

"Walk together" on Tim Jones -- he won't mind



By Brock Weir

Crowds of long-time friends and supporters gathered on Aurora's northern edge last week to pay tribute to former mayor Tim Jones.

For Mr. Jones, it was an assembly of people with whom he had walked throughout his long-running public service, whether as politician or volunteer, and now he's more than happy to let them walk all over him ? at least on the newly-minted Tim Jones Trail.

Mayor Geoff Dawe formally re-dedicated Aurora's northern link of the Nokiidaa Trail to one of his predecessors, which connects directly to Newmarket's Tom Taylor Trail, a stretch of path named after the former mayor of Newmarket. ?Tim is an influential and very respected leader in our community, and his passion for our Town is inspiring,? said Mayor Dawe. ?He is a strong role model for our residents. His enthusiasm for positive change and making life better for all walks of life is very inspiring. He motivates us to aim higher and achieve more.

?Today, Tim, we honour you for your love of the Town and your commitment to making Aurora a better place to live, work and play. For all your diligence, hard work and determination to enrich the many aspects of Aurora, on behalf of the Town of Aurora and Town Council, it is my extreme pleasure to dedicate this trail to former mayor Tim Jones and rename it the Tim Jones Trail.?

Mr. Jones' dedication to public service began at a very young age, first becoming a youth representative on various political bodies and advocacy groups, before entering the political realm himself in the area of parks and recreation. Specializing in the world of municipal management, he moved to Aurora in 1976 serving first on the Town's Parks and Recreation Committee before a successful run for Council in 1978.

It was the beginning of a long-time relationship with Town Hall. After several terms as a Councillor, he subsequently ran for Mayor, a position which he held for 12 years until 2006, becoming Aurora's longest-serving mayor in the process. In all, he served as an elected official for a total of 28 years.

Following his election defeat in 2006, he and Mr. Taylor became the inaugural community ambassadors for Neighbourhood Network, positions in which they are still very active. He now co-chairs the Character Community Foundation and is the Director of Development for CHATS (Community and Home Assistance to Seniors).

Council first voted to rename a portion of the Nokiidaa Trail in Mr. Jones' honour following a Notice of Motion from Councillor Paul Pirri this past winter. For Mr. Jones, having a section of the Nokiidaa Trail named in his honour was particularly appropriate, all things considered.

?'[Nokiidaa] means 'walking together' and that is meaningful,' he said. 'With everyone here, we have walked together in some shape or form. We tried to challenge staff, they tried to challenge me, and for that we made it a better Town. I am a little biased, but I thought we did.'

Paying tribute to his wife, Heather, as the 'person who has walked with me and continues to walk with me through life,' he underscored their volunteer philosophy, and noted it is a path which will endure for years to come.

'For former councillors that have walked with me, staff, people that are walking with me as a volunteer.'