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THE AUROREDAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 25 No. 30 905-727-3300

TheAuroran.com

FREE

Week of May 2, 2024

PIT STOP

Noah got a head start learning the ins and outs of how to change a tire at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex on Sunday as the Town of Aurora hosted its annual Electric Vehicle Showcase – held indoors for the first time this year. For more on the day of viewing, learning, and test-driving fun, see Page 16.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Province to “crack down” on cell phone use, vaping in schools

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The 2024-2025 school year will see stringent new rules across the Province when it comes to cell phone use and vaping within the educational environment.

On Sunday, Ontario Education Minister Stephen Lecce announced sweeping changes which will come into

effect in September.

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 will be required to keep phones on silent and out of sight for the entire school day, unless “explicitly permitted” by an educator. For older students up through Grade 12, there will be a slight relaxation of the policy, with the ban in force only within class time, unless otherwise permitted by a teacher.

“We have heard loud and clear

from parents and teachers alike that cellphones in classrooms are distracting kids from learning,” said Minister Lecce in a statement. “Our government is introducing the toughest policy in Canada to tackle this issue by cracking down on cellphone usage during class time, as well as banning vaping in all schools. When it comes to cellphones, our policy is ‘out of sight and out of mind,’

Continued on page 12

Aurora students come out on top at World Debating & Public Speaking Championships

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Local students conquered the world at the recent World Debating & Public Speaking Championships in Canberra, Australia.

Students the world-over converged on the Canberra Girls Grammar School last month for the championship which saw Aurora residents Ethan Wahba and Millie Steinmann, both of The

Continued on page 19

100 YEARS OF SOUTHLAKE

The annual Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake took place in Newmarket on Sunday morning, attracting hundreds of participants who came together to raise money for Southlake Regional Health Centre in its Centennial year. Helping kick off the event here are Jennifer Ritter, President & CEO of the Southlake Foundation, Nature's Emporium's Joe D'Addario, and Steve Hinder, Co-Chair of Southlake's Philanthropy Cabinet. For more on the event, which has raised close to \$440,000 and counting at the time of publication, see Page 17.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Julianne Boileau

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Aurora Performing Arts Festival returns June 15 – and now’s the time to audition

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The countdown is on for the 2024 Aurora Performing Arts Festival.

Now going into its third year, the burgeoning festival, at which the Aurora’s Teen Idol is just one component, will take place at Town Park on Saturday, June 15, highlighting local youth talents in the fields of music, dance and drama.

Applications for interested young artists are now being accepted through May 20 and applicants must submit a video audition between two and four minutes, all recorded within the last six months.

Divided into categories according to age and discipline, the competition is open to York Region residents between six and 17, with the Aurora Teen Idol crown reserved for youth in the Ages 13 – 17 vocal category.

The Aurora Performing Arts Festival is a joint venture between the Town of Aurora and Marquee Theatrical Productions. Since its inception in 2022, it has grown significantly year over year, and this year could prove extra-special.

“This might be our last year in Town Park and we want to go out with style as it will likely move to Aurora Town Square in 2025,” says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora, who describes herself as a “big champion” of the Senior Vocal Category due to its connection with the grand prize. “Aurora Teen Idol has such an important role in our community, which I think youth really look forward to and aspire to. With Marquee bringing forward the idea of the younger age groups, as well as the two additional disciplines, really strengthens and further promotes the importance of the three disciplines but also builds momentum to keep these youth engaged as they age – and maybe they’ll become the next Broadway star.”

As successful as the vocal categories are, Marquee’s Sheryl Thomas says the acting categories have been “underrepresented” in previous years’ auditions, and in the lead up to the May 20 deadline, she’s really going to be focused on encouraging participation in this area.

“We get a great selection of genres represented,” says Thomas, venturing a guess that one of the hurdles is a

misunderstanding of what constitutes auditioning with a monologue. “Some people enter with maybe a scene from a movie and they think they’re supposed to do the three different parts, not just speaking from one person’s vantage point. Eventually I would love to grow [the festival to have] duologues or small scenes, but we’re in our infancy and want to establish the monologue portion first and then expand.”

Adds Ware: “To take the stage takes so much courage. I’ve always been in awe of the contestants because I don’t know if I would have had the courage at that age. I think we’re looking at a very specific trait in these youth.”

“It’s seeing the innocence behind the stage of the [contestants] cheering each other on, then to see this nervous youth then go on the stage and transform into a performer cheered on by their competitors, it is rewarding to see that they have the empowerment and that emotional intelligence to be able to support each other versus seeing each other as rivals or competitors. It’s that individual network that organically happened last year.”

Similarly, when looking back at the first two years of the Aurora Performing Arts Festival, Thomas says what sticks with her are those “jaw-dropping” transformative moments.

One such moment last year involved a young seven-year-old who wowed the crowd with the unlikely selection of a Guns N’ Roses song while playing the guitar.

“It is those oh-my-gosh moments you see on TV shows where it’s wide-eyed, jaw-on-the-floor – the unexpected moments that are ‘wow’ moments. It is so fantastic to be a witness to it and it’s just an honour to watch that.”

If you’re interested in submitting an application and video audition for this year’s festival, Thomas stresses that it needs to be a recently-recorded showcase with a focus on what you’re hoping to deliver. She advises recording your audition in a distraction-free environment – sorry, pets! – and they’re open to hearing any music or dramatic genre you can think of.

For more information, including how to submit your application, visit aurora.ca/ArtsFestival.

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#AuroraArtsFestival

AURORA

Please note, we reserve the right to cancel, amend or change activities.



TIME TO SHOP FRESH, LOCAL – Head over to the Town Park this Saturday, May 4, as the Aurora Farmers’ Market hosts the grand opening of its 2024 season from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Ahead of the opening, Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese joined Market Chair Cathy Williams and Board members at the Park to launch the countdown.
Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month

May is Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Month and MS Canada invites Canadians to join the MS community and navigate MS together. At MS Canada, we work to educate people on the impact of MS in our country and support people living with MS through funding research, driving advocacy, and providing support programs. MS Awareness Month is an opportunity to raise awareness and funds to support the over 90,000 Canadians living with the neurological disease. This May we ask Canadians to come together and raise awareness, celebrate the MS community, and have a meaningful impact across Canada.

“MS Awareness Month is defined by active and meaningful participation. This May, we invite everyone to help us bring attention to the prevalence of the disease and need for support. There are many ways to join the MS community, you can volunteer with MS Canada, share accurate MS information on social media, or participate in the May 50K or MS Walk.” said Dr. Pamela Valentine, President and CEO, MS Canada. “MS Walk brings the MS community and their network, including caregivers, friends and family, all together for one day of collective action, moving us one step closer to a world free of MS.”

“As someone who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2020, I am no stranger to how overwhelming an MS journey can feel,” said Karen Jacoby, MS Canada Ambassador. “I volunteer during MS Awareness Month because I am driven by hope—and I encourage everyone to consider supporting the community, as I know firsthand the power that having other people demonstrating public support has had on my MS journey.”

This May, join the MS community as we navigate MS together, raising awareness on the complexities and realities that MS brings to the person living with it as well as their friends and family. Join us in advocating on behalf of the MS community to have equal access to care, prioritize MS research exploring pathways to cures, and access to social programs that improve quality of life.

For more information about MS Awareness Month, including how you can get involved, please visit mscanada.ca/msawarenessmonth.

MS Canada



GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor Tom Mrakas

I can hardly believe it's been four years since we launched the “Aurora Cares Community Action Team.”

This remarkable group of volunteer community leaders, supported by dedicated Town staff, provided invaluable help and support during challenging times.

The outstanding work they accomplished serves as a testament to the caring nature of our community.

Having such a proactive team

Continued on page 9

Machell's Corners



Out of sight, out of mind?

I don't know about the rest of you, but I get a rude awakening just about every Sunday morning.

Despite my best efforts, and valiant attempts to stop and find alternatives, I'm in the terrible habit of charging my phone overnight on the bedside table. It's a practical location, sure, but leaving it there to do its thing is not only habit forming in and of itself, but it also leads to other habits. For example, it sometimes seems like a wasted morning if I don't solve the daily Wordle puzzle before getting out of bed to truly start the day, but, at the same time, it's made getting up and at 'em as soon as possible every day more and more of a chore. Completely my fault.

And yet, just about every Sunday morning, comes an on-screen notification on just how much of my time was spent looking at the device over the previous seven days and the percentage change from week to week.

It's informative, I'll grant them that, but it can also feel a little judgemental when the number ticks up, particularly if one already knows not-so-deep down one's usage is up.

If you'd told me when I got my first mobile phone back in my high school days that this would ever be a worry, it would have been laughable. The first mobile phone I ever encountered was not, as is the case of many of my generation, seeing Mark-Paul Gosselaar's Zack Morris in *Saved By The Bell* talk into his oversized, hulking device. Instead, it was a groovy little number my grandfather had installed in his car, which gave him to my young eyes a sort of supervillain mystique. But it was a good decade before I got my own, and even then it was only secured by my mother after a spate of threats were made to my school. Given its intended use, I thankfully had little reason to use it, but it was nice to have just in case.

Now, not having a connection like that readily available at all times, is almost unthinkable. Yet, I'm interested to see how the Provincial Government's Sunday announcement of a crackdown on cell phone use in Ontario schools will go over and evolve before its targeted implementation in the fall.

“We have heard loud and clear from parents and teachers alike that cellphones in classrooms are distracting our kids from learning,” said Minister of Education Stephen Lecce. “Our government is introducing the toughest policy in Canada to tackle the issue by cracking down on cellphone usage during class time, as well as banning vaping in all schools. When it comes to cellphones, our policy is ‘out of sight and out of mind,’ as we get students back to the basics of restoring focus, safety and common sense back in Ontario schools.”



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

Should the new rules come into force as written, students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 will be “required to keep phones on silent and out of sight for the entire school day, unless explicitly permitted by an educator.” Further, social media websites will be “removed” from all school networks and devices and, if that wasn't enough, report cards this fall will include remarks from teachers on “student's distraction levels in class.”

Older students – those in Grades 7 to 12 – will have a little bit more leeway with cellphones being permitted during class time only with the explicit direction from the teacher or educator.

“At a time when young people are facing so many distractions, mental health pressures, and even potential dangers, such as addictions, cyberbullying and online predators, we are taking measures to protect students by cracking down on vaping and other addictive substances, removing social media from school networks and devices, and increasing student mental health supports,” said Burlington MPP Natalie Pierre, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education in a statement. “Students deserve positive and distraction-free schools that promote positive mental health and allow for uninterrupted learning.”

One can't argue with the sentiments, but I feel a missing piece of this puzzle is just exactly what kind of role parents and parenting will play in this. After all, in most cases, the phones and devices provided to students are done so within the household, as is the amount of data they are able to use, and, when push comes to shove, the content they're able to consume.

I also question whether the principle of “out of sight out of mind” will hold water in this case.

The very absence of a device could, in my view, prove an even greater distraction and make “out of sight out of mind” simply wishful thinking.

In March, for instance, the Peel District School Board, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic School Board, and Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, joined together to begin legal action against

the owners of such popular platforms as Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, and TikTok for “disrupting student learning and the education system” and calling for the tech giants to provide resources to the Boards to address mental health costs and costs related to “redesigning products to keep students safe.”

“The lawsuit claims that social media products, negligently designed for compulsive use, have rewired the way children think, behave, and learn, leaving educators and schools to manage the fallout,” the plaintiffs said in a statement. “Students are experiencing an attention, learning, and mental health crisis because of prolific and compulsive use of social media products. The fallout of compulsive use of social media amongst students is causing massive strains on the four school boards' finite resources, including additional needs for in-school mental health programming and personnel, increased IT costs, and additional administrative resources.”

Added Brendan Browne, Director of Education for the Toronto Catholic District School Board: “Fostering a nurturing environment of learning is critical to student success and stands at the heart of our educational mission. Yet, the intricately crafted and inherently addictive nature of social media platforms can hamper a students' capacity to absorb knowledge. Social media has an undeniable toll on student mental health which cannot be overlooked. In the absence of effective measures from the architects of these digital platforms, our educators find themselves increasingly involved in mitigating social media-induced matters, diverting precious time away from academic instruction.”

Social media has indeed had an “undeniable toll” on student mental health and, I would argue, mental health for people in just about every demographic, but pressing measures from the aforementioned digital “architects” would go further than an outright ban. Further, it shouldn't be forgotten, that as harmful as these platforms are, students and people of all ages might be using them to seek out those individuals and resources that offer coping mechanisms and other methods to deal with many of the listed problems – and apps that offer music for concentration and study, that help comfort and calm the individual, and expand educational horizons.

The upcoming rules are well-intentioned, well-reasoned and practical – but if these platforms have “rewired” the way youth think and behave, I certainly hope going in this direction doesn't exacerbate an existing issue, or create an entirely new set of challenges.

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.



The Aurora Museum & Archives is checking out...

Some Iron & Paper!



While our Time Traveller explores some questionably scrupulous patent-medicine behaviour in the Edwardian period, we're taking a look at some of the artifacts associated with that very same pharmaceutical proprietor. Frank Eyre York operated his Chemist and Druggist shop in the Oddfellow's Block on the West side of Yonge, beginning in 1886. His personalized 1899 National Cash Register (991.43.1) is one of our heaviest yet most cherished artifacts. Contrast this with the tiny and ephemeral paper book labels (992.31.61) which were affixed to school and music exercise books sold at York's. While Frank died in 1919, other pharmacists occupied the shop until the mid-70s. Ring 'em up!



Time Travellers Diary

By Jeremy Hood
 Museum Collections Technician,
 Aurora Museum & Archives

Cited, but Unrequited!

The sun's rays were reaching through wispy early-November clouds as I floated, invisible, above the reddening tree-tops of Victoria Street.

I'd travelled back to 1910 to soak in some of the optimistic pre-war ambiance that Aurora exhibited so thoroughly. That idyllic silence was only punctuated by birdsong and the clopping of horse hooves – a pace, sound, and smell soon to disappear, and to be replaced with the echoing growl and new stench of gasoline engines.

A shriek rose up from the front porch of a home near Trinity Anglican, and I banked my Time Machine around for a better view. A middle-aged woman was marching down her verandah to the stairs, presenting a folded newspaper to the sunlight. She glared at the front page, her hands beginning to shake with anger. She turned to her front door and yelled, "Paw! Did you tell some quacksalver that you took those silly pills?! They've quoted me in the paper saying as much!" She evidently heard no reply, as she stomped inside, repeating her inquiry and slamming her door behind her.

I figured I should see this paper for myself so parked a bit closer to Yonge and dropped 3 cents onto the counter at the newspaper office. Picking up the latest issue, I saw it immediately: centred under the masthead, titled "Women's Woes" was an advertisement for "Booth's Kidney Pills." The wordy ad's second half was almost exclusively a glowing personal endorsement of the product, ascribed to a Miss A. A. Brown of Victoria St, Aurora.

In the ad, she seemed to credit Booth's Pills with healing her father's back, which had been "tender, sore and lame, and ached badly." It claimed also that the pills had given him "buoyancy and good spirit."

These were indeed strong words of praise!

I investigated Booth's and discovered they were a forgotten "patent medicine" in use since the 1880s – but whose active ingredient, emodin, is still being studied for possible uses including antiviral and indeed, kidney treatment. So, the medicine was potentially effective in some way, but what was with the advertisement?

I jumped ahead to grab the next week's newspaper, and I found under "Correspondence" that Miss Amelia Brown had laid her ire down in ink to the editor of the paper, writing: "I never gave the R.T. Booth Co., a testimonial..." and, "I was not pleased at all to have my name used in that way."

She reported that her father had indeed recently recovered from some illness, but why the Booth company took credit for it was still beyond me.

Looking deeper, I found that year not only three different Aurorans' testimonials, but a similar phenomenon in other cities as well, with no way to know if they were authentic or fabricated.

But, by the beginning of 1911, this had changed: Booth's ads then contained new (and still possibly fabricated!) claims from real living Canadians, but those living far from the place of publication.

We thank Amelia Brown for bringing the bile and protecting Aurorans from misrepresentation by an unscrupulous company.

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Should cell phones and like devices be banned from Ontario classrooms?

YES NO

www.theauroran.com

Previous Poll
 Are you a volunteer in the community?

RESULTS TO DATE APRIL 30, 2024	YES	NO
	17%	83%

Budget 2024 is a plan to deliver fairness for every generation

Government budgets identify priorities – the vision of a government, its values and of course spending and revenue forecasts. Budget 2024 – Fairness for Every Generation speaks directly to values and vision. Values such as public health, clean air, and a healthy environment; employment opportunities and a bright future in the green economy are values important to Canadians as are important social programs such as dental benefits, a national school food program and disability benefits. These programs speak to the very nature of what it means to live in Canada.

First, the budget takes bold action to build more homes. Because the best way to make home prices more affordable is to increase supply—and quickly. It lays out a strategy to unlock 3.87 million new homes by 2031. Key measures include launching the new *Public Lands for Homes Plan* and Canada Rental Protection Fund, enhancing the Canadian Mortgage Charter, and creating a new Canadian Renters' Bill of Rights.

Second, it will help make life cost less. The budget builds on the government's transformative expansion of Canada's social safety net—\$10-a-day child care; dental care for uninsured Canadians, the first phase of universal pharmacare—and advances the government's work to lower everyday costs for Canadians. This includes helping to stabilizing the cost of groceries, cracking down on junk fees and lowering the costs of banking. Budget 2024 also makes transformative new investments, including a National School Food Program and the Canada Disability Benefit.

Third, this year's budget will grow the economy in a way that's shared by all. The government's plan will increase investment, enhance productivity, and encourage innovation. It will create good-paying and meaningful jobs, keep Canada at the economic forefront, and deliver new support to empower more of our best entrepreneurs and innovators. This includes attracting more investment in the net-zero economy by expanding and delivering the major economic investment tax credits, securing Canada's advantage as a leader in artificial intelligence, and investing in enhanced research grants that will provide younger generations with good jobs and new opportunities. And it means ensuring Indigenous Peoples share in this growth in a way that works for them.

Budget 2024 will also make



MP'S REPORT

Tony Van Bynen, MP
 Newmarket - Aurora

Canada's tax system fairer by asking the wealthiest to pay a bit more—so that the government can invest in prosperity for every generation, and because it would be irresponsible and unfair to pass on more debt to the next generations. Budget 2024 is a responsible economic plan that upholds the fiscal objectives outlined in the *2023 Fall Economic Statement*, and sees Canada maintain the lowest deficit- and net debt-to-GDP ratios in the G7.

I have long advocated for a federal disability benefit – a benefit overwhelmingly important to my constituents and to Canadians. A disability benefit cuts across political lines and speaks to the values Canadians believe in, values that define us. The introduction of the Canada Disability Benefit Act is important legislation that when implemented is estimated to increase the financial well-being of over 600,000 low-income persons with disabilities.

I am also a strong believer in a national school food program. Nearly one in four children do not get enough food, and that has a real impact on their opportunities to learn and grow. The National School Food Program is expected to provide meals for more than 400,000 kids each year.

Fairness for every generation means making housing affordable for every generation. On April 12, the government released an ambitious plan to build homes by the millions, Solving the Housing Crisis: Canada's Housing Plan. I encourage you to explore this historic housing initiative: <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/housing>

As the world becomes increasingly unstable, as climate change increases the severity and frequency of natural disasters, and as the risk of conflict grows, Canada is asking more of our military. Budget 2024 proposes foundational investments of \$8.1 billion over five years, starting in 2024-25, and \$73.0 billion over 20 years to the Department of National Defence (DND), the Communications

Security Establishment (CSE), and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) to ensure Canada is ready to respond to global threats and to protect the well-being of Canadian Armed Forces members.

Honda Announcement

Last week the Government of Canada, in partnership with the Ontario Government, welcomed Honda Canada's milestone investment of approximately \$15 billion to create Canada's first comprehensive electric vehicle supply chain, located in Ontario. This large-scale project will see four new manufacturing plants in Ontario, with a standalone battery manufacturing plant located in Alliston, Ontario. Honda's investments in electric vehicle and battery manufacturing in Alliston will generate over a thousand well-paying manufacturing jobs in Ontario, with additional thousands of direct and indirect jobs across Canada, including during construction and within Ontario's auto parts supplier and research and development ecosystems.

In Budget 2024, the federal government announced its intention to introduce the new 10 per cent electric vehicle (EV) Supply Chain investment tax credit, to attract investment across at least three supply chain segments – EV assembly, EV battery productions and Cathode active material production. It is estimated that Honda's new investments in eligible EV supply chain segments could benefit from federal support in the range of \$2.5 billion through the proposed EV Supply Chain investment tax credit and the proposed Clean Technology Manufacturing investment tax credit.

Canada Summer Jobs

CSJ provides wage subsidies to employers from not-for-profit organizations, the public sector, and private sector organizations with 50 or fewer full-time employees, to create quality summer work experiences for young people aged 15 to 30 years. Over the past two weeks we have been contacting organizations across Newmarket-Aurora to let them know the number of jobs and the dollar amount of their approvals. Ninety organizations have been approved here locally creating 328 positions for the summer with an investment from the government of just over \$1.25 million.

If you are seeking information or require assistance with Federal programs and services, please reach out to my team by e-mail at Tony.VanBynen@parl.gc.ca or by calling 905-953-7515.

Multi-Sport involvement builds a diverse skill set

Coaching experts everywhere are advocating for parents to consider the value of multi-sport involvement. What is multi-sport? It means participating in a variety of sports while young to build a diverse skill set – several each season, rather than just one or two.

This concept is not new. If you have been active all your life, you were probably a multi-sport athlete because 'back-in-the-day,' sport specialization was not as prevalent. Parents just put their kids in seasonal sports because all their friends were as well,

Only in the past ten years or so have we seen sports, largely driven



SPORTS SCRAPS

By Laurie Mueller
 Executive Director, Sport Aurora

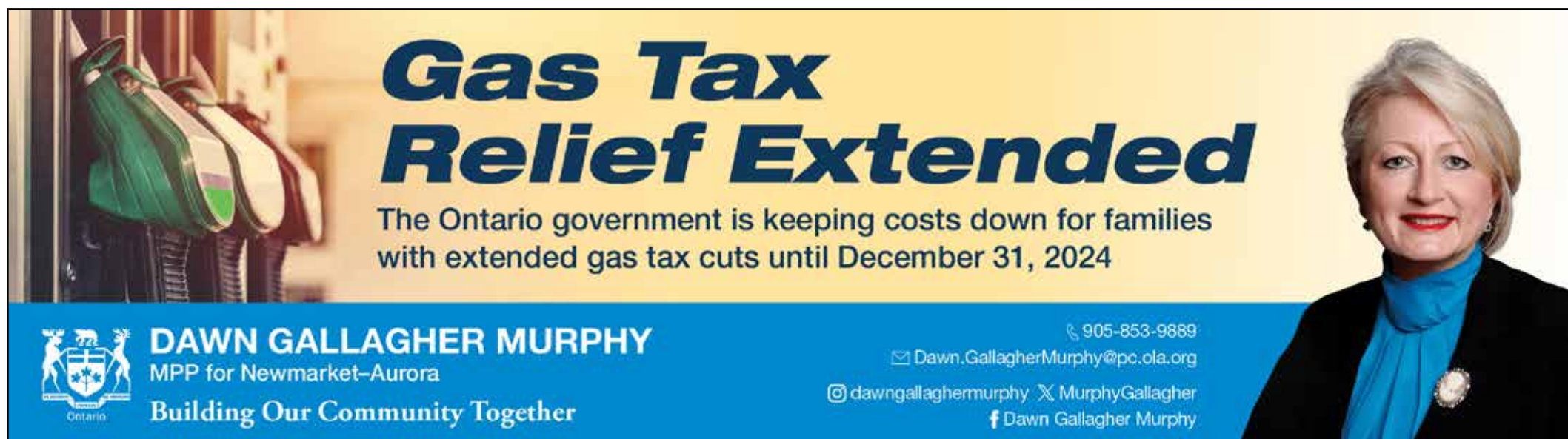
by coaches, who listen to parents about the need for year-long training in one sport or another, hoping to grab the brass ring of scholarships, or professional participation. They almost always start with "talent

identification" where the coach suggests the athlete is special in some way and would excel if only they had more training.

Athletes are created by playing a variety of sports to gain skills in object manipulation, balance, and locomotion. And they learn how to do this in many different environments such as fields, pools, gymnasiums, and rinks. They become "competent movers."


Once they become athletes, they can start to specialize in a couple of sports in which they excel, usually after the age of twelve. This avoids burn-

Continued on page 21




Gas Tax Relief Extended

The Ontario government is keeping costs down for families with extended gas tax cuts until December 31, 2024



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MPP for Newmarket-Aurora
Building Our Community Together

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Council mulls more water-friendly way to maintain local boulevards

Xeriscaping raises questions about cost, liability

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Grass and sod might soon be out as the regular way to keep Aurora boulevards green.

Council last week voted to explore the feasibility of a xeriscaping program which could see boulevards going forward planted with drought-resistance and native plants in a bid for better water efficiency.

The move followed a motion from Mayor Tom Mrakas to report back on

this type of system, but some Councillors suggested it could open the door to liability issues and ultimately prove costly.

“Water conservation and sustainable landscaping practices are essential for the wellbeing of our community and the environment,” said Mayor Mrakas in his motion. “Xeriscaping is a water-efficient landscaping method that promotes the use of drought-resistant and native plants, reducing the need for irrigation and conserving water resources and reduce yard trimmings.

“Xeriscaping on Town boulevards has the potential to showcase the benefits of water-efficient landscaping, beautify our community and inspire residents to adopt sustainable practices.”

Currently, he added, xeriscaping is considered an encroachment under existing bylaws.

The motion was approved on a vote of 5 – 2 with Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland and Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo voting against the motion.

Explaining her position to Council, Councillor Gilliland said xeriscaping could lead to liability issues for the Town, more maintenance work by staff, and a “Pandora’s Box” of issues.

“Just having my horticultural background, it is a higher amount of work to make sure it is kept clean and free of debris,” she said. “You’re talking about specialized perennials and plants and maintaining that, but I also have concerns even about the staff and operational costs to be able to identify what is considered a low-maintenance plant, what’s a weed, what’s not a weed. I feel this could actually open up a Pandora’s Box because it becomes very subjective, it could increase the cost of staff and also the type of staff that you hire in order to identify the type of plantings.”

From a legal perspective, the Councillor asked where liability would lie if river rock from the boulevard, for example, spilled from a Town-owned boulevard onto the sidewalk.

There were enough doubts, she said, that she didn’t feel a feasibility study was necessary.

From the perspective of Mayor Mrakas, a feasibility study is a step where questions can be answered.

There are existing examples of xeriscaping in the community, he said, with one example resulting in a Notice of Violation to the property owner.

“Hence why I believe we need to create policy, which is our job on Council,” he said. “We need to give clear direction on policy so our residents understand what the policy is, as well. That is essentially what this report would do.”

This was a position supported by Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim, who

noted: “I believe Council has approved many, many (motions) asking for feasibility studies. I think most of the [questions] we have will be answered by a feasibility study.”

If a feasibility report is where many questions have been answered, it might answer further questions posed by Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese and Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner.

While both voted in favour of the report, they each had concerns about the practicality of forging ahead with a program.

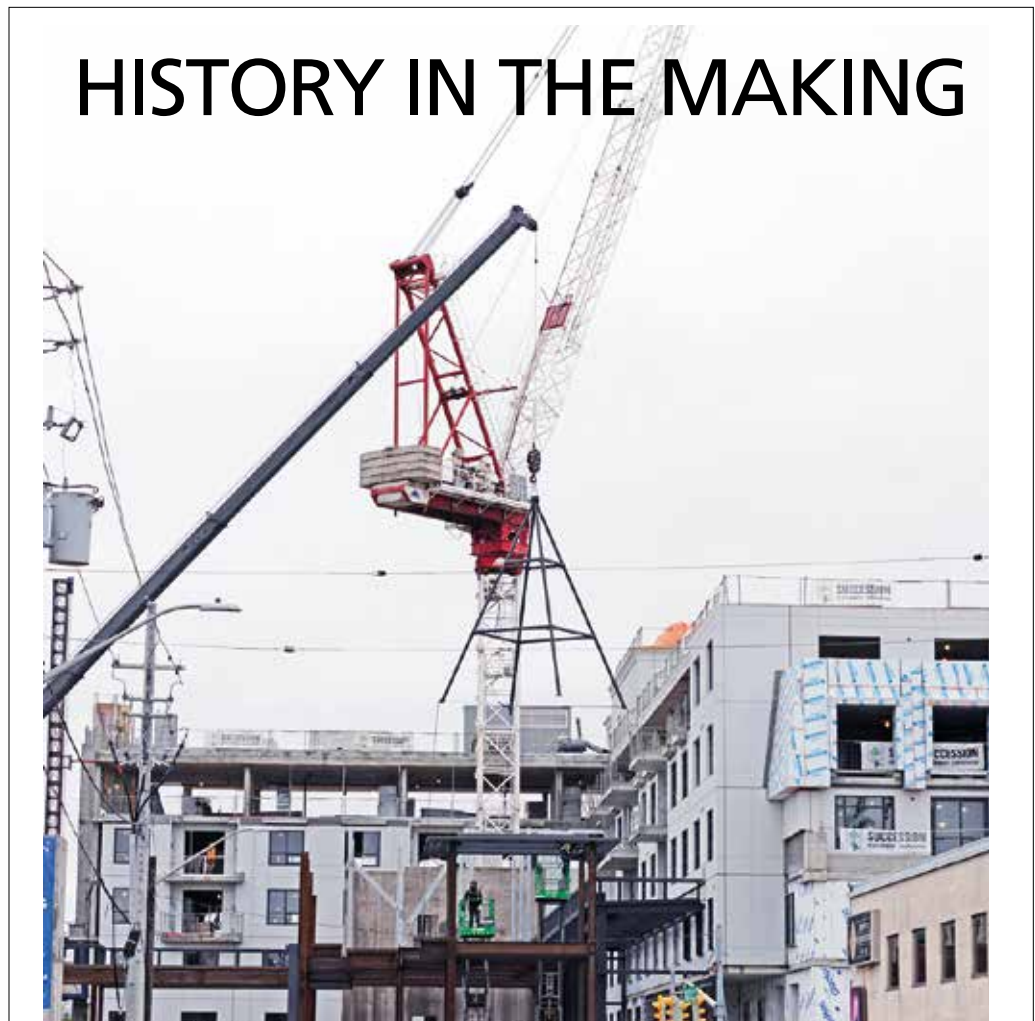
Xeriscaping systems, said Councillor Weese, are often found in more arid climates.

“I am all for water conservation, don’t get me wrong there,” he said, also asking the amount of staff resources that would be going into the report. “It has significant impacts on the way our Town looks, if it goes through. I have seen a number of pictures elsewhere where this has been done and sometimes it is not very pleasant.”

This was echoed by Councillor Gaertner, who cited medians on Wellington Street and a nearby roundabout as a few examples of less-than-successful attempts at xeriscaping that have since been changed.

“I think it was a good idea, but it didn’t end up looking very good,” she said. “I will look forward to a report coming back, but if we’re allowed to do this, I think we need to have rules about what kinds of plants and trees are allowed, the maintenance, the property standards – I see this as potentially becoming a big drain on bylaw and not potentially looking good.

“There’s the potential that it could look great, but there’s the potential it could not look good, and then what do we do about it? I think there needs to be not only research on what would be appropriate in our area...but what would look good in our area. We need a lot of rules so that bylaw isn’t inundated with angry neighbour complaints.”



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

The Aurora United Church has marked another milestone in its rebuild at Yonge and Tyler Streets, its historic spiritual home. On Monday morning, cranes hoisted into place the skeleton of the church’s new north steeple. The new church building, and associated Amica retirement community, replaces the landmark church building which was decimated by fire in April 2014.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger



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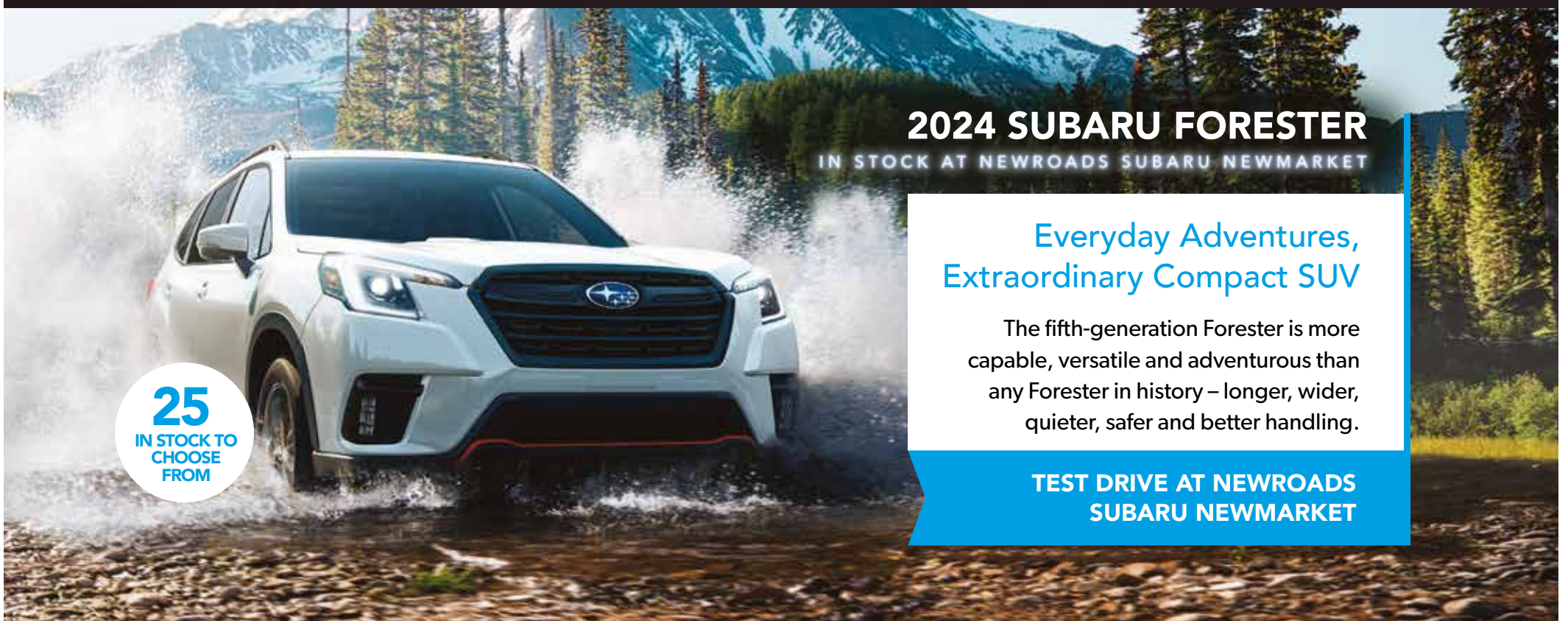
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BUSINESS & FINANCE



St. Anne's, Town, Shining Hill reach deal on new turf field

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new artificial turf field will increase sports and recreation opportunities in Aurora.

Last week, a deal was reached between the Town of Aurora, St. Anne's School (SAS), and Shining Hill Group to construct a state-of-the-art \$7 million turf field and park for the Aurora community.

The facilities will be located near St. Anne's, which is located on the north side of St. John's Sideroad, just west of Yonge Street, and will be part of Shining Hill's Gates of St. Anne's community, currently being constructed at the intersection's northwest corner.

"In partnership with St. Anne's School and Shining Hill Group, the Town of Aurora is proud to support the development of this state-of-the-art neighbourhood park inclusive of an artificial turf, splash pad, playground, and pickleball courts," said Mayor Tom Mrakas in a statement. "Partnership plays an important role in fostering a strong sense of community and has proven successful in Aurora. The addition of the turf field and park will not only benefit the students of St. Anne's but will enhance the overall quality of life for all residents. We look forward to seeing the positive impact this project will have on our Town for years to come."

The new turf field and park will



A rendering of the new artificial turf field, a shared venture between St. Anne's School and the Town of Aurora.

Contributed photo

include the field itself, which will be branded appropriately for St. Anne's and the Town, 500-seat stadium-style

bleachers, lighting for evening games, facilities suitable for flag football, rugby, field hockey and soccer, pickleball courts, multi-use courts for basketball and like sports, a splash pad, parking, and washroom facilities.

St. Anne's Head of School Sabrina D'Angelo says the new field and facilities will help the school "move into next-level programming, which is really exciting."

"It is a unique situation in that we have partnered with the Town and Shining Hill group. We have been conversing about it since Shining Hill Group purchased all of this property."

As St. Anne's is partnered with the nearby St. Andrew's College, which lies on 126 acres, there has been "no shortage of field facilities" for SAS students, but this new deal was a missing piece that will enable St. Anne's to serve the needs of its growing population and develop a "comprehensive athletics program" that will parallel SAC's offering.

"It's important that we invest in our student-athletes," says D'Angelo. "Because of the unique connection and partnership we have with the Town of Aurora and Shining Hill Group, we started to devise a plan around the various opportunities that could be afforded to

the school, that would complement and strengthen the relationship. For us, it was important to be able to leverage some of the Town land for the school, and we are also very big believers in having strong connections with the community, so it was a win-win-win – a win for St. Anne's, a win for the Town of Aurora and the local community, and a win for Shining Hill Group," says D'Angelo.

"One of the really great features, particularly with the two-acre turf field, is that it is outfitted for field hockey, flag football, soccer, and rugby, but we are also really excited about it being lit, which we don't have at St. Andrew's. Currently at SAC, games can't be played post-dusk, but now we have an opportunity to leverage the facility and host different events. St. Andrew's is very eager to see this introduction as well as it adds a dimensionality to their offerings."

Under the shared user agreement, St. Anne's will have the opportunity to use the turf field for academic and co-curricular purposes throughout the academic calendar.

Construction of the field is underway, and it is hoped to be operational and open to the public by the start of the 2024-2025 school year this fall.



OPEN HOUSE – Last week, Kingsway Place Retirement Residence held an open house featuring activities and live music. Here, Betty, John, Kristen and John welcome guests to the residence, located on Murray Drive. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

Council approves significant price hike on Thelma Fielding Park amid questions over process

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora Council last week approved the final park design and budget for the construction of a new community park in the northwest quadrant of St. John's Sideroad and Yonge Street.

Dubbed Thelma Fielding Park, the new space will include a new artificial turf field constructed in partnership between the Town of Aurora, St. Anne's School, and Shining Hill Developments, along with courts for basketball and pickleball, a splashpad, playground and more.

As The Auroran reported last week, however, the park development has seen a significant price tag increase of more than \$2.5 million since it was first approved by Council.

Concern over the rising costs dominated Council's debate on April 23, with Councillors questioning not only the cost, but also an increase in contingency funds to ensure it comes to fruition.

"Inflation is one thing and we're struggling with inflation, but not in the order of 50 per cent," said Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese before asking staff for detail on what led to the price hike.

Among the elements that caused prices to rise were detailed design work, "numerous consultants," a washroom facility coming in "well over estimated value" from the consultant by more than \$500,000, additional lighting for the multi-use court, rubberized surfacing for the playground to enhance accessibility, fencing and more, said Parks Manager Sarah Tienkamp.

Tienkamp noted, however, that her department spoke to other municipalities and the revised figures are "in line" with current market value.

Despite his support for the project in principle, Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo said he saw "a lot of red flags" with what was presented to Council.

He objected to making a Council decision worth \$2.6 million directly at a Council meeting rather than it coming to debate at a Committee of the Whole meeting for debate ahead of the final decision.

"We have a \$2.6 million overbudget coming straight to Council. The public had four days, five max, two of which are weekends, to even review this and this is...the first result of a new and, in my opinion, ridiculous meeting regime that you, Mr. Mayor, have implemented," he said, referring to a recent decision by Mayor Tom Mrakas to remove two General Committee meetings from the Council schedule in favour of one Committee of the Whole meeting ahead of Council.

Mayor Mrakas, on his part, disputed this and said he wanted to bring the

matter to a Special Committee meeting the previous week but the report was not ready.

Nevertheless, this was just one of the concerns voiced by Councillor Gallo.

The overages, he contended, should be revisited last fall during the 2024 Budget process, and he also questioned the procurement process and how the winning bidder was chosen, but could not press further as the bids are not public.

He also questioned the staff recommendation to increase the contingency funds from \$10 million to \$15 million.

Here, he was joined by Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson who said he would rather keep the contingency fund as is and leave any further increases for future Council approval, if required.

"The two other funding partners were supportive of this approach (to increase contingency last week) because of the unknowns," said Aurora CAO Doug Nadorozny, with such unknowns being soil conditions on-site and what might need to be removed from beneath the surface due to the previous use of the site.

"If the added expense comes up in July or August, we have the added complication of trying to get a Council meeting. It would potentially have to be a Special Meeting just for that subject and we are trying to have the field completed and usable for the next school year in September. So, while we could do as Councillor Thompson has suggested, it does add a little bit of risk to the completion in September (for the start of the school year)," Nadorozny continued, insisting it was a "proactive" recommendation.

Councillor Thompson put forward a motion for any further contingency boosts to the project come with specific Council approval, a motion which was approved on a vote of 6-0, with Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland not participating in the discussion or vote due to having a family member employed by St. Anne's.

"I am not too worried about the timing," said Councillor Thompson. "I would put forward an amendment that Council approval is required to exceed whatever that amount is of the 10 per cent contingency. Should it happen, staff will come back to Council and they would explain to members of Council and the public, if necessary, what has been the issue driving the spending for the contingency account, what the change orders are, and why they need the additional funds.

"Although we are approving the budget authority on Council, we understand that if the project is under-budget, that money just gets returned back to reserves anyway. We're just restricting that last piece of the contingency, which I think achieves

the same thing as changing the budget authority."

The overall price increase for the completion of Thelma Fielding Park was approved by Council on a vote of 4-2 with Mayor Mrakas, Councillor Weese, Councillor Thompson and Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim in the affirmative. Voting against were Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner and Councillor Gallo, with, as noted, Councillor Gilliland absent from the discussion.

GETTING THINGS DONE

From page 4

in place at the Town has proven immensely beneficial to our residents. Therefore, I will be requesting that staff reinstate this excellent ad hoc initiative.

The Town of Aurora has long been known for its generosity and dedication to helping those in need, and this action team upholds that proud tradition with its unwavering commitment to community service.

If you are interested in joining the Aurora Cares Community Action Team, stay tuned as more info will be coming soon.

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

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“Painting the Path” promises to be unique fashion show for good causes

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Fashion and visual arts are set to converge at Aurora’s Royal Rose Gallery on May 9 at “Beyond the Runway – Painting the Path.”

Creativity and self-expression “beyond the traditional boundaries” will come together for what organizers describe as an “immersive experience” that will benefit Aurora’s Lighthouse Learning and Development Centre, Newmarket’s Girls Inc. of York Region, and Hill House Hospice of Richmond Hill.

The event is the brainchild of Rossy Bustamante, a financial advisor who co-owns Roca Financial Solutions. While she’s a financial advisor by day, she’s always had a love for fashion and design, and struck with the idea of holding a fashion show like no other. She took her idea to Rosa Calabrese-Teal, owner of the Royal Rose Gallery, who was eager to help bring the vision to life.

“I absolutely loved [the idea] because I think fashion, art and music all goes together – it’s the creative process,” says Calabrese-Teal. “Anything I can sink into helping designers, artisans and artists, I’m all for it.”

Bustamante agrees, noting that



Beyond the Runway – Painting the Path, an immersive fashion show, will take place next week at the Royal Rose Gallery. Before the big day, co-organizer Rossy Bustamante, gallery owner Rosa Calabrese-Teal and Bruno gathered at the Yonge and Wellington space to discuss preparations.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

fashion is a way of expression.

“We wanted to showcase that women can express themselves through fashion the way they are, as they are, and to show different ways of doing it,” she says. “We as women sometimes feel a bit insecure, we don’t feel like we’re wearing the right outfit or doing the right thing; it has to be catered

to who you are and we wanted to show that you can put these pieces together and make yourself feel beautiful and confident. It’s about acceptance – accepting yourself as you are and embracing the way you like to dress.”

The May 9 event will feature clothing from Glitter Glam Apparel & Co., Coup De Foudre Luxury Lingerie, Escenia Handmade Artwear, Lily’s Tiny Eco, Omar’s Shoes, designer Tracy Toulouse, and Cotton Roses. The event will feature a boutique set-up and a designer market as well, so attendees will have the chance to purchase from featured designers, helping to support both them and the local business community.

The work of textile and beading artist Breeyn McCarney will decorate the walls, with students providing the music – all illuminated by specially-installed lighting that Bustamante and Calabrese-Teal describe as nothing short of immersive.

“It’s an immersive fashion show, so it is not a traditional catwalk per se – it’s cocktails, food, raffle prizes, door prizes, and the models will be walking in and amongst the crowd as well so you can interact with them. The whole atmosphere of the fashion show is a different experience.”

“The lights will be a surprise,” adds Bustamante. “It’s so pretty the way we are doing it. People will feel that they are somewhere else for the duration of the show. I think that is one of the highlights for us and surprises of people – the mix of the lighting and the music we will have. And the runway that we are creating – it’s all based on lighting.

“I think this will be a great ladies’ night out – to come and have a bite to eat, some wine, some networking with people in the community. It is a great event for women to come and see a fashion show and enjoy. We already have so many challenges that we face as women and I think by helping them it will help increase the awareness of the challenges women have and that’s a reality. I think that that’s why this fashion show should be one of the ones on the list to help us help them to thrive on whatever endeavours they do.”

Beyond the Runway – Painting the Path will take place Thursday, May 9 from 6 – 8 p.m., at the Royal Rose Gallery, located on Yonge Street just south of Wellington. For more information, including tickets, visit royalroseart.ca/beyond-the-runway-painting-the-path.

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Capital gains increase concerns Chamber following Federal budget

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Since its presentation on April 16, the Federal Government's 2024 Budget has received mixed reviews from community organizations.

As a recent poll suggests Canadians almost equally divided on whether the financial blueprint for the year ahead is good or bad, the Aurora Chamber of Commerce has raised some concerns on behalf of members.

"The recent Canadian budget's adjustment to capital gains inclusion rates has sparked concerns among businesses and investors regarding the potential effect it may have on business," said Sandra Ferri, President & CEO of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce. "By increasing the inclusion rate from 50 per cent to 66.67 per cent, the government aims to generate additional revenue but risks dampening investment enthusiasm and entrepreneurial activity.

"Higher taxes on capital gains could disincentivize risk-taking and long-term investments, potentially stifling economic growth and innovation. Furthermore, this move might deter foreign investment and talent, impacting Canada's competitiveness on the global stage.

"Balancing fiscal goals with fostering a conducive business environment will be crucial for Canada's economic resilience in the post-pandemic era. The fact that the Canadian debt is growing faster than the economy is also a concern for businesses. To ensure a sustainable future, Canada needs innovation and increased productivity to grow the economy, and to do this we need Canadian and foreign investments to grow business

opportunities. Canada must be seen on the global stage as a country with a welcoming business environment."

In response, Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leah Taylor Roy, a member of the Liberal government, said the matter of capital gains is the "biggest source of confusion and concern right now."

"As most business owners know, one of the most important things right now is ensuring that inflation stays down so interest rates can come down," said MP Taylor Roy. "That meant we needed to find revenue to offset some of the expenses in this budget in general for some of these really strong programs that promote growth and also fairness. This is really a budget about fairness and asking people who are able and making big profits off of the sale of businesses or secondary homes, or stocks and bonds – or whatever investments they have, whatever capital gains, to pay a little bit more.

"For the average person, most people don't incur more than \$250,000 of capital gains in a year. That's rare. When they do, there will be a small increase. One example was a couple who owns a cottage. If they sell it for a \$500,000 profit, there is no extra capital gains. If they sell it for a \$1 million profit, there is about a \$35,000 – \$37,000 increase in capital gains on a million-dollar profit. It is something, but I don't think when people see the numbers going from 50 – 60 per cent, I don't think it is quite as impactful, perhaps, when some people are seeing those numbers."

Canada, she says, is "one of the few countries" that doesn't tax gains on primary residences and that's not the

direction the government is going.

"When you look at the overall tax picture for even a small and medium business owner and compare it with other places they could live – both having a home and having a business – they are still better off."

Addressing the issue of the deficit, MP Taylor Roy said most countries have debt and deficits, but it is all in how they are addressed.

"There's the old theory that the Conservatives subscribe [to, the approach] that we should have no deficit and we should be bringing down the debt constantly. You have to be fiscally prudent and that is why we put in that

increase in capital gains because we have to keep our numbers in line with what credit rating agencies are looking for and what our central bank is looking for, and what multinational bodies like the IMF is looking for. When you look at those three parameters, we are one of the only countries to still have a Triple A credit rating. Our government's cost to borrowing is less than the United States and our debt to GDP ratio is still lower and the lowest of the G7.

"Like any company, you invest in things that are going to give you a good return and we're investing in things that make sense. We need to be building

Continued on page 21

Province to "crack down" on cell phone use, vaping in schools

From page 1

as we get students back to the basics by restoring focus, safety and common sense back in Ontario schools."

The Minister also announced on Sunday that the Ministry would be "strengthening" rules around students caught using – and also carrying – vapes or cigarettes. In these instances, students will be "required to surrender these products, along with parents being notified immediately of the situation."

\$30 million, the Government added, has been allocated within the 2024 Budget to install vape detectors and other security measures in schools.

"To support these initiatives, the Government is investing in \$17.5 million in new wrap-around supports for student mental health and parent engagement," said the Province.

These measures and supports will include \$15 million to provide supports for students at risk of addictive behaviours; \$1 million to partner with School Mental Health Ontario to develop webinars and resources "targeted to parents and students" across Ontario to "learn how to talk about the adverse effects of vaping and excessive cellphone usage; and \$1.5 million to Parent Involvement Committees and students to run local prevention campaigns to "deter" vaping and cellphone distractions.

"Our government is taking action to protect children and youth from the harmful risks of vaping and build healthier communities across the province," said Minister of Health Sylvia Jones, who also serves as Ontario Deputy Premier and MPP for Dufferin-Caledon, in a statement. "We are building on the changes we have already made to restrict the sale of flavoured vapour products by taking this next step to make students surrender vape, tobacco and nicotine products in student possession to ensure our children receive their education in a safe and healthy learning environment."

Added Dr. Kieran Moore, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health: "Ontario is seeing a growing number of youth in Grades 7 through 12 reporting using vaping products that contain and emit many toxic substances. These products can affect the respiratory, immune and cardiovascular systems, and nicotine in these products is particularly harmful to youth brain development. Removing vaping products from Ontario schools will help protect our students from these

preventable threats."

Since the April 28 announcement, groups representing educators have expressed concerns about how they will be equipped to enforce the new rules.

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), for instance, said during recent bargaining, they fought for improvements that would address what they describe as "increasing violence and disruption in schools" and noted that some of the concerns they outlined to the Ministry were reflected in last week's announcement.

But, they added, measures to address violence are yet to be reflected.

"Despite our attempts to make improvements to school environments in a collaborative way with this government, ETFO was not given the opportunity to review the revisions before the Ford government released them," said the group in a statement. "This is extremely disappointing, but true to form for a government that has, for years, consistently disregarded input from its education partners."

Their recommendations included clear definitions when it comes to "unacceptable" student behaviour and the enforcement of consequences for non-compliance, defining such behaviours as including "bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, harassment, racism, discriminatory behaviour, physical violence, sexual assault, shoving and pushing, profanity, disrespectful behaviour that shows disregard for a teacher's or other supervising adult's position, failing to follow directions, significant disruptions to the learning environment, misuse of technology and social media, and repeated use of tobacco or e-cigarettes.

"Education is a shared responsibility, and decisions affecting our schools should be made through transparent and inclusive processes that prioritize the well-being of students and the professionalism of educators," they said. "It is only through respectful dialogue and true collaboration that we can develop policies that reflect the diverse needs of our school communities and uphold the highest standards of education."

HAVE YOUR SAY – Do you agree with the Province's decision to crack down on cell phone use and the use of vapes? Send your thoughts to brock@lpcmedia.ca.

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ECO-SMART LUXURY LIVING IN AURORA

Experience eco-smart luxury in South Aurora's Royal Hill. This home boasts exquisite finishes, an open layout, a gourmet kitchen, and a spa-like master suite. Equipped with green technology and offering serene views, it's situated close to amenities and nature for an unparalleled sustainable living experience. Offered at \$2,588,000.



EXECUTIVE HOME WITH LUXURY UPGRADES

Builder's model home in Princeton Heights, Aurora Estates. This brand-new executive property boasts a 3-car garage, luxury upgrades, and exceptional craftsmanship. Highlights include a marble foyer, white oak floors, a gourmet kitchen, and spacious bedrooms with private bathrooms. Offered at \$3,999,000.



CUSTOMIZE YOUR DREAM LAKE WILCOX HOME

Introducing an opportunity to customize your dream executive home in Lake Wilcox. This to-be-built residence is designed with 4+1 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, and a chef's kitchen outfitted with high-end JennAir appliances. Envision luxurious finishes throughout, with the chance to select your preferences to truly make it your own. \$3,200,000.



BRAND NEW - DOUBLE LOT SIZE

Experience unparalleled luxury in Richmond Hill with this expansive executive home on a premium double lot. Features an open layout, 10-foot ceilings, a gourmet kitchen, spa-like ensuite, and spacious bedrooms with walk-in closets. High-quality finishes throughout enhance this exquisite property. Priced at \$3,080,000.



PERSONALIZE YOUR EXECUTIVE DREAM HOME

Explore this magnificent new 'Fernbrook Homes' property in prestigious Princeton Heights, Aurora Estates. Featuring a customizable kitchen with buyer-selected cabinetry and appliances, this executive home offers luxurious finishes, four spacious bedrooms with private bathrooms, and ample natural light. Offered at \$3,299,000.



LUXURIOUS 'FERNBROOK' HOME IN AURORA

Introducing the meticulously crafted 'Fernbrook' executive home in Aurora Estates' Princeton Heights. This large lot residence offers high-quality finishes, a gourmet kitchen, and the opportunity to customize details. Features four spacious bedrooms, each with private bathrooms. Offered at \$3,490,000.



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Rare chance to acquire two adjacent lots in a serene, coveted area. One features a renovated home with a modern kitchen, stainless appliances, quartz countertops, spacious backyard, luxurious master suite, and extensive updates. Sold with a ready-to-build vacant lot, offering endless potential for expansion or investment.



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Soon-to-be-built executive home in Lake Wilcox, on a 150' lot. Offers 4+1 bedrooms, 5 baths, chef's kitchen with JennAir appliances, luxurious finishes, hardwood floors, gas fireplaces, skylit primary suite, finished lower level, proximity to Lake Wilcox Park. Opportunity to personalize finishes for a truly custom living experience. Offered at \$3,200,000.



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Exceptional 4-bed, 3-bath bungalow. Open concept, 9ft ceilings, hardwood floors, chef's kitchen with quartz counters. Family room opens to a fenced backyard. Luxurious primary suite, finished lower level with extra living space. Conveniently located near amenities, schools, parks, water, and highways. Offered at \$1,078,000.



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Week of May 2, 2024



ABLE NETWORK WALK — On Sunday, members of The ABLE Network held their annual fundraising walk, which took participants, their families, and community members at large through the heart of Aurora's historic downtown core. Here, participants are pictured setting off from the Armoury. The ABLE Network is based out of the Rectory at Trinity Anglican Church and its mission is to "inspire adults with intellectual disabilities to reach their full potential through access to better living and employment."
 Aurora photos by Glenn Rodger

Aurora swimmer Madison Russell commits to Nova Southeastern University Sharks in Florida

By Jim Stewart

Aurora resident and Newmarket Stingray Madison Russell has signed her letter of intent to attend Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Matt Morris, Athletic Director at Bolles School in Jacksonville, Florida, announced that seven of the prep school's student-athletes, including Russell, "committed to their post-secondary destinations and signed their letters of intent at an in-school ceremony on April 17."

Bolles School Sharks Assistant Swim Coach Claire Mills praised Russell's performances in the pool this season.

"Maddie qualified for the USA Swimming Futures Championships in the 100 breaststroke at Sectionals in February. This past weekend at a Sprint meet in town, she swam her second-best times ever in the 100 breaststroke and 200 breaststroke."

Mills, the Lead National Prep Coach with Bolles's club program and Madison's main direct coach, outlined her swimmer's upcoming performances back home as connected to the upcoming Paris Olympics.

"Maddie is heading to Canadian Olympic Trials at the end of this month to compete in the 100 breaststroke."

Coach Mills was pleased with Russell's maturation over her stay at Bolles and noted some of the finer points of improvement.

"Maddie was very open to feedback about her breaststroke when she arrived in the fall and spent a lot of time changing how she approached racing in her events. She's continued to develop her stroke through this spring and has started seeing some great success as her stroke comes together. She's also made huge progress in the weight room, improving her range of motion, and translating that work into her work in the pool."

An outstanding student-athlete who transferred to Bolles School for her senior high school year, Russell earned a 3.9 GPA at the preparatory school in Jacksonville after a stellar swimming career in Ontario that included an OFSAA gold medal in the 4 x 50-meter medley and a silver in the 200-meter Individual Medley at the provincial championships prior to moving to Florida.

Russell's NCSA profile lists her Primary Race to be the Breaststroke with her Secondary Races being the 200 IM and the 400 IM. Her post-secondary academic aspirations include pursuing studies in criminology, criminal law, and/or psychology.

The multisport athlete was the Captain of the Barrie Soccer Club prior to her departure to Jacksonville.

Upon arrival in the Sunshine State, Russell focused singularly on swimming and procured an athletic scholarship at Nova Southeastern where she will be swimming with and for the Sharks in Fall 2024.



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LUCAS REID

ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Lucas Reid epitomizes the essence of leadership both on and off the field, making him a standout recipient as the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame Future Hall of Famer for the month of April. As a key member on the school rugby and hockey teams at St. Maximilian, Lucas not only excels in his athletic endeavors but also serves as a beacon of inspiration for his teammates. His unwavering dedication, resilience, skill and sportsmanship are evident in every game, earning him the respect and admiration of both peers and coaches alike.

Beyond the sports competition, Lucas exhibits exceptional leadership qualities within the classroom. He demonstrates a commitment to academic excellence, consistently striving for success and encouraging his peers to do the same. His ability to communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and problem-solve, demonstrates his natural aptitude for leadership in academic settings.

Moreover, Lucas extends his leadership beyond the confines of the school and the Mustangs' teams, actively engaging in community service initiatives, helping extensively with events for the Aurora Minor Hockey Association (AMHA). His willingness to give back to the community reflects his strong moral character and desire to make a positive impact on the world around him.

Lucas' excellence serves as an inspiration to his St. Maximilian teammates. Away from school, Lucas enjoys his work at Lawson Goaltending at The Hockey Club - Elite Training Centre in Aurora.

The Aurora Sports Hall of Fame wishes Lucas continued success and congratulations for this monthly recognition!



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THE PRINCIPLES OF AN ECONOMIC CHARTER OF RIGHTS

By Frank Stronach

Small business is bleeding

Everyone knows you don't kick someone when they're down.

But that's what the federal government's recent budget did to many small business owners who are struggling

to stay afloat or striving to take their new ventures to the next level of growth.

While the budget did include some small business relief measures, it also increased the capital gains inclusion rate.

The capital gains hike generated blowback from groups such as the Council of Canadian Innovators (CCI), who claimed the new taxes will stifle tech entrepreneurs trying to grow their businesses and cause "irreparable harm" to Canada's entrepreneur-based economy.

Other groups worried the tax increase was another nail in the coffin for Canada's small business sector. Dan Kelly, president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), said he was concerned that the budget measures had the "potential to demotivate Canadians from getting into business in the first place."

It's not just crushing taxes that are hurting small businesses. It's also job-killing regulations. Earlier this month, the CFIB published a blog by Simon Gaudreault, Chief Economist and Vice-President of Research at the organization.

Gaudreault argued that we could dramatically increase Canada's productivity by reducing unnecessary red tape and regulation. According to Gaudreault, we could free up 205 million hours of time, or approximately \$11 billion of squandered money, which could have otherwise gone toward more productive tasks.

The CFIB's most recent "Canada's Red Tape Report," published in 2021, had a revealing finding: although red tape ties up many businesses, it chokes the life out of small business. According to the report, the 2020 cost of regulation per employee for small businesses with fewer than five employees was an incredible five times more than for businesses with over 100 employees.

Canada's small business owners tell me all the time how they're being stifled. An entrepreneur shared the following with me a few months ago: "The

barriers to entry, compounded by the burden of taxation and the absence of incentives, have increasingly cast a shadow over the once-thriving entrepreneurial spirit. Like many of my peers,

I find myself at a crossroads where the perceived risks outweigh the potential rewards, a realization that saddens me deeply. It is disheartening to witness the erosion of confidence in the entrepreneurial journey, particularly when confronted with the stark reality that the risk-reward balance no longer tips in our favour."

One small business owner and founder bemoaned the current state of affairs by saying that "entrepreneurs are swimming upstream in Canada today." And yet another said: "I will certainly not be endorsing any young person to start a business in this country until things change drastically."

These heart-felt sentiments are a devastating indictment of a system that is crushing the life out of Canada's once-proud entrepreneurial spirit.

Canada's small businesses are bleeding, and if we don't stop the haemorrhaging by reducing taxes and slashing red tape, a growing number of them are going to go under or simply close up shop.

The National Economic Charter of Rights and Responsibilities I've proposed would require government to remove excessive regulations that stifle economic growth and unshackle small businesses by eliminating business tax on any small business with fewer than 300 employees.

If we reduced regulations and lower taxes, small businesses could grow like wildfire. It's one of the key principles in the economic charter of rights I've proposed. And it's the badly needed shot in the arm that Canada's economy needs right now.

To learn more about how the charter could help revitalize Canada's small business sector, contact 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).

EV Showcase highlights Options



If you are interested in owning an electric vehicle (EV) or have already taken the plunge, the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex was the place to be on Sunday as the Town of Aurora held its annual EV Showcase. The day featured an array of vehicles highlighted by a number of local car dealers, guest speakers on how to maximize the EV experience, kids' activities, and the chance to take a test-drive. (Top) Dan and Charlton had fun with their photo op. (Second) The McAlpine Team. (Third) The "show room" took over both arenas. (Fourth) Brenda and Cassidee take a Sarit for a test-drive.

Aurora photos by Glenn Rodger

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THINGS...you ought to know

SATURDAY, MAY 4

The Aurora Farmers' Market opens its 2024 season today at Town Park. Come by and shop local from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 9

Where Fashion meets Philanthropy! Join us for Beyond the Runway - Painting the Path, where we celebrate creativity and self-expression beyond traditional boundaries! At this evening of fashion, art and culture at the Royal Rose Art Gallery in Aurora, you will be immersed in the creations of local and upcoming designers and the finest clothing while enjoying cocktails in an exclusive and memorable evening. Designs will be showcased on local models (some of whom you'll recognize!) All proceeds from this event will be donated to three local charities: Girls Inc of York Region-Newmarket, Lighthouse Learning and Development Centre Inc.-Aurora; Hill House Hospice -Richmond Hill. For more information, including tickets, visit royalroseart.ca/beyond-the-runway-painting-the-path.

SUNDAY, MAY 12

Celebrate Mother's Day with a 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.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

York Symphony Orchestra Presents: The Music of John Williams tonight at 8 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria St, Aurora. Don't miss the YSO's last concert of the season, celebrating the great film composer. The program will draw from Raiders of the Lost Ark, Superman, Schindler's List, Harry Potter, 1941 and Jurassic Park, along with a heavy dose of Star Wars! Tickets at Eventbrite.ca or at the door.

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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.

Southlake Run kicks off 100th anniversary of local hospital



The 2024 Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake on Sunday, April 28, was a resounding success raising money for local health care and, at press time this week, was nearly \$440,000 towards its overall fundraising goal of \$500,000 – and there's still a lot more time for money to roll in. This year's run attracted hundreds of participants, including scores of local dignitaries including Aurora MPs Tony Van Bynen and Leah Taylor Roy, MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, Mayor Tom Mrakas – who was joined by his colleagues from King (Steve Pellegrini), Newmarket (John Taylor), Georgina (Margaret Quirk) – and Aurora Councillors Rachel Gilliland, Ron Weese, and Harold Kim, among others. At press time, Mayor Mrakas was the Run's top individual fundraiser while Team Aurora stood second amongst the teams. This year's run was the official kickoff to Southlake Regional Health Centre's 100th anniversary. "As we embark on the next 100 years of leading-edge care, Southlake remains relentless in our pursuit of excellence, always striving to innovate, inspire and serve our communities," said Tyler Chalk, Vice President, Strategy, Analytics and Communications at Southlake. "The communities Southlake serves are experiencing extraordinary growth, and we're excited to grow alongside them."

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

Geranium hosts hard-hat tour for prospective Aurora buyers

Award-winning developer and builder, Geranium, recently hosted Hard Hat Tours for its homeowners-in-waiting and prospective buyers, with over 100 attendees participating. The tours provided an exclusive look at what the company does behind-the-wall to future-proof its new homes — aiming to educate and provide insight on the construction process.

Held at the company's Allegro community in downtown Aurora — a collection of 52' and 61' homes nestled in an existing neighbourhood of mature-treed lots — group tours were led by Geranium's Director of Construction and Allegro's Site Superintendent through a 4,000 sq. ft. home at the framing stage. These events are unique and are above and beyond the standard practice in the industry, setting Geranium apart.

"We've hosted Hard Hat Tours for many years and the feedback is always very positive," says Stephanie Lane, Vice President, Sales & Marketing. "Home buyers often focus on their finishes, such as countertops, flooring, tiles, and more, but we feel it's equally as important for

them to know how a home is built and the mechanisms behind the walls."

Some of the items covered in the tours include the benefits of raised heel roof trusses, use of Tyvek home wrap as a drainage plane and air barrier, the different types of insulation used and their respective R-values, efforts made to reduce water leaks in bathrooms and laundry areas, and the inclusion of greywater rough in lines, a standard in every executive home built by Geranium, for the future purchase and installation of a water recycling system.

"My tour experience was great. The construction lead, Andrew, was very knowledgeable. I appreciate the fact that Geranium is using building materials and standard features that exceed the building code," explained Eric A., attendee, and prospective buyer at Allegro. "One feature that stood out to me and I give Geranium credit for is the use of two-stage HVAC systems, which are an awesome feature. I also love the loggia included in the home, and the big window designs won my heart. Overall, I had a very positive experience with the home construction and tour."



Auroran photo by Brock Weir



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Aurora students come out on top at World Debating & Public Speaking Championships



Sarah Croxon, Ethan Wahba, and Millie Steinmann.

Contributed photo

From page 1

Country Day School in King, take home the trophy in Interpretive Reading and Persuasive Speaking, respectively.

The Championships, which took place April 14 – 20, was the scene of a number of firsts for Country Day School (CDS) and their storied Debate team. Wahba and Steinmann, joined by fellow student Sarah Croxon, competed in a total of eight finals at the Worlds, the most the school has fielded in individual events.

Overall, Wahba placed third in the overall championships, Steinmann ninth, and Croxon 18th.

“All three of them did amazingly well,” said CDS’s long-time debate coach Kersten Wyndham-West. “It’s tough to even make one final, but to make two or more finals is incredible and all of them did that. Additionally, we have never had two students win their individual categories in the same year, and all three made it to eight of the possible 12 finals. That is a record for CDS.”

That excitement was still in the air when the three students sat down with The Auroran on Thursday to share their experience.

Steinmann, who aced the Persuasive Speaking category, says she chose Retirement as her topic for the Nationals, but tried a fresh approach for the Worlds, zeroing in on the impacts of highly-caffeinated energy drinks on students.

“I thought, what was going to make the kids listen the most because when the students are listening, the judges perk up too because they want to see the entire audience engaged,” she says, noting that one area of particular concern was how these drinks are marketed “negatively” towards kids “and the ever-increasing normalization in grocery stores and in vending machines at school.”

“It is covering up the health crisis that is actually going on with high amounts of caffeine,” she says. “I looked at different health studies, a lot of different case studies of different teenagers who have been affected by different energy drinks, by appetite suppressants, or using them as a way to mix them with alcohol. I looked at the different stakeholders for students foremost in my research,

but what I really tried to do in this speech is to make it funny. I try to use comedy in order to make them realize that we can think it is just a fun drink that people have occasionally and it is often compared to a soda or just a drink you have occasionally, but, in reality, it is actually something that people are getting addicted to. I thought by making them laugh at first and then hitting them with the hard-hitting question of why are we normalizing this? I thought that would persuade them.

“Instead of [going through] different consequences, I did different stakeholders of who was going to be affected by the drinks. Instead of saying the caffeine used in energy drinks [is] negative because they are used in these different cases, I asked, ‘So, what are the different types of teenagers who are going to be affected by this?’”

For his part in the Persuasive Speaking category, Wahba looked at the impact of a shortage of air traffic controllers – “I chose this because for this competition almost everyone I was presenting to would have flown hours and hours from across the world” – and how this shortage has eroded public safety.

In the same field, Croxon looked at the ins and outs of tipping and gratuity culture, with a particular focus on North America and how it has ramped up in the aftermath of the Global Pandemic.

“When restaurants and bars started closing, a lot of customers felt like maybe giving employees extra tips to kind of substitute for their lost wages that they would have been getting if they were open, but now it is four years later and obviously we’re out of the pandemic,” she says. “It is still a very prevalent thing and it keeps on evolving. The amount that people are expecting to tip just keeps growing and it’s at a point where you go to Starbucks and you try to tap your debit and you’re getting pre-set thing with three options. A lot of people are being guilted into it, and that isn’t right.”

Speaking on the topic, she compared North American tipping culture to those in other parts of the world. She didn’t come down on one side or another; she notes, but brought context to the table.

“By the end of the speech, I took the

stance where there are some people in the world who are never going to stop tipping, no matter how financially well-off they are,” she says. “People are going to feel like they want to tip, or it is a financial burden on them, especially with things like inflation going on [and] that is not something we should be making them feel guilty about and people should basically be able to do what they want in terms of leaving a gratuity.”

In addition to Persuasive Speaking, Wahba’s performance in the Interpretive Reading category came out on top. Selecting the short story, “Going Grapefruit” by Ian Richards, which touches upon an average man’s life and how it’s upended by a car accident and a resulting brain injury which made grasping for the right words difficult, the student really tried to communicate the emotion in the story.

“One thing that really came through above all else was after performing the piece I really understood the illness, the vital importance of compassion towards everyone, especially towards those who struggle to communicate,” he says. “One piece of feedback I received from a judge who has been judging for a really long time, was that she had heard the piece performed a few times but it never really stood out to her. She goes, ‘The way you performed it, the emotion and tone you had with it, it felt like I was in the room with this character.... It truly felt like I was watching him go through all these experiences and feeling it right next to him.’”

“I think at the end of the day that was what enabled me to be successful because there is kind of a moment in my reading where the character has a moment of growth and he’s finally able to choose the right words. When we were performing in Grand Finals in front of everyone in the competition, there were actually a bit of a gasp in the room when he got to his words.

That’s what made it special for me and why I was able to do well – people were so invested in this guy’s character, so at the end where he was finally able to overcome that hurdle it was like the crowd was overcoming it with him.”

Through the whole process of competing in Canberra, the students agree that one of the things they came home with – in addition to some hardware – was the importance of gaining a global perspective from their peers around the world.

“I feel in Canada and America we get such a one-sided approach on things,” says Wahba “Everyone, even when they have different views, we’re still kind of in the same ideological spectrum. When you’re meeting people from Asia, when you’re meeting from Africa, Europe, you’re getting all these different perspectives on issues from all across the world. I had several times through the competition where I would be talking to someone who came from a completely different culture and their way of thinking about things was so different compared to what we have in North America. I think getting that experience, the ability to talk to all these different people, is something you can only get at a global competition.”

Adds Steinmann: “Especially with persuasive speaking and listening to people’s speeches about what they feel like is a problem in the world, how we think we should solve it, as well as debate – we’re all trying to solve an issue and arguing about what is the best path forward as us for a society – I found it was really interesting to see, especially given that a lot of the competitors want to be lawyers or work in government, we’re all working together to make society a better place. The ability to work together and talk to people across the world, seeing other people’s opinions about what they think is a problem, what their country’s policies are, was really important.”

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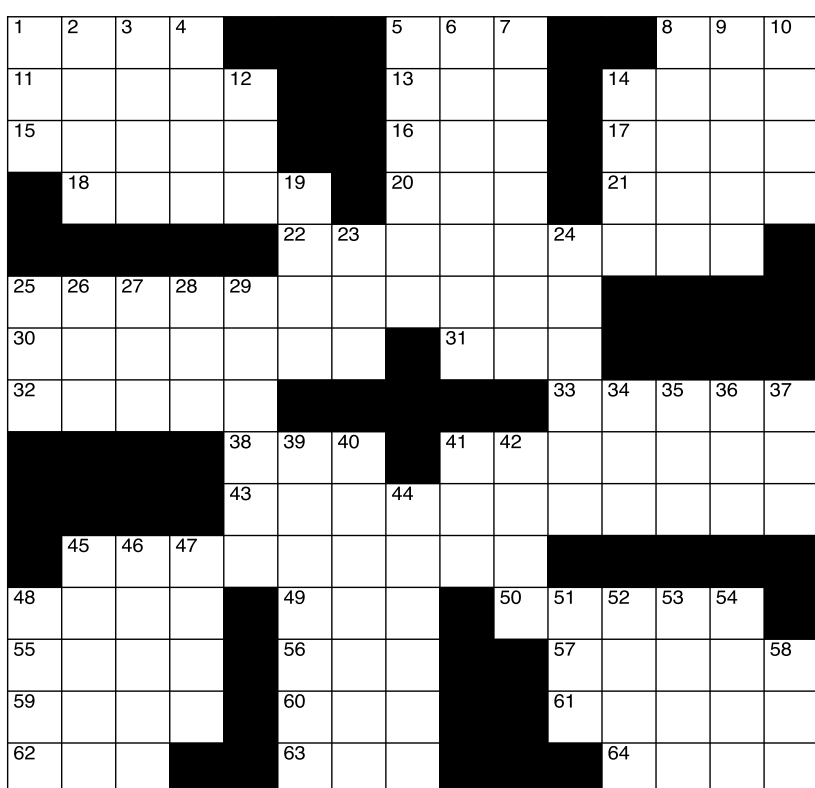
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Puzzle No. TAAPR2524 • Solution in Classifieds



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Lions do it
- 5. In favor of
- 8. Rest here please (abbr.)
- 11. Pulpits
- 13. Leisure activity
- 14. Fertility god
- 15. Financial obligations
- 16. When you anticipate getting somewhere
- 17. Spanish river
- 18. Sporting events
- 21. Ceased to be
- 22. Persons
- 25. Synthetic resin
- 30. Relates to photochemical reactions
- 31. Father
- 32. Former Cowboys coach
- 33. City in Finland
- 38. Run batted in
- 41. Got through
- 43. They darken skin
- 45. In a harmful way
- 48. Form of weaving
- 49. City of Angels hoopster
- 50. Caucasian language
- 55. Syngman __, Korean president
- 56. Sun up in New York
- 57. Paddled
- 59. Fishes
- 60. Affirmative
- 61. Nimble
- 62. Doctor of Education
- 63. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 64. A small island

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Cool!
- 2. Hebrew unit of measure
- 3. Swedish rock group
- 4. College army
- 5. Favor over another
- 6. Called it a career
- 7. Egg-shaped wind instrument
- 8. Israeli statesman
- 9. Hurries
- 10. Slog
- 12. Midway between south and southeast
- 14. Benedictine monk
- 19. Self-immolation by fire ritual
- 23. Family of regulator genes
- 24. Surrendering
- 25. Political action committee
- 26. S. American plant
- 27. Long-term memory
- 28. Bark
- 29. Breathes in
- 34. Take hold of
- 35. Everyone has one
- 36. Valentine’s Day color
- 37. Drivers’ licenses and passports
- 39. Outer walls of castles
- 40. Enters with force
- 41. One thousandth of an inch
- 42. Deceased Chinese politician
- 44. Sugary secretion of plants
- 45. Expressed pleasure
- 46. Shelter
- 47. Utilizes
- 48. Forest resident
- 51. Fashion accessory
- 52. A sharply directional antenna
- 53. __ Kristofferson, actor
- 54. A bad place to end up
- 58. MLBer Gordon

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Capital gains increase concerns Chamber following Federal budget

From page 12

more homes for Canadians. We get a lot of tax revenue when these homes are being built, it creates jobs, people have places to live so they can stay in the country close to where they want to work.... That generates revenue as well. We're investing in child care and that's a huge one. If you look at some of the studies that were done that shows a return on our investment, which is what is important – it is not just that you're spending money, it's that you're going to get a good return for your investment. The childcare program was estimated by I think it was RBC... you're getting back at least \$2 for every dollar invested from increased productivity and other measures.... We're investing because we believe in the future of this country. We believe in Canadians and we know that we have everything we needed in this country to do really well in the future if we make the right investments. Businesses don't always have the same big picture that the government does."

While taxes and debt have garnered a lot of attention since the Budget was first introduced, there are other items and

investments MP Taylor Roy says will be a boon to communities like Aurora, such as the investment in the Futurepreneur Canada program which will help 6,000 young entrepreneurs start and scale up businesses, as well as the School Food Program, which will help level the playing field for students, the national Dental Plan, and 30-year mortgages for first-time home-buyers.

"They are going to bring down those monthly costs and allow people to perhaps buy a home where before they couldn't," she said. "On that same home...there is also allowing people who have been renting to use their rental record to count towards their credit score for their mortgage application. I think that is going to help numerous people who need that.

"We had in place already the Child Care program, but I think for young families in Aurora, it has made an immense difference and that is continued to be financed through this budget. We put a lot of money into creating new spaces because the demand is so high. That is going to help people. For a lot of young families I've spoken with, their

monthly expenses have come down \$600 - \$800 a month. That is huge and if you have more than one child it is even bigger than that. I think families are looking at

it now and thinking, they may be able to afford another child, if they want, or they may be able to put that money into buying a home."

SPORTS SCRAPS

From page 5

out, injury, and makes them a well-rounded and active adult. So, if you have a kid who wants to try something new, please encourage them.

Two years ago, Sport Aurora launched a Program to encourage play: All Sport/One Day. It is a single-day program where no expensive equipment is needed, nor a long-term commitment required. ASOD offers a fun, one-day experience in a number of sports where kids can learn the fundamentals of these activities, delivered by expert coaches from the numerous members of Sport Aurora – with no strings attached.

ASOD has brought coaches and kids together in over 25 sports that include 'traditional' sports such as soccer, tennis, rugby, basketball, volleyball, and baseball, as well as others like

archery, martial arts, lawn bowling and, just recently, the increasingly popular sport of pickleball.

The purpose of the program is to orient participants to all these activities in a recreational manner, in a single day, where the focus is on fun, and socializing with other kids of the same skill level and similar age is encouraged. Kids often decide to join one or more of these organizations after the event.

The Program is subsidized by our sponsors, so registration cost is minimal. Expert coaches teach at an entry level free of charge to engage all participants, and the kids leave learning new skills and making new friends.


For more information on this program, contact Sport Aurora at www.sportaurora.ca.

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