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# THE AURORAN

Aurora's Independent Community Newspaper

Vol. 9 No. 23 905-727-3300 [auroran.com](http://auroran.com) FREE Week of April 7, 2009

## Man robs Aurora bank at midday

York Regional Police are still looking for a man, believed to be in his late 30s or early 40s, who brazenly walked into an Aurora branch of the Toronto Dominion Canada Trust bank at noon last week, and relieved a teller of cash.

The man, whose photos were released by police after they were taken on security cameras, indicated with a note to teller Alice Chen that he had a gun or a weapon of some sort.

No weapon was used nor seen, although the teller said she couldn't sleep that night.

Asked how much money she gave him, she wouldn't reveal an amount but suggested the robber wasn't going to get rich from it.

The robbery took place at noon last Thursday and before police had arrived, the branch, at the busy corner of Yonge and Wellington, had been closed.

Once inside, police said, the lone male approached the teller and produced a note indicating he

had a gun and demanded money.

The teller complied and the suspect obtained a quantity of money and fled the bank.

He was last seen running east on Wellington Street East.

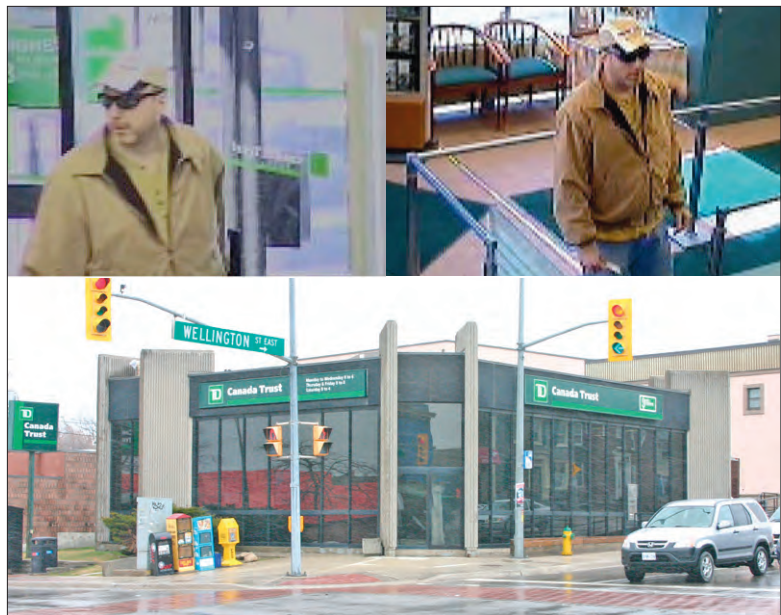
Ms Chen was not physically injured during this incident.

Police describe the suspect as a white male, in his late 30s or early 40s, 5'8" to 5'10" tall weighing about 190 pounds.

He was wearing a beige baseball cap, a beige bomber-style jacket, running shoes and sunglasses.

As of Monday morning, police said they were still looking for the suspect.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the York Regional Police Hold-Up Unit at 1-866-876-5423, ext.6630, Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS, leave an anonymous tip online at [www.1800222tips.com](http://www.1800222tips.com) or text your tip by sending TIPYORK and your message to CRIMES (274637).



Surveillance cameras (top) capture two photographs of a man suspected of robbing bank (lower photo) last Thursday around noon.



Work continues on 5-storey parking garage that will add spaces for commuters using GO train service.  
Auroran photo by David Falconer

## Parking lot will help until garage is built

While commuters are waiting for the finish of a new five-storey parking garage at the Aurora train station, they won't have to park on the street.

Vic Priestly, of Priestly Demolition, has fixed up a parking lot at the south end of Berczy Street, that will accommodate about 100 automobiles until the building is finished, expected this December.

Some commuters will be able to park in that lot.

Currently, the Aurora GO Station has about 769 parking spaces and is operating beyond capacity.

Meanwhile, Monday, an official announcement was made at the Aurora GO Station that the Provincial and Federal governments will provide funding to repair

Please see page 12

### Briefly

#### Volunteers needed

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce annual Home Show is about ready to start, but the Chamber needs a bit of help.

Officials are looking for volunteers for the Home Show and Outdoor Living Expo, over the weekend of April 17th to 19th at the Aurora Community Centre.

Volunteers will be asked to work two-hour shifts manning the ticket booth, or in the Chamber booth. Students looking for volunteer hours are also welcome, officials say.

If you have some time to offer call Nancy at the Chamber office for details.

You can call the Chamber office at 905-727-7262 or register online at [www.auro-rachamber.on.ca](http://www.auro-rachamber.on.ca) for all events.

#### Auction for Randy

A benefit dance and auction will be held for Aurora's answer to Elvis Presley.

Randy Skelcher, who impersonates Elvis, Roy Orbison, Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra and a host of other personalities, will be on hand Saturday, June 13, for the event, held at the Aurora Legion, from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

The cost is \$20 a head, but that includes a buffet meal.

Tickets are available at the Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North, or Dave's Garage, 70 Industrial Parkway South.

Proceeds will go to Randy.

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COMING EVENTS

**CONTINUING**

The Probus Club of Aurora meets at 10 a.m. the second Wednesday of each month at the Royal Canadian Legion on Industrial Parkway North. Probus was sponsored by the Aurora Rotary Club in 1995 with an initial membership of 25, now 82, for retired and semi-retired professional and business men and women, former executives and others. The club is non-sectarian and non-political. For information call 905-841-3558 or 905-727-9344.

\*\*\*\*

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.

\*\*\*\*

The Adult Bereavement Support Group offers a chance to learn how to cope with the loss of a loved one. Fred Bullen has given the use of the Aurora Lions Club and Brent Forrester of Thompson Funeral Home will provide administrative cost so that this service is given free to the community. Contact mariesgriefjourney@yahoo.com to reserve a seat or get further information.

\*\*\*\*

A Bereavement Support Group for adults experiencing the loss of a loved one, is again being offered at the Aurora United Church for an eight- week session starting Wed. April 8 to May 27, at 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. There is no fee for this program. Participation is open to all the community. To register or for more info please call Mary Smith at 905-727-6984.

\*\*\*\*

“Voice” is a creative writing collective for teens between the ages of 13 and 18. At the meetings, held at the Aurora Public Library, teens learn various creative writing techniques, give and receive constructive feedback on their writing and meet other like-minded young writers. Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month, September through May, from 7 to 8 p.m. Registration is not required.

\*\*\*\*

“Louder” is a semi-annual young adult magazine created through the creative effort of teens and produced by the Aurora Public Library’s Young Adult Services Department. Submissions of writing, poetry, art, graphic art and photography are accepted. E-mail your submission to yamagazine@library.aurora.on.ca or drop it off to the Children and Young Adult Information Desk to the attention of Monika Machacek.

\*\*\*\*

On Thursdays until June, the Navy League has a Cadet program for children 9 to 12 years from 7 to 9 p.m. Contact Cliff Davies at 905-727-2244 for details.

\*\*\*\*

On Tuesdays, until June, a Sea Cadet program for youths 13 to 18 from 7 to 9 p. m. Leave message at 905-895-3038.

\*\*\*\*

Aurora Opera Company’s Children’s Chorus is a new treble voice choir dedicated to educating, nurturing and providing opportunities for children to express their musical abilities. The chorus is open to boys and girls in Grades 1 through 12 and consists of two choirs: Angel Choristers, a training choir for 6 and 7 year-olds and the Children Chorus, open to 8 to 17 year-olds. To audition, contact general director Sarah Kyle at keepsinging@look.ca.

\*\*\*\*

CHAT’S Community Home Assistance to Seniors 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 Tuesday from 9.30 to 11 a.m. it’s Story and Playtime at Aurora Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South for tots (age 0-4 years) and their caregivers for coffee or tea. Call 905-841-8883 for further details.

\*\*\*\*

Every Wednesday from 6.30 to 8 p.m. the Pioneer Club for boys and girls, age 3 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 every Friday morning 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 evening at 6.30 p.m. at Gabriel’s on Yonge Street. New members are welcome. For further information call 905-841-1352.

\*\*\*\*

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.

\*\*\*\*

The Aurora Seniors Evergreen Choir practice in the West-McKenzie Hall of the Seniors’ Centre, every Wednesday from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. under the direction of Enid Maize.

\*\*\*\*

Meet at Martha’s Table, at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, every Thursday from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Hot soup, sandwiches, and dessert will be provided. Any funds raised go to local charities.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8**

Aurora Public Library, with Canada Revenue, is hosting free income tax clinics with trained community volunteers. This is an income-based service (individual \$20,000/family \$25,000). By appointment only from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. Register at the Adult Information Desk, or call 905-727-9493 option 4, for more information.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 11**

Eighth annual Easter Egg Hunt at Sheppard’s Bush. 9.30 a.m. to noon. For further information, call 905-726-4762 or click on www.e-aurora.ca

**TUESDAY, APRIL 14**

Aurora Public Library with Canada Revenue, is hosting free income tax clinics with trained community volunteers. This is an income-based service (individual \$20,000/family \$25,000). By appointment only, from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. Register at the Adult Information Desk, or call 905-727-9493 option 4 for more information.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 16**

Gardening Workshop with Master Gardener, Elizabeth Brims. Aurora Public Library hosts a free seminar at 7 p.m. in the Magna Room. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk or call 905-727-9493, option 4 for more information.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18**

Enjoy a mellow evening of music, poetry, and stories. Take part in a family-oriented coffee house featuring home-baked treats in St. Andrew’s Hall, on Victoria Street. Enter at Victoria Street. The event, in aid of a War Child Canada project, begins at 7.30 p.m. Admission is \$5 per person.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22**

Aurora Public Library, with Canada Revenue, is hosting free income tax clinics with trained community volunteers. This is an income-based service (individual \$20,000/family \$25,000). By appointment only from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. Register at the Adult Information Desk, ore call 905-727-9493 option 4 for more information.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 23**

Aurora Chamber of Commerce Luncheon will be a joint event with the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce and Human Resources Professionals of York Region at Oakview Terrace, 13256 Leslie Street, Richmond Hill. Showcase starts at 11.30 a.m. and lunch will be served at 12.15 p.m.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 24**

Aurora United Church annual Spring rummage sale takes place today from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the church, 15186 Yonge Street at Tyler. Proceeds from the sale go back into the Aurora community through women and men shelters and the Welcoming Arms project.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25**

Aurora United Church annual Spring rummage sale takes place today from 9 a.m. to noon at the church, 15186 Yonge Street at Tyler. Proceeds from the sale go back into the Aurora community through women and men shelters and the Welcoming Arms project.

**MAY 7 TO 9**

Pine Tree Potters’ Guild Spring Pottery Sale at St. Andrew’s Valley Golf Club, 368 St. John’s Sideroad East. All proceeds from the charity table go to CHATS (Community Home Assistance to Seniors). For further information, call 905-727-1278 or click on www.pinetreepotters.ca.

**SATURDAY, MAY 9**

“Words and Music” is a concert to benefit the Aurora Writers Group. It will be held at Trinity Anglican Church in Aurora beginning at 7.30 p.m. Live music will include selections from Broadway shows, 60’s folk music, and light classics. Readings from Aurora Storyalis will be interspersed with the music.

**SUNDAY, MAY 10**

The Aurora Historical Society hosts a luncheon in the Ballroom of Hillary House in honour of Mother’s Day. Guests can enjoy a three-course meal in historic Hillary House. Two seating times are available: Noon and 1.30 p.m. Tickets are \$18 per person or \$16 for Aurora Historical Society members and must be purchased in advance. For tickets and more information call 905-727-8991 or e-mail ahs@aurorahs.com.

**MONDAY, MAY 11**

Aurora Film Circuit presents The Necessities of Life (Ce qu’il faut pour vivre). Canada’s contender for the 2009 Foreign Language Oscar - this Canadian film about a tubercular Inuit man confined to a Quebec sanatorium is rich in lump-in-the-throat moments, as he experiences both profound culture shock and uplifting human connections. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the Aurora Public Library and R&R Revisited. All screenings take place at the Cineplex Aurora, with door prize at 6.45 and film at 7 p.m.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 4**

School teacher at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School Bob McRoberts is retiring. A party will be held today at the Howard Johnson Hotel on Yonge Street. For details contact Lynn Gardner at 905-727-3131 ext. 157 or Joe Pagniello at joseph.pagniello@yrdsb.edu.on.ca. If you plan on attending, you must RSVP by May 15.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 7**

Aurora Chamber of Commerce presents the 14th annual Longest Street Sale on the Longest Street beginning at 11 a.m.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 12**

Longest lacrosse game in history, starts today at 5 a.m and continues until 6 p.m. Saturday, June 13 at the Aurora Community Centre, Rink #1. The game is being played to raise awareness and support for the Canadian Centre for Abuse Awareness (www.abusehurts.com) and the Spirit of the Stick campaign (www.spiritofthestick.com). In addition to the longest lacrosse

game in history, a silent auction and a Family Fun day (Saturday) will be in full swing. Mayors and councillors from Aurora and Newmarket will play with lacrosse players from 5 to 6 p.m. Friday. For more information go to www.lax-dove.ca or www.amll.ca.

**TUESDAY, JULY 14**

Aurora Rotary Club golf tournament at Westview Golf Club. Shotgun at 10 a.m. \$150 per golfer includes lunch and dinner. Call Ron at 905-727-3300 for details. Participation limited.



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**CLOSED**  
April 17th - Home Show

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April 24th - Prize Night

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# Cultural Centre close to opening

"It's a historic occasion," noted Dr. Leslie Oliver, Interim Board member, of the establishment of the Church Street School Cultural Centre (CSSCC) in Aurora.

The CSSCC, located at the former Church Street School, just behind the new library, is intended to be a centre for arts, culture and heritage programming and promotion in Aurora.

In their appearance before Council recently to support the approval of the CSSCC agreement, Dr. Oliver and L. Douglas Hubley, Interim Chair of the CSSCC, thanked the mayor and council, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, and the members of the Aurora Historical Society for their support.

They also spoke warmly of the efforts of the Citizens' Volunteer Group "that had worked with town staff to negotiate the agreements with the town for the occupancy and cultural contracts with respect to the establishment of the CSSCC, amongst other things".

The members of the citizens' group included Susan Morton-Leonard, Robert Layton, Cathy Harris, and Tracy Smith, as well as Dr. Oliver and Mr. Hubley.

The venue of the CSSCC is an architectural and historic gem.

Church Street School was built in 1886, for a reported \$8,000, and was in use as a school until 1952.

During that time, students included Bette Stevenson, former Ontario Minister of Education, and Lester B. Pearson, one-time Prime Minister of Canada and Nobel Peace Prize recipient.

After 1952 the school was used by a variety of tenants,

including the school board, and community groups.

In 1981, it was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Since the plan to create the CSSCC has been in place, more than \$2.5 million, much of it funded by the Town of Aurora, has been invested into the restoration of the school.

Although the CSSCC has yet to open its doors to the public, the Town of Aurora had already been recognised with the Prince of Wales Trophy for its preservation efforts of the school.

On March 24, Council had before it for approval the CSSCC services agreement, which had been developed after countless hours of volunteer work.

In subsequent discussions about the centre's finances, Town Finance Director John Gutteridge confirmed the town would provide \$340,000 in annual base funding.

However, the operation of the facility would cost substantially more, and it would be up to the Cultural Centre to raise the additional funding through such means as user fees and donations.

Mr. Hubley had previously noted that "it's the cultural centre's prime objective to become fully and independently supported financially within the next five years."

According to the CSSCC's business plan, which Council approved in the summer of 2008, the not-for-profit corporation will achieve a \$200,000 operating surplus by its fifth year of operation.

In discussing the resolution, several councillors expressed concern about how little time there had been to review the agreement,

which had only recently been received.

Councillor Evelyn Buck said there was too much to read and absorb in such a short time, and that she'd be "voting completely on trust...not understanding".

There were also questions about whether the new town solicitor, Christopher Cooper, had had a chance to review the document.

Mr. Gutteridge said it had been reviewed by both the town's assistant solicitor, as

well as by an external local solicitor.

Although anxious to finalize the process, Council was divided on whether additional review by the town's solicitor was required before signing such a significant document.

Councillor Buck said that in her opinion "we owe it to ourselves, and to the board, to have a common understanding of what our agreement is, and I don't think that we're doing that".

Therefore, after further dis-

cussion, an amendment was added to the resolution that the mayor and clerk be authorized to sign the documents upon a review by the town solicitor, and that should the solicitor find any areas of concern, they be brought

before a special council meeting prior to the execution of the agreements.

With the completion of the paperwork, the town is a significant step closer to the completion of this important resource.

## Easter Bunny has a new Aurora location

The Bunny is back, and this time, he's not alone.

This Saturday, April 11, you can join the Easter Bunny as he returns to Aurora for the annual Easter Egg Hunt.

This year the festivities take place in Sheppard's Bush from 9:30 a.m. until noon.

Access is from the Industry Street entrance, south of Mary Street.

Apart from the new location, one other change to the event this year is that instead of a mad dash to collect eggs, children will only need to find one egg, which can then be turned in for a bag of prizes.

The Town of Aurora and Aurora District Girl Guides have lined up a number of other activities to enjoy.

As well as the egg hunt, there will be face painting,

a scavenger hunt, crafts, and bunny bowling. Participating in these events will allow kids to complete their "bunny passports", which can be turned in for a draw for additional prizes.

The Easter Bunny will not be alone when he visits, as he brings with him a family of real bunnies.

A pancake breakfast will also be available to everyone for a nominal charge.

All participants must pre-register at either the Aurora Family Leisure Complex or the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. The cost per child is \$5.

After the fun, families are encouraged to take time to enjoy the spring weather exploring Sheppard's Bush.



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— April 10

10:30 a.m.

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— April 12

8 a.m.

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## Poor Ronnie

By RON WALLACE

# Dick Illingworth: 1916 - 2009

There was something strange about the events of Sunday night, a week ago.  
I was asleep shortly before 11 p.m. when Kelly McClure called my cell phone. Fifteen minutes later, and the phone would have shut down for the night.

I heard it ring, but knew I could never answer it in time, since I was on the second floor and it was on the first.

But, I also had the feeling that I knew who was calling and what the message was.

So, I took my time getting up and wandering to the main floor.

My suspicions were correct: Kelly had indeed called but left an incoherent message.

I suspected she was reporting the death of my dear friend Dick Illingworth, but I wasn't 100 per cent sure.

Even my wife, Patricia, wasn't sure what Kelly was saying. Kelly was very upset.

Kelly is the daughter of Dick's wife, Dorothy Clark McClure, well-known Aurora artist.

Dorothy's health is not that great, either, and I hoped Kelly wasn't calling about her mother.

Because Kelly called me from a "private number", I couldn't call her back, so I called Dick's house, and Dorothy answered.

At least I knew it wasn't Dorothy who was in trouble.

Later, when I knew I couldn't go back to sleep, I went to the computer to compose the story which appeared as the headline in last week's Auroran.

That's when things got weird.

In order to track all the stories I plan to use in the paper, I use a numbering system, and when I started the story on Dick, the number was 0331-30. (Thirty-first day of the third month plus the number of the story).

As anyone in the newspaper business will tell you, the number 30 means "the end".

Stories written by reporters always end with the number 30.

No one seems to know why, although my favourite explanation is that a reporter for a New York City daily ended his stories with his last name, which was Thurty. So the story goes.

At any rate, Dick Illingworth, who had been in the hospital on and off for some time, had died.

He was, for lack of a better description, my "father figure".

My daughter owes her first name - Aurora - to Dick Illingworth.

He was the guy who, when I was a rookie reporter, was the mayor of Aurora, and when he wanted to talk to me, called me "Ron", instead of "hey, you with the pencil".

I was very impressed.

He's been my friend ever since, and because he was almost 28 years older than me - yes, I'm 65 now - I simply adopted him as my father...

The stories about Dick Illingworth could fill a book, and I heard a few more at a private funeral held at Thompson's Funeral Home last week.

When he was mayor (the first time), he got a call from a new citizen, who had purchased a home in the north end of town.

Shortly after the resident settled into his new abode, he called Mayor Illingworth.

"Do you know there's a train track in my back yard?" the resident yelled. "What are you going to do about it?"

Well, the track is still there, so I suspect Dick didn't do a lot about it.

Dick was known as the "memo" mayor.

Every Saturday morning, he'd drive around Aurora in his red convertible, talk into a hand-held tape recorder, and make note of everything he believed was wrong with the town.

Then he'd go home and type memos to the appropriate department head.

Some Mondays, you could hear the groans coming from various offices, but the work always got done and Aurora was in good shape.

When The Auroran began about eight years ago, it was obvious it wouldn't work without computers, and it certainly couldn't survive without Dick.

Getting him from a typewriter to a computer was no mean feat. Something about old dogs and new tricks.

But he learned it, refused the internet ("if I have that, I'll never get anything done") and called me the computer doctor every time something went wrong.

I think the best line I ever heard from Dick happened several years ago when the service station next to his house wanted to install a car wash near his property line. "I'm the mayor," he said, "who do I complain to?"



Three years ago, The Auroran ran a photograph of a Grade 12 class at Aurora High School, taken in 1950 in front of the school, which today is an empty building that once housed Wells Street Public School. Above is another Grade 12 class photo, also taken in 1950. In the front row, left to right, are Mary Rose, Ron Patterson, Roy Robson, Bill McCachen, Ross Linton, Bruce Norman and Helen Wells. In the middle row, left to right, are Noreen Seidel, Mary Chapman, Betty Scott, Marion Monkman, Rita Marshall, Noreen Lister, Ruth Buckmaster and Gladys Rushworth. In the back row, left to right, are Pat Davies, Bruce Wray, Dave Tolman, John Hodgkinson, Frank Harrison, Phillip Sacre, Charles Marston, Gordon Stone and Peter VanNostrand. Thank you to the Dr. G.W. Williams Alumni Association, through teacher Bob McRoberts, for supplying the photograph.

### Letters to the Editor

# Aurora's tax increase “outright lie”: reader

To the editor,

Shame on you and every other media outlet that has chosen to help municipal politicians get away with passing off a huge tax increase as a small one.

Aurora Council is claiming that this year's tax increase is only 1.89 per cent.

This is an outright lie.

How convenient that this year's "low" tax increase just happens to have occurred in the same year that the new Property

Assessment values from MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corporation) take effect.

According to MPAC, my home's value will be increasing at a rate of 3.06 per cent per year until 2012, which, according to them, is under the municipal average of 4.83 per cent for York Region, but it is still increasing nonetheless.

When you take that fact into account, the town's increase for me is actually a whopping 5.004844 per cent, not 1.89 per cent.

That's an increase of more than 2.5 times what they are claiming.

Unless MPAC does something to revise the assessment values to take into account the impact on home prices that are a result of the current recession, we are looking at a minimum tax increase for the next four years equal to the MPAC assessment increases.

In my case that's 3.06 per cent minimum.

The only way the town's portion of our property taxes increases by only 1.89 per cent is if they, in fact, lower the mill rate to offset the MPAC assessment value increase, which I highly doubt they are going to do.

Again, shame on all media outlets for not holding municipal politicians accountable on this.

Tony C.  
Aurora

# Resident objects to sidewalk plan

To the editor,

The Town of Aurora is going to put a sidewalk on the west side of Nisbet Drive.

I have lived here for 24 years and we have gotten along just fine with no sidewalk.

As a matter of fact, we have all planted trees where they want to put the sidewalk, so they will cut down all our trees, which we have planted to aid in the pollution, plus beautify the street.

They tell the children to plant seedlings.

I wonder why? So when said trees grow up they will cut them down?

This makes no sense to me or anyone else on the

street.

As a matter of fact, all the residents on Nisbet Drive are appalled that we will lose our trees.

We do not need a sidewalk on the west side of Nisbet. We get along just fine as it is.

So, Town council, it is in our best interest to leave things here as they are.

You could, instead, fix all the potholes that keep the auto repair shops busy because of the cars being damaged.

Fix the streets and skip the sidewalk.

It's time you know what to do first - fix the roads.

Rose Rank  
Aurora

## THE AURORAN

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Opinions expressed by columnists, contributors and letter writers are not necessarily those of The Auroran. Letters must include name and phone number, although number will not be published, and be limited to 600 words. Names may be withheld assuming a compelling reason to do so. Letters may be edited or refused. All contents protected by copyright.

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## Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

Dick Illingworth - the writer

I was coming out of the Aurora Leisure Complex the other day and I noticed the flag was at half-staff.

This was an appropriate gesture as a sign of respect and affection for former mayor, local television host and newspaper columnist, Dick Illingworth, who died last week at the age of 92.

This brief column is not about any special remembrances of the man; in fact, while I have been writing this column for almost three years now, I have only met Dick a few times.

A year or so ago, I saw him in the Aurora Municipal Chambers covering a council meeting.

He said that he had liked one of my recent columns - which meant a lot to me - and we talked at length about the Northern York Region peaking power plant issue.

I have run into him as well at a number of events, but for the most part, I have just said a quick hello.

Instead, this column pays tribute to his writing.

Dick was a fantastic and prolific writer, penning - I would imagine - well over a thousand columns and opinion pieces over the years.

His knowledge of the issues was extremely high; so was

his ability to formulate strong arguments on some pretty complex issues and explain his position - with a great degree of panache - in 700 words or less.

I was always in awe of his ability to recite facts about local issues going back 50 or 60 years.

The way that he would weave a historical perspective into his writing was wonderful.

When The Auroran came out on Tuesdays I was always relieved that the topic I had chosen for the week was different from Dick's because I know that my column would have suffered by comparison.

I remember writing a column about the ward system and feeling pretty good about it.

Dick wrote on the same topic a few weeks later; no contest - his was much better.

The same thing happened when I wrote about our mayor trying to get another Aurora seat at York Region Council.

I also really enjoyed his Bouquets and Brickbats - although being a member of both the Federal Conservatives and Provincial Progressive Conservative parties, I have to admit I sometime winced when another of

his brickbats was aimed our way.

Along with serving as our mayor and as a councillor, Dick's greatest gift was in covering council and reporting on it for his fellow citizens, I think.

And believe you me, sitting in the council chamber for three to four hours on Tuesday nights and attending various sub-committee meetings is not an easy task.

To sift through all this disparate information, prioritize it and then set a narrative that we could all understand regarding the important issues of the day is another great legacy of Dick's.

I think York Region chairperson and CEO Bill Fisch said it best, "Dick's astuteness as a journalist provided our community with a unique perspective and important voice."

Dick was an outstanding contributor to Aurora.

He really lived the motto - "in the community, of the community and for the community".

Our town and Page 4 certainly won't be the same without him.

Stephen can be contacted at:  
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



## Inside Aurora

By Scott Johnston

Bunny hop

It was a fine spring Friday in early April, and I was out in Machell Park, enjoying the sunshine.

As I walked by a bench, the figure on it reading The Auroran lowered the paper enough so that I could see who it was.

To my surprise, it was the Easter Bunny.

I had run into him last year at the grocery store madly buying up eggs for Aurora's Easter Egg Hunt. He was in pretty rough shape, as he tried to decorate all 14,000 eggs, so I was shocked to see the change in his appearance this year.

He looked great.

No vivid dye stains on his fur. No bloodshot eyes. No trembling limbs. He was calm and relaxed.

I had to find out how he'd done it.

"So, are you taking a year off from Aurora's Easter Egg Hunt?" I asked, as I took a seat beside him.

"No, it's still on," he said, glancing up from Cathy's Corner.

"In fact," he said, with a twitch of his whiskers, "we're right on schedule."

"Well, I must say how impressed I am that... wait a minute. Did you say 'we'?"

"Yup. I learned my lesson last year," he replied. "This year I contracted out."

"You mean someone else is decorating all those eggs? Who? Town staff?"

"No. Students."

"School kids? You mean you have child labour?" I exclaimed, aghast.

"Keep your voice down," he said, looking around nervously. "I've got my reputation to keep up. Not little kids - big ones."

"Do you realize how many Aurora students still need to get all their volunteer hours? Tons of them," he said, answering his own question. "That's how many."

"They did it all for me; picking up the supplies, colouring the eggs, and they even delivered and hid them all at the usual place. I didn't need to lift a finger."

"In fact, we're done," he smiled. "I've signed off on all the students' forms, and sent them home."

"That's terrific," I commented. "I must admit that after seeing you last Easter, I worried about your blood pressure. You were really stressed."

"Not this year," he smiled, lacing his paws behind his head, and leaning back contentedly. "And, with the Easter Egg Hunt on for first thing in the morning, all I have to do is sit back and enjoy the fun tomorrow at the Leisure Complex."

"The Leisure Complex? Don't you mean Sheppard's Bush?"

"No, the Leisure Complex. That's where the town holds it every year."

"Not this year. They moved it."

The Easter Bunny sat up quickly. His ears drooped, and I thought I saw a trace of that nervous tic I remembered so well from last year.

"You're kidding me."

"No, they changed the venue. Look," I said, opening his Auroran to page 2. "It's right here in Coming Events."

He scanned the notation under April 11th, the paper rattling softly from the slight tremor in his arms.

He looked at me with wide eyes. You could see the whites all around them.

"The students are gone. And I wasn't there when they hid them. I don't know where the eggs are!"

Grabbing my sleeve desperately, he gasped, "not only do I need to move thousands of eggs over to Sheppard's Bush and re-hide them by tomorrow morning, I've got to find them all first!"

With a quick look at the setting sun, he leaped up and raced off towards the Leisure Complex, his ears flapping wildly in the air.

It was a shame. I really hoped he'd be able to avoid all the chaos and stress of last year.

But then, I guess Easter truly is a time of surprises.

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



Letters to the Editor

Honour Dick in Canada Day parade

To the editor,

March 29th, 2009, was the day Dick Illingworth died. In my heart a thunderous sound rolled out in agony that one fine Canadian had passed on. The agony, of course, is for us left behind – to miss his great laugh, whimsical looks and powerful pen! We're left to ponder his life and appreciate the gifts he left behind. What he has built or inspired shall always stay with us and become a part of us. To document all Dick Illingworth has left us would require several volumes. He

was a fearless leader who spoke his mind openly. He supported those in need and served as an ongoing inspiration to anyone willing to step up to the plate and champion an honourable social cause. It is in that capacity that Dick and I got to know one another. I stumbled into becoming someone who might help get our Canada Day Parade back on the Yonge Street. I had no idea how that would be done! While I searched for ways to get the job done, Dick Illingworth offered me media spots on his ACI Show - Our Town! We had fun together on the

show wearing red hot Canadian hats, decorating the set with Canadian Flags and inspiring the Canadian national spirit and rebirth of a glorious parade in Our Town – which Dick made sure I knew was Canada's Birthday Town. He supported me through-out and mentored my efforts and those of our fantastic Canada Day Parade Subcommittee Team! We all wished for his presence in the parade but, although he and his beautiful wife Dorothy, could not be IN the parade in 2008 – the parade was definitely up-lifted by both of their spirits!

They watched it go by and were pleased with what the committee and volunteers had created with their support and love. I visited Mr. Illingworth at his bedside at Southlake the Wednesday before he died. Mary Georgopolous and I went with his lovely wife Dorothy. It was a heartfelt moment of love. These two were sweethearts to the end of their days together... enjoying their lunch 'date' every Friday at Jonathans... Dick was as sharp as ever asking Mary about the Get Your Greek On event and her restaurant and mentioning how he

missed lunch there! The visit gave me a chance to say thank you and goodbye to a wonderful gentleman. As Mary would say – "a man of honour". I promised him that I would continue to honour the cause of building and protecting our Canadian national spirit – as embodied in our Canada Day Parade. He smiled, gave me a kiss on the cheek and said thanks. We both knew he was onto another adventure. He built many things in his life. His life provides a powerful role model of a great Canadian. He dedicated himself to spread the word via the media; he was always up to date on current news and kept a great internal computer of facts about past events. He also enjoyed a fruitful political life – twice mayor of Aurora and he worked with the Ontario Government for many years. He continued with his passion actively working tirelessly to prepare articles for us all in The Auroran newspaper and engaging us on his television show to the very end of this life. He was really a GREAT Canadian, eh! The rebirth of our Canadian Birthday Parade in the Town of Aurora is one of his last gifts to us all. A man who has helped

weave the fabric of Aurora – a true Canadian leader has died. I propose to the citizens of Aurora that we honour this great Canadian man in our 2009 Canada Day Parade, that together we create a special tribute to Dick Illingworth as a symbol of a truly Great Canadian, who has now died - someone who helped us all and touched Aurora's hearts. Your suggestions would be appreciated. Perhaps we could gather a large group marching in the parade to honour Dick Illingworth or we could prepare a float and/or a special Banner in his memory and in his honour. We would need your help with this idea, if you believe it has merit. In this way, our own Dick Illingworth, who was also Citizen of the Year, will be IN our parade this year and for future years to provide us a great Canadian role model. He showed us all what can be done if we remain committed and persistently take the actions necessary to get it done. And if we all support each other, like Dick Illingworth supported me and the CDPSC team, more Great Canadians like Dick, will manifest and what better tribute to one's life? Thank you, Mr. Illingworth.

Sher St. Kitts  
Snowball

A legend has died

To the editor,

I was saddened by the death of Dick Illingworth last week, even though he was 92

years young. Dick, to me, was what Aurora was all about. A true politician, a writer, a TV celebrity, an honest person

who was willing to help anyone who asked but mainly a person who loved Aurora and life in Aurora. Dick, as Ron Wallace says,

forgot more about Aurora than most of us would ever know. At anytime Dick would let you know what you were doing right or what you were doing wrong. I, for one, listened as I knew that Dick was right 99 per cent of the time. I never minded the fact that he would take the time to give me his opinion as his opinion meant a lot to me. As a councillor the first thing that I did when The Auroran came out was check the Bouquets and Brickbats that Dick would hand out, hoping that I would get a bouquet. If I did, I sort of smiled to myself as I knew that having Dick's approval was important to me and that I had done something right. On the other hand when I got a brickbat I would wonder how I could have done things better. On many occasions I would ask for Dick's opinion, as I knew if anyone knew what to do, he would. When I ran for mayor, I was honoured that when I asked Dick for his support he said yes. I looked back on an old campaign brochure to see Dick's quote on it and I was so thankful to have known such an amazing man. My lasting memory of Dick Illingworth will always be seeing him at a Chamber or Town function carrying his glass of white wine with Dorothy by his side. I can imagine those in Heaven will be looking for Dick's bouquets and brickbats. Dick will be missed by all.

Nigel Kean  
Aurora

She'll miss Poor Richard

To the editor,

Even though I never met Dick Illingworth personally, I certainly knew about him. Dick's "Poor Richard" and "Bouquets and Brickbats" were always favourite reads from our local paper. He was a man with lots to

say and it was worth keeping up with his latest opinion. Dick was a big presence in the public life of this Town for a very long time. He seemed to be one of those people who would be around forever, sharp and witty, up on all the current events, reminding us

through his example to be interested and involved in our community, to ask the hard questions, but to be ready with a bouquet or three when rightly deserved. Thanks, Dick, you'll be missed. Jane Ross  
Aurora

Aurora has become nationally noteworthy

To the editor,

Subject: Award brings Aurora Plethora of Publicity, Auroran March 31, "Poor Ronnie", April 1.

Three cheers for Ron Wallace, always the quintessential Aurora booster. It is wonderful to read in Ron's column "Poor Ronnie", March 31, that Aurora is in the national and international news for all the right reasons. Our town, not by accident, has become noteworthy within the Region, the GTA, across Canada, and beyond, celebrated for its cultural and social development initiatives, many driven and well supported by our Municipal Council. Yes, the Prince of Wales Award was a marker of our achievements and the nation-

al recognition currently being enjoyed - hard earned on the backs of many community volunteers, now over many years. Our council recognizes the many contributions of its volunteers and the roles they play in Aurora's community cultural development. I had the opportunity recently to address council, thanking Mayor Phyllis Morris and councillors for another major achievement. It was the formal approval of agreements to establish the Church Street School Cultural Centre Inc. The Centre, established in Aurora's widely recognized and celebrated provincial site, the Church Street School, in the heart of our historic ceremonial core, will further identify Aurora as the Canadian municipality to watch.

To be opened this fall, a long time in its planning and development; the cultural centre is an innovative, state-of-the-art centre for the creative arts, history and heritage, telling the stories of community, region, and nation.

Les Oliver  
Aurora

ED. NOTE: For the readers' information, Mr. Oliver has long been associated with the Church Street School cause, and is a founding member of the Board of Directors of the Church Street School Cultural Centre Inc.

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# Why some birds fly into windows

To the editor,

Last October, when the fall was still clinging to days of warmth and sun, I heard a strange knocking sound one day and discovered a beautiful male Cardinal attacking my windows.

He would use a nearby branch to set up, and then, bam, he would fly full force into the window.

He then repeated this onslaught over and over.

Shocked, and worried for his safety, I googled "bird flying into windows" to get some answers, and to find a way to prevent his dangerous ways.

As with any internet search, there was a lot of information and some of it useful.

Many of the entries concerned birds that accidentally crash into windows, especially at night. While tragic, it was clearly not what was going on here.

The male Cardinal outside my house was very deliberately smashing himself into the panes of my windows. What I need to discover was why.

After pouring over birding websites and blogs, I finally found some answers.

That's when I got my first insight into my very own macho man bird. He's all about the testosterone, my Cardinal guy.

Birds, like all wildlife, have two paramount instincts that drive their every move - survival and reproduction.

This guy was no different, and had taken his dominant ways to a whole new level.

Concerned about his family and his territory (my yard), he was engaging in fisticuffs with his "enemy" who happened to hang out at each of my windows.

How frustrating it must have been for him, finding that his nemesis could flit from one window to the next as fast as he could!

I was really concerned about him - he hit that glass hard and fast.

So I read up on preventions and, after reading about specially constructed screens and other labour-intensive devices, decided on a less complicated suggestion - fake snow, which would obscure

the reflection.

According to the advice of many experts and home birders alike, the glass had to be altered from the exterior; no obstructions placed inside would make a fig of difference.

I hit a few dollar stores until I finally found one stocking the Christmas snow early.

So there I was, amid the blazing trees and warm days of October, squeezing myself between Dogwoods and Ninebark bushes, spraying the festive white stuff all over the main floor windows. My neighbours must have cast some sideways glances as they saw me out there, jumping the season we were all savouring.

And, I wasn't just trimming

the windows with a nice corner design - no, I was completely covering the windows to resemble a house about to be condemned.

It looked awful, but I was hopeful that it would save my new friend.

The next day, there was the familiar knocking. I looked to find Macho Man attacking the one tiny area of the window that had been missed by my frantic spraying.

This was a determined male!

I had read that the fall often brought a burst of testosterone before winter's chill.

The good news was that it was becoming apparent that, while he really gave it a go, he didn't seem to be hurting himself.

As a rain storm made a mess of my "snow" handiwork, I decided to let things ride.

Fall was almost over, and I was confident that Macho Man would calm down and ease into a winter routine.

In fact, I wondered if the family would take off for a southern habitat. Apparently, some Cardinals migrate and others do not.

Winter set in, and, not only did the beautiful family remain, but Macho Man continued his assault on the windows.

Adopting a "can't beat 'em, join 'em" approach, I consult-

ed a local wild bird retailer, and ended up with safflower seed, a special food that Cardinals love and squirrels don't care for.

I set up a "fly through style" feeder in the backyard alongside my regular niger seed finch feeders.

So, here we are, all hunkered down for the winter in our own ways.

I am relying on lots of tea, a wood-burning fireplace and extra layers.

And Macho Man? He's still charging the windows occasionally, and tucking into the safflower seed regularly.

I get a close up view of these beauties out of my kitchen window; him in his red glory and his beautiful mate, a regal female with muted red tinges and a camel yellow body.

If you want to start a winter's day on a bright note, have a male Cardinal give you a "weather report" by knocking on the window in the morning.

As you raise yourself from the fog of sleep, you'll gradually realize that you've just been given the promise of a sunny, bright day, and the comforting knowledge that the Macho Man made it through another winter's night.

## Donation ruling self-serving: reader

To the editor,

Mayor Phyllis Morris continues to demonstrate her "I am more qualified than you to make ethical decisions on your behalf" attitude with this latest discussion about self-funding campaigns.

First it was a Code of Ethics -- now it's who should be allowed to donate to your campaign.

The rules are already in

place through the Provincial Municipal Act and candidates have the ability to make their own choices and then be judged by the voters if they don't think the candidates' ethics align with their own.

What makes this mayor and council think they have the right to impose this limitation or have a better set of ethics than others.

Some of their own ethics have already been

displayed through the appointment of an unelected councillor earlier this term.

I have self-funded all my campaigns (at very low cost compared with some of my opponents). Primarily because I (not someone else) was uncomfortable accepting money from the development industry.

But that was my choice, not one imposed on me by someone else.

This ruling would also favour the incumbents who already have name recognition so it appears to be somewhat self-serving (speaking of ethics).

The rules are already in place.

This council needs to focus on what they were elected to do -- and stay out of our bedrooms.

**Bill Hogg**  
**Aurora**

Adopting a "can't beat 'em, join 'em" approach, I consult-

**Christine Woodley**  
**Aurora**

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# THE AURORAN SPORTS

Page 10

Week of April 7, 2009

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The Aurora major peewee house league team 505 cleaned house at the 43rd annual Newmarket House league March Break Tournament recently. The team dominated all opponents, scoring 15 goals, without allowing any against over the course of the three-game, eight-team tournament. Shining in net for Aurora was goaltender Johnathan Read who turned in a perfect performance. In the photo are, back row, left to right, Michael Arcuri, Brendan McDonald, Lucas Marek, Jamie Wilson, Elias Jeries, Carson Dupuis, Russell Johnson; middle row, left to right, Graham Killby, Owen Nesbit, Joey Stel; front row, left to right, Scott Taylor, Johnathan Read, Brady Wilson and Ian Coschi. Absent when the picture was taken was Nicholas Chethuan.

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## Underdogs advance

The championship game in the Monday Night Men's Hockey league was played Monday night, but results were too late for The Auroran's deadlines.

Playing were Priestly Demolition against Law Insurance.

Incredibly, the semi-final playoffs pitted the bottom four teams against each other, after each had knocked off a leading team in the quarter-finals a week earlier.

In the semis, Priestly Demolition advanced with a slim 3-2 victory over Rec Sports; while Law Insurance had the same score to eliminate FPL Aggregates.

In the consolation

round, Baldwin's defeated Tom & Jerry's 5-3 while Highland Chev Cadillac downed Masterclean 7-5.

Details of the championship game will be in next week's edition of The Auroran.

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## Student wins award at Trent

Trent University's Department of Athletics and Recreation celebrated student athletic achievement at an Athletic Awards Ceremony, held in the Great Hall at Champlain College last week, and an Aurora resident was there.

Aurora native Sarah Campbell was among the recipients of a Trent University Athletics Award.

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# Resthaven employees agree to new package

Employees of Aurora Resthaven Long Term Care Residence voted more than 98 per cent in favour of a renewed collective agreement, which provides a total package increase of between approximately 8 to 13 percent.

Resthaven is located on Mill Street. The three-year agreement includes wage increases, the addition of a family day, an increase to the weekend premium, benefit increases, and extra vacation time. "It was a challenging and time-consuming round of

negotiations," said Stephen Bromell, CLAC representative. "The membership showed great support and patience as the bargaining committee held fast to achieve a very positive outcome. We are pleased with the results and greatly appreciate the strong

endorsement of the membership." CLAC is an independent Canadian labour union representing more than 50,000 workers in a wide range of sectors' construction, health care, retail, service, transportation, manufacturing, and others. Based on princi-

ples that promote the values of respect, dignity, fairness, and integrity, CLAC's approach to labour relations

stresses membership advocacy, cooperation, and the long term interests of the workplace community.



Sheri Fiegehen, left, of CHATS receives a cheque from Jane Stevens and Karen Zorn (right) of Pine Tree Potters. Twice a year the Pine Tree Potters' Guild has a sale where members donate pottery to the Charity table, and all proceeds are donated to CHATS (Community Home Assistance To Seniors). The next sale is May 7 through 9 at St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club.

## Parking garage under construction

**From page 1**  
the GO Transit overpass on Yonge Street at the south end of town.

The overpass was originally owned by CN Rail, until 2002 when it was acquired by GO Transit, and is 61 years old.

In the mid-nineties the bridge had become an eyesore due to rust and council officially asked CN to paint the bridge.

CN declined, telling the town that if it wished to paint the bridge the town would have to cover the costs.

The last time the bridge had been painted was in 1974.

In 2001, the town decided, with CN's approval, that they had no alternative but to paint the bridge themselves and allocated \$50,000 to complete the work.

With the new repairs scheduled to be done this year, Aurora Mayor Phyllis Morris said she will be pursuing with GO Transit the possi-

bility that "Welcome to Aurora" signage can finally be installed on the south side of the bridge.

It was back in February when the Government of Canada and Government of Ontario announced a joint investment to upgrade and revitalize the GO Transit infrastructure and provide up to \$500 million to support GO Transit's major infrastructure projects, including the Aurora parking garage.

The investment involves projects at three GO stations in York Region.

In addition to Aurora, parking expansion at the Unionville GO Station and parking rehabilitation at the Markham GO Station will occur.

It is expected GO will spend about \$27.9 million on the Aurora project.

The parking garage is being built on vacant land facing Wellington Street, just west of Industrial Parkway.

"This is a major boost for

GO Transit and our customers," said GO Chairman Peter Smith. "In the years ahead, this joint investment will provide real, noticeable improvements across the GO network, and make the commute better for our growing ridership. We're very pleased with this announcement."

GO carries nearly 55 million passengers a year in a network of train and bus services that spans more than 8,000 square kilometres.

Last December, the contract for the parking structure

at the Aurora GO Station was awarded to Vanbots Construction, a division of Carillion Construction Inc.

The building, when complete, will have 860 parking spaces and bring total parking at the GO Station to about 1,630 cars.

The 5-storey structure will be equipped with elevators as well as a separate access from the third level connecting to the existing parking lot to the south.

The structure is designed to maximize the utilization of the available land while respecting local bylaws.

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## Aurora Seniors Duplicate Bridge

**Monday, March 30:** N/S - Rose White and Gloria Smith; Anne White and Melody Irving; Lucille Sequeira and Judy Salmon and Audrey Robertson and Kay Hack (tie). E/W - Mary Oglanby and Isobelle Garrett; Suzanne Nunn and Shirley Laurin; Murray Sinclair and Don Newman.

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The Honourable Lisa Raitt, Minister of Natural Resources, centre, visited Aurora Home Hardware last week to announce the availability of new government grants. She was accompanied by Newmarket-Aurora Member of Parliament Lois Brown, left, and met with Home Hardware owner Russ Barfitt.

*Auroran photo by David Falconer*

## Natural Resources minister visits Aurora

Canadian homeowners are being urged to act now to take advantage of a new opportunity to save money on home energy retrofits.

The Honourable Lisa Raitt, Minister of Natural Resources, made the announcement in Aurora last week.

Effective immediately, for a limited time, grants under the ecoENERGY-Retrofit Homes program will increase by 25 per cent.

"This is a great chance for Canadians to save money on home renovations that will cut their energy bills for years to come - but I do encourage homeowners to act quickly," said Minister Raitt. "This special increase in grants is for a maximum of two years only, putting money back in Canadians' pockets when they need it most."

As an added incentive, Minister Raitt pointed out that in many cases, homeowners who retrofit their homes to make them more energy efficient could also qualify for the Government of Canada's new Home Renovation Tax Credit, worth up to \$1,350.

"This is a great deal for homeowners and it's a great deal for Canadians," she said. "As more people retrofit their homes, they'll be generating economic activity and protecting and creating jobs in communities across the country - and, of course, as we become more energy efficient, we are also reducing emissions."

Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown was with the minister when she visited Aurora's Home Hardware. Following a media event to highlight the ecoENERGY program's benefits for consumers, Minister Raitt had a chance to speak with Aurora Mayor Phyllis Morris and Aurora Home Hardware owner Russ Barfitt.

The ecoENERGY Retrofit - Homes program will provide homeowners with grants of up to \$5,000 to offset the cost of making energy-efficiency improvements.

With the 25 percent increase in grants, the program will cover a larger share of the cost incurred by homeowners who carry out retrofits that improve energy efficiency.

As part of the Government of Canada's Economic Action Plan, an additional \$300 million is being invested in the ecoENERGY Retrofit-Homes program. This will

allow as many as 200,000 more homeowners to participate in the program over the next two years, generating an estimated \$2.4 billion in economic activity across Canada.

To qualify, homeowners must first have a pre-retrofit energy evaluation by a certified evaluator and a post evaluation following the renovations.

Funds are available only until March 31, 2011 and are subject to availability. Homeowners are encouraged to apply early.

"I am pleased the Minister chose Newmarket-Aurora to highlight the important ecoENERGY Retrofit-Homes program," said Ms Brown. "Our government understands the importance of communities such as ours and it's always nice to receive some national exposure."

Ms Brown will also have details on the program at her MP booth at the Aurora Home Show April 17 to 19.

## Klees names two to head campaign

Newmarket-Aurora MPP Frank Klees' campaign for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario continues to grow with Thornhill MPP Peter Shurman and long-time party organizer John Capobianco joining the Klees team as co-chairs.

"I am thrilled to have Peter Shurman, the MPP for Thornhill and John Capobianco, a lifelong Conservative, both provincially and federally, as my campaign co-chairs," Klees said. "They are highly respected members of our Party and I cannot think of better people to play key roles in my leadership campaign."

A two-time Conservative Party candidate in the riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore, John Capobianco has more than 20 years of political experience at all levels of government.

He was a senior political advisor to the Government of Ontario and is a recognized political expert and leader within Ontario's Progressive Conservative Party as well as the Conservative Party of Canada.

Most recently a member of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario Leadership Committee, Capobianco resigned in order to join Klees in

his bid for leadership.

Peter Shurman, whose voice is recognized by a majority of Ontarians as a talk radio host and currently the MPP for the riding of Thornhill was the first to join the Klees team.

Shurman is excited at the growing momentum of the Klees campaign and looks forward to working with Capobianco.

"John is supporting Frank Klees for the same reason I am...because Frank is the candidate to unite and energize our Party and to create common ground for rural and urban Ontarians," he said. "We need to rid Ontario of the Liberal scourge that has taken our province from first to last."

Klees makes his home in Aurora.

The town's Building Department has issued its annual financial report and 2008 seems to have been a good year for Aurora.

In 2008, building permits issued by the town were above average, resulting in a \$1,223,654.47 surplus.

Under Provincial legislation the excess funds must be placed in a Reserve Fund for future use.

The report noted that with the current economic climate "building permit activity will likely diminish and we may need to draw on the reserves to provide service."

With the 2008 surplus added to the Reserve Fund, Building Department reserves now stand at \$2,447,137.88.

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**Easter Saturday**  
 April 11- Easter Vigil and Baptism 7:30pm

**Easter Sunday**  
 April 12 - 8:00 am Holy Eucharist ~ Chapel  
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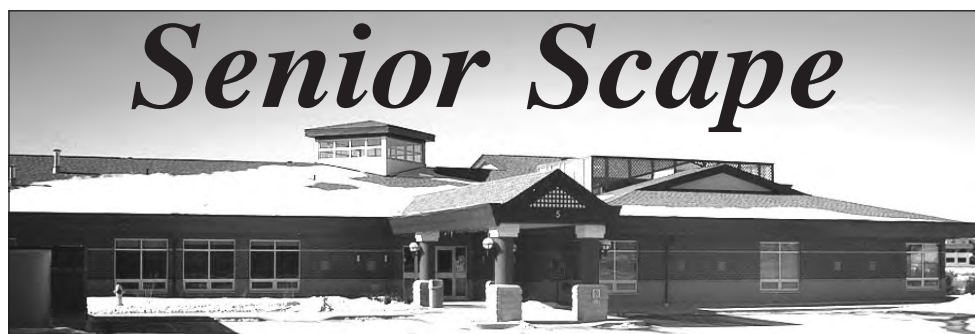
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# Senior Scape

## Volunteer Night set for April 15

By BRIAN WARBURTON

Easter approaches to coincide with the first growth of green grass, tree foliage and spring bulbs all bright and fresh and bringing pleasure and hopefully a Happy Easter for all of us.

The new growth in spring is an awakening of the land and an awakening of our senior lives, and a thought well worthy of consideration is the Aurora Seniors Association (ASA) which is a seniors' community centre, as a place to find a personal niche.

The ASA is not an island unto itself, nor are any of the activities or programs, which are not only offered to all, but all are encouraged to take part.

Among the great wastes in life is time spent doing little of interest, and this seems to afflict some of those who have raised their families, completed their working careers and now contend with time on their hands.

Tuesday mornings in the centre, the computer club hosts a gathering of bright and interested members, usually 20 to 30 strong, for a presentation relating in its broadest sense to computer activities, and you are welcome as a beginner or as an expert.

The Tuesday program presents an excellent opportunity to drop in on the ASA and participate quietly by listening to a group presentation.

Questions and answers form one presentation usually the first Tuesday in the month, and provides an opportunity to present any question, usually computer oriented but not necessarily so, to the presenter.

He will answer or appeal to members present to answer.

This method usually prompts a competent answer and if this fails, an attempt will be made to provide an answer later.

This simple format has appealed to members for many years. It is an opportunity to meet and mingle; to be present, seen and accepted in a wonderfully active senior setting, lacking any sense of hurry or urgency.

The relaxed atmosphere is always conducive to informal conversation in a semi-formal setting, and informal conversation is often extremely informative.

Ron Humenchuk, who often speaks at the Tuesday morning computer club sessions and who has excellent technical computer skills, was extremely informative last week.

He sent everybody who receives the free ASA flash e-mail advisories, a warning of a possible malicious attack by a computer worm, projected for April.

Nobody could know if the projected virus attack was real or merely a rumour, but many computer operators were relieved to receive the advisory, and judging from the e-mail response Ron received, a lot of computer owners were relieved to know he was right on the ball providing accurate and precise information to computer operators to protect their equipment.

The technical directions were easy to follow, and the computer owners only needed encouraging sage advice.

To those who visit the ASA for the first time and spend a little time investigating the possibilities, the centre is an eye opener since seldom are seniors the recipient of such fine public support as is available in this seniors' centre.

The ASA has been equipped with modern equipment, all in excellent working order and completely functional.

The pool room, computer room, woodworking shop, and kitchen are all merely a few years old and so is the building that houses them.

"Volunteer Appreciation Night" is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15th, at 7 p.m. and everybody is encouraged to attend for an evening of fun, food and entertainment.

Consequently, good fortune has been the constant companion of the seniors, for the most part, these past few years and dedicated volunteers have generated much of that good fortune.

Getting involved for the first time is a challenge for some but very often, interest mounts and surprisingly, what once was challenging proves to be stimulating and deeply satisfying.

With regret, I bid farewell to former Mayor of Aurora and life member of the ASA, Dick Illingworth, who died recently.

A man of many fine talents, Dick was deeply interested in Aurora, past, present and whatever the future might present.

He always appeared close to public life in and around Aurora and was an inveterate recorder and commentator of events as they unfolded including writing much of what this newspaper published.

Dick lived his life well and long. He was 92.



Michael Keith, acting Executive Director of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, spends time with Candance Carter of Back2Front, a website organization, during a recent "Lunch and Learn" event. Candice gave a presentation on search engines.

Auroran photo by David Falconer



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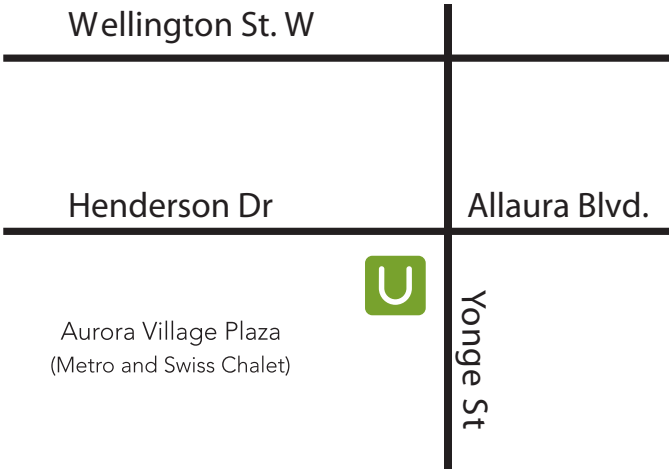


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