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Vol. 5 No. 32 Week of May 31, 2005 905-727-3300



Our 10-year-old festival includes a street dance

Hard to believe it has been 10 years. When the first "World's Longest Street Sale On The World's Longest Street" was created in 1996, its sole purpose was to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Yonge Street. When the idea was introduced to an Aurora Chamber of Commerce sub-committee meeting, presenters at the time believed the sale would be a one-shot event. It was meant for people to clean out their garages and basements and bring saleable stuff to the world's longest street and sell it. Yonge Street, much to the chagrin of the Region of York, was closed from Aurora Heights Drive in the north to Murray Drive in the south...about a mile. Booths, at a dollar a foot, were leased along both sides of the street and the party started. It was an unbelievable success and now, 10 years later, the street festival promises to be bigger and better than ever.

Henderson, and the party will begin. Live music will be provided by "The MAZE" and popular Aurora resident Brian Larter will be the Master of Ceremonies. Tickets are currently on sale...see the Coming Events, Page 2, for locations. Following that event, committee members will take a deep breath, then begin shutting down Yonge Street Sunday morning, June 5, for the 10th annual festival. With any luck and a lot of good weather, the event will draw more than last year's record 40,000 participants. While you're there, you'll likely meet vendors from places like Limehouse, Woodview, LaSalle and Cobden. All have booked booths in the already-sold out event. Some 500 vendors have snapped up more than 600 spaces. But the annual event is now much more than just vendors. It has morphed into a festival.

There's a skateboard park, rock climbing walls, face painting, tethered hot air balloon rides (if the wind stays away), music, singers, buskers, a classic car show, magicians and clowns. And Patty McLaughlin, the sweetest voice in Aurora, will sing. What a way to spend a weekend. Right here in Aurora.



Balloon returning

Time to go flying again...weather permitting. Pilot Insurance Company is again offering Aurora "An Adventure Above All Others", by sending its hot air balloon to the Street Festival this weekend. Hosted by Hartwell Thayer Insurance, the balloon will offer tethered rides to the public during the weekend, as well as a sunrise or sunset flight for two. This is the ninth year that Pilot Insurance has sponsored its Hot Air Balloon Program, sending its eight storey tall balloon throughout Ontario.

To give adults and children a sample of ballooning, tethered rides will be available at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School Saturday evening and Sunday morning, weather permitting. In addition, a draw winner will experience a sunset balloon flight for two during the Festival (weather permitting). The draw takes place Thursday and tickets are available at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Hartwell Thayer Insurance (2 Orchard Heights Blvd.) and the Yellow Brick House offices (37 Wellington St. E.).

Grade 4 student Jake MacKenzie gets his face painted, and 16-month-old Dennis Pugh isn't sure what's going on but both had a good time Saturday at a spring fair held at George Street Public School. *Auroran photo by Naomi Tobin*

To celebrate the anniversary, committee members, under the direction of chairman Kim Kerr, have organized a street dance the night before the big festival. Where? On Yonge Street, where else? So, this Saturday night, June 4, from 7 p.m. until midnight, a section of Yonge Street will be closed from Murray Drive south to



It was a garage sale with a hunka-hunka difference...Elvis showed up. Members of the Preceptor Beta Kappa chapter of the Beta Sigma Phi sorority held the sale at George St. and Hawthorne Lane in Aurora Saturday and donated \$1,000 to the restoration of the Whipper Watson therapeutic pool at Southlake Regional Health Centre. Elvis was played by Art Irvine. *Auroran photo by Naomi Tobin*

Mysterious motorist saves her

Aurora's Anita Johnson is looking for a good Samaritan. She wants to say thanks. The 80-year-old Orchard Heights Blvd. resident was on St. John's Sideroad in Aurora's north end Sunday when she stopped her car to admire a lilac bush. Descending into the ditch, she slipped, fell and couldn't move for about half an hour. An unidentified female motorist stopped, covered her with a blanket, called 911, then left before Anita could find out who she was. "I just want to thank her," she said. Anita is resting comfortably at Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket, recovering from a broken shoulder.

Wal-Mart definitely

It's confirmed. Aurora is going to get a Wal-Mart big box store at Highway 404 and Wellington Street East. Council asked if the photos shown during the presentation would represent what Aurorans would expect to see at Wellington and 404, and it was assured that was the case. For a preview of how it should look, please see page 18.

During a lengthy three-hour presentation and debate of the concept plans for the Aurora Gateway Business Park, Councillor Ron Wallace asked if one of the proposed big box stores was to accommodate a Wal-Mart and requested a "Yes" or "No" answer. Don Larke, representing Whitwell Developments and First Pro Shopping Centres, replied "Yes".

Please see page 18




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COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

CONTINUING

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.

Merlin's Hollow English garden open houses have been set for the summer. Garden will open Saturdays, June 11 and July 2 and Sunday, July 10, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Garden is located at 181 Centre Crescent.

York Region Food Network invites you to join the Aurora Community Garden. Vegetable plots (10' x 20') are available at no charge. Call Catherine Cook, Community Garden Coordinator, at (905) 967-0428 or e-mail at ccgyfrn@bellnet.ca.

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.

Every Friday night from 8.15 to 10.15 p.m. at the Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School gym there will be a basketball and volleyball drop-in for ages 14 to 18. Call 905-726-4760 for further 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 905-830-0205.

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. For further information contact Bob Butler at h.butler@sympatico.ca or 905-713-3314.

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.

Helping Hand: Gently used clothing for women and children, at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, every Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.30 - 11.30 a.m. Wednesdays 5.30 - 7 p.m. For more information, call 905-727-6101.

Towns of York Toastmasters meetings are free and open to the general public. Meetings are held every second and fourth Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway N., Aurora. For more information see the club's web site at www.townsofyork.org or phone Roy Bannon at 905-853-0859.

Progressive Euchre every Thursday night. Aurora Legion. 7.30 p.m. Call 905-727-9932.

Operation Catch-Up presents free "Tutoring and Homework Help" for ages 10 to 18 years every Tuesday and Thursday from 6.30 to 8.30 p.m. during the regular school year at the old Victoria Street library building. Call 905-773-7024 for details.

Canadian Federation of University Women Aurora/Newmarket welcomes new members throughout the year for monthly meetings and special interest groups. Contact Barb at 905-713-3587. Trinity Anglican Church, Aurora.

JUNE 3

Howard Johnson Aurora dinner theatre production of the romantic comedy "Apologies Accepted" in the newly renovated Queen Elizabeth Ballroom. Doors open at 6, buffet dinner at 6.30 with showtime at 8.15 p.m. Call 905-727-1312 to reserve.

JUNE 4

Street dance on Yonge Street between Murray and Henderson, 7 p.m. to midnight. Nearly sold out. Advance tickets at \$10 on sale at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce office; R & R Revisited, 75 Mary Street; Flipside, Yonge and Dunning; Oakridge Outfitters in the Aurora Shopping Centre; and Aurora Canadian Tire.

JUNE 5

Tenth annual World's Longest Street Festival on the World's Longest Street. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Yonge Street will be closed to vehicular traffic from Wellington to Murray. Booth space sold out.

Aurora Public Library annual book sale in conjunction with the World's Longest Street Festival. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

10th Annual Pain & Symptom Management Conference. PalCare Network invites doctors, nurses and allied healthcare professionals to Tuscan Banquet Centre, Edward Street. To register call 905-895-3628 ext. 294.

Third annual Charity Golf Classic tournament, sponsored by Aurora's Women's Centre of York Region takes place at the Briars in Jackson's Point. To register call Golf Tournament Co-ordinator Shelley Lundquist at 905-727-5837, extension 107.

Hospice Palliative Care Symposium. PalCare Network invites personal support workers, volunteers and palliative caregivers to Tuscan Banquet Centre, Edward Street. To register call 905-895-3628 ext. 294.

JUNE 9

Annual General Meeting at 10 a.m. at the Aurora Seniors' Centre main hall. There will be elections for four positions on the Board of Directors. Elections by secret ballot to Friday, June 3. Phone the centre at 905-727-9693 for details.

JUNE 10/11/12

The 83rd Annual Aurora Fair and Horse Show will be held at Machell Park with several equestrian events over the three days including the Grand Prix on the Friday evening. For more information call 905-713-6773.

JUNE 11

Annual Farmers' Market opens in Temperance Street parking lot near Yonge and Wellington. Every Saturday morning until Thanksgiving.

Calling all students for Parks Spring Clean-Up from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Aurora Community Centre and Fleury and Machell Parks. An easy way to obtain community service volunteer hours. For more information call 905-726-4760.

Local musician Kathy Reid-Naiman launches her CD "Reaching for the Stars" and performs some of the songs with Ken Whiteley at the Aurora Public Library from 10.30 to 11.30 a.m. Free with ticket available in advance.

Aurora Historical Society bus tour to Bowmanville. All inclusive price is \$47. Call 905-727-8991 to reserve.

Heart Health with pharmacist Calvin Brown. Refreshments to follow. 2 to 3 p.m. in the Magna Room. Pre-register at the adult information desk or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

JUNE 18

Aurora Day at Ontario Place. For further information, call Kristen Yemm at 905-727-3123, extension 4228.

JUNE 21

Visiting Library Services information tea, 1.30 p.m. in the Aurora Public Library's Lebovic Room. Must be 18 or older and able to volunteer two to three hours every three weeks to bring library services to shut-ins.

JUNE 22

The Aurora Historical Society teams up with David and Diedre Tomlinson for a visit to Merlin's Hollow, the Tomlinson's spectacular garden on Centre Crescent between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. with the \$5 fee going directly to Hillary House renovations. The House will be open for afternoon tea from 2 to 4 p.m.

with an additional charge for tea. ****

Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society monthly meeting and flower show. 8 p.m. Aurora Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North. Guests welcome. \$2. Guest speaker is Kristin Ego-McPhail.

JUNE 30

July First activities begin with a party in Town Park this evening.

JULY 1

Various activities, including parade, beer garden, horseshoe tournament and fireworks display occur all day. Most events at the Leisure Complex.

JULY 4

Baseball summer camp starts at the Aurora Leisure Complex and offers a full-day camp experience for kids aged 5 to 14 until August 26. Campers will be divided into five age groups and will receive baseball skills training as well as the chance to play in a game each day.

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Buck sees no point in saving old school

It's a small, non-descript house on Wellington Street East, just west of Baldwin's Steakhouse, but back in the 1800s it was the Hartman School located at the corner of Bayview Avenue and Wellington Street East.

It is believed the one-room schoolhouse was built around 1837 and could be the third or fourth oldest school building still standing in the province and is the oldest known school still standing in the GTA.

It is also believed the historic structure was moved to its present location around 1885 and converted into a house.

At a recent meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee the owners of the structure wanted to demolish the building due to the water damage caused by a broken water pipe.

It was pointed out that the original plan was to rent the house but as a result of the extensive damage it was planned to construct a new building on the site that could be used for an art gallery and associated uses.

Several committee members expressed concern about the demolition proposal due to the history of the building.

It was suggested it would be more beneficial to retain the structure as part of a redevelopment plan for the site.

The committee recommended the owners meet

with the Community Planner to determine solutions for the restoration of the property which they agreed to do.

An inspection of the building by historian John McIntyre and Community Planner Michael Seaman found some water damage but agreed the historic frame was substantially intact and the building did not need to be demolished.

The committee recommended the request for demolition of the old schoolhouse not be supported and the owner was asked to work with the committee to develop options for the structure.

It was also recommended the old school be considered for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

However, when the committee report came to council last week, Councillor Evelyn Buck said the building had not been designated and she didn't see any point in restoring it.

She added that to design-

nate the building required the consent of the owner and if it was not forthcoming the municipality would have to purchase the property if they wanted to preserve it.

Councillor Nigel Kean disagreed noting that the damage was not reported as being too serious and that it should be designated.

Council agreed to defer the issue until the next meeting when more information was available regarding the amendments to the Heritage Act.

Councillor Buck also questioned a committee recommendation that staff continue to proceed with the acquisition of the property where the Radial Railway Bridge Abutment/Pillar on Industrial Parkway South is situated.

Councillor Ron Wallace said it was to protect the pillar which was the last remaining link with the former radial railway.

Council adopted the committee report as presented.



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Poor Richard

Governor blesses the street dance

*Governor Simcoe pays a call,
To relive days long past;
When Yonge Street was his
And memories that will last!*

- Poor Richard's Scrapbook

During my days as executive assistant to John White, when he was Treasurer of Ontario, our offices were in the Frost Building, which was not too convenient when the Legislature was in session.

Arrangements were made to have an office on the fourth floor of the Legislative Building, which had a speaker hooked up to the debates going on in the Legislature.

We were able to work and at the same time the Minister could go to the Legislature, if necessary.

The office was located next to the Legislative Library and one day when the House was quiet, I explored the empty fourth floor opening this door and that, when much to my surprise when I opened a door, there was a man, resplendent in a red uniform, brandishing a sword.

It was John Graves Simcoe, the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada and founder of Toronto.

He also blazed Yonge Street from Lake Ontario to Holland Landing as a military route.

When he found out that I lived in Aurora he bombarded me with questions about his Yonge Street and if there was still a toll gate south of the village by the cemetery.

During the period I was mayor I heard from him on several occasions, especially regarding the reconstruction and widening, the fires, and the need for revitalization to keep his street alive.

I haven't heard from the old boy in ages and thought he had forgotten all about me, Aurora and his Yonge Street.

Then out of the blue, I heard from him again.

He had read about the coming activities on Yonge Street in The Auroran.

He called me and in his best military voice asked; "Boy! (He always called me Boy) what's going on with my Yonge Street? What's all this about a street dance and street festival on my street? They didn't obtain my permission and I want to know what's going on?"

I tried to explain that the World's Longest Street Festival on the World's Longest Street was started 10 years ago to celebrate Yonge Street's 200th anniversary as a one-time celebration, but it had been so successful that it has carried on ever since and that he should be very proud.

He swelled up in pride and asked for more details about the event and who hosted it.

I explained it was organized and carried out by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce with support from the town and that more than 500 vendors set up booths for the one-day event and there was food, entertainment and lots of other activities.

When I told him that traffic was banned from Wellington Street south to Murray Drive and about 40,000 people showed up to walk up and down his street, his chest swelled with pride.

"Well done, Boy, give my compliments to the Chamber, the town and all those involved," he ordered.

Then his face clouded over a little and he seemed quite perturbed.

When I asked what was bothering him, he replied it was the street dance, which seemed to him to be sacrilegious for Yonge Street.

He recalled all the brave men from his Rangers which had built the road back in the 1700s and wondered what they would think about people dancing on their roadway.

He seemed to accept my explanation that the street dance was to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the street sale and festival and would be held on the one block section between Murray Drive and Henderson Drive so that it would inconvenience the least number of people.

When he heard that the street dance would feature live music, a beer garden, food booths and a barrel of fun, he said it reminded him of the old days.

Then when he heard the Chamber was looking for a couple to announce their engagement at the dance, he withdrew all his concerns and wished everyone a good time.

So if you see an old gent in a red uniform dancing the light fantastic at the dance, say hello to Governor Simcoe, but watch out for his sword.



The first in a series of school pictures donated by Verne Eveleigh of Cookstown is shown above. This is a Grade 2 and 3 class from the Aurora Public School (Church Street) posing for this shot in 1951. Miss McKnight was the teacher. Front row, left to right, Jim Preston, Henry Feirheller, Roger Dyer, Verne Eveleigh, Gary Holder, Guy Langman, Scott Moddle, Terry Anderson; second row, left to right, Gordon Hayes, David Pringle, Rosemary Brooks, Beverley Strachan, ?, Linda Boland, Sandra Lloyd, Susan Blue, Raymond Smith; third row, left to right, Lynn Gard, Stanley Kerr, Jack Kennedy, John R. Wilson, Donald Faiers, Donald Case, Keith Wright, Ivan Anderson, Wayne Billing; back row, left to right, Miss McKnight, ?, Laura O'Brien, Carol Closs, Grovine Gage, Alex Fortier, Keith Bateman, ?, Lois Ann Lawaski, Carol Geniole.

Letters to the Editor

Perception is everything

To the editor,

During the past two municipal campaigns, I actively encouraged everyone I know to become informed and to vote with choice and purpose for the best candidates to represent us for town council.

Announced as our Deputy Mayor in the headlines after the election, the public believes that Phyllis Morris is indeed our Aurora Deputy Mayor by virtue of attaining the highest number of votes for councillor.

Yet, five councillors suddenly in mid-term, vote to limit the use of the deputy mayor title such that it cannot be used all the time.

Why? Why now? Many have had the honour of the deputy mayor title before.

Growing Place open

To the editor,

On behalf of the Regency Acres Public School Environmental Committee, we are proud to announce that "The Growing Place" has been completed and is open for all to enjoy.

This garden was named by the Grade 6 class and is to provide the students and teachers with a canopy to study nature in a local surrounding today, nurture the seeds in our young tomorrow, and provide a quiet, natural environment for those of yesteryear.

We encourage the residents within the community and past students to come and enjoy this natural setting.

When I first became involved in the Hightor issue in 1998, I was introduced to John West as the Deputy Mayor and everyone referred to him by this title. No one objected then.

Several of our town-owned buildings have beautiful bronze plaques with the title of Deputy Mayor emblazoned on them.

Even the Aurora Town Hall states "This building is dedicated to the people of Aurora and the principles of good government Mayor John G. West and Deputy Mayor George D. Timpson".

The Aurora Community Centre Addition (1996) has the name of Mayor Tim Jones and Deputy Mayor Peter Healy. They list councillors separately. Rightly so. Consistency is a key issue

for voters.

We need government to be consistent with their practices and procedures, not change them when it suits their own political purpose.

Does it cost our bottom line to allow Ms Morris to use the title of Deputy Mayor when she is doing the business of our Town for the residents of our community? No.

When our Deputy Mayor, Phyllis Morris is introduced at meetings outside Aurora, which she often is, the benefit is multi-fold.

Perception is everything and regardless of our official population, the title of Deputy Mayor infers a much larger community.

Is this perception a benefit to Aurora?

Is the branding of economic benefit to Aurora?

Many marketing gurus attest to the fact that branding is definitely an asset.

So I would say yes.

If council wants to truly enhance the municipal electoral process perhaps the public would be better served by council reviewing the number of terms of office with a view to limiting how long someone can serve on council.

This would encourage more residents to participate in a government role.

A fresh blood transfusion is definitely needed for this Aurora Council.

Why waste staff's time and energy clarifying procedural bylaws that do not impact the day-to-day operations of our town?

Surely there are other

pressing matters to address that impact our operating efficiency.

Taking away a Deputy Mayor title that has been consistently used by other councillors in the past who also received the most votes is a petty and costly time waster.

**Susan Walmer
Aurora**

AURORAN

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Mayor's Report By Tim Jones

Chamber of Commerce inauguration

The following is taken from the text of a speech I delivered at the recent Aurora Chamber of Commerce Inauguration Luncheon.

"I congratulate incoming President Steve Forsey and his board members and acknowledge the great work of the Immediate Past President Patty Davidson who, along with the Chamber staff led by recent Paul Harris Fellow recipient Rosalyn Gonsalves, make the Aurora Chamber the envy of Chamber of Commerces in Ontario, indeed I say, Canada.

"I'm feeling good about Aurora. About a year ago I wrote a column in The Auroran which focused on my perception of the dysfunction of our council. But that was a year ago.

"Today, I am proud of the attention council has paid to our staff.

"Council made the tough budget decision to raise pay levels for both union and non-union staff so that we were competitive in the municipal workplace.

"Councils come and go every three years, but it is our staff who implement the directions of council and it is our staff who have reacted in being responsible in their duties, demonstrating integrity in all that they do.

"I do not recall another year like this one where I have received more positive feedback about members of our staff in Aurora in all departments. And, I am thankful for the wonderful leadership demonstrated by our Interim CAO Scott Somerville in helping council through some challenging times and issues. I am also excited about retaining John Rogers as our new CAO to lead the administration in the future.

"On the business front, Aurora has a theatre coming to Town - Cineplex Odeon which hopes to open for the Christmas season. And you can see the new State Farm National Headquarters rising.

"And, although the taxes in the Region and the Town were finalized to meet the numerous challenges of the day, the bottom line increase in commercial taxes for 2005 was a 2.32 per cent increase.

"Council made a tough but good business decision to sell its hydro company which will result in the creation of a solid financial base for the Town of more than \$ 34 million.

"In addition, we have, through this sale, greatly improved the reliability of power to our residents and businesses from increased transmission utilities from the south as well as negotiating a rate subsidy of \$1 million a year for the next 10 years against the hydro usage of our users.

"In 27 years of serving on council, I can truly tell you this was one of the finest examples of how all members parked any personal idiosyncrasies at the door and dealt with the issue at hand openly, fairly and objectively towards reaching the decision we did.

Council moved forward from the decisions of the previous council, consulted with, and listened to the community on the facility requirements, finalized the designs, budgeted for and commenced construction of a new seniors' centre as well as a community centre comprised of a 25 metre eight-lane pool, a play pod and learning pod as well as two ice surfaces.

"We will also realize a new fire hall in Aurora over the next 12 months.

"On the planning and growth front, unlike our neighbours to the south, Aurora has managed its growth according to our allotted numbers and has not had to pull in the reins because of over approving building permits considering the current restrictions on water and sewer.

"We have maintained an average of 400 new units per year. Development charges and new assessment revenues obtained through this growth help to offset the costs of new facilities like the leisure complex, seniors' centre and second fire hall.

"This is a solid demonstration of good planning and controlled growth.

"And finally, it is not just the council or service providers like the Chamber of Commerce that make me feel good about our Town. It is the people who make up our town who partner with us.

"As examples, over the past 12 weeks groups have, or will work with the town to co-ordinate the following events for all of us to enjoy: Home Show, Hartwell Run, Aurora Art Show, Anti litter - Keep Aurora Beautiful Day, Freedom of Town to SACCC, Aurora Day at Ontario Place, Street

Festival & Dance, Horse Show, July First and Town Park beer garden, Civic awards.

"Am I upbeat about our Town - you bet I am - I hope you are, too.

"As our new slogan says: You're in Good Company!"

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



Cathy's Corner



In good company

Nearly two decades have passed since my husband convinced me Aurora would be the perfect place to call home.

In those early years, we learned the truth about the unofficial tagline: "Aurora has character", and we discovered that Aurora had characters as well.

These would be hard-working individuals with one-track minds whose collective efforts gave Aurora its alluring character.

They were everywhere - sports associations, business organizations, fundraisers, community events, centre stage and behind the scenes - everywhere, but always on the same track: making Aurora a better place to live, work and play.

It seems we were in good company long before it became a tagline.

In 2001, York Region launched the York Region Character Community Council.

I was left scratching my head.

First of all, people who have character hardly need a government council to define it for them. Second, if people lack character, there is no government body I know of that can give it to them. And finally, character, by its very nature, is not the kind of thing people sit on the fence about, "hmm...maybe I'll give this character thing a try..."

Government can no more give it than take it away, so I wonder who it is our tax dollars are serving.

Over the 18 years that I have lived here, governments have favoured a cookie-cutter approach to development, going to great lengths to rid our community of the inconvenient complication of character as if it is the greatest bane of the modern world.

The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) tops the list of character assassins.

A few years ago, while the YRCCC was congratulating itself on breaking character down to its component parts, we watched our council go to war, dog eat dog style, over the issue of the preservation of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Developers threatened lawsuits, not only against the town, but against individual councillors who voted to protect what's left of nature's masterpiece.

To make matters worse, the ayes suffered accusations of acting in "bad faith" from within their own camp, strengthening the outside threat.

In the aftermath, it became apparent that the YRCCC had served up a buffet of character carrion upon which the defeated continued to feast after their vote had died.

The YRCCC neglected to mention that character is often better defined by what isn't said than what is.

It is certainly not the art of twisting words so they can be woven into a Teflon suit.

Character isn't about words at all. It's about actions.

During the holocaust, the slave trade, the massacre in Rwanda, and more recently the genocide in Darfur, there have been compassionate people who risked their own lives and the lives of their families to save others.

Do you suppose they logged on to their local character dispensing website to check the definition of honesty and get a shot of courage? I doubt it.

I'd bet my integrity they had to conceal a thing or two to accomplish this most noble of purposes, and I have immensely more respect for the lying, cheating and stealing that it might have taken to honour the higher values that they chose to serve at all cost than I do for the ethically, morally and spiritually bankrupt governments of the day that would impose on them the duty to kill innocents, and threaten savage execution for disobedience.

Enter the vast grayness of character, where attributes like honesty are not so black and white, not as virtuous as they appear, and not so easy to sum up in a catchy little slogan.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

While I applaud the intent of the YRCCC, the effective reduction of character to 11 atrophied attributes doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of character, much less penetrate its core.

Character is a single set of values, principles and beliefs consistently applied in every area of life. Ironically, the truest show of character is what happens when nobody is looking.

We don't have to spend millions of dollars to become a character community.

We just need to ask two simple questions: "What would the world be like if everybody did this (the action contemplated)?" and "Would I want to live in such a world?"

If everyone in Aurora did this, we'd be in good company.

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

Bouquets & Brickbats

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

BOUQUETS to Rotarian Wendy Browne on being elected the first female president in the half century plus history of the Aurora Rotary Club.

BRICKBATS to Aurora councillors for discussing the role of the deputy mayor in open council and permitting the discussion to degenerate into personalities. Council goes behind closed doors for almost any excuse and this discussion should have been in camera.

BOUQUETS to Councillor Nigel Kean representing Mayor Tim Jones in the Region's Mayor's Five-Ton Truck Challenge during Public Works Week, which he won.

BRICKBATS to the Tory politicians who used completely unacceptable language when referring to Belinda Stronach, following her defection to the Liberal Party. They don't deserve to sit in Parliament, rather in the gutter where they belong!

BOUQUETS to Greg Foster and all the gang from the M & M Meat store on Yonge Street in Aurora and all the citizens who joined in the charity barbecue which raised \$2,339 for the Cohns and Colitis Foundation of Canada, bringing the store's total for the year to \$4,539.

BRICKBATS to holiday motorists who blamed the high price of gasoline on the poor gas station operators. Believe it or not, when regular gas was selling for 80.9 cents per litre, the wholesale price including all taxes was 79.07 cents, a very thin margin to meet expenses. If a credit card was used, his fee was about 1.5 cents per litre for a loss on every purchase.

BOUQUETS to the 60-member Children's Choir of York Region, musical director Terri Fowler and accompanist Ruth Ann Carswell on being invited to participate in the Canada Day Celebrations in Ottawa.

BRICKBATS to the Ministry of Natural Resources who refused a citizen's request for help when a little gosling fell through a street gutter on Orchard Heights Boulevard near St. Andrew's Centre while the frantic mother attracted a crowd.

BOUQUETS to the local fire and works department for their efforts to rescue the bird, but they failed to save the little gosling. If a gosling could fall through, what about a child's foot?

BOUQUETS to Aurora's Alanna Chisholm who just completed more than 600 performances in the hit musical "Mamma Mia" at the Royal Alexander since joining the cast in September, although the musical opened in May, 2000. She was a member of the children's chorus in "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat" starring Donny Osmond, as a 12-year-old.

BRICKBATS to the more than 1,300 drivers who were stopped by the OPP, during their four-day holiday blitz, with more than half charged with speeding. With all the advance warning, how stupid can you be?

BOUQUETS to Aurora's 15-year-old Andrew and brother 12-year-old Jordon Castillo, both holders of a second degree black belt, on being selected as members of Team Canada to participate in the Global Taekwondo Federation European Championships.

BRICKBATS to the wasteful government spenders in Ottawa for paying a jilted diplomat \$120,000 a year for nearly two years for a job he was not allowed to fill. Appointed by then Prime Minister Jean Chretien in October, 2003, to head a mission post in India, Bhopinder Liddar failed a security check, but he's still getting paid.

Letters to the Editor

Belinda: immoral, unethical, hypocritical

To the editor,

I am not surprised by the views of Bill Chadwick given that he is a representative of the Liberal Party.

He, of course, sees nothing wrong with Belinda's betrayal.

As for his comment about Harper denigrating her with bullying demands for blind obedience I almost fell off my chair laughing with the irony and hypocrisy of it.

The Liberals wrote the book on demanding their members toe the party line and discouraging any independent thought.

I am, however, surprised and extremely disappointed by the comments made by our mayor.

For him to not only condone Stronach's behaviour but to actually say he is proud of her given her betrayal and hypocrisy is beyond my comprehension.

In his column of May 24,

Mayor Jones outlines the reasons he supports Belinda's defection:

1. She prevented an election...she has not prevented one she has simply delayed it for several months. I'm sure Martin will honour his promise to call an election within 30 days of the Gomery Inquiry report (has he ever lied to us before???)

2. By avoiding an election we prevent the Bloc from gaining ground in Quebec...over the last 15 years the Liberal Party has damaged the unity of Canada; they have alienated both Westerners and Quebecers.

3. She supported the Liberal budget which allows gas tax to flow to municipalities...this idea was first suggested by the Conservatives.

4. She can use her personal principles (!?!) to objectively address the

scandals plaguing the Liberal Party as a result of the Gomery Inquiry...how can she possibly be objective now that she is firmly entrenched in the inner circle of these very same Liberals.

Mayor Jones states that Stronach listens to the people and assumedly after listening to her constituents she decided to "cross the floor."

She didn't consult me, from Mr. Jones' admission of surprise it appears she didn't consult him, she didn't consult her grass roots supporters and campaigners, she didn't even consult her own constituency office staff.

It appears one of the few people she did consult was Paul Martin and with the promise of a prime cabinet position she found the "courage" to betray all those who voted for her in good faith as a Conservative and

cross to the Liberals.

The only time we, as long suffering taxpaying citizens have a say as to how this country is managed is via the ballot box at election time.

Fewer than 12 months ago we had the opportunity to exercise this right. The people in Aurora and Newmarket voted to elect a Conservative candidate to represent them as a member of parliament in Ottawa.

As it turns out our votes were meaningless.

Mr. Mayor, as an elected official yourself I don't know how you can condone the utter contempt Stronach has shown for the democratic rights of the voters of this constituency.

What Belinda Stronach has done is a betrayal of her supporters, it is immoral, unethical and hypocritical.

It is also very likely illegal as it contravenes Section 119 of the criminal code. Yet you state you are proud of her?

Perhaps we could add another award to our annual recognition of Aurora citizens.

The award would be for hypocrisy, deceit, and betrayal.

It would be called the B.S. Award and would of course be presented by the mayor.

Reader can't believe this council decision

To the editor,

I read with deep regret and disbelief that Aurora Council in a five-four decision voted to rescind the title of Deputy Mayor earned by Ms Morris as a result of her excellent standing in the November, 2003, election.

I first met Ms Morris when she came to my door in the 1997 election.

At that time I was a newcomer to Aurora and had many questions which she explained patiently and at length.

Over the years I have met her many times at formal social occasions, about town and most importantly watched her in council sessions and on cable.

There is no question in my mind and many others, I refer to the large plurality of votes in the last election, that Ms Morris is a highly intelligent, articulate member of council who researches the issues tirelessly and is not afraid to question.

She defends the public she was elected to represent fiercely, for example,

the dual parking access for residents in the Yonge-Wellington area.

Perhaps because of her fine record and high profile others may see her as a threat and see a clarification of language as a petty opportunity to diminish her.

I would urge council to reconsider.

If Ms Morris were to resign, council, and more importantly, the taxpayers of Aurora would be the losers.

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However, it would be amusing to have her as a private citizen question her former colleagues from across the floor.

After all, this is the week for it.

Judy Salmon
Aurora

Graham Wride
Aurora

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Letter to the Editor

Make Belinda a "private" citizen again, association prez advises

To the editor,

In the aftermath of Belinda's sudden departure to the Liberals, I have been inundated with numerous requests for media interviews, as well as received a multitude of telephone calls and e-mails from members of our association and party members across this country.

My initial reaction to her departure was both shock and dismay, followed closely thereafter by anger. Neither I, the riding association, the campaign manager for the upcoming campaign, nor Belinda's constituency staff, were made aware of her decision prior to her public statement.

I was notified by a call from the Conservative party political operations office in Ottawa a few minutes before she met the press.

The stunning hypocrisy of her actions is breathtaking to behold.

She did not consult with her political base - either the riding association or the voters in the riding. She also did not, according to her own statements during the press conference with the Prime Minister, spend much time reflecting on her decision.

She said her deliberations only began a few days ago - after a conversation with David Peterson - of all people!

On an issue as important as this to her country, her party and her career, I would have thought that more than three or four days would have been necessary for both introspection and reflection.

Having said this, I still consider Belinda a friend.

I met her for the first time early last year when she was pursuing both the leadership of our party and the nomination in our riding.

At the time I was the Chair of Nominations for the Newmarket - Aurora riding.

After she successfully won the nomination I was asked to join her campaign as volunteer Director of Communications.

She has always treated me well and I thought we had established a first-rate relationship between the riding association and herself.

And I do look forward to continuing and hopefully strengthening our friendship - with Belinda being returned to the status of 'private' citizen.

As a friend, I can neither understand her actions nor condone them.

I figuratively would have to chew off my right arm before I would abandon either a provincial or federal Conservative party that has been my home for more than 22 years.

And let there be no mistake, this is no noble cause.

This was not like the case of Douglas Harkness, the Conservative Defence Minister in the early 1960s, who resigned his post from the Diefenbaker government over the question of equipping missiles with nuclear warheads.

His was a decision based solely on principle.

As one who has donated a modest amount of money and a lot of my valuable time to Conservative causes over the years, it seems to me that opportunity has trumped selflessness in this case.

This is exactly the type of behaviour that breeds public cynicism of our politicians.

She has chosen to join a party that only a week prior, she had vowed to, and also voted to, defeat. Her state-

ments regarding concerns over Quebec separatism are both misguided and without merit.

I find it incredulous that the Liberals have the temerity to implicitly suggest that voting for any other party than them could lead to the break-up of our country.

This government has shown time and time again that they have little or no regard for the public treasury.

After a year of government business that moved at glacial speed - thus earning Mr. Martin the well-deserved sobriquet as "Mr. Dithers" - we now have a Prime Minister dispensing our hard earned tax dollars like after dinner mints.

What is particularly galling is that, in addition to being made Minister of Human Resources, Belinda is now responsible for democratic renewal.

If it were not for the seriousness of her actions, it would be laughable.

I feel for the hundreds of volunteers and thousands of Conservative voters who put their faith and trust in Belinda as our Conservative Member of Parliament.

However, our riding association is moving forward.

Twenty-five of 30 board members and five of six

executive officers have reaffirmed their commitment to our leader and also to the aims, objectives and principles of our party.

The nomination convention has been set for Tuesday, June 14 at 7:30 p.m. at DiNardo's - The Mansion, located in Aurora.

Please join us to nominate a new candidate and also to bear witness to the renewal and strengthening of the democratic process.

I look forward to working with our new candidate to prepare for the election to come and to prepare our party to take the seals of high office once again.

In the end, the good peo-

ple of Newmarket - Aurora will be the final arbiters regarding Belinda's actions.

I urge all voters in our riding - at the next opportunity - to make Belinda a 'private' citizen once again.

Stephen Somerville
President
Newmarket - Aurora
Electoral District
Association
Conservative Party of
Canada



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~ SHOW CONTINUES ~

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Bloc can't break up country: reader

To the editor,

I respect Ben Kestain's service in the war (letter to the editor, The Auroran, May 17) but I do not respect his comments on Mr. Harper and the Bloc.

Mr. Kestain and his Liberal friends are going to make another mistake.

When he was in Europe fighting, the Liberals, under Prime Minister King stopped conscription because Quebec did not want to fight

in the war.

A few units from Quebec did serve but most of Quebecers were called zombies, serving only in Canada.

Another Liberal by the name of Trudeau showed his bravery on a motorcycle in Canada while others proved their manhood in Europe and North Africa.

Quebec was always the backbone of the Liberal party. They voted like sheep. It was the Liberals who

caused the Bloc.

One of the original founders of the Bloc sits on the right hand of the current prime minister, Mr. Martin, as our transportation minister.

So you trust him? All the Liberals are happy. They spent 4.5 billion dollars of our tax money vs. \$300 million for an election.

Maybe you do not understand numbers.

In 1993, the Liberals, under Mr. Chretien, promised to cancel the GST and

the free trade pact with the United States.

These two items were put together by the Brian Mulroney Conservatives.

If the wonderful Liberals had kept their promise (highly unlikely) they would have never balanced a budget in the past 12 years. The Liberals did not change any of Mulroney's government bills, especially the one that gave Quebec in 1991, \$3,800 per head for immigrants while Ontario received \$800 per head.

The GST nets \$30-40 billion per year and the trade deal is Ontario's gravy train.

So, don't give me any attitude about a Conservative government breaking up the country.

The Bloc cannot break up the country.

It is the provincial government that runs referendums.

The Bloc represents Quebec because they do not like the Liberals.

The Liberal backbone is now in Ontario.

The Liberals have blown billions of dollars since Mr. Chretien started with no accountability and arrogance all because of money from the GST and free trade.

The fear factor is Quebec separation promoted by the Liberals.

Our immigration system is the laughing stock of the world but if we elect another Liberal government after the Gomery report, people will add the word "idiot" to our resume.

So there goes the wonderful country Mr. Kestain fought for in the second world war.

Ontario has 74 members in Ottawa but not one of these representatives want-

ed to help our provincial government receive a fair deal from Ottawa.

Quebec has about a third as many Liberals in Ottawa as Ontario, but they still have the key portfolios.

What does that tell you?

If you do not mind people stealing your eye teeth and spending your money with no accountability, then vote Liberal.

R.W. Hanes
Aurora

Getting lost in Aurora

To the editor,

The joy of getting lost in Aurora.

I set out on my bike from my home in the southwest part of town, with a bag of planter pots for Merlin's Hollow.

I thought I knew where it was, and I asked a fellow on Royal Road, who said he used to live near there, and gave me further directions.

He saw my dismay, and added, "well at least you're over half-way there".

Point is, finding my way there and back home, my smile and greetings were returned by no fewer than a dozen passers by.

Bill Hack
Aurora

Get a grip, Mr. Mayor

To the editor,

I am shocked that Mayor Tim Jones would use his "Mayor's Report" column in The Auroran to support our little rich girl, B.S.

Your space should be for Town and Regional matters,

not federal politics.

These matters of B.S. should be in the letters to the editor section as you are entitled to your own opinion, but not under the office of the Mayor of Aurora.

Or are you setting your-

self up for a job at Magna when you retire?

I am ashamed of your actions.

Get a grip on yourself and see the daylight.

W. Devins
Aurora

Mayor Jones' position disappoints this reader

To the editor,

I was disappointed to see Mayor Tim Jones use his column to take sides in the shenanigans that have been taking place in Federal politics.

I am particularly disappointed that he backs Belinda Stronach's blatant and crass political opportunism and then attempts to justify it with

the usual separatist scare mongering that comes straight out of the Federal Liberal Party playbook.

He then offers further justification by supporting the new budget and thus illustrating that when Liberals throw enough of our tax dollars from coast to coast, it will stick somewhere and principles go out the window in favour of cold hard cash.

Mayor Jones appears to be comfortable with the unprincipled world of the Liberal Party and Belinda Stronach where morals and ethics are sold out for cash and power.

I hope he doesn't govern Aurora with the same lack of integrity.

Gordon Clarke
Aurora

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PROJECT: Leslie Street Widening (Town of Aurora)

LOCATION: Town of Aurora Municipal offices - Holland Room

WHEN: Tuesday June 21st, 2005 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

LESLIE STREET IS BEING WIDENED to a 5 lane urban cross section from Wellington Street to approximately 800 m north of Wellington. Work will include widening of the existing surface, additional southbound left turn lane at Wellington Street, installation of curb and gutters and a storm sewer system. The work is being completed in support of the development of the employment lands in the north east quadrant of Leslie and Wellington Streets.

Drawings will be on display and the consulting engineers will be available to answer any questions which may arise.

**JUNE
10, 11 & 12**

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Saturday Evening, June 11
**FAMILY
FUN NIGHT
AT MACHELL PARK**

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volunteer organization dedicated to putting on the
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Schedule of Events

FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 2005

5:00p.m. **GRAND PRIX.**
Eukanuba Superdog try outs.
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Friday night **ONLY** 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
\$20 advance and \$25 at the door. Price includes admission and rides.
Advance tickets (starting on May 23) can be purchased at Aurora Leisure
Complex, IGA, and R & R Revisited Book Store on Mary Street.

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2005

The Heavy Horse Show runs throughout the day starting at 10:30 a.m.

10:00 a.m. Opening ceremonies parade starting at the south end of the park with piper, juggler, one-man band and the Superdogs.
10:30 a.m. Superdogs
Birds of Prey presentation
10:45 a.m. Sheep shearing demonstration (agriculture tent)
11:00 a.m. The Ben Show (stage area)
11:15 a.m. Bandaloni
11:30 a.m. U-Who The Clown (stage area)
Children's Tractor Pull (ball diamond)
Sheep Herding demonstration
12:00 p.m. Bingo
Children's games with prizes (ball diamond)
12:15 p.m. Birds of Prey presentation
12:30 p.m. Superdogs
Bandaloni
12:45 p.m. Blacksmithing demonstration (agriculture tent)
1:00 p.m. Aurora Idol semi-finals (stage area)
1:15 p.m. Toronto Police Dogs
2:00 p.m. The Ben Show (stage area)
Sheep Herding demonstration
2:15 p.m. Children's games with prizes (ball diamond)
2:30 p.m. Superdogs
Birds of Prey demonstration
3:00 p.m. Mutt Show registration (stage area)
3:15 p.m. Children's Tractor Pull (ball diamond)
Milking demonstration (agriculture tent)
3:30 p.m. Mutt Show (stage area)
3:45 p.m. Bandaloni
4:00 p.m. Sheep shearing demonstration (agriculture tent)
4:15 p.m. The Ben Show (stage area)
4:30 p.m. Superdogs
4:45 p.m. U-Who The Clown (stage area)
5:00 p.m. Family Fun Night
6:00 p.m. Aurora Idol Finals
7:00 p.m. The Fab Four, Aurora Ambassador Finals, and much more.

SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 2005

The Heavy Horse Show runs throughout the day starting at 9:00 a.m.

10:30 a.m. Superdogs
Birds of Prey presentation
11:00 a.m. The Ben Show (stage area)
11:15 a.m. Children's Tractor Pull (ball diamond)
Sheep Shearing demonstration (agriculture tent)
11:30 a.m. Sheep Herding demonstration
11:45 a.m. Bandaloni
12:00 p.m. U-Who The Clown (stage area)
12:15 p.m. Birds of Prey presentation
12:30 p.m. Superdogs
Children's games with prizes (ball diamond)
12:45 p.m. Blacksmithing demonstration (agriculture tent)
1:00 p.m. The Ben Show (stage area)
1:30 p.m. Toronto Police Dogs
1:45 p.m. Bandaloni
2:00 p.m. AM Dance Force (stage area)
Children's Tractor Pull (ball diamond)
Sheep Herding demonstration
2:15 p.m. Milking demonstration (agriculture tent)
Poetry reading (stage area)
2:30 p.m. Superdogs
Scottish Country Dance Group (stage area)
3:00 p.m. Birds of Prey presentation
Children's games with prizes (ball diamond)
3:15 p.m. U-Who the Clown (stage area)
3:30 p.m. Children's Tractor Pull (ball diamond)
Poetry reading (stage area)
3:45 p.m. Bandaloni
4:00 p.m. The Ben Show (stage area)
4:30 p.m. Superdogs

ONGOING SATURDAY & SUNDAY

- * Midway rides and games
 - * Pigmobile
 - * Festival of Arts tent
 - * Junior Arts, Crafts, and Photography tent
 - * Bandaloni, the one-man band
 - * Agricultural farm animal exhibit
 - * Heavy horse show
 - * Vendors tent
 - * Car show (Sunday only)
 - * And more
- Schedule subject to change

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Aurora Master Ducks head coach Nancy Black, left, holds trophy high after her club amassed more points than 134 other swim teams to win the Investors Group 2005 Canadian Masters Swimming Championship at the Etobicoke Olympium last week. Etobicoke Swim Team member Yvonne Catrall, of Aurora, right, set another world record at the meet, and won five additional medals.

Auroran photo at right by Ron Wallace

Yvonne adds a sixth world title

Aurora's Yvonne Catrall picked up six medals at last week's swim meet in Etobicoke, one of them marking yet another world record.

Catrall, entered in the Canadian Masters Short Course National Swimming Championships held at the Etobicoke Olympium, set a new world record in the 100-metre breaststroke event, in one minute, 25:63 seconds, then added a pair of Canadian records in the 50-metre breaststroke (38:73 seconds) and 50-metre butterfly (37:10 seconds).

A member of the Etobicoke Swim Team since 1978, Yvonne also picked up gold medals in the 200-

metre breaststroke (3:16:59) and in the medley relay swimming the breaststroke and a silver medal in the 100-metre individual medley (1:23:61).

Her world record adds to her collection of five world records in masters' swimming that she already holds.

Currently, she swims in the 55-59 year age category.

"My next goal is to make an attempt at the world record for the 50-metre breaststroke event," she said. "I missed that record this weekend by a mere .41 of a second."

Meanwhile, Aurora's Master Ducks cleaned house at the swim meet, finishing first overall.

Master Ducks win

Their hair wasn't dry before the party started.

Some 80 members of the Aurora Master Ducks swim club had just finished knocking off another 134 clubs to win the Investors Group 2005 Canadian Masters Swimming Championship at the Etobicoke Olympium last weekend.

More than 940 athletes competed in the event that featured the presence of six former Olympians, 14 world records and more than 100 Canadian records, including six by the Aurora contingent.

When the waves calmed down, the Master Ducks had won the prestigious four-day competition, defeating Ottawa's Technosport, the London Silver Dolphins and the Etobicoke Masters.

Dave Legallais set a Canadian record in 1500 freestyle event for men aged 65 to 69.

Two Canadian records fell in relay competition; the women's 4 X 100m freestyle, consisting of Judy Iannucci, Janet Mitchell, Karen Bonham and Wendy Duck; and the men's 4 X 50m medley, made up of Tyler Clair, Carey Avery, Lloyd Brown and Dave Wilkin.

Individually, Aurorans brought home nine golds, 18 silvers and 19 bronze medals.

Here's how it broke down: Kelly Chester 2 bronze; Wendy Cimarno 1 gold, 2 bronze; Tyler Clair 3 bronze; Wendy Duck 2 gold, 3 silver, 2 bronze; Russ Farquhar 1 bronze; Julia Freixa 1 gold, 3 silver; Lori Haws 1 gold, 3 silver; Dave Legallais 1 gold, 1 silver; Kathy McKnight 1 gold, 3 bronze; Simon Meredith 1 bronze; Katie Ney 1 gold, 2 silver; Marcus Sandhar 1 bronze; Jill

Vickers 2 bronze; Dave Wilkin 5 silver, 2 bronze; Maya Ziolkowski - 1 gold, 1 silver.

In the relays, the Master Ducks brought home 7 gold, 9 silver and 4 bronze medals.

Jaguar Gymnastics



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Viva here Nov. 20

It was back in May, 2002, when York Region entered into a public/private partnership with a consortium of companies known as the York Consortium to plan a sophisticated rapid transit system to carry commuters on the busy Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors.

It soon became known as the Quick Start project. And it's getting ready to start.

By April, 2003, regional council approved Quick Start as an integrated member of the family of transit services operating in the GTA as the service was to be coordinated with York Region Transit, GO Transit, Toronto Transit Commission and transit operations in neighbouring regions.

In May, 2003, with commitments from federal and provincial governments to contribute \$50 million each to match \$50 million from the region, the first phase of Quick Start got underway.

Service on Quick Start

Bayview continues widening project

In April, 1985, York Regional Council agreed to pave Bayview Avenue from Wellington Street to Mulock Drive at an estimated cost of \$375,000, which included traffic signals at Wellington.

The contract was awarded to Miller Paving.

The five-year regional road plan was not well received by Aurora Council as it claimed Aurora projects were being ignored. Councillors noted a number of complaints from Bayview residents south of Wellington.

Then in November, 2001, the region agreed to widen Bayview from Wellington to Mulock.

In March last year, with Bayview between Wellington and the St. John's Sideroad widened to four lanes, questions were asked if new homebuyers on the east side of Bayview had been made aware of the widening before they purchased their home.

Staff replied that as the subdivision agreements had been approved in 2002 prior to any knowledge of reconstruction, a warning clause had not been inserted, but would be in any future agreements.

In May this year regional council granted approval to expropriate a strip of land along Bayview for road widening purposes from St. John's to Mulock and

was designed to be every 10 minutes or less with electronic signs at stations to announce the pending arrival of buses with an integrated fare system.

A progress report was submitted to Aurora Council in September, 2003, and again in April, 2004.

In December, the region officially launched its rapid transit system with the name Viva targeting September to be operational with a \$54 million fleet of 77 state-of-the-art buses serving the four key transportation corridors.

At a recent general committee meeting, Mary-Frances Turner from the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation provided a status report.

By September 4 the Yonge Street route is scheduled to be open from the Finch Avenue subway station to Bernard Avenue in Richmond Hill and from the Markham Town Centre to York University along Highway 7.

construction should begin later this year.

By October 16 the Highway 7 route will be extended from McCowan Road to Martin Grove on the west.

Then by November 20, the Yonge Street service will be available for Aurora commuters as the route is extended to the Newmarket Terminal.

Construction of bus shelters is currently underway and when operational will provide ticket-vending machines and validators as well as electronic readouts advising the destination and arrival time of the next bus.

In Aurora there will be a new shelter and receiving bay at the northbound stop at Yonge and Henderson, heritage shelters at both northbound and southbound stops at Yonge and Wellington, and northbound and southbound stops at Orchard Heights and Yonge Street.

With the introduction of Viva, it is hoped to attract a new generation of riders.

Other than questions regarding the duplication of Viva with GO Transit on the Yonge Street corridor, which Turner said was not a duplication but a complementary service, her presentation was received as information.



Dori Leisinger, who has been painting for many years, displayed her work Friday and Saturday at the Aurora Seniors' Centre on Victoria Street. Annual event was termed a huge success.

Auroran photo by Naomi Tobin



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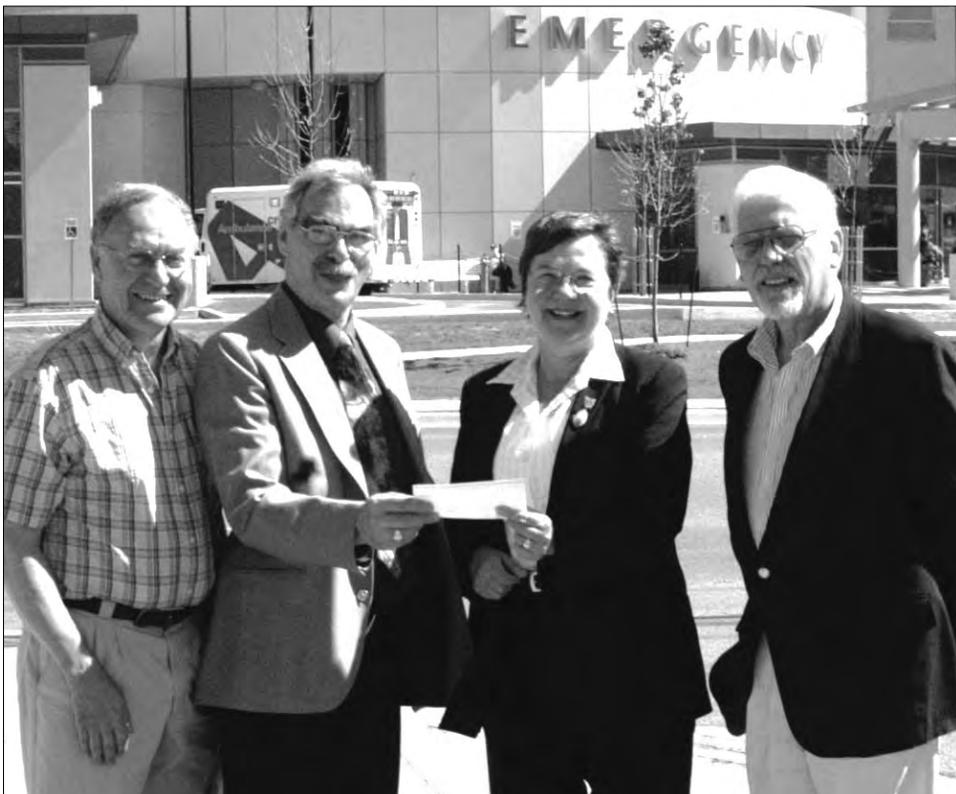


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As a result of fund-raising efforts, members of SOYRA (Society of York Region Artists) present a cheque for \$1,000 to the Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket. At the event are, left to right, Bill Reid, Vice chair, of SOYRA; Bill Van Oorschot, SOYRA Public Relations, promotions and chairman; Carol Oliver, acting president of the South Lake Foundation, and the artist who helped raise the money by donating his talent, Anthony Palmer of Sandpiper Studio.

Auroran photo by Naomi Tobin

Councillor opposes humps

Traffic calming speed humps on Aurora streets will continue to be considered in spite of strong arguments by Councillor Damir Vrancic that the approval of speed humps be discontinued.

The issue was first raised by Councillor Vrancic last March when the Traffic Safety Advisory Board (TSAB) recommended the humps for Fairway Drive.

He expressed concern that the problem was being looked at in isolation based on citizen complaints on residential streets and were dealt with in piecemeal fashion.

He stressed the need for whole areas to be studied and a comprehensive plan developed.

Vrancic pointed out that the current policy of dealing with traffic calming measures was pitting one street against another and soon there would be speed humps on every road.

At that time council agreed to reduce the speed limit on Fairway Drive to 40 km/hr and review the citizens' request after speed humps on Golf Links Drive had been implemented.

At last week's council meeting, the TSAB recommended staff be requested to modify the proposed traffic calming design to include a third speed hump on Heathwood Heights Drive in the vicinity of Gowan Lane and that a new poll be issued to determine the support rate for the modified design.

Last January a traffic calming public meeting was held to receive public comments.

Residents pointed out that Heathwood Heights Drive had numerous accidents resulting in vehicles causing damage on private property and that three pedestrian trail systems crossed the roadway.

Councillor Vrancic recommended that section of the report be deleted as he didn't believe in the speed humps.

Councillor John West,

Chairman of the Safety Board, said if the motion passed council should direct the committee not to consider any further requests, as council shouldn't approve one and deny another.

Other members of council disagreed with Vrancic claiming that speed humps slowed traffic and prevented accidents.

The TSAB report was adopted.

This was in spite of a warning in September, 2003, by the fire chief that there was concern about the delay in responding to an emergency

call on Kennedy Street due to speed humps.

It was also learned at that time that York Regional Police avoided Kennedy Street when responding to a call in the area and used adjacent streets because of the speed humps.

Council agreed that any future proposed traffic calming measures be forwarded to emergency services for comment, but none of the recent reports from the TSAB included any information from the emergency services prior to the approval of speed humps for Golf Links Drive.

Support for building

Buying a brick will aid seniors

The new seniors' centre building is under construction just south of the Aurora Town Hall and seniors hope to move in later this year.

The town required the seniors to raise \$250,000 towards the \$3.6 million total cost of the facility.

To respond, the seniors have launched a "Buy a Building Brick" fundraising campaign and are asking citizens, organizations and businesses to buy a brick to help the seniors move into their new home.

Each brick sold will be placed on the "Brick Wall" in the centre with the donor's name in large letters.

When the seniors move into their new home, the donors' names will move in, too.

For \$20 the donor gets a Blue Star Brick, a Green Star for \$50, a Red Star for \$100, a Silver Star for \$500 and a Gold Star for \$1,000.

Tax receipts will be

issued for all brick purchases.

In addition, for the business community the seniors have introduced a Five-Star Brick for a donation of \$5,000.

Donors will have permanent recognition on the walls of the new Seniors Centre.

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August 15-19 · 8:30am to 11:30pm
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Pee Wee Rep 94-93

August 15-19 · 3:00pm to 6:00pm

Bantam Midget Rep 92-89

August 15-19 · 2:30pm to 5:30pm

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August 29- Sept 2 10:00am to 2:00pm

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August 29 - Sept 2 · 7-10yrs old · 11:30am to 1:00pm

Defense Camp

August 22-26 · 9-12yrs old · 5:00pm to 6:30pm

August 29 - Sept 2 · 9-12yrs old · 5:00pm to 6:30pm

Cost per week clinic \$189.00

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Inspection

With parents, relatives and friends looking on, scores of members of the 140 Aurora Royal Canadian Cadet Squadron went through the rigours of inspection Saturday. The annual event was held at the Aurora Community Centre. *Auroran photo by Naomi Tobin*

Task force is established to study hidden apartments

In September, 2003, Aurora Councillor Damir Vrancic said Newmarket council had recently adopted a bylaw permitting the establishment of basement apartments and he had sought calls from citizens supporting such a bylaw for Aurora.

He received council support for staff to investigate the feasibility of adopting a similar bylaw for Aurora.

Concern was expressed that basement apartments might not meet building and fire code standards.

There was also concern about on-street parking problems, the use of town facilities including recreation and school classrooms without contributing to the economy of the municipality through the payment of taxes.

In February, 2004, town staff suggested three options, including the current policy of identifying all units created after November 15, 1995, as illegal and to be prosecuted on the basis of a complaint.

Other options were to amend the bylaw to permit the units or establish a task force to examine local issues.

In spite of a strong plea by Councillor Vrancic for a task force, the committee voted to maintain the status quo.

Then the committee report came to council, the decision was reversed and it was agreed on a 4-3 vote to establish the task force.

In May, 2004, when the proposed terms of reference came before a general committee meeting, the same arguments were presented.

When the vote was taken it was 3-2 against establishing the task force, but when the committee

report came to council, there was another flip-flop and council voted 5-3 to approve the task force.

Finally this year an advertisement was posted inviting applications from citizens interested in participating on the task force, the appointments were made and the first meeting was held earlier this month.

It is anticipated that the duties of the task force will take approximately 12 to 18 months with a public meeting scheduled within that time.

Aurora has had a hidden population of families living in basement apartments for several years.

Due to the lack of affordable housing, council has been reluctant to take action.

In August, 1966, council agreed to launch a hunt for the town's hidden population of people living in illegal basement apartments.

It had been pointed out that Aurora's percentage of school children was far above the provincial average and there were many complaints about overnight on-street parking, but the town had little success in locating the double families

as inspectors had no authority to enter premises.

In July, 1989, due to controls and lack of rental apartments, a movement was started to convince municipalities to ease their building codes to permit basement apartments and homeowners were advised to check with their local municipality.

In July, 1991, the NDP government announced basement apartments were to be legalized to increase low-cost rental accommodation.

Municipalities objected and raised a number of safety concerns including the inability of inspecting basement apartments to ensure they met building and fire regulations, and the additional load on municipal services.

In spite of the municipal objections, Bill 90, which would permit basement apartments as a right was introduced in October, 1992, and subsequently adopted.

In 1995 the provincial government rescinded legislation and returned the authority of regulating secondary dwellings back to municipalities where it has

continued to be a controversial issue.

Councillor Evelyn Buck is the chairman of the new committee.

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Aurora's town crests were for sale

Back in the 1960s the Town of Aurora crest was provided only to members of council to wear on their jacket.

Then in November, 1969, Councillor Illyd Harris suggested the town could receive publicity and become better known if the crests were made available to citizens of the municipality to wear when they were travelling.

Council agreed and made the crests available at a break-even cost of \$15.

The crest hasn't been seen for a long while and isn't being worn by today's members of council or citizens.

Maybe it should be re-introduced.

The crest, not the logo!

THE REST OF THE STORY?

Back in September, 2004, Tamara Estabrooks of Aurora was told about the Mrs. Canada Pageant and it was suggested she should enter.

She decided to accept the challenge but due to the illness of her mother had to forego the 2004 pageant.

Holding the title of Mrs. Aurora she planned to compete in the Mrs. Canada International in 2005.

The 31-year-old has a degree of Master of Science in Speech Pathology and works in that area for the Community Care Access Centre for York Region.

The Mrs. Canada Pageant is to be held somewhere, sometime this year, but does anyone know when or where and what happened to Mrs. Aurora?

The end of the story is missing.

(ED. NOTE: The rest of the story is on Page 3)

FENCE PARTIALLY BLOCKED TEMPERANCE ST.

It was back in 1969 when Aurora Council had to obtain a temporary injunction to force a Temperance Street resident to remove a barrier that blocked the sidewalk and part of the roadway as a result of a land ownership dispute.

The resident lived at the crest of the hill where the street curves downhill in a slight easterly path, north of Kennedy, south of Tyler.

He claimed he owned and paid taxes on a triangular-shaped piece of land that covered the sidewalk and jutted out into the street.

He painted lines across the sidewalk and a portion of

the roadway to denote the parcel of land in dispute.

He said at the time that the town could buy the land or get off his property.

By June, 1970, when the town failed to take action, he drilled postholes and erected a fence around what he claimed was his land.

He also painted a sign claiming the town refused to buy the 15 feet of property on which he was paying taxes.

A check of the records revealed he had purchased the property from the owner in 1968 and four years earlier the owner had deeded the triangular piece of property to the town.

But unknown to council members, the town solicitor of the day gave the parcel back to the original owner, who in turn deeded it to the purchaser so that he legally owned the piece of property in dispute.

Council members were astounded to learn they had constructed a sidewalk and a roadway on property they didn't own, resulting in a negotiated settlement with the owner ending the battle of Temperance Street.

SUNDAY MOVIES AND SPORTS

In October, 1966, Aurora Council decided to ask three questions in the upcoming municipal election.

The questions involved voting rights for roomers and boarders, and Sunday sports and movies, even though Aurora didn't have a movie theatre.

The Sunday sports issue came about as a result of a request from the Aurora Tigers hockey club, then in the Junior C League, with hopes of becoming a Junior A team.

With the opening of the new Community Centre, the team wanted to play home games on Sundays.

The movie question came about in hopes of attracting a movie theatre to the municipality or using the Community Centre auditorium for Sunday afternoon movies.

At the time, Sunday sports had been unofficially carried on for years in Aurora and there was some concern that this would have to cease if the vote was lost, but council decided to proceed with the referendum so that an admission fee could legally be charged on Sundays.

Voters overwhelmingly approved a broader voting base and Sunday sports and movies.

The extended voting franchise was approved 1519 to

Frank Klees slams Premier

Progressive Conservative Education Critic and Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees, of Aurora, called on Minister of Education Gerard Kennedy and Premier Dalton McGuinty to honour commitments to all Ontario children.

Klees said the Minister supports new funding for textbooks, but has put nothing in place to ensure funds

go for textbooks.

The Minister also promised funds for smaller classes and additional resources for technical education programs, he said.

Klees told the Legislature there is one group of parents who are left wondering how the Minister can justify making multimillion-dollar announcements for some students and continue to

ignore autistic children.

Klees said the Minister and the Premier continue to claim that every child in the province deserves an equal education, but their promises do not apply to autistic children, he said.

Premier Dalton McGuinty claimed Klees was trying to turn a wonderful news story for Ontario students into something negative.

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605, Sunday sports 1,740 to 422 and Sunday movies 1,740 to 381.

The movie vote worked...there will be cinemas in Aurora this year. Only took 39 years.

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Wal-Mart to anchor development

From page 1

Larke told council members that following a committee meeting two weeks ago he met with staff to discuss issues raised and had brought consultants to last week's council meeting to make a presentation on the economic benefits of the development, and urban design including internal and external traffic.

Dr. Frank Clayton indicated that on completion the development would provide \$409,000 annually in taxes, \$1.9 million in development charges plus building permit fees.

There would also be about 2,800 jobs created with about half employed in the commercial retail component and the other half in the office component.

About 66 per cent of the total would be full time office employees and the rest full and part time retail employees.

To achieve full development for the retail component was expected to take three to four years and a longer time for the office component.

Russell Fletcher said the business park along Highway 404 would accommodate larger buildings, Wellington Street, the retail component and a more natural component along Leslie Street with a stormwater pond, woodlot and landscaping.

He noted the Gateway to the Business Park from Highway 404 would be a major feature and Whitwell had provided \$80,000 to the town for its development.

He said the internal promenade on which the stores faced would be landscaped and animated with retail uses, restaurants, service retailers and parking meters.

The larger box stores will be so designed that they will look like a series of retail stores. He noted that the concept design was the first phase with the detailed design to be covered at the site plan stage.

Jim Howden explained what work had been done to alleviate concerns about traffic patterns and traffic flows both internally and externally. He also reviewed how the overall plan included the employment lands on the south side of Wellington Street.

Larke confirmed that Whitwell was willing to provide funds to help the downtown area and officials were willing to sit down with town officials to work out the details.

Early in the meeting Betty Reid and Don Hill, residents across from the proposal expressed concerns about the box stores.

Adrienne Long, a traffic consultant, told council the perceived internal and external traffic problems had been resolved, and while there may be some queuing, it would be within acceptable limits.

David Butler, a planner, told councillors that an official plan amendment must meet five tests and all had been met and recommended adoption of the official plan and zoning bylaw amendments.

It was proposed by Councillors John West and Evelyn Buck that the official plan amendment bylaw be enacted providing all outstanding issues had been resolved at the site plan stage.

Councillor Buck pointed out the development will create 2,800 jobs in Aurora and provide additional assessment and taxes for the municipality, so council shouldn't turn its back on it.

Councillor Nigel Kean said that while he supported the development, he was still concerned about the traffic as with more jobs, there would be more cars coming into the municipality.

Councillor Damir Vrancic noted that council hadn't heard from staff and he asked for some assurance that what was approved at the concept stage would be included in the site plan.

Planning Director Sue Seibert replied that with the town's guidelines, she was more certain than she might normally be. If any changes were to be made an application would have to be submitted for council approval.

Following the lengthy discussion council unanimously enacted the required bylaws to amend the official plan and zoning bylaw.



The above photos and drawings suggest what the Aurora development could look like, not necessarily what it will look like.

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