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# THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 15 No. 16 905-727-3300

[theauroran.com](http://theauroran.com)

FREE Week of February 12, 2015



**AGING GRACEFULLY** – Joanna Megraw, Daniel Ciccarelli and David Mouti bring Kimberly, Jeff and Buddy to life in Theatre Aurora's production of David-Lindsay-Abaire's "Kimberly Akimbo". The comedy follows Kimberly, a teen with a disorder which makes her age before her time, and her family as they grapple with the realities of her struggle. For Scott Johnston's review of the show, which runs through Saturday, see Page 10.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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## Privacy and environment dominate trash talks

By Brock Weir

Privacy issues were tempered with concerns over the environment as a steady stream of residents and politicians flowed into Town Hall on Monday night to weigh in on Aurora's proposed clear bag garbage program.

Municipal staff hope to get the program, which would see area residents making the switch to clear plastic garbage bags rather than the more conventional black bags, off the ground this spring in a "soft launch" before the program becomes mandatory in the fall.

If passed by Council, phase one, which would see voluntary participation in the program, would be launched in early June, with mandatory participation coming into force in October. The intent of the program, according to proponents, is to ensure waste that should not be in the garbage stream – ranging from toxic items such as paint cans to simply recyclable material – are diverted into the proper channel, with an ultimate cost savings to the Town.

Since the program was first floated during the last term of Council, the proposal triggered a wide range of

opposition from the community, but Monday's meeting indicated this opposition was coupled with cautious enthusiasm.

"I am totally for recycling [but I am against the clear bags] because I don't think it is any garbage man's business," said resident Jo-ann Spitzer.

Ms. Spitzer echoed the concerns of many residents over privacy on what one throws into their curbside trash. This was a concern shared by Joel and Margaret Sussman, who said their worries were soothed by the provision residents can use several opaque

Continued on page 9

## Speeding up St. John's interchange with Hwy 404 is top priority for Thompson

By Brock Weir

Aurora's east side will soon have thousands of new residents as development of the 2C lands continues, but as this community comes closer and closer to fruition, so too should St. John's Sideroad's interchange with Highway 404.

Currently scheduled to be constructed in 2031, Councillor Michael Thompson has a motion before Council this week which will request the Region of York to bring this timeline up by more than a decade.

"I think we're already seeing challenges with the interchange at Wellington and 404 during rush hour

and we have a tremendous amount of residents that will come into the 2C lands, and that is just going to exacerbate the issue," says Councillor Thompson. "I think 2031 is too late and I would really like to see us work with the Region and move that timeline up significantly. You are going to see [all this traffic] get funnelled down to that interchange at Wellington and it is not going to be pleasant for those who are trying to get to work and get home at night."

Considering the development of the Region's Master Transportation Plan, the timing is right to start this conversation, he adds.

Continued on page 8

*It's about "your sisters, your mothers, your daughters, your community"*

By Brock Weir

As a lawyer advocating for clients within Canada's prison system, Aurora's Sandra Leonard has always had a keen interest in human rights.

When the Aurora Public Library asked her to lead a panel next month to coincide with International Women's Day, however, Ms. Leonard says she was surprised, if not puzzled, as to why she was asked to moderate such a

Continued on page 11

"The Canadian flag is a symbol of peace, freedom, diversity and the strength of our nation. It proudly identifies our citizens and our accomplishments ... In the years to come, the Canadian flag will continue to symbolize great moments in our nation's history and to inspire a fierce sense of pride in our citizens."  
- Prime Minister Stephen Harper

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# Weekly Notice Board

Aurora Town Hall  
100 John West Way • P.O. Box 1000 • Aurora • Ontario • L4G 6J1  
Phone 905-727-1375 • Fax 905-726-4732  
Email [info@aurora.ca](mailto:info@aurora.ca) • Website [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca)

Accessible formats  
905-727-3123 ext. 4212  
[accessibility@aurora.ca](mailto:accessibility@aurora.ca)

## COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Thursday, February 12	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Committee of Adjustment
Tuesday, February 17	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee*
Wednesday, February 18	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library	Aurora Public Library Board
Monday, February 23	9 a.m.	Council Chambers	Special General Committee Operating Budget*
Tuesday, February 24	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Wednesday, February 25	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](http://www.aurora.ca)

\*Meetings can be viewed online by visiting [www.aurora.ca/gcstream](http://www.aurora.ca/gcstream)



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Town of Aurora is now accepting applications for the following position:

**Summer Student (Legal Services)**  
Applications deadline is **Friday, February 13**

For more information, please visit [www.aurora.ca/employment](http://www.aurora.ca/employment)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### Dinner and a Movie

*The Book of Life* (Rated PG)

Where: Aurora Public Library  
When: **Saturday, February 14**  
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.

### Clear Garbage Bag Survey

The Town of Aurora has created a survey available at [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca) for residents to provide feedback on the proposed implementation of a clear bag waste collection.

At its meeting on May 27, 2014 Aurora Town Council endorsed a recommendation to review the proposed transition to a clear garbage bag for waste collection in early 2015.

Information on the benefits of clear garbage bags was displayed over nine weeks in autumn 2014 in the Town Notice Board and the Town hosted an information session on **Monday, February 9**. Council will be discussing the Clear Garbage Bag program in February/March

### Youth Leisure Complex Drop-in Programs to be delayed

Youth Leisure Complex Gymnasium Drop-in programs will be delayed until **March 2015**.

Please check [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca) for updates. Thank you!

### Event at Aurora Public Library (APL)

Date: **February 1-15**  
Course: **Blind Date with a Book**

Description: Take a chance on love with our Blind Date with a Book. Come into the library and choose from a selection of wrapped books. Check your book out and take it home to unwrap your surprise! Is your date a dud? Don't worry, there'll be no hard feelings or awkward moments. Just bring it back!

### 2015 Town of Aurora Budget Meeting Dates

Aurora Town Council and staff encourage residents to attend the Budget meetings and provide their input on budget items under review. Budget consultations are scheduled to move forward for final approval in April.

The following is a schedule of Town budget meetings. Public input will be received at the beginning of each meeting.

Date	Time	Purpose
Monday, February 23	9 a.m.	Public Consultation, then Review of Key Changes and Tax Pressures
Monday, March 2	7 p.m.	Support provided to: Aurora Public Library Board, Aurora Historical Society, Aurora Cultural Board (Presentations by Each)
Monday, March 9	7 p.m.	Budget Committee Deliberations Continue
Monday, March 23	7 p.m.	Budget Committee Deliberations Continue (Subject to cancellation by Committee at Prior Meeting)
Monday, March 30	7 p.m.	Budget Committee Deliberations Continue
Tuesday, April 7	7 p.m.	Final Council Budget Approval

Those who wish to speak are encouraged to register with the Clerk's office in advance by emailing [csecretariat@aurora.ca](mailto:csecretariat@aurora.ca). Those who do not register will be allowed to make a presentation if time permits.

Budget information is available on the Town's website at [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca). For more information about the 2015 Budget, please contact Dan Elliott, Director of Corporate and Financial Services/Treasurer at [ourtownbudget@aurora.ca](mailto:ourtownbudget@aurora.ca)

### Seeking nominations for The 2015 Community Recognition and Citizen of the Year Awards

The Town of Aurora believes in recognizing citizens who have made a positive impact in our community. We are once again calling for nominations for the 2015 Community Recognition Awards. The awards honour individuals, groups and businesses that have actively supported the Town's development and enhanced the overall community.

For more information or to submit a nomination, please visit [www.aurora.ca/cras](http://www.aurora.ca/cras). Nominations will be accepted until **Thursday, March 19** at 2 p.m. For more information about the Community Recognition Awards, please contact Jennifer Norton at 905-727-3123 ext. 4232 or email [jnorton@aurora.ca](mailto:jnorton@aurora.ca)

### 2015 Spring & Summer Parks and Recreation Guide scheduled for distribution

Look for your copy of the 2015 Spring and Summer Parks and Recreation Guide being delivered in the Era Banner Newspaper on **Sunday, February 15**. Copies will also be available for pick-up at various Town of Aurora facilities in addition to being available on-line. Please visit our website [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca) or call 905-726-4770 ext. 0 for more details.

### Volunteers needed for Arctic Adventure event

Are you a youth looking for high school volunteer hours? The Town is looking for volunteers at Arctic Adventure on **Monday, February 16** at Aurora Town Park! If you are interested, please contact Nicole Young at 905-727-3123 ext. 3133 or [nyoung@aurora.ca](mailto:nyoung@aurora.ca). You can also get your volunteer application form at [www.aurora.ca/arcticadventure](http://www.aurora.ca/arcticadventure)

### New Changes coming to Curbside Collection!

As of **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 extra bulky items** per scheduled collection. For example, you can set out a maximum of five extra bulky items along with your green bin(s), blue box(es) and garbage bag(s)/can(s).

**Please note:** Any items over the five extra bulky item limit will be tagged and left at the curb. You do not require an appointment to pick-up your five extra bulky items.

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, wait till the next garbage cycle, or contact a private removal company.

For more information, please visit

[www.aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling](http://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](http://www.york.ca)

## REMINDER

### Parking enforcement to commence March 1 at Town Park

The Town of Aurora is sending notices to homes and businesses around Town Park to advise residents of recent changes to parking enforcement.

Further to a discussion at Aurora Town Council on **Tuesday, January 20**, Town By-law Services staff will enforce overnight parking provisions at Town Park, in an effort to ensure proper snow removal and provide adequate parking and access for park users.

Parking enforcement will commence on Sunday, March 1.

The Town of Aurora designates permitted parking areas around its parks. Until recently, Town Park did not have signage indicating parking prohibitions. Parking signs have since been installed and enforcement will commence.

If you have any questions about parking enforcement at Town Park, please contact Town of Aurora By-law Services at 905-727-3123 ext. 4240.

### Temporary Road Closure on Monday, February 16

Community Event: Arctic Adventure  
Date: **Monday, February 16**  
Time: Start at 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Roads to be temporarily closed:

- Wells Street at Mosley Street – Full Closure
- Wells Street at Metcalfe Street – Road Closure – Local Traffic Only
- South property line to the Old Wells Street School (#64 Wells St.) - Full Closure

### Public Service Disruption

There will be a scheduled service disruption at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex.

These disruptions include:

**Friday, February 13**

- PARENT & TOT 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., SHINNY HOCKEY 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., LADIES SHINNY 11:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and PUBLIC SKATE 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. are cancelled due to a hockey tournament

**Saturday, February 14**

- PUBLIC SKATE 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. are cancelled due to a hockey tournament

## ARCTIC Adventure

Another exciting event brought to you by

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**Monday, February 16, 2015**  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Aurora Town Park  
(Corner of Wells Street and Mosley Street)

- **Live entertainment**  
First Nations presentation, "Battle of the Chainsaws" and more!
- **Children's activities**  
Snow shoeing, mini snow tubing, floor curling and 'snow' much more!
- **Inflatables, ice fishing and mini golf**
- **Professional ice carving demonstrations**
- **Outdoor skating**  
Weather permitting. Helmets are strongly recommended.
- **Aurora Farmers' Market**  
Experience the market indoors at the Aurora Armoury.
- **Vendors serving delicious food**  
Please note, nominal fees apply.

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PLEASE NOTE, WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CANCEL, AMEND OR CHANGE ACTIVITIES.  
Call 905-726-4762 or visit [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca) for more information

#AuroraEvents2015



## Holiday Service Schedule Family Day – Monday, February 16



### MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way) will be **CLOSED** on Monday, February 16 for Family Day. Regular business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. will resume on Tuesday, February 17.

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



### LIBRARY

The Aurora Public Library will be **CLOSED** on Monday, February 16.

For more information, please visit [www.library.aurora.on.ca](http://www.library.aurora.on.ca) or call 905-727-9494.



### WASTE COLLECTION

Waste collection in Aurora is **NOT AFFECTED** by Family Day.

For information on waste collection in Aurora, please consult your 2015 Waste Management Guide and Recycling Calendar.



### RECREATION CENTRE

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

Saturday, February 14 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday, February 15 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Monday, February 16 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For swimming, skating and Club Aurora fitness schedules, please visit [www.aurora.ca/holidayrecreation](http://www.aurora.ca/holidayrecreation)

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

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

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

FOR ALL OTHER EMERGENCIES, CALL 9-1-1



The Town of Aurora wishes you a safe and happy holiday!



Auroran photo by David Falconer

## Fresh fun and returning favourites planned for Arctic Adventure

By Brock Weir

Keep warm with a blast of Arctic chill this Monday at the Town of Aurora's Arctic Adventure.

The annual Aurora tradition returns to Town Park this Monday for Family Day and organizers promise a host of returning favourites and what is hoped to be the start of some new traditions.

"This is our only outdoor winter festival of the year," says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town. "In the summer we have our routine concerts, Canada Day, and those types of things, but here we get to shake it up a bit. We get to see professional ice carvers, outdoor skating, snowshoeing and activities we get to present at this event that we don't have the opportunity to do at others."

Returning this year after a gap is "Speaking of Wildlife", an animal show-style presentation that will allow residents to get up close and personal with many of Canada's winter animals, such as baby foxes and coyotes and owls.

Canada's First Nations will also be represented, opening the festivities with, fittingly for Family Day, a presentation on family traditions of our native people.

"I always find this presentation to be so emotional and so life-changing because these First Nations describe what families were like 22,000 years ago when they were the first families in Canada," says Ms. Ware.

Outside of the band shell entertainment which will be hopping throughout the event, additional activities include the Battle of the Chainsaws, an ice carving competition hosted by Mayor Geoff Dawe and former mayor Tim Jones, "Arctic golf", bouncy castles, an outdoor fishing pond, curling, snowshoeing, and skating on the outdoor rink – weather permitting, of course.

## Canadian and Caribbean traditions come together for Family Day

By Brock Weir

Whether you want to step back in time, or step right into the middle of a raucous present, there is something for every taste on tap in Aurora for Monday's Family Day commemorations.

"We've had great weather and the outdoor ice surface at Town Park is stellar right now," says Ms. Ware.

New this year is a partnership between the Town and the Aurora Farmers' Market, which will be setting up shop once again at the Aurora Armoury.

"We're really hoping that people who attend Arctic Adventure are going to discover the Farmers' Market and maybe become new, faithful attendees every Saturday," says Ms. Ware. "With winter, we try to stretch out the activities across further landscapes so people are walking further from one end to the other because we want to ensure people stay moving for the warmth factor."

"For some people, this will be the first time for many people trying snowshoeing and I think the enthusiasm of trying those types of experiences aren't routinely available in Aurora and it makes the day pretty amazing. Yet, the entertainment on the stage is very, very strong, which can also cause a family to stand there for six hours. I think it is fantastic now that we have the use of the Armouries because those who really are chilled have the opportunity to go in and discover the market, take a break from the outside and return again."

A roaring bonfire will also be kindled for additional warmth.

But, what if Mother Nature has other ideas?

"We are Canadians, so we're used to this kind of weather and we will persevere throughout with a smile," says Ms. Ware. "The best way to realise why Aurora is such a fantastic place to live and work is to come and experience an event like this on Family Day. This is where families get to come together in the community. It really is a must-attend event because it is in your back yard."

Celebrations will be IGNITED at the Aurora Cultural Centre at from 1 – 4 p.m. as they host Toronto's Pan Fantasy Steelband in a presentation geared towards the whole family. The presentation is part of the IGNITE

Continued on page 10

### Briefly

#### ARMOURY EXAMINED

The Town of Aurora is performing "additional environmental testing" at the historic Aurora Armoury after some residents have expressed concern about possible soil contamination on the site. "The Town of Aurora follows an environmental due diligence process with all Town properties," said Michael Kemp, Manager of Corporate Communications for the Town of Aurora. "Further to this, the Government of Canada's environmental report noted that no action was required on the Armoury property. Prior to the Farmers' Market using the facility, the York Region Health Unit investigated and cited no environmental concerns with the property. Proceeding with an abundance of caution and fulfilling our municipal requirements for environmental due diligence on all Town Properties, the Town is performing additional environmental testing."

#### AGMs

A number of organizations will be gearing up for the year ahead next week holding their annual general meetings. Doors open for Sport Aurora's AGM at Aurora Town Hall next Wednesday, February 18, at 6.30 p.m., with a meeting start at 7 p.m. The Aurora Historical Society will also hold their AGM on Wednesday, beginning at 7.30 p.m. at the Aurora Cultural Centre, featuring nominations for the board of directors and guest speaker Shawna White, curator of the new Aurora Museum.

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Councillors should question every report**

(Re: Residents want less spent on "culture", according to Aurora's Citizen Budget)

This report should be treated in the same fashion as many submissions which are submitted to Council, that is for Council to receive it, and put it aside while they continue their work.

One hundred or so participants do not represent nearly sufficient numbers to have any statistical relevance, nor to show support for the Treasurer to use it to justify his work.

Two councillors, who are quoted in your article, showed critical thinking by challenging some aspects and then received an admission that the process was flawed.

Critical thinking is probably the most important trait that councillors can bring to their deliberations and they should be applauded for questioning every report to ensure that they receive accurate information.

**Robert Cook  
Aurora**

**Comparisons not apt for "mythical" downtown core**

I am referring to the comment attributed to Mayor Dawe in your January 29, 2015 issue. Regarding the proposed Yonge Street parking overhaul, I quote: "The idea was sparked on a recent visit to Niagara Falls..."

Mayor Dawe said what he saw encouraged pedestrian traffic and, after talks with many local business owners, there was support here as for something similar.

In my opinion, to compare downtown traffic situation in a world renowned tourist city like Niagara Falls to the traffic in the "mythical" downtown core of Aurora is a bit of a stretch.

With a high rate of turnover in retail occupancy over the years, can the downtown core location provide a viable economic and sustainable opportunity for the retail sector?

**Casimir Szuber  
Aurora**

**Restrictions will force drivers to "wholly inappropriate" alternatives**

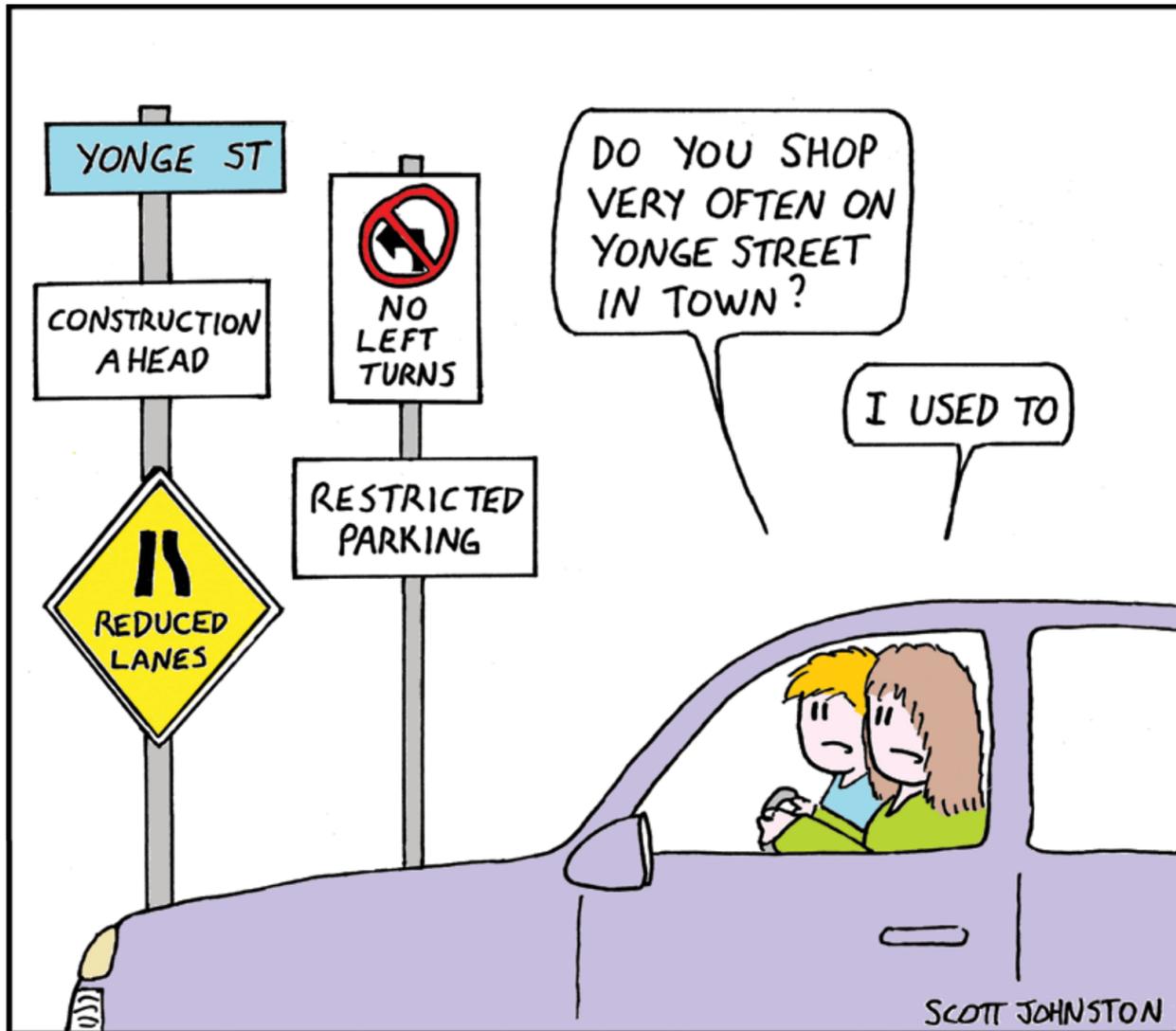
While everyone would agree that it is frustrating to negotiate the Yonge and Wellington intersection, restricting left turns will necessarily force drivers to use wholly inappropriate alternate routes that are residential streets.

Unfortunately, we do not have an east/west four lane road other than Wellington Street, so you cannot readily divert traffic from it.

Having cars speeding through neighbourhoods, past schools and home driveways is not a good alternative to waiting at Yonge and Wellington for traffic to clear.

**Sheena Loosmore  
Aurora**

**Machell's Corners**



**On their own terms**



**BROCK'S BANTER**  
Brock Weir

"It was a mercy killing!" That was the exclamation of my paternal grandmother listening to her kitchen radio one afternoon in Agincourt.

By the time she finished slicing our tuna sandwiches diagonally, and once again to make dainty quarters (crusts on), she placed our two plates down on the table where my jaw fell just a minute or two before.

I was probably only eight or nine years old, but I can still hear the sound of the "tut, tut, tut" coming out of her mouth as the radio continued its broadcast.

The newscaster was talking about Robert Latimer, the Saskatchewan farmer who, at that time, was recently arrested for killing his daughter, Tracy, through carbon monoxide poisoning, placing her in the trunk of his car.

Around this time, it had been claimed and speculated that Tracy was living in a world of constant pain, unable to adequately express herself, and her father's actions were the only merciful way out. Others, however viewed it as murder and took their claims higher and higher.

As a youngster, I didn't have an opinion formed in one way or another, but I just could not wrap my head around the actions of a parent ending the life of his or her child, nor could I wrap my head around the support coming from my grandmother.

When the shock wore off, I had lots of questions for her and she explained her views on so-called mercy killing. It was an eye-opening conversation, which diverted sharply from Saskatchewan to the work of Dr. Jack Kevorkian and the entire concept of doctor-assisted suicide. It was an enlightening conversation, to be sure, but I was not entirely on board with either concept.

As the years went on, however, my mind kept going back to this conversation as each passing year started to take away a little bit more of my grandmother. About four or five years after this conversation, it was evident she was suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

It started off with the little things, as this disease often does; instances which she tossed aside with a chuckle, but as they gained frequency they became no laughing matter for anyone concerned.

Soon, these instances became more serious to the point where it became clear she was no longer aware of what

the issue was, why she couldn't do certain things and, of course frustration mounted. Unbeknownst to herself, there came a point where her safety could not be ensured if status quo on her care was maintained and alternatives needed to be looked at. When that time ultimately came, however, the deterioration inevitably accelerated and she was soon gone to us in all but body.

But what was going on inside this body? Rarely did the intensity of her stare disappear from sight like a curtain wafting in the wind. They were still alert, but if the wheels were turning inside, the rest of the works were not cooperating with the gears.

What was going on behind those eyes when we came to make what was, in hindsight, idle chatter just hoping something would click? Were any of those words getting through to her, perhaps inspiring a thought or two? Were there thoughts being processed that were unable to be expressed?

Did she recognize any of us? Of the one seemingly random word that never left her vocabulary until just the very end (which is probably best not repeated in this space) have any particular meaning or context?

We will never know. We will also never know if she was experiencing regrets, frustration and, most importantly, pain.

As she neared the end of her life, I wheeled her out on the verandah of her nursing home into the fresh air and bright sunlight. She hadn't been out in a while and as soon as her face hit the air there was a change that came over her. By that time, the lone remaining word had since been consigned to memory, but it was clear by the faint smile on her face and the ever-deepening breaths that this was stirring something - instinctively, or otherwise - inside of her.

Nothing needed to be said by either of us. It was time just to enjoy the moment

- but it wasn't a moment I fully enjoyed. As we (and realistically that "we" should be "I") watched people coming into the nursing home, kids in tow, laden with flowers and gifts for parents or grandparents who were spending their twilight years in the facility, my mind went back to that conversation we had what had seemed like a few short years before around the kitchen table.

If my grandmother could have looked into a crystal ball at that very moment to see what the next decade had in store for her, I wonder if that would have shaped our talk, which was simplified at best for this youngster.

Over the course of the prolonged national debate on the issue of doctor-assisted suicide, a debate which has ebbed and flowed in terms of the attention it has stirred in the masses, we heard any number of arguments for or against any proposed changes in the law.

For supporters of the measures, it was a matter of the individual choosing to die with dignity, with minimal pain on their own terms. Those determined to follow this path did not wait around for the Government of Canada, or the Supreme Court, for that matter, to render a decisive decision and took matters overseas to get the job done in what they viewed as more "enlightened and progressive" societies.

Others, however, were of the opinion that permitting doctor-assisted suicide would lead down a "slippery slope" of complex medical, ethical and religious issues, as well as moral fears that relatives and others could use any change in law to prey on relatives, and others over whose affairs they had control, who were in a vulnerable position.

Each side made valid points, but no matter their merit, personal experiences, in my view, were decisive.

If she indeed had a crystal ball and knew what lay ahead of her, my strong, proud grandmother, a tiny woman in stature who was able to overcome just about any towering challenge but one, knowing the effects the disease would have on our family, particularly her husband who acted as her sole caregiver for several years, would have had no hesitation in picking the right time to "check out" and, more importantly, on her own terms.

I am heartened that Canadians facing such physical pain and struggles will soon, in many cases, have that option available to them as well.

**THE AURORAN**  
Aurora's Community Newspaper

The Auroran Newspaper Company Ltd.  
15213 Yonge Street, Suite 8  
Main number 905-727-3300 • Fax number 905-727-2620

Founder Ron Wallace | Publisher Emeritus Rosemary Schumaker

Subscriptions available within Canada and U.S.  
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Enzo Costanza, Vice President of Operations for BionX, the Aurora-based manufacturer of electric bicycles, gives a tour of the manufacturing plant to Minister of State Gary Goodyear and Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown during Goodyear's tour of the riding. Goodyear was in the riding to announce a Federal investment of \$995,000 to Newmarket's Gum Product International, which extracts food additives from seaweed and other biotechnological ventures, as well as to host a manufacturing roundtable with business leaders.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir



## MARKET MUSINGS

Jan Freedman

You may have noticed at the last two indoor Farmers' Markets that the York Region Food Network (YFRN) was there. We are delighted that they will be joining us again at the next two indoor markets, so I would like you to know something about them and what they do.

YFRN is a charitable non-profit that offers programs and education around access to healthy food. Their vision is "Food for Health-Food for All". Their programs range from community gardens to community kitchens and meals, and aquaponics.

They are involved in supporting healthy food policy including leading the development of the York Region Food Charter, and through broad community engagement on food issues.

With the vision that produce is just the beginning, upStream is a 1,000 square foot space dedicated to aquaponics, a closed-loop innovative food system, which produces both protein (fish) and vegetables.

In this soilless system, fish effluent is used to fertilize vegetable growth, solving the issue of dealing with fish waste in aquaculture systems, and avoids having to add chemical fertilizers needed in hydroponic systems.

With this system, they are able to grow several varieties of greens—lettuces, arugula, herbs, pak choi, Swiss chard and kale to name but a few. Fresh local greens are a real treat in the middle of winter. Funds from the sale of upStream greens support the programs of YFRN.

Their programs offered through their Community Food Hub are based on 3 principles: access to healthy food; knowledge and skills about nutrition, local sustainable food and food preparation; and community engagement. Through a variety of programs including the Good Food Box, Gleaning, the Breakfast Drop-In and Kitchen Programs, they can demonstrate in a supportive environment that healthy food is nutritious, delicious and fun.

YFRN is the host agency for York Region Food for Learning, a group that supports healthy breakfasts and snacks in schools. Research has confirmed that serving children healthy food at school improves learning, develops healthy eating habits and supports a sense of community and participation in schools. They also provide support to schools that are interested in creating school gardens.

Why should people care about food? The answer really is quite simple; food is a basic human need and food is delicious and a wonderful way to bring people together. We all care about food, although perhaps not all in the same way: we use food for comfort, we care about our diets for reasons ranging from controlling weight to food sensitivities and staying healthy. We all make decisions about food several times a day.

There is so much information which seems to make food complicated, but preparing healthy food is really not that complicated and YFRN is able to help people to learn ways to value food differently and as a way to connect with nature, health, the economy, family and community. I recommend that you visit their table at each of the next indoor markets.

The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair will be hosting TWO indoor markets in February. The first one will be on Family Day on Monday, February 16 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Armouries.

At the same time, the Town of Aurora will be having a number of family-friendly

Continued on page 15

## Patients First: An Action Plan for Health Care (Part I)

Dr. Eric Hoskins, Ontario's Minister of Health, unveiled the government's new action plan for improved health care during an Empire Club speech February 2. This column excerpts (and edits for space), a number of key points Dr. Hoskins made in that speech. This is the first of three columns focused on the new Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care.

Health care is undeniably one of the most important issues facing our government and facing all of us as Ontarians.

The stakes are high. Without exaggeration, the decisions that many of us make in the course of our work have life and death consequences, and it's a cause I've been championing my entire professional career.

So, the question then is not whether the system is unsustainable or whether universal health care is unattainable, or whether two-tiered alternatives are viable. These presume that principles of universality, equity and access in health care can be measured in degrees; that such rights are relative.

That's not a vision for health care that I can support, nor that this government supports. Instead, we have to approach the challenges facing health care from a different vantage point. If we believe in such rights to health and health care as we do, then the questions we really should be asking ourselves are, how do we ensure universality, how do we improve access and what does it take to deliver the highest quality of care?

Yes, there are economic and demographic realities and we will not hide from them. These are challenges we can manage together with determination and some ingenuity.

It's simply a matter of choices.

I believe that we have a tremendous opportunity in this province to lead, to



## View From Queen's Park

Chris Ballard, MPP  
Newmarket-Aurora

demonstrate a bold vision for delivering universal health care that will, above all, improve patient outcomes and make the best use of our financial resources.

The first Action Plan for Health Care by Minister Deb Matthews made a commitment to be "obsessively patient-centered". Patients First, our new action plan, builds on that commitment and recognizes that the health system belongs to patients, to Ontarians, and therefore this plan is for them.

It is shaped by their experiences and seeks to empower them.

If we want our system to serve each patient, we need fast, timely and responsive care, which also means redefining access from the patient's perspective. So what might that redefinition look like? Well, for starters, we should be proud that 94 per cent of Ontarians have a primary care provider, two million more than did a decade ago. But six per cent still don't, and timely access to both primary care and specialists remains a challenge.

We need a front door to our medical system that is open 24/7 and that front door should be a dynamic primary care system with team-based integrated and coordinated care, leveraging the skills of more health care providers and with fewer unattached patients. That is how we can truly put the needs of patients first.

## Meet Rookie Councillor Jeff Thom

This is the first in an ongoing series of short profiles on the new members of the Aurora Town Council.

Rookie Jeff Thom surprised a lot of folks in our community when he finished fourth in the municipal Council balloting last November. Included in that category was himself.

"I was shocked and honored that I finished fourth. I was very fortunate to have a great campaign team."

Anything shock you over your first couple of months in office?

"No, I knew that the workload would be heavy, but I was prepared for it. You also get asked to attend a number of community events and store/business openings, which I enjoy, as I love meeting people."

I believe that you are the youngest member of Council. Is that true?

"Yes, but only by a couple of months. Paul Pirri and I attended high school together. He just celebrated his birthday in January and I will turn 28 in April."

Getting used to your fellow Councillors?

(Laughs) "Yes, a very good group of people from different backgrounds and priorities but so far we are working collaboratively together."

What made you run for Council?

"I have had a life-long interest in politics and I always thought that I would throw my hat into the ring at some point."

What are the Town's biggest two challenges or opportunities?

"The Town's biggest two challenges or opportunities over the next four years will be to prudently manage our Town's



## FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

finances and to balance the needs of growth with protecting our heritage, environment and quality of life.

"I want to see us promote our Town's heritage. Also, the province's Oak Ridges Moraine legislation comes up for discussion this year which is a very important issue for our community. I want to see the current protections remain in place."

You seem very interested in heritage and culture – tell me more.

"It shocks me that so many people don't know Canada's history, such as the date of Confederation or the name of our first Prime Minister. I really take an interest in local history and culture. Aurora has a fascinating history which is well worth telling and I want to work to promote Aurora's history."

How long have you lived in Aurora?

"I was born and raised in Aurora. Apart from going away to university, I have lived here my whole life in Aurora."

Any family?

"I have a girlfriend, Kaelyn."

The reality is, these benefits are possible when we put patients first. And more, one of the greatest challenges right now facing our health care system, when it comes to access, concerns individuals in need of mental health and addictions services; not only acute care, but longer term care and supports that revolve around the patient.

That's why we're making targeted investments like the \$138 million over the next three years to shift more mental health services into the community; timely, effective and responsive ongoing care; and support that treats patients as people and breaks down the barriers that those struggling with mental illness and addictions too often face.

We've already made significant progress on mental health by working together. For the first three years, our strategy is focused on mental health supports for children and youth, almost 800 additional mental health workers are now providing services for children and youth in our communities, in our schools, in our courts and our tele-mental health services are providing nearly 3,000 psychiatric consults this year alone, to benefit children and youth in rural, remote and underserved communities.

We don't have to choose between bending our cost curve and putting patients first, both are possible. But it means being willing to challenge the status quo to find ways to better serve patients, by strengthening community-based care, improving transparency and accountability and developing evidence-based models that will tell us whether what we are doing is working.

Our community office is located at 203-238 Wellington St. E., Aurora. Phone: (905) 750-0019. Email: cballard.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

What is your educational background?

"I received my Bachelor of Arts degree in history and political science from Brock University."

What did you do for a living before seeking public office?

"I have been working in the family business – Thom Partners Inc. – a sports marketing company – since I graduated from University five years ago. The company purchases advertising on behalf of clients for various sports events across the country."

"I really enjoy what I do and I get an opportunity to work with my dad (Dave), mom (Dale) and my sister Heather. We are a very close knit family."

What kinds of things do you like to do outside of Council?

"I enjoy playing recreational adult hockey and I really like playing squash. If time permits, I try to play squash three or four times per week. I also like to attend concerts."

What Council Committees are you part of?

"We haven't finalized our Committees yet, but we will likely know in the next week or so."

I play pick up hockey and also on an "old timers" hockey team with Jeff's dad, Dave. At the end of the interview I wished Jeff well and told him that he needs to come out and play again in one of our Sunday afternoon hockey outings so that he can ensure that his dad arrives on time for a change!

Stephen can be contacted at  
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

## NEW AURORAN POLL

As Aurora gets ready to take another stab at the clear bag garbage program, are you in favour of making the switch?

A) Yes B) No C) Unsure

Go to [www.theauroran.com](http://www.theauroran.com) to vote!

### Previous Poll

Would you like to see left-hand turn restrictions at Yonge and Wellington? A) Yes B) No C) Unsure

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
FEBRUARY 10, 2015	62%	38%	0%

# Fire master plan delayed pending divisive workshop talks

By Angela Gismond

Discussion on the Central York Fire Services (CYFS) budget has been deferred until Aurora and Newmarket councils hold workshops on the fire master plan.

The decision was made at a Joint Council Committee (JCC) meeting held last week at Aurora Town Hall.

The draft 2015 Fire Services budget proposes a \$23.6 million operating budget, an increase of \$1.5 million over last year, which translates to about a 6.9 per cent increase. The figure includes \$852,000 to implement the fire master plan.

At the meeting, Fire Chief Ian Laing said service level improvements are needed and have been put off for

years. Both Newmarket and Aurora are growing municipalities and need more support.

It was Newmarket Councillor Jane Twinney who first requested that the master plan be brought before the respective councils, to gauge their opinions and receive input. According to Councillor Twinney, both councils need to discuss the master plan and the budget and the recommendations should be incorporated into the plan.

"Personally, I don't see how we can approve a budget if we haven't approved the (fire master) plan yet," said Twinney.

Aurora Councillor Michael Thompson said he disagreed. He said having the workshops would unnecessarily delay the process, and the adoption of the master plan and budget.

"It's our job to make decisions," said Thompson. "This is just adding to the process. What if we're not any further ahead after a one-day workshop? It could cause further delay ... you are essentially delaying the adoption of the master plan for some time."

After being asked to weigh in on whether or not further talks would be beneficial, and any risk associated with delaying the plan's approval, Chief Laing reiterated the importance of having a master plan to address the needs of the community.

"It's all a risk," said Laing. "I'm not here to tell you people are going to burn in their beds. This is not fear-mongering. It's a genuine document that addresses the needs of the communities."

"Central York Fire Services, to me, is one entity. The issues identified in this fire master plan are similar to the issues unresolved in the previous master plan."

He went on to say that the fire master plan has been delayed for some time and there are holes which need to be plugged. As the population grows, there will be more pressure and it will become

more difficult to meet the level of service needed. A new fire station will also be needed to meet that demand and to respond to the needs of the area on the border between the municipalities, he added.

"We have to get our house in order first before moving forward with anything else," said Laing. "Last year I was whittling the list down and cut it down basically to nothing. It's important that we start addressing some of these issues because for the last three years we've put some of these decisions off."

Newmarket Councillor Tom Hempen said he would prefer to see the fire master plan deferred to a workshop as quickly as possible.

"I don't want to put our community at risk, but what is before us is a significant cost to the community," said Hempen. "How we implement that needs to be discussed with my colleagues."

Twinney said she didn't see the harm in deferring the matter and said it would help everyone understand the big picture.

Aurora Councillor Tom Mrakas said he disagreed.

"I'm not in favour of a workshop," he said. "We've done our due diligence. Our councils have put us here and put their faith in us to make decisions. This will delay it. I don't see a problem with us approving it."

As Councillors looked for ways to reduce the budget, Newmarket's Joe Sponga suggested one way to do that might be to cut out the proposed new fitness program, which will cost about \$130,500, especially since the department is not sure about the benefits of the program.

But Laing said the program will not only save the department money, it saves lives by assessing, monitoring and developing fitness routines for firefighters to make sure they're able to fulfill their duties.

## Aurora Cultural Centre honoured for reporting

By Brock Weir

For several years, it has been a case of "always the bridesmaid and never the bride" for the Aurora Cultural Centre, but last week the Centre finally caught the bouquet.

The Aurora Cultural Centre, which is located at the historic Church Street School, was a winner of the Voluntary Sector Reporting Awards. Hosted by the Queen's Centre for Governance, for the past seven years, the awards recognize Canada's best annual reports across the non-profit sector. According to organizers rules have since been expanded to allow national and international charities from coast to coast to enter the awards process if they have a "significant presence in Ontario."

This year, more than 140 charities were nominated with each winner receiving \$5,000.

The Aurora Cultural Centre received top prize for Ontario-based organizations with total revenues up to \$1 million.

Canadian Feed the Children took home top honours for International Organizations, while March of Dimes Canada took the nationals. Elsewhere

in Ontario, Vita Community Living Services and Men's Sana Families for Mental Health were recognized for total revenues over \$10 million, while the United Way of Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington were saluted as an organization with revenues of over \$1 million to \$10 million.

"If you want to know who some of Canada's best charities are, then all you have to do is look at the Voluntary Sector Reporting Awards (VSRAs)," said George Boland, Associate Director of the CPA-Queen's Centre of Governance. "We honour the best charity annual reporting. These are charities that have excelled at transparency and accountability."

In a statement, Laura Schembri, Executive Director of the Centre, shared her excitement on receiving the award.

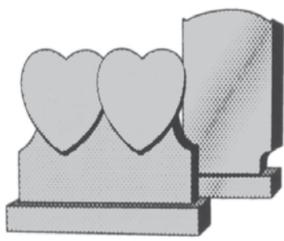
"I am thrilled that the best practices of our hardworking staff have been so publically celebrated," she said. "This is a ringing endorsement of the Centre's pursuit of excellence."

The Aurora Cultural Centre has been previously recognized with "honourable mentions" in their category by the organization.

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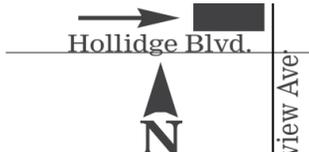
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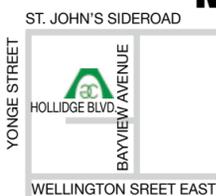
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# Charities get ready for the spotlight at next week's Blues Bash

By Brock Weir

Blue Door Shelters would love to be able to put up an "out of business" sign, but the sad truth is reality will not let that dream come to pass.

The non-profit, which operates shelters for youth, men and families across York Region is one of two charities to benefit from this year's Aurora Winter Blues Festival, which kicks off next Thursday, February 19, with the Blues Bash at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

The Blues Bash is a way to showcase not only up and coming talent, as well as the Juno-nominated 24<sup>th</sup> Street Wailers, but also a showcase for the good Blue Door and CHATS (Community and Home Assistance to Seniors) are doing within the community.

While hanging up that sign is something Anne Stuble, Executive Director of Blue Door Shelters, can only dream about, the support the organization will get for the fourth year running is a welcome boost in the meantime.

"Homelessness in York Region is on the rise and I think it is becoming a bit more visible," says Ms. Stuble, noting many people don't realise the resources available here in the Region to address the issue. "I think there are an awful lot of people in York Region who need to know about Blue Door Shelters. That is also where this really helps us because we may be full when they call today, but maybe we won't be tomorrow. Maybe we can actually help someone get to a different place where they would be safe."

In 2014 alone, Blue Door Shelters had to turn away approximately 6,000 calls from people looking for a bed for the night. With their share of last year's proceeds, Blue Door was able to enhance existing and add new programming that helps clients get the skills they need to move out of the shelter faster and, in the end, find housing. Significantly, last year's infusion also helped them replace their well-worn van, an essential in helping move clients and pick up donations and supplies.



CHATS CEO Christina Bisanz and Anne Stuble, Executive Director of Blue Door Shelters, are excited to take part in next week's Blues Bash, the prelude to the Aurora Winter Blues Festival. The two non-profits are beneficiaries of proceeds from the fourth annual Festival.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

"That was huge," says Ms. Stuble. "There is a great investment in the Region right now in moving towards ending homelessness and there are opportunities for people to participate in that. For ourselves, we really appreciate the community support and couldn't get by without the community support for donations that we receive throughout the year, whether that is food, some clothing for our residents, or household goods for our residents. We have people who are coming to stay with us when they have very little and we're really only able to provide them with socks, boots, coats, mitts, food, mugs or dishes when they leave, or while they are here, with the help of the community.

"We would love to take ourselves out of business and end homelessness, and we would like to continue providing the excellent community support that we have to increase our ability to serve more people, to engage more landlords, to engage the community supports to bring more volunteers in to help our clients get to where they want to be."

CHATS is also aiming to help their clients get to where they want to be. Looking ahead to spring, CHATS, which provides transportation for seniors across York Region and South Simcoe, among their other vital functions, is gearing up to be the lead transportation

provider in this field for the northern part of the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).

Planning is also underway to expand existing adult day programs not only to offer further services to clients, but also provide a respite for family caregivers.

"We are looking at this a little bit differently because we don't want to put ourselves out of business!" says CHATS CEO Christina Bisanz. "In fact, we want to ensure we are able to provide more services to people to enable more people to stay in their homes as long as possible, out of hospital and out of long-term care. We are looking to raise awareness that the services are here because often people may not be aware that they can have access to these kinds of services.

"[The Blues Bash] is an opportunity to get on stage and tell the assembled about us and express our appreciation to everyone who comes and enjoys bringing the arts together with social need and social awareness."

One of the chief benefits proceeds from the Aurora Winter Blues Festival will bring to CHATS clients are "exceptional subsidies" for seniors looking to utilize their programs. A number of programs run through the organization are either co-pay or come with a client fee. These fees are moderate and geared towards income, but some

seniors might still find this a challenge.

"When we do fundraising like this, it isn't specially designated for a new transportation van or for a particular service or program in one of the services we run," says Ms. Bisanz. "We anticipate demand for our services will grow as the seniors population in York Region is growing and the ability for people to continue to live in their own homes with as much independence and safety as possible often requires those additional supports that a community agency like CHATS can provide.

"It will become that much more important for us to have that sound financial base that we can provide the kinds of services and exceptional subsidies we do, but also to kind of enhance our programs."

For more on The Blues Bash and the Aurora Winter Blues Festival, which runs February 20 - 21 at Theatre Aurora and select locations around Town, visit [www.awbf.ca](http://www.awbf.ca).

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## Breakthrough Treatment Now Available in Richmond Hill

Imagine thirty to forty years ago if you were told that lasers would replace scalpels in surgery or that robotic instruments would build cars; you may not have believed it. By the same token, would you believe that chiropractic treatments could be performed using a special hand-held instrument developed by NASA scientists, all while you were sitting in an upright position without any turning or twisting movements?

Advances in computers and engineering technologies have been able to uniquely blend with chiropractic in order to both analyze and treat the human body in such a way that was never before realized.

According to Dr. Sean Eastman, "This new form of computerized treatment is so gentle and effective, that it amazes even the most skeptical patients. It's called the ProAdjuster and is the latest, state-of-the-art technology in existence today, and the only one in the north Richmond Hill area.

The ProAdjuster can safely and gently analyze and treat the spine and other joints to remove the nerve impingement that is often the cause of pains in the lower back, neck, shoulder, and elsewhere in the body. It also works on a variety of muscular conditions to loosen tight muscles with ease and comfort. Many patients say that it's like getting a mini-massage.

It can also help increase the amount of motion in almost any joint. Even patients with knee, hip, and foot problems such as plantar fasciitis are being helped. It is also covered by insurance companies since this is a chiropractic treatment and does not cost you anything additional.

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 malfunction 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's old flag and crest should fly once again, says Councillor

By Brock Weir

Jeff Thom, Aurora can foster this connection by plugging into the past. When Councillor Thom threw his hat into the political ring last year, he jazzed up his campaign headquarters – his dad's garage – with Aurora's Flag,

History and symbol have the power to bring people together and connect people to the world around them. But, according to Councillor

community, which stretches back over 150 years." The crest in the centre of the flag, first pitched by Aurora's first Council in 1863 before formal adoption in the 1920s, is particularly evocative of the Town's history, incorporating symbols such as a Fleury Plough to represent the Town's industrial history, mountains representing the rolling hills of the moraine, and a rising sun to represent "Aurora", the Roman goddess of the dawn.

"I believe in protocol; we have an official flag, so I think we should fly it," says Councillor Thom. "I think the crest and the symbolism behind the flag are really important, especially in today's society. Symbols are important, history is important, and I think they have the capacity to bring communities together because it connects us with our past. Whether your family has lived in Aurora since the days of Charles Doan in 1963, or whether you just moved into Town yesterday, it still has that capacity because symbols connect us to our place in Ontario.

"Local symbols are just as important as national and provincial symbols and I think maintaining them, protecting them and preserving them is important."

His drive to restore the former flag, however, is not a sleight of any sort on Aurora's corporate logo, which was adopted by Council in 2005, he says. It might bear the Town's slogan of "You're in Good Company", but the old crest will say so much more, he says. Corporate logos have purpose and importance, but that does not mean it should be on a flag.

"Flags are symbols and are very important to people and the one I am proposing to bring back to prominence is no different," he says. "The flag has only been around for just under 30 years, but the crest has been around since Aurora began. If someone was to look up and see the current flag, they might say, 'I'm in Good Company, that's great,' but if they look up and see our old flag, they might ask what the plough symbolizes, or what the sun symbolizes, and inevitably you will have to get into a discussion on the history of the Town.

"For me, it is important from more of a protocol standpoint, but also a historical and heritage standpoint. We want to preserve the heritage of Aurora, and this is a pretty easy way to do that."



Councillor Thom says he received an interesting reaction after tweeting a picture of Aurora's old flag decorating his campaign headquarters. He is pictured with it outside Town Hall.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

a cross of St. Andrew's, a variant of the flag of Scotland, emblazoned with Aurora's crest. After tweeting out a picture of his decorating scheme, however, he says he noticed a curious reaction.

"When we were playing hockey in Town back in the 1990s, someone procured a Town flag and we took it to tournaments and stuff like that down in the States and when I tweeted the picture, I had a really interesting response in people saying they hadn't seen that flag in years. I started paying more attention and realised the flag was nowhere to be seen."

A motion before Council this week could make the flag's absence, well, history.

Flying above Town Hall and other municipal facilities is a banner bearing Aurora's corporate logo. If Councillor Thom's motion is passed this week, the historic flag, crafted and approved by Council in 1988, coinciding with Aurora's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, will be waving once again.

In his motion, the Councillor sites Aurora's Official Flag as a "reflection of Aurora's distinct history and culture, and a symbol of the continuity of our

## Sports tourism should be part of Parks and Rec plan

From page 1

"It is not too bad today for most. It is not palatable, perhaps, but we're going to see 8,000 residents. How many cars does that represent in the next two years when we see plans fill up quickly?"

The acceleration of the interchange is one of several Councillor Thompson has been mulling over since last year's election campaign. In addition to a further motion coming forward this week which seeks to reaffirm Council's support of the Provincial Government's anti-SLAPP legislation, an initiative which got the thumbs-up in the last term, sport tourism, which is on the horizon, remains a high priority initiative in his book.

Talks are ongoing with stakeholders on ways to boost sport tourism, he says, including the idea of a Sport Development Officer at Town Hall, a position which was floated by a number of 2014 candidates.

"We are looking at some of the other municipalities who develop sport policy and sports plans and seeing if there

are opportunities there to incorporate some of that in Aurora to help really focus on our strategic objectives," says Councillor Thompson, noting a key portion of this will be a Master Parks and Recreation plan which will identify future needs and opportunities.

"There are some needs down the road for more facilities in certain areas of the Town as well so we can maintain those service levels of X number of fields for X number of residents, but in addition to it there is a little bit of a chicken and egg scenario. We do need a hotel in Town to allow us to pursue some of these tournaments and other sporting opportunities to drive economic business to Town and make Aurora attractive in that sense. At the same time, you have to develop these things to entice a developer to put up a hotel. How that is best approached, I don't know at this point, but that is part of the conversation of how to get there. There seems to be tremendous interest from the various sports groups as well as others to find a way forward."



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## Residents could use unlimited grocery bags if Clear Bag program is approved

From page 1

grocery bags within their clear bags.

"It seems like [the idea] is coming from a good place, but I don't know if everything was thought through," said Margaret, questioning who residents would turn to and complain if their garbage is ultimately inspected by the collectors and left on the curb.

"We're not worried about the personal things – we don't have anything to hide," added Rhonda Sanders with a chuckle. She and her husband, John, attended the meeting with several questions rather than to sound off for or against the plan. Among their questions was whether big garbage containers could still be used in the system (they can) and, like the Sussmans, where to go if there is a dispute with the collector.

"If the garbage man comes along and puts a tag on it, what do you do with it?" he asked. "Do you put it at your neighbour's and try again, or what? You should be able to call the Town and say you got this and have them look at the bag [to see] there is nothing there."

Helping to answer many of these questions was Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure and Environmental services. Many of the questions received on Monday were ones that have come in throughout the campaign, dominated primarily by the privacy concerns, cost, and the transition itself.

"I think what I am getting out of tonight's conversation is we're on the right track," he said. "I think the idea of unlimited grocery bags is really good. My goal going forward with this program is to make it as painless for the community as possible. All we're trying to do is create more awareness around where the materials need to go and the clear bag creates a little more consciousness around how you manage your waste."

"We're anticipating some cost savings in the long run based on Markham's experience and our primary goal is doing the right thing for the environment. We're talking about increasing our diversion rates

by upwards of 10 per cent and that is really at no cost to the Town."

Nothing, however, can be done without the greenlight from Council and Mayor Geoff Dawe, along with several Councillors, were on hand to hear their concerns. While some said they were fully on board with the project, others hoped to learn more before making their final decision.

"I am still in favour of it and still think it is the way to go," said Mayor Dawe. "[In terms of] dollars and cents, landfill is the cheapest way to go and, from that perspective, it is the cheapest alternative. From a long-term environmental perspective, it is the most expensive thing we can do. I think we owe it to our future generations to handle our waste in a responsible manner. It sounds a little Pollyanna-ish, but that is what I think."

"I think the toughest sell will be getting those people who are adamantly against it to use it. Whether or not we're going to implement it, we'll get the feedback from this meeting, the feedback from our online survey and see how that might go."

Mayor Dawe added one alternative on the backburner would be a different kind of soft launch in one particular undetermined part of Town that would act as a pilot area for the program.

Councillor John Abel, on the other hand, said he was ready to follow the lead of Markham with this program. While residents had concerns about privacy and costs, it all comes down to education, he added.

Other Councillors, such as Wendy Gaertner, Tom Mrakas and Jeff Thom, had more questions before they decided whether or not they would be on board. Councillor Gaertner, in particular, echoed the view that residents need to have someone to turn to if they have a dispute over whether their garbage should have been collected.

"That is going to be a big problem unless residents have someone to go to when they are upset," she said. "That is a concern I am hearing from the residents and I think it is justified."



Last week, "Team Depot," comprised of Home Depot employees from Aurora and Newmarket, were joined by an energetic team of volunteers as they took over Newmarket's Ken Sturgeon Park to construct an outdoor artificial ice rink for the communities. The team spent over five hours constructing the ice pad and over 20 volunteer hours were involved in the planning. Home Depot and RAM, the lumber supplier, donated 75 per cent of the material that went into its construction.

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# -THE AURORAN- Arts & Culture

## Theatre Aurora's Kimberly Akimbo: A Review



The story of a family, "Kimberly Akimbo" is performed by just five actors: (from left) Daniel Ciccarelli, Joanna Megraw, Angie Sapalovski, David Mouti, and Jamie Defoe.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

By Scott Johnston

A person is usually not expected to experience old age and first love at the same time in life, but the title character does just that in Theatre Aurora's

production of "Kimberly Akimbo".

In an unusual twist, Kimberly has the rare genetic disorder of progeria, which causes symptoms resembling rapid aging, with a result that most victims do not survive past their teens.

Even more unusually, the play, written by Pulitzer prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abaire, is a comedy.

The story takes place around the birthday of New Jersey teenager Kimberly. Despite her medical condition, she isn't the only one in her family with personal challenges. This includes her very pregnant and hypochondriac mother, her rarely sober father, and her scam-artist aunt.

Thrown in a dark family secret, the challenges of being an old woman at age 16, and that potential first love, and Kimberly has her hands full.

As was overheard in the audience at an early performance, "the characters in this are great - they're all different and unique."

Much of the credit for this goes to the terrific cast.

Joanna Megraw, an actor well beyond her teens, does a great job of portraying Kimberly as the youngest, but most stable-minded member of the family. An intelligent young lady, with all those teenage hopes and dreams, trapped in an aging body.

As swear jar-filling parents Pattie

and Buddy, Jamie Defoe and David Mouti have some excellent interactions with both each other and the other characters.

Young friend Jeff, played by Daniel Ciccarelli, gradually shows through the play that while not an adult, he is best able to see Kimberly's true self below her aging surface.

Much of the comic relief of the play comes through Aunt Debra, played by Angie Sapalovski. But she also shows some heart amongst all her unusual scams.

The show is directed by Theatre Aurora veteran actor and director Harry Lavigne who knows how to get the best work from his cast. He also makes excellent use of the simple but effective set, which is, appropriately for this play, slightly akimbo.

As one of the characters might say about this production; "neat party line sign" (an interesting play).

Evening performances of "Kimberly Akimbo" continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, February 12, 13 & 14. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.

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## Crafts, stories and fitness on tap at Hillary House

From page 3

initiative, events designed to celebrate the cultures of the Americas in conjunction with this summer's Pan Am and Parapan Games in Toronto.

Founded nearly 30 years ago as an outlet for youth in underprivileged areas in Toronto, teacher Wendy Jones has been with Pan Fantasy since the start. Over the decades, she and the founding members have watched the steel drum group grow and develop as these youth found their creative outlet to the world, eventually bringing their own children into the fold. It continues to serve as a vital outlet for the GTA, as well as communities further afield, to this day.

"When we started we were just coming out of school and moving on out of high school into universities and colleges and we saw an urgent need to form the group," says Ms. Jones on the foundations of the group, which has now been embraced by the Toronto School Board. "A lot of youth thought this was something new and different so they wanted to try it. Some dropped off, but most of us stayed with it in the community and we attracted more youth by playing out in the community and playing at other schools.

"The enticing part is once you have mastered the instruments you realise that you can play something totally different and you can play everything on the pan in terms of music. It is an instrument that carries an orchestra behind it. You can play jazz, pop, calypso, classical and I think that is what makes it popular with the kids. We even do a lot of hip hop with them." Come to the Cultural Centre to feel

the warm breeze brought on by the island sounds and, if you're brave, stay following the performance to try the pans for yourself as the group hosts a free try-it-yourself workshop.

"We're looking to bring the light of the entire community and light up Aurora with some nice, sweet music - and bring the warmth to Aurora as well," says Ms. Jones. "Hopefully we will be able to share with them our culture. We love it when kids start, so I am hoping [attendees] will grasp the fun we have playing the instruments. Once you learn it, you always want to keep playing it."

Hands-on activities are also the order of the day at Hillary House National Historic Site as the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) plans a day of stories, workshops, and even fitness.

Traditional crafts and refreshments will be on tap in the ballroom, with activities including scrapbooking and doll-making out of fabric. After 1.30, the ballroom will be cleared to make way for G.R. Fitness, who will lead a Family Fitness afternoon at 1.30. If you would rather be outside enjoying the snow, the hills behind Hillary House will be available for unsupervised tobogganing.

"I think it is a great idea to come out to Hillary House on Family Day because the house will be lively, fun and open like the house was when it was originally with the Hillary Family who had nine children running around," says Erika Mazanik of the AHS. "We often have people coming in and telling personal stories, so having events like this is a great opportunity for people to come in and see it for the first time."

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## International Women's Day panel brings together community leaders, Aboriginal advocates and local activists

From page 1

discussion, which brings together a wide range of community leaders on challenges faced by women at home and abroad.

"When I was asked, my response was, 'Why me?'" she says. "I haven't been particularly more involved in women's rights than in anybody else's rights. I see that they are all connected. With women's rights, I tend not to compartmentalize it because I think if you're harming one segment of society you're harming all of it."

Through her work, Ms. Leonard saw many things first hand with respect to how her clients, regardless of gender, experienced and the work that needed to be done to better their situation.

Her interest in law was first on the side of criminal law, working in her early years with lawyers such as Brian Greenspan. That firm handled many appeals and that taught her, she says, that you could win the battle but not the war due to many other factors.

"We came into contact with people who were in custody and had to deal with them and the issues that arose out of them being in custody," she says. "You would run into prisoners both male and female waiting for bail and you would look at what the real issues were for them, which were far more social work than law. When I went back and worked for another appellate counsel and we saw the same patterns, we decided it was an area to pursue."

At that time, the prison exclusively for women was still in use as women generally make up a significantly smaller portion of the Federal inmate population. As such, their resources were "considerably constrained."

"It was simple things like visiting rights, how you were made to feel when you visited your husband, son or your father in there," she recalls. "How were the men dealt with? What were the issues of their being able to go when their loved one was in custody? With the availability of resources going into halfway houses for men, what were the

resources for women?"

Allocation of resources was a key part of the problem, she says. Reflecting on her career, she says it is difficult to say whether male or female inmates were treated differently in the courts due to their gender, but it was more of an issue of the systems themselves being different. Resources were different, the number of facilities were different, and programs to help bring people back into the community were different.

*"With women's rights, I tend not to compartmentalize it because I think if you're harming one segment of society you're harming all of it."*

As host of the March 5 Panel, Ms. Leonard brings together the differing experiences and expertise of economist Carole Houlihan, who specializes in gender equality issues and women's economic empowerment, Becky Big Canoe, a prominent advocate for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Lorris Herenda, Executive Director of Yellow Brick House, and lawyer Tahirih Naylor, who worked with the United Nations on issues ranging from equality to environmental justice.

"They are vastly more qualified to comment on things given their background and that is why they have been asked: to deal with issues that are close to their hearts, their careers, and they can share with the community what is happening locally, and on a global scale, be it the economic perspective from what we need to do to allow more freedom in a variety of



Sandra Leonard  
Photo by the Aurora Public Library

countries to what we need to even the playing field." says Ms. Leonard. "If you go look to certain events in the news and you are appalled by it, whether it is the kidnapping of schoolgirls by Boko Haram and you feel helpless, hopefully there is some consensus that this is a problem for all people, not just women, and not just schoolgirls."

"I hope people in the community don't think, 'Oh, it's a panel on women's rights. I'm not a woman, what does that have to do with me?' It has to do with your sisters, your mothers, your daughters, and the entire community. I hope we get a good group from the entire community to hear what these fabulous panelists have to say."

Discussions get underway March 5 from 7 - 9 p.m. at the Aurora Public Library. Free tickets are now available by calling 905-727-9494 x275.

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## Tigers win-streak hits double digits for third time this season

By Brock Weir

It's been the same story for the Junior A Aurora Tigers team all season – they just keep winning.

The team earned its ninth and tenth wins in a row this weekend on the road, adding the accomplishment to their two eleven-game winning streaks put together earlier this OJHL season.

After clinching the division last week, and with the Northeast Conference within their grasp, they were hosted by the Stouffville Spirit on Saturday.

The last time the Tigers suffered a loss was at the hands of the Spirit back on January 9, and the Spirit are heading back to the playoffs for the first time in three seasons.

However, it was Aurora's game from the get-go as captain Michael Laidley gave the visiting team the early lead just three minutes in.

Cameron Morrison continued his stellar rookie campaign a few minutes later, notching his 28th goal of the season on the power play for the 2 – 0 lead after one.

Laidley capitalized again in the second period, followed by Callum

Fryer, which prompted a goaltending change in the Stouffville net.

But not all the blame can be placed on starting netminder Aaron Taylor, who had to face 29 Tigers shots in just over half a game played.

The change in net seemed to spark the Spirit, who broke the shutout in the last minute of the second with Kyle Locke serving a double minor.

With Locke still in the box at the start of the third, Stouffville's Spencer Roberts buried his second of the game to cut the lead to two.

That would be as close as they would come, however, with Liam Neuman putting away the game for good off helpers from Mack Lemmon and Locke.

The Pickering Panthers are struggling to stay afloat these days, and were given no help by the powerhouse Tigers on Sunday as they looked to move into a playoff position.

It was 3 – 0 Aurora less than fifteen minutes into the action, as Eric Williams, Johnny Curran and Lemmon put the game out of reach early.

Morrison and Keaton Ratcliffe added two more before the final buzzer for a 5 – 2 win.

Morrison picked up four points over



Cam Morrison and Tiger captain Michael Laidley celebrate a goal against the Stouffville Spirit. The Tigers defeated the Spirit 5 - 2 in Stouffville last Saturday.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

the weekend and is now on an over a point-a-game pace with only four games left on the schedule.

What has often been overshadowed this season by offensive production is the efficiency of the Aurora goaltending tandem, as Marcus Semiao once again proved himself to be one of the best backups in the league and the future of the Tigers. He stopped 29 shots in the contest.

His 13 – 0 record has provided much relief for starting goalie Andy Munroe, also putting up a career season.

The Tigers can tie their season

record for wins in a row in a visit south of the border on Wednesday after press-time. They take on the Buffalo Jr. Sabres, who had the Tigers' number in a 4 – 3 victory in their only other meeting this season.

Only one home game remains on the schedule, but with the success of the regular season one can anticipate – and expect – to see some quality playoff action at the Aurora Community Centre.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit [www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com](http://www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com).

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## Local funding puts young athletes back in the game

By Jake Courtepatte

Sport Aurora is looking for your help to make sure that no child sits on the sidelines.

The umbrella group for countless sports organizations in the local community recently received two large boosts to its "All Kids Can Play" program, an initiative aimed at providing funds for children to play sports whose families otherwise could not afford it.

Julie and Walter Karabin, as well as ex-Maple Leaf Kris King, contributed \$2,500 to the program through their 2K 4 KIDS fundraiser.

Another boost came in the form of a \$5,000 cheque from the Rotary Club of Aurora, one of the program's founding donors in 2012.

With the program now in its fourth year, All Kids Can Play has provided over \$15,000 worth of funding to young local athletes and their families, while working with Canadian Tire's JumpStart program.

"One of the objectives that Sport Aurora has is to increase participation," said Ron Weese, president of Sport Aurora. "We looked at ways we could do that, and of course one of the obstacles was finances."

A 2011 Ipsos-Reid survey found that one in three Canadian families cannot afford to enroll their children in sport and recreational activities due to financial barriers.

As the Ontario education system has yet to adopt the requisite 60 minutes of physical activity per day in curricular activities, many school-age children are

not getting the exercise they need strictly through the schoolyard.

Aside from the health risks, a lack of athletic participation poses a social issue as well.

"Participation in sport activities is crucial to community integration, after school and the church," said Weese. "What we want to do for new people coming into town is make sure to plug



Walter and Julie Karabin of 2K 4KIDS, and Sarah Smith, Chair of All Kids Can Play.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

them into one of our sports organizations as quickly as possible."

"If children don't have the opportunity to be involved in sport, sometimes they're left on the outside. We really do have to make a situation where a child has a 'right' to play."

According to All Kids Can Play Chair Sarah Smith, the program has provided funding for approximately 65 athletes over the last two years alone.

As this number continues to grow, so does the need for funding from service organizations, individuals, and companies.

Continued on page 13



PROUDLY SUPPORTING LOCAL SPORTS

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# Dreams become reality for Aurora student Femi-Cole

By Jake Courtepatte

For the Canadian high-school athlete, the NCAA's Division 1 (D1) can seem so far away and unachievable playing in a market often overlooked.

But for St. Andrew's College's Jonathan Femi-Cole, that dream became a reality Wednesday when he signed a commitment to play football next year for the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers.

"Growing up you dream about going to a D1 school, but growing up in Canada that dream seems a lot more far-fetched," said Femi-Cole. "The fact that I am living this dream and I have been given the opportunity to play for a great program is something that I can't even put into words."

The running back is expected to join around 20 players in the Gopher's 2015 recruiting class, and his numbers back up his talent. In eight games as a senior, Femi-Cole rushed for over 1,600 yards and twelve touchdowns. Scouts had him ranked as the number one running back prospect in Ontario.

His physical attributes are equally as impressive – he runs the 40-yard dash in 4.5 seconds, bench presses 330 pounds and has a 40-inch vertical.

"I started lifting when I was young, I've been around personal trainers a lot."

Upon his arrival at SAC three years ago, coaching staff at the college knew right away the potential within the young athlete, including head football coach Len Gurr.

"We knew he had the potential to accomplish great things," said Gurr. "To see him here three years later is a thrill for all of us. I have said it time and time

again, but Jonathan is arguably the most naturally talented football player I have coached, and we have had some truly great players come through our program over the years."

It was only fitting that Femi-Cole officially signed his commitment papers on campus, surrounded by friends, family, teammates, and coaching staff in the Yuill Andean Room within the La Brier Family Arena.

"I will be forever grateful for the opportunities I have been given here at St. Andrew's College," said Femi-Cole. "The chance to grow academically and athletically has truly paved the way for me...it truly is a special place."

One of the oldest programs in college football, the Golden Gophers participate in the highly-competitive Big Ten Conference, most recently coming up short in the 2015 Citrus Bowl to the Missouri Tigers.

With the graduation of David Cobb, the starting tailback position is wide open for the Aurora native to work toward. He has stated that his goal is to start and make an impact as a freshman player.

Schools such as Iowa State, Virginia, Virginia Tech, Colorado, and Louisville also put in bids for the running back, but his loyalty to the Gophers remained strong following a campus visit hosted by fellow Canadian and Vanier College alum Julien Kafo.



Len Gurr (Varsity Football Head Coach), Jonathan Femi-Cole, and Michael Carroll (Varsity Football Assistant Coach) celebrate Femi-Cole's signing his NCAA D1 football scholarship at St. Andrew's College last week. Photo by Paul Mosey

## Boost for sports program

From page 12

"We do a balancing act," said Weese. "The perfect balance is a flow of funds coming in from donors, with enough to send out the other way. That's how we can help the most amount of people."

100% of funds donated go directly to the cause.

"All those who are interested in making sure that all kids can play in Aurora can go to the website and inquire."

The 27 different organizations that Sport Aurora works with often match the donations provided, in order to give as much assistance as possible.

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# First drop of paint inaugurates new art room at Williams

By Brock Weir

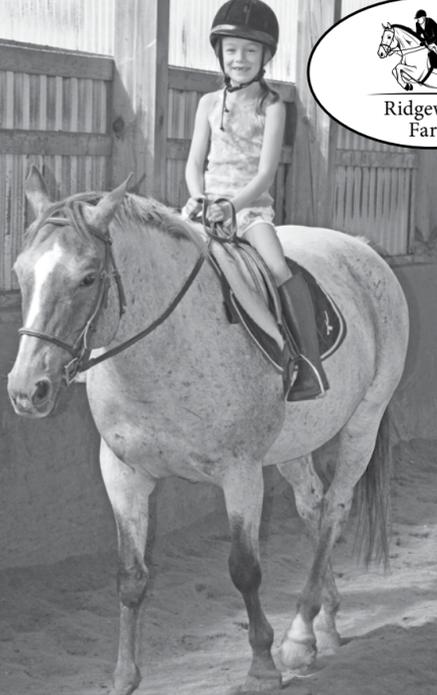
It doesn't take much to make a newly redecorated room look lived in, but most people are loath to make the first move – especially if the room in question is intended to be used for something messy.

experienced by the staff and students at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School as they moved back into their newly renovated and modernized art room after months of shuttling back and forth throughout the school in less than ideal conditions to allow their creativity to run wild.



Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School principal Christopher Hilmer, centre, cuts the ribbon on the new art room, joined by Grade 12 students Hillary and Breanna, teacher Andy McClure, and Grade 10 students Miku, Julia and Maddy.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir





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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14				15					16				
17				18					19				
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60						61			62		63		
64						65					66		
67						68					69		

### CLUES ACROSS

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Glasgow inhabitant             | 41. Fictional elephant                  |
| 5. Dangerous tidal bore           | 42. Grave                               |
| 10. Prevents harm to creatures    | 43. 12th month (abbr.)                  |
| 14. Upper class                   | 44. Knights' garment                    |
| 15. Caused an open infection      | 45. One point S of due E                |
| 16. Styptic                       | 46. Lender Sallie                       |
| 17. Am. Nat'l. Standards Inst.    | 47. Express pleasure                    |
| 18. Muse of lyric poetry and mime | 48. Grassland, meadow                   |
| 19. He fiddled                    | 49. Vikings state                       |
| 20. Afrikaans                     | 52. Deck for divination                 |
| 22. Don't know when yet           | 55. Mountain                            |
| 23. Mottled cat                   | 56. Cavalry sword                       |
| 24. 1803 USA purchase             | 60. Largest known toad species          |
| 27. Engine additive               | 61. Once more                           |
| 30. Reciprocal of a sine          | 63. Cavity                              |
| 31. King Cole, musician           | 64. Paper this tin plate                |
| 32. Time in the central U.S.      | 65. Slang for backward                  |
| 35. Insect pupa sheaths           | 66. James ____, American steam engineer |
| 37. Prefix denoting "in a"        | 67. Sea eagles                          |
| 38. Okinawa port city             | 68. Wooded                              |
| 39. Capital of Pais-de-Calais     | 69. Expression of annoyance             |
| 40. Small amount                  |   |

### CLUES DOWN

- |                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Spawn of an oyster         | 34. Slightly late              |
| 2. Town near Venice           | 36. Taxi                       |
| 3. Bone (pl.)                 | 37. Political action committee |
| 4. Pair of harness shafts     | 38. Grab                       |
| 5. Midway between E and SE    | 40. Between 13 & 19            |
| 6. Of a main artery           | 41. Body cleansings            |
| 7. Catches                    | 43. Newsman Rather             |
| 8. Maintained possession      | 44. Great school in Mass.      |
| 9. Old Tokyo                  | 46. Technology school          |
| 10. Yemen capital             | 47. Have a great ambition      |
| 11. Commoner                  | 49. Groans                     |
| 12. Street border             | 50. Fill with high spirits     |
| 13. Old Xiamen                | 51. Expressed pleasure         |
| 21. Soul and calypso songs    | 52. Modern London gallery      |
| 23. Explosive                 | 53. A gelling agent in foods   |
| 25. Put into service          | 54. Dilapidation               |
| 26. Swiss river               | 57. Swine                      |
| 27. Territorial division      | 58. Footwear museum city       |
| 28. Pulse                     | 59. Respite                    |
| 29. Hair curling treatments   | 61. Creative activity          |
| 32. Small group of intriguers | 62. Slight head motion         |

### Last Week's Puzzle Solution

<b>PUZZLE SOLUTION</b>	F	O	P		C	P	S		S	C	A	B					
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							E	M	F		P	E	A	K			
	T	O	M	B	E	R	G	E	R	O	N						
	I	N	H	A	L	E	D			B	O	G					
	L	E	O	N	E							I	C	A	C	O	
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O	W	E	N		L	E	Y					L	T	S			

was important," says Williams art teacher Andy McClure with a laugh. "The first clogged sink. All the firsts. One of the Grade 10s came in and tipped over a bucket of white paint. It hit the floor and went everywhere. One of our other art teachers was here, the student had paint all over themselves and all over the walls, and he said, 'Finally! Now we can all relax because somebody has spilt and it is now officially an art room.'"

Upcoming graduates, and soon-to-be Grade 10s were on hand to help cut the ribbon on the new art space last week. While the older students were excited to be back in the room after making due with cramped, confined, and occasionally dark spaces elsewhere in the school, the younger students were eager to begin leaving their mark on the space next year.

"On a simple level, the renovation was just to increase the efficiency of the room and all those things, but also to continue to support the idea that this is a place where creativity, critical thinking, and community involvement is happening, where we can continue to be a hub and a centre of new things to happen."

The art room renovation is part of an extensive and ongoing plan of renovation at Aurora's oldest operational high school. The art room itself was constructed in 1956 and very little about it had changed since then. According to Principal Christopher Hilmer, a lot of thought was put into how this space could be turned into the ideal art room.

"We really put some thought into how we could make this a practical space where creativity can still run free," he

says. "With the room being so long and narrow, it wasn't an efficient teaching and instructional space because you would have the teacher at one end and the students so far away at the other end. Because it was so narrow, there weren't a lot of options for storage as well."

Storage, he says, was a top priority, as was keeping the maple strip flooring which combines with sunlight coming in from the courtyard windows to provide ideal conditions for art.

While Mr. McClure is looking forward to the space to be complete, he is also looking forward to a fresh crop of students getting into this room on the ground level.

"The nice thing about this is we have a new generation of students all coming in and what we have said to them is they are actually part of the planning and organization of this space," he says. "What they tell us is what is working and what is not working and they will be a part of the continuum of how this room functions and operates. We're still learning how to adapt to the space that we have. The kids that are coming in are now part of the way in which the room is being shaped."

Science labs, structurally untouched since 1952, have now been upgraded with new lab stations, allowing for space both for desks for traditional classwork as well as experiments, new heating systems and lighting. All of this started when Williams looked to upgrade their boiler systems and the school board looked for ways to get the best bang for their buck on the project.

Further renovations on the docket include work on athletic spaces such as the weight room.



# Blues Bash

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# COMING EVENTS

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Amnesty International writes letters on current human rights issues tonight at 7.30 p.m. at The Rectory, Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street. All welcome. For more information, call 905-713-6713.

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

A great evening of theatre is in store tonight at the Aurora Seniors' Centre from 7 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. This will be an evening of theatre and entertainment by members of the Newmarket Stage Company, containing comedy, drama, and music. Tickets are \$10 each, which includes the show, refreshments and door prizes. The show is not suitable for children. Tickets are on sale at the Centre. Get your tickets early as there will be no tickets sold at the door. Doors open at 6.45 p.m.

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

The Royal Canadian Legion will host a Valentine's Dinner and Dance tonight, with dinner set for 7 p.m. Tickets are \$14 per person. Disc jockey for your dancing and listening pleasure. Come out and spend the night with someone you love, or meet someone new! For more information, call 905-727-9932.

\*\*\*\*

The Aurora Cultural Centre marks Valentine's Day with the Judy Marshak Quartet, which takes the stage tonight at 8 p.m. Come to the cabaret - join Marshak for a Valentine's Day tribute to the great classic love songs - and some not-so-classic-un-love-songs - from such legends as Johnny Mercer, Cole Porter and Henry Mancini, along with some newer music and original tunes! Tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 on the day of the concert. For more information, call 905-713-1818.

\*\*\*\*

Celebrate Valentine's Day with the Love Train

Revue. The annual event features George St. Kitts, along with Billy Newton-Davis, Kenni Hite, Jivaro Smith, Nicole Robinson, and Coco Lorraine Veira. The Love Train Revue kicks off at Newmarket Theatre (505 Pickering Crescent) at 8 p.m. For more information, including tickets and timing visit [www.newmarkettheatre.ca](http://www.newmarkettheatre.ca).

## MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Celebrate Family Day at the Town of Aurora's Arctic Adventure! The Adventure gets underway at Town Park at 10 a.m., running through 4 p.m. Activities include professional ice carving, outdoor winter games, snow tubing, ice fishing and snowshoeing, and live entertainment. For a full roster of activities, visit [www.aurora.ca](http://www.aurora.ca). Additional Family Day programming is also planned for the Aurora Cultural Centre and Hillary House National Historic Site.

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

The Aurora Historical Society will hold its Annual General Meeting tonight at 7.30 p.m. at the Aurora Cultural Centre. Guest speaker: Shawna White, curator of the Aurora Museum. Topics include the year in review, plans for 2015, and nominations for this year's board of directors. For more information, call the AHS at 905-727-8991.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

The Royal Canadian Legion hosts the Daytona 500 Nascar Fun Party this afternoon, beginning at 1 p.m. Enjoy the race in the comfort of our lounge, relax and cheer your favourite driver. For more information, call 905-727-9932.

## TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

The Canadian Federation of University Women Aurora/Newmarket meets at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) at 7.15 p.m.

Dr. Hans Martin, atmospheric physicist and local beekeeper will speak about bees, climate and the environment. Honey for sale! All are welcome. For more information, call Judy Craig at 905-895-8713 or visit [www.cfuwauroranewmarket.com](http://www.cfuwauroranewmarket.com).

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Big Brothers Big Sisters of York will host their annual Bowl For Kids' Sake day in Aurora. Events get underway at 1 p.m. at Gateway Café and Lanes. Additional tournaments are set for Georgina, Newmarket, Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill, and Bradford. Choose a location and pick a time. Call the Bowling Hotline at 905-726-2149 x324 to reserve your lanes.

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Garden Aurora! "Growing Summer Bulbs": Dugald Cameron will share with the Aurora Garden Club his experiences, tips and secrets for growing glorious summer bulbs. Meetings of the Aurora Garden Club are held at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) at 8 p.m. Please join us for the speaker of the month and the opportunity to become a member.

For further information, visit [www.gardenaaurora.com](http://www.gardenaaurora.com) or call 905-713-6660.

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

The Aurora Public Library presents Money Talks - Silent Robbers of Our Earnings. The free informal, monthly discussion group takes place tonight at 7 p.m. in the Library's Magna Room. No financial products or services will be offered or sold, directly or indirectly. To register and for more information, contact the Adult Information Desk at 905-727-9494 x275.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 14

The White Heather Pipes and Drums presents their annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Dance, marking the night when we're all a little bit Irish, at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North). Enjoy a dinner of Irish stew with all the fixings, along with some great music. Performance by the White Heather Pipes and Drums and Aurora's own Delaye Drive. Cocktails begin at 6 p.m. with dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 with entry after dinner at \$5. Tickets for dinner must be purchased in advance through the Legion or from band members.

## MARKET MUSINGS

### From page 5

activities in Town Park, including ice skating. So after participating with your family in the outdoor activities, be sure to come inside to warm up, have a coffee of tea, something delicious to eat and see what our amazing vendors have available.

At press time, the following are the vendors who are expected to be at the Armouries market: The farmers will be 19th Avenue Farm, Highmark Farm, Oakridges Finest, Pioneer Honey, Snowden Farm and YRFN. The food

vendors will include Jan's Country Pantry, Rustic Bread, Catharina's Kitchen, Boulangerie St. George and Dos Mariachis Restaurant. Green River Coffee will be there to provide coffee and tea. The artisans will include Catch my Drift, Eva Designs, Green Leaf Designs, Heartsease Co. and Kibo Soaps.

There will be another indoor market on Saturday, February 21st at the Aurora Cultural Centre from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

*See you at the indoor market!*

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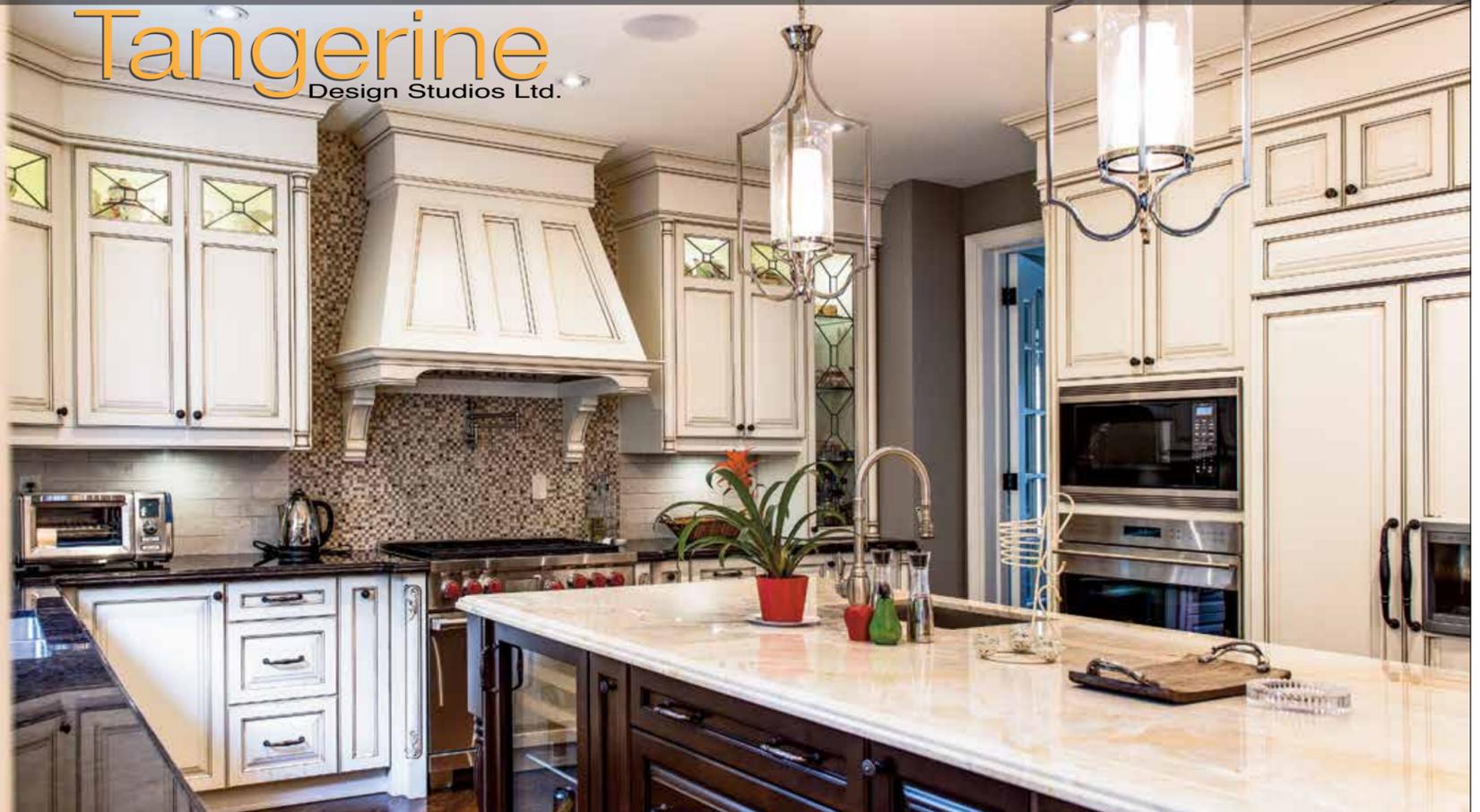
Newmarket-Aurora Federal Liberal Association  
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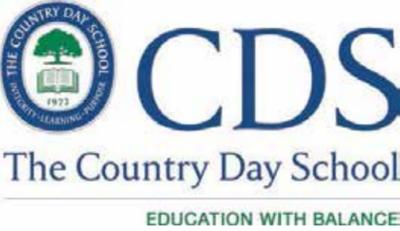
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