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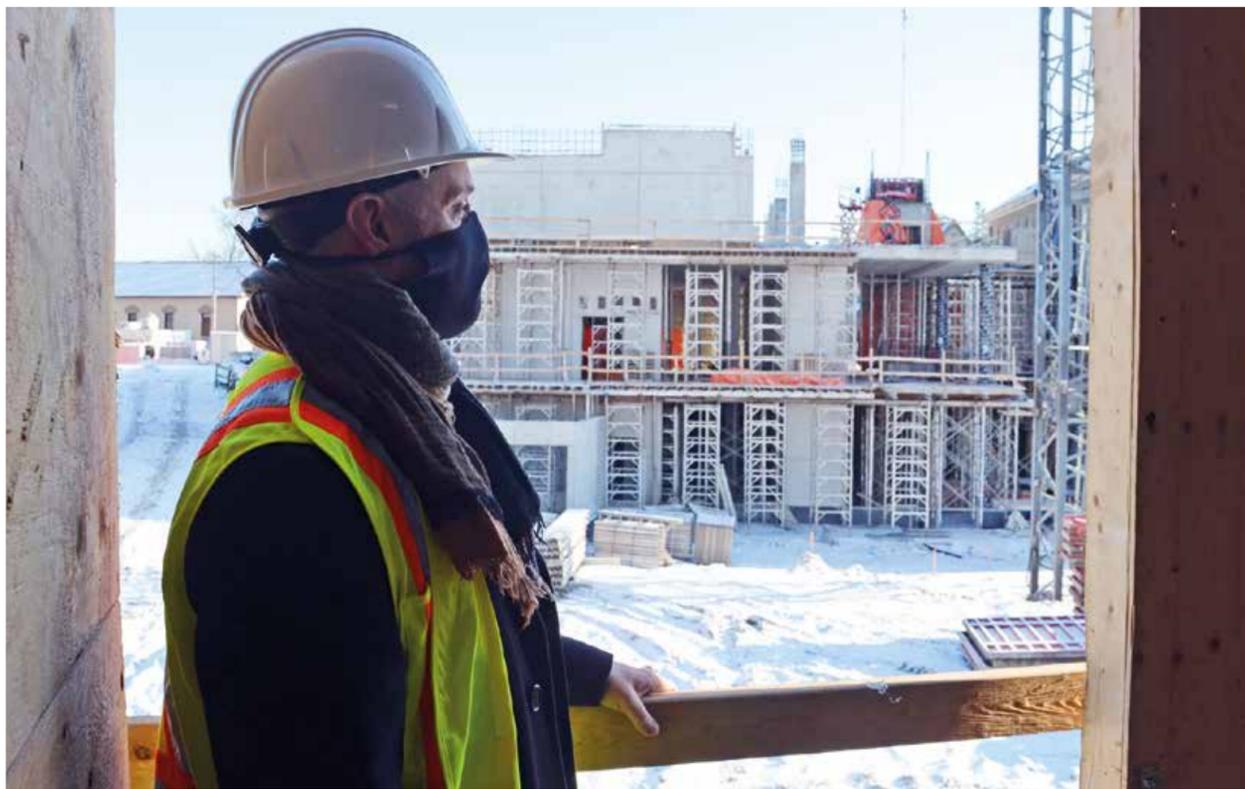
Aurora's Community Newspaper

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FREE

Week of January 13, 2022



**A VIEW TO THE FUTURE** – Phil Rose, Project Manager for Aurora Town Square, looks over the Aurora Town Square building site on Friday from where a new bridge will connect the Aurora Public Library to an expansive new addition to the Church Street School presently under construction. Elements of the downtown revitalization project could be open to the public as early as April. For more, please see Page 11. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

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## Omicron is “unlike anything we have encountered” during pandemic, says Southlake

### Public Health expands booster eligibility

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Over the span of last week, Southlake Regional Health Centre saw the number of patients admitted to hospital increase from 20 to more than 60, leading to an alarm bell

being sounded for doctors and nurses on the frontlines.

Last Thursday, Southlake said the spread of the Omicron variant was “unlike anything we have encountered in the pandemic to date” and warned they continue to see “significant numbers” of hospital staff test positive or require time off due to exposure to COVID-19.

“Based on Provincial directives and the need to preserve hospital capacity and reduce the spread of the virus, Southlake has had to

make a series of difficult decisions,” said the hospital. “With cases and hospitalizations increasing at an alarming pace, all hospitals in Ontario have been directed to cancel selected surgeries in order to increase bed capacity and free up staff to be redeployed. Southlake is following this directive and staff from our surgical program have already started to care for patients in other areas of the hospital.

“Staffing has become a significant

Continued on page 6

### Mental health donation supports leaders of tomorrow

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Our leaders of tomorrow might be struggling today – and it’s up to a collective effort to ensure they reach their full potential.

This is the view of Aurora resident George Rappos.

An insurance agent with Desjardins, Mr. Rappos recently donated \$10,000 to the Canadian Mental Health Association – York



Aurora's George Rappos, an insurance agent for Desjardins, presents a cheque for \$10,000 to Rebecca Shields of the Canadian Mental Health Association of York Region and South Simcoe. This donation, he hopes, will be part of a larger movement for youth mental health.

Contributed photo

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EXPLORE AURORA





David and Dierdre Tomlinson are pictured in their Merlin's Hollow garden on New Year's Eve. With the Centre Crescent property up for sale, portions of the garden are on the move and will soon take root around Aurora.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

# Famed Merlin's Hollow will live on in gardens across Aurora

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

For more than 40 years, gardeners and plant lovers have made Merlin's Hollow a spring and summer destination.

For five colourful days each season prior to the pandemic, visitors were able to enjoy the private paradise of David and Dierdre Tomlinson on Centre Crescent, but as the Tomlinsons prepare to wind down the garden and sell their home, the plants that made Merlin's Hollow famous will live on throughout Aurora.

Since the Tomlinsons made their difficult decision to sell up last year, members of the Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society have been hard at work helping the couple divide up the plants from their garden for sale. It's not only a fundraiser for the Society, which brought in thousands of dollars last year from the first round of plants, but a way to ensure the Merlin's Hollow legacy endures in the community.

This spring, as the Tomlinsons weigh their options, their focus will be digging up bulbs to distribute to members of the club and the community at large through the ongoing fundraiser.

"In 18 months, we could be in the middle of a building site," says David, 87, with a chuckle, noting most of the land surrounding theirs has been sold for development. "I can still do [the garden work] but what I could do in half an hour takes me five hours to do now and that's one of the problems."

The Tomlinsons, and their daughters Beth and Melinda, moved into Merlin's Hollow in 1979.

David wasn't especially particular on where he and his family wanted to plant roots; their single biggest criterion being a small, well-built house on a large lot.

What they found was a 1930s home, which the daughter of the original owner recalled as being a house built from a kit, with just the right topography to transform the land into something special.

"Dierdre told me about the property she found [when I was in Calgary] and I thought, 'but there's nothing there!'" says David on how they came to discover the plot on Aurora's last-surviving residential dirt road. "I had nothing to do with the

selection of this house, but it couldn't have been a better location because it's protected on the north side and the west side. It's open on the south and the east and it slopes to the southeast so it is well-drained. You couldn't have chosen a better site."

Indeed, you would be hard-pressed to find any visitor to Merlin's Hollow to disagree, whether they gravitate to the alpine garden, thyme lawn, or any number of flower borders overflowing with blooms.

"We thought last year was going to be our last season, but what we did is we got together with the Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society [to divide the plants]," says David. "When a developer comes, they're not going to be interested in this garden, it's all going to be bulldozed, and I said it would be a shame to lose all these unusual plants that we have. They arranged a series of plant sales last fall and because it was COVID, we couldn't have people coming around, so it was all online. The proceeds went to the Horticultural Society.

"We're looking to sell the bulbs in the spring. If we don't sell the house before the spring, we will probably open Merlin's Hollow up and carry on moving the plants out."

Many of the rare native plants that flourished in Merlin's Hollow have already been transferred to the nature reserve which bears his name for the entire community to enjoy.

But David, by his own admission, says he isn't a huge fan of native plants.

"I think you should grow native plants if you can, but native plants are not used to being in highly-disturbed areas that we create," he says. "Generally, our native plants are woodland plants because our area used to be wall-to-wall woodland with very little open space. We don't live in shady areas, we live in very open woodland edge areas. I believe in growing what grows best in the climate you have. If you have to put up with Norway Maples down the street, they're better than nothing.

"It has been a fascinating voyage of discovery. I have always been interested in discovering what makes things tick. This has gone a long way to making people garden more."

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TOWN OF AURORA  
PUBLIC NOTICE



### NOTICE OF CLOSURE Boardwalk Replacement

The Town of Aurora will be closing a portion of the Tim Jones (Nokiidaa) Trail through the McKenzie Marsh for removal and replacement of the boardwalk starting **January 17, 2022**, with construction scheduled to be completed on **April 29, 2022**.

The Town has retained Canadian Construction Limited to remove the existing boardwalk and construct a new boardwalk in McKenzie Marsh.

During construction the existing trail will be closed to the public from the Newmarket bridge down to St. John's Sideroad. No access will be permitted on the entire section of trail. We ask all trail users to please respect the trail closure signage.



For more information on this project please contact Gary Greidanus, Senior Landscape Architect at 905-727-3123 ext. 3227 or [ggreidanus@aurora.ca](mailto:ggreidanus@aurora.ca).

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**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**Thanks from the Aurora Food Pantry**

I am writing on behalf of the Board, staff, volunteers and clients of the Aurora Food Pantry.

I would like to thank the community—Individuals, families, businesses—for their support of the Pantry over the holiday season. Your generous donations of groceries and funds not only allowed us to provide a full range of groceries in the month just passed, but also to plan with confidence for the winter months.

A community is measured, at least in part, by the support it provides to its more vulnerable members and Aurora steps up to that responsibility.

Thank you from all of us.

Allison J. Stuart, Chair  
Aurora Food Pantry

**Rail plans “failed” to mention negative impacts on residents: reader**

Looking back at news coverage from four years ago when key provincial politicians stood at the Wellington Street station proclaiming GO rapid train service would bring all day service to municipalities across the region and GTA, they failed to mention the significant negative impact that the incessant blaring of diesel horns at crossings would have on thousands of Ontario citizens residing near and away from crossings.

The focus of the proclamation continues with ongoing government commercials about increasing service for the convenience of travellers while completely ignoring the plight of residents.

Given the rampant escalation of service, it’s not surprising a growing number of residents in Aurora and countless other municipalities are rightfully calling for cessation of horns and demanding prompt action be taken by their elected officials.

The issue is not about the noise of occasional horns. It’s about the relentless and inescapable noise 19 hours a day from 5 a.m. to midnight to which those whose lives have been immensely compromised have been forced to endure, with the peace and enjoyment of their homes and property callously taken away.

One can’t begin to imagine the intolerable circumstances experienced by those residing in close proximity to crossings, when the excessive harsh noise of constant blasting horns penetrates the walls of residences in countless neighbourhoods one and two kilometers away from the four crossings of the three-kilometer track that runs through Town.

The planned increases to service will significantly intensify the problem.

Municipalities in Ontario and across the country have successfully silenced train horns, Markham being one of the first in the GTA under the new federal regulations.

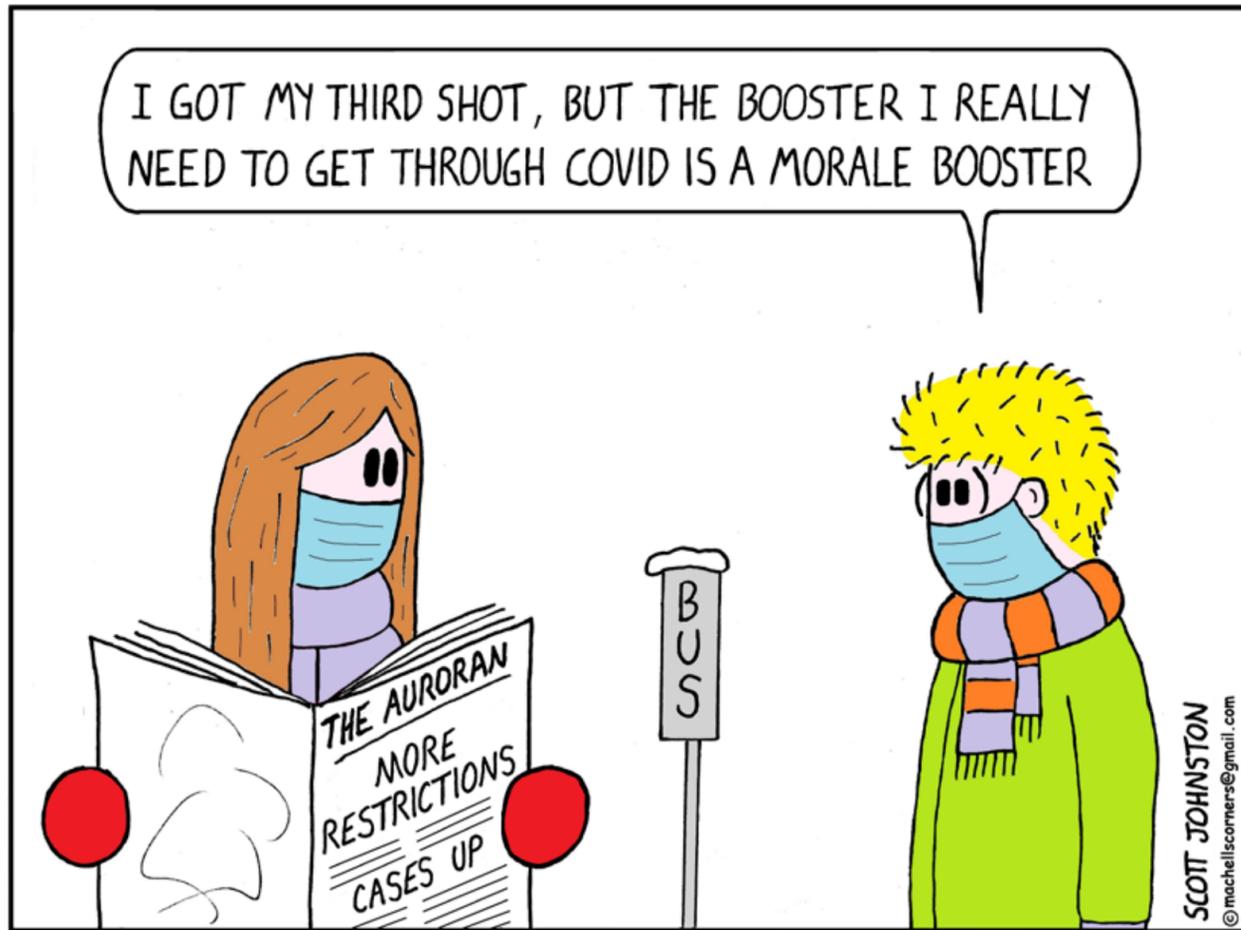
The cessation of train horns was implemented early in 2021 at 13 at-grade crossings through the collective efforts of determined resident advocates, the City of Markham, Metrolinx and York Region.

According to media coverage, funding for the program to silence the horns at 13 crossings was \$2.3 million from the city and \$3.8 million from the Region, an expenditure considered a “priority in the best interests of the residents.”

The new system is impressive.

Continued on page 18

**Machell’s Corners**



**Reasonable Patience**

The dawn of a New Year is always seen as a double-edged sword of renewal and change.

We want to go into our next trip around the sun with a renewed sense of purpose and a renewed sense of self, all the while keeping in mind that change is another constant that can’t be avoided.

But change, of course, means different things to different people.

Change doesn’t have to be grandiose gestures of varying levels of substance and emptiness. It doesn’t have to be a 180 degree turn on something in a bid to rapidly change your entire lifestyle. It can be as simple as setting a resolution, tackling one area in your life that might need a little bit of a tweak, or merely revisiting your list of life-goals and prioritizing them for the subsequent 365 days.

When a New Year approaches, I always like to ring in the dawn of a new one by doing something, well, new. Sometimes it has been as splashy as watching the ball drop – or whatever the local equivalent might be – in a place, exotic or not, I have never been before. It can be watching the clock tick towards midnight with a new group of friends or in a new venue. It can be crossing that threshold of space and time doing something you haven’t done before, like watching a new movie, cracking into a new book, or tackling a new game.

For the second year running, I was at a loss at what my new experience was going to be when we made the transition between years.

In the last few minutes between 2019 and 2020, the big excitement was, thanks to the global pandemic, trying take-out from a local restaurant that hadn’t previously been sampled and watching a new movie.

This New Year’s was shaping up to be a repeat of the same. Don’t get me wrong, it’s as lovely a way as any to ring in the new year, but, nevertheless, any excitement was dampened by how limited the options were for a second year running.

But, in a not all-together pleasant way, the guesswork was taken out of the evening almost at the eleventh hour.

Thanks to the Omicron variant, some last-minute reshuffling had to take place to ensure New Year’s festivities, such as they were allowed to be, were covered for the communities we serve. Therefore, unexpectedly, I was tasked with covering a local event where local families had the



**BROCK’S BANTER**

Brock Weir

chance to get together under the stars for some socially-distant fellowship and entertainment before having the chance to get cozy at home for the dawn of 2022.

It did the heart good to see so many community members come together for a common purpose, having fun and maintaining social distance all the while.

Although I was there for work, it was a nice mental break from the day-to-day slog against the virus – but it was made slightly bittersweet that, thanks to ever-rising case numbers, this would likely be the last opportunity for such a get-together until public health stats took a dramatic turn for the better.

I nevertheless got my chance to spend the evening doing something new – and that might have to be the win I take away from the whole experience because it seems my New Year’s resolution was over almost before it even began.

In the lead-up to the holidays, I wrote in this space that my New Year’s resolution would be to cultivate patience. Always in short supply with me, the last 22 months have worn down my own personal reserves and, as the reality of Omicron took hold, I knew they would be stripped to the limit – a changeable reality that would never do in our collective efforts to get through to the other side.

Patience simply wasn’t there when the Provincial Government announced that Ontario students wouldn’t be returning to school for a further two days into January apparently because those extra 48-hours would be enough to solve all the issues of ensuring students are safe in schools. And the community, in turn, could stay as safe as possible once the end-of-the-day bell rings.

Patience was also absent when the Province bowed to what seemed inevitable to everyone else and announced a further delay to the opening of schools to January 17 – two weeks and two days, as of this writing. That surely would do the trick...

Patience was gone when all of a sudden testing, which has been one of the primary indicators of any glimmers of hope on the horizon, was deemed a luxury rather than a necessity and we were all told to assume we had COVID if we had the slightest sniffle.

Patience went into the red when the Provincial government attributed staff shortages in hospitals and, indeed, staff shortages across the board, to “absenteeism” rather than individuals being sick and addressing it accordingly – or individuals exposed to the virus doing the right thing and isolating accordingly – as we have been told to do since March of 2020.

Patience continued to plummet when the Federal Conservative leader suggested people unwilling to get vaccinated against COVID-19 should be “accommodated” through rapid testing and other means. This, it was argued, would be a way to ensure supply chains kept pace.

Don’t get me wrong – I do think reasonable accommodations should be made for people who are unable to get the vaccine for any variety of reasons, but I couldn’t help but feel this request for “reasonable accommodations” was an untimely slap in the face to our frontline workers who have been fighting this thing day in and day out for nearly two years, are burnt out, yet continue to show up for work in conditions that are less than ideal by every stretch of the imagination.

A recent letter-writer to The Globe And Mail asked whether the cost of such “reasonable accommodations” for unvaccinated residents would be borne by vaccinated citizens. Of course, that question is “yes” and the subject for another column, but how about a call to our unvaccinated residents to make “reasonable accommodations” for the people on the frontlines while showing a vote of confidence in our beleaguered health care system and the tireless people who work day and night, against odds that seem to become increasingly dire each week of this latest wave, to both keep us healthy and the system we so depend on afloat for the future?

Unfortunately, it’s a debate that is not going to be over any time soon, so, in the meantime, if you have any ideas on how to replenish stores of patience, I think I – and every single reader of this column – would appreciate it.

These “reasonable accommodations” will make it a longer slog for all of us.

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Aurora’s Community Newspaper

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## The Aurora Museum & Archives is remembering... Medicine for the Common Cold!

These Pape's "Cold" Compound tablets, with one sealed and one full tube (991.43.184 & 185) were just one product among many that purported to break the symptoms of a cold or flu. An alternative to Aspirin in the late 19th century, the active ingredient, "Acetanilide", worked to reduce fevers and pain, but not without risk to the liver and kidneys. In 1948, when it was found that the drug became Acetaminophen inside the body, pharmaceutical companies began producing that compound directly, eliminating the more toxic elements in the process.

My last four articles have set the stage for this one.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion have been presented, but frankly, these well-established concepts have not been well implemented. Implementation requires ACTION.

I hope the principles of inclusion are accepted. Many sports people speak about inclusion and will support the concepts that diversity and equity indeed create strength. Their provincial and national sport governing bodies all have this on their radar – and for all the right reasons. Finally, the principle that no one should be excluded from sport seems fair and reasonable by all.

If so, why do people not have the same access to local sport? Why are some people treated differently in terms of opportunity? Is diversity evident in sport leadership?

The problem seems to be the lack of intent. In days gone by, the term used was "affirmative action" and reflected deliberate, intentional activity that focused on relieving inequality.

The action needed to create an inclusive and equitable environment for sport is not that complicated, but it requires change. We all know that change does not come easily.

The challenge for local sport organizations is that they are primarily



### SPORT SCRAPS

Ron Weese

focused on delivering high-quality sport programs to everyone that registers.

In my opinion, they do a good job of that. And that is a big enough challenge for largely volunteer-driven organizations who have "just enough" time to put a quality experience together.

When they are asked to stretch beyond the already complex task of delivering sport to thousands of residents in a growing and diverse community like ours, it is a lot to expect.

We ask them to ensure that opportunities for women and girls are equal to men and boys. We ask them to find resources to ensure that those marginalized through financial or other barriers are supported. We ask them to target newcomers who may have language and cultural issues that restrict engagement. We ask them to create new programs that serve specific needs.

It is a difficult job and, while everyone values Inclusion, the skills, time, and resources needed to make change is often beyond local capacity.

So, what do we do when we know something should be done? We make it happen, that's what. Because it is the right thing to do, and it is what builds a strong sport community – one of which we are proud.

Sport Aurora is exploring grants to implement DEI programs that require specialized expertise and resources.

We are inviting the sport community and our residents to contribute with a "lived experience" at the core of the mission. We are identifying partners in and out of sport to provide input. We are recruiting what is needed to support the work and create a more inclusive sport community. It can be done with the right people, acquiring the right skills, and supported with sufficient resources to do it right.

If you have a lived experience, if you deliver sport programs, or you have resources to share or support the work...Join us!

*For more Information on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Sport, please contact president@sportaurora.ca. Consider joining our DEI Committee to explore how we can be a stronger sport community.*



## Welcome to Library Land

By Reccia Mandelcorn

The greatest privilege afforded to public libraries is the connection we have to the residents in our communities.

In my early career, libraries could best be described as passive agents in the provision of information through printed material. But over the years, we've matured to occupy a unique non-political space, well-positioned to provide our residents with platforms to engage with issues, fostering a thoughtful and informed citizenry.

Whether you live in a major city like Toronto or a small town like Aurora, housing is a hot-button issue these days. Infill, monster homes, starter homes, homes for those wanting to downsize, walkable neighbourhoods with nearby shopping and services – all are topics discussed on front porches and Council meetings.

A new conversation we are hearing is about the concept of the "missing middle." This term describes an older planning approach with a range of multi-family or clustered housing compatible in scale with single family neighbourhoods. This is the kind of housing I grew up with in Montreal – several families sharing separate dwellings with backyards on tree-lined streets. Duplexes, fourplexes and courtyard apartments; much less common in current architectural practice, so hence, the term "missing".

A prominent writer on the housing crisis is Alex Bozicovic, architecture critic for the Globe & Mail. Alex's writing addresses the built environment, advocating for better buildings and more livable communities. His anthology, "House Divided: How the Missing Middle Will Solve Toronto's Affordability Crisis" (available at APL) offers innovative ideas for creating housing for all ages and demographic groups, posing tough questions about issues that will make or break our communities.

Previously an Aurora resident, Alex's work now spans six provinces with a range of architectural projects from houses to public buildings to urban design. I reached out and invited him to speak at our Library – and was thrilled when he agreed to present and participate in a Q&A.

I look forward to an engaging community conversation with diverse perspectives at our upcoming virtual event "Changing the Way Housing Can Work" on Thursday, January 27 at 7:00 pm. Tickets are available at [bit.ly/32eYjZC](https://bit.ly/32eYjZC)

### What I've been reading:

Where Beauty Survived:

An Africadian Memoir

by George Elliott Clarke

Bloodchild and Other Stories

by Octavia E. Butler

The Vanishing Half

by Brit Bennett

Nothing but the Truth: A Memoir

by Marie Henein

*Reccia Mandelcorn is the Manager, Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. The opinions expressed in this column reflect her personal thoughts about the engagement of community with their public library.*

### THIS WEEK'S POLL

Was the Province right to move Ontario back to Step 2?

Yes No Unsure  
[www.theauroran.com](https://www.theauroran.com)

RESULTS TO DATE

January 11, 2022

YES  
50%

NO  
37%

UNSURE  
13%

## Replacing Politicians

The other day, your loyal scribe was driving down Bathurst Street for an appointment in Richmond Hill when I was inundated with lawn signs on basically every street corner for the various folks seeking the Mayor's position.

I was puzzled. I know that municipal elections are to be held this fall across Ontario but I had not yet seen any election lawn signs anywhere else.

A quick search on the internet showed that this was a mayoral byelection. The former Mayor had resigned in the fall due to health reasons. The election date has been set for January 24.

We have faced similar situations here in Aurora in the recent past.

In 2014, former Councillor Chris Ballard won election as the Liberal MPP for Newmarket-Aurora and had to be replaced.

Local businessman Don Constable was appointed by Council after eighteen individuals submitted their credentials. Mr. Constable won a Council vote on the second ballot.

Back in 2012, Aurora-King's new Trustee on the York Region District School Board was named.

Peter Adams-Luchowski was appointed by the Board over eighteen other candidates, including Aurora's Dave Williams who finished second in that Trustee election.

A number of people – including yours truly at the time – were shaking their heads over why Adams-Luchowski, who resided in Richmond Hill at the time, was appointed to fill a position to represent Aurora-King's interests.

Don't get me wrong, based on what I had read, Adams-Luchowski had an abundance of experience and knowledge of the issues as he was a former Trustee in Richmond Hill and he would more than likely serve us well.

However, a by-election should have been called to replace the departing Gord Kerr, who resigned in January 2012. I also concurred with then Aurora Mayor Dawe's sentiments expressed in this paper at the time when he stated that "The second-best thing, in my



### FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

opinion, would be to appoint the person who was clearly the second place person. Mr. Williams was within 400 votes of winning. Granted, there were only two candidates and he still garnered 6,000 votes."

Sure, a by-election could cost about \$60,000 (my guess at the time). Based on 55,000 Aurora residents and 20,000 King residents, this works out to eighty cents per person; pretty cheap price to pay for democracy.

With the term still having over two years to run, it did not make sense to appoint someone, even if the appointed individual has served as a Trustee in the past.

If the term had only one year or less to go, then this would be a plausible option. If that were the case, then appointing someone would probably be a good idea, with the proviso that the appointed person would first agree not to run in the subsequent election.

While I imagine that the learning curve is steep for the first-timers, with over two years left to go, there is at least enough time to get in, become comfortable with the responsibilities of the job, and make a contribution before the end of the term.

This reminds me of the situation we had back in 2008 when then first term Aurora Councillor Grace Marsh resigned her seat.

A special council meeting was called and the Council declared Mrs. Marsh's seat vacant.

At that emergency meeting, Town Clerk Bob Panizza told Council that they had three options. Councillors could vote to appoint a person to Council, take the next finisher from the last election or call a by-election.

A motion to fill the seat via a by-election was then defeated after a 4-4 vote.

They then appointed John Gallo, who was the runner up from the 2006 election. He finished ninth out of a crowded field of twenty candidates in that election. And he did answer the bell when the election was actually called back then; that has to be worth something, you would think.

I believe that we should be putting some guidelines in place for Board Members and at local Council. As it stands, the Board and Council have a couple of choices when a locally elected Trustee/Councillor resigns or is incapacitated.

I'm not talking about taking the power out of the hands of the Board Trustees or Councillors; they were elected by us to make decisions but having some guidelines would mean that everyone knows the state of play.

I did a quick search on the internet to see if there were any specific guidelines, but I did not see any.

Here are my suggestions:

How about in the circumstance where someone who leaves in the first year of a four-year Trustee or Council mandate, the next place finisher is automatically appointed.

For someone who leaves after year one, but before year three, a by-election is held.

For a resignation in the last year of a four-year term, then appoint either one of the candidates who were successful last time or a former Councillor if none of the candidates from last time want to do it, with the proviso that this person cannot seek the same office in the next election.

Stephen can be contacted at [stephengsomerville@yahoo.com](mailto:stephengsomerville@yahoo.com)

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## Region expands booster eligibility

**From page 1**

challenge and we are doing everything we can to mitigate this. Healthcare workers are now more impacted by the increased spread of COVID-19 in the community than ever before. This, combined with the increased number of patients in the hospital with COVID-19, continues to put pressure on our teams. Similar to previous waves, we have started to redeploy staff into different areas of the hospital based on patient need. Our amazing staff and physicians are the heart and soul of Southlake. Their dedication, tenacity and compassion has been a constant source of inspiration throughout the pandemic."

The struggle faced by hospitals like Southlake in response to the Omicron variant was tackled at the start of the week by Dr. Barry Pakes, York Region's Medical Officer of Health.

The cancellation of some surgeries, he said, along with the closure of schools until at least January 17, are "designed to keep the burden on the healthcare system to a minimum."

"We understand how frustrating the return to these restrictions could be, but we have seen from experience they can truly make a difference and hopefully this time they will be more short-lived," said Dr. Pakes.

People might feel, he added, that the fight against COVID-19 is "moving backward rather than forward," but said there are still "good news stories" coming out of the local fight, including York Region's decision to lift the limits on boosters through the local health unit and expanding eligibility to residents between the ages of 18 and 49. There is also a new priority for education workers getting their boosters.

"Ontario data suggests that vaccine effectiveness with a booster against infection is still in the 30-40 per cent range with Pfizer and close to 60 per cent with Moderna," he said. "More importantly, protection against hospitalization and severe illness is in the 70-80 per cent range. The booster can truly make a difference for each of us and for our healthcare system."

"For those small number of York Region residents who are still unvaccinated, I have a special message and a special plea: while infections are occurring in vaccinated and unvaccinated alike, the hospitalization, ICU

admissions and deaths are largely in the unvaccinated. This is true in Ontario and across the world."

Vaccines will also be integral, he added, in making sure there is a return to school sooner rather than later, underscoring the value of in-person learning to students' mental and physical wellbeing.

York Region Public Health is "advocating a return to in-person learning and continuing to engage with schools and the Province to support this."

"The most important thing you can do to get students back to sustained in-person learning is to get your child vaccinated," he concluded. "Over half of York Region children are vaccinated and without higher coverage, we might continue to see unfortunately high numbers of children visiting emergency rooms and being admitted."

### LOCAL STATS

As of Monday, January 10, Aurora was grappling with 263 confirmed active cases of COVID-19, but, as York Region Public Health notes, this number is an underestimate.

"With rapid transmission of Omicron and recent provincial changes in testing eligibility and case management, case counts and outbreaks reported through the COVID-19 in York Region interactive dashboard are an under-estimate of the true number of individuals with COVID-19 and outbreaks in York Region," the Region stated, adding case counts should be treated with caution. "Public Health units across Ontario are prioritizing case management of high-risk individuals and settings. Workplace outbreaks are no longer reported."

Of the confirmed active cases, 235 are attributed to local transmission, close contact or unknown exposure and 28 to institutional outbreak.

Since the start of the global pandemic, York Region Public Health has been able to confirm 3,545 cases of COVID-19 as of Monday. 3,234 cases are now marked as resolved and there have been 48 fatalities attributed to the virus.

91 per cent of Aurora residents aged 12 and up have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, while 89.6 per cent had received two doses by the start of the week.



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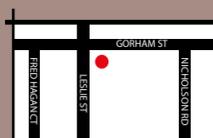


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## Police investigate shooting on Conover

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

York Regional Police are asking the public for any information they might have related to a shooting on Conover Avenue on January 7.

“On Friday, January 7, 2022, at 11.45 p.m., York Regional Police responded to the area of Conover Avenue and Starr Crescent for a report of a shooting,” said Constable Maniva Armstrong in a statement. “Officers located a residence with bullet holes through a door, along with shell casings on the street. Fortunately, no one was injured.

“Officers are appealing to any witnesses who may have been in the area at the time who have not yet spoken to police to please come forward. Investigators are also seeking any video surveillance from the area or anyone that may have captured dashcam video on the roadways.”

Anyone with information is asked to contact the York Regional Police #1 District Criminal Investigations Bureau at 1-866-876-5423 x7174, or anonymously through Crime Stoppers at

1-800-222-TIPS.

The investigation is ongoing.

### STOVE SUSPECTED IN GARAGE FIRE

A wood stove is suspected to be the cause of a detached garage fire on Metcalfe Street on New Year’s Day.

Central York Fire Services responded to a call on Metcalfe at 2.48 p.m., on January 1, encountering heavy smoke from the first and second floors of the building.

“17 firefighters responded to the initial report of black smoke and flames coming from inside the home,” said the CYFS. “Hoarding conditions hampered firefighting operations and resulted in defensive operations until the fire could be brought under control and the building safely entered.

“The cause and origin of the fire appear to have been a wood stove on the main floor of the garage.”

There were no injuries.

## Briefly

### OUTDOOR SKATING SEASON BEGINS

While Aurora residents have been taking advantage of the cold weather by hitting the ice on natural ponds around the community, the Town’s official outdoor rinks are now open. Beginning this past Tuesday, January 11, ice pads have been opened at Town Park, Ada Johnson Park and Machell Park. No registration is required to take part in the outdoor fun.

### BOTTLE DRIVE

The Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion will host a fundraising bottle drive this weekend at their 105 Industrial Parkway North location. Liquor, beer and wine bottles can be dropped off on a table at the Legion’s north entrance on Friday, January 14, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., on Saturday, January 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and at the same times on Sunday, January 16. “We appreciate the support of the community,” says Legion President Lori Hoyes.

### COUNCIL GOES VIRTUAL – AGAIN

Aurora Council has returned to remote meetings once again in the face of ongoing public health concerns. This week’s General Committee meeting was set at press time to shift back to Zoom, with this month’s Council meeting on Tuesday, January 25, will take place in the same way at 7 p.m. Delegations will be allowed by video conference through contacting the Clerk’s office at [clerks@aurora.ca](mailto:clerks@aurora.ca). Meetings will be live-streamed through [aurora.ca/livemunicipalmeeting](http://aurora.ca/livemunicipalmeeting) and through the Town’s YouTube channel.



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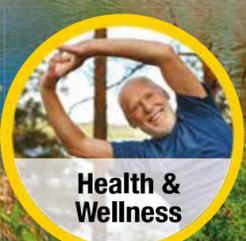
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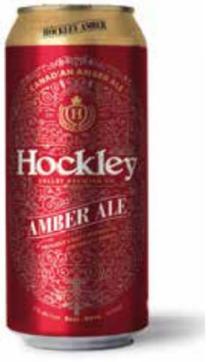
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## Oakridge's Fashions marks 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with move to community's heart

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's popular Oakridge's Fashions is making a bold move: to the heart of the community it has served for 25 years.

On New Year's Eve, the boutique secured the lease on an expansive new space in Aurora's downtown core: the former CIBC building just steps from Yonge and Wellington.

With a larger footprint and dedicated parking at the building's rear entrance, it is an exciting new chapter for owner Deb

Clark and her team.

"It feels right. It feels like this is where we belong," says Ms. Clark on moving her business from the Aurora Shopping Centre at Yonge Street and Murray Drive to Aurora's historic centre. "Because the business itself is so deeply-embedded into the community, I feel good having my site of business also in the heart of the community. They fit together and it makes me feel both fortunate and a little bit proud to be able to be one of those local businesses that is stepping forward early to support the historic downtown revitalization. We really have a lot of belief in it and we really want



Deb Clark, owner of Oakridge's Fashions, is excited to move her business to the heart of Aurora – just in time for the boutique's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the community. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

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to see this revitalization succeed – and one of the things we can do is be there!"

Ms. Clark says she is excited about all the possibilities in store for the area in the future, including new downtown parking to service both Aurora Town Square (formerly Library Square) and area businesses close on the horizon, the foot traffic Town Square will bring in, and the location's proximity to the seasonal Aurora Farmers' Market, and the incoming new Aurora United Church and its associated retirement community.

When they open their new doors in early spring, they will be able to roll out their lines of clothing and accessories in a space that is one-third larger than their current store, giving customers "a really beautiful experience."

It also boasts a basement area to support the retail space above and an on-site kitchen which will help renew Oakridge's dream of becoming a community hub for local fundraising, momentum for which was building just before the arrival of COVID-19.

"The new space means we will be able to conduct our business with more ease and more depth," says Ms. Clark. "A classic question we hear all the time now is, 'Do you have another one of these in another size?' and often we have to order it in because we do not have the space to hold extra inventory off the floor."

"Checking off boxes to make sure this is the right decision, the first box on my list were the customers' boxes: Would they be comfortable? Will they be able to park? Will they be able to feel at home? Can I transform this space into something that is both new and the same in a way that will make customers walk in and feel comfortable? I am sensitive to the fact that change is sometimes something we

all can resist a little bit and I understand that very well, but it is also an essential part of everyone's life from time to time – so I wanted to check off all those boxes that would assist my customers in making the transition.

"The next set of boxes was about how does the building support us better than where we are now to conduct business. Of course, it's about space, it's about storage, and, for when we get past pandemic days, and we will, this space is just fantastic for us to have some wonderful community gatherings and events. It just lends itself beautifully to it, right from a front door to a backdoor entrance for customers, to a kitchen, to washrooms, to beautiful light coming in from five west-facing windows. These things all spoke largely to me in terms of opportunity that does not exist where we are currently, and we are looking at the space with a healthy respect for the historic features of the building."

Once there is a return to normalcy, Ms. Clark hopes to host events that are focused on clothing and fashion, of course, but also give back to the community.

"That's what makes me happy," she says. "It's one thing to be an owner of a business, be successful and have a good bottom line, but what makes me really happy is when we can have an event that gives back to one of the many deserving organizations that serve and support our community. That's why I am in a community business and that is why I want to be right here in the heart of our community."

"It's a brand-new chapter for a store that has thrived, endured and been loved by so many in this Town. As a steward of this business, I really feel excited to know that we are securing a very lovely new chapter."

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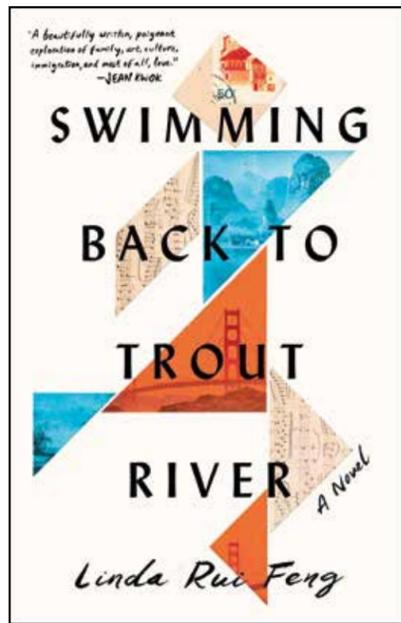


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BY BROCKWEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Music, which transcends language barriers, has brought people together since our ancestors sounded the first notes.

It connects people in a powerful way, sometimes in ways we find hard to understand. In *Swimming Back to Trout River*, the debut novel of Linda Rui Feng that was recently selected by the Aurora Public Library to form the basis of its One Book One Aurora campaign, it “connects characters through space and time.”

The power of music is one of the many themes local readers will be asked to consider while reading the book and participating in 10 months of programs made possible by the community and inspired by the author’s words.

“*Swimming Back to Trout River* has themes of family, art, culture, music, immigration, and all of that will spark discussion and provide lots of opportunities for programming that will enrich the readers’ experience,” says Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager of Community Collaboration for the Aurora Public Library (APL). “I personally really love that it afforded a perspective on history through a literary lens.”

*Swimming Back to Trout River*, which was critically acclaimed upon its release, begins in a small Chinese village the summer of 1986, centred on Junie, whose emigre parents to North America promise to collect her by her 12th birthday. Four interwoven stories come together to share a slice of the immigrant experience – and secrets we keep from ourselves and others.

“There was another reason I chose the book,” Ms. Mandelcorn adds. “We have a growing population in Aurora of community members whose original country was China. They may not be the first immigrants, but they have family members and history that go back. I hope this selection will invite participation and maybe even some collaborative programming from our community of Chinese descent.”

The pick is already bearing fruit.

Poet, photographer and journalist Yafang Shi, for instance, has come on board to curate a powerful art exhibition (currently virtual) entitled “Women’s Voices, Censorship & Resistance” to go along with the community reads initiative.

“When she came back from China a couple of years ago, she had some of her work censored when she was there and she actually faced some censorship when she came back to York Region,” Ms. Mandelcorn explains. “She started to do a series of photographs of beautiful flowers against barbed wire, against

## Music and family are themes that help guide One Book One Aurora 2022

fences, blanketed by shading. When we started to put together the program, she offered her exhibit to be a part of it, along with reading one of her pieces of poetry.

“We have also partnered with the York Chamber Ensemble for a performance of *The Lovers Concerto*, hopefully live in our Library Living Room, on Saturday, October 1. This is a piece with violin and keyboard and it is from two Chinese composers – a beautiful piece. The violin has a prominent role in the novel. This is something that, again, pulls from the themes of the novel and I think the public will be just so delighted when they hopefully come in and see this live performance.”

In addition to consuming these expressions of art, participants will have the opportunity to get their own creative juices flowing through writing and photography contests inspired by *Swimming Back to Trout River*.

The theme of “family” is one that figures prominently in APL’s writing contest, while photographers will be challenged to submit their own photos capturing how they see the power of music.

“Family plays a really important role in this,” says Ms. Mandelcorn, touching upon themes of immigration, secrets, trauma, love and betrayal. “In our APL writers’ group, there are a lot of stories that come out, fictionalized versions sometimes, of people’s past history. Family is a very interesting theme. It could be your family as real, it could be imagined, in any genre you want.

“We challenge photographers to capture the power of music and performance through photography. It can even be that they’re listening to music while they’re taking an image. They could be at Concerts in the Park, they could be anywhere, as long as it is related to music. I also thought this would be a really good contest because we have opened up in the last two years not only an adult category but also a youth category for ages 14 – 17 and thought music would be something that young people are involved with; it is part of their lives, and that might inspire a younger generation.”

This is just a sample of some of the programming inspired by *Swimming Back to Trout River* that will roll out across Aurora through 2022.

An up-to-date list of programs can be found at [onebookoneaurora.com](http://onebookoneaurora.com) and if you have any ideas for community programs of your own, Ms. Mandelcorn wants to hear from you at [rmandelcorn@aurorapl.ca](mailto:rmandelcorn@aurorapl.ca).

“One Book One Aurora is led by the Library but it is owed by the community,” she says. “We really do encourage community involvement. Let’s work together!”



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# First components of Town Square redevelopment eyed for April opening



**ROOM WITH A VIEW** – (Above) Phil Rose, Project Manager for Aurora Town Square, Municipal Marketing and Creative Specialist Katrina Estacio, and Carley Smith, Manager of Corporate Communications, stand in one of the new Yonge Street-facing spaces at the Aurora Public Library, part of the Aurora Town Square project. (Below) Work continues inside the Library's Yonge Street frontage, which will include an elevator to bring people up from street level to the main floor. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

**BY BROCK WEIR**  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As the \$5 million capital campaign for Aurora Town Square continues, the first elements of the \$56 million redevelopment and downtown revitalization project are shaping up to open this spring.

Work inside the Aurora Public Library, including new meeting spaces, a reconfigured Yonge Street Entrance, and further amenities are tentatively set to open with a ribbon cutting on April 12, according to Phil Rose, Project Manager for the Aurora Town Square project, formerly Library Square.

80 per cent of the project, he said, should be done by the end of 2022, including the bridge connecting the Aurora Public Library (APL) with the expansive new addition to the historic

Church Street School, home to the Aurora Cultural Centre and Aurora Museum & Archives, which should be complete by August.

Interior work on the new addition will be the last portion of the plan to be complete, with Mr. Rose estimating this should be done by January of

2023.

Mr. Rose provided an update on timelines during a media tour of the APL portion of the construction last week.

Work continues amid a capital campaign with a fundraising target set for \$5 million, a formal update



on which will be before Council next month.

“We do a hard hat tour [with potential donors, alongside the Mayor, the Consultant and me] and we give them information about the different naming opportunities,” said Mr. Rose on the work that has been done so far. “We have identified everything from the Performance Hall, to the outdoor square, to the bridge.”

Mr. Rose says there is a strong interest in sponsorship opportunities from the local development community and, further opportunities for the public to become involved in the capital campaign and be recognized permanently on-site will become available in the coming weeks.



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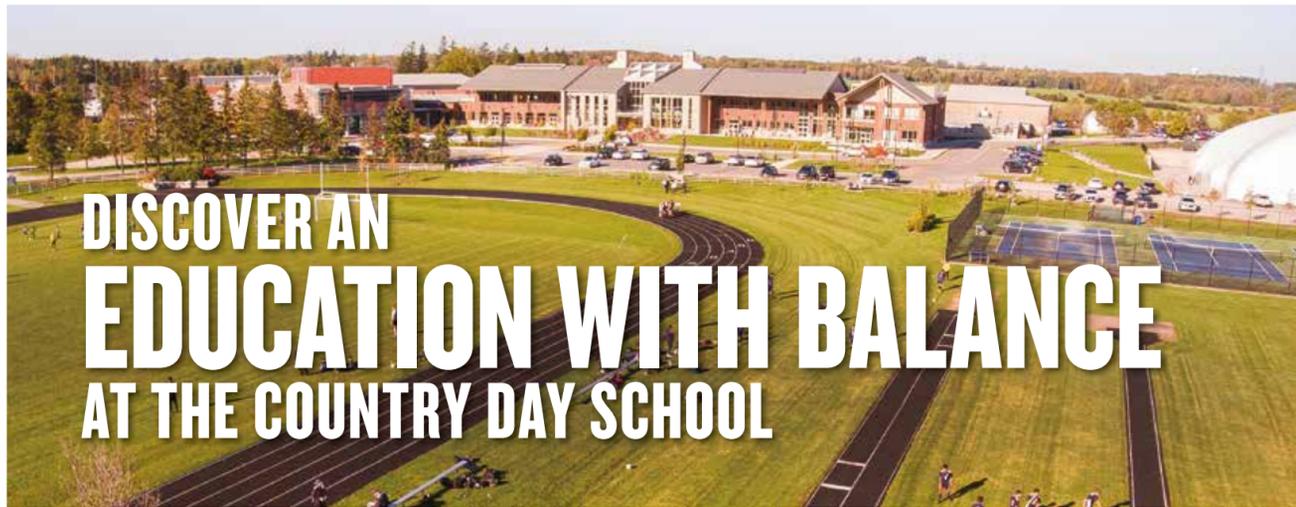
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If you would like more information on our Day of Care Program, please contact Jennifer Adams at [jadams@myhospice.ca](mailto:jadams@myhospice.ca).





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FREE Week of January 13, 2022



# York United sign three international talents

By Robert Belardi

In less than a month, York United have announced their new manager and three new players, beginning the next chapter for the York Region-based club.

Prior to the Christmas holidays, the club unveiled Martin Nash as the team's next manager.

The Regina SK native, signed a two-year deal with a 12-month option.

Revered across the Canadian Premier League for his work as an assistant manager with Cavalry FC, York United's Managing Consultant Angus McNab said Nash was the candidate who showed great enthusiasm for the club's roster and had the most effective vision on how to use the players moving forward.

A former player with many clubs, Nash spent his final six years of pro football with the Vancouver Whitecaps in Major League Soccer. He also appeared for the Canadian Men's National Team 38 times.

The club with Nash at the helm has already began 2022 with a bang. The club signed Danish international Daniel Obbekjaer, Brazilian Eduardo Jesus and Czech international Martin Graiciar to the roster.

The 19-year-old central defender Obbekjaer, has had a prosperous beginning to his young career. At the age of 16, he made his senior debut with Danish giant FC Copenhagen and later on that season, appeared for



Contributed photo

Martin Nash will lead York United into the next season.

Odense, becoming the youngest player in club history to take the pitch.

He went on to make appearances for his country and went off on loan in 2021 with Serie B side S.P.A.L.

The other 19-year-old signing, Jesus, is a fullback who is reportedly known for his pace.

Jesus spent majority of his youth career with Vitória which has seen the likes of David Luiz, Hulk, Dida and Bebeto all go on to have successful careers.

Jesus has also made appearances for Brazil under the U-16 and U-17 levels.

Similarly to the other two players, Czech Republic striker Graiciar has also made appearances for his national side at the U-16 level.

He received a call-up at the age of 14

and scored against Germany.

Originally beginning his club path with Spartak Prague, Graiciar made a name for himself with FC Viktoria Plzen. He was a part of their first-ever league victory in 2011 and represented the club in the UEFA Champions league and Europa League.

He was sought after in 2015 by former Arsenal manager Arsène Wenger but the move never came to

fruition.

In 2017, Graiciar was signed by ACF Fiorentina in the Italian Serie A. Since that move, he has spent seasons on loan with Liberec, Sparta Prague and most recently, FK Mladá Boleslav, before making the move to York United.

All players have signed on to two-year deals and all have options on top of their contracts to remain with York United further.

# OJHL plans to complete full season despite pause in games

BY BRIAN LOCKHART  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Ontario Junior Hockey League has announced plans to complete a full season, including playoffs, despite the temporary pause in hockey action around the province.

"The OJHL is committed to completing a full OJHL regular season and playoff schedule for the 2021-2022 season and we have put together various operation scenarios to allow us to do so," said Mary Savoy, League Commissioner. "With the current mandated pause, the OJHL has multiple scenarios developed which will allow us to get our full seasons and playoffs in this season."

All minor and junior hockey in the province came to a suddenly halt on January 5, with the announcement from the provincial government regarding the time-limited modified Phase 2 Reopening of the Province. That included the closing of all indoor recreational and sports

facilities.

The mandate does have some exceptions for "elite" athletes.

The OJHL is hoping to have Junior A level hockey included in that classification so they can remain on the ice.

"The League will continue to monitor the direction from the provincial government and will announce any adjustments to the OJHL schedule if or when they may be required," Mr. Savoy said. "Although the provincial government has not yet declared Junior A hockey within Ontario as elite level of sport, the OJHL is lobbying our various governing bodies in an effort to have this level of the sport included within this classification."

The OJHL normally has a 54-game season. During the stop in action, each team will be missing seven or eight games.

Plans could include extending the regular season time to include the additional games or slotted them in during the schedule to complete the season.

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# Chamber invests in getting people back to thriving at work

Contributed by  
The Aurora Chamber of Commerce

With the latest wave of Omicron infections causing continued disruptions for companies, the general anxiety level among employees is on the rise.

To combat the issue, the Aurora Chamber of Commerce is very pleased to be partnering with a local company, Flow Marketing who, along with the Canadian Mental Health

Association and Running Room have developed an evidence-based program called “Shift Your Mind”, to support the mental and physical health of employees.

The workplace wellness program is being offered to local Aurora businesses as part of the Chamber of Commerce’s Accelerate Business Recovery Hub program.

This online tool is designed as an all-in-one, self-serve resource to provide training and support for

businesses that may be looking to pivot, strengthen digital marketing or rethink their business model as they emerge from the pandemic.

“We heard from local businesses that the mental and physical wellness of their employees was a key part of keeping businesses productive and thriving,” said Sandra Ferri, President & CEO of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce. “Shift Your Mind is an important part of the resources needed for full economic recovery in Aurora. We are thrilled to be able to provide the skills to local businesses to stay well during these difficult times.”

Shift Your Mind has been proven to lift the spirits of employees by teaching the insights and habits that build resilience. It’s a fun group activity that allows employees to discover the science-backed strategies that will help them manage individually and as a team.

The program has generated positive results. 9 out of 10 agree that the program provided helpful strategies to manage mental health and they would recommend it to colleagues.

“This latest wave of the pandemic has hit people particularly hard mentally. Our ability to manage the everyday is low. Shift your Mind is a unique program that allows employees to feel they have the support and tools to not only survive, but feel the energy needed to be their best again” says Alison DeMuy, Director at Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington.

Flow has been providing mental health programming for years.

“Our work in mental health programming started in 2015,”

said Ted Jarvis, President of Flow Marketing. “York Regional Police approached our organization to develop a program for High Schools that combined mental health strategies with exercise. That program has grown to over 260 schools across Canada. Shift Your Mind is an evolution of our high school program to include those tactics that help employees manage the stressors of change and grow from the experience of life’s challenges.”

John Stanton, founder of Running Room, has helped tens of thousands of Canadians utilize exercise to improve their lives.

“It has been proven again and again that exercise helps people manage mental health. For over 35 years, Running Room has been offering running clinics that bring people together to accomplish an exercise goal – and have fun doing it. Shift Your Mind couples the incredible mental health management strategies with a group exercise experience. We believe it’s a winning formula.”

Employers interested in providing the program to their employees can check it out at [shiftyourmind.ca](http://shiftyourmind.ca).

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce will fully fund a pilot project for 30 individuals.

The funding will cover the enrolment of two employees per company on a first come, first serve basis, as a way for your company to experience the benefits of such a program.

Those interested in enrolling can contact Sandra Ferri, President and CEO of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce at [s.ferri@aurorachamber.on.ca](mailto:s.ferri@aurorachamber.on.ca).

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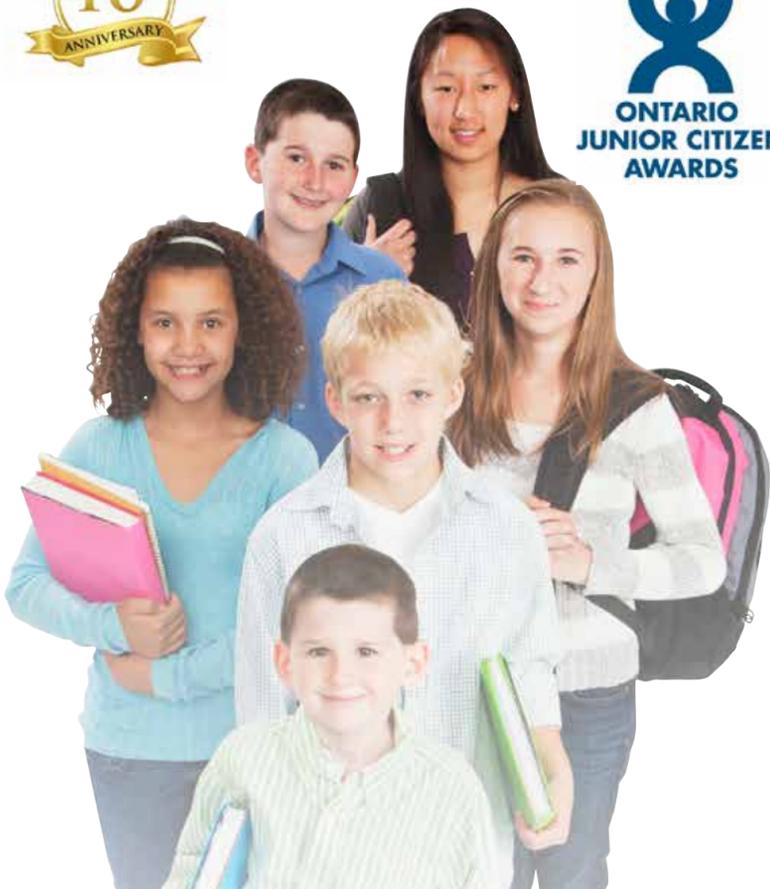
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## Mental health donation supports leaders of tomorrow

From page 1

Region & South Simcoe (CMHA-YRSS) to help fund the organization’s youth mental health programs, including MOBYSS, their mobile youth walk-in clinic, which provides free primary care and mental care to youth between the ages of 12 and 25.

It is the latest boost Mr. Rappos has given CMHA-YRSS and the latest in what he hopes will be a much wider movement beginning this spring.

“I am aware of the challenges of mental illness,” says Mr. Rappos, noting that mental health is health, just as much as diabetes, asthma, and other challenges. “We don’t put the same emphasis on supporting mental health in this country, I believe. Obviously, there is a societal stigma attached to exposing yourself if you do have a mental illness or mental disorder, but at the end of the day, we all have mental health, just like we all have physical health.”

“20 per cent of the population, unfortunately, suffers from a mental disorder or mental illness. [For] a lot of these mental illnesses and disorders, the onset of them starts at a very young age of a person’s life. To even get an assessment from a child psychologist could run you a couple of hundred an hour, which isn’t covered by OHIP. Unless you have employer-paid benefits, it is very difficult to afford even getting a psychological assessment. It is important that we make sure a lot of our young people don’t fall through the cracks, especially families that live on the margins of society. We need to make sure there is proper funding.”

Mr. Rappos’ donation isn’t just to support funding youth mental health programs, it is also to support the CMHA in advocating for governments to “do the right thing and make sure there is enough

funding” for coverage through OHIP.

“The issue is long, convoluted and complex, but over the last couple of years we have found with the pandemic that mental health disorders and illnesses, if you have one, tend to be exacerbated,” he says. “At the end of the day, it is necessary we make sure we nip this in the bud early on because these young people are going to be adults one day and we need to make sure that these young people who are going to become adults one day will become contributors to our society and our economy. If we’re leaving 20 per cent behind, that is not a good thing.”

To further this moment, Mr. Rappos hopes to mobilize the entire insurance industry in Canada to become part of a fundraising campaign to support youth mental health on a national scale through an initiative called “Insuring our Future”, set to launch this spring.

“We are hoping to garner some support from [industry associations] as we launch the campaign,” he says, noting a tentative launch date in early May. “We have had some great discussions with the CMHA and they are starting to...plan and brand around the initiative. I am really excited about that and I am confident we’re going to be raising a significant amount of funding. This is not a one-off, but this is something we’re going to try and implement annually in the insurance industry.”

“This is going to be a grassroots initiative to challenge all of us to make sure we step up and make a contribution to hopefully support youth mental health. Youth are going to be our business leaders, involved in arts and sciences, and we need to get these people the support they need to make sure they are functioning citizens.”

# Contractor helps provide more than 200 meals for residents in need



Jay Saveall of Green Side Up Contracting, second from left, is pictured with Mayor Tom Mrakas, Sandra Seepaul of the Aurora Food Pantry, and Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leah Taylor Roy, at a recent donation to the local food bank.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

## Saveall honoured with Inclusivity Award

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Welcoming Arms provides weekly meals to residents in need – and barely missed a beat in fulfilling its mandate throughout the global pandemic.

Helping to keep the Welcome Table program going, and more than 200 tummies satisfied, has been Jay Saveall President of Aurora's Green Side Up Contracting.

For their efforts in supporting the program, Mr. Saveall was recognized by the Town of Aurora with its 2021 Inclusivity Award.

Part of Aurora's Community Recognition Awards program, the Inclusivity Award is presented to an individual, group or business "which has contributed to making the Town of Aurora a more accessible and inclusive place to live, work and play for all people."

The award was presented virtually by Mayor Tom Mrakas at Trinity Anglican Church out of which Welcoming Arms operates.

"Welcoming Arms has continued to offer its Welcome Table program thanks in part to contributions made

by our local Inclusivity Award winner Jay Saveall, President of Green Side Up Contracting," said Mayor Mrakas. In 2020, Jay and Green Side Up Contracting dedicated the year to giving back to their hometown. They looked to create a more equitable and inclusive place for all Aurora residents to call home.

"During the pandemic, Jay recognized that now more than ever accessibility and meals for some Aurora residents was becoming increasingly difficult. To do their part, Green Side Up Contracting made a donation to Welcoming Arms to increase the supply of meals the foundation provides. This resulted in an additional 200 meals becoming accessible for Aurora residents. At Green Side Up Contracting, Jay has initiated a give back strategy: with each project over \$10,000, the company generously donates \$500 back to the corresponding community's food pantry. Through this act of kindness, the Aurora Food Pantry frequently benefits from this program."

Accepting the award last spring, Mr. Saveall said they were not content to rest on their laurels.

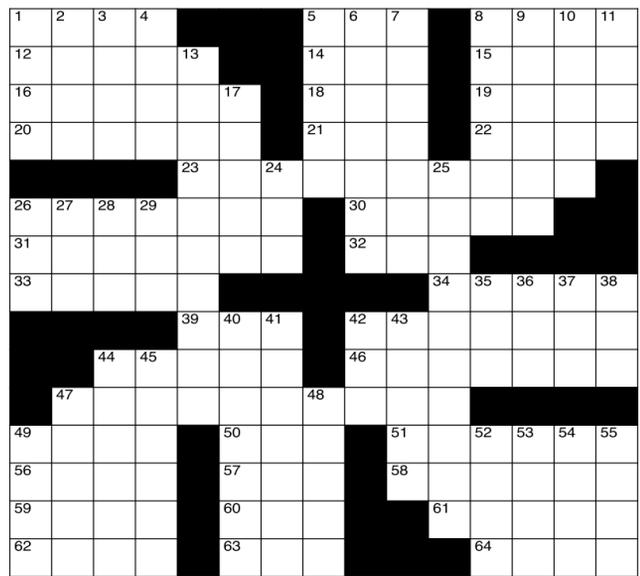
"I am very happy and grateful to receive the Inclusivity Award, but more importantly, we are so happy to give back to the community – to those in need, to the vulnerable, to those who

need food," he said. "We're going to continue our campaign in 2021 and we're going to come back and be giving back in a strong way."

This sense of giving culminated with

a donation of \$7,000 to the Aurora Food Pantry just before Christmas, a presentation attended by Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leah Taylor Roy and Mayor Mrakas.

# CROSSWORD

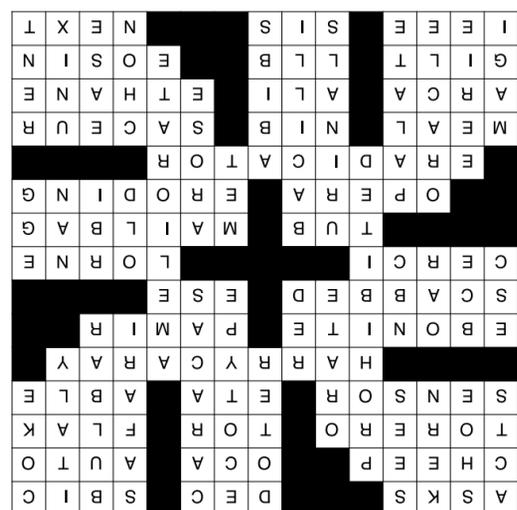


### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Requests
- 5. Calendar month
- 8. Invests in little enterprises
- 12. Bird sound
- 14. S. American plant cultivated for tubers
- 15. Car
- 16. Bullfighter
- 18. Hill (Celtic)
- 19. Strong criticism
- 20. Detector
- 21. When you hope to get there
- 22. Having the skill to do something
- 23. Legendary MLB broadcaster
- 26. Vulcanite
- 30. C. Asian mountain range
- 31. In a way, healed
- 32. Midway between east and southeast
- 33. Small appendages of insects
- 34. \_\_\_ Greene, "Bonanza" actor
- 39. A place to bathe
- 42. Postal worker accessory
- 44. Classical music
- 46. A way of wrecking
- 47. Terminator
- 49. You eat three a day
- 50. Pointed end of a pen
- 51. NATO official (abbr.)
- 56. Genus of clams
- 57. Boxing's "G.O.A.T."
- 58. A colorless, odorless gas used as fuel
- 59. Covered thinly with gold paint
- 60. Bachelor of Laws
- 61. Red fluorescent dye
- 62. Engineering group
- 63. Female sibling
- 64. Adjacent

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. What a thespian does
- 2. Footwear
- 3. Adjust spacing between
- 4. Witnesses
- 5. Who shows excessive fondness
- 6. Distinct form of a plant
- 7. National capital
- 8. Hunting expedition
- 9. Related to medulla oblongata
- 10. European country
- 11. Cola
- 13. Excluded from use or mention
- 17. Speak
- 24. Bloodshot
- 25. Make better
- 26. Keyboard key
- 27. Type of degree
- 28. Paddle
- 29. Peacock network
- 35. Not young
- 36. Baseball stat
- 37. One's grandmother
- 38. Breakfast food
- 40. Bathroom features
- 41. Disease-causing bacterium
- 42. NY ballplayer
- 43. Got up
- 44. Prophet
- 45. Part of the mouth
- 47. Unnatural
- 48. Acronym for brain science study
- 49. Three are famous
- 52. Languages spoken in Patagonia
- 53. Freedom from difficulty
- 54. Widely used OS
- 55. Many people pay it



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# A smile and a friendly chat can start the day off right for students and parents

Crossing guard Nancy Scott Stanley recognized with Community Safety Award

**BY BROCK WEIR**  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A smile and a friendly word might seem like small gestures, but they can go a long way in starting the day off right for people young and old.

This is a philosophy that guides Nancy Scott Stanley in her work as a crossing guard and one which guided her to accept the Community Safety

Award this past year from the Town of Aurora.

Ms. Scott Stanley, a former educator, was recognized for her work by the Town with the 2020 Community Safety Award, a part of Aurora's Community Recognition Awards program.

The Community Safety Award is presented to an individual or organization "dedicated to the promotion or support of an initiative that improves community safety," recognizing that "safer communities only happen when individuals take action to make a difference."

"Nancy not only looks to protect the safe arrival of students that pass



Nancy Scott Stanley is pictured with her 2021 Community Safety Award.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Rail plans "failed" to mention negative impacts on residents: reader

From page 4

Trains slowly and quietly arrive and depart from stations in residential areas and move across busy four-lane roadways with crossing barriers and safety lights causing no disturbance to the lives of residents.

The indisputable and significant precedence set by Markham and other municipalities to end the unconscionable noise forced on thousands of residents demonstrates exceptional responsible governance for serving the best interests of their residents by making the cessation of train horns a priority and a reality.

Residents of all communities

affected by the escalating detrimental effects of horn noise deserve the same consideration.

The large segment of Aurora's population affected by this intolerable situation has waited long enough.

The horn cessation process is there to follow without delay.

Clearly the cost is not a barrier, considering the substantial funding awarded for non-essential projects over the years, and residents have been told, "The Town is in a strong financial position." (The Auroran, November 11, 2021.)

E. Watson  
Aurora

her crosswalk before and after school, but she also ensures families and other members of the public are safe on the road," said Mayor Tom Mrakas, who presented the award virtually in light of the global pandemic. "Rain or shine, Nancy is on duty with a smile on her face. Nancy understands that families count on her to protect and look out for the best interests of their children. That is why she always looks to educate the public when she sees unsafe actions taking place.

"Nancy has made it her priority to get to know the families who cross her street daily. It has become a valuable part of their morning routine and it instills confidence in these families by showing how much she cares. The parents of younger children feel fortunate to have such a dedicated individual guiding their children to school and when their kids begin walking to school on their own, parents know they can trust Nancy

will make it safe for them to do so."

"Nancy's continued efforts to go above and beyond ensuring the safety of all who cross her path make her a deserving recipient of this award."

Ms. Scott Stanley said she was "honoured" to be selected for the award.

"It means a great deal to me," she said. "Over the years, I have become very good friends with our crossing guard. I simply began by coming to the corner to greet our students, parents and their dogs, and help them safely cross our busy street.

"I try to greet the students every day with a simple, 'Hello! How are you? Enjoy your day.' If our students and their families can feel safe and secure getting to and from school, they can become very happy souls. What a wonderful way to start the day! Through rain and snow, and wind and ice, it is so important that they can safely get to their destinations."

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**JANUARY 14 – 16**

The Aurora Legion will host a bottle drive this weekend. Any liquor, beer or wine bottles or cans may be dropped off on a table at the north side of the Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) on Friday between 12 noon and 5 p.m., Saturday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., or Sunday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. "We appreciate the support of the community," says Legion President Lori Hoyes.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 27**

The Aurora Public Library will host Changing the Way Housing Can Work, a virtual event with former Aurora resident Alex Bozikovic. Bozikovic unpacks the housing affordability crisis and offers innovative ideas for creating housing for all ages and demographic groups, posing tough questions about the issues that will make or break our communities. House Divided was shortlisted for

the Speaker's Book Award of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Alex has also written for journals including Azure, Architect, Architectural Record, Dwell, Frame, Landscape Architecture Magazine, and Spacing. 7 – 8.30 p.m. To register, visit aurorapl.ca.

**THROUGH FEBRUARY 5**

The Aurora Cultural Centre hosts the Constellations Solo Exhibition and Sale by Emily Carriere. Immerse yourself in the colourful world of intricately-cut vinyl and acrylic artworks by award-winning emerging artist Emily Carriere. Layering patterns and shapes with luminescent resins – many in a circle shape – Carriere places value in the creation process, often rescuing vinyl offcuts from

**THINGS You Ought To Know**

heading to the landfill. Most works available for sale, starting at \$75. Enjoy a fascinating stroll through the online exhibition, which is installed at Aurora Town Hall. To visit, head to auroraculturalcentre.ca/constellations.

**ONGOING**

Support AbuseHurts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. In the current COVID climate, a greater number of people are wanting to donate or get rid of unwanted items, increasing the need for more outlets being available to receive the items. This program will provide a convenient way for people to donate or get rid of used/unwanted clothing, blankets, linens and furniture and will help lessen the

amount of items ending up in landfills. Materials that were previously perceived as waste will now be seen as a valuable resource further encouraging redistribution. The items will be recycled in the following ways: To be given to individuals who are survivors of violence and are transitioning from shelters into new homes; To be sold in our store; To be sold to a textile recycler, which makes for an ongoing source of funding for Abuse Hurts enabling them to provide their services to the thousands of people that require them each year. When and Where: Monday and Wednesday, every week, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., with 30-minute time slots – only 1 drop off per time slot. If you do not have an appointment, we cannot accept your donation. The Abuse Hurts Warehouse is located at 1208 Gorham St, Unit 4, Newmarket - rear unloading dock. Visit AbuseHurts.ca to select your drop off time slot.

**THE AURORAN CLASSIFIEDS**

<p><b>FOR RENT</b></p> <p><b>BASEMENT APARTMENT:</b> one bedroom, walkout, laundry room, parking, all inclusive except TV and WIFI. No pets, no smoking. Close to Go Train - central King City. Single person: \$1500. Contact 289-383-3121.</p>	<p><b>SENIOR SERVICES</b></p> <p><b>LIVE - IN CAREGIVER</b> available Monday to Friday from 8 am to 4 pm. No weekends. I can provide personal care, homemaking, transportation, companionship etc. References available. For more information please call 905-590-1110</p>	<p><b>SERVICES</b></p> <p>Trusted Tree Maintenance &amp; Removal</p> <p><b>SHERWOOD MAINTENANCE GROUP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerial Pruning</li> <li>• Canopy Maintenance</li> <li>• Planting &amp; Fertilizing</li> <li>• Storm Risk Prevention</li> <li>• Arborist Reports &amp; Plans</li> <li>• Tree &amp; Shrub Appraisal</li> <li>• Urban Tree Removal</li> <li>• Storm Debris Clean-Up</li> </ul> <p>• Fully trained &amp; insured with leading techniques &amp; equipment • 647-400-6998 smgtrees@gmail.com www.smgtrees.com</p>	<p><b>OBITUARY</b></p> <p><b>Williamson, Helen Doreen (nee Compton)</b> August 6, 1921 - December 20, 2021</p> 
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**Thank You Carriers!**  
for delivering  
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during these challenging times.

After a joyous 100 year birthday celebration in August, Mom passed away peacefully at Helen Henderson Care Centre on December 20, 2021. She attained her goal of reaching 100 and received her much cherished certificate from the Queen who she, her mother and granddaughter Deb met along with Prince Philip when they visited the Kingston area.

Survived by her 4 children: Judy (of Virginia); John (Shirley) of Inverary, Jane (Bennett Lake) and Jim (Sue) of Coldwater. Also survived by 11 grandchildren: Laura, Katie, Christina, David, Jenna, Deb, Steve, Josh, John, Amanda and Jacob and their partners. Also sadly missed by 32 great grandchildren. Also survived by sister Freda (Cochrane, Alberta) and a niece and 2 nephews. Predeceased by her husband Jack, parents George and May Compton, granddaughter Megan, and sons-in-law Eddie and Ralph.

Mom grew up on a farm in Inverary and talked of fun and jokes they had even growing up through the Depression. She kept her sense of humour throughout her life. She graduated from KCVI and Kingston Business College. During the War she worked at Military Headquarters in Kingston where she met a dashing army officer, Jack; and they married in 1942. After the war, Jack was discharged from Camp Borden and the family moved to Aurora in 1951 where they raised the 4 Js: Judy, John, Jane and Jim. Mom was very active in the community and Trinity Anglican Church and worked at York Regional Hospital and a local jewelry store. She loved hosting dinners and entertaining friends and her meals were legendary. In the process she taught all 4 children to be good cooks and encouraged them in their education and careers.

During her Aurora days a hi-lite was a hot air balloon ride on her 75th birthday and trips across Canada and to Great Britain. She was always ready for a new adventure.

In 2007 she sold her home in Aurora and moved back to the family farm in Inverary and lived with John and Shirley and reunited with some childhood friends. She always enjoyed writing a poem to mark special occasions and won a competition for Sir John A's birthday and read her poem at that occasion. The last couple of years she was in Helen Henderson Care Centre where the staff were so kind and she participated in activities and kept her sense of humour, even donning a fake nose and glasses one day and pulled sheets up to her nose to surprise the staff.

Mom will be greatly missed by family and friends. Cremation has occurred and interment will be at Cataract Cemetery in the spring when family can hopefully get together. If people wish, donations can be made in her memory to Trinity Church Aurora, the Cancer Society or charity of your choice.

Mom you taught us to work, to love, to laugh and to persevere through all we faced.  
Please feel free to share memories of Helen online at [www.cataractcemetery.ca](http://www.cataractcemetery.ca)

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**EXPECTATIONS:**

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- Willing to take chances and learn from your peers

**DESIRED SKILLS & EXPERIENCE:**

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- Some Sales Skills Preferred but would be willing to train the right candidate
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**EXPECTATIONS:**

- Have a positive attitude
- Willing to work hard and enjoy rewards in a team environment
- Willing to take chances and learn from your peers

**DESIRED SKILLS & EXPERIENCE:**

- Sales Driven
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Or contact us at **905-833-1972** or  
**[admissions@cds.on.ca](mailto:admissions@cds.on.ca)** to learn about  
more options!

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**The Country Day School** has been part of the fabric of King since 1972. While our facilities and population have grown exponentially since then, our faculty and staff continue to provide the same warm and nurturing atmosphere that has always defined CDS. It is within this wonderful sense of community that our students thrive and learn. Come see for yourself what we mean by an *education with balance*.

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# CDS

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IN GRADES JK-12

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**100**

ACRE CAMPUS  
IN KING

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**18**

AVERAGE  
CLASS SIZE

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**88**

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# CDS

The Country Day School

EDUCATION WITH BALANCE