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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Independent Community Newspaper

Vol. 9 No. 10

905-727-3300

auroran.com

FREE

Week of December 23, 2008



Santa Claus had help in the form of "Fred" last week as the Aurora Rotary Club hosted its annual Christmas party for members' offsprings. "Fred" was not really a "Fred", more of a "Frederica". The event, which attracted dozens of youngsters, was held at Victoria Hall. Inset, four-year-old Mikayla Stade of Aurora dove into the pizza, part of the dinner offered to all the children. Christmas party for the adult Rotary members was held Monday at Hillary House.

Auroran photos by David Falconer

Town Recreation Plan heads towards reality

The town's new Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Pricing Policy are a step closer to reality.

At a recent Leisure Services Advisory Committee (LSAC) meeting, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants presented the draft Recreation Plan, which has been developed to guide and direct parks and recreation, programs, services and activities in Aurora until 2013.

As background, the consultants reported that research showed people find they have less much time to participate in organized sports, while at the same time, such casual leisure activities as walking and hiking are on the rise.

There is also a growing trend for municipalities to develop park space that accommodates a variety of uses in one location.

Aurora, it was noted, has a growing, yet aging population. Although the town's population will grow by almost 6,000 people over the next five years, the percentage of younger people is expected to decrease.

Input for the Plan was obtained in part through a survey conducted in June.

The survey showed that by far the leisure activity that most people participated in was walking/hiking. This was followed by swimming, cycling and aerobics/fitness.

Residents placed the highest importance on passive parks that preserve natural areas, as well as on trails and pathways. Facilities in town that rated highest for requiring additional spending were nature trails and paved, multi-use trails.

Based on this research, and additional consultation with other community stakeholders and sports and leisure organizations, a number of needs assessments and proposed action plans were developed for specific areas in Aurora.

No new ice pads are expected to be required before 2013. The consultant noted that despite the five

existing rinks being busy, if a new surface was added right now, it would not be used to capacity.

Similarly, no new pools are required, although efforts should be made to increase usage of the current pools during non-peak times.

With respect to gymnasiums, it was suggested the town develop one by 2010, given there are currently no municipal gyms in Aurora, and access for groups to existing school gyms is not always possible.

Please see page 15

Briefly

Guest speaker

Dr. Michael Thompson, author of "The Pressured Child: Helping Your Child Find Success in School and Life" will be at Aurora's St. Andrew's College Monday, Jan. 5.

His presentation, which is free and open to the public, will address concerns of "pressured parents" and describe the psychological journey children experience from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Dr. Thompson is a consultant, author and psychologist specializing in children and families.

He is the clinical consultant to The Belmont Hill School outside of Boston and has worked in more than 500 schools across the United States, as well as international schools in Central America, Europe and Asia.

A dedicated speaker and traveler, Dr. Thompson has appeared on The Today Show, The Oprah Winfrey Show, ABC 20/20, CBS 60 Minutes, The Early Show and Good Morning America.

The presentation begins at 7.30 p.m.

Holiday time

In order that the staff can spend some time with their families, The Auroran will not publish for the next two weeks.

Next issue of The Auroran will come out the week of Jan. 12, 2009. Happy holidays, everyone.

Merry Christmas
from the gang at The Auroran

HEY, LOOK - WE GOT A 'BOUQUET' ON PAGE 6!



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COMING EVENTS

CONTINUING

The York Regional Police Male Chorus is looking for new members. You do not have to be a police officer nor are you required to read music to volunteer. The group rehearses Monday evenings between 7.30 and 9.30 p.m. For further information, contact the chorus supervisor at 905-727-9676 or the coordinator of volunteer services for YRP at 905-830-0303, extension 6717.

The Adult Bereavement Support Group offers a chance to learn how to cope with the loss of a loved one. Fred Bullen has given the use of the Aurora Lions Club and Brent Forrester of Thompson Funeral Home will provide administrative cost so that this service is given free to the community. New group begins Thursday, Jan. 8th at 33 Mosley Street. Contact mariesgriefjourney@yahoo.com to reserve a seat or get further information.

Winter parking restrictions are in effect until April 15th from 2 to 6 a.m. and motorists must get their cars off the streets so that the Public Works Department can clear snow and ice from the roadway.

The Aurora Public Library winter programs have registration forms now available for pickup. Drop off date for Aurora residents begins Saturday, January 3rd. Processing begins Friday, January 9th. Programs being offered include: Books for Babies (6-13 months); Preschool Storytime (3-5 years); Time for Toddlers (14-23 months); Tales for Two (24-35 months) and Caregiver and Child Music programs (6 months-5 years). Visit www.library.aurora.on.ca or phone 905-727-9493 for further information or pick up a program flyer at the Library.

Grade 8 Only Book Club is here! In this club at the Aurora Library fast-paced adventures, fantasy, sport and contemporary novels will be read. Pre-register at the Children and Young Adult Information Desk. Club is held Thursdays from 7 to 8 p.m. starting January 8, 2009, and it's free.

VOICE is a creative writing collective for teens between the ages of 13 and 18. At the meetings, held at the Aurora Public Library, teens learn various creative writing techniques, give and receive constructive feedback on their writing and meet other like-minded young writers. Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month, September through May, from 7 to 8 p.m. Registration is not required.

"Louder" is a semi-annual young adult magazine created through the creative effort of teens and produced by the Aurora Public Library's Young Adult Services Department. Submissions of writing, poetry, art, graphic art and photography are accepted. E-mail submissions to yamagazine@library.aurora.on.ca or drop it off to the Children and Young Adult Information Desk to the attention of Monika Machacek.

Step into the world of watercolour with artist and teacher Alana Biasi. Both the beginner and advanced painter classes are held throughout the year, from January 22 to February 12, from 6.30 to 8 p.m. Fee is \$30 per registrant for students, Grades 5-11. Visit www.library.aurora.on.ca, or phone the Library at 905-727-9493 for further information.

On Tuesdays, until June, the Navy League has a Cadet program for children 9 to 12 years from 7 to 9 p.m. Contact Cliff Davies at 905-727-2244 for details.

On Tuesdays, until June, a Sea Cadet program for youths 13 to 18 from 7 to 9 p.m. Leave message at 905-895-3038.

Aurora Opera Company's Children's Chorus is a new treble voice choir dedicated to educating, nurturing and providing opportunities for children to express their musical abilities. The chorus is open to boys and girls in Grades 1 through 12 and consists of two choirs: Angel Choristers, a training choir for 6 and 7 year-olds and the Children Chorus, open to 8 to 17 year-olds. To audition, contact general director Sarah Kyle at keepsinging@look.ca.

CHAT'S Community Home Assistance to Seniors is looking for volunteers to assist with the activities in its Adult Day Program. The positions call for a commitment of a few hours a week at its Aurora location. Various times are available. Call Christine at 905-713-3494.

Every Tuesday from 9.30 to 11 a.m. it's Story and Playtime at Aurora Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South for tots (age 0-4 years) and their caregivers for coffee or tea. Call 905-841-8883 for further details.

Every Wednesday from 6.30 to 8 p.m. the Pioneer Club for boys and girls, age 3 to Grade 4 and the Junior High Club for boys and girls, Grades 5 to 8, will be held at the Aurora Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South. For more information call 905-841-8884.

A drop-in centre will operate every Wednesday at the Community Bible Church on Bathurst Street just south of Henderson from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information e-mail Judy Hoffmann jhoffmann@sympatico.ca.

Scottish Country Dancing every Friday morning at St. Andrews's Presbyterian Church beginning at 10.30 a.m. No partners are needed and beginners are welcome.

Aurora Rotary Club meets every Monday evening at 6.30 p.m. at Gabriel's on Yonge Street. New members are welcome. For further information call 905-841-1352.

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.

Masonic 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. and lunch at noon. Call 905-727-3032 or 905-727-1080 for more information.

Gamblers Anonymous meets every Tuesday night at Trinity Anglican Church, Victoria Street, at 7.30 p.m.

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

Canadian Federation of University Women holds monthly meetings at the Aurora Legion with a variety of speakers. Contact Beverley at 905-727-2151.

The Aurora Seniors Evergreen Choir practice in the West-McKenzie Hall of the Seniors Centre, every Wednesday from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. under the direction of Enid Maize.

Tots (age nine months to four years) bring your caregivers for coffee or tea while you enjoy story and playtime every Tuesday from 9.30 to 11 a.m. at Cornerstone Church, 390 Industrial Parkway South. Call 905-841-8883 for further information.

Meet at Martha's Table, at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, every Thursday from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Hot soup, sandwiches, and dessert will be provided. Any funds raised go to local charities.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

First Baptist Church will hold a Christmas Eve candlelight service beginning at 7 p.m. The church is located at 33 Wellington Street East.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

Merry Christmas.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1

Happy New Year.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 2

HOT SPOT celebrates its 17th birthday and the holiday season with a Prize Party at the Aurora Community Centre. HOT SPOT is closed December 26th.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

Aurora Chamber of Commerce first networking breakfast of the year will be held at Staples, 14800 Yonge St., Unit 180 from 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.

JANUARY 5 to FEBRUARY 27

The Aurora Historical Society will host a travelling exhibit entitled "Medical Records at the Archives of Ontario" at Hillary House. This exhibit will be tied to the medical collection at Hillary House and curator Jennifer Steen will speak on the subject at the February meeting.

JANUARY 7 AND JANUARY 15

Internet Training, at Aurora Public Library. For beginners: introduction to the Internet, a one-hour session on basic world wide web navigation, Wednesday January 7, from 1.30 to 2.30 p.m. For advanced: beyond Google, a one-hour session on advanced search strategies, using electronic databases and reliable web directories, Thursday January 15, from 6 to 7 p.m. Main floor internet computers. Free. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk, 905-727-9493, option 4. Sessions are limited to four participants per session. Mouse and keyboarding experience required.

MONDAY, JANUARY 12

Film lovers are in for another exciting and entertaining year as the Aurora Film Circle announces an eight-film 2009 subscription series for \$80 with a monthly film at the Aurora Cineplex Odeon. The first film in the series is entitled "A No Hit, No Run Summer" a

Quebec film from 1969. Both subscriptions and single tickets are available at the Aurora Public Library and R & R Revisited, 95 Edward Street.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

Demystifying databases at Aurora Public Library. This is a hands-on workshop to learn how use the Library's electronic research resources effectively; each month will focus on a different subject. Limited to four participants per session. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk, 905-727-9493. Free. Session begins at 10.30 a.m. and runs until 11.15 a.m.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 27

Family Literacy Day at the library. Aurora Public Library in partnership with the York Region District School Board and Ontario Early Years, York Region, presents 'What is Early Literacy?', a free workshop for parents/caregivers of children 0-6 years. 7 p.m. in the Magna Room. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk, 905-727-9493, option 4.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce annual Ski Day is at Osler Bluff Ski Club in Collingwood. If you are interested in participating, call the Chamber Office at 905-727-7262.



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Seasons Greetings

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy and prosperous holiday season, and hope that the spirit of the season shines brightly upon everyone's home.

All the best to everyone in 2009!

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Family Night December 31

If you're looking for a fun evening with the family over the holidays, the Town of Aurora invites you to ring in the new year at First Family Night.

The event will take place at the Leisure Complex December 31, between the hours of 6 and 9 p.m.

There will be a number of free activities available. The pool and rink will be open for swimming and skating. Children can also enjoy

magic shows, crafts, games and face painting.

For animal lovers there's a reptile show that will be both interactive and educational.

Or, if you like your animals more on the furry side, you can take a horse drawn wagon ride.

Finally, you can warm up with some hot chocolate by the bonfire, before heading home in lots of time to welcome the new year.



The folks from Century 21 St. Andrews Realty paid a visit to the Neighbourhood Network office on Yonge Street to drop off toys recently. Neighbourhood Network is acting as a toy drop off location and with the help of their partnering agencies will make certain the toys get to those most in need. Response has been overwhelming, as Aurora proves itself to be a great community with so many residents stepping up to help others.

Graffiti crackdown continues; two youths arrested in Aurora

Officers working out of the York Regional Police #1 District Property Crime Unit, the Community Services Bureau and the Community Oriented Response Unit, have arrested two people in connection with a break and enter at a commercial building and graffiti damage in Aurora and more arrests are expected.

Last week, a second suspect wanted in connection with one incident of damage to property and break and enter attended York Regional Police #1 District Headquarters, in Newmarket.

He was arrested without incident after turning himself in and later released on a Promise to Appear.

Since last summer, more than 70 complaints of damage to property were received from local homeowners, business owners and building contractors reporting mischief to their

property involving graffiti.

Investigations into the incidents centered around individuals who refer to themselves as "taggers" who commonly use spray paint and large thick markers for their purposes.

These individuals place a common marking or name on various types of property at various locations and believe the markings are artistic.

In addition to the graffiti, twice in November a commercial building located at 15400 Bayview Avenue in Aurora was entered and extensive damage was caused by graffiti sprayed on walls, steel support beams and on electrical panels.

Earlier this month, as a result of extensive investigation, officers attended a high school in Aurora and arrested a 15-year-old youth without incident.

Later that day, investiga-

tors executed a Criminal Code search warrant at an Aurora residence where they seized several markers, sketch pads and photos of graffiti.

A 15-year-old youth, who cannot be named, of Aurora was charged, followed by the charging of Rigel Stewart, 18, of Whitchurch Stouffville

The unnamed youth is scheduled to appear before the Youth Court Justice in Newmarket January 14 while Stewart will appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Newmarket January 6.

York Regional Police reminds parents and teachers to be aware if their students or children possess graffiti-related items such as markers, etching tools, spray paint, rubber gloves, adhesive stickers, sketch books or collections of photos, drawings or graffiti magazines.

The young person may also display an interest in graffiti through conversation, markings on their clothing, walls, lockers, books, school assignments and bags, police said.

A review of their Internet activity will show frequent visits to graffiti websites and related conversations with friends.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Community Services Gang Prevention officer, Constable Shayne Mulligan at 1-866-876-5423, ext. 7120, Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS or leave an anonymous tip online at www.1800222tips.com.

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Poor Richard

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

Soldiers overseas are truly alone for the holidays

*Oh, I'll be home for Christmas,
Is the dream of a Canadian son;
Instead of a tour in Afghanistan
In a war that can't be won.*

-Poor Richard's Scrapbook

There's no place like home for the holidays as family and friends gather to enjoy the Christmas season together.

Children grow up and some move away from home to start families of their own, but generally they can get home during the holiday season or at least communicate with each other.

There's something very special about the Christmas spirit and families and the need to be together even for a short period during the festive season.

It's difficult to feel festive and the wish to celebrate when you are absent from the family circle.

That will happen to many members of Canada's Armed Forces this Christmas as they are serving in Afghanistan and other foreign lands and may not be able to communicate with their loved ones.

Although almost everything possible is done for Canadian troops serving on foreign soil at Christmas time, they are still alone and away from families and friends.

Not only that, it is a different war.

During the First and Second World Wars, the men fought with the mission of overcoming the forces of evil and as was said, saving the world for democracy.

The Afghanistan War started off as a peacekeeping mission and developed into a terrorism conflict.

At Christmastime the feelings are the same, loneliness in a foreign land and away from family and friends.

They, like their comrades from the previous wars, will remember how they spent their first Christmas away from home while serving with the Armed Forces.

I was relatively fortunate as in 1941 and 1942 I was stationed at Manning Depot, Toronto, as a Drill Instructor and was able to get home for at least part of the holiday season.

I spent the 1944 (yes, it was the year the editor was born) Christmas season in Montreal after just returning from a trip to Iceland, England, Gibraltar, West Africa, Brazil to Bermuda and in 1945, I was home for Christmas.

The worst Christmas that I can recall was in 1943.

The dark clouds of war hung over England and the free world, the Battle of Atlantic was at its peak and there was a need for aircraft of all types

After completing my navigation training at # 1 AOS, Malton, I was assigned to #45 Group of the RAF Ferry Command bases at Dorval, Quebec, the jumping off base for most trans-Atlantic flights.

I didn't have long to wait for my first assignment as I was crewed up with a Polish pilot and radio operator to ferry Mitchell FR 198, a two-engine bomber to Scotland.

We took off from Dorval December 4th for Goose Bay, Labrador, and were stuck there until December 15th due to poor weather conditions and an unsuccessful five-hour search for a missing aircraft before we could take off for Greenland.

On December 18th we made the five-hour next leg of the journey from Bluie West in Greenland to Meeks Field in Iceland and on December 20 completed the final leg of the journey to Prestwick, Scotland for a total of 26 hours and 40 minutes in the air.

No sooner had we arrived in Scotland than the returning aircrew, from several deliveries were hustled onto buses for the short trip to Greenock, just outside Glasgow to board the Acquitania, a liner converted into a troop ship for a voyage to New York.

As the Polish pilot and radio operator had made arrangements to remain in Scotland, I was completely alone and didn't know a soul for the voyage and as it was a return trip, the ship was relatively empty.

On Christmas Eve, the passengers huddled in the lounge lost in their own thoughts and memories and as troop ships were dry there was nothing to bring them together as we sailed somewhere in the mid-Atlantic.

The Acquitania docked in New York December 30th and a special train was waiting for the overnight journey back to Montreal to prepare for the next delivery.

As you sit down to your Christmas dinner in the warmth of your home with family and friends, take a moment and think of our Canadian troops serving in foreign lands.



The address was 60 and 62 Yonge Street South, and the year was 1981. It was a time when Yonge Street had Aurora addresses, and anything north of Wellington Street had a Yonge Street North address. Today, numbering of Yonge Street starts at Lake Ontario (1 Yonge Street is owned by the Toronto Star) and continues into five digits up through Holland Landing. But 30 years ago or so, this building was on the corner of Yonge and Tyler Streets (there's an empty lot there now) and it was a paint store run by long-time Auroran Eric Smith. Eric, currently the oldest member of the Aurora Rotary Club, has just moved from the house he lived in for decades on George Street. While there have been several ideas suggested for the valuable property, none has ever materialized, and the corner remains empty.

Letters to the Editor

We blew it, reader says, regarding power outcome

To the editor,

Mayor Phyllis Morris was quoted as suggesting that there was a chance that an Aurora site for the peaker plant could have been selected by the OPA (Ontario Power Authority).

Really?

Given that there was no bid submitted for an Aurora site, how could we have been selected?

I guess that's just another case in point.

Not only has the mayor not demonstrated an understanding of the most basic issues including the identified need or the viable alternatives, but I'm sad to say that she apparently did not even understand how the OPA procurement process

works.

Mayor Morris opposed overhead transmission as well as local generation without proposing a single viable alternative.

Decisions were made by council about issues they clearly did not even come close to understanding.

As a result of Aurora's stance and the lack of adequate comprehension and engagement on the part of municipalities from across the region, both King and Aurora could now end up having new generation, transformation and transmission infrastructure imposed on us without the best possible mitigation measures being adopted.

We had our chance to become educated and

engaged enough to work towards a more constructive and considerate outcome, but it looks like we blew it.

From my front row vantage point I'm sure that we could have done a whole lot better if our elected officials had a better grasp of what has transpired over the past four and a half years, but I trust that is not likely going to come as a huge surprise to most people.

The next question to be answered is how the OPA arrived at its final decision but most people in Aurora are not likely to care, at least for the time being.

As much as some people may be happy that this issue appears to be over locally, I'm willing to bet that it won't be over for long.

Richard Johnson
Aurora

THE AURORAN

"Aurora's Independent Community Newspaper"

Published weekly by The Auroran Publications Inc.
at 95 Edward Street,
Aurora, L4G 1W1

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Opinions expressed by columnists, contributors and letter writers are not necessarily those of The Auroran. Letters must include name and phone number, although number will not be published, and be limited to 600 words. Names may be withheld assuming a compelling reason to do so. Letters may be edited or refused. All contents protected by copyright.

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Publisher is not liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. Disputes must be brought to the attention of the publisher prior to the following edition.

Traffic complainer moved, reader says

To the editor,

I have noted that during November, 2008, the Council for the Town of Aurora resolved to spend approximately \$200,000 to add "speed bumps" to the Mark Street/Walton Drive slalom course of traffic control.

In light of the traditional December to March lament of local politicians as to tax increases, this matter should be revisited and the decision reversed.

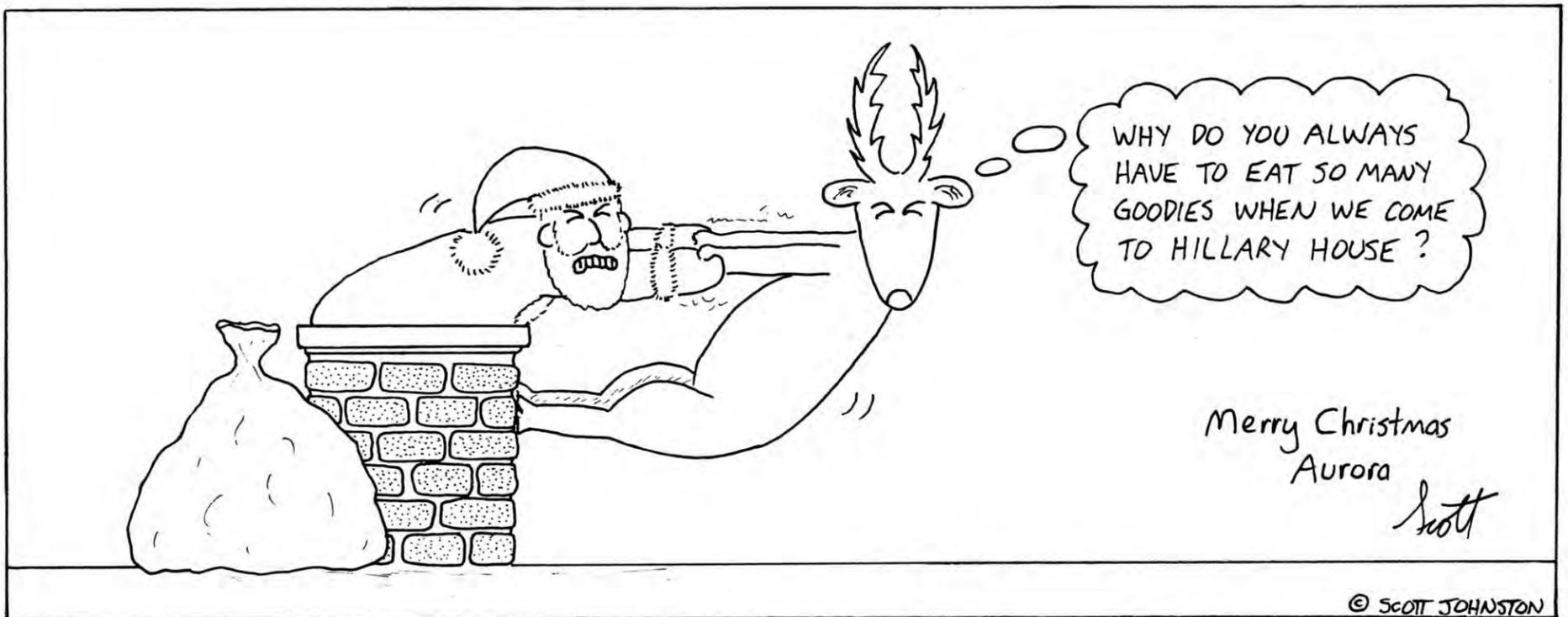
The Municipal Property Tax Assessments (MPAC) for the cited streets (four of which I have confirmation) sent to each street address in November,

specifically noted traffic on the cited streets is "light" which was the purpose of the initial construction, and project.

Further a major vociferous proponent of the "traffic quieting" proposal, was neither a ratepayer nor a tenant at the time, and moved from the municipality within four months of the proposal being approved.

That sometimes happens when Council considers an interest group's concern(s) and does not balance it against the other 90 per cent of the ratepayers' interests.

David H. Peirce
Aurora



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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

Energy alternatives

By now many of you have heard or read that Pristine Power has been awarded a 20-year contract by the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) to build a 392 MW natural gas fired peaking (simple-cycle) generation facility in King Township. The facility needs to be placed in service by the end of 2011.

Now the fun really begins.

While Pristine has been declared the winner in this Request For Proposals (RFP) solicitation against three other companies, they now have to complete their local permitting, site planning, electrical and gas interconnection work and a host of other things before they can begin construction of the facility.

There has also been a great deal of controversy regarding this RFP; with considerable opposition from most of the municipalities in this region.

There has been talk that King Township or some other interested party may ask that the Ministry of the Environment "bump up" Pristine's Environmental Screen to a Class "C" individual Environmental Assessment ("EA"). Such an EA is usually reserved for oil and coal fired generation projects.

Joining the fray have been other groups like The Ontario Clean Air Alliance ("OCAA") and MegaWHAT?

They believe that simple-cycle generation is not the best way to go based upon efficiency, operating cost and green house gas emissions concerns.

As I have written on this page previously, I disagree with them.

I declare my bias: I am involved in developing both wind and natural gas-fired projects in this province (but not in this area).

I am also a homeowner in Aurora who is concerned about the environment and who wants to ensure that my family's, and that of

our neighbours, health is not compromised.

I believe it is incumbent on the groups opposing the peaker to offer real alternatives.

The reason for the peaking generation plant in the first place is that Northern York Region is growing beyond the level at which the existing infrastructure can meet the Independent Electricity System Operators (IESO) standards for reliability.

Restoration of load can only be achieved in the required time-frame by either local peaking generation that can turn on and quickly ramp up to 350 MW, or a new 230 kV transmission line from Markham to bring in the electricity from elsewhere in the province.

So, if we don't increase the size of the transmission lines - which we know most Aurorans agree with - what do we do instead? We have three alternatives.

What about more conservation and demand management? Yes, these certainly have their place, and an important one at that, but people will not really begin to conserve energy until the true cost of production is reflected in the price to consumers.

Renewables are an important piece of the supply puzzle, but only a piece. Wind and solar, regardless of their size - either small or large scale - cannot be guaranteed to supply the load (the wind doesn't always blow, the sun doesn't always shine).

They can be welcome additions to the provincial grid, but are not necessarily suited to help with reliability. Renewables produce energy, not capacity.

Combined Heat and Power, or cogeneration, resources, would already be running full out (in order to be achieving their high thermal efficiency). They would be therefore unable to respond to addi-

tional demand on short notice.

There are two other aspects that I found fascinating to this entire process.

What this RFP revealed is the critical issue of balancing larger community interests vs. local interests - that is the provincial government mandate of ensuring that the lights stay on vs. local governments right to say no to a particular power project. It is a delicate balancing act.

The OPA, the agency responsible for running this procurement process, tried to ensure that the concerns of municipalities were addressed.

They held public meetings in all the Northern York Region municipalities and they also instituted a scoring system into this RFP that awarded points to developers for their municipal engagement activities.

Whether or not the OPA did an adequate job in this regard is a debate for another day.

The other interesting aspect to all this is that energy planning needs to be more fully incorporated into local planning activities.

Municipalities should not be allowed to grow unless they have a detailed energy strategy as part of their Official Plan. Ad hoc responses to something as important as this are not acceptable.

Our elected officials and the professionals from the power industry need to do a much better job of educating our fellow citizens about the economic impact and the environmental consequences of our possible energy choices.

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephensomerville@yahoo.com



Cathy's Corner

By Cathy Vrancic

The 12 rules of Christmas

My kids call me a Grinch but I am NOT a Grinch. I looked it up.

A Grinch is someone who spoils the enjoyment of others. I don't do that! I merely protect myself from having my enjoyment spoiled.

I figured out that putting up Christmas decorations is a lot more fun than taking them down. I also get the concept of limited storage space.

And I know that I would rather be curled up by the fire, sipping a cup of Christmas Cheer and watching the snow gently fall than be digging my way out of the mall after that delightful snowfall.

So here is my recipe for Peace On Earth...or at least, Peace in this household.

RULE #1: Just because they say "I love it!" doesn't mean they do. The more gifts you buy the bigger the pile of argyle sweaters and paisley pyjamas you will eventually be hauling off to your favourite charity. This is what they mean by "Goodwill" to Mankind.

RULE #2: Do NOT buy anything that says "some assembly required". If it comes in a long flat box, send it back. If it comes with instructions in Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, German, Russian, Macedonian, Swahili, Latin, Esperanto and Hieroglyphics but NOT English, send it back!!! If you asked for a nervous breakdown for Christmas, buy it.

RULE #3: Do NOT buy "quality". These things are expensive and meant to last a lifetime. They won't break or wear out but they will go out of style and you will be stuck with them forever. The more you pay, the longer you will feel obligated to let these items

torment you.

RULE #4: Do NOT hang Christmas lights until you have "tested" them ON THE GROUND. Changing 56 light bulbs on the driveway is one thing but changing 56 light bulbs on the roof is quite another. Your neighbours will laugh at you.

RULE #5: Do NOT hang Christmas lights that you are not planning to take down. First, they look really stupid when the daffodils bloom. Second, it is a lot easier to take down the whole string than to change 56 light bulbs on the roof. Trust me, I know these things. Mine have been up for three years now so I asked Santa for a ladder and I'm hoping he will throw in a few elves.

RULE #6: Consider an artificial tree. Here we are in Aurora planting thousands of trees in the Arboretum to keep our future green and healthy and it is sad to see so many wasted trees that might have thrived and graced our surroundings. Yes a "real" tree looks pretty but it only smells nice until the dog mistakes it for an indoor bathroom.

RULE #7: Do NOT go to the liquor store on December 24th or 31st. Every year we are given a year's notice as to when next Christmas and New Year's Eve will be. Those line-ups are reserved exclusively for those who have asked for a nervous breakdown for Christmas.

RULE #8: If you are a woman, do NOT go to the mall on December 24th. This is "Men's Day". It is an annual tradition women must respect or settle for gift certificates from sporting goods stores. Just pack him an energy drink that day and slip in a little "wish list"...complete with a map of the mall and the product codes of the items of interest. Oh, and if it's snowing pack him

a shovel.

RULE #9: Eat, drink and be merry. Do NOT go to any Christmas parties where they serve carrot sticks (these are for Rudolph) instead of rum balls or make mashed potatoes with skim milk as these people are clearly NOT in the Christmas spirit! If your bathroom scale is not keeping up with your credit card, you are doing it all wrong!

RULE #10: Find someone who is ALONE this Christmas and include them at your table. Leftovers are wonderful except when they are people.

RULE #11: Do NOT wear anything unbecoming in public. No matter how dear the person who gave you the unsightly gift it is not worth the damage to your self esteem. I once went Boxing Day shopping wearing a bulky pink track suit that made me appear 140 pounds overweight. I have never recovered.

RULE #12: If they call you a Grinch, remind them there is joy in what you DON'T get - frostbite, the flu, a fender bender at the mall, etc. Then, make them take down the lights, put away the decorations, freeze the leftovers, assemble the items that come in long, flat boxes and return the items that are the wrong size, shape and colour. Then, just sit back and enjoy another cup of Christmas Cheer, sing a few Christmas carols off-key at the top of your lungs and...watch them have a nervous breakdown!

Merry Christmas, Aurora! I wish you health, happiness and short line-ups at the return counter!

Cathy Vrancic welcomes e-mail at:
ccaurora@rogers.com



Bouquets &

BRICKBATS

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

BOUQUETS to Santa's elves for tipping off Poor Richard that as this is his last **BOUQUETS** and **BRICKBATS** before Christmas he should remember the spirit of the season and be kind to everyone so no **BRICKBATS** until the New Year.

BOUQUETS to all the firefighters, police officers, paramedics and all those providing a service to their communities during the Christmas holiday season, while those they serve are able to enjoy the company of family and friends.

BOUQUETS to Remo Agostino of the Daniels LR Corporation for including three lots in his proposed development at the corner of Bayview Avenue and St. John's Sideroad to be used for Habitat to Humanity homes.

BOUQUETS to Flo Murray the active soon-to-be 90-year-old member and fundraiser supreme of the Aurora Seniors Association for her letter to The Auroran suggesting a road map of the traffic calming maze in the northeast quadrant of the town so motorists can find their way. Maybe it could be distributed with the next tax bill!

BOUQUETS to Liberal Leader Stephane Dion on being selected as Poor Richard's Canadian Newsmaker of the Year for all the wrong reasons, as he dragged down the Liberal Party with him in spite of the begging and pleading of his members.

BOUQUETS to Prime Minister Stephen Harper if he will appoint an Ontario Progressive Conservative MPP to one of the two vacant Ontario seats in the Senate so that a vacancy can be created and Conservative Leader John Tory can win a seat in the Legislature to lead his party in these turbulent economic and political times.

BOUQUETS to the Prime Minister if he will fire Finance Minister Jim Flaherty who completely botched a major economic policy statement at a time of global financial turmoil, that was so wrongheaded that much of it had to be withdrawn after two days, making Flaherty the fall guy for Harper's policies.

BOUQUETS to Canwest Global Communications for naming former Metro Toronto Chairman Paul Godfrey as President and CEO of the National Post, in the hopes that he can turn the rather dull grey newspaper into a vibrant, exciting national daily. Godfrey has finished a tour as President and CEO of the Toronto Blue Jays, a position he has held since 2000.

BOUQUETS to Aurora resident Claudine Foong for setting her sights on the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour as the 23-year-old has signed up for two top developmental tours for Canadian women's golfers including the Duramed Futures Tour and CN Canadian Women's Tour.

BOUQUETS to the marketing organization behind the new development coming to Aurora on the Hallgrove Estates in the Leslie Street, Wellington Street East and Highway 404 area for all the commercial/industrial development on the property located immediately north of the town-owned land. Maybe the town should copy!

BOUQUETS to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs if they will appoint a supervisor to investigate all members of the City of Vaughan council and the governance of the municipality as council members have publicly requested Mayor Linda Jackson resign, and **BOUQUETS** to Linda for refusing to do so. In the meantime the taxpayers suffer.

BOUQUETS and a **MERRY CHRISTMAS** and **HAPPY NEW YEAR** to all residents of Aurora, especially the readers and advertisers of The Auroran, Aurora's independent community newspaper, and Santa and one of his reindeer on Page 1 this week.

Letters to the Editor

People who don't want to pay for calming are "hypocrites": reader

To the editor,

I've read a great many letters in this paper opposing the traffic calming in the north east historic core.

Aside from the safety issues involving the chicanes (which have merit, but may be balanced by the resulting reduction of traffic volume and speed), the primary argument appears to be a righteous belief that, if all Aurora taxpayers pay for something, then all Aurora taxpayers should stand to benefit.

Allow me to call a pig, a pig, and say that is absolute and utter hogwash.

Additionally, and even more importantly, anyone making such an argument and happening to live in one of the newer subdivisions

with endless winding roads and cul-de-sacs, is a hypocrite.

Governments at all levels do many things for many segments of society which only benefit a few. How many families benefit from the programs at the seniors' centre?

How many apartment dwellers benefit from yard waste pick ups?

If in fact, you are complaining that these measures actually benefit one segment at the direct and measurable expense of another, well I have to ask, what about noise bylaws, leash bylaws, or parking bylaws which place a measurable burden upon some for the direct benefit of others?

Most important is my charge of hypocrisy.

I don't know where most

of these letter writers reside in Aurora, but chances are good that the ones who complain about not being able to easily navigate through the Yonge and Wellington intersection are not from the old part of town.

Until they also start calling for their neighbourhoods to be overhauled to make their roads straighter and more accessible to other town residents; until they start petitioning council to change the road layouts in new subdivisions so that they are less maze-like before being built; their comments should be given all the consideration due to hypocrites.

Or is it really okay for their neighbourhoods to be limited access but not others?

Finally with regard to last week's letter by Joshy Kallungal, who happens to be one of the Aurorans who is challenged by the Yonge

and Wellington intersection, I find his use of the P. Eng designation in his signature to be somewhat cynical and disingenuous.

P. Eng denotes a professional engineer which in this context would imply that Mr. Kallungal has some related engineering background which lends some authority to his statements.

A quick search on the PEO website, however, reveals that he is, in fact, a retired chemical engineer. Hardly a branch of engineering that provides any expertise in these matters.

I, too, am an engineer.

I have a degree in electrical engineering and I hope that everyone gives the same appropriate weight to my electrical degree as they do to Mr. Kallungal's chemical degree with regard to these civil matters.

Darryl Moore, P. Eng.,
Aurora

Thank you to all who helped from the Aurora Food Pantry

To the editor,

As we close another year, it is with very thankful hearts we are able to say we have always had enough food to meet each week's need as people come to the Aurora Food Pantry.

Thank you to all who supported us in the last years.

The companies, organizations, schools, those who had parties and individuals who drop off at stores, fire-halls, churches and those who bring directly to the Food Pantry.

It is greatly appreciated.

Also, thank you to those who shared produce from their gardens this summer. This is a great help.

I would like to thank all

the volunteers who give of their time to man the Food Pantry each week.

A special group who come for their community service hours are the high school students.

This can be heavy and tiring work which they do so willingly. Thank You.

I wish I could thank all individually but this is impossible as there are many behind the scenes doing important jobs we know little about.

May we all continue in the coming year to make Aurora the wonderful place it is to live in.

Thank you, all.

Lorna Rummenie
Director
Aurora Food Pantry

Confusing wording

To the editor,

In recent advertisements to fill positions vacated by staff who have moved on to greener pastures, the mayor has chosen to attempt to lure talented professionals to our Town by referring to Aurora as "Hip, Upscale and Well-Educated".

Is that supposed to attract talent?

I would much rather see my Town referred to as "Prosperous, Caring and Well Managed", but then again, we can't say that, can we?

S. Lee
Aurora

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Letter to the Editor

Ruth Johnson is remembered

To the editor,

The Aurora High School alumni and many senior residents of Aurora were saddened to learn of the passing of Ruth (nee Knowles) Johnson recently, another well liked, honoured student who attended Aurora High School on Wells Street during the 1942 - 1948 period.

Her younger sister, Nora (nee Knowles) McRoberts, also an A.H.S. alumni, passed away earlier this year in March.

They were born and raised on Catherine Avenue, and were an integral part of "the doings" on Catherine in the thirties.

Maxine (McKenzie) Nisbet grew up living next door to the Knowles family and it is with fond memories that I recall "The Playhouse" upstairs in the attic of the McKenzie house.

Many happy hours were spent "playing house" with Maxine, Ruth, and Nora.

Maxine had three wonderful older sisters, Margaret, Dorothy, and Pauline, who were most generous in giving us their cast off clothes, shoes, hats, and jewelry.

What fun we had and what good memories of those wonderful days.

After graduating from A.H.S., Ruth and Nora went on to university and became teachers.

Nora taught at the Oak Ridges School and eventually married her principal Mac McRoberts.

They bought the Sisman home on Catherine Ave., and raised two sons, Bob and Joe.

Both boys went on to

become math teachers (like their grandfather). Bob is the head of the math department at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School.

Joe and family live in Ecuador where he is teaching math. Bob and his family live in "the Knowles House" on Catherine Ave.

While attending A.H.S. Ruth and Nora were active in all the activities of the school - such as the Glee Club, Cadet Corps, Drama, Sports, and the popular Friday Night Teenage Club.

Another good memory I have: During A.H.S. days in 1948 our senior Girls Basketball Team met Newmarket H.S. in the championship finals.

Due to the keen rivalry between our teams it was decided by the officials that the game should be played on a neutral court. St. Andrews was chosen and arrangements were made for the game.

It was a keenly played game with A.H.S. winning. I am glad that Ruth and I were members of that team, as well as Florence (Bell) Atkinson, another dear friend who has passed on. Our team photo hangs on the wall at the school today.

Ruth and Nora were daughters of Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Knowles. Mr. Knowles was the principal of A.H.S. and also taught mathematics. David was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Norm Johnson. Mr. Johnson was the science instructor at A.H.S.

The irony was that David and Ruth were classmates all through high school but it wasn't until they attended university that a romance blossomed!

My mother was well

known for having bridal showers and she had one for Ruth and David. It was well attended, mostly by Catherine Ave. folk.

Those of us who knew Ruth well were aware of her kindness and unselfish effort and support to her husband David at the time of Mr. Johnson's failing health.

After his death they continued to assist, support and help Mrs. Ada Johnson up until she moved into Park Place Manor in her 100th year. She has resided at Park Place for several years.

Ruth and David have maintained a close supportive relationship with Mrs. Johnson since her move to the Manor.

At the time of our Alumni reunion in 1988 Mrs. Johnson spoke on behalf of Mr. Knowles and her husband, Mr. Johnson, who were both deceased. She received a standing ovation which lasted nearly five minutes. She was voted the Alumni's favourite senior resident.

During one of our visits when Mrs. Johnson was still living in her house, I dropped off a photo that I came across of her older son, Ted. Ted looked so handsome in his cadet uniform.

We had a nice visit and she spoke so lovingly of David and Ruth stating their unconditional love and support over the years. She referred to her "beloved daughter-in-law".

After retiring from teaching, Nora became very involved in community work such as the Cancer Society (she was appointed captain).

She helped with activities in the United Church and was named "Citizen

of the Year" in 1987. Nora enjoyed her grandchildren, Marnie and Kyle. She was delighted that they just lived up the street from them.

She was glad when Joe married and she had another grandchild named Aaron.

Years ago Nora wrote a book: "A collection of Apple Recipes Book #1". She wrote on it "To Jolyne - a friend of many years, enjoy cooking! Love Nora".

I am so privileged to have a copy of her book.

After the passing of Mr. Knowles, the girls inaugurated a mathematics award in memory of their father.

It is awarded annually at the Commencement Exercises at Dr. Williams Secondary School.

Each year we meet at Williams at the reception as our family presents an athletic award in memory of our brother Gar who was an outstanding athlete.

Over the years faces change at the commencement but it was always a constant that either Ruth or Nora would be there. I looked forward to our visit, as did my brother Claire.

A few years ago Nora's grandson, Kyle, won Gar's award. Nora and Mac were very pleased and proud of their grandson.

Ruth leaves her dearly loved husband Dave, her

daughter Jennifer who was a real joy to her, and sons John, Bruce, and Bud of whom she was very proud. She loved to tell me of her lovely eight grandchildren. She also leaves a dearly loved mother-in-law, Mrs. Ada Johnson.

I learned of Ruth's passing from Maxine (Nisbet). It was such a shock and personal loss to both of us.

I was unable to sleep and decided to write a few thoughts and memories of these super girls who contributed greatly in the early years.

They will be remembered not only by the

Alumni but by many Aurora folk. I will always remember the beautiful countenance that each girl possessed, a trait acquired from their lovely mother, Mrs. Ivy Knowles.

Sometime, if you take a drive up lovely Catherine Avenue, note just east of Fleury Street, the third house on the north side, a lovely red brick house with a historical plaque on the wall stating "The Knowles House".

This is where it all began 80 years ago.

Jolyne (Doolittle) Bernardo
Mount Forest

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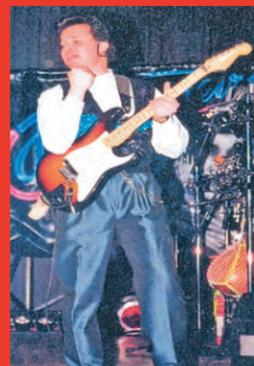
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This Holy Season, please take the time to stop and remember and reminisce, be thankful for all we share; family, friends and good neighbours, food on our tables and the privilege of living in the great little Town of Aurora.

When all is said and done, this is the true Spirit of Christmas!

The very best to all in 2009!

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Evelyn

Letters to the Editor

Dad was included in this old picture

To the editor,

I recently received a clipping of "The Aurora Boys", part of the 5th Canadian Division.

This photo includes my father, George E. Richardson, and his close friend Harold R. Baber, beside him.

Baber was killed in action but has three nephews living in the Newmarket and Stouffville areas: Basil, Jack and Harry.

My father survived WW I and returned to take an active part in farming at the family farm at Vandorf and civic duties in

Whitchurch Township and York Region councils.

They were both signallers in the Machine Gun Corps of the 198th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force.

There are other familiar names in the photo, one being N.F. Johnson.

I think that this man

may be Norman Johnson, who taught many of your readers at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School.

I had seen this photo in the Aurora Legion and have it digitally to include in our family history.

The article (Vol. 9, No. 3) about the Jack Woods

house is of interest to me also, as this was the site of my great, great, great grandfather's home, Capt. William Graham, of the Duke of Cumberland's Regiment of Foot during the American Revolution, later Lt. Col. of the 1st York Militia during the War of 1812 -1814.

Capt. Graham came from Nova Scotia to work as master carpenter on the government buildings at York during Gov. John Graves Simcoe's term of office. He was a United Empire Loyalist.

As noted in the article his son, Adam Graham, twin brother of my ancestor Peter Graham, also lived there, making the house bigger on the old foundation.

A family story has it that Unis Graham, William's wife, being well along in her pregnancy, went to bring home the cows, but returned with the twin boys in her apron, having given birth in the pasture field.

I'm not sure how the cows fared that day!

Your paper looks interesting with the good historical articles.

Hot Spot for kids now 17 years old

I can hardly believe that Hot Spot Youth Club is 17 years old, older by far than any of the children who spend their Friday evenings with us.

Having a weekly place for Grades 6 to 8 children to relax and have fun while practicing positive social skills seemed

like a relatively simple idea.

It wasn't easy to do and never would have happened without the wonderful community support we received.

Our sincere thanks to the Aurora Optimists and the Opti-Mrs. for their early support; and to the

Town for allowing us to use the Community Centre so that we could get on our feet.

Ron Wallace, as our Public School Trustee, really wanted to believe that we could do it and has supported us from the beginning.

Thank you to the many

volunteer parents who helped us through those first hard years.

After that an incredibly dedicated youth staff worked hard and demonstrated great capability.

And it means so much that Kevin and Vanessa are still involved.

The dedication of the

Temple family has been really amazing!

We've worked very hard for the last 16 years running bingos in order to pay the operating expenses and to not have to ask for help.

With the closing of the Bingo Hall our future is uncertain; but we haven't given up the fight.

Plan doesn't include visits

To the editor,

Until we have a process in place where all seniors are treated with respect and dignity, their families are not fearful of reprisals against their institutionalized parents when they speak up for appropriate care, and the issues of neglect and abuse in long-term institutions becomes

non-existent, there is little comfort in knowing there is further expansion of nursing home beds in this province.

Seniors are fearful to leave their homes.

Not only have they followed media coverage about the dangers in long-term facilities, but they hear about the disturbing experiences first hand

from friends in nursing homes.

Governments have been aware of the crisis in home care for years and now seniors are to expect some assistance will "roll out over the next four years".

It will never come soon enough for countless numbers of seniors who live day by day with meagre

assistance, trying to stay out of nursing homes.

The Aging at Home Strategy that is supposed to enable seniors remain in their own homes does not include one of the most crucial elements - in-home primary care physician visits.

Ellen Watson
Aurora

Wendy Gaertner
Aurora

Bill Richardson
Uxbridge



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A Christmas message

As we share the joy and friendship on this holiest of days
I wonder if we will ever get it and show the world the way.

We shuffle through the malls in flight to spend on those we love,
When we really should be releasing joy through the feather of the dove.

There is no money needed to enjoy the belief in peace
It's the past we must move forward from and give that time release.

It's the compassion we need to pass on to others and to not is the danger
We need to remember how to shine as a gift given in a manger.

So look to someone every day on and on these words reflect
And say to them I give you gifts of inclusion, empathy and respect.

Dave Heard
Aurora

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Senior Scape



"High Tea" needs more space

By BRIAN WARBURTON

Merry Christmas, gentle reader, and have a happy New Year!

In this busy season leading to the great Christmas festival, declining values of homes and stock market equities have aroused fear and even terror in the minds of some seniors.

Seniors feel helpless and can find nobody to turn to for help or even sound advice, because nobody knows how this financial confusion will play out, and I feel deeply for those who are experiencing worry and distress.

Advice on what to do must be tailor made for each of us and at this time, even those viewed as experts are confounded by the immensity of the convoluted and extremely intricate machinations of world financial markets, marching stubbornly to the beat of an unfamiliar drum.

On a more positive note the realization that the daylight now lengthens with each passing day provides some measure of cheerful comfort.

Weak sunlight at this time of the year fights gallantly to drive back the cold and dark winter nights, and the result will show in the coming weeks.

And in the heart of the seniors' centre, life will continue on, changing in rhythm with the seasons and with the inexorable passage of time.

What has happened to

our world in this passing year is now history and is locked in the past securely and with finality, but the Seniors' Centre will always try to provide a kind environment no matter how hard and cruel the world may be.

However, the future is always ripe for the young at heart and is open to our senior interpretation, to our intervention, our construction and the finest endeavours of everybody who wants to make life congenial in our fraternity of seniors!

The Canadian Cancer Society invites you to an informational afternoon Thursday, January 8, between 2 p.m. and 3.30 p.m.

This presentation will offer information on the progress of cancer research, and the direction of future research.

The Cancer Society accomplishes its mission with support from donors and offers gift planning ways to minimize estate taxes.

A "High Tea" at the centre was overflowing with seniors all in a merry and festive frame of mind.

Entertainment by George St Kitts was excellent and in this crowded environment with all spaces occupied, I quite by chance, was seated next to George as he performed, and in my judgment he is always good.

Charles Sequeira and Town Staff received a call to provide a larger hall for the next event, which is a

necessity to allow such a popular function to evolve as it promises to do.

Though simple in concept, this High Tea was outstanding and the quality, tone and ambience of this afternoon were splendid.

The Evergreen Choir directed by Enid Maize performed a sequence of Christmas choral arrangements in a delightful manner.

The choir warmed the audience with the first arrangements followed by Bud and Stella Switzer, an excellent couple who combine in a very pleasing and entertaining style.

The Straw Carol was performed by Doug Riley and is

music I am unfamiliar with but enjoyed greatly, and which was very well received by the crowded audience complete with digital cameras and camcorders.

Doug's wife Doreen was the accomplished accompanist and performed admirably each of the arrangements she played.

Sylvia Neal tenderly and lovingly sang the beautiful Ave Maria and Frank Hawkins' powerful voice rendered Birthday of a King very well, accompanied by his wife Margie for this arrangement.

The choir sang after each solo or duet and on occasion the audience was

invited to join in for several of the well known carols.

The choir is composed of seniors and is an experienced and enthusiastic group numbering about thirty for this performance.

Choir Director Enid Maize is always alert for new talent and can be reached at 905-841-9706.

The seniors' centre will close at noon December 24th and reopen Monday, January 5th at 9 a.m.

The Centre will open for the New Year's dance Wednesday, December 31st.

I wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Brown planning budget meeting

Newly-elected Newmarket-Aurora Member of Parliament Lois Brown wants to hear your views and priorities for the upcoming federal budget.

So she's planning to hold a Pre-Budget Consultation Town Hall meeting in Aurora.

The event will take place Thursday, January 8, in the Aurora Council Chambers, located at 1 Municipal Drive beginning at 7.30 p.m.

"I'm asking residents in Newmarket and Aurora to participate in the important budget process by attending a Pre-Budget Consultation meeting," said Ms Brown. "Federal budget

2009 is a crucial step towards our economic recovery and it's essential we have input and direction from the public. All comments, verbal and written, are welcome and will be forwarded directly to the Minister of Finance, Jim Flaherty."

Participants interested in making a formal deputation will need to pre-register.

Everyone in attendance will have an opportunity to provide their input.

For more information or to pre-register, contact Lois Brown's Constituency Office at 905-953-7515 or e-mail her at Brownlo@parl.gc.ca.

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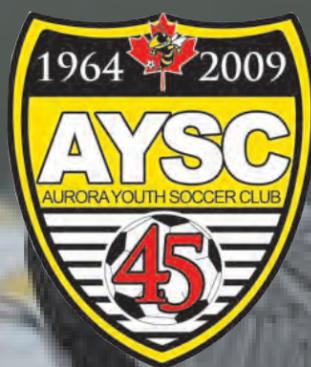
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THE AURORAN SPORTS

Tigers win one, storm cancels another

A Provincial Junior A hockey game between the Villanova Knights and the Aurora Tigers was one of at least 14 games cancelled Friday night when a winter storm whipped through southern Ontario, dumping almost a foot of snow on Aurora.

But the Tigers made up for it one night later when they defeated the Upper Canada Hockey Club 6-2 after jumping into a 5-0 lead after 40 minutes of play.

A game played Sunday afternoon at the Community Centre where Aurora hosted the Collingwood Blues was too late for results to appear in this issue.

While the weather was threatening Sunday morning there was no indication at press time that the game would be cancelled.

Make-up for the cancelled games Friday night has not been announced.

Saturday night, Aurora got a pair of goals from

Kyle McLaughlin, and singles from Dominic Monardo, Nick Vangog, Tyler Virgoe and David Morley as they racked up the rather easy victory.

The goal, plus an assist by Monardo, allowed him to keep three-point lead in the Tiger scoring race.

He now has 25 goals and 29 assists for 54 points, staying ahead of teammate Morley, who also added two points on Saturday to bring his individual record to 51 points.

Michael Sardella had a pair of assists to maintain his third place standing in the scoring race with a total of 49 points.

Following Sunday's game, Tigers will take a Christmas break and will not return to the Aurora Community Centre until Friday, January 9, when they meet the Georgetown Raiders.

That game begins at 7.30 p.m.

In the meantime, they travel to Collingwood to meet the Blues January

2, then head to Villanova to meet the Knights for a game January 4.

Saturday, January 10, they meet the Beehives in Dixie, then the following day head to Collingwood for another meeting with the Blues.

A - Dominic Monardo (Morley, Sardella) 5.24

A - Nick Vangog (Virgoe) 8.38

A - Tyler Virgoe (Mooney) 14.10

A - Kyle McLaughlin (Morley, Monardo) 19.11

Third Period

UC - Justin Brooks (Martin) 7.25

A - David Morley (Sardella, Monardo) 9.04

UC - Nikita Poliakov (Solomon) 13.17

AURORA 6 UPPER CANADA 2

First Period

A - Kyle McLaughlin (Bushbacher, Trainor) 13.37

Second Period

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AURORA MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION



Results to Sunday, December 21

House League Novice

206 Caravan Kids Penguins 8 - Nicholas Vamvakaris 6G 2A, Raffaele Parente 2G 3A, Thomas Morra 2A, Christopher Foschia 2A, Benjamin Pitre 1A. **205 Caravan Kids Leafs 2** - Vaughan Hewgill 1G, Evan Bryan 1G, Christian Ridd 1A.

202 Caravan Kids Bruins 4 - Christopher Walsh 3G 1A, Vince Rotondi 1G, Jack Campbell 1A, Matthew Romano 1A. **204 Caravan Kids Flyers 3** - Dillon Varone 2G, Paul Cotturo 1G, Adam Wochenmarkt 2A, Ethan Cohen 2A, Liam Patterson 1A, Kyle Kasak 1A.

201 0. 203 0.

206 Caravan Kids Penguins 5 - Nicholas Vamvakaris 2G, Colin Windle 1G 1A, Callum Gorrell 1G, Thomas Morra 1G, Alexander Mueller 2A, Raffaele Parente 2A, Teigan Avery 1A. **203 Carvan Kids Senators 2** - Chris Sands 1G, Jake Carson 1G, Ryan Ruuskanen 1A, Justin Carcone 1A, Kenzie MacMillan 1A.

205 Caravan Kids Leafs 4 - Evan Bryan 1G 1A, Dylan Clark 1G 2A, Tristan Hicks 1G 1A, Dane Kerckamp 1A, Justin Stewart 1A, Jack Fournier 1A, Vaughan Hewgill 1A. **204 Caravan Kids Flyers 1** - Brendan Dodd 1G.

201 Caravan Kids Flames 5 - Ben Godber 1G, William Reid 1G, Nick Robinson 1G, Lucas Alberico 1G, Keegan Fisher 1G 1A, Adam Dipiero 3A, Noah Cepelak 1A, Jack Hosmer 2A. **202 Caravan Kids Bruins 2** - Wayne Freeman 1G, Matthew Winters 1G, Jacob Yap 1A, Shayne Colin 1A, Nicholas Huxley 1A.

Rep League

Newmarket Redmen Atom AE 4. Aurora Tigers Atom AE 2 - Keegan Matthew 1G, Jeffrey McKay 1G, Zachary Fletcher 1A, Charles Bennett 1A, Tristan Kuchar 1A.

Aurora Tigers Minor Bantam A 6 - Matthew Pryse 2G 2A, Ryan Baskin 2G, Eric Damecour 1G 2A, Quincy Ing 1G 1A, Eric Archibald 2A, Vincent Ruscica 1A, Braden Casselden 1A. **Markham Waxers 1.**

Aurora Tigers Minor Bantam A 5 - Eric Archibald 1G 1A, Ryan Baskin 1G 1A, Andrew McDonald 1G 1A, Vincent Ruscica 1G, Evan Romano 1G, Matthew Pryse 1A, Eric Damecour 1A. **Richmond Hill Stars 5.**

Aurora Tigers Minor Bantam A 2 - Eric Archibald 1G, Quincy Ing 1G, Matthew Pryse 1A, Eric Damecour 1A. **Stouffville Clippers 2.**

Aurora Tigers Minor Bantam A 6 - Andrew McDonald 2G 1A, Ryan Baskin 1G 1A, Eric Archibald 1G 1A, Matthew Pryse 1G, Casey Severini 1G, Vincent Ruscica 2A, Eric Damecour 2A, Collin Laird 1A. Shutout - Ethan Slimkowich. **Orillia Terriers 0.**

Georgina 4. Aurora Tigers Midget AE 2 - Patrick Che 1G, Shea McGlone 1G, Justin Killens 1A, Mattheus Vloet 1A, James Sendel 1A.

Aurora Tigers Midget AE 5 - Stephen Di Nallo 2G, Andrew McKay 1G 2A, Mike Madigan 1G, Mattheus Vloet 1G, James Sendel 1A, Alex Heintzman 1A, Justin Killens 1A. **Stouffville Clippers 3.**

Aurora Tigers Midget AE 4 - Jake Boyle 2G, Patrick Che 1G 2A, James Sendel 1G, Stephen Di Nallo 2A, Andrew McKay 1A. **TNT Tornadoes 3.**

Monday night men's hockey

TEAM	W	L	T	F	A	Pts
Highland Chev-Cad	9	3	1	53	30	19
Tom & Jerry's	7	4	2	52	40	16
FPL Aggregates	7	5	1	47	46	15
Baldwin's	7	5	1	53	45	15
Priestly Demolition	5	6	2	48	44	12
Masterclean Cont.	5	7	1	45	52	11
Law Insurance Bkrs.	4	8	1	36	55	9
Rec Cycle N' Sports	3	9	1	30	50	7

WEEKLY SCORES

Law Insurance	4	Highlands Chev	4
Tom & Jerry's	1	FPL Aggregates	0
Priestly Demolition	6	Baldwin's	5
Masterclean Con.	2	Rec Cycle	2

PLAYER STANDINGS

NAME	G	A	Pts
Jody Matthews	10	13	23
Tom Hussey	10	13	23
Todd Richardson	15	7	22
Mark Swirla	10	11	21
John Archibald	14	5	19
Jason Muise	12	5	17
Brad McMillan	9	8	17
Steve Kavanah	7	10	17
Rob Blakely	9	6	15
Craig McConnell	9	6	15
Dean Iwai	9	6	15
Pat O'Mahony	6	9	15
Darren Yaremko	4	10	14
Bruce Chappell	1	13	14
Ed Kilroy	6	7	13
Mark Inglis	4	9	13
Chris Neale	8	4	12
Mike O'Conner	8	4	12
Scott Crabbe	4	8	12
Ken Rumble	4	8	12
Hugh Alcorn	1	11	12
Vince Greco	7	4	11
Dave Caverley	6	5	11
Steve Robertson	5	6	11
Charlie Steenhorst	2	9	11
Ken Fisher	3	7	10
Joel Reeves	2	8	10
Mark Sedore	2	8	10
Pat Davies	7	2	9
Dwayne Smith	6	3	9
Gerald Briand	3	6	9
Ed Jackson	4	5	9
Doug Adair	3	6	9
Scott Pogue	3	6	9
Scott Thomas	2	7	9
Mike Caicco	1	8	9
Peter Briand	5	3	8
John Yaremko	5	3	8
Ron Van Noort	4	4	8
Paul Gibson	3	5	8
Steven MacDonald	2	6	8
Brandon Chappell	5	2	7
Jerome Flanigan	2	5	7
Raz Khamissa	4	3	7
Derek Preston	4	3	7
Alain Boudreau	3	4	7
Ron Thiessen	3	4	7
Darryl Thompson	3	4	7
John Anderson	2	5	7
Jason Holbert	2	5	7

By ROBERT REVINGTON

Anyone looking to improve their golf game—regardless of what month it is—can try the Aurora Golf Improvement Lab Environment (AGILE).

Located on 160 Wellington Street East, in the same space being used by York Executive Fitness, the unique program is led by certified golf instructor Brian Morrissey.

AGILE bills itself as the home of "body motion golf".

As the program's website explains, "If you move your body the same way every time, you will get the same results every time".

This concept forms the basis for AGILE's year-round golf improvement training.

AGILE's top tool is the use of 3D body motion analysis, which is powered by Zenolink—a leader in sports body motion.

Other techniques used by AGILE include analyses of putters and putting style and mental golf workshops.

They also offer 2D video analysis of swing mechanics, ball flight statistics on a launch monitor, and other training methods.

According to Morrissey, the concept started eight years ago.

"I realized that people who wanted to improve their golf game needed a simpler system than those that I had seen or been taught as a Golf Professional," he said.

In evidence, Morrissey explained, "Thirty years ago, the average score was about 98 for an 18-hole round. "After 30 years

of research and technology applied to golf, the average score in 2007 was still 98".

Morrissey said, "Those facts were my motivation to develop my new system called the GOLFE Power Vest—which stands for Golf Physique Enhancement".

Morrissey spent a long time studying to perfect the system—culminating in a three-year stay in Georgia.

At AGILE, Morrissey uses an approach to golf coaching he refers to as The Hexagon of Player Development.

The six components of the hexagon are Basic Instruction, Course Management, Mental/Emotional, Physical Conditioning, Equipment, and Shot Making Skill.

"This system is the simplest way to learn or improve golf quickly," he said.

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Senior Games hockey players meet sponsor

Seven of the 15 hockey players who represented this area at last summer's Canada Senior Games hockey tournament in New Brunswick, met their sponsor last week.

Known as York-Team Klees, the team, all players over 65 years of age, was the first over 65 team from Ontario to participate in the games.

During their meeting, players presented Frank Klees, Newmarket-Aurora MPP, with his own hockey shirt, socks and photo of the team in his Aurora constituency office.

The games were held in Dieppe, New Brunswick.

More than 1,500 participants competed in 20 different sports events, representing different areas of Canada.

The oldest person participating at the event was a woman from Alberta. Her event was javelin.

She was 96 years old.

Aurora's Alex Ansell was behind the organization of the squad.

He sought players from the York Oldtimers Hockey League's over 60 division and they were asked if they

Aurora Seniors Duplicate Bridge

Monday, December 8: N/S - Sheldon Fast and Eva Guttman; Dennis McFadden and Frank Lablans; Murray Sinclair and Don Newman. E/W - Rose White and Gloria Smith; Inger Kamel and Priscilla Hull; Zeta Corry and Jeannine Mackie.

Monday, December 15: N/S - Bonnie Scheel and Melody Irving; Sheldon Fast and Eva Guttman; Frank Lablans and Dennis McFadden. E/W - Inger Kamel and Priscilla Hull; Rose White and Gloria Smith; Ev Dickie and Audrey Robertson.

were interested in playing and a team was selected.

Representation came from the Newmarket No Stars, Aurora Oldtimers and Aurora Bookends teams.

To prepare for the event, a number of practices were held against younger members of the over 60 division.

"Many thanks are extended to Frank Klees for arranging for sponsorship of the uniforms for the team," Ansell said. "They are distinctive."

The next Canada Senior Games will be hosted by Brockville, Ontario, in August, 2010, and it is hoped York will be represented at that one, he said.

Seven of the 15-member York-Team Klees players who participated in last summer's Canada Senior Games met their sponsor in Aurora last week. In photo at left seated are, left to right, Don Munro, Norm Smart and Alex Ansell. Standing, left to right, are George Buffett, Paul Tomlinson, Frank Klees, Ken Wilkinson and George Sled. Above photo shows Klees displaying the sweater the team presented to him during the meeting.

Auroran photos by Ron Wallace

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Brian Morrissey

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RUMOURS AND RAMBLINGS

Police takeover of buildings irks politicians

Regional government did not come easy to York Region as local politicians fought to save their own autonomy and the creation of a regional police force by combining local police forces was an example.

When the regional force took over the police buildings in Aurora, Sutton, Keswick and Vidor there were cries of confiscation without compensation from local politicians.

The buildings in question were taken over by the region because more than 40 per cent of the premises were occupied by the local police force, while other police departments did not occupy that amount of space so the region paid rent to the local municipality which owned them.

At regional council, Aurora was successful in gaining support for a motion that when the police buildings that had been taken over by the region were no longer needed, they would revert back to the local municipality at no cost.

Aurora Legion column

COST OF CAR OWNERSHIP

The cost will be higher today but in September, 1995, faster depreciation and higher gasoline taxes helped to drive the annual cost of owning a typical car to more than \$7,700 in 1995 or about 32.1 cents a kilometre.

The annual survey carried out by the Canadian Automotive Association noted that cost increases for Canadian motorists outpaced inflation in 1995 and motorists paid \$911.75 more than they did in 1994 to own and operate a car.

Gas and oil, maintenance and regular tires were estimated to cost about \$2,112 for the year, while ownership costs including insurance, depreciation, financing and snow tires totalled \$5,602.

Regular unleaded gas was estimated at 58.4 cents a litre, up from 52.4 cents in 1994.

BOXING DAY QUIET IN 1986

In spite of the furor over stores opening on Boxing Day in Barrie things were relatively quiet in York Region on December 26, 1986.

According to York Regional Police only five stores in the region were documented as being open illegally the day after Christmas.

Even then, police said the stores would not be charged until the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs had an opportunity to examine police reports.

No stores in the Aurora-Newmarket area were found by police to be illegally open, but several operations in the south of the region were found to be in violation of provincial law limiting store openings on Boxing Day.

According to police the stores that were open were habitual offenders that were always open on Sundays and holidays.

CODE OF CONDUCT PROBLEMS

Aurora Council's Code of Conduct has yet to be tried, but problems could occur similar to those experienced by the Toronto District School Board last summer.

The trustees gave themselves the power to ban any of their fellow trustees from attending the board's private meetings and receiving confidential information if the board decides the trustee has broken the Code of Ethics, including leaking private information.

But elected politicians banning other elected politicians from attending meetings of the body they have been elected to is an affront to democracy and the constituents who elected them.

DEMS: dangerous way to make a living

By IAN SWEET
Aurora Legion

DEMS? Who?

They were known as "DEMS" Ratings - a select group of World War II non-commissioned naval personnel who served in a relatively unknown but special branch of the Royal Canadian Navy.

Most everyone is familiar with the courageous feats and dedication of the Canadian Merchant Navy (MN).

To serve on merchant ships during wartime was to expose oneself to extreme danger, often in excess of that experienced on warships, the reason being that the speed was slow and your maneuverability was limited.

Cargoes more often than not consisted of high explosives, bombs, high octane gasoline and other extremely dangerous materials all necessary for the war effort.

Most importantly, the merchant ships were the main target for the marauding U-boats and everyone knew this.

Because of the inherent danger it was fitting that Canadian merchant seamen were given recognition for their wartime contributions.

It was something long overdue but many Canadians do not realize that these merchant seamen were not alone on these dangerous and often fatal voyages.

They were accompanied by a small contingent of highly trained (and mostly young) naval ratings who volunteered to serve on the merchant ships to assist in defending them against enemy action from the sea and air.

This special group was known as DEMS ratings. The term was derived from "Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships (DEMS).

The term "Ratings" in the naval service applies to Non-

Commissioned rank.

Most naval gunners were non-commissioned and operated aboard their assigned ships without benefit of supervision by naval officers.

Some ships had a non-commissioned petty officer as the senior gun layer. Others had a Leading Seaman (LS) as the highest naval person aboard.

Most DEMS gunners were Ordinary (OS) and Able Seaman (AB) who had all volunteered, demonstrating their abilities to act without supervision and qualification by way of written and practical examinations in order to serve as a DEMS gunner.

In the early years of the war it was not uncommon for a single DEMS rating to be handed a stripped down "Lewis" machine gun and then placed aboard a merchant ship with instructions to protect it as best he could against enemy aircraft.

As war years progressed, so did the training of this special force and the number of DEMS ratings placed aboard a merchant ship increased in proportion to the size of the ship and consideration of the armament it contained.

The popular 10,000 ton "Park" ships (our counterpart of the American "Liberty" ships) would have approximately seven or eight DEMS gunners aboard.

Merchant sailors were often given quickie courses by the DEMS ratings personnel to assist them in passing ammunition and where possible, in the operation of the gun(s).

During the final years of the war, a typical "Park" ship or large tankers would be armed with multiple machine guns, 20 mm Oerlikons, 50 calibre anti-aircraft machine guns, 12 pounder and 4 inch high angle anti-aircraft deck guns and in some cases, a 4.7 inch low angle naval desk armament. Rockets and aerial

mines, if aboard, were also the responsibility of the DEMS ratings.

In the gunnery training on machine guns, each DEMS rating had to be able to disassemble and reassemble the many types of large calibre machine guns while blindfolded.

Also, each rating had to qualify in all of the large gun positions which required up to seven gunners to operate efficiently.

On such large guns, DEMS ratings had to demonstrate that if the gun crew was reduced down to three by loss to injury or wounding, that the gun could be kept operational.

Why would any naval rating want such a job? Each sailor had his own reason and most would probably say "adventure" and travel as merchantmen sailed everywhere.

Of course "everywhere" meant the North Atlantic, the dangerous Murmansk run and the Japanese warship-infested South Pacific. DEMS ratings had few choices.

For the most part you went where the Navy thought you were needed the most. This could take you to all parts of the world.

Merchant seamen had one main advantage over DEMS ratings. They received bonus pay for dangerous crossings. In some cases this was substantial.

The Murmansk run purportedly paid up to \$1,000 to each merchant seaman aboard when the trip was completed. This was in addition to the seaman's pay. The DEMS rating was only

given his regular pay (approximately \$1.45 per day, depending on his particular naval rating).

There were other small benefits.

Because merchant ships often had neutral country destinations, it would be unlawful, technically speaking, for military personnel to be given shore leave in such countries. For this reason, each DEMS gunner rating upon boarding a merchant ship was required to sign on as a seaman (as opposed to a military person).

Sea tradition calls for each sailor to be paid and accordingly DEMS personnel were paid 15 cents per day for each day aboard.

Another benefit was that DEMS gunners were permitted to maintain a full complement of clothing and were given minor clothing allowance and an extra sea bag for containment of this gear.

This was necessary because, if in a neutral port, if any gunner was to go ashore in his naval uniform, he would in all probability be interred as a combatant in an otherwise neutral country.

DEMS personnel represented less than two percent of our Canadian naval personnel, however, their casualty rate was high by comparison due to the significant amount of casualties suffered aboard the type of ships they served on.

Aurora Legion member Don Dempsey Sr., RCNVR, served as a DEMS rating from 1944 to the end of WWII on the West Indies convoys.



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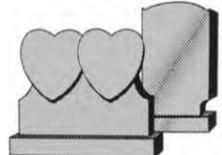
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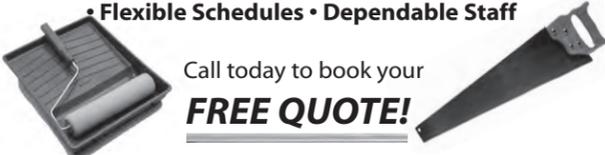
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Recreation Plan

From page 1

This development could also be associated with a new Youth Centre, the need for which ranked highly in the survey. These could potentially be housed in the Leisure Complex, if the existing Club Aurora fitness facility is moved to the new Rec Centre.

Soccer continues to be one of the biggest sports in Aurora, with more than 4,100 registered players. The town has 36 soccer fields, and makes use of 40 private fields. It was suggested existing fields be improved, and additional land be obtained for future use in the event that some of the private fields no longer are available.

It was recommended that over the next five years, one hardball diamond be added to the current 16 baseball diamonds. Also required will be new tennis and basketball courts, especially in areas that are currently under-served.

There are currently 32 playgrounds in Aurora.

The ideal situation is for residents to have unobstructed access to a playground within 800 metres of their home. Playgrounds will need to be added as the town grows. A barrier-free playground should also be established for children with disabilities and special needs.

No new dog parks are recommended, although it was noted these facilities provide important social opportunities, and are as much for people as they are for pets. Therefore, improvements should be made to the current park in the form of lighting and benches.

As one of the highest ranking leisure activities, the town's trail system should be expanded by improving the connectivity between key destinations. A Master Plan for Trails should be considered.

As a final recommendation, the draft plan notes that additional parkland should be obtained, and more community parks are needed.

Following the presentation at the meeting, the public was invited to provide comments.

One resident noted that much of the proposed expansion was in the east end of town, and asked that the developed areas of town be considered.

It was also suggested more natural land be protected, and efforts be made to replant these with trees indigenous to the area. Once planted, the town will be wasting a lot of money, unless the trees are properly cared for and maintained.

In response to another question, the consultants noted that the need for a curling rink in town did not rank highly in the survey, so none was proposed. However, if a suitable business case was presented, it would be considered by LSAC.

One resident observed that while there are a lot of organized sports groups in town, there's no voice for parks and trails, even though

their importance ranked highly with all residents.

He asked that more funding be allocated to trails, both to link gaps in the existing trail system, and to add underpasses at major roadways to improve safety.

On baseball, one person noted that contrary to the consultants' observation that interest in this sport was declining, he was aware of statistics that showed it was growing rapidly.

As a final observation, one resident noted that the five-year plan was good, but planners need to be thinking 100 years into the future.

The consultant wound up by noting that the final plan was a guiding document, and that each recommendation would need to be brought forward by town staff, for approval, as required.

Following this presentation, the IBI Group presented their Draft Pricing Policy for Recreation Services.

It was noted the town should offer recreational facilities that are not generally offered by the private sector. Pricing should not preclude or diminish participation.

It costs the town \$10.2 million to operate all its recreation facilities, programs and services.

Of this, \$1.8 million goes toward areas that cannot be associated with specific users, such as parks. Of the remaining amount, \$4.7 million is recovered by the town through user fees, while the town covers the remaining \$3.7 million.

Overall, it was felt the town's recreational facilities and programs were adequately priced, and the town is achieving an appropriate level of cost recovery.

Therefore, proposed fee increases are minimal.

Increases averaging less than \$2 per class are recommended to be phased in for about 25 programs, including the use of ball diamonds and sport fields.

No increases are recommended for the pools or ice surfaces.

Once the proposed increases are phased in, this would generate approximately \$48,000 more per year for the town, although this does not factor in inflation.

It was also noted that only operating, and not capital, costs were considered in the pricing policy.

The consultants will consider the evening's comments for both the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the draft Pricing Policy for Recreation Services.

Both documents will be placed on the LSAC agenda for January 22, and residents will have a final opportunity for input.

It is hoped that a final recommendation for council's approval will come out of that meeting.

If residents would like to provide further comments, these documents will be available on the town's website as part of the LSAC agenda on Friday, January 16.

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