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THE AURORED

Aurora's Independent Community Newspaper

Vol. 10 No. 30 905-727-3300 **auroran.com** FREE Week of May 18, 2010

Accessibility plan heads to next level

Many Aurorans may soon find relief from their frustration after the concerns they brought forward at last month's meeting of the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee were incorporated into the Town's Annual Accessibility Plan.

The plan, which was updated and revised earlier this month, heads to general committee this week for council review.

The proposed plan addresses key areas of concern, from physical and communication barriers, to financial and attitudinal barriers.

As The Auroran reported last week, one of the issues facing Aurora on the accessibility front is overcoming the financial barriers preventing the Town from hiring an adequate number of integration workers for summer camp programs to meet the demands of the community.

This issue, brought forward by Nevin Bhimani, is addressed in the plan with a shift in \$5,000 from the "yearly Accessibility fund to leisure services for camp integration."

While Aurora's Accessibility Advisor, Ivy Henriksen, noted at the last Accessibility Advisory Committee that \$5,000 is a "drop in the bucket" overall, it is still a "step in the right direction".

If the plan is passed, the Town will provide a number of additional steps to make Town events and services more

accessible for residents who are hard of hearing.

Daniel McDonnell, President of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, highlighted some of these issues at last month's public meeting.

There, he advised committee members that residents with hearing loss would benefit greatly from making such provisions as electronic note-takers for upcoming election debates, to simply providing closed captioning during movie screenings at the Aurora Public Library.

Planned provisions to address these concerns included providing the requested electronic note-taking services for residents.

The approximate cost for such a service is \$110 per two hour meeting, according to the plan. The note taking service, noted the plan, is "more cost efficient than (the cost of an) interpreter, and reaches a larger audience."

The Town will also consult with Rogers Television on providing closed captioning for televised council meetings and debates, with the cost to be incurred by the cable provider.

A program of retrofitting, renovating, and reorganizing many Town facilities to increase accessibility is also called for in the plan.

Such measures include increasing access to library facilities for the Pine

Please see page 13



The Grand Master of more than 50,000 Freemasons in Ontario, Raymond Daniels, left, helps cut the cake Saturday night at the Aurora Legion as Aurora's Rising Sun Lodge celebrated its 150th anniversary. Nearly 200 attended the event including Aurora Mayor Phyllis Morris. Assisting with the cake cutting ceremony is Rising Sun Right Worshipful Brother Robert Butler. Another photo on Page 3.

Auroran photo by Ron Wallace

York proposes change to several speed limits

York Region's Traffic Services stepped into Aurora to present proposed changes to speed limits on arterial roads last Tuesday after the proposals were met with a frosty reception by councillors in April.

In the interest of "harmonizing (the) inconsistent approach to current established speed limits", the Region proposes changing the speed limit of Bayview Avenue - from the southern limit of Stone Road north to 250 metres south of the south limit of Mulock Drive - to 60 kilometres an hour.

Changes would also be made to Leslie Street from the southern limit of Wellington Street to 526 metres north of Green Lane - an area which varies in speed from 60 to 80 km/hour.

This would be reduced to a uniform 60 km/hour.

For Wellington Street, York proposes reducing the stretch from the 404 to the eastern boundary of Bayview Avenue to 60 km/hour down from 80 km/hour, while Yonge Street from just south of St. John's Sideroad heading north to just above Green Lane, an area with varying speeds, would be harmonized to 60 km/hour.

"Regional Council has been looking at a revised speed limit policy for York Region for some time," said Stephen Kemp, Director of Traffic Management for the Region of York.

Mr. Kemp was on hand to receive input from municipalities on the policy changes as well as the implementation

of the plan itself. He also defended the Region's reasoning behind the traffic changes.

"It is a very patchwork situation right now," said Mr. Kemp. "On some roads, the speed limits change from 70 to 80 and back to 70. It's confusing for drivers, it's difficult to enforce, and it is something we would like to address."

The Region's current policy is outdated and has not changed to reflect increased urbanization in the area, he continued, and these new changes reflect this.

"There are many factors that go into selecting a posted speed limit," he said. "We get complaints from residents who would like to see speed limits lowered."

Please see page 13

Attack dog ruling turned over to Town

The Town of Aurora is taking charge of the case surrounding the Easter Weekend dog attack on Aurora resident Shelley Rose after it emerged the OSPCA failed to file an application to have the dog destroyed.

Ms Rose, who was attacked by a neighbourhood dog, leaving her injured and her family dog dead, was in court Monday to appear as a witness in a hearing against the case. The hearing was slated to include two bylaw charges

brought against the dog owners as well as the order to have it destroyed.

The proceedings did not go as planned and it emerged the OSPCA, despite assurances to the Town, failed to file the application under the Dog Owner's Liability Act.

"The OSPCA officer who was in charge of the investigation laid the two charges under the Town's bylaw and served the owner, but for whatever

Please see page 13

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COMING EVENTS

CONTINUING

The Aurora Probus Club meets every second Wednesday of the month (except July and August) at the Aurora Legion. Memberships consist of retired and semi-retired PROfessional and BUSiness people, hence the name Probus. It is a fun fellowship with well-chosen speakers. New members are welcome. For more information call Marilyn Munslow, 905-727-9344 or Bob Saunders, 905-841-3558.

Currently on display at the Colleen Abbott Gallery, located on the second floor of the Aurora Public Library, is an exhibit of paintings by Aurora's Philippa Hajdu. The paintings are selections from the artist's self-portrait series and her novel series inspired by the works of James Lee Burke and Janet Evanovitch. This exhibit will run through May 30.

Alateen meets every Sunday at 8 p.m. at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, corner of Victoria and Mosley Streets. Al-Anon meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m. at the Aurora United Church on Yonge Street. For more information go to al-anon.alateen.on.ca.

The Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 8 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North in Aurora. Visitors are welcome for only \$2. For more information call Ray at 905-727-6168. On May 26th, Master Gardener from Brantford, Nancy Lee-Colibaba, will speak on Gardening for Health.

York Highlands Chorus is an award-winning a cappella Sweet Adelines chorus, a group of women who gather Tuesday evenings at the Old Firehall, Newmarket, to sing, share in the harmony of friendship and learn the barbershop art form. York Highlands is always looking for new women who share the love of a cappella music. Call Karen at 905-726-2113 or Vikki at information@yorkhighlands.com.

The Upper Canada Chordsmen, Aurora-Newmarket's award winning chorus, is looking for male singers. The group meets every Wednesday from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Old Firehall, 140 Main Street South, in Newmarket .

The Optimist Club of Aurora meets the first Wednesday of each month at the Aurora Legion. New members are welcome. Call 905-727-5012 for more information.

The Aurora Lions Club meets the second and fourth Thursdays at the Aurora Lions Hall, corner of Mosley and Victoria Streets, Co-ed club welcomes new members. For further information, call 905-727-6079.

Every Thursday, Martha's Table serves home-made soup, sandwiches, and dessert in St. Andrew's Hall at the Presbyterian Church, corner of Mosley and Victoria Street. Cost is minimal, and the volunteer-run program enabled the church to give more than \$5,000 to local charities in 2008 alone. You can enjoy lunch, conversation, and a sense of community between 11.30 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. weekly.

The York Regional Police Male Chorus is looking for new members. You do not have to be a police officer nor are you required to read music to volunteer. The group rehearses Monday evenings between 7.30 and 9.30 p.m. For further information, contact the chorus supervisor at 905-727-9676 or the coordinator of volunteer services for YRP at 905-830-0303, extension 6717.

Aurora's Air Cadets meet every Tuesday night at Cardinal Carter School from 6.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m., and offer a program for 12 years and older boys and girls.

Aurora Opera Children's Chorus welcomes treble voices. It is a choir dedicated to nurturing and providing opportunities for children to express their musical abilities. The chorus is open to boys and girls ages 5-17. Contact the general director at keepsinging@rogers.com

Community Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS) is looking for volunteers to assist with the activities in its Adult Day Program. The positions call for a commitment of a few hours a week at its Aurora location. Various times are available. Call Christine at 905-713-3494.

Every Wednesday from 6.30 to 8 p.m. the Pioneer Club for boys and girls, age three to Grade 4 and the Junior High Club for boys and girls, Grades 5 to 8, will be held at the Aurora Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South. For more information call 905-841-8884.

A drop-in centre will operate every Wednesday at the Community Bible Church on Bathurst Street just south of Henderson from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information e-mail Judy Hoffmann jhoffmann@sympatico.ca.

Scottish Country Dancing on Tuesday evenings at 8.15 p.m. at the Aurora Heights Public School and on Friday mornings at St. Andrews' Presbyterian Church beginning at 10.30 a.m. No partners are needed

and beginners are welcome.

Aurora Rotary Club meets every Monday at 6.30 p.m. at Gabriel's on Yonge Street. New members are welcome. For further information call 905-841-1352 or 905-713-9356.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge 148 meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m. at 15216 Yonge Street, south of Wellington. For more information call 905-830-9205.

Masonic Rising Sun Lodge meets the first Thursday of each month at the Rising Sun Temple, 57 Mosley Street, Aurora at 7.30 p.m.

Robertson Masonic Lodge meets the third Saturday each month at 57 Mosley Street at 10.30 a.m. Coffee Club at 9 a.m. and lunch at noon. Call 905-727-3032 or 905-727-1080 for more information.

Gamblers Anonymous meets every Tuesday night at Trinity Anglican Church, Victoria Street, at 7.30 p.m.

Progressive Euchre every Thursday night at the Aurora Legion at 7.30 p.m. Call 905-727-9932.

Canadian Federation of University Women holds monthly meetings at the Aurora Legion with a variety of speakers. Contact Beverley at 905-727-2151.

SATURDAY, MAY 22

The Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society is having their annual plant sale at the Aurora Public Library, 15145 Yonge Street, Aurora from 9.30 a.m. to noon. Everyone is welcome.

TUESDAY, MAY 25

The movie tonight at the Aurora Seniors' Centre is "Serious Moonlight" starring Meg Ryan and Timothy Hutton. The movie starts at 6.30 p.m. and admission is \$1.50 for members and \$2 for non-members. Ticket price includes the movie, refreshments and treats.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26

Guest speaker for the Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society is Nancy Lee-Colibaba, a master gardener, from Brantford. Group meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 8 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North. Visitors are welcome for only \$2. A Youth Gardening Program will begin at 6.30 p.m. for one hour. Called "A Walk in the Aurora Arboretum", you can get more information by calling Ray at 905-727-6168.

SATURDAY, MAY 29

Aurora Grove Public School's 10th Anniversary Spring Fling and Reunion begins at 10.30 a.m. and continues until 3 p.m. Cake cutting ceremony at 11.15 a.m. Included will be Bouncers, a Silent Auction, music with a DJ, a Kidz Play Zone, a raffle, face painting, food, prizes, and a memory lane for the reunion.

FRIDAY, JUNE 4

Launch of Artcures Art Exhibition Show and Sale at the Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, at 7 p.m. A display and sale of York Region visual artists; works in a variety of media including oil, water-colour, acrylic, pottery and more. Artcures is a local not-for-profit organization dedicated to inspiring wellness through creativity. Ongoing through to June 13th; for sale hours call the Centre at 905-713-1818 or send an e-mail to info@auroraculturalcentre.ca. There is no admission fee for this event.

SATURDAY, JUNE 12

Merlin's Hollow, the English flower garden, is open, free of charge, to the public today from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 181 Centre Crescent.

THURSDAY, JUNE 17

Hospice King-Aurora and Doane House Hospice holds their annual fundraising golf tournament at nearby Station Creek Golf Club at 8.30

a.m. To reserve your spot and for more information contact Lynn McLarnon at 905-773-0155 or Stephen Forsey at 905-726-9343.

JUNE 25 AND 26

Slipperman appears at Theatre Aurora both nights at 7.30 p.m. There is also a 1.30 p.m. matinee at the Theatre on Saturday, June 26. For tickets, call Theatre Aurora at 905-727-3669.

SATURDAY, JULY 3

Merlin's Hollow, the English flower garden, is open, free of charge, to the public today from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 181 Centre Crescent.

SUNDAY, JULY 4

The Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society invites you to attend its annual Aurora Garden Tour. Spend an afternoon on a self-guided tour of seven gardens where the owners and creators of these lovely landscape designs will be present to chat with you. The tour is from noon to 5 p.m., rain or shine! Tickets are \$10 and are available in Aurora at Art of the Matter, 2 Orchard Heights Boulevard; Caruso & Co., 15210 Yonge Street; Flowers by Terry, 14799 Yonge Street; and R&R Revisited, 95 Edward Street; and at our booth at the Aurora Farmers' Market June 19th, 26th, and July 3rd. For more information call 905-727-5926 or visit http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/aurora/news/details/5469.

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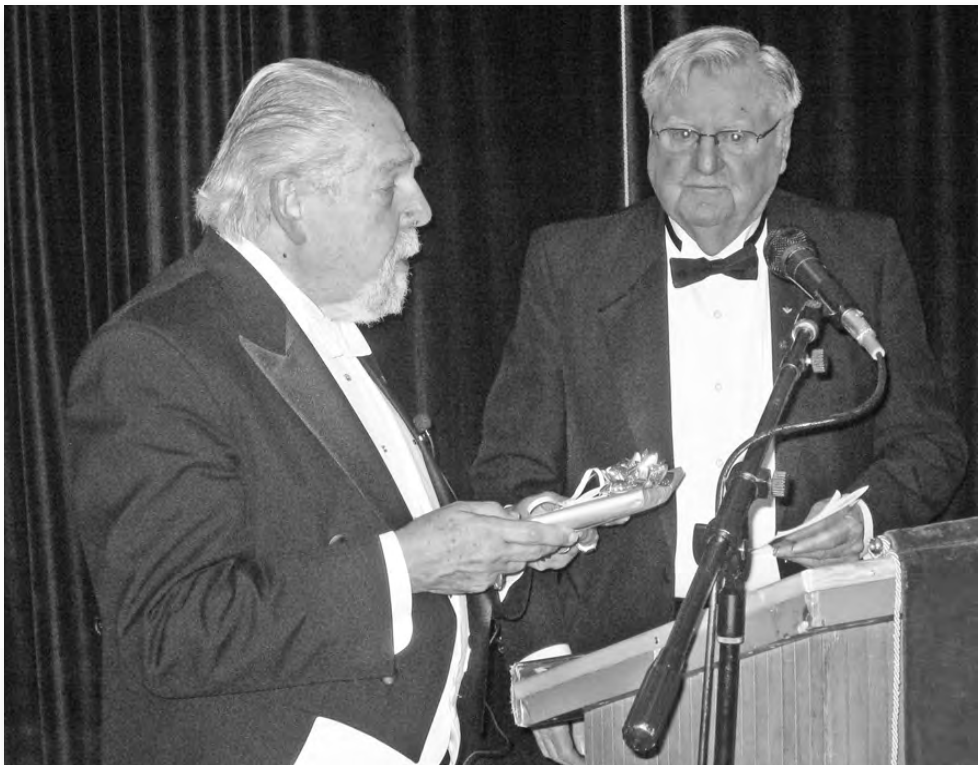
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Member of Aurora's 150-year-old Rising Sun Lodge, Freemason Doug Hotham, right, presents Ontario Grand Master Raymond Daniels with a gift during anniversary ceremonies at the Aurora Legion Saturday night. Almost 200 people attended the party.

Auroran photo by Ron Wallace

Market's transition phase could create a bottleneck

With the departures of two key people from its organization and the development of a new constitution, the "transition phase" currently being experienced by the Aurora Farmers' Market may have created a "bottleneck" in processing vendor applications.

"I have been asked by two people in town why the Farmers' Market vendors were not provided a permit when perhaps it should have been issued," said Councillor Evelina MacEachern at last Tuesday's council meeting. "It has been asked whether it was a result of our staff's inefficiencies, or not doing what they are supposed to do."

Aurora CAO Neil Garbe called the issue "complex", noting that the "transition (from having) a council liaison help facilitate the issuance of those (vendor) permits" created a snag.

"At present the process has been the Town has received (the applications) and forwards them on to the Farmers' Market who then reviews them for conformance with the bylaw and would subsequently issue a permit," said Mr. Garbe. "So the bottleneck seems to have been at the Farmers' Market and we have worked with Farmers' Market people to issue as many permits as are compliant and continuing to work on a better process to get the vendors processed a little more timely."

A meeting has been set up between the Town and the Farmers' Market to "streamline"

the permit process to ensure they are issued in a timely manner, said Techa van Leeuwen, Aurora's Director of Building Administration.

"We recently received the listing of the vendors so we're just trying to work through the process at this point in time to ensure compliance with the bylaw and make sure the permits are issued," she said.

Mayor Phyllis Morris said she was also at the receiving end of emails regarding the bottleneck.

"I believe it has been a couple of months that staff have been trying to facilitate a meeting and I know we're dealing with volunteers at the market," she said. "Maybe it is just a timing issue. Staff were getting very

anxious to get a response back to get this in place for May 8, to make sure we did everything we could at this end to facilitate that."

Several permits were issued in time for the Farmers' Market opening May 8, but a number of applications are still outstanding.

"We are endeavouring to work with the Farmers' Market as they transition to a review of the bylaw to make sure that both the Town and the Farmers' Market are on the same page as to their desire for the types of vendors and does it line up with the requirements of the bylaw," said Mr. Garbe.

"We may be back to council with amendments yet before the season ends."

Small business needs more space, president tells council

The Town of Aurora needs to do more to build and maintain professional office space, according to Geoffrey Dawe, President of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

Many professionals are heading to Newmarket to find adequate office space, and this should be taken into consideration when drafting the Town's Official Plan Review, he said at last Tuesday's council meeting.

"There is currently insufficient space which is suitable for small professional companies," said Mr. Dawe. "Statistics indicate that this is the fastest growing sector of our economy. The Chamber is aware of several instances where individuals, companies, businesses or physician groups were forced to locate to Newmarket because adequate and appropriate space - spaces with parking - did not exist in Aurora, and these groups have a multiplier effect on the local economy."

Retail space is often used for these professional businesses, but that is not "the most appropriate or desirable" situation, he said.

"The multiplier would accrue more to a professional business than it would to retail," he said. "Again, we think that would be a double loss to the Town of Aurora."

Mayor Phyllis Morris said she welcomed Mr. Dawe's comments, noting that this is something the Official Plan is looking into.

"We've certainly endeavoured to look at an Employment First approach, very much so," she said.

Mayor Morris added there are a number of open houses coming up where these concerns can be expressed as well, and taken for input to the development of the official plan.

Marco Ramunno, Aurora's

Director of Planning, confirmed that professional space will be a part of the Official Plan review.

"We're currently in the middle of our official plan review and our 2C Secondary plan process, and one of the key areas that council has instructed staff to focus in on is the Leslie Street Corridor lands between Leslie and the 404 just north of the current State Farm building," said Mr. Ramunno. "That is currently our business park area and the plans are to include those additional lands along that corridor to protect those lands for future employment uses (and) expansion of our business park area."

"In addition, we're in the middle of our Downtown Promenade study and our consultants are reviewing our policy along the Yonge Street - Wellington Corridor to ensure that it will accommodate local retail as well as professional office uses where appropriate along those corridors."

Councillor Evelyn Buck, however, wondered "what it is Newmarket has that we don't in terms of accommodation for small businesses."

While Mr. Dawe declined to "get into specifics", he said that office developments are more appropriate in Newmarket and "businesses have chosen to make that move".

Mayor Morris encouraged Mr. Dawe to bring cases of businesses moving north to the Town through "the proper channels".

"If we have that information perhaps before people choose to leave, we certainly have a list of vacant space," she said. "If people care to register with us, we always try and assist businesses with that."

"At the end of the day we've also had some instances where people from Newmarket have come here, whether they have been not-for-profit groups or businesses, so they do call us because they think Aurora has something different to offer as well."

"Retention is important to us. Where you choose (to locate a business) is critical, and if you choose a main street or a business campus, that can help make or break a business as well, so we're doing everything we can to open different types of office space so people can have a choice."

Open houses for the Official Plan Review will be held May 26 at 7 p.m., May 27 at 6.30 p.m. and May 31 at 7 p.m. at the Church Street School Cultural Centre.

Members of the public are encouraged to "drop in at any time".

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Poor Ronnie

By RON WALLACE

Time to eat humble pie once again

So it's time once again to eat some humble pie, and apologize all over the place.

First to my good friend - well, he was, before The Auroran ran the wrong advertisement for him last week - Frank Snape.

Yes, I know Easter has come and gone, but his advertisement, for Aurora Fine Foods, that appeared across the bottom of Page 2 last week, bravely proclaimed "Easter Is Just Around the Corner".

Nah, not true. Easter, while early this year, has already been here.

I'm certainly hoping we got the right one in place this week.

Then, there was the classified ad that offered a dinette set for sale for 40 bucks or best offer. Should have said \$400 or best offer.

The person who placed the ad said her phone rang off the hook as people attempted to get this deal of a lifetime.

The price also included four chairs and an extra leaf.

For 40 bucks, it was a helluva deal.

After thorough investigation, it was found that the person who took the information over the phone had incorrectly written down \$40 instead of \$400 so no proofreader could be faulted for not making the correction.

Then, in a cutline, which I must take full responsibility for, I noted that Don Dempsey was "one of the oldest vets" at an Aurora Legion function to honour its veterans a couple of weeks ago.

Not true, said Veterans' Service Office Ted Kearn.

If anything, Mr. Dempsey could be considered one of the youngest veterans in attendance, he said, noting a couple of them were in their nineties.

As if that wasn't bad enough, we left out someone else's advertisement last week.

Bob's Plumbing has been a client for several months, and his ad runs every week.

Not last week, though.

And here's something else I'll admit before the jungle drums start beating.

Last week, via e-mail there was a note on my computer that said "library parking" or something like that.

I don't even know if it was a Letter to the Editor, because I deleted it before I even had a chance to open and read it.

Of course, I'm not bright enough to recover stuff once it has been deleted, although I did look in several places hoping I would find it

This could start rumours that The Auroran doesn't print every letter it receives, which just isn't true.

So, if you were the author of that particular piece, please send it again and it will get printed...just like all the other letters we get.

It may have had something to do with a column I wrote when the Church Street School officially opened as the Aurora Cultural Centre.

I wrote a column saying that parking was at a premium, and if officials expected to make the cultural centre a success, they needed to solve the lack of parking available in the area.

And, I will say it one more time...there needs to be "no left turn" signs installed at the corner of Berczy Street and Wellington Street East.

The lineup at that intersection is unbelievable, throughout most of the day.

So, to all the people we offended last week, please accept my most humble apologies.

Believe me, people who live in glass houses should definitely not throw stones.

CONDOLENCES

To Aurora's Mary Georgopoulos on the death of her mother, Evelyn Maglaris, last week.

Mary is the owner of Jonathan's Restaurant and Evelyn, at one time, was a regular fixture in the building.

Evelyn was born in 1933 in Sparta, Greece, and was buried Monday at Elgin Mills Cemetery in Richmond Hill.

She will be missed.



Members of the boys' and girls' Athletic Associations at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School (it was Aurora and District High School then) are shown as they appeared in the yearbook in 1961. The boys' association, top photo, consisted of, front row, left to right, Kent Hill, Jim Gordon, John Ounapuu, Andy Petersons, the president, Robert Wright, Denis Symons, Len Simpson, and Sammy Tomlinson. In the back row, left to right, are Bruce Thompson, Norm Hollingshead, Jerry Hopkins, Joe Buchanan, Bob Fry, David Knowles, Dave Nattress, Tom Coe, Graham Constantine, Mike Blackett and Verne Eveleigh. In the lower photo are, back row, left to right, Pauline Black, Nancy Scott, Valerie Patterson, Rosalie Collins, Cathy Coon, Heather Chapman, Flora Leifhebber, and Dot Snikeris. In the front row, left to right, are Pam Rundle, Gabriele Elderes, Josie Loblaw, Cheryl MacDonald, the president, Denise Heaps, Joan McDonnell and Mary Jane Chapman.

Letter to the Editor

Add hybrid councillors, not wards

Maybe Aurora had some foresight in not opting for a ward system over the years.

Just maybe the current ward system is a relic of another era when issues facing residents of an urban area or region were local and defined by their geographical neighbourhood.

Today the most important issues are town-wide and region-wide.

It may no longer be appropriate for representation to be based on local wards as it is for representation to be based on issues.

So what if half the candidates re-elected ran as town wide or region wide the expertise to lead a department with specific expertise, say in urban development and transportation planning, one for public safe, health and social science, city maintenance, one who handles intergovernmental affairs and promotion of the town, plus economic development.

You may choose a different mix, but the core idea is the voter would choose: politicians who are expert in a particular field and these politicians would serve as town wide commissioners who are held accountable for their portfolio.

The concept has merit as the current system too easily absolves politicians of responsibility.

With these experts working with town staff it just may cut down always referring each issue back to staff or hiring all these consultants.

So we would have, in part, a hybrid council and the rest also elected at large from the population of the town to keep democracy alive.

This also satisfies those who cling to the idyllic notion of a local "ward" councillor coming to mediate a fence dispute, even though we do have a very capable by-law office.

It also provides a focus on larger issues with a mayor mandated to lead those issues.

If such a type of system is adopted our election to some would become more of a job interview, hopefully with some mayor in waiting.

I'm no expert but a town staff, a mayor, eight councillors consisting of four experts and four at large works for me.

Let's go back to the future with some fine tuning and see what happens.

Times are changing and there is no need to go with the flow.

I'm not up on municipal law, but I'm sure there are those out there who are.

Just maybe Aurora could be the first in another direction as we are one of the last to hold our stand in being an open at large

town.

This is a bit of a remix from an article in the Star Tuesday, May 4 "Let's cut some councillors, and add some experts to run city".

Check it out. As it is, we elect people then they hire people, or lobbyist do their work.

**John Sargent
Aurora**

THE AURORAN

"Aurora's Independent Community Newspaper"

Published weekly by The Auroran Publications Inc.
at 95 Edward Street,
Aurora, L4G 1W1

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Frankly Speaking

By Frank Klees

Brace Yourself for Canada Day

This Canada Day may well be remembered more for Dalton McGuinty's parade of new taxes that will begin to hit our pocket-books on July 1st than anything else.

Brace yourself!

Here's what's coming your way:

The HST: The McGuinty government's grand idea of combining the Provincial sales tax with the federal GST into one tax and "making it simpler and less costly for businesses to administer the taxes". The problem? This new 13 per cent tax will now be applied to everything you touch and this tax grab comes at a time when we can least afford it - when we're still trying to cope with the worst economic crisis in recent memory, thousands are still unemployed and especially seniors and people on fixed incomes are struggling to make ends meet.

Finally, after months of denying that the HST will cost Ontarians more, even the Premier admitted last week that everyone will be hit by this new tax, but that you'll just have to be willing to "pay the price" because, to quote the Premier, "you'll be better off in the long run".

Right!

Electricity, natural gas, heating oil, cable and even the cost of water: starting in July, all your utility bills will be hit with the new 13 per cent HST tax.

But why will the biggest shock come from your electricity bill?

Two reasons:

1) The McGuinty government decided that it would be a good idea to pay "green energy" companies as much as 20 times more to generate electricity than it costs to do so conventionally, and pass the cost on to you.

2) That new "smart meter" that was supposed to save you money and help you conserve electricity.

You're being charged for that so-called "smart meter" and when you look at your bill, you'll realize that your rates have actually increased, you're not using less electricity, but the only thing that's changed is that you're now doing the laundry at one o'clock in the morning!

On Friday last week, I was asked to help unveil a monument to the HST that was inscribed by "Dave Tomkinson, the owner of Luesby Memorial Company in Newmarket.

It reads: Wake Up Ontario - Dalton's Death Tax - \$1,200 - \$1,600 - We Will Never Forget You.

Dave was inspired to create the monument when he realized that the HST would increase the cost of dying by as much as \$1,600!

I and my colleagues in the Official Opposition have been fighting this tax and calling on the McGuinty government to at least defer it

As I've said many times since Dalton McGuinty first announced this drastic measure, I support simplifying our tax system, but I strongly oppose increasing taxes at a time when we can least



Auroran photo by David Falconer

afford it. This is the wrong time for the wrong tax!

Brace yourself. Canada Day is coming.

As always, I welcome your comments on this or any other issue. Please contact me at www.frankklees.com or call me at 416-509-8999.



Heard About Town

By David Heard

2011 could be his year

As I drove past the Aurora clock tower on Yonge Street, I saw a vision that I hoped I would not see any time soon.

There was a blanket, knapsack and cup on the sidewalk but there was no one seated there.

This was the place I was sure that a homeless person was doing business of sorts and picking up some spare change.

Where were they though?

Did they get enough kindness to purchase a coffee from a nearby store?

I thought they may return and I might be able to make them aware of some local programs to assist them.

I drove to the next intersection and found a place to turn around.

When I returned, there was another sighting of an individual on the other side of Yonge Street.

He was seated with the mirror possessions of his counterpart just across the four lanes of traffic.

Then I saw the camera and the supporting cast.

I parked my vehicle and approached the alleged homeless man.

There was now a meeting taking place. As I approached there were actors, a cameraman, and parents all taking part in the production.

This was the creation of a short film about homelessness and the awareness to one of the many events which can take someone on this downward path.

I also remembered the first time I slept outside and then took shelter in someone else's open garage.

Newspapers do not make a terrific blanket.

I was only 20 years old and had difficulty talking to my parents about what was causing me to sabotage my life.

After viewing the finished product it reminded me a lot of myself and the past I had put behind me.

I was impressed more with the high school student from Dr. G.W. Williams who produced it.

I expressed to him how proud I was of his efforts and creating awareness.

He was wise beyond his young years.

He smiled and thanked me and since then I have been thinking about him and the potential this gentleman has with compassion and empathy.

That was before I saw the video.

Those words were powerful in this effort.

Since the evening of April 27 that I was awarded with the Character Community "Change Our World; Social Justice" award and this event on Yonge Street, I believe 2011 might be this young man's year to collect it.

To the citizens of Aurora and many in York Region I wish you sincere gratitude for your support.

The Change Our World Award also belongs to you. I would not have achieved this without your caring about your community.

I have watched Brandon's video several times on YouTube and was proud to see our downtown core.

Not the emptiness, however.

The video is real and powerful and I must warn you it is graphic and a touch on the violent side.

However, there is belief in myself that says with some issues they must be "in your face" or the awareness factor and message are lost.

Sometimes on serious issues people just do not get it. Homelessness can be exactly like that.

If you cannot see it, does not mean it is not there.

It is estimated there are 10,000 homeless in York Region and I see them on the streets on a regular basis.

They attend dinners and outreach programs and we do our best to be supportive yet food and words are not enough.

Listening and housing are.

Please watch the video on YouTube titled; "Sitting Small" by Brandon Lewis.

I will be eager to hear your feedback and forward it to this amazing young man.

For his awareness on this issue, he is a community hero.

We will also continue the healthy community program at the Aurora Farmers Market.

So if you wish to help with fresh produce arriving at the Aurora Food Pantry then please drop by the Market between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.

It is going to be a stellar year.

Thank you again, Brandon, for the inspiration.

To volunteer send an e-mail to aurorafarmersmarket@yahoo.ca.

To contact David Heard:
astepintimeaurora@yahoo.com

Letters to the Editor

No barriers in reader's trail plan

To the editor,

I have discussed two of the potential barriers to achieving the preferred version of the Aurora Trails Network, the funding need, and the need for barrier free continuity.

Before discussing the third major potential impediment to fully achieving the ideal version of the Aurora Trails Network, I would like to present a bit of personal background.

That background has helped me understand the importance of viewing things in larger contexts, and has helped me focus on the need to consider the greater good, the public good.

I grew up on a farm. We were able to roam wherever. There were no 'No Trespassing' signs, no fences between properties, except for one (which we loathed, because there were blueberries on the forbidden side). That fence guarded a military compound, a munitions manufacturing complex.

Another good reason to loathe that fence.

Later in life I backpacked in Lapland, where the theoretical borders of Finland, Sweden, and Norway meet. But I was free to roam. The volunteer built hut where I overnighted at the end of the backpack was not locked. Freedom and solitude is what I experienced.

That was also the first time that it occurred to me that it was really crazy to have borders. What right did any group of people, even less, any individual, have, to own land? I thought about that, while I was sitting in a rock garden, in the centre of Helsinki. I felt like a citizen of

the world. Not really of any country, of any place. It is hard to describe my feelings.

The open landscape of Lapland, the absence of any physical barriers, impressed me. It opened my mind, I guess.

Still later I lived in the Arctic for a few months, in Baker Lake. There were no fences there, either. Even the doors of any of the homes were open. One could just walk in. A tea was the least one would be served. Often bannock as well. Nobody was scared of anybody - the people of Baker Lake had trust in each other.

I was the 'Kabluna', the stranger, but I never had any indication that I was mistrusted. The home that another volunteer and I built stood on community land. Any food I had brought along was basically community food.

When I went backpacking on the weekends I sometimes chose to stay in a makeshift cabin that had been built as a camp by someone from Baker Lake. The cabins were not locked. These cabins were like igloos - once built, anybody could use them.

It was unbelievably liberating, literally, to be able to live in Baker Lake.

I would have a hard time choosing if someone asked me which of these three experiences I would prefer over the other, the farm, Lapland, Baker Lake.

The Aurora Trails Network could be an overnight reality if the mindsets that are at work on the farm, in Lapland, in Baker Lake were the norm in Aurora.

I can hear you say: dream on!

True, it appears idealistic. But would you not agree that this world would be so much easier to live in if we were less preoccupied with possessing this, and possessing that; if we could subscribe to the idea that the less we possess, the less we have to worry; if we could embrace the idea that the more we share the more we possess; the more we strive to be a whole person, the more we have to accept that we depend on others to achieve that wholeness?

So what is so wrong with setting aside one's self, and let the public good get the upper hand. It would amount to a temporary inconvenience, with a huge future payoff.

Yes, I am getting at the pre-occupations that stand in the way of the trails corridors near homes, that result in the waylaying of a tremendous public asset - in the delaying, more than anything else, of the creation of a legacy for the generations of Aurorans who still will come to inhabit this town's space.

After all, we inhabit Aurora for such a short time, relatively thinking.

Why won't we all do what we all know is a fantastic contribution to not only our lives, but to all who come after us? Open our minds, reach out, and sacrifice a bit - to achieve something great, an off-road Aurora Trails Network.

We already have many of Aurora's homes backing onto existing trails, in the northwest, in the Arboretum, and in the Vandorf Woodlot.

Quite a few of the families who live in those homes moved there because of the proximity of the trails. Do we hear complaints from any of those owners along the trail corridors? None of which I have become aware.

The potential barriers to an off-road Aurora Trails Network are not insurmountable, as formidable as they may appear to be at times.

There are not too many facilities that can have such a wide net of benefits, at such relatively low cost.

What other town amenity offers health benefits; fosters meeting fellow Aurorans, and often their pets as well, in a stress-free environment;

allows for stress-free commuting; provides opportunity for nature experiences, and does all that for a relatively very low capital investment, even less maintenance cost, and no user cost, and has the potential of serving just about every citizen, of any age, capacity, gender and ethnic background, with no need for special equipment, pretty well at any time, year round?

Eventually this network will allow us to leave our cars at home - it will be that inviting.

Once we agree this is a good thing, once we agree we should say yes to having an off-road Trails Network in Aurora, then we should be able to make just that little sacrifice if that is what it takes to help achieve the goal.

The only barriers that really stand in the way of achieving an off-road Aurora Trails Network are the barriers we, the citizens, create.

I invite all Aurorans to help reduce barriers, and to find a way to contribute to

the creation of one of our generation's legacies for Aurora: The Trails Network.

You will always be proud of being part of the trail building team - of having contributed to this fantastic Aurora amenity. You will

wonder why we even ever talked about barriers.

Come see us at the next public meeting, about the Aurora Trails Master Plan.

Klaus Wehrenberg
Aurora

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Many stores need more help: reader

To the editor,

For the second year in a row my daughter, and most of her college and university friends are finding it very difficult to find a summer job.

Looking around at local stores I find this very hard to understand.

How many of you have been frustrated after walking into a grocery, drug or big box store.

If you are lucky to not need help in finding your purchase, you face long lineups at the cash registers.

This is because only one or two are open.

My husband has walked out of stores after finally finding an employee on the floor to return his full shopping cart to.

He then tells them they might want to return all of it to the shelves and should the store decide to hire more help, he would be glad to return.

If more of us did this instead of blankly standing in these long lines like sheep, these stores may have to revisit their hiring decisions.

Maybe then our kids would be able to find jobs.

Lynn Scriven
Aurora

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Letter to the Editor

Water rates not calculated fairly: Ev

To the editor,

I logged in to the Town web site last week. I needed to check the budget.

I voted against the water rate increase. The press report noted the vote to support was seven to one. And that's where the story ended.

More than likely because that's where the available space ended. But the story wasn't complete

So, the pressure is on me, myself alone, to keep following my nose.

One explanation for the increase was a change in bookkeeping.

Until this year, cost of maintaining water lines has been charged to a capital reserve fund established for the purpose of maintaining water lines.

The treasurer and public works director decided during budget preparation, before the year end, that should be changed.

It meant a transfer \$250,000 from a charge against the capital reserve to an increase in water rates.

The "water loss" factor was increased from eight per cent to 11 per cent.

I asked; since the principle that water rates are not tax supported is clearly enunciated, are we equally fastidious about not including water used in tax supported services in rates charged to the consumer.

The answer was yes; departments are charged for water used.

Well, last week I asked for the number of the line item on the budget that shows charges for water. I had found an item for "utilities" which I understood was for gas and electricity.

The answer was: water use in particular facilities is combined and shows

on a specific page of the budget as charged and settled.

Well, I gotta tell you. I went looking for that item. I didn't find it. Doesn't mean it isn't there. Just that my search skills are not that great. I don't know what that word "settled" means, either.

But I did find the Water Rate Report and read that again.

In a paragraph defining "water loss" it said: Fire department use, training and fire fighting.

D'you remember; I didn't get a clear answer when I asked about that in the joint fire committee meeting. Newmarket's treasurer was at the table. He was conspicuous in his silence.

Unmetered supplies for landscaping, parks and road maintenance are also factored in as "water loss".

I don't know how much water is used for landscaping and parks and road maintenance. I do know it isn't "lost". It's used by departments which are tax supported services.

We have multiple parks and sports facilities. More every year. We have a splash pad in the town park. Nobody knows how much water it uses. It's not a trickle.

The water is not re-circulating. It goes straight down the drain. Sewer or storm? Dunno. But it makes a difference to how much we pay.

We create outdoor ice in the winter. A hose is kept running for days. That must take thousands of gallons. Norm Weller used to calculate the cost by man hours. Never mentioned anything about water.

We didn't have meters then.

The Region doesn't charge us by the thousands of gallons. They

charge us by the gallon.

The Region, by the way, notified municipalities of the increase on April 1st. We got the report at council on April 20th. We didn't deal with it until April 27th. Then it was urgent. Had to be done in time to be implemented by May 1st.

The mayor was critical of my solitary negative vote. Scoffed at the politics of it. Said I should accept staff advice.

I don't know how many tanks of water public works uses to wash streets. It doesn't matter. It's not water lost. It is a tax supported service.

The town's budget report notes the increase in taxes on an average house is \$36. For perspective, a figure of 30 cents a day is included. I hate that perspective.

The increase in water rates on an average household is \$115. That means three times the increase for water than taxes.

There's reference to a future increase in rates for the capital reserve account for maintaining waterlines and such.

That has to mean the treasurer's change in accounting may not be as valid as first appeared.

If the money in the capital reserve to maintain water lines and such,

came from water rates in the first place, that is certainly where it should come from to pay for maintaining the water lines and such. Not from an increase in the rates.

The report refers to old water meters not registering efficiently.

That may be so. The only subdivision I know metered before the rest of the town, was Golf Glen.

In the greater scheme of things, that's a mere handful of homes. Meter

slippage could easily be checked for "water loss". I doubt it amounts to much.

Now then, I do not represent myself as an accountant. I don't even claim to be a competent book-keeper.

But I have to tell you, fellow tax and water-rate payers, I am not satisfied the town's water rates are calculated fairly or accurately.

They are certainly not meticulous.

We are paying for

more than the water we use in our homes. How much more I don't know. But I believe it is not unsubstantial.

It's clear to me service costs which should be in the tax rate have been down-loaded to the water rate.

That's not straightforward bookkeeping.

I believe as a Council, we have not done our due diligence.

Evelyn Buck
Aurora



Gerry Miller
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Letters to the Editor

She wanted to charge for water, reader says

To the editor,

Let me tell you about my Friday afternoon (May 7th). My husband, who suffers from an undiagnosed condition which makes mobility a challenge, wanted to go for a drive. I had three calls to make in Aurora so off we went listening to Frank Sinatra on the satellite radio in the car.

Finished with the errands, I asked him what his desire was for the rest of the day. "Go to Tim Horton's and have a Boston cream doughnut and a decaf coffee." When we finally got inside out of the rain, I found a table for him and I ordered his favourite and for myself a small cup of tea with the bag

on the side and an oatmeal cookie. We enjoyed the snack and I found the cookie was very sweet and I was needing a little more tea. I took my cup up to the nice lady for more HOT WATER. She was beginning to oblige me when this other woman stuck her face in the wicket and said, "we're going

to have to charge you for another tea." Surprised at such an unheard of practice, I said, "okay, give me the bag, then" I made tea from the used bag and brought the new bag home. Only in Canada. Only in Aurora. Joyce Epworth Aurora



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If we wouldn't take it home why would we sell it to you?

Still openings in this tourney

To the editor,

On Thursday June 17th, Hospice King-Aurora and Doane House Hospice will be holding their annual fundraising golf tournament at nearby Station Creek Golf Club. Cost is \$200 per golfer

and tee-off time is set for 8.30 a.m. with prizes and a barbecue lunch to follow. These are organizations that offer volunteer, non-medical service and support to those with life threatening illnesses, the people who care for them, and those who are

bereaved. Community participation in this event is important to ensure that those in need of such support have continued access to it. There is still some room for golfers (individuals and foursomes) as well as various sponsorship levels.

To reserve your spot and for more information please contact Lynn McLarnon at 905-773-0155 or myself at 905-726-9343. Stephen Forsey Co-Chair 2010 HKA/Doane House Golf Tournament



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Reader awaiting boardwalk report

To the editor,


If a child lives with criticism, s/he learns to condemn. If a child lives with hostility, s/he learns to fight. If a child lives with ridicule, s/he learns to be shy. If a child lives with tolerance, s/he learns to be patient. If a child lives with encouragement, s/he learns confidence. If a child lives with praise, s/he learns to appreciate. If a child lives with fairness, s/he learns justice. If a child lives with security, s/he learns to have faith. If a child lives with approval, s/he learns to like her/himself. If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, s/he learns to find love in the world. I wish to add, if a child lives with Peace, a child learns Peace and Peace is needed more than ever for all people at this present moment in our world. With that said, I ask, where do we rate as a society? As a collective, how are our actions/inactions affecting how children in Canada learn? To quote from a vet interviewed on CTV, Veterans Day, 2009, "we are not civil yet as we continue to use war and killing as means to solve our problems". Please consider highly the following questions with friends, family, co-workers, neighbours, all youth, everyone and anyone. Do you see Peace on Earth as a possibility in 2010? Are you an instrument of peace? For global consideration please think about the question, "Who is going to feed us? This is a matter we cannot leave a minute longer for the next generations to address.

Praise to Markham Council for putting their foot down and being wise and socially responsible rather than just developing in haste. Every town in Canada has to deal with this issue soon. What will it take for developers and real estate to tame their greed for self acquisition at the expense of future generations? The gravy train for the land in Canadian towns must be derailed. How do Canadians fix Canada's economy? We become the farmers, we were intended to be. We give farmers/farming the long overdue respect, recognition and support they/it deserve(s). We demand hemp to be unlocked and freed to fulfill its wonderful potential. Do readers realize that environmental disasters involving oil can be avoided should we commit to hemp? Henry Ford made a car in the 1920s, 70 per cent hemp, 30 per cent steel frame, fuelled on hemp and when hit with a sledgehammer, it would bounce back and

reshape itself! Our society once embraced hemp yet somewhere along the line, it became illegal and oil and forestry exploitation prevailed. This was a grave mistake by the people to let this slide and allow this plant to be squashed and be given a bad name. Developers, please look at the precious limits you are pushing and how perhaps you could start acting in healthy ways for the future. We have alternatives. Beautiful, soul appealing alternatives we can make to deal with population growth and you people can still benefit. Honestly, the days of the fast buck have to come to an end. Be your own critic and decide to become socially responsible. Thank you Linda Kivi for your lively support for the McKenzie Wetlands, re: The Nose on Aurora's Face (week of February 2). Yes, we are wetland supporters, life supporters till the end. We will not give up for the sake of

those without a voice. This is why we act. We as a community have choices which must be considered. Understand readers, an updated, thorough environmental assesment has yet to be issued and this proposal is being passed! It is most disturbing and irresponsible that this is even allowed to happen in this order. We are still waiting to hear a reply from Robb Ogilvie, mayor and council, Neil Garbe, somebody regarding our 15 reasons for concern for the proposed boardwalk through the McKenzie Wetlands and our suggestion for the project to be turned over to the youth. Again, a vote with both sides clearly stated publically in the media for citizens of Aurora and Newmarket to educate themselves, will be the only solution to this issue. The process of this project to date has been completely unacceptable. Love does heal all. Heidi G. A. Stoecklin Aurora

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This Month's Business Features



Aurora Chamber of Commerce Coming Events

THURSDAY, MAY 27
SPEED NETWORKING
Joint with Richmond Hill
Refreshments, formal networking,
business card exchange
Tuscany Event Centre
222 Edward Street, Aurora
Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Cost: \$10.00 Members

THURSDAY, JUNE 3
BUSINESS AFTER FIVE
JackKryn France Inc.
89 Wellington St. E., Aurora
Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Cost: Complimentary

SUNDAY, JUNE 6
15TH AURORA CHAMBER STREET FESTIVAL
Watch for new attractions this year!
Over 500 vendors on Yonge Street, between Wellington and Murray
Time: 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

THURSDAY, JUNE 17, BUSINESS AFTER FIVE
Joint with Richmond Hill, Markham, Newmarket, Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville Chambers.
The Manor at Carrying Place - 16750 Weston Rd., Kettleby
Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Cost: Complimentary

We look forward to seeing you!

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Learn to swim in your own backyard

The Town of Aurora has kicked off a new service which would bring summer programs to your own backyard.

The new Backyard Splash Program enables Aurora residents to register with the Town to have private and semi-private swim programs and lessons in their own pools," said Al Downey, Director of Leisure Services.

"(It is) a one on one pro-

gram where (residents) apply to us, we inspect the facility to ensure that it is safe and appropriate for swim lessons, we then make time where we come into your backyard and teach your child how to swim on a one on one basis," he said."The program is new this year and we hope it will take off. We've had a lot of requests from residents for this type of service. It has happened in other commu-

nities and we thought it was about time it came to Aurora."

If Town Staff deem your pool up to snuff, the Town will provide you with a Red Cross Lifesaving Water Safety Instructor for varying fees.

One 30-minute one-on-one lesson for your child with a certified instructor will run you \$24. For a semi-private two-on-one lesson, the fee is \$24 per lesson. A

three-to-one session comes to \$15 per 30-minute lesson.

Payment for the Backyard Splash program is due upon registration and "applicants must provide proof to the Town of Aurora that they possess a minimum of \$2 million insurance coverage on their property."

Interested residents can download the registration

forms from the Town website (www.e-aurora.com) and submit them at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex or the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex.

Staffers consider this project to be an "additional revenue stream" for the Town.

"The staff get paid their normal salary, so this is a revenue generator for the

municipality," said Mr. Downey. "It was just an additional revenue stream as well as an additional service we can provide to the community."

"This is not a cost-neutral situation; this is a money-making situation. Residents may pay a premium for this service and that will be reflected in additional revenues for the Town."

Bad weather fails to dampen spirits

Despite the inclement weather on the Mother's Day weekend, the Nokiidaa Trail "Walking Together For Southlake" event to raise money for the Stronach Regional Cancer Centre was not a complete washout, according to Councillor Wendy Gaertner.

"Through the wind, and the rain, and the cold we managed to raise \$4,000 which is a pretty good beginning," she said at Tuesday's Council meeting.

Walking enthusiasts and people simply looking to lend their support came together on Mother's Day to raise money for the Cancer Centre by hoofing it through the Nokiidaa Trail.

Starting at 10 a.m., participants had the option to take three different routes through the trail. Route 1 took walkers from Sheppard's Bush, north on the trail to St. John's Sideroad and back again. The second route followed the trail south from Sheppard's Bush to Vondorf Sideroad and back.

"This shortened route may appeal to those looking to take part in a less strenuous walk," said Jason Ballantyne, Aurora's Director of Corporate Communications prior to the event.

The third route focused on Newmarket and East Gwillimbury, beginning at Rogers Reservoir before ending at Fairy Lake.

"This community event

focuses on fundraising efforts for the Stronach Regional Cancer Centre at Southlake, the centrepiece of the \$110-million Regional Cancer Program that will serve as the designated treatment centre for almost 1.2 million residents

of York Region and south Simcoe County," said Mr. Ballantyne. "A full range of services including diagnostics, surgery, chemotherapy, support services and clinical trials will be provided at the centre."



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Aurora Minor Hockey Association



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10am – 1pm

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Tours highlight Doors Open event this season

By MAI AL NABHAN
Manager
Heritage Planning
Town of Aurora

Doors Open Ontario is a community-based celebration that builds pride in Ontario's heritage for residents and visitors alike.

The first Doors Open Day took place in France in 1984, and soon spread to neighbouring European countries.

In 2000, the City of Toronto launched the first Doors Open event in North America; and, in 2002, Doors Open Ontario, the first province-wide event of its kind in Canada, was launched by the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Every year, and between

April and October, Doors Open Ontario attracts millions of visitors.

This year, visitors will have the chance to explore heritage buildings, architectural showpieces and community landmarks in hundreds of communities participating in 55 events across the province, and Aurora is one of them.

This free event is in fifth year and offers Aurora residents and visitors a rare opportunity to explore hidden treasures, many of which are not normally open to the public.

Visitors will be able to tour buildings, take walking guided tours, view special exhibits and displays, and much more during this single day event.

Please join the group Saturday, August 21st, and enjoy this opportunity to visit Aurora's local landmarks and heritage gems and take walking tours.

Bring the children to have remarkable time at the "Kids, Heritage and Art" event to take place at Victoria Hall.

No tickets and no pre-registration are needed.

Since the start of Doors Open Aurora in 2006, 72 sites have participated and more than 10,500 site visits were conducted.

This year, Doors Open Aurora will feature 17 sites and four guided walking tours.

Leading up to the event, The Auroran will present you with a

weekly article featuring participating sites and activities.

Start your Doors Open day with a good breakfast and begin your tour with a visit to the Aurora Farmers' Market.

This is a place to enjoy a taste of Aurora's seasonal fruits and vegetables, baked goods, hand-made jewelry and other crafts.

As first stop for Doors Open, printed materials for all sites will be provided at the event's booth.

The Market is also the starting point for two special guided walking tours of historic Aurora.

Come early, as the Aurora Farmers' Market is only open from 8 a.m. to noon.

The first Walking Tour will take you to the Northeast Old Aurora and will be led by renowned architectural historian and local history expert Dr. W. John McIntyre.

The tour leaves from the Doors Open booth at the Market at 10 a.m.

The second walking tour is "A Step in Time" A walking tour of Southeast Old Aurora. The tour is a "Salute to our local heroes walk for peace." Join storyteller and founder David Heard on this remarkable tour, leaving from the Doors Open booth at 11.30 a.m.

Two other walking tours are planned so visitors can experience Aurora's natural heritage.

They will focus on ecological features in the forested valley

lands.

Both tours will start at Sheppard's Bush Conservation Area and go to Vandorf Road. Each is about two hours long and will be guided by Klaus Wehrenberg, a well-known local environmental and trails advocate. The tours will leave at 11 a.m. and 1.30 p.m.

For more information about Doors Open Aurora, visit

www.e-aurora.ca/aurora/doorsopen 2010 or call (905) 727-3123 Ext. 4351.

We are looking for dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers to help making this event a success and as a thank you, you will receive a t-shirt with Doors Open Aurora logo.

Visit our website and fill the volunteers' application form.

New design proposed for Sheppard parking

Avoiding new potholes after each rainstorm in the Sheppard's Bush parking lot could soon be a distant memory, as the Town of Aurora is looking at replacing the existing gravelled area with a new solid - yet permeable - surface.

Councillors authorized staff to proceed with a design and tender preparation package for the site - which also includes a project replacing fitness trail equipment - at a recent council meeting.

The approval, however, came with the provision requiring approval from the Ontario Heritage Trust before going out to tender.

Two-thirds of the projects' \$612,562 price tag will be covered by RinC - Recreation Infrastructure Canada - with Aurora being left with the remaining third of \$204,187.34.

The cost of the fitness replacement accounts for \$25,000, with the paving coming in at \$318,000 and \$45,000 going to "external engineering fees."

"The current gravel parking lot is a source of continuous maintenance which requires substantial surface maintenance following each rain event and can often be found in poor condition due to rutting and potholing," said Al Downey, Director of Parks and Recreation Services in a report to council.

"As the Town of Aurora is the prime user of this property, the responsibility of maintaining the parking facility and any completed upgrading of it falls back to the municipality in keeping with the current Property Use Agreement."

Installing a permeable solid surface parking lot would be something new for the Town of Aurora.

The construction, which Mr. Downey called "a relatively new concept", allows water to trickle through "via a free draining granular base" and back to the water table.

While many projects in the Greater Toronto Area have installed the surfaces, one local example is the East Gwillimbury GO Transit Station parking lot.

"Staff support the installation of a permeable paving surface in the reconstruction of the Sheppard's Bush parking lot as it is an excellent opportunity for the

Town to demonstrate an environmental initiative that could serve as a model project for our residents and business community to consider in future site plan and subdivision construction within the Town," continued Mr. Downey.

When this project was first discussed at the table at a general committee meeting April 20 - in the height of the recent Council debate over the potential custodial agreement between the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) and the Town regarding the Anne Bartley Smith lands - the OHT was a primary focus as well.

The OHT owns the Sheppard's Bush property and, as such, councillors wanted to ensure the OHT approved of the project before going forward.

"We need to make sure we absolutely get the Ontario Heritage Trust to approve it," said Councillor Evelina MacEachern.

"We had a good meeting through (Aurora CAO Neil) Garbe's office with the OHT, and the OHT is on board," said Parks Manager Jim Tree. "We need to give them some more

information on the product and the design, and they're on the same page as us as far as I'm concerned."

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority is also on board with the project, according to Mr. Garbe.

"(LSRCA has) given us the nod to go through this process and we can get the technology and layout of what is being proposed and they would have to approve the concept at that time," Mr. Garbe said.

Seniors Duplicate Bridge results

Monday, May 10: N/S - Joan Rotenberg and Mary Oglanby; Nan McLean and Carol Bell; Carol Gordon and Mary Cyr. E/W - Don Newman and Murray Sinclair; Judy Salmon and Greta Ogden; Bonnie Scheel and Pat Varney.



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The family cottage and your finances

Submitted by Michael P. Comeau
 Financial Advisor

Cottage values in much of Canada have surged in recent years. That's good news for owners. But it can create headaches and financial liabilities when the family retreat is sold or left to children as part of an estate.

Selling a cottage or transferring ownership can generate a substantial income tax bill-regardless of whether you do it while you're alive or upon your death. When you transfer ownership of a vacation property to anyone other than a spouse, you trigger a taxable capital gain on the appreciation in value since you bought the property.

Half the appreciation in value since 1971 is taxable. (Before 1971, capital gains taxes didn't exist.) So a cottage purchased 20 years ago for \$100,000 and worth \$500,000 today would generate a \$200,000 taxable capital gain. At a high marginal tax rate of 45%, that would result in a \$90,000 tax liability.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to offset or reduce capital gains taxes. Consider these strategies:

Buy life insurance coverage. The tax free proceeds of a life insurance policy can offset capital gains taxes on the cottage when left as part of your estate. Insurance can preserve the value of the estate, and make more cash available for distribution to beneficiaries.

Declare the cottage your principal residence. You can have only one principal residence for tax purposes, so consider designating the cottage if it has appreciated in value more than your house. Principal residences aren't subject to capital gains taxation. In the case of couples who have owned a cottage since before 1982, both spouses can claim partial principal residence exemptions. When considering which property to assign principal residence status, keep in mind that the tax consequences depend on the time you have owned the property, and the number of years for which it is designated a principal residence. These rules can be complex, so it's a good idea to consult with a tax professional.

Use your 1994 capital gains exemption. The fed-

eral government eliminated the \$100,000 lifetime capital gains exemption in 1994. At that time taxpayers could take advantage of a special provision to "crystallize" remaining unused lifetime room. If you claimed the crystallization related to your cottage, the cost base of the property for the purpose of calculating capital gains can be increased, reducing taxes.

Take into account improvements. The cost of improvements or additions to the cottage can be added to the cost base, potentially reducing the capital gain.

Transfer ownership while you're alive. You can transfer ownership of the cottage to a trust that names your children as beneficiaries. This will trigger an immediate capital gain. But from that point on future gains will be taxable in your heirs' hands. They won't pay those taxes until they sell the property or transfer ownership.

There may be other ways to reduce taxes related to your vacation property. Speak to a financial advisor about what's best for your situation.

Edward Jones
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Hadley Grange residents have problem on sideroad

Residents of Hadley Grange could soon have an answer to their long-standing traffic concerns following an April meeting of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) and last week's general committee meeting.

The move comes after members of TSAC received correspondence from Hadley Grange resident Andrew Urbanowicz regarding the St. John's Sideroad entrance to the building, which the committee referred to the Region of York to provide a response to Aurora staffers.

In his letter to Mayor Phyllis Morris, which was released in the TSAC meeting agenda, Mr. Urbanowicz noted the danger and difficulty in exiting from

Hadley Grange onto St. John's Sideroad during rush hour.

"This is the only way out of Hadley Grange to go east, south, and west, which lead to Aurora," he wrote. "The only other exit leads north, away from Aurora and to Newmarket. The only way to avoid difficult turns is to go in the opposite direction to where one needs to go. This makes no sense at all."

This has been an issue since Hadley Grange opened in 1993, he continued, and residents soon began petitioning for improvements to the St. John's Sideroad entrance. These concerns have been ongoing since late 1994.

"The last improvements to this intersection took place in the

Fall of 2008," he continued. "Visibility problems were resolved; however traffic flow problems were ignored. In the last 12 months there were four recorded accidents at (the intersection, one of which) involved personal injury."

"In the past, attempts were made to make minor improvements regarding traffic signs. However an effective solution may require relocation of exits, land expropriation, acquiring of properties and the need for the Town of Aurora to assume road rights."

At last Tuesday's general committee meeting, councillors and Ilmar Simanovskis, Director of Infrastructure and Environmental Services,

acknowledged the process is ongoing.

"Mr. Urbanowicz has sent us a proposal on some suggested traffic communications measures, and we have been discussing this with the Region and actually we had a meeting with the Region this afternoon to sort of identify what the next steps are," said Mr. Simanovskis.

"The Region in consultation [with us] will be preparing a letter to Mr. Urbanowicz to identify a response to his concerns, as well as meet with him in advance to review the report and, subsequent to that, depending on the outcome it may be referred back to the department. The Region does have some concrete recommendations to address some of his concerns."

The response is expected in "a few weeks time".

Aurora students take part in event

Last weekend, a total of 65 Grade 11 and 12 students joined local Rotarians from Aurora, Alliston, Bolton, Bradford, Brampton, Caledon, Kleinburg, Newmarket, Orangeville, Palgrave, Richmond Hill, Shelburne and Woodbridge at the YMCA Cedar Glen near Nobleton for another outstanding couple of days of business speakers, leadership workshops, team building activities and camaraderie.

Eight of the students represented Aurora high schools.

The objective of Camp Enterprise was to expose, explore, and ignite the student's imagination on the world of business and private enterprise.

In providing students with a broad view of professional, business and management careers, the program presented business and private enterprise as a challenging position, offering enormous personal satisfaction.

While allowing the students to exercise maximum creativity, the program emphasizes obligations to serve and contribute to the community.

Students attending the event found themselves meeting new friends from 25 other high schools, expanding their vision of their future in business, relishing in the expertise and experience that the guest speakers

have to offer and having an outstanding time.

Topics and events covered at Camp included a presentation and panel on starting a business which included a discussion and exercise on planning and team building in business and life; a high involvement, educational and enjoyable business game; presentation of the fundamentals of the free enterprise system; participatory labour and management agreement negotiations; a presentation on communication and financing; a presentation on

business ethics; a marketing and branding presentation; and recreational activities such as a rock climbing wall and high air ropes course.

Rotary is a world wide organization of business professionals dedicated to the idea of "Service Above Self".

Local Rotarians from 15 clubs across the northern ridge of the GTA gear up for this event every year and enjoy it more and more as the camps go on.

This year, chairman of the event was Aurora Rotarian Jack Laurion.

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The Optimist club of Aurora will hold its 3rd Annual Optimist Junior Qualifying Golf Tourney at

St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club

in Aurora on Sunday May 30, 2010.

All youth (boys and girls) aged 10-18 can compete. Eighteen-year-olds must not turn 19 before August 3, 2010. Age groups for competition are as follows:

10-11 Years	14 - 15 Years
12 - 13 Years	16 - 18 Years


To register for the Optimist Club of Aurora Junior Golf Tournament, you may:

- Call Greg at (905) 713-2570
- by e-mail at g_jway@sympatico.ca
- go to the Aurora Optimist Club website www.auroraoptimist.com
- applications are also available at St. Andrews Valley Golf Club.

Cost is \$70 per golfer which includes

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The registration deadline is May 24



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Former Aurora student at Wells Street School and Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School, Terry Anderson, left, was selected recently as the winner of the Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student at the University of Waterloo. He is the son of Fred and Vicki Anderson and the grandson of Jean Anderson of Aurora. Making the presentation was Sue Horton, associate provost (graduate studies) at the school. Terry is currently working on his Masters' degree.

Region proposes new road speeds

From page 1

We get complaints from commuters who want to see speed limits increased. It's a real balance in the various issues, traffic noise, mobility, environmental issues, and safety."

A simple speed reduction can increase the amount of information a driver is able to take in, as well as increase the ability of drivers to react to what's around them, he continued.

"A very small reduction of speed in a collision that involves a pedestrian can make a very significant difference in the outcome," said Mr. Kemp.

More pedestrians and cyclists are sharing the roads now than ever before, he added. This has rendered York's existing

policies out of step with the current climate.

"The existing policy has been around for years and it was essentially designed to move as many vehicles through the regional roads as possible," he said. "It didn't take into account as much pedestrian and cyclist interaction, and all of the other shared uses of our roads."

"The basic tenant of our proposed policy is a basic urban speed limit of 60 km/hour, so in any urban area where you would expect to see significant volume of pedestrians and cyclists, we would be proposing a speed limit reduction to 60. In rural areas, our policy would remain more or less unchanged with the maximum rural speed limit of 80."

"Some other considerations,

school zones on regional roads, our school zone policy, we're not proposing any change and we would continue to have 40 km speed limits in school zones on regional roads, and roads in transition areas between rural and urban would have a basic speed limit of 70 km."

While calling himself "a strong supporter of controlling speed limits and reducing speed limits, specifically on residential streets," Councillor Al Wilson said he could not support the policy.

He said there is a lack of clarity with what the Region classifies as an urban road versus a rural road.

He also said that due to additional measures, some of these speed concerns are unwarranted.

"I don't see (Bayview) as a problem because the Region has put so many stoplights on Bayview between Wellington and St. John's Sideroad that I don't think speed is an issue," he said. "There was just another one installed about a month ago, so there is a stoplight about every block, so I don't think you have much of a chance of getting above 60 km/hour anyway even if you're lucky with the timing."

He also expressed concern regarding speed traps that could arise from these changes.

"(On) your comment about cyclists and pedestrians, we spent considerable resources to ensure we have a cycle path along (Wellington) and that we have sidewalks up there up to the SARC," said Councillor Wilson. "I think what we're going to end up hearing is that we've created a lot of speed traps and that the feedback we're going to get is that we're just looking for a tax collection. I'm sure it will be an issue that will come up."

Councillor Evelina MacEachern said she agreed with most of Councillor Wilson's arguments, adding that the Region's policy has looked at a

"few little points" while missing the big picture with regards to road design.

She argued that road design and actual usage should determine the road speeds and safety levels, not whether the particular roadway is in an urban or rural area.

"I'm not sure what the answer is, but I don't agree with the policy as is proposed," said Councillor MacEachern.

Mr. Kemp, however, said arguments in favour of determination by road design were "absolutely right".

"Ideally a posted speed limit should be self-enforcing which means that we need to design the roads in a way to get people to drive at the speeds we feel are appropriate for that area, and we at the Region haven't done that," said Mr. Kemp. "That's changing as we're doing new road designs trying to take into account all of the other road users out there and you will start seeing some of those designs change particularly through urban areas."

Altering and reducing speeds on these arterial roads could also have an adverse effect on the local economy, said Councillor Stephen Granger, speaking about the transportation industry.

At the end of the discussion, it appeared the issues raised by councillors Tuesday were not unique to the Town of Aurora.

"Your comments are consistent with what we've been hearing from some of the other local municipalities, so everyone is in favour with making our roadways safer and doing things to try to reduce collisions and improve safety," said Mr. Kemp. "I think it is the implementation plan more than the safety."

Mr. Kemp said he would take the comments received back to the Region and a revised policy, taking these concerns into consideration, would be presented to Regional Council at a later date.

Town takes over dog attack case

From page 1

reason, and we don't know yet, the application to have the dog destroyed under the Provincial wasn't laid," said Jason Ballantyne, Aurora's manager of Corporate Communications.

The case has now been turned over to the Senior Inspector at the OSPCA under the direction of Aurora's Manager of Bylaw Services Jon Popple.

The scene at the Court on Monday was one of confusion.

Shortly after the plaintiff, defendant, and supporters gathered in the courtroom area, it was discovered that the OSPCA representative handling the case - and the file - was off on sick leave, a fact previously unknown to the key players.

"The SPCA person is on sick leave," Ms Rose told The Auroran, after defendant Dennis Wiitala moved for disclosure.

"That's why there was no file in the courtroom, so now what I've just been told by (Aurora's Manager of Bylaw Services) Jon Popple is now taking over the case himself. He's going to get the file and he will be in charge of the case, it won't be the SPCA. With saying that, I feel confident because Jon and I have talked back and forth and he has been a very good support. He is going to make sure that any of the officers we need are going to be here."

While Ms Rose said she felt confident over that development, she still felt some disappointment.

"I wish it was over today, because to move forward you really need to get this over with. There is nothing I can do."

Following a request made by the defendant to go into disclosure, the hearing for the bylaws was delayed to June 21. Mr. Ballantyne said the Town hopes

the Provincial matter can be dealt with at that point, but admitted that might not be the case as they bylaw offences have progressed further.

With that, Ms Rose is looking to the future.

"It has been a very difficult journey," said Ms Rose last week. "It has been emotional. It's been trying, it's been hard, and I've been very touched by people that I have got support from. I mean, the community has been amazing."

Soon after news of the attack broke, Ms. Rose was inundated with calls and cards from well wishers and concerned citizens.

The whole experience was particularly traumatic for her son, she said.

"He's 13 and he had to go through this with me although he wasn't with me when I got attacked," she said. "This was something he had to watch, he had to turn the corner and see his mum laying on a driveway and his dog dead. It's something you don't forget."

Ms Rose is continuing with a physiotherapy regimen that includes a focus on her left

thumb, the tendons of which were damaged in the attack.

"I'm taking it one day at a time," she said. "It's not an easy thing, you wouldn't wish this on your enemy for sure."

What Ms Rose is bringing forward are a number of measures to protect people from experiencing what she has recently gone through.

"We need to be responsible and we need to protect ourselves and people in the community," she said. "It's a hard road because if I don't turn this around and do something positive I'm going to be a victim the rest of my life and I don't want to do that."

Ms Rose said she is trying to make dog owners aware they need to be responsible, making sure their pets are leashed at all times and muzzled when need be.

"You just have to be extra careful that you are following these rules because this could have been a child. I feel that if I don't do something about it and a child is hurt in the same situation then I haven't done everything I can."

Accessibility

From page 1

Tree Potters Guild (one can only access their space via exterior stairs), the installation of an automatic door opener for the south door at the Town Hall's main entrance, and an investigation into improving acoustics in the council chamber.

Installing an automatic door opener and improving acoustics will not, however, be the only recommendations for the Town Hall facility on the slate if the plan is eventually passed by council.

Following complaints about the width - or lack thereof - of the wheelchair ramps in the council chamber, the plan calls for a reconfiguration of public seating in the room to remove sections of movable chairs in the back row to provide designated wheelchair space.

Purchasing portable ramps

for a number of Town events would also be required.

Town Leisure Services will also get a boost with the replacement of the water wheelchair at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex and the replacement of the elevator at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex.

"Some patrons refuse to use (the elevator) because of its old technology and confined space," notes the Draft Plan. "Children are currently being lifted up the stairs in their strollers by moms and fitness instructors (rather than) using the current lift."

The plan, with amendments stemming from the May 5 Accessibility Advisory Committee is scheduled to appear at Tuesday's general committee meeting for analysis, comments, and further recommendations.



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Happy 18th birthday, Sarah!



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Mary Jeanne Oliver, left, was honoured last week by the Canadian Federation of University Women, for being a member of the organization for more than 50 years. With her is Pat Leeson, President of the Canadian Federation of University Women. More than 50 ladies attended the event.

Auroran photo by David Falconer



Volcano's ash hurt my holiday

By BRIAN WARBURTON

Planning to win rates among life's better strategies in the establishment of an approach to life, and regardless of age, provides a personal sense of well being.

Those words apply to all periods in life and planning for a good future offers the proposition that appropriate dividends will reward positive planning.

Most members of the Aurora Seniors Association (ASA) plan their lives realistically, formally or informally taking into account social life, finances, families and homes.

It is probably impossible to follow the torrent of events from the volcanic eruptions in Iceland, impacting a widening circle of anguished holidaymakers, affected by the wrath of nature forced to vent vast stores of energy through ugly eruptions, but it is sure to touch the lives of many seniors including myself, holidaying in England with my wife.

It is certain that residents of Aurora and neighbouring areas including many seniors have been and will continue to be inconvenienced by the Icelandic volcanic eruption.

Meanwhile, Charles Sequeira reports that the ASA has raised \$1,659 for disaster relief in Haiti and this relief fund will be placed with the Red Cross as the best means of applying the money where it will do the most good.

The Town has agreed to erect parking signs near the Centre in an effort to divert traffic to the most appropriate use of the available parking.

If the existing parking was used in an appropriate manner, with understanding for the

needs of seniors, parking for seniors would improve.

The ASA Evergreens Choir is undergoing some change with Director of Music, Enid Maize announcing her retirement, effective June 1st.

What this will mean to the choir in the short term or in the long term is impossible to evaluate at this time.

The choir is reported to be 22 strong at this time, and has a strong complement of members who must decide how best to continue, and who among them will step forward to assume the formidable role of Director of Music.

Enid said she has not been well lately and medical advice is that she should take life more easily. Enid is a perfectionist, and always insists on giving the best of herself and the finest choral performance that the choir is capable of.

Even in a retired volunteer role, the demands of the perfectionist have a price, and Enid is wise to understand she has given her all for long enough.

Superb music is one of the delights of civilization, for young or old and is always available in abundance for talented singers to render magnificently, and the heart of the choir is clearly with Enid.

The ASA Wood Shop, which is always busy with assorted projects, many small and others big enough, is getting ready for the Canada Day Parade on July 1st, and requires volunteers to ride on the float and bring life to it.

Volunteers should dress in a fashion appreciative of Canada, and be ready to acknowledge the crowds lining

the sidewalks and to wave to them from the splendid procession.

If you are ready to take part in the Canada Day Parade this year, make your interest known to Judy Buchanan.

Diamond Landscaping has agreed to loan a vehicle once again, and the team of carpenters from the Wood Shop and others are working on the theme, and planning to make the trailer look really good, no less than impressive.

The floats will be judged in different categories, and the ASA team of carpenters, decorators and riders all aspire to be first in whatever category they compete in.

The pen making initiative has produced about 200 pens so far and has not shown signs of letting up yet.

Apparently, the pen making initiative caught on world wide so, the ASA is in the forefront of a world wide interest.

Bocce Ball at the ASA has attracted 15 interested members, so Bocce Ball is likely to take off big time with that response.

On Tuesday, May 25th, between 7 and 8.30 p.m., a presentation on "Key Points for Caregivers" will be given at the ASA.

This presentation will focus on looking after yourself aided by services available and where to turn to when you must fall back to the expertise of others.

Everybody needs to be aware of what is available and what might be required in the future, so come and listen, take part and ask questions before you are desperate for answers.

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- Aurora Art Show 2010
- Aurora Lawn Bowling Club's Open House

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