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THE AUROREDAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 25 No. 28 905-727-3300

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FREE

Week of April 18, 2024



LAKESIDE LIVING AT THEATRE AURORA – You can almost hear the sound of the loons in the air as Theatre Aurora opens On Golden Pond, the final production in their 2023-2024 season, this Thursday, April 18, on their stage on Henderson. Here, Tom Quinn and Jennifer Senior bring Norman and Ethel Thayer to life in the classic play by Ernest Thompson. For a review of their latest production, see Page 16. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

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Aurora Lions Club celebrates 80 years of community service

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Aurora Lions Club has never shied away from a challenge – whether it is providing vision services for youngsters or helping to make the holidays extra merry for local families in need – and now they are celebrating 80 years of making a tangible difference in the community.

The local branch of the Lions Club roared as one this month at the Aurora Soccer Club at a special luncheon to

mark their milestone anniversary.

Attended by several local dignitaries, including Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen, Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MPP Michael Parsa and Mayor Tom Mrakas, it was a time not only for looking back at past successes but also for looking forward.

The Association of Lions Clubs was first founded in the United States in 1917. Establishing its roots in Canada in Windsor, ON, in 1920, it took just four years for the club to

reach Aurora.

Lions International now has a presence in more than 200 countries and regions around the world, with 49,000 individual clubs shouldering the responsibilities they have taken on as a whole.

The mission of Lions International is simple: “to improve health and wellbeing, strengthen communities, and support those in need through humanitarian service and grants that impact lives globally, and

Continued on page 21



LIONS ROAR – The 80th anniversary of the Aurora Lions Club was recently celebrated at the Aurora Soccer Club by long-time and new members of the service club, as well as Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen, Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MPP Michael Parsa and Mayor Tom Mrakas. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

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Addressing income struggles is key to battling food insecurity: YRFN

Upcoming York Region Food Charter is nearing completion

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As important as food banks are to communities like Aurora, addressing income inequality will be the key to tackling food insecurity, according to the York Region Food Network.

Addressing the income gap will be an integral pillar in a new and refreshed York Region Food Charter which is now nearing completion.

York Region's first Food Charter was published in 2013 and a lot has happened in the subsequent decade, including climate change, the pandemic, and the ongoing affordability crisis.

Now it is time to "look at this again to re-examine all of our values, our goals, come back to that... and try to figure out how to move forward," says Morgan Sage, Food Policy Coordinator for the York Region Food Network.

"This document has been a great way to bring people together and have these conversations around food in this completely different landscape we're working within right now," says Sage.

Later this month, Aurora Council will consider making a "commitment" to support the new York Region Food Charter and a recommendation from staff "to work with local agencies and York Region in pursuit of food security for Aurora residents."

While Robin McDougall, Director of Community Services for the Town of Aurora, says the Federal government has a "lead policy role" on many of these matters, the municipal level can tackle the issue through public health delivery, food inspection, nutritional

health promotion, zoning policies, and waste management.

"All have an impact on food security, but given the government structure for Aurora, York Region holds most of the responsibility for the policies that govern each of these areas," said McDougall in a report to Council. "Aurora certainly has a responsibility in planning, zoning, waste management, water supply and recreation. Indirectly, Aurora can support the other areas of responsibility (housing, public health, transportation, and social services) but lacks the resources to lead them and Aurora relies on the Region."

Among the ways Aurora has stepped up to help address food security, said McDougall, are the installation of mini food pantries placed in four areas of Aurora in conjunction with the Aurora Food Pantry and the Aurora Seniors' Centre; community gardens recently approved the incoming John Abel Park in the Town's northeast; and food donations encouraged at numerous annual community events.

"Considering that food security relies on a healthy food system, Aurora cannot provide food security alone. Aurora has an integral role; however, it depends on the Region, Provincial and Federal governments, to support the local communities," she said, adding that it would be more valuable for Aurora to sign onto the York Region Food Charter rather than a Made-in-Aurora plan. "Aurora could commit to taking action to achieve the Charter's vision in our organization and the community we serve."

A staff recommendation to endorse the Charter was approved by Council at this month's Committee of the Whole meeting without discussion and will be up for ratification at the April 23

Council meeting.

Work on the Region's new Charter continues at pace and Sage says they are seeking endorsement of the finished product from the Regional Council this fall.

The new document is based on five key pillars including Income, Community & Culture, Health & Wellbeing, Agrifood, and Environmental Stewardship, but that lead pillar will prove to be a keystone for the whole, she notes.

"There is agreement in our consultation that food insecurity is a major problem," she says. "That goes without saying, but it is interesting because it has been across-the-board with community members emphasizing food insecurity now. It's also the policy-makers saying food insecurity is an issue and we need to talk about it – and when it comes to food insecurity, when you get down to the nitty-gritty of it, you get down to income."

"When it came to updating the Charter, we knew we had to make income the central focus because, in the past, when you talk about food insecurity, the solution that some people come up with is, 'Hey, let's have increased food bank hours,' or 'Let's have a community fridge.' Those are fantastic community assets and 100 per cent we need those because there are people right now struggling in our community, but if we're talking about a long-term solution, we need income solutions so everyone has the ability to purchase what they want, what's culturally acceptable to them, what fits their food preferences, and do that all with dignity as well."

As Sage has worked on the issue of food security and the Charter's development, she says she's found "loads of misconceptions" about what food

insecurity actually means. People come at the problem with well-intentioned solutions like suggesting people grow their own veggies and micro-greens where they can, but those offerings don't really get down to the roots.

"If people want to grow something in their backyard or grow something in their kitchen, people should have the right to access that and have the knowledge to be able to do that. Even in our Charter, we talk about knowledge and sharing as one of our key pillars. We want to make sure people have the ability and knowledge to do that," says Sage. "One of the major things that [we have struggled with in the Emergency Food Sector is] we sometimes struggle to get the point to stick with people that food insecurity is an income issue and we have been saying it for years and years – and people still come forward with these solutions for food banks; that's not to say anything negative about food banks, which are a much-needed resource in the community, but the root cause of food insecurity is income and that's the message we've had issues getting to stick."

"This Charter is meant to be a guiding document for the entirety of the food system. I'm really excited to actually share it out into the world because we've had a lot of conversations both within specialized sectors within the food system, but we have really been trying to bring those conversations together and make sure it is reflective of York Region and our food system."

"Communities want the Charter to be actionable. As we continue to develop it and continue to edit and bring all those consultation pieces, we'll make sure that there're actions community can take... at different levels and organizations can take as well."

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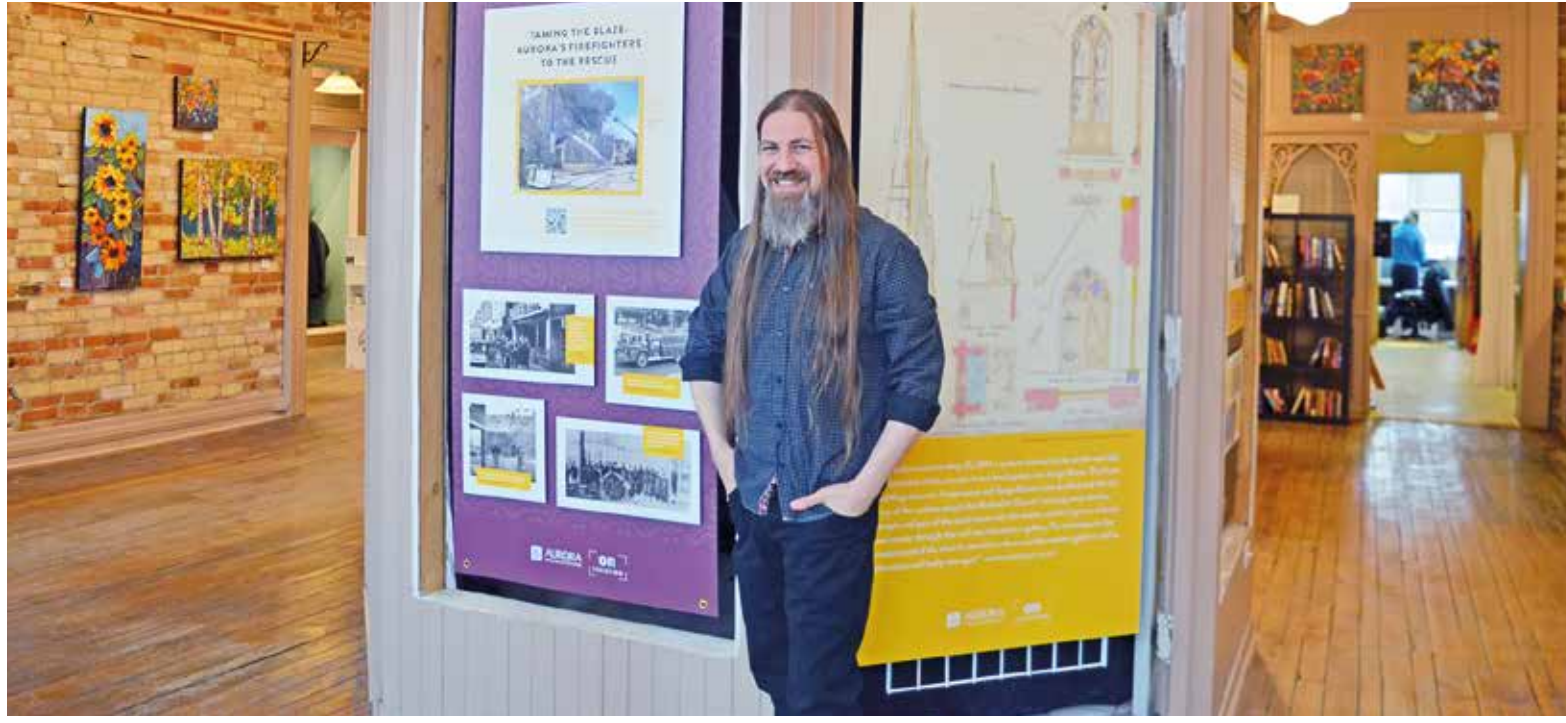
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Museum exhibition shines light on Aurora “disasters” and resilience to come through



Jeremy Hood, Museum Assistant at the Aurora Museum & Archives, showcases a new exhibition at the Royal Rose Gallery which runs through the end of the month. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

This month, the skeleton of the first of Aurora United Church’s two new steeples is set to be hoisted into place.

The design of the new steeples echoes those that were part of the landmark downtown Aurora landmark for generations that were felled first by wind and, ultimately, fire.

It’s emblematic of how wind, fire and water have impacted the shape of Aurora and have been the make or break of local landmarks, and this is the focus of a new exhibition staged by the Aurora Museum and Archives at the Royal Rose Gallery, just steps away from the Aurora United Church site.

The latest exhibition to be showcased at the Royal Rose Gallery uses primary documents and photographs to chart how Aurora dealt with severe weather and disasters both natural and man-made beginning in 1893 when a tornado – then thought to be a cyclone – swept through the downtown core, damaging both the church and the site of Aurora’s first Town Hall.

Next up is a 1924 explosion at a match factory once located between Berczy Street and the present GO rail line, which took place just before Christmas that year, claiming the life of the factory manager and seriously injuring another.

“Only those two people – which is unbelievable for an explosion in a residential zone,” says Jeremy Hood, Museum Assistant at the Aurora Museum & Archive. “It’s so compelling.”

Fast-forward a couple of decades and exhibition-goers can see documents from a significant flood in 1946, followed in 1965 by a fire that destroyed Aurora’s then-sole ice arena, sparked by a lit cigarette just days before Maurice “The Rocket” Richard was due to visit. The site of the arena, just north of Chartwell Park Place on Yonge Street, remains vacant in a testament to what was.

Next in the timeline is another fire in Aurora’s downtown core in April 1972 when Textile Bargain Centre, a very narrow standalone building, was destroyed – making way for the staircase which now connects shops, restaurants and businesses on Yonge Street to parking on Temperance Street.

And then – the Aurora United Church fire almost exactly 39 years later.

“They are fascinating moments in Aurora’s history,” says Hood, noting that part of the exhibition was previously curated virtually on their site and through their On The Spot app. “Elements of this may appear in our grand exhibit that we’re planning for Aurora Town Square in our large-scale exhibit and cases, but we haven’t decided what is going to go into that just yet.”

These instances, he adds, are examples of Aurora’s resilience as a community.

“We use the Aurora United Church as the most recent example,” he says. “They were able to go through that impossibility that happened to them and they’re still going strong, operating 10 years later out of a temporary location and eager to get back. They didn’t falter in all that time. I know a lot of military history, and

you can’t really destroy people’s morale that easily. I think people are very much willing to come together and help each other out and see themselves through these problems and know that things are just temporary regardless of how bad things seem in the moment.

“You see the beams sticking out from a smoking ruin or people knee-deep in floodwaters, but it recedes and it gets rebuilt – and for Aurora, pushing 200 years here, very few buildings of that original era survive, but we are doing our best and the more we respect that history, the more we can preserve it, remember it, and honour that resiliency.”

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AURORA TOWN OF AURORA PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

AURORA TOWN COUNCIL will hold a Public Meeting to receive input on a proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application:

Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 7 p.m.

Aurora Town Hall, Council Chambers, 100 John West Way, Aurora Ontario

APPLICATION: The purpose and intent of the proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application is to change the land use for a portion of the subject property to facilitate the development of 29 townhouse units.

PROPERTY: 7 Lacey Court
WARD LOCATION: 2
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: CON 1 PT LOT 81 PLAN 65M2583 BLOCK 12
APPLICANT: 200 Wellington Holding Corp
FILE NUMBERS: OPA-2024-01; ZBA-2024-01
RELATED APPLICATIONS: SP-2024-01



PROCEDURAL INFORMATION:

Parties interested in speaking during the public portion of the meeting may attend in person or electronically. To participate electronically, pre-registration is required. For more information, visit: aurora.ca/participation

The meeting will be live streamed at: youtube.com/TownofAurora

The Planning Report will be made available the Tuesday before the Public Planning Meeting date on the Town’s website, by visiting the Agendas and Minutes section, located at: aurora.ca/agendas

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Any questions regarding the proposed application can be directed to Antonio Greco of the Planning and Development Services Department at 365-500-3103, or by email at agrec@aurora.ca.

Comments may also be mailed to the Planning and Development Services Department at 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON, L4G 6J1, faxed to 905-726-4736, or emailed to planning@aurora.ca prior to the meeting. Please quote the File Name and Number.

INFORMATION ABOUT PRESERVING YOUR APPEAL RIGHTS:

If a person or a public body would otherwise have an ability to appeal the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora to the Ontario Land Tribunal but the person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Town of Aurora before the approval authority gives or refuses approval of the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Town of Aurora before the approval authority gives or refuses approval of the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Land Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to do so.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Council of the Town of Aurora on the proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment, you must make a written request to the Town of Aurora to the attention of the Director of Planning and Development Services.

If you have received this notice as an owner of a property and the property contains seven (7) or more residential units, the Town requires that you post this notice in a location that is visible to all the residents.

DATED at the Town of Aurora, this 18th day of April, 2024

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tax Rate Stabilization reserves are not for salaries: reader

There has been a lot of talk by Aurora Councillors that by using the Town's tax rate stabilization fund to give themselves a 30% pay raise would not affect the tax levy. Could it not be used to lower the tax levy then?

I am no politician, but a Town's tax rate stabilization fund is to be used to reduce the sudden impact to the tax rate or utility rates from UNEXPECTED cost in budgets or during costs arising mid-term, etc. Using this fund to give one's self a pay increase is not unexpected cost, in my opinion. So, using this fund to give Councillors a pay raise should be considered a little inappropriate, as it sure not unexpected as it appears a planned trait which should have been hashed out in 2024 budget planning.

There has been talk that some Councillors are not at top rate, yet all new Councillors knew it is a part-time job and the possible workload when considering to run and what the going rate was to be.

Once the money is taken from the fund it is GONE, so as per the reason for a stabilization fund why not use it for its real purpose of lowering the tax levy then and not for pay raises?

Sadly, the whole situation appears a tad shady and by trying to blame just the Mayor for using the Strong Mayor powers to veto it is just adding more grey areas.

John Sargent
Aurora

Better budget needed for housing, says resident

The number of people experiencing homelessness continues to increase in our community, caused by rapidly increasing housing costs. In the upcoming federal budget, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland must focus on housing and ending homelessness, with a particular emphasis on providing direct financial support to those at greatest risk of losing their home or already experiencing homelessness, through a Homelessness Prevention & Housing Benefit.

In addition, efforts by all 3 levels of government must be focused on increasing the supply of deeply affordable rental housing.

Homelessness is solvable, and poll after poll shows that Canadians are near unanimous in their support of policies that strive to end this crisis.

Jane St Germain
Aurora

THE AURORAN

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To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to brock@lpcmedia.ca
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

Machell's Corners



SCOTT JOHNSTON
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Creativity around the house (or home)

Spring is a time of renewal when it comes to our natural world, but most of us can agree that, as a result, it's also a time for renewal of our collective spirits.

As our days get longer, flowers begin their upward sprout, the grass gets greener; and the choir of birds that call our community home prepare for a big, extended musical number that lasts until the late fall, we're all imbued with a bit more energy than we had in the dark days of winter – and I say this as an unapologetic winter enthusiast!

Even though we're not gaining any further minutes as we get ever-closer to the summer, the extended daylight makes it feel like so much more is possible over the course of 24-hours. We budget them differently, make better use out of them, and want to maximize them because, when the workday wraps, the time between getting home and doing it all over again in the morning is to be savoured rather than weathered. That doesn't always feel the case when the snow is blowing.

Speaking only for myself, although I suspect most of you might find yourself in this same boat, I feel my creativity hit an upward trajectory around this time of year as well.

Words on the page come just a little bit easier, a boon for someone in this job.

Nature's near-blooming bounty offers a near-limitless backdrop for photos and other forms of visual art. The sunlight and the eagerness to get outside and make the most of it also re-charges off-the-clock hobbies as well.

As a voracious but leisurely-paced reader, colder months tend to push this love to the backburner in favour of some degree of hibernation and "comfort" shows and movies at night. Yet, there are few things better at this time of year than grabbing the reading material of choice at the end of the workday and going straight out again to your backyard, porch or nearest greenspace to both enjoy the golden hour light and make a dent in your library.

That, in turn, must go a long way in goosing up that mental creativity.

Although I am not a homeowner at present, one can see this springtime creativity in abundance as our communities host home and lifestyle shows, exhibitions that highlight scores of business and service providers close to home that can help make your living space the best it can be.

Visiting these shows, I always marvel at the ideas people have to improve and reimagine their spaces, indoors and/or outdoors, at various price points, of course – whether their properties echo



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

our once-sprawling parcels of farmland or offer little more than a balcony or postage stamp-sized patio.

These shows open your eyes to what feels like a limitless number of possibilities and ways to make it happen.

A decade or two ago, who could have envisioned that the humble shipping container could not only be transformed into beautiful, functional homes, large and small, but also into prime exemplars of what's possible? Well, creative builders who have breathed new life into smaller-scale decommissioned Victorian churches into comfortable single-family homes, and factories and schools into modern lofts with a nod to the past, probably had an idea or two – but, with the housing crisis continuing unabated, others seem to be taking to this idea with renewed vigor.

After all, many of us these days have no alternative than to look at, well, alternatives to the traditional housing model.

As much as government supports and, most importantly, action, are key to easing this crisis, if not solving it outright, creativity has to be on the table here as well.

I think we can all agree that the current housing model in this country needs a fair bit of help, so a healthy dose of thinking "outside the box" will be essential in re-thinking that aforementioned art of the possible.

Municipalities within the GTHA have a finite amount of space in which to live, move and develop. Many of our communities are running out of greenfield lands for new developments, so infill is and will be very much the name of the game.

Residents in well-established neighbourhoods across the area are rightly focused on maintaining the character of their existing neighbourhoods in the face of infill, but this needs a bit of a re-think as I fear this specific focus will not be sustainable in the long run.

Municipalities need to recognize that when parcels of land that could

be subject to infill come on the market, they have to exercise some creative muscle in maximizing that space and opportunity – and that includes the approval of fourplexes. Making sure such builds maintain the look and feel of the neighbourhood in question will be a challenge at the municipal level, but they have the resources – human or otherwise – to rise to the challenge.

Yet, Premier Ford has nixed the very idea of fourplexes.

Speaking to reporters last month, he said: "I can assure you 1,000 per cent, you go into the middle of communities and start putting up four-storey, six-storey, eight-storey buildings right deep into the communities there is going to be a lot of shouting and screaming. That is a massive mistake. We're not going to go into communities and start building four-storey or six-storey buildings beside residences like this. It is off the table for us. We're going to build homes, single-dwelling homes, townhomes – that's what we're going to focus on."

Yet, at the same time, his government, according to Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Paul Calandra, said what is very much on the table is potentially considering temporary lodgings, such as student housing, and rooms and suites in retirement settings as units towards Ontario's housing goals.

"We will continue to explore data sources for tracking the numbers of other institutional types of housing such as student residences and retirement types of housing such as student residences and retirement homes for future program years and commit to engaging municipalities on the same," said Calandra in a letter to the City of Mississauga, per a report from CP24.

Counting some of these types of housing units towards the overall goal prescribed to municipalities by the Province of Ontario is just a little too creative for my taste.

There is no debating that for seniors living in these residences it's very much a home. But, by and large, these are congregate living settings that do not dovetail with the Premier's commitment to the housing types above – no matter how creative you get – at the expense of fourplexes... which, with a little creativity, need not get anywhere close to four-, six-, or eight-storeys. Or stick out like sore thumbs, as some put it.

No matter the type, size, or configuration of your own home or living situation, I hope the spring and everything it has to offer inspires creativity – we're certainly going to need it!

THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

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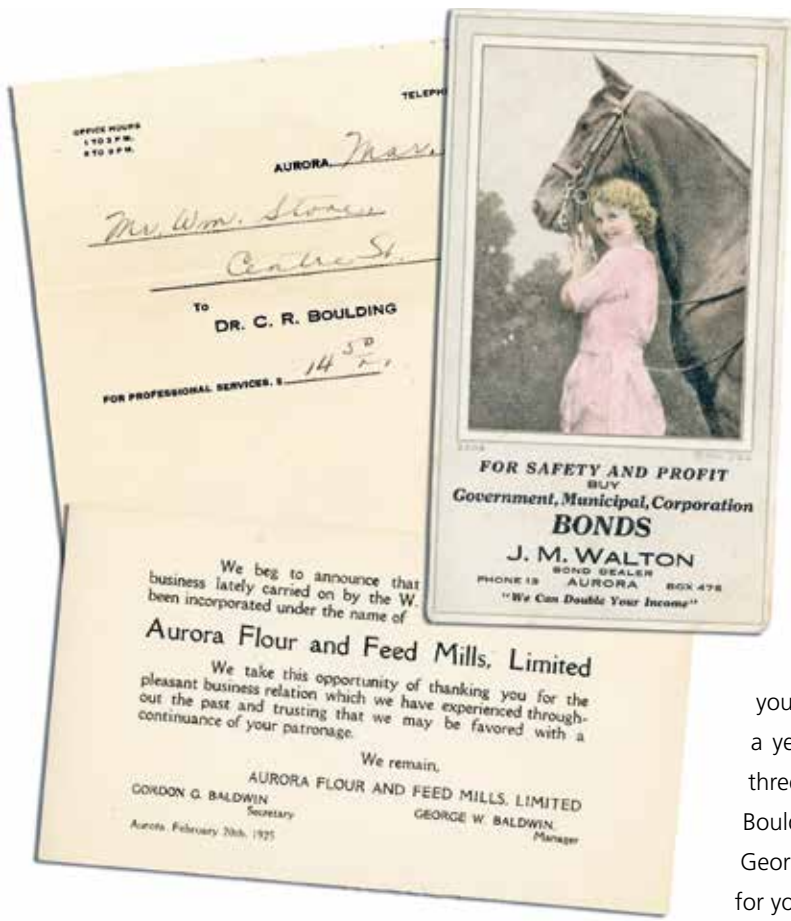
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The Aurora Museum & Archives is... Giving Business to the Mayor(s)

Aurora has had a Mayor since its incorporation as a Town in 1888. These Mayors were from the very beginning men who held prominent positions in the community – doctors, industrialists and business owners. If you take a look to the right at our Time Traveler's Diary, you'll see there was a year with three such Mayors! Above, well-preserved ephemera from these three Mayors' day-jobs can be seen: a receipt for medical services from Dr. C.R. Boulding (86.72.21), and cards advertising Aurora Feed and Flour Mills, owned by George Baldwin (994.35.13), and Bond Dealer J. M. Walton (81.93.166). Thanks for your double-service!



Time Travellers Diary

By Jacqueline Stuart

Third time lucky!

Back in April of 1939, eighty-five years ago, Aurora was looking for a mayor for the third time in four months.

Dr. Charles Boulding had been elected as mayor in January of 1939. In February he resigned because he had accepted the position of Medical Officer of Health for Aurora and a Town employee could not serve on Council.

There was a one-man race to become the new mayor: George W. Baldwin, of the family which had long-owned Aurora's mill, was duly elected by acclamation on February 14. Less than two months later he resigned.

During those two months, Council became embroiled in a complicated issue involving the Town's most senior staff member; the Town Clerk. Morley Andrews had been clerk for 12 years.

At a secret Council meeting late in March, Mr. Andrews was demoted to the position of assistant clerk. The vote was not unanimous: Mr. Andrews was well respected personally. Mayor Baldwin disagreed with the treatment of Mr. Andrews and said he would resign if the night's decisions were not rescinded. At the regular Council meeting of April 17, the earlier motions passed again, still not unanimously. Mr. Baldwin announced his resignation and walked out of the Council chamber.

The Town was abuzz with chat about Council's actions and who the next mayor might be. I decided to attend the nomination meeting on April 25 at the Mechanics Hall. Local politics and poor treatment of a prominent member of the community? Could spark strong comments from the floor!

As I got out of my time machine and entered the Hall, I could hear plenty of conversation, but nothing rowdy. That changed when the names of the last nominee and one of his endorsers were read out.

The first four nominees were not qualified to run: they just wanted the opportunity to express an opinion or two.

There was a moment of silence after the fifth name was read. Then most of us burst into shouts of laughter.

"Charlie McCarthy, nominated by E. Bergen and Charles Willoughby."

[For younger readers: Charlie McCarthy was a sizeable wood and plastic doll or dummy used by highly skilled ventriloquist Edgar Bergen. They were famous across North America.]

Unfortunately, neither Mr. McCarthy nor Mr. Bergen could take part in the election as neither was a resident of Aurora.

No further nominations were made, the meeting ended, and Aurora still did not have even a potential mayor. I came back to the present, still giggling at the memory of those names being read out solemnly.

Early in May, a relative newcomer to town, Howard Morton, declared himself a candidate, and he was followed by Jesse M. Walton. Mr. Morton owned a service station and car dealership. Mr. Walton, a local businessman, had served as mayor from 1923 until 1928. The local paper made an icy comment about Mr. Morton's short residency and lack of experience and stressed Mr. Walton's local government history as Mayor and, for 20 years, as treasurer of King Township.

In the election on June 2, Mr. Morton won a healthy 42 per cent of the vote, but Mr. Walton's fifty-eight per cent made him Mayor.

The last Mayor to be elected that year! Mr. McCarthy might have been more fun, but Mr. Walton's known pomposity was perhaps more useful at the Council table.



GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor
Tom Mrakas

a comprehensive public engagement initiative. This will include public planning meetings for zoning changes, ensuring that residents' needs and preferences are incorporated into the design.

Your participation will be crucial as we collaboratively work to enhance our neighbourhood. Stay tuned as I will continue to ensure all residents are informed of next steps.

This acquisition is part of the strategic approach our Town is taking to address parkland deficit in Aurora. As we all recognize, green spaces and parkland are vital components in fostering a vibrant and healthy community. Our commitment to

expanding parkland is essential for our community's well-being and aligns with our goal of reaching 40 percent total canopy cover by 2034.

Parks are more than just patches of greenery; they are the heart of our community, providing spaces for recreation, relaxation, and social interaction, which our residents deeply care about. The 2022 Citizen Satisfaction Survey highlighted residents' concerns regarding development and the loss of greenspace as the most significant ongoing issue facing our Town.

As Aurora continues to grow, it's imperative to ensure we have adequate park space and recreational amenities to sustain the long-term health and vitality of our residents.

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.

I am excited to announce that Council has unanimously agreed to acquire the approximately four-acre property at 115 George Street from the York Region District School Board.

This \$10,722,000 acquisition will be funded through our Parkland Reserve, signifying a significant step forward in our efforts to expand parkland in Aurora in a financially responsible way.

I envision this property not only as a new 2.7-acre park for Ward 2 residents but also as an opportunity for compatible development along George Street on the remaining 1 acre. This approach will enable the municipality to recoup funds, maximizing the value of taxpayers' dollars while enriching our community.

Our next steps involve initiating the removal of the existing school building by Fall 2024, accompanied by

This month has been filled with moments of community engagement, cultural celebrations and important initiatives from our government.

The time is now for Ontario to seize a transformative opportunity with Artificial Intelligence (AI). I am proud to have tabled my Private Member's Motion aimed at ensuring the responsible and ethical use of AI in government. This motion is pivotal in establishing transparent and accountable AI practices across Ontario's public services. By adopting such measures, we aim to lead by example in the responsible use of AI, ensuring that our advancements in technology directly benefit all residents while safeguarding their privacy and rights. Stay tuned for more announcements on this Motion as I help guide it through Queen's Park.

Earlier this month, we marked the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force at the Aurora Legion with a moving flag-raising ceremony. This event served as a tribute to the brave men and women who have served our nation, showing our profound respect and appreciation for their service.

At Central York Fire Services Station 4-5 in Aurora, our government launched the Bereavement Support Program with an investment of over \$3 million. This initiative will provide mental health support to families of first responders and public safety personnel who have tragically lost their lives in the line of duty or through suicide. The program reflects our understanding that grief needs healing and deservedly so.

The announcement of York University's new School of Medicine is a much-needed initiative for our region. Bolstered by the government's \$9 million investment, the school



DIALOGUE WITH DAWN

By Dawn Gallagher Murphy
MPP, Newmarket-Aurora

primary care doctors, addressing the growing need for accessible, high-quality healthcare. This furthers our mission to bring convenient care closer to home, ensuring your family receives the care they need, when they need it. Imagine, students from our own communities will soon be the family doctors caring for us and our loved ones.

The "Building a Better Ontario" 2024 budget reaffirms our commitment to rebuild Ontario's economy while continuing to invest in housing enabling infrastructure, highways, transit, and health care, without raising costs on families, businesses, and municipalities. Some of the budget highlights include:

- Helping to get more homes built by investing \$1 billion in the new Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program and quadrupling the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund to a total of \$825 million to help municipalities repair and expand the critical infrastructure needed to reach their housing targets.
- Connecting approximately 600,000 people to primary health care with a total additional investment of \$546 million over three years.
- Launching a new \$200 million Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund to strengthen

communities across Ontario by investing in new and upgraded sport, recreation, and community facilities.

- Investing \$46 million over three years, including for the purchase of four police helicopters, to improve community safety in the Greater Toronto Area by supporting increased patrols and faster response times to major incidents and serious crimes.

- Keeping costs down for people and businesses by proposing to extend the temporary cuts to the gasoline tax rate by 5.7 cents per litre and the fuel (diesel) tax rate by 5.3 cents per litre until December 31, 2024. This would save Ontario households \$320 on average since the cuts were first introduced in July 2022.

- Helping workers and job seekers, including apprentices, get the skills they need to advance their careers with an additional \$100 million investment in 2024-25 through the Skills Development Fund Training Stream.

- Supporting individuals facing unstable housing conditions and dealing with mental health and addictions challenges by investing an additional \$152 million over three years towards various supportive housing initiatives designed to support vulnerable people.

Reflecting on these transformative initiatives, my resolve to serve Newmarket—Aurora with dedication and to advocate for your needs at Queen's Park has never been stronger. Spring is in the air, and I eagerly anticipate connecting with each of you at upcoming local events as I remain deeply committed to Building Our Community Together.

To schedule a meeting, email my office at dawn.gallaghermurphy@pc.ola.org or call 905-853-9889.

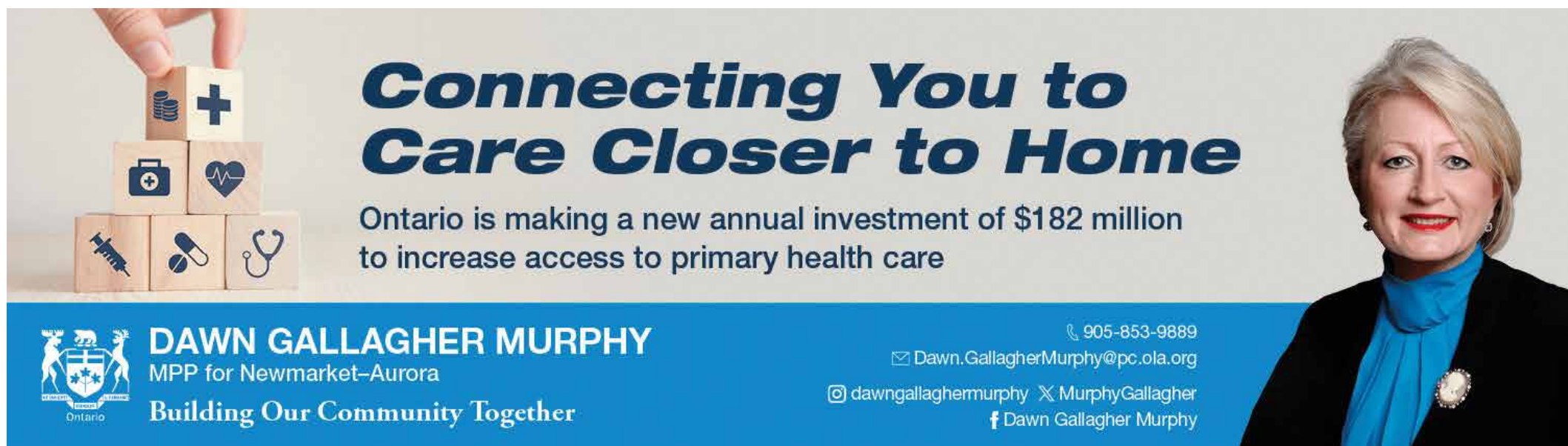
THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Should Aurora continue with windrow removal for the 2024-25 winter season?

YES NO UNSURE

www.theauroran.com

RESULTS TO DATE APRIL 16, 2024	YES	NO	UNSURE
	79%	14%	7%



Connecting You to Care Closer to Home

Ontario is making a new annual investment of \$182 million to increase access to primary health care

DAWN GALLAGHER MURPHY
MPP for Newmarket–Aurora
Building Our Community Together

905-853-9889
Dawn.GallagherMurphy@pc.ola.org
dawngallaghernurphy MurphyGallagher
Dawn Gallagher Murphy

Aurora launches online reporting system for coyote and fox sightings

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Coyote sightings in your neighbourhood might be alarming, particularly to parents of small children or pet owners, but a new online reporting system launched last week by the Town of Aurora aims to educate residents on safety and how to live alongside coyotes, foxes and other wildlife.

The tool, which can be found at aurora.ca/coyotesighting, allows residents to log their sightings of these four-legged critters through an interactive form and map.

“This new tool will provide valuable information to Animal Services to target areas for patrols, install signage in areas with reported sightings, investigate concerns about wildlife feeding and support community outreach

and education including awareness on how to keep families and pets safe,” said the Town in a statement. “Residents can report sightings of coyotes and foxes, including details such as location, time, and type of sighting. Additionally, residents can specify if the animal appears sick or injured, or if there is a perceived risk to public safety. Users can also view all reported sightings on the map over the past three months.”

The Town stresses coyotes and wildlife are important to the local ecosystem and typically don’t pose a danger to people – cats and small dogs are another story – and this tool can help us “learn to co-exist with our wildlife if we respect them and take proactive steps to keep ourselves and our pets safe.”

Lindsay Clark, Supervisor of Animal Services for the Town of Aurora, who has been with the

Town for five years, says in that time she has seen a marked increase in inquiries about coyotes and foxes within Aurora and, inspired by other communities, decided to create an initiative to keep the community engaged.

Some of the calls she and her department have received were requests to remove coyotes from any given area, but that is not what the department does.

“We wanted to promote co-existing with wildlife and consulted with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Coyote Watch Canada to best engage the community,” says Clark, noting this was a joint effort between herself and department, as well as Aurora’s IT and Communications departments. “I wanted to break the stereotypes of coexisting with coyotes and foxes within our community so I wanted to provide the residents an opportunity to share their experiences with local wildlife [while] at the same time, also creating public awareness for the residents and to be mindful in certain areas, which are classified as high traffic areas.”

Since its launch, Clark says uptake of the new system has been swift and positive and will likely be on the rise as mating season has just finished and kits will soon be hunting for food.

“We’re trying to turn the page on wanting animals removed from within our communities – because of all that new development, there is a lot of destruction of habitat happening. It’s pushing foxes and coyotes into our urban areas and they are just trying to survive wherever they can,” says Clark. “Most of the sightings I have seen so far are animals living within those greenspaces behind residential

zones. Some of those spaces are Town parks and then some of those spaces are future developments that haven’t been built yet.

“If people have any questions or they’re unfamiliar with coyotes and foxes – we do have a lot of new residents to Canada and I would encourage them to contact local animal services. We’re always happy to help residents out. We constantly provide education regarding wildlife and we also receive seasonal training from our partnership with Shades of Hope – they’re the ones that take any sick or injured wildlife from the Town of Aurora. We get a lot of training in order to provide the best education to residents as much as possible. We hope this sheds a positive light on coexisting with foxes and coyotes, especially in our communities.”

TIPS TO KEEP YOURSELF AND PETS SAFE:

- Be cautious of your surroundings when walking around forests, ravines, and open spaces;
- When walking your dog, keep them on a close leash and bring a whistle or stick with you to scare away a coyote;
- Never leave pets outside unattended on your property, as coyotes can jump fences;
- Prevent wildlife from coming onto your property by removing all food sources, including ripe fruit and bird seed, securing your garbage and compost, and fencing gardens off;
- Do not approach coyotes or their dens, as this may provoke them.

Solution for teacher absence raises eyebrows at St. Max

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A temporary solution offered by the York Catholic District School Board due to difficulty in replacing a teacher at St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic High School has raised eyebrows amongst parents.

On Friday, parents of many Grade 12 students received a letter from the school informing them that due to an ongoing teacher absence in a specific course, a vacancy the YCDSB is trying to fill, applicable students would receive a mark of 100 per cent on their mid-terms.

This caused concern among parents, with one who asked not

to be named questioning whether this would put some students at an unfair advantage in their applications to colleges and universities.

“In order to support students during this teacher absence, we will be giving all students a mark of 100% for their midterm,” read the letter. “This mark will be accompanied by a comment which states the progress and mark for this class has been impacted by a teacher absence. When the permanent teacher returns or when a replacement teacher is hired, the mark will be changed to reflect the student’s performance on assessments,

Continued on page 23



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BUSINESS & FINANCE



READY FOR BUSINESS – AGAIN! – Business owner Mike Rathke celebrated the grand re-opening of his MR Menswear on Friday, celebrating alongside his family. Previously located on Yonge Street at Church, the popular men's store is now located at 55 Industrial Parkway South, Unit 1. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

Budget is about “fairness for every generation” says MP ahead of Federal announcement

MP Taylor Roy defends carbon pricing

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The 2024 Federal Budget is about fairness – “fairness for every generation,” according to Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leah Taylor Roy.

Ahead of the release by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland just after press time on Tuesday afternoon, MP Taylor Roy

said tackling the affordability crisis is key, and, in turn, a key factor of that is the Federal Government’s Price on Pollution program, colloquially known as the Carbon Tax.

“When I say it is about fairness for every generation, our generation and the generation that came before us contributed to the greenhouse gas buildup inventory we have right now that we have to address,” she said. “Future generations are going to be dealing more and more with the outcome of that – the floods, the wildfires. People are more and more going to see it in their everyday

budgets.”

The cost of flood insurance, she added, is on the rise, as are wildfires as the result of climate change and, “if we don’t do something about that right now, we’re saddling our children, our grandchildren and future generations with huge costs to fight climate change and to deal with the outcomes of it.”

Since its introduction, the “Carbon Tax” has been the subject of backlash, but MP Taylor Roy insists the “price on pollution Program” will go a long way towards tackling the climate crisis as well as affordability.

“80 per cent of Canadians receive more in the Canada Carbon Rebate over the course of the year than they pay,” she said. “This is a program that has been shown to have helped reduce our emissions already – about 10 per cent of the emissions reductions we’ve achieved are estimated by the Canada Climate Institute and the Government of Canada to have come from this carbon tax and it is an important component of the overall price on pollution program we have.”

Citing a letter in support of carbon pricing signed by nearly 300 economists both within Canada and abroad attest to this, she said.

“The reality is we need to fight climate change, period. It has to be done somehow. This is considered to be the most efficient and when you add the rebate, the most affordable way to do it,” said Taylor Roy. “This is market-based... a conservative kind of program, to tell you the truth.... When you look at the Canada Carbon Rebate, that amount does not change based on how much fossil fuel, whether it is gasoline, or home heating oil, natural gas, you use... the only thing that changes that is when the price on pollution changes then your

rebate increases.

“What a family or individual pays through what people call the Carbon Tax can be reduced by their actions. They can actually make more money from the Canada Carbon Rebate every time they reduce their consumption of fossil fuels. There are so many ways to do that and I think people are starting to do that. We have a \$40,000 interest-free loan from the government to help homeowners or to help individuals make changes; for example, more insulation, a better heating and monitoring system, better thermostats, putting in blinds that are insulated... even people can make things like just keeping or moderating the temperature in terms of how warm it is in the winter and how cold it is in the summer. We can block off parts of our homes. People can even make big changes like deciding to move to a smaller home.”

On the electric vehicle (EV) front, MP Taylor Roy noted a Federal rebate of \$5,000 is still available to support residents’ purchases of these cars and their price is coming down.

“We’re trying to help people through incentives to make these changes so they can save,” she said. “We don’t want people to pay the Carbon Tax – we would like everybody to reduce their consumption. The other thing about that is the bigger issue is they are not subjected to the extreme fluctuations in the price of fossil fuels like gasoline or natural gas, which are really driven not by the price on pollution, because that’s predictable. It’s driven by world prices, by the huge multinational corporations, that made record-breaking profits in the last three years. That is what is actually driving up the cost more than the price of pollution.”

AURORA CHAMBER HOME & LIVING SHOW WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Sat. April 20th: 9-5pm | Sun. April 21st: 10-4pm
aurorahomeshow.ca

KIDS’ ACTIVITIES

Coach Steve

Hosts a “Silly Magic Show”
Saturday & Sunday @ 12:00 pm

Green Thumbs

Planting & Gardening Activities
All weekend in the Lounge

Colouring Contest

All weekend @ Booth 221



ASK THE EXPERTS

SATURDAY IN THE LOUNGE

11:00 AM MARYAM ASLANZAD
OWNER/DESIGNER, A4 CONSTRUCTION
Home Organization Tips to Increase Your Home’s Value

1:00 PM MATT WILCOX
OWNER, MKW SERVICES
Deck Maintenance, for a Stronger, Longer-Lasting Deck

3:00PM EMILY O’BRIEN
FOUNDER, COMEBACK SNACKS
From Con to Kernals – The Emily O’Brien Story

SUNDAY IN THE LOUNGE

11:00 AM LISA HORNE
OWNER, BYLISA HOLISTIC HEALTH CENTRE
Healthy Living: Simple Steps to Improved Digestion

1:00 PM MICHELLE HOULE
OPERATIONS, SUMMERS AND SMITH
Energy Efficient Settings to Save Your Wallet (& The Planet)

2:00 PM JON DURZI
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MILLER COMPOST
Compost 101: The Vital Role of Compost in Your Gardens

FOOD TRUCKS

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11:00am – 2:00pm



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THE PRINCIPLES OF AN ECONOMIC CHARTER OF RIGHTS

By Frank Stronach

How do we boost productivity? Give workers a piece of the action

As the former CEO of Magna International, one of Canada's largest manufacturing companies, my philosophy was always that employees don't work for you – they work with you.

At Magna, we backed that statement up by making every employee a partner in profitability. It was the secret to our success: giving workers a piece of the action to generate greater productivity and ingenuity.

However, overall productivity in Canada has been deteriorating for quite a while now, so much so that the Bank of Canada recently declared it a "national emergency." Carolyn Rogers, the Bank's Senior Deputy Governor, said productivity in Canada has essentially flatlined over the past few years. When a longer timeframe is considered, the productivity picture is much worse, showing signs of steady and significant decline over the past four decades.

So, if we truly are in the midst of a national emergency, then how do we go about boosting Canadian productivity?

Investing more in modern machinery, equipment and new technology is one sure-fire method for spiking productivity, at least in the short-term. So too is training workers and upgrading job skills.

But for me, the best way is still one of the oldest and simplest: make employees partners in profitability and let them share in the success of the business.

The profit-sharing culture that we established at Magna gave everyone at the company a stake in the outcome and a share of the profits. After we started sharing profits with all of our employees, productivity went through the roof, and we began generating spectacular growth in sales and profits.

But Magna is just one of many companies that have shown that sharing profits with employees is a tried-and-true formula for increased productivity.

A landmark study from the National Bureau of Economic Research in the US published a number of years ago concluded that profit sharing can in fact boost productivity. What's more, the report showed that profit

sharing programs lead to better pay, enhanced job security, and better employee/management relations.

Profit sharing carries a number of other benefits, as well – primarily for workers. For example, some studies have shown that profit sharing not only puts more cash in the pockets of employees, but it also can improve job satisfaction.

A survey conducted last month by recruitment firm Hays Canada showed that 71 percent of Canadian workers indicated a desire to leave their jobs in the next year due to rising dissatisfaction. One of the main reasons for wanting to leave, according to the study, is that workers feel "unmotivated."

Is it any wonder why Canada has a productivity crisis?

But if employees have a real and tangible financial stake in the company's success, they are more motivated because they know that their contributions will be rewarded, and they will be more driven to find ways to improve productivity and enhance quality.

It's just common sense: when workers get a percentage of the profits, when they feel they have something at stake, then they care more, they work harder, and they think about ways to make their business more productive.

Profit sharing is one of the key economic principles in the national economic charter of rights that I've been advocating for the past year.

If we want to end the national productivity emergency dragging our living standards down, we need to start making Canadian employees partners profitability.

Profit sharing will make companies more productive. It will raise the incomes of employees. And it will lift Canada's sagging living standards.

To learn more about how we can improve Canada's economy and increase living standards, 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).



Provincial funding was celebrated at Thermogenics on Friday with business leaders welcoming Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy and Mayor Tom Mrakas to their Scanlon Court facility just off Industrial Parkway North. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

Thermogenics receives nearly \$50k in Provincial Funding to expand

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora-based Thermogenics, which is a leading producer of boilers critical to hospitals and healthcare, received a boost from the Provincial government on Friday to help them expand their output and create new jobs.

On April 12, Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health, accompanied by Mayor Tom Mrakas, visited Thermogenics' base on Scanlon Court to get a behind-the-scenes glimpse at operations and to celebrate the \$48,000 grant from the Ontario Together Fund.

The Provincial dollars supports a \$96,000 investment by Thermogenics to build a second test bay and create five new jobs.

The Ontario Together Fund offers financial supports to businesses and organizations dedicated to "advancing healthcare resiliency, with a focus on developing innovative medical technologies and reducing dependence on foreign supply chains for essential lifesaving medicines."

Thermogenics fits the bill with

their equipment being integral in hospitals and healthcare settings, as well as commercial and industrial operations elsewhere.

"Our new second test bay will expand our equipment production and technician-training capabilities, allowing us to better serve our healthcare and food and beverage customers who provide essential services to all Ontarians," said Thermogenics CEO Ross Garland. "This additional test bay capacity also reduces our new product development cycle times, ensuring more rapid deployment of new and impactful technologies for these critical industries. This is an exciting advancement for Thermogenics."

Added MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy: "By supporting Thermogenics through the Ontario Together fund, 'we're boosting our local economy, creating jobs and enhancing our crucial services across Ontario. This investment highlights how targeted initiatives can substantially enhance our community's manufacturing capabilities and economic strength, ensuring that Newmarket-Aurora remains at the forefront of innovation."

CANADIAN DENTAL CARE PLAN

The CDCP will help ease financial barriers to accessing oral health care for up to 9 million eligible Canadian residents.

WHO'S ELIGIBLE FOR THE CDCP?

To qualify you must →

- ✓ be currently uninsured (without employer/pension-sponsored or private dental insurance)
- ✓ be a Canadian resident
- ✓ have an adjusted family net income of less than \$90,000
- ✓ have filed your tax return in the previous year

WHEN CAN I APPLY FOR THE CDCP?

Applications are open for potentially eligible seniors 70+

More potentially eligible Canadian residents will be able to apply online in phases:	
Seniors aged 65+	Starting May 2024
Adults with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate	Starting June 2024
Children under the age of 18	Starting June 2024
All remaining eligible Canadian residents	Starting 2025

WHEN CAN I START MAKING APPOINTMENTS?

Once enrolled, you will receive a welcome package from Sun Life that includes your coverage start date and details of what the plan covers.

→ Appointments can only be scheduled on or after your coverage start date.

WHAT DOES THE CDCP COVER?

The CDCP covers a wide range of oral health care services, based on the recommendation of an oral health care provider. Examples include scaling (cleaning) and polishing, as well as other services like exams, x-rays, fillings, removable dentures, and root canal treatments.

HOW MUCH OF THE COST IS COVERED UNDER THE CDCP?

For eligible Canadians with an adjusted family net income of less than \$70,000	100% of eligible service costs will be covered
For eligible Canadians with an adjusted family net income between \$70,000 and \$79,999	60% of eligible service costs will be covered
For eligible Canadians with an adjusted family net income between \$80,000 and \$89,999	40% of eligible service costs will be covered

→ You may have to pay additional charges directly to the oral health provider if you have a co-pay, if your provider charges more than the CDCP fee guide, or if you agree to a treatment that the plan doesn't cover.

Before receiving oral health care, always ask your oral health provider about any costs that won't be covered by the CDCP.

For more information, visit canada.ca/dental



TONY Van Bynen

Member of Parliament Newmarket-Aurora

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Ojibwe healer invites community on healing journey with “Living by the Medicine Wheel”



Asha Frost

Contributed photo

April 30 presentation is part of APL’s Indigenous Teachings program

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ojibwe healer and author Asha Frost didn’t always have a handle on what she describes as “the healing potential that lies within us all.”

As the descendent of grandparents who survived the Residential School system, much of her ancestral knowledge was just out of reach. But, after being diagnosed with lupus as a teen, the Newmarket resident, now 47, began a journey to tap into the traditional wisdom of her people – and now she is sharing this with the wider world.

On Tuesday, April 30, at 7 p.m. Frost will host “Living by the Medicine Wheel,” a conversation at the Aurora Public Library (APL) which is part of APL’s year-long Indigenous Teachings program.

“My grandparents [being] in Residential School really broke and fractured my connection to my ancestors, my ancestral ways,” says Frost. “My life has been about reclamation, remembering and doing it maybe in a more non-conventional way as we imagine Indigenous people sitting with their elders doing these teachings; that’s not really the way that’s happened

for many of us who are in my generation whose parents were fractured from those teachings. Their parents had their language taken away, their teachings taken away, their culture suppressed and oppressed. I feel like my purpose here is to reclaim and remember so that I can pass those onto my children and the seven generations that come.”

Doing so has been a very personal journey for Frost and it hasn’t been easy.

Her diagnosis, she said, put her on the path of “reclamation and remembering” because she was driven to “find ways that the Earth could help me heal.”

Growing up in Newmarket, Frost says she did so in an environment where there was “not a lot” of Indigenous representation and, for a time, she didn’t want to be seen as Indigenous. This watershed period in her life made her realize how “separated” she was from her “ancestral ways and teachings” which spurred grief and sadness.

“There were a lot of questions at the time, so I really had to listen to my dream time, my ancestors’ voice that spoke to me,” she recalls. “I have had to learn and learn ways that are more ‘indigenized’ and decolonized because we’re really colonized into thinking the only ways to learn are through books, through lectures, through seminars, and I have had to unwind

some of that and really listen to the ways our people used to listen and remember our knowledge. When my children were born, that was a huge push; somebody said to me, ‘If you don’t live out your purpose then your children won’t be able to live out theirs,’ and I realized that was a huge initiation to me to keep going, keep speaking, and then share those global skills in a big way.”

One of the results of that effort is Frost’s bestselling book: “You Are the Medicine: 13 Moons of Indigenous Wisdom, Ancestral Connection, and Animal Spirit Guidance,” published in 2022.

After publishing the book, Frost says she was “nervous” about how it would be received within Indigenous communities.

“[It’s because] I understand why we keep these so hidden, so sacred, or sort of tight to our hearts,” says Frost. “I know my instructions from my ancestors is to share these so we can heal together. I feel it is an invitation to reconciliation to share as I do.... The most beautiful feedback I’ve gotten [is from] Indigenous youth who say, ‘We don’t have any connection to our culture. We’re looking at ways to learn and your book has provided that for us.’ I think I was just really terrified and that was really rooted in that generational trauma, too, so I had to work through that in big ways. Even elders who come and we sit through Zoom meetings or circles say, ‘It touched me so

deeply,’ and that has been really rewarding.”

This month’s presentation, of course, is open to all members of the public.

Frost says she hopes registrants come to the APL’s Living Room space with an open heart, letting go of “any expectations because I think we sometimes come into these spaces imagining it is going to be a certain way, and I would love people to come in with just, ‘I’m going to have an experience and this is going to make the experience rooted a little deeper because it is going to be powerful.’ That is something I know to be true.

“People can assume an Indigenous person is going to teach about certain things and be a certain way; I am not saying I am not those things and I don’t teach in that way, but maybe it is an opportunity to look at your biases because we all have them, we have marinated in this society that has been rooted in white supremacy... perhaps even an invitation to look at, ‘What are my biases about Indigenous people? What are the things I have heard over the years? What are the things that have seeped in from the collective that may be still in there somewhere and bringing that out? Hopefully we can heal it together that night.”

For more on Asha Frost and “Living by the Medicine Wheel,” including registration, visit www.indigenousteachings.ca and select Events from the menu.

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Week of April 18, 2024

Electric Vehicle Showcase zooms into SARC for reimagined event



Frank Stronach's Sarit vehicle was a hit at last year's Showcase and, new this year, you can have the chance to take it for a test drive on "Electric Avenue."

Auroran file photo by Glenn Rodger

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The ins and outs of electric vehicles (EVs) will be in the spotlight on Sunday, April 28, as the Town of Aurora's Electric Vehicle Showcase returns to the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex – but this year's Showcase will be a new spin on an annual event.

Set to be held inside for the first time, the EV Showcase will take over both of the SARC's ice pads, allowing for expert talks, a chance to get up close and personal with vehicles supplied by local dealerships, and even take a test drive.

"We've been slowly gaining traction and momentum for this event year after year – and with our third annual event, it's indoors," says Cindy Shaver of the Town of Aurora. "We were able to secure both the Pfaff and the Toyota arenas and moving indoors we had a lot more space to work with, enabling us to really grow the event this year."

"EVs are gaining momentum and traction and a lot of dealerships are really eager to showcase the cars that they have. Most of our local dealerships are involved, so you can expect a variety of EVs on display, including a few newbies that people might not be familiar with. On top of that, we've expanded [our] Speaker Stage, which is front and centre in the Pfaff Arena."

With the weekend opening its doors at 10 a.m., the Speaker Stage will spark to life at 10.30 with Ken Bokor of The EV Revolution Show, who will present "EV101" focusing on the history of the electric vehicle, the current EV market, purchase options, and advantages of getting in on the market.

Next up at 11.30 a.m. will be The Great Ontario EV Road Trip with Toronto Star reporter Marco Chown Oved, who recently returned from a 2,300 km road trip into northern Ontario looking at various points in the EV supply chain "from mine, to refinery, to steel plant, to

battery plant, to assembly line."

EV Charging 101 will follow at 12.30 p.m. with Kush Obhrai of Ivy Charging network; followed by "From Gadgets to the Grid: Batteries & Our sustainable Future" led by Tim Burrows, producer of Canada Talks Cars and member of the Electric Vehicle Society. Wrapping up the Speaker Stage will be Heather Smiles, Vice President of Investor Relations and Corporate Development at Electra Battery Materials with "Building a North American Supply Chain for EV Battery Materials."

Another highlight will be the "test track" where attendees will be able to take a spin behind the wheel of micro-mobility vehicles, including Frank Stronach's Sarit.

"There will be a number of those small micro-mobility cars that you'll be able to drive around inside on our test track, which we're dubbing our Electric Avenue," says Shaver. "There is also going to be Trek Bicycles, which [will] be providing a number of e-bikes [for Electric Avenue], so for people who are looking at maybe not an electric vehicle, but wanting to hop onto that electric handwagon and maybe try out an electric bike and see what that is all about."

Also new this year is a large Kids Zone that will offer myriad family-friendly activities to stimulate young minds in learning the science behind EVs.

"We'll have STEM Minds on site that is going to have a number of different robotics opportunities for kids of different ages and depending on their age, the activity will change, but it is all robotic," says Shaver. "You can drive mini-robotic cars around a track [like] a remote control car but...you're using the science and the engineering to actually build a car. As for the older kids, you actually get more of a hands-on opportunity to look at the engineering and how those are built. That's going to be really interesting and then we will have car-related craft activities where small kids could create

their own car out of recycled materials and we also have what's called a Pit-Stop Challenge. This is really cool – it's an opportunity for kids big and small to learn how to change a tire. Which, whether you drive an EV or gas-powered vehicles, is kind of an essential skill I personally don't have!

"We have fairly progressive targets, I think, to reduce our emissions by 80 per

cent from our 2018 emissions, by 2050... so we can't do this alone. We really need to, as a community, learn, and make choices that are going to benefit. Putting this on is an opportunity to educate our community and hopefully start that conversation to make those big changes."

For more on this year's Electric Vehicle Showcase, visit aurora.ca/en/your-government/electric-vehicle-showcase.aspx.

George Street PS site secured by Town for parkland, redevelopment

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

George Street Public School, and its surrounding property, have been secured by the Town of Aurora for parkland and redevelopment.

The Town announced the \$10,722,000 million, four-acre purchase, which will be funded through the Town of Aurora's Parkland Reserves, on April 11. The latest purchase comes just months after the Town acquired a further 16-acre site in Aurora's west end, just north of the Woodhaven subdivision, for \$3.23 million, funded by the same reserve.

Both purchases will go towards helping Aurora address a significant deficit in parkland to serve current and future population.

"The Town of Aurora is taking proactive steps to address its parkland deficit, ensuring that residents have ample green spaces to enjoy as the community continues to grow," said the Town in a statement. "The Town recently purchased two properties; a 16-acre property on the west side of Yonge Street, just north of Woodhaven in December, 2023 and most recently, the Town acquired an approximately four-acre property on George Street from the York Region District School Board."

"The combined 20 acres were purchased for \$13,892,000 and funded through Parkland Reserve. Residents will soon have the opportunity to provide input into the development of park spaces in both locations, ensuring that it aligns with the needs and preferences of the community."

In addition to reaching parkland targets, Mayor Tom Mrakas said the purchases will both protect mature trees and foster new plantings in Aurora's natural heritage systems and greenspaces. It is also, he said, "a significant step forward in our efforts to expand parkland in Aurora in a financially-responsible way."

"I envision this property not only as a new 2.7-acre park for Ward 2 residents but also as an opportunity for compatible development along George Street on the remaining 1 acre," said Mayor Mrakas in a statement. "This approach will enable the municipality to recoup funds, maximizing the value of taxpayers' dollars

while enriching our community. Our next steps involve initiating the removal of the existing school building by Fall 2024, accompanied by a comprehensive public engagement initiative. This will include public planning meetings for zoning changes, ensuring that residents' needs and preferences are incorporated into the design."

Public participation, he added, will be "crucial" in "enhancing the neighbourhood."

The Auroran has asked the Town what a municipal role might be in guiding development on the remaining acre, including ensuring affordable housing units for the community.

In regards to park uses, Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland said residents within the ward have expressed an interest in parkland use children, their pets and pickleball, a sport which is growing by leaps and bounds within the community.

"Over the last four years there is a significant population of local residents in Ward 2 who are part of a dog owners group called, D.O.G., who would like to 'walk' to an enclosed open space to allow their pet to run around in a safe environment with fellow neighbours," she said. "Our Parks and Recreation Master Plan has identified a severe deficit of pet exercise areas."

"With pickleball coming in as the number one growing sport, this has also been a hot topic of discussion. However, we are planning to expand this at Fleury Park by at least six courts. Some like the idea of an upgraded local playground. I believe it would be beneficial to host a Ward 2 community town hall to receive public consultation to best meet the needs of the community. I look forward to reaching out to the residents and hearing their thoughts."

George Street Public School served the community from 1957 until its closure in 2015, when it served students in Kindergarten through Grade 3. Upon closure, its student community was merged with Aurora Senior Public School as the rebranded Wellington Public School, which continues to serve students in Kindergarten through Grade 8.

Since its closure, the building has continued to see educational uses in various capacities.

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A Golf Adventure in Arizona: Cursin' Amid the Cacti

By Jim Stewart

If you're interested in embarking on an eight-day, seven-night Golf Adventure in Arizona, I have a tried and true itinerary for you.

Last week, I was invited as a journalist to join a slightly-grizzled "Group of Seven" Canadian golfers who know their way around the USA, its best bargain courses, and the kitchen!

My first golf vacation in Arizona with these seasoned veterans did not open as smoothly as a nice drive up the middle. In fact, it was a muddle. A series of almost-comedic logistical "calamities" challenged our intrepid lead travel party of two – courtesy of Air Canada's clusterf#@%\$ at Pearson. Three gate changes including direction to a mythic gate, a cancelled flight, and a rescheduled delayed flight kept us hopping through Terminal 1.

Consequently, we arrived at Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix too late to pick up our rental van which was cancelled, despite our SOS call from Toronto. RG and I resembled the exasperated Steve Martin and hapless John Candy characters in a remake of Planes, Trains, and Automobiles, dragging our luggage and oversized golf bags off the carousel, lugging the unwieldy multi-sized luggage items across three Terminals and up escalators to board the Sky Train, spewing invective at an absent rental car rep who closed the rental store three minutes early, and ending up in an eerily-empty taxi zone with no taxis or Ubers.

When all looked lost at Sky Harbor, Earl the Good Samaritan Taxi Driver picked us up in a deserted corner of the airport before we became crime statistics in the desert, much like the fate of many extras in Breaking Bad. We stuffed Earl's Alúma with suitcases in the trunk and two oversized golf bags in the back seat behind which RG reclined rather uncomfortably. The congenial cabbie carted us to La Quinta hotel in Phoenix at 2.30 a.m. (5.30 EDT).

However, the sun did come up the next day at La Quinta, a hot breakfast was enjoyed with delightful Babbs from Minnesota, and our first full day in Phoenix went off without a glitch. After a "kick save and a beauty" by RG and the CAA secured us a last-minute minivan, we collected the remaining six-pack of golfers arriving at Sky Harbour to round out our Octet.

We donned our cool glasses to witness the 64% totality of the Solar Eclipse at the airport, secured our second minivan, and it was off to a patio lunch and the pleasures of a covered, state of the art driving range at Dobson Ranch Golf Course in Mesa to warm up for a week of cursin' amid the cacti.

After the range work, we reveled in the amenities of The Oasis—the aptly-named 3345 square-foot home we rented for the week in Peoria. We picked fresh lemons off the backyard

trees, chipped and putted on the artificial turf putting green, enjoyed a refreshing swim in the 72-degree F backyard pool; and gobbled down a great BBQ meal of RG's classic home-made burgers, fries, and a kale salad while watching the NCAA Purdue-UCConn final on a 70" TV in a great viewing room.

Alas, Toronto's Zach Edey, the biggest Boilmaker, lost in the title game, but his brilliant play throughout March Madness raised his draft stock. The Raptors are picking 6th, 17th, and 31st in June. Fingers crossed.

This annual Arizona Golf Vacation in April is timed to coincide with March Madness's climactic game on Monday and the four rounds of the Masters on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Traveling with seven seasoned veterans of Arizona Golf adventures featured the fine cooking of RG, FG, DC, JK, and EH who prepared symphonies for the tastebuds; JS, JL, and TD served as cleaners. The cooks delivered a series of preplanned gustatory delights including lasagna with an array of grilled vegetables and garlic bread; chicken Marbella; grilled flank steak; grilled pork tenderloin; a smorgasbord of leftovers for Saturday; and the traditional Sunday meal to coincide with the final round of the Masters: Pizza and Wings from Ray's, the top-rated pizzeria in Peoria. It was the only takeout we ordered all week. All meals were washed down with the requisite amount of California red and white wine or a range of US beers.

A healthy breakfast – cereal, bananas, yogurt, orange juice, toast or bagels, coffee or tea – was consumed before our 6.30 departures. Our 7.30 tee-offs beat the early-April Arizona heat where afternoon highs climbed to 88-90 F. An allotment of Gatorade, water, and trail mix was placed on the kitchen table for each golfer to Grab and Go. This savvy group reminded me that it's incredibly important to stay hydrated when playing desert golf so this daily care package assured we could flourish on the fairways and play six rounds in six days.

We kicked off the Golf Adventure at idyllic Rancho Manana GC in Cave Creek, AZ on Tuesday and Wednesday. The course's sweeping vistas and abundant wildlife provided a perfect backdrop for fun in the Arizona sun. Great-tailed grackles and white-winged doves seemed to mock our efforts; wild boars and prairie dogs ambled across the fairways on the 5407-yard-high desert tract. The 6th is certainly the Club's signature hole with a spectacular view of thousands of Cacti and mesquite trees dispersed across Camelback Mountain, Mummy Mountain, Piestews Peak, and Lookout Mountain.

The scorecard even included helpful hints for each hole. For example: Hole 1: "The largest mound is your target. Andora Wash is on your left. DON'T GO LEFT OFF THE TEE!" Talk about Arizonian hospitality.



Photo by Jim Stewart

My playing partner, EH, put on a short game scramble clinic to card a 41 + 41. Your faithful scribe rolled out a 43 + 48 to improve Day 1's score by three strokes. Two great rounds featuring welcoming marshalls, friendly Pro Shop reception, and spectacular high desert vistas made the experience at Rancho Manana a steal of a deal. Cost of 18 holes and an electric cart: \$55 US.

Playing each of the three courses two times was a great feature of the itinerary.

On Thursday and Friday, the Octet took on Coyote Lakes GC in Surprise, AZ, a rabbit lover's haven (RG and I counted 47 rascally rabbits), but the landscape is a wee bit dangerous, too. Two seven-foot rattlesnakes were spotted in the waste bunkers of their signature hole "The Ridge". Your faithful scribe played two terrific rounds at CLGC, breaking 90 both days. Round 1 featured a Back 9 of 41 and Round 2 featured a Front 9 of 39. The early-morning tee-offs and heat of Arizona seemed to agree with me as did the cool swimming pool at "The Oasis". It was a great way to refresh the aching cables after getting acclimated to dry, 30-degree heat. Cost of 18 Holes and an electric cart: \$75 US.

The Extraordinary League of Golfing Gentlemen concluded our six-round golf marathon on Sunday morning at The 500 Club in Phoenix. We enjoyed the course's signature Number 4 Island Green as well as its hills of black volcanic rock, mesquite tree-lined fairways, and lightning-fast greens. I was thrilled to birdie the elevated and charming 162-yard Par 3 13th by dropping a steep 25-foot downhill putt. It was our second weekend round at 500 and the greens were lightning fast compared to Rancho Manana and Coyote Lakes.

The 500 Club is surrounded by a Speedway, Water Park, and Conservation Park so there is a juxtaposition of the cacophony of car racing and the tranquility of the desert depending on which side of the course you're playing. Coyotes roam freely through the golf course and its adjacent conservation area. Cost of 18 Holes and an electric cart: \$101.50 US.

Golf Vacation reading, you ask? As a

nod to March Madness, I read "I Came as a Shadow" by John Thompson, a timely tribute to the towel-toting Georgetown U coach who won the NCAA championship forty years ago in 1984! It was compelling reading – at night in the rental as well as on the plane – about a legendary champion basketball coach who passed away in 2020. I read til midnight in a perfectly-quiet house sipping Earl Grey tea with fresh Arizona lemon. The golfers were in bed by 10 p.m. every night to respond to our "Wings Up" departure time of 6.30 every morning.

Staying with this theme of basketball within a golf vacation was meeting the iconic Steve Nash on and after our flight to Phoenix. I got a chance to thank him personally for setting such an MVP standard for Canadian NBA players. What a personable, modest, and approachable star! Nash took the time to make our day as big fans! The basketball star still looks like he could lace 'em up, even though he was coming off a connecting flight from Barcelona with his young family.

Meeting Steve Nash was our celebrity moment on the vacation and cheering Scottie Sheffler to an impressive Masters victory was the apex of our celebration of golf.

These seven seasoned travellers planned and executed this trip on budget. Securing the house as well as trips for food and booze at Costco made the trip very economical. It saved us a fortune in hotel and restaurant meals. In fact, our resident logistics expert TD budgeted \$2k for food, wine, and beer for 8 guys for 8 days. TD refunded us \$50 each at the airport for coming in under budget. Beer and wine are tremendously inexpensive in AZ and we secured chicken for 99c a pound at Costco. We ate and drank like kings of the links, as this esteemed group of semi-retired Canadians have been doing for over thirty years.

I hope I get an invitation to join them in April 2025 when they head to San Diego for more fun in the sun.

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Theatre Aurora wraps 2023-24 season with "On Golden Pond"

A Review by Scott Johnston

Theatre Aurora wraps up its 2023-24 season with Ernest Thompson's classic "On Golden Pond".

Set at a lakeside summer house in Maine, the play explores the past and current relationships between aging couple Norman and Ethel, and their daughter, Chelsea, who arrives to visit along with her new fiancé Bill and his son.

There are a number of factors at play here including Norman's stubbornness and increasing memory loss, the contrast in the couple's personalities and outlooks on life, a past estrangement between father and daughter, and how a young teenager's presence may impact the crusty Norman (and vice versa).

All are explored with sensitivity and wit, and will keep you engrossed until the end.

Although a well-written play, this

production really shines courtesy of its remarkable cast under the leadership of director Barb Jones.

Tom Quinn and Jennifer Senior as Norman and Ethel are outstanding, bringing real personality to their characters. Through all of their many interactions, you truly get the impression that these two have been together and loved each other all of their long lives.

Joe Nessuna is great fun as Charlie the mailman, an endlessly cheerful local who never resists an invitation in for a coffee, biscuit(s) and chat.

As daughter Chelsea, Karen Fogleman nicely demonstrates the growth and evolution of her character through her life, as seen in her relationships with Charlie and her father.

Steve Hopkinson as fiancé Bill provides humour through his portrayal of a man in an unfamiliar rural setting dealing with an unexpected introduction to his potential in-laws.

It's fun watching Jacob Fogleman-Cluff's character Billy growing from indifferent urban teen to being one of the



Tom Quinn and Steve Hopkinson are pictured in Theatre Aurora's production of On Golden Pond, opening this Thursday, April 18. Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

family, as he thrives in the countryside, mentored by his new grandfather figure.

The set is terrific, and wonderfully evokes a seasonal cottage on a lake, as do other touches such as loon calls, and lighting that emulates different times of the day.

This is a very heart-warming and enjoyable play that will likely remind viewers of familiar situations or figures

from their own lives. It's a solid and touching conclusion to Theatre Aurora's 2023-24 season.

Evening performances of "On Golden Pond" continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, April 18, 19, 20, 25, 26 and 27, with matinees April 20, 21 and 27. Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.

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A couple of weeks ago your writer oduced an updated column entitled, "The Top Ten reasons why I love Aurora".

I had listed Volunteers as #6 and the Santa Claus Parade as #2, but I switched their spots.

An abridged version of my list;

10.) Aurora has an abundance of parks and green spaces.

9.) Aurora Chamber of Commerce Street Festival - purported to be the world's longest.

8.) Our family is blessed with having fantastic neighbors.

7.) The size of Aurora and its proximity to other communities is just about right. We are close enough to Toronto for those of us who travel to work but also far enough away to maintain that "small town" feel.

6.) The Santa Claus parade is for me symbolic of our small-town nature. It is an absolute joy seeing all the families lined up



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

Top Six Pet Peeves 2024

along Yonge Street waiting patiently for Santa. It is a "must-attend" event for our family.

5.) The Auroran - It is important that we have a newspaper that is dedicated to our community by dealing with only local issues.

4.) The mural on the wall of the building located at the corner of Yonge and Wellington is something entirely unique to our community.

3.) War Memorial - for your writer, the cenotaph is a place of reflection, solitude and introspection. The valor and selflessness of the fine men memorialized there is most humbling. In its entirety, the two structures are a simple and regal monument to the fallen.

2.) Volunteers - I was struck by the impressive nature of volunteerism that goes on around us here in Aurora.

And the number one reason why I love Aurora is...my wife Julie. She was raised and has lived most of her life in Aurora. And besides, if I don't install Julie as the number one reason, I will never hear the end of it! Additionally, I would have to equip the tool shed in the backyard (which would henceforth become known as my new sleeping quarters) with carpeting, cable television (including the Golf Channel and CPAC) bar fridge and a shower!

Although Aurora is a wonderful community in which to raise a family, your

friendly scribe does have a list of things that drive me to distraction:

With the appropriate apologies to David Letterman, my revised top six pet peeves are:

6.) The traffic at the intersection of Yonge & Wellington. I'll bet the amount of greenhouse gases spewing from the idled cars during the rush hour period is just about as much as that emanating from the Town Council Chamber on a typical Tuesday evening. The only good thing is that driving southbound along Yonge Street we get to look at the mural while we wait to turn eastbound.

5.) Raccoons - I don't know what is so special about the garbage we have in Aurora or maybe it's just that we have lots of it, but based upon the size of these creatures they can easily be mistaken for black bears.

4.) Those of you speeding through the various back streets of Aurora - slow down, and while you are at it, please turn down the music - especially after 11 p.m. on a weeknight.

3.) Teenagers having multiple night parties while their parents are away - tone it down a little or better yet, invite me.

2.) The traffic light in front of the Magna Headquarters - it only seems to turn yellow when I am headed toward it - even if there is no one waiting to turn westbound from the parking lot.

And my number one pet peeve is...I have two. Number one would be that not enough of us take our right to vote serious enough. The next federal election is supposed to take place in 2025 while the next provincial election is slated for 2026. Hopefully, we can do better!

Second, and this is not a local issue, but it is a continuing pet peeve of mine, none-the-less. Why haven't the Toronto Blue Jays been more active for non-pitchers in the off season? They have spent \$400M on renovations to the Rogers Centre, which is nice, but please spend some of that in enhancing the on-field product.

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

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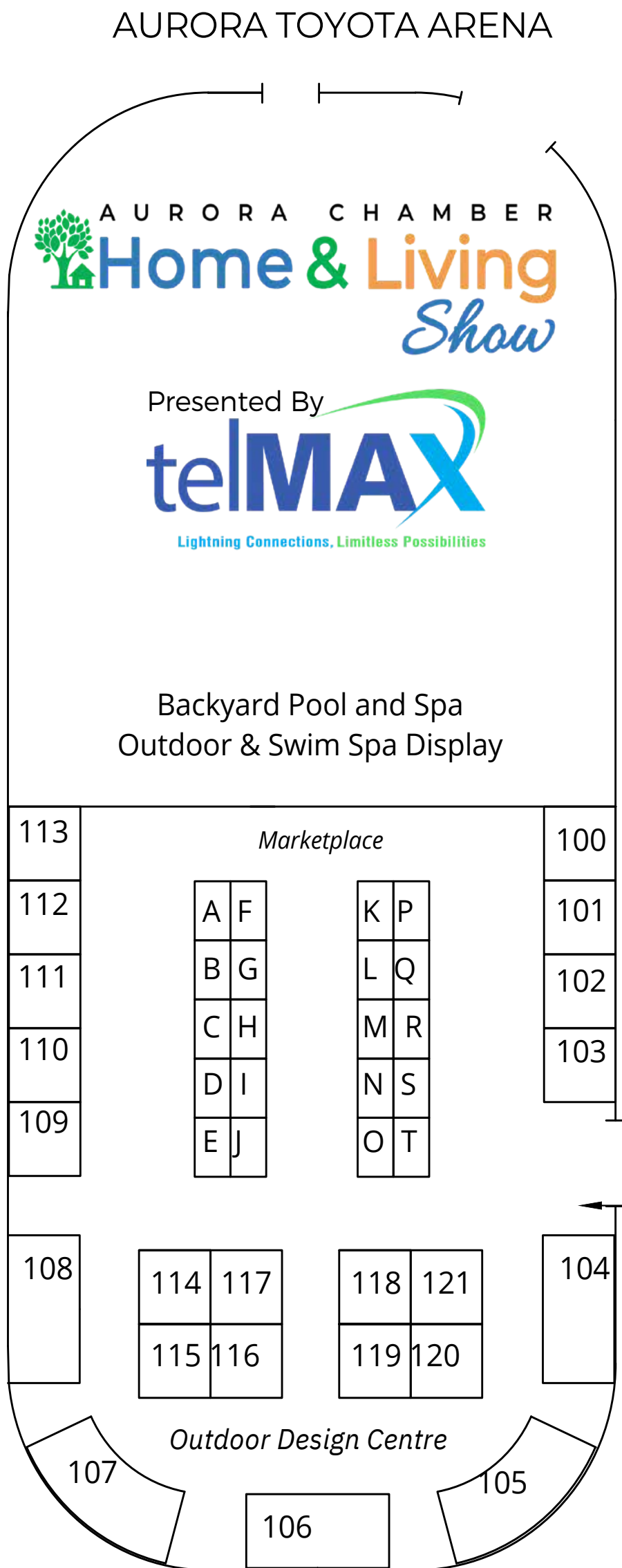
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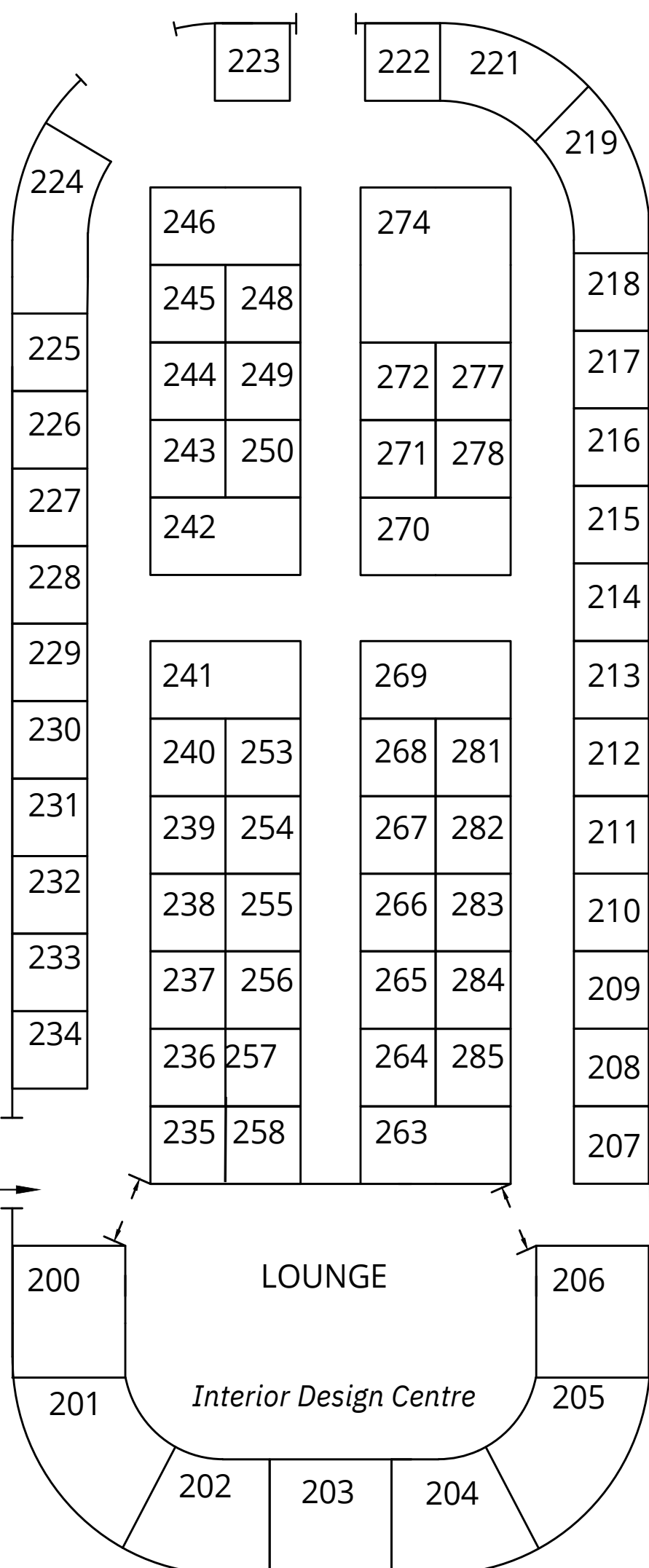
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Aurora Lions Club celebrates 80 years of community service



MPP Michael Parsa presents a certificate of congratulations to David Burnett, President of the Aurora Lions, on the Club's 80th anniversary.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

From page 1

encourage peace and international understanding.”

“When I was doing the Christmas program, people would come up to me and say, ‘When we were young, we had to go and get help from the Lions and I would like to give you \$100 now because I don’t need it anymore,’” says Lion Jim Bondy, a long-time member of the local club alongside wife Michelle.

Adds Michelle: “Their families, when they were younger, were helped by the Lions, so they would like to pay back now.”

The Bondys look back fondly on the numerous Lions-led campaigns they’ve been a part of over the decades, including both the Christmas drive and the vision programs.

“It’s the dedication of the Lions that really keep the club going,” says Jim.

Michelle notes that “12 or 13” members are the most active and, overall, the current “pride” of Lions is a “really good group.”

This is a sentiment shared by Jack Bentley, a life-member of the Aurora Lions Club who first joined up more than 40 years ago.

“I’d been living in Aurora and area and the Aurora community treated me well,” says Bentley. “I felt it was time to give back a little and felt the Lions was a good way to do it. Along the way, I met some fantastic people in the club who I really respect and it was an honour to work there with them.”

Among those he felt deserved special mention were Lions Don and Cathy Lewis, Trudy Stunden, Stu Barfitt, Earl Stewart, Bud Gilbert and Don Glass – “they were a pleasure to work beside and do things with and would do anything for anybody.”

Bentley says he’s enjoyed both the

service aspect of the club as well as the fellowship it’s offered.

“It was just an honour to be there and do the things they have done to help the needy,” says Bentley, who now lives in the Muskoka region. “If anyone needed anything, [residents] could always go and call the Aurora Lions Club and they were always there to help. If something came up, there was always somebody there to help.”

When he first joined, it was an era when employers encouraged their staff to suss out local service clubs – such as the Lions, Rotary, and Optimists – and join up to serve the community as a condition of their work. Those days are long gone, but this foundation of good works has sustained local service clubs in the decades since.

“It’s great that it is still going and they can still hold it together,” says Bentley. “We have gone through ups and downs with the clubs with personalities, and it’s nice to know it is still operating and doing a good job. It feels good to do something in the community and help out.

For more information on the Aurora Lions Club, visit e-clubhouse.org/sites/auroraon/contact.php. For more on Lions International and their mission, visit lionsclubs.org.

THINGS...you ought to know

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

The Town of Aurora will host its annual Spring Cleanup Day today beginning at 8 a.m. in various locations throughout the Town. Targeted locations include: John West Way; Alex Brodie Drivel Vandorf Sideroad; River Ridge Boulevard; Earl Stewart Drive; Issacson Court; Henderson Drive (Yonge Street to Watts Meadow); Stone Road; First Commerce Drive; Desjardins Way; William Graham Drive; Old Bloomington Road; St. John’s Sideroad; Industrial Parkway North and South; Bayview; Yonge Street; Wellington Street East and West; All storm water management ponds. For registration and further information, visit aurora.ca/en/town-services/garbage-recycling-and-waste-events.aspx.

SPRING BOOK SALE – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Aurora United Church Women are holding a book sale at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, Aurora. Choose from a wide selection of second-hand adult paperbacks and children’s books. Fill your bag, make a donation. Stock up on your summer reading! All proceeds will be used to support local charities. Donations are welcome on Friday, April 19, from 4 - 7 p.m., and on Saturday, April 20, from 8 - 10 a.m. No adult hardcovers, please!

York Symphony Orchestra Presents: Classical Masterworks tonight at 8 p.m. Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria St, Aurora L4G 1R3. YSO’s next concert features the overture to Rosamunde by Schubert followed by two of the great long-form pieces of the late classical period: Beethoven’s “nearly Romantic” Third Piano Concerto, with soloist Isabel Misquitta-Yip, and Mendelssohn’s inspiring Symphony No. 5, “The Reformation Symphony.” Tickets at Eventbrite.ca or at the door.

THROUGH APRIL 20

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.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents multiple Juno and Canadian Folk Music Award nominee Julian Taylor in concert. “A unique and important voice on the Canadian Folk Music Scene” - The Globe & Mail. Supporting act Tania Joy opens the show. Tickets \$40 (HST incl); show location NC Aurora Armoury, 89 Mosley St. Time 7:30 pm. For information, and to purchase visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca, or call the Box Office at 905 713-1818.

SUNDAY, APRIL 28

Giant Indoor Garage Sale at the Aurora Seniors’ Centre (90 John West Way) today from 8.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Featuring White Elephant sale, books, bake sale and more.

SUNDAY, MAY 12

Celebrate Mother’s Day with blend of creativity and cultural appreciation guided by Indigenous artist-educator Joy Rogers, as you learn to create a personalized beadwork masterpiece in this one-day workshop for adults 16+. A wonderful

way to celebrate the important women in your life together! Workshop fee \$65 (plus materials); for details, and to register visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca, or call the Box Office at 905 713-1818.

THURSDAY, MAY 16

Aurora Cultural Centre warmly invites you to the public reception for the gallery exhibition Early Bird Gets the Worm focuses on the annual re-awakening of yard-sale season through a curation of kitschy, curious, and questionable works by artists of varying practices, cultures, and identities. Event 6:30 – 8:30 pm with remarks at 7:00 pm. All welcome; light refreshments. Location at the Centre’s temporary Gallery space at Aurora Town Hall, 2nd Floor, 100 John West Way. For details, visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca

ONGOING

Partagez le Français: 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/Partagez-le-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 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.



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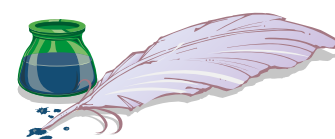
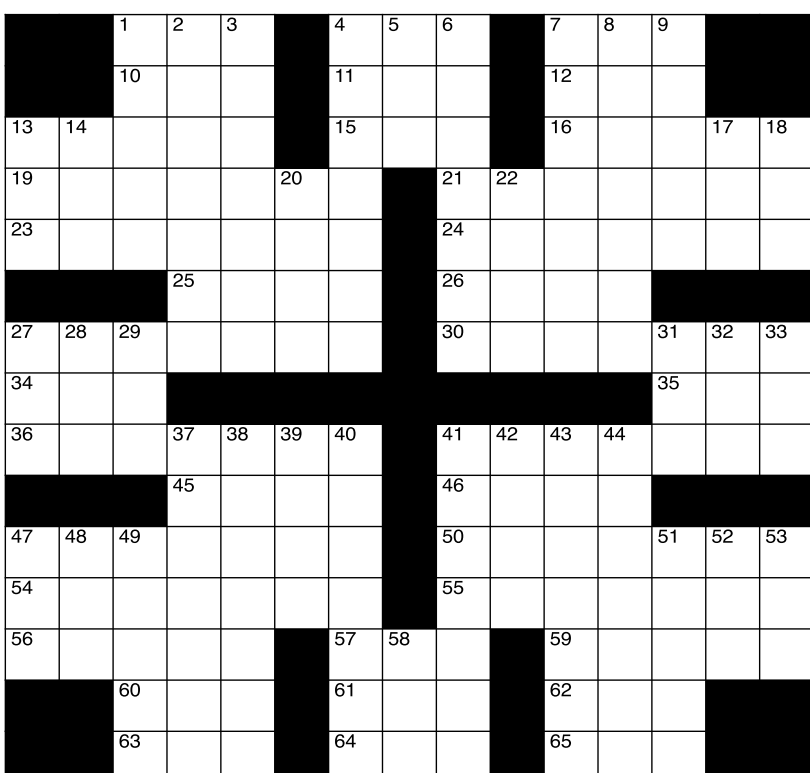
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Midway between south and southeast
4. For each
7. Airborne (abbr.)
10. Photographs
11. They ___
12. It's important in respiration (abbr.)
13. Monetary unit
15. Cool!
16. A son of Jacob
19. Cut off
21. Devour
23. Agent of one's downfall
24. Best
25. Network of nerves
26. Partner to "oohs"
27. Origins
30. Sewing utensil
34. Alias
35. Swiss river
36. Greek mythological figure
41. Type of whiskey
45. Lay to rest
46. "Rule, Britannia" composer
47. Select jury
50. Feeling
54. Action regarded as morally wrong
55. Makes angry
56. Act incorrectly
57. Defensive nuclear weapon
59. Class of escort aircraft carrier
60. To what degree
61. Buzzing insect
62. The human foot
63. "The Leftovers" actress Dowd
64. A place to stay
65. Sun up in New York

CLUES DOWN

1. An involuntary muscular contraction
2. Earnest
3. Cuts out surgically
4. Can't move
5. Baseball stat
6. British soldier
7. Traditional medicine plants
8. Political party controlled by managers
9. Hebrew prophet
13. Supporter
14. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
17. Liberty Mutual mascot
18. Georgia rockers
20. A place where building is done
22. Large, deep-bodied fish
27. Clothing retailer
28. Supplement with difficulty
29. Annoy constantly
31. Founder of Babism
32. Indigenous person in parts of A
33. Sea eagle
37. Leave behind
38. Time of day
39. Colorless crystalline compound
40. They lay out course requirement
41. A diamond has three
42. Algerian coastal city
43. Remove cover
44. Rechristened
47. Distinctive practice
48. Defunct phone company
49. Turkish officer of high rank
51. Eliminate from the body
52. Witness
53. Soviet Socialist Republic
58. Founding Father Franklin

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Solution for teacher absence raises eyebrows at St. Max

From page 14
including those that were already recorded by the original teacher. As such, it is important to understand that the final mark will likely be lower than 100 per cent.”

Mark Brosens, spokesperson

for the YCDSB, confirmed the class in question has been without a permanent teacher for most of the semester, a situation he said is “rare” at the Grade 12 level.

“All students in this class were assigned the same mid-term

grade so they could have enough information to apply to post-secondary programs,” said Brosens. “These students’ grades will be adjusted over the remainder of the semester. Post-secondary institutions consider a student’s

mid-term and final grades in many classes when making admissions decisions.

“The YCDSB is actively recruiting a permanent teacher for this class, and we are confident that someone will be hired soon.”

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