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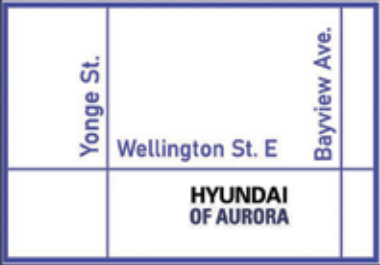
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Fall completion anticipated for Yonge Street multi-use path



Image courtesy of the Town of Aurora

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Construction crews continue their work on Yonge Street, changing the roadside landscape to accommodate a new multi-use pathway (MUP) that will bring greater connectivity to Aurora’s south end.

Once complete, the Yonge Street MUP will stretch from Bloomington Road in the south to Industrial Parkway South in the north, and will include a sidewalk

on the east side of Yonge Street and a multi-use and multi-path corridor on Yonge’s west side, allowing for cycling, walking, jogging, and wheelchair access.

“The goal for the Yonge Street MUP is to allow the community to connect to key destinations in Town such as the Aurora GO Station, existing trails, schools, and local businesses,” say municipal staff.

“Currently, active transportation facilities are not provided along this stretch of Yonge Street. Cyclists share the roads with motorists without dedicated and

separated facilities, and pedestrians are using the shoulder of the road to access services and amenities north of this area. This multi-use path will increase safety for all road users.”

Construction began with site preparation on June 23, and Nancy Flemming, Aurora’s Manager of Engineering and Capital Delivery, says much of the work that will be carried out this week will be topographic to make way for the western path itself.

With the first month of construction complete, Flemming says the project is on track for completion by the fall of this year, with some final landscaping work planned for the spring.

“Right now, our contractor is digging out where the alignment of where the multi-use path will be on the west side of Yonge and then, on the east side, they’re also carving the path where the sidewalk will be,” she says. “At 4.4 km both ways, it’s a very long stretch and we’re pretty much at the point where they have done the rudimentary alignment.”

“Work is coming along very well. A sidewalk is less technically difficult to build. The multiuse path has a lot more technical constraints. There are a lot more hills and retaining walls that need to go in, and we have a lot of utility relocations across the board, so this one is going to take a bit longer. We’re hoping the sidewalk will be done first and we’ll be able to use the paths for a little while after that. The actual paths will take until the late fall, and then we usually come in in the late spring to do the planting and the grass so it catches really well.”

The new MUP will not only serve a section of the community that has grown significantly in population over the last decade, but provide vital new connectivity to local trails and other municipal spaces, as well as connect to Richmond Hill’s MUP on the south side

of Bloomington.

“Residents are really excited as there has been no connection to active transportation facilities from the south end of Aurora to the north end,” says Flemming. “Those communities now will have that opportunity. Everyone who has come out [to engagement sessions] just wanted to talk about how excited they were about the active transportation facilities. We have an Active Master Transportation Plan that was approved in 2024 which made this one of the priority projects. Just seeing it come to fruition was a big deal.”

“Yonge Street is a very busy street, so being able to connect pretty much the south end of Aurora from a safety standpoint was one huge deal for us, but having that Active Transportation link where we’re now giving people the ability to get on their bicycle and ride or walk safely and connect to our beautiful trails... is such a big deal. This has been a game-changer for us.”

It’s also been a boon for the Town of Aurora as the Region of York has come on board to pay half the cost of the MUP.

But, of course, the project is not without its challenges, and has limited southbound traffic from Industrial to Bloomington by a lane throughout the construction times.

“I thank everybody for their patience because we know our contractor has shut down a lane while they are working so they can work safely and it allows them to work more quickly by having that lane shut down, but it’s a big deal to go down to one lane there,” says Flemming. “I’m very appreciative of the community supporting us in that respect. It’s really going to start taking shape now. We’ve started to lay out how the paths are going to look, so it should come together quickly.”



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Region commemorates Emancipation Day

On behalf of York Regional Council and The Regional Municipality of York, I join residents across our communities in recognizing Emancipation Day on Saturday, August 1, 2026.

On this day in 1834, the Slavery Abolition Act came into effect across much of the British Empire, including what is now Canada, marking the legal end of slavery for more than 800,000 people of African descent. While the Act represented an important milestone on the path to freedom, it did not immediately end all forms of enslavement or the discrimination and systemic barriers that followed.

Emancipation Day is an opportunity to reflect on the painful legacy of slavery, honour the courage and resilience of those who fought for freedom and justice and recognize the lasting impacts of anti-Black racism that continue to be felt today. It is also a time to celebrate the many contributions Black communities have made, and continue to make, here in York Region and across Canada.

York Region is committed to building welcoming and inclusive communities where everyone feels they belong and can thrive. Through our ongoing work to advance equity, diversity and inclusion and our commitment to the Inclusion Charter for York Region, we continue working alongside our local Black communities to address barriers, foster understanding and create meaningful change.

As we recognize Emancipation Day, let us honour the generations whose courage and perseverance helped shape a more just society. Together, we can continue learning from our shared history, fostering understanding and building communities where everyone feels welcomed, valued and respected.

Eric Jolliffe
York Region Chairman and CEO

Canada needs stronger taillight emission standards

Last year the government announced that it was scrapping the Electric Vehicle Availability Standard (EVAS). To replace the Standard (which would have made electric cars more available and accessible) the government announced a new “automotive strategy” and promised to implement new tailpipe emission standards. These new standards are supposed to drive EV adoption and see that 75 per cent of cars sold in 2035 would be EVs, a much lower goal than the 100 per cent target committed to by Prime Minister Trudeau. Although months have gone by, there has been no update to the automotive strategy or its implementation, leading to market uncertainty and a policy vacuum.

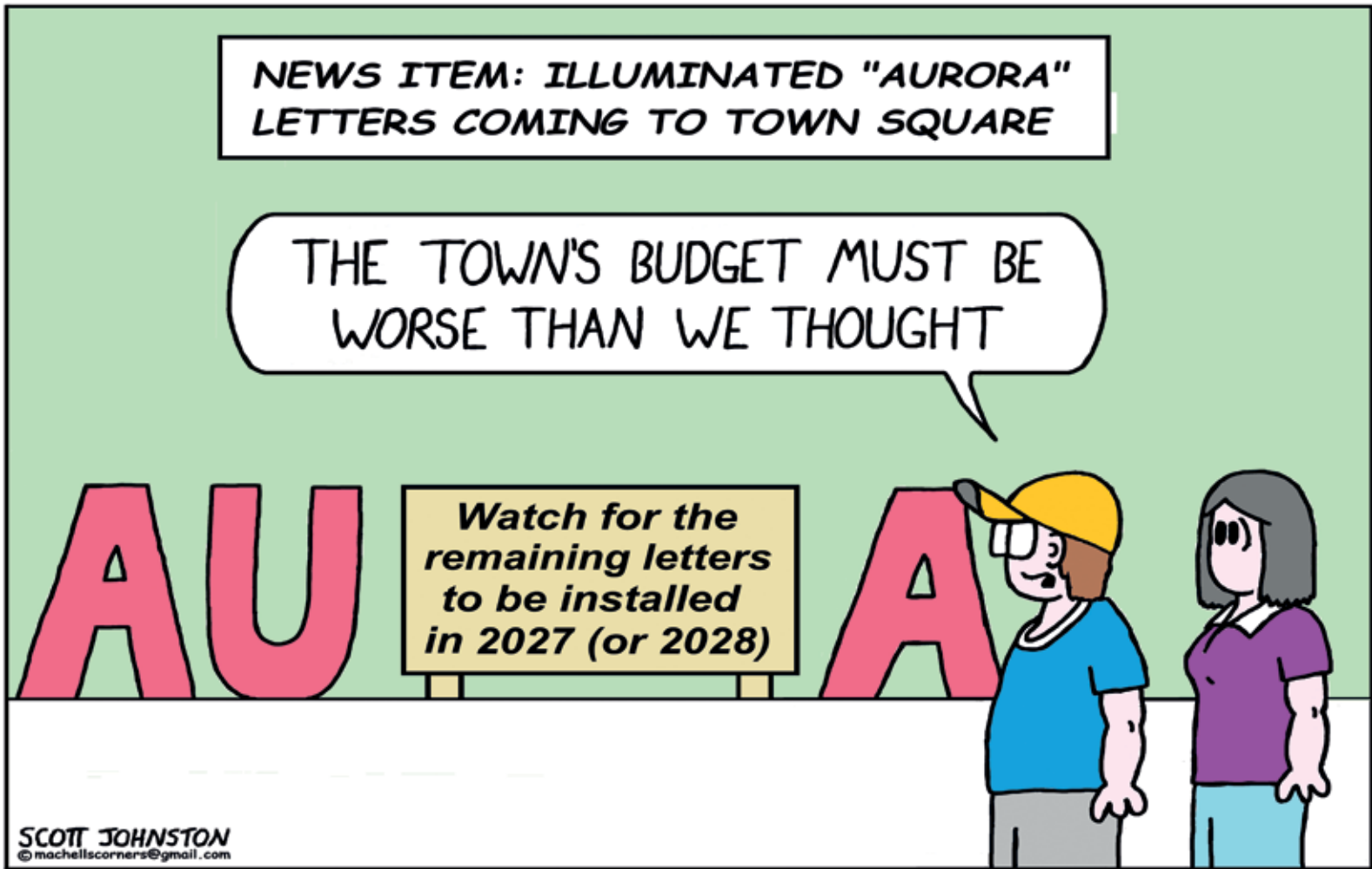
The good news is that Canada is moving away from automatically following U.S. vehicle regulations, but progress has been far too slow. After years of uncertainty created by the United States environmental protection rollbacks, Canada has to chart its own course. The government’s new strategy signals that it recognizes this reality, but the tailpipe standards currently under consideration need to be much stronger if Canada is serious about reducing pollution and protecting public health.

So, what exactly are tailpipe emission standards?

Simply put, tailpipe emission standards are legal limits on how much pollution a vehicle is allowed to release from its exhaust pipe. They regulate harmful pollutants such as nitrogen oxides (NOx), particulate matter and other contaminants that contribute to

Continued on page 5

Machell's Corners



Laugh early and often



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

experience.

Looking back, it might not seem like the most ground-breaking of films to have such a profound and lasting impact – after all, a spoof of all the previous cinematic depictions of Robin Hood, including Kevin Costner’s Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves, which was all the rage at that point – but, in the right circumstances, it’s just as easy to appreciate a doodle from someone you love as it is a Rembrandt.

These were just such circumstances.

From the first thwack of the arrow to the last rap laid down by the film’s chorus, it was cinematic love at first sight. I couldn’t remember the last time I’d laughed so hard at a movie and, truth be told, it still makes me laugh just as uproariously today. More important, however, was its ability to transport me away, at least for a little while, away from what was on my mind at the time and, afterwards, I felt recharged, renewed, and better equipped to process all that was going on.

I can only imagine it was a secret well-known to the two counsellors in question, but it really underscored how healing laughter can be for us all.

It’s certainly not a secret lost to Mel Brooks.

The comedy icon celebrated his 100th Birthday earlier this summer and, as his remarkable milestone approached, he shared some insights on what laughter means to him.

“I think laughing keeps you healthy,” he told People Magazine. “It’s an amazing sound, people laughing at something I created. Making comedy is a great job. It keeps you sane and happy. It gives you reason to live.”

Riffing on this theme, NBC’s Today Show looked at the phenomenon deeper, particularly the impact a good guffaw can have on laugh-makers and laugh-consumers alike.

“Research has shown that laughter is, indeed, among the best medicines,” they wrote. “In a 2016 longitudinal study published by the journal Psychosomatic Medicine, Norwegian researchers found

that women who scored highly on the cognitive component of sense of humor, or the ability to detect humor, were associated with 48% less risk of death from all causes. Mortality due to cardiovascular diseases in particular, the study said, was ‘significantly lower,’ in women with high scores on the cognitive component.

“A separate 2023 study also showed that spontaneous laughter is associated with a greater reduction in cortisol levels. The study suggested that laughter could be a potential supplementary medical therapy to improve wellbeing. Laughter isn’t just important for physical health. It’s beneficial for mental well-being, too. ‘If a patient can have a moment of levity in the face of crisis, I think it helps them better cope and better deal with the uncertainties of their problems,’ Edward T. Creagan, a Mayo Clinic expert and oncologist, said in 2024.

“Hopefully this means that Brooks has many years ahead of him. But he’s previously said he doesn’t really think about death. ‘I gave up after 60 thinking about it because if I did, I’d be thinking about it all the time. So I don’t think about it much. When and if it happens it’s going to be a sad day — for everybody but me,’ Brooks told the Associated Press in 2021. ‘I enjoy living,’ he told the outlet. ‘I’d like to do it as long as I can.’”

And we can all be grateful for these efforts.

This weekend, my family and I are taking our annual trip to Jamestown, NY, to attend the Lucille Ball Comedy Festival, an event that has never failed to bring joy to all of us, make us forget our troubles, and reconnect with life-long friends.

Among the features of this year’s festival is an array of original artefacts donated by Brooks himself to the city’s National Comedy Center.

“I’ve always been proud to say that I make people laugh for a living, so knowing that my work will have a home at comedy’s national archive and continue making people laugh leaves me with a deep sense of pride,” said Brooks earlier this year.

Seeing the raw materials that resulted in films, shows, and so much more that have brought people so much joy over the years, including myself, will be something of a full circle moment this weekend.

I’m certain it will also serve as a reminder that no matter how challenging our world can seem these days, an era were fewer and fewer things seem like laughing matters, it’s so important to find humour in just about everything, not take ourselves too seriously, and be able to point our respective energies in the right direction.

We can all do to remind ourselves of that.

And often.

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Quicksilver or Quacksalver?



Metallic mercury was used since ancient times for divination and healing, later for the extraction of metallic silver from ore, and most relatably, in many pre-digital thermometers. While the acute toxicity of this substance was known, it must have seemed almost too special to not have a useful purpose. Among the hundreds of applications devised for mercury, the over-the-counter topical antiseptic merbromide, best known through the brand Mercurochrome, is one that many people may have experienced in their lives. This little bottle of Mercurochrome (994.31.40) was made by the Drug Trading Company of Toronto sometime around the middle of the 20th century. Aside from being rather ineffective in its primary role of killing bacteria, one of the hallmarks of Mercurochrome was the dark red stain that it left behind – which could conceal future infections at the same site. Finally discontinued for sale in many places around the year 2000, it must have left a red stain in so many peoples’ memories!



DIALOGUE WITH DAWN

By Dawn Gallagher Murphy
MPP, Newmarket-Aurora

I hope you and your family had a wonderful Civic Holiday long weekend and were able to enjoy some well-deserved time together. Whether you spent the weekend with loved ones, exploring one of Ontario’s beautiful provincial parks, or enjoying our lakes and trails, I hope you had the opportunity to make the most of everything our province has to offer this summer.

As we continue celebrating the season, I was especially proud to see our government expand free day-use access to Ontario’s provincial parks for veterans and active members of the Canadian Armed Forces. This initiative is a meaningful way to recognize the service and sacrifice of those who have dedicated themselves to protecting our country, while making it easier for them and their families to experience Ontario’s incredible natural spaces.

Throughout the summer, I’ve also enjoyed connecting with residents at community events and while visiting neighbourhoods across Newmarket–Aurora. Whether at a local festival, community barbecue, or on your doorstep, I truly value hearing your thoughts and learning more about the issues that matter most to you. These conversations help ensure your voice is represented at Queen’s Park.

One topic that continues to come up is Ontario’s future—how we create good-paying jobs, grow our economy, and ensure we have the infrastructure needed for the next generation. That’s why I was pleased to see the announcement of the proposed Northern Shield Energy Corridor, a nation-building project that would connect Alberta’s energy resources to Ontario through a Canadian-built pipeline. By strengthening Canada’s energy security, supporting domestic supply chains, and creating thousands of good-paying jobs, this project would help build a stronger and more self-reliant economy.

Building on that vision, Ontario also unveiled plans to strengthen Sarnia’s role as one of Canada’s leading refining and petrochemical hubs. Processing more Canadian energy here at home would support manufacturing, attract new investment, create jobs, and reinforce Canada’s long-term energy security.

Energy security is about more than pipelines—it’s also about ensuring Ontario has the reliable electricity needed to power our growing communities and economy. That’s why I was pleased to see the completion of the new transmission line connecting Toronto’s Manby Transformer Station to the Richview Transformer Station in Etobicoke. Delivered on time and under budget, this critical project will improve electricity reliability across the Greater Toronto Area while helping meet Ontario’s growing energy needs for decades to come.

Preparing for the future also means strengthening our health-care system. That’s why I was pleased to see our government invest \$55.8 million to establish Ontario’s first medical school dedicated to training family doctors. This investment will help train more primary care physicians, strengthen our health-care workforce, and improve access to family doctors for communities across Ontario.

Together, these investments reflect our government’s commitment to building the infrastructure, health-care system, and skilled workforce Ontario needs to remain competitive, support economic growth, and improve quality of life for generations to come.

As always, if you need assistance with a provincial program or service, my constituency office is here to help. Please don’t hesitate to reach out—we are always happy to assist.



Senior Scape

By Christina Doyle

“Summer’s lease hath all too short a date.”

– William Shakespeare

6. Grieve your losses: We all experience the loss of loved ones and the loss of our own abilities, but few of us have been taught how to properly grieve and mourn. I also find solace in spending time alone and walking in the woods. When we allow ourselves to fully experience our emotions, it helps us recover our sense of well-being and joy over time.
7. Keep learning: We used to believe that you can’t teach an old dog new tricks, but recent studies on the aging brain tell us that we can continue learning throughout our entire lives.
8. Choose a positive attitude: For me, this means consciously deciding not to dwell on the past or worry about the future. It means staying in the present moment and enjoying my time now.
9. Laugh often: Laughter is more important than ever as we age. With all of us in our 80s and 90s, we frequently lost our places, dropped our scripts, forgot where we were supposed to be and sometimes didn’t hear each other. But we had so much fun and laughed throughout the class. I felt tremendous joy, fully aware

that I was part of the great human comedy that is life itself.

There you have it everyone: live each day to the fullest, try to develop as much gratitude in your heart as you can and realize that we all get a crack at the bat and some of us, like me, got another chance. Don’t waste a single minute. Relax and smile.

From Town Staff Parking Lot Update

The South Parking lot replacement work has progressed nicely.

Thank you for understanding during this important work. We will continue to keep folks updated on any timelines on the reopening of the lot and any further impacts.

Half Price Membership

If you are on the fence about joining the Aurora Seniors’ Centre, good news! Membership will be ½ price for the remainder of 2026. This is the perfect time for you and your friends and neighbours to join for residents at only \$17.50 and non-residents at \$25.00.

Save these Dates

Our Seniors Active Living Fair will happen on October 3. Also, our annual Open House will happen on October 7. Take a tour and meet some of our wonderful volunteers! There will be refreshments and draw prize. Don’t miss it!

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From page 4

smog, poor air quality and respiratory illnesses.

To determine whether a vehicle meets the standard, manufacturers test their cars in a lab. This test tells us just how much pollution is being created for each kilometre the car drives. This result is measured in grams per kilometre (g/km) or grams per mile (g/m).

For example, if a vehicle emits two grams of pollution during a 10-kilometre test, its emission rate is 0.2 grams per km. If the legal limit is 0.1 km per mile, that vehicle fails the standard and can’t be sold until it meets the requirement. While testing methods are getting more accurate all the time, the goal remains the same: ensuring vehicles sold to consumers are getting cleaner over time.

Canada doesn’t need to reinvent the wheel with its regulations. Europe has spent years strengthening its vehicle pollution rules through increasingly ambitious standards. Europe’s tailpipe standards are meant to ensure that 90 per

cent of new car sales are EVs in 2035. The newest regulations include tighter limits on harmful pollutants, improved testing that better reflects real-world driving and stronger durability requirements to ensure vehicles remain clean throughout their lifetime.

Rather than looking south to the U.S., where they are weakening environmental protections, Canada should be following the lead of places that continue to raise the bar. Aligning with Europe’s standards and target – would provide greater certainty about what the expectations are for manufacturers, and deliver cleaner air and healthier communities for Canadians.

The federal government has an opportunity to build a modern vehicle emissions framework that reflects Canada’s climate and clean air goals. These emissions standards would help ensure that every new vehicle sold in Canada is cleaner than the one before it.

Sam Hersh
Clean Transportation Program Manager
Environmental Defence

Someone once said, “What a wonderful life I’ve had! I only wish I had realized it sooner.”

We certainly don’t want to be caught saying that at any point. We have all have had and continue to have life’s lessons, lessons of struggle, hurt and pain and of joy and laughter.

A severe case of the regrets — feeling overwhelmed by the coulda-shoulda-woulda of life — not only robs us of energy and imprisons us in the past, it can also make us sick.

The other good news is that as we age, most of us become more adept at letting go of regrets. We may not have as much opportunity to undo the past — return to school for a degree, say, or undo an unhappy marriage — but life experience has wised us up.

“We get better at accepting things we can’t change.”

So, yes, we all have our share of regrets, but then we must move on by taking a new action.

Maybe you can’t make amends to the late relative that you used to diss, but you can redirect that energy to people around you now. If you regret that you hadn’t completed your education, then take a class in pottery – or anything. In other words, switch your mind away from the past and focus on the present.

When you find yourself focusing on regrets, shape your thoughts by exploring the silver lining in your life.

What lessons did you learn? How did you gain wisdom out of a particular situation? Finally, dear friends, taken from the words of a wise young 90-year-old woman, here are her views about living abundantly.

“I expected to face new challenges in my 90s, and I have. However, what has truly surprised me is the number of new joys I’m experiencing.”

I share my 10 non-negotiable rules for being 90 and happy. This list has been a valuable roadmap for me, and I believe that no matter how old you are, you will find them helpful, too.

1. Be kind, and above all, be kind to yourself: We tend to berate ourselves mercilessly when we can’t find the right word or when we forget an appointment. Now, I remind myself, “Not to worry. This is all part of normal aging.”
2. Practice gratitude: This has been a reliable way for me to stay grounded and maintain a positive mindset. Each morning, I take a minute to express gratitude for three things in my life. I try to mention different things each day, but it’s okay to repeat some.
3. Develop routines for routine matters: The older I get, the more I try to simplify my life, and I’ve found that routines are very helpful. I have an exercise plan, and I see my dentist and doctors regularly.
4. Stay connected to family and friends: During the pandemic, we learned just how important our relationships are for our health and happiness. Yet we often wait for others to reach out to us. I also prioritize spending time with those who lift my spirits.
5. Live a purposeful life: This can be creative, such as painting, or hobbies like gardening, or even volunteering at a hospital or soup kitchen.

Emancipation Day to be formally marked at Town Hall on August 14

From page 1
amazing.”

Mayor Tom Mrakas formally declared August 1 as Emancipation Day once again in the Town of Aurora, where he noted the history of the day.

“On August 1, 1834, King William IV abolished slavery throughout the British Colonies through the Slavery Abolition Act, 1833, and Emancipation Day recognizes the struggle for human rights made by freedom-seeking Canadians of African descent,” said Mayor Mrakas

in the proclamation. “The day is an opportunity to acknowledge the legacy of the history of slavery in Canada while celebrating the rich contributions that people of African descent have made to our Town and Country. By recognizing Emancipation Day on August 1, the Town acknowledges an unforgiving period within our history and the importance of our ongoing commitment to eliminate discrimination in all its forms. “Residents of the Town of Aurora



The Aurora Black Caucus hosted its Emancipation Day at Aurora Town Square last year. Next week, August 14, it moves back to Town Hall. **Auroran file photo by Glenn Rodger**



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are working hard to establish a caring and compassionate community in which all its members, regardless of race of ethnic origin, have the right to live in conditions of good health, safety, dignity, respect and peace.”

Hart says these are themes they will keep “hammering home” until everyone is free.

“Emancipation speaks to the issue of people being free – free from slavery – and that kind of freedom lends itself to what is happening now where people want economic freedom, they want different levels of freedom,” he says. “As the saying goes, nobody’s free until everybody’s free. We’ll keep hammering that theme, where we’re talking about making sure everyone feels liberated, everybody feels emancipated, nobody feels like they are in a straightjacket in any respect.”

While the importance of Emancipation Day in Canada is clear to organizers and local leaders, including Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, who sits on the Aurora Black Caucus, Hart says the day itself is sometimes “still a well-kept secret” compared to American observances like Juneteenth.

“I’m very much encouraged by what I’ve seen so far [in Canada] but there is much more to go in terms of just bringing this concept to the mindset of Canadians,” says Hart. “At the same time, I’m so proud of Aurora because this is our fifth year of doing it, while some municipalities have no idea what Emancipation Day is all about; they have never celebrated it, they have never proclaimed it, and the idea that our Mayor in 2021 proclaimed August 1 as Emancipation Day says a lot about

our Town of Aurora. There’s traction, but it’s still a well-kept secret, and our job should be to educate and to bring more awareness. I think that Juneteenth in the States has a little bit more traction than Emancipation Day in Canada. We can’t have that. That’s the reason we’re approaching every level of government, for them to get on, for lack of a better term, the celebration of Emancipation Day and just make it substantive – not that we’re trying to live in the past, but we want us to recognize Black History because Black History is Canadian History.

“We need to do a better job of educating the populace in terms of Emancipation Day, and hopefully things will continue to get better in terms of everybody just understanding what Emancipation really means – not just to me, but to everybody, or what it should mean. I think it signifies us coming together as a community. I think it really is a microcosm of the entire Emancipation Day movement: the idea that when you look at Town Hall next week, you’re going to see a multiplicity of cultures. You’re going to see a multiplicity of races. You will see people from all different stripes celebrating this idea. For every movement that we had to do with Civil Rights and things like slavery, it was not solved by Black people alone. It was solved by so many different races coming together and saying, ‘Listen, this is not right, let’s deal with it. We want to continue working together. We want to continue collaboration because I think that there’s nothing we can’t achieve when we stand together.”



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Historian shares Emancipation Day thoughts with ABC

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Rosemary Sadlier was instrumental in the establishment of Black History Month across Canada, but her advocacy work as President of the Ontario Black History Society increased the profile of Emancipation Day in this country as well.

As communities gathered August 1 to mark Emancipation Day, the anniversary of the abolition of slavery across the British Empire in 1834, Sadlier was at Aurora Town Square to speak on the importance of the observance to people all over the world.

Sadlier shared her thoughts in an in-person and virtual seminar hosted by the Aurora Black Community Association (ABC) and hosted by ABC founder Phiona Durrant.

“I became involved in doing Emancipation Day because I was approached by the President of the Caribbean Historical Society of Trinidad and Tobago many years ago,” she shared. “The focus was very much on the impact and significance of the British Imperial Act and [my focus was] why is it so important that at least

800,000 people were freed as a result of that?”

Sadlier is a multi-generation Canadian. Her mother’s family, she said, came to what is now Canada in 1830 via the Underground Railroad, while her father’s side of the family has heritage in New Brunswick going back to 1783.

She didn’t find out about her family’s deep roots here until she was already married and a mother of two, she said, leading her to wonder why this type of history was not taught regularly in schools. This fuelled her interest and eventual career in studying and amplifying Black history – a line of work which has given her a unique perspective on the present-day challenges facing Black Canadians.

“As a person who had grown up in this country, as a person who had children, as a person who was involved in doing Black History presentations, and I had done thousands, actually – in the process of raising awareness about the importance of Black History, how can you be a part of that and not see why you have to continue?” she said. “There weren’t as many people doing it as I might have preferred. You had to keep pushing, because it was a story

about me, because it’s a story about my family, because it’s a story about my kids and who they are going to school with. How do you make that change if you yourself aren’t willing to take some of that responsibility to change it?”

“When I had a platform heading the only Provincial heritage organization in this country with a focus on Black history, I felt it was important to use that as much as I could.”

More platforms exist now than ever before, however, and Durrant asked how people of European heritage can be part of that solution without concerns of “taking up space” or not having the personal lived experience to speak up.

Sadlier responded that not everyone is expected to be a “social justice advocate,” but it’s important to show up “if you are committed to seeing improvements in society.”

“If you are committed to seeing improvements in this society, and if you have children, or you want to see your tax dollars used properly in terms of what you support in terms of our school system, if you’re a voter, if you’re running for a position, you might need to have a position and you might need to do more than show up. You might need to actually commit and make yourself available to do things, but everyone doesn’t have to do the same thing. You work in the area where you have comfort and where you have skill, and you ask questions. If you’re not sure, just ask. Everyone has a space.”

At the same time, however, Black Canadians shouldn’t have to shoulder the burden of educating others.

“Every Black person is not supposed to be providing every White person with a rundown of Black history and issues related to the transatlantic slave trade,” she said. “At the same time, you have to come with some preparation. If you walk into a kitchen, you have to kind of know how to cook a little bit. You should have basic rules about what you need to do so that when someone puts a carrot in front of you, you kind of know how to peel it.



The Aurora Black Community Association held an in-person and virtual webinar at Aurora Town Square on August 1 to mark Emancipation Day. Pictured here from left to right are Serena, Rosemary Sadlier, Aurora Black Community Association founder Phiona Durrant, Dr. Vincent Conville, and Ward 1 Council candidate and Aurora Public Library Board chair Lauren Hanna.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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BUSINESS & FINANCE



Cardinal Carter students turn Research Club into international success

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As A.I. continues its rapid rise, it's can be harder and harder to suss out sources of real information – but a group of Cardinal Carter students have come together to help their peers hold their own in research literacy as they prepare for university, and their efforts have gone global.

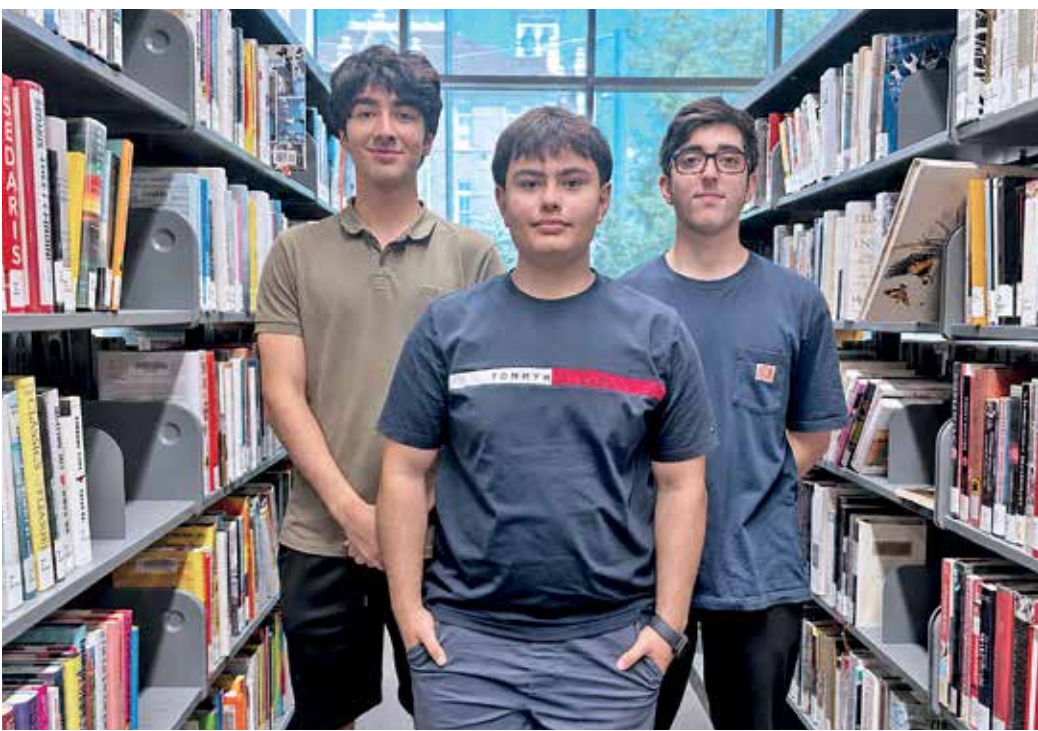
Samyar Shafiee, a student at Cardinal Carter Catholic High School who is going into Grade 12 this fall, is one of three students behind the school's Join Research club. Since its

inception within the Cardinal Carter community, it has since grown to more than 300 students across five provinces and two U.S. states.

Join Research pairs students with university mentors and free workshop resources, including its free Research 101 course, which offers students the fundamentals.

Students founded the Join Research club last October under the supervision of their biology teacher. By December, they began looking at ways to scale up.

Their first stop was establishing a monthly research club at the Aurora Public Library, a component of the



Kian Bassiri, Co-Founder, Samyar Shafiee, Co-Founder, and Erfan Timajchi, Lead of Education, are the minds behind Join Research. They are pictured here at their regular meeting spot – the Aurora Public Library



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program that continues to go from strength to strength. From there, they went online with their Research 101 program where they felt they had the potential to reach thousands of youth looking to build their skills.

Shafiee says there are more resources and programs in the United States to help students develop their research skills and, in founding the club here at home, they were looking to close a gap.

“It’s an online forum with one single classroom where we have live sessions every day for five days a week, one hour from 10 – 11 a.m.,” he explains. “I record those sessions and post it in the classroom, so if you have a time zone mismatch, you can easily watch the videos and ask the same questions. It’s just going to be asynchronous instead of a synchronous class. It still works out as a fully online course because we don’t have the resources as a student non-profit to go to every single province physically. However, what we’re planning to do is do a research competition with the University of Toronto in the winter of 2027.”

“Most of our students are interested in health science and biology, but we also have a bunch of students interested in engineering sciences and overall STEM. The whole point of the course is that we don’t dive into any content-specific information. What that means is we give you a baseline understanding that you can apply to any topic – for example, the basic skill of reading an abstract, or the basic statistics behind your data. These basic skills can apply to any sort of content. If you wanted to do a paper in history or the social sciences, you still have to go through the same process of writing, revision, being peer reviewed and all that fun stuff.”

For participants, a type of peer review can happen in real time as students are paired with one of five university members – often undergraduate students – who work with the teens to

take their skills for the next level.

“If we can just spark that passion in them, they’re going to be doing more work on their own and they’re going to become great researchers on their own after the program,” says Shafiee. “We want to keep it a fun environment and the whole point is we make it as flexible as possible so anyone can fit it into their schedules.... This is just for helping around the community and in general, Canadians and all international students. That’s the goal.”

It’s a goal that has been a few years in the making.

Shafiee came to Canada when he was in Grade 8 with limited English. He quickly found he was adept at learning the language through watching English TV shows and videos on YouTube. At the end of his first year, he earned the Math Award from his elementary school which he said “gave me that little confidence boost that I can actually achieve something.”

“I went through Grade 9 and Grade 10 just trying to build the skills required for starting this non-profit,” he says. “I always had an idea that I wanted to run something at a high scale, it doesn’t matter whether it is a research organization or even a business. I just wanted to commit to a company or an organizational non-profit I could scale up by some university. From then on, I studied hard, tried to build connections with my teachers, because if I didn’t build up connections with my high school teachers, there would have never been a club to begin with and there would never have been the idea to start a research organization.

“Building these connections with people around you is the most important thing I have ever done, and that’s how it helped me excel in Canada.”

For more on Join Research, visit joinresearch.ca or email info@joinresearch.ca.

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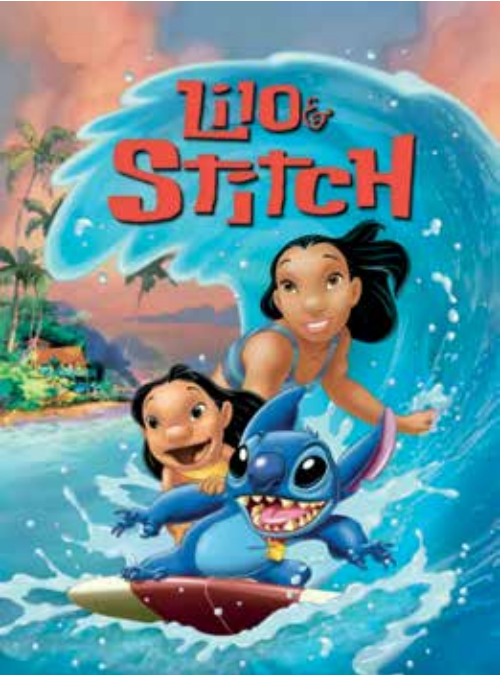
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Movies in the Park will bring double dose of fun this summer



BY BROCK WEIR
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LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Town of Aurora’s Movies in the Park summer series will offer a double dose of family fun this month as the program expands to three nights of double features.

The curtain will rise on Movies in the Park at Town Park on Thursday, August 20, at 7 p.m., and continue each Thursday at the same time through September 3.

“Movie enthusiasts are invited to join us this summer as Aurora Town Park transforms into an outdoor cinema,” says the Town. “Bring a lawn chair or blanket, gather family and friends, and enjoy a double-header movie experience under the stars. With two feature films showing back-to-back. It’s the perfect opportunity to settle in for an evening of outdoor entertainment in a fun and relaxed setting. Arrive early to find the perfect spot and take part in the pre-show activities the movies begin.”

The double feature series is made possible through the rental of a new mobile LED screen this year, rather than relying on an inflatable screen and traditional projector as in years past, says Shelley Ware, Special Events Supervisor for the Town of Aurora. These screens eliminate the challenges that come with waiting for dusk for the movies to begin, and eliminate some of the other challenges that weather can sometimes present.

With these constraints out of the way, the Town decided to make the most out of it.

“It is a bigger investment to go this route, but we’re also investing in the community,” says Ware. “I think we were really limiting the audience and residents we could attract to this event with such a late start. We’ve eliminated a few more risks that were out of our control and we’ve really been able to focus the earlier movie time on the younger families in Aurora, and then it also enables us to have the slightly more mature movies starting at 9 p.m., and people

are welcome to stay for both, come for one, or come to the other!”

Kicking off the film series on Thursday, August 20, under the theme of Pink Paradise Night – Think Pink, Live Aloha, are Disney’s “Lilo & Stitch” at 7 p.m., followed at 9 p.m. by Reese Witherspoon’s “Legally Blonde.”

Still feeling the FIFA buzz, the August 27 theme is Game Night – Game Changers, featuring Will Farrell’s “Kicking & Screaming” at 7 p.m., followed by Adam Sandler’s Happy Gilmore at 9 p.m.

Ocean adventures are the order of the evening on Thursday, September 3, with Ocean Adventures – Beyond the Reef, Waves of Hope, featuring Disney-Pixar’s “Finding Nemo” at 7 p.m., followed by “Big Miracle” at 9 p.m.

“It’s definitely a gem to be discovered, and bringing it out here to Movies in the Park is a great way to see it on the big screen,” says Ware of Big Miracle, which is described as, “a family of gray whales is discovered near the Arctic Circle, a team rally an international coalition to save the whales before it’s too late.”

“Big Miracle was actually based on the real-life Operation Breakthrough and it’s such a good movie with some animation mixed in, some fantasy mixed in, and it’s environmental conscience tied in with some truth.”

Truth will also be in the numbers of this year’s Movies in the Park as the new screen set-up, expanded film options, and more, create new measures of success.

“I’m hoping there’s an increase in attendance and I also hope there’s a section of attendance that does the full double-header,” says Ware. “I’m also hoping attendance that comes for the 9 p.m. movie where clearly you see older people who have clearly gone out for dinner and now they’re catching our Movie in the Park.”

For more information about this year’s lineup, which is sponsored by Aurora Orthodontics and Desjardins Insurance, visit aurora.ca/moviesinthepark.



ALLEY JAM – Aurora’s James Brown, pictured, and the James Brown Trio, kicked off an August of live music in the heart of Downtown Aurora on Saturday with the first Machell’s Alley “Alley Jam” series. Running each Saturday in August from 12 noon to 2 p.m., upcoming concerts include Michael Allen and Saskia on August 8; The Tap Room Gang on August 15; Larra Skye with Gord Girvan on August 22; and North of the Border on August 29. For more, visit aurora.ca/machellsalley.
Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger



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Meditations on grief and memory come to Cultural Centre in new exhibitions

From page 1

Chambers, a prominent textile artist who previously installed a work at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex and hosted by the Centre.

This new work by the Metis artist, an evocative look at the lives lost to the opioid crisis, came after Chambers lost her own son to overdose in 2023.

“She was trying to figure out a way to speak with her work about mental health and addictions, and she came to start considering textiles and their ability to represent people and also their comforting effect,” says Ashlyn Gregory, Gallery Manager for the Aurora Cultural Centre. “Using textiles that have been donated from families who have experienced loss in the opioid crisis in Canada, she started making this body of work. It consists of the donated textiles, which she seam-rips and then ties together to create this sort of cellular structure and this structure is meant to represent a saguaro cactus skeleton, all about the strength that is still there even when the plant dies.

“It was a shape that she and her son encountered together on a trip to Arizona and it ties all back to her relationship with grief and her son.”

Gregory first saw “They are loved – an epidemic of grief” at Artist Project in Toronto and said she was greatly moved by the installation and the way it tells stories of the individuals represented, and also its ability to be a springboard for conversation.

The exhibition will open to the public at an opening reception set for



Thursday, August 13, from 6.30 to 8.30 p.m., and will run through November 15. On Monday, August 31, Chambers will speak at an event hosted by the Cultural Centre and CAYR Community Connections, a York Region-based organization specializing in support for people who use substances, are living with HIV or Hepatitis C, or have lost a loved one to HIV or Hepatitis C.

“It’s a beautiful way to represent something that is so hard to talk about, and what a great way to get people to talk about it using art and creating a piece that is so dynamic and completely changes the space,” says Gregory. “It’s a really moving, beautiful work.

“[The artist] is also welcoming donations from families who have lost a loved one, and if people would like to donate a textile, and she has a catalogue of textiles she has collected for people who maybe don’t have a textile to represent their loved one, they can reach out if they would like to be

involved.”

As different textiles from different backgrounds come together to tell a common story in Chambers’ work, local artists are also bringing together different materials to tell stories of their own in a new exhibition in the Aurora Cultural Centre’s Great Hall Gallery. Also opening on August 13 as part of the Centre’s fall reception, and running through November 15, this exhibition of works from seven York Region Artists.

“The Collage exhibition really came to be just because I’ve been noticing trends at art fairs and different things in the cultural scene that collage is really making – maybe ‘comeback’ is not the right word as it’s always been there, but there’s sort of a resurgence in the amount of collage that I’m seeing,” says Gregory. “It’s such a dynamic practice because you’re taking bits from something else and bringing them together to create an entirely new artwork. It’s a great way for people to work through their understanding of themselves, identity, self-perception, by bringing different pieces together to create a collage of lived experience and cultural influences to explore identity.”

This is a theme that extends to the next exhibition, “Arnie Lipsey: Past. Tense.”

This show, which runs August 27 – October 31, draws on family photographs which Lipsey re-interprets into “fantastical compositions that bring into focus the cultural, historical, and personal circumstances that linger beyond the frame.”

“Suspended somewhere between the now and then, Arnie Lipsey’s narrative portraits navigate the porous spaces between inherited memory and imagination,” says the Centre. “Using painting to trace a family history shaped by immigration, trauma, and silence, the artist leans into the surreal to bridge a gap between what is remembered and what can only be imagined.

“As a second-generation Jewish Canadian, Lipsey paints from a position of ‘postmemory’ – a term that describes the ways in which the trauma of previous generations is internalized through stories, images, and cultural memory. His parents, European Jews who immigrated to Montreal before World War II, escaped Nazi persecution but lost many relatives in the Holocaust.

“Through complex symbolic language and unexpected juxtaposition, Lipsey’s work reveals the interpretive layers through which family narratives are continually re-imagined.”

Hailing his “beautiful narrative



(Above) Arnie Lipsey is the artist behind the Aurora Cultural Centre’s upcoming exhibition Past. Tense. (Top) Detail of Lipsey’s work.

Aurora Cultural Centre images

portraits,” Gregory says the Centre is always looking to tell stories of diverse perspectives from many cultures.

“Although his work is very specific to him and his experience, I think everyone will be able to see themselves in his portraits and their own relationship with family and inheritance,” she says. “Arnie has a really interesting process for how he creates his works. He works from black and white photographs of his family. He has boxes of these old photographs, and when he’s wanting to paint, he goes through them and finds a photograph, and then he fills in the background and the composition with fantastical elements that are surreal, that help tell the story, giving the photograph context, like what was going on in his family at the time. Through this symbolic language and the surreal juxtaposition, he reveals the layers of family narrative, so what he remembers, what he has been told, and how he fills in those gaps. It’s really complex, very intriguing work.

“I think people will walk away thinking about their own family history and how it’s been mediated throughout the years, thinking about things that your grandparents have told you, your parents, and then how you internalize them based on your own experiences.”

Lipsey’s exhibition will open to the public on August 27, with an opening reception open to the public from 6.30 – 8.30 p.m. The Aurora Cultural Centre will also host In Conversation with Arnie Lipsey on Wednesday, October 28, hosted by Gregory.

For more information about these and other upcoming Aurora Cultural Centre gallery exhibitions and associated events, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca/upcoming-exhibitions.

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WEEK OF AUGUST 6, 2026

Aurora Flag Football League launches in September at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School

Flag Football is a demonstration sport at the 2028 Olympics and "the fastest-growing sport in North America"

BY JIM STEWART
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Humberview Huskies Head Coach and Aurora resident Adrian Piscitelli has been providing a steady supply of football players to the OUA over the last four years—having resurrected a ROPSSAA high school football program and restored its pre-Pandemic glory days.

In a related initiative, the long-time high school teacher and Athletic Director at Humberview SS has launched the Caledon Flag Football League in July to much acclaim and, after that on-field success, has turned his eyes eastward to offer a similar recreational opportunity for Central York athletes.

In his most recent creative act, Coach Piscitelli is launching the Aurora Flag Football League next month. The fledgling sports organization will host its practices and games at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School's pristine new field facilities on Sunday mornings between 8 – 11 a.m.

The veteran football coach pitched the three benefits for athletes who join the AFFL: “They’re building confidence, learning new skills, and having fun playing the fastest-growing sport in North America. Flag football is a demonstration sport at the 2028



Flag Football has proved a success in the Caledon community already.

Auroran photo by Jim Stewart

Olympics and has replaced tackle football at the NFL's Pro Bowl. Most importantly, the Aurora Flag Football League is not an American franchise, and we're not connected to a big football program. It's a grassroots company that's run by Aurora residents. We're singularly focused on flag football. Everything we do as an organization will be reinvested in the age group divisions that we're serving and instructing."

Coach Piscitelli delineated the age groups featured in the new sports league and the logistics of joining the AFFL for its inaugural season in

September: “Cost of registration is \$300 for the U16, U14, U12, and U10 divisions. It includes eight sessions and a jersey to keep. We’ll provide the belt and the flags. Cleats are recommended, but soccer cleats are fine on the turf. We have a ‘Learn to Play’ Program, too, for \$200. The start date will be Sunday, September 13 and the inaugural season will end Sunday, October 25.”

The Humberview Huskies Senior Football team from Bolton and the OFSSAA-winning Senior Girls Flag Football team—the Robert F. Hall Wolfpack from Caledon East – will comprise the on-field instruction team. The instructors will be coordinated by Brittany Ross—a Humberview SS graduate who is a four-time OUA Flag Football champion with the Queen's

University Golden Gaels.

However, Coach Piscitelli is also looking to hire more local residents to augment his on-field instructional squad: “We’re looking to hire local Senior High School students who demonstrate our values of responsibility, empathy, leadership, and giving back to the community. We’ll be paying the on-field instructors \$20 per hour. We’d like to give local high school students the opportunity to develop transferrable skills as Flag Football instructors and put meaningful experiences like coaching and instructing young players on their resumes.”

To register for the first season of the Aurora Flag Football League, go to the organization's website at www.auroraflagfootball.ca and visit Instagram at [AFFLauroraflagfootball](https://www.instagram.com/AFFLauroraflagfootball).

*Aurora's B1 Groppo Cycling Team
wins two gold medals at
Canadian Masters Road Cycling
Championships in Alberta*

Paolina Allan and Deirdre Maloney finish first in their divisions in Calgary

BY JIM STEWART

Aurora Sports Hall of Famer
Paolina Allan just keeps on rolling.
Allan finished first in the Master
C Category at the Cycling Canada
Canadian Masters Road Cycling
Championships in the Individual
Time Trial in Calgary on Saturday.

It was the fifth time the ASHoF inductee has won the Canadian championship.

The Aurora-based B1 Gruppo Squadra Cycling team captured a second gold medal in the foothills of Alberta when Deirdre Maloney won the Master B category.

According to B1 Gruppo Squadra team spokesman Vito Barbera,

“Racing alone against the clock—the time trial is cycling’s ultimate test of individual power, speed, and determination, and both B1 women delivered championship-winning performances. Two of B1 Gruppo Squadra’s top female riders [made] their presence known [when] team leader Paulina Allan and teammate Deirdre Maloney struck GOLD in their respective Individual Time Trial categories.”

Both Allan and Maloney will compete in the Canadian Championships Road Race.

According to Barbera, the cycling teammates will “battle a strong peloton featuring some of the best Masters women across Canada. The championships will conclude with the fast and furious Criterium.”

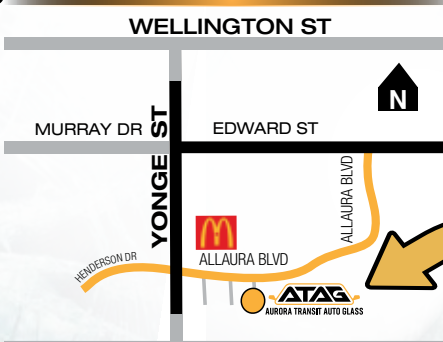


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The image features the New Roads Automotive Group logo, which consists of a stylized camera shutter icon in teal and grey, followed by the text "New Roads Automotive Group™". Below the logo is a row of automotive brand logos: Mazda, Subaru, Toyota, Honda, Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram, and NAB. To the right of the logos is an illustration of three children. One child is a girl in a white and blue hockey uniform with "EAGLES" on the front, holding a hockey stick. Next to her are two boys wearing red t-shirts with the New Roads Automotive Group logo, black helmets, and safety glasses. They are standing on a light blue surface, possibly ice or a rink.



The Aurora Farmers' Market continues to be a popular Saturday destination for Aurorans and shoppers from across York Region. On Saturday, it was shopping under sunny skies for (Top) Laurie, (Middle) Chuck, Joanne, and Matthew, and (Above) Rebekah and Steve.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

BY DAVID SUZUKI

When my wife Tara and I arrived on Quadra Island in the late 1980s, we were awestruck. Forests stretched to the horizon, fishing boats chased salmon, scores of herring rushed about as eagles circled above. Coming from Vancouver, the cove where we bought our cabin seemed like a secret oasis.

Our neighbours told a different story. Having lived there for 50 years, they recounted a version of Quadra Island that no longer existed: coasts teeming with red snapper, abalone, herring and cod as long as an arm. The schools of fish we saw on our arrival paled in comparison to decades past. It was hard to reconcile the natural vibrancy we saw with the losses we didn't.

In 2020, I spent early lockdown mornings on Quadra walking outside with my grandkids. At my old age, I remarked, “Look at that! They just cut that tree down. Look at the garbage on the shore here!”

My grandkids saw something different. When I found a salamander in a rotting log, you would've thought I had won a Nobel Prize. To them, the natural world is magical. It was hard to reconcile the awe in their eyes with the losses I catalogued through mine.

That's the dizzying cognitive dissonance of "shifting baseline syndrome."

A socio-psychological phenomenon, shifting baseline syndrome describes how environmental information is lost from memory over time, so changes go unnoticed. Marine biologist Daniel Pauly coined the term in 1995. He observed that fisheries scientists were measuring fish population sizes with reference to those present at the beginning of their careers. Fish stocks declined, and when the next generation of scientists started their monitoring, that declined state became the baseline. “We transform the world, but we don’t remember it,” Pauly remarked at a TED Talk two decades later.

The generational amnesia observed by Pauly, my Quadra neighbours and me is a main cause of shifting baseline syndrome. Younger generations inherit degraded environments with no memory of what existed. The baseline shifts, and the cycle repeats.

In this way, shifting baseline syndrome deceives us into thinking the history of a

place or species only extends as far back as our memory of it.

Nature doesn't adhere to human memory spans, but our sense of urgency does. As baselines shift, we get more tolerant of degraded environments. We feel less pressure to push politicians to implement policies aimed at conservation and restoration. We may not feel action is necessary.

After all, if the news reports that fish are large even when they're only a fraction of their previous generations' size, did they ever shrink? If my grandkids don't notice anything ominous about a clean windshield after a summer road trip, did insect populations actually plummet?

If all this has been happening unnoticed, is it really that bad? If it is, is there anything we can do about it?

It's a slippery slope from skepticism to cynicism to fatalism. Proof is in the subtleties, and shifting baseline syndrome proves that fatalism becomes fatal. In one human lifetime, we're left with shrunken fish and shrunken ambitions, polluted ecosystems and polluted politics, extinct species and extinction of experiences with nature. What we forget or forego is killing us.

It raises an important tension I wrestle with.

This year, touring the country with Tara for our play *What You Won't Do for Love*, releasing my latest book *Lessons From a Lifetime* and celebrating my 90th trip around the sun have forced me to confront love and what others would call legacy in surprisingly sentimental ways.

When I think of legacy, I think of how many old-growth cedars or pollution-free shorelines I'm handing to my kids and grandkids. Will the world still look magical to them when they're my age?

Shifting baseline syndrome lays bare all the ways past generations failed future ones. It also reminds us that we can shift baselines in another direction.

The world aw it does to harm, but healing is possible. The best way I can tell my grandkids “I love you” is to fight for a world that heals, a world that maintains their awe.

*By David Suzuki with contributions from
Communications Specialist Brandon Wei.*

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Ward 2 candidate Daust calls for “considerate, sustainable growth”



Ward 2 resident Angela Daust registered to run as Councillor last week.

Auroran photo by Diane Buchanan

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

In the face of infill development and significant changes to their community, residents often turned to neighbour Angela Daust to come to Council, approach the public, and speak their concerns to local lawmakers.

Now retired from the City of Toronto after a 30-year career in areas as varied as policy development and health and safety, Daust has thrown her hat into the ring to take her community advocacy to the next level as the Aurora’s next Ward 2 Councillor.

Daust, a member of Aurora’s Environmental Advisory Committee, registered her candidacy on July 29, and says her top three priorities include “considerate, sustainable growth for Aurora, fiscal responsibility, and democratic governance.”

“We need to evolve for the future, and I

think it needs to be done in a considerate fashion so that all parties are made comfortable with what is going forward,” Daust tells The Auroran. “I think we have to be fiscally responsible. I think the shortfall in [the] infrastructure repair and replacement budget is a glaringly obvious problem that we’re facing right now. Going forward, the budget needs to reflect being fiscally responsible in order to make sure that any growth in the future can be supported by our infrastructure.”

“The third think, I think, is to make sure there’s democratic governance,” she continues, touching upon the use of Strong Mayor powers in Aurora. “For however long Aurora has been in existence, there has always been democratic governance, and I think it’s very, very important that Councillors have a voice at the table and that their voice is heard for their constituents in their ward. I don’t believe that the decisions of one person properly represents everybody in

Aurora, and I think if we have a municipal election and people go out and vote for a certain candidate because they want their concerns heard by the candidate, they need to have a voice at the table, one that can’t be vetoed. It needs to be there to represent people in their ward.”

When asked what sets her apart in the race for Ward 2, which also, at press time, includes Marco Di Girolamo and Brynn Lansdown, Daust cites her work in municipal government, particularly in public engagement, and community advocacy as assets she feels will serve the community well.

She also feels its important to live in the Ward you wish to represent as being resident allows an individual to have a greater “sensitivity” to the issues at the hyper-local level.

“Each ward has its own concerns and its own needs, and I think it’s really important to live in the ward in order to know what people need in your ward,” she says. “I believe because I have advocated for people in my area numerous times over the past 30 years, it’s given me a lot of experience speaking to Council and preparing things... to make sure that the residents in my area are heard with their concerns.”

Daust has been a resident of Ward 2 for more than 30 years and was actively involved with the development of the Aurora Promenade Plan. Since that plan’s inception, she says several proposed development projects have come to Council that have “pushed the envelope” as to what was allowed within the Promenade, and this type of growth has been a particular focus for the Ward 2 community.

“I’ve always been very involved in local politics and very concerned about local politics and how it affects the residents. I think that level of government is the one closest to everyone. It affects everyone the most on a local basis. I’m looking

forward to doing more research and being presented topics by staff that I can look into and make sure that I’m really well-informed on what is going on in order to make the best judgements and the best decisions for people in my ward. My motto is going to be ‘Your Strong Voice on Council.’ I honestly believe that people in the ward need to have somebody to advocate for them and to stand up to make sure the Town of Aurora goes the direction that they want it to do and what all the residents of Aurora want it to be. [We need] to make sure that Aurora going forward still has that small town feel, but does have considerate growth with the needs of the future because we’re right on Yonge Street, obviously there’s going to be growth, but it needs to be growth that fits everyone.”



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However, many people are hesitant to have surgery given its invasive nature. It is important to know that although surgery is sometimes necessary, it is considered a last resort in most cases.

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National Wings Day: Celebrating Fifty Years of a Favourite Pub Snack at W.E’s fifth annual Wing Fest

Aurora should have a wing-fest, says restaurateur

BY JIM STEWART
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Restaurateur Robert Stewart knows his wings.

The popular proprietor of Wicked Eats in north Aurora has been in the restaurant business for more than fifty years and the commencement of his career coincided with the arrival of chicken wings on the menus of Toronto pubs.

“I’ve lived through the beginnings of wings in the GTA. Kelsey’s popularized wings back in 1977 at the same time as Pete and Marty’s brought the concept of the chicken wing as pub fare to Toronto. I met Marty in 1981 after he left Kelsey’s to open his upscale restaurants. I stayed with them for 18 years and saw the rise in the food’s popularity.

“I’ve worked with all the Wing restaurants over the years—Wild Wing, Buffalo Wings, and St. Louis Bar and Grill. When I worked at St. Louis, I created and introduced the Wingsanity promotion. It was this range of experiences that inspired the menu for Wicked Eats.”

However, Stewart’s connection to chicken wings goes much deeper than his days helping to establish restaurant chains over parts of six decades.

His links to the tender morsels are steeped in family history: “Chicken wings helped raise a family—Vincent Baldasio was my mother’s father, but the inspirational leader was my grandmother who was confined to a wheelchair. She was the matriarch of the Baldasio family whose roots were in Caceria, Italy. Living in Cabbagetown, she earned a reputation as a strong woman who was very resourceful. She would get the inexpensive pieces of chicken from the butcher that other people considered to be scraps and salvaged the wings and the pope’s nose. She’d season the chicken, serve it in her homemade sauces that we use at



Wicked Eats’ Robert Stewart, standing, is pictured here on Wing Day with Anthony Garramone, left, and Jim Stewart.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Wicked Eats, and wings and the pope’s nose would be a main part of our dinners to help make ends meet. They were the least expensive parts of the chicken and were tied to my Italian roots in Toronto. The pope’s nose was my favourite—it was so tender—until my grandfather told me the part of the chicken that the pope’s nose came from.”

Stewart laughs when he shares that childhood epiphany about a chicken’s anatomy.

Consequently, the pope’s nose is not featured in any of his signature dishes, but wings have been a staple of the Wicked Eats menu.

“We introduced Wing Fest in 2021 with 57-cent wings. This year, on our fifth anniversary of WingFest, we gave out free five-wing sample packs to the first fifty people who dropped by on July 29 on National Wing Day. Our ‘All-You-Can-Eat for \$24.99’ wings promotion ran for the entire month of July.”

The long-time restaurateur reflects with much gratitude about the past and expressed some reservations about the health of the industry in the present.

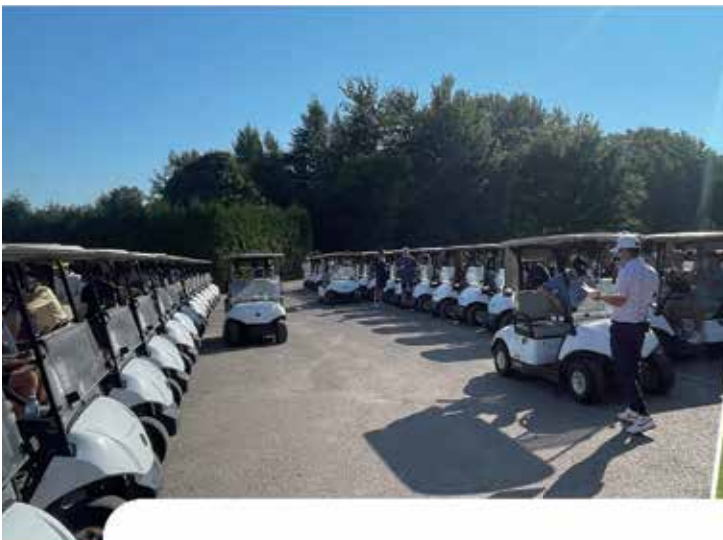
“I grew up in the Golden Age of restaurants, but the restaurant business had

Continued on page 19



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Hundreds join MP, MPP at ASC for Summer Barbecue



Hundreds descended on the Aurora Soccer Club on Saturday, August 1, as Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Costas Menegakis and MPP Michael Parsa hosted a summer barbecue while hosting Opposition Leader Pierre Poilievre in the community. (Top) Avisa stopped to get her face painted. Rob and Bonnie represented the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. (Middle) William brought a large contingent of guests. Menegakis and Parsa meet with York Regional Police Chief Paulo Da Silva. (Above) Menegakis and Poilievre addressed the crowds. **Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger**



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Aurora resident wins \$50,000 with Ontario 49



Salvatore P. of Aurora is celebrating after winning an **ONTARIO 49** second prize worth **\$50,000** in the **June 27, 2026** draw.

Salvatore, an electrician and father of two, is a long-time lottery player with OLG. He enjoys playing twice a week, with his favourite games being Ontario 49, LOTTO 6/49, and LOTTO MAX. Now, he's delighted to share the news of his first big win.

When Salvatore discovered his win, he initially thought he'd won a smaller prize before realizing there were a few extra zeros in the amount.

"I told my kids and a couple of close friends. They didn't believe me at first, but they're very excited for me," he shared while at the OLG Prize Centre in Toronto to collect his cheque.

With his winnings, Salvatore plans to take a family vacation.

"I always think about family first," he said with a smile. "This win comes at a good time."

Ontario 49 is \$1 per play and the draws take place every Wednesday and Saturday. Combination Play is available in five-, seven-, eight- and nine-number selections. Tickets are sold until 10:30 p.m.

The winning ticket was purchased at Longo's on Wellington Street East in Aurora.

Local food producers, businesses and artisans: Become a vendor at the first-ever Harvest King Fall Farmers Market

Champion local goods and support King Township's agricultural community at the October 4 event

CONTRIBUTED

Calling all farm stands, local produce growers, artisans, handmade goods vendors, and food producers! King Township invites you to take part in the first-ever Harvest King Fall Farmers Market on Sunday, Oct. 4 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the King Township Municipal Centre, located at 2585 King Road in King City.

Hosted in partnership with the King Environmental Action Team, this free community event celebrates the deep agricultural roots that continue to shape King Township today.

With more than 41,000 acres of farmland and nearly 240 local farms, agriculture remains a vital part of the community's identity and economy. Set against this rich backdrop – and in close proximity to the Holland Marsh, one of Ontario's most productive growing regions – the market brings together residents, farmers, artisans and local restaurants in a vibrant, welcoming setting filled with fresh, local flavours and seasonal finds.

Vendors get a 10x10 foot space at the venue from setup (8 to 9:15 a.m.) to teardown (2 to 3 p.m.) on the day of the event. Fees to secure a spot are \$25 (plus HST) for businesses; spots are free for designated Township community group affiliates. Six- and eight-foot tables are available to rent for \$15 (plus HST) per table. To be considered, complete the vendor application form online by Friday, Sept. 4.

Vendors selling food are also

With more than 41,000 acres of farmland and nearly 240 local farms, agriculture remains a vital part of King Township's identity –and this market brings that heritage to life with fresh, local flavours and seasonal finds

required to complete a York Region Public Health vendor application form. Only complete and signed applications will be considered. All vendors must be fully set up by 9:30 a.m. on the day of the event.

The Harvest King Fall Farmers Market offers vendors a unique opportunity to connect directly with residents, attract new customers and build brand awareness in King Township and beyond. Attendees can look forward to a lively marketplace atmosphere featuring a kid-friendly fun zone, fresh produce, local products and handmade goods.

For more information, including event details and vendor application forms, visit king.ca/KEAT.



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REINHARD (RON) PAUL JESKE

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our dear husband, father, Opa, great-Opa, brother and uncle in his 89th year following a courageous battle with cancer.

He will be deeply missed by his wife Margery of 66 years, son Bryan (Cathy), daughter Karin (Chris), grandchildren Samantha (Zain) & Stefan (Sabrina), and Kristina (Rory) & Carlton (Tiffany), his great-grandchildren Jaxson and Rowyn; his brother Ralf and all of Ron's relatives in Germany, and all his family and friends here in Canada.

He was predeceased by his daughter Della.

Ron will stay forever in our hearts and will never be forgotten. His great sense of humour, his strength, his kindness, his compassion, his resilience, and his patience will always be remembered. He was a true gentleman.

Ron was born in Oldenburg, Germany. He immigrated to Canada in 1956 at 19 years old. He was never without a job and was the hardest working man, always determined to provide a beautiful life for his family here in Canada. His longest employment of 35 years was with Magna International as a Production Manager at Unimatic and Normark Manufacturing.

His love of gardening and racing pigeons with the Far North Club brought him great joy for so many years. He enjoyed watching sports and Formula 1 racing.

His biggest joy in life was his grandchildren and great-grandchildren who always brought smiles to Opa's face. He loved everyone so much and always made sure everyone was happy, healthy, and smiling their way through life. Rest in peace you sweet soul. We love you more!

Donations in Ron's memory may be made to Margaret Bahen Hospice or Southlake Cancer Centre.

In keeping with Ron's wishes a Celebration of Life will follow at a later date.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Bleated

6. Snakelike fish

9. Database management system

13. Social evolution anthropologist Service

14. American rocker Grohl

15. Greek personification of compassion

16. Negatives

17. Rescued

18. Self-immolation by fire ritual

19. Assigns tasks

21. Popular type of cigar

22. Discounts

23. The whole quantity

24. New York Giants legend

25. Indicates before

28. Lentils

29. Extremely angry

31. Body part

33. "North Star State"

36. David __, US playwright

38. Lower and raise one's head

39. Private rendezvous

41. In a way, improved

44. A place to play

45. Astronomical period of 18 years

46. Automobile

48. Something you can take

49. A radio band

51. Jaws of a voracious animal

52. Short-billed rails

54. Chinese province

56. Shameless

60. Horizontal passage from the surface into a mine

61. Indian respectful titles

62. Fail to entertain

63. Dried-up

64. Central Utah city

65. Southern U.S.

66. German river

67. Necessary for breathing

68. Put into play

CLUES DOWN

1. Curved segment

2. Wings

3. Yellowish volatile liquid

4. Makes less severe

5. Debit note

6. Overhang

7. The nights before

8. Type of light

9. Lacking enthusiasm

10. Tattle

11. Some is "heavy"

12. One who is canonized

14. Indicates date and place of writing

17. "Peace" in Arabic

20. "Ola!" actor Josh

21. Fragmented rock

23. They __

25. Advanced degree

26. Backside

27. Influential architect and design couple

29. An act of undue intimacy

30. Words from which later words are derived

32. 10 meters

34. Neither

35. Fungal sacs

37. The law of God revealed to Moses

40. A woolen cap of Scottish origin

42. A promise

43. Challenges

47. British Air Aces

49. Large bank

50. Served as an omen

52. Cavalry sword

53. Vaccine developer

55. Belgian WW2 resistance leader Jules

56. Italian Seaport

57. Hip joint

58. __ Clapton, musician

59. Insect repellent

61. Constrictor snake

65 "The First State" (abbr.)

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THINGS... you ought to know

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5

Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series continues at Town Park this evening from 7 – 9 p.m. with The Beate Band. "The Beate Band is a thrilling live re-creation of 'The Beatles' remarkable journey from 1963 to 1969, blending iconic music and authentic detail into what audiences have called 'a theatrical and cultural phenomenon.'" Concerts are free, but donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged. For your seating comfort, bring portable lawn chairs.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair takes place today at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12

Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series continues at Town Park this evening from 7 – 9 p.m. with Epic Rush – The Canadian Tribute. "Experience a powerhouse country tribute featuring the smoky vocals of Chris Stapleton and the foot-stomping anthems of Luke Combs, brought together in one unforgettable night of chart-topping hits and heartfelt storytelling." Concerts are free, but donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged. For your seating comfort, bring portable lawn chairs.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair takes place today at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19

Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series continues at Town Park this evening from 7 – 9 p.m. with Outlaw State of Mind and Beautifully Crazy – Tributes to Chris Stapleton and Luke Combs. "A highenergy tribute concert honouring the iconic sound of Rush, featuring classic hits, exceptional musicianship, and an electrifying live performance celebrating one of Canada's most influential rock bands." Concerts are free, but donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged. For your seating comfort, bring portable lawn chairs.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20

Aurora's Movies in the Park Summer Series kicks off today at dusk at Aurora Town Park with the theme Pink Paradise Night – Think Pink, Live Aloha. Showtime begins at 7 p.m. with Lilo and Stitch, followed at 9 p.m. by Legally Blonde. Movies are free to attend – and there will be free popcorn while supplies last. For your seating comfort, please bring your own portable lawn chairs. Food donations for the Aurora Food Pantry will be gratefully accepted.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair takes place today at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Victorian Flower Arranging: Tussie Mussie Workshop – Join the Aurora Historical Society and Garden Aurora for a Victorian Flower Arranging: Tussie Mussie Workshop at Hillary House National Historic Site. Discover the fascinating language of flowers while creating your own traditional Victorian bouquet to take home. Perfect for beginners and flower enthusiasts alike. 2 – 4 p.m. Tickets are \$40pp/ AHS Members receive 15% discount. For tickets visit www.aurorahs.com or call 905-727-8991.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26

Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series continues at Town Park this evening from 7 – 9 p.m. with Project Phoenix. "Get ready to groove with Project Phoenix – a sensational eleven-piece Funk and R&B band. They will get you moving with music from classic groups such as Earth Wind & Fire, Stevie Wonder, Commodores and Kool & The Gang. Feel the beat and catch the vibe!" Concerts are free, but donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged. For your seating comfort, bring portable lawn chairs.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27

Aurora's Movies in the Park Summer Series continues tonight at Aurora Town Park with the theme Game Night – Game Changers. Showtime begins at 7 p.m. with Kicking & Screaming, followed at 9 p.m. by Happy Gilmore. Movies are free to attend – and there will be free popcorn while supplies last. For your seating comfort, please bring your own portable lawn chairs. Food donations for the Aurora Food Pantry will be gratefully accepted.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair takes place today at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series concludes at Town Park this evening from 7 – 9 p.m. with The 99s. "Close the summer with a non-stop dance party! The 99s light up the stage with pop, rock, and R&B hits from the '70s to the 2000s. Let the timeless grooves move you from the first chord to the last encore." Concerts are free, but donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged. For your seating comfort, bring portable lawn chairs.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

Aurora's Movies in the Park Summer Series concludes tonight at Aurora Town Park with the theme Ocean Adventures – Beyond the Reef, Waves of Hope. Showtime begins at 7 p.m. with Finding Nemo, followed at 9 p.m. by Big Miracle. Movies are free to attend – and there will be free popcorn while supplies last. For your seating comfort, please bring your own portable lawn chairs. Food donations for the Aurora Food Pantry will be gratefully accepted.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair takes place today at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

ONGOING

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

Support AbuseHurts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. 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.

National Wings Day

From page 14

been a grind for the last five years. It hasn't been a lot of fun – so a bigger WingFest event in Town featuring the independent restaurants would bring some of the fun back to restaurant life. By the way, our record for eating chicken wings at a sitting at Wicked Eats is 48. Those contests make for fun gatherings."

I was enticed to vie for the record, and settled into the All-You-Can Eat promotion which started with a delectable 10-pack of wings, the pub's fresh-cut fries, and it was complemented with an ice-cold Strongbow Cider.

I enjoyed two subsequent five packs and called it a day with the essence of Sweet Baby Ray's BBQ sauce still dancing in my salivary glands. It was a great way to celebrate Wing Fest and to partake in National Wing Day.

If the Wicked Eats proprietor has his way, a WingFest will eventually be celebrated across Aurora to rival the much-loved RibFest. Stewart praised five of the many independent restaurants in Town who could host a lively crosstown WingFest—Tina's Grill, St. Louis, TJ's, PD Diner, and The Tippy Goose—and lauded the quality of their fare and the quality of wings.

The veteran restaurateur opined in our booth by the bar that "this should be celebrated by Aurorans. On this anniversary, the story of the chicken wing needs to be told."

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Zach Shoub
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TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT
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THE PELVIC FLOOR REVOLUTION



...is in Richmond Hill

You may not know it, but there is a Pelvic Floor Revolution happening around the world. For years the pelvic floor was a taboo subject not well understood.

You can blame this on a historical lack of funding and interest in women's health. This is now changing. There are articles in major women's health magazines, podcasts, and even a new industry called FemTech – where women's healthcare and technology are colliding to solve unmet needs. And don't you think it's about time? If men peed their pants every time they sneezed, jumped, or shot a hockey puck this would have been solved 50 years ago. Can I get an "Amen?"

Women have normalized bladder leaks and urgency as "part of being a woman". This is simply not true. These issues are common, but not normal. Your body should not leak urine. Ever. Wearing bulky pads or diapers should not be something we settle for. These issues are typically a sign of dysfunction in your pelvic floor, and you deserve to have that problem solved.

Numerous surveys show many women have no idea what the pelvic floor is or what purpose it serves. **UROSPOT** is a private and modern pelvic health and urology focused clinic passionate about changing this statistic.

UROSPOT combines technology, education, and health coaching to help women (and men) say goodbye to bladder leaks, urgency, prolapse and other pelvic floor issues. The best part is you remain fully clothed, and the treatment is 100% non-invasive. Nothing goes in your body, and no one is touching you.

The care team consists of Nurses and Pelvic Floor Physiotherapists. You are surrounded by professionals coming together to help you. A key part of the care model

is the Kegel Throne - a medical chair, approved by Health Canada. As you sit comfortably, the chair not only re-boots the connection between your brain, bladder, and pelvic floor, but it also does 11,000 contractions of the pelvic floor muscles (you know these as Kegels) to help strengthen and restore the muscles.

"Finding this program was the best thing to have happened to me. I had become pretty reclusive, and now I feel free and liberated from my circumstances. I have learned so much about my body that I didn't know before – it's a wonderful blessing"

The level of education provided at **UROSPOT** is world class. "Why wasn't I told this 10 years ago?" is a common question asked by clients exposed to the education throughout their care.

With locations across Canada, **UROSPOT** has a home in Richmond Hill. This revolutionary and dignified treatment changes lives and restores confidence and freedom. You can even use physiotherapy benefits towards the cost of treatment. If bladder leaks, urgency, night waking to pee, frequent trips to the bathroom or pelvic organ prolapse are impacting your life, help is now here.

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