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**AN AFFIRMING NEW CHAPTER** – Aurora United Church marked the start of a new chapter in its more than 200-year-old story on Sunday as it was formally recognized as an Affirming Ministry within the United Church of Canada. Pictured here on October 15 is Aurora United's Affirming Congregation Committee: Brian Walter, Mary Munro, Debby Schieck, Noah Comar and Rev. Lorraine Newton Comar.

Contributed photo

# Aurora United Church celebrates becoming "Affirming Congregation"

**Mayor says church is "leading by example"**

**BY BROCK WEIR**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

It has been a long-time goal of Aurora United Church, and this past Sunday, October 15, the venerable faith community celebrated the start of a new chapter in its storied history: being officially designated as

an Affirming Congregation.

The milestone for Aurora United Church (AUC) was celebrated at Trinity Anglican Church, a space they have shared with AUC since its devastating fire in 2014, designates the church as fully inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

"Our United Church of Canada began the Big Welcome in 1988 when we acknowledged that being

gay or lesbian would not bar anyone from membership in or serving as clergy within the United Church and, as has been the practice with our denomination, we took that as a big, wonderful step, knowing there would be pushback, knowing it was the right thing to do nevertheless – in the name of Jesus Christ who welcomed all and included all," said Reverend Lorraine Newton-Comar,

Continued on page 7



Ann Watson, Executive Director at Inn from the Cold, is pictured at the historic Aurora Armoury on Friday afternoon. Next month, the Armoury will play host to a High Tea that will raise money towards the construction of more transitional housing units in York Region.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

**High tea at Armoury will highlight Inn from the Cold, need for transitional shelters**

**BY BROCK WEIR**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The need for transitional housing units for men and women requiring shelter services will be underscored at a high tea set for the historic Aurora Armoury on November 5, hosted by the staff of Newmarket's Inn from the Cold.

Set for 1 – 3 p.m., the high tea event will support Inn from the Cold's "All

Continued on page 23



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# Women’s Futures program supported by Provincial Government

Programs to assist more than 250 in York Region

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Women seeking to update their skills and land new jobs received a boost from the Provincial Government last week through support for the Investing in Women’s Futures program.

The Investing in Women’s Futures program, which is delivered locally by the Women’s Centre of York Region, provides a wide range of employment services and supports to women in the effort to “overcome barriers, increase wellbeing, build skills and gain

employment.”

Last Wednesday, Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy announced an investment by the Ontario government of \$6.9 million to further this program in York Region and throughout the Province.

“Through this new Investing in Women’s Futures program location in Newmarket, more survivors of gender-based violence will have access to the employment readiness and wraparound supports they need to increase their participation in the workforce and provide for themselves and their children,” said Ontario’s Associate Minister of Women’s Social and Economic Opportunity Charmaine

Williams in a statement. “Our government is empowering women to achieve the success they deserve because when women succeed, Ontario succeeds.”

Added MPP Gallagher Murphy: “Our government’s investment of \$325,000 to the Women’s Centre of York Region in Newmarket will have a significant and positive impact supporting women in our community who are facing social and economic barriers. This investment will provide the necessary tools, skills and support to empower and help women break through barriers and to reach their full potential.”

For services provided by the Women’s

Centre of York Region, this translates into \$325,000 over three years to allow the organization to deliver programs on personal growth and skills development, coaching to survivors of gender-based violence “to prepare them for meaningful employment” and these services are now being offered in-person and virtually.

“We are very excited to share our newest program, The First Step. This program was created to address the intersectional economic and personal barriers that women who have experienced gender-based violence are facing,” said Women’s Centre of York Region Executive Director Liora Sobel.

**Continued on page 25**

# WINDROW REMOVAL PILOT PROGRAM

Windrow clearing for seniors and people with disabilities

**Program begins December 1, 2023  
and runs until April 1, 2024**

Applications accepted until **November 30, 2023**


**What is a windrow?**

A windrow is the snow left at the end of a driveway after a snowplow has cleared a road



**aurora.ca/Windrow**





TOWN OF AURORA  
PUBLIC NOTICE

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

AURORA TOWN COUNCIL will hold a Public Meeting to receive input on a proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application:

**Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 7 p.m.**

Aurora Town Hall, Council Chambers, 100 John West Way, Aurora Ontario

**APPLICATION:** The purpose of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is to rezone the subject lands to “Townhouse Dwelling Residential R8” with site specific standards to permit the development of 225 stacked common element townhouses accessed from the north side of Allaura Boulevard, within the Aurora Promenade.

**PROPERTY:** 16, 20 and 22 Allaura Boulevard

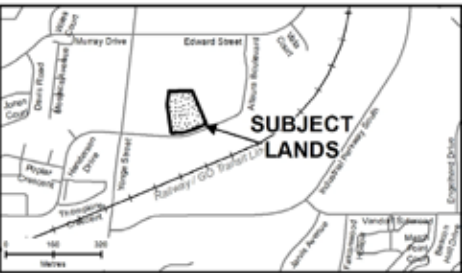
**LEGAL DISCRIPTION:** Lots 19, 20 and 21, Registered Plan M-51

**APPLICANT:** Land Services Group Ltd. (20 Allaura Boulevard Corp.)

**FILE NUMBER:** ZBA-2022-08

**RELATED FILE:** SUB-2022-02; SP-2022-13

**WARD LOCATION:** 1



**PROCEDURAL INFORMATION:**

Parties interested in speaking during the public portion of the meeting may attend in person or electronically. To participate electronically, pre-registration is required. For more information, visit: [aurora.ca/participation](https://www.aurora.ca/participation). The meeting will be live streamed at: [youtube.com/TownofAurora](https://www.youtube.com/TownofAurora). The Planning Report will be made available the Tuesday before the Public Planning Meeting date on the Town's website, by visiting the Agendas and Minutes section, located at: [aurora.ca/agendas](https://www.aurora.ca/agendas)

**CONTACT:**

Any questions regarding the proposed applications can be directed to **Adam Robb, Associate Manager of Development Planning** at 365-500-3104, or by email at [arobb@aurora.ca](mailto:arobb@aurora.ca).

Comments may also be mailed to the Planning and Development Services Department at 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON. L4G 6J1, faxed to 905-726-4736 or emailed to [planning@aurora.ca](mailto:planning@aurora.ca) prior to the meeting. Please quote the File Name and Number.

**INFORMATION ABOUT PRESERVING YOUR APPEAL RIGHTS:**

If a person or a public body would otherwise have an ability to appeal the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora to the Ontario Land Tribunal but the person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions the Town of Aurora before the approval authority gives or refuses approval of the subject applications, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Town of Aurora before the approval authority gives or refuses approval of the subject applications, they may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Land Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to do so.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora on the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment application, you must make a written request to the Town of Aurora to the attention of the Director of Planning and Development Services.

If you have received this notice as an owner of a property and the property contains seven (7) or more residential units, the Town requires that you post this notice in a location that is visible to all of the property's residents.

**PERSONAL INFORMATION COLLECTION NOTICE**

The Town of Aurora collects personal information in communications or presentations made to Town Council and/or its Committees under the legal authority of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter c.P13, as amended. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, (the “Act”) public feedback to planning proposals is considered to be public record and may be disclosed to any individual upon request in accordance with the Act. If you are submitting letters, faxes, emails, presentations or other communications to the Town, you should be aware that your name and the fact that you communicated with the Town will become part of the public record and will appear on the Town's website. The Town will also make your communication and any personal information in it, such as your address and postal code or email address available to the public unless you expressly request the Town to remove it. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Town Clerk at 905-727-3123.

**AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Town audio and/or video records Public Planning Meetings. If you make a presentation to Town Council or its Committees, you may be recorded. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, (the “Act”) public feedback to planning proposals is considered to be a public record and may be disclosed to any individual upon request in accordance with the Act.

Dated at the Town of Aurora, this 26th day of October, 2023.

[aurora.ca/publicnotices](https://www.aurora.ca/publicnotices)



# Chabad Aurora Rabbi calls for united voice following Israel attacks



Rabbi Yossi Hecht, pictured here at Chabad Aurora on Tuesday morning, has shared his message following the outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

## YRP sets up command post in light of turmoil

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

“Evil doesn’t know politics,” but a united voice will make a world of difference.

So says Rabbi Yossi Hecht of Chabad Aurora in the face of the Israel-Hamas war.

Following the attacks on Israel on October 7, the single deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust, the local leader is calling on his counterparts on all levels of government to come together with a strong, united message.

“This was a big shock and it just reminds the world, and should remind everyone, that evil has reared its ugly head again and we need to stand very clearly,” he says, noting that “any decent moral leader” needs to rise and condemn “with every fibre of their being...the hate, the evil, the atrocities, the horrific, barbaric things that were done.”

“Evil knows no boundaries,” he says. “When we stand strong and when we speak with moral clarity that this is evil and we stand with Israel...unity brings strength.”

It’s a matter of stating the facts, he says, as “to politicise things doesn’t root out the problem” but merely “kicks it down the road.”

“The events of October 7...was a reminder to the world to put politics aside,” he says. “Together, we need to fight this, together we need to eradicate this, and everyone will be able to do their part in making sure this does not raise its ugly head anywhere in the world.”

Since the attacks, there has been a heightened concern over rising anti-Semitism and hatred in York Region and around the world, not only among the Jewish community, but the community as a whole.

On Friday, York Regional Police announced they had set up a “command

post” at Thornhill’s Promenade Shopping Centre where officers were set to engage with citizens and discuss community concerns “in light of calls for civic unrest globally.”

“York Regional Police is actively monitoring the situation and has deployed police resources strategically,” they said. “Officers have been assigned to additional patrols to increase police visibility around synagogues and mosques, additional faith-based locations and institutions, as well as community centres, faith-based educational facilities and other local gathering places. There is zero tolerance for incidents motivated by hate in our community. We will thoroughly investigate any reports of hate-motivated offences, incidents, or acts.

“York Regional Police continues to share an open dialogue with community and faith leaders. We understand and appreciate the feelings of conflict and pain in our community as events around the world continue to be felt here in York Region. We will continue to assess and reassess the impact that global events are having on our communities to ensure that York Regional Police meets the needs of its community.”

York Regional Police urged citizens to report possible demonstrations and gatherings in the area via email at [demonstrations@yrp.ca](mailto:demonstrations@yrp.ca), while encouraging emergencies to be reported via 9-1-1.

Locally, Rabbi Hecht has called for, in addition to a unified voice from our leaders, other visible signs of solidarity, including that men wear tefillin – small boxes with passages from the Torah included inside – as a message.

“When a person puts that on and recites those scriptures, it brings a tremendous amount of blessing,” he says. “Non-Jews can continue to do this in kindness – when they see those around the world with them it will bring them strength that they are not alone in this fight. Government officials...need to stand up and be clear. I

know some politicians have contacted me and have reached out, some I haven’t seen at all. They should stand up, speak clear and speak out. The moral leaders need to stand up and really proclaim the same very clearly and very decisively to clearly explain and say this is evil and we stand with Israel.

“I speak to my local leaders, I speak to my provincial leaders, I speak to... those who serve in Ottawa and our communities, those who serve on a local level, because when people see our leaders are standing up and speaking with moral clarity, then that sends a very strong message and a very important message to our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land: that we’re with them, we’re here and we’re going to stay with them and unite with them and we’re going to be with them.

“I often say this to people: if there is so much bad in the world and so much evil, that means there is so much good because

often you will look at it as a balance. Let’s focus on what we can do positively. First call out the evil for what it is [and now] with our positive actions and with the good deeds, we can counteract this evil because if there is that balance that means there’s a tremendous amount of good energy we can tap into.

“There is so much good we can tap into every day, every week: be there for another person, give to charity, pray. These are things that are at our disposal, things we can do as individual citizens and citizens of this great country of Canada, that will have an effect. We hope and pray this will bring us to better times, more happier times, more joyful times and the world will come to a time where we can live peacefully with our brothers and sisters.”

In the meantime, the YRP will keep its command post operational until Monday, October 23, “at least,” operating between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m.

“We remind our community that in coordination with our federal and provincial partners, York Regional Police has not identified a credible threat within the Region at this time. However, we are actively monitoring the situation and will continue to deploy police resources strategically, including additional patrols to increase police visibility around synagogues and mosques, additional faith-based locations and institutions, as well as community centres, faith-based educational facilities and other local gathering places.

“York Regional Police continues to share an open dialogue with community and faith leaders. We understand and appreciate the feelings of conflict and pain in our community as events around the world continue to be felt here in York Region. We will continue to assess and reassess the impact that global events are having on our communities to ensure that we are meeting their needs.”

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Writer shouldn't compare Aurora to Toronto and Ottawa on shelter debate

It seems very clear Joyce Deutsch is against a men's shelter in Aurora, period.

I would like to point out first-hand that Aurora is not anywhere like downtown Ottawa or even Toronto for that matter. As a volunteer of another helping organization, I used to visit the current men's shelter in East Gwillimbury OFTEN while on delivery that the Aurora one is to replace and not once did I come across any of what is reported by the writer, tents included.

The writer states that this is not a women's shelter, "it's a men's shelter."

That statement says a lot, in my opinion.

This should be about a human needing shelter whether male or female.

Homeless men and women are likely to hang out at the new cozy Town Square once it opens rather than on the outskirts of Town if they need a place to sleep.

I wonder if there is a detailed plan in place by the Mayor and Council to deal with this situation if it arises to satisfy residents.

Will security guards be on duty 24/7 to boot such folk out?

I myself say it's about time this Town puts a foot forward to help with housing the homeless.

From what I understand, the Region and Blue Door will be footing most of the cost.

Come on Aurora, open our arms this time, as we have shunned groups like Habitat from building homes in Town in the past due to "Not in my neighborhood."

John H. Sargent  
Aurora

Lions gear up for holidays – with community's help

For more than 70 years the Aurora Lions Club has provided grocery gift cards to those in need in our community at Christmas. In addition, we work with the Salvation Army to provide non-perishable food, clothes and small gifts. Each year we serve as many as 220 families and individuals. But the needs continue to rise due to food insecurity that many in our community suffer from.

We anticipate the demand this Christmas will be the same or higher as previous years due to the impact of higher grocery prices. At this level, our commitment to provide a good Christmas for those in need is not sustainable without significant help. But with your assistance and that of other donors we can ensure we fully meet the needs of our fellow Aurorans – no matter how many.

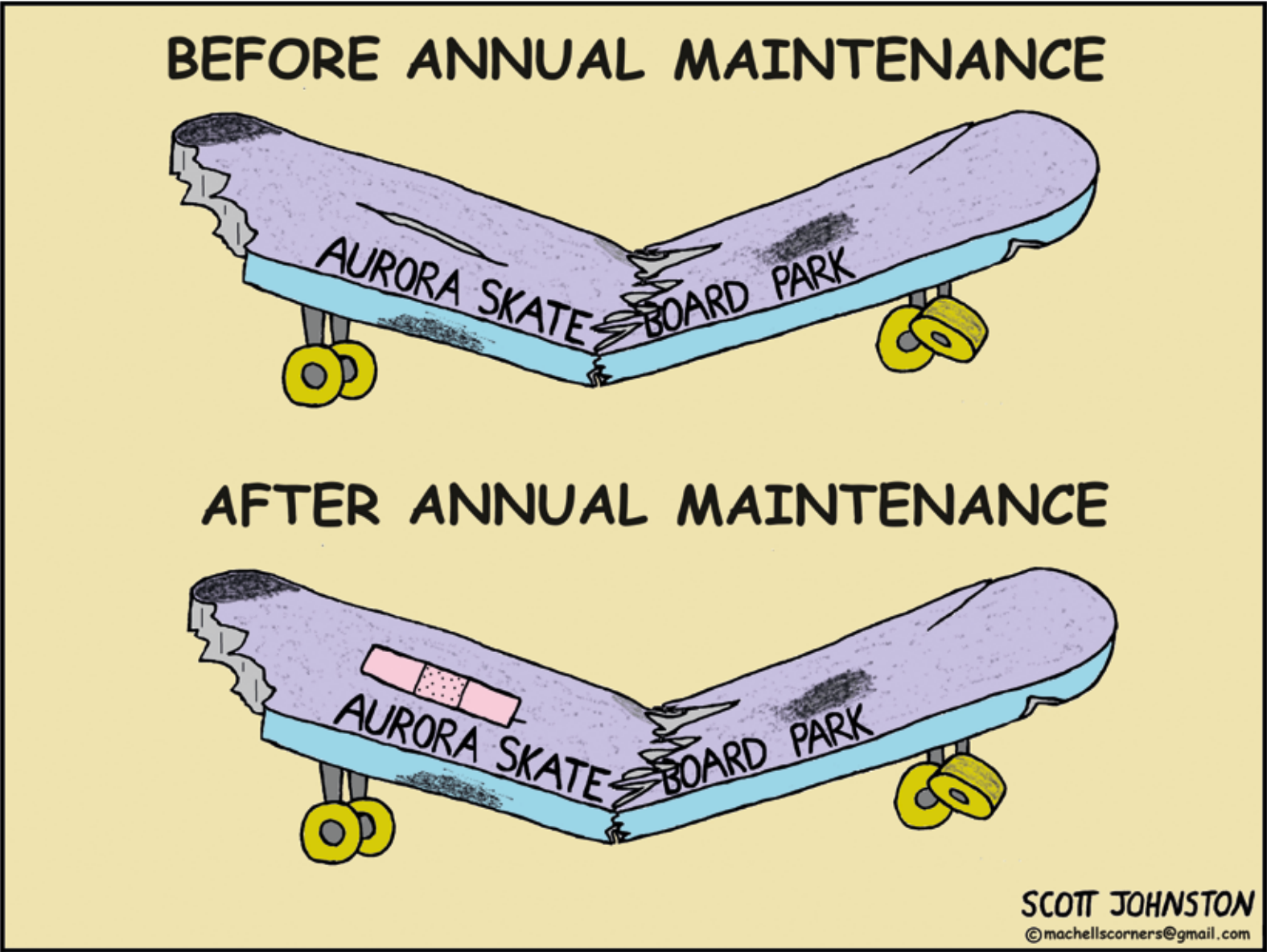
Please make your payment to the Aurora Lions Club and mail to: Aurora Lions Club, PO Box 71612, Aurora RPO, Aurora Shopping Centre, Aurora, ON, L4G 6S6 or call 905-727-6079 to have a Lion's member pick up your Donation, or if you wish to donate by e-transfer.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact us at 905-727-6079 or at auroralions1944@gmail.com about the Christmas campaign.

Lion Pat Mulcahy  
Lions Christmas Campaign Coordinator  
Aurora Lions Club

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

Macell's Corners



Learning from the past and changing the direction of the future

You always try to keep a few steps ahead in a newsroom, whether it's an upcoming event or a hot community topic on the horizon, so you're not completely unprepared for what the future might hold.

Often the landscape changes significantly from the laying of the groundwork to the unrolling of the story, but being prepared, whatever the eventuality, saves crucial time.

Some plans are easier to make than others.



BROCK'S BANTER  
Brock Weir

Work, on the other hand, is a very different story.

In my efforts to stay just a little bit ahead of the curve, my focus is now shifting towards Remembrance Day coverage.

Every year in my role as editor I strive to interview at least one veteran who has seen active service in a theatre of war, in peacekeeping, or in smaller but significant conflicts around the world, to share their stories, memories that are often troubling and terrifying, honest accounts of their struggles on the frontlines, and of their journey of re-establishing their lives as civilians.

These are, I believe, the histories we need to embrace, warts and all, but with each passing year it is getting harder and harder to find those who are willing and able to talk – and we're all the poorer for it.

Just a few short years ago, there seemed to be, perhaps optimistically, a bevy of veterans of the Second World War and Korean War eager to share their experiences, both good and bad. Not everything they shared was bad; there was no shortage of laughter when it came to sharing some of the more ribald off-duty antics of themselves and their comrades; but, most often, when the laughter died down, their message was serious – not a single degree of shyness in sharing their views on the true costs of war, but sometimes a pregnant pause before they answered whether they would do it all over again.

Few, if any, ever tried to sell the "glories" of war. They lived it. They knew it.

Yet, the more they shared, the more galvanized they were to spread the message, particularly in connecting with younger generations to make sure that the up-and-comers learned from history so that it wouldn't, they hoped, ever happen again.

As time marched on and their ranks

became fewer and fewer over the last decade, to just a handful of Second World War and Korean War veterans still active members of our Legions, I noticed that many veterans began shifting their messages.

They shared that they were dismayed with the direction the world was going in. They had seen this kind of division and rhetoric before. They knew what they meant. They were damned if they were going to let it happen again without putting up as much of a fight as they could muster.

But, nature being what it is, these voices have been largely silenced from expounding further.

They have been stifled by the sands of time and veterans who served in more recent conflicts, like Afghanistan, often seem to be reluctant to wear the mantle of "veteran" – and, truth be told, they have myriad reasons why not, including a lack of support to help them address the costs of war they live with every day in their post-war civilian lives.

But these voices are needed now more than ever.

History can be cyclical and it often feels that without the voices of the men and women who stood up to walk the walk for King, Queen and Country, those who were inspired to give so much of themselves to a common cause, to fight a common threat, and, in many cases, went in with the full knowledge that this particular sacrifice might be their last, we're veering dangerously close to a rerun.

In a time where it might feel that every day our world is at a different, more perilous crossroads we can all do well by talking to and truly learn from the veterans of the Second World War still with us and able to share – and they do have plenty of insight and real worries about our current trajectory – and we would all benefit from younger veterans with lived experiences to pick up the mantle of those who are now gone and to continue the advocacy work of what Tom Brokaw so memorably coined "the Greatest Generation."

When we look at the turmoil that is now a hallmark of our world, it feels as though we've heard this story before and might have a good idea of some of the outcomes. They sure do, and we need to take every opportunity to listen.





## The Aurora Museum & Archives is sampling...Some Nice Needlework!

Centuries ago, young girls would often demonstrate their prowess in needlework by producing a Sampler such as this (999.30.4). It was 215 years ago this week that a young girl named Ann Aspin [probably!] finished this cross-stitch sampler, which was framed and preserved. In addition to some early 18th century quotes from Alexander Pope and a popular hymn, it includes examples of all the letters of the alphabet. Most notably, the sampler displays the use of the already-archaic “long-s” which looks much more like a lower-case “r” than what we are familiar with. To us, this is indeed a “faultless piece to see.”

As October prepares to fade into memory and the world embraces the subtle chill of November, there is a distinct change in the air.

November 11 carries with it a unique aura of reflection, as it leads us towards Remembrance Day; a day of solemn remembrance and gratitude for the sacrifices made in the name of freedom.

This is a day we hold close to our hearts to honour the countless individuals who served in the face of adversity and lost their lives in protecting our beautiful country, sacrificing their today for our tomorrow.

Their unwavering commitment to the cause of peace works towards a world where armed conflicts are a memory, not a reality.

The red poppy has become a national symbol of remembrance for everyone to recognize. It serves as a continuous reminder of the bloodshed and sacrifice endured to protect the



## PARSA'S PERSPECTIVE

**Michael Parsa, MPP**  
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

values, we hold dear – peace, freedom, and human dignity. We wear it and it reminds us of the fragility of life and the resilience of the human spirit.

November signifies the transition from the warmth of autumn colours to the bright crisp winter

snow. Before the green leaves fall, the landscape transforms into a beautiful

palette of red and yellow leaves. The days grow shorter, and the evenings lengthen, inviting us to draw closer to our loved ones, to find comfort in quality time with family.

Autumn is a season of transition and preparation, a reminder that life, like the changing seasons, is marked by a cycle of rebirth. The leaves that fall will nourish the earth, making way for new life to emerge as the winter snow cleanses the earth and melts into spring.

As the temperatures drop and the world appears to quiet down, we wrap ourselves in warm coats and gather around the glow of fireplaces. We remember the lessons of history, the sacrifices of those who came before us, and the beauty of life's cycles. Let November be a time of reflection, gratitude, and renewed determination to create a world where remembrance is not just about the past, but a commitment to a better future.

## It's time to unshackle Canada's small businesses

It's understandable why many people often refer to small businesses as the backbone of our economy.

For one, small businesses develop a majority of the new breakthrough products and innovative technologies that fuel Canada's economic growth.

But more importantly, they generate most of the new jobs in this country. According to the latest Government of Canada statistics, small businesses accounted for 98 percent of all companies that employed people. As of 2021, small businesses employed more than 8 million people in Canada, which represents close to 70 percent of the total private sector workforce.

So, if small business is so vital to our country's economic well-being, why aren't we doing more to champion their success and promote even greater growth?

World-famous entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson, the founder of global companies such as Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Mobile, once noted that all big businesses start small.

That's certainly true of my own company. When I started Magna International Inc. in the late 1950s, I opened a one-man tool and die shop in a rented garage in downtown Toronto. I bought some used equipment and slept on a small cot inside the shop. I drummed up my first sale by knocking on the door of the American Standard factory right next to my tool shop.

I hired my first employee after one month. And by the end of my first year of operation, I had ten workers



## THE PRINCIPLES OF AN ECONOMIC CHARTER OF RIGHTS

By Frank Stronach

on the company payroll. My small company began to take off: we added new customers, hired more people, and made more money.

We should have thousands of new startups like the company I founded all over Canada today. But unfortunately, we don't.

In fact, I've often wondered: if I were to start Magna all over again today, instead of more than 50 years ago, would I have been able to grow the company as quickly as I did with all the shackles we put on small business nowadays? I very much doubt it.

We've placed so many obstacles in the way of small businesses and burdened them with countless regulations and rules that it's no wonder so many small business don't survive more than a few years after opening their doors.

So, what's the answer? I've been arguing in this column for the creation

of a new Canadian Economic Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, and one of the foremost principles in that charter is the elimination of corporate income tax for any small business with 300 employees or less.

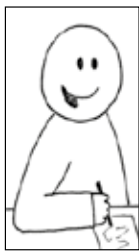
The one condition attached to eliminating income tax is that the small business owner has to reinvest most of the profits back into growing the business and hiring more employees. The government would receive far more in personal income taxes from the new jobs that small business creates than it ever would by simply taxing those same businesses.

We've got to stop holding back our entrepreneurs by taxing them into the ground and making them jump through countless bureaucratic hoops. If we eliminated all income tax for small business, everyone would win: government would rake in more taxes on business sales, Canadians would have more job opportunities, and entrepreneurs would finally get a fair reward for bearing all of the risks associated with running a business.

By implementing this one single economic action and unshackling small business, we would ignite the Canadian economy and set our country on a path of phenomenal growth.

### Author Bio

*Frank Stronach is the founder of Magna International Inc., one of Canada's largest global companies, and was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame. fstronachlpc@gmail.com*



## INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

## The One Less Traveled By

It had been a while since I had taken in Aurora's annual Halloween Haunted Forest, so I decided to drop by Sheppard's Bush for all the fun.

The Town does a great job with this event, and everyone was obviously having a good time. There were dozens of kids and families enjoying all of the spooky characters, displays and activities.

As always there were different trails with varying levels of scariness. One entitled “Family Trail” was geared towards the younger kids. For the more stoic there was one for “Those-Not-Faint-of-Heart”.

Then I noticed a new trail I hadn't seen before. This one was called “Town of Tomorrow”. Curious what I'd encounter, I started off down the indicated path.

It wasn't too long before I saw a frantic man scurrying about in a seeming panic, looking at his watch and crying “I'm late! I'm late!”

“You must be the white rabbit from Alice in Wonderland,” I said to him, as he briefly paused again to consult his timepiece.

“No, I'm an Aurora commuter from west of Yonge trying to park at the GO train station after they've closed Wellington for the underpass construction,” he said. “All the parking lots are now east of the station, and that huge daily detour I now need to make north or south to get to the next level crossing will make me miss my train!”

“Aaagh! Here it comes!” he cried, looking away into the distance, and running off.

A bit shaken by this encounter, I walked a little further and noticed a kind of a funky smell coming from up ahead. Rounding a corner, I ran into a woman standing next to a bus stop sign. She was dressed in office attire, but smelled like she'd been working out.

As I kept a bit of a distance, she confirmed my assessment.

“I've just participated in a fun pickup basketball game with some friends before work at the new gym at SARC,” she said. “It was fun but we all ended up getting pretty sweaty. Too bad the Town didn't include any showers in that project. I just hope I don't offend anyone on my bus ride to work.”

Glad that I wouldn't be her seatmate on her future bus ride, I hurried further along the trail. Soon I saw three smiling young children dressed in animal costumes, complete with appropriate makeup. One was a bunny, one was a raccoon and the last was a turtle. They were adorable, and in no way scary.

As I stood there wondering what could possibly be frightening about the scenario these three represented, in unison they took on sad expressions and held up a big sign saying “8,000 more homes for people in Aurora equals fewer homes for us.”

Now I was thoroughly unnerved.

Racing along the trail I'm embarrassed to say that I didn't even stop to hear what the couple standing under the sign “Strong Mayor Powers” had to say. Hastily retreating from the forest, and breathing a sigh of relief, I headed towards my car.

One suggestion for next year's event organizers; if they have the “Town of Tomorrow” trail again, they really should identify it as the one for “Those-Not-Faint-of-Heart”.

Feel free to e-mail Scott at:  
machellscorners@gmail.com

## THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Will Aurora's Housing Pledge and Provincial targets lead to more affordable housing?

YES NO UNSURE

[www.theauroran.com](http://www.theauroran.com)

Previous Poll  
Will you get a COVID booster this fall?

RESULTS TO DATE	OCTOBER 17, 2023	YES	NO	UNSURE
		69%	26%	5%



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## Dawn GALLAGHER MURPHY

MPP for Newmarket–Aurora

# Gender-based and intimate partner violence declared an epidemic in Aurora

**By Elisa Nguyen**

The Town of Aurora has declared gender-based violence and intimate partner violence an epidemic and requested that provincial and federal governments provide the necessary support to meaningfully address the epidemic.

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Mayor Tom Mrakas and was up for discussion at the September 26 Council meeting.

There, Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland expressed her support for the motion to bring forward awareness to gender-based violence and intimate partner violence.

“I think it’s good that everybody recognizes that there is a challenge going on,” she said.

Especially during the pandemic, the Town and many Councillors supported local organizations such as Yellow Brick House which provides help and hope to women and children facing violence, Councillor Gilliland said.

On November 5, an annual fundraising walk called “Break the Silence - Step in My Shoes” organized by Yellow Brick House will take place. Councillor Gilliland said it was “good timing” that council supported the motion on the table to further show support to the issue of gender-based violence.

“We should support these organizations as much as we can because silence is definitely what’s happening behind closed doors, and there is an epidemic going on that is out there. So, this is a good reminder that we need to ensure we don’t forget the forgotten,” she said.

The fundraising walk takes place at St. Andrew’s College from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on November 5 and more information can be found at yellowbrickhouse.org.

Mayor Mrakas added that the issue of the epidemic has been discussed in many municipalities, as well as by the Ontario big city mayors. The issue was brought to his attention by a few residents along with other mayors across the province.

“I’ve always believed that it’s important for us to stand up when we have issues like this and specifically, rally together to ensure that things change, because intimate partner violence is absolutely, in all forms, unacceptable and should never occur,” he said.

Numbers of intimate partner violence rose during the pandemic, Mayor Mrakas said, adding that it is disheartening to hear what has been happening.

“I’m glad that we will be passing this [motion] in joining with our colleagues right across this province and stand united and saying that intimate partner violence needs to end.”

Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner noted that the woman and family shelter in Aurora, Yellow Brick House, has told the Council that the situation has been tough and that getting funding is difficult.

“It’s an expensive thing to do well; you have to nurture and protect the people who have come to you. And I hope that the government will provide some of the resources to meaningfully address this,” she said.

In the motion, the Town of Aurora recommended that gender-based violence and intimate partner violence be declared an epidemic in the Province of Ontario, by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and all municipalities and regions in Ontario.

The Town of Aurora also requests that the provincial and federal governments enact the additional 85 recommendations from the inquest into the 2015 murders of Carol Culleton, Anatasia Kuzyk, and Nathalie Warmerdam in Renfrew County, Ontario, which provide a roadmap to preventing intimate partner violence from escaping to femicide.

The Town of Aurora also requests that the federal government start the enactment by adding the word Femicide as a term to the Criminal Code of Canada, and that the necessary support is given to municipalities, regions, and their emergency and social services to address the issue.



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# Aurora United Church celebrates becoming “Affirming Congregation”

From page 1

who leads the AUC with Reverend Andy Comar, at Sunday’s service.

“When we first spoke together in this sanctuary about what being ‘affirming’ would mean to us, you will remember that we had some of our committee members speak about their own lives from their own perspectives, using clear language about being gay, being lesbian, being in church as a child and as a teen, as a young adult, having a gay child and teaching neurodiverse, non-verbal young adults,” Newton-Comar continued. “We spoke afterwards about a statement that would reflect who we are as a diverse congregation and what that would look like, what that would include.

“Being affirming is an ongoing process of expanding the welcome into the fullness of our church community. The church is truly at its best when it addresses the brokenness of the world near and far and then tends to it, so, when one part of the Body of Christ suffers, we rise to attend to those wounds of mind, body and spirit. Becoming an affirming congregation does not mean, of course, that we have arrived at the finish line, done; it does mean that we’re now part of a network of persons and of churches that believe that each person has inherent value, is loved by God as we are – worthy of celebration. We have been reminded recently how important it is to keep strong in the face of growing intolerance and even violence against persons who identify in the LGBTQ2+ community – a disheartening time, really – but a time when we have been reminded how vitally



Rainbows were prominent at Sunday’s service celebrating AUC becoming an Affirming Congregation.

Contributed photo

important it is to stay strong together and to advocate for one another.” Sunday’s declaration was greeted as a welcome development well beyond Aurora United Church.

In words delivered in front of the congregation, Mayor Tom Mrakas hailed the importance of AUC in the lives of so many residents and, by becoming an affirming congregation, they were “leading by example,” demonstrating its commitment to “inclusion and justice for all people, including all sexual orientations and gender-identities.”

“The Aurora United Church is showing our entire community what it means to accept everyone for who they are,” he said. “By becoming an Affirming church, AUC is also making it crystal clear that it is committed to challenging bias and discrimination, working to end racism and promoting economic justice. The sad reality is for far too long residents, especially from the 2SLGBTQ+ communities, have felt excluded in places of worship. With many having no place to turn for

support, Aurora United Church’s Affirmation signals to our entire community that everyone is, in fact, welcome and will be supportive. This is such a progressive and meaningful step AUC has taken and I couldn’t be more proud. It reflects the kind of Town we’re all striving to create.”

This goal towards fostering a better future were echoed by Reverend Daniel Graves, Interim Priest-In-Charge at Trinity Aurora.

“I think it goes without saying that the Anglican Church has had its own challenges moving forward on this issue, but several years ago, Trinity Anglican discerned that we would be a place that, if we were permitted by our Bishop to offer same gender marriages – we were given that blessing several years ago and subsequently our diocese has allowed that to happen in all parishes. When I was in another parish, I was asked to officiate a same-gender blessing and I was unable to and was very sad that I couldn’t do that. I was so happy when I came to Trinity Aurora because then I could do this. I think if my feeling of what it was to wait was that profound, how much more must it be for others for whom this is a matter of their own life? I am the father of a gay son and this is a tremendous step you’re taking today.”

Citing the Book of Acts passage of, “Now I truly understand that God shows no partiality,” Graves added: “If that’s good enough for God, it should be good enough for us. I commend you today for this momentous step and commit to continuing to journeying with you as a sibling in Christ on this new and exciting journey we’re on together.”



## GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor  
Tom Mrakas

It was truly an honor to bring greetings on behalf of the Town of Aurora at Aurora United Church’s Affirming Ministry Celebration this past weekend.

I’d like to thank Reverend Lorraine Newton-Comar for inviting me to be part of this celebration and Reverend Andrew Comar, and the entire staff at the Aurora United Church, for their invaluable contributions to our community. They are an important institution in the lives of many of our residents.

When I learned more about what becoming an affirming church meant, it was simply a no-brainer for me to attend. That’s because by becoming an affirming church, the AUC is leading by example, demonstrating its commitment to inclusion and justice for all people, including all sexual orientations and gender identities.

The AUC is showing our entire community what it means to accept everyone for who they are.

By becoming an affirming church, Aurora United Church is also making it crystal clear that it is committed to challenging bias and discrimination, working to end racism, and promoting economic justice.

The sad reality is that for far too long, many residents, especially those from the 2SLGBTQ+ community, have felt excluded from places of worship, with many having

Continued on page 21



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# BUSINESS & FINANCE



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## Southlake dedicates Emergent Mental Health unit in honour of NewRoads

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

It was a celebration of a job well done at Southlake Regional Health Centre as the local hospital dedicated its Emergent Mental Health Assessment Unit in honour of NewRoads Automotive Group.

The Newmarket-based auto leader has been a long-time key fundraiser for Southlake’s mental health programs through several initiatives, most recently their annual NewRoads LakeRide. Their contributions have been essential to the hospital’s capital campaign to create and open new mental health spaces and the October 12 event was to celebrate NewRoads and all those who made the transformation possible.

“Before this, our patients had to stay in the emergency department two days, three days, and sometimes you’re talking about sleeping in a chair overnight before coming upstairs,” said Dr. Mahdi Memarpour, Southlake’s Chief of Psychiatry.

The creation of a new assessment unit where patients can enjoy dignity and privacy was “amazing and very emotional for many people,” he said.



On hand for the dedication of the NewRoads Automotive Group Emergent Mental Health Assessment Unit on Thursday evening were, from left, Michael and Sharon Croxon; Dr. Mahdi Memarpour, Southlake’s Chief of Psychiatry; Southlake Foundation President & CEO Jennifer Klotz-Ritter; and Aga Dojczewska, Manager of Inpatient Adult Mental Health and the Emergent Mental Health Assessment Unit.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

“When we started, on the very first day I looked at [the unit] and couldn’t believe we had this,” he continued. “People would come up... to a modern

facility here: a private room, shower, things that didn’t exist [previously]. Now they have it and it is unbelievable in their recovery. From an emergency department where they had to sleep in a chair to something extraordinary. Many people who have sometimes been here before, for example a couple of years ago, can’t believe the transformation. For that again, I would like to thank everyone who was involved, including people who really worked on designing it and especially the donors who really helped us build this. It serves the community well and it decreases the stigma that comes with psychiatric illness.”

The new space, added Aga Dojczewska, Manager of Inpatient Adult Mental Health and Emergent Mental Health Assessment Unit, is also being felt by staff.

“It is an incredible space,” she said. “A lot of the patients were coming in, after days of not taking care of themselves, and that shower that we have is such an incredible basic need that every one of us needs and we are addressing this by having this incredible space. Staff love working here. We are actually seeing they are coming to work and they are very satisfied with the level of care they can provide to every patient we have.”

All those who contributed to Southlake’s capital campaign for mental health contributed to the “dignity of peace, privacy and security” for patients and their families, said representatives of the Southlake Regional Health Centre Foundation.

“It was not even a full six months that we were in COVID when we really recognized our need for better spaces to bring our mental health care environment to modern standards and how urgent this was,” said Jennifer Klotz-Ritter, President and CEO of the Southlake Foundation. “I think we all remember the necessity of looking after mental health and wellbeing, especially during COVID, and that continues today. Our spaces at the time were really crowded, they were lacking what our clinicians and our staff would talk about as the basic necessities of care that happens – dignity, privacy, and in a therapeutic environment conducive to a healing journey.

“The demand exponentially grew. It was very challenging to undertake this campaign and...it was a challenging decision to undertake this campaign

when we were still in the first year of COVID, but I’ve always said that it is the donors and the supporters of the community who decide what is and is not acceptable when we’re trying to deliver healing and care to our communities.”

The fundraising goal, she added, was reached at the end of Southlake’s last fiscal year and, this past February, opened the inpatient adult mental health unit to its first patients.

“We are so grateful you answered the call and stood by our side so we could bring [our talented clinicians and staff] the tools and environment they need in order to help our brothers, our sisters, our parents, our children, our family our colleagues, get the healing care they need when they need it,” concluded Klotz-Ritter. “This is an example of the extraordinary power of community, community investment, and philanthropy.”

As community contributors assembled for the unveiling of a donor wall recognizing their donations and fundraising efforts, NewRoads CEO Michael Croxon, joined by Sharon Croxon, underscored the importance the Automotive Group places in mental health.

“Long before COVID, we at New Roads identified mental health as a growing need not only in our community but the world and decided to throw our collective weight behind raising funds for that initiative,” he said. “As we all know COVID just sort of exacerbated that need and it became even more prevalent and even more apparent we needed to up our game and do our part in this community that is so special to our organization to give back.

“I get the honour of representing NewRoads and, ultimately, I guess signing the cheques that go to Southlake, but I couldn’t do that without Sharon and I couldn’t do that without the 430 people who work in our organization, who staff it every day, who volunteer endlessly at our charity events.

“Most of my senior team is here today and I want to give a shout out to them as well because certainly without them we wouldn’t have the capacity to give back in the way in which we give back. We’re immensely proud to be part of the Newmarket community, we’re immensely proud to have our name on the assessment unit upstairs.”

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# Sports Dome generating “higher-than-expected” revenue for Town

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Town’s partnership with the Aurora Youth Soccer Club (AYSC) on running the Lind Realty Sports Dome on Industrial Parkway North is bringing “higher-than-expected” revenue to municipal coffers, according to a report before Council.

Earlier this month, Council considered a report recommending some changes to the current structure of the Club’s agreement with the Town. These included nixing the requirement of the Club to provide audited financial statements in favour of a less costly annual financial review, and a 10 per cent reduction in permit fees currently paid by AYSC.

When the Town first acquired the Sports Dome in 2021, the Town provided a “conservative” forecast of \$475,000 in annual gross revenue, according to the report prepared by John Firman, Aurora’s Manager of Business Support.

“Dome permitting has rebounded quickly, returning to pre-pandemic volumes resulting in higher-than-expected revenue,” he said. “Gross revenue for 2023 is currently forecast to be approximately \$700,000. It is also anticipated that with the addition of air conditioning, currently anticipated for Spring of 2024, we will experience an increase in summer rentals which will further increase revenue.

“Being operational for the majority of 2022 and now having completed the third quarter of 2023, staff have obtained a good understanding of this facility’s ongoing operating costs for utilities, maintenance and daily operations. The AYSC has also operated within budget since the beginning of the partnership and

have demonstrated a commitment to ongoing responsible financial management.”

Even with the revenue, the report also found that rental rates in Aurora are below average, which provide a “good value to the community” and surplus could fund other capital projects and operational programs. Such surpluses could amount to \$6 million over 20 years.

A reduction, however, could be coming if Council approves for the AYSC a 10 per cent reduction in the fees they pay to rent the space to compensate for the work they do to manage the facility.

“The initial agreement with the AYSC, their rental rates were set at 10 per cent below the regular rate for other community groups,” said Firman in his report. “In the initial discussions with the AYSC a larger discount had initially been requested to adequately compensate the club for the operational management responsibilities they had assumed responsibility for. It was agreed that the discount would remain at the previously-established 10 per cent and that any additional discount would be considered at the time of this operational review so that we could have a better understanding of their financial outlook.”

If the Town took on the operational work provided by the AYSC, Firman’s report estimates it would cost the municipality between \$24,000 and \$26,000 annually.

“I realize that we as a community need to have facilities, they need to be paid for, looked after, but here we’ve crafted a model where everybody benefits – all the users, the municipality and the Aurora Youth Soccer Club that, in 2024, in a few

short months will be celebrating its 60th anniversary of providing high-level sports in Aurora,” said AYSC President Roy Cohen at the recent General Committee meeting.

Council members were supportive of the work being provided by the AYSC in managing the Dome, citing it as an “extremely good news story” but some wanted further information on the financials before making a decision over the fee reduction. That decision is due by the end of this month.

“We have a lot of expectations with our other community partners as well and I would feel more comfortable being able to justify that because I look at this like we’re giving a 20 per cent reduction if we’re already giving them a 10 per cent reduction. How much of a break are we giving?” asked Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland. “I want to see that comparator and what we’re actually giving, compared to what their actual ask is. What I am seeing is they want a 10 per cent reduction and I want to see that breakdown.”

Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner was on a similar wavelength, stating she wanted further information on the monetary value provided by the AYSC.

“The primary expense is staffing,” said Firman. “The Soccer Club provides the staffing much more efficiently than the Town could at a more economical rate. They staff the desk within the dome and act as a convenor for all permit holders. Additionally, they are responsible for the day-to-day cleaning, making sure the field is tidy and organized, making sure the clubhouse is clean, washrooms presentable...”

Additional responsibilities include minor procurement, such as a

replacement net, and addressing concerns and complaints from the public.

“This is an extremely good news story,” said Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo, noting that there is probably no other municipal facility generating the revenue that is being turned here. “I am looking for more information on the total operation of the Dome and I think we’re clear on that. In terms of the decisions we’re making tonight, I have no issues with moving them forward but I hope we can remember and underline one of the reasons why I would like more information and data is we should be yelling it from the rooftops how successful it is...”

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# Artist wants to take past wrongs and create “something where people see the truth”

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Living in a refugee camp, 13-year-old Narin Ezidi İsmail had few ways to express herself.

Born in Iraqi Kurdistan, she and her Yazidi family fled Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship at the height of the Gulf War in 1990. They hid in the mountains for weeks to survive until Turkey opened their borders to refugees, where they stayed in a camp for three years.

Now a successful York Region artist, the roots of her artistic passion can be traced back to this tumultuous time in her life.

“I was 13 and at that time we had no access to education, or to anything, so a lot of my days I would create art through rocks, stacking them together, collecting sticks and anything that was in front of me was art to me. I brought it here and I wanted to express it in such an interesting way. For me, it’s all about creating art, not war. Going through that trauma, that kept me.”

Art remains an important means for expression and next month the Aurora Public Library’s Colleen Abbott gallery will play host to an exhibition of her work.

It’s an exhibition the Aurora Public Library (APL) planned to host before the global pandemic shut the world down, but now that the show is back on track, with recent events in the middle east, the message of İsmail is timelier and more immediate than ever before.

“I met Narin before we got locked down and [her paintings represented] history, it was passion, it was truth,” says Reccia Mandelcorn, APL’s Manager of Community Collaboration. “Hers

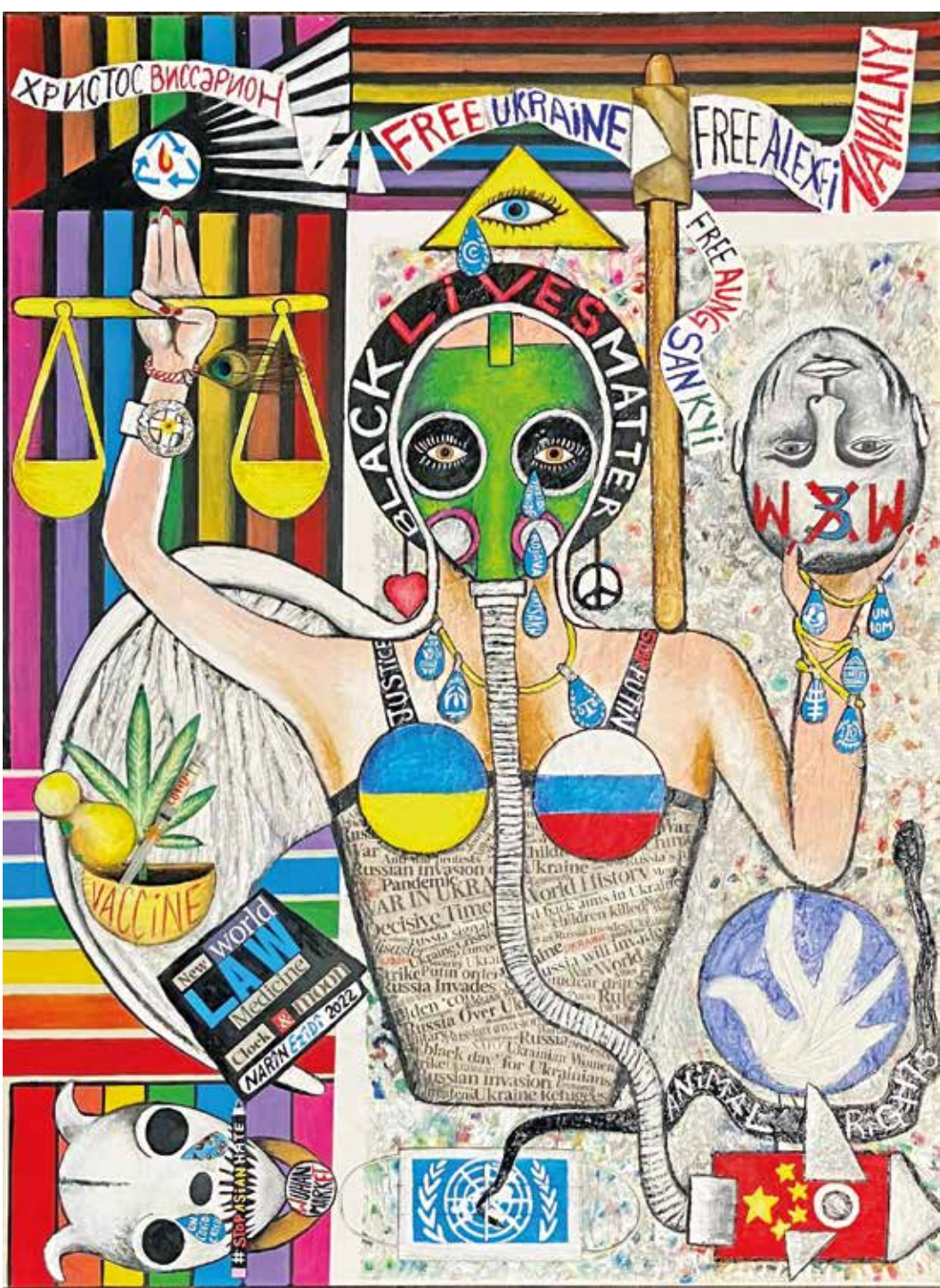
was one of the first if not the first Yazidi family to come to Canada and her politics, her hope, her compassion were all evident in these bright, colourful, storytelling images.

“Then, COVID hit and I had to delay all the exhibits that were scheduled. During that time, she wrote back and as all artists, they develop their work more and more. She said, ‘I have a whole new body of work I want to show.’ I would have been happy with Exhibit 1, I am happy with Exhibit 2, and I am looking forward to seeing whatever else she creates because she is just an amazing artist and person.”

İsmail says “Exhibition 2” is particularly important to her, she says, and is “all about the storytelling.”

“Everybody needs to read and understand what is happening,” she says of the journey of the Yazidis. “I wanted to be the voice behind the work and have people understand how this came to life. For me, it is all about correcting the wrong. In my work, I have tried to connect and bring everything from the wrong and try to bring it into an artwork. This collection has much to say. It is not racism, it is not against anyone, I am only against terrorism – those people who have done terrible things and right now we’re talking about what Israel is going through. This is another story and I am working on another painting especially towards that, because the world needs to wake up to terrorism. There is no beauty to it.”

Regarding the Israel-Hamas War, İsmail says people are “now taking a very serious glance at what is happening to innocent people.”



The evocative paintings of Narin Ezidi İsmail will form a new exhibition of her work next month at the Aurora Public Library’s Colleen Abbott Gallery. Contributed image

Contributed image

“Hamas is a terrorist organization and I stand with the Israelis on this because Hamas is just a name,” she says. “If you go back a little bit, nine years ago it was ISIS. The same flag, the same belief. All of these are still connected and tomorrow it is going to be a completely different name.”

At the end of the day, she just wants people to come together and take in the work.

“I am the soul of the work, but if the work is not done, who is going to do it?” she asks. “It’s for people who are standing up for what’s right, for what is right in everyone. We’re talking about Indigenous rights, Black Lives Matter, animal rights, the Putin war right now in Ukraine, Israel, Yazidis... there is so much to cover and I have tried to cover that.

During my time working on these paintings, I kept saying, ‘Okay, I have a mission and my mission is to create... and I won’t stop because I want Canada...to do something for this. I don’t want to die and have people say, ‘Okay, this is just the work she has left behind.’”

Adds Mandelcorn: “She can be very, very dark and a negative experience can push you into a dark place, but all of her work is bright and, to me, it shows a hope for the future. It’s not giving up, it’s telling a story. It’s asking people to think and it is looking towards building a better world. I think if people come in and they see that message in that work, because it is what I see, then that would be a really good thing and it is an honour for us to be part of that experience.”

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# CULTURE DAYS CONTINUES



Theatre Aurora and the York Chamber Ensemble joined forces on Saturday afternoon for a performance of Stravinsky's The Solider's Tale. The performance took place in the Living Room space of the Aurora Public Library.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger



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# CDS’s Debate Team prepped to take on the world at the International Independent Schools Public Speaking Competition

By Jim Stewart

Kerstin Wyndham-West, the legendary Debate and Public Speaking Coach at Country Day School in King City, fills a room with positive energy when we meet for a Friday afternoon interview. The educator has been retired for four years, but continues to teach the fine art of debate and rhetoric in the most

inspirational manner. Wyndham-West has been coaching the CDS Debate Team to lofty heights for over 22 years, but she derives the most satisfaction in both seeing her students succeed after they have left her mentorship and in seeing the debate program flourish. “It’s very satisfying to watch students later in life using their skills. They often come back to visit and share stories about

their success. Seeing the growth of the program is really satisfying, too. Our team is currently comprised of 25-30 students.” Coach Wyndham-West has been diligently preparing her team for success in Vancouver next week at the IISPSC (International Independent Schools Public Speaking Competition) and is quietly optimistic about her team’s prospects on the West Coast.



Country Day School debaters are ready to take on the world. **Contributed photo**

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“We’ve got a pretty strong team. Two of our three competitors were at the World Championships last year in South Africa. This is an experienced team, they’re accustomed to a very high level of competition, and they’re prepped for all the challenges that come with competing against students from across the world.”

In addition to preparing her team of 30 students for various levels of competition during the 2023-24 school year, the veteran teacher-coach is also mentoring Antonella Costanzo, a CDS colleague, a Middle and Senior School Math/Science teacher, who has been assisting and learning from a seasoned Debate Coach.

“Antonella has been a big help in growing our program and I appreciate her contributions as a teacher at CDS. She has helped make our team as successful as it is.”

When asked about how important the art of debating and public speaking is in 2023, Wyndham-West makes a great case for its value as both a co-curricular activity and, more importantly, a key life skill that’s necessary in a high-functioning democracy.

“In the 21st century, it is extremely relevant to provide arguments and support them with real content.

The art of persuasion is an important part of the democratic process and being able to persuade is an important skill for today’s students. The same skills apply. Listening to nuances and noting body language expression are just as important as they’ve always been. All work environments—especially ones with daily interactions between people—require a certain level of confidence when a person enters a room. Learning the art of debating and public speaking prepares our students for success and the confidence they need in the 21st century workplace.”

Preparing for that 21st century workplace and the IISPSC in Vancouver is the energetic quartet of Sarah Croxon, Diviya Amarnath, Millie Steinmann, and Ethan Walba who join us after Period 3 for our interview and inject another dose of positive energy into the room on a Friday afternoon.

Continued on page 22



# A Community-Centric Franchise Opportunity

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# Empty Bowls goes beyond the soup with more ways to support Welcoming Arms, Inn from the Cold

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

While tickets are selling fast for the 14th annual Empty Bowls event, hosted by Aurora’s Pine Tree Potters Guild, there are more opportunities now than ever before to support the Guild’s long-time community partners – Welcoming Arms and Inn from the Cold.

This year’s event will take place Thursday, November 16, at Newmarket’s Old Town Hall.

Over the last 12 months, Guild members have been hard at work making more than 500 unique ceramic bowls which are at the heart of the event. Ticket holders are able to select the bowl of their choice and have it filled with delicious soups offered by chefs from nearly two dozen York Region restaurants.

The purpose of the event is both simple and twofold – to remind people that not everyone has a full bowl every day, and to support two community organizations dedicated to making sure that each week, for those in need, as many empty bowls are filled as possible.

As The Auroran went to press this week, only limited tickets were available for the dinner seating from 6.30 – 8.30 p.m., but new this year there’s a chance to still get a bowl, with all revenues supporting the mission.

“Empty Bowls has been a part of our community and the flagship event of our Guild going on now for 14 years. We can see the impact that it makes and it is close to home,” says event chair Lisa-Marie Oliphant. “It has been very rewarding to do this work, to work all year, making 500-plus bowls, knowing that each one of those bowls is going

to find its way into someone’s hands who is going to donate money and be a part of the spirit and gain awareness of the plight of what is happening in our own community and how small acts of kindness and focus around such community involvement can make a difference. That is why it endures.

“We have quite a wide range of effort and skill that goes into creating the bowls. No matter what, even if you aren’t making a bowl, you’re a part of preparing the glazes, part of getting the tickets sold, part of creating the volunteers’ list for coordinating the 20 restaurants that are going to be a part of our event or coordinating volunteers who will do everything from lifting the equipment, setting up the table cloths, creating the flower arrangements. It’s not just about the bowl making, it’s about everything that goes into creating such a flagship event in the beautiful space that is Old Town Hall.”

Each year, Empty Bowls invites new and returning chefs to be a part of the event, underscoring not only the chance to showcase their signature soup but how each ladle is critical to both Welcoming Arms and Inn from the Cold.

“Empty bowls is impactful in two very important ways,” says Ann Watson, Executive Director of Inn from the Cold. “Firstly, it provides much needed funds which we apply to our food programs. IFTC serves 1,135 meals a week to some of our community’s most vulnerable residents. Empty Bowls helps tremendously to offset the steep increase in food prices that we have seen over the past several years. And secondly, Empty Bowls brings together the community to support both Inn From the Cold and Welcoming Arms. Both Inn From the

Cold and Welcoming Arms are deeply imbedded in the community and this event highlights the great things that happen when we come together in support of local not-for-profits, while enjoying a beautiful, elegant event with delicious soups!”

Any remaining tickets are on sale now from the Aurora branch of Meridian Credit Union at Wellington Street East at Mary Street, but if you’re too late, your purchase of a bowl, even if it’s without the soup, will still allow you to bring home a piece of art and benefit the organization.

“100 per cent of the money spent on that bowl, which is also tax free, will go directly to Inn from the Cold and Welcoming Arms, so we’ll have our bowls room open at Old Town Hall on Friday, November 17, from 1 - 9 p.m., Saturday, November 18, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, November 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with special signage to direct people to purchase bowls for the charity fundraiser.

“What goes through my mind and with everyone in the Guild each year is making a difference. Their one small bowl makes a difference. The lifecycle of that bowl is going to be filled with a local restaurant’s soup, which helps them. It helps awareness of the restaurants there, supporting local business. When it comes to Welcoming Arms and Inn From the Cold, we are spreading not only dollars their way but spreading awareness of the reality of their struggles and the credibility for what they do for our local communities. This isn’t a Downtown Toronto problem; there is homelessness, families in need, families in crisis in Newmarket, in Aurora, in York Region. They need our help and we can’t forget them.”

*Empty Bowls has been a part of our community and the flagship event of our Guild going on now for 14 years. We can see the impact that it makes and it is close to home*



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# Haunted Forest returns to Sheppard’s Bush next Saturday with a slash of Hitchcock

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Thrills and chills – and a potential visit from Norman Bates – will take over Sheppard’s Bush next Saturday, October 28, as the Town of Aurora’s Haunted Forest returns for Halloween Fun.

Taking place from 6 – 9 p.m. at both Sheppard’s Bush and the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, where seasonal activities will be found throughout the building, the award-winning event offers something for everyone, including the faint of heart!

“Our partners have come back with huge, spooktacular enthusiasm, including Marquee Theatrical

Productions, the Knuth Family, and 5th Aurora Scouts,” says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. “We’re very excited and this year we have our Youth Engagement Committee coming on board to help us, in addition to a minimum of 130 community volunteers. We’re currently in the Bush working non-stop at it, getting cabins ready, getting the trails ready, planning the displays, as well as curating the activities that are going to take place at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex (AFLC).”

Asked to provide a teaser on some of the spookiness to come, Ware and her team promise a Barbie-themed display that could very well be ‘Kenough’ to

get the blood pumping, the traditional ghosts and goblins, and, if you venture down the “scary” trail, appearances by film-villains Michael Meyers, Freddy Kruger, Jason and, new this year, bloodcurdling salutes to Alfred Hitchcock’s classic film, Psycho. Maybe it’s best to shower ahead of time!

“Our ghosts and goblins have been resting and vacationing over the last year and are ready to get up to their usual shenanigans as they join us on this adventure,” says Ware on the family-friendly version of the two trails. “We will have friendly witches, not-so-friendly witches, not-so-friendly lemonade stands, I Scream for Ice Cream.

“Then we have our scary trail and it wouldn’t be scary if we didn’t have Michael Meyers, Freddy and Jason back. The Knuth family, which takes over the big scary cabin, have done an outstanding job. They worked all Thanksgiving weekend on it and will still be working the next two weeks on it, and that is certainly going to be an experience for those brave enough to trek out.”

While the Haunted Forest has been a favourite community event for more than a decade, this is just the second year back in the forest since the global pandemic forced a pivot towards Aurora’s Haunted Greenhouses, which transformed the conservatories at the Joint Operations Centre on Industrial Parkway North into a walk-through haunted house.

While patrons enjoyed the experience, they were thrilled to get back to the Bush last year and Ware and her team are keen to keep that momentum going.

“Once again, we will have a combined family trail which will then split off to two trails – one for those

not of the faint of heart, and the other continuing on with the family-rated displays,” says Ware. “We really want to encourage people to enjoy the activities at the AFLC and then hop on one of three shuttlebuses going back and forth between the Complex and the Bush where, once again, we will have bonfires, photo-ops, and we’re very fortunate to have the Optimist Club of Aurora doing their charity barbecue and Caterina’s Kitchen on hand with some bites and nibbles for people who have done their trail experience – unless they want to partake before.

“This is for the community, created by the community and enjoyed by both the producers and the receivers of it,” she says. “We have so much fun working with the groups. We also have some dedicated Royal Bank employees from some of the area branches which are actually dedicating a night to make some packing tape sculptures which, in the past, have been so, so well-received.

“We’re very thankful for the volunteers who have stepped forward. We’re excited to be able to get acquainted with the ghosts and goblins of Shepard’s Bush, and we’re so excited to bring the community back to one of the most anticipated events of the year. Even if the weather seems a little bit unfavourable, that is perfect because inclement weather adds to the excitement of the event. It makes it harder on us and the volunteers, but it does add to the experience of the patrons.”

Aurora’s Haunted Forest is admission-by-wristband only and these can be purchased for \$5 per person (ages 2 and up) from the AFLC (135 Industrial Parkway North), Town Hall, and the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex (1400 Wellington Street East). For more information, visit [aurora.ca/hauntedforest](http://aurora.ca/hauntedforest).



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# Haunted Forest offers chance to increase accessibility of Halloween

BY BROCK WEIR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora’s Haunted Forest will address accessibility issues when the event takes over Sheppard’s Bush on October 28, and will also be an invitation to households to do the same.

If you need an assist on the night of the Haunted Forest, applicable residents can contact the Town’s Special Events Department in advance with their requirements.

“We will have on-site accessible parking and at the AFLC there will be a sensory room set up with sensory experiences available,” says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora, noting that these experiences are available in groups and should be booked in advance. “We will be opening early [for those with accessibility needs] at Sheppard’s Bush at 5.30 p.m., which will be a quieter walk-through for families that would

prefer that type of setting. For us, the Bush experience is from 5.30 – 9, and for the general public it’s 6 – 9, but we want to put in as much effort as we can to make it inclusive as possible.”

This inclusivity could also extend to the home.

On the night of the Haunted Forest, signs will be available for pickup to denote your house as an “accessible trick or treat landscape” for trick-or-treaters on Halloween night.

“If presented on your driveway, people who require accessibility accommodations will know which houses are inclusive or more accessible more easily,” says Ware. “This was a project spearheaded by our Accessibility Advisory Committee, which we’re happy to help promote through the busy night we’re anticipating having.”

For more information on the Haunted Forest and how to contact the Town’s Special Events Department, visit [aurora.ca/hauntedforest](http://aurora.ca/hauntedforest).



Keep an eye out for this symbol while trick-or-treating this Halloween as it identifies an accessible place to get candy.

Contributed photo



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**Tickets and details:** [www.holidayhometour.ca](http://www.holidayhometour.ca)

Use promo code **AURORA5** to save \$5.00 off per ticket/package.

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# Aurora Sports Hall of Fame 2023

## Inductee Charles Leeming: Hockey and baseball legend a lively source of local sports history

By Jim Stewart

Charles Leeming has seen oodles of changes in his hometown of Aurora in 73 years of residency, but one thing that has remained constant is his sense of humor.

When asked to describe the feeling he experienced when the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame called to confirm his 2023 induction, Leeming quipped in self-deprecation: “If you live in this Town long enough, they either bury you or they put you in the Hall of Fame.”

The engaging raconteur even diminished the initial conversation he had with his wife when she reminded him, “Chuck, a woman from the Town called and said they want to put you in the Hall of Fame.” Leeming’s self-deprecatory reply: “What category?”

Leeming’s modesty belies his impact on the early history of hockey in Aurora.

An original Aurora Tiger, Leeming recounted “scoring 40 goals in 35 games with the Junior B Tigers and playing on a great line with Ray Pugh and Gordon Burbidge. Ray led the league in points, Gord led the league in assists, and I led the league in goals.” He added with a dash of ironic understatement that, “I could put the puck in the net.”

The spry, sharp, and inspirational 80-year-old delineated an outstanding run he had with a series of Aurora teams throughout the 50s and 60s, which sounded like an engaging audiobook on local hockey history: “In 1955, our Bantam team—the Royal Lions—won the North York League championship. I always played up—it was a way to get better playing with and against older kids. Sometimes I’d have to play up two divisions because we had so few players in Aurora when the population was only 3,300. We won the Ontario championship in St. Mary’s in 1956-57—it was the first time in ten years an Aurora hockey team won a title. In 1957-58, we were named the Unwanted Ugly Ducklings of Aurora because we couldn’t find a sponsor after being nicknamed the Studebaker Larks by a local car dealership that sponsored us the year before. In 1959-60, we had a great season with the Junior B Aurora Bears. Dave Dryden was our goalie and Roger Neilson was our coach.”

Although Leeming noted his connection to NHLers like Dryden and Neilson, his voice became animated with parental pride and joy when he discussed his favorite moment as a hockey player.

“In 2017, my son Bob’s team was short of players prior to an exhibition series in Europe so I was invited to play for the Canadian team and we played five games in five different countries together. I wound up being the second top scorer at the age of 74 playing against guys who were my son’s age of 54. Any father should do this.

Bob wore my old number 14 so, with my number taken, I chose 41. Bob and I played defense together—number 14 and 41 on the blue line. We had some injuries in Europe so they moved me to left wing and that’s where I scored most of my goals as a 74-year-old. Playing hockey with my son in Europe was the highlight.”

As if this anecdote wasn’t the hockey version of the magical moment shared by Ray and John Kinsella on a diamond in Iowa, Leeming acknowledged his own “Field of Dreams” background in baseball as a multi-sport Auroran: “I played ball in Aurora and Richmond Hill during my summers. When I came to Town, everybody played hockey in the winter and baseball in the summer. Aurora Glenville Dairy was our sponsor and we won the Ontario Men’s Intermediate B championship. Frank Dynes down in Richmond Hill has all our championship trophies at his jewelry store. We won 2 of 3 Canadian championships in 1971, 1972, and 1973. The championship game we lost likely will not be repeated. We won our way into the championship and played 15 innings on a Sunday afternoon and into the evening tied at 0-0 and the game had to be postponed to another weekend. The next weekend, we resumed the championship game and played another 15 innings—and lost 1-0. A 30-inning national championship game that we lost due to a basepath error. That was tough.”

Leeming remembers with great sentimentality “how much fun it was to play ball with great guys and winning Ontario and Canadian championships.”

“It was the same kind of relationship I enjoyed with my hockey teams, too, especially when the wives got along so well, too.”

The legendary two-sport athlete remembered when the Aurora Bears franchise moved to Schomberg, but he stayed in Aurora in 1961-62 to play for the newly-established Aurora Tigers.

“I was 19 years old, married, and had 2 kids. Cousins Dairy Bar and Jerry Wilson’s Hardware sponsored us and provided babysitters so my wife could attend the games.”

Leeming’s big 40-goal season with the Tigers caught the eye of pro hockey scouts and he was invited to “play for the ECHL’s Nashville Dixie Flyers who were willing to pay me \$140/week. I was 24-years-old and was ready to meet them in Rhode Island to join the team. When I asked them for a bit more money per week to support my wife and family, I got a telegram that told me not to report. It was just as well. I needed to be home with my wife and kids and that’s the way it was back then with a six-team NHL—so few hockey jobs and the ECHL and AHL were the ways into the NHL, but they could say no because there

were so many players to choose from.”

The reflective octogenarian does not seem to regret his near-miss with a pro hockey career in the pre-1967 era of the NHL and its farm teams system. At 35, Leeming started “playing hockey in the Aurora Old Timers Hockey League and played for the next 45 years.”

One recurring theme that emerges in our hour-long phone call is Leeming’s connections to people, places, and teams. Leeming’s connection to the current Aurora Tigers remains strong and his assessment of Tigers’ Governor Jim Thomson—a fellow 2023 Hall of Fame inductee—is a positive one.

“Jimmy Thomson seems to be a very decent guy and is running the club very well. We appreciated getting the Tigers Alumni jackets from him and participating in the Opening Ceremonies in September. The Tigers are a nice little team and any team is capable of winning a Canadian championship. I hope they do.”

Leeming attended a recent Tigers game against the high-flying Collingwood Blues and was a wee bit critical of the home team’s effort: “I thought they skated really well against Collingwood,



Charles Leeming is pictured on a hockey trading card.

Image courtesy of ASHOF

but they took too many penalties and it cost them.”

It’s clear that Charles Leeming is connected to the here-and-now of Aurora hockey just as he is an invaluable link to the Town’s hockey history-- having excelled as an outstanding and original Aurora Tiger who has donned both local hockey and baseball uniforms with equal pride and success since the 1950s.



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# Lavallee and Karkoulas sparkle in Tigers' 4-1 win over Toronto Patriots

**By Jim Stewart**

The Aurora Tigers defeated the Toronto Patriots 4-1 in OJHL action at Westwood Arena on Saturday night.

The Tigers, in the midst of another grueling four-game road trip, turned in a terrific team effort in Toronto that featured two goals by Jace Lavallee and stellar goaltending by Yianni Karkoulas, who turned aside 26 of 27 shots to earn the W versus the Patriots.

Aurora fell behind in Toronto when Matthew Manza scored at 16.03 of the first period to give the Patriots a 1-0 lead. However, it would be the only goal that Karkoulas would surrender and Tigers' forward Max Ceryjakovs tied the game thirty-seven seconds after

Manza's marker with assists from Bode Pearson and Connor Russo.

The Tigers took the lead less than two minutes later when Lavallee beat Patriots' goaltender Evan Maillet. Frank Castiglione earned the only assist—his eighth of the season—on Lavalee's go-ahead and game-winning goal.

Lavallee's timely marker stood up after a scoreless second period and Kyle Baston made it 3-1 for the Tigers at 6.40 of the final frame with helpers from Kenneth Wu and Jonah Ziskinder.

Lavallee's second goal of the game closed the scoring at 16.54 when he fired the puck into an empty Patriots cage.

Jacob Carroll and Wu earned assists on Aurora's empty netter.



Goaltender Yianni Karkoulas #73 of the Aurora Tigers makes the save as Diego Da Silva #11 of the Toronto Patriots looks for the rebound during the third period at the Westwood Arena on October 14, 2023.

Photo by Ray MacAloney/OJHL Images

Prior to Saturday night's much-needed victory, the Tigers lost in Trenton 7-4 to the Golden Hawks on Friday and lost 4-2 in Burlington to the Cougars on Tuesday.

In Trenton, Aurora held a 2-1 lead after the first period on goals by Kyle Baston—assisted by Bode Pearson and Kenneth Wu—and Ryan Evenhuis with helpers from Peter Lopes and Ethan Lindsay. It was Evenhuis's tenth goal of the season.

However, Trenton tallied four consecutive goals in the second period to take a 5-2 lead into the final frame and Barret Joynt's second goal of the game at 7:44 gave the Golden Hawks a commanding 6-2 lead. The Tigers fired two third period goals—courtesy of Frank Castiglione—three minutes apart, but the Aurora rally on the road came up short.

A silver lining to a tough final result in Trenton was the production of

Aurora's top line of Evenhuis, Lindsay, and Castiglione who collected eight points in the loss to the Golden Hawks.

In Burlington, Yianni Karkoulas was selected as the first star of the game by PJHL staff. He stopped 46 of the 49 shots that the Cougars fired his way, but it wasn't enough in a 4-2 loss to start the road trip on Tuesday.

Ryan Evenhuis—with his ninth goal of the season—and Frank Castiglione scored for power play goals for the Tigers in Burlington. The Tigers and Cougars battled to a 1-1 tie after two periods, but Burlington scored twice early in the third period to take a 3-1 lead.

The teams exchanged goals in the back half of the final frame at Central Arena, but the Tigers could not close its two-goal deficit.

The Aurora Tigers look to even their road trip to 2-2 with a win in Pickering on Tuesday night.

<

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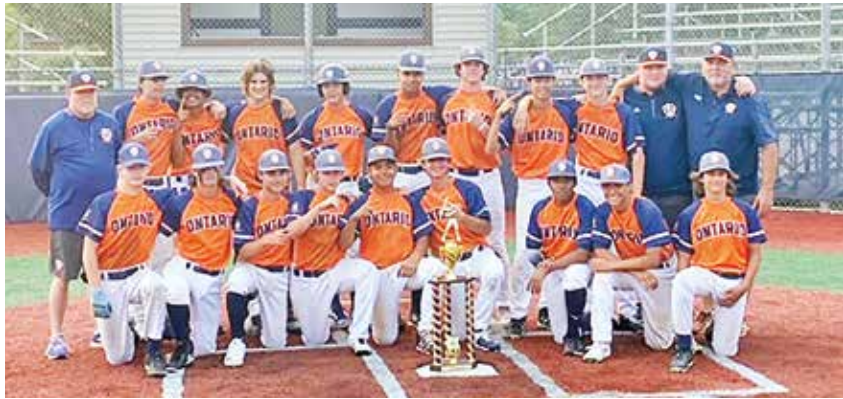




# Breakfast of Champions 2023

## SPOTLIGHT

### TEAM ONTARIO ASTROS



The Team Ontario Astros 14U McGuire traveled to Cleveland Ohio for the CABA Travel Ball World Series, which was a four-day event, finishing with the third seed going into the semi-finals.

Team O drew the second seed, The Columbus Cobras.

Starting pitcher left hander Nick Emons went the distance with a complete game seven hit performance leading Team O to an upset win 5-3 and securing a berth in the World Series final.

Moving into the final Team O found themselves as the underdog matching up with Pennsylvania's top ranked 14U team , The Pittsburgh Diamond Dawgs, and the number one seed after pool play. The Dawgs were a perfect

5-0 going into the final.

Team O went with Kris Pedrosa, the calm, cool and collected right hander, who put in the best performance of his young career.

Pedrosa threw a complete game three hitter in a 2-0 shutout win, securing the first World Series title for the Team Ontario Astros.

An amazing feat for a group of young men from Canada!

Sport Aurora's Annual Breakfast of Champions, set for October 22, will be held at the Stonehaven Banquet Hall from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., celebrating our Provincial and National Sport Champions of Aurora. Returning Emcee is Jim Thomson and our Guest Speaker is Grey Brett.

## GETTING THINGS DONE

From page 7


no place to turn for support. AUC's affirmation signals to our entire community that everyone is, in fact, welcome and will be supported.


This is such a progressive and meaningful step that AUC has taken, and I couldn't be prouder – it reflects the kind of Town we're all striving to create.

I also want to acknowledge that the Church has taken this bold

step during a very difficult time in its history. It's now going on close to a decade since the fire, and like everyone in our Town, I'm so eager for AUC to finally once again have a home of its own in our downtown core.

I again want to thank AUC for everything they do, and congratulations on becoming an affirming church. I couldn't be prouder.






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# CDS’s Debate Team prepped to take on the world at the International Independent Schools Public Speaking Competition

**From page 12**

Croxon, Amarnath, and Steinmann are the experienced debaters to which Coach Wyndham-West alluded earlier and they provide insight into the value of competing in the World Championships in Durban, South Africa in the 2022-23 school year.

Amarnath, a Grade 11 student, noted that the 2023 competition in South Africa was a valuable experience because “it was the first time I made the Finals and

in addition to learning about apartheid while we were in South Africa, there were opportunities to learn about South African customs and traditions. We enjoyed the week prior to the tournament and to see so many different things made the trip so enjoyable. I made lots of friends, too.”

Croxon, a Grade 12 student, concurred with her teammate regarding the value of the competition and travel as the best educator.

“Finding out that I made the Final and

that all three of us qualified for the Final was the highlight of the competition for me. We all got to do something very special together. Travelling to South Africa was my first international trip where I could truly appreciate what I was experiencing and really spend time learning about culture. It was so cool to travel beforehand and I was coming back from a year off competing. We had our families with us, too, so it was a unique experience.”

Steinmann, a Grade 11 student,

commented on not only the level of competition, but on the eye-opening experience of travelling to another continent.

“It was incredible how much we saw during the sight-seeing tours prior to the competition. It was great to see the culture and history of South Africa, but it was also enjoyable to meet students from South Africa and to talk to them about their customs.”

In addition to being moved by both the competition in Durban and the experience of international travel, the trio competing in the IISPS in Vancouver this coming week—Croxon, Steinmann, and Ethan Walba—commented on what they’re looking forward to most from their trip to British Columbia.

Walba, a Grade 12 student, noted that “Being able to get away to a different Canadian province is great—each part of Canada has its charms.” Steinmann expressed her relief that the competition won’t be virtual:

“Going to a live competition rather than on-line is so much better. I’ve never been to Vancouver so meeting people will be so much more enjoyable in person instead of a virtual experience.”

Croxon spoke of the trip as a climactic event in her four-year high school career: “I wanted to get back into this after a year off. In some ways it seems surreal that I’m going back to Vancouver in my final year. It feels really good and this competition will be rewarding for all of us.”

When asked to be prognosticators and describe their prospect of winning in Vancouver, all three competitors couch their language effectively.

Walba, a veteran debater, expresses an air of confidence and feels “cautiously optimistic as a Grade 12 student in this competition,” Steinmann notes that “knock on wood – that we do well. It’s about the experience, too,” and Croxon acknowledges that many elements make predicting an outcome difficult.

“Debates and public speaking can be so subjective. Success depends on so many factors. We’ve got a really good team that is experienced as well.”

There’s no debate about it. Coach Kerstin Wyndham-West has her CDS competitors ready to take the West Coast by storm—one persuasive argument and rhetorical device at a time.

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### Upcoming Debating and Public Speaking Events at CDS this month:

In addition to travelling to debating and public speaking events, Country Day School will host the Fulford Cup for the first time since 2017. This competition is in need of judges. Community members interested in volunteering to judge at the upcoming Fulford Debate Tournament at CDS on Friday, October 27th from 3 – 8 p.m. should email [volunteer@cds.on.ca](mailto:volunteer@cds.on.ca). Dinner is included.

## CROSSWORD

Puzzle No.TAOCT1923 • Solution in Classifieds

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13		14			15			
16					17	18			19			
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							47					
49					50			51	52	53	54	55
56					57			58				
59					60			61				
62					63				64			



### CLUES ACROSS

1. A device to disengage without a key  
5. Subdivision  
8. Network of nerves  
12. Lounge chair  
14. Ocean  
15. C. European river  
16. Bowl-shaped cavity  
18. \_\_\_ Caesar, comedian  
19. Lyric poems  
20. Tia's sister  
21. A way to develop  
22. Cows collectively  
23. Areas close by  
26. Slightly disreputable  
30. Made a mistake  
31. One who cites  
32. Food stall: \_\_\_ pai dong  
33. Narrow valley between hills  
34. Members of people living mainly in the Congo  
39. More (Spanish)  
42. Classroom implements  
44. Cognizant of  
46. One who tells on others  
47. Free from slavery  
49. Thick piece of something  
50. Containing two nitrogen atoms between carbon atoms  
51. Removed entirely  
56. Late rocker Turner  
57. Appreciated  
58. Observation expedition  
59. Opposite of subtracts  
60. Unit of work  
61. Wreckage on the sea bed  
62. Affirmative! (slang)  
63. Witness  
64. River in England

### CLUES DOWN

1. A dissenting clique  
2. Japanese city  
3. Spiritual leader  
4. Second letter of Greek alphabet  
5. Musical term  
6. Ruled over  
7. Fortified wine  
8. First year player  
9. Moved in a circular way  
10. Adolescents  
11. Scottish or Irish Gaelic language  
13. Someone who serves in the armed forces  
17. Bring up  
24. Factual written account (abbr.)  
25. Having three sides  
26. Annoy  
27. Hustle  
28. American WW2 leader  
29. Stale atmosphere  
35. US Treasury  
36. Sound unit  
37. They \_\_\_  
38. Soviet Socialist Republic  
40. Places to play video games  
41. Medical event  
42. When you hope to arrive  
43. Fixed prices  
44. Popular Boston song  
45. Valley in Indiana and Illinois  
47. Omit when speaking  
48. German explorer of the Congo Basin  
49. Stick around  
52. From a distance  
53. Heroic tale  
54. Amounts of time  
55. Eat



# High tea at Armoury will highlight Inn from the Cold, need for transitional shelters

From page 1

Inn!” capital campaign which will lead to the construction of a 16,000 square foot housing centre in Newmarket that will offer transitional housing units for those in York Region. All told, it’s a project with a \$15 million price tag.

The \$2.5 million fundraising goal of the All Inn! capital campaign is the largest ever undertaken by Inn from the Cold in its 18-year history and aims to be a game-changer within the Region.

Ahead of the event, Inn from the Cold Executive Director Ann Watson had nothing but praise for staff who have organized the tea from the ground-up.

“We landed on the All Inn! name because we really wanted every member of our community to be all-in in terms of making this happen,” says Watson. “That includes our staff, our Board. Our staff came up with this idea of holding an event and they came up with the idea of a high tea because it is something different and the Armoury was really gracious and gave us the space for free. The first one we had last year was incredibly successful, a beautiful event.”

While the event is a great chance to enjoy a full high tea, it’s also a great opportunity to help Inn from the Cold address dire needs within the community.

Shelters, says Watson, really emerged in the late 1970s and early 80s as a response to “unprecedented” challenges. They were initially hoped to be a “temporary fix to a structural issue” that was going to be addressed. Unfortunately, this turned out to be more of a dream than a reality.

“We’re seeing that now young people in their 20s and 30s can’t even fathom how they will get into homeownership,” she says. “As it has now reached that generation in terms of recognizing we finally have a crisis, for decades it affected those who are low income. Homelessness has continued to escalate since the late 1970s and now it is really at crisis proportions. The pandemic really increased the numbers. A lot of people who were living on the cusp, just able to maintain their housing, lost their housing and now they are facing or experiencing homelessness as well. With this project, while we’re not going to increase our shelter beds, we’re going to increase our traditional housing program which we’re really committed to doing because that project really saw people start to get housed who were in the shelter system. Too many people get stuck in the shelter system because there is nothing for them to move onto.

“Our hypothesis is if we can come up with options for people to move out of the shelter system, we won’t get bogged down in the shelter. Shelters are being used for de-facto housing because it’s impossible. Their income doesn’t meet the cost of rent, even for a room for someone who is low income. We’re creating those options for people to move.”

The resulting 18 units will complement the five units they have now, she added, and will also support their Please Come Inn program that allows Inn from the Cold to offer rental opportunities in the community post-transitional housing “that are achievable.”

“Everything we do is kind of predicated on the idea we want to move people out of the shelter. We don’t want to be just a good shelter, we want to be that shelter that really encourages people, values them, says ‘You’re worthy of a place to live’ and we’re going to help you get there. That’s what the new location is all about: helping us do more.”

By holding their event at the Armoury, Watson notes it helps bring the Aurora community into the conversation because, although Inn from the Cold is based in Newmarket, the needs are felt in Aurora as well –



particularly where, over the past two years, transitional housing for men proposed by the Region of York for south Aurora, has seen pushback from some residents.

“I’m a homeowner, too, and Inn From the Cold is a neighbour in our community. We all want to be good neighbours and I think the thing we all need to remember is we’re serving residents of York Region,” says Watson. “We’re serving people born and raised in Newmarket, in Aurora, in Richmond Hill. They are our kids, our parents, and grandparents and for whatever reason those folks fell between the cracks. Organizations like Inn from the Cold plug those gaps and they are the net that catches these folks. Our intention is not to just hold them there in that position, it is to work with everyone in the community and that person.

“One of our signature programs, Getting Ahead in a Just Getting By World, and that is all about where you

are at, how do you get unstuck, how do you unpack all the stuff that happened to you, all the things that continue to happen to you, both personal and structural? How do you unpack all that? Get the right supports in place so you can move forward with confidence. We have had so much success. We have housed people who slept in bus shelters for a decade. It does happen, but it does take a really committed community to make it happen, too, and I just wish we could push past the worst-case scenario and look at what the best-case scenarios are – and think of it as you would a family. I don’t think any family is immune to having someone

experience difficulty and usually what happens is people rally around that person, they show them love, they show them support, they show them patience and/or they accept them for who they are. But not everybody is afforded that same family and that same opportunity and we want to build that compassionate community around these folks so they can move forward.”

High Tea in Support of Inn from the old’s All Inn! campaign will take place at the Armoury on Sunday, November 5, from 1 – 3 p.m. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, call 905-895-8889 or email [info@innfromthecold.ca](mailto:info@innfromthecold.ca).

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Call Helen or Anna to RSVP today, spots are limited 905-770-4704

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# THiNGS *you ought to know*

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20**

Canadian jazz legends Joe Sealy (piano; Order of Canada and Juno Award winner – Africville Suite) and Paul Novotny (upright bass) open the Voices of the World performing arts season with a high-octane performance. Specially-featured supporting artist pianist Thompson Egbo-Egbo in an opening set. A night of jazz icons and discoveries. Tickets \$40 (HST incl.); location – Trinity Church Aurora. For info and to purchase, visit [AuroraCulturalCentre.ca](http://AuroraCulturalCentre.ca) or call the Box Office at 905 713-1818.

\*\*\*\*

The “British Invasion” comes to Aurora this evening at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North. The Tribute to the Beatles and other British entertainers will include Joe Culmone, Jerry Belluzzo, Alex Harrison and Josh Park. Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door. For more information. Call 289-221-2687.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21**

The York Symphony Orchestra presents “Heroic Brass” tonight at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street. The Program includes Dvorak’s Symphony No. 9 (from the New World) , Brahms’ Academic Festival Overture and Mozart’s Horn Concerto No.3. With guest artist Sarah Bell, horn. Tickets

available at Eventbrite, at the door, or by calling 647-849-8403

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28**

Join the fun at Aurora’s Haunted Forest, presented by Healthy Planet. This event is geared to all ages with family experiences, as well as for those looking for a good scare. 6 – 9 p.m. at Sheppard’s Bush and the Aurora Family Leisure Complex. Aurora’s Haunted Forest has been acclaimed as one of the Top 100 Festivals and Events in Ontario. Special thanks to 5th Aurora Scouts, Marquee Theatrical Productions and The Knuth Family for their countless hours and passion for creating displays and themes. Additional thanks to the more than 180 volunteers whose time and talent has been essential for getting this event ready. Wristbands are required to participate in the indoor activities as well as to tour the Haunted Forest trails. Event wristbands are \$5.00 per person (ages 2 and older) and can be purchased in advance, while supplies last, at the AFLC, Town Hall and the SARC. For more, visit [aurora.ca/hauntedforest](http://aurora.ca/hauntedforest).

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4**

Electrifying powerhouse Basia Bulat (Juno and Polaris Prize multi-nominee) and her four-piece band make their Aurora debut. Having previously shared the Arcade Fire,

The National, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, Daniel Lanois, St Vincent, Sufjan Stevens, to name a few – Bulat is also a remarkable multi-instrumentalist, from piano to autoharp, ukulele to bass. Tickets \$50 (HST incl.); 7.30 p.m. Location – NC Aurora Armoury. For info and to purchase, visit [AuroraCulturalCentre.ca](http://AuroraCulturalCentre.ca) or call the Box Office at 905 713-1818.

**THROUGH NOVEMBER 18**

Continuing in the Aurora Cultural Centre Gallery: A Path to Totality: Solo Exhibition by Vicky Talwar. Paintings in translucent media, along with three immersive installations using Himalayan pink salt rocks as the main medium, informed by Talwar’s process of sound energy healing therapy offered by Buddhist Monk Lama Jam of the Five Wisdom’s Temple. Through November 18th in person (December 1st online).

**CONTINUING**

Partagez le Francais: Ce groupe accueille les ADULTES / 18+ (des francophones aux débutants capables de converser) - qui cherchent à mettre en pratique leurs compétences Conversationnelle en français. Over Zoom with a nominal fee of \$2.50. RSVP by visiting [meetup.com/Partagez-le-francais](https://meetup.com/Partagez-le-francais). For more information, email [partagez.york@outlook.com](mailto:partagez.york@outlook.com).

\*\*\*\*

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](http://AbuseHurts.ca) to select your drop off time slot.

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# Women’s Futures program supported by Provincial Government

**From page 2**

“With the support of the Province of Ontario, we will now be able to offer 250 women each year the services they need to leave abusive situations and develop economic opportunities for them to thrive.”

According to data provided by the Province, the global pandemic has presented women and gender-diverse Ontarians with more challenges than ever before, including economic insecurity, an increased burden of caregiving responsibilities, and a rise in the incidence of domestic violence.

“Young women, mothers of young children, racialized women, single mothers, Indigenous women,

immigrant women, women with disabilities and women without university degrees have been most affected,” says the Province. “In June 2021, the government launched Ontario’s Task Force on Women and the Economy to provide advice on addressing the unique and disproportionate economic barriers women face. Building on the work of the task force, the government is taking action to address the challenges women face in the workforce. In 2022-23, the Investing in Women’s Futures program helped nearly 1,300 women across Ontario secure employment, start their own businesses or pursue further training and/or education.”

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(rain date Sunday, Oct. 30)

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8 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
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OBITUARY

**JONES (nee WOODHOUSE), Margaret Elizabeth Grace Lynn of Aurora.**

Passed away peacefully in her home in Aurora on Friday, October 13, 2023 in her 87th year. Born November 1, 1936 in Toronto. Beloved mother of Michael, Wendy, Brian & James Jones. Dear sister of Irene Holder and the late James Woodhouse. Loving wife of the late Frank Jones and companion of the late Don Staples. Grandmother of seven, and great-grandmother of 6. Margaret was active in many groups within her community. Most memorably, she was a Cub Scout Leader of 4th Aurora Chapter from 1976-1984, an avid member of the Happy Hoppers Square Dance Club from 1986-2014, and a member of her local Red Hat Society “Aristro-cats”. A visitation for Margaret will be held Friday, October 20, 2023 from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM at Thompson Funeral Home, 530 Industrial Parkway South, Aurora, ON L4G6W8 followed by a funeral service in the chapel at 1:00 PM with reception to follow at Thompson Funeral Home. Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at [www.ThompsonFH-Aurora.com](http://www.ThompsonFH-Aurora.com) for the Jones family.

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(JK to Grade 12)

**Saturday, October 21**

Junior School (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5):  
October 21, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

Middle School (Grades 6-8) + Senior School (Grades 9-12):  
October 21, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

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- PC Student, Grade 12



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Ken had a previous career in the grocery business before owning his own store in Beeton. He took over a grocery store at the request of the owner at that time, who asked him to continue to run the store and help guide many of the staff into retirement.

"I really enjoyed the sales part of the industry," Ken explained. "I took the Canadian Professional Sales Association course and became the first retailer to be allowed to use my experience to join the Association. It is based on bringing ethics and morals into sales."

Along with his experience in business, Ken is also a former Councillor with the former Town of Alliston, a Director and Sunday school teacher with his church, and has developed a strong network of knowledgeable connections through the region.

Ken always had an interest in real estate and has kept informed of the market and the trends over the years. It was this interest in the market that led him to pursue a career in real estate. He had a natural ability to work with people and negotiate deals that created equitable results for both buyers and sellers.

In his first year as a real estate agent, Ken was named a 'Centurion' – an honour awarded by Century 21 to top salespeople at a brokerage.

"To be really good at real estate, you have to be very good with details," Ken explained. "If someone is buying, they want to pay a certain price; if someone

is selling, they also want a certain price. It takes negotiation to get somewhere in the middle. My background in selling means to me that it's all the same - you need the same principles and ethics."

As a realtor, Ken is knowledgeable of the region and the towns he works in. He can guide you to a neighbourhood that has the amenities you want or require.

When purchasing a home, clients are often very interested in schools, restaurants, sports groups, recreation facilities, clubs, and other local organizations near where they are looking to buy. Other clients may be more concerned about having a pharmacy or medical clinic close by.

Ken knows the neighbourhoods and can guide a client to an area where they just might find what they are looking for. He also has the knowledge of what is or will be, happening in a town that may affect a potential buyer's decision to purchase in a particular area.

Everything from a new development to an area that is on a flood plain must be considered when buying a house, and Ken can advise clients on areas where there is unseen potential or something that could negatively affect a buyer in the future.

"When clients are looking for a realtor, they want someone who is honest, knowledgeable, and a true sales professional," Ken said.

Ken strives to meet and exceed these expectations when he is dealing with clients. He enjoys the job and appreciates meeting clients and helping them achieve their home buying or selling goals – and he does it while maintaining his strong conviction in ethical and professional business practices he has always used in his career.

To reach Ken at Century 21 Heritage Group Ltd., you can visit online at [www.ken-pratt.c21.ca](http://www.ken-pratt.c21.ca) to view featured properties or call him at the office at 905-936-2121 or on his cell phone at 705-796-6753.

WRITTEN BY Brian Lockhart

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#### MARKET UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2023

### AURORA

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AVERAGE 18 DAYS ON MARKET

NUMBER OF SALES

**49**

151 NEW LISTINGS

SALE TO LIST RATIO

**99%**

YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE

**9.01%**

### KING

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

**\$2,052,470**

AVERAGE 35 DAYS ON MARKET

NUMBER OF SALES

**33**

95 NEW LISTINGS

SALE TO LIST RATIO

**96%**

YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE

**4.05%**

\*The statistics provided were obtained from the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board's Market Watch September 2023:  
Summary of Existing Home Transactions for All Home Types September 2023 + Focus on the MLS Home Price Index for Composite for York Region's Aurora and King

We continue to have a shortage of inventory in the market, by historical standards, but more inventory is beginning to trickle in. With the most recent rate hold, we hope to see Buyers continuing to come off the sidelines and engage in the market. Homes that offer many aesthetic renovations and are priced sharply are still demanding market value and selling in an average number of days. Days on market are beginning to increase and we are experiencing a "more normal" real estate cycle. The higher price point homes are moving slower than expected, but still generating a fair volume of interest. In the lower to mid range segment of the market, multiple offer strategies are not always working as intended. We are experiencing a more balanced market and this is a great time for Buyer's to capitalize on second looks, offers with contingencies and more choices when shopping. If you have any questions about current market conditions, we are always here to be a source of value, as your trusted advisor.

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RESALE  
HOMES  
COLLECTIONS

Embrace the Autumn Advantage:  
SELLING YOUR HOME IN THE FALL



Selling a home is a significant endeavour, and the season in which you decide to put your property on the market can have a notable impact on your success. While many homeowners opt for the spring and summer months for listing their homes, the fall season holds its own unique charm and benefits for sellers. In this article, we will explore the advantages and considerations when selling your home in the fall.

CURB APPEAL IN FULL COLOR

One of the most striking features of selling your home in the fall is the vibrant foliage and warm colour palette that nature provides. The reds, yellows, and oranges of fall leaves can add a picturesque and inviting atmosphere to your property. Take advantage of this season by raking leaves regularly and keeping your garden well-maintained. Buyers will be captivated by the picturesque view.

LESS COMPETITION

The fall season usually sees fewer homes on the market compared to the spring and summer rush. With less competition, your property can stand out more easily. Buyers may be more focused on the limited available options, giving your home a better chance of being noticed and considered.

SERIOUS BUYERS

While there may be fewer buyers in the fall, the ones who are actively searching are often more

serious about making a purchase. These buyers may be motivated by various factors, such as job relocations, changing family needs, or investments. This means that the showings you receive are more likely to come from genuine, qualified purchasers.

FLEXIBLE CLOSING DATES

Fall homebuyers often have more flexible closing dates. This can be an advantage for sellers who need a quick sale or have specific timeline requirements. Buyers may be motivated to close before the holiday season or in preparation for the new year.

SHOWCASE COZY INTERIORS

As the weather cools down, you can play up the coziness and warmth of your home's interior. Consider staging your home with fall-themed decor, such as warm throws, scented candles, and tasteful seasonal arrangements. A warm, inviting atmosphere can make potential buyers feel right at home.

HIGHLIGHT ENERGY EFFICIENCY

In the fall, buyers tend to be more concerned about energy efficiency as they prepare for the upcoming winter. You can take this opportunity to showcase the energy-saving features of your home, such as well-insulated windows, efficient heating systems, and draft-proof doors. This information can be a strong selling point for environmentally conscious buyers.

THINKING OF SELLING THIS WINTER?

If you are planning on selling your home this winter, consider having your exterior photos taken now! By taking exterior photos in the fall, you can showcase your home in a state of readiness for the impending winter. This can include well-maintained gardens, trimmed trees, a clear driveway, and other preparations that make your home look prepared for the challenges of winter. Winter weather can pose challenges for photography, including snow accumulation, overcast skies, and shorter daylight hours. By taking photos in the fall, you can avoid these challenges and present your home in the best light possible. This ensures that your home is showcased at its best, even once the snow hits the ground. Buyers will appreciate being able to view photos of your home through various seasons.

Selling your home in the fall may not be the most popular choice, but it offers unique advantages that can lead to a successful and profitable sale. From the picturesque curb appeal to the presence of serious buyers, the fall season has much to offer sellers. So, don't be deterred by the changing leaves and cooling temperatures. Embrace the autumn advantage and prepare to welcome prospective buyers into your cozy, inviting home.

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RESALE  
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# How to get your home ready for winter

(NC) As the seasons shift, it's the perfect time to prepare your home for the chilly temperatures ahead. Taking steps to winterize your home now can make a big difference in your comfort and energy bills. Here are some practical tips.

## DRAFT PROOFING

Looking for air leaks and drafts is an important first step when it comes to keeping your home cozy and energy efficient. Cold air can seep into your home through gaps around windows, doors and - believe it or not - even electrical outlets. After a thorough inspection, use weatherstripping or caulking to seal any openings. You'll keep warm air in and cold air out, which can save you energy and money.

## INSULATION UPGRADES

Think about adding insulation in key areas of your home. Attics, walls and floors are common places

where heat can escape. New or additional insulation can help retain heat and keep indoor temperatures consistent. It's a smart investment that can pay off with lower energy bills and greater comfort.

## HVAC INSPECTION

You probably haven't used it for a few months, so don't forget about your heating system. Schedule a professional maintenance check to make sure it's running at its best. Clean or replace filters, check for any problems and make necessary repairs before winter weather strikes. A well-maintained heating system will not only keep you warm, but also save energy by running more efficiently.

## WINTER ESSENTIALS

Now is also a good time to stock your home with winter supplies. Make sure you have extra blankets and warm clothing on hand. Plus, emergency supplies like flashlights, batteries, water and non-perishable food. You'll be better prepared for unexpected weather and can have extra peace of mind for the upcoming season.

Remember, preparation is key and the sooner you start, the longer you can save energy. For recommendations on which upgrades to tackle first, and to see what rebates you can qualify for, you can sign up for a home energy assessment. Find out more at [enbridgegas.com/herplus](https://enbridgegas.com/herplus).

[www.newscanada.com](https://www.newscanada.com)

### 3 steps to make your home a safer sanctuary

(NC) Your home should be your haven – a place for you to rest, recharge and enjoy your life. But even in the most magazine-perfect home there are a few important steps to take to keep your hideaway healthy.

#### TEST FOR RADON

Radon is an invisible radioactive gas that can seep up from the ground anywhere in the country. You can't see it or smell it, but long-term exposure to radon is the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers, and it increases the existing risk of cancer in those who do smoke. It doesn't matter if you have a newly built home or an old fixer-upper, your radon level could be high.

The only way to know if there is a dangerous level of radon in your home is to test for it using a do-it-yourself kit or by hiring a qualified professional. Health Canada recommends using a long-term test over three months in the fall and winter for the most accurate results. If your level is too high, you should hire a professional to fix it – it's a usually an easy, one-day job costing about as much as a new home appliance.

#### INSTALL CO ALARMS

Carbon monoxide, known as CO, is another deadly gas that you can't see, taste or smell. It's made by fuel-burning appliances like gas stoves and fireplaces. When installed, maintained and used properly, these appliances are safe. But if there's a malfunction or not enough ventilation, CO can build up to a deadly level. You may become tired and achy and eventually lose consciousness.

Installing CO alarms on every level of your home, especially outside sleeping areas, is the only way to protect yourself from this deadly gas. If an alarm goes off, get everyone out immediately and call emergency services right away. There shouldn't be damage to your home, but you'll need to air out the home and get the source of the buildup fixed before you can return.


#### REPLACE BATTERIES IN SMOKE DETECTORS

We all have smoke detectors in our homes to alert us in case of a fire, and you might know you are supposed to test them and change the batteries every six months. Put a note on your calendar to remind you when it's time for this important step. You can also consider wiring in your smoke alarms if you ever update your electrical system. Just remember that you'll still need back-up batteries installed in case of a power outage. Or buy ones with a built-in 10-year battery. Depending on the model, detectors must be replaced every five to 10 years.


Even though these safety steps may not be as pretty or satisfying as sprucing up your space with new paint or decor, they are crucial steps to ensure you can rest easily and safely in your home.

Find more information about radon gas at [takeaction-onradon.ca](https://takeaction-onradon.ca).

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RESALE  
HOMES  
COLLECTIONS

6 easy hacks  
to save energy  
at home

- (NC) Saving energy doesn't need to be complicated or expensive. With a few simple upgrades and changes in daily habits, you can make your home more energy efficient and help lower utility bills.
- 1 EMBRACE NATURAL LIGHT** Take advantage of natural light during the day. Open curtains and blinds to let the sunshine in. You won't need to turn on as many lights, plus it will make your home brighter and more inviting. Keep in mind, this can heat up your home on hot days, but the extra heat is a good thing as the weather cools down.
  - 2 LIGHT THE WAY WITH LEDS** When you do need to turn on lights, choose energy-efficient LEDs. They use less energy and last significantly longer than traditional incandescent light bulbs. By switching to LEDs, you can reduce both your energy use and the number of bulbs that end up in landfills.
  - 3 ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT** Save energy without sacrificing comfort. During cooler months, lower your thermostat by a degree or two and put on an extra layer of clothing. In summer, raise the temperature a bit and use fans for added cooling. Also consider a smart thermostat to automatically adjust temperatures based on your schedule.
  - 4 UNPLUG AND POWER DOWN** Many electronics and appliances use standby power — also known as phantom power — even when they're turned off. It's a good idea to unplug them when not in use to reduce energy waste. Also think about using power bars with switches to easily turn off multiple devices at one time.
  - 5 SEAL ENERGY LEAKS** Are your windows or doors drafty? Use inexpensive weatherstripping and caulking to seal up gaps. This simple step can keep your home better insulated and temperatures more stable. That way, your heating and cooling systems don't have to work as hard to keep your home comfy.
  - 6 TAP INTO LOCAL PROGRAMS** Check out programs that help homeowners reduce energy use, such as Home Efficiency Rebate Plus. A partnership between Enbridge Gas and the federal government, it offers rebates for energy-efficient home upgrades, such as insulation, windows, doors and more.
- Find more information at [enbridgegas.com/herplus](https://enbridgegas.com/herplus).

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The season of pumpkin spice  
is once again upon us, and so  
are fall decorating traditions.

For many of us, the transition from summer to fall is a nostalgic time to break out the spooky decor, unpack the turkey-themed table runner and adorn the front door with our favourite fall wreath. But, if dressing up the house with orange pumpkins and burlap year after year is getting a bit stale over time, there's no harm in shaking up your fall decorating choices this season.

Here are four new 2023 fall decor trends you can try in your home:

**EARTHY TONES**

Fall colours are traditionally defined by shades of orange, red and brown. This year, more earth-like tones are making their way into the home, including varieties of sage green, warm beige and caramel, rustic brick red and earthy terracotta. You can achieve this softer, more muted fall look through coloured glassware, cushion covers, ceramics, blankets and other housewares that are easy to swap out when the seasons

change. If you're looking to add a contrasting statement piece to your interior this fall, try introducing an eye-catching accent colour with a hint of black, indigo or copper.

**RUSTIC TOUCHES**

Rustic furniture is a staple in fall design this year. Building off of the theme of warm and earth-inspired interiors, distressed or vintage finds will bring a touch of charm to your home this season. The most economical and environmentally friendly way to pull off this look is with the help of your local thrift store or online marketplaces, where you're likely to find an array of second-hand furniture, rugs and trinkets. You don't need to spend a lot to add a ton of character to your space.

**LAYERED TEXTURES**

As the temperature drops, we tend to layer up with different fabrics to keep our bodies warm – it's no different for our homes.

This fall, mix and match different layers of textures and fabrics for an extra cozy feel. Whether it's your bedding, accent cushions or rugs, get creative with different textiles, such as wool, knit, velvet, satin and cashmere. If your interior tastes are more neutral, you

can still achieve this trend with a monochromatic colour palette to elevate your home.

**FRUITS AND FLOWERS**

Move aside pumpkins – fruits are all the rage this year taking centre stage in 2023. Arrange apples, figs and pears in dough bowls for a less-expected fall centrepiece. If fruits aren't your thing, opt for dried florals like pampas grass, sunflowers or wheat stalks to add a touch of 'Cottage Core' to your living space.

**BONUS TIP: GIVE ATTENTION TO OUTDOOR SPACES**

We are using outdoor spaces longer thanks to milder weather and outdoor heaters. Show your balcony, patio or backyard some fall decor love too by dressing it up with lanterns, wreaths and seasonal flowers, such as chrysanthemums or hydrangeas. Add a touch of coziness around your outdoor fireplace or sitting area with water-resistant pillows and blankets in your favourite fall colours and patterns.

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# SPOOKY REAL ESTATE: THE HAUNTED HOUSE OF AURORA



By Julien Laurion  
The Big Tuna of Real Estate

Aurora, Ontario - As the leaves turn to vibrant shades of orange and the chill of autumn fills the air, we take you on a spine-tingling journey through the haunted history of Aurora. While most might associate the real estate market with property values and square footage, there are tales of one house that transcend the ordinary.

**NESTLED AMIDST THE CHARMING** streets of Aurora, a historic Victorian mansion stands as a ghostly testament to the town's eerie past. This impressive abode, known as the "Evershadow Estate," has intrigued both ghost enthusiasts and real estate aficionados alike. The property, now listed for sale, comes with a thrilling twist that would make even the bravest buyers pause.

Julien Laurion, known as "The Big Tuna" in the real estate world, is tasked with the spooky honour of selling this house. As he guided me through the cobwebbed corridors and creaky floors, he began to recount the ghostly tales of Evershadow Estate.

"From the moment you enter this haunted house, you'll feel the presence of its otherworldly inhabitants," said The Big Tuna. "It's the ultimate fixer-upper, but the spirits that call it home are the true investment."

As we explored the house, he shared stories of spectral laughter echoing through the halls, and phantom footsteps descending the grand staircase. Brave buyers, be prepared for unexplained drafts and flickering lights and don't be surprised if you find your furniture rearranged when you wake up in the morning. The ghosts have a taste for interior design!

The Big Tuna also introduced me to the tale of Lady Abigail Sinclair, the original owner of Evershadow Estate. Her tragic end involved a forbidden romance, a hidden treasure, and an untimely demise. Locals say she still roams the halls, searching for her lost love and the treasure she was unjustly denied.

The basement, with its ancient stone walls and dimly lit passageways, is rumoured to be the epicentre of paranormal activity. Many visitors have reported ghostly apparitions, and one brave homeowner even claimed to have seen Lady Abigail herself, weeping in the shadows.

But it's not all spooks and chills; Evershadow Estate boasts breathtaking architecture, with intricate woodwork, stained glass windows, and elegant fireplaces that have stood the test of time. The spacious rooms have seen centuries of history unfold, and the property includes a sprawling garden with a centuries-old oak tree that's rumoured to be a gateway to the spirit world.

Some may see the haunted history of this property as a deterrent, but others view it as an opportunity to live in a house with a story to tell. The Big Tuna explained, "There's a niche market for buyers who relish the idea of sharing their home with friendly ghosts. It's a chance to become a part of Aurora's rich history."

Indeed, it seems there are prospective buyers who are drawn to the thrill of living in a haunted house. One such prospective buyer, Al Wilson, is considering purchasing the estate. "I've always been fascinated by



Image by Raphael Olegre from Pixabay

the supernatural, and when I heard about Evershadow, I couldn't resist taking a look," Al shared. "The idea of sharing my home with spirits is intriguing, not to mention the unique conversation starter at parties!"

As Halloween approaches, the fate of Evershadow Estate remains uncertain. Will a brave buyer like Al take on the task of restoring this historic haunted house to its former glory? Or will the ghosts of Aurora continue to call it home?

Evershadow Estate is a chilling reminder that in the world of real estate, every property has a story. For those who dare to step inside, this house offers a chance to be a part of a spine-tingling tale that transcends the ordinary and who knows, perhaps a ghostly roommate or two. Aurora's haunted history lives on, and it's up to the brave and bold, like Al, to decide if they want to write the next chapter in the story of Evershadow Estate.

If you're in the market for unique properties in Aurora, consider Julien Laurion's real estate services to help you find your next home, whether it's a charming historic mansion or a cozy contemporary abode. Aurora's haunted history lives on, and it's up to the brave and the bold.

Julien Laurion AKA Big Tuna is a local Real Estate Sale Representative with Royal LePage Your Community Realty in Aurora. I am a real estate agent who has expertise in both Real Estate and Renovations and has been involved in this community for over 20 years. If you have a question for my monthly article or if you are considering buying, selling or leasing a home please feel free to call or email me directly at (416) 402-5530 or julien@bigtuna.ca or by alternatively visiting my website www.bigtuna.ca or Facebook page @bigtunarealty



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## Warranty coverage on a resale home? Yes, it's possible

(NC) If you've got your eye on a resale house or condominium unit that is less than seven years old, you're in luck. Not only do you get to own a home that has the latest building innovations, but you also benefit from a builder's warranty on work and materials.

That's because the standard seven-year warranty on new homes in Ontario stays with every home even after it's sold by the original owner.

Knowing how much coverage you have and how the warranty works will ensure you don't miss out on any protection – and the sooner you find out, the better.

### DETERMINING YOUR COVERAGE

The online Ontario Builder Directory, available on the Home Construction Regulatory Authority's website, makes it easy to confirm your home's warranty details. Simply enter the address and you'll see your home's warranty start and end dates. You'll also have access to the builder's information, which will come in handy if you need to report any issues.

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR COVERAGE

Ontario's new-home warranty is broken down into one-, two- and seven-year coverages. The one-year warranty covers general defects in work and materials. The two-year warranty covers defects in your home's plumbing, electrical and heating systems, water penetration through the foundation or other parts of your home, defects related to exterior cladding and Ontario Building Code violations that affect health and safety. Finally, the seven-year warranty provides coverage against major structural defects.

### USING THE REMAINING COVERAGE

Before you can take advantage of remaining warranty coverage, you'll need to provide Tarion, Ontario's new-home warranty administrator, with a copy of your purchase agreement. As soon as your name is on file as the current owner, you're good to go. You can even register online to submit claims and access your home's warranty history.

Find more warranty information at [tarion.com](http://tarion.com).

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# Furnish a home for comfort



The pandemic changed much about the way people live, including a propensity for spending more time at home.

In 2020, people spent far less waking time, roughly an hour and a half less on average, with people outside of their own households.

Though restrictions that limited social interactions have long since been lifted, spending time at home has remained popular. With all that extra time on their hands, respondents have been pouring their energy into fixing up their homes. Lawns, kitchens and living rooms are popular spaces to renovate.

As people continue to fix up their homes, they may be interested in ways to make them more comfortable. Certain furnishings can ensure living spaces are comfortable places to pass the time.

### ENSURE AN ABUNDANCE OF LIGHT.

One stark overhead light will not create a cozy environment. Introduce groupings of illumination where you hope residents and guests will congregate to engage in conversation. Utilize different lighting sources, such as task lighting, table and floor lamps, recessed or ambient lighting, and even candles. Warm temperature light bulbs will add to that comfortable feeling.

### ORDINATE DESIGNS FOR EACH SEASON.

Crisp cotton and breezy linens are great for the warm weather, but when the colder temperatures arrive, it's time to swap for flannel or jersey. Folded quilts or throws on the sofa also can be handy for chilly evenings. Make subtle changes to the home as the temperature changes to epitomize comfort in your spaces.

### SPLURGE ON YOUR SOFA AND BED.

Much time will be spent lounging on the couch or sleeping in your bed. It's worthwhile to invest in pieces that are durable and, above all else, comfortable. While these items may be more expensive up front, the comfort they provide will be well worth it.

### SOFTEN HARSH LINES.

Tricks like incorporating round area rugs or using oval or round pillows can break up the straight line of rooms and even modern furniture pieces. Opt for soft and inviting textiles as well. Textural elements, such as woven decor baskets, also can soften harsh lines.

### INTRODUCE ORGANIC ELEMENTS.

Home entertaining expert Julie Blanner says plants, flowers, fruits, and vegetables bring life to a space. Choose easy-care plants if you do not have a green thumb, or swap out freshly cut blooms in vases as pops of colour and fresh elements are needed.

### UTILIZE WARM PAINT COLOURS.

Cool-toned paints can make a space seem colder and more utilitarian or clinical. When looking at swatches, select paints that have warm undertones. Eggshell and satin sheens will be more inviting and evoke a cozy feel more effectively than flat or matte finishes.

These are just a few ways to build a cozy and comfortable home.

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## Owner's suite renovation ideas for luxury spaces

An owner's suite is a sanctuary for homeowners. It's a place where adults can retreat, relax and unwind after a busy day.

While the largest bedroom in the home typically is dubbed the "owner's suite," it cannot be classified as a suite unless there is an adjoining bathroom. An owner's suite also may have many more unique features that individuals may want to incorporate into a remodel. Here are some ideas to consider.

### UPGRADED CLOSET

Those who will be overhauling the walls and layout of the bedroom can configure the space to make room for a serious closet overhaul. A spacious, walk-in closet that has built-in shelves, drawers and rods can improve the functionality of the bedroom. Draw dividers and other components also can optimize space.

### SITTING AREA

In large suites, homeowners may have the potential to set up a sitting area in one portion of the room away from the bed. This area can have a sofa, chairs, chaise, or other furniture and make for an ideal spot to read and lounge. Some people also enjoy having a television adjacent to the sitting area so they can watch a show in the privacy of the bedroom.

### FIREPLACE

Fireplaces add a unique ambiance to bedrooms and make for cozy spaces in which to cuddle up. While a traditional, roaring wood fire is one option, there is much less mess and fuss with a gas fireplace. Some gas fireplaces may not even have to be vented, and they can be turned on with the flip of a switch.

### PRIVATE PATIO OR BALCONY

Owners who want to go the extra mile in owner's suite renovations can incorporate outdoor spaces into the plans. Many homes are now being built with owner's suites on the first floor, facilitating the possibility of aging in place at home. With this layout, the bedroom can be opened up to the outdoors by way of a sliding door or French doors. Decking or a patio can be outside of the room, or even a covered space similar to a Florida room. Those with second-floor suites may want to consider a small deck or balcony where bistro seating can be placed.

### LUXURY BATH

Owners can turn the en suite bathroom into something out of a spa. A steam shower; heated floors; a separate area for the toilet, closed off from the rest of the bathroom; and dual vanities and sinks can make this a place that screams luxury and comfort. Do not forget dimmer switches for lighting and even the inclusion of some new aromatherapy technology to increase the potential for relaxation.

# The benefits of working with an interior designer

Homes require an investment of time, energy and money. The payoff of those investments is substantial, and the benefits of homeownership are more profound than even longtime homeowners may recognize.

Homes are undoubtedly a point of pride for millions of homeowners, and that sense of fulfillment is even greater when interiors are up-to-date and welcoming. Home trends come and go, and busy homeowners can be forgiven if they're not able to keep up with the latest interior design styles. That's the job of a skilled interior designer. Working with such professionals when redoing a home's interior can make all the difference and increase the already profound sense of pride many homeowners have in their homes.

### INTERIOR DESIGNERS CAN HELP NARROW DOWN THE POSSIBILITIES.

A simple internet search before beginning a home renovation project will turn up millions of results. That can leave homeowners' heads spinning as they try to identify their own style and plan a project that coordinates with their preferences. Experienced interior designers can help homeowners identify their style and offer practical insight as they work with clients to choose elements to incorporate into spaces they aspire to renovate.

### INTERIOR DESIGNERS CAN ENSURE A ROOM DOESN'T STICK OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB.

Just because a design looks good on the internet does not mean it will work well in every home, particularly if only one room is being renovated. Interior designers recognize that and can steer homeowners in the direction of designs that will fit the larger theme of the home while still offering a fresh look and feel.

### INTERIOR DESIGNERS CAN SAVE HOMEOWNERS MONEY AND HEADACHES.

Renovation projects can be pricey, and that price tag only goes up when mistakes are made. Interior de-

signers advise clients on furnishings and other design components, and that advice can save homeowners money in the long run. Furnishings may be returnable, but such returns typically come with sizable fees. By directing clients toward furnishings and other components that fit the overall design scheme, interior designers are saving homeowners the cost and headaches associated with fixable yet expensive mistakes.

### INTERIOR DESIGNS ARE UP-TO-DATE ON THE LATEST TRENDS.

Real estate and design trends come and go, and dated designs can adversely affect what homeowners recoup at resale. Homeowners who want to update their home interiors with the ultimate goal of selling their homes can work with experienced interior designers who know which trends are in and which are out. That knowledge can make it easier and more lucrative to sell a home.

Homes are a significant investment, and investing in the services of an experienced interior designer can ensure homeowners maximize the value of their homes.



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# Small renovations that can make a big impact

Home renovations provide a host of benefits. Such projects can increase resale value and improve the safety, aesthetics and functionality of a home.

Some homeowners may employ the mantra “go big or go home” when they embark on home improvements, thinking that only the largest renovations produce noticeable change. But that’s not the case. Various smaller renovations can provide a lot of bang for homeowners’ bucks as well.

**COUNTERTOPS (AND HARDWARE):** A complete kitchen overhaul may stretch some homeowners’ budgets. However, changing an older countertop for a new material can provide the facelift a kitchen needs. While changing the cabinets may be home-

owners’ ultimate goal, swapping hardware in dated finishes for newer handles and pulls can provide low-cost appeal.

**PAINT:** Painting a space is an inexpensive improvement that adds maximum impact. Paint can transform dark and drab rooms into bright and airy oases. Paint also can be used to create an accent wall or cozy nooks. Homeowners also can showcase their personalities with their choice of paint colours.

**LIGHTING:** Homeowners should not underestimate what a change in lighting can do. When rooms or exterior spaces are illuminated, they take on entirely new looks. It’s worth it to invest in new lighting, whether it’s a dramatic hanging light over the dining room table or task lighting in dim spaces.

**WEATHERPROOFING:** Improving windows, doors, weatherstripping, and insulation in a home can offer visual appeal and help homeowners save money.

The initial investment may be significant, but those costs will pay off in energy savings. According to One Main Financial, space heating is the largest energy expense the average American homeowner has, accounting for around 45 percent of all energy costs.

**MUDROOM:** Turn an entryway into a more functional space with the addition of cabinets, benches or custom-designed storage options that perfectly fit the area. Cubbies and cabinets can corral shoes, umbrellas, hats, bags, and much more.

**ACCENT UPDATES:** Any space, whether it’s inside or outside a home, can get a fresh look with new decorative accents. Invest in new throw pillows and even slipcovers for living room sofas. Use new tile or paint the brick on a fireplace in a den, then update the mantel with decorative displays. Purchase wall art that can bring different colours into a room. Change the cushions on deck furniture and buy colour-coordinated planters.



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# Did you know?

Certain areas of a home are more likely to draw the interest of prospective buyers when a house goes on the market.

When that day comes, many realtors and homeowners rely on staging to make a home as attractive as possible during an open house or appointment viewing. According to a 2019 report from the National Association of Realtors, staging the living room is most important for buyers, with

47 percent of buyers indicating a well-staged living room had an effect on their view of the home. The owner’s suite (42 percent) and the kitchen (35 percent) were found to be the next most important rooms to stage. Though the report is generally concerned with selling a home, the conclusions in the report are something renovation-minded homeowners can keep in mind. If prospective buyers are most impressed by well-staged living rooms, owners’ suites and kitchens, it stands to reason that those same rooms, when well-designed and recently renovated, will elicit a similarly positive reaction if homeowners ultimately decide to sell their homes in the future.

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# 8 steps to a more functional kitchen

A kitchen is often the most utilized room in a house. Meals may be prepared, cooked and often eaten in kitchens, and the room is often utilized as a homework spot or a makeshift place to pay bills and stay on top of household needs. By enhancing the organization and functionality of the kitchen, homeowners can enjoy these popular spaces even more.

Homeowners have increased their spending on home improvements in recent years. According to the Joint Center for Housing Centers for Harvard University, project spending rose to \$472 billion in 2022 from \$328 billion in 2019. It's estimated consumers will have spent \$485 billion by the end of 2023. Kitchen renovations were the most popular upgrade and accounted for the highest budgets in 2021, according to Houzz. When the time comes to renovate a kitchen, homeowners can take steps to make these spaces more organized and

therefore functional. Here are eight tips to creating a more functional kitchen.

## 1 INCREASE STORAGE, AND THEN INVEST IN MORE.

Make the most of corner cabinets and other potential dead spots in a kitchen. Various products can be used to organize awkwardly angled or shaped areas. Kitchen designers also can work with you to reconfigure cabinets and kitchen layouts.

## 2 ORGANIZE UTENSILS AND DISHES AROUND THE SINK/DISHWASHER.

Rather than traversing the kitchen to put clean dishes away, make loading and unloading the dishwasher that much easier by locating commonly used items next to and above it. Similarly, place frequently used saucepans, baking dishes and other items near the oven or food preparation area.

## 3 UTILIZE DRAWER AND CABINET ORGANIZERS.

Make a place for everything in the kitchen. Take out all items and see what you need and use all the time. Then coordinate storage around those items so everything fits perfectly. Pull-out shelves and Lazy Susans also can facilitate access.

## 4 ADD SHELVES TO CABINETS.

If you can afford to have a custom-built kitchen, by all means design cabinets according to preference. If you're using standard cabinets, you may have to reconfigure shelves and spacing to fit the items you have. This also will help you maximize cabinet space.

## 5 ORGANIZE THE GARBAGE.

Have a pull-out drawer or cabinet to store trash bins. Separate compost, trash and recycling needs.

## 6 CREATE CONTINUITY IN THE ROOM.

Many open concept homes will have kitchens open up to another room in the home. Mirror the design scheme from elsewhere in the house, and make sure that the flow between spaces is not obstructed.

## 7 CREATE A BEVERAGE STATION.

A beverage station can minimize the time needed to make a cup of tea or coffee or for the kids to grab juice or chocolate milk.

## 8 HAVE A WORKSPACE IN THE KITCHEN.

Whether paying bills, making a grocery list or leaving notes for the family, a dedicated workspace can add more function to the room. Be sure there is task lighting nearby and ample overhead lighting to ensure that all kitchen needs are illuminated properly.

A more functional kitchen can make this already popular space even more so.



## 3 modern kitchen features to consider

It's well-documented that kitchens are the most popular rooms in many homes. Kitchens are where families tend to congregate during holiday celebrations, and many a child has tackled their homework as mom or dad prepares dinner just a few steps away.

Whether homeowners are planning a full-scale remodel or a few tweaks to update the room, the following are three popular features of modern kitchens.

### 1 KITCHEN ISLAND

A recent survey from interior design experts at Houzz found that kitchen islands are popular for a variety of reasons. Fifty-eight percent of respondents indicated they enjoy eating at kitchen islands, while 49 percent reported they like islands for entertaining. Forty-five percent of respondents like socializing around kitchen islands. Islands provide a versatile functionality that comes in handy when preparing meals on typical weeknights and when hosting friends and family on special occasions like holidays and birthdays. Islands come in a variety of shapes and sizes and can be customized to fit just about any space. Mobile islands can be utilized in small kitchens when homeowners want the extra prep space but think the kitchen would be too cramped if a permanent island were added.

### 2 DEEP SINK

The popularity of farmhouse-style sinks is proof that large and deep sinks are sought-after among today's homeowners. Farmhouse sinks may be best suited to a particular aesthetic, but a 2021 study from the National Association of Home Builders found that side-by-side double sinks and walk-in pantries were the most popular of 30 listed kitchen features. That study surveyed more than 3,200 recent and prospective home buyers. Deep sinks are especially useful for people who love to cook, making them a solid addition to any kitchen where home chefs ply their trade most nights of the week.

### 3 STORAGE

As the NAHB study indicated, kitchen storage space is sought after among modern homeowners. As home cooks expand their culinary horizons and cook more elaborate meals, they need extra places to store specialty pots and pans, ingredients and other materials. Homeowners looking to add more storage in the kitchen can consult with a local contractor about how to create such space. A walk-in pantry can do the trick, but homeowners with kitchens where space is more limited may need to get a little more creative. Sliding-door pantries and roll-out shelving in existing cabinets can add functional space in kitchens with close quarters.

Modern kitchens are visual marvels and highly functional spaces. A new island, a deep sink and some extra storage space can help homeowners transform their existing kitchens into spaces that cater to their every need.



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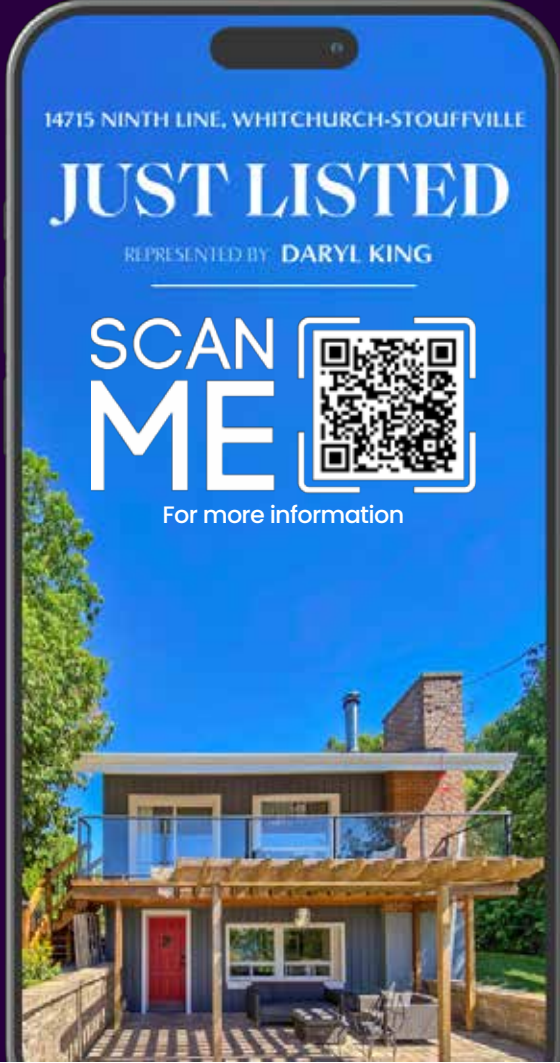
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