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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 11 No. 43 905-727-3300 *theauroran.com* FREE Week of August 23, 2011

Town lowers flag for Layton

Local politicians paid tribute to Jack Layton's "passion and commitment" to Canada and his "larger than life" personality after the Federal Leader of the Opposition lost his battle with cancer in the early hours of Monday morning.

Mr. Layton's death at 4.45 a.m. was announced by his wife, Toronto-area MP Olivia Chow, and his children, shortly before 9 a.m.

Newmarket-Aurora's political communities remembered the NDP leader for his "tenacity" and said his death is seen as a loss of a "great Canadian".

"He was always a very positive individual and in my encounters [with him] he always had a warm and engaging smile," said Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown, shortly after the announcement of his death. "We are obviously greatly saddened by the loss and although we didn't see eye-to-eye

politically, I believe he has been a great Canadian.

"He demonstrated passion for our country and I would just like to say that our condolences go out to his wife Olivia and to his family. He was a fighter in every area of his life and I'm sure that he approached this fight with cancer with the same vigour that he approached everything else and it is just sad that this is a battle he lost."

Ms. Brown added that Mr. Layton's influence in leading the NDP to the official opposition for the first time had a "tremendous" influence on Canadian politics and she believes he leaves behind an influence that will be felt within the NDP for "many years to come."

Tributes also came in from the Newmarket-Aurora Liberals.

"I think Canadian politics needs more people like Jack Layton," said Kyle Peterson, Newmarket-Aurora's

Federal Liberal candidate in the 2011 election.

"On behalf of Newmarket-Aurora Liberals I want to extend our condolences to Jack's family at this time of mourning and our thoughts and prayers are with them."

Mr. Peterson said he first met Mr. Layton as a law student when the latter was in his 2003 NDP leadership campaign.

At the University, Mr. Layton gave a speech to students and encouraged those who had not already done so to sign up for a party membership and vote for him.

"Obviously I didn't do that, but I certainly respected his passion and his commitment to politics," said Mr. Peterson. "Even back then when he was running for leader I could see it coming through."

After the announcement, the Town of Aurora lowered flags at Town Hall to half staff in memory of Mr. Layton.

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Christina Bisanz, Provincial Liberal candidate for Newmarket-Aurora, left, was joined Sunday afternoon by Markham-Unionville Member of Parliament John McCallum at the Liberal Party's Central Ontario meeting at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Briefly

Corn Roast

This Saturday the residents are invited to attend the Council Corn Roast at the Aurora Farmers' Market. Councillors and the Town's Executive Leadership Team will be handing out what Councillor Sandra Humfries described as "awesome corn from local farmers".

The Council Corn Roast will be held at the Aurora Farmers' Market on Wells Street from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Man hurt

A 23-year-old male is in hospital with serious injuries after a collision between a motorcycle and a car on Industrial Parkway at St. John's Sideroad Saturday morning.

According to Constable Blair McQuillan of the York Regional Police, the accident occurred when the eastbound motorcycle entered the intersection and collided with a car as it was attempting to make a left turn from Industrial to St. John's.

The 59-year-old driver of the car was not injured in the collision. Police are asking witnesses to come forward. The investigation is ongoing.

Pool closed

The pool at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex (SARC) will close this Friday for a routine inspection, repairs, and regular maintenance.

Alternative pool times have been made available at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex to pick up the slack.

The SARC pool is scheduled to re-open Saturday, September 24.

In the parks

PACT, police will run ambassador program

After months of referrals and debate at both council and committee, Aurora's Parks Ambassador program is finally set to go, after council's approval of a one-year pilot project which will be undertaken by PACT (Police and Community Together) in conjunction with York Regional Police.

Council's approval last week, however, was not exactly smooth, with the members attempting to determine how to address the needs of PACT in the face of recommendations from Town Staff which differed significantly from what PACT initially proposed.

In their recommendation, Aurora staff recommended that the one-year trial program run from

May to September, that the program's terms of reference be hammered out by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) and also the town include \$500 in the 2012 operating budget for support.

The one particular recommendation from Town Staff that did not appear to sit well with some councillors was their recommendation for significant involvement of PRAC in the program.

In their recommendations staff called on the committee to have the responsibility for reviewing the program, screening applicants, and participating in training.

When pressed by Councillor Michael Thompson on whether

PACT initially planned on limiting the Parks Ambassador Program largely to the summer months, PACT's Cyndy Skillins said she was "surprised" by the recommendations staff brought forward.

"We never asked for the Town to be the organizing committee," she said. "The last thing we want to do is impose more demands on the Town Staff so that was definitely not part of our proposal. We would like to run it, obviously with the support of the police and with the structure [previously presented]."

"We did not see it being May through September. We saw it as being year-round, recognizing that there is greater use of the parks

Please see page 19



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COMING EVENTS

AUGUST 23, 24
Aurora Cultural Centre presents a series of two individual Camp Days for children ages 6 to 12. A full day brimming with a variety of music, dance, art projects, improv and theatre games; \$45 per child. Bonus before-and-after care included in price; inquire about special rates for sibling/friend registration. The Aurora Cultural Centre is located at 22 Church Street. For information or to register call 905-713-1818 or info@auroraculturalcentre.ca.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30
Movie tonight at the Aurora Seniors' Centre is "Win Win" starring Paul Giamatti, Amy Ryan and Jeffrey Tambor. Disheartened attorney Mike Flaherty (Giamatti), who moonlights as a high school wrestling coach, stumbles across a star athlete through some questionable business dealings while trying to support his family. Just as it looks like he will get a double payday, the boy's mother shows up fresh from rehab and flat broke, threatening to derail everything.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
Money Talks. A free, informal discussion group will be held tonight at the Aurora Public Library to share ideas and exchange unbiased financial planning information, beginning at 7 p.m. in the Magna Room. Moderator Roger Strong is not affiliated with any financial institution. RSVP is required.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
The first Aurora Chamber of Commerce networking event is a breakfast, sponsored by Avaloch Insurance Services Inc. and slated to be held at St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club, 4 Pinnacle Trail, Aurora, from 7.30 a.m. to 9 a.m. Cost is \$20 for members and \$30 for guests.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9
The Aurora Seniors' Centre will hold its final event of the season tonight in the form of a Corn Roast for ASA members, families and friends on the deck of their headquarters at 96 John West Way beginning at 6 p.m. Cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children. A cash bar, serving beer, white and red wine soft drinks and water will be operating. Following the corn roast will be a video concert. Advance tickets are now on sale at the ASC reception desk. For more information, contact Marie Leone at 905-713-0608.

SEPTEMBER 9-11
The sixth annual Ribfest will be held this weekend in Machell Park. It will operate Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and on Sunday from noon to 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
The Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society is hosting its Annual Flower Show today where members exhibit exceptional specimens from their gardens and display unique artistic floral designs. The flower show will be held at the Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, from noon to 4 p.m. For more information call Cindy at 905-713-6660.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11
The 14th Annual Aurora and Newmarket Parkinson SuperWalk will take place at Fairy Lake in Newmarket. Registration, a Yoga demonstration by The Royal Pathways Inc., and speeches begin at 9.30 a.m. under the main pavilion closest to the Water Street entrance. The walk begins at 10.30 a.m. For more information or to volunteer call Kim Rouse-Parypa at 905-713-0774 or e-mail kimp@sympatico.ca. For more information on Parkinson's or to register on-line visit www.parkinsonsuperwalk.ca.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14
Baby Talk supports language development with Blue Balloon and will be part of a free seminar with a pediatric health specialist covering normal language development and how best to support language acquisition in your child, with games and activities at the Aurora Public Library beginning at 7 p.m. in the Magna Room. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17
The Aurora Seniors' Centre will hold its second annual Dog and Mutt Show behind the Centre at 96 John West Way from 1 p.m. (rain or shine). A barbecue will also be available. Registration forms are now available from the Centre. Maximum is 30 entrants. For further information contact Michelle Sterner at 905-727-3123, ext. 3611.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18
The annual Terry Fox Run takes place today from the Sheppard's Bush soccer fields beginning at 8.30 a.m. with registration. Participants have the choice of a five-kilometre run/walk/bike/roller blade or a two-kilometre forest stroll. For more information go to www.terryfox.org which also includes on-line pledging) or contact Hank Van Bakel at (hvanbakel@ortech.ca).

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
This year the Aurora Chamber of Commerce's Annual General Meeting will be held on this evening from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m., at the Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street. The 2010 - 2011 Audited Financial Statements and year end reports will be presented, followed by the induction of the Board of Directors. A cocktail reception, catered by Maunders Food Shop, will follow the formal part of the meeting. Cost is \$10 for members.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
The Art of Stenciling, with Deborah Mores, an artist, teacher, home furnishing designer and business owner. She will bring more than 30 years of expertise to this workshop from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Lebovic Room. \$20 per person and you must be 18 years and older. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
The Triple P Parenting workshop series returns to Aurora Public Library. Join the group the last Wednesday of each month, September to May, excluding December. A variety of topics will help you answer your parenting questions and needs. All meetings at 7 p.m. in the Magna Room. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

OCTOBER 1, 2, 6 AND 7
The Canadian Cancer Society: Holland River Unit will be running the Pink Ribbon event in October. October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and volunteers from the Canadian Cancer Society will be selling pink ribbons on the

above dates to raise awareness about breast health. Funds raised during this campaign will support breast cancer research and community programs for people living with breast cancer and their families.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1
The Juno nominated Sultans of String bring their CD release tour to the Aurora Cultural Centre tonight at 7.30. Tickets are available at the door from the Cultural Centre for general admission seating for \$30. Advance tickets are \$25.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4
You're invited to be part of the Aurora Artist Studio Tour 2011, a group of professional artists along with emerging artists from Aurora, inviting the public into our homes for our second year two day annual studio tour on Saturday and Sunday, October 1st and 2nd, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The following artists are already participating: Jean Beard, David Beard, Deborah Campo, Eva Folks, Maya Rodrigues, Judy Sherman and Christine Valentini. E-mail Deborah Campo to be added to the list by August 13th at deborah.campoart@sympatico.ca 905-727-1447.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4
The Tuesday Philosophy Club meets tonight at the Aurora Public Library in the Lebovic Room at 7 p.m. What is the meaning of life? Why are we here? Is there an ultimate purpose to my existence? If these questions have ever crossed your mind, join the club. No prior experience in philosophy is required. Pre-register at the Adult Information Desk, or call 905-727-9493, option 4.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6
Join the Aurora Chamber of Commerce at the black tie (optional) 2011 Business Achievement Awards Dinner, which will be held at The Manor, 16750 Weston Road, Kettleby. Cocktails start at 5.30 p.m., with dinner and awards ceremony at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$125 per person plus HST. Visit the Chamber website for details and to purchase tickets.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24
Aurora's Pine Tree Potters' Guild announces that it will be hosting its second annual Empty Bowls fund-raising event. Tickets, at \$45, go on sale September 6 and are available from the Aurora Cultural Centre, Vic's Shoe Repair and Meridian Credit Union.

Victoria Streets. Co-ed club welcomes new members. For further information, call 905-727-6079.

MARTHA'S TABLE
Martha's Table, the community lunch program offered at St. Andrew's Church, Aurora, will open again on Thursday, September 1, after closing for the summer.

THE YORK REGIONAL POLICE MALE CHORUS
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 co-ordinator of volunteer services for YRP at 905-830-0303, extension 6717.

AURORA'S AIR CADETS
Aurora's Air Cadets meet every Tuesday night at Cardinal Carter School from 6.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m., and offer a program for 12 years and older boys and girls.

QUEEN'S YORK RANGERS ARMY CADET CORPS
Queen's York Rangers Army cadet corps has openings for boys and girls aged 12 to 18. The group parades every Friday night between 7 and 9 p.m. There is no membership fee and those in high school can earn community service hours through the program. For further information, call 905-726-8600.

AURORA OPERA CHILDREN'S CHORUS
Aurora Opera Children's Chorus welcomes treble voices. It is a choir dedicated to nurturing and providing opportunities for children to express their musical abilities. The chorus is open to boys and girls ages 5-17. Contact the general director at keepsinging@rogers.com.

COMMUNITY HOME ASSISTANCE TO SENIORS (CHATS)
Community Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS) 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 WEDNESDAY
Every Wednesday from 6.30 to 8 p.m. the Pioneer Club for boys and girls, age three 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
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 at jhoffmann@sympatico.ca.

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING
Scottish Country Dancing on Friday mornings mornings at St. Andrews' Presbyterian Church beginning at 10.30 a.m. No partners are needed and beginners are welcome. For more information, call Agnes at 905-841-2747.

AURORA ROTARY CLUB
Aurora Rotary Club meets every Monday at 6.30 p.m. at Gabriel's on Yonge Street. New members are welcome.

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS LODGE 148
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
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
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.

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More than 700 people showed up for the regular Concert in the Park at Aurora's Town Park last Wednesday evening to hear Blue Radio, the ultimate Blue Rodeo tribute band.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Town to look outside to staff crossing spots

The Town of Aurora will look to an outside staffing service to fill vacancies for crossing guards across Town, following a council resolution last week, but given today's economic climate, Councillor Evelyn Buck suggested this should be an initiative for the Town to take on itself.

Councillors passed a recommendation from Town Staff to execute a three-year contract with Proactive Staffing Services for the amount of \$293,550.73, a figure which will ensure that the complement of crossing guards at Town intersections is full.

"The Town of Aurora is currently providing school crossing guards at 11 locations throughout the Town," said Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure, in a report. "Historically, school crossing guards were hired directly by the Town. Over the last 15 years it has become increasingly more difficult for Town staff to find persons willing to perform these duties."

Staffing Services were retained in 2000 to provide crossing guards at locations where the Town was unable to replace persons, he said, and since then the number of crossing guards staffed by Staffing Services has and will continue to increase over the coming years.

Funding for this initiative was approved in the 2011 operating budget.

During the course of council discussions on the crossing guards, who, Mayor Geoffrey Dawe noted, make approximately \$12,000 for the school year, Councillor Evelyn Buck

wondered that given today's economic situation and the number of people looking for work, whether appropriate conditions now existed for the Town to find people to fill crossing guard vacancies.

"Things may have changed," she said of the outside staffing services since 2000. "I think there may be greater interest in this job now that there are so many people out of work. This wouldn't offer anyone a livelihood but there may be more people interested in doing it than when we originally decided to go to tender with this service."

"I think this is a pretty expensive way of providing the service for eight people. That's \$209,000 over three years and I don't think that is a bargain, but if we were able to offer that as a salary to someone it might be quite attractive to a person who is not employed. In hard times people look for these opportunities and sometimes they're taking several opportunities to make a living and this might be a place. I'm thinking that maybe we should give consideration to that."

One of the drawbacks of having the Town staff fulfil the service of administering the crossing guard services themselves is that if one crossing guard fails to show up for any number of reasons it then becomes a Town responsibility to find a suitable replacement, said Mr. Simanovskis.

"By working with the contractor it is their responsibility to ensure that someone is available," he said. "It is up to them to make sure a body is available."

The contract found support

from most councillors, however, including Wendy Gaertner who said she witnessed first-hand why this would be a valuable service for the Town.

"I'm satisfied that this is a good way for us to go," she said. "I had an experience seven years ago where the Town couldn't find a crossing guard and there was an off-duty policeman at the corner of Glass Drive and Murray and they were charging \$75 an hour. I would say that this is probably the most economical way to go with respect to the actual fee and the time of staff."

Before the final vote was taken, however, Councillor Buck reiterated that she was not talking about saving money but making employment readily available to the people within Aurora neighbourhoods.

"A crossing guard has to live within the community to be there for however long it is in the morning and be there again when they go home for lunch and back again when school ends," said Councillor Buck. "Whoever does that job has to live nearby. Whatever we're paying these people we're paying more than we were paying crossing guards and we still have some crossing guards carried by the Town, so my idea is that in these hard times where there is employment available from the Town they should be immediately available by the Town."

"We have had far too many of these consultants and middlemen cleaning up on what should be a straightforward agreement between ourselves and the people that provide this work."

Magna Hoedown names Emerson Drive as lead

Emerson Drive will headline this year's Hoedown entertainment line-up.

A Grammy-nominated country band with a decade of chart-topping music already under their belt, Emerson Drive recently released their latest album, *Decade of Drive: 10 Years of Hits*.

The album features a number of the band's greatest hits, including "I Should Be Sleeping" and "Fall Into Me", both of which peaked in the Top Five on the Billboard charts, as well as "Moments", Emerson Drive's first #1 single in the USA, and their latest single release, "Let Your Love Speak". Since their smash debut on the country music scene, Emerson Drive has received multiple awards and/or nominations, including the Canadian

Country Music Association Group of the Year award and Billboard Magazine's Top New Artist award.

The band has toured with Toby Keith, Shania Twain and Big & Rich, among others.

In addition to Emerson Drive, the Hoedown will also feature Jason McCoy, "the best tribute show to Johnny Cash on the planet" - The Legend in Black, and local talent Dani Strong, as well as The Simcoe Country Ramblers and the Jaymor Dancers.

The event will be hosted by Ken Shaw and Beverley Mahood.

The 2011 Hoedown will take place on Saturday, September 10 on the Magna campus in Aurora under the largest tent in the country.

The event will run from 5

p.m. to midnight - rain or shine - and features a Texas-style barbecue dinner, cash bar and Prospector's Raffle.

The Hoedown started out as a backyard barbecue fundraiser at the Stronach family farm and has become York Region's largest annual community fundraiser, generating proceeds of more than \$4 million for local community groups during its 23-year history.

Twenty local charities, including a number from Aurora and community groups, including a number from Aurora, serving a wide range of residents and community needs, have been selected as recipients of this year's Hoedown funding.

For more information on the 2011 Wild West Hoedown, visit www.hoedown.ca.

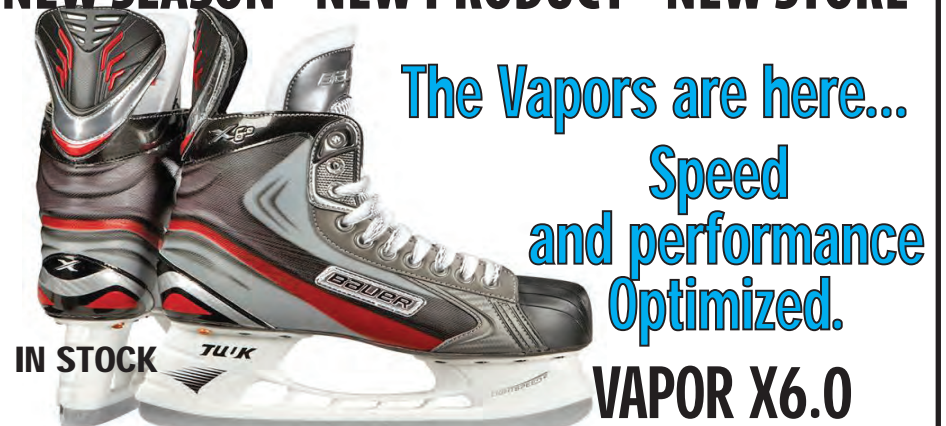
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A NOTE TO ANYONE who ever scratched Rec behind the ear.

Doug and the staff at Rec Cycle N' Sports are very sad to announce the recent passing of everyone's best friend, Rec, on Saturday, August 13, 2011.

Over the years, so many people from Aurora and elsewhere have come through the door of Rec Cycle to be warmly greeted by Rec. We know he loved each of you as much as you loved him.

Thanks for all your support and we look forward to seeing you again soon.



15483 Yonge St., Aurora, across from Howard Johnson Hotel 905-841-5757



Poor Ronnie

By RON WALLACE

I don't want to be coach of the Tigers

I am truly thankful I am not the coach of the Aurora Tigers. How Jim Richmond, the team's coach, can select a team from the 40 or so who showed up at Rink Two of the Aurora Community Centre Thursday night, is anyone's guess. They all looked pretty good to me. In a "game", which pitted the yellow shirts against the dark shirts, both sides seemed to hold their own. When I left the "game" was tied 1-1 and neither side was any better than the other.

Jim needs to find the combination of players who can drive the team to finish better than last year, when they missed playoff action by a single point, even though they won the final two games of the regular season.

I tried to call him Saturday, but his "mailbox was full" so I have yet to contact him to find out just how difficult it is being the coach of a Junior A hockey team.

I did touch base with him Sunday afternoon and he acknowledged that there was a "mailbox full" message, but it was only because of a dead battery in his cell phone.

Once he had changed the battery and did a reboot, everything was fine again.

Sunday night at the community centre, Jim said he "had some tough decisions to make" as he selects his team for the coming year.

His job will be to select about 14 forwards, six defencemen and a pair of goalies.

No easy task that.

I have just learned that the hockey club invites you and other community leaders as its guest to participate in the season opening Wine & Cheese gathering Wednesday, August 31st at Joia Restaurant on Yonge Street in Aurora.

They have set aside the hours between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. for the event.

Kristin Quinn wants to know if you're planning to attend. Call her at 905-967-4258 or e-mail her at k_quinn@rogers.com to let her know.

The Tiger coach will be there but only if he hears about it.

"I don't get involved in things off the ice," he said, confirming that Kristen is Barry Quinn's daughter. Barry is vice-president of the team.

At least two players on the Tigers this year will be from Auora, he confirmed, saying upward of 10 and 12 players will be returning to the team from last year.

From Aurora will be Justin Nice and Dylan Sikura. Other players come from Newmarket and King City.

Tigers play their arch-rival, Newmarket Hurricanes, in that town September 15, but open the season in Pickering Wednesday night at 8 p.m.

Quinn tells me the team is still looking for billets. If you have room to put up a hockey player, call Barry at 416-606-4901.

Meanwhile the Tigers, now that a team is together, are ready for the "Woodchuck Classic", a hockey tournament in Vermont that gets underway September 2.

Tigers will not play home games Sunday afternoons, like they did last year.

After hammering out a deal with the Aurora Minor Hockey Association, Tigers will now play 12 Saturday night home games, including their home opener September 17th when the Milton Icehawks invade the Aurora Community Centre.

They will still be at home for Friday night games.

"Our primary home date will continue to be Friday nights, with Saturday becoming our alternate home date," Quinn said.

All the team needs now is fans. Turnout has been rather low at the Community Centre in recent years.



JIM RICHMOND
TIGER COACH



These two shots show a class of Grades 2 and 3 students and teachers, top photo, from George Street School. You probably recognize the George Street principal, the late Ross Brethour, standing in the middle of the back row. He died about six years ago. The students' photo was taken in either February 1968 or 1969. We're not sure because we can't read the entire sign located in the front of the class. Recognize anyone?

Letters to the Editor

Writer never has to leave safe position

To the editor,

When I read the letters to the editor supporting the criminalization of abortions and glance down to see the signature, invariably I see a male name.

This is not a male bashing letter.

I have remarkable men in my family, and among my friends, and I admire their informative, rational thinking, and their powers of observation.

Rick Doust, in his letter, refers to the physiology, questions the credibility of the woman's decision, statistics, a woman cited for have changed her mind from pro choice to no choice, as the ultimate in humanity.

The flippancy with which he describes a woman's reason to abort as "any reason will do", "no health risks a threat", "no medical reason" tells me more about the writer than the actual issue.

Rick Doust will never in a million years have to leave his safe position of having to risk his health,

his mental health, his educational pursuits, his career, his future prospects because of pregnancy.

All pregnancies are not the result of planned parenthood.

Some pregnancies are the result of ignorance, rape, incest, etc.

A woman has a right to a safe position for herself. Her right to choose.

Corinne McConnell
Aurora

Different perceptions

To the editor,

Re: Reaction to Mr. Moll's observation of anonymous blogging.

I do not know what motivated certain individuals not to reveal their names, but on a prima facie basis it is reminiscent of blind siding an opponent.

Alex Vander Veen
Aurora

THE AURORAN

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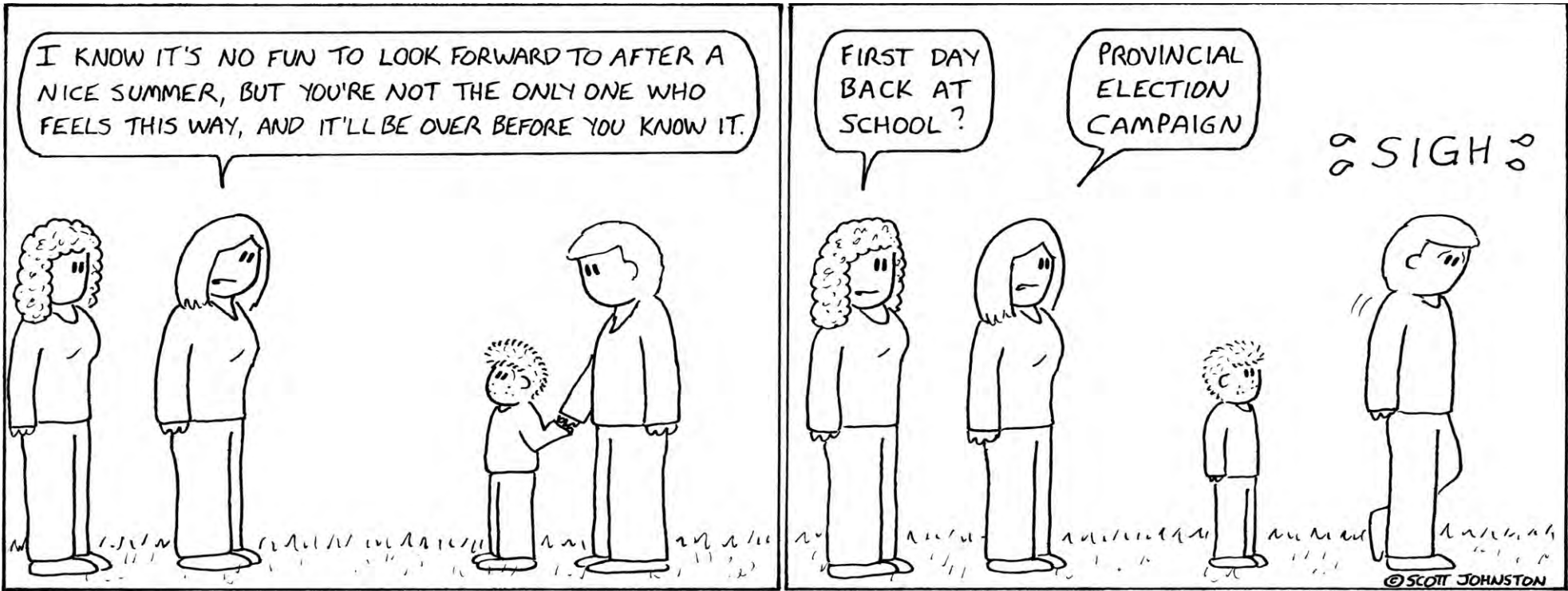
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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

Political polling

We are inundated every day with the results of public opinion polls.

It seems that whenever we turn on the television, listen to the radio or open a newspaper there is a story about polling.

We are canvassed for our thoughts on everything from Canadian tax policy to whether or not we feel that Britney Spears is a good mom.

But most of the emphasis in the media is placed on political polling.

I am not sure if it was the first, but the most well known is the Gallup Poll, named after its inventor, George Gallup.

Dr. Gallup founded the American Institute of Public Opinion, the precursor of The Gallup Organization, in Princeton, New Jersey, in 1935.

They have been surveying political opinions ever since.

But why the need for political polling?

Brian Walker, a candidate for the Newmarket - Aurora federal Conservative nomination in 2005 put it aptly: "Representative government was born hundreds of years ago when MP's traveled to far off cities, and there, out of touch with their constituencies, made decisions for them. We don't live in such times anymore."

Politicians continually listen to their constituents.

Today's elected officials certainly have the resources: websites, mail-outs, town hall meetings and other media at their disposal.

Included in this arsenal is polling.

Governments, political parties and individual politicians conduct polling primarily for two reasons.

In between campaigns, politicians want to know whether or not the public thinks they are doing a good job or they may desire feed-

back on a specific issue.

During an actual election campaign, respective national or provincial campaigns use polling to see if a particular strategy that they have employed is working, and if not, why not, and what the campaign should be doing differently.

Look at the 2008 U.S. Democratic race where the Hilary Clinton campaign started to make in-roads at the end of the primaries by painting Barack Obama as an elitist, and out of touch with the average voter's concerns.

You may also recall later that year during the actual presidential race that John McCain had (for a while at least) climbed back into a statistical tie with the presumptive Democratic nominee by painting the Illinois Senator, as inexperienced, a "celebrity" liberal and a light-weight.

The lines of attack were based on polling.

Reliance on polling can also lead to electoral disasters.

How else to characterize the faith based initiative launched by the provincial PC Party back in 2007. Obviously, this policy would not have been introduced unless the campaign strategists felt that this was a potential "wedge" issue that could drive masses of voters into their camp.

Closer to home, polling does have its place; reinforcing to the local campaign that the communications strategies being employed are indeed working.

However, it is becoming increasingly harder to be heard and also to influence voters at the local level.

Probably 95 per cent of the reason that a person votes is based on the Party and the leader.

In some instances, where there is a very high profile person or highly ranked cabinet minister, then the local campaign probably

accounts for say, 10 to 15 per cent.

The results of a strong local organization will really matter when the race is extremely tight; every vote counting.

Looking back to the fall of 2007, as a member of the local PC campaign team, we were cautiously optimistic.

Our candidate was Frank Klees, the long-time Aurora resident and at that time a 12-year member of the legislature who was a former leadership contender and cabinet minister and also a high profile member of the John Tory team.

We had a high profile candidate, a great volunteer organization, sufficient funds to run a campaign, and our initial polling showed us in good shape.

The local communications strategy that was developed - reinforced by tracking - was figuratively thrown out the window during the campaign because the faith-based issue sucked the air out the Leaders' campaign balloon.

Mr. Klees in the end won in a very tight race because of his personal popularity.

Recent polls have shown a considerable tightening of the provincial race with the Liberals within as close as five points of the Tories.

A couple of weeks back I predicted a minority government (either way) once the dust settles after October 6th.

Nothing that I have seen or heard at this point would lead me to back away from this prediction.

It is certainly going to be an interesting fall campaign and I look forward to sharing my opinions and views with all of you.

Stephen can be contacted at
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



Inside Aurora

By Scott Johnston

Still more burning questions

Over the past few months we've looked at some "burning questions", puzzling mysteries right here in Aurora.

But the number of unanswered questions in town continues to grow, so with that in mind...

Whatever happened to all the debate and discussion about whether the town should adopt a ward system?

How large does Aurora's population have to be (currently 50,000 plus) before the province updates the "Aurora: Population 41,000" sign on Highway 404?

Why are the Aurora Town Hall and Family Leisure Complex buildings seemingly structurally obsolete after only 30 or so years, but most of the stores built in the 1800s at Yonge and Wellington are still going strong?

If the point of Hoedown is to raise much-needed funding for charity, and it sells out so quickly every year, why don't they add another tent and sell more tickets?

How many more shops will go out of business on Yonge Street before the Aurora promenade study geared at reinvigorating this area of town is completed, and the recommendations start to be implemented?

Why are there no Aurora-based achievements on the Canadian Achievements mural at Yonge and Wellington?

Why are political parties that have nothing to do with housing always so well represented at Home Shows?

Has anyone ever been fined for tossing trash out of their car windows at the off-ramp of Highway 404 at Wellington, an area with a prominent "do not litter" sign, but which is continually blanketed in garbage?

Would any store in town accept an "Aurora Dollar", if one of these promotional items from the 1970s was ever redeemed?

Is local history taught enough in our schools that students in town can name any three Aurora mayors prior to Tim Jones?

Since the Church Street School is a "Cultural Centre", why does the directional sign just north of it on Wellington identify it as a "Museum"?

Has anyone ever tried walking a pet other than a dog in Canine Commons, the leash-free park?

What is the greatest number of times council has referred the same issue back to staff for a report?

Since there are more odd than even numbered dates during the year, do the odd numbered houses in town have better watered lawns during the summer water ban?

Did Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe somehow predict the road rage that would occur at the intersections of our main street when he named it after Sir George Yonge, the British Secretary of War?

Why is it that no matter how many playing fields, pools, ice pads, ball diamonds and other rec facilities the town adds, there never seem to be enough?

Is there any better free entertainment than looking at the murals the kids (and their parents) draw July 1st outside the library as part of the Sidewalk Chalk activity?

Is there an overall master plan to coordinate all of the many town master plans, such as the ones for parks, trails, accessibility, and the promenade?

Now that the anti-train whistle debate is over, will the next issue be the anti-siren debate, as police, fire trucks and ambulances, like trains, make a lot of noise letting you know they're coming, so that you don't get hurt.

If it's possible for our municipal buildings to reduce their energy consumption by 8 per cent during Earth Hour, why don't they maintain this level of efficiency by just doing the same things every other hour of the year?

Is what we're beginning to experience leading up to October 6 actually election fever, or just nausea at going to the polls for the third time within a year?

Just asking

Feel free to e-mail Scott at:
machellscorners@gmail.com

Letters to the Editor

Writer bases his statements on suggestions never made

To the editor,

"Mr Doughty avoids the issue of anonymity".
In answer to Mr. Doughty's letter of disagreement in The Auroran dated August 16th to my letter of support for our former Mayor Mrs. Morris's law suit.

Mr. Doughty enters a number of items never mentioned in my letter.

I never did suggest a law to stop the right to openly criticize.

Civil law is available to pursue any abuse, while Criminal law should pursue hate crime.

It is the Anonymity used to hide, when victimizing a person in cyberspace (Mr. Doughty's

word) that I am suggesting should be enacted as criminal.

Mr. Doughty seems to suggest that there is a difference between cyberspace victimization of people, companies or governments, and deserve no protection by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, if the victimization is done through cyberspace.

Is the anonymous victimization in cyberspace any different from a person pulling a hood over their head to hide their identity while committing robbery; damage property, injure or do worse?

If we were to accept Mr. Doughty's premise of protection under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; a

person victimizing another citizen while hiding their identity in cyberspace is acceptable.

We all feel some paranoia about big brother protecting us, which may bring some inconvenience within the circumference of living a relatively safe life in freedom to do almost anything, which I think most Canadians can accept.

You can't have it both ways, Mr. Doughty.

I believe the intent of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is to protect, not aid and abet anonymity to victimize any one at any level.

The enactment of some Criminal Law against anonymity in cyberspace

will not hurt any trustworthy citizens, but can remove a tool from anyone intent on doing harm while hiding in cyberspace.

A law prohibiting anonymity in cyberspace, could put law enforcement in a proactive position rather than reactive, to protect us.

The present naivety to our crime filled cyberspace, including intimidation, i.e. bullying, criminal conspiracies, misleading information etc., is already biting society in the rear end Mr. Doughty, not the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Jake Mol
Aurora

Reader enjoyed watching Alison's internet TV show

To the editor,

ED. NOTE: The following letter was sent to Alison Collins-Mrakas after the author approached the Town of Aurora re the "camel hump" issue and the issue was discussed on "Our Town", a show seen regularly on The Auroran's website. It is reprinted here with permission of the author.

Hi Alison,

I have watched a few of your broadcasts online and I have enjoyed them.

I wish to comment on the shows that referred to the camel hump since I was one of the delegates (first one).

Thank you for the first show especially (July 12 council).

You said some very complimentary things about what I said.

I worked hard on my speech, to make every word count. You were very kind.

In the follow up show, you commented that all the delegates repeated themselves.

I admit, Leah, Cindy and I agreed that this whole issue was a complete waste of time of council.

It seemed to be a "no brainer".

However, we felt the opposite view needed to be heard, too.

When the last council

came up, I had no idea it was on the agenda until someone from council called me and invited me to come back as a delegate.

I stated then, I felt I would be repeating myself, but was assured that was okay since the other two people were coming back as delegates and they wanted the opposite view again.

So, just want to confirm, I agree, waste of council time.

The issue of safe use of playgrounds is important and I am glad that increased signage around the parks in Aurora may be an outcome of this whole controversy.

I believe the time committed by council was not wasted in this respect.

On another note, I am one of three women who plan a Walk of Hope for Ovarian Cancer Canada in Aurora on Saturday, September 17 at 9 a.m.

It is our Fifth anniversary and we are beginning at Town Park, during the Farmers' Market. We are very excited about that.

We have Michelle Lemme and her dad John Lemme singing during registration, a fire truck and crew, MP Lois Brown, silent auction, and a 3.5k walk.

One of my sisters is in remission, but was diagnosed four years ago with the cancer.

Would you consider attending our walk and

maybe talking a bit about it after (and before to help promote)?

Gayle Palmer
Aurora

And Alison responds:

Hello Gayle,

You are absolutely right - you needed to be there again to present the opposite view.

My point was, how sad, was it that this "issue" was allowed to balloon to the point that it has taken at least, by my estimation, almost five hours of council time and yet issues such as the indemnification policy, third integrity commissioner discussion were given short shrift (or no shrift, as the case may be).

You ladies all made concise, cogent arguments.

I hope that was clear in my show. Good for you for coming forward, most people don't.

With regards to your walk, I would be more than happy to help out.

I am a cancer survivor (thyroid cancer 19 years ago).

I would be happy to promote it - even have you ladies on my show before hand if

you wish.

As for the actual day, I think I am in Welland racing that day.

But if I am not racing, I would be happy to be at the walk, and help out whatever way I can.

Alison Collins-Mrakas
Aurora

Summer's over and receiving Wish Book proves it

To the editor,

Christmas!! Humbug!!!
August 20th, 2011.
The CNE opened yesterday.

I always think it is the hint that the lazy hazy days of summer are soon coming to a close.

But, the "clincher", the absolute certainty that bare feet and shorts are coming to an end, is finding the Christmas Wish Book on my front porch.

Guess I'd better get the snowblower ready.

Bill Hack
Aurora

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Ministry rejects Town's request, but Westhill hasn't applied, yet

Ontario's Ministry of the Environment has rejected the call from Town Council to automatically withhold the necessary Permit to Take Water (PTTW) for Westhill Redevelopment Company's proposed championship golf course and residential home development near Leslie Street and Bloomington Road.

Environment Minister John Wilkinson was responding to a council resolution which asked Mayor Geoffrey Dawe to write to the Province requesting the refusal, which was the last card the Municipality had in hand to try to stop the development due to the environmental concerns of residents and some members of council.

But Westhill has yet to apply for another PTTW after their first permit was revoked due to lack of planning approvals, the Minister explained. The Minister made his comments in a letter in response to the one from Mayor Dawe which informed him of council's June resolution.

Minister Wilkinson said that the Ministry was committed to protecting provincial water supplies and "ensuring the fair sharing, conservation, and sustainable use of water for all Ontarians, including those supplies situated on the Oak Ridges Moraine. When the Ministry receives Westhill's latest PTTW application, they are obligated to

inform both the Town and the Region of the application and will consider all comments received from the municipality and relevant conservation authorities when the time comes. "A permit will not be issued if the ministry determines that the proposed water-taking will adversely impact the environment," wrote Minister Wilkinson. "I am aware of the significant public concern relat-

ed to the proposed Westhill development and would like to assure the Town of Aurora that there will be opportunity for public consultation if the ministry receives a permit application for this development. "The ministry will post a summary of the application on the Environmental Registry in accordance with the Environmental Bill of Rights and consider all public comments in making our decision."

Time for a new library?

With Margaret Atwood and other notables, including literacy advocates, waging all-out war against the Ford brothers in Toronto surrounding possible library cuts and closures, here in Aurora it is a very different story with the Aurora Public Library set to look at ways to expand to better meet the needs of the growing community. A \$6 million project for a possible new library has been identified in the Town's recent 10-year capital investment forecast for the year 2014. According to Town Treasurer Dan Elliott, nothing is set in stone with the project, but the amount has been put into place in anticipation of a new building. One thing that will be going forward, however, is a space needs analysis to see whether a new building is indeed needed, according to Louise Procter Maio, CEO of the Aurora Public Library. "We know our population is

growing and changing over the next number of years as we grow to build-out and we do have approval to conduct a sort of space needs study to plan for our future service delivery in light of anticipated population growth," she said. "That is on the books and it is something that we need to tackle." It is still "early days" in planning but Ms. Procter Maio said the Library Board wants to have an "open slate" to look at all possibilities and see what might fit, and part of the direction will come from the Library's strategic plan, which came out last year. "We recognize not only our physical but our virtual spaces have to be developed and I think we just like to keep an open mind as to what future possibilities there might be," she said. In looking at what the Aurora Public Library currently offers to patrons, expansion is currently underway with pro-

gramming for both kids and adults but in this expansion it has often been found difficult to find adequate programming space, she said. There are standards in place for library services in terms of area per person, she added, noting that they strive to keep their services "relevant" to the public. Going forward, assessment needs to be made on the kinds of delivery points needed by the library while finding a balance in keeping services both cost-effective and dynamic and accessible to patrons. Recent use of the building has brought home to the Library Board that the building and its services are seen as a "valued community asset" in Aurora and this is reflected in surveys undertaken by the organization as well as having what Ms. Procter Maio described as a "very busy summer" this year. "People come in here not

only to pick up materials to read, but they're looking at databases, they're checking e-mail, they're perhaps job searching using the job information material we have here," she said. "It is a really dynamic place, so we have to be cognizant of that as we think about our future plans and how we can best serve a growing public. "We just want to make sure that we have the right facility and at the service level that won't deteriorate as the population grows. We know that the demographics will be changing in our future as well, both socially and economically there is going to be more diversity. We see that now. We're all getting older and we want to be sure that we continue to offer the library service that our residents expect."

Jack Layton dies at 61

From page 1
In a statement, Mayor Geoffrey Dawe said he was "saddened" to hear of Mr. Layton's death and extended his condolences to his family and friends. "He will be remembered as a tireless public servant who represented not only his constituents but all Canadians," said Mayor Dawe. "He served them with passion, hard work and a strong desire to make Canada a better place." Speaking to The Auroran, Ontario NDP candidate Robin Wardlaw expressed his condolences on behalf of area NDPs not only to Ms. Chow and their family, but to all those who have been touched by cancer. "I share in the sadness of all Canadians at the loss of a great leader," he said. "We saw his

greatest legacy on May 2 when he brought a party from third place to opposition. Had his health not been such a factor I think he was poised to be our next Prime Minister. "He was called the 'Happy Warrior' for a reason. He was a very passionate fighter for fairness and compassion in Canadian life and he did that in a way that made him very attractive to many people. He managed to rise above personal attacks and concentrate on the issues that matter to everyday Canadians. In that role he will be very sorely missed. There is nobody quite like him at the moment. "There are certainly other competent leaders in the Federal party; I have no doubt about that, but no one just like Jack."


Dates set for Park movies

The Town of Aurora is offering a refreshingly unique twist to the modern movie theatre. You can watch, with your family, an unforgettable evening of movies under the stars. All you need to bring is a blanket or a lawn chair. The Town of Aurora kicks off brand new summer line up of films for Movies in the Park with screenings of current and classic movies. Toy Story 3, The Wizard of Oz and The Karate Kid can be viewed on oversized outdoor screens starting at dusk at various

neighborhood parks in Aurora. M&M Meat Shops will be on hand with barbecue treats and Poppers Popcorn will be there with tasty popcorn. "What better way to spend some quality time with your family than under the stars in one of Aurora's beautiful parks," said Geoffrey Dawe, Mayor of the Town of Aurora. "Since we're asking for a donation for the local food pantry in lieu of an admission fee, you'll also be helping local families in need." The evenings begin at 7

p.m. and movies start at about 8 p.m. Instead of an admission fee, movie-goers are asked to bring a donation for the local food pantry. Here's where to watch the movies: Toy Story 3 is playing at Hickson Park, Tuesday, August 30; The Wizard of Oz is showing at the Aurora Town Park on Wednesday, August 31; and The Karate Kid may be seen at the Norm Weller Park on Thursday, September 1. In case of inclement weather, call the Special Events line at 905-726-4762 for regular updates.

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Rita Theil, seated left, the owner of JackKryn France Inc., on Wellington Street East in Aurora, donated \$1,500 from the company's annual French Country Market to the Big Brothers, Big Sisters organization. Receiving the cheque is Grant Peckford, a Big Brothers, Big Sisters executive director, while two market volunteers Jack and Catherine McKenzie look on.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Accepting nominations

The Town is now accepting nominations for the 2011 Community Recognition Awards

The Community recognition awards recognize individuals and groups in the Aurora community who have "actively supported the Town's development and enhanced the overall community".

Areas of recognition include a volunteer service award recognizing 10, 15, and more than 25 years of volunteerism, an award for non-profit groups and community organizers, youth, and awards in the fields of sport, environmentalism, arts and culture, accessibility, and for being a "good neighbour."

Nomination forms are available to download at the Town's website (www.aurora.ca) with a nomination deadline of Thursday, October 6.

The awards will be handed out Tuesday, November 29.

The year's awards ceremony will accommodate new initiatives and a brand new format, one which Councillor Sandra Humfries promises will be markedly different than ceremonies in years past.

"The entire event is being revamped," said Councillor Humfries last week. "While staff are still

working out the details, it sounds like it is going to be an absolutely fantastic evening."

Joining the Town for the first time this year in handing out the civic awards this year will be local volunteer organization Neighbourhood Network.

"It is going to be a fantastic initiative," she said.

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Parties finalize policies on this province's energy

With fewer than seven weeks to go until the October 6 provincial election, parties and candidates across Ontario are finalizing their policies and getting the word out to potential constituents and one of the key issues that is making its way to the forefront of debate is how to approach Ontario's energy consumption.

Although declared candidates in Newmarket-Aurora have expressed support for renewable and sustainable energy and delivering it efficiently to Ontarians, how each approaches the matter varies quite differently.

From Progressive Conservative Frank Klees' perspective, a contributing factor in rising energy costs is what he describes as Dalton McGuinty's "experiment" with energy policy, something, he said, which just hasn't worked.

"It has resulted in significant increases in our electricity bills, already some 84 per cent - for Ontario families and small businesses that have an activated smart metre, that increase can be as high as 150 per cent since Dalton McGuinty took office."

The current "experiment" is "unsustainable and unaffordable" and a PC government would ensure that the "experiment is stopped in its tracks", he added.

One of the ways to curb the rising energy prices is tax and cost relief on bills, but of particular interest to the municipal side of Aurora, also the elimination of the Feed-In Tariff

(FIT) program for those putting renewable energy back on the grid.

The Town of Aurora recently approved sending out Requests for Proposals on leasing out the roof of the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex to companies interested in installing solar panels for energy generation.

Some councillors at the time, however, questioned whether this would be the most sensible route to go as a change in government at Queen's Park could see the program scrapped.

While they deemed it a no-risk situation as that risk would be assumed by the operating company while they raked in money from renting out the roof space, if the PC party takes the reins of government, this program will be on the chopping block.

"The energy programs that are subsidizing the cost of generating renewable energy far beyond what anyone can afford and far beyond what anyone in the industry needs to sustain," said Mr. Klees.

At a recent meeting in Newmarket, Mr. Klees said he was told by a solar panel manufacturer that the FIT program is unsustainable and an open bidding process for renewable energy is the preferred route.

The Liberal green energy plan would, according to this business owner, result in increased energy cost to the taxpayer because there would be an increased subsidy.

"A PC government believes in renewable energy,

believes in solar power, and wind power, but we're going to make sure that the energy plan that is put in place is based on a solid and reliable economic model that does not rely on taxpayer subsidies but is based on good, sound business principles," he said. "We believe that we can deliver renewable and clean energy to Ontario without breaking the backs of taxpayers."

On the part of Liberal candidate Christina Bisanz, the energy program currently offered by the Liberal Government is important to sustain going forward.

"We're very fortunate that we have an energy plan that is looking at a balanced mix of energy sources and I think it is very important to continue with that," she said.

"At the same time, we have to make sure that we have a sustainable system that is not injurious to the environment. I'm hearing friends in the city make note of the fact that the air quality has been dramatically improved since the coal fire plants have been shut down. I think that is a fairly significant indication of the need to make sure we balance our energy needs [and] sustainability with our environmental concerns."

"I fully believe in the need for a responsible use of energy and conservation and encouraging residents to see energy not just as something that is a cheap and plentiful source, but something that we have to respect in terms of how we use it."

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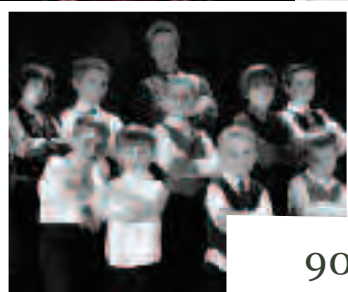
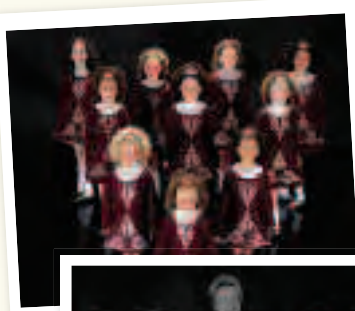
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Week of August 23, 2011



The championship Aurora Midget Select Jays are shown here. Standing left to right, are coach Rob Seguin, Joe Ariganello, Scott Tonello, Dalton Mayo, Ryan Laird, Matthew Miller, Matthew Zambri, Matthew Stewart, Eliot Harkin, Robert Spencer and coach Robert Spencer. In the front row are Andrew Seguin, James Harkin, Robert Bradford. Absent when the picture was taken is coach Mike Ariganello.

Aurora Goodyear Midget Jays win championship

The Aurora Midget Select Jays, sponsored by Goodyear Tire, claimed the York Region league championship last weekend with a convincing 8-5 upset win over the favoured rivals from Collingwood in the final game.

Midget select consists of players from the 1993-1995 birth years.

Game MVP Elliot Harkin closed out the game by fanning Collingwood's clean up hitter with the bases loaded in the final frame.

Robert Spencer had provided the Aurora Jays with another strong pitching start, limiting the Collingwood team to two runs on just three hits.

Ryan Laird hit a towering two-run homerun in the 3rd inning to add to a six-run 2nd inning and gave the Jays an 8-2 lead.

In earlier tournament action, James Harkin hammered a 3-2 fastball over the right-field fence to give the Jays a dramatic walk-off 5-4 victory over the first place Collingwood squad.

Down 4-0 late in the game, the Jays got untracked with a double off the bat of Matt Miller and a RBI single by Matt Zambri.

Elliot Harkin scored Zambri with a solid single up the middle.

Ryan Laird singled and after a double-steal and Andrew Seguin drove a two-strike curveball down the left-field line for a two-RBI double to tie the score.

The Jays got game-saving defense thanks to a diving catch in right field by Laird with the winning run on third and two out in the top of the final

inning before James Harkin's home run heroics in the bottom of the frame.

To reach the two-game final against Collingwood, the Jays defeated Markam 11-3 with a two-hit gem from Matt Miller, and strong relief from Scott Tonello, and RBI contributions from Joe Ariganello, Robert Bradford and Dalton Mayo.

Next, the Jays eliminated the Georgina Bulldogs by a score of 17-2 with strong starting pitching from Matt Stewart and two innings of one-hit relief from Seguin.

The Jays will now represent York Region at the Ontario Midget Select Championship tournament in Mississauga on the August 27th weekend and look to bring home another provincial banner to the Aurora baseball community.



Aurora Minor Hockey Association

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING 2011/2012 REGISTRATION

We will be available for In-House Registration at the Hockey Office located at the Aurora Community Centre for the following dates in August. Divisions are filling up quickly.

Wednesday August 24, 2011

7 – 9 pm


Wednesday August 31, 2011

7 – 9 pm

Please refer to our website
www.auroraminorhockey.net for further information.

NOTE:

Tyke players born in 2004 and 2005 must submit a copy of a birth certificate. It is recommended that 2005 players have either taken skating lessons or completed one year of Opti Hockey.



AMHA MIDGET TRYOUT SCHEDULE



Date	Start	End	Event	Location
9/11/2011	6:00 PM	7:30 PM	Midget AA/A/AE Tryout	Aurora Recreation Centre [ARC West]
9/12/2011	6:00 PM	7:30 PM	Midget AA/A/AE Tryout	Aurora Community Centre [Aur CC 1]
9/14/2011	9:30 PM	11:00 PM	Midget A/AE Tryout	Aurora Community Centre [Aur CC 2]
9/14/2011	7:00 PM	8:30 PM	Final Midget AA Tryout	Aurora Recreation Centre [ARC West]
9/15/2011	7:00 PM	8:30 PM	Midget A/AE Tryout	Aurora Recreation Centre [ARC West]
9/17/2011	5:15 PM	6:45 PM	Final Midget A Tryout	Aurora Community Centre [Aur CC 2]
9/17/2011	6:45 PM	8:15 PM	Midget AE Tryout	Aurora Community Centre [Aur CC 2]
9/18/2011	7:00 PM	8:30 PM	Final Midget AE Tryout	Aurora Recreation Centre [ARC West]

PLAYERS MUST PURCHASE AN AMHA MIDGET TRYOUT PASS (\$50) PRIOR TO ATTENDING TRYOUTS. PASSES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE FROM THE AMHA OFFICE DURING OFFICE HOURS WEDNESDAY NIGHTS 7 PM - 9 PM.

IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE TO BE SELECTED FOR A MIDGET DIVISION REP TEAM YOU MUST ATTEND EITHER THE FIRST OR SECOND SCHEDULED MIDGET TRYOUT SESSION. NO PLAYERS WILL BE ACCEPTED AS FIRST TIME ATTENDEES AFTER THE SECOND TRYOUT SESSION.

MIDGET TRYOUTS FOR ALL TEAMS, AA/A/AE, ARE BEING HELD AS A GROUP. PLAYERS WILL BE EVALUATED AT EACH TRYOUT SESSION.

AT THE END OF EACH TRYOUT THE PLAYER WILL BE DIRECTED TO A SPECIFIC TRYOUT DATE/TIME FOR THEIR NEXT TRYOUT OR RELEASED.

IF A PLAYER IS OFFERED A POSITION WITH ONE OF THE TEAMS, AND REFUSES THAT POSITION, THEY ARE NO LONGER ELIGIBLE FOR FURTHER TRYOUTS.

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Despite councillor's protests, they'll upgrade Leisure Complex

Numerous repairs and refurbishments to the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, clocking in at approximately \$600,000, are still on track despite a last ditch attempt by Councillor Evelyn Buck to bring the items back to the council table for reconsideration.

Councillors voted down Councillor Buck's motion for reconsideration for the repairs, which passed council last month by consent, without any discussion or questions being asked.

The repairs, which were recommended by Aurora's Parks and Recreation department, were the subject of a lengthy discussion at a Special Committee meeting in June to discuss capital projects left over from the 2011 budget process.

When Councillor Buck brought the already approved repairs up last week, she said Town Staff did not take concerns raised at the June meeting into account when they presented their final report and recommendations to council in July.

Of particular concern for Councillor Buck was the installation of a new ice plant for the arena and a new full-size eleva-

tor which could be independently operated by patrons rather than relying on the assistance of AFLC staff coming to operate it with a single key.

"There was a full table of staff and councillors there who could recall we did not agree to replace that elevator and we did not agree to replace that elevator and we did not agree to that huge expenditure on the ice making equipment," said Councillor Buck, speaking of the June Special Committee Meeting, where councillors voted to bring the report and recommendations back to council the following month.

"What was tabled at the June meeting were information reports," explained Aurora CAO Neil Garbe to council. "There was no action requested of council. It was presented to get feedback and to present information that could be discussed in a workshop setting and in each of the reports it said that we would bring, subject to the comments received during that Special General Committee meeting, the reports forward and that was done on July 12."

From Councillor Buck's perspective, however, the fact that these reports were brought back to the table without direction from the June 27 meeting meant that the discussions were all for naught.

At the June meeting, for instance, Councillor Buck suggested that ALFC patrons be given keys to the elevator rather than going all out on a new elevator with a larger cabin.

"If Mr. Garbe's contention is that because subsequent to our discussion and our input our decision as far as I am concerned, our direction to staff, we do not approve these capital

items," she said. "That is the direction that would be taken and our work that day would not have been ignored and still a report came forward recommending those items. It doesn't matter what we decided. We had a full day to discuss it and that didn't matter. It slid through and I object to that."

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe then raised an objection to Councillor Buck's objection, rejecting the her use of the phrase "slid through" as she opted not to pull the item from the agenda for further discussion at last month's council meeting.

"It went through on

consent agenda," he said. "Nobody pulled the item. I disagree that it 'slid through.' I don't particularly like your implication. Staff did what they were instructed to do; staff brought it forward to us on the agenda."

Added Councillor Wendy Gaertner, "If someone had been concerned about the items that were in the report then someone should have pulled the item on July 12. Nobody did. So that would have been your opportunity to discuss it on July 12."

But Councillor Buck contended that there are often reports that she would like to pull from the

agenda but chooses the issues she particularly wants to discuss as there are "nine of us with particular issues, and there is a finite time for us to do so".

But, contended Mayor Dawe, it is council's "responsibility" to pull any items that are of concern.

Following council's approval of the initiatives, the AFLC will see money pumped in to improve its ageing sound system, the first phase of a retrofit of the building's ice plant, re-glazing for energy efficiency, a reconstruction of the parking lot, and the installation of a new elevator.



Aurora Tiger coach James Richmond, left, lines up players in final practice of the season Sunday night at the Aurora Community Centre, prior to selecting the team that will represent Aurora this year. Between 10 and 12 players will return from last year's team, the coach said. Home opener is slated for Saturday, September 17 when they host the Milton Icehawks. *Auroran photo by Ron Wallace*

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Camel climber to stay in Confederation Park

A full audit on ways to improve playground safety in Aurora could be underway as early as next year, following council's decision last week to keep Confederation Park's controversial two-hump camel climber equipment in place after weeks of heated debate from residents on both sides of the issue.

Council's decision to allow the camel climber to stay in the park's playground came with the proviso that Parks Staff install "permanent and prominent instructional signage" at the playground instructing users on the appropriate age limitations of specific playground equipment.

Councillor Paul Pirri made the motion and in his remarks, he said he had first-hand experience of some of the concerns brought forward by residents who would have liked to have seen the climb-

ing apparatus consigned to the scrap heap.

"When I was younger I, in fact, fell off a camel climber," he said, in speaking to his motion. "I have frozen at the top of a camel climber. I think at some point you have to face your fears and you have to get up and try again. I think adding extra safety measures in this circumstance are warranted and I think removing it is [not]."

In responding both to Councillor Pirri's motion as well as Councillor Michael Thompson's questions on whether similar signs can be erected in similar municipal facilities such as the Skate Park, Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation, said the debate swirling around the camel climber had been a "good education" for everyone concerned.

"One of the things we are

recommending is perhaps going through all our playgrounds, do an audit of how we might improve safety with regards to additional signage and those kinds of things," he said. "I always think that is good. Our playgrounds aren't unsafe, but we can always make them a little bit safer to provide that additional bit of education for those parents."

"We are recommending that we look at an audit and you will more than likely see something in our 2012 budget identifying something along those lines."

Since the matter was first brought forward this summer, one of the original proponents of the equipment removal was Councillor Sandra Humfries, but in speaking to residents and staff since the debate initially went around the table, she said she had changed her mind in consideration of the "abundance of information

coming from all angles."

Confederation Park's camel climber became the unlikely subject of spirited debate between residents after local parent Martin McIntaggart first brought his concerns to council in June.

At the initial meeting he expressed worry that children could get injured when using the camel climber as they could freeze at the top when trying to figure out and coordinate on how to get back down the other side.

One false move, he argued, could see a user fall onto the metal bars that go across the centre of the apparatus resulting in injury or worse.

He repeated his arguments as a delegate last week and argued against Mr. Downey's report which said there had been no injuries reported from users of the apparatus.

"There have been reports of injuries on this piece of equipment," he said. "There have also been reports of a woman and child falling [and] children freezing in fear on this piece of equipment who needed to be rescued."

"Why wait for a fatality and a coroner's inquest to make changes when we have the power to prevent it before it happens in our parks right now," he added, suggesting council opt to replace the camel climber with something "age appropriate" but not "dangerous".

Mr. McIntaggart was accompanied once again by Laurie Harris who appeared with him the first time. Ms. Harris said her daughter was injured when she fell across the metal bars on the camel climber earlier this year resulting in a bruised pelvis.

As she told councillors last week she felt her personal character had been "attacked" in the ensuing debate.

"I felt I had a moral obligation to bring this concern to Town Council where it would be debated and based on an evaluation of equipment," she said. "I didn't expect for issues to be clouded by a debate of parenting styles and quite frankly an attack on my personal character. I don't have a hidden agenda and I'm certainly not trying to take away anything from the children who enjoy the playground. I have a genuine concern for my community and am simply trying to prevent serious injury from happening in the future."

"I know that each of you will make a decision based on

what you think is best for the community and I will respect your decisions. I will not negatively judge those who oppose the motion as I respect they are entitled to their opinions. I ask for the same respect in return."

Despite their arguments, Mr. McIntaggart and Ms. Harris were outnumbered 3-2 by delegating residents, Gayle Palmer, Cindy Taylor, and Leah Clark, who argued in the camel climber's favour.

First up was Ms. Palmer who said she had run into people expressing "surprise" that there was a motion before council to remove the equipment.

Parents and caregivers, she said, have to keep an eye on their children but, as in any playground, accidents happen.

"[The climber's] removal will not eliminate the potential for injury at Confederation

Park," she said. "I think the posted sign is the right solution and clearly states the guidelines for the structure. It is up to caregivers to decide if the child is capable of playing."

"In discussions with other Aurora residents we believe it is best to move forward but [with] the solution that benefits the entire Aurora community and that is by addressing the larger concern of accidents in playgrounds due to misuse. This does not start with removing one piece of equipment at one park. But one solution might be creating a signage system throughout every park in Aurora or stickers like on the camel hump now."

"Wouldn't it be great if there were stickers on every piece of equipment in every Aurora park? It could recommend ages and any ages would be identified by caregivers and children alike"

Lifeguards are honoured after she has heart attack

The quick thinking of life guards at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex (SARC) were credited with saving a woman's life earlier this month after a 65-year-old swimmer went into cardiac arrest during a public swim.

Barbara Atkinson, a resident of Cobblestone Lodge Retirement Home, went to the SARC for a swim on the afternoon of August 8.

Before taking to the pool, which was being used by more than 200 patrons at the time, Ms. Atkinson approached a life guard complaining of thirst.

Fifteen minutes later, when she was checked on by lifeguard Alexandra Lawlor, Ms. Atkinson again complained of being unwell and was taken to the lifeguard office where 10 minutes later she had a seizure and collapsed.

According to Aurora's aquatics supervisor Lorianne Ierullo, who made a presentation to the SARC lifeguards at last Tuesday's council meeting, Ms. Atkinson had no prior history of seizure and the pool was cleared after she had the initial attack.

"Alexandra Yustin performed 15 compressions and Barbara came to," said Ms. Ierullo. "Brandon

[Baird] monitored her breathing and kept her airway open. They had just stopped CPR when [Deck Supervisor Oliver Koh] and I arrived on the scene in the lifeguard office with the AED (defibrillation) unit. I applied the pads to the patient and the unit immediately assessed the victim. The unit said, 'No shock advised', but almost instantly Barbara went unconscious again."

Lifeguards then began CPR and Ms. Atkinson came to after five compressions and was coherent enough to begin speaking to Ms. Ierullo and provide the lifeguards with emergency contact information before falling unconscious for a third time a few minutes later.

"Brandon checked her breathing and pulse and I started compressions giving her approximately 12 compressions before she came to again," she said, noting that EMS arrived on the scene a minute later and took over care for Ms. Atkinson.

Ms. Atkinson was transferred to Southlake Regional Health Centre by paramedics and at the hospital went into cardiac arrest a fourth time.

"Unbelievably she was treated and released that evening at 8 p.m. and came back to swim at the

SARC three days post incident," said Ms. Ierullo of Ms. Atkinson, who was in attendance during last week's presentation. "All the aquatic staff on duty did an amazing job clearing the pool, assisting with customer service, crowd control, putting the fears of many young children attending the swim that day at ease and assisting emergency personnel in completing proper documentation."

"Aquatic staff complete hundreds of hours of training in preparing for situations like this and are thrilled by the outcome. For most of these 16 to 20 year old staff it is the first time being involved in a major accident. After stress debriefing, all have returned to work and are ready for whatever comes their way because it is not every day that one gets the privilege to save someone's life."

Lifeguards honoured Tuesday were Brandon Baird, Taylor Cowl, Emily Fahlgren, Oliver Koh, Alexandra Lawlor, Nicole Lawlor, Helene Neising, Andrew Recine, Brett Richardson, Kylie Smith, Jeremy Warner, and Alexandra Yustin.



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Finding balance inspired him to join PCs

By **BROCK WEIR**
Auroran Writer

When Frank Klees joined the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario at the age of 24, he said he was drawn by finding the balance between personal and social responsibilities.

Recognizing that when an individual has the ability to work to sustain them they also have the responsibility to do so, society also has the responsibility to ensure the needs of others when they do not have that option.

It is this philosophy that keeps the veteran MPP coming back for more, he says, and why he is proud to be carrying the PC banner in Newmarket-Aurora for the October 6 Provincial election.

"I am a Progressive Conservative because I believe strongly in the balance of both those principles - personal and social responsibility," he says.

As the incumbent MPP in this election, Mr. Klees says he has seen Ontario "suffering" as a result of what he describes as "very bad economic policy", including the loss of numerous manufacturing jobs and his vision not just for Newmarket-Aurora, but the province of Ontario - and one he shares with his party - is restoring Ontario's economic power.

"My vision...is to restore Ontario as the leader in Confederation as an economic community," he said. "That can only be achieved through fiscal responsibility, ensuring that people can once again begin to afford the very basics of life, and that means food, shelter, and clothing. The only way we're going to achieve that is through policies that put people first through reduced costs, reduced taxes, through reduced costs on their basics of electricity bills, home heating bills, and ensuring that businesses in this community and this province can once again begin to function without government saddling them with unnecessary red tape."

Having been first sent to Queen's Park as an MPP in 1995, Mr. Klees said he recognizes that his "most important responsibility" is to his constituents - being accessible to them, listening to their concerns, advocating on their behalf and, conversely, being accountable to them.

With this attitude, he said he believes it has allowed him to stay grounded "with respect to the issues that are most important to [his] constituents."

"The news stories that are in the media or on the 6 o'clock news aren't necessarily the issues that are really affecting the people here in Newmarket-Aurora on a day-to-day basis," he said. "That way you connect with people and I have been able to stay in touch and ensure that I understand my

constituents."

This philosophy has been best demonstrated, he said, in his advocacy at Queen's Park for constituent Cody Hughes who lives with rheumatoid arthritis.

When Mr. Hughes and his family first made contact with Mr. Klees, the latter said his mother was concerned that he might not live out the rest of the year and needed the transplant of three jaw joints.

Cody was put on a three-year waitlist for the surgery.

"Cody was on medication the level of a dying cancer patient and it would have been impossible for him to achieve... and even keep up with the basics of life," said Mr. Klees. "I was able to intervene; I asked his parents to come to Queen's Park and they were in the gallery when I asked the [Health Minister] to meet with the parents...after the minister had refused on a number of occasions to even acknowledge this was an issue.

"The bottom line is that as a result of that intervention, Cody had his operation within the month. He is doing well today and 72 other patients who were on a waitlist for the same procedure received their operations in a timely basis."

As the incumbent MPP, Mr. Klees may have a built-in advantage on his door-to-door canvassing as in his current role constituents are still coming to him with their concerns.

When these constituents express their opinions or describe their problems on a number of issues, the most common concerns relate to making ends meet, he says. They describe situations where life has become unaffordable, whether it is due to new taxes, "skyrocketing" hydro bills - especially among seniors - and people generally wanting relief, he said.

The HST, he adds, has compounded some of these concerns.

If he becomes a part of a Progressive Conservative government in October, Mr. Klees said his party has committed to taking the



FRANK KLEES, MPP

provincial portion of the HST off hydro and home heating bills.

"Where people feel it most is on the essentials and to slap an HST charge on top of things like energy bills and home heating bills, this is something that especially people on fixed incomes are feeling on a day to day basis," said Mr. Klees. "Our commitment is to begin the tax relief on those essentials and we're going to continue to look for ways to reduce the cost of living."

The HST is something Mr. Klees said he has fought against from the outset.

While he said he was clear that he wanted a more simplified tax system for Ontario, he said it was the wrong time to introduce a new tax on the province "in the middle of a recession and at a time when many people are still unemployed and on fixed incomes".

While Ontario is still not out of the economic downturn, a PC government will "find ways to reduce that HST and to eliminate it over the next number of years"

when economic stability is achieved, he said.

"From my discussions with constituents what they want us to do is to bring fiscal responsibility back to this province so that we live within our means and that it basically comes down to the point that people make to me all the time - don't make a promise that you can't deliver on," he said. "Over the next number of weeks as we go into this election people will know that we're only going to commit to doing the things that we are capable of delivering within the framework that we have."

If returned to Queen's Park this fall, Mr. Klees said he also wants to continue to be a "strong advocate" for organ donation, a passion for which, he said, was fostered from personal appeals and experiences shared by constituents, many of whom have been on waitlists.

While he said he has applauded the current government for bringing about an online donor registry, there is more work to be done to make people aware

they have the option to be an organ donor and are connected appropriately with people in need of donations.

"That would be a legacy that I would be very proud

of," he said. "I would like to complete some of the work that I have been doing on that file and, given the opportunity, I will dedicate myself to that."



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Sam Abbas, General Manager of Boston Pizza Aurora is shown with Judy Marshall, Executive Director of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, during the chamber’s pub night held at that location recently.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

You’re not allowed to smoke in Town’s recreation parks

People taking their kids to play at any of Aurora's many parks will be encouraged to butt out after council passed a motion from Councillor John Abel to begin a public education campaign to make Town parks and other recreational areas smoke free environments.

Councillor Abel gave his notice of motion calling for the measures last month and they were approved at council last Tuesday.

In his motion, he said a public education campaign for promoting a smoke free environment could be carried out in a similar fashion to the previous council's anti-idling campaign. Second hand smoke, he said in his motion, has been "shown to affect young children more significantly than adults and...young children most often frequent our outdoor recreation areas such as playgrounds and park areas."

When speaking to his issue last week, Councillor Abel said it was a "common sense approach" to talking the problem of smoking in public and conforms to Smoke Free Ontario legislation.

"As of yet, the municipalities have one by one started amending their own compliance for playgrounds and recreation areas that involve children," he said. "The benefits are obvious. It doesn't cost our Town or our taxpayers enforcement money. It's one of those things that have high compliance in self-regulation, just some signage in the area that is a con-

cern and I think that is something that would only benefit awareness and education."

In the future, signage strategies will be developed by the Town's Department of Infrastructure in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Department.

The Town's Communications team are also likely to get down to business and develop a media strategy along with the two Town departments.

Council supported Councillor Abel's initiative unanimously with Councillor Wendy Gaertner noting that she was particularly glad that an educational component would go hand in hand with this, unlike the anti-idling strategy which simply involved putting signs out front of municipal facilities.

"There was absolutely no public education campaign, so hopefully this will encourage the community to really support it," she said, adding she would like the Town to show the public it is "serious about this" by having a "small amount of active enforcement" as well.

Earlier in the evening, Councillor Abel's motion received a ringing endorsement from representatives of the Canadian Cancer Society, who made a delegation in support of the initiative.

Janice Hodgson, Public Issues Volunteer for the Society, said an outdoor smoking ban such as this would "decrease negative role modelling for children" and protect them from

exposure to health risks.

"Children do not have a choice when it comes to exposure to second hand smoke in play areas," she said. "Children, especially infants and toddlers, are not able to choose to relocate themselves when faced with second hand smoke. Municipalities have the opportunity to implement bylaws and policies that extend the requirements of the smoke Free Ontario Act."

Currently there are 50 municipalities in Ontario with degrees of outdoor smoking bans which Ms. Hodgson said were "more comprehensive" than the Smoke Free Ontario Act.

Education, she added, was one of the most important methods for increasing compliance with regulations without active enforcement.

"To increase compliance, the reasoning for the smoking restriction must be communicated in a meaningful way, such as for the children's health or the community's health or for environ-

mental and fire concerns.

"Studies show that the fear of issues with compliance actually exceeds the actual problems that they find. Signage paired with public education and a small amount of active enforcement would create a compliance that can be achieved."

Using a case study from Woodstock, Ontario, Ms. Hodgson said the municipality found that after their extension of the Smoke Free Ontario bylaw was put into effect, smoking at city parks decreased from 33 per cent to 21 per cent and support of the restriction increased to 84 per cent within a year of implementation.

"Nineteen per cent of people who smoke reported they were more likely to quit smoking as a result of the bylaw and 47 per cent of those quit after the bylaw was passed and reported that the bylaw helped them to stay a non-smoker," she said. "A further 33 per cent said the bylaw helped them cut down on the amount they smoke."

Some householders not paying taxes: auditors

The recent economic downturn has left a number of householders unable to make their tax payments to the Town according to a recent audit of municipal finances by auditors Grant Thornton.

The information came to council at last month's meeting following a presentation of the annual audit by Grant Thornton's senior manager Irfan Ahmad.

In their report, the auditors said that the percentage of outstanding taxes receivable for the calendar year of 2010 stood at 42 per cent, up from 27 per cent in 2009.

"At the same time, the provision for doubtful accounts decreased by \$84,000 to \$200,000, as at December 31, 2010," they said. "Accordingly, we reviewed the larger older balances with management. The largest outstanding amount in taxes receivable as at December 31, 2010 is a balance in the amount of \$623,000 from a property with a current assessment value of \$744,000; however there are concerns with respect to the prior use of this property that may affect its resale value."

The property in question, they noted, is to be listed for sale and the Town believes that "the allowance for doubtful accounts in the amount of \$200,000 will be sufficient to address a shortfall if one were to occur on a sale of the property."

"Based on our analysis of taxes receivable, we have determined that management's allowance for uncollectible receivables is appropriate."

When pressed by Councillor Michael Thompson why such a significant jump in outstanding taxes receivable occurred last year, Aurora Treasurer Dan Elliott said that it could be attributed to the economic downturn.

"[When] the economy turned,

there was a certain percentage of households that were having difficulty in meeting the tax payments," said Mr. Elliott. "That continued into the current year and that is now aged enough that it is now picked up in this additional aging. Our total receivables still remain relatively stable."

The state of the economy could also have an effect on the amount of money in the Town's coffers from Development Charges, it was also revealed in further discussion regarding Mr. Elliott's budget forecast for the coming year.

"I know one of the biggest deficits is from a reduction in the permits issued and we're aware of [effect the downturn has had] on the development industry," said Councillor Buck. "We have normally ended the year in good shape with supplementary assessment and I have some concerns that if we're not issuing permits...that is going to have an impact on our supplementary assessments."

While Mr. Elliott said he was "comfortable" that the Town's supplementary tax component would be achieved for 2011 despite the economic downturn, he conceded that the reduction in permits issued would indeed result in a reduction of the collected development charges.

"I was surprised with how few development charges we had collected in this first six months of the year," said Mr. Elliott. "It is impairing our revenue collection for development charges, however it is not an operating charge revenue. As we collect development charges it goes straight into the reserves. It is not part of our operating budget so we don't budget for the receipt of development charges."

"We do budget for the expenditure of development charges in our capital budget."

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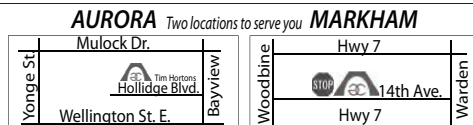
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Town agrees that PACT should run Parks program

From page 1
and public land in the summer time and we tend to cocoon in the winter. The reports would be coming back from our Parks Ambassadors and we're requesting they meet weekly during the more active months and it might drop down to every other week or monthly when we get to the winter months."

While Councillor Thompson said he was glad that council was poised to endorse the program - albeit on a trial basis - he said it was important for all parties to be on the same page going forward. He said he was not in favour of sending the terms of reference back to committee unless he had a clear sense that PACT agreed with that.

"In her delegation she said she didn't necessarily agree with the structure, didn't necessarily agree with the timing, there was no budget request, so there just seems to be a disconnect there and I'm concerned about adopting these terms of reference when the proponent of the idea isn't necessarily on board."

Although any terms of reference that were made at committee would ultimately have to come back to council for debate (if necessary) and final approval, there were other concerns

voiced at the table, including the Town's involvement in the screening process and the screening and training that the York Regional Police intended to provide to PACT and the Parks Ambassadors program.

"For us to take on the responsibility of screening people for this is outside our core competence and I don't think that is an area that we should be involved in," said Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, who added he could not support the recommendation. "The folks in PACT have a lot of experience with this as there are two other programs running in York Region like this."

In defending the recommendation from his department, Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation, said he suggested a more active role for PRAC to ensure proper volunteer screening and ensure the best distribution of ambassadors to parks.

That kind of distribution discussion would not necessarily take place between the Police and PACT, he added, and increased committee involvement would "ensure that we have appropriate coverage with regards to the program."

"We already have some partners within the Adopt-a-Park program but we have barely 10 per cent of our parks covered by that

program," he said. "This would definitely provide an additional opportunity for people to get involved and that was one of the reasons I had suggested that."

From Mr. Downey's perspective, limiting the one-year trial run from May to September would have allowed for a more active recruitment period during the off-season and also allow for training the volunteer complement all in one shot in the late winter or early spring before the program commences in May.

PRAC's overseeing of the program would be particularly "appropriate" while it is in its infancy, he added, before the reins are "turned loose" to PACT.

"I do strongly believe that training for the staff and the selection is something that is essential, as does Vaughan. I think it is best operated by the police," he said. "I think they have the best ability in order to do that but that type of activity can be overseen by the Parks and Recreation Committee to ensure that all members are trained."

At the end of the discussion, councillors voted in favour of endorsing the one-year trial of the Parks Ambassador program beginning May 1, 2012, but rejected the \$500 in support and the provision of handing over the terms of

reference to PRAC.

Through Parks Ambassador Program, walkers, runners, and cyclists will receive training to identify potential problems in parks assigned to them to police and relay their information to other appropriate bodies, such as the Parks and Recreation department.

According to Ms. Skillins, the program would

serve to fill a gap between a number of different crime prevention programs in the community, including Neighbourhood Watch and Business Watch, and engage the community in going out to familiar environments and "interact with the proper authorities".

The program, she said, also generates local stewardship, guardianship, increases a local percep-

tion of the individuals that our community is safe. Potential participants in the program must be over the age of 18 (16, if accompanied by an adult) and they must commit to work in their assigned public space on a regular basis, not intermittently. They must also live and/or work in Aurora, with few exceptions, and obtain police clearance.



It was a wedding with a switch. When Shaun Mills married Theresa Saturday, the couple decided to donate to a charity in lieu of the traditional wedding favours. So the couple donated to Big Brothers, Big Sisters of York. Both are employed by the Keg Restaurant, a national sponsor of Big Brothers, Big Sisters. The donation to BBBSY was described on a table card. In the photo, with the happy couple is Grant Peckford, left, an executive director of Big Brothers, Big Sisters.
Auroran photo by David Falconer



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