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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

CMCA AUDITED

Vol. 14 No. 43 905-727-3300 theauroran.com FREE Week of August 28, 2014

Sarah and Archer dug into their corncobs with enthusiasm at the Aurora Farmers' Market on Saturday as part of their annual Community Corn Roast. Hosted in conjunction with the Aurora Cultural Centre, the Aurora Public Library and the Aurora Seniors Association, the event featured a barbecue, music from the After Hours Big Band, a Scavenger Hunt, and much more. For more on another event being cooked up by the Market, Centre, and Library, please see Page 17.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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Morris, Town to continue fight over lawsuit costs this week

By Brock Weir

Representatives for the Town of Aurora and former mayor Phyllis Morris are due in a Kitchener courtroom this week to continue the fight over whether the municipality is responsible for costs spent by Ms. Morris in her aborted 2010 defamation lawsuit against three local bloggers.

Ms. Morris, who launched a lawsuit against the Town last year for court costs coming out of her own pocket after the Town discontinued its involvement in the lawsuit in December 2010, is seeking to move the case to small claims court in Newmarket after slashing the costs sought by 90 per cent from $250,000 to $25,000.

According to the amended Statement of Claim, Ms. Morris was actually out $27,821.46 after continuing the lawsuit without municipal involvement, but waives any claim above $25,000 to bring this to Small Claims Court.

"At the time this Action was commenced, the total legal fees to be indemnified had not yet been determined and could have totalled the sum she initially claimed," said Steven O'Melia, lawyer for Ms. Morris, in the recent motion. "The Plaintiff has since learned that her exposure is significantly less, just over the monetary jurisdiction of the Small Claims Court. In order to expedite the matter and to minimize costs, the Plaintiff has now decided to abandon her claims beyond the jurisdiction of the Small Claims Court and limit her claim to $25,000 as a contribution to her damages."

Prior claims outlined in the first Statement of Claim are carried over with minor amendments into this week's hearing.

"Prior to the initiation of the Town Action, Ms. Morris was advised by the Town CAO [Neil Garbe], the Town Solicitor and the law firm that had been retained by the Town that it was necessary for the Town Action to be brought in the names of individuals," reads Ms. Morris' statement claim. "Ms. Morris was advised that the Town Solicitor, the Town's Integrity Commissioner and she would be those named individuals.

"Ms. Morris consented to having her name listed as a plaintiff on the Notice of Action and Statement of Claim issued by the Town in support of the Town Action because she was advised that this was the only way that the identities of the anonymous bloggers could be determined. At some point prior to the issuance of the Notice of Action that commenced the Town Action, the Town Solicitor and

Continued on page 6

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Breakthrough artist to usher in Hoedown Showdown champ

By Brock Weir

For nearly 20 years, Tim Hicks made his living playing his music five or six nights a week through steady gigs in smaller venues in and around the GTA and Niagara Region.

It wasn't exactly the big time but, as his wife reminded him, he was doing what he loved for a living and how many people can boast that?

Still, he says, there was something he felt was missing from the big picture.

"She said I should be thankful for that," says Hicks. "She was right, as usual, and as soon as I let go of all that pressure and expectation on myself, and disappointment, the phone rang and I was headed to Nashville."

The last three years have been something of a watershed for Hicks as he prepares to headline the finals of the Hoedown

Continued on page 17

Liberals set to name Peterson as Newmarket-Aurora candidate

By Brock Weir

Newmarket lawyer Kyle Peterson will once again carry the Liberal banner in the next Federal election.

Mr. Peterson is set to be officially nominated and acclaimed to the position at a special meeting, which will be held Monday, September 8, at the Ray Twinney Complex, representing the party in Newmarket-Aurora.

This will be the second consecutive Federal election where Mr. Peterson has served as Liberal candidate for Newmarket-Aurora. This time, however, will be slightly different given the recently reconfigured Federal electoral boundaries which will split Aurora in two at Wellington Street in time for the next election, which is expected in the Fall of 2015.

While Aurora residents south of Wellington will vote in the newly-created riding of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond

Continued on page 18

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Email info@aurora.ca • Website www.aurora.ca

Accessible formats
905-727-3123 ext. 4212
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COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, September 2	9:30 a.m.	Joint Council Committee (Newmarket)
Tuesday, September 2	7 p.m.	General Committee*
Monday, September 8	7 p.m.	Heritage Advisory Committee
Tuesday, September 9	7 p.m.	Council
Thursday, September 11	7 p.m.	Committee of Adjustment

Meetings are open to the public and held at Aurora Town Hall. Council meetings can be seen on Rogers TV, channel 10. For a full list of upcoming meetings, please visit **www.aurora.ca**

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

2014 AURORA VOTES

The next municipal election in The Town of Aurora will be held on **Monday, October 27**. Nominations are open until **Friday, September 12** at 2 p.m. Forms can be viewed and downloaded online at www.aurora.ca/vote2014

Residents are encouraged to educate themselves on the election process and the candidates running for office. Have your voice heard on election day and vote!

This year, the Town will also ask residents to vote on the following two questions on the ballot:

1. "Are you in favour of electing all Aurora councillors, other than the Mayor, by ward vote instead of general Town-wide vote?"

2. "Are you in favour of reducing the number of Aurora councillors, other than the Mayor, from eight (8) councillors to six (6) councillors?"

PUBLIC NOTICES

Temporary Road Closure Notice

Please be advised that Wellington Street will be closed on **Saturday, September 6** at 7 a.m. to **Sunday, September 7** at 7 p.m., from Yonge Street to Industrial Parkway. This temporary road closure will facilitate the rehabilitation of the track panel and asphalt at the railway crossing located along Wellington Street.

Election Day Employment

The Town of Aurora is recruiting for a variety of customer service-focused, temporary election workers to assist with the **October 27** municipal election.

Applicant requirements include:

- 18 years of age or older;
- Legally entitled to work in Canada;
- Applicants cannot be a candidate or the spouse, sibling, parent or child, or grandparent or grandchild of a candidate running in the **October 27** election;
- Customer service and/or election official experience preferred;
- Fluent in English (knowledge of other languages an asset);
- Access to reliable transportation;
- Ability to work well both independently and as a team; and
- Available to attend a two-hour mandatory training session, up to two weeks prior to the election.

To apply, please complete the online application form available at www.aurora.ca/electionsemployment or at Aurora Town Hall, 100 John West Way. The application deadline is **Monday, September 15** at 9 a.m.

Notice of Subdivision Assumption

On **July 29**, The Town of Aurora assumed the Preserve Subdivision, Phases 1 and 2, from Preserve Homes Corporation as per registration plans 65M-3852, 65M-3945 and 65M-3946.

The following streets have been accepted by Public Works: Ames Crescent, Nicklaus Drive, Kane Crescent, Steel Drive, Pattemore Gate, Halldorson Avenue and Mavrinac Boulevard. Please refer to the map below.

For more information, please contact Erwin Molnar, Administrator of Construction Projects, Town of Aurora, at 905-727-3123 ext. 3441.

MOVIES in the park

Join us on **Thursday, August 28** for a superhero-themed evening at Norm Weller Park for the final 2014 Movies in the Park event. Don't miss Spider-Man on the big screen, which will begin at dusk. This is a free event but food donations for the local food pantry are greatly appreciated. For more information, please visit www.aurora.ca/moviesinthepark or call 905-726-4762.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Street Trees Block Pruning

Please be advised that municipal street tree block pruning will occur on the following streets starting in early September. The program will run until early November.

Kirkvalley Crescent	Chippingwood Manor
Valemount Way	Pederson Drive
Limeridge Street	Blaydon Lane
Calmar Crescent	Skipton Trail
Billingham Heights	Perivale Gardens
Birkshire Drive	Earl Stewart Drive
Turnbridge Road	Sommerton Court

If you have any questions, please contact the Parks & Recreation services department at 905-727-3123 ext. 3233.

2014 Skylight Gallery Draw

Located on the third floor of Aurora's Town Hall, the Skylight Gallery is an open space dedicated to featuring exhibitions by local artists. The gallery features a dramatic skylight, backboards and track lighting to display artwork in a striking setting. Access to this ever-changing art gallery is free to the public.

Each month, the work of a different artist is featured. The draw to determine who will exhibit in 2015 will be held this year on **Wednesday, September 3.** Application forms are available at www.aurora.ca

The 12 artists chosen will represent one month during the year. Artists within York Region and beyond are invited to enter the draw. The featured artist also has the opportunity to host a reception in the Skylight Gallery during his/her chosen month.

For more information, please contact Laura Malone, Special Events Co-ordinator, Town of Aurora, at 905-727-3123 ext. 3132 or lmalone@aurora.ca

REMINDER

Pet Bylaw

Pet owners are reminded that dogs and cats are prohibited from running at large within the geographical boundaries of The Town of Aurora. A dog or cat is deemed to be running at large when the dog or cat is found in any other place, other than the lands or premises of the owner or person keeping such dog or cat.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Town of Aurora is now accepting applications for the following positions:

Part-Time Group Fitness and Aqua Fitness Instructors
Application deadline is **Tuesday, September 2**

Part-Time Fitness Centre Attendant and Assistant
Application deadline is **Tuesday, September 2**

Part-Time Lifeguard and Aquatics Instructors
Application deadline is **Tuesday, September 2**

Curator
Application deadline is **Wednesday, September 10**

For more information, please visit www.aurora.ca/employment

Holiday Service Schedule
Labour Day – Monday, September 1

MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way) will be **CLOSED** on **Monday, September 1** for Labour Day. Regular business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. will resume on **Tuesday, September 2.**

If you would like to pay a water or tax bill, payments can be placed in the drop-off box 24 hours a day outside of Town Hall. Please do not place cash payments in the boxes and remember to include your payment stub along with your payment. Alternatively, you may pay your bills through your ATM or through your bank's online banking service. Parking tickets can be paid online at **www.paytickets.ca**

LIBRARY

The Aurora Public Library will be **CLOSED** on **Monday, September 1**.

For more information, please visit **www.library.aurora.on.ca** or call 905-727-9494.

WASTE COLLECTION

Waste collection is **NOT AFFECTED** by the Labour Day holiday.

For more information, please consult your *2014 Recycling and Waste Collection Calendar*.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

As always, the Town will continue to provide essential and emergency services.

For Town-related emergency situations, please call 905-727-1375 or 905-727-3123 and follow the voice prompts.

FOR ALL OTHER EMERGENCIES, CALL 9-1-1

CENTRAL YORK FIRE SERVICES

RECREATION CENTRE

Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, 1400 Wellington Street East

Saturday, August 30	7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sunday, August 31	7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday, September 1	8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For swimming, skating and Club Aurora fitness schedules, please visit **www.aurora.ca** or call 905-726-4770.

Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown reacts after being doused in the Ice Bucket Challenge by Aurora resident Mike Springford, right, on Sunday afternoon. Auroran photos by Brock Weir

MP Lois Brown does Ice Bucket Challenge in style

By Brock Weir

If she was going to get drenched with a bucket of ice water, trust Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown to do things in style.

Ms. Brown came to the season launch party of the North Newmarket Lions Club, held at an Aurora residence, on Sunday afternoon to accept the challenge issued to her by Mike Springford, a realtor and long-time community volunteer, involved not only in the Lions Club, but also Habitat for Humanity York Region.

Arriving to the party, Ms. Brown excused herself before she emerged wearing a floor-length black gown, complete with pearls, ready to take on the challenge to benefit ALS research.

"I have been challenged and I have decided to do it in style," said Ms. Brown as Mr. Springford held the bucket of icy water over her head. "I am supporting all those who are suffering with ALS and hoping that our contribution is going to help make ALS a forgotten disease."

As a long-time piano accompanist for the York Regional Police Male Chorus, Ms. Brown said she had a personal connection to the disease.

"I am doing this in memory of a very good friend, Xavier Hutton, who was a respected and wonderful member of the Chorus for many years, who died from ALS about 10 years ago," she said. "We miss Xavier and we hope this disease will be a forgotten disease through the money that is raised for research."

After the requisite soaking, Ms. Brown issued her own challenges: Ryan Sykes of the Accountants Association, "who I know is going to challenge all the accountants," Brian Patterson, president of the Ontario Safety League, with whom Ms. Brown has a long-standing work relationship as an active member of Operation Red Nose, a seasonal campaign designed to stop drinking and driving during the holidays, as well as Richmond Hill-based Senator Don Meredith.

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge was established earlier this year and took off significantly over the summer, spreading virally across many social media platforms, particularly Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The premise is simple – those challenged to take part can either be dunked and donate $10 for ALS research, or decline the challenge by donating $100.

As of Tuesday, the ALS Association alone has raised a whopping $88.5 million through the Challenge.

Jennifer Coulthard finishes at top of her class

By Angela Gismondi

Jennifer Coulthard has graduated with one of the highest marks at Aurora's Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School.

The York Region District School Board (YRDSB) recently released the top marks for students across the Region. Coulthard finished her high school career with a 95.5 average, sharing the top honour with fellow classmate Stephanie Louie who graduated with the same mark.

"I knew I was up there but I didn't know I was at the top, so it was a surprise," said Coulthard, who has maintained a high average throughout her high school career. "I'm proud of my achievement. It's a great school. The teachers are great and I had a good time."

Although she has a natural affinity for learning, Coulthard said she had to work hard to achieve the high grades.

"I really had to put the time in," she stated, adding math and history were among her favourite subjects. "I pick up things really fast so school is not that hard for me."

Coulthard, a second-degree black belt, was able to maintain her stellar grades while working at a karate studio five nights a week.

Coulthard is now looking forward to the next step in her academic journey – post secondary school. This fall, Coulthard will be heading to the University of Western Ontario, majoring in film studies and creative writing.

Briefly

TA'S FUNDRAISING CONTINUES

There are further opportunities to help in Theatre Aurora's revitalization campaign. In addition to their previously scheduled Open House on September 6, which also includes a garage sale of old costumes, props, set pieces, and other items out of the Theatre Aurora archives, as well as a Fun Run, with everyone taking part dressed up as their favourite musical theatre character, the fun now includes a Classic Tribute, which will run at the theatre Thursday, September 4, and Saturday September 6. The September 4 show featuring tributes to Journey and Toto begins at 8 p.m., while tributes to Billy Joel and Elton John take the stage at the same time on September 6. Tickets are $27.50. For more information, call 905-726-3669.

AUDITIONS UNDERWAY AT THEATRE AURORA

Auditions are now underway for Maggie's Getting Married, the Norm Foster Play which opens Theatre Aurora's 2014 – 2015 season. The play follows Maggie, and her fiancée Russell, as they gather at her home for one last family party. Things take a turn, however, when Maggie's elder sister returns, discovering she has had a past with her sister's betrothed. Opening night will be held Thursday, October 9 at 8 p.m., playing on select dates through October 18. Further highlights of TA's 57th season include Next To Normal, Kimberly Akimbo, Down Dangerous Passes Road, and Lost in Yonkers. For more information, visit www.theatreaurora.com.

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Letters to the editor

"Mayor's rebuttal" doesn't wash with Kean

I can't believe that Mr. Dawe, in my opinion, has such a short memory. Wow, he states that I asked for his support. What a crock that is. I went door-to-door on his street and I had no idea who he was the first time that I ran.

He said that I could put a sign on his lawn. I did not know his name and I was asking everyone if I could put a sign on his lawn.

By his statement he actually thought that I knew him. Wrong. He avoids, as usual, answering the real question: did he promise to get Council's hand out of taxpayers' pockets? I have a copy of his brochure and, yes, he did promise that. He does not answer why Don Constable managed to get voted in by Dawe's Council over other more suitable opponents. He does not answer any questions about the cost of the revamp of the original Centre on Industrial. He does not answer the questions about over costs under his watch. He does not answer whether the taxpayers of Aurora can afford a new home for the Works Department and the extra costs over the original quote. He does not answer whether he did or did not say that it was OK for Council to charge alcohol to residents. He makes a statement that his tax increases are "much" less than Councils that I sat on with Tim Jones and his group of five as mayor. Please produce those numbers as proof.

Mr. Dawe, what are you going to promise this time?

I have nothing against you, but I do have a lot against the way things have gone since you were elected mayor.

Nigel Kean
Aurora

Where is RFP? asks Aurora Community Tennis Club

(Re: Timberlane set to close next August as tennis hits "all time high". August 21, 2014)

An Open Letter to Council:

I believe it was on April 8, 2014 that Mr. Downey told the Council he would produce in one month a revised Stuart Burnett Park RFP for the construction of a covered tennis facility.

In early summer, I learned that Mr. Downey would produce a report which would contain recommendations to Council on how to proceed with creating a revised RFP. Also, there was mention of gaining input from the tennis community on what specifications should be included in the RFP.

The Aurora Community Tennis Club (ACTC) was and is eager to provide input and advice on the design of the new RFP.

With the published story in yesterday's Auroran, which detailed the closing of the Timberlane Athletic Club, I'm reminded that it is now almost 6 months since Mr. Downey promised a revised RFP (or Report). Our ACTC members are asking me about the status of the Stuart Burnett Park site and many of our members are hoping to play winter tennis at this new facility.

I realize the election is consuming a lot of the Council's attention (and staff?) however the tennis community is eager participate in contributing to the revision of the RFP and having this project move at a much faster pace. Is there a reason for a delay in designing the RFP that we are not aware of?

If so, an explanation would be appreciated. I would like to inform our membership and the broader tennis community in York Region about the timeline for completing the RFP and approximately when we might see construction of this much needed facility.

Brent MacKinnon
President, Aurora Community Tennis Club

Jazz Fest finds footing in Newmarket – despite Mother Nature

Like many thousands of people who attended the highly successful Newmarket Jazz+ Festival on the long weekend, we were treated to multi-talented and high quality entertainment. It was unfortunate that "Mother Nature" decided to dampen the festivities. Kudos go to the support and technical teams and volunteers who managed to keep water levels under control so that the programs could continue.

A very special thanks must be given to George and Sher St. Kitts for organizing and hosting this marvellous event.

We would also like to thank Aurora Councillors who voted against the Aurora Jazz Festival and thus deprived the community of holding this wonderful festival in our own backyard. We will not forget your questionable decisions on Election Day.

Aurora Councillors, and especially Councillor Buck, rejected the Aurora Jazz Festival for questionable reasons, such as fencing in Town Park, and then approved fencing for Ribfest. Just a little bit of hypocrisy.

P. Smith
Aurora

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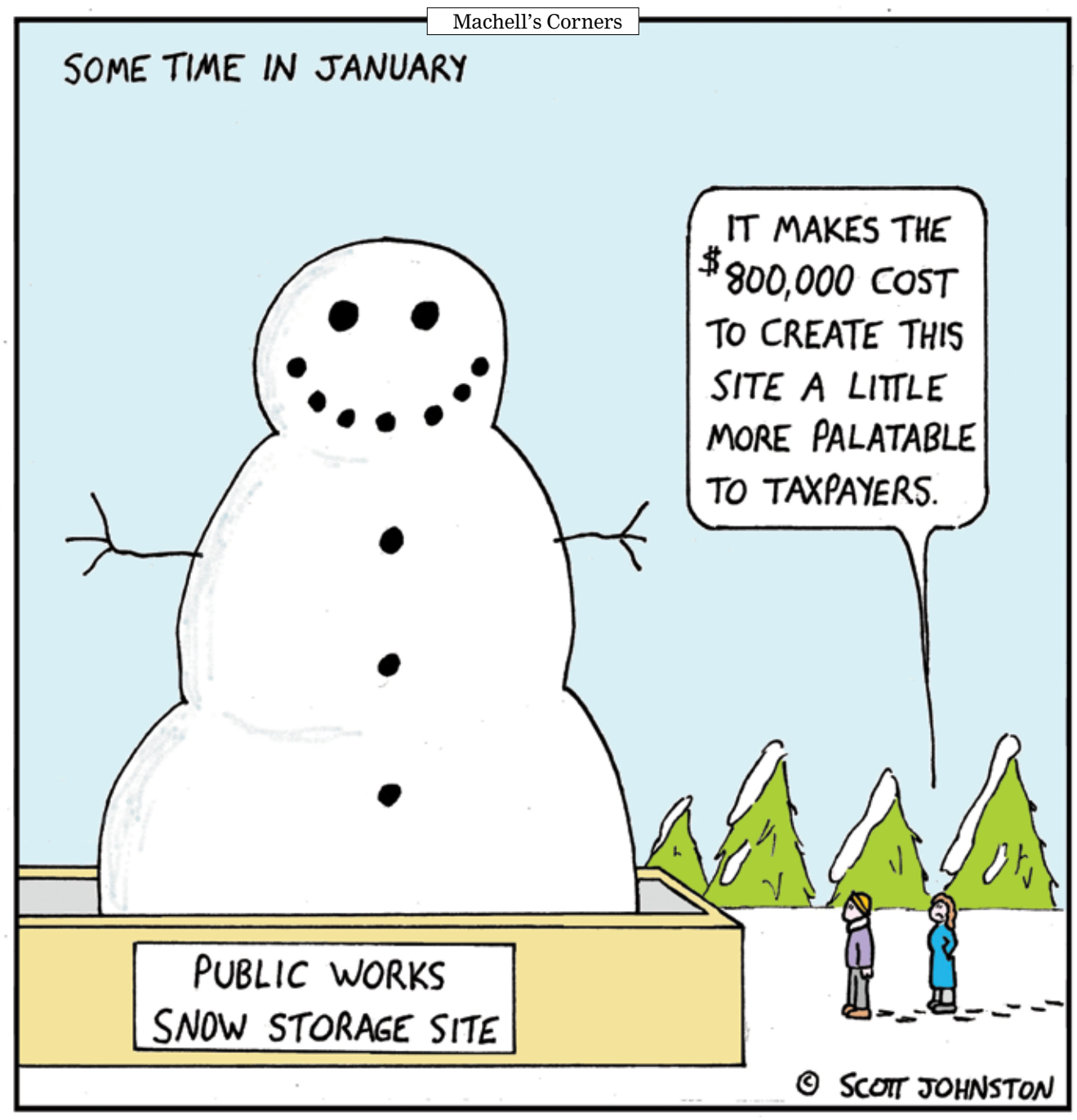


To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to letters@auroran.com.
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

Ready for the Real World?

BROCK'S BANTER
Brock Weir

With the clock counting down to Labour Day weekend, it's safe to say that summer is rapidly coming to a close.

Around this time of year, people start to reflect on the memories made over the course of the season, or perhaps even opportunities that have been lost, not realising the season itself was passing so quickly – all the while trying to get yourself back in the zone for work, school, or what is otherwise (and often snidely) referred to as getting "back to the real world."

With my vacation essentially out of the way, my mind is more or less there already. And, to the fall ahead, I say "bring it on", and bring on the sweater weather.

I'm not a fan of sticky, muggy summer days. Hovering between 21 and 24 degrees is more than sufficient in my book, so I'm quite looking forward to an end to the humidity...and yet, there is something missing in the air.

It might be the lack of the traditional Staples commercials of mom and pop prancing up and down the aisles to the tune of "It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" with their brats following mournfully behind. Maybe it is the lack of heat warnings (this past Tuesday excepted), smog advisories and water bans which are otherwise the hallmarks of our Southern Ontario summers that are conspiring to throw off the typical feelings.

On the other hand, maybe it is the turmoil that is plaguing the world outside the comfy confines of our own country that has taken some of the joy and fun out of the season of the sun, being forced – and beneficially so – to take stock of the world around us beyond the summer cocoon.

But, come this Tuesday, it will be back to business as usual. Cottage activities will start to wind down ahead of a season closer, local business productivity will shoot up, and shops and restaurants surrounding our local schools will once again be in clover.

For some of us not lucky enough to be able to escape for a week or two at the time to relax in a cottage, sit on a beach, or jet off to any exotic locale around the world, there are a few constants year-round Aurorans can look forward to as the rest of the Town becomes sleepy in the summer haze.

We have our traditional annual grousing about certain music festivals in Aurora, lack thereof, how that lack thereof came to be and where we should collectively point our fingers. We have our traditional annual debates over whether the Town of Aurora should have a proper snow disposal facility, a debate to which I can only assume is some sort of strange experiment in psychological air conditioning for the masses. We have our annual moaning about what should, shouldn't, can and can't be done in Aurora while so many residents are off into parts unknown. But, on the flipside, we have our traditional summer of philanthropy with astronomical numbers of kind-hearted, generous and selfless Aurorans dreaming up new and traditional ways to help others, whether they geared up for walk-a-, run-a-, or marathons to raise money to combat illness, poverty, or other social ills, or taking part in the incredible cultural phenomenon that has become the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge.

BUT LET ME PICK SOMETHING OUT OF THE "MOAN" PILE

The end of summer is also the time of year when mundane paper pushing, voting and squabbles – colloquially referred to as "the business of the Town" starts moving forward once again (speed to be determined) for what is hoped to be the betterment of every man, woman and child in the Town of Aurora.

Not so this year. There is a pesky election in the way with local lawmakers starting to become a bit gun-shy in making decisions one way or another all in the name of it being "too close to an election" or ostensibly – and selflessly, presumably – not wanting to burden incoming Council with big-ticket and big-idea items so close to the inaugural.

With some projects circling Council table for years before they even come close to coming in for a landing, it can be frustrating for those people standing on the sidelines, whether they have a vested interest in a particular decision or not, to be kept waiting on tenterhooks for what seems like an eternity.

This was underscored at this month's Council meeting by Mayor Dawe in the recent debate over the $26 million Joint Operations Centre, now approved to be constructed at the top of Industrial Parkway North. Speaking to suggestions from some Council members that it was too big an item to approve so close to an election, he said, "I am constantly confused by this concept that we are too close to an election that we can't make a decision. At what point do we actually cut it off? Is it a year? Six months? Or is it three months? We're here to do a job. We're paid to do a job and, in my opinion, that is what we're doing."

BUT IS IT?

One can understand such big decisions close to a time when voters are going to be extra-vigilant in keeping tabs on how their elected representatives vote, and checking off whether or not they actually represent their individual interests at the table, can make some people on all sides a little bit uncomfortable. I do, however, agree with the Mayor's point that Council members are paid to do a job.

That being said, I won't go as far as to say the Mayor nailed it on the head.

The Joint Operations Centre was not the only item on this month's agenda that underscored this issue. A variety of items discussed looped into the idea that (a) due to many people being away over the summer, and (b) Council only meets once or twice a month and there aren't as many opportunities for members of the public to come forward to have their say at a General Committee meeting.

Several items were deferred to the September Council meeting, the last one currently on the books ahead of the October 27 election, due to a lack of time, as was the case at the July 29 Council meeting, and the July 15 meeting prior to that.

Perhaps the solution in making sure the business of the Town moves forward to everyone's satisfaction without things spilling over from meeting to meeting, or potentially excluding people from participating in the public process, is evaluating the summer schedule.

If not having General Committee meetings to give the public a fighting chance to participate in discourse, why not consider adding a meeting here and there over the summer months to nip the problem in the bud? To the best of my knowledge, neither the Mayor nor any of the eight Councillors still need their summer vacations to bring in the harvest, as was the case during the summer vacays of our forebears.

In future years, it might nibble into valuable cottaging time, but there might be a chance to have the business of the Town wrapped up in a neat bow in time for the 2018 election.

AURORAN POLL

Do you support Aurora's newly approved Joint Operations Centre?

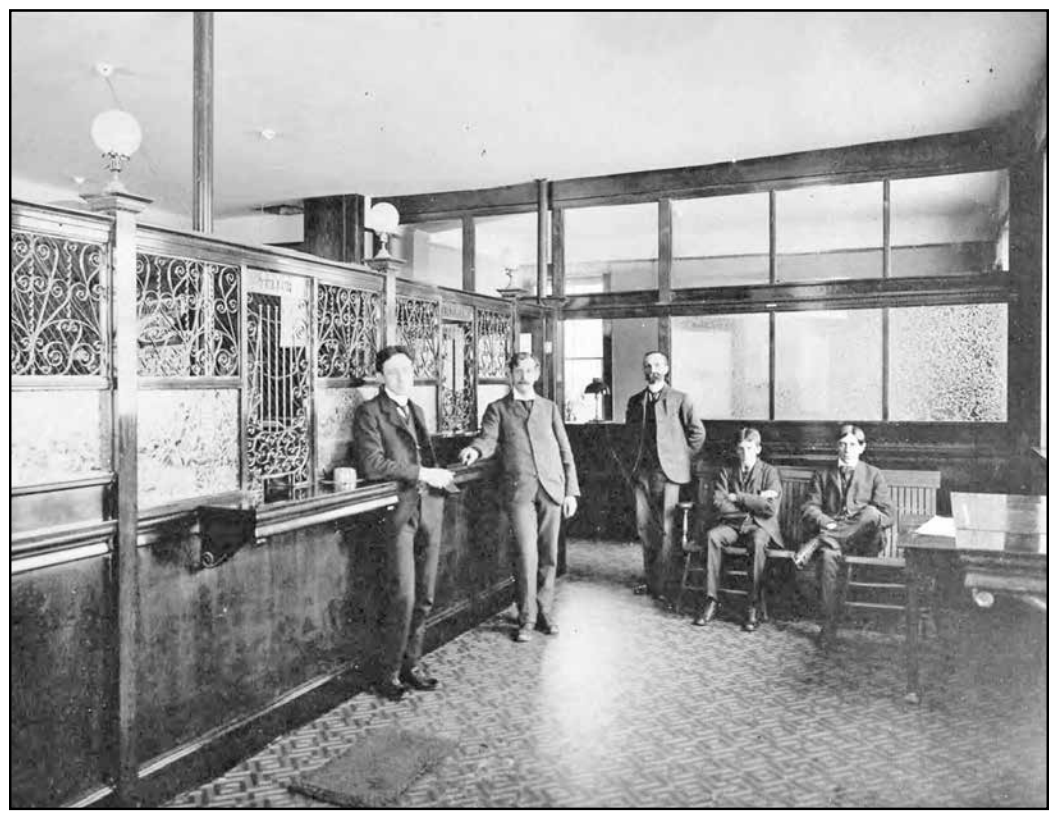
A) Yes

B) No

C) Unsure

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!

RESULTS AUGUST 26, 2014	YES	NO	UNSURE
	59%	30%	11%



Fencing went up last week around the former L.W. store on the north-west corner of Yonge and Wellington, preparing to introduce Aurora residents to a proposed commercial and condo complex slated to become an anchor near the corner in the years ahead. Here is a glimpse inside the former Bank of Montreal building from the late 1800s. The current Bank of Montreal building now stands on the site.

Ottawa Report

LOIS BROWN
MP Newmarket-Aurora

Breaking-down barriers to interprovincial trade

Trade is vital to Canada's economy and to the well-being of all of us.

To support economic growth and Canadian prosperity, our government has committed to an ambitious international trade strategy and we have been very successful. However, progress on domestic trade has not always kept pace. We are also working here at home to eliminate domestic regulation that leads to increased and unnecessary costs for our businesses which, in turn, limits growth and job creation.

One Canada, One National Economy: Modernizing Internal Trade in Canada is a plan that lays out a broad proposal to remove barriers to internal trade and guiding principles for modernizing the current Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). Eliminating internal trade barriers would create jobs, boost economic growth and strengthen Canada's internal market by helping to move goods and services more freely across Canada. As Canada signs on to more international agreements we must ensure that Canadian companies have the same opportunities here at home. Visit www.ic.gc.ca/internaltrade to learn more.

Improving Food Safety

Health Minister Rona Ambrose has announced new labelling requirements for mechanically tenderized beef (MTB).

The new labels will emphasize the importance of cooking MTB to a minimum internal temperature of 63°C (145°F) and turning over mechanically tenderized steaks at least twice during cooking to kill harmful bacteria that can cause food poisoning. Mechanical tenderization of meat is a common practice used by the food industry to improve the tenderness and flavour of beef by using needles or blades to break down muscle fibres. This regulatory change applies to all industry sectors selling uncooked MTB to other industry members or consumers. This includes, but is not limited to, grocery retailers, butcher shops, meat processors, and importers of MTB.

As part of its commitment to promoting food safety, Health Canada also released new industry guidelines to improve safe cooking and handling information on packaged raw ground meat and raw ground poultry products sold in Canada. To be used by retailers, processors and importers who choose to include food safety information on their products, the guidelines provide standards on what information and symbols to include on the label to boost consumer recognition and uptake, and how the label should be formatted and placed on ground meat packages so that it can be easily seen by consumers.

These changes are another step in our government's commitment to make certain that consumers have the food safety information they need.

Consultation on the Future of TV

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has launched an online discussion forum for Canadians to have their final say on the future of the television system. The forum will be open until September 19 – the final day of the public hearing on Let's Talk TV: A Conversation with Canadians. To help focus comments, the CRTC has also published a working document for discussion that outlines some of the issues to be considered during the public hearing.

The CRTC is seeking to ensure that the television system fosters choice and flexibility in the selection of channels, encourages the creation of compelling and diverse programs and empowers Canadians to make informed choices and have recourse in the case of disputes with their television service providers. To participate, visit http://consultation.crtc.gc.ca/en/consultation/19/help-shape-future-tv-canada.

Fitch Reaffirms Canada's Triple-A Rating

Fitch Ratings has reaffirmed its triple-A rating of Canada, with a stable outlook. The Canadian economy has posted one of the strongest job creation records in the Group of Seven (G-7) over the recovery, with more than 1.1 million jobs created since July 2009. Real gross domestic product is significantly above pre-recession levels—the best performance in the G-7. According to KPMG, Canada's total business tax costs are the lowest in the G-7 and 46% lower than those in the United States.

Canada has weathered the economic storm well and the world has noticed:

Both the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development expect Canada to be among the strongest growing economies in the G-7 over this year and next;

For the sixth year in a row, the World Economic Forum rated Canada's banking system as the world's soundest; and

In 2013, Canada leapt from sixth to second place in Bloomberg's ranking of the most attractive destinations for business.

Three credit rating agencies—Moody's Investors Service, Fitch Ratings and Standard & Poor's—have reaffirmed their top ratings for Canada, reminding us that Canada is an island of stability in an uncertain global economy.

If you would like to contact me on any issue, please call 905-953-7515 or visit my website at www.loisbrown.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sciuridae Scurge

INSIDE AURORA
Scott Johnston

Despite the fact that we live in a fairly treed area of town with several ravines nearby, until recently this has been a surprisingly squirrel-free neighbourhood.

We've had lots of chipmunks, who although delightful to watch, are slowly undermining the west side of our house with all their burrows, but a squirrel sighting was a rarity.

That changed this year.

In the spring I noticed our birdfeeder had fallen off of the tree where it normally hangs.

Not long after I put it back up, I noticed a black squirrel climbing down the side of it, so I knew the feeder had not been the victim of a freak windstorm.

Of course, the squirrel's weight soon caused the feeder to come down again, so this time I hung it up more securely on what I hoped was a less accessible branch.

Not only did the squirrel quickly prove me wrong by readily getting to it, but it also showed who was boss by both knocking down the feeder, and chewing huge holes in the side of it, rendering it completely useless.

Looking at options for a replacement, we came across no end of feeder designs, but all looked as insecure, and potentially edible, as our last one.

As for squirrel-proof feeders, we're not completely convinced of their invincibility, although you'd expect they'd be the animal kingdom equivalent of Fort Knox, based on the price.

So after both our existing feeder (and its contents) had been consumed, we didn't replace it. This has been a disappointment, not only for us, but for the many colourful birds who used to adorn it throughout the day.

But at least with no feeder to savage, squirrels were no longer bothering us.

Or so we thought.

Then we noticed that large chunks of bark had been eaten from various branches of our maple trees. The scope of the damage suggested that this was obviously the work of something much larger than an insect. And although my city friends suggest that Aurora's up in the boreal forest somewhere, we're not that far north to be considered firmly into porcupine territory.

That was when we started noticing not only the black and grey squirrels, but red ones as well. A quick bit of research confirmed that all of these members of the sciuridae family have been known to remove bark from trees, including maples.

We're not sure which of them is the culprit, but this is getting more serious, as the cost and time required to cut down, replace and grow a mature maple is a dramatic step up in scope from that of procuring a new bird feeder.

It seems clear that the local food chain is out of whack, because while we've seen an increase in chipmunks and squirrels, there doesn't seem to be a corresponding rise in the number of owls, hawks, foxes and other predators.

And despite the damage that domestic pets can do to local small bird and mammal populations, our neighbourhood dogs and cats are obviously a complacent bunch.

So, I've been on my own protecting our property from this mammalian invasion. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to discourage the chipmunks from digging around our foundation. As for the trees, I have a hard enough time stringing a few Christmas lights on them once a year, let alone contemplating encasing them completely in chainmail or Kevlar, or whatever we'd need to do to make them squirrel-proof.

But, perhaps more alarming, there are still more members of this rodent family native to Ontario, such as groundhogs, ground squirrels, and flying squirrels, which we have yet to encounter.

With our luck, they're queuing up now in the wings, just waiting to pull off our roof shingles, or deflate the tires on the car, or steal our welcome mat, or make their presence known in some new and equally undesirable manner.

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

POLITICS AS USUAL
Alison Collins-Mrakas

Openness and Transparency

Do you ever feel that our fearless leaders are all speaking the same language, spouting the same words, but not really saying anything because when you get right down to it, none of it makes any sense?

I can say with confidence that you are most assuredly not alone. Much like bureaucratese in the public service sector, politicians use their own vocabulary of consultant-developed, focus-group tested words that give them the ability to talk for hours on end while literally saying nothing of substance at all.

By deftly deploying terms and terminology from their arsenal of banalities, even the lowliest of backbenchers is a master in the high art of exquisite equivocation; that seemingly wondrous ability to answer a question without answering a question; to not tell a lie, but not tell a truth either.

From political pundits to politicians of every ilk, everyone and anyone uses the same lingo, over and over and over, to mind numbing effect. Listen to any stump speech or interview given by any candidate and it will be peppered with the same language that both vaguely promises and vaguely castigates "something" without ever defining what that "something" is.

It sounds good, but it is style passing as substance. And we lap it up because there's nothing else to eat.

It's not just the obfuscation though that irks. It's the sledgehammer approach to debate that is most grating. By this I mean the current tactic of the deliberate over-use of a handful of phrases to drive home – with a nail gun – whatever point is supposedly being made.

An example?

I watched a recent episode of Power and Politics with a current MP as guest. This NDP talking head used the words, "partisan" and "kangaroo court" 12 times in 9 minutes (yes I counted!) in describing the antics of the Board of Internal Economy. Whether or not the criticisms were justified is beside the point. The message was lost – for me at least – in the miasma of political-speak.

Each level of government has its own unique lexicon, with varying degrees of absurdity. At the municipal level, things often devolve into the truly silly. Case in point? The current, absolute obsession with the need for "open and transparent" government.

Everyone promises more "open and transparent government." We need greater "openness and transparency" at the Council table. I used it myself when I was a Councillor – though more ironically than was recognized at the time.

What does that phrase even mean, I wonder. I seriously doubt those that incessantly spout the "need" for it even comprehend its meaning. Or care to, frankly.

I must confess that every time I hear someone say it – and it does seem to be the same folks who use the term ad nauseum – I can't help but think of the movie The Princess Bride. In the movie, Vizzini uses the term "inconceivable" at every turn, to which, finally, a quizzical Inigo Montoya says, "You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means."

It's funny, but it's true.

If, as the strident voices tell us, we need more "open and transparent" government, does that mean then that what we currently have is closed and opaque? Shuttered and murky? Sealed and cloudy?

Or does its usage have nothing to do with meaning and everything to do with implication?

Bingo! We have a winner! The "need" for open and transparent government is necessarily premised on the implication that our current government and those that occupy it are somehow not. That they are secretive, or obstructive, or dishonest.

It's a political smear dressed up as a principled stance.

Much like the use of anonymous bogeymen.

Talks leading up to lawsuit made public ahead of court date

By Brock Weir

According to a revised Statement of Claim by former Aurora mayor Phyllis Morris, the Town of Aurora "had complete carriage" over a lawsuit brought forward against three local bloggers in the fall of 2010 over what she claimed were "defamatory comments" made on the Aurora Citizen Blog.

From the perspective of the Town's lawyers, however, more documentation needs to be put forward by Ms. Morris' side "to determine the extent that Phyllis Morris was controlling the litigation, whether there were opportunities available to [Ms. Morris] after she knew or ought to have known that the Town would be withdrawing funding, to resolve the matter and mitigate the damages," according to their Notice of Motion.

In a demand for particulars from the Town of Aurora to Ms. Morris put before the courts last week, numerous emails between Ms. Morris and current and former Town Staff outline the behind-the-scenes discussions that took place in the days surrounding the September 2010 closed session Council meeting which ultimately led to the initial lawsuit in question.

In emails filed by the Town of Aurora, Ms. Morris is shown discussing the blog posts in question with lawyer Howard Winkler.

"These are shockingly defamatory comments about me contained in the blog," she wrote. "They are extremely over the top. I am astounded that the Aurora Citizen allowed it to be posted. I wish to ask Council to have a lawyer write to them to request that it immediately take this blog down. Furthermore, I wish to have an application made to the court to get an order to find out who is writing that defamatory material in order to sue them or at least write to them threatening to sue unless they cease and desist."

The email quoted here was appended to a further email from Ms. Morris to Aurora CAO Neil Garbe, which states, in regards to having the blog posts on that evening's closed session agenda, "Please note, I am waiting to hear back from my lawyer – I will then advise you and the Town – how I wish to proceed."

A further email the following day from Christopher Cooper, then Solicitor for the Town of Aurora, states Ms. Morris consulted with Mr. Winkler on a "preliminary basis" before asking for Mr. Winkler's opinion on whether the blog posts were "libelous" and appropriate direction if that was indeed the case.

By the end of that week, further emails between several staff members passing on a message from Ms. Morris questioning Mr. Cooper on whether Mr. Winkler had been retained, as well as asking if she should be "taking her own steps, retaining her own lawyer," and so forth, indicating an emergency Council meeting would then be called if she did not receive an update.

Mr. Winkler's opinion was received dated that same day advising that, in his opinion, the words were defamatory of Ms. Morris and David Tsubouchi, Aurora's then-integrity commissioner, and "potentially" Mr. Cooper.

"While it is our view that any application or proceeding must be brought by individuals affected, it is our view that all of the comments made by the blogger are against the individuals in their capacity as elected officials or employees of the Town of Aurora," said Mr. Winkler in his letter "In our view, none of the comments made relate to the actions of the Mayor, the Town Solicitor, or the Integrity Commissioner in their personal capacities.

"Any damages ultimately awarded by the court would be made payable to the individuals defamed, rather than to the Town. We are aware of precedents where public bodies have funded the litigation of elected officials and employees where defamatory statements have been made about them in their official capacities. In these circumstances, the public body usually enters into an agreement with the elected official or employee for the reimbursement of any costs incurred out of any award or damages or costs ordered payable by the court."

Such an agreement is confirmed in a subsequent email to Ms. Morris from Mr. Cooper.

A further email from Ms. Morris to Mr. Cooper and copied to Mr. Garbe questions whether the Town's lawyers have advised those for the bloggers "that it is not the Government that is bringing the action – it is Phyllis Morris, Mayor, Town of Aurora [and] as Mayor – I intend to pursue all options against all parties."

Further correspondence between Ken Clark, by then lawyer for Ms. Morris, and Jordan Goldblatt, lawyer for Bill Hogg and Richard Johnson, two of the three residents named in the original suit, quotes Mr. Clark as saying. "We further note that you indicated in your letter [of October 14, 2010] that you believed that in some way that this action was being brought by a 'government.' We note that this action is being brought by Mayor Morris with respect to defamatory comments made by anonymous individuals with respect to her profession or calling, namely as Mayor of the Town of Aurora. This action is not being brought by a 'government' nor by the Town of Aurora."

As the matter is still before the courts, Steven O'Melia, lawyer for Ms. Morris in this matter, declined to comment further other than to point to exhibits in his own affidavit which will be part of this week's proceedings, on "who was driving the case."

The first is correspondence from September 17 from Mr. Winkler to Mr. Cooper confirming "The Town of Aurora has directed you to retain" their law firm and that, in their opinion, the statements made on the blog were made against Ms. Morris, Mr. Cooper, and Mr. Tsubouchi in their capacities as Town officials.

Further documentation includes cited include an email from Mr. Cooper to Ms. Morris confirming the undertaking, attached to which was a letter again from Mr. Winkler seeking Ms. Morris' signature advising her to "seek an undertaking from the Town" for reimbursement for any liability stemming from the case, signed and dated by Ms. Morris on October 6, 2010, and an email from Aurora CAO Neil Garbe instructing Mr. Winkler "to take any steps necessary to bring a motion to obtain the identity of the blogger who has made comments at the centre of this matter."

Finally, he cites an affidavit from Mr. Cooper, affirmed on October 19, 2010 outlining his knowledge of the case.

Claims have not been proven in court.

Notice seeks to move case to small claims court

From page 1

the Town's integrity Commissioner declined to have their names listed on the pleading, without notice to Ms. Morris. Ms. Morris states that at the time she provided her consent to have her name listed as a plaintiff in the Town Action, she was not aware that she would be the only named plaintiff."

While Mr. O'Melia goes on to claim Ms. Morris was advised by then-Town Solicitor Christopher Cooper "unconditionally and in writing" that she would be "indemnified for any legal costs that might be incurred in the pursuit of the Town action," this is something contested by lawyers on behalf of the Town of Aurora.

The Town of Aurora claims they have not been provided enough information from Ms. Morris to adequately respond to her statement of claim. According to a Notice of Motion made public late last week from lawyer Michael T. Lax, on behalf of the Town of Aurora, Ms. Morris failed to sign two proposed indemnification agreements presented to her in November of 2010 as well as in January, 2011.

"It is unclear whether Phyllis Morris is solely relying upon Christopher Cooper's comment in his [October 2010 email that] he had confirmed with Mr. Garbe that, in the absence of an indemnification policy/bylaw and given the current Council hiatus, the Town would provide her with the undertaking referenced… or whether she is relying upon any other oral or written communications or representations," reads the Notice of Motion.

"It is further unclear with respect to Paragraph 10 of the Statement of Claim if there were separate 'representations' by Neil Garbe or Christopher Cooper, aside from the alleged 'indemnity provided by the Town,' that Phyllis Morris relied upon in 'allowing her name to be used in order to accomplish the Town's objectives in the Town action."

A significant portion of the Town's arguments, expected to be put forward this week, focuses on just who was driving the lawsuit against the local bloggers. In the initial lawsuit against Mr. Hogg and Mr. Johnson, it was argued by Ken Clark, the then-lawyer for Ms. Morris, that it was a lawsuit brought about by Ms. Morris in the interests of protecting her own reputation as Mayor of Aurora.

In a subsequent lawsuit brought unsuccessfully against Ms. Morris by Aurora resident George Hervey who alleged Ms. Morris breached the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act by not declaring a pecuniary interest before participating in the closed session meeting which ultimately led to the lawsuit, Mr. O'Melia successfully argued before the courts that the lawsuit was driven by the Town of Aurora in Ms. Morris' name.

This latest Notice of Motion introduces a series of emails as exhibits which, they say, muddies the waters on that position.

"In order to provide a complete and proper answer to this claim, the Town requires [complete emails from Ms. Morris' representatives] to determine the extent that Phyllis Morris was controlling the litigation, whether there were opportunities available to Phyllis Morris, after she knew or ought to have known that the Town would be withdrawing funding, to resolve the matter and mitigate her damages," reads the document."

After the newly elected Council of 2010 discontinued municipal involvement in the lawsuit, the Town was later advised it was liable for approximately $55,000 worth of legal costs that had been wracked up to December 2010.

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Optimists and Staples raise thousands to help students start the year off right

By Brock Weir

Katy Perry might have what it takes to make people roar, but when it comes to getting the school year off right to local students in need, she hasn't got a patch on the Optimist Club of Aurora and Staples.

In fact, Ms. Perry is a relatively new kid on the block. Brought in by Staples this year to add a bit of star wattage to their corporate Back to School Campaign, the partnership between the Aurora Staples and Optimists is one stretching back 14 years and, this year alone, they are over $3,000 into their fundraising target with a couple of weeks left to go.

Their partnership is a simple one, which has evolved over time. Staples customers, and people just looking for an opportunity to come into the store and make a donation, can put forward the amount of their choice. This money is collected and, in turn, converted into gift cards which are distributed by the Optimists to local families in need living in Aurora.

According to store manager Susan Gaudet, this relatively recent innovation on the system provides a lot more opportunity to these students than the previous practice of customers donating the school supplies themselves.

"In previous years we were finding it was getting repetitive," she explains. "They were getting a lot of refill paper when there was such a need for different things. That is why they have gone with the cash cards because, that way, you can find exactly what people need. A couple of years ago students really seemed to need calculators but they weren't getting calculators as donations. They were then able to go out and buy things like that."

For Kimberley Kerr, incoming president of the Aurora Optimists, the gift cards also ensure that donations are distributed where they are needed most.

"Each school, each class and each grade has different requests and different lists," says Ms. Kerr, noting that past Optimist president Terry Sherin meets with each family to help them through the process, shop, and pay. "We ensure that every dollar that is donated goes to a child in need for school supplies. They can't get iPads, they can't get computers, they can't buy frivolous things. They have to buy school supplies and that is an awesome thing.

"It is all done very quietly and it is done so no one is bullied or know they are a child in need, and we know supplies are going directly to the kids."

In turn, while they welcome the boost from Katy Perry, Aurora's Staples store has found that knowing the Optimists are involved in the school supply drive holds a bit of extra cachet with their customers.

"When we say it is the Optimist Club of Aurora it really sparks their interest," says Ms. Gaudet. "They see [the Optimists] around town and the other day I mentioned the Optimists to one lady and she said, 'Change my donation from $1 to $20.' It is all about community – the fact it is all staying in Aurora really helps people give. The demand every year is getting greater for the need for individual school supplies.

"The community is starting to realise there is a need out there. They are starting to realise they have somebody to reach out to, but some still don't realise they can reach out to the Optimist Club, even schools. When I told a couple of teachers that they could reach out to you guys for assistance, they just found that amazing – and it made them give more, too."

As the school year approaches, Ms. Kerr says she measures the success of this partnership not just by the amount of money raised, but by knowing each student participating will be set for the semesters ahead.

"For the Club, it means a lot to us because we actually get to help kids in need and that is a very important part of our foundation," she explains. "We are not throwing the money out there. It is actually going to a child, and that child is going to succeed in school because he has the calculator and she has the pen, just like all of their other classmates do, even if they might be disadvantaged.

"It's the fact that a child comes into school on their first day, he or she can hold their head high that they have exactly what they need to have a successful year. You want everyone on a level playing field so when they have that opportunity to learn, they can learn."

Members of the Optimist Club of Aurora join forces with Staples staff at the Yonge and Murray Drive store on Thursday night to get out the word on the annual school supply drive. With just about two weeks left in the campaign, the store and the club are well beyond the halfway point in their $6,000 fundraising target.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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Snow dump delayed as Council seeks alternatives to Lambert Willson site

By Brock Weir

Aurora's long-gestating snow dump will have to cool its heels for a little while longer after Council voted to delay making a decision on whether or not it will become a reality.

The delay likely means there won't be any further clarity on the issue before the snow starts flying once again this year, but Councillors argue there is still more information to consider before taking the plunge.

Going into this month's Council meeting, members faced a recommendation to proceed with the nearly $800,000 snow dumping facility at Lambert Willson Park, after it was split off as a separate item from the larger-scale Joint Operations Centre (JOC). The JOC, which was approved at the same meeting, is slated to be constructed on Industrial Parkway just north of Lambert Willson Park.

According to Town Staff, the purpose of a specially created snow dump facility in the park would have multiple benefits to the community and the surrounding watershed area. When constructed, it would allow contaminants to be filtered out of the melting water before it hits the watershed and, in particular, the wellhead protection area, as well as provide measures for ensuring salt used to melt ice and snow does not find its way into the surrounding environment.

Some Councillors, however, said they were unconvinced of the benefits of such a program and wanted more time to look at alternatives, and the project hit a deadlock, falling on a tie vote of 4 – 4.

"I struggled with this from when I first saw it and have swayed back and forth," said Councillor John Gallo who, along with Councillors John Abel, Evelyn Buck, and Don Constable voted against the project. "Recently I visited two municipalities that don't even put salt on their roads for very specific reasons: they are very close to water courses and those municipalities simply avoid that and manage to deal with winters that are even more severe than ours.

"Is it money better spent to figure out how to deal with what we put on our roads so we don't have this problem to deal with? I am leaning far more towards that than to build facilities to deal with a problem. I am not convinced this is the best approach to deal with the issue."

Councillor John Abel said he too would like to see alternatives explored. As snow dumped in this facility often comes from highly congested corridors like Yonge Street and Wellington Street, it accounts for a very small sliver of Aurora's overall snowfall, he argued.

"I would like to see a snow melter brought into the conversation, one that we can rent out to other municipalities that have very small areas, shopping centres where the piles are big and they lose a lot of parking and deal with it in this manner rather than pile snow next to our arboretum and trying to deal with the runoff from there."

While Councillor Constable said he agreed that there might someday be further environmental issues that might need to be addressed through snow disposal, there was not enough information in the report before Council on alternatives to satisfy him.

In addressing some of the concerns put forward at the meeting, Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure, said alternatives had been looked at but some missed the mark. Alternatives such as a snow melter that would travel the roads melting snow on board before dumping the water into storm sewers, were evaluated for their impacts but didn't make the grade.

"[A snow dump] doesn't require fossil fuel to actually perform the function," said Mr. Simanovskis. "It is the cost of moving the snow, which is actually a lot cheaper than bringing it from freezing to melting temperatures in large volumes. The capital cost is obviously a lot cheaper but, in the long-term operating and environmental impact from CO_2 contributions just doesn't seem like the right thing to do, but it is still a very viable option. From an emissions perspective, it is something that didn't rate very high."

Risk, however, was one factor which had significant pull with both Mr. Simanovskis' department, and Mayor Geoffrey Dawe, and Councillors Wendy Gaertner, Paul Pirri, and Michael Thompson who voted in favour of moving ahead with the snow dump. This type of facility has been shown as a "best practice" in other municipalities, added Mr. Simanovskis, and goes a long way towards salt management.

"If there is any risk of groundwater contamination, I think the prudent [thing to do] is move forward with this," said Councillor Thompson.

Councillor Gaertner said she agreed: "As a municipality, I would say that we are in the business of risk management and, if this manages risk, this is something I am going to be voting for."

Although he said he had gone "back and forth" on the issue, Councillor Paul Pirri said he believed it was "important" to move forward on this facility.

"For me, even if we did go for a completely salt-free environment that would require we purchase more sand and ultimately a grit separator would be just as useful and needed in those situations as well," he said. "I fear if we didn't move forward with this, the Province will recognize this is the direction we need to be going and…in four or five years it will end up costing us two or three times as much. I do see it as a risk management piece and we should move forward on it."

A similar view was expressed by Mayor Dawe.

"We have a very special Town, we have done a lot of work, and Councils have spent a lot of money over the years to ensure, in my opinion, that we keep our Town as clean as possible and I think this just goes along that same line that we do what we can in order to protect our future," he said. "I feel this is the responsible thing to do."

PORTRAITS OF GIVING – The annual photographic celebration of people who give back to their communities is now at the Aurora Public Library. Tim Jones, centre, is one of two Aurora residents honoured in the show and was joined at last week's unveiling by photographer Karen Merk, front left, and representatives from the Library, Merk Photography, and Magna.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

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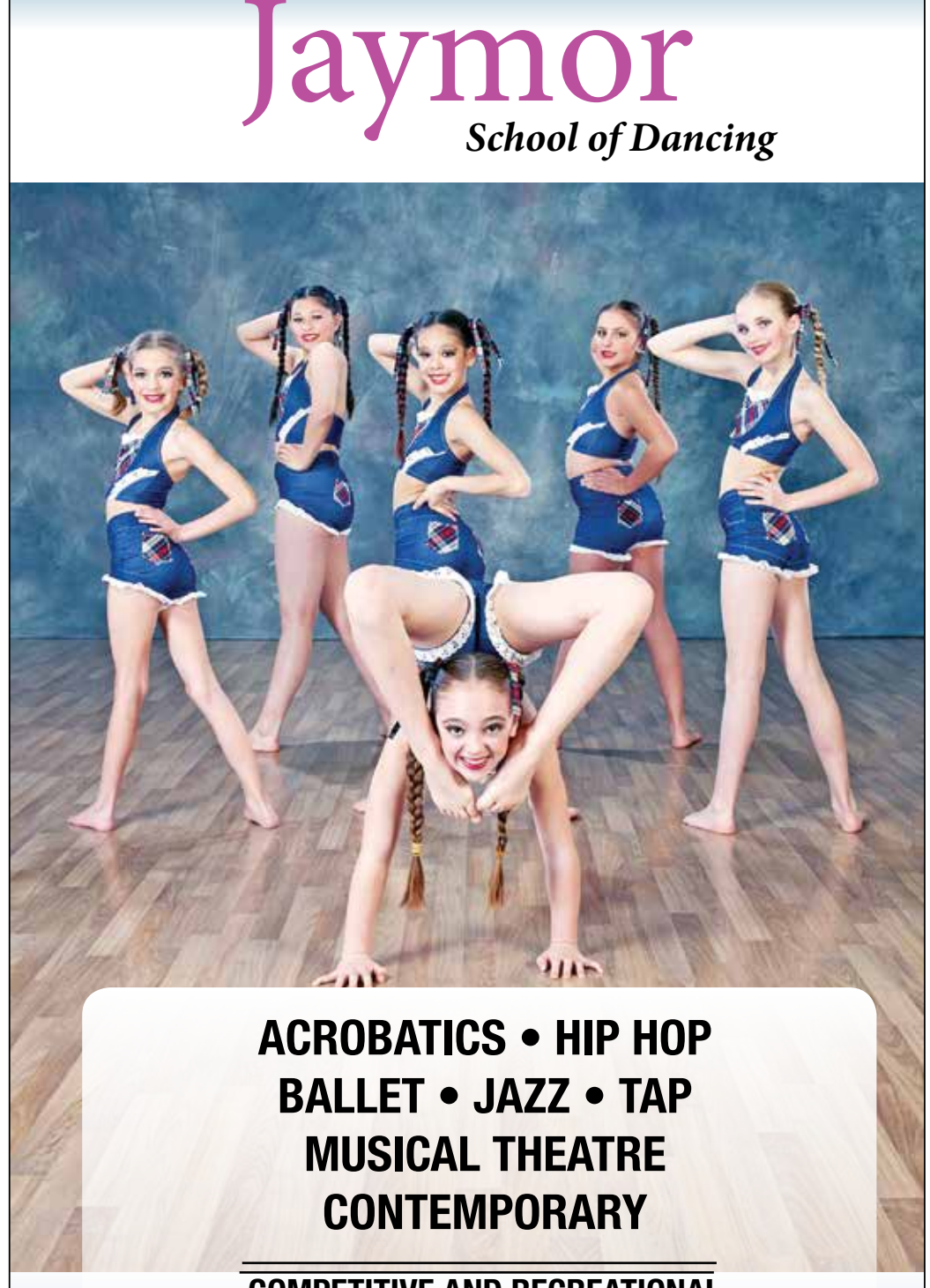

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Vol. 14 No. 43 905-727-3300 theauroran.com FREE Week of August 28, 2014

Teams duke it out on the field at Sheppard's Bush on Saturday afternoon.
Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Aurora Youth Soccer Club hosts annual Stinger Cup tournament

By Jake Courtepatte

Aurora's annual end-of-season soccer tournament and festival was held last weekend, marking the 50th year of the Aurora Youth Soccer Club (AYSC).

Games were held across Aurora throughout the weekend, with the majority being played at Sheppard's Bush Field, the Magna Campus, Optimist Park, and Highland Park.

While the under-5 division to the under-12 division participated in a no-score "festival" style of play, the U13's to the U18's competed in round-robin tournaments to decide the best house league teams in the area.

With all the finals occurring on Sunday, the weekend was highlighted by the U18 boys final that went to penalty kicks after playing to a 1 – 1 draw. Team Red would go on to beat Team Royal in the penalties.

AYSC Promotions and Sponsor Coordinator Louise Dyer said she was was pleased with this year's event, adding that the weather and the players cooperated well throughout the weekend.

"There were no injuries, which is something we're always happy about. We have almost 5,000 members, so for everything to go off without a hitch is great."

While the Stinger Cup marks the end of the official house league season, the John Traganitis All Star Tournament will be held September 13 – 14. The tournament welcomes All Star teams from house leagues across Ontario. More information can be found at www.aysc.ca.

Sport Aurora Breakfast of Champions Spotlight: 13U Storm Typhoon girls bring home the gold, silver and bronze

By Bruce Stafford

Storm Typhoon competed in four 13U tournaments and one 14U tournament in their first season together as there was no 12U age division.

As an underage team they managed to capture an OVA (Ontario Volleyball Association) bronze medal at the last regular season tournament and finish 9th at 13U OVA Provincials.

In their second year together the team competed in both 13U and 14U divisions. The girls did not lose a match all year at 13U, capturing 4 OVA gold medals and the Provincial title.

In their third season together the team competed in both 14U and 15U divisions. The girls captured 3 OVA gold and one OVA silver medal in regular season in their own age division and captured back-to-back Provincial titles.

The majority of the girls compete on the beach each off season and have captured medals at 14U, 15U and 16U age divisions this summer. 7 of the girls are part of 4 teams that will go into 14U Beach Provincials ranked in the top 10 teams in Ontario.

Aurora Jays continue perfect postseason, heading to Championship Series

By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Jays are heading to the North Dufferin Baseball League (NDBL) Championship Series for the third season in a row after sweeping the New Lowell Knights in the semifinals.

The action began last Tuesday as the Jays opened up the best-of-five series in Aurora. Starting pitcher Brad Crosby got the home team off to a great start, sending the first three batters he faced back to the dugout after two fly balls and a ground out.

The offence would give their pitcher some breathing room in the bottom of the first when a hard-hit single brought in Chris Bloom to put the Jays up 1 – 0.

Although the Knights would tie the game one inning later, the Jays' bats exploded in the bottom of the third. After Bloom picked up his second single of the game, he would be brought in two batters later on an Ian Rettie RBI.

After six straight hits, zero outs, and a New Lowell pitching change, the Jays suddenly led by four. Ted Beadle would add one more in the inning to give the Jays a sizable lead.

"This is what we've been doing all year – we go up and then just cruise," said the Jays' Ryan Lewis. "Early in the game, we fight, we make the pitcher pitch, work counts, do the jobs that move guys around. You've got to be doing that the whole time, that's what good teams do."

The Jays would play shut-down baseball the rest of the way, giving up one more run in the fourth inning to take game one 6 – 2.

After squeaking out a 4 – 3 game two win at home three days later, the Jays traveled to New Lowell Saturday looking to finish off their second-straight series on the road.

The Jays came out on top 7 – 2, extending their perfect postseason run to six straight wins.

The NDBL Championship Series has now been set, as the third-place Ivy Leafs knocked off the second-place Bolton Brewers in four games in the other semifinal.

Both regular season games between the two clubs were won by the Jays, 12 – 6 and 9 – 1.

Aurora is looking to win its first Strother Cup in its history in the North Dufferin Baseball League after being defeated in the Championship Series by the Bolton Brewers last season. The best-of-seven finals will kick off Saturday, September 6.

For full playoff schedules and stats, visit www.ndbl.com.

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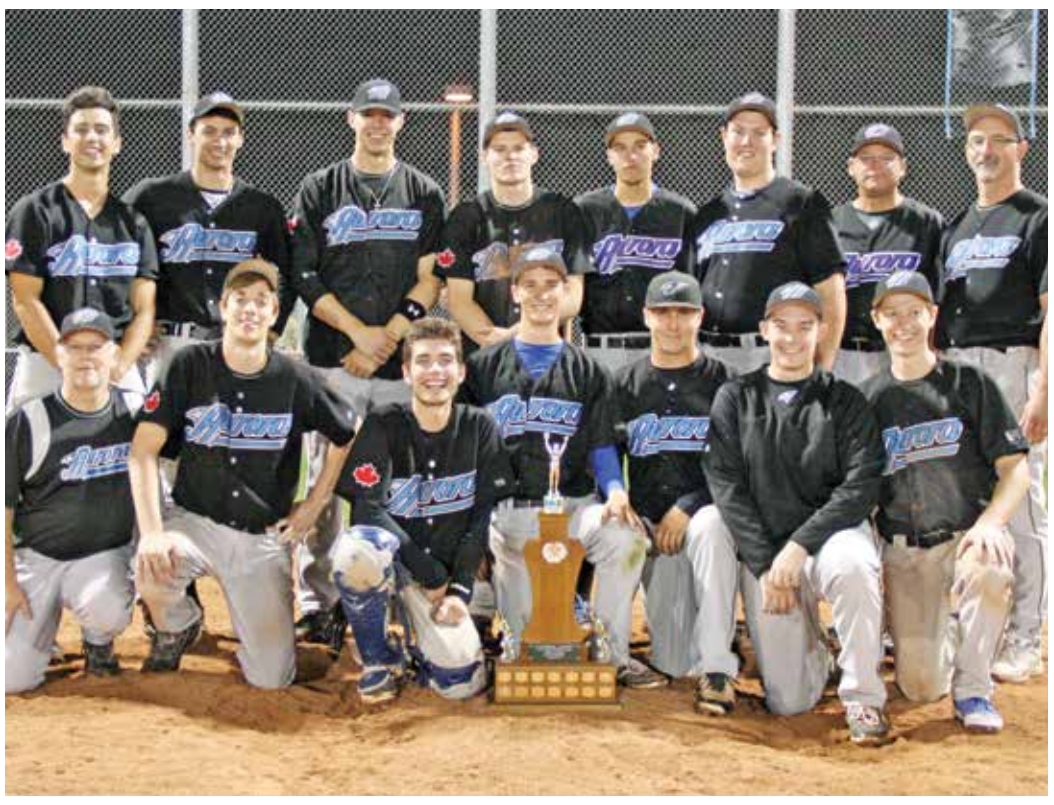


The Aurora Junior Jays claimed their first title last Thursday with a 3-2 victory over the Barrie Red Sox. Both teams were tied 5-5 in points heading into the sixth game, with each team winning two games. The final game was a tight battle, but Aurora secured the championship by scoring a run in their half of the sixth and held Barrie in the last inning with a runner on third. Submitted photo

PeeWee Jays heading to OBA finals

By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora PeeWee Jays are York-Simcoe Baseball Association (YSBA) champions for the second year in a row.

Aurora's season ended with three games against Barrie, who had won one game all year. After winning the first game at home, the Jays dropped a doubleheader in Barrie, giving up a quality chance to improve their record before the postseason.

The Jays finished the season at 7-13-1, landing in fifth spot heading into the YSBA Championship.

The YSBA Finals then kicked off last Friday night, set as a double-elimination tournament between Stouffville, Thornhill, Barrie and Aurora. With their poor end to the season still in mind, the Jays squad faced off against Barrie for the third game in a row.

Barrie would take the first game of the championships 1 – 0, off a passed ball in the sixth inning.

Now down to a single-elimination standpoint, the Jays were in hot water facing Stouffville Saturday morning. However, they turned their luck around, mercying Stouffville to improve their tournament record to 1 – 1.

Retribution was all the Jays wanted on Sunday, knocking out Barrie after playing them five of the last six games. They would then need two wins in a row in a doubleheader against Thornhill, who earned a bye to the finals.

After the climactic buildup to the finals, the championship was anything but close, as the Jays won the first game handily, 8 – 4, followed by a 23 – 5 mercy in the second.

The Jays bats exploded at just the right time.

"We went through the batting order in the second last inning almost twice," said coach Mark Elbaum. "The boys really just started hitting."

The Jays now head to the Ontario Baseball Association (OBA) tournament on Friday, representing the YSBA. They kick off against Oshawa, the team that knocked them out of the first round of the CNE PeeWee Baseball Tournament two weeks ago.

"They're probably coming in thinking that Aurora's not a very strong team," said Elbaum. "But they haven't seen our best yet. I think they'll be surprised."

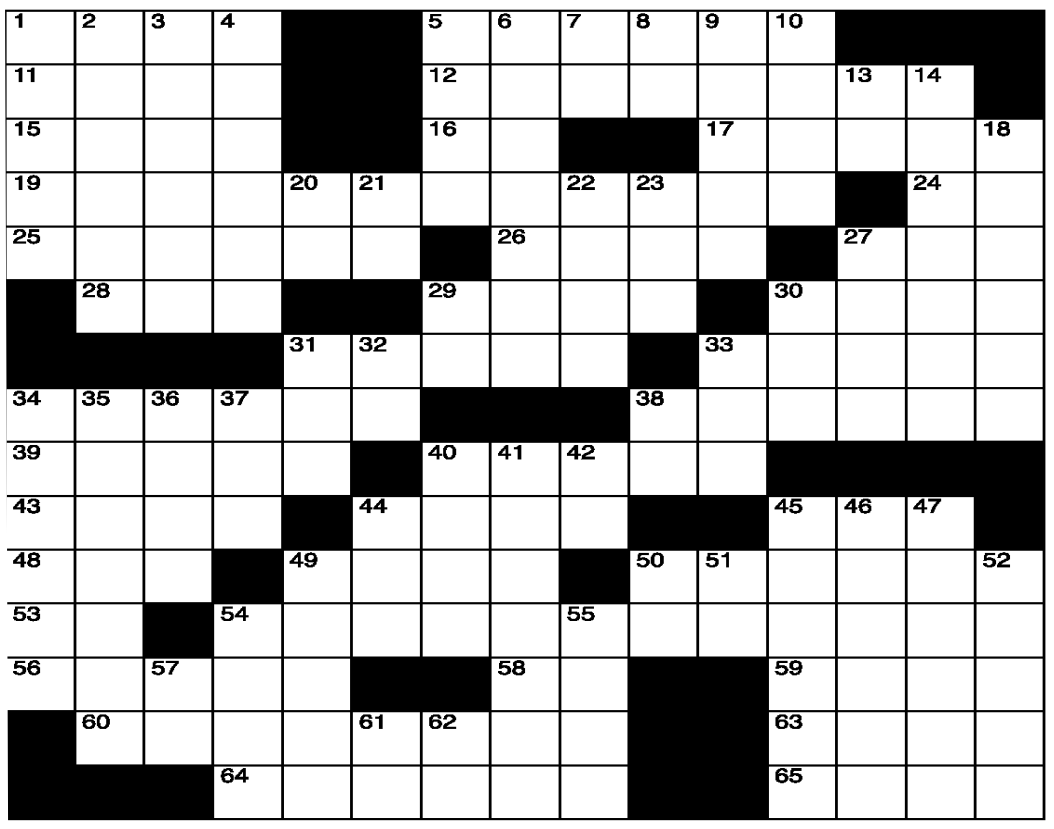
Aurora lost in the OBA finals last year to Cobourg, who also knocked them out the previous year.

Elbaum suspects the two teams may meet again in this year's tournament.

"They're in a loop above us, so they've had our number now for a couple years. But we're hoping to get some revenge."

Information on the OBA tournament can be found at www.baseballontario.com.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CLUES ACROSS

1. Nuclear near reach weapon
5. Delicately beautiful
11. Queen of the gods
12. Reordered letters
15. Representation
16. 24th state
17. Irritated
19. Large black dog breed
24. Atomic #18
25. Followed
26. Ivy University
27. Equal, prefix
28. Cablegram (abbr.)
29. Affront
30. 7th Hindu month
31. Competed
33. Slur over
34. Shape before marketing
38. Comes into being
39. White House architect
40. Brazilian dance
43. Somalian supermodel
44. Yield
45. Electric Cobra model 80
48. Local area network (abbr.)
49. Substitution
50. "Thornbirds" actress Ward
53. Not out
54. Male ice dancing champion
56. Tops of birds' heads
58. Carrier's invention
59. Children's author Blyton
60. Anise liqueur
63. Listing
64. Adult females
65. Yellow Dutch cheese

CLUES DOWN

1. Emit light
2. Not long past
3. Casually inspect
4. Masculine
5. Wish harm upon
6. Capable of soothing
7. Farm state
8. Initials of HLN legal host
9. Planets 120 degrees apart
10. An enclosed field
13. Initials of one of the Olson twins
14. Coastal
18. Remote control aircraft (pl.)
20. Oersted (abbr.)
21. Blue Hen school
22. Praise
23. Vestment
27. Egyptian goddess
29. Atomic #21
30. Boxer Muhammad
31. Fast gallop
32. Indicates position
33. Geological time
34. Elizabeth's Prince
35. Balkan nation
36. Israeli politician Abba ___
37. Indicates ability
38. Universal recipient blood group
40. Clairvoyant
41. Blandish
42. Of I
44. Former OSS
45. Deviously plan
46. Polished shoes
47. Visual processing membrane
49. Tibet's capital
50. 2nd musical tone
51. Expression of sympathy
52. Bog Labrador-tea
54. To furnish with a ceiling
55. Frosts
57. Natural logarithm
61. -__, denotes past
62. Atomic #22

Last Week's Puzzle Solution

PUZZLE SOLUTION

A	B	R	A	D	E	■	■	■	■	■	P	A	T	S
G	U	A	N	A	C	O	■	■	■	P	A	D	U	A
I	R	V	I	N	G	B	E	R	L	I	N	■	M	U
S	R	I	■	■	■	S	I	R	E	E	■	D	U	D
M	O	N	■	■	■	E	R	N	E	■	M	A	L	I
■	S	E	A	S	■	S	E	A	■	S	O	R	U	S
■	■	■	B	A	T	S	■	■	P	A	R	E	S	■
■	■	■	A	T	E	■	■	■	H	M	O	■	■	■
■	S	A	T	E	D	■	■	B	I	A	S	■	■	■
S	A	L	E	S	■	P	E	A	■	S	E	S	S	■
E	L	I	S	■	M	O	L	S	■	■	■	I	A	D
C	A	T	■	P	A	O	L	I	■	■	■	E	N	E
T	B	■	W	A	S	H	I	N	G	T	O	N	D	C
O	L	M	E	C	■	■	■	S	C	A	N	N	E	R
R	E	D	E	■	■	■	■	■	D	R	E	A	R	Y

COMING EVENTS

JULY 5 – SEPTEMBER 6

The Pine Tree Potters Guild hosts "Earth to Fire", a new exhibition of fine art ceramics by members of the guild, to showcase works that move beyond the functional. Featuring 46 pieces selected by ceramics expert Bruce Cochrane, he has gone a step further and singled out seven exceptional pieces as award winners. Guild members were encouraged to stretch their artistic vision and create their own statement pieces, and the results will be spread over two galleries at the Aurora Cultural Centre. Additional features include a ceramic "patchwork quilt."

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28

The Business Women's Network of York Region will host "Project Yourself" at the Gem Theatre in Georgina. ($15 for members and $25 for non-members). This month, the Network will give members the opportunity to screen 30 second "infomercials" on who you are and what you do. For more information, contact Network president Elizabeth Johnston at 416-910-1058.

SEPTEMBER 5 – 7

The 8th annual Aurora Ribfest returns Friday for the "tastiest event of the year". Held at Machell Park, the event brings together five "ribbers" hailing from Fort Erie to Florida, and other tasty treats to satisfy every palate, and the traditional beer garden hosted by the Aurora Rotary Club. The celebrated Glass Tiger headlines Friday evening entertainment beginning at 9 p.m., while Saturday is all about Platinum Blonde as they take the stage at 9 p.m. Age of majority applies after 8 p.m. For more information, visit www.aurora.ca.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

The Aurora Seniors Association will host a Friday Night Social Dance this evening from 8 – 11 p.m. Singles and non-members always welcome. Admission is $4.50 for members of the Association and $5 for non-members. Tickets include light refreshments and cash bar is available with wine and beer. The Aurora Seniors' Centre is located at 90 John West Way.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

End of Summer ART BLAST – Take a break from technology. Join artists from Sherman J. Studio and Local Colour Aurora as they show off their latest paintings. Styles range from traditional to quirky and everything in between. Come and meet the artists and explore their visual language of shape and colour. This Fine Art Show and Sale takes place at 89 Temperance Street from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. All ages are welcome and admission is free.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

The 25th Anniversary Feast of Fields Organic Food Festival will take place today from 1 – 6 p.m. at Cold Creek Conservation Area in King Township. "The Grande Dame" of Organic Food Festivals, Feast of Fields celebrates their milestone with a star-studded cast of celebrity chefs, award-winning restaurants, Ontario's finest VQA wine and micro-breweries, plus organic growers and producers. For more information, visit www.feastoffields.org.

****

The Aurora Community Band will host its first rehearsal of the season this evening from 7 – 9 p.m. at the Aurora Cultural Centre. Rehearsals are held each Sunday at the same time. If you are a brass, woodwind or percussion player with some concert band experience, you can attend two complimentary rehearsals before the membership fee applies. For further information, contact auroracommunityband@gmail.com

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Dust off your cowboy boots and shoes for the Hoedown Showdown, taking place from 5 p.m. to midnight at the Magna Corral. Featuring headliner Tim Hicks and the Wolfcreek Band, and host Beverley Mahood, this year's finalists in the local talent competition will compete for the crown – and the right to play before thousands tomorrow at the Wild, Wild West Hoedown. Admission is $25. For more information, visit www.hoedown.ca.

****

The Aurora Seniors' Association invites you to a Trivia Challenge at the Seniors' Centre. Four games will be played and each table will form one team. Prizes for winning tables and door prizes. Light refreshments and dessert will be served at intermission. $10 per person. Seating is limited. The Aurora Seniors' Centre is located at 90 John West Way.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

York Region's biggest party returns to Aurora tonight with Magna's Wild, Wild West Hoedown, featuring headliners Lonestar. For more information, including where to buy your tickets, visit www.hoedown.ca.

****

The Aurora Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion will host a Country-Westernnight this evening at 6.30 p.m. "Wanted: Cowboys and cowgirls. It's gonna be a wild, wild west party with Miss Piggy on the barbeque, corn on the cob, assorted salads and desserts," say organizers, but no comment at press time from Kermit the Frog. Advance tickets are available at the Legion for $15.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

The Aurora Community Arboretum will host their annual Shoreline Cleanup today beginning at 10 a.m. Interested volunteers are asked to meet at the gazebo near the Aurora Soccer Dome on Industrial Parkway North. For more information on the cleanup and other activities, contact the Arboretum at 905-727-3492 or email trees@auroraarboretum.ca.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Eating Disorders of York Region's Riverwalk Wellness Centres presents: Recovering from Eating Disorders: Tools and Techniques for Individuals, Family and Friends with Marilyn Reisz and Megan Fearnley from 7 – 8.30 p.m. at 15213 Yonge Street, Suite 11, Aurora. This workshop is designed to provide individuals with eating disorders with information, tools and techniques to help recover from disordered eating. $20 per person. Registration is required. Visit www.edoyr.com/support-programs.

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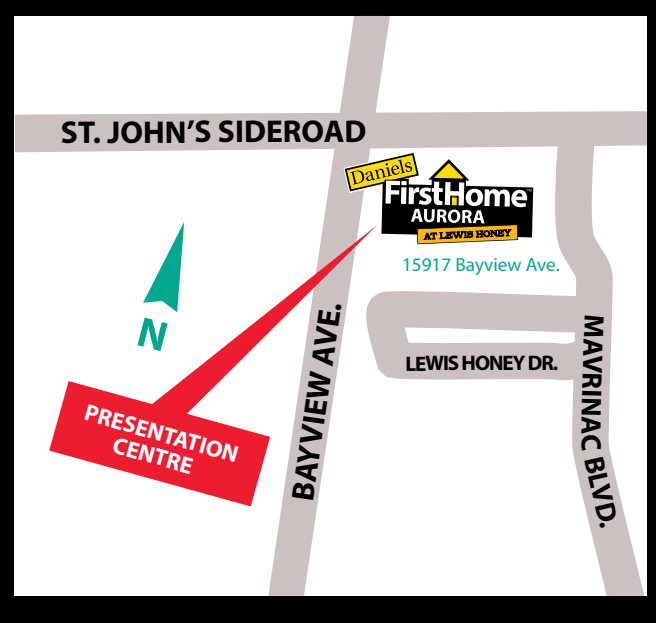

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THE AURORAN Arts & Culture

St. Max student has something to Crowe about ahead of Hoedown Showdown semifinals

By Brock Weir

14-year-old Kahlan Crowe is no stranger to the audition process.

Often when she puts her voice forward to judges or teachers, it can be in a non-descript room or even outdoors depending on the fickleness of Mother Nature. This summer, however, she had a very different experience stepping onto a real stage in a real theatre for the first time, belting her way into the Semi-Finals of the Hoedown Showdown.

Crowe is one of 20 semi-finalists who have made it through into the next round of the Hoedown Showdown, which takes place next weekend at Aurora's Ribfest, kicking off at Machell Park on Friday, September 5.

Set to take the semi-finals by storm, the St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic High School student is currently working on getting the song "DONE" by The Band Perry just right before the next round.

"The lead singer of The Band Perry has a lot of attitude when she sings, she's a really good performer, she has an amazing voice, and her songs usually tell a story," says Kahlan.

For Kahlan, who recently participated in the Aurora Teen Idol competition, this foray onto the Theatre Aurora stage was all about performance. Through her vocal lessons and training, she has also put a concerted effort into her own showmanship and using the stage to her best advantage, and that training came in particularly useful over the summer.

"This was really nice because I hadn't actually performed on stage inside with the lights and the cameras and everything on me when it was just me on the stage," she explains. "It was a really great experience to be up there and just have fun, sing and perform for the judges and audience.

"When they called my name I was thinking, 'don't forget the lyrics and don't mess up because I forgot the lyrics in my other performance for Aurora Teen Idol. I still got in, but I had a fear of that – but after this performance, I got rid of that fear completely and I am completely fine now. I was also just thinking about stage presence, having a good time and enjoying it while you are there, and just making the song your own in ways that you can."

Her efforts paid off. Following her performance, judges heralded her stage presence, urging her to practice even more with that ahead of the semi-finals, but also fine tuning her voice to make sure she is on top of all the notes required.

"I am practicing every day like they told me," she says, noting she is also working on her song for the finals, if she makes it through to the next round – Dolly Parton's "Jolene". "We are perfecting them, adding things to them and hopefully that will make it better."

This next time, however, she is bringing something else out of her arsenal: a guitar, with which she has been practicing for over a year.

"I am working on volume, working on crescendos and decrescendos, adding some flavour to what I have found by making it louder or softer at certain parts of the piece to a excitement or to make it more soft and gentle. In DONE, there is one note that is really high, so I am working on making sure I can hit that note all the time. At first when I tried to do it, it was a little bit pitchy and my vocal teacher helped me find some new techniques on how to reach that note without it sounding like I am straining my voice."

At the end of the day, as important as vocals are, Kahlan is looking forward to looking out from the stage, finding people in the audience smiling along with her, engaged in her performance. She hopes they both have fun and listen to the words in the song. She also says she is looking forward to meeting everyone involved with Ribfest and Hoedown, and being a sponge for every experience this opportunity has to offer.

"I am going to try and do my best all the way through, give it 110 per cent and if that is not goood enough, I can always take away that I tried my best and know I took away from that experience. Hopefully I learned things from the audience, learned things from the judges, and I will take their criticism away and make good of it.

"If I do [take the ultimate Hoedown Showdown crown] the recording session, guitar, and all that stuff could really lift off the career I am trying to make happen. It is my dream."

Aurora's Kahlan Crowe has her game plan ready for next month's semifinals in the Hoedown Showdown, which will be held at Ribfest on September 6.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Katy Perry makes dreams come true for Aurora's biggest fans

By Brittany Spencer

It has been a very exciting and star-studded summer for Anthea and Dabria Peta, as through a classic case of "at the right place at the right time" led them to meet and befriend their pop star idol Katy Perry.

Anthea and Dabria Peta's dreams came true after a chance encounter with Katy Perry at Black Creek Pioneer Village. Submitted photo

Last month the Peta family had planned a Sunday trip to Black Creek Pioneer Village that was nearly cancelled due to rain and cloudy skies. Despite their parent's attempts to convince them to go somewhere else for some indoor fun, Anthea, 8, and Dabria, 7, insisted that the trip must go on, rain or shine. The entire family loaded the car along with Anthea's favorite stuffed animal "Kitty Purry", unaware of the unexpected surprise awaiting them at their destination.

Once they arrived, Anthea and Dabria immediately recognized a "special visitor" and wasted no time approaching her to ask: "Are you the real Katy Perry?" To this Perry playfully answered, "today is my day off, so I am not Katy Perry today, but I will be again tomorrow!"

Perry was in Toronto for her Prismatic World Tour, and had stopped at Pioneer Village during her day off between shows. She gladly took the time to talk to the girls about their summer camp experiences, love for her music and their upcoming school year.

Anthea and Dabria, who have always enjoyed singing and dancing, were thrilled with the opportunity to talk to Perry about her music, performances and life as a pop star. They even had the chance to meet Perry's touring sidekick, her dog Butters.

In addition to spending time with Anthea and Dabria, Perry also invited them as her guests to her final concert of the Prismatic Tour in Toronto the following evening. The girls' mother, Andrada Peta, described what happened next as "an explosion of happiness, the girls ran to me screaming: This is the best day of my life! Can we pretty please go?"

The girls described Perry's concert as "amazing", and that they had "the coolest and best time ever" as they enjoyed the show from their eleventh-row seats with handmade posters and stuffed animal "Kitty Purry" in tow. They were particularly impressed with Perry's many vibrant costumes and hairstyles as well as the grand finale of her song "Firework", which was accompanied by a live firework display.

"The girls have always been passionate about dancing and singing," the girl's mother said. "But now, after meeting Katy, they are talking more intensively about their wish to perform in a show like Katy's."

However, what impressed the girls most about their encounter with their beloved pop idol was her kindness. "My favourite thing about Katy Perry is that she is very nice to people," said Anthea. Dabria agreed with her sister claiming "Katy is very nice to everybody and I think that makes her very special and unique."

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Culture Days at the Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair

By Joanna Allison

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair will be hosting a special culinary event on Saturday, September 27, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. as part of Culture Days.

Culture Days was created in response to the growing recognition that a vibrant arts and cultural sector contributes directly to a healthy and stable society.

This national initiative provides Canadians with the ability to participate in the arts and cultural happenings in their own communities.

The Aurora Farmers' Market Culinary Day will provide the opportunity for the community to engage in culture centralized around healthy food.

The event encourages people to explore the importance of buying local produce and incorporating these items into everyday meals that will support a healthy lifestyle.

Artist Judy Sherman paints en plein air at the Aurora Farmers' Market on Saturday as part of the Local Colours Aurora campaign. Their next En Plein Air day will be held Saturday, September 6, at Sherman J. Studios on Temperance Street from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Auroran photo by David Falconer

Culinary Day will showcase the popular talents of some of the local chefs who are regularly at the market. They will prepare delectable fall harvest-themed dishes on-site and provide free samples and recipes to the public.

The chefs will cook with the market's local farmers' produce, emphasising the tastiness of cooking with squash and pumpkin.

Chefs participating in the Culinary Day special event are: Andrew Evans and Mat Orr of Cookery Catering, Mel Laidlaw of Mr. Spinner's, Pascal Poilbout of La Brehandaise Catering (Organic Crepes), Gabriel Schacher of Gabriel's Café, and Nick Vannan of The Family Kitchen.

Squash and pumpkin will be in season in September, which makes these local foods ideal for creating tasty fall dishes. In addition to being in season, squash and pumpkin are high in nutritional value. The nutrients in squash strengthen the immune system and bone health, as these vegetables are high in potassium and vitamin B6.

Pumpkins are high in fibre and low in calories, which makes this vegetable popular amongst people wishing to lose weight. Not only are these vegetables delicious, but they are also healthy for you. The talented chefs will create these culinary pieces into works of art in terms of appearance, aroma and taste.

Take this opportunity to learn a new recipe and try something a little different.

On September 27, the Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair will also feature at least 20 members of the Aurora Community Band in the Town Park band-shell for two sets starting at 10 a.m.

There will be free crafts for children and a fun scavenger hunt to claim a prize. A stylish jute Market Bag filled with fresh produce, delicious baked goods and beautiful artisan products will be raffled off at noon.

The Market is located at 49 Wells Street, Aurora Town Park, and is open every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine until October 25, 2014. For more information, please visit their website at theaurorafarmersmarket.com

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September 26, 27 & 28, 2014

Chance encounter led Hicks to big time

From page 1

Showdown under the big Hoedown tent on Friday, September 12, as the prelude to the main event on the Saturday night.

After plugging away at his passion for 17 years, he was nominated as Rising Star in the 2013 Canadian Country Music Association Awards, followed up by Juno nominations for Breakthrough Artist of the Year and Country Album of the Year and, most recently, he racked up four further CCMA Awards, including Album of the Year and Songwriter of the Year.

He has come a long way since he first found a love of music accompanying his great-grandmother's church music as they both played the organ in her parlour.

When he takes the stage in Aurora next month, he will headline an event showcasing local up and coming country talent, something he says will provide invaluable experience for future stars of all ages.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for a young artist or a young band to come and show their stuff and get an opportunity to play with a big band like Lonestar," says Mr. Hicks of the chance the winner will have to perform with the Hoedown headliner on the following night. "I wish there was something like that around when I was up and coming. Maybe we would have got someplace a little bit sooner."

When asked what it feels like to be on hand to usher in new artists, he jokes that he doesn't feel like he is "qualified" to do that, but he has certainly put in his dues. From those early days playing church hymns, his parents saw a spark in their young son and enrolled him in the Ontario Conservatory of Music.

From the time he was seven, he was in a band which he thought was "just the coolest thing in the world" – a feeling he still carries with him today. Early teachers saw he had an affinity for voice, and helped him hone in on that, including being able to handle singing and playing the piano at the same time. Although there was a streak at the school towards classical music, that really did not hold his attention and his teachers steered him towards what he describes as his "natural tendencies."

"I played all kinds of music when I was coming up," he explains. "Music was my living for 17 years so you have to take every gig that comes your way – especially if you are growing up in Niagara Falls, there are no honky-tonks to go and play country music in."

As he was growing up, his parents filled the house with the sounds of The Beatles and Simon & Garfunkel, and as Tim became more interested in music, he found himself gravitating towards their underlying country tendencies.

"That means good songs, good singing, harmony, which has sort of become a lost art aside from country, and just good playing. It took me a really long time to realise the thing I liked about the Beatles was they were playing Johnny Cash, Eddie Cochrane, and all those bands. They were just playing it and filtering it through their English upbringing."

Fast forward over a decade and a half, Hicks and his band were playing a regular house gig in Toronto when they happened to be spotted by a couple of songwriters. Evidently taken with Hicks' voice and the band's sound, the songwriters approached them after the show looking for a collaboration. They later wrote a few tunes and one of the writers took a demo to Nashville, where it caught the ear of Ron Kitchener of RGK. And, it turns out, the two songwriters who found him were Casey Marshall and Neil Sanderson from Three Days Grace.

Before he knew it, it was a blustery January and he and his wife wrapped up their five week old son, loaded up the van and headed to Nashville.

"We took off like a couple of kooky people chasing a silly dream," he says. "Everyone thought we were crazy – crazy for taking the baby out of the house that soon, crazy for even wanting to try, but we didn't care."

After they collaborated on his first album, successes kept rolling in. Awards and nominations are one thing, but after his first single, "Get By" was released he felt he had finally made it. While on the Boys of Fall tour in 2012 he and a fellow artist were driving from Hamilton to Ottawa for their next gig when his phone began "exploding" with messages from Twitter.

"It was the first time people were talking about my performance, talking about my songs, and looking for interaction from me. It was kind of emotional because I thought, 'Finally, I am getting through to people after all these years!' This was a moment where I felt good and that we were on the right track.

"[The Hoedown Showdown] will be fantastic. I always encourage young people, young artists or artists in general when they ask on Twitter or Facebook to put away your webcam, get off YouTube and get out and play in front of people. The Hoedown is offering that exactly."

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Jodie Cara Lindley

September Horoscopes

***Virgo* (August 23 – September 22)**

Wealth is your keyword for September, Virgo. This can apply to anything: a wealth of deep wisdom; a wealth of abundance; a wealth of change. Your mind will also be focused on a wealth of details and practical matters. All will balance out.

Libra (September 23 – October 22)

Your perceptions are due to undergo a reworking, Libra. Consider September a time of initiation into a different type of vision and insight. You are keen for hard work now, and it will pay off in the end. By the end of the month, life will equalize.

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

Keep strong in your sense of integrity, Scorpio. You may feel like easing off a bit by mid-September, but don't lose your focus. That may be difficult, but allow what enthuses you to drive you forward. Also, be proud of what you have already accomplished.

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

The rebel inside wants out Sagittarius! You are in an incredibly creative time of your life, and nothing is in your way. Self-expression is vital for you in September. Let whatever inventive and dynamic genius screaming within out!

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

You have the gift of endurance this month, Capricorn. This is not new for you! There are many projects to tackle, and you have the required energy now. Engaging in artistic pursuits and self-expression will help you achieve what you want.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

Take on the role of a "charismatic visionary" this month, Aquarius. What does that mean? It means to say whatever genius is on your mind with gusto, foresight and poise. You have something unique to share, so honour that gift.

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

The Fool in the tarot deck is your personal mentor for September, Pisces. Go about life with a foolish grin and a sense of freedom. Look at everything with fresh eyes and innocence. This will get you farther than being self-deprecating.

Aries (March 21 –April 19)

Your cup is full Aries. Enjoy this time of abundance, and the occasional running over of goodness this month. Your fire power energy will continue to gain speed, but make sure to rest when you feel a bit hazy. Go after that which inspires you.

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

Compassion is your keyword for September, Taurus. While you may feel self-critical and under pressure, make sure you have empathy for yourself. You are in a period of hard work right now. You will feel stronger by month's end.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

Don't let your mind interfere with your inner balance in September, Gemini. You will be seeking peace *and* turning over new ground on a mental level, simultaneously. You can do this. Use your innate duality to claim serenity in the midst of chaos.

Cancer (June 21 – July 21)

You will be thinking a lot about your life this month, Cancer. That is okay. Contemplation is good for you now. Use your mind to work out the details and set out a plan, and apply your incredible intuition to feel the best method of application.

Leo (July 22 – August 22)

Connect to fire and earth energies this month, Leo. Insight and illumination, balanced with practicality and work, are the keys to your success now. By the end of September, you will feel much more balanced and secure in everything.

For more information about Jodie and astrology, visit www.EarthSkyJourneys.org.

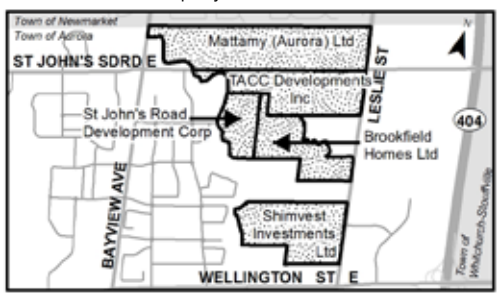
TOWN OF AURORA
PUBLIC NOTICE

AURORA

NOTICE OF COUNCIL'S INTENTION TO REMOVE A HOLD "(H)" PROVISION

Aurora Town Council will consider an Amending Bylaw under section 36 of the *Planning Act* to Remove the "(H)" Holding Provision for the lands described below, on Tuesday, September 16, 2014 at 7 p.m. at Aurora Town Hall, Council Chambers.

1. An Application by Mattamy (Aurora) Limited, file number D14-08-11 (H-3) has been submitted to Amend the Zoning Bylaw to Remove the "(H)" Holding Provision. The lands are located at Part of Lot 26, Concession 2 E.Y.S., municipally known as 1280 St. John's Sideroad.
2. An Application by TACC Developments (Aurora) Inc., file number D14-09-11 (H-2) has been submitted to Amend the Zoning By-law to Remove the "(H)" Holding Provision. The lands are located at Part of Lot 25, Concession 2 E.Y.S., municipally known as 1335 St. John's Sideroad.
3. An Application by St. John's Road Development Corporation (Metrus Development Inc.), file number D14-01-12 (H-2) has been submitted to Amend the Zoning By-law to Remove the "(H)" Holding Provision. The lands are located at Part of Lots 24 and 25, Concession 2, municipally known as 15887 Bayview Avenue.
4. An Application by Brookfield Homes (Ontario) Limited, file number D14-12-11 (H-2) has been submitted to Amend the Zoning By-law to Remove the "(H)" Holding Provision. The lands are located at Part of Lots 23, 24 and 25, Concession 2, municipally known as 15624 and 15776 Leslie Street.
5. An Application by Shimvest Investments Limited Homes, file number D14-02-12 (H-2) has been submitted to Amend the Zoning By-law to Remove the "(H)" Holding Provision. The lands are located at Part of Lot 22, Concession 2, municipally known as 15436 Leslie Street.



The conditions for Removal of "(H)" Holding Provision as set out in By-laws 5522-13, 5523-13, 5524-13, 5525-13 and 5526-13 have been fulfilled. The Removal of the "(H)" Holding Provision will allow for the development of additional phases of residential Plans of Subdivision. The Holding (H) Provision was primarily established to ensure The Town of Aurora has allocated sufficient servicing capacity to this development, adequate transportation services available to accommodate the Draft Plan of Subdivision, represents a logical and orderly progression of development, and complies with the policies of the 2C Secondary Plan (OPA No. 73).

Additional information may be obtained from the Planning & Development Services department at 905-727-3123 extension 4226. Comments may also be mailed to the Planning & Development Services department at the same address, faxed to 905-726-4736 or emailed to planning@aurora.ca prior to the meeting. Please quote the file name and number.

The Town of Aurora collects personal information in communications or presentations made to Town Council and/or its Committees. The Town collects this information to enable it to make informed decisions on the relevant issue(s). 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. By submitting a fax, email, presentation or other communication, you are authorizing the Town to collect and use the above-noted information for this purpose. If you make a presentation to Town Council and/or its Committees, the Town will be audio recording you and Town staff and may make these audio recordings available to the public. Please direct any questions about this collection to the Town Clerk at 905-727-3123, ext. 4771.

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Newmarket-Aurora nomination meeting set for September 8

From page 1

Hill, those living on the north side of Wellington will stick with Newmarket-Aurora.

"The riding is now physically smaller, so in that sense it will be easier because it will be less ground to cover, but whether Aurorans north or south of Wellington are markedly different remains to be seen," says Mr. Peterson. "I think most Aurorans, like most people in Newmarket, want the same things –they want a strong economy, they want to make sure there are jobs for the future, they want to make sure their kids have better opportunities than we had, they want to make sure they get good value for their tax dollars, and they want their government to be responsive to their needs. I want to be the person to represent those views in Ottawa."

The party got started early for Mr. Peterson last weekend, with a barbecue for Liberal faithful held at Newmarket's Fairy Lake and also attended by the likes of Newmarket-Aurora MPP Chris Ballard, and Markham MP John McCallum.

Although ideas were exchanged throughout the Sunday afternoon event, it got off to a thought-provoking start by Dianna Big Canoe of Georgina Island, who spoke about the missing and murdered Aboriginal women. The response of Prime Minister Stephen Harper to the crisis is one which Mr. Peterson says shows a marked difference between what the Liberals and Conservatives represent.

Pending Newmarket-Aurora Liberal candidate Kyle Peterson meets with Markham MP John McCallum at a riding event held at Newmarket's Fairy Lake on Sunday.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

"One thing I have learned [between the last and upcoming elections] is residents might want a new attitude towards government, openness and transparency, honesty, and maybe a healthier attitude towards politics," he says. "Politics does not have to be a negative affair, it doesn't have to be something where you try to hide what you are doing, or doing things by stealth. People across Canada, not just Newmaket-Aurora, are coming to the conclusion.... it can actually be something positive.

"You look at [Mr. Harper's] response to the issue about Native Women where he says it is a criminal issue and not a socio-economic issue. Well, I don't buy that and I don't think most Canadians buy that. The façade he likes to hold up as being a master of the economy – our economy has never been in worse shape than it has under his guidance and leadership. He just thinks if he repeats the lie enough times people are going to believe it and it will become the truth, but I think Canadians are coming to realise maybe that is not the way it is, and that is certainly not the way I think it should be."

If the election were held today, Mr. Peterson says he believes the top issues will be the "economy, openness and transparency, and healthcare." But, the election is not going to be held today, nor will it be in the near future. Once his nomination is signed, sealed and delivered next month, Mr. Peterson will likely have over a year before Canadians head to the polls. In that time, he says he will be embarking on a "listening" rather than speaking tour to hear what the residents of Newmarket-Aurora and work with the party to make sure these are addressed in the party platform.

Leading the party is Justin Trudeau, who Mr. Peterson says has shown a "remarkable ability" to connect with Canadians.

"We have had eight years of aloof leadership where if it can't be focus-grouped he doesn't care about your issue," said Mr. Peterson of Mr. Harper. "If it doesn't poll well with his base, he doesn't even want to talk about it. Mr. Trudeau is the exact opposite. He will, of course, speak off the cuff at times. He is happy to walk into a crowd, and it is an approach that we are all in this together instead of the Father Knows Best approach, and that is the approach I hope to bring to the people of Newmarket-Aurora as well."

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Big Brothers Big Sisters get ready for busy weeks ahead

By Brock Weir

Big Brothers Big Sisters of York got their engines running on Sunday as part of the annual New Roads Charity Classic Car Show, which was held at the New Roads dealership on Yonge Street in Newmarket.

Open to the public, the free event featured a barbeque, music, prizes, kids' activities and fun for the whole family.

With classic car enthusiasts paying a $15 registration fee to have their own vehicles in the show, 100 per cent of the proceeds went back to Big Brothers Big Sisters of York.

It will be a busy few weeks ahead for Big Brothers Big Sisters of York (BBBSY) as one of 15 community-based charities set to benefit from next month's annual Wild, Wild West Hoedown, hosted by Magna International. BBBSY Executive Director Sarah Dame, seen top left with New Roads owner Michael Croxon, says they plan on focusing on physical literacy for the "Littles" and "Bigs" in their program. "Physical literacy is becoming far more in the forefront of our one-on-one mentoring," Ms. Dame told The Auroran. "We include healthy choices, healthy mind, healthy body, and healthy spirit."

(Second Row) Kids' activities included face painting

(Third Row) Kate Collins, Community Partnerships and Events Coordinator for BBBSY, flips burgers with Greg Foster of Aurora's M&M's Meat Shops

Auroran photos by David Falconer

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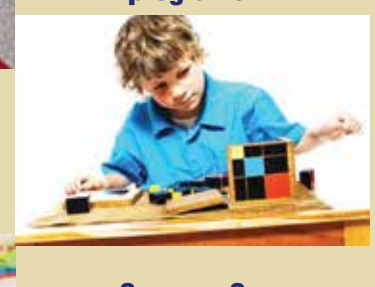

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Walking Club at the Seniors' Centre

We at the Aurora Seniors' Centre encourage you to stay active in the coming months. Walking is a very basic form of exercise and is good for you. I try and walk each day whether on the treadmill or an evening walk, and I have an average of 5,000 steps each day.

Walks are held on Wednesday mornings and are about an hour in length.

All walks are on trails in and around Aurora.

The terrain may be hilly (as is much of Aurora) and participants should wear appropriate clothing and footwear. We meet each week at 9.30 a.m. at the Seniors' Centre and carpool to the starting location, if necessary.

No pre-registration is required, just show up. We are always looking for eager members to walk, so come out and join us.

If walking is not your preference, then you should consider enrolling in any one of the Fall 2014 Town-run programs for seniors. Registrations have started and you can view the different programs by going to our website as shown below, or in person, and pick up a copy of our August newsletter.

Trivia Challenge – Friday, September 12

We invite you to a Trivia Challenge event. There will be four games played and each game will have a series of questions to challenge your knowledge. Each table forms one team and a team answer for each question will be required. Prizes for the winning tables and door prizes. Light refreshments and dessert will be served at intermission. Price $10 per person. Seating is limited.

Our Appreciation…

… to Investors Group, Patrice Graham-Brown, Division Director and her Team for including the Aurora Seniors' Centre along with seven other different charitable organization with grants based on time commitment and the volunteering provided in 2013 by Patrice and her team.

This grant was presented to us at the Town Park concert on Wednesday, August 13, 2014.

SENIOR SCAPE

Charles Sequeira

Volunteers required!

Almost everything in the Centre is run by volunteers. Without them lunch might be cancelled, the shop will be closed, library books everywhere, playing cards gone, you won't get expert help in the computer room, and so on. Our volunteers makes sure that you have everything you need to enjoy your time at the Centre.

Many of our members have been – and are – volunteers for many, many years and some of them now feel it's their time to sit back and enjoy. That's great as long as the Seniors' Centre can still have all the great activities, lunches and events that everyone expects, but without volunteers it won't happen. Our Seniors' Centre is the best because of the great people who use it and respect it and the volunteers who make it the best. We are very lucky to have this facility for our use and enjoyment. Please think about volunteering to help keep our Seniors' Centre special!

Our Food Services Committee needs a new Chairperson Volunteer. If you think you can help please speak to Charles, Ron or Karie at the Centre.

Friday Night Social Dances – September 5 and 19

From 8 – 11 p.m., singles and non-members are always welcome. Members: $4.50, $5 for non-members. – Includes light refreshments. Cash bar available.

Soap Operas

Do you watch soap operas? We are thinking of starting a soap opera club that would meet on Friday afternoons. Join others, watch together and talk about it. If you are interested sign up at our reception desk. Tell us which soap you watch. If there is enough interest we will let you know.

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

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Route D-27
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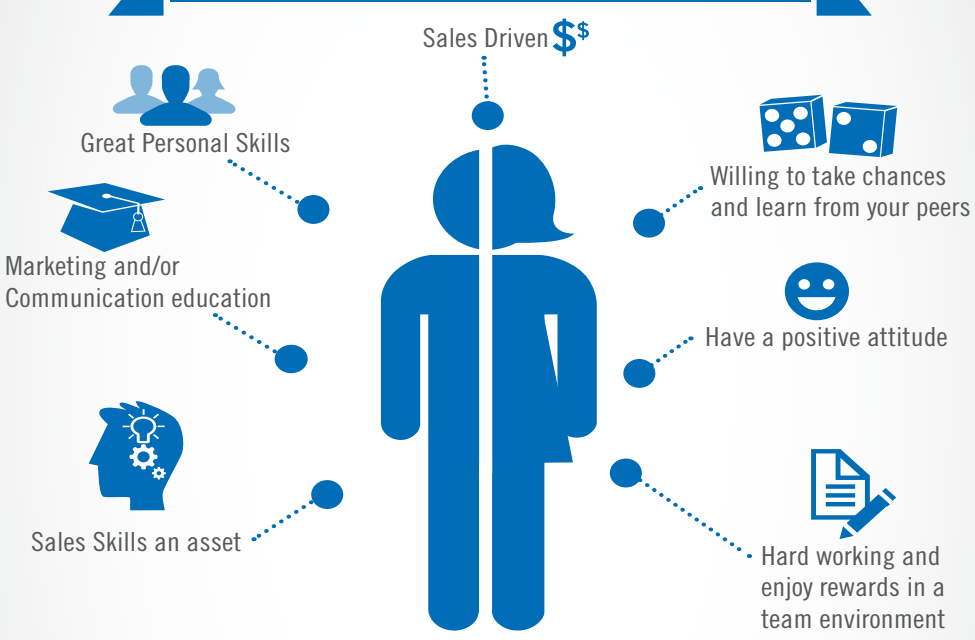

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ELECTION 2014

Aurora needs to establish long-term vision for development, seniors and youth, says Council candidate Plamondon

By Brock Weir

When Tom Plamondon moved to Ontario from Pointe Claire, QC, in 1994 with his family in tow, he was looking for a place where his kids could continue with their French education.

On the recommendation of his sister, Sue, they looked into Lester B. Pearson Public School, enrolled their kids, and the rest is history.

At that time, Aurora and Pointe Claire were relatively similar in terms of size and growth and over the last 20 years, Mr. Plamondon says he has watched this growth locally with great interest.

It was a natural interest for Mr. Plamondon, who spent over 22 years as a planning director of the Quebec municipality, as well as serving as director of economic development and after watching with a vested interest, he now wants to be an active voice at the table as Aurora rapidly approaches build-out.

Tom Plamondon Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Earlier this summer he registered as a Council candidate for the October 27 municipal election. He says he hopes to be able to bring the skills gleaned from his career in city planning and economic development, skills he puts to good use today as a planning consultant for numerous municipal projects, to the table, with a goal to establishing a long-term vision for Aurora.

"When I look at the growth that has occurred in Aurora over the last 20-plus years, and understanding what the Province has been, the direction it has taken in establishing growth communities, and the establishment of the greenbelt and protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine, it has raised the importance of planning, particularly for areas like Aurora and Newmarket," he says. "We see the community has actually accelerated in growth. Most members of Council…tend to look at the community's needs in the immediacy and not look down the road. I find myself looking even further. The time projections I am used to looking at are 30 or 40 years. Managing the growth of Aurora is one thing, but I think also understanding the cultural diversity of the community is becoming increasingly important."

As Aurora physically grows outward, and as its citizens follow suit, challenges inevitably lie ahead, he says. Case in point are the aging baby boomers. As this significant demographic ages, more thought will have to be put in to how community facilities can serve the whole population, particularly a greying one.

"The bulge [of seniors] is moving up, they tend to be healthier, they tend to be more active, and I think the facilities in the community need to reflect what their needs are," he says, noting the community in turn can't risk losing sight of Aurora's youth. "Although we always talk about our focus on the youth and opportunities for them, I think there needs to be a greater sensitivity around what that really means. I think it means we need to understand the implications technology, for example, is having on youth and making sure that every opportunity [is encompassed and embrassed] because it is changing so quickly. We also need to focus on a greater sense of involvement in the community. I don't see many opportunities for youth to really express what it is they are looking for in the community directly to members of Council and that is where I think my campaign is going to focus."

In the weeks leading up to the October election, Mr. Plamondon says he will be keeping his ears open to the voice of the community in determining how it can be best represented at the Council table. That is a responsibility he believes every Councillor should take to heart.

Being able to hear the views of the community will be particularly important, he adds, as the community reaches that all-important build-out stage where focus will have to shift away from development towards redevelopment and intensification.

"If you look at [recent recommendations to Council on the Aurora Promenade], consultants looked at five and 10 year time horizons, looking at intensification, redevelopment opportunities, and they are looking at ways to make it more vibrant, attractive and safer. Those then become very key focal points. In my experience as a planning director, working in a 300-year-old village, and looking at the protection of heritage and the viability of the business community, many of them struggle. How to stimulate and bring in the right mix of new businesses that help support existing business communities is very important and there I believe I can talk about making a difference.

"I am committed to making sure the voice of the community is heard at Council and that Council has a long-term view of the community and the direction in which it is going."

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