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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 21 No. 50 905-727-3300

TheAuroran.com

FREE Week of September 30, 2021

CMCA AUDITED



SILVER CELEBRATION – On Saturday, the Aurora Community Arboretum marked 25 years of operation. Aurora's largest green space, the Arboretum has been a passion project for volunteers over the last quarter-century and, since the global pandemic, has been discovered and rediscovered by residents who have been taking solace in the nature around them. Pictured here attending the celebration is former mayor Phyllis Morris, landscape architect and long-time volunteer David Tomlinson, Arboretum chair Irene Clement, co-founder Ken Smith, Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Operations, and former mayor Tim Jones. For more, see page 19.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Truth & Reconciliation gathering will offer learning and reflection around sacred fire

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Following the shocking discovery of the remains of 215 Indigenous children in unmarked graves on land associated with a Kamloops residential school, Town Park was a place for healing as the community came together to underscore the point that "Every Child Matters."

Now, to mark the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation this Thursday, September 30, from 6-8 p.m., Town Park will become a place for gathering, learning, and meaningful reflection in a ceremony and presentation led by Anishinaabe grandmother Kim Wheatley, elder Pat Floody and Ancestral Knowledge Keeper Raiden Levesque.

"As the whole nation was rocked and shocked by the findings of the children

at the residential schools, this isn't a time where we just apply cookie-cutter tools and figure out programming aspects, this is for all citizens, regardless of background. This is our time where we stop, we pause, and we respond to the guidance we ask for," says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora.

"There is a huge emotional journey as to why we need this day, a day that

Continued on page 22

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OFF TO OTTAWA

Aurora's MPs-elect Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket-Aurora) and Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill) are seen at the divide between the two ridings on Monday. With mail-in ballots now counted, the Liberal duo are eager to get to work in the nation's capital. For more, see Page 18.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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TOWN OF AURORA

Notice Board

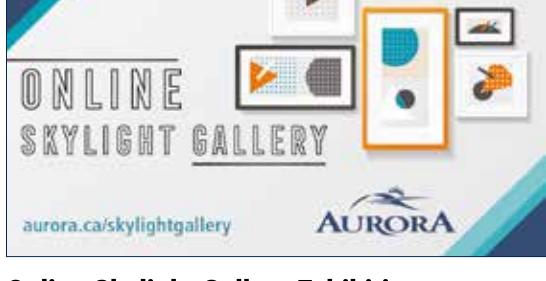


Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Tuesday, October 5	5:45 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, October 5	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee
Tuesday, October 12	5:45 p.m.	Video conference	Finance Advisory Committee
Tuesday, October 12	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Public Planning
Wednesday, October 13	7 p.m.	Video conference	Accessibility Advisory Committee
Wednesday, October 13	7 p.m.	Video conference	Aurora Cultural Centre Board
Thursday, October 14	7 p.m.	Video conference	Committee of Adjustment

*All meetings held electronically are as per Section 19. i) of the Town's Procedure By-law No. 6228-19, as amended, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meetings will be available to the public via live stream only on the Town's YouTube Channel. In-person public attendance at meetings is not permitted at this time.

What's Happening



Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition Artist: Dianne Olchowy

For the month of October, Aurora's Online Skylight Gallery is featuring works by artist Dianne Olchowy in a series called "Ontario Landscapes". Dianne has created a compilation of landscape paintings that evoke the feeling of place and belonging. She intends for the viewer to experience the beauty and wonders of the Georgian Bay scenery; with its meadows, forests and farms. The exhibition is a collection of artwork created using the outdoor concept and creations in her studio. View this online gallery at aurora.ca/skylightgallery

Thanksgiving Day Holiday Weekend

Have fun over the holidays! We have programs and activities for everyone to enjoy. Visit our Holiday Schedules webpage for full details at aurora.ca/holidayschedules.

Proof of COVID-19 vaccination required for all indoor Town of Aurora recreation facilities

Effective **September 22, 2021**, all visitors 12 years of age and older will be required to be fully vaccinated in order to access Town facilities, unless an exemption applies.

In accordance with Provincial legislation, anyone wishing to enter the Town of Aurora's Recreation facilities will be required to show proof of identification and full COVID-19 vaccination status. All staff are also required to be fully vaccinated under the Town's mandatory vaccination policy.

All patrons to the Town's recreation facilities will be required to provide proof of identification (name and date of birth on one document) and proof of being fully vaccinated (two doses plus 14 days) against COVID-19.

Exemptions

- Exemptions will be permitted for unvaccinated individuals with medical exemptions
- Youth under the age of 18 who are actively participating in an organized sport, training, practices, games and competitions including sports leagues, organized pick-up sports, dance classes, swimming, skating
- Anyone ages 0 to 11 who are participating or spectating in any activity

All other individuals should be prepared to present their documentation upon arrival. This includes parents/guardians who are accompanying a child to a program, or those who are spectating. Entrance will be denied if the required documentation is not shown.

All health and safety requirements will continue to apply at our facilities including screening, masks, and physical distancing.

Vaccine receipts can be downloaded from the Provincial Booking portal or by calling the Provincial Booking Line. The Province of Ontario will introduce an enhanced digital vaccine receipt that features a QR code, which will come into effect on **October 22**.

For more information on the vaccine receipts visit covid19.ontariohealth.ca or call the Provincial Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900.

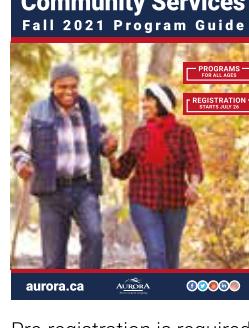


Neighbourhood street sweeping

Aurora's fall street sweeping will begin the second week of October (weather permitting). Residents are asked to avoid parking on the road when possible during this time. Please do not place garbage bins on the roadway and remove basketball nets.

When cleaning up the leaves on your property please do not sweep them onto the roadway as large piles could damage equipment and pose a hazard in the roadway. Street sweeping will continue until conditions no longer permit.

What's Happening



Fall 2021 Program Guide

Our Fall 2021 Program Guide has arrived, including both in-person and virtual programs for all ages. Registrations are now open for recreation and aquatic programs.

The guide can be viewed online at aurora.ca/recguide.

Pre-registration is required for all programs and drop-in activities at aurora.ca/eplay.

Aurora Family Leisure Complex swim times

Daytime Leisure Swim times available at the AFLC pool for families with young children.

Pre-registration is required at aurora.ca/eplay.

For AFLC pool swim times schedule, please visit aurora.ca/aquatics.

Aurora Family Leisure Complex drop-ins and skating activities

Recreation centres are now open for indoor sports activities. Pre-registration is required.

For AFLC Drop-In schedule, please visit aurora.ca/aflcdropin.

For Skating Activities schedule, please visit aurora.ca/skating.



Thank you to our Culture Days partners

Culture Days is a national celebration of culture that invites the public to participate in hands-on and behind the scenes activities that highlight the importance of culture in our communities. Initiated by the Canadian Arts Summit, Culture Days began in 2010 and five years later, it became an independent non-profit. Culture Days in Aurora is a collaborative effort across multiple partners who strive to bring creative and engaging programming to the Town. Thank you to the following our local partners for their support and vision to help make Culture Days a success in Aurora: Aurora Black Community Association, Aurora Cultural Centre, Aurora Farmer's Market, Aurora Film Circuit, Aurora Historical Society, Aurora Museum & Archives, Aurora Public Library, Aurora Seniors Association, Aurora Sports Hall of Fame, Marquee Theatrical Productions, Music Aurora, Pine Tree Potters' Guild, Society of York Region Artists, Theatre Aurora and York Region Arts Council.

BAG IT AND TAG IT

The Town of Aurora is moving to a bag tag system.

Effective January 2022, residents who place more than three (3) bags or containers out for pick up will be required to purchase and place a bag tag on any additional bags.

Any waste exceeding the limit will require a bag tag to be attached to each bag.

Example:

Bag Tags cost \$5 per tag and can be purchased at Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way).

Bag tags must be visible and wrapped around the neck of the bag.

Does not apply to the limit of 5 bulky items

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



What's Happening



SEPTEMBER 10 - OCTOBER 3

Take your taste buds on a tour of Aurora!

The Town of Aurora in partnership with the Canadian Food and Wine Institute and the Aurora Chamber of Commerce is proud to bring Auroralicious to Aurora. Explore Aurora's culinary delights from a variety of local restaurants during Auroralicious, starting on **Friday, September 10** to **Sunday, October 3**.

Auroralicious gives patrons an opportunity to experience A Taste of Aurora by purchasing from the prix fixe (fixed price) program that many local restaurants are participating in. With so many fantastic restaurants and diverse cuisines in Aurora to choose from, the only challenge will be in deciding which establishments to order from.

For more information on this initiative or for interested restaurants that would like to participate, please email auroraliciousON@gmail.com.

For a current list of participating restaurants and their available menus, please visit exploreaurora.ca.



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After their August launch at Town Park was rained out, the Aurora Black Community Association recalibrated and formally launched the group at the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Aurora Black Community Association launches with goal to bring people together

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

It was second time lucky for the Aurora Black Community Association as they formally launched their initiative this month.

Originally slated to open with a community gathering at Town Park that was ultimately rained out just before it started, the Aurora Black Community (ABC) Association didn't let the rain dampen their spirits; they simply packed up, re-thought, and re-calibrated their event for the weather-friendly banquet hall at the Royal Canadian Legion.

"We were super-grateful," says ABC Founder Phiona Durrant of finding a place to kick off their initiative where they didn't have to worry about stormy skies. "Not being able to have it at the park took [some of the planned elements] away from us, but we hope as informal as the launch was, we get out the message that it is everyone's responsibility to make what we aim to do with the Aurora Black Community Association successful."

And the ABC has a bold vision for the future.

Initially founded as a Facebook group, the ABC has grown from strength to strength.

Finding their feet during Black History Month this past February, they spearheaded a number of initiatives that built momentum for the organization.

The next step, they hope, is to secure a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to take things to the next level.

"The grant will help us test the ideas that we have," says Ms. Durrant. "For example, culinary is a big piece because we know with food and music and stuff like that it brings people together. It is a big piece in bringing different cultures together and learning about one another. The

grant, if approved, will help us get that started."

Last week, the ABC met with representatives from the Aurora Armoury, home to Niagara College's Canadian Food & Wine Institute with a goal of furthering the culinary piece. The ABC wants to form a partnership with the Armoury to use their facilities to hold cooking lessons and other like programs.

"It would be amazing because that is in the heart of the community," says Ms. Durrant.

Another goal is to work with municipal committees to see what their plans are for diversity and inclusion and collaborate with them to further their goals.

"It is about how can we help them better than, to work with the BIA (Business Improvement Association) and the Chamber of Commerce to say, 'Hey, what is the process and how are we being intentional about getting the faces in Aurora represented and included in the process?' That is our next step right now, to take that grant, do that research, do the programs and keep moving forward."

Despite the name "Aurora Black Community Association," Ms. Durrant stresses that it is an Association open to all individuals regardless of their background.

"When we look for grants, they want you to say 'Black this' and 'Black that,' but in my opinion, it is another form of segregation," she says. "On the other hand, we know that they are really trying to be intentional and make sure there is access to those who have been marginalized and lacking the access, resources and the opportunity to rise."

"With that being said, it is in the Association's best interest to remain with the name and give emphasis to our mission, philosophy and what we're about."

For more information, visit aurorablackcommunity.com.



We are recruiting members for the
Heritage Advisory Committee
& Anti-Black Racism and
Anti-Racism Task Force.

The Heritage Advisory Committee advises Town staff on matters relating to the conservation of buildings of historic or architectural value, the designation and preservation of heritage conservation districts, and relevant new planning and development.

The Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Racism Task Force works with Town staff to develop strategies to eliminate racism and promote anti-racism in our community and the Municipal Corporation.

More details at:
aurora.ca/committees

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR**TA launches multi-theatre fundraising partnership**

Theatre Aurora, a Town institution for over 60 years, has partnered with three other theatres to create an online "Catch the Ace" initiative to raise funds.

This is the first time that these four theatres (BurlOak Theatre Group in Oakville, Markham Little Theatre, Scarborough Music Theatre, and Theatre Aurora) have worked closely together.

The pandemic has been hard for all community theatres as they are not treated the same as large professional theatres by the government; thus, community theatres have had to rely on small grants and donations. As the province begins to re-open, community theatres are trying to understand what health and safety guidelines mean for a return to business and how it will impact the audience.

Theatre Aurora itself hopes to use any money raised for its ongoing lobby restoration, as well as building larger and accessible washrooms for all.

A "Catch the Ace" Draw allows a person to buy a ticket specifying which envelope – 52 of them at the start – you think holds the Ace of Spades. If your ticket is drawn, you win immediately 20% of that week's amount raised, and unless the Ace of Spades is drawn, then 30% is forwarded into the growing pot. The first person to choose the envelope that contains the Ace of Spades wins 20% of that week's raised amount and the pot that has grown over the preceding weeks.

Community theatres provide affordable, high-quality theatre in our local villages, towns, and cities. Community theatres contribute to the larger cultural landscape in society where musicians, artists, craftsmen, and dancers collaborate. They are fertile training grounds for young artists without which many of Canada's theatre artists would not have had a clear path to their career or industry. In 2018/2019, community theatres in Ontario amassed revenues of over \$17,000,000. Over 400,000 tickets were sold to approximately 600 community theatre productions.

Theatre Aurora was founded in 1958 and is a member of the Association of Community Theatres of Central Ontario (ACT-CO). Theatre Aurora has been nominated and awarded in ACT-CO's annual festival of plays and musical productions and has been honoured to remount a production for the Theatre Ontario Festival.

For more information, visit theatreaurora.ca.

**Neill Kernohan
Interim President
Theatre Aurora**

To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to brock@lpcmedia.ca. Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

THE AURORAN

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Aurora's Community Newspaper

The Auroran Newspaper Company Ltd.
15213 Yonge Street, Suite 8, Aurora, L4G 1L8

Main number 905-727-3300

Fax number 905-727-2620

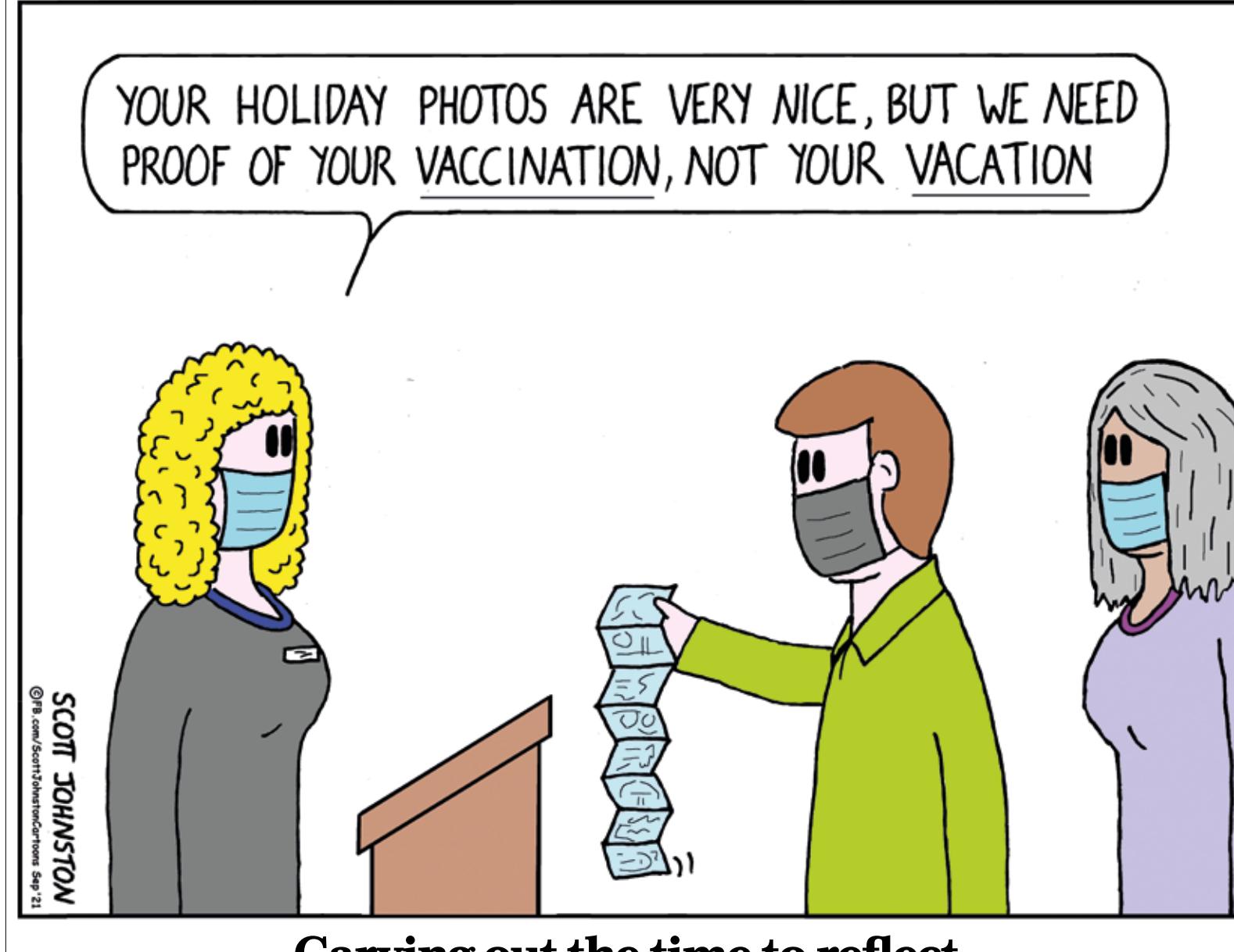
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Machell's Corners**Carving out the time to reflect, grieve and move forward**

Statutory holidays can be a tricky business.

While people generally relish the opportunity for a day off from the daily grind, some bemoan the negative impact closing one's doors for a day or two here and there can have on the bottom line on business.

It all depends on the holiday, however, as some seem to have a bit more weight than others.

Boxing Day, for instance, although completely overtaken by American Black Friday-style commercialism these days, is something Canadians take seriously, if only as a respite from the hustle and bustle that comes with Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and, in the pre-COVID days, the seemingly never-ending social whirl that leads up to the end of December.

Thanksgiving is, so far, comparatively free of the commercialism creeping over the border (with the exception of Cyber Monday) although the holiday's origins in this country are continually lost in the unlikely bucolic traditions that have become steeped, even falsely, in the American observance. Yet, we know it is a time for family, food and fun in the fall.

We know what to expect, we look forward to it, and more likely than not, there are traditions individual to each family that are all but unavoidable due to the simple fact they have always been done.

Then, there are the statutory holidays for which their purpose has been kept deliberately vague or overtaken by something completely different.

Civic Holiday is celebrated across most of the country in different ways – but just what exactly are we celebrating? Some extra time off at the height of summer is always welcome, but in British Columbia, it's known by the highly creative name of British Columbia Day, a trend that is also shared by Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. In Alberta, it is Heritage Day while here in Ontario it is known by any number of things. While "Civic Holiday" usually wins the day, depending on where you are in Ontario, it can be known as Simcoe Day in honour of Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe, Colonel By Day in honour of an early developer of our nation's capital and the list goes on.

Victoria Day, as the name suggests, is a celebration of Queen Victoria, the first monarch of a post-Confederation Canada, but it is also the official Canadian birthday of the Sovereign of the day. Yet, how many of us stop on that May Monday every year

**BROCK'S BANTER**

Brock Weir

to raise a glass to Victoria or Elizabeth II? Some might, sure, but for most people it is the unofficial start of summer and has gained the unfortunate nickname of "May Two-Four" weekend.

Holidays that are not rooted in faith or Remembrance seem to be observed with appropriate solemnity. But just as many holidays are used as a time to party, others for family and fellowship, to simply have the day off, or, if you're in business, to drive up sales.

This week, however, we have the chance to do something with a bit more meaning: stopping on Thursday, September 30, for National Day of Truth and Reconciliation.

Originally Orange Shirt Day, National Truth & Reconciliation Day was recognized by the Federal Government earlier this year after the remains of 215 Indigenous children were discovered in unmarked graves on lands associated with the Kamloops Residential School.

Although making the day a holiday was fast-tracked following this grisly discovery, the first of many thousands of remains to have been discovered since then, it was not a new idea; a statutory holiday to allow Canadians to reflect on and never forget the tragic legacy of residential schools was one of the 94 Calls to Action to come out of the National Truth & Reconciliation Commission's report.

"We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian Heritage and Commemoration. This would include, but not limited to... establish as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth & Reconciliation to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component to the reconciliation process," the report set out with little room for interpretation.

Although the day has been established

at the Federal level, not all Provinces have followed suit in making this a holiday. The Government of Ontario confirmed earlier this month that Thursday, September 30, would not be a public holiday – at least this year.

The decision in and of itself has sparked further calls to action.

"Six Nations Grand River is most disappointed that the Government of Ontario has decided not to observe National Truth & Reconciliation Day by marking September 30 as a statutory holiday," said Chief Mark B. Hill in an open letter to Premier Ford last week. "While you and many other provincial officials have expressed your commitment to strengthening relationships with First Nations Communities, this upcoming statutory holiday is an important symbol indicating a commitment to practical action."

"This year has been difficult on everyone, but particularly so for the Indigenous communities whose old wounds were reopened upon the discovery of their lost children's remains. Canada's history has been marred by the dark legacy of governmental theft of children. Forcefully removing children from their parents and communities to assimilate them to Government's culture and values was and remains an abominable crime. It is not enough that leaders give a few remarks on occasion, only to let pass more formal opportunities to officially acknowledge where we've come from and where we need to go."

Chief Hill concludes that now is the time for Ontario to join British Columbia and the Northwest Territories to "lead other provinces, in full, official commemoration of this day."

I quite agree with the leader of Six Nations of the Grand River.

National Truth and Reconciliation Day will be a difficult, but poignant observance, one which will undoubtedly continue to raise awareness of darker, more tragic chapters of our recent past and plant further seeds for change. It should be a day where we have the ability to get out of our offices, schools and indeed our routines to learn, grieve and heal collectively.

It is too late for Ontario to change its decision to have any meaningful impact this year, but 2022 can be a very different story – and I'm just thankful so many municipalities across Ontario, along with non-profits and cultural groups have stepped up to fill the vacuum.

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To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to brock@lpcmedia.ca. Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

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Let's continue to grow... together

In recognition of National Day of Truth & Reconciliation, the Town of Aurora encourages all residents to continue to educate themselves on the past and present realities of the Indigenous peoples of this land. We invite you to join the Aurora Cultural Centre in Town Park tonight (September 30) from 4 – 6 p.m. to hear from Jared Big Canoe of Georgina Island who will lead the recognition and acknowledgement of this historic day, through traditional ceremony, reflections, song and dance. Then join the Town of Aurora from 6 – 8 p.m. to share, reflect and listen to Anishinaabe Grandmother Kim Wheatley who will be sharing prayers and reflections with the community.

NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

Join us for an evening of learning, meaningful reflection and a sacred fire.

ceremony and presentation led by:

- ANISHINAABE GRANDMOTHER KIM WHEATLEY**
- ELDER PAT FLOODY**
- ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE KEEPER RAIDEN LEVESQUE**

aurora.ca/truthandreconciliation

AURORA

ALL WELCOME

SEPT. 30 | 2021

Aurora Town Park

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.



GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor
Tom Mrakas

fiscal strategy: capital planning, reserve management and debt management.

The fiscal strategy developed by Council is one that looks at the long-term health of our Town.

Too often, municipal fiscal strategies seem to look no further than a term of Council; just four years down the road; hardly an effective way to plan for the future. That is why this asset management plan will become the foundation upon which the long-term capital asset rehabilitation and replacement plan will be based. This will ensure that this Town continues to be in a healthy financial position for decades to come not just four years.

While there is much work left to be

down on this plan, we are well-positioned as we enter budget discussions next month.

As some Members of Council needed more time to read and understand the document fully, the discussion was referred to next month's Council meeting. This will give those members enough time to fully understand the AMP and get answers to any questions that they might have.

And while Council has done an excellent job making sure that the Town is in a great position financially, the second-generation Asset Management Plan will ensure that we continue to maintain our good financial standing and continue to provide the services that our residents deserve while maintaining a stable tax rate.

As always, if you have any questions about this update please contact me by email tmrakas@aurora.ca or by phone 416-543-1624



Time Travellers Diary

By Jacqueline Stuart

A Ho-hum Election

Well, that was not exactly an exciting election, was it? When the local candidate gets in by acclamation, we miss the campaigning, the promises, the sitting on the edge of one's chair as the votes come in.

Oh, whoops! I am mixing up my elections: so easy to do when one is a time traveller. Especially when the month and the day are the same. I was thinking of the federal election of September 20, 1867, the first election following Confederation.

Prior to Confederation James Pearson Wells had been serving as the representative for our riding in the lower house of the Province of Canada legislature: equivalent to an MPP today. In 1867, Mr. Wells became the only candidate for the local seat in the election for the new federal level of government. He had spent most of his life in King township. In his politics he was a Reformer or Liberal.

Mr. Wells' successors have been a good mix of Liberals and Conservatives. They include the Conservative Dr. Frederick Strange, the second owner of Hillary House in Aurora, although he had moved to Toronto by the time he was an MP (served 1878–1882). Dr. Strange was succeeded by the Liberal William Mulock (later Sir William), whose tenure of twenty-three years (1882–1905) is the longest in this riding to date.

In 1925, Thomas Herbert "Herb" Lennox, a Conservative, won York North. He defeated the incumbent, Mackenzie King, who was also prime minister. [Don't worry: a safe riding was quickly found for Mr. King in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, a seat later held by another prime minister, John Diefenbaker.] This was Mr. Lennox's first go at the federal position, but he had previously served for eighteen years in the provincial legislature. Vast crowds attended his annual picnics at Jackson's Point: you will remember that time traveller Jeremy enjoyed the event in 1921. Mr. Lennox was still our MP when he died in 1934.

But back to 1867. The federal election may not have been interesting locally, but it was not the only contest. The provincial election was held on the same day! Two days, actually: September 19 and 20. John McMurrich (Reform/Liberal) won our provincial seat. I cannot find any other local connections for him. His Conservative opponent, Alfred Boulbee, had had a law practice in Newmarket and served on our neighbour's town council for several years.

I travelled back to that night of the final day of voting in 1867, placing myself on the vacant property which in just a couple of months would become the Town Park.

As I expected, crowds were celebrating the successes of Messrs Wells and McMurrich. A bonfire was blazing, but I was shocked to see that a roughly fashioned human effigy had been thrown on to the fire! It was apparently supposed to represent the defeated provincial candidate, Alfred Boulbee. Why? Surely the McMurrich supporters should have been satisfied by the simple fact of Boulbee's defeat. I decided to return to today, not necessarily a wiser time, but at least familiar.



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

with their neighbours while they waited to cast a vote, I was struck by, for all its faults, how well our democratic system works.

There were no armed guards outside, no one was coerced into voting one way or another, there was no UN inspectors monitoring the proceedings to ensure fairness and no was fearing for their life.

The other thing that I noticed was the decrease in the number of volunteers. There is always going to be a core group of individuals to assist, but the numbers of volunteers - among all parties - seems to have decreased. People are extremely busy and don't have the time or the inclination to devote to civic causes as they once did.

This means that more pressure is put on the existing workers to do more. My hats off to the volunteers for all the candidates. You make democracy thrive in our community by offering that most important commodity to the voter – a choice.

On a different note, you don't need to read the papers, listen to the radio or watch your television to know when a federal election has begun; simply watch for the lawn signs.

The amount of signs that one sees doesn't correlate exactly to a winning campaign of course, but they do provide

clues as to the organizational strength of the candidate, provide visibility and name recognition and, as the campaign moves along, the more signs shown popping up on people's lawns, shows momentum.

Your writer was putting up some lawn signs in support of one of the candidates during the final two weeks of the campaign.

First, people are suspicious as you and the other members of your sign crew jump out of the van before it completely stops; this conveys an extreme sense of urgency to your task. Neighbours may even think you are members of the York Region Emergency Task Force Team.

People then become intrigued as they watch one crew member go to the door and the other puts up a sign. I love it as the neighbour cranes his neck to see what it is being put up. A sign of relief comes when they realize it is not a "For Sale" sign.

The homeowner then sees the name of the candidate on the sign and they either smile or may even say something nice to you or they will immediately look away.

In some rare instances, these individuals looked stunned, thinking to themselves, "I thought my neighbour was a good guy – I shared a beer with him yesterday. It turns out that he is an idiot."

I wish I had a camera to record some of the looks! Priceless!

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Are you satisfied with the results of the 2021 Federal Election?

Yes No Unsure

www.theauroran.com

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
September 28, 2021	47%	47%	9%

Councillor opposes mandatory vaccines for municipal employees

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Town Hall is once again open to visitors with continued health and safety protocols in place reflective of the global pandemic.

But one element of the protocol is not sitting well with one Council member.

Last week, Councillor John Gallo spoke out against municipal employees being required to show proof of vaccination before returning to work.

"I felt compelled to say a few words around... the Town of Aurora and mandated vaccine policies," Councillor Gallo told his colleagues during the Public Service Announcements segment near the end of last week's General Committee meeting. "I wanted to just speak to the 200 or so employees of the Town of Aurora that I don't agree with what is happening."

"I want them to know that these are very difficult times for everyone and that I respect those who made decisions to vaccinate. Equally, I respect those who are choosing not to, but more so I respect the sanctity of everyone's privilege, especially in this country, that it is nobody's business what you do medically with your body. That is between you and your doctor."

"I realise [this view] is not shared across the board, but I did want to reach out to all members of staff to let them know that

from at least where I sit, that is my viewpoint on this."

Town Hall announced mandatory vaccinations for all employees on August 30.

In a statement at the time, Mayor Tom Mrakas said that the decision was made by CAO Doug Nadorozny "in alignment with recent announcements made by many public and private sector organizations."

"The Town is moving forward with a mandatory vaccination requirement for all Town employees," said Mayor Mrakas. "We believe that it is our responsibility to take this additional step to protect everyone, given the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation and the pressure that we are under as a region and a province. With today's announcement, all Town staff will be asked to provide proof of a first vaccination dose before October 1, and of both a first and second dose by November 1, unless they have a valid medical or human rights-based exemption."

"As an organization, we believe that this is the best possible approach to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of both staff and members of the public."

Councillor Gallo declined to comment further on his position, but said he would be bringing forward a motion to allow for rapid antigen testing for all Town of Aurora employees, volunteers and students.

"Not everyone who has COVID-19 will

show symptoms," said Councillor Gallo in a draft of his motion.

"Regular rapid tests provide an extra layer of defence against the spread of the virus. Along with public health measures such as frequent handwashing, physical distancing, wearing a mask and vaccination, workplace screening will help to: slow the spread of COVID-19; keep employees, their families and your community safe; and safely reopen the economy."

"Rapid tests are fast, easy and safe. They provide results in 15-minutes and...allowing employees the option of undergoing frequent rapid antigen testing maintains the health and safety of workers from the hazard of COVID-19 and provides employees a level of privacy."

PROOF OF VACCINE REQUIRED FOR RECREATION FACILITIES

Proof of vaccination will be required for all visitors to recreation facilities ages twelve and up.

The new roles came into effect September 22 in line with provincial legislation.

"Ensuring that both staff and patrons

are fully vaccinated will help keep our community safe and increase vaccination rates as we continue to confront this next wave of the pandemic," said Mayor Mrakas in a statement.

All recreation facilities patrons will be required to provide proof of vaccination (two doses plus 14 days) with exemptions for medical reasons, youth under the age of 18 "who are actively participating in an organized sport, training practices, games and competitions, including sports leagues, organized pick-up sports, dance classes, swimming, and skating." Anyone under the age of 12 is also exempt as they are not yet eligible for Health Canada-approved vaccines.

"All health and safety requirements will continue to apply at our facilities including screening, masks and physical distancing," said the Town. "Vaccine receipts can be downloaded from the Provincial Booking Portal or by calling the Provincial Booking Line."

An enhanced digital vaccine receipt with a QR code is expected to be launched by the Ontario government next month, and is slated to come into effect on October 22.

Screening instructions increasingly not followed with child care: Region

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Region of York is encouraging parents and child care providers to use its online screening tool prior to sending their children to school and care settings.

This was the message delivered Monday by Dr. Richard Gould, York Region's Medical Officer of Health, who says the local public health unit was "experiencing more individuals not following daily screening instructions, specifically when it comes to childcare centres and home child care."

"York Region's school and child care screening tool must be completed every day prior to attending school, child care or day programs. A child must not attend school or child care if experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms. The screening tool can be found at York.ca/safeatschool," said Dr. Gould.

"I would like to sincerely thank all parents, guardians and residents who continue to do their part, and complete this tool thoroughly every day. You are helping to keep COVID-19 out of our schools and keep our friends and family members safe. As a parent and grandparent myself, I understand the added steps it takes to get your children out the door – but screening works and is an important tool during this pandemic. As an additional layer of protection,

further instructions have been issued for owners and operators of licensed child care centres, home child care, and before and after school programs requiring confirmation of daily COVID-19 active screening for anyone entering the premises, requiring all staff to wear medical masks, ensuring physical distancing measures between cohorts, maintaining daily attendance records for staff, prohibiting non-essential visitors and volunteers from entering the premises, cooperating fully with York Region Public Health, and complying with all requirements of the Provincial Reopening Ontario Act."

We all have a role to play in keeping our communities safe, he added, noting that vaccination "remains our best protection against COVID-19."

LOCAL STATS

Since the start of the global pandemic, Aurora has seen a total of 2,021 confirmed cases of COVID-19, as of September 28.

1,963 of these cases are now marked as recovered and there have been 48 fatalities. Of the 10 active cases, 9 are attributed to local transmission, close contact or unknown exposure, while 1 is attributed to travel.

Between September 21 and September 28, 58.4 per cent of new cases have been amongst the eligible unvaccinated population aged 12+.



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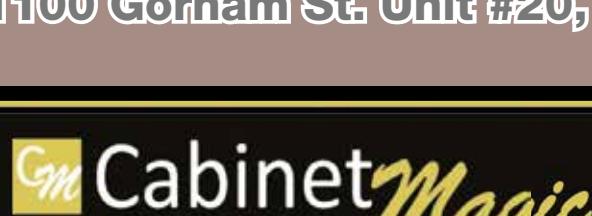
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Sidewalk connection between park and Town Square reconsidered due to potential tree damage

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Council has reconsidered a proposal to enhance connections between Town Park and the Town Square redevelopment through a new sidewalk on the north side of Metcalfe Street.

This past Spring, the majority of Council approved tasking staff with the in-house design of the sidewalk, which would extend from Wells Street to Victoria Street, alongside the boundary of Trinity Anglican Church.

The idea was to increase pedestrian access between the two gathering spaces present and future, but concerns were raised by area neighbours that building a sidewalk on the north side of Metcalfe would not only be unnecessary but could have negative impact on heritage trees in the area.

"Upon completion of the sidewalk designs, the Town consulted Davey Tree Resource Group (arborist) to complete a site assessment determine the feasibility of the proposed sidewalk designs, identify any potential risks and/or impacts to the existing heritage trees due to construction, and provide technical recommendations," said Garry Anggawinata, Project Delivery Coordinator for the Town of Aurora, in his report to this week's General Committee meeting.

"The potential implications associated with the construction of the sidewalk on the existing mature vegetation [is] a moderate risk of adversely impacting the health and stability of existing deciduous trees located at the west end of Metcalfe (near Victoria Street) [and] a high risk of adversely impacting the health and stability of existing heritage coniferous trees located at the east end of Metcalfe Street (near Wells Street)."

As such, staff is recommending

against the proposed sidewalk.

"Due to the high risks of impacting existing heritage trees, Town Staff does not recommend the construction of a sidewalk on the north side of Metcalfe Street," said Anggawinata. "This risk is especially high at the northwest corner of Metcalfe Street and Wells Street where it is densely vegetated with sensitive mature coniferous trees. Although the risks are lower on the west side of the street, it is not recommended to construct a sidewalk that terminates halfway through the block where there are no designated intersections or pedestrian crosswalks as it poses safety issues."

Pedestrians can access the existing sidewalk located on the south boulevard of Metcalfe as the pedestrian connection between Library Square and Town Park. It should be noted that the existing crosswalk at Metcalfe and Wells Streets is located on the south side of Metcalfe Street. Pedestrians using the walkway on Metcalfe would need to cross to the south side in order to access Town Park as there are no designated crosswalks or existing sidewalk at the northeast corner of Metcalfe Street and Wells Street. In addition, existing sidewalks on Church Street and Victoria Streets offer options for pedestrian connectivity between the two public facilities."

Meeting at the Committee level this month, Council members agreed with staff's assessment and could press staff for further options next week.

"The intent was to create linkage between Town Square and Town Park," said Councillor Michael Thompson, noting he supported the revised recommendations from Town Staff citing tree safety. "I would still like us to consider some sort of connection. I don't want to lose sight of the fact we want to create that linkage between the two properties. While we have ruled this one out...that leaves you with Mosley

or the mid-block. I want to make sure...we have a long-term vision for both properties and what could be the future development."

"We've talked about it from a Cultural Precinct perspective that over the long period of time we certainly see further commercial uses [private and public] and we need to have that connection either through Mosley or the mid-block. I hope it will stay on the radar and staff will continue to look at ways to foster that connection."

Councillor Sandra Humfries was another lawmaker who wanted to make sure that considering alternative connections was still at the forefront.

"It is really important to have our Town Square super-connected to all

of our downtown core," she said. "We need to look at that mid-block area or think a little bit in terms of signage and walkways, pointing to certain areas to get across. Mosley would be amazing. We [need to] ensure there is clear connectivity for residents. This is for more than just our local residents; we know where to walk and find it, but this is for visitors so it makes it easier for them to explore downtown and all of those areas."

Staff indicated that with the Metcalfe sidewalk out of the equation, there are few alternatives left to consider beyond the mid-block and Mosley, both of which could be subject to a further report on costs if Council deems it necessary at next Tuesday's meeting.

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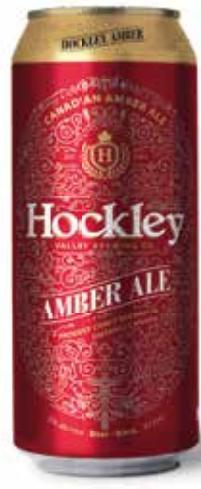
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Town Square redevelopment delayed by three months

Council,
Committee look
at ways to make
up for lost time

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Originally slated to be largely complete by the end of next August, residents might have to wait until November of 2022 to fully enjoy Aurora's complete Town Square redevelopment.

The \$60+ million project, which will include a public gathering space, a substantial new addition to the Church Street School, a bridge to the Aurora Public Library, and significant changes within the Library itself, has seen a number of minor setbacks since construction began.

In addition to unanticipated work to improve the rubble foundation of the historic former Church Street School building, additional challenges have included the remediation of contaminated soil on the 22 Church Street site, and change orders to work being carried out at the Library.

November of 2022 is now set as the new date for "substantial performance" of the new Cultural Centre addition, with renovations at the Library scheduled to be complete by December of this year. The



Restoration work on the Church Street School's rubble foundation is one factor in the projected three-month delay in completing the Town Square redevelopment.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

bridge connecting the Library to the new Cultural Centre building is scheduled to be in place by June of 2022 with the gathering space below it by July of that year.

"Although the 22 Church Street completion date has been pushed to November 2022, we anticipate the bulk of the overall project work to be complete before this date," said Project Manager Phil Rose in a report to Council. "From the general public's point of view, the project will appear as though it is complete by late September or early October 2022, and we should be able to retract most of the hoarding by then, making most of the site usable for a public ceremony and public access."

But questions have been raised by both the Town Square Governance Committee and Council itself if any work can be done to get the project back on track to its original completion date.

The Governance Committee, for instance, was told that they do not believe it can be brought back on track "much beyond two to three weeks."

"Our approach is to continue to stay on them (Chandos Construction) to meet the completion dates they have issued on their latest schedule for the Library, bridge, square, and heritage school house," said Rose. "The risk of slippage will also diminish once we are completely above ground and steel erection begins on the new addition."

Posed with the question whether there was opportunity in other areas to speed up the build, November still seemed "the most likely scenario."

"Chandos will need to work with their trades to identify ways to improve the schedule. To date, conversations with the subtrades have not led to any schedule improvements. Chandos is open to working outside normal hours to make up time where possible, however this is at a premium. Colliers has made it clear any proposed overtime will need to be requested on a per occurrence basis and will only be considered if an improvement to the schedule can be guaranteed."

These questions were highlighted by Council at last week's General Committee meeting.

Building on any potential opportunities to make up the lost time, Councillor Rachel Gilliland questioned on whether staff were indeed considering the premium.

"There have been many discussions about the timeline related to the project with the various parties," said CAO Doug Nadorozny. "One of the things we have put on the table is since our contingency is still relatively healthy and we're through a lot of the risk in terms of the soils and everything, we have suggested that we could consider additional charges for weekend work and to expedite this kind of project if it brought direct benefit to the timeline. We said we would not take it as a general consideration, that we would want very specifically... if we paid extra for this to happen, this would be the impact on the schedule. We put that out there a couple of times and to date there hasn't been any opportunities because of the nature of stage they're at with the project."

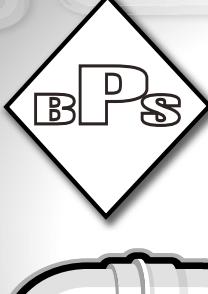
Councillor Gilliland responded that Council wants to "make the best decisions that are going to be the most cost-effective solution."

"If it is going to take an extra couple of weeks, I am sure that saving a couple of extra dollars here and there is something we would like to see," she said.

Similarly, Councillor John Gallo said he was "not interested in finishing" Town Square early "just to eat up some contingency to be able to open the doors quicker."

"To me, that makes no sense whatsoever," he said. "If there's value added, we're going to generate income, whatever the reason is, I am okay with that. Just because we have a contingency there doesn't mean we're going to spend it all, unless it is for very good reasons and finishing it quicker than necessary, to me, is not bringing value to and we shouldn't be spending contingency on that – unless, again, there is a solid reason for it."

Added Councillor Wendy Gaertner: "When we did the SARC (Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex) we were rushing to open it and that ended up in a couple of lawsuits. I think we need to be very careful with what we do if we move up the timeline."



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What is Aurora's "current state of culture"? Revised plan aims to pin that down

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Throughout the summer, Town Park has been a cultural hub for the community.

From the Town's Multicultural Festival earlier this month to programs offered by the Aurora Cultural Centre, the Aurora Public Library, the Aurora Museum & Archives and the Aurora Black Community, there has been no shortage of cultural activities for residents to enjoy.

But how does the community of today define culture? That is a deceptively complex question the Town hopes to answer through the drafting of a new Cultural Master Plan.

The Cultural Master Plan was first developed for the Town in 2014. Drafted with a five-year window, it is up for review once again through a process led by Phil Rose, Project Manager for Town Square.

Taking on the job at the beginning of 2020, Rose, along with an assembled Collaborative Leadership Team, their efforts were only temporarily hampered by the arrival of COVID-19. Throughout the pandemic they have been meeting virtually, with in-person elements like community engagement resurrected this summer all designed to help answer the cultural question.

"We're working on a model where we're defining what we call the 'current state of culture in Aurora' and we're trying to determine this based on census records, StatsCan data, on anecdotal information from the group on how would we define Aurora from a cultural perspective currently in terms of how we support it, the strength of it, and how vibrant we think the cultural community is," says Rose. "Once we've mapped out the current state of culture, the next step, which will begin this month, will be saying, 'this is where we currently are and where do we want to be?'"

From there, the next step will be how do



Phil Rose, Project Manager for the Town Square redevelopment, is leading the development of Aurora's revised Cultural Master Plan.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

we get from where we are today to where do we want to be in the future.

From the feedback they have received so far, Rose says culture can mean many things to different people. For some, it can centre on traditions and values. For others, the performing arts. The public engagement process has given the team a good idea on who residents consider to be "culture providers" but the "values the community shares and the traditions we hold dear" might be a bit trickier to pin down – but maybe not, with a helping hand from the public.

"One of the things that is in the works now is we want to put together what we call a Cultural Forum," says Mr. Rose, noting this forum will bring together people from the cultural sector, the business community, sports groups, and even people with backgrounds in promotion to weigh in. "Depending on where we are in COVID and capacity, this is an opportunity to get those individuals together [for] a conversation about where they see the current state of culture. What are the main

challenges? What would you like culture to look like in Aurora in the near future?"

Culture has not been immune to the pandemic. Nor has culture been immune from political shifts and efforts to address social injustice. Both factors have shaped culture and also opened up new avenues that might not have been previously considered by the Town's Cultural Partners.

A new Cultural Master Plan, says Mr. Rose, could consider culture's role within our changing world.

"The Cultural Sector has probably been one of the most hard-hit due to COVID and culture relies on people being in the same space, experiencing live music [and] the degrees of separation to really experience it has to be small. We have had lots of conversation about how do we move so many different businesses and organizations to a virtual space [and] COVID has definitely informed how culture has been experienced in the last little bit."

"Just by nature and the demographics

of Aurora, the individuals who are on our Collaborative Leadership Team are a homogenous group for the most part: white, middle class. We have a cross-section of men and women but there isn't a lot of diversity there. How can we do better on that perspective? Culture has the ability to speak to some pressing issues around equity, diversity, discrimination, racism – even housing is a huge issue in Aurora and across York Region of the GTA. Even if you think of performing arts or visual arts, culture is much broader than that. It has the opportunity to raise awareness of some of these larger issues. That is where we want to go and I think the Cultural Master Plan will talk about how we can be more direct.

"Culture works best when you have a buy-in from a lot of different groups and individuals and I think that is what we have been aiming for. We're going to steer the ship as much as we can, but we want our culture groups and the public to know they have a lot of influence on the process as well."

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More work needed to get Diversity & Inclusion Mural just right, say Councillors

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new mural celebrating Canada's diversity as a rich tapestry could soon be placed on the southwest corner of Yonge and Wellington, but some fine tuning is needed to make sure it reflects the diversity of Aurora, say Councillors.

Last week, sitting at the Committee level, Council received the winning submission for Aurora's Diversity & Inclusion mural, one which is intended to complement the Great Canadian Achievements mural on the opposite corner.

Approved by Council last year, the winning design by the Moonlight Mural Collective was selected from five submissions received by the Town. An additional sixth proposal was received following the deadline.

With the design submitted and most of the funding in place, the mural is expected to be in place by next May with a formal unveiling in June of 2022.

But, before it gets to that point, some Councillors would like to see some additional tweaks to the finished product.

"Originally, this wasn't what I was expecting – I don't think many were," said Councillor Wendy Gaertner. "A quilt wasn't a unique idea to me, but on thinking it through this may be the appropriate venue for what we're trying to accomplish. I know this is just a draft [but] we have to ensure that all parts of the quilt in combination, are what Council is trying to address with diversity and inclusion."

These areas, she said, include recognition of Indigenous people and achievements and the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

"There are so many groups in the community and even outside the community that we want to include," she said. "The artwork has to be very specific to identify all those different groups that we're trying to include."

Councillor Rachel Gilliland too said the

quilt design wasn't what she was expecting, but said this discrepancy might have been borne out of not having a "proper process" in place to steer the project.

"We don't have our Master Cultural Plan done as of yet and guidelines are not really solidified to make it seamless," she said. "I would maybe have liked to have seen some things before hand. It's beautiful, but as far as what is being encompassed, is that the message we're really trying to exemplify."

While she said she liked the idea of different fabrics representing different communities, she said there was something missing and what has been presented so far was incomplete."

Councillor John Gallo shared her views on a lack of process.

The project, he says, "feels somewhat rushed" and Council should have had a say in how it was developed.

"I hate to say 'no' because I always supported the idea [but] I don't like the process," he said. "Would it look great there? Probably. Would it add to the Town? Probably. Could it have been done better? Absolutely, in my view. Would it have garnered more support? I think so."

On the other hand, Councillor Sandra Humfries said this was Council's "first go" at the mural and, as far as process was concerned, it is just the beginning.

"Art is also everyone's opinion as well," she said. "I may like something that somebody else might not like and we would all probably see different things. It is the first time we actually started to move forward on something like this and I am okay with it."

While Councillor Michael Thompson saved his opinion on the design itself, he said Council would benefit from having a different version of the design in front of them to consider, one which is superimposed on top of the building's façade to get a fuller picture of what could be the finished product. This was a view shared by Councillor Gaertner and



The winning design of a potential Diversity & Inclusion mural at Yonge and Wellington, created by Moonlight Mural Collective, was introduced at Council last week.

Contributed photo

a successful motion was made at the table to get just that.

"This needs to come back to Council for some kind of approval," Councillor Gilliland concluded. "Everybody's art that was submitted is beautiful and definitely there is no lack of talent. At the same time, we're trying to make a decision on the four corners of our downtown and I think a little bit more

pre-process for coming to this is in order and that is because of the lack of the Cultural Master Plan."

Added Councillor Gallo: "It is really important to get it right. To me, there is no rush. We are where we are. I don't like the process, but let's see if something can come out of this. If it is not what we're looking for, we should get back to the drawing board."

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Stitching together Canada's diversity: Artists propose quilt design for Diversity & Inclusion mural

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Canada has been stitched together by many hands from many cultures.

That is a theme that could soon be reflected on the southwest corner of Yonge and Wellington if a proposal from the Moonlight Murals Collective is accepted by Council.

Moonlight's proposal is the winning submission in an open call for artists to create the Town's new Diversity & Inclusion mural.

Their vision was one of five qualified proposals submitted to the Town and evaluated by a selection committee comprised of members of the Town's Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Racism Task Force, a representative from the Aurora Cultural Centre, and Phil Rose, Manager of the Town Square redevelopment.

"For this project, we want to portray the idea of Canadians of all backgrounds, coming together in order to build and produce beauty together by way of sewing a quilt," say the artists, a collective of Iranian-born artists Ghazaleh Rastgar, Melika Saee and Yasaman Mehrsa, who describe themselves as immigrants who moved to Canada at an older age.

"We depict a number of different coloured hands who are putting together a beautiful quilt made up of a variety of textiles with different designs and motifs. The different coloured hands suggesting different races and the textiles are traditional prints from a variety of cultures and backgrounds.

"If we are chosen for this project, we will add more details and more patches in the quilt, ensuring the message comes across strongly."

Should their vision be realized with Council's approval, it will take the form of a digital print wrap that will be placed on the northern wall of 15242 Yonge Street, which would be on the right side of Yonge Street for southbound drivers through the Town's busiest intersection.

"This particular location has many windows which can be visual interruptions for most designs, but when it comes to ours, it will actually work perfectly," say the artists. "Our design can be easily manipulated and adjusted based on the canvas it will be applied on. The message of the patchwork quilt will be easily understood even with the windows interrupting the design. We will also be able to adjust the placement of the sewing hands to ensure they don't fall where the windows are. We would like this location as it is the most visible to the community."

"As the city aims to raise awareness about the significant achievements made by diverse individuals from Canada's past and present, we find this theme very fitting while not isolating one person [or] group. Our message includes everyone and is a strong message of unity. We are all Canadians while being from around the world and we

Our message includes everyone and is a strong message of unity. We are all Canadians while being from around the world and we are always striving to better ourselves, our communities and our hometown.

are always striving to better ourselves, our communities and our hometown.

"The message this represents means a lot to us, as immigrant artists. Throughout our time in Canada, specifically the GTA, we have been able to not only build better lives for ourselves, but have also got to collaborate and work with people from a variety of backgrounds in order to make the city more beautiful. We find that we are constantly inspired by people from different cultures and love the fact that we can also inspire others by what we bring into communities by way of art. We have also noticed that Aurora includes a large community of Iranians and as Iranian artists, it would be great for us to contribute to this community in Aurora."

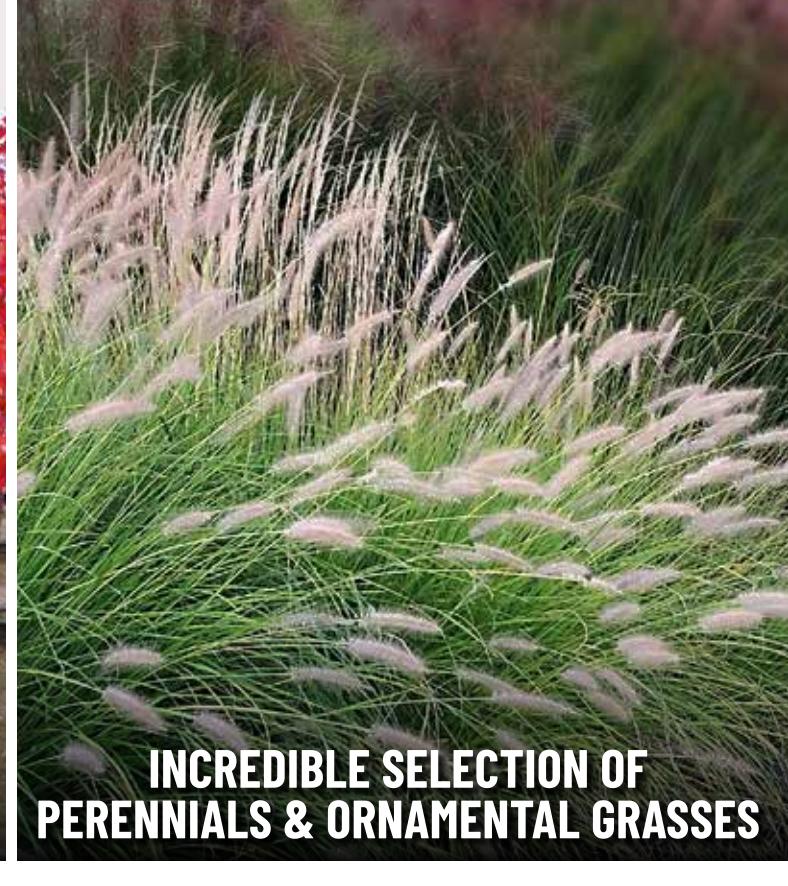
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BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A month-long celebration of local arts and culture is now underway.

Culture Days 2021 kicked off Saturday morning at Town Park with celebrations running from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Helping to get the extended celebration started were Njacko Backo and Kalimbas at Work, a performance from Marquee Theatrical Productions, Juno-nominated drummer and recording artist Sara Thawer, and Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer KH Kanna.

"Culture is meant to be a focus within the community and this Culture Days specifically is a nationally-recognized period of time," says Robin McDougall, Aurora's Director of Community Services. "Through that, we recognize and honour our local arts and culture groups and, in doing so, have partnered with some of them to bring to the community [virtual and in-person] initiatives and we're quite excited about the elements they have put together."

"Our feel is the arts and culture community has been one of the hardest hit through COVID and this is an opportunity to celebrate them as they start to re-open and engage with the community. Arts and culture is a huge part of the lifestyle and interest of a community. It brings people out, it shows what kind of versatility we have, the kind of cultures and ethnicities [are part of the community]."

Celebrations continue this week with An Evening with Anna Yin on Thursday, September 30, hosted by the Aurora Public Library, bringing together Ms. Yin, Mississauga's first Poet Laureate, with journalist Yafang Shi in a conversation held virtually in both English and Mandarin.

This Saturday, October 2, Culture Days returns to Town Park where the Pine Tree Potters' Guild will host a free hands-

on Raku pottery event, where participants will be able to choose a prepared tealight holder, glaze it, and watch the potters fire it right there for you to take home.

This demonstration will take place between 12 noon and 3 p.m.

On Thursday, October 2, The Aurora Museum & Archives will host a virtual installment in their "How To Care For" series.

"Proper care and maintenance of heirlooms in your personal collection will ensure that they stay safe for future generations," says the Museum. "Show and brag about your favourite family items while learning the simple tips and tricks to preserve them at home."

This event, which will be held over Zoom, will be admission by donation.

One Book One Aurora, a yearly project by the Aurora Public Library to get all of Aurora reading from the same page, will also culminate during Culture Days.

On October 23 at 2 p.m., Drew Hayden Taylor, author of this year's selection, Chasing Painted Horses, will hold a virtual author talk.

"This is a celebration of the diversity Aurora has to bring to the community," says Ms. McDougall. "We encourage the community to come out, celebrate with the local organizations, find out what they have to offer, and just simply enjoy time with their family and friends in a social setting or online."

Cultural Partners this year include the Aurora Black Community Association, Aurora Cultural Centre, Aurora Farmers' Market, Aurora Film Circuit, Aurora Historical Society, Aurora Museum & Archives, Aurora Public Library, Aurora Seniors' Association, Aurora Sports Hall of Fame, Marquee Theatrical Productions, Music Aurora, the Pine Tree Potters' Guild, SOYRA (Society of York Region Artists), Theatre Aurora, and the York Region Arts Council.

For a complete and growing list of Culture Days activities, including how to register, visit aurora.ca/culturedays.

Culture Days underway



CULTURAL KICK-OFF – Culture Days was formally launched Saturday at Town Park with programs, activities, and performances running from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pictured here are Njacko Backo and Kalimbas at Work.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

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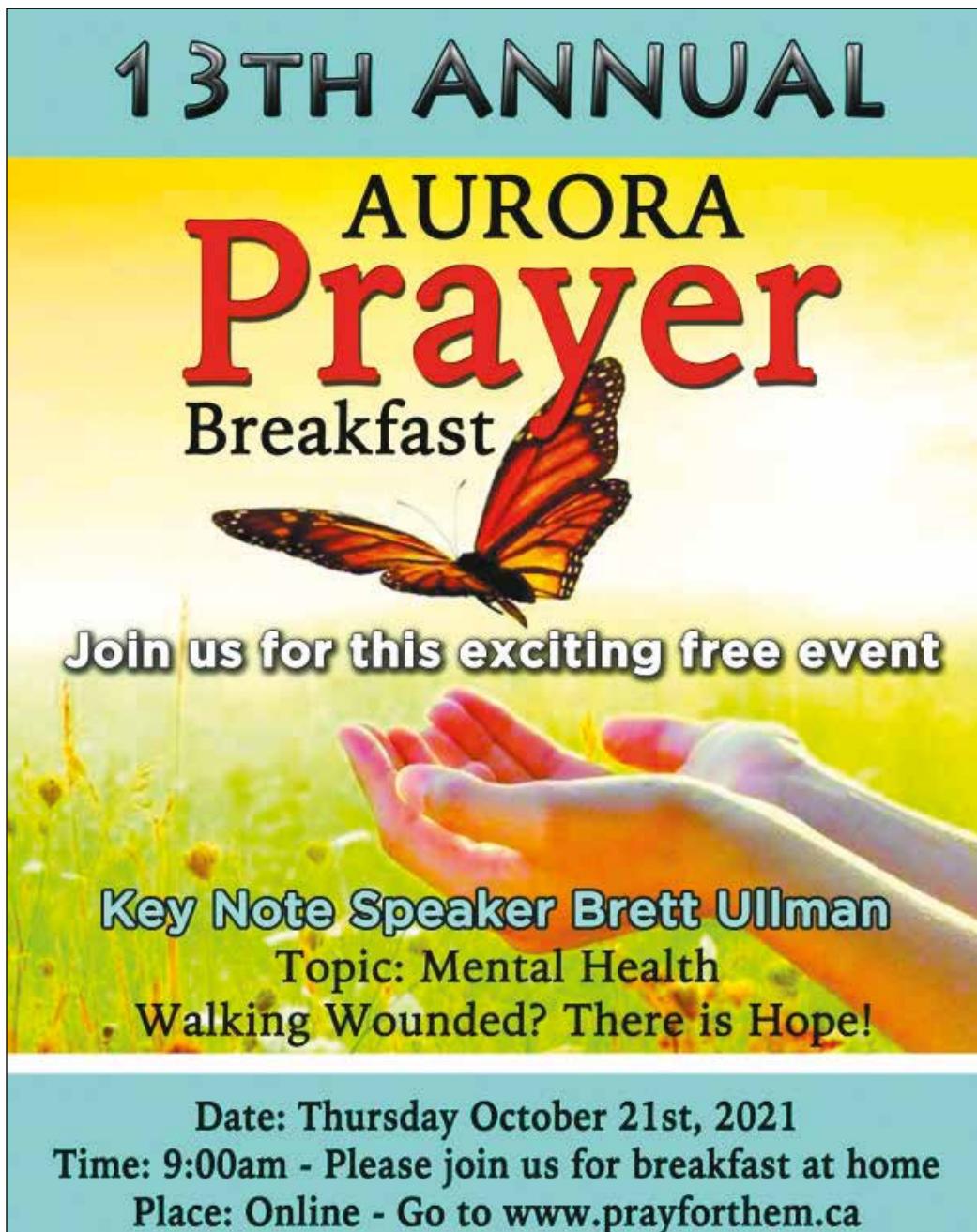
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(LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM) Among those enjoying the day were Abigail and Sophia; Theo, Emelia, Penelope and Lukas; and Irene, Shiry, and Zohra. (RIGHT COLUMN) Young performers from Marquee Theatrical Productions showcased vignettes from such musicals as Matilda, The Addams Family and more.

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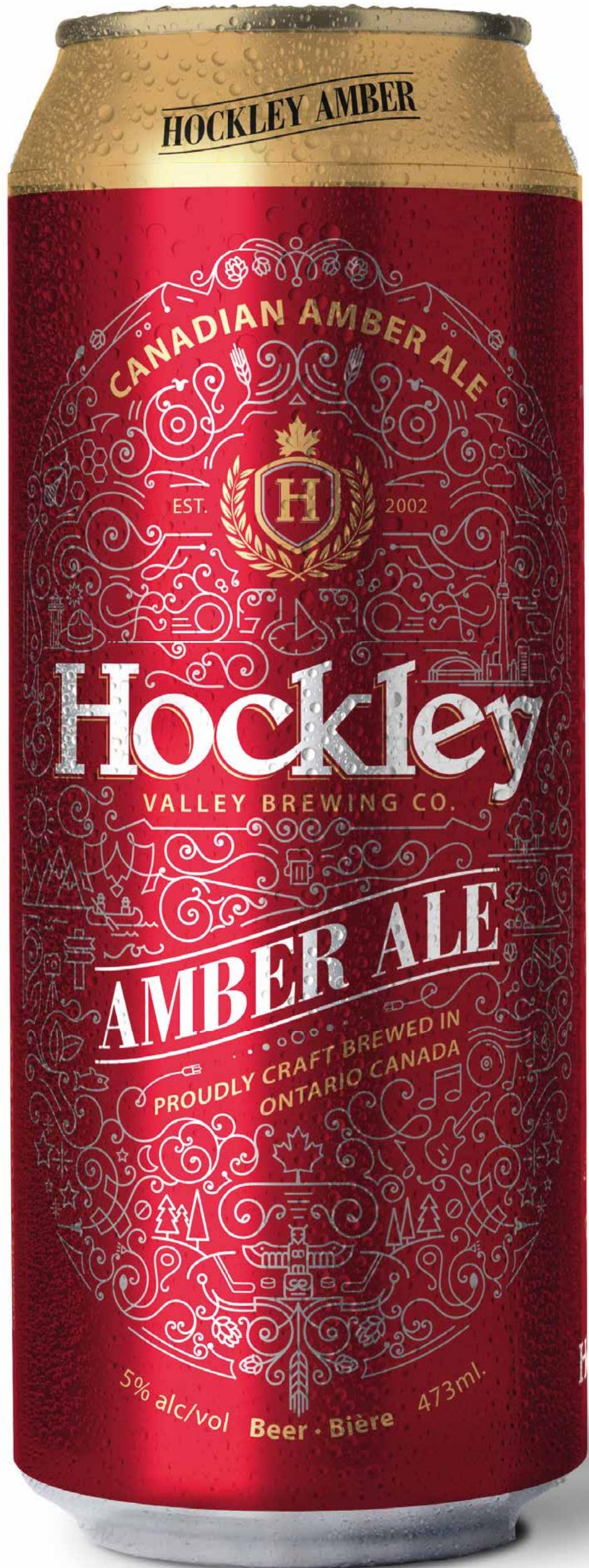
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Dr. Michael Paluch, Assistant Head, Director of Academics



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FanSaves is every sports fan's best coupon

By Robert Belardi

In 2017, Shannon Ferguson and her life partner Kris McCarthy, were working for two minor professional hockey clubs.

They both managed marketing and sales, selling rewards and corporate ads to business owners.

When liaising with business owners, both Ferguson and McCarthy were told that business owners wanted more out of their sponsorships. They asked for things that were digital, that drove fans into their stores and tracked customer demographics that would earn profits on investments. With all this in mind, Ferguson and McCarthy developed their own system for this and FanSaves was born.

"[It is] an app and a website. So, a digital platform, that offers fans discounts and deals from sponsors of their favourite teams," Ferguson said. "So, if Pizza Hut is a sponsor of your favourite team, you get a discount for Pizza Hut because you are a fan. Season ticket holders and V.I.P.s can get even better discounts and deals. We like to think of it as Instagram meets coupon."

Ferguson, who was in San Diego throughout the interview for the Women's Venture Summit, is not only running FanSaves but is also advocating for more women in the entrepreneurial side of sport in a male-dominated sporting world. She idolizes Vice President of the NHL Kimberly Davis.

"She is so empowering. She speaks to people but women can really hear her message and that's important too. As a woman, I'm not looking to just be there to check a box. I want my product and my service to be something that people want. I want to be investable because I'm a great business. But a lot of times, women get

overlooked," Ferguson said.

"There's unconscious gender bias. Not for any other reason. It's not like they're bad people. It just happens. Women and men have unconscious gender bias. The more we can speak up and have our message seen and have our message heard, that's what's important. Women are getting chances in the past that they never had."

Currently, FanSaves is investing into the Toronto Six in the NWHL. The team is working hard to gain sponsorships and FanSaves is interested in labelling these sponsorships for fans of the team on their app and website.

In women's sports, Ferguson said that it is the underrepresented businesses that would come into play here and FanSaves would represent those brands.

Local businesses are thriving under FanSaves and this app will support the growth of small businesses especially in a pandemic, that has impacted small business more prevalently.

In order to sign up, you can download the app or create an account and begin to follow your favourite teams no matter where they are across North America. Instead of seeing pictures of the team, you see their sponsors and what deals are available. You can redeem the deal both in-store or online.

Then the app will track the demographics.

"Currently we work with over 550 businesses and brands across North America. Everything ranging from QSR to restaurants, retail, accommodations, automotive, e-commerce. For us, the feedback has been really great. Because again, they're used to getting paper coupons in. A coupon is nothing new, but paper coupons don't track data and data is king," Ferguson explained.

"True conversion is hard to come across in sponsorship. For us, sponsors and businesses, big and small, are very happy with what FanSaves provides. It's something they've been looking for from their sponsorships for a very long time."

Discounts on the app are provided directly by the sponsors. Sponsors sign up on the app as well and they choose what deal they would like to provide to consumers.

FanSaves provides discounts to all major North American sports leagues and to a few OHL teams, ECHL teams, junior teams, Major Arena Soccer League, NWHL, WNBA and more.

On top of sporting entities, Ferguson

said that FanSaves also supports chambers of commerce, tourism groups, BIAs and collegiate athletics.

Locally, FanSaves helped the Aurora Chamber of Commerce with their FanSaves Helps Gift Certificate Program. The program assisted over 630 businesses all across Canada, generating \$30,000 of revenue in the process.

"The Aurora Chamber was actually one of our most successful communities that were on it."

For more information on FanSaves you can head to their website or contact Ferguson directly at (613)-361-1229. To get started, simply download the app or head online.

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Aurora's MPs-elect eager to get to work following election

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
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They spent 36 days taking the



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Liberal Party of Canada's platform door to door across the ridings of Newmarket-Aurora and Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, and now Aurora's MPs-elect are eager to get to Ottawa and put the plan in action.

On September 20, Canadians went to the polls and re-elected a Liberal minority government under leader Justin Trudeau.

Here at home, voters followed the trend, re-electing incumbent Liberal Tony Van Bynen over Conservative challenger – and Aurora Councillor – Harold Kim in Newmarket-Aurora, and Liberal candidate Leah Taylor Roy over two-term Conservative incumbent Leona Alleslev in Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill.

In Aurora's north riding, Van Bynen came out on top with 43.8 per cent of the vote (24,208), followed by Kim with 38.3 per cent (21,173). NDP candidate Yvonne Kelly came third with 11.5 per cent (6,338), followed by Andre Gagnon of the People's Party of Canada with 4.2 per cent (2,296), Green Party candidate Tim Flemming with 1.8 per cent (1,016), and independent Dorian Baxter with 0.5 per cent (260).

The total number of ballots cast in Newmarket-Aurora was 55,662, with

372 ballots considered spoiled.

In Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, Ms. Taylor Roy received 45.2 per cent of the vote (20,764), followed by Alleslev with 42.1 per cent (19,304), NDP candidate Janice Hagan with 7.8 per cent (3,594), Anthony Siskos of the People's Party of Canada with 3.8 per cent (1,734), and Libertarian candidate Serge Korovitsyn with 1.1 per cent (500).

46,406 total ballots were cast in the south riding, 509 of which were spoiled.

"I am looking forward to getting back to work," said Van Bynen on Monday. "There's a lot of things we put forward in our platform that I am eager to make sure we start getting some implementation done, start moving forward, and start getting some traction on some of the priorities."

It is a "new experience" for Ms. Taylor Roy, who says she's "looking forward to learning from pros like Tony" as well as revisiting some of the residents she met along the campaign trail.

"I am looking forward to following up with a number of people I spoke to in the riding that had specific issues and really meeting with groups here and making sure I understand what the priorities are [of all parties], trying to figure out what they think is the most important thing because part of my agenda will be set, obviously, by what the riding finds important."

Looking back over the 36-day campaign, Van Bynen says the plan for \$10 a day child care particularly resonated with voters, something Ms. Taylor Roy agrees with, stating that that particular platform plank dovetailed with the primary issue she heard at the door: affordability.

"The Quebec model shows that every dollar invested in daycare has a return of \$1.80 or \$2.80, so it makes a lot of economic sense and it enables more people to get involved in the community, business and the economy," said Van Bynen.

Added Taylor Roy: "The other thing child care addresses is affordability. We heard about housing prices, but child care is like a second mortgage. If you have two children, it can be \$3,000 - \$4,000 a month. Getting that child care policy, we can also address affordability in our region, which is very important."

"Other things that resonated in the last half of the campaign," she continues, "was safety and security in our neighbourhoods. The spectre of Conservatives re-evaluating semi-assault rifles to see which ones should be reviewed and included was ludicrous in my mind and I think a lot of people in our community felt the same way: why would we waste money looking at which semi-automatic rifles should be legal? The answer is clear to me: none whatsoever."

Liberals, although they have "a lot of good ones," don't "have the monopoly" on good ideas and both say they are looking forward to working with community members of all political stripes to find common ground.

"It is reaching out to all those different groups and regardless of political leaning, being open to ideas and concerns and working together on the really important issues we have to address here," said Ms. Taylor Roy.

Added Van Bynen: "The key is listening, not necessarily having to agree, but listening and finding a solution."

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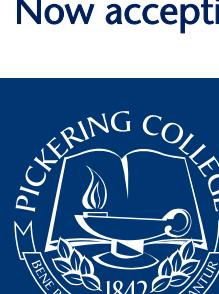
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Aurora Community Arboretum marks 25th anniversary of creating community paradise



Arboretum Chair Irene Clement leads the 25th anniversary celebration on Saturday morning.

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

They have been on the ground since the very beginning watching their vision take root, and on Saturday they gathered to see their dream come into full bloom as the Aurora Community Arboretum formally marked its 25th anniversary.

Beginning at the head of Industrial Parkway North and St. John's Sideroad and cutting through a swath of land on either side of the East Holland River down to the foot of John West Way and Wellington Street East in the south, the 100-acre green space has become Aurora's "Urban Oasis."

Focused on providing an opportunity

for passive recreation and ecological education, all the while fostering more than 1,000 different species of trees and shrubs in a number of types of ecosystems, the Arboretum was founded in 1996.

100 percent led by volunteers, the early days of the Arboretum were hallmark by the planting of commemorative trees, which served as a fundraising initiative to further their vision. It has grown significantly since its first Arboretum Master Plan was developed in 2006, with financial support from the Town beginning the following year.

"The Arboretum was set up in 1996 and Ken Smith was really the lead person and the real push behind it," says Irene Clement who now leads the

Arboretum alongside husband John. "We started small, we had a few small grants from March for Parks and other things like that, and we really existed by a lot of volunteer efforts and the money we raised through commemorative trees. In 2006, Town Council voted to approve our Master Plan, which had a funding amount attached to it, and they agreed that the vision we had for the park was worthy of support – and that was really quite forward-looking of them because could you imagine what it would be like in Aurora during COVID-times if you didn't have the Arboretum to walk around in? I know there are other parks, but this is the biggest park in Town."

Indeed, prior to COVID-19, one could argue that the Aurora Community

Arboretum was one of the Town's best-kept secrets, but as people looked more and more for things to do close to home, the Arboretum became a natural destination to get fresh air, decompress, and experience nature.

One of the destinations within the Arboretum has been Flora Aurora, a showcase of flowering trees and shrubs that surround the trails near the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, heading east towards the Aurora Seniors' Centre. Featuring more than 350 species, it's an explosion of colour during the spring and summer months, as is their Field of Gold initiative which now boasts more than 10,000 bulbs in place, making a "spectacular" visual for several weeks in the Spring.

These are initiatives the Arboretum is particularly proud of during their first quarter-century, as is simply seeing the natural growth of the trees they have planted and the forests they have fostered along the edges of the park and along the river.

"We will continue our efforts to reforest and put in unique specimen trees," says Ms. Clement on what the near future holds for the Aurora Community Arboretum. "We would also really like to get into educational programming. We have always been restricted simply because we have a small group of volunteers and there is a lot of maintenance to do now, but that is what we would like in the future."

"In the meantime, if you like to be out in nature, you like to walk a variety of paths and see and experience the colours of fall, we have a lot of different maple trees and other trees that turn brilliant reds and yellows. Just go out and explore. There are some paved paths, stoned paths, mowed trails that we do. I think there are a variety of areas and experiences there. Fall is a beautiful time."



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\$15
EACH

5-7 KG
\$22
EACH

7-9 KG
\$29
EACH

9-11 KG
\$36
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1²⁸
EA



Tilda basmati rice 4.54 kg
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SAVE 7.00
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pork tenderloin
fresh cryovac
package, pkg. of 2
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LB
8.77 kg



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20626949_EA

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selected varieties
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21214560_EA

1⁸⁸
EA



Coca-Cola
or Canada
Dry soft
drinks
selected varieties
24x355 mL
20308197001_C24
20306330002_C24

8⁴⁸
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tissue
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or Velour
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20705292_EA
21191252_EA

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Community Improvement Plan could be retooled after slow uptake

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

It was intended to give property owners in the Aurora Promenade financial incentive to improve and enhance their properties through grants and tax grants – but a slow uptake in the program could lead to a retooling for the years ahead.

Aurora approved its Community Improvement Plan (CIP) in 2014 to “provide the Town with a flexible set of incentives in order to stimulate private investment that will result in increased assessment, jobs and managed population growth.”

Among the raft of programs offered through the program were grants to improve facades and signage, an initiative to restore, renovate and improve buildings to promote the use of second floors in commercial blocks, a reduction in development charges for the redevelopment of specific sites, and grants for heritage properties, environmental site assessments, and tax assistance for environmental remediation.

But few of these programs saw significant uptake from property owners.

Since its inception, just five COP applications were approved in any part by Council with \$85,000 awarded under the Façade and Signage Improvement Program and the Building Restoration, Renovation and Improvement initiative.

“Three of the applicants’ funds have yet to be disbursed since the applicants have yet to complete their respective projects,” said Lisa Hausz, Manager of Economic Development and Policy for the Town of Aurora in a report to Council. “Of the seven programs offered in the CIP, the Façade and Signage Improvement Grant has been the most popular

program. Three applicants applied or the program, each was granted the maximum \$15,000 for a total of \$45,000 awarded to applicants. To date, only two applicants have received the full disbursement of funds.

“Three out of the seven programs did not receive any applications over the initial five-year period. They included the Development Charge Grant Program, Environmental Site Assessment Grant Program, and the Environmental Remediation Tax Assistance Program. The reasons for not receiving applications to the programs include eligibility for the program or little demand for the program.”

Now, it is a matter for Council and staff to decide where the program should go from here.

A review, according to Hausz, will look at ways to improve the program and make what is offered more effective for the community. It will look at what should be eliminated and added, as well as how applications are evaluated.

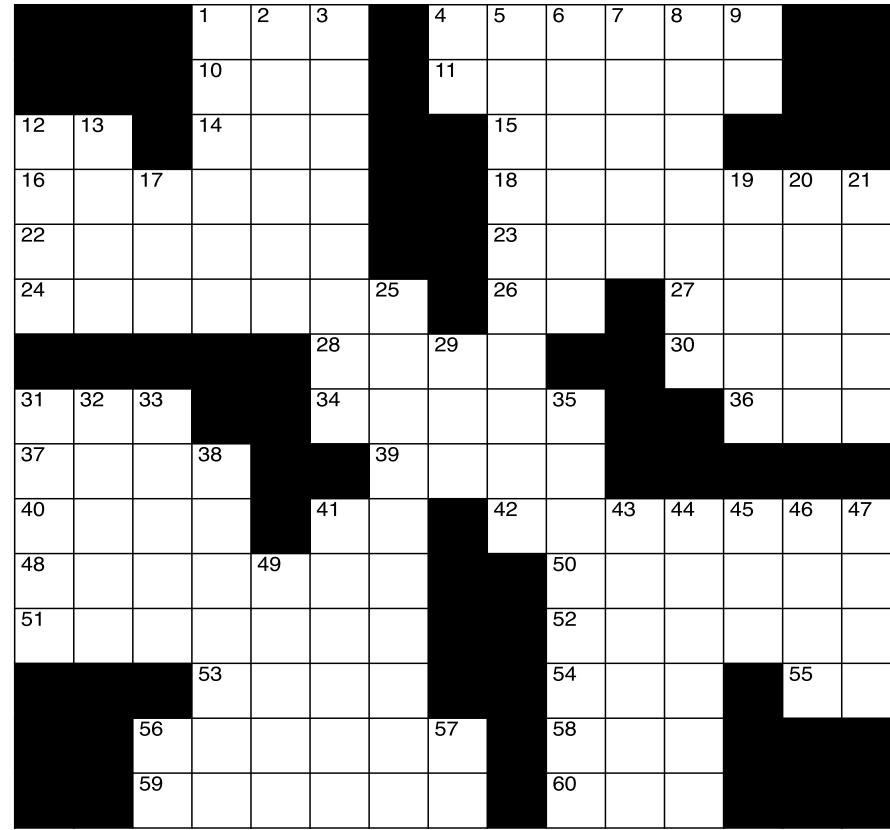
“Prior to holding the statutory public meeting, staff will schedule an open house to consult with stakeholders of the Aurora Promenade to gain insight and input on the review of the previous programs and policies of the CIP, what new programs could be introduced, and how they align with the vision of the Promenade Secondary Plan,” said Ms. Hausz. “Following the open house, a statutory public meeting will be scheduled to present a revised CIP for public review and comment in accordance with Section 17 of the Planning Act.

“As part of the updating and public consultation process, staff will update the program comparison of neighbouring municipalities as well as review and present best practices and programs from across Ontario that are permitted under the Municipal Act for a Community Improvement

Plan. Special consideration will be identified for programs that align with the Town’s Strategic Plan and various departmental plans and objectives including: downtown revitalization,

business support, climate and environment, green development, heritage preservation, accessibility and public realm amenities, along with managed growth in the Promenade.”

CROSSWORD

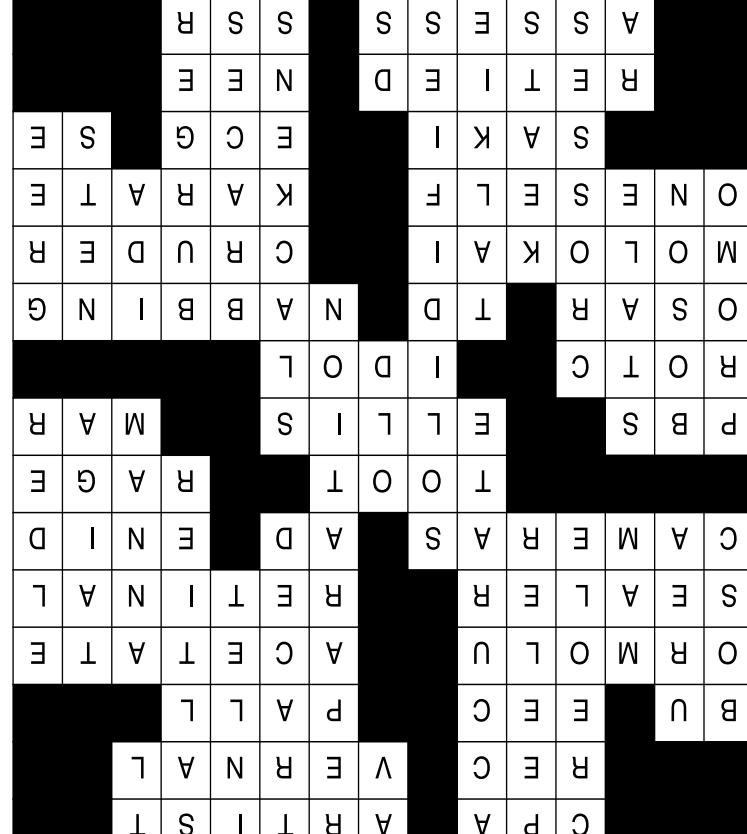


CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Numbers crunched | 34. Island entry point |
| 4. Creator | 36. Disfigure |
| 10. A type of center | 37. College army |
| 11. About spring | 39. One who's revered |
| 12. Equal to 64 U.S. pints (abbr.) | 40. Long, winding ridge |
| 14. Precursor to the EU | 41. Football stat |
| 15. Something that can be cast | 42. Stealing |
| 16. Gold-colored alloy | 48. Hawaiian island |
| 18. A salt or ester of acetic acid | 50. More raw |
| 22. A hard coating on a porous surface | 51. In one's normal state of mind |
| 23. A type of detachment | 52. Daniel LaRusso's sport |
| 24. Filmmakers need them | 53. Tropical American monkey |
| 26. Promotional material | 54. Measures heart currents |
| 27. __ Blyton, children's author | 55. Midway between south and east |
| 28. Short, sharp sound | 56. Knotted again |
| 30. Feeling of intense anger | 58. Born of |
| 31. Popular TV network | 59. Value |
| | 60. Soviet Socialist Republic |

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Mother tongue | 29. Ancient |
| 2. Removes potato skins | 31. Advertising gimmick |
| 3. True | 32. Subatomic particle |
| 4. Early multimedia | 33. Not fresh |
| 5. The making of amends | 35. Loosens |
| 6. Discovered by investigation | 38. Religious symbols |
| 7. Small arm of the sea | 41. Film |
| 8. More seasoned | 43. Orthodontic devices |
| 9. Atomic #81 | 44. Grilled beef sandwich |
| 12. Type of pear | 45. Journalist Tarbell |
| 13. Chemical compound | 46. Brooklyn hoopsters |
| 17. One's mother | 47. Japanese social networking service |
| 19. Vietnam's former name | 49. Romantic poet |
| 20. Snow forest | 56. Dorm worker |
| 21. Church officer | 57. Poor grades |
| 25. Hardens | |



PUZZLE SOLUTION



BEST WISHES

Lt. Col. (Retired) Len Whines celebrated his 90th birthday at the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion on September 25. A long time leader of both the Legion and local cadet programs, Whines was recognized by Gary Pond, Ontario Legion President, with the Meritorious Service Medal, one of the highest awards that can be granted by the Royal Canadian Legion.

Auroran photo by Diane Buchanan



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Truth & Reconciliation gathering will offer learning and reflection around sacred fire

From page 1

wasn't just quickly thrown together – it has been much-needed for decades. In doing so, our program is the start of a catch-up to figure out why we are here. So many people like myself have responded emotionally and are reflectively seeing what they see on the news. Our approach to September 30 is to give us the foundation [so] we can talk about meaningful reconciliation, but we need to focus on what those two words mean and we need a better foundation. It comes from soul searching, reflection, and guidance and the guidance will come from ancestral stories, and actively seeing some of the Indigenous cultures being active."

It is impossible, says Ms. Ware, to get a "handle" on reconciliation simply by skimming the surface. That is why she stresses the presentation at Town Park this week is a "gathering" rather than an "event."

Around the sacred fire, which will be kept by Floody in the role of Sacred Fire Keeper, participants will be asked to step up and accept a tobacco tie and, in doing so, introduce themselves and state why they are there.

"[Wheatley] wanted to make sure we had different voices guiding us," says Ms. Ware. "Because we have a sacred fire, it is not a bonfire, it is not a campfire, it is likely not what most people will envision as you don't go there to warm your hands. Rather, it is to help guide us and what we need to

be learning at this point in time. Floody is a residential school survivor and he will be sharing firsthand what his years were like from a personal experience.

"[Ms. Wheatley] is going to lay it on the line as well and teach us some hard truths that maybe haven't been revealed or come to the surface in the forefront. These are truths as they know it. Many First Nations rely on oral histories and it is through storytelling...but the definite focus is on the residential school children, the tragedies that went with it, and how we can work together to honour the survivors and families affected. The families affected can be generational [and] that generational healing has to happen.

"We're all going on this road to reconciliation. We're all going to be of varying amounts of knowledge that we have interpreted or understood. I really hope people walk away with something new they didn't know, and to walk away believing in their heart there is more to work on."

Preceding the 6 p.m. gathering will be a showcase from the Aurora Cultural Centre, which will take place at Town Park from 4 – 6 p.m.

"Honouring the Children" is a program in solidarity with Indigenous peoples, where the Cultural Centre has partnered with Chippewas of Georgina Island's Jared Big Canoe leading the recognition and acknowledgement of the historic day through "traditional



Thursday's National Truth & Reconciliation Day gathering will be led by Indigenous elders, including Anishinaabe Grandmother Kim Wheatley.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

ceremony, reflections, song and dance."

Activities on site include the creation of a healing card to send to Indigenous neighbours on Georgina Island.

The ceremony will run from 4 – 5.30 p.m., followed by the Healing Card Activity from 5.30 – 6 p.m.

For more information on the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation this week, visit aurora.ca/truthandreconciliation. Additional information on the Aurora Cultural Centre's programs can be found at auroraculturalcentre.ca/event/ndtr2021.

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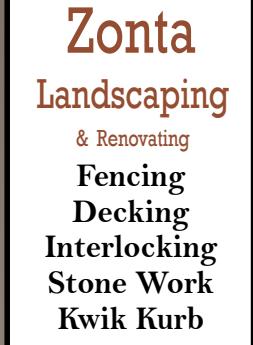
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THINGS You Ought To Know

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION DAY

- Town Park will see a number of observances today to mark National Truth & Reconciliation Day. From 4 – 6 p.m., the Aurora Cultural Centre will present Honouring the Children, in partnership with Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation resident Jared Big Canoe. Jared Big Canoe of Georgina Island will lead the recognition and acknowledgement of this historic day, through traditional ceremony, reflections, song and dance. The ceremony will be opened and closed by an elder. Stay to create a healing card to send to our closest Indigenous neighbours on Georgina Island. From 6 – 8 p.m., the Town of Aurora will host an “evening of learning, meaningful reflection and a sacred fire led by Anishinaabe Grandmother Kim Wheatley, Elder Pat Floody, and Ancestral Knowledge Keeper Raiden Levesque. All are welcome.

Acclaimed poet Anna Yin will hold a virtual evening of poetry in English and Mandarin this evening with the Aurora Public Library starting

at 7 p.m. and co-facilitated by Yafang Shi. For more information, including how to register for the Zoom program, visit aurora.ca/culturedays.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2

Come out to Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for the Aurora Farmers' Market. With strict COVID-19 protocols in place, the Market vendors are excited to welcome residents and customers once again. For more information, visit theaurorafarmersmarket.com.

Come out to Town Park from 12 noon to 3 p.m. and be a part of Culture Days in Aurora! You can participate in this free Raku event. Glaze a piece of pottery made by members of the Pine Tree Potters' Guild and watch it being fired in a Raku kiln. Then you can take it home! Quantities are limited so be sure to come early. For more information visit www.pinetreepotters.ca or www.Aurora.ca/culturedays.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7

Aurora's Colours of Fall Concert is more than just great music! Come out tonight to celebrate

autumn with amazing Celtic music by the American Rogues. They will have you out of your seats with their lively drum, bagpipe and violin performances. Don't miss their performance of "The Outlander Song" and "Last of the Mohicans". Bring your creativity as we will have pumpkins and carving utensils available for carving during the show. Come with a vision and leave with a jack-o'-lantern! The concert is 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Aurora Town Park. Pre-registration is required, for details visit aurora.ca/fallconcert.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9

Come out to Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for the Aurora Farmers' Market. With strict COVID-19 protocols in place, the Market vendors are excited to welcome residents and customers once again. For more information, visit theaurorafarmersmarket.com.

ONGOING

Support AbuseHunts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. In the current COVID climate, a greater

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- 12** Over 400 school-wide student leadership opportunities available