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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 13 No. 20 905-727-3300 theauroran.com FREE Week of March 26, 2013

Budget set for approval Tuesday with 3.42 percent tax increase

By Brock Weir

After months of debate and negotiations, Aurora's 3.42 per cent tax hike for 2013 is slated for final approval this week.

Councillors are expected to have one final discussion surrounding the 2013 budget at Council this Tuesday before a vote. This last step comes after one final presentation and discussion over the budget at committee level last week, which was essentially their last kick at the can to make suggestions on how to tweak that number. Despite many questions over the bottom line, what came out of the General Committee meeting was exactly what came in – 3.42.

It has been a long road to get to this point, however. After a series of meetings, deliberations, staff revisions, and public consultations, Councillors have come to the 3.42 increase on the Town's portion of the tax bill after whittling it down from the initial 8.2 per cent tax hike floated last fall.

Reductions stemmed from a closer look at what Town departments – such as Customer and Legislative Services and Parks and Recreation – actually needed to keep service levels as they are within the community.

When combined with the 1.9 per cent tax increase from the Region of York and school taxes, this 3.42 per cent tax increase on the Town's side of things will result in a combined tax hike of 2.02 per cent on the average tax bill.

Taking this 3.42 bit by bit, 2.12 per cent of the number can be attributed to “running Aurora today”, according to the Town. This includes regular budget increases from both Central York Fire Services (the fire department jointly governed by the Towns of Aurora and Newmarket) and the Aurora Public Library, as well as addressing other cost factors such as inflation. The remaining 1.3 per cent is for laying the groundwork for Aurora's future such as roads

Continued on page 9



Having fun this weekend wasn't as much of a head-scratcher as people descended on the Aurora Cultural Centre on Saturday for the final Indoor Farmer' Market of the Season. Above, Andy Sampogna of 19th Avenue Farm, seriously considers the price of his zucchinis while (inset) mother and daughter came looking for a deal. The Grand Opening of the outdoor Aurora Farmers' Market, back at its customary Wells Street location, will take place Saturday, May 4.

Auroran photos by David Falconer

Hitting the right note

Bill Rickard found renewed passion for a hobby from his youth after a devastating highway accident in Italy robbed him of his left arm and leg. Putting his skills to good use, Mr. Rickard and a team of dedicated craftsmen and factory workers have turned their hobby into serious business right here in Aurora. See Page 10.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, March 26	7 p.m.	Council
Wednesday, March 27	7 p.m.	Public Planning
Tuesday, April 2	10:30 a.m.	Joint Council Committee
Tuesday, April 2	7 p.m.	General Committee
Wednesday, April 3	6 p.m.	Community Consultation Re: Corporate Environmental Action Plan Update
Wednesday, April 3	7 p.m.	Accessibility Advisory Committee
Wednesday, April 3	7 p.m.	Sesquicentennial Ad Hoc Committee
Thursday, April 4	7 p.m.	Environmental Advisory Committee
Thursday, April 4	7:30 p.m.	Committee of Adjustment

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:



Image Courtesy of Aurora Historical Society

Railway Station (1853)

The first steam-powered railway trip in Upper Canada was on May 16, 1853. This trip was from Toronto to Machell's Corners (now Aurora). The station we see today was built in 1900.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Dinner and a Movie

Here Comes the Boom

Where: Aurora Public Library
When: **Saturday, March 30** from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Rating: Rated PG
Ages: 11 to 14 year-olds
Price: Entry is \$3 per person and pizza will be served.
For more information, please call 905-726-4760.

Seeking nominations for the 2013 Citizen of the Year

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe invites residents to submit a nomination for the 2013 Aurora Citizen of the Year. Nominations for this significant award are open to citizens of The Town of Aurora that are 16 years of age and over, with the exception of Members of Council.

The deadline for nominations is **Tuesday, April 30**.

The 2013 Citizen of the Year nomination form is available on the Town's website at www.aurora.ca. To obtain a hard copy, please contact Betty De Bartolo, Executive Assistant to the Mayor at 905-726-4741.

Judging will be based on the information received in the nominations, with an emphasis on the all-round activities within the community.

The winner of the Citizen of the Year Award will be announced at a Council meeting in June.

Please send your nomination form to:

Citizen of the Year Award
Attention: Mayor's Office
Town of Aurora
100 John West Way, Box 1000
Aurora, Ontario L4G 6J1
CONFIDENTIAL

Visit The Town of Aurora Booth at The Aurora Home Show

Looking for a copy of the latest Waste and Recycling Calendar or the Resident's Guide? Do you have questions about Town programs or services? Drop by The Town of Aurora booth at The Aurora Home Show starting **Friday, April 12 to Sunday, April 14**. The show will be held at the Aurora Community Centre, 1 Community Centre Lane. The Town booth is located in Arena 2, Spot 75 and 76.

Visitors can access an assortment of Town information and brochures. We hope to see you there!



Aurora Seniors' Centre trips

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

Trips this spring include:

- Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
Saturday, April 13 to Monday, April 22

Trip includes transportation, accommodations, shopping trips, meals and shows and more.

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

Sign the Town's Memory Book

Share your stories and memories of Aurora by signing the Town's memory book at the following locations:

- The Aurora Seniors' Centre, 90 John West Way
- Aurora Town Hall, 100 John West Way
- Aurora Public Library, 15145 Yonge Street

The books will be placed in a time capsule during the Aurora 150th Birthday celebrations. Thank you!

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

Seeking Citizen Members for two Committees

Aurora Town Council invites residents to apply to participate as a citizen member for:

- The Southeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District Study Area Sub-Committee
- Environmental Advisory Committee

For the Southeast Old Aurora Committee, the Town seeks representation from members of the Heritage-East Aurora Rate Payers Group and residents who live within the Southeast Old Aurora study area. Please visit www.aurora.ca and view the homepage for a map of the selected area.

Applications will be accepted by mail addressed to the Deputy Clerk, 100 John West Way, P.O. Box 1000, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1, by email at cjanzen@aurora.ca, by fax at 905-726-4732 or hand-delivered and received prior to: **Tuesday, March 26**.

What is the Advisory Committee's Role?

To find out more about this opportunity or to pick up an application form, please visit the Customer & Legislative Services department on the 2nd floor of Aurora Town Hall, 100 John West Way, or visit the Town's website.

Applicants must be 18 or older and not employed by The Town of Aurora.

For more information, please call 905-727-3123 ext. 4217.

Another exciting event brought to you by



easter egg hunt

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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For more information, please visit www.aurora.ca or call 905-726-4762.

*We reserve the right to cancel, amend or change activities.

Parks Spring Clean-up seeking student volunteers

Need community service volunteer hours to graduate from high school? Come out and help the Town's Parks staff clean-up Aurora's parks.

The two clean-up sessions are:

Clean-up areas: Aurora Community Centre, Fleury and Machell Park
Dates: **Saturday, April 13, Saturday, May 11 and Saturday, June 8**
Time: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Clean-up areas: Aurora Family Leisure Complex and Lambert Wilson Park
Dates: **Sunday, April 14, Sunday, May 12 and Sunday, June 9**
Time: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information and to sign-up please call 905-726-4760.



Mayor's annual Anti-Litter Clean-Up Day

Saturday, April 20, 2013
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Drinking water will be provided by **Water for Tomorrow**
Please bring a refillable water bottle!


Clean-up kits including gloves, bags and t-shirts will be provided when you register*

Barbecue and family fun activities will take place from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. at Town Park

For more information please contact the Office of the Mayor at 905-726-4741 or bdebartolo@aurora.ca

*Register to participate by contacting Info Aurora at 905-727-8214 or infoaurora@aurora.ca

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Briefly

POLICE SEEK WITNESSES AFTER SERIOUS CRASH

York Regional Police continue to seek witnesses after a serious crash in King left many Aurora residents injured last month. The crash took place Saturday, February 16 at 4 p.m. on Bathurst Street near King Road when a westbound black Kia Sportage collided with an eastbound blue Dodge Caravan. According to police, the driver of the Dodge was a 31 year old Aurora man who received minor injuries, but his 35 year old female passenger, along with the 10-year-old boy and seven-year-old girl in the backseat, all from Aurora, were transported to hospital with serious injuries. A fourth passenger recovers from minor injuries. All have been released from the hospital. Anyone with information is asked to contact Constable Kevin Hamilton at 1-866-876-5423 x7200 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

BEETHOVEN AND BRAHMS ON OFFER

Beethoven and Brahms will be on offer next month as the York Symphony Orchestra brings their next show to Aurora. The next series, featuring the works of the two composers, will also see a return of two of the York Symphony's most popular guest performers. Conducting the show will be Denis Mastromonaco, who comes to the York Symphony from Opera Mississauga and guest conducting roles around the world. Joining him in the show will be Elissa Miller-Kay, an award winning pianist who has been recognized with top honours in scholarships and international competitions. The concert will take place at 8 p.m. Saturday, April 13 at Trinity Anglican Church here in Aurora. Tickets are available at 416-410-0860.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Organizers of the 2013 Special Olympics Summer Games, which will take place this July throughout York Region, are looking for volunteers. Running from July 11 – July 14, volunteers are “Asked to commit at least 16 hours of their time to this worthwhile cause.” Volunteer must be at least 14 and undergo a police background check. For more information, contact Karen Richards at 1-866-846-5423.



Newmarket-Aurora MPP Frank Klees delivered his message to local politicians and immediately affected residents outside Newmarket Town Hall on Thursday night, but his legislation, if passed, could have future consequences in both halves of his riding.
Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Klees bill would make towns more “accountable” for communities and development

By Brock Weir

How a community looks should be decided by the community itself and the people they elect to represent them, rather than an arm’s length board, according to Newmarket-Aurora MPP Frank Klees.

Mr. Klees introduced a Private Members’ Bill in the Ontario Legislature last week challenging Ontario’s Places to Grow Act and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, calling for changes to protect “established neighbourhoods” across the province.

The bill was in response to a situation faced by Newmarket residents in the Glenway neighbourhood in the north end of Newmarket who are facing significant changes to the community as developers plan on building extensive new residential units on the now defunct golf course lined by innumerable homes. The issue has been

simmering for quite some time, turning out to be a hot-button issue among candidates in the last Provincial election but, according to Mr. Klees, situations like these are not limited to Newmarket or just this point in time.

As things stand now, if a Council disagrees with a developer’s application, such as what is going on in Glenway, the developers’ recourse is to take their application for the ultimate decision at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) which, he said, more often than not bases their decisions on the existing provincial legislation leaving community perspective out of the loop.

“At the end of the day, if it means the local Council decides the application that was brought forward was not in the best interests of the municipality and turns it down, the automatic trigger, of course, is to go to the OMB where the OMB panel is required to make its decision consistent with provincial policy,” said Mr. Klees. “[If the legislation passes] people will have a community that is decided by their Council who are elected to make the decision about what the local community should look like. The other implication is local Councillors, with all due respect, would no longer be able to hide behind the OMB.

“One of the things that has happened, and I know firsthand, is there are discussions that can take place with developers to say, ‘nudge, nudge, I am going to vote against this but I know you will go to the OMB and we know the OMB will approve it.’ Local Councillors have the ability to be seen to be opposing a development knowing full well they will never be held accountable. I believe this will hold Councillors accountable.”

Mr. Klees’ bill will come for debate in the Legislature on April 18.

With Glenway firmly in the eye of this debate, both Mr. Klees and Mayor Geoffrey Dawe said this bill, if passed, could have significant implications

down the road in Aurora if and when similar situations arise.

“The point that Councils are now going to have to be a little bit more responsible for their decisions is very well made,” said Mayor Dawe. “It certainly happened in Aurora in the past and I think that is a very good step forward for us as a municipal Council to step up to some of the responsibilities we need to step up to.”

“It was an interesting point Frank made that Councils can’t use the nudge-nudge-wink-wink to duck issues anymore. I would suggest that was done on Hartwell Way. In the Official Plan that was passed in the last term was dead-ended as opposed to being put through where it was always on the books that it be put through and I would suggest it was known all along that the Region would never pass the OP without Hartwell Way going through, but it was a good way to do the nudge-nudge-wink-wink.”

Overall, if the bill passes or comes up for more extensive scrutiny, it is bound to raise some questions about the OMB itself. In the last provincial election, Mr. Klees was adamant he believes the OMB needs to be reformed, a stance he maintains today. He said from its beginnings it has grown and become overreaching, but some of that blame can be attributed to provincial policies itself, which are broad and allows them to make decisions they were never intended to make, he said.

“I think when Councillors know that they ultimately will be responsible and accountable for the decisions that they make, they will approach their responsibility in a different way,” he said. “I believe that whatever redevelopment would take place in Aurora will have the stamp of the local Council on it. It will not be redevelopment designed by the Ontario Municipal Board panel. It will be designed by the people who were elected by the residents of Aurora.”

April is Abundant & Amazing!

Lunch & Tour!

Saturday, April 6th, 12-3pm

Have a tasty lunch and see our beautiful community and meet our amazing staff.

The Power of the Pen

Wednesday, April 10th, 2pm

Come and let Elaine Charal tell you the secrets within your handwriting, she will reveal positive strengths, talents and secrets behind your strokes. This fun filled Handwriting Analysis is interesting and fun.

An afternoon of delicious food and beautiful music

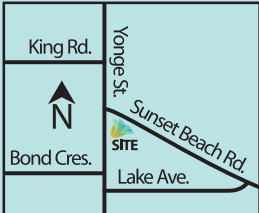
Saturday, April 20th, 12-2pm

Richmond Hill Philharmonic Orchestra perform at Richmond Hill Performing Arts Center. Come have lunch with us before the show!

Earth Day Luncheon!

Monday, April 22nd, 12-2pm

Oak Ridges Retirement Community



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Holiday Service Schedule
Good Friday – Friday, March 29



MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way) will be **CLOSED** on Friday, March 29 for Good Friday. Regular business hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. will resume on Monday, April 1.

If you would like to pay a water or tax bill, payments can be placed in the drop-off box 24 hours a day outside of Town Hall. Please do not place cash payments in the boxes and remember to include your payment stub along with your payment. Alternatively, you may pay your bills through your ATM or through your bank’s online banking service. Parking tickets can be paid online at www.paytickets.ca



LIBRARY

The Aurora Public Library will be **CLOSED** on Friday, March 29, Sunday, March 31 and Monday, April 1.

For more information, please visit www.library.aurora.on.ca or call 905-727-9494.



WASTE COLLECTION

Waste collection scheduled on Friday, March 29 is **MOVED TO** Monday, April 1.

For information on waste collection in Aurora, please consult your 2013 Community and Waste Management Calendar.



RECREATION CENTRES

Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex

Friday, March 29 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturday, March 30 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday, March 31 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday, April 1 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Aurora Family Leisure Complex

Friday, March 29 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturday, March 30 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday, March 31 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday, April 1 5:45 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Program Opportunities
For swimming, skating and Club Aurora fitness schedules, please visit www.aurora.ca/holidayrecreation

EMERGENCY SERVICES

As always, the Town will continue to provide essential and emergency services.

For Town-related emergency situations, please call 905-727-1375 or 905-727-3123 and follow the voice prompts.

FOR ALL OTHER EMERGENCIES, CALL 9-1-1



The Town of Aurora wishes you a safe and happy holiday!

Letters to the editor

Letters showed “lack of professionalism”

I remain extremely disappointed in the lack of professionalism exhibited by Town Councillors John Gallo, Wendy Gaertner and Chris Ballard in their jointly authored letter that ran on page 4 and 6 of the February 12th edition of the Auroran.

In it several factually incorrect statements were made regarding the proposal from Lucid Community Development Group. Thankfully this misinformation was clarified in a follow up letter that ran on page 6 of the February 26th edition by Mayor Dawe.

One outstanding issue I have with the letter of February 12th has to do with three elected officials soliciting public input and then providing personal email addresses for such a purpose.

Considering how the three Councilors’ letter spoke to the themes of “transparency” and “acting in the community’s best interest” I find it both conspicuous and hypocritical that these same Councillors would provide personal email addresses to communicate town business.

How circumventing corporate email could be construed as being in the Town’s best interest is beyond me, especially when it appears to contravene my understanding of all four objectives laid out in staff report : CS08-038 dated October 7th 2008.

Emails sent to personal email accounts are not subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act which is one reason municipalities, the Town of Aurora included, provides and maintains at a cost to tax payers, a secure email service along with mobile devices to all members of council.

As recently as last month the entire issue of email communications was reviewed by Council suggesting to me that the decision to include personal emails in this letter wasn’t some honest mistake, and makes me question the motivation behind it.

Back in May of 2010 the City of Vaughan’s integrity commissioner provided direction through a series of guidelines that spoke to accountability and transparency

Continued on page 6

Aurora Winter Blues Fest raised over \$5,000 for shelter

The Aurora Winter Blues Festival Organizing Committee would like to thank the residents of Aurora for their continued support of “Live” music and our charitable causes, plus the generosity of our local business community for their sponsorships and donations.

Our second annual event, held March 2 at Theatre Aurora, was another sell out and was successful in raising \$5,210 for Blue Door Shelters of York Region. In addition to our sponsors – RBC Dominion Securities, King Brewery, Coca-Cola Ltd Canada and The ARTS Music Store, we’d like to thank all of our many volunteers, plus Theatre Aurora, Jonathan’s Restaurant and the Town of Aurora, for their ongoing support in making the annual Aurora Winter Blues Festival a successful community run event.

We’re working on bringing an expanded event to Aurora for 2014 with an even bigger lineup of Top Canadian talent – here’s to keeping the Blues alive!

Jamie MacDonald
AWBF Festival Director

THE AURORAN

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



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

The Hills are Alive with the Sound of...wait...hold on a sec...

I often wonder if there is something in the water here in Aurora.

Recent reports from the Town suggest all is well, but it’s the only explanation I can think of on why issues pertaining to culture in this Town seem to either send everyone haywire or result in nearly inexplicable results.

Most recently we have seen the implosion of Lucid Community Development’s Aurora Live festival after a mass exodus from their camp, but there has also been bitter back and forth between proponent and politician(s).

Sound familiar? Echoes of the year-after-year-like-clockwork battles between politicians and proponents of the Jazz Festival are still ringing in my ears, so this certainly didn’t help matters. Now it seems that the battle lines around the Council table have slightly shifted.

One can imagine that a newcomer to Aurora taking in these shenanigans with fresh eyes might be baffled on what could possibly be so contentious about staging something seemingly as harmless as a music festival. Admittedly, it is still baffling to the initiated.

Shortly after the Lucid people came into the Council chamber armed with their Aurora Live! sign ready to pose with the Mayor and six of eight Councillors, an acquaintance who was one of the less vocal critics of the Aurora Jazz Fest took me aside and said, “Hey, it looks like the Town will be alive with the Sound of Music again.”

I rolled my eyes at this analogy, but after the events of the last few weeks, I take it back. What would happen if Julie Andrews herself appeared in character outfit atop Aurora’s highest peak proclaiming “the hills are alive” with what she had on offer?

What a reception she might receive!

Would one faction criticise her for being completely presumptuous and entitled? After all, who said Aurora’s hills were in need of resuscitation? Would the residents be in favour of someone performing musical CPR on their green and pleasant land? Most



BROCK’S BANTER

Brock Weir

importantly, would she have the utter gall to throw a fence up around her hill of choice?

And what of the other faction?

If Julie waltzed into Town asking to apply for a permit to hold a music festival on the hill of her choice, would they demand to see her credentials of other hills she has attempted to enliven with her own brand of song? Would they accept a mere notarized letter from Christopher Plummer or the heirs of Rodgers & Hammerstein? Would any support gained be obliterated if five of the seven Von Trapps kids decided to break away from the fold and set out on their own?

Our lawmakers often seem to take it upon themselves to take a proprietary stake in their own slice of Aurora’s Cultural Pie, logic be damned. All sides of the Cultural Centre debate, however, seem to have finally blossomed into adulthood, but...

NOT SO FAST!

Both parties in Aurora’s Great Cultural Centre Debate (successors to historians John McIntyre and Elizabeth Hearn Milner are going to have a field day with this topic when writing about Aurora’s Bicentennial) are supportive – or tolerant at the very least – with Aurora’s new Cultural Services agreement. Council, for instance, largely got what they wanted. They could have representation on the board, they have further input on their budget, more transparent financials, and a new permanent home for the Aurora Museum upstairs in the aptly named Aurora Room.

But one aspect of this that appears to escape the majority of Councillors who were pushing for this – spare Councillors Humfries and Abel – is that one actually has to fill this room with something, or it is just a complete waste of space.

It was disappointing that Councillors are heading into this week poised to defer acquiring the Aurora Collection from the Aurora Historical Society until the completion of a Cultural Master Plan which will chart the future course of the Cultural Centre, Library, and like institutions within the wider context of Aurora as a whole.

The price tag is, of course, hefty, as these things often are, but this is Aurora’s 150th anniversary, so what better time to exercise a little indulgence and secure Aurora’s history in this milestone year? It can’t be lost on Councillors that in the recent presentation by the group tasked with evaluating and appraising the collections that parts of this collection are in significant peril. While they praised many aspects of the current storage arrangement of heritage artefacts at the Aurora Cultural Centre, they couldn’t stress enough that resources were not available to adequately tackle some of the more pervasive problems with the current situation, particularly the insect infestation currently gnawing away at the Town’s textile heritage.

The stop gap solutions they have put in place in the meantime to slow down the infestation can only go so long. History tells us these master plans take a significant amount of time to develop. People hopeful that Council can bring this baby in for a landing before the end of the year are likely being far too optimistic.

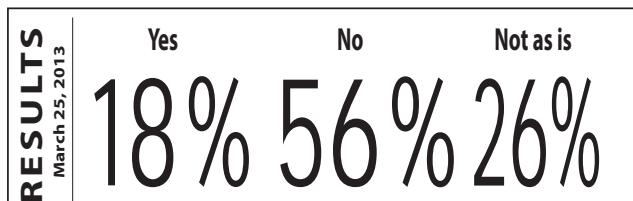
I fear by the time all is said and done with the Cultural Master Plan, the price tag to acquire the Aurora Collection will be significantly reduced, if only because a few thousands of dollars worth of archival material has gone to satiate legions of carpet beetles.

Not the most fitting of birthday legacies.

AURORAN POLL

Do you think Aurora Council's Code of Conduct should stay on the books?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Not in its current state



"double-takes"



Double-takes is a rephotography project by The Aurora Heritage Authority. This third installment focuses on the venerable Church Street School. The building itself hasn't changed much compared to its contemporary surroundings, as the picture held before it indicates, but its use is very different – now home to the Aurora Cultural Centre.

Ottawa Report

Economic Action Plan 2013

Economic Action Plan 2013 was tabled in the House of Commons on March 21. It is a continuation of our government's responsible plan to create jobs, growth and long-term prosperity and a document created by a government who listens and delivers results.

Since the depth of the global economic recession, the Canadian economy has created over 950,000 net new jobs – the best record among advanced economies. We are building on that strong foundation by taking action in three important areas, staying on track to balance the budget by 2015, increasing federal transfer support to Ontario to record highs and keeping federal taxes at their lowest level in fifty years.

Connecting Canadians with Available Jobs

A new Canada Job Grant will transform the way Canadians receive skills training. Training in Canada is not sufficiently aligned to the skills employers need or to the jobs that are actually available. Now, individuals may qualify for up to \$15,000 to learn new skills to accept a new or better job. The \$15,000 will be funded from the federal government (up to \$5,000) with matching funds from provincial or territorial government and the employer. For the first time, the Canada Job Grant will put skills-training choices where they belong: in the hands of employers with unfilled jobs and Canadians who want to work.

Our plan also includes increasing opportunities for apprentices and new

support to underrepresented groups such as persons with disabilities, youth, new Canadians and Aboriginal peoples.

Introducing a new Building Canada Plan

This new infrastructure plan - \$70 billion in federal infrastructure funding over 10 years – is the largest federal investment in job-creating infrastructure in Canadian history. It has a number of important components, including:

New Community Improvement Fund – providing base funding for Canadian municipalities of \$32.2 billion over 10 years including an indexed Gas Tax Fund (GTF) and increased GST Rebate to build roads, public transit, recreational facilities and other community infrastructure. The GTF indexing alone represents another \$29,000 into Town of Aurora coffers on top of the current \$1.46 million it receives each and every year through this program.

New Building Canada Fund - \$14 billion will support major economic infrastructure projects that have a national and regional significance. The \$10 billion Provincial-Territorial Infrastructure Component will support projects of national, regional and local significance in communities across the country that will include highways, public transit, drinking water, wastewater,



LOIS BROWN
MP Newmarket-Aurora

connectivity and broadband, and innovation.

Renewed P3 Canada Fund - \$1.25 billion will be invested to find innovative ways to build infrastructure projects faster and provide better value for Canadian taxpayers. Under P3 arrangements, governments continue to own the infrastructure assets while the private sector plays a larger role in their design, construction, operation and maintenance. In doing so, the private sector assumes a greater share of projects risks.

In addition, over the next 10 years, we'll invest \$6 billion in existing infrastructure funding and \$17 billion to build, operate and maintain federal public infrastructure.

Supporting Canada's Manufacturing Sector

Economic Action Plan 2013 takes action in three ways to support Canada's manufacturers, by; providing tax relief for new manufacturing equipment through the extension of the temporary accelerated capital allowance; building equipment for the Canadian Armed Forces; and helping Canada's manufacturers to compete through a new Advanced Manufacturing Fund for Southern Ontario, continuation of the Strategic Aerospace and Defence Initiative, investments in Forestry Industry Transformation and renewed Automotive Innovation Fund.

Balancing the Budget by 2015

Our Government is committed to balancing the Budget by 2015. Since 2010, we have taken significant action to reduce government spending and this year's spending is projected to be over \$11 billion lower than planned. To date, over 16,000 positions have been eliminated and direct program spending on federal government operations is projected to remain below 2010 levels for the next five years. Economic Action Plan 2013 builds on these efforts by announcing an additional \$1.7 billion in ongoing savings including; reducing travel costs through the use of technology, standardizing government information systems and enhancing the integrity of the tax system by closing tax loopholes to ensure that everyone pays their fair share.

Keeping Taxes Low

Economic Action Plan 2013 continues to keep taxes low for families, seniors and businesses. Since 2006, we have reduced taxes over 150 times, and the average family of four pays \$3,220 less in federal taxes each year. Seniors are also benefiting from our low-tax plan, paying on average \$2,260 less in taxes each year. Budget 2013 takes further action to support families by eliminating tariffs on babies' clothing, sporting goods and athletic equipment.

If you would like to contact me on this or any other issue, please call 905-953-7515 or visit my website at www.loisbrown.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.

The Budgets and possible provincial election issues

The Federal and Provincial Budget season is upon us.

The Federal Budget was brought down last week, and it is expected the Provincial Budget will follow in mid to late April.

We know that things are not well.

Canada and Ontario both share large annual deficits and accumulated debt, and there are a large amount of unemployed Ontarians.

We need to have an adult conversation about the difficult choices that face our public policy makers.

There are two very well done economic studies that have just been completed that politicians should endorse in full and pledge to move ahead on the recommendations.

Donald Drummond, the former bank economist and provincial bureaucrat, was the Chair of the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, and released the first report entitled, "Public Services for Ontarians: A Path to Sustainability and Excellence."

The report outlined 362 cost-cutting recommendations to reduce the provincial deficit and debt and to make the delivery of government services more effective and efficient.

He is calling for deep spending cuts to all ministries, save education and health, although funding increases for these two portfolios will be limited as well.

The Commission projects that if the government continues on the course it's on, Ontario's deficit would reach \$30 billion

by 2017-18 and the net debt would reach \$411 billion. Sobering statistics to say the least!

Mr. Drummond's work should really begin the long overdue debate on the cost, scope, reach and delivery of government.

Whether it is the federal government or the provincial government, the size of the public service can't continue to outstrip and outgrow the capacity of the private sector ability to create wealth to pay for these services.

To govern is to choose. And public finance is not about technical wizardry, but about making choices, and in many cases, tough choices.

Provincial governments can do one of a number of things to deal with the deficit/debt situation. These include raising taxes, cutting expenditures, selling public assets and or increasing the efficiency of public service delivery.

The second is the report that was issued last December 19 by the Jobs & Prosperity Council – a non partisan group – and is entitled, "Advantage Ontario".

The report's recommendations offer a "vision for growth that include more international trade, increased productivity, more innovation by Ontario businesses and a reinvigorated manufacturing sector



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

– things that will lead to better jobs and a better standard of living for all Ontarians."

Sure, we have all seen or heard these types of individual recommendations before, but as they are contained in two well thought out, and non partisan produced documents, it is time to accept these proposed actions in whole.

It is also good to see that at least one of the provincial political parties has been thinking about the key issues facing our province.

In an effort to move past being seen as negative all the time, Tim Hudak and his PC team have been unveiling nine "Pathways to Prosperity" discussion papers regarding health care, education, governance, energy and the like.

The Tories are always quick to point out that these documents will not necessarily be the corner stone of the campaign platform that they will release during an election, but at least they are putting some meat on the policy bones and adding to the public discourse.

At this point, we do not know if Ms. Wynne's first Budget will pass; Tim Hudak says the Tories will not support it while the NDP says they might – if a reduction in insurance premiums is forthcoming, that is.

A possible spring election would likely be

fought on a couple of areas:

First, and foremost the economy, the deficit/debt and private sector job growth.

Second, the integrity of government and delivery of services. This is a catch all for ORNGE, e-health and the gas plant cancellations.

Third, transit, gridlock and funding for infrastructure.

Fourth is energy policy. The Liberals and Tories have fundamentally different views on most items in this sector, from new nuclear and renewables (Liberals Feed-In Tariff Program, while Tories adamantly opposed).

There is another issue that really is a ticking time bomb, and as tax payers, will ultimately affect all of us, and thus at least deserves to become part of the electoral cycle discourse: public sector pensions.

In a lot of cases, defined public pension plans don't have enough money to cover the plan's obligations to retirees. The amount of this unfunded liability is huge.

A thorough discussion of this issue is needed.

A poll released today shows a tight three way race between the three main parties, with the Liberals still holding a big lead in popular support in the Greater Toronto Area.

Could be – politically speaking – an interesting spring in this province.

Stephen can be contacted at stephensomerville@yahoo.com



SENIOR
SCAPE

Jim L. Abram

An introduction

This is my first article for The Auroran. I hope you like it but if you don't, please let me know. If you do like it, that would be nice to hear too! I welcome hearing any stories, anecdotes, life experiences or any other information you wish to share with fellow seniors concerning life in Aurora as a senior.

I will make my best effort to include your contributions in content or in spirit in this column. Please send any correspondence to Jim Abram at jimabram@sympatico.ca. Not to worry though, Sylvia will continue to share this space with me and continue to provide her ever-interesting and insightful perspective on life at the Aurora Seniors' Centre.

In the news recently, the Cardinal conclave has elected a new Pope. This is very exciting, not only to those of the Catholic faith, but for all of those of us who are members of this great experiment we call life. This historic event did not go unnoticed by the members of the Aurora Seniors; Centre on 13-03-13 (a date that numerologists might have a field day with) as members watched, tweeted and gasped in anticipation as we waited for the announcement of the new Pope.

There was surprise and excitement around the winner, a respected Cardinal from Argentina and there was some vibrant conversation as to whether it should have been Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet or some other contender. Members at the Centre reacted with joy, bursting into applause and cheers at the news.

The point of all this is that the Centre serves as a meeting place for persons of all faiths to discuss, debate and enjoy the company of others in celebrating a major historic event in a comforting and pleasant environment.

Trivia Challenge

We had our always popular Trivia Challenge on March 8, where very competitive seniors taxed their memories and knowledge. It was a tremendous night for all. Our sponsor for the event was Oak Ridges Community Living who provided a great meal of lasagna and salad.

Even the cash bar hosted by Bill wasn't enough to give me the brainpower to win against the knowledgeable competition! Wait until next year! I do apologise for using the word "taxed" at this time of year.

The Aurora Seniors' Centre held its annual St. Patrick's Day luncheon on March 13. There was great Irish-themed music, food and general fun had by all Irish and Non-Irish alike. At the St. Patrick's Luncheon, members were entertained

by the Irish dancers and they were just amazing with their dance numbers. They were all young students from the Irish Dance Studio in Newmarket.

Annual Spring Sale

The Annual Spring Sale will be held on April 27. There will be a wide variety of books, crafts, treasures and a great bake table and BBQ. Don't miss it! Your "White Elephant Treasures" are greatly appreciated and will be accepted at the Registration Desk April 22 - 26 during the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday to Friday. Please search them out and bring them in!

Budget Bistro

Another good reason why you might wish to hurry and join the Aurora Seniors' Centre is to enjoy our weekly Budget Bistro where you can enjoy a tasty lunch for only \$4 served by a tremendous team of volunteers every Wednesday.

Aurora Seniors Centre
Board of Directors Election

Nominations for the Board of Directors are now being accepted. Nomination dates for ASA -Board of Directors is Monday March 18 to Friday April 12 inclusive. If you already a member of the Aurora Seniors' Centre, be sure to learn more about the candidates for the vacancies on the Board and please get out to vote! If you are not yet a member, I do encourage you to join the Aurora Seniors' Centre as you are always welcome.

Membership is affordable; participation is tailored to members' wants and needs. Fun and Friendship are mandatory.

The Aurora Seniors' Centre is conveniently located and is a full access facility. Becoming a member is as simple as dropping by for a tour of the facilities and signing up. There is a modest fee of \$20 per year for Aurora residents and \$25 per year for non-residents. All those individuals over 55 years of age are welcome to join. And for a small Activity Fee of \$1 per day you can enjoy the many ASA sponsored activities to build your health, wellness and social interactions.

Well, that is my first article for The Auroran, our community newspaper. My goal in writing this article is to make every article very different in terms of content but to also make it very relevant to all seniors living in Aurora.

This week's advice: "Don't let the person next to you see your cards."

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.

Letter to the editor
Reader disagrees with column

(Re: "The Extraordinary,
Strange and Downright
Bizarre", March 12)

What I find extraordinary, strange and downright bizarre is that you are allowed to write this nearly half page column in The Auroran whose central fact is erroneous.

You then expound upon it as your whole column. Then you have the gall to accuse others of "misinformation at best". Ms Collins Mrakas, as a paid columnist on politics, and a past Councillor; I would think that you might know how to factually report a motion.

You infer that these three Councillors (Ballard, Gaertner and Gallo) were part of the unanimous FINAL vote to move forward with this music festival proposal. You state "... they voted in favour of the motion...the vote on the music festival was unanimous."

And then your whole column is spent questioning their motives in continuing to pursue more information, as if they have already given final approval. Ms. Collins Mrakas, what they voted on unanimously on February 12 was the "principle" of the proposal but for STAFF to request FURTHER details from Lucid Group (Aurora Live Festival):

"...and THAT staff be directed to meet with the organizers of the event to ensure that all municipal requirements are addressed and are compliant with any fees or permits required; and THAT staff provide a full report to Council."

And, in the following you are wrong too. Others were not spreading "misinformation" by having concerns about a proposal

put to staff and a resolution referring to that proposal which they were required to vote on in Council that asked taxpayers to pay \$25,000 towards the new music festival, and also for the perimeter of the park to be fenced.

Anybody's ridiculing of the due diligence shown by the three Councillors who wanted some references from the Lucid Community Development Corp. from past festivals or projects completed before they, the Council, had to finally vote on whether to accept this grand (but unsolicited) proposal surely shows a lack of understanding of Council's responsibility. There is no moral high ground in false history. Please do your due diligence on the facts before trying to inform the reading public. And although (according to you) it is "pretty extraordinary", and "bizarre actually" and you "have no idea what has happened" now that the significant portion of stars and Lucid members have decided that they no longer wish to be associated with Lucid Group Aurora Live Festival, they obviously know their reasons.

Mr. Flex, as spokesperson, has stated "intrinsic differences in

business philosophy" and that these differences between these members and Mr. Roche are "irreconcilable". These stars have established reputations, so "red flag" to the logically inclined! Maybe you could research the source corporation, Lucid Community Development Group, George Roche et al's past references/behaviour plus the irreconcilable differences and tell us citizens what happened in a useful column. I am disappointed that "I told you so!" possibilities are your overriding concern.

Obviously these three Councillors' questions were needed, although not respected by others on Council, especially Mayor Dawe.

They see that the Aurora public would like a music festival to replace the scuppered Jazz+, but from a trustworthy source. And, unlike your personal interpretations, to me this is caring for the town's best interests.

Catherine Marshall
Aurora

(Editor's Note: Ms. Collins-Mrakas is not a paid columnist, as the writer states)



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Letter to the editor

From page 4

with regards to corporate email.

Surely it doesn't require a code of conduct, an integrity commissioner, and/or a full on policy review by staff here in Aurora for these three Town Councillors to realize they should use their corporate email accounts when acting in their capacity as Councillors.

Council members are either doing the

town's business or they're not and email accounts should be used appropriately.

Going forward when communicating to members of council by email I would encourage fellow Aurorans to pay extra attention as to where exactly your concerns are being directed.

Christopher Watts
Aurora



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Chief, Council ponder Regional fire merger

By Brock Weir

When Fire Chief Ian Laing arrived in Town from Mississauga to take the helm of Aurora and Newmarket's amalgamated fire service, he was arriving on the scene of what he felt was a "model" other communities could emulate.

Arriving here from Mississauga a little over three years ago, he found himself in the middle of what was a relatively new model, however. In that time as the head of the Central York Fire Services (CYFS), he says he has found it is a model that works and has watched proudly as it has gone from strength to strength.

The establishment of the CYFS, which is under the control of both Towns, has been an undoubted success story but in the time he has been head of the local force, the success of the local model may have snowballed into a drive in some quarters to amalgamate all the fire services in York Region into one.

A recommendation from the Joint Council Committee (JCC), the group comprised of Aurora and Newmarket Councillors to oversee fire services in both towns, to do just that is before Council for consideration this week.

But looking upon the success of his own department's development, however, he would be hard pressed to raise an eyebrow.

"Here I am sitting as the Chief of a Consolidated Fire Service that is a success story, so how could I say this wouldn't be a success?" Chief Laing told The Auroran. "It certainly would be a much bigger project, but I think we could probably turn the fire service into a bigger, stronger, faster fire service for the residents of York Region."

If momentum for a truly amalgamated York Region Fire Service continues to build, Chief Laing says that undertaking a study from the Fire Services side to ensure that all aspects of fire services are met – far beyond the simple operation of emergency vehicles.

It is much more than

coordinating driving between the municipalities. There is the potential consolidation of their individual communication and training centres, ensuring their education, training and operating procedures are uniform across the board, and "getting everyone on the same page."

"While the number of bureaucracies would diminish, the size of the bureaucracy would have to increase to take on all the responsibilities of a much greater area and fire service," he cautions. "I came from a department that covered 1,100 square miles with 600 fire fighters so there were 30 crews on duty in 20 fire stations."

Ottawa and Hamilton have shown that consolidation of fire services, whether they are similar to Central York, more volunteer in nature, or somewhere in between, work. The question then becomes, he says, where does the amalgamation stop? Would it continue to be water where the Region controls the water supply rather than merely acting as wholesaler?

"It is time in our history for everybody to be looking at ways to be more efficient because taxpayers get tired of paying high taxes, but it is not going to be any cheaper," he says. "It is just going to be funded differently."

Chief Laing arrived in Aurora and Newmarket in the winter of 2010 after serving for 34 years in the Mississauga Fire Service. Having grown up in the small town of Atikokan, ON, he didn't initially have an interest in firefighting. But after initially pursuing a career in the police force, meeting people on the other side prompted the shift.

The change may have been inevitable. His wife is an Emergency Communications Officer in the City and his son has grown up to become an Advanced Care Paramedic with Halton EMS.

Before his arrival at the CYFS, the crew put together a master fire plan which essentially served as a road map to the future. Looking

at the larger picture of this "road map" and how the community continues to be served, one of the things he says he would like to spearhead is a fifth fire station in Aurora, ideally on St. John's Sideroad between Bayview Avenue and Yonge Street.

Before that can happen, however, Chief Laing says the CYFS needs to resolve the thorny issue of ownership of the fire stations. Although the two towns amalgamated their services, they each retained ownership of the stations, so a capital project within Aurora or Newmarket would need to be paid for by their respective towns. Costs should be shared between the two communities as both sides would benefit, he says.

Details aside, it hasn't all been growing pains. During his time in the community so far, he highlights last year's wish day in honour of young Auroran Owen Veloso, who was named Honourary Firefighter in a special "Wish Day" put together by the Make a Wish Foundation and the CYFS.

"That is certainly a highlight of my career," he says. "I look at those pictures and I just tingle because of a very special young man, a great program put on by some awesome people that truly have the children's wish at heart."

"I actually saw Owen at our open house in Aurora and he showed up with his helmet and gear on and he is quite the young man and I have to say it made an impact on me. He's a special young fellow."

Another highlight undoubtedly took place last month when members of the JCC, presented Chief Laing with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his services to the community.

"To be recognized by staff and members of Council for my contributions was really special," he says. "We're just doing our job and we kind of fall short on the accolade part. It was a surprise and very much appreciated. It was certainly an event I



Since Ian Laing came to Aurora and Newmarket from Mississauga to take the helm of the Central York Fire Services, one of his most memorable experiences was naming young Aurora resident Owen Veloso (pictured with his parents Laura and Brian) an honorary firefighter in a celebration last April.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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IN GOOD COMPANY

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe

Gift of a Lifetime

Last month, I had the opportunity to sit with The Auroran editor Brock Weir to discuss some successes from the first half of my term in office, challenges our community faces as well as speak about my vision for community development in The Town of Aurora.

I am very proud of the progress achieved on many fronts during the first two years of the 2010 to 2014 Council term and I am looking forward to many further successes before the term concludes.

The interview, which is available for viewing on The Auroran website, talked about creating a positive and courteous environment at Town Hall where a culture of creativity and openness could thrive. Openness is a critical prerequisite to establish accountability and spur progress. I firmly believe that much of our recent accomplishments took root in a decorum and openness to new ideas that had been largely absent in previous years.

I reflected upon this theme at length in my annual keynote address to the Aurora Chamber of Commerce on February 21 at St. Andrew's College, where I cited some notable achievements, including our new Strategic Plan, new space for youth at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, new contract for cultural services with the Aurora Cultural Centre that provides accountability and oversight, preservation of the historic Petch House, the relocation of York Regional Police headquarters to Aurora, the arrival of Bulk Barn's new headquarters as well as new tennis facilities and a new artificial turf field.

Some of these accomplishments represent the completion of stalled initiatives from the past and some are the result of creating an environment where people want to invest in our community.

Further to this last point, I was thrilled to hear of the Stronach Group's recent proposal to create a new 34-hectare Eco Park in our community, on the east of Bayview Avenue, south of Wellington Street.

The Stronach Eco Park concept was presented at a joint committee meeting in late January and is truly breathtaking.

It includes upland and lowland forests, wetlands, a habitat pond, interpretive trails, an environmental education centre as well as three soccer fields. It will allow for a variety of outdoor activities such as hiking, snowshoeing, skating, tobogganing and cross-country skiing. The abundance of wildlife habitat will be a boon for nature enthusiasts.

Plans are underway to further refine the concept for the park, including a governance structure to maintain the landscape and facilities. Opportunities for public input will be made available throughout the process.

A gift of this magnitude is truly a once in a lifetime opportunity, made possible through the generosity of Mr. Frank Stronach. The park represents a perfect example of how The Town of Aurora is working to effectively balance nature with development to create a community that enriches the lives of our residents and creates demand for families and businesses to establish themselves here. Mr. Stronach's gift will be a legacy for generations of Aurorans to come.

Part of the lure of communities like Aurora is the great events that take place in Town. We had a fantastic turn-out at our annual Arctic Adventure on Family

Day and I am looking forward to another great family event on March 30 as we host the 12th annual Easter Egg Hunt at the Aurora Seniors' Centre. I hope to see you there!

Finally, I would like to comment on last week's federal budget. With \$47 billion in new spending allocated over the next 10 years, the Government of Canada's proposed infrastructure funding is both substantial and encouraging for municipalities struggling with capital repair and replacement costs.

The Gas Tax rebate will also be indexed. This rebate is an important source of revenue for our Town, which I actively lobbied our MP Lois Brown to consider in this budget cycle.

I am very pleased that through these efforts and the dedicated efforts of groups such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, this critical source of municipal funding has been preserved and enhanced. Municipalities currently receive \$2 billion per year through the Gas Tax rebate.

With indexing, this amount will increase by two per cent per year starting in fiscal 2014-15, helping to offset the costs of inflation and provide a consistent source of funding for our community and communities across the country.

Weaning off Hydro money gives some Councillors growing pains

By Brock Weir

When Aurora's 2013 budget is approved on Tuesday, the Town will take one further step in weaning itself off interest from the Town's Hydro Reserve account.

Since the Town sold Aurora Hydro, much of the interest collected from the \$33 million pot had been skimmed off and put back in the Town's budgets to help lessen the direct impact on taxpayers. When these funds were initially established, however, this was intended to maintain a balance in the books to account for the shortfall of incoming revenue from the municipal power company.

But the initial intention was to eventually wean the municipality off the funds.

Other Councils had reduced this number in increments, but the current Council has not, until this year.

Early in the budget process, Council decided to finally get on with it and reduce the amount taken from the Hydro Reserve interest to cushion the tax blow by \$100,000. Proponents of the move, particularly Councillor Michael Thompson, who made the initial suggestion, said the continual skimming off of the interest from the Hydro Reserve Account would ultimately reduce its purchasing power as Council has yet to decide just what to do with the nearly \$34 million in the account.

When the budget came up for committee approval last week, however, Mayor Geoffrey Dawe suggested it would be worth taking a second look at the move

before the document is approved by Council this week.

"We have had discussions about reducing our dependence on the interests from the hydro reserves by \$100,000 and while I fully appreciate Councillor Thompson's point of view, I don't necessarily support them," he said, wondering the impact of putting off the deduction "until we get a better sense of what to do with the hydro money".

"I fully appreciate the point that when you're taking interest out you're eroding the capital and there is no doubt merit, but it might make sense to postpone this for a year just until we get a sense of what, if anything, we're going to do with the hydro money."

The postponement, however, failed to gain any traction at the committee

level.

"I agreed that taking interest and not putting it back in reduces the purchasing power of our hydro fund," said Councillor John Abel.

Added Councillor Thompson: "We need to be fiscally prudent and follow these wishes that were established before, and like Councils before, make that effort to wean ourselves off those funds. I know we have a lot of challenges, but I wish it could have been more than \$100,000 myself. It is a start, and I would like to see us make an effort in our second year."

Similar concerns about the erosion of the funds were also expressed during the meeting from Town Treasurer Dan Elliott.

"By doing that we are


Continued on page 17

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Cultural Centre eyes fundraising for 2013 with budget in place

By Brock Weir

Fundraising for the Aurora Cultural Centre is expected to kick into high gear this year with Council’s approval of their operating grant.

Council is set to formally approve a \$370,000 grant to the Aurora Cultural Centre this week, per the terms of the recently signed new Cultural Services Agreement between the Town and the Cultural Centre. In order to do their part, the Cultural Centre has set a \$200,000 revenue goal of their own through programming and fundraising.

According to Frank Pulumbarit, President of the Cultural Centre Board, the finishing touches are being made on a new fundraising plan. It has been in the works for the past several months and they have engaged outside help, an “expert in funding” to make sure the correct – and practical – targets are met.

“We have many elements to that plan, and that plan consists of corporate sponsorships, going out into the community and doing sponsorship and individual drives, and I understand there is a desire to look at membership drives to be part of the whole fundraising picture,” he said. “That is not part of the plan at the moment, but something we can definitely accelerate and look into this year.”

Their \$200,000 goal is one for self-revenue. This means the Centre will generate 40 per cent of its own revenue this year, as opposed to just 10 per cent three years ago, he added.

“The Centre has just gone up and up and up in its ability to generate its own revenue and contribute to its success,” he said, noting \$150,000 of that is due to programming revenue, with \$50,000 each from fundraising and corporate sponsorship, almost double from 2012 numbers.

“I hope we are demonstrating to you real commitment to try and make that number as high as it can be in this particular year. We’re trying to nearly double the amount of fundraising that we’re going to be responsible for. The \$200,000 represents nearly an 8.5 per cent increase on revenues that we’re going to be responsible for versus last year.”

The Cultural Centre is also going to decrease costs by 4.6 per cent this year, he added. Revenue hits, however are going to come on board from no longer being able to rent out the Aurora Room by this time next year.

Under the terms of the new agreement, this second floor space will be handed over as permanent museum space for the Aurora Collection. The new agreement also calls on revenue generated by permitting out space to groups outside the mandate of the Cultural Services agreement to be handled by the municipality rather than the Centre.

“We felt [the issue of permit revenue] was a really important thing as part of our agreement, so we’re going to do this in spite of the lost revenue,” said Mr. Pulumbarit. “We’re going to up that number by 8.5 per cent and we’re going to decrease our costs by 4.6 per cent revenue. We’re going to balance our budget and we’re going to reduce the amount we’re going to require from the Town. That’s the delicate balancing act we’re going to try and accomplish this year. Most for-profit companies would look at those objectives and cringe, but we’re going to try.

“We’ve sharpened our pencils numerous times and we have looked at it up, down and sideways.”

Mr. Pulumbarit made his comments to Councillors at the committee level last week. Joining him was Heidi Franken, a member of the Cultural Centre Board, and also an accountant overseeing some of the financial planning of the group. In her comments, she addressed concerns that several Councillors had the last time the subject was brought up over reserve funds held by the Cultural Centre, which currently hover around \$100,000. This, she said, represents about two months of operating funding.

“It is a critical component of our risk management plan having financial stability and having an appropriate contingency reserve is a part of that,” she said. “The need for a reserve in general for non-profit charities is recognized as a best practice and it also meets one of the goals set out in our strategic plan to be a respected role model for a well-managed organization.

“Having a reserve is very critical to us in achieving a number of objectives. It is very important to us as we wrap up our fundraising plans and it is also important to protect the centre and the town. It acts as a shock absorber in the amount of an unforeseen circumstance such as legal fees. It ensures programming is not impacted in the event there is an unforeseen circumstance and so we can continue to fulfil our mandate under the cultural services agreement.”

Councillor John Abel, one of the more vocal opponents of Council’s previous agreement with the Cultural Centre said the new initiatives show the community “is moving and addressing” the concerns to make a “sustainable model.” Although he said he thought about asking if the ask from the Cultural Centre could be reduced further, he said he wants to see how this will turn out this year.

“We’re going into the fourth full year and [citizens have] established that they are supporting the Cultural Centre, and they are the ones who are using it,” he said. “I am encouraged by that. I am pleased to see there is dialogue and they are listening to what we are saying and we’re voicing what residents are telling us”



Mood lighting was the order of the evening on Saturday as Earth Hour was marked with a dimmed school-HOUSE concert “Memories Unplugged” featuring “Seasoned Voices, Heartfelt Songs”. The musicians hail from Stouffville and brought floods of memories back to the audience with their melodies from the ‘50s, ‘60s, and ‘70s. Auroran photo by David Falconer

Water increase will be part of Tuesday’s decision

From page 1

and other infrastructure.

“Our total 2013 tax levy is about \$33 million for the Town’s share,” said Dan Elliott, Treasurer for the Town of Aurora last week, noting a total \$51,300,000 of expenses in the budget. “Other than staffing costs, the total operating expense, net the non-tax revenue has only increased by \$48,000. When you consider that as a percentage \$51 million, that is a pretty big reduction.

“We have really controlled Town expenses. On those areas we can’t control, we have also tried to focus on controlling our staff costs by minimizing the needs and requests for new staff in this budget. Several of those requested positions were removed in the budget deliberations. We have also approved \$7.5 million for improving our existing infrastructure, \$19.5 for new infrastructure, including money for a new Operations Centre, and we have \$235,000 in there for some special studies.”

Looking at how Aurora compares across York Region, Mr. Elliott said that when one looks at the tax rate, Aurora is among the higher municipalities, bested only by Newmarket and ultimately Georgina, but looking at the average assessment of a similar home, Aurora is firmly in the middle of the pack.

“If we continue on this track of 3.42 per cent, we will continue to be in great company, right in the middle of the group,” said Mr. Elliott. “There has been much bantering back and forth in the newspaper about our taxes relative to other municipalities, but these are the facts when we compare the residential houses to the same houses.”

Looking at another comparison of the total tax rate hike as a “percentage of household income”, Aurora is among the lowest in the Region, he added.

“We know that it varies dramatically throughout the Region,” he said. “Aurora is [at the low end] this time as a percentage of household income compared to communities like Georgina. I will let you draw your own conclusions on these various communities

and I am sure they are all delightful to live in and to raise a family in, but it appears Aurora is particularly excellent on that.”

Along with Aurora’s 2013 budget, rate increases for both water and waste water are also expected to be approved this week. The retail water rate will increase by \$1.60 per cubic metre of water with wastewater coming in at a \$1.40 increase per cubic metre. With these hikes, the average residential water bill is expected to increase by just under \$35 per year, and by \$34 for wastewater, for a combined increase of 9.7 per cent.

Wholesale water rates, which are controlled by the Region and purchased by the Town for drinking water, will increase by 10 per cent.

Looking at the water rate, Mr. Elliott conceded that many see the water rates as a tax. He, however, is not one of them, explaining he sees it as a “self-supporting business run by the Town.

“We’re tasked by at least half a dozen pieces of legislation to implement a municipal water system that is fully cost recoverable,” said Mayor Geoffrey Dawe. “There is quite an onerous task on us to ensure that we do that.”

Added Councillor Chris Ballard: “It is really difficult to keep a lid on things when the raw price is out of our hands and the Region is telling us about 10 per cent per year increases for five years, but two years ago when this Council was new, we put [the Department of Infrastructure] under the microscope on water costs and how much the Town is spending on leakages. I think [the] department has done a good job and I certainly have confidence that once the water enters our system, that we’re taking not only good care of it but we’re working hard to minimize loss.”



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(above) Local banjo maker Bill Rickard is pictured with just three members of his extensive team including (from left) Sean Sewell, Melissa Archer and Al Box. (Below) Projects are always on the go in their small workshop, such as this custom order being made by Bill and Sean. Auroran photos by Brock Weir



Banjo builder found new passion – and business – after devastating accident

By Brock Weir

Aurora’s Bill Rickard is someone who has repeatedly defied the odds.

It was little over 10 years ago that the owner of General Conveyors was on a European trip combining business with pleasure when in Italy on a motorcycle excursion he was hit head-on by an oncoming truck. It sheared his left arm clear off and later necessitated the amputation of his right leg.

He maintained consciousness almost through the whole process, so the memories of the accident are vivid, but after eventually blacking out when the ambulance arrived, he was taken to a small country hospital before being airlifted out to a larger facility and eventually back to Canada.

“The first surgeon who saw me worked like hell to keep me alive and I found out that the surgeon later went home and found out his 20 year old son had been in an accident and hit a man on a motorcycle,” recalls Mr. Rickard. “He didn’t know that at the time. The accident cracked my chest to my heart, ripped all the arteries, cut all the arteries in my legs, so I was bleeding to death. They said my jacket basically held me together and they had never had anyone live with so much blood loss and come out of it.”

From that point on in his recovery, he continued to defy all expectations.

Mr. Rickard took over General Conveyors, the Aurora-based manufacturing company now located on Engelhard Drive, as a family business following the death of a relative, but however successful that venture was, his original passion had been music. As the business flourished, however, this passion eventually subsided in favour of the factory, but never actually faded away.

It started when 66-year-old Mr. Rickard was a teen. He wanted to play the guitar but couldn’t afford one, so his carpenter father suggested he build

one; advice he followed. From there, he started building electric guitars with solid bodies, then acoustic guitars, a mandolin or two, and then he started playing the banjo. He needed something to play, so he put his creativity to the test to build and string one from scratch, and it was love at first strum.

After joining the family business in his 30s, he no longer really had time to pursue his hobby, but by his late 40s, the interest started to creep back, taking lessons from famed Aurora-based banjo player Arnie Naiman. From there, he practiced two hours a day straight through until his accident at 57.

“Sunnybrook said I would never walk again,” he said. “I have a prosthetic leg, so I can get around but it becomes a bit of a hassle. They said, ‘by the way, you’re not going back to work,’ but within a year I was back at my business [but in hospital] I was drugged up, disoriented, thinking this only happens to other people in your life but never to you, but unfortunately it does.

“There, I would wake up and somebody would be playing the banjo or would be playing the guitar for me and word got out in the community that I had this terrible accident and I was getting cards from people I didn’t even know. Instead of flowers, I got a bouquet with harmonicas because you only need one arm to play the harmonica!”

But when he did eventually get back into his business, that same passion just wasn’t there. Eventually he decided to turn what was then just a small part of his factory from its previous purpose to making all the parts necessary for banjos. Since then, he – and eventually his small army of equally passionate people – have turned the humble hobby into an international business leader in banjo construction, pioneering new techniques and styles of instruments, but also maintaining some of the more traditional makes, models, and materials. It has steadily grown and Mr. Rickard predicts that with the next year

or two much of their operations will be devoted solely to making the parts that make the banjo an instrument continuing to grow in popularity.

With his existing team, Mr. Rickard builds about 200 banjos a year. He concedes, of course, that trying to re-learn to build the instrument he loved with just one arm was a steep learning curve, but necessity is the mother of invention and he has figured out new techniques that in some cases have streamlined a few things here and there. With the renewed and growing popularity of the instrument, however, there is nowhere to go but up, he said.

“The U.S. has had a huge resurgence,” he says, citing bands like Mumford and Sons who have made banjos part of their regular repertoire. “You can go through Flatt and Scruggs and bluegrass, and now old time music has come on, but young people have really gotten into it.”

Since his accident, however, banjo making has gone far beyond a simple hobby or a new business interest.

“Out of all the business people I knew, maybe only a handful of people came to see me in the hospital,” says Mr. Rickard. “That affects you mentally. I think people in the arts and music are probably more compassionate and it is just something about your makeup. Maybe some people in business didn’t know how to react. I tried this, didn’t think I would be able to do it, but it worked. If it hadn’t, I probably wouldn’t be sitting here right now. I wouldn’t be alive. I was in bad mental shape and now I wake up every morning and get annoyed because I have paperwork to do, but I would rather be back here building banjos!”

Rickard Banjos sponsors the upcoming Aurora appearance of the bluegrass group The Foggy Hogtown Boys, who will take the stage at the Aurora Cultural Centre on Friday, April 19 at 8 p.m. For more information, visit www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

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FREE Week of March 26, 2013

Aurora Panthers ousted from playoffs

By Jeff Doner

The Aurora Panthers women's hockey team was ousted from the PWWHL playoffs last weekend, but it wasn't for lack of effort.

The Panthers were eliminated by the Whitby Wolves in four games after a 2-1 loss on Saturday.

The series was a low-scoring affair and the Panthers just didn't seem to have much luck on their side.

Panthers defenseman Ashley Rothon – who scored the lone Panthers goal – offered an honest assessment of the game and attributed a quick goal by the opposition just 28 seconds into the first period as a pivotal moment.

"They scored on us on the first shift in the game and that was rough on us, but in the first two periods we were battling ourselves and couldn't get anything through."

But instead of letting the game get away from them, the Panthers kept things close.

"At the end we were all over them six-on-five (with the goalie pulled) and the buzzer went, but the ref called a penalty shot because one of their players put their hand on the puck in the crease or something. Our player went in and had the goalie beat, but it just didn't get by her. It's tough."

Although regretful about the loss, Rothon was proud of how her team came out to play against a higher ranked Whitby club.

"It was a good series overall, every game was close," she said confidently.

"We battled hard and played the way we were coached to play and it sucks to lose, but you win and you lose games and it just makes you that much stronger for when you move on."

Coach Stephanie Boyd agreed with Rothon's assessment of the game.

"You know what, it was really tight today," she said. "They scored first and we kind of battled back and we had a ton of chances and just didn't finish. The ref made some great calls around the crease, including the penalty shot at the end, but they covered the puck up. It felt like it just wasn't meant to be for our team today."

Anyone who watched could say that's how the whole series went for Aurora – so close, yet so far.

"You know what, it is," continued Boyd. "First game we lost in overtime, second game we lost 2-0, third we won 2-0, so it's as even as you can possibly imagine. We just kind of came out on the losing end of it – it's tough."

As Whitby prepares for their next series against London, a strong season comes to an end for the Panthers squad.

Boyd, a former Olympian in women's hockey, praised her team and their season.

"This is a great group of kids," she said. "A ton of character and a ton of skill and they stuck together as a team, which is all that matters win or lose. If you can stick together – which they did – that's what sets them up for success."

Rothon added: "It's going to be hard to leave the girls, but it was a hell of a season. It's going to be hard to move on."



Brianna Veerman leans in for a faceoff in the second period of a recent faceoff game. The Aurora Panthers were ousted from their playoff season over the weekend.

Auroran photo by Jeff Doner

Q & A with Tigers' David Iacono

By Jeff Doner

This is the first in a series of Q&As with some of the Aurora Tigers Junior A players who are moving on to the next step in their hockey and academic careers.

First up is slick skating defenceman David Iacono. David is moving on to Sacred Heart University in Connecticut to play Division 1 hockey and study math after a very successful half season with the Tigers. Good luck, David!

Born: Scarborough, ON (now lives in Newmarket)

Age/birthday: April 29, 1993

Seasons with Tigers: 1

Shoots: Left

Position: Defenceman

Past: Played with Markham Waxers (OJHL) 2009-2011 and then with Nanaimo Clippers (BCHL) 2011-2012 before joining the Tigers this past December.

Season Stats: GP 19 – G 1 – A 13 – PTS 14 – PIM 44

Best memory playing with Tigers: "At the end of the season when we clinched first. It was something that we came back from being down

eight or 10 points when I first started playing with them and then by the end of the season we clinched first. That'll be the biggest thing I'll remember."

What's on tap for next season: Going to Sacred Heart University to study math and play hockey.

Why this school? "It's a division 1 program and they offered me a pretty good scholarship and it's a really good academic school. I saw it as an opportunity to step in and play right away."

Hobbies: "I like to golf and play lacrosse (but not competitively)."

Favourite movie: "Stepbrothers"

Favourite sports movie: "Mighty Ducks for sure."

On your ipod: "Mostly country and a little bit of house. Lee Brice is one of them."

Favourite hockey team: "I like the Philly Flyers. They've always been an exciting team to watch play."

Favourite NHL player: Erik Karlsson.

Any other sports? "Not really. My whole family has just been brought up with hockey and we played lacrosse as well growing up."

Continued on page 13

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House League

102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 8
Adam Campagna 1G, William Dodd 4G, Max Bruce 1G, Christian Pisapia 2G
110 Timbits - Vintage LA Purple: 4
Jack Bulmer 1G 1A, Alexander Mann 1G, Will Vincent 1G, Nathan Marincola 1G, Jack Hargrave 1A

104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 11
Devrim Coskuner 4G, Stefano Deappolonia 3G, Tyler Pridham 4G 3A, Patrick Mikkelsen 2A, Jake Riddell 1A, Lucas Dang 1A
106 Timbits - San Jose Teal: 8
Nate Brentnell 3G, Luc Warner 2G 2A, Ashur Baig 1A, Adam Schellenberg 1A, Bryce Lamontagne 1G, Andrew Mariani 1G, Niko Andrew 1A, Thomas Buckley 1A, Adam Digoacchino 1G 1A

108 Timbits - Atlanta Sky: 2
Norbert Kristoff 1G, Zaid Soliman 1G
102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 1

105 Timbits - Pittsburgh Black: 7
Tristen Aben 3G, Jack Rispin 2G 1A, River Marek 1G 1A, Ayden Burt 1G, Jayden Dosanjh 1A, Benji Strom 5G
110 Timbits - Vintage LA Purple: 0

103 Timbits - Toronto White: 10
Griffin Lamanna 1G 1A, Riley Saltzman 3G 1A, Alex Weir 1G 2A, Tyler Vasilevski 1G 1A, Ty Gipp 2G, Joseph Trovato 1G, Austin McIntaggart 1G 1A, Nathan Windle 5G
107 Timbits - Nashville Silver: 0

109 Timbits - Philly Orange: 12
Noah Savage 5G, Brendan Hicks 2G 3A, Jack Helkie 1G, Kane Poland 1G, Jack Charbonneau 1G, Gabriel Raposo 1A, Ethan Lane 1G, Zac Bensley 1G, Andrew Aikins 3A
101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 2
Lucas Reid 2G

102 Timbits - Boston Gold: 12
William Dodd 2G 2A, Max Bruce 1G 1A, Luc Warner 4G, Nate Brentall 5G
104 Timbits - St. Louis Blue: 3
Lucas Dang 1G, Tyler Pridham 1G, Edan Kroi 1G, Devrim Coskuner 1A

105 Timbits - Pittsburgh Black: 8
Jack Rispin 1G 2A, Tristen Aben 3G, Tyler Hewitt 2G, Ayden Burt 1G 1A, River Marek 1G, Julian Molella 1A, Natalie McCol 1A, Evan Hodgson 1A, Jayden Dosanjh 1A
101 Timbits - Calgary Red: 6
Andrew Mettel 2G 1A, Lucas Reid 2G, Nicholas Ferrante 1G 1A, Yiannis Skanderis 1G, Jacob Warecki 1A

109 Timbits - Philly Orange: 6
Noah Savage 2G, Kane Poland 2G 1A, Andrew Aikins 1G 1A, Jack Charbonneau 1G 1A, Carter Hadcock 1A, Owen Luelfoff 1A, Ethan Lane 1A
106 Timbits - San Jose Teal: 2
Luc Warner 1G, Niko Andrew 1A, Adam Digoacchino 1G

201 Caravan Kids - Calgary Red: 8
Jordan Sieber 4G, Braeden Merchant 2G 1A, Nathan Cobb 1G, Jacob Phillips 1G, Jacob Madore 2A, James Hall 1A, Dimitri Iriotakis 1A
203 Caravan Kids - Toronto White: 2
Yi Wang 1G, Matthew Keizer 1G

201 Caravan Kids - Calgary Red: 5
Jacob Madore 2G 1A, Braeden Merchant 1G, Cole Jekkinson 1G, Mitchel Abrams 1G, Matthew Song 1A, Nathan Cobb 1A
202 Caravan Kids - Boston Gold: 3
Joshua Zwicker 2G, Ben Cordingley 1G, Jordan Ko 2A, Alex Rogers 1A, Noah Bobrow 1A

204 Caravan Kids - St. Louis Blue: 8
Jeffery Belvedere 2G 2A, Luca Pugliese 2G, Jakob Isreal 4G, Julian Tsukada 4A
203 Caravan Kids - Toronto White: 2
Matthew Keizer 2G, Colm Maceachern 1A

402 McDonald's - Vintage Vancouver Gold: 6
Griffin Charnley 2G, Luke Pignatelli 2G 1A, Macisaac Eveleigh 2G, Liam Morasutti 2A, Andrew Zuliani 2A
408 McDonald's - Carolina Grey: 3
Alex Morra 3G, Ryan Cariou 3A, Jesse Thomas 1A, Francesco Dinardo 1A

403 McDonald's - Ottawa White: 10
Luke Parris 3G, Ian Hilgendorff 4G 1A, Liam Parris 1G, Sebastian Santagato

1G, Jack Benjamin 1G 1A, Cole Spragg 1A, Matthew Muxlow 1A, Dylan Klein 1A, Nathan Clark 1A
407 McDonald's - Minnesota Kelly Green: 4
Brennan Powell 1G 1A, Daniel McKay 2G, Giancarlo De Appollonia 1G, Tarik Soliman 2A, Christopher McGee 1A

410 McDonald's - Philly Orange: 8
Logan Kidder 5G 1A, Turner Dudzinski 1G, Matthew Cowl 1G 1A, Aiden Knight 1G, Dylan Anderson 1A, Liam Sullivan 1A
405 McDonald's - Chicago Black: 2
Sam Morin 1G, Jackson Galbraith 1G, Aaron Murphy-Sealy 1A

409 McDonald's - San Jose Teal: 4
Om Dihenker 1G, Josh Turritt 1G 1A, Justin Just 2G, Jake Byrne 1A, Corson Haywood 1A
401 McDonald's - New Jersey Red: 3
Caspar Timothy 1G 1A, George Worth 1G, Gregory Welsch 1G, David Moschella 2A

407 McDonald's - Minnesota Kelly Green: 5
Daniel McKay 1G, Brennan Powell 1G, Christopher McGee 1G 1A, Nathan Mohabeer 1G, Giancarlo De Appollonia 1G, Tarik Soliman 1A

408 McDonald's - Carolina Grey: 4
Stefano Iervasi 1G 1A, Ethan Edwards 1G, Alex Morra 2G, Alexander Ko 2A

410 McDonald's - Philly Orange: 6
Dylan Anderson 1G, Liam Vivian 2G, Ethan Joiner 1G, Logan Kidder 2G 1A, Matthew Cowl 1A
403 McDonald's - Ottawa White: 6
Jack Benjamin 1G, Ian Hilgendorff 3G 1A, Liam Parris 2G, Luke Parris 1A

405 McDonald's - Chicago Black: 3
Sam Morin 2G, Aaron Murphy-Sealy 1G, Jackson Galbraith 2A, Trent Ljucovic 5G
401 McDonald's - New Jersey Red: 0

607 Crabby Joes: 2
Claudio Basso 1G, Matthew Parkin 1G, Hunter Gilpin-Maier 1A, Connor Elbaum 5G
603 Optimist Club of Aurora: 0

606 Benson Kearley IFG: 3
604 Orr & Associates Insurance: 2

606 Benson Kearley IFG: 5
Carson Venneri 2G 2A, Daniel Rheeder 2G, Jason Cox 1G, Matthew Winters 2A, Austin Martin 1A
607 Crabby Joes: 2
Matthew Parkin 1G, Hunter Gilpin-Maier 1A, Carter Beacom 1G, Michael Kieffer 1A

805 York Region Auto: 3
Alex Hoffmann 1G, Shawn Mason 1G, Joey Leger 1G, Austin Skelhorn 1A
809 Manhattan Trophies Ltd.: 2
Josh Fallavollita 1G, Collin Dyer 1G, Andrew Negri 1A, Jacob LeBlanc 1A

807 Crabby Joe's: 2
Nik Seidel 1G, Jackson Simmons 1G, Tyler Wilson 1A, Tyler McKechnie 1A
810 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 2
Michael Montesanti 1G, Matt Leclair 1G, Jeffrey Crowe 1A, Nicholas Hatzilios 1A, Leo Branigan 1A, Barrett Scott 1A

803 McAlpine Ford: 4
Matt Glionna 2G, Louie Simonin 1G 1A, Evan Knowles 1G, Tarek Koudmani 1A, Eric Trudell 1A, Jordan Bodimeade 1A
802 Aurora Home Hardware Bldg Ctr.: 3
Jake Hatton 2G, Brendon Farnum 1A, Sean Mackrell 1G 1A

809 Manhattan Trophies Ltd.: 5
Ryan Motezadian 1G, Jacob LeBlanc 1G 1A, Riley Callaghan 1A, Josh Fallavollita 1A, Alex Sesto 1G, David Tonelli 1G, Wyatt Dane 1A, Chris Roche 1G
801 Diamond Groundskeeping Services: 4
Evan Nugent 3G, Aidan Burbank 2A, Josh Hookey 1A, Trystan Macklin 1G

802 Aurora Home Hardware Bldg Ctr.: 10
Sean Mackrell 2G, Daniel Della Rocca 1G 1A, Jake Hatton 1G, Colin Boorn 1G 1A, Nathan Sherrard 2G, Christian Ramirez 1G, Zachary Fletcher 1G 1A, Nicklaus Reid 1G, Eric Shennan 2A
808 Twirl 'n' Top Yogurt Cafe: 1
William Morin 1G, Jordan Reeves 1A

804 Optimist Club of Aurora: 3

Alex Tashos 2G, Darren Tree 1G, Chris Aldis 1A
806 Backyard Pool & Spa Co. Ltd.: 1
Anthony Loduca 1G

810 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 2
Kyle Wulle 1G 1A, Noah Murphy-Sealy 2A, Marcus Hamann 1G, Barrett Scott 1A

805 York Region Auto: 0

810 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 1
803 McAlpine Ford: 0

801 Diamond Groundskeeping Services: 1
Harrison Jarvis 1A
805 York Region Auto: 0

809 Manhattan Trophies Ltd.: 3
Jacob LeBlanc 2G 1A, Josh Fallavollita 1G, Adam Mizuguchi 1A, James Freel 1A
806 Backyard Pool & Spa Co. Ltd.: 1
Elias Pasani 1G

909 Inaria: 6
Cameron Staples 2G, Mitchell Arnold 1G, Erik Balkovec 2G, Tom Mason 1G 1A, Nicholas Scougall 1A, James Johnston 2A, Parker Baile 1A, Michael Liscio 2A, Jesse Joynt 1A, Sam Mason 5G
903 BMO Bank of Montreal: 0

904 A.D.C. Aluminum: 4
Evan Jackson 1G, Austin Waite 1G, Nick Scott 1G, Michael Tanel 1G 1A
912 Jonathan's: 4
Anwar Hared 1G, Scott Taylor 1G, Ben Black 1G, Chris Crisolago 1G 1A, Jacob Hagias 2A, Liam Gray 1A, Kyle Strachan 1A

901: 4
Liam Joiner 1G 1A, Joey Hodgson 1G, Brayden Beswick 1G, Ben Goldman 1G
913: 4
Geoff Siow 1G, Adam de Roos 2G, Alec Ground 1G, Sandy Rundle-Sanderson 1A

906 AHPA: 1
Adam Ashraf 1G, Gabe Oulahan 1A
908 Laurion Law Office: 1
Alec Barnett 1G, Nathan Nealon 1A

911 Coldwell Banker Case: 2
Michael Arcuri 1G, Russell Johnson 1A, Grant Kavanagh 1A
910 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 4
Austin Harvie 1G, Derek Keun 1G, Cole Baker 2G 1A, Noah Spicer 1A, Brendan Ruuskanen 1A, Kevin Hillsdon 1A

901: 5
Matthew Iwai 2G 1A, Matthew Walker 2G, Michael Bitzos 1G, Alex Gouthro 1A, Brayden Beswick 2A, Ben Goldman 1A, Liam Joiner 1A, Josh Mohabeer 1A, Dakota Stone 1A
905: 1
Jake McKee 1G

911 Coldwell Banker Case: 7
Paul Neophytou 3G, Spencer Green 3G, Russell Johnson 1G 1A, Mitch Carter 1A, Paul Mason 1A, Alec Popa 1A, Lockhart McMann 1A
909 Inaria: 3
Erik Balkovec 2G 1A, Tyler Hindley 1G, Nicholas Scougall 1G, Nicholas Steiner 1A

906 AHPA: 8
Adam Ashraf 3G, Jerryd Jensen 1G 3A, Jamie Wilson 2G, Zac Cowl 2G 1A, Chris Sutherland 4A, Peter McKerracher 1A
912 Jonathan's: 1
Scott Kostin 1G, Leon Vizin 1A

904 A.D.C. Aluminum: 3
Joseph Veneziano 1G, Evan Jackson 1G, Michael Tanel 1G 1A, Jonathan Caporusso 1A, Austin Waite 1A, Alex Goncalves 1A, Christopher Ottman 1A
908 Laurion Law Office: 3
Liam Coll 2G 1A, Tim Pare 1G 1A, Oliver Jones 1A, Zac Kroll 2A

902 Tile Master: 2
Graham Robinson 1G, Domenic Fiorini 1G, Tait Snedden 1A, Erick Bortolotti 1A, Brett Bond 1A
903 BMO Bank of Montreal: 2
Austin Persaud 2G, Luc Martineau 1A

908 Laurion Law Office: 0
911 Coldwell Banker Case: 0

901: 1
912 Jonathan's: 0

909 Inaria: 11
Erik Balkovec 7G 1A, Matt Liscio 1G, James Johnston 3G, Nicholas Scougall 1A, Michael Liscio 1A
906 AHPA: 9
Zac Cowl 7G 3A, Peter McKerracher 1G 2A, Jerryd Jensen 1G 3A, Chris Sutherland 1A, Adam Ashraf 1A

910 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 4
Mitch Arnew 2G, Chris Sanita 2G, Matt Sanita 2A, Robert Stokes 1A
913: 1
Cody Child 1G, Neil Duggan 1A, Sandy Rundle-Sanderson 1A

905: 7
Lucas Marek 3G, Jake McKee 2G, Jeff Stobo 2G 2A, Austin Tanaka 1A, Stewart Reid 1A
902 Tile Master: 5
Brett Bond 2G 2A, Adam Petit 1G, Domenic Fiorini 1G, Tait Snedden 1G

912 Jonathan's: 5
Michael Walsh 3G, Josh Lye 1G 1A, Kyle Strachan 1G 1A, Scott Kostin 2A, Robert Doswell 1A
907 Crabby Joe's: 4
Tyler George 2G, Tyler Futterer 1G 1A, Brian Langdon 1G, James Power 2A, John Partland 2A, Ryan Batten 1A, Yosif Kakush 1A

910 Neuman's Puck Bandits: 12
Mitch Arnew 1G, Chris Sanita 2G, Matt Sanita 5G 1A, Kevin Hillsdon 1G 2A, Derek Keun 1G 1A, Austin Harvie 2G 1A, Max Brown 2A
905: 2
Lucas Marek 1G 1A, Stewart Reid 1G

903 BMO Bank of Montreal: 6
Blake Wallace 1G 3A, Luc Martineau 2G 1A, Nick Armour 1G 3A, Bryn Burbank 1G 1A, Nicholas Baczynski 1G 2A
908 Laurion Law Office: 1
Zac Kroll 1G, Jordan Stephenson 1A, Michael Imseis 1A

902 Tile Master: 4
Brett Bond 3G, Graham Robinson 1G 2A, Kevin Wood 1A, Scott Barker 1A
911 Coldwell Banker Case: 1
Spencer Green 1G

913: 3
David Gonder 1G, Ian Coschi 1G, Adam de Roos 1G 1A, Chris End 2A
904 A.D.C. Aluminum: 1
Jonathan Caporusso 1G, Michael Tanel 1A

913: 3
Cody Child 1G, Alec Ground 1G, Sandy Rundle-Sanderson 1G, Geoff Siow 2A, Nathan Dinatale 1A, Edi Nisenbaum 5G
908 Laurion Law Office: 0

902 Tile Master: 6
Brett Bond 2G 2A, Domenic Fiorini 1G, Tait Snedden 1G, Graham Robinson 1G, Adam Petit 1A, Jason Glionna 1A, Scott Barker 1A, Kevin Wood 1A, Alex Harrison 1A
907 Crabby Joe's: 1
Tyler Futterer 1G, James Power 1A

911 Coldwell Banker Case: 8
Spencer Green 3G 3A, Russell Johnson 3G 3A, Graham Kilby 2G 2A, David Leeper 2A, Michael Arcuri 1A
906 AHPA: 5
Zac Cowl 3G 1A, Peter McKerracher 1G 2A, Braydon Babineau 1G, Adam Ashraf 1A, Gabe Oulahan 1A
904 A.D.C. Aluminum: 3
Evan Jackson 2G, Harris Riopelle 1G, Ben McGowan 1A, Tyler Abushinov 1A
909 Inaria: 2
Erik Balkovec 2G, James Johnston 1A

1006 AHPA: 6
1008: 2

Rep League

Tyke - Aurora Select B: 3 **Newmarket: 1**

Tyke - Aurora Select B: 3 **Cobourg: 1**

Novice AA - Aurora Tigers: 2 **Barrie: 1**
Emmett Ross 1G, Jack Beswick 1A, Ayden Posa 1G, Daniel Iwai 1A

Novice AA - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Barrie: 2**
Marco Djordjevic 1G, Andrew Parsons 2A, Daniel Iwai 1G, Ayden Posa 1A, William Haines 1G

Novice AA - Aurora Tigers: 5 **Barrie: 2**
Emmett Ross 1G, Easton Irvine 1A, Daniel Iwai 1G, Tucker Kauffeldt 1A, Ayden Posa 1A, Jack Beswick 1G, Emmett Ross 1A, Cameron Boyd 1A, Aaron Rose 1G, Adam Rame 1G

Novice AA - Barrie: 2 **Aurora Tigers: 1**
Daniel Iwai 1G

Novice AE - Georgina: 3 **Aurora Tigers: 2**
Nathan Mochizuki 2G, Dylan Vasilevski 1A

Novice AE - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Georgina: 0**
Carson Day 1G 1A, Malcolm Parkinson 2A, Josh McLeod 1G, Ryan Blakley 1G, Dylan Vasilevski 1A, Julian Martin 5G

Novice AE - Aurora Tigers: 2 **Georgina: 1**
Josh McLeod 1G, Dylan Vasilevski 1G, Malcolm Parkinson 1A

Minor Atom AA - Aurora Tigers: 6 **Stouffville: 0**
Michael Crowe 3G, Anton Sopov 2A, Nick Giorgio 2G, Lucas De Palma 2A, Owen Papulkas 1A, Todd Cook 1G, Charlie Huxley 2A, Anthony Russo 5G

Minor Atom AA - Aurora Tigers: 5 **Stouffville: 0**
Nick Giorgio 2G 2A, Owen Papulkas 2G, Lucas De Palma 1A, Myles Graham 1G, Ryan Catania 1A, Calum Ormond 1A, Ethan Belisle 2A, Parker Holmes 5G

Minor Atom AA - Stouffville: 7 **Aurora Tigers: 2**
Lucas De Palma 1G 1A, Michael Crowe 1G, Nick Giorgio 1A

Minor Atom A - Barrie: 7 **Aurora Tigers: 1**
Ayden Whilby 1G

Minor Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Barrie: 2**
Jake McMillan 1G, Ryan Weeks 1A, Ayden Whilby 2G

Minor Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Barrie: 1**
Jake McMillan 1G, Ryan Weeks 1G, Michael More 1A, Gavin Loria 1G, Dylan Andersen 2A

Minor Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Barrie: 1**
Ayden Whilby 1G, Jake McMillan 1G 1A, Ethan Solilo 1A, Gavin Loria 1G, Dylan Andersen 1A

Minor Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 1 **Barrie: 2**
Max Reeves 1G, Jake McMillan 1A, Jonah Spataro 1A

Minor Atom AE - Richmond Hill: 1 **Aurora Tigers: 0**

Minor Atom AE - Richmond Hill: 1 **Aurora Tigers: 0**

Atom AA - Markham: 1 **Aurora Tigers: 0**

Atom AA - Markham: 5 **Aurora Tigers: 4**
Ethan Cameron 1G, Evan Vierling 1A, Brett Pearce 1A, Ben Barber 1A, Sam Lombard 1G, Jake Piper 1G 1A, Carter Beswick 1G

Atom AA - Aurora Tigers: 2 **Markham: 1**
Jake Piper 1G, Evan Vierling 1G, Anton Thompson 1A, Carter Beswick 1A

Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 0 **Richmond Hill: 0**

Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 2 **Richmond Hill: 0**

Atom A - Aurora Tigers: 2 **Richmond Hill: 1**

Atom AE - Aurora Tigers: 4 **Richmond Hill: 1**
Mitchell Weatherall 2A, Zachary Grant 1G, Carson Klein 1G, Joshua Torres 1G, Geoffrey Wilson 1G, Quinn Spicer 1A, Carson Tidd 1A

Atom AE - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Richmond Hill: 0**

James Sproul 1G 1A, Jake Iwai 1G, Carson Tidd 1G 1A, Geoffrey Wilson 2A, Sean Haw 1A, Max Piorischin 5G

Atom AE - Aurora Tigers: 5 **Richmond Hill: 4**
Mitchell Weatherall 2G, Zachary Grant 1G 1A, Cole Nip 2A, Curtis Manley 1G, Sam MacLeod 1G, Joshua Torres 1A, Quinn Spicer 1A

Minor Peeewe A - Orillia: 3 **Aurora Tigers: 0**

Minor Peeewe A - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Orillia: 3**
Andrew Park 1G 1A, Spencer Morrison 1G 1A, Colby Prymych 1A, Craig Therkildsen 1A, Alex Sandras 1G, Blair Crabbe 1A

Minor Peeewe AE - Newmarket: 5 **Aurora Tigers: 2**
Cooper Judson 1G, Russell Tanaka 1A, Luke Catania 1G, Noah Dempsey 1A, Owen Romano 1A

Minor Peeewe AE - Newmarket: 3 **Aurora Tigers: 2**
Kyle Fowler 1G, Brendan Sanford 1A, Luke Catania 1G, Jack Campbell 1A, Cory Read 1A

Minor Peeewe A - Orilla: 3 **Aurora Tigers: 0**

Peeewe A - Richmond Hill: 4 **Aurora Tigers: 2**
Julien Aben 1G, Peter Chimienti 1A, Anthony Capraro 1A, Ben Spittle 1G, Thomas Morra 1A

Peeewe RS - Aurora Tigers: 4 **Markham: 2**

Peeewe RS - Barrie: 4 **Aurora Tigers: 2**

Minor Bantam AE - Aurora Tigers: 4 **Stouffville: 0**
Jack Camplin 1G 2A, Alexander Simardone 1G 1A, Curtis Romanchych 1G, Jack O'Keefe 1G

Minor Bantam AE - Stouffville: 4 **Aurora Tigers: 2**

Minor Bantam AE - Stouffville: 3 **Aurora Tigers: 2**

Bantam AA - Richmond Hill: 3 **Aurora Tigers: 2**
Jack Pecora 1G, Connor Irving 1G, Christian Arcuri 1A, Bryan Manweiler 1A, Cameron Zinner 1A

Bantam AA - Aurora Tigers: 3 **Richmond Hill: 2**
Cameron Zinner 1G, Tristan Kuchar 1G, Michael Shum 1G 1A, William Stover 1A, Connor Irving 1A, Evan Cherubini 1A

Bantam AA - Richmond Hill: 1 **Aurora Tigers: 0**

Bantam AA - AuroraTigers: 1 **Richmond Hill: 1**
Christian Arcuri 1G, Bryan Manweiler 1A, Tristan Kuchar 1A

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

Bantam AE - TNT: 4 **Aurora Tigers: 3**

Bantam AE - TNT: 4 **Aurora Tigers: 3**

Minor Midget AA - Aurora Tigers: 5 **Markham: 3**
Steven Tsianos 1G, Adam Newell 1G, Jack Ellison 1G, Nick Papousek 1G, Eddie Duffy 1G

Minor Midget AA - Markham: 2 **Aurora Tigers: 1**
Andrew Klinowski 1G

Minor Midget AA - Markham: 3 **Aurora Tigers: 2**
Lucas James 1G, Adam Newell 1G

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

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

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



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Final word from David Iacono

From page 11

Which super hero would you want to be, why? “Superman. He can fly and get some girls.”

Who is your hero/idol/role model? “My grandfather. He passed recently, but he was always just so supportive and he always just wanted what’s best for me. He was just a hardworking guy who never really had much growing up.”

Favourite subject in school: “Math. I’m going to school for it.”

Who will win the Stanley Cup this year? “I’d say the Blackhawks, because they’ve been pretty unbelievable so far this year.”

Best thing about playing for the Tigers: “Being close to home and being around a pretty great off-the-ice group of guys. JR [coach James Richmond] was always supportive – he’s not really the yelling type, but he’ll tell you when you’re doing stuff wrong and was really supportive of me going to school even though I could play one more year. He’s just a great coach and a great guy off the ice as well.”

What type of hockey player are you, what are you known for? “Probably my skating and passing ability. I think I see the ice well. I think of myself as a guy who likes to move the puck well and make those difficult passes.”

Best accomplishment on and off the ice: “Last year I played for Canada West – the prospects – that was a pretty big accomplishment. Clinching first place overall. Off the ice, I’ve been honour roll my whole high school career, so maybe that’s a good thing.”

What are you going to do with your summer before school starts? “I’ve got to start working right away and start saving some money and just working out. I’ll probably start

getting out on the ice once or twice a week, but nothing very exciting – just working and working out. I’m going to be working construction.”

If you had a motto, what would it be: “Just be the best you can be and the rest will fall into place.”

Are you superstitious? “I don’t like to think of myself as a superstitious guy, but I have my ritual things that I always have to do. I always put on the left side of my equipment first, so I start with left shin-pad, left skate, left elbow pad. I always take the same route to a game. I don’t like to detour anywhere and I like to listen to the same music on the way to a game.”

Any good pranks/funny stories with Tigers: “Putting a cup of water under a guy’s helmet, so when he pulls it out he gets a full cup of water in his equipment. It can kind of ruin a guy’s day,” he says with a laugh.

Stance on fighting in hockey: “I think it has its place in the sport, but I don’t think it should be used unnecessarily. I believe it should be used as a way to stand up for your teammates. I don’t think it should be used so that one guy just goes out and beats another guy up just to show how tough he is. I think it belongs, but not unnecessarily and I don’t think staged fighting belongs in the game. It should only happen in the moment.”

Coach’s comment [James Richmond]: “David made an immediate impact to the Tigers’ power play after coming to Aurora after a year and a half out in B.C. He was a key player in helping the team win the north division title. By coming back to Ontario and playing a key role for the Aurora Tigers, David was able earn the NCAA Division 1 scholarship he had been striving for. We wish David the very best and success at Sacred Heart University over the next four years and would like to say, ‘thank you’ for his time well spent in Aurora.”

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POLITICS
AS USUAL

Alison Collins-Mrakas

Swinging back
into action

This past week Council returned to action and got down again to the business of the Town after a two week absence.

I had a gander at their agenda and was blown over by the sheer volume of materials they had to review. Literally hundreds of pages of agenda items to review and discuss – a number of which spoke to fairly discussion intensive issues such as the final budget numbers, a proposed increase in Council remuneration, and the transfer of the Town’s Historical assets from AHS to the municipality just to name a few.

In short, some fairly significant discussions sandwiched in between multiple zoning applications, site plan agreements and committee reports that were also on the agenda. All in all, a rather ambitious agenda for a 3 ½ hour meeting.

If past experience holds true, then this week’s Council meeting will prove pretty much the same given the contentious nature of some of the items noted above we are sure to witness a rehash of the matters again for the benefit of the cameras.

Maybe not.

Though, I hope in time that that particular practice of political pantomime will end given that General Committee meetings are now also broadcast – via live streaming video. As both Council meetings and General Committee meetings are accessible and readily watchable by the general public – there will be no need for special “performance” days anymore.

I missed last week’s meeting which was disappointing as I was very interested in the discussion about the transference to the Town of the collection of historical artifacts currently collecting dust – and unfortunately quite a bit of wear and tear – in storage.

The report from staff and the historical consultant was very thorough outlining a number of concerns with the current state of the collection and forwarding potential solutions such as options for display, storage, appropriate location(s) and comparators from other comparably sized municipalities with curated collections.

If you haven’t read the various reports associated with this agenda item, I suggest you do. They are a fascinating read. There a lot of information about the collection. For example, it is noted that there are between 16,000 and 17,000 items in the collection and it represents a value of close to \$200,000 – though some would argue the value of the collection to our community cannot be measured in mere dollars and cents. I was a bit alarmed to read that a sizeable number of the artifacts cannot be accounted for – but perhaps that’s just a wrinkle in the record keeping.

Council has decided to defer making a decision on transferring the collection despite the March 2013 deadline as they are waiting for the completion of the Cultural Master plan. It is expected to be completed in April 2013. So it is hoped then that following deliberations of the Master plan as well as the transfer agreement itself, by May or perhaps June of this year– the Sesquicentennial year – that the Town’s valuable historical artifacts will find a permanent home and the community at large will have greater access to their rich history as a result.

To end this week’s column, I have an aside. While inaccurate comments generally require a response or at least a correction, personally, I am loathe to engage in a back and forth with anyone in the pages of a paper. I don’t think it serves any useful purpose – and worst of all - I think it bores you, the reader.

What I will say though is this – it is also a futile exercise. If my message was not understood the first time, I doubt it will be when repeated a second time - regardless of how the message is worded. There’s only so many ways a person can state the obvious. I have no doubt we will continue to see ad hominem attacks in various media. That is the prerogative of those that choose to express themselves in that manner. I however prefer to engage in arguments of substance. And that’s all I’ll say about that.

Until next week, stay involved, stay informed because



Tottenham chef Ian Bellis, seen above picking out his fresh bird, was one of many aspiring cooks from the GTA taking part in King Cole Ducks’ second annual Great Duck Race. Paired with Samantha Chevrier, the two students of Canadore College in North Bay completed their journey at George Brown College in Toronto, whipping up an entrée of seared duck breast in a ginger-honey glaze and duck sausage.

The King Cole Great
Amazing Duck Race

Photography and Article by David Falconer

“What is a duck race?” you ask. Well it is not ducks racing across a pond, but rather teams of culinary students from ten colleges in Ontario competing for three prizes given out by King Cole Ducks.

Now in its second year, ten teams consisting of two second-year culinary students from various community colleges in Ontario are selected to compete in the competition. The event started at 6 a.m. at King Cole Farms in Aurora and ended in the evening at George Brown College in Toronto.

The race starts with the students collecting duck eggs from the breeder farm in Cedar Valley, so the students have an idea of what farm life is all about. They then move to the production room in Newmarket where each team is given four killed and cleaned ducks to dress for the final product, cooked later that day at George Brown. From there, they board a bus for Finch Station where after a subway ride they race through St. Lawrence Market for the ingredients they need for their menu.

The entire competition is based on set times for each phase of the race, just like in a real restaurant situation, and the teams must complete their prep work, cooking and final presentation in an allotted time period.

Once the final dishes are presented, they are judged for culinary supremacy.



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Meet your Iron Chefs: Thay Siharath

By Brock Weir

Thay Siharath's story is undoubtedly one which many with a bent towards the culinary arts can relate to – being enticed by some nice home cooking and getting the proverbial wrist slap when trying to grab a quick and sneaky taste when mom wasn't looking.

But regulars of Aurora's Orchid Thai restaurant might breathe the occasional sigh of relief that Mr. Siharath took his upbringing among the thick and pleasant aromas and full bodied flavour Thailand has to offer to the next level in sharing it with the masses.

"I don't remember when I knew I wanted to do this for a living, but I discovered my love of cooking around the age of 12," he says. "When my mom was cooking, I would always go into the kitchen and get into trouble taking her food, but I guess I realised I could be a chef when I was in my late teens because people used to tell me, 'Hey, your food is not bad. You should open a restaurant.'"

Evidently it was sage advice. Mr. Siharath arrived in Canada with his family in 1979 at the age of 11. He eventually took over what is now Orchid Thai about 10 years ago. At the time, Thai was one of the more exotic international foods gaining popularity on the international stage and he thought with many people in Aurora, often heading down to Toronto for new, more interesting, and more creative ways to tickle their palates, would embrace the authentic flavours he had to offer.

A decade on, this theory has proven correct.

Mr. Siharath will put his skills to the test against four other local chefs this April 18 as the Aurora Community Centre (ACC) is transformed into "Kitchen Stadium" for the first Iron Chef Aurora competition. Iron Chef Aurora, and the three day Taste of Aurora festival at the ACC that will follow, is the brainchild of Debbie McGrath and Tim Newnham of the Aurora-based Habachat, a social media company.

The duo thought with events like Ribfest showcasing out-of-town restaurants, something was needed to put the spotlight on what local chefs and restaurants have to offer. Paired with many community-based charities and organizations, it was also a good way to raise money for worthy causes that serve the community.

Mr. Siharath and Orchid Thai are teamed up with Yellow Brick House in this competition to raise money for the local

shelter. The restaurant chose Yellow Brick House, having been involved in many fundraisers over the years – including donating two round-trip tickets to Bangkok at one event.

They are happy to be paired up again and tickets for the April 18 event and subsequent festival are available at both locations.

Chefs hoping to be victorious have already met a few times to go over the plan for the evening, but are keeping their game plans fully under wraps. All five chefs will be tasked with showcasing their talent through some of their favourite dishes incorporating the same two secret ingredients.

Mr. Siharath has a particular penchant for the aromatic curries that dominate parts of Thai cuisine and experimenting last week, he was sceptical about how to incorporate one particular ingredient into a favourite dish, but was very happy with the result. Tasked with creating enough food for the hundreds of people they hope to draw to Iron Chef, he estimates he will need a further four people to help him pull off his vision.

"My mom is a great cook, so when I was a little boy, I always enjoyed her food and hoped one day I could cook the same," he recalls. "I knew every Sunday she always made a feast. It always changed, but regardless of what she cooked, it was good. It was traditional Thai cooking so with the curries, the herbs, and her lemon prawn soup, with the aromas you always knew it was Sunday and that was really inspiring."

This inspiration is something that he hopes to pass on not only throughout the wider community, but also to his two sons. The elder has developed a similar appreciation for the food his dad has to offer, but his brother?

"The little guy we're trying to break in very slowly!"

For more information on either Iron Chef Aurora, or Taste of Aurora, visit www.habachat.com/ironchef.

GOT TALENT?

You can showcase your talent or expertise at the Taste of Aurora. Organizers welcome pitches from local entertainers, bands, magicians, clowns, and performers of all varieties to showcase their talents on the entertainment stage. There are also opportunities for health and wellness experts within the community to share their expertise on stage as well from chiropractors to naturopaths to yoga instructors. To sign up, visit www.habachat.com/tasteofaurorasignup.

Things get fresh at York Region Food Network with fish farming

By Brock Weir

Things are getting both fresh and fishy at the Aurora-based York Region Food Network.

Upstream, a new initiative spearheaded by the group, is set to launch as early as next month, aiming to get fresher foods on the tables of people who use food support services, and also to provide some social enterprise along the way.

The program aims to make fresh and healthy food more readily available in the food

bank system through hydroponic farming and aquaculture and, when fully launched, will see the York Region Food Network raising their own tilapia and using the water to grow lettuce, herbs, and other greens and veggies in a "closed loop" system.

"It's new and it has been a challenge to get going and we have hit a few snags along the way," says Joan Stonehocker of the York Region Food Network. "We had trouble finding a location, but

we finally found one in Newmarket, and we have about 900 square feet of warehouse space.

"The whole idea is to raise the tilapia in large tanks and circulate the water from the fish through grow beds and grow fresh greens, lettuce, and herbs. The lettuce takes about a month to grow in a cycle because things grow really fast because of the fish fertilizer [in the water]. Tilapia has been farmed for 2,500

Continued on page 23



Chef Thay Siharath's love for Thai cooking was inspired by his mother's cooking growing up in Thailand. Now owner of Aurora's Orchid Thai, he will be facing off next month against four other local chefs to be named Iron Chef Aurora.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Make Your Vote Count For Aurora's Top Chef



David Charyk
from Oakland Hall



Thay Siharath
from Orchid Thai



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Grant Robertson
from Aw Shucks



Rob Lizotte
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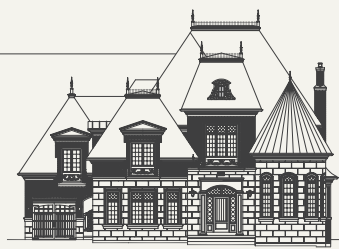
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NORTHERN LIGHTS

Jodie Cara Lindley

April 2013 Horoscopes

Aries (March 21 –April 19)
You are full of energy and enthusiasm this month, and it is really your time to shine. Tap into your dreams and put all your energy into them. Later in the month is better for building security and making lasting decisions.

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)
Life has you feeling a bit frazzled lately. Not something a Taurus likes very much! A personal issue comes to light that lifts a feeling of constriction. By the end of the month, you will feel much more grounded. Use truth as your protection.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)
You are leaving something behind in April. A heavy load will be lifted this month. A fire has been kindled within you that can be very healing. By month's end you will be busy and engaged in communication, something you love.

Cancer (June 21 – July 21)
Begin something new this spring, that resonates with a secret urge or desire you have. Nature will become important to you, so get outside and connect. Find a personal power place and feel the ground. This will help you deal with intense emotions arising this month.

Leo (July 22 – August 22)
Your creativity can reach an all-time high this spring. Let your inner child express itself, and have faith your creations will be well received. Use the second half of April to manifest your desires. Let a creative project come to a tangible form for all to see and admire.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)
You may receive a flash of brilliance that seems to come from nowhere. Pay attention, Virgo. Don't analyze your insight too much. Instead, act on your ideas with systematic precision. Set an intention of what you would like to happen and then act accordingly.

Libra (September 23 – October 22)
You may feel out of your comfort zone in early April. It is best to look within to see where your uneasiness resides. The truth cannot be seen through others right now. Create fertility this spring by looking to your inner warrior, and be willing to stand alone.

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)
You have the energy now to cover much ground. Unlimited vision is yours, so use it. Use the past as a springboard for the future, as you are tapped in at the moment. Re-work and re-structure your routines to achieve optimal health this spring.

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)
Keynotes for you in April: communication, movement and vision. Connect to any new abilities that show up this spring and use them to your fullest

capabilities. This is the month to expand your reach Sagittarius, so start the fire and go!

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)
You have been working hard dear Capricorn. Just a little longer. Continue to re-work and purge old energies from your life, as this will help you feel whole and accomplished. Activate your potential by unearthing your energy reserves, and marching onwards.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)
Dig deep in April. Tap into your best storytelling skills and express yourself. You may meet with opposition but you can handle it. Authority figures and important partnerships will be the source of conflict. Revamp your words, if necessary.

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)
The pressure eases as spring arrives, and you will feel less spaced out! Plant seeds and get your message out into the world. Learn to become self-reliant this month, and be willing to act versus just float along. You are being called to step up and out.

For more information about Jodie and astrology, visit www.EarthSkyJourneys.org.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3			4	5	6		7	8	9
10			11		12			13		14	
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	22							23			
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43						44	45				
46					47				48		49
50					51				52		
53						54				55	

CLUES ACROSS

- Confederate soldier
- ___ Lilly, drug company
- Negative
- Teacher
- Informal term for money
- Environmental Protection Agency
- County in Transylvania, Romania
- 1896 Ethiopian independence battle
- 50010 IA
- It grows every year
- ___ and feathered
- Founder of positivism
- Variant of lower
- Russian weight = 36 lbs.
- Megavolt (abbr.)
- 40th state

- Flower jar
- Satisfy fully
- Weatherman Roker
- Atomic #18
- Somali supermodel
- Skank
- “No more” (Spanish)
- Gets up from
- E.M. Forster novel
- Motown singer Diana
- Scottish hillside
- Give qualities or abilities to
- No (Scottish)
- “Laughter of the marsh” rail
- City in Thuringia, Germany
- Not divisible by two
- Head bob
- Tooth caregiver

CLUES DOWN

- Revolutions per minute
- Break out
- Relating to the North wind
- African antelope
- 44254 OH
- Hawkeye state
- Roundworm
- Unfolded
- 19th C political cartoonist Thomas
- Denotes iron
- Powder mineral
- Blood fluids
- Nearly
- The courage to carry on
- Soda

- Skedaddled
- Poplar trees (Spanish)
- Triangular spinal bones
- Opposite of leave
- Encroachment or intrusion
- Another word for mother
- Employing
- Transferred property
- Point that is one point S of SW
- In front
- Bladed weapon
- River in Florence
- Ferromagnetic element
- Poi is made from it
- No longer is

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Last Week's Puzzle Solution

PUZZLE SOLUTION	R	E	B			E	L	I			N	O	N
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	N	A	E			S	O	R	A		G	E	R
	O	D	D				N	O	D			D	D

COMING EVENTS

ON NOW

FEBRUARY 4 – APRIL 8

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

FEBRUARY 6 – APRIL 6

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

FEBRUARY 11 – MARCH 31

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

MARCH – APRIL

March has arrived, and that means two things: spring is almost here and Epilepsy Awareness Month is in full flight. Epilepsy York Region hopes to use this time to share information and build relationships with all those affected by Epilepsy. March Awareness Month culminates with Purple Day, March 26, a world-wide initiative that aspires to promote awareness and engage learning about this more-common-than-you'd-think disorder. For more information, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/epilepsyorkregion to learn more about all things Epilepsy.

MARCH 1 – APRIL 2

Register now for The Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School 125th Reunion on Friday, May 3 and Saturday, May 4. All Alumni and guests are welcome. Many events and social functions are being planned. A new history book has been created. Space and history books are limited. Don't be disappointed! For more information and to register, visit www.reunion125.com, or email reunion125@bell.net.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

Garden Aurora! Our next monthly meeting is at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North, at 8 p.m. Donna Fenice will take us on a journey through Italy's most beautiful public and private gardens. Join us for "The Gardens of Italy". As well, our Youth Members, ages 5 to 15, will be meeting 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. Children love to garden and joining a gardening club is a wonderful way to teach them about our natural world. Further information at www.gardenaurora.com or 905-713-6660.

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce hosts the Chamber Pub Night this evening at Sgt. Pepper's

Pub and Grill (115 First Commerce Drive, Aurora) from 5.30 p.m. – 7.30 p.m. Casual networking, no formal agenda. Meet some new friends and make some contacts. Cash bar.

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Retire RIGHT (Retirement Income Guidance and How To) will host a seminar this afternoon in the Magna Room of the Aurora Public Library. The lecture will be two hours of education designed to give you the facts about your money in retirement; the decisions you have to make; how to avoid common mistakes; and ways to keep more of your hard-earned savings. Includes a Q&A session so you can ask what you need to know. Light refreshments will be served. You will receive a free seminar workbook plus a copy of RIGHT Answers: Answers to 260 of Your Retirement Questions. Tickets: \$29.95 pp or \$39.95 per couple. For more information, call 416-564-8978 or visit www.rightseminars.com. 1 – 3 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

The Newmarket-Aurora French Language Meetup Group meets this evening at 7 p.m. in Newmarket at Heavenly Bite European Café at 1100 Davis Drive, Unit 20 (Leslie and Davis). This MeetUp is for those who want to practice their French in conversation and for those who want to study French. The meetings are fun, informal and fully oriented towards self-help and individual member initiative. The normal routine is to break into self-organised groups for French at various levels. They promise fun with French and in meeting great new people.

APRIL 4 – 27

The Aurora Cultural 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 April 27. For more information, visit www.artcures.ca.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

Spectrum North, an Aurora-based baton club is hosting its annual Spirit of Spectrum Competition. Clubs from all over the GTA will meet to compete in group and individual events, as well as a pre-event showcase. Free Admission Newmarket High School, 515 Pickering Crescent, Newmarket. For more information, contact Jen Meron at j.meron@rogers.com or visit www.eteamz.com/spectrumnorthbaton.

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

Evening with the Curator – Join the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) this evening for an intimate event with Aurora Historical Society Manager/Curator Catherine Richards. Part lecture and part hands-on, this workshop-style session will focus on archives. Participants will learn about 'encapsulation' and have the opportunity to encapsulate their own archival document or photograph. There will be a \$20 registration/materials fee (\$15 for AHS members). Please phone the AHS office at 905-727-8991 to register for this event. Location to be determined. This is the first of three "Evening With The Curator" events that will be presented by the Aurora Historical Society; each will cover a different topic.

The Newmarket-Aurora French Language Meetup Group meets this evening at 7 p.m. in Newmarket at Heavenly Bite European Café at 1100 Davis Drive, Unit 20 (Leslie and Davis). This MeetUp is for those who want to practice their

French in conversation and for those who want to study French. The meetings are fun, informal and fully oriented towards self-help and individual member initiative. The normal routine is to break into self-organised groups for French at various levels. They promise fun with French and in meeting great new people.

APRIL 11 – MAY 16

Eating Disorders of York Region launches a new group for teens – Healthy Coping Skills for Anxiety and Depression. Very often anxiety and depression 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 patterns 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. Location: EDOYR, 15213 Yonge St., Ste. 15, Aurora, Main Floor. \$60.00 for six weeks. EDOYR is a registered non-profit organization. For more information email info@edoyr.com or call 905-886-6632 or visit www.edoyr.com.

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

The Aurora Seniors' Association will be holding a Night of Dixie and Mardi Gras event with a live Dixieland band, dinner; music and dancing until 10.30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each and are available in advance at the Aurora Seniors' Centre, 90 John West Way. Doors open at 5.30 p.m. with dinner at 6 p.m. A cash bar is available throughout the evening. Think of jazz music, beads, masks, tantalizing food and entertainment in the full New Orleans style and we bring you Mardi Gras! Dress is semi-formal or as formal as you wish and Mardi Gras costumes are encouraged. All ages are welcome. Come out and have a fun and enjoyable evening at the Centre.

The Aurora Cultural Centre's Great Artists Piano Series continues this evening with Bax & Chung, the Seiler Piano Trio. A first for the Centre - one piano, four hands! Originally playing together at the 2003 Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, the real life marriage of these 2 great concert pianists has led to one of the best piano duos of their generation. Performing together at the Yamaha C7 piano, their repertoire will include works by Brahms, Stravinsky and Piazzolla. For more information, visit www.auroraculturalcentre.ca. Tickets are \$30 for adults, and \$25 for seniors and students. On sale now. Doors open at 7 p.m. Concert begins at 8.

APRIL 12 – 14

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce hosts the annual Aurora Home Show at the Aurora Community Centre (Aurora Heights Drive and Yonge Street). For more information, visit www.aurorachamber.on.ca.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

A local sorority will host a Social Tea Fundraiser for Belinda's Place, the future women's shelter serving York Region. The tea will be held at The Mansion (400 Industrial Parkway) from 1 – 4 p.m. Tickets are \$35 and available for purchase at The Oaks, and Badali's Restaurant. Ticket includes tea, coffee, sweet and savoury treats, vendors, silent auction, raffle and prizes. All proceeds go to Belinda's Place. For more information, contact Leslie Roth at lroth1012@hotmail.com.

MONDAY, APRIL 15

L'Arche Daybreak hosts Artists in Motion tonight at 7.30 p.m. at the Richmond Hill Centre for the

Performing Arts. This is an evening to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Spirit Movers and to savour art and photography for the L'Arche Daybreak community. The centrepiece of the April 15 event will be the screening of a documentary about the Spirit Movers produced by Salt & Light Television. Salt & Light filmed the Spirit Movers during the preparation for last year's stage show With Our Own Hands. They also integrated historic footage of the Spirit Movers and the L'Arche Daybreak community to create a very engaging television documentary. The Spirit Movers will "frame" the film with live dance performances on stage. Tickets now available for \$20 at the Richmond Hill Centre. 905-787-8811.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

The Newmarket-Aurora French Language Meetup Group meets this evening at 7 p.m. in Newmarket at Heavenly Bite European Café at 1100 Davis Drive, Unit 20 (Leslie and Davis). This MeetUp is for those who want to practice their French in conversation and for those who want to study French. The meetings are fun, informal and fully oriented towards self-help and individual member initiative. The normal routine is to break into self-organised groups for French at various levels. They promise fun with French and in meeting great new people.

APRIL 19 – 20

The Aurora United Church will hold its annual Spring Rummage Sale Friday and Saturday at the Church (15186 Yonge Street at Tyler). Friday's sale will consist of individually priced items from 1 p.m. – 8 p.m., while shoppers on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. can enjoy a bag sale for clothes, linen, books, toys, and garage sale items. For more information, call 905-727-1935.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

The Aurora Cultural Centre hosts a Wrap Up Party for the "Mentorship in Motion" art exhibition. "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. All are welcome to the party. Art will be on display through April 27. For more information, visit www.artcures.ca.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21

Trinity Anglican Church hosts the concert "Springtime in Europe" this afternoon at 2.30 p.m. Popular Music in English French, Italian, German, as well as operatic selections and music from the Phantom, My Fair Lady, etc. Charlene Santoni, soprano, Jean-Paul Reymont, baritone and emcee, Ryan Wang, concert pianist (Music from Chopin, Debussy, Schubert), and Jennifer Alderson, accompanist. Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria St., Aurora. Call 905-833-5368 /905 898-5686. Benefit Concert for Marylake Monastery. \$30 / \$25 senior/students.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

Garden Aurora! The Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society invites you to learn how to wean your gardens off expensive and unhealthy chemicals. Hear Paul Cray, an organic gardener; speak on "What, Why and How to Compost". The meeting is held at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North and starts at 8 p.m. Our Youth Members, ages 5 to 15, will meet at 6.30 p.m. to show their prized tulips and daffodils and to create a hat for the Easter Parade! Further information at www.gardenaurora.com or 905-713-6660.



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Hydro interest to have impact on tax bill

From page 8

preserving the purchasing power of those funds, which I have expressed concerns that they are eroding if we continue to rely on that interest," he said. "Moving away from that reliance on the interest will help preserve the purchasing power of those funds."

Over the past two years, the majority of the discussion surrounding the hydro funds have centred on what to do with the nearly \$34 million in the bank. Suggestions have raised from re-investing it back into the system to lessen the tax rate to building something "spectacular" for future generations.

The Town ran a survey this fall and concluding in the winter; over 50 per cent of the 180 respondents said they wanted lower taxes. At the time when the results came in, several Councillors agreed that it may have been a mistake putting this option on the table for the public's consideration in the middle of the furore over the initially proposed 8.2 per cent tax hike, which has since boiled down to 3.42 per cent. "I don't think there was any appetite amongst those of us

at Council to move forward with that 8 per cent tax hike and I think that skews the results that came back through the community consultation," said Councillor Thompson. "Had it been more reflective of where we want to go with our taxes or what we would try to achieve, I think you would likely see different results one way or another."

Councillor Chris Ballard said he shared his concerns and at the end of the day it was akin to the adage of "be careful what you wish for."

"Be careful asking a question if you're not going to do something with the answer," he said. "We raise people's expectations that you're asking and then we don't do anything with it. I think if we got taxes down to zero and asked the question people would still say they want their taxes lowered. They would say distribute the \$32 million amongst the residents of Aurora."

"I think it is a lesson to all of us that we better be very careful about asking questions if we're not going to act on the answers and think very carefully about what questions we do ask."

Artists draw inspiration from medical artefacts

By Brock Weir

Hillary House has no shortage of things to see and catch the public's eye, and artists are no exception to the rule.

The next wave of artists chosen to take part on the Aurora Historical Society's second annual Art at the Manor initiative descended on Aurora's national historic site last week to find inspiration for their work. Art at the Manor invites artists from Aurora and beyond to come to Hillary House, get a closer look at some of the artefacts on display – and even some things not necessarily in the public eye – to find inspiration for their work ahead of the spring art show.

Last year's crop of artists found inspiration in some of the building's more unique architectural elements, while others decided to focus on textiles and other objects. With the AHS in the midst of preparing their new exhibition in conjunction with Southlake Regional Health Centre on medical implements of the past and their present-day counterparts, this year's potential artefacts are taking on a bit of a medical edge as well.

Nestled on top of an

ancient and heavy safe in the front examining room used by many generations of Hillary family doctors, is a leather bound medical case complete with a mortar and pestle for compounding and bottles still safely holding on to their yellowish sulfur-based compounds generations later.

This small artefact caught the eye of artist Elena Yim, one of the three artists selected to participate in this year's Art at the Manor.

A painter, who likes to work in acrylics, oils, and ink, Ms. Yim also has a particular penchant for micro-imaging, which makes this year's medical theme right up her alley.

"I have been interested in microscopic images and medicines for viruses and tissues for years, so I thought it would be interesting to apply that to something like this," said Ms. Yim, leaning in to get a closer look at the medical bottles, with some assistance from AHS' Alexandra Riccio. "I got a textbook about microscopic images and I found it really interesting. At first, it was the colours, the organisms, and they looked beautiful – but these are also inside our bodies, so it is something we rarely

see. I am interested in the body and the awareness of it and what is happening inside."

Looking at things like this, she said, opens one up to new things and melding this sense with art, makes it "accessible to people in a way that is not as foreign, making it more interesting." When asked what she sees as the artistic possibilities when looking at a humble medical case, Ms. Yim said she sees the connections between the herbs in some of the compounds and traditional medicines.

"It goes back to alternative medicine of the plants and the roots and more of that imagery, so it is really going back to basics," she said. "Now people are taking pills and going back to basics and understanding how nature works for us, rather than understanding chemicals and where they come from."

This year's artistic applications were handled and sorted by AHS Curator Catherine Richards. She said looking ahead to this year's partnership with Southlake, she knew it would be a good idea to have some of the medical artefacts handy for the artists.

"That was really the



Painter Elena Yim found artistic inspiration in old Doc Hillary's medicine chest on Wednesday during an exploration of Hillary House ahead of May's Art at the Manor exhibition.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

stimulus for the Art at the Manor theme being health and medicine and to root it with the other exhibition," she said.

Ms. Richards was wading her way through an array of medical pieces ready to be installed in the new exhibit – as well as things getting ready to be featured in their new culinary show ("Chicken Frills", anyone?) – as artists made their way through the house on Wednesday night seeing where they would be struck with the artistic

thunderbolt.

"This is a preliminary step, showing them what material is going to be on display and if that ends up triggering their creativity, wonderful, but if they want to delve deeper into an area of how the doctor recorded patient histories, then we can pull those archives out for them," said Ms. Richards. "If they are really interested in amputation kits, then we can pull out more amputation kits for them, so tonight was really our preliminary

scan on how their work could link to the historic exhibit, but it is not necessarily required.

"We want them to be creative, we want them to have fun with the content, and already one is toying with medicine bottles so we will support them to see if we can find more material that is in storage, so really at this point it is investigation for them and we will do what we can to keep feeling it."

Art at the Manor will open May 18 at Hillary House.

Looking at the future of music festivals

By Brock Weir

Although Aurora Live! is dead in the water, other proponents of having a music festival of some sort in Aurora are keeping their eyes on Council not just this week, but over the next two as well.

Farley Flex, for instance, one of the key names that left Lucid Productions in the middle of their planning for Aurora Live said they would not rule out the possibility of applying for a permit for some sort of music event this year, but would not expand further pending Council's expected decision to reissue an RFP for summer music festival for next year.

To that end, Councillor John Abel will introduce a motion this week indicating the Town's desire to hold a music festival, but calling on the rest of Council to establish an ad-hoc committee with clear terms of reference "to assist in the development and promotion of any application that comes forward."

Since news of Aurora Live's demise there have been rumblings that additional groups are poised to come in and pull something off this year if the opportunity

presents itself. No further applications, however, have come forward so far.

Another set of eyes keeping a close watch on things is Sher St. Kitts, long-time organizer of the Aurora Jazz+ Festival, which now plans to hold their annual Civic Holiday

Weekend festivities at Newmarket's Riverwalk Commons after the brouhaha last year over the use of Town Park for that particular weekend.

While there were always tension between organizers of the Jazz Fest

Continued on page 19

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Walking into Wilderness: The Toronto Carrying Place and Nine Mile Portage

By Mark Pavilons

The historical significance of one of King Township's features hasn't escaped notice. In fact, a book by an Aurora resident has just received the Ontario Speakers' Award.

Celebrated author Heather Robertson won the inaugural Ontario Speaker' Award at a ceremony at the Ontario Legislature on March 19.

Published by Winnipeg's Heartland Associates, Robertson's Walking into Wilderness: The Toronto Carrying Place and Nine Mile Portage, was chosen over 49 other entries. The 15 books shortlisted for the prestigious new award included many by Canada's largest publishers.

Robertson, who lived in King for 17 years and recently moved to Aurora, admitted she felt she was a bit of a "long shot" for the prize and was both "flabbergasted" and "flummoxed" about the

award, given the very strong contenders of Canadian authors.

A reception was held at Queen's Park



recently and in dramatic fashion, "the envelope please" announced Robertson as winner.

She received \$1,000, along with an inscribed crystal book and two medals.

The Speaker's Book Award recognizes works by Ontario authors reflecting the diverse culture and rich history of the province and of its residents. Topics include the history of the

province and its many communities.

Walking into Wilderness is a soft-cover illustrated history of Ontario's two major portages. Carrying Place figures prominently in the book, which Robertson wrote in 2008, leading up to 2010, the 400th anniversary of the arrival of French explorers in Canada.

"Toronto Carrying Place is part of King's history," she observed.

Walking into Wilderness is the sweeping tale of the crucial land and water trails between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay. Beginning with the region's geological history and early archaeology, Robertson writes about the history of these much-used trails – roughly 130 kilometres.

Robertson chronicles the ultimate destruction of the Wendat, the coming of the French, the fur trade, the War of 1812, the settlement and railway periods, the transformation of

Holland Marsh and the devastation wrought by Hurricane Hazel.

She's woven beautiful portraits of Etienne Brûlé, the first European to tread on Ontario soil; Father Jean de Brébeuf, martyr to his evangelism; Robert Cavelier de La Salle, North America's ceaseless wanderer; Governor John Graves Simcoe, whose brief tenure left a lasting mark; William Lyon Mackenzie, the City of Toronto's first mayor, and many others.

Robertson clearly demonstrates that what might be seen as regional history is, in fact, the history of Ontario, Canada and North America.

She pointed out these portages were very influential among early explorers and literally connect Ontario to the

rest of the world.

Robertson, a native of Winnipeg, has more than a dozen books and hundreds of articles to her name. Among them are her 1983 novel, Willie: A Romance, which won both the Canadian Authors Association Fiction Prize and the Books in Canada

Best First Novel Award, and her 1995 biography, Driving Force: The McLaughlin Family and the Age of the Car, which won a National Business Award.

Robertson was also just re-elected as president of the King Township Historical Society.

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Jazz Fest mulls options

From page 18

and certain members of Council, matters came to a head late last summer following a motion from Councillor Evelyn Buck to open up the use of Town Park that weekend for all community groups wanting to use it for a music festival over the holiday.

Ultimately, Ms. St. Kitts and her Aurora

Festival of the Arts group opted not to bid on the park and take their business elsewhere.

When asked last week in the aftermath of the Aurora Live implosion if she would be willing to give Aurora another look, she left the door open.

"We are so busy with our new festival, however it has always been our goal and desire to support

and showcase local entertainers, musicians, and visual artists," she said. "To that end, we might consider this idea with input from our board.

"In many ways, given all the work it requires, it would all depend on whether or not Aurorans want the Aurora jazz+ Festival back and would be willing to support it."



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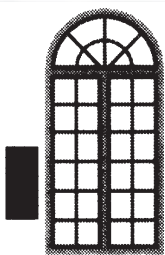
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ASK TOM

Tom Mrakas

Prime Time

Is this spring? It sure doesn't seem like it, does it? Good thing I am off to Cuba for some sun in the very near future.

This week I received a question from a reader about the process of painting over wood that has a clear coat/urethane finish. The reader wanted to know if he could simply paint over it without having to do anything to the finish to prepare for the paint.

Yes, there are some products out there that tell you that there is a quick "no sand" way to do this – and I am going to tell you they are wrong! Sorry to inform everyone. There is simply no quick and easy way of getting

around the fact that you have to sand it to scratch up the surface.

And that includes those other products – such as primers - that advertise that you can simply apply the product and it doesn't require you to sand the surface or strip it.

Unfortunately, that too is simply not the case. It won't work; well it certainly won't give you the results you desire.

The bottom line is you need to prep the surface in order to paint.

When you sand the surface what you are doing is causing grooves to form in the finish and these grooves allow for the primer to adhere to the surface. Without sanding,

the primer will just dry on top of the finish and will easily and readily

Yes, there are some products out there that tell you that there is a quick "no sand" way to do this – and I am going to tell you they are wrong!

just scratch right back off (which I am sure some of you have had happen to you). Then you will have

an even bigger job to do – remove the dried primers, sand the surface and start all over again.

Not a good situation to be in.

Before you start sighing about the huge job this will be, you can relax a bit. You don't have to sand it off completely, you just have to scuff up the surface.

A couple of passes across the finished surface with medium grit sand paper should be enough. The same applies to painting any surface that has a sheen. You need to sand it to scuff it up in order to ensure that the new paint will adhere to and dry properly on the walls or whatever surface

you are applying the paint to.

As with anything, there really is no shortcut to doing a good job.

A few simple steps: lightly sand the wood to scuff it up a bit, then prime it, and then you can apply your paint finish. If you follow these steps you will have a beautiful finish that will not scratch, or peel.

Until next week, remember a good job, is a job well done! Also if you have any questions you can reach me at www.facebook.com/anastasisdesign or on twitter; @ADesign_build and email of course Anastasis@anastasisdesign.ca.

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Parking still at issue in 2C development

By Brock Weir

It’s the last large-scale development left in Aurora, but several subdivisions in the Town’s 2C neighbourhoods are expected to take a significant step forward this week with approval of their draft and subdivision plans.

The plans for mixed density housing of over 3,000 units in the northeast corner of Aurora were approved at the committee level last week and while earlier discussions on the plans focused on environmental concerns in the area, the latest debates centred on parking issues.

Two sections within the proposed subdivisions have different standards of parking with some homes being allocated three off-street parking spots (such as driveway and garage space) while others have only two spots to accommodate more homes, with on-street parking slated to pick up the slack.

Some Councillors, however, argued that allocating only two off-road spots in certain areas would be a mistake.

Councillor John Gallo, for instance, said going forward with the plan as is would repeat some of the parking issues just west of the proposed development, such as the areas immediately north of Town Hall.

“I am not interested in putting my name to that,” he said. “I am very much interested in having them go back to the drawing board and see what they can do to mitigate that. The whole rationale behind changing our plans to have three spots was because of what we did there and to suggest that we do the same just doesn’t make sense to me.”

This stance was bolstered by Councillor Chris Ballard, who said the Town needs to prepare for the fallout if the same situation does arise with mass on-street parking impeding traffic and sight lines.

“We have to be prepared in this area to take the calls from angry citizens who are concerned about roads being plowed with cars and that means additional costs when it comes to reinforcement,” said Councillor Ballard. “If we are prepared to enforce the rules, then that is fine, but my concern is all too often we just don’t have the people power to enforce the bylaws on the roads that we

have, let alone the new areas as well.”

The majority of Councillors were supportive of the plan and appreciative of the ways the developers had addressed their previous concerns, including reducing the number of units that would only have two spots. Some argued that having them go back to the drawing board to find further solutions to the parking would delay the whole project because the various developers had been working in tandem on significant aspects of the project, particularly roads and other infrastructure.

“One of our challenges is to increase our quantity of affordable housing and we have density challenges we have to meet,” said Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, referring to the issue as a “dilemma”. “One of the ways you meet those is by reducing the size of the units and the size of the lot. It is a compromise and that is how we have to look at it.”

Councillor Michael Thompson added that sending it back for another review would be doing so based on a number of “what if” scenarios.

“We don’t know for a fact everyone is going to have the maximum number of cars and parking on the street and this area is going to be inundated like some are,” he said. “I am not willing to hold up the development as a whole. While we’re just dealing with one piece, there is the potential this may impact the whole. When it is fully developed, we’re talking about 3,000 homes and that is a large chunk of tax dollars for the community. I think it is important for us to move forward on this development.”



Xander, Austin, and Zoye Fortier – along with their eldest brother Mitchell Gardiner – are The Auroran’s Carriers of the Month for March.

Carriers of the Month – Team Mitchell & Fortier

The Auroran’s Carriers of the Month for March are very much a family affair – four siblings who deliver nearly 240 papers in Aurora’s northwest quadrant.

Mitchell Gardiner, 15, is the eldest and delivers the largest number of papers of the group, visiting 117 homes on his appointed rounds. Mitchell is joined on the carrier team by his twin brothers, Xander and Austin Fortier, 8, and his sister Zoye, 7. The youngest three are all students at Aurora Heights Public School.

Together, they serve the residents Macdonald Drive, Boulding Drive, Hammond Drive, and Navan Crescent.

Speaking to the younger three while Mitchell was away, it is clear that the trio share an enthusiasm both for delivering the paper and for their community.

“To get money!” exclaimed Zoye when asked why they wanted to take up a route or four, pointing to her brothers. “I needed money for gymnastics and they needed money for karate.”

The boys are very interested in martial arts, aiming firmly for their black belts.

When in the classroom, Austin’s favourite subjects are math, science, and social studies, while Xander leans toward gym, along with the other three subjects.

Zoye also goes in for gym, but shares a passion for art.

“It is actually quite nice,” said Austin, when asked what it is like to cover so much ground for The Auroran with his twin, older brother, and younger sister.

“And exhausting!” added Zoye. They share a love of getting out into the community with their parents helping them lug the bags along the way – Mitchell can handle the bags himself – and they make it a family event.

“The kids do most of the work and I just carry the bags for the little ones,” said Jennifer Fortier. “Mitchell does his route all by himself – he doesn’t need any help at 15 – and then one kid goes with one parent and the other two with the other and we just do both sides of the street.”

Meeting their neighbours, on hot days some offer them some water and a tip here and there – and Xander takes particular pride in one neighbour who gave them some money for some refreshing slushies for the walk home.

“Thanks for always reading our papers!” said Austin when asked what message he would like to send to the people he delivers to.

And our thanks to this hard-working quartet. Congratulations!

Program aims to provide “ultra-local” food

From page 15
years so it is a fish that is happy in a crowd. It doesn’t require special cold water or hot water. It can live at room temperature or a little bit warmer, and they are particularly suited to being in this schooled environment. They grow quite fast and they taste good!”

The idea, says Ms. Stonehocker, was first brought to the York Region Food Network “serendipitously” by Richmond Hill resident Stephen Looi who suggested it would be a good way to get fresher food into local food banks. She concedes that many of the non-perishables that currently line the food bank shelves are not the healthiest things going but this could be a step in the right direction.

The initiative got a boost last week from Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE), which supports community groups on plans to combat poverty head-on. They were one of five programs

from Toronto to Ottawa they recognized as socially innovative collaborations.

OCE was founded by the Province in 2011 to develop social innovation connecting “industry, academia, and non-profit organizations and social enterprises to develop socially-innovative products, services, and business models in the areas of health improvement, the environment, and poverty alleviation.”

When their first “crops” of fish and greens are ready to go, the York Region Food Network plans on making the finished results available to clients through their Good Food Box program, a monthly initiative where the Food Network sells a small or large box of fresh produce – often supplied from an Innisfil farmer – on the third Thursday of every month to, essentially providing warehouse pricing for freshness to clients throughout the Region.

Some of the rest, however, could find use in restaurants. Their warehouse space, says Ms. Stonehocker, is very close to Main Street, Newmarket so they hope the fish and the greens can be offered for sale to restaurants looking for an “ultra-local” hook for their fare. As the program develops, they hope to continue to expand.

“We think that we have the capacity to produce about 800 heads of romaine every month, so every week we could pull off 200,” she says. “We’re still learning and writing a business plan. Part of this whole project is to engage at risk youth. One of our partners is Pathways for Children, Youth and Families so they see 2,000 at risk youth a year, so we will work with them to try and find kids who are interested in doing this type of project, so they will be helping with the marketing and the research around who we can sell that to and how we can go from there.”

\$ 825,000

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Property Facts

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MLS #: 1203039	3650 sq ft	Fireplace: Double sided
Property Type: 6.9 Acres	5500+ sq ft finished space	Heating: forced air oil
2 Story Custom built home	Bedrooms: 4+2	Garage: oversized triplecar
15 Years old	Bathrooms: 4 full	Maple Hardwood Floors



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It's a beauty! Shows to perfection! Open concept! Large 2-story living room/dining room! Gleaming hardwood floors! Gourmet centre island kitchen open to spacious family room with limestone floor-to-ceiling fireplace! Inviting master with enticing marble ensuite and walkout to balcony! Knockout builder finished walkout lower level! **\$749,900**
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RICHMOND HILL BUNGALOW BEAUTY

Quiet court location! 2500 square feet! Open concept floor plan! Soaring 9 foot ceilings! Gleaming hardwood strip floors! Large living-dining room combination! Huge modern eat-in centre island kitchen! Master with inviting ensuite and walk-in closet! Professionally finished lower level with 2 bedroom in-law – great two-family home! Pool-sized professionally landscaped premium lot too! **\$879,000**



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*Some conditions apply.

†based on IMS Stats Aurora offices