

Parent volunteer Miriam Dos Anjos and Principal Saira Salman are hoping to highlight and address community needs through Hartman Public School's Universal Snack Program. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Hartman's food program aims to "disrupt perception of what community needs"



17 Industrial Parkway South

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora has long been thought of as an affluent community, but not every experience is the same, regardless of age or circumstance – and this is a perception that leaders at Hartman Public School is aiming to challenge. Hartman Public School believes that access to proper nutrition is "essential for a child's growth, development and academic success," and with the help of several local businesses, including The Real Canadian Superstore at Bayview and St. John's Sideroad, they have been able to take their school's Universal Snack Program to the next level. The Hartman Public School Universal Snack Program aims to provide healthy and nourishing snacks to all students regardless of their financial circumstances. The overall goal is to "create an inclusive environment where every child can thrive and concentrate on their studies without hunger as a

Continued on page 12

"Being one of one isn't a good feeling" – International Women's Day highlights women in "non-traditional" careers

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Seeing herself as "one of one" wasn't the feeling Nicole Boreland anticipated when she decided to change careers after 20 years in childcare, but, as far as feelings go, it wasn't unfamiliar.

Continued on page 15

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TOWN OF AURORA

NOTICE BOARD March 14, 2024



Council & Committee Meetings

| Date | Time | Location | Meeting | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Week of March 11 | No meetings | | | | | | | |
| Monday, March 18 | 7 p.m. | Holland Room | Heritage Advisory Committee | | | | | |
| Tuesday, March 19 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Finance Advisory Committee | | | | | |
| Wednesday, March 20 | 7 p.m. | Aurora Public Library | Aurora Public Library Board | | | | | |
| Thursday, March 21 | 7 p.m. | Holland Room | Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee | | | | | |
| Tuesday, March 26 | 6 p.m. | Council Chambers | Special Meeting of Council (Water/ Wastewater Rate Frameworks) | | | | | |
| Tuesday, March 26 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Council | | | | | |
| Wednesday, March 27 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Active Transportation and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee | | | | | |
| Thursday, March 28 | 10 a.m. | Video Conference | Aurora Appeal Tribunal/Property Standards Committee (if required) | | | | | |
| Tuesday, April 2 | 9:30 a.m. | Newmarket CC | Joint Council Committee (CYFS) | | | | | |
| Tuesday, April 2 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Council Closed Session (if required) | | | | | |
| Tuesday, April 2 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Committee of the Whole | | | | | |

*General Committee, Public Planning and Council meetings are available to the public in-person and via live stream on the Town's YouTube channel.

Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition

Featured Artist: Raul Arango Gomez - Geometric Harmony with the Spritual World

Raul Arango Gomez exhibits artwork that showcases Geometric Harmony with the Spiritual World. This display looks at the set of geometric patterns and shapes found in nature.. Raul's work seeks to explore the meaning and significance of these shapes, connecting them to the spiritual world to discover the larger purpose they hold. View in-person at Aurora Town Hall in the Skylight Gallery. View in-person at Aurora Town Hall in the Skylight Gallery. View online at aurora.ca/SkylightGallery. All artwork is for sale. Please contact Sarah Reynolds at sreynolds@aurora.ca if you are interested in investing and owning a beautiful artwork piece.



March 21, 2024 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Spring/Summer 2024 Program Guide

The Spring & Summer 2024 Program Guide is available to view online and registration

dates are posted at aurora.ca/ProgramGuide. View our interactive guide and click on the code # to register online. Pay in-person at the A.F.L.C. or S.A.R.C.

What's Happening







Share your thoughts!



Your opinion counts! As we work on the Water and Wastewater Rate Study for Aurora, we want to ensure it considers YOUR needs. Join us on March 26, 6 p.m. at Town Hall to discuss the Town's proposed rate structure. Can't make the meeting? Email us your comments at ourtownbudget@aurora.ca.

Road Closure

The Westbound lane on Tyler Street will be closed from April 1 to October 31 for structural steel installation of the Aurora United Church. Traffic will be one way in the eastbound direction from Temperance to Yonge Street.

Heavy equipment will be on-site. We appreciate your patience during this period. For more details, visit aurora.ca/roadclosures.

Request for expression of interest: Food vendors opportunity

The Town of Aurora is looking for interested food vendors for Aurora's Concerts in the Park series on Wednesdays in July and August at Aurora Town Park (49 Wells Street). Community Services requests to hear from interested parties that would like to participate in managing, organizing, selling and serving food for sale and consumption.

Proposal requirements are located at aurora.ca/ SummerConcerts. Interested parties are requested to submit their proposal to the Recreation Supervisor, Special Events at sware@aurora.ca by: March 29, 2024 at 12 p.m.

Have any questions? Please call 905-726-4762.

Summer Camps 2024 Program Guide

The Summer Camps 2024 Program Guide is available to view online and registration



dates are posted at aurora.ca/SummerCamps. View our interactive guide and click on the code # to register online. Pay in-person at the A.F.L.C. or S.A.R.C.

Have your say! Choose the ideal location for a Community Reflection Space

We are looking for input from you on which location in Aurora is the most ideal for a community reflection space. The need for a dedicated public space was identified as part of our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

A community reflection space is an area where members of our community can come together during difficult and tumultuous times regardless of location, cultural affiliation, and cause.

Visit engageaurora.ca/ReflectionSpace to find out more and choose your space! Deadline to complete the survey is April 8.



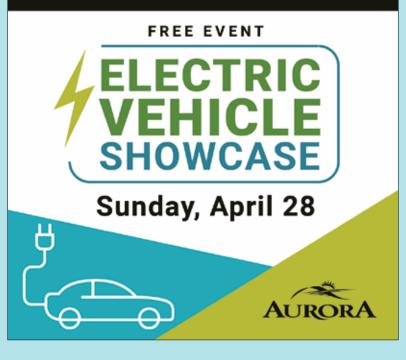


Aurora Family Leisure Complex • Aurora Joint Operations Centre Aurora Town Hall • Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex

Pancake breakfast offered by the Optimist Club of Aurora Nominal fees apply

aurora.ca/HelloSpring

SAVE THE DATE



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Accessible Formats

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Long investigation ahead for crash that claimed the lives of King family

By Mark Pavilons

Investigators are looking into cause of a plane crash in the United States that claimed the lives of an entire King family.

The community is still mourning the loss of Victor Dotsenko, 43, his wife Rimma, 39, and their children David, 12, Adam, 10, and Emma, 7.

One of the first to publicly identify the victims was King Mayor Steve Pellegrini who posted the information and words of sympathy last Wednesday.

"On behalf of King Township, I extend our deepest condolences to the families and friends of the Dotsenko family from our community who tragically lost their lives in the small plane crash in Nashville, Tennessee," he said. "This is a heartbreaking and devastating loss for our tight-knit community.

"We await further details from the ongoing investigation, our thoughts and prayers are with the loved ones of the victims during this incredibly difficult time. We also extend our gratitude to the first responders and officials involved in the response and investigation.

"We stand together in mourning the loss of Rimma Dotsenko, her husband Victor and their three children, and offer our support to those affected by this tragedy."

"We are all devastated to hear of this tragedy impacting the Dotsenko family, including three children. On behalf of Ontario's Government, we extend our prayers to the family and the entire community for this profound loss," added King-Vaughan MPP Stephen Lecce.

The UMCA Rich Tree Academy in Vaughan mourns the passing of three students from the school and their parents.

"Emma, Adam, and David Dotsenko were a fantastic part of our school and community. They were loved by all who knew them and will be sorely missed by our students and staff. The Dotsenko family is well-known in our community, and we offer our sincere condolences to the extended family and community. School counselling services are available to students to provide them with support."

The shock was shared by members of the Brampton Flying Club in Caledon, where the Piper PA-32RT plane was housed.

Victor was piloting the Piper from Ontario en route to Florida for a family vacation, when the crash occurred last Monday evening in Nashville.

According to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the crash occurred at 7.45 p.m. ET. The last point of departure for the airplane was Mt. Sterling, Kentucky. It was destined for John C. Tune Airport in Nashville.

Prior to completing a normal descent into the airport environment, it overflew the airport at about 2,500 feet. At an altitude of about 1,600 feet, the pilot reported a loss of engine power to air traffic control. ATC declared an emergency on behalf of the pilot and cleared him to land at the airport. The pilot indicated he could not make it to the airport. The airplane crashed near Interstate 40 in a left-wing, low orientation and came to rest about 60 feet from the highway.

An NTSB investigator arrived at the accident site Tuesday morning, documenting the scene. The aircraft was recovered to a secure facility where it's being thoroughly examined.

NTSB investigations involve three primary areas: the pilot, the aircraft and the operating environment. As part of this process, investigators will gather the following information and records:

- Flight track data Recordings of any air traffic control communications;
- Aircraft maintenance records;



Rimma and Victor Dotsenko with their three children.

Photo courtesy of UMC Rich Tree Academy

- Weather forecasts and actual weather and lighting conditions around the time of the accident;
- Pilot's licence, ratings and recency of flight experience;
- A 72-hour background of the pilot to determine if there were any issues that could have affected the pilot's ability to safety operate the flight;
- Witness statements;
- Electronic devices that could contain information relevant to the investigation;
- Any available surveillance video, including from doorbell cameras.

Witnesses to the accident or those who have surveillance video or other information that could be relevant to the investigation are asked to contact the NTSB at witness@ntsb.gov.

During the on-scene phase of the investigative process, the NTSB does not determine or speculate about the cause of the accident.

Preliminary reports, they said, are usually available within 30 days of an accident. Once a publication date is set, it will appear on the following page: www.

Are You Caring for An Older Loved One?

so much worry... so much time...

ntsb.gov/safety/data/Pages/dailypublication-dashboard.aspx. It will also be posted on NTSB Newsroom Twitter (https://twitter.com/NTSB_ Newsroom).

The preliminary report will contain facts gathered during the initial phase of the investigation. A probable cause of the crash, along with any contributing factors, will be detailed in the final report, which is expected in 12-24 months.

According to the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, pursuant to international agreements, the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) appointed an accredited representative to participate in the investigation into the incident.

As per ICAO Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, information on the progress and the findings of the investigation cannot be publicly released without the express consent of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), who is leading the investigation.

"In keeping with this convention, the TSB will not be able to comment on the investigation."



Guilty verdict handed down following 2020 murder of Aurora woman

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER for the public's assistance in finding Helen Sedo on Sunday, August 2, 2020

A jury has found John Sedo guilty of manslaughter following the death of his wife, 61-year-old Helen Sedo, in 2020.

Sedo was found guilty of manslaughter on February 29 and York Regional Police say sentencing will take place "in the coming months."

"Helen Sedo was reported missing on July 29, 2020 from her residence in Aurora," said YRP Sergeant Andy Pattenden in a statement. "Her disappearance was deemed suspicious and the Homicide Unit was engaged. On Wednesday, September 23, 2020, John Sedo was arrested and charged in connection with her death."

York Regional Police first asked

2020.

At the time, Police said Ms. Sedo was last seen leaving her home on the evening of July 29 and was carrying a red and white olivecoloured duffel bag and driving a 2012 silver Acura RDX with the licence plate CDBY 015.

Later that week, members of Ms. Sedo's family released statements to the public – and to Helen herself – appealing for information on her whereabouts.

"Mom, if you read this, I want you to know I love you very much and that all I want in this world right now is to know you are safe," said her son, through the YRP. "I understand if you need space and will fully support you in anything you Continued on page 19

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Solve clues, support local, and enter to win big with BIA

The Pot O'Gold Challenge presented by the Downtown Aurora BIA has officially begun! Solve clues, support local and join in the fun!

Follow @DowntownAuroraBIA on Instagram and follow the clues via our scavenger hunt and enter to win before midnight on St. Patrick's Day! Win one of 20 incredible prizes generously donated by Downtown Aurora businesses. Grand prize is a Nintendo Switch!

How to Play:

Follow the BIA on Instagram and look for our post with the clues! Each clue leads to one of 10 different Downtown Aurora businesses along Yonge (Henderson to St. John's) or Wellington (Machell Avenue to the GO station). Look for the sign that says "Congrats! You Found the Pot O'Gold" on the storefront window.

Share a photo of the storefront and share it to your Instagram stories.

Tag the BIA, the businesses' Instagram handle (provided on the 'ou Found the Pot of Gold poster) and use #BIAGold2024 for a chance to win!

Just one correct clue and you'll be entered into our prize draw for a chance to win!

Contest ends March 17th, 2024 at 11.59 p.m. Winners will be announced on March 23, 2024 at 12 noon.

Grand prize:

Nintendo Switch sponsored by Mauro Bucci and Angie Vallelunga of Your Home Sold Guaranteed Realty Specialists Inc. here in Aurora.

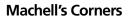
Runner up prize

is a Year of Free Dental Cleaning (worth over \$400) and an electric toothbrush from E&E Dentistry.

Plus, more prizes from your favourite local businesses include:

\$285 Acupuncture assessment + treatment from Aculife Aurora Acupuncture and Herbal Chinese Medicine:

- ٠ 1-week free children's art camp (August 19-23, 2024) from Royal Rose Gallery;
- 1-week free doggy daycare and





Using what we have while we've got it

It's often said that you don't know what you've got until it's gone.

That is indeed true, as anyone with a reasonable amount of time under their belt can attest; but it's also a two-way street. One sometimes doesn't know what one has, and then, when they find it, they either have no idea what it is – or what to do with it.

Looking back on my recent move, I should have kept a list of what fell into the latter category.

For some of the seemingly random items I found sifting through my life, there was an instant spark of recognition, no matter how non-descript the object. Often this spark re-heated the sentimental value still carried by the object, followed by the difficult task of determining whether that sentiment was strong enough to carry it into the next chapter.

Take, for instance, the humble VHS tape. As I don't personally have a working VCR or any other means of playing them, I got rid of the vast, vast majority of what I came to discover was an alarmingly vast, vast collection - but there were a couple of handfuls that I kept with me. Some, such as a trio of box sets, were imbued with that aforementioned sentiment and so many happy memories that came from unspooling them that donation to any number of organizations, or simply throwing them out, was completely out of the question. A few more I kept around just for the aesthetic value, potentially keeping a décor idea in the back of my head for another day because, quite simply, and at the risk of sounding like an old fart, they don't make cover art like they used to!



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

and early retirement, out they went... but, also maddeningly, the mystery endures.

But some items, like those VHS tapes, have turned into resources in the new domestic configuration. As much as I kept them around purely for their looks, they've turned into lightweight and practical "bricks" on which to house beloved items in the newest abode. They've doubled as small, make-shift shelves, display platforms, and even means to prop up other items which would otherwise flop over - with a which we rarely really think to use to our full advantage.

Of course, in this day and age, a global organization that sprang out of the former British Empire and all the baggage that comes with that, can be seen as an outmoded institution that is losing its relevancy with each passing year. But, in my opinion, relevancy is only what you make of it.

For better or worse, the vast majority of Commonwealth member states have similar histories, backgrounds, and similar challenges as we collectively come to terms with that shared history. Our efforts here at home to walk the path of Truth & Reconciliation are not dissimilar to the paths currently being walked in Australia and New Zealand, for instance, or to the paths being experienced by scores of African and Caribbean member states. We can all learn from each other.

Nor, of course, are our collective efforts to combat the challenges that will come with Climate Change dissimilar. Should the direst predictions on this front come to pass, member nation Tuvalu, a country which shares our Head of State, will be one of the first to be submerged by water. As such, they have not only done the hard work of doing everything they can to mitigate the threat, but have laid the metaphorical groundwork of "recreating" their nation, and their culture, in a digital format. It might be an unthinkable outcome for many of us, but it is their lived reality and we can learn from it. In a speech to mark the 75th anniversary of the Commonwealth this week, its head, King Charles, touched upon this sense of relationship. "Together and individually, we are strengthened by sharing perspectives and experiences and by offering and borrowing the myriad ways we have tackled the challenges of our time," he said. "This is true both at the level of nations and, indeed, at the local level. We recognize today that our diversity is our greatest strength. The Commonwealth represents a third of humanity, from all regions of the world, with different experiences, knowledge, and aspirations that this brings. "We must work together to understand each other's perspectives, including the inequalities and injustices which still resonate to this day. We must find ways of healing and to support each other to pursue solutions." Personally, I agree, but we can only do so when we know how – and remember - to deploy this resource to our advantage and, of course, the resources that are closest to home and all around us.

- prize pack from Dogtopia;
- \$200 Paw Patrol Weighted Blanket from Sparkle Pharmacy;
- \$185 OxyGeneo Facial from The Derma Lounge;
- \$150 OVO sweatshirt from Style Encore Aurora:
- \$90 Dolcezza Scarf by an exclusive artist (2024) from gift Oakridges Fashion;
- \$75 prize pack from The Residences on Yonge;
- \$70 Shellac Manicure and Pedicure from Andrew Nails Spa;
- \$60 bouquet from florist Petal Me Sugar;
- \$50 gift card to Sweet Dutchess Kitchen + Café;
- \$50 Prize Pack from Bookworms & Co

And more!

Note: This giveaway is not affiliated with Instagram.

Any questions, please send an email to auroradowntownbia@gmail.com.

Aurora Downtown **Business Improvement Area**

Correction

Last week's article, Lion's Sip and Paint Night will support dog guide programs, had a typographical error in the date of this spring's PetValu for Dog Guides. The event will take place at Queen's Diamond Jubilee Park on May 26. We regret the error.

On the other hand, for some things, there was no question that it was time purge.

Somewhere along the way, I came across three pieces of wood I glued together once upon a time. I knew in the back of my mind they were part of a project ultimately abandoned, but since I had no recollection what said project was, it was a piece of useless baggage that could be discarded. Another was an extensive cache of magazines from the early aughts that were squirreled away, presumably for a rainy day - but paper gets wet, so off to the donation piles there were placed. Maybe they made some decoupage enthusiast's day!

Most maddening of all, were those oh-so-familiar tiny pieces of perforated paper - numbered raffle tickets emblazoned with "KEEP THIS TICKET!" that outlived any memory of what I was supposed to keep them for. Reasonably sure none of these would lead to a significant financial windfall

certain panache.

Had I realised what I had previously, I would have dusted them off much sooner for deployment in this way, but necessity is the evergreen mother of invention.

In short, they were resources that I didn't really know that I had - and while, in this instance, I'm speaking about objects, I think there are resources all around us, physical or otherwise, that we're not taking full advantage of.

Our libraries, for instance, are well-used and well-loved community resources, but, in my view, despite the efforts and creativity of staff to reimagine these spaces for maker-spaces, creative hubs, and even performance venues, there is still, in many quarters, the view that libraries are staid and quiet places to grab a book or study. They still are, of course, but they're so much more.

Similarly, local arts venues might have the perception that they're for certain groups of people, those who might identify themselves as "art patrons" or persons who are better heeled than others, rather than the reality of being spaces for all - and venues where everyone's horizons, regardless of their interests, can be broadened.

Even as I write this on March 11, Commonwealth Day, I think the same can be applied to this extensive global "family" of nations that are being celebrated this week.

The Commonwealth, to me, always seems to be a prime resource for many things that is available at our finger tips



CLASSIFIEDS 905-727-3300 ex.102

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cynthiap@lpcmedia.ca TODAYS NEW HOMES zach@lpcmedia.ca

Heather Erwin heather@caledoncitizen.com



The Aurora Museum & Archives is admiring... The Good Kind of Mould!



We pass through them every day without thinking. They surround our doors, windows and artwork, our photos and mirrors. Wooden moulding is such a commonplace element of everyday life that it's hard to comprehend the great difficulty with which this product was made before the advent of automation and mechanization. These moulding planes (72.1.1-4) each have specific shapes of wooden body and unique notched and angled steel blades. These permit the incremental carving of the bulbous and curvilinear shapes that makes moulding so attractive. At least this kind of mould is welcome on your walls!

As the world awakens to the fresh promises of spring, our collective consciousness is drawn not only to cultural and religious celebrations like Easter, Passover, Nowruz, and Ramadan but also to the pivotal issues shaping our society. This season of renewal and reflection emphasizes the importance of hope, rebirth, and focused determination on what truly matters for the future.

As we observed International Women's Day on March 8, the ongoing struggle for gender equality and women's rights remains at the forefront in Canada and around the world. This day serves as a reminder of the achievements in the fight against gender-based discrimination and the work still needed to achieve true equality. Celebrating this day amidst the diverse observances of March reinforces the message that the need for gender equality spans all communities and gives hope to women and girls worldwide that we will continue to work for equality rights and opportunities across genders.

In the spirit of International Women's Day, I had the honour of joining my colleague at the York Region Liberal Caucus to host "Empowering Women in Trades: Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers." an event dedicated to celebrating the achievements and addressing the challenges of women in trades, and nontraditional role. This gathering brought together women firefighters from Richmond Hill and Central York, representatives from York Regional Police, and advocates from Blue Door, among others. The event featured a keynote from LiUNA, and I



Leah Taylor Roy, MP Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

led a panel discussion with Minister Ien and Minister O'Regan, highlighting the journey and impact of women in trades and public service.

I participated at the Richmond Hill Board of Trade Women in Business breakfast, the CFUW Aurora/ Newmarket annual luncheon and walk, and the evening keynote speech enriched by former Premier Kathleen Wynne. My involvement in these events reflects a deep commitment to fostering a community where women's contributions are celebrated, and their challenges met with supportive solutions.

Recent developments have shown a promising decrease in the inflation rate, providing relief to Canadians and potential economic stability. Coupled with our federal government's recent efforts to reduce telecom prices, eliminate junk fees, limit credit card company charges, and bring down grocery costs, these measures will make everyday life more affordable for Canadians. Such steps are crucial in easing the financial burden on families and individuals, making essential services more accessible to all.

The transition to a greener economy is gaining momentum with the introduction of clean electricity regulations, a cap on emissions, and a carbon pricing program. These policies are designed to accelerate Canada's move toward sustainable energy sources, aligning with global efforts to combat climate change and ensuring a healthier planet for future generations. Environmental stewardship remains a key component of our collective well-being.

At the heart of ensuring a safe and equitable digital space is the Online Harms Act, which was tabled on February 26, a legislative effort to protect individuals from misinformation, disinformation, and the darker corners of the internet. This act is a crucial part of a broader conversation about the role of large multinational companies in our digital lives and the need for critical engagement with the content we consume online. It represents a step forward in safeguarding the mental and emotional well-being of internet users, particularly the most vulnerable among us and our children, while balancing this with our Charter-protected freedom of speech. In the realm of healthcare, the Pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance is making strides to make medication more affordable and accessible. This initiative highlights the importance of collaboration across provinces and territories to negotiate better prices



March is the month God created to show people who don't drink what a hangover is like. – Garrison Keillor

Ah, Spring. It's the best time of the year, my utmost all-time favorite season, a season of hope, holding a promise that change is a-comin' for the better. Spring signifies coming out of the darkness. English poet Anne Bradstreet said, "If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant, and if we did not taste adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."

Yes, friends, it's time to buy a new pair of Skechers as this beautiful season encourages us to spend some time outdoors. Breathe in that fresh air and walk, my friend, walk and walk.

There's even some science to the joy of spring. Spending time in daylight boosts mood, well-being and energy. Dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with attention, motivation, pleasure and mood seems to increase with more exposure to sunlight. Ah, yes, love is in the air.

My husband and I would go out every spring and go to a forested area not far from us and in early March we could hear the froggies singing and a-calling for their mate. At first it sounds like birds excitedly chirping in the trees but as you approach the little creek, there they are, all sitting and bopping their heads and singing away.

The old serenade trick works every time!

Ladies and gents, it's also time to revisit your closets giving it a ruthless look and getting rid of clothing you no longer wear, kept it when you lose weight, gain weight, or dear Aunt Gladys gave you for Christmas one year; yes, it's time to say bye-bye with no regrets. Choose a day, plan your attack, put on some inspiring music, get your boxes or plastic bags ready and once you are in, there is no turning back!

When I got rid of my teacher clothes,

Last year the Town signed an agreement with a local internet provider to allow them to install their fibre optic cables all over Aurora.

This will eventually enable residents to get high speed fibre optic internet, assuming they want it, and that they don't already have it through another local service provider.

Since then crews have been out prepping for the cable installation. This is the initial "locate" phase of the operation, which will eventually see five more slightly disruptive ones: construction, conduit placement, installation, fibre build and restoration. A couple of months ago I noticed they that had started locate in our neighbourhood. work It was hard to miss. Their trucks were parked everywhere and brightly vested crews wandered all over with metal detector-like devices locating existing underground utilities.

It's understandable they'd want to know where these are as it would cause no end of grief if, during the construction phase, they dug up any existing electrical, water, phone, gas, or a host of other existing buried infrastructure that we all take for granted.

In any case, I was curious to see the crews out marking the snow over these existing utilities using fluorescent pink paint. Continued on page 10

"Permanent" Markings

happens in the spring around here; ALL the snowmelts. This would mean erasing all evidence of their locating work. But they must have considered this because as the snow did melt completely over those two weeks during our unseasonably warm winter, the crews started transitioning from painting the snow to marking up the sidewalks and grass, which are somewhat more permanent surfaces than temporary precipitation.

With the snow now gone for good (we hope) the boulevards and sidewalks in our neighbourhood are covered in brightly painted dots, lines and symbols. They seem random, but I'm sure there's some logic to them. However, by that one crew member's estimate, construction is still a few months away. There's no guarantee that all of these markings will still be around in the spring. After all, as the weather warms the grass will start growing and also need to be mowed, and rain, sidewalk sweeping and pedestrian traffic may to some degree clean the surfaces of the sidewalks. I'll be curious to see if the locating crews will be back again to touch up their work before all the digging starts. If so, at least by then all the snow will be gone.

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

it was the most invigorating experience I have had in a long time. Yes, many of the clothes brought memories but spring is the perfect time to start with less. Here's the thing, if you have room in your dwelling place and you can keep those pieces of clothing that have sentimental value to you, then keep them but it's okay, too, to pass them on to a family member or donate them to the Salvation Army or women's or men's shelter who will enjoy them probably even more than you.

As a woman I have bought some fashion mistakes that have cluttered my wardrobe for years.

Clearing my closet of past blunders gave me the space and freedom to choose clothing in the future that reflects the woman I am becoming.

In some cultures, spring brings great celebrations and traditions. The start of spring is the start of the new year. The luck-infused Chinese New Year is celebrated after the second full moon after the winter solstice ends in a parade of dragons and fireworks that scare away the bad spirits.

In Thailand, there is the waterthrowing New Year festival held every April, when Thais also clean their houses for good luck.

The 13-day Iranian festival of Continued on page 22

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

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INSIDE AURORA Scott Johnston

Over the next several days I continued to see the crews out, diligently going over the same areas several times. Perhaps they were being thorough, or perhaps during that time the snow they were painting did what snow tends to do in winter; it accumulated and melted. And every time it did so, it erased all evidence of the recently applied fluorescent paint by either covering it up under new snow, or by having the snow it was painted on melt away.

One day I approached one of the crew members, who was cheerfully repainting the snow on a boulevard near our house, and asked based on all this prep work when construction was going to begin. Based on their repeated efforts to ensure the markings remained, I assumed he'd say something like "next week", but instead he noted "sometime in the spring". I'm not sure if this company is aware, but something else that usually



WALKING THE **SWEETGRASS ROAD** Kim Wheatley

Traditional Anishinaabe Grandmother

Identity and Belonging has become a Witch Hunt

WHO is Indigenous and can claim that based on the complex interconnected relationships and ceremonies of Indigenous People is not for the government, institutions, media outlets, organizations to decide...period.

We are in the time of the revised witch hunt now called "pretendians" where famous and the not-so-famous are being called out for identity fraud. This has had enormous detrimental impacts on these individuals, Indigenous communities at large and is a growing concern with postsecondary institutions who are receiving and experiencing serious academic challenges to their institutional credibility and positioning of key Indigenous job placements.

Indeed, the rotten seed of identity fraud has been quietly supported by post-secondary institutions even when questions have been presented from wellrespected and well known Indigenous persons showing they made a mistake. Its only when the news that a high-profile



[•] Memory Care Stays

- Trial Stays
- Post Surgery Stays

academic is claiming fraudulent identity hits public media that some backstepping seems to occur.

This whole arena of dialogue is further complicated by the research on identity and authenticity based on the false colonial construct of blood quantum only imposed upon anyone who asserts Indigenous identity and can be recognized under the Indian Act. Holding status is a hoax of Indigenous identity and not a true identity component. Status is a process of regulation and control...extraordinarily detrimental to the fabric of Indigenous identity and inclusion.

The Indian Act is one of the most racist pieces of legislation still held as the legal framework upon which identity and inclusion are ascertained. The most horrendous of crimes were justified and placed upon Indigenous Sovereign nations across the country via this document. It is interesting to note that only Indigenous people are scrutinized for blood quantum while immigrants to Canada are exempt from this process. It is a horrific tool of conquer and divide that has continuously disrupted and muddled identities of communities, families and nationhood at large. The Indian Act was created to control and assimilate Indigenous peoples and their communities. This control has led to divide in our communities about who is and is not included while the colonial agenda claps its hands in glee.

The seemingly justifiable glee in which public media extolls their "discoveries" is devastating. It seems the continued belief in the "disappearing race" theory is gaining momentum with these ongoing reports. How on earth is an individual expected to maintain culturally relevant identities and relationships within Indigenous communities with a colonial system of measurement and validation as the foundation?

Where is traditional governance, practices, ceremonies and recognition holding space? While we continued to be identified as wards of the Crown supporting the ongoing need for Indian Affairs offices now conveniently renamed Indigenous Affairs offices who are populated by mostly non-Indigenous employees who make lifeimpacting decisions for people they don't understand or seemingly even care about. It's their job to address inquiries and make judgements for Indigenous People across the Nation.

Many of these employees sit on the sunshine list making over \$100 thousand dollars a year disseminating "our" money as so many community members struggle

ago that Bill C31 "reinstated" Indigenous women's identities who had that removed for marrying someone they loved who did not have status and yet all the women who "gained" status for marrying in still hold that intact?! Think about it...if there are more of "us" recognized and accepted as Indigenous the governmental responsibility increases which means more money needs to filter down to honour Treaty agreements.

Apologizing and then immediately continuing with racist policy making in full effect is in direct conflict to honoring Treaty Agreements and walking the road of Reconciliation that this country continues to claim it is adhering to.

In my opinion, the witchhunt is the new smokescreen of distraction to influence the Canadian public's acceptance and belief in our continued and contemporary existence.

The idea that Christianity and their prodigious documentation is valid proof of identity is ridiculous for a nation of people who have their own process and tracking recognitions of community and relations. WE and only OUR communities should hold the right to determine who is and who is not a recognized community member.

Our complex relationality systems surpass Canada's stunted colonial restrictions and we remember how much hardship this has created intergenerationally within our communities historically and contemporarily. Shame on Canada and many of the news media outlets for shaming and blaming individuals on such a high-profile stage.

Worldwide people are watching and wondering what and why is this going on, while the government conveniently and comfortably hides behind its ongoing racist laws of blood quantum to ascertain Indigenous identity.

I do agree there are many fraudulent impersonators out there who have found a lucrative loophole to benefit in many ways as an Indigenous person. However wellmeaning or important their contributions, they continue to fray the important fabric of truth that many are struggling with. Not to mention we have residential school history identity erasures, the Children's Aid Society's identity erasure policies by holding adoption records hostage only to disseminate highly redacted files to adoptees after jumping through endless hoops.

The historic record of relations between Canadian government and Indigenous peoples is flagrantly unbalanced. Trust in legally-binding documents such as the Indian Act that are inherently designed to eradicate identity continue and continue to be the foundation of decision making in Canadian Courts of Law. It is important to note that this Act is one of the most amended in Canadian history and is also the foundation upon which apartheid was designed for South Africa. Hitler took notes on its success and replicated many of the same processes in World War II. I cannot continue to participate in a dialogue on "pretendianism" while its rotten roots continue to dictate Indigenous Sovereign relations with a government who is directly responsible for this quagmire.

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with some of the lowest social economic parameters in this country. This institution directly affects the economic, health, social and educational realities of Indigenous persons across the country.

The audacity of the Canadian government to hold the right to decide on identity and inclusion based on their defined and rigidly controlled recognition standards is self-serving to the highest degree. Especially when you take into consideration the fiduciary responsibility it continues to hold over Indigenous nations across the country. It's not so long



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Residents asked to weigh in on location of Community Reflection Space

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Town of Aurora is seeking input from residents on potential locations for a Community Reflection Space.

The Community Reflection Space has been in the works since 2023 and is an initiative that has come out of the Town's Indigenous Relations Committee (IRC) as part of its work towards Truth & Reconciliation.

Since it was first floated, the vision has evolved into a dedicated area where all members of the community "can come together during difficult and tumultuous times regardless of location, cultural affiliation and cause."

"It serves as a place for collective reflection and paying respects to those affected by tragic events," said the Town in a statement.

Since the initial conception, the Community Reflection Space proposal has been presented to Council and members of the Town's Advisory Committees, along with several proposed locations: the forecourt of Town Hall, Lambert Willson Park, Town Park, and Queen's Diamond Jubilee Park.

Lawmakers and committee members have voiced pros and cons for each of the sites, and now it's time for residents to have their say – or even propose a location that isn't presently on the shortlist.

"Right now, we're mainly focused on finding the ideal location for the reflection space," says Phil Rose of the Town of Aurora. "We had a report to Council and at that time we presented what we felt was our ideal location and Council wanted us to do a little bit more feedback. We're focusing on location and in the spring we will come back to Council and we will let them know what the public has said. We have done some presentations to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee as well as the Accessibility Advisory Committee and then we're doing some targeted consultation with certain stakeholders like the York Regional Police and we're going to combine all that information."

A report is expected to come forward to Council in April with the location or locations that have risen to the top and staff will make recommendations based on those findings.

"The things we're looking for from an ideal location perspective are is there parking? Is it accessible from a walking and public transit perspective? Are there safety things associated with it such as lighting, washrooms as well, and proximity to other Town amenities that would allow us to have our staff maintain it as we need to?" says Rose. "Once we get Council's direction, the next step will be going out to some of the design phase of the project.

"We looked at the amenities that are at different spots at the Town...different Town locations and we shortlisted. We looked at some of the space behind the Leisure Centre, Town Hall at the front, close to John West Way as you first come in by the flagpole, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Park just down the street. One of the things we're trying to maintain is having a quiet space for reflection against competing uses. Town Park, for example, has come up and we've kind of quickly crossed it off the list because, of course, it is a very active space and it's not conducive to having a reflective space to think about community loss as well as, at the same time, the Arctic Adventure or baseball tournaments happening. We are slowly winnowing the list down."

Since the idea was first brought

forward, Rose says there hasn't been a lot of feedback on the appetite for such a space, but the Council and staff have concurred that there is a need.

"There really [aren't] a lot of communities that dedicate space for these kinds of memorials and community grieving and we think it is important that they're there," he says. "This project came up as part of our Indigenous Relations Committee and how do we address the findings related to the residential schools and the bodies that are found. I think based on the Town's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, there was an early buyin for this, but realizing there was more than the residential schools to grieve and reflect on. "We have feedback that it would be nice to have some additional shelter in those spaces for people who might want to go on a hot day, have a lot of tree canopy, somewhere to sit under while they are there. Seating is very important for a spot to sit and reflect. Public art has come up as well, something we're conscious of, and we have the Public Art plan coming forward. Having something that is created as a symbol of loss or reflection and... signage... letting people know what the space is about, what's allowed and not allowed in these spaces."

To provide your input on the proposed Community Reflection Space, visit engageaurora. ca/ReflectionSpace.



Last week, for three days, I've was in Washington D.C. alongside fellow mayors from both Canada and the United States, part of the Great Lakes -St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. During this time, we had the opportunity to meet with numerous lawmakers, including Senator Gary Peters, **Representatives Hillary** Scholten, Dan Kildee,



rely on the Great Lakes for their water supply.

While in Canada, we may not be

and Frank Mrvan. Additionally, we held discussions with Mary Frances Repko, Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Climate Advisor, to advocate for vital programs and facilitate easier access to funding.

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goal is to ensure that communities

on both sides of the Great Lakes can continue their efforts to restore and protect this vital ecosystem, while also safeguarding our freshwater for future generations.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me by email tmrakas@aurora.ca or by phone 905-726-4746. I am here for you.



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Active Transportation Plan could bring nearly 200km of new routes, trails to Aurora

Road diets, east-west connections discussed at Council

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's new Active Transportation Master Plan could bring nearly 200km of new routes to the municipal trails system.

The draft Master Plan was presented to Council last week at the Town's first Committee of the Whole meeting on March 5.

The Plan is intended to guide the development of active transportation networks – such as trails and bike lanes – for the next 20 years.

The Master Plan has been in the works since 2021 with consultants WSP Canada and has been guided by six key pillars: Provide and Support a Variety of Transportation Options; Support Community Health; Improve Connectivity; Increase Sustainability; Prioritize Safety and Accessibility; and Coordinate with Existing and Future Infrastructure Projects.

The draft plan also looked at socio-economic trends to help "develop an understanding" of the current and future needs of Aurora residents.

"Approximately 60 per cent of Aurora's population commuted to work, with 22 per cent spending under 15 minutes and 21 per cent spending 15 to 29 minutes on their commute," the report found, citing the most recent data from Statistics Canada. "Despite the relatively short commute times, the majority of Aurora residents (87 per cent) use driving as their main form of transportation during the week. This is followed by transit use, including GO Rail, local transit, and school buses, at 7 per cent. Active transportation, such as walking and cycling, accounts for

Value beyond numbers

approximately 5 per cent of the overall transportation mode share in Aurora."

In consultation with Aurora residents, consultants say community members identified "challenges" within the existing active transportation network which affect how often residents use them, including "lack of a connected cycling and trail network, concerns about high speed and noise from vehicle traffic, poor conditions of some existing sidewalks and trails, [and] connections to key Town destinations" such as the GO Station.

"A key task of the Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP) was to develop a proposed active transportation network for Aurora that was...designed with an equitable lens to ensure that underserved communities will have optimal access to the network. Along with equity and connectivity considerations, the proposed network is intended to be universally accessible to people of all ages and abilities," they said. "In total, the Town of Aurora's recommended active Thompson. "In the past when I have raised the concern, I am looking for more evidence, more details to corroborate that this is the right thing for us to do in our downtown core.

"When I go online and just search myself to understand road diets and implementation in other communities, there is certainly a lot of positive results and information available for anybody who wants to do some research... but there are also come cases where it didn't work out and they've had to reverse it or it has created other issues. I am a little concerned when I see it being identified as a quick win to implement that program; I don't know if collectively we have done enough due diligence to support the idea and make all of Council and myself fully aware of not just the benefits but also any potential risks."

Another concern voiced at the table came from Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese who questioned how Metrolinx' plans to add a double track through Aurora on the GO line to allow for all-day, twoway 15-minute train service, and potentially a traffic underpass beneath Wellington Street, would impact plans for gradeseparated active transportation infrastructure. "Is there a reason for it being a priority 10 years from now as opposed to somewhere between now and 10 years?" he asked. The consultant replied the priority is to complete a feasibility study to get "a better appreciation of what would be involved to design and implement" some of the grade separations. The Wellington Corridor, agreed Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland, was a "sticking point" and the current configuration of the rails bisecting Aurora was a "great divide" that is an ongoing challenge. Now is the time to advocate for Aurora's priorities and send a message that more infrastructure is needed for eastwest connectivity. "[Metrolinx] will be double tracking and that will then guide York Region in what they can do from that point on to provide pathway connections to the GO Station to both east and west of Yonge Street and beyond Yonge Street to Bathurst," said the consultant. Added Councillor Gilliland: "I understand there are a lot of challenges between Yonge and the GO because it is very narrow, but at the very least, especially with the development that will occur down that local corridor, it (traffic) is only going to increase. I have families who say they can't walk strollers, there is nowhere to go. It is a challenge, so I would just prefer to highlight that as I feel, for Aurora, it is a priority to be able to connect east and west."



transportation and trails network is made up of almost 490 km or routes. Approximately 300 km is existing and this ATMP proposes about 190 km of new routes.

"To create a culture of walking, cycling and micro-mobility use in the Town of Aurora, financial investment and other resources need to be strategically allocated. The ATMP outlines phasing and maintenance strategies that are intended to guide decision-making on active transportation policy and planning processes while being flexible enough to adapt to changes in active transportation trends or other opportunities that may arise over the years as the network is being implemented."

Short term goals – those that can be accomplished within ten years of the plan's adoption – include "quick wins" of signed bike routes, "conventional or buffered" bike lanes, physically separated facilities along roadways, the further development of sidewalks and the implementation of "road diets" to facilitate traffic flow.

A road diet in this context is a reduction of lanes for through traffic to allow bike infrastructure and on-street parking – particularly on Yonge Street and the Aurora Promenade area in the Town's historic downtown core.

Consultants said this would allow for further turn lanes that would "really benefit businesses in terms of access to and from those properties compared to the current condition," but said doing so at Orchard Heights would require "significant design modifications."

"The concept has been talked about for many years now," said Ward 4 Councillor Michael



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Van Bynen won't seek re-election as MP

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen will not seek re-election in the next Federal election.

The two-term Member of Parliament, who served as Mayor of Newmarket for more than a decade, announced his decision in a statement on Monday, March 11.

In doing so, he said it has been an honour to serve the local constituents and will "continue working hard" as MP until the next Federal election is called.

"After nearly 25 years of public service, I'm shifting my focus to family, and in particular to my wife, Roxanne, who has been my greatest supporter," said Van Bynen. "I look forward to more quality time with my loved ones."

"From Councillor in 2000 to Newmarket Mayor (2006-2018) and now a two-term MP from Newmarket-Aurora, serving my community has been rewarding," he continued. "I stood for election in 2019 out of a deep concern for the environment and for future generations, and I'm proud that our government has made this a priority. Facing climate change is essential for our future; we must achieve a balanced, and more compassionate relationship with nature.

"Reflecting on our efforts to build a stronger, healthier Canada, I'm proud of our focus on supporting families. Our initiatives, including our flagship childcare support, have significantly relieved financial burdens, enabling more women to contribute to the economy. The Canada Child Benefit has helped lift hundreds of thousands of children from poverty. And our initial dental benefit allowed many children to receive dental care, while our new Canada Dental Plan extends that coverage and will be including seniors going forward.

"Strong families help build healthier communities and caring, engaged communities support family growth. We are fortunate to live in Newmarket and Aurora, which are wonderful places to call home. I am grateful for the support our government has given to community

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MSON DENTAL



Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen, seen here speaking at an International Women's Day event in Richmond Hill on Thursday, announced he would not seek re-election earlier this week. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

organizations and even more grateful for the compassion and caring nature of these organizations and the thousands of volunteers who make a positive difference."

Public service, he concluded, is more than a career, "it's a calling and my commitment to our community doesn't end with retirement."

"This is my home, and I am deeply grateful for the help and encouragement I've received along the way."

Van Bynen was first elected as Newmarket-Aurora's Federal representative for the Liberal Party of Canada, defeating Conservative incumbent Lois Brown 26,488 votes to 23,232. He retained his seat in the 2021 Federal election, fending off Conservative challenger – and Aurora Councillor – Harold Kim by a vote of 24,208 to 21,173.

LEAH'S LETTER

From page 5

for pharmaceuticals, ensuring that Canadians can access the treatments they need without financial strain. This is also why Pharmacare has been introduced, with the provision of contraceptives and diabetes medications.

These topics, from the economic relief of lower inflation rates and reduced telecom prices to the environmental imperative of clean electricity regulations, the digital safety ensured by the Online Harms Act, the healthcare improvements through the Pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance, and the celebration of International Women's Day, reflect the multifaceted nature of our societal progress. They underscore the interconnectedness of our challenges and achievements, reminding us that

our efforts in one area can support and enhance progress in another.

As we embrace the themes of hope and renewal that March brings, let us also commit to being informed, critical participants in our digital and physical worlds. Supporting local journalism, engaging in critical thinking, and advocating for policies that protect and uplift all members of society are actions that can lead to a brighter, more equitable future.

As your Member of Parliament, my priority is to ensure that your views and concerns are shared and advocated for at the national level. I am here to serve and assist all constituents on federal matters. To keep up to date on how I am working for you, visit my social media pages on Facebook, Instagram, X, and LinkedIn or my website: leahtaylorroymp.ca.

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Is technology accelerating the great divide in income?



THE PRINCIPLES OF AN ECONOMIC CHARTER OF RIGHTS By Frank Stronach

Back in the 1980s, when Artificial Intelligence (AI) was still the stuff of science fiction and computers and automation were changing the way we worked, a number of futurists and economists predicted "the end of work" and rising living standards.

Not only would we not need to work, according to these experts, but incomes and living standards would rise due to the wealth these new technologies generated.

Clearly, it hasn't quite turned out the way – at least not for the majority of Canadians.

When I was CEO of Magna International back in the late 1980s – the time when robotics first began appearing on automotive production and assembly lines – I publicly raised the issue of who would be the chief beneficiaries of these new technologies and what would happen to the assembly line jobs being replaced by robots.

It's hardly mentioned anymore nowadays, in part because most of our manufacturing has either been shuttered or offshored to countries where workers are still cheaper than robots.

But without a doubt, many jobs will disappear in the years ahead because of technological advances.

In the decade ahead, everything from self-driving transport trucks and taxi cabs to elder care robots will cause the loss of millions of jobs around the world. And that's not counting the job losses that will happen once AI becomes deeply rooted in the offices and workplaces of our country.

A report published last week by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said that AI – the most transformational new technology to emerge in our lifetimes – has the potential to increase incomes for high-income earners while also accelerating income inequality.

On the other hand, the IMF report also warned that AI could displace a large number of high-income workers performing white-collar jobs in finance, communications, and law.

But even if AI ends up wiping out a large number of jobs, we can't blame a technology for our society's growing income inequality. That's the fault of our system.

The fact remains, Canada's economic fundamentals are unsound and are not conducive to fostering economic growth.

If we want to insulate ourselves from the coming wave of job losses that AI will inevitably unleash, then we need to once again start making things. We need to stop exporting our abundant raw materials and importing finished goods made elsewhere.

We need to start turning our natural resources into value-added goods that the rest of the world wants to buy. And we need to unchain our entrepreneurs and small business owners so they can create the innovative new products that will generate added wealth and increase the size of our economy.

If we created the right conditions for start-ups and small businesses to thrive – by removing business income tax, for example – then we could spark an economic boom that would add hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

But small businesses across Canada have to unite and make their voice heard, because right now no one is listening to their needs, and unless they band together and become a force to be reckoned with, nothing will change.

Small businesses can revive our manufacturing sector – if we dismantle the red tape and create the right environment for them to grow and prosper.

That would be a guaranteed solution to raising the incomes and living standards of millions of Canadians, regardless of what AI or any other disruptive technology has in store in the years to come.

To learn more about how we can "Regenerate Canada", email me at info@economiccharter.ca.

Author Bio

Frank Stronach is the founder of Magna International Inc., one of Canada's largest global companies, and the Stronach Foundation for Economic Rights (www.economiccharter.ca).





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Hartman's food program aims to "disrupt perception of what community needs"

From page 1

barrier." It's a cause particularly close to the hearts of Principal Saira Salman and parent volunteer Miriam Dos Anjos.

Together, the women have been working to not only amass support amongst the business community, but challenge the school's catchment area on how a school community should be defined.

"When we first started, there was a little bit of, 'Oh, but our community doesn't need it,' but I thought every community needs it, regardless," says Salman, who joined the Hartman community last September. "School can be a place where we can address a lot of the issues we're not willing to socially address. You can do it quietly and effectively and that is the goal here."

Dos Anjos, however, has been a bit less quiet. Described by Salman as a "huge advocate for students," Dos Anjos approached her children's principal with an idea to kick programs that were already in place up a notch or two. Their efforts build upon the groundwork of school administrator Gigi who secured some funding from a partner program in Peterborough to offer select healthy snacks in the main office to anyone who needed them.

The women saw an opportunity to build community buy-in and, with the support of businesses, they're now feeding 550 kids with granola bars, apples, bananas, Cheese Strings, juice boxes, and more.

"I had an extra driving force because if I was dropping something off [in the office] I would see some students come in and ask for a snack because they didn't have lunch," Dos Anjos explains.

Now, the Universal Snack Program brings these healthy goodies right into the classrooms where students might need them, allowing them to access the food without having to ask, helping to reduce the "stigma" that sometimes comes with need.

"Having a bin in their class has helped students so much because they don't have to come down to the office and feel uncomfortable," says Dos Anjos. "We don't know what their family economic status or situation is, but I think just having access to something and it being in a safe place, not it being an uncomfortable thing, not being teased because you don't have something, is part of the whole picture. "I think every child deserves a chance and, to me, a tummy that is full is a tummy and a mind that is able to expand and learn. I have seen it with students and I have seen it in the community where some kids don't have access to things or are uncomfortable asking. It made me think we could do something 'bigger picture.' Everybody deserves a chance regardless of your social or economic status. It's not always that kids don't have lunches here or don't have food, but it is access in a safe, positive environment and that is the best."

environment where students can do just that.

"I am privileged and honoured that they trust me with that but, at the same time, I want to make sure our kids are fed. Full tummies means that they're ready for learning and for our older kids, sometimes their parents leave early and they think they are independent to pack their own lunches, or they forget their lunches, and a school should be a hub where kids feel like it's home," says Salman. "That's where we're working from."

Salman grew up in Montreal and has vivid memories of taking part in her school's milk program. She "hated milk with a passion at home" but things tasted just a little bit sweeter at school where she received a little blue carton of her own each day, making it a lifelong habit.

"We have changed schooling so much that we have forgotten we're in partnership raising somebody else's child. How do we build that partnership?" she says. "I am the parent while Miriam is working and my job is to make sure they are healthy, safe, nourished and educated. I can't do the education part without them feeling the rest."

There are additional benefits as well. Since they started work to augment the program, they have seen students take ownership of it as well.

"Our Student Council has been very helpful," says Salman. "We have one in our school for the first time this year and they have taken it on to help out, to make and deliver the bins, so they are part of this journey. It is leadership from them. It means they're receptive to it."

Adds Dos Anjos: "I pick up my kids after school and it makes it worth it for me to see the happy faces and the excitement. My kids help me go pick up our deliveries [in the morning] and it's a battle of who gets to bring in the wagon of cases of bananas and apples. It's a pride thing for my kids to be able to help and seeing the other kids and hearing that the Student Council is really





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That hasn't always been the case.

Salman says that since she joined the Hartman community, she has had kids come to the office to quietly see if there were any leftovers from pizza lunches. Although it's less than ideal for a student to have to even ask the question, she prides herself that she has fostered an involved in distribution and part of it just takes away the embarrassment, the uncertainty, or being uncomfortable."

Salman and Dos Anjos encourage local businesses and like-minded organizations to partner with their local schools to make these programs take root in their schools or to bolster programs that already exist – and to re-think what it means to be part of a school community now and in the future.

"Demographics change every 10 years or so," says Salman. "Our notion of who we serve sometimes gets frozen in time. We're at a point in our school where demographics have now started to change and it is through that lens that I am starting to see needs arise.

"I would really like people to challenge their own understanding of school. School isn't just a place where we come to do the ABCs and 123s; it's a place where we can come to have someone who is safe for us, somebody we can tell what happened the night before or at the breakfast table. School is more than just classrooms with desks in a row. With that vision, I hope to really think more deeply about who our students are and who they are no longer."



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Innovation Fair is chance for youth to show off inventions, visions for future

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora youth are invited to register to take part in an "Innovation Disneyland" as the Town re-launches its Youth Innovation Fair after a fiveyear hiatus.

Originally organized as part of the Canada 150 celebrations in 2017, the Youth Innovation Fair was put on the backburner due to the global pandemic, but organizers this year are looking to bring together more young residents than ever before to share their ideas and their visions for a better world.

Geared towards students in Grades 4 to 12 in Aurora and the surrounding areas, the Fair is a chance for students, or even teams of students, to "showcase their ideas and innovations to tackle real-world issues," whether it's in technology, science, performance, conservation, building projects and more.

"We're excited to get this back off the ground," says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. "If you need the extra push to enter, just re-watch Iron Man and look at Stark Industries at their innovation expo. This could be your first step trying something like this. I can't underscore enough how much opportunity is there for likeminded youth to meet others from different schools, different towns and cities and bringing these exceptional minds into one space is like an innovation Disneyland."

We know the next generation is highly creative, highly innovative, and this is such a unique event

Development Specialist with the Town of Aurora.

After a five-year hiatus, Hamilton says she's looking forward to seeing what the youth in the community are looking to innovate and the problems they're trying to solve as the world we're living in today is quite different than the one of 2019.

"Society as a whole has developed around technology, math and how students are learning," says Hamilton. "We're in a different realm of what could potentially be presented at a Youth Innovation Fair with what students are using in the classroom to be able to learn and evolve. What they're coming up with, I think, is pretty exciting.

"If we look at things around climate change and what's going on in the real world right now, we have a group of youth who are really engaged in those topics and have some strong views and ideas as to how to address them. I think...we're going to see a whole new realm of potential inventions and ideas that we may not have seen in 2017."

Registrations for the 2024 Youth

Hall from 6 - 9 p.m. This year's event is sponsored by Desjardins and Alectra.

"We know the next generation is highly creative, highly innovative, and this is such a unique event," says Ware. "It's a chance for students [to] come up with all that will make their life faster and more efficient, maybe the things we take for granted and just accept as adults because that's just the way it goes."

Adds Hamilton: "This is the perfect environment where...you can be around other individuals with innovative ideas and share that knowledge with one another."



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Helping to spearhead the 2024 Youth Innovation Fair is Erin Hamilton, Sport & Community

Innovation Fair are being accepted online through Wednesday, April 24 - visit aurora.ca/youthinnovation for more – while the event itself will be held Wednesday, May 15 at Town



GIRLS NIGHT OUT - The Aurora Chamber of Commerce was well-represented at NewRoads Automotive Group's annual Girls Night Out Event by Sandra Watson and Seanna Murray. The event, held each year in conjunction with International Women's Day, showcased female-owned local businesses and raised money for Girls Inc. of York Region. Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger



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McCain to bring Celtic sense of home to St. Patrick's Day-eve performance

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Celtic music can foster a sense of "coming home" for people with Scottish and Irish roots, but it also transcends to people of every heritage.

That's the feeling that Eleanor McCain will bring to the St. Andrew's College stage this Saturday, March 16, with the Aurora Cultural Centre's presentation of Eleanor McCain in Concert: A Night of Celtic Traditions & Classics.

An acclaimed singer, McCain, a scion of the well-known New Brunswick family, will be joined on stage for the St. Patrick's Day-eve concert by performers Brigham Phillips and Jason Fowler, with the North Atlantic Drift trio serving as the opening act.

Throughout her career, McCain has recorded six critically-acclaimed albums, including 2017's True North: The Canadian Songbook, and has collaborated with Canadian performers ranging from Chantal Kreviazuk and Natalie MacMaster to John McDermott and Roch Voisine.

"This music resonates with many people because it has beautiful, lilting, lyrical melodies that really pull at your emotional heartstrings," says McCain. "Plus, a lot of the poetry, the situations, the stories, a lot of the songs tell stories that really draw people in, but there is very often an emotional component to them. There are a lot of songs of longing for home and because the lyrics are so real and so down to earth and accessible, they are very captivating in that way."

Hailing from the small town of Florenceville, NB, McCain's earliest musical foundation came from her mother, who, as a pianist, could often be found at the church organ. When she was nine-years-old, however, on a visit to her aunt in New York City, she saw the musical "Annie" on Broadway, an experience which sparked a life-long interest.

"It was really a turning point for me to do something in a more professional vein," she says. "From there, my mom took me to Fredericton once a week where I started taking singing lessons, 90 minutes each way from Florenceville. The voice teacher I had there is still one of my best teachers. She was fabulous and [fostered] the dedication to music and singing from a very young age."

From there, McCain studied Classical Music at Mount Allison University, receiving a Bachelor of Music degree with a focus on Vocal Performance. She





Eleanor McCain will bring Celtic sounds to Aurora this week ahead of St. Patrick's Day. Contributed photo

" on what draws her to a

continued her training after moving to Toronto, but found herself deviating just a little from the classics.

"I started to change lanes and get more into working with songwriters, getting more into a sensibility of fusing the classical with some jazz, with some folk roots, pop ballads, and I mixed them together and realized what was most important for me in music was the emotion behind the song, not necessarily the vocal style. Some people have made comments over the years that maybe I should choose a style, but that is my style – focusing on the emotional content of music. It's a mix of styles in a melting pot!"

Asked what fuels her creativity, she responds that she has "never really found the words that adequately describe the movie that goes on in my head" on what draws her to a song, but it always comes back to the emotion of things – and that is something she hopes is felt by local audiences this weekend.

"I hope the music touches them in the same way it does me," she says. "It is not just a Celtic journey they go on, but maybe it is an emotional journey they go on as well. Hopefully in many ways the music touches their hearts the way it does me. I'm excited and honoured to be asked to sing in concert and it's always nice to celebrate St. Patrick's Day eve with this music."

Eleanor McCain in Concert will take place Saturday, March 16, at 7.30 p.m. at the Wirth Theatre at St. Andrew's College. Tickets are \$40 and can be obtained at auroraculturalcentre.ca or by calling the box office at 905-713-1818.



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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY – Among the guests offering their insights at an International Women's Day event hosted by Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leah Taylor Roy and the local Liberal caucus last week were, from left, YRP Inspector Sarah Riddell, MP Taylor Roy with Minister for Women, Gender Equality and Youth Marci Ien, and tradesperson Nicole Boreland. Auroran photos by Brock Weir

"Being one of one isn't a good feeling" – International Women's Day highlights women in "non-traditional" careers

From page 1

She had gotten used to being the only Black woman in the room, sometimes the only woman in the room full stop, but was always willing to speak up and advocate for herself. But making that jump to a career in construction exposed a new facet to that feeling.

"Being a woman in construction can unlock a new level of loneliness when you don't see a version of yourself on site," said Boreland on Thursday night at an event celebrating International Women's Day, one which put women in the trades and "non-traditional" jobs in the spotlight.

Hosted by Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill Leah Taylor Roy at the LiUNA Local 506 Training Centre in Richmond Hill, it was attended by representatives from across the Greater Toronto Area, including York and Peel Regions, Federal Minister for Women and Gender Equality & Youth Marci Ien, and Federal Minister of Labour and Seniors Seamus O'Regan.

Last week's gathering underscored this year's International Women's Day theme of "Invest in Women, Celebrate Progress."

"To honour this theme, we're focusing on the importance of women in labour and non-traditional careers across all sectors and the need to ensure equal opportunities for women," said Taylor Roy in welcoming remarks. "We continue to break barriers every day, but...I think some people sit back and think we're really there and we don't have to do anymore. I think some younger people still think that. Really, we still have a ways to go. "We can't sit back and say we're there because some of us have been able to make it; and some of us can say, 'There's a woman who did it, therefore we're good. Everyone can do it.' It's not the case. Until we have true equality, there is work to do."

she received from her male counterparts. They were "shocked" to see her, she recalled, and was initially only assigned tasks tailored to their own perceptions of what women could do.

"I am almost certain I was the subject of a 'toolbox talk' minutes before I arrived on that site," she said. "Luckily, with the support of LiUNA (Laborers' International Union of North America) 506, we (women) were able to build a community of mentorship and a safe space to support each other. Along with the knowledge I obtained here at this training centre, I feel confident and prepared to be a woman in construction. I wasn't deterred by my first experience. In fact, it fuelled me. It encouraged me to show up every day ready to work, to speak up more about the skills and the [training] I have obtained and ask for help when needed.

"Within a few months, I was able to work on another site where my voice was heard, I wasn't isolated from my team, the bathrooms weren't tucked away in a dark or secluded corner and I was given the opportunity show what I was capable of – and also getting the chance to learn something new. Women in the trades are not only the future, we are embedded in the present."

Also highlighting the power of women in the trades was Construct, a social enterprise of Blue Door Shelters, serving York, Peel, Durham, and beyond. Construct provides training and on-thejob work experience and supports to We recognize that is not possible for vulnerable folks to take eight weeks off... so we pay our participants for their time in the program; wraparound supports provided to further remove the barriers and allow for participants to enter and finish the program. This includes food, transportation, psychotherapy, child care, emergency assistance for the things that just pop up. If you want go into apprenticeship, we'll cover your CVs. The best part, at the end there is a completion bonus so you can celebrate your achievements.

"There is a need to tap into an untouched demographic of individuals to curtail rapid skills training and enter into the workforce to close this gap and there is no reason why these people can't be women. I might be biased, but I know women can be just as physically fit, determined, confident and capable of operating the same tools and machinery as their male counterparts and in a traditionally male-dominated industry, Construct is seeking not only to help meet the ongoing demand for skilled workers in the GTA, but to recruit women into participating in the program to jumpstart their careers in the skilled trades."

Women being just as "physically fit, determined, and capable" was not lost on Amber Bowman, an active Captain with the Central York Fire Services (CYFS), a department serving Aurora and Newmarket.

Previously a high-performance athlete, particularly in hockey, Bowman was one of the first four women hired by the CYFS as late as 2011. "I was about to sign my Division 1 full hockey scholarship with the Ohio State Buckeyes," she said. "After practice one day, I had a conversation with a male firefighter who is the dad to one of my teammates. He told my mother and I there was, 'no way I could tell your daughter to choose firefighting as a profession because of how dangerous it is, of what you see when responding to calls and the physical challenges the job entails.' But, being a high-ended athlete, I loved the profession of firefighting for the aspects of teamwork, community, dedication and the commitment to helping others and I was determined to prove him wrong."

dreams," she said of balancing her work with motherhood. "My hope is some of their barriers that I was a part of breaking down no longer exist for the future of our youth."

A similar view was expressed by York Regional Police Inspector Sarah Riddell, a fellow mom, who said this year's International Women's Day theme was a "call to action and a reminder that gender equality is one of the most effective ways to build healthier, more prosperous and more inclusive communities."

"I was born in 1973. Wonder Woman was a real thing and I wanted to be just like her," she said. "As the oldest child of a single parent family, I was responsible for the safety of my little brother. This was a job I was happy to take on and diligently kept little Mikey safe – whether he liked it or not. (And those of us in the room of a certain vintage will get the 'Mikey likes it' joke!) Those early days shaped a personal values system that is based on loyalty, bravery, courage and responsibility.

"Through these 25 years I have been blessed with an amazing career. The Chamberlain Curse, 'May you live in interesting times,' is not so much a curse for our first responder as it is a promise."

Those interesting times, she said, included "days without sleep, splitsecond decision-making that affected people's life" and welcoming her first daughter in 2003, another in 2009, and then, in 2013, becoming the primary caregiver for her children while working as a detective in Markham.

The women who shared their experiences at last week's event drew a line under that sentiment. Representing careers as varied as policing, firefighting and in construction, each broke through a glass ceiling and remain willing to help others up and through.

On her first day at a construction site, Boreland said she was "overwhelmed by the stares, the very personal questions" vulnerable individuals looking to secure long-term well-paying careers in trades related to construction.

Construct's Emma Wood said, since its founding in 2020, the enterprise has trained over 500 people, with 85 per cent securing employment within six months of completing the program.

"The way our training works is a bit different across Regions," she explained, noting that the program includes "all the things you need to get into employment," including relevant certificates, equipment like hard hats and steel-toed boots, job interview training and more.

"They are things that might seem just normal to us, but not everyone has had the opportunity to work," she said. "What makes Construct unique is its holistic approach to training with an emphasis on participants' wellbeing.

"My biggest goal now is to lead and support my little people to conquer their There was, she said, "a very real fear of not being able to manage at all, but I did. We do. Women do, and the same way my mom did."

"If you find your north star and keep it in sight, the decisions you make will always be sound," she included. "They may not be easy, they seldom are, but you will know in your heart you did the right thing. I started in 1999 full of passion and ready to defend those who couldn't defend themselves and speak to those who could not speak for themselves. 25 years later, I am so fortunate to be able to support those who do the work on the frontline, making sure they are well, that they have what they need in order to do that important work of community safety and wellbeing."





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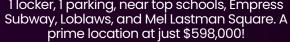
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Week of March 14, 2024

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Whitby Wolves wreck Central York Panthers' party

By Jim Stewart

One of the memorable moments in the classic film Forrest Gump is when the protagonist, played by Tom Hanks, punches out a misogynistic hippie at a Black Panthers' gathering. Gump apologizes to the urban paramilitary unit by drawling: "Sorry I ruined your Panthers' party."

Similar words could have spoken by the Whitby Wolves on Sunday afternoon. The visitors skated into SARC for the Panthers' last regular season home game, edged them 5-3 in a spirited tilt, and wrecked the home club's "Seniors Day" send-off festivities. The Panthers rolled out an impressive pre-game ceremony, featuring Team Canada Olympian and PWHL Toronto defender Renata Fast, to honor their four US College-bound players: Captain Hannah Clarke - Providence College Friars in Providence, Rhode Island; Hannah Franz – Wilkes University Colonels in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania; Jade Lore - University of Connecticut Huskies in Storrs, Connecticut; and Hailey Maguire - Big Green of Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Fast dropped the puck in the pregame ceremonial faceoff between the captains whose squads were both in need of two points. The Wolves are battling Burlington for the OWHL's third seed. The Panthers are in a four-team doglight with Mississauga, Cambridge, and Waterloo for the eighth seed. Seeds 1-8 in the OWHL earn a bye into the upcoming provincial playoffs. On a blustery and snowy March afternoon, the similarly icy SARC was rammed to capacity with hundreds of fans assembled in the bleachers and also congregated sixdeep in the mezzanine—including dozens of young Panthers players sporting the organization's colors, catching a glimpse of an Olympics and PWHL hero, and watching two terrific U22 hockey clubs. Unfortunately, after the emotional pre-game ceremony and a big win in Burlington on Saturday, the Panthers came out flat and trailed 4-1 halfway through the second period-a fact bemoaned by Head Coach Steve Dempsey who was philosophical about the untimely loss to the Wolves: "Emotions were running high and it was hard for our players to compartmentalize the celebrations that took place in the dressing room and on the ice. Their lifetime achievement in a sport was being recognized. We take a lot of pride as a hockey club in our players' achievements. It's understandable



FREE

US College-bound Panthers Jade Lore, Hannah Clarke, Hannah Franz, and Hailey Maguire are front and centre in this group shot at the SARC on Sunday. Auroran photo by Jim Stewart

that we didn't have the same fire and didn't do the little things that we did yesterday against Burlington. We just didn't put forth the level of execution into our game plan as we did on Saturday."

Coach Dempsey continued to contrast the weekend results: "I'm hoping that today's game is an anomaly because we looked playoffready on Saturday in Burlington, but didn't look that way this afternoon."

After a "playoff-ready" 3-1 win on Saturday versus the Barracudas in Burlington, the Panthers fell behind early on Sunday afternoon. Five minutes into the game, Wolves' forward Rylan Haslam created space off the right circle and sniped a puck high glove side past Panthers' Clarkey" ended fifteen minutes of frustration for her club when she rifled a wrist shot past Lucifora at 4:48 to pull the Panthers within two by the second intermission.

With a big comeback needed, Coach Dempsey deployed five of his top-scoring players—Li, Clarke, Degeer, Buckley, and McGuire – to start the third period.

The strategy worked immediately. Within 15 seconds, Li lit the lamp behind Lucifora, with assists earned by Buckley and Degeer, to pull the Panthers to within one of the visitors. Whynot made four big saves in the ensuing four minutes to keep the Wolves off the scoreboard and preserve the possibility of a Panthers' comeback.

Unfortunately, the hungry Wolves would not be denied on Seniors Day with seven of their own graduates in the lineup. blocker side from between the circles to restore Whitby's two-goal lead—a dart that took the air out of the blue, red, and yellow balloons festooning the north end zone plexiglass behind Whynot.

When Kylah Kenyon of the Wolves drew a penalty at 4:21 of the final frame, Coach Dempsey called a timeout, pulled Whynot to place an extra attacker in the Wolves' zone, and tried to manoeuvre another miracle on ice. Sadly, Sunday was not the day for turning water into wine for Central York.

The Junior Panthers end their OWHL regular season schedule with a two-game road trip: on Saturday, March 16 in North York versus the Storm (15-19-1-3) and on St. Patrick's Day in Toronto versus the Leaside Wildcats (12-25-2-3). Two wins will guarantee Central York the sought-after eighth seed and a bye to the provincial championships.

netminder Izzy Whynot to give the visitors an early 1-0 lead.

The Panthers evened the score ninety seconds later at 13:32 when Alessia Stoikos fired a wrist shot from the left faceoff circle that beat Wolves' goalie Mya Lucifora high short side. Assists were earned by Klaire Essex and Franz on the tying goal.

However, Sydney Sawyer onetimed a short-handed goal off the pipe and past Whynot at 9:48 to restore the Wolves' lead. Less than three minutes later, on a Whitby power play, Haslam's second goal gave her team a 3-1 lead that deflated the large crowd assembled at SARC.

Equally-deflating was the Wolves' fourth goal in the second period that came after the Panthers kept the visitors pinned in their own zone and poured on the pressure, but Hannah Thornton flicked a backhand high over Whynot's shoulder to give Whitby a commanding 4-1 lead at 10:45.

After penalty killer Cheyenne Degeer was stoned by Lucifora on a clear-cut breakaway and teammate Clara Williams beat Lucifora but not the goal post at 5:25, "Captain Alice Brock fired a shot high





Central York Junior Panthers beat Barracudas 3-1 in Burlington

By Jim Stewart

Amber Esterbrooks fired the game-winning goal and Izzy Whynot kicked out 27 of 28 shots to lead the U22 Central York Panthers to a crucial 3-1 win over the Burlington Barracudas at the Mainway Recreation Centre on Saturday afternoon.

Assistant Coach and CYGHA President Mark Dubeau cited the Junior Panthers' "second efforts, diving for loose pucks, blocking shots, and desperate play" as four key factors in the road win.

Coach Dubeau also credited the fine play of Whynot as a key to victory over the third-place Barracudas.

"Izzy tracked the puck really well today. She gave up very few rebounds and was very quiet in the net."

The eighth-place Panthers opened the scoring when Erica Buckley one-timed "a perfect pass" from leading scorer Cheyenne Degeer at 14:57 of the first period.

Degeer's nifty feed earned the gritty Panther her 25th assist of the season on Buckley's 14th goal of 2023-24.

The Barracudas evened the score in the second period when high-scoring Sara Manness potted her 37th of the season at 9:26. Claire Murdoch—the leading scorer in the OWHL with 107 points earned her 62nd assist on the tying goal.

However, the Panthers showed their resolve on the road and would not be denied in Burlington.

Central York's leading goal scorer Amber Esterbrooks buried a rebound for the game winner with 1:22 left in the second period.

Li picked up her second assist of the game on Esterbrooks' 22nd of the campaign.

Avery Johnston's 15th goal gave the visitors a 3-1 lead when she redirected Esterbrooks' pass with 7:43 left in the game to provide the Junior Panthers some breathing space and their margin of victory.

The precious road win in Burlington retained Central York's hold on the 8th and final OWHL playoff spot that carries with it a bye into the Provincial Playoffs later this month.



DIVERSITY ON THE ICE – The Aurora Black Community Association (ABC) held its annual Diversity on Ice at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex on Monday afternoon, a component of their year-long program of Black History events. A time to (top) skate, celebrate "and enjoy the flavourful touch of Jamaican patties together," the event was also a chance to recognize young entrepreneurs Ethan and Courtney with Power Forward Grants handed out by Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy and ABC Founder and President Phiona Durrant. **Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger**



Tiles Outside? You Bet!

Southlake identified as Level III trauma centre

BY BROCK WEIR LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Southlake Regional Health Centre will be able to improve trauma care after being named a Level III Trauma Centre.

The new designation was announced by the local hospital on Monday.

As a Level III Trauma Centre, Southlake will care for medium acuity patients who have suffered traumatic injury, including wounds resulting from accidents, falls, sports injuries, violence, and other incidents that cause damage to the body's tissues, organs and bones.

While Southlake currently cares for an average of 500 medium acuity patients each year, formal recognition as a Level III trauma centre means they will be able to do so as "part of an inclusive, integrated and accountable system" that can call upon the expertise of leading trauma centres like Sunnybrook Hospital, SickKids, and United Health Toronto.

"When patients come to our hospital, they know they're in good hands and that's a good thing because new patients enter our emergency departments every four-and-a-half minutes," said Dr. David Mackary, Southlake's Vice President of Medical Affairs, at Monday's announcement. "Many of these patients come to Southlake because of traumatic injuries and in these moments they need the best care possible as quickly as possible.

"This recognition [as a Level III TraumaCentre] reflectsourcommitment to the patients and communities that we serve. It also connects Southlake with an inclusive, integrated and accountable trauma care system that will improve patient outcomes and experiences."

When a patient experiences trauma, added Trauma Medical Director Dr. Leeor Sommer, time is of the essence in improving chances of survival and recovery.



Auroran photo by Brock Weir

"That is where trauma centres really come in," said Sommer. "Data shows that areas with Level 3 Trauma Centres have lower mortality rates because those patients have immediate access to care in the right place. Trauma Centres save lives. As a Level 3 Trauma Centre, Southlake now has connections to a huge trauma network, so we're working together with lead trauma hospitals like Sunnybrook, Unity Health Care, SickKids, to ensure all patients can receive quick access to specialized trauma care. Together, we can give patients the best chance of recovery.

As part of this recognition process, and to improve capacity within the healthcare system, six hospitals across Ontario met the criteria of Level III.

Stella Johnson, Director of Emergency and Mental Health at Southlake, said the Trauma Program will be led by "highly-skilled teams of medical staff" including surgeons, emergency medicine specialists and critical care nurses that are available around the clock to support needs.

"As a Level III Trauma Centre, Southlake has made numerous changes to support the patients who present to our Emergency Department," said Johnson. "We have hired staff to successfully implement the Trauma Program, its requirements and ensure that our operations are meeting and exceeding the Trauma Level III standards and that begins with our trauma team activation process. When a trauma patient arrives at Southlake or is on their way to Southlake to receive emergency care, the trauma team activation page will be heard overhead across our organization and lead to awareness amongst all our care partners that this designation has occurred and patients presenting will receive the best trauma care possible. This situational awareness ensures the team is also available and ready to provide life-saving treatments.

"High acuity or very sick trauma patients or those with multi-system injuries will continue to be triaged here at Southlake and then transferred to a lead trauma hospital in the Greater Toronto Area, with one of our partner hospital sites as part of our integrated trauma care here in Ontario. This has not changed. Instead, what we are most proud of and what we can say has changed is the relationships we have been fortunate to build both inside this hospital and with community partners and with the trauma system at large.

"Communication with our emergency medical services and individuals who we otherwise may not have partnered with have also significantly changed and improved for the better. This is just the beginning. We are so excited about our Level III trauma journey here at Southlake. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnerships with the Ontario Regional Trauma Network, with our lead trauma hospital sites, and continue to move forward in our journey as a Level III Trauma Centre."

Guilty verdict handed down following 2020 murder of Aurora woman

From page 3

need to be happy! Your grandson needs you, I need you. Please Mom, if you are out there, please call someone... anyone!"

Added Helen's siblings: "To anyone who has seen or knows about our sister Helen Sedo's whereabouts or wellbeing, please contact the Police. To Helen – we miss you dearly. We are here for you unconditionally. We are desperate. Please contact someone if you are able. You are the glue that keeps our family together. We love you so very much."

By September 14, however, the investigation shifted with Police announcing the Homicide & Missing Person Unit, along with the Search and Rescue Unit were conducting searches in the Huntsville area.

It was in a quarry northeast of Huntsville that a burnt-out vehicle connected with Ms. Sedo's disappearance was found.

"On October 12, investigators recovered the vehicle belonging to Helen Sedo in a quarry near Williamsport Road, which is northeast of the Town of Huntsville, after it had been located by hunters in the area," said Police at the time. "The vehicle had been completely burned."

They appealed to anyone who may have seen the vehicle or a fire between August and September at the location come forward. The same appeal went to anyone who may have had trail cameras in the area that captured anything suspicious.

Anyone with further information is asked to call the York Regional Police Homicide Unit at 1-866-876-5423 x7865 or by email at homicide@yrp.ca.



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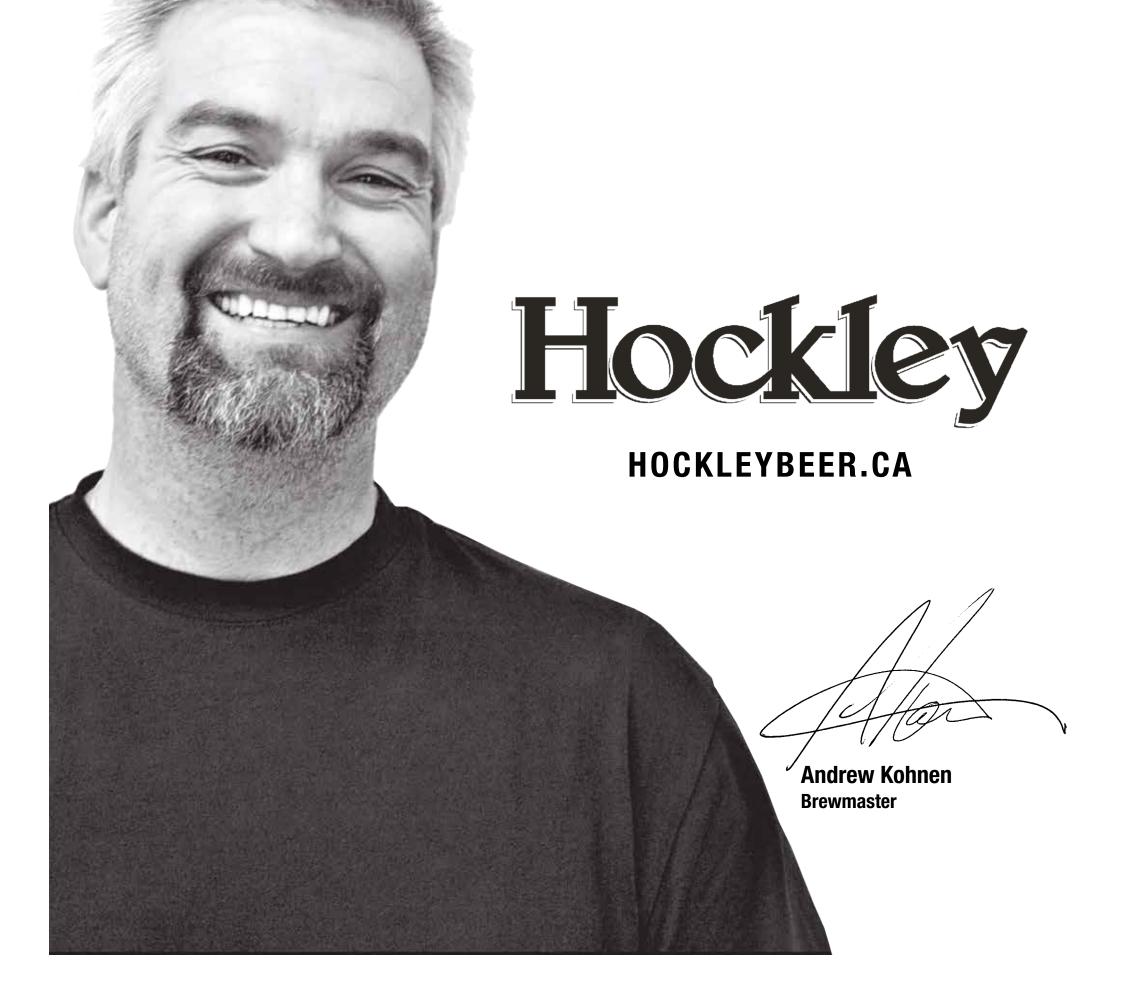
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Broad Appeal brings laughs to Aurora







THiNGS...you ought to know

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

Free March Break Crafternoon drop-in from 11 am – 2 pm at the Aurora Armoury, 89 Mosley Street. Explore environmental stewardship through art with a create-and-take workshop for all ages. From gift tags and buttons to wall art and gift bags, you'll create your own unique crafts while learning to upcycle old materials into new decorative pieces. Parents/guardians must stay and play/create with their youngsters. A free presentation of the Aurora Cultural Centre. For more information, visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca.

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

Join Memory Lane Home Living from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for seminars and workshops to educate those interested in learning about living well with dementia. We have invited senior wellness experts to discuss fall prevention, medication wellness, nutrition, safety, and social activities for both the care partner and those with memory loss. Join us at Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, 10066 Yonge Street. No charge for this event. Lunch included, limited capacity, registration required. Call 905-237-1419 to reserve a spot, or go to our website at memorylanehomeliving ca to sign up via email.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

The Aurora Cultural Centre welcomes Eleanor McCain in performance for a delightful Celtic evening of song. The multiple East Coast Music Award-nominated classical crossover artist returns to her Celtic roots with a repertoire of songs from the Scottish, Irish and Cape Breton traditions. Special opening guests North Atlantic Drift. Tickets: \$40 (HST incl.); Show at 7:30 pm; location – St. Andrew's College, 15800 Yonge Street. For information, or to purchase, visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca, or call the Box Office at 905 713-1818.

* * * *

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day eve at the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) with ShamROCK & ROLL featuring live music by Aurora's own Tangent. Showtime is 8 p.m. Doors open at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. For advance tickets, call 905-727-5642.

MONDAY, MARCH 18

Open for registration starting today! Aurora Cultural Centre Spring arts classes, workshops, P.A. days and children's summer art camps. Many newly-added programs to accompany favourites – from toddler and child music classes, to teen calligraphy, adult oil painting, printmaking – and so much more. NEW – use your e-PLAY account to register. For all program information, visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca.

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

The Aurora Historical Society will host a paint night this evening at 7 p.m. in the Hillary House ballroom, a partnership with the Royal Rose Gallery. Join us for an evening of casual acrylic painting with guided instruction. Featuring lively conversation, light refreshments, and an experience that is friendly to all levels of artsy participants. All materials will be provided. Tickets are \$30 per person. Visit www.aurorahs.com. this ancient, 72-string instrument in the Persian musical tradition into a musical conversations for our time. Persian percussionist (tonbak, daf) Naghmeh Farahmand, who has toured in internationally and performed with Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, opens the show. Tickets \$40 (HST incl). Show at 7:30 pm; location – Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street. For information, or to purchase, visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca, or call the Box Office at 905 713-1818.

ONGOING

The Mayor's Celebration of Youth Arts (#MCOYA24) exhibition featuring over 100 artworks from Aurora's graduating grade 12 artists. Gallery Hours Monday – Saturday, 8 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.; admission is at no charge. Be sure to check out the new offsite pop-up MCOYA installation of past student artworks from Aurora High School at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex! For information, visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca.

* * * *

The Aurora Cultural Centre is excited to introduce ASAP, a free weekly after school art program for high-school-aged youth in Aurora, hosted at the Centre's temporary gallery at Aurora Town Hall (second floor). Running every Thursday from February 22 - March 21, 2024, with dropin hours between 4.30 - 6.30 p.m. With a goal to provide students of all backgrounds and identities with a consistent, reliable, and safe space to create freely, and build their own artistic community, any high school-aged student is welcome to drop in to work on art projects, meet other artistically-driven peers, gain advice from the professional Gallery team, or simply hang out. Please note that parking and entry to this program is through the Upper/ North entrance of Aurora Town Hall only. For more information, visit AuroraCulturalentre.ca.

* * * *

Partagez le Francais: Ce groupe accueille les ADULTES / 18+ (des francophones aux débutants capables de converser) - qui cherchent à mettre en pratique leurs compétences Conversationnelle en français. Over Zoom with a nominal fee of \$2.50. RSVP by visiting meetup.com/Partagezle-francais. For more information, email partagez. york@outlook.com.

* * * *

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

Laughter was in the air for International Women's Day on Saturday as the Aurora Cultural Centre hosted Broad Appeal at St. Andrew's College. The first stand-up comedy showcase hosted by the Centre, the event was headlined by (top) Martha Chaves, (middle) Zabrina Douglas, and (above) Sarah Boston. **Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger**

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

The Aurora Cultural Centre is thrilled to present dazzling santur musician Amir Amiri (CBC Artist of the Year – 2003 Galaxie Rising Stars) in performance. Born in Tehran and living in Canada since 1996, Amiri has reputation for transporting 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.

How do You want to be Remembered?

37. Partner to cheese

41. City in ancient Syria

44. Established practice

48. District in Peru

50. State in India

53. Raised platform

56. Japanese warrior

64. Advanced degree

65. Fiddler crabs

63. Transitory

61. R.L. Stevenson novel

47. Thanksgiving side dish

52. Measure of illumination

39. _____ school: where to learn healin

42. Gasteyer and de Armas are two

49. It's becoming more prevalent

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Helps little firms

7. Allowed

15. Open

4. Political action committee

12. Olivia Colman played one

16. He had a notable lamp

18. Promotional material

19. Domesticated animal

21. The best ever

24. TV network

27. Checked for

33. Dash

30. Dry or withered

35. A secret clique

20. Larry and Curly's buddy

31. Expression of annoyance

34. Fifth note of a major scale

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Puzzle No.TAMAR1424 • Solution in Classifieds



CLUES DOWN

- 1. Prevent from seeing 2. Czech city 3. and Andy, TV show 4. A young pig 5. Removed surgically 6. Covered with 7. Chest muscle (slang) 8. Nigerian City 9. Midway between south and east 10. A way to shut 11. Stop playing 12 Marshy places 13. Takes apart 14. Ten cents 17. A gesture of assent 22. Scent 23. Teletypewriter 24. General's assistant (abbr.) 25. Hillside
- 26. Taxi driver 28. Semitic Sun god 29. Town in India 32. Traditional rhythmic pattern 36. Fugitives are on the 38. Type of dance 40. Two letters, one sound 43. Having a strong, pleasant taste 44. Golf score 45. Mavhem 46. Drenched 51. River in northeastern Asia 54. Drug to treat anxiety (abbr.) 55. Part-time employee 56. A very large body of water 57. Aboriginal people of Japan 58. Millisecond 59. Forearm bone 60. Subway dweller

62. Royal Mail

Senior Scape

From page 5

Nowruz ("new day" or "New Year") is also celebrated by cleaning one's house, filling it with flowers and giving gifts and on the last day by staying outdoors.

In Russia, the spring holiday of Maslenitsa (Pancake Week) is a sun festival with singing, dancing, bonfires and, of course, lots of pancakes.

Passover is a spring holiday that celebrates the brightness that follows the dark days of slavery.

And the Indian holiday of Holi that brings winter to a colorful close.

Christians celebrate a literal return from death (according to their faith) by the crucifixion and the celebration of Our Risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Spring season holiday celebrations

are what holidays do, they bring us together around things and family we value surrounded with peace, love and generosity.

This season of March, make the most of your days and welcome Mr. Sun, we have missed you so! As Margaret Atwood in her book, "Bluebeard's Egg" said, "in the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt".

What's Happening at the **Seniors' Centre**

The Special Events Committee has booked another "fantastic" singer for you to enjoy. He is Tony the Entertainer who will entertain us on Saturday, March 16 from 2 -3 p.m. He will get you up "dancing

and singing" with him. Tony started singing in Retirement Homes in 2018 and he has been a very big success ever since then. Bringing joy to people means the world to him. Tickets are \$10 each at the Reception Desk. There will be our delicious refreshments as usual.

There is another "Trivia Night" coming on April 19 from 6.30 - 9.30p.m. 78 Tickets at \$15.00 each will be sold for this Special Event and are available at the Reception Desk while quantities last. There will be refreshments and a cash bar as well as a great evening with prizes for each table of six people who win one of the four rounds. Be sure to get your tickets early.

Mark your calendar. The Indoor

Garage Sale is back at the Aurora Seniors' Centre on April 28. Donation drop-off dates are April 26 and 27. This is a great event to meet others and find valuable gems. Do not miss it!

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday. The monthly Seniors Association bulletin is posted on our web site so for all the details on Association activities, clubs, events, bistro lunches and BBQs, sports, and movies to mention a few, and town programs, trips and other valuable information concerning the Aurora Seniors Association, take a look at www. auroraseniors.ca



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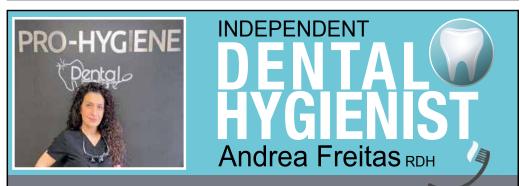
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