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THE AUROREDAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 20 No. 18 905-727-3300 **TheAuroran.com** **FREE** Week of February 20, 2020 **CMCA AUDITED**

BATTLE OF ICE AND FIRE

Hundreds gathered at Town Park on Monday for the Battle of the Chainsaws, one of the centrepieces of Aurora's annual Arctic Adventure celebrations. Sunny skies were the order of the day as thousands flocked to the event, which boasted a full day of family-friendly activities, live entertainment and more – all built around the theme of Fire & Ice. For more, see Page 16.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Traffic changes proposed for Yonge Street

Study suggests widening intersection at Wellington

Significant changes to Yonge Street traffic flows could become a reality in the next decade as Council considers updates to the Town's Master Transportation Study.

The study, which is up for consideration at next week's Council

meeting, suggests a widened Yonge and Wellington intersection to allow a right-hand turn lane onto Wellington from southbound Yonge Street traffic. Also up for consideration is a reconfiguration of Yonge Street from Orchard Heights in the north to Golf Links Drive in the south, where the street would be limited to one lane of traffic in each direction with leftover space allocated for a centre turn lane and bike lanes.

"Along the Yonge Street Corridor, a

capacity and level of service analysis and progression analysis were conducted to identify any potential improvements to address existing operational issues," says Michael Bat, Traffic Analyst for the Town of Aurora, in his report to Council, which will receive a first sweep by local lawmakers at this week's General Committee meeting.

The reconfiguration of Yonge Street traffic is known as a "road diet" within the study. Bat says the implementation

Continued on page 6

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Cultural Centre marks tenth anniversary Friday with renowned pianist

By Brock Weir

The Aurora Cultural Centre is set to celebrate its tenth anniversary this Friday, February 21, with a special performance by renowned Canadian pianist Janina Fialkowska.

Ms. Fialkowska, who is in the midst of a Canadian tour, will bring her program of French music to the Cultural Centre as part of the Great Artists Piano Series.

Having launched her career in

Continued on page 11

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY – Aurora Cultural Centre volunteers Mandana, Elizabeth and Linda greeted Family Day visitors with special cake and lemonade to mark the organization's tenth anniversary. Anniversary celebrations continue Friday with a concert from acclaimed pianist Janina Fialkowska.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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Council calls for better public engagement on Official Plan

By Brock Weir

Council has called on municipal staff to improve public engagement as just a handful of residents came out to Council Chambers last week to provide input on the Town’s revised Official Plan.

Aurora is currently engaged in an Official Plan review, the results of which will act as a blueprint for municipal growth through 2041.

The February 11 meeting was intended as a way to receive feedback from members of the public on how they would like Aurora’s future shaped before this feedback is sent back to staff for the development of a workplan. But, when just one member of the public stepped up to share their vision, Council raised questions about the process.

“If this is an exercise in checking a box

off because the Planning Act tells us we have to have a Public Planning meeting, I think we would all agree we’ve failed miserably,” said Councillor John Gallo addressing his Council colleagues.

Mayor Tom Mrakas and Councillor Michael Thompson were not present for the meeting.

Councillor Gallo went on to note that it didn’t make sense to have the Public Planning meeting on updating the Town’s Official Plan (OP) before the Town had retained an outside consultant, as planned, to engage members of the public.

“I am here to listen to the public and I am prepared to get up and leave because that’s done,” he continued, following the resident’s presentation. “I have plenty of time to speak into this microphone and engage in what I believe we should be doing with this process, but if we’re

here to listen to the public to guide this process, we’ve failed miserably and I will underline that. I have a whole bunch of questions, but I don’t know the value to them.”

Although staff pointed out that more than 300 residents had been engaged in the OP process through several means, including “planner pop-up events” that had been held at various municipal events throughout 2019, and a further “dozen” residents attending an open house on the matter just prior to that evening’s meeting, Councillor Gallo said the process was flawed.

“I want the public engaged in a significant way,” he concluded. “I ran on that and I’m standing by that. I’m disappointed we’re here and the chambers are virtually empty on a very important issue.”

This was a sentiment shared by many around the table, including Councillor Sandra Humfries who said although she was disappointed by the turnout, staff had done what they could to engage the public to this point and further – and, it is hoped, more fulsome – consultation would take place once steering committees are in place to guide the OP review down the road.

“[We need to state] this is the future of your Town, how you want the Town to be, how you want to live here, and this is how you provide input,” she said. “We need to take it seriously.”

Councillor Rachel Gilliland offered similar concerns.

“I really feel that staff is trying to do their job to get public engagement... and feedback, but I think my bone of contention is just where are they going to get this information,” she said, suggesting the public needs to have more information made available to them in order to provide a true opinion to Council. “Even though this is the kick-off [meeting and] I understand it is very preliminary, it would be really good to know there is going to be another


meeting that is formal, or something to give public feedback to also provide a copy to the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, York and all [surrounding communities because] I feel there is much content we can provide.”

Also speaking to the matter was Councillor Harold Kim, who chaired last week’s meeting. He stated that there is rarely a huge turnout in Council Chambers as far as members of the public at large are concerned and “context” was needed in the debate.

“We put out a Citizen Budget for online surveys, we’ve done that for many years, and we don’t get that much of a response, so to actually get 300 [responses from the planner pop-ups] I think that is quite an accomplishment,” he said. “Almost assuredly, we would like to have more feedback. I don’t want to harp on staff and the lack of response we have had, but relative to similar types of events, I think this is quite good. Unless we’re building a sidewalk or monster home, you’re not going to pack this room and you’re not going to get email or survey responses.”

Nevertheless, Council decided another Public Planning meeting would need to be held to solicit input from residents, voting to hold another session after the consultant is hired and their own public consultation is compiled and sent to staff for a review and report.

“I still think if there’s not a huge risk in delaying our input to the municipalities and the Region, if we could try when the consultant’s on board to try and engage further public input, see what the next public planning meeting holds,” said Councillor Humfries. “If it is the same turnout, we’ve done the best we could. If not, and we have a fulsome turnout, then we have [done so] without risk and it gives [the Town a chance] to really come out and share their thoughts and ideas.”



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Affordable housing, walkable communities rise to the top in first round of OP review

By Brock Weir

Providing affordable housing and moving away from tailoring communities to cars were among the issues rising to the top in the first round of public consultation on Aurora’s new Official Plan.

The revised Official Plan (OP), a blueprint intended to guide growth in Aurora through 2041, was formally presented to local lawmakers at last week’s Public Planning meeting.

Last updated in 2010, the OP has been the subject of several amendments in the ensuing ten years, and a new OP will bring the Town into conformity with a number of pieces of legislation that have been updated since that time, including the Province’s Official Growth Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

Twelve principles have been pinned down to help guide Aurora’s Official Plan review. They include: Promoting responsible growth management; ensuring design excellence; building a greener community; providing a range and mix of housing; providing appropriate community facilities; protecting stable neighbourhoods; developing vibrant new neighbourhoods; advancing the economy; building a successful downtown; establishing a linked greenlands system; conserving cultural heritage resources; and providing sustainable infrastructure.

While only one resident came forward Tuesday night to offer his opinion, his input touched upon many of these principles.

“This Town is sprawling and 60 years of development have led to this sprawl, but it has created and we continually reinforce a car-centric planning style, which, if you listen to anything going on in the world, even outside York Region, this should be something we’re discouraging,” said resident Neil Asselin. “I live on the Yonge Street corridor, I can walk to the GO Station, yet getting anywhere on my bicycle is not safe, first of all, not pleasant. Getting around as a pedestrian in the summer, there are bicycles on the sidewalk and I don’t blame them because they don’t feel safe, but it makes the pedestrian experience not safe. I can walk five minutes to the grocery store, but that walk is so unpleasant along Yonge Street because there are no buffers from the sidewalk to the lanes.

“The lanes are too wide, people are speeding, there are no trees. It is just parking lots and drive-thrus, and we continually go along this path of reinforcing this need for a car, even though we have things on our doorstep, but we should also be building around Town and centring a

lot around localized micro-economy. Bayview is very unfriendly and a lot of our retail is located on Bayview. I can cycle here in ten minutes, but in order to do it safely, it takes me 20 minutes.”

Also contributing to sprawl, he said, was the proliferation of single-family dwellings, which leaves many people out of the equation – particularly those looking to

Secondary suites, which often take the form of basement apartments are “fine” but not ideal, he contended.

“There’s no shame in renting and there’s no shame in having our neighbourhoods accommodate renters, and just building along a promenade plan, we’re not really promoting a mixed-use, vibrant neighbourhood,” said Mr. Asselin. “Home ownership is unaffordable but that doesn’t mean everybody has to own a house and have a mortgage.

“We need to open our eyes and open our minds and open some books and understand what good policy is, not what’s popular, because sometimes it isn’t going to be popular and there are a lot of things that have proven to be good policy even though they weren’t popular and didn’t fit into a four year election cycle. Some things are better taken slowly and taken cautiously and really get at the root of the humanity in our Town and what is most important.”

Responding to the residents’ points, Town Planner David Waters said Aurora is “essentially” out of greenfield development lands for residential use, so future growth will likely take the form of higher densities to meet targets set out by the Region of York’s OP and provincial targets.

Councillor John Gallo said he also shared the resident’s concerns, calling for a more detailed look at the Town’s Trails Master Plan to improve on its intended use to allow people to get to and from work, to stores, and to recreation centres off-road – safely.

“The whole purpose is a utilitarian off-road plan,” he said. “That’s how [trails advocate Klaus Wehrenberg] designed it, so people can get from their home, to work, to shop, through our trails system. That is the whole point of the plan and I think we should augment that.”

Councillor Wendy Gaertner also said she agreed with many of the points raised, placing special emphasis on affordable housing.

“We need to think about low incomes and moderate incomes,” she said. “Habitat for Humanity has teachers on their list of people who can have a Habitat for Humanity house and that means we’re really in trouble.”

Replied Mr. Waters: “It is [a matter of] finding the appropriate

locations [to support] that kind of density housing. That typically will be the lands surrounding the Aurora GO Station. There will also be opportunities along the Yonge Street Corridor within the Promenade Plan for higher density housing, both condominium and also rental to be developed over time and that is where the bulk of our growth is going to occur over the next 20-some years.”




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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

AURORA TOWN COUNCIL will hold a 2nd public meeting to receive input on the following Planning Applications:

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 7 p.m.

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

APPLICATION: The proposed Official Plan Amendment is to designate the lands as “Stable Neighbourhoods” and “Environmental Protection”, and to allow for an increase in the height policies of the Official Plan. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is to zone the site as “Townhouse Dwelling Residential” (R8) and “Environmental Protection” (EP). The proposed Plan of Subdivision seeks to divide the lands into one residential block and three open space blocks to accommodate 70 condominium townhouse units. The Applications were appealed to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) by the applicant. This second public meeting has been directed by Aurora Town Council and notice is being given in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act.

PROPERTY: 45 Tyler Street

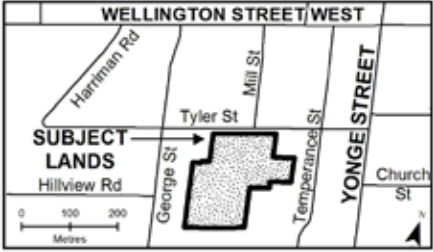
APPLICANT: Charleville Developments Limited

FILE NUMBERS: OPA-2015-02, ZBA-2015-06, and SUB-2015-03

At this time, there are no other applications, under the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended, pertaining to the subject lands.

CONTACT:

Additional information and material about the proposed applications is available for public review at the Town of Aurora office located at 100 John West Way, Monday to Friday between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Any inquiries should be directed to **Katherine Bibby** of the Planning and Development Services department at 905-727-3123 extension **4347**. Comments may also be mailed to the Planning and Development Services Department at the same address, faxed to 905-726-4736 or emailed to planning@aurora.ca prior to the meeting. Please quote the File Name and Numbers.



PERSONAL INFORMATION COLLECTION NOTICE:

The Town of Aurora collects personal information in communications or presentations made to Town Council and/or its Committees under the legal authority of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter c.P.13, as amended. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, (the “Act”) public feedback to planning proposals is considered to be a public record and may be disclosed to any individual upon request in accordance with the Act. If you are submitting letters, faxes, emails, presentations or other communications to the Town, you should be aware that your name and the fact that you communicated with the Town will become part of the public record and will appear on the Town’s website. The Town will also make your communication and any personal information in it, such as your address and postal code or email address available to the public unless you expressly request the Town to remove it. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Town Clerk, Town of Aurora, 100 John West Way, Box 1000, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1 905-727-3123.

AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

The Town audio and/or video records Public Planning Meetings. If you make a presentation to Town Council or its Committees, you may be audio or video recorded. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, (the “Act”) public feedback to planning proposals is considered to be a public record and may be disclosed to any individual upon request in accordance with the Act.

If a person or public body would otherwise have an ability to appeal the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal but the person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Town of Aurora before the by-law is passed, or in respect of the proposed plan of subdivision, before the approval authority gives or refuses to give approval to the draft plan of subdivision, the person or public body:

- is not entitled to appeal the decision; and,
- may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to do so.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora in respect of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and Plan of Subdivision, you must make a written request to The Town of Aurora to the attention of the Director of Planning and Development Services.

DATED at the Town of Aurora, this 20th day of February, 2020.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Affordable housing, broadband, transit addressed at Region: Chair

York Regional Council is committed to delivering the services and improvements that matter most to our residents. Collaboration on affordable housing, broadband and rapid transit, including the Yonge North Subway Extension, were the focus of a meeting this week with our federal partners representing York Region.

Regional Council continues to invest heavily in roads construction as it is the top concern of our residents who are frustrated when they do not have the ability to move throughout our Region efficiently.

However, issues such as affordable housing for those in need, better broadband connectivity for residents in our more rural areas and subway and rapidway construction to reduce the amount of vehicles on our congested roads, require regulatory and financial commitments from all levels of government.

To advance these priorities and drive regional, provincial and national prosperity, we continue to work with our partners at all government levels. Meeting with our federal partners, regardless of their political party, provides the opportunity for meaningful discussions on critical projects requiring funding commitments from the federal government as we continue to build strong, caring, safe communities for all our residents.

As a Region, we are stronger together.

Wayne Emmerson
Chair, Regional Municipality of York

Expertise needed at Council table

(Re: Brock’s Banter, February 6)

I want to commend you for your concept of bringing a measure of expertise to Aurora Council.

With the lack of committees that are mandated to deal with the spheres of interest that you mentioned, there is indeed no ongoing input from somewhat authoritative citizens.

A very current example is Council’s apparent willingness to install a stop sign when lack of parking is the issue.

Nobody appears to be worried about the substantial negative contribution of endless stop signs in Aurora (four-way stops instead of yield sign usage).

Maybe the Aurora bureaucrats who park their cars near the Seniors’ Centre could find alternate parking not too far away, and thereby not only free up spots for the less agile seniors, but also help with Aurora’s climate emergency (less pollution because of less emissions, caused by stopping and starting of cars), and get a little extra exercise to boot.

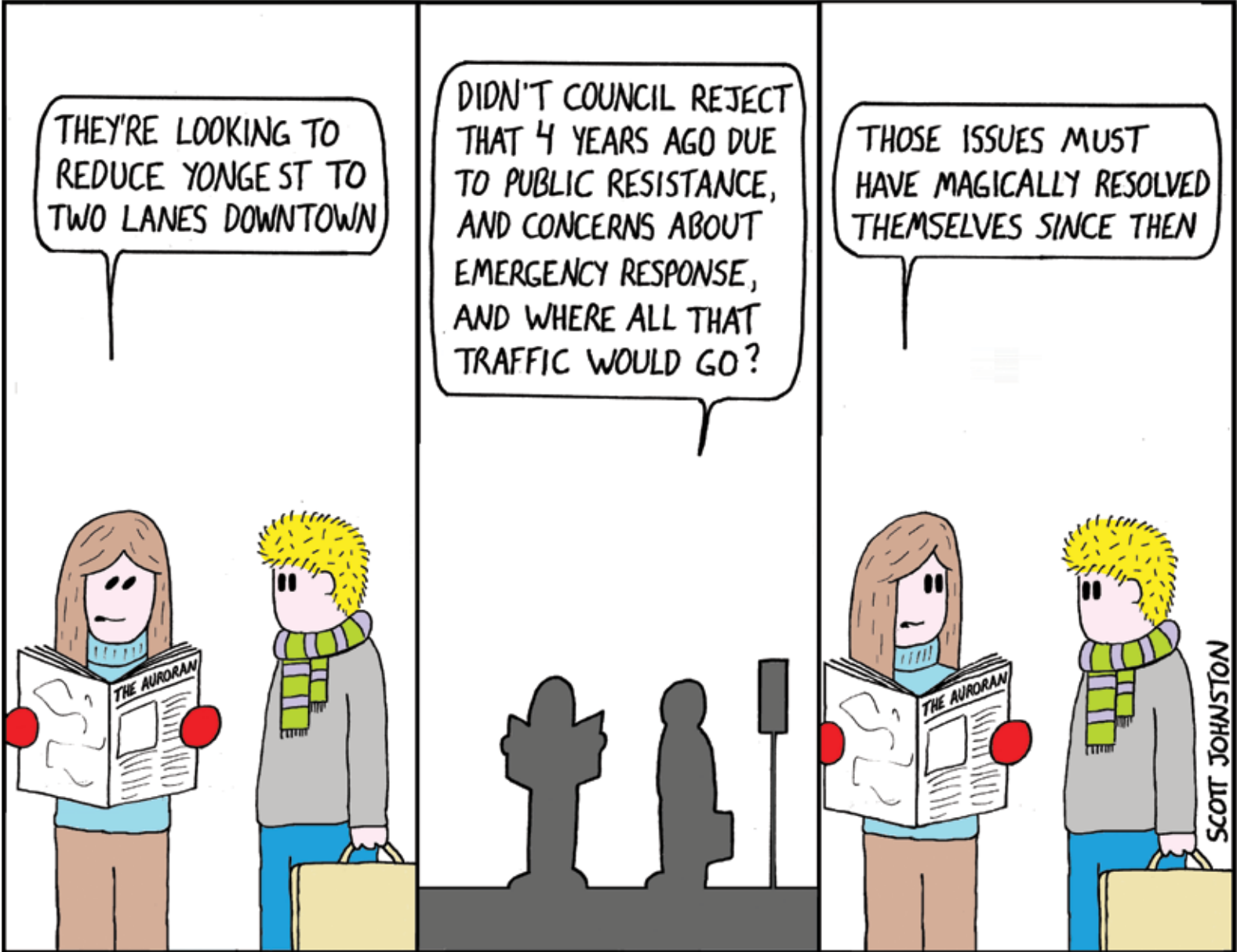
Council normally asks for umpteen reports and feedback from staff before making any decisions, but seem ready to bypass that avenue of input; but an expertise on environmental matters might have done the trick, immediately pointing out the climate damaging emissions.

My preference would be to elect extra Councillors representing the fields of interest, with a special mandate to put creative solutions on the floor; like you have done in your article.

Klaus Wehrenberg
Aurora

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

Macell’s Corners



Shining a light on the background

Is there such a thing as bad publicity? When one talks about the fickleness of fame, people often mock those seeking it with the adage, “There’s no such thing as bad publicity.” The point being that as long as they’re talking about you – and the “they’re” in this case is never really defined – you’re golden.

That way of thinking might hold true in the glitzy world of celebrity culture, but the same isn’t often said about the way our government functions.

Over the past couple of years, we’ve weathered lively and sometimes heated elections at all three levels of government which, if you were engaged in any of those three trips to the ballot box, might have left you with either an overwhelming feeling of exhaustion or an equally overwhelming but galvanized feeling that you were part of something larger than yourself and you have a mandate to help effect change.

But, that usually pertains just to those people who were actively involved in the campaign of their choice. Those candidates that knock on doors, offer campaign speeches, and work hard – for better or worse – to energize whomever they see as their base might welcome the chatter that comes with publicity because it’s working and there’s a school of thought that as long as their names or policies are on the lips of potential voters, that this energy will translate to results.

Yet, there are some areas of government that thrive because they get little to no publicity, free to go about their business and effect change in ways that rarely get newspaper front pages, magazine covers or twitter stories.

On Sunday afternoon, I had the opportunity to attend a lunch in Toronto with a keynote speech by Donald Booth.

Who is Donald Booth? By his own admission, that was a question asked by many last fall when he received a rare appointment.

A career civil servant, he had been working diligently in a very important position within the Federal Government’s Privy Council Office before the Prime Minister appointed him the Canadian Secretary to the Queen. This position, which often flies under the radar, was first established by the Federal Government in 1959 to act as a formal conduit between the Government and Rideau Hall with Buckingham Palace.

Initially founded as a part-time position, it was made full time by Prime Minister Harper in 2012 but had, for the past 18 months or so, following the retirement of



BROCK’S BANTER

Brock Weir

Kevin MacLeod, been a position waiting to be filled.

After only three months on the job, he described Sunday’s keynote as his “debutante ball” as he took the opportunity to speak about his position for the very first time.

“I must admit, when I took the job, I though this would be great and I could ease in slowly because there’s nothing really going on in the monarchy right now,” he said, referring to his mindset in November, before the headline-grabbing decision of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex to give up royal duties and re-establish themselves in this country.

“The decision of the Sussexes to relocate to Canada has really caused a lot of public attention to fall on the issues of the Crown in Canada – the Crown broadly, but specifically the institution and how the various parts of the constitution interact,” Booth continued. “From my perspective, my selfish perspective, that kind of wrecked my quiet easing in, but, more broadly, this is wonderful.”

Underscoring his point, he cited several examples of healthy debate over the status of constitutional monarchy within Canada representing all sides of the issue. This, he said, can only serve to bolster the health of Canada’s constitution and nation-wide consciousness of how it works.

Booth’s point was complemented earlier in the lunch by Ontario Lieutenant-Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell, whose remarks opened the event – one intended to mark the 68th anniversary of the Queen’s accession to the throne and the Golden Anniversary of the Monarchist League of Canada.

“Here we are at the beginning of a new decade,” said the Queen’s representative in Ontario, who is now in the sixth year of her term. “The nature of the game has once again changed. These are strange and uncertain times when we’re being pulled apart in all directions. Our institutions are under strain and many

are feeling quite disconnected from our precious democracy than ever before. We do continue to evolve as a country and, to my mind, the continuity of the Crown has been a key factor in that peaceful evolution, permeating every aspect of how we govern ourselves. The Crown does continue to be relevant, notwithstanding transformative, geopolitical, technological and demographic changes.

“That is, of course, to say nothing of the Crown’s cultural presence in this country. In my experience, by far the greatest power accorded to me as Lieutenant-Governor is not granting Royal Assent to Bills or appointing Premiers. Rather, it is the power to convene diverse people in dialogue about things that really matter. It is not just symbolism. I take most seriously the incredible privilege it is to hold up the mirror to Ontarians, to reflect their identity, their hearts and minds and souls, to help them articulate their aspirations and their challenges – and to tell stories to one another and the world.”

This, in my view, is the power of the Crown across this broad and diverse country – and indeed the Commonwealth countries around the world.

It is not just symbolism. The Crown, and the individuals who work to keep the institution afloat, both members of the Royal Family and their Vice Regal representatives in Ottawa and in each of our Provincial capitals – work tirelessly to shine a light on our stories and the non-partisan, unifying issues that do indeed “reflect their identity, their hearts, their minds and souls.”

One only has to look to the unique power Her Majesty has shown over the last 68 years to unite her people around the globe in times of challenge and tragedy, the tireless work of the Prince of Wales to give a hand to the disadvantaged and continued efforts towards Reconciliation, and the passionate efforts of William and Kate – the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge – to break down the myriad stigma that still sadly surrounds issues around mental health.

One also only has to look at the Canadians who represent the Crown across Canada as well, individuals who reflect every background and every walk of life that comes together to make this county great.

All without a political, partisan mandate, all of whom have the power to unite.

If recent events can serve to shed a light on the work these individuals are doing for all Canadians, so much, in my view, the better.

THE AURORAN

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Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.



From the York Militia to the Queen’s York Rangers – 1st American Regiment, discover how deep Aurora’s military roots run by visiting the comprehensive exhibition “Swift & Bold: The Queen’s York Rangers.” This exhibition features the 1878 Regimental Colours (pictured above) along with a number of compelling artefacts that are on loan from the Queen’s York Rangers Regimental Museum, the Royal Canadian Military Institute, and private collectors. Be sure to visit the Aurora Museum & Archives and view the exhibition before it closes on February 29.

The Aurora Museum & Archives is reminding you...

To visit our current exhibit before it closes on February 29.



Welcome to Library Land

Reccia Mandelcorn

One of the greatest perks of working in Library Land is the immediate feedback we receive through daily conversations with our customers. While not always positive, it’s a great way to take the pulse of our community to see if we are on the right track in delivering programs, services and collections.

APL hosts many events in our open living room; events that enliven our space, provide serendipitous experiences for our visitors and attract new faces, demonstrating our broad mandate to engage the community. A few years ago, after a fabulous (and admittedly very noisy) music pop-up, a man stopped me as he was leaving and said that he was not a “Reader” and never felt that the library was a place for him. But today, having come to enjoy the emotive sounds of the Blues, he realized that he too had a place in his public library.

I have always believed that every resident should find something that speaks to them at their public library – and although a Reader myself, I know that it’s not always our books that speak to every resident. Exhibits, music and theatre provide experiential appreciation of the arts; at exam time, students take over formal and informal seating space where they engage in animated group discussions; toddlers learn through energetic, often noisy play.

The upcoming months will provide some great reasons to make APL your destination of choice. In addition to our regular programs, we’ll be offering some special events in our community living room, including two pop-up concerts and a surprise mini-concert thanks to an amazing partnership with the Aurora Winter Blues Festival. International Women’s Day will see a day-long celebration with tables hosted by local artists, artisans and community organizations, culminating in a concert featuring Louisa Barbosa. And we are so excited to be bringing back York University’s Scholars’ Hub with Professor Robert Latham delivering a timely lecture on Freedom in our Democracy: should we take it for granted? Q&A to follow. Quiet space will be provided in alternate in-library locations during these special events, but we hope you will join us in community building; enjoying the surprise of a new experience you may not have expected when you started your day. For that is the magic of Library Land.

For information on upcoming events, please visit aurorapl.ca.

Reccia Mandelcorn is the Manager, Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. The opinions expressed in this column reflect her personal thoughts about the engagement of community with their public library.



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THIS WEEK’S POLL

Should Council lift one-way traffic restrictions on Centre Street?

Yes No Unsure

www.theauroran.com

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
February 18, 2019	43%	43%	14%



INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

So, do you have plans for your bonus day this month?

In case you hadn’t noticed, this is a Leap Year. An extra day in the form of February 29th is added to the calendar every four years to make up for the fact that the earth takes not an even 365, but 365 and a quarter (or so) days to travel around the sun.

Sadly, unlike daylight savings time when you can sleep during the extra hour we receive, spending an entire Leap Day sleeping, even every four years, is bound to be unpopular with your employer or spouse.

The unusual nature of this day, which has been in our calendar since ancient Roman times, has resulted in a number of traditions and superstitions.

Many of these revolve around relationships. For example, way back when in parts of Europe on this day, if a woman asked a man to marry her and he declined, he had to give her 12 pairs of gloves.

The thought behind that was that they would hide the “shame” of not having a wedding ring. I think it was all just a ploy for women to stock up on free gloves, which would be especially handy in northern Europe in winter.

Those who have birthdays on February 29th are obviously in the minority, and there are not too many famous people who were born on this day.

Although not even a real person,

probably the most well-known Leapling (yes, it’s a real term) is Superman. The most famous Canadian was also a Canadien; hockey player Henri Richard.

One might think that by only having a birthday every four years, Leaplings would be shafted, present-wise, but that may not be the case.

I knew someone who was born on February 29th. When I asked him about it, he said it was great because when it was actually February 29th, everyone made a huge fuss over him because his birthday only came once every four years. On the years where the calendar skipped right from February 28 to March 1, people felt sorry for him and made an even bigger fuss on his behalf because he didn’t have a “real” birthday that year.

Being a Leapling therefore sounds like a win-win, even if you have to put up with a lot of ribbing about it. For example, you could be celebrating your 32nd birthday, and be the brunt of jokes about being only “8”, and still being too

young to buy an alcoholic drink.

Statistics suggest that there should be around 45 Leaplings in Aurora, which seems to be a lot. As for couples, there are even fewer in Town with anniversaries on this day, perhaps nine or so. Feel free to insert your own “only having to remember or buy anniversary gifts every four years” joke here.

As for significant events that have happened on this day, The Family Circus comic strip debuted, Gordie Howe scored his 800th goal, and the first Playboy Club opened. Okay, so world-event-wise, maybe those weren’t all that significant.

Appropriately for Black History Month, it was on February 29th that Hattie McDaniel became the first African American actor to win an Oscar, for her role in Gone With the Wind.

As for what an extra day means for people in Aurora today, there are a couple of considerations.

Unfortunately, it does mean that spring is one day further away.

On the plus side, we don’t pay more taxes for this extra day, so any snow ploughing, playground use, library borrowing and similar property tax funded things one takes advantage of on that day could be considered “free”.

So go wild and enjoy your gifted extra day. But try not to sleep through it all, even though it is a Saturday.

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



SPEAKEASY

Jane Taylor & Reccia Mandelcorn

such as pop-up concerts at Aurora Public Library and a BluesBash Festival Kickoff Party at an undisclosed private industrial location where you can celebrate a night of great music with 250 of your closest friends.

The AWBF is part of our Town’s identity through providing free workshops, showcasing local talent and bringing in some of the biggest names in Blues for us to enjoy – without leaving our community. For the complete line-up and to purchase tickets, visit www.musicaurora.ca.

Since 2011, the Aurora Cultural Centre has hosted graduating Grade 12 youth artists in the community to showcase their talents and achievements at the Mayor’s Celebration of Youth Arts. We were very excited to welcome Christina DiPaola, Gallery Assistant and show lead, to the Speakeasy to get the scoop on this exciting opportunity to engage with the next generation of visual and performing artists in our community.

The Visual Arts exhibition is a huge collaborative show that takes over all galleries at the ACC involving student participation from most of the high schools in Aurora. Students participating

in the visual arts portion come in with their work, then get together in design teams to curate, hang and label the show - no mean feat as they have no prior knowledge of what other schools would be contributing to the exhibit. The collaboration and positive energy students brought to making this show a success for viewers is very rewarding for Christina to experience, as was the knowledge that these emerging artists were also gaining entrepreneurial skills that would stay with them through life, regardless of where their career paths may take them.

A recent addition to the Visual Arts component is the Performing Arts evening that will take place on Wednesday, February 19, in the lovely Brevik Hall. Performances will showcase music, dance theatre, spoken word and more, and will demonstrate the amazing talents of these young adults. Admission is free, with a start time of 7 pm, but Christina gave us the heads-up to arrive early as the room will be packed.

Although winter may bring the desire to hibernate, we realized that with so much going on, we’ll likely not be spending much time at home. There is too much to enjoy in our Town.

Jane Taylor is Communications and Events Manager at the Aurora Cultural Centre and Reccia Mandelcorn is Manager of Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. They co-host The Speakeasy on the first Wednesday of each month on 102.7 CHOP-FM.

Opening the Speakeasy with the bluesy sounds of Harpdog Brown put us in the groove for an intimate conversation about the upcoming Aurora Winter Blues Festival with our first guest, Greg Smith, President of Music Aurora, the not-for-profit organization that is the driving force behind the Festival.

The AWBF emerged from its grassroots beginnings as an annual house party to become one of the preeminent music happenings in the province.

Now in its ninth year, the festival has blossomed into a month-long community event of the best of the Blues, featuring emerging local talent and world stage performances by concert headliners, placing Aurora on the map as a dynamic tourist music destination.

Greg’s involvement with the AWBF started back in 2013 when he first became involved with a youth and music event as part of Aurora’s Canada 150 celebrations. Teaming up with Jamie McDonald, he was hooked, both as a lover of the genre and as part of his give-back to the community.

One of Greg’s most favourite parts of the Festival is the vibe music lovers enjoy at Theatre Aurora, one of the selected venues for performances. With a seating capacity of 150, audiences can be up-close and intimate with some of the greatest Blues sounds around. There are also fabulously fun and free surprise locations to enjoy the festival,

*You are invited to join
MPP Christine Elliott for a
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All are welcome*

When: Saturday, February 29, 2020
Time: 9:30am – 11:45am
Where: St. Andrews Presbyterian Church HALL,
484 Water Street, Newmarket, ON L3Y 1M5





Christine Elliott
MPP - Newmarket-Aurora

16635 Yonge Street, Unit 22, Newmarket, ON L3X 1V6

905-853-9889 1-800-211-1881 905-853-6115

Christine.Elliottco@pc.ola.org www.christineelliottmpp.ca

Study proposes significant change to traffic flow

From page 1

of such a system “will enhance safety for all road users and create a pedestrian-oriented environment.”

“A road diet is generally referred to as a transportation improvement concept that reconfigures a four-lane cross-section with two lanes per travel

direction to [a] three-lane cross-section with single lane per travel direction plus a centre two-way left turn lane,” says Bat. “This configuration provides storage for left-turn movements while additional space at the existing curbs may be utilized for either bike lanes, additional public realm/sidewalk

width, or parking lay-bys depending on the existing pavement width, and the presence of side-streets and the need for the centre two-way left turn lane.”

A similar concept was floated at the Council table in the last term by then-mayor Geoff Dawe, who proposed limiting Yonge Street in the Downtown Core to a single lane of traffic in each direction and the remaining space turned over to on-street parking in an aim to benefit local business.

This idea, however, was routinely voted down by the Council of the day.

“A road diet on Yonge Street through the downtown core area should be considered to improve operations and safety,” Bat continues. “Although Yonge Street from south of Orchard Heights Boulevard/Batson Drive to Golf Links Drive/Dunning Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the Town, close coordination with York Region is required particularly at the critical Yonge and Wellington intersection and also to address the implications on the YRT/VIVA service on Yonge Street.”

Should Council vote in favour of bringing this traffic model forward, public consultation will be the next steps, with a special emphasis on nearby businesses and residents, as well as further work with the Region of York to make it happen. Detailed designs for the model, if the concept is approved, will be part of 2021 budget deliberations this fall.

The second significant change proposed is a left-hand turn lane onto Wellington for southbound drivers which has been a perennial call from Aurora residents.

by the Bank of Montreal (BMO) to “facilitate” its development.

“This isn’t something that has just come up in the last little while, this is something that has been going on for two decades now and no Town Council...has ever done anything about it,” said resident Mark Holmes during the budget process. ““We have been sitting on [this issue] and it just keeps getting pushed to the backburner.”

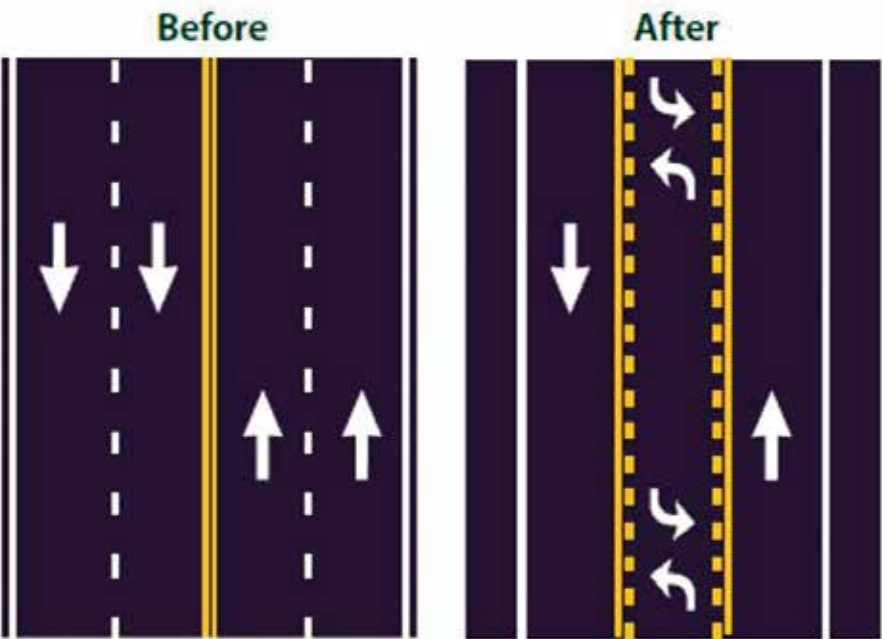
“Council has tried every which way, and I think the Region has as well, to try and figure that out,” replied Councillor Wendy Gaertner. “I don’t really know what we can do at this point. We have looked at every conceivable idea to fix this and we have not been able to come up with a solution.”

Mayor Tom Mrakas offered a similar point of view, but assured the residents there was already some movement on this file.

The sticking point, however, is securing land in front of the Bank of Montreal, the current occupant of the intersection’s northwest corner, to make the turn lane a reality.

“The only thing we don’t have is we haven’t expropriated the land yet,” said Mayor Mrakas. “We don’t own the land as of yet, but we are moving forward with the project. We will be looking at implementing a right turn lane there. How small or how big [the land to be expropriated] is doesn’t make a difference on how you go about expropriating it, it is the same regardless of the piece of property.

“That’s the part that has been taking a bit of time at this point, but we are moving forward with it. I can’t speak to why previous Councils before my time didn’t move forward with it, what studies there were and why they didn’t do anything, that’s beyond me to speak to, but I can speak to the fact we are going to get it done.”



A diagram of how the proposed Yonge Street “road diet” might work.

Photo courtesy of the Town of Aurora



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BLACK HISTORY MONTH COMMEMORATIONS CONTINUE

Earlier this month, the Aurora Public Library welcomed Trinidad-born author and storyteller Rita Cox to the Library living Room. Cox has performed for adults and children on stage, radio and television across North America, in Europe, Brazil and the Caribbean. At the Library, Cox brought her storytelling magic for an afternoon enjoyed by all ages. The Library's Black History Month programming continues this Thursday, February 20 with Being Black in Canada, a panel discussion featuring Tessa Benn-Ireland, the York Region District School Board's first Black trustee, Jacqueline Benn-John, Executive Director of the Women's Support Network of York Region, and musician and educator Glenn Marais. The Conversation, moderated by Auroran editor Brock Weir, will take place from 7 – 8.30 p.m. Admission is free.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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TOWN OF AURORA
PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

AURORA TOWN COUNCIL will hold a public meeting to receive input on the following Planning Applications on:

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 7 p.m.

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

APPLICATION:

The Town of Aurora is initiating an Official Plan Amendment to allow outdoor swim schools to be considered as a permitted home occupation use along with related criteria for single and semi-detached dwellings. The purpose and effect of the proposed Amendment is to amend the home occupation policies of the Official Plan to allow a swim school home occupation use to be conducted entirely outside of a dwelling unit and to permit associated minor outdoor storage. The proposed Amendment provides enabling policies for swim schools to be permitted subject to approval for a minor variance by the Committee of Adjustment.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment will apply to all lands across the Town where home occupations are permitted in single and semi-detached dwellings. A key map is not attached as the proposed amendment applies to all lands across the Town. At this time, there are other applications, under the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended, pertaining to the lands affected by the proposed amendment. Please contact the Town for additional information.

CONTACT:

Additional information and material about the proposed amendment is available for public review at the Town of Aurora office located at 100 John West Way, Monday to Friday between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Any inquiries should be directed to **Anna Henriques** of the Planning and Development Services department at 905-727-3123 extension **4389**. Comments may also be mailed to the Planning and Development Services Department at the same address, faxed to 905-726-4736 or emailed to **planning@aurora.ca** prior to the meeting.

PERSONAL INFORMATION COLLECTION NOTICE:

The Town of Aurora collects personal information in communications or presentations made to Town Council and/or its Committees under the legal authority of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter c.P.13, as amended. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, (the "Act") public feedback to planning proposals is considered to be public record and may be disclosed to any individual upon request in accordance with the Act. If you are submitting letters, faxes, emails, presentations or other communications to the Town, you should be aware that your name and the fact that you communicated with the Town will become part of the public record and will appear on the Town's website. The Town will also make your communication and any personal information in it, such as your address and postal code or email address available to the public unless you expressly request the Town to remove it. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Town Clerk, Town of Aurora, 100 John West Way, Box 1000, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1 905-727-3123.

AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

The Town audio and/or video records Public Planning Meetings. If you make a presentation to Town Council or its Committees, you may be audio or video recorded. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, (the "Act") public feedback to planning proposals is considered to be a public record and may be disclosed to any individual upon request in accordance with the Act.


If a person or public body would otherwise have an ability to appeal the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal but the person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Town of Aurora before the proposed Official Plan amendment is adopted, the person or public body:

- is not entitled to appeal the decision; and,
- may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to add the person or public body as a party.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora in respect of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, you must make a written request to The Town of Aurora to the attention of the Director of Planning and Development Services.

DATED at the Town of Aurora, this 20th day of February, 2020.

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Board members receive no monetary compensation and are expected to devote approximately 12 hours per month to hospital matters. In addition to serving as a member of the Board, members must serve on a minimum of two Board sub-committees: Audit, Governance and People, Quality, Finance & Property. To learn more about Southlake and the role of the Board of Directors, visit our website at Southlake.ca.

Please send a letter or email describing your background and your interest by February 29, 2020 to the Chair, Board of Directors, Southlake Regional Health Centre, 596 Davis Drive, Newmarket, L3Y 2P9 or via email to taustin@southlakeregional.org. Candidates will also be required to provide one or more letters of reference.

We thank all applicants who apply but regret that only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Applications received will be considered for the 2020/2021 fiscal year.



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Downtown development should be at heart of Economic Strategy: Council

By Brock Weir

Downtown revitalization should be priority number one when it comes to forging ahead with Aurora’s Economic Development Strategy.

This re-affirmation came as Council questioned priorities contained within Aurora’s proposed Economic Development Strategic Plan – which Mayor Tom Mrakas said were somewhat “shocking.”

Received at the Committee level, the Economic Development Strategic Plan offered a list of 10 “action items” stemming from a presentation to the Aurora Economic Development Board.

These recommendations, in the order presented, included undertaking a target sector analysis to identify growth sectors to attract to Aurora, including sectors related to Southlake Regional Health Centre; developing a business mix strategy “to determine the type of retail and commercial businesses that could be attracted to Downtown Aurora”; a partnership with sporting groups to develop a Sports Tourism Strategy for Aurora; work with Magna to retain their permanent head office in Aurora; continued work with the York Region Economic Development and neighbouring municipalities to tap into further business opportunities; and the launch of a new economic development website.”

Rounding out the Top Ten were:

“capturing and capitalizing on the entrepreneurial spirit” in Aurora by fostering co-working and incubation spaces; developing sub-committees aimed at building relationships with CEOs and other high-level executives living in Aurora; strengthening the local workforce; and exploring incentives to bring new office development into Downtown Aurora and local employment lands.

Taking a look at the proposed strategy, Mayor Tom Mrakas, a member of the Aurora Economic Development Board, said he was taken aback by the report.

“Some of this in front of me comes as a bit of a shock because the list of ten items, when we had discussions at the Board, we talked about whittling it down to three. There are also some on this list we actually removed,” he said, referencing efforts to maintain Magna in Aurora, an initiative already being undertaken by the Mayor’s Office.

Mayor Mrakas said he couldn’t understand how the second and third priority items – Downtown Revitalization and the development of the sports plan – were placed below looking at targeted sectors.

“From what I recall, this is not what we ended up with [at the Board],” the Mayor continued. “The Downtown Strategy is Number One. Looking at this list, this is the wrong list and I think we need to have the proper list. We need to send this whole thing back

to the Board, have them maybe look at the comments of everyone sitting at this table, and we can have a discussion there.”

And the comments around the table were myriad.

Rising to the top of the heap were concerns over the sheer number of studies – often carried out through the hiring of external consultants – suggested in the report, including \$50,000 from the Town’s Economic Development Reserve Fund to carry out a Target Sector Analysis and unspecified amounts for studies on building the Business Mix and Sports Tourism Strategies.

“We’re in the midst of hiring a new Economic Development Officer/Land Use Planner since the position has opened up,” said Councillor Rachel Gilliland. “It would be nice to give that person some part of the process. It is a lot of money and I think we really have to do this right. I say this for a couple of reasons and one of them is at the beginning of last year, Council had partaken in this exercise where we sat with the consultant and we were given a table with some cards identifying what our mandate was... I remember the overarching two things that our Council wanted to actually achieve was the Library Square project as one and revitalizing the Downtown Core. I am curious as to why this is listed as a second priority.

“This is three studies, plus staff’s time to implement these studies. I would really hate to give direction on something and not really understand the full context of what we’re asking them to do.”

Mayor Mrakas offered similar concerns, suggesting that the proposed studies be carried out in-house by municipal staff rather than consultants.

“We need our staff sometimes to roll up their sleeves and get things done. It’s not to say that they don’t, but sometimes especially with someone new coming in, they might be willing to take that initiative and go that one step further and say, ‘I’m going to dig deep into this, I know what Council wants, I know what the Board wants, and I am going to push forward on this and do a lot extra.’

“To automatically say, let’s go out, spend \$50,000 and get a consultant – how much government spends on consultants is absolutely insane. Sometimes we need to step back and say, ‘What can we do?’”

Added Councillor John Gallo: “If it is \$50,000 a pop, that’s significant money and [if we] go down that road, what’s our return on that kind of investment? We have been at this for quite a long time and I would like to see some action items because we put a lot of money and effort into volunteering into this whole thing and I think it is about time we see some results.”

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\$10K WIN – The team at Aurora Hyundai celebrated a significant win on Saturday. The dealership, located at Wellington Street East and Mary Street, concluded a contest where the purchasers of 100 vehicles sold within a certain time window were entered into a contest for a \$10,000 giveaway. The ultimate winner was Kristopher P., who purchased a 2019 Tucson.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Mysteries of the ancient world and the modern mind explored in "Agatha Christie, Archaeology and Alzheimer's"

By Brock Weir

Side by side, they put together the clues of the past to solve mysteries both ancient and modern.

For archaeologist Max Mallowan, the mysteries he tried to solve were often 4,000 years old. But the mysteries his wife, prolific mystery novelist Agatha Christie, were trying to solve seated at his side, typing away in the desert, they were mysteries concocted in her mind that could only be solved by those conjured up by her little grey cells.

Their collective work, along with some modern questions about whether Dame Agatha's little grey cells declined near the end of her career, will be explored at Hillary House next Wednesday as the Aurora Historical Society hosts Dr. Amy Barron with her talk "Agatha Christie, Archeology and

Alzheimer's."

Dr. Barron, who is presently working at the Clarington Museum, holds a doctorate in Ancient Mesopotamian Studies and began taking a closer look at Mallowan's work while completing her thesis in the United Kingdom. But as much as she was invested in archeology, Mallowan's wife found a place in Dr. Barron's heart much earlier.

As a high school student, she devoured the works of Agatha Christie, a legacy of more than eighty works, which are as popular today as they were when her first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, was published 100 years ago this fall.

"I just gobbled up these books and thought they were fabulous," she says. "But, I moved on, and when you're in university, you spend all your time reading very serious, heavy and dull academic things, but when I was on a

research trip to London I was at the British Museum. The British Museum has most of the artefacts Max Mallowan dug up, except for the ones still in Iraq, and they also have Agatha's first editions. They put up a little pop-up exhibit during one year of my research that just showed in a really quick way the parallels of what Max was doing at the time and what Agatha was writing at the time. It really stuck in my head that there was a really neat connection between two things which I love. When I picked up [an artefact] and held it in my hand, I knew it had been held by an ancient Assyrian, Agatha Christie and then me without too many people in between and that is kind of cool."

Dr. Barron's talk will take the audience through Agatha Christie's life, starting with her childhood in a loving family environment, through to the "distressing" end to her first marriage and how that personal disaster led to an exploration to the unknown of the Middle East trying to get away from it all.

"That's where she fell into this whole new life she never could have imagined and was reborn at the age of 40 by marrying a fine, dashing young archeologist and discovering this whole world she previously knew nothing about. That filters down into her novels, so books like *Murder on the Orient Express* and *Death on the Nile*, all of those encompass this new world that she is learning about."

Dr. Barron will then touch upon the work of this dashing adventurer before touching upon their later years and what modern research suggests about Christie's state of mind as she entered the last two decades of her writing career in the 1960s and 70s.

"We don't know if Agatha Christie had Alzheimer's, but they have now done studies on authors...and the idea is that, over time, your vocabulary decreases and you just repeat words and phrases, and use words like 'everything'

and 'something' rather than coming up with specific words more often. In Agatha Christie's works, from the first book to the end, you see almost a 20 per cent drop in her vocabulary, that her mental processes weren't as strong as they once were. This isn't just aging because they have done this with other writers as well, like Iris Murdoch (who lost a well-documented battle with dementia) and she shows the same trends, but there are other people like H.G. Wells who just got sharper and sharper right to the very end of his days.

"Many people have no idea that Agatha had this wonderful and exciting life. They picture a somewhat middle-aged mystery novelist sitting at her typewriter and I think they picture her like Miss Marple, living out in the English countryside. But she's working as an archeologist all day long, typing in the sands of the desert, and was living this incredibly exciting life. I often end up giving these talks at places where my crowd is on the slightly older side and I think it is neat to see a woman, who especially at the time in the 1930s, starts this whole new adventurous life for herself at a time where, at 40, most women, especially a woman who has been left by her husband, would have been just written off and settled into a life of spinsterhood. There she was instead making this whole new world for herself. I think that's a positive message for all of us!

"Now, when people live so much longer than they used to, they often say that 40 is the new 30 or whatever. You can always remake your life and start over."

Dr. Amy Barron's "Agatha Christie, Archeology and Alzheimer's" will take place at Hillary House next Wednesday, February 26, from 7 – 9 p.m. at Hillary House National Historic Site. Tickets are \$10 (\$7 for Aurora Historical Society members). For more information, visit aurorahs.com or call 905-727-8991.

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Internationally-renowned pianist helps Centre mark first decade



Contributed photo

Janina Fialkowska

From page 1

1974 with the mentorship of legendary musician Arthur Rubenstein, Ms. Fialkowska's career has taken her to the most celebrated concert halls around the globe – collecting an Order of Canada along the way – but this week marks a return engagement to Aurora's own Brevik Hall.

"I started very early because my brother played the piano and I wanted to be like him," Ms. Fialkowska told The Auroran last week, over the phone from her home in Bavaria. "That wasn't the beginning of my love of piano but sibling rivalry! My mother was my teacher and I wanted to please her, but I found it was kind of fun to play and do something different from the other children."

She began to take piano more seriously at the age of twelve when her parents took her to see the Montreal Symphony. There, Rubenstein was playing a Chopin concerto and the youngster felt a whole new world open up for her.

"Suddenly, I was absolutely mesmerized. The music moved me to tears," she recalls. "It was also about the performer and I suddenly realized what he was doing, what he was communicating, how he held the entire 3,000 people in the audience

spellbound. I realized that if music could hold such a power over people – such a good power over people – it was from that moment on I knew there was only one thing I wanted to do: play the piano, make music, and try to create this bond between the genius of the composer and the wonderfully receptive audience."

That is exactly what she has done over her storied career.

Over the years, she has become renowned as "one of the great interpreters of the piano works of Chopin and Mozart," according to the Aurora Cultural Centre.

The works of both composers will be well-represented when she takes the stage this week. Her "French Program" consists of selections from Debussy, Revel, Fauré, Tailleferre, in addition to Chopin. Some might not consider Mozart's place in a "French" program, she said, but he will be represented by what she describes as "his most dramatic sonata", composed while touring Paris with his mother, who died in the City of Lights during their trip.

"It is one of the most personal sonatas he ever wrote, verging on the romantic movement, breaking the boundaries of classical movement," she said. "It is really a wonderful sonata and I love playing it. What always strikes

me as wonderful about French music is that although the composers are all very individual and have very different personalities, the minute one hears their music one thinks of France, one thinks of Paris. I don't know how they do it, but that's what I love about it.

"People really actually like this program very much because it is varied. The second half is all Chopin and I think people expect to hear Chopin. I am always happy to play Chopin and Chopin is always a winner with any audience. Audiences are glad to hear these different kinds of French music which people don't often get the opportunity to hear. It creates beautiful pictures in one's mind, but it is incredibly restful as well. Somehow, that strikes a chord with the very stressful and nervous

world that we live in to come and sit and listen to half an hour or 45 minutes of lovely, beautiful French music, it is something that actually works, I hope. I haven't had any complaints!"

In addition to being appointed Officer of the Order of Canada, Ms. Fialkowska is a recipient of the 2012 Governor General's Lifetime Achievement Award in Classical Music.

She has recently completed a new recording of French piano music for the ATMA Classique label.

Tickets for Friday's concert, which will open with a pre-concert talk by Rick Philips of CBC Radio's Sound Advice at 6.45 p.m., before the 7.30 p.m. curtain, are on sale now through auroraculturalcentre.ca or by phone through 905-713-1818.

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Week of February 20, 2020



Tigers win one and lose one in two-game roadtrip

By Robert Belardi

In the second last week of the season for the Aurora Tigers, the boys travelled out on the road, falling to the Collingwood Colts last Friday 6-0 before defeating the Oakville Blades Saturday night 3-2.

In an up and down week for the Tigers, on Valentine's Day night, the boys knew it was going to be a tough test against the Colts.

It's one of those stories throughout the year. There is always one team that consistently has your number.

In the first period, the Colts took the game to the Tigers. Just over the halfway mark, Nicholas Cirone found the back of the net for his 11th goal of the season to give the Colts the lead.

In the second period, the Colts added to their lead. Patrick Brown and Derek Sweeney made it 3-0 by the time the third

period rolled around.

In the final frame, Payton Schaly and Adrian Nabuurs capitalized on the power play. Sweeney added insult to injury with his second of the game shorthanded at the end.

Funnily enough, the Colts scored the number goals in accordance to the period number. What wasn't funny, was the Tigers could not break down Colts goaltender Andrew Rose, who recorded his second shutout of the year.

Despite this loss, the boys didn't back down when they travelled to Oakville to take on the Blades.

In only their second meeting this season, the last time the Tigers played the Blades was back on December 14, when the boys suffered a 6-2 defeat at home.

That was at a different time, a different mindset and a different roster. With the recent changes and tune-ups to the lines, it was going to be a good matchup.

With no score in the first period and being outshot 17-4, the boys entered the second determined to get on the score board.

That is exactly what happened.

Forward Blake Frost found the back of the net shorthanded for his third goal of the year. With under five minutes left in the frame, Mauro Biasutto capitalized on the power play for his fifth goal of the season.

At the beginning of the third period, Stephen Whittle got the Blades on the board. With just over five minutes in the game, Harrison Israels tied it up.

On the power play with just over 30 seconds left, Luc Reeve scored the game

winning goal, to give the Blades their eighth loss of the year.

The Tigers had defeated an 80-point team.

Although being outshot 47-16 on the night, Christian Filippetti earned himself first star of the game, playing one of his best games of the year, in front of over 200 fans in attendance.

Entering the final week of the 2019/2020 OJHL season, the Aurora Tigers will travel on the road one more time this Friday and take on the Burlington Cougars before returning for one last hurrah at home this Saturday against the Pickering Panthers.

Puck drop is at 7:30 p.m.

Local student praised as "true leader" in Black Excellence by School Board

By Kinjal Dagli Shah

Amira Zamanifar dreams of becoming the Prime Minister of Canada in the future.

The 14-year-old was in the spotlight recently when, as part of Black History Month, the York Region District School Board featured her on social media as an example of Black Excellence. They described her as a "true leader", a talented student, volunteer and caring young woman.

"I feel a great sense of pride to see my accomplishments being highlighted on such a large platform. Black excellence has always been around but it has not always been acknowledged. To me, black excellence is when a black person is able to break through barriers and persevere to achieve their goals. Due to my background, I have always been aware that I was different and this difference has made me work harder and strive to be better than what I might be perceived as," explained Amira.

Her maturity is palpable even as she expresses gratitude for her achievements in elementary school.

A Grade 8 student at Lester B. Pearson Elementary School, Amira won a Leadership and School Involvement Award from the Alliance of Educators for Black Students Committee and was one of the students chosen to represent her school at YRDSB Applause Award Ceremony for winning the Solar Oven Challenge in 2019.

"I am also on various sports teams and lead our announcement team. My favourite achievement is being in the top four in the Student Spark Speech competition. This competition was a platform for students to voice their opinion on one of three topics. I wrote a speech in French on my personal opinion of what our future school systems



Amira Zamanifar

Contributed photo

should resemble. I presented my speech to my class and my teacher recorded and entered me into the competition where people across York Region voted," said Amira.

Amira was born in Canada to a Jamaican mother.

"I have visited Jamaica on several occasions. Jamaica is known for producing personalities like Usain Bolt, the fastest runner in the world, famous singer Bob Marley, and it is a country with amazing food and a bobsled team. Jamaicans always strive to be the best and that is a lesson I will always carry with me – Try my best in whatever I do."

Her goal of becoming the Prime Minister of Canada is a serious one.

"I hope to continue achieving and be the best student I can be in both academics and extracurricular activities. Beyond that, I would like to receive my law degree at the University of Toronto and pursue my ultimate dream of becoming Prime Minister. I would love to one day lead and represent the people of Canada and voice their opinions. Representing my country on a global scale and meeting the needs of Canadians as best as possible motivates me for this role."

So impassioned are the teenager's aspirations that they make you hope her dreams take flight.

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York9 FC signs Canadian Hall of Famer

By Robert Belardi

Head Coach Jimmy Brennan continues to bolster the York9 bench, this time with a former compatriot.

Canada Soccer Hall of Famer Paul Stalteri, joins York9 FC as the assistant coach, right beside his fellow hall of famer and former teammate with the national team.

The 42-year-old Brampton native said that he is excited to join the club level, next to the man he has known for more than 25 years.

“This is a great opportunity to build this club into something very special,” Stalteri explained in a press conference.

“We grew up playing together, so I’ve known Jimmy for more than 25 years. We’ve kept in close contact throughout that time, and it was just after Christmas that we started to speak in more serious terms on what role I could play and bring to the team, and what he’d like [to achieve].”

Brennan, added on to how long he has been wanting Stalteri to join his coaching staff and how the players can benefit from his expertise.

“I wanted to get Paul in from day one; he’s got a great deal of experience, but he was with the national team at the time so we’ve had to be patient,” said Brennan. “I am pleased that we’ve been able to get him on board now. He’s a professional who has played at the highest level and it’s a great

opportunity for the players here to be able to utilize his vast knowledge.”

Stalteri’s career kicked into high gear when he was transferred to Werder Bremen in 1998; a year after appearing for the national team for the first time.

In his seven seasons with Werder Bremen, he became the first Canadian player to score in the Bundesliga, win the Bundesliga title and the DFB-Pokal double back in 2003/2004. The defender played alongside a few international stars such as Euro 2004 winner Angelos Charisteas and former manager of the Serbian national team Mladen Krstajic.

He carried on his club career with Tottenham Hotspur, on loan with Fulham and Borussia Monchengladbach.

When he retired back in 2013, he stood alone, as the most experienced Canadian international player with 84 caps. He was part of the team in Canada’s 2000 Gold Cup victory, alongside Brennan and former Sportsnet broadcaster and goalkeeper, Craig Forrest.

In May of 2017, he joined Brennan and Forrest in the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame.

Upon his retirement, Stalteri has been working with Canada Soccer from the U15 level and up, honing their skills.

“It was an excellent grounding at the start of my coaching career, and I finished off working with the men’s team.”

In addition to joining York9 FC, Stalteri went on to add that this move



Stalteri holds the scarf wide, proud to be the assistant coach for the upcoming season. Photo courtesy of York9 FC

simply makes sense for his career moving forward behind the touch line.

“I live in the area so it makes a lot of sense on my side and from the club’s perspective. Knowing Jimmy for a long time also makes the decision to work together easier; we have a similar

philosophy on how the game should be played and how we want this club to move forward.”

As the two reunite here in York Region, both coaches are more than ready to bring home the first trophy in York9 club history.

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Chris Hodgins (right) receives an endless amount of support from family and friends greeting the 35-year old inside the banquet hall. Auroran photo by Robert Belardi

“Support that I’ve got here has been outstanding,” says Hodgins at second annual Hockey for Hodge

By Robert Belardi

Chris Hodgins could not be more thankful for the support he received on Family Day, in the second annual Hockey For Hodge event, held Monday at the Aurora Community Centre.

“The support that I’ve gotten here has been outstanding. Everybody

here is behind me in my recovery 100 per cent,” explained Hodgins, in the banquet room upstairs inside the ACC. “I couldn’t be more happy and grateful for the people that are here.”

It was another day to remember. The banquet was filled with family, friends and members of the community. Over 117 hockey players took part in the

Continued on page 18



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Regional Free Throw Championship set for Aurora



Auroran photo by Robert Belardi

By Robert Belardi

The Knights of Columbus District Free Throw Competition winners move on the Regional Championship in Aurora next month.

The contestants won their local school competition and local council competition to qualify for the tournament at St. Michael’s Catholic Secondary School in Bolton this past Saturday.

“Fifty-thousand students in Ontario compete, in the elementary schools,” said director of the tournament Ron Frank, emphasizing the growth and the participation numbers.

The Knights of Columbus welcomed Council winners from Bolton, Tottenham, Orangeville and Alliston, in order to judge who will represent the district.

The players had to shoot 25 consecutive free throws, instead of 15 in the previous two. Ages from nine to 16 were in contention.

Children from nine to 11 shoot from a 12-foot line, using a woman’s size (28.6 inch) basketball. From 12-years old and up, the children shoot from the 15 foot-line, using a men’s size ball (29.5 inch) ball.

After warmup, the nine-year-olds stepped up to the plate and the boys and girls did not disappoint in front of a warm crowd.

Fuelled with determination, St. John Paul II student Jake Rampino and Monsignor JE Ronan Catholic School student Emilia Angilletta won their round. Rampino swished home 12 out of 25 baskets and Angilletta won the girls round with a whopping 16 made baskets.

Setting the tone for the day, the 10-year-olds stepped up to the line.

Nicholas Brozina Ramos from St. James School in Tottenham has an affinity to score free throws, almost flawlessly, finishing his round with 23 made baskets. That was the best score of the day between all age groups.

“He’s solid, he has great skill, he has great technique set up and he didn’t move his feet,” expressed Frank, on what he saw from Brozina Ramos.

Sage Vattt for the girls, also from Monsignor, tied for the third-highest scoring total of the day with 14 shots.

The 11-year-olds witnessed the second highest scoring total for the boys. Holy Family Elementary school representative Adrian Edelenji made five consecutive baskets in the end, finishing his round with 18 points with a fist pump upon

leaving the foul line. Also, from the same school, Tyra Reginald returned to move on scoring 12 baskets of her own.

The 12-year-old winners saw the Father Francis Xavier O’Reilly tandem Leandro Martins score 17 points and Emily Turco with 11, move on to the regional finals, with some sweet shooting.

In the 13-year-old age group, Monsignor player Claudio Di Palma moves on as well, and Francis Xavier player Ainsley Cummings.

The 14-year-old and 16-year-old representatives had no competition at all, as Tamara Sommer from Alliston Community Christian School and Alyssa Trushinski from Robert F. Hall automatically qualified.

District Deputy Tim Grant was in

attendance for this tournament and explained what he saw from the event on Saturday.

Grant said, “I’m impressed by the number in Ontario. 50,000 kids getting involved in Ontario – it’s great to see them getting out; it’s a good family activity.”

The Regional Finals will be held on March 7 at Ecole Secondaire Catholique Renaissance at 700 Bloomington Road in Aurora. The winners of the next competition, will move on to the International competition. Results will be compared, according to Frank.

The Knights of Columbus expands all the way from North America, to countries in the Caribbean, to South East Asia and Europe. There are over two million members.



YOUTH TEDx TALK – In a school first, a Grade 12 student from Pickering College successfully secured the rights to host and run a TEDx event at the school last Wednesday. For her Capstone Project, Yagmur Ozturk, a boarding student from Turkey, is required to take action on an issue of local or global significance. Ozturk’s Capstone Project topic is freedom of speech and giving a voice to young people. Student speakers included Gabrielle Robinson, Kathy Wang, Phillip Carson, Shyam Subramanyam, Emre Basaran, Yoyo Zhang, Damian Larice, and Katherine Starr. For more, see next week’s edition of The Auroran.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir



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Record numbers turn out for Arctic Adventure



Sunny skies and mild weather saw record-setting numbers at Town Park on Monday for the Town of Aurora’s Arctic Adventure, Aurora’s annual Family Day tradition. (Top Row) Shawn, Michelle and Elton made the day a family affair. As did Max and Schuylen. (Second Row) Micah and Liam get into the spirit of Canada’s game. Raman, Abby, Kiana and Andrea kept events moving. (Third Row) Kennedy tries out the miniature snow tubing run. Animal shows kept hundreds enthralled – and this eagle held by John was no exception. (Fourth Row) Kennedy, Katrina, Karlie and Erica enjoy the entertainment. Brandon and Finnigan spent time on the outdoor rink. (Fifth Row) Hayden and Marley try on Body Zorbs. Mayor Mrakas congratulates Battle of the Chainsaws competitors Paul and Thomas. (Sixth Row) Councillor Rachel Gilliland with husband Brad and daughter Madison. The Fire Guy blazed the stage.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

Polar Plunge is a cool way to support local Special Olympians

By Brock Weir

If you’re looking for a cool way to help local Special Olympics Athletes, consider bracing yourself to take the plunge!

Next month, members of the public are invited to support local Special Olympics programs by joining members of the York Regional Police and the York Regional Police Association in the annual Polar Plunge. Set to take place in Newmarket on the evening of Thursday, March 5, the Polar Plunge sees costumed individuals and teams literally take the plunge into a shipping container of icy water, all in the name of raising money for local athletes with intellectual challenges.

Last year’s efforts saw the Association raise over \$30,000 for Special Olympics Ontario. Province-wide, Polar Plunges have raised over \$1.5 million and benefited over 25,000 athletes over the past five years.

“It’s not as cold as you think,” says Karen Richards of the York Regional Police.

Ms. Richards is a long-time supporter of both the Special Olympics and the Polar Plunge, having worked with Special Olympics for the past 20 years. This year will mark her eighth Polar Plunge.

“Yes, it’s freezing, but it is an amazing chance to get to interact with local athletes and raise some money for the athletes as they get to compete in the sports they love to do,” she says.

Ms. Richards has previously served as a Special Olympics basketball coach, a volunteer passion that first began in 2000 when the York Regional Police hosted the Special Olympics Summer Games. As a volunteer, she says she fell in love with their mission to give opportunities to athletes with intellectual disabilities.

“I grew up working with people with intellectual disabilities as a teenager at summer camps, so it was always important for me to stay involved,” says Ms. Richards, noting that this passion eventually led to her being Games Manager when the Police once again hosted the Games in 2013.

“The athletes make it all worthwhile,” says Ms. Richards of her involvement in both the Special Olympics and the Polar Plunge. “The athletes are so excited on the day and the relationship the athletes have with people in law enforcement is, I think, really important as well. Through Special Olympics, athletes gets the chance to travel to competitions and I have met tons of athletes from the area who have never in their life been out of Town. Because of some of the money we raise, they are able to attend the Provincial, National and World Games to participate in sports.”

To do your part to help the cause, the Polar Plunge is open for anyone to participate. Each year, there are a few handfuls of individuals who come out having had a Polar Plunge on their bucket list but never having the opportunity to do so. By coming out, they can scratch that item off their list while helping athletes and their families achieve their own goals.

“People can support the event by going online (polarplunge.ca/York) and pledging their support,” says Ms. Richards, adding this year’s theme is the 1970s, so expect bell bottoms and other fashions of the era to be the order of the day. “They can raise money for friends, there are athletes who are registered, and they can also come out on the night of and cheer us on. Come out and support us. The money that we’re raising will stay so local athletes have the opportunity to compete in competition, which I think is really, really important. These

are the people in their community, these are the people they go to school with, so if they want to come out and do a pretty cool experience and cross something off the bucket list, they can come out and join us that night.”

For more information on the York Regional Police Associations’ 2020 Polar Plunge, visit polarplunge.ca/York. Registration is \$75, but this registration fee is waived once you’ve raised \$150 in sponsorship.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Expression of disgust

4. A place to unwind

7. A type of cooking range

8. Grasp tightly

10. Sea eagles

12. Carb dish

13. Late-night host

14. Revolutions per minute

16. Indicates odd or erroneous

17. FDR’s military chief of staff

19. Swiss river

20. Norwegian district and river

21. A form of motivation

25. Car mechanics group

26. Once a must-have home theater accessory

27. Broken branch

29. Apple and pumpkin are two

30. Skeletal muscle

31. Small Eurasian deer

32. Tight-lipped fellow

39. Comes after a cut

41. A place one lives

42. Cognizant of

43. Albanian monetary unit

44. Carrot’s partner

45. Famed garden

46. Chilean seaport

48. Days (Spanish)

49. Sudden anxiety

50. 100 square meters

51. A type of beer

52. French/Belgian river

CLUES DOWN

1. Spanish dish

2. Concurs

3. ___ and her sisters

4. Patti Hearst’s captors

5. Used to refer to cited works

6. A state of excited movement

8. Advertising term (abbr.)

9. Nocturnal S. American rodent

11. New York art district

14. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

15. Pre-release viewing

18. Northwestern Canadian territory (abbr.)

19. Consumed

20. Falters

22. Radioactive form of an element

23. Catch a wrongdoer

24. Breeze through

27. Thick piece of something

28. Yellowish-brown color

29. “The Raven” poet

31. Rural free delivery (abbr.)

32. Creating

33. Supervises flying

34. Northwestern state

35. Was obligated to repay

36. Diverging in lines from a common center

37. Bleak

38. We all have them

39. Hit with the palm of one’s hand

40. Sea that’s part of the western Pacific

44. Political action committee

47. Famed Spanish soldier El ___

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Second Hockey for Hodge is another Family Day Success

From page 14
tournament throughout the day.
The hockey tournament ran on both rinks from 9:30 a.m., and finished shortly after 4 p.m., thanks to a thrilling final in the end.
The blue team faced off against the maroon team with one-minute periods. After a few overtimes and some one-on-one action to solve the winner, Number 18 from the maroon team buried the game-winning goal to win the tournament.
“I watched a couple of the games, it was good,” said Hodgins, pleased with the competitiveness and wishing he could have been out there on the ice.
All of the players, wore uniforms with a Hockey For Hodge crest embroidered on the jersey. Inside the community centre, people were wearing sweaters and hats with that logo on it.
Families and children came out to skate afterwards and were joined by Carlton The Bear, the mascot for the Toronto Maple Leafs.
Inside the banquet hall, beers, burgers, pizza and wings were being served all day.
Raffle prizes for a signed Wendall Clark jersey, a signed Auston Matthews

jersey, a signed Kyle Lowry jersey and much more, were available to be won.
Toques, snapbacks and the sweaters were being sold at the front table of the banquet, with the Hockey for Hodge designed logo on the front.
That is, all thanks to a gentleman named Dan, according to Chris.
Chris Hodgins’ brother, Mike, explained the whole idea and the sponsors who have contributed so much for this to happen. Nightworks Design Limited and Trillium Property Services have made hefty contributions.
Maple Leafs Sports and Entertainment (MLSE) jumped in on the action along with Apple Storage.
To witness this event is something special. To see Chris Hodgins’ progress in comparison to when he suffered his Sea Doo accident just over a year ago is breathtaking.
“It’s night and day. When I was here last year, I was barely able to drive my chair on my own. Now, I’m more than capable to control my chair on my own, I got here on my own, I’m going back on my own,” explained Hodgins, as he continues to become more independent and strengthen his upper body muscles.
Throughout his recovery, Mike

Hodgins says the doctors want to see how Chris operates everything using his right hand. It is expected in May he will receive a prognosis from the doctors.
Right now, Chris operates his chair with his left hand.
It won’t be for another five to seven

years before the doctors can discover what his limitations are.
For the coming years, Chris, hopes to make this an annual event.
“As long as people want to come out and support, then we’re going to keep it going.”

THINGS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19
Join the Aurora Chamber of Commerce for the annual Mayor’s Luncheon at the Royal Venetian Mansion (400 Industrial Parkway South). The lunch will feature a keynote speech from Mayor Tom Mrakas. For more information, visit aurorachamber.on.ca.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20
Neighbourhood Network (14988 Yonge Street) invites all organizations interested in learning more about the 2020 Magna Hoedown Application and charitable requirements to participate in these Info Sessions. Registration is required due to room capacity. For more information, email info@neighbourhoodnetwork.org.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20
The York Symphony Orchestra presents A Night at the Opera tonight at Trinity Anglican Church (79 Victoria Street) from 8 – 10 p.m. Join us for a concert of opera favorites. This memorable performance features the greatest overtures and arias from the world of opera. Experience the splendour of voice and orchestra as only opera can express! For more information, call 647-849-8403 or visit yorksymphony.ca.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24
The Aurora Seniors’ Centre and CHATS (Community & Home Assistance to Seniors) will host a discussion Exploring Relationships: Discussion on

Elder Abuse, How to Break the Silence from 5.30 – 6.30 p.m. Featured guest speaker is Courtney Farhat, Public Education Coordinator at Yellow Brick House. For more information, contact Jazmine at 905-713-3373.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25
The Aurora Legion will be flipping pancakes this morning for Shrove Tuesday. Come out for pancakes, served with homefries, a choice of sausage or bacon and fruit cocktail. Tickets are \$8 per person and serving will run from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

The Canadian Federation of University Women Aurora-Newmarket hosts their monthly meeting today from 1- 3.30 p.m. at the Aurora Legion. 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 February monthly meeting. Join us to learn about the History of Eaton Hall with our guest speaker, Kelly Mathews, Author of Eaton Hall: Pride of King Township “History of Eaton Hall.”

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27
Canadian Blood Services will host a Blood Donation Event today at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) from 2 – 7 p.m. 96 donors are needed.



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Parking crunch addressed in new traffic study

By Brock Weir

As Aurora moves to make the historic downtown core a destination once again, pointed questions are often asked just where people are supposed to park if they plan to drop into local businesses or, in the future, enjoy Library Square.

This is an issue set to be addressed this week as Council reviews an updated Master Transportation Study.

Within the plan are a number of proposals to address the parking crunch not only for individuals and businesses in Aurora’s Downtown Core but also commuters looking to travel into Downtown Toronto for work.

Among the key proposals contained within the plan is one from Metrolinx to turn land previously occupied by the Town’s Public Works Department on Scanlon Court into a parking lot to accommodate an estimated 400 vehicles.

The parking situation at the GO Station is set to only get worse as Metrolinx prepares to accommodate

both double-tracking to make way for all-day two-way train service on the Barrie line and the construction of an underpass at Wellington Street. Both related projects will take up a significant portion of GO’s Berczy Street lands already allocated for parking.

“A parking needs assessment was undertaken as part of the TMP (Transportation Master Plan) to document current parking conditions within the Aurora Promenade, including Yonge Street from Wellington to Church Street, Library Square, and the Aurora GO Station area,” says Town Traffic Analyst Michael Bat, going on to outline a number of short-term recommendations pegged at the 1 – 5 year window. “Metrolinx is proposing to construct a new surface parking lot at 9 Scanlon Court with an estimated supply of more than 400 parking spaces. This is primarily to offset the loss of existing Berczy Street surface parking lot on the west side of the rail corridor to the new platform construction.

“As part of the proposed Wellington

Street Grade Separation Project, Berczy Street will be realigned and there will be reduction in the number of parking spaces related to this project.”

Additional short-term recommendations include a further look at on-street parking on Yonge.

“If the traffic demand along Yonge Street from Wellington Street to Church Street increases, on-street parking along this segment should be strictly enforced to maximize safety and reduce congestion.”

On-street parking is also addressed in the long-term window, including consideration for new on-street parking policies to prevent GO commuters “from parking on adjacent residential streets, including clear signage and information on where appropriate overflow parking is located” and the chance for residents to apply for on-street parking permits for accessible users.

“Further study is required to determine an appropriate solution to address area-specific needs,” says Bat. Beyond the five-year window, further

opportunities might present themselves in the consolidation of privately-owned parking lots in the downtown core and the possibility of using land currently under the jurisdiction of the Lt. Governor John Graves Simcoe Armoury on Industrial Parkway South for parking.

“Consolidation of private lots into municipally owned and managed lots promotes efficiency in land use, creates land for new development, and results in increased pedestrian activity in the area,” says Bat. “This may be achieved through new development application process and/or land acquisition. It is to be noted that land acquisition costs requires further consideration if this option will be considered.

“215 Industrial Parkway South is a property owned by the Town of Aurora and is currently leased [to the Armoury]. Although this property is located outside of the study limits, there is a possibility of this property to be converted to municipal parking lot in the future, if necessary.”

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