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Vol. 5 No. 38

Week of July 12, 2005

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You walked on the wild side if you were part of the Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society's garden tour Sunday and you visited Henning Malmholt's incredible efforts on Clubine Court. A partial view of his garden is shown, inset. His was one of eight Aurora and area gardens available on the tour which attracted scores of visitors.

Auroran photos by David Falconer

Aurora retail bustled years ago

Long before the current convenience store opened on Wellington Street East, just east of the bank, there was a Home Hardware store but before that the

first IGA store in Canada operated there by Larry Rubin.

Even earlier, the building was once the site of a general store operated by the Fingold family.

Aurora student joins Historica Fair group

Aurora's Caitlin Nishimura has been selected to join the Ontario delegation of 15 students attending the 11th annual National Historica Fair in Saskatoon this week.

In celebration of Saskatchewan's centennial, the National Historica Fair will bring together 165 young students from across the country for a week of learning and adventure that culminates with a public display of their history projects at the Saskatoon Field House.

Caitlin's class project "Remember Me" is a play written and performed by the students of a Grade 8 class from Highview Public School.

The play tells the story of the Halifax explosion when two munitions ships collided in Halifax harbour. The blast killed 1,500 people and wounded 9,000 others.

The play tells the story of how these events affected the people of Halifax.

Purpose of the play was not only to tell this story, but also allow the audience to relate the event to recent world tragedies.

While in Saskatoon, Caitlin will meet others from Labrador City to Resolute Bay, Nunavut, to Zeballos, British Columbia, and all points in between.

They will spend the week exploring many historic sites in the Saskatoon region such as Batoche, Fort Carlton, Duck Lake, the Diefenbaker Canada Centre, the Saskatoon Western Development Museum and the Historic Marr Residence.

The National Fair delegates were selected from more than 220,000 students in more than 1,000 communities who participated in Regional and Local Historica Fairs in May.

The Historica Foundation engages Canadians in the stories that define its identity and the events that shape the country's future.

There was the mother and the father, sons Phil and Harvey and daughter Shirley.

It was a combination grocery and dry goods store with a huge opening in the wall of what was once two stores.

Years ago, Rolling's fruit store was across the street from the Fingold store while Joe Mitchell's hardware store and Frank Teasdale's grocery store were located farther east on Wellington Street.

Such is the changing face of Aurora.

A bank now occupies the site of the former Queen's Hotel and across the road is the third edition of the Bank of Montreal, Aurora's oldest bank.

On Yonge Street there was Cousins Dairy where Wellington's restaurant is now located.

For many years, the Trio Restaurant operated there, and once, on the second floor, there was a bowling alley.

When it was Cousins, Bob Montgomery operated the dairy bar in front of the store and in the back Reg Glass made ice cream.

He was the brother of Don Glass who operated the dairy along with Fred Cousins.

At that time dairies delivered milk and one of the deliverymen was Bud Gilbert, Aurora's 2005

Please see page 12

Now you see them...



...now you don't



Two weeks ago, The Auroran ran a picture of the two trees in the top photo with a resident fighting to save them from being removed because of reconstruction of the Vandorf Sideroad. The resident was not successful. The two trees, believed to be more than 100 years old, were removed last week. They were part of a total of 21 trees that were taken from the side of the road to allow crews to rebuild the Vandorf from Industrial Parkway South to Bayview Avenue. Officials claimed the two maples, located near Jarvis Avenue, had root damage and would not have lived more than another seven years had they been spared. Virginia Johnson, who fought for the survival of the trees, noted "I'd rather enjoy the shade, colour and graceful beauty of those mature maples for five to seven years than to watch a sapling struggle for survival".

Auroran photos by Ron Wallace



Brian



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COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

CONTINUING

Aurora Farmers' Market continues every Saturday in the Temperance Street parking lot until Thanksgiving. Event opens at 8 a.m.

Aurora Rotary Club meets every Monday evening at 6.30 p.m. at Gabriel's on Yonge Street. New members welcome. For further information, call 905-841-1352.

During the month of July the Skylight Gallery in the Town Hall will feature the artwork of Rosie Schroder. Regular viewing hours are 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

On the first Wednesday of every month from 9 a.m. to noon, a satellite constituency office for Vaughan/King/Aurora MPP Greg Sorbara will be open in the councillors' lounge at the Town Hall. Call 1-877-880-6770 for information.

Every Friday night from 8.15 to 10.15 p.m. at the Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School gym there will be a basketball and volleyball drop-in for ages 14 to 18. Call 905-726-4760 for further information.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge #148 meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m. at 15216 Yonge Street (south of Wellington). For more information, call 905-830-9205.

Masons' Rising Sun Lodge meets the first Thursday of each month at The Rising Sun Temple, 57 Mosley Street, Aurora at 7.30 p.m. For further information contact Bob Butler at h.butler@sympatico.ca or 905-713-3314.

Robertson Masonic Lodge meets the third Saturday each month at 57 Mosley Street at 10.30 a.m. Coffee club at 9 a.m., lunch at noon. Call 905-727-3032 or 905-727-1080.

Helping Hand: Gently used clothing for women and children, at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, every Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.30 - 11.30 a.m. Wednesdays 5.30 - 7 p.m. For more information, call 905-727-6101.

Gamblers Anonymous, every Tuesday night, Trinity Anglican Church, Victoria Street, 7.30 p.m.

Progressive Euchre every Thursday night. Aurora Legion. 7.30 p.m. Call 905-727-9932.

Canadian Federation of University Women Aurora/Newmarket welcomes new members throughout the year for monthly meetings and special interest groups. Contact Barb at 905-713-3587. Trinity Anglican Church, Aurora.

JULY & AUGUST

Primary school registrations continue until August 25, at the admissions office of the York Catholic District School Board, 320 Bloomington Road West from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. On Saturday, August 27, register from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

JULY 15

Deadline for public comment for the Class Environmental Assessment for the Whitwell/State Farm Sewage Pumping Station to be located on State Farm Way just east of Leslie Street which is scheduled for construction later this year. For further information call Paul Husson, project director at 905-709-5825.

JULY 18

Aurora Writers' Group monthly meeting at 7.30 p.m. in the Holland Room at the Aurora Town Hall. Adult writers of all genres and skill levels welcome. Writing exercises, discussion. Free. For further information call Malcolm at 905-898-5484.

JULY 20

Concert in the Park. Cindy Thompson, old time fiddle music. Town Park. 7 - 9 p.m.

Afternoon tea on the verandah at Hillary House between 2 and 4 p.m. Just drop in! Price per person for tea and a tour is \$5. Hillary House is at 15372 Yonge Street. For more information call 905-727-4015.

JULY 27

Concert in the Park. Hot Rocks and Robert Wotherspoon - Rolling Stones Tribute Band. Town Park. 7 - 9 p.m.

Afternoon tea on the verandah at Hillary House between 2 and 4 p.m. Just drop in! Price per person for tea and a tour is \$5. Hillary House is at 15372 Yonge Street. For more information call 905-727-4015.

AUGUST 3

Concert in the Park. Hurricane Big Band. Town Park. 7 - 9 p.m.

AUGUST 10

Concert in the Park. Blackboard Blues Band. Town Park. 7 - 9 p.m.

AUGUST 16

Aurora Council meets at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of the Town Hall. This is the only council or committee meeting to be held during the month of August.

AUGUST 17

Concert in the Park. Hotel California, Eagles Tribute Band. Town Park. 7 - 9 p.m.

Afternoon tea on the verandah at Hillary House between 2 and 4 p.m. Just drop in! Price per person for tea and a tour

is \$5. Hillary House is at 15372 Yonge Street. For more information call 905-727-4015.

AUGUST 24

Afternoon tea on the verandah at Hillary House between 2 and 4 p.m. Just drop in! Price per person for tea and a tour is \$5. Hillary House is at 15372 Yonge Street. For more information call

905-727-4015.

SEPTEMBER 10

Mark this date for the annual Candlelight Tour of Homes sponsored by the Aurora Historic Society with all proceeds going towards the restoration of historic Hillary House. For more information call 905-727-8991.

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Peggy Thomas, left, and Marianne Still, Adult Day Program Co-ordinator for CHATS (Community Home Assistance To Seniors), cut the cake officially marking the opening of the adult day program's new home at 126 Wellington Street West in Aurora last week. The program has moved from its St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church hall location on Mosley Street.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Pathway marks anniversary

The Aurora-based Pathway of Peace celebrates its fifth anniversary Friday, July 15th, with a plaque commemoration and a smudging ceremony by Grey Eagle, who opened the pathway's sold-out benefit concert earlier this year.

Special guests at the event include Aurora Mayor Tim Jones and Juliette's Place Executive Director Margaret Haynes.

Scarborough women's shelter Juliette's Place is in the process of developing its own Pathway of Peace.

York Regional Police Chief Armand La Barge is also scheduled to attend.

Officially opened by then Ontario Lieutenant Governor Hilary M. Weston five years ago on June 29, 2000, one of the dreams for the Pathway of Peace co-founders Filomena Williams

and Mark LaVigne was to see it eventually develop into an international network of community initiatives to raise money for and awareness of the issue of violence against women and children.

The Pathway of Peace has generated about \$125,000 in revenues so far for women's shelter Yellow Brick House.

The Pathway of Peace is built through the centre of Temperance Park, just west of Aurora's main intersection of Yonge and Wellington Streets.

Bricks are being sold for \$25 (families and individuals), \$100 (small business) and \$1,000 (corporate).

Contact Yellow Brick House at (905) 727-0930 Ext. 2241 to purchase a brick or visit www.pathway-ofpeace.org.

Program lacks attention

It was back in September, 2003, when York Regional Police announced the start of the "Safe Streets, Nice Neighbourhoods" project, which was designed to target residential traffic complaint areas and school and community safety zones with a zero tolerance attitude.

Spokesmen said police would take enforcement units into subdivisions to target aggressive drivers who chose to jeopardize the safety of children and other citizens.

Over the years several Aurora residents have complained to council about speeding motorists in various Aurora subdivisions.

In previous police residential enforcement campaigns, it was found that about 80 per cent of the drivers charged with speeding were residents of the community in which they were stopped.

The police promised to target speeding, stop sign and school bus violations and other traffic related laws.

Chief Armand La Barge urged motorists to assume responsibility for the safety of their community and drive with care.

Since then, little or nothing has happened to control speeding, stop sign violations or other traffic infractions in residential areas of Aurora.

At every council meeting there is normally a delegation from a residential neighbourhood complaining about speeding or other traffic violations on residential streets.

Either that or there's a recommendation from the Traffic Safety Advisory Board seeking more multi-way

stops in hopes of controlling speeding on residential streets or a reduction in the speed limit to slow the traffic.

When stop signs and lower speed limits didn't work, residents demanded speed humps as a means of slowing the traffic.

So far speed humps have been constructed on Kennedy Street and will be soon installed on Golf Links Drive with several more streets being considered.

This is being done in spite of the fact that for every five speed humps emergency vehicles could be delayed by as much as a minute, thereby endangering the lives of citizens.

It is obvious the Safe Streets, Nice Neighbourhood program is not working as few residential streets ever see a police cruiser or a police officer.

Because of citizen complaints, time after time council has authorized staff to request York Regional Police to monitor certain streets as a result of the complaints.

However, no reports are ever received, at least in

open council, as to the results of such monitoring.

With the rapid growth of the region and the increase in more serious crimes it may be difficult to provide manpower and resources to the Safe Streets, Nice Neighbourhoods program, but if that is the case the public should be so advised.

Every year the police budget is increased with the addition of new officers and civilian staff, but none of the new resources appears to be going to keeping residential streets safe.

Municipal taxpayers shouldn't have to pay for additional signs to meet the requirements of the Highway Traffic Act to lower speed limits, pay for unnecessary stop signs or pay to install speed humps to control speeding, when that is the responsibility of the regional police force.

Granted police officers can't be on every street all the time but under the Safe Streets, Nice Neighbourhood program taxpayers should be entitled to some attention, which is sadly lacking.



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Poor Richard

Government education is needed in class

*Education is badly needed,
For politicians to do right;
Instead of being deadbeats,
They will have to be oh so bright!*
- Poor Richard's Scrapbook

There's no doubt that politics and politicians around the world today have little respect or trust from their electors.

The decline in voting is a good indication of the poor respect in which politicians generally are held.

One of the problems is that new politicians pick up all the bad habits of their more experienced colleagues.

They learn to live high on the hog at the public trough and forget they were elected to serve the people not the party.

The Ministry of Education has been requested over the years to initiate a course in local government in the school system, but to no avail.

Ministry education officials claimed local government was being taught in various courses.

Back in the mid 1970s, members of the former Bureau of Municipal Research became concerned about the lack of knowledge of government at all levels and decided to do something about it.

But even before that, in 1966 the Association of Women Electors submitted a brief to the government requesting that school children have the opportunity to learn more about the workings of local government.

There was also the Ontario Conference on Local Government.

The Small Urban Section of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario also pressed the government for action.

Some teachers took it upon themselves to teach civics by taking the students out of the classroom and into the local political arena.

In 1968, a total of 70 students from R. K. Smith's Grade 10 class at Aurora's Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School visited Queen's Park.

The next year, in co-operation with Aurora Council and staff, Smith arranged to hold a mock election for his students for council positions, and appointees to staff.

The students sat next to their council counterparts at two or three regular council meetings and then held their own mock council meeting at the high school.

Parents, grandparents, friends and members of council attended the student council meeting.

It was obvious the students had picked up many of the bad habits of their senior colleagues.

Steve Ostick was elected student mayor and later his father Len Ostick was elected a councillor for the municipality and served for many years.

While they discussed many current problems facing council at that time, the students also introduced several new resolutions, one of which was the appointment of the Aurora Citizen of the Year.

They argued that the town should recognize one of its own as the Citizen of the Year.

Members of the town council picked up on the idea and, in 1970, Bob Blick was named as Aurora's first Citizen of the Year.

Originally the Citizen of the Year was named at the Birthday Ball on the eve of the July First activities.

Today the Citizen of the Year is named during the Civic Awards Ceremonies.

Unfortunately, teacher R. K. Smith was transferred to another school and no other teacher was willing to devote the time and energy to carry on the program and the student council idea in Aurora died.

Federal Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament Flora MacDonald picked up the challenge in 1976.

Speaking to the Canadian Teachers' Federation she said the real basis of politics had never been taught in the school and there was no effort to do so.

Some teachers invited local politicians to visit the classroom to explain local government and most politicians who participated said afterwards that the students asked more informed and penetrating questions than at a ratepayers' meeting.

It was suggested that guidelines for the lessons be prepared in consultation with members of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Ontario Association of Clerks and Treasurers, but nothing happened.

If teachers don't feel comfortable in teaching local government, there are many retired politicians willing to help and make government more meaningful and understandable.

Give it a try!



Above is a photograph of the 1955-56 Aurora Legion Peewee Allstars. In the photo are, front row, left to right, Tim Hoffman, Ivan Anderson, George Harrison, Fred Hughes, Michael Teasdale, Jim Preston, Verne Eveleigh; back row, left to right, Shorty Heard (Legion representative), David Pringle, James Fox, John Wilson, Donald Faiers, Terry Stone, Ted Heaney (coach), Keith Wright, Paul Sisman, Jim Wells, and ? Mathews (manager). The photo belongs to Verne Eveleigh of Cookstown.

From the Editor

Bullet narrowly missed heart of the newspaper

From the editor,

There isn't enough room to recount the number of bullets I have dodged in this business over the years, but none came closer than the one fired late last Monday afternoon.

I have worked in this business so long I have first-hand knowledge of hot lead, chases, type that was backwards, flat-bed presses, linotype machines, headlines that had to be rewritten if they didn't fit and a plethora of other "olden-days" newspaper objects.

What five people and a computer can do these days would have taken two dozen people to do back in the sixties.

But the operative word here is "computer", either the world's number one

assistant or the world's number one headache.

It was about 4 p.m. and for no more than two seconds, the lights went out. Then they were on again. All the computers, of course, went black then began that long re-boot while the machine tries to figure out if it's all right or not.

In the production department, we planned for such an occasion. We have backups, power bars, surge protectors, battery packs, all the goodies to make sure a power failure won't bring us to our knees.

Monday, we were brought to our knees.

The entire paper - all 16 pages of it, only minutes away from being sent to the printer - disappeared.

"It's in there some-

where," said Production Manager Cynthia Proctor. "I can see it, but I can't open it."

Every attempt from every angle resulted in the same error message.

That famous line, from the TV series Six Million Dollar Man, suddenly came into play.

"We can rebuild him. We have the technology."

Five hours later, electronically, the new 16-page newspaper left Aurora for the printing press in Barrie, a number of hours after our normal deadline.

The people in Barrie rose to the occasion, and the freshly-printed newspaper was back in Aurora the following morning, as though nothing at all had happened.

So, dear reader, if you

found typographical errors in last week's paper that made you wonder what it is we do here from one week to the next, I apologize.

We caught some of them, but we didn't catch them all.

Too busy ducking that bullet.

Ron Wallace
Editor

AURORAN

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At 75 Mary Street, Unit #3
Aurora, L4G 1G3
Owner & Publisher
Rosemary Schumaker
rosamary@auroran.com

Editorial
Ron Wallace
ron@auroran.com
Dick Illingworth
dick@auroran.com

Photography
David Falconer

Advertising
Diane Buchanan
diane@auroran.com
Roy Urbach
roy@auroran.com

Production
Cynthia Proctor
cynthia@auroran.com

All Departments
905-727-3300

Classifieds
905-727-7128
classifieds@auroran.com
Facsimile Machine
905-727-2620

Editorial Department
rwall9999@aol.com

Editorial policy
Opinions expressed by columnists, contributors and letter writers are not necessarily those of The Auroran. Letters must include name and phone number, although number will not be published. Names may be withheld assuming a compelling reason to do so. Letters may be edited or refused. All contents protected by copyright.

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

Letter to the Editor

Bowling event 2nd best in the country

To the editor,

Grand total: \$235,133!
Thank you to everyone who made Big Brothers Big Sisters of York Bowl for Kids Sake 2005 the huge success that it was.

The campaign, led by Honourary Chair York Regional Police chief Armand La Barge saw more than 1,100 bowlers participate in 11 events across York Region and Bradford West Gwillimbury along with 150 community sponsors listed on

its roster.

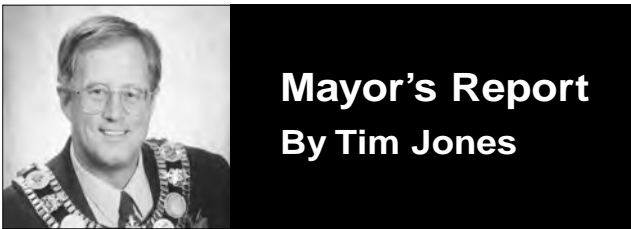
The success of this 30th annual fund raising event ensures that the many children who now benefit through the friendship and mentoring programs provided continue to do so and allows for increasing the number of boys and girls who can be served.

Interesting note - a group of six people from Scotiabank became the top fundraising team in Canada with results totalling more than \$17,000.

On another note, people of York Region and Bradford West Gwillimbury, congratulations on making BBBSY Bowl for Kids Sake the second largest in the country.

In the end though, the real winners are the children whose lives will be made better because so many took some time to extend a helping hand.

Maddy Nichol
Big Brothers
Big Sisters
of York



York Region Annual Report - 2004

Some statistics taken out of York Region's 2004 Annual Report:

- The Region's operating and capital budget exceeded \$1.7 billion.
- Staff at the Region including regional staff and police numbered 3,400.
- A total of \$74.6 million was collected in development charges.
- York Region had one of the lowest costs for administration in the Province.
- York provided \$3.2 million to Conservation Authorities for water improvements, land conservation and education.
- In partnership with the Salvation Army, York helped 284 households maintain their housing through the Region's Homelessness Prevention Program.
- York administered 14,540 flu shots, a 28 per cent increase from 2003.
- Dental Services provided dental screening to 66,599 children.
- A private well water initiative was launched to encourage private well users to test at least three times annually - 600 well kits distributed.
- 11,389 food premises inspections were completed.
- Two additional ambulances were added to provide a total of 26 ambulances and six paramedic response units in the Region.

- 32 long-term care beds were added to provide a total of 232 beds or 84,680 facility program days.
- York endorsed the Centre and Corridors Strategy to encourage development that is transit supportive and consistent with intensification, density and urban design policies.
- The Human Services Planning Coalition established a multi-sector action group to lead a community wide consultation process which developed "The Road to Inclusivity - An Action Plan for York Region" to make the Region an ethno-culturally inclusive community.
- York expanded the Regional Forest tract by 24 hectares in partnership with the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation and Land Trust.
- York planted more than 55,000 trees and shrubs in the Region.
- York implemented a household source separated organic waste pilot in Markham resulting in a 30 per cent reduction in

landfill needs in the study area.

- Transit improvements increased the average weekday transit usage to 55,000 passengers.
- York Region Transit achieved a 50.2 per cent revenue/cost ratio in 2004.
- Secured \$150 million from York Region, and the governments of Ontario and Canada to fund the initial phase of Rapid Transit.
- The Police Board appointed 138 new and 21 experienced officers.
- York opened a new Community Resource Centre in Richmond Hill to include minor accident reporting among other services.

The Region was recognized with a number of awards in areas of Finance and Administration, Planning and Development, Emergency Medical Services, Accessibility Planning and Policing.

Letters to the Editor

Kids' eating contest out of date: reader

To the editor,

Recently, Aurora Cable Internet's channel 10 aired highlights of the Canada Day celebrations from the local area.

It was interesting to review the cultural festivities that were held during the day and to reflect on Canada's diversity.

One event, however, did not seem very appropriate. In fact, it was gross.

There was an eating contest where several children had to eat a full plate of chicken wings.

The winner was the person who could devour the BBQ chicken wings the fastest.

In Barrie, the Live 8 Concert, was just recently held to raise funds to alleviate global hunger and child poverty.

People were gathering to challenge governments to improve foreign aid policies to combat economic underdevelopment in the Third World.

It is wrong to promote eating contests while the majority of the world's population is starving.

Furthermore Statistics Canada reports that in the past 25 years, obesity has increased dramatically for both men and women.

For two to 17-year-olds, obesity rates tripled from three per cent to nine per cent; and for adults, aged 25 to 34 years old, the obesity rate soared from nine per cent to 21 per cent.

For people 75 years and older, the obesity rate has risen sharply from 11 per cent to 24 per cent during the same period of time.

It is clear that our modern day diets of junk food and the lack of exercise for all age groups in our society are showing up now.

It is now the time to drop the eating contest event from Canada Day celebrations.

**Jim Jackson
Aurora**



Cathy's Corner



Who tooted?

Is there a polite way to toot anymore?
Toot just once, just a little bit, and people all around you will get offended.
Even if you tooted by accident.
It's not really surprising.
Horns have a bad reputation. The devil has them.
When people go bad, they grow them. And when people get mad, they honk them.
It wasn't always this way.
Once upon a brainstorm, the car horn was as a safety device.
Somebody discovered that no two cars can occupy the same space at the same time...without insurance, and came up with a heavy duty party favour to protect against people who flunked physics but still insist on driving cars.
Back then, it was "little toot, salute", with big toots enabling drivers to stay calm while screaming at each other. It was very civilized.
Not anymore.
Today, drivers lay on the horn as a prelude to shifting into modern monster mouth gear, but that doesn't mean the quaint sign language that dates back to cave man days has lost its appeal.
The vehicle has become an army tank, the road a war zone, and the horn a four-letter word.
The subtle nuances of the toot have been forever lost.
In spite of the fact that I've never seen a speed limit sign with fine print that says "just a suggestion", nor a stop sign on which the word "optional" appears in brackets, it's become trendy for drivers who have such hallucinations to blare their horns in disgust at those of us who respect the rules of the road.
They call it "road rage" - how fitting to use a pair of four letter words to describe this unwelcome phenomenon.
Early warning signs include people tailgating pedestrians, the use of speed humps as launching pads, and, of course, drive-thru domination.
Late last summer, an Aurora woman wrote a letter to the editor of The Auroran describing her experience.

She was not only the target of a horn blasting symphony of profanity, but the ogre driving the SUV behind her went so far as to get out of his vehicle to pound on her window.

In Aurora? Who let the dogs out?
Stuff like that only happens in big, impersonal cities. Or does it?

Last September, the Toronto Star reported that Jo Kennedy, a regular at a Tim Horton's in Vaughan, surprises motorists behind her in the drive-thru several times a week by paying for their order. I was impressed.

Such anonymous acts of kindness don't usually make headlines.

Heck, they don't usually happen. Or maybe they do usually happen, but don't usually make headlines, so we think they don't usually happen.

Could it be that there isn't enough horn tooting going on?

I began to suspect this when I exuberantly shared this inspiring, uplifting story with my sister.

"That happened to me once," said Dianna, "in Aurora!"
Did Jo visit? Or maybe there's more than one Jo Kennedy in the world ...

Inasmuch as the world sometimes seems full of people who deplete it, it is equally well stocked with people who make it a better place.

Which we become is a matter of personal choice.

When met with hostility, we can return in kind, becoming the very evil we claim to stand against.


Or, we can return in kindness, patience...maybe even choose to do something outrageous, like buy the troll a cup of coffee.

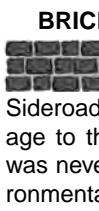
That would be like tooting the horns of all the anonymous Aurorans who keep Aurora small no matter how much it grows.


Hmmm...maybe there is a polite way to toot after all.


**Cathy Vrancic welcomes e-mail at:
laughingmatters@aci.on.ca**


By DICK ILLINGWORTH

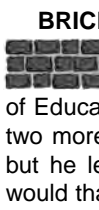
 **BOUQUETS** to the Town of Aurora for distributing the 2005/2006 very informative Recycling Waste Collection Calendar for residents who have a poor memory.


 **BRICKBATS** to members of Aurora Council and/or staff for keeping the heavy loss of mature trees secret during the reconstruction of the Vandorf Sideroad. Staff reports never indicated the amount of damage to the trees or alternatives and the damage to trees was never discussed in open council. Where was the environmental committee?

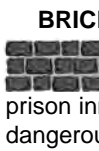
 **BOUQUETS** to the students of Highview Public School in Aurora for participating in a Jump Rope for Heart event and raising \$27,000 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation.


 **BRICKBATS** to the operators of the toll billing system for Highway 407 for continuing to send invoices to people who have never used the toll highway. Graham Crichton received an invoice for using the highway, when he was visiting in Scotland. It was another Mike Harris deal with the devil.

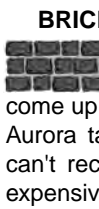
 **BOUQUETS** to the member of Regional Council who will request a report of how the region's grant of \$500,000 of taxpayers' money to the Red Cross and World Vision Canada for Tsunami Relief was spent. With all the reports of money not getting there, it would be interesting to know. In addition, did Aurora Council ever receive a reply to its request for a Ministry investigation.


 **BRICKBATS** to the Toronto District School Board for allowing themselves to get trapped into a contract in which they have to pay leaving Director of Education David Reid his annual salary of \$230,000 for two more years. If he had been fired it might be different, but he left to take another job. How many school books would that have bought?


 **BOUQUETS** to a member of Aurora Council who will request a report from the ice and aquatic users of the new recreational complex about how their fundraising efforts are going. The ice surfaces will be operational in September but no reports in public session. If you're not worried, the taxpayers are!

 **BRICKBATS** to newspapers, especially the Toronto Sun, for the number of photos and stories about the release of Canada's most hated prison inmate, as if she was some type of heroine. She's a dangerous psychopath and should be treated as one.

 **BOUQUETS** to the Ontario McGuinty government for reopening trade offices in London, Los Angeles, Tokyo and New Delhi to join Ontario offices in Munich, New York and Shanghai. Until 1993 Ontario had 17 trade offices known as Ontario House with an Agent General, but were closed by the Bob Rae NDP government.

 **BRICKBATS** to the City of Toronto council members for always crying about how poor they are yet were willing to spend 13 months and \$4 million to come up with the new logo and tagline "Toronto Unlimited". Aurora taxpayers got off easier with the town's logo. We can't recall the actual cost, so it couldn't have been too expensive.

 **BOUQUETS** to all the students who participated in the "What I Love About Aurora" essay and visual presentation contest. The essays should be mandatory reading for all members of council.

 **BRICKBATS** to members of Aurora Council for debating issues in the local press, through letters to the editor, instead of the council chambers where such debate belongs.

Letters to the Editor

Citizen involvement - just who's in charge, Buck wants to know

To the editor,

I have never agreed that citizens should be involved on regular council committees.

It creates a shambles of the decision-making process and completely negates the principle of accountability.

The Municipal Act permits citizen appointees but never more than elected members. They should never be a majority.

Only the electorate can delegate their authority. They do that at the time of an election when they choose the people who will occupy the seats around the council table.

The entire organization and structure of a council is designed to provide the electorate with the opportunity to know at all times what items of business are being decided and who is taking what position.

They may not be keeping a tally but they certainly can over a period of three years gain a perception of how a councillor's values might reflect their own and help with a determination in the next election.

In Aurora, we have eight councillors. Only six on committees. Not all councillors attend all committee meetings.

There are about 70 citizen appointees. Not all citizens attend committee meetings. More often than not, non-elected citizens are making the decisions to recommend to council.

When the recommendation gets to council, it is considered bad form for a councillor to challenge

it because the citizen members have given a lot of thought to the matter and they should not be challenged.

If it wasn't serious, it would be comical.

We complain about how few people come out to vote. Some people ponder the intelligence of those who do. Then as soon as the election is over we hand over responsibility to people who did not ask for it.

We recently added two appointees to the finance committee.

This committee has been

relatively moribund.

Councillor Bill Hogg is the chair. Mayor Tim Jones and I are members.

Scott Somerville, our acting finance director, and John Rogers, our Chief Administrative Officer, are attendees and we have a recording secretary.

Prior to the appointments, I made my usual arguments against but this time with more specificity. Public sector financial management is substantially different from the corporate sector.

The appointees were to be experts from the private sector.

It was my contention they would have more to learn than to teach and I could gain little from the town's perspective in spending the time needed to convey that message delicately.

A good part of my enjoyment in politics is the opportunity to state in the bluntest terms exactly what I believe to be logical and expecting other politicians to do the same.

Tip toeing around any issue is not what I do well.

Notwithstanding my argument, two citizens with expertise were appointed.

At the first meeting, they came on like gangbusters. It quickly became apparent they had been briefed.

Their comments were coordinated, interspersed only by the chair's repeated assertions that councillors are elected in a popularity contest and therefore not competent to do the job thereby creating the need for non-elected appointees to do it for us.

Frankly, I surprised myself with the restraint I exercised under these particular circumstances.

After the second meeting I found myself still concerned about the direction of this committee.

The town was at the point of appointing a new financial director.

I believed he should be part of any discussion of change in financial management. Again I was in the minority.

So, I sent a memo to my council colleagues expressing my concern.

It was spare in its con-

struction, precise and respectful, and noted my solitary position. Out of courtesy, I forwarded a copy to the two appointees. It is a public document.

It triggered an entirely unexpected response from one of the appointees; boorish, brutish, rude and insulting and quite impolite.

He believes that because he pays my salary that makes me his employee and subject to his direction and he deserves an apology.

The finance committee scheduled a "workshop" for June 29th to continue the direction started.

It was rescheduled to July 7th because the chair was not available. On July 7th, the chair was not available.

As a footnote...in days gone by council members had the flexibility to discuss matters behind closed doors which could not be discussed publicly without the possibility of causing embarrassment or injured feelings to a private citizen.

That possibility would not therefore restrict a council from holding a necessary discussion.

We now have what I think of as the Illingworth Law which took away that flexibility.

I call it that because it was passed when Richard worked in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs when it was passed.

My sources tell me he was highly instrumental in its passage.

My personal theory about

his obsession with the matter is because he still cannot stand not being privy to everything that's going on.

I understand that feeling.

What I cannot understand is why he keeps insisting we are making decisions behind closed doors when he is never behind the closed doors to know that.

And he never ever specifies what decisions we have made behind the closed doors.

Are not the accused entitled to know of what we are accused?

Evelyn Buck
Aurora

Unedited letter surprised him

To the editor,

I would like to express my thanks to you for publishing my letters to your paper.

Many times I have thought to write to papers before but I did not.

I am pleased and surprised that you saw fit to publish both of my submissions.

It was surprising that the first submission was printed without any editing on your part; I thought it was too long.

On your editing of the second letter it meets with my full approval (I did get windy).

Again, I thank you for providing me with a "soap box" to express my views.

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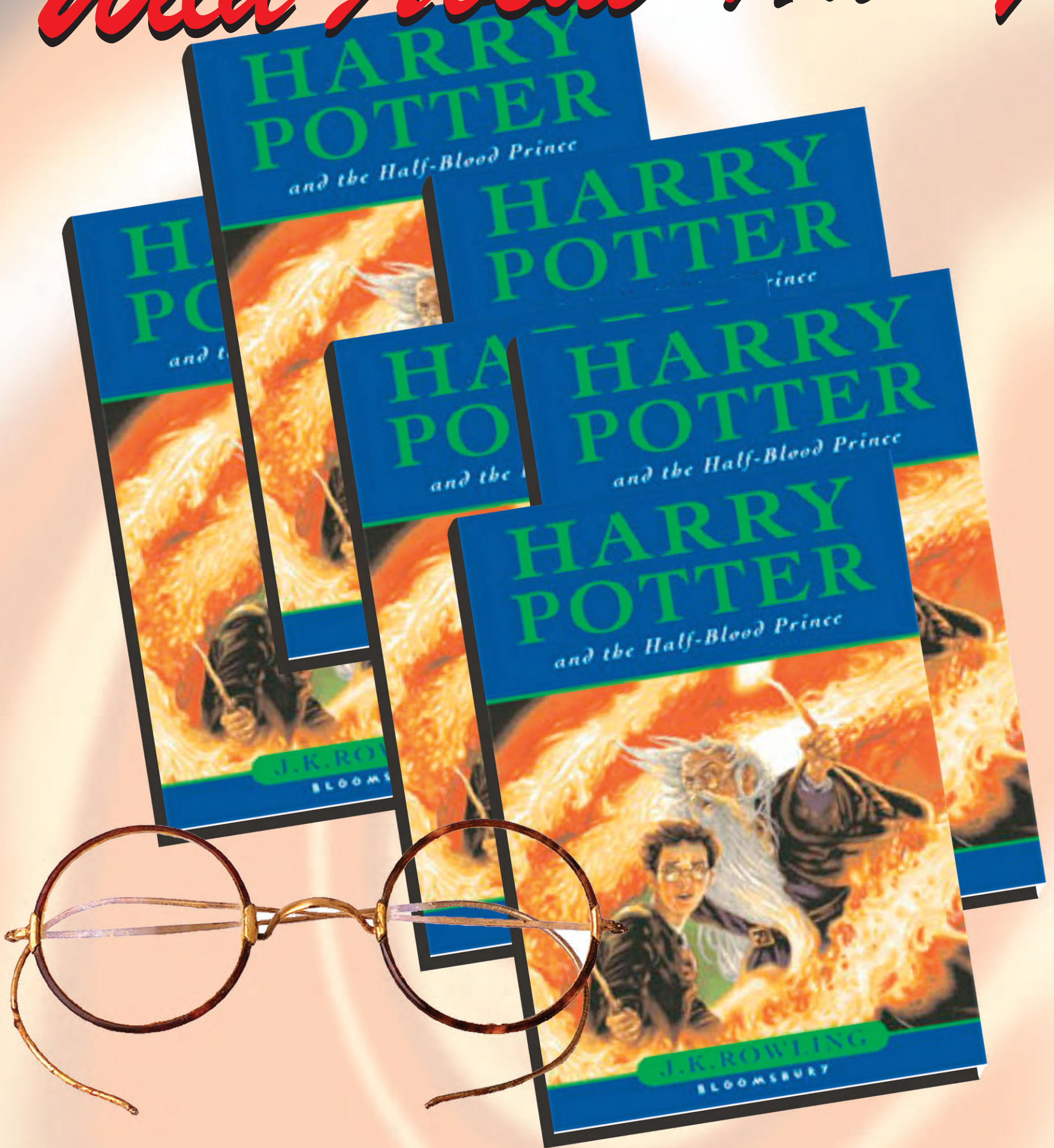


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we would like to thank all those who have been so involved with our events during the past year.

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Congratulations to the winning team at our recent golf tournament held at Silver Lakes Golf and Country Club - Doug Adair, Tom Davies, Ken Valliquette and Rick Sainthill.

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Week of July 12, 2005



Derek Marshall is convinced there are better things to do than watch television, and he has a \$250 sports gift certificate to prove it. The Grade 4 Wells Street School student had his name drawn from a region-wide school event that saw students turn off the television for a week and enter the draw.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

May not be too late to register for event

Even though the deadline has come and gone, it may not be too late to register in Shawn Burt's marathon hockey game slated for the Aurora Community Centre, Saturday, Aug. 13.

The annual event now in its third year, raises money for Camp Oochigeas, and is held in memory of James and Barbara Burt, both of whom died from cancer.

Since its inception, the event has raised more than \$40,000.

The JBB Memorial Fundraiser is the founding patron for a new Camp Oochigeas initiative called Camp Teomul, a one-week session for bereaved siblings.

Registration is \$65 a person, which will cover the event costs. Participants are expected to raise a minimum of \$300 in sponsorships.

"I wanted to extend a big thank-you to Pat Park, Nancy Gilks, Mike Ferriman, and Bobby Hastings of the Toronto Maple Leafs for their incredible generosity and support

of our event since 2003," Shawn said. "We have been the lucky recipient of some incredible Maple Leaf and Raptor prizes over the years."

For further information, call Shawn at 416-804-2122.

Completion of the first phase of construction of the new recreation complex is scheduled for September this year and it will include space for a pro shop.

But the operator of the pro shop will pay more for the space than originally anticipated.

Town staff wanted to proceed with a Request for Proposal and Pro Shop Agreement in order to have services available when the arenas begin operation.

But council's general committee recently sought more information.

In a report to that committee it was suggested the Request for Proposal and Pro Shop Agreement include a five-year term until August 31, 2010, a flat rental of \$2,400 annually including all utilities, liability insurance and a tenant who would be responsible for all equipment and upgrades.

Councillor Nigel Kean said he had some concerns with the proposal and referred to council's experience with the Aurora Library.

He asked if staff had investigated what other municipalities were receiving for similar operations.

Councillors learned no investigation had been carried out with other municipalities and the proposal had been prepared based on the town's experience at the community centre.

Kean said it was necessary to obtain the best and questioned the flat rental rate.

He said councillors should know what other municipalities were doing before a decision was made.

There was also discussion as to whether the town should set a flat rate or ask the applicants to make an offer, resulting in the report being referred back to staff

for more information.

At council last week, it was learned the deferral for more information was in the best interests of the municipality as it was found Aurora's proposed price

was low.

Prices in other locations ranged from \$4,200 to \$10,000 per year, resulting in council agreeing to double the rental rate to \$4,800 per year.

Locals win medals in summer games

Several Aurora Seniors' Centre members brought home awards from the annual York Region +55 summer games recently.

In Contact Bridge competition, Kay Hack and Rose White brought home a silver medal.

Ron Good scooped a gold medal in 9-Ball Pool and added a silver in Men's Snooker.

In golfing action, Bill Argue won a gold, Jim

Liddy scored a silver and Barry Robertson brought home a bronze.

Sandra Gothard and Tammy Pessarjick won a bronze in Bid Euchre, while Ron Gibson's team won a silver medal in Lawn Bowling.

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Americans Celebrate Independence Day Friendship with the City of Toronto

It was a special event at City Hall in Toronto with Mayor David Miller, Consul-General Jessica LeCroy, Consul Michael Keaveny and Consul Michael Schimmel from the United States Consulate.

There were also representatives from the American Chamber of Commerce of Canada, the American Club, the Republicans Abroad, the Democrats Abroad and the American Women's Club of Toronto.

There was a flag raising ceremony at City Hall to raise the American flag representing the American-Canadian friendship. Then a luncheon at the Ontario Club with speakers from the various organizations. I was speaking on behalf of the American Women's Club. The 4th of July was a very special day in Toronto.

If anyone living in Aurora is interested in information about the American organizations please call Beverley Varcoe at Royal LePage Your Community Realty 905-727-3154.



Beverley Varcoe speaking at the Ontario Club about the American Women's Club

Fox hunting more of a chase for riders in Aurora area club

Fox hunting has been in the news lately as the British government outlawed the sport in England and Wales in spite of strong opposition from the House of Lords. Fox hunting had been previously banned in Scotland.

Proponents of fox hunting plan to fight the ban which became effective in February.

While it is still legal to shoot foxes, the legislation banned the traditional fox hunt with hounds and red-coated riders, which had been in force for more than 700 years.

Legislation wasn't required to stop fox hunting with horses and hounds in Aurora and York Region, as rapid development gobbled up most of the hunting grounds.

For more than half a century, members of the Toronto North York Hunt Club went fox hunting in York Region, but according to the club president, the last time a huntsman killed a fox was around 1969.

There was a great deal of misunderstanding about the hunt as animal lovers called the hunters red-coated rednecks who could watch, without qualm, a fox being torn to pieces by the hounds.

Canada's dean of fox-hunting, Clifford Sifton, Honourary Master of the Hunt and 66 years a fox-hunter disagreed. He pointed out that the most recent killing was several years ago.

The Toronto Hunt was founded in 1843 from stables at the corner of Wellesley and Yonge Street, with the hunt starting from the grounds of Upper Canada College.

But the lack of kills and the long absence of the traditional bleeding did not indicate any lack of enthusiasm by the hunters and their hounds.

They were quite content to chase the fox and were quite content to let the fox live, for a future hunt.

According to the riders it was the chase that counted with the challenge and the excitement of the jumps and the sound of the hounds barking in the clean air.

In October, 1923, Aemilius Jarvis opened his Hazelburn Farm on the east

side of Yonge Street north of the Aurora Cemetery to the Toronto Hunt Club.

Club members were so impressed by the gently rolling countryside around Aurora some decided to move here and purchase Beverley Farm south of the cemetery.

They formed the Toronto North York Hunt Club in 1933.

The Toronto Hunt was split and legally transferred some of its hounds to a group of its members who had acquired Beverley Farm where Beacon Hall Golf Club is now located. The red-coated riders, their horses and their hounds were a familiar sight.

In the early days the Eaton Hall Farm (now Seneca College) in King Township was the focal point for the club's steeple-chase days such as the annual Thanksgiving Hunter Trials which later moved to Beverley Farms.

In the past, hunting was known as the sport of kings. People who had sufficient funds to maintain a large stable of horses and hire professional grooms dominated the sport.

By 1979, most club members were one-horse owners and people with average incomes. At that time the club had approximately 150 active paying members and about 150 inactive ones.

The club's hunting area was registered east to Uxbridge, west to Nobleton and north to Collingwood.

Riders and hounds travelled within this area, always hunting new grounds so they didn't chase the game out of the area and so they didn't overrun the same farmers too often.

Although the fox-chasing season only runs from the end of September to the beginning of December, club activities continue year round.

Club members road-hunted in the spring to exercise the dogs. During the summer, staff repaired fences and built jumping panels for August and September, when the young hounds were trained.

At the time Beverley Farm had approximately 80 hounds but only 32 to 38 were used at a time

depending on the area.

At most hunts, the huntsman took the hounds into cover or bush where game hides and lives. The hounds spread out over the area searching for a scent whereupon they start to bark, attracting the rest of the pack to cover ground along the scent line.

The riders prefer the dogs to scare up a fox rather than a deer as deer run in a straight direction and travel tremendous distances. The deer also travels fast causing the hounds to move across the countryside much faster than the riders.

It's up to the Club Master to provide good sport for his riders and he controls the hunt. The club has five masters who take turns presiding at the hunt. The master's job is to lead the hunt and he's responsible for

everyone's behaviour if trouble should develop with the landowner.

The club made a point of thanking all landowners who allow members to cross their lands, but the club could no longer treat the farmers to a dinner like they did in the early days. In 1953 they entertained as many as 900.

On a blustery morning in December, 1981, men and women dressed in scarlet coats, velvet riding hats and pale-coloured jodhpurs waited on their horses with the hounds to start the hunt.

It was one of the last hunts of the year for the members of the Toronto and North York Hunt Club. Hunts were held Wednesdays and Saturdays.

On a good day about 70 of the 175 members would turn out for the hunt, which

was really a chase as a fox hadn't been killed for more than 20 years.

Increased urbanization in Aurora in the 1980s caused the Club to move to the Creemore area and the Beverley Farm was redeveloped as a gated community

and private golf course known as Beacon Hall.

That was the end of fox hunting in the Aurora area as the hounds and the red-coated riders disappeared from the local scene.

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Last week's results

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Peewee

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Futurestars 13 National Sports 3
Dr. Orschell 14 Royal Wood 7

Mosquito

Royal LePage 16 Royal LePage
Armstrong 4
RCR Royal LePage 17 Royal LePage
Armstrong 5
Royal LePage Woodhead 8 Filebank 7

Midget

Greenham's Distinctive Clothier 13
Georgina 3

REP BASEBALL

Minor Peewee

Cherutti/Johnson Families Jay 16 Bolton
Braves 2

SOFTBALL

Mite

Goodyear 15 Master Mechanic 9

Squirt

Home Hardware 19 McAlpine Ford 11
Home Hardware 12 Bryson's Angels 10

Midget

Dial Tone Communications 17 Goodwood 13

Fleury remembered in Hall of Fame

The Fleury name is well-known in Aurora with Fleury Street and Fleury Park, but many newcomers may not be familiar with the history behind the name.

Joseph Fleury, the founder of the dynasty, was a blacksmith in King Township. He came to Aurora in 1859 at age 27 to join Thomas Pearson in a blacksmith partnership.

They developed a cast-beam plow before the partnership broke up.

Fleury was left with the Wellington Street West property, now Bacon Basketware, and decided to open his own shop and build his own plow.

His first Fleury plow broke, but he kept trying and at a critical moment in his business he received an order for 100 plows from William Linton, an ancestor

of Ross Linton who was Mayor of Aurora from 1944 to 1947.

It was the Fleury Plow Works that gave Aurora its industrial head start.

It was so important that in 1863 the town fathers in selecting a crest for the little village put the rising sun coming over the top of a hill to represent Aurora, Goddess of the Dawn on the top half and a Fleury Plow on the bottom half.

By 1874 Joseph Fleury was Reeve of Aurora and was gaining recognition for the company's reapers, mowers, plows and even sewing machines.

The Fleury plant operated in Aurora for 80 years from the pioneer days of 1859 to 1939. At its peak more than 200 people were employed in the rambling buildings that

filled a block on Wellington Street from Temperance Street to near Mill Street.

The impact of the Fleury plant was important in the growth and development of the municipality. In 1863, just after the business started, the hamlet had grown to 700 people and it was incorporated as a village.

Fleury served as Reeve of Aurora from 1873 until his death in 1880. He was Warden of York County in 1879. Andrew Yule, who served as Reeve from 1884-87, was office manager and ran the plant until Fleury's son, H.W. Fleury, was old enough to take over.

A fire destroyed the whole works in 1876 but it was soon rebuilt. H.W. Fleury was elected Mayor of Aurora from

1892 to 1899 and again in 1907.

In September, 1988, Bruce Fleury, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation for Scarborough, visited Aurora Council and presented Mayor John West with a plaque to commemorate the entry of Joseph Fleury into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Fleury told council members there were still numerous members of the family and they were all happy for the recognition by Hall of Fame officials.

To see the famous Fleury Plow, one is mounted at the entrance to Fleury Park, south of the Aurora Community Centre. It was donated to the town by the late Jack Wood.

Award inspirer dies suddenly

he man who was the inspiration behind a community award that has yet to be inaugurated has died.

Frank Camenzuli, a resident of Holman Crescent, would have been nominated for the first "Good Neighbour Award", but the idea was too late to be included in his year's Aurora Civic Awards Night.

He was 73.

The premise of the award, according to its originator Rebecca Beaton, was "to honour Aurora's unsung heroes, residents who had shown kindness to their neighbours and continually went out of their way to make life a little better for

people".

Camenzuli came to Canada from Malta in 1950, married Margaret two years later and came to Aurora in 1959.

"Frank didn't just talk about the value of family and friends, he showed it," Ms Beaton said. "Whether it was coaching hockey on Saturdays at 5 a.m., fixing a neighbour's dishwasher or driving someone to a doctor's appointment, Frank was always there to help."

He is survived by wife Margaret, sons Frank, Jr., Peter and Paul, and six grandchildren, Kate, Shannon, Karley, Taylor, Mark and Cole.

Yonge Street was alive with retail

From page 1

Citizen of the Year.

Before Highway 400, Yonge Street - or Highway 11 - was the only quick way to cottage country and Cousin's Dairy was a favourite spot to stop en route.

The Aurora Dairy was located at the northeast corner of Centre and Yonge Streets, with Mel Kilpatrick operating the dairy bar.

The dairy was operated by Doug Harrison, who later moved to North Bay.

His daughter, Janet, moved to North Bay with the family where she met a golfer and ski instructor named Mike Harris, who eventually became Premier of Ontario. They were later married and recently divorced.

Meanwhile, back to Cousins Dairy.

Just north of it was a building that housed the Bell Telephone exchange and later a dental office, before it was demolished and converted into an office building.

South of the dairy, Elwood Davis had a garage and the motor vehicle licence office.

The office is now located on Mary Street and still operated by his daughter, Janet.

Ernie Holman operated the Esso station at the corner of Yonge Street and Cousins Drive.

There was also a Shell and Texaco station at Ransom and Yonge and a Gulf station at Church and Yonge Streets.

Ron Simmons operated

a butcher store at Tyler and Yonge Street. The Knowles and Morris families operated butcher shops on Wellington Street.

Nixon Fisher had a popular 5 and 10 cent store on Yonge Street, next to Mary's Fruit Market, one of the oldest businesses on the street.

Another long time Yonge Street business is Thompson's Fine Furniture, and that family, until a few years ago, also operated the funeral home on Victoria Street.

Scanlon and Spence bakeries were also located on Yonge Street as was Jack Chapman's blacksmith shop and Case's home ice delivery service. There were several small grocery stores including Dominion, Cameron Loblaw's, and Lacey's.

There were the Hess and Willis drug stores in the Yonge Street downtown core and two jewelry stores, Marshall Rank and Allison McConnell, and two Chinese restaurants, Dan's and Ray's, the latter of which was renamed Moon Gardens.

Retail stores included Ardill's Ladies Wear where the Larter Building is now located, Norm Cook's Men's Wear, Chet Osborne's Shoes and Clothing, Simmon's Shoes and both an Eaton and Simpson order office.

There were many other businesses and people back in the 1950s, all helping to make downtown Aurora a busy and interesting place to be.

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Arts, Culture Fund now 32 years old

Two weeks ago was the deadline for Aurora groups and individuals to submit applications to the Aurora Arts and Culture Fund.

Over the summer a selection committee will review applications and make decisions which will become public at a council meeting in September or October.

It all started in 1973 when David Merkur, owner and operator of the Aurora Shopping Centre, donated \$10,000 to the Town of Aurora to establish the fund for individuals or groups to be paid out over a 10-year period at \$1,000 per year.

He explained that Aurora citizens had been good to him and the merchants in the shopping centre and he wanted to give something back to the community.

Theatre Aurora and the Aurora and District Historical Society were the first recipients in 1973.

Ten years later, Merkur increased the grant to \$25,000 with \$2,500 to be paid annually and he was still hopeful other businesses would join him in contributing to the fund.

Then in March, 1988, Merkur increased his commitment to \$50,000 over a 10-year period or a grant of \$5,000 a year.

By this time Joe Lebovic of Lebovic Enterprises, a developer in Aurora, joined the fund with annual contributions.

Presentations were normally made at a council meeting in September or October with the recipient providing a brief explanation of how the money would be spent.

In September, 1995, the Arts and Cultural Fund distributed a total of \$8,750 in varying amounts to nine organizations and an individual.

Organizations includ-

ed Aurora Learning Centre, St. Joseph Catholic School Parent Teacher Association, Hillary House and the Koffler Museum of Medicine, York Symphony Orchestra, 200 Years Yonge Committee, Aurora Historical Society and Museum, Aurora Nursery School, Teen Talk Productions and the Aurora Horticultural and Garden Society.

The individual donation went to Jesse Weafer, a 10-year-old ballet student at Jaymor

School of Dance.

He has been accepted into the National Ballet School of Canada and his \$500 grant will pay his tuition.

In October, 2000, during the presentation of the grants, Merkur and Lebovic received plaques from the town for their continued financial support of local arts and culture

In 2002, a total of 14 organizations and one individual received various amounts totalling \$6,750. The individual

Please see page 14



Aurora's Sarah Kyle and Joe Likuski will be featured during a candle-lit evening of songs from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales during the 2nd annual Midsummer Celtic Night, slated for Thursday, July 21st, at Wesley United Church, corner of Woodbine Avenue and Aurora Sideroad beginning at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and available at the door.

A teenager's odyssey to meet Elton, her idol

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

It was in September, 1975, when 14-year-old Karen Kay, a Grade 9 student at Aurora's Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School, armed with a return air ticket, about \$200 cash and 30 songs of her own creation set out on her odyssey to England to hopefully meet her idol, singer Elton John.

At home, she was always listening to Elton John with the radio turned up loud, until family members had to tell her to turn it down.

Her two older brothers had gone on school trips, so her parents didn't think anything of it when she said she wanted to go to Europe during the March break. They even helped her save.

In September, Karen told her younger sister she was going out west, but her friends confessed she had flown to England to find her hero.

It was a rough few days for her parents until local reporter Tony Drew tipped off a London paper, the Daily Mirror, who phoned her parents and assured them they had found Karen and she was safe and sound in Surrey, England.

In the meantime her parents had sent one of her brothers to aid in the search, but in many ways they were still lost due to the cloak-and-dagger antics of two Daily Mirror reporters who used the two to continue writing stories about Karen's odyssey.

Karen had been able to convince customs offi-

cials in London she was going to visit her grandmother, although she had no relatives in England.

But a few hours before Karen arrived, Elton John had left England for Los Angeles to begin a two-month concert tour, so she never got to see him.

Reporters in the Toronto area were able to contact Elton John's manager in London and the manager promised to let the singer know about the situation.

Meanwhile in England, Karen had obtained a job through an employment agency by claiming she was 18 and was employed as an au pair to do housework and look after three young boys.

Within a week through cooperation of police, airline officials and her parents, arrangements were made for Karen's return home.

But she accomplished part of her mission as she saw an official of Rocket Records, owned by Elton John, and was promised he would look at her songs and comment on them.

The record company even arranged for tickets to be reserved for Karen at Elton's October con-

cert in Vancouver and arranged an interview with the singer if she could get to Vancouver.

In October, with the help of some anonymous Aurorans whose money made the trip to Vancouver possible, a Toronto Star chaperone and a kind-hearted publicity man who conveyed the message that Karen was waiting, Karen met her idol and the odyssey was complete.

But the hero of the story was Maurice D'Amore. He lived in Weston, was employed part-time and had a ticket to the Vancouver concert, but he didn't have the money to get there.

He heard a radio station tell the story about an Aurora teenager who couldn't live out her dream of meeting Elton John because she couldn't get a ticket. He called the radio station and Karen got his ticket.

She hopped a jet for Vancouver where she was met by Judith Timson, a Star reporter who helped her get backstage to meet Elton.

It sounds like a novel, but it was a true-life story and it started right here in Aurora.

Where is Karen today?

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Trying to steal the school board

When the county school boards were created in the late 1960s, Aurora Council offered the incoming county public school board the use of the Church Street School as an education centre for a minimal rental providing the board was responsible for the operating expenses and maintenance of the historic building.

Later when the school board and the town agreed to share a six-acre site on Wellington West, where the Education Centre is today, York Regional Chairman Garfield Wright exerted pressure for the Centre to be part of a regional complex on the old York Manor Farm in Newmarket.

He was also critical of the Town of Aurora and the board for planning to build the complex in a floodplain with the building spanning Tannery Creek.

His comments were made after regional council had voted not to offer land to the school board.

When it appeared that Aurora Council and the school board were close to making a deal for the joint complex, Newmarket Mayor Bob Forhan proposed that the region give the school board four acres of land for one dollar on the Manor farm, but regional council refused to approve his suggestion and the school board remained in Aurora.

COLLECTING THE UNUSUAL

Back in 1994, someone stole four of the eight signs erected by Big Sisters of York, now Girls Incorporated, promoting their annual 10-kilometre run to raise funds for the work of the agency.

What anyone would do with four large signs is still a mystery.

BILL 102 CREATED THE REGION

It was in late June, 1970, when the Legislature gave third and final reading to Bill 102, "An Act to Establish the Regional Municipality of York" just before the House recessed for the summer.

The Act required the municipal election to be held October 5, 1970, and for the new council to officially assume office January 1, 1971.

During the interval the newly-elected members met on a regular basis, without pay, to act as a transition team to convert the county government into a regional government.

The original council had 17 members, counting the regional chairman appointed and paid for by the province, plus 16 council members, eight from the south three municipalities and eight from the six central and north municipalities.

ASK AND YOU WILL BE ANSWERED

In a recent issue of The Auroran, Rumours and Ramblings asked about the rest of the story about Tamara Estabrooks of Aurora who competed in the Mrs. Canada International Pageant in 2005 as Mrs. Aurora.

Lo and behold in the same issue was a news story that Tamara had won the Mrs. Canada International with 63 contestants vying for the title.

She is a speech language pathologist and works with children from pre-school to school-age throughout Aurora as well as in the school system and was a guest in Aurora's July First parade.

TRY TO EXPLAIN THIS ONE

According to the Toronto Star, Progressive Conservative MPP Joe Tascona claimed \$22,647 for travel around his Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford riding during 2004.

At 34 cents a kilometre that is 66,609 kilometres, which works out to 182 kilometres a day, 365 days a year, criss-crossing his riding.

He also claimed almost \$9,949 for travel between his riding and Queen's Park which works out to 29,261 kilometres or an average of 80 kilometres daily every day of the year.

He also has a Toronto apartment which costs taxpayers \$17,016. Obviously no one bothers to check expense accounts, or he's found a way to be in two places at the same time!

MOBILE SPEED BUMPS

Aurora will soon be known as the home of the speed humps with the number in operation and under consideration.

But a few years back a mobile speed hump was originated in Australia and imported to some American cities.

In addition to losing demerit points and paying a fine for speeding, the Judge ordered motorists to 30 days of Mobile Speed Bump Duty.

The Speed Bump penalty required the motorist to drive through residential neighbourhoods at the posted speed limit and observe all other traffic rules in an effort to slow traffic behind him.

If the driver was caught breaking any traffic law while performing Speed Bump duty he automatically lost his driver's licence for 30 days.

Well worth a try in York Region.

WHERE IS THE COUNTRY LADY?

Back in 1981, Country Lady opened in Aurora for women who wanted better quality clothing and with staff to help customers find the right dress or blouse and ensuring that it fit properly while providing an enjoyable shopping experience.

In June, 1985, Country Lady expanded to Newmarket with a store on Main Street, both operated by Oksana Stein.

One of the specialties of both shops was dressing pregnant women, which included a restructuring service for the dress so it could be worn after the birth.

Where is Country Lady today?



Sean Sinclair wed the love of his life, Christine Akemi Hood, in a recent ceremony at Newmarket's Glenway Country Club. Proud parents are Diane Hood, Heather Sinclair and Henry Sinclair. Chrissy and Sean honeymooned in Cuba. Chrissy grew up and went to Aurora High School, and Sean attended Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School.



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Culture Fund in 32nd year

From page 13

was Cheryl Farrel.

Organizations included Aurora Agricultural Society, Aurora Nursery School, Aurora Seniors' Book Club, Aurora Writers Group, In Celebration of the Arts, RBC Seniors' Jubilee, Theatre Aurora, Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Aurora Opera Company, Aurora Seniors' Art Group, Aurora Senior Public School, Kataura Productions, Marquee Productions and Pine Tree Potters.

Following Merkur's death, his family continued to contribute to the fund on behalf of the Aurora Shopping Centre.

In 2003, recipients included the Aurora Agricultural Society, Aurora Nursery School, Aurora Seniors' Book Club, Irish Dance Parents Association, In Celebration of the Arts, Thornhill Scottish Country Dancers and Theatre Aurora, Aurora

Chamber of Commerce, Aurora Heights Public School, Aurora Historical Society, York Symphony Orchestra, Aurora Creative Connections, the Aurora Opera

Company and Pinetooth Pictures.

Santa Claus will come early this year to some Aurora individuals and groups who help to keep arts and culture alive in

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In the Estate of Norma Jean Legge, deceased.

All claims against the Estate of Norma Jean Legge, late of the Town of Aurora, in the Regional Municipality of York, who died on or about the 15th day of April, 2005, must be filed with the undersigned personal representatives on or before the 19th day of August, 2005. Thereafter the undersigned will distribute the assets of the Estate having regard only to the claims then filed.

Dated: July 12, 2005
Elizabeth (Beth) Humfries, Anna Metcalfe and Elizabeth Mills, Estate Trustees, by their solicitors, Shugart & Associates, Barristers and Solicitors, 9 Wellington Street East, P.O.Box 486, Aurora, Ontario, L4G 3L6, Attention: Mr. Kenneth R. Shugart

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