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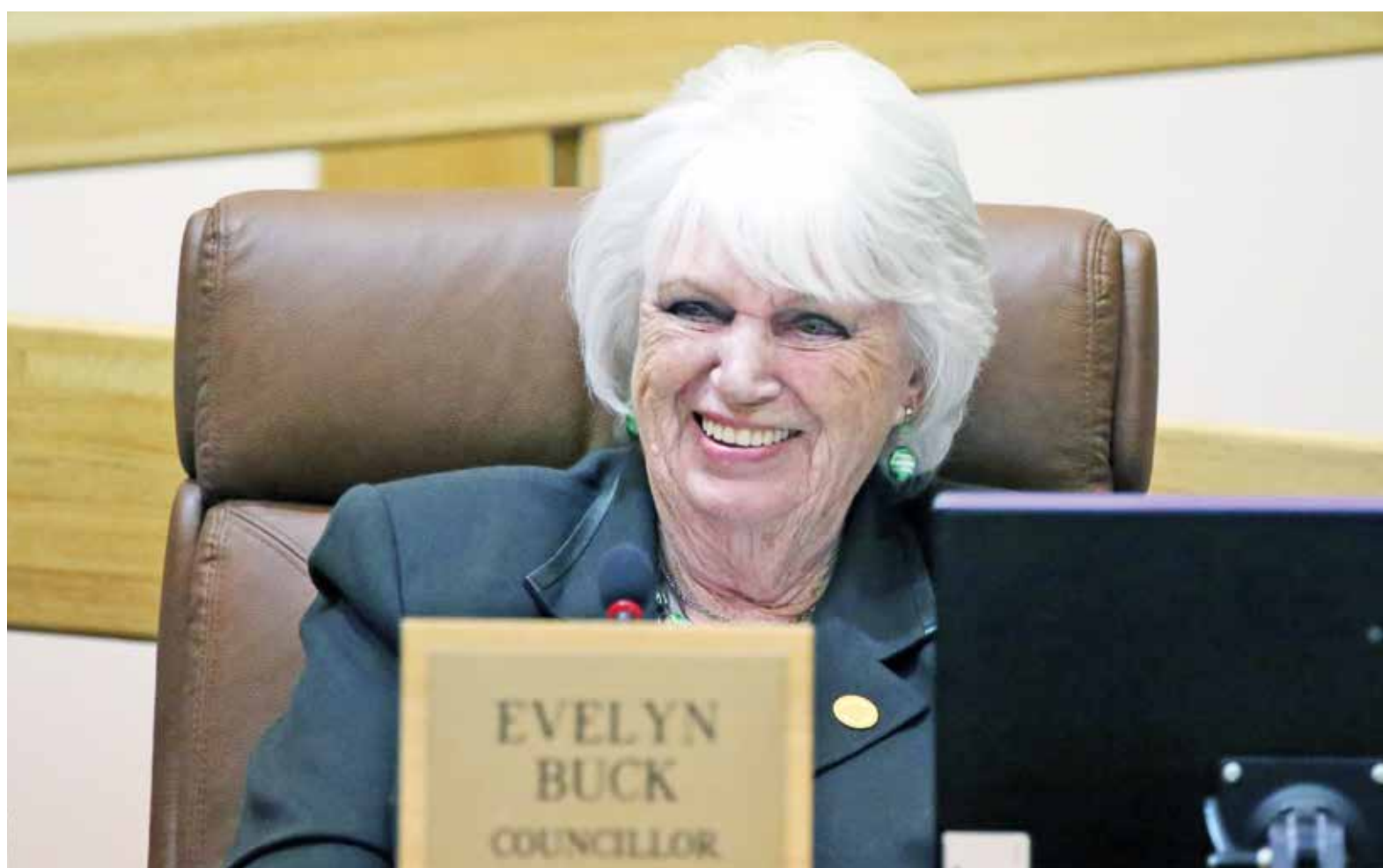
Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 21 No. 12 905-727-3300

TheAuroran.com

FREE

Week of January 7, 2021



Evelyn Buck smiles from her seat at the Council table after receiving a Long-Standing Service Certificate from then-mayor Geoff Dawe on behalf of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on April 8, 2014. Ms. Buck, Aurora's first female mayor, died December 21 after a brief illness.

Photo by Anna Lozyk Romeo

Evelyn Buck had "big heart, but didn't let it get in the way of a good political fight"

Aurora's first female mayor dies at 92

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Evelyn Buck, Aurora's first female mayor, is being remembered for her passion for the community she represented for decades.

Ms. Buck, who began her political career in the early 1960s and served

multiple terms on Council through 2014, died Monday, December 21, at the age of 92 after a brief battle with multiple myeloma.

Born Evelyn Mary Finnigan in Ayshire, Scotland, on December 1, 1928, she and husband Cyril Buck, emigrated to Canada in the mid-1950s before settling in a new home in what is now Aurora's Regency Acres community in 1960.

The Bucks raised seven children in this home and it was from this home that she began her public life by chairing the

Regency Acres Ratepayers Association. It was soon after that Ms. Buck won her first seat on Aurora Council. She served in various capacities on Council, including serving as the Town's last Reeve, before beginning two terms as Mayor in 1976.

After flirting with other levels of government in subsequent decades, including standing locally for the provincial NDP, she returned to where it all began in 2003 with another Council run, where she served as a Councillor in multiple terms

Continued on page 17

Residents and staff of York Region's LTC to be vaccinated by January 21

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Region of York has begun the roll-out of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine to area long-term care homes and all residents and staff of area facilities will be vaccinated by January 21, according to the Province.

The Ontario Government

Continued on page 8



VIRTUAL NEW YEAR – The Province-wide shutdown may have nixed Aurora's drive-thru fireworks display planned to ring in the New Year, but celebrations continued in the virtual realm – including this performance from Mighty Mike. For more, see Page 18.

Photo courtesy of the Town of Aurora

PICKERING COLLEGE

VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, January 13
6:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 16
10:00 a.m.

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TOWN OF AURORA Notice Board



Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Tuesday, January 12	5:45 p.m.	Video conference	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, January 12	7 p.m.	Video conference	General Committee
Thursday, January 14	7 p.m.	Video conference	Committee of Adjustment
Tuesday, January 19	5:45 p.m.	Video conference	Finance Advisory Committee
Tuesday, January 19	7 p.m.	Video conference	Public Planning
Wednesday, January 20	7 p.m.	Video conference	Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Racism Task Force

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

What's Happening



Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition Artist: Irene Schaefer

During the month of January, enjoy the exhibition 'Inspiration from Outside'. Using vivid colours and soft brush strokes, Irene Schaefer shares the beauty of line and shapes found in nature. Schaefer dove into her art practice later in life, and is now devoted to the visual arts. With acrylic as her medium of choice, she paints a variety of subjects, such as landscapes, flowers, and still life. Her work is nostalgic and reminds others of a place previously visited, bringing light and joy to the viewer experience.

View this online gallery at aurora.ca/skylightgallery.

Town of Aurora parking tickets get a new look

As of early December, Town of Aurora's parking tickets now have a new look. We have moved to a new vendor, GTECHNA, to issue and pay for parking tickets. The new parking tickets are yellow in colour, water resistant and contain bilingual wording.

The existing white and red parking tickets will be discontinued, however any issued tickets up until **December 31, 2020** will remain valid and can still be paid online through paytickets.ca.

The new Town parking tickets will be paid through GTECHNA's portal (details will be on the back of the ticket). Through this system users can also view their parking ticket history and photos of the infraction.

For more information, please visit: aurora.ca/parking.

All outdoor ice rinks in Aurora are closed

Due to the mild weather conditions, all outdoor ice rinks in Aurora are closed. Conditions will be reassessed and we will update the public once the outdoor rinks are open.

To check for updates, please visit aurora.ca/outdoorrinks.

E-Waste Recycling Event

Looking to get rid of an old tv, radio, computer or cell phone? Join us for the Town's electronic recycling event on **Saturday, January 23** from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) located at 229 Industrial Parkway North.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are only accepting electronics at this time. York Region is currently under a provincial lockdown at least until January 23. Provincial physical distancing guidelines and mandatory masks are in effect. Please check aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling and the Town's social media feeds for event updates or cancellations.

THREE BAG OR CONTAINER LIMIT

DID YOU KNOW?

Town of Aurora residents can place up to three (3) bags or containers out for pickup every other week on regularly scheduled collection days.

All garbage should be placed in a Town approved container or black plastic bag.



No more than 133 litres or 50 pounds maximum. No loose material, all items must be bagged and tied.

Effective January 2021, bags will not be collected beyond the limit.

Additional waste will have a non-compliant sticker placed on it and will be left behind.

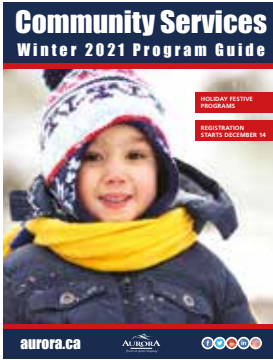
Additional waste can be kept until the next waste collection week or dropped off at the closest waste depot transfer station.

As outlined in **Bylaw #5590-14** section 4.16, the number of items put out for collection from any premise on any collection day shall not exceed a total of three (3) garbage bags and shall not exceed a total of five (5) bulky items.

For more information, please visit: aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling 905-727-1375 • info@aurora.ca



What's Happening



Winter 2021 Community Services Program Guide

The Winter 2021 Community Services Program Guide is available for online viewing at aurora.ca/recguide.

Online registration for Recreation and Aquatics programs is now open at aurora.ca/eplay.

Club Aurora Virtual Group Fitness classes

Join us for a Group Fitness Class in the comfort of your own home by pre-registering for one of our exciting virtual classes.

Learn about our virtual programs and view the schedule online at aurora.ca/fitness.

Recreation at Home

It's easy to stay actively engaged at home with more than 200 online resources available on our Recreation at Home webpage. There are activities for all ages.

Please visit aurora.ca/recathome for more details.



Cabin Fever Reliever photo contest

Aurora's Cabin Fever Reliever photo contest runs until **Monday, January 25**. Bundle up and take a photo of your favourite outdoor places.

Please visit aurora.ca/cabinfever for more details.



Master Transportation Study

We have completed a Master Transportation Study (MTS), assessing both the current and long-term transportation needs of the Town through to 2041.

The MTS is a comprehensive town-wide study to guide improvements in transportation, mobility, connectivity and safety. Recommendations address short-term and long-term needs for sidewalks, cycling, traffic and parking.

The study updates the Town's Master Transportation Operations Study completed in 2013 and builds upon the recommendations for the Town within York Region's 2016 Transportation Master Plan.

To view the report, please visit: <https://bit.ly/2IRdKxD>

HELP STOP THE SPREAD

Medical masks and gloves should be disposed of in garbage bags only. Place all tissues and napkins in a closed bag to ensure safety of collection workers and help reduce the spread of Covid-19.

aurora.ca/covid19

What's Happening

FRIDAY FAMILY CAMPFIRES

Town Park • 49 Wells Street

January 22 to February 26

FREE
Aurora residents only

6 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
OR 7:15 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Pre-registration is required

aurora.ca/campfires

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2021 WASTE MANAGEMENT GUIDE AND RECYCLING CALENDAR



NEW! Recycle Coach app now available in nine languages. See aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling



AURORA CULTURAL CENTRE:

Upcoming In-Person Classes & Workshops Winter 2021

Adult Classes (16+)

Start Painting Now with Acrylics!	January 26 – February 23
Drawing & Sketching	January 27 – February 24
Expand Your Horizons in Acrylics Level 2	January 28 – February 25
Wood Carving	February 22 – March 22
Ukulele for Beginners	March 2 – March 30
Beginning Guitar	March 2 – March 30
Exploring Watercolours	March 3 – April 7
Watercolours: Basics & Beyond	March 4 – April 1

Adult Classes (16+)

Winter Paint-Along	Date TBC
The Art of Calligraphy	Date TBC
What is Printmaking?	Date TBC
Monogram Wood Sign Making	Date TBC
Photographing Nature	Date TBC

Check back in the New Year for additional virtual class offerings!

Children's Classes & Workshops

PA Day Programs	Ages 4-12	January 15 • February 1
A Journey Through Art & Time	Ages 4-6	February 20 – March 27
Around the World with Art	Ages 7-10	February 20 – March 27
Famous Artists & Their Styles	Ages 11-15	February 20 – March 27
You Can Uke It!	Ages 8+	March 2 – March 30
March Break Arts Buffet Camp	Ages 4-12	March 15 – 19

All classes and workshops meet all current COVID-19 gathering limits and safety protocols. For program and gallery information, venue locations, safety guidelines, and to register visit: AuroraCulturalCentre.ca

Aurora Town Hall

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“Chasing Painted Horses” is 2021 One Book One Aurora pick



Contributed photo

Author Drew Hayden Taylor penned “Chasing Painted Horses”, this year’s selection for One Book One Aurora.

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As he headed in the direction of a fairground attraction, five-year-old Drew Hayden Taylor stopped in his tracks to look at a small horse taking his fellow youngsters for a “ride” in small circles.

It was tethered in place, limited to that circle, day in and day out.

“It just looked down and never looked up,” Hayden Taylor recalls decades later. “Even as a little kid, it looked so sad to me.”

It may have just been a daytrip to Campbellford he took with his grandfather, but this takeaway was anything but.

Over the years, this horse has fuelled both his imagination and his creativity. Now, the resulting novel, Chasing Painted Horses, has been selected by the Aurora Public Library (APL) as its One Book One Aurora selection for 2021.

One Book One Aurora is APL’s initiative to get all of Aurora reading from the same page.

With multiple copies of the book ready to be released throughout the community over the coming months to be picked up, read, shared and passed on, it will form the centrepiece of a year’s worth of Library programming.

Chasing Painted Horses begins with Ralph Thomas who comes across graffiti of a horse in an alleyway.

“He recognizes the horse. A half-asleep Indigenous homeless man sees Ralph’s reaction to the horse and calls out to him. Over the course of a morning’s worth of hot coffee on a bitterly cold day, Ralph and the homeless man talk and Ralph remembers a troubling moment from his childhood when an odd little girl, Danielle, drew the most beautiful and intriguing horse on his mother’s Everything Wall, winning the competition set up for children on the Otter Lake Reserve.

“Ralph has lived with many questions that arose from his eleventh winter. What did the horse mean – to him, his sister, his best friend, and, most importantly, the girl who drew it? These questions have never left him.”

Nor has the story of the horse left Drew Hayden Taylor:

A resident of Curve Lake First Nation near Peterborough, Mr. Hayden Taylor has had a storied career as a writer. His credits include episodes of The Beachcombers, Street Legal, and North of 60, a number of novels, and short story collections.

Chasing Painted Horses began life as a short story in his collection “Fearless Warriors” under the title The Girl Who Loved Her Horses.

“It wasn’t happy just being a short story, so I wrote it into a one-act play for a young audience,” Hayden Taylor tells The Auroran. “It was my favourite thing I ever had the opportunity to write but, again, it still wasn’t happy being a one-act play for kids; it kept telling me it had more story there.”

Hayden Taylor didn’t start out wanting to be a novelist. In fact, he was often discouraged from writing by his mother and “oddly enough, my Grade 11 English teacher.”

“Growing up on the Reserve can be quite boring, so I read a lot and the more I read the more I realized I wanted to be a writer. I gave up wanting to be a writer and it wasn’t until I was in my 20s...that it wasn’t so much of me finding my art, but my art tracking me down and kicking me in the ass,” he says.

He started off writing magazine articles before turning to the film industry. He turned in his first television script at the age of 25, but didn’t really feel he had found his voice until his late 20s when his first play became a hit. He published his first novel nearly 15 years ago, with his second novel, Motorcycles & Sweetgrass, becoming a national hit.

“I never thought I was a novelist, that involves real effort – novels are like a marathon – but I realized I could write it and this story had been sitting in the back of my mind for so long that it eventually came forward and said, ‘Don’t forget us.’ So, I decided to blow the dust off the horse, Danielle and Ralph, sit down and just create their world once more and give them much more freedom, dimension and life.”

Now, this story, with its complete freedom, dimension and life, is set to become the heart of a community

conversation and Mr. Hayden-Taylor says the fact that “it was picked for something like [One Book One Aurora] that lets other people feel the resonance of what I felt from the story and wanted to share on a larger scale means so much to me.”

“Getting face-to-face, one-on-one interactions with [Aurora readers] is what I am most looking forward to,” he says about One Book One Aurora. “I hope they like the book and [I look forward to] learning what they liked about it. As a die-hard lover of reading books, as well as writing them, sitting down and talking about literature is just so much fun. A lot of people talk about movies, a lot of people talk about television... I do that, but I also like to talk about literature. I miss authors festivals and all my usual lectures where we get to talk about the wonders of Indigenous literature. I am very, very flattered.”

Drew Hayden Taylor has recently

completed work on a 13-part documentary series for APTN called “Going Native” and is presently working on a non-fiction book that will form the fourth installment of what he calls his “Me” series. Previous volumes include Me Funny, which “deconstructs” Indigenous humour; Me Sexy, which explores Indigenous sexuality, and Me Artsy, which looks at how Indigenous heritage influences art. The latest, Me Tomorrow, looks ahead.

“It is about Indigenous futurisms, where we will be in 10, 20, 50 years from now,” he says. “People are always thinking of Indigenous people, including ourselves, where we came from, what was lost, what we’re trying to get back, our connection to the past. I want to turn that lens around to see where we will be in 10, 20, 50 years.”

For more information about One Book One Aurora, including programming as it takes shape, visit www.onebookoneaurora.com.

I don't really need help but I'm so scared because....

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- I'm taking up so much time every day from my Daughter and her family.
- I want to stay always in my home.

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- Mom thinks that she can still do everything by herself.
- I need more time with my own family and my life every day.
- She wants always to stay in her home.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Share the trails at Sheppard's Bush, says reader

I'm sharing a "be careful" message if you're walking the trails down the hill from Sheppard's Bush.

My husband and I were walking (with the river on our right-hand side) toward the wide trail that has the bridge at the bottom of the long hill from the parking lot.

Suddenly, we heard a loud clattering and before we could even realize what it was, a cross-country skier came speeding around the corner from the long hill on our left. We had to jump out of the way as he hurtled into a turn onto the path we were on. He was travelling at an unbelievable speed! If we hadn't jumped, he would have crashed right into us!

Even so, if his skis had slipped or if he hadn't been able to make his turn there would have been a terrible collision.

We were very shaken to think what could have happened. We turned right, went over the bridge, and turned right onto the path. The skier must have travelled around the loop onto that trail because not long afterwards a lady was walking towards us with her dog. The same skier came speeding around a bend, zooming towards her and her dog.

If she had stepped the wrong way or if her dog had moved in front of him there would have been a terrible accident. I could not believe how fast he was moving. He was sort of "skating" on his skis and was going super-fast. It was so upsetting - absolutely an accident waiting to happen!

We've never seen such reckless behaviour ever! It seemed like he was trying to build up as much speed as he possibly could. He could very easily have killed someone.

It was a male, seemed like he was in his very late 20s or early 30s.

Due to his speed, walkers would only have a very small warning of the clattering noise before he'd have reached them, swinging quickly around them, but what if the trail was not wide enough at that point? What if they were startled and stepped the wrong way? What if their dog or small child was startled, or moved in front of him, or fell, etc?

I just wanted to bring it to people's attention so they can be aware that this type of thing might happen.

We've walked the various trails in and around Aurora for so many years and have never experienced anything like this!

Hopefully it's a one-off event, and everyone can enjoy safe, pleasant walks.

Kathryn Lloyd
Aurora

When will sidewalks be maintained like roads?

My name is Vicky McGrath and I am the owner of Here to Help Home Care (Newmarket, Aurora, Stouffville and areas), a private homecare business I am passionate about caring for seniors in our communities.

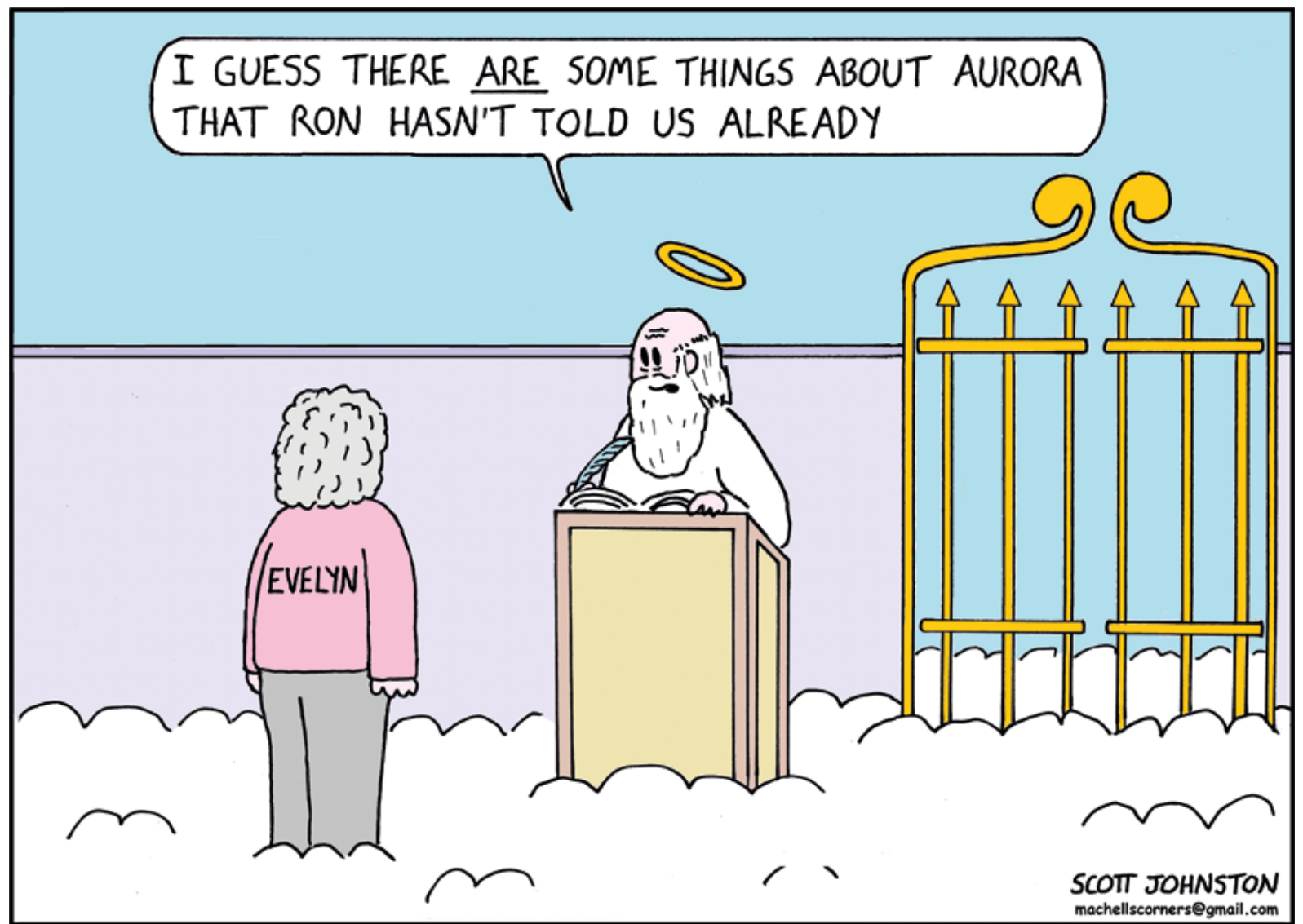
This year, with COVID-19, I have heard from a number of seniors in our care that they feel isolated and unable to walk anywhere due to icy, snowy and slippery sidewalks.

Imagine being elderly, frail or disabled, relying on an assistive device to ambulate and being unable to leave your home due to fear of falling and getting injured in the process.

Slips and falls fill our hospitals

Letter continues on page 16

Machell's Corners



The Wisdom of Experience

Now that the New Year has come and gone, we can now truly reflect on the year that was.

What will be the first thing we remember when the generations to come ask for a better understanding of what we have endured over the last 12 months? Will it be the challenges of staying indoors and staying socially distant from friends and loved ones? Will it be the sacrifices most of us have made each and every day to put just a little bit more pavement down on the road to a better future? Will it be of the financial struggles that were the hallmark for so many? Or, will it be the positive stories of how countless individuals have risen to the occasion to make the best out of a situation that was all but unthinkable less than eleven months ago?

In this first week of this fresh start, I am not sure just what my answer would be if asked that hypothetical when time has given me a bit more hindsight, but, at the moment, I'm learning towards the positive.

This was an unusual holiday season for all of us.

Although we kept up with the rapidly changing rules of the game for the better part of a year, it was still disconcerting to have so many life-long traditions thrown out the window. Yet, we knew the holidays were going to be what we made of then, and, as I have said before, all we could do was our best.

That being said, there was one tradition of ours that continued unchanged, as it has for generations: The Queen's Christmas Message.

It has been customary in my family for as long as I can remember to hit pause on the hustle and bustle of Christmas Morning to listen to the broadcast – and interest was particularly high in this challenging year. In the days preceding December 25, memes abounded speculating on how The Queen might begin this year's recap, ranging from "Where do I start?" to captions decidedly unprintable in this family medium.

Thankfully, Her Majesty has seen it all and done it all over her nearly 69-year reign, and I took no small degree of comfort in the words she offered.

"Every year we herald the coming of Christmas by turning on the lights," she began. "And light does more than create a festive mood – light brings hope. For Christians, Jesus is 'the light of the world', but we can't celebrate his birth today in quite the usual way. People of all faiths have been unable to gather as they would wish for their festivals, such as Passover, Easter, Eid, and Vaisakhi. But we need life to go on. Last month, fireworks lit up



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

the sky around Windsor, as Hindus, Sikhs and Jains celebrated Diwali, the festival of lights, providing joyous moments of hope and unity — despite social distancing.

"Remarkably, a year that has necessarily kept people apart has, in many ways, brought us closer. Across the Commonwealth, my family and I have been inspired by stories of people volunteering in their communities, helping those in need. In the United Kingdom and around the world, people have risen magnificently to the challenges of the year, and I am so proud and moved by this quiet, indomitable spirit. To our young people in particular I say thank you for the part you have played.

"As with other nursing pioneers like Mary Seacole, Florence Nightingale shone a lamp of hope across the world. Today, our front-line services still shine that lamp for us - supported by the amazing achievements of modern science - and we owe them a debt of gratitude. We continue to be inspired by the kindness of strangers and draw comfort that - even on the darkest nights - there is hope in the new dawn."

And, within this dawn of a New Year, one which will undoubtedly get worse before it ultimately gets better, it is more important now than ever before to keep this light burning bright.

It is also important to listen to the wisdom that comes with experience.

Having joined The Auroran team in November of 2009, I vividly remember one of my first assignments.

I think I had little over a week under my belt when Ron Wallace asked me to pop by a holiday party hosted by Neighbourhood Network. It wasn't the most taxing assignment and I anticipated the assignment to be a breeze. But there she sat, cane at her side, in conversation with an individual but still presiding over the room.

I hadn't met her either – but I certainly knew who she was.

Despite a few short days at the paper, I already felt pretty briefed on the subject. Her name was never far removed from the pages

of The Auroran at the time, particularly at this time when her battle with the majority of the 2006 – 2010 Council was at its zenith.

I was hesitant to approach her and introduce myself. Why? I'm not sure. It wasn't a familiar feeling.

It was common knowledge she pulled no punches. Would her first impression of me set the tone for our professional relationship? Would she cut me down to size face to face, or wait to deliver her unvarnished appraisal in her then-popular blog? The mind reeled.

As these thoughts raced, I steeled myself to approach Evelyn Buck, but by the time I decided on my approach, her conversation had ended and she was almost out the door. So much for that. But it afforded time to get Ron Wallace's input on how to navigate these potentially choppy waters before covering my first Council meeting a few days later.

I needn't have worried. As I quickly found out, she already knew who I was and was well-versed on the rather large shoes I was hired to fill.

It was immediately clear that there were few things that escaped the then-Councillor's eye.

Whether you loved or hated her, or fell somewhere in between, it was a marvel to watch her in action.

Despite the challenges that came with age – and she often beckoned to me to haul her walker out of the back seat of her car on those occasions we arrived at Town Hall at the same time – these faded away as soon as either Mayors Morris or Dawe began each meeting.

She was in her element and determined to do what she thought was in the best interest of the community she loved.

Over my time covering her in the Council chamber, I marvelled at the knowledge and historical insight she brought to the table, and she never hesitated to distribute it liberally. Each meeting contained at least one valuable history lesson, even if it meant that some meetings lasted until the wee hours of the morning as a result. It was also refreshing that when you asked her a straight question, she wouldn't hesitate to give you a straight answer, even if it wasn't what she thought you wanted to hear.

That approach sometimes got her into hot water, sometimes justifiably so, but she offered nothing less than the genuine article.

Now, as I write this in memory of her, one burning question comes to mind and I'm just a bit miffed I can't pick up the phone and ask her for the straight answer: Evelyn, why did you insist on calling me Brock Spiers?

That answer, like so much information she always had immediately on deck, is now lost with her.

THE AUROURAN
Aurora's Community Newspaper

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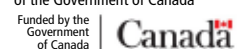
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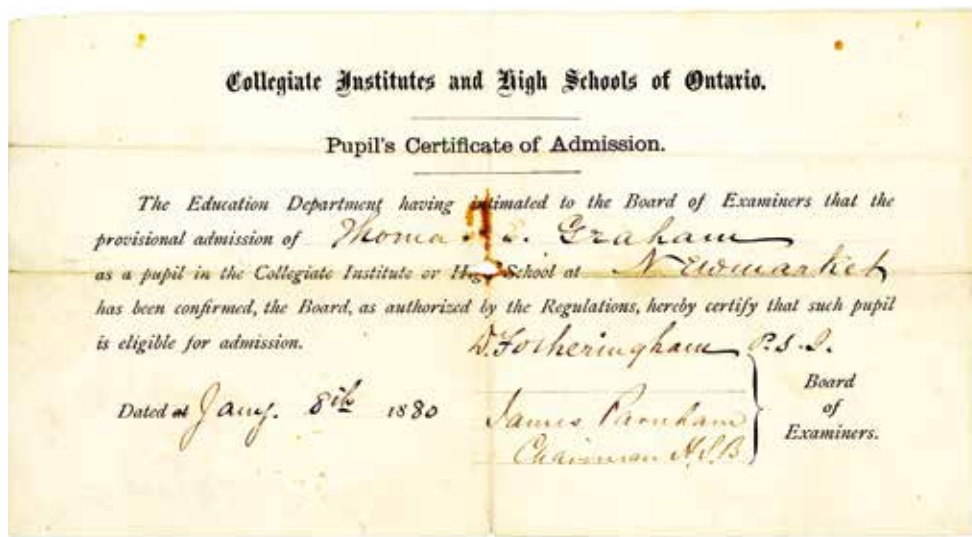
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The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating...

Back to School in the New Year

(January 8)

While we don't know the circumstances surrounding the issue of this January 8, 1880 admission slip to Thomas Graham (75.14.6) we do know he was the great-great-great grandson of William Graham, United Empire Loyalist, and one of the original settlers in Whitchurch, whose family was significant in the development of Aurora.



Time Travellers Diary

By Jeremy Hood
Museum Assistant, Aurora Museum & Archives

New Year's Wishes and Wisdom

*"Nineteen twenty-one, Howdy!
Well, what'll we do to THIS year?
And what will it do to us,
one wonders."*

Aurora Banner, January 7, 1921

The words from the New Year's edition of this 1921 newspaper stared back at me from the control panel where they were taped. They repeated in my head, they rang true for all time, although I had dialed in a date fifty years later into the time machine. I gripped the handle of the Temporal Motivator and gave a mighty pull, sending gears whirling and wheeling into motion above my head. I was off to the past.

It was New Year's Day, 1971, and I had arrived at the birth of the Regional Municipality of York - a carefully planned out merging and division of the municipalities from Vaughan up to Georgina into a new entity. Aurora grew in that moment, at the expense of King, which also lost territory to Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

I covered my face with my scarf and wandered into the busy IGA to purchase a copy of the newspaper - it was still the issue from the previous week (*Aurora Banner, December 29, 1970*), and the political cartoon inside struck me. If it was any indication, concern over the new York Region was on the minds of the populace - it appeared in the cartoon as "Regional Mish-Mash" in the bottom half of an enormous hourglass, alongside "White Paper," that year's rejected proposal for relations with Canada's First Nations, and "FLQ" in reference to the crisis involving the separatist group in Quebec three months prior.

These 1970 problems were being buried under the sand of the hourglass, sands which formed the shape of an old man wielding a scythe.

But, alongside those particular issues the people wished to put behind them, there were other problems named which seemed much more familiar to this time traveler's eyes: Unemployment, Constant Inflation, High Taxes, and Pollution. I've seen these issues in some form or another in my travels from the dawn of civilization and into the future, so it's no surprise that they feel timeless even here in 1971.

I thought back again to that newspaper scrap in the machine - there was a second nugget of wisdom on it, reflective of hundreds of years of New Year's anxiety:

*If New Year's Eve night wind blows south,
It betokeneth warmth and growth.
If west, much milk and fish in the sea.
If north much cold and storms there'll be.
If east the trees will bear much fruit.
If northeast, flee it, man and brute.*

Aurora Banner, January 7, 1921

However helpful such predictions may have been to our forebears, they underscore that whatever the weather of life blows our way, we can do naught but face it and bear it, be the consequences for good or evil. The fears that accompany a new year are multifarious, and they come with pressure to better one's self and to reflect upon the past months. It is perhaps sobering and gladdening to remember that for every fearful year-end recap, the cold wind of renewal is bearing down on us, offering new chances to address our challenges and successes.

Hope and determination for 2021

As most new years begin, many of us take time to reflect on our accomplishments in terms of what we had hoped for and what had been achieved. And we craft new resolutions - hoping to do even better. But 2020 was not just another year.

COVID-19 has shaped our lives, redefined values, revealed challenges our society needs to address, and it has certainly provided insights into what is important. A year ago, we were just becoming aware of the COVID-19 breakout in Wuhan, China. And we were quickly advised to keep two metres apart, wash your hands regularly, and self-isolate. That was the beginning of our new norm. Face masks and hand sanitizer quickly became sought after items, and a new wave of local entrepreneurship came to our rescue.

We gained inspiration from and a new appreciation for our essential and frontline workers, and marvelled at their willingness and their courage to keep us safe. We collectively expressed our gratitude in many heartfelt ways.

We are not out of this crisis yet, but have gained confidence and hope in knowing this pandemic will end. We will recover and build back better by continuing to keep each other safe: by washing our hands, keeping two metres apart, downloading the COVID alert app, staying home as much as possible, and listening to our local public health authorities.

COVID-19 Vaccinations

Throughout the pandemic, our government has been working to keep Canadians safe and healthy, and to ensure they have the support they need to weather this crisis. This includes ensuring all Canadians have access to a safe, effective, and free vaccine.

To date both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines have been approved

2020 has come to its much-anticipated completion and - after this unprecedented year - I think we are all ready for a fresh start.

I want to start by thanking you - the residents of Aurora - for coming together as a community over the last 10 months to support one another during these tough times. It has not been easy, and so many of our residents have suffered irreconcilable loss, but with the COVID-19 vaccine now being administered, there is light at the end of the tunnel. However, we are not yet "out of the woods" and I urge you to please continue to follow the health guidelines and stay vigilant.

Throughout this past year, COVID-19 has also been "top of mind" in the decisions we have made at Council and we have continued to move things forward that will better position our community to thrive as we recover from the effects of this pandemic.

Below are some of the highlights of what we have accomplished together this past year:

Budget 2021

Recognizing the difficult financial situation in which the pandemic has left many of our residents, through significant efforts and collaboration between staff and Council, we were able to reduce the tax levy to a rate of 1.96% which will minimize any financial burden while ensuring the approved reductions do not negatively impact or increase tax pressures in future years.

Naturally, a 0% tax increase, would be a popular decision, however, it would be fiscally irresponsible with long term ramifications on our town and its residents. We are committed to ensuring a strategic approach to our budgeting process that strikes a balance between the current and future needs of the community and the financial impact on our residents.



MP'S REPORT

Tony Van Bynen, MP
Newmarket - Aurora

by Health Canada, and more than 100,000 Canadians have received their first of two doses. We expect to vaccinate 3 million Canadians during the first months of 2021. The availability of the vaccine will increase throughout the year, ultimately providing every Canadian an opportunity to be immunized by the end of September, according to Public Health Canada (PHAC).

International Travel

Last week our government announced additional measures to protect the health of Canadians. These relate to the return of international travellers to Canada. Effective January 7, 2021, every air traveller 5 years of age or over will be required to present a negative COVID-19 PCR test from an accredited lab. It must have been taken no more than 72 hours before their scheduled departure, or they will be denied boarding to Canada.

Anyone who receives a negative test result and is authorized to enter Canada must still complete the full, mandatory 14-day quarantine. Persons who are travelling from a country where testing is unavailable will be required to complete the mandatory 14-day quarantine at a designated Government of Canada quarantine facility near the point of entry.

Government Support for all Canadians

We took, and will continue to take,

action to support all Canadians through this pandemic. Here are a few of the key initiatives:

The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy is helping employers keep their employees on the payroll.

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), rapidly supported Canadians who lost their jobs or income because of COVID-19. And it has transitioned into a strengthened EI program.

We also acted quickly to keep Canadians safe by procuring more personal protective equipment, supporting Provinces and Territories, investing in science and research, and securing a diverse vaccine portfolio.

And although COVID-19 dominated the news cycle, we must remember that it was not the only priority that defined 2020. We looked after Canadians on a variety of fronts:

- Cut taxes for the middle class and the people working hard to join it.
- Banned the harmful practice of conversion therapy in Canada.
- Reducing cell phone bills by 25% by 2022.
- Banned dangerous assault rifles to keep Canadians safe.
- Introduced our strengthened climate plan, giving us a clear path to net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Ratified the new NAFTA, and protected thousands of Canadian jobs.

It has been a challenging year, yet I'm heartened by the co-operation in both the public and private sectors. And with that in mind, I am truly optimistic for 2021. If you are seeking information or require assistance with Federal programs and services, please reach out to my team by e-mail at Tony.VanBynen@parl.gc.ca or by calling 905-953-7515



Getting Things Done

Mayor
Tom Mirakas

Library Square

After years of planning, Council provided final approval to proceed with the historic Library Square project. In doing so, we will take the exciting last step in a decades long journey to translate ideas into action and realize a shared vision for the transformation of Aurora's Downtown core. There has never been a better time to make this investment in our community!

Downtown needs our support now. Our local businesses need our support now. Our community partners need programming space now, and we are now on our way to implementing this critical element of our downtown revitalization plan and providing a much-needed boost to our local economy.

Ward System

This year, Council made the decision to implement the ward system for the 2022 election. As our community grows, we need to ensure the best possible governance for all Aurorans. The change to a ward-system will enhance governance and increase engagement between our community and Town Council.

Magna Headquarters

Since setting up their headquarters in 1997, Magna has been part of the fabric of Aurora. As the company considered long-term options for its headquarters, we were fortunate to have a role in those discussions and worked tirelessly to solidify the already

strong relationship between Magna and the Town. After careful consideration, the Magna Executive Team determined that Aurora remained the ideal location to call home.

Our community is grateful to have Magna as one of our premier corporate businesses. Magna has been a significant contributor to our local community and will now continue to do so for many years to come.

Rainbow Crosswalk

The Town of Aurora became the first municipality in York Region to install a rainbow crosswalk. This crosswalk will be a permanent feature in the heart of our Town and is a symbol of Aurora's commitment to a diverse and inclusive community where everyone is welcome and accepted.

New Hotel

The opening of Aurora's hotel has been a long time coming and even a pandemic did not stop this important initiative. I was truly excited to officially open Aurora's new hotel - Holiday Inn Express! This hotel is a much-needed piece of our overall economic development strategy.

Old Hotel

Speaking of hotels, this year the old hotel on Yonge Street - which has been vacant and an eyesore for many years - finally sold! Plans have been submitted to completely overhaul the existing building - both inside and out - with a proposed 104-unit seniors housing facility delivering an attractive addition to our Yonge Street Promenade. We are all looking forward to seeing this property come back to life.

St Anne's School

We all know St. Andrew's College is a world-class facility that has brought international attention to the Town of Aurora. People know that their children can flourish both academically and personally here. This year also brought

Continued on page 9

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Have you or someone you know received a COVID-19 vaccine yet?

Yes No
www.theauroran.com

PREVIOUS POLL

As 2020 comes to a close, are you optimistic about the year ahead?

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
January 5, 2020	88%	12%	0%

Loved ones remembered at Fleury Park memorial by Bereaved Families of York Region

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

When Vern Cunningham's wife died four-and-a-half years ago, he sought counselling from Bereaved Families of York Region and Hope House Hospice to help cope with the loss.

They helped him work through the devastation and once he felt able to, he has dedicated himself to helping others in the same way as a bereavement counsellor for both organizations.

Last Tuesday, December 29, Mr. Cunningham's work with Bereaved Families of York Region culminated with the unveiling of a new community memorial at Fleury Park which local residents have subscribed to as a place nearby where they can come and remember their loved ones.

More than three dozen plaques affixed to the memorial were dedicated by Mr. Cunningham and Mayor Tom Mrakas in a ceremony attended by a handful of socially-distanced individuals who contributed to the memorial and, in turn, have their family members permanently remembered.

The memorial was spearheaded by Mr. Cunningham as a way for Bereaved Families of York Region to raise much-



Mayor Tom Mrakas helps Vern Cunningham of Bereaved Families of York Region unveil the new memorial at Fleury Park on December 29 as residents who have remembered their loved-ones with plaques look on. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

needed funds at this challenging time.

"With the COVID lockdown, we weren't able to raise any funds so we came up with this idea where people could come and pay homage to their loved ones who have died," said Mr. Cunningham. "In a lot of cases, parents or relatives are located in other parts of the country and there is no place where they can go just for the serenity and peace of being with their loved ones. It isn't the same thing as being at a gravesite, but it is a place where people

can come regardless of religion in a beautiful setting."

For a minimum donation of \$100 to Bereaved Families (and a tax receipt of 75 per cent of the amount), individuals can place a memorial plaque on the new landmark, located right where Fleury Park meets the Aurora Community Centre.

Among those who came together for Tuesday's unveiling were Bob Kerr, whose late wife Kimberly was a tireless community leader, as well as former councillor Damir Vrancic, who dedicated a plaque to his father.

"Kim had so much to do with the Town and now she is here," said Mr. Kerr.

Added Mr. Vrancic: "We thought it was a wonderful idea to have a place where we can remember our loved ones. They are always with us, but to have a physical presence that others can see and our children can come is a wonderful thing to have. It is important to remember those who are gone. By keeping their memory alive, by telling stories about them, we keep them in our hearts and others know that they

were here, they mattered, and made a difference."

Donations to Bereaved Families of York Region allow the organization to provide services to grieving individuals and families across nine municipalities.

Contributing to making this memorial a reality were the Town of Aurora who helped pinpoint the ideal location for the installation, as well as the Aurora-based Almac Industrial Systems who not only donated the stainless steel material to make the sign but fabricated the sign as well.

"We would like to see a memorial like this in every municipality in York Region just to honour their loved ones," said Mr. Cunningham. "It doesn't have to be people who communicated with Bereaved Families; it could be anyone who has died. It is for everyone, the whole population. We will keep adding to the sign and keep adding more memorials."

For more information about Bereaved Families of York Region, including services and how to have your loved ones memorialized on a plaque, visit bfoyr.com or call 905-898-6265.

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PSW is first to receive COVID-19 vaccine at Southlake



Personal support worker Robin Dowdall applauds after receiving the first dose of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine at Southlake Regional Health Centre on December 23.

Photo courtesy of Southlake

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A personal support worker from Sutton got an early Christmas present when she became the first person to receive a COVID-19 vaccination at Southlake Regional Health Centre.

Robin Dowdall, a PSW at River Glen Haven Long-Term Care Home, received her first dose of the Pfizer vaccine from the local hospital on December 23.

River Glen Haven is a long-term care residence hit particularly hard by the virus. As she begins her 14th year working there, Ms. Dowdall says the last 12 months have been the hardest she has ever experienced.

"I'm excited to be getting this vaccine," said Ms. Dowdall in a statement released shortly after receiving her injection. "We've been waiting for it. We're a compassionate caring team at River Glen Haven and we've been doing everything we can to keep COVID out of the home. By getting the vaccine today, I'm protecting residents at the home, as well as my family, until they are able to get vaccinated themselves."

Following Ms. Dowdall's vaccination, Southlake's vaccination clinic was visited by Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen, Minister of Health and Newmarket-Aurora MPP Christine Elliott, as well as York Simcoe MPP Caroline Mulroney and Newmarket Mayor John Taylor to thank staff for their work.

"I am pleased to see the first COVID-19 vaccines being administered at Southlake Regional Health Centre," said Mr. Van Bynen. "Vaccines save lives and are an important tool to end the pandemic. I am proud that all levels of government have worked together as quickly as possible to start to get Canadians vaccinated."

Added Ms. Elliott: "Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the team at Southlake has gone above and beyond in their efforts to care for patients and families in our community. Watching one of our health care heroes, Robin Dowdall, a personal support worker at River Glen Haven, become the first person in our community to be vaccinated reminds us that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and that light grows brighter with every vaccine administered. Thank you to the teams at Southlake and River Glen Haven for your compassion and commitment to our community, and for being partners in this critical new stage in our fight against COVID-19."

For Arden Krystal, President & CEO of Southlake Regional Health Centre, Ms. Dowdall's vaccination was "a turning point" in the fight against the virus.

"It's an honor to be a part of the largest vaccination campaign this country has ever seen," she said. "This vaccine is a turning point

and as much as today is about looking forward with hope, it is also an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the partnerships we've forged throughout this pandemic. Today is great example of what we can achieve when we work together, across the healthcare system and at every level of government."

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New gym for SARC moves forward in Capital Budget

BY BROCK WEIR
 EDITOR
 LOCAL JOURNALISM
 INITIATIVE REPORTER

A potential new gymnasium for the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex has taken a step forward.

Council concluded its 2020 sitting with the approval of the 2021 Capital Budget, one which includes a new gymnasium for the complex (SARC).

Councillors signalled their support for a new 7,500 square foot gymnasium at the SARC located on Wellington Street East, just west of Leslie Street.

A gymnasium of this nature was originally envisioned as part of the SARC more than 15 years ago, but was subsequently taken out of the project. Now, from the perspective of many Council members, the demand is clear.

Should the project be brought to fruition, it could cost in the neighbourhood of \$5 million, funded in the end by Development Charges (DCs) – money paid to the Town by incoming developers to account for growth demands on municipal resources. Staff anticipate there will be \$9.5 million in Development Charges coming into municipal coffers by the time the project is done and would be financed by debt financing until that time.

From the perspective of Councillor Michael Thompson, who put the potential SARC gym back on Council's radar, the potential price tag was a good reason for moving forward now.

"I think the SARC, in my view, has always needed a gymnasium," he said. "I think it is incomplete. The challenge

is, of course, year after year we have seen the price tag escalate. I don't know what the price was for a gymnasium when they built the SARC, I assume it was around \$1 million or so, but when we added the gymnasium to the Aurora Family Leisure Complex (AFLC) that was a \$3 million price tag and now, as you can see, it is up around \$5+ million depending on what you want to do."

The SARC is not the only sport-related project that is being mulled by Council.

As The Auroran has previously reported, an aquatics facility will be subject to further review in the New Year.

Rather than look at these projects in tandem, Councillor Thompson argued that they should be evaluated on their own merits.

"I think we can make a decision on [adding] a gym to this facility and then continue on those conversations around the aquatics facility that may or may not happen there," he said.

But, looking at the potential SARC gym on its own, size of the potential facility came into sharp focus.

Council agreed that a 5,500 square foot gym wouldn't cut it, instead supporting a high school-sized facility to maximize opportunity for the community.

While a 7,500 square foot facility wouldn't be the competitive-level gym that some groups, such as Storm Volleyball, have wanted, it was deemed the most "versatile" option.

"I worry a 5,500 square foot size [is investing] in something we really won't get the bang for our buck, or the benefit of use from that gym," said Councillor Rachel Gilliland. "If we are going to

build something, we can build something that is going to be multi-use for a wide variety of areas.

"I feel it would be much more beneficial to do it right the first time, at least do the 7,500 [square foot] high school gym. It will bring much more flexibility in usage as kids grow in the sport, whether it is through volleyball, basketball, floor hockey... I just feel the investment now for something that is going to be widely utilized will be much more beneficial for the community down the road."

Councillor Harold Kim offered a similar perspective, adding: "I want to have something that will have spillover effects, be it economic or social."

Reservations, however, were expressed by Councillors Wendy Gaertner and John Gallo, albeit for different reasons.

Although Councillor Gaertner said a gym at the SARC was "a great idea" and needed, she wanted to make sure the option they chose was the best one for the community as a whole and, to come to that decision, it needed to be looked at hand-in-hand with both the potential aquatics centre and the Town's ongoing Sports Tourism plan.

Councillor Gallo, on the other hand, said he wanted a business case for a new gym before signing off.

"I don't have enough information in front of me to justify any of those, perhaps previous reports or reports that are coming up may do that, but I just don't want to debt finance another capital project. I just can't do that," he contended, noting the uncertainty in the future.

"While I would love to build as much as we possibly can for the community, I just don't feel comfortable doing any of this right now. I don't know what six months, one year from now is going to look like. If all of you do, you know far more than what I know. What I hear is the start of something very serious financially. I am being cautious. I hear all the arguments and I don't necessarily disagree with them. I am a proponent of sports and [I'd] love to see a facility there. While we may think that things will cost more and perhaps it will, my view is to be cautious right now. To suggest we're not going to spend any money, even if we just approve a capital budget, I think is somewhat naïve. I have been through this many times."

Twenty-one Aurorans now lost to COVID-19

From page 1

announced Tuesday that all residents, healthcare workers and essential caregivers at long-term care homes in York, Peel, Toronto and Windsor-Essex will receive the vaccine by this date.

"Ontario continues to make important progress in quickly and safely vaccinating our frontline health care workers, our most vulnerable and those at greatest risk, and we continue to administer doses to thousands of Ontarians across the province," said Health Minister and Newmarket-Aurora MPP Christine Elliott. "Our Vaccination Distribution Task Force, led by General Rick Hillier, has put a plan in place to get these doses distributed and administered as quickly as possible and that plan is working."

Two residents of Aurora's Kingsway Place Retirement residents have now lost their battle with COVID-19. Just before the start of the weekend, an 89-year-old female resident, became the Town's 20th fatality attributed to the virus after first testing positive on December 24 and experiencing symptoms on December 27.

She lost her fight at Southlake Regional Health Centre on December 31.

A further resident of Kingsway Place lost to COVID was announced January 5, this time an 88-year-old woman who died January 3 at Southlake. She experienced her first symptoms on Christmas Eve and tested positive the same day.

Last week, a 56-year-old Aurora man became the Town's 19th fatality, having acquired the virus through close contact. He first tested positive on December 3 and experienced the first symptoms the following day. His battle was lost at Southlake on Monday, December 28.

By Tuesday, January 5, Aurora had seen a total of 614 cases of COVID-19, 86 of which remain active. Of the active cases, 63 are attributed to close contact and local transmission, 22 to institutional outbreak and 1 to workplace cluster. There have been 507 recoveries.

At press time this week, the

community was grappling with two outbreaks, both in long-term care and seniors' residences. Willow Estates in Aurora's south end has seen 2 active cases amongst its complement of 90 caregivers and 1 case amongst its 72 residents. Kingsway Place on Murray Drive has seen 8 cases amongst its 50 caregivers and 8 within its residential population of 82.

"Vaccines are being dispatched on a priority basis and taking into account resources and readiness, ultimately making their way to all long-term care facilities," said Dr. Fareen Karachiwalla, York Region's Associate Medical Officer of Health. "Healthcare workers and residents of long-term care homes are appropriately prioritized to be the first people to receive the vaccine. Residents of retirement homes and other congregate care settings for seniors will be included in the next phases of the Provincial plan. We're optimistic that the rollout of the Provincial immunization program will make great strides in protecting and saving the lives of some of our most vulnerable residents. As more vaccines become available, public health is ready with plans to distribute the vaccine using different delivery models and partnering with local physicians and pharmacists and other immunizers. The idea is that eventually every resident in York Region who wishes to receive a vaccine will be offered the opportunity.

"Vaccination is a cornerstone of public health and historically has been one of the most effective ways of reducing the death and disability caused by disease. Immunization is one of the safest ways to protect you and your family. COVID-19 vaccines will serve as an important tool in helping to stop the spread of the virus and allow people and families the chance to safely return to a normal life. The COVID-19 vaccine is voluntary, but highly encouraged for those who are eligible. Not only for your own protection, but for the safety and wellbeing of others, as well as the protection of our healthcare system at large and society."

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Aurora Councillors vie for Federal Conservative nomination

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora Councillors are among the individuals vying to be Newmarket-Aurora's next Member of Parliament.

Councillors Harold Kim and Rachel Gilliland have both confirmed they intend to seek the Conservative Party of Canada's nomination in Aurora's north riding for the next Federal Election. Also vying for consideration by local party faithful include former broadcaster Teresa Kruze, a resident of Newmarket, and former Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown.

Councillor Kim, who was first elected to Council in 2014 and has served as Deputy Mayor since 2018, launched his campaign website over the holidays, stressing his mantra of "servant leadership" which helped lead him to the top of the Council stakes in the last municipal election.

"A government leader is able to translate the needs of local constituents into a strong voice in the House of Commons, and forceful, strategic action at the legislative table," he said. "As Newmarket-Aurora continues to grow, so too will the complexity of issues we will face as a community. From the growing number of seniors who want the opportunity to age in place, to the continued pressure on our environment posed by the need for more and more housing, we need a representative in Parliament who can think critically, who is principled and transparent in their dealings, who is trusted by the diverse local constituents, and who has experience in a variety of business and governmental contexts.

"I believe we need a representative who will epitomize what it means to be a true 'public servant.'"

Councillor Gilliland, a rookie council member first elected in 2018, has also

stated she is the right person for the job.

"I have been a Councillor for a couple of years and I have been working really hard for the people in Aurora," she said. "Through [this] experience with COVID, you really start to see and understand the supports that the people really rely on – on a Provincial and Federal level. There is so much more work that needs to be done. When they opened up the [Federal] nominations for Newmarket-Aurora, I just chomped at the bit and thought, 'This is my time.'

"I really want to continue working hard for the people and I want to contribute and advocate for the people and I think one of the great things is that I have had the opportunity to be a municipal Councillor and be on the ground with the people, hear their struggles, hear what they're going through. I can take that emotion and that real-life experience and I can take that to the Federal level because sometimes I feel their voices really aren't being heard from the top down."

Councillor Gilliland says "the timing is right for me to step in and do the work that needs to be done," but, as far as timing is concerned, no one knows just when that might be. As Canada currently has a minority government, it is anyone's guess when the next Federal Election might be called.

Ms. Kruze, who became one of Canada's first female sportscasters with TSN, before turning back to hard news with 680 News and CP24, is not new to Federal politics. A resident of Newmarket for nearly 20 years, she stood as the Conservative party's candidate in Vaughan-Woodbridge in the 2019 Federal Election.

"I am a long-time Conservative," she says. "I was born in Calgary, so we joke out there that we bleed blue and you're a Conservative when you're born. I have always had an eye on

Federal politics and always felt that when my broadcasting career evolved that eventually I would like to step into Federal politics.

"I have done a lot of soul searching and I still believe my political fires burn deeply in me. If I was going to run anywhere, it was going to be where I have lived and have made my life for 19 years."

Another long-time resident of Newmarket looking to carry the Blue banner is Lois Brown, who served as the riding's MP from 2008 to 2015. Having lost the last two Federal elections, Ms. Brown says she needs a waiver from the Conservatives to seek the nomination,

as per the party's constitution.

That is something she says she has sought and is waiting for word.

"Serving the constituents of Newmarket-Aurora was a great honour and with my considerable experience, both as the Member of Parliament for Newmarket-Aurora and as Parliamentary Secretary for International Development, I believe that I would be a caring and effective representative for our communities," she said. "My deep roots in Newmarket-Aurora give me a love for our communities and the people who have chosen to live here. It is my hope to serve them once again."

Getting Things Done

From page 5

the exciting news of the newest addition to the St. Andrew's family – St. Anne's, an all-girls school to our thriving and vibrant community, and I look forward to working with SAC on growing their legacy here in Aurora. There was a great deal of work to bring this vision to a reality during this year and I am proud to have played a small part along with Headmaster Kevin McHenry, and the board in bringing this school to Aurora.

Small Urban GTHA Mayors

As we have gone through this year, the response to the pandemic has made it abundantly clear that what works for large urban centres, may not necessarily work for our local communities.

In order to foster the necessary discussion and collaboration among our local communities, I reached out to fellow small urban GTHA Mayor's and proposed we meet regularly to discuss issues relevant to our unique context and afford us the opportunity to speak on behalf of our own municipalities. We have had several productive meetings and, as the Chair of this committee, I am looking forward to the

positive impact we will have in the coming years on behalf of our communities.

Your Town of Aurora Team

Last, but definitely not least, I would like to thank the staff for their tremendous efforts over this past year. It has been an extremely challenging time with layoffs of over 280 employees, to closing our facilities, to events being cancelled. But, our dedicated Town employees found innovative ways to provide events, including Canada Day, the Haunted Forest, and even a reverse Christmas parade. They also ensured the opening of our parks and facilities were done in a way we could all enjoy while following Provincial orders and staying safe.

In closing, while it has been a truly challenging year – one that has seen all of us pull together – I am truly proud of our Town and support from our Community as we faced these unprecedented challenges. As we see that light at the end of the tunnel, I know that we will come out of this stronger. I am looking forward to the next year as we all work together to 'get things done' to not only recover from this past year but thrive for years to come.

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Community Recognition Awards: Student honoured with Green Award for environmental efforts

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The environment has always been important to Olivia Scott.

A regular participant in community clean-ups, Olivia has seen the effects of waste being swept up by wind from open garbage and recycling containers waiting to be picked up, landing unceremoniously on nearby lawns and in greenspaces.

It can be frustrating for the average person, but how many of us step up to try and do something about it? Olivia Scott is one and, for her efforts, she was honoured earlier this year by the Town with the Green Award, a part of the Town's Community Recognition Awards program.


The Green Award is presented to an individual or organization that supports the preservation, protection, sustainability or conservation of the natural environment, celebrating those "who share the Town's commitment to building a greener community."

"Along with her family, Olivia regularly participates in community-wide cleanups in green spaces around her home and she encourages neighbours and community members to get involved and care for the natural environment around them," said Mayor Tom Mrakas, who presented the award virtually. "Olivia brings her passion for preserving nature to her school, where she implements her knowledge in every day learning. Her example inspires other students and they are more aware



Aurora student Olivia Scott was honoured by the Town with the Green Award.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger



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of recycling habits and use less single use plastics.

"When presented with the chance to select the topic at school for her speech, Olivia chose the continue explore green issues to share. Olivia wrote her school speech on plastic and garbage found in the water and green spaces. Her speech was so impressive... she moved on to represent her class at a school-wide presentation. Now, I met Olivia last year when she came to me with her concern about Aurora's garbage management methods. I invited her and her friends to come to Aurora Town Hall to discuss the matter more. I was pleasantly surprised by how passionate and dedicated she was to making a difference in her community. At only 11 years old, she has demonstrated initiative and leadership."

In turn, Olivia said she hopes her

being recognized by the Town in this way will inspire others to demonstrate similar initiative and leadership.

"Everybody tries to recycle but sometimes we do not know where that recycling ends up," Olivia said. "On windy days, some recycling ends up on our streets or in greenspaces. I asked friends and family to help me clean up our greenspaces. It is a simple thing to do and a good way to spend time with friends and family."

"Another thing we can do is bring ideas to the Mayor on how to prevent this from happening. Imagine how pretty our Town could be if we picked up one single piece of garbage each day, or if the Town of Aurora came up with a solution on how to keep this from happening. Thank you to the Town for this award. I think it will encourage kids my age to do something they believe in."



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Decking the Halls in Style



Santa and Mrs. Claus made an additional holiday appearance in Aurora in the lead-up to Christmas, taking part in the Town's self-guided Deck the Halls tour. The Deck the Halls tour encouraged residents to decorate their homes to the nines to celebrate the season, allowing participants to get into the spirit of the season safely. (Top Left) Santa meets Emilie, Jayde and Gabriel at the Joint Operations Centre. (Top Right) Mrs. Claus met Victoria outside a participating home. (Middle Row) 81 Catherine Avenue and 71 Connaught Avenue. (Bottom Row) 65 Spruce Street and 4 Odin Crescent.



Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger



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Community Recognition Awards: Principal receives Inclusivity honour for breaking down barriers

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

During her time as Principal of Regency Acres Public School, Lisa Leoni dedicated her time to breaking down barriers wherever she could.

From making healthy food readily accessible to students in need to fostering a welcoming environment for students from what might be considered marginalized communities, these efforts have paid dividends for the venerable neighbourhood school – and her efforts did not go unnoticed.

Earlier this year, Ms. Leoni was honoured by the Town of Aurora with the Inclusivity Award, part of the Town's Community Recognition Awards program.

The Inclusivity Award is dedicated

each year to an individual, group or business which has contribute to “making the Town a more accessible and inclusive place to live, work and play for all people.”

“Lisa has dedicated her work to create an equitable and inclusive school for students and their families by reaching young people and by teaching them about respect, inclusivity and kindness,” said Mayor Tom Mrakas, who hosted this year's Community Recognition Awards virtually. “Lisa has achieved the ultimate goal of making Aurora a better place to live and grow for generations to come.

“Lisa recognizes that it is crucial for her students to have a positive mindset. She initiated the Mindfulness Room. This is a dedicated space to support students' mental health and social wellbeing through the day at school. For physical health, Lisa has partnered with Activate Aurora as they co-organize community events such as Pause to Play. Lisa supports the school's initiative for the Snack Cart where students can access healthy snack items throughout the day as many of them might not even have

access to breakfast in the morning. The program has no stigma around it so students feel comfortable getting food when they need it. When the school has new families, she shares community supports and services that will visit them in their homes and assist with navigating community services.”

Mayor Mrakas also paid tribute to Ms. Leoni's efforts to establish education related to the findings of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission and to recognize topics related to the LGBTQ2S+ community. As such, Regency Acres has the first ever elementary Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA).

“It has been an honour to serve the Aurora community for more than five years as the Principal of Regency Acres Public School,” said Ms. Leoni. “This award represents a collective effort, so I want to extend a deep appreciation to staff at Regency who model a sincere dedication to the families they serve and for ensuring that student identities are placed in the centre and the heart of the work we do at school. Together, we established our first GSA,

a mindfulness room to ensure ongoing mental health supports, a space for newcomer families, wholesome food programs, a huge makerspace, and... we make deliberate efforts to focus on Indigenous education and teach the truth.

“As a school leader, I believe in the importance of facilitating community partnerships that brings everyone to the table. As someone who benefits from white privilege, it was important for me to partner with the Indigenous Black, Muslim, Jewish and 2SLGBTQ communities to establish a process where community voice is heart and for the school to serve as a strong hub for community action planning.

“It is our mandate and professional responsibility to challenge barriers and transform our practices.

For those of us who may sometimes wrestle in that middle space between theory and practice, my hope is that we push ourselves and demonstrate leadership by doing and continue to evaluate our impacts and question our intentions. Each of us in whatever role we serve can work within our sphere of influence and responsibility to make a difference in this world.”

Community Recognition Awards: Paputsis recognized as “Good Neighbour” Sam

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Good deeds often go unrecognized by the wider community, especially if it is neighbour to neighbour, but the people Sam Paputsis counts among friends decided it was time to shine a light on his good deeds.

This past year, Mr. Paputsis was recognized with the Good Neighbour Award by the Town of Aurora, part of the Town's Community Recognition Awards program.

Aurora's Good Neighbour Award was inspired by Frank Camenzuli and is presented to a person who “embodies what it means to be a good neighbour” – celebrating the “simple acts of kindness and compassion that help create connected and vibrant neighbourhoods.”

Mr. Paputsis received the award virtually from Mayor Tom Mrakas this past June and was heralded for stepping up when his neighbours need it the most.

“This year, we congratulate Sam Paputsis who is an all-encompassing good neighbour,” said the Mayor “Sam is a compassionate, kind, generous and thoughtful person towards all his neighbours. Sam helps his neighbours regularly by shovelling their driveways, mowing their lawns and keeping an eye on things while they are away on holidays. On top of this help, Sam provides his neighbours with unconditional and invaluable emotional support.

“For example, one of Sam's neighbours had surgery where they could not drive for a month. Sam was there regularly at their doorstep to take them for a drive and to get a coffee. Sam is a handyman and where and if you need something fixed or if your tire needs air, he will just jump there and lend a helping hand. Sam never expects any of his good deeds to be rewarded as he is a genuinely kind-hearted, caring individual. Everyone should have a good neighbour like Sam on their street.”



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– **Randee Sorbo**
CDS Parent



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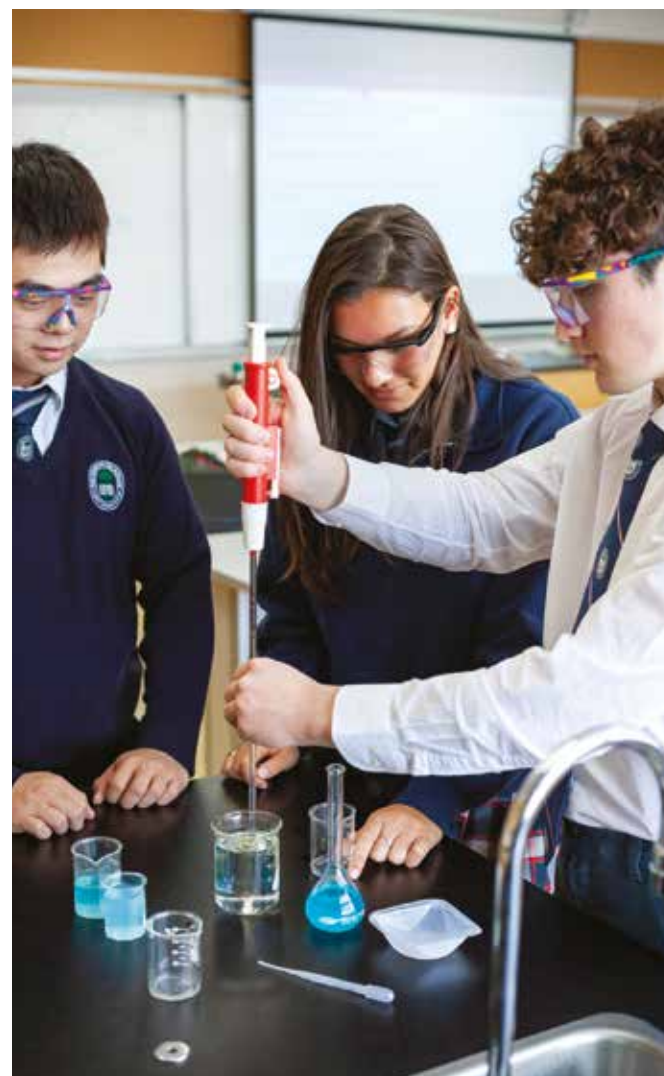
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Week of January 7, 2020



Ecole Saint-Jean kids come together as "COVID Busters"



Contributed photo

Kinjal Dagli Shah

The COVID-19 pandemic hasn't dampened the spirits of six youth from École Élémentaire Catholique Saint-Jean, who are the brains behind COVID Buster, an online program designed to motivate people of all ages and physical abilities to be more active, while adhering to health regulations.

As part of their FIRST LEGO League Challenge, the team comprising Suzanne Northrup, Danielle Northrup, Claire McWhinnie, Kaiah-Marie Sanderson, Amélie Heng, and Thomas Patterson were tasked with coming up with an innovative project that would encourage them to look at their community and find a way to contribute positively to it.

"They must do some research, consult experts and create something innovative. They then have to share it with others. The idea is to get the students to be socially conscious and to take on a leadership role within their communities as problem solvers," said Renée Northrup, parent coach and teacher at the Department of Mathematics at ÉSC Renaissance in Aurora. The Grade 5-6 team did all that, and more.

"We started by identifying the problem: More and more people are not active enough, especially during the pandemic. So, we all brainstormed separately and all of us had great ideas. For example, we could install a tetherball game at bus stops, or we could find a way to encourage people to eat healthy. We could not just choose one idea, so we decided to put all our ideas together to create the COVID Buster program," said Claire McWhinnie.

Suzanne Northrup added that the team chose to focus on physical activity because their research showed that people have not been active enough because of the pandemic. "We wanted to give an opportunity to people to be more active in a fun and engaging way," she said.

The program was launched on December 1 and will be running until January 31.

221 participants have already signed up for the program, in four different age groups, from 5 to 100+ years old.

"We do have a few spots left in our program in the 18-64 age group and in the 65+ age group," said Northrup. "In order to make the program accessible to everyone,

adaptations are offered for the differently abled and participation in the program is free. Each participant receives a cotton bag and set of 16 unique badges at the start of the program, paid for by a 2020 Culture and Recreation Grant from the Town of Aurora, and sponsorship from l'AFRY, les Chevaliers de Colomb and Canadian Tire (Alliston)."

Participants complete as many of the 16 challenges in their age group as they can during these 62 days, and report their progress on the program's website. After completing each challenge, participants pin the corresponding badge on their bag and the online leaderboard automatically updates their score. "The challenges are based on research completed by the students on physical activity, nutrition and sleep requirements for each age group. Examples of the challenges include shovelling snow for a neighbour, running during sunset or sunrise, plogging (jogging while picking up litter), finding a geocache while hiking in the woods, dancing, preparing a new healthy recipe, and sleeping for five consecutive days without screens in the bedroom," explained Northrup.

The teamwork and camaraderie among the group is evident.

"We started by creating a Google Jamboard and then wrote down our ideas. For the badges, we went home with our button templates and drew the badges by hand. It was a lot of work, but it was fun too," said Danielle Northrup.

Amélie Heng added: "We asked multiple individuals to look over our ideas and give us feedback on them. Once we had our first edition of the program written out, we found 16 testers to try out our program and give us feedback. The program is truly a group effort between our team and the community."

The students' efforts have been rewarded in many ways. Recently, the team learned that they secured first place in the FIRST LEGO League Ontario Remote Practice Event. They won the Robot Performance Award as well as the Champion's Award.

"We are all very excited because it is a big step up for us. This is only our second year in this competition and it is open to all teams in Ontario. We are determined to improve our COVID Buster program and robot even more for our next tournament on February 22," said Kaiah-Marie Sanderson.

Thanks to their unique program, the local

community will be cheering them on.

People interested in participating can register on sites.google.com/view/covidbuster/sign-up. The program runs

from December 1 to January 31.

Participants can start completing the 16 challenges any time during this period of time.

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E-book "Blueprint to Recovery" a supplemental guide for better health

By Robert Belardi

Between process and recovery, there is a gap that, historically, has never been simple to bridge.

With fitness, there are ways that it can be. A recently published work from Quinton Nurse and Christopher Araya, *The Blueprint to Recovery*, can help make a difference in your daily life. It is all about the will power to make a difference.

Still in the process of getting his Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine degree at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, Caledon resident Quinton Nurse yearned for more knowledge and approached a registered massage therapist (RMT) teaching his physical therapeutics class for more information.

Christopher Araya, RMT and owner of Araya Health Centre in Scarborough, won the 2019 Toronto Star Reader's Choice Award for the best therapy clinic in the city. With the idea of putting something practical and symbiotic together, Araya knew who he could turn to discuss this.

"I approached Quinton; he had a strong background in nutrition, but, for me, it was always interesting to

talk to him. Quinton always shared some insight on nutrition and fitness and how I always preached massages. It was always integrated in the bigger perspective of health," Araya said.

They shared intricate conversations on nutrition, fitness, and therapy. They both determined each of these three could not reach its full potential without the others. Fuelled by their own desire to make a difference, Nurse and Araya wanted to play a role filling a void in the health care and fitness industry they both felt needed to be addressed. Together, they co-wrote *The Blueprint to Recovery*.

The e-book released last month is a practical and engaging 75-page informative work that is supported by their three concepts or "pillars."

It shares intricate detail on nutrition, exercise, and therapy with an emphasis on diet, restorative movement, and metabolism.

"If your metabolism is way off, and the foods that you are eating contribute to inflammation; no amount of massage therapy is going to fix that. So, when one pillar is completely off, you won't have success," Nurse explained.

For example, the body not only needs water to be hydrated but also needs

water to properly function and perform. He also mentions that the foods that we consume are better off being consumed while there is daylight.

"The sun impacts your metabolism right down to your genes," Nurse explained.

Research shows that bodily signals stimulated by the sun help the body use foods and can provide a sufficient amount of Vitamin D. The book will detail how to maintain your health throughout the winter months with less sunlight (and often less activity) per day, and how to use food timing to help recovery.

As many workers experience working from home due to COVID-19, people continue to experience a shortage of movement.

Nurse says the human body will adapt to its surroundings and, in this case, in a negative way. It's a big part of how people come to experience pain and damage. This blueprint is in part a guide on how to diversify your movement to prevent negative adaptations.

"I would view this book in the same category as an important supplement, because as a supplement to what you are currently doing currently, it isn't meant to carry you wall the way. More, it shows you what you need to go forward, sets you in the right direction, and stimulates your curiosity for betterment. And that's what this book

does," Araya said.

"It's a gateway to the next step. It's a checkpoint."

Further in, celebrity Chef John Abanilla crafted healthy recipes to get you started.

Illustrator Anthony Nucifora showcases what movements you can do to ensure the body is steadfastly meeting its own demands and needs for activity.

Combined with over 15 years of total experience between Araya and Nurse, the *Blueprint To Recovery* is designed for everyone. For those with everyday pain and injuries, and for athletes desiring to further pinpoint their problems and improve their longevity in the sport, this is the right read for them.

At a time where everyone is still experiencing a step-back from life as we knew it, this is a good time to take a step-back and ensure your eating habits are proficient and your activity is optimized for you, if it isn't already.

For more information on purchasing the e-book visit @arayahealth on Instagram and Facebook or at arayahealth.com.

In their next phase, both Araya and Nurse look to collaborate to get this book into the hands of trainers and coaches. They look to further instill the methodology that if you have a routine and an active lifestyle, recovery needs to be part of your journey.



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From page 4

with patients who have fractured a hip or wrist and are then unable to carry on with activities of daily living

Poor maintenance practices by the Region and municipalities contribute to the social isolation and burden on the healthcare system.

When will sidewalks be given the same maintenance as roads? Properly graded, immediately cleared, salted,

sanded and well lit so people who rely on walking can continue to participate in society?

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Vicky McGrath
Aurora



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Evelyn Buck served Aurora community for 50 years



**Evelyn Buck
1928-2020**

From page 7

until 2014.

At the time, Ms. Buck said there was an opportunity to “restore integrity” to Council and “lift it out from where it was at.”

“It was only a matter of someone being there who knew the difference between how they were functioning and how they should function,” Ms. Buck told *The Auroran* in 2014. “My main objective was to bring back some civility to our Council Chamber by being the kind of person that I am.”

Ms. Buck was rarely out of the headlines during her political third act, which concluded in her narrow Council defeat in 2014 by just 42 votes. But, following that election, she was philosophical about her loss, telling *The Auroran* “politics is a harsh taskmaster.”

“It doesn’t matter how popular you are. It is a hard, hard thing to be involved in. I have exalted in it. It is less a matter of being privileged or honoured, or any of that. I have enjoyed it because I have taken all kinds of risks. I have no regrets about it because I couldn’t have done it any other way. I couldn’t be anybody else except who I am – and I have survived.”

“You can be courageous and you can be successful in politics if you have the courage,” she added, in advice to the next generation of Council members. “People will recognize it and they will give you credit for it. They may not agree with you, but they will give you credit for being absolutely honest. People don’t ask for much, so it is not hard to give them something they can trust.”

From the perspective of Evelyn Buck’s daughter Theresa, her mother’s philosophy could be distilled even further.

“Her passion for Aurora was so strong and the people of Aurora were like family to her,” said Theresa, the morning following her mother’s passing.

In the days following Ms. Buck’s death, tributes from community leaders past and present poured in.

“I was saddened to learn of the passing of Evelyn Buck,” said Mayor Tom Mrakas. “Anyone that knew Ms. Buck knew she was passionate and wore her heart on her sleeve. Ms. Buck cared deeply about our Town and was involved in municipal politics for many years, serving

as Aurora’s first female mayor. On behalf of Aurora Town Council and Aurorans, I offer deepest sympathies and condolences to Ms. Buck’s family and friends.” Former mayor George Timpson said he first met the woman who would ultimately be his predecessor in 1972 when aged just 26. He remembers Ms. Buck as “quite the colourful mayor” while in office and remembers her making a splash at a Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference held in Charlottetown.

“She nearly broke up Confederation with her comments about living standards in PEI!” Timpson joked, recalling political battles including the widening of Wellington Street. “Evelyn was always concerned about maintaining good employment opportunities in Aurora and this is why, when [what is now the York Region District School Board] had to vacate the Church Street School building, Evelyn seized the opportunity to keep the school board offices in Aurora and eventually the new Town and Board offices were built [on Wellington Street West] in the building which straddles Tannery Creek.

“Evelyn enjoyed a little tippie of whisky from time to time and she gave me the advice of drinking rye and water as a preference [as] the water would keep one from becoming dehydrated! During my mayoralty, Evelyn was elected as Councillor in 1980. She was constructive in her work with me as Mayor and we got along well, given our history. She always had Aurora in her mind and, in her own way, always tried to do what was right and good for the Town and its citizens.”

When Tim Jones, Aurora’s longest-serving mayor, first got his feet wet at the Council table, he says he didn’t know quite what to expect – but soon found out.

“I believe she lived the job when she was on Council, which made it natural for her to speak from the heart on issues,” says Mr. Jones. “There were times she may not have read the agenda before a meeting, but that never stopped her from offering her opinion. She had a big heart, but didn’t let it get in the way of a good political fight.”

“With Dick Illingworth and John West in the room, there were some spirited debates,” he adds, referencing one instance where he had to ask Ms. Buck for an apology after she rolled up a newspaper and hit a fellow Councillor over the head with it at the table – with said Councillor being the newspaper’s publisher. “In the early days someone referred to me as a ‘watchdog’ on Council. Ev was quick to clarify that should probably be ‘watch puppy.’ You couldn’t help but admire Ev for her energy both on and off Council when she took on an issue. Hopefully someone has given Ron Wallace a heads-up in case Ev brings a copy of *The Auroran* with her to heaven!”

Ms. Buck last served as Councillor under the first Council led by then-mayor Geoff Dawe in 2010-2014. Mr. Dawe recalls first becoming aware of her work in 1977 when he and wife Henny first moved to Regency Acres. But his first “real” encounter was at a reception held at Town Hall in 2008 where she was “holding court, waxing eloquently.”

“I will always be grateful to Evelyn for

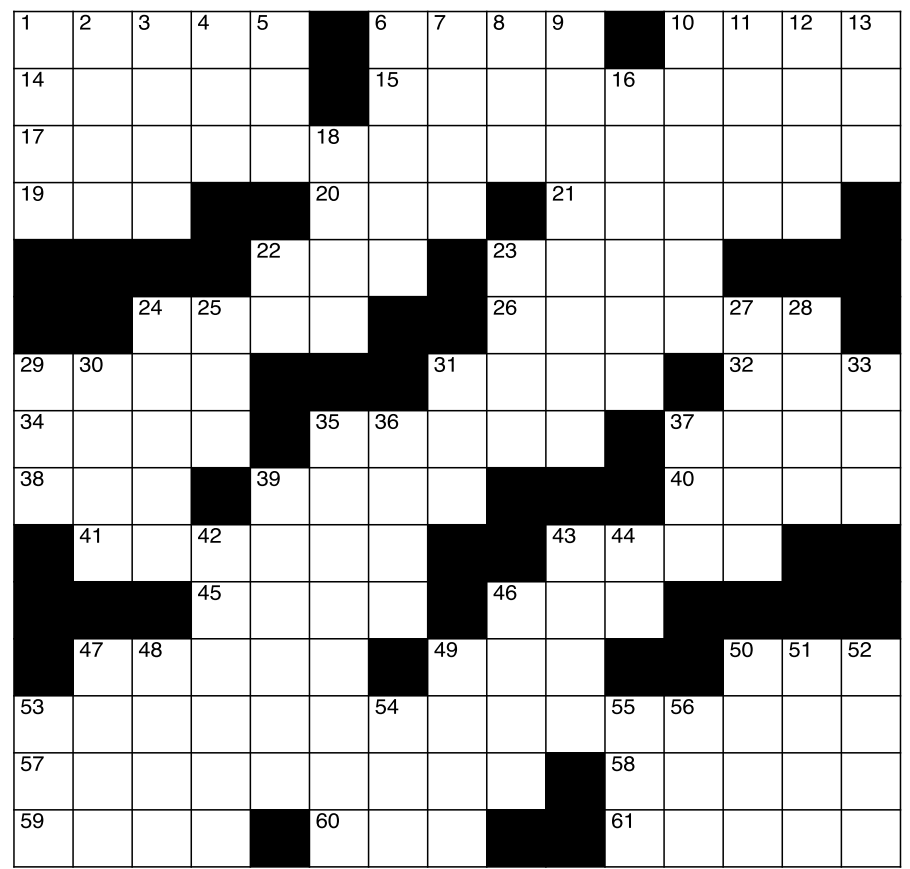
her endorsement when I ran for Mayor in 2010,” says Mr. Dawe. “I have no doubt that it helped in my victory. And then, she was a big help to the ‘newbies’ as we found our ‘sea legs.’ Like others, I benefited from her stories and experienced her razor-sharp wit. The depth and breadth of her interests was truly astounding! She was truly a living history book.

“While it is safe to say we did not always

agree (she disagreed with me when I once suggested that we would have to agree to disagree on a particular issue), it is also safe to say that there was no doubt about her commitment to the Town of Aurora and its residents.”

Evelyn Buck was predeceased by husband Cy, and is survived by her two daughters, five sons, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

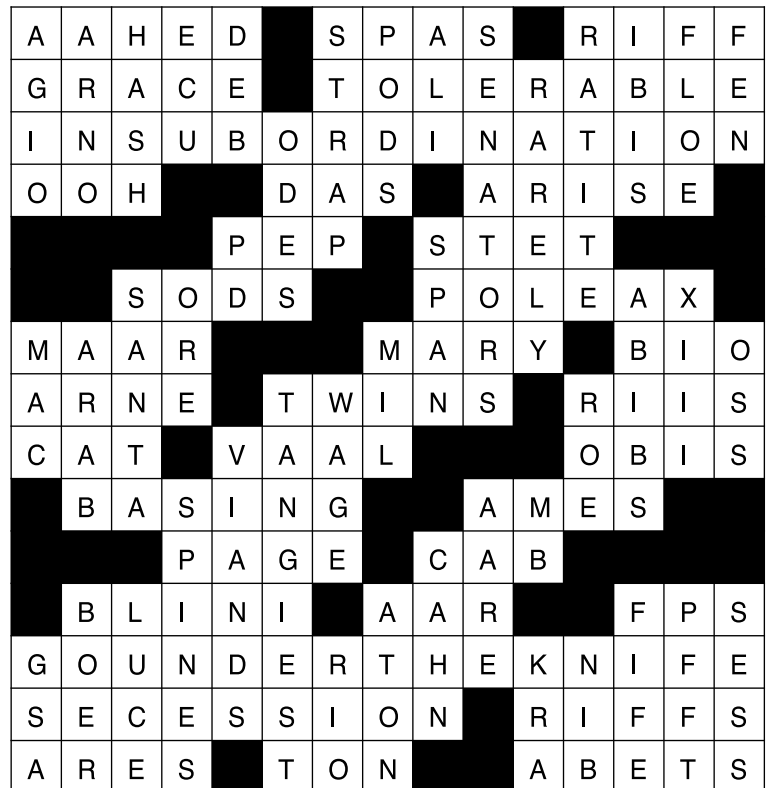
- 1. Partner to “oohed”
- 6. Relaxing places
- 10. Humorous monologue
- 14. Simple elegance
- 15. Bearable
- 17. Disobedience
- 19. Express delight
- 20. Gov’t attorneys
- 21. Wake up
- 22. A type of band
- 23. Remain as is
- 24. Turfs
- 26. Battle-ax
- 29. Volcanic crater
- 31. The mother of Jesus
- 32. One’s life history
- 34. “Rule, Britannia” composer
- 35. Doubles
- 37. Jacob ___, American journalist

- 38. House pet
- 39. S. African river
- 40. Broad sashes
- 41. Establish as a foundation
- 43. KGB double agent Aldrich ___
- 45. Part of a book
- 46. Taxi
- 47. Pancakes made from buckwheat flour
- 49. Train group (abbr.)
- 50. Frames per second
- 53. Have surgery
- 57. Formal withdrawal from a federation
- 58. Guitarist sounds
- 59. Greek war god
- 60. 2,000 lbs.
- 61. Helps escape

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Currency exchange charge
- 2. River in Tuscany
- 3. Breakfast dish
- 4. Defunct European currency
- 5. Upper class young woman
- 6. Part of a purse
- 7. Self-contained units
- 8. Boxing’s GOAT
- 9. Legislators
- 10. Flightless birds
- 11. U. of Miami’s mascot is one
- 12. Floating ice
- 13. Low, marshy land
- 16. Seldom
- 18. Lyric poems
- 22. Law enforcement agency (abbr.)
- 23. Full extent of something
- 24. ___ Claus
- 25. Naturally occurring solid material
- 27. Acquired brain injury behavior science (abbr.)
- 28. Thirteen
- 29. Partner to cheese
- 30. Member of a Semitic people
- 31. One thousandth of an inch
- 33. Former CIA
- 35. Most lemony
- 36. Engage in
- 37. Small Eurasian deer
- 39. Provisions
- 42. All humans have them
- 43. Swiss river
- 44. Storage term (abbr.)
- 46. Famed Broadway lyricist Sammy
- 47. Dutch colonist
- 48. Full-grown pike fish
- 49. Egyptian sun god
- 50. Flute
- 51. Flew off!
- 52. Scottish tax
- 53. Young women’s association
- 54. Populous Brazilian city
- 55. Malaysian Isthmus
- 56. Pointed end of a pen

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A Virtual Welcome to 2021!



Aurora's traditional Family First Night may not have been able to take place on December 31 at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex due to the Province-wide shutdown, but the fun continued virtually with a variety of popular attractions translated for online viewers. In addition to Mighty Mike, as seen on Page 1, additional performers included (TOP) Bex In Motion, (ABOVE LEFT) The Funny Waiter, and (ABOVE RIGHT) The Fireguy.

Images courtesy of the Town of Aurora





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DEATH NOTICE

Buck, Evelyn Mary
(nee Finnigan)



Evelyn Buck a native of Ayrshire, Scotland passed away peacefully at her Aurora home surrounded by her loving family on December 21, 2020. She is pre-deceased by her husband Cyril (2012) and survived by her 7 children Stephen (Mary), Frank (Lorna), Martin (Marnie), Theresa, Heather (Andy Brookes), Mark (Storm), and Andrew (Rhonda) and all her 19 grandchildren and 13.5 great grandchildren.

She was a loving and cherished mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. Evelyn devoted almost 60 years of her life to public service in the Town of Aurora. She was the longest serving elected politician in the history of the town and sat as the last Reeve of Aurora, the first female Mayor and served several terms on the town council. She was also the first representative of the town on the council of the newly created Region of York. As a journalist and political commentator, she wrote regular columns in local papers and produced a popular political blog "Our Town and It's Business" right up until the time of her passing. She played an iconic role in the governance and development of the Town of Aurora.

She will be forever missed by her family, friends, and citizens of the town. A private service will be held for the family, and a celebration of life will be held when it is safe for us to gather again.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Aurora Able Network would be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made by cheque, payable to The ABLE Network, 44 Metcalf Street, Aurora, ON L4G 1E6 or by e-transfer to barb.allan@theablenetwork.ca. Please include your postal address to receive a charitable receipt.

Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at www.ThompsonFH-Aurora.com for the Buck family.

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