

BROCK'S BANTER: Renewal (Whether you want it or not)

By Brock Weir

Easter is approaching and the closer Easter comes, it seems the more often you're reminded that this season is one of renewal. This reminder comes not only from the more Christian-minded among us, but everywhere you look as the world slowly wakes up to spring after a long, cold winter ? especially as long and cold a winter as we've just experienced.

There is a certain electricity in the air after we pass the equinox and all of a sudden the sound of the birds outside seem to become more amplified. You know you've had a long winter when you're sitting at your desk late on Thursday night in March and, upon hearing a flock of geese flying over your house, you have a reaction similar to those of Henry Fonda and Katharine Hepburn in ?On Golden Pond? whenever they spotted or heard one of those damn loons.

The sound of the kids playing and basking outside becomes particularly welcome as well.

Even as I am writing this from my office, a lovely couple apparently from the apartment building next door have taken what seems to be a relatively routine domestic squabble out to their parking lot to enjoy the spring sunshine and several members of the York Regional Police have come to join them.

Ah, Spring.

As everything around us wakes up, it infuses me with a new level of energy. I sleep better, my time management skills suddenly kick back into gear, and I feel ready to take on the world.

Spring also marks a number of changes in a number of areas across Aurora, for better or worse.

And it was bound to happen, wasn't it? There must be something in that old principle of Murphy's Law.

Last summer, the Town teetered on the edge of losing the Aurora Tigers. New rules were handed down to the local team from their governing body, extending the hockey season, making it imperative they keep their grips on the Aurora Community Centre in the event they made the finals.

In 2014, that ultimately proved to be the case.

After a stellar year, they went the distance, but there was a victim to their success ? and who that victim was is in the eye of the beholder.

Capping that year, they made the finals but when the finals conflicted with the annual Home Show hosted by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, the hockey team was forced to take their action to York University where they subsequently lost in the very end.

Could this loss be chalked up to taking on their ultimate rivals on unfamiliar ice well away from home?

Maybe. Maybe not. But that was certainly the implication presented to Town Council when the Tigers approached local lawmakers to say if they weren't able to secure ice time at their long-time home for the duration of their season, they would have to move elsewhere.

The kicker? The Home Show would either have to change their long-established spring dates or up sticks to a new location.

Ultimately an equitable solution was found in the Home Show moving to the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex (SARC), but in the end it was all, theoretically, for naught.

Their season came to an abrupt end on home ice last Tuesday night with little over two weeks to go before the Home Show is set to open in its new digs.

Strictly for my own entertainment, I wouldn't have minded being a fly on the wall at the Chamber Office last Wednesday morning as they discussed a possible next course of action, but I had to feel for both groups. The Tigers were riding so high for most of the season, only to crumble at the very end, while the Chamber put so much effort into a revamped plan that, from certain perspectives, might be unnecessary.

Their efforts, however, will ultimately turn out to be invaluable, in my view.

As a regular attendee of the Aurora Home Show, it can become relatively routine. You know what to expect, you know who you are going to see, and you usually know what you're going to leave with. The move to the SARC adds a new dimension and I am very curious to see what's new for their much more modern location.

Staff at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce came to Council cap in hand earlier this year looking for a cost break on the SARC. It is not beyond the realm of reasonability to expect a certain contribution from the Town to help offset any costs of the Chamber's move to the SARC ? after all, it wasn't their idea to tinker with what had been a winning formula, nor was it the Town's, but it was the path of least resistance. Requesting a certain figure sure in the knowledge that attendance this year would be lower because, apparently, people won't be able to find the SARC in the vast expanse known as Aurora, almost seems like a self-fulfilling prophecy.

A move to the SARC might just prove the shot in the arm the Aurora Home Show and the Aurora Chamber of Commerce didn't even know they needed.

Visitors will be able to take in all the great things local and area businesses have to offer to address their home improvement needs, vendors will have more elbow room to show off, and there will be plenty of further opportunities for kids to have fun while their home-minded parents are elsewhere getting ideas.

And although it might take a few years to be fully borne to fruition, they are now going to be in the centre of thousands of new households and businesses housing and serving thousands of further residents, each with a house or an office to furnish, and a yard or two to landscape.

Renewal is always a cause for celebration, whether you are getting back outside, doing some spring cleaning, using the newness of the season to do a full-scale re-evaluation of your New Year's Resolutions, or tackling a new, previously unforeseen project bolstered by the vim and vigor that comes with spring.

But, given the opinions expressed by our readers this week, maybe renewal is not all it is cracked up to be.