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Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 18 No. 8 905-727-3300

theauroran.com

FREE

Week of December 7, 2017

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OVER 8,000 MIRACLES

Dozens of students from York Region's Community Classrooms descended on Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School to dance their way to a sizable donation for Toronto's SickKids Hospital. At press time, over \$8,000 had been raised for the cause, which saw students dancing away the day to an in-house DJ and tucking in to food and snacks donated by many local companies. For more, including how to push the students over the top, please see Page 20.

Auroran photo
by Brock Weir

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Canadian Food & Wine Institute coming to Armoury

By Brock Weir

The historic Aurora Armoury will become an extension of the Canadian Food & Wine Institute at Niagara College, the Town announced Friday.

In a statement, the Town said it is "thrilled" to announce a partnership with the Canadian Food & Wine Institute (CFWI) at Niagara College.

The partnership will entail short-term and part-time training at a restored Armoury which will become "a vibrant, community gathering space

and a home to a world class training facility specializing in culinary skill building, commercial brewing and viticulture."

"This partnership is the perfect match," said Mayor Geoff Dawe in a statement. "We've been able to take a prestigious school and match it up with an equally prestigious building. This is going to provide the Town with some very special community space while offering state-of-art training opportunities for residents and visitors."

Added Craig Youdale, Dean of Niagara College's Canadian Food and Wine Institute: "Recognition is growing for the expertise the CFWI has cultivated in the culinary, wine and beer sciences, and we're excited to share our unique expertise with new audiences."

Negotiations between the Town of Aurora and Niagara College have been taking place behind closed doors for more than a year. What was known was the Armoury was the subject of talks, but there was no hint on what the

Continued on page 9

Library Square plans look at making a landmark

By Brock Weir

Two concept plans for the future redevelopment of Library Square are set for Council consideration this week after a series of public information sessions.

Developed by the Planning Partnership, the two concepts focus on making a public space that will be a destination for people from all corners of Aurora, and well beyond.

At the heart of both plans is the parking area now lying between the Aurora Public Library and the Aurora Culture Centre.

"The vision is a space that links the

Continued on page 20



THE VICTORIAN TRADITION CONTINUES – Santa Claus, or Father Christmas as he was popularly known in the Victorian era dropped in at Hillary House on Sunday and met Blake and Khloe at the first of two family events hosted by the Aurora Historical Society at the National Historic Site designed to spread the festive cheer. For more, see Page 13.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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The cost of the program is \$199, which includes Bauer hockey equipment from "head to toes" for the participants and six instructional on-ice sessions, which the AMHA has sponsored with our association coaches and teams leading the drills. For more information, please contact our AMHA office.

For more information, please visit: www.auroraminorhockey.com or at our Twitter account: @AMHTigers



STICKS TAPE IN BLUE - NOVEMBER- DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

The players of the Aurora Panthers Atom A team showed us that hockey is more than just wins and losses. Last weekend, the Atom A Players taped their sticks with blue tape in support of their teammate with Type 1 Diabetes. Amazing things can come from girls learning to support each other on and off the ice, as team mates and friends.

We are all very touched and proud of the Atom A Girls – Go Panthers Go!!



CARPET BOWLING AT THE AURORA SENIORS CENTRE

This is a fun and safe game, suitable for all ages. This game provides a nice alternative to sports that rely on strength, agility and speed. New players are always welcome.

Another good reason for active seniors to join the Aurora Seniors Association! Carpet Bowling is a team game with two or three persons on each team. The object of the game is for each team member to gently roll special biased bowling balls down a 30-ft. long carpet so that they stop as close as possible to the small white ball called the jack. The team who get the closest to the jack scores points.

Visit the Aurora Seniors Association website at asa@auroranseniors.ca for scheduled days and times. The Aurora Seniors Centre (90 John West Way) is operated in partnership with the Town of Aurora Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. Its success is based on the seniors who volunteer their time and Town of Aurora staff.

Our goal is to provide programs, events and activities that will benefit and enrich the lives of older adults. On yeah, and to have fun and meet new and interesting people too! Keeping active has no expiry date.



NEW OWNERS AT EVOLUTION GYMNASTICS

It's the start of a new season for the competitive athletes at Evolution Gymnastics and while some of them have already started their qualifications for Ontario Championships, most of them are preparing for their first competition of the year.

It's been a busy few months at EGA with the club changing ownership after 8 years of being run by the Smith family. The new owners, Simon and Nicole Kay who have worked at the club for several years are already ringing in some changes this season.

There are new toddler programs for the younger athletes, and more youth classes than ever! While the direction and community values of the club remain intact, the Kays hope that their commitment and energy will continue to improve the programs at the club.

The foundations of EGA are something to be proud of and the future of gymnastics in Aurora looks very bright indeed.



STAYING ACTIVE WITH MOBILITY AIDS

To stay active, we often need mobility aids. Mobility aids can mean a wide variety of things for different people with different needs. For an athlete, a mobility aid can include icing equipment to aid with inflammation, braces to promote recovery and continued activity, and compression to promote support. These braces can range in material, and from mild to advanced support. With injury or surgery, we may need a wheelchair, walker, or crutches, and again, a brace could be warranted during recovery.

For long standing or recurrent injuries, we may likely need all of the above at various points in our recovery journey. If you have any questions or needs related to mobility aids, please visit us at 14800 Yonge St and ask for Dr. Michael Khalil.



EARL McCREADY

MOMENTS IN SPORT

As part of a Canada 150 initiative, the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame, in partnership with Sport Aurora, the Aurora Museum & Archives, and 105.9 The Region, has been collecting stories about people or events that are connected to sport in our town over the last 150 years. Here is one of them:

In May 1937, Earl McCready, Whipper Billy Watson and Mike Sharp turned the Aurora Armoury into a wrestling ring. A legend in the wrestling world – and possibly the best amateur wrestler this country has ever produced - Aurora resident McCready was the Canadian amateur heavyweight-wrestling champion from 1926-28. To sport and wrestling fans around the world, Earl was known as "The Aurora Farmer".

For full version or to listen to the live version, please go to www.aurorashof.ca/moments-in-sport/

SPORT AURORA MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- Aurora Barbarians Rugby Football Club
- Aurora Community Tennis Club
- Aurora Diggers Girls Softball
- Aurora Family Martial Arts
- Aurora King Baseball Association
- Aurora Lawn Bowling
- Aurora Master Ducks Swim Club
- Aurora Masters Lacrosse
- Aurora Men's Slo-Pitch League
- Aurora Minor Hockey Association
- Aurora Seniors Association
- Aurora Skating Club
- Aurora Sports Hall of Fame
- Aurora Football Club
- Aurora Taekwondo
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of York
- CanAm Karate
- Canada's Black Belt Martial Arts Centre
- Central York Girls Hockey Association
- Coerver Soccer Academy
- Crossfit Ark
- Ducks Swimming Club Inc
- Everest Academies
- Evolution Gymnastics Aurora
- Extreme Goalkeepers Inc.
- Global Gymnastics
- Newmarket Redbirds Lacrosse Club
- Nordic Pole Walking Club
- PLAYBALL
- Skaters First
- Soccer Recruits of Canada
- Special Olympics Ontario-Aurora
- Spectrum North Baton Club
- St. Andrew's College
- Storm Volleyball
- Tigers Jr. A
- Total Tennis
- York North Basketball Association
- York Oldtimers Hockey League
- York Simcoe Minor Football Association
- York Synchronized Swim Club

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

- Bayview Physiotherapy & Sports Medicine Clinic
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- Aurora Chamber of Commerce
- Auroran Newspaper
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- National Sports
- St. Andrews Chiropractic & Wellness
- Aurora Sports Medicine Professionals Inc.
- Sigma Promotions
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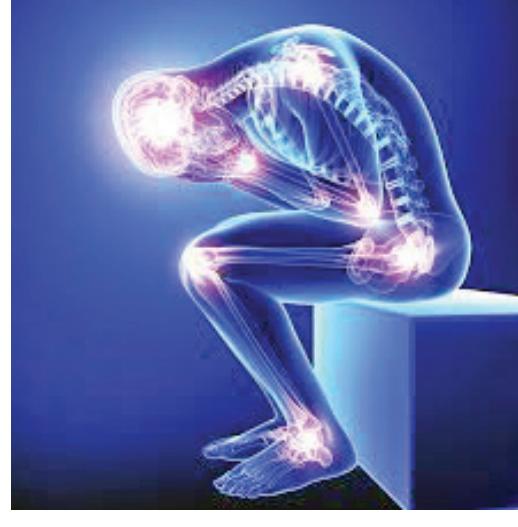
Family and friends of the late Aurora realtor Marilyn Redvers gathered at the tennis facility in east Aurora bearing her name for the official dedication ceremony on Saturday afternoon.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Advertisorial

Breakthrough Treatment For Spinal Stenosis

(Cervical/Lumbar Stenosis)



Do you experience numbness, weakness or tingling in a leg, foot, arm or hand? Do you have neck or back pain that has lasted more than one month or experience frequent headaches? You may be suffering from a condition known as spinal stenosis.

Spinal Stenosis is defined as narrowing of the bone channel occupied by the spinal nerves or the spinal cord.

Some people are born with a congenital form, but most develop spinal stenosis as part of the degenerative process. A few do not feel any effects of the narrowing, but as part of the aging process, most people will eventually notice radiating pain, weakness, and/or numbness secondary to the compression of the nerves or spinal cord.

In lumbar stenosis, the spinal nerve roots in the lower back become compressed and this can produce symptoms of sciatica—tingling, weakness or numbness that radiates from the low back and into the buttocks and legs—especially with activity.

You go to the drug store or to your doctor and get pills to help relieve your symptoms. But you find the symptoms keep returning. Alternatively, the doctor may refer you to a specialist who may tell you that surgery is needed or is an option for you.

However, many people are hesitant to have surgery given its invasive nature. It is important to know that although surgery is sometimes necessary, it is considered a last resort in most cases.

Also, you may have heard that there are serious health risks associated with chronic use (or overuse) of medications that include damage to the

liver, kidneys and gut.

There is a new, natural, safe and highly effective approach that has helped many sufferers improve their lives dramatically: Laser therapy uses light to favor and accelerate the body's natural healing processes. The innovative Multiwave Locked System (MLS) Laser produces a safe, efficient and simultaneous effect on pain, inflammation and nerve conduction, exceeding the limits of traditional LLLT (Low power) and concerns of HP (High power) laser therapy.

According to multiple studies MLS laser therapy appears to be uniquely capable of decreasing the inflammation around the spinal cord and shows great promise in the battle against the devastating sequelae of this condition.

What does this mean for you?

Many of our patients have reported a 90-95% relief of their symptoms, more mobility, increased sensation and vastly improved function!

It is the very latest in medical technology, with years of clinical studies supporting its safety and efficacy and we are very proud to offer our patients effective solutions to their recent or chronic conditions.

"This new, natural, safe and highly effective approach has helped many sufferers improve their lives dramatically".

Come in and allow us to help you achieve the results you deserve! Call (905) 773-2225 to book your FREE consultation and examination at King West Wellness Centre 141 King Rd., Unit 10, Richmond Hill (In the Home Hardware Plaza)

Busy tennis centre opened as tribute to Marilyn Redvers

By Brock Weir

Indoor tennis is back in Aurora.

Although tennis enthusiasts have been enjoying the new indoor tennis facility located at Stewart Burnett Park, just behind the Stronach Aurora Recreation Centre, for the better part of the year, the doors officially opened on the new structure, which is not only a testament to the popularity of the sport within the Aurora community but also a tribute to late local realtor Marilyn Redvers.

Mayor Geoff Dawe, along with Councillors John Abel, Harold Kim, Tom Mrakas and Michael Thomson, joined members of Ms. Redvers' family Saturday to officially dedicate the Marilyn Redvers Tennis Centre.

Owned in part by Ms. Redvers' son Trevor, her former husband Terry,

as well as Adam Seigel, the 3,000 square foot Marilyn Redvers Tennis Centre is now the flagship of Tennis Clubs of Canada which, in addition to Aurora, operates similar facilities in Newmarket, Richmond Hill, and Barrie.

"Our vision is to create players for life," says Mr. Seigel. "Our vision is to work with as many municipalities as possible to grow the game within that municipality and Aurora is a perfect opportunity because [after Timberlane Athletic Club closed its doors] Aurora residents really had no opportunity within their own municipality for indoor tennis. Working with the municipality, they were able to develop a partnership and this facility on a year-round basis.

"As many people know, Marilyn was

Continued on page 18



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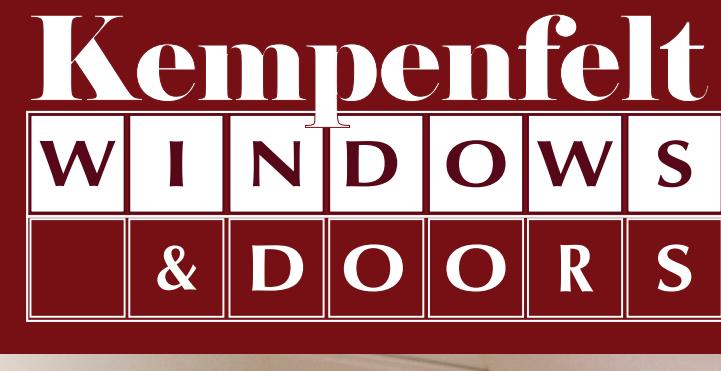
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pine Tree Potters Guild's Empty Bowls was another successful event

On behalf of the Pine Tree Potters' Guild, I would like to express our gratitude to everyone who participated in the 2017 Empty Bowls event that took place on November 16 at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

Empty Bowls events are held by potters in communities throughout North America with the objective to raise funds and awareness for local charities that work to relieve hunger and homelessness. During the event, patrons select a handmade bowl from the hundreds on display and local chefs and bakers in attendance serve a ladle of their gourmet soup and artisan bread. The handmade bowl guests take home with them serves as a gentle reminder that not everyone has a full bowl every day.

This year we raised over \$19,600 to be donated to Welcoming Arms, Aurora and Inn From The Cold, Newmarket. Since our first event in 2010, Pine Tree Potters' Guild has raised over \$134,700 for local charities.

We wish to extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to all of the local chefs and bakers who donated their time, gourmet soup and bread; Meridian Credit Union for a very generous grant; Tucker's Pottery Supplies for donating the clay used by our potters for crafting the bowls; David Schembri Design and KKP Design and Print for donating our printed materials; and the Aurora Cultural Centre for all their support allowing us to host our event at their beautiful facility.

We also wish to thank Joy Gannicott, Dave Parsons and Sam Carothers for their contribution of great live music. Finally, we are so very grateful for all of our dedicated volunteers who donated their time and skills to ensure that everything ran smoothly.

The following is a list of the culinary establishments that participated in our 2017 Empty Bowls event:

*Aqua Grill
Aw Shucks
Catharina's Kitchen
Father's Moustache Grill and Bar
Gabriel's Cafe
Graystones Restaurant
Hungry Brew Hops
Joia Ristorante and Wine Bar
Little Red Catering
Maunder's Food Shop
Nature's Emporium
PC Cooking School Aurora
State and Main Kitchen and Bar
Taste it Catering and Event Planning
The Hurst Bakery
The Kitchen by Food in Motion
The Pickle Barrel
Vintage Spice
Walt's Bistro Bar and Grill*

Again, thank you so very much to all who participated. It is because of you that our event has been so successful year after year.

Looking forward to 2018!

Jacqueline Adamek
Chair, 2017 Empty Bowls Committee
Pine Tree Potters' Guild

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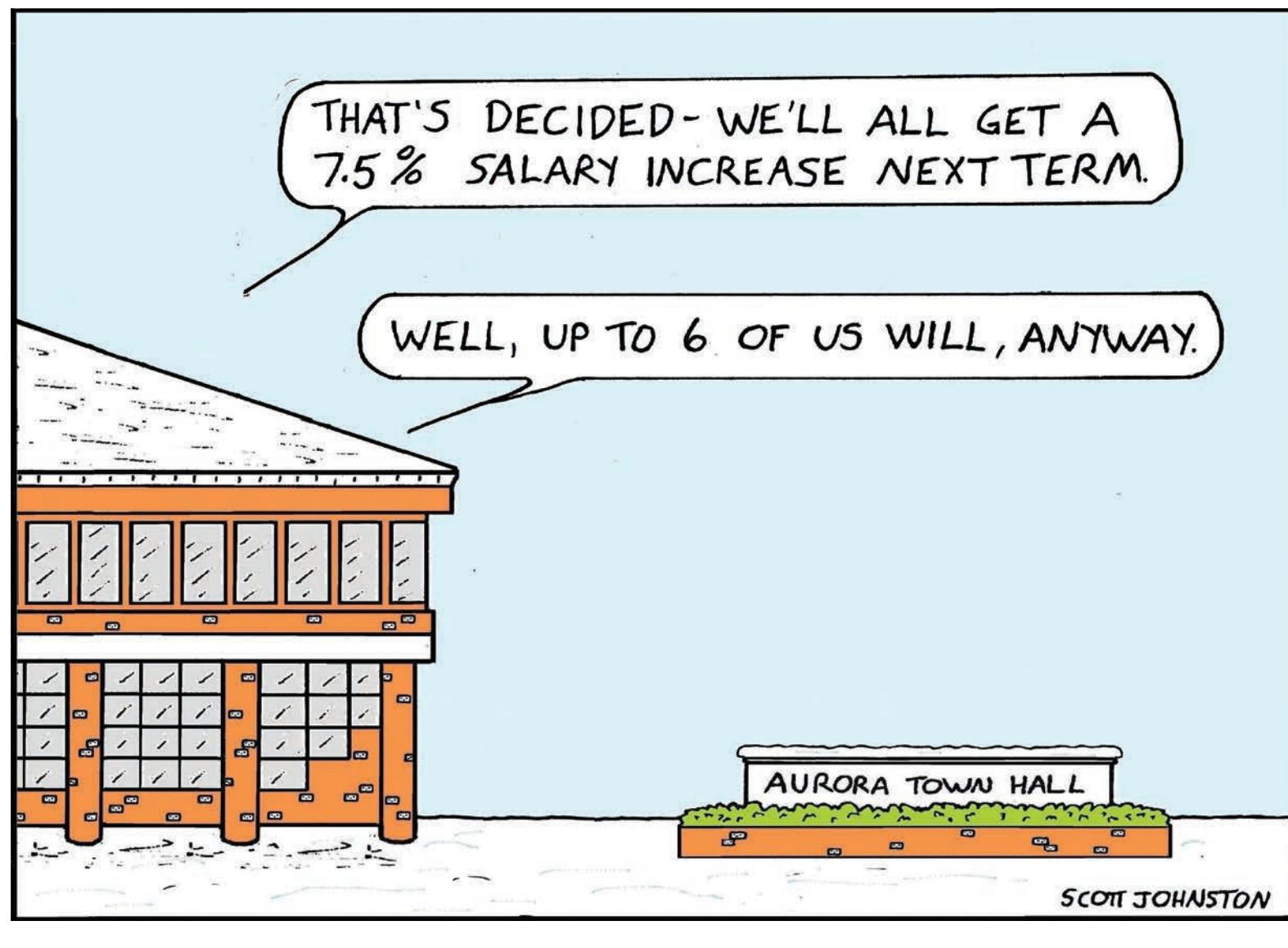
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Machell's Corners



SCOTT JOHNSTON

Approaching the finish line**BROCK'S BANTER**

Brock Weir

semblance of a post-secondary presence in our Town.

And all this after year upon year with barely a trickle – but, as the saying goes, when it rains it pours.

So, Aurora, have your umbrella handy because we're having a deluge.

Why now? Could it possibly be that we're now less than 12 months away from inaugurating a new Council? Perhaps; after all, the 2014 – 2018 slate of Council was largely determined to bring Library Square in for some kind of landing as a legacy project.

Some members of Council expressed a similar enthusiasm for securing a post-secondary presence for Aurora by the end of this term, in accordance with the Town of Aurora's Strategic Plan.

The mission is almost accomplished in both cases, but is it a race to the finish line to get these projects done to show progress has been made over the last four years?

Maybe, but although it might cause some to be sceptical, I think excitement will ultimately win the day.

The plans are ambitious, to be sure, but they do have the potential to bring about a watershed moment for this community.

So many times in this Town, good ideas have been left to collect dust on a shelf, whether they were deemed too gutsy or, worse, too risky to be accomplished. They might have been seen as having the potential to ruffle a few feathers when every feather ruffled translated into a potentially ruffled voter. Some were tossed aside as mere change for the sake of change.

As a result, I think Aurora, in many ways has fallen behind some of its municipal contemporaries.

I've written before in this space how, as a one-time outsider looking in from the hinterland of Aurora, how this Town was once perceived. There was, and I'm sure I'm not alone here, a sense that Aurora was always one step ahead of the curve.

Arts and heritage were cultivated, storefronts in the downtown core were flourishing, their wares varied, offering something for everyone. All of this bolstered with a firm sense of identity, of both where Aurora has been and where, as

a community, it was going.

But, by the time I moved to Aurora, I sensed a change.

Granted, the grass always seems greener from the other side, but by the time I became a fully fledged Auroran after a stint in Ottawa, it seemed the axis had shifted.

Newmarket's Main Street had transformed itself from the grubby thoroughfare of my youth to a flourishing community hub; new, innovative ideas were now being floated, embraced and lauded with alarming regularity... and Aurora?

Sure, the Aurora Cultural Centre has been an invaluable addition to our community which has only grown in relevance since its inception, but as Newmarket picked up awards for its transformation of the historic core, including its celebrated Riverwalk Commons, Aurora was stuck in nearly two decades of limbo over what to do with a crumbling block of mid-century buildings on Victoria Street.

With the creative plans for both Library Square and the Aurora Armoury up for consideration, I think the Town is on the brink of turning that tide and I, for one, am excited to see how it all unfolds.

The only thing standing in its way could be Council and whether the momentum that is already there will see them through to the push of the proverbial button.

Last week's Council meeting offered an exchange which held promise.

"We are proxies for residents of Aurora," said Councillor Kim regarding the plans to renovate the Armoury. "In situations like this you only have a short opportunity to make those decisions."

And that is what's really at the heart of the matter.

All too often plans hit a fatal speed bump when faced with a few loud voices from within a very large whole, leading Council members to become gun-shy about making a final decision at the very last moment.

More public consultation, always welcome, is invariably prescribed to address these concerns; concerns which had already been dissected and deliberated through public consultation processes stretching back years, ultimately leading to the same result.

Sometimes it feels as though Councillors are torn between their role as representatives of the people who put them there and a perceived role as mere facilitators of public opinion.

At the end of the day, the people speak through just about every avenue available to them. They make their voices heard, and while this cacophony rarely uniformly agrees on everything, they take the time to provide their input.

But, there comes a time to act and that time, in my opinion, is now.

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Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.



AURORA
MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating...

National Brownie Day!
(December 8)

This probably isn't the first image that comes to mind when you hear it's National Brownie Day. In 1900, the Eastman Kodak Company produced the first low-cost hand-held camera known as the Brownie, which introduced portable cameras to the masses. This Brownie 2A camera (990.8.6) dates to the 1910s and belonged to Aurora resident Miss M. Smith. Interestingly, the delicious dessert treat by the same name pre-dates the Kodak Brownie by only two years. The first definitive reference to chocolate brownies was published in an 1898 issue of the Kansas City Journal.



POLITICS AS USUAL

Alison Collins-Mrakas

Effective Decision-Making

In politics as in life, when folks don't like the outcome they attack the process.

Sometimes it is, well, just grumbling by folks who don't like the outcome. But sometimes it is a fair comment. We've seen many a public venture – gas plants anyone? – where the process, such as it is, has been so lacking in transparency as to be opaque. Other times though it's just plain partisan politics. Whatever one side does, the other automatically attacks.

To quote the buzzword of the day, it's tribalism. Folks suspend all common sense to vote with the tribe.

How else to explain the nonsense going on with our neighbours to the south? (I guess I have to be a bit more specific). I am talking about the recent vote in the US Senate, a vote where the Republicans were loudly proclaiming a monumental "victory" with the passage of a tax reform bill, only in an era of rank and extreme partisanship could the passage of that bill be considered as a victory.

A victory for the politicians maybe, but certainly not a victory for democracy, or democratic principles because they were left trampled on the senate floor amongst the crumpled paper drafts of the bill. Fully 51 members that voted in favour of that Bill had not read it in its final draft form, let alone its entirety. And, being fair, the same could be said for those that voted against it. I seriously doubt rank and file Democrats that are raging about the bill, have read it in full either.

But how could they?

For heaven's sake, there were little scraps of paper with scribbled "amendments" on it being passed about and voted on. Sorry, but that's bananas. How can you possibly say that the proposed legislation has had a thorough vetting when the ink wasn't even dry on the documents?

How can you vote on proposed changes that are hand written and barely legible? This is legislation that will have serious implications for literally millions upon millions of people. To pass it without so much as a how do you do is shameful.

But let's not be smug about our own legislative processes.

The same thing happens in our parliament, though with far less drama. (However, to the best of my knowledge, our parliamentarians don't write legislation on cocktail napkins and put it to a vote). But looking at the process broadly, large pieces of legislation get tabled for a vote, with minimal time to review and even less time to debate. And even when it is not a whipped vote, it is rare to find any dissent amongst the party that has put the legislation forward. Our members vote along party lines.

Period.

The merits, or lack thereof of any particular agenda item before parliament for consideration, are entirely beside the point – it's whose idea it is that matters.

Say what you will about municipal politics, but it's the most accessible, for lack of a better word, decision making process of any governmental level. You know exactly how each councillor, mayor, regional councillor feels about a particular issue. There's no hiding behind party.

And I think that's a good thing.

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Do you support the Canadian Institute of Food & Wine coming to the Aurora Armoury?

Yes No Unsure

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!

Previous poll results

Should a new Aurora Recreation Centre feature an Ice Rink

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
DEC 5, 2017	52%	36%	12%

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

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...



View From Queen's Park

Chris Ballard, MPP
Newmarket-Aurora

seasonal employees doing the same job as full-time employees; and equal pay for temporary help agency employees doing the same job as employees at the agencies' client companies.

The new legislation provides for up to 17 weeks off without the fear of a worker losing their job when they or their child has experienced, or is threatened with, domestic or sexual violence. This includes paid leave for the first five days. The government is also expanding family leaves and adding measures to ensure that employees are not misclassified as independent contractors, ensuring they get the benefits and protections they deserve.

Ontario Launches New Tool to Check if Prescriptions are Covered with OHIP+

January will also bring the introduction of the government's new OHIP+ plan, when 4,400 drugs become free for everyone in Ontario under the age of 25.

The province is making it easier to find out what medications will be covered with a new online search tool.

The new, universal prescription medication coverage will include asthma inhalers, drugs to treat depression, anxiety, epilepsy, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, antibiotics, EPIPENS, diabetes test strips, oral contraceptives, medications to treat some childhood cancers and other rare conditions, and thousands of others.

The online search tool to learn what medications are covered can be found at: www.ontario.ca/page/check-medication-coverage. I hope this will be the first step toward pharmacare

coverage for everyone across Canada.

Ontario Boosting Rental Supply for Individuals and Families We have heard concerns from residents all across the province about the lack of affordable rental options. People have to spend far too much on rent – if they are "lucky" enough to find a place to rent.

The government will make it easier for individuals and families to find a home by rebating development charges on new, purpose-built rental housing. This will encourage more construction and bring more fairness to the rental market.

Last week Peter Milczyn, Minister of Housing and the Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy, announced the province will rebate up to \$125 million in development charges over five years for priority, purpose-built rental developments in municipalities with low vacancy rates or high tenant populations, and where affordable rentals are hard to find.

In the coming days, the province will be inviting municipalities to participate in the program.

Promoting Local Food and Healthy Eating in Local Schools

Eating healthy and promoting a healthier lifestyle is an important lesson for us to teach our children.

The province, along with the support of Ontario farmers, is helping students learn more about local food, agriculture and the importance of healthy eating, while also raising funds to support their schools.

Over the past year, almost 500 schools across the province have participated in a unique fundraising program. Ontario students have helped raise over \$1 million dollars to support their schools by selling locally grown produce including carrots, onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes and apples.

Look for schools in our area that are taking part.

As always, I invite you to contact me on any issue. Please call my community office at 905-750-0019, or visit my website at www.ChrisBallardMPP.ca. My email is: cbillard.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org. I look forward to hearing from you.

Idle Thoughts



INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

small impact on the downtown parking footprint.

That's all going to change.

As I write this, an announcement hasn't been made, but soon we will find out the future of this site. Whatever it is, it's supposed to be big. And big means the building will be a fully used focal point, and bring even more people to the area.

The other future challenge is not a new issue, but the expansion of an existing one; literally. The imminent twinning of the GO tracks will require tons of equipment and supplies that all has to be stored somewhere nearby during probably about a year of construction. It's inevitable that parking will be sacrificed for that.

While a hassle, that's only a short term inconvenience. But once the work is done, and the parking lots returned to their intended use, we'll then have all day 15 minute train service. Hugely

convenient, that will increase riders, probably by a lot, who in turn will have to park their cars somewhere.

With this additional development downtown, Aurora will continue to a victim of its own success.

There are valiant efforts through groups like Activate Aurora and the trails folks to get people to walk and cycle more around Town. That may get a few people out of their cars when they head downtown, but it's by no means going to stem the tide.

One bit of reprieve will come shortly when the former library and seniors' centers go under the wrecking ball. However, the resulting parking lot will be only temporary. Sooner or later, this land will be redeveloped into a grand vision. Perhaps some sort of hub for education, innovation, sport or culture.

Whatever it is, it will draw crowds. And inevitably, they will drive there. So, unless the place is only open from midnight to 5 am, which is unlikely, it will add to the parking congestion.

Granted, a decision on the future use of that site is by no means imminent, so that "temporary" parking lot may be there longer than expected.

That may buy us some time until a more permanent solution presents itself.

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

Cultural Centre, Library differ on preferred Square options

From page 5

[two buildings] with a gathering space which will be at the heart of Aurora's Cultural Precinct," said planner Donna Hinde at the last of a series of Town Hall meetings which attracted dozens of area residents and stakeholders. "Over the course of these conversations, we [have compiled] page after page of notes from people that we spoke to and when I went through the list [we heard] things like a winter carnival, a tree lighting, gallery space for artists, a flea market and food trucks.

"We're trying to design a space where nothing is precluded. Everybody's great ideas can find a space that would be ultimately programmed by the Town of Aurora with help from the Library and Cultural Centre."

Indeed, that's exactly what the two concepts entail – flexible spaces tailored for a variety of community uses. Both options feature a large programmable space bordered by landscaping and other

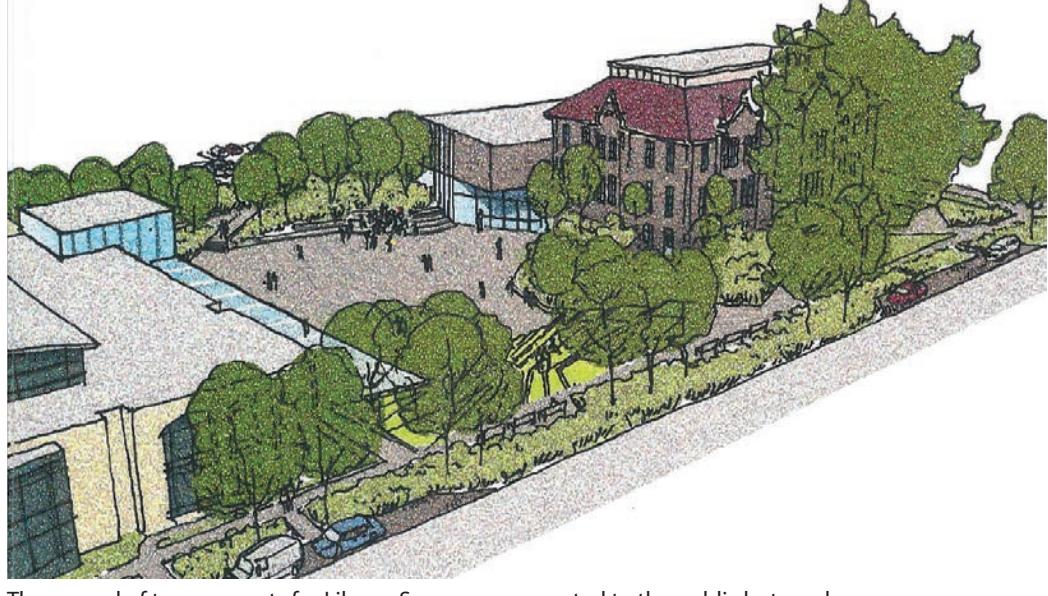
amenities, both also feature 80 on-site parking spaces, but how these spaces are configured tell a very different story.

The first option, dubbed the "Raised Square" option will see the sloping area between the Library and Cultural Centre raised to the level of the Cultural Centre, providing a flat surface between the two well-used community hubs with parking configured below the surface.

This option, as presented to the public, will provide vehicular access from Victoria Street, divert parking below grade, while leaving a wide-open area above with significant potential.

This option, said Ms. Hinde, could include a marketplace and stalls for up to 80 vendors, the option of "giant harvest tables" spread out across the area to accommodate a community dinner for over 300 people, a giant movie screen for public viewing, and a refrigerated platform area that would allow up to 400 people to enjoy outdoor skating.

The second option would lower Library



The second of two concepts for Library Square, as presented to the public last week.

Image courtesy of the Town of Aurora

Square to be flush with the ground level access to the Aurora Public Library, offering parking just off Victoria Street and most of the amenities proposed in Option One.

Both concepts feature an area set aside for possible future expansion of the Aurora Cultural Centre.

Victoria Hall remains just outside the area considered for Library Square.

Contained within the report presented to Council this week is a summary of stakeholder comments.

Members of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, which kicked off last Monday's series of information sessions, voiced concerns over the cost and construction of Option 1, while the Aurora Public Library voiced its support for Option 1, adding the construction should be coordinated with a long-planned renovation of the Library itself.

The Library augmented its support by stating they would pick in a portion of their own development charges (charges paid by a developer coming into the community to offset the impact of growth) to realise Option #1.

The Aurora Cultural Centre, on the other hand, has voiced support for Option 2, noting that the proposed expansion to the Centre itself would need to be built in order to "relate" the facility to the rest of Library Square.

While many of the people at the

public information sessions offered their support for Option One, with some of this support tempered by concerns over the final price tag, Option Two is the one staff are recommending Council consider this week.

"The Planning Partnership believes that both options are viable, however Option 2 with the lowered square has been identified as the preferred option," said Fausto Filipetto, Senior Policy Planner for the Town of Aurora. "[Both options] have merit in creating a public gathering space that connects both the Library and the Cultural Centre buildings. However, Option 2 is preferred...for the following reasons: visibility from the street and safety, architectural impact (the square would be framed by a two-storey library instead of just one storey; sense of space [in that] the lowered square would provide for an amphitheatre setting where seating would be designed into the retaining walls; cost of construction (\$2 million less than Option 1) and the cost of maintaining the underground parking and safety issues associated with it."

\$500,000 has been previously earmarked for demolition of Library Square and design services for what replaces it. Full costs and how the construction of Library Square will be funded is set for a future report.



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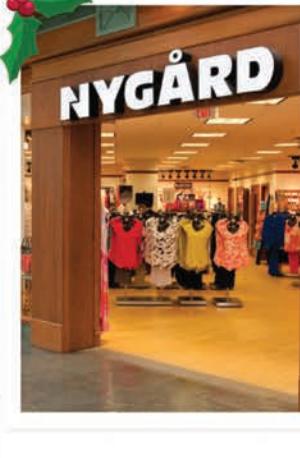
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UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER



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Library Square demolition set, but salvage could come at a cost

By Brock Weir

It's signed, sealed and delivered – the contract to demolish the two buildings currently occupying Library Square was approved at Council last week.

King-based Priestly Demolition will carry out the work under a contract worth \$111,300, excluding taxes, but this number could increase for any additional salvage work Council might request before the wrecking ball arrives.

At last week's Council meeting, some members reiterated their wish that some parts of the old Aurora Public Library building on Victoria Street, which was Aurora's gift to itself to commemorate the Centennial, be salvaged for some future re-use.

While Priestly Demolition has agreed to salvage two of the building's external beams at no additional cost, anything else will be an add-on.

"They are prepared to salvage the

wood beams at no additional cost [but] they were concerned with trying to salvage all the wood in the ceiling because that involves nail removal and that sort of stuff, and they thought they wouldn't be able to do that without an extra cost," said CAO Doug Nadorozny.

Council, however, was prepared to explore the options further.

"Even if they did damage some [of the wood] we could take the best of the bunch and take the nails out and there is still a span of significant footage," said Councillor John Abel. "It might not be whole, but it would be worth cutting the ends to bring it through. Mr. Priestly is very community-oriented, I would assume with the understanding we could possibly maximize the opportunities to grab what is there."

Mr. Nadorozny said that is indeed something that can be explored but "they made it clear" the costs would go up.

"They bid on the basis they would be

They do not normally recycle the wood because of the nails, the fasteners, and wires within it. Everything other than that gets diverted and recycled, the rest goes to a landfill or to the energy-from-waste facility.

demolishing the whole thing," he said.

Town Treasurer Dan Elliott reiterated to Council that while Priestly Demolition is prepared to salvage the beams, transportation off-site and storage of the material would be an additional cost borne by the Town, but it's a cost that can be accommodated within the current demolition budget.

The cost of the contract, Mr. Elliott noted, was kept low on the basis that Aurora wouldn't want to reclaim any part of the demolished buildings.

"Metal, concrete, masonry, [and] bricks are standard recycling materials and the contract was called for standard industry regulations, etc.," said Mr. Elliott. "They do not normally recycle the wood because of the nails, the fasteners, and wires within it. Everything other than that gets diverted and recycled, the rest goes to a landfill or to the energy-from-waste facility.

"We don't want to impose additional restrictions on them. They pull stuff out of the building they think they can get a buck from and it helps drive our cost down. When we start asking for these things out it defeats the purpose. [They] bid on the most competitive approach and that is what we've got."

That being said, Mr. Elliott said they look forward to the possibility of the beams being reused within the proposed overhaul of the Aurora Armoury or even whatever is ultimately built in the final design of Library Square.

Hate Crime team investigating Aurora High School graffiti

Hate crime investigators with the York Regional Police Criminal Investigations Bureau are seeking information and witnesses after hateful, anti-Semitic graffiti was found at Aurora High School.

On Thursday, November 30, the YRP responded to a report of anti-Semitic graffiti spray-painted on a storage building at the Wellington Street West School. Police say they believe the incident occurred sometime between 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 29 and 7:30 a.m. the following morning.

Investigators are asking any witnesses and anyone with information, or anyone with dashcam footage in that area, to please come forward.

"The York Regional Police will not tolerate hate crime in any form," said Constable Andy Pattenden in a statement. "These kinds of crimes not only hurt the community that has been targeted, but they hurt us all. We take great pride in being one of Canada's safest and most inclusive communities and we remain vigilant in our fight against prejudice, discrimination and hate in our community."

Anyone with information is asked to contact the #1 District Criminal Investigations Bureau at 1-866-876-5423, x7141, CrimeStoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS, leave an anonymous tip online at www.1800222tips.com, or text your tip to CRIMES (274637) starting with the word YORK.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

\$4 million revamp will open Armoury to Town Park – and pave way for Culinary Institute

By Brock Weir

A \$4 million dollar revamp of the Aurora Armoury will not only pave the way for the Canadian Institute of Food & Wine to expand to Aurora, but also open up the historic building to the equally historic surroundings of Town Park.

Concept plans for the extensive overhaul of the 1874 building situated on the northeast corner of Town Park at Mosley and Larmont Streets were presented to Council last week.

They include a 1,600 square foot expansion to the south end of the building while opening up portions of the east and west facades to the surrounding community.

The concept plans were greeted warmly by the majority of Council, but was used as a springboard by local lawmakers to get in their points on the future use of the building before the Town's lease deal with Niagara College was announced on Friday afternoon.

"The program elements we were given largely focused around a central events space and that takes about a third of the plan into the centre," said architect Jim Burkett. "Flanking it is a multipurpose meeting/classroom. There is a snack bar component to serve the park and an event kitchen will ultimately serve as a flexible demonstration and interpretation space and that is served by a series

of support spaces such as freezers, fridges, and interior garbage. The key point of that being that it not effect the neighbourhood on Larmont or Mosley Streets.

"The key part of the plan is really just opening up the plan and that central event space to the park."

A key driver in the concept plan, said co-architect Philip Hastings, was retaining the original form of the building. That includes removing the current aluminum siding on the building and replacing it with vertically placed wood boards which is more in keeping with the historical character of the building and removing the drop ceiling to expose what they believe are original beams up above.

"It will bring it back as much as possible to its original function while, at the same time, giving it a new use in the park," he said.

Added Mr. Burkett: "It all boiled down to four design considerations, the first one being really understanding the shape and the cultural importance of what the Armoury has been for such a long time. The second, and perhaps the most important, was opening up this building to the park so that basically the building is not a backdrop anymore, but it is integrated into all of the activities."

Rounding out the four are technical upgrades to bring the building up to snuff as well as looking at the building as "flexible" space for Town use.

Although Council spoke favourably about the plan overall – with the exception of Councillor Gartner who said she had concerns about what opening up the building on the east and west sides would do to the privacy of surrounding neighbours – heated words were exchanged over the process leading up to the concept plan.

This discussion was led by Councillor John Abel, a long-time opponent to the plan.

His first concern centred on the timing of the proposal considering it had been discussed behind closed doors for nearly 18 months.

Timing was of the essence, responded Aurora CAO Doug Nadorozny, so the partnership with what turned out to be Niagara College could move along "sooner rather than later." Adding urgency to the timeline is taking advantage of grant money to bring the project to fruition.

Overall, however, Councillor Abel said the whole process lacked community input.

"In recent years, we have seen ways that evidence-based planning can be used and abused," he said. "We are using our Strategic Plan and we're moving forward in a non-transparent way and we're not serving our community and that community trusts us to make the best decisions. We have not seen anything of what the post-secondary [institution] is bringing. We haven't seen any of the financials, we haven't seen any terms... and it just diminishes the community trust when we operate this way."

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There are – and were – many municipalities interested in hosting this post-secondary institution and we thought it was too good an opportunity to pass up

Councillor Michael Thompson, however, said Councillor Abel was not "completely accurate" in that Councillors have indeed seen the terms, financials and other information associated with the College deal.

"We have seen them, we have had conversations around them in Closed Session, some of which I am sure will become public once everything is signed and completed, but we are fairly aware of what is going on in there, what the business plan is, what some of the future implications are. We aren't going in with this with our eyes closed. We have a good sense of what may happen and we understand the risks and benefits as well."

And, for many other elected officials, it will all be worth it in the end.

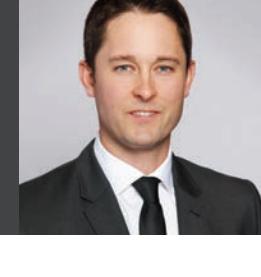
"We have had communications with the public around the Promenade and Library Square and Town Park and something like this encompassed what many stakeholders wanted and indeed we are proxies for residents of Aurora," said Councillor Harold Kim. "In situations like this you have only a short opportunity to make those decisions. There are – and were – many municipalities interested in hosting this post-secondary institution and we thought it was too good an opportunity to pass up."

Councillor Thompson expressed a similar view.

"From a strategic objective, this has long been an initiative of this Council and this term and last term," he said. "We pursued post-secondary institution on multiple occasions and made many overtures because we saw it as part of our strategic plan and we saw it as a vital component to help the Downtown Revitalization Plan and so forth. We had lots of conversation around the Council chambers about the potential to secure one and at the same time since we purchased the armoury we have had conversations about wanting to improve the facility, to maximize the use of it."

"For me, when I look at this project, although there is still more information to come, I think this is a tremendous benefit to the community and I think it can only continue to grow and benefit the community as a whole."

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AURORA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Business After Five: Thursday, December 14, 2017 at The Story of Love, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Information Session – Bill 148: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club, 7:30 am – 9:30 am

Information Session – Exporting & International Expansion: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at St. Andrew's Valley Golf Club, 7:30 am – 10:00 am

Aurora Chamber Home & Living Show: April 20 – 22, 2018. Book Your Exhibitor Space Now!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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CHEVROLET

College wants to be “up and running” by next fall: Mayor

From page 1

nature of the talks might have been, leading to speculation throughout the community.

According to the details that have been hammered out, the Town will continue to own and maintain the historic building, make investments needed to convert the building into “a world class training facility” and the CFWI will operate there, offering what the Town describes as “the same signature training programs also offered at Niagara College’s specialized campuses in Niagara.”

“Through the Canadian Food & Wine Institute, Niagara College will introduce its Expert Edge Corporate Training facility into the heart of Downtown Aurora,” said the Town in the announcement. “Expert Edge delivers one-time training or part-time instruction to industry professionals, enthusiasts and for team-building exercises in an intimate and unmatched learning environment.”

“Bringing our Expert Edge training to Aurora reflects the mandate of the CFWI to develop the food, wine and beer industries not only in Niagara, but across the country,” added Mr. Youdale.

The facility will include an incubator space, a culinary demonstration theatre, as well as a wine and beverage sensory lab.

Councillor Paul Pirri has been a long-time advocate of bringing a microbrewery incubator to the Town as a way of promoting small business development and providing space for industry partners to network and collaborate.

“As soon as I brought my idea to staff, they took it and ran with it,” said Councillor Pirri in a statement. “They did a phenomenal job in bringing this partnership to fruition. I am excited that Council has embraced the vision of bringing something truly unique and exciting to the Town.”

Less enthusiastic about the plan has been Councillor John Abel who has, at the public Council table, often spoken against the lease deal which was, up to

that point, still an unknown.

As late as Tuesday, when Council received a presentation on how the Aurora Armoury might be renovated and updated at a total cost of \$4 million funded from Hydro Reserves, he said the Armoury would be better used as “community space.”

“We keep hearing that post-secondary is going to help us, but how is it going to help us?” he said, suggesting a better plan would have been to lease space above a local restaurant at Wellington Street and Berczy Street, for the purposes of post secondary while keeping the Armoury for programming. “We could have that space for us and still have post secondary right there, but we didn’t have any options. We should never have offered the Armoury because it belongs to the community. We never should have gone into closed session.”

The benefits of bringing an arm of the Canadian Food and & Wine institute to Aurora, however, were clear to proponents of the plan.

Councillor Tom Mrakas, for instance, said the deal was an “exciting opportunity” to achieve a goal of Aurora’s Strategic Plan, which is to secure a post-secondary presence for the community.

“It is a great economic development opportunity for the Town,” he said. “The Armoury is the ideal place because it is part of the larger picture within our Cultural Precinct. It was a good fit for Niagara College because they felt the historic value within the building and the opportunity provide, in essence, food, wine and craft beer during [events in the park] and the more we looked at it from a staff perspective and also from a Council perspective we agreed it was a really good fit to be there.”

Mayor Dawe was on the same wavelength, telling The Auroran after the announcement was made at the end of last week that it will “highlight more reasons to come down to Town Park to further revitalize the Town Park and Downtown Area.”

“I think it will be a great attraction,”



Architects' plans for the future of the historic Aurora Armoury, as seen from within Town Park. Image courtesy of the Town of Aurora

he said. “We have signed the lease, it goes to Council for approval in terms of looking how the building is going to come about and then we get to work and start fixing up the old Armoury and

getting it ready for the college. Ideally, they would like to be up and running by next fall so they get that school year in. That is certainly something we will be shooting for.”

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THE AURORAN ARTS & CULTURE

Photographer delves deep in Portrait of a Lady

By Brock Weir

From books and magazines, to television and social media, people are bombarded with images each and every day and, although you might not realise it, these visuals go a long way in forming how you see yourself in the world.

Photographer Angela Durante Dukat is no exception.

Throughout her life, the images Ms. Durante Dukat says she grew up with formulated ideas within on what she was supposed to do with her body, how her body was supposed to move, look,

and even what space it was to occupy.

These images, however, were challenged at home by a mother who refused to abide by the regular formulas, and it lit a spark in her daughter that endures to this day.

These are the very notions she explores in her photographic exhibition, *Portrait of a Lady*, on now in the Colleen Abbott Gallery at the Aurora Public Library.

Depicting women from around the Aurora community in a variety of settings, it sets out to provide an "uplifting message" about – and for – contemporary women.

"The idea for the project came out of my academic work; it was the research I did for my PhD around how women's bodies were being used by artists to articulate ideas about nationhood. It got me thinking about how women's bodies were being used in a political way by artists and how maybe we could use that same political rhetoric to show more uplifting messages about women and not fear-based messages about women."

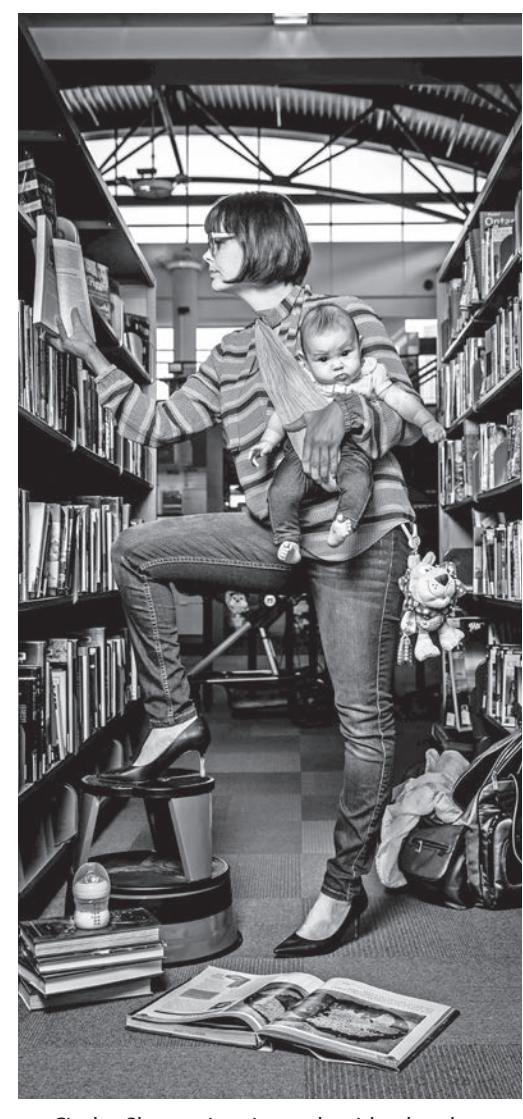
Ms. Durante Dukat focused very close to home when choosing subjects for the exhibition, approaching women she encountered in her everyday life to consider being a part of it. They are "everyday" women but everyday women who are "really powerful icons for other women around them."

"Everyone I asked said yes," says the photographer, formerly an Aurora resident, now living in Uxbridge with her husband and two children. "The question I asked them as a starting point was, 'what do you think makes you extraordinary?' Although this was a tricky question for many women, we were able to carve out why they found themselves to be non-normative and we focused on those things. Perhaps Cynthia Balaski's portrait with her two girls is a good example.

"She said the bicycle is a way she has been able to connect with her daughters to communicate ideas about women going fast through the world. We just had to do something with the bicycles. Each portrait really does reflect the lives and passions of the women who are in the portraits. It doesn't extend outside of their own personal experience."

It struck her, she says, how willing the women were to participate in the project when they knew it was a project focused squarely on women and girls.

"What that says to me inherently is women widely really do understand that we don't have enough iconic imagery and enough variety in the type of imagery we see of womanhood. Everyone I asked was super-enthusiastic. This isn't a problem



Cindy Shaver is pictured with daughter Scarlett at the Aurora Public Library by photographer Angela Durante Dukat. The photographer's exhibition, *Portrait of a Lady*, runs at the Library's Colleen Abbott Gallery through January 9.

Photo by Angela Durante Dukat

that just I see, this is a commonly understood gender issue: how we see the world is heavily dictated by the art we put in front of ourselves."

Art, of course, is always in the eye of the beholder and Ms. Durante Dukat contends that any form of imagery can be considered art, whether or not it is "being used to one political advantage or another; those are underlying issues we need to start picking apart, but that comes later."

"Right now, my goal is to expand a little bit on the imagery we tend to see of women. My idea is to put more of that imagery out there."

The Colleen Abbott Gallery is situated on the top floor of the Library, just at the top of the stairs on the way to the Children's and Young Adult Sections. This is a prime opportunity to make an impression on the upcoming generation and challenge the contemporary stereotypes they encounter today.

"If they don't have a lot of time to spend with each image, I hope just passing by the group as a whole at least gives them a feeling of power that is related to womanhood," she says. "What I am really hoping is they can just normalize what they see because they can relate it to their daily lives. I hope there is something really normal to these photographs as well."

"There is some form of tension that makes the portrait I think interesting and one of those intersections is always gender. I think it touches upon the fact we are nowhere near done the work we need to be doing as image makers and women to continue to ameliorate the cultural environment for women so we can start to take down the boundaries that we don't see."

"What we're allowed to study, where we're allowed to go, and what we're allowed to do, those kind of political boundaries, have come down but we're still working really hard on the social and cultural boundaries that are holding us back in some really big ways. For me, imagery is one of those universal languages we can contribute to that cultural and social problem."

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Soul and salsa sparks hurricane relief for Puerto Rico

By Brock Weir

Puerto Rico was, until a series of devastating hurricanes, seen as an island paradise for so many looking for a warm getaway. But it was much more than that for Aurora native Ted Haberer.

Mr. Haberer called the Island home for over 12 years and now, back in Aurora, he is pulling out all the stops to send some sunshine back down to Puerto Rico as they still grapple to get back on their feet.

Next Saturday, December 10, the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion will be transformed for the Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief Benefit Dance presented by Mr. Haberer and the band Soul Benefit.

- 8.15 p.m., before the band takes the stage at 8.30, a limited number of tickets are on sale now from the Legion

Proceeds from the benefit will go

Proceeds from the benefit will go towards the new mattresses and toys for families impacted by the hurricanes.

While still at school here in Aurora, Mr. Haberer spent his time painting communications towers as a summer job. After going to study at York University, the company began building towers in Puerto Rico and they invited him down for a summer. There, he fell in love with the island, fell in love, and ended up "sticking around" for over a decade.

"I made a lot of friends there and obviously still have very strong ties to the island," says Mr. Haberer. "I go down once or twice a year to reconnect with the people. When I lived there, I would be broken down on the side of the road with my piece of crap Jeep and I was never there long before someone just pulled over and got me back on

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up with Aurora business owner – and musician – Steve Falk, left, for a musical evening next Saturday benefiting the island's hurricane relief efforts.

living in their homes

More are people living
in their homes with no roof,
in a tent with no doors and
no windows.

LEWIS is supposed to be giving people money for their houses but that is contingent on people having paperwork for that house, which they don't have

That Steve is Steve Falk, owner of Aurora-based Prime Data where Mr.

Aura-based Time Data where Mr. Haberer now works who, in his spare time, is one of the lead members of Soul Benefit, a band, formerly known as the Thursday Night Jam Band, which has become a mainstay of local benefits, providing their talents free of charge for good causes.

While the benefit might be a couple of months removed from the hurricanes

months removed from the hurricanes themselves, the devastation is still being acutely felt on the island with more than 70 per cent of Puerto Rico still without light and a good portion still without running water.

“There’s still a lot of uncertainty right now as
of the aftermath,” says Mr. Haberer.

with no roof, in a tent with no doors and no windows. FEMA is supposed to be giving people money for their houses but that is contingent on people having paperwork for that house, which they don't have. It is gone with the hurricane, or they built this house on their family property which has been in their family for generations and they don't have paperwork. If they don't have paperwork, they're not getting a dime out of FEMA. The outlook was grim initially, but the more I hear about it and the more reports I get, it is not looking any better as time goes on.

dry it off and use it, but once a mattress is flooded it's garbage and what you're seeing on the side of the road is stacks and stacks of mattresses and they are in front of houses with no roofs and no doors, and a family sleeping in a camping tent inside their living room or on a concrete pad that used to have their wooden home on it. Ideally we're going to try and give some of it to mattresses and a certain percentage to toys for kids that will be purchased down there."

Saturday, Mr. Haberer says he hopes ticket holders not only get a chance to enjoy the music and learn a few new Salsa moves in the process, but also gain a full appreciation on how interconnected we all are in the global community.

“If something is happening far away

we can still have an impact and make a difference," he says. "We're not as disconnected as we may think."

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The advertisement features a large, bold title "PADERNO CHRISTMAS FACTORY SALE" in a serif font. Below it, a sub-headline "SAVINGS UP TO 78%! ON NOW THROUGH DEC 10TH" is displayed. To the left, a collection of stainless steel cookware items like pots, pans, and lids are shown. A circular badge on the cookware reads "MADE IN CANADA" and "ÉTUIQUE AU CANADA". Another badge on the right side of the cookware says "INDUCTION COMPATIBLE". On the far left, there's a small circular logo with a maple leaf and the text "PADERNO CANADIANA". The right side of the ad is divided into several promotional sections with product images, descriptions, and prices. A prominent section at the top right offers "UP TO 73% OFF! Special 150th Celebration!" for Avonlea stainless steel and granite fry pans. Another section shows a "1L Rose Valley teapot" with a "42% OFF!" discount. Further down, there are deals for a "32cm/12.5" Canadiana Everyday pan" and a "30cm/12" non-stick stir-fry wok". A "20pc Springbrook flatware set" is also offered with a 61% discount. A "25-YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY" badge is visible near the bottom right. The bottom of the page includes a note about store hours and a "NOTICE" section.

No Ghosts of Christmas Past required – step back in yuletide time at Hillary House

By Brock Weir

Travel back in time to the yuletide of yore this holiday season with the Aurora Historical Society at Hillary House.

This month, the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) in conjunction with the Aurora Horticultural Society, have been hard at work transforming the National Historic Site into a Christmas paradise, not to mention the ubiquitous Winter Wonderland.

Patrons had their first chance to glimpse their combined handiwork this past Sunday with A Family Christmas.

If you missed it, however, get ready for a musical interlude this Sunday, December 10 from 1 – 4 p.m. featuring the best Christmas Hillary House has to offer, accompanied by classical and holiday music performed live by acclaimed pianist Ellen Meyer.

The Musical Christmas will

feature not only Miss Meyer, but light refreshments, the ongoing Art at the Manor exhibition featuring the work of local artists, children's activities, a gift shop and more.

"Everything is beautifully decorated by the Aurora Horticultural Society and we have refreshments so people can come in, sit for three hours while Ellen Meyer plays classical music, if they like, or wander through the house listening to the music, taking in all the greenery decorations, as well as our two beautifully decorated Christmas trees – one decorated to the 1900 period and one for the 1950s – as well as the gift shop for holiday shopping!" says Mary Beth Hess of the Historical Society.

"The Horticultural Society [have partnered with us for years] and they have always done a beautiful job. A small team of three does the exterior decorations and we had about 12 or

15 members this year for the interior decorating. One of them even comes back to water the plants inside."

Art at the Manor, which has been ongoing since November 16 running through January 26, features the work of the Aurora Artists Studio Tour – Carol Beaver, Shirley Binns, Judy Bobsin, Karen Bowen, Deborah Campo, Claire D'Aurore, Willo Rodrigues, and Christine Valentini.

"It is a really nice Christmas event which gets you into the spirit of things,

lets you do a bit of shopping, see Hillary House [and the proceeds] help us restore a 150 year old house," says Ms. Hess. "It was built in 1862 and it is one of the main treasures of Aurora. It helps in preservation and restoration and at this event we just want everyone to enjoy themselves."

Tickets for Christmas at Hillary House: A Musical Christmas are \$7 for adults and \$3 per child.

For more information, visit www.aurorahs.com or call 905-727-8991.



Sofie, Jasmine and Khloe get crafty at the Aurora Historical Society's Family Christmas event on Sunday. The festivities continue this Sunday with a distinct musical flair.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Menegakis launches Conservative bid for Aurora's south riding

By Brock Weir

Former Richmond Hill MP Costas Menegakis has launched his bid for the Federal Conservative Party's nomination in Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill.

Mr. Menegakis launched his nomination campaign before a room full of supporters – and former staffers – at Aw, Shucks! on Saturday morning.

The move to strike out early on the campaign trail to secure the currently vacant Federal nomination follows on the heels of former MP Lois Brown, who launched a similar early campaign this fall to re-claim the riding of Newmarket-Aurora.

In his speech over the weekend, Mr. Menegakis pointed to a number of controversies swirling around the Liberal Government, currently represented in the riding by Leona Alleslev.

"What we have seen over the last two years has been a big derivation from what we expect from our Federal Government," he said. "The Conservative Party has always stood for business, always stood for ensuring Canadians have an economy in which they can flourish. You lead by example when you're in governance and certainly the focus on how we manage your taxpayer dollar is paramount in showing to Canadians that indeed the way we manage government dollars is

prudent.

"That is not something we can say about the current Liberal government. They came in on a promise that they were going to have teeny little deficits of \$10 billion a year. Sadly, that ballooned to \$30 billion in each of the two budgets since they have been in power. We have seen an attempt by the Finance Minister to put some very strong, very tough controls on small business people. Fortunately, Canadians spoke resoundingly, with great leadership [from Conservative head Andrew Scheer] and the caucus to ensure that those changes they want to put in place were somehow curtailed, if not eliminated."

On the subject of taxation, Mr. Menegakis focused on Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau, who has recently been embroiled in a controversy surrounding shares from his family company leading to accusations of a potential conflict of interest from the opposition benches.

"You have to pass the ethics test and you have to pass the optics test," he said. "I don't know about the legal or ethical side, there are people responsible for monitoring and managing that effort, but certainly on the optics side there is a lot to be desired. It is important that when you're transparent you're transparent in every possible way because when you sit in an elected post, you are sitting in a borrowed chair."



Former Richmond Hill MP Costas Menegakis launched his bid for the Federal Conservative nomination in Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill Saturday at Aw, Shucks.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

"The privilege of sitting in that borrowed chair is given to you by residents and your constituents. The way you behave, the way you act, the way you vote, the way you conduct yourself and your business affairs is a way of leading by example. It is sad that these things have transpired."

That being said, Mr. Menegakis said the 92 members of the Conservative caucus will continue to hold the government to account. Integral in this effort, he said, will be Mr. Scheer, who was voted party leader in May.

Describing the party leader as "young", "dynamic" and "energetic", he said the party will stand for the principles it has always stood for: "putting Canadians first" with low taxes, job creation, being "tough on crime," strong on international trade and "strong on defending the brave men and women who serve in the Canadian Armed Forces and those Canadian values that are so dear to every single person that lives in this country."

Bolstering these platform planks, Mr. Menegakis cited the recent \$10 million settlement reached between the Federal Government and Omar Kadhr and the Federal Government's plan

to "rehabilitate" former ISIS fighters returning to Canada.

"My position, and I am certain the position of pretty much everyone in this room, and I can tell you with great confidence that the people of Aurora and Richmond Hill would prefer to see those 60 people in jail where they belong," said Mr. Menegakis. "To speak about rehabilitating them and their ability to [re-enter] Canadian society is to disrespect the people that put their life on the line and served for us. It is not the Canadian way and I submit to you that I highly doubt anyone in this room can find someone in their community who can say, 'I will happily have one of these 60 people as my neighbour around my children, around the schools, around our malls and plazas and around our community centres. They should be in jail.'

"There should be unequivocal, focused attention from our elected representatives on what they do every day that supports their community and the people that voted for them. Our representatives need to speak to us and I will tell you that Costas Menegakis will always put Richmond Hill and Aurora first."

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MARKET MUSINGS

Jan Freedman

The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair is about to host its last Indoor Market of 2017 at the Aurora Armoury on Saturday, December 9, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This Market will be our final one at the Armoury now that, reportedly, it has been leased to a post-secondary institution.

Just in time for our season's end, I have two final new vendors to tell you about. These two ladies make up the WordSmiths, long-time writing and critique partners. Now that they are published, they enjoy touring book fairs and markets together to share their passion for writer's craft with others.

Nanci Pattenden began crafting stories in 2000. A juicy crime story in an old newspaper will inspire her to create a page-turning Victorian murder mystery. She might even come up with a good paranormal story. A displaced native of Aurora, Nanci attended school in Aurora before moving to Newmarket by way of the former city of York and Janetville.

In addition to writing, her main hobbies are cross-stitching and genealogy. Nanci has received two genealogy certificates (Canadian and English), completed the Creative Writing Certificate program at the University of Calgary and is awaiting her final grade for the Creative Writing Certificate from the University of Toronto. Her interest in genealogy and local history led her into the world of writing. Her first writing course was through Continuing Ed at Huron Heights SS. There she met several other writers and they formed a writing critique group. Although the members changed several times before they disbanded, she met MJ Moores who has become a life-long friend.

Nanci went on to join the Writers' Community of York Region, and is the current Secretary and Events' Coordinator. She also serves on the Board of the York Region Genealogical Society. She doesn't travel much but her favourite destination is the UK, where her last trip sparked a story idea, yet to be written.

MJ grew up with a gypsy-like single mother who had difficulty settling down in one place so they moved seven times before MJ branched out on her own. Since then, she's moved another seven times and is currently living in her "forever home" in Caledon with her husband and son.

She attended Mayfield's School for the Arts where she was accepted into the Regional Arts Drama program. She attended York University for Theatre Production where she minored in Creative Writing and received her BFA. While she loves improvisation, acting was never really her passion; she used drama to help her better connect with the characters she wrote about, and spent more time writing potential one-act plays for the Sears Drama Festival than she did trying out for big roles. However, musical theatre has always been a draw for MJ thanks to her love of singing. She even tried out for the very first Canadian Idol!

While singing is still one of MJ's passions, she also likes to dabble in home décor, scrapbooking, sewing,

amateur graphic design and good old-fashioned roller skating. During her nine year stay in Newmarket, she met a number of supportive writers, including Nanci, and has become a champion for the Writers' Community of York Region of which she's currently the Board Coordinator. MJ has always had a huge heart and finds it difficult to say "no" whenever a friend or new writer is struggling with some aspect

of the craft or the business. Both MJ and Nanci invite you to visit their table at the final Indoor Market to chat and get to know them.

This final market will be Christmas-themed and there will be Christmas music from Lawrence Moule and his band, Take 2. This is your last chance to shop with your favourite vendors until May.

Thank you to all the Farmers' Market

vendors, the Board and our loyal customers for another great year and we look forward to a new and fabulous season in 2018.

A special thank you to Brock and The Auroran for the privilege of having this column to talk about the Market, one of my favourite things to do. Happy Holidays to all and we'll be back in May 2018!

See you at the Market!

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10-month-old Allison tucks in to a fresh apple under the watchful eye of Veda at the most recent indoor Aurora Farmers' Market.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir



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Tigers take five of six points in busy weekend

By Jake Courtepatte

Three tough games, five total points.

It was a successful weekend for the Junior A Aurora Tigers in what was perhaps their most grueling stretch of the season so far, picking up two wins and an overtime loss against three of the OJHL's top teams.

Opening the week's schedule against the Kingston Voyageurs at the Aurora Community Centre on Friday, the Tigers managed four straight goals in the first period to take a commanding lead they would never relinquish.

Netminder Bradley Van Schubert was the first star of the game for the Tigers, only bested once late in the second on 53 shots.

Joseph Mizzi found the back of the net twice, while Anthony Romano, Brock Welsh, and Jake Bricknell each added singles in a 5-1 win.

A depleted Tigers squad made the trip to Toronto on Saturday night to take on the Jr. Canadiens, missing forwards Romano and Welsh and defenseman Chris Giroday, all at selection camp for Canada East in the upcoming World Jr. A Challenge.

Others stepped up in their absence in the high-scoring affair between two of the league's top

teams, with the Tigers going a perfect three-for-three on the powerplay in the first period. Elijah Gonsalves found the back of the net



Aurora's Rizvan Mansurov looks to get a pass through North York's Ryan Radisa in the Tigers 2 - 1 loss to the Rangers at Herb Carnegie Arena on Sunday.

twice, along with an Evan Bidenti single, to give the Tigers a 3-2 lead after one.

Mizzi added another powerplay marker in the second, though Toronto kept pace with a 4-4 score through two periods.

Aurora blew the game open early in the third, notching three goals in just over two minutes from Mizzi, Zach Wilkie, and Tyler Davis, holding on for an eventual 7-5 win.

Closing out a grueling weekend on Sunday with a road matchup against the powerhouse North York Rangers, Aurora captain Bricknell managed to open the scoring early with a blast from just inside the point.

Netminder Bradley Van Schubert was strong in stopping the Rangers' first eleven shots of the game, though he was fooled by a backhand in the final minute of the first to tie the game heading into intermission.

The score held right until the game's second overtime, where a tipped shot in front bested Van Schubert.

Despite the loss, picking up the single point has helped Aurora keep pace with both the Markham Royals and the Newmarket Hurricanes in the OJHL's North division. Aurora's record of 15-9-1-2 has them sitting six points back of both the Royals and the Canes, though they have games in hand against both.

While the Tigers head to Lindsay on Friday to take on the last-place Muskies, they gear up for the annual Teddy Bear Toss game on Saturday, in support of Southlake's Sick Kids.

Fans are asked to bring a new teddy bear or stuffed plush toy to toss on the ice after the first

Tigers' goal, a fun yearly tradition that sees

dozens of toys collected. All those who bring a teddy or toy will also receive a coupon for a free treat courtesy of COBS Aurora.

The Tigers are also collecting for the Aurora Food Pantry until December 16.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.auroratigers.com.

www.pointstreaksites.com.

Panthers join tournament to benefit mental health

By Jake Courtepatte

Some things are just more important than hockey.

The Bantam Aurora Panthers will be looking to break the stigma around mental health when they take the ice in January for the Start Talking Cup, a mental health initiative that has raised over \$40,000 since its inauguration in 2015.

Joined by the Barrie Jr. Colts and Orillia North Central Predators, the Panthers will showcase their talents against the Barrie Sharks at Barrie's Molson Centre on January 15, after the organization helped raise \$15,400 in last year's girl's tournament.

"It's not just boys who experience mental-health difficulties or addiction issues, girls do too," said Lynne Raimondi, resource development with the CMHA in Barrie.

With one in five Canadians struggling with mental health issues, according to Stats Canada, Raimondi said physical activity can help

athletes with the battle.

"If you're physically healthy it certainly helps your mental health. And especially in the hockey world over the years we've heard so many stories of athletes who are struggling with mental-health issues, addiction issues. It really normalizes it."

Former Toronto Maple Leafs Jack Valiquette has supported the event from the beginning.

"I'm involved because it bothers me that these young athletes and any young people are taking their own lives," said Valiquette. "We want these young people to understand that being a good person and striving to be better is good enough."

An event attended by over 1,500 fans yearly, the Panthers will open the night against the Sharks at 6:45 p.m. Included are an array of silent auction items, a 50-50 draw, interactive booths, surprise VIP guests and more.

Tickets are five dollars each, and can be purchased at the door or at www.starttalking.ca.

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Advantage Rugby aims to get high-schoolers recruited

By Jake Courtepatte

Rugby players in York Region looking to make the jump to the collegiate level will have the chance to do so in front of recruiters this weekend.

Advantage Rugby, run by the coaches of the under-18 boys Aurora Barbarians team, will host its second annual High School Player Showcase on December 9 from 2 – 3 p.m., held at the Aurora

Sports Dome.

"This is a great idea", said Graham Brown, former CEO of Rugby Canada and current President and CEO of U Sports. "Opportunities like this give student athletes the visibility, appreciation and reward they deserve."

High schoolers will have the chance to show what they are made of in front of coaches from colleges and universities across Canada through a

series of tests.

"Connecting prospective student athletes with varsity coaches is our goal for the showcase; we want kids to understand the development opportunities that exist and for coaches to be able to identify talented players," said Director of Rugby Development Sandy Townsend. "We are delighted to be hosting this Showcase for high school rugby players across the province, connecting players with coaches and promoting the varsity development pathway is what this event is all about."

Players will not only have the opportunity to perform in front of the province's top recruiters, but meet and greet as well, and learn about academic programming to assist them in choosing the right school.

"The U Sports, OUA and OCAA are great development pathways for future national level talent," said Ryan Stickle, Advantage Rugby founder. "We want to identify student athletes who are capable of playing at that level and get them into programs that best assist their progress inside and outside the classroom."

"Many people are familiar with the term 'combine' from other sports, and we are trying to do the same here with our Showcase. We know that a full ride scholarship for rugby is not possible in Canada, but many colleges and universities do have smaller financial awards available and we think kids in York Region are as good as any around the province."

Townsend said the response so far has been "amazing," and the showcase gives players and coaches "an early look" at some of the top rugby talent in York Region.

"Every coach we've reached out to supported the idea, and we anticipate an excellent turnout of coaches and players," said Townsend. "We have extended invitation to every College and University rugby coach in Ontario... this is an all-inclusive event we want to grow each and every year!"

The event is open to any and all high school-aged boys and girls interested in playing OUA/OCAA rugby. For more information and to register, visit www.advantagerugby.ca, or email advantagerugby@outlook.com.

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Tennis facility at Stewart Burnett Park is seeing significant growth



Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

From page 3
heavily involved in the local community and had a great identity with the Town of Aurora itself and we thought [naming the facility was] a wonderful way to honour her memory and a perfect combination. When you start taking registration for memberships,

it is heart-warming the number of people who would say to me and Trevor, 'It's so wonderful you named this after Marilyn. I knew her and she was such a wonderful person.'

With the mandate of creating tennis players for life, the Marilyn Redvers Tennis Centre prides itself on its programming which ranges from lesson programs to house leagues, to round robins, to inter-county leads, to casual court times and even a "matchmaker" service where the Centre partners you up with another player who fits your age and skill level.

Saturday's grand opening was a showcase for everything the facility has to offer, and it was also a point of pride for advocates for indoor tennis in Aurora who led a charge for an alternate facility within the community once Timberlane was sold off for redevelopment.

One such advocate is Kevin Carter, Director of Business Development for Tennis in Aurora, which rallied the athletes behind a common cause.

"I was a member of Timberlane for many years and when they shut down there was nothing really being done for year-round tennis in Aurora," says Mr. Carter, who collected data through Tennis in Aurora's website to build a business case for a tennis facility. "It was worth about \$12 million annually to the Town having this traffic come through."

"People have been taking advantage of it and membership has been coming in droves. Now there is actually a waiting list to become a member and they are even looking at opening up at 6 a.m. to have early morning timing. It has been absolutely amazing. Every court is filled, it is all ages, men and women, people who have been in Aurora for 20 years and people who have moved here last week are joining up. A year round facility certainly helps put kids into playing on the Davis Cup team in 15 years time. It is hard to be a professional tennis player if you're only able to play four months of the year!"

"Now they have a very accessible place, a very cost-effective place. It is not an exorbitant place to play and I am just happy to see that people who are used to playing winter tennis have a home and all the new people who have found the courts. When I was a member of Timberlane those courts weren't always full but these courts are full all the time, which is great to see. It is nice to see so many new tennis players and families now have a place to play."

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Oakland Hall proposal sparks heated planning debate

By Brock Weir

A proposal to move historic Oakland Hall to make way for a 10-storey apartment development sparked a heated discussion around the Council table regarding the future of local planning.

Reiterating a position stated the previous week, Council once again voted not to allow a zoning amendment application from the owners of the Oakland Hall/Red House property on Yonge Street, just south of St. John's Sideroad, along with two other zoning amendment applications, at last week's Council meeting.

While some of the previous week's discussion centred on whether the applications should be approved, if only to allow the proposals to move forward to a future public planning meeting so the full merits of the plans could be discussed – a position held by Mayor Geoff Dawe – last week focused on the future of planning in Aurora as a whole.

"The [property owners] have put forward what their intentions are and I think if we don't look at those intentions we're not doing our due diligence and coming up with a clear understanding of how to, in essence, protect our town [and] protect against

overdevelopment," said Councillor Tom Mrakas.

Councillor Mrakas was responding to comments from Councillor John Abel who argued allowing the developers to go to the next step in the process was normal procedure as the applications were filed at Town Hall in 2015, well before Aurora put a moratorium in place pending changes to the Planning Act currently making their way through the Ontario Legislature.

These changes, once passed, are likely to lead to significant overhauls of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), the unelected arm's length review panel put in place by the Province to act largely as mediators between municipalities and developers on a host of related issues.

"When you look at what's going on right now, personally I think we in Aurora are in a very good situation," Councillor Mrakas continued. "We have aligned ourselves very well to the upcoming reforms at the OMB. We're looking at a month or two months. Why would we give up our upper hand? We have control right now of not allowing builders and developers to come in and propose things that, quite frankly, don't fit in our community and fit within our official plan and don't fit within our zoning, don't meet any of

those requirements. Why would we look at receiving [the application] and allowing it to fall into a process that would ultimately land at the OMB, who considerably favour the development community."

If Council does not do its "due diligence," he concluded, then "we are not doing our jobs to protect our community against overdevelopment."

Councillor Michael Thompson, another leading proponent around the Council table for OMB reform, was on a similar wavelength.

Councillors, sitting at the Committee level, spoke resoundingly against the Oakland Hall application as a whole, so he questioned why any members of Council would support sending it through to the next level.

"Why would you accept the application if you were going to reject it outright at the public planning meeting?" he asked. "That, to me, is a waste of time and money. Whether you like it or not, if they get into the queue and they don't like what Council says or does, they have the right to go to the OMB and put any application forward. They can use their original design or their amended design and then we run the risk. Why, on the eve of the Bill being passed, giving municipalities the ability to [determine] planning in their

own communities would we open the crack of allowing the possibility of a 10 or 11 storey building?"

Speaking in favour of the application, Mayor Dawe stressed that he is not in favour of a 10 storey proposal taking the place of Oakland Hall while one of the last remaining buildings of the largely vanished hamlet of Cosford's Corners is moved one lot north to the corner of Yonge and St. John's, he was in favour of the process.

"If the whole intent of this moratorium was specifically to frustrate anyone coming forward, and maybe that is not the right word, so they couldn't go through the OMB process then that should have been explained to Council," he said. "[If the Bill] doesn't pass, if the regulations don't fall out the way they want, or if an election this spring happens to change things around and go back to where we were, we're in the same pickle, we're back in a situation where all we've done is delay someone for a year and a half. If we are truly interested in protecting our residents overall, we need to have this kind of issue clearly stated up front as to what the goal is."

Armoury deal lacked public input, say history advocates

By Brock Weir

A lease deal that will transform the historic Armoury into a branch of the Canadian Institute of Food and Wine lacked "transparency," according to heritage advocates who proposed an alternative use for the historic building last year.

Heritage advocates David Heard and Christopher Watts, the latter representing the Aurora Heritage Authority, made their feelings clear as delegates to last week's Council meeting, just days before details of the lease with Niagara College were made public.

In their comments, they said keeping the details behind closed doors lacked "transparency."

Late last fall, Mr. Watts appeared at Council to pitch his own idea for the Aurora Armoury, a concept he dubbed "The Farmoury."

Billed as a way to mark the Canada 150 commemorations, and floated shortly after Council approved moving forward with the Armoury's repurposing, by bringing in an element of "innovation" to the Downtown Core.

Had it been brought to fruition, it would have been an "empowerment centre" which may have appeared as a simple Farmers' Market to some, but he said to get at the whole idea you had to peel back the layers like an onion.

Based on four principles – education, community, exchange and sustainability – it was not only an all-season market, but a facility with a full teaching kitchen to provide education and rental opportunities, seed libraries, day camps focused on the educational power of food and farming, and even a "Hall of Farm" to celebrate local agricultural history.

While the concept announced Friday between the Town and Niagara College's Canadian Institute of Food and Wine incorporates some of these concepts, particularly the education component, the resulting deal was not done with full community consultation, they contended.

"Our modest little Town was built on farming, faith and the fight for freedoms," said Mr. Heard. "It really began with that connection when John Mosley and then reeve Joseph Fleury negotiated the Town Park and eventually the training facility that became the Armoury. [The Farmoury] successfully cherishes our valued history. It was created with passion and research. It was not hurried, it was presented for all to process, but it did not come back to this table. I am very proud to be related to John Mosley and I do believe we do not plough through concepts, plans and issues without full public input. I believe your intentions may have been fully genuine but I have also delegated many times on the Armoury building and the park and pleaded to keep it in full community space, especially

community events that may help those in the community.

"[Our community] was built on ideas like those of John Mosley, Joseph Fleury, and Arthur Petch. It was built on teamwork. Community and unity makes plans for a very powerful potential in communities. It brings us together. Powerful ideas come from all walks of life, not just within these walls. We should relish, for those in Aurora who love Aurora to dream of a vision and willing to contribute and be heard."

Added Mr. Watts, speaking to

branding brought forward to last week's Council meeting: "In the background of this report, it states the Town intends to invest \$4 million in this exercise. I see this as a prestige redevelopment. I have to wonder why a branding exercise for a project like this would even be attempted in house. I understand there have been a lot of in-camera meetings to deal with the Armoury project. I look forward to finding out more about [this] but staff has not followed up with myself since December 5 or any of the Farmoury task force assembled."

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Eight thousand “miracles” created by special group of York Region students

By Brock Weir

Students in York Region's Community Classrooms are often on the receiving end of support but they proved Friday, one dance move at a time, they can make a huge difference well beyond the community.

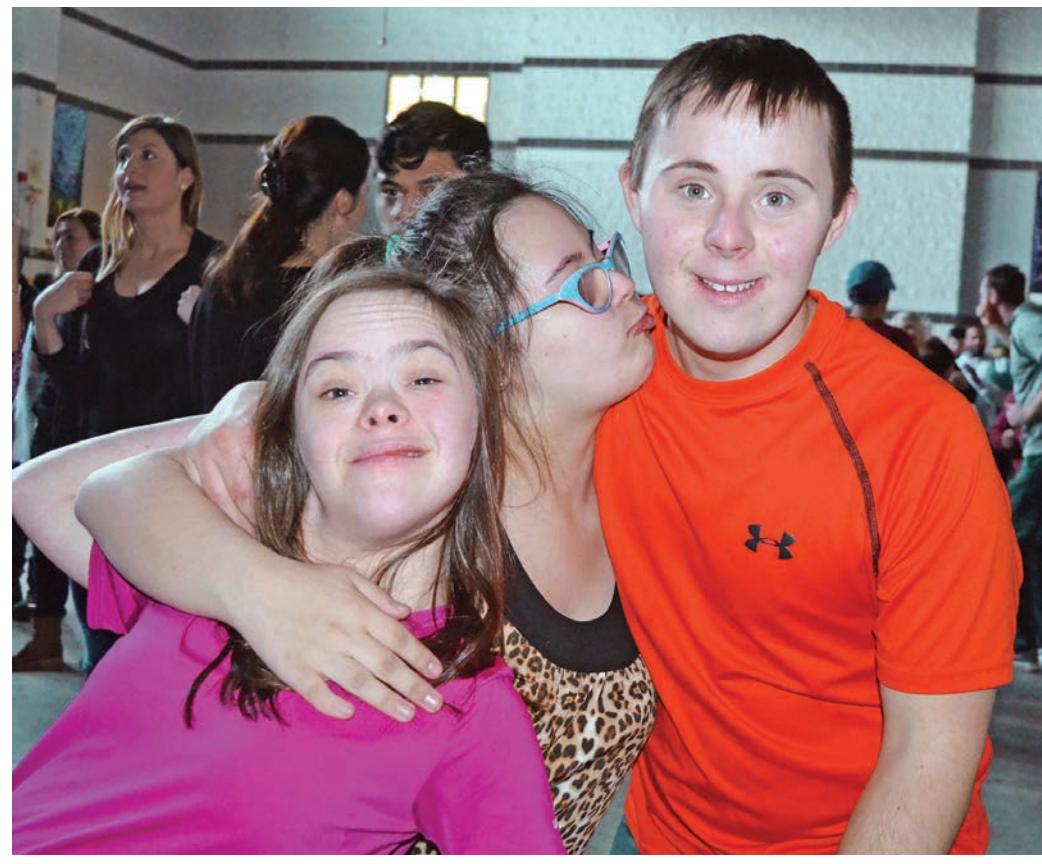
Over 100 students from York Region's Community Classrooms – classrooms tailored to students on the autism spectrum, students living with mild intellectual disabilities, as well as developmentally delayed students, descended on Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School to get their groove on for a Dance-A-Thon benefiting Toronto's SickKids Hospital.

Armed with a link to their website, as well as pledge forms, the students set out to hit a \$2,000 goal – but they

kicked things up to eleven, with the 20 participating schools raising an impressive \$8,400 and counting!

Organized by four Williams teachers, with a marketing assist from the school's Media Arts students, the first seeds of the idea were sown on a field trip last spring to the SNAP (Special Needs Athletic Program) Tournament.

“Usually at the half time, they play music and the kids start dancing, which they just loved to do,” said teacher Paul Grassi. “They love to show off their moves and are just so happy once the music is on. We thought the twist could be that it would be a community exercise where the students could raise funds for SickKids. The kids are so used to receiving things from other people, it would be nice to put themselves out there to raise money and see what that



The cafeteria at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School was a sea of joy on Friday as Community Classroom students gave back to SickKids, one busted move at a time. To contribute to their fundraising campaign, visit tinyurl.com/williams-dance.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

would look like.”

Urged on by fellow York Region District School Board teacher Dave Pilkey, one of the lead organizers on the now-annual Student Hoedown which tailors the yearly Magna Hoedown experience to special needs students from across the area, the Williams teachers pitched the idea to students.

Having all, in some way or another, been impacted by the work the Hospital for Sick Children carries out day in and day out, it was an easy sell.

“A lot of people really relate to it and I can tell you our website has been going crazy!” said Mr. Paul Grassi as the numbers continued to roll in leading up to the Friday event when they were sitting at just under \$2,000. “My thought at the beginning was, ‘What if we raise eleven bucks?’ but it has really turned into a nice fundraiser. Over the last few days we have been

seeing all these little donations come in and the kids are so excited to watch [the online fundraising] thermometer go up. The Children's Miracle Network has been amazing in helping us set up our website.

“We told parents, we told the kids, we told the administrators this was not a door-to-door soliciting event at all. The kids have pledge forms, but we don't want them going to businesses or going down the street knocking on doors – but we weren't expecting such a big hit on our website. But, that's what happened – a lot of people have donated and, on top of that, the kids have been getting cash and cheque donations.”

In addition to that, one of the students in a school had been making and selling Christmas decorations and selling them in the school at lunchtimes to benefit the hospital, while other schools have donated proceeds from their school stores.

Helping the students make the event memorable were a number of community businesses ranging the Dollar Store at Henderson and Yonge, to Costco's donation of over 320 bottles of water, to PizzaPizza which donated 50 party-size pizzas, and to Williams graduate Megan Flynn who donated 500 chocolate chip cookies to keep the students well-fuelled.

“All the main food groups!” Mr. Grassi joked.

It was enough to do the trick, however, as over 120 students filled the Williams cafeteria, showing off their moves to students from other high schools, enjoying tracks as varied from artists as varied as Katy Perry and Taylor Swift to The Spice Girls, all spun by the house DJ – Williams teacher Mark Watkin.

These dance parties, facilitated by the Children's Miracle Network, have sparked a fundraising frenzy across the country with Dr. G.W. Williams and the students in the York Region School Board, now adding their spark to the growing flame.

The \$8,011 will go directly to the hospital.



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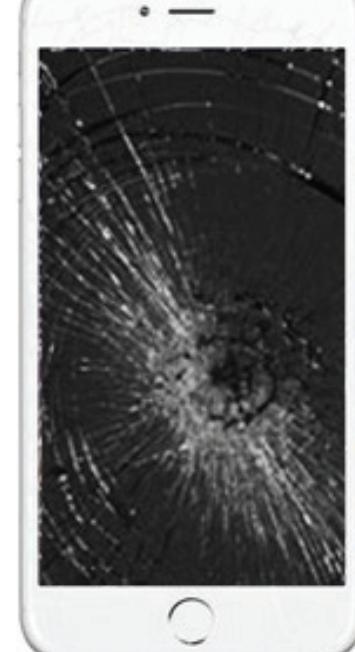
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THINGS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 9

Theatre Aurora presents Ken Ludwig's The Game's Afoot (or Holmes for the Holidays) at various dates and times between November 30 and December 9. What are the holidays without a little murder? Kick off your holiday season with this laugh out loud farcical murder mystery. For more information, and tickets, call 905-727-3669 or visit www.theatreaurora.com.

NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 30

1917: Canada Comes of Age – A multi-artist, two city painting exhibition at the Aurora Cultural Centre that looks back at the year 1917: 50 years removed from Confederation and 50 years before the glorious summer of '67 in Montreal, 1917 was the year of the crucible. It was a coming of age story. Curated by brothers Dave and Ross Rheaume, artists from Ottawa and Toronto will tell the story of milestones in history, medicine, art/science and sports, arts and entertainment. Opening Reception: Thursday, December 7 from 6 – 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7

Celebrate the season with a trip around the world when 3x JUNO nom/3x CFMA winning Sultans of String perform their new Christmas Caravan concert at the Aurora Cultural Centre, an exuberant show featuring band originals, world music inspired classics, and seasonal favourites to warm your heart on a cold winter's night. From fiery fiddle tunes to a Caribbean sleigh ride, this surprising and delightful holiday fiesta heats up when Sultans of String bring their signature sound to well known gems such as Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, The Huron Carol (with translated Indigenous lyrics), a djembe-driven Little Drummer Boy, a ska-inspired Feliz Navidad, a Turkish twist on Greensleeves, A Charlie Brown Christmas, not to mention a Gypsy-Jazz inspired Django Christmas and a Flamenca-fuelled Jingle Bells. The show features special guest and Canada's singer to the stars Rebecca Campbell (Bruce Cockburn, Emmylou Harris, Alanis Morissette). For tickets and further information, call 905-713-1818.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

GIRLS NIGHT OUT – Ladies, come out for the first Girls Night Out. This is a chance to get out (husband and/or baby free), shop, mingle, network with other women in the area. A great opportunity to support/shop local women and businesses. 7 – 10 p.m. in the Pearl Room at Aw, Shucks. Admission is \$5 and payable at the door.

The Aurora Community Band hosts their concert "Mystical Journeys" this evening at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults or \$5 for seniors/students, available at the door or by contacting auroracommunityband@gmail.com.

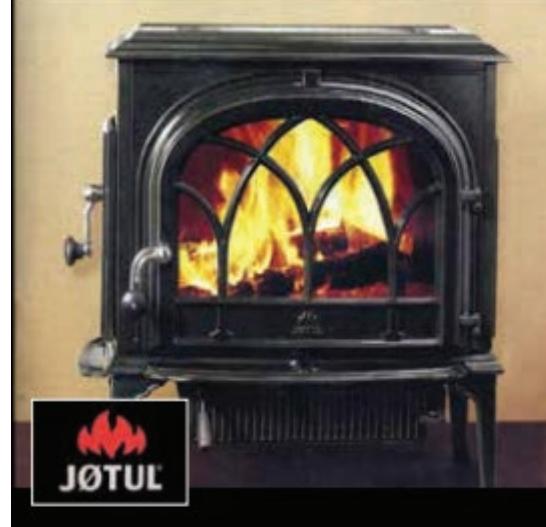
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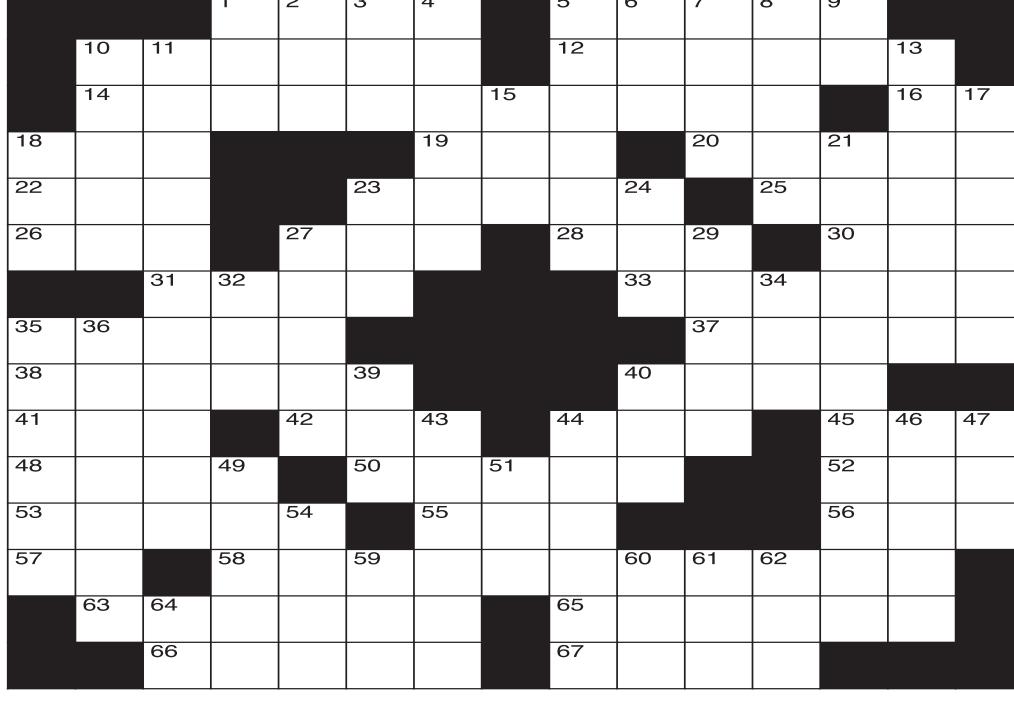
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Large jug
- 5. Anwar ___, Egyptian statesman
- 10. Punjab province capital
- 12. Evoke
- 14. Data
- 16. Exists
- 18. Supervises flying
- 19. Having eight
- 20. Right-handed page
- 22. NHL great Bobby
- 23. German municipality
- 25. Negotiate
- 26. Keyboard key
- 27. Youngster
- 28. Medical decision (abbr.)
- 30. Ribonucleic acid
- 31. One-time Levi's chairman Walter
- 33. Cold region
- 35. Type of plywood
- 37. A way to unfreeze
- 38. Winter melon
- 40. Dispute
- 41. An expression of imagination
- 42. Human gene
- 44. Touch lightly
- 45. Computer giant
- 48. Garlands
- 50. Franz van ___, German diplomat
- 52. Vineyard
- 53. Elk or moose
- 55. Moved quickly
- 56. Swiss river
- 57. Rhode Island
- 58. Fall into disrepair
- 63. Ancient Roman virtue
- 65. Removes
- 66. Slovenly women
- 67. Comedian Rogen

CLUES DOWN

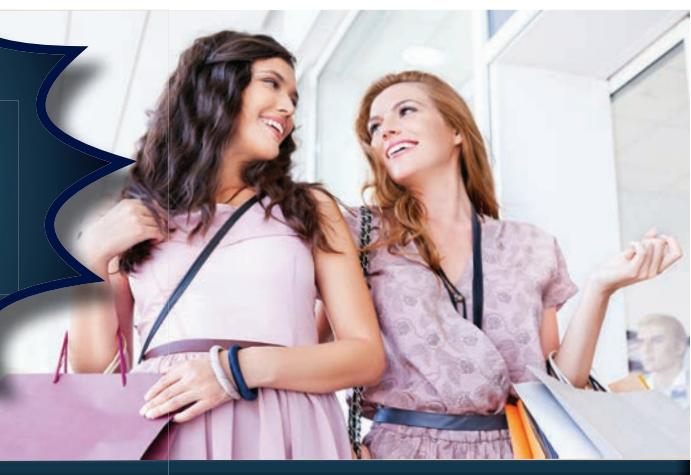
- 1. Extremely high frequency
- 2. Court
- 3. Make a mistake
- 4. Change the appearance of
- 5. Long-haired dog
- 6. The Greatest of All Time
- 7. Designer Christian
- 8. Blemished
- 9. Atlanta-based rapper
- 10. Deceivers
- 11. One who supports disorder
- 13. Colossal
- 15. A team's best pitcher
- 17. Comfort in a time of sadness
- 18. Opponent
- 21. Professionals might need one
- 23. Captures geographical data (abbr.)
- 24. Senior officer
- 27. Sacred Islamic site
- 29. Egyptian unit of capacity
- 32. Comedienne Gasteyer
- 34. Performer __ Lo Green
- 35. Having only magnitude, not direction
- 36. Cleft lip
- 39. Payroll company
- 40. Prohibit
- 43. Stroke
- 44. Does not acknowledge
- 46. Hillsides
- 47. Austrian river
- 49. Passover feast and ceremony
- 51. Golf score
- 54. Hair-like structure
- 59. Check
- 60. Extract metal from this
- 61. Tell on
- 62. Powdery residue
- 64. A part of the mind



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Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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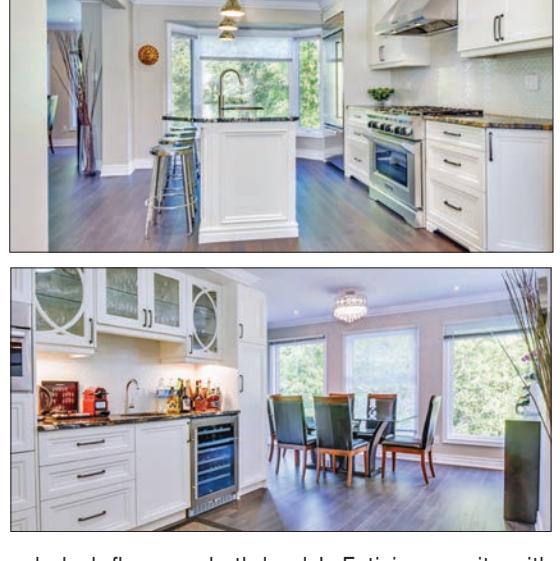
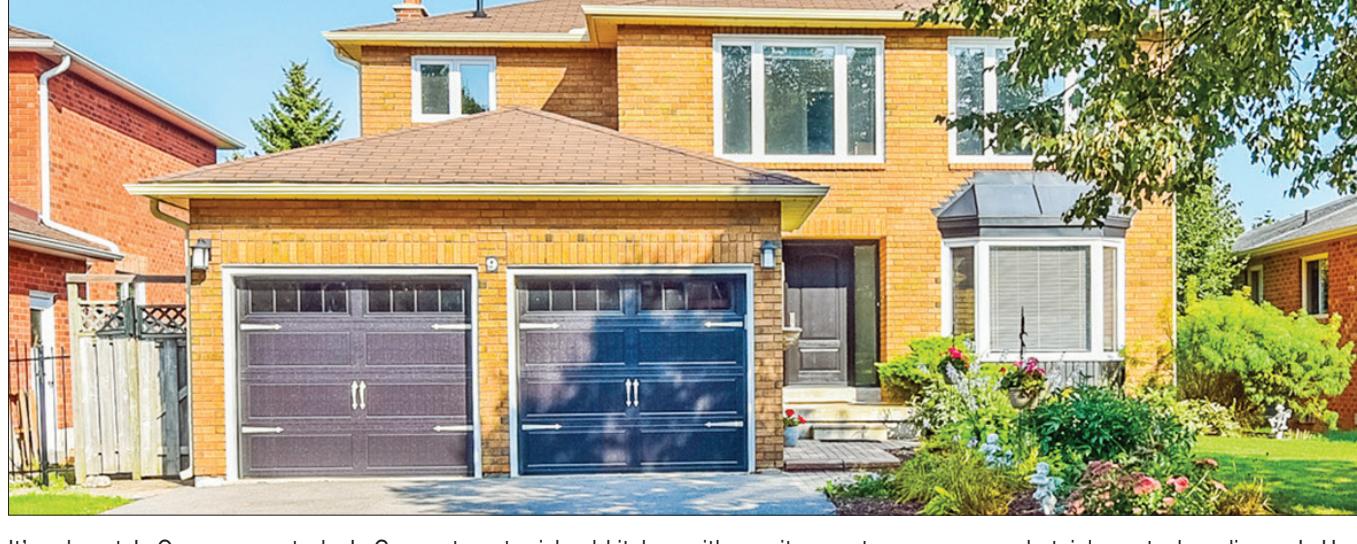
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