

Arboretum challenges community to look beyond the Pine with new evergreen grove



By Brock Weir

A rose might be a rose, but trees might be an issue altogether thornier for the Aurora Community Arboretum ? but they're setting out to do something about that thanks to Tree Canada and Home Hardware.

If you've called your pine, fir, spruce or whatever kind of evergreen you've been decorating this season by the generic term ?Christmas Tree,? the Aurora Community Arboretum would like to give you some food for thought.

This fall, the Arboretum celebrated National Tree Day with the planting of several different species of conifers that will serve to educate generations of Aurorans who take to local trails.

?We are excited about the unveiling of our new collection of trees: the Native Conifers of Ontario, which hopefully will come with complete educational information identifying characteristics which will hopefully bring an end to what I call ?conifer confusion',? said John Wilson of the Arboretum at the gathering. ?No longer in Aurora will we be tolerating the default when you're referencing a conifer. If you don't know, ?Christmas Tree' and ?Pine Tree' will no longer be accepted.?

The plantings were made possible thanks to a grant from Tree Canada, a grant that was assisted by Home Hardware.

John Barfitt, representing Aurora Home Hardware for the unveiling, said it is great to ?come out and help maintain, rebuild and grow our natural community to help it green, grow and prosper.?

?Hopefully it is something that will be here for another 40 years or more for my kids and their kids,? said Mr. Barfitt. ?I knew we had a relationship with Tree Canada and they have done different events, but I wasn't really aware of the depth of that relationship. Over the past 26 years or more, they have been able to plant almost 26,000 trees over that course of time. I am glad we can help bring it to Aurora just to help our community grow and keep it beautiful here in Town. Thank you to the members of Tree Canada, the members of the Arboretum, the volunteers and all the groups that help support and keep the parks beautiful and grow the community.?

Over the past 26 years, Tree Canada has planted over 80 million trees in communities across the country. The organization has had a partnership with Home Hardware going back a quarter century and this year alone, over 34 Home Hardware owners took part in plantings to mark National Forest Week.

?Things like this don't happen by default; it takes the efforts of many people over many years,? said Mr. Peterson, congratulating the partnership. ?This is a great opportunity to thank all the volunteers who make things like this happen and make Aurora such a great place to live.?