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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 16 No. 29 905-727-3300

theauroran.com

FREE Week of May 12, 2016





**PIPING A
NEW TRADITION**

Members of the St. Andrew's College Cadet Corps recently held their annual cadet inspection on the school's historic quad featuring, inset, marches from their Pipes and Drums. The impressive afternoon display was preceded by the formal opening of the Pipe and Drum corps' newly retrofitted headquarters.

For more, see Page 8.

Auroran photos
by Glenn Rodger



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Doctor-assisted dying laws need continued dialogue, say MPs

By Brock Weir

Before Newmarket-Aurora MP Kyle Peterson stood up in the House of Commons to speak on new legislation on doctor-assisted dying, he was contacted by a woman in the area living with ALS.

Her ALS, said Mr. Peterson, was slow moving, but she is already living with its effects.

“Gradually, this horrible disease has taken her voluntary muscle control, making it difficult for her to sign her own name, to speak, and to even form the most

basic sentences,” said Mr. Peterson. “In her own words, she describes the situation as thus: ‘Our hearts continue to pump. We are aware of everything happening to us and around us, but become unable to do the simplest things for ourselves. We cannot predict our lifespan.’”

Through Mr. Peterson, the Newmarket-Aurora resident urged the House of Commons to reconsider portions of the legislation currently working through the system, thereby extending the right of doctor-assisted dying to “advance directives,” essentially stating your

decision in favour of medically assisted suicide in the event you are stricken down by a disease that will rob you of making a decision after the fact.

“Bill C-14 clearly states that a requirement for assisted dying must be that natural death is within the reasonably foreseeable future,” said Mr. Peterson. “For many Canadians, suffering and looking toward the future of only further pain and suffering, there is no clear, distinguishable path to death, but this should not diminish their choices. For

Continued on page 15



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Customer is king – or queen – for Business Woman of the Year

By Brock Weir

It's been quite a ride since Pam Martin first walked into Creative Colours, going in for a fitting after agreeing to be in a fashion show for one of her favourite clothing boutiques.

After walking into the south Aurora shop, she got to chatting with the owner who said she was looking for part-time staff.

A part-time job was perfect for Ms. Martin who, at that time, was raising children ages seven and 10.

Continued on page 9

Park options should include new baseball diamond, say Councillors

By Brock Weir

The resurging popularity of baseball in Aurora and King has led to a relative shortage of places to play, and the new parkland on Mavrinac Park could help pick up the slack, say Councillors.

While public meetings are now in the planning stages to allow the community at large to weigh in on various amenities to put in the recently approved six acre parkland on Mavrinac Park, a full-scale baseball diamond should be on the table for discussion, according to Councillor Jeff Thom.

“I had conversations with the Aurora

King Baseball Association and they are really having an unprecedented level of registrations and they can't cope with the demand for spots,” said Councillor Thom.

“In fact, for some of the rep baseball teams in Aurora, their home field is now in doubt. To me, that is just wrong. They are also reducing their capacity and having to make sacrifices for time. These are things sports teams have to do all the time, but...they are turning kids away. Now that we have a parkland coming on board, for me, having that option for Council to discuss and consider would have been nice.”

Continued on page 6



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

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COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Monday, May 16	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Special Council*
Tuesday, May 17	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee*
Wednesday, May 18	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library	Aurora Public Library Board
Friday, May 20	10 a.m.	Council Chambers	Trails and Active Transportation Committee
Tuesday, May 24	5:30 p.m.	Leksand Room	Finance Advisory Committee
Tuesday, May 24	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Wednesday, May 25	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



Sign up now to join the Canada Day Parade!

The Town of Aurora is already busy planning for another exciting Canada Day Parade on **Friday, July 1**.

Are you interested in being part of the 2016 Canada Day Parade?

Register floats, marching groups, bands and vehicles before **Thursday, June 23**. Applications are available for download at www.aurora.ca/canadaday

Parade entry fees
\$75 Aurora business
\$150 Non-Aurora business
Individuals and not-for-profit groups can participate for FREE

For more information, please call 905-726-4762.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Open House for Mavrinac Park Design on Tuesday, May 31

The Town of Aurora's department of Parks & Recreation Services is hosting a Public Open House for the Mavrinac Park Design.

Date: Tuesday, May 31
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Location: Aurora Town Hall
100 John West Way
Leksand Room

The purpose of the meeting is to present the conceptual plan for Mavrinac Park and to obtain input and comments from the public on the proposed design and facilities to be included in the park.


Town staff from Parks & Recreation Services will be in attendance to answer your questions and receive input on the design elements to be included in the park.

The proposed park site is located on Mavrinac Boulevard bounded by Suffolk Avenue to the north and Borealis Avenue to the south.


If you are unable to attend the Public Open House and would like to provide comments on the park design please forward written comments to: Jim Tree, Manager of Parks, jtree@aurora.ca. The deadline is **Wednesday, June 15**.

For more information, please call 905-727-3123 ext. 3222.

PUBLIC NOTICE




NOTICE OF TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE
The following street will be closed to vehicular traffic from Monday, May 2 to approximately Monday, May 16 for replacement of the underground road infrastructure.
ROAD CLOSURE: Industrial Parkway South from Wellington Street to Industry Street
DATE: Monday, May 2 to Monday, May 16
DETOUR: Please follow detour signage posted. Businesses in the area are open for business and access will remain open to local traffic.




CONTACT: For more information, please contact Norman Whitley, Administrator, Construction Projects, Town of Aurora at 905-727-3123 ext. 4376.
Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1 | www.aurora.ca/publicnotices | 905-727-3123, ext. 4376



NOTICE OF TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE
The following street will be closed to vehicular traffic from Monday, April 18 to approximately Wednesday, May 18 for road reconstruction.
ROAD CLOSURE: Vandorf Sideroad from Leslie Street to 1270 Vandorf Sideroad
DATE: Monday, April 18 to Wednesday, May 18
DETOUR: Please follow detour signage posted. Access will remain open to local traffic.



CONTACT: For more information, please contact Norman Whitley, Administrator, Construction Projects, Town of Aurora at 905-727-3123 ext. 4376.
Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1
www.aurora.ca/publicnotices | 905-727-3123, ext. 4376

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 **Tuesday, 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 this By-Law, including permit fees, please call 905-727-3123 ext. 3222.

NOTICE OF SERVICE DISRUPTIONS

There will be scheduled service disruptions at the AURORA FAMILY LEISURE COMPLEX. These disruptions include:

All public skating will be CANCELLED from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. on: **Thursday, May 12, 19, and 26**

Shinny Hockey will be CANCELLED at 11:30 a.m. on **Monday, May 23**

For more information, please contact:
Karie Papillon
905-726-4760

Invitation to participate in Doors Open Aurora 2016

The Town of Aurora and the Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee are hosting Doors Open Aurora 2016 on **Saturday, August 20**. Doors Open Aurora is part of Doors Open Ontario, an event that has attracted over 4,000,000 visitors since its start in 2002. Our 2015 event was a great success with over 2,700 visits to 16 featured sites and walking tours.

In 2016, our goal is to recruit 10-12 sites of architectural, historical, cultural, environmental and/or social significance, focusing on sites that are new and not normally open to the public.

To learn more or to submit an application, please call 905-727-3123 ext. 4226 or email planning@aurora.ca.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Summer Camp Open House

Town of Aurora Summer Camp Open House is a great opportunity to meet some of our camp staff and learn more about our exciting programs. Registered campers are encouraged to attend.

Date: Saturday, May 14
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Location: Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex
1400 Wellington St. East

For more information, visit www.aurora.ca/campprograms or contact our Community Programs Coordinator at 905-726-4761 or fdemarco@aurora.ca

Upcoming Events at Aurora Public Library

How-To in 10 Minutes
Saturday, May 14, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., Magna and Lebovic Rooms

Drop in for an afternoon of fun and learning at APL! A wide variety of businesses and organizations will be on hand to lend their expertise and enthusiasm teaching a new skill, in breezy 10-minute intervals.

Blitzing the Moraine!
Friday, May 27 and Saturday, May 28

Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust invites you to participate in a BioBlitz at a local Nature Reserve. This private property is not open to the public so it's a rare opportunity to see it. Experts and volunteers will create a master list of all the living things that are observed on the property beginning at noon on **Friday, May 27** and ending at noon **Saturday, May 28**. Shifts will be determined by the specialty and best viewing time.

To register, please visit www.oakridgesmoraine.org and click on the 'register here' button or go directly to www.eventbrite.ca and search for 'Blitzing the Moraine'.

John West Memorial Scholarship

The Town of Aurora recognizes leaders of tomorrow through the John West Memorial Scholarship Fund. Apply today and you could win a \$1,000 scholarship. Application deadline is **Wednesday, June 1**. For more information, please visit www.aurora.ca/youth

AURORA'S PAWS in the PARK

JOIN US FOR AURORA'S FIRST PAWS IN THE PARK EVENT
CELEBRATING THE LOVE OF DOGS!

Enjoy free treats, activities, meet other pet owners and local pet vendors!

Pet fashion show at 2 p.m.*

Get your photo taken with your pet

Learn about the Town's pet bylaws and how to license your pet
Pet passport activity with great prizes
Free giveaways
Food vendors on site – Please note, nominal fees apply.

We reserve the right to cancel, amend or change activities.
Event takes place rain or shine. *Prizes for the best-dressed pet.
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Saturday

MAY 14

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Sheppard's Bush
(enter at Industrial Parkway South and Cousins Drive)



Another exciting event brought to you by

AURORA

Are you the next AURORA TEEN IDOL?

If you are a resident of Aurora and between the ages of 12 and 17, you are eligible to enter the competition! Open to individual vocalists only. Applications are available at Aurora Town Hall, the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, the Aurora Family Leisure Complex or online at www.aurora.ca/teenidol

Auditions take place on Wednesday, June 15, 2016 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Aurora Community Centre

Final competition takes place during the Canada Day festivities on Friday, July 1, 2016

Great prizes to be won!

REGISTER BY Friday, June 10!

PLEASE NOTE, WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CANCEL, AMEND OR CHANGE ACTIVITIES.

Please call 905-726-4762 or visit www.aurora.ca/teenidol for more information

Aurora Community Centre, 1 Community Centre Lane
Aurora Family Leisure Complex, 135 Industrial Parkway North
Aurora Town Hall, 100 John West Way
Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, 1400 Wellington Street East

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St. Jerome students Melissa and Amelia take a turn in the “Wipe Out Stigma” selfie booth at their school’s Health and Wellness Fair on Thursday night. Intended to raise a dialogue on mental health, this booth was one of several dedicated to overall wellness.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Less than 60% of Aurora kids are active every day: study

By Brock Weir

Less than 60 per cent of Aurora kids get the physical activity they need every day, according to a needs assessment carried out by the Town of Aurora and Windfall Ecology Centre.

The study, part of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge, was intended to collect information to help the town set priorities in getting kids off the couch and on their feet – and barriers standing in their way.

Part of the problem, according to the report is the high cost of food in York Region. Findings show that high housing costs in the area, coupled with high food costs “leaves less income for spending on obesity reducing and preventing activities.”

“Obesity is a key concern to children’s health in York Region with 25 per cent of York Region students reported to be overweight or obese in 2013,” reads the report. “This number is on the rise and has increased from 21 per cent in 2011 and 2009. Research suggests that fitness levels may affect academic performance in math and reading. Physical education may also have a positive impact on student academic achievement.”

“Aurora schools were surveyed as part of the EQAO testing and it was found that 44 per cent of Grade 3 students and 47 per cent of Grade 6 take part in sports or physical activity less than twice a week, indicating Aurora is ahead of the Region and the Province...in physical activity.”

Following the report’s release on Friday, Brent Kopperson, Executive Director of Windfall Ecology Centre, said the research in the report is a stepping stone to a more active community.

“The community needs assessment has illuminated opportunities to better the long-term health of our kids,” he said. “I am convinced that acting on our research will lead to a lasting legacy of healthier children for our community.”

While Aurora boasts many amenities, programs and services to keep kids healthy and active, there are a number of challenges that have to be overcome before the Town can

achieve its goal of becoming the most active in Canada. The report outlines several barriers, including infrequent public transit, lack of “spontaneous” neighbourhood play, a lack of program funding, competition between programs, and a lack of education on nutrition and physical fitness that need to be addressed.

On the other hand, their research indicates there are opportunities on the horizon to look at increasing “Feelings of safety in parks and public areas,” ramping up awareness campaigns on health and wellness, instituting lunchtime play programs and boosting kids’ access to healthy foods.

On the eve of the report’s launch, many local families had a first taste of the outreach to come with a health and wellness fair hosted at St. Jerome Catholic Elementary School, which brought together stations on physical activity, mental wellness, as well as different tables to introduce kids to different ways to snack healthily – and opportunities to burn it off through yoga and Zumba demonstrations.

“Healthy eating affects how you exercise,” said Windfall’s Gemma Goldstein, local project coordinator for the Healthy Kids Community Challenge in Aurora. “It also affects your mental health. Your mental health affects what you are eating and how much activity you do. It is all intertwined and we’re just trying to get the school healthier in general. We have kids educating kids so they learn and then they teach other kids, and pass that education on.”

St. Jerome was the latest stop on the Healthy Kids Community Challenge circuit. Previous activities have focused on key areas, bringing in sports stars to drive home the message. And it is a message that is gaining traction. In the lead up to the St. Jerome event, Ms. Goldstein says they had over 30 of the students on hand brainstorming and helping set up the event.

“The school has embraced it and that is the reception we have seen from most of the schools in Aurora,” she said. “They are keen to get their kids healthy because, at the end of the day, the healthier the kids, the happier the kids.”

Briefly

HELP SEND BEN TO OTTAWA

As a young political volunteer, a trip to Ottawa has been a long-held dream for Aurora’s Benjamin Williamson, but a dream just out of reach. By dining out at Boston Pizza Aurora next Wednesday, May 18, you can help send him on his way. Williamson, a student at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School who lives with cerebral palsy, is hoping to raise \$1,500 for his trip and, at press time, was nearly \$750 into his goal. He is hoping the Boston Pizza fundraiser will help put things over the top. “It has been one of my dreams to visit Ottawa for a while now,” he says. “However, my dad is a single parent of five children and traveling can be very costly. I would like to try and pay for as much of this trip as possible on my own. I cannot begin to express my appreciation for those who have donated so far. It truly means the world to me.” The Boston Pizza event runs from 6 – 9 p.m. For more information on the fundraising campaign, visit www.gofundme.com/Bensottawa-trip.

OMB REFORM SUMMIT THIS WEEKEND

What started off as an idea from Councillors Tom Mrakas and Michael Thompson looking at ways to reform the Ontario Municipal Board has morphed into a wide-ranging summit involving representatives from nearly 60% of all Ontario Municipalities which gets underway this Saturday in Markham. “This is a unique event: a grassroots gathering of elected officials from every corner of our Province working together towards the common goal of affecting real change in the decision-making process that affect how our communities are planned,” said Councillor Mrakas. “The message is clear: real, positive and effective change is needed as it speaks to the scope of powers of the OMB. With reform, it is hoped that municipalities will have a greater say in how they grow and evolve.”



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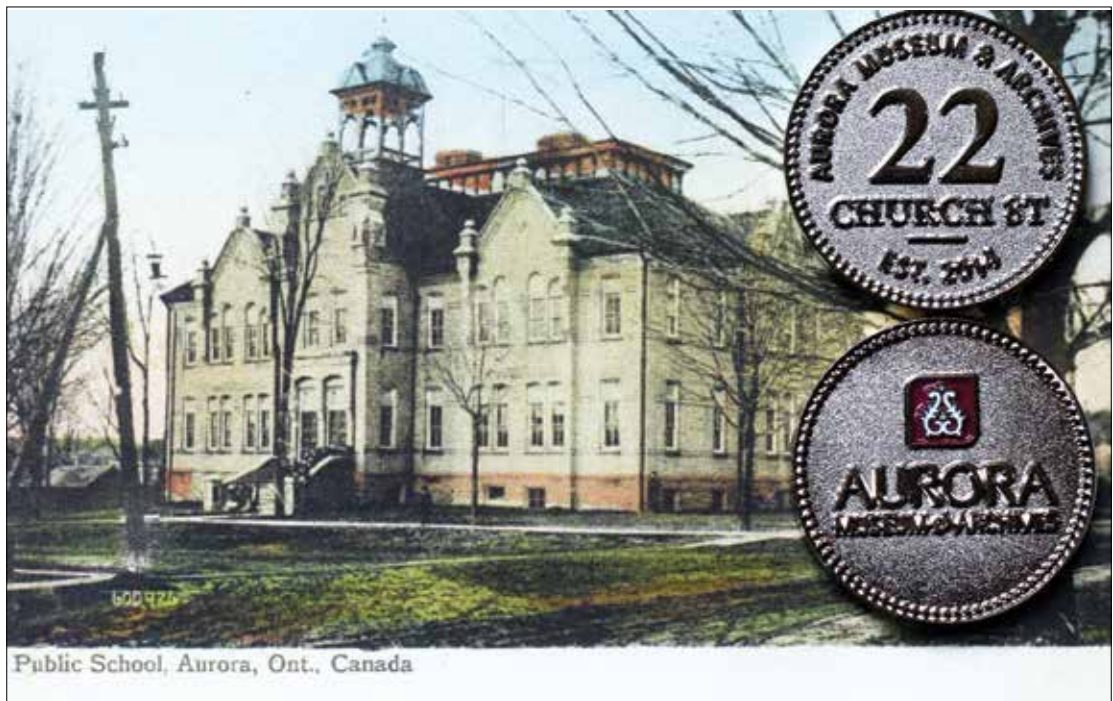
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The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating:

Museum Month
and Museum Day!
(Wednesday, May 18)

Come and visit the Aurora Museum & Archives, or complete the Cultural Precinct geocache to pick up your own commemorative coin!



POLITICS AS USUAL

Alison Collins-Mrakas

Wither UberX?

I had to take a cab home from the gym the other day (long story...) and, as I was in a chatty mood, I asked the driver about his day, what it's like to drive a cab in Aurora, etc.

The lovely driver proceeded to fill me in on a few facts of which I was largely unaware. While I knew that driving a cab is a hard way to make a living, I was not aware just how hard.

It's pretty tough to make a buck. Taxi driving is highly regulated. However, the rules are not standardized across the province. Each municipality has its own set of bylaws, regulations, etc., that govern how taxis operate in town – even how many operate in Town.

The driver maintains that some of the rules that govern taxi operations in Aurora put cabbies at a disadvantage, as compared to those that drive in neighbouring municipalities.

For example, in Aurora, a driver must replace his car every eight years. In Newmarket, drivers must replace their cars every 10 years. That's a significant cost differential born by drivers in adjacent communities.

There are other differences, small and large, that also affects their ability to earn a good income.

But nothing affects their bottom line more than UberX.

For folks that may not be aware, UberX is a taxi service that isn't a taxi service. It is a "ride-sharing" service for which you must "share" a fee. It has been described as, "an app-based ride-sharing service...One tap and a car comes directly to you...and payment is completely cashless."

The company argues that they're not a taxi service but rather more of a "matchmaking service to willing parties."

So, if I understand them correctly, they're saying that their service is E-harmony for folks that need to get around town? Nonsense.

Semantics aside, it sounds like a taxi service to me. But, make no mistake, they are not. They are not licensed taxi drivers. They do not carry the necessary or relevant insurance (IE: commercial driving insurance). There are little or no security screening or safety measures in place, and most if not all are not accessible.

But, they are cheaper and that's why they are becoming so popular.

They are cheaper, however, because they don't currently have to obey the same rules as licensed taxi drivers or pay for the attendant costly overhead.

A number of cities (such as Ottawa and Calgary) have banned UberX. The City of Toronto is currently debating what to do about it. I was not aware that UberX was operating in Aurora. But it is, and has been for some time now.

It has flown under the radar thus far, but I think municipalities in York Region will soon be in the same position of having to make a decision one way or another.

I am all for free enterprise. If someone can offer a service at a better price than I am all for it. However, everyone who enters the marketplace should have to play by the same rules. I am not for or against UberX per se, but I am not in favour of allowing them to operate outside the standard rules that govern all other modes of public transportation.

It isn't safe and it isn't fair. UberX should be regulated or it should be prohibited. Period.

Until next week, stay informed, stay involved because this is – after all – Our Town.

NEW AURORAN POLL

Should Aurora welcome UberX?
Yes No Unsure

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!

Should community gardens be considered for large neighbourhood parks? Yes No Unsure

RESULTS TO DATE

MAY 3, 2016

YES

46%

NO

54%

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

Human trafficking, Day of Mourning and more...

We generally lead safe lives here in Aurora and feel insulated from harsh crime that too often occurs elsewhere. We are correct – Aurora is a safe place in which to live and raise a family.

And yet, there is one crime throughout York Region – and that includes Aurora – that we need to confront: human trafficking for prostitution.

Human trafficking and violence against women in York Region is a reality. All too often we believe things like this can't possibly happen in our own backyard – but it does.

York Regional Police report human trafficking is on the rise and local York Region social service organizations report that: 63 per cent of victims trafficked in Ontario are Canadian citizens; 90 per cent are female; 63 per cent are between the ages of 15 and 24; 34 per cent entered exploitative trafficking through boyfriends acting as pimps; and 96 per cent of victims experienced multiple forms of violence.

While I'm told exact numbers of women in York Region who are being trafficked is difficult to pin down, police and social service agencies concur the number of women they help, almost on a daily basis, continues to grow.

Social agencies in Toronto have told me no longer is human trafficking about bringing women from overseas – it's about women from our own communities being bought and sold. Increasingly, it's also about young boys being lured into this modern form of slavery.

That's why last Friday I was delighted to attend a ceremony in Newmarket to award the Women's Support Network of York Region a grant of \$612,000 to help women who are trafficked and want to escape the dangerous world of prostitution.

The grant was made by the Ontario



Chris Ballard, MPP
Newmarket-Aurora

View From Queen's Park

Trillium Foundation, an agency of the government. The Network works closely with York Regional Police and York Region Victim Services to help women safely escape and rebuild their lives.

The Women's Support Network also provides free confidential services for women who have experienced sexual violence – including a counselling and crisis line, support groups, outreach and public education and community based training.

Day of Mourning

I was honoured to be asked to speak at the recent National Day of Mourning at CUPE 905 headquarters on Pony Drive in Newmarket. CUPE 905 has created a beautiful memorial rock garden with cascading water. It is such a moving location that members of the community stop by to add small stones to the rock garden with the names of their loved ones who have died in workplace accidents, written on them.

The National Day of Mourning is not only a day to remember and honour those lives lost or workers injured due to a workplace tragedy, but also a day to renew the commitment to improve health and safety in the workplace and prevent further injuries, illnesses and deaths. Growing up I recall hearing stories told by my father and uncles about workplace accidents that killed and injured their colleagues. It made a

Reply to Our Lady of Grace

In my last column entitled, "Our Lady of Grace – New Church and Homilies" I wrote about two topics.

I first gave an update regarding whether or not a new Catholic church should be built in Aurora.

I made the point that I liked the present location as it seemed central for people and there was a bus stop right in front of the parish.

I also made the point that I would rather have any money that we would use to build a new church instead be used to fund various church programs or help those in our society who needed it.

I also turned my attention to homilies. This is what I wrote:

"The other item that I wanted to briefly comment on was the homilies delivered by our (or other) Priests, Deacons or by any invited guests to Our Lady of Grace. In this writers' humble opinion, brevity and message are key in a good homily.

"I believe that a homily should not be more than five to six minutes long and convey one or perhaps two central spiritual messages. Too many times over the years I have seen and heard 20 minute and longer homilies that contain far too many intricate messages and, in some cases, seem to be rather a stream-of-conscious discourse with no central theme.

"As I listen to some of these long homilies and look around the church at my fellow parishioners, many people are either not paying attention or have tuned out, including, on a few occasions, yours truly.

"I know that in previous days or probably at other churches, the sermons were fairly long, but I think our priests and deacons need to take another look at



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

their audience and understand that in this day and age of 500 television channels and social media, people's attention spans are shorter and we need messages that are more succinct, but hopefully continue to be thoughtful and uplifting."

At the end of the 8.15 a.m. church service two weeks back, Father Francis McDevitt took the time to respond to my column in his closing remarks to the members of the assembled congregation.

Among a number of things he stated that the length of the sermon that morning by Father Joshua was seven minutes and thirty five seconds. Father McDevitt also said that he had some time ago instructed homilists to keep their respective remarks under 10 minutes.

My response is as follows:

Upon quite a lot of reflection and re-examination regarding my column over the past week, if I could do it over again, I would have handled this issue differently. I should have first spoken to Father Francis or Father Joshua in person or on the phone or via e-mail to voice my concerns (and those expressed to me by many others) regarding the length of some of the sermons.

Long-term care facility, retirement home planned for south Aurora

By Brock Weir

A new retirement home and long term care facility will be built in the south end of Aurora, pending Council’s approval this week.



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Councillors gave the tentative green light at the committee level last week to the four-storey 250 unit facility earmarked for 14314 and 14338 Yonge Street, signing off on a zoning amendment standing in its way.

Currently zoned for a school, and sitting on land on the Oak Ridges Moraine, a zoning bylaw amendment is set to be presented for final approval at a future Council meeting.

“The Official Plan always contemplated this land for institutional-type uses and the underlying designation was for residential, so they have achieved their 195 maximum units under the plan,” said Marco Ramunno, Aurora’s Director of Planning, at last week’s General Committee meeting. “Minor institutional uses are permitted within this residential designation in the Official Plan [such as] small scale public service uses, places of worship, private schools, day care, and residential facilities for children, nursing homes, etc., so it is considered an institutional use.”

For many Councillors, the proposed

long term care facility fulfils a need in Aurora.

“I think we all talk about affordable housing as something we need in the community [and] this is something I see as very similar to affordable housing,” said Councillor Paul Pirri. “A lot of seniors are unable to stay in their homes, they become too difficult to maintain, and this is a way we can keep people who are aging in place and keep them in Aurora where they have been for the last number of years.”

Councillor Sandra Humfries offered a similar viewpoint, underscoring Aurora’s aging population.

“A long-term care facility is something that is dearly needed in that area, which is really lovely,” she said. “I am really looking forward to seeing this come to fruition and I support the plan. This is not necessarily condos with living quarters, but basically a long-term care facility [we need]. We have lots of assisted living, but they absolutely don’t do this type of service.”

Also supporting the plan was Councillor Michael Thompson who said

Important to get park “done right”: Abel

From page 1

Various options were presented to Council last month by Al Downey, Aurora’s Director of Parks and Recreation, in a tentative concept plan which will be up for public discussion. Responding to the Councillor’s concerns,

Mr. Downey said a baseball diamond is a better fit for large-scale 10+ acre “community” parks, rather than the “neighbourhood” park proposed for the Mavrinac site.

“[These amenities] include lights and we are concerned that if we put a lit

the south end was a “good location” for such a facility. Councillor Wendy Gaertner, on the other hand, was opposed to the plan and said there will be concerns she will reiterate at this week’s Council meeting.

“If you look at the official plan, even though it has institutional zoning, it was envisioned to be an elementary school park with the underlay of cluster residential, and that is how the density transfer occurred,” she said. “Minor institutional includes nursing homes and senior citizen homes, but it does not include that use here.

“I have been interested in affordable housing in Aurora since I started on Council and it is something Councillor Buck and I tried to join forces on. There is certainly no mention of this being affordable. [Also], this land was never envisioned for this kind of intensive use. [We spent \$600,000 at the OMB to] protect the integrity of the [Oak Ridges] Moraine, the functioning of the Moraine, and I do not believe that this is in keeping with that, or any of the planning that took place, and is in place, for these lands.”

facility [there] that would create the need for light poles 60 to 80 feet in the air, and that would certainly have an impact on adjacent residents.”

Although Councillor Thom questioned the difference between the lighting that would be required for a tennis court proposed for the Mavrinac site over what would be needed for a baseball diamond, Mr. Downey added the Town does not currently have adequate parkland available for building a new baseball diamond.

“However, that doesn’t mean we couldn’t look at repurposing, or we could look at a rethink of some of the plans we have for some existing lands that could accommodate a ball diamond,” said Mr. Downey. “We understand that in the Master Plan it was a high priority and is something we would need to address within the 2017 capital budget as far as how we are going to proceed.”

The Town purchased several acres of land in the Industrial Parkway and Vondorf Road area last year behind the former home of Hallmark Cards. At Council, Mayor Geoff Dawe suggested that would be an “ideal location” for baseball and lighting would have minimal impact on the area.

Baseball is indeed something that could be accommodated on the Hallmark lands, noted Mr. Downey, and is one of the areas where a “rethink” on how to use the land would be needed.

“Most of the things with regards to the Hallmark lands centre around soccer fields, so if Council felt that perhaps those lands would be more appropriately dedicated to baseball, we would be more than happy to bring that forward to Council for your consideration,” said Mr. Downey.

While this option was put on the table, other Councillors called for baseball to be an option for Mavrinac neighbours to consider.

“I would rather get this done right rather than just get it done,” said Councillor John Abel. “We should have a diamond somewhere east of Bayview and north of Wellington. It is a growing sport and you may see that demand come up.”

Added Councillor Thom: “I am absolutely for a parkland in part of that area and I am happy to look at the mix of services offered to residents, but it doesn’t make sense that if we have an identified need in the Master Plan, and we have land allocated for parks, that we [don’t] look at all the options and then make a decision. As long as we get some baseball diamonds in the mix moving forward.”



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Regency aims for a renaissance as a “makerspace” for students



Regency Acres P.S. teachers Robin Morrison-Claus, left, and Stephen Lanning, right, with principal Lisa Leoni. To vote for Regency Acres, visit learningproject.cst.org/ideas/1225

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

By Brock Weir

Necessity might be the mother of intervention, but a really cool opportunity might be the mother for re-invention over at Regency Acres Public School, as far as their library is concerned.

Having opened its doors nearly 60 years ago, the school has seen technology come and go, the way lessons are taught rethought and, with your vote, you can help set the school on a new course to put students at the centre of learning.

Regency Acres is in the running for a \$100,000 grant to create a makerspace in their library through the CST Inspired Minds Learning Project.

With the grant money, they plan to redesign their library to create hands-on learning spaces that allow kids to learn and work together to design and invent through 3D printers, Lego robotics, app creation, and other innovations.

“I think the best way to learn is to do,” says science teacher Stephen Lanning. “We can tell them and give them all the background information, but if they have the opportunity to do an experiment and try it, they are going to remember their successes and failures and learn just as much through both. Any time that I have a chance to do hands-on, I do, but budget is always a consideration.

“Right now we are doing a project building out of all sorts of paper products. It would be great to take that and learn out of Lego, add solar energy to it, and bring it to life, rather than just [create] a 3D model. This provides us that next step – and the part I like is we get to learn along with the kids. We will be getting new equipment that we will train ourselves on and the kids will be able to teach us as well. It’s a chance for kids to take on a leadership role.”

The team behind the pitch is very much focused on putting the students in the “centre” of learning, according to teacher Robin Morrison-Claus, who will be taking the helm as librarian in the 2016-2017 school year.

“It places students in the centre of learning, but it also places teacher and student as learners alongside each other, and I think that is a really powerful statement because it removes the power dynamic of teachers being holders of knowledge to students being at the centre and teachers being the facilitators,” adds principal Lisa Leoni.

At this point, Regency Acres is committed to “reinvent” its library space and other learning hubs around the school, but how much of a reinvention they can actually swing depends entirely on the amount of resources available at their disposal. They’re dreaming big, but with each vote their dream comes closer to reality.

Voting is now underway through Monday, May 16 at learningproject.cst.org/ideas/1225. You can vote once every day but, if you also use Facebook and Twitter you can vote up to three times each day in three different ways.

Should their dreams become a reality, a win will not only benefit Regency Acres, but the community as a whole, they say. When their makerspace is installed, it will be a resource that will be a big draw.

“Makerspaces are really becoming a big thing because it is very hands on; it uses other parts of your brain,” says Ms. Morrison-Claus. “Where we have some kids who can’t sit at a desk and be successful, this is an opportunity for our hands-on learners, as well as our kids who can sit at a desk, to work together to really collaborate, think, create, produce and be successful.”

Adds Mr. Lanning: “It’s the challenge

many employers face: how do we create a product that people want? We need innovative people. I think any time you support a school, the children in I and you empower the children, the community benefits – whether it is kids who are

more engaged, who are better educated, who are happier to be here and loving it, the community wins no matter what.

“Maybe that next engineer is someone who will fall in love with that one lesson here we get to take computers apart.”

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Revamped Pipes & Drums Centre pays tribute to teacher

By Brock Weir

It isn't every day you can go to work and walk through the doors of a building bearing your name.

But, it is an honour Jim McGillivray experiences every day as he walks through the doors of the Petracheck-McGillivray Pipes & Drums Centre at St. Andrew's College.

The Centre, which is the headquarters of the school's vivid pipe corps, was formally dedicated prior to the school's 111th annual Cadet Inspection.

"As far as I know, I am the only living teacher here who has their name on a building," says Mr. McGillivray. "I thought it was a very special thing that they decided to recognize what they felt was an influential person at the school rather than just have their name on the building."

The space was retrofitted thanks to a donation to the school from the Petracheck family whose son, Zachary,

once served as SAC's pipe major. It was within the pipes and drums program that Mr. McGillivray says Zachary really found his niche and when his parents started looking at ways to give back to the school, Zachary knew just the ticket.

"Our building has been here since the 1960s and it was housing for support staff," says Mr. McGillivray. "When I first came to the school in 1998, there were people actually living in the building. Our piping and drumming program was actually situated in the basement of one of the buildings in what was once the cadets' rifle range, which isn't the greatest place to teach loud instruments like pipes and drums."

Eventually, the building they now call home became vacant and, once they moved in, Mr. McGillivray says he found it to be a very "functional" teaching space. But, some "serious work" was required to bring it up to



The Petracheck family formally dedicates the Petracheck-McGillivray Pipes and Drums Centre.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

snuff. Now, the building is properly sound proofed, is fully equipped, and can now accommodate what has grown to be something of a "visual educational museum" for pipers and drummers featuring some of the school's collection of historic prints, portraits of pipers, and watercolours of highland regiments.

Mr. McGillivray grew up in Kitchener

which has a decidedly more Germanic than Scots heritage. Nevertheless, his parents had a certain fondness for the bag pipes and steered him in that direction once he decided he wanted to play a musical instrument and the accordion a door-to-door salesman tried to hawk to the family was the last thing his parents wanted to hear.

"It is quite a difficult instrument to learn and what usually captivates people about piping is the sound of the instrument when it is played well, and it is an easy instrument to hear played badly – frequently!" he says with a laugh, noting he strives to make sure the band is always playing in tune.

"When the middle school boys hear us and they see us in full regalia, they are very impressed and want to be a part of that. It is one of the elite groups at the school and it is one of the most respected."

"Even though we are a musical band, we are very much like a senior sports team in terms of the camaraderie, teamwork and the respect the band receives at school"

Door-to-door sales ban will protect seniors: MPP

By Brock Weir

This past spring, Aurora took steps to get tough on door-to-door sales; but now the Province of Ontario is poised to take things a step further with an outright ban on the sales of air conditioners, water heaters, furnaces, and water treatment systems.

Put forward by Liberal MPP Yvan Baker, the bill is moving through the Ontario Legislature and is particularly welcomed by Newmarket-Aurora MPP Chris Ballard, who says it will go a long way in keeping seniors from being duped by shady dealers.

"It helps protect our most vulnerable citizens, namely seniors who, for too long, have been abused too many times at the door in these categories," says Mr. Ballard. "The second thing it does is protect the reputations of reputable dealers and vendors we have in this community."

Seniors, he says, have repeatedly voiced their concerns about this, along with the children of seniors, many of whom have "horror stories to tell."

"It wasn't too long ago when I was talking to an [Aurora] chap whose parents live in King City and he talked about how his parents were bamboozled into buying a \$1,200 water conditioning system when, in fact, the water doesn't need any conditioning," says Mr. Ballard. "But that didn't stop the company from selling to their parents and really using some questionable tactics to prove the water was really hard when it wasn't. I hear constantly from seniors who are being harassed at the door by less than reputable vendors."

During his tenure as Executive Director of the Consumers Association of Canada, Mr. Ballard says he heard these concerns as well – and even long before that. Complaints and concerns, however, are becoming "more frantic."

"It seems that not a day goes by where someone is trying to knock on your door and bamboozle you, quite frankly, quite fraudulently, that they are representing the municipality," he says. "It was just last week I heard there were people going around in Newmarket claiming to be working for the Town wanting to inspect your furnace. I think a lot of legitimate companies and a lot of reputable companies in Aurora recognize there are more efficient ways to make sales than cold calling at someone's door. They are using advertising, they are using newspapers, and they are using the phone."

"I have heard from my senior constituents who feel they have been duped. [The Bill] has a nice list of five things, but there are other [areas] that we eventually might need to look at. I am hearing about less-than-honest paving companies and lawn care services, home care services, high-ticket and very expensive items, and people who are less than honest in their sales. The unfortunate thing is that, for reputable companies that are out there, this hurts everyone and it hurts them."

Continued on page 15

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Business Woman of the Year went from customer to boutique owner

From page 1

Now, they are 38 and 35, Ms. Martin has been at the helm of Creative Colours for over 20 years and now she is York Region’s Business Woman of the Year.

Ms. Martin received the honour this month from the Business Woman’s Network of York Region, picking up additional awards for Best Small Business and Best Customer Service.

“I knew I had been nominated for the Small Business Owner and Customer Service awards, but it didn’t even enter my mind that that would be happening,” says Ms. Martin. “When they were starting to talk about this person, there were little things I recognized and I thought, ‘Oh my gosh! That’s me!’ When they called my name, I was totally shocked. It was an amazing award to win amongst a room of outstanding business women in York Region, so I was very, very honoured.

“It means a lot. This is my 20th year owning this business and in a business of your own you work really, really hard. There are ups and downs over the years, and just to be acknowledged by women that are in similar situations to me, owning their own businesses really meant a lot because I admire them so much.”

As a teen, Ms. Martin says she loved clothing and taking modelling courses in her youth, but working with Laura, her predecessor and buying items for the store along with her, stoked that creative fashion fire. It is an interesting process, she says, going through everything from start to finish all the while thinking of customers.



Pam Martin of Creative Colours receives recognition from MPP Dr. Helena Jaczek.

Submitted photo

As she looks through clothing to stock for the store, she often thinks of each regular customer and what they will like. When those items arrive, she hits the computer sending out word that she has just the right thing for them. As a customer herself, she knows the importance of her customers and that, she says, is her key to success.

“I think now the business is way more customer-oriented than it was back then,” she says. “It’s a sign of the times, too. You can’t just put a sign on your door and expect people to come in. You have to be out there, thinking of your customers and being in touch with them all the time. Obviously, you have to have a good product. I target women who are 40-ish, and I have customers who are 80-ish too, but I don’t target that young market. That is what the mall is filled with. You find your niche and you address that, and that is what I do. It is a matter of keeping in touch with offering a good shopping experience when they come through the

door and that is what it is really about. If you don’t do that, you’re not going to be around.”

And that is evidently a winning formula. In an area of Town where businesses have come and are all-too-frequently gone, Creative Colours remains. In addition to customer service, Ms. Martin says she and her two staff members, “my girls” simply have a passion for the business.

“Some people have a little job and they

go and put their time into it, but I would say my girls are passionate about what they do here,” she says. “There aren’t a lot of places where you can go shopping, come through the door and say, ‘Hi, Susie! How are you? How are the kids?’ I have customers who have been shopping here for over 20 years and I have been on their life’s journey with them. I was even invited to one of their big birthday parties. It is taking that few minutes extra to actually talk to people and get to know them.”

This recognition from the Business Women’s Network of York Region makes her feel she and her team “are doing something right” but as for whether the win has given her any ideas to step up her game, she says there still needs to be a bit of time for the shock to wear off.

But, continuing to grow the business is something currently on her mind – including an expansion of the way they keep in touch – and in tune – with their customers electronically.

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MOMS AT THE MARKET – The new season of the Aurora Farmers’ Market opened this past Mother’s Day weekend. (Left) Artisan Eva Nagy received a special balloon for the occasion while (right) jewellery-maker Carrie Eastwood was joined for the day by her son.

Auroran photos by Brock Weir



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Life is a never-ending adventure for gardener Dierdre Tomlinson

By Brock Weir

There are those who go through certain trauma and come through the other side without complaint. Then there are those who are adventurous, promiscuous, chatty enough to take up all the air space around them yet have nothing to say. Some others display aggression against their neighbours. A slice of ordinary human existence? Perhaps. But, this is how Dierdre Tomlinson sees her garden.

Ms. Tomlinson who, with her husband David, opened the doors to their Merlin’s Hollow garden 35 years ago, freely admits she sees the world a little bit differently. Opening their Centre Crescent gates for the first time in this 35th season this Saturday, she gives back to the community not only by sharing her garden with nature lovers from around Ontario, but as a

tireless volunteer for organizations including the Aurora Food Pantry.

“I have always felt if you’re lucky you should make things lucky for others,” she says. “It is hard to be poor in a place like Aurora. It is an affluent town now, but there are some people who work really hard but just have so little money. There was once a couple from Afghanistan who came in with their two young children. I talked to them as I took them around, asking what sort of work they did. She said she pumped gas until the previous week when she was laid off for no reason. Her husband worked in a coffee maker factory for \$10 an hour.

“In Afghanistan, he was an engineer and she was a lawyer. They have been cherry-picked to come to Canada and are unable to work at their own level. I have had some very interesting conversations with people going around, so I go there to help out. I think if you’re lucky, you should make things lucky for other people.”

The Tomlinsons have seen both sides of lady luck. Both hailing from the United Kingdom, they came to Canada in the early 1970s. Although they were not particularly affluent in their home country, the lean times really hit when they arrived on our shores. The two occasionally struggled to get work while raising their two daughters, but they made do and David continues to carve a remarkable career for himself as a landscape architect.

“Life can be so interesting and it has been so good to David and I,” says Mrs. Tomlinson, 74. “We both started off very poor working class. We didn’t think we were because everyone around us was too. We came here and David had the opportunity to be a landscape architect for 40 years and I worked in a mental health clinic. I found that fascinating.”

As she walks around her garden pondering the personalities of the flowers she has come to love and intently observe, she freely admits to seeing the world just a little bit differently.

In her eighth decade, her artistic roots have spread well beyond the confines of Merlin’s Hollow to encompass the written word – fiction and poetry – which she now regularly performs in various outlets, including open mike nights around York Region.

Curiously, when she sets pen to paper, she often finds herself writing from the perspective of a man. This surprised her, as she says with a laugh that she had never before considered what was on the other side of the gender divide. Yet, this was the voice looking to get out and “sometimes it is a lazy teen or a grumpy old man.”

Reading a piece from her garden gazebo, Dierdre reads in the voice of a man named Sid – probably someone who is closer to the grumpy old man column than the lazy teen – writing to his friend Brian. Sid and Brian both hailed from Aurora and Sid is writing to his childhood pal about how much the area has changed from their salad days.

“The fields we used to tromp over looking at birds, we’d have a hard job finding a blade of grass on now,” writes ‘Sid’. “Hey, the old tree we loved at the edge of the slope we tobogganed past, all its branches have fallen off and it is just like a monument to what was, but it has still got our initials carved in. They grew bigger as we grew older. Working class people have been vacuumed out of the Town, superseded by colonizers who golf all day and eat at high-priced restaurants at night. Kids are driven to school now. Imagine that, Brian. If we had been driven we couldn’t have gotten up to half the tricks we did.

“Whatever happened to that lean, strong carpenter I was back in the dark ages who repaired people’s windows and

Continued on page 17


AH S

AURORA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Presents

NORA’S SUITCASE

At Hillary House National Historic Site
Exhibit Opening May 14, 2016
Ends August 14, 2016



Nora Hillary (1902-1993) was an enthusiastic world traveller. This exhibit will go through the changes in travel throughout the 20th century, following Nora on her journeys with stories of her life along with the souvenirs, travel documents, postcards, clothing, and many other items that she left for us to share and enjoy.

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See you There!

Skate parks and brew pub considered in new vision for Aurora

By Brock Weir

They are buildings that have sat underused and without use for many years, but a new study is suggesting ways to breathe new life into community hubs all around Aurora.

Council is set to tackle recommendations this week that, if followed through, will dramatically transform how landmarks such as Petch House, the Aurora Armoury, Victoria Hall, and the long-debated former homes of the Aurora Public Library and Aurora Seniors' Centre are used – with a focus on arts and culture, and even a microbrewery.

“Repurposing is all about taking advantage of what already exists rather than developing previously untouched land or demolishing older structures in favour of the new,” says the report, which was completed by AECOM and will be formally presented to Council this week by Arthur Diamond. “And while we certainly have nothing against brand-new construction from the ground up, there is something uniquely special about being able to repurpose an old building. It is almost as though we are given the opportunity to breathe new life into a structure that might otherwise be on its last breath.”

The old Library and Seniors' Centre have been gasping for air for over 15 years, but the repurposing study suggests an overhaul on the existing buildings.

The consultants suggest a complete renovation of the former Seniors' Centre as a clubhouse dedicated to two clubs.

“The interior space will be completely renovated with carpet floors for the club rooms, ceramic tile for washrooms and concrete floors for the storage area,” says the report, which notes these changes will require significant upgrades.

Immediately south of this is the former library building which, in this plan, forms the centrepiece of the “Victoria Cultural Plaza” which connects the building with the Aurora Cultural Centre to the south and the Seniors' Centre while turning Victoria into a one-way northbound street.

“Due to the juxtaposition of Victoria

Hall, the Former Town Library and the Former Seniors' Centre around an open parking lot and the proposed repurposing functions, we have determined that this open space can act as a cultural nucleus in the Town of Aurora. In order to achieve this, we are proposing to direct traffic on Victoria Street north and Wells Street south to create more [diagonal] pairing on the street. The Cultural Plaza will have a glass canopy connecting the three buildings together and a dedicated entry allowing passenger drop off at every building front.”

Within the plan, Victoria Hall remains relatively unchanged with a small glass addition proposed for the back, but the more radical changes happen eastward at the Aurora Armoury. The report questions the long-term viability of permitting this space out to various groups, including the Aurora Farmers' Market and suggests it is an ideal location for a multipurpose facility housing art studios and gallery space, along with a small café. An alternative proposed for the location within the report is a microbrewery.

“Urban wineries and breweries have become an attraction in a number of cities, towns and villages across Ontario and far, attracting a large number of guests and tourists. As a result, and with the understanding of the Town, in order to attract more tourists to the Town and specially to this specific area and create evening vitality, it is proposed that the Armoury be converted into an urban brewery pub where guests will experience firsthand the art of brewery, sample different beers and have a chance to eat good food.”

Changes are also proposed for the other side of the tracks, namely the historic Petch Log House, which has been restored and reconstructed behind the current Aurora Seniors' Centre on John West Way. While it has been used for small municipal functions since it was reopened, the repurposing study suggests it could be a future winter destination.

“With the aim of providing more vitality and attracting more people to the area, a new skating path will be constructed and Petch House will be

repurposed as a change room which can provide service to the ice skaters, roller bladers and hikers alike.”

A gift shop and tourist centre is another proposed use for the building.

All this, of course, will come at a cost and Council will be doing some number crunching. In the report, which was received by Councillors at the Committee Level last week, recognizing the concept that if any of these recommendations are ultimately approved, money will have to be earmarked, Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation noted

that all the recommendations – if carried out – will clock in over \$10 million.

“Repurposing of existing and older buildings to serve new means can seem expensive at first glance,” reads the report. “However, knowing that by repurposing buildings of historic, cultural and sentimental value, one can better use the buildings instead of spending more on demolition and constructing new buildings, which will look no different from the ones seen in the next town or across the continent [and that is an option] which should be thought of deeply.”

Briefly

LEGION HELPS FORT MAC

The Royal Canadian Legion is ladelling out some help for victims of the Fort McMurray wildfire. Various kinds of soup will be for sale at the Legion from 11.30 a.m. to 7 p.m. through Friday for a minimum donation of \$5. All proceeds will be sent to the Alberta and Northwest Territories Legion command to help any veterans or families that need assistance.

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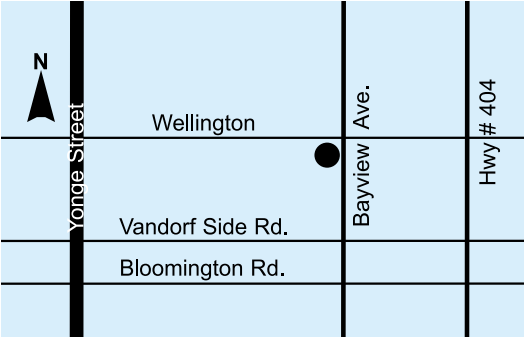
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FREE Week of May 12, 2016

Aurora United draws with Vaughan in League 1 debut

By Jake Courtepatte

An experienced Vaughan squad put the Aurora United FC women's side to the test in the League 1 season opener Saturday at McNaughton Park, eventually drawing 1 – 1 in Aurora's league debut.

Under-17 national team star and

newly-signed Aurora midfielder Sarah Stratigakis seemed in control of much of the play, with the ball often landing on her foot. Her breakout pass to Megan Reynolds at the 29-minute mark allowed Reynolds to score the side's first-ever goal, using her speed to push past the defenders and knocking it in off the

woodwork.



Aurora United FC (yellow) drew 1 - 1 with Vaughan Azzurri in the League 1 season opener on Saturday.
Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

a lack of possession time never allowed Aurora to gain any momentum in the form of a comeback.

"I thought we were sloppy at the back, and had problems up top where we have a very talented striker," said Aurora head coach Jimmy Brennan. "Overall we are still learning as a squad here and figuring out the league...we are a new team in this league and as a group, but we just need to sharpen up and not give the ball away too easily around the box."

The team will visit the North Toronto Nitros this Sunday, and are gearing up for their home opener against the Woodbridge Strikers in late May.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.league1ontario.com.

Ex-Tigers coach Richmond lands OHL head coach job

By Jake Courtepatte

James Richmond is continuing his march up the junior hockey ranks with a familiar position behind the bench.

The Oak Ridges resident, whose tenures involve the head coaching position with both the Georgetown Raiders and Aurora Tigers of the OJHL, was named the head coach of the Ontario Hockey League's Mississauga Steelheads last week.

"I am very thankful for the opportunity [the Steelheads] have given me and I'm excited to build on the momentum the team showed this past season," said Richmond in a press release from the Steelheads. "We have some terrific returning players, and with some of the young prospects from our drafts the past few years the future looks great. I look forward to the challenge ahead and my family and I are honoured that I am the new Head Coach of the Mississauga Steelheads of the Ontario Hockey League."

James Richmond, affectionately known as "JR" in hockey circles, will take over the position from James Boyd, who is making the shift from behind the bench to the front office.

JR left behind an extremely successful tenure as head coach in Aurora, twice named OJHL Coach of

the Year in 2013 and 2014. Although the Tigers bowed out of the playoffs unexpectedly early in his last season, Richmond led them to first-place in regular season standings with players taking home a handful of hardware.

Eric Williams was named the recipient of the Top Defenceman award while Cameron Morrison earned the award for top rookie.

Richmond joined the Tigers in 2010, improving their season record each year and bringing the team to the third-ranked position in minor junior in the country. Guiding the club for five seasons, the Tigers improved their regular season record throughout his tenure.

Although failing to take home a Buckland Cup during his time there, the Aurora Tigers went to the OJHL finals three years ago where they lost to the Toronto Lakeshore Patriots in six games.

"It's a great team with a great future," said Richmond upon leaving the Tigers organization, having turned the team from a sub-.500 season to a championship contender in his first year. "I've been given the chance to work for some great clubs. My time in Aurora was some of the best years I've had."

Continued on page 14



Aurora Minor Hockey Association



IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING 2016/2017 REGISTRATION

On-Line Registration begins: April 1, 2016

In-House Registration dates: May 4, 18 and 25 (6 – 9 pm)
AMHA Office at the Aurora Community Centre
Yonge/Aurora Heights Drive

Please refer to our website at www.auroraminorhockey.com for Rep tryout policies and schedules.

REGISTRATION fees for the 2016/2017 season are:

Early Bird Registration Fee

\$590.00 Players born 1996 through 2010*

(Registration fees increase by \$50 on June 1, 2016 and \$100 on July 1, 2016)

\$ 60.00 Non-Resident Fee (if applicable)

*New Tyke players born in 2009 and 2010 must submit a copy of a birth certificate or passport and proof of residency. It is recommended that 2010 players have either taken skating lessons or completed one year of Opti Hockey.

A 10% discount applies to families with 3 or more players.

Refunds will be issued to anyone withdrawing prior to September 1, 2016 (less a \$25 admin fee).

PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!

Guaranteed spots are available ONLY to players registered on or before June 30, 2016.

We will not add teams in September to accommodate late registrants.

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Saints strong as baseball season opens

By Jake Courtepatte

When the St. Andrew’s College Saints aren’t ruling the hockey rink in the winter, they are ruling the baseball field in the summer.

The Saints posted a 10 – 0 win over rival Country Day School to open the CISAA season last Monday, a league the Saints have been the dominant force in for years.

Despite a slow start, SAC’s boys of summer found their rhythm in the middle innings, plating run after run with big offensive outings from Riley Jackson, Alex Oushalkas, Will Merkel, and David Bowen.

The shutout was shared on the mound between Jackson, Eugene Lee, and Tristan Hicks, who started the game with three and a third solid innings.

Both the pitching staff and bats were back to work two days later in a 15 – 2 romping of Crescent School.

The Saints will face St. Michael’s College on Thursday, a game that head coach Len Gurr calls “a much tougher test.” St. Michael’s is yet to be tested in CISAA action this year.

On a larger scale, St. Andrew’s brought in a pair of wins last week at the Ontario showcase in Port Hope. Following a 5 – 3 victory over the Clarke Secondary School Raiders, Jack Little was on the bump for a 10 – 7 win over Anderson Secondary School, with Brayden Byers closing out the last two innings in relief.

Merkel was an offensive force in this win as well, going three for three with two singles, a triple, a walk, and two runs scored. Tyler Black contributed two doubles, a single, and four runs of



The St. Andrew’s College Saints, pictured here against Country Day School, have opened the CISAA season with two straight wins.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

his own.

Although they hold a perfect regular season record since the start of 2015, the Saints have been held off in the postseason over the last few years. A 9 – 0 record brought SAC to the CISAA championship game in 2015, only to fall 10 – 3 to St. Mike’s.

The Saints fell to a talented squad from Upper Canada College in the 2014 CISAA semi-finals, despite an impressive 7 – 1 regular season record.

The U14 softball Saints kicked off their season with a loss at home, falling 12 – 4 to Upper Canada College on Wednesday.

To follow the Saints’ season, check out www.sac.on.ca.

Tigers improved under Richmond’s coaching

From page 13

Mississauga will be looking to put their new head coach to the test immediately, as the Steelheads, having only made the transition from the St. Michael’s Majors four years ago, have a long road to success still ahead.

The team went through a rebuilding phase as early as two seasons ago, improving in 2015-16 with Richmond behind the bench to a 33-30-5 record while returning to the playoffs for the first time in three seasons.

Finishing seventh overall in conference standings, the Steelheads took the powerhouse Barrie Colts to seven games in their opening round matchup, coming up just short.

“We have some good pieces, a lot of good young guys,” said Richmond.

“There’s a lot of potential on this team.”

Richmond’s future as a member of the player development staff of the NHL’s Los Angeles Kings remains to be seen.

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NOTICE OF TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE

A portion of Haida Drive will be closed from Monday, May 23 to Friday, May 27. Wellington Square Plaza, James Henry Drive, Jasper Drive and local traffic will continue to have access off of Haida Drive.

Road closure signage will be positioned at the intersection of McDonald Drive and Haida Drive and Haida Drive and Wellington Street West.

KEY PLAN - LOCATION OF HAIDA DRIVE CLOSURE

INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Town of Aurora | 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1 | www.aurora.ca/publicnotices | 905-727-1375

The Aurora Cultural Centre seeks new Members to our volunteer Board of Directors

Now in our 6th year, the Centre has grown to welcome over 30,000 visits annually. Join us and share your enthusiasm and passion for the arts in our community.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Related experience with non-profit Boards, committees, associations or other community groups as a member, donor, volunteer, or staff.
2. Transferable skills for Board governance particularly in Finance, HR, Fund raising, Public Relations etc.
3. Personal attributes of benefit to the Cultural Centre e.g. active contributor, team player, personal network, problem solver, creative thinker, etc.
4. Time and energy to contribute as a member and volunteer on committees, fundraising, special events and other activities.
5. Personal commitment to the vision, mission, and ongoing operations of the Centre.
6. Must be a resident of Aurora.

Please send a brief outline of your interest with a Résumé or CV by email to: info@auroraculturalcentre.ca (before May 31) with a subject line of BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

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Hotel “action plan” being developed

By Brock Weir

Aurora’s business leaders have been tasked with helping municipal staff develop a new strategy and action plan to entice a new hotel to Town.

Council has approved a motion from Councillor Michael Thompson calling on members of the Town’s Economic Development Advisory Committee to work with staff to develop a “strategy and comprehensive action plan to enhance the Town’s ability to attract and secure a hotel” before the approval of next year’s budget.

The motion stemmed from calls from Councillor Thompson to change the conversation around attracting a hotel from a negative to a positive, hoping to find other barriers to hotel developments that need to be cleared to attract some new lodging beyond Regional development charges that have already been identified as a roadblock by lawmakers and the industry alike.

“As any business owner would say, you’re always trying to drive more people

through our doors and I think this is the same way,” said Councillor Thompson. “Let’s look at different ways to increase the number of prospective individuals interested in opening up a hotel and let’s drive them towards Aurora.”

The motion won the unanimous approval of Council members, with Councillor Paul Pirri, the current Chair of the Town’s Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) calling it a “great initiative.

“There are a number of things we can always be looking at, and we have identified development charges as being a big hindrance to us,” he said. “There are other marketing standpoints and one of the good ones I have heard is actually going out to talk to architects that specialize in hotel development. They want business so they will have contacts.”

Added Councillor Tom Mrakas: “We have some good business leaders as part of that Committee and I think to utilize that experience to come up with a strategy to put forward in marketing to entice a hotel to come to Town is a great idea.”

From the perspective of Councillor John Abel, another Committee member, hotels have often been a hot topic around the table. Over the years, he said, there has been contact made with a number of “major hotel chains” expressing interest, but nothing has come to fruition.

“We are getting close,” said Councillor Abel. “We have also been working directly with several local realtors to attract possible investors. Currently, there are four active groups who are interested in getting a hotel in various locations around Town. Council has addressed the reduction of development charges, which seems to be one of the stumbling blocks, but we also have Town-owned land on Leslie Street we have been trying to leverage as well, working with hotel chains that may be interested in going forward.

“I am sure if we keep working at it, before long we’re going to see something. We’re all ready to welcome anyone who is interested and move them forward in a quick way and show them we will be creative in trying to get them quickly to see this is a good investment here in Aurora.”

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3							4	5	6	7		
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Administrative Review Board

4. Not worried

8. Rowan Atkinson played him

10. Stars

11. Indian city

12. North American nation

13. He partnered with Garfunkel

15. Understood

16. Foe

17. Jewish state

18. 2015 postseason hero

21. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)

22. Goddess of the dawn

23. __ Squad
24. Belonging to a thing

25. Food-related allergic reaction (abbr.)

26. Car mechanics group

27. Exceed in weight

34. Deserved

35. Singer Thicke

36. Clemencies

38. Critique

39. Resented

40. Type of tissue

41. Passages

42. It comes in a can

43. His heart is in San Francisco

44. Retirement account

CLUES DOWN

1. Belittled

2. Actress King

3. They pour drinks

4. Communicates

5. Take advantage of

6. Take on cargo

7. A stiff drink

9. Actress Watts

10. Natives of the American Southwest

12. Covered

14. The Science Guy Bill

15. Soviet Socialist Republic

17. Contraceptive device

19. Unfastened
20. __ student, learns healing

23. Ties the knot

24. Actor McKellen

25. Optical phenomenon

26. Turf

28. Foot (Latin)

29. Flub

30. Birds settle here

31. Calculator

32. Herbal tea

33. Catch

34. Pitcher Santana

36. Not for vegetarians

37. Japanese novelist

COMING EVENTS

FRIDAY, MAY 13
The Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, presents Aurora Unplugged, the Local Artists Coffee House featuring performers ages 14 – 22. Check out the amazing talent in our community! The event starts at 7 p.m.; \$4 at the door, includes refreshments. For more information, call 905-713-1818 or visit auroraculturalcentre.ca.

SATURDAY, MAY 14
The Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, presents the 2nd Annual Spring Artisan Pop-Up Market, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Meet gallery artists and artisans, and pick from their one-day expanded collections of jewelry, glass, fine art, pottery and more. Free admission. For information, call 905-713-1818, or visit auroraculturalcentre.ca.

SUNDAY, MAY 15
Partagez le Français! This free French language conversation group welcomes adults from francophones to beginners looking to put their French language conversation skills into action. Francophones and stronger speakers are encouraged to share their French language skills with less strong speakers. 3 – 5 p.m. at Country Style Deli and Bistro (14980 Yonge Street).

SATURDAY, MAY 28
The Aurora Seniors Evergreen Choir, under the direction of Dr. Richard Heinze, with our accompanist, Hadara Jacoby, warmly invites you to come to our Tenth Anniversary Concert: “Keep on Singing” with singing, decorations, refreshments, guest artists. Tickets: \$5.00 (children under 14 are free, but need a ticket. Tickets are now available at the Seniors’ Centre Reception Doors open at 2 p.m., concert starts at 2.30 p.m. at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre, 90 John West Way, Aurora. For more information, call 905-726-4767 Sponsored in part by: Chris Ablett of BoomerConnect and Royal LePage Realty Inc.

Christ Church Kettleby hosts “A Springtime Soiree” featuring Diva in the Rough Catherine Hughes. Cocktails and canapes at 6 p.m., live auctioneer at 7 p.m. Show starts at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are \$35 at the door or call 905-836-4618 to reserve. Come celebrate the 125th anniversary of Christ Church at 292 Kettleby Road.

SUNDAY, MAY 29
Partagez le Français! This free French language conversation group welcomes adults from francophones to beginners looking to put their French language conversation skills into action. Francophones and stronger speakers are encouraged to share their French language skills with less strong speakers. 3 – 5 p.m. at Country Style Deli and Bistro (14980 Yonge Street).

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1
Devins Drive Public School, 70 Devins Drive, presents the Fourth Annual Spring Fair today from 5 – 8 p.m., featuring bouncy castles, obstacle course, slide, exotic animals, games, DJ, face painting, fire truck, as well as a BBQ, sno-kones, cotton candy, popcorn and bake sale. Tickets and food can be purchased on site. For more information, please email tturriff@penguinrandomhouse.com or marybclowater@gmail.com.

The Aurora Public Library’s Economy Talk\$ series continues tonight at 7 p.m. with Which Markets: TSX or USA? Which Securities: Stocks or ETFs. This free informal monthly discussion/education group is to share unbiased knowledge in economics and financial planning. Presentation followed by group discussion. For more information and to register, cll the Library’s Adult Information Desk at 905-727-9494 x275.

SUNDAY, JUNE 12
Garden Aurora! Annual Plant Sale. NEW LOCATION! The Aurora Garden Club and Aurora Home Hardware Building Centre are joining to make this our best plant sale ever. Our members will be donating plants from their own gardens in this area so you are assured they will work for you. Great member and nursery plants at fabulous prices, giveaways and more, make this a must visit to Aurora Home Hardware at 289 Wellington St East, Aurora. Sale from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. More info at www.gardenaurora.com or 905-713-6660.

Partagez le Français! This free French language conversation group welcomes adults from francophones to beginners looking to put their French language conversation skills into action. Francophones and stronger speakers are encouraged to share their French language skills with less strong speakers. 3 – 5 p.m. at Country Style Deli and Bistro (14980 Yonge Street).



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Next phase of Yonge Street Parking Plan due next week

By Brock Weir

Next steps to a plan proposed by Mayor Geoff Dawe to limit traffic on Yonge Street in the Downtown Core to one lane in each direction to allow for more on-street parking is expected to come forward next week, following public consultation last month.

The timeline was outlined by Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure, in a report card highlighting the number of steps taken by Town Hall to address traffic concerns brought forward by residents.

"In 2015, Council introduced a number of motions in relation to traffic operations in the Town including a street parking plan for Yonge Street between Wellington Street and Kennedy Street, a pilot project for left turn restrictions for the northbound and

southbound traffic at the intersection of Yonge Street and Wellington Street, a pilot project for the installation of speed cushions in five locations in the Town and pedestrian and vehicle traffic concerns in the area between Earl Stewart Drive, Pedersen Drive, St. John's Sideroad, and Bayview Avenue," said Mr. Simanovskis in his report.

"The parking plan on Yonge Street and speed cushion installation pilot project is still ongoing and staff will bring reports to Council on their status during the second or third quarter of 2016. The Region of York is still working on the left turn restrictions with updates to follow."

Additional traffic measures implemented by the Town to address residents' concerns include the installation of a stop sign at Wells Street and Cousins Drive, on-street parking restrictions in

new areas of Town, seven speed boards scattered around Town, currently on Mavrinac Boulevard, Tecumseh Drive, John West Way, McMaster Avenue, Industrial Parkway North, Walton Drive,

and Kennedy Street West. These signs are designed to signal to drivers who are exceeding the speed limits.

Over the last year, Aurora reported 182 traffic collisions, compared to 147 in 2014.

Youth artists, musicians take over Cultural Centre for Aurora Unplugged

By Brock Weir

Emerging musicians, spoken word artists and other performers are set to show the community what they're made of at the inaugural Aurora Unplugged.

Taking over the Aurora Cultural Centre this Friday from 7 – 9 p.m., the Aurora Unplugged Coffeehouse is the brainchild of Joey Ferguson and Jane Taylor of the Cultural Centre to give youth a venue to make their own.

With the date firmed up, and the venue a given, Mr. Ferguson reached out to local high schools with the opportunity and received a tremendous reception. At press time, they expect singers, solo musicians, groups representing genres from indie folk to modern pop, to country, to everything in between, bringing together new songs, cover songs, spoken word, and even a splash of comedy.

"It is knowing that there is a want for them to perform, that there is an audience out there for them where people will listen, to [encourage] them to continue working on their craft

and to try and excel as a performer," says Mr. Ferguson when asked what he wants the youth performers to take away from this inaugural event. "Hopefully they will meet other artists they might be able to collaborate with and even if this is not what you want to do with your life, it is a great thing to continue and there are people who want to listen if you want to perform."

"One of the comments we have had a bit at the Centre is there is great music that goes on here, but not a lot of local. The idea is this is how we can bring in these local talents, give them a place to perform in an intimate setting and, who knows, perhaps be able to create larger shows out of that as well."

Tickets for Friday evening's coffeehouse are \$4, which includes refreshments.

"There are tonnes of performers and definitely something for every music fan," says Mr. Ferguson. "If anyone is at home on Friday night and not sure what to do, this is cheaper than going to the movies and they will definitely have a great show."

Merlin's Hollow opens for 35th season

From page

fortified their rooves and basements three wives ago? Where does the time go? My sister eyed my paunch the other day and asked if I was expecting twins or triplets. Women! How are you doing? It has been decades since this and your last letter. How are you doing in the love market? I am staying away from dames now. It's safer. Three counts and you're out, eh?"

Rest assured, there are plenty of innings left for this "dame" and she is looking forward to tackling each one of them. Merlin's Hollow is located

View from Queen's Park

From page 5

award winning organization depends on volunteers and community support. Doane House Hospice is dedicated to enhancing quality of life through the provision of non-medical support for those affected by, or caring for, an individual with a life-threatening illness, as well as bereavement support. Learn more on the group's website.

I invite you to contact me on any issue. Please call my community office at 905-750-0019, or visit my website at www.ChrisBallardMPP.ca. My email is: cballard.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org.

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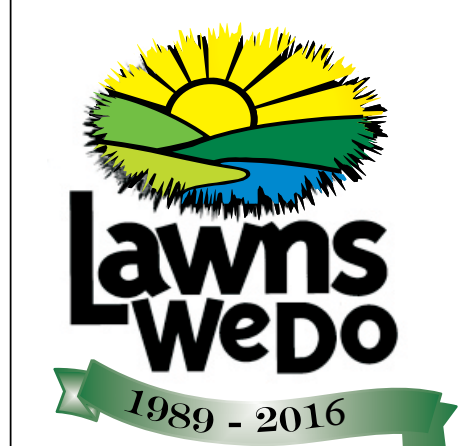
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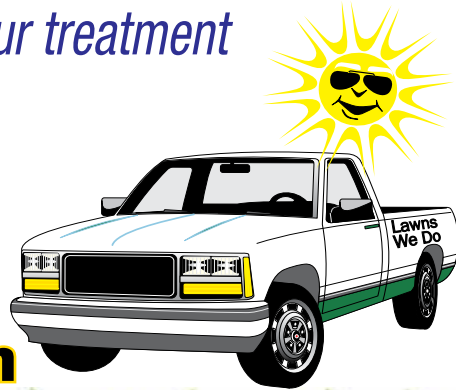
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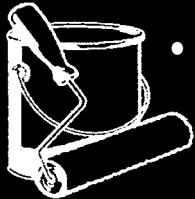
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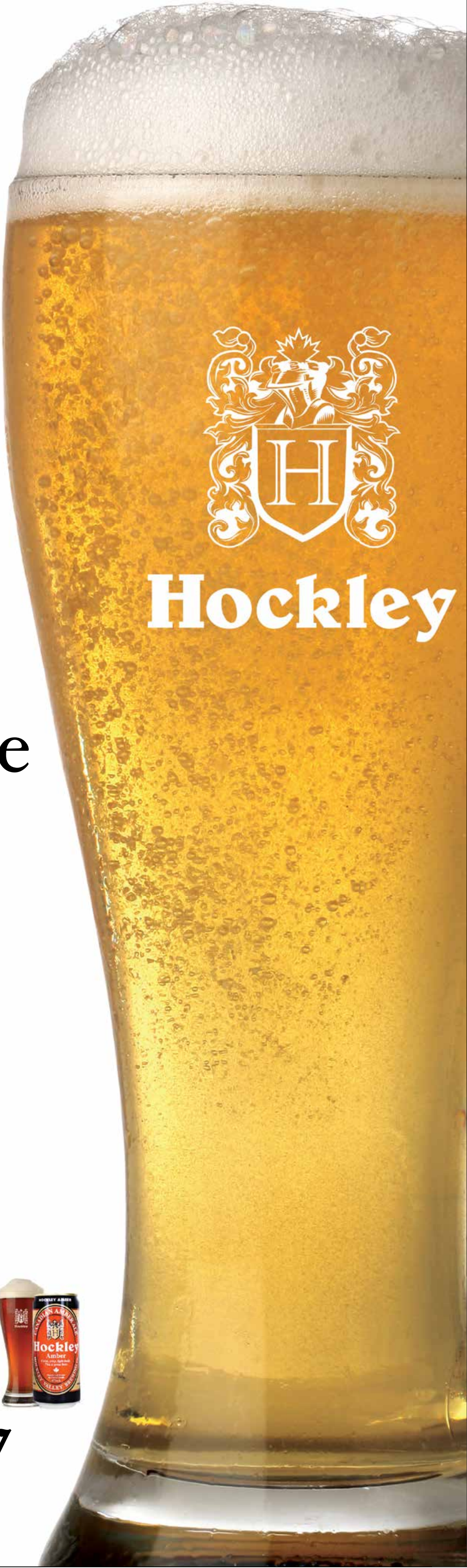
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