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THE AUR

Aurora's Community Newspaper

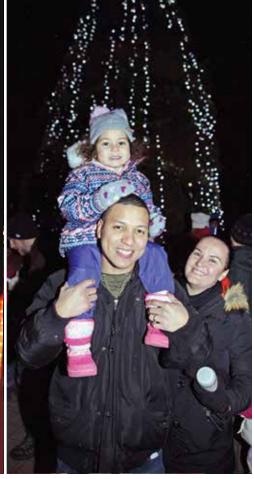
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theauroran.com FREE

Week of December 14, 2017 CMCA







SHINE ON – Fresh off his appearance at last month's Santa Under the Stars Parade, Santa Claus made a return engagement in Aurora on Wednesday night for the Town's annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. This year's ceremony had a few extra special touches in addition to the brilliantly blazing Christmas Tree itself, enjoyed by (right) Paul, Isabella and Lena, but for full details, you'll want to turn to Page 22.

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2.4% tax increase set for approval

By Brock Weir

combined residential tax bill rise by 2.4 per cent in the year ahead.

Council is poised to give their final

approval to the 2018 Budget this week. Their approval will see the municipal portion of your tax bill rise 3.1 per cent which, when calculated and weighted with a 2.87 per cent tax increase on the Regional portion of the tax bill, along with a neutral impact on the educational contribution, this comes

Menorah to be lit

following graffiti

incidents

By Brock Weir

out at a combined rate of 2.4 per cent.

homeowners can expect to see an increase of \$168.29 for the year (\$80.52 for Aurora's portion).

The increase of 3.1 per cent is in keeping with the target set by Council earlier this year and has been achieved through several meetings' worth of

negotiations. "At its July 2016 meeting, Council approved specific budget preparation directions for staff," says Town

Treasurer Dan Elliott in his report For the average Aurora residential before Council this week. "The base Aurora residents will see their property assessed at \$770,000, budget was to result in a tax increase of not more than inflation, with a further 1 per cent increase to assist in funding the Town's long term financial strategies related to unsustainable revenues and needed funding for

infrastructure sustainability." In short, this extra one per cent will go further to reduce the Town's reliance on interests from the Hydro Reserves and other sources to keep the tax rate

Continued on page 6

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger RF (RADIOFREQUENCY) FACAIL SKIN REJUVENATION, IPL - ACNE HAIR REMOVAL - ALL SKIN TYPES CONTOURING - SCULPSURE, ZERONA, VENUS FREEZE **Now Also Offering BOTOX, FILLERS EYELASHE EXTENSIONS** GLOW - Chemical Peels (ACNE, ANTI-AGING) 160 WELLINGTON EAST #1 IN AURORA



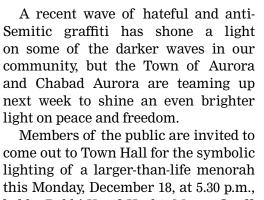
16686 Yonge St., Newmarket (905) 895-4084 **Across from Mandarin Buffet Restaurant**





A TREE GROWS IN AURORA - and, chances are, some of them were planted by former Parks Manager Jim Tree. After 38 years with the Town, Mr. Tree, an Aurora native, is set to retire next year. He is pictured here outside Aurora's Joint Operations Centre, which has been his office for the past year. For more, see Page 21.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir



lighting of a larger-than-life menorah this Monday, December 18, at 5.30 p.m., led by Rabbi Yosef Hecht, Mayor Geoff Dawe and members of Council.

Monday is the seventh day of the eight-day festival of lights and this



Ontario, L4E 3N7

Offers end January 2nd

Notice Board



i Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
T Thursday, December 14	5:30 p.m.	Holland Room	Finance Advisory Committee
			Cancelled
Thursday, December 14	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Public Planning Cancelled

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

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

Public Notices

Notice of service disruptions

Please see below for the scheduled service disruption at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex:

The lane and swim and spa pool programs running from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. will be cancelled effective Monday, November 6 for the remainder of the fall season.

Please see below for the scheduled service disruption at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex:

Leisure Swim will be cancelled on Tuesday, December 19 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. due to staff training.

For more information, visit aurora.ca/news.

Register now for winter programs & aquatics

The Winter 2018 Parks, Recreation and Culture Program Guide has been distributed to all residents via the Banner Newspaper.

Registrations are open for winter programs and aquatics. To register, visit aurora.ca/recguide.

IMPORTANT: Waste and Recycling Collection Dates are Changing for 2018

Please see the full-page Town ad in this week's Auroran newspaper describing the waste collection map changes starting on January 1, 2018. For more information, visit aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling.

December Skylight Gallery Artist

The Skylight Gallery in December will feature the art of Sandra Crozier, who lives life expressing her creativity with luscious, brilliant colours.

Sandra experiments with exciting textures and is constantly searching for new, innovative ways to express herself.

Sandra's artwork stretches the boundaries of abstract painting. While sweeping fluid acrylics across a canvas, Sandra is able to achieve a brilliant explosion of colour.

Regular viewing times are Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Aurora Town Hall, 3rd Floor.

What's Happening

Volunteer or donate to the 2017 **Salvation Army Christmas Kettle**

The Town of Aurora is pleased to once again support the 2017 Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Drive in Aurora. We are calling volunteers to man kettles at one of the locations in Town. If you are available to help, please call The Salvation Army Central York Region at 905-895-6276 ext. 208.

If you would like more information about the Salvation Army, or to make a donation online, please visit salvationarmycentralyork.ca.

2 a.m. to 6 a.m. Overnight Parking Restrictions

Our bylaw states that cars must be off the road between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. between November 15 and April 15. As a courtesy to residents, we are not enforcing when the weather is fair and there is no need for any winter maintenance or

We thank you for your co-operation in keeping the roads free from parked vehicles during the prohibited times.

Town hosts its first-ever Menorah Lighting Ceremony

The Town of Aurora, in partnership with Chabad Aurora, will host a Menorah Lighting Ceremony at Town Hall on Monday, December 18 at 5:30 p.m.

The Mayor and members of Council will be joined by Rabbi Yosef Hecht, spiritual leader and Executive Director of Chabad Aurora, for the ceremony.

The menorah will be lit on the seventh day of the eight-day festival of lights, commemorating the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in second century BCE. To rededicate the temple, the Jewish people needed oil to light the menorah but they could only find enough to keep the flames burning for one night. Miraculously, the oil lasted for eight days.

All members of the public are welcome to attend the Menorah Lighting Ceremony.

Thank You

2017 Santa Under the Stars Parade

The success of the Santa Under the Stars Parade would not be possible without the support of our community partners and friends. The Town of Aurora would like to express our appreciation to the Optimist Club of Aurora for their exceptional marshalling job, Don Valley REACT for crowd control and York Regional Police and the York Regional Police Auxiliary Unit for traffic control.

A special thank you goes to the volunteers from the Northridge Salvation Army for collecting food donations and Santa's letters at the beginning of the parade.

A BIG thank you to all those who donated time, equipment, services and goodwill to the 2017 Aurora Santa Claus Parade:

- Aurora Community Volunteers
- Canadian Tire Aurora
- **Casey Transportation**
- St. Andrew's Shopping Centre
- St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club
- Town of Aurora Parks Department
- Town of Aurora Public Works Department

Thank you to all the participants who spent countless hours preparing for this magical

Congratulations to our 2017 Santa Claus Parade Winners:

- Best Commercial A2Y Dance Inc.
- Best Non Commercial The Salvation Army
- Best Service Club The Optimist Club of Aurora
- Best Decorated Silhouettes of York Rhythmic Gymnastics Club
- Best School –Aurora Montessori School
- Most Original Royal Wood Shop
- Mayor's Choice Aurora Historical Society











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Winter Holiday Service Schedule aurora.ca • 905-727-1375



MUNICIPAL OFFICE • 100 John West Way

Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way) will be CLOSED starting Monday, December 25 and reopens Tuesday, January 2, 2018. Regular business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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 paytickets.ca



AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY • 15145 Yonge Street

The Aurora Public Library will be **CLOSED** on from on December 24, 25, 26 and 31, as well as January 1, 2018. For more information, please visit aurorapl.ca or call 905-727-9494.



WASTE COLLECTION

Waste collection is **NOT AFFECTED** by the Winter Holidays. For more information on waste collection in Aurora, please consult your 2017 Waste Management Guide and Recycling Calendar.



RECREATION CENTRES

Recreation centres including the **Aurora Family Leisure Complex** and the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex will be operating with modified

For a full list of hours of operation and program opportunities including fitness classes, pool, gymnasium, rock wall and The Loft hours, please visit aurora.ca/holidayrecreation

Please note, the Aurora Seniors' Centre is CLOSED on December 25, 26 and January 1, 2018.

SERVICES

EMERGENCY For Town-related emergency situations such as flooding, watermain breaks or downed trees, please call 905-727-1375 or 905-727-3123 and follow the voice prompts.

FOR ALL OTHER EMERGENCIES, CALL 9-1-1







Aurora Town Hall

🛄 905-727-1375 📑 905-726-4732 阕 info@aurora.ca 📐 aurora.ca













Accessible Formats

















Midday and evening GO Train service coming weekdays in January



Minister of Transportation Steven Del Duca makes the rail service expansion announcement at the Aurora GO Station in the middle of Tuesday's snow. He is joined by, from left, Phil Verster, President & CEO of Metrolinx, York Region Chair Wayne Emmerson and Newmarket-Aurora MPP Chris Ballard.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Breakthrough

Treatment For

Sciatica

Do you experience lower back pain, pain in the buttocks or leg

that is worse when sitting, hip pain,

burning or tingling down the leg,

weakness, numbness, or difficulty

moving the leg or foot, a constant

pain on one side of the buttocks

and/or a shooting pain that makes

it difficult to stand up? You may be

suffering with a condition known as

of a spinal nerve root in the lower

back, often owing to degeneration of

when a herniated disc, bone spur on

the spine or narrowing of the spine

(spinal stenosis) compresses part of

the nerve. This causes inflammation,

your doctor and get pills to help

relieve your symptoms. But you

find the symptoms keep returning.

Alternatively, the doctor may refer

you to a specialist who may tell you

that surgery is needed or is an option

However, many people are hesitant to have surgery given its invasive

nature. It is important to know

that although surgery is sometimes

necessary, it is considered a last

there are serious health risks

associated with chronic use (or

Also, you may have heard that

resort in most cases.

You go to the drug store or to

an intervertebral disc.

Sciatica is defined as compression

Sciatica most commonly occurs

sciatica.

affected leg.

for you.

highly effective approach that has helped many sufferers improve their lives dramatically: Laser therapy uses light to favor and accelerate the body's natural healing processes. The innovative Multiwave Locked System (MLS) Laser produces a safe, efficient and simultaneous effect on pain, inflammation and nerve conduction, exceeding the limits of traditional LLLT (Low power) and concerns of HP (High power) laser therapy.

According to multiple studies MLS laser therapy appears to be uniquely capable of decreasing the

> Many of our patients have reported a 90-95% relief of their symptoms, more mobility, increased sensation and vastly improved function!

inflammation around the spinal cord and shows great promise in the battle against the devastating sequelae of this condition.

What does this mean for you?

Many of our patients have reported pain and often some numbness in the a 90-95% relief of their symptoms, more mobility, increased sensation and vastly improved function!

It is the very latest in medical technology, with years of clinical studies supporting its safety and efficacy and we are very proud to offer our patients effective solutions to their recent or chronic conditions.

"This new, natural, safe and highly effective approach has helped many sufferers improve their lives dramatically".

Come in and allow us to help you achieve the results you deserve! Call (905) 773-2225 to book your FREE consultation and examination at King West Wellness Centre 141 King Rd.,

By Brock Weir

to the subway – is set to get easier in the coming weeks.

Hourly two-way train service on the Barrie corridor during the midday and evenings, along with extra morning, afternoon and late evening trips between Union Station and the Bradford GO, will come into effect on January 2.

The announcement was made by Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca on the blustery platform of the Aurora Station on Tuesday morning.

In addition to the increased train service, the Minister announced that weekend GO Train service along the corridor would be increased to an hourly service starting this December 30 and all GO Trains will serve the new Downsview Park GO Station, connecting commuters to the new Line 1 subway extension in York Region.

"Our commuters have consistently asking us for more trains Getting in and out of the city - and and connections to the broader transit network which spans our Region,"

Continued on page 4



Highland Automotive Professionals would like to introduce their Service Manager Mo Chehade



My name is Mo Chehade, and I am the Service Manager at the Highland Chevrolet Buick GMC Cadillac Dealership in Aurora. I have 16 years of experience in the automotive service industry.

My wife and I have been married for 15 years and have two beautiful kids; Maya and Bilal. I am an active member of the Aurora Soccer Club. I play on two teams out of the Highland GM Park. Having been an Aurora resident for 20 years, I am happy to be able to now work in this community.

I am very excited about my new role at Highland. pleasure to be a part of an organization that goes above and beyond to meet and satisfy the needs not only of customers but employees as well. I am family oriented and believe in providing nothing less than safe, detailed, and thorough work for our customers.

Your satisfaction is of our utmost importance, and any questions or concerns that our customers have for me is my first priority.

Email: service@highlandgm.com Direct Service: (905) 727-7787



Special







15783 Yonge St., Aurora Auto Campus



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

It's the "beginning of the end" of neighbourhood, says reader

The southwest corner of Aurora is the last vestige of '60s bungalows cherished by their owners as part of our heritage, but these classic neighbourhoods are slowly being invaded by oversized homes which the city building departments are blindly approving without respecting the charming neighbourhoods they are randomly being dropped into.

The lure of these last few areas of "Old Aurora" with large lots is understanding, but, at the same time, the city must respect the charm of these neighbourhoods and be sensitive to only approving new builds that integrate and not alienate.

An example of such alienation is a new 3,400 square foot build that was blindly approved on Seaton Drive, which will surely dwarf its bungalowdwelling neighbours and negatively change the landscape.

Please respect these neighbourhoods and actually visit them prior to stamping approvals to show you respect their charm and the people that live here.

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

Go trains will soon connect to subway extension

From page 3

said Del Duca. "I want everyone to know that here in Newmarket-Aurora and beyond, we have been listening closely to the concerns and to the requests for more GO Service. [With this announcement] we are nearly doubling the number of weekly GO Train trips between Union Station and Aurora GO. That's 230 train trips per week on the Barrie line, up from the current 118 train trips."

Added Phil Verster, President and CEO of Metrolinx: "We will be adding hundreds - and, sometimes during the day, thousands – of seats and capacity along the route, which will be fantastic for our customers. It provides us with the capacity to grow our service and boardings every day from around 1,800 to 2,700 over the next two years. That is around a 50 per cent increase in footfall and it just shows what a contribution it will make to the Region and along the

"We are really excited about the fact that these journeys will shave up to 44 minutes off a single journey for customers who use our services. We look forward to continue to do exciting things."

Along with the increased service, January will also bring a savings to commuters. In the New Year, adults, senior, youth and student commuters using PRESTO cards will pay a TTC fare of \$1.50 when transferring between the GO system to the TTC or the UP Express.

-THE AURORAN-

www.TheAuroran.com





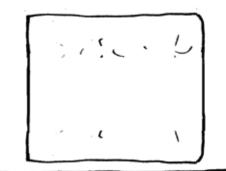
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A Christmas miracle.... twenty years in the making

= THE AURORAN =

Aurora's Community Newspaper

CONCEPT PLANS FOR LIBRARY SQUARE TO BE PRESENTED TO COUNCIL



SCOTT JOHNSTON

A light on a simpler time

I've never been one to moon over any particular era being of a "simpler time."

It's a well worn cliché which has inexplicably taken hold in our psyche for reasons which have never been clear to me.

Every time I've heard someone haul out that hoary old chestnut, I almost involuntarily roll my eyes because it's a symptom of more than just nostalgia; it's an indication that whomever is offering that turn of phrase is going through something, be it a particularly warm and fuzzy memory, recalling time with a loved one no longer with us, or even a place when their inner turmoil was merely on a slow boil.

When you go beneath the surface, however, chances are your warm and fuzzy memories have taken on an artificial patina.

Just a few decades ago, race issues were the order of the day, generations of Canadians were still grappling with the reality of so many lost to war and attempting to carve out their new normal, and women were trying to crack through many more glass ceilings than they still, unfortunately, encounter today.

Nothing was ever simple; nothing will ever be and yet, over the past few months, I've found myself reconsidering this whole premise.

On Sunday, we finished off decorating our Christmas tree.

It's not a real Christmas tree, although we had, until last year, luxuriated in the smell of a fresh evergreen more often than not. Rather, it's one of those nifty pre-lit porch trees, complete a goldsprayed base, and permanently affixed pine cones and assorted berries.

It came into the house from a local hardware store last year when the quest for the perfect "real" tree proved fruitless. No matter which tree lot I happened to go to, I was coming up empty. Many of the trees were misshapen, others too big or too small. Some were missing branches, others were dropping needles faster than Donald Trump drops ill-informed tweets.

So, to spare myself any further anguish, I took the path of least resistance and found a reasonable facsimile. Two years on, it has proven to be a wise investment and has fit into our Christmas traditions reasonably well.

Feeling particularly festive this year, the tree went up far earlier than normal the weekend after Remembrance Day - and, since that time, we have been enjoying the simple, embedded white lights, pine cones and berries. But the time had come to gussy it up like a Solid Gold dancer.

While I unpacked the tree decorations, and the bulb hooks which,



BANTER

Brock Weir

in the intervening eleven months, had somehow detached themselves from their respective bulbs and had inexplicably gone missing, we decorated the tree to the mellifluous sounds of Burl Ives on CBC's broadcast of the traditional holiday favourite, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, an animated tale which has warmed the hearts of generations of kids, parents and grandparents since it debuted over 50

By the time the tree was half-dressed in balls of red, light green and gold, I paused and marvelled at the show. It has a timeless message we can all resonate with (after all, who among us has never thought about pitching a tent on the Island of Misfit Toys?) and lessons of inclusion and acceptance that are more relevant today than ever before.

For a brief moment in time, I thought how nice it would be to hop in a time machine for a quick stop in front of a big, unwieldy television set, a machine which might take a minute or two to warm up, sitting excitedly cross-legged on the floor, face pressed up almost against the glass so as to not miss a single frame of the stop-motion animation. It would be a stop in a place far away from here, where reports of hate crimes, particularly incidents of anti-Semitic hate, are becoming alarmingly regular occurrences in our community.

If I had a time machine at my disposal, yes, the DeLorean would have dumped me off in a time when the Cold War was at its height and, down south, the Civil Rights movement was in a particularly contentious and hate-filled place.

But, would it be all that different?

We're now living in a world where the former key Cold War players are switching up sides and creating a new alarming dynamic, a word where one of the most powerful people in the world, not to mention those in his party, are making hate speech not only acceptable but encouraged; and a world where nuclear war is once again becoming a threat, only to be knocked back in the public consciousness by focusing on whatever insane rambling is coming out an iconic white house in Washington

A few months ago, The Auroran ran a poll on whether or not our readers had seen an increase in hate speech since the start of 2017, not coincidently in line with the inauguration of the President of the United States. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the result was a resounding yes.

Now, we are seeing that manifest itself within Aurora in tangible ways, whether they were swastikas painted on the road and on utility boxes in the Town's southwest quadrant, hateful messages spray-painted near Hartman Public School, the recent anti-Semitic messages scrawled onto an outbuilding at Aurora High School and more swastikas freshly covered at Yonge and Kennedy Streets.

This past fall, I wrote of my scepticism over a Councillor Kim's push to have Aurora's Tree Lighting Ceremony branded as a "Christmas Tree Lighting" celebration. He said the word "Christmas" had been left off for "reasons unknown" although we can all imagine what that reason was.

Nevertheless, Council went ahead with his motion and, with the inclusion a Christmas Market, the 2017 Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony was an unqualified success.

But, it is paying unexpected dividends leading to the Town of Aurora's inaugural Menorah Lighting Ceremony this Monday, December 18.

Organized partly in response to being as inclusive as possible to all faiths following the rebrand and also organized in the wake of the most recent anti-Semitic attack at Aurora High School, Mayor Dawe and Rabbi Hecht have approached the same core message from different directions.

"We stand in unity and we want to spread the universal message of freedom...illuminating and adding light into the world," said Rabbi Hecht.

Added Mayor Dawe: "No one is born hating. We can teach that there is a better way to go about life."

And, indeed it is.

I encourage everyone in the community to come out to Town Hall on Monday night at 5.30 for the ceremony, not only to shine a light but to send a clear message to our community that while some things might, unfortunately, be the new normal for so many in the United States, it is not welcome here.

Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer is now 53 years old, and will likely still be going strong on whatever is waiting to replace the air waves 53 years from now.

Let's just hope that Aurorans who come out on Monday will not, 53 years hence, look back on the ceremony with nostalgia, harkening back to our present as a much simpler time than what they might be experiencing in theirs.

Aurora's Community Newspaper

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

ADVERTISING heather@caledoncitizen.com chelsea@lpcmedia.ca

To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to letters@auroran.com.

Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating....

Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol! (December 19)

This classic holiday tale was first published on December 19, 1843 and was completely sold out by Christmas Eve. The novella was produced at a time when the British were exploring both old and new Christmas traditions. The Aurora Museum & Archives is fortunate to have an 1866 copy (74.36.1) in our library, which was reprinted using the same stereotype plates that were used for the original 1843 publication. This Christmas ghost story has proven to be timeless and is still celebrated 174 years after its original publication.



Parliament winds down for winter

As the 2017 parliamentary sitting begins to wind down, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in Ottawa. Parliament Hill is adorned with festive lights and ornaments, and a blanket of snow covers the city. I am very much looking forward to returning home.

Our government remains hard at work implementing our plan for real change and an economy that works for everyone, and that gives each and every Canadian a fair shot at success. And our plan is working – we continue to lead the G7 in economic growth, and over 600,000 jobs have been created since our government came into office.

Recently, on Thursday November 16, I was proud to attend the Aurora Chamber of Commerce 2017 Business Excellence Awards Gala Dinner & Ceremony. Guided by a theme of celebrating the Magic of Business, the evening was a splendid display of the thriving, innovative business community we enjoy in Aurora and an opportunity to recognize the achievements and contributions of our local business leaders. It was great to see this important event return to our community.

Congratulations to all the finalists in the five categories, and to the award recipients: Artistica Ballroom Dance Studio, Aurora Orthodontics, Whitehots Intelligent Library Solutions, MR Menswear, Community and Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS), and Food in Motion.

As 2017 winds down, so too do the



MP's Report

Kyle Peterson, MP **Newmarket-Aurora**

of Confederation. This year saw Canadians from coast to coast to coast come together to celebrate our country's history, and to look forward to the next 150 years of Canadian ambition and success. From enjoying free access to all national parks to the many memorable Canada Day celebrations across our country, Canadians found many different ways to celebrate. Here in Newmarket-Aurora, I wanted commemorate this important milestone in Canadian history by awarding 150 outstanding volunteers in our community with the Member of Parliament's Canada150 Medal for Volunteer Service. Volunteers are the backbone of our community and indeed our country. They are blankets for the cold, food for the hungry, and a friend to those in need. They are our neighbours and our family. Their steadfast determination to help those around them, their kindheartedness and selflessness in the drive make our community better inspires all of us. It is because of them that Newmarket-Aurora is the best place to live in Canada, and why celebrations for the 150th Anniversary I am proud to be raising my family here

too. It was an honour and privilege to recognize these 150 individuals who do so much for our community. To them, I say - Thank you and Congratulations. I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone here in Newmarket-Aurora a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Season's Greetings. The Christmas Holiday season is always a special time of the year to meet with friends and family, and remember loved ones near and far away.

My boys, Kolton and Kash are always excited for Christmas. I am grateful for the time I get to spend with them and my wife Andrea. It is important that we also take time to remember those who need help at this time of year. Christmas, unfortunately, is not a positive time of year for all. Please do what you can to help others at this time. The New Year is also a wonderful time to appreciate and give thanks to the many gifted and talented people who work so hard in our community, tirelessly giving of their time and service to others in order to make Newmarket-Aurora a better place to live. I wish you all the best for 2018. May the New Year bring much happiness and prosperity, and may you be successful in all your endeavours. As a reminder, you can reach out to my office and my staff at any time. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any information or assistance with Federal Matters. We are located at 16600 Bayview Avenue, Suite 202. You can reach us at Tel: 905-953-7515 or by email at Kyle.Peterson@parl.gc.ca.

Ontario election – polls

The next provincial election is scheduled for June 7, 2018; only 6 months from now. Oh, joy!

We are inundated everyday with the results of public opinion polls.

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

We are canvassed for our thoughts on everything from Canadian tax policy to whether or not we feel that Taylor Swift is a better vocalist than Selena Gomez.

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

I am not sure if it was the first, but the most well-known is the Gallup Poll, named after its inventor, George Gallup. Dr. Gallup founded the American Institute of Public Opinion, the precursor of The Gallup Organization, in Princeton, New Jersey, in 1935. They have been surveying political opinions ever since.

But why the need for political polling?

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

Politicians continually listen to their constituents. Today's elected officials certainly have the resources: web sites, mail-outs, town hall meetings and other media at their disposal. Included in this arsenal is polling.

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

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

may desire feedback on a specific issue. During an actual election campaign,



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

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

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

A few months later during the actual Presidential campaign, John McCain had climbed back into a statistical tie with the presumptive Democratic nominee by painting the Illinois Senator, as inexperienced, a "celebrity" liberal and a light-weight. The lines of attack were based on polling.

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

Or how can we forget about the axing of 100,000 public service jobs by then provincial leader Tim Hudak back in 2011. His strategists no doubt saw something in the polling or focus group research that they were doing.

Recently, Greg Lyle of Innovative Research Group spoke to an energy conference that I am involved in. He shared with us the combined results from three separate Ontario polling engagements.

Mr. Lyle pointed out that in the 2014 election, Ontario Liberals won with 39% of the vote to PCs 31% with 24% voting NDP. In his latest quarterly tracking the PCs lead with 41% support among decided voters, Liberals are in second at 31%, and the NDP has dropped five points since the election to just 19%.

His major point is that that Liberals will have a hard time raising the Premier's numbers so it will be easier for them to lower Brown's. He expects the campaign to be really nasty from the Liberals.

Closer to home, polling does have its place; reinforcing to the local campaign that the communications strategies being employed are indeed working. However, it is becoming increasingly harder to be heard and also to influence voters at the local level.

Probably ninety percent of the reason that a person votes is based on the Party and the Leader. In some instances, where there is a very high profile person or highly ranked cabinet minister, then the local campaign probably accounts for say, ten to fifteen percent, maximum.

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

The other point is that most people don't make up their mind until the last days of a campaign, with a good percentage not deciding until they get into the voting booth...

Lots to think about and of course lots more polls to decipher as we get closer to the June 7, 2018 election date!

> Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



POLITICS AS USUAL

Fake News?

Do facts matter? I mean that in all seriousness.

I've said this before but it seems to me that objective truth is under siege these days. Misinformation, misleading statements and - at times - outright lies are proffered by the usual suspects - advertisers, political spin masters, corporate talking heads and the like with reckless abandon and lightning speed. While disappointing, that isn't surprising or unusual. However, the sheer volume of lies and distortions of the truth are truly frightening.

As is its reach.

The advent of social media has magnified the speed with which "information" flies around the globe. And that increases its impact manifold. Folks are hit by waves and waves of this stuff in their daily - and targeted - news feeds.

A cacophony of biased noise that they are forced to try to make sense of.

Which brings me to my concern about the ability of the general public to access objective truth on matters of public interest. Where do they get their information?

Well, they should be able to get facts about issues from the fourth estate; ostensibly apolitical organizations that provide either both sides of an issue or at least a fulsome analysis of one side.

The news media is supposed to fill that role. I'm not talking about the talk show hosts, or the shock jocks, whose sole job is to deliberately distort the truth for the purposes of generating interest and ratings. They share their opinions on issues, no matter how ill or uninformed they may be. And they do so as loudly as possible. Folks have no illusion that these talking heads are in any way unbiased.

I am talking about real journalists. They are supposed to present the news; information about issues of local, national or global importance in an unbiased or at least neutral manner. Or, at least as unbiased as possible because, let's face it, everyone has a bias and it's pretty difficult to be completely dispassionate as a consequence.

But regardless, the mainstream media is charged with the responsibility of informing the public on things that matter. So, when they fail in that job it can have serious consequences, especially in an era where the guy at the top says all news that he doesn't like is "fake news", you'd better be sure your reporting is fair, and accurate.

Recently, CNN, an arguably well respected news organization, pushed a story, and pushed it hard, that was at best a distortion of facts. They reported about an email that supposedly proved that the Trumps had access to the hacked Clinton emails a day before everyone else had access to those emails. Turns out they were wrong. They had the dates wrong. The Trumps did get the email about the encryption key - but well after the emails were already public.

So, after hours of pushing this exclusive story, they had to back down and admit that after checking their sources, they made a mistake. They retracted their story and apologized. Mitigates the damage somewhat, but none the less, the reputation of CNN has taken a hit. And justifiably so.

Every media outlet in the world seems to be chasing the same story finding evidence that Trump colluded with the Russians. Fair enough. If true, Continued on page 23

THIS WEEK'S **POLL**

Do you support the Canadian Institute of Food & Wine coming to the Aurora Armoury?

Yes No Unsure

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!



Country Toy Tea raises \$25,000









The 13th annual Country Toy Tea was held last Wednesday and, with the help of Santa, his merry elves, and a group of dedicated volunteers, the event raised over \$25,000 and collected thousands of toys for local children in need. (Top) Santa and his merry elves, lending a hand from King's Country Day School, celebrate a job well done. (Second) The Country Toy Tea Committee: Leslie Ewing, Linda Brown, Kim Nichols, Stacie Stanton, Lori Masse, Andrea Marshall, Judy Totten, Molly Fitzpatrick, Andrea Webb and Amanda Langston. (Third) Two of the elves, McKinley Masse and Riley Hayes, sit amongst the massive display of toys that were later distributed to local children in shelters. (Fourth) The Country Day School Choir provided wonderful holiday music.

Auroran Photos by Diane Buchanan

Budget numbers up for approval this week

From page 1

down.

"Despite inflation reported at 2.1 per cent for 12 months to June 2016, staff presented Council with a base operating budget proposal with a resulting tax increase of 1.9 per cent plus the 1 per cent for fiscal strategies."

This left Council with just under \$100,000 to work with in order to accommodate various extras – including presentations for budget consideration made by individuals and community groups – before the final numbers were crunched.

Budget meetings proper wrapped up on November 27 and staff were left to figure out how to bring the budget down by .2 per cent from 3.3., or by \$72,400 over the targeted final figure.

These adjustments were approved by Council at the committee level this week and entailed factoring in expected surpluses from a variety of Townprograms, including an expected surplus of \$30,000 in revenues from municipal aquatics programs, a further \$16,000 in revenues from youth programs and reductions in areas such as shrub bed maintenance and eliminating the Town's Citizen Budget survey program.

"Between the time the budget was drafted, which was, for all intents and purposes, in September, in terms of those operational numbers and now, we have the benefit of a third quarter report for 2017," explained CAO Doug Nadorozny at last week's General Committee meeting. "What we endeavour to do is look at the surpluses that were being presented in 2017. We went back and looked

at 2016 actual numbers as well and compared those surpluses. Where we saw a pattern of surpluses, we took a conservative approach and allowed for some of that difference to be suggested as a modification to the budget.

"In the case of pretty much all of these, the variance is actually larger than what we're proposing here but, to be safe, we're taking a portion and we feel very confident it is an acceptable modification on the budget based on 2016 final [numbers] and the 2017 year to date."

As for the Citizen Budget, the online tool which has allowed residents to log onto the Town's website and, using a sliding scale on the screen, provide feedback on where they would like to see budget adjustments made, it is being discontinued due to an apparent lack of interest on the part of citizens.

"We have realised that despite our best efforts, I wasn't personally satisfied with the response and I think the Financial Advisory Committee felt the same," said Stephanie Mackenzie Smith, Manager of Corporate Communications for the Town. "We certainly want to continue to engage the public on that matter, but we'll look at much cheaper or free alternatives to be able to do that."

Overall, the final 2017 Operating Budget will entail planned expenditures totalling \$60,814,800, and \$18.99 million of it will be funded through non-tax revenues such as investment income, user fees, and Federal gas dollars.

The balance, \$41,821,700 will be funded through property taxes.





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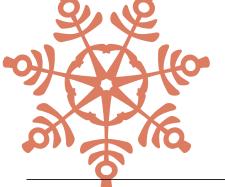
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BUSINESS



Niagara College stresses "community partnership" in Library revamp

By Brock Weir

If you attended last Wednesday's Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at Town Hall and had the opportunity to sample turkey sliders or some of the other goodies being served up under the big top of the inflatable igloo, this was your first taste in what could be a long relationship between Aurora and the Canadian Institute of Food and Wine.

The Canadian Institute of Food and Wine, a part of Niagara College, was on hand to introduce themselves to members of the public last week after Council signed off on a \$4 million revamp of the Aurora Armoury to house a branch of the institute in the heart of the Downtown Core.

Featuring an expansion of the

Town Park building, opening the historic structure up to its heritage surroundings, and bringing the building back to much of its original glory, it's a five-year lease deal which proponents hope will bring much needed revitalization to Aurora's traditional centre.

But, for the College, it is an opportunity to plant roots in Aurora as a firm community partner.

In a presentation to Council last week, Craig Youdale, Dean of Niagara College's Canadian Food and Wine Institute said the deal was "not a business proposition for Niagara College [but] a partnership" that fits in with the strategic plans of both the College and the Town of Aurora.

"We feel strongly about the expertise we have," he said. "When we started talking about the opportunity here in Aurora, it really fit with our own strategic opportunity to provide the expertise we have and work within our own community, within the Region, and be able to bring our particular brand of expertise to the community. This is about partnership and a two-way street. We look very much to working with the Town, with all its community leaders, with various community groups, and we're looking for opportunities to be able to develop a space that is not just about teaching cooking or having a wine tasting, but is about community and having the opportunity for all areas of the community to access this space.

"The Town provided us with many proposals from a variety of people who have ideas not just for the Armoury, but for many other things in [Aurora's] Strategic Plan [and] what really excited us about the Armoury was attaching to the Park, being a vital part of what I know is an important centre. I have friends ...who were born and raised in Aurora and they speak so much about the park in the centre part of Town and how much it means to them, so we



Mayor Geoff Dawe presents a cheese board to Craig Youdale, Dean of Niagara College's Canadian Food & Wine Institute at last week's General Committee meeting. The cheese board was made by the local Parks Department out of ash trees felled by the Emerald Ash Borer.

Photo by Anna Lozyk Romeo

know and really feel strongly about the importance and we want to make sure that's the building that connects the park."

The College, he said, envisions a refurbished building that is "as openminded and multipurpose as possible" and they are open to all ideas, concepts

"Eventually, over time, we can morph this concept and idea to be really owned by the Town of Aurora and that we can bring what we have at Niagara [here] and make it your own."

While the culinary program at Niagara College is over 40 years old, the Canadian Food and Wine Institute was only formally established in 2010. Since then they have built upon their culinary expertise with the introduction of viniculture and brewmaster programs and broke ground just last week what is now Canada's only artisan distillery program.

"This is the only place in the world where all these educational opportunities are available in one spot," said Mr. Youdale.

Their Culinary Innovation and Food Technology program is another facet of the Institute that is unique in Canada, he said, in helping people hone their skills in food research and product development, and fostering ideas from farm to shelf to plate.

"A recent development for us, and this is what we hope to bring, at least in part, to Aurora, is what we call our Expert Edge corporate training strategy," he said. "This is to bring all that roundness of education and put it into a package of success to the average

When we started talking about the opportunity here in Aurora, it really fit with our own strategic opportunity to provide the expertise we have and work within our own community, within the Region, and be able to bring our particular brand of expertise to the community. This is about partnership and a two-way street

individual. Those who simply want to learn about our business and be able to offer training to them on a short term basis, but we also want to access the industry professional to be able to find training for them and also to look at our corporate world and how we can use food and beverage as a way to do things like team building, corporate training and development. We talked [with the Town] about how food and beverage is always looked at as a stepping stone to maybe something else in the future, but we really feel strongly that food and beverage is a career, a life. It is an important part of all our lives just in the day to day, but also for young individuals who are looking to develop careers and move forward into the world and we look at what we do in the Canadian Food and Wine Institute as a really important stepping stone to a great career and a great, fulfilling life."

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Information Session - Exporting & International Expansion: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club, 7:30 am - 10:00 am

Aurora Chamber Insider Session – Maximize Your Membership! Thursday, January 25, 2018

at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, 8:30 am - 10:00 am

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Process defended in Armoury deal with Niagara College

By Brock Weir

Aurora Council threw out the welcome mat for representatives of Niagara College last week, whose Canadian Institute of Food and Wine will be the centrepiece of upcoming renovations to the Town's historic armoury.

But as warm a welcome they received, last Tuesday's General Committee meeting was a chance for Council members to defend the negotiation process leading up to the lease deal, a process which was subject to criticism from Councillor John Abel and some members of the public.

"Like all commercial transactions, it is neither prudent or efficient to try and negotiate those in public for either party," said Town CAO Doug Nadorozny, adding it was the view of all parties concerned that it was in everyone's "best interests" to explore the details in private until a deal was reached. "Once the lease was signed by both parties, the details were made public a couple of days after that.

"As Council knows, Council was properly informed in closed session as permitted by the Municipal Act as it relates to the negotiation of leases by municipalities. On two occasions, specifically Council directed staff to proceed on the terms we had suggested. As these sorts of deals go, you can't negotiate in a glass fishbowl when you're trying to get the interests of two parties to be aligned and, in the end, I think we did that and we did so with the support of Council. The proof will be in the pudding when the community sees the value of this partnership and sees the benefits that accrue, I don't think there will be any concerns about the fact the initial steps had to be in a closed environment."

While Councillor Abel has been one of the most vocal opponents of the deal, even when details of what he was objecting to were still the subject of closed door talks, he told members at last week's meeting that discussing the agreement itself "is probably a debate for another time" but efforts could have been made to show "residents we were open and transparent."

Nevertheless, he said he was "very impressed" by a presentation made near the start of the meeting by representatives from Niagara College, as well as the municipal staff who steered the deal forward.

My feeling is if we were starting down this road, we could have asked a year ago for a report saying, 'Let's go for a post secondary, let's put a budget out, let's put some locations out, and let's make that public'

"As far as the comments about the nature of how we do the process, there are always different ways we can choose to go forward," said Councillor Abel. "They can proceed in closed session and make it available for public consumption. My feeling is if we were starting down this road, we could have asked a year ago for a report saying, 'Let's go for a post secondary, let's put a budget out, let's put some locations out, and let's make that public.' I am sure any college would have allowed a [presentation from the Town] as Niagara did, but what we have committed for in the culinary is fantastic.

"Our strategic plan does cover incubation and IT and a medical campus and all kinds of things that are in there. A culinary, at first blush, takes a bit to understand, but I can certainly see outreaching to our restaurants and businesses to give them the advantage of all the opportunities and education that can be provided to make us probably a much better restaurant or go-to destination. We need that here. We need a light and I am very pleased to say I am confident Niagara will be able to do that."

Other Council members were more fulsome in their support for the deal and the process, including Mayor Geoff Dawe who said he had "absolutely no concerns" with the process.

"If there have been any issues, we

have our Clerk and our Solicitor who would have stopped us in our tracks to say we are not approaching this in the way we should have, so I have no concerns with that at all," said the Mayor. "With the exception of one person, the comments have been overwhelmingly positive. There is just a huge amount of excitement this has created and it has fantastic long-term potential for where we want to see the Town of Aurora going.

"We actually had conversations with four post-secondary institutions and, for whatever reason, those did not come to fruition. I think we have more than met our challenge for due diligence and to ensure we're bringing value. When we purchased the Armoury in 2014, I think we all had a vision. I can't really enunciate what my vision was, but this sure fits it. I am very excited and very excited about getting this on the road to

bring new life in the area."

The potential for "new life" in the area was a strong factor for Councillor Tom Mrakas, who said there are "many spin-offs" that can develop from this partnership with Niagara College.

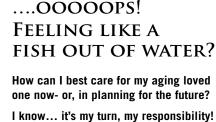
"This is something we have taken a giant step towards that buzzword everyone always uses - revitalization of the downtown core," he said. "When you enter a partnership there has to be value on both sides and there has to be something both sides get out of it and I think Niagara College is getting something out of it because they are entering a market they weren't part of. We're getting the benefit of an experienced, well-established secondary institution coming to our town and creating an economic benefit to the whole town. I think there is excitement in the air throughout the whole town."



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Anna and Catherine sell mosaics at the final Aurora Farmers' Market of the 2017 Indoor Season on Saturday. Given plans for the building, this will likely be the last Market event to take place in the historic

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

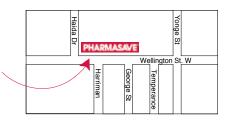


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THE AURORAN ARTS & CULTURE

Library Square offers "extraordinary moment" for Aurora: Planner

By Brock Weir

Approving the construction of Library Square will be an "extraordinary moment" in the efforts to revitalize Aurora's Downtown, according to planners behind two design options up for Council consideration this week.

"Building a public square is a bold initiative that will leave a legacy for future generations," said David Leinster of The Planning Partnership, one of a team of planners that has developed two distinct visions for Library Square, designs which are up for final approval at Council this week. "We imagine that this square is multipurpose, flexible and programmable space for many, many activities in the Downtown. A place that would build on the already great programming of the public park just a block away. This should be a space for all seasons, for children and families, and it should be a place for the everyday, a place for some potential commercial activity that would animate the square at different times of day and throughout the seasons.

"It is critical, in our minds, that this is a connecting space."

Guiding their vision, he said, is the idea that Library Square, regardless of which configuration ultimately wins the day, should be framed by strong architecture, architecture now embodied by the Aurora Cultural Centre and the Aurora Public Parking.

That is why the proposed public square is designed to fit in between the two existing buildings, rather than on the site of the soon-to-be-demolished old homes of the public library and seniors' centre

on Victoria Street, as was originally envisioned. Instead, the space left by these two buildings will provide parking to the north and, to the south, a new community building that will be an extension of the Cultural Centre.

"The vision for the Aurora Town Square is a place that links these two civic buildings, these two institutions, that is a central gathering space in the heart of Aurora's cultural precinct." said Mr. Leinster, illustrating his point with visions of outdoor skating rinks, spaces for community meals, and even movie screenings. "There are many things that could happen in this square, a variety of scales." Another factor in the plan is considering Library Square as a place to shoulder some of the burden currently carried by nearby Town Park. Planners consider their plan as a connection to the historic greenspace, linked by Mosley Street, and interconnected.

That is why locating Library Square off Victoria Street did not fit in with the vision," he said.

"One of the positives with having this square located on Victoria was that there wouldn't be a change to the parking and library delivery functions; that if we looked at an option where the Cultural Centre and a new community space were separated to frame this public space, then it would be framed by architecturally strong buildings and the Cultural Centre would have the ability to activate that location.

"Our big concern with the location of the public square on Victoria is that it doesn't connect directly with the Library. We think that is critical because the Library and the Cultural Centre, in our mind, not only form out an architectural frame but also the potential to animate this public space and that, in our mind, is critical. [The design options are] in the centre of the entire block, and in terms of the expansion of the Cultural Centre as a community facility, it links very nicely to that addition.

"The negatives here are that the parking will have to be redistributed somewhere and the library deliveries are obviously an issue. We wanted to carve out 1,500 square metres of programmable space at a minimum. We think that is an adequate size for the square here, to provide barrier free access, increase the pedestrian connection through the site, and maintain accessible parking."

Points in favour of Option 1, the raised square, from the planners' perspective, is it allows for a new "beautiful, architectural pavilion" as a new entrance to the Library, but a drawback is it largely covers the lower half of the Library's west façade.

Option 2, the "lowered square' option, ticks all the boxes, he said.

"It would be very much a public space that could be open much of the time to link people from Victoria down through and into the square, with the potential midblock "sacrifice" and would mea everyone" but there was parking within a five n radius of the whole area."

connection to the east, a space that would navigate the contemporary architecture of the new community building with the former school houses as well," he said.

"[The lower square] does have better visibility from Church Street and from Yonge Street in terms of being a lower option you can see down into. It doesn't separate itself from those adjacencies as does the raised options."

Yet, Option 2 moves parking away from the Library itself, an issue which not only raised alarm bells from the Library but amongst Council as well.

"My main concern with both of the designs is the public has a certain service level now with respect to parking and dropping off books, and particular dropping off children and seeing them go safely into the building," said Councillor Wendy Gaertner. "I don't think the public is going to appreciate us decreasing what they will perceive to be their service level and I am also concerned about the accessible parking. We're aging and there is going to be more demand for that."

In response, Mr. Leinster stated he understood it would there would be a "sacrifice" and would mean "a change for everyone" but there was ample on-street parking within a five minute walking radius of the whole area."



Senior Stars bring Scrooge to Life

By Rod Urquhart

Feeling a little doom and gloom over the recent onslaught of winter?

Well, fret no more! There is just a foolproof way to fully get into the "Christmas Spirit." Just take in the Aurora Seniors Association Silver Stars presentation of Ebenezer Scrooge, this coming weekend at the Aurora Seniors' Centre.

This rollicking romp of the seasonal classic, written in 1843 by Charles Dickens and based on a radio play by Walter Hackett, will have everyone in the audience really anticipating Christmas Day this year!

This Silver Stars Drama Group production is directed once again by the talented Joan Brownlow, with producer Paul Wells and pianist Joy Gannicott. A pianist, you ask? Why this colourful presentation of the classic fully involves the audience with several Christmas carols that are guaranteed to have everyone singing and clapping along!

Ebenezer Scrooge, as you can imagine, has a large cast, with many of the cast members doubling up on roles – but the star of the show – Scrooge himself – is played with zest by John Dowson, who may be "a mean old man" but he certainly comes around in the end in this delightful rendition.

Other standouts in the cast include Shawna O'Neill as the well-costumed Ghost of Christmas Present. Shawna also has a role as one of the carollers and also a dancer. The effervescent Paul Wells is back with three prominent roles, but is a standout as the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. Yvonne Lewis is the Ghost of Christmas Past.

John Gillan is effective as the evergrateful Bob Cratchit and also as a Young Ebenezer. Ed Webster carries off the part of the nephew Fred and two other roles, but a real bright spot in this production is Geraldine Smith as Jacob Marley (with a great costume) and also as a businessman. (Most of the cast are also featured as Villagers, Carollers or Dancers).

Dawn Bovingdon is Belle and Martha and Agnes Vallejo is Mrs. Cratchit and Mrs. Fezziwig. Najma Kausar is a Crachit girl as is Diane Ament (who is also the first lady) and doing just a great job as a youngster is Myles Heney as Tiny Tim and a boy who gets the turkey! Dona Williams is Mrs. Dilber.

If you are still saying, "Bah Humbug" at the end of this, there is a rousing singalong of Christmas tunes to help you out of your funk. And light refreshments will be served following the performance.

Katharine Gerrits gets a nod for the excellent costumes and Ron Coe for the props. Make-up is by Diane Ament; scenery by David Brownlow; and stage managers are Mike Carter and Katharine Gerrits.

Ebenezer Scrooge is on stage at the magnificent Aurora Seniors Centre this Saturday, December 16, and Sunday, December 17, at 2 p.m. Sunday's performance is already sold out, but there are tickets for Saturday if you hurry. Available for \$5 at the Aurora Seniors' Centre reception desk.

For more information, call the Centre at 905-726-4767.





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Library Square designs up for approval this week



Artists' rendering of how Library Square would look at the level of Option 2, the preferred option of planners, municipal staff and the Aurora Cultural Centre. The Library, however, backs Option One, which raises Library Square to accommodate parking below.

Image courtesy of the Town of Aurora

By Brock Weir

The last Council meeting of the year could signal the dawn of a new day for Library Square.

Council is set to review final design concepts for Library Square this week.

The two plans, presented at last week's General Committee, offer two distinctly bold visions for the area, now currently occupied by the former homes of the Aurora Public Library and Seniors' Centre on Victoria Street and flanked by landmarks the Aurora Cultural Centre, Victoria Hall, and the current Library building.

Once the demolition of the two disused buildings on Victoria Street is complete, the concept plans for an overhaul of the area between the Library at Yonge and Church and the Aurora Cultural Centre further east on Church Street.

In the first plan, a public square will be built level to the street level of the Aurora Cultural Centre with parking reconfigured beneath a platform that would be flush with the bottom of the Library's second floor. This would allow for an extensive public space in the public square itself, as well as a new entrance to the public library. Additional parking would be located on the present site of the former Seniors'

Centre while the old Library would be razed for a new community building extending the Aurora Cultural Centre.

The cost for Option 1 is just over \$15million.

Clocking in just under \$3 million less than the first is Option 2, dubbed the "lower square." The Second Option would take public parking completely to the site of the old seniors centre and building the public square to the level of the Library's Church Street entrance. Bordered on all sides by the two Church Street landmarks, the lower square would create a bowl shape, allowing for amphitheatre-style seating along the perimeter, all surrounding a public space.

Council tentatively backed Option 2 at last week's meeting but, requesting further information on both options in time for this week's meeting, the final decision could be distinctly different.

What could lead to a change in direction was a presentation last week by Nancy Eveleigh Brown, Chair of the Aurora Public Library Board, which is firmly in the camp of Option 1.

"Parking is an ongoing issue in the area," she said. "Our staff park in the surrounding streets to free up spaces for our customers. We currently have two accessible parking spots right outside our door and there is a demand for

being strong users of the library, we have to ensure that our users are able to access the library with relative ease. Concept 2 does not provide for either of these, with fewer total parking spaces than we currently have and all of them further from the door."

The second option, she said, would involve reconfiguring the interior of the library to accommodate new routes for shipping and receiving, which would ultimately result in the loss of one community room within the building. Option 1 leaves shipping and receiving as is, and would ultimately increase accessibility.

"This may cost a little bit more now, but it would be a wise investment for the future of Aurora," she said, adding a raised public square would offer an integrated entrance to the library on its second floor. "This not only provides a more welcoming and open entrance to the Library, but also connects the Library directly to the square. This raised placement of the Town Square creates a friendlier and more welcoming space as the Cultural Centre building would not be three storeys high as it would be in Concept 2. The square would be warmer and sunnier, extending the usability of the space into parking lot north of the proposed new building, there would be more parking spaces than there currently are, better suited to serve four event spaces: the library, the cultural centre, town square and the new building."

"There is," she concluded, "only one chance to get this right."

This was the prevailing view around the Council table as well, but there were differing views on just what was "right."

After Councillor John Abel's calls to go out to tender for a third option. possibly with new planners behind it, was rejected by Council, he said he would ultimately back the Library's position.

"I would vote for what the Library recommends and they recommend the one with the deck for obvious reasons,"

more. The seniors and young families he said. "I appreciate what professional opinions we're getting, but the Library is the gem, the biggest part of this whole exercise, and we have our professional director coming forward and telling us that's the one she prefers. I would have to support that concept."

Councillor Harold Kim, however, had a slightly different perspective.

"I think the gem of the block is really the land between the Library and the Cultural Centre and what it will turn out to be," he said, adding he was initially in favour of Option 1 as it would cause minimal disruption to the Library "When I took a closer look at it, I [thought], who is this Square serving? It's not for the Cultural Centre, it's not for the Library, although they are important partners; it is all the residents of Aurora. It has to be a practical space, it has to be aesthetically pleasing and it has to be pleasing enough for people to want to come forward and create traffic.

"Ultimately, when you have more traffic in the Square, it is going to ultimately benefit the library and the Cultural Centre because they are going to increase their human footprint."

Other Councillors were more guarded in their opinions ahead of what could be this week's final vote.

Councillor Pirri came into the the spring or fall. With the additional meeting favouring Option 1, he said, but he wanted more information about the long-term viability of each option and if there is room for further development 30 or 40 years down the line.

> Mayor Geoff Dawe was also looking for more information on accessibility concerns voiced by the Library before he made a final decision, while Councillor Sandra Humfryes said she understood the concerns and was leaning towards Option 1 as well.

> "I think at the end of the day we're going to make a decision of what we feel is in the best interests of the community as a whole and I think we're all waiting to get some further information... and have a fulsome discussion round the table with my colleagues when we go from concept to reality," concluded Councillor Michael Thompson.

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Forget 1867 – artists shine a light on the momentous 1917

By Brock Weir

As 2017 draws to a close, we have been inundated with celebrations and initiatives to mark 150 years since Confederation in 1867, but somewhat lost in the shuffle have been celebrations to mark another milestone year in Canadian history: 1867.

Ontario artists, however, are not going to let the anniversary go out like a lamb and have pooled their talents to shine a light on the centennial of the year that included decisive allied victories – and hundreds of thousands

of loses in the Battle of Passchendaele, a move towards full woman's suffrage, and the formation of the National Hockey League.

These tragedies and triumphs are currently immortalized in "1917 -Canada Comes of Age: A Story Told In Visual Images," now on through December 30 at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

The show and sale is a multi-artist exhibition curated by brothers Dave and Ross Rheaume, history buffs both, who happened upon the 1917 idea when looking on a show to do together.

one thing that was a bit overlooked was that 100 years ago Canada actually had a fairly significant year which represented, for a lot of people, Canada's coming of age," says Dave.

feelers to individuals in the artistic community who jumped at the chance to become a part of the collective. For some, the idea of infusing history into the work, was just outside their comfort zones, but each artist the brothers contacted had something very important in common: they are story tellers.

to predominate [the collected work] so we tried as much as possible to get other storylines in there as well," says Dave. "A large theme that emerged was the desire to tell the stories of people whose stories wouldn't otherwise have been heard. We have a lot about the participation of women in the war effort, the story from an Aboriginal artist whose grandfather was a much decorated veteran of the war. I have always been a bit of a history buff who loved the First World War, so I did one piece surrounding Passchendaele, but I am also a big hockey fan, so I thought I would do one painting around the NHL being born. I also did a piece on Mary Pickford because she was arguably

"In the rush for all these 150 events, the biggest female star at that time, leading the charge of Canadians going to Hollywood and achieving fame on an international scale."

Although the Aurora Cultural Centre was the first gallery to book With that in mind, they put out the exhibition since it was conceived last year, it made its debut at Ottawa's Byward Market and also had a stint at the Cailuan Gallery in Cornwall. As more people have taken in the exhibition, Dave says he is continually impressed how many people are interested in the individual story lines represented on the walls.

"History is often put aside a little "The First World War really tends bit, but these artists were all very keen," he says. "I sensed a real desire to connect with that earlier era and it is interesting to me how much a lot of the same things still come out; there was a lot of turmoil in their loves, a lot of sacrifice, fighting against injustices and, in some ways, the more things change the more thing stay the same.

> "People are thrilled that we're bringing these stories to life and we've had a lot of comments that this is something high schoolers should come to see. It is part of our history and our past, but it will always be an important year. It doesn't matter how many years go by, this will be the year a lot of people will say Canada really came of age."



Over half of the Ontario artists participating in the "1917 - Canada Comes of Age" show gathered for the exhibition's opening reception at the Aurora Cultural Centre on Thursday afternoon.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir



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SENIOR SCAPE

Christina Doyle

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.

intention of composing a classic essay to answer a little girl's query. Little Virginia was only eight years old, just when skepticism starts to erode one's faith. She was informed by her friends that there was no such thing as Santa

father this heart wrenching question, and as many parents would have responded, dad said the next best thing.

His advice was why don't you ask the all-knowing newspaper editor of that time. She was quick to write that

In 1897, Francis P. Church had no Claus. She then proceeded to ask her her father had said, if you read it in the paper then it must be so.

> So, here we are, nearly one hundred Christmases later about what's real. The sense of joy and wonderment is found in children everywhere around the world that just maybe there is such a person, who is generous and rewards those who are good. All you need to do is just believe.

> This is a season of miracles of every sort. And, that there is a Santa Claus and that you have been a very good girl or boy. Have you written to Santa, well my friend, get out the hot cocoa and with great anticipation, write to the old gent about your wish for this year to come.

> What would our world be like without a belief in Santa, I say, boring and uneventful? We too need hope that everything will be alright in the morning, and that our feeling of loneliness will soon be a thing of the past.

> We all need hope that this Christmas will be better, be different, be filled with laughter and love. We all need hope to keep on keeping on. In the end that is all we have in this world, hope.

> So, what does it look like, it's in the face of your neighbour who needs a listening ear as they deal with a loss. They don't want your advice, your wise words, they just need you to be there and be quiet while they shed a tear or

> It's in the face of that adorable kitten or puppy that loves you no matter what your faults are. It's in the innocence of children accepting what you say to them and placing it in their hearts. So, be gentle my friends, be of a few words, remember less is more! It is in giving of one's self for another, knowing that full well you will not be reciprocated.

> In this beautiful season and most Holy of all for Christians everywhere, may you be the forgiving soul, may you be the strong shoulder to lean on, may you hold back a negative opinion of another and realize that you too are not perfect! Let's think of forgiveness, gratitude, love and peace for this aching world. There is enough sadness and negativity to go around, please do not be part of that world.

> No, Santa Claus! Thank God! He lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, no, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

> Merry Christmas to all those who are still young at heart and a wonderful Happy Chanukah to all our Jewish readers and friends. Ho, Ho, Ho!! See you in 2018!

HAPPENINGS AT THE SENIORS' CENTRE

HOLIDAY DATES:

The Centre will be closed Monday, December 25, Tuesday, December 26 and Monday, January 1. It will be open with holiday activities on December 27, 28, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Friday, December 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.

EBENEZER SCROOGE:

The Silver Stars will be performing Ebenezer Scrooge on Saturday, December 16 and Sunday, December 17. The show time both days is 2 pm and tickets cost \$5. This is a fun holiday





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By Brock Weir

Every dime you drop in a Salvation Army kettle this year stay within the community to help those calling it home – but if there aren't enough volunteers to keep a kettle warm this season, those dimes will be hard to come by. The Salvation Army of Central York Region, based out of Aurora's Northridge Community Church, is continually looking for volunteers to lend a hand this holiday season, donating two hours of their time to fill a shift at kettles scattered at locations throughout the community.

While it depends on the day and hour, the local Salvation Army is currently averaging at about 60 per cent when it comes to filling volunteer slots. Of course, that ebbs and flows, with this past Monday reaching 100 per cent capacity, but the more hands on deck, the happier a Christmas and New Year for some of our most vulnerable.

"Probably the biggest thing people don't realise is money that goes into the kettles stay within the community. It does not go downtown to a big sorting location to be spread out throughout the Salvation Army locations across Canada," says Nancy Harrison, Coordinator for Northridge's Kettle Drive. "Whatever is raised in the kettle in Central York Region stays here in



Mayor Geoff Dawe, pictured here on Friday, has taken many of the Salvation Army's kettle shifts this year.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Central York Region, going back to the community through our Christmas Hamper program, our Senior Support programs, kids camps, affordable counselling programs, and everything that keeps our community services running here."

Ms. Harrison joined the Salvation Army in October after leaving a private sector job to help the cause.

She was first introduced to the behind-the-scenes work of the kettles last year working a contract position, but when the opportunity to fill the shoes of the retiring long-time



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coordinator, she jumped at the chance to throw herself in from the deep end. a Salvation There was no option but to hit the

There was no option but to hit the ground running she says, there was no time for a full-blown game plan for the program, although she says there will be a game plan in place by the time the 2018 Holiday Season rolls around, so it was full steam ahead this year.

"The organization is wonderful and it is an organization that puts so much back into the community," she says. "Community is where my heart is and that is why I do it. I love the volunteers, they're amazing people. Everyone's different, but the time they give and their kindness is just awesome.

"Two hours a week of your time can truly make a difference in somebody's Two hours a week
of your time can truly
make a difference in
somebody's life.
Poverty is not
always easy to see

life. Poverty is not always easy to see. Yes, there is poverty in Aurora, there are homeless in Aurora -- but if you

can't volunteer on a kettle, just say hello to your kettle worker."

One such kettle worker last week was Mayor Geoff Dawe.

Stationed at the LCBO on Yonge Street at Brookland on Friday afternoon, he shared many of Ms. Harrison's sentiments.

"It is fun, you can have a few laughs [working the kettle], but notwithstanding Aurora is a highly affluent town, there are still lots of people who need help. The Salvation Army does a great job, through the Kettle Program, to help residents."

If you have some time to spare and would like to take a shift on the kettle, contact Nancy Harrison at nancy. harrison@northridgesa.com.

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SALVAGED FROM LIBRARY SQUARE

 $Demolition of Library Square is set to be ginthis week, but the legacy of {\tt constant} and {\tt constant} are {\tt constant}. {\tt constant} are {\tt constant} are {\tt constant} are {\tt constant}. {\tt constant} are {\tt constant}.$ Aurora's first purpose-built public library will live on in the Aurora Museum and Archives. Ahead of demolition work, which is slated to begin with the former Aurora Seniors' Centre and Fire Hall, the Museum received a number of items to add to the collection. They include, clockwise from top left, the heritage plaque (as displayed here by Michelle Johnson of the Aurora Museum & Archives, the plaque marking the dedication of Aurora's Centennial gift to itself, a "cookie" from the birch tree that grew up and through its Victoria Street façade, a memento of the architects behind the building, the original scale model of the much-used facility, and the date

Auroran photos by Brock Weir

THINGS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 30

1917: Canada Comes of Age -• A multi-artist, two city painting • exhibition at the Aurora Cultural Centre that looks back at the • year 1917: 50 years removed from • Confederation and 50 years before ullet the glorious summer of '67 in $_{ullet}$ Montreal, 1917 was the year of the • crucible. It was a coming of age • story. Curated by brothers Dave and • Ross Rheaume, artists from Ottawa • ullet and Toronto will tell the story of ulletmilestones in history, medicine, • art/science and sports, arts and • entertainment. Opening Reception: • Thursday, December 7 from 6 – 7

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

The Prostate Cancer Canada • Network - Newmarket Support • Group will host their December • meeting tonight from 7 - 9 p.m. at • the Newmarket Seniors' Meeting • Place (474 Davis Drive, Halls • 4 & 5, Newmarket). Come out • • for a Christmas social potluck • and fellowship. Please RSVP • if you plan to attend by calling • 905-895-1975 or emailing info@ • newmarketprostatecancer.com. • Please bring a donation for the local • food bank.

DECEMBER 16 – 23

Bring your gifts and stroll around • the Aurora Shopping Centre while • the Aurora Lions Club does your gift • • wrapping. All donations stay in our • community. Non-perishable food • donations are especially required. • December 16, 17, 22, and 23 from 11 • a.m. to 5 p.m. Free photo with Santa . • on Saturday, December 16, from 12 • • noon to 3 p.m. Aurora Shopping • Centre, 14800 Yonge Street, Suite 106.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

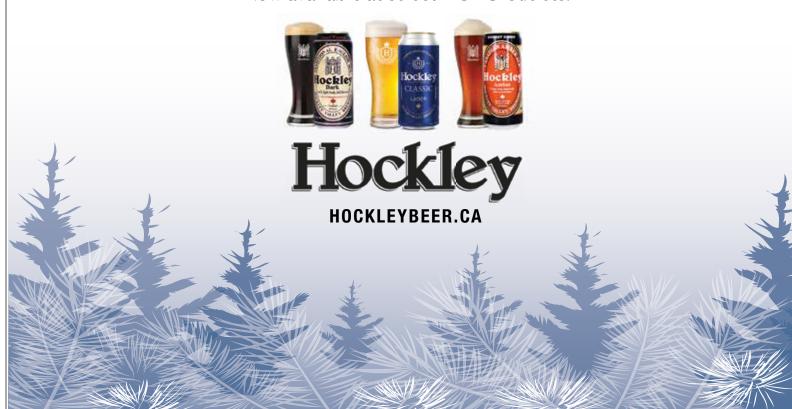
Join the Town of Aurora for Family First Night on Sunday January 31 from 6-9 pm. All activities • are free and include skating, • swimming, mad science, reptile • show, magician, crafts, inflatables, rock climbing, face painting and • lots more. End the night with a • fireworks display to celebrate Canada 150. Food Donations to the • Aurora Food Pantry are appreciated. •



Great things come in threes.

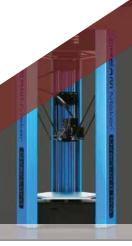
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FREE Week of December 14, 2017

Tigers keeping pace in tough OJHL North division

By Jake Courtepatte

The race is on.

Just past the halfway mark of the Ontario Junior Hockey League season, three teams have separated from the herd in the North division, seemingly making it a three-team battle for the title the rest of the way.

Among them are the Aurora Tigers, winners of two over the weekend, giving the cats a very real chance to catch both the Markham Royals and Newmarket Hurricanes.

rebuilding Lindsay Muskies team that has managed just five wins all year, a one-sided matchup that earned backup goalie Jack Irvine his first shutout of the year.

The Tigers walked away with a 3-0win, thanks to goals from Jake Bricknell. Evan Bidenti, and Christopher Giroday.

It was Saturday's matchup with the Pickering Panthers that proved to be the game of the week, a tight contest coming down to the final two minutes of play.

periods, Tyler Davis set up Elijah points over the weekend to stay atop the

Gonsalves on a two-on-one for a onetimer to give Aurora their first lead in the third.

The Tigers then doubled their lead in the eighth minute of the frame on the powerplay, when Brock Welsh tipped home a Bricknell point shot.

Pickering stormed back with a pair of their own late in the game, including the tying goal with just under two minutes left in regulation.

But it was Christian Monachino that was the recipient of some nice puck luck just seconds later, when the Friday night saw the Tigers visit a Panthers goaltender botched a pass behind his own net.

Welsh capitalized on the mistake, and centred to Monachino who buried it in the empty cage, putting another two points on the standings board for the Tigers.

Kevin Dean, play-by-play analyst for the Tigers, called it a "tough break" for the Pickering goaltender.

"He came out, he thought he was Bobby Orr, and played the puck," said Dean. "Tough break for him."

Unfortunately for the Tigers, the red-With the game tied at one after two hot Canes also picked up a crucial four



Aurora's Bradley Van Schubert (pictured) combined with Jack Irvine between the pipes this weekend in earning the Tigers two straight wins.

division.

Fortunately, Markham fell to both the Wellington Dukes and Mississauga Chargers, leaving Aurora only two points back of the Royals with a whopping four games in hand.

Six points separate the Tigers from the Canes, though Aurora also holds an advantage in games in hand against their Yonge Street rival with three.

the Royals may be the most crucial on the Tigers' schedule so far, having met them just once so far this season.

Saturday's home matchup with the Mississauga Chargers at the Aurora pointstreaksites.com.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

Community Centre kicks off a fivegame homestand, which will run into the New Year.

Saturday will also be the final opportunity for fans to donate to the Aurora Food Pantry at a home game, with a collection box for non-perishable items located outside the box office.

Anthony Romano, the team's secondhighest scorer after over-ager Jake This Friday's road matchup with Bricknell, will miss both games this week while representing Canada at the World Jr. A Challenge in Nova Scotia.

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

3HL Tour returns to Aurora for Christmas Classic

By Jake Courtepatte

Overtime, all the time.

That is the fast-paced experience fans get with the 3HL Tour, making a stop in Aurora over the holidays in the league's third year.

professional three-on-three hockey league, eight teams from across York Region and the GTA will vie for a share of a \$15,000 purse in the Aurora Christmas Classic, returning to Aurora after a successful inaugural visit last season.

Markham The Millionaires, Toronto Bees, Niagara Rapids, Newmarket Saints, Milton Flyers, County Clippers, and Hamilton Tigers will take to the ice at the Aurora Community Centre, this year joined by some hometown flavour.

The home crowd will be represented by the Aurora Avalanche, in their first year in the league.

"3-on-3 Hockey provides more open play, which allows players to be more creative with the puck and makes for more scoring opportunity," said Pat Gregoire, Director of Media Relations with the Tour. "The NHL has seen a ton of success with their new 3-on- 3 overtime format that has created end-to- end non-stop action, but only for five minutes. With the 3HL, we like to say its overtime, all the time."

It was Aurora's PJ Buys who first brought the tour home last season for the first event at the ACC, titled the Aurora Dangle Fest. It proved to be an overwhelming success, when over 600 fans packed the rink to watch the revolutionized game of hockey.

"(Buvs) approached Justin Fox, higher price. the CEO and founder of the league, and was adamant that the 3HL make

a stop in Aurora," said Gregoire. "He told us if we came to the ACC, the seats would be filled with fans wanting to see exciting professional 3-on-3 hockey."

"Aurora is a great hockey town that has a very tight-knit community that Dubbed as the world's first has been unbelievable in supporting this event."

> Buys, now 27, cut his teeth at the Junior level with the OJHL's Newmarket Hurricanes from 2008-10, before playing at the collegiate level with the British Columbia Intercollegiate Hockey League.

> After a stint with the Newmarket Saints last season, Buys took a leadership role as the captain of the new Avalanche team in the offseason.

> With just two games under their belt heading into the Aurora Christmas Classic, the Aurora squad will be looking to establish themselves in a highly competitive league.

> The parity in the league is rarely matched in today's pro hockey world, with the tour having repeat champions for only the first time ever last weekend, when the Toronto Bees won their second tournament in a row.

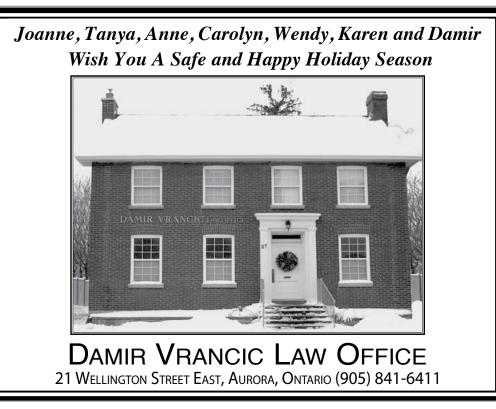
> Buys shares the team lead in points so far with Kyle Morrison, also an ex-OJHLer who competed at the collegiate level.

> Boasting talent from levels as high as the NHL, the action consists of two seven minute halves per game, with no icing or offsides.

> The event runs December 23 from 12 – 3 p.m. at the Aurora Community Centre. Tickets are \$9.99 for children seventeen and under, and \$19.99 for adults, while more immersive experiences can be bought at a

> For more information, visit www.3hltour.com.







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Formenton, Thomas named to World Junior roster

By Jake Courtepatte

There is a good chance this year's World Junior Hockey Championship will have a touch of local flavour.

Aurora will have twice the opportunity to watch some homegrown talent at this year's prestigious tournament in Buffalo, as both ex-Tiger Alex Formenton and Aurora native Robert Thomas earned invites to this week's selection camp in St. Catherines.

Both players, at only eighteen years of age, are attending their first national camp.

"I try to work as hard as I can, and to be recognized for that, it's pretty cool," said Formenton. "I'm just going in excited. It should be a fun camp and hopefully, I can make the team out of it."

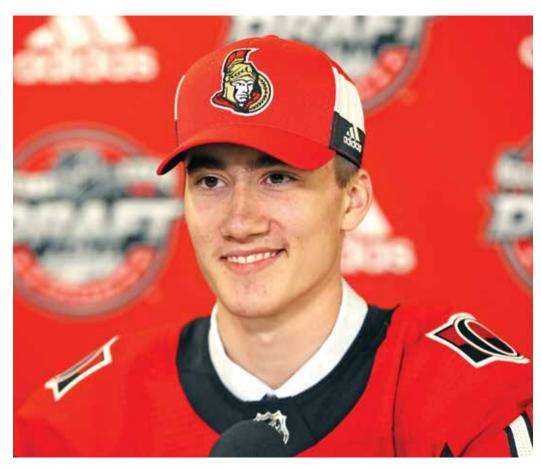
"Watching Team Canada and all the games on TV, that was probably the best part of Christmas every year. They've had a lot of success and to be part of this selection camp is special."

Getting his first NHL experience early this season in one game with the Ottawa Senators, Formenton has put up 21 points in 17 games since returning to the Knights. He was a key cog in the Junior A Aurora Tigers' offense in his first junior year in 2015-16.

Thomas, a native of Aurora and product of the York-Simcoe Express system, has burst out offensively in his first season as Knights' captain to sit fourth in the league in scoring.

Despite his high-scoring prowess, the first-round pick of the St. Louis Blues in 2017 will have to work like any other to make the final cut, one of eleven first round picks invited to camp.

"With a talent pool as deep as we have in this country, we believe the 22 players eventually selected from camp will give us the best chance at bringing home a gold medal," Shawn Bullock, Hockey Canada's senior manager of hockey operations and men's national



Former Aurora Tiger Alex Formenton is one of two Aurora invites to Team Canada Selection Camp for the upcoming World Juniors tournament.

Photo courtesy of the Ottawa Senators

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teams, said in a statement.

In his third season with the Knights, Thomas is well aware of the talent pool available at the camp, which consists of eleven OHLers.

"At the summer showcase it came in that (Juniors) could be a possibility," he said, "and I have to keep working hard and have a big camp to make it, in reality."

The 32 will be whittled down to 22 by final cuts next week.

Former teammate Victor Mete will Boxing Day.

also be a familiar face to the pair, loaned by the NHL's Montreal Canadiens to the team earlier this week, the only NHLer to be given permission.

The trio was instrumental in the Knights' run to the OHL Cup semifinals last season.

Canada kicks off their schedule with a pre-tournament game in London on December 20 against the Czech Republic. The regulation round opens, as is yearly tradition, on Boxing Day

Romano notches first international point at WJA Challenge

By Jake Courtepatte

Anthony Romano can now say he has seen his name on the stat sheet for Team Canada.

That has to be quite the feeling.

Just barely into his seventeenth year, the rookie phenom for the Aurora Tigers is representing Canada East at the World Jr. A Challenge in Nova Scotia, picking up an assist in a 5-1 loss to Team Russia on Sunday.

With the Canadians down 4 – 0 late in the second period, it was Romano who centered the pass to Nick Campoli, whose wrister was deflected by Jack McBain, an all OJHL line.

Romano was also a plus-two for the Canadians in their first win of the tournament, a 4-3 win over Switzerland on Monday.

A short two-game regulation round is followed by an elimination tournament later this week, with final standings yet to be determined.

He has managed twelve goals and nineteen assists for 31 points with Aurora this season.



"We always said 'good enough' was not good enough"

Long-time Parks director Jim Tree set for retirement after 38 years

By Brock Weir

When you work in a municipal parks department and your last name just happens to be "Tree," chances are there's not a pun that's left unturned. Especially after 38 years in the job.

But, after nearly 40 years with Aurora's Parks Department, former Parks Manager Jim Tree is set for retirement.

Over the years, he has seen local parks built from the ground up, longestablished green spaces overhauled for more contemporary use, and developed to accommodate residents of all ages and all abilities, a steep curve from when he first gained a job at Town Hall in a much smaller community.

"I've always liked to work outside and I've lived and died on the frontline," he says. "That is where my heart is and that is where my head is. I am always looking at what actions we can do to make a difference."

Jim Tree grew up in Aurora and, for much of his time working with the Town, continued to call Aurora home.

Growing up here, he says he has always had a strong connection with the community and, through his work, has prided himself on this hometown investment.

"You should feel comfortable and happy to be at work, and I have felt like that since Day One," he says. "I had a really good mentor in Norm Weller; he was a very miserly guy, a man of wisdom, a man of unique character, but his heart and soul was in his job, getting more for a dollar than anyone I've ever seen in my life, and dedicated to the people in the municipality, trying to give them first-rate service.

"I have always put myself in the position of the homeowner and the taxpayer because they are paying our salaries and we are serving them. I can't preach that enough to the people who are coming along - you need to pay attention to these people. If you don't do that, you really don't understand why you're here."

Jim Tree joined the Parks team when the Aurora community was significantly smaller than it is today.

At that time, it was much easier to build parks completely in house. Most, if not all of their projects were done with their own staff while, with the help of part-time staff, including students, maintenance work was still being carried out.

Working on this projects in-house saved a lot of money, he says, but rapid growth eventually made that hands-on work more of a challenge.

"Because of the size of the municipality and the number of issues in forestry and the growth of the forestry inventory, it has strained our construction resources to the point where we're not doing as much of that," he says. "We're actually doing more hands-on work in terms of maintenance projects; minor projects, but more of them."

As Aurora rapidly reaches the buildout of 2C, Mr. Tree says the Town is now "over the hump" in terms of new development. When that arrives, there will be a steady stream of infill projects but the Parks department will,



Jim Tree is pictured in the greenhouse of the JOC last week. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

in his view, be in largely a maintenance

During his time in the Parks Department, Mr. Tree and his team have spearheaded a number of initiatives, including an innovative riding line painting machine, typically used on soccer fields, which was pioneered in house and then became largely a commercially-built industry standard. He also floated a new and efficient way of maintaining Aurora's outdoor ice rinks through an innovation based on the principle of the ice cube tray but this was, for lack of a better phrase, put on ice after Council got muddled in patent concerns and other legal issues.

He says he hopes his successor in the Parks Department, a role currently filled by Sarah Tienkamp, will take this particular ball and run with it, ultimately making it the norm in Town.

When asked of his proudest achievements working with the Town. the first he cites is the restoration and rebuilding of the Petch Log House. This, he says, is a project that was estimated by architects and engineers to clock in at "hundreds of thousands of dollars" but the Parks team brought it in with a budget of \$140,000.

But, at the end of the day, his proudest achievement is the relationships relationships which, once the succession plan is finalized, he will be leaving behind.

"I will miss the people, I'll miss the challenges," he says. "It's always great to have your head in the game and be at the forefront of solving people's problems and issues. I'll miss the highs and the lows, the drama. I love when something comes at us that is maybe not so good but is a problem to solve and everyone comes together to solve the problem.

"It has been a privilege to serve this fabulous community. The people who are in this Town are very fortunate. They have a great parks system, great recreation, good staff in the roads department. They should know that the people who are employed in this municipality are working for them, are top shelf and have a great deal of

don't agree, and I respect that, but for their money."

pride in their work and just want to do knowing what I know, the resources we the best they can. I think we do it very have and the amount of area we need to well – I think they get excellent value cover, I truly believe after my years of for their taxpayer dollars. Some people experience they are getting full value











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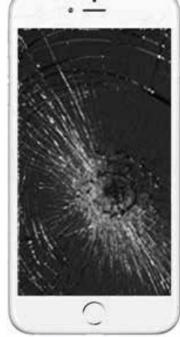
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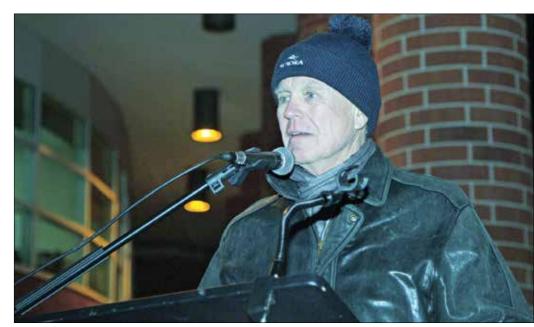
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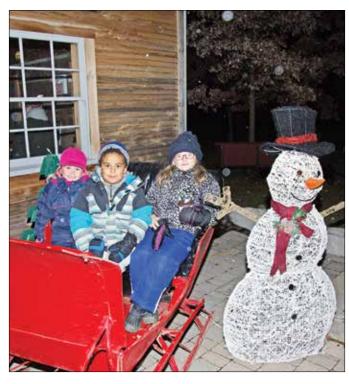








the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, but a miniature Aurora Christmas Market, which is expected to become an event of its own next Year. (Top Row) Councillor Harold Kim, joined by his son, motioned earlier this fall that the word "Christmas" be added to the name of the ceremony. Town Crier John Webster officially kicked off the ceremony. The fully-lit tree brought out smiles in Donny and Anne Marie. (Second Row) The Knotty Elf elves, Sarah Tienkamp and Mandie Eddie, participated in the Christmas Market, selling products crafted in-house at Town Hall out of local wood – with the proceeds benefiting TOAST (Town of Aurora Staff Together), which makes donations to organizations throughout the community. Mayor Geoff Dawe awaits Santa's arrival. (Third Row) Mrs. Claus sets her game plan with her helper elves prior to the ceremony. Craig Youdale of the Canadian Institute of Food and Wine, serves up a tasty treat to Frozen's Olaf (Logan). (Fourth Row) There's no mistaking whose Christmas Tree this was. Sheryl Thomas of Marquee Theatrical Productions with organ grinder Klaus Wehrenberg. The crowd enjoys some magic tricks. (Fifth Row) Addison enjoys activities inside the Seniors' Centre. Noah and Luka tuck into some grilled cheese. (Sixth Row) Youngsters discover what fun it is to ride and sing a sleighing song. Joshua tries his hand at some reindeer games. J.P. and Luke Meet Mrs. Claus.







From page 1

community celebration will feature Hanukkah-related treats for members of the public to sample, including latkes and donuts.

"When we were talking about moving from a 'Tree Lighting' to a 'Christmas Tree Lighting' last month, what was at the back of my mind was this would probably expand out into recognition of other religions, because it is not just Christmas and Christians, there is Hanukkah and other observances as well," says Mayor Dawe.

This was all being formulated when the York Regional Police appealed for information on a spate of hateful and anti-Semitic graffiti which was found outside Aurora High School at the end of November.

It is just the latest in a long line of incidents that have taken place in Aurora over the course of 2017, including graffiti at Hartman Public School on Aurora's east side, to swastikas tagging pavement and street furniture in the Town's southwest quadrant.

"When those activities came to light, we were disheartened by the hate and anti-Semitic graffiti, and I said we really should stand up and do something to send a message that we stand together, that we stand in unity, and we want to spread that universal message of freedom," Rabbi Hecht tells

When those activities came to light, we were disheartened by the hate and anti-Semitic graffiti, and I said we really should stand up and do something to send a message that we stand together, that we stand in unity, and we want to spread that universal message of freedom

The Auroran. "The idea is really about illuminating and adding light to the world and every day adding another candle and bring more light into the world. In light of recent events, we believe this is an opportune time to come together as a community, at Town Hall, which is really a beacon of light, and to stand proud, stand together, and celebrate in unity."

Both Town Hall and Chabad Aurora reached out to one another and everything fell into place, all with the common message.

"These are learned behaviours." says Mayor Dawe of the vandalism. "If people can learn that behaviour, they can learn other behaviours. No one is born hating; you learn that. We can teach that there is a better way to go about life."

There are also certain messages Rabbi Hecht says he hopes the community

takes away from the celebration.

Hanukkah has its roots in the desecration of the Second Temple. There was only enough oil found to keep the light burning for a single evening, but the oil lasted for seven nights.

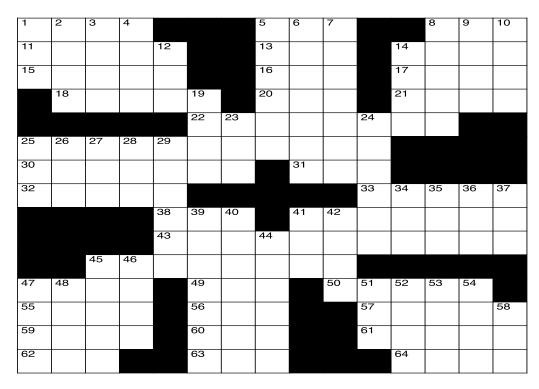
"That miracle sends a message," says Rabbi Hecht. "It's a universal message. We are all here to spread the light, spread the love and spread this unity. When we stand together, we stand strong – and when we stand strong those who, for whatever reason, desecrate or do disheartening things, we need to continue to send this message of love and unity. When we illuminate everyone in their own life, their own communities, their families, places where they have positions of responsibility, the world will become a better place.

"It will bring more light into the world and our communities will be brighter communities."



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From page 5

that would be a huge story. Everyone has visions of the Pulitzer Prize for a never in the public's best interest. Watergate like story.

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Kathy van Nostrand CPA, CGA

kathy@kvncga.ca

When the supposed "good-guy" is demonstrated to have pushed a false

narrative, it loses all semblance of its hard won integrity. And that's

The responsible, ethical and appropriate response is to retract, correct and apologize. Anything less is to do a disservice to the very public and principles they supposedly

CNN has done that. Now if only other purveyors of misinformation (Fox "news" anyone?) would do the

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Member of a Semitic people 5. Certified public accountant
- 8. Residue
- 11. Sayings attributed to Christ 13. The products of human
- creativity
- 14. Listen to
- Longed
- 16. No (Scottish) 17. Descriptor
- 18. Yankees' sensation Judge
- 20. Zero
- 21. Comics legend Lee
- 22. Honorary title holder
- 25. "Uncle Joey"
- 30. Graceful and stylish
- 31. Pitching term
- 32. Former Mets outfielder Jones

- 33. One who avoids animal products
- 38. Ouick to learn
- 41. Mechanism in an organ 43. Redo with new materials
- 45. Epics 47. Wings
- 49. Extrasensory perception
- 50. Cavalry sword
- 55. Bangladeshi monetary unit
- 56. Not the bottom
- 57. Afflicted 59. Bound
- 60. One who is highly skilled 61. Jewish spiritual leader
- 62. Tall, rounded vase
- 63. Liturgical language of
- Hinduism (abbr.)
- 64. Cheek

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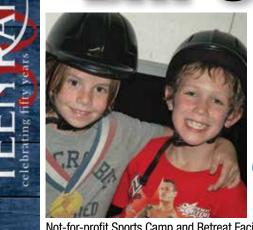
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CLUES DOWN

- 1. Pie _ __ mode
- 2. Portuguese cape
- 3. Ottoman military title 4. Movable frame used in burials 36. Type of beverage
- 5. Type of coal
- 6. A treeless grassy plain
- 7. Artist's workroom
- 8. Assists
- 9. Protein-rich liquids
- 10. A song of praise to God
- 12. Much __ about nothing
- 14. Japanese city 19. Atomic number 10
- 23. Egyptian goddess
- 24. Go places
- 25. Having ten
- 26. Complete 27. Automotive belt
- 28. Psyche

- 29. Melodious bird 34. Medical personnel
- 35. Acquired
- 37. Neither
- 39. Spanish monetary units 40. Small area of grass
- 41. Your
- 42. Diana ___, singer
- 44. Salt's partner 45. Made of wood
- 46. No longer alive
- 47. Alaskan island 48. Wild animal's resting place
- 51. Swiss river 52. Partiality
- 53. "Luther" actor Idris
- 54. UNLV's "Runnin'
- 58. Criticize

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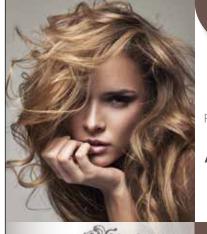
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DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

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- Will produce stories and bylines for the events they cover
- Will be paid on a freelance/contract basis per project/story
 - Generate story ideas and follow up on news tips
 - Take photographs
 - Work some evenings and weekends, as required

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Diploma in journalism preferred
- Candidates should have experience working on the editorial side of the newspaper industry
- Excellent writing, editing and photography skills
 - Valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle
 - Reporting experience an asset
- An interest in local issues is a necessity, as the majority of the writing for this role will be local



Let's Talk.

Interested and qualified candidates should forward their cover letter and resume to brock@auroran.com

COORDINATOR, INTAKE & ADMINISTRATION 1 Year - Contract Employment

Cedar Centre is a non-profit organization that provides trauma therapy to children, youth and adults who have experienced all forms of interpersonal violence. The Coordinator, Intake & Administration is responsible for providing telephone intake and clerical support to the Centre's clinical team. This position plays an active and pivotal role in establishing and maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for program participants and providing a liaison to the Agency's community partners.

- Provides administrative and coordination support to Cedar Centre's Clinical staff and to all clinical programs, including group and individual services
- Answers inquiries and provides information about programs and services
- Conducts trauma-informed telephone intakes, including assessing eligibility for service, preparation of therapeutic files and making appropriate referrals, as required
- Ensures that all documentation of client-related information is recorded in an accurate and timely manner
- Maintains clinical file room and filing process, including organization of client files and individual case files
- Assists in the creation and maintenance of all clinical forms
- Participates in weekly program planning and supervision meetings and other agency meetings, as required
- Represents Cedar Centre at community meetings, as required
- Maintains the smooth and efficient delivery of service within the policies and practices of the organization

Agency Business:

- Demonstrates excellence in the area of client service
- Assists with front desk relief
- Organizes and maintains all clinical electronic files
- Provides logistical support for all trainings and workshops, including creation and distribution of community and group
- Responsible for written, verbal and email communications to individual clients, contractors and community partners on behalf of the clinical team
- Maintains clinical appointment booking system and schedules for groups, supervision and trainings
- Attends professional development and training activities, as required Other duties as required by the Executive Director or Clinical Director

Data Management:

• Responsible for the collection, maintenance and reporting of all clinical program metrics

Community Outreach Activities:

• Maintains an active liaison with referring community partners

Qualifications and Qualities:

- Evidence of practicing from an Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppressive perspective
- Demonstrated ability to establish effective working relationships with diverse populations and community agencies
- Theoretical and practical knowledge of childhood sexual abuse and other forms of interpersonal childhood trauma
- Strong organization and administrative skills
- Strong interpersonal skills and demonstrated strength in client advocacy Previous experience working in a clinical environment
- Previous experience conducting intakes would be an asset
- Trauma-informed training would be an asset
- Thrives in a busy and dynamic work environment

Accountability:

The Clinical Administrator reports directly to the Executive Administrator, and ultimately to the Clinical Director.

1 FTE - Contract Employment (35 hrs./week)

As an employer, Cedar Centre is dedicated to building an organization that reflects the diversity of our clients and the commu nities we serve. We strongly encourage applicants from Indigenous/First Nations, Francophone, Immigrant and Refugee, Wom en of Colour, LGBTTTQQI individuals, people with Dis/abilities, and all equity seeking groups to apply for this position.

Apply in confidence to Kerrie Kortis, Clinical Director, k.kortis@cedarcentre.ca prior to January 5, 2018.

We thank all candidates for their interest but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.



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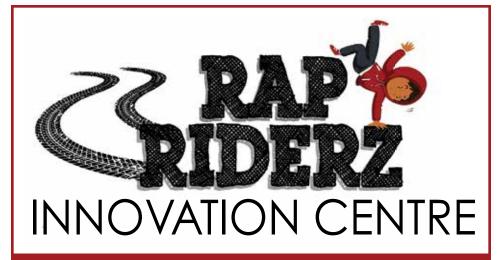
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