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AURORAN
Aurora's Community Newspaper

INVEST AND RELAX
SEE PAGE 2

Vol. 6 No. 31 AURORAN, Week of May 30, 2006 905-727-3300

Vendors await throngs Sunday

Hit the street Sunday.

The 11th annual World's Longest Street Festival on the World's Longest Street happens Sunday, June 4, and, with pleasant weather predicted, more than 40,000 people are expected to show up.

They'll have plenty to see and do.

The event, which closes Yonge Street from Murray Drive to Wellington Street for all of Sunday afternoon, is sold out.

More than 500 vendors, selling, singing and entertaining, will fill spaces along both sides of Yonge Street, in an event that was started to celebrate the 200th birthday of Yonge Street in 1996.

Some of the old favourites return to the street - the classic car show will take up its normal location just north of Murray Drive; Patty McLaughlin will sing near the new library; the Rock Climbing Wall will be found in front of Law Insurance, across from Royal Road.

But new this year, and you'll have to see it to enjoy it, is the addition of the Dance Heads.

Dance Heads superimposes participants' heads on professional dancers' bodies while they sing along to some of the greatest pop hits of all time. This outrageous effect is completed with animated backgrounds. Monitors allow visitors to watch and enjoy and DVD copies are available of your performance.

You'll find them, and all the laughs you can stand, in front of Needles & Knits, near Reuben Street.

In addition to the plethora of booths, you'll find pony rides, clowns, a Rolling Stones Tribute Band, stilt walkers, and that Playhouse Project being organized by Habitat For Humanity in front of Park Place Manor.

There will also be a skateboard park set up near the corner of Cousins Drive.

Activity officially gets underway at 11 a.m. and the festival ends at 5 p.m.

Prior to the festival, a street dance will be held Saturday night on Yonge, between Murray and Henderson, sponsored by the Aurora Optimist Club.

The dance originated last year to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the festival, and was so successful, it is also destined to become an annual event.



In spite of some vendors not being available, this year's official opening of Aurora's Farmers' Market Saturday was a success, according to organizer Nigel Kean. Here, Ron VanHart of VanHart Greenhouses, displays tomatoes for customers. Market is held in the parking lot on Temperance Street, south of Wellington, and runs Saturdays throughout the summer.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

* * * *

Up, up and away...

Aurora's Hartwell Thayer Financial Services Group will bring the Pilot Insurance Company hot air balloon back again this year to the Aurora Street Festival, June 3-4.

There will be a chance to win a flight for two in the balloon or just sample what it feels like on a tethered ride, all to raise funds for the Southlake Regional Health Centre.

Now in its 10th year, the Hot Air Balloon Program has taken more than 500 passengers on exhilarating flights in its eight-storey tall balloon, while thousands more adults and children have enjoyed a taste of ballooning on tethered rides.

"We're really excited about the Pilot balloon coming back to Aurora," says Barbara Hartwell, President of Hartwell Thayer. "It's a creative way of raising money for charity in our community, while at the same time giving lots of people a real thrill that they might otherwise never experience."

Tethered rides will be offered to the general public at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School football field Saturday evening and Sunday morning, weather permitting.

An optional charitable donation benefitting the Southlake Regional Health Centre is sought for these rides.

In addition, a draw winner will experience a sunrise or sunset balloon flight for two during the weekend (weather permitting).

For information, call 905-713-9870.



Councillors want corner to develop soon

While the planning department may want to see offices develop at the northwest corner of Wellington and Bayview, members of Aurora Council prefer commercial activity on the land...the sooner the better.

With that in mind, they approved an application from the D. Schmidt/Rice Commercial Group for a multi-commercial development comprised of four buildings on the 8.9 acre parcel of land at a public planning meeting Wednesday night.

The proposal calls for a 54,850 square foot building, another of 9,850 square feet and two others covering 8,850 square feet with two "right-in, right-out" accesses, one on Wellington and the other on Bayview with a connection to a commercial site to the north.

The development would also include 365 parking spaces.

Aurora's planning staff expressed concern about the lack of provision of stand alone offices as was contemplated when the secondary plan for the area was developed.

It was pointed out that when the secondary plan was developed there were four areas with office commercial designations.

A northern site was amended for offices and retail, another was amended for residential use and the owner of the third site at the northeast corner of John West Way and Wellington Street has submitted an application for a seven-storey, 184-unit apartment building without office space.

The Economic Development Officer stressed the need to increase the inventory of available office space in various locations throughout Aurora, especially in the northeastern quadrant.

Council received a letter from a solicitor representing Loblaws and pointed out that an application had been submitted to expand the Superstore at the St. John's and Bayview intersection.

It was suggested existing retail commercial designations should be considered in any impact analysis prior to approval of a proposal

Please see page 12

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COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

CONTINUING

Aurora Farmers' Market will be held every Saturday morning at the Temperance Street parking lot until Thanksgiving. Free space is available for non-profit groups. Contact Nigel Kean at 905-751-0790.

* * * *

Until September 30, water restrictions are in effect in Aurora. Watering is permitted from 6 to 10 a.m. and 6 to 10 p.m. for even numbered addresses on even numbered days and odd numbered addresses on odd numbered days. For further information call 905-727-3123 ext. 4240.

* * * *

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

* * * *

Wellington Gallery features 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 Zen Meditation Group has resumed sitting every Monday evening at Healing Hands Wellness Centre on Wellington Street at 7.30 p.m.

* * * *

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 905-830-9205.

* * * *

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.

* * * *

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.townsofyork.org or phone Elena Silaev at 905-726-9750.

MAY 31-JUNE 14

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

MAY 31

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.

* * * *

Open House to provide the public with an update on the Strategic Plan Process from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Seniors' Centre. The meeting is to obtain comments and additional suggestions on how the town can achieve the proposed goals and objectives. Call Cindy Janzen at 905-726-4740 for more information.

JUNE 3

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.

JUNE 4

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

* * * *

Hospice King-Aurora presents an English Country Garden Party at the home of Deborah Saadetian, 51 Kingscross Dr., King City, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Guest speaker is Marianne Broome, King Township artist. Tickets are $25 each. For further information, call 905-773-0155.

JUNE 6

Join members of the Visiting Library Services for an Information Tea in the Lebovic Room at 2 p.m. If you are 18 or older and can give 2-3 hours every three weeks, find out how you can help provide library services for those unable to come to the library. For more information call the Adult Information Desk at 905-727-9493 option 4.

JUNE 7

Civic Appreciation Awards in the council chambers of the Town Hall at 7.30 p.m.

* * * *

Aurora Public Library in partnership with Aurora Cable Internet, presents "Q & A" in the Magna Room at the library beginning at 7 p.m. Register on-line, at the adult information desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

JUNE 8-11

Annual Aurora Fair and Horse Show takes place at Machell Park, featuring midway rides, games, horse shows, performing dogs, arts, photography, stage shows, entertainment, free pony rides, exhibits, the Aurora Idol and Fair Ambassador competitions, food, and craft vendors. Fair opens Thursday night, runs Friday night, day and night Saturday and all day Sunday.

JUNE 9

Grand Prix Horse Show, at Machell Park from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., featuring some of Canada's best horses and riders. Public is invited to walk the course at 5.45 p.m. Event is followed by a reception.

JUNE 10

Merlin's Hollow open to the public today, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Gardens are located at 181 Centre Crescent in the Centre Street/Industrial Parkway North area of Aurora.

* * * *

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, 7 Lacey Court, will hold a garage and bake sale from 8 a.m. to noon. A fun fair will occur between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. and a barbeque will be held all day long. For further information call 905-727-3311 or visit www.christlutheranaurora.com and check under 'Events'.

JUNE 11

Dick Illingworth turns 90 today. An afternoon with Dick is planned at DiNardo's beginning at 2 p.m. Presentations at 4 p.m. Advance tickets at $25 are now available at R & R Revisited.

JUNE 12

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

JUNE 13

Women's Centre of York Region will hold its 4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Stouffville. Contact the Centre at 905-727-5837 to register.

JUNE 15

Aurora Chamber of Commerce Business After Five at Sormeh Beauty Spa, Wellington Street East from 5.30 to 7.30 p.m.

JUNE 21

Aurora Public Library, in partnership with the Aurora Seniors' Centre, presents the movie "Bewitched", starring Nicole Kidman, at 1 p.m. in the Lebovic Room. Admission is free. A tea prior to the movie will begin at 12.30 p.m. Pre-register at the adult information desk or call the library at 905-727-9493, option 4, or the Aurora Seniors' Centre at 905-727-2816.

JUNE 22

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce will hold its 2006 Golf Tournament at the Westview Golf Club in Aurora. Westview can accommodate 200 golfers. Additional information and application in the March newsletter and spaces will be assigned as forms are received.

JUNE 23-25

Polo Charity Series to raise funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation will be held at the Gormley Polo Centre on Leslie Street just south of Bloomington Sideroad. For information call 905-477-8000 ext. 242.

JUNE 24

Aurora Legion Strawberry Supper. 6 p.m. $8 per person.

JUNE 26

Yard Waste Collection Day. Yard waste in brown kraft bags or open rigid reusable waste containers will be collected if left at the curb by 7 a.m. to ensure pick up. For further information call 905-727-3123 ext. 3447. Pick-ups also scheduled for July 24th and August 28th.

JUNE 28

Aurora Horticultural Society presents a lecture on "Where Have All The Flowers Gone?" at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North. 8 p.m.

JULY 1

Merlin's Hollow open to the public today, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Gardens are located at 181 Centre Crescent in the Centre Street/Industrial Parkway North area of Aurora.

JULY 9

Merlin's Hollow open to the public today, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Gardens are located at 181 Centre Crescent in the Centre Street/Industrial Parkway North area of Aurora.

AUGUST 12

Doors Open Aurora provides an opportunity to visit various buildings and businesses in Aurora including the Railway Station, Baldwin's Mill, Hillary House, St. Andrew's College, Trinity Anglican Church and The Auroran. For more information call 905-726-4762.

SEPTEMBER 9

Aurora Historical Society Candlelight Tour of Homes.

SEPTEMBER 22

Theatre Aurora opens its 49th season with the comedy "Educating Rita" at the Factory Theatre. Other productions in the fall/winter line-up include "Crazy for You", Dr. Cook's Garden" and "Blythe Spirit".

OCTOBER 20

Celebrate Business Excellence in Aurora hosted by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

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Soaring through the air is Colin Kirkey during Saturday's Bike and Board Rodeo, sponsored by PACT (Police and Community Together), and held at the Leisure Complex. *Auroran photo by David Falconer*

June 30 dance will move

The dance location preceding July First celebrations in Aurora is changing.

For the past several years a Town Dance was held in the Town Park along with a Beer Garden on June 30th, which was always well attended.

In spite of strong arguments by Councillor Ron Wallace and Nigel Kean, the nostalgia and tradition of the Town Park will be lost as council confirmed a previous decision to move the event to Lambert Willson Park near the Leisure Complex.

It was also proposed that a local service club assume responsibility for the Beer Garden, and the Aurora Rotary Club has been accepted.

One of the reasons given for the location change was so that the same setup could be used at Lambert Willson Park for the many planned events the following day.

Last week, following a reconsideration of the issue, Councillor Ron Wallace, chairman of the Special Events Committee, said he was still baffled by the reasons used to change location.

Councillor Wallace said the majority of his committee supported retaining the dance the Town Park, however, Cliff Davies, a member of the committee, appeared before council as a delegation, supporting the change of location.

He suggested that by moving the location of the dance it would bring old and new residents together. He added that the logistics were more difficult if the event took place in two locations, as all the July First events were being held in the Lambert Willson Park area.

When asked if he was expressing a personal or a committee position, Davies replied it was a personal opinion.

Councillor John West said council had approved the move following an excellent presentation and there had been no dissension during the debate.

Councillor Nigel Kean agreed the presentation was excellent, but he was under the same impression as Councillor Wallace that the presentation had been referred to the special events committee.

He said the steep slope to the Lambert Willson Park would make it impossible for many seniors to attend.

Councillor Evelyn Buck said that while she shared the nostalgia of the past it was sensible to make the move, but agreed with Councillor Kean that it was difficult to get down the hill.

Councillor Damir Vrancic said nostalgia was not a good enough reason to oppose the move and council had supported the new location.

Mayor Tim Jones said he agreed with Councillors West and Vrancic and holding the events in two separate locations was unnecessary duplication and the new location should be tried.

In closing the debate Councillor Wallace questioned the need for a special events committee as all the arrangements had been made by Leisure Services.

With Councillors Bill Hogg, Wendy Gaertner and Phyllis Morris absent from the meeting, the vote was 4-2 to defeat the motion to retain the dance at the Town Park, with Councillors Wallace and Kean in support.

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Poor Richard

Donations to hospital work, mandatory pay isn't an alternative

Hospitals always need money,
Of that there isn't much doubt;
Should it be voluntary or forced
As Southlake asks for clout?
- Poor Richard's Scrapbook

Aurora and area property owners could be asked to pay $400 over five years towards the cost of the new cancer clinic at the Southlake Regional Heath Centre if hospital officials get their way.

According to Southlake President and CEO Dan Carriere and Hospital Foundation Board Member Marc Neeb, the community's financial support is required to make the much needed facility become a reality.

They made an appeal to Aurora Council recently as they are doing to all municipal councils in the hospital catchment area, and asked that the municipality commit the funds as a separate levy rather than on the tax bill at the rate of $80 a year for five years.

It was reported that the province was paying two-thirds of the cost with the remainder about $18 million to be made up by the community and if that didn't happen the project could be cut back or cancelled.

Magna International has contributed $8 million to the project, but as Carriere pointed out there is still a long way to go.

He pointed out that a recent poll commissioned by the Hospital Foundation found 97 per cent of respondents considered it important to have a cancer clinic closer to home, 82 per cent indicated they would support the municipality paying some of the costs and 60 per cent said they would be willing to pay $400 over five years.

It would be interesting to find out how many seniors on a fixed income were included in that 60 per cent.

Like other residents of Aurora, they have experienced nearly a 50 per cent property tax increase over the past six years, while their pensions have remained at the same level as in the past.

There is little relief in sight, as the town is in a rather poor financial condition with a predicted shortfall of $68 million by 2013 in the capital asset program representing a need to raise $10.8 million a year over and above the current tax levy to meet the capital required for the asset management program.

Not only that, there is a $4.5 million deficit in five reserve accounts which is expected to grow to $5.7 million by the end of 2006.

This does not include the Library and Recreation Complex which are dependent on growth development charges of approximately $18 million.

Aurora taxpayers, especially senior citizens and those on a fixed income cannot afford a special levy to pay for the cancer clinic, regardless of how badly it is needed.

Voluntary giving, by all means, but a mandatory levy, NO!

If a levy is to be imposed such as Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty did with his Health Premium after promising not to raise taxes, it should go to reducing times in the Emergency Room at Southlake.

McGuinty and the Minister of Health brag about injecting millions of dollars into the health care system to reduce wait times in five key areas.

Premier McGuinty bragged that Southlake has the lowest wait time for elective bypass surgery in Ontario and is the envy of the province.

The Premier should have spent some time in Southlake's Emergency Room where wait time of up to five hours is quite normal.

One patient with a suspected heart attack was rushed to the hospital where he sat for an hour before seeing anyone.

Then, after getting his green card, he had to wait four hours to see a doctor.

Mothers with sick babies sit for hours waiting to see a doctor and once they are seen, they receive good care but the wait time is too long and immediate action must be taken to improve the situation.

One of the problems is that so many people are without a family doctor so even with a mild ache or cold they wind up in emergency as they have nowhere else to go.

Rather than visit municipal councils to seek money, hospital officials and foundation board members might better spend an afternoon in ER and find out what's going on in their hospital.



One of the last Aurora High School (Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School) plays to be performed on the stage of what is now Wells Street Public School, occurred in 1952, and featured the above cast. They are, left to right, Phil Hobson, Mike Maughan, Donald Rawlings, Greta Tienkamp, Richard Hyma, Frank Seidl, ?, Nancy Ball, Eugene Underhill, ?, Marion Burns, Thelma Gordon and Jean Willson. Anyone know what play they were performing?

Letters to the Editor

Who is councillor's "reliable source", he wants to know

To the editor,

Councillor Evelyn Buck states that she has learned some things from reading my recent letters regarding the Ontario Heritage Act and Heritage Conservation Districts.

I would repeat, however, that modest financial incentives do not come automatically once a property is designated and that they are not part of the current Heritage Conservation District proposal which soon will come before Council.

Aurora may or may not wish to pursue these options.

Some of our neighbouring municipalities have, while others have not.

And no, heritage conservation district designation does not "take precedence over all other zoning".

The consultant did not state that at the public meeting which Councillor Buck attended.

Current zoning will remain in place, including provisions for multiple family dwellings and commercial usage.

The consultant did say that the town may wish to review current zoning bylaws to determine if they conflict with the objectives of the district plan. Some of the main objectives of Heritage Conservation District planning are to preserve the streetscapes and essential character of historic areas.

Those objectives may still be met through the presence of multiple-family dwellings and mixed uses which have been characteristic of downtown Aurora for many years.

Councillor Buck is right that a provincial grant was given to 74 Wellington Street East to help reshingle the cedar roof, restore the front verandah, and replace the decorative wooden detail on the façade.

This happened more than a decade ago as part of Ontario's Designated Property Grant program.

The program offered up to $5,000 for eligible projects and required matching funds from the owners.

In this and most other cases, the owners' contribution was far more.

I was chair of the town's Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee at the time.

The grant was approved by Council and then paid by the town which was reimbursed by the province.

The grant came at a time when homeowners could apply for many other kinds of grants as well, ranging from insulation upgrades to improved access for the elderly or handicapped.

The grant to 74 Wellington helped restore an important Aurora landmark which is seen and enjoyed by many as they enter the older part of our town from the east.

Councillor Buck states that she has heard from "a reliable source" that there are no Heritage Conservation Districts in the City of Toronto because "they are too expensive".

Who is her reliable source?

Toronto has more Heritage Conservation Districts than any other Ontario municipality, large parts of The Annex, Cabbagetown, and Rosedale being among them.

As in Aurora, their creation involved a huge amount of volunteer effort and homeowner support.

They have been remarkably successful in achieving their goals.

The most disturbing part of her letter questions whether people like me, a longtime citizen member of our town's Heritage Advisory Committee, may not be sharing their knowledge with other committee members and councillors.

Is she suggesting a hidden agenda here? I would like to know what she means.

And I would like to meet her "reliable source".

John McIntyre
Aurora

Council, get on with task: reader

To the editor,

I am a long-time resident of Aurora and I enjoy living in this not-too-small not-too-big town.

However, the constant and most recent bickerings among our councillors in public view are in contrast to what I imagine this town to be like.

Actually,it sickens me to hear and see these goings-on on television.

I personally do not believe 100 per cent in the sincerity of apologies especially among public figures.

If someone calls another "stupid" and have that someone state an apology under duress, nothing will change and I'm sure that that someone will still feel the other to be "stupid".

It's all what you call cosmetic surgery.

Besides, all these personal attacks should be sorted out behind closed doors and council should not waste the citizens' time and taxes by having to watch a real bad show.

Just get on with the task at hand please!

Elinor Allison
Aurora

AURORAN

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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

Cenotaph humbling, but litter abounds

Located across from Aurora's Canadian Tire store in the southern part of town is the local war memorial.

As I walked eastbound across Veterans' Lane, I was struck at once by both the magnificence and also the simplicity of the two structures that comprise this edifice.

For your writer, the cenotaph is a place of reflection, solitude and introspection.

The valor and selflessness of the fine men memorialized there is most humbling.

As you make your way along the path looking due east you only see the monument and the trees behind it; during the summer not a building is in sight.

This lends an aura of serenity to the place, even though it is located on Yonge Street.

The park has been well maintained; the grass was recently cut and the trees have full leaves.

There are identical sets of three wreaths near the flagpoles that flank both sides of the monument.

The small asphalt path that bisects the park leads to three stone steps and then to the first monument, which bears the large inscription, "Altar of Sacrifice 1939 - 1945".

There are 55 names engraved on the granite marker.

Each of these names had a life, a story. Did these men perish in battle or while training or while serving in another capacity? Which battle? How old were they? Did any or all of these men have a wife? Any children?

There are two men with the last name Dawson and two with the last name of King. Any relation?

Unlike the Korean War Memorial in Brampton, which, if memory serves, lists the ages of the deceased and the date on which they died, this one does not. This leads to more questions.

On the side of the granite tablet is inscribed the battles in which these men fought and died. Dieppe. The Invasion, D Day. The Battle of the Bulge. Sicily. Monte Casino. The list goes on.

Reading them reminds us that Canadians were at all the major engagements in the European theatre of World War II.

Situated directly behind stands the World War I monument. The inscription reads "Their names Liveth for evermore 1914 - 1919".

The structure is slim and stands erect - like a soldier. Standing at its base, on an absolutely beautiful morning, makes one think of our freedom and the enormity of their sacrifice.

The dedication reads "To the honoured memory of the men of the Town of Aurora and the Township of King and Whitchurch who died in the Great War and in grateful tribute to all who shared its dangers."

The names of 70 men are listed.

Unlike the other commemorative, which had two sets of men with the same last name, there are six such sets here.

The names of the battles are familiar to anyone who has watched the history channel - Ypres. Somme. Passchendaele, Hill 70, Vimy Ridge.

In its entirety, the structures are a simple and regal monument to those, as Billy Bishop was once described, who had "the courage of the morning sun".

What struck and also really angered me that morning was the thoughtlessness of some of our fellow citizens.

For at the back of the cenotaph was a vast collection of fast food wrappers. And although I don't work for CSI, I could tell that at least two or three people had been eating there in the recent past. What's worse is that a refuse receptacle was less than 70 feet away.

I have never seen such litter at either a cemetery or at a church. Why should it be any different here?

It is a given that wearing a poppy and observing a minute of silence at 11 a.m. each November 11 is a very small token of our respect and affection for our Veterans. But let us go one small step further.

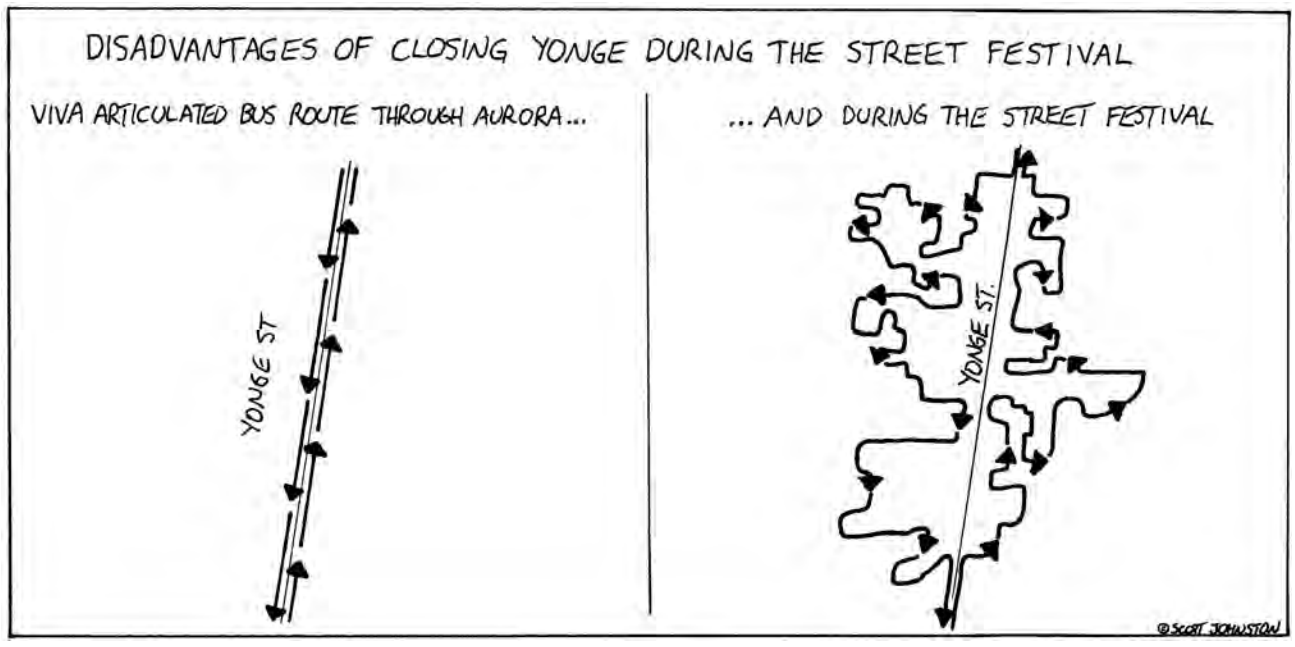
If you have the urge to eat at the cenotaph, sit at one of the two park benches.

If you see some litter at the war memorial pick it up!

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

Machell's Corners

by Scott Johnston



Letter to the Editor

Letter writer can't believe reaction

To the editor,

When I read Brian Barbeito's response to my earlier letter, my first response was, "is this guy kidding?"

There is nothing quaint or inspirational about the damage done to our woodlot.

If he had actually read the letter thoroughly then he would know as kids we NEVER cut down trees, dug up paths or made jumps or ramps of any kind.

Most of those paths we rode on were already there from people walking in the woods, or made and maintained by the Parks Dept.

If you think I need to lighten up, then perhaps you should ask our Parks Dept. and Ministry of Environment to do the same.

They are a lot more concerned about this than I am.

The woodlot is protected and managed for a reason, to keep it unspoiled for the enjoyment of everyone. That is why there are signs offering rewards for the conviction of anyone vandalizing the woods posted at all entrances. It is illegal for anyone to cut, dig, or alter the bush in any way.

Cutting trees and stripping ground cover by digging holes causes unnecessary erosion which damages the bush to a great extent. The depth of some of the holes dug there also is dangerous to anyone walking who may not see them.

I realize two pictures and a short letter do not tell the whole story. The damage is far worse than what you saw printed in this paper. I cannot believe anyone would condone the killing of mature, healthy trees for a so-called "seasonal pastime", when riding there can be such an enjoyment without doing any damage to the environment.

If anyone wants to see the rest of the photos they can e-mail me at: dickiemichael@hotmail.com and I would be happy to forward as many as you would like to see of the 55 I took.

I invite anyone; but especially Mr. Barbeito, to meet me there for a tour of the affected areas.

I will be there Saturday June 3 at 8 a.m. at the entrance on Henderson Drive (just west of the pond). I would be happy to show anyone who thinks we are over-reacting to see for themselves the damage done to one of the few remaining natural spaces in our town.

I do not think anyone can walk away from this thinking it "marvellous" or "creative".

If I and my "ilk" are the kind of people who respect our natural spaces, I think I am in good company.

Mike Dickie
Aurora



Cathy's Corner



Here, kitty, kitty...

Be careful what you chase. You just might catch it.

As a little girl growing up in the Beaches, I'd do anything for a pet. I especially liked cats.

My parents gave me a lot of reasons why I couldn't have a cat, but I knew it was because my mother was a consummate Macedonian clean freak.

So I did the next best thing: I borrowed pets.

Yup, every time the teacher asked for a volunteer to take the class pet home for the weekend, my hand shot up.

Most Fridays, I arrived on my mother's doorstep in the company of some rodent.

I brought home guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, and my all-time favourite, Cocoa, the black bunny I signed out of the library for the March Break, the Christmas Break and the Summer Break...every year.

One Friday, I showed up with yet another cage and my mother made it clear I had crossed the line. She slammed the door in my face and screamed: "Take it back or don't come back!"

Some people just can't handle rats.

I ran back to the school in a panic, but all the doors were locked and everyone was gone. So I did the only thing left to do: I stashed "Ben" in the garage.

I had forgotten about my mother's nightly trip to the deep freezer to pull out the next day's meal. The deep freezer was in the garage. "Ben" was on top of the deep freezer.

Not that this was the first time that my mother threatened me with a frozen lamb leg.

A few weeks before, she came home from work to the sound of a serious catfight that seemed to be coming from the alleyway behind our garage.

It wasn't.

Pulling open the door, my mother found herself in the middle of the mass exodus of neighbourhood cats that I had spent the better part of the day chasing.

I had "borrowed" about a dozen that time.

I tried to deny it, but the evidence was overwhelming. My arms and neck were all scratched up and I was covered in cat fur.

Later, my mother found the shredded sweater I had worn while perpetrating the multiple abductions, so I had to lay low for a couple of weeks.

When things settled down, I bought a white mouse from a classmate for a quarter.

Like I said, I got used to my mother coming after me with the frozen lamb leg.

Finally, I had pushed my parents' sanity to such extremes that they did something crazy: they got me a cat.

In fact, after that, I can't remember a time when we didn't have a cat.

There were even times when we had several cats, and once I stepped outside to catch my mother chasing after a neighbourhood cat with the grandchildren in tow!

"Will wonders never cease," I thought, listening to my mother tell my children about their mother, the notorious cat-catcher.

"Here, kitty, kitty!"

It was all very cute until the cat darted from the hedge where it had taken cover, and waddled across the neighbour's lawn.

I froze dead in my tracks. Cats don't waddle.

"Get away!" I screamed, hysterically. "Get away RIGHT NOW!"

My mother looked at me as if giving me a taste of my own medicine, then scurried to catch up with my three children who now had the pretty black kitty cornered.

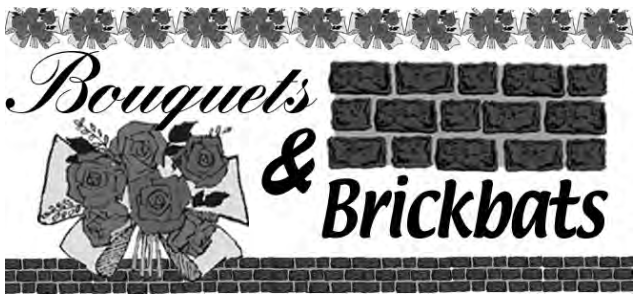
Except it wasn't a kitty at all. It was Peppe Le Pew!

Yeah, I didn't know he moved to Aurora either, but he's lived here for a while.

Last fall, I let Jake out and it was about three weeks before I dared let him in again, so I know Peppe still lives in Aurora.

And this is why, before I let my dog, my children, or my mother out, I warn them: Be careful what you chase. You just might catch it!

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



By DICK ILLINGWORTH

BOUQUETS to Mayor Tim Jones on being one of seven municipal representatives in Central Ontario to be presented with a long-standing award by Municipal Affairs Minister John Gerretsen. The service award was introduced in 2004 to recognize municipal officials with at least 25 years service.

BRICKBATS to Aurora dog owners who put their pets outside for the day and let them bark all the time. It becomes very distracting and annoying. Take pity on your neighbours!

BOUQUETS to Aurora's Peter Storms who was presented with a Meritorious Service Decoration (Civil Division) by Governor General Michelle Jean for his management expertise to the development and hands-on implementation of public safety policies affecting youth at risk in Canada and internationally.

BRICKBATS to Poor Richard for inviting Dorothy out for a Mother's Day dinner and forgetting his wallet with credit cards and money and sticking her for the bill.

BOUQUETS to Bishop Philip Poole, formerly of Trinity Aurora, for organizing other Anglicans to participate at a Queen's Park forum on living wage and affordable housing concerns. They had the opportunity to discuss these issues with MPPs of all three parties.

BRICKBATS to the federal government for signing a botched building deal that will cost taxpayers 20 times the market value of the building. The Public Works Department signed a 10-year lease-to-own building which will cost more than $620 million over the 10 years, more than 20 times the purchase price by a developer. It will be used as a headquarters for the RCMP.

BOUQUETS to Aurora's Susan McLuckie on winning a weekend at Howard Johnson Hotel for having the fastest frog in the Aurora Rotary Club's first Frog Race on Tannery Creek. Her plastic frog outperformed 800 others to win the race. The Rotarians hope to make the Frog Race an annual event.

BRICKBATS to TV producers, or whoever is responsible, for preparing the printed words that appear in the screen when a speech is being translated or for some other reason and put light letters against a light background so that it's almost impossible to read. It's frustrating!

BOUQUETS to York Region's finance department on being awarded the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2006 budget.

BRICKBATS to the Province of Ontario and the City of Vaughan for not researching land about to be developed, that is said to be site of a nationally significant 15th century Huron Village.

BOUQUETS to John Sioui, of Aurora, a grandson of the Huron-Wendat Bear Clan family of chiefs for attempting to stop the above mentioned development.

BOUQUETS to Sue of Aurora on winning the recent FOXY-FM Trivia Contest by knowing the release of the movie that day was "Poseidon" a remake to "The Poseidon Adventure".

BRICKBATS to a society in which proper shelter and care to women and children living in an abusive relationship is not available due to lack of facilities in York Region. There is a dire shortage of beds at both Yellow Brick House in Aurora and Sandgate in Georgina.

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Letters to the Editor

Do we have anything to worry about: reader

Open letter to Aurora Council

Do we have anything to worry about?

A fair question that taxpayers of Aurora may have of this council.

Most of us think that the taxes we pay in this Town are more than enough; taxes have increased 20 per cent over the past three years and another 24 per cent during the previous three years.

It is concerning, if not confusing, when one looks at some of the events that have occurred over this term:

• The Town's 2004 audited statements were not presented to the public until February, 2006, with the auditors charging an additional $60,000 for what was called extra work "because the knowledge had walked out the door".

• We have had three people in the role of Treasurer in almost as many years. (five in the past six years).

• Our auditors, Grant Thronton, provided a letter to council following their audit of 2003 stating "at the present time there are no significant accounting or reporting developments that would impact the Town that should be brought to the attention of members".

• The 2005 audited statements have yet to be made public even though they were promised to be completed in more timely manner.

• Finance committee meetings are regularly cancelled.

• We have accumulated more than $2 million in budget surpluses during the term of this council; this excessive taxation has been a regular occurrence for at least the past six years. These surpluses, however, have apparently not helped fund our reserves, the money which we put aside to pay for future repairs and expenses.

• The Treasurer states in his recent report "we have determined that our Reserve and Reserve Fund Balance are not adequate to meet our asset management program." He concludes that because we have under funded our Capital Asset Management Plan there is a need over the period 2007 to 2013 to raise an additional $10 million per year (yes, that's $10 million a year) to meet the capital requirements.

• A recent newspaper headline said 'Financial bomb hits Aurora' yet a recent column of the Mayor's stated that 'we are currently in good financial shape'.

• Last year as the 2005 budget was being discussed, to reduce the proposed tax increase, a $400,000 reduction in expense came from the decision to reduce contributions to various reserves.

In a March, 2005, report from the Deputy Treasurer he states that "senior staff has reviewed the various balances for 2004 and based on requirements for 2005 and have reduced some of the annual contributions to these funds." The mayor defended the budget saying "the accounts have already adequate funding and the decision to reduce contributions is a matter of not over contributing to those reserves."

• Last year we faced an eight per cent increase although it is now projected that we have accumulated another $1.3 million surplus.

• We have more than $35 million in the bank (from the sale of Aurora Hydro) earning roughly 3.35 per cent and we have borrowed some $16 million for the new recreation centre costing roughly 4 per cent.

• We have hired a consultant to develop an updated strategic plan for the Town.

• We have commissioned another consultant (the former CAO of Richmond Hill) to undertake a public consultation process during May to solicit input from residents regarding the proceeds of the hydro sale. It's essential to have the complete financial picture when taking any position on the use of these funds or approving any new strategies.

So where does this all leave us?

Confused? Content? Upset? Relieved?

Maybe all of the above?

It would be a reasonable expectation, however, that council provide some clarification; a transparent explanation including all the specific information regarding the financial health of our Town, before the end of their term.

One critical question that remains is the funding plan for that needed extra $10 million a year?

It's important to have public consultation but equally important to have all the information readily available in a format that the public can digest.

Taxpayers need to be told just what current financial options are available when considering the future of Aurora.

So I end where I started, "do we have anything to worry about?"

Al Wilson
Aurora

Is council dragging feet on Wal-Mart?

To the editor,

What is the big decision that takes months to answer Wal-Mart's wish to expand?

No major decisions after September 29th?

I thought our council was voted in for three years ending in November.

Do we stop paying them for the last month and a half?

You would think when someone wants to purchase more land and give you more tax dollars you would accommodate.

I recall when Frank Stronach wanted a quick adjustment of plans it was done with no problem.

Loblaws should have no say in the Wal-Mart change.

I did not hear Sobey's complain when Loblaws moved in two blocks away.

Compeititon is business and we do not need politicians interfering.

Have the changes done for the taxpayers of Aurora.

R.W. Hanes
Aurora

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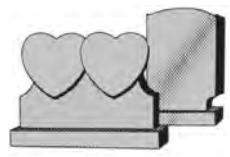
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Letters to the Editor

How to get rid of council

To the editor,

I see that the Provincial Government has slipped in a sneaky change to make the term of municipal councils four years instead of three.

I remember a time when it was only two years.

What's worse however, is the possibility that we residents of Aurora will have to endure four years of a dysfunctional council as we have had to endure this past two and half years.

We cannot let this happen.

Do we want four years of councillors hitting other councillors with rolled up papers?

Do we want councillors calling other members "stupid" and then apologizing that they are "sorry that they are stupid"?

Do we want a mayor who acknowledges that he has no control of the meetings?

In the past, we have seen incumbents run under the platform of experience.

I am afraid that experience under the current council is not an endorsement of quality.

Like sports teams that fail to make the playoffs, I feel it's time to "blow up" this council and make sure none of them is re-elected this November.

How can we do this, you might ask? I think I have a solution.

So far, Mayor Tim Jones and Councillor Nigel Kean have submitted their forms to run for mayor.

In order to make sure none of the other councillors sits on the next council, I suggest that the "Other 7" also run for Mayor.

This way, only one of the dysfunctional nine will be at the table after November.

In order for this plan to work, however, we must get them all to run for mayor.

What we have to do is "draft" them and pay the $200 fee on their behalf.

I suggest that readers of The Auroran send in donations to the paper.

We only need $1,400 to put the whole bunch into the mayor pool and then we voters can decide who out of the nine we want to keep as Mayor.

Think of it as an investment in the future of Aurora.

This plan will mean that we will only have one out of the nine return.

Hopefully the councillors who are elected can work together with this Mayor.

Heck, if we could get all nine running for mayor, I might even throw my hat into the councillor race.

Bruce Orrell
Aurora

Joey has been great

To the editor,

The Aurora Agricultural Society would like to congratulate Joey Clark on his stellar performance this past year in his role as the official "Aurora Idol" of the Aurora Fair & Horse Show!

Currently a Grade 10 student at Country Day School, Joey is making a splash on the singing scene, performing recently in Fiddler on the Roof at his school to rave reviews.

Over the past year as Aurora Idol, Joey sang at numerous events around town which included singing Oh Canada at the July 1st celebration and at the opening of an Aurora Tigers hockey game.

Additionally, Joey has been accepted, and given a scholarship, to the Idyllwild Arts Academy, an international private school in California that only accepted two male students for the 2006-2007 school year.

While at Idyllwild, Joey will complete all his regular Grade 11 classes, while also receiving private vocal studies with some of the Academy's finest professors.

He'll be returning home the following year to complete Grade 12 with his friends.

You will have the opportunity to meet and chat with Joey at this year's Aurora Fair & Horse Show, where this talented young vocalist will be one of the judges for the final competition of the 2006 Aurora Idol.

Joey will also be performing at the Fair this year to kick off the Aurora Idol Final competition on Saturday, June 10 at 6 p.m.

We wish Joey all the best in the future and are very proud to call him our first Aurora Idol.

The Aurora Idol finals will be part of the Aurora Fair's "Family Fun Night", which will start at around 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 10.

For more information about this and other exciting events at this year's Fair, please visit our website at www.aurorafair.ca.

Congratulations again, Joey! See you at the Fair!

Lori Young
Director,
Aurora
Agricultural
Society

Reader thinks column is anything but boring

To the editor,

Here's another opinion on Cathy's corner "The Roarora".

Cathy's Corner is one of the first things I read when your excellent paper arrives in my mail box.

I couldn't find it in the May 23 edition, but instead found a letter to the editor criticizing the columnist and saying the column was boring.

I vehemently disagree.

I found the columns on "Roarora" witty, satirical and entertaining.

I watch the council meetings on cable and I think she captured the personalities in a light-hearted way.

If a reader was not familiar with the personalities on council perhaps they missed the clever use of names for the players in our own Aurora soap opera.

The letter writer complained that the column was "a lot of bantering about nothing" - well, yes - that's the point!

I do agree that it must be difficult to come up with fresh material each week, and I'm amazed that Cathy is able to write about the ordinary life most of us live here in Aurora, and put a humorous slant on in.

Everyone is entitled to his or her opinion, but all of the people I have spoken to really enjoy your column, please keep writing.

J. Jones
Aurora

Wondering what she stands for

To the editor,

It was a curious sight to see Newmarket-Aurora MP Belinda Stronach stand up in the House of Commons May 17 and vote against Canada's involvement in the Afghanistan mission.

Curious because, among other reasons, Stronach had previously defended Canada's role and vocally stated that she supported the mission.

This comes as a disappointment to her constituents who are in favour of Canada taking a role in fostering a democratic Afghanistan, a country whose people have been brutally oppressed by the terrorist group, the Taliban until only recently years.

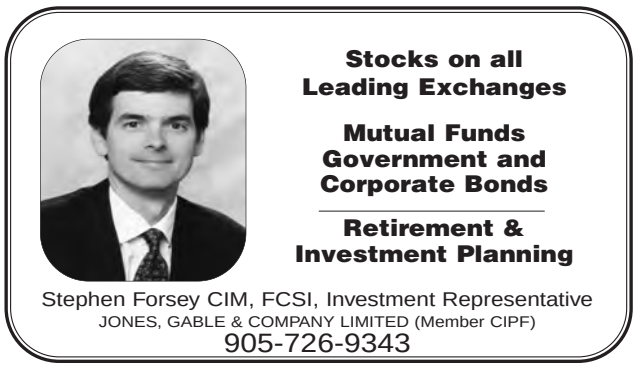
It also comes as a disappointment to the members of the Canadian forces.

We should remember, of course, that it was the Liberal Party that sent the Canadian mission to Afghanistan, with Stronach providing full support. The fact that she has now waffled and in a fickle manner pulled her support, makes some once again question what she really stands for.

S.C. Brown
Aurora













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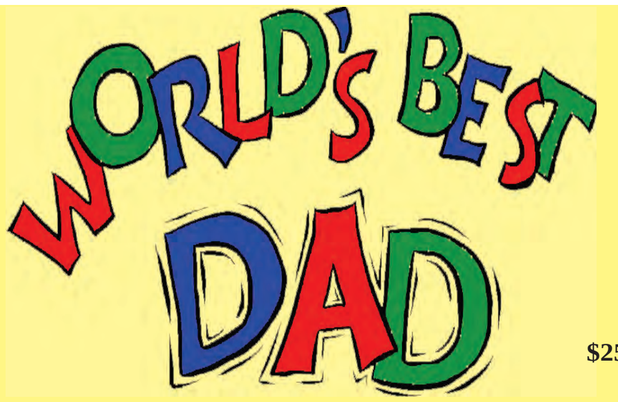
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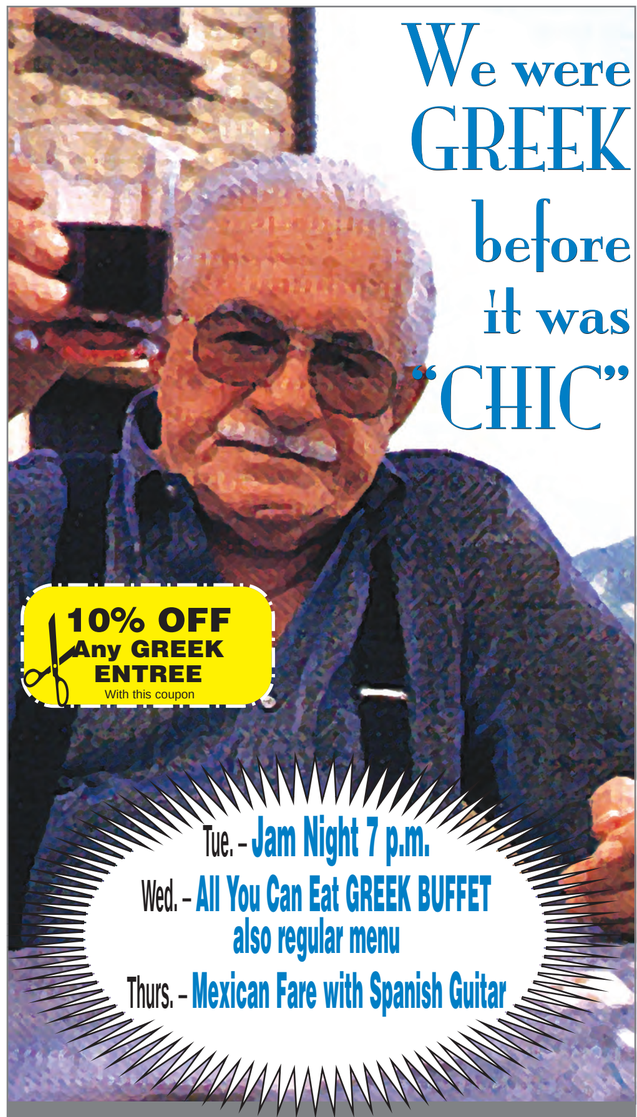
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Most of the skaters from the Aurora Skating Club and all of the coaches are shown here after the locals captured the Cheney Cup for the second year in a row in Buffalo, New York.

Aurora skaters win Cheney Cup - again

Twenty-six members of the Aurora Skating Club attended the 2006 Spring Skate Festival held recently at the Holiday Twin Rinks in Buffalo, New York.

For the second consecutive year, the Aurora Skating Club came home with the Cheney Cup for accumulating the most points by a club.

Here's what Aurora's skaters (in alphabetical order) accomplished.

Jasmine Biasi: Beginner Jumps (Group A), 6th; Badge 1 Freeskate (Group A), 3rd; Beginner Compulsory Moves (Group A), 6th.

Jihyun Cha: Preliminary Jumps, 8th; Preliminary A Freeskate (Group B), 3rd; Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group B), 1st.

Samantha Duncan: Pre-Preliminary Freeskate (Group C), 4th; Pre-Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group C), 2nd; Solo Dance – Ten Fox, 2nd.

Alana Fabbricino: Preliminary B Freeskate, 4th; Preliminary Showcase, 6th; Preliminary Footwork, 3rd.

Jory Goldman: Juvenile Compulsory Moves, 8th; Solo Dance – Blues, 1st; Pre-Juvenile Freeskate (Group B), 3rd; Pre-Juvenile/Juvenile Footwork, 2nd.

Maya Goldman: Intermediate Short Program (Group A), 3rd; Solo Dance – Quick Step, 2nd; Intermediate Freeskate (Group B), 2nd; Junior/Senior Footwork, 1st.

Savannah Hendy: Pre-Preliminary A Freeskate (Group B), 2nd; Music Interpretation – Level 1, 3rd; Pre-Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group B), 4th; Pre-Preliminary Jumps (Group A), 5th.

Meaghan Jones: Intermediate Spins, 1st; Solo Dance – Kilian, 1st; Solo Dance – Quick Step, 1st; Intermediate Freeskate (Group A), 7th.

Shannon Lacombe: Pre-Preliminary A Freeskate (Group D), 6th; Pre-Preliminary Showcase, 4th; Pre-Preliminary Spins (Group B), 5th.

Sidney Lambert: Badge 1 Freeskate (Group B), 4th.

Kendall Mannella: Preliminary Showcase, 9th; Preliminary A Freeskate (Group A), 4th.

Taylor McDowall: Preliminary Showcase, 4th; Preliminary A Freeskate (Group A), 5th.

Courtney McGrath: Badge 1 Freeskate (Group A), 6th; Beginner Spins (Group A), 3rd; Beginner Compulsory Moves (Group B), 3rd.

Hailey McGrath: Pre-Preliminary A Freeskate (Group E), 1st; Pre-Preliminary Jumps (Group B), 2nd; Pre-Preliminary Spins (Group B), 1st.

Kailee O'Connor: Beginner Jumps (Group B), 5th; Solo Dance –Dutch Waltz, 1st; Badge 2 Freeskate, 7th; Beginner Spins (Group B), 4th.

Shauna O'Connor: Pre-Preliminary Freeskate (Group C), 6th; Pre-Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group B), 2nd; Pre-Preliminary Jumps (Group A), 6th; Pre-Preliminary Spins (Group A), 1st.

Molly Oulahen: Pre-Preliminary A Freeskate (Group D), 2nd; Music Interpretation – Level 1, 4th; Pre-Preliminary Jumps (Group B), 7th; Pre-Preliminary Spins (Group A), 2nd.

Marilena Perri: Pre-Preliminary A Freeskate (Group B), 5th; Music Interpretation – Level 1, 5th; Pre-Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group B), 6th; Solo Dance – Ten Fox, 4th; Pre-Preliminary Spins (Group B), 3rd.

Hailey Riggs: Preliminary Jumps, 1st; Solo Dance – Rocker, 2nd; Preliminary A Freeskate (Group B), 1st.

Alyssa Simon: Pre-Preliminary Showcase, 2nd; Badge 2 Freeskate, 8th.

Emma Slimkowich: Juvenile Freeskate, 1st; Juvenile Compulsory Moves, 3rd; Solo Dance – Blues, 2nd.

Carley Steiner: Pre-Preliminary A Freeskate (Group E), 3rd; Pre-Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group B), 4th; Pre-Preliminary Showcase, 3rd.

Julia Steiner: Beginner Jumps (Group A), 3rd; Badge 1 Freeskate (Group B), 2nd; Beginner Compulsory Moves (Group C), 7th.

Allie Sutton: Juvenile Spins (Group B), 1st; Pre-Juvenile Compulsory

Please see page 13

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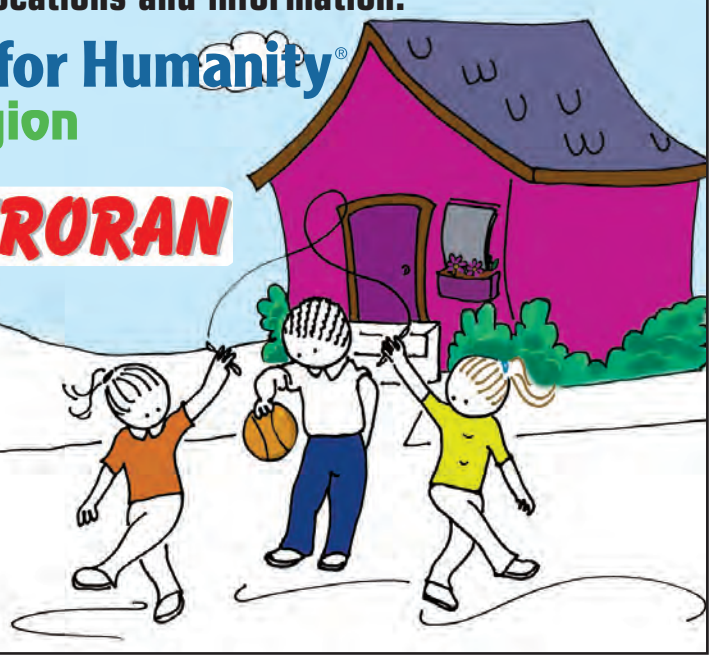
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Proposal will get another look

A plan to build a five-storey commercial-residential building will have to come back to another Aurora planning meeting for another look.

The building would sit on the east side of Yonge Street south of Craddock Park with three retail units on the ground floor and 15 residential units above the first floor.

At Wednesday's planning meeting, town staff advised that the proposed development with commercial on the ground floor and residential above was in keeping with official plan policies.

While staff believed that the proposed use is appropriate, several neighbours disagreed.

They claimed the proposed 34 parking spaces were not sufficient and that parking was a problem in the area.

Concerns were also expressed about garbage and snow removal, with the possibility of the snow being pushed into Craddock Park.

It was said the construction of a five storey building on a small site was not compatible and would be an eyesore and would not enhance the northern gateway to the town, even though Helen Levek, representing the developer, said it would.

Ms Levek said the number of parking spaces was consistent with town standards and garbage would be picked up by a private contractor.

She also advised that a traffic study was being carried out and would be reported with the site plan, the lighting would be directed away from the residences and the mechanical equipment on the roof met all standards.

Staff said the application met official plan requirements, the region's Centres and Corridors plan and the provincial Places to Grow strategy.

Councillor Nigel Kean recommended that following the resolution of the outstanding issues such as parking, height of building and traffic, a second public meeting be held.

He was supported by Councillor Wendy Gaertner.

Councillor Buck pointed out the parking on the adjacent commercial plaza had nothing to do with the application and it was an ideal location for an apartment next to the park.

Councillor Kean said there were several problems needing to be resolved. His motion for a second public meeting was adopted 4-1 with Councillor Buck in opposition.

A previous application was submitted for this site in March, 1990, by York Cross Developments for a three-storey office building with parking spaces to be provided in Craddock Park, which would be available to the town during the evenings and weekends.

At a subsequent public meeting, residents opposed the application on the basis that parkland should not be used for private parking even though it could be used by the public at other times. Council approved the application and use of the parkland.

By December 1992 as no development had taken place, staff enquired as to the status of the application and was advised the developer planned to proceed as soon as it was economical feasible to do so, but the site remained vacant.

Aurora will maintain greens

The Aurora Lawn Bowling Club is the oldest sport club in Aurora. The sport was played by Aurora residents in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

Around 1900 a lawn bowling club was formed and played on a large green to the east of Trinity Anglican Church.

In 1930, an application was submitted to the town by the Aurora Lawn Bowling Club for a green to be constructed in McMahon Park near Maple and Fleury Streets where it is currently located.

After quietly catering to the residents from more than a century, the Club fell on hard times.

Club President Alan Dean, who has declared his intentions to seek a seat on Aurora Council, appeared before the general committee last February to outline problems facing the club,

He explained the Club has always been self-sufficient with members maintaining their own greens, surrounding gardens and clubhouse, with the town contributing fertilization, weed control and coring in the fall.

During the past few years, however, the greens have deteriorated due to limited rainfall and water restrictions and in addition, the Club lost one of its greens experts, who moved out of the area.

Dean said the Club was at a crossroads as without additional support from the town, it may become necessary to close and ask the Newmarket Club to accept the 53 Aurora members.

The general committee referred Dean's presentation to staff to meet with Club members to discuss their problems.

A report was submitted to the Leisure Services Advisory Committee earlier this month outlining the problems including the need for a major renovation at an estimated cost of at least $139,000 and an annual cost of about $7,000 to maintain the greens.

Staff suggested they look for a more suitable location including the vicinity of the new Seniors' Centre.

An advisory committee endorsed continued discussion with the purpose of constructing a new facility in 2007 at an estimated cost of $328,000.

Charles Sequeira of the Seniors' Centre and Gordon Barnes of the Aurora Arboretum Society attended the advisory committee meeting to seek additional information about the proposal.

When the report came to council, Councillor Evelyn Buck wondered how the costs would be paid as the report made no reference to user fees.

She added that it had been a private club for many years and had exclusive use of the greens at a cost of about $7,000 from the town for maintenance for which members paid nothing.

Councillor Damir Vrancic, a member of the advisory committee, explained that the club's membership was not growing and the greens needed extensive repairs.

There was a need for direction from council, he said.

Following further discussion it was agreed to accept the advisory committee recommendation that the town maintain the greens on a temporary basis until a more permanent solution has been decided.

Councillor Buck opposed the recommendation.

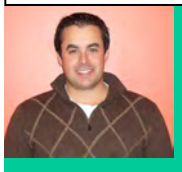


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A Public Planning meeting was held May 24th, to discuss an application for zoning amendment by Origin Retirement Homes to construct a five-storey retirement home containing 144 full service rental units and designated institutional, which means that it is equipped with a commercial kitchen. The location behind the Town Hall on Hollandview Trail is zoned and designated as high density population and a maximum of seven storeys is permitted to be built there.

The Public Planning decision was 4-2 in favour of the amendment, and will result in a recommendation to council, I understand.

Origin proposes a five storey structure, and the wings nearest the local residents would be reduced to four storeys which is a considerable concession. Changes to lower the roof, and improve the landscaping are under discussion.

The zoning by-law went into force in1994 and is still in effect. If the amendment were to be rejected, the seven storey zoning would continue as the zoning regulation.

Since the zoning went into effect in 1994, four municipal elections have been held with another to be held later this year. I take those elections to be an endorsement of all regulations enacted into law, which means the voters tacitly approved of the zoning.

Some local residents are objecting to the amendment, and if successful they might wind up with a seven storey apartment building catering to mixed ages. Is this what they want?

This would increase vehicle traffic, demand for schooling, and so on. The location at issue is planned for high density, and zoned for seven storeys, and four municipal elections have failed to find any problem or raise an objection. Why now we ask?

I am a senior and some of my senior colleagues and I were confronted by several of the local residents after the planning committee meeting. The confrontation was loud and close enough to council chambers to disturb the council who had other matters to discuss. We were politely but pointedly asked to leave, twice.

Continuing the loud debate near the exit to Town Hall, and experiencing the difficulty that passionate debate entails, I have concluded that the residents want houses of some description in place of the multi-storey residential building. That is my personal conclusion from the noisy and passionate encounter with the residents.

The complaint that surfaced constantly during this noisy sequel to the planning meeting was the loss of the present view from their homes, to be replaced with the view of a multi-storey building.

I would like to draw attention to the fact that areas that have been zoned, of necessity, have boundaries.

So a residential boundary could have a commercial plaza, or a school or industry for close neighbours.

I live in a senior residence in Newmarket and I accept emergency vehicle sirens with equanimity as do my elderly neighbours. Others live within hearing of railway tracks and of train's loud warning signals and basically, they shut the sound out.

One very powerful point that came to mind is that of financial considerations. Would these properties appreciate in value if a multi-storey building were not constructed as zoned? Probably yes! I think emphatically yes! So might that be an underlying reason for opposing the amendment?

If the proposed institutional residential building is scuttled in this zoned location, then what chance is there that Origin Retirement Homes, or anyone, will pursue the initiative in another location?

A location out in the boondocks somewhere, does not conjure up visions of contented seniors, and would probably deter Origin from supplying this Aurora market with an enviable environment for the growing population of elders.

If this retirement residence is lost to Aurora, a drain on the public purse might be the eventual result. As matters stand, the development is a commercial, for profit undertaking, and the residents pay their own way.

The proposal is situated within walking distance of the seniors' centre, opposite the Town Hall, which is also where the Arboretum Park commences. The residence will be served by a walkway already in place, giving easy access to excellent shopping including: Zellers, Odeon Cineplex, Sobeys and Tim Horton's, plus chiropractors and dentists, to mention a few who would be delighted to welcome the seniors and all residents.

Normally few institutional residents own vehicles and the demand for schooling will be minimal, which together, reduces the pressure on a high-density location.

If the local residents were to block the development, an expensive legal battle is likely to be won by Origin. Even so Origin would be damaged by the delay, and would not be encouraged to service Aurora further.

The Town's integrity would be sorely strained by failing to sustain their authority to plan, to designate, to zone and to carry out their strategies and programs as designed.

A failure to accept Origin's amendment and allow the construction to proceed would be catastrophic to the Town's ability to enact zoning regulations and amendments with valid dependability.

The burgeoning senior community soon to be complemented by the arrival of the baby boomers, will be confronted by a residential mess exceeding by far, anything the local residents have to complain about.

And the local merchants, who are and were smart enough to go to Town Hall and request a copy of what is planned and pending, and who have confidently anticipated an increased senior clientele, will be disappointed if they lose these potential senior clients.

You, too, can approach Town Hall and view what is planned and pending! They will even supply you with a copy.



Six days out of seven, Mary Hillary goes walking. As she strolls along the west side of Victoria Street, the 92-year-old picks up litter. The sight of trash bothers her and Mary says it doesn't hurt to pick it up. Her connections with Aurora are long-standing since she's the daughter-in-law of the late Dr. Robert Michael Hillary, former owner and resident of Hillary House. If you know someone you would like to see recognized as a local eco-hero, send the information to auroraeac@hotmail.com and Aurora's Environmental Advisory Committee will follow up.

Development planned for busy intersection

From page 1

for a new retail commercial designation.

Possible tenants mentioned include The Keg and Kelsey's.

Michael Rice, a partner for the proposed development, said considerable work had gone into the application.

He said the access to the north had been resolved, and agreed that drive-thru restaurants, garden centres and day care centres would not be included in the plans.

He noted that the proposed development was not excluding offices but that a mixed commercial/office complex was not usually successful.

Councillors Evelyn Buck and Wendy Gaertner opposed the motion saying the area should be developed for offices.

The vote to approve the application in principle with the deletion of office space minimums was adopted 4-2.

Councillors Phyllis Morris, Bill Hogg and Damir Vrancic were not in attendance.

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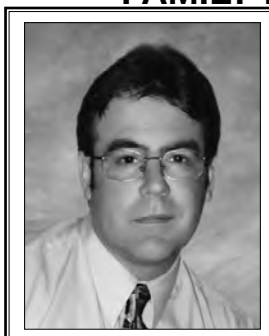
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TA selects comedy to end season

For their last production of the current season, Theatre Aurora selected the comedy "I Hate Hamlet" by Paul Rudrick and directed by veteran Theatre Aurora performer Brad Poirier.

The cast includes failed soap actor Andrew Rally who turns to performing Shakespeare in the park, a dizzy real estate agent who dabbles in séances, an elderly agent with a bizarre history, a slightly crazed girlfriend who is the ultimate romantic, a sleazy California dealmaker and the ghost of John Barrymore, actor, womanizer and drunk.

Action takes place in the top floor apartment of a brownstone just off Washington Square in New York City. Real estate agent Felicia Dantine shows Andrew Rally, his girlfriend Deirdre McDavey and agent Lillian Troy the apartment, which she said was once occupied by Barrymore.

The furniture is covered in white giving the room a ghostly effect. Deidre is overcome with the news that the great Barrymore once lived there and talks Felicia into holding a séance to try to bring Barrymore back.

Over the objections of Andrew the room is darkened, boxes drawn up around a table with a lit candle in a wine bottle and Felicia goes into her trance through her aunt, her only contact, and asks her to contact Barrymore.

The chatter turns to Shakespeare and Hamlet much to the annoyance of Andrew who finally bangs the table and proclaims "I Hate Hamlet!"

With that lightning flashes, thunder roars, doors open and close and the séance comes to an end.

Later when Andrew is alone trying to compose himself, lights flash again and in a bank of fog the ghost of Barrymore appears dressed as Hamlet and challenges Andrew to play the role.

Enter fast-talking Gary Peter Lefkowitz who tries to talk Andrew to return to Los Angeles for a new series, but Andrew refuses out of loyalty to his girlfriend and agent.

Six weeks later it's opening night and the women are in their finery for the gala occasion.

The next morning Andrew is in despair due to what he called his worst performance ever when Gary arrives with a new long-running series that will pay Andrew $3 million.

He is torn trying to decide when he recalls one moment during his performance when he struck a pose and recited a few lines claiming he was Hamlet and in spite of the pleadings of the dealmaker, he refuses the series.

Barrymore is well and smoothly played by Patrick O'Grady who has appeared in several local productions including a role in Theatre Aurora's "L'il Abner".

Anthony Notarfonzo has the challenging role of Andrew and plays it well. Although it was his first performance for Theatre Aurora, he has performed with other groups.

Taisa Ballard plays the exuberant Felicia. She has had experience in radio, television and film and currently resides in Aurora with her two children.

The rather scatter-brained romantic girlfriend Deirdre is played by Jessica Schmidt who has appeared in several other Theatre Aurora productions.

Denise Zahorodny makes her Theatre Aurora debut as agent Lillian Troy although she has appeared with other groups including dinner theatre at Aurora's Howard Johnson Hotel.

Fast talking, demonstrative Gary Peter Lefkowitz is played by Joe Elvidge in his first production since graduating from Fanshawe College.

Set design by Brad Poirier and construction was outstanding as were the lighting and sound effects.

"I Hate Hamlet" continues at Factory Theatre May 31, and June 1 to 4 and 7 to 10. Call 905-727-3669 for tickets.

Experiencing everyday life from a handicapped view

This week has been proclaimed National Access Awareness Week, established in 1988 in response to a request from Rick Hansen following his Man in Motion World Tour.

The disabled, it has been proven, are quite capable if given a chance.

Some years ago, a demonstration, set up for National Access Awareness Week, was arranged by the Transportation Advocacy Committee of the Community Services Council of York Region and the Ontario Office of Seniors Issues.

They joined together to help make communities more accessible for people with disabilities.

Volunteers from all walks of life gathered at the Stouffville Fire Hall.

Originally the demonstration - "Through Other Eyes" - was used for employers to train staff to meet the needs of handicapped customers but was soon expanded to community groups.

Through the use of restrictive devices, volunteers were able to see and experience surroundings and services viewed by visually handicapped persons or to listen to whispered words through layers of foam.

Volunteers were equipped with an orange water wing blown up to fit tightly around the right elbow to restrict movement, a five-pound weight strapped to the right ankle, a three-pound weight on the left wrist, foam ear plugs to reduce hearing, two pairs of silk gloves to lessen the sensitivity of the fingers, various types of eye glasses to simulate various conditions and a cane.

One of the volunteers was Aurora's Dick Illingworth. He recalls that his glasses were to simulate tunnel vision. The lens was painted black except for a quarter of an inch square in the centre of each lens.

He was provided with a sheet of normal everyday tasks including a trip to the Library and the Post Office.

Leaving the fire hall, he proceeded to the library. The restrictive devices were not a problem at first, except for the glasses.

He says he had no depth perception or peripheral vision and had difficulty in navigating as even the slightest grade or curb was a handicap until he learned what the cane was for.

Without the kindness of the staff at the library, he says he would have been completely lost. He managed to find the access button on the computer, but had difficulty trying to read the information on the screen.

It was tiring and time-consuming. By this time the weight on his right foot was starting to become noticeable and an extra effort had to be made to lift it to take a step to avoid dragging it and his left arm was starting to hang loosely by his side.

After the Library, he carried out some of the assigned tasks, but chickened-out when it became time to cross the street to the post office.

As time was running out, it was time to return to the fire hall with the aid of volunteers who were assigned to keep the participants safe.

With the equipment removed they talked about their experiences.

Some of the observations included the reluctance to ask for assistance, talking louder than normal, difficulty in hearing other people, problems in writing with the silk gloves, problems crossing roads and general lack of public awareness.

It was learned that people with disabilities are not disabled and while they may be handicapped, they can still get around and do things, but it makes life easier if others understand.

Skaters

From page 10

Moves, 1st.

Katie Sutton: Pre-Juvenile Freeskate (Group A), 3rd; Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group A), 1st.

Courtney Tidona: Pre-Preliminary A Freeskate (Group D), 8th; Pre-Preliminary Compulsory Moves (Group B), 6th; Pre-Preliminary Jumps (Group B), 6th.

Team Events

Blandy's Beach Babes (Maya Goldman, Meaghan Jones, Julia Ranson, Emma Slimkowich, Allie Sutton), Intermediate, 2nd.

Blandy's Hip-Hoppers (Sierra Chovanec, Elyse Glenn, Jory Goldman, Briar Koski, Katie Sutton), Pre-Juvenile, 1st.

Blandy's Ice Stars (Savannah Hendy, Kailee O'Connor, Shauna O'Connor, Molly Oulahen, Marilena Perri), Pre-Preliminary, 4th.

Canadian Chicks (Raquel Burges, Jihyun Cha, Taylor McDowall, Hailey Riggs), Preliminary, 1st.

Canadian Crew (Jasmine Biasi, Dryden Koski, Sidney Lambert, Courtney McGrath, Julia Steiner), Beginner, 1st.

Canadian Cuties (Alana Fabbricino, Kendall Mannella, Hailey McGrath, Courtney Tidona), Preliminary, 2nd.

Crazy Canucks (Samantha Duncan, Shannon Lacombe, Alyssa Simon, Carley Steiner), Pre-Preliminary, 2nd.

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Tax relief for volunteer firefighters

Back in March, 1979, when Aurora had volunteer firefighters, council petitioned the government to increase the tax exemption for volunteer firefighters from $300 to $1,500 annually.

With the increasing difficulty in enlisting volunteer firefighters, a larger tax exemption would provide a greater incentive for members to remain as volunteers.

Although the provincial firefighters' association supported the move there was no groundswell of support.

AURORA'S FIRST HARDBALL DIAMOND

In January, 1994, it was announced that the town would soon have its first regulation hardball diamond if the fundraising drive by the local baseball association was successful.

A growing passion for baseball had led to a shortage of baseball diamonds in general and highlighted the need for at least one hardball diamond.

The town agreed to build a regulation hardball diamond but was unable to cover the $450,000 cost.

The Aurora Minor Baseball Association agreed to raise $50,000 towards the construction by selling raffle tickets, and holding bingo evenings.

The new diamond was constructed northeast of diamond #3 at the Leisure Complex.

Aurora was the last municipality in the area to have a hardball diamond with most other municipalities of its size having at least two and in some cases three diamonds.

THE PENTHOUSE FUROR

It was in November, 1984, when a public furor developed over the sale of the December issue of Penthouse magazines and at least six regional convenience store operators were charged with possession of obscene material.

The controversy was brought about as a result of a 10-page pictorial of Japanese women tied with rope.

Officials of the distributors of the magazine claimed they had been given guidelines from the customs department that the magazine was not obscene, so they distributed it.

The magazine was approved for sale by Canada Customs and the Ontario Advisory Committee on Contemporary Literature, but after protests by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association and women's groups, the police started to lay charges.

All Mac's Milk stores in the region took the magazine off their shelves on receiving instructions from their head office as soon as it was heard that the magazine might be banned.

Some store operators gambled and continued to sell the magazine which had become a hot item with some copies being sold illegally for as much as $10.

That was in 1984 and today, you rarely hear the magazine mentioned.

Earlier this month the magazine came to life with the opening of The Penthouse Club in Niagara Falls.

SWITCHING INDUSTRIAL LAND

In most municipalities land zoned as industrial is sacred, as new industry not only brings employment, it helps to provide a more balanced residential/non-residential assessment base.

Originally the whole area east of the Holland River Valley from Wellington Street to the St. John's Sideroad east to Bayview was zoned industrial.

Then with the possibility of a regional shopping centre in the Bayview/Wellington area, the land use plan was amended to change the designation to commercial and residential.

In October, 1998, the developers submitted an application to rezone 50 acres of vacant land from industrial to residential on the basis that it was too close to the residential area for industrial use and was supported in the request by the residents of the existing housing development.

Some council members argued that with the exception of a few acres of industrial land on the Industrial Parkway, Aurora needed to retain the land as industrial.

But under pressure from the developers and residents, council caved in and on a 6-2 vote with Councillors John West and Phyllis Morris in opposition, the application was approved.

An Employment Land Retention Strategy was adopted in January, 2005, so it shouldn't happen again, especially as at the end of 2005 the ratio was 11.8 per cent non-residential to 88.2 residential.



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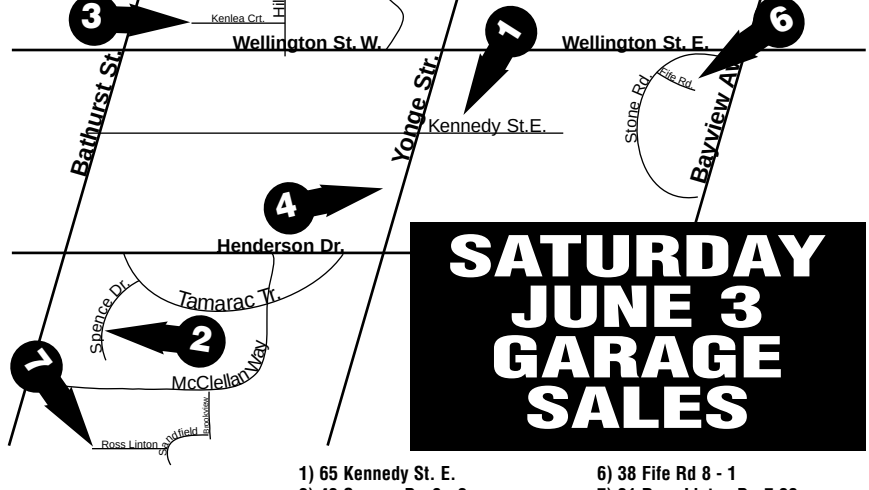
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4) 14810 Yonge St. 8 - 11
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6) 38 Fife Rd 8 - 1
7) 31 Ross Linton Dr. 7:30 - noon
8) 36 Moffat Cres. 8 - 1

JUNE 12 –
Wyatt Lane STREET SALE 8 - noon

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• FREE Pony Rides • Balloons, Face Painting
• Farm Animals • Pet Show on Wheels
• Campo Kid's Art Camp • Pulsars Gymnastics activities

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• Loonie-in-a-Haystack • Kid's Tractor Pull
• Agricultural Trivia

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JUNE 8, 9, 10 & 11 2006

Thurs. June 8th: 4:30 to 10:30 pm
Fri. June 9th: 4:30 to 10:30 pm
Sat. June 10th:
Daytime: 9:30 am to 5:00 pm
Family Fun Night: 5:00 to 10:30 pm
Sun. June 11th: 9:30 am to 5:00 pm

Admission:

Thursday Night: No Admission Charge: Loonie-Toonie Night

Friday Night: Fair Admission is included with the Pay-One-Price Midway. For Grand Prix Competition only: Adults $5.00, Seniors & Kids: $2.00

Saturday & Sunday:
Adults: $7.00
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Kids, 12 years or under: $3.00
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Thursday June 8th
4:30 - 10:30 pm Loonie-Toonie Midway. No Admission charge.

Friday June 9th: Evening
5:30 - 9:00 pm Grand Prix Horse Jumping Competition. Reduced admission charge.
4:30 - 10:30 pm Pay-One-Price for Midway Rides & Fair Admission
$20.00 In Advance, $25.00 at the Gate. Advance tickets can be purchased at Aurora Leisure Complex, IGA and R&R Revisited Book Store at 75 Mary Street, Unit #3.

Saturday June 10th: Day Events

10:00	Opening Ceremonies Parade starting at south end of Machell Park
10:00 - 11:30	Monopoly Tournament
10:30 - 11:00	The Ben Show-Juggling
10:45 - 11:00	Birds of Prey Presentation
11:00 - 11:30	Bandaloni the One-Man-Band
11:00 - 12:00	DogSmart Performing Dog Show
11:00 - 1:00	Kid's Art Camp
11:30 - 12:00	Pet Show on Wheels; Kid's Tractor Pull
12:00 - 12:30	Pulsars Gymnastics Show
12:30 - 1:00	Sheep Herding Demonstration
12:45 - 1:15	Line Dancing-Join In!; Children's Games
1:15 - 1:30	Birds of Prey Presentation
1:30 - 2:00	Aurora Idol Competition Semi-Finals
2:00 - 2:30	The Ben Show-Juggling
2:00 - 3:00	DogSmart Performing Dog Show
2:00 - 3:30	Monopoly Tournament
2:15 - 2:45	Children's Games
2:30 - 2:45	Birds of Prey Presentation
2:30 - 3:00	Pet Show on Wheels; Pulsars Gymnastics Show
2:45 - 3:15	Sheep Herding Demonstration; Bandaloni the One-Man-Band
3:00	Mutt Show Registration
3:15 - 4:00	Mutt Show; Kid's Tractor Pull
4:00 - 4:30	Line Dancing-Join In!
4:00 - 5:00	DogSmart Performing Dog Show
4:30 - 5:00	The Ben Show-Juggling
4:30 - 6:00	U-Who the Clown-Balloons & Face Painting

Saturday June 10th: Family Fun Night

5:00 - 5:30	Ambassador Speeches
5:30 - 6:00	Ausom Kids Musical Performance
6:00 - 6:30	Ambassador Awards; Aurora Idol Finals
6:30 - 7:00	Ausom Kids Musical Performance
7:00 - 7:45	Connie Scriver First Set "Redneck Woman"
7:45	Aurora Idol Winner Announced
8:15 - 9:00	Connie Scriver Second Set "Fleetwood Nicks"
9:00 - 9:30	Line Dancing-Join In!
9:30 - 10:15	Connie Scriver Third Set "Whodathunkit"
10:30	Fair Closes

Sunday June 11th

10:00 - 11:00	DogSmart Performing Dog Show
10:00 - 11:30	Monopoly Tournament
10:30 - 11:00	Pet Show on Wheels
10:45 - 11:00	Birds of Prey Presentation
11:00 - 11:30	Bandaloni the One-Man-Band, Sheep Herding Demonstration
11:00 - 1:00	Kid's Art Camp
11:30 - 12:00	The Ben Show-Juggling; Children's Games
11:45	Prince & Princess of the Fair Competition
12:00 - 12:15	Birds of Prey Presentation
12:00 - 12:30	Pulsars Gymnastics Show
12:00 - 2:00	U-Who the Clown-Balloons
12:30 - 1:00	Jaymor Dance Studio Performance
12:30 - 1:30	DogSmart Performing Dog Show
12:45 - 1:15	Pet Show on Wheels
1:30 - 2:00	The Ben Show-Juggling; Sheep Herding Demonstration
2:00	Soap Box Car Display Competition
2:00 - 2:30	Bandaloni the One-Man-Band
2:30	Silent Action Closes
2:30 - 2:45	Birds of Prey; Children's Games
3:00 - 3:30	Ausom Kids Musical Performance;
3:00 - 4:00	DogSmart Performing Dog Show
3:30 - 4:00	The Ben Show-Juggling
4:00	Children's Art Competition Awards
5:00	Fair Closes

Schedule subject to change. The Aurora Agricultural Society is a non-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to putting on the Fair and Horse Show for Aurora and the surrounding communities.

Ongoing Saturday & Sunday

• Midway Rides & Games • Heavy Horse Show (Saturday) • Miniature Horse Show (Sunday) • Free Pony Rides • Festival of Arts Tent • Junior Art, Crafts & Photography Tent • • Bandaloni • Ben • Agricultural & Animal Exhibits • Toronto Police Dogs • Food & Craft Vendors • Soap Box Car Display • Antique & Classic Car Show (Sunday) •