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APRIL 16 • 9AM-6PM

SUNDAY
APRIL 17 • 10AM-4PM

THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 16 No. 22 905-727-3300 *theauroran.com* FREE Week of March 24, 2016 CMCA AUDITED

WEARING OF THE GREEN

Scores of Aurorans put on their green hats, shirts and shamrocks last Thursday to celebrate St. Patrick's Day across the community. Here, Dylan and Mara get their Irish on at the Aurora Cultural Centre, taking in St. Patrick's Day-themed music, activities – and, yes, cookies – at a special event hosted by Rafferty & Russell. For more, see Page 14.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir



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Refugees face service gaps in York

By Brock Weir

Syrian refugees are settling into their first spring in their new Canadian homeland, but as they plant roots and become acclimatized, refugees continue to come in from other parts of the world as well.

Recently, sponsors from Our Lady of Grace (OLG) Catholic Church welcomed families from Iraq and Cote d'Ivoire.

While many of them have found new jobs at counters across Aurora, and others explore post-secondary opportunities at Seneca's King Campus, they – and their sponsors – are finding some obstacles in their resettlement hard to overcome.

Earlier this month, members of OLG's

sponsored families, along with their volunteer sponsors, hosted Leona Alleslev, MP for Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, for a discussion on how these gaps can be best addressed.

These gaps include significant challenges in finding the best and most practical ways for these newcomers to get a handle on the English language, as well as navigating York Region's complex transit network to get to their jobs and their language classes.

According to sponsor Marina Nemat, a significant challenge is ESL classes at places like the Welcome Centre, which has locations in Newmarket and Richmond Hill, as well as more structured classes at places such as the Dr. Bette Stephenson

Centre for Learning in Richmond Hill, which places an emphasis on adult learning.

"At any given time [you go into a Welcome Centre], they will do a basic assessment and put you in one of their levels," says Ms. Nemat. "[Some classes] turn more or less into a conversation group, more or less, for seniors; not that they call it that, but that is what it is in practicality. They were really happy and excited about that at the beginning, thinking, 'Oh, my gosh! We're going to learn English!' and then they go and think 'Oh...' Conversation groups aren't bad, but as a supplement it's great. They need something structured."

Continued on page 3

Focus on soccer and hockey is just not cricket: Sports Plan

By Brock Weir

As the demographics of Aurora change over the next few years, so too should the way the Town looks at providing sports opportunities, according to the Town of Aurora's new Sports Plan.

The plan, which received tentative approval at Council earlier this month, is subject to a further round of talks this week as Council moves towards implementing some of the

Continued on page 13

Affordable housing and infrastructure top Federal budget concerns: MP

By Brock Weir

Throughout January and February, local Members of Parliament held open houses across both of Aurora's ridings to take input from residents on what they would like to see in a new Federal budget from a new Federal government – and this week, those who participated are able to see if their suggestions had an impact.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau delivered the Government's new Budget in the House of Commons on Tuesday afternoon.

Ahead of its release, Newmarket-

Aurora MP Kyle Peterson told The Auroran he did not anticipate anyone who followed last year's Federal Election campaign, or any of the words from the Finance Minister since then, would be surprised by the budget, and residents could anticipate significant investments in infrastructure.

"I think there is going to be an investment in Canadians through infrastructure spending through hopefully more green and social [investments] and the long-term assets of infrastructure," said Mr. Peterson. "I hope that is in it, and I think

Continued on page 6

Another exciting event brought to you by **AURORA**

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 26, 2016
9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Aurora Seniors' Centre (30 John West Way)

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In Partnership with: **Girl Guides of Canada**

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Weekly Notice Board

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Email info@aurora.ca • Website www.aurora.ca

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905-727-3123 ext. 4212
accessibility@aurora.ca

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Tuesday, March 29	6:30 p.m.	Council Chambers	Audit Committee
Tuesday, March 29	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Wednesday, March 30	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Public Planning*

Council meetings are open to the public and can be seen on Rogers TV, channel 10. For a full list of upcoming meetings, please visit www.aurora.ca

*Meetings can be viewed online by visiting www.aurora.ca/gcstream



PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposed Private Tree Protection By-Law Approval

On February 9, 2016 Aurora Town Council directed that a "Private Tree Protection By-Law" to prohibit and or regulate the injury or destruction of trees on private property in the Town of Aurora, be presented to Council for approval and that the current Tree Protection By-law No. Number 4474-03.D. be repealed.

Please be advised that the Revised By-law will be presented to Council for enactment at the General Committee meeting on **Tuesday, May 17, 2016.**

Pending Council approval, the revised Private Tree Protection By-Law will come into effect on **May 24, 2016** with the following significant revisions:

- Number of trees that can be removed from a private property in a 12-month period without obtaining a permit has been reduced to two (2) trees from four (4) trees.
- A permit must be obtained prior to removal of a single heritage tree or a single tree in any heritage district as described in the By-Law.
- For larger properties, owners shall be permitted to remove two (2) trees per .25 ha. of property in a 12-month period without obtaining a permit. (For example: Owner of a 1 ha. property can remove eight (8) trees in a 12-month period without obtaining a permit.)

For more information about the By-Law, including permit fees, please call 905-727-3123, ext. 3222.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Speed Cushion Pilot Project on Stone Road from Clift Road to Hawtin Lane

The Town of Aurora is considering installing speed cushions on Stone Road between Clift Road and Hawtin Lane to address speeding concerns.

The Speed Control Policy requires achievement of the following warrants to proceed:

- Warrant 1 – To achieve a minimum of 70 per cent support from area residents
- Warrant 2 – Minimum Speed, on streets where traffic calming is proposed, the 85th percentile speed over a 7-day period must be a minimum of 15 km/h (but less than 20km/h) over the posted speed limit.

Stone Road has posted 40 km/h and 50 km/h speed limits and study results showed that the 85th percentile speed is 60km/h.

The Town is conducting a survey asking affected residents who reside in the area and use Stone Road to cast their vote of the following:

- Option 1: Yes, I want the speed cushions installed
- Option 2: No, I don't want the speed cushions installed

The installation of the speed cushions will only happen if 70 per cent of area residents are in support of this initiative.

We request that residents answer the attached survey and return it to the Town of Aurora Infrastructure and Environmental Services department by **Friday, April 8, 2016** by mail, by fax at 905-841-7119, or by email jmassadeh@aurora.ca to express your opinion regarding which option is preferred.

For more information and to view the maps of the affected areas, please visit www.aurora.ca.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Food for Fines – help the less fortunate in Aurora!

The Town of Aurora is providing an alternative method of payment for parking infractions. The Town has partnered with the Aurora Food Pantry to help the less fortunate in our community.

In lieu of paying your "Park on Municipal Property without Consent" parking ticket issued between **March 15 and April 15, 2016**, you can choose to purchase a \$25 gift card at any local grocery store in Aurora. Drop off the gift card, along with your ticket and purchase receipt indicating the balance and activation status to Access Aurora located at Aurora Town Hall, 100 John West Way. Participation is optional.

For more information about this program, please contact the Bylaw Services department at 905-727-3123 ext. 4240 or visit www.aurora.ca/parking

Digital Innovation for Business Success Conference

Attend this FREE conference to learn, network and grow your business.

Date: Tuesday, March 29
Time: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Location: Meadowbrook Golf Club
11939 Warden Avenue
Gormley, ON L0H 1G0

Cost: FREE! Hot buffet breakfast included

For more information or to register, visit www.eventbrite.ca

Aurora's Juried Art Show and Sale

Aurora's Juried Art Show and Sale is looking for aspiring young artists!

This exciting show is a fantastic opportunity for youth artists looking to gain exposure for their work and even sell a few pieces. Youth artists will also have the opportunity to network with more than 120 professional artists from across York Region.

Entry forms are available at www.aurora.ca/artshow



Good Friday Service Schedule
www.aurora.ca • 905-727-1375



MUNICIPAL OFFICE • 100 John West Way
Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way) will be **CLOSED** on Friday, March 25 for Good Friday. Regular business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. will resume on Monday, March 28.



AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY • 15145 Yonge Street
The Aurora Public Library will be **CLOSED** on Friday, March 25, Sunday, March 27 and Monday, March 28. Regular business hours resume on Tuesday, March 29. For more information, please visit www.aurorapl.ca or call 905-727-9494.



WASTE COLLECTION
Waste collection scheduled on Friday, March 25 is **MOVED TO** Saturday, March 26. For more information on waste collection in Aurora, please consult your 2016 Waste Management Guide and Recycling Calendar.



RECREATION CENTRES
Recreation centres including the **Aurora Family Leisure Complex** and the **Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex** will be operating with modified hours. For a full list of hours of operation and program opportunities including fitness classes, pool, gymnasium, rock wall and The Loft hours, please visit www.aurora.ca/easterweekend



► **Check out our renovated Aurora Family Leisure Complex!**
135 Industrial Parkway North




EMERGENCY SERVICES
For Town-related emergency situations such as flooding, watermain breaks or downed trees, please call 905-727-1375 or 905-727-3123 and follow the voice prompts.
FOR ALL OTHER EMERGENCIES, CALL 9-1-1

Aurora's Juried Art Show and Sale

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Entry forms are available at www.aurora.ca/artshow



Opening Reception
March 30th, 2016, 3-6pm
Brevik Hall, 22 Church Street
Light Refreshments Provided

Built Culture: Memories of the Precinct examines over 160 years of cultural activity within the Cultural Precinct of Aurora. Focusing on historic sites, this exhibition tracks the physical evolution of spaces and their use.



MOVIES in the Park

Call for suggestions!
Movies in the Park returns to Aurora this summer with **five nights of outdoor movies under the stars!**
We want you to be part of the movie selection process! Send us your suggestions by **FRIDAY, APRIL 29**. Your choice could make it to the big screen!

Mark your calendars!
2016 SCHEDULE
Thursday, August 4 – Town Park
Thursday, August 11 – Norm Weller Park
Thursday, August 18 – Ada Johnson Park
Thursday, August 25 – Town Park
Thursday, September 1 – Hickson Park

Please email your suggestions to sware@aurora.ca or call **905-726-4762**
www.aurora.ca/moviesinthepark



Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 26, 2016
9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Aurora Seniors' Centre (90 John West Way)

- Enjoy EGG-citing activities including an egg hunt, face painting, easter games, craft making and more!
- See adorable live bunnies and baby chicks!
- **Wristbands must be purchased in advance** at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex or at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex. *Please note, wristbands will not be sold at the event.*
- Wristbands cost \$5 per child. Children 12 and under are welcome to participate. Parents are free!
- Pancake breakfast offered by the Aurora Seniors' Association and the Optimist Club of Aurora. Please note, a nominal fee applies.

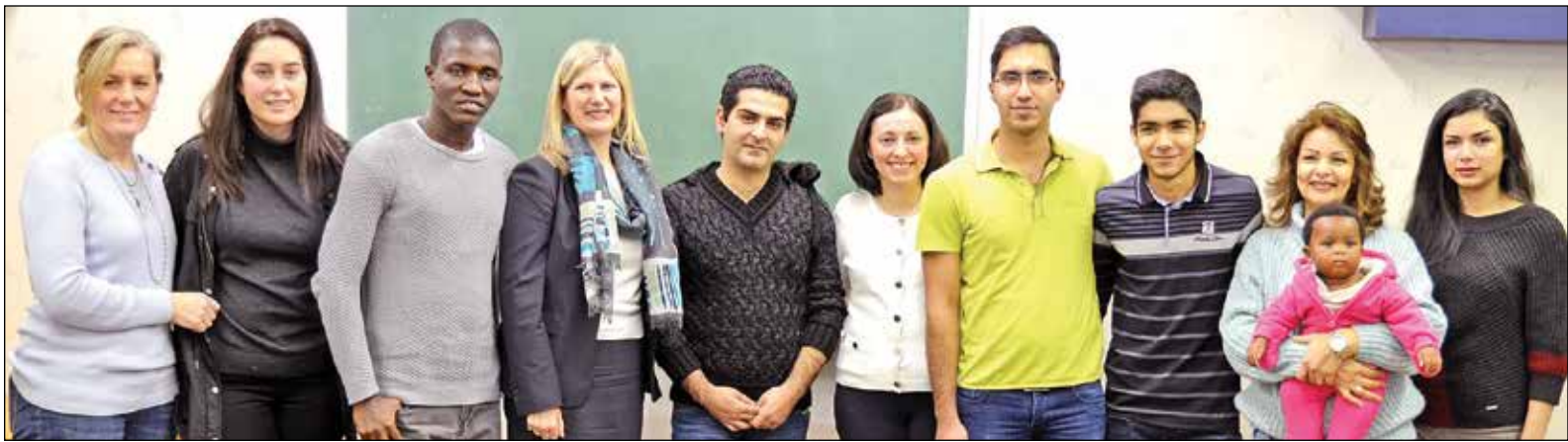


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For more information, please call **905-726-4762** or visit www.aurora.ca/easteregg hunt #AuroraEggHunt

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Our Lady of Grace refugee sponsors including Wendy, far left, and Marina, centre, recently welcomed newcomers from Iran and Cote d'Ivoire. Recently, they hosted Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leona Alleslev at the church to speak about the transition process and challenges they are facing. Newcomers, from right, include: Ala, baby Divine, Atefeh, Ilia, Ali, Hadi, and Ephrem.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Language and transit are significant hurdles: sponsors

From page 1

That is one of the challenges of living in the suburbs, she adds. In Toronto, there are practically endless options for ESL but in York Region, particularly northern York Region, those opportunities are few and far between. Places like the Stephenson Centre have 90 spaces available for newcomers, which isn't bad, she notes, but they often fill up on the first or second day they are available.

With Welcome Centres, structured classes at the Stephenson Centre, as well as additional learning opportunities facilitated by the York Catholic District School Board, the basic infrastructure is there, she says, but that infrastructure needs a better underlying structure.

"We have all the possibilities, but we need to restructure," says Ms. Nemat. "Now that we have this huge influx of refugees, you know how it is with bureaucracy. It takes time to adjust, but if we can speed that up somehow... We don't want it to be too late for these people and [have them] fall through the cracks.

"What happens for a lot of these people, even Downtown, especially the ones who are over 45, is they end up sticking with their own communities and then they don't learn English and end up working in stores that are owned by the same ethnic group and there is no advancement. The second generation does quite well. It is not a bad thing to start at one of these local ethnic stores just to get a foot in the door, but a lot of people, they feel comfortable there, and it is difficult to get from point A to point B and learn English. It is that vicious cycle that keeps going."

Literally getting from Point A to Point B is also presenting something of a challenge for the newcomers, the group notes. Soon, the cost for a York Region Transit pass, which covers two-zone Viva service, will be \$185 per month. This two-zone pass will get the newcomers to the Stephenson Centre and back, but one for each of the refugees is a costly prospect.

Sponsor Catherine Falzone says they have canvassed area municipalities to see what supports are in place to help reduce those costs, but have come up empty.

"We get it, there are a lot of people in this community who still have trouble affording [transit], but even so, let's go a step further and say, for the people who have just come, their budgets are very minimal, what can you do to help? Right now, it is nothing.

The group recently hoped to have a temporary lifeline through Mayor Geoff Dawe's office when it was suggested that some residual funds raised during the 2015 Mayor's Charity Golf Classic might be available for a handful of passes. It might have provided a temporary solution, but the group says they were prepared to accept what they could. Ultimately, this

light – if not at the end of the tunnel, but at the end of a nearby off-ramp – fizzled out.

"I was told the committee in charge decided that we didn't meet the criteria," says Ms. Nemat. "When I asked which criteria, I was told... 'How would it serve the residents of Aurora on a broader level? Most, if not all, past recipients provided programming/supports for a wide range of town residents and the community at large.'

"I am at a loss. 'Broader level' is such a vague term. So, for example, if one wants to serve those with a disability, one would not get any money? Or the homeless? Or the hungry? A recurring nightmare I have is that I am standing at a busy intersection literally begging for money as people walk by like I am invisible. I hate asking for money, even though not a penny of it would go to me. It makes one feel small, very small, and undermines one's dignity, especially when people walk away."

However, according to Tim Jones, who co-chairs the annual golf tournament, the committee met March 8 to begin planning for the event, reviewing each request one at a time to prioritize and identify successful applicants. The average amount each successful group receives, he notes, is between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

"Over the past number of years, with the growth of requests, not all applicants are successful," said Mr. Jones. "The Mayor asked the committee to consider a special request from the Our Lady of Grace – Refugee Resettlement Committee for \$15,204 for specific transit pass purchases for the seven Syrian adult refugees.

"It has been the past practice of the committee to support organizations who demonstrate open public participation opportunities for all residents in Aurora as opposed to addressing specific individual needs. On a vote, the committee respectfully declined the request."

At this month's meeting, Ms. Alleslev took note of their issues and expressed sympathy with many of their concerns, noting that further supports need to be put in place for language and transit.

"This is a very real issue and I think if the objective is for people to be able to communicate in a second language and be positioned to learn at a higher level in a second language so they can go to schools and get jobs, we're not giving them the best foundation on which to build," she said, asking the group for recommendations on what might change the status quo. "This is the beginning of a new chapter in Canada welcoming refugees, period. Let's put in some infrastructure that will stand the test of time."

But, it will take a bit of effort, they agree.

"Yes, it is going to take a little bit more

time, but this is an investment we are making in our economy," said Ms. Nemat. "As soon as the people enter the job market, the less donations we are going to need from the community to cover this and cover that. It is something that will help all of us in the community in the long run because as soon as they become self-sufficient, the better off everyone is going to be at the end of the day."

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Briefly

REMEMBERING ROB FORD

Politicians are paying tribute to Rob Ford after the Toronto Councillor lost his battle with cancer on Tuesday morning. The controversial former mayor of the city was 46 years old. "I was deeply saddened to learn about the passing of former Toronto Mayor Rob Ford," said Regional Chair Wayne Emmerson in a statement. "He was a popular politician who cared deeply about his constituents and his municipality. It is always tragic when a person is struck down in the prime of his life. My thoughts and prayers go out to the Ford family and Rob's friends and colleagues during this most difficult time." Added Mayor Geoff Dawe: "My heartfelt condolences to the Ford family on their loss. Rob Ford was a strong influence on politics in Toronto. His perseverance and dedication to making Toronto a better place will be remembered."



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Trump gives hope to “disenchanted” Republicans: reader

(Re: Politics as Usual, March 17)

Ms. Collins-Mrakas trots out a predictable condemnation of Donald Trump’s presidential aspirations. Mr. Trump does not represent the traditional candidate. He is not smooth, politically correct, deferential or contrite. So why, to this point, has he been successful?

A large segment of Republicans feel they have been wronged.

For example, the Tea Party movement arose from George W. Bush’s big government spending followed by even more massive government growth under Obama. The Tea Partiers were merely asking for real reduction in government debt and deficits as well as sensible immigration policies.

They did this peacefully without rioting or violence and for this they were branded as racists and bigots. They were successful in giving Republicans control of both the House and Senate and the result? Nothing changed. Obama’s big government and open southern border policies were not challenged.

The Republican Party leadership lied to its own supporters.

Along came Donald Trump. He represents someone outside of the “establishment”. He gives the disenchanted Republican voters hope that he would be the one to finally put an end to the obvious slide in American economic power. Under Obama, debt has skyrocketed (\$1 billion now spent daily on interest), real wages have fallen, middle class jobs have disappeared and the massive influx of illegal immigrants has continued.

It is no wonder that choosing another candidate favoured by the Republican elite was not the favored option. They know nothing will change.

Donald Trump is more representative of New York City street culture than our ideal of a presidential candidate. He is a populist in the same vein as Trudeau or Obama, but can you blame the Republican voter for looking to him to do something different? You can only stiff your supporters so many times before they turn away.

I await Ms. Collins-Mrakas’ tirade against the candidacy of the media darling – the corrupt and incompetent Hillary Clinton.

Gordon Clarke
Aurora

Reader to Mayor Dawe: Because it’s 2016

The Mayor has stated his opposition to having the Regional Chair position elected starting in the next election cycle.

He says that he has only heard from three people on the matter and that no one is interested.

Let me be the fourth. Well, actually the thirteenth, if the eight people on Town Council count for anything.

He has offered several reasons in addition to the “nobody cares” argument.

He says that a complete governance review of the Region is needed, in part because of the Town’s under representation at Regional Council. The approach of not fixing anything, until everything can be fixed is an excuse as old as politics.

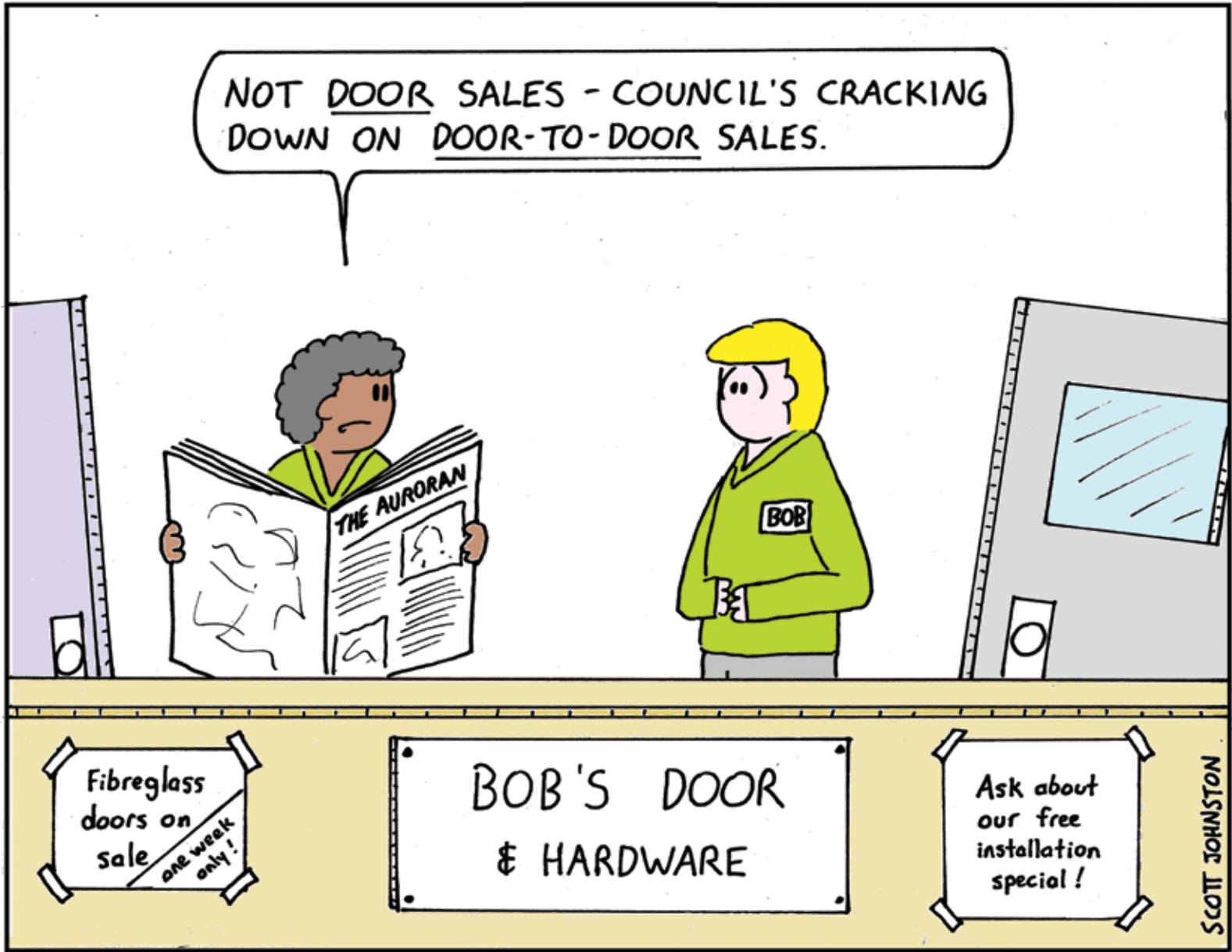
More specifically, the Town has 5 per cent of the seats on Regional council and 5.2 per cent of the Region’s population. Others municipalities in the Region may have more or fewer seats than their share of the population may deem appropriate, but not Aurora.

Frankly, I didn’t vote for him to argue someone else’s case.

The Mayor further argues he’s against the move to elect the Chair because it targets York Region specifically. Where exactly does he

Continued on page 7

Macell’s Corners



Innovation: On Ice



BROCK’S BANTER

Brock Weir

of our outdoor rinks and made them contingent solely on temperature rather than having enough snow to build a thick base to flood.

Created by Parks Manager Jim Tree in a response to increasingly mild winters wreaking havoc on the care and maintenance of outdoor rinks, the solution was a “relatively simple” ice-making system consisting of an intricate network of grids featuring individual water-filled cells lying on top of the ground. These cells would be connected to create a uniform ice surface in a system.

In its simplest terms: a series of larger-than-life ice cube trays.

An in-house invention, it came with a relatively conservative price tag, as far as municipal projects go, of \$54,000 to get a working prototype.

“We had approached some manufacturers and some designers to determine what we might come up with and we developed this prototype,” Al Downey, Aurora’s Director of Parks and Recreation, told the Council of 2010 – 2014. “It seems to work, we think it is going to work; however, molds needed to be made in order to produce this prototype. We are recommending that we spend money to develop the aluminum mold to manufacture enough of these to try out on a pilot project for one of the rinks. If it works, then we would come back to Council to request additional funds in order to produce a steel mold which we would then be able to mass produce this product and use them in all of our rinks.”

Several Council members at the time were intrigued by the concept, but became skittish when it came to making a firm decision, as politicians so often do.

“We spend many man hours in the winter spraying and creating ice surfaces and nothing is more popular in the wintertime,” said then-councillor Evelyn Buck. “People come from Newmarket to skate on our parks because they enjoy it so much [but] it has always been a problem, the amount of time and man-hours we put into creating ice surfaces to have in January and February. It is something you’re constantly arguing with yourself on whether you should

be doing it and yet you know how much people enjoy it.”

If the pilot worked, she added, it would be an investment well worth the money, but she shared the concerns of other members around the table when it came to patents and intellectual property rights around Mr. Tree’s innovation.

Although Mr. Downey told Council he had already discussed whether Mr. Tree wanted to pursue a patent – he didn’t, said Mr. Downey, adding he could provide something in writing if Council was hesitant – it wasn’t enough for Council to pull the trigger.

“I would really hate to see a mess between the Town and a very valued employee,” said then-councillor Chris Ballard. “I want to make sure the Town understands what it is getting and the employee understands what they are getting so there [is] no miscommunication or hurt feelings in the years to come as this thing becomes successful and takes off across North America.”

But, right now, what the Town is getting, what the employee is getting, and what the residents are getting is a big, fat nothing.

As far as anyone can tell, this project, something which lawmakers saw as having the potential to become wildly popular, is cooling its heels in the annals of Councils-past, consigned there by politicians who got cold feet in the end.

During the discussion, former councillor John Gallo questioned whether it is the role of a municipality to be “innovating. In my view, it is the role of the private sector to be innovating and coming up with these kinds of things.”

Councils, however, can’t always wait for the private sector to come a-knocking, especially when local governments are all too keen to reinvent wheels in favour of Made-in-Aurora or Made-in-York Region solutions to issues that have already been solved.

Someone has to do it, and if municipalities – and those they employ – have the wherewithal to be innovators, why not take the plunge?

It seems to be working for Newmarket, a Town which has had no hesitation in coming forward with bold innovations that have put our neighbours firmly on the map.

Perhaps it’s time for Aurora to be bold again as well.

Defrosting this idea for a second look wouldn’t be a bad first step.

By the time winter rolls around again this December maybe, just maybe, local youngsters – and the young at heart – will be able to enjoy winter-long outdoor skating.

THE AURORAN

Aurora’s Community Newspaper

The Auroran Newspaper Company Ltd.
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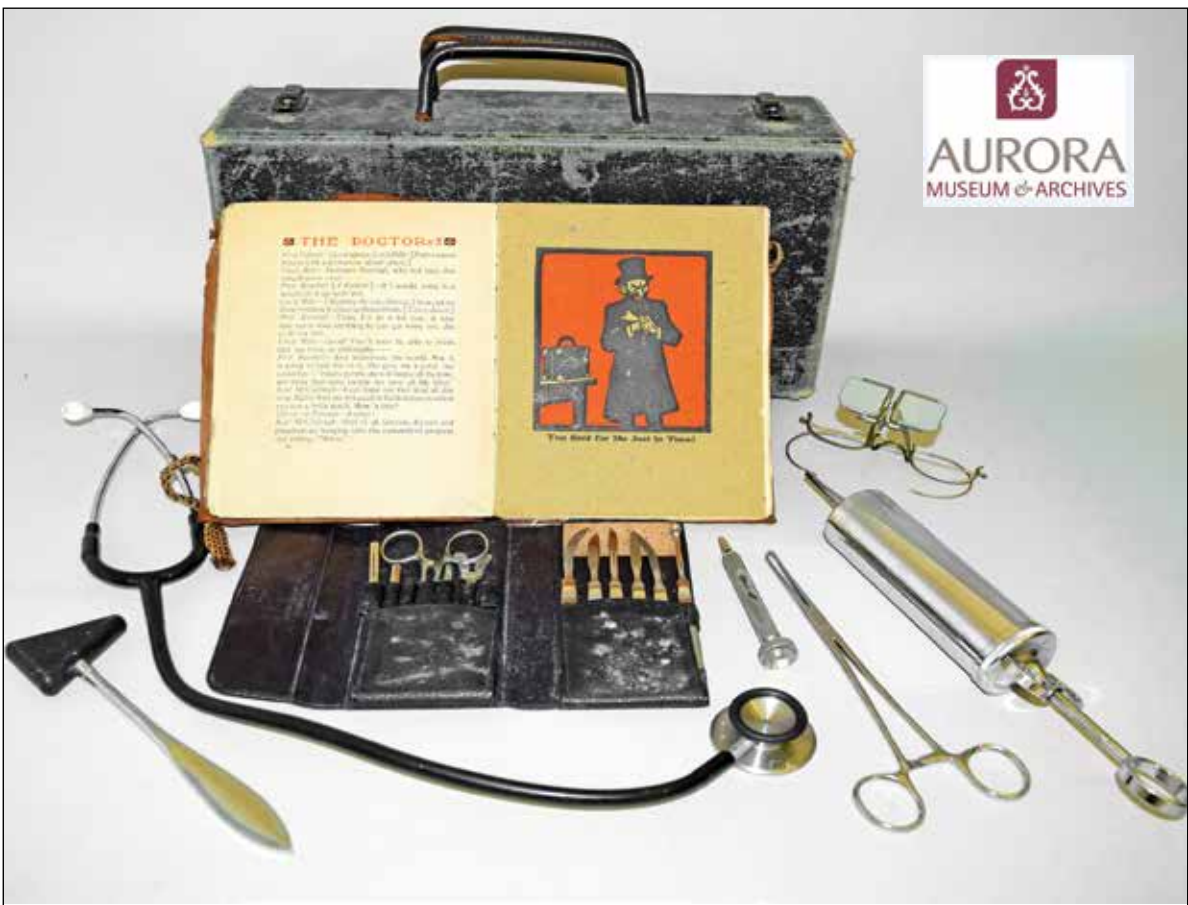
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The Aurora Museum & Archives celebrates...

**Doctors’ Day
(Wednesday,
March 30)**

This doctor’s bag belonged to Dr. Boulding, who practiced in Aurora from 1920 to 1945. It was donated to the collection by the widow of Dr. Crawford Rose, along with the medical equipment pictured. The book is Elbert Hubbard’s “The Doctors: A Satire in Four Seizures” written in 1909. Have more information about Dr. Boulding or Dr. Rose? Let us know at letters@auroran.com.



IN GOOD COMPANY
Mayor Geoffrey Dawe

Looking ahead to the future in hotel development

Welcome to Spring! With the warmer weather approaching, I hope that you and your families take this opportunity to explore the many parks and trails in Aurora.

Don’t miss Aurora’s Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 26 from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre. There will be a variety of fun activities including face painting, an egg hunt, craft making and more. Wristbands for the event must be purchased in advance. The cost is \$5 per child. Parents are free.

Activities for the event will be inside the Aurora Seniors’ Centre and outside along the Arboretum Trail. Please dress for both indoor and outdoor activities. Don’t miss the annual Pancake Breakfast offered by The Optimist Club of Aurora. A nominal fee will apply. For more information on Aurora’s Easter Egg Hunt, please visit www.aurora.ca/easteregg hunt.

Aurora is flourishing with many new housing and business developments underway. With more visitors and activity in Aurora, the need for accommodations within the community is crucial. Currently, Aurora does not have a hotel in the community. Most municipalities in York Region and across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) have at least one hotel in their vicinity.

As mentioned in my Aurora Chamber of Commerce Luncheon address, the Town has connected with several potential investors interested in developing a new hotel in Aurora. There is a site at Leslie Street and Don Hillock Drive that has all approvals in place for a new hotel. However, a substantial barrier to this development is high development charges (DCs).

What are development charges and why are they important?

Development charges are fees that developers pay when a building permit is issued. The fees help pay for costs to provide municipal services and fulfill infrastructure requirements such as roads, transit, water and sewer infrastructure, community centres and emergency services.

The DCs have increased over the past few years, impeding hotel expansion in York Region.

The current methodology to calculate DC rates is 50 per cent of the non-residential rate plus the small apartment rate for each unit in the hotel. Since these DC’s have been in place, there has been no new hotel development in York Region.

I am currently lobbying Regional Council to reduce their portion of hotel DC’s which amounts to the largest share of the charges. Council understands the extreme importance of hotel development in Aurora and the positive impact this will have on local businesses.

Development of a hotel is one of our main focuses and we are working collaboratively to achieve this goal.

Stay connected to find out what’s happening in Aurora. Visit the Town’s website, read the local Notice Board, subscribe to our social media feeds and sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, Aurora Matters.

Stay tuned to In Good Company for more information about Aurora.

Easter Egg-spectations



INSIDE AURORA
Scott Johnston

It was a nice spring day in late March and I was walking in the Arboretum near Town Hall, when I came across the Easter Bunny. He seemed a bit stressed, sitting hunched over on a bench with his paws fidgeting in his lap.

I’d run into him many times over the years in Aurora, and he always seemed to be dealing with some last-minute crisis as he readied himself for the big weekend.

“So, are you all ready for Easter?” I asked, with some trepidation, taking a seat beside him.

“Yes,” he sighed. “Absolutely. All prepped and ready to go. No issues.”

Based on his appearance, it wasn’t the answer I was expecting. But I smiled at his response, and we sat in silence for a while, watching a robin hopping along on the other side of the path.

But he continued to seem in some distress, so eventually, although I hated to bring it up, I just had to say it.

“You realize,” I noted quietly, “every year there’s always an issue.”

His demeanour completely changed, and he broke down sobbing. “I know!”

Looking over with red-rimmed eyes he continued, “You’re right. There always is, isn’t there? No matter how well I plan things, something always seems to go wrong.”

“Remember the year I got the dates mixed up? And the time when I hid the eggs in the wrong place?”

He continued counting off on one paw.

“And what about when I had too many eggs ready too soon, and couldn’t store them anywhere? Or when I set my clock backwards instead of forwards at daylight savings and nearly missed my own egg hunt!”

“And then,” I reminded him, “there was the suggestion following the Jazz Fest in Town Park that Aurora was opening to competition the running of all civic events, and you thought you’d be replaced in coordinating Easter?”

“That was awful,” he agreed, with a shudder, and stared off into the distance for a minute.

“I just can’t think of what I’ve missed this year,” he cried eventually, pounding his little fists on the bench in frustration. “It’s killing me!”

“But I was just reading in The Auroran last week how organized you are this time,” I said. “You’ve ordered all the eggs, prizes and supplies, and have them at the right venue, don’t

you?”

“Yes.”

“And all the games and events are planned? And the baby chicks and bunnies safely on hand?”

Another nod.

“The Girl Guides and other volunteers are ready to help out, and the Optimists are lined up for the pancake breakfast?”

“I’ve taken care of all that,” he sighed.

He seemed to have everything under control. However, with his track record, I couldn’t blame him for worrying.

“Maybe this is the year you turn the corner and start fresh with an issue-free event,” I said, with as much encouragement as I could muster. “After all, with all your experience and hard work, it was bound to happen.”

“Maybe,” he conceded. “But I’m going to take another look, and make sure I haven’t missed anything.”

With that, he hopped off the bench and headed off in the direction of the Seniors’ Centre.

It would be great for him to have a successful day, but at the very least his being stressed out was an Aurora Easter tradition that seemed to be continuing for another year.

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

Importance of Volunteering



MP’s Report

**Kyle Peterson, MP
Newmarket-Aurora**



As I write this column, the first Budget of this government is about to be released. Yet, I will leave commenting on that Budget for another day.

Since my last column, I have had the opportunity to take part in a number of community events, and I thoroughly enjoy participating in these types of events. They shine a light on the many positive organizations and people we are lucky to have in our community.

Recently, I was proud to participate in the 360° Experience in support of 360°Kids programs and services for at-risk and homeless youth in York Region.

I spent a night as a homeless youth, and had to make my way around various shelters, seeking warmth in coffee shops, and navigating local transit in York Region.

I spent the night sleeping outside in the snow, with only a tarp and sleeping bag.

This experience was eye-opening for me. Homelessness is a real issue right here. Fortunately, when the night was over, I could return to my home, which is not an option for so many homeless youth.

I commend 360 Kids, York Region

and Michael Braithwaite, Executive Director at 360 kids, for the great work they are doing. Nearly \$100,000 was raised during the 360 Experience, which I and many others took part in. To find out more about this organization, please visit www.360kids.ca.

Another one of the many great events I was fortunate enough to attend was Neighbourhood Network’s Collaboration Day.

Neighbourhood Network is a fantastic organization based in Aurora which, among other things, connects volunteers with organizations.

I was honoured to take part in its government panel discussion, and

hope that I was able to contribute in some small way to the event. As often is the case, I was overwhelmed by the quality of the organizations and people who take part in this event.

Congratulations to Neighbourhood Network for organizing a successful meeting. To get involved, please visit neighbourhoodnetwork.org.

Neighbourhood Network and 360°Kids York Region are two examples of the many organizations here in our community that are doing great work, and also highlight the importance of volunteerism.

In April, we will be celebrating National Volunteer Week, between April 10 and 16.

I urge you to consider getting involved in volunteering. There are so many ways to do so in Aurora. You will be helping groups and people that need the help - but you will also feel good about doing it.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office for further information, or for any other reason.

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C) John Kasich D) Bernie Sanders
E) Donald Trump

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RESULTS TO DATE March 22, 2016	A	B	C	D	E
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WiFi eyed for Aurora light posts

By Brock Weir

WiFi could be coming to an Aurora light post near you – that is if Aurora partners with Bell Canada to make it happen.

Bell has approached several York Region municipalities, including Aurora, on possible partnerships to bring “small cell” technology to help relieve the pressure on their wireless networks. Since Aurora converted its street lights to an energy saving LED system last year, the new fixtures are essentially WiFi ready, now it is just a matter of turning them on.

“This is something we’re quite excited about,” said Anthony Ierullo, Aurora’s Manager of Strategic Planning. “The Town has made an investment in LED infrastructure... and an ancillary benefit of that is these poles have WiFi capabilities that can be enabled with some hardware and software. The technology is enabled in the LED heads, but the infrastructure hasn’t been put in place.

“Bell Canada has really shown an interest in partnering with the municipalities and have launched a pilot project to leverage those potential WiFi networks to take some pressure off their existing wireless networks. There is a significant concern with the wireless network providers about the amount of traffic with smart phones running through their networks and the need to ramp up those networks. This type of

partnership could potentially give them an opportunity to take some of that traffic off their main network and onto this ancillary network, and potentially assist in not requiring as much infrastructure in the future.”

Infrastructure which may not be needed as frequently in the future include additional cell towers.

While many points of a potential partnership need to be “clarified” before moving forward, Mr. Ierullo added the telecom company is “definitely interested” in carrying out talks and looking at benefits.

“There are potential options around public WiFi that could potentially come out of it,” he added. “It’s an initiative we’re excited about and are chasing down.”

The potential program was recently brought to Aurora’s Economic Development Advisory Committee. There, Council members and citizen members offered their enthusiasm. Councillor John Abel, for instance, said such a partnership could address cell “shortcomings” along the Yonge Street component.

Citizen member Marilee Harris, on the other hand, said she looked forward to seeing whether the Town of Aurora could get a revenue stake in such an endeavour.

“We’re talking about partnering with Bell to have them use this network to sell their services,” said Mr. Ierullo. “There may be a municipal component to it, but that is not what their interest is.”

Liberal government’s first Federal Budget delivered Tuesday afternoon

From page 1

it will be.”

Ahead of the Budget, one particular tenet was leaked, namely the pledge to maintain retirement age at 65 rather than the anticipated change to 67 floated by the previous Conservative government. This was an issue Mr. Peterson said he heard voiced continually during the election campaign, with many Newmarket-Aurora residents expressing “worry” about the impact such a change would have on them.

But, everything comes at a cost, and well before Tuesday’s budget, the Finance Minister announced deficits would be deeper than originally anticipated. In the weeks since then, Mr. Peterson says the “prevailing sentiment” from neighbours is “people don’t mind the spending if it is spent on things that are worthwhile.”

“I think it is more important to invest in things that don’t seem as wasteful and I think people can live with deficits when they realise they are investments that are going to pay off in the midterm to long-term, as opposed to money we may never see a return on,” he said.

Following the public input sessions, Mr. Peterson said common themes offered by residents were affordable housing, investments in infrastructure, such as broadband, as well as investments in green technology.

“A common theme I heard was whatever the spend is, or the investments are, make sure it either creates jobs or builds things we are going to need in the long-term,” he said. “That was the overall theme I got because the promise during the election was to spend a lot of money, of course, and I think people are generally supportive of that as long as it is on the right thing.

“Transit is a big thing in Aurora and transportation is more than transit. It is not just something like the two-way

GO train or anything like that, but it is also the overall approach to transit and how we can make transportation work for everybody. The more people take public transit, the less people [there are] on the highway and roadways, but we also have to improve the roadways and make sure they are serving the community as it grows.

“People even talk about there being more commitment to cycling and other green means of transportation as well, so that runs the gamut. There are also people who want to invest in affordable housing. Whether that is some way of encouraging builders to build more affordable housing and the mix when they are building new developments, or whether it is directly investing in some community groups that are already building housing solutions in the community.”

Ahead of the Budget, the Aurora Chamber of Commerce echoed the call for increased infrastructure funding, sighting pre-budget submissions from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, which calls on the government to keep its commitment to infrastructure, clarify the small business tax cut, and “eliminate Ontario’s Federal fiscal gap when it comes to EI funding.

Ontarians, they argue, contribute between \$9.1 and \$12.5 billion more than what they get back in terms of services. The Federal government “must correct this fiscal gap, as the current funding calculation places the province at an economic disadvantage,” they agree.

“Following through on infrastructure investments in Ontario should be the federal government’s top priority,” said Javed Khan, Chair of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. “The federal government has committed to investing in infrastructure and, in order for Ontario’s economy to thrive, the province needs to see the federal government’s commitments come to fruition in the near future.”

Briefly

ALLISTON MAN CHARGED IN SEXUAL ASSAULTS AGAINST VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES

York Regional Police have charged a 44-year-old Alliston man with several historical sexual assaults against victims with disabilities. Former group home worker Jose Munoz-De-Rueda is due to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Newmarket to answer the charges after the YRP received information on February 7 regarding several victims with cognitive and physical disabilities. Investigators have identified eight adult male and female victims who were sexually assaulted by the accused during a period between 2009 and 2013 when the accused was employed by Christian Horizon as a group home worker in several locations around York Region. He was arrested the same day. Investigators are seeking witnesses who may have more information and to ensure there are no further victims. The charges have not been proven in court. Anyone with information is asked to call York Regional Police’s Special Victims Unit – Sexual Assault Section at 1-866-876-5423 x7071, or contact Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS.

WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING SYMPOSIUM

Crime Stoppers York Region will host a public symposium next Thursday, March 31 at Newmarket Theatre from 6 – 9 p.m. to raise awareness about the growing and illicit trafficking of wildlife in York Region. The wildlife being taken from York Region’s lakes, rivers, forests and wetlands include everything from bear and moose to rare and endangered turtles. Some of the turtles most frequently targeted by traffickers include wood turtles and spotted turtles. The global illegal wildlife trade, which includes elephant ivory tusks, is estimated to be worth approximately \$30 billion a year. Animals targeted by illegal traffickers include rare species prized by collectors and endangered animals killed for food. Jack Hurst, Chair of Crime Stoppers of York Region and the organizer of the Symposium, adds that “people should watch for suspicious activity in natural areas, including off-trail activities, overnight parking, or anglers carrying unusual equipment such as snares or a large number of buckets. We encourage people to get involved and help prevent the trafficking of our wildlife.”

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Tough issues to be tackled head-on as Aurora debaters take on world

By Brock Weir

If you want a barometer of the world issues that are going to dominate the national and international conversation over the next year or so, consult with a local debating student. As two Aurora students head this week to the World Debating Championships in Pittsburgh, they are among the 12 best debating students from across Canada set to take on their international peers, numbering between 80 and 100, on the issues that matter to them.

And, according to Country Day School debating teacher Kerstin Wyndham-West, these issues are often a precursor to a larger conversation.

“What’s really fascinating to me is we tend to pick cutting edge topics and then, a year or two later, many of the solutions [the students] propose are actually put into play and we see them discussed in the national or world forum,” says Ms. Wyndham-West, who is accompanying Aurora students Natalie Ganzhorn and Olivia Railton to the international competition. “It gives a sense of hope for the future in the way these guys are tackling issues that are so important and hopefully make a difference.”

These students do not shy away from tackling these problems head-on.

A key component of the Worlds is a persuasive speech in which students are tasked to come up with a topic, take a position, and bring judges around to their way of thinking. Natalie is taking on the topic of female genital mutilation not just in the developing world, but all around the globe.

“The speech is geared very much towards, yes, it is an uncomfortable topic, but because we don’t talk about it, it continues to be a real problem,” says Ms. Wyndham-West. “It is still happening here as well as in other places around the world and [this will be about] what we can do to solve the problem.”

Olivia, on the other hand, is tackling the vast and growing world of cyber-terrorism.

Olivia recently returned from the Nationals in Winnipeg, where she won the National Public Speaking and Debating Championship. There, she won with her persuasive speech on juvenile incarceration in Canada and the United States, arguing offenders who get put in prison before the age of 18 have an 80 per cent higher chance of reoffending because they “just grow to hate police officers, hate authority, and hate adults – an awful situation. We need to focus on making kids better, not sticking them in jail.”

While in Winnipeg, Olivia and many of the other competitors, had a chance to go through the Human Rights Museum, which was a particularly moving experience for those taking aim at issues related to just that.

“There is quite an emphasis on native culture and community because there are quite a few Aboriginal groups native to around that area,” says Olivia. “[Aboriginal rights] is a huge issue in Canada with the fact we have a million people who don’t have access to clean water and we think we’re a first world country. We have a ridiculous native suicide

rate and a ridiculous native rate of mental illness, alcoholism and drug abuse just because people aren’t giving them the support they need.”

Following the visit to the Human Rights museum, Olivia was challenged with arguing against the resolution “governments should not take into account the opinions of local residents when building nationally beneficial works.”

“If I am wanting to build some huge infrastructure like the Keystone XL Pipeline through sacred native land, I shouldn’t listen to what the Natives are saying? Obviously we should listen to the people. [Aboriginal rights] is one of the most pressing issues in Canada. We pride ourselves on being this amazing, inclusive nation, but we have so many people who are struggling and I think we definitely need to do more to help these people.”

As the students prepared their talking points last week, they also looked forward to reconnecting with some familiar faces from around the world who are regulars on the debating circuit as well. As Natalie prepares to head off to her post-secondary career after this term, Olivia said she was looking forward to taking on the world with her long-time friend – and co-president of the CDS debate team – one last time.

Ms. Wyndham-West was also looking on with pride.

“It makes us incredibly proud,” she says. “I have been doing this for a really long time and I have been lucky enough that I think in the last nine years we have had at least one student qualify for the Worlds. When you only have one coming from all of Canada is pretty cool, and they have all gone on to do some really cool things and the majority of them are advocates in some way for those who are less fortunate.”



DEBATING CHAMPS

This week, Canada is sending twelve of its best debaters to the World Debating Championships in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – and two of the twelve are from Aurora. Representing the area on the world stage are Grade 11 student Olivia Railton and Grade 12 student Natalie Ganzhorn, both of Country Day School.

Auroran photos by Brock Weir

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From page 4

expect it to target? York Region is the third largest municipality in Ontario, the sixth largest in Canada. It has a population greater than five of the 10 provinces. The Region’s 2015 budget was \$2.72 Billion.

In 2014, the then Chair, Bill Fisch, was paid \$225,000, one of the highest paid political positions in the country.

It can reasonably be argued that the Chair of York Region is the most powerful unelected political position in Canada.

Well, here’s one argument for you to think over Mr. Mayor - it is 2016 not 1816.

Len Bulmer
Aurora

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Cultural Precinct comes into focus with new museum exhibition

By Brock Weir

150 years ago this year, the Fenian Brotherhood launched a series of raids throughout what is now Canada, to provoke Great Britain to withdraw from Ireland.

The British, however, were quick to respond and, by 1871, put an end to the raids.

Amid the British victories, members of the Aurora Infantry Company, now part of the Queen's York Rangers, were celebrated at Town Park with a huge community celebration welcoming them home.

Over a century-and-a-half on, their medal will take pride of place among a myriad of objects and photographs with close ties to Aurora's "Cultural Precinct" in the new exhibition from the Aurora Museum and Archives entitled Built Culture: Memories of the Precinct.

The new exhibition, which opens this Wednesday, March 30, with an opening reception running in the Aurora Cultural Centre's Brevik Hall from 3 – 6 p.m., examines over 160 years of cultural activity within the Cultural Precinct Area of Aurora's historic downtown core.

"We were presented with this project from [Aurora Museum and Archives curator] Shawna White," says Michelle Johnson, a Master of Museum Studies student at the University of Toronto, who built the show along with fellow students Sarah Spotowski and Rebecca Frerotte, in collaboration with Ms. White. "The scope of covering the Cultural Precinct seemed very timely. We went over a few different options on what to include in the exhibition, but the Precinct provided us with a wealth of content and stories

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The new exhibition was put together by U of T students Sarah Spotowski, Michelle Johnson, and Rebecca Frerotte, pictured here with some of the items ready for the show, including old fire maps, information on the old Mechanics Hall and an original roundel from Church Street School.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

about both the uses of the buildings and the history of the architecture.

"It is the intention of this exhibition to be a sampling of those stories that took place in the buildings, within the boundaries of the precinct to act as a resource for the community, while discussions are happening around the precinct."

Adds Ms. Frerote: "While the Town continues to look at the future of the neighbourhood and make plans, this is taking a look back at what the Cultural Precinct has been in its 160 year history."

Over the years, what is now described as the "Cultural Precinct" has meant different things to different people.

The trio hit the ground running looking for key dates, exact uses of buildings in the area – both long-lost and extant – and how their uses evolved, such as the Mechanic's Hall at the southeast corner of Mosley Street and Victoria Street which has evolved from that early community hub, to the Aurora Lions Hall, to the Romanian Orthodox Church which now calls it home.

"We wanted to tease out the stories that aren't necessarily so obvious," says Ms. Johnson.

Adds Ms. Frerote: "Our process was very site-centric to begin, so we divvied up the sites in the Precinct and had a lot of fun really going through the archives and resources here at the museum. There are a lot of recent artefacts that have come into the archives, like the Mortgage from Mechanics Hall, and it is great that we can handle the tangible history of these buildings through those ephemeral events that took place."

Another important place to start were early fire maps for the Town of Aurora, notes Ms. Spotowski, which chart which structures were on every plot of land in Aurora at any given time for insurance purposes. It helped understand the footprint, how things changed, and uncovered small but interesting details.

She was most interested with the people, she says, and these maps kick-started further discoveries into local teachers, hoteliers, and other people who were community leaders within the Precinct area.

"While researching Church Street School and Aurora Public School, there was a collection donated by a former teacher, Donald Webster, and it was really enlightening to see how education in Ontario in the 1930s was," she says, noting additional archival materials included school newspapers charting issues within each area schools from big ticket items to seemingly trivial matters. "There was a selection of student newspapers he supervised them printing and those students complaining how the school was too small and all of their little 1930s problems were really great.

"The most interesting thing for me was learning about the actual people."

As they put the finishing touches on the show ahead of next week's opening, the three Masters students agree that this exhibition is the "capstone" to their education, which has allowed them to really feel the value of making those connections between archives, museums, and the community around them.

"We worked with a core of five people who aren't actually employees of the museum that have just been amazing in giving us extra bits of information when we need it, filling in holes, answering our questions, and it is just so lovely to see the community come together over a shared history," says Ms. Spotowski.

Adds Ms. Johnson: "It was a true collaborative relationship with Shawna. She really mentored us through the process to let us know what high standards look like in terms of research, talking to people and getting facts right. I know I definitively feel comfortable going out into the world as a museum professional having done an exhibition like this so comprehensive in scope."

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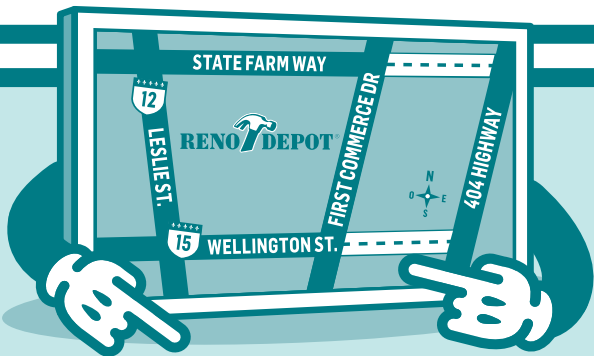
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THE AURORAN SPORTS

Vol. 16 No. 22 905-727-3300

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FREE Week of March 24, 2016

Tigers forward Formenton signs with OHL's Knights

By Jake Courtepatte

Alex Formenton is taking the next step in his hockey career after a successful season with the Junior A Aurora Tigers.

London Knights General Manager Basil McRae announced last week the team signed Formenton to an OHL Standard Player's Agreement, one year after drafting him in the OHL Priority Selection draft.

The King City native, a natural left-winger, spent the 2015-16 season with the Tigers after a productive Minor Midget campaign with the Mississauga Rebels one year earlier.

Through one season in the OJHL, Formenton put up thirteen goals and thirteen assists in 54 games.

He added two more goals in the 2016 postseason, through the Tigers'

six-game opening series with the Wellington Dukes.

Over the course of his career, playing in both the OJHL and GTHL, Formenton has a total of 84 points and 160 PIMS in 127 combined regular season and playoff games.

"Proud to be a part of the London Knights," Formenton said in a tweet. "Can't wait to get things started and wear the logo next year."

While the Tigers had a disappointing early exit in the OJHL playoffs, the major junior Knights open their postseason next week after finishing tied atop the OHL standings with the Erie Otters.

The Knights took the 16-year old in the eleventh round, 216th overall in the 2015 draft. The OHL is ranked as the third-best developmental hockey league in North America, and the top among non-professional players.



Alex Formenton follows the puck behind the net in the Aurora Tigers' first round OJHL series with the Wellington Dukes in early March.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

Andonovski lifts Saints hockey to national title

By Jake Courtepatte

The St. Andrew's College Saints concluded their 2016 first hockey campaign with yet another accolade.

The CISAA champions swept through all five of their matchups in the National Independent School Championship (NISIC) over the weekend, taking the final 3 - 2 over Ridley College on home ice at LaBrier Arena Sunday.

Facing a divisional foe in Appleby College twice in round robin play, the Saints were victorious both times in 6 - 5 and 4 - 3 games. Outside of the CISAA, the Saints were also perfect, defeating two Quebec teams in Ulysse Prep and Bishops College School.

Sunday's final at LaBrier had SAC's first major blip in the tournament, going down 1 - 0 less than a minute into the second period and unable to solve the Ridley tender.

Ryan O'Connell traded a goal with Ridley's Matvev Skripchenko before the end of the period, with the home team down 2 - 1 heading to the third.

Felix Cote tied the game with ten minutes to go, and Corey Andonovski gave the Saints their first lead of the game three minutes later on a solo

effort.

Cole Chapman was a wall between the pipes, shutting down the Ridley offense for the rest of the period and securing the victory. He made 39 stops on 41 shots faced.

Otto Saarimaa was named the James McCreath tournament MVP, and was joined by team captain Reid Yochim who was named a tournament All-Star.

The Saints entered and completed the tournament as the top-ranked team in the country by MyHockey rankings.



Regan Kimens plants himself in front of the Appleby College net in the opening game of the National Independent School Championships at LaBrier Arena.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

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Director Bill Maron

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Kelly and Sebastian Gobbels accept the donation from Mary Rourke, right, at her Industrial Parkway South office. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

Young soccer players gear up for the pre-season thanks to local contribution

By Brock Weir

With the hockey season winding up, kids across York Region are gearing up for soccer season and some local players will have a little bit of extra fun in the pre-season thanks to Mary Rourke and Hollis Wealth Aurora.

Ms. Rourke welcomed Sebastian Gobbels, a member of the Aurora Youth Soccer Club's 2002 Boys OPDL (Ontario Player Development League) Team, along with his mom Kelly, to her Industrial Parkway South office on Thursday to make a \$500 contribution to the team.

As they received the cheque, Sebastian was grinning from ear to ear as he knew where the money was going.

"It is going to the team in general, but right now we're using the funds for a pre-season camp at Teen Ranch in Caledon," said Kelly. "It is a great thing they do the weekend before their season starts. They have two nights there for team bonding, have their days filled with soccer activities, and finish up with a game."

"Last year, there were different boys who hadn't played together but before the end of the weekend they came out like glue, which was amazing to watch."

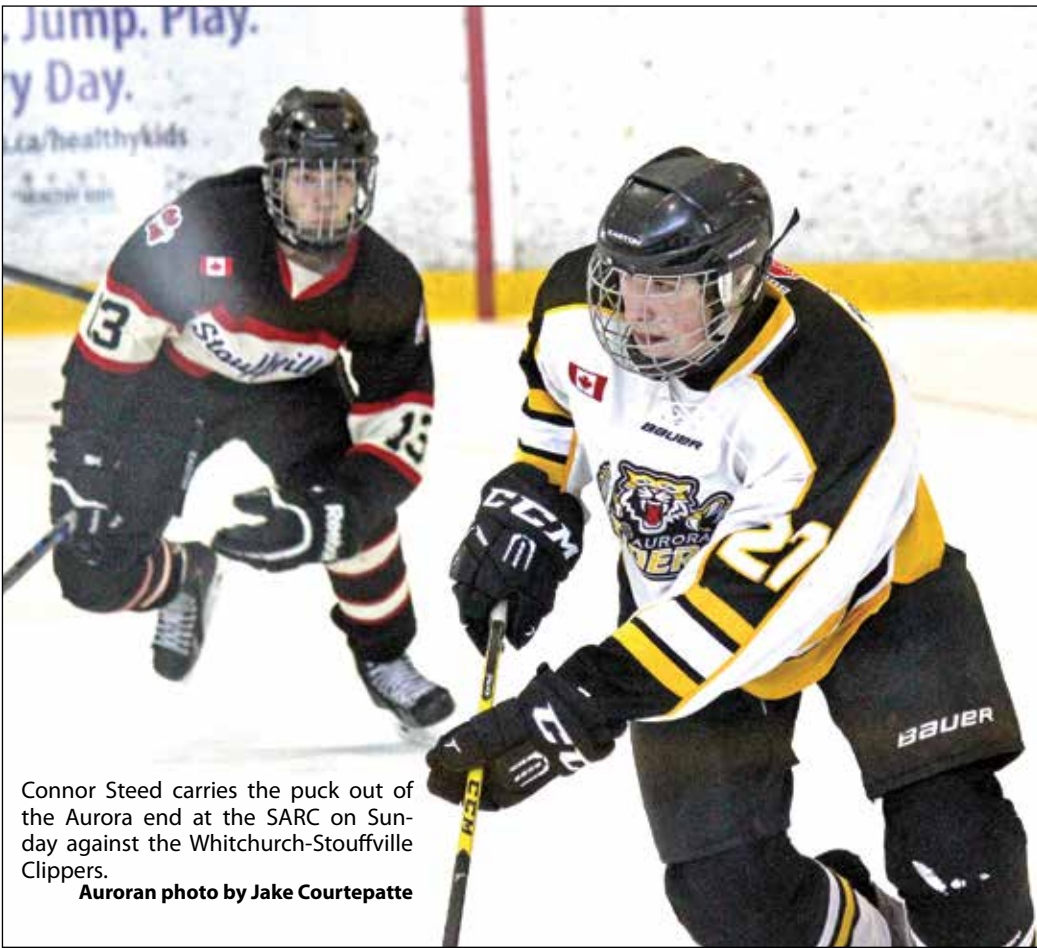
This year, the team welcomes a handful of newer members, so there will be fresh faces to join in the fun.

The Aurora Youth Soccer Club is the latest community group to receive a donation from Ms. Rourke and Aurora Hollis Wealth. The company donates money to charities on a rotating business each year.

"There is so much need out there we tend not to focus on one area, but rotate our critical dollars in a way that addresses some of the needs out there," she said. "This year, we wanted to focus on our community, in particular the area of youth sport."

"We very much like to focus our dollars preferably where it relates to youth, children. The Aurora Youth Soccer Club does a lot of work around Youth sport. In the past, we have donated to mental health initiatives as it relates to youth, as well as places like the United Way of Toronto [and] Habitat for Humanity have been on our charitable giving list in the past. Need and where we can focus those dollars on children and youth has been very much part of our focus here."

This contribution, both women hope, will lead to an enduring relationship between the AYSC and Aurora Hollis Wealth.



Connor Steed carries the puck out of the Aurora end at the SARC on Sunday against the Whitchurch-Stouffville Clippers. **Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte**

Minor Midget AA Tigers get even in York-Simcoe final

By Jake Courtepatte

A late third period goal on Sunday at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex has the Minor Midget AA Tigers back in York-Simcoe contention.

The Tigers opened the YSMHL final series with the Whitchurch-Stouffville Clippers on Friday, edged out 4 – 2 on the road. The first-to-six-points series moved to the SARC for Game 2, an afternoon game that drew a big crowd for both sides.

It didn't take long for the Tigers to strike.

Less than a minute in and already on the powerplay, Matthew Ferry made a nice move to wait out the Clippers goaltender while coming out from the side of the net to make it 1 – 0.

That score would hold up for more than two periods, despite multiple two-man advantages for the Tigers. At the other end, John Hopkinson kept the Clippers at bay with some solid rebound

control.

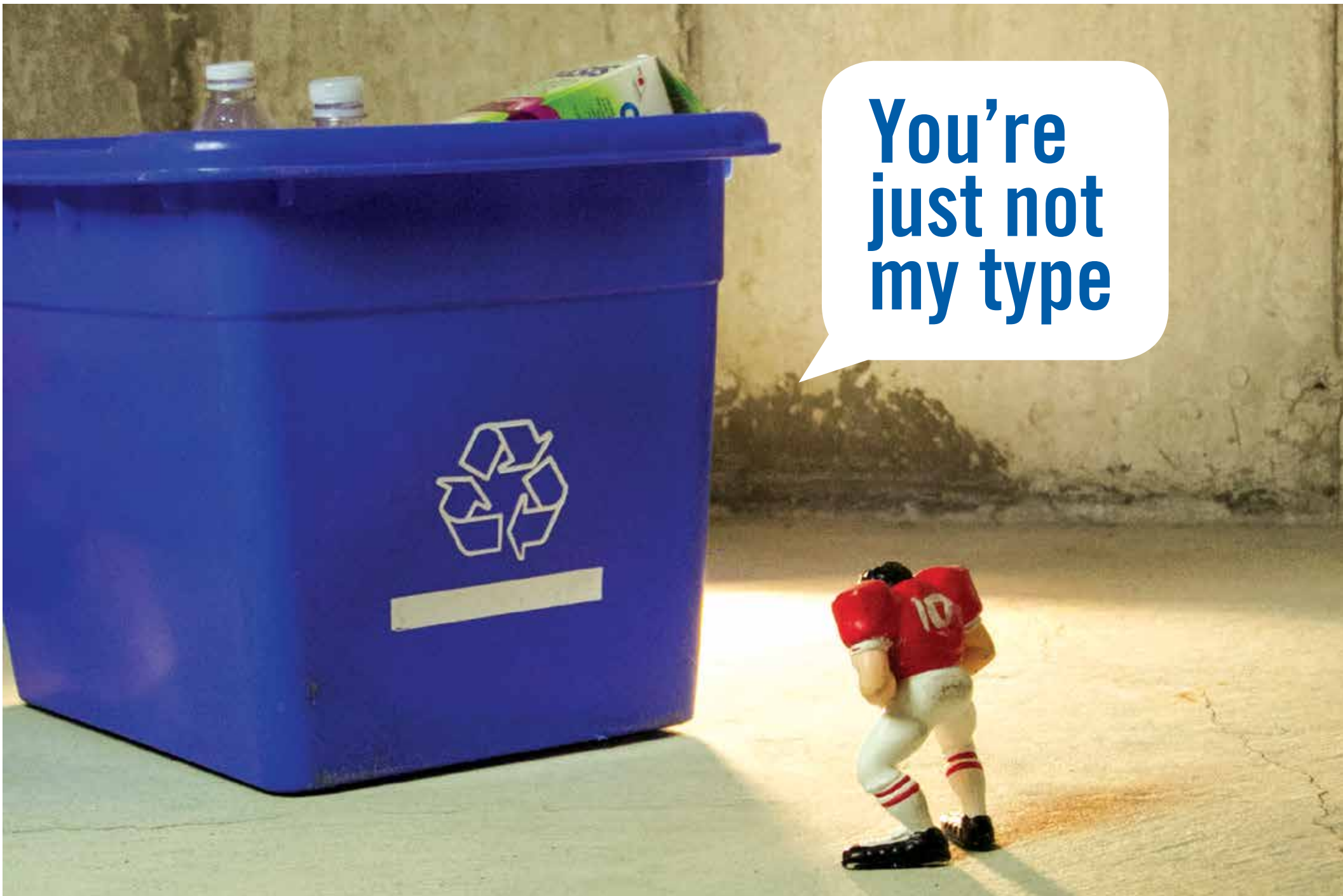
With nine minutes to go and the Tigers unable to clear the puck from their zone, he was finally beaten while on his back during a scramble in front of the net.

Peter Chimienti thought he took the lead for Aurora on the very next shift, taking a couple whacks at the puck, but with a referee's conference deciding the puck never crossed the line.

It wouldn't mean much in the end, however, as the game winner came off the stick of Parker Boland with five minutes to go, a one-timer from the slot for the 2 – 1 victory.

With the series now tied at two points apiece, the Tigers return to Stouffville for Game 3. Game 4 will be played Thursday at 7:55p.m. at the SARC, while if necessary, Game 5 will head back to Stouffville on Saturday.

For schedules, visit www.auroraminorhockey.com.



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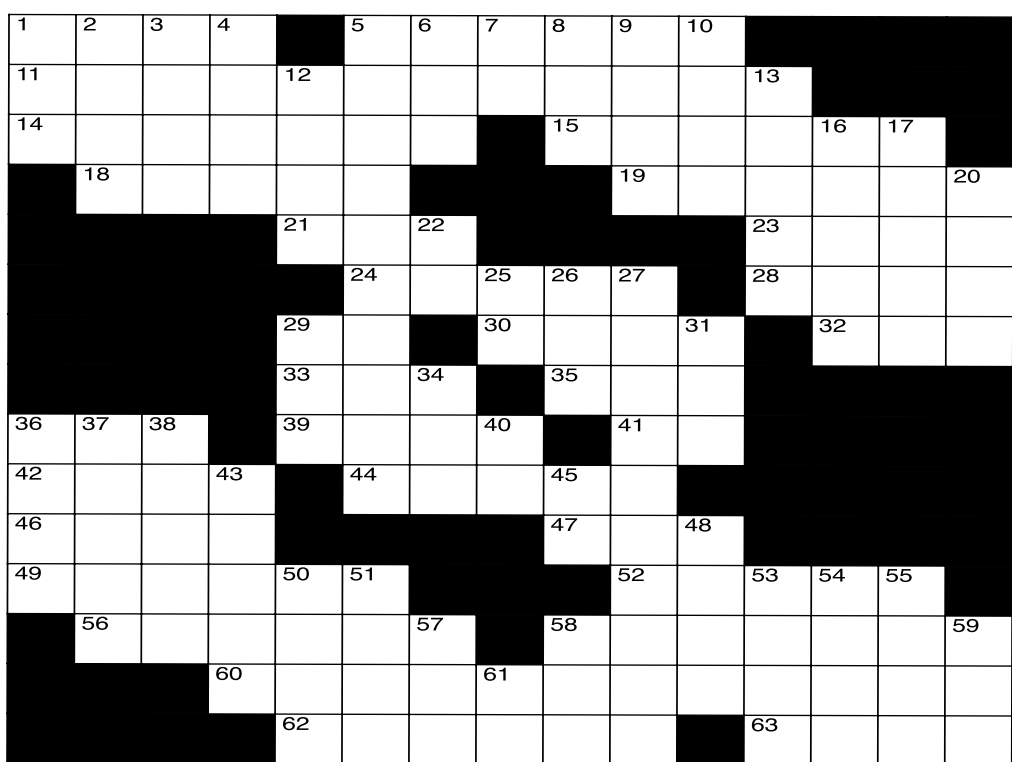


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CLUES ACROSS

1. Matter
5. Puzzled
11. Well wish
14. Frightened
15. Home of the Cowboys
18. Between the jejunum and the cecum
19. Founded the Union Colony
21. Read-only memory
23. Sorcerers
24. Female parents
28. Unexpected obstacle
29. Of I
30. Used to have (Scottish)
32. Patti Hearst's captors
33. Rock TV channel
35. Revolutions per minute
36. Exclamation: yuck!
39. Be afraid of
41. Arizona
42. Red liqueur __ gin
44. More discourteous
46. Type of chef
47. Mother (Brit.)
49. Untidy in character
52. Inhibitions
56. Pains
58. Politician
60. Unofficial fighter
62. Type of Mustang
63. Branch of Islam

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Satisfaction | 29. Magnetomotive force (abbr.) |
| 2. Astragals | 31. Without armies (abbr.) |
| 3. Egg-shaped | 34. Portuguese municipality |
| 4. Nothing more than specified | 36. Old Marxist-Leninist state |
| 5. Measures speed of wind | 37. Malicious satisfaction |
| 6. In the middle of | 38. Actress Julianne |
| 7. Actinium | 40. Rural delivery |
| 8. The Master of Shadows | 43. Bar or preclude |
| 9. Dutch cheese | 45. Unit of measurement |
| 10. Valley | 48. Peninsula in Greece |
| 12. A river between China
and Russia | 50. Bird genus |
| 13. Masses of matter | 51. Releases gonadotropin |
| 16. They live along Gulf of Guinea | 53. Racquets |
| 17. George __, actor | 54. Southwestern state |
| 20. Latvia's largest city | 55. Town in Benin |
| 22. One thousandth of an ampere | 57. Car mechanics group |
| 25. Millihenry | 58. Brother or sister |
| 26. Swiss river | 59. Woollen rug |
| 27. Individually | 61. Millilite |

Last Week's Puzzle Solution

PUZZLE SOLUTION

P	A	H		S	C	A	L	E	D					
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C	T	N				M	O	T	E					
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Double OT winner nets OHL Cup for Express

By Jake Courtepatte

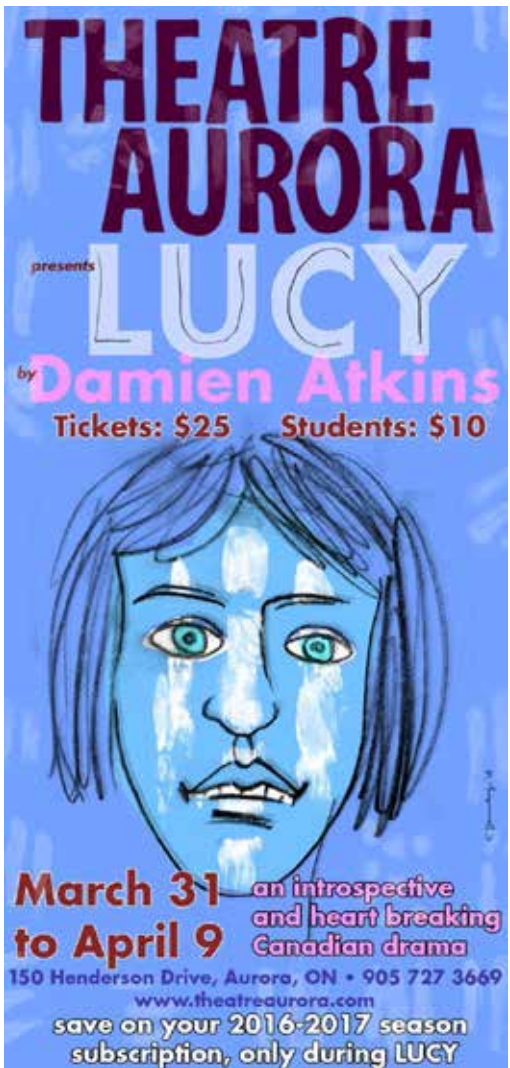
Over seventy minutes of two-goal, deadlocked hockey came to an abrupt end Monday night in anti-climactic fashion.

Rhys Forhan's goal late in the second overtime period, his second of the night, clinched the prestigious OHL Cup for the York-Simcoe Express: the club's first since 2004.

It came as an unassuming wrister that snuck under the pad of Toronto Marlboro's goaltender Elliott Tang, with the referee calling it a goal after seeing the puck over the line while the play was dead.

"I didn't see anything, I just shot it and hoped it went in," said Forhan, a call-up for the Junior A Aurora Tigers this season. "It feels amazing, there's no place I'd rather be. Doing it for the boys is amazing and being able to capitalize in front of everyone, there's no feeling like it."

It capped off a 2 – 1 win for the







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Early goals in sport plan should be carried out by Sport Aurora: recommendation

From page 1

strategies in the document.

Rather than hiring a Sport Development Officer to oversee the implementation, Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation, recommends Council go with a \$56,000 contract with Sport Aurora, the umbrella group which represents the majority of local sports teams and clubs, to carry out some of the initial priorities.

The Sports Plan suggests there is a shift coming in the types of sports Aurorans will embrace and, according to Mr. Downey, it is important for Aurora to be ahead of the curve.

"Aurora needs to pay attention to some of the changing demographics that are coming to this community, whether that is a changing age group [as] we move towards a senior population, whether that is a changing culture," he said. "Many of the new residents that are moving into the Town of Aurora are of Asian descent. We have to start looking at what recreational opportunities might be available to them. We have a growing Russian population. How do we deal with some of their changing needs?"

"Traditionally, we built soccer fields, baseball diamonds and hockey rinks, and have built those in response to the

desires of the user groups. We need to start looking at whether that is the plan for the future and whether or not we need to start looking at making some changes to those facilities and whether we need to start looking at the creation of some alternate facilities in order to address some of those changing cultural and demographic needs in response to the changing demographic patterns that are going on in Aurora."

Citing the City of Brampton, Mr. Downey said they weren't paying attention to changing demographics and built facilities that are no longer being used as they once were.

The recommendation in the draft Sports Plan called for the training of staff and volunteers to work with "culturally diverse groups to better understand their sports needs and look to other communities within the Region that have responded to changing demographics by providing both culturally appropriate sports and an introduction to traditional Canadian sports."

The wording of this recommendation, however, rankled Councillor Jeff Thom who suggested this be reworded to the training of staff and volunteers "to encourage and facilitate Aurorans of all backgrounds to participate in sports."

"I can appreciate the need to look at best practices from other municipalities on reaching out to cultural backgrounds or immigrants or new Canadians with respect to having them be included in municipal activities, including sports, so I appreciate that," he said. "[But] sports transcend culture, in my opinion. I think we do provide a very wide variety of sports that appeal to many culturally diverse backgrounds and I wouldn't characterize them as being traditional Canadian sports or being culturally appropriate sports. They are sports and they appeal to a wide variety of cultural backgrounds.

"There may be sports we don't currently offer that some groups in the community might want to see, but I just don't see why we have to approach it from a cultural basis. To me, if the Australian community is clamoring for Australian Rules football fields be constructed...then we, as a Council, can certainly look for the need of such facilities and we can move forward as necessary. We do that all the time."

Elsewhere in the sports plan, a healthy community through collaboration is key.

The Plan itself, borne out of a notice of motion from Councillor Michael Thompson, sets short, medium, and long-range goals for a healthy community as well as making Aurora a sports destination. A sport development officer was a

position advocated for during the last municipal election by several candidates, including Councillor Thompson.

Among the recommendations within the plan are the development of a formal "Aurora Sports Policy" which delves into the full role sport plays in the community – from sports clubs, to health, to business – and how to address each level's responsibilities. It also calls for the reconstitution of Sport Aurora into a "Sport Council" with representation from the local sports community as a whole.

"You might have your work cut out for you on that particular recommendation," said Mayor Geoff Dawe to Mr. Downey as Council took its first sweep over the plan at the Committee Level.

Mr. Downey said there was no doubt that would be the case, but it is a principle he agrees with.

"I think that it is important that if we do have a Sports Council that it have representation of the sports community and not some of the sports community," said Mr. Downey. "That certainly is a discussion that is taking place in my office and with community groups.

"My goal would be to bring all the groups together and if we need a new executive structure in order to make that happen, then that is something we should be pursuing."



POLITICS AS USUAL
Alison Collins-Mrakas

Long-term Leaders

Are multi-term incumbents good for the electorates they ostensibly serve?

By that I mean, is it in the community's long-term best interest to have the same MP, MPP or Mayor for three, four or even five terms in some cases?

Given the amount of deadwood that occupies a multitude of elected offices, there are many that have renewed the call for setting term limits to avoid the inertia that results from political "lifers" that currently see elected office as a job for life.

Personally, I am not sold on the idea of restricting particular elected offices to a two-term limit; the whole "lame duck" period that results from term limited offices can be just as negative to governance systems, in my opinion, as the never-ending campaign mode that the political "lifers" engage in.

But, I can see why folks are agitating for it.

It's because once someone has been elected, it can be difficult to unseat them – regardless of how ineffectual she or he may be.

A local MP, MPP or Mayor and Council can be literally phoning it in – just cutting ribbons, attending photo-ops and picking up their paycheques – and yet still get re-elected, over and over.

We've seen it in every community and at every level of office. There's always the one guy that seems to do nothing for anyone and yet somehow, miraculously, gets re-elected.

And why?

Because no one pays any attention. There are always the folks that are involved, watch Council meetings, attend open houses held by their local MPP, read the information sent to them by their MP, and get informed – but, to be honest, they represent a very small fraction of the electorate.

The rest of the less-than-half of the electorate that bother to actually vote have no idea who they're voting for. They simply vote for the name – any name, frankly – that they vaguely recognize, and then pat themselves on the back for voting.

Does that sound harsh? Well, perhaps, but it's true. How else to explain the election or continued re-election of "representatives" who represent nothing but themselves? McGill five, anyone?

It boggles the mind how uninvolved the average voter is in matters as they relate to how they are governed. The decisions made on their behalf shape every aspect of their lives: who they can marry, whether we go to war or not, whether a lifesaving drug is covered by OHIP. And yet, I guarantee you if you polled 10 people on the street right now they could not name their MP, MPP and Mayor, let alone the eight members of Council.

You know, the folks that set your property tax.

This is not to tar all leaders with the same brush.

There are untold numbers MPs and MPPs and Council members who work bloody hard for their community – and Aurora has been and is lucky to have quite a few truly great representatives.

But folks are tired of those elected officials that are simply playing the part and not doing their part. And I am tired of the folks bemoaning the leadership they have, when they've never bothered to articulate the leadership they want.

On the broader scale, then, I encourage folks to really pay attention – get informed; get involved. Because this is – after all – Our Town.

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“April Ghouls” tour aims to led a voice to the voiceless on World Autism Day

By Brock Weir

Over 10 years ago, Dave Heard met a young man who was kicking and screaming on the floor.

At the time, the boy’s quality of life could best be described as low. It was difficult for the young guy to find his place in the world, but David Heard was struck by his indomitable spirit.

They first met when Mr. Heard walked through the door of Kerry’s Place Autism Services on Berczy Street and, over the next year and a half, they worked with a diligent team to improve this young man’s lot in life. By the time he was a teen, they were able to take him to fun events and participate in society.

His life, however, was cut short, and when Mr. Heard was “labouring over” the boy he supported, he was inspired by his spirit to create the Aurora Spirit Walk, a walking tour through Aurora’s quirky, kooky, and spooky past.

“He had such an incredible spirit and it was his incredible ability to overcome adversity having autism,” says Mr. Heard.

These walks, which have become an enduring Aurora tradition, are typically held in the lead-up to Hallowe’en, but this year, the tour returns for a one-night-only event April 2, beginning at Kerry’s Place in a special event to mark World Autism Day.

“Recently, we had an individual, an early adult,” Mr. Heard continues. “She is non-verbal with autism, came to us over a year ago, and has now been diagnosed with ALS. With her, it suddenly hit me when World Autism Day came up, here are two people who have impacted my life and the team around them so greatly, that I contacted the people who helped me with the ghost tours to put something together.”

With everything unfolding the day after April Fools, everyone was on board for the one-off “April Ghouls” tour.

“This is a one-shot deal to honour all the people who are gifted with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and it kind of fits,” says Mr. Heard. “It starts in



Historian David Heard

File photo by Brock Weir

front of Kerry’s Place and Kerry’s Place is part of the old Sisman Shoe Factory. In autism, we always use the phrase, ‘a walk in their shoes,’ the ability to be empathetic and know what someone else, especially someone with autism, how they function day to day. Most of us couldn’t even imagine.

“In some ways, I think some people with autism are invisible. They struggle to find their place or be accepted in their community, or we try to make them fit in the community when it is their own community. How they fit is their choice.”

In many ways, this makes a ghost tour even more fitting. The spirits, he says, are invisible, and he sites a particular instance at the Filly & Firkin Pub when he says the spirit of a woman came through with a message that had to be conveyed through non-verbal communication.

“I am going to take the spirit of a lot of these stories, and people communicating these stories, but I am also going to communicate some incredible ways some of the people I have met [have had an impact],” says Mr. Heard. “A lot of times, we only get to hear the negative stories. This is showcasing through street theatre a message wrapped around a little theatrics. I am going to do my darndest to get that message out there that these people are incredible people.

verbal, I am going to be their voice and hopefully I can help them be heard.”

To lend an ear to these voices, tickets for the April Ghouls tour are now on sale for \$15. Proceeds support Kerry’s Place Autism Services. For more information, visit creepy tours.com.

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Senior Scape

Jim L. Abram

Stay on Your Feet!

I trust that all seniors are enjoying the spring weather!

We’ve had a mild winter with little snow, but don’t be fooled.

Don’t be overconfident. Mobility issues can make us vulnerable to falling, slipping and other hazards associated with aging.

I am a case example! I fell this winter in my own home and in a parking lot.

I was being careful, but, in retrospect, I should have been using my cane and been more respectful of the risks.

Don’t worry, I’m okay. I do worry though about all the seniors that fall at this time of year regardless of how much care we take. Spring sunshine doesn’t give us a getting-out-of-falling free card. So, don’t over-do it, stay off the ice and keep well.

Cinderella – Seniorella Production

This wonderful, entertaining play features a cast and crew of Aurora Seniors’ Centre members who share the love of Community Theatre. This popular event takes place at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre on Friday, April 8, at 7.30 p.m. and again on Saturday, April 9, for a 2 p.m. matinee. Tickets are only \$5 each and refreshments served after the play are included. What a great value! Get your tickets early, available at the

Seniors’ Centre reception desk.

Don’t miss this always entertaining event!

MAH-JONGG CLASSES RETURN!

It is interesting to note that Mah-jongg, a fascinating and challenging game of tiles that began over 5,000 years ago in China has recently been deemed by gerontologists to be one of the best activities for stimulating the brain.

Who knew that having so much fun could be so worthwhile? My brain needs all the help it can get. What began several years ago at your Seniors’ Centre as a small group of just 4 players has grown to a dozen and more people who meet two afternoons a week to play the game, have a few laughs and even enjoy snacks from time to time!

The convenor, Heather Trusler and the other volunteers at the Seniors’ Centre are once again offering beginner lessons of American Mah-jongg. If you are interested, please sign up at the reception desk by offering your name, phone number and email address. We have room for a maximum of nine people -- weekly classes, from 10 a.m. to 11.30 and will start Wednesday April 6, and run for four weeks following.

There is no cost, aside from your

Continued on page 17

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TA’s “Lucy” examines a mother’s love

By Brock Weir

A mother’s love is usually held to be the ultimate symbol of strength above all else, but sometimes these relationships can be strained, or even non-existent.

But what about the relationship between a child raised by her father, unwanted by her mother, who finds herself thrust back into maternal care?

Theatre Aurora, and director Brian Moore, hopes to shed a light on this difficult dynamic in their upcoming production of the Canadian drama Lucy, starring Hayley Carr and Elene

Stamatatos, which opens March 31 at the Henderson Drive theatre.

“It is an extremely challenging play because it deals with an autistic child and the relationship between the child and the mother who didn’t want to have a child in the first place,” explains Mr. Moore, who is making his Theatre Aurora directorial debut after over 40 years of directing with the Richmond Hill Curtain Club. “You get to know this [dynamic] very quickly. The father has been looking after Lucy for 13 years and now wants the mother to take over. He’s met a lady and wants to get married again and concentrate on the marriage.

Lucy is at the stage of puberty and she doesn’t quite know how to deal with that.”

For me, that is the beauty of the theatre, to make someone moved by it.

Mr. Moore’s love for a good theatrical challenge came early as a student in a new kind of comprehensive school in England which, over the trades, emphasized the arts along with more “practical” subjects. From there, he worked in community theatre and took every chance he could to get close to the boards.

“Initially I was drawn to acting, but I started to look at plays a little bit differently and thought I might want to have a little bit more control,” says Mr. Moore of his shift to directing. “At the Curtain Club, I decided I would direct a short play every month for the general meetings just to establish myself and get used to directing.”

When he helmed a production of The Glass Menagerie it was clear, he said, he had made the right choice. His approach as director was to strip the play back to how it was originally staged in 1945 which, perhaps not coincidentally, was the year Mr. Moore himself made his debut in the world. This feeling continued through a production of Shadowbox, focusing on the five stages of death.

“At the play, there was a lady who

came up to me one night and said, ‘you know nothing about death and dying of cancer,’ but I did,” he recalls. “She said she didn’t think she would watch the second act, which is about how you deal with what is going to happen. By the end of the night, she came backstage and said, ‘I did go in and I want to thank you. You helped me deal with my husband’s death.’

“For me, that is the beauty of the theatre, to make someone moved by it.”

That too is what he hopes theatre-goers coming out to see Lucy leave with, he says.

“You have to try and understand the issues and find a way to work with the issues,” says Mr. Moore. “If I think about Lucy, Vivian, the mother, does not want to deal with this autistic child, but as she is an anthropological person, she starts to believe this is the next evolution of humans and autism is the future.

“There is a school of thought that you just accept and help them deal with life, and there is another school of thought where you try and mold their behaviour to fit in. What we deal with in the play is one person wanting to do that and help them fit in, and one person who accepts them for who they are.”

Lucy opens at Theatre Aurora next Thursday, March 31, running on select dates and times through April 9. For tickets and more information, visit www.theatreaurora.com.

SENIOR SCAPE

From page 15

customary \$1.00 daily activity fee. You will fill your sense of curiosity and have a great time!

Reminder: The Annual Spring Sale is coming soon!

The Aurora Seniors’ Centre Annual Spring Sale featuring vendors, crafts, white elephant and diamond treasures, is one of the most anticipated and exciting events of the year.

It is coming up soon on Saturday, April 30, so mark your calendar now! If you are spring cleaning, downsizing or just have a donation, no matter how large or small, please

keep us in mind. Your donations in the past have made this annual event a huge success. You can drop off your donations at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre located at 90 John West Way (next to Town Hall) on Thursday, April 28 or Friday, April 29 between the hours of 9 – 4. (Most donations are acceptable but please no VHS tapes, magazines, computer books nor clothing). Vendor space is fully booked!

For more information on the Aurora Seniors’ Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

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