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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 19 No. 13 905-727-3300 theauroran.com FREE Week of January 10, 2019 CMCA AUDITED

GALLOPING INTO 2019 – Gabriel, Annabel and Dali rode into 2019 in style at Family First Night, which was hosted by the Town of Aurora on New Year's Eve. For more on the yearly tradition, please see Page 20. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

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Questions still need to be answered on retail pot, say Councillors

By Brock Weir

Aurora will host a Special Council meeting next Monday, January 21, to decide whether or not to allow retail cannabis sales within the Town.

As The Auroran reported last week, the decision will come down to the wire as municipalities have until January 22 to opt in or opt out, but some Councillors say there are still many questions that need to be answered at the Special Council meeting for them to make an informed decision.

"Whether one likes it or not, it is important that we recognize cannabis is now a legal product and Aurorans have access to legally purchase cannabis online via the OCS (Ontario Cannabis Store)," says Councillor Rachel Gilliland. "The Town of Aurora has thankfully been given more time than others to do more research and observe other municipalities go through the same process of deciding whether or not to opt in or opt out of allowing cannabis retail and I, for one, am still researching and asking questions to help make the best decision for our Town.

"For me, the key factors are public health, enforcement and regulation and Council will be meeting with York Regional Police shortly to gather more information. I would like to know if there are potential risks around illegal sales if we opt out. Will our enforcement costs go up? Is it safer for the public to have a controlled retail environment? I also look

Continued on page 13

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Artists tap into "Memory" for SOYRA show

By Brock Weir

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but images can also help preserve and spur memories.

A painting of an Italian streetscape might be the trigger of a long-forgotten family story. The photo of a beach could bring on a wave of reminiscences a favourite holiday. A

Continued on page 10

SOYRA President Linda Welch, right, and Aurora Cultural Centre curator Stephanie Nicolo are pictured on Friday putting the finishing touches on "In Memory", a new juried art show now on at the Aurora Cultural Centre. An opening reception will be held Saturday afternoon. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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TOWN OF AURORA

Notice Board

AURORA

Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Thursday, January 10	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Committee of Adjustment
Friday, January 11	1 p.m.	Off-site	Council Workshop
Saturday, January 12	8:30 a.m.	Off-site	Council Workshop
Monday, January 14	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Budget Committee (Special Budget Public Consultation)
Tuesday. January 15	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, January 15	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee
Wednesday, January 16	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library	Aurora Public Library Board
Wednesday, January 16	7 p.m.	Aurora Cultural Centre	Aurora Cultural Centre Board
Monday, January 21	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council (Special) - Retail Cannabis Outlets
Tuesday, January 22	10 a.m.	Newmarket	Joint Council Committee
Tuesday, January 22	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, January 22	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council

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

Council meetings are open to the public. For a full list of upcoming meetings, please visit **aurora.ca.**

What's Happening

January Skylight Gallery Artist

The skylight gallery artist for January is Oksana Baczynsky. Oksana's main goal is to search out the beauty that surrounds us and to capture it in paint. By sharing her art, she hopes to provide the viewer with the awe and spiritual peace that the majesty of the Canadian landscape inspires. Visit the Skylight Gallery this month to see this exciting work called *Exploring Nature*. This exhibit is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Aurora Town Hall, 3rd floor.

Club Aurora Wellness Seminar - Secrets to Better Sleep on January 22

Register today for Club Aurora's *Secrets to Better Sleep* on **Tuesday, January 22** from 9:30 a.m. to 10:25 a.m. at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex. For more details, visit **aurora.ca/fitness.**

Club Aurora open house on January 19

Join us on **Saturday, January 19** at Club Aurora's open house from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Try a variety of group fitness classes for free. For more details, visit **aurora.ca/fitness.**

Information for Community Groups Seeking Grant Funding from the Town

Are you a community group, organization or individual seeking special grant funding or services in kind from the Town for 2019? If so, you need to complete a Financial Request form & present at the budget consultation meeting on Mon. Jan. 14. More info at **aurora.ca/budget.**

What's Happening

Register now for Winter 2019 Recreation & Aquatic Programs

Registrations are **now open** for winter recreation and aquatics programs. Pick up a copy of the *Community Services Program Guide* at one of the Town's recreation facilities or view the program guide online at **aurora.ca/recguide.**

Town of Aurora E-Waste Event on January 19

Have you recently replaced a computer, phone or television? Drop-off all unwanted or obsolete electronic devices to be safely recycled.

The event will be held on Saturday, January 19 at the Joint Operations Centre located at 229 Industrial Parkway North from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For a full list of acceptable materials please visit **aurora.ca/ewaste.**

Have your say about Economic Growth in Aurora

We're working on an Economic Development Strategy that will guide Aurora's economic development activities for the short and long term. Your thoughts will give us valuable insight into our local economy and opportunities for economic growth. Take the survey now at **surveymonkey.com/r/AuroraEDStratPlan**.

What's Happening

AURORA

2019 BUDGET
SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

- Budget meetings are held at Aurora Town Hall, located at 100 John West Way. Public input is welcome at the beginning of each meeting.

UPCOMING	Monday, January 14, 2019 • 7 p.m. Special Budget Consultation*
UPCOMING	Tuesday, January 22, 2019 • 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Capital Budget Review
UPCOMING	Saturday, February 2, 2019 • 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Capital Budget Review
UPCOMING	Tuesday, February 12, 2019 • 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Council - Operating Budget Introduction
UPCOMING	Thursday, February 21, 2019 • 5:45 p.m. to 10 p.m. Operating Budget Review
UPCOMING	Monday, February 25, 2019 • 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Operating Budget Review
UPCOMING	Tuesday, February 26, 2019 • 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Capital Budget Approval
UPCOMING	Monday, March 4, 2019 • 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Operating Budget Review
UPCOMING	Monday, March 18, 2019 • 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Operating Budget Review
UPCOMING	Tuesday, March 26, 2019 • 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Operating Budget Approval

- *Budget material will be distributed to committee members at the end of this meeting.

Aurora says no to "Open for Business" legislation that could have environmental impact

By Brock Weir

Aurora has formally said "no" to Ontario's Bill 66, which could give municipalities the ability to override provincial planning documents put in place to protect the environment in the interests of speedy developments.

In his motion, Mayor Tom Mrakas said the "protection and integrity of the Green Belt is paramount for our residents" and cited the importance of legislation protecting our water.

"Significant concerns have been raised by residents, community leaders and organizations such as the Canadian Environmental Law Association that provisions within Bill 66 will weaken environmental protections as it '…will enable municipalities to pass 'Open for Business' zoning bylaws that do not have to comply with…' important provincial environmental statutes.

The Mayor called upon Council to oppose planned changes to the Planning Act contained within Bill 66 that may allow for an "Open for Business" planning bylaw while requesting the Province to reconsider its plans.

"I believe we have to get out front and make a statement and let everyone know, especially in our community," said Mayor Mrakas, noting some colleagues in other municipalities have considered waiting for information before making a similar motion. "While we encourage jobs and businesses to come into the community and we want them to come to our community, I don't think any of us want it at the expense of our environment, at the expense of any safety measures that have been put in place by previous governments. To overturn and allow municipalities to be exempt from these legislative requirements, I think, is a bad thing not only for our community but the province in general. I think it is important we put forward this motion, we let the province know we're not in favour of this."

Addressing Council members around the table, he added: "I know each and every one of you to a certain extent and I know we would never look at allowing for an exemption like this to…occur, but I think the concern lies with what other municipalities are doing. That is why we need to send that message to the Province [and say] we oppose this, and that is exactly what this motion says." First to support the motion was Councillor Sandra Humfryes, who said she supported it "100 per cent" and seconded the motion.

Next to note her support was Councillor Wendy Gaertner who agreed that many Council members ran on environmental platforms and the proposed legislation was contrary to the mandate given to them by Aurora voters.

"This [move], without a doubt, is contrary to that as the protections in the Clean Water Act, the Green Belt Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Act, the Places to Grow Act. It can override all of those. It is very important that we send a strong message, not only to the Province, but to our community," she said.

Councillor Gaertner, however, suggested the Motion on the floor go a step further, taking a cue from information submitted to Council by Susan Walmer, Executive Director of the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust, and inserting another clause: that "the Town of Aurora will not exercise the powers granted to it in Schedule 10 or any successor sections or schedules to pass open-for-business planning bylaws."

"I think having that extra clause just hits the spot because it says exactly what we're not going to do," she said. "It sends a message to our community exactly what we are not going to do."

But this additional clause received some pushback from Mayor Mrakas, as well as Councillor Michael Thompson, with the latter suggesting it might be too premature.

Speaking to an earlier iteration of the clause which had the phrase "any other" instead of "any successor," he said he couldn't support something that vague.

"We all know how bills work," said Councillor Thompson. "It has passed first reading and it still has to go through other stages. There could be some amendments and changes along the way. We have also received communication from AMO (the Association of Municipalities of Ontario) that talks about all the various components of that Bill and there is a wide number of them, but I am leery to move forward on something that says 'any other' because I don't know what 'any other' means at this point. That kind of vagueness is difficult to support."

Mayor Mrakas, on the other hand, said his motion spoke for itself.

"If we pass it, we're saying we oppose it and wouldn't be looking at amending or giving powers and allowing to exercise for an open business planning bylaw," he said. "I stated that clearly and I think Council by passing this motion are stating that clearly. I don't think it has to be a clause within the motion."

While the original clauses of Mayor Mrakas' motion passed unanimously, this additional cause was passed on a vote of 5 – 2, with Mayor Mrakas and Councillor Thompson voting against.

In supporting the motion as a whole, Councillor Harold Kim said it is important to build upon the last decade-and-a-half of Provincial legislation.

"The Green Belt plan, which was formulated back in 2005, is a cornerstone of the Greater Golden Horseshoe growth plan that we have been operating in over the last 14 years or so and a lot of other established practices have occurred since then," he said. "There's a marked delineation between agricultural land

Continued on page 8

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TOWN OF AURORA
PUBLIC NOTICE

AURORA

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

AURORA TOWN COUNCIL will hold a public meeting to receive input from a Planning Consultant to provide an information report with regards to redevelopments within the Stable Neighbourhood Study Areas.

At the September 18, 2018 Council Meeting, Council motioned to have an information report for the Public Planning meeting to provide an expert opinion on the subject of developing within the Study Areas.

The Planning Consultant will discuss the following:

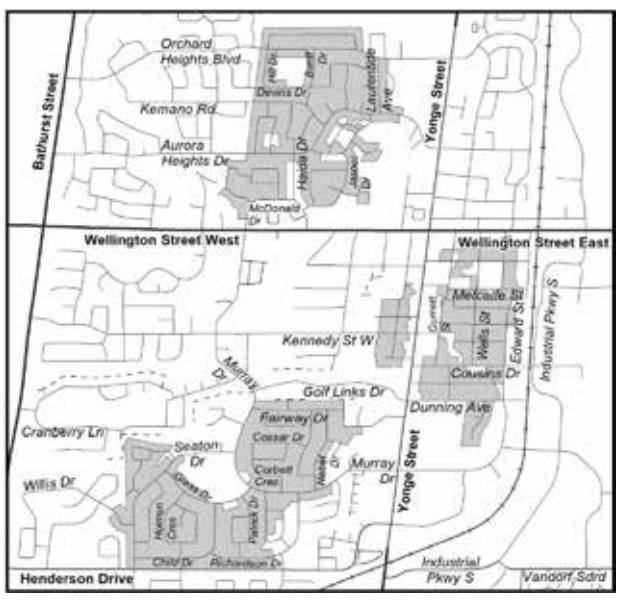
- Highlighting findings from the site visits of each communities
- Peer Review of Staff Report Recommendations
- Overview of the comments from the three 3 Ratepayer's Associations
- Identifying the impacts of 'downzoning' from a real estate market/fiscal analysis, and urban design perspectives
- Discussion of other legal tools to self-regulate development with each community

LOCATION: Aurora Town Hall, Council Chambers, 100 John West Way, Aurora Ontario

DATE: Wednesday, January 30, 2019

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

STUDY AREA:



CONTACT:

Any inquiries should be directed to Planning and Development Services at 905-727-3123 extension 4226, Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Comments may also be mailed to the Planning and Development Services department at the address below or emailed to planning@aurora.ca prior to the meeting.

To stay updated please visit **aurora.ca/stableneighbourhoodstudy.**

DATED at the Town of Aurora, this 10th day of January, 2019

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"I'm a Facebook failure," jokes Councillor

I am a Facebook Failure!

I would like to wish our Aurora community a healthy, joy filled and successful 2019. We are fortunate to be able to call Aurora, and Canada our home; to be able to live with the expectation of peace.

On the topic of Facebook, I have tried to use this medium to communicate without much success. Thank you to my 39 followers!

Well, it is a New Year and a new Council term and I am determined to persevere with FB because I know that many of you are users. I ask that you support my Facebook learning curve. There are very important issues facing Aurora that I would like to discuss with you.

There is the continuing effort to protect our mature neighbourhoods from development that changes their character and adversely affects residents enjoyment of their homes. Hundreds, probably thousands are proud and happy to call these Stable Neighbourhoods home.

It is not a choice of whether we want to change our Zoning By-laws. To be in compliance with Section 8 of our Official Plan, that directs future development in mature residential areas, we must change these zoning permissions!

The development of the Library Square area is exciting and complex. The community needs a plan for the Square that will add to our quality of life and our cultural enjoyment without imposing a financial burden on taxpayers. We are lucky to have money from the sale of Aurora Hydro to build something special for Aurora. However, a Square and cultural building will require substantial money to maintain and operate. Where is that money planned to come from?

Another, for our future quality of life, for our children, is action that we must take to protect the environment; and help mitigate the causes and effects of climate change. The reality is that we are already experiencing, increasingly, with severe weather events.

If you are interested in my point of view, and adding your own please give me another try on Facebook. For those who would like to receive information via email, please let me know at: wgaertner@aurora.ca.

Councillor Wendy Gaertner
Aurora

Make a difference with Relay for Life

With 1 in 2 Canadians diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime, cancer affects us all; every Canadian, in every city, across the country. But when cancer hits close to home, community matters. It is a source of strength, courage and hope.

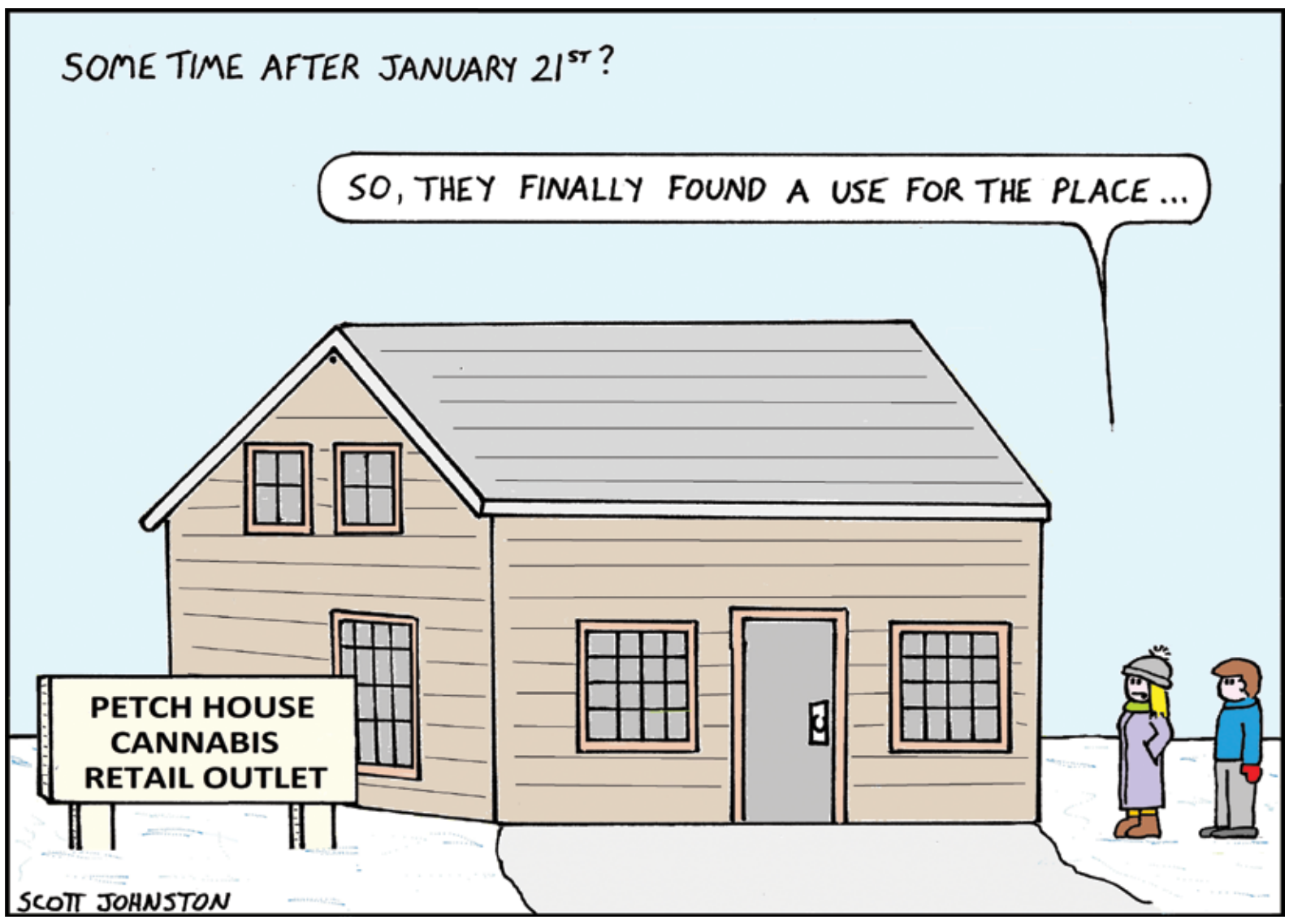
The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) Relay For Life brings together communities, united by the same goal of creating a world where no Canadian fears cancer.

By registering for Relay For Life, you can celebrate those who live and have lived in the face of cancer and those moving past cancer. Relay For Life Newmarket will be held on June 21, 2019 at Pickering College.

"Whether you are cheering on survivors, walking the track or joining in exciting trackside activities, Relay For Life is an unforgettable event!" said Leslie Yeates, event chair. "Your office or family Christmas parties are

Continued on page 11

Machell's Corners



Lost in the weed

BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

"Time travel" was always my stock answer – and it still is, the mystery and excitement as fresh today, in my mind, as it has ever been.

The question is usually: "If you could have any superpower, what would it be?"

Time travel, at least to my peers growing up, never seemed as glamourous as it did to me. Many were raised on comic books and morning cartoons, so the possibility of flying through the atmosphere at supersonic speed by donning a cape, or being able to perform superhuman feats of strength without needing the softest snap of a finger were just too enticing as far as options went.

Of course, this all changed once hormones started to race and many of the aspiring Clark Kents and Bruce Banners in my circle decided they would give it all up for x-ray vision. Feeling their oats was something of an understatement, but I digress.

I guess I was a different breed altogether. While being able to fly, perform adrenaline-defying acts or see through whatever one needed to see through were equally intriguing – and I certainly wouldn't have turned any of these options down – there was nothing more thrilling to me than the idea of picking any point in history as a destination

If you're scoffing at the idea, consider this: Would you really turn up your nose at the chance to zip back to the Middle East two or three millennia ago to get to the bottom of this whole Bible business? How about the opportunity to go back to Tudor England and see just what was so bewitching about Anne Boleyn? Or the opportunity to see how things unfolded on the Plains of Abraham in 18th century Quebec. Or 19th century Ontario to trail Laura Secord on her journey. Or the second half of the same century in Austria to give Klara and Alois Hitler a Planned Parenthood pamphlet. Or the "Roaring Twenties" when prohibition in the United States and some Provinces here at home served to not only make alcohol consumption more exciting, but proved to be a boon to distillers here in Canada and, presumably, bathtub manufacturers on both sides of the border.

On this last front, I do have some experience.

As a late September baby, I had the ignominious honour of beginning university in Ottawa at the briefly-tender age of seventeen. For first-year students at Carleton University, especially during frosh week, it was a rite of passage to head over the river to a bar in Quebec to take advantage of the Province's drinking age, which is 18 as opposed to Ontario's 19.

Except for me.

By the time I hit the age of 18, frosh was already a fortnight in the rear-view mirror, so I had some catching up to do, but nonetheless I briefly had the experience of knowing what it was like living in a "dry" environment when others around me were apparently living the high life; a 20 minute trip off campus and out of province be damned.

Everything old, however, seems to be on the way to becoming new again.

This month, municipalities across Ontario will have to decide whether to opt-in or opt-out of allowing retail cannabis sales inside their municipal limits. The City of Toronto has already had a head-start in opting into the plan, while some lower-tier municipalities, including the City of Markham, exercised their choice to opt out.

"We still have a lot of unanswered questions about community safety, about the impact to families and children," said Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti in a statement. "This vote by Markham Council reflects the concerns we have heard throughout the community. We have taken this position with the previous government and we applaud the Provincial Government for giving municipalities the right to opt out."

December's vote was Markham's second in relation to the legalization of cannabis across the country following an October decision to prohibit the smoking and vaping of cannabis in public places within the city.

While I think the latter option was sensible and in keeping with similar measures pertaining to other controlled substances, I'm less confident about the decision to opt out all together.

I was not exactly beating the drum of support when Premier Ford announced in the early days of his mandate that Ontario would forego the model proposed by the previous Liberal government whereby cannabis in its various forms could be sold in specific retail outlets similar to the ubiquitous LCBOs – the Ontario Cannabis Store (OCS).

Don't get me wrong: the OCS model as proposed by the previous government was in no way foolproof; the LCBOs of today are far from perfect, but, at the very least, it has become a tried and nearly-true method of selling a controlled substance.

The retail route, on the other hand, raised questions with me as well, from how the product would be handled by the individual seller, safety measures prescribed to keep the product out of the hands of those underage, and how government monitoring would be continued after licenses had been granted.

Some of those questions still need to be fully answered but opting out, in my opinion, could have unintended consequences in the not-too-distant future, including painting the Town into a corner.

Whether we like it or not – and there seems to be a fairly even split on the matter – the fact remains that cannabis is now legal in Canada, and it is not going away. You can grow some plants on your own. If you are over the age of 19 and have a credit card, you can buy cannabis buds, pre-rolled joints, oils and more with just a few clicks and have it delivered right to your door or nearest postal outlet. It is already in the community, so why not take advantage of it, help shape the impact it will have here at home, and reap the financial benefits?

Opting in has the potential to provide opportunities for retailers and entrepreneurs while creating jobs in the process. Opting in also has the potential to bring in business from elsewhere, attracting customers from other communities that have opted-out. It also has the potential to bring increased tax revenue into the municipality to support social services and programs.

Opting out, on the other hand, excludes the community from any such tax revenue schemes set up by upper tier governments, blocks retailers from competing fairly with their counterparts in other municipalities, drives potential business within our town limits elsewhere, and simply ignores a reality.

After all, there don't seem to be any plans to put in place planning blocks on future LCBOs and convenience stores simply because they respectively sell alcohol and tobacco. Maybe that comes next.

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Aurora's Community Newspaper

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Founder Ron Wallace | Publisher Emeritus Rosemary Schumaker

Subscriptions available within Canada and U.S.
email: administration@auroran.com

EDITOR
Brock Weir
brock@auroran.com

ADVERTISING
Zach Shoub
zach@lpcmedia.ca

ADVERTISING
Doug Sherritt
doug@lpcmedia.ca

GENERAL MANAGER
Zach Shoub
zach@auroran.com

ADVERTISING
Diane Buchanan
diane@auroran.com

ADVERTISING
Rachael Magee
Rachael@lpcmedia.ca

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Cynthia Proctor
cynthia@auroran.com

TODAYS NEW HOMES
Zach Shoub
zach@auroran.com

MOTORING
Heather Erwin
heather@caledoncitizen.com

CLASSIFIEDS
905-727-3300 ex.102
cynthia@auroran.com

PHOTOGRAPHY
Glenn Rodger
grodger@rogers.com

To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to letters@auroran.com.
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

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Publisher is not liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. Disputes must be brought to the attention of the publisher prior to the following edition.

The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating… Hat Day!

(January 15)

Take a cue from these 1890s Aurora High School children…
Bowler, fedora, beret,
Beanie, cowboy or sun
You know you have one lying around…
So put it on and have some fun!

TIME TRAVELLER'S DIARY

Jacqueline Stuart

Aurora's customs

The time traveller stepped out briskly as he went down Yonge Street on a cold January afternoon in 1916. He was brought to a stop, however, when he was about halfway between Wellington and Mosley. What was that sound? Then he remembered: the clock had at last been installed in the tower over the new post office building. The clock, the chime, and his pocket watch all agreed that it was two o'clock.

He crossed over to the west side to have a better view of the building and its latest feature. Looking up, he saw the new clock in place, with a face on each side of the tower. But even people out of sight of the clock could hear its chime from just about anywhere in the town of about 2,000 people.

The traveller's gaze moved over the rest of the imposing red brick structure.

As a traveller in time, he was pleased to note that the year in which the construction of the building had started, 1914, was inscribed on a stone panel for the information of the passers-by of the future. The official opening had taken place late in 1915 but on that November day the tower clock had not yet arrived from England: the local paper had had to draw the clock's features onto its proud photo of the new post office. But now all was in place.

And "all" included a customs office, with its own stone panel above its entrance. A customs office for dealing with imported goods had been established in Aurora in 1900, thanks to the efforts of William Mulock, the local Member of Parliament.

Andrew Yule of Aurora (a highly respected businessman and, possibly not coincidentally, of the same political persuasion as Mr. Mulock) was appointed Collector of Customs. The customs house served merchants and manufacturers and others in both Aurora and Newmarket and Mr. Yule took the train up to Newmarket almost every weekday to deal with customs business there.

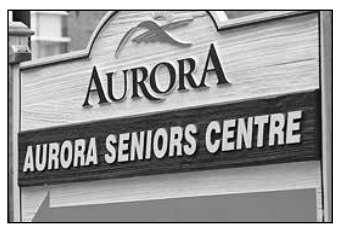
Mr. Yule would continue in the new building as Collector until 1918 when he retired because of ill health; he was seventy-nine years old (he did have an assistant by that time).

A few months later it was announced that the Aurora customs office would be closed down but, thanks to the efforts of the Municipal Council and the local MP, J. A. M. Armstrong, it continued to function until 1929. At that point the office did shut down and customs services were available only at the outport in Newmarket.

The Yonge Street post office became "the old post office" when a new federal building was opened on Wellington Street just east of Yonge in 1968. That building, in turn, closed in 2012 and today over-the-counter postal services are to be found in two convenience stores and a drug store.

The old "old post office" on Yonge Street is now privately owned and accommodates various businesses, including The Auroran. The Customs sign is still there, the tower is still a useful landmark, and the clock still chimes.

A New Song!



SENIOR SCAPE

Christina Doyle

As our years gallop by, and even though at times we would like to slow them down, joy is what will sustain us. Even though our life has its struggles and the pain and difficulties of others, sometimes overwhelms us, we can still have joy.

It is time to put a new song into your hearts, dear readers. Its time to dust off the old way of dealing with ourselves and with those around us. Its time to play a new tape in our heads and our hearts, of words that will encourage us and not hurt us or others. What makes your heart sing? What makes you smile, what keeps you going on with your lives? What makes us realize that our lives are fulfilled?

The answer to these questions is that we have followed a purpose instead of just the requirements of a job and we have made a life instead of a living! Today, I want you to really try and see the best in your life, appreciate what you have. Put a new song in your heart and be kind to yourself. Every one of you has a song, a story to tell, an unfolding personal life story. Your age doesn't matter, you have a purpose in this life on earth, its time to make new roads, new thought patterns.

Why? Because it's time.

When we make connections with others, we usually are healthier. No man or woman can live for themselves alone. Remember the old saying, "no man is an island."

Your purpose is the great magnet that attracts the circumstances that make you what you are. Live a purposeful life, dear reader, live it fully and well, choose right things for you, so that you can have an abundant life of well-being.

When you decide to love something greater than yourself and put real meaning into what you do, you will discover that depression, boredom and even illness become diffused.

Yes, have purpose in your life this New Year, and you will experience joy and a deep satisfaction in living your life. Let's step up to the plate and slug one right out of the ball park. You will see a transformation in your mind, heart and spirit, a new you, no matter your age.

This New Year, start something new in your spirit, a spirit of thankfulness, of joy, of doing right and holding back those negative comments that come so quickly to our mouth.

Let everyone take notice of how you are slow to react, of how patient you have become, how blest you feel and how much people want to be around you. Let the music begin in your beautiful life, it is as always, a precious gift not to be taken for granted!

May all our readers experience a wonderful, healthy and happy New Year. May your presence be a gift to someone today.

HAPPENINGS AT THE SENIORS' CENTRE

SEMINAR, Wednesday, January 30 at 1 pm there will be a Seniors Safety Seminar entitled "Cyber Scams."

MEMBERSHIP FEES are now due. If you are a resident of Aurora the cost is $25 for the year and if you reside outside Aurora then you pay $35 for the year January 1 to December 31, 2019.

FRIDAY NIGHT DANCES. These will be held January 11 and January 25. The cost is $5 for Aurora Seniors Association members and $6 for non-members. Refreshments are included.

MONDAY MORNING POOL FOR LADIES. If you would like to learn to play pool, why not come out on Monday mornings each week from 9 am to 12 noon. Coaching is available and it is a fun time. You will meet like-minded women.

Homeless But Happy

(Part 5 in a Series)

Who are the homeless? We are this unique group; all citizens of our Town gathering to cope and silently share and discuss our strengths and weakness.

We are not the underground. We are not subhuman. We are not destroyers. We are above ground earth residents still striving to achieve our goals.

We are human beings, men and women who, for various reasons, ended up in turmoil. From job loss, plant closures, company bankruptcies catapulting our finances to default in mortgage payments, thus losing the walls of our very home environments.

Relationship breakdowns of catastrophic, tsunami, emotional levels.

The bereaved from deaths of loved ones. The results of war, from our veterans returning from duty suffering PTSD. The single parents falling on hardships. We are even the venerable from drug dependency or health challenges.

In this same group is the senior population that built this country and community who cannot survive on their pension allowance, and thus a few become the casualty of homelessness with many more fearing the same.

The beautiful-minded ones whose minds are tormented in mental illness are part of us, in our community. There are all social classes in this group of people. There are the highly educated people in this same group of homelessness. There is no segregation of ethnic backgrounds or religion. We are homeless, not irresponsible and this situation is a crisis. Just to live we became; the couch surfers with the great white sharks always following, the environmentalist with tents in the woods as survival of the fittest, the sidewalk sleepers of our city sidewalk installation art called "Homelessness".

Our group doesn't judge one another, we cannot judge, as outside judgement has already filed us. We have become street family when no one seemed to really care.

To be sad, depressed or even suicidal for some is now what I hear most from listening to others. I want them to be happy. I want them to love and smile.

"Well Mr. Potter is it too much to ask, to have them work and pay and live and die in a couple of decent rooms and a bath!"

I continue to write this series from my compassionate point of view to challenge your perspective of our real needs. Help us with jobs, help us fix our broken cars so we can get to any type of work. Help us with affordable living. This will make such a difference to one person living this, so that he will not want to debate jumping off a bridge like George Bailey in "It's a Wonderful Life."

Do I feel some of these same emotions, perhaps your wondering? I felt, of course, sad and lost while searching for my new beginnings. I surrender my self doubts to continue life. Who is to say I wasn't rescued already by guardian angels?

I keep trying.

How can you believe that a homeless person could be happy?

Well it's simple, all we have left is happiness in a hope for a better future. I know this will happen for me and for others.

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Have you used public transit (York Region Transit, GO) in the past 12 months?

Yes No

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!

Previous poll results

Should Aurora allow retail cannabis sales?

RESULTS TO DATE January 8, 2019	YES	NO	UNSURE
	12%	86%	1%

Women's Centre of York Region faces challenges in New Year

By Brock Weir

The Women's Centre of York Region ended 2018 with a new location and a new Executive Director and now, at the start of a New Year, they are going into 2019 prepared to tackle new challenges in an ever-changing community.

The community is growing, but funding is not, says Executive Director Liora Sobel. Funding is largely in a holding pattern, but shelters are operating well above capacity.

"We're trying to show to funders, especially large funders, how big our catchment area is, and also the need in our area," says Ms. Sobel. "They say a minimum of 25 per cent of women are experiencing violence; we have a population of over one million in York Region and over 250,000 women who are suffering right now and living in abusive situations within our Region. Some statistics go up to as much as 50 per cent of women experiencing violence – and we have just 30 shelter beds in the Region."

The Women's Centre of York Region (WCYR) has just three counsellors on site, focused on getting women leaving abusive situations, to the resources they need. Their aim is to increase rather than decrease services they provide, but that is an ongoing challenge given resources.

"Toronto has over 20 different organizations providing services; we have five violence against women (VAW) organizations in York Region, which is not nearly enough for what the demand is on services," she says, noting this and many other York Region organizations took a hit when the United Way merged throughout the GTA.

Prior to the merger, the United Way was the main funder for shelters in York Region. Now that funding goes to women's shelters administered by the YWCA, all of which are within the City of Toronto.

Last year, the Women's Centre of York Region served over 900 women and nearly 560 children.

Ms. Sobel took the helm of the organization in the second half of 2018, following Catherine Madden who left for another opportunity at Ronald McDonald House. Ms. Sobel says she was attracted to the job not only for the leadership opportunity but also the feminist philosophy at WCYR.

Coming into the job with 15 years working in the VAW field, she was also interested in the economic development potential that WCYR had, particularly when it comes to social enterprise for young women who have experienced violence.

Women's Centre of York Region Executive Director Liora Sobel, pictured above at their new Newmarket office, joined the Centre in 2018.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Ms. Sobel was inspired to get involved in the field from the own challenges she has had to overcome. She experienced these challenges, she says, from something of a "privileged position" having the education to overcome her oppressors; other women, she said, are "dealing with these same oppressors, but don't have the same advantages I had."

"I think that is what really drew me to the VAW sector and field was my own personal experiences and wanting to give back to the community," she says. "Knowing what it felt like to be oppressed and to be in abusive situations, knowing we can make that change, and that women often get stuck in these situations. A woman who doesn't have any background with any financial knowledge or empowerment of their own and isn't able to work or hasn't ever worked feel dependent upon that abusive situation and that is one thing we work to do here: empower them, to give them those skills and abilities so that they are able to leave those situations, and guiding them through that process.

"Not all women are so lucky as to be given those opportunities. A lot of them don't even know that that exists, especially if you're not going through a shelter system. That's what makes us unique as well: you can get all these transitional supports through a shelter system, but a woman has to intake into a shelter. Our shelters are over capacity at this point and not all women want to be in a shelter or need to be in a shelter, but still need to access the services. We can help you work through the system of leaving that abusive situation and into a safer situation, but we can help you do it without having to utilize the shelter system. We offer the same supports and services without the bed."

But those beds are very important in addressing community needs – and this isn't the only shortfall. While the WCYR served over 500 children last year, they do not currently have children's programs, nor do they have parenting programs. These are two areas Ms. Sobel hopes to develop while leading the organization, helping women through motherhood.

They currently offer counselling and group services for women focused on their own social and economic empowerment but parenting, she says, is a huge part of that.

"It's about what a woman brings back to her children, especially when leaving abusive or violent situations," she says. "How do you parent after abuse? How do you work with that child through what they have been through when you yourself is traumatized? If half our clientele has children, why aren't we offering those programs that support children with these services as well? I am hoping to empower women on that parenting journey.

"York Region is an affluent community, but we often don't see the suffering or the poverty of what exists in these communities because we see the affluence and we want the people in the community to know this does exist."

For more information on the Women's Centre of York Region, visit www.wcyr.ca.

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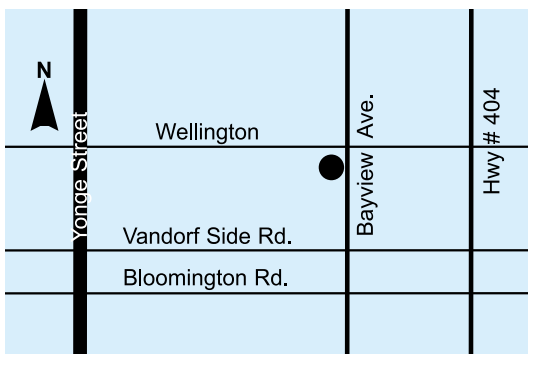

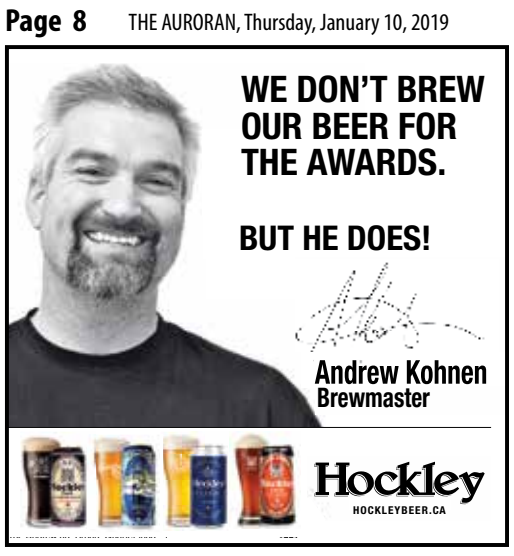

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Community Recognition: Foxglove Designs honoured for giving other businesses a helping hand

Foxglove Design owner Michelle Major accepted the Good Business Award from Councillor Michael Thompson at the 2018 Community Recognition Awards.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

By Brock Weir

As an entrepreneur Michelle Major knows the importance of receiving a helping hand along the way, and has tried to pay this forward through her business Foxglove Designs Inc.

Her efforts have not gone unrecognized and this past year she was honoured with the 2018 Good Business Award by the Town of Aurora.

The Good Business Award is presented to a business that has shown its commitment to corporate responsibility and community involvement through its ongoing support of charitable causes, events and programs – and Foxglove does all this and more through special luncheons, events and making its own space available for others.

"Foxglove Design has been an active community member who supports local small and home-based businesses by providing them with the use of their shop in the evenings and on weekends free of charge to help others promote their business," said Brian North, emcee of the 2018 Community Recognition Awards, reading Foxglove's citation.

"Michelle Major, the owner, lends out her shop three to four evenings and one to two times per weekend all year long. She will only ask that you leave the space the way you found it. Foxglove Design also sponsors weekly women's luncheons every Tuesday where she provides women with a hot lunch and a rich networking opportunity and asks that the women attending make a donation to Yellow Brick House.

"Foxglove Design is a thriving business but it also contributes to making the community thrive."

Ms. Major accepted the Good Business Award with gratitude.

"I am so grateful to have won the Good Business Award with the Town of Aurora and we do two things at this studio: we allow other business owners to use the studio evenings and weekends and we do not charge for this," she said. "It was important for me to allow other people to use the studio to grow their business. The other thing we do is a donation lunch every Tuesday at 12.30 with donations taken to Yellow Brick House. At this point we have donated close to $10,000 to Yellow Brick House."

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Motion aimed at protecting environment in future developments

From page3

and urban land. The builders understood where they could build and where they could not build, the municipalities created their official plans based on the existing policies. For the province to change all of that now and really have it be helter-skelter because some municipalities will make the necessary changes to have a 'business friendly' land development policy and others will not, so there is no consistency. Prior, there was order from the top down. Now you do what you want. That's not very orderly and I don't think that serves the citizens very well.

"For all that work and all these policies and practices to be put out of place by this one Bill is unfortunate and I think we owe it to our residents and we owe it to ourselves to put this motion forward."

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Being called a "traitor" was the hardest part of floor crossing: Alleslev

By Brock Weir

As a former member of the Canadian Armed Forces, being called a "traitor" after crossing the floor was the toughest part of a tough decision, says Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leona Alleslev.

Ms. Alleslev, who was elected as a Liberal Member of Parliament in Aurora's southern riding began this new year, an election year, as a member of a new party after crossing the floor to the Conservatives on September 17.

Looking back, Ms. Alleslev says 2018 was a year of "big decision" but her big decision is one she looks back on with a smile because now she feels she is able to do what her constituents asked of her – and that is "influence the future shape and direction" of the country.

"I think the country is in one of those points in history where we're facing some big challenges and I didn't feel that we were able to have an open conversation about those big challenges," Ms. Alleslev tells The Auroran. "Now, I am in a position to have those candid conversations with my constituents. When they say, 'These are big problems and you're not doing anything,' I can now say, 'Yes, I agree these are the big problems and I am working with the new team to shape how we can address those and what that needs to look like in terms of solutions, whether it is having a conversation in Question Period or at Committee to hold the government to account in terms of shaping as best we can where we are going, or whether that is shaping what a Conservative government would do, were they to win the next election."

Among those top priority issues, she says, are the economy, increasing competitiveness, and making sure businesses can get their goods to market, whether it is through pipelines, airports and seaports. Defence and security, she says, are also critical going forward, and this includes cybersecurity.

After making her bombshell announcement on September 17, many of Aurora constituents wondered, along with Canadians from further afield, what exactly changed. It was less than two months after Ms. Alleslev welcomed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to the riding at a party fundraiser during which she heaped praise on the Liberal leader.

That very question of "what changed" is something she says is still "very difficult" to answer.

"I ran because I felt a sense of urgency and I campaigned on those issues because I felt a sense of urgency," she says. "I did everything I could as a Liberal to influence and communicate and advocate from within that sense of urgency. I tried all of my plans and felt that I wasn't making enough progress as quickly as I felt that progress needed to be made. At some point, I looked at it and said, 'I only have a year left and I may or may not get re-elected. That's okay, that's the wonderful thing about our democratic process, but if I don't get elected, can I look in the mirror and know I did everything I possibly could while I was here?' Once that answer was 'no' I had no choice but to do something so I could do the best with the year I had left."

"There was no one point," she adds, about what made her come to that realisation, but pressed further, the former Air Force officer says, "purchasing used F18s" set off alarm bells.

"It was like a cumulation with my project plan. I felt like I was running out of time and therefore at the beginning of that last session, [I felt] I really don't have any other choice. If I am going to serve my constituents and my country the way I said I was going to, and true to what they told me and what I believe needs to be done, I am running out of time and I better do something with this last year."

The most difficult part of making that decision, she says, was leaving a team – both at the national level and at the local riding level. It wasn't about people, she says, and

Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leona Alleslev is pictured at the Aurora Soccer Club with her office team: Anna Milani, Melanie Anderson and Elisa Damiano.
Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

she would still like to consider the people on the other side of the floor "great friends."

"I accepted the possibility that I would have no friends or relationships on the old side and that I wouldn't necessarily gain any on the new side because politics, for many, is a team sport and loyalty is to a

Continued on page 23

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Artists hope new exhibition will inspire and trigger memories

From page 1

quick sketch of a favourite dish could open the floodgates to smells and tastes that stuck with you – and stuck to your ribs – for decades.

For Linda Welch, President of the Society of York Region Artists (SOYRA), it is a dark and mysterious photograph of a weather-beaten rock off the coast of Newfoundland that stirs the soul and is one of her contributions to "From Memory" a juried exhibition of works from SOYRA members now on at the Aurora Cultural Centre through January 26.

This year, the Aurora Cultural Centre invited all SOYRA members to participate in an inaugural juried exhibition built around a theme: memory.

"Our memories are a collection of stored information, sensations and feelings, created from communal stories and fleeting memories," says curator Stephanie Nicolo. "They nurture our traditions, inform daily functions and provide context for our lives. Memories establish where we've been, who we are, and guide us to who we may become."

Ms. Welch's photograph does exactly that.

"I lost a friend and I made a card of that image for his wife," Ms. Welch explains. "Other than it being a nice picture with a lovely colour, it meant nothing, but it was the story I put inside. The rock is very ancient. It was unique and unlike anything else on that beach in colour or pattern; the tides come in and out every twelve hours, there are storms, it tumbles and tumbles, there's wear and tear, but the rock stays. It doesn't wear away. I felt that spoke to her husband and how he was unique yet survived. He was caught up in a world with lots of wearing and tearing on him, yet his memory will survive."

Building an exhibition around a specific theme is something relatively new for SOYRA. They built their 2017 exhibition around the broad theme of "Canada" to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation. The idea of "memory" was a "thought-provoking" concept for members, says Ms. Welch, one that allowed SOYRA to "add another layer to their professional shows because it challenged members with a singular focus. But, for some, that challenge proved more than, well, challenging.

"Not all members chose to be part of this inaugural exhibition because some just couldn't grasp the concept, but others thought it through and finally said, 'I'm getting some ideas," says Ms. Welch, noting that each participant had to not only submit a work, but also complete a statement to go with each piece explaining their work, rather than a simple artists' statement.

"The subject matter has turned out to be incredibly varied, so it will be the story that goes along with the image. Our artists could paint, take photographs and do all the production steps, but for some of them, it was really tricky to put into words what made that such a special memory. We worked with our members on both production and their memories."

"From Memory" has been in the works since last March, adds Ms. Nicolo.

"Once the curatorial statement was finessed about what From Memory is about, the steps of how to jury came forward," says Ms. Nicolo. "That was provided to the organization through the executive committee and anyone who had joined SOYRA were eligible to submit. What was asked for submissions were two images, two different pieces of work, any medium. There is consideration of what the artist is saying with their statement. It is a little bit different than the artists' statement because it is about the work specifically and how it reflects upon the theme of From Memory. Those pieces are all in consideration when it comes to the jury process."

To underscore this concept, she points to the vivid wall in the Red Gallery which bears a painting of a simple strawberry shortcake and another of a cook comfortably placed in a kitchen, each of which has the potential to spark deep sensory memories. Elsewhere, there will be a wall looking at the memories of loss, and memories that evoke joy, friendship and growth.

"I hope there is at least one picture in the exhibition that, for visitors, will speak to a memory of their own and that will create a response," says Ms. Nicolo. "That is really what I, as a curator, always try to aim for, that there is some sort of response from the audience, that it creates something new for them, and that could be a memory. For this particular exhibition, it will be interesting to see what other memories come forward. Does the strawberry shortcake painting bring people into the smells and the joys of maybe a July 1 barbeque? Does it bring sad memories because somebody in their family was the only one who created the best strawberry shortcake and nobody could repeat it? Each painting and each photo and piece in this show I hope at least connects with somebody and brings forward something really special for them."

From Memory, on now, officially launches this Saturday, January 12, with an Opening Reception at the Centre (22 Church Street) from 1 – 4 p.m. Remarks and awards will be presented around 1.45 p.m. Free admission and light refreshments will be offered. All are welcome. For more, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca/events/frommemory.

Imagine the Possibilities – pen in hand – at the Library

Aurora Public Library's Jodi Marr is pictured in front of the wall which has inspired Library patrons to get creative.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

By Brock Weir

Why do you go to the library?

Is it to pick up the latest work by your favourite author and explore the new adventure on every page between its covers? Do you pull up to grab an audio book for the commute? Maybe you come in to use the computers to stay in touch with family and friends around the world, or to bring your ideas to life through burgeoning maker-spaces.

Now, as the Aurora Public Library continues its renovations into the first quarter of 2019, they are inviting you to Imagine the Possibilities of things to come by leaving your mark on a temporary wall at their main entrance.

If you have been into the Aurora Public Library (APL) since the early days of December, you've noticed the stark white wall jazzed up with colourful dialogue and thought bubbles just waiting to be filled in. If you're a frequent flyer at APL, you've seen these spots get filled in pretty quickly with quotes, doodles and inspiring messages.

But there's still room to fill in, and more possibilities to be imagined, says Jodi Marr, Manager, Customer Opportunity, at APL.

"We wanted to give people a spot to express themselves in a more controlled way, hopefully!" says Ms. Marr with a laugh. "Any big white wall is going to attract some friendly fire."

The title of this community effort, "Imagine the Possibilities" came from a suggestion made by fellow APL staffer Michelle, selected as it tied in nicely with their renovation mantra that "great change is coming."

"The response has been really great so far," says Ms. Marr. "The bottom has been totally taken over by small children during story time. There have also been a lot of parents engaged as well. There were a few who even wrote on it before it was ready to go who said they loved the idea and couldn't wait for us to finish painting. We had to paint around those comments! We love that there are six or seven different languages on our wall, some Arabic, some Chinese, Malaysian and French."

Particular inscriptions Ms. Marr says she finds especially interesting are those giving a shout-out to Library staff – often noting story times performed by Polly and Jackie – and those that really heed the idea of limitless possibilities, including "Wherever knowledge is, that's the place to be."

"There is room for this wall to grow," she says. "The whole point of the wall is for people to continue to add to it. While the bubbles are already filled, there is lots of white space in between and people can continue to just go and go. It might get a little messy looking, but we're okay with that! Anyone can just grab the marker and write little messages as they go by. So far, everyone has been very rule-following and no one has really taken it upon themselves to draw anything inappropriate.

"We love to hear more about where our customers and our community feel like the Library could take them, or where we have taken them and help them out. If anyone wants to come in and share or express where they have been or how the Library has really impacted them, that would be fantastic. The wall is going to be up until the end of February, which is what our timeline is looking like for the renovations. Because of all the great feedback, I can totally see us doing something similar in the future. We will have to see where and how that will play out. Having this community-led feedback is what is a huge part of our strategic plan and it is exactly what we want to start to gather more of."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From page 4

the perfect time to suggest forming a Relay team and organizing fundraising activities."

By taking part in Relay, you help fund ground-breaking research as well as essential support services for people living with cancer and their families.

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On behalf of my family, I wish you a healthy, happy and prosperous 2019.
Happy New Year to you and yours!

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Committee will look at pros and cons of ward system

By Brock Weir

Aurora's Governance Review Committee will look at the pros and cons of adopting a ward system over the next four years, according to terms of reference approved by Council.

Council, at its first formal meeting of the 2018-2022 term, formally approved the re-establishment of several citizen-led advisory committees which will provide review and input on many issues facing this community, providing further information to elected representatives during the decision-making process.

In addition to committees mandated by the Province – the Aurora Public Library Board, the Committee of Adjustment and the Accessibility Committee – Council approved the establishment of the Heritage Advisory Committee, Finance Advisory Committee, the Community Recognition Review Advisory Committee, the Governance Ad-Hoc Committee, and the Community Advisory Committee, the latter of which amalgamates three committees operating in the previous term of Council: the Parks, Recreation & Culture, Environmental, and Trails & Active Transportation Committees.

In addition to Council members seeking re-assurances that the Governance Ad-Hoc Committee would offer recommendations on how to implement a ward system, both for and against, the composition of this amalgamated committee garnered significant chatter at the previous week's General Committee Meeting.

As some Council members expressed concern that combining three committees into one five-member body would limit public participation, Councillor Michael Thompson moved a change the following week that this Committee be expanded to up to nine members. This was endorsed by Council.

Councillors, in particular Councillor Wendy Gaertner, also pressed for further changes in how the committee minutes are taken, calling on the Clerk's Office to note for the record questions posed by committee members to staff and their responses.

While Clerk Michael De Rond said the Municipal Act did not allow minutes to be taken "with comment," Councillor Gaertner argued this was another matter altogether.

"It is in the provisions of the Municipal Act that it is the intent that the Clerk record the minutes without any comment, but in this case it is not the Clerk that is making comment, it is staff that is making a comment in response to a committee member's question and the reason why that is important is those questions and answers could be information that…could be a benefit to Council," she said. "When the minutes come forward, I think it would just add clarification for Council and residents. I don't see why it can't be changed."

This was, said Mr. De Rond, something that could be considered going forward.

"Under the Municipal Act, we will try to provide more of these answers as best we can without breaking [how] we see the provisions of the Act," he said. "Maybe I can meet with [Councillor Gaertner] in three or four months to see if [she] is satisfied with how the minutes are. It is the intent that members don't get to interject their own comments; the minutes are meant to capture committee and Council decisions and not much else."

This was a step in the right direction, she agreed.

"I don't think that reporting the minutes those ways is going to break the requirement that the Clerk doesn't make his or her own personal comment," she said. "Let's see how it works out because I guess it could be up to the Chair of each committee to provide a companion to the minutes to say this is what happened. I think it is important that Council have that information."

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS TO DATE:

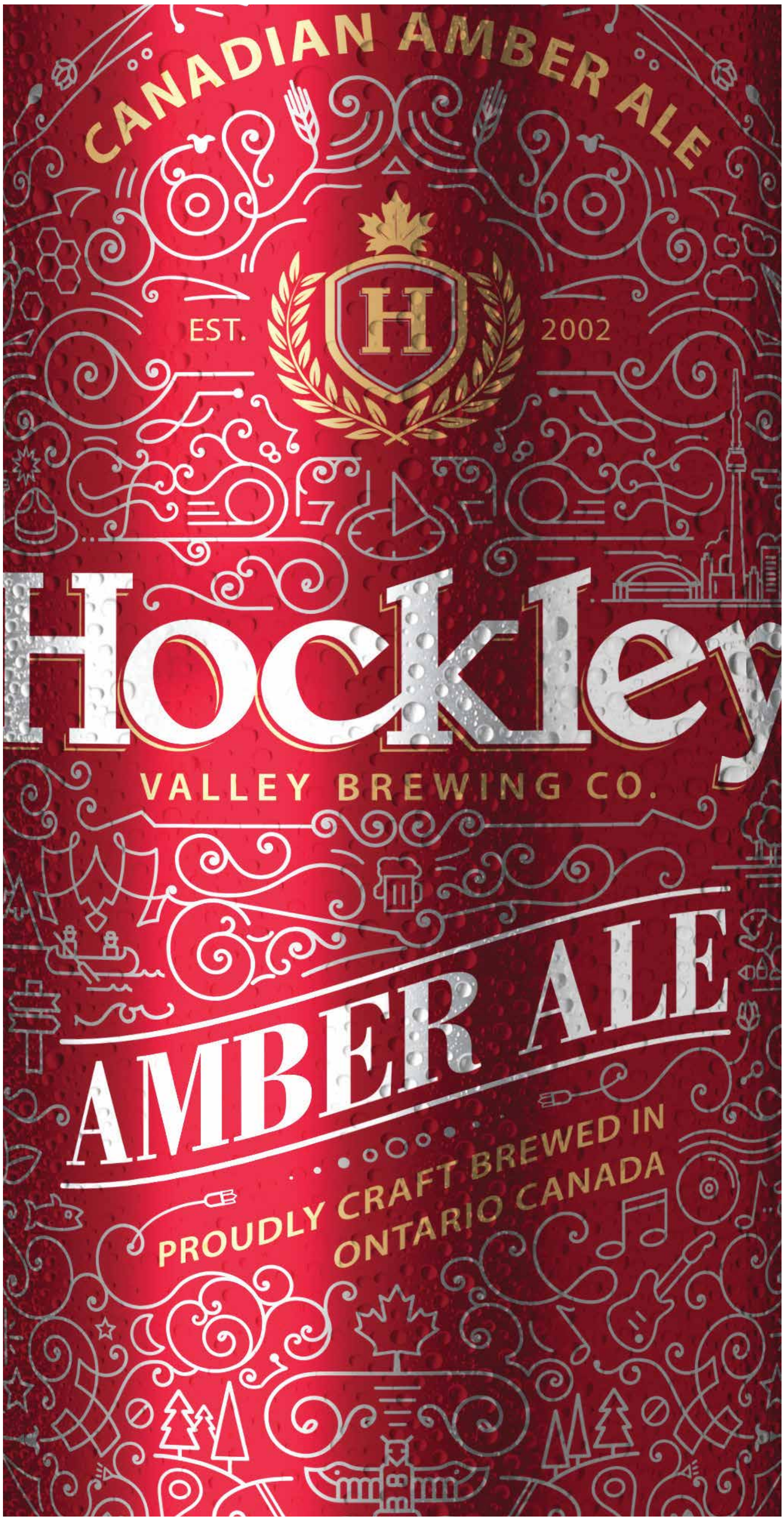
Aurora Public Library Board: John Clement, Tom Connor, Adam Mobbs, Marie Rankel, Ken Turriff, Councillor Sandra Humfryes and Councillor Harold Kim

Committee of Adjustment, Property Standards Committee, Aurora Appeal Tribunal: Michele Boyer, Steve D'Angeli, Daniel Lajeunesse, Clarence Lui, and Tom Plamondon

Accessibility Advisory Committee: Matthew Abas, Gordon Barnes, Max Le Moine, John Lenchak, Hailey Reiss, Jo-anne Spitzer, Councillor Rachel Gilliland

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Board: Councillor Wendy Gaertner, representing the Town of Aurora

Joint Council Committee (A committee of Aurora and Newmarket Councillors overseeing Central York Fire Services): Mayor Tom Mrakas, Councillor John Gallo, Councillor Rachel Gilliland



Councillors say they've received mixed feedback on retail cannabis

From page 1

forward to hearing more from the public to understand their concerns, issues and/or support."

Councillor Sandra Humfryes is also looking forward to getting more information from both York Regional Police in the days ahead, as well as from the public in the lead-up to – and at – the January 21 meeting.

Over the course of the 2018 Municipal Election campaign, Councillor Humfryes said the vast majority of the people she spoke at the door were in favour of opting out but, over the last few weeks, the tide has started to turn.

"The majority of people were asking to opt out, but that was back in October and November and there have been some developments," says Councillor Humfryes. "There is the argument that we have liquor stores and you can go and buy cigarettes and alcohol and I am seeing a different viewpoint in the last few weeks with people saying, 'If we can go to neighbouring municipalities or Toronto and still get it, why can't we get it here at home? It is legal, so why should we opt out?'"

The "problem" with cannabis, she says, is that people still have the idea that people use it simply to get high but, she says, people are increasingly using it for different reasons, whether it is "for pain, for ways of functioning or focusing."

"It is totally different and I feel people need it and we should support that use for them," she adds. "I worry a little bit for the youth and they have to get the right view of what it is for."

In the lead-up to the January 21 meeting, Councillor Humfryes says she is looking forward to receiving more input from the public, seeing the results of public surveys the Town has been conducting and getting a feel for the majority.

"I will go that route, however there is still a part of me that doesn't think we're ready for it in our Town just yet," she concedes, "but I don't want to have some missed opportunities with tax benefits and opportunities for small businesses to take advantage of this."

What has been missing from the dialogue, she adds, is information from the upper levels of government on just how the retail environment will be "managed" while municipalities "are just reaping the benefits, or not."

"The public needs to have more information on how these retail stores will be regulated with health inspections and everything else," she says. "It will be a very regulated environment. There is a lot more to be done before January 21 and then we will be in a better position to see where Aurora wants to be. We need to hear more, listen more, hear what the residents have to say and make a final decision."

Also on the fence is Councillor Wendy Gaertner.

Although she says she's received just a few emails on the subject, on top of one in-person conversation and one voice mail, the comments she's heard so far on retail cannabis have been mixed.

"I have to do what the residents want," she says. "I think there are more people who don't want it, but I've had about seven emails, one voicemail and one [conversation] in person, so it has been very hard to judge [so far]. I think, and rightly so, that there have been a lot of emotional responses, but I am looking for facts and I am looking for information that will point me to something that is right for the community or wrong for the community. So far, I don't have, that and you have to do what the community wants."

The Special Council Meeting on whether to opt in or opt out of retail cannabis sales will take place in Council Chambers on Monday, January 21, at 7 p.m. The meeting is open to the public."

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RN

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Tigers drop two in a row to start New Year

Aurora forward Markus Paterson scored his seventh goal of the season in the Tigers' 3 - 2 loss to the St. Michael's Buzzers on Friday.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

By Jake Courtepatte

The year of 2019 has not been kind to the Junior A Aurora Tigers as of yet, who lost a pair of games in the opening weekend of January to tie their season-high losing streak of three games.

Visiting the St. Michael's Majors for the first time this season after a thirteen-day break in the Ontario Junior Hockey League schedule, the Tigers met a Majors squad heading the other way with wins in three of their last four.

The rust showed early for the Tigers and goaltender Lucas Durante, who allowed a pair of St. Mike's goals before the five-minute mark of the first period.

Markus Paterson stopped the bleeding with his seventh of the year before the end of the first period, while Durante came into form in the second stopping all ten shots he faced to take a 2 – 1 score into the final frame.

Both sides had the offense clicking with 26 shots combined in the third period, though it was the Majors that capitalized with under seven minutes to go to take a 3 – 1 lead.

Cameron Neaylon scored for the Tigers with three seconds remaining on the clock for a final score of 3 – 2 for St. Mike's.

Returning to the ice Sunday for a divisional matchup with the Pickering Panthers, the Panthers picked up where they left off, taking their third of four meetings with Aurora this year with a 4 – 2 win.

Neaylon found the board for the second straight game, while Mauro Biasutto added a powerplay marker for the Tigers.

Despite dropping his third straight decision as the Tigers' backup netminder, Christian Filippetti was stellar between the pipes in stopping 32 of the 35 shots he faced.

With only three wins in the month of December, and a record of 3 – 8 since Nov. 30, a blazing-fast start to the OJHL season has slowed enough to allow the Tigers North division rivals to climb back into the race for the top spot.

The hot Markham Royals (18-13-2-4) are just two points back of the Tigers (21-15-2-0) with a game in hand, while the Newmarket Hurricanes (17-14-2-5) sit just three back of the division leaders.

Aurora hosts the Royals in a key matchup Saturday at the Aurora Community Centre, the start of a three-game home stand, looking to improve upon a home record that has dropped near the .500 level as of late.

Puck drop is set for 7:30 p.m.

Before then, the Tigers will face their toughest matchup with the season on the road Friday, visiting the Conference-leading Oakville Blades (31-4-1-2) at the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com.

Former Express, Saint earns high draft praise after bronze win

By Jake Courtepatte

Alex Newhook has come a long way since his time on the rock.

The seventeen-year old centre has seen his name rise to the top of the 2019 NHL Entry Draft rankings over the past two seasons, now with the BCHL's Victoria Grizzlies after a three-year stint between the York-Simcoe Express minor program and the St. Andrew's Saints varsity hockey team.

Earning a bronze medal with Team Canada West at December's World Junior A Challenge in Alberta certainly helped: he posted four assists in the tournament for the red and white, who defeated Czech Republic 3 – 1 in the bronze medal match.

Alex Newhook, pictured with the OJHL's Aurora Tigers, earned a bronze medal for Team Canada West at the World Junior A Challenge in December.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

It was a step in proving he was heading in the right direction, after being a late cut to the Under-18 team just a few months prior.

"Going into a camp like that, all that's really on your mind is making that team," said Newhook. "If you don't do that, it's motivation. Proving them wrong is something anyone wants to do when they don't make a team. So, for me, keeping it in the back of my head at all times as motivation is what I had to do."

After putting up close to two points a game in his hometown St. John's, Newfoundland AAA program at the age of fourteen, Newhook moved to Ontario and got his feet wet in skating with the Saints program, before leading the Express Minor Midget AAA team in scoring in 2016-17 with a whopping 74 points in 33 games.

"Playing at home and going up through the ranks there was great, and I loved it," he says, "but for me, at that time, I just needed better competition and more exposure, and going to Ontario was a good fit for me."

Skating in one game with the Aurora Tigers as well that season, something quite rare for a player just turned sixteen, Newhook made the decision to head west to the Grizzlies program.

"I was looking at options to stay in Canada, and the B.C. Hockey League is obviously a great option," said Newhook. "It's looked at as probably the best Junior A league in Canada and maybe North America, so, to go out there and be in Victoria, it's a great city and a great organization. It's great to be there, and I'm happy with my decision."

It is precisely these efforts that has risen his prospective ranking to an 'A' by NHL Central Scouting.

"In your draft year, you're going to have eyes on you no matter where you are or no matter what's going on," he said. "Trying to get better every day, every week and not really worry about what other people think or what other people are seeing – that's what I'm focusing on."

He said seeing his name among those at the top of the ranks is "pretty special."

"To stay amongst those guys and stay atop of that class is definitely motivational, but it's something you can't really worry about too much at this point."

He is already committed to play NCAA hockey with the prestigious Boston University program next season, a commitment he made at the young age of fifteen.

Community Recognition: Shirley Cook honoured for being a good neighbour with a bright "Howdy Do"

Shirley Cook accepted the Good Neighbour Award from then-Councillor Jeff Thom at the 2018 Community Recognition Awards.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

By Brock Weir

Making the move into an assisted living facility can be a daunting prospect not only for the individual having to settle into a new environment, but also for the people who love them.

This was something recognized by Shirley Cook when she moved into Chartwell Aurora and, as a resident, she has made it her mission to help make for a more warm, welcoming environment.

Ms. Cook's efforts were rewarded when she received the 2018 Good Neighbour Award from the Town of Aurora.

The Good Neighbour Award was inspired by Frank Camenzuli and is presented to "someone who embodies what it means to be a good neighbour. This award recognizes and celebrates the simple acts of kindness and compassion that help create connected and vibrant neighbourhoods."

Ms. Cook has done her best to create that connected and vibrant neighbourhood at Chartwell, being part of the "Howdy Do Crew" that greets new residents and their families "so they don't feel overwhelmed and alone in a very large transition of their lives."

"Shirley Cook has been a resident of Chartwell Aurora LTC Residence since 2009 and has been actively volunteering within the home ever since," said event emcee Brian North reading Ms. Cook's citation. "Shirley graciously meets others wherever she may be and always puts others first. She has a smile that lights up a room and once you get to know her you will see the mischievous sparkle in her eye that shows she doesn't miss a thing. She is one of those people who is a carrier for contagious happiness – in other words, she [has a way] of making you feel like you're worth a billion bucks and having you pass it on to the next person.

"Shirley is also part of the Howdy Do Crew which greets new residents and their families so they don't feel so overwhelmed and alone during this transition in their lives. Although Chartwell Aurora is a cozy home, it is also a large home and can feel daunting until one gets to know their way around. Shirley makes sure they receive a brochure and a follow-up visit, if they wish, to provide a friendly face. Shirley's world may be limited to the community limits of Chartwell Aurora, but her heart touches so many residents since moving there."

Ms. Cook accepted the award with thanks and modesty.

"When I first came into Chartwell, I always wanted something to do," she said. "They realised that they could talk to us and we suggested we [might meet] the people coming in who are very nervous about leaving their homes, which is a hard thing to do. We thought, maybe if we had a club or someone who could walk around and introduce them to staff and a few things about where we live.

"I am certainly very glad and surprised to get the award. I do appreciate the people that I work with and I see all the time. They are great people. I would like to thank everyone for my award. They say, 'Oh, you deserve it, Shirley.' I don't think so, but that's fine! I am very proud."

A 100K WIN – Aurora's Tom Plamondon took home a **$100,000 win** by playing Encore in the December 28 Lotto Max Draw. His ticket, purchased at a Yonge Street Shopper's Drug Mart, matched six of the seven Encore numbers in exact order.

Photo courtesy of OLG

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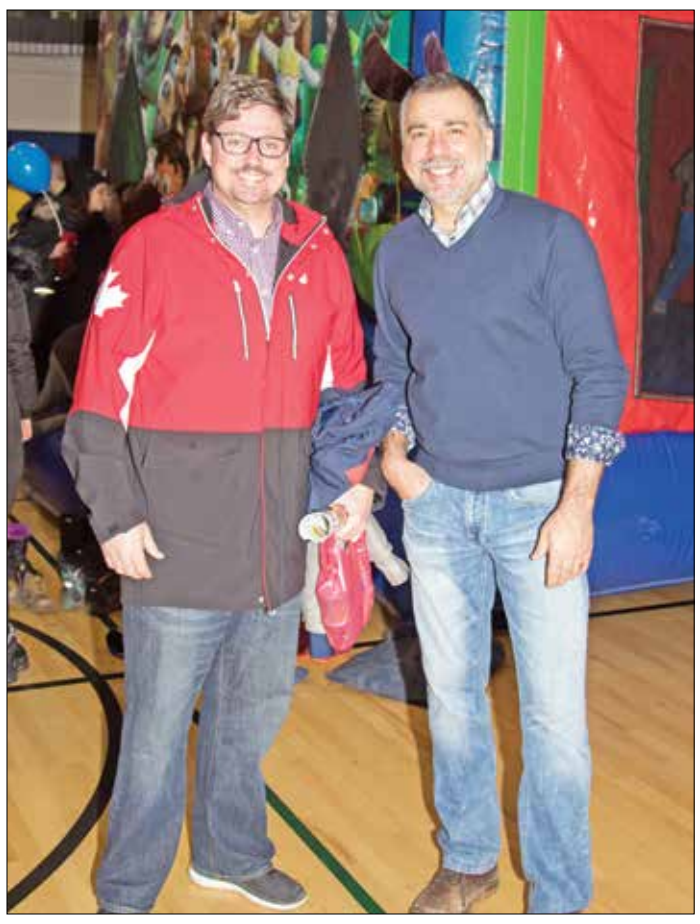

Aurora families said goodbye to 2018 and welcomed 2019 at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex at Family First Night. Hosted by the Town of Aurora on December 31, the annual tradition is a way for families and neighbours to gather in celebration. Attended by Newmarket-Aurora MP Kyle Peterson, Mayor Tom Mrakas, Councillor Rachel Gilliland and a host of other dignitaries, the halls of the complex were bustling with activities for the whole family, including face painting, reptile and magic shows, photo ops, a free family skate, tabletop games in The Loft, and a chance to scale the rock climbing wall.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

Saints set to host prestigious tournaments

The St. Andrew's varsity B Saints battle Pennsylvania's Kiski School in the 2018 Gary West Tournament at La Brier Arena in this file photo.

By Jake Courtepatte

It's the most wonderful time of the year for the St. Andrew's Saints.

The athletics program announced Monday the schedule and lineups for the annual Gary West Hockey Tournament on Jan. 18 – 20, the precursor for the prestigious MacPherson Tournament, a packed-house affair the following weekend that has been the pride of St. Andrew's College since 1984.

"The MacPherson Tournament is a great opportunity for fans to witness some of the most talented players from around the world in high school hockey," said Headmaster Kevin McHenry. "Many of these young athletes will go on to play at the university, junior, or professional levels. It's also a weekend for players to go up against top-quality opponents in an arena that values sportsman-like conduct and respect for others."

Runners-up in two of the past three seasons in the MacPherson, the varsity A squad will be looking to capture gold on home ice from Jan. 25 – 27 for the first time since 2014.

The varsity B Saints will also be looking to exact some vengeance in front of their home crowd at the Gary West, after being knocked out of the semifinals in 2018 by Vaughan's Everest Academy. St. Andrew's tome home bronze in an overtime win over CISAA rival Upper Canada College.

This year's rosters will feature three American schools, two from Ohio and one from Pennsylvania, as well as Everest, King City Secondary, Upper Canada College, and St. Charles College of Sudbury.

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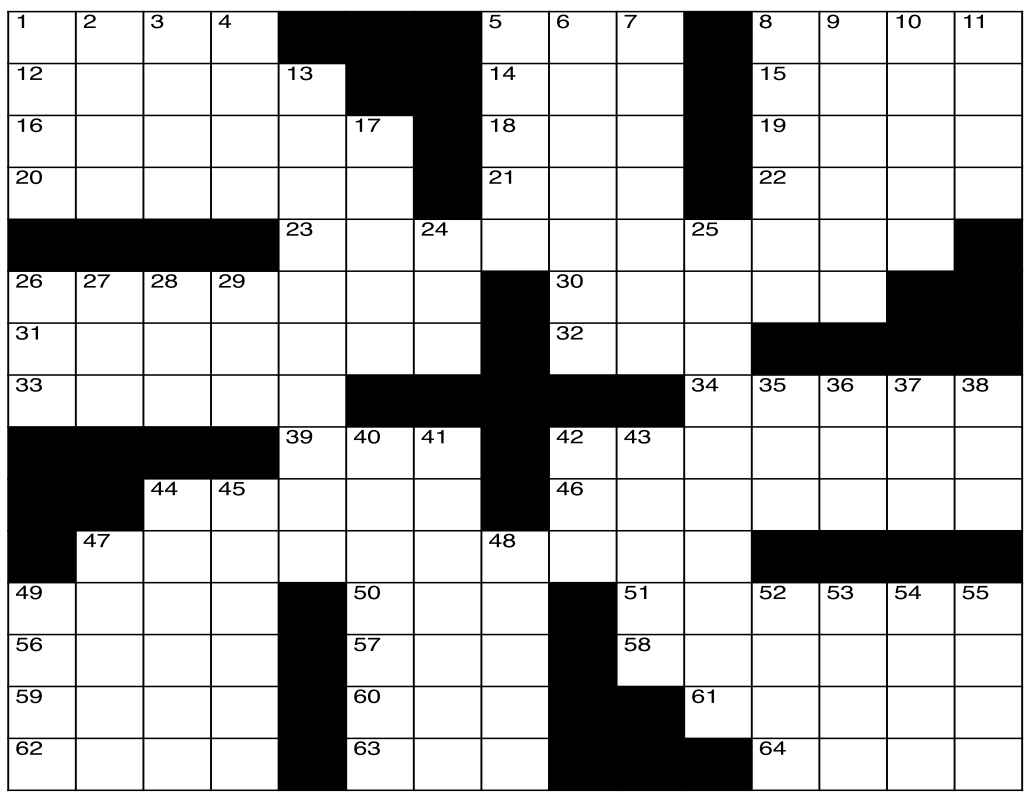

CLUES ACROSS

1. Homestead
5. More (Spanish)
8. Type of notification
12. Approves
14. Mandela's party
15. "Mom" actress Faris
16. Predatory insects
18. Where honey goes
19. Canadian flyers
20. Of an earlier time
21. Indigenous people of Australia
22. Organize
23. All over
26. Made it through
30. Between-meals food
31. A quantity upon which an operation is performed
32. German mythological god
33. "Heavy" type of rock music
34. Pharmacy chain Duane __
39. First responders
42. Mysterious
44. Leisurely stroll
46. Most naughty
47. Plant tissue
49. Small fish
50. Men's fashion accessory
51. Distant planet
56. Destroy
57. Location in Norse mythology
58. One who is deliberately cruel
59. __ Romeo, car
60. Of the ear
61. Former name of Tokyo
62. Male children
63. French/Belgian river
64. Tide

CLUES DOWN

1. Grave
2. Alright
3. Sharp tooth
4. Bird genus
5. Important
6. One who studies carefully
7. Not very big
8. Astronomy unit
9. A way to open up
10. Trap
11. Handle of a knife
13. Indicates one from a part of W. Africa
17. Lucky number
24. Doctor of Education
25. Legendary Cubs broadcaster
26. Female parent
27. Mimic
28. Connects to the rim
29. Small constellation
35. Indicates near
36. Consumed
37. Criticize
38. Shock therapy
40. Type of cigarette
41. The fashionable elite
42. Shed tears
43. Arm or branch of a bone
44. Quell anger
45. Where rock and rollers play
47. "The Alchemist" author Coelho
48. Choppers
49. Lacks brightness
52. Port in Yemen
53. Brood of pheasant
54. Approves food
55. A type of sign

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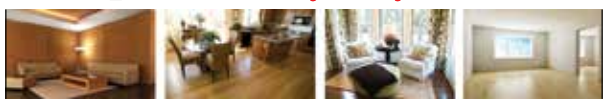

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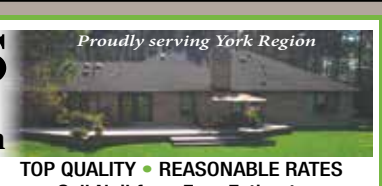

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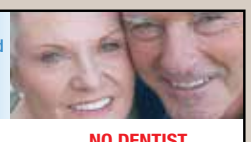

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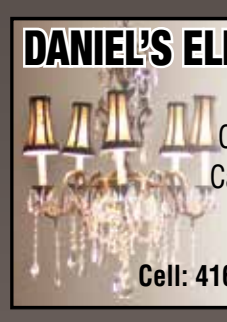

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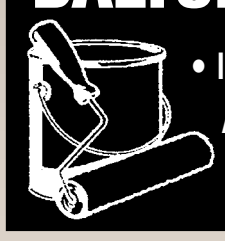

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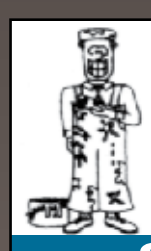

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Community Recognition: Rob Johnson honoured for helping victims

By Brock Weir

Rob Johnson accepted the Community Safety Award by then-Councillor Jeff Thom at the 2018 Community Recognition Awards.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Accident scenes can be cleaned up, some of the damage left by fire can be repaired, and physical wounds often heal. But those involved in the accident, fire, or incident that led to physical injury can have emotional and psychological wounds that stick with them for the rest of their lives.

It is in these situations that Victim Services of York Region springs into action, and among those answering the call is Aurora's Rob Johnson.

Mr. Johnson, a long-time volunteer with Victim Services of York Region, was awarded the 2018 Community Safety Award by the Town of Aurora, an honour presented to an individual "dedicated to the development, promotion or support of initiatives that improve community safety."

"This award recognizes that safer communities only happen when individuals take action to make a difference," said event emcee Brian North, reading Mr. Johnson's citation. "This year, we are recognizing Rob Johnson for his outstanding leadership, long-time volunteer commitment and his efforts in raising awareness about issues of safety in our community.

"Rob has been involved with Victim Services of York Region and is currently a Victim Response leader of volunteers. Rob has been trained to emotional support and practical assistance to the clients of Victim Services of York Region who have been victimized by crime or have experienced trauma in the immediate aftermath of an incident. Rob is someone who is consistently reliable for shifts, regularly attends volunteer meetings and is a leader among his peers as a mentor. Rob continually exceeds all expectations and always goes above and beyond in his role."

Mr. Johnson has been involved with the organization since 2016, beginning his work as a photographer and videographer for police events before moving on to becoming a Victim Response Volunteer. In accepting the honour, Mr. Johnson said it was all about giving back to the community.

"For me, community is as good as what you put back into it, really, and there are so many opportunities within York Region to give back to your community through things like Victim Services," he said. "We'll deal with people at their absolute worst and it is our opportunity to be our absolute best. It is a great opportunity for us to give back to our community and make a difference in someone's life. Even if it is just touching one person's life and improving them and helping them see the light and get through a difficult situation, it is all very worthwhile. I enjoy giving back to the community through volunteerism."

Alleslev crossed floor in September

From page 9

political party first and not necessarily ideas and the country first," she says. "The most rewarding thing was how overwhelmingly welcomed I was by the Conservative party and the Conservative team and right away they wanted my ideas and they wanted me to be a part of shaping the vision of the country and that has been very rewarding. And, of course, to have my entire team come with me, which was the other incredibly rewarding thing.

"The [fact my]whole team came with me didn't surprise me because I am not sure I would have made the decision I made if I didn't have my whole team with me. I can only do what I do because I have an incredible team. If they didn't think it was the right decision it probably wouldn't have been the right decision and I wouldn't have made the decision I made. Because all of them believed it was the right decision and came with me, I knew it was what I had to do and we did it together."

Next Week: The checklist for which Ms. Alleslev says she was running out of time to finish.

THINGS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10

Amnesty International Aurora-Newmarket Group holds their monthly meeting tonight from 7 – 8.30 p.m. to discuss current human rights issues and write appeal letters. Held at Trinity Anglican Church (in The Rectory building behind the church), 79 Victoria St., Aurora – all welcome! Free. For more information, contact Renee at 905-713-6713 or visit amnestyaurora.wordpress.com.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17

Canadian Blood Services will host a blood donor clinic today from 2.30 p.m. – 7.30 p.m. at the Aurora Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North). Start the New Year off right and make a difference in the life of a hospital patient in need of blood. Donate today!

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20

PARTAGEZ LE FRANCAIS – A free French language conversation group will take place this afternoon at Country Style Deli/Bistro, 14980 Yonge Street, from 3 – 4.30 p.m. This free group welcomes adults (from francophone 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. For more information, visit bit.ly/partagez-fr.

MONDAY, JANUARY 21

Canadian Blood Services will host a blood donor clinic today from 2.30 p.m. – 7.30 p.m. at the Aurora Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North). Start the New Year off right and make a difference in the life of a hospital patient in need of blood. Donate today!

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22

The CFUW (Canadian Federation of University Women) Aurora/Newmarket will hold their monthly meeting today at 1 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North, Aurora). CFUW Aurora/Newmarket is a women's organization engaged in empowering women's lives through friendship, education, outreach and advocacy. All women in York Region are welcome at our January monthly meeting. Featuring speaker, Alex Andras on the topic: "Transitions: The Experience of Being Transgendered". Alex Andras is an educator, motivational speaker, musician and LGBTQ rights activist. Alex is currently making his way towards a PhD in Social Work, sharing his story and moving rooms of people as he speaks about the discrimination and difficulties he has faced as a transgender man growing up in a society that didn't acknowledge him. For more information, visit www.cfuwauroranewmarket.com/Upcoming-Events.html.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce will hold an After 5 Business Social today at Air Riderz Trampoline Park (250 Don Hillock Drive, Unit 1) from 5.30 – 7.30 p.m. A casual evening of networking. If you plan to jump into this event, please dress appropriately. Registration closes January 22. For more information, call the Chamber at 905-727-7262.

* * * *

CHATS (Community & Home Assistance to Seniors) invites you to join them for an encore presentation of last year's sold-out An Evening of Scotch Tasting tonight from 7 – 9 p.m. at their head office (1-240 Edward Street). Local scotch expert Keith Scott will be sampling five fine scotches, including a very special bottle aged 35 years from the 2017 Northern Borders Rare Collection. You will be taken on a journey through the regions and history that make each bottle distinct. Tickets are $75 per person. For more information, visit www.chats.on.ca/fundraising-events.

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DEATH NOTICE

BURKE, Mary Ann (nee Gloggner)
– Member of the Carmalite Order

Peacefully went to be with her loving Lord Jesus at Grey Bruce Health Services, Owen Sound on Saturday, December 29th, 2018 in her 83rd year. Mary, loving wife of the late David. Beloved mom of Joe, Paul and his wife Jade, and Lucy. Proud Grannie of Elizabeth, Dawson, Emma, Amber and Dylan. Special friend of Karen Lock and Linda Roberts. Dear sister of Elizabeth Moreno, and the late Frank Gloggner. Loving Godmother of Phillip Gloggner and Maria Moreno. Predeceased by her daughter Theresa Marie.

Friends were received on Thursday, January 3rd, 2019 at the Tannahill Funeral Home, 1178 4th Ave West, Owen Sound, 519-376-3710. A Funeral Mass was held on Friday, January 4th, 2019 at 11:00am at St. Mary's and the Missions Catholic Church, 554 15th Street East, Owen Sound. Interment took place on Wednesday, January 9th, 2019 at Holy Cross Cemetery, Thornhill.

Memorial donations to the Covenant House or the Owen Sound Crisis Pregnancy Centre would be appreciated by the family.

Memorial online at www.tannahill.com

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$2,000 price adjustment on cash purchase.

5 Year†† Warranty

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Fees may vary by dealer. ◊Leasing offers available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a new 2019 Elantra Essential manual/2019 Kona 2.0L Essential FWD/2019 Santa Fe 2.4L Essential FWD with an annual lease rate of 1.99%/2.49%/1.99%. Weekly lease payment of $45/$55/$80 for a 60/60/48-month walk-away lease. Down payment of $1,095/$2,195/$2,395 and first monthly payment required. Trade-in value may be applied to down payment amount. Total lease obligation is $12,802/$16,589/$19,090. Lease offer includes Delivery and Destination charges of $1,705/$1,805/$1,905, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Lease offer excludes registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. $0 security deposit on all models. 16,000 km allowance per year applies. Additional charge of $0.12/km. ^0 payments (payment deferral) for 90 days is available on finance offers of in-stock 2018/2019 Hyundai models. Payment deferral offer applies only to purchase finance offers on approved credit. If the payment deferral offer is selected, the original term of the finance contract will be extended by 2 months (60 days). Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. will pay the interest during the first 2 months (60 days) of the finance contract, after which the purchaser will pay all principal and interest owing in equal installments over the remaining term of the contract. Payments on finance contracts are paid in arrears. ^^For finance contracts payable on a weekly and bi-weekly basis, purchasers who select the payment deferral offer may have to make their first weekly or bi-weekly payment sooner than 90 days from purchase. Down payments are not subject to the payment deferral offer, and are due on the date the contract is signed. Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. reserves the right to amend or terminate this offer, in whole or in part, at any time without prior notice. Additional conditions and limitations apply. Ask your dealer for details. ▼No-Charge All-Wheel Drive Offer: Purchase or lease a new 2019 Tucson/2019 Santa Fe/2019 Santa Fe XL, and you will be entitled to a $2,000/$2,000/$2,000 factory-to-dealer credit for cash purchases or lease or finance at Smart Rates (non-promotional rates). The factory-to-dealer credit of $2,000 is equivalent to the No-Charge All-Wheel Drive offer. The manufacturer's estimated retail value for 2019 Tucson/2019 Santa Fe/2019 Santa Fe XL is $2,000/$2,000/$2,000. Factory-to-dealer credit applies before taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available credits. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. Ask your dealer for details. ♦Price of model shown: 2018 Tucson 1.6T Ultimate AWD/2019 Elantra Ultimate Intense Blue/2019 Kona 1.6T Ultimate AWD Tangerine Comet/2019 Santa Fe 2.0T Ultimate Turbo AWD is $40,237/$29,437/$34,037/$47,037. Price includes Delivery and Destination charges of $1,805/$1,705/$1,805/$1,905, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, license fees and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. ♦†^^◊^▼Offers available for a limited time and subject to change or cancellation without notice. Vehicle colour is subject to availability. Delivery and Destination charge includes freight, P.D.I. and a full tank of gas. Dealer may sell for less. Inventory is limited, dealer order may be required. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available offers. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. Visit www.hyundaicanada.com or see dealer for complete details. ††Hyundai's Comprehensive Limited Warranty coverage covers most vehicle components against defects in workmanship under normal use and maintenance conditions. ▽Android Auto™ is compatible with Android phones running Android Lollipop or newer. Android Auto may not be available on all devices and is not available in all countries or regions. Additional apps may be required. Visit www.android.com for further details and any applicable limitations. Android and Android Auto are trademarks of Google Inc. ‡Apple CarPlay™ works with iPhone 5s, iPhone 5c, iPhone 5 and later models running the latest version of iOS 7 and above. CarPlay™ may not be available on all devices and may not be available in all countries or regions. Visit www.apple.com for further details and any applicable limitations. Apple, Apple CarPlay and iPod are trademarks of Apple Inc.

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(JK to Grade 11)

Tuesday, January 15

6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

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The Global Leadership Program teaches students to deeply consider the global context. Creative and innovative decision making drives all programming in academics and activities beyond the classroom.

Students learn to take theory to action, and to assess the impact of their actions. The program is tailored to each age group and culminates in an action-based Global Leadership Diploma.

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Pickering College prepares students for university while also encouraging them to make a difference in the world as ethical, compassionate and values-based decision-makers. Our academic curriculum focuses on excellence and innovation while ensuring students have a solid understanding of core subjects. All students also have countless opportunities to participate in leadership activities, community service, sports and the arts and excursions, both locally and globally.

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