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THE AURORED

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 15 No. 7 905-727-3300

theauroran.com

FREE Week of December 4, 2014



Bandleader Gord Shepard gets serious as he gives Santa Claus a few last-minute pointers before handing over his baton at the Aurora Community Band's 3rd Annual Holiday Market on Saturday. Santa led the Band in a rousing rendition of Sleigh Ride as vendors provided plenty of holiday gift ideas. For more upcoming holiday events, please see Page 16.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

New vision needed to challenge changing face of youth homelessness: United Way

By Brock Weir

There is a perception in communities such as Aurora that youth on the streets are simply "bratty teenagers" reacting to a simple argument at home, according to the United Way of York Region.

But, this perception is far from the reality and if there is any truth to it at all, it is merely the tip of a very complex iceberg.

This was the message driven home by the United Way last week as they presented their report, Leaving Home: Youth Homelessness in York Region, to a large group of advocates and stakeholders at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

The report, which was two years in the making, lays bare the realities of youth homelessness across York Region and urges collaboration across the nine municipalities, and the groups serving youth and homelessness within them, to make the issue a thing of the past.

"Often, there is a perception that they are bratty teenagers who get into an argument at home," said Stephen Gaetz, one of the leaders of the study. "Having worked in the sector for years, if you spend a week being homeless, cold, not getting three meals a day, being afraid of getting your head kicked in, suffering the loss of family and friends – if you leave home for a frivolous reason like not wanting to do the dishes, you will probably wind up going home very quick."

For many teens on the streets of York Region, however, this is simply not a possibility.

According to the report, 60 to 70 per cent of homeless youth flee homes where they experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse which often goes unnoticed by others.

In developing the study, the researchers, bringing together a team from York University, interviewed 60 young people who are currently accessing various resources such as shelters and employment services within

Continued on page 7

Council bids farewell to the class of 2010 – 2014, ahead of this week's inauguration

By Brock Weir

John Gallo feels as though he still has a lot to give to the community.

That was the sentiment he expressed as he participated in his last meeting as an Aurora Councillor after serving for six years.

Gallo was one of three Councillors on the receiving end of tributes at the final meeting of the 2010 – 2014 term last week, after coming in second in the 2014 Mayoralty Race.

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe led the tributes to the outgoing councillors, including Evelyn Buck and Don Constable, presenting Mr. Gallo and Mr. Constable with a token of the Town's appreciation at the start of the meeting.

Mrs. Buck was not in attendance.

"Thank you both very much for the work you have contributed and for your passion and dedication to the Town," said Mayor Dawe.

While Mr. Gallo said it was "somewhat sad" to leave the table, it was a rewarding experience.

"Although we have had our differences, I believe we have done a good job to serve the community," said Mr. Gallo. "Particularly, I would like to thank all my supporters throughout the years. I hope I have made you proud. I have done my best to bring everything I could to the Council table and I am very happy with our accomplishments.

"It is somewhat sad to leave the Council table. I feel I still have a lot more to contribute, and perhaps I will do it in other ways, but I

Continued on page 6



Councillors John Gallo and Don Constable received tokens of appreciation from Mayor Geoff Dawe last week in recognition of their service serving on the previous Aurora Council. The new Council for 2014 – 2018 was installed Tuesday night.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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TOWN OF AURORA Weekly Notice Board

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COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, December 9	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee*
Wednesday, December 10	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library	Aurora Public Library Board
Thursday, December 11	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Committee of Adjustment
Tuesday, December 16	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Wednesday, December 17	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Public Planning*

Meetings are open to the public and can be seen on Rogers TV, channel 10. For a full list of upcoming meetings, please visit www.aurora.ca

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



WHAT'S HAPPENING

New Changes coming to Curbside Collection!

Starting **January 1, 2015** all residents and businesses in Aurora who participate in curbside collection must comply with the following changes:

- E-waste and batteries are banned from curbside collection
- There is a maximum of five items per scheduled collection

Please note: Any items over the five item limit will be tagged and left at the curb.

Residents can dispose of their E-waste and batteries at one of the The Regional Municipality of York's local depots or at the Town's scheduled E-waste events at 9 Scanlon Court.

Extra bulky items can also be taken to one of The Regional Municipality of York's depots.

For more information, please visit www.aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling or call Customer Service at 905-727-1375.

For a full list of The Regional Municipality of York's depots, please visit www.york.ca

Dinner and a Movie

Earth to Echo (Rated PG)

Where: Aurora Public Library

When: **Saturday, December 6**
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



Salvation Army Kettle Drive

The Town of Aurora, Salvation Army and Neighbourhood Network have launched the annual Aurora Salvation Army Kettle Drive which runs from **Saturday, November 22** until **Wednesday, December 24**.

Contributions to this campaign will provide practical assistance to vulnerable members of our community at Christmas and throughout the year.

Kettles are located at the following locations in Aurora:

- Walmart
- The Real Canadian Superstore
- Metro
- Both LCBO outlets in town

For more information on how to volunteer for the Salvation Army Kettle Drive, please call Neighbourhood Network at 905-726-3737 to book your preferred date, time and location.

For more information on the Aurora Salvation Army Kettle Drive, please contact Glennanne Phillips at 905-895-6276.



Photo caption: Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, CAO Neil Garbe, Town Councillors, Town staff, representatives from Neighbourhood Network, Salvation Army and Central York Fire Services.

Register now for Winterfest Camp

Take a break from the cold weather and join us for activities including games, sports and arts and crafts.

Date: **Monday, December 22, 2014 to**
Friday, January 2, 2015 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Extended care is available. For more information or to register, please call 905-726-4770.

Town of Aurora Memorial Tree & Park Bench Dedication program

Would you like to establish "lasting roots" in Aurora? Are you looking for a unique gift idea for a special person or occasion? Feel like making an investment in greening your community? Contact The Town of Aurora's Parks & Recreation department to find out more about the Memorial Tree Planting and Park Bench Dedication program. Please call 905-727-3123 ext. 3233 or email cwright@aurora.ca

2014 Aurora Seniors Association Presents the Evergreen Choir Christmas Concert

The 2014 Evergreen Choir Christmas Concert will be held on **Saturday, December 13** at 2:30 p.m. at the Aurora Seniors' Centre, 90 John West Way.

Tickets are \$5 per person and children 14 years of age and under are free if a regular ticket is purchased.

Light refreshments will be served at intermission. For more information, please call 905-726-4767

The Aurora Farmer's Market is moving indoors for the winter!

All are welcome to the indoor Aurora Farmer's Market on **Saturday, December 6** from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Aurora Armoury, 89 Mosley Street.

Don't miss the wide variety of vendors and artisan creations.

Please visit www.theaurorafarmersmarket.com



Skylight Gallery

During the month of December, the Skylight Gallery will be featuring the artwork of Carole Tremayne.

Carole showcases close-up and distant images, perceived through the camera lens and the paint brush. In her first show, "Near and Far" she shares the beauty of nature and the fascinating world around us.

Artist Reception: **Friday, December 5**
from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Regular viewing hours: Monday to Friday
from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Neighbourhood Network Winter Snow Removal

Neighbourhood Network coordinates a volunteer snow removal service for eligible seniors and persons with disabilities. This program matches volunteers with registered clients in our partnered municipalities.

A volunteer is matched with a registered client and is expected to deliver clearing services within 24 hours when snowfall accumulation exceeds 10 centimetres (4 inches). Volunteers will clear:

- Snow from town sidewalks
- A path to resident's front door
- Snow at driveway entrances left by snow plows

Recipients:

- Must be a resident in the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina or Newmarket
- Must be 65 years of age or older (low-income seniors who receive a Seniors Tax Credit will be given priority), or
- Any resident with a disability documented by an Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) cheque stub, a wheelchair parking pass or a doctor's note, regardless of age
- In addition, there must be no able-bodied adults living at this address

Note: Not all applicants will receive this service and can only be matched according to the availability of volunteers. Non-matched applicants will be put on a waiting list and contacted only if a volunteer becomes available.

For more information, please download the application form on www.neighbourhoodnetwork.org

Event at Aurora Public Library

The Hour of Code

Date: **December 8 - 11**, from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Location: Library Living Room
Age: Ages 6 and up

Millions of people of diverse ages and backgrounds have tried The Hour of Code. This is a one-hour introduction designed to demystify computer science and show that anybody can learn the basics. Using drag and drop programming, these game-like exercises will teach you the essentials.

Drop in for one or all of the sessions. Bring your own device or use one of ours.

Launched in 2013, Code.org® is a non-profit dedicated to expanding participation in computer science by making it available in more schools and increasing participation by women and underrepresented students of color. Their vision is that every student in every school should have the opportunity to learn computer science. They believe computer science and computer programming should be part of the core curriculum in education, alongside other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses, such as biology, physics, chemistry and algebra.

REMINDER

Winter Parking Restrictions in effect from November 15 to April 15, 2 a.m. to 6 a.m.

It's that time of year again! Snow and ice are due to arrive soon.

Please make it safe for everyone and ensure that your vehicles are not parked on the street. It is also important to not park over sidewalks or onto the roadway.

This is a hazard for residents and it severely hinders the ability of our Infrastructure and Environmental Services staff to efficiently plow our roads and sidewalks.

For more information, please call 905-726-4751 or visit www.aurora.ca

Club Aurora Fitness Centre Memberships on sale

Looking for that little extra gift?

A Club Aurora Fitness Centre Membership makes a great stocking stuffer!



Club Aurora Fitness Centre offers a variety of memberships to suit everyone and makes a great Christmas gift.

Gift Certificates are available for purchase at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex.

For more information, please call 905-726-4764

A SMALL CHANGE WITH CLEAR BENEFITS.



In January/February 2015, Aurora Town Council will vote to consider adopting clear (transparent) plastic bags for municipal waste collection, replacing the use of traditional opaque (black) bags.

Similar to other municipalities across Canada, The Town of Aurora is considering clear bags to:

- Improve safety for our garbage collectors by enabling them to see the contents in the bags
- Increase the diversion of household hazardous material from landfills to environmentally-appropriate disposal facilities
- Increase the amount of garbage diverted from landfills through increased recycling and green bin collection

DID YOU KNOW?

Demand for extra Blue Boxes and Green Bins typically increases when clear garbage bag programs are launched. As a result, The Town of Aurora has a well-stocked supply of boxes and bins to ensure these are available for residents.

LOOK HERE EACH WEEK FOR MORE FACTS ABOUT CLEAR GARBAGE BAGS

For more information, please contact:

The Town of Aurora
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Tree Lighting Ceremony

Another exciting event brought to you by
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Wednesday, December 3, 2014
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Aurora Town Hall Courtyard
100 John West Way
Aurora Seniors' Centre
90 John West Way

- Complimentary **Tim Hortons** hot chocolate with a food donation to the Aurora Food Pantry
- Trimming of the Town tree (ornament supplies provided)
- Official countdown with Santa for the lighting of the Town tree at 7 p.m.
- Enjoy caroling with the traditional sounds and accompaniment of the Salvation Army Brass Band
- The Aurora Seniors' association hosts Mrs. Claus for a reading of "Twas the Night Before Christmas"

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Call 905-726-4762 or visit
www.aurora.ca/treelighting
for more information

[f](#) [t](#) #AuroraEvents2014

PLEASE NOTE, WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CANCEL, AMEND OR CHANGE ACTIVITIES.

York Region’s Canine Unit celebrates 25-year success story in Aurora

By Brock Weir

As one of the longest-serving members of the York Regional Police’s Canine Unit, Sgt. Mike McGuigan has seen many changes in policing.

Technology has changed the playing field in many areas, but when it comes to training and serving with the four-legged members of the YRP’s canine unit, much stays the same. This steady approach, however, can be a double-edged sword.

“We are sometimes an afterthought when technology fails,” mused McGuigan. “The fact of the matter is footprints in the snow always seem to end or converge with other footprints. Cell phone pings are always within 500 or 750 metres, and sometimes the camera on the helicopter is down. The weather conditions aren’t safe to fly, or the foliage might be too thick, but the dog’s nose will always be there and, in many cases, it will prove the officers, investigators, and the handlers wrong.”

Speaking to a packed house at the YRP’s Aurora headquarters last week, McGuigan was somewhat preaching to the converted as members of the Canine Unit past and present came together to mark the unit’s 25th anniversary.

“We have come a long way from our unheated offices and kennels on Industrial Parkway to the facilities we are so lucky to have today,” said Superintendent Karen Noakes.

According to Noakes, 48 dogs have served in the canine unit since its inception in 1989, and while just three dogs blazed that trail at the very beginning, 16 dogs now serve.

“What the statistics don’t tell are the stories behind each of those numbers, stories of dedicated and highly skilled teamwork, working long hours, often in difficult terrain and difficult situations, supporting frontline officers and ensuring our citizens feel safe and secure,” added Deputy Chief Tom Carrique. “The mission is satisfied by the Canine Unit working very closely with frontline officers and specialized units like air support to apprehend the most dangerous of offenders and safely locate the most vulnerable of missing people.

“Since the inception of the Canine Unit, the dogs have been directly responsible for more than 1,500 arrests and successfully locating close to 100 missing people. Being a member of the Canine Unit requires the best of the best. It demands the most physically and mentally fit officers, individuals who are disciplined, intuitive,



(Above) Sgt. Mike McGuigan speaks of the unique partnership between officers in the Canine Unit and their dogs. (Right) Members of the unit, past and present, gather for a group photo.

Auroran photos by Brock Weir

and committed to the organization and the community by putting service above self.”

This discipline and commitment can best be exemplified by the philosophy members of the Canine Unit live by, and that is the police service dog is not just a dog, or a partner on duty, but a member of each officer’s family. For McGuigan, this philosophy extends to the belief that “you get the dog you deserve.”

“There was only one Rin Tin Tin,” he said, noting the extent of the training that goes into forging the bond between officer and dog. The dog has the talent and the ability, but it is the job of their human partners to bring out the best in them.

“Every canine officer has been dispatched to a number of serious calls, and it is expected we find the missing person or suspect who has just assaulted an officer, or committed a serious crime,” said McGuigan. “We have all been dispatched to help find missing children, a parent with Alzheimer’s, or someone experiencing mental health issues. It is then when we, as officers, realise where our dog’s strengths and weaknesses are located. That is why training is so important. The simple fact of the matter is if we don’t commit to training them then we, as a team, fail operationally.

“Over the years, things have changed with our department and technology seems to have taken over. It may create easier fixes for solving or assisting in the investigations of certain crimes, but in canine, despite all the advances in technology, the same basic principles remain. With canine training, the first officers selected for the unit in 1989 did

what the next officer selected in 2015 will do.”

After York Regional Police Chief Eric Jolliffe assisted in presenting each member of the Canine Unit, past and present, with a challenge medal, a special commemorative tree was unveiled just behind the Aurora Headquarters. It wasn’t simply to mark the unit’s milestone anniversary. The “Lydia Tree” was planted with the singular purpose of paying tribute to the late Lydia Sullivan who was instrumental in laying the foundations of the unit.

Through a number of fundraisers and community events, Ms. Sullivan raised \$5,000 to purchase Police Service Dog “Lappy.” A long-time supporter of the work the York

Regional Police and the Toronto Police Force do in their respective communities, Ms. Sullivan forged a unique relationship with the Canine Unit, which continued until her death in 2008 at the age of 80.

Continued on page 16





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This winter ... Get active!

Aurora has more than 57 kilometres of pathways and trails, including the Nokiidaa and Oak Ridges Moraine Trails. The majority of our trails are multi-use, suitable for walking, hiking, jogging, cycling and cross-country skiing. Our trails offer a great way to see The Town of Aurora's most scenic and natural areas.

Using our trails system also contributes to a healthy lifestyle and reduces traffic and pollution within our community.

Want to learn more about The Town of Aurora's parks and trails system? Pick up a copy of our Streets, Parks & Trails map. Copies are available on a one-per-household basis from Aurora Town Hall or download a copy from www.aurora.ca/parksandtrails



To learn more about The Town of Aurora's commitment to healthy living, safety around our schools and our School Travel Planning policy, please visit www.aurora.ca/safe

Look here each week for more information about healthy living and safety around our schools.



The Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON | www.aurora.ca | 905-727-1375

NEW AURORAN POLL

Now that the 2014 – 2018 Council term is underway,
are you optimistic about the next four years?
a) Yes b) No c) Unsure

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!

Previous Poll Results

Canada Post plans to move most Aurora homes still receiving door-to-door mail delivery to community mailboxes next fall.
Are you in favour of the switch?
a) Yes b) No c) Unsure

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
DECEMBER 2, 2014	54%	44%	2%



Aurora's Boston Piz-za was hopping on Wednesday night as members of Somerville Dance Academy's "Dancing for Life" team took over the dining room as Celebrity Servers to raise money for their team ahead of next year's Relay for Life, the annual fundraiser for the Canadian Cancer Society. Their team is consistently among the top earners for Aurora's relay. From Left: Kyle, Kaylee, Julianne, Lily, Stephanie, Greg, and Carly.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Ottawa Report



LOIS BROWN
MP Newmarket-Aurora

Mental Health First Aid

The Government of Canada is investing \$970K over six years, and \$150K ongoing annually to develop and implement a Canadian Veteran-specific version of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for Veterans and their families.

The investment will include a train-the-trainer program that will be offered to approximately 48 trainers across the country. VAC (Veterans Affairs Canada) will also deliver the Canadian Veteran-specific MHFA training to up to 3,000 Veterans, their families and caregivers in the next five years. Participants will learn about mental health conditions; the signs and symptoms of common mental health disorders; practice crisis first aid for mental health conditions; where and how to get help; and what type of help has been shown to be effective and why.

The content of the training focuses on mental health problems such as mood disorders, anxiety disorders and psychosis, as well as substance-related disorders and mental health crisis situations such as suicidal behavior, overdoses, panic attacks, reactions to traumatic events and psychotic episodes.

Mental Health Research

The Government of Canada is committed to supporting research to find better treatments, promote faster recoveries, and achieve better outcomes for Veterans and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members with mental health conditions. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), in partnership with the Department of National Defence (DND), will invest \$6.98 million over six years to conduct research into operational stress injuries (OSIs) and potential treatments and supports and on the development of national standards for psychiatric service dogs.

In follow up to VAC's current pilot project on the use of service dogs to assist Veterans living with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the Department will fund the development of standards to ensure the best possible outcomes for Veterans. VAC will also fund research into the effects of Veterans' operational stress injuries on the mental health of their spouses and children. The two-year project will include a pilot study to test the effectiveness of potential interventions.

Protecting Seniors from Elder Abuse

The Government of Canada has made combatting elder abuse a priority and supports a range of measures to help protect seniors from all forms of abuse, including neglect. To raise awareness about elder abuse, the Government recognizes World Elder Abuse Awareness Day each year on June 15, creates activities and information resources and provides funding for elder abuse awareness projects through the New Horizons for Seniors Program. The government

has also introduced the Protecting Canada's Seniors Act to help ensure consistently tough penalties for those who take advantage of seniors in Canada. To find out more about elder abuse prevention and recognition, as well as other resources for seniors, visit seniors.gc.ca.

Third Quarter Growth Ahead of Expectations

Statistics Canada announced that the Canadian economy grew at an annualized rate of 2.8 per cent in the third quarter of 2014 - higher than market expectations of 2.1 per cent. This economic growth is another positive sign that our Conservative government is on the right track. Since coming to office, Canada has had the best job creation record in the G7. Over 1.2 million net new jobs have been created with the vast majority being full-time, private sector jobs in high-wage industries.

Economic Action Plan 2014 continues with positive growth measures like making landmark investments in research and innovation, creating the Canada Apprentice Loan, supporting more paid internships for recent graduates, cutting red tape for small business, delivering additional tax relief for families, and more.

Reducing Business Red Tape

Treasury Board President Tony Clement has released the Administrative Burden Baseline (ABB) initiative's count of regulatory requirements. As of June 30, 2014, the Government of Canada had a total of 129,860 federal requirements in regulations and related forms that imposed administrative burden on businesses in Canada.

The Red Tape Reduction Action Plan, among the most ambitious red tape-cutting initiatives in the world, increases Canadian competitiveness and frees business to innovate, grow, and create jobs. It underscores Canada's reputation as one of the best places in the world to do business and invest. The Red Tape Reduction Action Plan's One-for-One Rule, which is currently being considered by Parliament as Bill C-21, requires regulators to offset any increases in administrative burden that result from regulatory changes with equal reductions from existing regulations. With the ABB count complete, federal regulators now have an inventory of administrative burden they impose on business, through regulations and related forms.

As a member of the Red Tape Reduction Commission I am pleased to see this important action to help entrepreneurs focus their resources on what they do best – creating jobs and growing the economy.

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



MARKET MUSINGS
Jan Freedman

Here we go!

On Saturday, December 6, the Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair will be having an Indoor Market at the Armoury Building for the first time.

This will be a trial run for both the Market and the Town to see how well the Farmers' Market will work in this historic location, which the Town recently purchased from the Government.

Keep in mind they will be using the building "as is" on this occasion as it needs considerable updating and some T.L.C. We hear that the Town will be doing significant renovations to the building in 2016. At that time it is expected that they will upgrade the electrics and install a proper kitchen.

In the meantime, we will make the very rustic environment work for us and we are very excited to be able to host this holiday Market there this Saturday. Do plan on dropping by to see your favourite vendors in this wonderful venue.

In my last column I mistakenly listed a new vendor, Plaid Raspberries, among the food vendors, having not been told what they make. Well, my bad! They make gorgeous wool mittens and were so gracious about my error that their story follows.

Alex Kirkham was born and raised in Chatham, Ontario. She and her husband and their two sons moved to Aurora about two years ago. She is a stay at home mom, looking after her two sons ages 2 and 5. Apparently there isn't much reason for the name of the business, but Alex told me that she chose the name so she wouldn't be limited as to what she could make—sounds good to me.

She started sewing as a child, both by hand and by machine. She still sews everything on her Grandma's old Kenmore sewing machine, bought in the 60's. It's not fancy, but is reliable and sturdy and she likes the sense of nostalgia that using that machine gives her.

She is an inherently crafty person and her craft supplies threaten to take over the house. Her mom was also crafty and her Dad was the photographer in the family and Alex figures that she takes after both of them.

The walls of their house are covered in crafts made by the children, art made by family and friends and photos of family. While she has made and sold everything from aprons and stuffed animals to beaded and crocheted jewelry, she enjoys making mittens most of all.

Alex describes her mittens as upcycled sweater mittens. The term "upcycled" refers to taking something that might go to waste and making something better and useful out of it. In her case, she takes tired, outdated or even ugly sweaters, shrinking them down and making them into mittens. They are very warm and are lined in arctic fleece. It is important to Alex that they are both durable and beautiful.

Because they are made from upcycled material, the mittens are made in small batches and it is rare to find two pair that are exactly the same. She loves the idea of having mittens that no one else has and she enjoys watching to see which ones people choose: whether they want to match their coat or go for the colour and pattern that they are drawn to, regardless. They come in three sizes and are for both men and women.

When she does shows, it is usually a family affair with her husband helping to set up and tear down and the children under the table colouring and occasionally peeking out from under the tablecloth.

Alex has done a few local shows but is delighted to be a part of our Indoor Market this season. She is a big supporter of buying local and buying handmade and feels that the Market is a perfect fit. Look for her and her beautiful handmade mittens at the Armouries on Dec. 6th.

Here are the vendors you will find at the Armouries Market from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.:

Continued on page 17

A Seasonal Spot of Bother



INSIDE AURORA
Scott Johnston

We're all aware of the challenges of parking in Aurora.

There's the chaos surrounding the exodus from the GO Train station every evening. Who would have thought that a newly-built five-level parking garage would be at complete capacity every day before the province has even begun ramping up all day train service through Town?

As for Library Square, we've all been stuck endlessly circling the area trying to find an elusive spot on a typical Saturday, just to spend a few minutes to pick up a book at the library, or drop into the Cultural Centre.

But these frustrations pale in comparison to what's ahead for us in Town, because it's the beginning of the Christmas season.

Yes, soon every parking lot, mall and side street will be inexplicably filled to capacity for what seems like 24/7.

It won't just be limited to the traditional places, like shopping centres, but literally everywhere, as people go out to parties, attend school plays, and take in Christmas concerts.

This is bad enough, but the problem is compounded by that thing that, ironically, people long to see this time of year; snow.

Of course, they long to see it through a window, gently falling, with beverage in hand, as they bask in the glow of a warming fire.

It's much different when you're out in the dark - and it's dark now many more hours than not - surrounded by tractionless vehicles whose drivers were planning to get their snow tires on by now, but something else kept coming up.

But the biggest challenge with snow is that while the flakes themselves are very small, once on the ground they collectively take up a lot of space.

When you're spending additional time trying to find a spot it's frustrating to know that at least 10% of the available parking is lying under an ever-growing ski hill's worth of the white stuff in a prime location in the lot.

There are some strategies that one can employ to mitigate the challenges of parking during this time of year.

One can take public transit, but local buses don't always go where you need to, or when.

Cycling and walking, while pleasant during the warmer months, tends to be less pleasurable on cold, blustery days (or nights), with a biting wind chill, especially if any packages you're carrying are large enough to act as small unwanted parasails.

As for taking the car, and braving the lots, you could choose to show up earlier or later than usual, but the quiet times where you want to go tend to be in the middle of the night, which over time can have a negative impact on one's circadian rhythm.

Some people follow folks as they leave the shops, overtly trailing them to their cars like really bad spies, and hovering while they load their packages.

This approach is good in theory, but there are a couple of problems. First, people leaving the mall could be just dropping off some stuff in their car, before heading back inside for Round Two of shopping.

Or, while silently stalking your potential spot, you may be unaware that other motorists are doing the same thing. When the space is finally vacated, four drivers will try to nudge in their vehicles simultaneously, making "couldn't you see I was here first", gestures, which may escalate into gestures which can't be described in a family paper such as this.

Fortunately, although holiday parking can be frustrating, there is a plus side. Not that it is associated with peace on Earth, and other warm seasonal sentiments, although those are nice.

No, the best thing is that it will all be over in a few weeks.

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

Humfryes keeps one eye on the past and one eye on the future ahead of second term

By Brock Weir

There is much to be done in the next term of Council, according to recently re-elected Councillor Sandra Humfryes – and although much has to do with Aurora’s future, working hand-in-hand with that future is Aurora’s past.

Ms. Humfryes was re-elected in this fall’s Municipal Election, coming in second in the Council stakes, just behind John Abel.

She describes Election Night as being slightly nerve-racking, and one she initially wanted to spend quietly and privately.

“That night it really sunk in how it would feel not to be able to serve again,” she says. “It was a pretty sad feeling and it would have been heartbreaking for me. I would have been able to find other ways to participate in the community, but it would have been a heartbreak knowing where we really could go in the next four years in terms of planning and moving forward with some of the initiatives we started.”

As she watched the results roll in on television at the home of her in-laws, and flipping back and forth to Dancing with the Stars when things got particularly edgy, she said she realised she needed to be where the action was at Town Hall to watch the results come in live. She wasn’t sure where she stood in the standings, but when she arrived she found she was not only re-elected but re-elected in a much higher position than she was four years before.

“I am really excited for the future,” she said.

Although she was the last of the incumbent Councillors to put their name forward for re-election, the campaign felt like a longer process, she said, as there was “surprising negativity” on the campaign trail from some new candidates “bringing out concerns and accusations” against others she says she feels was unnecessary.

“I think running a positive campaign is the way to do it; positive about what you, as an individual, can contribute

to this Town versus trying to really accuse or suspect other things from other candidates,” she said. “The focus should be on what the individual can bring to our town, why you really want to make a difference to Aurora.”

Where Councillor Humfryes was always clear she wanted to make a difference was in fostering opportunities for both Aurora’s youth and Aurora’s heritage, commitments she reaffirms ahead of this week’s Council inauguration.

“One thing I am most looking forward to is bringing the Youth Centre to fruition and bringing that to a really good conclusion,” she says of recent renovations at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, leading to the creation of Aurora’s new Community Space for Youth. “In this second term, I am also really focused on what works with the Aurora Promenade Study, the revitalization of Downtown, and the key to that is Library Square.

“It is time to buckle down and get those incredible ideas from the last four years, bring them together, and create an environment where it is a place of gathering, a place for celebration, a learning centre, tying in with the Cultural Centre and the Library. We have a lot of opportunity here, there are some great ideas, and I can’t wait to buckle down and get some of those moving.”

Working in conjunction with this is the establishment of a new museum for Aurora, an initiative for which

Councillor Humfryes was a vocal proponent four years ago as a first-time candidate, remaining so throughout the remainder of the outgoing term.

While the completed Aurora Family Leisure Complex is not quite camera-ready yet, the re-establishment of the museum, as a concept, was borne to fruition by the end of this term, but there is still a lot of work to do to make it a tangible reality.

“One thing that slipped right in right at the very end of our last official meeting [before the election] was hiring a curator for our museum,” she says. “This is exciting and this is what I will be focusing on very strongly for our community. I would like to see an up-and-coming museum that we can be proud of really happen. I want to see the hiring of the curator, move this museum into the place where we always envisioned it to go and be, and that will tie in with our Library Square initiative as well.

“It took 12 months for us to realise [a curator] was the right thing to do. Initially, it was presented to us on what staff was required to support the museum, it was turned down, there was a Cultural Master Plan that had to be done, and even with that happening, it came back to the original staff proposal to hire a curator. I am really excited to see a museum come to full fruition and get going on that. We will have a museum we can be proud of where residents can honour our history and our heritage.”

Returning Councillors are eager to get started on new term

From page 1

also want to wish the incoming Council all the best of luck. If there is anything I can do to help out, I will be there.”

Mr. Constable, who was appointed to the Council table at the end of July to fill the vacancy left by Chris Ballard, who was elected Newmarket-Aurora’s Member of Provincial Parliament that spring, thanked Mayor Dawe “and the majority of Councillors” for the opportunity over the last few months.

“It certainly has been rewarding to certainly represent our community and taxpayers,” he said. “The same thing with our staff. I can’t say enough about the majority of staff too who have been excellent to work with, and you do a great job. To the newly elected Councillors, I wish you three all the best success over the next four years. To the public, to my family, and to the many volunteers, I just wanted to say thank you. It is certainly nice to be in a community that is well supported by the taxpayers, businesses and volunteers.”

There was a lot of love to go around the room as Councillors who fared better in October’s poll spoke of the bittersweet nature of the term’s final meeting.

Councillor Sandra Humfryes said the last four years have been “an incredible experience working together.”

“I am going to miss some of the individuals who won’t be back, but will be back in other ways and functions to support Town initiatives,” she said. “It has just been a real honour.”

Councillor Wendy Gaertner used her opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Gallo’s service.

“I would like to thank [him] for his dedication to involving citizens in the process of government, for championing transparent government, and for asking a lot of pertinent questions with respect to how we spend the public’s money,” said Councillor Gaertner.

Added Councillor Michael Thompson: “I too would like to express my gratitude to everyone for this last term and working together to help make the community better. I look forward to continuing on in the next term.”

In his remarks, Councillor John Abel said it was an “honour and a pleasure” to serve and engage the community, two facets of the job he said were particular highlights.

“I would like to extend to the Councillors that are leaving my thanks and wishing them all the best in the future,” he said. “Thank you for serving the community.”

One voice missing around the table was Evelyn Buck. (Mrs. Buck expresses her thoughts on the outgoing Council in a Letter to the Editor on Page 4 of this week’s edition of The Auroran)

“I didn’t always agree with her, but she has certainly been a wealth of information, a great deal of knowledge, and I do believe she will be missed on Council over the next four years,” said Councillor Pirri. “I am extremely appreciative of the work she has done over the last four years, as well as the work in the past, and not just of Councillor Buck, but everyone else around the table and the Councillors who will be leaving us.

“It is with a heavy heart that I want to say thank you to everybody and I am very much looking forward to the next four years.”

In closing, Mayor Dawe said serving on Council is one of the most “fascinating professions” one can take on, and one that brings with it a series of highs and occasional lows.

“I certainly want to thank the departing Councillors for their work and I certainly look forward to working with the [remaining and] new Councillors and I also want to echo the statements about working with staff,” he said. “I found our staff incredibly professional and I believe that they do a great job and are highly underrated. I want to thank staff for the work they do as well and we will see if we can’t push you a bit harder next term!”



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PEANUT BUTTER, CHOCOLATE & BANANA PANCAKES 13
3 Chocolate Chip Pancakes, Peanut Butter and Banana Filling

AM BURGER 18
8oz Angus Ground Chuck, Apple Wood Smoked Cheddar, Bacon, Fried Egg, Home Fries

BREAKFAST FAVORITES

SPINACH & MUSHROOM OMELETTE 8½
3 Egg Omelette, Baby Spinach, Crimini Mushrooms, Swiss Cheese, Home Fries & Toast

GRIDDLE SANDWICH 10
2 Pancakes, Sausage Rounds, Three Eggs, Home Fries

BREAKFAST BURRITO 11
Chorizo Sausage, Peppers, Red Onions, Monterey Jack Cheese, Scrambled Eggs, Home Fries

LOBSTER EGGS BENEDICT 13
Poached Eggs, English Muffin, Lobster Claw & Knuckle Meat, Béarnaise Sauce, Home Fries

Sides

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SAUSAGES (3 Pcs) 5
SAUSAGE ROUNDS (3PCS) 5
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Cost is a “red herring” in solving youth homelessness initiative, says expert

From page 1

York Region. 57 per cent of those interviewed were men, 36 per cent women, and the balance identifying themselves as transgender.” The average age was 19 and, when looking at their sample, Aboriginal youth were over-represented at 14.8 per cent of the sample, although they represent just 4.3 per cent of the average population. Only 8.2 per cent of the sample identified themselves as LGBTQ, whereas this number is more likely to be in the range of 40 per cent overall.

“They experienced a combination of individual family problems as well as structural problems,” said researcher Amanda Noble. “Many were part of the child protection system or were discharged directly from the criminal justice system, but what was really important is we often think about homelessness as a linear event. For most of the young people we interviewed, they experienced problems within the family before their first episode of homelessness and they continued to experience barriers after they were homeless. It is important we understand youth homelessness as a process as opposed to an event, and that there are multiple opportunities within this to intervene and provide services.”

On average, the typical age homeless youth left their homes for the first time was between the ages of 15 and 16. This is particularly significant, Ms. Noble said, as these are the individuals most likely to get into criminal activity to make ends meet, become part of the sex trade, experience addictions and experience homelessness for longer periods of time. Existing services in the community are typically geared towards youth over the age of 16, leaving a particular gap to be addressed.

“Before we intervene, they have been exposed to more hardships, more trauma, they haven’t had these services and then we attempt to save them once they hit 16,” she added. “It shows most of the young people between 12 and 16 were in school at some point and that is a good place



Daniele Zanotti, CEO of the United Way of York Region, says some existing services provide mere “Band-Aid solutions” to a growing problem.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

to intervene and find these young people while they are still in the school system.”

This point struck a particular chord amongst the audience in attendance last week, many of whom represented different facets of the school systems serving York Region.

No response to youth homelessness ever emerges without local leadership, and this leadership needs to be leveraged to create awareness and provide opportunities for early intervention, said Mr. Gaetz. Coming up with a plan is a key first step, but to be successful it should be reflective of local plans and targeted in their responses. Causes are different in each municipality, as are the

solutions.

Many communities, he added, have “fragmented” existing services that make flowing through the system difficult for youth experiencing difficulties. Collaboration is key in addressing this, as is working together to ensure these services are accessible to those who need them.

“The percentage of young people between 20 and 29 who live at home with their parents is over 42 per cent,” said Mr. Gaetz. “Why do we have systems in place that assume that a young person at 18 can go and be independent? That means child protection and how we deal with youth homelessness. We need to stop having short-term fixes that make no sense because that is not what we offer people who are housed.”

Playing a part in this trend is a lack of affordable housing in York Region, particularly purpose-built rentals. The report includes statistics from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities which shows the percentage of new housing stock in York Region built specifically for rental has plummeted from 20.3 per cent in 1991 to zero in 2001, rebounding negligibly to 0.5 per cent in 2010.

“The City of Toronto, with a population of 2.7 million has 3,800 emergency shelter beds,” Mr. Gaetz continued. “York Region, with a population of 1 million has 115 shelter beds. I am not asking for a mass investment in emergency supports because I think you should focus more on prevention, but what this means is you don’t have emergency capacity to deal with homelessness. If you don’t have that, they are either going to sleep under bridges, in the streets, in the woods, or they are going to leave the community.”

If young people living at home have a chance to grow to adulthood in a gradual way, tackling youth homelessness needs to take the same approach in not rushing people through the system, such as imposing time limits on how long one can stay in a shelter. Resources need to be in schools to enable teachers to identify potential problems early. More investment needs to be made

to support struggling families before youth are forced to leave home and, if this is not possible, structures need to be provided ensuring they have the support to move forward.

“All of us care about young people, but this is a justice issue,” he concluded. “No young person in our society, not one, should be exposed to homelessness for more than a week. We should not allow them to become mired in homelessness, lose their education, become disengaged from their family and become, in a sense, destined for a life in poverty.

“The issue of cost, to me, is a red herring. We have to fix this because it is wrong. Every young person matters.”

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Last Thursday, Aurora realtor Caroline Baile, right, Broker at Royal LePage, held a Customer Appreciation night at Niche Décor, where she hosted her clients and friends with wine, appetizers, and the holiday spirit. Left, Jean Bisnaire, owner of Niche Décor, speaks to the crowd, providing tips on how to transform your home for the holidays.



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Dr. Eastman says that “The secret to the Pro-Adjuster lies in its advanced piezoelectric sensor that is able to detect the slightest amount of restriction in a joint and then deliver an extremely precise adjustment.” He says that “Even though traditional forms of adjusting also work, people are drawn to this new technique because of how gentle it is and does not involve any twisting, especially



Dr. Eastman uses the Proadjuster to analyze a patient’s spine and pin-point areas of nerve impingement syndrome causing mal-function and pain.

in the neck. Many people love getting adjusted with traditional manual techniques, all of which are safe and effective. But there are a large number of people who never get to experience the amazing benefits of chiropractic because they are scared to have their spines adjusted in that way,” says Dr. Eastman. Now, there is no longer a reason to be leary. The ProAdjuster is perfect for anyone who has been thinking about going to a chiropractor, but hasn’t yet made that decision. Dr. Eastman wants everyone to be able to experience these same benefits and if you have any of the following conditions, the ProAdjuster may be the answer you’ve been looking for...

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Aurora investigates how much they own of Highland Gate as residents mobilize

By Brock Weir

As names continue to be put forward to lead a new ratepayers group to advocate on behalf of Aurora residents living around Highland Gate Golf

Course, the Town of Aurora is looking into how much of the golf course’s perimeter actually lies in municipal hands. A report on the issue is expected to be posted on the Town’s website as early as this week, following a motion put forward at last week’s Council meeting by Councillor John Abel, and subsequently approved by Council that evening, calling for answers. “We had a great meeting with the community from Highland Gate [on November 24] and one of the questions that came up was about a one

foot perimeter that goes around [the course],” said Councillor Abel on one foot buffers around the golf course that could actually be owned by the Town. “If that information could be brought forward and posted as soon as possible, it would help in this situation. It seems like a simple ask. If we could get that clarification as soon as possible, it would be a great assist.” According to Town Solicitor Warren Mar, investigations into Aurora’s situation were already underway ahead of the Council motion. “We started Friday looking at the one foot reserves,” Mr. Mar told Council. “We know there are some in place at the stub ends of roads that dead end onto the existing golf courses, but we’re looking into the underlying plans to determine the extent of the one foot reserve. If Council wants it, we are happy to put together a report, but we’re actively investigating it right now.” Potential land reserves surrounding the golf course have been a bone of contention since ClubLink, Highland Gate’s owners, announced the closure of the venerable club last month, announcing this past season will be its last, as they look to alternative uses to the property. Although land sales have not taken place yet, over the ensuing weeks area neighbours have speculated on the extent of these reserves – ranging anywhere from one foot to ten feet – believing these, whatever the extent, to be somewhat of a trump card to future land negotiations. It was a question raised by one newer resident at last week’s meeting of residents looking to form a ratepayers group. According to Bob Callow, who was part of the area’s original ratepayers’ group 25 years ago when Highland Gate was first slated for redevelopment, reserves held by the Town had significant sway.

“I can tell you the last time we went against ClubLink and we negotiated, the reason why they were so willing to negotiate is the Town did own, and still owns – unless they have sold it, but nobody has told me they have sold it – a one foot allowance around the perimeter of the open areas,” Mr. Callow told the crowd of over 300 people filling Town Hall. “Even if the [Ontario Municipal Board] had approved a plan, they couldn’t cross the one foot. We were able to negotiate with ClubLink. “In the context of having the negotiation, they built in some areas and in some cases they didn’t, but there was a complete plan to be brought to Council. At the end of the day, ClubLink did not proceed with it, but we did negotiate and we were able to get a good deal that we thought was good for the community and it ended up that way for 25 years. “The one foot allowance is still there. The real question comes down to whether or not the Legislation brought in by the [Province] transcends or takes away the rights of the municipality over property that they own. There is a legal question there and I don’t know the answer to that.” As the Town of Aurora’s report is prepared, area neighbours hoping to form the executive of the new ratepayers’ group are preparing as well. Dave Newton, who was elected at last week’s meeting to serve the fledgling group in an administrative capacity for the time being, says names and short biographies of those interested in serving in the roles of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be accepted through this Friday, December 5, at 12 noon. Once all submissions have been received, they will be distributed to those who have signed up for the ratepayers group. Then, they will set a date to hold a “paper ballot election” for the candidates of their choice.

“We started Friday looking at the one foot reserves. We know there are some in place at the stub ends of roads that dead end onto the existing golf courses, but we’re looking into the underlying plans to determine the extent of the one foot reserve.”





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Plant to process recycled plastic proposed for Industrial Parkway North

By Brock Weir

Have you ever wondered where your empty plastic containers go after you put them in your curbside blue box? Soon, if one company gets its way, the answer might be pretty close at hand. Council signed off on the technical aspects of a proposal from Pnewko Brothers Ltd. To operate a waste disposal site for 226 Industrial Parkway North last week. According to the report before Council from Marco Ramunno, Aurora’s Director of Planning, the company has submitted plans with the province to operate the site to process and grind empty plastic containers on site before they are shipped elsewhere. “The application, if approved, will permit the transfer and processing of...non-hazardous municipal waste, industrial, commercial and institutional recycling...plastics,” said Mr. Ramunno. “The proposal submitted to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) is for a new Environmental Compliance Approval (Waste Disposal Site) for the use and operation of a waste disposal

site with a total area of 0.2 hectares, to be used for the transfer and processing of up to 30 tonnes per day of non-hazardous, solid municipal waste, industrial, commercial and institutional recycling plastics. “The total amount of waste and processing materials stored at the site will not exceed 150 tonnes at any one time. The processes to be used entail screening and grinding of plastics.” The report goes on to note that the plant will be in operation between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., Monday through Saturday, will provide services to the Province, and the planned operations of the facility fall within existing municipal bylaws. Council’s role in this application was little more than to provide comment to the Minister of the Environment on the plan’s compliance with municipal bylaws on noise and hours of operation. “Council is not the approval authority, but we have been asked to comment on it,” said Mr. Ramunno, responding to questions from Councillor Wendy Gaertner on process. “We thought it was prudent to bring this forward to let Council know we had the application and we are making a comment that the waste disposal site be limited solely to the processing and grinding of plastic containers.” While Council’s authority in the matter was limited, Aurora CAO Neil Garbe advised that the regulated period for Council to make comment on the plan ends December 6, and that is why it hit Council when it did. Nevertheless, Councillor Gaertner was the one vote against the recommendation, arguing that now was not the time to give the plan the green light. “I think it would be more appropriate for the next Council to approve this because if there are any issues with this, it is going to be the next Council to deal with this, including noise and other issues,” she said. “The other reason I would like this to be delayed is I see there is public information that is going to be coming in, but it won’t be coming in now. Why wouldn’t we wait to have the public’s comments before we make a decision?” “As a member of Council, I would like to know what those comments are before I go forward with this, so I will have to vote against it.”

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Aurorans can keep yearly tabs on energy reduction at Town Hall

By Brock Weir

Energy use can often play a significant part in the cost of running Aurora, but residents will soon be able to keep tabs on the municipality’s efforts to reduce energy consumption and, in turn, the cost of running local facilities.

Councillors voted unanimously to formally approve the Town’s Corporate Energy Management Plan last week, in one of the last decisions of the 2010 – 2014 Council Term.

The Corporate Energy Management Plan (CEMP) serves as a five year roadmap to increase energy efficiency, decrease energy consumption, and minimize the environmental impact of running municipal facilities. According to the plan itself, its overarching goal is to “establish a culture of energy conservation, while contributing to a global reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.”

Over the next five years, the plan aims to review energy efficiency measures in existing buildings while strategizing for new buildings, equipment, and vehicles, the procurement of green energy and renewable technology, tracking the impacts of such measures, and ensuring these green policies are part of the day-to-day function of the municipality.

According to the report, the CEMP complements other initiatives recently undertaken by the Town including the designation of idle-free zones at municipal facilities such as local ice rinks, two stations for charging electric vehicles, the installation of LED lights where appropriate, and approving the construction of Aurora’s new Joint Operations Centre to LEED Gold Standard.

“North American municipalities are increasingly focusing on energy as a strategic priority to reduce operating costs and to demonstrate their commitment to long-term sustainability,” said Marco Ramunno, Aurora’s Director of Planning, in his report to Council last week. “Under [Provincial Regulations] all public agencies, including the Town of Aurora, are required to report their energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions on an annual basis starting in 2013, and are required to submit five- year energy conservation plans...in 2014.

“[The Plan] reflects Council’s commitment to supporting, through its plans, policies, and initiatives, a vision for a more sustainable Aurora. There are significant opportunities for the Town of Aurora to improve the energy efficiency of its buildings to reduce utility costs and to minimize its environmental footprint. The Plan provides the Town with energy saving opportunities within its facilities, including both capital improvement projects and operational maintenance changes that will help to conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

As one of the first tasks of the new Council will be to begin the 2015 Budget Process, Councillors said it was a “great plan”, but said it did not go far enough at first blush to track and monitor the success of each goal.

Although supportive of the initiative, Councillor Wendy Gaertner raised a number of questions on its implementation such as looking for partnerships with York Region’s

Northern Six (N6) municipalities to reduce costs and working with PowerStream to find additional opportunities to make buildings more efficient. She also said key to the success of the plan will be ensuring everyone is on board.

“It is not going to work unless we have the employees buying into this,” she said, questioning whether incentives could be put in place to ensure the program’s success.

She shared views put forward by Councillors Michael Thompson and Sandra Humfries that success needs to be tracked.

“My hope is that some of these [Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)] will be a little bit more specific,” said Councillor Michael Thompson. “It is admirable to say we are going to be working towards energy efficiency in the various facilities in Town, but it would be nice to have a metric or a better gauge in what savings that is generating. Personally, that is what I am looking for.”

Added Councillor Gaertner, putting forward an amendment that yearly

reports on these targets are made public: “It is important...that the Town create an energy page on the website with updates on the Corporate Energy Management Plan, progress on corporate initiatives and conservation information for residents. I think it would be a very good thing to have on our website. We have a very conservation-minded community.”



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Alien Babies

We live in an era in which anyone and everyone has the potential, the very real risk in fact, to experience the excruciating reality of public exposure of every foible, be it personal or professional, regardless of its magnitude.

From hogging two parking spots at the local mall, to cheating on your spouse, anything and everything you do can end up at some point on someone's blog or twitter feed should it strike their fancy – or more likely, appeal to their sense of spite.

Every Blackberry and iPhone has a camera and video capability – with pretty good quality. As a result, someone is always watching and just as likely someone is always recording. There's no need for the massive Big Brother CCTV infrastructure that exists in the UK. Joe Public is more than capable of handling the job.

It seems like everyone has a blog these days or - God help us – a twitter feed. Facebook page updates from all and sundry bombard us with fantastically inane musings about, well, nothing. Foursquare updates on where people are every minute of the day are particularly irksome. Why someone feels they must account for their whereabouts in 15 minute increments all day, every day is simply beyond me. For the record, I do not care what restaurant you are at, what you had for dinner or what intersection you are passing. But the thief who is breaking into your house right now sure appreciates the information.

On balance, social media is a wonderful thing. It makes information use and dissemination accessible to anyone with a computer and internet access. Some argue its relevance and importance in terms of democracy is akin to the creation of the printing press and the Gutenberg bible. I'm not sure I would go that far, but it is an incredibly important leap in terms of increasing the accessibility of democracy. Injustices can be exposed by anyone. Sanitized versions of wars, uprisings, atrocities are no longer possible in the face of real-

time reporting by real people on scene.

You can still lie, but you won't get away with it. Eventually, someone, somewhere will produce a video, a photo, a recording that will expose the "truth" for all to see.

And therein lies the problem

The downside is that there is a complete and utter lack of consideration for what constitutes the "truth." "News" can be posted without any verification, without any semblance of objectivity at all. It can be manipulated or even manufactured. Speed of reporting and "gotcha" moments caught on tape rule the bandwidths.

There is no context. Many a public person has been snared in that trap – of statements made, and duly reported, but in a highly edited way. A snippet of a conversation can seem extraordinarily damning when heard without the benefit of the sentence before and after.

Photo-shopped images and doctored recordings make people question the "truth" of anything.

No one has the time to sift through the massive amount of detritus that litter the web in search of the important information. As a result, many things pass as fact when they are in most cases entirely fiction.

This is our reality.

The next time the web explodes with a story about a celebrity, a politician or even an ordinary citizen alleged to have done something extraordinarily bad, I think we should view that "news" story with a healthy dose of skepticism.

Treat it like it's a story by the National Enquirer. Yes, there is a slim chance that they have indeed got a scoop, but it's much more likely that there is no alien baby.

Until next week, stay informed, stay involved because this is – after all – our Town.

**Alison can be reached at:
acollinsmrakas@gmail.com.
Comments and questions
are always welcome!**



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Briefly

CHRISTMAS ARRIVES AT HILLARY HOUSE

Christmas is coming early to the Hillary House National Historic Site this Saturday, December 6. The Aurora Historical Society (AHS) hosts "A Family Christmas", featuring live music, children's activities, light refreshments, a visit with Santa Claus, and one more chance to see their 2014 exhibits before they close for the season. There will also be opportunities to cross some items off your Christmas shopping list as the AHS will offer books for sale at their gift shop at 10 per cent off, along with other items. Authors might also be on hand as well!

Adding to the festive atmosphere will be special decorations adorning the historic building created by the Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society.

Through December 20, Hillary House offers special holiday hours to allow visitors to take in the traditional Victorian decorations. They will be open December 10 – December 13 from 12 noon to 4 p.m., and from December 17 – December 20 at the same time. Regular admission charges apply. For more information, call 905-727-8991.

MAN ARRESTED

A 32-year-old Aurora man was arrested last week by York Regional Police in connection with a South Simcoe warrant. Last Wednesday, South Simcoe Police detectives received a tip on the whereabouts of a man wanted on a warrant for fraud and uttering forged documents, as well as drug possession. York Regional Police located the Aurora resident in Town, who was subsequently turned over to South Simcoe Police. He was taken to jail on the strength of a committal warrant, according to the Department.

PETER PAN

If you're inspired by this Thursday's live NBC production of the musical Peter Pan, you can get your feet wet closer to home this spring. Aurora's Wavestage Theatrical Company is currently hosting auditions for their full-scale production of the classic, which will run at Newmarket Theatre from April 23 – 26. To book an audition, visit www.wavestagetheatre.com.

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Helping pack up the seniors’ gift boxes were Kelley McKenzie (CHATS), volunteers Carol Hedenberg, Sheena Loosmore, Mary Smith, Barb Hibbitt, Kathryn Potgieter, Carol Demarcado, and Karen Hall, and CHATS’ Devin Stephenson. Aurora photo by Angela Gismondi

Aurora Seniors take on the spirit of giving by making Christmas boxes for others

By Angela Gismondi

Members of the Aurora Seniors Centre are in the giving spirit. Every year, the Seniors’ Centre chooses a charity to donate to at Christmas time. This year, members of Let’s Create, a program at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre, decided they wanted to “Fill-a-box for shut-in seniors.” Thanks to generous donations, the club was able to fill and donate 75 gift boxes to Community and Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS). They presented the gift boxes to CHATS on November 27 at the Seniors’ Centre. “We had an amazing response from our members...absolutely over the top amazing,” said Carol Hedenberg, vice president of the Aurora Seniors Association, adding over \$1,000 was collected to purchase things to fill the boxes. “This is probably the best response we’ve had for one of our charities because we can all relate to it. We are all seniors here.” CHATS will distribute the gift boxes among those seniors in most need.

“We chose CHATS because we wanted to connect with shut-ins and their caregivers,” said Ms. Hedenberg. “They will give them to seniors who need it the most and will appreciate them.” The gift boxes are filled with necessities and goodies including socks, a toothbrush and toothpaste, a flashlight and batteries, candies, cookies, a night light, puzzles, a pen and pad of paper, a mug with tea and coffee, a lotto scratch ticket and a bag full of granola bars and raisins. Each box also contained a treasure gift such as bracelets or a deck of cards. In addition to the 75 boxes, organizers were able to put together small gift bags of goodies for 22 residents of Cobblestone Rest Home. Any items that did not fit in the boxes or bags were sent to the food bank and Blue Door Shelter. Let’s Create decorated the boxes and gave up their Wednesday afternoons to sort and fill the boxes. “In the end we were able to help out a lot of people that might not have received anything for Christmas,” concluded Hedenberg.

Sendel earns trampoline silver medal in World Championships

By Jake Courtepatte

Samantha Sendel can add another medal performance to her growing list of athletic accomplishments. The Auroranative earned a silver medal in women’s synchronized trampoline last month at the 2014 World Championships in Daytona Beach, Florida, along with her training partner, and King City native, Rosie MacLennan. The two have a long history of achievements together, both training out of Skyrider’s Trampoline Place in Richmond Hill. Sendel’s latest accomplishment was almost unattainable due to injury. A concussion

several weeks prior to the event while training in Toronto left Sendel unsure if she was even going to attend. Going through the recovery process, she made the trip to compete under the condition that she was “symptom-free.” With the individual competition early in the event, Sendel was left with a tough decision. “If there was any slight symptoms, it

Continued on page 13

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Tigers win streak hits double digits with another trio of wins



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By Jake Courtepatte

Exactly halfway through the 2014-2015 OJHL season, the Junior A Aurora Tigers couldn't be in a better position.

Three more wins over the past week have given them a sixteen point cushion atop the North Division, as well as three points above the Trenton Golden Hawks in the overall league standings.

The Milton Icehawks visited the Aurora Community Centre on Wednesday in a game that saw the Tigers jump out to a 3 – 0 lead and never look back.

Goal tender Marcus Semiao continued his unbeaten season with the 5 – 2 win, improving to 7–0 by stopping 20 of the 22 shots he faced.

Two nights later the Tigers were back at it against the Whitby Fury of the East Division.



Michael Laidley fights for position in front of the Muskies' net on Saturday, The Tigers won the game 7 - 4.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

pads to cut the lead in half.

Now 3 – 1 in the second, Drake Board got the Tigers out of a tough spot with a nice shorthanded goal on a four-minute penalty kill.

The teams would trade another goal each before the end of the period to make it 5 – 2.

After a couple of Lindsay notches in the third and a goal from Michael Laidley, the Muskies decided to pull their goaltender with about two minutes to play.

Cameron Morrison notched the empty-netter for the Tigers third special teams goal of the game, an area they have been particularly successful in as of late.

“If you get the special teams going, you're going to win hockey games,” said Board. “It's the little

things that make the difference.”

The wins extend the Tigers' winning streak to ten games, having won 21 of their last 22 games. Their last regulation loss came at the end of September.

Despite the team's success, it may come as a surprise to some fans that the Tigers aren't crowding the top scorers leaderboard. Curran, who leads the team with 35 points, sits tied for twelfth in league scoring.

Board, following closely with 33, says it is representative of the teamwork on the Aurora squad.

“It's a team game. Everyone's in it together, we're all brothers here. We don't have anyone in the top-ten in scoring and we're one of the best teams in Canada...I think that really says something.”

All three of the Tigers recent pick-ups were on the score sheet on Saturday -

The trio of new faces have combined for 13 points in 15 total games so far, with Mack Lemmon leading the way with eight.

Along with adding to the score sheet, Board said his new teammates also add a presence physically – perhaps the only aspect the team was weak on.

“They're all big boys. They bring some toughness, but also skill and speed for sure.”

“Now we've got four solid lines going, and we can throw anyone out there and trust them.”

Two games are on the docket this week, as the home stretch continues against the Georgetown Raiders on Friday and the Buffalo Jr. Sabres on Saturday.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com.




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Medal winner is Germany-bound this month

From page 11

wasn't worth it to hinder myself even more,” said Sendel. “It was the best and safest option to withdraw from the individual.”

With synchro on the last day of competition, Sendel was given almost three days to rest and recover, which luckily did the trick.

“Fortunately enough, on Sunday I hit the trampoline and felt right back to 100%. Just two and a half days too late for individual.”

Due to Sendel's concussion, the pair went into the event cold, the only prior training for the week being warm-up right before competition.

The duo was still able to bounce to a silver medal, earning 47.200 points in competition.

“We've trained together for years, we're no newbies to competing in synchronized trampoline together,” said Sendel. “We just trusted our past training going in, and it obviously worked out well.”

Sendel praised her relationship with

MacLennan as an aid to her recovery and the success of the team.

“She definitely helped with any struggles I was going through. She's there to motivate me, keep me calm, and tell me ‘we're here, you're jumping, this is more than we expected a couple days ago so just enjoy it’.”

MacLennan also earned a silver medal in the individual routine, performing her three triples routine for the first time.

Sendel and MacLennan's synchro routine was a familiar one for them, something that they had already practiced many times.

“For us, we've been doing this routine for a while, we knew it, and I think in the end that's what helped us walk away with a medal.”

Sendel's busy schedule takes her to Germany later this month to perform some shows. However, her mind is always on training.

“Come January, it's straight hit-the-ground-running with training. I'm looking forward to the Pan-Am Games, and after that World Championships for Olympic qualifications.”



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Veteran director focuses on the characters in Theatre Aurora’s “Next to Normal”

By Brock Weir

Long-time theatre director Michael Jones has always had a fascination with musical theatre, but that fascination never delved too deeply in what he describes as “Rodgers and Hammerstein we’re-so-happy-all-the-time-that-we-break-into-song” shows.

There will be none of that when Theatre Aurora opens their latest production, Next to Normal, this week.

Next to Normal, a Tony-winning musical by Brian Yorkey and Tom Kitt, centres on Diana, a mother dealing with a recent diagnosis of bipolar disorder, and how her family reacts to her struggle.

While Mr. Jones is making his Theatre Aurora debut, he is a veteran of many productions and saw the opportunity to direct Next to Normal as a particular challenge.

Having seen the original production on Broadway, Mr. Jones says he was struck by the complexity of the piece and what could and could not be done with it.

“It is a really unusual musical,” he explains. “It is certainly not light in its subject matter, but I have always been interested in how contemporary musicals, in particular, can take that art form and turn it into something that tells a real story, a dramatic story with integrity, and that tells a story about the relationships between people.

“Both times I saw it, I came out with a feeling something was missing in that production. It was a well-written piece, and the performances were extraordinary in this special piece of theatre, but it didn’t quite speak to me in the way I wanted it to. I always thought it was a show I would have liked to do differently.”

His approach, he says, is to focus on characters.

Whereas big Broadway productions often focus on spectacle, relationships between characters can often get lost in a big production or a “great big cavernous set.” In that environment, the production became the story of a woman rather a story about a family.

“As spectacular as Alice Ripley was in that production, it became about her and I was just as interested in the husband, I was just as interested in the son and daughter, and I wanted to see more about how those people interacted with each other and the impact that what this one person is going through has on those relationships. If those people had the ability to do it in a smaller scale, you would see and understand those relationships more.”

A prime example of this, he says, is a recent production of Next to Normal at the Stratford Festival, which was more of a concert with little more than actors standing behind music stands and delivering the message. Although he did not have a chance to see it first hand, friends told him it was the best production they had seen of the show.

“When you took away all the trappings, that’s what was left: the relationships.”

“I always hope the audience is intrigued by, understands, and is interested in the story that we tell. I believe first and foremost that theatre is a storytelling medium, but I also hope an audience gets a sense of a collective experience. It is a sense of sharing something with the people on stage, the people who are watching something around them, that it is a shared experience.

“Typically on the night a show opens I speak to the cast about the fact that the whole process to that point has been to help share with each other and discover things together; and the point about performing a show is about sharing those same things with a wider



Rick Davidson, Evan Benyacar, Megan Powell, Nick Jeffrey, Jody Butler and Sergio Calderon bring to life “Next to Normal”, which opens this Thursday, December 4, at Theatre Aurora. Auroran photo by David Falconer

audience now. I hope the audience feels that they were engaged in that type of sharing.”

To share this experience, Theatre Aurora’s production of Next To Normal opens this Thursday, December 4, at 8 p.m. at Henderson Drive’s Factory Theatre. It runs on select dates through Saturday, December 13. For tickets, and further information call 905-727-3669 or visit www.theatreaurora.com.

Local inventor emerges victorious with four offers from CBC’s Dragons

By Brock Weir

Supporters packed Aurora’s Boston Pizza last Wednesday night to see a local competitor emerge victorious from Dragon’s Den.

Inventor Adam Pauze and business partner, retired baseball player Cliff Floyd, came out of the hit CBC series with offers from four out of five Dragons for the Drywall Axe, a three-in-one tool that combines a blade, tape measure, and writing utensil, which has been a good seller at Canadian Tire, its exclusive Canadian retailer.

Although they kept their decision to go with the offer from Arlene Dickinson under wraps until the show aired before an at-capacity bar, their excitement over what was to come was palpable as they waited for their segment to come on.



Adam Pauze and Cliff Floyd, 2nd and 3rd left, were joined by supporters Kevin, Daniel and David of Community Living Aurora Newmarket, where Mr. Pauze works. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

“I was pretty nervous today,” said Mr. Pauze after seeing a teaser for that evening’s episode online.

Added Mr. Floyd: “This is a great turnout and I think that is the biggest thing. People are really interested in us doing something different. We’re in a good spot right now. It has been three long years back and forth, but now we’re right to the point. We can’t say what the ending is, but we are anticipating a really good one!”

The foundation for Pauze and Floyd’s business partnership came out of Floyd’s marriage to Pauze’s daughter. When the father-in-law came up with the invention after cutting his arm working on a drywall project, his son-in-law immediately saw the value in it.

“I thought the concept was great and I thought I would take a chance,” said Mr. Floyd. “It is about backing somebody that you love, care about, and it is something really good.”

While they ultimately went with Arlene’s deal, Mr. Pauze and Mr. Cliff have since cracked the American market, signing a deal last month which will see the Drywall Axe hit shelves in Lowe’s U.S. arm, and at other outlets in the country.

“This company is going to take it worldwide,” said Mr. Pauze. “[Appearing on Dragon’s Den] was more like a marketing standpoint. We got exposure and a lot of people came out tonight.”



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Tech addiction spreads far beyond youth and video games: counsellor

By Brock Weir

If you like to stay connected via social media or like to unwind with a video game or two, there is no harm in that, unless, of course, there is.

If there are consequences in your everyday life due to a “need” for being constantly connected, however, there could be a problem.

Technology addiction is an issue which has become increasingly recognized and accepted in years, according to addiction counsellor Brian Irving, who is spearheading the new Technology Dependency Support Group, which is beginning this Thursday, December 6, and running for four Thursdays facilitated by Aurora’s Eating Disorders of York Region’s Riverwalk Wellness Centres.

Mr. Irving, who is laying the groundwork to starting a similar support group in the Innisfil area in the near future, says people tend to see technology addiction as a typical teen spending hours on end playing shoot ‘em up video games, or whiling away their lives on Facebook or Twitter. Recent studies, however, indicate this is far from the reality of the situation.

“Addiction to technology is the sort of stuff that is relatively new in being recognized,” says Mr. Irving. “When we look at addictions, we’re often looking at substance use, gambling, and that sort

of thing, but the idea now is to be able to provide service for this growing area of concern, not only for young people but adults too.

“There is a big misconception that it is always related to video games and younger people, but recent stats show that 40 – 60 per cent of people with technology addictive types of behaviours are above the age of 25.”

These studies go on to indicate that women tend to be particularly “socially connected” through their cell phones, Facebook, and email. Simple, free-to-play online games are also a big draw for women, whereas men trend towards massive multiplayer online games and competitive shooting games.

“In the last six months there have been more studies released on how females are connected to tech addiction because it is relatively new in its acceptance and recognition,” Mr. Irving adds. “It shows the level of acceptance for technology. These days in our society we have to be connected with email, and other programs and it is hard to pull that away. In addition we also have to look at how to manage that addiction and not just abstain [as opposed to addressing] substance abuse.”

In working with people with technology addiction, Mr. Irving says it is often an even split of people who recognize there is a problem with their own behaviour versus others

recognizing the problem in their friends and family members. Education, particularly for family members, is essential in learning what is normal and what is not. Just because you’re on Facebook regularly doesn’t mean you are necessarily addicted, he adds, but if there are negative consequences in the world around you because of it, you need to start looking at how it is playing into your life.

Earlier this year, provincial statistics indicated that 78 people were killed on Ontario highways due to distracted driving, while 57 deaths were connected with impaired driving. That, he says, is a particularly telling statistic showing how pervasive IT addiction can be.

“We get sucked into a false connection, these false relationships, these abstract ways of dealing with relationships and a lot of times it is dealing with getting people back in touch with real, interpersonal relationships,” says Mr. Irving of how to approach IT addiction versus simply turning off.

“It is also getting them back in touch with themselves, in touch with their emotions, what they are going through, and looking at things like anxiety. If people have an underlying anxiety or depression issue, the tendency is to isolate and pull away. Things like video games and social media are a great way to stay somewhat connected, but not really.

“I have had many young fellas

that spend 12 – 15 hours a day playing online video games and though some work and time we are able to cut that back. When they realise there is a life outside that game, that there are relationships outside that game, that there is a sense of accomplishment and wellbeing outside that virtual world, they make a lot of headway and changes in that behaviour.”

For more information on the Technology Dependency Support Group and Riverwalk, call 905-886-6632 or visit www.edoyr.com/support-programs.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12				13		14			15				
16					17				18				
20						21			22				
				23		24			25				
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				39	40	41		42	43				
		44	45					46					
								48					
49					50			51		52	53	54	55
56					57			58					
59					60				61				
62					63				64				

CLUES ACROSS

1. Cuts off a branch

5. 13th Hebrew letter

8. “Hair” producer Joseph

12. Giraffa camelopardalis

14. Indicates near

15. Capital of Samoa

16. Roving adventurously

18. Help

19. Deafening noises

20. Spanish neighborhood

21. Portable computer screen material

22. 20th Hebrew letter

23. “Blue Bloods” lead actor

26. Scholarly

30. Raleigh NC river

31. Alongside each other

32. Electronics Support Module

33. Dogma

34. New Deal statesman Harold
39. A corporation’s first stock offer

42. Slender tower with balconies

44. Young eel

46. Deviation from the normal

47. CBS police drama

49. Cliff

50. Resting place

51. Island in Venice

56. 1981-82 Sec. of State

57. Young man

58. Skylighted central area

59. Oily skin disorder

60. East northeast

61. 1945 Crimean conference city

62. Transfer property

63. Used to be United ____

64. Daze

CLUES DOWN

1. Murderers Leopold & ____

2. Southern veggie

3. Henry’s 6th wife

4. Practice fight

5. Dinners

6. Hermaphrodite

7. Centers

8. Fathers (Spanish)

9. For each one

10. SW Belarus city

11. Australian slang for a kiss

13. Ability to begin

17. Short whistle blasts

24. Were introduced

25. Glowing quality

26. Ingest

27. Relative biological effectiveness

28. Footed vase
29. River in NE Scotland

35. English Univ. river

36. Malaysian Isthmus

37. Soft-finned fish

38. Eyelid infection

40. Fred & Wilma’s baby

41. New ____, Louisiana city

42. Tse-tung or Zedong

43. Hindu weather god

44. ____ May, actress

45. Hauled laboriously

47. One suspender

48. More peculiar

49. N. Central African country

52. Macaw genus

53. Rhythmic swing or cadence

54. Ballerina skirt

55. Arabian sultanate

Last Week’s Puzzle Solution

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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

LATEST NEWS on The Meadows:

- ground broken, under CONSTRUCTION
- over 75% of Phase 1 units SOLD
- 15221 Yonge Street Sales Centre OPEN

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SITE

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Hwy #404

With Phase 1 almost 80% sold out, here’s your last opportunity to buy-in at prices that won’t be seen in Aurora again. We’re open on Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm or by appointment. Plan to visit us now.

Sales Centre: 15221 Yonge Street, Aurora

www.themeadowsofaurora.com

905 591-3491

The Meadows of Aurora

York Region Christian Senior Homes Inc. Site: 15600 Leslie Street, Aurora

A Non-profit CHRISTIAN Seniors’ Residence

Developers break ground on unique approach to senior living

By Brock Weir

The meadows in question may have been grey when local dignitaries joined developers to break ground on the “Meadows of Aurora” last week, but a new approach to senior living will soon come into full flower.

Mayor Geoff Dawe and Councillor John Abel helped break ground on the first phase of the Meadows of Aurora, a 25-acre project in Aurora’s new 2C Development, which is slated to provide 400 housing units in total when everything is said and done.

The Meadows of Aurora is being undertaken by York Region Christian Seniors Homes, founded on a non-profit model to provide “a caring Christian community for the aged” combining traditional housing with assisted living services as the complex continues to develop.

Operating slightly differently from a condominium concept, the Meadows of Aurora works under a “life lease” program, which Simon Frankruyter, President of York Region Christian Seniors Homes, says results in a 25 per cent reduction over normal condo pricing.

“A life lease is like renting for the rest of your life, except you get to pay for it up front and you get the money back when you are done,” he says. “This is a huge issue for seniors as they don’t always have a lot of money to throw around. The main thing they are looking for is community. We really stress community. We will have lots of amenities that focus on the community, not

only the community within the building, but also outside the building.”

Inside the building, the residence will feature exercise areas to allow people to keep in shape. This works, he says, in conjunction with their location which connects to Aurora’s trail systems just steps from their doors. Woodworking shops are also planned in the first phase to keep the mind active, along with a coffee shop and fellowship hall where residents can come together for a variety of purposes.

Outdoor gardens for growing vegetables in-house will also be featured.

“We’re trying to provide for the total needs of the person,” says Mr. Frankruyter. “We’re going to make sure they can age in place and over time we will have an assisted living facility as well so they can stay in the same building.”

Although the multi-phase project is built on Christian principles, and run by a non-profit board also governed on Christian principles, Mr. Frankruyter says it is a facility that is open to all.

“Our core principles are Christian principles, the main one being to love one another and a strong emphasis on community, which is all about helping one

another,” he says. “That is what we want to try and instill in how this whole building is run in the future as well. It is run by board members that believe in those principles.

“Meadows...gives seniors a chance to be together with other seniors to form a true community. I think this is where the Christian aspect comes into play. It is a community where everybody shares with each other, cares for each other’s needs, and supports each other – especially through the challenging years. I am a senior myself and I have a wife who is somewhat disabled, so you have to recognize there are a lot of chances for people to have issues in their lives and it happens more and more. Therefore, it is nice to have a community around you that can support you when you are dealing with these issues.”

Over 150,000 life lease condos currently exist in Ontario, he notes. York Region Christian Seniors Homes currently operates a development in Stouffville, while similar facilities exist in communities such as Brampton, Barrie and Whitby.

Tree marks lasting legacy

From page 3

“She was just an amazing, amazing gem of a person,” recalled Detective Constable Bill Charnock, who worked closely with Ms. Sullivan in securing Lappy. “If there was a president of the York Regional Police Canine Fan Club, Lydia Sullivan would have been that person. Lydia needed no recognition. She was perfectly happy to work behind the scenes to do what she could to raise funds to support the YRP Canine Unit and the Toronto Police service dogs.

“All of her dogs made her extremely proud and I know it would put a smile on her face to know the dogs have a place to rest under a tree dedicated to her memory.”



Participating in last week’s ground-breaking were Milena Belomorska, Architect OCA; Hank Kampen, Board Treasurer; Roland Jonker, Senior Partner, OCA; Aurora CAO Neil Garbe; Mayor Geoff Dawe, Simon Frankruyter, Board Chair; Mary Ann Cowie, representing MP Lois Brown; Ann-Marie Thompson, representing MPP Chris Ballard; Gino Bifulchi, Lisgar President; and Councillor John Abel.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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COMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 4 – 13

Theatre Aurora’s production of Next To Normal will run on select dates through December 13. It tells the story of mother Diane Goodman, who struggles with bipolar disorder and the musical charts the effect her illness has on her family. With provocative lyrics and a thrilling score, this musical shows how far two parents will go to keep themselves sane and their family’s world intact. For more information, visit www.theatreaurora.ca or call 905-727-3669.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

Holiday Open House: Join Polly and her Puppets for fun, hot chocolate, and festive sweets at the Aurora Public Library’s awesome Holiday Open House for children of all ages. We’ll sing Jingle Bells and other great songs, read some excellent seasonal books and meet some very friendly puppet friends. 10 a.m. – 11.30 a.m. in the Library.

LOCAL COLOUR AURORA: Local Colour Aurora will be at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre today from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Participating artists in the year-long initiative will be painting, sketching and photographing newly elected councillor Tom Mrakas. Come out and watch the art in action!

Write for Rights at the Amnesty International Writeathon today from 2 – 4 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church (79 Victoria Street). Write cards to human rights defenders around the world. All are welcome. Refreshments. For more information, call 905-713-6713.

DECEMBER 6 – 7

Hillary House hosts its annual Family Christmas from 1 – 4 p.m. New this year is a book sale! Enjoy live music, light refreshments, a visit with Santa, children’s activities, and one more chance to see the Aurora Historical Society’s 2014 exhibits. You might even meet an author or two. Hillary House will once again be beautifully decorated for the holiday season by the Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society. \$5 per adult and \$3 per child. Tickets at the door. 15372 Yonge Street.

The York Chamber Ensemble’s salute to the Four Seasons turns to winter this evening with performances of the Nutcracker Suite, the 12 Days of Christmas, and seasonal selections of Vivaldi and Britten. Performance includes the Trinity Festival Chorus. The concert gets underway this evening at 7.30 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street. Tickets (\$20 for adults and \$15 for seniors and students) are available at the door.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

Newmarket-Aurora MPP Chris Ballard will host a Community Office Opening and Holiday Party this evening at 6 p.m. at 238 Wellington Street East, Suite 203. Join him and his team for some holiday cheer and the opening of their new community office. Light refreshments. For more information, contact cballard.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

The Aurora Cultural Centre, 22 Church Street, presents the Ensemble Polaris with Definitely Not the Nutcracker tonight at 8 p.m. A holiday concert like none other, featuring lively arrangements of Tchaikovsky’s popular music, as well as folk tunes of the times – with influences from Scandinavian bluegrass, Klezmer, Celtic, Chinese classical – along with instruments and songs from Russian Folk Tradition. Join us as early as 7 p.m. for the launch of Whose Art Is It Anyway? A Mystery Art Fundraiser. Tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 on the day. Cash bar and CD sales. For more information, call 905-713-1818.

DECEMBER 12 – 20

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents Whose Art Is It Anyway? A Mystery Art Fundraiser. Over 25 professional artists have specifically created and generously donated small works that are available for sale. Purchase your favourite piece for \$50 and the name of the artist is revealed – and you have a unique new piece of art that is perfect for holiday giving – or for yourself! All proceeds from this sale support projects, programs, free exhibitions and art events at the Centre. For more information, gallery hours and more, call 905-713-1818.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents A Victorian Christmas Afternoon, featuring the Humber River Shakespeare Company with A Christmas Carol. A wonderful annual family tradition, come at 1 p.m. for a plate of sweets and refreshments with live music provided by The Carrying Place Band. At 2 p.m., enjoy the theatrical presentation. Tickets are \$15 each or \$45 for a Family Pack of four (2 adults and two school-aged children).

‘Tis the Season to Be Jolly with the Evergreen Choir today as they host their annual Christmas concert, Peace & Joy at 2.30 p.m. at the Aurora Seniors Centre. What can make us feel happy and lighthearted, friendly to our neighbours and part of a loving and giving community? Getting together to enjoy each other’s company: singing, good food, and sharing a happy experience. Come join the members of the Evergreen Choir, under the direction of Dr. Richard Heinzel, with accompanist Hadara Jacoby and emcee Jim Gilchrist. Tickets are \$5 and kids under 14 are free with a ticket. Tickets are on sale now at the Seniors’ Centre’s reception desk at 90 John West Way.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

Aurora United Church’s Carols by Candlelight, featuring the Aurora United Church Chancel Choir and Hand Bell Ensembles, will continue this year at Trinity Anglican Church. Two concerts are slated for today at 4 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. Freewill offering with refreshments afterwards. For more information, call 905-727-6101.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

The Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion will host a Progressive Euchre tournament today beginning at 1 p.m. \$5 entry per person, includes cash prizes and fun games. Come on out for a great day of cards! The Royal Canadian Legion is located at 105 Industrial Parkway North.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2015 HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Aurora Legion hosts the 2015 President’s Levee today at 11 a.m. Meet, greet and enjoy the great comradeship! Lunch is served at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$7 per person and everyone is welcome. The Royal Canadian Legion is located at 105 Industrial Parkway North.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

The PROBUS Club of Aurora will host its monthly meeting today at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) today from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. The guest speaker this month is a travel agent from Marlin Travel. For more information, call program chair Cliff White at 905-841-2421. New members are welcome. For more about membership, contact Gary Gilbert at 905-895-2849 or join at the meeting.

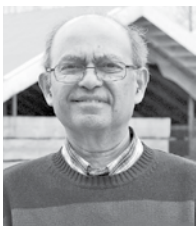
SATURDAY, JANUARY 24

The White Heather Pipes and Drums presents their annual Robbie Burns Dinner tonight with cocktails beginning at 5 p.m. and dinner served at 6 p.m. Enjoy an evening of bagpipes, Scottish music and dancing. Enjoy haggis, roast beef, tatties and neeps, and Yorkshire pudding. Silent auction. Performance by the White Heather Pipes and Drums. Live music by Aurora’s own classic rock band Dalayne Drive. Tickets are \$40 per person and on sale now from the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) or from any band members. For more information, email tomkatbrowne@yahoo.ca.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31

The Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir will play Trinity Anglican Church tonight in a concert benefiting Welcome Table. The concert gets underway at 7.30 p.m. For more information, visit www.welshchoir.ca.

To submit your event send details in 100 words or less to letters@auroran.com with the subject line “Coming Events”.



**SENIOR
SCAPE**
Charles Sequeira

**FILL-A-BOX
FOR SHUT-IN SENIORS**

The Aurora Seniors' Centre volunteers were able to fill 75 gift boxes with goodies, treasure and necessities for Seniors who are confined to their rooms. The generous donations for inside the boxes were amazing, but the cash donated to finish the job was over the top. Each gift box received the follow items: Socks, tooth brush and paste, candy, cookies, flashlight and batteries, night light, game or puzzle, pen and pad, mug with tea and coffee, Lotto scratch ticket, bag full of granola bars, raisins, candy. On top of that, each one received a treasured gift, ranging from bracelets to decks of cards, stuffed critter to tell your troubles to. After each box was filled, we were able to put together small gift bags of goodies for 22 residences of Cobblestone Rest Home. These bags have toothbrush and paste, tissues, granola bar, candy and soap. Also any item that would not fit in the box, like large boxes of cereal we sent to the food bank or large bath washes were sent on to Blue Door Shelters. In the end, we were able to help out a lot of people that might not have received anything. Thank you to our Let's Create committee of volunteers who decorated the boxes and gave up their Wednesdays afternoons to sort and

fill these gift boxes.
These gift boxes will be distributed by CHATS.

A TIGERS SUPER-FAN!
The Ultimate Tiger Keepsake-It's here! Joan Levert, a member of the Aurora Seniors' Centre and a volunteer instructor of our sewing club, designed a Tiger quilt pattern and each square is a symbol of the Aurora Tigers' hockey club philosophy.
The picture of the finished quilt is on display on our bulletin board and the actual finished quilt is more beautiful than ever imagined. Each square is stitched in a specific pattern, with an interpretation representing teamwork, speed, skill and determination. The true TIGER testament.
There is even a hidden hockey stick, puck, and net in the stitching!
You could win this Ultimate Tiger Quilt by purchasing raffle tickets at three for \$10 sold only in the Tiger Den at their home games.
Proceeds collected will benefit the Aurora Seniors' Centre. Thank you, Joan.

STAYING FIT
The Aurora Seniors Centre is excited to debut evening fitness classes starting in January. Join us Tuesday nights at 5.30 p.m. for Body Control Pilates, 6.30 p.m. for Gentle Pilates and at 7.30 pm for BOSU. What is BOSU? This class is designed to improve your balance and core stability for better coordination, endurance and strength. The BOSU was originally designed to help athletes however we find it is also great for older adults. We also are offering Zumba Gold on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. starting in January! If you are interested or have any questions, please call Karie Papillon, our Seniors Coordinator at (905) 727-3123 x3610. She would be happy to help!

INTERGENERATIONAL LINK
Lester B. Pearson P.S. students are developing a senior-friendly app tutorial that would help seniors learn how to use


MARKET MUSINGS


From page 5
19th Avenue Farm, Breezy Ridge Farm with their lamb, Howard's Farm, Oakridges Finest, Pioneer Brand Honey, Snowden Farm and Kind Organics.
Food:
Catharina's Kitchen, Gabriel's Café, Jan's Country Pantry, Nicole's Cakes, and Rob's Good Food. Sass Tea and Green River Coffee will provide beverages. Rustic Breads will be on hand with her delicious homemade bread Cathy's Composters will be there.


Artisans
The Bear's Den, CADA, Captain Ted's Knick-Knack-a-Thon, Carrie's Creations, Catch My Drift, Elderberry Boutique, Eurasia Jewellery Design, Eva Nagy, Green Leaf Designs, Limitless Jewells, Out of My Mind, Plaid Raspberries, and SDD Flags.
We will also host Resting Rock Landscapes who will have Christmas trees and greenery with the proceeds going to YR Children's Aid.
The Armouries are located at 89 Mosely Street at the edge of Town Park.
See you at the Indoor Market!

their email.
They would like to share their research and ideas with the Aurora Seniors' Centre members on Tuesday, December 9 at 10 a.m. at the Centre. These students have developed an app tutorial to help seniors learn how to use email and make attachments to their email.
They concluded that this is one of the most meaningful skills for this population to keep connected with family and grandkids.

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

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