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AURORA UNITED CHURCH
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Good Friday Service
10:30 a.m.

Trinity United Church, Newmarket
461 Park Avenue, on Main Street

Easter Sunday Service is 10:30am
Aurora High School Auditorium
155 Wellington Street West, Aurora

THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper



Vol. 14 No. 24 905-727-3300

theauroran.com

FREE Week of April 17, 2014

Hope rises from the ashes

Members of Aurora United Church are looking into their faith following Friday's fire which gutted not only their spiritual centre, but also a building which has served as the spiritual home for generations of their families spanning nearly 140 years.

As the flames raged, first from the rear of the church and quickly spreading to engulf the entire building, many parishioners looked on with tears rolling down their cheeks, some describing the frustration of feeling "helpless" in the situation, and others the emotions they felt as a building so rooted in their memories was turned to ash.

Parishioners gathered in nearby parking lots to watch the scene unfold. As they looked on, their numbers swelled, and many ran to embrace old friends. Some, many former residents of Aurora, drove in from places as far away as Barrie just to be with their fellow congregants as the unthinkable happened.

One congregant who had been in the church when the fire broke out was Laurie North, who said she had been attending Aurora United Church since she was a baby. She had just arrived at the church ready to volunteer in the decorating for their traditional Palm Sunday service, when a roofer working on repairs rushed in to call 9-1-1.

"I was baptized here, I went to Sunday school here, I was married here and our kids were christened here," she said, dabbing her eyes. "It is really upsetting, but at least everyone is safe. You can always replace a building, but this just tears you apart."

Local business owner and musician Steve Falk has also been attending Aurora United Church since he was a toddler and has been very active in supporting the church, both in fundraisers and in his regular children's music programs, one of which was scheduled for Palm Sunday.

The music he had collected for the kids over the decades went down with the church, as did its musical instruments ranging from a very rare Quebec organ which was recently refurbished, to the hand bells which had

Continued on page 8

By Brock Weir

Volunteers work in the kitchens of Trinity Anglican Church on Saturday morning, ensuring the traditional Rise & Shine Breakfast went ahead as planned.
Auroran photo by David Falconer

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Weekly Notice Board



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Email info@aurora.ca • Website www.aurora.ca

Accessible formats
905-727-3123 ext. 4212
accessibility@aurora.ca

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Thursday, April 17	7 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
Tuesday, April 22	7 p.m.	Council
Wednesday, April 23	7 p.m.	Special Council - Public Planning*
Friday, April 25	10 a.m.	Trails and Active Transportation Committee
Tuesday, April 29	7 p.m.	General Committee*

Meetings are open to the public and held at Aurora Town Hall. Council meetings can be seen on Rogers TV, channel 10. For a full list of upcoming meetings, please visit www.aurora.ca/calendar

*Meetings can be viewed online by visiting www.aurora.ca/gcstream

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The next municipal election in The Town of Aurora will be held on **Monday, October 27**. Nominations are now open and forms can be viewed and downloaded online at www.aurora.ca/vote2014

Residents are encouraged to educate themselves on the election process and the candidates running for office. Have your voice heard on election day and vote!

This year, the Town will also ask residents to vote on the following two questions on the ballot:

1. "Are you in favour of electing all Aurora councillors, other than the Mayor, by ward vote instead of general Town-wide vote?"
2. "Are you in favour of reducing the number of Aurora councillors, other than the Mayor, from eight (8) councillors to six (6) councillors?"

PUBLIC NOTICES

Share Your Ideas for the Petch House

Aurora Town Council wants your opinion on potential uses for the historic Petch House. This two-storey log home was constructed by the Petch family circa 1844 and was recently restored and relocated.



We need your help with ideas and suggestions. Residents are encouraged to share their ideas by emailing communications@aurora.ca or through the Town's Facebook and Twitter profiles, using the hashtag #petchhouse. Suggestions will be accepted until **Wednesday, April 30**.

For more information on the Petch House and to watch the informative video on one of the oldest surviving homes in Aurora, please visit www.aurora.ca/petchhouse

York Region Transit Service Changes

Effective **Sunday, April 20**, several YRT/Viva service changes will take place. Changes for Aurora include:

Viva	blue
31	Aurora North
98	Yonge
98/99	Yonge (late night service)

Statutory holidays (Sunday/holiday service)

Good Friday	April 18
Victoria Day	May 19

All revised schedules are available at www.yrt.ca

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Tennis Courts

Please note that Town-owned outdoor tennis courts located at David English Park, Fleury Park, Norm Weller Park, McMahon Park and Summit Park are now open.

Upcoming Trip with the Aurora Seniors' Centre

Where: Agawa Canyon
When: **Sunday, September 21 to Thursday, September 25**
Trip Includes: Travel by DeNure coach, rail and ferry

For more information or to book this trip that will showcase the rugged beauty of the Canadian Shield, please contact Andrew Bailey at 905-727-3123 ext. 3611 or abailey@aurora.ca

Pine Tree Potters' Spring Pottery Sale

Visit the Pine Tree Potters' spring pottery sale from **Thursday, May 1 to Sunday, May 4** at the Aurora Cultural Centre, located at 22 Church Street. For more information, please visit www.pinetreepotters.ca

Aurora's Spring Street Sweeping Program

The Town of Aurora's spring street sweeping program will be in effect for the next 2-3 weeks. Please help ensure our streets and sidewalks are free of obstructions by avoiding day-time parking on streets between Monday and Friday and placing waste in your driveway.

Your co-operation and patience are greatly appreciated. For further information, please contact Customer Service at 905-727-1375.

Book of Condolences

Residents are invited to sign a book of condolences to honour the memory of The Honourable Jim Flaherty. The book will be at the Access Aurora Customer Service Desk on the first floor of Aurora Town Hall, located at 100 John West Way, until **Friday, April 25**.

Art in the Park

Calling all young artists! Help The Town of Aurora paint our picnic benches and garbage cans by registering your school or community group for Aurora's 4th annual "Art in the Park" event. This initiative is a great way to promote public art and share your artistic talents.

To register, please contact Franco DeMarco, Youth Co-ordinator, at fdemarco@aurora.ca or 905-727-3123 ext. 3121. For more information, please visit www.aurora.ca/artforthepark



The Aurora Public Library

New – Free Digital Magazines

You can now access more than 50 popular magazines online with your APL card. Enjoy titles such as The Economist, Rolling Stone and Shape. Please visit www.library.aurora.on.ca for more information.

And Neither Have I Wings to Fly

Author Thelma Wheatley will give a presentation on **Thursday, April 17** in the Magna Room at 7 p.m. at the APL on the Orillia institution for "the Mentally Retarded." Straight from recent headlines and a \$35-million class-action lawsuit, this true story reveals the social biases, abuses and human systemic failures that contributed to this tragic part of Canadian history. This is a free event but please call 905-727-9494 ext. 275 to reserve your spot.

Build-a-Bot Makershop

Drop-in after school on **Tuesday, April 22** from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. for a free workshop to build your own magnetic robot! Try different variations, see how big you can make your robot and learn fun magnetic magic tricks. This event is for children ages five and older.

Trails Donation Fund

Aurora Town Council approved a bylaw that allows residents to make donations to a Trails Donation Reserve Fund, to receive and hold donations for the betterment of the Town's trails network. The following guidelines apply to the fund:

- All gifts of \$50 or more will be receipted for income tax purposes by the Corporate and Financial Services department
- Only unconditional financial gifts will be accepted
- Gifts from estates and wills are also encouraged for consideration
- All gifts will be segregated from Town funds and will be planned for specific projects to be recommended to Council by the Trails and Active Transportation Committee
- Recommended projects will be above and beyond base financial commitments for trails made by Council in its annual budget, or to assist in funding large projects which would not proceed by Council without the additional funding from the donations
- Unspent reserve fund account balances will earn interest in the same manner as other Town reserve fund accounts

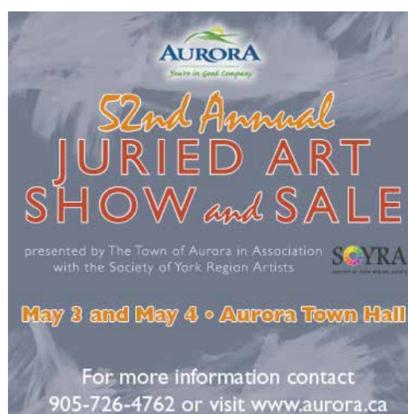
To make a donation to the Trails Donation Fund, please contact Dan Elliot, Director of Corporate and Financial Services, at 905-727-3123 ext. 4722.

Club Aurora Annual Golf Classic

Register today for Club Aurora Fitness Centre's 13th Annual Golf Classic event on **Wednesday, June 18** at St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club. Cost to participate is \$110 per person which includes lunch, dinner and power carts.

To register, please visit the reception desk at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex and reference the program code 35684. Registration deadline is **Saturday, May 31**.

For more information, please contact Wayne De Ryck or Diana Dawson at 905-726-4764.



Dinner and a Movie

Bend it Like Beckham (Rated PG)

Where: Aurora Public Library

When: **Saturday, April 19** 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Ages: 11 to 14 year-olds

Price: Entry is \$3 per person and pizza will be served.

For more information, please call 905-727-3123 ext. 3121.

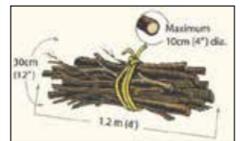


REMINDERS

Yard Waste Pick-Up

Residents are reminded that yard waste collection has resumed.

You are asked to bundle branches and place them curbside on the alternating week of garbage collection with your recycling and green bin.



Bundling guidelines are available on page 17 of the Town's 2014 Waste Management Guide and Recycling Calendar or at www.aurora.ca/yardwaste

Coyotes

Residents are reminded that with warmer temperatures, coyote sightings become more frequent. They are usually wary of people and avoid contact whenever possible. It is unusual for coyotes to show no fear of humans.

Conflicts can be prevented by removing sources of food, protecting pets and livestock, fencing gardens and securing garbage and compost.



For more information, please visit the Town's resource page at www.aurora.ca/coyote

Another exciting event brought to you by **AURORA**
You're in Good Company

Aurora Teen Idol

Are you the next Aurora Teen Idol?

If you are a resident of Aurora and between the ages of 12 and 17, you are eligible to enter the competition!
Open to individual vocalists only
Register by Friday, June 13. Applications are available at Aurora Town Hall, the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex or online at www.aurora.ca/canaday

Auditions take place on
Tuesday, June 17, 2014
from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
at the Aurora Community Centre

Final Competition takes place
during the Canada Day festivities on
Tuesday, July 1, 2014
from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Lambert Willson Park

Please note, we reserve the right to cancel, amend or change activities.
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Call 905-726-4762 or visit www.aurora.ca/canaday for more information

Another exciting event brought to you by **AURORA**
You're in Good Company

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 19, 2014 • 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Aurora Seniors' Centre (90 John West Way)

- Enjoy EGG-citing activities including face painting, a carrot toss, craft making and more!
- Find an egg and redeem it for an Easter goodie bag!
- Only 1,500 tickets are available. Tickets must be purchased in advance at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, located at 1400 Wellington Street East.
- Children 12 and under are welcome to participate. Tickets are \$5 per child. Parents are free!
- Pancake breakfast offered by the Aurora Seniors' Association and the Optimist Club of Aurora. Please note, a nominal fee will apply.

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Aurora Seniors' Centre
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Police crews block traffic on Leslie Street from Wellington Street East to St. John's Sideroad on Saturday after a shooting at State Farm Parkway. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

22-year-old man dead after police shooting on Saturday

By Brock Weir

A 22-year-old man is dead after an altercation with police in Aurora.

Just before 9 p.m. on Saturday, York Regional Police responded to a 9-1-1 call reporting a "man with a gun" on Leslie Street near State Farm Parkway. At the time, York Regional Police say they had reports of "people shot" but no other persons sustaining injuries had been found.

"At the scene, there were no other injured parties found," said Constable Laura Nicolle of the York Regional Police on Monday. "If that was alleged in the call, we are going to thoroughly investigate that to see if anyone else was involved, but I don't know the status of that as of now."

By 11 p.m., police confirmed the YRP was involved in the shooting and the man in question was taken to hospital with no vital signs, where he was later pronounced dead at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.

Ontario's Special Investigations Unit (SIU), which is an arm's length provincial agency that investigates reports involving police where there

has been a death, serious injury or allegations of sexual assault, has assigned four investigators and three forensic investigators to probe the circumstances of the shooting.

"Preliminary information indicates on Saturday, April 12, at approximately 9 p.m., officers with the York Regional Police interacted with a 22 year old man in Aurora," said the SIU. "Officers discharged their firearms. The man was taken to Sunnybrook where his death was pronounced."

The SIU asks that anyone who might have witnessed the incident to contact their lead investigator at 416-622-1898 or 1-800-787-8529 x1898.

The mandate of the SIU will be to consider whether any officers involved in the incident committed a criminal offence.

Although few details were available at press time, the SIU said an update on the investigation was expected later this week, but they did confirm they have spoken to "a number of civilian witnesses" over the course of the weekend and into the early part of this week.

For updates on the investigation, visit www.theauroran.com.

Volunteers gear up for Aurora's first Habitat for Humanity build

By Brock Weir

Volunteers are spending this week practicing their hammer wielding and their skills around a paint roller, all in preparation of tackling Aurora's first Habitat for Humanity build.

The house, which is mostly complete, sits in the new Daniels development on the southeast corner of Bayview and St. John's Sideroad. The three bedroom, two bath townhouse is now in its drywall stage and was formally dedicated earlier this month. Next week, however, volunteers will be arriving to help finish the job.

"The Daniels Corporation has been a long-time supporter for Habitat For Humanity across the Greater Toronto Area and in York Region we have been talking about this partnership since 2008 when they came to us," says Richard Solomon, Regional Vice President for Habitat For Humanity. "We have been working closely with them on that and through extensive discussions, it finally materialized to have one home in Aurora be dedicated as a Habitat for Humanity home."

The house sits in a complex of approximately 100 units tailored by Daniels to cater to first-

time home buyers. With the drywall sanded and ready to paint, Habitat anticipates they will have volunteers on site next week working through mid to late summer for a mid to late summer occupancy.

The family taking occupancy of the house is expected to be formally recommended to the Habitat for Humanity Board and approved this week.

"This is our first build in Aurora," says Habitat's Kari Salovaara. "Our site community is also looking at land throughout York Region and the Aurora area as well."

For Daniels' Vice-President Don Pugh, any time they bring a "first home" development into a new community, they offer local Habitat for Humanity affiliates a chance to partner on a Habitat build. One such partnership already underway is now in Mississauga and another is ready to get off the launching pad in Brampton.

"When we do this particular program, and there are various programs that can happen with Habitat, because it is a condominium format, we deliver the home when it is

Continued on page 12

Briefly

AURORA WOMAN HONoured BY PROVINCE

Aurora's Michele Liotta has been awarded a 2014 Victim Services Award of Distinction. Ms. Liotta was one of 19 individuals and organizations to be recognized by the Ministry of the Attorney General at a Queen's Park ceremony last week. In her citation, the Ministry hailed her for her efforts to empower women in the community after being a long-term victim of domestic abuse herself. "She has been a source of empowerment for many women as a community volunteer and public education advocate," said the Ministry in her citation. "Michele's first public appearance was as a keynote speaker at a meeting of the York Domestic Violence Court Advisory Committee in 2011. She continues to hold regular training sessions for local victim services volunteers and police officers at intensive court training courses. She works with a number of community organizations, describing her personal experience to help others find the strength to come forward." The Attorney General's Victim Services Awards of Distinction were founded in 2006 to honour those who have worked to "help victims of crime rebuild their lives." They were awarded during National Victims of Crime Awareness Week.

TASTE OF HOPE RETURNS WEDNESDAY

The AIDS Committee of York Region (ACYR) will host its annual fundraiser, A Taste of Life, at various restaurants across York Region on April 23. Participating Aurora restaurants include Bonsai Hill Tea, Chinook and Scorpion Mediterranean Bar and Grill. Restaurants taking part in A Taste of Life will donate 25% of their lunch and dinner sales on Wednesday to support ACYR, which provides support and care for people affected by HIV/AIDS. For more information, and to see what each restaurant is offering, visit www.atateforlife.org/york-region.html.

AL-ANON GROUP MOVES MEETINGS

Aurora Al-Anon and Alateen will now meet in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church following Friday's devastating fire at Aurora United Church. Aurora Al-Anon and Alateen supports those whose lives have been affected by drinking, and someone else's drinking. The relocated group will meet each Tuesday on the second floor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian (Mosley and Victoria) at 8 p.m. or more information, call 1-888-425-2666.



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Holiday Service Schedule Good Friday – Friday, April 18



MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way) will be **CLOSED** on Friday, April 18 for Good Friday. Regular business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. will resume on Monday, April 21.

If you would like to pay a water or tax bill, payments can be placed in the drop-off box 24 hours a day outside of Town Hall. Please do not place cash payments in the boxes and remember to include your payment stub along with your payment. Alternatively, you may pay your bills through your ATM or through your bank's online banking service. Parking tickets can be paid online at www.paytickets.ca



LIBRARY

The Aurora Public Library will be **CLOSED** on Friday, April 18 and Monday, April 21.

For more information, please visit www.library.aurora.on.ca or call 905-727-9494.



WASTE COLLECTION

Waste collection scheduled on Friday, April 18 has been moved to Saturday, April 19.

For information on waste collection in Aurora, please consult your 2014 Recycling and Waste Collection Calendar.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

As always, the Town will continue to provide essential and emergency services.

For Town-related emergency situations, please call 905-727-1375 or 905-727-3123 and follow the voice prompts.

FOR ALL OTHER EMERGENCIES, CALL 9-1-1



RECREATION CENTRE

Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, 1400 Wellington Street East
905-726-4770

Friday, April 18	8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturday, April 19	7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday, April 20	7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday, April 21	5:45 a.m. to 10 p.m.

For swimming, skating and Club Aurora fitness schedules, please visit www.aurora.ca/holidayrecreation

Town of Aurora

Anti-Litter

Saturday, April 26, 2014

9 a.m to 12 p.m. Clean-Up Day

Clean-up kits including gloves, bags and t-shirts will be provided when you register*

Barbecue and music from the Aurora Community Band will take place from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. at Aurora Town Park

*Register to participate by contacting
Access Aurora at 905-727-3123 or infoaurora@aurora.ca

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Letters to the editor

Preschoolers were on hand when church fire broke out

My boys' last day of YMCA preschool will be remembered by all!

Mateo and Mason are still asking questions and expressing concern while pointing out the smoke from home.

Melissa, their teacher, said the men working on the roof came down and banged on the door to the gym and said the roof was on fire. Then the alarm went off.

Everyone was immediately and safely evacuated. The children were amazingly brave and obedient. They have practiced fire drills as part of their safety and learning experience at the YMCA. I never imagined they would have to use it there.

They scurried to TC's Burgers and waited for their pick-up while Kim, Melissa and other moms dialed them to explain the situation.

Most of the kids were more concerned that they didn't get to eat their snack before getting evacuated. Their jackets, bags, boots and artwork is still inside the church basement where it will hopefully survive.

The fire is still burning. The boys ran out back as soon as we got home to spot the smoke in the sky. They're both sad and worried.

Kim and Melissa were my heroes today, and we will be back as soon as the preschool opens again to say our official thank you and goodbye since our last day was unlike any other.

Meave Mastracci
Aurora

(Editor's Note: The Auroran received Ms. Mastracci's letter just before noon on Friday.)

Mayor thanks Aurora for support following fire

By now, you have probably seen, heard or read about the devastating fire at Aurora United Church, which occurred on Friday, April 11. This is a tragic loss for our community, and our thoughts and prayers go out to the congregation.

Aurora is a close-knit community that looks out for its neighbours. I was quickly reminded of this when calls and emails simply asking "how can I help?" came within hours of this fire. Tragedy began to turn to hope in the form of an incredible community response with many generous offers of assistance.

There is no doubt that the United Church congregation faces a long road. But the outpouring of sympathy and offers of help from our entire community says they will not have to take that journey alone.

I would like to thank York Regional Police, who evacuated nearby buildings and secured the area; York Region EMS who treated one resident and four firefighters who were exposed to smoke; and Central York Fire Services, who, along with fire services of East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, and Whitchurch-Stouffville, did their utmost to save the building.

The swift and professional response from all three services contained the fire and prevented any loss of life or serious injuries.

The actions of Aurorans have shown that we truly are a Community of Faith! With ongoing support and co-operation, we will move past this tragedy together.

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe
Aurora

Former resident shares "Aurora's grief"

To the Residents of Aurora: With the fire and destruction of your United Church, Aurora has suffered a devastating loss that is being felt in other parts of the country as well.

There are many of us in far corners of Canada who have happy childhood memories of Old Aurora.

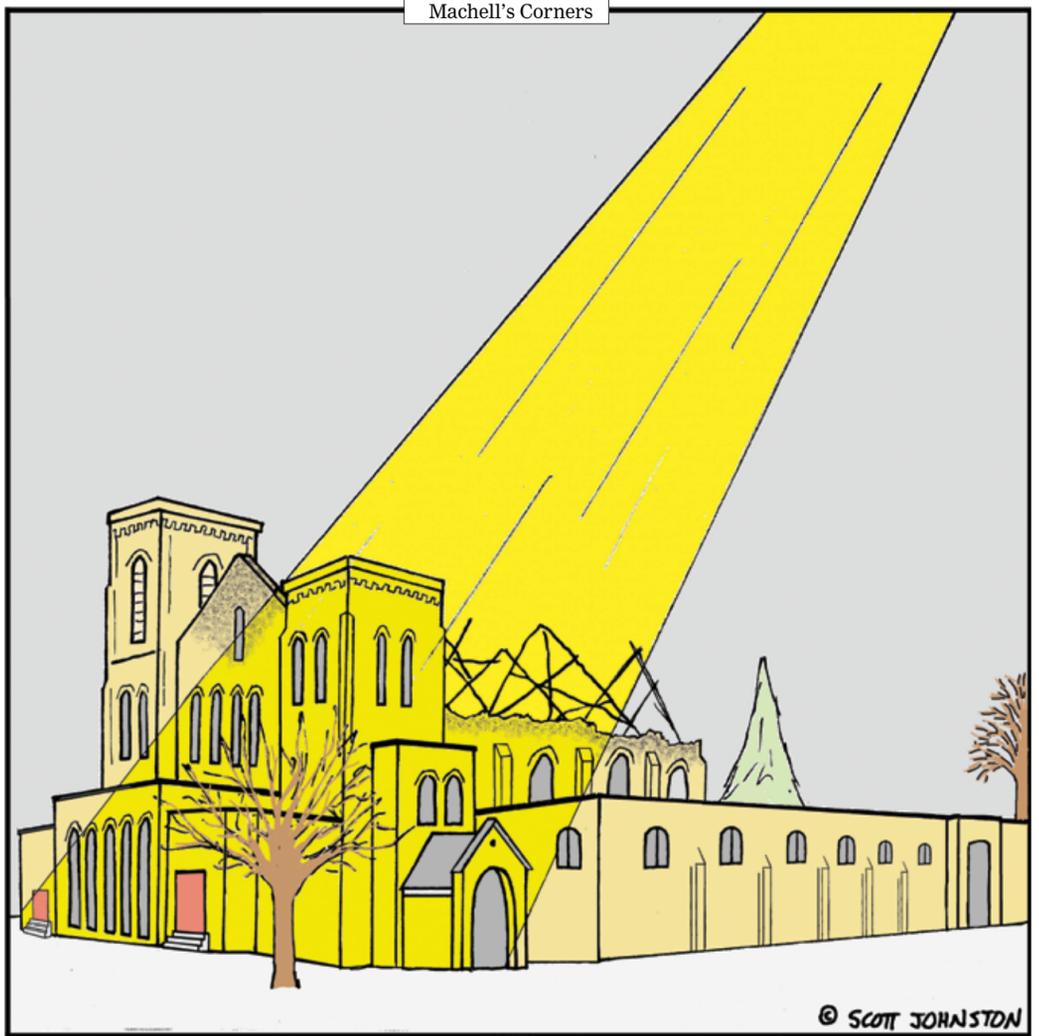
The United Church was one of the icons firmly planted in our minds.

As a small girl in the 1950s, I walked uptown countless times from Kennedy Street West with my grandmother, Olive Closs.

The route always took us past Aurora United Church. It was just *there*. And now it isn't. My mother, June Seaton Closs, was christened in the church in 1926. And then in 1945 I was christened there too.

I send my most sincere condolences to all of you.

Lynn Closs Tomlinson
Qualicum Beach, British Columbia



**To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to letters@auroran.com.
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.**

Healing an open wound

It was a phrase which was on the lips of so many Aurorans on Friday and throughout the weekend, but it is true – there are no words.

After spending the bulk of Friday watching Aurora United Church be felled by flame, I got back to the comfort of my own home knowing that, rationally, the previous six hours had actually happened but it was almost impossible to comprehend. Therefore, I can't even begin to mention what the parishioners must continue to feel nearly a week after the tragedy.

When the community came together the following day at the traditional Rise & Shine Breakfast, now held across the road at Trinity Anglican Church, there was no doubt this particular dedicated community had risen from the ashes, determined to rebuild and replant their roots.

Yet, the fire itself seemed incomprehensible.

Later that day, the rear of the wreckage was once again accessible. People flocked to survey the damage for themselves. Some brought cameras and smart phones to capture it for posterity. Others brought their kids and, straddling a trench carved into the saturated ground to let the torrents of water still gushing from inside the church's shell flow onto Tyler Street, share memories with their toddlers of milestones celebrated within its now exposed walls.

Despite it all, it still seemed surreal, until a glint caught my eye within a break from the one remaining plume of smoke still billowing into the atmosphere.

Something had caught the light as the bulldozer inched closer to it.

After an uncharacteristically gentle prod by the claw, the object turned very slightly.

It was one of the intricately beautiful railings from the second floor balcony, emerging relatively unscathed before it was dumped unceremoniously into the rubble below.

Suddenly, in my mind at least, my very fresh memories of Friday found a permanent, yet uncomfortable place in my mind.

Outside of one brief trip with my Beaver troop, which was based at Newmarket's Trinity United Church, my first true encounter with Aurora United Church was at a Doors Open Aurora event, courtesy of historian Helen Roberts.

At the time, I marvelled at the bright and open church until I was instructed to look up. There, Ms. Roberts excitedly told the story about how parishioners long since passed had shared their memories of these railings they once thought lost in the mists of time.

Evidently, they captured the imaginations of their resident historians who had spent the most recent decades looking at austere wooden barriers in place to keep those in the flock up in the mezzanine from tumbling into the pews below.

Recent renovations, however, cleared those mists as restoration experts found the original, gleaming cast iron railings encased in the wood panels. After the renovations, they once again took pride of place, this time protected with sheets of Plexiglas for everyone to admire.

And, indeed, it was something I did admire on each subsequent visit. My most recent excursion into the church was for a riveting presentation open to the entire community by Holocaust survivor Leslie Meisels to mark 2013's Holocaust Education Week.

Attended by Aurorans from across the religious spectrum, including a small crowd of boys who were just a few days shy of being confirmed right in the church, it served no embody not only the spirit of inclusivity the church had come to stand for but (selfishly) as I was on duty with camera in hand, I had a perfect excuse to go up and sit directly behind these railings as Aurorans had done since the 1870s – even if they didn't know it.

As I am writing this, demolition crews are still working on the scene, and the charred railings



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

(including that one gleaming exception) are now in a heap of rubble in the bottom of a shell. By the time this gets to you, they might very well end their days in a dumpster, but I certainly hope not.

The way the community has come together in the aftermath of the fire has been heartening. I attended the 11 a.m. service at Trinity Anglican Church on Sunday and was struck by the open hearts with which they received each displaced parishioner, lending a hand wherever it was

needed to help guide the United Church parishioners through the slightly more elaborate Anglican service.

This weekend, and in the week ahead as Easter approaches, has served to remind people exactly what a community is, and what it is there for. We would all benefit from keeping this reminder uppermost in our minds as they begin the process of rebuilding and making fresh memories that will be handed down the generations.

NOW WHAT?

As they rebuild, however, more questions are going to be raised.

As I watched the building burn on Friday, it might seem strange, but one of my first thoughts was, "This really puts some of Aurora's recent squabbles into perspective."

Over the last few months (and let's be truly honest with each other, the last few years and decades), there has been increasing discussions, debate, and bickering over just what should be done with Aurora's Downtown Core.

Aurora's Promenade Plan is intended to provide prescriptions for new builds and planning that would foster not only a sense of community, but an attractive, walkable, community. The proposed Heritage Conservation District, the boundaries for which Aurora United Church fell just short, is intended to preserve a heritage flavour of the community while fitting into the rest of the plans.

Most recently, Council approved the Community Improvement Plan, which is ostensibly there to provide some financial supports and incentives to spruce up Aurora's Downtown Core, encourage intensification in the area and, when you get to the bottom line, restore the area to what it once was – the heart of a bustling community.

Of course, not all of these plans were approved unanimously – although the Community Improvement Plan came very close – as some of Aurora's lawmakers professed different visions for Aurora's Downtown Core. At least one has said they do not see any sort of decay in this area, as storefronts are shuttered and businesses struggle.

There have been roundabout debates for almost 13 years on what to do with Library Square, when the majority of the community seems to be on the same page on just what should be done, lest a decision after over a decade is "rushed", and on and on it goes.

Whether or not one can see the decay in the area, or whether or not one recognizes the urgency in moving forward on some of these plans, and some of these constraints, there is one certainty: the heart of the community is no longer in decay, it is not something that can be fobbed off until a sexier new vision comes along, or something that can simmer away on the backburner until the next Council is elected and can take all the glory.

The heart of the community now has an open, weeping wound.

It is time to put differences aside, confine politicking to the campaign trail rather than the council table and, if need be, bite the bullet, and get down to business plotting a course of action everyone in a position of power can live with and get behind, not only to revitalize the area, but also help the community at heart, still reeling from the gut punch that was Friday, get back on its feet.

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AURORAN POLL

Last week to vote

Would Aurora benefit from a ward system?

A) Yes B) No C) Undecided

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!

RESULTS April 15, 2014	Yes	No	Undecided
	33%	58%	8%



Alicia Burke and Joanne Gorry of the Town of Aurora gave the Easter Bunny a helping hand at the Aurora Home Show last weekend ahead of this Saturday's Easter Egg Hunt. The Easter Egg Hunt, a day of family fun, will get underway at the Aurora Seniors' Centre from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Easter Egg hunts will take place at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. Tickets are on sale at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Ottawa Report

Myths and Facts: The Canadian Health Transfer

Unfortunately, there have been a lot of rumours and misinformation spread about federal health transfers. I would like to take this opportunity to set the record straight.

The federal government is committed to a publicly funded, universally accessible health care system founded on the principles of the Canada Health Act. In 2011, the Conservative government announced a major new investment in health care, and committed to continued growth in health transfers to the provinces and territories.

This plan has provided record growth to all provinces, and these transfers will continue to grow by 6% every year for the next three years. In 2014 – 2015, Ontario will receive \$12.33 billion through the Canada Health Transfer – an all-time high and a 60% increase over the previous government.

These record transfers are providing long-term, stable funding so that our health care system is there when Canadians need it. To ensure health funding for the provinces continues to grow in a sustainable way, transfers will grow in line with the economy starting in 2017 and are guaranteed to increase by at least 3%. This record increase in funding will reach \$40 billion by the end of the decade and provides stability and predictability to the system.

In addition to transfers being at an all-time high, we are also funding nearly 13,000 health researchers across Canada, and investing roughly \$1 billion every year for health research. We have increased funding for health care in many other ways including by:

- Providing over \$1 billion to reduce wait times.
- Achieving the highest level of physicians per capita in recent history.
- Providing \$15M to expand patient-oriented research and to work towards finding a cure for dementia by 2025.
- Investing nearly \$45M to expand the focus of the National Anti-Drug Strategy to include prescription drug abuse.
- Enacting further deterrents to discourage smoking.
- Improving supports for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Expanding health-related tax relief, including coverage of expenses for diabetes alert dogs.
- Investing up to \$500 million through Canada's Economic Action Plan to establish electronic health records.
- Introducing the Family Caregiver Tax Credit to support caregivers of infirm family members.
- Investing \$6 million for palliative care.



LOIS BROWN
MP Newmarket-Aurora

Through record transfers and significant investments we are supporting all provinces and territories in delivering the quality of care that Canadians expect.

Canadian Victims Bill of Rights

Prime Minister Stephen Harper recently announced the introduction of legislation to create a Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, which will create, at the federal level, clear rights for victims of crime – a first in Canadian history. It is our belief that the justice system must put the rights of victims ahead of the rights of criminals, including:

Right to information: Victims will have access to information about the justice system, victim services, and specific information about their case.

Right to protection: Victims will have their security and privacy protected during the criminal justice process.

Right to participation: Victims will be able to present a victim impact statement and have their views considered at various stages of the criminal justice process.

Right to restitution: Victims can ask the court to consider restitution when there are easy-to-calculate financial losses.

The Bill of Rights will ensure that victims have enforceable rights in Canada's criminal justice system, be treated with the respect and fairness that they deserve, and have a stronger voice.

Book of Condolences

A book of condolences in honour of the late Honourable Jim Flaherty is available for signing in my constituency office. Jim's untimely passing has brought about an outpouring of sorrow and appreciation from across the globe. The book will be available until April 25 at 16600 Bayview Avenue, Suite 206 in Newmarket. Drop by anytime Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If you would like to contact me on any issue, please call 905-953-7515 or visit my website at www.loisbrown.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.

Baptism at the Campus Church

A couple of Sundays ago, I was invited to attend a baptism. It was not your traditional baptism of a baby. It was for my sister-in-law Cindy and my seventeen-year-old nephew Brock.

I had been to a few Catholic Church baptisms before so I kind of knew – or at least thought I knew – what to expect.

I have to admit that I was a little nervous when Cindy told my wife that the ceremony would last about one hour and a half. This seemed long to me and I envisioned some cringe-worthy ceremony that would last a long time.

But I was proven wrong. The ceremony itself did take about 1.5 hours but it was very moving emotionally.

The event was held at the Campus Church on Bathurst Street, in the southern portion of Aurora.

Three things immediately struck me as different from my regular attendance at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Aurora.

First, there were comfortable chairs for everyone as opposed to the pews that I am used to. Also, these pews did not have a padded knee board to kneel and prey on.

Secondly, on the screen at the front, there was an electronic counter counting down the time until the service began. This was kind of neat and was required as it seems most people congregate before the service as opposed to the service that I attend where everyone is there in the seats before the mass.

Third, I could not help but notice the large tank at the front on the side. This was going to be used for the baptism.

There were a number of songs sung at the start of the service, accompanied by a very good band.

The Pastor then offered some introductory comments and a collection was held seeking financial donations.

Then it came time for the baptism ceremony itself.

I was both interested to see this baptism initiation for adults but I was also dreading some potential long-winded ceremony.

I was wrong.

Video testimonials were used by most of the people seeking baptism.

The first video testimonial put up on the screen featured a young lady – probably seventeen or eighteen years old. The video lasted about one minute and she spoke directly about her reason for wanting to be baptized.



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

The testimonial was very good and uplifting.

A supporter of her baptism was then called who read a piece of scripture to the audience. The young lady then was asked by Pastor Jim Nolson two questions and after answering both, she was put under the water. When she came out, the newly baptized lady was greeted with applause.

This process was repeated in total I believe six times.

Each of the individual stories for finding the Lord was truly compelling but a couple stood out for me.

One gentleman spoke of the hardships in his life – and based on what he told the audience via his video testimonial - he has had enough dark times for three lives. This man spoke of how the Lord has helped him overcome these obstacles and how blessed he is to have the family that he does.

As I listened to this man's testimonial, I had a large lump in my throat and I tried to wipe away some tears without anyone seeing me. I did not dare look around except at the large video screen at the front of the room as I think everyone around me was witnessing and feeling the same way.

My sister-in-law, Cindy's, testimonial was also very heartfelt and I was very happy and proud to witness her baptism.

My nephew, Brock, did not have a video testimonial but he rather spoke to the audience and did a good job.

His friend, Liam, read the scripture and had the best one liner of the day when he said "I am very happy to see you in that tank".

At that point I leaned over to my wife, Julie, and said "It would be nice if we had that tank for your mother". She just shook her head at me and went back to viewing the ceremony.

The Lead Pastor, David Payne, then gave a lovely sermon about the origins of Baptism and its meaning, which I think rather nicely placed the entire ceremony into perspective.

I congratulate all the baptism celebrants that day and hope that this was a very special day in their individual spiritual journey.

I also offer a special shout out to my sister-in-law and nephew Brock for allowing my family and me to bear witness to their special day.

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

Letters to the editor

Letter writer responds to "Concerned Citizens"

(Re: Heritage District Letter prompts more question than answers. April 3)

Thank you for reading my letter and responding to same.

You state that I "posed questions but provided no answers." I did not pose any questions, therefore there was no need to provide answers.

My criticism was, and is, the misinformation your delegates presented at the council meeting in question.

The statement in your letter to The Auroran, "the material advantage of surrendering one's property rights to the authority of bureaucracy remains elusive" is inane, at best misleading and continues in the vein of the above noted misinformation.

I do support the concept of designated historical districts because in my opinion it protects the historical and architectural integrity of one's neighbourhood and sets a higher standard as to what can be built in a specific area.

Hopefully further information and clarification from the consultant, Mr. Bray will address the concerns of the residents and enable a factual and rational decision one way or the other.

Graham Wide

"Concerned Citizen of Aurora"



This photo by reader Andrew Coutts of traffic coming to a standstill when Friday's fire broke out was one of many sent to The Auroran over the weekend. To share your memories of Aurora United Church or thoughts on the fire itself, contact letters@auroran.com.

Lawsuits impact taxpayer: reader

A major contributing factor in the premium increase in Aurora Town's insurance coverage is the skyrocketing cost emanating from Council member lawsuits. With the in-fighting among Council members, tens of thousands of dollars have already been expended in defending actions, with, additionally, tremendous town staff manpower lost in having to attend and address these. Insurance companies are not benevolent societies, who look benignly upon Council chamber insurance covered squabbles.

They are very much profit and loss institutions and will ensure that through substantially increased premiums, over years, a level of cost recovery is ultimately achieved. While offending Council members go scot-free, it is again the property tax payers, who are on the hook for the increasing cost, which, with a degree of self-restraint by Council members, and consciousness of how their conduct financially impacts the Town, could be avoided. Too bad there is not a Council member cost contributing factor for frivolously caused lawsuits, which appear to be more personality (or politically) motivated rather than based on justifiable causes.

Alex Vander Veen
Aurora

Time for residents to get involved in review process, say environmentalists

It's time for concerned citizens to make a lot of noise and elevate the discussion on the environmental plans that protect lands in Ontario.

The lack of monitoring and any real data on environmental protection in this province is its main failing, according to Gord Miller, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner. Miller was the keynote speaker last Wednesday at a public forum hosted by Concerned Citizens for King Township at the Kingbridge Centre. London Publishing, owner of The Auroran and King Weekly Sentinel, was the exclusive media sponsor of the event.

A capacity crowd gathered to hear from Ontario's top environmental cheerleader, who provided an overview of our shortcomings, while offering insights on what the future holds.

The event was put together by CCKT to inform residents about the importance of the 2015 reviews of major pieces of legislation – the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, and Greenbelt Plan.

Once the envy of the world regarding environmental policy, Ontario's focus has declined and public service cuts in the ministries that handle environmental issues have led to lackluster enforcement and no follow-through monitoring, said Miller.

The province currently lacks the professional capacity of experts – those important “boots on the ground” – to ensure our environmental plans are working. Miller stressed that it's our tax dollars that fund environmental protection so taxpayers should demand they be invested where it counts.

The once powerful Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and Ministry of the Environment (MOE) have been “gutted” and their combined budgets today account for less than one cent out of every tax dollar. Even increasing their budgets twofold would see changes and not affect the big tax picture.

He said he is not adverse to tax increases if they can be directed to the environment.

Miller also told the audience to never underestimate the “noise” made by people to their elected officials. With impending municipal and, potentially, provincial elections this year, it's vital to “explain it to them.”

An officer of the Legislative Assembly, Miller's role is to critically evaluate government decisions and the provincial planning system as it relates

to the environment.

Broad rules have been set out in a number of key pieces of legislation – the forerunner of them all, the Niagara Escarpment Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP), Greenbelt Plan, and now the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

While somewhat controversial at the outset, today these plans have been embraced as our guiding lights, but unfortunately have lacked performance monitoring indicators.

So, it's difficult to say whether they've been successful or not, without that on-the-ground data. With no real metrics, this has inherent problems, Miller pointed out.

Regarding the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe the Ministry

Continued on page 24



ASK THE DESIGNER

JEAN BISNAIRE

Getting your garden ready for Summer

“Now that spring is here, I can't wait to get the outside of my house looking as good as the inside. Do you have any ideas for landscaping and tying it in with the rest of my home?”

Feel free to send me your comments or questions to askjean@nichedecor.ca

First impressions are everything.

People often think that the signs of good design should be recognized the moment you enter a home. They want their guests to open the front door and be wowed by what they see. What people don't realize is how impactful it can be to let their personal style shine not just throughout the interior of their home, but right through the front door spilling out on to the porch, walkway, and into the garden.

The right garden accessories and plant species can set the tone for an incredible outdoor atmosphere. Our friends at Jack's Landscaping have given us some great tips on how to embark on your spring gardening adventure. Even though the weather is warming up a little, don't jump into things too quickly. Like all good designs, a little planning goes a long way. You want to make sure that there's no more chance of frost, which will kill young saplings. For this reason, the end of May or even early June is the ideal time to start your planting. This is the best time to plant new perennials or shrubs, it's also the best time to transplant making sure that your plants get plenty of water in order to grow successfully in their new location.

When it comes time for actual plant selection, try opting for plants that are native to the region. They are more beneficial for the environment and are more likely to thrive in your garden. Also, with the frequent water bans we see in summer, drought tolerant plants are a good thing to consider. Try Portulacas or Zinnias for continuous colour all summer long!

Once you've got your exterior looking great, bring that outdoor feeling inside. When inside meets out in the decorating world we see beautiful results. Shapes become more organic, colours become more natural and the

overall feel becomes more zen.

Here are some of my favourite ways to marry the outdoors with your interior:

Colour

Keep your colour palette simple. Bold choices can add an unexpected pop of colour to any space, but having too many different colours can create a feeling of chaos and disorder. Yellow tulips scream spring and look beautiful when paired with whites and neutrals. White on white can be incredibly soothing. Try combining different types of white flowers for an eclectically elegant look.

Repetition

Repeat some of the elements you see outside, indoors to create harmony between the 2 areas. For example, use a similar fabric on your window treatments overlooking your garden as the fabric on your lawn chairs. Why not mimic the stone or wood you may have in a walkway or patio in your interior accessories?

Materials

Don't just stick to flowers. There are many ways to get that spring garden feeling indoors that go beyond the standard vase of flowers on a table. I love the mix of masculinity and femininity that is achieved by bundling lush branches together, or displaying leafy greens in a terrarium. Is pollen a problem for you? Don't worry, you can still achieve this hot look by hanging nature photography and using reclaimed wood pieces in your home.

Whether you're looking to enjoy your morning coffee surrounded by green refuge, or some well deserved time off after a hard day at work, Mother Nature can be the greatest source of design inspiration. Have fun with it, relax, and enjoy your spring garden oasis!

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Aurora delays indoor tennis plans to seek more options

By Brock Weir

Aurora's tennis players hoping to have a warm place to play tennis during the long winter months will have a while to wait yet as Council last week put the brakes on a potential tennis dome at Stewart Burnett Park.

Councillors voted in favour of referring the matter back to staff for more options after a push came at the Council table to move away from the tennis dome supported by staff in favour of investigating a fixed structure which could, in turn, be used for many different sports and activities. Some Councillors, however, said a delay was needless and could ultimately cost taxpayers more money.

Councillors initially voted in favour of moving ahead with a six court tennis dome at the Committee level the previous week. That proposal would see Canada Winter Tennis, a company associated with Terry Redvers, owner of the Aurora Sports Dome, construct a tennis dome on municipal land at his own cost for a 20 year term which would subsequently become the property of the Town.

"The land that this facility is to be placed on is land that would not otherwise be used," said Councillor Evelyn Buck, supporting the dome proposal.

Some, however, hesitated going forward with this plan, saying they believed the terms of reference put out by the Town last fall for expressions of interest in providing an indoor tennis facility were too narrow to meet the Town's needs.

"We don't have any research that says we need six more tennis courts in Aurora," said Councillor Wendy Gaertner. "To the end of 2013, we need to add one more [through the Master Parks and Recreation Plan] and we did that. Six seems like a lot of courts.

Maybe we need them and maybe we don't. Everyone around this table knows we don't have a lot of vacant land for recreational purposes [and building multiuse facilities] makes the best use of your land and your tax money and you're thinking towards the future."

Councillor John Gallo, a key proponent of an original proposal of a multi-use tennis facility at Fleury Park first proposed by the Aurora Community Tennis Club in 2012, disagreed with Councillor Gaertner about the need for a facility. A tennis "bubble", however, just wasn't going to cut it – particularly considering the millions of dollars Aurora has already spent on the nearby Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex and ball diamond in the adjacent park.

"I believe that a bubble at this location with a trailer connected to it for changing rooms and for washrooms is completely substandard [next to the SARC]. To put this type of facility there seems below the level I believe we could accomplish," said Councillor Gallo, citing the impending closure of Timberlane as exacerbating the need. "What I envision is a report with options on a structure there. I don't see the need to rush into this, but there is a desperate need for an indoor tennis facility. I think we are rushing into it and need to press pause and look at some different options.

"I think we would be doing a disservice to this community [if we] plowed through this without thinking it through properly."

In response, Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation, said he had no problem with going back to the drawing board and coming up with an option for a rigid structure, but said Council needs to narrow its focus on what exactly they envision for a multi-purpose structure so there is a clear message to send out to possible

proponents in the tennis community looking to follow through with the plans.

Others, however, weren't as particular about the aesthetics – preferring function (and cost) over form.

"Function is extremely important and costs are extremely important," said Councillor Paul Pirri. "It might not be the same aesthetic value, and I don't disagree that that is important to some people, but if you look at what it does, if people need a place they can play tennis in the winter, this meets that need. If we're looking at costs, we have a very clear known cost with what we have in front of us."

Going back to the drawing board, expanding the scope of the project for a multi-purpose structure, would present a lot of unknowns which would require partnerships and the need to raise more money.

"This serves the need in the most cost-efficient manner," said Councillor Paul Pirri. "I don't see why we would be looking at doing something else."

Councillor John Abel said he agreed. "What is great about this is it is not going to cost the Town any money apart from the land," he said. "I sure do like the fact we're not going to spend any money and it is going to be operated by someone else."

Nevertheless, Councillors voted

5 – 4 in favour of looking at further options. Supporting the motion were Councillors Abel, Ballard, Gaertner, Gallo, and Humfries. For Councillor Chris Ballard, it was a matter of interest to see the other options out there, although he didn't want the concept to "grow and grow and grow".

"We have to keep it within our means, so I am very comfortable to take it back to staff [for] more information... perhaps with some use for other venues like theatres, movies, and a community meeting space," he said. "I don't think we require any more indoor soccer space, so I am comfortable keeping things small and modest."

For those voting against the plan, it was an opportunity missed which resulted in Council "accomplishing nothing."

"The ultimate persuasion for me is it wasn't going to cost the taxpayers' anything [and] we would be adding an amenity for the town," said Councillor Buck, noting her disagreement with a proposal for a rigid structure from Sport Star which would have required Aurora to act as guarantor for their construction loan. "That does not interest me at all. If they fail to make the payments, the Town is responsible for that mortgage, whatever that might be, and we have no idea what such a fixed structure would cost."

Public talks lead to "surprising" findings for York Region Food Charter

By Brock Weir

Residents of York Region want to get back to nature.

That is the word stemming from ongoing consultations on the York Region Food Charter, a document spearheaded and lead in collaboration between the York Region Food Network and the Region of York, to identify common values and objectives related to food and food production at the community level.

Council is expected to formally endorse the Charter this week.

The charter focuses on five pillars: health and wellbeing, economic opportunities, environmental sustainability, social justice and education.

After the document was finalized just over a year ago, it has been making the rounds, gaining momentum, and through further community consultation, has yielded some surprising results.

"Across the board, community gardens and nutritional programs came up,"

said Kate Greavette of the York Region Food Charter Working Group. "This was somewhat surprising because York Region does have an urban/rural mix to it, so I think we were all a little surprised that these programs were consistent across the board."

With this feedback, she said, the program has been working with groups, such as York Region's Seeds For Change to work with schools such as Rick Hansen Public School, Our Lady of Grace Catholic Elementary School, and Hartman Public School to begin school gardens, both in outdoor spaces and planters within the school.

According to Ms. Greavette, one of the main objectives of the Charter was to bring together groups that don't normally work together on daily basis, beyond the producer and consumer, to also waste managers to identify inefficiencies in the food systems and where there are problems in the "food system" as a whole.

Continued on page 25

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"Our son was diagnosed with learning disability in reading and writing at 6. He has completed the program and is now very successful. The confidence he now has is the best reward."

— Ron & Wendy Jennings,
Newmarket, Ontario

"The thought of completing high school was almost inconceivable. After a month or two at Learning Ability, we started talking about what college she will be attending."

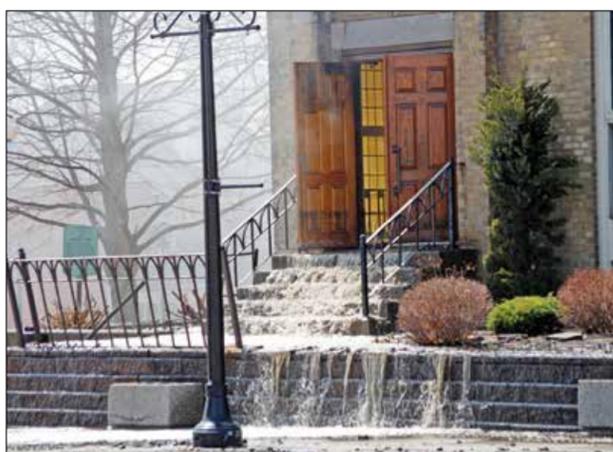
— Richard & Deb Pope
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Rebuilding fund established for Aurora United Church

Fire Department investigation deems fire "accidental" amid roofing repairs

By Brock Weir

Demolition crews are expected to continue dismantling portions of the nearly 140-year-old Aurora United Church after a devastating fire reduced the historic landmark to mere ruins on Friday.

Although crews and church leaders are hopeful portions of the Yonge Street façade can be saved, the north, south, and west walls had to come down by Tuesday afternoon.

As work continues, those involved have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from the community, regardless of religion. The "Aurora United Church Rebuilding Fund" has been established to provide a way for people to help.

Donations can be made to Bank of Montreal Account number 03038976766.

By Saturday, Central York Fire Services (CYFS) deemed the blaze accidental caused by roofers who had been repairing a leaky roof on the north addition to the building, work which carried on throughout the preceding week.

"The roofers were using an open flame, part of the roofing process, and started a small fire they thought they had extinguished," said Deputy Chief Paul Leslie. "By the time they realised they had not, it was too late to extinguish it."

By Saturday, the CYFS decided they had the fire out, but crews from Priestly Demolition were on hand doing limited demolition work, clearing rubble trying to get to the basement. The crews are due to conduct an exploration of the structural stability of what is left standing before deciding the next steps.

Aurora United Church has been the spiritual home of over seven generations of Aurora residents.

Volunteers began arriving at the church on Friday morning to prepare for Palm Sunday services, while children played in the on-site day care centre when the blaze broke out on the roof.

The alarm was sounded with a call to 9-1-1 at approximately 10.25 a.m. with reports of a structural fire. When the CYFS, York Regional Police, and York Region EMS arrived on the scene, smoke was visible coming from the roof, but the fire soon began to rage.

Eventually, it became clear to Chief Leslie that despite an aggressive attempt to knock the fire down, they "weren't able to get a leg up on it."

"The fire spread up inside the roof space and that is very difficult to access in a church structure," he said. "The fact the roof was sheathed in steel also meant it was very difficult for us to access from the outside through the roof cover."

Business owners, area residents, and students on

their lunch breaks gathered in alleys along Yonge Street, and lined Tyler Street and Temperance Street to watch the landmark, for some, their life-long place of worship, burn. Spectators were eventually moved off Tyler Street once it became engulfed in black smoke.

By the early afternoon, it was clear the fire crews were fighting a losing battle against the blaze.

"We had to pull our crews back as a result of deteriorating conditions with the fire. Eventually the fire worked its way through the roof," said Leslie, noting they then had to deploy their aerial streams of water directly onto the church roof. "The nature and the types of these fires was such it was very difficult to get to the scene of the fire with the roof structure still in place. It is a conundrum because you can't get at it from inside and you can't get at it from the outside until the roof starts to give way. When the roof at the rear started to collapse, that exposed the rear side and we were able to put it out quickly."

"Once the rear roof started to collapse, we were actually able to get into the scene of the fire with our hose streams and did a very effective job of knocking the fire back down. Unfortunately, the fire progressed through to the main roof of the church and as that started up to the main interior, it fuelled the fire more and it started to build across the front of the church as well."

Nearly 70 firefighters were on the scene to fight the blaze, not only from the CYFS, but also crews from King Township, Whitchurch-Stouffville, East Gwillimbury, and Vaughan. Additional crews were also brought in from Georgina and Markham to help cover the rest of the area normally serviced by the CYFS.

York Regional Police and EMS were at the scene from the start, also helping to direct traffic after Yonge Street was closed from Wellington Street to Kennedy.

Several surrounding businesses were closed, and six homes were evacuated.

One resident was treated for respiratory problems, and two firefighters were taken to Southlake for observation after receiving minor injuries with "irritants."

The Aurora Public Library was also closed due to the fire, as was the Aurora Cultural Centre, which cancelled the rest of the day's programming, including a concert.

The CYFS and York Regional Police completed their investigation into the cause of the fire on Saturday. "Good witness statements" taken early on helped them zero in quickly on the cause, added Leslie.

For congregation, church community is about more than just a building

From page 1

popular in the church's annual Christmas concerts.—

"I know every cavity of this place and you can imagine how difficult it is to put a fire out in something that is over 100 years old," he said. "You are going to miss a building, but it is the community of people that makes this place strong. Is this reaction being rational, or is it shock?"

There to lend a helping hand and a kind word, as they had for many of these people's weddings, christenings of their children and grandchildren, or funerals of their parents, spouses or partners, were Revs. Andy Comar and Lorraine Newton-Comar.

"It is just a building, it will be rebuilt or something new will come from its ashes," said Andy, as the fire raged.

"We're leading into Holy Week. This is a very passionate week for us as Christians and with Good Friday and Easter it is always a sign of new life. What new life will come from this, only God knows, and we will wait for that."

The Comars were joined at various times throughout the day by Fr. Joe Gorman of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church and Rev. Dawn Davis of Trinity Anglican Church, who each offered a helping hand in providing support for the United Church Parish. As Good Friday and Easter approach, it is that support which is needed now more than ever.

"I am absolutely numb," said Lorraine. "This is so devastating. So many people here have been here their whole lives. Some of the youth that have come by today were baptized here. Some young couples who went by were married here or just baptized their babies. The people in this area have been involved in this church in a lot of ways."

"I am not a member of this congregation; I serve it. It is just such a loss not only to me personally, but because of the depth of loss that people will feel to their own lives and were just such a presence in the community. It is not just the loss of the building, it is the ministry and that is a lot of people who come on a Saturday morning [for our Rise and Shine

Breakfasts]. There are a lot of people who depend on that, but I know the power of the community to come together and I am hoping for that."

For many parishioners who came out to watch, there was a shared sense the church is less about the building than the people who not only worshipped there but invested their time and effort into the community as a whole.

"I don't know how many nights we spent in this church with sleepovers, 30 Hour Famines, and all of the stuff we did for years," said Bruce Williamson, who led many youth groups at the Aurora United Church over his three decades of membership.

As he spoke, he looked on as the flames began to die down, with an eye fixed on the few remaining stained glass windows at the very front of the church which were, at that point, unscathed.

"There is art in there and a lot of it was made by the people of this church," he said. "The time and the effort and the love that went into that, all that can be replaced, but it is the memories. There was a time not too many years ago when every single person in this town would have been in this church at one time or another. The people who were members of this church put a lot into it and they gave of themselves."

Erina Kelly expressed a similar sentiment, standing with Mr. Williamson near the corner of Yonge and Mosley, but said it was hard to find just the right words to convey the emotion inside.

"This church belongs to everybody, not just the congregation," she said, questioning what it meant to people who were married there, or had a funeral for a loved one within its walls. "We have lost our sense of place. The congregation is the people. We can rebuild it, but this is just beyond sad. There aren't words to express it."

"The church really did do good works in the community. That is what this is about; helping people who need help."



(Top) Parishioners come together at the foot of Mosley Street as the fire begins to subside. (Bottom) Revs. Andy Comar and Lorraine Newton-Comar ministered to grieving church members in a parking lot off Temperance Street.

Auroran photos by Brock Weir

Parishioners and the wider community take the reins in Rise & Shine Breakfast

By Brock Weir

As the fire raged in his spiritual home on Friday, Reverend Andy Comar never shied away from the positive.

Holy Week, he said, always signals a sign of new life. What new life would come from the blaze which gutted Aurora United Church could, at that time, only be imagined.

But, less than 24 hours later, hope rose from the ashes and the Aurora United Church, and its people, banded together in steely resolve.

In a remarkable show of strength and solidarity, volunteers that have been the backbone of the church, along with some very welcome assistance from Trinity Anglican Church, were back in action to host their traditional Rise and Shine Breakfast, a partnership with other faith groups in the Aurora Community to provide a warm meal and fellowship to some of our community's more vulnerable citizens.

Those who came to Trinity on Saturday morning were not simply looking for this fellowship the Rise and Shine Breakfast normally dispenses, but they wanted to be together not just in grief, but to mount a plan of action.

"It would have been so easy to step back and grieve because we were all grieving the loss of a church building and part of the history of Aurora," said Carol Lever, one of the founders of the program.

With the help of parishioner Steve Falk and Trinity's Reverend Dawn Davis, they were soon mobilized with a sense of purpose, and a record number of volunteers to help lend a hand.

"We called on more volunteers than our regular team who would be here today because we knew how important it would be to provide some additional fellowship today," said Ms. Lever. "People need to know that we don't know how, and we don't know where, but the Breakfast will continue next year. Obviously we haven't lost our will and we have not lost the commitment of our guests and volunteers because we are here today."

With over half of their food for Saturday lost in the blaze, the volunteers worked like clockwork to do the necessary grocery shopping, pick



Rise and Shine coordinator Carol Lever addresses the crowd, backed by musicians, at Trinity. Auroran photo by David Falconer

up their regular bread donations from Cobs Bakery, which was then bagged up by the helpers.

Among these helpers was 16-year-old Aurora resident Ross Kenyon, who has been volunteering with the program at Aurora United since 2012. He was on a school field trip in Markham at the time and could see the plume of smoke rising from Aurora from there.

"When my mom picked me up and told me it was the church, I was just really devastated," he said. "To think I have been wheeling tables since 2012 and they are all burnt now and everything is gone. [Being here today] feels like a heartwarming start to a sunny, warm weekend. All of the people here are amazing."

These feelings were shared universally by the people in the room.

Andrea Hartley, an Aurora resident who is not a member of Aurora United Church, was out for her morning walk with her son Ty and his friend Daniel and was so moved by the plight of the church she came over to the breakfast looking for ways to donate her time and money to help the congregation.

They shared their meal with Joyce Hagarty, an 18 year member of Aurora United's congregation, who spent her morning in Trinity's kitchen preparing for guests.

"I am just sad at the loss, but it is just a building and we have to regroup and think what our next steps are going to

be," she said.

For leaders in attendance – both church and civic – events unfolding Saturday morning signalled exactly what the community should be.

"This is what we are, this is the church in action," said Andy. "The Rise and Shine is going to continue with the love of our friends and neighbours. Rise and Shine continues."

Added Councillor John Abel: "To see it happen and transform over here in less than 24 hours is absolutely amazing. I am not surprised, but really impressed at how fast they galvanized and put it together. It shows the character of our community and it shows how important it must be for community members to not forget."

Also on hand to provide his support for the group was Father Joe Gorman of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church. While he said Friday's fire was a "tragedy", the community needs to band together to support those displaced by the loss of "this beautiful central pillar of our community."

"We know a building is a structure," he said. "The church is the people of God, but you need places to worship. This was a beautiful structure in which to worship and it will leave a hole in this community. Nobody was injured, nobody was killed, so it is an opportunity just to move forward with openness, support and anything we can do to help the community."

Local leaders praise first responders as Aurora loses landmark

By Brock Weir

Local leaders from all levels of government praised York Region's first responders in their handling of the fire which tore through Aurora United Church on Friday.

Among those on hand watching the scene unfold were Mayor Geoffrey Dawe and Member of Provincial Parliament Frank Klees.

Members of the Central York Fire Services (CYFS), the amalgamated fire unit which serves Aurora and Newmarket, were not the only responders who were on the scene. In addition to the York Regional Police and York Region EMS, mutual assistance agreements in place also secured the support of fire crews from Richmond Hill, King Township, Georgina, Markham, Whitchurch-Stouffville, East Gwillimbury, and Vaughan.

"This is a devastating loss for our community and thankfully no one was injured," said Mayor Dawe in a statement. "The Town of Aurora will be working closely with Aurora United Church staff to provide assistance in this time of crisis."

As he watched the blaze from a parking lot adjacent to the church, along with Aurora CAO Neil Garbe and CYFS Chief Ian Laing, he said he found it difficult to find adequate words, but in the days since has been inundated with calls from people from as far away as Ottawa looking for ways to support

the church in the hard months ahead.

"It was such an integral part of our Town," he said. "It was one of those things you drive by every day and you almost take it for granted. When something like this happens, it really brings home what it has meant to the community. For many people, that has been their spiritual home for many years, but there are community services they run out of the United Church. When something like this happens so dramatically and so violently it really gives you pause for thought."

Speaking on Friday afternoon as the CYFS started to get the fire under control, Mr. Klees praised first responders for the swiftness in which they answered the call. He described the blaze as a "tragedy for the town", but said he was grateful there was no loss of life or injury.

"It saddens me," he said. "This is a landmark not only for the Town of Aurora, York Region and, frankly, the province. I think of the services I have attended and what was always magnificent to me was the historical context. Whether it was the pews, whether it was the stained glass, the acoustics that you can only find in a historic church, this is a tremendous loss. I empathize with the congregation who, over the years, have supported this church and, of course, the investment that was made in the recent renovations."

"It is a very, very sad day."

Added Councillor Chris Ballard: "This is an absolute disaster for the parishioners, for all Aurorans and the downtown. The members of this church have done so much for the community over the years and I know the community will pull together to help them overcome this."

"They say that the church is the people and not the building, but this is awful and I feel for them."

On Saturday, standing at the Aurora Home Show where a water jug was turned into a makeshift collection for money to help support the church, MP Lois Brown spoke of the connection the Church had in the lives of so many Aurorans.

"The church is a building, but the church is the community of people who meet there," she said, noting she spent a lot of time in the church as a teen honing her music. "I know these people are going to gather together, they are going to rebuild, and stay strong in the community. Whatever new facility we see coming out of this is going to house the heart and soul of the people who make up this community."

Ms. Brown also noted several years ago when the church was raising funds for a new organ, she was one of the ones who purchased a piece of pipe for a nominal fee to help support the cause. It is something she still has today. Donating it back to the church, she said, would be giving them back a piece of their history.



(Left) CYFS Chief Ian Laing, Aurora CAO Neil Garbe and Mayor Geoffrey Dawe look on as firefighters (center) prepare to cut into the church's steel roof to fight the fire from above. (Right) Aurora United Church, then Methodist, in 1907.

Auroran photos by Brock Weir, post card courtesy of the McRoberts Collection.

Aurora United Church: A personal history

By Bob McRoberts

My church has burned down!

The site has been a place of worship for 196 years; the oldest in Aurora.

In February of 1818, William Tyler conveyed, for the nominal sum of 5 shillings, one acre of his land at the corner of Tyler and Yonge Streets for the erection of a house of public worship for use by the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Province of Upper Canada.

Later that same month, David Culp preached the first sermon in that log cabin church.

With the arrival of the first train to Machell's Corners in 1853, the Town and its businesses started to grow. The congregation of the church was expanding.

In 1855, the original log church was moved to the back of the property and replaced by a larger frame structure. Coincidentally, this frame church was partially destroyed by fire in 1877.

Some of the lumber was salvaged and sold to Mr. J. Andrews for his house on Mosley Street.

In October of 1878, the new building opened at a cost of \$8,915.

The yellow brick, at 6 cents per 1,000, came from the brickyard just down the street, before the Collis Leather Company began.

The new church had two spires, one over 100 feet high. In 1893, a cyclone blew down the taller one. It was replaced, but both spires were taken down in 1943 after too many lightning strikes.

Former Prime Minister of Canada, Lester Pearson, attended Sunday School at the church as his father was minister from 1900 to 1903.

The Methodist and Presbyterian congregations joined in 1925 to form the United Church.

In 1987, the church underwent a million dollar renovation project with additions on the north side. In 2009, major renovations were made to the interior of the church.

When someone or something is lost, it generates many fond and personal memories. That certainly is the case with the loss of the Aurora United Church. As I stood watching the flames and smoke, I could hear many of the spectators sharing their reminiscences. I'm sure that's the same for thousands of others.

I've been a member of the church my whole life, almost 62 years.

Since the age of 12, I've sung in the bass section of the choir. I've seen the backs of the heads of a number of ministers and the faces of many church goers.

Here's a very brief list of what's popped into my head the past two days: my baptism, marriage, and mother's funeral; my kids' baptisms; my wife as a Sunday School coordinator; my dad as a trustee and offering collector; my mom as perhaps the longest-serving member of the choir; my grandfather, J.H. Knowles, as Clerk of Session and Chair of the Board of Trustees; Ilyd Harris (school music teacher and former town councillor) as my first choir director and voice teacher; Rev. John Morris as my first minister who lived in the manse on Catherine Avenue and had a wonderful neighbourhood skating rink.

There was Reg Sheppard (of Sheppard's Bush) as my Sunday School teacher and storyteller; David Ouchterlony's recital on the church's 1930's Casavant organ and saying the acoustics were the best of any church he'd ever played in; Lester Pearson's visit; the families of Bill Devins (orchard/school); Lambert Willson (park), Ross Linton (mayor), Arnold Miller (principal), Norm Johnson (principal), Ada Johnson (oldest known Auroran who died last year at 109); T.H. Oliver (heating business); Norm Cook (who turns 98 next month, men's wear store); Roland Moddle (teacher/artist); Bill Thompson (furniture store/funeral home); Rex Sedore (dentist).

I realize this is a very narrow snippet of one person's immediate memories. Thousands of people have had personal connections to the church.

To me, it is obvious that a church, like a school, is more than just a building. It's the people and their beliefs and actions in their community and beyond.

These, thankfully, all still exist.

The Aurora United Church has been a focal point of friendship, fellowship, outreach, and worship in the heart of Aurora for almost two centuries.

Now is the time to heal and rebuild.

Award recipients have "given back" on local and international scale

By Brock Weir

Do you have a spare hour or two on your hands?

Alex Auger, Nicolas Chethuan, Sydney Cobbold, Alexander Harrison, and Mathilde Paré could give you some sage advice on just what to do with them. Collectively, these Aurora students have given back over 1,000 hours to their community over their high school years.

They were honoured this week among recipients of the 2014 Give Back Awards.

The Give Back Awards were established in 2014 by Belinda Stronach, then Member of Parliament for Newmarket-Aurora, with the salary she received serving in the House of Commons. Each \$500 grant is a way to recognize the good works students do from within the school community to the wider world as a whole. It is an award not necessarily contingent on academic success, or whether or not they were going to pursue university or college studies.

Nevertheless, Thursday's ceremony held in the glittering atrium of Magna's headquarters, honoured students from Aurora up to Georgina, who hit all the marks.

Over 870 hours of community involvement have been racked up by Alex Auger alone. A student at St. Andrew's College, he was saluted for his "personal commitment to areas of community service and school leadership at SAC.

"Within his school, Alex volunteers as a school ambassador, as the tech designer for dramatic productions, as a lifeguard at swim meets, and as a fundraiser for causes like 30-Hour famine," said the Give Back selection committee.



Neighbourhood Network ambassador Tim Jones and Mayor Geoffrey Dawe bookend Aurora recipients of the 2014 Give Back Awards: (from left) Nicholas Chethuan, Sydney Cobbold, Alexander Harrison, Mathilde Pare, and Alex Auger. Aurora photo by David Falconer

opportunities within its walls. Outside the expansive Aurora campus, he has also dedicating his time helping to improve education in Madagascar.

In February, Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School was transformed into a showcase of food and cuisine as students hosted "Something for Sarah", their second annual bone marrow drive and community event to benefit six year old Sarah, who is living with leukemia, and her family.

Sarah's was a plight which inspired Williams' students to take action, and two of the driving forces behind the campaign were also honoured.

Sydney Cobbold was one of the faces

"Through her bone marrow drive within the school, two students were matches for patients in need of bone marrow - incredibly beating the 1 in 22 million odds," said organizers. "Sydney was also determined to bring the Terry Fox Run back to her school and, after a 20 year hiatus, she co-organized its successful return.

"When it comes to giving back, Sydney has spearheaded significant efforts to engage the community and to support the local and global communities."

Alexander Harrison is also a Peer Mentor at

Continued on 20

Easter services will continue as artefacts are found in rubble

Easter services will continue as planned for parishioners of Aurora United Church.

Good Friday Services will be hosted at Newmarket's Trinity United Church (461 Park Avenue at Main Street) this Friday at 10.30 a.m. Easter Sunday services return to Aurora at 10.30 a.m. in the auditorium at Aurora High School (155 Wellington Street West).

Following Holy Week, regular Sunday services are expected to continue through September at another local church. They have been overwhelmed by support from other local congregations and details on the schedule beyond Easter Weekend are expected to be finalized this week.

Other welcome news was also received on Monday as demolition crews, guided by church members, were able to locate some precious cargo in a burnt-out closet in the southwest corner of the church. Inside a scorched basket were sounds

which have brought joy to many over the years.

"The Bell Choir was able to find their bells," said Rod Johnson, Chair of the Church Council on Monday. "There were shrieks of joy around 5 p.m. when they opened them and they were intact."

Looking ahead this week, they are working with the demolition crews to salvage what they can. They are hopeful a large wooden cross once hanging over the sanctuary is still salvageable at the bottom of the rubble, and they also hope to retain as many bricks as they can to incorporate into their new structure.

Engineers still haven't decided if the façade of the building, still standing, complete with its street-level stained glass windows, will be able to stay, but they are expected to dismantle the gable above the windows this week.

At this early stage, they foresee a two year window for reconstruction.

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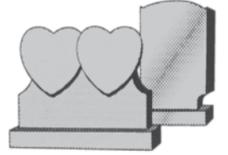
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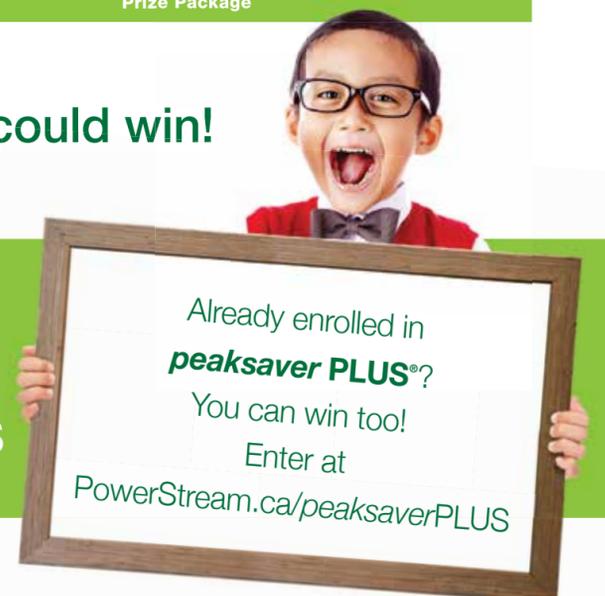


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Financial "task force" will oversee Joint Ops construction and spending

By Brock Weir

When Aurora Councillors signed off on the next steps to make the Town's new Joint Operations Centre (JOC) a reality earlier this year, it was amid calls that those who opposed the project failed to offer solutions to their objections.

One idea stemming out of these talks is set to be borne to fruition this week with the establishment of a financial "task force" with a mandate to oversee all spending on the project.

The proposed JOC, which will combine Aurora's Parks and Public Works departments into one new facility near the top of Industrial Parkway North, has become the subject of much scrutiny over the last six months, as costs have ballooned from an initial estimate of nearly \$15 million to approximately \$26 million, due to an expanding scope of the project and engineering challenges encountered on the land.

Although Council was split on how to proceed with the project, those in favour of moving forward said they were "frustrated" that those opposed to the plans brought little to the table other than complaints. Asking for ideas or solutions, at least one rose to the top – the financial task force.

Floated by Councillor Chris Ballard amid his concerns over the expanding price tag of the project, he said establishing a financial "task force" to oversee the spending with the Mayor and at least one Councillor being on the committee, would give him "some comfort" with the project going forward.

"I have studied the Newmarket Centre and talked to elected officials

and staff there, and they found this task force approach was very effective," said Councillor Ballard. "Their ops centre actually came in under budget and every expense was examined by the Committee and voted on by the Committee. It is quite unique that you have staff, project planners and architects all sitting around the table and it gave Council some comfort that two members of Council were sitting on that Committee to help explain to Council what was going on from a financial perspective.

"I am not happy with this going ahead, but if we're going to go ahead with it, I would strongly urge that we move forward with a budget control task force."

At the end of the day, Councillors were ultimately in favour of putting a body such as this in place. When asked by Councillor Michael Thompson to weigh on such an idea, Aurora CAO Neil Garbe said the pros far outweigh any cons of a task force.

"[Members would] share an equal voice around the table, which is extremely positive," said Mr. Garbe, noting the only significant challenge would be to find committee members with flexible schedules should an urgent matter arise. "I think it adds a lot of value to the project and gives Council a lot of confidence in the role staff are playing."

Questioned by Councillor Paul Pirri at the time whether having a financial task force in place would be enough for Councillor Ballard to vote in favour of the project, Councillor Ballard said it would "go some way to convincing me", but ultimately voted against the overall project in the end.

"I don't even know where to tackle it," said Councillor Ballard. "The only other idea I have is to cap the budget to say 'What

would it mean if we could only spend \$18 million? \$20 million? To me, that sounds like an awful lot of work for staff to go through. I think because of the property we're proposing to build this on, our costs are out of control. That does not mean I am suggesting going out and buying another piece of property, but I would be quite happy to go back to staff for a range of options."

If approved at the Committee level this week, and ultimately at the April 22 Council meeting, the financial task force will go at least one step further in providing Mayor Dawe and the Councillor appointed to the task force oversight on the project.

"The purpose of this task force would be to oversee financial decisions for the project," said Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure, in his report to Councillors this week. "However, as financial decisions are driven by project requirements, staff are recommending

that the scope of the task force be expanded to incorporate overall construction monitoring. This would be to fully engage the task force in ongoing project delivery challenges, resulting in a better understanding of project impacts and alternatives.

"This approach, it is believed, will better inform the task force members and facilitate better decision-making, thereby affecting the goal of responsible financial management of the project."

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Habitat builds get enthusiastic response from families and neighbours

From page 3

at drywall stage," explains Mr. Pugh. "That gives us the ability to make sure that the condominium requirements are taken care of and gives Habitat the opportunity to do the builds they need to do.

"It is about housing for us. The Habitat partnership is just a natural fit. We are in the home-building business and they are in the home-building business. The relationship with Habitat is very strong, they are great people to work with, and their partner families are also fantastic people.

"What is also really cool is the feedback we get from families who are buying in the communities

where the Habitat builds are now and how embracing they are of having had that in their communities. Obviously Habitat is going to be happy and we're going to be happy and the partner family is going to be happy they have got a home, but it is really great to see the acceptance from other people in the community."

For anyone in the Aurora community looking to put a little bit of sweat and elbow grease into providing a home for the selected family, their volunteer corridors are always open. Volunteer opportunities on this site, as well as in their two Re-store opportunities, can be found at www.habitatnyork.ca.

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Prices for new homes rise with demand as Town approves DC bylaw

By Brock Weir

Prospective Aurora residents looking to relocate to, or purchase a new home within Aurora, can expect to pay a little bit more to do so with the approval of an update in Aurora's development charges.

Council signed off on a new Development Charges bylaw last week which would raise development charges for a single detached home from \$15,748 to \$20,116.

Development charges (DCs) are funds taken by the municipality and the Region from developers to account for infrastructure and other impacts that can be directly attributed to population growth. As such, DCs can be used for an increase in recreation spaces, parks facilities, and other large scale projects where extra demand might be put on existing services.

Councillors went into last week's discussions with requests from at least one developer for rebates and other programs on the non-residential side of development charges as an incentive to attracting businesses. Those concerns, however, were taken off the table after further talks with the Town in the intervening week.

Instead, Council's focus shifted to ensuring that these new charges would provide for Aurora's future while having a minimal impact on taxpayers. Councillor Wendy Gaertner was the first to raise

an alarm bell, questioning why many of Aurora's reserve accounts were in the red.

She questioned whether the negative amounts in these accounts could be attributed to not collecting enough DCs over the past 10 years, or at least not as much as had been anticipated.

"We anticipated probably a little more robust growth," said consultant Gary Scanlon, noting building and development projects they anticipated to be on the horizon took a hit. "With the economic downturn in the United States and slowdown on growth here in the GTA, a lot of the projects had been in progress, but we didn't get the corresponding growth as well. Our revenues are down, even though we put the services in place, causing a negative balance. Today, the housing market has been deemed quite robust and they are anticipating good things. I would expect the revenues that we would see in the coming year would take care of those balances quite nicely."

Aside from the fiscal impacts of Aurora's revised Development Charges bylaw, some were concerned about the deeper impacts it would have on new and perspective homeowners looking within Aurora. From the perspective of Councillor Buck, DCs have to come from somewhere and developers aren't going to be looking into their own pockets to cover the cost.

These costs, she argued, would be ultimately unloaded to the new homeowners.

"It is a tax, it is a hidden tax, and then it is included in the market value [of a home] and people are taxed on [this value] forever and a day afterwards because of that," said Councillor Buck. "Calculating it is not a moral issue, but it is for me when I think of the young families who are mortgaging. They don't even have fixed mortgages. It just sickens me to think we are collecting this amount of money and the result of collecting this amount of money we are able to think of all the extravagant wishes people might have of fixed structures for indoor tennis in the wintertime."

Added Councillor Chris Ballard: "This is a deep and complex issue and one that we look to staff and outside expertise to help us understand what the ramifications are of decisions and frankly how far we can push the envelope in terms of what we can charge while, at the same time, keeping in mind that we need to be fair and balance with pending residents in Town."

For some, the DCs are also, to some extent, a buy-in to Aurora in providing for "critical infrastructure" that is required to accommodate them.

"I don't look at it as a way of extracting tax from a newcomer," said Councillor John Abel. "If they don't pay a development

charge that pays for roads, sewers and facilities that will come out of the existing tax base. If we didn't have a DC development, our taxes would have to go up 30 per cent to cover that."

Added Councillor Pirri: "The newcomers in this community have to buy in as well. You are moving into a great community. You should have to pay a premium to be doing so. As much as I don't want to be collecting more than we have to, I think this [review] has done a good job of explaining we are not, and we are collecting this amount to sustain the quality of life everyone has."

At the end of the day, about 75 per cent of total development charges are taken by the Region of York, but if Councillors were concerned about the impacts being felt directly by new homeowners, things are moving at a rapid click in Aurora, according to Mayor Geoffrey Dawe.

"Two of the developers in 2C have already put their housing prices up because they are selling so well and they have put their prices up more than we have increased our development charges," he said. "Councillor Pirri is right - Aurora is a very desirable place indeed and one of the developers had 650 people registered to purchase 50 houses. Will that continue? I think the odds are better that it will than it won't."

The DC bylaw was approved 8 - 1 with Councillor Gaertner the lone holdout.

Plans to save Aurora's ash trees turns from streets to parks

By Brock Weir

As 2013 came to a close, Aurora was just one York Region municipality gearing up to spend money on treating street trees that would otherwise be killed by the Emerald Ash Borer.

In the wake of the pre-Christmas ice storm, however, a storm which snapped off many of the trees due to be put on life support, focus is now turning to save not just the remaining street trees, but also those in parks.

Councillors approved a plan last week which would extend Aurora's previously approved program to treat municipal ash trees with the chemical TreeAzin, which is promised to prevent infestation of the invasive beetles in otherwise healthy ash trees, into mature trees in Aurora's public parks.

According to a report from Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation, last summer saw the first real effects of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in Aurora, with the "rapid decline of many ash trees" being observed on parks and with street trees. So far, 75 trees have already been removed.

The new plan would not treat any trees already impacted by the EAB and, at this moment, that would make between 30 and 50 percent of trees ineligible for treatment.

"It may well be that further impact will be observed in the spring and summer of 2014 and render many ash trees in parks untreatable based on the advanced damage that these trees have already sustained," said Mr. Downey, noting trees that seemed healthy last spring were dead by fall.

Therefore, he argued, if such a program is approved, it should be done as soon as possible.

So far, staff have earmarked 386 trees to be treated at a cost of \$38,556.

Prior to last week's Council meeting, Councillors John Abel and Wendy Gaertner agreed that just under \$100 to potentially save each tree was money well spent, but others - Councillor Evelyn Buck in particular - had reservations. These

were reservations she reiterated last week.

There has to be a point where Aurora stops the treatment, considering how fast the invasive beetles can decimate trees. "I think it is a losing battle and we are just pissing money away," said Councillor Buck at the Committee level.

Last week, she came back with the same arguments, but this time armed with numbers from Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation Services, that nearly 100 per cent of the street trees lost in the storm were ash. How many of these, however, had already been treated in the first round of TreeAzin, however, he couldn't say.

"I don't see this as a sensible thing to do with our resources," concluded Councillor Buck. "We're told the climate is changing and we can anticipate [ice storms] in the future. We cannot have any guarantee we have control over nature. This is an example of [the principle] of throw money at it and you can exercise almighty control over everything."

Mr. Downey, on the other hand, said there are tell-tale signs which gives staff the indication of candidate trees. As long as they look healthy, there is still a fighting chance.

"If we find it is showing signs of decline and clearly it has some issues, we are not going to take that chance," said Mr. Downey. "With regards to which trees we pick up and which ones we don't we are looking for trees within our parks and within the arboretum that show healthy signs of growth and would have a negative impact on the park and open space if it was gone."

Responding to Councillor Buck's comments, Councillor Michael Thompson argued that, no matter how you slice it, there was going to be an expense. Trees are going to die. Dead trees will have to be removed and replacement trees, due to grow in nurseries arranged by the Town, will have to be planted. Each step comes with a cost.

"To me, it almost seems like it is revenue neutral in the sense that if we don't treat these trees, they die and staff have to go out and deal with it," said Councillor Thompson. "We're going to spend \$38,000 on staff time alone digging up these trees and dealing with them. There is going to be a cost either way. Either we treat them or we don't."

The treatment program was approved 8 - 1 with Councillor Buck being the dissenting vote.

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The tenders will be opened in public on Thursday, May 8 as soon as possible after 3 p.m. at Aurora Town Hall.

Description of Lands:

Roll No. 19 46 000 021 73600 0000; Centre Street, South Side; PIN 03638-0141(LT); Part Lot 15 First Range S of Centre St, W of Railroad Plan 107 Aurora, designated Part 1 Plan 65R20226; Aurora; File No.12-01
Minimum Tender Amount: \$35,182.01

Roll No. 19 46 000 070 83606 0000; 64 Lanewood Dr, Aurora; PIN 03627-0665(LT); Parcel 22-1 Section 65M2258; being Lot 22 Plan 65M2258; S/T LT208223; Aurora; File No.12-03
Minimum Tender Amount: \$241,293.06

Roll No. 19 46 000 045 10800 0000; 12 Industrial Parkway S, Aurora; PIN 03645-0021(LT); Lot 1 Plan 535 Aurora; File No. 12-04
Minimum Tender Amount: \$857,161.94

Roll No. 19 46 000 113 47786 0000; PIN 03641-1132(LT); Parcel 141-1, Section 65M2689, Block 141 Plan 65M2689; Aurora; File No. 12-05
Minimum Tender Amount: \$81,486.66

Tenders must be submitted in the prescribed form and must be accompanied by a deposit in the form of a money order, a bank draft or cheque certified by a bank or trust corporation payable to the municipality and representing at least 20 per cent of the tender amount.

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The municipality has no obligation to provide vacant possession to the successful purchaser.

For further information regarding this sale and a copy of the prescribed form of tender, visit www.OntarioTaxSales.ca or if no Internet access is available, contact:

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Celebrate Aurora will focus on local talent as festival returns for second year

By Brock Weir

The second annual Celebrate Aurora Music Festival is officially a go, after Council gave the green light last week.

Councillors unanimously approved a permit for Town Park for the weekend of July 24 to Habachat, a local social media company, to hold the second installment which, despite rain in its inaugural event last summer, organizers plan to replicate much of what they deem to have been a tremendous success.

Ahead of last week's Council meeting, organizers took time to address some of the concerns identified by Councillors at the committee level when they took a first crack at their application.

Among these concerns were ensuring both Celebrate Aurora and the Aurora Farmers' Market, the latter of which has been a mainstay at Town Park for several years during most spring and fall Saturdays, and every Saturday of the summer, would be able to work together toward a plan that would suit everyone.

At the time, Al Downey, Director of Parks and Recreation, said he was unsure of any arrangements between the two groups, but Councillors said that was an important factor going forward.

"Traditionally, the Farmers' Market has worked with other groups so they can fill their obligations to the farmers that come out and to other vendors,"

said Councillor Michael Thompson. "It is well-loved, well-enjoyed and I wouldn't want to see anything impact their ability. For me, to vote on this positively, I will have to understand where the conversation has been."

Tim Newnham, a representative of Habachat, came forward last week to address some of these concerns head-on. The company was requested to appear before Council by Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, who said he would have a hard time voting in favour of the permit until these issues were ironed out.

In addressing their worries, Mr. Newnham stressed the community atmosphere Habachat is trying to foster with their festival.

"We have a strong belief that engaging community members in a local event builds a vibrant community, and that is what this event is all about," he said. "Town Park is a great location [for] a cultural event that includes music, arts and crafts, local food provided by local restaurants, which helps support our local economy."

"Our desire is to have 100 per cent local involvement, which we did last year. All the entertainment came from the local area, the food was provided by the local area, face painters and so on were local. Our revenue generation is only based on local promotion and it is only derived from people who do attend. Last year, with the rain on Saturday, it

Continued on page 21

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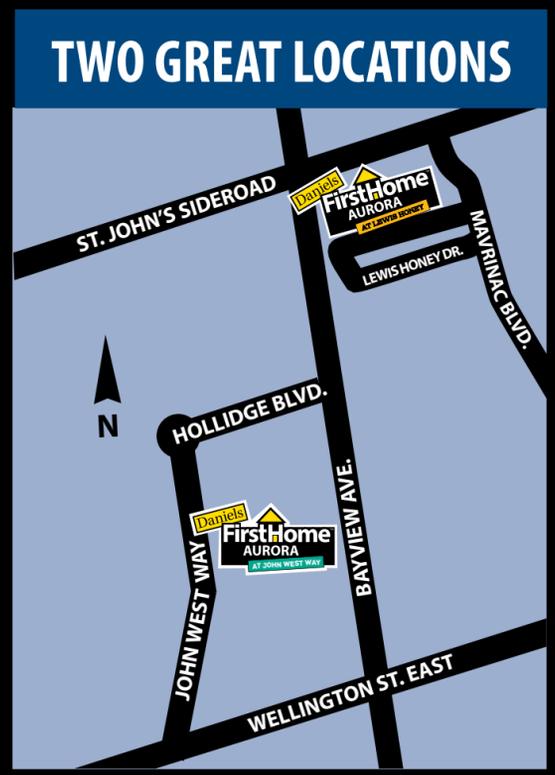
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THE AURORAN

SPORTS

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FREE Week of April 17, 2014

Tigers find footing against Toronto Lakeshore Patriots

By Jeff Doner

After dropping the first two games of the OJHL championship final against the Toronto Lakeshore Patriots, the Aurora Tigers fought their way back in Game Three on Monday night.

Dropping game three would have put them in a do-or-die situation for Game Four, but the team dug deep and clawed their way back from a 3-0 deficit with four unanswered goals.

Captain Robert Angiolella said it will take more of the same in order to even up the series on Wednesday night.

"We just need to stick to the game plan, get pucks deep, get pucks to the net and our chances will come," he said. "I think we need to minimize our mistakes because they seem to be capitalizing on them, so if we just stick to our game plan and reduce our mistakes it will make things easier for us out there."

In Game Three, the Patriots used a wild first period to gather an early 3-0 lead over the Tigers.

"Once we got down, we knew we had to stay positive and keep our heads up and we were able to grab two goals before the first period ended, so we went into the first intermission with our heads up and we knew we'd be able to come back and win the game," Angiolella said.

Before the period ended, defenceman Eric Williams made it 3-1 on the power play and Calvin Higley scored his fifth goal of the season to pull the Tigers to within one goal.

The second period went scoreless, but the Tigers upped the ante in the third period with Williams scoring a second power play goal to tie it and then rookie Johnny Curran scored the game winner at 15:56.

"The mood in the dressing room was really good after the win," Angiolella said. "It was a tough game being down 3-0, but we were able to come back and win, so we're all really happy."

Earlier in the week the Tigers didn't

fare so well, but it wasn't for lack of trying as games one and two were both one goal games.

Game one was the first for the Tigers at the Canlan Centre and was a close one.

Lakeshore scored the first goal of the series and Dylan Sikura tied it up before the first period was over, but the game remained close until the Patriots pulled ahead with two goals in the first 10 minutes of the third period.

Williams scored a power play goal with just under three minutes left, but it was too little too late for the Tigers in the 3-2 loss.

Game two was much of the same, with the Tigers putting together a strong third period.

"The first two periods we weren't playing our game and we kind of got away from the game plan and we did some uncharacteristic things," said defenceman Kyle Liu. "When the third came around we turned on the switch and put the pedal down and we got going, but it was like it was just too late. We need to play a full 60 and get beat in the first two, so it was tough to come back."

Playoff hero Curtis Warren netted two goals in the 5-4 loss, with Angiolella and Sikura also adding single tallies.

Liu, who returned to the Tigers after missing five games with an injury, said his team is facing a different club than the ones in the previous rounds.

"Toronto is a different team compared to Kingston and Cobourg," he said. "The teams in the east are a lot bigger and a lot more physical, but these guys are a lot like us and are built on speed. They're a dangerous team and are quick, but so are we, so that works both ways."

Heading into game four on Wednesday night, many of the Tigers preached the mantra of sticking to the game plan and playing a full 60 minutes.

The Tigers will now head back to the Patriots home arena for game four on Wednesday night, before returning to their temporary home at the Canlan arena on Friday night.



A Toronto defender tries to force Tiger Calvin Higley from the front of the net in Game One of the OJHL championship final on Thursday night at York University. The Tigers ended up losing the game 3-2 and are now looking to even up the series at two games apiece on Wednesday night. Auroran photo by Jeff Doner



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PLAYER GROUPINGS (1 PT GOAL, 1 PT ASSIST, 3 TOTAL PTS OT GOAL)
CHOOSE 1 PLAYER FROM EACH OF THE 12 GROUPS

<input type="checkbox"/> PIT – Sidney Crosby	<input type="checkbox"/> DET – Pavel Datsyuk	<input type="checkbox"/> ANA – Nick Bonino
<input type="checkbox"/> ANA – Ryan Getzlaf	<input type="checkbox"/> CHI – Marian Hossa	<input type="checkbox"/> CBJ – Ryan Johansen
<input type="checkbox"/> CHI – Patrick Kane	<input type="checkbox"/> BOS – David Krejci	<input type="checkbox"/> COL – Nathan MacKinnon
<input type="checkbox"/> TB – Steven Stamkos	<input type="checkbox"/> COL – Ryan O'Reilly	<input type="checkbox"/> DET – Gustav Nyquist
<input type="checkbox"/> STL – Alexander Steen	<input type="checkbox"/> STL – T.J. Oshie	<input type="checkbox"/> STL – Jaden Schwartz
<input type="checkbox"/> SJ – Joe Thornton	<input type="checkbox"/> MTL – Max Pacioretty	<input type="checkbox"/> BOS – Reilly Smith
<input type="checkbox"/> PIT – Evgeni Malkin	<input type="checkbox"/> STL – David Backes	<input type="checkbox"/> LA – Drew Doughty
<input type="checkbox"/> SJ – Joe Pavelski	<input type="checkbox"/> BOS – Patrice Bergeron	<input type="checkbox"/> TB – Victor Hedman
<input type="checkbox"/> ANA – Corey Perry	<input type="checkbox"/> TB – Valtteri Filppula	<input type="checkbox"/> CHI – Duncan Keith
<input type="checkbox"/> CHI – Patrick Sharp	<input type="checkbox"/> PIT – James Neal	<input type="checkbox"/> DET – Niklas Kronwall
<input type="checkbox"/> CHI – Jonathan Toews	<input type="checkbox"/> MIN – Zach Parise	<input type="checkbox"/> STL – Alex Pietrangolo
<input type="checkbox"/> DET – Henrik Zetterberg	<input type="checkbox"/> COL – Paul Stastny	<input type="checkbox"/> MTL – P.K. Subban
<input type="checkbox"/> SJ – Logan Couture	<input type="checkbox"/> SJ – Brent Burns	<input type="checkbox"/> BOS – Zdeno Chara
<input type="checkbox"/> COL – Matt Duchene	<input type="checkbox"/> LA – Jeff Carter	<input type="checkbox"/> ANA – Cam Fowler
<input type="checkbox"/> PHI – Claude Giroux	<input type="checkbox"/> BOS – Milan Lucic	<input type="checkbox"/> PIT – Matt Niskanen
<input type="checkbox"/> BOS – Jarome Iginla	<input type="checkbox"/> NYR – Rick Nash	<input type="checkbox"/> CHI – Brent Seabrook
<input type="checkbox"/> PIT – Chris Kunitz	<input type="checkbox"/> MIN – Jason Pominville	<input type="checkbox"/> STL – Kevin Shattenkirk
<input type="checkbox"/> DAL – Tyler Seguin	<input type="checkbox"/> PHI – Wayne Simmonds	<input type="checkbox"/> MIN – Ryan Suter
<input type="checkbox"/> DAL – Jamie Benn	<input type="checkbox"/> MTL – David Desharnais	
<input type="checkbox"/> LA – Anze Kopitar	<input type="checkbox"/> MIN – Mikko Koivu	
<input type="checkbox"/> COL – Gabriel Landeskog	<input type="checkbox"/> MIN – Matt Moulson	
<input type="checkbox"/> SJ – Patrick Marleau	<input type="checkbox"/> LA – Mike Richards	
<input type="checkbox"/> NYR – Martin St. Louis	<input type="checkbox"/> NYR – Derek Stepan	
<input type="checkbox"/> MTL – Thomas Vanek	<input type="checkbox"/> NYR – Mats Zuccarello	

GOALIES (3 PTS WIN, 2 PTS SO)

<input type="checkbox"/> CHI – Corey Crawford	<input type="checkbox"/> STL – Ryan Miller	<input type="checkbox"/> LA – Jonathan Quick
<input type="checkbox"/> PIT – Marc-Andre Fleury	<input type="checkbox"/> SJ – Antti Niemi	<input type="checkbox"/> BOS – Tuukka Rask
<input type="checkbox"/> ANA – Jonas Hiller	<input type="checkbox"/> MTL – Carey Price	

Limit of one entry per person. All entries must be completed fully on original clipped forms. Leaders will be posted weekly in the Newspaper.

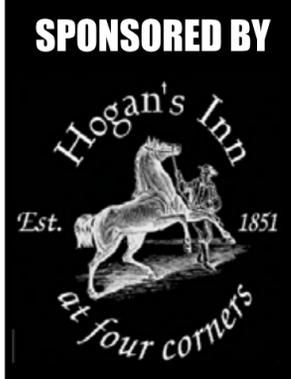
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WINNER OF BOTH DIVISIONS
RECEIVES
\$500 CASH

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Phone: _____

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kiaofnewmarket.com



AMHA RESULTS



NewRoads
Richmond Hill Subaru



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RichmondHillSubaru.com

AMHA Game Results April 6-2014 - April 13-2014 Rep League

Atom RS -
Aurora Tigers: 8
Peterborough: 0
Matteo Rossi 2G, Parker Jalbert 3G 1A, Cayden Visser 2G 1A, Colm MacEachern 1G 2A, Daniel Han 1A, David Iacovetta 1A,

Atom RS -
Aurora Tigers: 3
Richmond Hill Stars: 0
Cayden Visser 1G 1A, Parker Jalbert 1G 1A, Jack Boyd 1G, Daniel Han 1A,

Atom RS -
TBD: 4
Aurora Tigers: 3
Matteo Rossi 3G, Nathan Cobb 1A, Cayden Visser 1A, Daniel Han 1A, Jack Boyd 1A,

Minor Bantam AE -
Aurora Tigers: 3
Hamilton Spitfires MB AE: 0
Dylan Clark 1G, Ty Boisseau 1G, Nicholas Vamvakaris 1G, Christopher Walsh 1A, Braden Reid 1A, Colin Windle 1A,

Minor Bantam AE -
Aurora Tigers: 3
Guelph: 3
Ty Boisseau 1G 2A, Francesco Scuglia 1G 1A, Dylan Clark 1G,

Minor Bantam AE -
Aurora Tigers: 3
East Gwillimbury: 3
Colin Windle 1G 1A, Christopher Walsh 1G, Max Lombard 1G, Nicholas Vamvakaris 1A, Matthew Parkin 1A, Tristan Hicks 1A,

Minor Bantam AE -
Oakville: 5
Aurora Tigers: 1
Matthew Parkin 1G, Tristan Hicks 1A, Ty Boisseau 1A,



Aurora Minor Hockey Association



IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING 2014/2015 REGISTRATION

On-Line Registration begins: April 1, 2014

In office registration: April 2, 9, 16, 22, 23, 24, 2014
(6 pm – 9 pm)

REGISTRATION fees for the 2014/2015 season are:

- \$555.00** Players born 1994 through 2008*
- \$ 50.00** Late fee effective June 1 – 30, 2014*
- \$100.00** Late fee effective July 1, 2014*
- \$ 50.00** Non-Resident Fee (if applicable)

*First time registrants in Tyke born in 2007 and 2008 must register in person and submit a copy of a birth certificate and proof of residency. It is recommended that 2008 players have either taken skating lessons or completed one year of Opti Hockey.

PLAYERS MUST BE REGISTERED PRIOR TO ANY TRYOUTS FOR AAA OR ANY AMHA REP/SELECT TEAM. AMHA REP TRYOUTS WILL COMMENCE APRIL 27, 2014.

A 10% discount applies to families with 3 or more players.

*Late fees do not apply to new registrants.

Refunds (less \$25 administration fee) will be issued to anyone withdrawing prior to September 1, 2014.

NEW REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

<https://omhahockeyparent.respectgroupinc.com/secure/>

The Ontario Minor Hockey Association has mandated that one parent per family must complete the online "Respect In Sport" – Parent Program in order for their child to be rostered to an AMHA team this season.

PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!

Guaranteed spots are available **ONLY** to players registered on or before June 30, 2014.

We will not add teams in September to accommodate late registrants.



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Sunshine brightens everybody's mood, but Ontario is not exactly known for clear skies year-round. Luckily for locals in the area, **Flowers by Terry of Aurora** is one of the best places to find fresh flowers year round. With this kind of convenient accessibility to some of the freshest, most beautiful flowers, it's easy to brighten those rainy and snowy days with fresh floral arrangements and gifts. Few things generate a higher "smile factor" than a beautifully arranged bouquet. In fact, flowers from **Flowers by Terry** are the ideal way to convey your personal feelings, whether it's expressing your love, thanks, gratitude, sorrow or best wishes for a healthy recovery. Delivery is available to the whole greater Toronto area, including Hamilton to the West and Bowmanville to the East.

Whether it's a bridal consultation to make your dream day a reality, sympathy arrangements, or you need floral arrangements and gifts for corporate needs and special occasions, **Flowers by Terry** can do it all with Satisfaction 100% Guaranteed.

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Don't forget them for Easter (April 20th) for your Easter Lilies, and other Easter table floral centrepieces.

Owner **Terry Thomson** and the staff at **Flowers by Terry** bring you service, selection and value, plus your satisfaction is guaranteed. **Flowers by Terry** are "Your Local Florist", taking pride in your satisfaction.
www.flowersbyterry.com



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Manager Director **Brent Forrester** and the staff invite you to call for more information and visit them online at www.thompsonfh-aurora.com.



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When it comes to their vehicle's factory scheduled maintenance and repairs, all motorists seem to want today is competent mechanical work performed on their vehicle and at a reasonable price.

Tony's Auto Repair Ltd. has been open since 1976 by Tony Werth, and is today owned & operated by **Tim Asaph** who had been with the garage since 1978, and later took over. This shop takes personal pride in seeing that every effort is made to service your domestic or import vehicle properly the first time.

Due to the increased computerization and technological changes in newer vehicles today, the technicians at **Tony's Auto Repair Ltd.** make use of current service equipment, reference materials, and their personal experience to diagnose the specific problem and formulate the required remedy.

Tony's Auto Repair Ltd. has a 3 bay garage that provides computerized tune-ups and diagnostics, brake and exhaust work, shocks and struts, air conditioning service, lube-oil-filter service, M.T.O. safety inspections, and major/minor mechanical repairs.

Tony's is also a dealer for today's ultimate protection in rustproofing **Oil Tech**. **Oil Tech** has never ended its quest for the finest rust protection system and has spent many hours on development and research since 1969. It is different than any other type of rustproofing material that is on the market. Basically, the product is an annually applied fluid known as paraffinic hydrocarbon or a neutral petroleum based material.

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This multi-generation family business, with locations in Newmarket and Markham, was founded in 1970. In early 2013, they acquired Outside Powersports Inc. at 382 Mulock Drive in Newmarket and moved from Yonge Street into that new facility. On November 1, 2013 they opened a third location, situated on Brock Road in Pickering.

Owners **Ken Paterson** in Newmarket, **Andy Paterson** in Markham, and the staff can match something suitable to your needs and budget. Ken's wife Mandy and son Kirk are part of the sales team in Newmarket.

Experienced technicians at **Newmarket Mower** service anything they sell as well as most other makes and models of outdoor power products and small engines sold at major retailers. Service Manager **Kevin McIsaac** brings over 20 years experience. Pick-up and delivery are available. Do-it-yourselfers have access to repair parts and accessories. The Newmarket location is open Mon-Fri. 8-6, and Saturdays 8am-2pm.
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Powell Plumbing Supply carries the brands you know and trust: American Standard, Crane, Moen, Kohler, Delta, Price Pfister, Waltec, Maax, Mirolin, and others.

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Bring in this ad and receive \$20.00 off your on-premise order or 15% off of wine accessories.

Students set to spin their way to sport success

By Brock Weir

Students at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School will be spinning their way to their school's athletic success this week – and giving kids in the community a Jumpstart to boot.

Over 16 student teams, each in groups of five or six, will be taking over the Williams gym on 30 stationary bikes to raise money for their school's athletic program, as well as the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Program.

The Spin-A-Thon is the brainchild of Stephanie Blom, Claire Murphy, and Alexandra Scott, all in Grade 12, who wanted to find a way to incorporate "healthy, active living" while raising money at the same time.

"There are two benefits to one event," says Stephanie.

The group found inspiration from a similar event done at the school a few years ago. That drive, however, simply had individual students riding on bikes as long as they could. But, according to Alexandra, they wanted to come up with something a bit more special to generate "more enthusiasm and more of a team environment."

"We have already started coming up with different active, yet fun, and somewhat simple competitive games," says Alexandra. "We have a balance idea of how long you can balance on one leg while holding a basketball. We also have a game of 21 in basketball, as well as a challenge in how many free throws you can in one minute."

As details finalize, they won't rule out a hula hoop challenge either!

With sixteen teams signed up by the end of last week, organizers have already surpassed the expectations of other students, but they say they had a hunch all along the buy-in from the students would strike the right note.

"I am definitely looking forward to just the enthusiasm," says Claire. "We had a buy-in before March Break for the boys volleyball team and there were so many students there cheering on the teachers vs. kids game. We're hoping to get that enthusiasm and spirit."

As they plan on heading off to university this fall – Alexandra hopes to go to the University of Ottawa for communications or public relations, Claire to Dalhousie or McGill, leaning towards business commerce, and Stephanie to the University of Western Ontario with a penchant for mechanical engineering – they hope students taking part this year will pick up the torch and make this Thursday's Spin-A-Thon a legacy which will live on yearly.



Alexandra, Stephanie and Claire gear up to spin this week at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

University of Ottawa for communications or public relations, Claire to Dalhousie or McGill, leaning towards business commerce, and Stephanie to the University of Western Ontario with a penchant for mechanical engineering – they hope students taking part this year will pick up the torch and make this Thursday's Spin-A-Thon a legacy which will live on yearly.

Aurora High School debate team challenges Richmond Hill and Newmarket on home turf

By Jeff Doner

Throughout the year, the Aurora High School (AHS) debate team has spent countless hours preparing and practicing their craft every Thursday night after school.

After all their hard work, the team's skills will be on display next Wednesday when they host their own debate tournament at AHS. The tournament will pit them against some of the Region's best from Richmond Hill High School and Newmarket High School.

"The team members are very excited for this debate," said AHS debate team president Chen Liu. "We had a debate at Pickering College in December. I think that's the one that got our wheels going, but I think this one is a test for the debaters, and for me as well to see how well we organized it. It's great to see their skills implemented in a real competition."

The group is made up of 15 students, mostly in Grade 10, who have been learning various styles of debate, from formal parliamentary debate to the less rigid.

Liu said this year's debate team is focused and has grown together throughout a long school year.

"I think you can see people go into the debate team from all kinds of backgrounds and we all have a common goal of being able to share our ideas, express our opinions and, at the end of it, we can really see the level of confidence grow," he said. "We have all certainly come a long way from September."

Martin Nicolai, the debate team facilitator, and a history teacher at AHS, said Liu and the team have done a great job of staying dedicated throughout the

whole year.

"I am the one who kind of organizes the students and suggests things we should do, but [Liu] has taken over that role almost completely and he's very enthusiastic, very responsible and very energetic," he said. "He does exercises for training the students and gets everyone involved and he's also the one who really organized this tournament."

Nicolai has been involved with the debate team for over 10 years and said the students take a number of important skills out of it.

"I think that public speaking is a skill that is applicable to just about every job you can imagine," he explained. "It's about organizing your thoughts and collecting information and very quickly developing a persuasive argument on your behalf. It also requires the skill of seeing the other person's point of view."

But one of the biggest things he sees from students who get involved with the debate team is confidence.

"Some of these kids come in and they're not really sure about whether they can do this and how good they'll be, but with practice, they've really become quite effective speakers and I think that's something really positive as well."

Liu said he remembers the first time he participated in a debate, recalling it as a "scary experience," but he said the support from his teammates and reminding others that everyone starts out in the same place helps.

"In any career, it's important to have the communication skills to back up a point that you want to make," he said. "I hope next year we will have a debate tournament for the YRDSB. That is a long term goal that I can see."

also taken on the role as mentor advocate for the Canadian Association of Disabled Skiing, where he helps students with physical and mental disabilities participate in the sport."

Hailed as the "ultimate community ambassador", Mathilde Paré of École secondaire catholique Renaissance, has also had an impact within the local community and the wider world.

"Mathilde...plays an active role both in the community and her high school," they said. "For over a year, Mathilde has volunteered at the Southlake Residential Care Village, where she helps as a program assistant. In 2012, she travelled to Honduras to build a house through Habitat for Humanity. She is currently working on a fundraiser for The Lavoie Foundation and will soon be riding her bike 300 km to Welland and back for this cause."

Honourees contribute locally, nationally and internationally

From page 10

Williams who helped drive "Something for Sarah." Harrison, the captain of the school's Relay for Life Team, has contributed to the community as a whole in anything from fundraising to sport.

"He's an example of someone who has shown consistent commitment to the improvement of our community," said the committee. "He believes that 'volunteering is an amazing way to give back to the community that gives so much to us.' He lives by these values, exemplified in his many volunteer roles...selling ribbons for Wounded Warriors, assisting the Aurora Minor Hockey Association at the Hockey Helps the Homeless Tournament, and with Neighbourhood Network's Spring Tree Planting Day."

Community and sport are also two watchwords for Nicolas Chethuan, a student at St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic High School. His many volunteer endeavours include the Neighbourhood Network Food Drive, Big Brothers Big Sisters of York, and assisting a children's orphanage in Colombia.

"Nicolas believes that everyone should have the same educational and recreational opportunities regardless of their age, cultural background, physical abilities, or economical means," said the committee. "Nick has spent many years volunteering within his local community and on a global scale. He has



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COMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

The Aurora Public Library will host a presentation by author Thelma Wheatley on the Orillia Institution for "the Mentally Retarded." Straight from recent headlines and a \$35 million class-action lawsuit, this story reveals the social biases, abuses, and human and systematic failures that contributed to this tragic part of Canadian history. 7 p.m. in the Magna Room. Admission is free, but call 905-727-9494 x275 to reserve your spot.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

The Canadian Federation of University Women Aurora-Newmarket will hold its Annual General Meeting tonight at 7 p.m. and present a slate of executive members for 2014/2015. Drs. Susan and Michael Dolbey will speak about "Gardening in the Kawarthas." The meeting will be held at the Royal Canadian Legion at 105 Industrial Parkway North. All are welcome.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL: Join fellow film buffs as we watch a different Canadian produced documentary on the big screen at the Aurora Public Library each week throughout April. This week's film: Out of the Shadows (Sullivan Entertainment, 2012). This film explores just how closely science allows art historians to enter an artist's psyche. All film screenings are free and begin at 7 p.m. in the Magna Room.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

Emotion-Focused Family Therapy Workshop for Parents and Caregivers for addiction, substance use and other mental health concerns. This therapy is rooted in the deep belief in the healing power of families across the lifespan. The goal is to support parents and caregivers to take on the roles of recovery coach and emotion coach. Parents and caregivers are also taught how to heal emotional injuries in the family's past, including repairing parent-child relationships, if appropriate. Cost: \$400. An official receipt in the amount of \$250 for psychological services will be provided for benefits. For more information, call 905-886-6632.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

The Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, presents The Banjo Special with guest artists Arnie Naiman, Chris Coole, Chris Quinn, and Brian Taheny. Tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 on the day of the concert. For more information, call 905-713-1818 or visit www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Write For Rights: Drop by the Aurora Public Library from 1 - 3 p.m. today and help Amnesty International support human rights around the world. For more information, call 905-713-6713.

The One Parent Families Association will host a dance at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) tonight at 8 p.m. All - singles and couples - are welcome. Light buffet at 10:30 p.m. and a great DJ for the over 35s. Admission is \$18, but \$15 for Association and York Singles members.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

Nature's Emporium presents the

Run or Walk for Southlake today at the Aurora Community Centre. The annual fundraiser features four routes and three speeds to choose from and for every \$100 raised, you are entered to win a return trip for two from WestJet. For more information, visit www.runforsouthlake.ca.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

Make Tracks: Join us for some flat-out fun at Aurora Public Library. Help make amazing racetracks from cardboard tubing and lots of tape. Pick a toy car from the heap and join the challenge! Let's see how fast and how far our racers can go. We will have some great new books for you too! Free program for 6-8 year olds. 6:45 - 7:45 p.m. Call to reserve your child's spot! 905-727-9494 x280.

Documentary Film Festival: Join fellow film buffs as we watch a different Canadian produced documentary on the big screen at Aurora Public Library each week throughout April. This week's film: Gentle Bear Man of Emo, Exploration Films 2013. This is the story of one man who has been hand-feeding over 60 wild bears a day who come out of the bush on his property in a small town in northwestern Ontario. All film screenings are free and begin at 7p.m. in the Magna Room.

MAY 1 - 4

The Pine Tree Potters Spring Pottery Sale will be held May 1 - 4 at the Aurora Cultural Centre (22 Church Street). The show will be open Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Parking is free, admission is free, and there is a beautiful door prize. A great selection of gifts for Mother's Day! Visa, Mastercard and Interac accepted. Call 905-727-1278 or visit www.pinetreepotters.ca for more information.

SATURDAY, MAY 3

The York Region Community Choir presents "Take Me Home", featuring songs of Canada, Canadian Artists, and the music that takes us home, tonight at 7:30 p.m. The concert will be held at Trinity Anglican Church (79 Victoria Street). Tickets are \$15, or two for \$25 in advance. To reserve, call Michele at 905-726-3831.

MONDAY, MAY 7

The Aurora Public Library Presents Money Talks a free monthly discussion/education group, sharing unbiased experience and knowledge in financial planning. Tonight's presentation is Selecting The Best Investment Advisor and Developing Your Own Investment Plan. To pre-register, contact the Adult Information Desk at 905-727-9494 x275.

FRIDAY, MAY 9

The Aurora Seniors' Centre hosts its Black Tie Gala this evening from 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. This informal event of dinner and dancing will be catered with a buffet dinner with dessert, tea and coffee. An appetizer table will be available before dinner. A cash bar will be available as well as prizes to be won. Dinner is served at 6:30. Non-members and singles are encouraged and welcome. Tickets are \$25 each and \$30 for non-members. Tickets will be available from the Centre through May 2.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10					
11					12					13	14	15		
16					17				18					
19				20	21			22	23			24		
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49				50					51	52				
53			54						55					
56		57					58					59		
60					61	62						63		
					64								65	

CLUES ACROSS

- A braid
- Print errors
- Any of 3 avatars of Vishnu
- Odor masking toiletry
- Abba __, Israeli politician
- An enlisted person
- Any speed competitor
- Manitoba hockey team
- The Bay state
- Trees with conelike catkins
- Central area of a church
- 2 year old sheep
- Interpret written words
- Greek goddess of youth
- Bullfighting maneuver
- Shapes
- Decreased
- Fly
- Unbelief

- Traditional Hindu rhythms
- Yemen capital
- Prayer leader in a mosque
- A sheep up to the age of one year
- Soldier in an airborne unit
- What a cow chews
- K particle
- 50 cent pieces
- Trauma center
- 2011 Stanley Cup winners
- Inner bract of a grass spikelet
- The Show-Me State
- Self-immolation by fire ritual
- Offshoot interests
- Amounts of time
- Salty
- Guinea currency 1971-85

CLUES DOWN

- Existing before a war
- Open to change
- Gunsmoke actress Blake
- Converted into leather
- Boundary
- Predominated
- Royal Observatory
- Promotion
- Rich multilayered cake
- River between Iran and Armenia
- Carrier's invention
- Banes
- Catastrophe
- Atomic #77
- A note appended to a letter
- Licks
- Adam's wife
- Counterbalance
- Brokeback star's initials
- Golf score
- Manuscripts (abbr.)
- Old English
- Pod legume
- Upper arm muscle
- Japanese warrior
- Oh, God!
- A Scottish cap
- Expresses surprise
- Carbon particles
- 4th cognomen
- "Joy Luck Club" actress Irene
- Holds
- Favorable factors
- Bird enclosure
- Act of pay for usage
- St. Francis of ___
- Aussie bear
- Day-O singer's initials
- One of the six noble gases
- Apiary inhabitants
- Proboscis
- "Titanic" star's initials
- Lincn's state
- Atomic #28

Last Week's Puzzle Solution

			P	A	H			I	D	L	E	R	S		
				E	R	E			F	O	A	L	E	D	
A	Y		P	O	L			W	H	I	G				
T	O	S	S	U	P			N	O	S	E	B	A	G	
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N	A	U	S	E	A	M		R	E		T	R	O	T	
						T	O	D	A		S	E	R	E	
C	N	S				E	T	U	D	E			R	E	D
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A	V	O	N			S	E		S	E	S	S	I	L	E
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S	E	N	E	G	A	L			T	I	C	K	L	E	
				G	A	M	A		I	R	K			Y	R
				D	E	M	A	N	D		N	E	E		
				G	R	I	N	D	S		G	E	T		

—THE AURORAN— Arts & Culture

Strumming banjos stir Arnie Naiman's soul ahead of concert

By Brock Weir

On a visit to the Mariposa Folk Festival in the 1970s, something “tweaked” inside Aurora’s Arnie Naiman when he was hit by the sounds of Pete Seeger and Michael Cooney.

Seeing how they brought the spirit of the entire audience up on stage with them, it was something he knew he wanted to do, but was at a loss of where to start.

But, \$200 later he had a banjo in hand, picked up Seeger’s instruction manual and set about to master the claw hammer.

The following year, he went back to Mariposa. While waiting in line for tickets, he was spied by another musician who

challenged him to a jam session. It wasn’t quite duelling banjos, but it turned out to be a watershed moment for Mr. Naiman who, at that point, just considered himself a beginner.

“It was my very first jam session and that was a very powerful thing for me. It opened up a lot of doors and I’m still playing with new people and meeting new friends.”

Next Friday, Mr. Naiman will join three of his friends on home turf, performing in The Banjo Special at the Aurora Cultural Centre. Joining him on stage will be Brian Taheny, Chris Coole, and Chris Quinn, all of whom have previously brought their banjos to the Centre.

The group formed The Banjo Special over 14 years ago after Mr. Naiman hit the folk music scene with his wife, Kathy Reid Naiman, a popular children’s musician and mainstay at the Aurora Public Library. Aiming to show audiences all the different styles and sounds they could produce with a banjo, they put together the concert.

“We were shocked that the place was just overloaded with people and we decided to do it at least once a year in bigger venues,” Mr. Naiman explains. “The next year we did two evenings in a row of The Banjo Special. After we noticed how popular it was, we decided to put out a recording.”

Each musician recorded four tracks any way they liked at the Naiman’s Aurora-based Merriweather Studio. The CD eventually gained traction in the folk scene, particularly in the United States and here at home on the CBC.

In recent years, he says, he has enjoyed seeing the banjo take on something of a renaissance with the unique sounds of the instrument popping up in new recordings, sometimes where you wouldn’t expect it. He attributes much of this growth to how

or it can be very delicate,” he says. “It’s a whole new thing for audiences to hear us at The Banjo Special. Having so much variety at the concert makes it a very entertaining evening.”

But, perhaps it also harkens back to that fateful day at the Mariposa over 40 years ago.

“There’s nothing like hearing the music right up front and it is very powerful,” he recalls of that first concert. “There is something that tweaks my soul about the way melodies are formed. Maybe they are a bit bluesy, down to earth, and the music doesn’t seem overly contrived like modern music does. I could relate to that music right away, but there is something very soulful about listening to good banjo I clicked into, and maybe it was something inside me.”

Naiman, Taheny, Coole and Quinn will perform The Banjo Special on Friday, April 25 at 8 p.m. They will be joined by guests Kathy Reid-Naiman and Leon Taheny. Tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 on the day of the concert. The event is sponsored by Aurora’s Rickard Banjos.



Aurora’s Arnie Naiman will bring The Banjo Special to the Cultural Centre next week. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Music takes over Town Park from July 25 to 27

From page 15

was a bit difficult and we are trying to do a rain dance to eliminate that!”

Additional revenues, he said, were generated from a nominal entrance fee, and some revenue from food and beverage sales.

Additional concerns addressed last week was the perennially contentious issue of fencing around Town Park. Much of the layout this year, said Mr. Newnham, would be the same as last year, dividing the park into two segments. The first is the area around the band shell which would be the music and food showcase, and the second around the baseball diamond would be a children’s play area with bouncy castles and other inflatable entertainment.

People would still be able to walk through Town Park freely and take advantage of amenities such as the playground and splash pad.

Mr. Newnham added they are looking forward to working with the Farmers’ Market to come to an agreement on scheduling and layout.

Supporting the motion, Councillor John Abel said existing and pre-booked activities

were not affected by last year’s Festival and he expected the same thing in 2014.

“The Farmers’ Market was not impacted by the footprint, as it was previously, and people can walk through and they weren’t able to do that either,” said Councillor Abel. “It was fantastic how you aligned that to accommodate our regular people who go there to park on a daily basis.”

Also in support of the Festival was Councillor Evelyn Buck who expressed misgivings the previous week about permitting out the park for what sounded like a commercial venture.

“When I read the initial report it read like a commercial event to me,” said Councillor Buck of her position

before last week’s presentation. “Now, I am very appreciative that Mr. Newnham has come forward and given us the details. I realise it is a community event and I wish you well.”

Added Mayor Geoffrey Dawe: “We look forward to a successful event.”

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Brown and Klees remember friend and mentor in Jim Flaherty

By Brock Weir

Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown is mourning a "mentor" in former cabinet minister Jim Flaherty.

Mr. Flaherty, who served as Canada's Finance Minister from 2006 until his resignation just under a month ago, died at his Ottawa home early Thursday afternoon.

Flags were lowered across the country, including at Aurora Town Hall, in his honour as friends and colleagues grappled with what they described as a shocking and sudden loss.

"I am shocked and saddened," Ms. Brown tells The Auran. "I have known Jim for more than two decades through involvement in provincial politics and watched him closely when he was Finance Minister in Ontario."

As Ms. Brown herself eyed becoming involved in the Federal level, after Mr. Flaherty too made the leap from Queen's Park to the House of Commons, she says she found considerable encouragement and support in him.

"He was always a mentor," she says. "For many of us who were part of the Conservative family, and who were looking at a political career, he was very generous with his time and his mentorship in how to go about being elected. He was so generous with his time that as a cabinet minister he got to as many of the ridings as he possibly could where new candidates were running."

Once elected, Ms. Brown says she recalls the many meetings Mr. Flaherty had with MPs as he worked on the Federal Budget. Each had a list of suggestions and Ms. Brown was no exception.

"A couple of times he looked at me and said, 'Lois, I am not sure we can do that right now, but that is out of the box thinking and I like out of the box thinking!'" she says. "We regularly had those conversations

and now that we are heading back towards a balanced budget next year, which I honestly believe is going to be a Jim Flaherty budget, I think we all recognize that this will be his crowning glory."

While Ms. Brown is looking ahead to the impacts Mr. Flaherty's legacy will leave with his successor, Joe Oliver, his legacy can also be seen close to home, particularly in financial support he provided on behalf of the Federal Government towards the restoration of the Church Street School in 2007, which was to become the Aurora Cultural Centre.

"That is part of the legacy he leaves for our community," she says. "I believe Jim Flaherty's legacy is a strong and prosperous Canada that he has left for generations to

come." This is a view shared by MPP Frank Klees, who said his "steady hand on the rudder" of the economy helped Canada "weather" a very difficult economic storm.

Their ties ran deeper than simple party politics. Having been elected together in 1995, they served on the same side of the Legislature, worked together at the cabinet table and then faced off against each other in the 2004 leadership race, which also featured John Tory.

"You really get to know somebody when you are in close quarters for an extended period of time, often in heated debate on issues," said Mr. Klees. "I came to respect Jim over the course of serving together and also especially in the course of that leadership campaign because regardless of how heated the debate became, there was always a coming back together as friends and colleagues."

"He had the ability to disagree but at the end of the day had the ability to maintain a friendship and

trust relationship. He's a man who is going to be dearly missed."

While praise was heaped on Mr. Flaherty for his handling of the economic downturn, one thing lost in the discussion, added Mr. Klees,

was the support Mr. Flaherty and his wife, Christine Taylor, had for vulnerable Canadians, something that can be seen in their support for the Abilities Centre in Whitby which provides



Flags were lowered at Town Hall on Thursday in Flaherty's honour.

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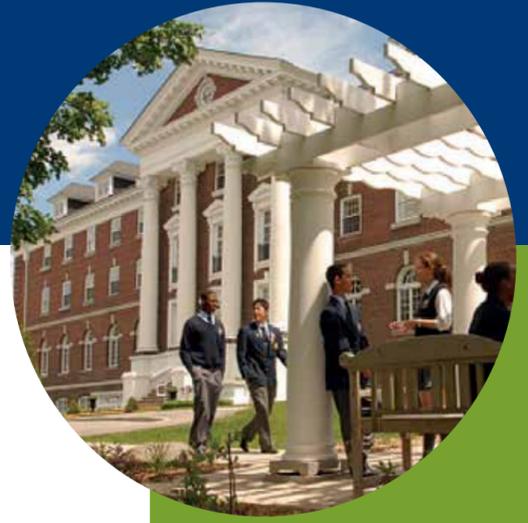
The Town of Aurora's Parks and Recreation Department hosted its 8th annual April Pool's Day event on Sunday to benefit the Life Saving Society's WATER Smart campaign. Under the theme of "swimming is a life skill", young swimmers and their parents filled the pool at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex not only to have fun, but also learn a thing or two about life-long water safety skills through games, demonstrations, and water safety techniques.

Auroran photos by David Falconer





PICKERING COLLEGE



2013-2014 Headmaster's List

PICKERING COLLEGE HONOUR SOCIETY

Pickering College is proud to recognize the accomplishments of its Grade 7-12 students who have achieved significant distinction in their academic results throughout the year.

The Headmaster's List is comprised of students who have achieved 80 per cent or better on their cumulative average or who have demonstrated outstanding learning skills in such areas as collaboration, independence, initiative and responsibility.

"We are tremendously proud of the accomplishments of our students," says Peter Sturup, Headmaster at Pickering College. "Not only have they achieved academic excellence they are charting a course to become leaders and responsible global citizens."

Students who achieve a place on the Headmaster's List are recognized at an Honour Society reception. This year, Sean Stevens, CEO of TreeFrog Inc., an award winning Newmarket web design & development company, was the guest speaker at the annual event. The Honour Society began in 1978 by former Pickering College Headmaster, Sheldon Clark, to recognize the value of scholarship.

Congratulations!

Grades 7 & 8

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME
Baker	Brooke
Barratt	Celine
Bianco	Julia
Bolivar	Julian
Bruce	Mitchell
Chan	Desiree
Correa	Samuel
Gardner	Vanessa
Golding	Emily
Kerswill	Emma
Kim	Justin
Lucchese	Kayla
Moskaltcova	Anastasia
Murphy	Adam
Qiu	Tianqing
Rajani	Inaara
Smith	Alexander
Strawbridge	Leonora
Beswick	Katelyn
Cannon	Nicole
Charles	Elexis
Cinq-Mars	Lauren
Dhanjal	Maya
Falcon	Erin
Kara	Hamza
Krishnan	Nupur
MacDougall	James
MacRae	Kyleah
Mason	Daniel
McDougall	Samantha
McLaughlin	Mollie
Pedersen	Jaimee
Philp	Madeline
Prochazka	Patrick
Robinson	Megan
Scott	Kaitlyn
Serna Guzman	Mariana
Skurnac	Jenna
Slind	Dalton
Snow	Joshua
Spiers	Hayden
Tanina	Natalia
Zykova	Vanessa

Grades 9-12

Last Name	First Name
Barratt	Mark
Berleth	Maurice
Beswick	Brayden
Black	Alyssa
Bolivar	Camila
Borlestean	Alexis
Buckmaster	Jess
Carsolio Gonzalez	Memo
Casanova Ochoa	Fernando
Chadarov	Victor
Chen	Snow
Chiu	Vanessa
Coleman	Mandy
Cooper	Zahan
Cork	Alyssa
Cumiskey	Alex
Cumiskey	Eric
Darvay-Canavor	Izzy
Dzisiak	Darragh
Eby	Carter
Egi	Alexis
Elliott	Catherine
Farmer	Sean
Fitzgerald	Brendan
Fitzgerald	Garrett
Floyd	Alexander
Floyd	Hannah
Fong	Isaiah
Fresco	Chantelle
Funk	Lottie
Galata	Kirstin
Garcia Barriga	Loren
Gautier	Michael
Gleed	June
Gocool	Amber
Gole	Redmond
Gupta	Sumana
Hagias	Jacob
Hambrock	Isaac
Han	Eddie
Hannan	Meghan
Henry	Noelle
Hernandez Navarro	Danny
Hilton	Grace
Hopkinson	Katie
Hoss	Katharina
Hsieh	Charles
Hu	Chester
Hu	Jame
Hu	Jessie
Imonawa	Yuka
Ip	Rennie
Jenkins	Lauren
Jeppesen	Ashley
Johnson	Ryan

Last Name	First Name
Jonasson	Victoria
Juta	Kairav
Kaszuba	Andrew
Kavanagh	Amy
Kavanagh	Grant
Kelln	Sam
Kelly	Michael
Kim	Ahkina
King	Zachary
Krstajic	Ally
Lamuno Sarda	Mariana
LaValle	Nicholas
Lee	Avery
Lee	Mara
Li	Joe
Liu	Vicky
Lu	Alba
Lu	Jessica
Lu	Betty
MacDonald	Aleksa
MacDonald	Serena
Macias	Gabi
Macias	Nico
Malins-Umansky	Sean
Mancuso	Sterling
Mantle	Olivia
Marchese	Michael
Marschall	Max
Mason	Jordan
McDougall	Amanda
McGill	Ally
McGill	Matt
McKay	Tyler
McTamney	Jessica
Meng	Colbert
Miller	Alanna
Milne	Gen
Montgomery	Allison
Montgomery	Margaret
Moody	Kate
Mouna	Leilah
Mulroy	Seamus
Murphy	Andrew
Murphy	Samantha
Nam	Christopher
Nicholls	Shayna
Nooristani	Iman
Nowlan	Sarah
Nunn	Alyssa
Nunn	Emily
Nyamrunda	Belinda
Pang	Shannon
Park	Simon
Pasquel Najera	Linett
Pedersen	Julie

Last Name	First Name
Perkovic	Emily
Phillips	Caroline
Pitters-Fisher	Emma
Pozdnyakov	German
Prefontaine	Michela
Pyatnitskiy	Dmitry
Qiu	Charles
Qiu	Aisling
Qiu	Ben
Quinn-Rabot	James
Resendiz Garcia	Yoyis
Riswick	Trish
Ritchie	Sarah
Ritchie	Spenser
Ritchie	Tyler
Romano	Emily
Roodenburg	Martin
Roy	Seija
Saito	Risa
Scott	Stephanie
Shaw	Nicola
Shouldice	Nicole
Shourideh-Ziabari	Ali
Sochaniwskyj	Matthew
Spiering	Kevin
Stevenson	Sydney
Sun	Sara
Tan	Kevin
Tan	Samantha
Taupin Muelas	Almu
Totonchian	Leila
Toye	Sydney
Vessio	Nadine
Walker	Evan
Wang	Jason
Wang	Ada
Wang	Catherine
Weldon	Summer
Wong	Larissa
Wu	Joanne
Xin	Vivian
Xu	Lester
Xu	Bruce
Yang	Lucinda
Yazdani	Alexandra
Yim	Vanessa
Yu	Vine
Yuan	Eugene
Yustin	Matt
Zhang	Emily
Zhang	Cynthia
Zhang	Jasmin
Zhang	Ivy

Legislation has to have teeth: expert

From page 6
of Infrastructure did not develop indicators and the plan has undergone two substantial amendments and changes, with no evaluation, no metrics and no real measurements.

One of the problems is government ministries tend to create plans, and draft discussion papers but never finalize anything.

The only plan that works is the Niagara Escarpment Plan, created in the 1970s with its own monitoring system.

While the ORMCP tries to ensure ecological integrity, it too lacks a monitoring network. It's great to set high standards, Miller noted, but it all falls apart when there's no monitoring mechanism in place.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation was doing it, but the province cuts its funding and the foundation folded.

What we have in Ontario is a "planning hodgepodge" and Miller came out swinging in a recent report to Queen's Park. He said he was "astounded" at the failure to develop monitoring and evaluation for the Greenbelt and ORMCP and it was "disconcerting" that the Growth Plan was amended "in the dark."

The problem lies with responsibilities fragmented between ministries. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is the lead ministry for land use planning and has adopted a "one window policy" but this has proven to be ineffective. Miller explained that previously, both MOE and MNR were lead

commenting agencies on all development applications in this province and they had field staff to provide on-site expertise. Both ministries have suffered staff cuts over the years and currently "no one in government is looking at the land."

But our hands aren't tied as concerned citizens.

Miller said we need to take a step back, push for, and help create, a transparent monitoring and evaluation framework for all land use plans. It is the government's responsibility and there needs to be a long-term commitment to environmental monitoring. The government doesn't always get things right so in order to make proper decisions, they need full knowledge of the situation and the consequences.

When asked about the role of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), Miller said it was created at a time when municipalities were ill equipped to make complicated decisions, but that's no longer the case today.

Developers aren't necessarily the villains in all of this, they are merely playing the game as the rules are laid out. If sloppy decisions are made, they take advantage of them. "We can't allow bad decisions to be made," he said.

Miller said we need to raise the discussion standards and have substantive talks that will see these pieces of legislation continue to have teeth.

—THE AURORAN— CLASSIFIEDS

Deadline: Monday 1 p.m. week of publication. 905-727-3300 Monday – Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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In olden days, if you had a stroke, your life was crippled by its affects. Most likely you would spend your final days unable to converse effectively with your family and friends, continue your hobbies or write letters.



SENIOR SCAPE

Sylvia Dickens
Aphasia help

Fortunately, today that is no longer the case. Medical scientists have discovered that you can rebuild your life but it does take work.

What is aphasia?
Aphasia is caused by an injury to the brain, most often from a stroke and particularly in older individuals. It can result from head trauma, brain tumors and infections, which means people of all ages are at risk.

A person with aphasia experiences impaired language, comprehension and speech, however intelligence is not affected.

This makes the condition frustrating for the individuals affected. They know what they want to say, but just can't find the words. Comprehension is slowed by varying degrees depending on the person.

Recently, I had the honor of meeting a group of individuals with various levels of aphasia. While obvious signs of stroke and other physical damage were evident, their aphasia was not quite as obvious until they tried to communicate. Some had more difficulty while others seemed to be mildly affected.

The amazing thing about this group was their level of happiness. They joked, they laughed, they gestured. Volunteers who work with them to improve their abilities help make it happen. They provide an informal, casual, friendly and, most important, non-threatening environment. Here, clients receive the help they need in a social gathering with people experiencing the same challenges.

It was inspiring to hear their stories and learn about the condition. It is understandable that a person unfamiliar with the condition could mistakenly think their communication difficulties came with lowered intelligence.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Over the two hours I spent with them, it was evident that they are brave individuals who are working hard to overcome some extreme challenges.

One young man was a talented musician prior to his injury. Today, he cannot recall the music he wrote or play his

guitar, but he's working at it.

Interestingly, some popular childhood songs are completely alien to him. No longer can he recall them. With the encouragement of a volunteer, he eventually was able to add

the final word to the song, "Twinkle, twinkle little ____." After the song was repeated by the group, his brain suddenly recalled the appropriate word, "star".

I asked him if he experiences that sudden recall, and he said yes. We might all relate to this as we strive to recall someone's name. When we aren't thinking about it, it pops into our heads.

One man who arrived with severe communication difficulties worked hard for five years to graduate from the program. He has since traveled the world.

Aphasia program
If you know someone who has suffered a stroke and has problems communicating, chances are that person has aphasia.

The March of Dimes aphasia program was created with the expertise of a speech-language pathologist and communicative disorders assistants who help with program development so that clients can meet their communication goals. People with aphasia are encouraged to seek out their program.

There are several ways to get there: referral by a hospital through the Community Care Access Centre or you can self-refer through their web site www.marchofdimes.ca. Look for links to their programs and the York-Durham Aphasia Centre. That page will provide you with information about the program. Or you can call the Newmarket office at 905-895-3628 x3418

Volunteers needed
Volunteers are needed for this program. Find out how to volunteer on the web site. You will help clients with a variety of strategies: making choices, gestures and movements, visual aids, slow speech, pictures, drawings, newspapers, and keyword hints.

Yoga
Feeling tight? Increase your flexibility, build strength, improve your balance and reduce body stress with Yoga. Classes for beginners run April 14 to June 30 at the Aurora Seniors' Centre; intermediate classes run April 16 to June 18. Register at the reception desk.

Charter promotes food as a tourism and business draw

From page 7

"People are starting to look at food differently and starting to seize opportunities to grow things closer to home or seek out local producers. It might be going to the local farmers' market. It might be going to the local farm and embracing it. Another benefit through this discussion is there is often an increase in programs and policy initiatives which often leads to greater access to safe, culturally appropriate food in the community. People see food as a valuable thing; it is not a cheap commodity and it has a lot of meaning to it."

While they have seen great strides in awareness since the York Region Food Charter was brought

to fruition, they are realistic about their goals. The brains behind the plan do not expect drastic change with everyone suddenly thinking differently and shopping local, she says. Moreover, it is about raising awareness so people open their eyes to seeing opportunities out there to shop and consume local, as "motivate them, encourage them and support them in their quest to do so."

"People want to use food as a destination," she said, noting people who make a day out of visiting the Aurora Farmers' Market. "There is a lot of culinary and agri-tourism within it, and it is something we, as a working group are really keen to see happen more in the community."

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