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Library square: what now?

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

Last week The Auroran carried a front page story about Library Square getting 15 more parking spaces through the demolition of the former seniors' centre on Victoria Street after a lengthy debate, subject to council approving the general committee report.

Well, forget it, as after debating the same issue at council for more than an hour Tuesday night, it was back to square one as council referred the whole issue back to staff to investigate alternative parking.

The council meeting was almost a repeat of the general committee with Geoffrey Dawe, Chairman of the Aurora Library Board, making a plea for more parking for the library and supporting the demolition of the two buildings as the current situation was unacceptable and was something the library couldn't resolve.

He was supported by Colleen Abbott, Chief Executive Officer of the Library, who provided information about the number of library users and the problems they experienced in finding parking spaces. She also showed photos of the crowded parking lot.

Councillor Ron Wallace pointed out that he made an inspection of the parking area and found 14 empty spaces behind the former seniors' centre and suggested a sign be posted to advise users of additional parking spaces.

Helen Roberts, President of the Aurora Historical Society, noted that with the opening of the Heritage Centre the parking issue would become worse and pointed out that the Historical Society had not contacted Trinity Anglican Church for a parking agreement as previously reported.

She said she had no problem with the demolition of the former seniors' centre or the addition to the former library, but would like to retain the front part, or the original library built in 1963 to mark Aurora's Centennial as a village.

Rather than debate the general committee report, Councillor John West made the same motion to demolish both buildings and used much

Please see page 12



Aurora's seniors, as usual, presented a colourful addition to Saturday's July First parade on Yonge Street in Aurora. Parade was one of several activities held as Aurora celebrated its 37th annual July First party over two days. For more pictures, see Page 14.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Council unsure of how to spend \$34.5 million

Aurora Council has all this money and doesn't know what to do with it.

It received \$34.5 million when it sold Aurora Hydro to PowerStream, Inc., in a deal that was approved by the Ontario Energy Board last November.

After a presentation by a consultant and more than a hour debate, council failed to reach a decision Tuesday night.

Finally it received the report and ordered town staff to respond to a general committee meeting in September.

In June, 2005, council agreed to enact a bylaw to establish a special reserve fund to re-allocate the net proceeds.

It was also agreed that any re-allocation of funds be approved by not less than two-thirds of the entire council and that the public be involved in setting the criteria.

In December, staff recommended that before hearing from the public, council should determine the objectives it was trying to achieve.

It decided to follow Richmond Hill's lead since it had developed a similar process following the sale of its hydro utility.

In January, Aurora's general

committee adopted a staff recommendation to engage a facilitator at \$150 per hour plus mileage.

Some councillors said the exercise was a waste of time as the Hydro sale proceeds were needed to meet the \$68 million shortfall as revealed by the Capital Asset Management Plan but the consultant proposal was adopted.

Tuesday, the consultant summarized his process which included distribution of a discussion document, communication with ratepayer and community groups and two public consultation sessions, which, he said, were not well attended.

Suggestions from the public included the purchase of lands on the north side of Henderson Drive and projects that would make a long-term difference for residents.

Other suggestions included planting more trees, preventing tax increases, subsidizing high utility costs, and spending only the interest created by the money.

Specific projects included the

Please see page 7



Hamburger magic. The flipping abilities of Aurora Mayor Tim Jones and MP Belinda Stronach were evident Thursday when more than 200 people showed up for a fundraiser at the new Aurora Seniors' Centre. Called "From the Hill to the Grill", the barbecue was arranged by Stronach and when all was said and done, participants had consumed more than 150 hamburgers, 130 sausages and 200 ice cream bars. For further information about the event see Senior Scape on page 13.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

CONTINUING

Aurora Farmers' Market 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 regulations 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.

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

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.

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.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Park series opens tonight with Erick Traplin, a non-stop fun filled music show for children of all ages. 7 to 9 p.m.

SATURDA, JULY 8

Official opening of Aurora's new Fred Bolsby Fire Hall, Wellington Street East. 2 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 9

The Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society hosts its Annual Garden Tour from 12 noon to 5 p.m. Tour seven unique and beautiful gardens in Aurora for \$10 per person. Phone 905-884-0893 for more information.

Merlin's Hollow open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Gardens are located at 181 Centre Crescent, north off Centre Street west of Industrial Parkway.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12

Probus Club of Aurora's guest speaker at this month's meeting is Jennifer Pereira, an acupuncture practitioner. Club meets at the Aurora Legion the second Wednesday of every month, beginning at 10 a.m.

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Town Park presents Fleetwood Nicks, a night of great music by a great pop rock band that has all the sounds, moves and look of Fleetwood Mac. 7 to 9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Town Park presents Cadence, a Juno award nominated "a cappella" group of top quality! Whether you're into jazz, doo-wop, classical, funk, or something in between, Cadence delivers. 7 to 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 22

Beach Party at the Aurora Legion, Industrial Parkway North. Begins at 7 p.m. Admission is \$12 per person.

TUESDAY, JULY 25

Christmas In July luncheon at the Aurora Legion, Industrial Parkway North. Lunch, with reservations only, is served from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person.

The Gathering Place, located in the Edward Street bowling alley, will feature Christmas in July with karaoke singing of Christmas carols with special prizes and the first game of bowling free for families who bring a non-perishable food item for the food drive.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 26

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Town Park presents Broadway Showstoppers, a great summer evening of broadway hits including songs from West Side Story, South Pacific, Sound of Music and Oklahoma, with quality Opera York Stars led by the fabulous Andrew Tees.

FRIDAY, JULY 28

Aurora Seniors will join the Bradford Seniors for a boat cruise in Orillia with lunch at the Ossawippi Express following the cruise. A visit to the Old Colony Candle Factory and afternoon tea follow. Fee for members is \$70, non-members \$75. Call 905-726-4767 to register.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Town Park presents Swing Street. Enjoy big band favourites, featuring the gorgeous voice of Danielle Bouree, with a band that can "swing"! 7 to 9 p.m.

AUGUST 5-6

Cyclissimo Grand Prix Cycling Event sanctioned by the Ontario Cycling Association as the only OCA race in the GTA this year. Takes place around the Magna property from Wellington Street East to Leslie Street, Vandorf Road and Bayview Avenue. Call 905-727-2064 for details.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9

Probus Club of Aurora's guest speaker at this month's meeting is Steven Falk, representing the Steven Lewis Foundation. He will speak on "Easing the Pain of HIV/AIDS in Africa". Club meets at the Aurora Legion the second Wednesday of every month, beginning at 10 a.m.

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Town Park presents Dick Smith. Syncona Caribana is in the air! Experience the warm, sway of music from the Caribbean with Dick Smith, one of the founders of Caribana and lead

drummer from Toronto's Lion King. 7 to 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, 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 Auran. For more information call 905-726-4762.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Town Park presents "Appreciate our Canadian Forces" Concert. Hear the Royal Canadian Artillery Band and the Air Force 400 Squadron Pipes, in a military show you won't forget. 7 to 9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23

Town of Aurora 2006 Summer Concerts in the Town Park presents the ultimate Janis Joplin tribute experience. Join the party at this final summer concert, with a tribute to this great singer. 7 to 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Aurora Historical Society Candlelight Tour of Homes.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Probus Club of Aurora's guest speaker at this month's meeting is Diana Baggett. Club meets at the Aurora Legion the second Wednesday of every month, beginning at 10 a.m.

FRIDAY, 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".

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20

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

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25

Aurora Seniors travel to the Stratford Festival for the Rogers and Hammerstein musical "South Pacific" with lunch included for \$107 for members and \$112 for non-members. Call 905-726-4767 to register.



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No doubt about the school year ending for these two students as books go flying in the air. They are Brittany Wiemer and Julia Ludwig, and they're celebrating the last day of school at St. Joseph's Catholic School on Glass Drive in Aurora. For them, it was over June 28.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Town noted for its work with youth

Recently, the Play Works Partnership - a group of organizations concerned about the future of youth - celebrated the Town of Aurora and seven other Ontario communities as the first recipients of the prestigious Play Works Youth Friendly Community Recognition Program at Queen's Park.

Last September, mayors and community representatives from Aurora, Ajax, Burlington, South Huron, Port Hope, Chatham-Kent, Pickering, and Peterborough were formally recognized as leaders in a youth friendly community by acknowledging their community inclusive of the municipality, not-for-profits, private enterprises, and informal groups, as actively supporting and providing opportunities for the growth and development of youth (ages 13-19) through play.

The municipalities received provincial recognition for their superior leadership and youth awareness activities in a ceremony held at Queen's Park.

Presentations were made by Play Works Chairperson Beth Gignac and Minister of Health Promotion John Watson.



Nigel Kean for Mayor

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Kean for change

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Aurora Council proves to be an embarrassment

*Something has happened to council,
The changes aren't for the best;
As this is a municipal election year.
Some councillors should take a rest.
- Poor Richard's Scrapbook*

The once proud Aurora Council has become dysfunctional and is destroying itself with petty bickering, nit-picking, personal attacks, name calling, flip-flopping and disregarding normal parliamentary procedure, normal process and their code of ethics.

After years of experimenting with a committee structure, in 1986 council engaged a consultant to review the town's organization and operation and one of the recommendations was to replace the standing committees by council in committee or general committee.

It was pointed out that with standing committees with a membership of three councillors, an issue could be fully debated in committee and then debated again in council but with all council members sitting on the general committee, this would not be necessary.

It was agreed to adopt the general committee structure consisting of all members of council with the intent of having a more informal setting to hear delegations and debate the issues.

It was hoped that as all members of council were part of the general committee, when the committee report came to council it would be ratified without further debate unless there was new information to be introduced.

It hasn't worked that way.

Very seldom does a general committee report come before council that there isn't further debate on one or more items without any new information presented that may change the decision.

If a member wants to re-introduce an item from the report, it is "lifted" without having to give any reason or explanation why the member wants it re-introduced.

Normally, the reason it is lifted is to have another opportunity for the member to get his or her own way after losing out at committee, this time in front of the TV cameras, or possibly because it's an election year.

Sometimes it is because a member is absent from the committee meeting and wants to add his or her two cents to the debate, forgetting that a quorum is five members and as long as a quorum is present, the meeting is legal and decisions made are valid.

When a majority vote is cast in committee or council, the decision made is a council or committee decision and should not be re-opened unless there is new information and a motion of reconsideration approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

In November, 2005, Chief Administrative Officer John Rogers made several suggestions to improve the efficiency of council meetings including one that required a member of council to give a reason for wanting to rehash an issue decided at general committee, but his suggestions were rejected by council.

The question of whether it was worthwhile to have general committee meetings when so many of the issues are re-introduced at council without an explanation why, has been debated several times at council with no action taken.

A good or bad example is the recent debate over the future of the former library and senior centre on Victoria Street due to the lack of parking for the new library.

The issue was fully discussed during a lengthy debate at the general committee meeting in which a motion by Councillor John West to demolish both buildings to create 67 parking spaces was defeated on a 6-3 vote and a motion to only demolish the former seniors' centre to create 15 spaces was adopted.

That should have been the end of the controversial Library Square redevelopment project, but the issue was rehashed at council for more than hour when the same motion of demolishing both buildings was introduced by Councillor John West and defeated by the same 6-3 vote.

This resulted in the issue being referred to staff to investigate alternative parking arrangements.

Aurora council is an embarrassment!



The Grade 4 class at the Aurora Public School (Church Street School) in 1945 looked like this. They are, front row, left to right, John Urquhart, Bobby Flicker, Bobby Seaton, John Toole, Ron Starkey, Arthur Southwood, Gordon Bruce, Ken Elmer and Ron Smith; second row, left to right, Earlene McCready, Diane Graham, Betty Anne Waite, Mary Adams, Jill Moffatt, Shirley Bull, Jackie Seaton, Joan Bice, Margaret Howlett, Darlene Akinson, and Shirley Chapman; third row, left to right, the teacher Olive Bostwick, Doris Chambers, ?, Reta Brown, Barbara Anthony, Grace Longhurst, Marilyn Hurst, Helen Long, Joyce Dunstall, Edna Cole, Shirley Faulkner, ?; top row, left to right, Shirley Ellis, Muriel Collins, Charles Sutton, Sid Lustic, John Bradbury, Ted Starkey, Bob Cook, Stuart Wilson, Donnie Morning, Cleon Bunn and Ron Brookes.

Letter to the Editor

Broken glass bigger hazard than doo-doo

To the editor,

I hope you are an equal opportunity editor and will carefully consider my letter even though it is written by a dog.

My folks keep me up-to-date on all dog related news.

There is a special place in my heart for Mr. Routledge, and as for the people at "1010" well, I'm too polite a dog to frankly comment.

Often I hear of complaints about doggie doo-doo not being picked up.

A valid complaint to be sure, and shame on those owners who leave those poops unscooped.

You know who you are: please mend your ways and start today to "stoop and scoop."

But I have to tell you that on "my" block (Trillium / Timberline / Cranberry) I don't often see (or more accurately "smell") any "orphan" poops.

My mom and dad pick up after me, and most of the folks in the neighbourhood likewise pick up after their dogs.

However, on virtually every walk I see broken glass on the sidewalk.

In winter I'm generally wearing my boots; the rest of the year I'm out there in my bare feet, dodging glass.

While admittedly unscooped doggie doo-doo is a hazard, person-



Pinkerton

ally I think the broken glass is a greater hazard to us dogs than these few errant dog droppings are to humans.

Think about it: shoe clad human foot in dog doo-doo versus bare dog foot against broken glass.

This broken glass is a danger to the children in the neighbourhood, too; especially should they trip and fall or take a spill from their trikes and land on the glass.

These kids are my friends (they love to pet me!), and I don't want to see them hurt.

I'm no CCSI (Canine Crime Scene Investigator) but these appear to be beer and liquor bottles tossed thoughtlessly which break when they hit the sidewalk.

I know it's unlikely that the perpetrators of these uncivilized acts will give this due thought and reform, but I thought it was worth mentioning, just in case.

I shudder to think about the possibility that these bottles are evidence of drinking and driving, or even worse underage drinking and driving.

But it would explain the drivers who drive very fast, and fail to yield to pedestrians and dogs at stop signs, or just plain ignore the stop signs altogether.

A thank you to those innocent homeowners who find this nasty mess virtually on their doorsteps and quickly sweep it up, and a plea to those who may not have been in the habit of quickly cleaning up the glass to please do so in the future.

I'd love to see my neighbourhood free of both unclaimed doggie doo and broken glass.

Thank you for considering this from the canine perspective.

Pinkerton Menzies Aurora

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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

Town needs report before next election

When a new administration takes over invariably it seems the first thing they do is claim that the government cupboard is bare.

It really is a tried and true tradition. By doing this, it provides the new government with a cloak for any harsh economic measures they may want to implement and it gives them the added bonus of blaming the current fiscal woes on the rascals they just replaced. I agree with those suggestions that some independent, non-partisan group, like Statistics Canada or the Auditor General's office should publish an economic statement just prior to every election.

The statistics certainly don't tell the whole story, but they are the basis upon which to begin the debate about priorities and the fiscal capacity to implement a proposed legislative agenda.

Furthermore, the incumbent party would have a tougher time disguising any fiscal shenanigans.

We need something similar in Aurora.

As part of the Aurora strategic planning process, a review of community attitudes survey was completed.

Eighty-five per cent of those surveyed believe that the quality of life in Aurora is good to very good.

But 38 per cent feel the Town is changing for the worse and 38 per cent feel the Town is changing for the better.

The results show that we love our Town but we are also very confused and concerned about its future.

It means that the municipal election this fall is very important.

Some type of document is needed that provides the voters with unbiased and unvarnished basic information.

It would be nice if the good folks at the Aurora Town Hall produced such a document.

But it would be even better if our fellow citizens published this information.

A group of concerned citizens and stakeholder groups could, together, either purchase say a couple of pages of ads in this newspaper or produce a brief pamphlet which could be inserted into The Auroran. **(Note to editor: I will be waiting for my commission cheque). (Note to Stephen: don't hold your breath...ed.)**

Such a group could include the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, various ratepayer associations, volunteer organizations and the three main provincial political parties.

The three political parties would not actively participate on the committee, but would be supporting this endeavour in the name of increasing voter education, and would, in return, have their respective logo or name mentioned as one of the sponsors.

This committee could be comprised of 10 to 15 citizens who are not supporting any of the mayoralty candidates.

They would hold a couple of meetings this summer and decide upon the important metrics that should be included in this voter handout.

What type of information should be included in such a document?

A good start for the committee would be the draft Aurora Strategic Plan and its accompanying stakeholder presentations.

The document should have a number of easy to read charts and graphs, with not a lot of text.

The graphs would show five-year trend lines for a number of various metrics.

The trends would also show how we compare with other similarly sized communities.

It should also include comparisons with Newmarket.

Although Newmarket has a much larger population than Aurora, there is a commonality, based on proximity, community make-up and shared interests.

Visually, it could be something akin to the community events calendar that is published on a regular basis in this newspaper.

The calendar is a cornucopia of information, and is visually appealing and easy to go through.

Something similar would be nice.

As the municipal election takes place November 13, the document should be published in early October, just prior to the various public hall and debate forums.

Hopefully, it would serve as the jumping off point for people to ask questions about the issues of growth, the level, quality and costs of services, and the appropriate level of taxation.

We are all aware that election-voting patterns at the federal, provincial and municipal level have been on the decline and that the lowest voter turnout occurs for municipal elections.

Any measure that can be utilized to both further educate and interest our fellow citizens in voting should be explored.

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

Machell's Corners



Letter to the Editor

He's hoping for a good turnout at this meeting

To the editor,

The new updated Strategic Plan for Aurora will be presented Monday evening, July 10 at 7 p.m. before our Aurora Council. Many people, writers to the editor, management, politicians and other stakeholders have contributed to this Plan for the future for Aurora.

It is interesting that the plan certainly spells out some very specific benefits in living within "our town" as well as some clear difficulties that we will face in the future.

It would confirm for me if that council room was filled with residents to also listen and see this presentation as it is open to the public that we care.

It would also confirm change that all those letter writers, and many of our residents are serious about for their town and its future.

Change for our town is not always about changing politicians although I am sure that will happen but far more importantly it is YOUR interest and voice we want to hear.

You can respond on the

Aurora Web site also if you cannot make the meeting.

Let's hope that it does not collect dust, but that we enact these plans and develop policies to meet the plan and the strategies including my desire to control taxes within such a plan.

Marten Mol
Aurora



Cathy's Corner



Home

My column of a few weeks ago entitled "You Know You Live In Aurora When ..." was warmly received by Aurorans all over Aurora.

"What does that tell you?" asked my husband, who always reassures me that Aurora does read, especially when those long, dark weeks without e-mail go by and I begin to sigh like a lover without a letter.

"Hmm...", I mused. "It tells me that our neighbourhood isn't unique."

He raised an eyebrow. "Huh?"
"Our neighbourhood isn't unique," I repeated. "It's typical of Aurora's uniqueness."

He smiled.
"Yes," he agreed. "Aurora really is unique."

Over the past few weeks, Aurorans have shared with me the experiences that I shared in that column. It feels wonderful. It feels like...home.

I have come to suspect that there are only two or three tall ladders per street in Aurora; that at any given time, everybody has something in their house or garage that belongs to a neighbour; and that every weekend, Aurorans feed, look out for, and tuck in children who aren't their own. It's so typical. And it's so unique.

It was 1987 and we were new arrivals to Aurora. I was so happy and excited about my brand new house that my domestic instincts went into hyper-overdrive. I asked Damir to dig me a garden in front of the house even before we got sod.

Heck, we hadn't finished unpacking yet!
He did it, and that October, I did the impossible. I got down on all fours and planted daffodils.

My next door neighbour, Norman, came over. "Stop that," he demanded. "You're putting us all to shame!"

I smiled. I was eight months pregnant. That first spring, I stood in front of my garden, hands on hips, frowning.

Norman came over and stood beside me, hands on hips. He frowned, too.

He knew what I was thinking: it looked...terrible. "I like to plant them in clumps," he said, taking in my pathetic little display of 14 daffodils almost two feet apart. "That," he said, motioning to my sparse little row, "would be one clump. Almost. You need to buy a few more bulbs."

I bought 240 bulbs that fall, but Norman bought more than 700.

I had myself a gardening coach.

The Annual Street Barbeque was traditionally held in the circle at the end of our cul-de-sac. One year, it rained.

We moved the party into the nearest garage - I think it might have been Shirley and Mike's?

The neighbours nestled their lawn chairs in among typical garage stock.

It would take more than rain to shut this neighbourhood down.

Somebody asked me about the speeches I was writing for Toastmasters.

Somebody else said they'd like to hear them. With mixed feelings, I went home to get my notes.

Until then, I didn't know my neighbours were a bunch of hecklers.

Nor did I know that I could pull off stand-up comedy...but only in good company.

We laughed so hard and so long that nightfall found us still in that garage.

And nobody noticed it had stopped raining hours ago.

It was two days after Christmas, 1994. In spite of all the new toys littering the halls, the mood in our house was somber.

Tasha, our eight-month-old German Shepherd puppy, had gotten out of the backyard the day before and was still missing.

The kids had cried a sea of tears, and they wanted to go looking for her. Again.

I told them we would drive around the neighbourhood after dinner.

We were just clearing dishes when the doorbell rang. It was Tasha.

Our puppy had fallen into the kind hands of our dog-loving neighbours several streets away.

They had spent many hours going door to door looking for her family, and when they reached our door, it was Christmas all over again!

This little town is full of people with big hearts.

I invite you to send me your stories of how unique Aurora is, and how typical of that uniqueness your neighbours are.

Aside from filling those long, dark weeks without e-mail (and filling those stark white pages with Aurora content!), I think that knowing we are in good company fills a deeper part of us - the thing that brought us to Aurora in the first place:

It feels like home.

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

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

 **BOUQUETS** to Aurora High School physical education teacher Keith Bagg on winning one of the top individual awards for administrators at the York Region Athletic Association's annual general meeting and awards ceremony held recently. He received the Norm Menczel Award for outstanding extra-curricular athletic activities.

 **BRICKBATS** to Aurora Council for breaking with normal practice by making two delegates sit through almost two hours of boring debate before bringing their items forward for debate, when the normal practice is to receive the delegate and bring the item forward, not receive and refer to the report.

 **BOUQUETS** to Finance Minister Greg Sorbara on being nominated as the sexiest guy at Queen's Park, but he was beaten out by Timmins MPP Gilles Bisson. Sorbara was also nominated in the best dressed male category and Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees in the best male hair-do category.

 **BRICKBATS** to a justice system that does not include a Statute of Limitations for charges of indecent assault brought to court several years after the alleged assault. While indecent assault should never be tolerated, it took 50 years before a charge was laid against a teacher and 30 years for another charge against the same teacher.

 **BOUQUETS** to former Progressive Conservative Transportation Minister James Snow for donating his \$2.1 million estate in the Milton area to the Salvation Army., after buying a new home beside the Niagara Escarpment

 **BRICKBATS** to the Dalton McGuinty Liberal government for their delay in approving municipal zoning bylaws prepared in accordance with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. By the end of May, 2006, four years after introducing the plan only six of the 24 GTA municipalities had been approved: Aurora, Newmarket, Markham, Vaughan, Port Hope and Hamilton.

 **BOUQUETS** to the federal Conservative government for adopting legislation to deter people from street racing, although it's not much stronger than the Criminal Code.

 **BRICKBATS** to the same government for not taking action to curtail the manufacture of souped-up auto parts, TV ads of racing cars and movies such as "The Fast and the Furious" with all its high-speed thrills.

 **BRICKBATS** to RCMP officials for demanding \$1.6 million in fees from a journalist who had filed a request for information under the Access to Information Act, which Information Commissioner John Reid reported was excessive.

 **BOUQUETS** to Newmarket/Aurora MP Belinda Stronach on becoming one of the stars in the down-in-the-dumps Liberal Party with her pizzazz and pointed questions especially to the Environment Minister.

 **BRICKBATS** to the McGuinty Liberal government for failing to show leadership by not giving unanimous consent to a Street Racing Bill, which was first introduced by the former Progressive Conservative government in 2003, but good for Oak Ridges MPP (and Aurora resident) Frank Klees for pushing the issue.

 **BOUQUETS** and an Aurora Welcome to Helene Lantak on the opening of her innovative women's accessory shop "Girls and Pearls" at 15387 Yonge Street.

Letter to the Editor

Parent impløres co-operation between bikers and opponents

An Open letter to readers of The Auroran, residents of Aurora, and the Town Council.

It is with great concern that I write this letter regarding the recent issues surrounding biking, and the building of bike jumps, in our woodlots in Aurora.

We have seen a barrage of letters from a Mr. Dickie in The Auroran newspaper condemning our children who have the audacity to enjoy themselves biking in the woodlots, in addition to anyone else who chooses to disagree with his viewpoint.

I am even more concerned with the apparent endorsement by the Town to plow down the bike jumps developed by our young biking enthusiasts on a regular basis.

I appreciate that our Parks Dept. employees are only doing their job, enforcing the Town bylaws, but the time has come to reconsider those bylaws, revisit our conservation ideals, and update both to meet new requirements and demand.

Mr. Dickie is an alarmist. Armed with little evidence or proof, but lots of propaganda, he skews the truth to satisfy his view, in an effort to convince others of the harm our youth are doing.

He augments this by actively confronting our children while they are biking, blatantly attempting to entice a conflict with people who are much younger than himself.

His recent efforts are to leave signs in the woodlot challenging our children. Clearly, conflict seems to be his method of choice.

I do applaud our other concerned citizens and Town Council members have shown a more mature approach by open discussing their concerns with the kids, while listening to their viewpoints, during their visits to Case Woodlot.

Listening is the key, and these folks through their actions have begun to teach our youth about all viewpoints.

Like Mr. Dickie, I, too, grew up in Aurora and actively used our woodland areas for recreation as a youth. Salamander Pond and Case Woodlot were my favourites.

To see our youth, and my children, continue to use this area and obtain such enjoyment brings me great pleasure.

The fact that we didn't build jumps for our bikes "when I was a youth", is quite simply, an out of date, archaic, and lame argument.

Times have changed and the youth of today are better educated, more creative, and more demanding of our resources.

I suggest we endorse their activities, but provide guidance with our collective experience to ensure that their activities are safe and not environmentally destructive.

Of course, to reach a compromise between the two we must revisit our values about strict conservation and make some decisions about whether conservation wins above all, or whether our values, such as recreation, can take precedence for a small area within the woodlot.

With regards to Mr. Dickie's "environmental conscience", I have seen one too many times the voice of uneducated and uninformed so called 'environmentalists' who lack the basic understanding of how our ecosystems work.

As a trained geographer and consultant to the natural resource and environmental industry for more than 20 years, I can tell you that our ecosystems do not easily erode due to man's impact, and in fact, are much more resilient than most understand.

Losing some herbaceous ground cover is not necessarily a bad thing. It happens all the time in nature.

The issue is to manage change, not stop it, to accommodate those values of most importance.

All natural landscapes, especially in urban environments like Aurora, must be

managed. Case Woodlot, in particular, is a mature forest with timber litter seen throughout the forest.

Our youth are simply using what nature discards to better use. Think of it as a renewable resource.

Is the biking causing an impact on the ground cover for this small area? Definitely, yes. Is this bad? Well, it depends on your value system.

Will this cause widespread devastation to the woodlot...absolutely not.

As a father of one of the children who bikes regularly in the woodlots, I endorse their efforts in building jumps.

As recently stated in a letter to the editor of The Auroran, it does indeed show a level of creativity and commitment that is good to see in our youth.

Instead of choosing options that are all too readily available, vandalism, gangs, etc., activities negative to their good and to the community's, they instead choose to share a passion together that is not only healthy and positive, but develops a work ethic seldom seen in most adults.

I have been into the woodlot on many occasions and our children are not actively cutting trees or purposely destroying landscapes.

In fact, they utilize resources available to them, old logs, dirt, etc. to creatively build jumps for

their enjoyment.

To my recollection this area has been used for biking for several years in Case Woodlot and the loss of ground cover is a consequence that is not new.

It does appear that volume has increased, primarily due to demand. The only real tree damage I have seen has been caused by the Town's bobcats, including the recent chopping down of several live trees used to create barriers to access for the bikers.

Somehow this logic escapes me.

I suggest that this issue provides an ideal opportunity for the Town of Aurora to craft a solution that meets this obvious recreational demand.

In a time, where conflict seems to be the order of the day, we need to entice solutions that force our authority figures, our Town managers, and our resource users to work together.

This is a basic principle behind "integrated resource planning" where all stakeholders are included in decisions about land use.

It is the essence of the environmental movement and all natural resource management agencies, including the forestry industry.

We now have an opportunity to set a standard within the Town of Aurora to promote open communication.

Please see page 7



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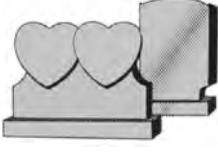
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Letters to the Editor

Parent seeks co-operation with mountain bikers

From page 6
tion among our youth and the Town, to develop "woodlot biking" areas that not only meet the demand shown, but to also address environmental stewardship. It is my belief that the Town should proactively service this demand by establishing "woodlot biking" areas in both Sheppard's Bush and Case

Woodlot that can safely be managed and maintained to meet all objectives. This would restrict biking, and particularly bike jumping, to a predefined area where damage to ground cover, trees and other vegetation can be managed and restricted. It is important to understand that changes to our natural environment are not

necessarily bad, it is simply adjusting our social value system to accommodate a recreation demand in concert with a conservation target. This is not new, it is in fact, the focus of most natural resource agencies across North America. Can there be more effort in managing a predefined area for biking than the current effort to regularly

destroy it? Additionally, no one would be better to guide our youth than our Parks Dept. folks, supported by trained forestry consultants, who could work with our youth to build these jumps they so passionately crave, and maintain the area so it is safe for all. With a predefined area for biking and bike jumping

we could also address liability concerns, ensure better safety for our children, and promote positive values for our community. This opportunity presents a clear win-win situation for all parties. The Town must also realize that building BMX or skate parks (as planned) will not satisfy this demand. There is a natural component to mountain biking and jumping that is simply not satisfied by the physics used for BMX biking. Mountain bikes and BMX bikes are fundamen-

tally different in design. Town Council now has the opportunity to show the residents of Aurora, that indeed, they will listen, and they will meet the demand shown by our community. I implore interested parents to support this effort, and our Town's caretakers, to set a precedent for other communities to follow. With the summer quickly approaching I urge the Town to address this issue immediately.

**David J. Buckley
Aurora**

Town Park visitor didn't go to dance

To the editor,

I am writing to convey my dismay over the decision to move the Canada festivities of June 30th from the Town Park to the new location, somewhere in the industrial park. The Town Park was built

for the community to gather in. It is a convenient, central location where many people can walk to. There are not many people who are within walking distance to this new place. I have always enjoyed

Aurora for the sense of community and small town feel that it has. I am concerned that the move to the new location will make the event feel like something that would take place in Newmarket. Anyway, several long time Aurora residents and I

have been going to the Town Park event for years, and enjoying the walk there. This year we cannot walk there so we did not attend. I have spoken with many other residents who have no desire to attend the new location. Hopefully this is a one-year mistake and after you see the disappointment many people have and the general lack of success of the festivities, you will bring it back to Town Park. Oh, but I almost forgot this is an election year, so who knows who will be making the decision about it next year. Cheers and Happy Canada Day.

**Mark Ford
Aurora**

People respond to flags

To the editor,

I would like to thank everyone for attending the Farmer's Market July 1st. It was, by far, the most successful to date and there were more new faces than in any one day in the past. It was great that all of the vendors handed out Canadian flags on such

an important day. The winners of the basket of goods donated by the vendors were Chuck and Cheryl Bombardieri of Aurora. Next week, July 8th, we are raffling off three Toronto Blue Jay tickets in the gold section and a parking pass for the July 15th game. The value is more than

\$160 and the raffle tickets will cost \$5 each or three for \$10. All money raised will go to the Aurora Food Pantry. Also, if you have any non-perishable goods for the Food Pantry, please bring them along to the market. **Nigel Kean
Aurora**

Council ponders hydro money

From page 1
completion of the Arboretum master plan, a youth centre through the completion of the Library Square project, and a museum historical centre. The consultant recommended council establish a State of Good Repair Reserve and transfer 80 to 90 percent of the money to that reserve to keep the town's infrastructure in good order. He also suggested 10 to 20 per cent of the proceeds be transferred to a reserve created to fund new capital projects not eligible for funding from development charge revenues. Councillor John West proposed the recommen-

dations be accepted but others wanted to debate the report. Councillor Damir Vrancic asked why the report had not included options and suggested having a brainstorming session with citizens. Councillor Evelyn Buck said she was disappointed with the report as it merely recommended the proceeds be switched from one reserve fund to another and the money was doing nothing for the community. Councillor Bill Hogg questioned the percentage split and said he

would have liked to have seen something more exciting as it was found money and it shouldn't be used for past indiscretions of council. Councillor Nigel Kean referred to the petition signed by 100 residents that the town acquire the Henderson lands and asked why there was nothing in the recommendations about the purchase. It was finally agreed to refer the report to staff who will bring it back to a general committee meeting in September based on the various comments by councillors.

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Martha visits

Arriving in her big red bus (well, actually, it's a motorhome) Federal Liberal leadership hopeful Martha Hall Findlay was in Aurora last week, and was met by Aurora mayoralty hopeful Nigel Kean. Hall Findlay, who was primed to fight for the Newmarket-Aurora riding in the last federal election was nudged out of the position when then Conservative MP Belinda Stronach crossed the floor of the house to join the Liberals. The move put Hall Findlay out of a riding and since none was being offered at the time, she became the first candidate to sign up for the leadership after Paul Martin announced he was stepping down. In a field of 11 candidates, Hall Findlay has been spending her time introducing herself to the country thanks to her red bus which has now been from one coast to the other. Later in the evening, bottom photo, she was guest at a Liberal gathering in Aurora where she met briefly with one of the participants, Rosemary Park.

Auroran photos
by Ron Wallace



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Heritage planners from across Ontario are taken on a tour by John McIntyre of the Heritage Advisory Committee of Aurora last week following a meeting of the group hosted by the Town of Aurora at Hillary House National Historic Site. Aurora had the opportunity to showcase some of its historic buildings such as Hillary House and discuss its recent and ongoing heritage conservation initiatives such as the successful Old House Restoration Workshop, recent heritage designations, the upcoming Doors Open event and the Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District. Hillary House is in the background.

No Frills expansion gets okay from Town

A couple of weeks ago, Aurora's General Committee had a tough time deciding what to do with a staff report dealing with an 8,000 square foot expansion to the south of the No Frills Store in the Aurora Shopping Centre.

They got over it last week at a council meeting, voting unanimously to allow the project to proceed.

The application for expansion was received in July, 2005, and the proposal called for the elimination of the central roadway which divides the existing parking lot in half.

That would force traffic in front of the stores which was seen as a hazard by councillors.

In addition, the proposed expansion would force traffic to make a sharp turn at the bottom of the westerly ramp from Murray Drive, which some members of council found unacceptable and it was referred back to staff and the applicant to resolve the expressed concerns.

A public planning meeting was held last February with no members of the public in attendance to support or oppose the application.

At that time councillors questioned realignment of parking, landscaping, snow removal and protection to the residential area to the west, and approved the application in principle subject to the resolution of out-

standing issues.

In a report to the general committee, staff recommended that the Director of Planning be authorized to execute a site plan agreement including the proposed changes.

Planner Harry Froussios appeared before the general committee meeting to support the staff report.

He pointed out that the centre roadway would be retained and proper signage would be displayed on site, there would be additional landscaping along Murray Drive and the west boundary with a fence to protect the residential areas.

He said all garbage bins would be removed from the rear of the stores to provide parking and an enclosed central garbage pick-up area would be constructed in the northwest corner.

Councillor Phyllis Morris objected to authorizing the Director of Planning executing the site plan agreement claiming that it should be returned to council for approval as there had been

objections to the application.

She questioned if any correspondence had been received regarding the application with staff replying in the negative.

Her motion for the site plan to be returned to council was lost on a 4-4 vote.

A subsequent motion to adopt the staff report was also lost on the same tie vote, stalemating approval of the site plan until the committee report went to council Tuesday night.

Mr. Froussios was back to speak on the stalemate at the committee meeting.

He said the applicant wanted to start construction in July as the site plan was complete and he requested council support.

He noted that failing council support, his client could abandon the project or launch an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Without further discussion council approved the original staff recommendation to the general committee.

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Whistle talks continue

Residents may have to listen to train whistles for a little while yet.

The Town of Aurora was advised recently that York Region does not support the elimination of train whistles at their two regional road crossings because of pedestrian volumes, sight-line concerns and concern for regional liability.

Those crossings are the St. John's Sideroad and Wellington Street.

Since complaints started about the noise, gates have been installed at all level crossings in Aurora and negotiations to eliminate the

whistle noise continue.

York has agreed to contact representatives of municipalities involved in the train whistling dispute to learn how they dealt with the liability issue and to follow up with Transport Canada regarding the ongoing evaluation of a new concept called wayside horns.

The concept of the wayside horn system is to replace the locomotive horns with roadway horn systems at railway level crossings, which allows the noise to be more directed at automobiles and away from

the surrounding area.

It is expected that if the wayside horn system is approved by Transport Canada and adopted by the region, the cost will be the responsibility of Aurora.

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Announcement



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York Simcoe Interlock
Baseball Bantam

Bantam Standings
As of June 26, 2006

Games					Total
Team	Played	Wins	Losses	Ties	Pts.
Bradford Lions Club	4	4	0	0	8
Georgina – Red	6	4	2	0	8
Part Source	7	3	3	1	7
Dell Roofing	4	3	1	0	6
DiSal Contracting & Design	6	3	3	0	6
Showcase Furniture Galleries	6	3	3	0	6
Royal Wood Shop	4	2	2	0	4
Armstrong Petroleums	5	2	3	0	4
Sutton Legion	3	1	1	1	3
Wait's Bathroom Plus	5	1	4	0	2
Smith William & Bateman	6	1	5	0	2

SCORES

Smith William & Bateman	7
Part Source	3
Royal Wood Shop	9
Showcase Furniture Galleries	5

Showcase Furniture Galleries	11
DiSal Contracting & Design	0

Armstrong Petroleums	12
Royal Wood Shop	3

Part Source	11
Wait's Bathroom Plus	6

York Simcoe Interlock
Baseball Pee wee

Pee wee Standings
As of June 26, 2006

Team	Played	Wins	Losses	Ties	Pts.
FileBank Records	10	7	3	0	14
Phil's Motors	9	4	4	1	9
FutureStars Baseball Camp	5	3	1	1	7
Mastercut Property Services	6	3	2	1	7
Aurora Home Hardware	3	3	0	0	6
Centre Ice Sports	3	2	1	0	4
Good Year – Aurora	5	2	3	0	4
Rhind Electric	4	1	3	0	2
Toronto Star	4	1	3	0	2
Gary's Service & Towing	3	0	2	1	1
Pefferlaw Lions Club	4	0	4	0	0

SCORES

Mastercut Property Services	14
FileBank Records	9

Rhind Electric	12
Phil's Motors	6

FileBank Records	12
Pefferlaw Lions Club	3

York Simcoe Interlock
Baseball Mosquito

Mosquito Standings
As of June 26, 2006

Team	Played	Wins	Losses	Ties	Pts.
RCR Royal LePage	9	8	1	0	16
Rotary Club of Aurora	8	6	2	0	12
RONA Cashway	8	5	3	0	10
AURORAestate.ca	9	5	4	0	10
BMO – Mortgages	7	3	4	0	6
Flex 'n' Gate	8	2	6	0	4
TD Waterhouse					
Wealth Management	9	0	9	0	0

SCORES

RCR Royal LePage	14
TD Waterhouse Wealth	3

BMO – Mortgages	6
AURORAestate.ca	3

Rotary Club of Aurora	11
RONA Cashway	10

Flex 'n' Gate	8
TD Waterhouse Wealth	6

RONA Cashway	17
AURORAestate.ca	12

RCR Royal LePage	10
BMO – Mortgages	5

York Simcoe Interlock
Baseball Rookie

Rookie Ball Standings
As of June 26, 2006

Team	Played	Wins	Losses	Ties	Pts.
King 2 (Schomberg I.G.A..)	5	4	0	1	9
Dr. Chan – Bradford	4	2	1	1	5
Dr. Orschel's Drillers	4	2	1	1	5
Priestly Demolition	8	1	6	1	3
King 1	3	1	2	0	2

SCORES

Dr. Orschel's Drillers	22
Priestly Demolition	15

King 2 (Schomberg I.G.A..)	12
King 1	7

King 2 (Schomberg I.G.A..)	21
Dr. Chan – Bradford	15

Priestly Demolition	14
King 1	7

York Simcoe Interlock
Baseball Midget

Midget Standing
As of June 26, 2006

Team	Played	Wins	Losses	Ties	Pts.
Extreme Pita	5	5	0	0	10
Braywood Services	7	4	2	1	9
NorthView Collision	8	4	3	1	9
Dixon Medical Pharmacy	5	3	1	1	7
Greenham's Distinctive Clothier	6	2	3	1	5
Rowan Hardwood Floors	7	2	5	0	4
McAlpine Ford	6	1	4	1	3
Marlin Travel	4	0	3	1	1

SCORES

Dixon Medical Pharmacy	7
McAlpine Ford	6

Braywood Services	12
Marlin Travel	9

Braywood Services	1
NorthView Collision	1

Rowan Hardwood Floors	10
McAlpine Ford	9

NorthView Collision	12
Rowan Hardwood Floors	3

Scores for Pee Wee Division.

June 19

Mastercut Property Services,
14 vs. FileBank Records, 9

June 20

Mastercut Property Services,
13 vs. Toronto Star, 3

June 26

Good Year Aurora, 6 vs.
Centre Ice Sports, 14

FutureStars Basball Camp 8, vs
Mastercut Property Services 6

June 27

Good Year Aurora, 5 vs
Aurora Home Hardware, 13

Aurora Goodyear Jays triumph over King City

Led by another fine pitching performance from birth-day boy Joe Ariganello, the Goodyear Aurora Jays Pee wee select team evened their record at 1-1 with a convincing 15-10 victory over the visiting King City Cobras recently at James Lloyd Park in Aurora.

Ariganello scattered two hits and shut out the King City team over the first three innings, allowing his team-mates to focus on offence.

The team combined for 15 hits, with all the players in the batting order contributing to the win.

Ricky Evans led the way, going three for three with two runs batted in.

The Jays scored three runs in succession off the suicide-squeeze play, and showed plenty of speed and smarts on the base pads all afternoon.

Braedan Mackenzie and first baseman Andrew Welsman played outstanding defence, with Mackenzie's diving catch in left on a line-drive smash in the third inning inspiring his mates to snuff out a King City threat.

Billy Ferguson shut the

door on King City in the final frame as he pitched out of trouble, helping his own cause with two strikeouts over his one and a third innings of relief.

The Goodyear Jays hit the road for a few away games and tournaments then return home to play a double-header with league-leading Midland Saturday, July 16 at 1 p.m.



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Library Square issue back to the drawing board

From page 1
the same arguments as used at the general committee meeting.

In response to a question as to whether staff had contacted Trinity Anglican Church officials regarding the use of the parking lot during the week, the Director of Leisure Services replied that he had dis-

cussed parking with Father Philip Poole on a couple of occasions but there was no agreement and there had been no recent contact.

Councillor Bill Hogg said that taxpayers had spent a lot of money on the library and it had been planned with very limited parking and the 15 spaces with the demolition of the former

seniors' centre wouldn't solve the problem.

Councillor Nigel Kean who had made the successful compromise motion adopted at the general committee, suggested both buildings be saved and the Town seek alternative parking arrangements either at Trinity Church or behind nearby stores on Yonge Street.

He said it was disgusting to even consider demolishing more than \$3 million worth of assets for a parking lot when so many Aurora-based non-profit community groups needed space.

Councillor Phyllis Morris pointed out that when the library was built in 1999 council had given very little consideration for parking and her vision of Aurora did not include a parking lot and she would not consider any demolition without a full impact study and community input.

She added that by creating more parking, council would be encouraging the use of cars and that it was a transit issue rather than a parking issue.

Councillor Wallace said he was opposed to the demolition of both buildings especially the former library and council didn't have enough answers to make a well-informed decision.

Councillor Damir Vrancic pointed out that council was

rehashing the general committee debate as no new information had been introduced.

He stressed the need for an overall parking study of the downtown area as there were some empty parking lots.

He added that no studies had been carried out and no alternatives offered and asked if the next step would be to demolish Victoria Hall.

The question of parking meters and valet parking were also introduced as ideas successfully used in other municipalities and public institutions.

Mayor Tim Jones said it was necessary to be realistic and 15 spaces were not enough and the library needed help.

Sensing defeat and the possible need to seek outside assistance, Councillor West said he would withdraw his motion which was challenged by Councillor Morris under a little-known section of the procedural bylaw.

Her challenge to the withdrawal motion was upheld on a 5-4 vote with Mayor Jones and Councillors Buck, Hogg and West on the losing side.

The West motion to demolish both buildings was defeated on a 6-3 vote with Mayor Jones and Councillors Buck and West on the losing side, exactly the way the vote went at the

general committee meeting. A motion was then presented not to demolish either building and staff prepare a list of issues to be

resolved, obtain outside help and plan a consultation program with the public which was adopted on a 9-0 vote.

Aurora food bank will see the light

Clients of food banks in Aurora, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan will receive energy-efficient light bulbs as part of a conservation program being offered by PowerStream, Inc., in conjunction with York Region Food Network (YRFN).

It is expected that the use of these compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs will help food bank clients reduce electricity consumption and save money.

"Our clients are on very tight household budgets. This program will help to save money and not require clients to take funds from their limited food budget," said Elizabeth Brims, YRFN Executive Director. "We applaud PowerStream for bringing this initiative to us."

The program will see more than 2,000 CFL bulbs distributed at the four food banks over the next several weeks.

"The assistance of YRFN enables us to reach a significant number of low-income households and moves us one step closer towards building a culture of conservation in our service territory," said Patrick Guran, PowerStream's Chief Energy Conservation Officer.

York Region Food Network (YRFN) is a food security agency that works with York Region food banks to coordinate food drives and the distribution of food supplies across the region.

In 2005, York Region food banks fed 46,575 people of which 20,900 were children.

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Aurora youngsters petition the mayor

In August, 1985, Mayor Dick Illingworth met the youngest delegation in the town's history as they visited him with a complaint and before they left they got his name on their petition.

The delegation consisted of young children from the apartment building on Wellington Street West directly across the road from the then town's administrative centre.

It seems the Baldwin Pre-School Centre, a day-care facility located in the apartment building, had exclusive use of the playground space and equipment located to the rear of the building.

When a chain link fence was constructed, complete with locked gates, surrounding the equipment, the kids from the apartment building were locked out and they objected, resulting in the petition and the visit to the mayor.

The petition was sent to the owners of the building and the end results were lost in the passage of time, unless some of those kids, now adults, can recall the results of their petition.

SPACE RENTAL AT THE SENIORS' CENTRE

Last February, Grace Jones of the Canadian Federation of University Women, wrote to the Leisure Services Advisory Committee requesting a room at the Seniors' Centre at either no cost or a reduced rental rate as the organization couldn't afford the \$100 per hour rate.

The committee requested a staff report indicating a cost benefit analysis of the West-McKenzie Room rental at the Seniors' Centre, a record of bookings and the process undertaken to arrive at the room rental rate of \$100 per hour.

The committee report was endorsed at the April council meeting including the committee recommendations requesting a staff report.

Yet at a subsequent council meeting, without comment, discussion or the staff report, council confirmed the rental rate of \$100 per hour.

Short memories or just in a hurry?

PRICE CHANGES OVER THE YEARS

Inflation, like the weather, is something everybody talks about but nobody does anything about it.

But inflation may not be entirely responsible for a big jump in food prices over the period, November, 1970, to June, 1989.

A dozen grade A eggs jumped from 42 cents to \$1.68, a 300 per cent increase; three quarts of 2 per cent milk went from 67 cents to \$2.57; a pound of sirloin steak from 99 cents to \$3.96; and 10 pounds of granulated sugar went from 96 cents to \$4.48.

One pound of Maxwell House coffee jumped from \$1.19 to \$4.99; a 12 ounce jar of Billy Bee honey went from 31 cents to \$1.99; and Special K cereal made the biggest jump from 56 cents to \$4.15, an increase of 641 per cent.

It might be interesting to price the same products today.

VOTER TURNOUT

A task force is currently studying low voter turnout in Aurora municipal elections as in 2003 the turnout was 33 per cent and it is hoped to increase that number in the November 13 election.

Traditionally, municipal elections draw the lowest percentage of voter turnout, falling behind provincial and federal elections, but whose turnout rate has dropped significantly in recent elections.

But in November, 1982, Aurora set a new voting record during the municipal election with a total of 49.2 per cent voter turnout, an eight per cent increase over the previous record of 41 per cent and an 18 per cent increase over the 1980 election.

Municipal electors do not seem to realize that municipal government has a significant bearing on the day-to-day life of a community and its citizens.

MONSTER HOMES

Council is currently grappling with the construction of

monster homes which are not compatible with surrounding homes in built-up areas of the municipality.

A staff report has been prepared but due to the length of meeting agendas, it has not yet been considered by council.

In October, 1990, then Councillor Judith Ochalski warned that monster homes were creeping into the municipality due to a decision made by the Committee of Adjustment.

The committee granted a minor variance to a resident to permit him to build his two storey home 12 feet higher than the town bylaw allowed. She said it was the thin edge of the wedge and the town had no policy in place that would prevent monster homes.



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By BRIAN WARBURTON

The idea of this barbecue day originated when Belinda Stronach agreed to purchase the naming rights to the kitchen of the Aurora Seniors Association [ASA] and name it 'Belinda's Kitchen', which it now is, and will forever be.

Subsequently, Belinda, whose star is rising and who is in great demand, agreed to host the event, which originally might have had Belinda flipping burgers, and working the kitchen. That idea didn't work.

And so, the Thursday before Canada Day was chosen for the occasion, and on the day of the event, more than 200 guests filled the ASA West-McKenzie Hall, and overflowed outside into adjoining rooms, into the foyer, through the front of the building and onto the parking lot, and out of the rear onto the deck, and down among the trees of the Arboretum, where Greg and Catherine Foster of M&M Meats, were running the barbecue.

For most of Aurora, Thursday was a regular working day; but the ASA was a rockin'.

The dignitaries and people of note present, were far too numerous to mention by name, but many were present and participating, plus many more politicians and

administrators including Aurora councillors and administrative staff, Belinda's administrative staff and high ranking Magna officials, and many others from the business community and from the Liberal Party, just too many to mention.

Add to that the regular members and we had a house full to overflowing.

The retired group, formerly known as the Melody Makers, entertained with their vocalist Donna Waterworth, and our own Ken Elmer entertained with his guitar accompanist.

As I mentioned earlier, this event immediately preceded Canada Day, and Canadian flags and red and white colours seemed to be everywhere. Those not wearing the colours, felt slightly not dressed for the occasion.

Belinda was too much in demand to flip many burgers; she came from the 'Hill and right past the Grill', and from the 'get go', was filmed and interviewed constantly.

Mayor Tim Jones and a fine complement of senior women, all smiling and in red and white, did a masterful job serving the numerous guests.

The media recording the scene as it unfolded included an ACI camera crew, a cameraman from The Auroran, and other media

Belinda wows 'em at senior barbecue

who filmed seemingly endlessly.

I got some shots with my camera, and let me tell you, that was not an easy matter in that bustling throng.

This was a happy, joyful and vibrant scene with everybody involved in the action and will remain long in my memory as a highlight.

This was probably the best attended event so far at the ASA centre; it seems like everything this edition of seniors touches, turns to gold.

The centre is an excellent place as I have repeated countless times, and the ones who get the most out of it, are those who are active, doing something, getting involved and staying involved, keeping the grey matter busy, and growing more of it.

Let me note also, the commendable work done by our fine coordinators Kelly and Jennifer, and Matt who keeps the place in tip top condition; I am proud of each of them. They were busy this day.

I would like to add my opinion, that the Town of Aurora in its initiative with the Aurora Seniors Association is travelling a road to excellence.

The investment made by the Town into the seniors' centre and its location, is proving to be astute, able,

vigilant and shrewd, and in my opinion, the venture is turning into an exhilarating triumph of municipal politics.



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Classic St. Andrew's has its Doors Open

By KIM SILLCOX
Associate Director of
Admission
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St. Andrew's College

The first Doors Open Day took place in France more than 20 years ago, and the concept soon spread to other European countries.

In 2000, the first North American Doors Open was held in Toronto, and in 2002 the Ontario Heritage Trust launched Doors Open Ontario.

More than 45 communities are taking part in Doors Open Ontario 2006, and Aurora is one of them!

On display will be the town's culture, history and environment!

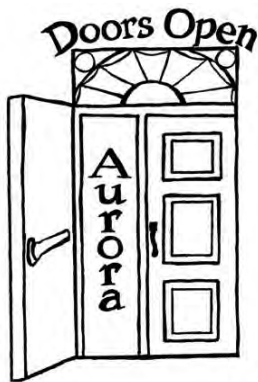
Join in Saturday, August 12, for free tours of Aurora's local landmarks and hidden heritage gems.

No tickets or pre-registration is needed. Visitors choose their sites and tour at their own pace.

To give you an idea of what you can see, The Auroran is featuring some of the sites on a weekly basis.

Fourth in the series is St. Andrew's College, one of Canada's oldest all-boys' schools.

Situated on a hill overlooking the Town of Aurora, St.



Andrew's College may carry a mystique for those who have driven by the gates on Yonge Street, but never entered.

Founded in 1899 by Dr. George Bruce, a Presbyterian minister from Scotland, the school's original location was in the Toronto neighbourhood of Rosedale.

Inspired by his close friend George Dickson, Rev. Bruce named the school St. Andrew's School for Boys after St. Andrew, Scotland's patron saint.

From 1918-1920, the school temporarily relocated to Knox College on the University of Toronto campus, as the government decided Rosedale would be an ideal site for a much-needed military hospital during World War One.

In 1926, St. Andrew's College officially moved to Aurora under the direction of its second headmaster, D. Bruce Macdonald.

Macdonald found comfort in the fact that Aurora appeared to be a one-horse town and provided few distractions for young boys compared with city life in Toronto.

Today, the 110-acre Aurora campus is a beautiful reflection of old and new, with the traditional buildings depicting the Georgian style architecture of ash brick with doorways, sills and medallions of Tyndall stone, and a roof of green slate.

The quadrangle consisted of four original structures of which Dunlap Hall was the most central, housing classrooms, the assembly hall, administrative offices, the gymnasium, the swimming pool, and locker rooms.

Today, Dunlap Hall houses predominantly administrative offices.

To the south and slightly west of Dunlap Hall were Flavelle House (then the Lower School), named after its donor, and the Upper School residence, Memorial House, commemorating the dead of the First World War, both connected to a central dining room by covered outdoor corridors.

The beautiful and stately Headmaster's Residence and grounds were constructed adjacent to Memorial House at the south end.

Today Sifton House, is situated between Flavelle and Memorial Houses. These three houses make up the Upper School residences, each housing 60 students.

The Middle School residence, Macdonald House, was completed in 1930 and is named after the second headmaster.

It is the first building people see upon their arrival at the top of the driveway.

Memorial Chapel was built in 1931 in memory of the 113 Andreans who lost their lives in the First World War.

The Chapel is located on the northeast end of the quad, adjacent to Dunlap Hall, and its steeple can be seen from Yonge Street.

SAC's programs and facilities have continued to expand beyond the original quadrangle since its move to Aurora.

As one of Canada's oldest all-boys' schools for Grades 6 to 12, St. Andrew's current population is 534 students split evenly between day and boarding.

The school now has an impressive array of new facilities, including the new Middle School - Rogers Hall, named after its benefactor.

The Gallery, located at the heart of the school, encloses what was previously an open courtyard.

The Wirth Art Centre, a stunning three-storey facility built into the former gym and the newly renovated Towers Library, were both constructed within the framework of historic Dunlap Hall.

In all cases, the newer architectural designs were carefully selected to complement the original buildings mentioned above.

Not to be missed, St. Andrew's welcomes the community to visit August 12.

For more information, please visit the website at www.sac.on.ca.



Highlights of two days of Canada Day celebrations in Aurora are shown here. In the top photo, residents await the arrival of the parade Saturday morning, while others took advantage of the midway, set up at the Leisure Complex, next photo. Below that, Fraktal creator Ingrid Kulbach set up a display table, while, in the bottom photo, children enjoyed the giant castle. A huge fireworks display ended the activities Saturday night.

Auroran photos by David Falconer



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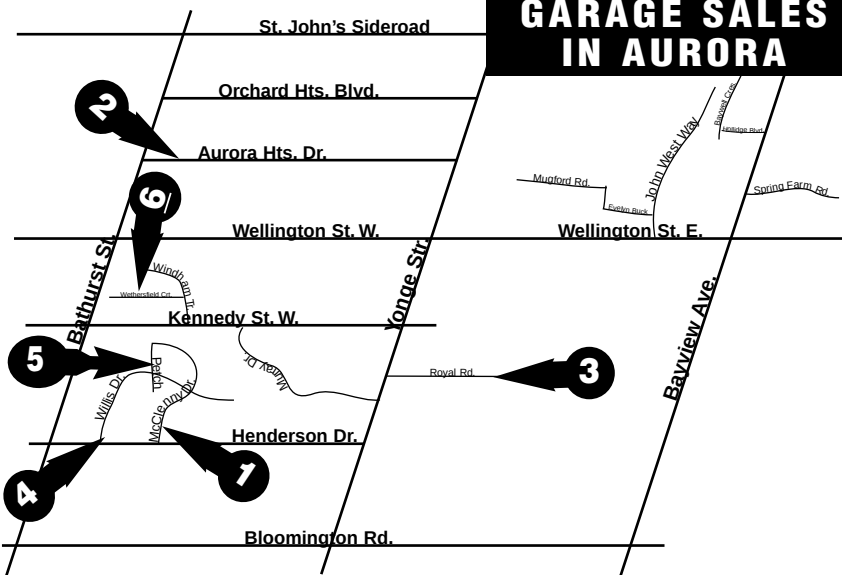
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