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# THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 19 No. 18 905-727-3300

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FREE Week of February 14, 2019



**FUTURE WINTER SCENE?** – An artistic rendering of an aerial view over the proposed Library Square. The revised plans, which will be presented to Council this week, includes parking, a reconfiguration of an extension to the Church Street School, and a year-round attraction which, in the winter, can double as a skating rink.

Illustration by Hallett Visual for RAW Design and The Planning Partnership

## Library Square focuses on “performance hall” and year-round attraction

By Brock Weir

A year-round attraction and a multi-purpose “performance hall” are the hallmarks of revised plans for Library Square, which are due to be presented to Council members this week.

The newest plans for the downtown attraction, which is slated to be built on the land between the Aurora Public Library and the Aurora Cultural

Centre, include a number of revisions, based on feedback from stakeholders, that vary significantly from previous versions offered at Town Hall.

Following the demolition of the old Library and Seniors' Centre on Victoria Street last year, Council approved in principle a gathering space between the two remaining landmarks, plus a three-storey addition to the Church Street School, which would feature a 250-seat theatre.

The three-storey addition remains

in the revised plans, but the theatre has been reconfigured into a multipurpose space now dubbed a “performance hall.”

“Since June 2018, staff and consultants have continued to refine the features in each of the spaces of the three-storey model that includes the theatre space,” says Robin McDougall, Director of Community Services, in her report to Council. “Based on the inputs from the specialized consultants

Continued on page 8

## Laramie Project aims to shine light on humanity, say student actors

By Brock Weir

Convincing someone to set aside their personal biases for a moment and take a new approach in how they look at the world has become an increasingly tall order in this increasingly polarized world, but students at King's Country Day School are aiming to do just that

Continued on page 10



**THE LOOK OF LOVE** – David and Dierdre Tomlinson are familiar faces around Aurora, not only for their activism, but for sharing their famed gardens with the entire community. Now married for 57 years, this Valentine's Day they share their story. For more, see Page 14.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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20035921

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**CLUB SIZE**

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# Aurora Council set to adopt new Code of Conduct

By Brock Weir

Once a political hot potato less than a decade ago, Aurora is set to adopt a new Council Code of Conduct.

A new Code of Conduct is required to comply with the Province's Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, which was brought into force in 2017, and mandates that all municipalities in Ontario have both a Code of Conduct and an Integrity Commissioner to review all alleged violations on the Code adopted by Council.

The Code of Conduct covers considerable ground, including gifts, benefits and hospitality received by each Council member, how they conduct themselves around the Council table and with municipal staff, and how they handle confidential information.

"The Council Code of Conduct has been prepared using best practices from

around the Province," says Michael De Rond, Clerk for the Town of Aurora.

The draft Code, which, if approved at this week's General Committee meeting will be ratified at Council on February 26, notes that all Council members in Aurora "recognize their obligation to serve their constituents and the public in a conscientious and diligent manner understanding that as leaders of the community they are held to a higher standard of behaviour and conduct."

"Members recognize that ethics and integrity are at the core of public confidence in government and in the political process; that elected officials are expected to perform their duties in office and arrange their private affairs in a manner that promotes public confidence, avoids the improper use of influence of their office and conflicts of interests, both apparent and real. They recognize the need to uphold both the

letter and the spirit of the law, including policies adopted by Council.

"This Code of Conduct ensures that Members of Council share a common basis and understanding for acceptable conduct of Members of Council in concert with and beyond the minimum standards of behaviour set out in the existing legislative framework."

Outlined in the Code of Conduct are rules governing Conflicts of Interest and how elected members can avoid them, gifts that are or are not appropriate to accept, such as avoiding gifts valued over \$500, events that can and cannot be reimbursed.

"Gifts and benefits are often received by elected officials in the course of their duties and attendance at public functions is expected and is considered part of their role," reads the Code. "Business-related entertainment and gift-giving can be a token of respect and admiration for the elected official,

but can also be seen as an instrument of influence and manipulation. The object of this rule is to provide transparency around the receipt of incidental gifts and benefits and to establish a threshold where the total value could be perceived as potentially influencing a decision.

"The practical problems that nominal gifts and benefits create require a Code of Conduct that provides clarity and transparency. Personal integrity and sound business practices require that relationships with developers, vendors, contractors and others doing business with the Town be such that no member of Council is perceived as showing favouritism or bias towards the giver. There will never be a perfect solution."

The Code of Conduct also sets out rules and prescriptions around how members of Council interact with each other, staff, media, and indeed the community when using social media

Continued on page 12

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**A word for John A.**

I just want to say I enjoyed your editorial (Brock's Banter) in the February 7 issue.

I always enjoy your editorials and relate to the majority of them.

I, as well as you, was not familiar with Viola Desmond until 2016 when her name was put forward to replace the first Prime Minister and the Father of our country Canada, Sir John A. Macdonald, on our ten dollar bill.

Although I have all the respect in the world for Ms. Desmond and am proud of her action and related feats, I am bewildered how she should replace someone as revered as John A.

Not for a second am I saying she should not be portrayed on our money, but I am saying she should not replace Macdonald.

Sure, Macdonald had his faults and as we look back he did things we think aberrant in today's world but it was the normal thinking back then.

It would be instilled in him from childhood. He was not some tyrant or dictator but one man in a legislature of many of which all had a vote as did he.

I am proud of Sir John A. Macdonald for his achievements not the least of was the building of a railroad system from coast to coast. The bringing together of the French and the English in Upper and Lower Canada. Today's government can't even get a pipe line through a couple of provinces.

I have never been prejudiced. I was raised in a very protestant, Orange Lodge, family but some of my best friends were and are Roman Catholics. Some of my best friends were and are black and brown skinned people.

I don't care where people are from but if they choose Canada as their new country it's because Canada is one of the best in the world so don't try to change it to what you left.

John H. Archibald  
New Tecumseth

**Nature Aurora hosts annual open house**

Nature Aurora is hosting an Open House to welcome anyone with an interest in Aurora's natural treasure. All are welcome to learn about our work and join in as they wish. We monitor bird boxes, capture Chimney Swift activity, survey dawn birds as well as the owl and frog populations and track snakes in the Nature Reserve, too. We are Citizen Scientists who also welcome students seeking volunteer hours. Saturday March 2, 2 - 5 p.m. at the Aurora Seniors' Centre.

Lissa Dwyer  
Nature Aurora

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**Machell's Corners**



**Chapters Yet Written**



**BROCK'S BANTER**

Brock Weir

At the cusp of entering my teen years, I heard a centuries-old quote that has stuck with me:

"Man was made for joy and woe  
"Then when this we rightly know  
"Through the world we safely go.  
"Joy and woe are woven fine  
"A clothing for the soul to bind."

Why these words, written in Georgian times by British poet William Blake struck a chord was unclear to me at the time, and it is not clear to me now. Nevertheless, the passage of time has underscored the fact that it is a timeless passage and ultimately true.

It is said almost often enough to be a cliché that you can't know joy without sorrow. Whether we like it or not, they go hand in hand and no one is immune to it.

Examples of it in Aurora have never been far away.

Many of us remember the sorrow shared by so many in this community when Aurora United Church burned down in 2014, only to see how even more people were buoyed by the reaction of the community to double down and turn a tragedy into a positive.

We've also seen a local family, like the Neville-Lakes, who tragically lost five members of their family to a drunk driver, grapple with their grief, only to turn around and focus on making a positive difference for children and families who are struggling with bereavement. More recently, Aurorans were united in shock and grief for the victims – and families – of the bus crash that killed so many members of the Humboldt Broncos hockey club in Saskatchewan. Aurorans donned green in their honour, left hockey sticks outside their door in memory, and opened their wallets to help those left to pick up the pieces. The story didn't stop there. When survivors of the crash came to the Aurora Community Centre in December for Rogers Hometown Hockey, that joy took over, filling the ACC with the most electric atmosphere I've ever seen in the arena as the players received a red-carpet

heroes' welcome.

And yet, it's a story that continues to unfold.

There are chapters still untold, and its lasting impacts are not yet known.

And here, I turn the rest of this space over to my colleague Joshua Santos, editor of our sister paper, The Caledon Citizen:

**Humboldt Broncos crash driver made a mistake that anyone could have made**

By Joshua Santos  
The Caledon Citizen

*Humans are imperfect beings.*

*We make mistakes all the time. Many of us doing things we shouldn't out of carelessness when we know better. We speed when we shouldn't, cut drivers off when we miss an exit or take our eyes off the road for a split second.*

*Even if we proclaim ourselves as perfect drivers, many of us become complacent with our driving abilities. We're lucky that our mistakes don't damage someone's car, let alone kill someone on the highway.*

*Jaskirat Singh Sidhu, the driver of the semi-trailer trucks that struck a bus carrying the Humboldt Broncos hockey team in Saskatchewan last April was not lucky.*

*It was supposed to be a day, like any other except it wasn't. He killed 16 people and seriously injured 13 more after his truck blew through a stop sign in rural Saskatchewan on April 6, 2018.*

*He apologized to the families of the victims numerous times pleading guilty to 16 charges of dangerous driving causing death and 13 charges of dangerous driving causing injury, according to the Toronto Star.*

*He faces a maximum sentence of 14 years and 10 years in prison, respectively, for each count of dangerous driving causing death and dangerous driving causing bodily harm. He appeared selfless dozens of times in videos and photos. He said the crash happened because of his inexperience. The defence focused on*

*his intent arguing his actions were negligent and not intentionally reckless.*

*Sidhu could have challenged the charges and drawn out an already lengthy case, but he didn't. He has taken responsibility for what had happened.*

*He was not speeding, drunk or distracted at the time of the collision, according to the CBC. There was nothing blocking his way at the intersection and the stop sign where he could have yielded was visible. Maybe he zoned out. Maybe the sun was in his eyes. We don't know.*

*All we know is that he still missed those signs while driving in broad daylight and clear roads.*

*The Crown said that based on the facts of the case, current legal statuses, other case law and the victim-impact statements delivered, a 10-year-sentence is fitting.*

*Many may want him to be locked up in prison for the rest of his life. He did kill 16 people and destroyed many families, after all. He was the one driving but he made a mistake anybody could have made.*

*A sentence may stop people from driving carelessly, and if anything, it could reinforce people's faith in the justice system. However, considering that he took ownership of his actions, there's no purpose to impose an extended prison term, especially when he's of low risk to reoffend.*

*Compare Sidhu's case with that of Marco Muzzo. Muzzo, who was recently denied parole after serving two years of a 10-year-sentence, drove his car and killed three young children and their grandfather in Vaughan. Muzzo also pleaded guilty to the charges against him.*

*Muzzo was drunk, speeding, drove past a stop sign and had a blood alcohol level of about three times the legal limit. Muzzo made a choice to drink and drive instead of calling for a cab ride home. Many of us, who are responsible, would leave our keys at home or called a friend if we think we drank too much to drive. His case may be a lesson for drivers to stop drinking and driving when we know we shouldn't.*

*An extended sentence for Sidhu on the other hand won't remind people to drive carefully on the roads. It was a freak accident and one that will haunt him for the rest of his life.*

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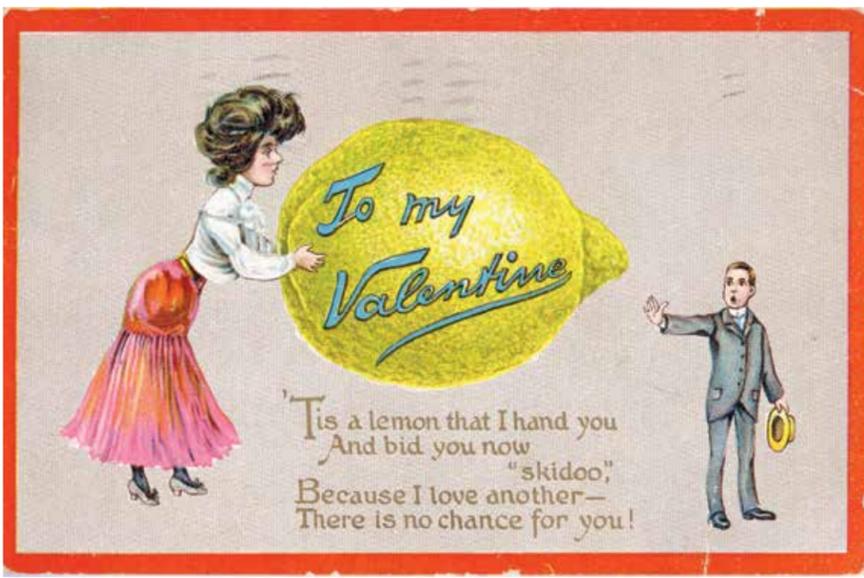
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Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.



## The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating...

Valentine's Day!  
(February 14)

In 1910, Miss E. Osborne received this postcard (81.79.21) from her friend, Kate. Unlike the lemon, the humour in this poem has not gone sour.

Happy Valentine's Day,  
Aurora!



## TIME TRAVELLER'S DIARY

Jacqueline Stuart

## Behind the white fence

One day in February 1919, the news spread around Town that the working day at Collis Leather – Aurora's second largest employer, located on Tyler Street – had been reduced from ten hours to nine, with no reduction in pay.

The time traveller was a bit cynical about this apparent generosity on the part of president Sidney M. Collis.

The tannery (which converted animal skins to leather) was by no means the first industry in the country to reduce workers' hours and in many cases production had actually increased. And such a move was probably wise at a time when there was a good deal of labour unrest: the Winnipeg General Strike was just around the corner.

The tannery's late founder, Sidney Collis's older brother Walter, had previously worked at the Davis tannery in King Township. There he had introduced the use of chrome, replacing the tree bark traditionally used in tanning. Chrome reduced to just one day what had been a month-long stage in the process.

The benefit to tanneries was immediately obvious but the long-term harmful effect on people and the environment took longer to be recognized. In the early years of Collis Leather (which opened in 1912) the wastes were simply dumped into the stream which ran through the property.

Spurred by a growing understanding of pollution and by the constant complaints from residents, steps began to be taken to treat the tannery's wastes.

A treatment plant, settlement lagoons, and a pond were installed. In the hot summers the odorous solids in the pond, including animal hair and flesh, might build up to ten inches in depth and were sturdy enough to walk on.

One air-borne chemical tended to turn the white paint on nearby houses black: repainting was done at the expense of the tannery. Over time the active pollution problems were dealt with.

The tannery was purchased by Canada Packers early in 1936. Meat packers and tanneries – a convenient combination.

Quite stylish additions were made to the original brick building, including some designed by architect William Fleury, descended from the Aurora family famous for its ploughs. But in time Collis, like most tanneries in Canada, was defeated by foreign competition and the use of synthetics. The tannery closed in March of 1988, costing just over one hundred employees their jobs.

After Collis closed the various spaces in the plant were for many years rented to different businesses, but in 2013 the owners (by then Maple Leaf Foods) sold the site.

The time traveller was able to visit the building about that time: he saw some spooky black pits at the lowest level, acres of wood flooring on an upper floor, and a bright pink lunchroom/auditorium.

The new owners began the long process of preparing the brownfield site for residential development.

All structures disappeared and mountains of gravelly soil moved in and out. Today neat white boarding lines the Tyler Street frontage and in due course there will be no sign of this site's industrial past.

Or perhaps there will be an actual sign (as the time traveller would hope): a plaque informing the passerby of the importance of Collis Leather in Aurora's history.

## January in Review



## MP'S REPORT

Leona Alleslev, MP  
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

I thought you may be interested in what my team and I have been up to this last month! January was a busy, but exciting month in the riding full of community events and in the new House of Commons in Ottawa.

In Ottawa

The House of Commons new home will reside in West Block for the next decade as Centre Block receives interior restoration. The renovation is quite impressive, and if you plan on visiting Ottawa, contact my constituency office so we can assist in setting up a tour!

Canada is currently experiencing one of the most challenging times with our diplomatic relationship with China. The Prime Minister has failed to protect the privacy and security of Canadians and our digital infrastructure from intelligence gathering, and the situation of Canadians being detained in China is rapidly deteriorating.

From speaking on CBC's Power and Politics, to asking the tough questions to our Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Public Safety – as Shadow Minister for Global Security, I had several opportunities to speak to the federal government's failure to address the escalating situation with China.

On the first day back in the House, I asked the government what their plan is for China. I also had the opportunity to stand up for the privacy and security of Canadians and asked when the Prime Minister will ban Huawei from Canada's emerging 5G infrastructure.

My colleagues and I in the opposition continue to question the

government on their involvement in the Vice Admiral Mark Norman case. Evidence continues to mount that there has been an attempt to obstruct the Vice-Admiral's defence by withholding critical government documents.

Last week, I also asked questions, on the Globe and Mail's story alleging that there was pressure from the Prime Minister's office to make the Attorney General of Canada abandon the criminal case against SNC-Lavalin. If true, it is a threat to the independence of our judiciary and the very foundation of our democracy.

### In Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill

In December and January, I asked you to fill out a survey to rank Canada's Top 10 Federal Priorities. To those that filled out the survey, thank you. To see how the residents of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill ranked the priorities, please go to my website [LeonaAlleslevMP.ca](http://LeonaAlleslevMP.ca).

This month I attended the Aurora Chamber of Commerce's Breakfast with Finance Minister Bill Morneau. It was disconcerting that the Minister did not provide answers to questions from local business leaders regarding the lifting of punishing steel and aluminum tariffs, prevention of further losses of foreign

## Depth Perception



## INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

Once again the age old Aurora question has been raised; at what point should the Town start or stop shoveling snow from its roads and sidewalks?

As it seems to do every winter, Council has debated and ultimately declined to approve the removal of windrows, those mountains of snow deposited at the ends of our driveways when the plows go by.

While it would be nice to have that service, and not have to worry about chipping away at the rapidly freezing wall of ice, it would mean another increase in taxes, and no one wants that.

Higher service costs also explain why snow plows don't clear the streets until 8 cm of snow has fallen. Except for Yonge, which get attention once 5 cm has fallen.

5 cm is also the magic number for sidewalks to be cleared.

Aurora is fortunate to have a service that clears all sidewalks. Many neighbouring municipalities do not, or just the main walkways are cleared.

In locations where there is no full service, the residents are responsible for ensuring the sidewalks in front of their properties are cleared in a thorough and timely manner.

That's what I remember where I grew up. Clearing the driveway also meant shovelling the entire length of our sidewalk.

While having the Town do the work sounds wonderful, there are pros and cons to public vs private sidewalk clearing.

If the residents are tasked with the job, it saves tax dollars, and the sidewalks

tend to be cleared of snow and ice, even if well below the 5 cm threshold.

On the negative side, it's more work for homeowners. And for those who use the sidewalks, there's no guarantee the homeowners will clear them, at least voluntarily, which necessitates increased enforcement efforts.

With the Town doing the work, it costs more tax-wise, but you're guaranteed clean, sanded sidewalks in a relatively timely manner.

Countering this, is that you're guaranteed clean, sanded sidewalks only when snowfall levels reach 5 cm. If less than that falls, it's *periculo tuo uti*, or use at your own risk.

Sadly, many folks of all ages have no option but to "risk it" in these circumstances; kids going to school, people exercising or walking their dogs, those trying to reach their super mailbox .... the list goes on.

I never really thought about this risk until recently when I was out for a stroll in our neighbourhood. A couple of centimetres of snow had fallen, which nicely concealed a large sheet of ice on a depressed slab of sidewalk.

capital, and measures to address challenges in Canada's competitiveness.

Recently, I visited local small businesses and community organizations across the riding. I stopped by Aurora Family Shoe Repair, a locally owned and operated business for 30 years. I also toured the Aurora Museum and Archive's Play Hard, Fight Hard Exhibit to learn more about the history of military in sport in Canada.

It was also great to visit the Canadian Mental Health Association York and South Simcoe Branch to discuss the organization's creation of a mental health and addictions crisis hub for York Region. Last but not least, I visited CosmoProf in Aurora, and stopped in to James Dimitri Hair Atelier for some pampering after a busy month!

Many thanks to everyone who braved the cold to join me at our New Year's Levee at my constituency office. Residents from across the riding came out to celebrate the New Year, meet my team and have conversations on how we can work to build a better Canada in 2019.

### Upcoming Events

I am excited to be hosting two events in the riding – a Town Hall on Taxes, Tariffs and Trade on February 24 and our Policy & Playtime event for families on March 1. To learn more and RSVP, visit my website [www.LeonaAlleslevMP.ca](http://www.LeonaAlleslevMP.ca).

*As always, I encourage residents to engage with me as their federal representative. To share your feedback and concerns, contact my constituency office by e-mail at [leona.alleslev@parl.gc.ca](mailto:leona.alleslev@parl.gc.ca) or by phone at 905-773-8358.*

Despite wearing boots with good traction, down I went.

While my wrist broke my fall, my fall broke my wrist.

Although I did break a bone in my hand, on the "ouch" and recovery scale, I was fortunate that it wasn't as bad as it could have been. Plus I got to meet all the nice folks at the fracture clinic at Southlake (really, they're great people).

This experience got me thinking about two things. First, many thanks to those who altruistically shovel and sand or salt their sidewalks for the benefit of their neighbours each snowfall, whether there's enough "official" snow for the plows to be out or not.

Secondly, it made me ponder the standards that are in place in Town for snow removal, whether it be for sidewalks, roadways or windrows.

While we all want to see these services improved, such as all windrows being cleared, or the plows being out on the roads and sidewalks as soon as snow starts to accumulate, and not only after several centimetres have fallen, doing so comes at a financial cost, and no one is a fan of that.

But not improving them has other types of costs, as well, as I've now experienced first-hand, so to speak.

With no clear right or wrong, and arguments for both sides, this explains why such things as windrow removal and snow clearing standards are debated every year in Aurora, and likely will be each winter for years to come.

Feel free to e-mail Scott at:  
[machellscorners@gmail.com](mailto:machellscorners@gmail.com)

## THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Have you noticed an increase in cannabis consumption in the community?

Yes No Unsure

Go to [www.theauroran.com](http://www.theauroran.com) to vote!

Previous poll results  
Do you support Council's decision to opt-in on retail cannabis?

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
February 12, 2019	53%	45%	2%

# Fire & Ice to keep families warm at Arctic Adventure

By Brock Weir

For decades, archeologists have been able to chisel prehistoric creatures out of blocks of tundra ice, giving us a good idea of the larger-than-life animals that used to roam the earth.

This Monday, amateur sleuths will be able to see what they can uncover at Arctic Adventure.

Monday is Family Day and the Town of Aurora is hard at work pulling out all the

stops for the annual winter festival, which always sees thousands of residents brave the cold for a day of fun at Town Park.

This year, however, organizers are putting a bit of a different spin on the party – building morning and afternoon programming based around the theme of Fire & Ice.

“Fire and ice are two extremes and I really wanted to add that to the mix,” says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora “The idea of the two extremes has been percolating since



The Battle of the Chainsaws, pictured here in 2018, is always a popular attraction at Family Day's Arctic Adventure.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

last spring and this year everything just lined up well.”

Helping bring this theme to life are fire jugglers, the ever-popular Battle of the Chainsaws ice sculpting competition, a bonfire to keep families nice and toasty, an outdoor skating rink that is purely at the mercy of Mother Nature, Body Zorbs, and a new activity for the kids.

“Kids will get the chance to get to chisel and crack away at ice to free animals from the ice age,” says Ms. Ware, who says the Special Events team has had quite an interesting time through trial and error bringing this event to fruition, but they have perfected the technique. “There are hippos, elephants, bears, monkeys, moose, zebras, rhinos, cougars, chickens and cows. We'll have this activity twice and there will be 120 animals in total to uncover each time – but you won't know what animals are in it until you start working on them.

“You always want to look at what you've done in the past, what's currently coming up, and this year we have settled enthusiastically on our Fire & Ice theme, doing our overall entertainment programming slightly different than we have in previous years. We'll start off Family Day with the White Pine Dancers, an indigenous group that will be doing presentations and storytelling. They were the first families 20,000 years ago and we'll be starting the day with some of the oldest families.

“Back by popular demand, we will have the Speaking of Wildlife show which is going to give an educational animal display on animals [often associated] with the winter, and then we'll move into the Battle of the Chainsaws which will see two professional ice carvers compete to create what the crowd determines is the best ice sculpture. This will be followed by a dynamic 40-minute fire juggling show

by The Fire Guy, followed by a second round of the Battle of the Chain Saws with new sculptures.”

Family Day is often a day where people stay home and focus on the family, says Ms. Ware, but they hope Arctic Adventure will encourage families to try something new. Their goal is to provide as many quality programs as possible for local families, for free, giving families a new experience each year.

If going out into the February cold is not your idea of a good time, however, the Town will also hold two indoor activities at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex to mark Family Day: a free Zumba class with Club Aurora at 11 a.m., and a free leisure swim at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“We have really tried to strike a balance between some indoor activities as well as the outdoor activities,” says Ms. Ware. “Regardless of the weather, because you have the ability to dress up for it, come down and experience something new. This is an event where, every single year, I've met new residents who have just moved here during the winter and this was the first event they had been out to. After talking to them, you would see them start to talk to the people in the park and you can just start to see that friendly, welcoming appeal Aurora has. You can actually see it in action.

“For those who haven't come and those who have come before, come out and take in an experience which is something that isn't always otherwise accessible, like the Battle of the Chainsaws, the Fire Guy and Body Zorbs. Everything is meant to keep you active and keep you captivated.”

For more information on Monday's Arctic Adventure, visit [www.aurora.ca/arcticadventure](http://www.aurora.ca/arcticadventure). Events run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Town Park (Mosley and Wells Streets).



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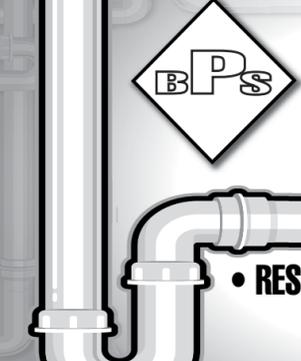
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# Personal Support Worker flips script to provide support for PSWs

By Brock Weir

Personal Support Workers (PSWs) dedicate their working lives providing care and support for those who need it.

But who, at the end of the day, supports the PSW?

For Sheri-Lyn Steele, it's a question that needed to be answered.

The former Aurora resident has founded the Canadian PPE Network, an organization that takes its name from a term familiar to just about every person in the health care sector: Personal Protective Equipment.

"Your mask, your gown, your gloves – these are the things that are meant to protect you," says Ms. Steele. "That's what PSWs do and that's what we do – PSWs have to go to each other because they don't have anyone else."

"We are driven by a single goal: to do our part in making the world a better place for all PSWs and front line health care workers – at ground level," she says. "In a world where society is aging at an alarmingly rapid rate and PSWs are leaving the field at an equally alarming rate because of feeling devalued with chronic understaffing, unfair minimum wages and pay scales, and often overworked, we need to ensure that our PSWs that provide these critical care services are staying in the field and are taken care of properly at a personal level to be able to ensure that the care brought provided is the best, top-quality care possible. We want to help our PSWs and frontline workers feel valued and like they matter – because they do. Truthfully, health care as we know it would crumble without them."

The goal of The Canadian PPE Network is to provide mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, social, personal and educational resources, supports and programs to frontline workers at little to no cost to them through memberships, partnerships, donations and more,

so they can continue to develop as PSWs, individuals and succeed professionally and personally.

"The reason we decided to start this up was because there are no supports," says Ms. Steele. There are no resources and nowhere for PSWs to turn. They turn to each other online in Facebook groups, throw ideas around and try to console and support each other. I really started to notice a need for something just for PSWs. There is no governing body, we're not regulated, we're literally out there on our own. Nurses have [several organizations] and PSWs have nobody, not one single person. There is not one entity out there that provides support for PSWs.

"They need somewhere to turn when they say, 'I'm really struggling. I need bereavement counselling. Can you help me?'" The way that we have structured it is membership based, so, as a member we are able to get you educational programs that are free or discounted. I have a program right now set up through Alzheimer's Ontario that we're going to be offering for educational resources for PSWs for Alzheimer's. It is kind of like a subsidy-type program as well.

"We believe that by giving this to them we can impact their morale, their pride, their competence, and in turn that is going to be passed on to the people they care for. PSWs love doing it but they can't afford to live. If we can give them something to want to stay in the profession, and bring more people into the profession, then it is just going to be all round better for everyone else – the people getting the care and the people providing the care."

The PPE Network was soft-launched online in October, followed by a formal launch at the Aurora Public Library attended by now-Mayor Tom Mrakas the following month. In that time, memberships began rolling in, as have partnerships.

"In the two months we have been doing this, we have already made a

huge impact," says Ms. Steele. "In the next 12, it is going to be much bigger. Our main goal is to do Ontario first and by the time we're across the Province we're then going

to want to branch out across Canada over the next three years.

For more information on The Canadian PPE Network, visit [www.ppenetwork.com](http://www.ppenetwork.com) or call [info@ppnetwork.com](mailto:info@ppnetwork.com).



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## Getting Things Done

Mayor Tom Mrakas

Well, it is budget time not only at Aurora Town Council, but at the Region as well.

At Regional Council, we had a presentation by our Commissioner of Finance to kick off the upcoming budget process. The presentation helped outline the current pressures as well as the proposed tax levy from the Region.

The 2019 proposed budget includes \$2.3 billion in operating costs and a tax increase of 3.37%. During the presentation we examined the 10 year capital plan which sits at \$6.6 billion and what needs to be done to ensure that the Region continues to grow in a positive way.

The interesting thing that always gets looked at is how tax dollars get spent whether it is the local level or the Region. At the Region, for every dollar that is spent the breakdown is as follows - 30 cents York Regional Police, 28 cents Transportation Services, 19 cents Community and Health Services, 9 cents Corporate Services, 5 cents Environmental Services, 5 cents Financial Services, and 4 cents Other.

I am looking forward to dive into my first budget at the Regional level and look at ensuring that every dollar that is spent has value to you the residents

of the Region – because, at the end of the day, it is your money and we need to ensure that we provide the best possible services to our communities!

Some did mention that the 3.37% was unacceptable. While that might be high, I believe that we need to come up with some concrete examples of where we can make adjustments and not just say "we can do better."

I know that I will bring the same level in depth analysis to the Region Budget as I have to the Town's Budgets and examine the budget to find those areas that we could look at creating savings.

I am looking forward to beginning the budget at the next Committee of the Whole meeting in February. Now, off to go through the Budget binder!

Well, that is all for this week.

I am looking forward to working together with my Regional colleagues to get things done in a fiscally responsible manner.

As always, if you would like to get into contact with me please feel free to contact me anytime by phone 905-727-3123 ext. 4746 or by email [tmrakas@aurora.ca](mailto:tmrakas@aurora.ca) and if you would like to sign up for more newsletters and Council updates then please visit [Mrakas.ca/](http://Mrakas.ca/) contact to join the growing list of Aurorans that are staying informed

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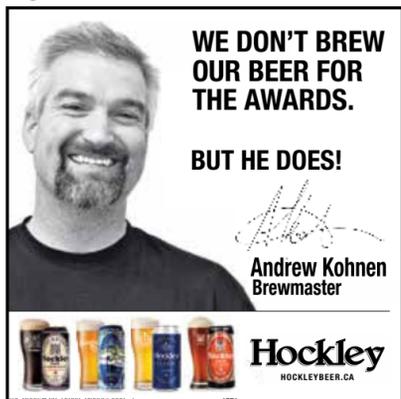
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## Revisions to Library Square plans came after consultation

From page 1  
and cultural partners, certain aspects of the spaces became apparent and were identified as important to be included in the final design, and yet are known as typical features for cultural spaces.

“It was also important through discussions that the third floor theatre space be a multi-purpose space as it will serve much more than just theatre-style uses. The word ‘theatre’ brings to mind certain functions; however, the space is being designed to be very multi-functional. The space will be able to service functions such as musicals, theatre, dance recitals, concerts, movies, lectures and ceremonies with retractable seats extended, while the space will also service banquet or conference-style with the seats retracted to provide an open hall for table and chair setting.”

Helping inform the proposed new layout for the performance hall were visits to similar venues, such as the performing arts space at King’s Country Day School, which features the retractable seating model.

Up for further consideration by planners, designers, Council members and Cultural Partners will be several different options for seating configuration designed to maximize use of the this third floor space.

Below, the proposed addition to the Church Street School will include a visual arts room and performing arts

studio that can be divided to increase usage.

The first floor includes program rooms for community groups, as well as temperature-controlled rooms for the Aurora Museum & Archives.

“In order to celebrate all the amazing artefacts collected over the years, a special glass wall and shelving will be installed to enable patrons to view the artefacts as they enter the facility,” said Ms. McDougall. “Staff would regularly change out the artefacts as different elements are to be featured. In addition, in a few different locations near arenas where patrons may gather [such as the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex], special glassed cases will have artefacts on display.

“The central atrium will be an excellent gathering space while celebrating the original building and the new addition. This space will be a multi-floor feature providing excellent visibility from the Victoria Street entrance to the outdoor square. Access between the two buildings will be open concept through two connecting bridges. A central customer service kiosk will welcome patrons as it will be first point of contact whether they come from Victoria Street or the square. The first floor access off the outdoor square provides a feature entrance into a simple refreshment counter that could



**A SNEAK PEEK** – A bold vision for transforming Library Square is set to be presented this week. Top, atrium space between the historic Church Street School building and the proposed addition. Above, a multipurpose performance space which is planned for the new wing.

Illustration by Hallett Visual for RAW Design and The Planning Partnership

be utilized during special events. Guests could mingle in the facility or head outside through the large retractable glass doors onto the patio and square.”

### OUTDOORS

The outdoor features of Library Square are focused on a year-round attraction.

Plans originally approved by Council did not include an ice rink, but further discussions with the stakeholders brought planners to the conclusion that there is a need to “activate” the square year round, in addition to being a destination for special events.

An ice rink, they agreed, was needed to draw the public to Library Square during the winter months.

“This feature requires a refrigeration system, a mechanical building and a small ice resurfer,” said Ms. McDougall. “The ice rink would be

located in the area where the summer water feature would take place. Approval of the addition of the ice rink would be required to proceed.

“The outdoor square will serve as a place to gather to enjoy the peaceful environment or take part on special events such as festivals, markets, fairs, movie nights, etc. Other features in the outdoor square include consideration for lighting, hydro, water sources, shade features, and a pathway connecting the Library to the new addition.”

As The Auroran reported last week, \$35 million is earmarked in the 2019 capital budget to bring Library Square to fruition, much of which is slated to be funded by the Town’s Hydro Reserves, the pot of money collected from the sale of Aurora Hydro over a decade ago.

Applications for grants, however, might offset the total price tag here, Ms. McDougall notes.

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# Too early to tell whether cannabis consumption is on the rise: Police

By Brock Weir

In the lead up to the legalization of cannabis last fall, there was a concern amongst the police that there might be evidence of an increase in consumption, but according to the York Regional Police, it is too early to tell whether those concerns were warranted.

Police will continue to monitor the situation as they face new challenges on illegal activities, according to Superintendent Mike Flack of the York Regional Police.

Aurora Council voted last month to become just the second municipality in York Region, behind Whitchurch-Stouffville, to opt in on allowing retail cannabis sales. But, due to Aurora's population being over the threshold of 55,000 set by the Provincial Government is likely to be the first community in York Region to see a pot shop plant roots in Town.

According to Superintendent Flack, existing policies place regulations squarely on the shoulders of local bylaws, as well as the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), which is the regulatory body overseeing the retail process, but if the AGCO suspects something criminal is occurring, or is a breach of Federal legislation when it comes to the Cannabis Act, a police investigation would be triggered in conjunction with bylaw.

"[It's similar] to bars and restaurants," says Flack. "We will get complaints from the public that maybe they believe they are serving underage youth at a bar, or they are over-serving, or that we have concerns about various activities that might be occurring at one of those locations. That is when we would start our investigation."

"The new legislation allows for enforcement in a different way. Instead of enforcing what would have been a criminal offence, or an offence under the previous drug act, we're able to enforce it in a way that essentially we're issuing a Provincial Offences Notice. It's very similar to a speeding ticket or an offence under the Liquor Licence Act. Where we might have chosen not to lay charges in the past for, let's say, an underage person who is in possession of marijuana, we're now able to issue a Provincial Offences notice. In some respects, you'll see an increase of enforcement for such things as Cannabis Readily Accessible to the Driver, which is a ticket we've been writing, as well as underage consumption."

The York Regional Police recently completed a two-month initiative on cannabis enforcement and in 1 District,

which covers Aurora, King, Newmarket and East Gwillimbury, 59 charges were laid under the above provisions, he says.

"One of the things we're seeing is certain criminal elements are adapting to the new legislation – or new opportunities, I would suggest," Flack continues. "Just recently, we executed a search warrant and made arrests on essentially a person running a cannabis operation out of their house where they were dialling much like [apps such as Uber Eats]. That is a new trend we're really starting to see; a new criminal enterprise that didn't exist a year ago."

In the weeks prior to and immediately following legalization, York Regional Police raised alarm bells over the increased cost of enforcement, particularly the exorbitant costs of roadside tests for cannabis impairment compared to the cost of testing for alcohol.

Financial assistance has come from upper levels of government, covering a range of costs including the increased training of officers.

"Any time you're potentially going to take someone's liberty away, you absolutely need to make sure your officers have a high degree of knowledge and expertise in the new legislation," says Flack. "With that said, there is a lot of hours that go into training our officers. Every hour spent training is another that is not spent by an officer on the road, either responding to calls or doing proactive policing. The other thing we're still waiting on is the technology to catch up [with] roadside screening. We have had to train a lot of our officers as drug recognition experts and that is quite expensive. Field sobriety testing as well [accounts for] a lot of hours that are spent in training. It is really the financial assistance that is needed to support the increase to our budget in order to make that all happen."

There are few misconceptions out there in the community when it comes to opting-in, he adds, but that is not to say there aren't misconceptions in other areas. Flack says there is "anecdotal evidence, whether it is me listening to talk radio or listening to conversations around the consumption of marijuana" that people still don't look at impairment due to cannabis the same as alcohol impairment.

"You do have a large number of people that believe you can still use cannabis and not be impaired, which is a bit alarming and a bit concerning to us, as you can imagine," he says. "It is very similar, I would think, to where we were 10 or 20 years ago when people thought driving while impaired by alcohol, that they would be fine. We have worked so hard to educate

the public on the hazards of driving while impaired by alcohol and now we're starting that same discussion. It is almost as though we're back where we were 10 or 20 years ago trying to convince people it is unsafe to drive while using cannabis as well.

"It is a little early to tell whether or not we have seen an increase in consumption yet or not. That has been

our big concern, that whenever you see an increase in consumption of any drug, alcohol or intoxicating substance, there are individuals who can't do it responsibly. If you increase the number of people who can't do it responsibly, it is going to lead to more calls for service for us and that can lead to a little bit more of an unsafe community."

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## Parents of Matthew Shepard to attend student production at CD

**From page 1**  
later this month when they perform The Laramie Project.

A 2000 play by Moisés Kaufman, The Laramie Project looks at the aftermath of one of the most infamous hate crimes in living memory, the killing of openly gay university student Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming.

Matthew, whose ashes were finally laid to rest last fall at Washington's National Cathedral on the twentieth anniversary

of his murder, the only location where his parents could rest assured his grave would not be vandalized or desecrated, was beaten, tortured and left to die just over 20 years ago.

His murder shone a light on homophobia and hate crimes and, drawn upon countless interviews with Laramie residents and others connected to the case, the play has become a potent medium to combat prejudice and promote tolerance wherever it is



Many members of CDS's production of The Laramie Project were hard at work rehearsing the play last Thursday.  
Auroran photo by Brock Weir

performed.

"It is a powerful piece of theatre," says director Scott Garbe. "In the current atmosphere in the world, we need to facilitate open discussion around tolerance and acceptance, and really be frank about what the endgame of hatred is; what happened with Matthew is that endgame and I think it is really important to have a realistic and open conversation around where small comments can lead and try to encourage all of us to allow each other to become ourselves, become fully who we hope to be, and who we are authentically as ourselves."

Over the course of this production, The Laramie Project has become quite personal to Scott, as well as his son, Jeremy, who portrays, among other roles, Matt Galloway, the bartender at the last place Matthew Shepard was seen alive.

Last spring, the duo set off to Laramie to speak with members of the close-knit community who were directly impacted by Matthew's death. As they met with individuals who were directly impacted by the murder, they received a phone call from Matthew's parents, Dennis and Judy, and they formed an immediate bond, the couple welcoming Scott and Jeremy into their home, introducing them to people who knew their son, and accompanying them to a Pride event in Matthew's honour.

Now, with each performance at CDS between February 28 and March 2, Dennis and Judy will be at the theatre offering talk-backs after the play.

"I feel a lot of responsibility bringing this play to life because these are real people, especially with Matthew's parents coming," says student Maeve Tebbutt, who plays Reggie Fluty, the police officer who was first on the scene when Matthew was found, as well as the infamous Fred Phelps, who picketed Matthew's funeral and the subsequent trial of those responsible along with members of his Westboro Baptist Church.

Maeve says she was first introduced to The Laramie Project through her sister, a member of the LGBTQ community, who attended a school that also tackled the play.

"This story is something everybody

should know about, not just because it resonates with the individuals in the LGBT+ community, but it can resonate with anyone who has ever been targeted for something they cannot control," says Maeve. "It also brings with it this amazing message of empathy and maybe if you aren't a supporter of the community, you can see this play, see the struggles of individuals just like yourself, and you might come to change your views on that."

Jeremy agrees that the fact Matthew's parents will be there underscores the importance for them to get this right.

"To me, this will be a success if we are able to enable others to rethink their values and just kind of take a new approach to how they're looking at the world; if they had any previous views, to question them a little bit and try to reconsider why they think certain things, or whether or not it is reasonable to do so, and just see things with an open mind."

Adds Maeve: "But also, if we're able to make any member of the audience, just for a moment, understand what it would have been like for Dennis to lose his son, or for Aaron Kreifels to find Matthew's body, and to just think about the gravity of that event and, like Jeremy said, call into question what they believe. Maybe it is worth putting aside any personal bias for the sake of a human being who deserves to be alive today."

This is music to the ears of Scott, who says he hopes audience members will leave having had a glimpse of humanity, not just Matthew's, but of all those people in Laramie who struggle with what happened in their community.

"There were no winners," says Scott. "The whole town was labelled as a centre of hate crime, when it is really just like any other town. If we can help people see the humanity of the people the students are portraying on stage, I think it will be a success. If we can make Dennis and Judy feel a part of our community, that will be a success as well."

The Laramie Project runs at Country Day School February 28 - March 2. For more information, including tickets, visit [www.cds.on.ca/events](http://www.cds.on.ca/events).



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## Junior A Tigers losing streak reaches four games



Aurora's Tyler Davis gets caught up with Newmarket's Dimello Smith in the Tigers' 4-2 loss to the Hurricanes at the Aurora Community Centre on Saturday.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Tigers will be in tough in looking to return to OJHL contender status, after seeing their record plummet to 2-9-0-2 in the new year and their losing streak hit four games over the weekend.

A pair of losses to the Whitby Fury and rival Newmarket Hurricanes in back-to-back nights has the playoff-clinched

Tigers almost at the .500 level, a position the club has not held since the start of the season.

The absence of league-leading scorer in Friday's tilt with the Fury was certainly felt on the bench at the Aurora Community Centre, where the Tigers were shutout by a score of 4-0.

The Fury managed to outshoot the Tigers 35-28 in the contest, with Aurora goaltender Lucas Durante managing

31 stops. Luke Pearson picked up the shutout for Whitby.

Saturday's meeting with the Hurricanes was a much closer battle between two evenly-matched squads, with the Canes coming out on top 4-2 after a late empty-netter.

Jack Varga notched both of the Aurora goals, while Christian Filippetti made 25 saves between the Aurora pipes.

With only five games remaining on the schedule, the Tigers (23-22-2-2) will be in tough to crawl back into a top-two spot in the North division standings, currently five points back of the Hurricanes and eight points back of the Markham Royals.

Fans looking to get their faces in the spotlight should be looking forward to this Saturday's battle with the Pickering Panthers: the game has been chosen as the OJHL's "Game of the Week", to be broadcast on CHCH TV.

OJHL analyst Alex Bloomfield said he expects a good matchup.

"The Panthers have had Aurora's number all season long," said Bloomfield. "They've really had no trouble with the Tigers, despite being behind them by upwards of twenty points.

"The slump of the Aurora Tigers has been spreading...they're barely treading water at this point in the North division."

Yet all is not yet lost for one of the hottest teams in the OJHL in the season's opening half: the Tigers host two more games at the Aurora Community Centre

this weekend, a place where Bloomfield said he has seen some significantly good play for the home team.

"On home ice, they're a tough team to beat anytime. But the Panthers, with Aurora and Newmarket, have had no trouble with them this season though they're well back in the standings. I expect an evenly-played game."

The Tigers will host the division-leading Royals in a Friday night tilt at 7.30 p.m., before closing out the regular season home schedule against the Panthers with Saturday's televised game.

Books close on the regular season on February 22 against Markham, the finale of a three-game road trip.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit [www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com](http://www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com).

## Newmarket's Williams leads Northeastern to Beanpot title

By Jake Courtepatte

TD Garden. 15,000 fans. And a trophy.

What a way to end a college career.

Newmarket native and ex-Aurora Tiger Eric Williams captained the Northeastern University Huskies to their second-straight Beanpot tournament title on Monday at the home of the NHL's Boston Bruins, taking down the rival Boston College Eagles by a score of 4-2.

"It's incredible, to be able to get a win in my last Beanpot tournament," the college senior told a packed-house press conference following the game. "But I'm also extremely happy for the freshmen who haven't experience this feeling yet. It's an amazing feeling. It's something none of us are ever going to forget."

A battle of cross-town rivals in the Boston area since the early 1950s, the Beanpot is played annually between Northeastern, Boston College, Boston University, and Harvard University in front of a rabid fan base of college rivalry.

For Williams, who is enjoying his best season statistically since his sophomore year, it's the icing on the cake for a stellar college career.

"I wish I could play in this tournament every year until the day I die. It's

that much fun."

Despite the program failing to reach the Beanpot spotlight for over thirty years, Williams said he felt good about the program's future when he made his college decision midway through his second year with the OJHL's

Aurora Tigers.

"Obviously, having not won it in so long, there was a little bit of pressure but I think everybody in the locker room, coming to the tournament every year, was so eager to be the first team to

**Continued on page 19**

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# York 9 FC planning on run at Voyageurs Cup

By Jake Courtepatte

York 9 FC bench boss Jimmy Brennan knows a thing or two about winning a Canadian championship.

In an unprecedented move by the Canadian Soccer Association, members of the inaugural season of the Canadian Premier League will have the opportunity to vie for this year's Voyageurs Cup, the Canadian championship only ever won by Major League Soccer clubs.

"I won a few with TFC as a player and coach, and I'd love to win one with York 9," said Brennan, who will be the only member of a CPL squad, player or coach, to lift the Cup.

Awarded since 2002 by the Voyageurs,

a national organization of Canadian soccer fans formed in 1996, the Voyageurs Cup has annually pitted the best of the best in Canadian soccer against each other throughout a season-long format.

This season's participants, announced on Monday, will include first-year teams for the first time in the tournament's history.

"Because it's the first year of this format, everyone is gonna have a go at it," said Brennan. "We're keen to show our value in the CPL by getting into stages with MLS teams and showing them what we could do."

"We're taking all competitions seriously. We'd love to have a great run in the Cup, even to win it. Same goes for the league."

With the CPL set to kick off its inaugural season in April, a revamped Voyageurs



Morey Doner (#3, left) fights for the ball as a member of Aurora FC last season.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte

league, all who have experience success in the tournament.

The Montreal Impact have lifted the Cup a record nine times, while the Toronto FC are runners-up with seven wins. The Vancouver Whitecaps FC close out the winners' circle with a single championship.

Quarterfinal action kicks off May 15, with York 9 likely facing the local Vaughan Azzurri FC club of the League1 Ontario. A win in round one could have York9 face Hamilton's Forge FC in round two, in the clubs' second meeting after playing the season opener in Hamilton on April 27.

In the meantime, Brennan and his crew have recently added three more names to the opening roster, including former Aurora FC captain Morey Doner, of League1 Ontario. Brennan and Doner worked together in the 2018 season, Brennan's last with the club.

"He's an energetic fullback that loves to get up the line," Brennan said. "I don't think I've seen a guy with that much energy getting up the field as a fullback. He has electric pace. I think he'll cause a lot of problems."

Cup schedule has been in the works for months, more than doubling the number of participating clubs.

A trip to the semifinal rounds could have York9 FC possible facing off against a trio of MLS teams, the top North American

## Integrity commissioner mandatory

From page 3

platforms.

Once adopted the Code of Conduct will bring into place a procedure allowing residents to file a complaint against a Member they allege may be in contravention, as well as a resolution mechanism.

"To initiate a complaint, residents should go to the Town's website and specifically the page dealing with the Code of Conduct and Integrity Commissioner," says Mr. De Rond in his report. "From there, they will be able to fill out and submit the form directly to the Integrity Commissioner. Depending on the type of complaint received, the Integrity Commissioner will initiate either

the informal complaint procedure or the formal complaint procedure. The informal procedure will likely lead to a quick resolution, while the formal complaint procedure may involve an investigation and take days or weeks to conclude. A formal investigation may result in a report to Council with recommendations from the Integrity Commissioner regarding potential remedies. The Code also contains a provision whereby the Integrity Commissioner, under their sole discretion, may declare a complaint to be frivolous and vexatious and therefore not to be investigated."

Council will only be able to terminate the Integrity Commissioner by a two-thirds vote of all members.

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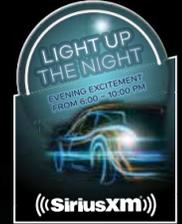


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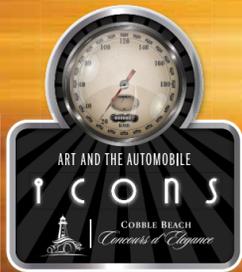
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# 57 years on, variety is still the spice of David and Dierdre Tomlinson's life

By Brock Weir

Strung around her neck on a leather strip were the eyeballs of former lovers.

This was, without thinking, the first words that came out of Dierdre Tomlinson's mouth when working as a palliative care volunteer when a rather dour patient looked up from his chair, spotted her necklace, and grumbled, "And what are those?"

"I was trying to cram the words back into my mouth," Dierdre recalls. "After what seemed like a long, silent pause, he said, 'I thought there would be more.'"

In reality, for the past 57 years, Dierdre and David Tomlinson, who welcome hundreds of people to their famed Merlin's Hollow garden each year, have only had eyes for each other.

"I have more of a sense of humour than David," Dierdre confides as David leaves the kitchen table to take a phone call which, as it turns out, was a call to arrange an upcoming engagement in Dierdre's busy social schedule. "He's very interested in scientific bird research and things like that, but I am more varied and different in that way."

"I'm not so interested in people," David adds with a wry smile, phone call concluded and Dierdre's concert date in Downtown Toronto firmed up for this week. "Dierdre is very interested in people. She likes people and gets on with them, and I get on with them when it suits me."

Fortunately for the people of Aurora,

those times when it suits David are frequent as they welcome hundreds of people through their famed Merlin's Hollow garden each year, and as David, 84, continues his advocacy work in Town for the advancement of the Ivy Jay Nature Reserve and the Aurora Arboretum, but both halves of the whole agree that their differences keep the spark in their relationship.

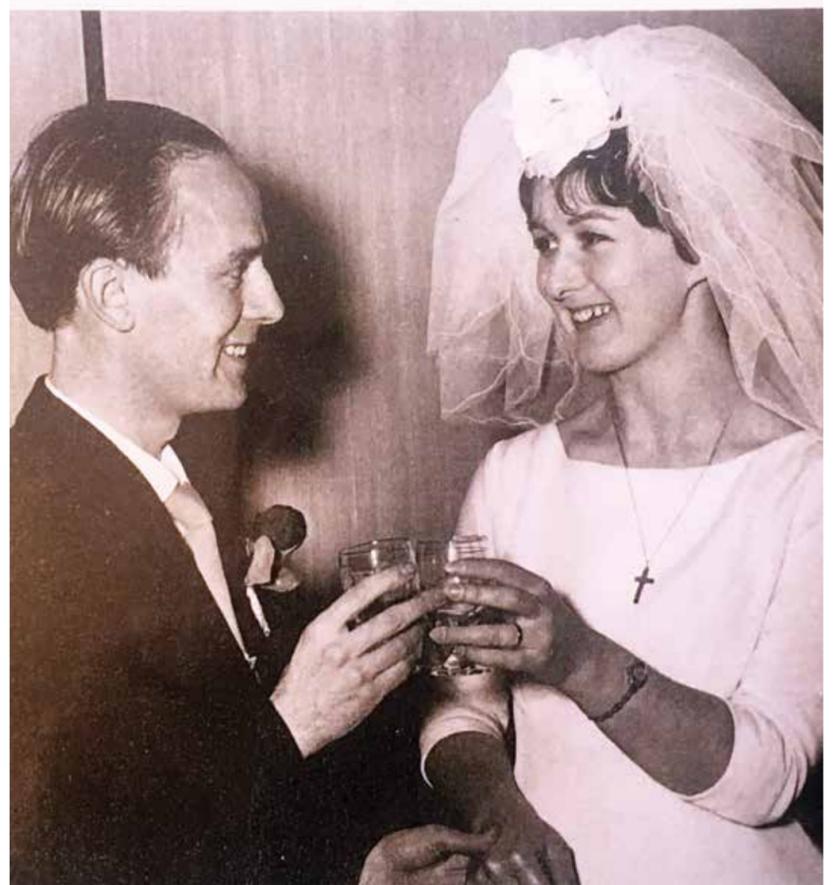
This Valentine's Day, The Auroran asked the well-known just what makes them tick after 57 years.

It's a relationship of mutual respect and understanding, of shared and varied interests, but, perhaps most importantly, a friendship that continues to go from strength to strength.

Dierdre, 77, and David came from similar backgrounds, both from what Dierdre describes as "very low, working class families" in the United Kingdom, Dierdre from London and David from Manchester.

After first crossing paths by chance and thinking little of it at the time, they truly met for the first time in a rather unusual way: stopped at a traffic light amid the hustle and bustle of London.

"I was travelling to college on my scooter in busy London traffic when I stopped at a red light," Dierdre recalls. "Another scooter came up with two men on it, and it was David's friend driving. David said, 'Nice night, isn't it?' I agreed and went onto the next red light. He then said, 'Warm for this time of year.' I agreed and went on. This happened for eight traffic lights and then he finally said,



**A TOAST!** – Aurora's David and Dierdre Tomlinson are pictured on their wedding day 57 years ago.

Contributed photo

"Fancy coming for a coffee?" I thought, why not?"

The trio parked on the side of the road, found an Italian coffee house and spent the night chatting.

David and Dierdre were engaged three months later.

"The next week when I went home, I told my mother what had happened and she said, 'You went out with strangers like that? I said I knew I was safe because there were two of them. Such was my naivety!'"

David says it's a good question what initially made him spark a conversation with the young lady on the next scooter. He had just come out of what he describes as an unhappy relationship with another woman and "wasn't keen on jumping through the same hoops again."

"But, it all worked out," he says, looking over to Dierdre. "It was a very lucky break, wasn't it, love? It was sheer luck."

While they had similar family backgrounds, they came into the marriage with different life experiences. While David was not a scholar, starting as a gardener's apprentice at the age of 12 before working his way up the ladder to eventually become a renowned landscape architect, Dierdre had decidedly different interests.

After her father died when she was just three, she was considered an "Officer's Orphan" and between the ages of five and 18 was sent to a boarding school paid for by the army. She went from working class to the middle class, she said, and left school with a yen to be a teacher, pursuing her passion at the Froebel Institute.

After their marriage in 1962, the Tomlinsons had two daughters – Beth and Melinda – before David's scooter-driving friend invited them to come and visit him at his new home in Canada in 1974.

He and David eventually formed a business partnership and the family of five – including dog Lucy – were bound for Aurora.

They first settled into a house on Wellington Street – unfurnished as the furniture they had sent on was a casualty of a warehouse strike.

"We arrived on August 14," says Dierdre, "which is David's birthday, and we couldn't get anything out until Hallowe'en."

"We were in this big empty house and that is what really impressed me," David adds. "When our furniture arrived, we already had a TV, tables, chairs and beds. People would come and say, 'I've got a spare bed. Use that.' Or, 'We have a spare TV in the basement.' In the end, we had a houseful of furniture in those days. Canadians were very generous and that's what really made us stay. We haven't lived anywhere else."

Generosity might have been a factor in staying put, but they were more than willing to pay this generosity forward. In a few short years, they moved out of their digs on Wellington and found a new home on Centre Crescent, Dierdre's only stipulation to the real estate agent being a small old house in good shape on a large lot.

Here, David's background as a landscape architect came into bloom as he set about transforming the square

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The flower shops and chocolate candy sales are on every shelf in stores these days, and they are about to encounter one of their busiest times of year.

It's nearing Valentines Day!

But allow this moment to consider this: stop thinking what the world wants you to think and do – and do some more. Although the world would like you to think about many things, its time to turn away from the world and to realize what in this life makes you truly happy.

For each one of you will give a different answer, given your circumstances. Stop the television, turn off the news for just a day and, even possibly, for a week, if you can.

What is it that makes you smile, makes you feel at peace and contented? When you silence the outside world, you will give your heart an opportunity to look inside and say to yourself "Stop! Time to listen to myself and to do what is good for me and me alone."

Take a moment and begin welcoming an early spring into your home, buy some fresh flowers and with all your might, stop and look at them and gaze upon their beauty, and of how miracles can happen. No one can tell you how to live your life, but you.

If you need a little mentoring, my friends, then here it is, something for you to read each morning and begin living this gifted life in a profound and meaningful way.

First and foremost, you have every reason to be happy — really! Being happy goes beyond just pleasant emotions. Learning to remain joyful throughout the day can have dramatic positive effects on physiology and even improves the overall mental function.

Isn't that enough to keep you smiling? It does not matter what you are pursuing in your life, whether it is business, education or service, you are doing so because somewhere deep inside you is a feeling that this will bring you happiness.

Every single action that we perform on this planet springs from an aspiration to be happy because it is the original nature. When you were a child you were simply happy. That is your nature. The



## SENIOR SCAPE

Christina Doyle

**"The world is too much with us"**

William Wordsworth

source of joy is within you, you can take charge of it.

When you get up in the morning, the first thing you should do is smile. At whom? No one. Because just the fact you woke up is not a small thing. So many millions of people who slept last night did not wake up today, but you and I woke up! Isn't it great that you woke up? So, smile because you woke up. Then look around and if there is someone, smile at them.

Go outside and see the beauty in nature and see how it hasn't died either.

For the first time maybe in a long time, you can now see what is important here. What does this message mean for you? Say to yourself, I know what is important in my life. I have peace of mind and I am content with what I have, and my priorities are straight and clear.

Remember, the quality of your life is not determined by the clothes that you wear, the educational qualifications that you carry, the family background or your bank balance that you hold. Rather, the quality of your life depends upon how peaceful and joyous you are within yourself.

As Bing Crosby would sing, "count your blessings", yes, count them, my friend; you have much to smile about. Enjoy the early beginnings of spring and go ahead and buy yourself that heart shaped box of chocolates — you deserve it!

Repeat after me: I am grateful for this day, I am grateful for my body, my soul and my mind. Everyday, I notice and feel gratitude for the abundance around me. Today I let go of all that does not serve me and choose to heal my heart, mind, body and soul with self-love and kindness.

### HAPPENINGS AT THE SENIORS' CENTRE

Seminar. On February 20, the President of the Aurora Seniors Association, Dr. Dave LeGallais, and his wife Linda will give a seminar on Animal Tails. Dave was a well-known veterinarian in Aurora before his retirement and will also have a special guest with him and his wife.

Continued on page 19

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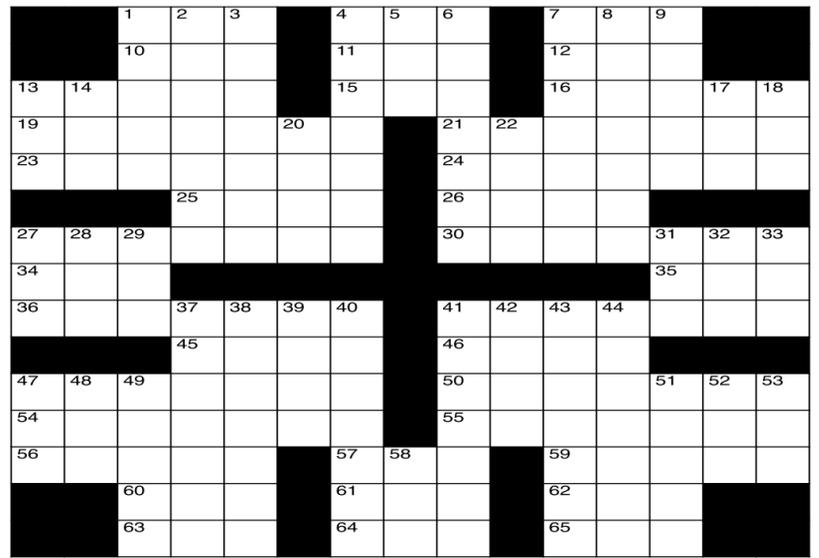
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## CROSSWORD



### CLUES ACROSS

1. Chop or cut
4. Political action committee
7. Male parent
10. Doctors' group
11. Ottoman military commander
12. A metal-bearing natural material
13. Lively ballroom dance
15. Male Gypsy
16. Once-popular card game
19. Occurred just once
21. \_\_\_ Streisand, singer
23. Shiny yellow minerals
24. Get hitched again
25. See (Latin)
26. Lies between the Caspian and Persian Gulf
27. Scourges
30. Sentence
34. Supervises flying
35. Bar bill
36. Alfalfa
41. Type of dishwasher soap
45. Witnesses
46. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
47. Newspapers need them
50. Discuss again
54. Small group with shared interests
55. Support
56. Wool
57. Take hold of
59. Likely the first Meso-American civilization
60. Woman (French)
61. Automobile
62. Popular Georgia rockers
63. Soviet Socialist Republic
64. A major division of geological time
65. Make an effort

### CLUES DOWN

1. Czech monetary unit
2. Able to arouse feeling
3. Elk
4. Muscular weaknesses
5. Earlier
6. Lightweight fabric
7. One who greets
8. Soldiers sometimes wear one
9. Officially prohibit
13. US political party
14. Used of a number or amount not specified
17. Make a mistake
18. Biopic starring Jamie Foxx
20. Ancient Media inhabitant
22. About aviation
27. Popular American sports league
28. Cologne
29. Partner to cheese
31. When you'll get there
32. Not pleased
33. One point east (clockwise) of due north
37. Respects
38. Shake up
39. Ethiopian river
40. Intrinsic nature of something
41. Principal parts of the brain
42. Brews
43. Where ships dock
44. One who wassails
47. Shock treatment
48. Popular average
49. Things
51. A type of "bear"
52. Utilize
53. European Economic Community
58. Swiss river

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T	E	N	S		A	N	G	E	R		L	A	T	E	
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# Author hopes One Book One Aurora will change perspectives

By Brock Weir

Camilla Gibb's upbringing, by her own admission, wasn't exactly "jolly."

A native of England, she grew up in a family headed by a father she describes as "rule-bound, rigid, and ex-military" and "as a consequence of it not being a particularly jolly [atmosphere]" her parents divorced when she was 10. While a divorce is always a challenging time for children, for Ms. Gibb it ultimately helped open up a brand new world to her.

At the age of 10, her mother fell in love with an Armenian actor who grew up in Beirut. Although he was not Muslim, he was an Arabic speaker and his addition into the family brought a new sense of "fun" into her world.

"Everything changed," says Ms. Gibb. "The smells changed, the food changed, the dynamic and energy changed and I thought wherever he comes from must be a happy place. That influence certainly stayed with me, thinking there is something there that spoke to me."

That influence outlasted her mother's relationship with the man, but it informed the direction of her life.

Wanting to know more about this culture and its influence on the world, Ms. Gibb dedicated her life to pursuing a career as an anthropologist. For her, anthropology was "a portal, an escape, and a means" to get to a place for which she always had romantic ideas.

Her novel, *The Sweetness in the Belly*, the Aurora Public Library's 2019 One Book One Aurora selection, is very much informed by this journey.

*The Sweetness in the Belly* is described as "a richly imagined narrative of one woman's search for love and belonging cast against a nuanced portrait of political upheaval" in Ethiopia. It follows Lilly, a young, white Muslim nurse searching for her missing love, Aziz. This yearning takes her – and the reader – to Haile Selassie's Ethiopia, which is on the cusp of revolution.

Writing has always been a passion for Ms. Gibb, but there was a time when something like a novel was, for her, considered an almost "illicit" writing form. "I really took my academic self

seriously," she explains. "I was a pretty seriously driven young academic, but in that world I don't think things like sensory experience and feelings were really valued. I didn't read any fiction for the entirety of my education, 10 years, where I had grown up with fiction. It was everything. Secretly, I started writing short stories – secretly, because it almost felt illicit at this point."

Taking a gap year after getting her PhD, Ms. Gibb says she began writing a short story "that just wouldn't stop." Previous attempts were "terrible" but this one, she says, had some momentum and she was "scared" to abandon it.

"This looks suspiciously like something that is not a short story," Ms. Gibb recalls thinking.

She was supposed to take up a job in Lethbridge, AB, at the time, but deferred it for a year to pursue her instincts, although she says she didn't tell anybody as it seemed like a "betrayal" of her academic life.

Two novels into her writing career, there were still signs of her academic life in the first couple of drafts of *The Sweetness in the Belly*. Her first two novels were written from the perspective of children, and the same can be said of the first iteration of *Belly*, but her editor at Doubleday asked a very pointed question: Who is Lilly as an adult?

"I realised I had just written the backstory," says Ms. Gibb. "One of the things I think she was encouraging me to do was not hide behind the voice of a child; there is a complicated political framework and a child doesn't have to know what is going on, a child doesn't have to have an opinion, a child could be a pawn. She was forcing me to grow up in a way to take on the complexity of this place. I had to let Lilly grow up and I had to rewrite the book from the perspective of her as a young adult who is aware of what is going on."

"I think I was intimidated to take on the politics and the complex social and political landscape, and it took a lot of years, really."

The book, she says, wasn't so "agenda driven" until 9/11, but it was already underway. She was driven by a desire to tell an "intimate story about this person in this place."

"It was a literary endeavour, not a political endeavour, but when 9/11 occurred, I realised the context in which it

would be received and the landscape had completely shifted," she says. "I had more of a responsibility, perhaps, or this book had more of a responsibility than just a piece of literary creation. I probably didn't respond to the extent to which that was true until I started having conversations with people around the book when it was out in the world and I saw how it could be used as a counter-balance between some of the more disturbing stereotypes of Islam as a religion of terror."

This idea of challenging stereotypes is just one characteristic that made *The Sweetness in the Belly*, in the eyes of the Aurora Public Library, the perfect selection for One Book One Aurora 2019. Its themes have leant themselves to a wide-array of programming that will take place throughout the year based around the book, ranging from culinary endeavours to an evening of Arabic poets coming in to

share their art in their own language and music.

"This is a dynamic world," says Ms. Gibb. "The issues of immigration and migration are as old as we are. There are alarming circumstances that are moving people, but it always happens. We live in a complex, multicultural world. Why wouldn't we want to have informed friendships and find a common understanding, sharing each other's experiences in that way? I want people [through One Book One Aurora] to have an experience, which is what I look for in a book. I want an experience. I want to be immersed in something that is both outside my own experience, but also kind of reflects our common humanity. I hope it alters one's way of looking at the world, which is a little bit ambitious."

To find out how you can start that journey through *One Book One Aurora* and Ms. Gibb's novel, visit [onebookoneaurora.com](http://onebookoneaurora.com).

## Newmarket's Williams leads Northeastern to Beanpot title

From page 11

break that streak. Being able to do that last year really got us able to experience that feeling...and made us want it every year going forward.

"You realize how big it is, when you talk to other students, teachers, staff... just every time you run into them they're asking if you're gonna win the Beanpot this year. It's such an incredible experience."

Earning the bragging rights to one of the most coveted titles in college hockey certainly cements Williams' legacy amongst the Northeastern captains, especially considering it is the team's second title in two years. The Huskies took down the Boston University Terriers in the 2018 championship, 5 – 2, for the school's first Beanpot since 1988.

"Everyone in that locker room was so eager to be the first team to break that streak. We got that feeling and we wanted to experience it again this year," said Williams. "And every year after."

After cutting his teeth with the York-Simcoe Express AAA minor program, Williams transitioned smoothly to the Junior A level as an important piece of the Tigers' blueline. In his second year

with the club, he was given the title of assistant captain, riding a 50-point season in 2014-15 to a scholarship offer from the prestigious Huskies program.

## Senior Scape

From page 17

**Walking Clubs.** There are two walking clubs: one is held each week and the walkers go outside every Wednesday morning to walk for about an hour. The walkers gather in the lounge at 9.30 am. The other walking club is held once a month inside at the Leisure Complex. After you walk and stretch, a seminar is held.

**Seniors' Centre Without Walls.** This is a new initiative reaching out to vulnerable and isolated seniors who are unable to come to the Seniors' Centre for various reasons. Through the use of conference calls, seniors are given information on health-related matters, access to conversations with professionals, but more importantly, an opportunity to feel part of a community. If you are interested in learning more about this, contact Karie at 905-727-3123 extension 3610.

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- Freelance reporting work for weekly community newspapers and special projects
- Will produce stories and bylines for the events they cover
- Will be paid on a freelance/contract basis per project/story
  - Generate story ideas and follow up on news tips
  - Take photographs
- Work some evenings and weekends, as required

### QUALIFICATIONS:

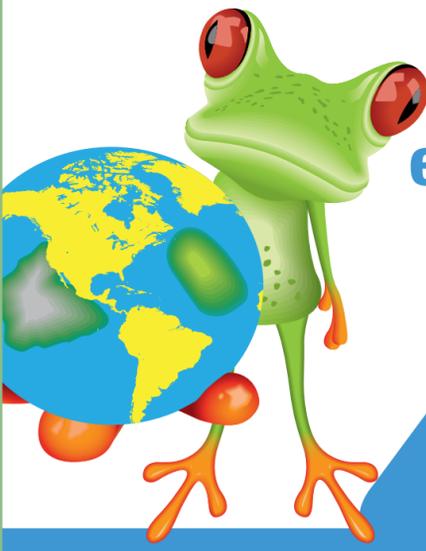
- Diploma in journalism preferred
- Candidates should have experience working on the editorial side of the newspaper industry
- Excellent writing, editing and photography skills
  - Valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle
  - Reporting experience an asset
- An interest in local issues is a necessity, as the majority of the writing for this role will be local



## Let's Talk.

Interested and qualified candidates should forward their cover letter and resume to [brock@auroran.com](mailto:brock@auroran.com)

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