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THE AUROREDAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 22 No. 3 905-727-3300 *TheAuroran.com* FREE Week of October 28, 2021

ENTER IF YOU DARE

Edie and Abel were in for a spooky surprise on Saturday as they braved Aurora's Haunted Greenhouse. The second annual event, which has replaced the traditional Haunted Forest due to the global pandemic, welcomes visitors on select dates and times through October 30 at the Joint Operations Centre. For more, see Page 14.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Capacity limits lifted in most settings as Ontario looks to ease restrictions by March

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Capacity limits in venues where proof of vaccination is required – such as restaurants and gyms – are now lifted as the Province of Ontario looks at when further public health measures can be eased.

The limits as they pertain to restaurants and bars, indoor areas of

sports and recreation facilities such as gyms, instances where personal fitness trainers are providing instruction, as well as casinos, bingo halls, and other gaming establishments were eased effective Monday, October 25.

It was the first step in what the Province presented last Friday on a longer-range roadmap for a return to normal.

“Thanks to our cautious and careful approach to reopening, we are now in a

position to gradually lift all remaining public health measures over the coming months,” said Premier Doug Ford in a statement. “The plan is built for the long term. It will guide us safely through the winter and out of this pandemic, while avoiding lockdowns and ensuring we don’t lose the hard-fought gains we have made.”

Added Health Minister Christine Elliott: “Since the beginning of the

Continued on page 6

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Poppy marks 100 years as poignant symbol of remembrance

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

For 100 years, the red poppy has been Canada's official symbol of remembrance.

In the two weeks leading up to November 11, they have become synonymous with Remembrance Day and memorializing the men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice

Continued on page 15



Lori Hoyes, left, President of the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, and Poppy Chair Bonnie Robertson, are kicking off the 2021 Poppy Campaign this week, benefiting veterans and their families. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the adoption of the poppy as a symbol of Remembrance.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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TOWN OF AURORA

NOTICE BOARD

October 28, 2021



Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Thursday, October 28	6 p.m.	Video Conference	Aurora Appeal Tribunal
Monday, November 1	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Heritage Advisory Committee
Tuesday, November 2	9:30 a.m.	Video Conference	Joint Council Committee
Tuesday, November 2	5:45 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, November 2	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee
Monday, November 8	6 p.m.	Council Chambers	Budget Committee
Tuesday, November 9	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Public Planning
Wednesday, November 10	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Accessibility Advisory Committee
Wednesday, November 10	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Aurora Cultural Centre Board
Thursday, November 11	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.

Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition

Aurora's Royal Canadian Legion, Col. Fred Tilston VC Branch 385 Remembrance Day Exhibit: Artwork by local students

For the month of November, Aurora's Online Skylight Gallery is featuring works by local students in a series called "What Remembrance Day Means To Me". See how students in our community have reflected on Remembrance Day. We often see poppies pinned on our hearts to honour those that have given their lives to this country. Take a moment of reflection to view works of art that not only represent poppies and other symbols in meaningful ways, but also convey deep emotion, sacrifice and bravery.

View this online gallery at aurora.ca/skylightgallery.

What's Happening

Presented by Healthy Planet

AURORA'S 2021 Haunted GREENHOUSE

OCTOBER 23, 27, 28, 29 & 30
5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. or 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Aurora's Joint Operations Centre (JOC) - Greenhouses
229 Industrial Parkway North

FAMILY FUN THROUGH THREE GREENHOUSES **SPOOKY SURPRISES**

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aurora.ca/hauntedgreenhouse COVID-19 safety protocols

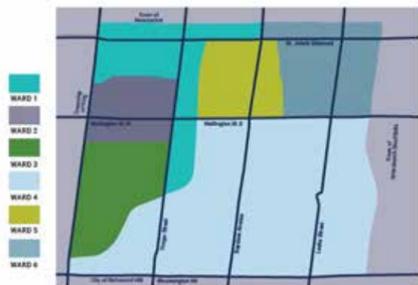
#AuroraHauntedGreenhouse • 905-726-4762
We reserve the right to cancel, amend or change activities.

AURORA



The Town of Aurora will be switching to a ward system in 2022. When residents vote in the 2022 Municipal Election, they will be voting for a Mayor and one Ward Councillor who represents their ward indicated on the map below. In total, there will be a Mayor and six ward councillors elected.

To find out which ward you live in, enter your street address into the interactive map at aurora.ca/wards.



Winter 2022 Program Guide

Our Winter 2022 Program Guide has programs and activities for all ages. The guide will be distributed to all Aurora households with The Banner on **November 4**.

Online registration for recreation and aquatic leadership programs starts on **November 8**.

Full details available at aurora.ca/recguide.

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

Aurora Family Leisure Complex pool 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 the skating activities schedule, please visit aurora.ca/skating.

Club Aurora is open

Club Aurora Fitness Centre is now open. This includes fitness classes, indoor walking track and squash match play. Pre-registration is required. Full details available online at aurora.ca/clubaurora.

Seniors Centre Without Walls

Seniors Centre Without Walls (SCWW) is a free program, providing community outreach to seniors and adults via telephone and Zoom. Check out the monthly schedule online at aurora.ca/scww.

WINTER PARKING BYLAW

NOVEMBER 15 to APRIL 15
No street parking between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.

aurora.ca/snow

AURORA'S 2021 SANTA UNDER THE STARS PARADE

Saturday, November 27
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Aurora Family Leisure Complex
(135 Industrial Parkway North)

This "Stationary Parade" will be in the Aurora Family Leisure Complex parking lot. It is going to be the warmest parade of the season as you travel in your vehicle around decorated floats. Our festive special friends are excited to greet you!

Food donations and letters to Santa will be collected at the entrance of the parking lot!

Please note, we reserve the right to cancel, amend or change activities.

aurora.ca/santaparade
905-726-4762 • #AuroraSantaParade

Additional funding provided by Ontario, 100, AURORA

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: TOWN OF AURORA 001257

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

AURORA

30 DAYS...NEW HABITS GREENER PLANET

NOVEMBER 1 - 30

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Empty Bowls set to warm hearts in new location

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

An empty bowl can go a long way to warm a heart in need, and despite the ongoing challenges of the global pandemic, Aurora's Pine Tree Potters Guild is hard at work to ensure local residents in need are able to access a helping hand.

This November, the Pine Tree Potters Guild will host its 12th annual Empty Bowls fundraiser, one which has raised tens of thousands of dollars for Aurora's Welcoming Arms, an ecumenical organization dedicated to lending a hand and sharing a meal with community members in need, and Newmarket-based homeless organization Inn from the Cold.

In the lead-up to Empty Bowls, Guild members make hundreds of hand-crafted bowls which can be picked out by each ticket holder and, once their selection is made, take their bowl to be filled by one of up to a dozen chefs serving signature soups, which can then be shared together in the spirit of fellowship and fundraising.

As was the case for so many popular local events, COVID was a game changer and the Guild retooled their event last year to a "bowl sale" under a tent. In addition to picking out a bowl, ticket-holders received a coupon entitling them to a soup at the local restaurant of their choice.

This year will once again be a "bowl sale" event, but in a new indoor location: Newmarket's Old Town Hall (460 Bosford Street).

"The coupon book was a great initiative to not only link people to soup but link people to restaurants that are also in need of our support," says Lisa-Marie Oliphant, Empty Bowls Chair for the Pine Tree

Potters Guild. "These have been long-standing partnerships that we have had over the years and we want to make sure we're supporting them as well. This year's event will not be taking place in Aurora and it will not be taking place in a tent. We have been able to progress a little bit because the pandemic rules allow us to gather inside.

"This year we have volunteers from both Inn from the Cold and Welcoming Arms at our event, on hand for the community to get to know them more and they were hungry to join up! We make these beautiful bowls, they're empty and we want to still fill them with coupons and those coupons are good for a year. You can keep refilling your bowls and the cost of \$40 per ticket is helping to fill other people's bowls and they need it now more than ever."

Ms. Oliphant knows firsthand the work each organization provides the community, particularly Welcoming Arms, which she visited at a recent Wednesday night drive-through for meals for community members in need.

"There is every type of person volunteering at Welcoming Arms: people who are young, people who are no longer in the workforce, people from the community dropping off baked goods because they know little children who are in need will get to have sweets and baked goods just like they used to have. The common thread is trying to give people a sense of community, love and support. With people driving up to Welcoming Arms for a warm meal, I was able to witness in a single week the various teams preparing and packaging the food and serving the food to people in need. It was a small act of kindness and effort to give people warmth, food and comfort. I know this is making a big

difference."

While Pine Tree Potters Guild Members can feel satisfied they are helping the community through Empty Bowls, they are set this year to have additional creative satisfaction.

Now that indoor events are able to take place, albeit with public health measures in force, the Guild will also host a pottery show and sale in conjunction with the Empty Bowls event at the same menu.

"It is going to be enriching for our members," says Ms. Oliphant. "We create art and we create functional art and not being able to put that out into the world – there are a lot of shelves that are full. They are excited to be able to share their art with the community. A lot of them are Canadian small business owners as well who have taken a hit by not being able to sell their products, which is pottery. There are well over

20 potters who are going to be in that space with our beautiful bowls room [adjacent]."

The 12th Annual Pine Tree Potters' Guild Empty Bowls Fundraiser will take place November 18 (4-8 p.m.), 19 (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.), and 20 (10 a.m. – 2 p.m.) at Newmarket's Old Town Hall. Three bowl selection dates are designated to allow for physical distancing and to otherwise manage numbers indoors.

Everyone aged 12 and older entering Old Town Hall will be required to show proof of COVID-19 full vaccination and government identification.

Tickets are \$40 each and must be purchased in advance from Aurora's Meridian Credit Union, located at 297 Wellington Street East.

For more information, visit www.pinetrepotters.ca.

What if I could help my favourite local business get some recognition?



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Kids, don't shout or sing for your treat this Halloween: Public Health

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Youngsters have the green light to go trick-or-treating this Sunday for Halloween, but York Region Public Health is reminding kids and parents alike to do so safely.

Dr. Richard Gould, York Region's Acting Medical Officer of Health says that anyone considering going out on Halloween night should stay home even if you have mild symptoms of COVID-19 and, if you're symptom free, that masks that are part of your costume just aren't going to cut it.

"Remain outdoors as much as possible and if celebrating indoors, be sure to maintain physical distance and wear a face covering," said Dr. Gould on Monday. "Costume masks should not

be worn over face coverings as it could hinder breathing. Take turns on door steps one at a time. Do not shout or sing for your treats and use hand sanitizer often.

"Those giving out treats should not give out treats if you have symptoms, even if they are mild. Keep interactions short. Consider wearing a face covering when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Give out only purchased and packaged treats. Do not ask trick or treaters to sing or shout. Clean your hands often throughout the evening using soap and water or hand sanitizer.

"We want everyone celebrating Halloween to have a good time [but] we must continue to be vigilant so we can continue to celebrate upcoming events and holidays. We all have a role to play, which includes following current public health measures and getting vaccinated."

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ideology, not data-driven Master Plan, says Reader

Doug Nadorozny, CAO for the Town of Aurora's goal is to "build and maintain a workforce that is talented, diverse and committed to fostering a safe, fair and inclusive workplace and municipal administration".

Where is the evidence for the assumption that the present workforce is not "inclusive"? Have there been valid Human Rights claims made against our Municipality? Where is the evidence that the present staff are not talented enough? How has the CAO shown that the Municipality's hiring practices are not safe or fair?

I have worked in Human Resources hiring employees and am disturbed how Aurora's CAO is so negative on the current Human Resources staff and based on what data? This must be extremely demoralizing for them.

Every significant procedural change in hiring should be based on valid data to support changing the current system to one which is moving to quotas that need to be filled. Give the evidence to show how this improves anything.

Hiring needs to be based on merit (experience, education, training, skills), character and references. I totally agree that those hiring should not judge people on their gender, colour of skin, and place of origin and the CAO thinks that requires "blind" evaluations and adding a token female and "racialized" people on the hiring board. How insulting.

The CAO and the Municipality staff are paid with our tax dollars. The citizens of Aurora deserve the best applicant for the job opening not one based on gender, skin colour and place or origin to manufacture diversity. These are irrelevant qualities for job performance and as Aurora becomes more diverse with immigration, there will be a natural change in the workforce.

The results of this agenda will be reducing the number of white staff because of the colour of their skin and reducing the number of men because of their gender. The CAO "will hold managers accountable for advancing their plans and achieving results." This sounds like managers will be punished for not embracing this social engineering program. A program trying to stop perceived discrimination by discriminating. How ironic.

Investing in DEI training programs wastes our money because it teaches people to focus on our differences and not on what we have in common. This never fosters productivity, innovation or better service. Show the evidence otherwise. The only people who benefit are the DEI training companies. It is quite a lucrative business.

Each person whether Aboriginal, White or Black is unique and does not represent a group. Every person has their own life experiences and to assume people are victims or privileged because of the colour of their skin, gender, or culture is unfair and inaccurate. Understanding someone's cultural background should be irrelevant to hiring that person.

This is a highly subjective, virtue signalling and discriminatory proposal. We deserve better.

Shelley Wister
Aurora

Machell's Corners



A missing piece of the consumer puzzle



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

Patience has never been one of my strongest virtues.

I freely admit it. There were few things more aggravating in my mind than a "hurry up and wait" situation.

Note the use of past tense. A global pandemic changes many things.

Yet, here I am, back from a weekend that necessitated three trips into Toronto. Whether it was to catch up with people I hadn't seen since a month before COVID-19 ushered in our first lockdown, check a few long-standing errands off a list that has become rather dusty through the passage of time, or visit a few attractions that have long piqued my interest, I relished the chance to hurry up and wait.

If you told me 18, 19, 20 months ago that I would welcome standing in a line, I would have, depending on my mood, either rolled my eyes or laughed. Now such lines, at least in my view, are a great confidence booster.

A line-up was once an inconvenience, especially if you were pressed for time, but now it is a sign that whatever business, service, restaurant or attraction you're looking to patronize is taking what is hoped to be the tail end of a pandemic – and the health of its staff and patrons – seriously.

Given my recent experiences in the city, however, not all businesses, services, restaurants and attractions are cut from the same cloth. While most had staff members in place to check vaccination status, whether through the Province's new app or the trusty hard-copy certificate handed out at the point of inoculation, some either didn't care or didn't have the resources to do so. Or, in at least one instance, had the resources but had to be prompted to jump into action.

The businesses and services that don't have the resources to be as vigilant as they could be can't be blamed for being comparatively lax with the rules. A lot is being asked of them above and beyond the extremely difficult times they have faced throughout the pandemic and having to pump in scarce resources to implement Provincial rules with little

assistance from Queen's Park is yet another stressor.

The businesses that just don't care? Well, I suspect this lack of effort will also hit their bottom line.

On Thanksgiving, for instance, I was in Orillia to visit family. With some time to spare before the culinary mayhem was set to begin, we took a trip up bustling Mississauga Street to see how local businesses were faring. Some didn't survive COVID-19, judging by some of the recently empty storefronts, while others bravely forged ahead to open up new businesses and fulfil their dreams. Yet, one business, one which had many tantalizing offerings in their window, lost ours when one member of our group of four pointed out a sign in their door essentially stating they didn't care one way or another if you came in vaccinated or not, masked or not.

Such business, unfortunately, was taken elsewhere.

So, while in pre-pandemic times, a line-up might make me look elsewhere purely out of the interests of time, this has been well and truly flipped. Want me to wait an extra five or ten minutes for a patron or two to leave before I can come in and maintain social distance? Perfect!

But we're now getting a vague timeline on when these lines, capacity limits, and the requirement to prove your vaccination status might too be a thing of the past.

On Friday, the Government of Ontario set out its long-term plan for easing us out of COVID measures, so long as trends continue in a positive direction.

Capacity limits in many settings, including restaurants and gyms, were lifted Monday. The next step is slated to come on November 15 with higher-risk settings like nightclubs seeing their capacity limits lifted as long as proof of

vaccination is required.

After that, we have a bit of a wait.

As long as people follow their good common sense over the holiday season and we don't see a spike of new cases in schools or the community at large in the two weeks after the dawn of 2022, capacity limits in places where proof of vaccination is not currently required will be lifted – with the lifting of proof of vaccination requirements in high-risk settings set for February 7.

As for masks in indoor public settings? We might be able to finally hang them up by March 28.

Again, as long as common sense is followed and numbers don't spike.

"We are now in a position where we can see the proposed plan for lifting the remaining public health and workplace safety measures in Ontario," said Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health on Friday. "The months ahead will require continued vigilance, as we don't want to cause anymore unnecessary disruption to people's everyday lives. We must continue to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in our communities by following the public health measures in place and by vaccinating those who have not yet received their shots. Ontario has the infrastructure in place to manage outbreaks, including a high-volume capacity for testing, and people to perform fast and effective case and contact management when needed."

Ontario also has the resources to further support businesses of all kinds as we ease out of what has become our new normal and while these establishments were largely left to themselves in implementing social distancing, mask rules, and proof of vaccination requirements, it is necessary for them to receive the supports they need to handle this transition as well.

While we will all welcome the time we can go into most places without our masks on, it might take some time for people to feel comfortable in doing so.

Supporting consumer confidence is, at this time, a missing piece of the puzzle.

THE AURORAN
Aurora's Community Newspaper

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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.



The Aurora Museum & Archives is cooking up... A Hallowe'en Concoction!

It's the spooky season again, and you may want to whip up a witches' brew or two to take the edge off the constant toil, trouble and ringing of the doorbell that comes with Hallowe'en. This small cauldron, (99.34.4) would be an ideal vessel for mixing a draught, elixir or potion.

Ready to get to work for you!

Greetings, fellow Aurorans. It has been a whirlwind since I was elected to be your representative on September 20.

I have just been officially sworn in as your Member of Parliament on October 27, two days after my birthday.

I am incredibly proud to represent the constituency of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, a diverse community that is growing every day. Currently there are over 120,000 constituents (awaiting the 2021 census for more up to date numbers), close to half of whom have emigrated from other countries and chose to live in this great country of ours.

We will work tirelessly with the community and all levels of government to hear your concerns and address your needs. One of the issues we heard most frequently from you during the election was making life more affordable. I am eager to work on some of the proposed programs that will be addressing affordability once I am in Ottawa.

Ottawa news for Aurorans

We are moving forward on a national child care policy and an aggressive housing strategy to address this issue of affordability here in Aurora and across the country.

The cost of childcare is continuing to grow, forcing many of you as parents to work a second job, or to stay home and take care of your kids. A \$10-a-day program is essential for your family, our community and our economy, and it pays for itself.

The significant investments our government is proposing will drive economic growth, create jobs, increase young parents' participation in the workforce and provide each child in Canada with the best start in life. This is a plan that will benefit all Canadians over the long term.

Our government is also working towards making housing more affordable. There is such a demand for housing and not enough supply,



LEAH'S LETTER

Leah Taylor Roy, MP
Aurora-Oak Ridges - Richmond Hill

which increases the cost of housing to a point where only a select few are able to afford the cost of living. Banning blind bidding and temporarily banning foreign investment in homes that are not a principal residence will help.

The government's plan will also help create jobs and ensure that every Canadian has a safe and affordable place to call home. You should not have to choose between buying a house or taking care of your family. They are both essential needs that are not a privilege, but a right.

As we progress through this pandemic, our federal government's response is continuing to adapt. Thankfully, the advisory for non-essential travel has been lifted. I am looking forward to visiting members of my family that I have not seen in almost two years. I am sure many of you feel the same way.

We are still being asked to follow current health guidelines, which includes being fully vaccinated at least 14 days before we travel. To make travelling a little easier, it was announced last week that Canada will have a standardized vaccine passport, developed in cooperation with the provincial governments and fully funded by the federal government.

Our Activities here in Aurora

- I have been, and continue to be around the community attending events in Aurora. For example;
- I regularly go to the Farmers Market at Town Park in Aurora to buy some fresh produce and

flowers, as well as great local arts and crafts.

- I will be attending a Remembrance Day event at the Aurora War Memorial Peace Park on November 11 and;
- I am looking forward to serving dinner at one of the wonderful Friday evening dinners at the Royal Canadian Legion in November.

We are planning on both hosting and attending regular events throughout Aurora. If you or your community have an event that you would like me to attend to speak or participate in some way, please contact our office and let us know.

We are working hard to get our office up and ready, and grow our team to serve you better.

Since we moved into our temporary office mid-October, we have already met with many of you to discuss issues and follow up on requests.

If you would like to meet with me or with a member of our welcoming team, please reach out to us by phone or email. Jane, Minnie and Mehdi are in the office and are happy to assist you and arrange a meeting.

We require that you wear a mask and provide proof of vaccination to enter our office. We are also happy to meet with you virtually or by phone.

If you are interested in volunteering with us, or are a student looking to earn your community service hours, we would love to have you on our team.

We want your input. We want your ideas. We want you to know that your voice will be heard. We look forward to hearing from you soon and hopefully seeing you in person soon as well.

To contact my constituency office, please send an email to: leah.taylorroy@parl.gc.ca or call the office at 905-773-8358. Our office is located at 12820 Yonge St. Suite 202 (at the corner of Yonge St. and Estate Gardens Drive in Richmond Hill).



Time Travellers Diary

By Robert Revington
Aurora Museum & Archives
Museum Student

The Carpet Party

I stepped out of the time machine on Mosley Street in Aurora in the fall of 1962.

The wind whisked yellow and red leaves around me. A bald man briskly rushed past me.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"The party," he said.

"What party?"

"The carpet party."

"I've never heard of a carpet party," I said.

"Neither have we," he said.

What I didn't know was that I had just met Louis Fowler, the minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Aurora.

He went on to say to me: "When I came here, I thought it would be a quiet little church where I could write a book; I found I had been completely had! We decided we wanted a new building. But the bank manager told me, 'The head office thinks that you people have bitten off more than you can chew.' I thanked him and told him, 'That's all we Presbyterians need to hear; something to make us angry, and we'll be on our way.' Soon after, I helped write a newspaper ad to fundraise. Some people might even call it passive-aggressive."

In it, Fowler said its purpose was "not to solicit funds" for the new building, the ad reminded local Presbyterians that, "as the Scripture states, faith without works is dead" and encouraged them to (and I quote) "respond as their conscience, if a true conscience, may direct."

Fowler laughed. "Not long after, a United Church member said he liked our spirit, and handed over a \$500.00 cheque! We've raised a lot. But today ... the women of the church thought we needed more. The new church building doesn't have a carpet!"

As I followed him along the path, we passed scores of people streaming down the sidewalk – satisfied attendees of the Carpet Party. We headed to the Baldwin family home where he introduced me to Reta Rank – a stalwart of the church and one of the organizers of the party.

"I remember in the 1930s, during the Great Depression, people from the church took turns hosting crokinole parties to pay for the church's heat in winter," said Rank. "Today we had a 'carpet party'! There were people lined up all around the block and we had coffee in the morning, an afternoon tea, an apron sale, and a buffet dinner for 100 people."

She smiled as she lifted the lock-box full of money.

"Don't be disappointed if there isn't enough money for a carpet," said Fowler.

"You haven't enough faith!" she said.

They counted up the day's funds and discovered they had raised close to \$1,300.00—more than enough.

"You can accomplish almost anything if you try," said Rank.

Thanks to the hard work of Fowler, Rank, and many others, that church building is still here today, although the carpet has long since been replaced.

The congregation celebrates 150 years in 2021. Visit our online exhibit which launches November 6 on auroramuseum.ca to explore some of the church's fascinating history.

THIS WEEK'S POLL

Do you plan to use the Province's new Verify Ontario app for proof of vaccine?

Yes No Unsure

www.theauroran.com

RESULTS TO DATE
October 19, 2021

YES
72%

NO
14%

UNSURE
14%

Continued on page 19

Modifying the formats for the Municipal Debates

Now that the federal election has been completed, we get to relax for a few months before we vote in a provincial election next June and then a municipal vote in the fall of 2022.

Part of this local election process will involve public forums and debates where those seeking Council seats or the Mayor's chair can discuss their respective visions for the Town.

I have attended a number of the federal, provincial and municipal debates in our community over the years, and for the most part I have found them wanting. That is not say that they have not been entertaining or interesting. But as way to impart knowledge and subject candidates to a thoughtful and respectful inspection and evaluation of their views. Not a chance.

The reason that the local public forums have not been overtly successful has nothing to do with the candidates themselves or their supporters.

The hall is usually jammed, and the atmosphere is electric and tense, similar to that prior to a big prizefight.

It has to do with two things: the number of aspirants for the positions and also the format of the debates themselves.

Let's take a brief look at recent federal and provincial leaders' debates.

These debates are held in a television studio, without an audience. Usually,



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

the party leaders are asked questions by a panel of eminent journalists. Sometimes questions are asked of the leaders directly from the voters; this is done via a video clip.

The debate format has been modified a few times over the years, depending upon the number of party leaders invited to take part. As there were only three party leaders involved in the 1984 and 1988 debates, each of the prime ministerial aspirants had a number of one-on-one sessions with the others. This led to the memorable and electric Mulroney and Turner exchanges in both 1984 and 1988.

You may recall that the 1993, 1997 and 2000 federal debates were marked by each of the party leaders talking over one another. No one-on-one debates were held, as there were too many party leaders; the addition of Reform leader Preston Manning and Bloc leader

Lucien Bouchard made for five on the stage.

The format was altered again for the federal debates held during the most recent federal election.

There was some verbal inter-play, but nothing extraordinary took place, no real fireworks or the proverbial "knock-out" punch occurred.

I agree that the format does not work with five people speaking over one another and I also very much agree that a more respectful tone is required. A great moderator is also a must.

At the local level, the introduction of the one-on-one format could be done for the mayoralty debates.

The problem is that the council debates could include tens of candidates, which can be a logistical and thematic nightmare.

I remember witnessing the same thing in Etobicoke in the early 90's – the council election debates were a disaster. If memory serves, there were between thirteen and fifteen candidates. Each candidate was given a minute or two for an opening statement, then a question would be asked and each candidate had a limited time to answer. The answers were getting pretty stale by the time the tenth candidate answered the initial question. I didn't really learn anything of substance about any of the candidates.

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Capacity limits lifted in most settings as Ontario looks to ease restrictions by March

From page 1
pandemic, Ontario has taken a cautious approach to reopening to protect the health and safety of Ontarians. Our plan will ensure we replicate this success and take a gradual approach that will protect our health system capacity, prevent widespread closures, keep our schools open, and support the province's economic recovery."

The easing of restrictions that came into effect Monday was the first step in the new timeline.

All remaining public health and workplace safety measures, including the requirement for proof of vaccination and the wearing of face coverings in indoor public settings could be lifted in as soon as six months.

Timelines, however, will be phased in according to key public health and health care indicators such as the identifications of new COVID-19 variants, increases in hospitalizations, ICU capacity, and increases in transmission.

The next step on this roadmap is tentatively set for November 15, when Ontario intends to lift capacity limits in remaining higher-risk settings like restaurants with dance facilities, such as nightclubs and strip clubs.

January 17, 2022 is the tentative date to lift capacity restrictions in places where proof of vaccination is not required, pending any "concerning trends" coming out of the winter holiday and students returning to class after the winter break.

"Proof of vaccination requirements may also begin to be gradually lifted at this time, including for restaurants, bars and other food and drink establishments, facilities used for sports and recreational facilities and casinos, bingo halls and other gaming establishments," said the Province.

Come February 7, proof of vaccination requirements in high risk settings like nightclubs and strip clubs, could be lifted and, by March 28, a return to normalcy will be closer than ever.

"At this time (March 28), it is intended that remaining public health and workplace safety

measures will be lifted, including wearing face coverings in indoor public settings," said the Province. "Recommendations may be released for specific settings, if appropriate. In addition, the Provincial requirement for Proof of Vaccination will be lifted for all remaining settings, including meeting and event spaces, sporting events, concerts, theatres, cinemas, racing venues and commercial and film productions with studio audiences."

In order to manage COVID-19 long term, the new roadmap also allows for local and regional responses to combat the virus based on local data. Measures that could be introduced by the local health units could include reintroducing capacity limits or physical distancing requirements in certain settings – "in exceptional circumstances."

"York Region welcomes the recent release of the Ontario Government's plan to safely reopen Ontario and manage COVID-19 for the long-term," said Dr. Richard Gould, Acting Medical Officer of Health for the Region of York. "The plan also allows for local health units to reintroduce capacity limits and other public health measures based on local data and COVID-19 case counts. While we're pleased with the Provincial announcement, residents are reminded that COVID-19 continues to be present in our community."

LOCAL STATS

As of Tuesday, October 26, Aurora has seen a total of 2,059 cases of COVID-19, 1,999 of which are now marked as recovered.

There have been 48 fatalities. Of the 12 active cases, 8 are related to local transmission, close contact, or unknown exposure, while 3 are attributed to school settings, and 1 is related to travel.

Between October 19 and October 26, 52.7 per cent of cases were among the unvaccinated eligible population aged 12+.

87.2 per cent of Aurora residents had received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine at the start of the week, while the number of residents with one dose stood at 89.9 per cent.

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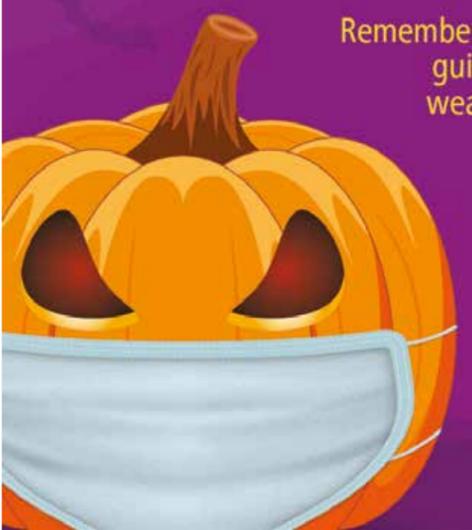


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York Region

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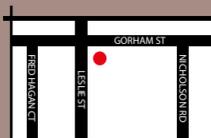
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First Responders spearhead book drive for area youth



Welcoming Arms volunteers received a book donation from the Aurora Detachment of the OPP and Scholastic Canada at their base behind Trinity Anglican Church last week.

Contributed photo

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Reading is fundamental and a good book can literally change lives – but, for some youth, putting their hands on a compelling book, a gripping graphic novel, and an entertaining comic book can be a challenge.

But York Region Paramedic Services, Central York Fire Services, and the Aurora detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police, along with Welcoming Arms, have joined forces to ensure teens have access to the books and stories that they love.

The local first responders came together for the cause earlier this year, keeping in mind the impact COVID-19 has had on everyone, regardless of age. They believe that a book can transport people to “wonderous places, push our minds to

imagine new things, and learn about topics we have not known before. It can provide an escape and joy in these challenging times.”

Over the last few months, the four organizations have been accepting donations of new books, novels, comic books and graphic novels at the local OPP detachment at 100 Bloomington Road West, Fire Station 4-4 on Wellington Street East, Station 4-1 on Gorham Street in Newmarket, and two Newmarket paramedic stations.

Scholastic Canada earlier this month made a significant contribution to their efforts, donating multiple boxes of new books to Welcoming Arms which will be distributed to local youth, teens and tweens.

“Generally speaking, our teens and tweens, I think, get lost in the mix,” says OPP Sergeant Clayton Brown. “You hear about toy drives, which are for young

kids, but teens and tweens seem to be forgotten about. This is an opportunity to do something for them. Particularly with COVID going on, there are a lot of kids who are struggling out there so it is a way to provide something positive and some kind of escape. I think reading is very powerful and can be very positive and uplifting.

“This is a book drive for youth and I think if we don’t say that, you’re going to get your Ken Follets, your Grisham books, and you’re going to get the stuff that’s big sellers, but ideally what we’re looking for is that young adult teen stuff, in a perfect world. Having said that, if [a book store] says ‘we have all these Top 20 books’ we’re not going to turn it away, but we’re really trying to get that market that seems to be forgotten. If people want to contribute, that is what we’re looking for. With comics being donated, it is kind of an outside-the-box idea, but you have these kids who have been hit with COVID, they don’t have summer jobs, and are struggling in that way. This is something that they probably wouldn’t do for themselves and that is what we’re looking for here: that little something positive.”

That donation from Scholastic was a “big something positive” with “a few hundred” books coming in from them in their October donation, but smaller businesses are contributing as well, including R&D Comics based in the St. Andrew’s Village Plaza set to host a live event for the book drive later this fall before they bring the campaign to a close in the first week of December.

“This will give us the opportunity with Welcoming Arms to go and do the deliveries,” says Sergeant Brown. “The plan is to go until the first week of December to give Welcoming Arms the opportunity to do that last delivery to our youth in the community before we all get really busy.

“We would love to know of a kid who taps into a new author, or discovers these comic books and says, ‘I never get to buy comic books because I don’t get to go

out and do that for myself.’ That kind of feedback, I think, makes it all worth while. For me, reading is always worthwhile and having that enthusiasm, that energy to find a new author they keep with them as they grow up is what we want to hear.

“You don’t have to look too far to see the impact of who it is we’re trying to help. Even if you don’t have kids in your life or don’t have youth in your life, this is your opportunity to have that positive impact on someone else’s kids.”

If you would like to make an impact, new books can be donated to the OPP Detachment between 8.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m., Monday to Friday, at either fire station between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., and at the York Region Paramedic Services Stations (135 Aspenwood and 45 Harry Walker Parkway, Newmarket) between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.



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BUSINESS & FINANCE



Men's fashion show supports local hospital and shop local movement

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

If you're making the transition back to the office and want to get a few ideas for new looks to take back to your team, you can see some sleek new threads in action November in a fundraiser benefiting not only our local hospital but a local Aurora business.

On Wednesday, November 10, Mike Rathke, owner of Aurora's MR Menswear, will host a Whisky & Wine fundraiser and fashion show at Newmarket's NewRoads Performing Arts Centre (formerly Newmarket Theatre).

Now in its eleventh year, proceeds from the event will support the most urgent needs currently being faced by the Stronach Regional Cancer Centre at Southlake Regional Health Centre and

will feature a bevy of male models from Southlake's team of physicians.

As a two-time cancer survivor, Mr. Rathke knows all too well the importance of having quality cancer care close to home, and has been a long-time supporter of the hospital long before he most urgently needed their services.

"It is a tradition for me regarding Southlake and the Cancer Centre there and I am glad the doctors are involved again this year," he says. "We have got six doctors modelling for us and they are each going to be up there twice. We'll be dressing them right from the average gentleman going to the office all the way down to casual wear and vacation attire.

"As a two-time cancer survivor, the amount of people in this Town who supported me when I was going through it four years ago was just incredible. I started donating at the hospital in 2002



Mike Rathke, Owner of MR Menswear at Yonge and Church, is hosting a fashion show this November benefiting the Stronach Regional Cancer Centre at Southlake.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

and these efforts have just gotten bigger and bigger."

Since he began hosting these events, Mr. Rathke estimates they have raised over \$60,000 for local care and he's determined to bring in more this year than ever.

"It is a great feeling, for sure, to be celebrating the hospital this way, and we have just got to continue," says Mr. Rathke, whose business was, like countless others throughout COVID-19, hit particularly hard by lockdowns and subsequent restrictions. "With Christmas coming up, I am so looking forward to people going back to their offices and coming to pick up their outfits. I got a little excited back in September when I had three people come in the first week [we reopened] saying they were going back to the office three days a week and needed outfits. I thought, 'Oh, that's promising,' but I haven't seen anybody since - it's Zoom meetings, a lot of people are still wearing shirts and ties but just jeans below the desk."

If you're looking for ways to step up your workplace fashion game - or even find some alternatives to the below-the-desk jeans that have become a hallmark of

the last 19 months - consider coming out to the Whiskey, Wine & MR Menswear Fashion Show on November 10.

Doors open at 6.30 p.m. with whiskey sampling, wine tasting and food, with the fashion show hitting the catwalk at 7.45 p.m. General admission tickets are \$75 with all ticket sale proceeds going directly to the Southlake Foundation.

Southlake Regional Health Centre's Stronach Regional Cancer Centre serves close to 1.5 million people of York Region, North York, and South Simcoe County. Southlake sees more than 12,000 chemotherapy and supportive treatment visits, more than 29,000 radiation treatment sessions, and nearly 66,000 outpatient visits in a year.

"This is a great cause to support local business but also an organization that serves the whole community," says Mr. Rathke. "The locals all know me and have supported me through all this and I honestly don't know how I could have done it without them. It's a great little Town."

For more information on the event, including ticket sales, visit southlake.ca/MRfashion.

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Vaccine debate spills into Diversity & Inclusion Plan talks

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Can a workplace that requires employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 truly be an inclusive one?

That was the question posed to consultants last week as Aurora Council considered a number of recommendations in a draft Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Action Plan for Town Hall.

As The Auroran reported last week, the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan is being considered for implementation to ensure the municipal public workplace is reflective of the community it serves.

This includes putting safeguards in place to ensure “unconscious bias” of any kind is not a factor in the hiring process and ensuring workplace training is inclusive and conscious of various needs.

While the plan is still yet to go before the Town’s Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Racism Task Force for their review and input, Council weighed in on the draft plan and the actions contained within it last week.

“I am excited for the groundwork being done here and the ability to continue to build upon and grow the culture of our organization because I think it is so essential,” said Councillor

Michael Thompson, adding he was looking forward to input from the Task Force.

This enthusiasm was shared by Councillor Sandra Humfries who said not only was the “timing” right to bring this forward but so was the content.

“We need to do this,” she said. “It is so important now more than ever and the more we can train and learn and really have those values, those visions, [and] the mission values understood. This is very, very important and all these areas are very important for us to work on.”

Councillor Rachel Gilliland was also supportive, adding that setting out core values and laying it out for staff and Council members alike to follow was important as well. In implementation, however, she asked how technology would play a part on achieving the goals.

In response, consultant Dr. Nafeesa Jalal said that technology will be particularly important in the hiring process to ensure “unconscious bias” is not a factor in new hires at Town Hall. One such example is programs that remove factors like name and gender from the application process so candidates are evaluated on merits alone.

Dr. Jalal noted further that Council needs to consider courses of action for employees who “aren’t in line” with the principles of the plan.

“We as an organization need to set our standards to define who we are at

the Town of Aurora,” she said. “If we say we’re an anti-racist organization, then we’re an anti-racist organization. If someone comes into our organization or already exists in our organization who is okay with racism, we have to be very clear in saying we appreciate and value you as a person, but this is not going to be acceptable. I think as soon as you, as a Town, an organization, define yourself to say, ‘We stand for diversity and inclusion, we welcome people with diverse backgrounds because that is who we are as Canadians...’ we are going to say everyone has a voice at the table regardless of who you are and what you are.”

“Does everyone within the organization feel we are a fair organization? Sometimes we feel we’re a fair organization, but when we speak to people they might have different opinions.”

But will municipal employees who are now required to get vaccinated against COVID-19 without a valid reason for exemption have different opinions on how “fair” Town Hall is? That was a question that Councillor John Gallo, who was one of three Council members earlier this month who argued against mandatory vaccines for all municipal employees, wanted answers to.

“In terms of equity and inclusion, the Town of Aurora recently put in a policy to mandate that staff provide personal medical status regarding their vaccination,” said Councillor Gallo. “If you don’t, ultimately you could be fired. In terms of equity and inclusion, how do we, I guess, bridge that gap?... Reading the report and listening to you (Dr. Jalal) I had difficulty bridging that gap.”

While the recent mandate was not something Dr. Jalal said she considered in her recommendations, she provided her opinion based not only in her role as a consultant, but in her role as a person with a doctorate in Public Health, working on the front lines of the pandemic.

“The importance of vaccinations is commonplace to all of us,” she said, adding that she was wearing “both hats” while addressing the question. “The human rights piece comes in where some people might not be able to take vaccines because of medical history... if you have a policy if someone is able to provide you a medical record to say they are not, for medical reasons, able to take the vaccine for issues that they would have, then we may have to consider that. We may have to say the vaccination policy is required from everyone at the Town with the exception of A, B, C, D and that exception for A, B, C, D is where we incorporate our fairness piece. We want to be fair to everyone, so we can’t have a blanket approach that everyone is vaccinated or else they are not going to be working at the Town if they have reasons that are valid for not having a vaccine.”

“The two big grounds from a human rights perspective that have been allowed in terms of the vaccination, one is the medical status of people. If you have a medical condition that does not permit you to take the vaccine and you have

a medical record to support that, that has been respected by institutions and all bodies that are now requiring a mandatory vaccination. The second one has been on religious grounds. If people are coming to you with the religious ground to say our religion does not permit a vaccination, we have seen a smaller number of this, but it still existed and it still continues to exist, so that is another ground in terms of the human rights side where people can come to you and say, ‘Well, we work at the Town and we would like to continue to work with the Town. We have a religious restriction on which we’re unable to take a vaccine.’ The equity piece really comes into the piece of fairness. Are we being fair with our policies? If we have a vaccination for all policy, of course the exemption has to exist for people who are not able to take the vaccine. We cannot fire someone when they are not medically able to take the vaccine. We can’t fire someone when they say they belong to a religion or a faith that does not allow them to take the vaccine.”

While Councillor Gallo said he wasn’t “entirely sure” that the vaccine policy aligns with those principles, Mayor Tom Mrakas said that valid exemptions are part of the policy.

“I think that it is about providing health and safety for all our employees while being fairer, equitable and inclusive,” said Mayor Mrakas, adding he would like Dr. Jalal’s opinion on the policy in full.

“We talked about culture and we have heard it around the table with culture, and how do you change culture?” he continued. “I love the fact that the number one on the list is commitment from the top and I think it is so important that people need to understand culture does not change unless there is that commitment from the top. Ultimately, I believe diversity and inclusion strategies are not just simply a task on a list, to be completed and forgotten about. They should be and will be an integral part of our community, woven into the fabric of our community, as we go forward towards a more positive, inclusive future...I am excited about us moving forward in the direction we are.”

Zombie Hunt hits the streets in support of St. John Ambulance

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A zombie invasion is set to invade the community this week – but don’t be alarmed, they’ll do you no harm. In fact, they might do a lot of good.

This Sunday, October 31, the York Region Zombie Hunt will take place at Newmarket’s Riverwalk Commons in support of St. John Ambulance.

Now in its second year, the event aims to not only raise funds for St. John Ambulance but local businesses at the same time.

In the lead-up to the main event, which will see four “waves” of Zombies take over Newmarket’s historic core, the event will be preceded by a different kind of hunt to showcase these businesses.

“In partnership with the Shop Local campaign, people can find Zombie Hunt Brain Ballots at local businesses and earn an entry into a draw for prizes donated by our event sponsors,” says Jason Colterman. “Through this ballot, we are also asking people to nominate their favourite local business for a Zombie’s Choice Award. The Zombie Hunt Shop Local Draw is free to participate in and open to everyone supporting local businesses.”

“The second part of our event is an in-person walk on October 31 with participants meeting at Riverwalk Commons and then making their way

up Main Street in Newmarket. Due to social distancing guidelines, the walk is broken into three waves, starting at 12 noon, 2 and 4 p.m. Registration is required and is limited to up to 100 people per wave.”

Registration is \$10 per person for the “wave” of their choice, with all proceeds going to support the work of St. John, including their therapy dog program.

“At St. John Ambulance our mission is to enable Canadians to improve their health, safety and quality of life by providing training (first aid) and community services (health and safety),” say organizers. “Since 1884 the St. John Council for Ontario has been the provincial arm of St. John Ambulance, a worldwide, humanitarian, federally registered charitable organization dedicated to the service and well-being of others. St. John delivers quality community service and training through its 30 branches, 1,000 nationally certified instructors and over 5,000 volunteers in Ontario.”

Programs include youth services, focusing on opportunities for young people in first aid, health care training, community services and more; medical first responders, who have a highly visible presence at many events across Ontario providing basic first aid when needed; car seat safety programs; and the therapy dog program.

For more information, including registration, visit yrczombiehunt.com.



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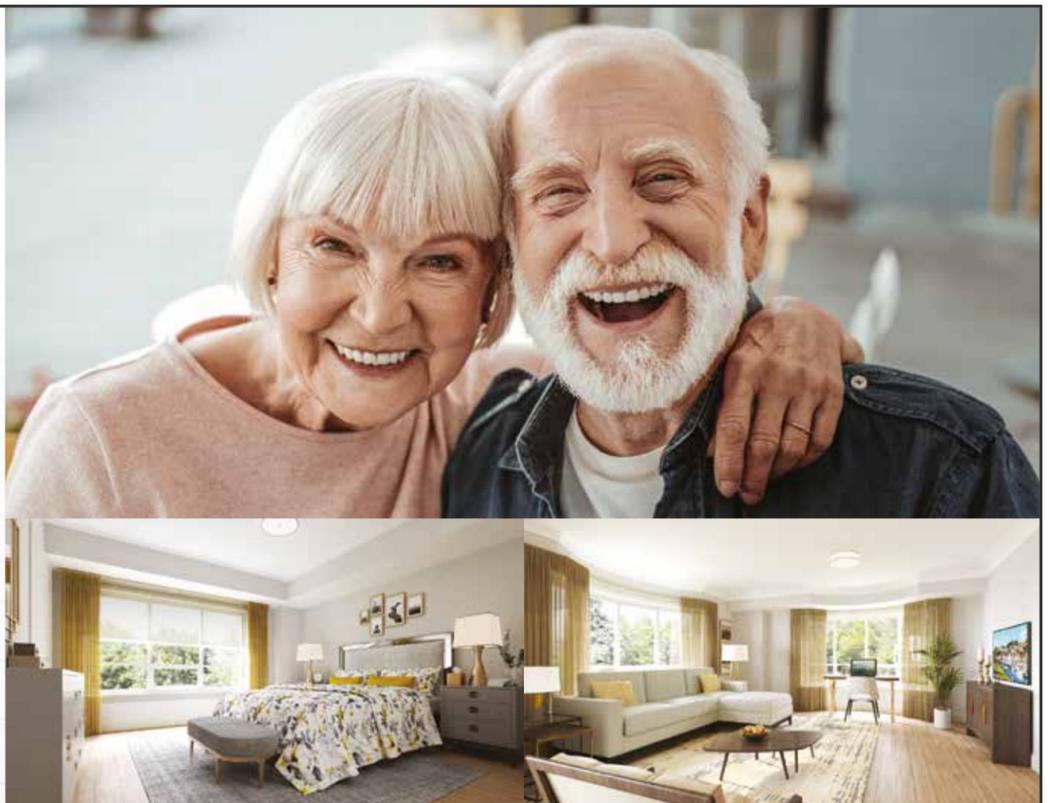
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Jazz favourite Barbra Lica brings live entertainment back to Cultural Centre

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Her powerful stage presence has brought her acclaim from around the

world, and now jazz singer Barbra Lica is bringing her trademark style and quartet to Aurora next Friday, November 5, for an indoor concert hosted by the Aurora Cultural Centre.

This will be not only the first indoor in-

person concert for the Cultural Centre in their fall season, it will be the first indoor in-person concert for Lica and her team as well – but not just for the fall, since the start of the global pandemic.

“It is both terrifying and exciting because, on the one hand, I am just so excited to be with the guys again and I love them a lot and being on stage with real people and having that exchange of energy, I think I am personally starving for it!” says Lica, who received a Juno Award nomination for Vocal Jazz Album of the Year in 2017. “At the same time, I haven’t done a live concert with them since February of 2020. We have done digital things, we’ve done empty venues, and sure it is nice but it is weird playing for an empty room and looking at empty chairs.”

There is no doubt that fans of live music are equally starving for live entertainment and at the November 5 concert, which will take place before audiences at the Aurora Armoury with a live feed for ticket-holders who don’t feel quite comfortable yet heading out for an in-person show, will feature the jazz standards audiences have come to love from Lica as well as new tracks from their upcoming album.

“I’ll be performing for an audience for the first time some of the new songs that are going to be on the upcoming project,” she shares. “I am releasing it as a song a month once [the tracks] start coming out and it will be compiled at the end.

“I am a bit of a sap and I am trying out new love songs,” she continues with a laugh. “It has been a goal of mine for years, possibly my entire lifetime as a huge fan of rom-coms and chick flicks. I am always trying to write the next chick flick song, always the big explosive love song that happens. It’s a goal of mine to have my music featured in the next big rom-com.”

Not every song will be that big, explosive tune that comes with the proverbial fireworks when the two leads kiss for the first time. Jazz of all varieties is a passion for Lica who first became interested in jazz listening to the works of Ella Fitzgerald and particularly Fitzgerald’s duets with Louis Armstrong.

“I just put it on, they started singing together and I have never had that feeling before; I remember falling backwards,”

she says. “I think when you go through childhood and you have this feeling that is lacking a kind of awareness and you just live moment to moment but you never really have that sense of identity that comes from really loving something – but I just remember that moment because it is the first time I just really loved and got excited about something just independently. They sounded amazing so I wanted to be where they are.”

It was an interest that, in retrospect, she played almost close to the chest.

With professional musicians for parents, she says joining the “family business” was the last thing she wanted to do, pursuing microbiology and immunology at university. But as soon as she graduated, she knew she couldn’t hide her passion any longer.

“Music just kept taking off,” she says. “I would try to make it not work, I would literally attend my jazz combo rehearsals in my lab coat and then run off to nighttime laboratory – I even remember the other musicians would get pissed at me and the guy I am married to was in one of my combos and he always talked about how much he didn’t like me because they were all there to take things seriously and I was running off in my lab coat.

“On the day I graduated, I finally gave in. You can’t fight music. It’s a bug. I am so addicted to it and it is something I love to do every day.”

For her, the perfect song “just feels like the perfect marriage of words and music,” and it is this pursuit that fuels her.

“I am not a hippy-dippy person, I tend to be very logical, I love spreadsheets, but when it comes to music there is some kind of energy, whether it is between you and the other band members, you and the audience...it just energizes you in a way that you can’t emulate with anything else.”

If you would like to be a part of that energy, the Aurora Cultural Centre will present Barbra Lica and her live quartet at the Armoury on Friday, November 5. Performance is at 7.30 p.m. with light food options available for purchase in advance of the event. Tickets are \$35 a head for the in-person show and \$15 for the live stream. For more information, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca.

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Ready to Walk the Hall: Lois Thompson needed softball and the sport needed her right back



Lois Thompson, pictured in the front row, far right, with the Ladies League in 1975, is part of the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame's Class of 2021.

Contributed photo

By Robert Belardi

We might ask ourselves every day how do we want to live? Do you want to throw off the bedsheets every morning and say this is just another day? Or do we find something we love and pursue it no matter what it took?

Lois Thompson took it upon herself to find reason since she was young.

Growing up in the village of Drayton, ON, just north of Kitchener-Waterloo, Lois Thompson fell in love with softball.

"After school we used to play ball. I was really young, seven or eight years old, I think. I think the only reason they let me play was because they needed the numbers. I don't know!" Thompson said. "Ever since then, everywhere I seemed to go, I wasn't content until I found a team to play on. What can I say? It's my sport!"

In 1967, Thompson and her husband Bob purchased their first home right here in Aurora.

A simple and private woman, she sought to start her life in a much larger community than where she came from. But she was adamant on one thing, of course, and that was seeking out the local ball club.

She watched the local men's team play and couldn't help but wonder why there wasn't a women's team?

"Very shortly thereafter, we founded the ladies league, and they're still playing, which is great," Thompson said.

"We ended up with four teams and I got sponsors for our team. There was a bunch of us that got together and put out the word. We had enough interest for the four teams."

Thus, the Aurora Ladies Softball League was formed between the year

of 1968-69. The Auroran's Diane Buchanan was also involved in getting the league started and played a little ball herself.

Thompson, who said she was fortunate to be a stay-at-home mother, played up until her two daughters, Cheryl and Barbara, were ready to play rep ball in 1971. She packed in her playing career and, along with Bob, began coaching and convening.

In 1978, she got involved with an Aurora Diggers team.

"By 1979, there were three Diggers teams and we decided to get together and thus the Aurora Diggers Girls Softball Association was formed in the fall of 1979. I have been the secretary and treasurer ever since."

Simultaneously, she joined Provincial Women's Softball and Softball Ontario and became a manager. Thompson had a part to play in the first women's softball team that Canada watched compete in the Olympics in 1996.

In 2001, in London, ON, in front of a stellar crowd of 1,500 people, she also managed Team Ontario past Team Alberta to win the gold medal, in one of her most memorable softball moments she had ever experienced in her life.

In her life, aside from playing ball, Thompson loved to volunteer her time elsewhere in the community with school track and field events and camping. She's an outdoor girl, who has a passion for gardening.

Now, the 79-year-old who recently was awarded the Town of Aurora Volunteer Service Award for her contributions over the past 40 years in the community, is incredibly thankful to be honoured in the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame recently.

When asked how she felt when she

got the phone call, Thompson said she was very honoured.

"I'm not sure you want to know," she chuckled. "Awards usually aren't my thing. I don't like to be in the highlights. But I am very honoured to be selected and thanks to all of the people who worked towards the nomination."

Thompson said that after being nominated it was fun for her to travel back down memory lane and sift through all of her photos. She doesn't

do it very often and it was interesting to go through all of the newspaper clippings.

Throughout her time, she made memorable friends throughout her softball career that have been there with her every step of the way.

To meet Thompson, you can do so at the Induction Celebration Dinner set to be held at the Royal Venetian on November 18. Tickets are still available for purchase online at aurorashof.ca

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York United draw Atletico Ottawa, winless in last five games

By Robert Belardi

A late 80-minute header from Chrisnovic N'Sa secured the point as York United keep their playoff hopes alive following a 1-1 draw from Atletico Ottawa.

It wasn't one of the prettiest performances from the Nine Stripes, but it was enough to earn a point for their fourth straight match.

At least that's the positive side of things, but as for the problems and the improvements column, there is still plenty left to do with three games left.

This was a perfect matchup for York United to earn the three points against a second-to-last place Atletico Ottawa side playing for pride.

However, it was the Otletti who created more chances, and 15 minutes in the boys were rewarded.

Antoine Coupland's shot from just outside the 18-yard box deflected off of York defender Matteo Campagna and went right past Nathan Ingham's trailing leg to make it 1-0.

Of course, with 10 minutes left to go, the Nine Stripes tied the match. A lovely ball from the right side of the 18-yard-box from Noah Verhoeven found N'Sa soaring above the defence and he potted home the tying goal.

On the day, York United once again struggled to find the back of the net and it was Atletico Ottawa who found themselves with the upper hand.

Ottawa put forward 21 shots on goal with seven hitting the target, shooting almost at will against a timid York side.

York dominated possession



Contributed photo

holding 57 per cent of the ball, and their 13 shots had two hit the target.

It wasn't a pleasant day offensively and even the One Soccer commentators for the match pointed out how York United were unwilling to change things up formation-wise. Chances seemed rare and it was clear that York didn't know exactly what to do with the ball in some cases.

Ahead of the match, head coach Jimmy Brennan said it was a must-win game and Atletico Ottawa is a tough team because you don't know what team you're getting on that day.

He said his side were going to be on the front foot and in this case, only produced one goal.

Prior to the Atletico Ottawa bout,

York United have been one of the top teams in the league for shots put forward each game.

York United lead the entirety of the Canadian Premier League with 246 total shots on the year and rank second for goals forward with 31.

Although the numbers are there, as mentioned in previous weeks, the results must arrive. It's time as the boys cannot let any more crucial points slip away if they want to be in a playoff spot.

York is currently one point behind the HFX Wanderers for fourth place with three matches to go.

They're on the road this Saturday to take on Pacific FC. Kick-off is at 6 p.m. EST.



Getting Things Done

Mayor Tom Mrakas

Last week at Regional Council, we discussed intensification targets and engaged in a long debate about appropriate intensification. The staff recommendation was to start with 50% intensification and phase to 55% by 2051. During the discussion, a proposed amendment was made seeking a 60% target.

Intensification rates reflect the amount of new residential growth directed to existing built-up areas with the idea that "...directing a significant amount of new residential growth to existing built-up areas makes the best use of infrastructure, including transit, water and wastewater. It also minimizes outward growth into York Region's agricultural areas."

While it sounds great on paper, a larger percentage of intensification would stop urban sprawl and this "top-down" regional approach to planning may have negative impacts on individual communities.

In this case, one size certainly does not fit all.

Region-wide intensification targets impact each municipality differently. Thus, how each municipality intensifies should be the decision of each individual community, not a Region decision. By having the target at 50% it opens "white-belt" lands for development. But what if those "white-belt" lands are not needed to hit those targets? Shouldn't the municipality decide this as opposed to the Region? It may be a bit of a moot point in Aurora as we don't have any "white-belt" lands. However, the larger issue of meeting regional intensification targets remains.

Intensification will occur, it is provincially mandated, but the amount, the rate, how high we must go to accommodate this growth should be Aurora's decision. No town, no individual community should be required to overdevelop to meet regionwide intensification targets.

This is the problem with setting the target too high. I believe that each municipality should have a greater say in what percentage they believe to be appropriate for their community. Some communities will see 80, 90 or even 100% intensification. But, at the same time, a few will struggle to even meet the 50% target.

As such, I was unable to support the proposed 60% intensification target. I don't think we in Aurora should tell our York Region neighbours how and what is appropriate for their community. Just as I am sure all of Aurora would agree they would not want those neighbours to make decisions affecting how our community should grow.

This brings me to my larger point: the need for a rethink of Regional Planning. I know the Region and the local municipalities are intertwined, so some aspects of planning need to be at the Region level. However, I do believe the scope of regional planning should be narrowed.

Regional planning should be limited to regional issues – issues that require integrated planning decisions: policing, transit, major infrastructure like water/wastewater etc., which spans all nine municipalities (and it should include regional fire as well, but that's a discussion for another day). For planning matters which are not regionwide or do not impact multiple municipalities, there should be more autonomy for local municipalities' planning processes.

I'm repeating myself, but a one size fits all approach to planning does not work.

Not everyone wants to live in a city. The beauty of the Region is we are all different communities. That there is variety, people choose where they want to live and raise a family not out of necessity, but because they fall in love with what the community has to offer. Top-down region wide planning decisions can have unintended, negative impacts on our communities; potentially eroding what makes each community unique, one decision at a time.

We need a conversation about what Region planning should look like as we plan our community's futures – individually and collectively as a Region.

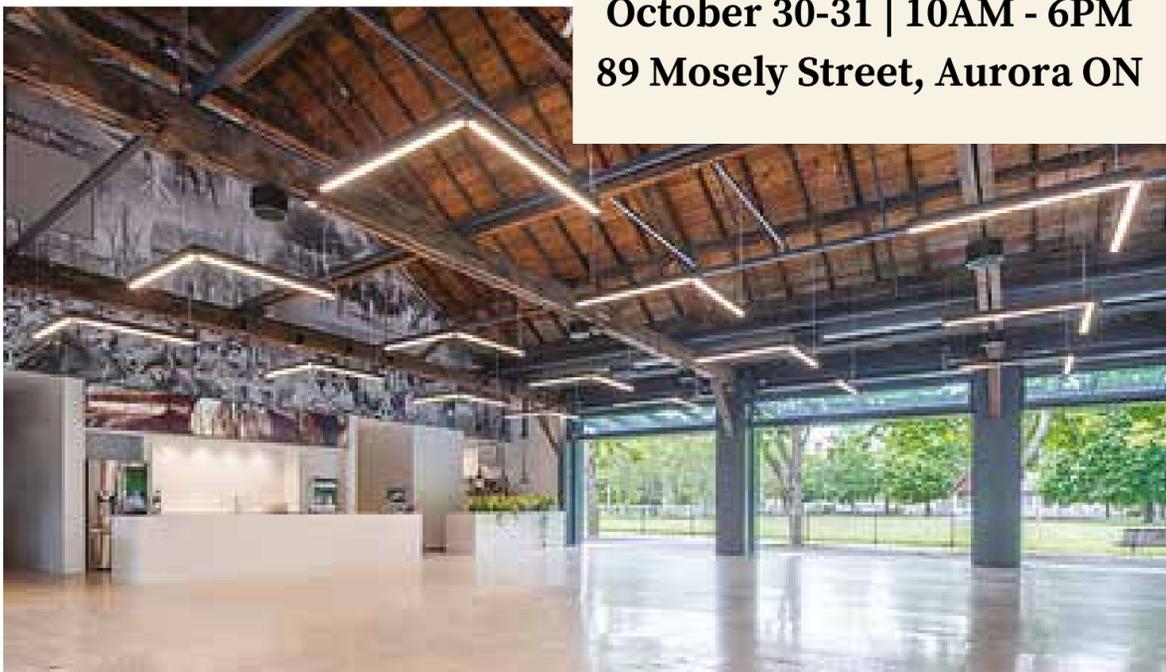
As always, If you have any questions please contact me by email tmrakas@aurora.ca or by phone 416-543-1624. I am here for you.

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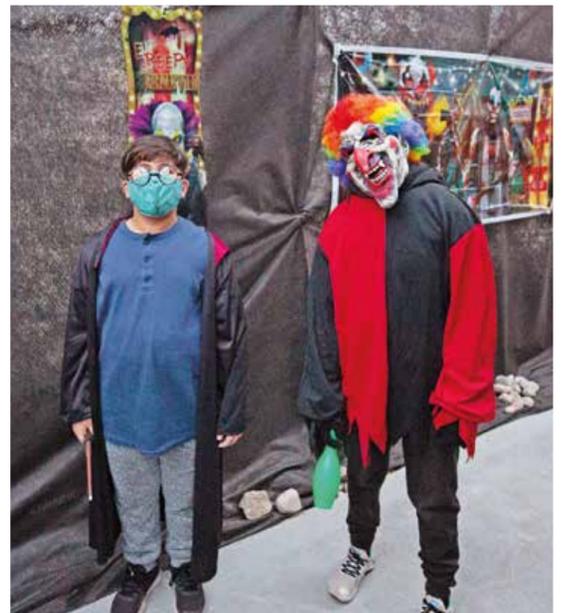
GHOSTS AND GOBLINS TAKE OVER GREENHOUSE



The Halloween Haunt is now on at Aurora's Haunted Greenhouse. Having opened Saturday, October 23, at the Joint Operations Centre on Industrial Parkway North, the spectacular showcase runs on select dates and times through October 30. Pre-registration is required. For more information, visit aurora.ca/hauntedgreenhouse.

(Top Row) Anaya meets Genie, Aladdin and Jasmine from Disney's Aladdin. Ursula from The Little Mermaid had her tentacles on the pulse of the community. Who's afraid of the big, bad wolf? Hallowe'en revellers and Little Red Riding Hood, that's who! (Second Row) An undersea adventure. Mikaela and Noah meet Miss Trunchbull and Bruce Bogtrotter from Matilda. Marquee Theatrical Productions offered some spooky science in a hut outside the JOC. (Third Row) The huts also had some scares up their sleeves. Mahail welcomes guests. (Fourth Row) Noah and Katrina managed to stay dry on their undersea adventure. Amanda and Jon experience some haunted hospitality. Mellady encounters a not-very-laughable clown. (Fifth Row) Karyee and Kattyn make a bewitching and regal entrance. Hudson, Alana, Constanti, and John prepare to venture into the Haunt.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger



Poppy marks 100 years as poignant symbol of remembrance



Poppy chair Bonnie Robertson displays a traditional lapel poppy, with some new additions to the Royal Canadian Legion's line -- including a mask and earrings. Fully committed to her role, Ms. Robertson also sports a poppy manicure, but you will have to seek that out yourself if you're looking to make a statement!
Auroran photo by Brock Weir

From page 1

for King, Queen and Country.

In a typical year, a representation of the blazing flower can be seen just around every corner, particularly on the lapels of those who pause each year to make a donation to the Royal Canadian Legion's Poppy Fund.

But, as residents were encouraged to stay home in the lead up to Remembrance Day last year, the poppy wasn't as visible as it once was, and the local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion is looking to turn things around as restrictions continue to lift and there are more opportunities than ever before to contribute to the Legion's Poppy Fund.

From the traditional flower made out of velveteen plastic, to earrings, facemasks, scarves, and special hand-made poppies designed to harken back to their first introduction in 1921, you can make a contribution – and a statement – beyond your lapel or the outside of your jacket.

Not sure what the best poppy option is for you? Well, your best bet might be to ask Bonnie Robertson,

who joined the Aurora Legion just last year and has now taken on the mantle of Poppy Chair for the local branch.

And this isn't simply down to her position within this year's campaign.

Sitting down to speak to The Auroran last Thursday to discuss the official kick-off of this week's campaign, she provided no shortage of inspiration: from her face mask emblazoned with the poppy, poppy-shaped earrings, and even a manicure with poppies on every other finger.

All these are available from the Legion in the lead-up to Remembrance Day with one possible exception: if you want a Remembrance Day manicure, you'll likely have to seek that out on your own!

"This year is a little less restrictive than it was last year because we were still in lockdown," says Ms. Robertson. "We had to get poppy boxes and they had to sit for 72 hours before we could put them out [due to sanitation requirement]. This year, I think we might have a more successful campaign because people can go into restaurants, we can tag again

this year at the Beer Store, Walmart and different places – and getting a veteran out in a uniform generates a lot more donations than just a poppy box sitting on a counter.

"We're calling a lot more places ahead of time and are hoping to get into a lot more stores this year and with the schools being open again, we're hoping that we can get a lot more visibility there and more education in schools because they can now have their services again."

Last year, the Aurora Legion's Poppy Campaign brought in close to \$40,000 – but as impressive as this number sounds, it was about half of what they would bring in in a pre-pandemic year. With these new opportunities out there thanks to the loosening of many restrictions related to the pandemic, Ms. Robertson hopes they can crack the \$60,000 fundraising mark.

New wireless poppy boxes which allow members of the public to make a donation to the fund with the simple tap of their debit or credit cards at the point of purchase is another helpful advance born out of the pandemic that will continue this year.

This money, she stresses, does not go into the local Legion's coffers. Instead, 100 per cent of all proceeds go directly to benefit veterans and their families.

"The most important thing I don't think a lot of people know, for me, is the poppy money goes directly to them," she says. "It doesn't go to pay our rent and hydro, it goes directly to veterans and their families."

One particular program, however, is getting special emphasis this year, according to Legion President Lori Hoyes.

"A big thing we're focusing on this year is PTSD support dogs, and that is something that has been really brought to light," says Ms. Hoyes. "At our recent convention, there were two

veterans there with their support dogs and the Poppy Chair for the Ontario Provincial Command had a chance to sit down and talk with these veterans and realized a dog can make a world of difference, but it is a huge cost to train a dog and that is something we like to support through our poppy fund.

"There is also a big focus on Leave the Streets Behind, which is an Ontario Command program that a lot of our money goes to support as well. That is for homeless veterans. In Toronto or wherever, there are lots of veterans that just find it very difficult when they transitioned from the Military back to civilian life and it is a big thing. I just want to see everybody remembering those who have sacrificed and those who served their country."

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New crosswalk gets tentative green light ahead of Machell and Irwin development

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new stop sign and crosswalk could soon be in place at the intersection of Machell Avenue and Irwin Avenue pending a Council decision this week.

The move, which goes against recommendations from municipal staff, was tentatively approved by Aurora Council at the Committee level on October 19.

A potential traffic control measure in the area was first floated by Councillor Harold Kim earlier this year through a motion in which he outlined his concerns that the area was being used by drivers from outside the immediate neighbourhood as a way to bypass the busy Yonge and Wellington intersection.

The idea gained further traction at a Public Planning meeting earlier this month where area residents expressed concerns over the impact a proposed condo development for the southwest corner of Irwin and Yonge might have on local traffic.

But going into last week's Committee meeting, however, Council members faced a report from staff saying the current traffic volumes at Machell and Irwin don't meet the Town's criteria for a "controlled intersection."

"You have to keep in mind that even though traffic warrants criteria were not met, we're still in a COVID situation where some of the traffic is still muted," said Councillor Kim in response to the recommendation. "I see no reason why we can't go against the staff recommendation and be proactive in this case. Right now, the three-way intersection is not like other intersections; it is not a large thoroughfare, but it is quickly becoming one. I think the all-way stop sign [and] cross walk delivers traffic management, [and] helps the livability of residents on the street."

From the perspective of Councillor Wendy Gaertner, this was not the "only solution" for traffic issues in the area, but it is worth a shot.

"The traffic cutting through is also an issue and I would like to try and find a way to limit that or completely stop that," she said. "I am not sure about the crosswalk though. I would like to put the stop sign in place and then see if we need a crosswalk there."

"But I think we need to err on the side of caution and do a stop there."

Councillor Michael Thompson offered a similar viewpoint to that of Councillor Harold Kim, stating that the evaluation of whether or not the area met traffic warrants was incomplete. The report, he noted, refers to traffic "at this time" and "under the existing conditions" but the current state of traffic is likely to shift sooner rather than later.

"I am cognizant of the fact Council has before it a significant planning application for that corner that would significantly impact the warrants and the data that is in this report," he said. "I like the opportunity to be proactive rather than reactive. We're hearing from residents today that there is a situation and yes...in the report it doesn't meet the warrants, but I don't want to get into a situation where we're dealing with this well after the fact and the situation [is compounded]."

"When I look at this report and I think about the planning application, while it ultimately may still change in certain aspects of it, given the Centro building across the street, I think there will be something on that corner...[and] it is going to meet or exceed those warrants. I am comfortable moving ahead with the amendment and supporting because I get that today it doesn't meet the warrants, but I think it will."

But this uncertainty over the development was cause enough to give Councillor Rachel Gilliland pause.

"The planning application is not finalized," she said. "For all I know, they could pull it and they won't build anything. I really don't know what it is going to look like when it is built, the traffic, and maybe a stop sign isn't going to solve the problem."

Maybe it will be calming measures like speed humps instead.

"I understand we want to be proactive, but we don't know what the finalized planning application is going to be like. It was quite clear to the developers that traffic analysis of the area was incomplete and needed to have some refinements...we weren't sure what the parking was going to be, so I think it is very preliminary to be installing a stop sign at this point because it just might not be the right solution."

On a similar token, Councillor John Gallo was unconvinced and voted against the motion – albeit for a different reason.

Citing Council's decision last year to install a stop sign on John West Way

at Amberhill, Councillor Gallo says he regularly sees vehicles backed up at the intersection and questions if there have been any studies out there on the carbon footprint attached to vehicles waiting at such stop signs.

"It is significant when we keep introducing these things when the merits aren't there," he said. "Even if we think it is justified, I don't think it is a complete picture. As a Town, we keep promoting we're being conscious of our carbon footprint and we're doing so much to be able to deal with environmental issues [and] to me this is a big one."

"I am happy to monitor it and if here comes a point where it is justified, then obviously we move forward with it."

Decommissioned pipe is not the source of basement water: Town

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

An pipe uncovered in recent demolitions on Yonge Street near Irwin Avenue is not the cause of flooding in the basements of some homes on Irwin and nearby Machell Avenue, according to municipal staff.

Concerns were first voiced at Aurora's Public Planning meeting earlier this month, sparking action from Council and Municipal Staff.

At the time, an unsealed water pipe was floated as the possible culprit for this flooding, including one resident who reported pressurized water coming up through his foundations, but preliminary work has concluded this is not the case.

"We have confirmed that the pipe was not one of the possible sources

of water [and it] had been sealed as part of the demolitions," Doug Nadorozny, CAO for the Town of Aurora, told local lawmakers last week. "The resident also has another expert assessing the situation that he asked for in terms of his foundation, but we do have to do some coordinated work with York Region and figure out what the best solution is for the site and then also assess to what degree some of the issues might be with the foundation, even though there is a groundwater situation we're looking into."

"There are a number of people from our staff who are looking into this... and we're committed to getting back to the resident with some concrete actions or solutions, or at least analysis in terms of what we're finding, but it does involve the Region and we have been advised it will take some time."



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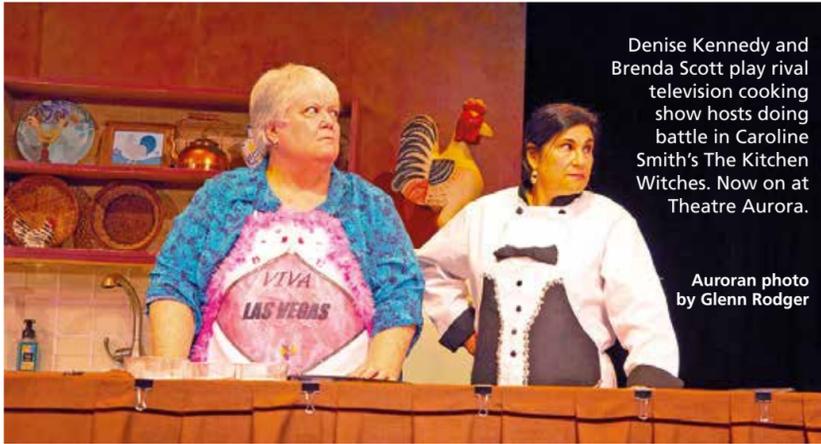
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The Kitchen Witches



A review
by Scott Johnston

After being darkened for 19 pandemic-filled months, the stage is once again lit at Theatre Aurora.

Fortunately, as we all really could use a laugh these days, their first show of the 2021-22 season is a comedy, "The Kitchen Witches".

Written by Canadian playwright Caroline Smith, this tells the story of two feuding cooking show hostesses.

Isobel and Dolly have known and hated each other for personal reasons for many years. When they are thrown together on a TV cooking show, their already boiling antagonism bubbles over, and before long, the ingredients and insults are flying. Will their new-found popularity bring them closer together, or will they kill each other first?

Director Kay Valentine has a small, but strong cast to work with.

As the two feuding cooks, Brenda Scott (Isobel) and Denise Kennedy (Dolly) are wonderfully balanced as they trade insults and innuendos. Whether alone or together, both actresses command the stage, while giving their characters some emotional depth as the story progresses.

Tristan Stansfield plays Stephen, Dolly's long-suffering son, and the cooking show's producer. His character's ever-present stress ball gets a complete

workout as he deals with his domineering mother, the demands of Isobel, and a few other surprises, all while trying to kick his smoking habit.

Mr. Stanfield is wonderfully comedic in his role, but it would have been nice if the script had given him more of an opportunity through the play to portray a wider range of emotions than those that are more anxiety-related.

The final character is "Rob the camera Guy". Despite his character having a non-speaking part, Nicolas Cramarossa is fun to watch, with his deft use of subtle physical comedy and reactions.

As can be expected, well-written script is filled with lots of verbal jousting and barbs. Despite their quirks and antagonism, all four characters evolve nicely as the play goes on.

All in all, this show at Theatre Aurora gives us a well acted, sharply written, and humour-filled return to our local theatre. It's good to be back.

Note that COVID protocols are in place at the theatre, which includes the requirement for patrons to wear masks at all times while within the building.

Evening performances of "The Kitchen Witches" continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, October 28, 29 and 30, and November 4, 5 and 6, with a matinee on October 31. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.

Coaching staff pleased with how Tigers are playing

By Robert Belardi

Following a 1-1-1-week, head coach of the Aurora Tigers Greg Johnston said he is very happy with where the staff and the players stand.

"I'm very, very happy with where we're at. Rob (Powers) and Joey (Piccone) are young coaches. Robby is very young in the coaching scheme of things and he is very prepared and does an excellent job with the defence, totally engaged. I'm the head guy but we coach by committee in the full scheme of things," Johnston said.

"We make adjustments live time. They come down to me and say what they think about this and I come down to them and ask them, 'what do they think about this?' It's a really good comfortable group. We're all on the same page. We know our roles and we're comfortable with those roles and then you got Jimmy (Thomson) on top the owner and talks to us regularly. He's got a good hockey background and we feed off of that as well."

Following a 5-1 loss to the Milton Menace, a 5-3 win against the Stouffville Spirit and an overtime loss to the Brantford 99ers, Johnston and the staff have been pleased with the boys. They are playing hard every night and giving it they're all. Their offence is secretly creative as the boys average 3.00 goals per game (14 in the league), averaging 33.9 shots per game (above the league average of 30.96).

But moving forward, there is a bigger emphasis on the defensive side of the puck as the Tigers currently rank 15 in the league in goals against, averaging 3.80 goals against per game.

"It's more just cleaning up. We don't have to do anything drastic. Overall, it's been pretty good. But we have to do a better job in protecting our house, and a little bit better on the defensive side of things. Sometimes we cheat a little bit and think offense before we take care of the defence," Johnston said.

"Power play has been good. Penalty kill has been very good. [We're] really happy with that. I don't think we're taking a lot of penalties, which is good. We're playing very disciplined. The guys are good [and] we've just got to take care of our end a little more. You can't expect to win giving up five. We have to be better defensively as a unit."

Johnston emphasised all of this, without taking away the offensive creativity his team possesses. He stressed the group has to find the right balance and the correct formula moving forward to stay within games.

Ranked in the top five in both power play and penalty kill, the Tigers' drastic changes over the past two years has made the world of a difference on the ice.

They had to put that all to the test against a top Georgetown Raiders side that is currently averaging 5.11 goals per game ranked third in the league and ranks fifth in goals against with 2.44 per game.

To view the results of that game, head to ojhl.ca.

To catch the Tigers in action this Friday, the boys will be on the road in Markham to challenge the Royals. In their two previous matchups, the Tigers took out the Royals 5-2 both times respectively.

Puck drop is this Friday in Markham at 7.30 p.m.

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One Book One Aurora and the **WINNERS** are...

ADULT



Auroran and The Aurora Public Library are pleased to announce the winners of the 2021 One Book One Aurora photo contest. This year, photographers answered a challenge inspired by Drew Hayden Taylor's "Chasing Painted Horses" to capture beauty in unexpected places and readers certainly delivered. (Top Row, Left) **First prize in the adult category goes to Ellen Davidson** with "Flora", a statue engulfed by nature. (Top Row, Right) **Second prize went to Sara Bedal** who captured these "enigmatic eyes staring out from a building in Toronto's Yorkville district." (Second Row, Left) **First prize in the youth category went to this image created by Zander Chernev.** (Second Row, Right) **Second prize in the youth category was awarded to Amelia Mendoza** who captured a pollinator garden.

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FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

From page 5

For argument's sake, let's assume there are twenty Aurora council candidates for the six ward seats. I humbly suggest that each Council candidate should be given an opportunity for a one to two-minute opening statement. Then, why not group the candidates into groups based on each ward.

Make each "bear pit" session either fifteen or twenty minutes. A question is then posed to the group. After a suitable amount of time has been spent on the question, another question is then put forward. Four to six questions should get dealt with during this time.

Each candidate can offer their respective opinion or challenge the assertions/policies of the others. This format can work if you have a very strong moderator who lays out the ground rules, and makes sure that the candidates follow them.

It also works if the candidates themselves truly respect their fellow candidates and give their competitors the time to finish their sentences before interrupting!

Another suggestion is that, while the event should be held as an open forum, there should not be public questions. Verbal questions from the audience are rarely asked with the sincere intention of seeking an answer. They are usually asked, after a suitably healthy and highly partisan pre-amble, only in order to embarrass one particular candidate.

Allow members of the media only to ask the questions or, prior to the event, have a panel choose from audience submitted written questions. Or have a mix of media and public questions, but have the moderator read out the questions.

The citizens of Aurora deserve a vigorous and respectful debate next fall on the issues of growth, the level, quality and costs of services, and the appropriate level of taxation. Revamping the debate format could lead to an interesting, engaging and thoughtful discussion of Aurora's future.

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

THINGS You Ought To Know

OCTOBER 23 - 30

Aurora's Haunted Greenhouse returns to the Joint Operations Centre on Industrial Parkway North on October 23, 27, 28, 29 and 30 with two time slots each night from 5.30 - 7 p.m., and from 7.30 - 9 p.m. Pre-registration is required at aurora.ca. There will be entertainment provided from the entrance through two family friendly greenhouses, followed by one greenhouse for those who want a good scare. You will end your fang-tastic evening with a trail of spooky huts. A charitable BBQ will be on-site for a nominal fee. Admission is \$3 per person for every member of the household attending the event. Upon entry, proof of vaccination is required for those 12 years of age and older, in addition to government-issued ID with your name and date of birth.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30

Come out to Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for the final Aurora Farmers' Market of the 2021 Outdoor Season. 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.

OCTOBER 28 - NOVEMBER 6

Theatre Aurora lifts the curtain for the first time since the start of the global pandemic with The Kitchen Witches, "a comedy with food by Caroline Smith" on select dates and times through November 6. Tickets are available at theatreaurora.com or by calling 905-727-3669. Theatre Aurora is located at 150 Henderson Drive.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

The Aurora Historical Society's Speaker Series continues this evening from 7 - 9 p.m. with Ted Barris. Ted Barris is an award-winning journalist, author, and broadcaster. His writing has regularly appeared in the national press, as well as magazines

as diverse as Air Force, esprit de corps and Zoomer. He has also worked as host/contributor for most CBC Radio network programs and on TV Ontario. And after 18 years teaching, he recently retired as a full-time professor of journalism at Toronto's Centennial College. Rush to Danger: Medics in the Line of Fire, published by HarperCollins, is Ted's 19th non-fiction book. For more information, call the Historical Society at 905-727-8991 or visit aurorahs.com.

ONGOING

Support AbuseHurts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. In the current COVID climate, a greater number of people are wanting to donate or get rid of unwanted items, increasing the need for more outlets being available to receive the items. This program will provide a convenient way for people to donate or get rid of used/unwanted clothing, blankets, linens and furniture and will help lessen the amount of items ending up in landfills. Materials that were previously perceived as waste will now be seen as a valuable resource further encouraging redistribution. The items will be recycled in the following ways: To be given to individuals who are survivors of violence and are transitioning from shelters into new homes; To be sold in our store; To be sold to a textile recycler, which makes for an ongoing source of funding for Abuse Hurts enabling them to provide their services to the thousands of people that require them each year. When and Where: Monday and Wednesday, every week, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., with 30-minute time slots - only 1 drop off per time slot. If you do not have an appointment, we cannot accept your donation. The Abuse Hurts Warehouse is located at 1208 Gorham St, Unit 4, Newmarket - rear unloading dock. Visit AbuseHurts.ca to select your drop off time slot.

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