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THE AUROROAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 25 No. 33 905-727-3300

TheAuroran.com

FREE

Week of May 23, 2024



Grade 4 student Kingsley Matthews and Grade 5 student Taylor Underwood took home top honours in the Junior Category of Aurora's 2024 Youth Innovation Fair last week with their Stardust Snugglers. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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Bright ideas showcased at re-launched Youth Innovation Fair

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

From helping kids who are afraid of the dark get a good night's sleep to coming up with illuminating ways to re-purpose some of the things we stockpiled to combat COVID-19, the Skylight Gallery at Aurora Town Hall was full of bright ideas last week as the Town re-launched its annual Youth Innovation Fair.

The Youth Innovation Fair, which last took place in 2019 due to the global pandemic, brought together youth from across the GTA on Wednesday, May 15. Taking home top honours in Junior and Senior categories were ideas that quite literally shone a light on innovation.

Stardust Snugglers helped Taylor Underwood and Kingsley Matthews of Lester B. Pearson nab top spot in the Junior Category.

Stardust Snugglers appear to be simply stuffed animals by day, but by night they warm up and glow for the kids who cuddle them.

"We came up with the idea because kids are afraid of the dark and we want to fix that," said Kingsley.

Added Taylor: "It's a nightlight that you can actually cuddle with and we really want them to know that these 'stuffies' are

Continued on page 10

New Cultural Action Plan given tentative green light

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

As the opening of Aurora Town Square nears this fall, a new Cultural Action Plan to help both this project and the cultural sector thrive, is nearing completion.

Council this month gave the tentative green light to Aurora's new Cultural Action Plan.

Designed to help guide cultural development and planning within Aurora through 2028, it builds

Continued on page 22



MUSIC MATTERS - Local Francophone robotics team Équipe Francobotique: Les robot-franco-zarts is ready to take on the world next month in Massachusetts with their innovation to make music education more accessible. For more on their efforts, see Page 14.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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TOWN OF AURORA

NOTICE BOARD

May 23, 2024



Council & Committee Meetings

| Date | Time | Location | Meeting |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------|---|
| Tuesday, May 28 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Council Closed Session (if required) |
| Tuesday, May 28 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Council |
| Tuesday, June 4 | 9:30 a.m. | Newmarket CC | Joint Council Committee (CYFS) |
| Tuesday, June 4 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Council Closed Session (if required) |
| Tuesday, June 4 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Committee of the Whole |
| Monday, June 10 | 7 p.m. | Holland Room | Heritage Advisory Committee |
| Tuesday, June 11 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Finance Advisory Committee |
| Wednesday, June 12 | 7 p.m. | Holland Room | Accessibility Advisory Committee |
| Thursday, June 13 | 10 a.m. | Holland Room | Community Recognition Review Advisory Committee |
| Thursday, June 13 | 7 p.m. | Video Conference | Committee of Adjustment |
| Thursday, June 13 | 7 p.m. | Tannery Room | Aurora Cultural Centre Board |

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

What's Happening

Aurora's Community Garage Sale



Saturday, June 15 | 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Aurora Community Centre Parking Lot

Interested in selling your used household items?

Register by Friday, June 7

aurora.ca/GarageSale

Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition

Featured Artist: Sean Stone – Window on the World

A statement from artist Sean Stone regarding his work: "As a lover of travel, I have had the good fortune to have travelled around the world and record some of the beauty that I have found, both in distant locations as well as across Canada. This exhibition reminds us of the wonders that await us outside our hometowns. So come on a visual adventure with me, from Alaska to Australia, from Newfoundland to Morocco. It's a fascinating, beautiful world out there." View in-person at Aurora Town Hall in the Skylight Gallery. View online at aurora.ca/SkylightGallery. All artwork is for sale. Please contact Sarah Reynolds at sreynolds@aurora.ca if you are interested in investing and owning a beautiful artwork piece.



Pool and Hot Tub Opening Tips

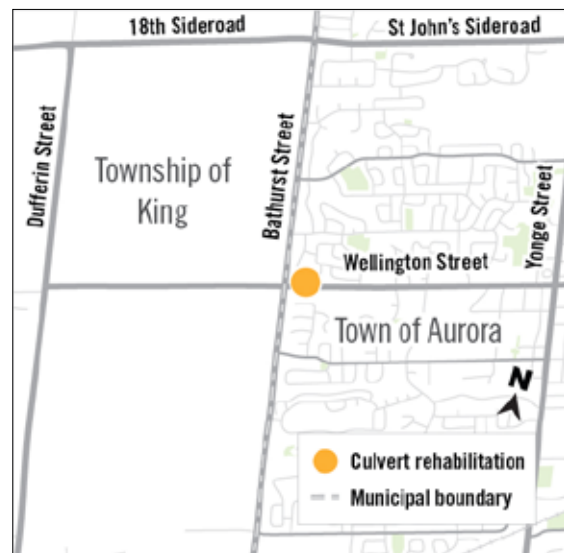
Pool season is almost here! As you open your pool, remember that pool water is harmful to aquatic life. Help us keep our streams, creeks and Lake Simcoe healthy by following the proper pool and spa discharge steps. More details at: aurora.ca/Pool.

Spring/Summer 2024 Program Guide

The Spring & Summer 2024 Program Guide is available to view online at aurora.ca/ProgramGuide. Registration is open for Recreation and Aquatic programs. View our interactive guide and click on the code # to register online. Pay in-person at the A.F.L.C. or S.A.R.C.

Summer Camps 2024 Program Guide

The Summer Camps 2024 Program Guide is available to view online at aurora.ca/SummerCamps. Registration is open for Summer Camps programs. View our interactive guide and click on the code # to register online. Pay in-person at the A.F.L.C. or S.A.R.C.



Construction Notice

The Region of York is rehabilitating a culvert that will allow water and wildlife to pass freely under the road. The construction will replace existing gabion stone retaining walls with concrete retaining walls and will take place on Wellington Street east of Bathurst Street in Aurora from June to September.

The road will remain open to through traffic, however temporary lane closures will be in effect Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Access to homes and businesses will be maintained.

For questions about this project, please contact:
 · Shu Zhu, Senior Project Manager, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75295 or shu.zhu@york.ca
 · Sharon Boyles, Construction Administrator, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75286 or sharon.boyles@york.ca

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2025 BUDGET SURVEY



Complete the online survey by Sunday, June 16, 2024

engageaurora.ca/Budget2025

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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST JOHN ABEL PARK

Apply by June 3, 2024

Calling all Indigenous artists, horticulturalists, and passionate volunteers! John Abel Park is looking to bring your creativity to life! We're excited to announce that expressions of interest are now open for three distinct features at our new park:

1. Wood pole carvings to be featured on the park pathway
2. Educational healing garden with Indigenous consultation
3. Annual community garden plot program

Let's make John Abel Park a hub of artistic and educational wonder together!

Visit aurora.ca/JohnAbelPark to learn more and submit your expression of interest today!



Contact Photography Festival

We are hosting a multi-venue archival photography exhibition called "Aurora Through the Archives," as part of the 2024 CONTACT Photography Festival.

WHEN: The historical display will be offered free to the public from **May 7 to June 30**.

WHAT: Delve into Aurora's rich history through a collection of archival images that span over a century.

WHERE: The exhibition will be showcased across three venues: the outdoor space of the Aurora Armoury, the Hillary House National Historic Site, and the Royal Rose Gallery & Gifts.

For more information about the CONTACT Photography Festival in Aurora, visit AuroraMuseum.ca.



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Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society heads into busy slate of spring activities

Plant Sale set for Sunday

By Jim Stewart

Every Spring, the Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society busies itself with a series of activities to celebrate the arrival of the growing season.

This Spring is no exception for the venerable 106-year-old organization that has encouraged blooms in Aurora since Robert Borden was our Prime Minister.

Garden Aurora has been “rooted in our Town for over 105 years” and the organization’s Membership Director Heather McFarquhar invited local gardeners to attend the Club’s many coming attractions.

The engaging McFarquhar noted that Garden Aurora’s Annual Plant Sale—a cash-only event that takes place between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Sunday, May 26 in the Home Hardware parking lot at Mary and Wellington—features “plants that work in our zone—they’ve already been in the soil and it’s a mature plant that’s being purchased.”

“They’re acclimated to our local conditions—which is a combination of three growing zones: 4, 5, and 6. The Plant Sale is a great place to get ideas for planting in full sun, partial sun, or shade. Experienced gardeners are on-site to help, too. It’s also a fundraiser for the Club to support our initiatives.”

One of the initiatives funded by the Plant Sale, as well as the Club’s Garden Tours, is the Margaret Howard Gunn Memorial Award. According to McFarquhar, this award has been established by Garden Aurora in honour its namesake, who was a woman who valued education and was a flower

show enthusiast.

She was knowledgeable and had a passion about horticulture, and was awarded Garden Aurora’s lifetime membership along with many other awards. Candidates applying for this \$500 award must be pursuing horticultural studies at an accredited Ontario college or university, or any other valid institute of higher learning.

Applications are currently open until July 31st. To find the application, visit our website: www.gardenaurora.ca.

It’s evident that the Margaret Howard Gunn Memorial Award is near and dear to the heart of McFarquhar and its members, as are the connections that are created by Garden Aurora.

“Having access to so many different people with so many different specialties is one of the most satisfying aspects of belonging to the Club. There is a generosity of spirit among the members and someone is going to have an answer to my questions about gardening.”

The five-year member of Garden Aurora also noted the “sense of belonging” she feels.

“Everyone in the club have so many different kinds of gardens. Indoor gardeners share their expertise with house plants. Outdoor gardeners with wild gardens or perfectly-kept gardens share strategies about growing plants in our zone.”

McFarquhar also reminded local gardeners that “Pollinator Week is coming up June 17-23, 2024” and she disclosed that there will be a “Photo Contest with details to follow.”

Just four days prior to the Club’s Annual Plant Sale is “Four Months of Iris Bloom and Beyond”—a seminar delivered by local gardeners Terry Laurin and Kate Brewitt.

Laurin and Brewitt are members of Garden Aurora and will “deliver the

‘dirt’” on growing irises, according to McFarquhar.

“The irises are grown in their backyard and we’re expecting over 50 at our meeting at the Legion on Wednesday, May 22 to pick up gardening tips about these plants that thrive in our zone. Irises will be sold at the event and members and guests are welcome.”

Garden Aurora—with over 100 members in the Club—is in a growth phase itself and meets on the fourth Wednesday of the following months: February, March, April, May, June, July, September, and October at the Aurora Royal Canadian Legion on Industrial Parkway.

McFarquhar observed that “a whole

new burst of volunteers has enlivened the Club and new members are welcome.”

“We also welcome guests to our meetings which feature a seminar on some aspect of local gardening. There are two ways to join Garden Aurora: show up to a meeting and join; or, go to our website, fill in an application, and mail it in. It’s \$25 for a single membership and \$30 for a family membership. Discounts to local gardening centres are just some of the benefits of membership.”

Based on these activities and its expanding membership, it’s clear that the Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society is still growing strong in our Town after 106 years.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

University comparison was less than apt: reader

(Re: *The Principles of an Economic Charter of Rights*, May 16)

Mr. Stronach, of course, is well-known, immensely wealthy, and much admired for his “rags to riches” biography and corporate success. Trying to refute his serial manifesto would be daunting. Lacking the time and resources to launch a counter-campaign, I have remained sullenly silent.

When, however, Stronach expressed opinions on universities returning to their original mission, I had to respond. I’ve spent over 62 years as a student and professor in public and private colleges and universities in Canada and the United States. His comments struck too close to home.

Stronach describes Plato’s “academy” as a precursor to today’s university. He says that “at the top of Plato’s curriculum was the subject of what constitutes an ideal state.” He then insists that today’s graduates will “have a lot of knowledge regarding topics such as philosophy, sociology, and political science... [but] the one topic they won’t have explored... might be the most important of all” (the nature of the ideal state).

Stronach is right to say that most students don’t learn much about the “ideal state.” That, however, is because universities and, more so, colleges are routing them into vocational education. They stress training in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, computers, and business. Our society is obsessed with immediately marketable employability skills. In fact, the only places where Plato might get a brief hearing is in underenrolled “philosophy, sociology, and political science” courses.

Stronach acknowledges that he has “funded research centres related to entrepreneurship and technological innovation... [but] until recently, it never occurred to [him] to consider what was the overriding purpose of the university.” I’m glad that he’s finally thinking about it, but it may be too late.

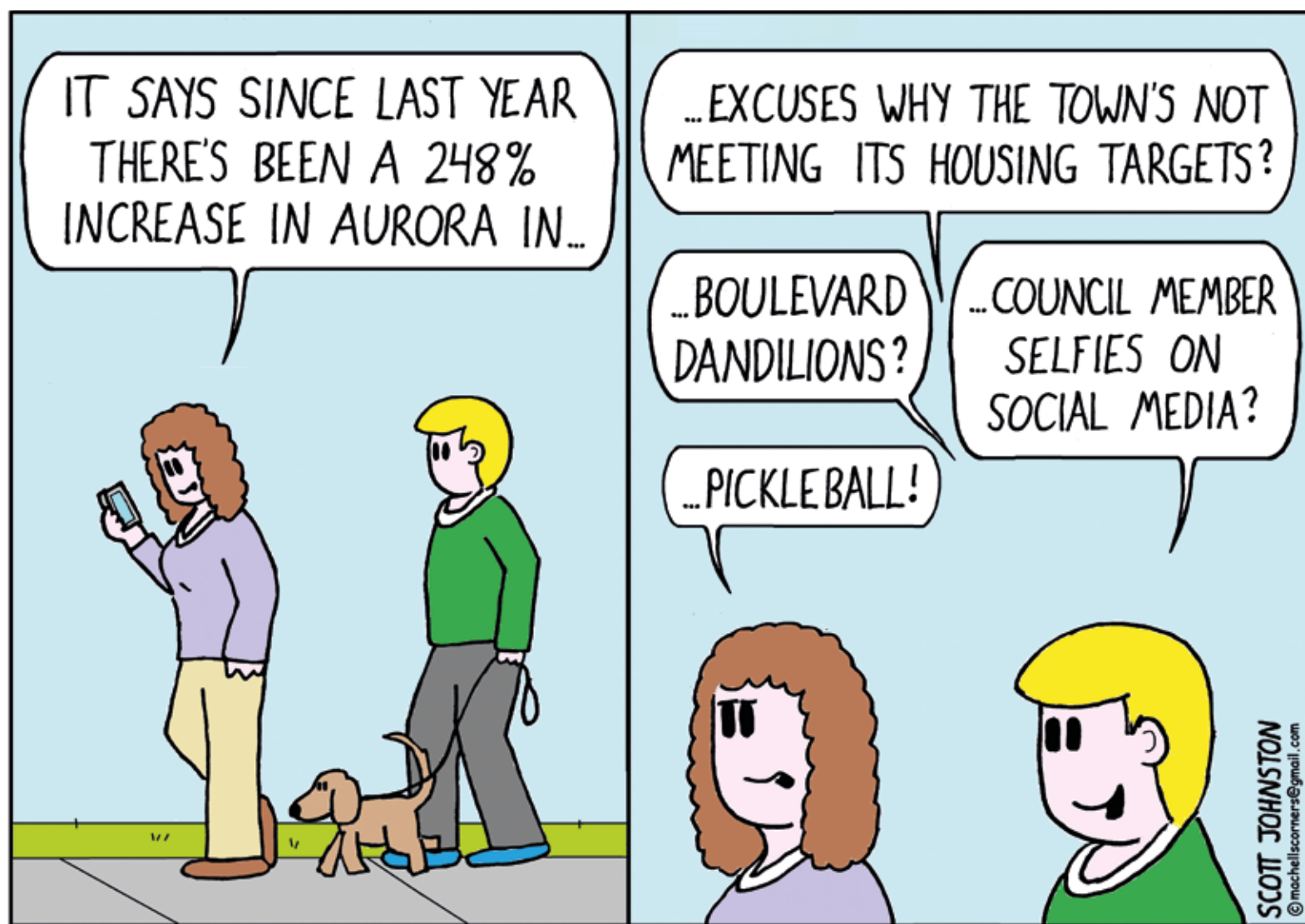
After all, his beloved Plato would not approve of any course that encouraged democracy (he’d also ban music and poetry). Plato’s ideal society was a patrician dictatorship that relied on a small elite with allegedly special knowledge, a layer of guardians to enforce order, and a vast majority fitted only for labour. Stronach’s enthusiasm for individualism would be crushed.

As for technology, Plato’s hero, Socrates, despised innovation and denounced even the written word. We know that because Plato subversively wrote it down.

I sincerely hope Mr. Stronach learns more about Plato’s adversity to his own core beliefs. He might then rethink his own philosophy. If so, then he could reconsider whether the right question isn’t what a university is for, but what “business” is for! Not only would he find Plato standing against him, but also that the life project of acquiring wealth is the problem, not the solution.

Howard Doughty
Oak Ridges

Machell’s Corners



A 2-4 for 30,000



BROCK’S BANTER

Brock Weir

Whatever you want to call it, it’s come and gone – and now we’re settling into all the realities that come with kicking off a “short week.”

Some of you might call it “the May Long Weekend.” Others, looking forward to crack open a few cold ones, might subscribe to “May 2-4” school of thought. More still simply dub it the “official start of summer,” using the word “official” in the most unofficial way possible – in other words, incorrectly – but any excuse for a good party, right?

I do have to admit that all these alternate names for the weekend that was irk me just a little bit, particularly when it comes to Victoria Day.

As a student of history, I’ve always gravitated towards names – holidays or otherwise – that commemorate something specific rather than something vague or ephemeral. Each is a chance for a history lesson, an interesting cultural exchange, or a chance to find inspiration from our past, and those who made a difference, in order to benefit the present and future.

Many of the names listed above, and even some that didn’t make the cut, are undoubtedly fun and, in the case of that “official start of summer” nonsense, aspirational as, given climate change, it could have, for all we know, just as easily snowed over the weekend. And yet, they don’t really have meaning or import.

Officially, at the Federal Level, Victoria Day was established not only as a tribute to Queen Victoria, under whom the present Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia came together to form the Dominion of Canada in 1967, but, later, as a permanent way to celebrate the monarch’s official birthday.

Victoria’s birthday on our shores were first declared a holiday more than 20 years prior to Confederation, and, following 1867, was typically celebrated on the Queen’s actual birthday of May 24 before it was fixed to the closest Monday under the reign of her son, Edward VII. It was Edward VII who approved keeping his mother’s birthday as the sovereign’s official day of celebration – presumably because May was a far more clement time of year for a blow-out bash than his own birthday in November.

Despite a few bounces-around between May and June depending on the sovereign’s preference, for the majority of Elizabeth II’s remarkable 70-year reign, it was fixed to what we now know as Victoria Day, and remains so in the reign of Charles III, with the proclamation as recently as May of 2023 fixing it on

behalf of all future monarchs going forward.

Once again, it’s a chance for a history lesson and one that can spur valuable discussions on Canada’s past, present and future.

In the lead-up to the long weekend that is just now in the rear-view mirror, I don’t think I heard a single reference to Monday, May 20, 2024, being the Official Canadian Birthday of King Charles III.

During the latter years of Elizabeth II’s reign, those references would percolate up to the surface here and there, albeit less frequently in each passing year – one of the most memorable, for me, was a passing paraphrase to a Classic Simpsons quote related to the sale of fireworks: “Celebrate Her Majesty’s Birthday by blowing up a small part of her Kingdom.”

The best pop culture mustered up ahead of the weekend were memes of Victoria, dressed in the so-called widow’s weeds, celebrating “the May 2-4 weekend” on the back of a Sea-Doo – or even taking the aforementioned widow’s weeds to a new level, picturing her coming out of a local dispensary laden down with enough bags of product to make her entire court Merry throughout a long weekend. It seems for cartoonists, pink-hued eyeballs in this last instance were optional.

While there wasn’t much fuss over the last weekend, the same can’t be said for the month of May as a whole.

May 6, for instance, marked the first anniversary of the Coronation and, as such, the Governor-General finally unveiled the long-awaited Coronation Medal, which is intended to honour 30,000 everyday Canadians who have made a real difference in our communities – or, in the words from Rideau Hall, individuals who “have made a significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region of, or community in, Canada, or attained an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to Canada.”

This, in my view, is a long-overdue move – and not just because it took a full 12 months from the medal’s announcement on May 6, 2023 until the first be-crowned medallions were awarded to our Provincial Lieutenant Governors and territorial Commissioners near the same day in 2024.

In whatever wisdom, the Federal Government, the ones who actually greenlight medals military, commemorative or otherwise, opted not to issue a medal for outstanding Canadians to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022.

Some might see these things as merely a bauble, but the Jubilee came at a time where we were just being lifted out of the restrictions and, indeed, mindsets that came part and parcel with the Global Pandemic. We were getting back into the world, we were grateful for our first responders and frontline workers who went above and beyond the call of duty to do everything they could to mitigate the health disaster, and then... well, it wasn’t exactly “crickets” but it was pretty darn close.

One can only hope that the criteria of those who “have made a significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region of, or community in Canada” element of the eligibility requirement includes these individuals – individuals whose heroism now sadly appears forgotten now that we’re back in the swing of things and reluctant to look back on that strange and scary time – rather than used as a way to express political thanks by MPs and MPPs, which often appeared to be the case in 2012 when the Diamond Jubilee of Elizabeth II was marked in a similar way.

Now that the medals have been struck, I think the only things left on the “to do” list the Feds assigned themselves ahead of the Coronation is an official Canadian portrait of the King. That portrait was likely delayed due to the King’s recent cancer treatment, but now that he appears well on the road to recovery, let’s hope that’s produced sooner rather than later – and that a “homecoming” to Canada is soon in the offing.

Hopefully before his next “Official Canadian Birthday” on May 19, 2025 – but it wouldn’t be the worst thing to have him here for the “Official Start of the Summer” or the “May Long Weekend.”

Somehow, cracking open a 2-4 in his honour doesn’t seem particularly on brand, but maybe let’s raise a...can to our upcoming medal winners.

THE AURORAN

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The Aurora Museum & Archives is... Getting Agitated



This might look like a metal plunger, and if that's what you thought, then you would be partially correct. This is actually a metal hand agitator (L81.7.58) and is the predecessor of our modern toilet plungers, and the agitators in some washing machines – a design that comes in handy for unmentionable incidents, and unmentionables! While doing laundry, this tool would be used in a plunging motion to work the water around the textiles. Evolving in form from an upright mallet, the screens and holes prevented the user from getting wet as the water is forced away. You can still purchase hand agitators that are similar in model, if you're feeling rustic.



GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor Tom Mrakas

We held our first meeting of the Aurora Cares Action Team on May 13 where we discussed new ways to connect vulnerable community members to available services, as well as any potential in-kind supports that we may be able to provide.

We also discussed revising the resource guide that we developed during COVID-19 to include updated information and links and include housing supports.

The reality is that there continues to be many residents in Aurora who aren't aware of, or can't access, important supports and services. Thanks to the Action Team members — a diverse array of community members — who not only identify needs amongst vulnerable groups, but also have the time and resources to connect their fellow residents with help they may need.

These members include Wendy Browne, President of the Aurora Rotary Club; York Regional Police Superintendent Russ Bellman; Sandra Humfries, former Aurora Town Councillor; Rosalyn Jardim Gonsalves, former General Manager of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce; Doug Steele, Chair of Welcoming Arms; Captain Fred Reid, Lead Pastor of Northridge Community Church, Salvation Army; Angela Covert, Community Relations Representative, Northridge Community Church, Salvation Army; as well as Aurora residents Marco Di Girolamo, Alexandra Bonham and Patricia Wallace.

Looking ahead, we will be meeting monthly and I am looking forward to this action team working together to help vulnerable residents connect with important supports and services in our community.

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.

Father's Day



PARSA'S PERSPECTIVE

Michael Parsa, MPP
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

I am delighted to extend my warmest wishes to all the fathers and father figures in our lives as we celebrate Father's Day. This day is dedicated to honouring the men who have shaped our lives with their wisdom, love, and unconditional support.

In celebrating Father's Day, we also highlight the diversity of fatherhood. Fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, and father figures each play a unique and significant role in our families.

Let us remember to express our gratitude to the fathers and father figures who have made a difference in our lives.

In our modern world, the role

of a father continues to evolve. Today, more than ever, fathers are deeply involved in every aspect of family life, from caregiving to encouraging a sense of integrity and perseverance.

To all fathers and father figures, thank you for your unwavering dedication to your families. Your hard work has not gone unnoticed,

and today, we celebrate you.

As we commemorate Father's Day, let us also take the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful summer weather. Whether it's a casual day at the park or a simple family gathering, please make the most of this time together. This season brings a renewed sense of joy, offering countless opportunities to connect with nature and each other.

June marks the beginning of longer days, warmer weather, and breathtaking landscapes. It is a time to step outside and engage in the many activities that our wonderful community has to offer. Remember to stay active and enjoy the summer. Happy June!

The Word on the Street (Festival)



INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

Sunday in June.

Of course, things have changed along the way. It is no longer a garage sale, although one may see the odd booth with items that have a distinctly "vintage" look. And at the behest of York Region, the northern end of the route has been shifted to Wellington, although the closure still goes as far south as Murray.

Within that 1.6 km stretch of road, approximately 500 vendors set up at 600 booths along both sides of the street, which doesn't include all the bricks and mortar businesses along Yonge, almost all of whom take part in the fun. There are also food vendors, music stages, buskers, demonstrations and more.

Booths are no longer a dollar a foot, but a flat rate of \$125, although less for Chamber members, charities, service clubs and not-for-profits. And every year, all of the 600 spaces are sold, usually well in advance.

One never quite knows what they'll see each year. Past shows have included such things as tethered hot air balloon rides, car shows, climbing walls, and a zoo. Fortunately, for the sake of the animals exposed to the hot summer sun, that latter one only

lasted a few years, and will not be repeated.

But there are still animals to be seen, as many Aurorans bring their dogs with them to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells. Many of the vendors put water bowls out to keep our four legged friends hydrated.

For years, traditionally, unless the weather was poor, the estimate was that 40,000 people attended this event. I'm not sure who came up with that number or how it was calculated, but it was used as an attendance claim almost every year until the COVID shutdowns. Since then, more recent estimates of "30,000+" or simply "tens of thousands" have been used.

However many people visit over the course of the six-hour long festival, Yonge Street is always packed, especially by early afternoon.

Any other time of year, one could walk the distance from Wellington to Murray in about 20 minutes.

But on Sunday, June 2, that will be impossible as not only will there will be too many people, but more importantly, far too many interesting things to see, do and enjoy to move at such a rapid pace.

So, take your time to take it all in, and have fun, everyone!

THE AURORAN

www.TheAuroran.com



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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.

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Do you feel Aurora is a safe community?

YES NO UNSURE

www.theauroran.com

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| RESULTS TO DATE MAY 21, 2024 | YES | NO | UNSURE |
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Feel free to e-mail Scott at: machellscorners@gmail.com

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Investment dollars fleeing Canada

Investors, it seems, are increasingly losing confidence in Canada and putting their money elsewhere.

Here's the thing about money: it has no heart, no conscience, and no homeland. It flows along the path of least resistance in search of the greatest return possible.

You can't blame investors for wanting a decent return on the money they invest.

At Magna, the company I founded, we gave the biggest chunk of our annual profits to shareholders – around 20 percent paid out in the form of a dividend.

Magna's investors provided the capital we needed to build new factories, purchase new equipment, and fund product research. Without them, we wouldn't have been anywhere near as successful as we were. Business is driven by three forces: smart managers, motivated employees, and confident investors. At Magna, we had all three.

But investors today are growing increasingly wary about sinking money into Canada – whether its foreign

companies looking to acquire Canadian businesses or mutual funds investing in Canada's stock markets.

According to the latest World Bank data on Canada, net outflows of foreign direct investment are nearly double the amount of investment dollars coming into this country.

There was a string of other troubling reports in recent months as well, including news that foreign investors sold nearly \$50 billion worth of Canadian equities in 2023 – the largest exodus of securities investment dollars in our history.

Canadians, meanwhile, were busy buying up a record amount of foreign stocks and bonds, according to BNN Bloomberg. The common thread that runs through all of these reports is a



THE PRINCIPLES OF AN ECONOMIC CHARTER OF RIGHTS

By Frank Stronach

disturbing lack of conviction and trust on the part of investors in Canada's economic fundamentals.

The investment climate here in Canada was never ideal, but it has significantly deteriorated in the past decade or so. To make matters worse, the new capital-gains taxes introduced in last month's federal budget will likely

increase the flood of money leaving Canada in search of better returns and less government meddling elsewhere.

If we fail to retain the businesses and individuals that create products and services and hire Canadian workers, then our living standards will inevitably fall. It's why you hardly ever see factories being built anymore, why good-paying jobs are drying up, and why investment capital is fleeing our country.

The reality is that in today's borderless world, it's difficult to cage in money. Investors will simply move to jurisdictions where there are less restrictions, lower taxes and fewer headaches.

So how do we create an environment that would allow Canada to retain the brains and investment dollars needed

to build new businesses and generate new jobs, while also attracting foreign investment?

For starters, we need to dismantle and rebuild our tax system so that it's flat-out simple, black-and-white and stripped of all loopholes, deductions and exemptions. And we need to stop treating income differently – all income should be treated the same in terms of taxation.

We also need to claw back the regulations choking the life out of small businesses, cut government spending, and give our entrepreneurs the breathing room they need to grow their businesses.

All of these policies are part of the economic charter of rights I've been touting as a way to halt the further erosion of our economy and rejuvenate business growth in Canada.

If no one wants to invest in Canada – including even Canadians – what does that say about the true state of our country and our economy?

To learn more about how an economic charter could help restore investor confidence and fuel new economic growth, 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).

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FASHION FORWARD – Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MPP Leah Taylor Roy was among the models when "Beyond the Runway – Painting the Path" unfolded at the Royal Rose Gallery on Yonge Street, just south of Wellington. The fundraiser was co-hosted by Royal Rose and owner Rosa Calabrese Teal and financial advisor Rossy Bustamante.

Photo by Jim Jackson

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BUSINESS & FINANCE



Cenotaph's 100th anniversary could be celebrated with exhibitions, site improvements

War Memorial was dedicated in 1925

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Aurora Cenotaph is one of the Town's most iconic landmarks and ahead of the 100th anniversary of its dedication to the men who paid the ultimate sacrifice for King & Country in the First World War, plans are underway to make it a milestone to Remember.

The Cenotaph, which lies at the heart of the Aurora War Memorial Peace Park, serves as a memorial to soldiers and servicemen hailing from Aurora, King Township and Whitchurch-Stouffville and plans for the milestone anniversary include collaborations from all three municipalities.

While a final budget for the celebrations is yet to be presented, initiatives that are part and parcel of the anniversary could include site work to install permanent seating at the space, correct some century-old typos on the monument, a street banner program, exhibitions outdoor, virtual and travelling, and the installation of a monument for Indigenous soldiers.

"A special ceremony will take place to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial," said

Michelle Johnson, Collections and Exhibitions Coordinator for the Aurora Museum & Archives, in a report to Council. "The Aurora Legion will lead this ceremony and it will include a rededication of the restored monument, speakers, and a selection of traditional music and readings. Staff will endeavour to connect with descendants of individuals who were responsible for organizing, fundraising, and advocating for the construction of the Aurora War Memorial in 1925.

"For 100 years, Aurora War Memorial Peace Park has been identified as the place community members go to memorialize those who have been lost to armed conflict. Missing from the landscape is a memorial dedicated to Indigenous community members who have lost their lives in conflict since the beginning of European settlement. A new memorial dedicated to Indigenous people who have made the ultimate sacrifice is being considered as part of this project."

Additional site work is slated to include renovating and levelling existing pathways, the addition of four memorial benches, correcting the misspelled last name and removing an "incorrect medal attribution," preventative conservation and restoration, additional lighting to illuminate the LAV, which



The Royal Canadian Legion Colour Guard stands vigil at the Aurora Cenotaph at last November's Remembrance Day ceremonies. Plans are now underway to mark the Centennial of the iconic Aurora landmark.
Auroran file photo by Glenn Rodger

was installed to pay tribute to those who served in Afghanistan, and the Korean War memorial installed last year.

It is hoped that all three municipalities will collaborate on the exhibition to be developed, said Johnson.

"Aurora, King, and Stouffville have a unique relationship that transcends municipal borders," she said. "A series of outdoor, virtual, and travelling exhibitions will explore that relationship by focusing on how the three municipalities came together to share in memorializing those who made the ultimate sacrifice during the First World War. Content from all three municipal collections will be showcased to help tell the story of how the Aurora War Memorial, and surrounding Peace Park, came to be.

"The Town will recruit contract staff to assist with exhibition research, development, installation, and other parts of the project, as needed. The outdoor exhibition will be located in Aurora War Memorial Peace Park and will be on view from August to November 2025. A virtual exhibition will be launched on the anniversary of the memorial dedication. Finally, a travelling exhibition will be developed for display in Stouffville, King, and other possible locations."

The proposed street banner program will feature soldiers from the First World War featured in their respective municipalities as well, she added.

"Banners will fall into two categories: the first includes information about the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial, the second category will feature individual soldiers whose names are included on the Aurora War Memorial," she said. "The design of the banners will be standardized, and each municipality will highlight individuals local to their area who made the ultimate sacrifice during the First World War. After the project, the soldier banners will be given to the Aurora Legion for their use."

The plans were greeted warmly by Council at the Committee level on May 7 with Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner praising the new lighting proposed.

"Definitely I think the Korean

War Memorial should be lit and also the memorial to the Aboriginal war veterans," she said. "That's very important."

Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland was also positive about the plan, but sought assurances that Whitchurch-Stouffville and King would be collaborating and "chipping in" – as well as potential grant funding from other levels of government.

"We have consulted with King Township and Whitchurch-Stouffville. There are no budget commitments at present," said Johnson. "They are waiting to better understand what Council is prepared to endorse at this time. There are some areas that for them are more appropriate to support in times of budgetary commitments. Some of those areas are exhibitions, a banner program, not necessarily the site works that the Aurora War Memorial Peace Park for a few reasons that are more relevant to their budgetary mandates."

Responding to budgetary questions from Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, Johnson added the exhibition budget line is a three-pronged approach.

"It includes an online exhibition in which we would target Virtual Museums of Canada Community Memories funding," she said "That is a grant that is up to 50 per cent. It also includes an on-site exhibition at Aurora War Memorial Peace Park that would be temporary for about three months and would include signage throughout the park that would have reproductions of archival materials, stories related to the establishment of the memorial, and then a travelling exhibition component. That's three mediums for the exhibition. The travelling exhibition component is also eligible for grant funding... and there is appetite to bring that to our partner municipalities in King and Stouffville."

The estimated budget for the 100th anniversary project stands at \$144,000 -- \$53,500 for site works and enhancements; \$38,000 for the exhibitions; \$12,000 for contract staff; \$12,500 for street banners; \$25,000 for the new Indigenous memorial; and \$3,000 for the ceremony itself.



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← SCAN TO RSVP

Aurora Through the Archives is multi-location photo exhibition

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora will be a photographer's dream through June 30 as multiple venues across the community come together to host the 2024 CONTACT Photography Festival.

Running through June 30, Aurora Through the Archives showcases archival images from the 1870s through to the 1980s and is spread out through Hillary House National Historic Site, outside the Aurora Armoury at Mosley and Larmont Streets, and within the Royal Rose Gallery on Yonge Street, just south of Wellington.

"The exhibition is a collaboration between the Aurora Museum & Archives, Aurora Armoury, Hillary

House National Historic Site, Royal Rose Gallery, Maddison Dearlove-Marshall, Amanda Jenkins, and Sophie Langille, who are Master of Museum Studies students from the University of Toronto," says the Town.

"The CONTACT Photography Festival is based in Toronto and has grown since 1997 to become one of the world's largest photography festivals, attracting as many as 1.5 million people a year in venues and public places across Canada's most populated cities."

This is Aurora's first entry to the Festival and showcases public and private spaces within our community.

"At each location, visitors are treated to an exploration of archival

and reproduction images of Aurora dating from 1850s – 1980s," say organizers. "Journey through the lens of archival photography to delve into Aurora's past, presented in modern-day public spaces and local businesses. This is a uniquely immersive exploration of the Town of Aurora."

In addition to the three historic venues, contemporary photography is also in the spotlight at the Skylight Gallery on the third floor of Town Hall on John West Way.

On now, through June 3, the Gallery is host to Sean Stone's photographic exhibition, "Window on the World."

"As a lover of travel, Sean Stone has had the good fortune to have travelled around the world and

record some of the beauty that he has found, both in distant locations as well as across Canada," say organizers. "Especially after a pandemic-length lockdown, he thinks the need to see beyond one's own city has never been felt more acutely.

"This exhibition reminds viewers of the wonders that await us outside one's hometown. So come on a visual adventure with Stone, from Alaska to Australia, from Newfoundland to Morocco. It's a fascinating, beautiful world out there."

For more information on Aurora's contributions to the Festival, visit www.aurora.ca/en/Museum/contact-photography-festival.aspx. For more on CONTACT, head over to contactphoto.com.



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Bright ideas showcased at re-launched Youth Innovation Fair

From page 1

good for little kids and can help them fall asleep more easily.”

The students know first-hand how difficult it can be to fall asleep when you're afraid of the dark. They had been through it themselves, they say, and younger family members can still find themselves unsettled when the lights go out.

“I have ten cousins and five of them are really little,” said Kingsley. “When we go to the cottage together, sometimes they will wake us up really early!”

Nightlights also won the day in the Senior category when students from Toronto French School (TFS) presented the Lumine to local judges.

In 2020, when much of the world first experienced the impacts of COVID-19, one of the courses of action taken by TFS was to install Plexiglas barriers between desks to help stop the spread.

But, now that we're settled into our new normal, these students discovered the school had “thousands” of these boards gathering dust in storage with very little practical use. That is, until they came up with the Lumine.

“We found out that thousands of boards were being left in the storage room and were probably going to be thrown out, but our business solution to that is to reuse the boards, cut them out using laser cutters and put them together using LED boards to create acrylic nightlights,” said student Ethan Bu.

The main goal of the idea, added Aiwen Huang, is to “reduce as much Plexiglas as we can as we realized there is

so much waste.”

“The material itself, which is a polycarbonate, is very difficult to recycle,” said Huang. “By making these nightlights, we're able to reduce the amount of waste our school has produced and, in the future, we hope to reduce Plexiglas around our local communities, including other schools, businesses, and maybe even hospitals. Additionally, we work with local artists to create our nightlight designs so their art can be spread amongst the community and we can collaborate with even more people in the community.”

The lights have been a hit within the TFS community, noted Tristan Kako.

“We have been able to talk about our projects and also sell nightlights at school events,” said Kako, adding popularity was particularly high around Valentine's Day. “We made over 35 sales there and were able to talk to people about the mission of our project.”

“We want to continue this for as long as we can, just so we can maximize how much Plexiglas we can use up,” said Vanessa Leung. “In the future, we're also planning to make a few more products, maybe some smaller ones. Our night lights aren't all square, so there are wasted space. We want to take that space and maybe make some small keychains. Hopefully we can grow our business and experience more entrepreneurship, more communication skills, and be able to reach out to our community.”

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

RYAN QIN

St. Augustin CHS: Qin's innovation focused making computers and processors more energy efficient, particularly given the rise of Artificial Intelligence in day-to-day use. “I see a lot of use for AI [but] the downside of it that nobody has been talking about is excessive power consumption. It's easy to fall into this hole that AI is good, and I agree, but I believe if the power consumption is not solved, there will be a shortage of electricity.” Qin's innovation optimizes the efficiency of voltage regulators, how chips are powered and how the chips, in turn, consume the power.”

EQUIPE FRANCOBOTIQUE: LES ROBOT-FRANCO-ZARTS

Multi-School Team: This Francophone robotics team, which will head to the international WPI FIRST LEGO League open next month was inspired by a lack of music education in schools to create their innovation. Their solution was a universal keyboard that could be enjoyed by people of all abilities, including the visually-impaired and colourblind. “We found that Ontario has the lowest amount of education for music in school,” said team member



The team from Toronto French School took top honours in the Senior Category at last week's Youth Innovation Fair with their project to transform plexiglas barriers left over from the Global Pandemic into new useful items.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Madeline Northrup. “We have no mandatory music in any grade, while Saskatchewan has mandatory music all the way through Grade 9.” Added Ayden Arabi: “Small details all together make a big problem and we have to solve that. This has a universal design, which means it includes everyone in the design of the product.” The team is comprised of (Grade 4) Dominic James, Mila Oliveira, Ayden Arabi, Patrick Northrup, (Grade 5) Alexander Kharlanuau, (Grade 6), Hagan Pong and Madeline Northrup.

ZOEY RABINOVICH & MAELLE HAMILTON

Highview Public School (Grade 5): Students can often find getting ready quickly and efficiently in the morning can be a bit of a chore, particularly if you have physical challenges. These young innovators developed a neat solution featuring a skateboard on a track. The idea is twofold: if you have difficulty getting up and down the stairs holding your school supplies, you can secure what you need to a skateboard to help get up and down; if you're packing your bag, you can also use it to propel what you need from the counter directly into your bag. “I hate packing up in the morning and I just thought it would be a good idea – and I thought of people in wheelchairs who have disabilities and this is so much easier,” said Maelle.

LUCAS AGOLLI, RYAN BOROOMAND, ETHAN MacDONALD & WINTERS ZHANG

Lester B. Pearson Public School: Looking to keep fit and help the planet at the same time, this group of students presented the Vacusize, a backpack that, with weights, can be used for various forms of exercise, but also equipped with small vacuums to help you pick up garbage and recyclables you might find in your path. “Lucas came up with the idea of a vacuum combined with a backpack,” explained Ryan. “Then I added onto the idea that maybe it could be a backpack for exercise so when you're on a walk you can put weights in

it.”

SUMAYA CHAUDARY

St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic High School: Sumaya has always had her eye on environmental innovations and here she presented Green Roof Community Gardens, an innovation she said would help with pollution, air quality, and addressing “urban heat islands” through making the most of roofs. “I really appreciate gardening and that is something that is so useful,” said Sumaya. “I found green roofs fascinating ever since I first learned about them. I put the two ideas together because people who mainly live in apartment buildings or have small back yards, they might not have the opportunity to garden and I thought that was such a sad thing. They could garden on the rooftop and that makes it a community space, it makes it easier since it is a shared responsibility. I also realized the learning experience this creates—learning about the environment, the eco-system it creates, how to garden and leadership skills in the community. They can also be implemented on top of schools and this food can be used to teach students about the ecosystems, about healthy eating, healthy living, and how gardening is good for your physical and mental health.”

VANESSA PALAZZOLO

Lester B. Pearson Public School: When the alarm goes off in the morning, our thoughts often immediately turn to what we have to do that day. Palazzolo's projecting alarm clock takes away much of the guess work, projecting not only the date and time, but weather and your complete agenda. “I would always wake up and wonder what do I have to wear, I didn't even know what temperature, what day it was, and how to dress appropriately for school. I thought of this because I thought maybe I can just think of something that would project on the wall or ceiling and show you everything you have today. If you have a soccer practice or something, if you have a hot lunch at school like Pizza Fridays and subjects you have today.”

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Local youth showcase innovations for a better tomorrow



Clockwise from Top Left: Sumaya Chaudary, Grade 11, showcased the benefits of green roofs and community gardens. Vanessa Palazzolo, Grade 4, presented a projectable alarm clock. Ryan Qin brainstormed ways to make computers and devices using AI more energy-efficient. All participants were celebrated in the Skylight Gallery. **Auroran photos by Brock Weir**

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WeeFestival set to wow youngsters with Paper Playground



Photo courtesy of the Aurora Cultural Centre

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Youngsters will be able to flex their creative muscles in brand new ways this month as the Aurora Cultural Centre partners with WeeFestival to bring a new immersive experience to the community.

The Paper Playground, which will be offered at the Aurora Public Library on May 25, is the brainchild of British Columbia-based Foolish Operations.

“Paper Playground is an immersive experience that welcomes children as true creative collaborators, where they become an essential part of the ‘under the sea’ performance,” says the Centre. “Exploring the theme of water with boats, fish, crabs and sharks, the artists offer irresistible invitations to roll like a wave, fill with air like a cloud and draw the ocean.”

“This is a stimulating experience set on a large paper carpet created especially for children six and under that is full of live music, drawing, colourful projections and movement. A playful and interactive dance performance where children are free to join in and explore – because that’s what young ones do best!”

Foolish Operations’ Artistic Director Julie Lebel, a dancer of more than 25 years, says she has always been interested in “intergenerational work” in the field of dance. When she had her twins in 2010, she started focusing on making work for “very, very young children” that put this interest into action.

“I think if you can breathe you can dance,” she says. “I started working with people of all ages and I think when people discover their own power through movement it is a beautiful thing to watch.”

Paper Playground was one of the very first works produced by Foolish Operations and with west coast success, they’ve long-dreamed of bringing the show to Ontario and beyond.

“When we started in 2016 and 2017, water was on our minds,” she

says. “The protection of water and it is still very dear to our hearts. We can’t say this is an environmental piece in a way that we don’t have a strong message of ‘protect the water’ but we are hoping to instill a sense of wonder about the water and little kids and in families that this will help them be more curious about water and hopefully make efforts to protect it.”

“We started that with my children, an improvisation practice for parents and children together. The children are 0 – 5 and what I keep witnessing is we started with children who aren’t verbal yet... and I am witnessing them growing in confidence – in their muscle, in their bones – as they are making creative decisions, exploring through dancing...outside of their main caregiver with other children. I am sensing we’re all witnessing these children growing in confidence and that sense of safety and exploring, developing relationships with new people. They have this in their early DNA and I’m hoping as they grow through life they will be humans who will not be afraid, try new things, and express themselves and have a voice. I think that’s what dance gives you – that confidence of being witnessed in your space and take your place in the world.”

“We create this sense of play and joy, but sometimes we have parents tearing up because they are witnessing their child in a new way. That was surprising to us, it keeps happening, and I hope it will happen in Aurora.”

Paper Playground, a Foolish Operations production presented by the Aurora Cultural Centre and WeeFestival will take place at the Aurora Public Library on May 25 a 11 a.m. (a production best for kids between the ages of eight months and three years) and again at 2 p.m., recommended for participants aged three to six. Admission is \$10. The show is presented as part of the Aurora Cultural Centre’s Magic Carpet Series.

For more information, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca.



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Breaking down medical barriers, fostering equity drive Give Back Award winners



Aryanna Moolla of Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School was celebrated by Janice Tee, Global Director of HR Systems and Projects for Magna International, and Erin Cerenzia of Neighbourhood Network.
Auroran photo by Brock Weir

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Multiple factors drive people to give back to the world around them, but one common denominator is a drive to foster equity in the communities they call home.

This is particularly true for Grade 12 students from across York Region who were recently awarded the 2024 Give Back Award by Neighbourhood Network and Magna International.

Aryanna Moolla, a student at Aurora's Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School is preparing to embark on a post-secondary career in biomedical sciences with an eye on "dismantling health inequities and their impact on patient outcomes."

"While it may seem like our universal healthcare system in Canada addresses these issues, disparities exist across Indigenous and immigrant health, mental health/addiction services, and socioeconomic status," says Aryanna. "My volunteer work has provided the tools to continue fostering equity in the medical field I choose to pursue. My empathy, compassion, and emotional involvement in this issue stem from my high school experiences, aligning with my lifelong commitment to make a positive impact."

Within the walls of her Aurora school and the broader community, she cites her work organizing a local menstrual product drive for Blue Door Shelter as amongst her most fulfilling work.

"With a passion for improving healthcare access, I identified with this issue as a female student. After having completed research about period poverty in Canada, I pledged to make a difference in this national crisis in any way that I could, starting with my local community. While this project helped make a tangible difference in the lives of women at the shelter, it was also a fulfilling educational experience for those at my high school. Throughout the initiative, I made sure to push for education on women's healthcare access within my school, in order to demonstrate the impact and importance of the student donations."

Seeing this impact and passion only fuels her further – and has benefited local food banks, the formation of her school's Muslim Students' Association, as well as one-on-one mentorship tutoring younger students.

Among this year's honourees were:

PRISHA BHAVSAR

Stouffville District High School

"Prisha epitomizes dedication and service to others through her impactful volunteer work. As a Student Trustee for the York Region District School Board, she created workshops to support thousands of students from 33 different high schools who were impacted by pandemic-related learning loss. Prisha also serves as President of the Empowered Student Partnership and STEM Science Council, Chair of the Ontario Well Being Working Group to help students with physical and mental illness, is a STEM mentor, and volunteers at her local hospital. In addition to these efforts, Prisha founded the global initiative

contributing meaningfully to society."

NIKI ZAFAR HEIDARI

Newmarket High School

"For Niki, giving back means using her resources to help create a more equitable world, amplifying the voices of those who are marginalized and disadvantaged. In her school and the broader community, she dedicates her time to educational outreach, leading initiatives like MedTalk and STEM Today where her medical and scientific research has been published. Niki also founded the non-profit organization Wise Owl Academy, bringing free education to students in need across the province and into developing nations. She is an active fundraiser and volunteer for Cancer Kids First, the York Region Food Network, and is editor for The Affair Magazine. Niki's diverse volunteer efforts reflect her deep-seated desire to have a meaningful impact on others."

MICHELLE KELLY

Dr. J.M. Denison Secondary School

"Volunteering has been integral to Michelle's life, and giving back is deeply ingrained in her values and life experiences. At her high school, Michelle launched their first VEX robotics club, serves on Student Council, and is a mentor in the Best Buddies Program. Her leadership extends to the community, where she

supports Blue Door, Daily Bread Food Bank, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and Southlake Regional Health Centre. Michelle also co-founded Animal Action, partnering with the OSPCA to donate and deliver 210,000 pounds of pet food during the pandemic – including using drones to make deliveries in Northern Canada. Through her future studies in STEM, Michelle hopes to inspire young women, break down barriers, and serve as a role model for future generations."

MATTHEW PILLING

Sir William Mulock Secondary School

To Matthew, giving back to others is a fantastic way to invest in the well-being of a community. At school, he dedicates himself to various roles, from supporting sporting events and tutoring, to managing sound for school plays, and preserving school spirit through videography of different occasions. Matthew's support extends to the community, where he volunteers for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel York, helps at local clean up events, and notably, brings self-expression, joy, and empowerment to children facing medical challenges at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital. For Matthew, giving back is about recognizing the opportunities he has received and working tirelessly to ensure others have access to similar benefits."

RedCycle to provide menstrual health resources and education to women in developing countries. She is planning to pursue studies in medicine, where she is committed to creating equitable women's health solutions and care for all."

PARKER BARNARD

Huron Heights Secondary School

"Parker's volunteer journey began at the hockey rink, where he was encouraged by his coaches to help as a referee, with timekeeping, and supporting young players at public skating events. As time went on, he realized that volunteering was not only helping others, but was enriching his own life. Parker believes that small acts of kindness are contagious. He supports his community by shoveling snow and raking leaves for local seniors and collecting food and coats for people experiencing homelessness. Parker also created a Youth Space group at his school to help bringing positivity and inclusivity to students. He will be studying Mechanical Engineering with the goal of developing innovative, sustainable solutions to improve lives and continue

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Local Robotics team hits just the right note to take on the World

Music education a focus for local students

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ontario lags behind when it comes to elementary school music education, but local students have come up with some innovations to make music not only more practical but accessible.

Local French-language students, led by educator Renee Northrup, are bound for Massachusetts next week to take on the WPI FIRST LEGO League US Open event.

The students' team, Equipe Francobotique: Les robot-franco-zarts, and their universal music keyboard, have wowed judges at the Regional and Provincial levels, and now, after a good showing at Aurora's Youth Innovation Fair, they are set to see if their project hits just the right note stacked up against international competitors.

"I think the kids have found an incredibly smart solution to the problem of not having enough music education in our schools," says Northrup. "More and more we're cutting money out of our schools, especially our public schools, and the kids out of the seven kids on our team, no one has learned how to play a musical instrument in school. Some of them are up to Grade 6 and no one has learned how to play an instrument. I feel this is a problem in our society that we're not investing in our next generation.

"We're not providing the arts, we're not providing music, and we're not providing specialist teachers anymore that are teaching nothing but music because they are professional musicians themselves. What they have come up with is a very innovative solution. They have used a universal design to come up with a really cheap, portable small piano."



At the 2024 Youth Innovation Fair last Wednesday, the team made its pitch to judges – including 2023 Aurora Citizen of the Year Wendy Browne and Sandy Bundy of the Aurora Optimists. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

Among the team this year are Grade 4 students Dominic James, Mila Oliveira, Ayden Arabi and Patrick Northrup, Grade 5 student Alexander Kharlanuau, and Grade 6 students Hagan Pong and Madeline Northrup.

Their product, they say, costs just \$100 in materials, thus making it accessible to schools and students no matter the financial barriers. It's also accessible in the broadest sense of the word, tailored to those who are visually impaired, deaf, live with colour blindness and sensory issues, and more.

"Whether you're deaf, blind, colourblind, or you have other impairments, absolutely everyone in that class can play the same instrument because they have thought of how to adapt their design so it included absolutely everyone," says Renee Northrup.

The students are excited to showcase their work to their peers all around the world, including teams from Europe and East Africa, and say they have enjoyed the journey to this point; each step, they agree, has given them ideas on how to improve and perfect the product.

"We improve every time we step higher," says Madeline, adding that they have consulted with nearly 20 experts to ensure their device covers all eventualities.

Adds Ayden: "We had 18 experts – eight professional experts, two official experts, and some other experts, four inclusion experts – all of them helped put this together.

"It has a universal design, which means it includes everyone in the design of the product. For example, if you're blind or you can't see, there are music symbols over here. They can go down the keys, feel the real music symbols and then go back to play."

Continues Madeline: "We want to inspire people and we want the world to be better."

In addition to their innovation, the students have also been hard at work perfecting their robot – an integral part of the competition.

Throughout each level of the competition they have tweaked their model to meet various challenges and objectives, and Renee says they're at a stage where they can get every point on

the board – sometimes with a musical flare.

"They have three different presentations to memorize, 17 different songs they need to refine – there is some rapping involved, some traditional French-Canadian songs, there's an entrance and exit song for the set up and dismantling their project while they are singing about their project and then there is the robot," she says.

"They have worked the past eight months on their robot. They were first in Ontario at the Provincials and they now have a perfect robot that can score every point on the robot table. If all goes well and everything goes to plan, and the robot performs what it was programmed to do, they are certainly very competitive about this international level. I can't wait to watch and see what they can do."

The WPI FIRST LEGO League US Open will take place at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts, from June 9 through 11.

For more information on the local team, visit sites.google.com/view/equipefrancobotique/2023-2024.

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Hope House Hospice walk will make poignant return to Lambert Willson Park

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The importance of hospice care will be highlighted in Aurora next Saturday, June 1, as Hope House Hospice hosts Hike for Hope at Lambert Willson Park.

The event, the first solo hike for Hope House in more than five years, will open at 10 a.m. for check-in and registration, followed by the hike itself at 11 a.m., and lunch at 12 noon.

Organizers have set a fundraising goal of \$25,000 for this year's event and, in addition to the fundraising element, they hope to raise awareness of the services community hospices can provide.

"Hope House assists people right from diagnosis and onward," says Hope House Hospice Executive Director Heidi Bonner. "We have programs that support people who are not necessarily going on the palliative path but are going through, perhaps, cancer treatments and they need some support and community and connections. We do offer programs that offer those folks early on in the disease trajectory; we help people of all ages in terms of our bereavement support for children, youth and adults; and we have a new program called Help Us Understand Grief which is specifically for children and youth.

"We have hired a child life specialist to work with the community and help support the younger folks helping to understand about serious illness, about dying, in an age-appropriate way. We're excited about that program and

also it is important to know that our programs are offered at no cost, that we do need to fundraise about 65 per cent of our budget. We have limited government funding and in order to continue to offer the quality programs we provide free of charge to the community, we do need to fundraise and these are important fundraisers that will help us do the work that we do."

Hope House held its own fundraising hikes through 2018 and, as public health restrictions began to ease during the global pandemic, teamed up with Richmond Hill's Hill House Hospice for a walk in 2022.

Now, helping spearheading this year's solo event is Rhonda Flanagan, Director of

Development for Hope House. Flanagan says they're expecting at least 100 participants to descend upon the Industrial Parkway North greenspace for the June 1 event and promises a morning of music, fun activities, a selfie booth, a warm-up, and picnic lunch.

"It is the first time in a few years that we have done this event, so we're hoping this is an Inaugural Hike for Hope and it will just grow from here over the next few years," says Flanagan. "This is an opportunity to support your community in a grassroots way. We are definitely one of the smaller events but we are there for people from the beginning of their journey. We don't have residential beds. We're a community hospice,

which is a little bit different. If you have young kids – we help children as well as seniors and people of all ages. It's an opportunity to meet new people in your community and to give back in a compassionate and caring way – and to those who truly need it – and everybody in this community at one point in our lives will need these types of services."

If you are unable to make the Hike itself, Hope House says there are many activities you can do on your own to help support the event.

For a list of these activities, the event, and how to register and/or support an individual participant or team on their Hike, visit www.hopehousehospice.com/hikeforhope.



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2024 Southlake Run raised more than \$450,000 for local healthcare

The 2024 Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake has raised \$450,000, an impressive figure for the 100th anniversary of Southlake Regional Health Centre.

Fundraising closed Friday, May 3, and the final numbers are in – and it was the “best-ever fundraising result for the event,” say Southlake officials.

“For 100 years and counting, Southlake has built healthy communities through leading edge care,” said Dr. Paul Woods, President & CEO of Southlake Regional Health Centre, speaking to more than 1,350 participants at the April event. “While a lot has changed since then, the overwhelming support from the communities Southlake serves has stood the test of time.”

Runners and walkers gathered on

Sunday, April 28 at the Newmarket Seniors' Meeting Place for Southlake's largest annual community fundraising event that takes participants down Davis Drive on a five-kilometre loop past the hospital.

The event that began as the Bob Hartwell Challenge is now in its 22nd year and rallies a large cross section of participants of all ages from across the community.

“We are so thrilled to see the incredible results from this year's event,” said Joe D'Addario, CEO of Nature's Emporium, who celebrated their 12th year of partnership as the event's Title Sponsor. “Our more than decade-long partnership is a key way that Nature's Emporium gives back to the communities that support us and every year our team is inspired by the positive



Participants in the 2024 Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake are pictured starting off from Newmarket's Senior Meeting Place. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

impact we all make together.”

96 teams participated in the event and competed for fundraising awards in five different categories. Fundraising challenge winners are:

1. Corporate & Business Team Challenge Winner: Team Magna;
2. Community Friends & Family Challenge Winner: Angel Mom Squad;
3. School Challenge Winner: Aurora Montessori School Wolverunners;
4. Mayors Challenge Winner: Team Aurora;
5. Hospital Family Challenge Winner: Fun-Raisers.

A sixth additional award was added in 2022 – the Community Spirit Award which goes to the municipality that has the largest number of participants per capita. The winning municipality for this year's event is the Town of Newmarket.

In addition to Nature's Emporium, Southlake extends a special thanks to event sponsors who were integral to the success of the event, including: Magna International (Community and Volunteer Sponsor and long-time corporate partner of Southlake), Upper Canada Mall, BUNN, Boland Romaine LLP, GEM Health Care Services, Highland GM, Sports Medicine Centre

of Excellence, telMAX, The Bakerfield, Chartwell Retirement Residences, Century 21 Heritage Group Ltd, Print Graphics, and Upper Canada Signs.

Southlake Foundation President and CEO, Jennifer Ritter says she is thrilled by the community support and fundraising success of this year's event.

“To say that I'm blown away by how our communities showed up for Southlake at this year's Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake is an understatement,” she said. “From our dedicated group of volunteers, to our participants who fundraised so passionately, to our community leaders that participated, and sponsors who supported the event to help deliver the best experience for our participants, we couldn't be more grateful for this level of commitment for our hospital in this, our 100th year providing leading edge care close to home for our communities.”

Funds raised from this year's event will enable the purchase of things like day-to-day equipment essential for patient comfort and care and advanced technology for clinicians across the hospital as they provide leading edge care to patients and families.

For more information about upcoming events supporting Southlake throughout the year, visit www.southlakefoundation.ca.

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Peacekeeping Past & Present in focus at Hillary House National Historic Site

BY BROCK WEIR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers will be marked by the Aurora Historical Site with a presentation from a decorated peacekeeper.

Next Wednesday, May 29, Vishnudat Persaud, a veteran peacekeeper who has been awarded for his services in Bosnia, will present “Peacekeeping in the Past & Present” from 7 – 8.30 p.m.

The evening is part of the Aurora Historical Society’s (AHS) Speaker Series program and will be a hybrid program taking place at Hillary House National Historic Site as well as virtually.

“This month’s talk is happening on the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers,” say organizers. “Audiences are welcome to hear from Vishnudat Persaud, who joined the Canadian Forces in the 1980s and is still active in the service today.

“Hear about how Persaud’s journey overseas and how his past experiences are repeating in present-day peacekeeping efforts.”

As much as the AHS looks to the past in programming, they feel it’s equally important to bring context to current events and Selin Kahramanoğlu, AHS’ Programming and Outreach Coordinator, says this event dovetails perfectly into their mandate.

“The speaker we were lucky enough to be in contact with thanks to Historica Canada, is in active service right now with the Canadian Forces and seeing the global situations,” says Kahramanoğlu.

“Of course, our Historical Society wants to shine a light on history, but also modern issues and connect the two. We are very happy to get a speaker who focuses on peacekeeping throughout his work with the Canadian Forces.

“We take seriously getting our community more of those local history stories from people who can talk about their personal experiences, kind of an oral history, and we’re hearing that people are interested a lot in military history. The other thing we always aim to do is welcome new speakers to our roster. We have the favourites that the audience always looks forward to hearing but we wanted to branch out and just hear from speakers on topics that maybe the Aurora community is interested in hearing... that is why we had an influx of speakers with different backgrounds, either personally or experience-wise, to help bring that variety and diversity to the Aurora community so they can see themselves reflected back.”

And there is much more of that to come.

Throughout the summer and into the fall, the Speaker Series will continue – first with AHS Curator-Manager Kathleen Vahey who will lead a presentation on recent archival findings from within the Society’s extensive collection, particularly items associated with Hillary House and the family that called it home for more than a century.

This talk will shine a brighter light on the generations of doctors who practiced out of Aurora’s only



Image courtesy of the Aurora Historical Society

National Historic Site, one that is continually cited as an exemplar of Victorian Gothic architecture.

Author Ted Barris, a popular fixture in the Speakers Series, is set for a summertime return, as is historian Arlene Chan, who will speak about Chinese Canadians and early pioneers in what is now York Region and the Greater Toronto Area.

“We’re very excited to welcome her in July,” says Kahramanoğlu. “She is a very busy woman and I’m very happy she made time for us and we’re looking forward to bringing more of that narrative of Chinese Canadians in Aurora. I would encourage people to attend that one. She’s extremely knowledgeable and she’s talking from a place of personal experience. We have a lot of gratitude around that talk.”

For more information on the Aurora Historical Society’s Speaker Series, and all future events, visit aurorahs.com.



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Week of May 23, 2024

Aurora resident and TSN legendary broadcaster Darren Dutchyshen dies at 57



Long-time TSN host and Aurora resident Darren Dutchyshen is pictured here in 2019. Photo by TSN/Darren Goldstein

XBy Jim Stewart

Multiple generations of sports fans mourned the passing of one of Canada's most engaging television sports broadcasters.

Aurora resident and TSN legend Darren Dutchyshen, 57, died on Wednesday "surrounded by his closest loved ones."

TSN reported that Dutchyshen died following "a long battle with prostate cancer."

The energetic anchor revealed that he been diagnosed with prostate cancer in September 2021 and had disclosed that the cancer had metastasized throughout his body.

"It's not the kind of cancer where you ring a bell. It's still in the base of my skull, my ribs, my legs, my hips."

Dutchyshen noted valiantly on-air that the cancer was treatable and reassured his viewing audience that he felt "really, really good."

TSN's poignant tribute to Dutchyshen was hosted by Aurora's own James Duthie who was joined by Dutch's long-time co-hosts Jennifer Hedger and Rod Smith in a moving memorial segment to their Saskatchewan-born colleague. All three TSN mainstays praised the iconic SportsCentre anchor's "endless enthusiasm for narrating highlights" and his "infectious love of the sports he covered."

Smith and Hedger praised his "positive energy on the set" and championed Dutch's "ribald humor" that never abandoned him, as noted in a statement on Thursday by his family.

"His sharp wit remained until his

final moments, classically delivering plenty of jokes—most of them pretty good and all of them inappropriate."

It is this kind of sharp wit and positive energy that will be missed by viewers and Dutchyshen's sudden passing moved many Aurorans when news broke on Thursday.

Aurora Tigers' owner and governor Jim Thomson shared Western Canadian roots with Dutch.

"I knew Dutch back in Edmonton. He was a young sportscaster and I was a young hockey player. We both had common goals and worked hard to achieve them. He and I go back a long time. His son Tyler skated with me at Summer Hockey Camps. Dutch always brightened a room when he walked into it. He was way too young to pass away."

The former NHLer was impressed by the on-air chemistry of Dutchyshen and Jennifer Hedger as well as many of the legendary anchor's personal qualities.

"Dutch and Jennifer were an amazing team for so many years on TSN. I remember when he arrived at TSN. He was an excitable, funny sportscaster. I also remember how he turned into this massive man—his physicality, his workout regimen. Dutch's commitment to his body was so impressive, but he was also a great and devoted father, husband, and friend."

Thomson also praised Dutch's authenticity: "Most importantly, he was one of the good guys. We had an old saying in hockey when we wanted to praise a teammate-- we'd refer to him as a gem. Dutch was a gem. So

well-respected. We lost a really, really good guy today. It's a sad, sad day for his family and his fellow broadcasters."

It was also a sad day for Aurorans who knew Dutch away from the broadcasting studio and starring in a different role: as a great hockey and baseball dad.

Long-time Aurora resident Jim Keon extolled the virtues of Dutchyshen's positive energy around the rink and diamond.

"Darren's son Tyler and our son Michael played hockey and baseball on the same teams when they were

young, around the ages of 9 to 12. Despite his busy schedule at TSN, Darren and his family – he had three children – attended many of the games. Darren was an enthusiastic and positive parent and a great supporter of his son and the teams. Darren had a big personality and was a popular member of the parent groups."

Dutchyshen's big personality will, indeed, be missed by the townsfolk of Aurora as well as millions of Canadian sports fans who loved a Dutchy with their coffee and sports highlights. Rest in Peace.

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SPRINGSMASH



St. Andrew's College's annual SpringSmash was, well, another smashing success for students! The event, which was organized by Grade 12 students, aimed to raise \$50,000 for Jumpstart Charities. Running from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the sport and festival activity event was available for the entire student body and featured basketball, flag football, soccer, ultimate Frisbee, Pickleball, Tchoukball, and road hockey to celebrate their fundraising efforts. "The SpringSmash campaign launched on April 8 with a kick-off assembly to generate excitement for the cause," says SAC. "During the assembly, students were informed about their impact on Jumpstart Charities and how their generosity helps get kids off the sidelines and into a sport. They were then taught about the importance of philanthropy and strategies to successfully fundraise for a cause."

Auroran photos by Brock Weir



Remembering Ron Ellis: Leafs Legend and Team Canada '72 Unsung Hero

By Jim Stewart
COMMENT

I was saddened by the passing of Leafs' legend Ron Ellis at the age of 79 on May 11. I met Ron Ellis on the beach at Sand Lake in July 1973 on a family vacation. Ron was taking a break from running his summer hockey camp. He was larger than life to me, but so welcoming to all "us kids" that mobbed him. He was kind and patient as he signed autographs.

Despite being a big scorer in Junior and in the NHL, Ron Ellis embraced a key defensive role in Team Canada's stirring Cold War victory over the hated Soviets in Summit Series '72. Ellis tallied 3 assists and – with the gritty Bobby Clarke – checked the Communists into submission. Team Canada Coach Harry Sinden believed Ellis's steady checking in all eight games was a key to winning the Summit Series.

It was this kind of selfless, team-first play on that famous Canadian squad which created my admiration for the talented Ellis. He scored 46 goals to lead the Junior A Toronto Marlboros to a Memorial Cup sixty years ago in 1964. Ellis joined the Leafs right out of Junior A Hockey and finished second to Roger Crozier as Rookie of the Year in 1965.

He averaged 23 goals a season for the Leafs and, as Dan Robson wrote on Saturday, "Ron Ellis

learned to skate with legends" as a comparably young player contributing meaningfully to a team filled with Stanley Cup champions.

Two years later, the youthful Ellis scored 22 goals for the veteran-laden Leafs and added a Stanley Cup to his trophy case in Canada's Centennial Year – prior to the '67-68 Expansion Draft that transformed The Original Six rosters significantly.

However, Ellis remained on Toronto's roster during the diaspora as legendary Leafs like Bobby Baun, Allan Stanley, and Terry Sawchuk were selected by the brand-new Oakland Seals, Philadelphia Flyers, and LA Kings, respectively.

In all, Ellis was a Leafs "lifer" who played over 1,000 games for Toronto for parts of three decades; he ranks fifth on the franchise's all-time scoring list, and was a four-time All-Star. I was fortunate to be a sports card collector during his fifteen-season career and the cards displayed span his professional life as a Leaf.

Rest in peace, Ron Ellis – a Lindsay-born Leafs legend who wore the Maple Leaf proudly for his country in 1972 and was, remarkably, the favorite player of my beloved Aunt Margaret: an ardent Montreal Canadiens' fan. I admired Ellis, too-- as a lifelong Blackhawks fan. That's how special Ron Ellis was to us and millions of Canadians.



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New Cultural Action Plan given tentative green light

From page 1

upon the Town's first such plan from 2013.

With final approval expected to come at Council's meeting on May 28, the Plan (CAP) is focused on "nurturing, sustaining and preserving the diversity of cultural elements that enrich the life of Aurora."

"The Cultural Action Plan includes nine objectives that are paired with numerous Key Results that will help track progress towards achieving each objective," said Phil Rose, Manager of Cultural Services for the Town of Aurora, in a report to Council.

Elaborating on the objectives to local lawmakers at Council's Committee of the Whole meeting on May 7, Rose was joined by Nichole Campsall, the Town's Cultural Development Coordinator, to outline the objectives.

The first objective is to "align" the plan with Aurora's Truth & Reconciliation efforts.

"Indigenous considerations will play a significant role in the facilitation of the Cultural Action Plan," said Campsall. "Further to this, we plan to implement an inclusive classroom at Town Square. We will be modelling this after the inclusive classroom at the Community Safety Village in Stouffville, which includes wall hangings, artwork and resources representing diverse communities and voices, including Indigenous teachings. This room will be home to our education programs. Our goal is that every community member who joins us for a program or event feels at home and represented in the space. It is important to ensure that Indigenous components are an integral part of Aurora Town Square all year long. We plan to increase Indigenous participation in events, programs and exhibitions as part of the plan."

The second objective is, according to Rose, to develop "creative innovation opportunities."

Through the development of the Plan, Rose said "a number of different individuals" voiced the need for space and resources for creative professionals and entrepreneurs.

"One of the first things we want to do as part of Objective 2 is to gauge the feasibility of either programs or physical space that will

serve as a community hub for local artists, creative entrepreneurs, to allow them to create network, share resources and foster collaborative efforts," he said.

The third objective is to use Culture Days, which runs from mid-September through mid-October each year, to increase awareness of local cultural groups and "demonstrate their value to Aurora."

"We will allocate an annual budget to support Culture Days," said Campsall. "We will continue to review and evaluate Culture Days programming by Q4 annually to ensure continued improvement and success. Beyond this, we intend to increase the heritage experiences that are offered during Culture Days to the Aurora Museum & Archives."

The fourth pillar is to map "cultural resources" throughout Aurora to showcase the sector.

This will, says Rose, create a database of "people, places and organizations" that are rowing in similar directions.

"The map is really meant to show where the concentration of cultural resources are in your community, so when you're making decisions on where to invest in your creative economy, you have an understanding of where your clusters of creative and cultural resources are."

The cultural mapping element leads directly to Objective Five, which is to position Aurora as a destination for arts, culture, heritage and tourism within York Region and beyond.

"Here, we think there is, now that we have hospitality infrastructure, now that Town Square is about to open, we anticipate there is going to be revitalization downtown," Rose continued. "We have seen some new restaurants and different businesses around Town open up and there is the potential for cultural tourism experience packages."

Packages, he added, would be developed with the Town's Economic Development team and could include accommodations at a local hotel, dinner at a local restaurant, and tickets to a show at Aurora Town Square.

"That will be a key priority with the implementation of the Plan," he said. "The other is to try and draw more national [and] provincial

arts, cultural, heritage and tourism initiatives into Town."

Objective Six is to increase capacity of the local cultural sector, including hosting a summit for the sector, while Objective Seven is to ensure the Plan "remains strategically aligned with other related corporate plans.

The eighth and ninth objectives are to use cultural resources for downtown revitalization and to "demonstrate that arts, heritage and culture play an instrumental role in enhancing Aurora's quality of life and supporting a vibrant downtown."

"Supporting the revitalization of downtown is a key component of the cultural action plan," said Campsall. "Public art makes spaces welcoming, meaningful and strengthens communities. We plan to introduce public art to the Cultural Precinct to add visual beauty, connection and engagement to the Downtown Space. Further, we will contribute to the Promenade Streetscape Redevelopment design process and regularly meet with Economic Development and Downtown Business Community to ensure Town Square aligns with the revitalization efforts."

Added Rose: "Data does show the GDP impacts of culture to Aurora, what the economic development impact is to Aurora. We have never really been able to translate that data into anything tangible that paints the picture of how important culture is to our community from a quality of life and economic development perspective, so in addition to the data we gleaned from that program as well as gathering our own quantitative and qualitative data, again through conversations, being at the public and a rigorous data collection process, we want to be able to issue a Cultural Impact Report annually that lets Council know how the dollars we're spending on culture are having a ripple effect in the community."

Ensuring it has just that effect was top of mind for Council during this month's discussions.

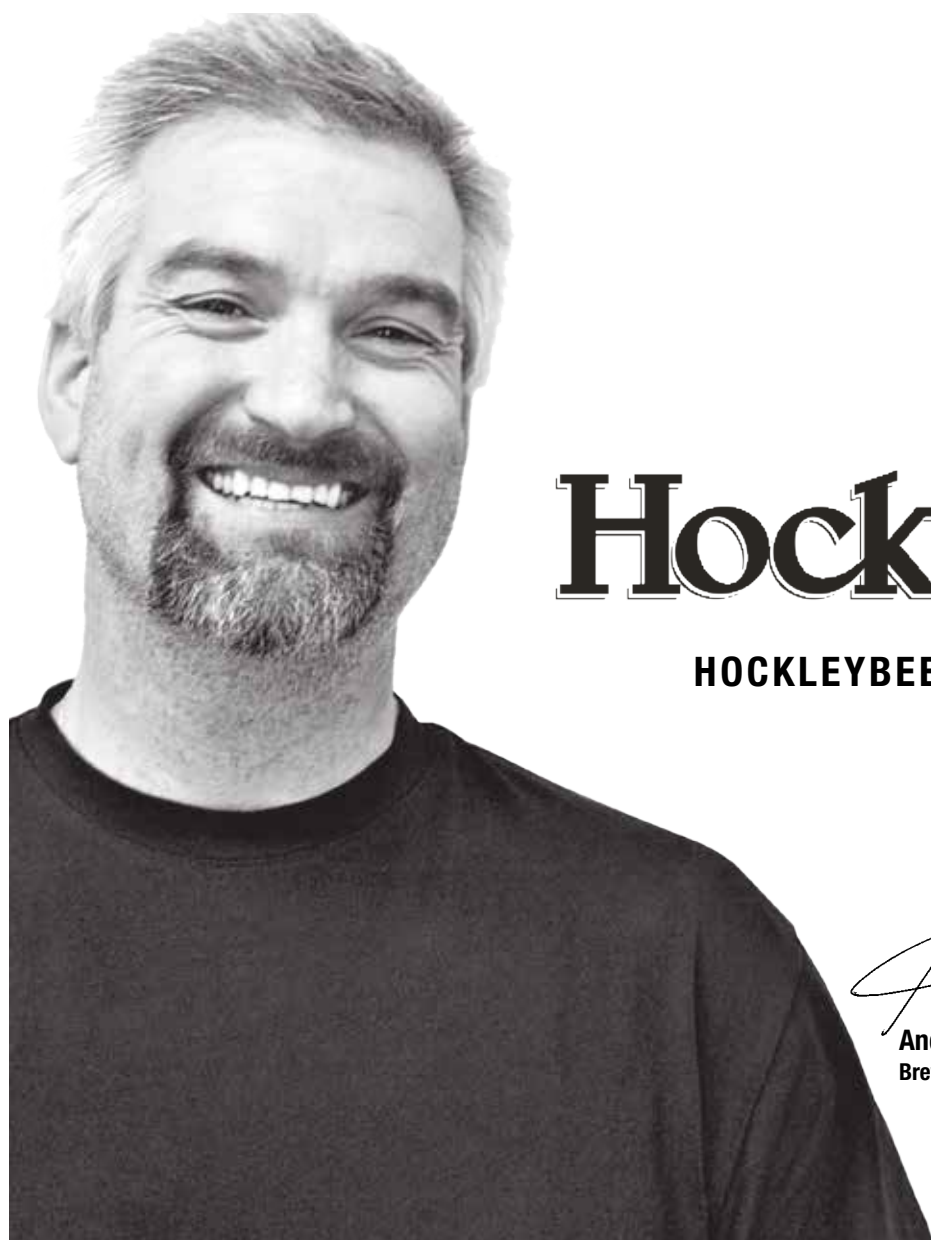
Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson sought assurances that these objectives were already funded through the Town's 10-year capital plan and was told this Plan earmarks \$50,000 annually for implementation of the goals.

We have seen some new restaurants and different businesses around Town open up and there is the potential for cultural tourism experience packages

"This doesn't create any budgetary pressure," he said. "The delivery of all these services and initiatives will have no impact on the tax levy because we have already pre-approved from a capital perspective. There are no staffing requests, no increase budgets, that's what I take from the financial implications. I'm a little challenged because I think it is a great plan but I want to understand the financial implications of the report."

Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland said Council had been "waiting a long time" for the Plan to come out and she said what was presented was "very robust." Nevertheless, she requested regular updates to ensure the goals outlined were met.

"I would like to see a report maybe on a biennial basis because we have to prepare for the budget," she said, asking staff to ensure that all applicable grants from upper levels of government are applied for in bringing this to fruition.



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The Aurora Farmers' Market returns to Town Park today. Come by and shop local from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Paper Playground is an immersive experience that welcomes babies and young children as true creative collaborators, where they become an essential part of the "under the sea" performance. Two performances: 11 a.m. for babies/toddlers; 2 p.m. for 3 - 6 years. Limited number of participatory places - register for your tickets today. Presented by the Aurora Cultural Centre, in collaboration with the WeeFestival of Arts & Culture for Early Years. Details/tickets at AuroraCulturalCentre.ca.

SUNDAY, MAY 26

iPad/Tablet Drawing for Artists 1-Day workshop for adults (16+) with artist-educator Jan Dolby. Unlock the creative potential of digital art on your device. For information, workshop fee and to register, visit AuroraCulturalCentre.ca.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

Pride Month is all about being your most authentic self! The Aurora Cultural Centre is pleased to offer a free "Build Your Alter-Ego workshop with Jonah Strub," (exhibiting artist, Early Bird Gets the Worm). With plasticine, glitter, feathers, and a sprinkle of creativity, this workshop will help you bring your inner Queen/King/Anything in-between into this world. Limited spaces; for details, and to register in advance at AuroraCulturalCentre.ca.

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.

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

York Region's largest community event, the Aurora Chamber Street Festival, is held annually on the first Sunday in June. The Festival is a fun-filled family event for all ages with 500+ vendors, fantastic street performers, live music, food galore and so much more. Yonge Street is closed to traffic between Wellington Street and Murray Drive, allowing vendors and visitors full access to the

street. Plan to attend rain or shine! Free parking and admission.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

The Aurora Seniors Association Presents: Mexican Fiesta! From 6.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. At the Aurora Seniors Centre, 90 John West Way, Aurora. Featuring: Mexican Buffet & Dessert Bar, Coffee Tea, Mariachi Band, Photo Booth, Games with Prizes, Cash Bar. Tickets must be purchased in advance at \$60. Tickets on sale now from the Aurora Seniors' Centre or by calling 905-726-4767. For more information please contact Sandy Bundy at ssbundy@sympatico.ca or 416-580-7866

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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.



BRUNCH RUN - (Top) Mike, Flo and little Camille were all smiles on Saturday as they got a delicious bite at the Aurora Farmers' Market. The popular spring and summer staple continues at Town Park each Saturday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. through October 26. (Below) Recently, Lennon was among the many young residents who stopped to have their faces painted.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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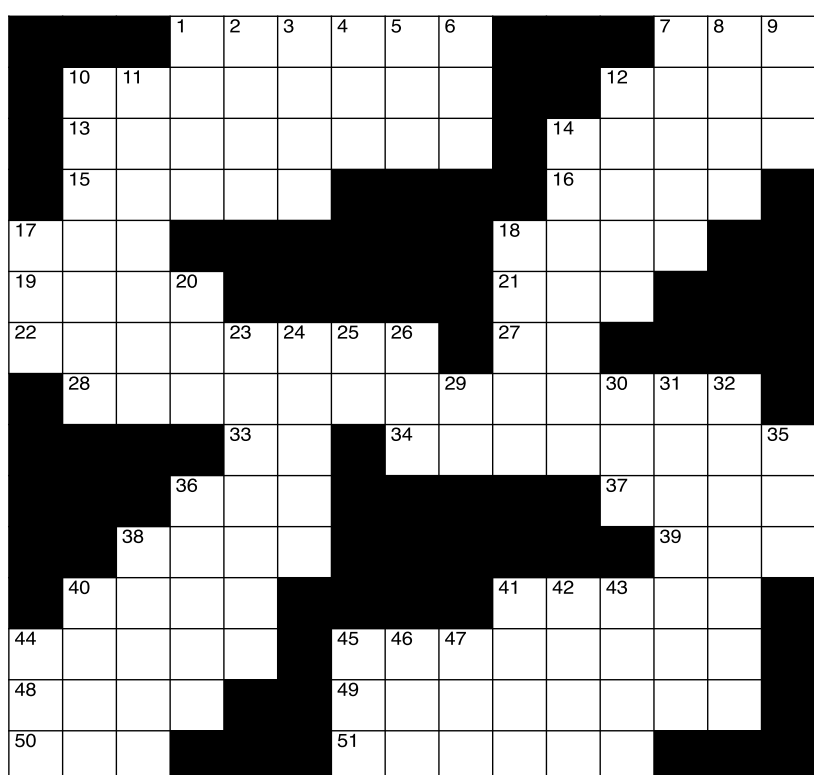
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17. Engine additive
18. Nasal mucus
19. Fit a horse with footwear
21. Consumed
22. Settle
27. Larry and Curly's pal
28. Basketball's GOAT
33. Exclamation of surprise
34. Made tight
36. Before
37. Actor Nicolas
38. Not hot
39. Talk
40. Pledge
41. Abandon a mission
44. Trims by cutting
45. Aspects of one's character
48. Boxing GOAT's former surname
49. Holy places
50. Body art (slang)
51. Attributes

CLUES DOWN

1. How one feels
2. American Nat'l Standards Institute
3. Information
4. Licensed for Wall Street
5. Keyboard key
6. Born of
7. Choose to represent
8. Small European freshwater fish
9. Everyone has their own
10. Line from the center of a polygon
11. Lebanese city
12. Type of watercraft
14. A way to twist
17. Soviet Socialist Republic
18. Greek island
20. Medical practitioner
23. DeGaulle, French President
24. Partner to "ooled"
25. Atomic #52
26. Santa's helper
29. Rapper Rule
30. Month
31. Word formed by rearranging letters
32. Nullifies
35. Young woman ready to enter society
36. Unemployment
38. Weight unit
40. Formal party
41. Computer language
42. Residue formula in math
43. Duty or responsibility
44. Part of (abbr.)
45. Time zone
46. Body part
47. Nucleic acid



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PANORAMIC LAKE SIMCOE VIEW HOME

Welcome to a luxurious 5639 sq ft waterfront estate on Lake Simcoe with 230 feet of shoreline. Enjoy 20ft coffered ceilings, a gourmet kitchen, and a primary suite with a spa-like ensuite. Features include a heated boathouse, hot tub, sauna, outdoor bathroom, grand foyer, slate tile flooring, and an oversized gas fireplace with a stone mantle.



BRAND NEW EXECUTIVE "GREEN" & "SMART" HOME

Experience eco-smart luxury in South Aurora's prestigious Royal Hill. This home features a gourmet kitchen, spa-like master suite, hardwood and porcelain floors, 10' ceilings, and an oak staircase. Highlights include a walk-out lower level, green technology, and serene views. Located close to amenities, nature, and transit for unparalleled sustainable living.



EXECUTIVE HOME WITH LUXURY UPGRADES

Brand new executive home in Princeton Heights, Aurora Estates! This luxurious Fernbrook Homes property features a 3-car tandem garage, white oak hardwood floors, an elegant living room with coffered ceilings, a chef's dream kitchen by Downsview, a great room with 20ft ceilings, and a finished lower level with an exercise/media room, recreation room, wet bar, and spa-like bathroom.



CUSTOM-BUILT LAKE WILCOX DREAM HOME

This soon-to-be-built executive home in Lake Wilcox is situated on a 150' lot and features 4+1 bedrooms, 5 baths, a chef's kitchen with JennAir appliances, gas fireplaces, hardwood floors, and a skylit primary suite. The finished lower level and ability to personalize finishes ensure a fully customized luxury residence.



ZONED FOR HOME BUSINESS, SALTWATER POOL

This fully renovated executive home in Richmond Hill boasts a 4-car garage, finished basement, solariums, and a pool with a waterfall. Perfect for remote work, it's near schools, parks, and amenities. Zoned to allow 35% of its space for home business, it also includes a sunroom, indoor hot tub, and fenced backyard.



BRAND NEW - DOUBLE LOT SIZE

Discover unmatched luxury in Richmond Hill with this custom-built executive home on a premium 96' x 126' lot. Features include an open layout, 10' ceilings, gourmet kitchen, spa-like ensuite, spacious bedrooms with walk-in closets, and a bonus 38' x 126' easement providing extra space for your own enjoyment or potential for creating a building lot.



LUXURIOUS 'FERNBROOK' HOME IN AURORA

Presenting the exquisitely designed 'Fernbrook' executive home in Princeton Heights, Aurora Estates. This expansive lot property boasts premium finishes and a gourmet kitchen, with customization options available. It includes four generously sized bedrooms, each with its own private bathroom.



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.



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.



OAK RIDGES HOME WITH ADJACENT LAND

Beautifully renovated home, nearly 3000 sqft plus lower level, on a 74 x 296ft lot in Oak Ridges. Features a modern kitchen with walk-out to a pool-sized backyard, large family room with gas fireplace, formal living and dining rooms, and a primary suite with walk-in closet and luxurious ensuite. Rare chance to purchase with adjacent vacant land, totaling over 48000 sqft.



ALMOST NEW BUNGALOW LIVING

Exceptional 4-bed, 3-bath bungalow featuring an open concept layout with 9ft ceilings and hardwood floors. The chef's kitchen has quartz counters, and the family room opens to a fenced backyard. Enjoy a luxurious primary suite, finished lower level, and convenient access to amenities, schools, parks, water, and highways.



90 X 200 FT LAKE WILCOX GEM

Discover your secluded paradise in Richmond Hill's prestigious Lake Wilcox community, close to Hwy 404 for easy commuting. This versatile home offers a unique layout, a large front porch for sunsets, and a prime 90 x 200 ft lot. Near Lake Wilcox Park and amenities, it's ideal for renovation or building your dream home.

We Speak Your Language



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