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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Independent Community Newspaper

Vol. 8 No. 35 905-727-3300 auroran.com FREE Week of July 1, 2008

Aurora turns down peaking generation station location

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

For more than two hours of last week's five-hour council meeting, members wrestled with the question of a gas-fired peaking generation station to be located in Aurora and the alternatives.

Finally, Councillor Evelina MacEachern introduced a lengthy resolution to the effect that Aurora did not support the site proposed by Northland Power or a confidential second site, known to members of council from another applicant, and if the transmission line was to be enhanced, the lines were to be underground in urban areas.

Due to the complexity of

Hot Spot moving to ACC1

Aurora's Hot Spot, the place for the town's youngsters, is moving.

Wendy Gaertner, who started the operation several years ago, told The Auroran Hot Spot will leave its Lions Club location and move to the community centre.

"Hot Spot will celebrate its last Friday evening at the Aurora Lions Hall this Friday, July 4th, beginning at 7.30 p.m." she said.

The following Friday, July 11, Hot Spot will move into the auditorium at the Aurora Community Centre, just off Aurora Heights Drive.

Hours and restrictions will remain the same, she said.

the resolution, councillors sought a recess so that printed copies could be made available to members, which was eventually adopted on an 8-1 vote with Councillor Evelyn Buck opposed.

Jim Mulvale, Environmental Engineer for Northland Power, appeared before council to present the firm's proposal to locate the 340-400 megawatt gas-fired Peaking Generation Station on a former landfill site on Bloomington Road.

He said the project was being developed to respond to the need for electrical generating capacity in Northern York Region as identified by the Ontario Power Authority in its Integrated Power System Plan.

The OPA has launched a competitive bidding process to respond to the need for generating capacity in the northern part of the region and the proposed Northland site is adjacent to the transmission corridor and the proposed project will use state-of-the-art low emission, high efficiency technology.

Please see page 9



Hosting her third "From the Hill to the Grill", Newmarket-Aurora Member of Parliament Belinda Stronach, served up lunch to a sold-out crowd at the Aurora Seniors' Centre Thursday. Enjoying dessert with her is former Aurora Mayor Tim Jones, who will run for the Liberals in the next federal election, as soon as one is called. Ms Stronach has announced she will not run in the next election. *Auroran photo by David Falconer*

Vending box issue settled?

An issue that has faced Aurora Councils as far back as 1969 has been citizen complaints about the proliferation of newspaper vending boxes on town streets.

A solution has finally been approved.

Council approved the enactment of a proposed bylaw to licence and regulate the location of newspaper distribution boxes

in the municipality and an agreement be authorized with Creative Outdoor Advertising for the provision of Newspaper Distribution Boxes Corrals.

In addition, staffers will review the number of newspaper distribution boxes as well as the proposed locations to determine whether they can be reduced.

The enacting bylaw was adopted by council last week.

In a report, staffers noted there were 100 distribution boxes in 24 locations along Yonge Street, Wellington Street, John West Way and Allaura Blvd.

It was also noted that Creative Outdoor Advertising was prepared to provide the town with the necessary corrals at no cost as the firm generates

Please see page 13

BRIEFLY

New executive

Aurora's Probus Club has elected its executive for the 2008-2009 year.

President is Bob Saunders.

Also on the executive are George Woolley, Vice-President; Marilyn Munslow, Past President; Jim McCulloch, Secretary and Ron Canham, Treasurer.

As the group does not meet during the summer, the next meeting will be Wednesday, September 10, at the Royal Canadian Legion on Industrial Parkway North.

Instant photos

Because The Auroran deadlines won't allow us to get pictures to you in a hurry after July First, we'll do the next best thing.

Put them on the internet.

As soon as the day ends, parade pictures, courtesy of Rob Schuetze, will be available for your perusal at www.auroran.com.

Go have a look.

Walking tour

The weather wasn't on his side, but Auroran David Heard kicked off his weekly "walking tour" Saturday morning.

He'll do it every Saturday, leading up to Aurora's Doors Open in August.

Called "A Step in Time", the tour will concentrate on the older homes near the Town Park where the walk will start each Saturday, beginning at 10 a.m.

David will present history on homes located on Wells, Mosley, Church, Victoria, Metcalfe, Wellington and Larmont Streets, and pay particular attention to the now empty Church Street School and Wells Street School.

Opening was missing

A recent front page story on Aurora Council turning down a proposal to install traffic lights just west of Bayview and Wellington Streets, somehow got into print missing the first seven paragraphs.

So, here they are:

Aurora Council has voted once again not to install a traffic light on Wellington Street just west of Bayview to serve the proposed Aurora Gateway plaza.

In February, 2008, Joe Longo appeared before General Committee to request a new access to the proposed commercial development on the northwest corner of this intersection.

The approved plan at that time allowed only for a right-in/right-out turn off of Wellington, and he hoped the town would agree to a new signalized full access intersection.

He argued that 65 per cent of the business he expected at his proposed grocery store would come from the west.

Without a traffic intersection west of Bayview, these customers would be required to turn left at Bayview, left again at the next intersection, and enter through the neighbouring plaza.

He was supported by other proposed tenants, including the Bank of Montreal, as well as Aurora Toyota, located on the south side of the street.

But this was not the first time this issue had been before council.

No, we have no idea where they went, but they were there when the reporter wrote the story. We checked.



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COMING EVENTS

CONTINUING

Relive history with a family tour of Hillary House to relive the history and the families who lived there. From the old furnishings to the 19th century medical equipment, visitors will get a first hand look at the life of a doctor and some of the equipment used to cure common ailments in Aurora during that time period. Hillary House is open daily through August from 9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Call 905-727-8991 for details.

Thursday barbecue is back at the Aurora Seniors' Centre from 11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. at \$4.50 per person which includes a burger, drink, dessert and coffee/tea. No reservations are required. The ever-popular bingo is being played Friday afternoons.

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

Every Tuesday from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. it's Story and Playtime at Aurora Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South. Call 905-841-8883 for further details.

Every Second Friday, students in Grade 5 to 8 can gather at Aurora Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South from 7 to 9 p.m. For more information call 905-841-8883 or email jonathanturtle@gmail.com

A drop-in centre operates every Wednesday at the Community Bible Church on Bathurst Street just south of Henderson from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. It's open to all parents, grandparents and caregivers. For more information e-mail Judy Hoffmann at jhoffmann@sympatico.ca.

Scottish Country Dancing every Friday morning at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church beginning at 10.30 a.m.

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.

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. There is also a selection of interest groups. Contact Beverley at 905-727-2151.

The Aurora Seniors Evergreen Choir practice in the West-McKenzie Hall of the Seniors' Centre, every Wednesday from 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. under the direction of Tom Rainsford and Enid Maize. For more information, call 905-841-9706.

Tots (age 0-4 years) bring your caregivers for coffee or tea while you enjoy story and playtime every Tuesday from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Aurora Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South. Call 905-841-8883 for further information.

FRIDAY, JULY 4

Town of Aurora Mayor's Blood Donor Clinic, 1 Municipal Drive from 11.30 a.m. to 2.20 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 5

Merlin's Hollow open house. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 181 Centre Crescent. Free.

SUNDAY, JULY 6

The Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society will hold its gar-

den tour featuring seven Aurora gardens noon to 5 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased at R & R Revisited, 95 Edward Street; Caruso & Co.,15210 Yonge Street; Flowers by Terry, 14799 Yonge Street; and Pathways to Perennials in Pottageville. Call 905-727-5926 for more details.

MONDAY, JULY 7

Our Lady of Grace Church, 16 Catharine Avenue, is the site of a blood donor clinic from 2 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 11

Creative and inspirational artist Raine Davis will teach young adults how to wire wrap as they create their own wind chimes using seashells, beach glass, beads and other recycled items at the Aurora Public Library, 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Cost is \$30 per registrant and classes are restricted to people nine to 15 years of age.

SUNDAY, JULY 13

Merlin's Hollow open house, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 181 Centre Crescent. Free.

TUESDAY, JULY 15

Aurora Council meets at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of the Town Hall for the only council or general committee meeting during July. Aurora Cable Internet, now Rogers Cable, will telecast the meeting at 6.30 p.m. the following night and at noon the following Saturday and Sunday.

SATURDAY, JULY 19

Artists in the park today at the Aurora Farmers' Market, Wells Street, between Mosley and Metcalfe Streets. For further information, go to [www.e-aurora.ca/farmers market](http://www.e-aurora.ca/farmers%20market).

THURSDAY, JULY 24

Christmas in July at the Gateway Cafe & Lanes, 210 Edward

Street, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Bring a non-perishable food item and bowl for free. Food will be donated to the Aurora Food Pantry.

SATURDAY, JULY 26

Turn your trash into other's treasures at the regular Great Curbside Giveaway. Take unwanted items to the curb today and mark them free for others to pick up. To keep Aurora attractive, please remove leftovers by 6 p.m.

AUGUST 12-15

Step into the world of watercolour with artist and teacher Alana Biasi, designed to teach the beginner and advanced painter the possibilities of watercolour painting. Course is for students Grade 5 to 11, and runs from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. at the Aurora Public Library. Fee is \$40 per registrant.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16

The Aurora Farmers' Market is part of the annual Aurora Doors Open Event. This event will include music in the park. For further information, go to [www.e-aurora.ca/farmers market](http://www.e-aurora.ca/farmers%20market).

Third Annual Doors Open Aurora featuring a variety of heritage sites, cultural and community interest.

Local author and historian John McIntyre will guide residents on a walking tour of historic Wellington Street and southwest Old Aurora. The tour leaves from the Farmer's Market at 11 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Guest speaker Ivan Harris, Curator for the CBC's Broadcast Museum, returns to the Aurora Historical Society at 8 p.m. at Hillary House. He will speak about the changing technology up to early 1900s, the different uses for light bulbs and lead discussions on the spectrum showing the infrared lamp to the ultra-violet.



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Ron Wallace, left, editor and publisher of The Auroran, has been named president of the Aurora Rotary Club, for the upcoming year. Former president Greg Foster pins the new president in a ceremony that took place last week at the home of Jack Laurion, a Rotary member. Wallace is a former president of the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce.

Photo by Pat Stade

Future of Wells Street School remains in doubt

In a letter recently to parents of students formerly attending Wells Street Public School, the York Region District School Board advised that the architectural feasibility study of the school had been completed.

The feasibility study presents three options for the renewal of the building to current code and safety standards and all of them carry substantial costs.

The feasibility study was based on information received from a contractor in May, 2007, and was carried out by IBI Group and R.J. Burnside and Associates to identify strategies and the scope of work and associated costs to repair and restore the school.

It was pointed out that after 115 years on the same foundation, the school was beginning to show its age as new and widening cracks in the foundation were in need of a thorough structural inspection.

Wells Street School was originally Aurora's first high school, built in 1892 but didn't look anything like today's building.

It's believed that when the existing building was constructed in 1923, parts of the original structure were included.

The building has served as an elementary school since 1952 when the Aurora and District High School, now called Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School, opened on Dunning Avenue.

The engineering consultants have been monitoring the physical condition of the school over the past two years and while they were confident that the building posed no immediate danger to occupants, they were concerned about longer term use.

The board made a decision to move the students from Wells Street to Stone Road, where they currently attend school at Aurora Grove Public School.

As a result of their ongoing review, the engineers recommended a through investigation of the building structure to be carried out during the summer months.

Based on their observations, the estimated cost was in the \$1 million to \$1.5 million range.

The investigation involved opening floors and walls for visual inspection and because of the scope of the work, there was a strong possibility the school would not be ready for classes in September.

It wasn't, so the board arranged for alternative accommodation for the students to be provided in vacant classrooms within the Aurora Grove Public School

In October, trustees adopted a motion that staff be directed to undertake additional investigations of the mechanical, electrical and life safety systems within the school and the results be shared with the community.

Since receiving the final report, Board planning staff has spent much time considering how to advise trustees. Given the condition of the building, doing nothing was not a responsible option.

On the other hand, making a quick decision without understanding the long term need for the school would not be responsible.

Before consideration of any of the options it is planned to carry out a Student Accommodation Review to assess and study options available regarding the future of the school.

Provincial law, as set out in the Education Act, requires that these reviews include extensive community input and members of the community will have that opportunity through a series of community meetings which are tentatively scheduled for this fall and next spring.

It was pointed out that the establishment of a student accommodation review does not mean that the school has been or will be slated for closure.

And Wells Street Public School will remain as a distinct school at Aurora Grove.

In April, the auditorium of Wells Street Public School was filled to capacity with for-

mer and present students, staff, parents and friends of the school as they celebrated its 115 years of history.

Teacher/librarian Wendy D'Angelo involved the students in a school-wide literacy project focusing on the history and heritage of the school, instead of presenting their annual play.

During the opening ceremonies, she spoke about the tradition of the school which she referred to as an old School with a Big Heart, dating back to 1892 as the Aurora High School, with J. H. Knowles as principal from 1923 to 1958.

School Principal Larry Fritz, dressed in period costume, welcomed the guests and introduced Trustee Gordon Kerr and former teachers.

It was also the first opportunity for parents and friends to hear the school song, "This is Our School" sung by the school choir assisted by local songwriter and singer Glenn Marais on guitar.

Aurora artist Dorothy Clark McClure was introduced as she had granted permission for the school to use her drawing of the Wells Street School as the crest on a school T-shirt, which was worn by several staff members and students.

Guest speaker was Jacqueline Stuart, former Curator of the Aurora Museum. She spoke about the history of the school and how back in the early days of the area John Mosley subdivided his land to include an Academy, which later became Wells Street School.

The Village of Aurora purchased 16 lots in 1867 to cre-

ate cricket grounds which later became the Town Park.

At one time there was a three-tier fountain in the park with the top tier for people, the middle one for horses and the bottom one for dogs.

A bandshell was built in 1892 which was replaced by the Aurora Lions Club in 1950 and more recently with a new bandstand.

She also spoke about the barriers which block Wells Street on school days. In 1893 the provincial school inspector was critical about the lack of playgrounds for the school and arrangements were made for students to use a section of the park, resulting in the barriers.

Following the opening ceremonies, guests were invited to view the displays of pictures and artifacts in various locations throughout the school and explore a Wells Street classroom of the past, the present and the future.

Now students, parents and old time residents hold their breath as they wait for information as to the future of this historic school.

In June the Heritage Advisory Committee directed staff members to bring back a heritage research report including details on the future use of the Wells Street Public School as proposed by the York Region District School Board.

In October, 2007, the Heritage Advisory Committee received the Heritage Building Evaluation Working Group Report regarding the Wells Street Public School.

The Advisory Committee approved for designation the school as a property of cultural heritage value.

Tag system deferred

Last March Aurora Council directed staff members to review options to allow waste pick up beyond the current limits including investigating the merits of implementing a Buy Tag system.

The town's current policy allows three bags or items per pickup for households and 10 bags per industrial unit, and Aurora is one of the few remaining local municipalities to adopt such a practice.

It was also noted that staff has received feedback from the public and a majority of the calls are in favour of implementing a Buy Tag system especially during peak cleaning periods.

Following a review, staffers pointed out that since the three stream waste program started last September, they have received weekly calls inquiring if a bag tag system would be in place.

It was noted that there were some exceptional circumstances where some families could not maintain a three-bag limit such as a home with special care residents or group homes.

Staffers also carried out a survey of adjacent municipalities outlining various approaches to the maximum bag limits.

They found the average maximum bag limit is three with a bag tag program in place to accommodate excess bags at an average cost of \$2 per tag.

Staffers said that implementing a bag tag system would further enhance the town's waste diversion from landfill by encouraging residents to favour participating in the no charge recycling

and composting programs.

Having a bag tag system could also increase awareness of modern waste management standards and bring to light the actual economic and environmental costs associated with waste generation and disposal.

Staff also noted that the town may encounter difficulty with some residents who may perceive the switch to a bag tag system as an attempt to raise garbage rates through an added tax and suggested a through and informative communication plan to inform residents well in advance about the costs of the existing waste management practices.

The proposed plan, similar to that in other municipalities, would allow residents to buy the tags indi-

vidually at \$2 or in quantities of 11 for \$20.

The general committee received the staff report as information and deferred it to a future council meeting for discussion.

When the staff report came before council, Councillor Evelina MacEachern moved that it be referred back to staff for more information including the impact of the three-bag limit now that garbage is only picked up every two weeks.

Other members wanted to know where the concept of the bag tag came from and sought background information.

It was agreed that staff members would report on the various issues raised by members of council early in 2009.

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Poor Richard

Controversial group is still deferring items

*Council's term has been controversial,
And there's still two more years to go;
A lot of election promises were made,
But there's not too much to show!*
- Poor Richard's Scrapbook

Every year as an annual exercise, town departments compile statistics related to their operations and provide a summary of their accomplishments and initiatives from the previous year which is compiled into an Annual Report.

This comprehensive review advises council and the public of performance highlights of the municipality for the previous year and sets out goals for the current year.

The 2007 Annual Report was presented to the general committee last May and provided information in detail of the initiatives and the continued collective efforts of staff to provide the highest and best level of service to the residents and businesses they serve.

When the report came to the general committee, some members expressed concern that it was a staff report without council input, even though it had always been a staff report which included a message from the mayor.

At the meeting, Mayor Phyllis Morris said she was in the process of preparing a 10-page summary of the many achievements of council which would be in a report to the community from the mayor and councillors.

It was finally agreed to receive the staff report as information and for the mayor and the Chief Administrative Officer to work together on one report for the municipality.

Although the year is almost half over, citizens are still waiting for the Town's Annual Report, while the mayor issued her personal report titled "What a Difference a Year Makes", which was a first for Aurora.

The mayor reports that she was pleased by how often council members had been able to find common ground on many issues.

The significant drop in close, recorded votes, as compared with previous councils, was one indication that council has been working hard to reach consensus.

Not wishing to rain on the mayor's parade, the voting record is that of block voting with several 5-4 recorded votes for the Morris/MacEachern team.

Based on preliminary results, with the appointment of John Gallo, the voting record could be 6-3.

Rather than an action-oriented council, it has become one of constant deferrals as members appear unable to make decisions as it took four deferrals before there was agreement to approve \$15,000 for pathway lighting in Lambert Willson Park.

An astute letter writer to The Auroran noted that there too many "I's" in the Mayor's Report and not enough "We's" with the final count 54 to 6.

Every month staff produces a comprehensive 30-or-more page report on pending issues brought before council or committees which are deferred for some reason or other and the list keeps getting longer as it is normally received as information with no action taken.

In addition to the various issues on the pending list there are two very important issues that need to be discussed prior to the next municipal election and which were promised during the mayoralty debate prior to the last election: a ward system for the municipality and more representation at regional council.

All candidates agreed the town should have a second representative with Mayor Morris adding that a strong voice was needed at the region, but so far there has been little, if any, public debate at Aurora or regional council.

Regarding a ward system for Aurora, the mayor said she had supported a motion to have a referendum for a ward system on the ballot for this election but it had been defeated by council and she added that citizen input should be obtained.

If action on a ward system is to take place as a referendum in the 2010 municipal election, it's time to get working on it now, possibly with the establishment of an Ad Hoc Advisory Committee for each issue.

There's still time to switch from a deferral council to an action-oriented council, if there is the political will to do so.



We may never understand why anyone would get rid of a school yearbook, but someone dropped a copy of the 1961 Atom yearbook from Aurora and District High School (Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School) in our lap at the second-hand bookstore - R & R Revisited - recently. The book is incredible and above is one of hundreds of old photographs found inside its covers. We chose the student council for that year. They are, front row, left to right, Nancy White, Eleanor Smith, Karen Stein, Joann Lysecki, Bob McBurney, Nancy Darrach, Barbara Bolsby, Ann Huizingh, Nancy Greensides, and Susan Crisp. Middle row, left to right, Al Hutchins, Walter Shultes, Phyllis Hutchins, Janet Irvine, Shirley Weir, Dorothy Carleton, Carolyn North, Cherryl MacDonald, Kirsten Jensen, Joan Fluck, Bill Atkinson, Mike Blackett and John Lacey. Top row, left to right, Barry Wilkens, Don Graham, John Hird, Wolfe Buchholz, Jon Wilson, Peter Veltheer, Jim Hadcock, Jim Best, Jim Maxwell, Keith Munroe, and Thomas Patterson. Absent when the photo was taken were Nancy Davis, Hilda Boneschaker, Andy Peterson, Cary Moses, Robert Tetley and Patricia Garstang. Maybe whoever left the book didn't realize it was in a box of used books. Tell us the name on the inside front cover and you can have it back if you wish.

Letter to the Editor

SOYRA takes exception to 'Poor Richard' remarks

Open letter to Richard Illingworth:

Dear Mr. Illingworth,

The Society of York Region Artists (SOYRA) would like to invite you to our next meeting so that you can enjoy the positive energy of our group and update your understanding of the organization itself. We also invite you to have a discussion with our executive members.

In the meantime, we would like to clarify and correct some information from your "Poor Richard" column of May 20.

1. In recent years our membership tripled and we are actively engaged in promoting the arts in York Region.

Aurora is our home base, but we are an inclusive, not exclusive group. We welcome artists from all of York Region.

Currently, six executive members are long time residents (more than 20 years) of Aurora.

As well, nearly 40 of our members are Aurora residents and taxpayers. It is important to note that art societies are not, and should not be, comprised of members from just one town.

Our Aurora artists and regional artists are welcomed in other art societies and shows. As you know, this is common practice.

Support among community groups is vital for the promotion of the arts.

2. Any communication we have had with the town has been public, not "behind the scenes". None of our discussions bring up the question of, "who owns the Town Hall?"

SOYRA has hung paintings, by agreement with successive town councils, over many years. Does the swimming club own the swimming pool? Does the soccer club own the playing fields? No.

But all these community groups have a working agreement to use these assets and expect that agreement to be honoured by the Town.

In May, SOYRA had a concern that our agreement was being compromised. SOYRA expressed its concern in a letter to the mayor, members of council, and relevant town staff.

A meeting was convened and a civil and amicable resolution was reached.

3. We currently have two ongoing projects with the Town of Aurora.

The Town organizes Art Aurora, while SOYRA members volunteer their time in the set up, running and take down of this event.

As in other well known art shows, artists from beyond Aurora town boundaries are welcomed.

4. As a group, SOYRA is not involved with the Skylight Gallery.

Artists may apply to have the opportunity to exhibit for one month in the Gallery. Several

artists belonging to SOYRA have been fortunate to exhibit in the Skylight Gallery, but that has literally been "the luck of the draw".

5. SOYRA does not exhibit on the first floor of the Town Hall.

6. Our rotation on the second floor is on a four-month basis, not three months.

7. Any money received by SOYRA is the result of an application for a grant. Our last grant was for \$300.

8. We have no knowledge of your "abuse from SOYRA members".

Would you be so kind as to personally meet with the executive with specific evidence of this, so we might clarify any misunderstanding?

Perhaps more thorough research is required.

Objective and journalistic integrity would then be met. In the meantime, please refrain from using such hurtful language in a public forum.

An apology to SOYRA would be welcomed.

9. It is unfortunate that you continue to denigrate the efforts of a non-profit volunteer society that adds so much to the value of living in Aurora.

SOYRA is pleased to have a positive and growing relationship with the Town of Aurora.

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We look forward to meeting with you.

Bill van Oorschot

President

SOYRA

Nancy Newman

Vice-President

SOYRA

THE AURORAN

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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

A couple of weeks back, the provincial Tories held a policy town hall meeting at the St. George campus of the University of Toronto.

More than 220 people attended, and Aurora was well represented by a good-sized contingent, led by our MPP, Frank Klees.

I was also in attendance, in my capacity as first vice president (responsible for policy and fundraising) of the local riding association.

This policy conference was for the GTA East and GTA West riding associations and it was the first of five such regional policy gatherings that will be held during the year.

The nature of this meeting was quite a bit different than the provincial party Annual General Meeting, held in February in London.

At that meeting, the only question on the 1,500 people's minds was leadership.

You may recall that Mr. Tory received 66.8 per cent of the vote and announced he would remain on as Leader and lead the party to fight the next provincial election, not scheduled until October 2011.

The tone of the discussions in the town hall was quite enthusiastic and optimistic.

The volunteers realized that the party, having dealt with the leadership question, now needed to get on with the work of strengthening itself, recruiting new party members, raising funds and developing policy alternatives for the next election.

What was remarkable was that more than 200 people would give up an absolutely beautiful Saturday to sit in a classroom and talk policy development. And an election is still three years away!

Despite what happened last October, people still care about the party and want to be part of its renewal.

The policy discussions were split into two sessions during the day. In the morning, delegates could pick from energy, or the environment, to name a few, while in the afternoon, people could choose to attend the sessions on health, economic development, or rural affairs.

I chose to attend the energy forum in the morning and then the health session in the afternoon.

Each session was co-chaired by two individuals; one an elected MPP, and the other a volunteer with industry knowledge and expertise.

The policy chairs first provided an outline of the process and the expected timelines. We then spent that Saturday identifying what we believe are the key issues within each of the portfolios.

No suggestions were offered as the party leadership, at this point, simply wants to determine what individual party volunteers feel is important and to identify policy priority areas.

Over the next three years party members will be shaping and developing policy resolutions on a wide range of issues so that by the time the 2011 election rolls around, the party will have a policy platform that has been debated, and vetted by the ordinary volunteer members.

This is especially important in light of what took place last fall, when most people recall the PC electoral disaster because of the "faith based" issue.

That is why I am pleased we are doing these sessions.

You could really call this exercise "Back to the Future" because the party is traveling back to its recent past to determine its future policy.

Under the guidance of then Ontario third vice president Frank Klees, the policy process that began in 1993 was one of the main rea-

sons for the PC Party's electoral success in 1995.

The party developed a plan that was discussed and debated within the various riding associations, and then at regional policy workshops before final resolutions were adopted after rigorous debates at a provincial wide policy meeting.

These final policy resolutions became part of the party's platform.

While it is true that the end product - that being the policy platform document - is the most important issue, how you develop the document is also crucial.

Party volunteers were energized, as they had the opportunity to make and influence party policy. This certainly did not mean that they won everything that they wanted - as the Leader and his campaign team craft a campaign strategy and theme out of the policy resolutions - but the grass roots were consulted, and listened to.

So, why is all this important to me here in Aurora in the summer of 2008?

It is important for the simple reason that a democracy best functions when you have opposition parties that are ready and able to govern.

Knowing that the other guy can do the job is a great way to keep the incumbents on their toes.

By proposing detailed, and well thought out policy alternatives, hopefully it will provide voters with that most important commodity when they enter the ballot booth in 2011: a clear choice.

**Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com**



Inside Aurora

By Scott Johnston

There was a lot of sadness last year - and justifiably so - when Aurora cancelled the July 1st Canada Day parade.

While it never attracted the crowds associated with our town's Santa Claus Parade, perhaps due to the fact that not as many people are out of town cottaging in late November, it was a shame that another tradition of Canada's Birthday Town was gone.

Fortunately, the parade is back - better than ever - for 2008.

But overlooked in all the angst last year was the related loss of the one July 1st event that more than any other held in Aurora that day, truly captured what it meant to be Canadian.

The Sidewalk Chalk Competition.

I'm not surprised if you're unfamiliar with this activity, as it was one of the lesser-known events held in town on Canada Day.

Maybe this was because its budget (or complete lack thereof) did not allow for advertising.

Or perhaps it was because this event was the first one of the day, so necessitated getting up even earlier on a holiday.

Or maybe the combination of both getting up early on a holiday, and crawling around on the ground, sounded even less appealing.

In any case, for a time it was one of Aurora's best kept secrets.

And what a great secret it was.

This competition was initially conceived as an inexpensive way to keep kids occupied prior to the parade.

From a small tent on the east side of Yonge Street in front of

the library, organizers would dispense supplies, instructions, and enthusiasm.

Children were given their choice of a few colours of chalk (red was always the most popular), directed to their own slab of sidewalk, and tasked with drawing the best Canadian theme.

Kind of like a mini-version of the Canadian Achievements mural at Yonge and Wellington, except without all the advertising.

Points were awarded for such things as originality, colour, and creative use of sidewalk cracks (yes, feel free to insert your own creative 'crack' here).

And make no mistake, the kids were both imaginative and talented, especially using chalk - a less than forgiving medium.

As more and more families gathered for the parade, many of them took time to participate in this inexpensive (it was free) way to pass the time.

Before long, the entire stretch of sidewalk from Mosley to Victoria was being transformed.

It was great fun to stroll along and watch these creations reveal themselves.

And no matter how many children participated, and despite all of them working on the same "Canada" theme, it was amazing how unique each vision was.

Some children drew one big picture - Canadian flags and maps of the country were popular.

Others went for collages, packing in as many different ideas as they could.

Concrete Canada

Soon everything that could possibly be construed as being Canadian got temporarily immortalized on the sidewalk: flags, beavers, canoes, loonies, mountains, ice skates, maple leaves, moose, snow shoes, the Great Lakes, inuksuit, pine trees, transcontinental railways, syrup, Mounties, hockey and lacrosse sticks, and yes, even donuts.

Best of all, whole families got involved.

You could see parents initially watching from the sidelines, and offering suggestions.

Then, before you knew it, they were down on all fours, as well, enthusiastically chalking away with their kids.

Eventually, the sketches were completed and admired, and maybe a small prize or two awarded.

The mini-murals would remain until the next rain, at which time these sidewalk slates would be cleaned off, and ready for the next year.

But in that brief time before the parade, this simple and inexpensive exercise reminded us of the importance of families spending time together, the diversity of our rich heritage, and how lucky we are to live in this wonderful town in this great nation.

And that's what this day's all about.

Happy Birthday, Canada!

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

Aurora snookers itself on power supply issue, he says

To the editor,

Well, Aurora Council has gone and done it this time!

After two years of trying to set up a meeting with the mayor in order to discuss with council and staff the details of one of the largest infrastructure projects facing this town and Region, Northland Power was granted 10 minutes to present to council this past Tuesday.

Over one hour of questions followed the presentation and questions that should have been answered months ago were finally asked.

Following this detailed grilling a lengthy motion that had every appearance of being pre-prepared was put forward by Councillor Evelina MacEachern.

Unless two motions were in the wings, it looks to me like it would not have mattered what the OPA or Northland had to say earlier.

Who needs accurate information when you've made up your mind long ago?

Why wait to attend Northlands scheduled public open house the next day before you take a stand?

While not opposing the concept of local generation outright the council passed a resolution (8-1) that opposed the identified sites in Aurora as well as the transmission fall back alternative.

To clarify, it looks like the town's official position is to do as little as possible to address important issues proactively in advance and then ask

for everything and support nothing.

Aurora asked for the OPA to explore alternatives in 2005, we conditionally accepted the subsequent recommendations and we have done next to nothing to address these issues ever since.

Now we have adopted a stance that vastly increases our chances of getting the power plant, overhead transmission and a transformer imposed upon on us with less than the best possible mitigation measures that could have been negotiated.

Why do I say that? Because the solution is very likely to be imposed by the provincial government out of urgent necessity and I have to ask why any proponent would disadvantage their bid by

adding the cost to underground transmission lines and addressing other concerns of the community when they gain no official support locally?

No memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be negotiated and the town has not even shown the courtesy of becoming fully versed in the bid before taking a stand, unless you call what I witnessed at council this week adequate background research for a project of this magnitude.

At some point the OPA and proponents will have to say enough is enough; it's time to make some decisions with or without the municipalities involved being well informed or proactive in the process.

Aurora and King have the preferred con-

nection points for the OPA's proposed local generation solution and yet only 18 people (including two councillors and our head planner, but no mayor) showed up to the Northland Power open house in Aurora and three people in total left comments (including mine).

In the two hours I was at the open house I could not see more than a few people opposed to this plant once they saw the renderings, the emission dispersion maps and the supporting information. This power plant offers significant benefits to this town and Region but few people seem interested in pursuing the facts.

If I was a betting man, I'd say that there is now a better than 50 - 50 chance that four

years of effort to address this issue proactively based on well founded information has just gone down the drain. Too bad no one saw fit to do their homework in detail and go to the open house scheduled for the next day, before they voted against what some well informed people recog-

nize as our best and only opportunity to address any number of pressing issues responsibly and with due consideration for the facts before us.

I guess when you think about it, it is just another day in Aurora.

**Richard Johnson
Aurora**

Chamber group endorses more power

From page 6
subjecting the Region to unfair treatment respecting our electricity needs.

Businesses in York Region are deeply concerned that unless this project goes forward without further delay, areas of York Region may face brownouts, or perhaps even blackouts, that will disrupt business, discourage

growth and investment in the northern part of the Region, and undermine York Region's reputation as a good place to do business.

While the need for a full examination of this sensitive issue is appreciated, it is very apparent to York Region businesses that there is an urgent need for the electricity supply issue to be addressed. Therefore,

we encourage local governments in York Region to make the electricity supply issue a priority now and move expeditiously towards a solution in the short term.

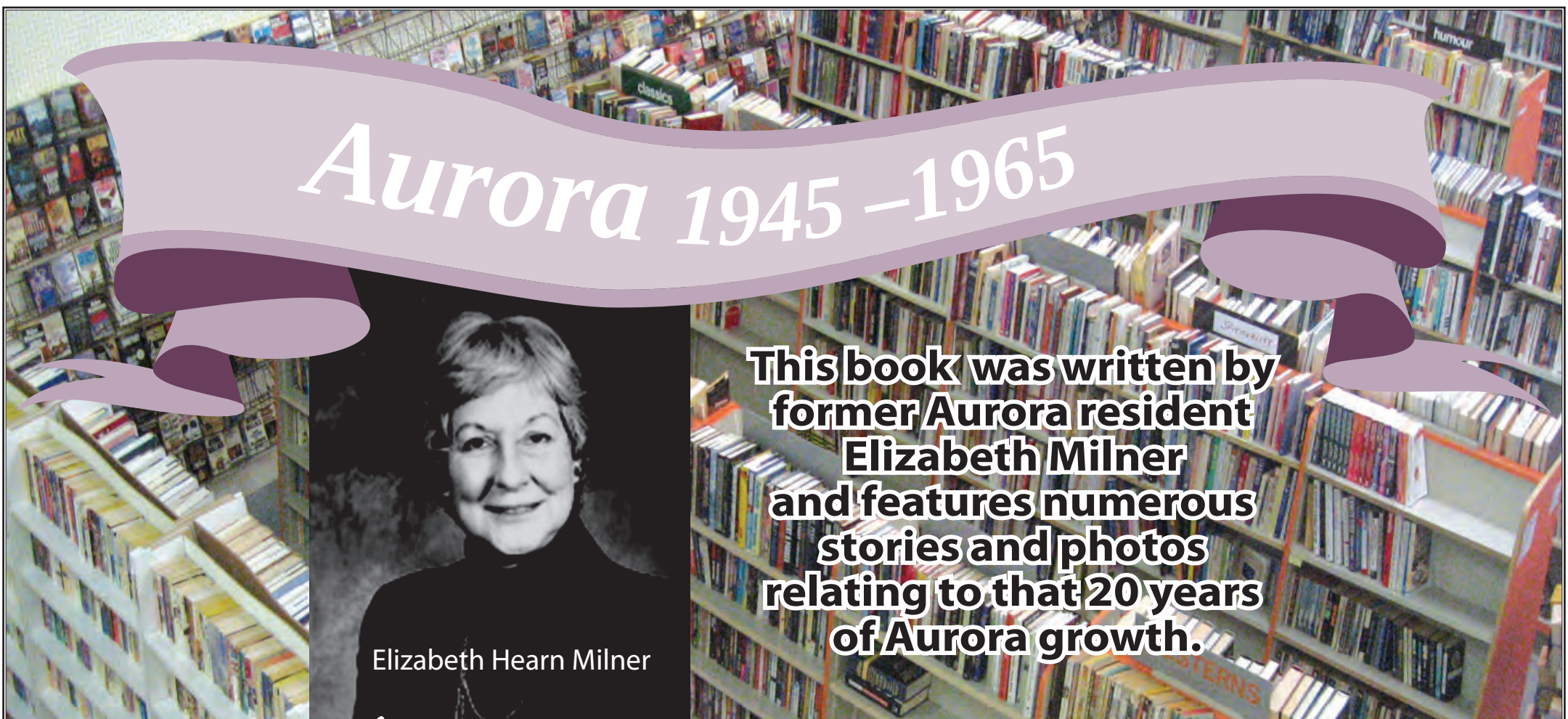
**Michael Manett
York Region Chambers' Advocacy Committee
Vaughan Chamber of Commerce City of Vaughan**



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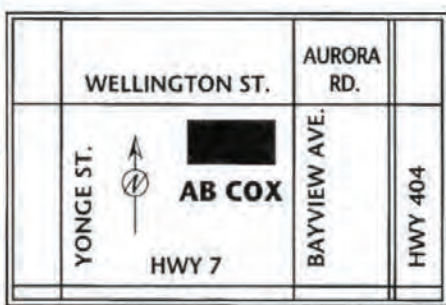
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Jonathan's Restaurant in Aurora was filled last week when it introduced "Celebrity Waiters". Waiting tables during the inaugural were Chris Sorley, left, and Barry Williams, right. Entertaining the crowd was guitarist James Miller.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Council rejects peaking site

From page 1

It was pointed out that the proposed project is subject to the Ontario Environmental Act and will be subject to an environmental screening.

The screening requires examining the projects potential impacts on the environment including land, air, water and noise, developing suitable measures to mitigate potential impacts and conducting public consultation.

Northland Power is committed to consulting and working with the public and stakeholder groups throughout the development of the project.

Prior to the council meeting Aurora resident Bonnie Kraft appeared to express her opposition to the proposal claiming it was too close to a residential subdivision.

She also expressed concern about pollution.

Correspondence was also received from six residents and the Ratepayers of Aurora Yonge South and from a group in York Simcoe calling itself MegaWhat opposing the proposed project.

In addition, staff had prepared a comprehensive report outlining all the discussions and actions to date and responses from the

local municipalities.

In his presentation Mulvale said there was a need for power and he outlined the process required by the OPA to fill that need as the area was expected to grow by three per cent a year for the next 10 years.

He said the natural gas process was clean and required no water and the pollution was no more than a residence with a gas-fired furnace and with 50 to 60 foot chimneys would be dispersed into the air.

He compared the peaking station to a form of insurance to be used on demand and to provide a secure source of supply when needed.

He noted there are five applicants of which Northland Power is one, and it will be up to OPA to select the one site.

He also noted that Northland has two other potential sites in King and one in East Gwillimbury and separate applications had been submitted to OPA for each site.

Members of council asked several questions dealing with pollution, local effect, number of employees, if exempt from Planning Act, why solar and wind power couldn't be used and the size of the site, which Mulvale responded to.

Councillor Alison

Collins - Mrakas expressed concern and fear about the MacEachern resolution as she didn't want the enhanced transmission lines and rejecting the peaking generation station left the option to the OPA.

Councillor Buck pointed out that the province has the authority over the municipality and if council rejects the proposal, the applicant can go to the Ontario Municipal Board and the decision is taken out of local hands.

She added that the area needed electricity, one way or the other.

Other councillors supported the motion saying they were not opposed to buried transmission cables in urban areas.

The motion was adopted.

Council approves drive-thru

Although council has not met to discuss a drive-thru policy as a result of a public planning meeting in June, 2007, approval has been granted for the adopting of a bylaw to permit a drive-thru and take-out restaurant as additional permitted uses for the Esso station on Wellington Street East.

A public planning meeting was held last April to consider an application from Imperial Oil for an amendment to the zoning bylaw to permit a drive-thru/take-out restaurant as an additional permitted use to the existing zoning category.

In 2006, the property located at the northwest corner of Leslie Street and Wellington Street East was developed for an Esso gas station consisting of a convenience store, gas pump islands and a car wash.

Staff members were advised to facilitate the proposed drive-thru restaurant within the convenience store and associated stacking lane, the site plan has been modified from the original approved site plan and the revised site plan was currently under review.

Staffers also noted that the proposal was being considered relative to the drive-thru study currently being conducted with a report scheduled to be presented to council in the near future.

The Imperial Oil proposal conforms to the proposed drive-thru criteria developed to date with a 30-metre distance separation and screening and sound attenuation.

It was also pointed out that the Accessibility Advisory Committee had recommended the site plan agreement require the applicant to provide full service for a minimum of six hours per day.

All town departments and regional officials had reviewed the proposal and had no comments.

Staff members suggested if council determined there was merit in the proposal that the application be approved in principle subject to the resolution of outstanding issues.

Representing Imperial Oil, Don Dussault said he agreed with the staff

report and the proposal was submitted due to the many customers using the station and the convenience store.

In a video presentation he noted the various improvements to be made to the site with the addition of trees, shrubs and a stone wall with "Aurora" on it as a gateway feature at a cost of \$153,000 for landscaping.

Referring to the

request for full service he noted that the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommendation was for future stations and this was an existing station and the application was only for the drive-thru.

He also outlined the company's existing policy for all stations whereby seniors and disabled could receive full service by phoning the station 24 hours in advance and

arranging a time when a second staff member was available to provide the service.

There were no members of the public in attendance in support or opposition to the application and after a few questions for clarification, on a motion by Councillor Al Wilson the application was approved in principle subject to the resolution of outstanding issues.

Brickbat upsets mayor

In a recent Bouquets and Brickbats column in The Auroran, a brickbat was awarded to Mayor Phyllis Morris for claiming block voting didn't take place at Aurora council meetings.

The brickbat pointed out that all she has to do is look at the voting record as she and Councillors Evelina MacEachern, Wendy Gaertner, Stephen Granger and Al Wilson are the "Gang of Five", although Wilson acts on his own occasionally.

At last week's council meeting an upset Mayor Morris referred to the block voting comment and noted there were several 8-1 votes and lots of unanimous votes, but only recorded votes were shown in the minutes.

The mayor gave a Notice of Motion that the procedural bylaw should be amended so that the minutes will record unanimous votes in order that citizens will know that council is working together as a team and there isn't a "Gang of Five".



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THE AURORAN

SPORTS

Page 10

Week of July 1, 2008

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WINNERS

Soccer team captures annual Barrie tourney

The Aurora Stingers 98B Team 1 spent a hot weekend in Barrie recently competing in the Fifth Annual Barrie Spiritfest.

They finished off the

Aurora Seniors Bridge Results

June 23 -N/S: Sheldon Fast and Eva Guttman; Bill and Bonnie Scheel; Mary Oglanby and Joan Rotenberg. E/W: Brenda Smith and Carol Gordon; Rose White and Gloria Smith; Priscilla Hull and Inger Kamel.

first day winning all three of their games, scoring 13 goals and allowing none.

The next day, they met the Scarborough Blizzard for the final qualifying game and had little trouble coming up with a 6-1 victory.

The final game offered their toughest match of the tournament when they met the Richmond Hill Raiders.

After being down 1-0 to the Raiders at half-time, the boys hammered home the win with two stunning goals, edging the competition 2-1.

The team's dedication and teamwork brought home the cup, coaches and parents agreed.

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The little shoemaker ends rewarding career

The corner of Yonge and Wellington Streets in Aurora will never be the same with the retirement of Vic Paraninfo, the Little Shoemaker of Aurora, from the shoe repair business he has operated since 1972.

Vic Paraninfo is Aurora's goodwill ambassador.

He's the guy who invites school kids to his shoe repair store every Halloween to get some candy and meet York Regional police officers.

He wanted to foster good relations between the police and the community. He's the guy who paid for bumper stickers promoting the police and brought doughnuts and other treats to the police officers working the Christmas shift.

A native of Sicily, Vic began learning the shoe repair business at the age of six from a neighbour. He hurried home after school to work on the shoes and deliver the repaired shoes to their owners.

At 12, one of his proudest moments was when he made a pair of shoes for his Dad.

Immigrating to Canada from Italy in 1956 at the age of 19, Vic was unable to find work as a shoe repairman and worked in a bread factory and as a barber, but he kept looking for a shop of his own.

He eventually found his way to Aurora and settled in 1973, with his wife, Sheila, and two daughters, Marie and Peggy, as he had found a little shop on Yonge Street.

Through his hard work and service with a smile, he soon built a successful shoe repair business in downtown Aurora.

Over the years he became involved in many community groups to give something back to the country and people who had given him a chance.

When some of his customers asked for special alterations to their shoes, he learned how widespread and painful arthritis can be.

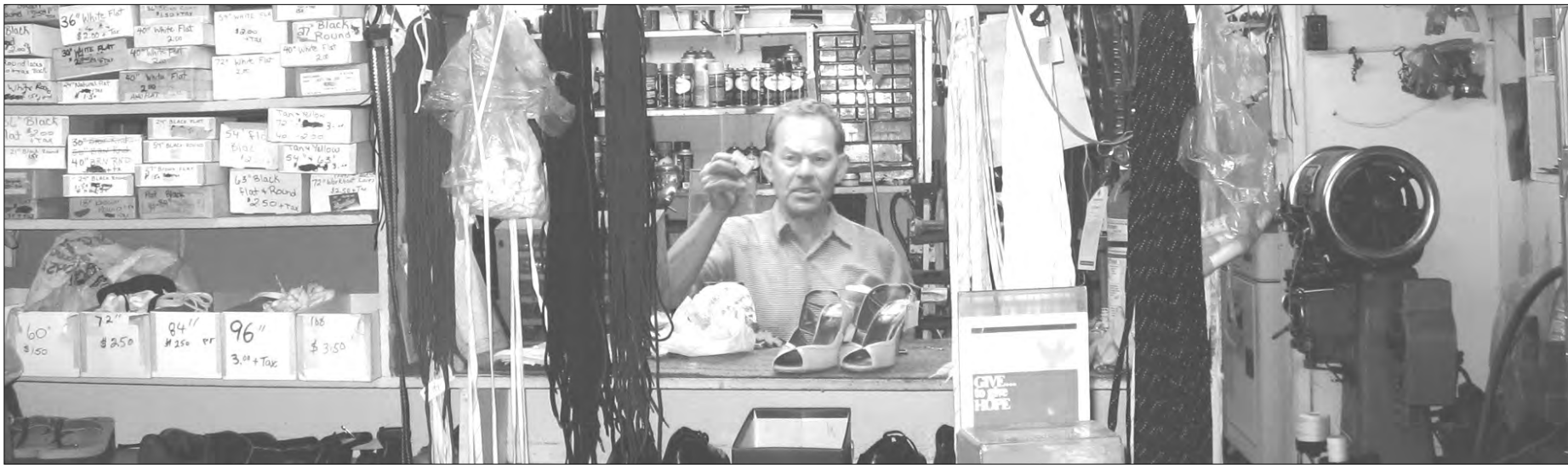
In 1975, he initiated Vic's Skate Day when all proceeds from skate sharpening went to the Canadian Arthritis Society.

Vic's Skate Day soon became a community event. In the first year he raised \$213.29. This was increased to \$724 in the second year and \$1,626 in February, 1977, far exceeding his target of \$1,000.

Not only that but he took time to show young people how their skates were sharpened.

Lawrence Lawaska and Jesse Harrison entertained customers with harmonica and fiddle tunes.

He set a target of \$2,000 for skate-sharpening day in 1978 during his eight-hour sharpening session at 75 cents a pair, but a jar was also available for cash dona-



Vic Paraninfo at work

tions. He exceeded his own expectations by raising \$2,524 for the Canadian Arthritis Society.

In 1982, the little shoemaker was named Aurora's Citizen of the Year for his many community works. In 1984, the Province of Ontario awarded him the Bicentennial Medal.

Not too well known at the time was the gift of skates he made to children, whose families couldn't afford to buy them.

In April, 1985, in spite of a disappointing crowd, the little shoemaker raised \$381 for the Arthritis Society from his annual hockey game between the York Regional Police and the region's doctors.

The police won the game 10-5.

The Aurora Figure Skating Club held a CFSA sanctioned exhibition between periods.

He was a great supporter of the police.

In July, 1985, he started a one-man campaign to rid Aurora of all old and unused guns. He said they were too dangerous to be left lying around and should be turned over to the police.

Concerned about the number of shootings taking place, his first campaign resulted in collecting 10 sporting rifles which he turned over to the police and he hoped that would just be the beginning.

In 1986, the force hon-

oured him with a service award at the second annual Chief's Dinner and Awards Night.

In April, 1986, Vic suffered a heart attack and was advised to slow down, but that was almost impossible.

He was amazed by the many cards, letters and flowers with best wishes he received while in the hospital, including letters from two classes at Wells Street School.

Every year since he opened his shop, he welcomed schoolchildren from Wells Street School to the shop as they paraded from the school in their Halloween costumes.

Along with his wife, they shelled-out bags of candy to all the children, with members of York Regional Police assisting.

The 24-year tradition was broken in 1997 because of a teachers' strike but the candy didn't go to waste. Some parents brought their children to see Vic and the balance of the 750 bags went to the police and the Yellow Brick House.

In spite of his heart attack, he continued with his skate-sharpening day and in 1987 raised \$4,293. Donations far exceeded the \$2 charge for skate sharpening.

In November, 1988, he was honoured by Ontario Solicitor General Joan Smith and the Police community at a dinner as part of the 6th

Annual National Crime Prevention Week with the theme "Families and Communities Working Together to Prevent Crime".

He received his award for his work with York Regional Police in a variety of safety programs including his program to reduce Halloween accidents.

In January, 1989, it was just a little notice in the paper but it was the end of an era. The little notice advised the people that Vic was no longer able to hold Skate Sharpening Day for the Arthritis Society.

For 14 years on the second Saturday in February, he sharpened skates, scissors and knives for the Society.

But it was more than just Vic and his helpers sharpening skates, it was a meeting place where the townspeople gathered to pass the time of day with Vic.

Health, pressure of work and the lack of readily available helpers

took their toll and Skate Sharpening Day slid into history but the good works of the man behind the project will never be forgotten.

In November, 2000, the National Register, which annually released a list of Who's Who in Executives and Professionals selected the little shoemaker for inclusion in the 2001/2002 edition.

A press release at the time said the intent of the National Register's Who's Who was to notify everyone that the individual named had reached a level of recognizable success in his respective field.

In the beginning he helped others because he wanted to, but he soon found out that it was better to give than to receive and it made him feel good.

Over the years he has made, and is still making people feel good, just knowing Aurora's little shoemaker, Vic Paraninfo.

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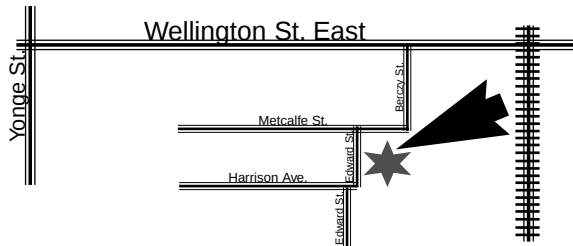


Changes coming



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Beauty is in the eye of the beholder

Aurora is having its problems with graffiti these days but back in November, 1968, it was an artistic problem of a different type trying to decide when art becomes pornography.

What is the dividing line between an artist's vision of beauty and the viewer's opinion that the painting is obscene?

As a result of protests from parents, the principal of Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School removed four paintings termed obscene from an art exhibition at the school.

The paintings were part of a travelling art exhibit from the Art Gallery of Ontario.

The removed paintings entitled "Lovers" by artist Joe Rodenthal depicted a naked male and female with their bodies entwined.

A spokesman for the AGO said it was the first time a complaint had been received about any of the paintings.

The students started two petitions stating the removed paintings were not obscene and requested they be returned but the wall remained empty.

WHO PAID TO HAVE THE SIGN REMOVED?

In July, 1985, the town experienced trouble finding someone to pay a \$2,739 bill for the removal of a large billboard located on the roof of a Yonge Street building destroyed by fire in November, 1984. The town ordered the removal of the sign as a safety precaution due to the damage to the building.

The bill was sent to Paul Skinner, owner of the building, but he refused to pay claiming he didn't own the sign.

The bill was then sent to Medicom, the owner of the sign, but they refused to pay claiming they were not responsible for the removal of the sign.

The town then decided to seek legal advice as to who should pay but as in so many cases the response was not made known in open council and it is not known if the money was ever recovered or if the taxpayer paid for the sign removal.

USER FEE FOR GARAGE PROPOSAL

A staff proposal has been presented to council recommending a user fee for the disposal of residual waste for landfill with a tag required after the first three bags per household.

It's not the first time a user fee has been proposed as back in February, 1993, due to the uncertainty of waste disposal at that time, a user fee system was considered for implementation in 1994.

The proposal came about as the result of a dispute between Metro Toronto and York Region over waste rebates from the Keele Valley landfill which resulted in an increase of approximately \$360,000 for the town's waste budget.

Staff was directed to provide further information to council by August, 1993, so that the user fee system could be implemented in January, 1994, following public consultation, but it didn't happen then.

RESIDENTS DON'T WANT SMALLER HOMES

Today there is a demand for smaller starter homes that are affordable for young families, but they are not available and there doesn't appear to be any plans to make them available.

At one time, the provincial or the federal government required that 25 per cent of any new subdivision had to be affordable but that is no longer in effect.

In May, 1992, Geranium Homes planned to build some smaller homes on 53 lots on property they owned near Yonge Street and the St. John's Sideroad.

More than 150 residents of St. Andrew's on the Hill jammed the council chambers to demand that council slap an interim control bylaw on the 53 lots claiming the proposed homes didn't meet the standards they were promised when they purchased their homes.

It was pointed out that the homes being offered by Geranium were as small as 2,000 square feet and as low as \$270,000, almost 1,000 square feet smaller and \$200,000 cheaper than the smallest home in their subdivision.

Geranium officials pointed out that their proposed development met all the zoning, architectural and planning agreements for the subdivision, resulting in council telling the residents that there were no legal grounds to impose an interim control bylaw.

The residents had a different legal opinion resulting in council referring the issue to staff to examine the resident's legal opinion and report back and while the result of the report is not known it is believed the development proceeded as planned.

MORE OPEN COUNCIL MEETINGS

At almost every election, politicians at all levels of government promise more open, transparent and accountable government and then when elected they don't seem to want to make the hard decisions under the glare of the spotlights and rush to get behind closed doors.

Back in April, 1990, the province was concerned and wanted local councils to do more of their business in public and Municipal Affairs Minister John Sweeney introduced legislation setting out guidelines for Ontario's 839 municipalities.

The Minister told the Legislature that the proposed changes were designed to ensure that the public's business is conducted in public and not behind closed doors.

He said municipalities could ignore the guidelines if they wished as the Ministry didn't have an enforcement power and the best enforcement mechanism is public action at the next municipal election when voters can clearly indicate their approval or disapproval of council's actions.

He added that the government's amendments were introduced in part to restore the public's faith in municipal government, but not much has changed over the years as Aurora Council still rushes into a closed session after almost every council and general committee meeting and very seldom reports what happened in a public session.

POST OFFICE CLOSING SCARE

Back in March, 1991, with the establishment of mini-post offices in at least two convenience stores in Aurora and with Canada Post still not providing any guarantees of future postal service in Aurora or Newmarket there were strong rumours that the Post Offices were to be closed.

The rumours were so strong that the Aurora Chamber of Commerce sent a letter to its members warning them of the possible closing.

York Simcoe MP John Cole, a former Mayor of Newmarket, took up the battle and brought a letter from Canada Post to both councils that while the Corporation was reviewing its mail processing and delivery requirements, there were no current plans to close either the Aurora or Newmarket post offices.

However the service did change as the local post offices became similar to commercial centres, Retail operations were left to the mini-post offices in the convenience stores whom are still in the business even though the post office has returned to providing the sale of stamps and other postal services.

LOOKING FOR FEDERAL GOODIES

Today municipal governments are trying to get the Harper government to give something back to the municipalities such as one cent of the GST.

Conditions must have been different in May, 1973, when York Simcoe MP Sinclair Stevens told York Regional politicians to start selling the federal government on such ideas as locating federal administration buildings in the region, and helping to finance a domed sports stadium.

York Regional councillors and PC caucus members held an informal meeting to discuss the region's federal problems and priorities.

The MP pointed out that North York receives more in taxes from one federal building than the region receives in federal grants in a year and urged York to explore the possibility of including federal government buildings in any plans it draws up for a municipal administration complex.

Mr. Stevens also told the York politicians the Pickering airport was almost sure to be built and a rail commuter line was 75 per cent certain to Richmond Hill and 50 per cent certain to Barrie.

NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED

In June, 1990, a Gallup poll indicated that more than a third of Canadians had no savings or investment program for retirement and some may not be able to afford to retire.

It was noted that most people need to maintain an income level of about two-thirds of their pre-retirement salary to keep up their standard of living and many were ill-prepared for retirement.

Canada Pension Plan and basic Old Age Security together only add up to a maximum of about 40 per cent of salary even for people with lower earnings, meaning that many Canadians will have to find a way of providing at least another 30 per cent or so themselves.

The survey revealed 60 per cent of Canadians aged 69 qualify for all or part of the Old Age Supplement indicating that they need government assistance to meet their needs.

Concern was also expressed that as the average age of Canadians increases in the coming years, there will be fewer workers to pay for such assistance.

Survey respondents were asked about their attitudes towards compulsory retirement and nationally 58 per cent disapproved of compulsory retirement.

IN CASE YOU WONDERED

The 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics Torch Run generated several protests and controversy around the world, but few have

asked about the torch itself.

According to officials the design for the 2008 Torch was selected from 388 proposals. It is made of aluminium, it's 72 centimetres high and weighs 985 grams.

With red colour on a metallic base and slightly curving lines it resembles a scroll and is decorated with a traditional Chinese design called lucky cloud.

The fuel is propane and the torch was designed to withstand winds as strong as 65 kph and to stay lit in heavy rain.

The Olympic Relay is scheduled to last 130 days, traversing 20 countries, five continents and 137,000 kilometres and will visit 135 cities.

CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS

At the February, 2008, Aurora Council meeting, Mayor Phyllis Morris told council members about a program "Cell Phones for Soldiers" and would provide information to staff so citizens could be made aware of this new initiative.

Was the information provided and what were the results?

KEEPING METRO OUT OF YORK

The battle has been forgotten now but back in November, 1971, there was a concerted effort by Metro Toronto to take over some of the southern part of York Region.

York Central Liberal MPP Donald Deacon called on the area municipalities to put forth strong opposition to fight the Metro attempt.

He asked Richmond Hill to join with Markham and Vaughan and York Region in preparing a joint brief for the province which would outline their opposition to the proposed takeover.

Concern was expressed by local and regional politicians about the loss of regional assessment which would occur if Metro took over the south part of the region.

It was also noted that a recent survey in Thornhill indicated 60 per cent of residents opposed the takeover as they didn't want to lose their identity and become part of Metro.



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Newmarket-Aurora Conservative candidate Lois Brown collected more than 5,000 signatures in support of Canadian troops at recent Newmarket and Aurora Home Shows, then presented the banner to Minister of Defence Peter MacKay in Ottawa. He will send it on to Kandahar. During the presentation, student summer interns, at rear, assisted.

Box dilemma solved?

From page 1
revenue for the corrals through advertising located on panels. The corrals will limit the number of boxes to three per location and any additional boxes could be accommodated with a second corral at selected locations only pre-determined by town staff.

The enactment of the bylaw to regulate and permit the newspaper boxes will generate a revenue source based on a licence/permit fee cost of \$50 per box per year.

In 2006, a staff report was presented to council regarding newspaper distribution boxes and boulevard waste containers.

At that time council received the report and recommended the newspaper companies be advised of the town's proposal.

A survey of newspaper distribution boxes was conducted in town and showed most were located on Yonge Street with the remaining on Wellington Street for a total of 92.

It was also noted that a majority of the boxes contained either Career, Auto or Real Estate publications.

Through staff discussions with officials from Creative Outdoor Advertising it was learned that the firm could supply the town with not only waste containers to replace the existing older units but could also supply corral units to house the newspaper distribution boxes.

In addition, the firm could also supply benches that could be used to replace the older town benches in several locations on Yonge Street.

By November, 2005, the proliferation of newspaper vending boxes on Aurora streets was a problem for council.

The previous April, then-councillor Nigel Kean gained support for staff to investigate and advise what bylaws were in place to prevent the placing of newspaper and magazine vending boxes on Aurora street corners.

In a report to council in November, staffers reported that

a check had been made of other municipalities as to their efforts to control the number and placement of the vending boxes, with some municipalities reporting some form of control.

It was pointed out that a proposal to regulate newspaper vending boxes was submitted to council in May, 2002, but the report was received as information and no action was taken.

Due to the littering around the vending boxes, staff members suggested council may wish to exercise its authority in determining that such boxes were causing a public nuisance.

During the discussion some councillors argued that members of the public might object to a total prohibition of the vending boxes as they liked to stop and pick up a paper.

It was finally agreed that staffers report back with a draft bylaw to include site locations and restrictions, and that all companies and distributors be advised of council's proposal to enact a regulating bylaw.

Back in November, 1969, Aurora Council received several complaints resulting in letters sent to all newspapers requesting that the local representative meet with the town's administration committee to discuss ways and means to control the placement and maintenance of the vending boxes.

But the problem wasn't solved and in July, 1984, staff was directed to contact other municipalities in an effort to find

ways and means to implement some controls to clear up the citizen complaints.

In 1990, council received several complaints from both citizens and commercial operators about the number of vending boxes within the town and staff was instructed to investigate and report to council.

Once again, newspaper officials were contacted and agreement reached that if a complaint was received, the local representative would investigate and failure to rectify the complaint would result in the removal of the vending box.

A proposed bylaw would require a fee of \$25 per year per vending box or a flat fee of \$1,000 per box placed on municipal property and the newspaper and/or the distribution company would provide insurance coverage.

The problem wasn't over as in March, 2002, more complaints were received about the proliferation of boxes used to distribute real estate, motor vehicle and other advertising papers, as well as the daily papers.

Staff was directed to carry out another investigation and report back on ways and means of regulating the street vending boxes, including suggested locations, potential financial implications and the preparation of a draft regulatory bylaw but no action was taken on the report.

After all the citizen complaints and problems over the years, a solution may finally be in sight.

Aurora Minor Baseball Association

Peewee House League

June 23:
Royal LePage Larry Willert 10, Greenpoint 7
McAlpine Ford 12, Minto Homes 4
Gabby's 11, Aurora Cable 10

June 25:
Gabby's 14, Aurora Cable 10
Greenpoint 19, Minto Homes 2

Midget House League

June 24:
Aurora "Greenhams" 20, King "Phil's Motors" 9.

REP JAYS

Aurora Junior Jays

The Jays had a successful weekend at the Vaughan Invitational tournament June 20-22. They finished second in their pool with a 1-1-1 record. The Jays tied the Brampton Royals 1-1 on Friday night behind the four hit pitching of Jesse Barker. After a tough loss to the Bolton Braves 8-5 on Saturday morning, the Jays rallied to defeat Milton 7-6. Dylan Kelly earned the win, Johnny Bethune pitched two effective innings in relief, and Eric Wakeman earned the save. The Junior Jays have turned a corner after a rough start to their inaugural Metro-Leaside season. The young ball club took three of four points in a doubleheader June 24 against the Vaughan Vikings in games played at Concord Regional. The Jays and Vikings played to a 2-2 tie in Game 1. In Game 2, the Jays hung

on to win 4-3. In the first game, Jesse Barker pitched the Jays to a tie and a valuable point in the Metro-Leaside standings. Barker threw a complete game - his second in five days - and provided a steady stream of groundball outs to his middle infielders. Dylan Kelly and Tyler Cattapan drove in runs for the Jays. In the nightcap, Dylan Kelly earned the victory by pitching 6 1/3 strong innings. Johnny Bethune earned the save by getting the last two outs of the decisive frame. The Jays got RBIs from Bethune, Cattapan, Kelly, and Darrin Goodale. They went out to a 4-0 lead after two innings and withstood a furious Vaughan rally in the bottom of the seventh as the Vikings plated three runs to pull within one. Bethune shut the door to preserve the win. Second baseman Ryan Pontone and center-fielder Steve Scobie were outstanding defensively in both games for the Jays. Pontone made 18 putouts over the two games and Scobie picked up outfield assists by throwing out two Viking baserunners. The Jays met Oshawa Legionnaires in the quarter finals and held a 4-2 lead against the powerhouse Metro-Leaside squad before running out of pitching and dropping a 14-4 decision.

Aurora Rookie Jays

June 27:
Aurora Jays 7, Vaughan Vikings 0

Minor Mosquito Jays

June 24:
Aurora Jays 9, Toronto Playground 10

Bantam Jays

Friday, June 20:
Aurora TSN Bantam Jays 10, Etobicoke Titans 9.

On Monday June 23rd the Aurora TSN Bantam Jays tangled with their cross town rivals, the Newmarket Hawks and came up on the winning side of a 11-3 score. Great pitching by Ben Arbon, Patrick Jones and Troy Gouveia. Ryan Anderson was hot behind the plate throwing out three Hawk base runners. Jays are now 8-2-1 on the regular season.

Minor Midget Jays

The Aurora Minor Midget Jays, sponsored by Boland Howe Barrister, beat the Newmarket Hawks 7-4 in York Simcoe Baseball Association action at the Aurora Leisure Complex Friday night. Lefty pitcher Brayden Jones got the win pitching five innings, striking out five and only giving up two earned runs. Tyler Clements closed the game out earning a save by blanking the visiting Hawks in the top of the ninth. Jake Boyle, coming off the disabled list, started the game going three innings giving up two unearned runs. Offensively, the Jays were led by catcher Michael Gray who went two for three with a double and a walk and Jake Boyle who smashed a triple to the centerfield fence in the third inning. James Welsman also chipped in two singles with one of them knocking in a big insurance run for the Jays in the bottom of the eighth.

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Senior Scape



By BRIAN WARBURTON

Computer knowledge abounds at the Centre

Among the technological marvels of modern times is the computer, now established and popular among members of the Aurora Seniors Association (ASA) and which continues to grow in use rapidly.

Computing among seniors has progressed to a degree of proficiency that carries their interest forward to internet exploration and new avenues of interest, which are now within the scope of their newly found capabilities.

Once the fear of intimidation has diminished or lifted completely, the vast majority of seniors will master any facet of computing that catches and maintains their interest, and consequently, many have become completely at home surfing the internet or uploading their digital cameras to computer and then to compact disc and on to any facet of computing that seizes the imagination.

Enthusiasm totally overwhelms anxiety and fuels mastery of computing for everybody, including seniors.

The ASA computer club continues in summer mode with reduced instruction and other activities reduced or suspended until September, but a drop-in session is scheduled for Tuesday, July 15, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m., when any member of the ASA may visit the computer club and seek advice on any computer related topic.

Advice will be given if available and located if not.

The regular drop-in sessions will resume the last two Tuesdays in August to accommodate members who wish to sign up for instruction resuming Monday, September 8.

The ASA pool room is one of the finest in Aurora and certainly the most cost effective and is always open for snooker, billiards, pool and now darts has been added as an attraction.

Card games have been known to take place in the pool room and tournaments of all kinds are organized and conducted in house or with other organizations as opportunities arise.

Each Friday afternoon, women are encouraged strongly to play any of the games in the pool room, but particularly billiards and snooker, with help available for anybody who needs help.

Summer is here and June is seniors' month and the ASA is open for you, close to the Aurora Town Hall and ready to welcome members old and new.

The patio party hosted by a sparkling Belinda Stronach, and presented as the "From the Hill to the Grill III", captured the levity of the moment with a comment from Belinda in her address, tongue in cheek, that on the hill it is she who gets grilled.

Belinda captured the pride of the moment by indicating that this Aurora Seniors BBQ fundraiser is an important opening event to the Canada Day Parade which this year promises to be the biggest and best ever in Aurora.

The barbecue was wonderfully well supported by members of the ASA and by many well know public people, who all intermingled as though everybody knew everybody-and probably did-on the patio and inside the centre, and wherever there was room to sit or stand.

Enthusiasm abounds amongst the seniors for all fun events and with pride in Canada swelling greatly and with everybody interested and excited, the barbecue at the Seniors' Centre was clearly the place to be with good feelings and complete harmony governing the occasion.

It was the place to have fun, to talk to friends old and new and even to have a photograph taken with a local dignitary or someone from the halls of power in Ottawa, but mostly, it was to be a factor in the senior community by being present and so weaving an indomitable link in the fabric of Canadian pride.

The Seniors' Centre is a tribute to the work and industry that developed our society in former years as well as today, and enjoyed now by the seniors of today and standing ready and patiently for those who will retire in good time.

It is a monument to the perseverance of people great and small who laboured through good times and bad to create the glorious opportunity to prosper in today's Canada in which we dwell.

Not at any time in any past generation was life as good as it is in Canada at this time, and for all of the problems existing, further opportunities loom that are greater.

For the retired generations in Aurora, the doors of the Seniors' Centre are open to you, and somewhere inside the centre, you will find a place or an activity that will seize your imagination and you will prosper in your seniority.

Aptitude and natural ability often lie concealed and unused, until a gift emerges mysteriously and suddenly to the light of day, and the centre will often uncover natural gifts long unrecognized.

As with anything in this life, success must be achieved with effort, and as with any relationship, patience, time and energy will result in a golden harvest and quite possibly in directions never dreamed of, and the Canada Day Parade will celebrate our wonderful town Aurora, our great Canada and the teeming mix of Aurorans from the world over that makes us what we are.



Aurora Armoury



Cenotaph

Military, remembrance at Doors Open

By MICHAEL SEAMAN
Community Planner

Doors Open Aurora is sure to be one of the highlights of the summer of 2008.

With 13 brand new sites this year, Aurorans will have a rare opportunity to learn about and explore the many interesting places and sites in the community.

One of the most interesting groupings of sites this year is the focus on the Military Heritage of Aurora and the remembrance of the sacrifice of those brave Aurorans who gave their lives in the service of our country in the first and second world wars.

Doors open is pleased to welcome the Aurora Armoury to its list this year.

Built in 1874 as a drill shed for the 12th Battalion of Infantry, the Aurora Armoury was part of a network of defence training facilities for citizen soldiers.

As Canada assumed responsibility for its own defence from Britain, drill sheds and armouries were constructed as a response to the associated challenges and initiatives.

These facilities reflected the increased emphasis on defence during the period, the importance of the militia

to Canadian security, and the development of the military profession in Canada.

The Aurora Armoury, built in 1874 as a drill shed, is the oldest purpose-built armoury still used by the military in Ontario.

It is an evocative link to the larger history of the province's militia regiments, recruited regionally and possessing close affiliations with their communities.

It was also the site of Edward Blake's famous "Aurora speech" in 1874 when the prominent politician and former Ontario premier called on the federal government to implement reforms.

The Aurora Drill Shed was one of many similar structures built from the 1860s onwards.

It provided defence training facilities for volunteer militia in a period of border insecurity and Anglo-American tensions associated with the Civil War in the United States and the Fenian Raids.

The Aurora Armoury and the formation of volunteer militia units during the period surrounding Confederation reflected the young country's growing responsibilities for defence.

On hand at the Armoury will be members of the Queens York Rangers 1st

American Regiment (RCAC) who occupy the building today.

It also serves the 2799 Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps (affiliated with the Rangers), which provides citizenship and leadership training to young people within a military environment.

The Queen's York Rangers have a storied history, serving in the Riel Rebellion in 1885 and sending troops to fight in the South African (Boer) War of 1899-1902.

The regiment also contributed men to the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War. During the Second World War, the regiment was mobilized and served in Canada as part of the home defence force.

While the Aurora Armoury will give Auroran's the opportunity to see the members of the local regiment at work, another site on Doors Open Aurora, the Aurora-King-Whitchurch Cenotaph provides a sombre reminder of the sacrifices made by members of the Canadian armed forces in defence of this country in the wars of the 20th Century and through to today.

Built in 1925, the memorial tower recognizes the sacrifice made by 77 local men who did not return home after the First World War.

In 1960 it was altered with the addition of the Altar of Sacrifice which commemorates the 55 local men and women who did not return home from the Second World War.

It stands 73 feet high, built of granite.

The land was once owned by William Graham who fought in the British Army during the American Revolution.

In 1992, the property where the memorial stands was dedicated by the Town

as the peace park.

While the Aurora-King-Whitchurch cenotaph can be seen by Aurorans every day, an added feature of this site on Doors Open Day will be the presence of members of the local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, who will be on hand to tell the story of this landmark memorial and the service and sacrifice paid by all those from Aurora in the wars of the 20th Century who died in the service of Canada.

Doors Open Aurora isn't only about sites that you

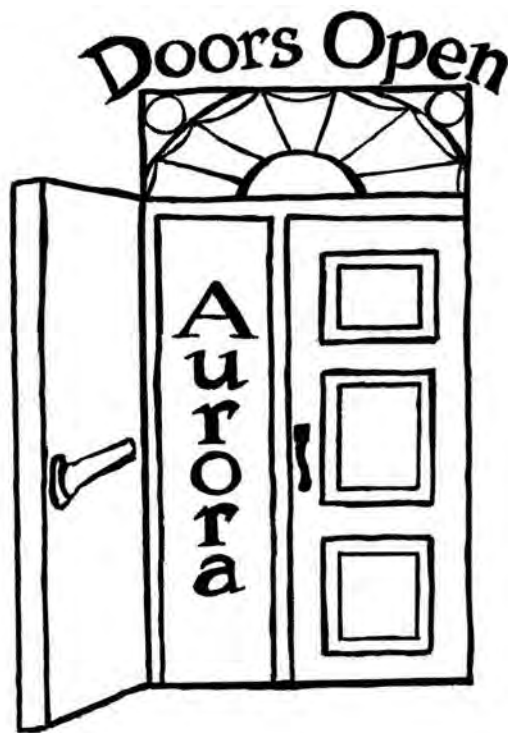
can't regularly see.

It is also about those sites that you see every day in Aurora but seldom have the opportunity to stop and take a second look.

Doors Open Aurora gives you the chance to see those sites from a new perspective, and it is hoped will help to make the experience of living and working in Aurora richer for it.

Doors Open this year will be held Saturday, August 16, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information, contact Shelley Ware at 905-727-3123, ext. 4762.



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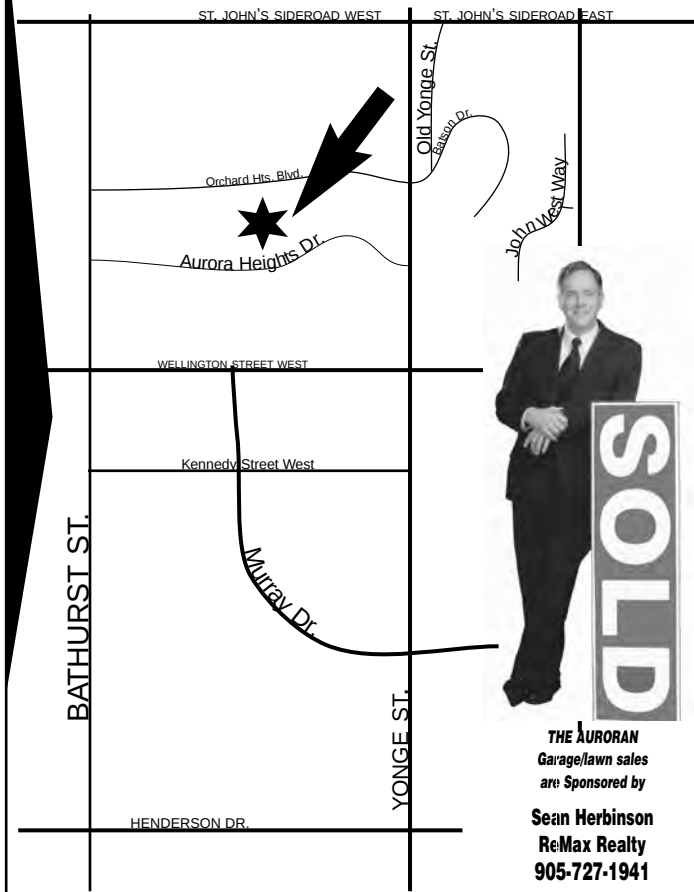
Call Steve Miller at 416-439-6557

Email: Steve@SteveMillerDance.ca

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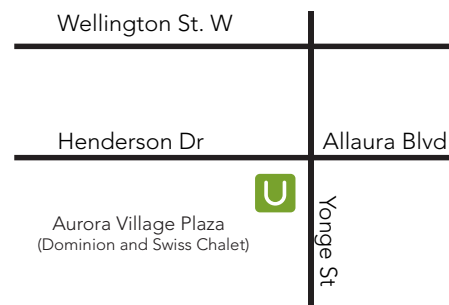
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