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AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

“Short & Sweet”
See Page 3

Briefly

Another fundraiser

On Friday, May 12, another fundraiser will be held for young Devon Brisbane.

This one, an evening of live entertainment by Glenn Marais and Cara Chisholm, follows on the heels of a successful event held recently by Randy Skelcher that raised close to \$16,000.

This event will feature, along with the entertainment, dancing to a DJ, a silent auction and a 50/50 draw.

Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door and are available at the Legion, Industrial Parkway North, or by calling 905-727-5642.

...and another

M & M's National Charity Barbeque Day has become quite a tradition in Aurora, and local operator Greg Foster is hoping to break some records this year.

The event is scheduled for Saturday, May 13, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in front of the store at 15005 Yonge Street.

People will be able to purchase a hamburger and or hot dog and they will also receive a bag of chips plus a drink for a minimum \$2 donation to the Crohns and Colitis Foundation of Canada (CCFC).

All proceeds will be donated to the CCFC.

Greg's store goal this year is \$2,000, while the corporate goal is \$1.75 million.

Street dance

When the Aurora Chamber of Commerce held a street dance last year, it was to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Aurora Street Festival.

It was a huge success.

So much so that it will happen again this year, Saturday, June 3, but this time, it will be organized and operated by the Optimist Club of Aurora.

Set up on Yonge Street, between Murray Drive and Henderson Avenue, the dance will feature entertainment by the 14-piece Thursday Night Jam band.

Advance tickets, which are now on sale, sell for \$10, while tickets at the gate will cost \$15.

Advance tickets are available at Canadian Tire, Oakridge Outfitters and Royal LePage.

For more information on this event, contact Terry Sherin at 416-315-7368.

Long-time award

Aurora Mayor Tim Jones was one of seven municipally-elected officials in central Ontario to be presented with a long-standing service award last week.

The presentations were made by John Gerretsen, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, in Richmond Hill.

Long-standing service awards were introduced by the Ontario government in 2004 to recognize municipally-elected officials with at least 25 years of service.

Newmarket Mayor Tom Taylor and Newmarket Councillor Dave Kerwin, were also recognized.

Meanwhile, Aurora's Peter Storms was presented with a Meritorious Service Decoration (Civil Division) by the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, Friday in Ottawa.

The civil division recognizes individuals who have performed an exceptional deed or an activity that has brought honour to their community or to Canada.

Between 1995 and 2003, Mr. Storms contributed his strategic and project management expertise to the development and hands-on implementation of core public safety policies affecting youth at risk in Canada, and in highly sensitive areas internationally.

In spite of risks to his own personal safety for prolonged periods of time, he displayed relentless efforts and commitment in applying strategies and solutions to strengthen municipal infrastructures and eradicate dangers affecting numerous social, political and civilian organizations throughout the world, a press release said.



Student and teacher. Scores of people showed up at Hillary House Sunday afternoon to honour Jackie Stuart, Aurora's museum curator for the past 25 years, at an open house to mark her retirement, including Aurora's John McIntyre. The college professor taught Jackie at Seneca King many years ago. Jackie learned that a room, inside the new Aurora Heritage Centre now under construction at Church Street School, will be named after her.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

\$2 Magna million for site

It came right out of the blue Tuesday night, catching both residents and councillors off guard.

Aurora Mayor Tim Jones used last week's council meeting to announce that Frank Stronach, Founder and Chairman of Magna International Inc, had agreed to donate \$2 million to the new Aurora Recreation Complex.

The mayor said later he was asked to make the announcement the way he did and that's why others were not informed in advance.

He and Mr. Stronach have been in talks over the past few weeks regarding the importance of capital funding to help the still under construction facility.

Magna, he said, will donate annual sums of \$400,000 to the Town of Aurora for five consecutive years with the understanding that all proceeds will be directed to the retirement of capital obligation for the facility.

Council will also be reviewing naming rights and provisions

Please see page 3

They want to sell food, too

The shovels aren't even in the ground yet, but already officials want Aurora's new Wal-Mart store to be bigger.

Using existing space available, a proposal to eliminate one store site at the Wellington East/404 location and give the space to Wal-Mart, was made to Aurora's public planning meeting last Wednesday night.

Aurora Council wasn't so quick to jump at the idea, however.

It sent the proposal back with the proviso that it be presented to another public planning meeting before any approval is given.

A new Wal-Mart store has

already been approved by Council, allowing for an anchor store of up to 132,605 square feet.

On the approved plan, a supermarket would be built across the street.

Wal-Mart officials want to use the supermarket space and incorporate it into the Wal-Mart space, which would now include a supermarket, and create a one-storey building that would cover about 219,000 square feet.

The new department store would then sell a full range of food products on about 55,000 extra square feet of space.

According to officials, the

change is necessary because the "larger format department store is in keeping with its new proptotype department stores that are being launched in Canada".

As far as Aurora planners are concerned, the proposal would "create a challenge".

"The proposed enlarged Wal-Mart store and the associated mass of parking will create a challenge in being able to comply with the urban design guidelines for both the proposed Phase 1 site and the balance of the lands on the east side of First Commerce Drive," Aurora Manager of

Please see page 3




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COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

CONTINUING

Aurora Community Garden has plots available to grow fruits and vegetables. For more information call York Region Food Network at 905-967-0372.

Wellington Gallery will feature the wildlife artwork of Edward Spera and Les Pomeroy in their Best of Breed exhibit. Gallery hours are from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursdays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

Weekly lunches will be held from 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Wednesday in the Norma Jean Legge Room of the Aurora Seniors' Centre. Call 905-726-4767 for more information.

"Martha's Table" offers comfort food and a sense of community at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, corner of Mosley and Victoria Streets. Available are hot soup, sandwiches, and dessert in the hall. Church-sponsored initiative runs every Thursday.

Aurora Agricultural Society (organizer of the Aurora Fair & Horse Show) meets on the second Tuesday of every second month, at 7 p.m., at the Aurora Community Centre. New members welcome. For more information, call 905-713-6773 or info@aurorafair.ca, or visit www.aurorafair.ca.

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.

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.

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 905-830-2055.

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.

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.

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 has monthly meetings at Aurora's Trinity Anglican Church with a variety of speakers. There is also a selection of interest groups. Contact Beverley 905-727-2151.

Dancing at the Legion, 8 p.m. every Friday night.

Bid Euchre at the Legion, 1 p.m. every third Sunday.

Queen's York Rangers Army Cadet Corps, boys and girls, ages 12 to 18. Camping, canoeing, target shooting. Aurora squadron meets every Friday evening. For more information, call 905-726-8600.

Towns of York Toastmasters Club meetings, open to the public, are held every second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Park Place Manor, 15055 Yonge Street, Aurora. For more information see the club web site at www.townsofyourk.org or phone Elena Silaev at 905-726-9750.

Aurora-based Kerry's Place Autism Services is hosting its 12th Golf Invitational at Angus Glen Golf Course. Event features 18 holes of golf with a 1.30 p.m. shotgun start, barbecue lunch and gourmet dinner. Lots of prizes. Call Nancy at 905-841-6611 ext. 333.

44th Annual Juried Art Show and Sale at the Town Hall. Open from 7 to 10 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. For further information call 905-726-4762.

First Aurora Rotary Club frog race in Tannery Creek between the Board of Education office and the Aurora Community Centre. Rent a frog for \$5 at R & R Revisited.

York Symphony Orchestra presents "A Night At The Proms" with guest artist Elke Eble-Streissberger. 8 p.m., Trinity Anglican Church.

Aurora Seniors Annual Bazar & Bake Sale at the Seniors' Centre, 5 Municipal Drive, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For further information call 905-726-4767.

Susan MacDonald, great niece of renowned Group of Seven artist, J.E.H. MacDonald and Sunrise of Aurora senior residence present an art show and sale at the residence, from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, 3 Golf Links Drive. Admission is free.

Aurora Film Council presents its second film night at the new Aurora Cinema on Bayview Avenue at 6.45 p.m. featuring "Merry Christmas", a French-German-UK collaboration dramatizing the WWI Christmas cease-fire of 1914. Tickets available at R & R Revisited and the Aurora Public Library. Only a limited number will be available at the door the night of the screening.

The Aurora Public Library, in partnership with York Regional Police presents "Personal Safety", a free presentation for seniors, 1 to 3 p.m. in the Lebovic Room, Pre-register at the adult information desk or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

York Centre District Women's Institute 57th annual meeting at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Victoria and Mosley Streets. Registration 9 a.m.

York Region 55+ Summer Games hosted by all regional municipalities with the closing ceremonies held June 14th at Aurora's Senior Centre.

Aurora's Marquee Productions presents the musical "Cats" at the Newmarket Theatre. Call the theatre box office at 905-963-5122 for ticket information.

Live entertainment by Glenn Marais and Cara Chisholm along with dancing to a DJ, plus a silent auction, and 50/50 draw at the Aurora Legion beginning at 7 p.m. all in aid of Devon Brisbane Trust Fund. Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door. Tickets available at the Aurora Legion or call 905-727-5642.

Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society annual plant sale at the Aurora Public Library, 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

M & M's National Charity Barbeque Day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in front of the store at 15005 Yonge Street.

Join the Aurora Seniors for a trip to Auberge Memphre Inn in Magog, Quebec. Trip includes three nights' accommodation, nine meals and snacks, entertainment, dancing, indoor pool. Call the seniors' centre at 905-726-4767.

Contract Bridge competition to be held at the Aurora Seniors' Centre, 5 Municipal Dr. at 1 p.m. For more information go to website www.yr55plus-games.org or visit the Seniors' Centre.

Election and induction of Aurora Chamber of Commerce officers and directors at St. Andrew's Golf Club, 368 St. John's Sideroad East, at noon. To register call 905-727-7262.

Aurora Public Library, in partnership with Addiction Services for York Region, presents a free information seminar "Exploring Responsible Gambling", 7 to 9 p.m. in the Magna Room. Pre-register at the adult information desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

Amnesty International group meets at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street for information, discussion and letter writing about human rights issues. New members welcome. For more information, call 905-713-6713.

Last day for the public to submit comments on PowerStream's draft "Conditions of Service" pertaining to its operating practices, connection policies and the types and levels of service. Copies of the draft document are available for viewing at the utility's Markham and Vaughan offices.

Nominations close for positions on the Board of Directors of the Aurora Seniors Association. A ballot box will be available from May 23 to June 2 with results reported June 8.

Aurora Public Library, in partnership with the Oak Ridges Trail Association, presents "Hiking On The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail" with Harold Sellers from the ORTA. Event occurs in the Magna Room between 7 and 8 p.m. Pre-register at the adult information desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

Bike and Board Rodeo at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex 10:30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., free of charge for all skateboarders and bike enthusiasts. For more information contact 905-726-4762 or visit e-aurora.ca.

Aurora Farmer's Market opens at 8 a.m. in the Temperance Street parking lot for the fourth year and continues every Saturday through Thanksgiving weekend.

"Lilac Tyme Lunch," featuring a ham and salad plate, at St. Andrew's

Presbyterian Church, Mosley at Victoria Streets. Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Tickets: \$8; \$4 for children 10 and younger. Sponsored by St. Andrew's Guild.

York Chamber Ensemble, conducted by Aurora's Tony Browning, presents "Crowns of Summer," featuring strings and chorus. Trinity Festival Chorus and Trinity Youth Choir will join the orchestra. Concert will take place at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 or \$10 for students and seniors. Purchase at the door, or call 905-727-6101.

Aurora Heritage Centre fundraising golf tournament at Aurora's Westview Golf Club. The noon hour shotgun event is limited to 96 golfers to play two of the club's three nine-hole courses for \$150 each, including dinner at Dinardo's Mansion. Contact Sharon Nisbet at 905-727-0446 for further information.

Business after 5, sponsored by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, presents dart night at the Aurora Legion, Industrial Parkway North, from 6 to 8.30 p.m. To register call 905-727-7262.

From 7 to 8 p.m. in the Town Park, Miriam Goldberger of Wildflower Farms will present a gardening workshop on "Elegant Water Efficient Landscaping". Call 1-888-967-5426 to register.

An all-new bike clinic covering terminology, bike maintenance, safety skills, equipment, stopping/turning and tricks for ages 7-13 at the Leisure Complex parking lot. Cost is \$16. Call 905-726-4760 for further information.

Yonge Street Dance, between Murray and Henderson, 7 p.m. to midnight. Sponsored by the Optimist Club of Aurora. Advance tickets at \$10 now on sale.

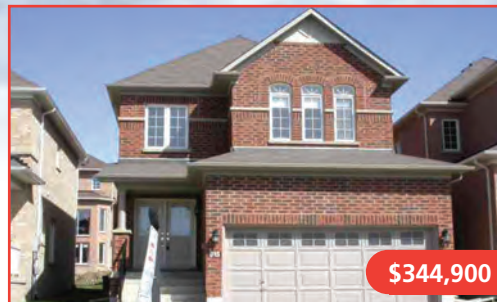
Eleventh Annual Street Festival on Yonge Street between Wellington and Murray. Booth space available by calling 905-727-7262.

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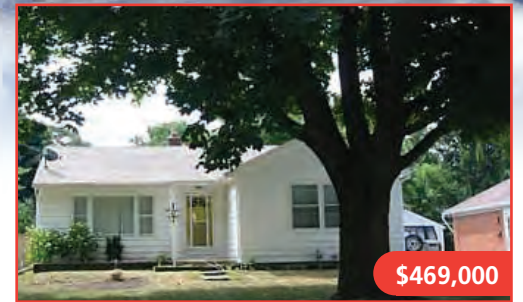
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PROUD TO BE LIVING AND WORKING IN AURORA



A recent pancake brunch at Aurora's Park Place Manor raised funds for the Easter Seals Society of York Region. Among those enjoying the meal were Edith McMaster, left, staff-member Andrew Meikle and Gwen Fletcher. Nearly \$500 was raised for the charity.

Photo courtesy Silas Studios

Raucous council meeting one of longest this term

During the past two and a half years of the term of Aurora Council there have been many raucous and embarrassing meetings, but the last week's had to be one of the worst.

It all started very early in the term when the newly-elected council planned a traditional off-site weekend retreat to formulate a vision

Wal-Mart

From page 1
Development Planning Glen Letman wrote in a report.

Not everyone at the meeting was thrilled with the proposal.

True Value Hardware operator Mike Evans said the meeting was "illegal" because people who had opposed the original Wal-Mart store had not been notified.

He claimed there would not be enough hydro power available for the project.

A spokesman for Loblaw's said there have been plans submitted to expand the Real Canadian Superstore at Bayview and St. John's Sideroad but the company had not heard of Wal-Mart's proposal.

He said Loblaw's planned to get into the department store business, much the way Wal-Mart planned to get into the food business.

Councillor Damir Vrancic said the proposal was "premature".

"We need all the facts before we can make an informed decision," he said. "Too many changes have not been detailed."

Under the new proposal, there would be parking provided for more than 1,000 cars.

Councillor Evelyn Buck, however, was willing to approve the bylaw amendment application in principle "with the amending bylaw being scheduled for approvals after council has had the opportunity to review and approve the site plan".

Her suggestion was hers alone as council voted 6-1 to send the proposal back for more answers.

Councillors John West and Wendy Gaertner were not at the meeting.

for the coming term and to get to know each other.

Councillors Phyllis Morris, Wendy Gaertner and Nigel Kean boycotted the retreat even though it had been approved by the majority of council and conflict was created.

This has carried on throughout the term as the same members boycotted other assembly meetings as they were not open to the public, even though one of the best municipal lawyers in the province reported that such assemblies were legal under the Municipal Act.

In addition, during the term although the majority of the general committee approved a certain course of action, when the report came to council, the issue was rehashed as some members didn't agree with the majority.

That resulted in nit-picking, points of order and personal remarks.

At the start of Tuesday's meeting, Mayor Tim Jones laid down some ground rules about not permitting personal remarks by members of council, and then allowed it to happen.

Before the meeting got underway, Councillor Evelyn Buck raised a Question of Privilege by pointing out that Councillor Damir Vrancic had lectured her and Councillor Phyllis Morris had questioned Buck's intel-

ligence and she claimed the mayor had done nothing to stop them.

She added that she had a right to say what she wanted and while she wouldn't ask for an apology, she recommended the procedural bylaw be followed.

When the mayor indicated he agreed and said he had asked everyone to show respect, Councillor Vrancic said if he agreed with Councillor Buck's comments, he would appeal the ruling of the chair.

Councillor Phyllis Morris said she had been impugned and the mayor had agreed with the comments and suggested the mayor lead by example.

Before the business of the municipality could get underway, Councillor Wendy Gaertner questioned two items on the agenda that had been submitted by Councillor Evelyn Buck and should be considered as a Notice of Motion.

Town clerk Bob Panizza replied that as the motions had been received in advance and had been circulated with the agenda, they met the requirements of the procedural bylaw.

Councillor Gaertner disagreed and said in order for the items to remain on the agenda a motion would have to be adopted to waive the procedural bylaw, which she so moved.

In the absence of a second, her motion died, and a subsequent motion to approve the agenda as submitted was approved and the meeting got underway.

Later in the meeting, during a discussion on the heritage conservation district, Councillor Kean claimed Councillor Buck was fear-mongering. When Buck objected, Kean withdrew his remarks and apologized.

This caused Councillor Hogg to utter an obscenity indicating he didn't believe Kean, resulting in Kean asking for a retraction. Hogg apologized but added he was sick and tired of the sniping and told his colleagues to grow up.

In addition to being one of the most raucous of meetings, it was also one of the longest, getting underway at 7 p.m. and adjourning at 11.30 p.m.

\$2 million from Magna

From page 1
consistent with policies to ensure Magna is appropriately recognized for its contribution.

"The Town of Aurora is delighted about this donation to the new Aurora Recreation Complex," Mayor Jones said. "We are extremely grateful to the Stronach family and Magna for their continued support of our community. This wonderful gift will provide several benefits to the residents, children and organizations in Aurora for years to come."

Over the years, the Stronach family has made numerous contributions to the community including capital donations to the Aurora Library, many sports and community groups, providing free

soccer fields on their corporate headquarters, their financial support of the Aurora Tigers and their financial commitment to the Southlake Hospital Regional Cancer Centre.

The Aurora Recreation Complex will offer new facilities such as a twin-pad arena, an aquatics facility, a pre-school, community space and adjacent site development.

The new facility will provide residents with year-round swimming opportunities, additional ice time and community service opportunities.

The project is currently scheduled for full completion this year. The ice surfaces have operated all winter, but the swimming pool is still incomplete.

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Law enforcement is the only answer

*It's a rocky road to rescue,
As more speed humps appear;
Causing lives to be at risk,
But residents have no fear!*

- Poor Richard's Scrapbook

If council continues to approve more all-way stops, lower speed limits and the installation of speed humps as methods to control speeding on residential streets, Aurora will become known as anti-motorist.

Motorists, except for some commuters who use the main streets to come to town to catch the bus or train, are taxpayers and should have some rights, but they are being shifted from street to street in order to get around.

When responding to an emergency every second counts when a life or a burning residence is at stake, but our politicians love affair with so-called traffic calming devices means more and more streets are delaying emergency vehicles.

It has been pointed out time and time again that five speed humps in a row on a street can slow down emergency vehicles by as much as a minute and that minute could make the difference between life and death

Delays in response time might also include higher fire insurance premiums if fire equipment is delayed reaching the fire beyond what is considered a normal response time.

Paramedics point out that ambulances are also slowed down by speed humps making it uncomfortable for patients with major trauma who get bounced around and for the un-tethered paramedics trying to treat them.

It's obvious more stop signs, lower speed limits and speed humps are being used as political candy to satisfy local residents who complain about speeding and aggressive driving on their streets.

None of these traffic calming devices gets after the real problem and that is speeding and aggressive driving and that is the responsibility of the police and they are conspicuous by their absence on residential streets.

On several occasions council had directed staff to contact the police and request increased surveillance on this street or that but it doesn't seem to make any difference as citizens continue to complain.

Aurora established the Roadwatch program in an attempt to report speeding and aggressive driving on residential streets but its success or failure is unknown as reports very seldom come to council.

It would be interesting if York Regional Police submitted a monthly report of the number of speeding offenders caught on residential streets in Aurora and if the Traffic Safety Advisory Board did the same for the Roadwatch program.

At least council and citizens would know that something was done.

Before approving any more traffic calming measures in Aurora, members of council should make a presentation to the York Region Police Services Board about the lack of traffic law enforcement in the municipality and find out what happened to the Community Policing program that was supposed to make our streets and communities safe and make a report to citizens in public session.

It is also suggested that council convene a well-advertised public meeting with representatives of police, fire and ambulance services in attendance to discuss traffic calming devices and their impact on emergency services.

The meeting should also provide an opportunity for motorists to relate their experiences about finding alternative routes to avoid the speed humps and from citizens who want to bargain lifesaving seconds against speeding cars.

There's no doubt that speeding and aggressive driving must be controlled, but that is the responsibility of the police, and council members should find out why they are not carrying out their responsibilities.

At one time Aurora Council hired off-duty police officers to control speeding in high-risk residential areas and it was quite successful until it was stopped by police officials claiming law enforcement was the responsibility of officers on regular duty.

Another possibility is to have town bylaw enforcement officers sworn in as special constables with a mandate to enforce traffic regulations in the municipality, but if I remember correctly police officials opposed this move.

It's time to get to the root of the problem and that's law enforcement!



Today, it serves as the home for Bacon Basketware, but originally, this was the factory that gave Aurora its rightful place in the industry of the nation. The Fleury Works, by the turn of the 20th century, was by far Aurora's largest employer, employing about 200 people, and manufacturing the famous Fleury Plow along with a host of other agricultural implements which were shipped throughout Canada. The business was started by Joseph Fleury, a blacksmith, in 1859. He died in 1880 and left the business to his sons. Several buildings made up the Fleury factory, and a highlight was a huge smokestack that was demolished a few years ago. The above photograph appears on a postcard, part of the collection of postcards owned by Aurora resident Bob McRoberts.

Letters to the Editor

Aurora seniors need stuff you don't

To the editor,

The Aurora Seniors Annual Bazaar and Craft Sale will be held next Saturday, May 6th, starting at 9 a.m. and running until 2 p.m. at the seniors' building, 5 Municipal Drive, across from the Town Hall.

The seniors are in need of your unused, unwanted, spare,

surplus, not required merchandise, articles, and items for their bazaar.

Crafts of all kinds are welcome.

Your unwanted jewelry and toys in good order of all descriptions are welcome.

Books, ornaments, knick-knacks, trinkets, knitted goods, games, golf clubs and tools,

can find a loving owner.

Please look around your home at what is unused, unexploited, gathering dust, taking up your space.

What is clutter to you is a treasure to somebody else, so please let us offer it at our bazaar and let somebody put it to good use.

Please drop off non-perish-

able items each day until May 5th, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Of major importance, and always our most popular table is the baked goods table.

If you have any baking skills, please bake a cake for the seniors, or a pie or muffins or tarts, or do whatever you choose to turn your culinary skill to good effect.

You will delight us totally and we will be proud of you big time.

Baked goods can be dropped off at the centre Friday afternoon, May 5, and Saturday until noon. Nothing will be wasted.

Brian Warburton
Aurora

To the editor,

As a partially disabled veteran from World War II, I'm bogged by the pseudo-war in Iraq.

After three years of conflict still going on, the last number of dead servicemen of the - let's call them allies - stands at approximately 2,500 souls.

Still a crying shame.

However, comparing this with our two major wars, the comparison isn't there.

In WWI, lasting from 1914 to 1918, Canadian deaths totalled 68,300.

In two battles, for example, one in 1916, 24,713 were killed.

Then, in 1917, at Passchendaele, we had 15,000 dead and wounded.

And, finally, when the Kaiser Wilhelm capitulated, that war was finally over. A very dirty war. Trenches like open

sewers.

In WWII, after the allies invaded Normandy, June 6, 1944, the war lasted until VE Day, May 8, 1945.

Total deaths from all aspects of that campaign totalled 42,042, including an additional 4,500 serving with other armies and eventually Adolf Hitler committed suicide with Eva Braun, his mistress, in the Berlin bunker.

And now, in Iraq, it has become a civil war with four combatants: the Shiites, the Sunnis, the Kurds, and, of all things, the allied troops which President George Bush will not acknowledge.

You may recall that President Bush's reason to invade Iraq was a lie about instruments being made by Saddam Hussein for mass destruction. Never found.

Lately, we hear stories of at

least two trailers moving about the country manufacturing lethal chemicals, such as Anthrax.

These were found and inspected by a U.S. group and their report stated that no such thing ever occurred there. Another lie from the White House.

When Hussein was found and dragged out of his rabbit warren, the war should have ended there, as with the Kaiser and Hitler in WWI and WWII, but the little man still wants to rule the world with his democracy ventures.

Now we have Iran and maybe another war with more casualties.

But nothing will ever compare, I hope, to those in the two World Wars.

Archie Milne
Aurora

Roadside landscaping costs a fortune: reader

To the editor,

This letter is to the taxpayers of Aurora and other towns and cities of Ontario.

The tax monies which we have to pay to groups acting on our behalf to landscape our neighbourhoods and public properties is appalling.

New subdivisions, plazas, parklands and public streets never mature to the artist's conception of what they should evolve into because of the total incompetence of the landscape and construction industry.

Trees are the beautifier of these areas.

Millions of dollars of our taxes are squandered away because

of stupidity.

Trees being planted improperly, poor locales, planted directly under hydro wires, wired so tightly that within a year or so they are nothing but thousands of dollars worth of stricks in the ground.

The same companies are then recruited to do the same act over again at our expense.

A tree doctor, when asked about the situation, related to me that he has not wired trees in 10 years and they used to wire trees so they would not blow over.

"I would not want to be in that wind storm," he said.

When you're out on a Saturday or travelling to work,

just look around and be a witness to why our taxes are as high as they are.

The last major power failure was caused by branches and hydro lines.

Trees have been planted under major hydro lines on St. John's Sideroad by the McKenzie Marsh which will, if allowed to grow to maturity, be higher than the poles the hydro lines are on.

The saplings are already touching the wires.

To make a mistake is acceptable, to make the same mistake over and over again is folly.

K.G. Munro
Aurora

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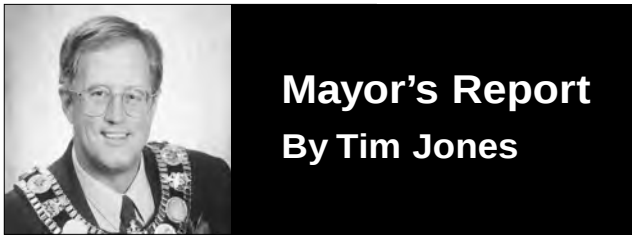
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Mayor's Report By Tim Jones

Chicken or the egg?

Recently, Aurora Council deliberated the 2006 budget for Town Services. We did so with the added value of departmental business plans, documents prepared by each department on the base services and priorities of each department.

Ideally, department business plans should fall out of a Town-wide Strategic plan which identifies in broad strokes the vision and priorities, usually six to eight value statements of our Town followed by objectives.

Business Plans are used as management tools to assist members of Council and Senior Management in looking forward to determining trends and needs of the municipality.

Business plans are constantly under review and need to be flexible enough to respond to ever-changing circumstances.

Trends are found in the review of the development and approval process, legislated requirements set out from the Provincial level and the requirements to continue to provide a satisfactory level of services to deal with the Town's forecasted growth during the period.

For the purposes of our budgeting, business plans will be prepared from the directions and priorities identified in the update of the Town's Strategic Plan.

Plans will be developed for the following areas: Chief Administrative Officer, Building Department, Economic Development, Legal Services, Corporate Services, Financial Services, Leisure Services, Public Works, Planning, and the Aurora Public Library.

As an example, using the Chief Administrator's Office Business Plan draft, information is provided about the office responsibilities - that its mission is to provide effective and efficient administrative service to council, staff and the public.

It also states the statutory responsibility under the Municipal Act of the C.A.O. which include exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the Municipality and performing other duties as are assigned by the municipality.

The Office is described as having three divisions, Administration, Economic Development and Legal.

For Corporate Administration, goals are set to provide efficient and effective administration for the corporation as a whole.

Numerous action steps are then identified which include completing the strategic planning process and implementing long-term business plans for all departments, to improve the flow of financial information through the implementation of our new financial system.

Accomplishments are also outlined from the previous year to put the future into some perspective.

And key performance indicators are identified.

Examples include: completion of Strategic Plan update - May 2006; response to inquiries of members of council within one business day; and keeping the number of complaints down to fewer than 10 per month.

Each service will be broken down to reflect the same information with its own set of accomplishments and key performance indicators.

For a better look at the draft plans, go to the Town of Aurora website at www.town.aurora.on.ca/notice/2ndDraft2006BusinessPlans/2ndDraft2006BusinessPlansContents.html

The Region of York has been operating under a similar format for a number of years.

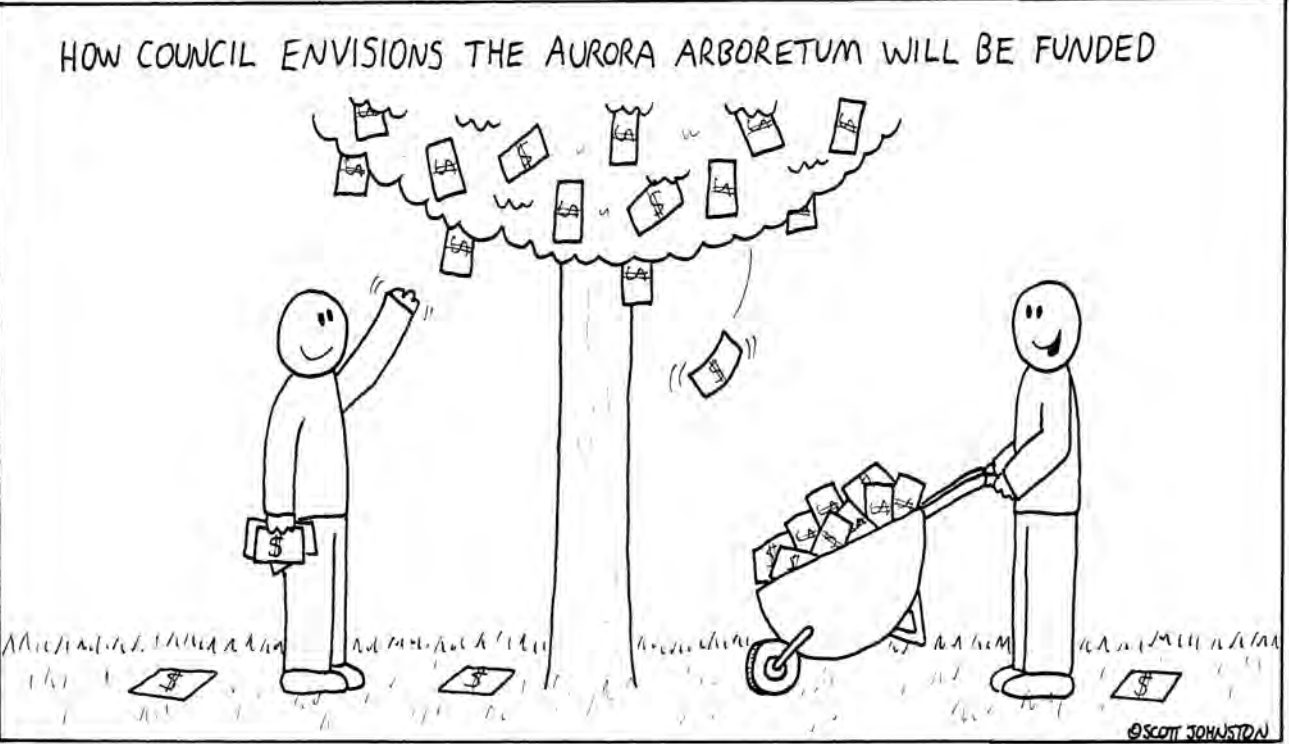
As Chairman of the Region's Finance and Administration Committee for the majority of the past two terms, I find this system a very efficient and easy to understand approach to annual budgeting and I have been advocating this approach in our Town.

Residents, staff and council will have a better understanding of our budgeting, costs and revenues as well as performance through this improved process.

For information on the Region's budget on the web, you can go to: www.region.york.on.ca/Regional+Government/Budgets/default+budget.htm

If you see something in this column that you wish to respond to, I welcome your comments, either through the paper, to the Town Hall by mail - Box 1000, Aurora, Ontario, L4G 6J1 or e-mail at tjones@e-aurora.ca

Machell's Corners



Cathy's Corner

The pink scarf

It isn't safe to vote the party anymore.

According to my Aunt Ruth, it never was. "Always vote the man", she said.

I know it sounds a little strange - especially for a feminist. She never married and always had a rebellious opinion complete with the guts to express it.

She respected men, but if a man underestimated her intellect, he'd be wearing her hot pink scarf...wrapped around his tongue and tied in a bow.

"Always vote the man" was her mantra because a few decades ago, only men were running.

I grew up with it. In other words, my Aunt Ruth scarred me for life.

In university, I wrote a paper arguing that minority government is the best form of government because everybody's vote counts.

Later, I wrote another one promoting the ousting of incumbents when they stop looking like their campaign literature.

"You are getting bolder," my professor wrote on my paper. I took that as a compliment and bought myself a hot pink scarf.

I wear it to scrutinize the candidates and review the issues.

I don't vote for women just because they are women, and I don't vote the party just because it appealed to my father. I vote on the basis of who cares about what I care about most.

So it matters to me who will be running in the Liberal leadership race. They might get elected!

I'm glad to see Martha Hall Findlay has thrown in her hot pink scarf. People say she got "parachuted" into Newmarket-Aurora like it's a bad thing.

But a candidate who can come out of nowhere, embrace the community and make her mark deserves more credit.

I don't care how she got here. I am impressed with Martha's character and the grace with which she handled getting steam rolled by a political machine that equates leadership with name recognition.

The media, however, isn't interested in people of substance. The papers are sizzling with the news that Bob Rae has thrown in his dunce cap.

Yes, the former NDP Premier who led Ontario to the panache of record government deficits has searched his soul and found a Liberal lurking in the shadows.

Some say it is unfortunate that he reigned during the worst recession since the Great Depression. Had times been better, he might have done better.

But isn't the mark of a GREAT leader the ability to lead when everything ISN'T peachy?

Back then, the confused and desperate NDP had its own definition of a leader: an articulate sort who could look good on television and convince people to switch brands.

Fabulous skill set...for a beer commercial.

Today, the only things left to tell that Ontario was once led by a Rhodes Scholar are: gambling casinos, the 407 ETR, and the quote: "Socialism is love".

Pass me a beer, will you?

Without one, it's hard to wash down how "Socialism is love" translates into building a highway few can afford. Unless you consider legalizing casinos so that the poor can hope to some day drive on it a socially loving thing to do?

Forget the beer. That calls for champagne!

Today, Bob Rae has long abandoned the NDP principles for which he once proclaimed a fire in the belly. Some say he was a Liberal all along, and judging by his spending habits, they could be right.

But leadership isn't about who can look best on television telling the sincerest lies.

Brian Mulroney's landslide victory makes him the master of convincing people to switch brands, but the devastation that he left in his wake - both to our country and the Conservative party says: a leader he was NOT!

When the likes of Mulroney and Rae have dreams, we have nightmares. That's hardly the kind of vision Canadians deserve.

Leadership is about commitment and principles. It's the stuff that legacies are made of.

Most people have never heard of Ruth Andonoff, but she didn't have to be a household name to be a leader in her lifetime.

What makes her great is the legacy she left behind - one that continues to enrich many lives many decades after her passing.

She lost her battle with breast cancer in 1980, but not even cancer could defeat the spirit with which she promoted equality for women and encouraged independent thought.

Cancer took her life, but it will never take away the legacy of a woman who lived purposefully, loved richly, and laughed louder, longer and more often than anyone I have ever known in my life. Her pink scarf lives on.

"Always vote the man", she said. And given the popularity of brand switching these days, her advice makes a lot of sense.

In fact, it always has.

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

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

 **BOUQUETS** to Councillor Nigel Kean and his volunteers for organizing the Aurora Farmers' Market which opens for its fourth year May 27 in the Temperance Street parking lot, just south of Wellington Street West. It opens every Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon until the Thanksgiving weekend.

 **BOUQUETS** to Councillor Ron Wallace for volunteering to represent council on the Special Events Committee, which was endorsed by council. He was chairman but took a rest and Councillor Wendy Gaertner took over but asked that she be allowed to step down and suggested Wallace assume his rightful place.

 **BRICKBATS** to duct cleaning company telemarketers for making telephone sales calls on Good Friday. It's bad enough at any time but on a holiday when almost all businesses are closed, it's ridiculous. When is the federal government or the CRTC going to take action to stop these annoying pests?

 **BOUQUETS** to Magna International for continuing its agreement with the town for the use of its Wellington Street East property for the 2006 season of the Aurora Youth Soccer Club. The agreement has been in place for several years.

 **BRICKBATS** to some residents and the management of a north Aurora apartment building for objecting to a bird feeding station that one of the handicapped residents had placed outside her window so she could watch the birds. She has had it for 10 years but management made her remove it due to complaints of Canada Geese making too much noise.

 **BOUQUETS** to Newmarket Council in establishing a Task Force to study the reasons why the voter turnout in recent Newmarket municipal elections remained around the 31 per cent mark and issuing a challenge to other municipalities to do the same. The average municipal voter turnout in York Region was 34.8 per cent. Municipalities should accept the challenge.

 **BRICKBATS** to Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay for gushing like a teenager when he met his American counterpart U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. In spite of his boyish enthusiasm, he was not able to make any headway in pushing Canada's interests in several cross-border issues, especially border crossings and softwood lumber, as he blamed the former Liberal government for the situation.

 **BOUQUETS** to Kaitlyn Lenchak, the 2006 Provincial Seal Ambassador, for her excellent presentation about the work of the Easter Seal Society at a recent Aurora Council meeting. She also promoted the Joe Persechini Easter Seal Run-A-Thon on May 28th. She's a worthy Ambassador and she's from Aurora.

 **BRICKBATS** to Prime Minister Stephen Harper for using Canadian troops and their mission in Afghanistan as a political tool, especially since national defence was not included as one of the top priorities of his government, but they provide excellent photo ops.

 **BOUQUETS** to Aurora High School student Caitlyn Urquhart in winning the Earth Rangers Sustainable Future Day at Kortright Centre for Conservation recently. She won first prize in the York Region District School Board category for her concept of making a horse stable more environmentally sustainable.

 **BRICKBATS** to the vandals who are setting fires in garbage bins, slashing tires and other acts of vandalism in Aurora, as 17 vehicles had tires slashed in a one-week period and Central York Fire Services responded to nine garbage bin fires. Police need the help of the public in reporting any suspicious activity.

Letters to the Editor

Old fogies must stop whining

To the editor,

I am so fed up with the old fogies of this town whining about change and how they are going to "lose their small town".

Wake up. It is not a small town anymore.

When I moved here 12 years ago, there was a population of 33,000 plus. Now there are more than 48,000. In a couple of years there will be more.

Get used to it. The only constant in this world (beyond death and taxes) is that things will always change, and the older generation will always resist it.

Initially, all human beings desire a pattern or an environment where they can be comfortable.

But being comfortable only lasts so long as it can lead to

complacency and apathy, allowing for problems to develop and resulting ultimately in causing a change that would have to occur anyways in order to restore the balance.

As far as the ward system is concerned, I take the position that an ounce of precaution is worth a pound of cure.

By no means do I suggest we rush into things without due consideration, but why sit around on our collective rumps until we are in a situation we can't handle and struggle to catch up to a problem that has been growing under our very noses, all the while pointing fingers to figure out who was to blame?

The world does not wait for those who sit and watch.

Adopting a ward system now may avert complications and improve communication between the town and its con-

stituents as we continue to grow and develop.

In this case the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few and the town had best be ready to address this.

By rejecting the ward system question, they are in effect turning deaf or even defiant ears to the greater population of Aurora.

In regards to the current system being more democratic, I am not so sure of that.

In the time I've been here, I have noticed that the people who run for the council are the same (with a couple exceptions) every term.

And the conduct of the council is the same, too (just look at all the articles in The Auroran).

There is no real sense of responsibility among these guys. Who do you go to? Who is accountable for which things are areas? Who besides the older generation of Aurora really knows these people?

The current panel of councillors consists of several characters including a woman who hits people with newspapers and a guy who used to be mayor 15 to 20 years ago.

You don't see former Prime Ministers with seats in parliament, do you?

Wouldn't that count as cronyism in some form? And what does he argue about? A street named after him.

It is no surprise that council opposes the ward system, because they are the same old fogies that like the quiet,

comfortable Aurora of days past.

(I have recently heard another resident refer to the town council as "King Jones and his Council" - no disrespect to Mr. Jones).

The comedian George Carlin once told a joke about how people should not be allowed to drive cars in the modern age if they could remember a time when there were no cars.

Maybe people shouldn't be on the council if they can remember a time when Aurora really was a small town.

Point being, we need some fresh blood in there.

But we are not likely to attract or inspire many new people unless something dramatically changes and this town becomes willing to consider new ideas.

N.W.
Aurora

Best wishes

Open letter to Maurizio Bevilacqua, MP.

Have received word that you are now in the Liberal leadership race.

You say, "The time for licking the wounds of Jan. 23 is over. The time for renewal is now."

Great news, best wishes.

Peggy & John Trusler
Richmond Hill



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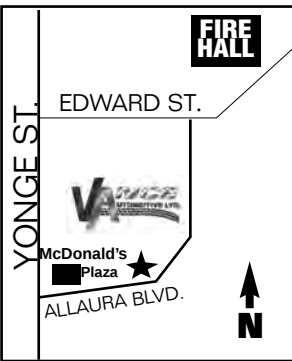
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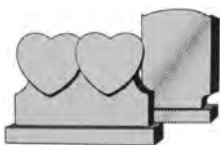
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Letters to the Editor

I want to stay in Aurora...is there room, he wonders

To the editor,

For a number of reasons, I've recently been thinking about senior citizens who live in Aurora and specifically about appropriate housing for seniors. I know we have a number of good accommodations for seniors, but do we have enough?

As a life-long resident of Aurora, I think I'd like to stay in town a little longer, maybe forever. (My family does have a plot at the south end of town.)

When I decide to move from my house to some

other arrangement, what are my choices?

Will there be any choices when that time comes?

Will I be able to walk to do my basic shopping and banking?

Will I be near the new Seniors' Centre?

Will I be near the town transit system?

Will I still be driving?

Will there be enough doctors in town?

A million other questions are popping to mind.

I made a few phone calls and talked to a few people. I've learned there are

quite a variety of names for the different types of residences - assisted living (or supportive housing), nursing home (or long term care facility), and retirement home.

I have a friend whose dad is on a wait list for a nursing home in Aurora that is predicted to take 18 to 24 months.

Her family is under quite a strain.

I understand that current wait times for seniors housing in Aurora are anywhere from 1½ to five years.

According to DPRA

Canada, the consulting firm in charge of the Strategic Plan Update for Aurora, a sizeable component of Aurora's population is rapidly approaching retirement age and a major issue facing our town is affordability of housing and quality of life.

Even with the excellent seniors' housing facilities that Aurora already has, there is a need for more, affordable, and up-to-date housing for the senior citizens of our town.

I encourage Town Council to seriously consider this growing need if such a

proposal were to come long as I want to. before it.

I do hope that I will have a choice to stay in Aurora as

Bob McRoberts
Aurora



Nigel Kean
for
Mayor
905-751-0790

Quality care not available to all, reader says

To the editor,

Standards of care not met which are repeatedly detailed in nursing home compliance inspection reports, combined with the findings of a Toronto newspaper last year which reported more than 6,100 calls were made to the

Ministry's 'hot line,' substantiates why families' complaints about the substandard care of their institutionalized elderly relatives are justified.

While the compromised care of long-term residents continues to be at issue, business news articles show profits made in the nursing home

sector.

Recent news reports show that more than \$2.8 billion has been invested into the long-term facility sector for 2006/2007, yet over the past few weeks petitions from nursing homes have been presented to MPPs calling for additional funding.

Clearly, quality care is not available to all residents in provincial long-term facilities, and the lack of accountability for funding as the auditor's review indicated, emphasizes the need for the public to be concerned about how the funds are spent.



Peter E. Reiss
Barrister & Solicitor
Business Law

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Unlikely residents would jump at this

To the editor,

It seems as if Councillor Evelyn Buck is in high dudgeon that a historian like me would dare to challenge her understanding and opinions regarding town planning matters.

She is disappointed that there was not more "gravitas" in my "rambling dissertation" in which she found I was "slagging" my opponents.

Curious.

She then pens a letter, condescending in tone and rife with sarcasm, which accuses Aurora's Community Planner of lying-or at least presenting "a blatant denial of the facts"--at a public meeting where the redevelopment of 34 Catherine Avenue was discussed in context with the proposed Heritage Conservation District.

To conclude her letter,

she refers to "the other little matter" of possible tax relief, grants, and loans to owners of designated properties as if this were part of the Heritage Conservation District plan.

It is not.

Should Aurora eventually choose to follow the lead of neighbouring towns such as Newmarket and Markham and offer modest incentives, partly supported from provincial coffers, the town could do so only in exchange for easements registered on the titles of these properties in order to safeguard its investment.

That is the law as spelled out in revisions to the Ontario Municipal Act in 2001.

Does it seem likely that large numbers of homeowners would flock to take advantage of this?

The 2002 Annual Report of the Provincial Auditor of Ontario provided an in-depth investigation of issues concerning long-term care facilities which included serious concerns around resident care and lack of financial accountability for funding.

According to the auditor's report, "long-term-care facilities received approximately \$1.6 billion in funding" for the fiscal year 2001/02 and "approximately \$793 million in accommodation charges from residents."

For the 2003/04 fiscal year, "long-term care facilities received approximately \$2.1 billion in funding from the Ministry and approximately \$985 million in accommodation payments from residents."

The report concluded, "the Ministry's procedures for providing adequate accountability to the public" were impaired because "financial information submitted by facilities was not sufficient to allow the Ministry to determine whether funds had been used in accordance with the Ministry's expectations."

Ellen Watson
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11:00am-2:00pm & 5:00pm-8:00pm

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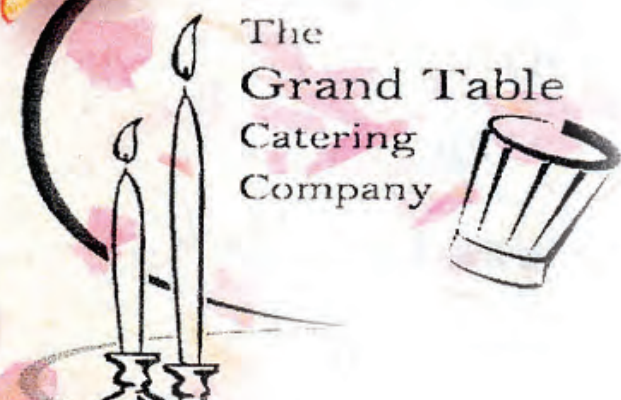
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This month's restaurant guide featuring...



Mother's Day Brunch

May 14, 2006

From 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
*** THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME**

Breakfast Items
Breakfast Pastries, Bread Rolls, Eggs Benedict,
Bacon, Sausage, Home Style Potatoes, Home Made Baked Beans

Cold Table
Smoked Salmon, Jumbo Shrimp, Marinated Mussels, Assorted Salads,
Assorted Cold Cuts, Vegetables and Dip, Assorted Pickles, Devilled Eggs
Cold Lobster Salad, Fresh Oysters on Half Shell

Entrée
Carved Baked Honey Glazed Ham, Beef Stroganoff, Grilled Chicken
with Curry Sauce, Grilled Snapper with Creole Sauce, Basmati Rice,
Fresh Vegetables Medley

Sweet Table
Assorted Cakes and Pastries & Pudding, Fresh Fruit,
Assorted Cheese Platter with Bread & Cracker, Chocolate Truffle

Juice, Coffee and Regular Tea

\$32.95 Per Person plus applicable taxes
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May 14
4 p.m.

APPETIZERS

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Light Caesar Dressing 7.00
With grilled Chicken Breast Add 4.00

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Homemade Gnocchi, Roasted Sweet Peppers, Basil Smoked Cheese 14.00
Linguini with Shrimp, Scallops, Mussels, Squid, Salsa Fresca
and Extra Virgin Olive Oil 18.00

SEA COURSE

Salmon Filo, Baked Filet in Light Pastry, Leek & Saffron Cream Sauce 19.00
Pan Seared Ancho Chili Crusted Jumbo Sea Scallop, Risoto and Chipotle
(smoked jalapeno) Mango Mojo 19.00

GRILLED COURSE

Pan Roasted Chicken Breast Supreme, Mushrooms Ragout, Brown Rice Pilaf 16.00
Veal T-Bone, Grilled Vegetables, Balsamic Veal Juice 24.00
Steak & Shrimp, 8 oz New York Striploin & Tiger Shrimp 26.00

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Swimmers finish fourth in Sudbury meet

The Aurora "Ducks" swim team finished a respectable fourth last weekend at

Division II Team Championships held in Sudbury.

With clubs from all over Ontario attending, the meet was filled with fierce

competition.

The Ducks were able to accumulate 407 points to take fourth overall, behind the Oakville/Barrie Dolphins (697 points), the Burlington Devilrays (497 points) and the Granite Gators (429 points). Aurora finished ahead of teams from Oshawa, Crescent Town, Sudbury, Dorado and Toronto.

Last year the Ducks managed to win Division III Team Championships which vaulted them to Division II.

Next year the Ducks plan to put together a strong team which will strive to win Division II's and advance to Division I, where the most elite teams in the province compete.

Swimming for the Ducks were David Ahong, Joey

Bascin, Marina Biasutto, Randal Bonham, Kevin Boots, Alex Brown, Max Brown, Dylan Cook, Katie Downer, David Ellis, Julia Ewing, Sarah Gillis, Guido Iannucci, Marika Iannucci, Steven Kadas, Michael Cormack, Samantha Marshall, Drew Marshall, Jaimee Mellor-Hill, Graham Mitchell, Andree Payne, Alex Rodrigues, Callum Ross, Jamie Ross, Carling Seidl, Jake Silverthorn, Kate Slater, Matthew Smith, Julian Staniewski, and Alessia Valente.

Jake Silverthorn led the way with three firsts, one second and a fourth, while Jamie Ross followed with two firsts and one second place.

Marina Biasutto also had two firsts and one second

placing. Randal Bonham had a first and a third; Alex Brown had two firsts and a third; Guido Iannucci had two firsts and Callum Ross had a second and a third place finish.

Matthew Smith finished the meet with a first and second place finish while Alessia Valente wrapped up a third place finish for herself.

The Ducks compete in Port Hope this weekend, Buffalo at the end of May and will enter the Age Group Internationals, also at the end of May.

The club looks forward to welcoming new swimmers for next year's season, when they will swim in the new, eight-lane pool at the Aurora Recreation Centre, Wellington and Leslie.

Dance in the park may find new park

Following a presentation at the Leisure Services Advisory Committee by Special Events Coordinator Shelley Ware regarding proposed changes for the Canada Day Celebrations on July First, the committee recommended a similar presentation be made to council.

Ms Ware suggested the event be branded as "Celebrate Aurora" and the format be changed to make the event an even greater success, by making it more of a Family Event.

She reviewed the current event layout, indicating that some gaps had been identified such not addressing all age groups and events ending at 4 p.m. and beginning again at dusk forcing attendees to leave and return later in the day for fireworks and evening events.

She also noted there was a lack of "Aurora feel" among the entertainers, vendors and activities and suggested there were many untapped Aurora services that could be utilized.

She proposed the Dance in the Park on June 30th be moved from the Town Park to the Lambert Willson Park adjacent to the Leisure Complex.

It was also proposed that a local service club assume ownership of the Dance in the Park Beer Garden in order to reduce liability and allow the Special Events Sub-Committee to have more of an overview of the entire event.

In addition, a midway would be added to Canada Day which would provide more revenue for the town.

It was noted that members of the Leisure Services Advisory Committee had concerns about the loss of

revenue from the beer garden if given to a service club and the location change of the dance from the Town Park to the Lambert Willson Park.

In response to a question about timing, Director of Leisure Services Allan Downey said it was necessary to advertise for the operation of the beer garden as soon as possible.

Councillor Damir Vrancic recommended that the Dance in the Park be moved as proposed and that staff be

authorized to issue the Expression of Interest as suggested.

Councillor Evelyn Buck said many citizens would have fond memories of the dance in the Town Park, but with the growth of the town, she could see the necessity to move to a larger park.

Council adopted the Coordinator's recommendations and requested that the Special Events Sub-Committee schedule an early meeting to discuss any refinements.

Skating results

The following skaters who represented the Aurora Skating Club at the 2006 Scarborough Skate Invitational held recently were successful:

Starskate Freeskate Events

Pre-Preliminary Ladies B – Event #4: Savannah Hendy (Group 1) - 2nd; Shannon Lacombe (Group 2) - 6th; Shauna O'Connor (Group 3) - 5th; Samantha Duncan (Group 7) - 1st.
Preliminary Ladies B – Event #12: Hailey Riggs (Group 1) - 1st; Samantha Galati (Group 2) - 5th.
Preliminary Ladies B – Event #13: Katie Sutton (Group 3) - 5th.
Junior Bronze Ladies: Allie Sutton (Group 2) - 4th; Alysa Nichols (Group 3) - 7th; Jordana Goldman (Group 6) - 4th.
Junior Silver Ladies: Fayme Cockshutt (Group 2) - 6th.
Senior Bronze Ladies: Julia Ranson (Group 1) - 2nd.

Competitive Events

Pre-Juvenile Men: Alex Woodward - 1st.
Pre-Juvenile Ladies: Sierra Chovanec - 7th.
Pre-Novice Ladies Short: Maya Goldman (Group 2) - 7th; Emma Hayzelden (Group 3) - 4th.
Pre-Novice Ladies Freeskate: Maya Goldman (Group 4) - 6th.
Novice Ladies Short: Lauren Cooper (Group 1) - 2nd.
Novice Ladies Freeskate: Lauren Cooper (Group 3) - 5th.

Jaguar Gymnastics

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Happy 120th birthday, Church Street School

With permission from the author, the following piece was taken from the pages The Attic, a newsletter provided to the members of the Aurora Historical Society.

By JACQUELINE STUART

The object of my affection: a tribute to the Church Street School on her 120th birthday.

The assistant curator of the York Region District School Board's Heritage Schoolhouse Museum & Archives (one of our own directors, Sara Fayle) has just finished setting up an exhibit about the history of public education in York Region.

Local museum curators were asked to lend artifacts on which they are particularly fond for "The Object of My Affection".

The exhibits can be seen until June 26th at the education centres in Aurora at 60 Wellington Street West and Newmarket, at 300 Harry Walker Parkway South, during office hours.

When it comes to education in Aurora, the object of MY affection is Church Street School.

With Sara's agreement, the comments which I submitted to the exhibit (along with photographs of the building and the old "Church Street School" sign) have been slightly reworked for this birthday tribute.

Church Street School opened as the Aurora Public School in 1886.

Although officially closed as a school in 1952, it served as an "overflow" school in the booming 1960s and became the first home of the York County Board of Education in 1969.

In 1981 the Aurora Historical Society took over the top floor to accommodate the Aurora Museum, and now the whole building is under renovation for use as the Aurora Heritage Centre under the auspices of the society.

The building has character. It has quirks. It has...spirits?

No anonymous public building, this school has an exotic belfry and metal balls decorating its roofline.

The grand interior staircase has been thudded up and down by thousands of young feet.

Soaring windows flood each room with natural light, a necessity in pre-electric 1886.

Even school-age visitors comment on the warmth of the woodwork and the rich colours in the restored areas.

With renovation, some of the school's oddities

have disappeared.

The modest little back door and dank entryway quite at odds with the impressive front entrance, for example.

Gone is the alarming self-flushing toilet - faulty, not technically advanced - and the great crashes when the building shrugged off one of its original metal ceiling tiles.

I've never seen a ghost in Church Street School, but something of the spirit of the past lingers in the shadows in the old cupboards, in the initials illicitly carved into the walls and chimneys, and in every sign of the skills of the masons, woodworkers, and metal-workers of 120 years ago.

On those special occasions when the old bell is rung, we know that the chimes can be heard to the boundaries of that village and small town of the past.

For 66 years, every school-age child in Aurora spent time in these rooms and halls.

Some became leaders in their fields - yes, we claim Lester B. Pearson.

Most would not become household names, but what they learned in this building would be one of the foundation stones for the lives they did lead.

The previous school on this site had four classrooms and 400 students.

Fortunately, attendance was poor. Unfortunately, attendance was poor.

By the 1880s, it was realized that education was important for everyone.

Aurora erected a significant building to house one of the the most significant activites in the life of a communy: education.

Happy birthday, Church Street School. A place for education, still.

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Newmarket Theatre
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May 10, 11, 12, 13 at 7:30pm
May 13 & 14 at 2:00pm

A Great Family Musical!



St. Andrew's dancers perform at recent African Concert Charity Fundraiser to adopt Kenyan village.

St. Andrew's College expects to 'Adopt A Village' in Kenya

Aurora's St. Andrew's College Outreach Committee will contribute 100 per cent of its charity fundraising efforts this year toward building and furnishing a school in Kenya.

What appeared to be an unattainable goal set in September is now close to becoming reality through the perseverance of the students.

They are now expecting to exceed their initial goal of \$30,000 through ticket sales for an African Concert - Charity Fundraiser that was held recently.

The committee typically selects a handful of charities to support over the academic year.

This year, they decided to focus their energies on helping

one cause with the philosophy that \$30,000 given to one village would make a far greater impact than contributing \$2,000 each to several different organizations. This is by far the most ambitious student-led fundraising effort in the history of the school.

"In past years we have contributed about \$20,000 to a variety of different worthy causes," said Mark Service, Faculty Outreach Coordinator at St. Andrew's College. "After hearing Marc Kielburger, co-founder of Free The Children, speak earlier this year the students decided to focus on one cause they were passionate about and dedicate the entire year to attaining this goal. The results have been remarkable."

Twenty-nine students and five faculty members will travel to the Masai Mara region of Kenya at their own expense this summer to construct a one-room school house.

Funds will also go toward furnishing the school, purchasing textbooks, paying a teacher's salary for two years, school supplies and health kits for 100 students, and \$2,000 worth of medical supplies for the community.

Their donation will also pay for the construction of a residence for one teacher, a drinking water well, and two latrines.

"We can't wait to actually witness the final results this summer in Kenya," said Adel Ratansi, a Grade 11 student and co-President of the Outreach Committee. "I've been really impressed this year with how much the St. Andrew's community has rallied behind this cause."

Students and staff will also spend some time teaching English lessons to children in the community.

The intention is to maintain contact with this school and community for years to come through a pen pal relationship involving students in Middle School.

Free the Children is the largest network of children helping children through education in the world, with more than one million youth involved throughout 45 countries.

Adopt a Village is one of these programs, and began with the goal of helping Sri Lankan tsunami victims with long-term relief and rebuilding efforts.

Area YMCA groups planning walkathon

Nadine Star and Elisia Pisapia are organizing the Aurora area contingent that will join more than 200 other YMCA Child Care Centres across the GTA May 11 in a walk-a-thon to support of the YMCA Spirit of Giving Campaign.

Young YMCA members from Pre-school, Kindergarten and School Age Programs will raise funds through pledges based on their participation in the event.

An estimated 300 children will take part.

The YMCA of Greater Toronto is the largest not-for-profit provider of licensed child care in Canada, providing care for more than 25 years.

Each year, with donations raised through the YMCA Spirit of Giving Campaign the YMCA of Greater Toronto helps thousands of individuals and families participate in programs they otherwise could not afford.

For further information about the Walk-a-thon event or for more information about YMCA Child Care programs, contact St. Jerome YMCA Child Care, YMCA Aurora/Oak Ridges School Age Programs, and Aurora YMCA Nursery Schools.

Nadine can be reached at 905-751-1189 or nadine.star@ymca.net and Elisia Pisapia is at 905-727-5189 or elisia.pisapia@ymca.net.

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

What happens to commercial space?

In April, 1991, despite a last-minute objection by the Aurora Shopping Centre, Aurora Council approved a small factory outlet as part of the new Reebok Canada warehouse and head office on Bayview Avenue in the Aurora East industrial park.

The company planned to open a 3,500 square foot retail shoe store as part of its proposed 146,000 square foot Aurora facility.

Aurora Shopping Centre officials argued that council was setting a dangerous precedent by allowing commercial stores to be located in industrial areas and was failing to support existing retail areas.

Concern was also expressed about the commercial designation if Reebok should leave in the future. That concern may be put to the test as in March, 2005, it was learned Reebok was closing its Aurora operations and relocating in Montreal in the summer of 2006.

Then in February, it was announced the lease on the Aurora building had been extended until December, 2006, so the future of the commercial outlet is still a question mark.

NAMING CANADIAN COINS

In Canada, there's no such thing as a penny, nickel, dime, quarter or half-dollar, and Canada never had coins by those names.

The words all have British or American origins and their use in Canada is technically incorrect.

Using British or American names for Canadian coins is nothing new.

The word "penny" is a British word dating back more than 1,200 years.

The term "nickel" first appeared in North America as a nickname for the U.S. five-cent pieces in 1865.

The name "dime" was given to the American 10-cent piece in 1837 and became common usage in Canada before the first Canadian 10-cent piece was produced in 1858.

The terms "quarter" and "half-dollar" were part of the daily language in Canada long before the government issued its first 25-cent and 50-cent pieces in 1870.

Not taken from Britain or the United States was the term "shinplaster" for a 25-cent paper bill.

It was first introduced in 1870 with a second version in 1900 and the final version in 1923.

There were plenty of shinplasters in circulation

in the 1930s.

The name was said to come from the similarity in size to that of a sheet of brown paper soaked in vinegar that at one time was applied to sore shins.

Also original in Canada was the "loonie" to replace the \$1 bill introduced in 1989 and the "toonie" in 1996.

But when was the last time you saw a half-dollar, or more officially, a 50-cent piece?

GET OUT ALIVE

At 6 p.m. on October 9, 1985, fire alarms rang across York Region and the country in hopes that families would conduct their own domestic fire drill.

The idea of Getting Out Alive began in Edmonton in 1984 when a fire drill was staged at 6 p.m. Studies after the drill indicated that while 80 per cent of the population of the area was aware of the event, only 40 per cent participated.

Organizers in York Region, with the help of McDonald's Restaurants, hoped to have a better response in the region.

McDonald's distributed thousands of information kits for the Get Out Alive program.

The kit included a floor plan to be completed by parents.

A coupon was attached to the plan which could be completed and dropped off at any area McDonalds. A draw was to be made for a child to be Fire Chief for a Day.

BEST AND WORST OF PLANS

The highly-promoted Toronto-Centred Region Plan has long been forgotten but it was designed by the Bill Davis Progressive Conservative government to provide a green-belt north of Toronto for recreational use and a commuter shed for people working in the city and a planned development area in the Barrie/Orrilla area.

The newly-established York Region was caught in the centre of the two and prepared a brief for the province with individual comments from each of the region's nine local governments.

In June, 1972, Aurora Council approved its part of the regional brief and requested that the population restrictions be lifted to allow the town to grow to between 28,000 and 31,000 by the year 2000.

It also asked that a half-mile wide service corridor and green space be established to clearly stop any southward urban sprawl from Newmarket.

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Ward system question defeated by councillors

A ward system question will not appear on this year's municipal ballot, council decided last week.

At an earlier general committee meeting there were several presentations and correspondence tabled both for and against including the question on the ballot.

After a lengthy debate, the committee defeated a motion by Councillor Phyllis Morris and Mayor Tim Jones by a 5-2 vote with Councillors Bill Hogg and Nigel Kean absent.

At the council meeting, resident Eric McCartney sought clarification of the committee decision. He pointed out the number of letters and presentations in support of the question, and that the committee had discussed a ward system, rather than the inclusion of the question.

Resident Bill MacWilliams also wanted the question on the ballot. He questioned whether enough publicity and advance notice had been given to citizens regarding the question.

He stressed that the ward system was not the

issue but the inclusion of the question and in the interests of democracy, the people should have a say as to whether the municipality has a ward system or not.

Councillor Morris recommended the question be on the ballot. She said it was up to the people to decide if they wanted a ward system or not.

Councillor Kean said that while he personally was opposed to a ward system, he believed the question should be on the ballot as the decision was up to the people.

Councillor Evelyn Buck pointed out that members of council were elected to make decisions.

Councillor John West provided a brief summary of attempts to obtain a ward system in the past, and agreed the decision was up to council, and if people wanted changes, they should run for council.

Councillor Ron Wallace said that while he had no objection to including the question on the ballot, he wouldn't support it. He questioned if one question

was allowed on the ballot, would there be others such as train whistling at night and heritage districts.

Decisions were up to councillors, he said.

Councillor Hogg said because he didn't support a ward system, he couldn't support the question.

Councillor Damir

Vrancic noted there hadn't been a groundswell of public protest against the current system and it was up to council to evaluate it.

A recorded vote was called with six members of council opposing the question while Mayor Tim Jones and Councillors Morris and Kean supported it.

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