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THE AU 20 YEARS RAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 21 No. 28 905-727-3300

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FREE

Week of April 29, 2021



READY FOR BUSINESS – The re-opening of the Aurora Farmers' Market was one of the first signs of a return to normalcy during the first lockdown and now, in the third, it will be once again – if all goes according to plan. The Market is aiming to re-open this Saturday morning, May 1, at Town Park, and Councillor Sandra Humfries, Board members Lynne Logan and Paddy Honey, and Market Chair Cathy Williams share what's in store on Page 20.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Vaccine rates nearing 40 per cent in York Region

86-year-old is Aurora's 43rd COVID fatality

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Vaccine rates in York Region are nearing the 40 per cent mark despite a continuing shortage of doses.

By the start of this week, approximately 36 per cent of York Region residents 18 years of age and older have received at

least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, according to Dr. Fareen Karachiwalla, Associate Medical Officer of Health for York Region.

Nearly 378,000 vaccine doses were in arms by Monday, April 26 as eligibility groups continue to expand, she said.

"This means that about 36 per cent of York Region's population aged 18+ have received at least one dose of vaccine and we're working to push this number even higher as quickly as vaccine supply allows," she said, noting the Region's recent move

to expand eligibility to residents 60 years of age or older; with this threshold lowered to 35+ in several hotspot postal codes in the Cities of Vaughan and Markham.

"Pregnant individuals and one essential caregiver are now eligible under the highest risk health conditions as identified by the Province," said Dr. Karachiwalla. "The Provincial government has made a number of announcements regarding vaccine eligibility including making vaccines available to those 18 years of

Continued on page 15

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READY TO RUN – The 2021 Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake Virtual Challenge continues through May 9 and participants got an added boost on Saturday picking up their run kits at title sponsor Nature's Emporium's Newmarket store. Here, Lynne, Brian and Melanie await their arrivals. For more on the Challenge, see Page 17.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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TOWN OF AURORA

Notice Board



Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Tuesday, May 4	9:30 a.m.	TBD	Joint Council Committee
Tuesday, May 4	5:45 p.m.	TBD	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, May 4	7 p.m.	TBD	General Committee

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

What's Happening



Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition

Artist: Society of York Region Artists

For the month of May, Aurora's Online Skylight Gallery is featuring works by artist Anita Niemeyer-Archibald in her show, "Silent Reflections".

Working with oils on wood panel, Anita's paintings are created with special consideration to precision. By focusing much of her attention to the smallest detail, the viewer is drawn into the intricacies of her work. The gentle ripples of a calm lake as it laps around the ankles of her young daughter, who is contemplating a dip in the refreshing waters. The sunlight busily bouncing and reflecting in the swirling eddies of a stream while her son gazes with his back to the viewer, deep in thought.

Water, in its many natural forms, holds particular fascination for Anita Niemeyer-Archibald as she observes and captures it with sublime sensitivity and immediacy, producing paintings that are realistic and engagingly composed. Dynamic light and shadow treatments are prominent statements in her paintings. Emphasizing these two elements has enabled her to create powerfully expressive still lifes and bold compositions.

View this online gallery at aurora.ca/skylightgallery.

What's Happening



Spring & Summer 2021 Community Services Program Guide

Our Spring & Summer 2021 Program Guide has arrived. The guide can be viewed online at aurora.ca/recguide. Register online at aurora.ca/eplay.

John West Memorial Scholarship Award

Students in our community entering their first year of full-time post-secondary study can apply for the John West Memorial "Leaders of Tomorrow" Scholarship.

Deadline to apply is **Saturday, May 1**. For more details, please visit aurora.ca/leadersoftomorrow.

Take Home Kits

Town of Aurora has created a variety of exciting and interactive Take Home Kits to enjoy in the comfort and safety of your own home. From preschool to children, youth to adults, we have something for everyone. Kits must be purchased online.

For more details, please visit aurora.ca/takehomekits.

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.



Downtown Street Wall Mural Program

In May 2020, Aurora Town Council approved a motion to introduce a Street Wall Mural Program to allow local artists to beautify the downtown core in a unique way. The purpose of the murals is to create a sense of pride, reduce graffiti and tagging, and allow neighbourhoods to shape their community through beautification. The murals will be created on

Town-owned retaining walls along Yonge Street in the downtown core between Aurora Heights Drive (to the north) and Kennedy Street (to the south).



The Town of Aurora is seeking an experienced artist to create the first mural for this program. Artists are invited to submit an engaging design that is complementary to the essence, vibrancy, and uniqueness of Aurora's downtown and the Town's vision to revitalize this area as a dynamic public space.

The Mural Program is open to individual artists that meet the following criteria:

- Submit a complete Application Form that includes the information detailed in Section v. (Call for Artists Application Requirements) of these Guidelines;
- Possess demonstrated experience in creating murals, street/graffiti art or similar artwork;
- Are over 18 years old at the time of submitting the Mural Program Application Form;
- Preferably reside in Aurora and/or York Region, although this is not a requirement to participate.

Submission deadline is May 21, 2021 at 4 p.m.

Please review the Downtown Street Wall Mural program guidelines.

For more information on the program and to submit your application online, please visit aurora.ca/downtownmural.



May is Museum Month



New website launches
MAY 1, 2021

The redesigned museum website allows you to explore some of our collection, experience the past with our Time Traveller's Diary, view our exhibits and more!



What's Happening

58TH ANNUAL
AURORA ART SHOW & SALE
SATURDAY, JUNE 5 & SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2021

10 A.M. TO 5 P.M.
Aurora Seniors' Centre
90 John West Way

• Youth ages 12 to 17
• 18 years of age and older for the adult category
Deadline for submissions is Monday, May 3, 2021

AURORA
Presented by the Town of Aurora in association with the Society of York Region Artists

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INVOLVED AURORA: BRINGING BUSINESS TO THE TABLE

CALL FOR BUSINESS INPUT

Complete our brief online interview to help us better understand Aurora's business community needs.

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aurora.ca/Business

Deadline for feedback May 17



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Aurora residents between the ages of 12 and 17 are eligible to participate in the competition.

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Like Father Like Son: Bolsby hangs up hat after more than three decades in Fire Service



Fire fighting in Aurora has been a family affair for the Bolsbys with father and son Fred and Jim Bolsby dedicating decades first to the Aurora Fire Department and, until Jim's retirement as Captain this month, the Central York Fire Services.

Contributed photo

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As a child, Jim Bolsby watched as his father Fred left the house each day to serve the community as Deputy Chief of the then-Aurora Fire Department.

He grew up in a home where his father's career was synonymous with community service and, when it was time to pick a vocation, Jim knew he wanted to follow in his dad's footsteps.

This month, Captain Jim Bolsby hung up his hat, retiring from the Central York Fire Services fittingly at the Wellington Street East fire station that now bears his dad's name.

"I grew up with my dad being on the fire department from the age of six," says Jim. "I knew what the Fire Department was about, how it was involved in the community, and I wanted to be a part of that. It was just about helping people in need."

The Bolsby family's service to the Aurora community began in 1969. Jim grew up in a small, tight-knit community where many of his childhood friends also had fathers who served on the force. When he began pursuing his own career in fire services he found another tight-knit family united by a common cause: getting out there and helping people.

"A lot of my early experience was involved with the safety of firefighters," Jim explains. "My dad being a firefighter for a long time, I was always worried about him growing up as a kid, so when

I got on that's what I jumped right into: firefighter safety."

He dedicated himself to firefighter safety both as a volunteer and when he was able to join the force full-time in 1994.

"Once I joined, I was struck by the closeness of working with the firefighters," he says. "I'll always remember some of the important calls, some of the large fires we went to. We were able to help people as best as we possibly could and that was one of the most difficult things: you're always trying to help somebody on their worst possible day. A lot of it sticks with you – everything from car accidents to medical calls. Every day you went to work you were hopeful you would be able to help somebody and if it was a slow day you just trained all day hoping you wouldn't have to run a call. The less time you had to go out on calls, the less people were in need."

But those calls always came and Bolsby was always at the ready.

These experiences, however, ultimately began to take their toll and this was a factor in deciding to retire.

"Unfortunately, I was diagnosed with PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) about a year ago; I was getting very close to retirement and luckily I achieved enough time so I retired a bit early," he says. "It is important to get help and don't be afraid to ask. There is a stigma around it that it is weakness or whatever to ask for help. It is not. It is actually one of the bravest things you can do."

"Fire fighters, all emergency services,

they see a lot and it accumulates. As I got closer to my retirement date... the calls started to affect me more. You think you have dealt with it and kind of put it in its place, but it all just came flooding back."

Although Jim Bolsby has moved on from the department his family has served for more than 50 years, it is not the end of the family's association with emergency services. He takes pride in the fact his stepdaughter has set her sights on becoming a fire fighter as well with her training well underway.

"The fire department is a great team environment," he says. "I wouldn't have gone as far as I did in my career without the crew I worked with. Anybody who is interested in

becoming a firefighter, they can look forward to that if they are lucky enough to get that job. It's a wonderful environment to work in because everybody probably sees so much they understand each other."

As for advice for up-and-comers, Bolsby stresses training in all aspects of the job: "Train hard. Take every opportunity for training. I did that throughout my career [but] I wish PTSD training had been out there a little more than when I first started. The courses they offer for that, take as many as you can and learn as much as you can not only to be the best you can to help the people in your community, but to help yourself so you can go home to your family every day."

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Council needs to put meaning to words, says reader

Aurora Council's heritage designation is a good first step for protecting those Yonge Street buildings: to put meaning to that effort, though the buildings could be spruced up.

If funds were provided, the owners of such buildings could be encouraged to restore the buildings to their period best. Such restorations could enhance the appearance of the historical character of the downtown, a much desirable public benefit.

Going beyond just a good-sounding designation surely has the potential of adding much needed appearance to Aurora's most prominent thoroughfare.

Generally, I believe that Council has to get beyond making resolutions concerning climate emergency, energy conservation and, now, heritage designations, to put meaning to words.

Klaus Wehrenberg
Aurora

Trudeau "failed on climate" and Alliance is needed

In mid-April, the federal government released new data showing that during the six years of Justin Trudeau's leadership, Canada's emissions have continued to rise. And, most of those emissions are coming from the fossil fuel sector.

If we're serious about tackling the climate crisis, this needs to change, and the best way to make that happen would be a Climate Emergency Alliance between the NDP and the Green Party.

If the Greens and NDP form an alliance, and agree not to run candidates against each other, both parties would win more seats. This Alliance is the best way to elect as many climate champions as possible and pass bold climate policy in the House of Commons. And, voters like me could cast a vote for a candidate with the best climate plan, and a good chance to win without having to worry about vote splitting handing the seat to the Liberals or Conservatives.

We have less than a decade to be well on our way to tackling the climate emergency and Canada's rising emissions show us just how much Justin Trudeau is falling short. We need a game changing plan and a Climate Emergency Alliance is just that.

Cassandra Westover
Newmarket

Flushing the bill

I received my quarterly Aurora water/wastewater invoice:

Water: \$ 59.03
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It costs nearly 2x to drain than to turn on the water.

Alex Vander Veen
Aurora



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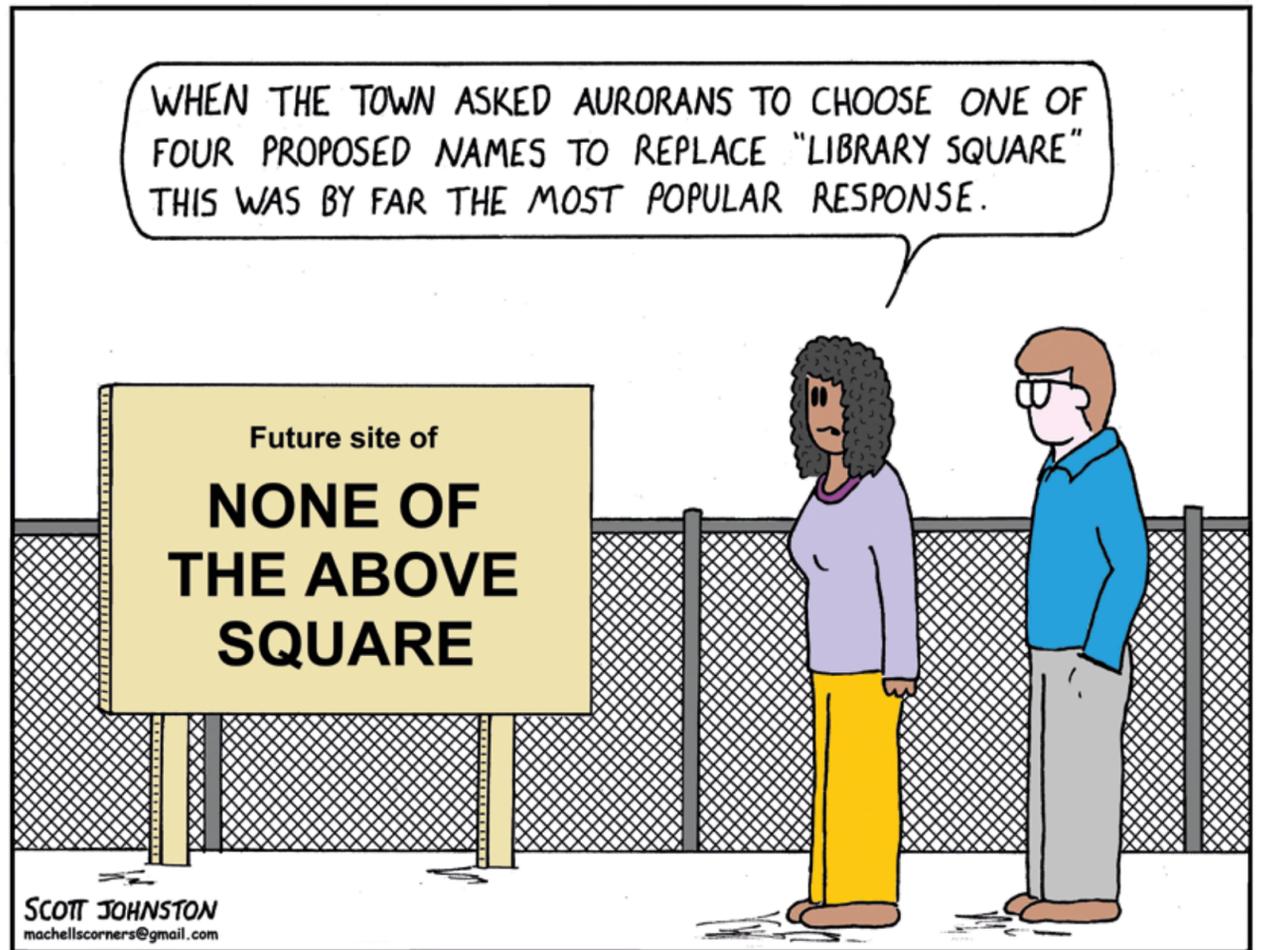
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Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

Machell's Corners



Fear of Missing Out on Milestones

When all this is said and done, what are we going to have to show for it?

The popular Broadway musical Rent offers a few suggestions beyond "525,600 minutes":

*In daylight, in sunsets, in midnights
and cups of coffee
In inches, in miles, in laughter, in strife*

By the start of this week, we were zeroing in at around 560,000 minutes since the start of the pandemic and we have had plenty sunsets, midnights, cups of coffee, and bursts of daylight-past. Hopefully we've had plenty of laughter in our self-imposed exiles, but if you're counting the inches and miles of your home, faced with a dearth of things to do, the pandemic just might be getting the better of you.

When we started out, we were brimming over with ideas on how to keep busy and, of course, in this age of social media, mark them for posterity.

In an effort to show we were all in this together, we solicited images from our leaders – elected officials and community builders alike – to see how they were spending the first few weeks of the first of three-and-counting lockdowns.

Their images were probably not dissimilar to what you probably shared with your own friends and family: showing off some of the cool and sometimes kitschy features of home offices, newly-found places to walk dogs, flexing some atrophied culinary muscles, and the list goes on.

While I wasn't part of the seemingly endless parade of people sharing pictures of their sourdough starters and the resulting loaves and rolls of varying quality, I did what I could. For better or worse. The fun of taking to Facebook to vent my spleen on various missteps made by contestants on Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy wore off quickly, so I challenged myself to trim my beard down almost to the skin to see just how far I could grow it before we were allowed to get haircuts again.

The fun – and the interest – quickly waned too as I got closer and closer to blending into ZZ Top but thankfully the first wave flattened before things got too out of hand.

And not a moment too soon. The inter-wave weeks brought a new trend: photo streams of people first cautiously peeking their eyes out from their doors attempting some activities that reminded them of normalcy and, once case counts well and truly started to wain by the middle of summer, a barrage of photos of business as usual...

And, as that trend continued into the second wave, we of course had to hunker



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

down once again. Too much business as usual in unusual circumstances.

Chalk it up to the winter, but the inter-wave weeks between Wave 2 and Wave 3 didn't seem to bring as much rejoicing. We were – and are – sick and tired of what we're slogging through and documenting it didn't appear to be top of mind. Accentuating the positive was practically replaced by wallowing in the negative and complaining about what we *couldn't* do.

But now, in the middle of a third wave, we're seeing another trend emerge: the vaccination selfie.

As a guy in his mid-30s living in an area not yet designated as a hot spot, I have seen photos of our community leaders, once eligible, lining up for their AstraZeneca, of my parents with Pfizer-loaded needles in their arms, and some of my closest friends in the United States receiving a few drops of the bounty of vaccine options at hand, with their doses miraculously accessible at pop-up clinics at the ends of their residential streets.

Am I jealous? Frustrated, perhaps, but jealousy is futile. Instead, I am rejoicing in the fact that each needle in an arm, whether in the United States or Canada, is an all-important building block in getting back to some degree of normalcy.

However, this stance is not the only game in town.

A lot has been written recently about vaccine "FOMO" – that is, "fear of missing out."

In a think piece earlier this month in the New York Times entitled "The Joy and Envy of Seeing All Your Friends Get Vaccinated", authors Jenny Gross and Jesus Jimenez gave us a snapshot of the Canadian experience: "The end of the pandemic also feels far away in the Canadian province of Ontario," they wrote. "Massimo Cubello, a 28-year-old who lives in Toronto, said he is happy for his vaccinated friends in the United States and Britain, but his Zoom fatigue is setting in, and driveway visits with members of his family have not been that easy because of the cold weather.

"It's good to see people getting vaccinated because that's all part of the process of getting to where we need to get to, but it definitely does make you a little bit envious and anxious about where we, as Canadians, are going to be able to experience that ourselves."

In the weeks since Gross and Jimenez published their piece, the anxiety referenced by Cubello is emerging ever-stronger.

Could the deluge of selfies and photos of jobs in progress be causing undue stress and anxiety for people who are, for one reason or another, unable to get their jobs in a timely manner?

"Not going to contribute to vaccine FOMO by posting a selfie," wrote a lawyer friend recently, just one of many friends who have considered how such images have contributed to another health crisis which has only been exacerbated by the pandemic: mental health.

An alternate take, however, was offered by Patrick J. McGinnis in Business Insider.

"Fast forward to the summer of 2021. Imagine your friends and family sitting maskless at an indoor restaurant. They are laughing and hugging and living life like it's 2019 because they have had the vaccine. You, however, are attending virtually, via Zoom, because you do not. You sit at home with your Netflix and your sourdough, as you have for the last 18 months. If that image doesn't give you vaccine FOMO nothing will.

"Before long, the skeptics and holdouts will realize that they are now part of an increasingly isolated minority. They will also inhabit that nightmare scenario of living life on Zoom while the rest of the world is returning to normal. As the pressure becomes unbearable, they will accept that their FOMO is stronger than their resolve. They will log out of Netflix, throw out their sourdough and roll-up a sleeve.

"While not everyone will give in – some people are impervious – it won't take too many converts to neutralize COVID-19 once and when that happens, spare a thought for FOMO.... When it comes to ending the pandemic, FOMO is no luxury good. It might be the most powerful weapon we have to achieve herd immunity."

Of course, McGinnis writes from the perspective of a United States resident where vaccines are, by comparison, flowing like wine compared to our situation.

Our mounting frustration might make the FOMO situation a little more complex, but each photo is undoubtedly a step in the right direction. Knowing that all of our turns will eventually come, keep 'em coming. Personally, I'd rather look of a shot of a shot than a mullet.

THE AU 20th ANNUAL
Aurora's Community Newspaper

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The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating...

Hairball Awareness Day! (April 30)

April 30 is the day we raise awareness of an issue faced by cat owners around the world – hairballs. Also known as “bezoars”, hairballs are a by-product of cats’ grooming methods, but can indicate health problems if they become too regular. This hairball pictured here is actually a “hair wreath” (988.30) which were popular in the Victorian era, and were typically woven out of the hair of a deceased loved one.



Time Travellers Diary

By Jeremy Hood

Tipping the Scales!

Maybe it is a childhood love of trains that keeps drawing me back into the jumble of gears and levers that is my Time Machine.

I sometimes simply hover invisibly over the rail tracks, between Wellington and Centre, watching the trains zip in and out of town while in my machine’s Time Lapse mode.

On one such day, I noticed some commotion around a small out-building near the train station.

I rewound and paused my journey in March of 1914.

I nudged the machine over for a closer look, passing through a cloud of steam from the waiting engine.

The building, more of a solid shed, was open on both ends with large double doors, and bore a sign for B.F. Davis, a local merchant who dealt in bulk materials.

From this building, a row of horse-drawn carts were queued down Berczy Street, carrying all manner of such bulk goods – coal, wood, and livestock, destined for the Toronto market. It became clear that this was the Town’s primary set of weigh scales for this size of product: a dedicated building, shielded from the elements, providing an objective measurement of goods – this was truly the peak of technology and convenience for 1914 Aurora.

The raised voices became louder as I approached, and I extended my SonoProbe to listen in – one Mr. McClure, apparently a farmer, wasn’t satisfied with the weight reported for his hogs and wanted them unloaded from the train and put back on the scales.

The other man, Mr. Richbell, insisted that the weights were correct and that he would not unload the train.

The standoff continued for a time, with the sounds of impatient farmers and animals getting louder by the minute.

Finally, a compromise was reached – the animals would be weighed again once arriving in Toronto to put Mr. McClure’s mind at ease – a plan that he accepted.

I started up the Time Lapse again and watched as the procession finally moved through the shed and onto the waiting train. It zipped off to Toronto, and I followed.

Now there is a world of distraction in the Big Smoke, but I was able to follow Messrs. McClure and Richbell on their steam to Toronto and witness the re-weighing of the hogs.

I don’t want to keep you in suspense, so I will tell you, the difference between the Toronto and Aurora scales was just 11 pounds overall – the difference benefitting Mr. McClure – who was satisfied being paid based on the marginally higher reading on Berczy Street.

I followed the men back to Aurora the following day and got back to my Time-Lapse, watching not only the flow of trains and people in the haze of smoke and steam, but also those commercial goods, almost accurately weighed, as they moved through Aurora’s weigh scales.

Historic and Ambitious Budget 2021

I am encouraged that Budget 2021 – “A Recovery Plan for Jobs, Growth and Resilience” – dealt first with our current situation by extending COVID-19 support programs. We need to continue to vaccinate as quickly as possible, keeping Canadians safe while providing the financial and human resources needed in areas highly impacted by COVID-19.

But recover we will and throughout this pandemic, Canadians have indicated a strong desire for the kind of change that will ensure a more prosperous future for all. I believe that we cannot betray ourselves and achieve anything less than a more inclusive future – and a quality of life for all that is the envy of the world. Even more, we need to be a country of equality and equity built on respect and compassion, not only for our people but also for the environment.

In the lead up to this budget, I have been connecting with residents and business owners on their ideas and suggestions for Budget 2021. We have engaged through tele-town halls, and through the Aurora and Newmarket Chambers of Commerce on Zoom calls. Although there have been as many questions as there are suggestions, I really appreciate the input and time from our constituents, making sure their voices were heard.

And I believe they were heard, with remarkable clarity and inspiration.

Jobs a key priority

Let there be no question, jobs – good jobs for Canadians – has to be at the forefront of an economic recovery. The news from Statistics Canada that 303,000 jobs were added in March is encouraging. What is more encouraging is the commitment in this budget to a promise made to create



MP'S REPORT

Tony Van Bynen, MP
Newmarket - Aurora

one million jobs by the end of this year. The constituents of Newmarket-Aurora were clear in stating that job recovery was the most important indication of a recovery from this pandemic.

Universal child care

Our government’s commitment to childcare and its promise to provide \$10-per-day universal child care, complete with national standards within five years, will be a defining moment in Canadian history. This is an investment in our future, an investment in gender equality, and an opportunity to unleash the potential of so many.

Caring for seniors

Compassion is also key to our recovery. Compassion for our elders in long-term care that ensures they can feel safe and cared for – we owe them nothing less. Certainly, I heard many times of the need for long term care health standards, and I am heartened by the provision of \$3 billion over 5 years to ensure standards are applied. The commitment to Old Age Security increases for those 75 and older. And the funding proposal for seniors who don’t live in LTC, pledging \$90 million over three years starting in 2021-22 to Employment and Social Development Canada through

an “Age Well at Home Initiative,” will certainly provide assurances that elders in our society are valued and cared for.

Towards a green recovery

I believe climate change is the most pressing challenge of this generation and an opportunity to renew, invest and create a more promising future. Certainly, the provision of \$17.6 billion to a green recovery and ensuring our agreed-upon 2030 climate targets are exceeded will accelerate innovation, opportunity, and prospects for a brighter future.

Engaging our youth

Reviewing our youth council recommendations, I am struck by how this budget reflects so many of them, including investments in mental health, reducing student debt both through grants and lowering interest on student loans, and investments in renewable resources. Engaging our young people is paramount for building a prosperous future.

There is much to be proud of in this budget and much work still to be done. This is an historic and ambitious budget that will require the federal and provincial governments to work together – to build a Canada better prepared for any future pandemics, to seize the opportunities for prosperity, and to create a country capable of harnessing the strengths of its people and its resources.

I promised my children and grandchildren that is what I would work for; I hope we all seize that opportunity.

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.

Energy, NIMBY and NOPE

While COVID has rightfully taken the majority of the spotlight in the daily news cycle, Ontario’s energy policy will slowly start to come into public consciousness once again.

Most polls show that Ontarians view energy through the prism of price, reliability and environmental sustainability. Depending upon the state of the economy, these three items may change in order, but in poll after poll, they always finish in the top three.

The provincial Liberals want to trap the Tories for the increase in green-house gas emissions since Premier Ford assumed office. The problem with this argument is that the original pledge to close the five coal-fired electricity plants was made by former Progressive Conservative Premier Ernie Eves in 2003 and carried on by the succeeding Liberal government.

It was former Premiers McGuinty and Wynne who were responsible for the Green Energy Act and the resulting high electricity prices.

The transformation is mainly the result of the provincial government’s move to close its five coal-fired electricity plants, one observer says.

According to various published reports Ontario will need to refurbish, rebuild or replace thousands of megawatts of generating capacity over the next twenty years. The estimate is that this will require an investment anywhere from 25 to 40 billion dollars, depending on what generation resources we choose to build, and when.

Ontario is facing critical decisions regarding the appropriate energy supply mix and also how best to procure new generation. Inextricably intertwined with these decisions is a need for power that is both affordable and environmentally friendly.



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

Ontario’s future economic wellbeing is tied directly to the future condition of Ontario’s electrical supply. The route that we choose regarding supply will have very serious, material, long-term, cost, productivity and industrial strategic implications for the province.

All this sounds very well and good, but what does that mean to me here in Aurora? Will we have the right quantity and mix of reliable power at a reasonable price?

On the supply side of the equation, the biggest issue is the discrepancy between the new generation projects that are announced and the number of these projects that actually get built.

There have been a number of projects in Ontario that have been announced over the years, but for various reasons, have not been proceeding. That brings me to NIMBY – which stands for “Not In My Back Yard” – and as we have seen, we are not immune to this in our own neighborhood. Witness the 300 MW natural gas fired peaking plant that Northland power was going to build in Newmarket all those years ago or the proposed enlargement of the tower and transmission line in Aurora.

The overriding issue is that we do in

fact need new sources of power in York Region to maintain our standard of living and way of life.

What about conservation? Yes, it certainly has its place, and an important one at that, but people will not really begin to conserve energy until the true cost of production is reflected in the price to consumers.

Renewables are an important piece of the supply puzzle, but only a piece. Wind, for example, cannot by itself supply base load power and while revered by some, is reviled by others.

This brings me to another acronym – NOPE – “not on planet earth”. For some, it does not matter what type of generation technology is employed; they will always be against it, be it nuclear, wind, tidal, coal, natural gas, hydro, biomass, biogas, geothermal, solar.

What both NIMBY and NOPE reveal is the critical issue of balancing larger community interests vs. local interests – that is the provincial government mandate of ensuring that the lights stay on vs. local government’s right to say no to a particular power project. It is a delicate balancing act.

Like the health care question, it is very tough to sort out fact from fiction in the energy debate. All the spin doctors, communication consultants and PR flacks are being lined up by the various competing stakeholder groups to get their message out as the provincial government considers its supply options.

As we move closer to a provincial election slated for June 2022, I’ll take a closer look at some of the above and the potential implications for growth and electricity rates in Aurora.

Stephen can be contacted at
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

THIS WEEK'S POLL

Would paid sick days help the fight against COVID-19?

Yes No Unsure
www.theauroran.com

RESULTS TO DATE April 26, 2021	YES	NO	UNSURE
	89%	11%	0%

Groups embrace plan for \$10 a day child care for Canadian families

By Mark Pavilons

Families with children are getting a boost, thanks to measures contained in last week's federal budget.

Ottawa announced a goal of on average \$10 a day child care within the next five years. By building an early learning and child care system, the government will make life more affordable for Canadian families, create new jobs, grow the middle class, increase women's participation in the work force, and drive strong economic growth across the country.

The federal government will work with provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners to build this Canada-wide, community-based early learning and child care system. The government will invest \$30 billion over the next five years, with a minimum of \$9.2 billion per year on an ongoing basis. By the end of 2022, this new system would reduce fees for parents with children in regulated child care by 50 per cent on average, everywhere outside of Quebec. While Quebec already has shown leadership through a child care system where prices are affordable, they will still receive their share of the funding to allow for further improvements to their system.

Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, spoke at a virtual session last week hosted by the Boys and Girls Club. He clarified the funding and the goals to participating early childhood educators and families in York Region.

Hussen said it's all about building an inclusive system through a comprehensive approach. The government is bringing real options to the table for parents, he said, noting that by building a strong early education system, it will give children the best possible start in life.

It's an investment on the government's part to subsidize child care costs, bringing fees down 50 per cent by 2022 and reaching a \$10 per day cost for parents in five years. "Child care is a necessity," he said. "No child will be left behind."

There's a consensus across the board, the Minister noted, and he firmly believes these goals are achievable.

Owen Charters, President & CEO at BGC Canada, is enthusiastic about the plans. He said he's seen first-hand the importance of high quality, safe and accessible child care programs. He admits that one size doesn't fit all, but

this is a positive start.

This investment will create new opportunities for Canadian families and allow parents, particularly mothers, to get back into the workforce, said proponents.

Establishing a Canada-wide early learning and child care system will create jobs and economic growth, increase women's participation in the workforce, and offer each child in Canada a better start in life, it was added.

This is part of a plan to grow the middle class and help people working hard to join it.

"Without child care, Canadian parents can't work. [This] announcement is as much about meeting their needs as it is about setting our children up for success for generations to come. Investing in early child learning and establishing Canada-wide child care will make life more affordable for families, create jobs, strengthen our economy, get women back into the workforce, and grow the middle class. We will get it done," said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

"COVID-19 has brutally exposed something women have long known: Without child care, parents – usually mothers – can't work. The closing of our schools and child care drove women's participation in the labour force down to its lowest level in more than two decades. There is agreement, across the political

spectrum, that early learning and child care is the national economic policy we need now. This is social infrastructure that will drive jobs and growth. This is feminist economic policy. This is smart economic policy," added Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

Throughout the pandemic, women's participation in the workforce has been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and public health restrictions, in part because they are the main providers of family care, including home schooling and caring for family members.

COVID-19 has also had a particular impact on the labour force participation of racialized women with young children. For example, under 76 per cent of Black mothers with a child younger than six were active in the labour market in January 2021, compared to over 81 per cent of mothers who did not identify as visible minorities.

Investments in child care will benefit all Canadians. Studies show that for every dollar invested in early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.

As part of \$30 billion in funding, and building on Canada's Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care framework co-developed in 2018, Budget 2021 proposes to invest up to \$2.5 billion over

the next five years:

- \$1.4 billion over five years, starting in 2021-22, to create up to 3,300 new high-quality early learning and child care spaces for Indigenous families.
- \$515 million over five years, starting in 2021-22, to support before- and after-school care for First Nations children on reserve.
- \$264 million over four years, starting in 2022-23, to repair and renovate existing Indigenous early-learning and child care centres
- \$420 million over three years, starting in 2023-24, to build and maintain new early-learning and child care centres in additional communities.

Budget 2021 also builds on the approximately 40,000 new spaces already created through previous federal investments.

To make immediate progress for children with disabilities, Budget 2021 proposes to provide \$29.2 million over two years, starting in 2021-22, to Employment and Social Development Canada through the Enabling Accessibility Fund to support child care centres as they improve their physical accessibility.

THAT'S WHAT DAFFODILS DO



Contributed photo

In an ordinary April, the Canadian Cancer Society does the extraordinary work of selling daffodils to raise money for the cause. Once again, this is a unique year and fundraising efforts can't be as in-person as they once were, but Oakridge Fashions has come up with a creative way to deliver that message. "Knowing this is an important fundraiser, and knowing we all need to fill our hearts with some joy these days, Oakridge Fashions informed its customers that for this month a portion of all sales will be donated to the Canadian Cancer Society to help fill the gap," says store owner Deb Clark. "Once again [my customers] have stepped up" and each bag going out the door for curbside has been decorated with a daffodil pin for customers to wear as a thank you for their support of the initiative.



Christine Elliott
MPP - Newmarket-Aurora

905-853-9889 1-800-211-1881
Christine.Elliottco@pc.ola.org
www.christineelliottmpp.ca

To the Residents of Aurora,

Ontario's vaccine rollout is well underway, with thousands of vaccines being administered every day. Pending supply from the federal government, the Ontario government continues to work closely with public health units and health care workers to vaccinate Ontarians as quickly and safely as possible.

All Health Canada approved vaccines available in Ontario are safe and effective at protecting you and your loved ones from COVID-19. The best vaccine for you is the one that is offered to you first. I strongly encourage everyone to sign up to receive a vaccine as soon as you are eligible.

Ontario is now offering the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to eligible individuals in participating pharmacies across the province. Visit ontario.ca/pharmacycovidvaccine to find out if you are eligible for the vaccine and for a full list of participating pharmacies. Eligible individuals should contact their local pharmacy to schedule an appointment based on the pharmacy's available supply.



Getting vaccinated as soon as you are eligible is the best way to protect you and those around you from COVID-19

Here are the 11 local participating pharmacies offering the AstraZeneca vaccine as of April 23:

Aurora IDA Pharmacy
25 William Graham Dr.
Unit B1
Care Drugs
24 Orchard Heights Blvd.
Unit 103
Family Drug Mart
9 Borealis Ave., Unit 5

Loblaw Pharmacy
15900 Bayview Ave.
Pharmasave Aurora
126 Wellington St. W.
Unit 105
Shoppers Drug Mart
14729 Yonge St.
Shoppers Drug Mart
446 Hollandview Trail

Sobeys Pharmacy
15500 Bayview Ave.
Wal-Mart Pharmacy
135 First Commerce Dr.
Wellness Clinical Pharmacy
15450 Yonge St., Unit 2
Wellington Pharmacy
300 Wellington St. E., Unit 2

Help keep our community safe by continuing to follow public health advice.

Local volunteers paint town "Pink" to get seniors to and from vaccinations

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

They might not be hitting the streets in rose-coloured roadsters, but volunteers from PinkCars.ca are leaving seniors tickled pink in helping them navigate their COVID-19 vaccination journey from registration to job.

PinkCars.ca was recently founded by Shanta Sundarason to mobilize volunteers with cars to help take the guesswork out of the vaccination process for seniors, helping them not only book their appointments online or over the phone but shuttle them to and from vaccination clinics throughout the year.

For Sundarason, founding Pinkcars.ca was a way to fill a gap in the system, and filling this gap was just one of the many reasons Aurora's Jane Taylor stepped forward as a volunteer driver.

This past weekend, Ms. Taylor carried out her sixth drive for the organization.

A full-time employee of the Aurora Cultural Centre, she has been working from home since the start of the pandemic but, through the service, has made herself available for drives on evenings and weekends.

"It is important to understand the obstacles faced by seniors in the program to get them vaccinated," says Ms. Taylor. "There is all the goodwill to make it happen, but it does require a certain amount of technical expertise. That's what drew me to the organization: they were going to reduce all the anxiety

for seniors by saying, 'Just call this hotline and we will get you booked, we will arrange your ride to and from safely' just to take that anxiety away. That was important to me because I think it dealt with a hole that we recognize in the system for we knew that the most vulnerable needed to get these first.

"We have stayed home, we have worked from home and we have the luxury of doing that – but, by the same token, when the vaccine opportunities came along, it was, 'How can I contribute to this? How can I make it happen?' The opportunity to safely engage with the public in a way that is approved, healthy and reduces anxiety? It was all the right fit."

What also impressed Ms. Taylor about the Pinkcars.ca organization was their business-like manner. Almost as soon as she put herself forward as a volunteer driver, she was given everything she needed: a voluntary sector screening check from the York Regional Police, COVID assessment forms that need to be filled out every time a pick-up is scheduled, and tools to determine a schedule.

A good volunteer, she says, is a person who is organized and can put themselves into the shoes of the person they are assigned that day.

You have to be on time, be detail-oriented, make contact with your pick-up as soon as you receive an assignment and follow up with them the day before.

Perhaps as important is the ability to connect with the individual.

"It is a nice opportunity to chat,"



Jane Taylor is one of many volunteers for PinkCars.ca, a York Region initiative connecting drivers with seniors to help ease the vaccination process – from registration to getting to and from a clinic.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

says Ms. Taylor, a smile evident behind her mask. "Every single time it has been a nice opportunity. After a year of not chatting with new people really in a face-to-face kind of way, it is an absolute joy to get to know people. What I really love working with all the rides that I have taken so far is just that willingness to engage and talk. It is not this sense of nervousness that I've had; people are just so happy to sit down and chat with you.

"For a number of seniors, there are barriers in getting to the vaccination site, whether the family is far away and they can't take them themselves, or there are physical barriers, there is still that total

'go forward' attitude that 'I might have physical limitations getting here, but that is not going to stop me from getting to the site. I love that any site you drive up to has the friendliest, most welcoming volunteers who go out of their way to make sure that the person you're bringing in is having the best possible experience.'

For more information on Pinkcars.ca, visit their website.

Rides are available to seniors 70+.

Given the current rate of vaccines in York Region, the need for drivers is expected to surge come June as second dose appointments arrive.

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3.8% 4 L Bag.....\$10.49

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\$3.99

Alter Eco Organic Truffles
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Assorted Varieties 120 g
\$6.99

Theo Organic Chocolate Bars
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Santa Cruz Organic Lemonade
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Assorted Varieties 946 ml
2/\$5



PREPARING FOR THE GREAT MIGRATION.

Leaving the hectic pace of city life behind for calmer, more scenic pastures north of Toronto is, for many of us, something we only dream about. It's a popular choice with baby boomers, for whom making a permanent move outside of the city is often part of a long-term retirement plan.

But the COVID-19 pandemic forever changed the way we live and work. It also accelerated the movement of city slickers to cottage country—a trend Lorraine Jordan, owner of Team Jordan | Keller Williams Experience Realty calls “The Great Migration”—into overdrive.

“People didn’t think they could move full-time to their ‘fun place,’ their ‘happy place,’ ” says Jordan. “And then when COVID hit, that dream became a real possibility with the sudden shift to working from home.”

For many companies, being forced to move employees into fully remote work was a watershed moment. Some are choosing not to renew high-priced office leases, and have indicated that remote work will be an option, at least part of the time, even after the pandemic is over. Others are making a permanent switch to remote work, like Canadian-based Shopify, which announced in May 2020 that the company would become “digital by default.”

And then there's the price of real estate in the Greater Toronto Area. “Buyers can get more property up here for far less money than in the city,” says Jordan. “For some that means reducing their debt and financial stress, and for others it means retiring a few years earlier than they’d planned—mortgage-free. And for other families who thought they’d never be able to own a home in Toronto, I’m now helping them buy their first home.”

Dufferin County offers many of the same qualities of cottage country, with its natural surroundings, rivers and streams but its proximity to Toronto makes it even more popular making Dufferin



Country, along with other northern communities and towns, becoming one of the most sought-after areas.

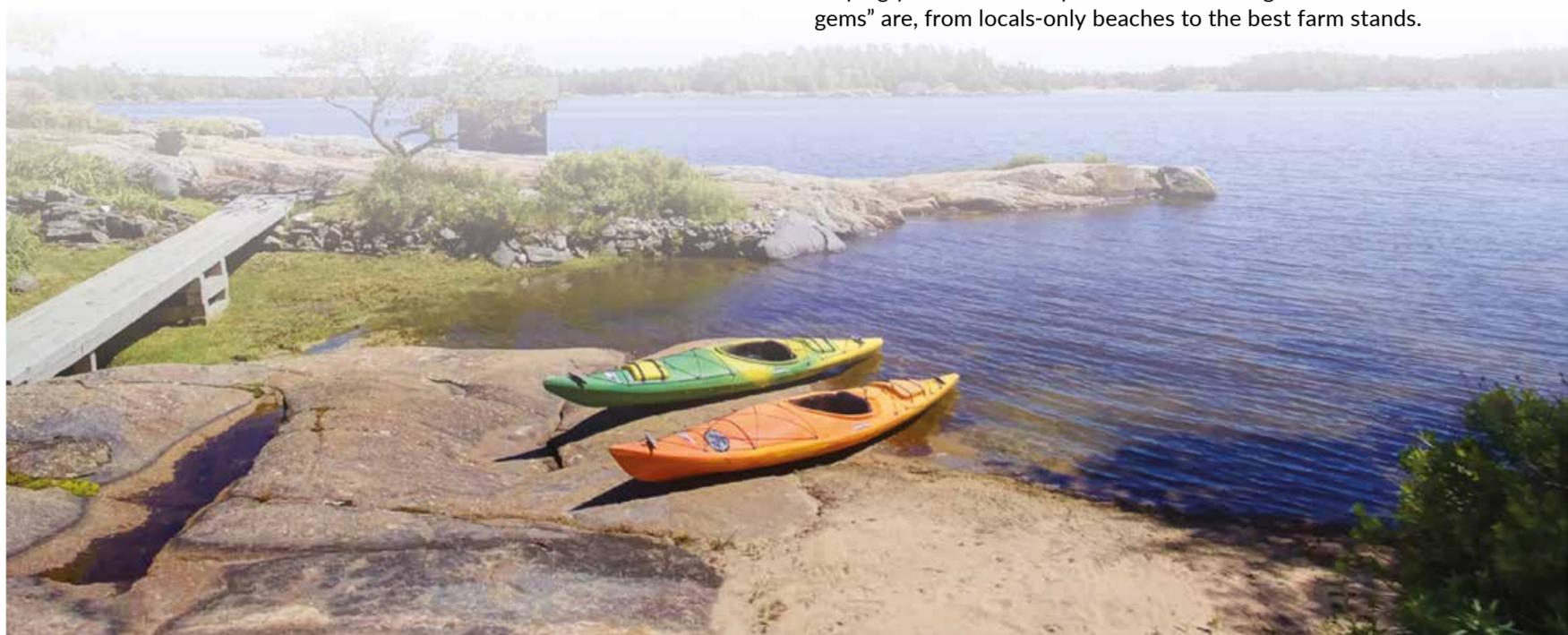
So what does this all mean to you? The one question you should ask yourself. “Are you living your best life?” Does this opportunity open more doors for you? Sound too good to be true? It's important to note that The Great Migration isn't for everyone. But those who have made the move say it has changed their lives for the better in expected—and unexpected—ways, and here, they share their words of wisdom on how to make it work for you.

TIP #1: Create your wish list

Before you start scrolling through real estate listings, think about why you want to make this move. Is your motivation short-term (for example, related to pandemic lockdown exhaustion) or part of a long-term lifestyle you envision for yourself and your family?

TIP #2: Work with a local agent

You might be tempted to rely on online real estate listing and weekend drives to cottage country to find your dream home. An experienced local agent, however, often knows about properties months they go on the market. A local agent can also be a great resource when it comes to integrating into a new community, from helping you find service providers to knowing where the “hidden gems” are, from locals-only beaches to the best farm stands.



TIP #3: Choose a community, not a house

"Many buyers want to drive up on a weekend and look only at properties. I always suggest starting with a tour of the community," says Jordan, who heads a real estate team of 13 known as Team Jordan. "Many buyers fall in love with a house online, without considering the community it's a part of. It's important to determine whether you see yourself not only living in that house, but becoming a part of that community."



beginning with your initial inspection. A good local agent can connect you with the right inspectors, will have your water tested at the Ontario Health Unit, and will ensure that there are clauses in the purchase agreement to protect you in case of post-purchase issues with your septic system or well.

TIP #7: Slowww down

For many former city dwellers, it can take time to adjust to the slower pace of cottage country. Advises Jordan, "You moved to the country for a slower pace, a lifestyle that's calmer than the city. That's what the other residents love, too—which means that shops close earlier, and repair and service providers can take longer to respond. It's important to learn to let go of that 'instant' mentality."



TIP #8: Get involved

Building a local network isn't easy when you're new to a community. Volunteering can be a great way to meet people, says Jordan. "I often connect new residents with local charities. We have a lot of talent coming in from the city, especially with retirees. Volunteers enrich our local boards and at the same time build their personal networks. It's a win-win."

TIP #9: Be prepared to do some networking, especially on the health care front

It's well-known that family doctors are in short supply in cottage country. And the process of finding a new doctor requires you to first remove yourself from your current doctor's care, adds Daniel. For her part, she's decided that sticking with her Toronto doctor is the best option for now, as she doesn't require frequent appointments.

TIP #10: Don't be a Cidiot

Definitions vary, but "Cidiot" is typically used as a derogatory term to describe a city dweller who behaves with an air of entitlement. Don't be one. "Take the time to learn about the community and know that it will likely be different from the one you left behind in the city," says Jordan. "A little kindness and respect go a long way."



TIP #11: Embrace the seasons

A common denominator among those who make The Great Migration is their love of the outdoors. It's easy to love country life during the glorious summer and picturesque fall months. During the winter, cottage country becomes a very different place, however, with many shops closing for the season, and wintry weather sometimes making even local travel treacherous.



TIP #12: Consider investment real estate as part of your retirement plan

Monica Marquis learned at a young age that real estate could be her ticket to long-term security, buying her first investment property with her mother and brother in her 20s. She had been considering a move to the Midland area to be closer to family when news stories started breaking in early 2019 about a possible pandemic. The former public health worker saw the writing on the wall, and shifted into high gear, listing her Burlington townhouse in early March and selling it for more than \$100,000 over asking just days before the country went into lockdown.

With interest rates at all-time lows, now is a great time to invest in real estate, says Jordan, who herself owns several investment properties and considers them a key part of her personal retirement plan. "Real estate is an incredible investment. Everyone has to sleep under a roof, after all."

TIP #4: Know the difference between rural and remote

A waterfront cottage might offer a lot of privacy. It may also come with lake-sourced water or a well, a septic system, and an access road that is unmaintained in the winter. This is where the expertise of a local agent and that wish list can prove helpful.

TIP #5: Know your maintenance tolerance

When you fall in love with a property, it's important to be realistic about the maintenance it will require. Falling in love with a property that requires grass cutting or snow clearing doesn't have to be a deal-breaker, Jordan says. Those services can be hired out, and your local agent can help you find the right people for the job.



TIP #6: Understand what's underground

Many rural properties, especially those in more remote locations, come with septic systems and wells. This can be a crash course for home owners used to city plumbing. It's important to educate yourself about these underground systems,

ARE YOU READY TO ESCAPE TO THE GOOD LIFE?

"The Great Migration is for people who are adventurous, who seek opportunities," says Lorraine Jordan. Those who have made the shift from city to "the good life" say there's no turning back: "I am very happy here," says Shereen Max. "I have everything I need, and this is where I'm going to stay. *I only wish I'd done it sooner.*"

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Downtown BIA sets course for the future after being sidelined by COVID

BY BROCK WEIR
 EDITOR
 LOCAL JOURNALISM
 INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) was barely a year into its mandate before the global pandemic forced them to put much of their work on the backburner. But, as the light at the end of the tunnel grows ever-brighter, the BIA is charting its course for the future.

Last week, BIA Chair Joanne Russo outlined plans for the year ahead that would not only support businesses in the Yonge and Wellington corridor that have been hit hard by the pandemic but continued efforts to make the historic core a draw once again.

The new plans address the realities presented by COVID-19 head-on.

Last year, the BIA decided to not ask property owners in its catchment area for the previously-established tax levy to fund their operations in light of COVID-19. But, as businesses begin to find their footing in this new normal, they brought forward a budget "that will support BIA businesses through promotion, engagement and beautification."

"One of our objectives for this year is to provide marketing, promote education, and to get support from the Town and the Economic Development Board in an effort to bring in new

businesses that support the vision of the BIA," said Ms. Russo, noting that another objective is to assist enterprises in the BIA area with Canatrace, a program that helps businesses collect patron and employee information for contact tracing to bolster consumer confidence.

The BIA's 2021 Budget accounts for their traditional tax levy of \$40,000 – money which is collected specifically from property owners falling within the BIA – with funds left over from last year resulting in a total ask of \$37,553. Of these funds, \$10,000 has been allocated for marketing and campaigns, \$10,000 for contact support and communications, \$5,000 towards materials and printing, and \$6,400 for administration, including accounting and bank fees.

"We need your help now more than ever," said Councillor Sandra Humfries of the BIA's role in supporting local business. "Please continue to work hard, continue to get your teams together, and [keep] everyone together to really focus on how we can make our downtown successful. We have things happening in Town but we need the BIA badly in support of those initiatives."

Mayor Tom Mrakas offered similar sentiments.

"Now more than ever we need the BIA," he said. "The Downtown Core,

our businesses, are struggling and it is more important than ever to get back up and running... I am looking for some better times – I think we all are – as we get through this pandemic and I think we can look to some exciting things, especially come the fall, when everyone gets vaccinated and we're able to get back out there again."

But a different view was offered by Councillor John Gallo.

Although he didn't discount the work of the BIA, he questioned the timing and whether businesses struggling in the core would be as receptive to stepping up with their tax levy at this moment in time.

"I suspect every business owner is probably saying, 'I don't want to pay into that right now. I'm suffering. Everyone is suffering.' Maybe I'm wrong, maybe some see the value, I just don't know," he said. "Sitting here where I am and the information that is in front of me, I just don't know. If I say yes to \$40,000, does that equal businesses in that geographical area that are benefiting? Am I saying, 'You might not see a benefit in 2021, maybe it is 2022 or 2023 until we really establish ourselves?'"

From the perspective of a Councillor, he said he didn't have enough information in front of him to gauge just how receptive BIA member businesses might be right now.

"They are all questions I have that are obviously very difficult for you or anyone to answer," he continued. "To a certain degree, it is a leap of faith that we're doing this and there is a benefit to the community and the ultimate goal is to make those businesses and others in the community thrive. That is ultimately what we're all trying to do."

I am supportive of that concept [but] there are a bunch of missing pieces I don't think anyone can answer in terms of what kind of feedback are we getting and how is this really working to achieve our goal."

Ms. Russo said she agreed it is a difficult question to answer "because we're really living in a different world right now" but businesses know there will come a time when they are able to pull themselves out of the pandemic and everything that has wrought.

"Right now, local support is very key and business owners are trying to find some sort of avenue as to... 'am I going to be able to [open my doors]?' she said. "We know we're going to be there one day, so one of the things we're focusing on as a Board is [we] don't want to just impose a levy and do something that we feel will not benefit business owners because, you're right, we don't want to put this levy on during stressful times; our focus is on really trying to reach out and communicate with the members and trying to help them market themselves so that we can bring awareness – 'Hey, I'm still here, operating, still open, these are what my new rules are, here's how you can help me.'"

"The reality is our local businesses within the downtown core need our help, need our support. They want to keep their doors open and they want the community to help them. The only way to do that is by communicating with them and promoting and marketing them because they are struggling. The funding is geared towards the re-opening plan and the re-opening plan is going to only benefit them because... speaking to other BIAs, they are all struggling."

Bay Street Service, Aurora Prices!

Gerry is available by appointment in his Aurora Office for Business, Real Estate and other legal matters.

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Town launches business retention and expansion outreach

BY BROCK WEIR
 EDITOR
 LOCAL JOURNALISM
 INITIATIVE REPORTER

Business retention and expansion is a key pillar in the Town's Economic Development strategy, and now officials are getting down to making that happen.

On Monday, the Town launched its Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) initiative, which will see officials from the Economic Development team interview businesses to "share their views on Aurora as a place to do business."

Interviews will shine a light on the current and future needs, as well as the future plans, of businesses.

"Results from the interviews will support future economic development activities, programs and services," says the Town. "The Town has retained MDB insight, an economic development consulting firm, to assist with the project. MDB Insight will be working with Town staff to review the completed interviews and online feedback for challenges and opportunities that the local business community is facing."

The first interviews were set to be carried out on Monday, April 26, with an estimated completion by

May 17. Businesses, say organizers, will be randomly selected for phone interviews which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

"We know that there is a bit of survey fatigue right now. However, we also know that reaching out directly to gather information, via phone or online, is the best way to connect with our businesses who are integral to the well-being and prosperity of our Town," said Mayor Tom Mrakas in a statement. "Through this initiative we are taking the Town's business engagement to another level in partnership with key business support organizations including [the] Aurora Economic Development Corporation, Aurora Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Aurora BIA."

Added Lisa Hausz, Manager of Economic Development and Policy for the Town: "This next stage of connection is critical in developing the programs and services needed to provide ongoing support for our local businesses. More than a simple survey, this interview initiative will provide key insights and help us make connections that may not be as obvious unless we ask our businesses."

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Last week's General Committee was a long one! Council had before it just seven items and, despite running until midnight, completed only six of them.

Several residents who watched the meeting reached out asking what measures are in place to ensure the Town's business is done in an informed but efficient manner. So, I thought it would be appropriate to share the pertinent items from the Procedural Bylaw, the governing document that sets the rules and guidelines for Council during meetings.

First is speaking limits – the length of time each member can speak to an item on the agenda. As per our bylaw, "At Committee Meetings, Members are permitted to speak two times on a matter; the first time being for a maximum of ten minutes, and the second time being for a maximum of five (5) minutes and at Council Meetings, Members are permitted to speak two (2) times on a matter for a maximum of five (5) minutes each time."

It's the Chair's role to ensure all speakers adhere to their time limit; thus, when a member comes to their limit they are asked to wrap up as their time has expired. This ensures meetings don't drag on unnecessarily, members share their views in a timely fashion and all members have equal time to speak.

The second pertinent section of the bylaw is the rules of debate. "Members shall express themselves succinctly without repetition." The phrase, "without repetition", typically applies to debate and discussion at Council meetings arising from a member "pulling" an item that has already been discussed at a previous meeting.

The Purpose of General Committee is for members to have a fulsome discussion of matters before Council. The purpose of Council meetings is to ratify decisions. Council members can pull previously



Getting Things Done

Mayor Tom Mrakas

discussed and debated items again – but it should only be for the purposes of a Recorded Vote or to introduce new information which was not previously known to members and could change the debate; or a member wishes to make a statement of approval or disapproval. Simply repeating or rehashing what has already been said in a previous meeting is not permitted under the procedural bylaw.

Lastly, the question has been raised if members are provided enough time to prepare for meetings? Do they receive an agenda in advance? The procedural bylaw does speak directly to when agendas shall be made available to members. As per the procedural bylaw "General Committee Meeting agendas are generally available to Members on the Monday that is eight (8) days preceding a General Committee Meeting." This procedure was changed last year, increasing the time between receiving agendas and the meeting. By doing so, it gives Council members more time to read through the agenda and seek any additional information and clarifications from staff, so they are fully informed and prepared to do the Town's business at the meetings.

These are just a few of the procedures outlined in our Procedural Bylaw; implemented to ensure that the Town's business is dealt with in as efficient a manner possible. As our bylaw states, "Each Member has the right to an efficient meeting"; and with all members working together we can achieve that.

That's all for this week. As always, if you would like to get into contact with me please feel free to do so anytime by phone 905-727-3123 ext. 4746 or by email tmrakas@aurora.ca and if you would like to sign up for more newsletters and Council updates, please let me know and I will add you to the growing list of Aurorans that are staying informed.

Gathering space proposed Yonge & Wellington

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Congregating indoors will still be off the books for a little while longer, but Aurora's downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) is proposing an outdoor gathering space for businesses and patrons alike just south of the Yonge and Wellington intersection.

The proposal was brought to Council's attention last week by BIA Chair Joanne Russo who provided an update to Council on their operations moving into 2021.

"We wanted to be able to welcome individuals into the Downtown Core and support local businesses right now in terms of takeout," said Ms. Russo.

Lisa Hausz of Aurora's Economic Development Board noted that a report will be coming forward to Council in the coming weeks on the project's specifics, but said the use of land was donated by a property owner with Town Staff tasked with "doing the cleanup and the promotion of the space" to the tune of \$9,000.

"This would be done in an open space for visitors and patrons of the downtown to have a gathering spot that is COVID-safe," she said. "The tables would be [distanced] apart, but it [would be] an outdoor seating space that isn't directly in the line of traffic on Yonge Street."

"The BIA was supportive in being able to promote this space. The funds

they are proposing tonight are to do just that and promote the space for gathering, for visiting, and attracting people in the Downtown...there are so many crazy ideas to attract people, whether it is buskers, music, whether we have artists in the space – something unique down there and that's what the funds are for...to try and animate the space and invite people down."

Presenters at last week's General Committee meeting were mum on the exact location of this proposed greenspace but confirmed to The Auroran the land in question is a vacant lot just north of the old post office/Clock Tower building that has been earmarked for apartments in the future.

"The owners, Yonge Developments Inc., are intending to build a residential or mixed-use building and they are working with Town Staff on what type of development would be best given the current times and vision for the Downtown," said Ms. Russo. "In the meantime, they have generously donated the space for temporary use this summer for public open space. The Town will be clearing it and making it available for seating and shade space for visitors to the Downtown. The BIA will be supporting the space and businesses through promotion and signage. We are also hoping to 'animate' the space with music or artists, but we are awaiting more volunteers for brainstorming and, of course, the Province for COVID protocols."

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What's in a name? New branding on "Library Square" shortlisted



Work continues at the Library Square redevelopment at Church and Victoria, but the name "Library Square" could soon be consigned to the history books.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Library Square has been a name on the lips of Aurorans for the better part of 40 years as the Town debated the future of the lands at Victoria and Church Streets.

But now, as construction continues on the area's redevelopment, the hunt is on for a new name that reflects the past, present and future of the community's gathering space.

Public consultation on a new name for Library Square is drawing to a close on the Town's online engagement platform Engage Aurora, and possibilities include "Aurora Junction", "Church Street Square", "Constellation Square", and "Town Square."

"Why are we changing the name? Finding an alternate name for the project currently known as Library Square is an important step that will help to better define the space as a downtown destination for community gatherings, arts, culture and heritage activities, special events, recreation and more," said the Town in a statement. "This project has evolved in such a way that the name 'Library Square' no longer captures the full extent of its cross-sectional and collaborative nature. The new name will encompass the Aurora Public Library, 22 Church Street (home to the Aurora Museum & Archives and the Aurora Cultural Centre), including the new addition, the sky bridge, and outdoor square. The new name will also reflect the types of services, programs and partnerships that will occur in the new and existing spaces.

"Aurora's Library Square project is a place where young and old can come together in all seasons to enjoy art, theatre, music, shopping, community events and activities. The space includes two key areas – a vibrant outdoor square and a new community facility that will feature a flexible performance hall with seating for up to 250 people and a variety of multi-purpose programming spaces that will bring life and energy to our downtown core. Library Square is a key part of Aurora's exciting downtown

revitalization plan."

Council's decision could be final by June.

What's in a name? Here is the reasoning behind each of the four options:

Aurora Junction: "Junction can be defined as an act of joining as well as a place or point of meeting, making it a fitting name for Aurora's newest space, where people from all walks of life will come together to enjoy art, theatre, music, shopping, community gatherings, and more. The term junction is also associated with the railway and so this name is a nod to the importance of the railroad to the development of Aurora from a small town to a growing and diversifying municipality."

Church Street Square: "Loaded with history and home to the Aurora Cultural Centre and Aurora Museum & Archives, Church Street Square honours one of Aurora's most iconic streets. The name is place-centric and speaks to how this area has grown into the Town's home for creativity, culture, innovative programming, and community gatherings."

Constellation Square: "The Town's newest facility is a place of opportunity and learning, where people can aspire to be more creative, more artistic, and more connected to their community. Constellation Square is a name that reflects these aspirational qualities. The name also translates well to a dramatic visual identity that is inspired by the night sky and some of the facility's unique design features, such as the catenary lights and the backlit aluminum mesh around the Church Street School addition."

Town Square: "Town Squares exist across the globe and can be described as an open public space usually located in the heart of a town used for community gatherings. Although not unique, Town Squares have a long history and reflect the age-old desire for communities to share a space of belonging and celebration."

What is your favourite and why? Have an alternate suggestion? Send your thoughts to brock@auroran.com.



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Theatre Aurora plans play reading for One Book One Aurora campaign

Drew Hayden Taylor piece eyed for theatre's reopening

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Over the last few weeks, Aurora readers have had the opportunity to all read from the same page as part of the One Book One Aurora campaign, spearheaded by the Aurora Public Library.

With each page of *Chasing Painted Horses*, the acclaimed 2019 novel by Drew Hayden Taylor, the vivid characters of Danielle, who found a creative outlet with her "Everything Wall" and police officer Ralph, whose interest is stirred by a graffitied image of a horse on a wall, have come to life.

This fall, readers will be able to come face to face with them as Theatre Aurora unveils a staged reading of "The Girl Who Loved Her Horses", the play that started it all.

Set to take place on the Theatre Aurora stage on October 2, it is unclear at this point whether the public will be allowed into the Henderson Drive performance venue to see the reading in person, or whether it will have to be a strictly streamed affair online, but Theatre Aurora is eager to get those creative juices flowing once again after more than a year in the dark.

"I was taken aback by the simple idea of how art is impactful and the creator can be – which is the loveliest gem for me in the book – as simple as a ten-year-old girl who can create something and it becomes a moving piece of art to many people," says Theatre Aurora Artistic Director Sergio Calderon. "That strikes a chord with me working in the theatre. We want to create art hoping it will



Contributed photo

Chasing Painted Horses by Drew Hayden Taylor, above, is the 2021 book selection for One Book One Aurora. The play that started it all, *The Girl Who Loved Her Horses*, will be subject of an upcoming Theatre Aurora initiative.

move people. It doesn't need to be complicated, it doesn't need to be complex; it can be simple and sort of universal.

"Everyone has their own experience from it. Not everyone has to have the exact same experience; some will be positive, some will be negative. Some will be confused or ponder, and I think that is ultimately the goal of what art is trying to create: the very beginning of a conversation."

The conversations sparked by the words on the pages of "Chasing Painted Horses" started out life as "The Girl Who Loved Her Horses" and going through both pieces has provided Theatre Aurora with a number of threads to draw on – not only about art, but Indigenous persons and their histories.

But that has also provided a

challenge. Unfortunately, Theatre Aurora does not have a regular roster of players of Indigenous ancestry and they have been reaching out to different groups for leads on how to make this reading as authentic as possible by bringing Indigenous actors into the fold.

"We produce shows and content and things that we're all comfortable with," says Mr. Calderon. "People continuously show up and do things, thus we have our local small theatre, we have our Indigenous theatre, our Black theatre, but it would be nice if a lot of those borders were broken down, a lot more diverse and we mix a little bit more into each other's worlds. We're reaching out and hoping this is not just a one-off but the beginning of a process where we can examine larger bodies of work to present on our stage and perhaps share experiences on both sides."

As they still have a few months to bring everything together, having a representative cast to bring the play to life is not their only challenge; another hurdle is preparing for any and all eventuality due to the global pandemic.

"What we don't know is how we have to approach it," says Mr. Calderon. "We have to set it up and be ready and able to do this virtually at the end of the day because we have

no idea where we will be in October with restrictions or if we're even going to be allowed audiences. All of that is left to the unknown. Our approach is we're going to start with the simplest, most basic and safest way, which will ultimately lead to four chairs on our stage where it will truly be a reading. In that format, then we can set up several cameras and we can easily switch from in-person to live-streaming should we need to. Then, as we get closer and more familiar with the material, and as we're told what the new guidelines are for performance basis, we might be able to augment a little bit with a bit of movement, but that will all be determined at some point in the summer when we start hearing what will this truly look like.

"It is an all-in for us. Our biggest hope is we'll be able to welcome people back into our space. Hopefully it is our first event back in the theatre after COVID."

If you or anyone you know might want to become involved in the reading/presentation of *The Girl Who Loved Her Horses*, visit theatreaurora.com, call 905-727-3669, or reach out to Mr. Calderon directly via social media. For more on the One Book One Aurora campaign, visit onebookoneaurora.com.

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Oliver family leaves behind lasting legacy in Aurora

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

There was work going on in the “lab” downstairs.

A laboratory might not be something you would associate with a home in Aurora’s Heritage Conservation District, but this residence on Spruce Street is not the average home.

Mellowed by age and, when they are in full foliage, almost hidden by mammoth trees on the front lawn, the “lab” was where so much of Aurora’s history has been preserved by Dr. Leslie Oliver. It also builds on a legacy founded on Spruce where his father, T.H. Oliver stayed two steps ahead of the technological curve, pioneering many innovations that became the hallmark of the company,

founded in 1924, which still bears his name.

Members of the Oliver family have called Spruce Street home for nearly a century, but this month marks the end of a chapter for the street and a new one for the Olivers.

Now in their nineties, Leslie, founder of the Aurora Historical Society and a leading expert in the field of material culture, and wife Mary Jeanne, a music teacher who, in turn, has taught generations of residents their way around the 88, are preparing a move to Owen Sound to be close to family. They – with an assist of the Aurora Museum & Archives and the Aurora Historical Society – are excavating through 97 years of community milestones lovingly curated by the family which do nothing short of tell the history of Aurora in the



As they begin a new chapter in Owen Sound, Aurora Historical Society founder Dr. Leslie Oliver and educator and musician Mary Jeanne have left a lasting legacy in the community they have called home for decades.
Auroran photo by Brock Weir



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twentieth century.

“We are very conscious of the shoulders we stand on while we’re here and how we profit by those who have gone before,” says Dr. Oliver, whose family first settled in the Whitchurch Highlands in the 1790s.

History has always been a way of life for Dr. Oliver. He has never been one to be very nostalgic, however. For him, history is a “prologue” to where we are going.

He founded the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) in 1963 to serve as an advocacy body for local heritage securing such “jewels in the crown” as the Church Street School and the Grand Trunk Railway, now served by GO Transit.

Nearly 60 years later, he maintains a passion for the AHS and his community.

As he and Mary Jeanne welcomed The Auroran onto their front porch recently

for a chat, Jeremy Hood of the Aurora Museum and Archives was down in the lab preparing boxes of material curated over the years by Dr. Oliver that span the century that was.

He estimates there are roughly 25 boxes of archival material that will make their way to the Archives, including “a very substantial collection of early images of Aurora going right back to the 1920s.

“One of the things [father] Howard Oliver did in his early years is he became very adept at photo work,” says Leslie. “He developed a very substantial dark room down in the shop and in his house, a lot of early colour work. He was one of the first generation of high-tech workers.

It has been a two-generation contribution to the community. It tells very substantial stories of Aurora, particularly in the post-World War Two period where evolution has been very significant to say the least. It’s the cultural orientation of the Town.

“I am not particularly interested in the Oliver name. What I am interested in is the use of archival material to tell important stories of who we are, how we got here, and the implication for future planning and development. It’s about understanding things: what they do, how they work, and what results and consequences there are for Canadian culture and society. We can see the physical changes in this Town and ask the questions: what are the implications for the future of the Town in terms of the new direction it has taken and what has been lost? These are the very philosophical questions until you burrow down to the reality with some careful thought of what it means.”

This interest in Aurora’s cultural identity is not limited to history. As an educator, Mary Jeanne has been instrumental in instilling a love of music in countless Aurora youngsters.

“I taught Kindergarten at George Street School for about six years to fill a gap in our family when we needed some extra finances when [Les] went back to school,” she says, noting she is part of a group of music teachers that have sponsored concerts for the community, including some at her grand piano which, prior to its recent pre-move sale, once took pride of place in their Spruce Street home. “I have enjoyed what I have done, I’ve seen hundreds of kids come through the door, not all of whom were talented, but it is part of education. It doesn’t matter if it is physics or math, music is part of education. I have really enjoyed my teaching and it is hard to leave it all.”

But they’re not leaving it all behind. As passionate supporters of the Aurora Cultural Centre, particularly its music programs, both Olivers are eagerly anticipating the redevelopment of Library Square and look forward, even at a distance, to seeing how things progress. Even remotely, they still hope to stay involved in the community even as “ex-pat Aurorans” and, on return trips home, trying out one of Aurora’s new hotels.

“There are lots of things we can continue to contribute, reflecting our interests,” says Leslie.

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Aurora sees first COVID death in more than a month as active cases drop slightly

From page 1

age or older living in hotspot postal code areas. While the Province has identified 13 high priority postal code areas in York Region with high COVID-19 rates, high levels of hospitalization and deaths, York Region is unable to offer vaccines to all those identified areas and age groups at the same time because of the current shortage in vaccine supply, unfortunately.”

Instead, the Region has prioritized six postal codes – five in Vaughan (L4L, L6A, L4K, L4J, L4H) and one in Vaughan (L3S).

“Vaccines are available to all individuals living in this area who are 35 years of age or older,” she said. “Now this does not mean we won’t get to the remaining identified postal codes in the areas for the 18+ population living there, but we do intend to continue to expand the vaccine program to additional hotspot postal codes and younger age groups as vaccine supply allows.

“Health Canada has assessed and continues to review all COVID-19 vaccines currently approved to ensure that they are safe, meaning very low rates of side-effects, including possible rare but serious ones, and highly effective at preventing COVID-19 infection, serious illness, hospitalization or death. The best vaccine to get is still the first one available to you. Remember, the risk of COVID-19 and suffering serious illness from it is high right now in Ontario because of the high case counts, unpredictable variants of concern and variants of interest. The quicker we can immunize our residents with these safe and effective vaccines that are monitored very closely every day, the better off we all can be. While we’re asking you to wait your turn, when it is your turn please don’t wait.”

To check your eligibility and/or to book your vaccine through the Region’s portal, visit York.ca/covid19vaccine.

Elsewhere pharmacies across the Province, including 11 in Aurora, continue to administer AstraZeneca vaccines to adults 40 and older.

Participating locations include:



Contributed photo

In an effort to boost vaccine confidence, Mayor Tom Mrakas has shared a photo of him receiving his first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine from a local pharmacy.

- Aurora IDA Pharmacy (25 William Graham Drive)
- Care Drugs (24 Orchard Heights Blvd, Unit 103)
- Family Drug Mart (9 Borealis Avenue, Unit 5)
- Loblaw Pharmacy (15900 Bayview Avenue)
- Pharmasave Aurora (126 Wellington Street West, Unit 105)
- Shoppers Drug Mart (14729 Yonge Street)
- Shoppers Drug Mart (446 Hollandview Trail)
- Sobeys Pharmacy (15500 Bayview Avenue)
- Wal-Mart Pharmacy (135 First Commerce Drive)
- Wellington Pharmacy (300 Wellington Street East, Unit 2)
- Wellness Clinical Pharmacy (15450 Yonge Street, Unit 2)

For a complete list of participating pharmacies, including how to book an appointment at each location, visit covid-19.ontario.ca/vaccine-locations and select Aurora from the drop-down menu.

WORKPLACE OUTBREAKS

York Region Public Health is now

shining a light on sectors most impacted by workplace outbreaks of COVID-19.

Since the start of the pandemic, there had been 3,881 cases of the virus attributed to workplace outbreaks as of Monday, April 26.

At press time, there were 20 open workplace outbreaks with 444 now marked as closed or resolved.

1,409 York Region residents have been impacted by workplace outbreaks with 2,438 cases involving workers living outside of the Region.

12 deaths have been attributed to the workplace.

45 per cent of workplace outbreaks involve product/material manufacturing (9 cases), 10 per cent in agriculture, government and health, service, and

transportation respectively, with 5 per cent of cases each attributed to food manufacturing, grocery and food retail, and general retail.

AURORA STATS

An 86-year-old man is Aurora’s 43rd fatality attributed to COVID-19, the first in more than a month.

The man lost his battle with the virus on Friday, April 23, at Southlake Regional Health Centre.

He first experienced symptoms on Thursday, April 15 and received a positive test the same day.

York Region Public Health lists his exposure to the virus as close contact.

Since the start of the pandemic, Aurora has seen a total of 1,575 confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of Tuesday, April 27. 1,424 cases are now marked as recovered.

Active cases total 108, a significant decline from last week when case counts neared 190.

There have been 43 deaths attributed to the virus.

Of the active cases, 104 are attributed to local transmission or close contact, 2 to institutional outbreak, 1 to workplace, and 1 to schools.

477 of Aurora’s cumulative cases are identified as belonging to variants of concern, according to York Region Public Health, 37 of which are of confirmed lineage. 440 have been detected with mutations, but the lineage has not yet been identified.

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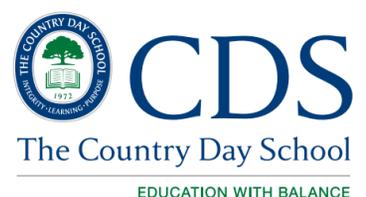
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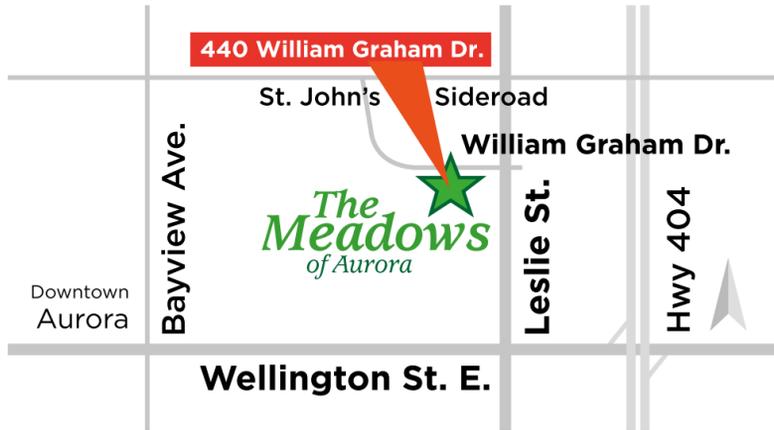
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Week of April 29, 2021



The 2021 Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake is once again a virtual challenge due to the ongoing pandemic, but teams are getting creative in helping the cause. Here, Rob, Anna and Tom of the Optimist Club of Aurora prepare to get their steps in at the Aurora Arboretum. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

We can't play rugby right now, but we can Run for Southlake

Contributed article

When the Aurora Barbarian Rugby Club decided to join the 2021 Nature's Emporium *Run for Southlake*, they went all in! For the club, it was an excellent opportunity to raise funds for Southlake and a great way to build camaraderie at a time when members were being forced to stay apart.

The Club formed a team, Aurora Barbarian Rugby, and rallied members to register, even incentivizing with a discount on club dues to the first players to join.

Dan Murack, a long-time member registered early and gifted his discount to one of the younger members who didn't make the cut.

"It's a tradition in Rugby," he says. "Whether it's paying opportunities forward or providing financial help, the older members help out the younger ones whenever possible."

It's that culture of giving and helping that is rallying the Club during the Southlake Run.

The Barbarians changed the cover photo on their Facebook page to the *Run for Southlake* banner and created posts about their participation. In the spirit of this year's Run, they left it up to each team member to set their own

strategy and distance goals.

Sydney Mann, who has played for the Barbarians for over a decade, jumped at the chance to register. A lifelong resident of the area, she understands the importance Southlake brings to its communities.

"I've been lucky never having used the hospital's services," she says, "but my family members have and received excellent care."

Both Sydney and Dan were happy for the opportunity to add structure to their physical training. Sydney is running her distance.

"It is more fun to run for someone else, not just myself," she says.

Sydney initially set her activity goal at 20kms and her fundraising goal at \$150.

"I was shocked by how generous people were," she says.

In no time she had raised \$750, so she changed her fundraising goal to \$1,000 and honoured her sponsors by doubling her distance commitment to 40kms!

Dan's approach is more practical. He and his family recently adopted Gypsy, a husky puppy.

"She loves to hike," says Dan, "and thankfully so do we!"

The family shares duties walking the 10-15 kms a day needed to keep Gypsy happy. This is no hardship!

Dan is fully enjoying his lunchtime hikes on York Regional Forest trails to achieve his goal of 300kms. His next objective is to focus on fundraising. Dan has committed to raising \$500, and believes he will make it.

"People are generous," he says. "I think the consensus is that the governments are funding so much

right now that those who can need to step up to help."

The 2021 Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake kicked off on April 12th and runs until May 9th. There is still plenty of time to "step up" to either register or sponsor a participant. Visit runforsouthlake.ca for information.

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Cycle Aurora encourages biking enthusiasts to re-discover community

BY BROCK WEIR
 EDITOR
 LOCAL JOURNALISM
 INITIATIVE REPORTER

Your mission, should you choose to accept it: rediscover your community one pedal at a time.

That's the aim of Cycle Aurora, a new biking initiative the Town is set to launch Saturday.

"It's bike season and the Town of Aurora is thrilled to announce the new Cycle Aurora challenge!" said the Town in a statement. "Stay active this season while riding your bike, whether it is outside on the road or trail, or on your indoor bike from home."

"Whether its your first time on two

wheels or you're a regular cyclist, let's all enjoy the pleasure of riding a bike safely during this pandemic and beyond."

Registration for Cycle Aurora begins May 1 and is open to all ages through May 31 via the Town's ePlay app at aurora.ca/ePlay - then the fun begins, with the challenge itself running between June 5 and July 1.

"After you register, download the GooseChase app, complete missions and collect points," says the Town. "Kids will love earning stickers for the missions they complete. Complete three missions to earn a prize."

For more on the initiative, visit aurora.ca/cycleaurora or call the Town's Special Events line at 905-726-4762.

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Volunteer positions open at Aurora Sports Hall of Fame

By Robert Belardi

Setting out with a new vision for this year in the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame Annual General Meeting last week, there are available volunteer positions to get involved with the organization.

Wanted are a Board of Governors' Director, manager of website and maintenance, a marketing chairman and volunteers for multiple committees including education, marketing, induction and cornerstones.

"A Board of Governor's director is essentially someone who is going to sit on our Board. There is an expectation that they will participate in one committee minimum. We're looking at five to eight hours of their volunteer time a month," said President of the

Aurora Sports Hall of Fame Javed Khan.

"We're looking for someone to be a connector in our community, someone who can come with innovative ideas and action them and an individual who can be a tremendous ambassador for the Hall of Fame."

The Manager of website and maintenance is someone who is tech-savvy and familiar with content management systems.

The Marketing Chairman is someone with extensive knowledge in continuing to expose the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame within the community and will help with branding the name.

As for general volunteers, those who wish to make an impact in the education sector, marketing, induction nominations and in cornerstones will have multiple areas they can



**AURORA SPORTS
HALL of FAME**
EST. 2013

contribute into.

Potential volunteers may contact Lisa at executiveassistant@aurorahof.ca to inquire.

Amongst the many goals set out for this year are engaging with the honoured members more frequently and seeking more revenue opportunities, as officials noted during the meeting the Hall is set to bring

back the annual induction celebration dinner.

"We are planning an induction celebration dinner in November of 2021 and it is going to be at The Venetian," Khan said.

As of now, Khan says there are four nomination applications being reviewed. One of those four is "very strong", one other is "fairly strong" as well, and the other two are being worked on.

The Aurora Sport Hall of Fame nominations portal has been reopened on their website for 2022. For those who know of someone to nominate, you can begin their application at any time.

For other questions and inquiries you may contact Lisa for anything further, and you may also contact Javed Khan directly at president@aurorahof.ca.

Robert's Rant: Super League collapse a glorious week for soccer

By Robert Belardi

Under normal circumstances when you want to build a long-lasting structure, usually you build it from the ground up. What you don't do is construct it on top of a previously-built foundation that simply needs some tweaking.

Two Sundays ago, the world shook. Soccer fans around the world were filled with distaste and anguish. Twelve of Europe's largest soccer clubs had come to an agreement to introduce an all-new Super League as the sports latest new vision in over 150 years of existence.

It was reportedly began by President of Real Madrid Florentino Perez who was preparing to become chairman of the Super League alongside President of Juventus Andrea Agnelli.

If there's one thing this sport teaches anyone it is the global game is for the fans and by the fans.

In a time where fans have been forced to sequester in their own homes and remain on the sidelines until another day, this forced many people out of their shells.

Pundits like former Manchester United fullback Gary Neville and Rio Ferdinand shared their fan perspective and ripped this apart immediately.

Neville said you might as well disown your own club and the grassroots system that has been built in the United Kingdom would have been squashed. Ferdinand said this is a war on football, it's embarrassing and similarly to Neville, touched on how lower professional clubs would have suffered.

On April 20, fans came with banners. They came with vehement messages, lambasting the owners and the American investors over this perturbing idea.

Chelsea supporters, including former goalkeeper Petr Cech, marched in front of the gates of Stamford Bridge before The Blues were set to take on Brighton and Hove Albion in protest.

Shortly after, Chelsea FC declared they would be opting out, then Manchester City announced it. Then all six English clubs involved opted out.

Atletico Madrid and then all three Italian clubs hit the deck as well. Agnelli

admitted defeat but he did say he is still convinced about the idea. Perez opted to stand by the Super League. FC Barcelona still remained convinced that opting out of the Super League would have been an historic error, as per theScore.

The idea that lasted around 72 hours was also harshly criticized by soccer's governing bodies. UEFA threatened to ban clubs from participating in the Champions League and in future World Cups. But the fans publicly shaming their own clubs in a sport that is tribal by all stretches of the imagination must have left a sour taste in all of their mouths.

Following many apologies and issues stated, there is a lot of damage done. How can fans trust their owners now? How can supporters wear the shirt with pride right now knowing what has just occurred? It will take time surely. Maybe even a change in ownership and management would do the fans justice.

Probably why Executive Vice Chairman of Manchester United Ed Woodward called it a day.

Meanwhile, in North London last week, Arsenal supporters protested against their owner Stan Kroenke and called for his resignation.

There was a lot at stake. The Super League couldn't happen. It would ruin soccer as we know it. From the grassroots levels all the way to the top tier leagues. All the money is funnelled from top leagues down to other pro leagues in their own countries. The Super League would have destroyed that.

The hope is UEFA, FIFA, club presidents, owners and fans find another way. Find a way to spread the wealth. Find a way to make many teams competitive. Find a way to turn around the narrative that soccer is all about the money. Because the message was clear the Super League was about money. Lately, the entirety of the sport revolves around it.

It might also be fair to say the fight against the Super League isn't over just yet. With Juventus conceding yet still believing, and with Real Madrid and Barcelona still convinced, expect more proposals moving forward.

As of now, no team is viewed with the same love and passion. The fight is with the fans and the call to action is clear.

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Anti-Black Racism Task Force member questions mission of Committee

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

For the last few months, members of Aurora's Anti-Racism and Anti-Black Racism Task Force have been providing input on a proposed new mural celebrating Canada's diversity, but there is much more work to be done beyond the arts sphere, says Task Force member Phiona Durrant.

Ms. Durrant, a business owner in Aurora's historic downtown core, has been a member of the Task Force since its inception and made a delegation to Council members last week to express her frustration on the work that has been carried out to date.

"I am very concerned about how the committees are built," she said. "What is the plan? What is the strategy? I am wondering if this is a working group because I have not seen any action yet for this group. When a group is created, that is not the action. That is the place where the action is supposed to be taking place, being planned and done."

She shared with Council that she felt "lost and unsafe" within the group because it is not clear what their goal is.

"I think the hiccup or the problem is the group was created and the Town put a wall project on us and left us with that," she continued. "From November to now, all we're talking about is a wall and nothing to deal with what the terms of reference says. Also, no practical procedures and guidelines have been given to me on how to do this successfully."

"Now I feel that the task force I am on, which is supposed to be effective and great, I feel it is divided," she said, adding that she felt like the mural was sent to the Task Force as a done deal. "It is not like something we could critique or have a say on."

Her comments were taken to heart by Council and they sparked a lengthy discussion not just on the Task Force but the Town's citizen-led committees as a whole.

In addressing Ms. Durrant's concerns, Council members praised the Task Force for the initiatives they undertook for February's Black History Month, as well as the work Ms. Durrant and her team at the Aurora Black Community Facebook group took on and executed throughout the late winter. But they urged the group to forge ahead.

"I don't want you or anyone on a committee to feel unsafe...and to feel like you are not contributing," said Councillor Sandra Humfries. "One of the things I think is a little tricky from what I hear from you and other members is that when they have an idea, they don't know where that idea goes and you can't really

ratify an idea at a committee-level. The minutes come to Council and we review them through a staff report and then we ratify ideas. We need to understand these issues where we can listen and set the right policies to enable committees to feel they are contributing and they feel good about what they are doing."

From Councillor John Gallo's perspective, "expectations [of the Task Force] were somewhat different from reality." He noted that committees once made recommendations to Council, including motions, but this duty was removed in favour of minutes from the meetings coming forward for Council's review.

"That changed and if you look at the Committee minutes now, Council just receives and doesn't necessarily take action on what the Committees were discussing or moving forward," he said. "It is a bit of a change. Maybe a discussion should happen again. Maybe we should have a higher-level discussion of why we want committees, what we want committees to do, and the value of committees. I think that is somewhat the frustration you're experiencing."

Aurora established the Anti-Racism and Anti-Black Racism Task Force last fall following a motion from Councillor Harold Kim. Speaking to Ms. Durrant's concerns, Councillor Kim said "the concept of the Task Force is to give advice and perspective to Council whenever items that pertain to that group is going to be discussed at Council."

"When it comes to heritage or accessibility, there is a new development, or a renovation that is coming relative to a heritage home, then it will go to that advisory committee for their input [and] their perspective because of their experience and so forth," he said. "If the Task Force did not want to provide the perspective on a particular item, the Task Force has the prerogative to say, that is not something we want to weigh in on. I think almost everyone wanted to weigh in on the mural. I empathize [with] those who may not want to talk about the item at hand, but that is the role of the advisory committee."

On the part of Mayor Mrakas, he encouraged the Task Force to look at goals and "clearly lay them on the table."

"I think that is something all our committees need to do," he said. "I think it is a great structure to have because it allows you to achieve something and you know what you're striving for. Once you create the plan and you have goals, then you can break off into sub-groups that want to work on each of those goals and have more informal conversations and bring those conversations back to the structured Task Force."

Three-digit suicide and crisis hotline endorsed by Council

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora has joined calls for a three-digit nation-wide suicide and crisis prevention hotline.

This week, Council is set to formally endorse calls to designate 9-8-8 as a hotline for individuals in crisis after giving the thumbs-up to a motion from the Town of Caledon.

Council unanimously voted in favour of endorsing Caledon's motion, which says the three-digit line would "ensure critical barriers are removed to those in crisis and seeking help."

The motion was forwarded to Aurora by Caledon Mayor Allan Thompson.

Caledon's resolution notes the COVID-19 pandemic has "increased the demand for suicide prevention services by 200 per cent" and that suicide prevention lines "require the user to remember a 10-digit number and go through directions or be placed on hold."

"In 2022, the United States will have in place a national 9-8-8 crisis hotline," said Mayor Thompson. "The Town of Caledon recognized that it is a significant and important initiative to ensure critical barriers are removed to those in crisis and seeking help. Caledon endorses this

9-8-8 crisis line initiative." Adopting 9-8-8 for this purpose is an initiative that has already seen traction in Ottawa, backed by a number of MPs including Dufferin-Caledon's Kyle Seeback who helped bring the matter forward earlier this year with British Columbia MP Todd Doherty.

"Now, more than ever, the mental health of Canadians is being tested," said Doherty at the time. "Increased isolation and heightened anxiety have led to higher rates of alcohol and substance abuse. Reports [of] domestic violence have gone up and we are seeing elevated levels of suicidal ideation and crises. First Nations communities across Canada continue to battle a growing suicide crisis."

Added Seeback: "I myself have had serious bouts with depression over the years. I thought this was something to definitely try to get behind. I have been very fortunate in my life. I've had good friends, family, and the ability to speak to people when I needed to."

Some people, however, have not been as fortunate.

Until a three-digit hotline is in place, resources are still available if you are in crisis.

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With files from Alyssa Parkhill

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Farmers' Market set to re-open Saturday at Town Park

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

After three months of living with COVID-19, the re-opening of the Aurora Farmers' Market last year was one of this community's first hints of a return to normalcy.

Now, well into our second year of living with the virus, the Market is set to once again be a light at the end of the tunnel.

The Aurora Farmers' Market is set to re-open with new and returning vendors this Saturday, May 1, at 9 a.m. at Town Park with strict health protocols firmly in place.

Open to a limited number of people at any one time, protocols will be very similar to how the Market was operated last year, with a controlled entrance off Larmont Street and an exit onto Wells Street, with vendors limited during lockdown to farmers, produce vendors and other food purveyors.

"All safety precautions are being followed to the T," says Councillor Sandra Humfries who serves as liaison between Council and the Farmers' Market. "Last year, I am proud to say that it was the first year [of our protocols] and this Market



When the Aurora Farmers' Market re-opened to customers last May, strict health protocols – including hand sanitizing at the Larmont Street entry point – were in place. And they will be again as the Market eyes the start of its new season May 1.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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was the very first market to re-open in York Region. Many farmers' markets used our template to open theirs.

"I have to commend this Farmers' Market executive, the Chair, and Town staff in Parks and Bylaw who have been unbelievably supportive. I know without staff's support and this amazing executive we wouldn't have been so fortunate. This year we need it."

Indeed, with many of our favourite outdoor activities once again on the backburner until health restrictions allow, the Farmers' Market is, for many, a much-needed outlet on a Saturday morning.

"People really have to go out somewhere and the Farmers' Market is the place to go – it's the only place to go!" says Market Chair Cathy Williams with a laugh.

Market Board Member Paddy Honey shares this sentiment, noting, "Every weekend the customers would tell us how much they appreciate this place, how uplifting it was. It helped them with the COVID fight and we had 18,000 customers last year and not a single COVID case was traced back to this Market."

The Market this year will again have very strict protocols to maintain to ensure it can open safely. The Board sees this as a team effort and they are doing their utmost to make sure it is a success.

"They will move mountains to make sure it opens safely, perfectly and everyone is just so excited," says Councillor Humfries.

New this year is an increased

People really have to go out somewhere and the Farmers' Market is the place to go – it's the only place to go!

push to make it a cashless market. Although some vendors will accept cash, almost every vendor has been outfitted with tap for debit and credit cards. Customers are also discouraged from touching produce offered by farmers and instead to point to the items they want for vendors to bag it all up.

Among the new vendors this year will be Red Thread Brewery which will be taking orders at the Market and delivering product later, food vendor Mad Mexican, Chuckleberry, Fabulicious Taste, and the Social Pup will be on-hand selling treats for our four-legged friends.

"We would love to see 1,000 people come through on our opening day, that would be amazing," says Ms. Williams.

For more on the Aurora Farmers' Market, including up-to-date information on COVID protocols and any changes to plans post-press time, visit theaurorafarmersmarket.com or call 289-796-1825.

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Local author heads south with journey to Caribbean

BY BROCKWEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora author Andrew King gave readers the travel bug last fall with his first book, *A Visual Journey to Alaska*.

In the process, King picked up a bug of his own – the writing bug – and is back this spring with another visual trip, this time to the sunny climes of the Caribbean.

A Visual Journey to the Caribbean, the second travel book by Mr. King, is now available through Amazon, charting his personal journey through the islands, along with stunning shots of landmarks and natural wonders, and travel tips as well.

“With my first book, everyone has been loving the pictures and the dialogue, and it has made people want to travel after the pandemic is over,” says King. “With *A Journey to the Caribbean*, I wanted to show something different that you don’t always see: new scenery, new places, bright colours.”

King first travelled to the Caribbean on a family cruise about six years ago. Sailing out of Florida, they visited the U.S. Virgin Islands,

Saint-Martin, and the coast of Mexico.

“It was just amazing discovering these scenic areas, the greens in the trees, the real difference in the blue of the water,” says King. “I wanted to show the amazing places you’ll see, the different people you’ll meet, the food you’ll eat – it was like a whole new life experience.”

Among the favourite locales he has visited so far are the resorts, public art and majestic homes of Nassau, Bahamas and the Mayan ruins in Central America.

“One of the biggest misconceptions about travelling to the Caribbean is everybody wants to go to the beaches, but there is more than just beaches, you can explore the history of the area as well.”

King never dreamed he had book publishing in his future.

As a student at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School, he struggled with the work, struggled with anxiety, and wanted to be anywhere else but in the classroom. Getting out and seeing the world has done nothing but broaden his horizons and helped him “get through the rough points.”

In addition to Alaska and the Caribbean, he has travelled through

Italy, Malta, Greece, Australia, New Zealand and has cross-crossed the Atlantic.

Once the pandemic is over, he hopes to explore more of Europe – and he also hopes his books will encourage people to set their own travel goals once there is a return to some kind of normal.

“I just want people to feel better

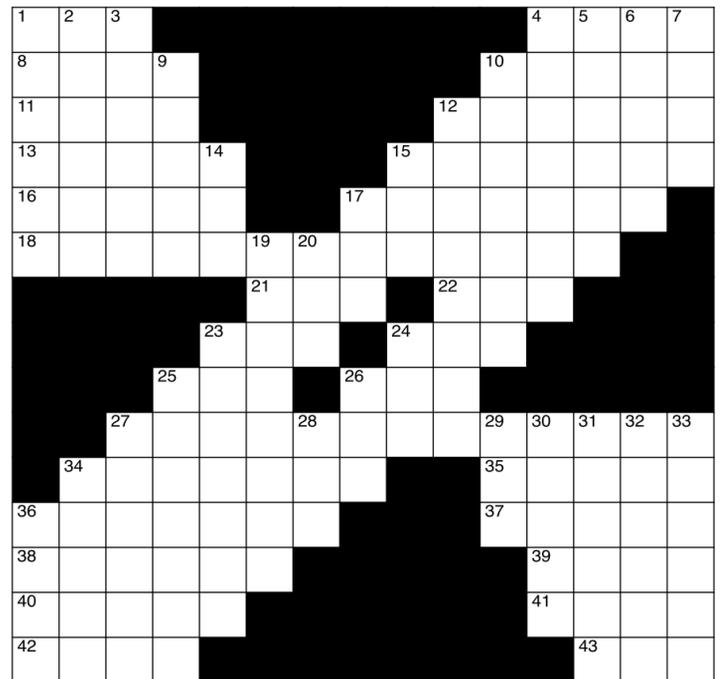
during this rough time we’re in right now and give people something to look forward to after,” he says. “I am really looking forward to getting back on a cruise ship and see the world. If everything can work out by next year, I am going to do much more of Europe.”

Will it inspire another travel book? Watch this space.



Andrew King’s photo of a sunset is just one of the beautiful images he captured for his latest travel book, *A Visual Journey to the Caribbean*. Photo by Andrew King

CROSSWORD

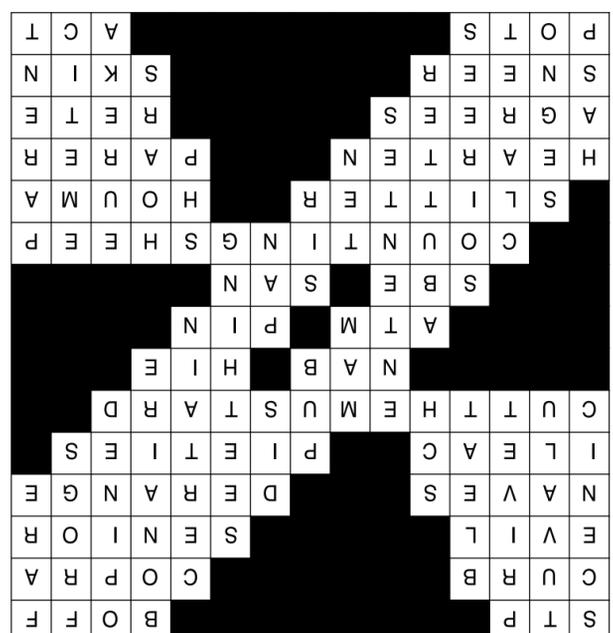


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Engine additive
- 4. A hearty laugh
- 8. Restrain
- 10. Dried coconut kernels
- 11. Nefarious
- 12. Elderly
- 13. Central part of a church building
- 15. Throw into confusion
- 16. Intestinal
- 17. Qualities of being religious
- 18. Live up to a standard
- 21. Seize
- 22. Go quickly
- 23. Automated teller machine
- 24. Bowling necessity
- 25. One point east of due south
- 26. Japanese honorific
- 27. A way to induce sleep
- 34. Makes cash register rolls
- 35. A city in S Louisiana
- 36. Make more cheerful
- 37. Manicurist
- 38. Consents
- 39. Network of nerves
- 40. Mocking smile
- 41. It covers the body
- 42. Partner to pans
- 43. Perform in a play

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Beautiful
- 2. Polynesian island country
- 3. Shrub of the olive family
- 4. Self-governing Netherlands territory
- 5. Shared one’s view
- 6. Tailless amphibians
- 7. Charge passengers must pay
- 9. Sound sheep make
- 10. Known for sure
- 12. Filled with unexpressed anger
- 14. Student (abbr.)
- 15. Criticize
- 17. Gathering place
- 19. Informal alliances
- 20. One’s mother (British)
- 23. Landholder
- 24. Peter’s last name
- 25. Parties
- 26. Title of respect
- 27. Red wine
- 28. Pearl Jam’s debut
- 29. Shaft horsepower (abbr.)
- 30. Frosts
- 31. Cry of joy
- 32. Induces vomiting
- 33. Mother or father
- 34. Dal _ : Musical navigation marker
- 36. Door fastener part



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THINGS You Ought To Know

SATURDAY, MAY 1

Come out to Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for the opening day of the Aurora Farmers' Market. With strict COVID-19 protocols in place, the Market vendors are excited to welcome residents and customers once again. Due to health rules, only food and produce vendors will be on site at this time. For more information, visit theaurorafarmersmarket.com.

MAY 1 - 29

The Aurora Farmers' Market

will host a virtual dinosaur egg hunt during each market day on Saturdays between 8 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. Bring your family to the Aurora Farmers' Market Saturday and have your kids look for dinosaur eggs to "hatch". Bring your dinosaur to the Brainy Games booth for a reward. For more, visit dinhunt.fun.

SUNDAY, MAY 9

This Mother's Day, join Chef Julian Pancer from The Chef Upstairs in support of Abuse Hurts. Show mom

some love and fun! Cook alongside Chef Julian and Huggum Bear to create a delicious and healthy brunch featuring our La Vie en Vert Smoothie and Croque Madame Sandwich. Chef Julian will guide guests through the preparation of this fun and unique brunch that the whole family will enjoy. Cook along with step-by-step instruction and treat Mom on her special day. Set up sheet, recipes and zoom link will be sent via email, after registration. For more information, visit abusehurts.ca.

THURSDAY, MAY 13

Amnesty International's Aurora-Newmarket Group holds their monthly meeting the second Thursday of the month (January-May, September-November) from 7.30 to 8.10 p.m., to discuss current human rights issues and write appeal letters. Held online via Zoom currently - all welcome! Free. For more information contact Renee at reneeandlen@rogers.com, or visit www.amnestyaurora.wordpress.com



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Vince's launches PPE recovery program

Most Canadians have adapted to the “new normal” by wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) on the job, while buying groceries, and anywhere they are likely to be in contact with others – particularly indoors. This adherence to health department protocols has undoubtedly saved many lives.

But the COVID-19 pandemic has had other unintended consequences. That being the improper disposal of these masks, face shields, gloves, and other items.

Who hasn't gone for a walk and seen discarded PPE littering the pathways and parks?

Similarly, there's no shortage of these items scattered in parking lots – or just outside a building's entrance.

Indeed, there has been an overwhelming amount of waste created as a result of efforts to keep us safe. Globally, 129 billion disposable face masks and 65 billion gloves are being thrown away each month.

Vince's has signed on with Green Circle Ideas to participate in their innovative new program to

recover and sustainably dispose of single-use PPE. These items include masks, gloves, face shields, eye protection, capes, gowns, disinfectant wipes, and single use towels.

At the store level, customers will see clearly marked, free-standing PPE boxes in several high-traffic areas. Customers and staff can discard their used PPE in the bin's plastic liner, and when full, Vince's will ship everything back to Green Circle Ideas.

These sealed PPE containers will then be safely incinerated to produce clean, renewable energy. The ash can be used as filler in asphalt and other construction materials, with nothing going to waste.

“By supplying our staff with the necessary PPE, and carefully following health department protocols, we have been doing our part to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 to both our customers and staff,” said Giancarlo Trimarchi, partner at Vince's. “That being said, we are pleased to be taking a positive step in reducing the environmental impact of these important safeguards.”



Vince's Community Ambassador Maria Ciarlandini is pictured with Green Circle Ideas PPE recovery boxes.

Contributed photo

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Freelance Reporter for Local Community Newspaper

Come join a dynamic, fast paced, growing entrepreneurial company looking for an energetic Freelance Reporter with a passion for community news.

The ideal candidate will have a distinct willingness to cover local community events and issues.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

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

QUALIFICATIONS:

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



Let's Talk.

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

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DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Tour groups of students through houses and apartments to rent them out for the annual rental campaign.
- Plan, Prepare and Execute Advertising and Marketing Material for the annual rental campaign.
- Complete all necessary paperwork involved in lease signing and payment collection for newly rented units.
- Work with all current tenants in completing necessary paperwork for renewal units

EXPECTATIONS:

- Have a positive attitude
- Willing to work hard and enjoy rewards in a team environment
- Willing to take chances and learn from your peers

DESIRED SKILLS & EXPERIENCE:

- Sales Driven
- Work well in results based environment
- Goal Oriented
- Great Personal Skills
- Some Sales Skills Preferred but would be willing to train the right candidate
- Marketing and/or Communication education would be a great fit

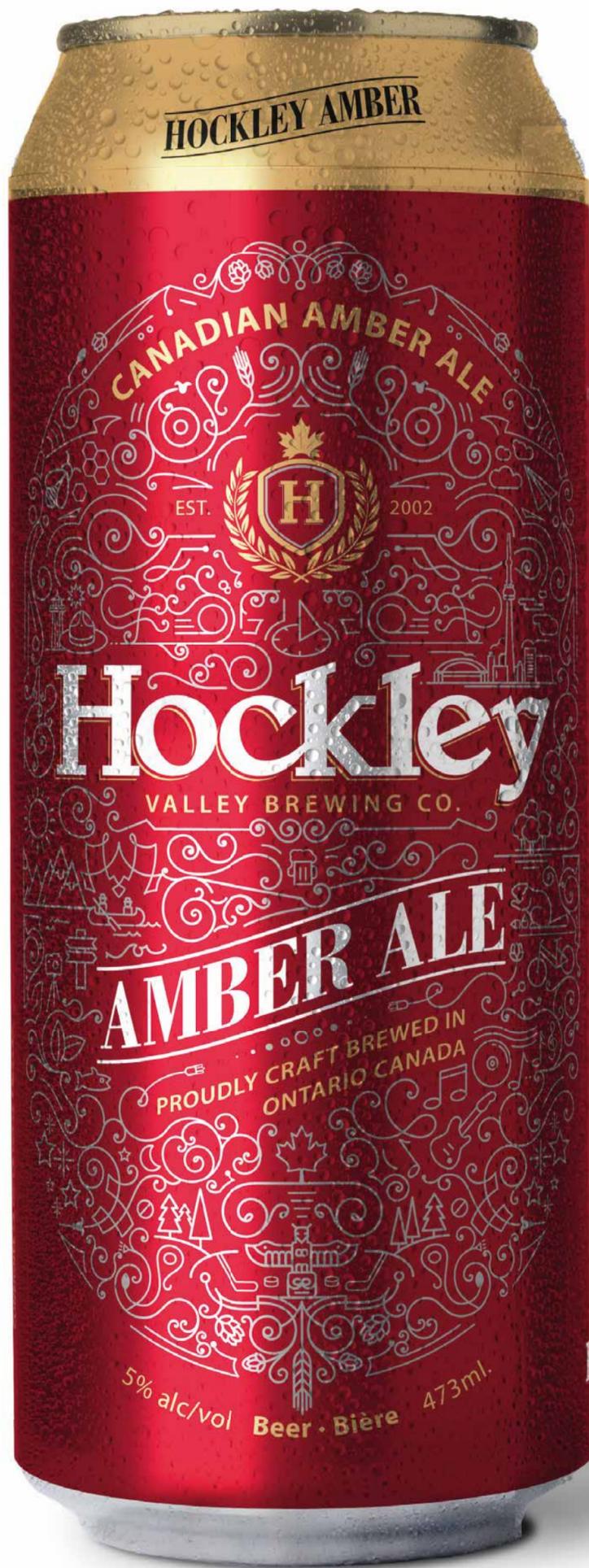
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