Windstorm leads to close call for local soccer players

Sports Dome levelled, trees felled during powerful storm

By Brock Weir

The Aurora soccer community had a close call on Friday afternoon as wind ripped through the community, leveling the Aurora Soccer Dome on Industrial Parkway North.

Friday’s windstorm left hundreds of thousands of people across southern Ontario, including many chunks of Aurora without power, and also left them half an hour later, you would have had a close call on Friday afternoon as wind ripped through the community, leveling the Aurora Soccer Dome on Industrial Parkway North.

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**Notice of service disruptions**

Please see below for the scheduled service disruption at the Aurora Family Life Centre Complex (AFLC).

- On Tuesday, May 15, public skate will be cancelled from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- On Monday, May 14, Adult Sliding Hockey from 11:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. will be cancelled.

**What’s Happening**

**May’s Skylight Gallery artist - Hans Backer**

This month, the Skylight Gallery will feature the works of Hans Backer.

Photography has been a lifelong passion for Hans. He is constantly inspired by nature’s endless beauty. Hans endeavours to see everyday objects in a unique perspective and to use that perspective to create a sense of peace and harmony in his artwork.

Visit the Skylight Gallery to see this exhibit. Regular viewing hours are Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Aurora Town Hall, 2nd floor.

**Seeking Canada Day Parade participants**

The Town of Aurora is very excited to be hosting Aurora’s Canada Day Parade on Sunday, July 1. Community Services is looking for interested community groups, or casual performers that would like to participate in this annual event.

Anyone interested in participating in the parade should contact the Recreation Supervisor, Special Events at aurora.ca/contact by Friday, June 15.

For more information, please call 905-726-4762.

**Register now for spring & summer programs**

Register now open for Town spring & summer programs, including aquatic and summer camps. There are many programs and activities for all ages. To view the recreation guide, visit aurora.ca/gcstream.

**Club Aurora wellness seminar - Walk Your Way to Good Health**

Register today for Club Aurora’s Walk Your Way to Good Health seminar on Saturday, May 12 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the AFLC. This seminar is free for Club Aurora members. For more information, visit aurora.ca/wows.

**Summer camps Open House on May 12**

Join us at the Town’s Summer camps Open House on Saturday, May 12 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. Learn more about Town camps and programs and meet some of the camp staff. For more information, visit aurora.ca/campprograms.

**Yard waste collection has begun**

A reminder that yard waste collection has started. Yard waste is collected with recycling every second week from April to November. Please place weeds, plant trimmings and leaves in paper yard bags; or any rigid open top container that has sturdy handles.

Remember to bundle and/or branches as follows:
- Individual branches must be no longer than 10 cm (4 inches) in diameter.
- Branches must be bundled with twine.
- Bundles must be no more than 22 kg (50 lbs) and no longer than 1.2 m (4 ft).

Grass clipping is not collected in Aurora’s carriable yard waste program. There are maximum weights for yard waste bags but no limit on the amount of yard waste placed for collection, providing that acceptable containers are used. 

**Are you prepared for an emergency or disaster? Don’t be scared. Be prepared.**

Be prepared for a variety of weather or civil-related emergencies by knowing the different types of risks, making a household emergency plan and assembling an emergency survival kit. 

For more information, please visit aurora.ca/emergencypreparedness.

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Sciatica is defined as compression of a spinal nerve root in the lower back, often causing pain radiating down the leg, weakness, numbness, or a shooting pain that makes it difficult to stand up. You may be suffering with a condition known as sciatica.

Sciatica is most commonly occurs when a herniated disc, bone spur on the spine, or other condition compresses part of the nerve. This causes inflammation, pain and often some numbness in the affected leg.

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 therapy appears to be uniquely capable of decreasing the inflammation around the spinal cord and shows great promise in the battle against the devastating reality 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) 773-2255 to book your FREE consultation and examination at Kings Hotel Wellness Centre 141 King Rd., Unit 10, Richmond Hill (the Home Health Plaza)
Government “not taking drug crisis seriously”

Justin Trudeau’s Liberals have failed to tackle our drug crisis seriously. The Trudeau Liberals have already announced that they will make marijuana legal. Even marijuana is available to drug addicts and they’re still running ahead with the legalization of [theword] marijuana.

And now, Liberals want to go even further. This past weekend the Justice Minister told Canadians that she’s open to decriminalizing illicit drugs like crack, cocaine and heroin.

As we face an unprecedented opioid epidemic, the Liberal government should be focusing on expanding treatment programs and making sure dangerous drugs stay out of the hands of vulnerable Canadians. Instead, the Trudeau Liberals are spending millions on marijuana legalization and paving the way toward more drugs being available to Canadians.

Canada’s Conservatives take this drug crisis very seriously. That’s why we’re demanding that Justin Trudeau put the safety and the health of young people first, ahead of their ideological disposition to do drug.

Windrow clearing would be nice to have: reader

The Aurora Windrow
Inside Aurora, May 3

I enjoyed your windrow column. I grew up in Willowdale as a kid. I remember having to get rid of snow at the end of the driveway. At that time, I remember that in Erinbrook in some areas they had the windrow service. Not in North York where I lived. So, having this service certainly isn’t a new feature. It would be nice here in [place]. That snow in the storm certainly gives windrow service a heads up. Keep up the good work.

Dana Osler
Aurora

Went With the Wind

BY EASING THE RULES TO ACCESS THEM, THE HYDRO FUND WILL SOON BE OURS! HA, HA, HA, HA!

SORRY, THE DIABOLICAL LAUGHS JUST SLIPPED OUT

CLEANING UP – AND POWERING UP

Friday’s windstorm, including efforts to clean up the last vestige of a winter that seems to be all around us.

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As someone once said, your house is your home only when you feel you have your family there. If you ever dream of moving, put down roots, or get married, please go ahead and display it, knowing everyone has access to the support they need to achieve their fuller potential.

The ninth annual Portraits of Giving celebrated leaders in social responsibility in York Region on April 11. Congratulations to all the recipients for their leadership and inspiration, and wish them all well. Congratulations and resources for several notable causes.

Preserving our environment to benefit our children and the communities is important to me. On April 28, I joined Neighbourhood Network and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority for the annual Spring Tree Planting. We had a great turnout with many residents and many volunteers, without whom this event would not have been possible. Over the course of the morning, we planted over 400 trees.

On April 29, I participated in the 2018 Run or Walk for Southlake, presented by Nature’s Emporium. The walk was a fantastic success and it was great to see such strong community support for an important cause. The event saw over 1,500 participants, and raised over $137,000 for patient care at Southlake Regional Health Centre. A special thank you to all the organizations who worked tirelessly to make this event a success.

On a sad note, the House lost one of its own on May 2: Good Broom, Member of Parliament for Leeds-Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. Good was a personal friend. I got to know him through his work with the Conservative hockey team, and I serve as captain of the Liberal team. He was a selfless, hard-working gentleman, and a true gentleman. He was never partisan, a trait I try to emulate. Good taught me much and I will miss him dearly.

I am thankful for my own family and friends who are always there to support me throughout life. I am especially thankful for my family and friends who are always there to support me through my work.

This month, speaking of home and family, I would like to wish all the mothers of all ages and abilities a wonderful Mother’s Day.

If you are so fortunate to have one of us, you are surrounded by angels and that makes you an angel who watches over each of us. You don’t need to be a hoarder, but know when to say enough because we all have it we really need.

Unless you live alone, is your home your own? I can think back when the children were young, and all the momentos we had to lose, lost to table tops and shelves. Until one day the children and the crystal could coexist next to their toys as our belongings. It is overdrawn and completely depleted, they really do live happily ever after.

To learn more about how you can get active and healthy living and make Aurora’s best, please do not hesitate to contact us to my office and my staff at any time.

**Congratulations on this significant milestone! I was pleased to be able to participate in this special celebration event. Without a doubt, they have well established roots in our community, and I look forward to seeing them grow over the next 100 years as they cultivate greenery and provide a wealth of resources for those wishing to explore gardening.**

On April 11, Community Living Centre Aurora hosted their 100th anniversary celebration for their remodelled space. Community Living supports residents of all ages and abilities to participate in their communities. I am thankful for the home-owning experiences of everyone who resides.

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Funding to finally complete Aurora's Joint Operations Centre is set to receive the $2.2 million price tag that has turned the page on the project.

A total of $2,185,200 worth of capital works, funded by reserves and development charges as it didn't result in a direct hit to taxpayers, will be required to finish the job on a project councillors described as the "close of a chapter."

The final tally was presented at last Tuesday's General Committee meeting by Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Operations. Mr. Downey's report signalled the final step in the full audit over the Joint Operations Centre's (JOC) construction, which was requested by Council last year.

The initial audit, as reported earlier this spring by The Aurora, criticised the build for its "poor management" in a number of areas, stemming from its lack of a specifically-tasked project manager until the JOC was well underway. It also outlined a number of essential components of the JOC that were removed from the build's original scope so it appeared to be within budget. These elements were then brought back to Council for further approval as extra addition items.

Mr. Downey's report — and recommendations — follow a Council decision which tasked staff with bringing forward all the items, previously approved conditionally at budget time, that are required to complete the JOC.

Among the items still needed to be completed out of the contract were back lot paving to the tune of $300,200, completion of the upper parking lot and rear yard for $213,500, landscaping for $35,000, a garbage tipping station for $190,000, $60,000 for exterior signage, and $15,000 for furniture.

New items — encompassing those cut from the original design — include $300,000 for storage buildings, $50,000 for automated gate control, $310,000 for south side exterior finishing, $500,000 to complete the shell space on the third floor, and $20,000 for an intercom system.

In addition to these items, approvals from the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) are still outstanding.

"Permits for the JOC were obtained from the LSRCA to commence work on the site," said Mr. Downey. "During the construction process, fill was placed into the valley without the approval of the LSRCA. Staff from the LSRCA have attended the site and inspected the results of the fill operations. The site remains stable and erosion protection has been installed; however, ground cover and landscaping to stabilize the slopes is required."

"Staff have been in communication with the LSRCA and are awaiting further approval of the works with regard to remedial actions that are required to obtain approval. Staff have not included any cost estimates for remedial works as they are unknown at this time. If capital funding is required, staff will prepare a separate report to Council requesting such funding."

While this approach sees another piece of the puzzle, council members expressed some relief that they are close to turning the page on this project, which has been dogged by controversy from the start.

"I am truly relieved to have this chapter of the JOC, at least in my mind, to be closed and everything that needed to be in the JOC has been budgeted, accounted for, and all of the requirements for staff are in there," said Councillor Harold Kim. "Again, it was necessary that it was overbudget, but things that should have been included were not included. I am just happy this chapter is over and the JOC will finally be how it should have been at the very beginning."

A similar sentiment was offered by Councillor John Abel.

"I am along the lines of Councillor Kim that we're finally closing the loose ends on this project," he said. "It was controversial from the beginning, but one of the main things that was borked out was there was no project management methodology in place, and that came from the auditor and that's his comment. We will take that as something we learned from that. As we said at the conclusion of that audit, this is something we will use further for any projects that we are undertaking."

While Councillor Wendy Gaertner said she had an issue with the project being completed from Development Charges earmarked for Parks & Facilities as well as Roads & Related, money set aside for indoor recreation and roads, she said should not be used in this project, she argued.

"There is a lot of money set aside for indoor recreation and parks and roads maintenance."

Another sticking point was the building out of the JOC's third floor shell space.

"This shell space was intended as a cost-effective way to have space ready once other administration spaces become oversaturated, and as a potential future office space that could be used for storage in the meantime."

This building, however, is coming sooner than Council anticipated.

"We haven't determined which department [will be moving into the space]," said Councillor Dong Nadrozno, responding to questions from Councillor Michael Thompson. "We’re actually at

continued on page 21
**Spring has finally arrived!**

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Community benefits on Armoury deal should be clear: Abel

From page 1

Mayor, I have come to the realization that politics is about improving the lives of the residents of Aurora, nothing more, nothing less,” says Councillor Abel. “I am perfectly situated to do that] having over seven years as Deputy Mayor. It would make absolute sense that I would be ready and willing to assume that role.”

Although Councillor Abel said his vision for Aurora was a “full plan” that would be rolled out during the campaign itself, he said that part of that vision is the belief that “any money we’re spending would be to the benefit of our residents.”

“If we are spending money and it is not for the benefit, I would not be making that decision.”

To that end, Councillor Abel has said he will re-raise his notion of a motion asking for a full report on the benefits a deal with Niagara College’s Canadian Food & Wine Institute (CFWI) will bring to Aurora.

The motion for the “economic impact analysis” of the deal was brought forward to Council last month, but it was tabled on the table when it didn’t receive a second.

The Motion, he said in a statement, came in the wake of April’s audit report on the Joint Operations Centre that outlined many improvements that need to be made “before spending money on large capital projects.”

A Project Management Methodology was recommended, he said, to include an analysis of the economic benefits a project will have on the local community, and the economic benefits of the CFWI deal goes hand in hand with this.

“We have heard several Councillors refer to the spin-off benefits that the Food & Wine Institute will deliver, but we have yet to hear exactly how it will do that,” said Councillor Abel in his statement. “While Councillors show no hesitation for extolling the virtues of the agreement with Niagara College, they are reluctant or unable to substantiate any of their claims.

“It transparency and open competition before deals are struck is a genuine aim of an elected body and its members, and if they truly wish to live up to the promises and commitments they made to serve the community’s best interests, then they should welcome the idea of an economic impact analysis with open arms. Not only does this conform to the recommendations of the JOC Audit report, it is specifically meant to guide the decisions of policy-makers and inform the public as to whether or not this is a good investment of taxpayers’ money.”

Seeking the Mayor’s Seat is an opportunity Councillor Abel has been mulling for several months, confirming to The Aurora back in February that it was very much an option on the table.

Between them and now, a number of factors fell in place, he says, that helped solidify his decision.

“The support I have gotten from the community, the business community, and organizations I participate, have all encouraged me to step forward to assume the role of the mayor,” he says. “There are a number of issues that have not been addressed, and I would be addressing these if I became Mayor. Downtown revitalization, we’ve all been talking about that and nothing has happened. Obviously, we have a huge problem at the GO Station, the lack of parking, and the impact it has on our Heritage District. I think I can provide the leadership that is required to address the issues and I think what I bring to the table is experience and leadership.

“What I really want to champion is affordable housing. There are two reasons: Our children, and I have raised two, can’t afford to live in Aurora and new businesses can’t afford to live in this community. We need to have rental units and also for our seniors, and we’re moving into a huge seniors [population], we need to age in place as we downsize. People shouldn’t have to move out of Aurora to find affordable housing. We need more rental units and that is what I am really championing for and it would have a great impact on our community in the long run.”

Councillor Abel was first elected to Aurora Council in 2010. The position of Deputy Mayor is allotted to the top vote-getter in the Council race, a position Councillor Abel has secured in both of his terms on Council.
Changes proposed after “horror story” on Brookland

By Brock Weir

Long delayed and bigger-than-expected reconstruction works on Brookland Avenue last year left business owners and residents alike angry with how things went down. From Councillor Wendy Gaertner’s perspective, it was nothing short of a “horror story” for all concerned. Now, changes are being proposed to ensure these situations don’t pop up again.

This week, Council will consider a number of changes to how the Town approaches road reconstruction projects, including a more stringent procurement process for contractors, full traffic management plans, and provision for damages to be paid by the contractor.

Residents last year did not hesitate to express their frustration with reconstruction of Brookland, but the matter came to a head at the Council table after the owners of the nearby Yonge Street Winery cited financial losses resulting from consumers not being to able to access their store.

“The main concerns from the residents in the Brookland Avenue area included the project duration, traffic and access matters, business disruption with resultant business loss, the adequacy of the contractor’s actions, schedule delays and overall contractor performance,” said Arna Mihail, Manager of Engineering and Capital Delivery for the Town of Aurora, in her report to Council. “The scheduling delays were mostly due to the very wet summer of 2017, with a very high number of rain days (21 in total, that impacted and delayed the curb cut replacement work. The replacement of the sanitary sewer, the storm sewer and watermain, as well as the road work, could not start until the two culverts were replaced. The schedule delays intensified the disruption to both residents and business owners and there were complaints regarding noise, dust, mud on the street, storefront disruption, difficult pedestrian access, as well as difficult access into the commercial plaza. Also, the size of the required work zone and the narrow right-of-way of Brookland Avenue intensified the construction disruption to residents and the general public.

One way to right any future wrongs, she said, is to require all potential contractors to issue a pre-qualification, which would allow for the evaluation of all contractors based on specific criteria as well as their expertise to perform the work, including capacity requirements, before they can even submit a bid to take on the project.

“Pre-qualifying criteria are project-specific to ensure an alignment between the performance requirements of the project with the capabilities, capacity and experience of the contractors bidding the job in order to confidently secure compliant contractors,” she said.

“Additional criteria can be considered on a project-specific basis.”

For significant projects, a Traffic Management Plan will, providing Council’s approval this week, be required. Currently, traffic control plans are the norm for outlining construction work zones and proper procedures and appropriate signage for closing traffic lanes during the construction projects.

“For projects where the traffic impact of a construction project is considered to be significant and extending beyond the limits of the work zone, a more comprehensive site and area specific Traffic Management Plan can be developed by the contractor prior to the start of construction,” said Ms. Mihail.

“The ultimate objective of the Traffic Management Plan is to ensure that road safety is maintained for the public and construction workers.”

Throughout the process, improved communications to area businesses and residents.

“The recommendations in the report were received positively by Council members at last week’s General Committee meeting, but some thought these measures could go further.

“I was involved in this project when it didn’t start on time, from the beginning of July, all the way through to the fall,” said Councillor Gaertner.

“This project was a horror story and my opinion is when we’re looking at ways to improve how we handle these kinds of projects there has to be some kind of Town oversight. I don’t know if Town oversight was lacking in this case, but I think it’s a very important component.”

Mayor Geoff Dave suggested the report be sent back to Town Staff to address Councillor Gaertner’s concerns, but withdraw his motion to do just that in favour of an additional memo expected before this week’s Council meeting.

Councillor John Abel also noted concerns, primarily with the damage done during the project.

“The scope of this work is controversial and well-known, but what I really want to point out, in addition to a lot of the activity… is the devastation of a lot of the plant life and the big trees and how it impacts the ability to retain the water that pours into that part of Tannery Creek that goes downstream,” he said.

In response, Marco Ramunno, Aurora’s Director of Planning, said a number of trees had to be removed because of the slopes on the site and efforts to stabilize the land. A new planting program is planned to replace some of the lost vegetation over this spring and summer, he said, but this did not go far enough in the Councillor’s view.

“These were very big, mature trees and these little plants we’re putting in will take years, decades to bring back the protection and value these trees have collectively,” he said. “It was a canopied and now the runoff is going to be significantly different than what it was normally.”
Century-old themes remain relevant today, says Temple director

As a director, Sara Moyle has always been interested in bringing together history through the art of drama — or, as she calls it, “animating history.”

So, when the opportunity came up to animate history right here in Aurora, Ms. Moyle jumped at the chance. Sara Moyle takes the helm of The Temple of Fame, a revamped, renewed and refreshed version of the classic play, which opens this week at Trinity Anglican Church.

Produced by the Aurora Museum & Archives and written by local writer Corrie Clark, this weekend’s production of The Temple of Fame marks the 100th anniversary of when it was last produced here in Aurora. The text may have changed, but its core message remains the same and as relevant as it ever has been — and you needn’t look any further than the banners hanging from light posts throughout Aurora with the simple question, “Are you worthy?”

“The question, ‘Am I worthy?’ is a question that women ask themselves, maybe not out loud, but every day and multiple times a day,” says Ms. Moyle. “If there is a way to answer that question, even in a moment, even in a snapshot in time, I think we may be able to do that with this play and have people walk away with the understanding that, ‘Yeah, I am worthy.’”

The Temple of Fame has a simple premise: women throughout history are descending on the Temple to plead their case to the Goddess. Their objective? Proving they’re worthy enough to take their rightful place in the pantheon.

The play was first staged by Aurora women in 1900 and again in 1918 as part of an animating history project. Director Sara Moyle, second right, provides notes during the Temple of Fame production.

One of the ideas that Ms. Moyle jumped at the chance to animate was that of a female playwright. The Temple of Fame was written over 150 years ago by a man, and to Ms. Moyle, that is “Incendiary!”

“Previously with the Humber River Shakespeare Company, which uses drama to tell the history of Ontario, not to mention keeping The Bard’s words alive and well, Ms. Moyle approached the 2018 Temple of Fame right at the roots,” says Moyle. “I am a career theatre artist, but the opportunity to be a part of an animating history project was very attractive to me, but trumpping all of these is how timely this project is and the importance of sharing this story 100 years later about women’s issues that are really still looking for resolution.”

“In my perfect world as an artist, I am always marrying heritage with theatre, or animating history, so to speak,” says Ms. Moyle. “The opportunity to be a part of an animating history project was very attractive to me, but trumpping all of these is how timely this project is and the importance of sharing this story 100 years later about women’s issues that are really still looking for resolution.”

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In 2015, a cache of artefacts related to the last production made its way into the Museum archives, donated by historian John McIntyre, and curator Sharan Whitney. What evoked the most goosebumps was it was remounted, led once again by local Aurora women.

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Women's Groups in focus as Aurora celebrates Temple of Fame centenary

By Brock Weir

Groups like 100 Women Who Care have shown how the power of women can make a difference on the community around them. These women's groups have been on something of an upswing in recent years, but before a downturn in the 1960s and 1970s, such groups were often the lifeline of communities nation-wide.

The impacts of Aurora's early women's groups, some that have gone largely forgotten over the past half-century, are very much in focus in The Temple of Fame: Staging Women's Roles, a new exhibition launched by the Aurora Museum and Archives to coincide with this weekend's production of The Temple of Fame.

Guest-curated by Kara Izodaki, Maeghan Jerry and Sarah Kelly, combined Master of Information/ Master of Museum Studies students from the University of Toronto, the exhibition takes a three-pronged approach to The Temple of Fame: the production itself and the local women who made it happen, the turning tide for women around the globe at the end of the First World War, and the groups who kept the home fires burning at that trying time in our collective history.

Ms. Kelly focused on the role of women's groups, including the local Women's Institute and the Temperance Movement.

"What I really liked were the stories of women," says Ms. Kelly on her starting point. "There was the idea that there are these separate groups in Aurora doing different things with different priorities in mind. When the war broke out, they didn't drop everything, but they changed the way they looked at things and melded together to really raise funds for the war, to help people in society who were affected by the war, to keep in contact with the soldiers overseas. You could see them coming together. In a lot of my research, I saw the expanding sense of neighbour, it was not just your neighbour next door, but maybe the neighbour you haven't even met."

At the very beginning, she tasked herself with sorting out which group of women did what – including their activities and their ultimate mandate. That, she said, was initially a frustrating challenge because there were no real boundaries or borders on the type of work each group did. There was plenty of overlap, "a melding" but, at the end of the day, each group "backed up their bootstraps and got to work."

"I took a real liking to the way care packages were sent and received," says Ms. Kelly on telling the human story. "The Aurora Banner had a really interesting set of letters they would print in their newspaper and those letters were cool because you could go back weeks before and see listings of women's groups calling other groups to come out into the community and put those boxes together, and you could see the response to these letters."

"I knitted a pair of reproduction socks they would have sent over, which was really fun and interesting for me to do. One thing that really touched me was these women, even children, would knit these socks and write letters, and put them in the toe of the socks and send them over. You can even see letters coming back where soldiers would say, 'I loved getting your care package, but missed getting the letters.'"

This is an area of history that was largely forgotten over the past half-century, "a melding" but, at the end of the day, each group "backed up their bootstraps and got to work."

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Mrakas supports Regional fire service in first speech of Mayoral bid

By Brock Weir

Local fire services should join together to form a Regional department in a bid to maintain service but reduce costs to taxpayers, says mayoral candidate Tom Mrakas.

Councillor Mrakas, who launched his bid to be Aurora’s next mayor last week, outlined planks in his vision for government. Most candidates will

“We need a mayor who will act, a mayor who will get things done, I’ve heard you loud and clear,” he said. “You need strong leadership, leadership that truly works in all senses of the word. I agree having a vision is great, having a plan is necessary, but it doesn’t mean if you can’t get it done. The Mayor’s job is to lead Council and get things done for our community. At the end of the day, the Mayor is just one voice, one vote, so you can’t get things done by going it alone.

“Vision to reality takes teamwork. Teamwork is built on relationships. We know relationships are built on trust and mutual respect. An effective mayor builds consensus by building relationships with his colleagues. You get support by giving support, listening to all viewpoints, engaging in meaningful dialogue and not just paying lip service, but truly supporting your colleagues.”

Over the course of his time on Council, Councillor Mrakas, along with Councillor Michael Thompson, led the charge which ultimately led to the Province replacing the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) with local appeals tribunals which will give municipalities a greater say in their own planning matters.

“Growth isn’t a bad word,” he said. “I don’t think any of us in Aurora want the Town to become a place where time has stopped, but I think many of us, myself included, are alarmed at how things have changed in our community. We want appropriate and smart growth; growth that meets the needs of our present and our future. We want to maintain what’s unique about Aurora as we grow. While the OMB is no more, we now have the local planning appeal tribunal. They have given us the power and the responsibility to ensure our community grows the way we want it to, but it will take real leadership to make that happen.

“Promises don’t mean anything if you don’t have a realistic plan to deliver. Grand visions and strategies are useless if you can’t get behind them. Leading alone gets you nowhere. Leading together gets you to where we want to go.”
Association marks its 100th anniversary this week, which runs May 7 – May 13.

One she now shares to raise awareness, Ms. Badar would never have considered sharing her story.

"Before the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), I felt like a naked baby in the mouth of a wolf who opened its mouth one day and said, 'Hey! Have a nice life!' and it dropped me," explains Ms. Badar.

"I had to get up, dust myself off, and find my clothes. When I ran into the CMHA, I didn't even know my head from my tail," Ms. Badar's story is one of abuse and bullying throughout her life, and one she now shares to raise awareness of Mental Health wherever she is.

This week marks Mental Health Week, which runs May 7 - May 13. As the Canadian Mental Health Association marks its 100th anniversary this year, Mental Health Week is now in its sixty-seventh, dedicated to ending the stigma surrounding mental illness.

Throughout this week of raising awareness, the CMHA is calling on the community to "tune into your own mental health needs and #getloud in its sixty-seventh, dedicated to ending the stigma surrounding mental illness."

Y et, as she shares her story, Ms. Badar says she finds rewards keep rolling in. "Honestly, just as much as I give, I get back tenfold," she says. "When you are people come in so broken, but they begin to trust you and feel safe with you, you see them realise you really care and understand. I have had people who wouldn't even make eye contact, who wouldn't talk, who wouldn't join in a group or nothing – and now it's like you can't shut them up! Once came in, was deep all day, and was so scared to get a job and didn't have a hobby, They wanted to go to school and was scared, but now he is doing all that. I volunteer in the peer-run after hours drop in group, and I said, 'Had we not that, would you have done all this?'

She is now using her story, in turn, to inspire confidence inside the clients now turning to the CMHA for support. Ms. Badar is now a member of their Speaker's Bureau, a public role she never could have imagined for herself.

"It gave me more confidence to start believing in themselves," she says.

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"It's not your stuff, it's something so much more," Ms. Badar says. "People cannot do it for you. I have people that you trust, and that you feel safe in confiding in. Don't give up, it is really worth it. You can live a well-rounded, positive, healthy life."

For more information on the Canadian Mental Health Association of York and South Simcoe, visit cmhays.org, or call 905-841-3977.

"We're all in this together" on Mental Health Week: CMHA

Reaching out to CMHA taught Aurora resident “how to live”

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What kind of help do you need? I'll then refer them to all the CMHA has to offer.

“But, first of all, you have to realise that you need help. Second of all, you have to try and help yourself because people cannot do it for you. I have come a long way, but you have to want to help yourself and you have to be willing and open to listen to people, people that you trust, that and you feel safe in confiding in. Don’t give up, it is really worth it. You can live a well-rounded, positive, healthy life.”

By Brock Weir

DAMIR VRANCIC

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invite you to come visit us and our friendly and informed staff at the largest shoe store north of Toronto! Omar's is celebrating 48 years of being shoes for everyone from babies to adults. Clark's shoes have a long standing reputation for making good quality shoes that give you comfort right away. Select styles are also available in wide widths.

Mental Health Association of York and South Simcoe is celebrating 47 years of fitting shoes for everyone from babies to adults. Clark's shoes have a long standing reputation for making good quality shoes that give you comfort right away. Select styles are also available in wide widths.

For more information on the Canadian Mental Health Association of York and South Simcoe, visit cmhays.org, or call 905-841-3977.
Dogs take over the arena at Paws in the SARC

Paws in the Park is so 2017; this year, Aurora’s four-legged friends are movin’ on up, setting up shop at the SARC, the home for Saturday’s PAWS event. The event now being done by the Town of Aurora, so we have looked at that and we have made the move forward to bring it in-house. It is better for the pets, it is better for our vendors and we look forward to a little more engagement with the community having it indoors.”

The event, he said, also affords them a chance to educate members of the public on municipal animal control services in-house. 

“Prior to that, animal control was always contracted outside and Paws in the Park was done by a third party,” explains Mr. Dewar. “Weather in the month of May is always unknown, so it still damps the success of the event, being outside with some bad weather. The event now being done by the Town of Aurora, so we have looked at that and we have made the move forward to bring it in-house. It is better for the pets, it is better for our vendors and we look forward to a little more engagement with the community having it indoors.”

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He was part of their in-house training unit, training OSPCA officers in the tools of the trade, including how to read the body language of animals when dealing with a call, and the execution of warrants.

“I thoroughly enjoy engaging with the community,” he says. “I do not simply have a chat, whether it is about talking about what [bylaws] changes have occurred, or sometimes the negative side of an animal that unfortunately gets away from its owner, it’s running at large, it is displaced from its home, that is something that does happen. As an officer, we’re able to try and reunite that animal back to the owner.

“If we can do that without having to bring it into the shelter, that is our primary goal. He will either every opportunity present to get an animal back home, and that is the rewarding side because we get an animal that was displaced, temporarily, and get it back to its family where it belongs.”

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The event, he said, was part of their in-house training unit, training OSPCA officers in the tools of the trade, including how to read the body language of animals when dealing with a call, and the execution of warrants.
Welcome to The Speakeasy, a monthly column highlighting arts and culture in Aurora. This print edition features stories from the radio broadcast, which airs the first Wednesday of each month at 10 am on CHOP-FM 102.7 and is available through social media channels at the Aurora Cultural Centre and Aurora Public Library.

Shawna White, Curator of the Aurora Museum and Corrie Clark, playwright and actor, stopped by to talk to us about The Temple of Fame. This upcoming production, with multiple performances over the weekend of May 11 – 13, is a remount of a performance that took place in Aurora on May 10 – 11, 1918. The Temple of Fame was loosely based on a popular poem by Alexander Pope, and was staged frequently in the late 19th century.

The action of the play originally featured famous men and women in history presenting their case to “The Goddess of Fame,” with the winner receiving a crown of glory for the worthiest claim.

It is fascinating to hear how the script came into Shawna’s office. In 2015, former Aurora resident John McIntyre passed along an original copy he had from his grandmother Della Webster, who had been one of the organizers of the 1918 production. John’s treasure trove also included original press reviews, accompanying notes and letters that together gave a fulsome picture of community intent. They discovered that the Aurora Overseas Auxiliary mounted a two-night production as a fundraiser to support area troops stationed overseas at the time. Given the historical context and times from the original, Corrie’s work as playwright needed to balance the historical significance of the 1918 production with a much-needed updating of the cast of characters to reflect modern cultural awareness and representation.

She also wanted to ensure that a sense of humour infused aspects of the script. The result is a highly entertaining and made-in-Aurora updated version featuring heroes that are recognizable for modern-day audiences accompanied by original live music.

The Aurora Museum is currently featuring Temple of Fame: Staging Women’s Roles, an exhibit to accompany the production. The exhibit lends a deep historical context to the Aurora production, and the motivation to support the war effort on the home front.

For more information about tickets and exhibit details, visit www.auroramuseum.ca

Aurora Public Library welcomes Canadian author Kerri Sakamoto on Wednesday, May 23 at 7 pm. Sakamoto, a Governor General’s Literary Award-nominee and winner of the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize, will present her newest book Floating City. Described as “Citizen Kane reimagined”, the novel tells the story of a fiercely ambitious boy who overcomes humble beginnings and hardship in British Columbia to become a wealthy property developer in Toronto, but cannot escape the ghosts of his past. Tickets are free, and available online at www.aurorapl.ca.

When you’re at the library, drop by the Colleen Abbott Gallery to enjoy landscapes, portraits and a touch of the whimsical in a collaborative exhibit by Local Colour Aurora. On exhibit to June 2.

The Aurora Cultural Centre is hometown proud to present The Pick Brothers Band on May 11 at 8 pm. You might have caught their energized show last summer at the Music Aurora Summer Festival during the August long weekend in Town Park. All three brothers (yes, they are brothers!) went to school in Aurora — and bring an incredible, energetic live show. For ticket information, visit www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

After being cooped up all winter, we’re ready to enjoy the variety of arts and cultural activities once again in the great outdoors. A great place to start is the Aurora Farmers’ Market and Artisan Fair, now back in action for the season. Check them out each Saturday in Town Park from 8 am – 1 pm.

Jane Taylor is Events & Communications Manager at the Aurora Cultural Centre, and Recchia Mandelcorn is Manager of Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. They co-host The Speakeasy on the first Wednesday of each month on CHOP-FM 102.7.
Grand Opening

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony 1:00 p.m.

York Laser and MedSpa

Wednesday June 20th – Noon to 4 p.m.
The ribbon cutting ceremony will be done by Aurora’s Mayor Dawe.

95 Wellington Street East, Aurora, Ontario
(905) 726-1126 | yorklasermedspa.com
Ex-Saint drafted third overall in CFL Draft to Lions

By Jake Courtepatte

A familiar face on the St. Andrews's football front line may be heading to British Columbia. A three-year offensive lineman for the Saints varsity program, Peter Godber was selected third overall by the BC Lions in Saturday’s CFL entry draft.

The 6-foot-four, close to 300-pound Godber was watched by six CFL teams on his combine day, eventually selected by a Lions squad in need of some size up front.

Though like many high-end prospects, Godber is hoping to use leverage to gain a chance at an NFL start. “I’ve got to go in with the right mindset,” Godber said. “I set high goals. In college I wanted to be a four-year starter and I started for three years. I’m going to BC with high goals again, but everything is earned, nothing is given.”

Godber will be competing for a starting spot on the Lions’ line, when training camp opens in a couple of weeks.

He was instrumental in bringing the Saints the CISAA title at Rogers Centre in Toronto in 2012, being named a city and provincial all-star as a junior. Ranked as the number-two player in the nation in his final year as a Saint, he also represented St. Andrews on the World Team in the 2012 IFAF International Bowl in Austin, Texas.

Majoring in sport management and kinesiology, Godber joined the Owls in 2013 after a heavy recruitment process, choosing the smaller Rice University over the larger, more prominent football system at Baylor.

He started in 39 games for the Rice University Owls, mostly at the guard position. “It’s kind of a surreal moment for me, to get a call from (Lions general manager) Ed Hervey and to say they really liked me. They made that clear before the draft.”

“They made it clear that if I was there, they were going to take me, and they did. I’m really excited. They have great coaches there, and a great staff.”

Hoping to make an impact on the team as well as the education system, Godber said, “I believe in myself.”

“The definitely know what I bring to the table as an offensive lineman. I think it shows in my film, as well as my numbers on pro day.”

“At the end of the day, the team are going to pick the best football players that are going to help them win games, so that was my mindset.”

St. Andrews coach Len Guer tweeted his congratulations, saying “huge congrats to our boy Peter…Great moment for (St. Andrews) football!”

Saints defenseeman commits to Surrey Eagles

By Jake Courtepatte

The hockey factory known as St. Andrews’s College is sending out another product.

Single defenseeman Evan McIntyre is spreading his wings to the Surrey Eagles of the British Columbia Hockey League, after two successful seasons with the SAM Saints.

“Coming to Surrey is a dream come true,” said McIntyre. “It has been my goal to play in the BCHL, since I first learned about the league. I’m really excited to get started and meet my teammates.”

McIntyre is coming off of a sophomore season that saw him lead all Saints defensemen in points, putting up 51 over a span of just 49 games. He also added five points in four playoff appearances.

He also put up a total of 37 points in his rookie season with the Saints in 2016-17, establishing himself as one of the program’s top blueliners.

Playing preparatory hockey certainly left his effect on the 17-year old, who plans on taking the collegiate route in the sport despite being drafted by the Hamilton Bulldogs of the OHL. “I definitely want to go the school route,” McIntyre said. “Our coach at St. Andrew’s, David Manning, really stressed academics first then hockey.”

The Oakville native joins a promising up-and-coming program that feels off a divisional final loss to the Prince George Spruce Kings.

A product of the Missions Rebels AAA system, McIntyre will be looking at to make a big difference early on in the season for his BCHL teammates.

Continued on page 18
York Physical Literacy Summit preaches movement as education

By Jake Courtepatte

With all the electronic distractions for the youth of today, York Region is hoping to remind this generation to stay active. The third annual York Physical Literacy Summit, put on by Activate Aurora and titled “Creating Physically Literate Children and Youth”, brought teachers, coaches, and parents from across the district to King’s Seneca College campus on Friday for a day of active inspiration.

Aurora Mayor Geoff Dawe said it was “so important to get our kids active,” and that’s exactly what the Summit was set out to do. “Not only are we looking to get them moving, but teach them how and why it’s so important to stay active,” said Dawe. “Through parents, through the schools, kids should have the opportunity to learn how to stay active.”

The single-day summit had keynote speakers from across the physical literacy landscape, including Dean Kriellaars, a professor at the University of Manitoba and described as the “guru of physical literacy.”

Dawe praised Kriellaars for “making a difference,” and bringing back the freedom that children of the past had to roam. “What an excellent concept,” said Dawe. “We’ve reduced the amount of space that kids have dramatically in the last number of years, and through that, I’m probably preaching to the choir, so we really need to bring that space back.”

Kriellaars said that although the concept of physical literacy has a long way to go in Canada, Ontario is a leader in that $30-million has been budgeted for the project, the first province to do so. York Region was one of the first to receive funding.

He said that having the support of the region’s mayors, Mr. Dawe and King North’s mayor Steve Pellegrini in attendance, is “vital” to keep the project moving. “Having the support of local politicians is how we keep making changes in the community,” said Kriellaars.

The Summit was rescheduled from an October 2017 date, when it was cancelled due to a strike at Seneca.

Aurora FC draws again with Windsor

By Jake Courtepatte

Weather delays were not the only thing plaguing the Aurora FC men’s side on Saturday, who gave up a goal in the late stages of a match against Windsor FC to force a tie.

Just eight minutes in, a handball inside the Windsor box gave a penalty kick to the visiting Aurora team, where Dylan Rennie stepped in and opened the scoring for his third goal in two games.

A rejuvenated Windsor squad came out after a 90-minute weather delay, earning most of the offensive chances in the game’s second half. Just one minute before full time, Windsor’s Stefan Milidrag finished a header off of a Celso Carpana corner kick, beating goalkeeper Adam Stanclon into the net’s top right corner.

With little time added on by the referee, the game ended in a 1 – 1 draw. A pair of ties on the record so far for the young League 1 season, Aurora sits in the middle of the pack in the semi-pro league’s standings, while the Oakville Blue Devils are the only team to kick off the season with back-to-back wins.

The Aurora men next take to the field Saturday at Stewart Burnet Park in Aurora, hosting the Vaughan Azurri at 4 p.m.

The Aurora FC women next take to the field on Saturday at Stewart Burnet Park against the Toronto Azurri Blizzards. Kickoff is set for 4 p.m.

Saints defensemen commits to Surrey Eagles

From page 17

The Surrey blue line, with top-scoring defenseman Owen Norton leaving for the NCAA, “We’re thrilled to bring in Evan,” Eagles GM Brian Neufeld said in a statement. “He’s a fantastic skater that sees the ice very well. We feel that his game will translate to the BCHL very quickly.”

Neufeld also noted that his commitment in the programs at St. Andrews was another factor when bringing McIntyre in. “He comes from a terrific program. His coach David Manning has done a terrific job, which is why St. Andrews is seen as one of the nation’s top programs,”

As for the 2018-19 season, McIntyre said he plans to “take the role very seriously.” “I like to jump into the play and skate with the puck. My game plan is to move puck up the ice as quick as I can by using a good first pass out of the zone.”

Aurora mayor Geoff Dawe speaks at the York Physical Literacy Summit at King's Seneca College Campus on Friday. Aurora photo by Jake Courtepatte
HIKE FOR HOSPICE - Volunteers and those impacted by their services have always been happy to support Doane House Hospice for the annual Hike for Hospice, but this is the first year they have

| MAY 11 – 13 | The Aurora Museum & Archives will stage the 100th anniversary celebrations of The Trorne of Fame and Acute Anglican Church. Women, women’s societies and various groups are

| MAY 15 | The Aurora Cultural Centre presents the Pick Brothers Band from 8 – 10 p.m. with altars Park Leonard and Blue Door. Under their band, Aurora’s Pick Brothers Band will be appearing, on the national stage, speaking with the

| FRIDAY, MAY 18 | The Aurora Historical Society’s Speaker Series continues tonight with Melanie Whittal on The Leaskdale Manse NHS. This presentation examines the history of the house, of Granville Simpson, of the Casa Loma family and the development and evolution of The Leaskdale Manse Museum Site. and the Lucy Maud Montgomery. while the book from 9001 to 9076: 97 $9.99 each, $10 for AHHS Members. Booklets and tickets are available at our new time: 1:30 pm, doors open at 1 pm. Children under 14 are free. They are available at the reception of the Centre 59 50 West Way, Aurora. For more information, call 905- 726-8792. Light refreshment will be served atZidders.

| SATURDAY, MAY 26 | The Aurora Senior Association Evergreen Choir continues tonight with Melanie Whittal on The Leaskdale Manse NHS. This presentation examines the history of the house, of Granville Simpson, of the Casa Loma family and the development and evolution of The Leaskdale Manse Museum Site. and the Lucy Maud Montgomery. while the book from 9001 to 9076: 97 $9.99 each, $10 for AHHS Members. Booklets and tickets are available at the reception of the Centre 59 50 West Way, Aurora. For more information, call 905- 726-8792. Light refreshment will be served atZidders.

| SATURDAY, MAY 12 | Aurora Farmers Market: Seasonal fresh fruits & veggies, delicious goodies and unique crafts will be waiting for you at the Aurora Farmers Market & Aurora Fair today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Town Park 10 West St. Theaurorafarmersmarket.ca.

| THURSDAY, MAY 10 | The Aurora Community Café is open today – and each Wednesday – 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church. located at the corner of Victoria and Mosley

| SATURDAY, MAY 19 | Aurora Farmers Market: Seasonal fresh fruits & veggies, delicious goodies and unique crafts will be waiting for you at the Aurora Farmers Market & Aurora Fair today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Town Park 10 West St. Theaurorafarmersmarket.ca.

| WEDNESDAY, MAY 16 | The Aurora Chamber of Commerce will host a 2018 Business Election Candidate Networking Event. Each candidate will have 1 minute to introduce themselves, and take place from 11:40 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Aurora Museum & Archives.

UFOs YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23 | The Aurora Community Café is open today – and each Wednesday – 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church. located at the corner of Victoria and Mosley

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Aurora Art Show & Sale marks 56 years of creativity

Aurora Town Hall was filled to the brim with original art over the weekend as the Town and the Society of York Region Artists (SOYRA) presented the 56th Annual Art Show & Sale. A juried show featuring an impressive collection of artwork using a variety of mediums, the show opened with a special reception on Friday night where winning artists were recognized by Mayor Geoff Dawe, SOYRA president Linda Welch and, for youth artists, by Robin Taylor Smith of the Aurora Optimists. Winners were as follows.

OILS: First Place: Anita Niemeyer (“Sublime”), with honourable mentions to Bill Lunshof with “In All in the Angle” and Jose K. with “Flight.”

ACRYLIC: First Place: Eva Folks with “Steampunk Dave”. Honourable mentions to Barbara Horstman with “Autumn Morning” and Johanna Van Kempen with “Georgian Bay Island”.

WATERCOLOURS: First Place: Douglas Crowe with “Winter Kale.” Honourable mentions to Barbara Hontman with “Autumn Morning” and Johanna Van Kempen with “Georgian Bay Island”.


OPTIMIST CLUB OF AURORA – BEST IN YOUTH AWARD: First Place: Hannah Clark Gomez with “Love You Forever.” Honourable Mentions: Sarah Fusco with “Save the Bees” and Olga Parovyk with “Catch the Sunlight.”

SOYRA’S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: First Place: Anna Vander Heide with “Reflection of the Mind.” Honourable Mentions: Mary Ibrahim with “Cultural Beauty 18” and Lauren Rae with “A Buffalo Who is Too Old to Drink. All he Does is Think (Victor).”
Council needs to be kept in loop: Thompson

Councillor Thompson, in turn, expressed some reservations.

“1918 was a really complicated time. Conflict was happening, you’re losing loved ones, they are going overseas, and you have this group of women in a local context who just decide they are going to do things. They have priorities they want done, they want the vote, they want safe treatment for children, they want to do something about it, and all the time they have to keep in mind the war was happening and it was their part to step up and do something.”

The Temple of Fame: Staging Women’s Roles runs through June 10 at the Aurora Museum and Archives. The Museum is located on the second floor of the Church Street School.

Exhibition runs through June 10

Collectively how to protect their families through safety and hygiene.

“I think [that origin] is hard to make connections to,” she says. “Local women’s groups disbanded in the 60s and 70s, but there have been recent trends of it coming together. I think it would be really cool to re-think what women’s groups are today and what women can garner from each other and that service. I was a Girl Guide, I was a Ranger, and I have done a lot of volunteer work. It is kind of like Girl Guides to me. I like this idea of really pulling a group together through things like this and the things we feel are important to the community.

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Merlin’s Hollow opens Saturday for 37th season

By Brock Weir

Merlin’s Hollow, the famed gardens of David and Dierdre Tomlinson will welcome visitors for their 37th season this Saturday.

Founded by landscape architect David Tomlinson, and his wife Dierdre, in 1981, Merlin’s Hollow is designed as a series of gardens within a garden.

"Enclosed by high cedar hedges, each garden has its own distinct character and a series of arches invite the visitor from one garden to the next," say the Tomlinsons. "Features within the garden include a woodland walk, a firm walk, alpine garden with achen herb, bog bog and a bog pond. Stone walls enclose raised beds of sweet flowers, herbes, herbage shrubs and a chyme lawn. A winter garden and knot garden were added in 1996."

The ½-acre garden contains over 1,200 different plants and will be open on four Saturdays this spring and summer, which each day promising a completely different garden as each plant comes into its own.

The first day is this Saturday, May 12, which will showcase spring bulbs, sweet flowers and alpine scree.

The next open day will be the second Saturday in June, featuring the fragrant garden, thyme lawn, iris and peonies.

Merlin’s Hollow will be open again the first Saturday of July and the Sunday of the following weekend, where visitors will be able to take in the summer flowering perennials, good and water gardens.

Merlin’s Hollow is located on Centre Crescent, which is off Centre Street, just west of Industrial Parkway North.

For more information, call 905-727-8979.

Local gardener Dierdre Tomlinson is pictured giving a tour of her famed Merlin’s Hollow last year.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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