





THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

VOL 28 | NO. 6 | 905-727-3300 | TheAuroran.com | FREE | WEEK OF NOVEMBER 19, 2026



END OF A CHAPTER – Outgoing Council members Rachel Gilliland (Ward 2), Wendy Gaertner (Ward 3), John Gallo (Ward 5), and Ron Weese (Ward 1), are pictured at last week's Council meeting with CAO Doug Nadorozny as they received a token of appreciation from the Town as their terms came to an end.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

Aurora's 2022-2026 Council signs off with farewells and a look to the future

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's Council of 2022-2026 formally came to a close at Town Hall at November 10's Council meeting.

With a light agenda before them, it was a time for incumbent lawmakers who will not be returning for the 2026-2030 Council to say farewell, while re-elected members had the chance to look ahead.

"Four years of debates, difficult decisions and, yes, a few disagreements along the way. What matters most is that each of us came to this table with a commitment to serving our residents and making Aurora a better place," said Mayor Tom Mrakas, summing up the term.

Mrakas was re-elected by Aurora voters on October 26 to lead the incoming term of Council, which, at press time, was set to be inaugurated at Town Hall on the evening of November 17.

He was re-elected alongside incumbent Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson and incumbent Ward 6 Councillor Michael Thompson.

Outgoing Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo left his Council position to run for Mayor, while Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland, and Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner did not seek re-election.

The incoming Council will include Ward 1 Councillor Lauren Hanna, Ward 2 Councillor Angela Daust, Ward 3 Councillor Nikki Alber, Ward 4's Thompson, Ward 5 Councillor Jessie

Continued on page 6

Ontario Legion Health aims to bring healthcare closer to veterans

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

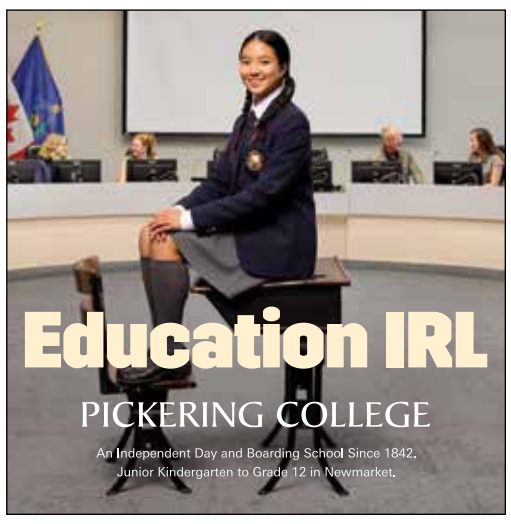
Veterans, Legion-members, and everyday community-members in under-served areas of Ontario will soon be able to access several healthcare services at their local Legion branches.

Continued on page 15



MPPs Michael Parsa, Graham McGregor and Laura Smith joined Mayor Tom Mrakas and members of the Royal Canadian Legion at the Aurora branch on Friday for the launch of the Ontario Legion Health kiosk program.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

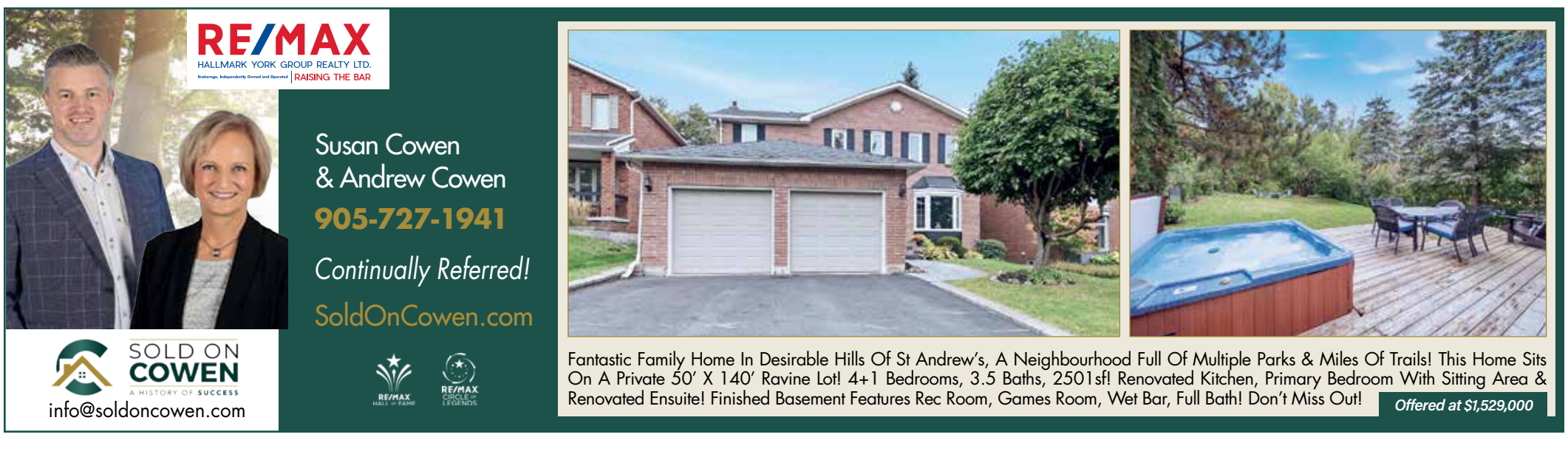












TOWN OF AURORA

NOTICE BOARD

November 19, 2026

Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Week of November 23	No meetings		
Tuesday, December 1	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Public Planning
Monday, December 7	7 p.m.	Holland Room	Heritage Advisory Committee
Tuesday, December 8	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, December 8	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Committee of the Whole
Wednesday, December 9	7 p.m.	Holland Room	Accessibility Advisory Committee
Wednesday, December 9	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library	Aurora Public Library Board
Thursday, December 10	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Committee of Adjustment
Tuesday, December 15	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, December 15	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Wednesday, December 16	6:30 p.m.	School House Mtg Room	Aurora Cultural Centre Board (6:30-7 p.m. Public Meeting)

***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.**

Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition

Featured Artists: Aurora's Royal Canadian Legion, Youth Remembrance Day Contest Winner - Artwork by Local Students

Through the annual National Youth Remembers Contests, the Legion National Foundation, in partnership with The Royal Canadian Legion and schools across the country, invite Canadian youth and children to honour Canada's Veterans and foster the tradition of Remembrance through visual art, poetry writing and video. Col. Fred Tilston V.C., Branch 385 in Aurora is proud to exhibit the 2026 local winners of the Youth Poster and Literary Contest. Enjoy touring this month's Aurora's Skylight Gallery exhibit, with artwork from Aurora's Royal Canadian Legion available for in-person viewing opportunities.









Winter 2027 Program Guide

The **Winter 2027 Program Guide** will be available to view online starting on **December 1**. Registration dates are posted online at aurora.ca/ProgramGuide. View the interactive guide and click on the code # to register online. Pay in-person at the A.F.L.C., A.R.C. or A.T.S.

2027 Aquatic Leadership Courses

Aquatic Leadership registration is now open for all seasons of our 2027 Aquatic Leadership courses. Full details at **aurora.ca/AquaticLeadership**. Register online or pay in-person at the A.F.L.C., A.R.C. or A.T.S.

Winterfest Camp – Junior & Senior

School is out for the Winter holidays. Take a break from the cold weather and join us for games, sport, crafts and more! Winterfest Camps are available for children aged 4 to 6 and 7 to 12. Full details at **aurora.ca/Camps**.





What's Happening



Travelling south on Yonge Street from Orchard Heights Boulevard to Murray Drive.

Please view the parade from the sidewalk.
The roadway will be blocked off for parade floats only.

aurora.ca/SantaParade



Are you a festive decorating enthusiast?
Do you have a knack for untangling lights like a pro?

Register you home or business for Aurora's Deck the Halls Tour.

The tour runs from **December 6 to 23** with big prizes to be won.
To compete register by **November 29, 2026**.

All Aurora residents welcome – homes, apartments and business storefronts!

aurora.ca/DeckTheHalls



aurora.ca/MenorahLighting

Aurora Town Hall
100 John West Way, P.O. Box 1000, Aurora, ON, L4G 6J1
905-727-1375 • info@aurora.ca • aurora.ca

Accessible Formats
905-727-1375
accessibility@aurora.ca

Mrs. Claus getting Santa camera ready for his star-studded night

Santa Under the Stars returns November 21



Mrs. Claus is pictured on her float at last year's Santa Under the Stars parade. This year's parade takes over Yonge Street this Saturday, beginning at 6 p.m. at Orchard Heights and travelling south.

Auroran file photo by Glenn Rodger

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Santa Claus is set for a star-studded return to Aurora.

Aurora's Santa Under the Stars Parade will take over Yonge Street this Saturday, November 21, from 6 – 8 p.m., an event that regularly draws hundreds to the Town's historic downtown core.

This year's parade will travel southbound on Yonge Street from Orchard Heights Boulevard to Murray Drive, and will feature beautifully-decorated community floats, marching bands, and, of course, the Man of the Hour himself.

"The best way to get the spirit into your hearts is definitely to take the time, come to the parade, come out with your friends and family, and hopefully you make new friends with the people you're watching the parade with along the route," says Shelley Ware, Special Events Supervisor for the Town of Aurora. "It's 2.4 kilometres of heart and cheer. We want everyone to make the time to come out and officially start their holiday season with us!"

Ahead of the Big Night, Mrs. Claus sat down in the North Pole for a Zoom interview with The Auroran. She is not only preparing to ride in a float of her own, but doing her best to make sure Santa, along with the reindeer and elves under her charge, are camera-ready.

Here are some of her insights:

The Auroran: I know this is always a favourite parade in Santa's calendar. How are you feeling ahead of the trip?

Mrs. Claus: "I'm overwhelmed as more nice kids been coming in, because Aurora's had an exceptionally kind year. I'm excited, too, to make the trip down because I want to do a bit of shopping in Aurora, but out of all the parades I have been able to tour, this one really, really speaks to my heart."

TA: What makes it stand out?

MC: "Well, I always look forward to my sweet ride – although Santa has the best ride in the float, I'm very grateful that the Town of Aurora staff put together a special float just for me. It's cool that I get to see all the shining faces along the route before Santa does. I just like taking it all in – and everybody is so eager to see me as well!"

TA: What do you want them to leave with?

MC: "I hope they see my smile, I hope they know how grateful I am to be in Aurora. But I also get a sense that this is the start of the holiday season, and although it's the start of the season, it's also the start of additional giving back efforts as well. Christmas is about receiving, but also more so about giving."

TA: Have organizers given you any teasers about any of the entries?

MC: "Some of the longstanding floats are returning, but I also understand that the parade has piqued some interest from some new groups, so I am excited to see how they shape up as they step up to help to contribute to the merry brightness of the evening. I especially always look forward to the Optimist Club of Aurora float, and I'm always so blown away by the St. Andrews College Pipe and Drums bands. I can't believe those are youth that are in that band!"

TA: Why do you think the Santa Under the Stars parade continues to be such a community draw?

MC: "I think it's the way Aurora makes it so inclusive. The downtown area is so charming. It's nice that the parade route is straight. They also have a special accessible viewing-of-the-parade section, which I don't know of other parades that actually do that. There are special viewing areas set aside based on the needs of those families. I really like how inclusive the Town has been as they welcome both me and my husband."

TA: Should kids bring their letters to Santa for collection along the way?

MC: "Correspondence has started to trickle into the North Pole. I haven't heard from Aurora yet, though, whether their postal workers will be out. But if their workers aren't out, we still want the Littles to write their letters and post it into any of the mailboxes with the postal code H0H 0H0. I have to remind the kids to please put their return address. We get so many letters, but far too many of them don't have an address, so we can't simply respond when that happens."

TA: You see the parade from a unique vantage point each year. Seeing the shining faces from your float, do you have any reminders for them and their families ahead of November 21?

MC: "I'm in charge of elf safety at the North Pole and with this being a nighttime parade, which really makes it super-special, I really have to ask all the parents and caregivers to keep their children off the road. The road is closed, and I'm sure it looks like fun in that instance, but we have to remember that if a fire truck has to come down or if an EMS call happens, we want those services to be able to get where they're going safely and quickly. I take extra duty in taking care of the elves and I really hope those watching the parade can also. I'm sure it takes a lot of reminders, and I'm sure it takes a lot of effort to keep people, especially Littles, off the road, but it's so, so important."

TA: What's left on the to-do list?

MC: "I have a special crew at the Town in the Parks Yard, especially one particular man, Greg Knuth. The tires on the floats all get prepped up, ready to go. All the cleaning of the floats, extra massaging of all the special decorations that are done – truly, when I arrive, it is just sparkling. I really quite enjoy how much care and heart they put into welcoming both my husband and I. Then, of course, how sweet and comfortable the ride is. With every smile I give to the kids on the route, I hope that all the children will share their smiles. Because every smile that's shared becomes a lantern in someone else's winter."

For more information on this year's Santa Under the Stars Parade, visit aurora.ca/santaparade.

NORTH YORK
HEATING, PLUMBING & ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES

We sell all types of Filters Humidifiers Air Cleaners & Water Pumps

Tel: 905-727-6401
www.nyhp.on.ca
8 Industrial Pkwy. S.
Aurora, Ontario



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Lions launch holiday Christmas appeal

A full grocery bag. A warm coat. A small gift chosen with care. These may seem like simple things, but for a neighbour wondering how to manage Christmas, they can mean a great deal.

This season, the Aurora Lions Club is inviting our community to help fill those grocery bags—and ease some of the worry that too many families carry into the holidays.

For more than 70 years, our Christmas campaign has provided grocery gift cards to people in need. Working alongside the Salvation Army, we also help provide clothing and small gifts. In recent years, the campaign has supported as many as 220 local families and individuals.

Behind that number are neighbours: parents stretching a grocery budget, individuals facing a difficult year, and families hoping to give their children something to smile about on Christmas morning.

A donation cannot solve every challenge they face. But it can help put dinner on the table, provide something warm to wear, and make room for a little joy. It can offer the reassurance that their community has remembered them.

We welcome donations from residents, businesses and community organizations. Please give what you comfortably can. Many acts of generosity, brought together, can make Christmas brighter for people right here in Aurora.

Cheques payable to Aurora Lions Club may be mailed to:

Aurora Lions Club
PO Box 71612
Aurora RPO, Aurora
Shopping Centre
Aurora, ON L4G 6S6

To arrange a donation pickup or ask about donating by e-transfer, please call 905-727-6079 or email auroralions1944@gmail.com.

To everyone who has supported this campaign before, thank you. You have helped turn our community's kindness into something a neighbour can carry home.

Let's do that again this Christmas.

Lion Brenda Braendel
Christmas Campaign Coordinator
Aurora Lions Club

Traffic should be redirected during Remembrance service: Resident

Once again, I attended the Remembrance Day service at the Cenotaph in Aurora. As always, the service was extremely well attended. Unfortunately, once again much of the service was difficult to hear over the speeding cars, trucks of all sizes including tractor trailers, and the occasional vehicle which was hopefully being driven to a muffler shop.

The service is important to the hundreds who attend. It is important to those who have served, and it is important to those who are with the Armed Forces. It is important for me to be thankful for my own father's service of 20 years in the Canadian Armed Forces. Why can't we close the portion of the roadway that passes directly past the Cenotaph for an hour? We close other portions of Yonge Street in Aurora for Santa Claus, a street sale and a dance party. Surely we can close a portion of it for an hour to honour those who made and are still willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for the rest of us.

Len Bulmer
Aurora

Machell's Corners



Tick-tock, tick-tock...



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

When cancelled, postponed, or otherwise fallen-through plans offer up an unexpected free hour in your day, are you the type of person who feels compelled to immediately fill those 60 minutes with something highly productive?

Or, are you the type of person in who will take those free minutes as a bonus and use them to slow down for a minute, regroup, or refresh, knowing that the rest of the day is packed to the gills and you might as well tackle it on a full battery?

A lot can be done – or not – in the span of an hour, but it all depends on how you measure it.

The perennially popular Broadway musical "Rent", in arguably one of its most enduring tunes, measures not an hour, but a year. "Seasons of Love" calculates their year in 525,600 minutes, yes, but it also leaves the door open to other units of measurement, including amount of daylight, and numbers of sunsets, midnights, cups of coffee, inches, miles, laughter, and strife.

There are still more ways to measure those 60 humble minutes.

Maybe it can be measured on the impact you can have on your loved ones, your community, and indeed yourself as the large hand makes its way fully around the clock.

Perhaps others measure it in sheer dollars and cents.

Here in Ontario, according to the most recent update to minimum wage rules, an hour of our time is valued by the Province at a minimum of $17.95. It's far from uniform across the country, however, with different Provinces and Territories pegging the same 60 minutes at different values.

Newfoundland & Labrador has set their minimum hourly wage at $16.35, Nova Scotia at $17, New Brunswick at $15.90, Quebec at $16.60, Manitoba at $16.40, Saskatchewan at $15.70, Alberta at $15, and British Columbia topping the Provincial list at $18.25. Up in the territories, the value of the hour is particularly dear in Nunavut at $20.17, while Northwest Territories and Yukon register at $17.20 and $18.51 respectively.

Earlier this month, we gained an "extra" hour of time when we were compelled to move our clocks back 60 minutes as our seemingly never-ending dance with Daylight Savings Time kicked into fall sweeps.

Ordinarily, this is a time of year when I once again indulge in something I've often been accused of: relentless positivity. I guess it's slightly better than "toxic positivity," but unlike an hour, I'm not sure what units we use to measure toxicity in that context, but I digress. Is it relentless positivity to consider that hour as a bonus that should be taken advantage of in one way or another?

Getting an "extra hour of sleep" is goal enough for some, and I don't disagree, but that hour doesn't have to be cashed in on the day the extra 60 minutes arrive; it can be spread in any way we see fit throughout the long, arduous months we have before we "spring forward" to a time when the sun doesn't begin turning in for the evening at 4 p.m.

It always seems like a golden opportunity at the time, so much so that we all too often forget we have to pay it back in the springtime.

I don't know about the rest of you, but I'm at the point now where if Ontario values an hour as it currently does, I'll happily take a cheque for $17.95 for the privilege of leaving clocks right where they are when we're collectively sprung forward and calling it, well, a day.

Each time we fall back or spring forward, it spurs a debate on whether or not we, as Ontarians, should continue shuttling this hour back and forth.

Despite amazingly consistent statistics being dusted off an updated every year delineating the negative health impacts of the time change, the challenges it brings to drivers and, by extension, the safety issues it brings to our streets, and so much more (not the least of which is public opinion) we're often told with the same consistency that Ontario can't ditch the system until Quebec and New York State get on the same page.

All in the name of the economy, of course, and cross-border trade – although I wonder how much of a factor this remains given our current trade relationship with the national umbrella under which New York finds itself.

At the same time, however, at the start of this month, it was confirmed that this multi-lateral collaboration isn't necessarily the case as the Provincial Government made Daylight Savings Time permanent in northwestern regions of Ontario.

Ostensibly, the move was to maintain alignment with Manitoba, which moved to Permanent Daylight Savings Time on the same day.

"We heard from Manitobans loud and clear – no more changing the clocks in Manitoba," said Premier Wab Kinew in a statement. "Permanent Daylight Savings Time is good for our health, good for business, and good for parents. For families, especially those with young kids, that one-hour shift can disrupt sleep and routines for days. This change means one less adjustment families have to deal with each spring and fall. That's why this November, your clocks won't be changing."

Ontario, on the other hand, made no mention of the health and family impacts, and instead focused on the economic angle.

"Providing certainty and predictability is essential to supporting strong communities and a competitive economy," said Ontario Attorney General Doug Downey last month. "By keeping this part of the province aligned with Manitoba, our government is taking a practical, common-sense approach to avoid unnecessary disruptions and ensure economic stability in communities that reside in Ontario's Central Time Zone."

The Ontario Government continued: "This decision comes after considerable engagement with communities throughout northwestern Ontario, including Indigenous leaders, that began following Manitoba's declaration of permanently moving to daylight savings time. This engagement revealed substantial support for maintaining alignment with Manitoba. The government will continue to work with local leaders and communities as this proposed change moves forward."

While I'm fairly sure the vast majority of us living in the Eastern Time Zone are content to remain doing so, I suspect if "considerable engagement" was carried out in the rest of Ontario, Ontarians would largely support maintaining alignment with Manitoba in pushing back against this arbitrary and archaic mechanism.

I don't hold out much hope that when we spring forward in March of 2027 that it will be the last time where we're expected to complete this threadbare task and return the hour we received this month, whether we used it wisely when it was in our hands – or not.

But the realization that we need to rely on the good legislators of Quebec and New York to proverbially get with the program has been a false bill of goods this whole time makes me slightly more optimistic that the clock on daylight savings time is ticking down.

Queen's Park can do a lot with an extra 60 minutes between now and March. Let's allocate that time to copy Manitoba's legislation, switch up some of the particulars, get on with it, and watch it pay dividends down the road.

And just think what they could do with the 57 minutes they have left!

THE AURORAN
Aurora's Community Newspaper

The Auroran Newspaper Company Ltd.
15213 Yonge Street, Suite 8, Aurora, L4G 1L8

Main number 905-727-3300
Fax number 905-727-2620

Founder Ron Wallace | Publisher Emeritus Rosemary Schumaker

Subscriptions available within Canada and U.S.
email: administration@auroran.com

EDITOR Brock Weir brock@lpcmedia.ca
ADVERTISING Zach Shoub zach@lpcmedia.ca
ADVERTISING Karen Nemet karen@lpcmedia.ca
GENERAL MANAGER Zach Shoub zach@lpcmedia.ca
ADVERTISING Diane Buchanan diane@lpcmedia.ca
PRODUCTION MANAGER Cynthia Proctor cynthiap@lpcmedia.ca
TODAYS NEW HOMES Zach Shoub zach@lpcmedia.ca
MOTORING Heather Erwin heather@caledoncitizen.com
CLASSIFIEDS 905-727-3300 ex.102 cynthiap@lpcmedia.ca
PHOTOGRAPHY Glenn Rodger grodger@rogers.com
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER Sheila Ogram sheila@lpcmedia.ca

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada
Funded by the Government of Canada | Canada

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

News Media Canada / Médias d'Info Canada

EDITORIAL POLICY
Opinions expressed by columnists, contributors and letter writers are not necessarily those of The Auroran. Letters must include name and phone number, although number will not be published. Letters may be edited or refused. All contents protected by copyright.

ADVERTISING POLICY
Publisher is not liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. Disputes must be brought to the attention of the publisher prior to the following edition.

AURORA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

HISTORY THRIVES ON PAGE 5 WITH THE AURORA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

FAST FACTS



A Viceregal Viscount Visits

The title "Viceroy" and its adjective "viceregal" have essentially fallen out of popular use in English, although here in Canada, we have had a lengthy succession of Viceroys: from the 16th century Governors of New France and the 19th century Governors General of the Province of Canada, to today's Governor General, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Louise Arbour. Aurora has not been a stranger to visits from people occupying this high office. This week, here and in the Time Traveler's Diary, we're looking at the 1926 visit of Governor General the Viscount Willingdon, who was part of the opening ceremonies at the new St. Andrew's College (Photo courtesy of the St. Andrew's College Archives). Here, he cuts a distinct silhouette, with his anachronistic top-hat, contrasting with the cadets in their Highland dress (essentially unchanged from World War I). Perhaps obviously, the noble title Viscount shares an etymological root with Viceroy, both being "vice" substitutes for a Count, or a Royal, respectively. The vibes are very vintage.



MP SANDRA COBENA'S UPDATE

Sandra Cobena, MP
Newmarket-Aurora

Every family in Newmarket–Aurora deserves to feel safe in their own home. But if someone breaks in, what does the law say about your right to defend yourself and your loved ones?

This week, Parliament will debate that very question as my private member's bill, the Stand on Guard Act, comes before the House of Commons. Introduced on March 12, 2026, the bill seeks to clarify how Canada's self-defence laws apply during a home invasion.

When I speak with our neighbours across Newmarket–Aurora, public safety is one of the concerns I hear often. With growing concerns about violent crime, many residents tell me they no longer feel the same sense of security they once did, even in their own homes.

Those conversations helped shape the Stand on Guard Act. Under the proposed legislation, if someone knowingly and unlawfully enters your home and you use force to defend yourself or your family, that force would be presumed reasonable unless evidence establishes otherwise.

This legislation is grounded in a simple principle: Your home should be your safe place, and the law should recognize its special importance. Canadians who defend themselves during a home invasion should not have to live with the uncertainty of lengthy legal proceedings over decisions they were forced to make in a matter of seconds.

The Stand on Guard Act is about giving families greater peace of mind, protecting the right toself-defence, and ensuring that the law recognizes the difficult circumstances Canadians face when their safety is threatened in their own homes.

With the Vice-Regals



Time Travellers Diary

By Jacqueline Stuart

I noticed the other day a street banner marking the one hundredth anniversary of the arrival of St. Andrew's College in Aurora. I assumed there had been an official opening event and I thought I might take a trip back in time to attend.

There was indeed an official opening, conducted on November 18 in 1926 by Canada's very new Governor General, the Viscount Willingdon. He had just taken his oath of office in October.

I decided to join the vice-regal group, in invisible mode, in Richmond Hill. Apparently that Town had learned of the Willingdons' Aurora visit only that very morning. Amazingly, hasty communications between the municipal office and those managing the Governor General's stay made the Richmond Hill stop possible.

As was typical of such visits, the Governor General first viewed the Richmond Hill war memorial. Its location right in front of the public school made it easy to assemble a welcoming crowd at very short notice. Some suitable words from Lord Willingdon, a bouquet presented to Lady Willingdon, and then it was back into the motor cars to make our way up to Aurora.

Again, we stopped at a war memorial: the cenotaph commemorating those from Aurora, King, and Whitchurch who had lost their lives in service.

Soldiers and cadets from the York Rangers formed ranks to greet the visitors.

Lord Willingdon laid a wreath at the memorial and inspected the military groups. Some informal conversations followed. The Governor General seemed especially impressed by the cadet leader, James Murray. I could have told him that young Mr. Murray was a future mayor of Aurora, but of course I did not. Lady Willingdon received a bouquet of flowers.

I forgot to mention: this was all taking place in pouring rain!

Then it was northward again, to a platform on Wellington decorated with flags and a huge "Welcome to Aurora" sign. There was a big crowd – some said a thousand people – made up of civic officials, students, the high school cadet corps, and many other citizens.

The Governor General inspected the high school cadets, then stepped on to the platform to receive Mayor J. M. Walton's rather lengthy speech of welcome. Lord Willingdon expressed his thanks but said that in view of the weather he would not give the full response he had planned. No one looked disappointed.

It was time to move on again: St. Andrew's was waiting. The crowd sang "God Save the King," the school children waved flags, and we pulled away.

At St. Andrew's, the Governor General first inspected the school's kilted cadets, then had a tour of the buildings. After a luncheon (none for me, of course) the special guests moved to the gymnasium where a great many other guests, along with students and staff, were waiting. The school was formally declared open, speeches were made, and a prize-giving began.

The Governor General's day was running rather late and he had to leave right after the prize-giving. Although so close to home I decided to keep on travelling

Surprisingly, our next stop was back in Richmond Hill. The destination was the Loyal True Blue and Orange Home orphanage. Lord and Lady Willingdon proceeded along the entrance hall which was lined with the resident children, all waving flags and cheering. Lady Willingdon passed a beautiful bouquet of flowers to the matron of the home, who must have been moved by the gesture. (I suspected that it was a convenient yet thoughtful way to make use of one of the bouquets presented to Lady Willingdon earlier that day.)

I was exhausted – and I had not had to make speeches or be charming. I decided to come home to the present, and another fairly new Governor General: Louise Arbour.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Final word from outgoing Regional CAO

Serving as York Region Chairman and CEO has been one of the greatest honours of my public service, and I am deeply grateful for the trust placed in me.

When I was appointed by the Province of Ontario in December 2024, I committed to completing the remainder of this term of York Regional Council. I also made it a priority to work collaboratively with Members of Council, our exceptional staff, local municipal partners, the Province and community organizations to advance the priorities that matter most to our residents. As this term of Council comes to an end, I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together.

Over the past two years, Regional Council has made important decisions that will have a lasting impact on York Region's future. We have strengthened community safety through significant investments in police and paramedic services, advanced affordable housing and homelessness initiatives, supported responsible growth and taken steps to make new homes more attainable. We have continued to invest in the roads, transit, water and wastewater infrastructure that connect our communities and support our growing population, while maintaining the essential services residents depend on every day.

Leading an organization responsible for $5.3 billion in annual services and infrastructure means every decision directly affects more than 1.3 million residents who call York Region home. I have valued the opportunity to work alongside Council, staff and our partners to meet today's needs while planning for the Region's future.

I did not apply for reappointment as York Region Chairman and CEO. I am deeply grateful to the Province for the opportunity to have served in this role and for the trust placed in me. I also want to recognize the dedication of Regional Council, our staff, local municipal partners and community organizations. Their commitment has been central to the progress achieved during this term.

I am confident the 2026 to 2030 term of York Regional Council will continue this important work, building on the progress we have made and advancing the priorities that matter most to our residents.

It has been a privilege to serve York Region, and I wish the incoming Council every success in the important work ahead.

Eric Jolliffe
York Region Chairman and CEO

Brook of Hope Home moves into fourth year

November 1, 2026, marked the start of Aurora's own Brook of Hope Home's fourth year of operation, but the story of this registered Canadian charity actually goes back a dozen years earlier to 2014.

That year the Campus Church, Aurora, sent 20 volunteers to minister to orphans in Zambia, Africa.

Thanks to that two-week, short-term mission, the love of the Zambian people continued to grow here, ultimately formalizing in the registration of Brook of Hope Home (BHH).

With a vision to help orphaned and at-risk children in Zambia, BHH focuses efforts to provide these children the means to not only stay in school, but thrive academically through much needed tutoring with locally trained teachers.

For more information on this locally grown charity, please visit brookofhopehome.ca and check out the videos on Facebook and Youtube.

If you notice some of our 70 children wearing Aurora Youth Soccer jerseys or sporting Tim Horton's and other Canadian logos, that's thanks to the generosity of our wonderful Auroral Youth Soccer Club!

Leo DiPaola
Aurora

Aurora's 2022-2026 Council signs off with farewells and a look to the future

From page 1

Fraser, and Ward 6's Kim.

"To our two returning Council members, I look forward to continuing the work that we started and building on what we've accomplished together," Mrakas continued. "To our four outgoing members, I want to sincerely thank each of you for your service, your dedication, and the time you've given to our community. Public service requires sacrifice, not just from those sitting around this table, but from your family as well, and that commitment deserves to be recognized and appreciated.

"As we close this chapter and prepare to begin a new one, I want to thank you for your contributions to our community and I wish our outgoing colleagues nothing but success and happiness in whatever comes next. Thank you to each and every one of you for your service to the Town of Aurora."

Each Council member had the chance to speak at last week's meeting, including the outgoing members who expressed their appreciation to the community and the returning Councillors, in turn, saluting their service.

"I would like to thank each of them for their service to the Town of Aurora," said Thompson. "Serving on Council requires a significant commitment of time and effort. Each of you has contributed in your own way to our community and I want to acknowledge the commitment tonight. Thank you for your service and I wish each of you all the best in your future endeavours.

"Finally, I'd like to congratulate Mayor Tom Mrakas and Councillor Harold Kim on the re-election. I look forward to working with both of you over the next four years as we address the opportunities and challenges ahead and continue to make decisions in the best interests of our community. Congratulations to you both and best wishes for a successful term ahead."

Kim also expressed his appreciation to those who put their names forward for the 2026 Municipal Election.

"I remember in 2014, when I first went out there. It's scary wondering who would open the door, so kudos to all of you who put your name out there and kept the democratic process going. Congratulations to the new Councillors that I look forward to working with in the next term," he said. "Congratulations to Mayor Mrakas, Councillor Thompson, look forward to continuing to work with you, and thank you all very much."

During her final meeting in Aurora, Gilliland, who was elected Deputy Mayor of the Town of the Blue Mountains on October 26, spoke to members who will continue serving at the Council table.

"To my returning colleagues: Harold, you had a way of thinking things through out loud and there was usually a long story to go with it, quite fun actually. You could probably count on me to have a different point at the end of it, and I've always really appreciated that you heard me out. I'm really glad that we got to spend these eight years together on Council," she said.

"Michael, you had a knack, a real knack to getting to the question and we really needed to ask. I appreciate the experience you brought to the table, the way you kept us thinking about what our decisions would mean for Aurora for years down the road. I'm really glad I had the opportunity to serve alongside you for that. You kept us on our toes.

"And Mayor Mrakas, thank you for the eight years we served together. We've worked through a lot together, and cheeky at times, but all joking aside, I'm grateful for what we were able to accomplish together for Aurora as a whole."

Returning members also received advice from a voter at last week's Council meeting with resident John Hartman, who described himself as a "frequent flyer" at the podium, reviewing Council's accomplishments as well as some tasks that lie ahead.

"There are also words of appreciation to Council to express to each of you as individuals or a collective group, as you dealt, debated, and challenged each other and the community staff on complex issues to support our Town over the past four years," said Hartman. "Projects such as updating our Official Plan, important work on heritage, advancing work on the greening of Aurora, the ever-changing landscape of housing development, Metrolinx, and who could ever forget the debates around windrow pilot number four, what was known as the Blue Bin Affair with [Circular Materials], the tragic loss of a family pet, the changing minds around a men's transitional home, Victoria Hall, and the perpetual discussion on questionable financial placeholders. These are just a few examples of the topics that were debated over the past four years.

"To our outgoing members of Council, Ron, Wendy, John, and Rachel, I am grateful for the countless hours of time required in these Chambers, the extended committee work, the long commute from other parts of Ontario, the evenings and weekends away to debate, question, and engage residents for what we all hope are the best decisions to improve our Town. I did not agree with all of you on Council matters, yet democracy is grounded on the fact that we expect you to collect the most up-to-date information….when needed, see clarity when needed, use facts and not fiction, admit when you're wrong, and have open, transparent, and collaborative discussions before a single voice can make a decision.

"In my opinion, independence and collaborations are the key. I want to give a special tip of the hat to Councillor Ron Weese, who served Ward One. You were available, Ron, direct, and open to ideas and sought clarity when asked. Not sure how you and others did it by reading hundreds of pages of technical and service reports and staff reports and attended functions that impacted your family life. Ron, it was never gone unnoticed. We appreciate you from Ward One. To our Mayor Tom and new Council members Lauren, Angela, Jessie, Nikki, and existing members, Michael, and Harold, my sincere appreciation to all of you for taking the oath to serve in the upcoming weeks."

"[On] most of your pre-election websites, you noted independent thinking, collaboration, honest leadership, transparency and engagement, trust, and accountability. I will continue to challenge you to embrace those words and turn them into visible action for the improvement of our next four years," he concluded.





TRICK *or* SUITE

The Starlight Children's Foundation held their annual Trick-or-Suite event at Microtel Inn & Suites by Wyndham Aurora last week. The annual event, which provides Halloween fun for seriously ill children and their families, proved popular once again, and even the likes of Captain America, Spiderman, Superman, and Batgirl turned up to raise smiles. **Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger**



the RESIDENCES ON YONGE
15520 Yonge St. Aurora, ON

Because Familiar Faces Make All the Difference

Smaller households. Familiar care partners.
Memory Care that feels like home

Schedule a visit and see the difference

905.724.3211
info@theresidencesonyonge.ca
www.theresidencesonyonge.ca



The bitterness of poor quality is remembered long after the sweetness of a low price has faded from memory.

VISIT OUR SHOWROOM
1100 GORHAM ST. UNIT #20,
NEWMARKET, L3Y 8Y8

905-954-0967
info@cabinetmagic.ca
www.cabinetmagic.ca
Follow us
100% CUSTOMER SATISFACTION GUARANTEE
BUY Canadian!

Gaertner signs off after record-breaking Council service



Wendy Gaertner
Photo courtesy of Wendy Gaertner

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A lot has changed in Aurora since 2003, but one constant over the last 23 years has been Wendy Gaertner at the Council table.

Councillor Gaertner, who has most recently represented Ward 3 at Town Hall, formally closed the chapter on a long municipal career last Tuesday at Council's final meeting of the 2022-2026 term.

Joined in Chambers by her children and her granddaughter, Hazel, and other friends and family, Gaertner said that despite her long tenure on Council she was still "nervous" about making speeches.

"There are many to thank for the privilege of being able to serve Aurora. Twenty-three years seems like a lifetime to me. My late husband Ephraim showed me that it is important to always do what you think is right, even if there are negative consequences. My children, Sarah and Misha, always respected me and what I was trying to achieve. They listened to me patiently…most of the time, and when I ranted and raved about what I thought was wrong or unjust – I did a lot of that!" she said.

"Democracy works best when residents are fully informed and consulted on neighborhood and community issues. Despite that not always happening, so many hundreds of people came to delegate to this Council. It might've been a neighborhood concern, sometimes about community issues that have far-reaching effects. It's hard. You need to be a little brave to stand at that podium, so I thank everybody who took the time, even when they were sick, to come forward and tell us what they thought."

While she came to the Council table with a degree in Sociology, Gaertner said this education certainly doesn't prepare a person for the job she is leaving behind.

"I learned a lot from the points of views of the people who came forward. I learned a lot from their research and passion. That educating helped me with my work," she said of delegates who made the time over the years to speak at meetings. "You can't make a decision in a vacuum, so it is really good when people let us know what they think."

Among the residents she specifically cited were Drs. Isobel Ralston and Jan Oudenes, as well as residents Wendy Kenyon and George Skoulikas for their environmental passion.

"I don't know how many hundreds of people who came to this Council Chamber to plead, almost beg to not let the older neighborhoods be overcome by what they called 'monster homes' that would reduce their shade and privacy and streetscape. We failed to protect those neighborhoods, but Councillor Gallo and I listened," Gaertner continued.

"In closing, in my 78 years, I've never had a job that holds such great responsibility. I've loved it. I was shocked though to find out that two separate reports showed how underpaid Aurora Councillors are compared to other municipalities, especially as we receive no pension or benefits. To add insult, the powers-that-be have denied a leaving bonus to thank us for work. To me, that's very disrespectful and hurtful," she concluded. "My commitment and love for Aurora continues. Thank you to everybody who supported and believed in me. May the next Council have vision to ensure that our community thrives and is financially stable."

COLLEAGUES PAY TRIBUTE

Following Gaertner's final address, her Council colleagues paid tribute to her long legacy of service.

"Twenty-three years is an extraordinary commitment to public service," said Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson. "Behind those years are countless meetings, difficult decisions, conversations with residents and many hours devoted to our community. Wendy, I've had the opportunity to serve alongside you for the past 16 years. While we haven't always agreed on every issue, I've always respected your commitment to Aurora and your determination to represent the residents who place their trust in you.

"Public service asks a great deal of those who take it on – time, patience and dedication –sustaining that commitment for 23 years is something to be genuinely proud of. On behalf of the residents of Aurora, thank you for your dedication and for the contributions you've made to our community. As you begin your next chapter, I wish you all the very best and congratulate you once again on that remarkable milestone."

Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim, who described 23 years on Council as "a superhuman feat", said he appreciated the compassion for people Gaertner brought to the decision-making process.

"I remember in my 12 years, you asked a lot of questions and you asked them fearlessly. Many of your questions resulted in answers that became very educational to many or all of us, so I thank you for that," he said. "I know every year when we have budget time, we can be sure that you have a different…lens on development charges. We got another re-education on development charges for 45 minutes, and I'm very appreciative for that. I remember all those years of discussing turtle crossings, Henderson Forest, and definitely when I see Wendy Gaertner I see 'green.'

"I just thank you for your years of contribution. I know you did a lot for my education and I know you helped me a lot in Council as well."

Tributes were also offered by outgoing Councillors Ron Weese and Rachel Gilliland, Councillor John Gallo having offered a fulsome tribute to Gaertner at the September Council meeting.

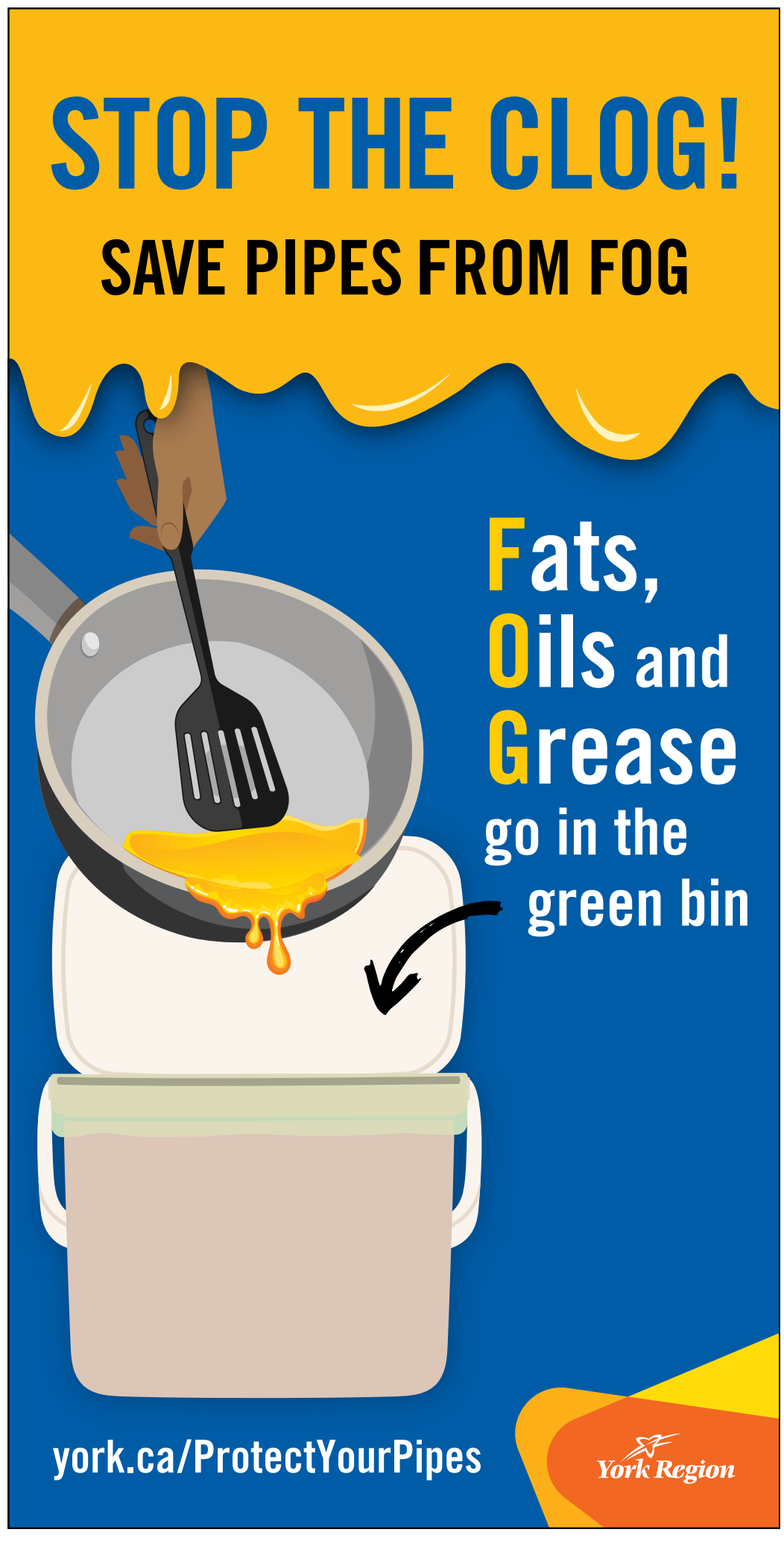
"Wendy, thank you so much for your many, many years of service and for the passion you brought to protecting Aurora's environment," said Gilliland. "Whenever you said, 'just one more question,' I learned to take that word 'one' a little loosely, but we always knew why you kept asking because…you cared so deeply about getting it right for Aurora."

In his tribute, Weese went back to even before Gaertner's time on Council when his children enjoyed Hot Spot, a drop-in program Gaertner ran for local kids.

"Councillor Gaertner has become quite simply a legend in Aurora," he said. "Councillor Gaertner has become quite a fixture in this community and here (Town Hall). She served for 23 years, making her the longest continually serving Councillor in the history of the Town.

"She knows municipal government and it goes without saying she has experience, but those who know her, know her passion for the environment, her support for heritage, your commitment to residents. While you often speak softly, your resolve is never in question. Your steadfast support of residents is really why you've been elected, re-elected term after term. The Town will miss your presence in many different ways, but I know your family and friends will enjoy more of your time."







SUPPORT Local BUSINESSES

BUSINESS & FINANCE

MADE IN CANADA
SUPPORT LOCAL
Hockley
HOCKLEYBEER.CA

Francophone Community's village plan supported at Gala: *Breaking bread sees community support for CTB*

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER



Mayor Tom Mrakas and Councillors Jessie Fraser, Angela Daust, and Lauren Hanna joined CTB's Jean Bouchard and Carole Mirkopoulos at the organization's recent fundraising gala. **Photo courtesy of Mayor Mrakas**

Communaute du Trille Blanc's (CTB) vision to build a community village for Francophone and Francophile seniors in York Region became ever-stronger on November 7 as dignitaries, supporters, and residents came together for a fundraising gala supporting the cause.

The fourth annual gala evening, which was attended by Members of Parliament, Provincial Parliament, Mayor Tom Mrakas, as well as incumbent and incoming members of Council, raised more than $60,000 in funds to make the project a reality.

The intent of the Francophone village, which is set to be constructed in the northwest quadrant of Bloomington Road and Yonge Street, is touted as a vision for "a vibrant and integrated living environment, designed to meet the specific needs of Francophones and Francophiles aged 55 and over."

"The ambitious project is a direct response to the growing need for environments where seniors can live life to the fullest, preserving their language, culture and community ties," says CTB. "We envision a place where a high quality of life goes hand in hand with access to appropriate services and care, all within a warm, Francophone atmosphere.

"The Seniors' Village will have a profound and lasting impact on the Francophone community in York Region and beyond. By offering living spaces and services in French, our project directly contributes to the vitality and flourishing of the Francophone community. It creates a hub for seniors who wish to age in their language, while remaining connected to their culture and community."

Once complete, the project will include high-quality long-term care spaces with beds allocated to York Region's Francophone population, independent and assisted living, healthcare services, and more.

The Town of Aurora will also be involved in the development of parkland in conjunction with the Village construction.

"Tonight, let us be proud of what we have accomplished, but, above all, let us be ambitious about what remains to be done," said Jean Bouchard, President of the CTB, at the gala. "No organization can build this alone, but together we have everything it takes to succeed."

While Saturday's gala was an opportunity for members of the community to break bread for a good cause, sharing a meal also earned CTB some extra support from the Provincial government.

The CTB recently received a $40,000 grant from the Provincial government to support a new cross-generational initiative.

The program will pair local high school students with Francophone seniors in the community where students will learn what CTB describes as "Old Grandmother Recipes" from their elders. Intended to be an interactive program, participating students will not only learn a few new dishes, but will do so while filming their experiences and sharing stories.

"I am proud to highlight our government's $40,000 investment in La Communauté du Trille Blanc through the Francophone Community Grants Program (FCGP)," said Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy. "This initiative will bring Francophone seniors and younger generations together while helping preserve and pass on our cultural heritage and traditions."



THRIVING - Newmarket Mayor John Taylor joined Memories Plus for their recent THRIVE 2026 event, a full day of information on healthy aging and living options for seniors. The free event featured speakers throughout the day, imparting information for seniors and their families investigating options "for that next chapter." **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

Value beyond numbers



Partners in Your Business

Brian Roberts
CPA, CGA, LPA

ROBERTS & COMPANY
Chartered Professional Accountant

Call us at 905.727.8046 or visit www.robertscpa.ca

2026
BUSINESS EXCELLENCE CELEBRATION
An Evening of Distinction

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2026
GRANT RECIPIENTS



RISE UP GRANT RECIPIENTS
Swingcore Golf Academy
A WWB Production, Inc.



SCALE UP GRANT RECIPIENTS
Aizadfood
Attuned Relationships



MEDIA GRANT RECIPIENT
Aurora Family Martial Arts
(Sponsored by Addison Marketing Solutions)

TO READ MORE ABOUT OUR GRANT RECIPIENTS AND THE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE CELEBRATION, SCAN THE QR CODE

Struggling with TECH ISSUES or need a Professional WEB SITE?



Our services include:

Flexible Tech Support: Get help when you need it, with both on-site and remote support for Windows and Mac.

Complete Web Services: From reliable web hosting to custom website creation, we build your on-line home.

Total Security: Protect your data with our robust backup, anti-virus, and anti-spam solutions.

Lower Your Costs: Switch to our VoIP services and significantly reduce your monthly phone bill.

We offer special rates for not-for-profit organizations
Contact us today for a free consultation and see how we can simplify your technology.

aurora ONLINE Rob SCHUETZE

AURORA ONLINE INC.
20521 CENTRE STREET MOUNT ALBERT, ON L0G 1M0
T (905) 222-2022 F (866) 812-7442
AURORAONLINE.COM | ROB@AURORAONLINE.COM

Gallo "closes a chapter" at Council but does not "close a book" on community involvement



John Gallo
Auroran file photo by Brock Weir

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

October 26's municipal election may not have brought about the results Ward 5 Councillor – and Mayoral candidate – John Gallo wanted, but as time on the 2022-2026 Council came to a close last Tuesday, he said the outcome would not lessen his involvement in the Aurora community.

"For 14 years, I have had the honor of serving the people of Aurora. Through every debate, every difficult decision and every conversation with a resident who simply wanted to be heard, I have carried one belief: public service is a responsibility to leave our community better than we found it. I hope I have done that," he said. "That responsibility reaches beyond the decisions we make. It lives in the way we treat people along the way.

"As I leave this seat, I hope you'll all allow me to offer a little advice drawn from 14 years of service and the lessons I have learned along the way, particularly to the new Councillors: Remember that a decision in this Chamber can change a neighborhood. It can help a family find a home, a child a place to play, or ease the burden on someone struggling to make ends meet. Behind every report, every budget line and every vote, there are people whose lives we touch. Remember that our words carry weight, too – the way we respond to a concern, the patience that we have with someone who disagrees, the respect we offer when emotions are high. These things matter. They determine whether a resident leaves Town Hall feeling dismissed or feeling that they belong. And remember that long after people forget how a vote was cast, they may remember whether we listened, whether we showed kindness, whether we treated their concerns as worthy of our time.

"None of us get it right every day. I certainly haven't. But each day gives us another opportunity to listen more carefully, speak more thoughtfully and serve people well. To our newly elected Council, congratulations. You have been entrusted with something precious: the confidence of your neighbors and the future of our Town. May you lead with courage, listen with humility and use that trust with care. Your success will be Aurora's success. and I sincerely wish you all well."

Addressing all the candidates who put themselves forward for office in the 2026 municipal election campaign, Gallo thanked them for "having the courage to stand up and offer to serve."

"Please do not mistake the election results for a measure of your worth," he said. "Your ideas still matter. Your commitment still matters. There are people you encouraged simply by having the courage to try. I hope you will stay involved because the community still has a place for your contribution.

"For my part, I want to finish this campaign able to look in the mirror and say, I did my best. I stood up for what I believed. I challenged decisions I felt we were wrong and I worked to keep my criticism respectful and focused on issues. I am proud that our team worked to earn people's trust without resorting to nasty tactics or personal attacks. That matters to me and I hope it matters to the young people watching us.

"Every campaign ends with a result but each one of us carry responsibilities of how we conduct ourselves. When the signs come down, we owe ourselves some honest reflection. Did we treat people fairly? Did we speak with integrity? Did we believe the behavior lived up to the trust we asked other people to place us in? That reflection matters for all of us, especially those who are entrusted with the office. Winning brings the responsibility of setting an example. A victory is also a moment to look honestly in the mirror and ask whether the way we earned people's votes reflects the values we have and the responsibility to uphold them. I hope we can all look back with pride, learn where we need to and carry the best of ourselves into what comes next."

Addressing "young people who stepped up," he thanked them for bringing their ideas and questions forward and said their "willingness to get involved gave me hope."

"Please keep showing up, keep asking questions, keep bringing ideas to the table. An election result does not take away your voice or your ability to make a difference. Aurora needs your energy. It needs your perspective today," he said, before turning his attention to his family. "Thank you for sharing me with this Town. Public service asks something of the people at home, too. The evenings apart, the interrupted plans and the worries that sometimes follow us through the front door. Your patience, honesty and love have carried me through more than I can say. Whatever the title I had, being part of my family has always mattered most. We have called Aurora home for more than 30 years. Our roots are here, our friendships are here and our hopes are here.

"So let me be clear, I'm not going anywhere. I will keep showing up. I will keep listening. I will keep working for the Town I love because our ability to serve does not begin with an election and it does not end when we leave office. Each of us has the power to make someone feel less alone, to give someone confidence, to help someone believe that their voice matters. We exercise that power in ordinary moments through a little patience, a little generosity and the willingness to listen. That is how trust grows. That is how neighbours become community and that is how we leave something better for those to follow us. You don't need to be on Council to accomplish that. I leave this seat with gratitude for the past, hope for the future and faith in the people of Aurora. Thank you for the honour of serving you. There is still a lot of work ahead and I look forward to doing my part."

Over the course of his final Council meeting, Gallo received kudos from many of his fellow members, including outgoing Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, who said Gallo "could always be counted on to bring experience and knowledge of the past forward to us," after a total of 14 years on Council.

"John, you took time when asked for opinions and I appreciated your ability to identify problems and seek solutions in the best interests of residents," said Weese. "I counted on your understanding of the financial implications of a complicated budget at times and sought opinions often. John, you're a passionate guy. You love Aurora. Your family feels the same way and they support you unconditionally. I know your family is going to be looking forward to some quality time with you."

Added outgoing Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland: "I've really appreciated serving alongside you over these past eight years. I really thank you for bringing your experience and your independent judgment into our debates. I also recognize the courage it took for you to put your name forward for mayor and the hard work you put into that campaign. Thank you for all the time and the commitment and the passion that you've given to Aurora over the years."

In her speech, outgoing Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner said that both she and Gallo, at separate times, agreed to "leave our egos at the door of the Council Chamber."

"It is clear from all of his years on Council that John managed to do that – that the wellbeing of the community is his priority," she said. "Thank you, John."



DAMIR VRANCIC
LAW OFFICE
BUSINESS LAW,
REAL ESTATE,
WILLS & ESTATES
905-841-6411
Providing valued and trusted
legal advice since 1983

WELLINGTON TOWERS APARTMENTS realstar



WALK-INS WELCOME OR BOOK YOUR TOUR TODAY
905.288.4999 147 Wellington St. W. realstar.ca

Spacious, Open-Concept* Layouts
Stainless Steel Fridge, Stove & OTR
Updated Bathrooms
Hard-Surface Flooring
In-Suite Storage*
Private Balcony or Terrace
Outdoor Swimming Pool
Fitness Centre
On-Site Laundry Facilities
Elevators
Secure FOB Entry
On-Site Management

UP TO ONE MONTH FREE RENT ON SELECT SUITES!*



RENOVATED 1, 2 & 3 BEDROOMS
Prices, incentives, availability and specifications are subject to change. Images may not reflect actual suite finishes. Pet restrictions may apply. E. & O.E.

The War Amps
You can empower child amputees
by providing them with the artificial limbs they need to lead independent and active lives.
See your impact at waramps.ca



Walk through a Winter Wonderland as Aurora's Christmas Market returns to Town Square

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora Town Square will be transformed into a Christmas cavalcade next Friday with the opening of the Town's annual Christmas Market.

Held over two weekends – Friday, November 27 to Sunday, November 29, and Friday, December 4 to Sunday, December 6 – the Market will include more than 130 vendors spread over the multiple days, festive live musical performances, film screenings, and much more.

"We've expanded the number of vendors every single evening and cumulatively over the six nights we'll have over 131 vendors," says Shelley Ware, Special Events Supervisor for the Town of Aurora, on what she and her team are cooking up for the popular event. "We're also going to debut three brand-new Christmas Market huts, with 10 in the outdoor square, and we're also changing where the fire shows are going to be done and a few surprises with lighting outside the Square.

"We want people to be able to explore both the outdoors and indoors. There will be bonfires outside, and there will be warmth inside."

Adding to the warmth inside will be a candlelight concert on November 27 featuring The Neil Young Experience's After The Gold Rush. Additional live entertainment on the opening weekend will be the Borealis Big Band's A Jazzy Christmas, with vocalists Cheryn Lyn Backman and Steve Falk coming together for "an evening of swinging jazz holiday favourites."

"I can't say enough about Gord Shephard and the Borealis Big Band and Aurora Community Band. Both of those bands' presence really adds a touch to the overall Christmas Market to the point that I can't imagine the Christmas Market without them."

Rounding out the first weekend of entertainment in the Aurora Town Square Performance Hall will be a film screening of It's A Wonderful Life, celebrating the 80th anniversary of the beloved holiday classic starring James Stewart, Donna Reed, and Lionel Barrymore on Sunday, November 29.

Also happening on November 29 is a "Sensitive Santa" experience, an initiative of local accessibility advocate Allison Hughes, which will give kids of all needs and requirements, such as a quiet space, the opportunity to meet Santa Claus himself.

Santa will be holding court for all residents in Brevik Hall each night of the first weekend from 6 – 7.30 p.m.

Other attractions the opening weekend will be the Town of Aurora's annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on November 27 at 5.15 p.m., followed by two performances from The Fire Guy at 5.30 and 7.30 p.m.

On Saturday, November 29, Zoe Stardust will offer two performances in the outdoor square at 6 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

"Zoe brings you an experience that blazes with passion, energy and the sheer magic of fire. This isn't just a performance; it's a fiery feast for the senses, a dance of flames that beckons, mesmerizes and will leave the audience in sheer wonder," say organizers, noting the outdoor entertainment on Sunday, November 29, will see a return of the ever-popular Bex-in-Motion at 6 and 7.30 p.m. "Bex is a one-of-a-kind performer who incorporates fire, comedy, acrobatics, juggling and mesmerizing hula hoop tricks into her show. After many years of practice, she can now spin up to 50 hula hoops at once. With her quirky, light-hearted attitude and ability to involve audience members, Bex puts on a show that is sure to move you."

Additional Festive Fun on Weekend 1 includes North Pole Kids Activities in Program Room A nightly from 5 – 8 p.m., a Silent Dance Party in the Addison Hall Dance Studio on Saturday, November 28, from 6.30 – 8.30 p.m., and Cookie Decorating on Sunday, November 29, from 6 – 7.30 p.m. in Brevik Hall. Limited quantities are available for this workshop, so arrive early.

Next Week: The second weekend of Aurora's Christmas Market offers a tribute to Coldplay, a return of Claus, and a fiery circus. For more information on the Aurora Christmas Market, including concert and film screening ticketing information and activity registration, visit aurora.ca/christmasmarket.





CULTURALLY speaking

by Debra Wilson, Director of Development, Aurora Cultural Centre

Aurora Cultural Centre
PERFORMING ARTS
GALLERIES
EDUCATION

Introducing something NEW: 50/50 Draw to Support Arts in Our Community



When people think about supporting the arts, they often picture making a donation, attending a performance, sponsoring an event, or volunteering their time. These are all important ways to help sustain arts and culture in our community.

This year, the Aurora Cultural Centre is introducing another opportunity to support the work we do through our first-ever 50/50 Lottery, giving residents the chance to support local arts and culture while also having the opportunity to win a significant cash prize.

As Director of Development, I have the privilege of hearing many stories from people who value the role that arts and culture play in their lives. Some discovered a lifelong passion through a school arts program. Others found connection, inspiration, or a sense of belonging through performances, exhibitions, or creative experiences shared with family and friends.

The impact of arts and culture extends far beyond the walls of a theatre or gallery. Strong cultural organizations help create vibrant communities, support local artists, encourage creativity in young people, and bring people together across generations and backgrounds.

At the Aurora Cultural Centre, we see this impact every day.

From captivating live performances and exhibitions to educational initiatives such as Kaleidoscope in the Schools (KITS), our work is made possible through the generosity of supporters like you, who believe that arts and culture should remain accessible and available to everyone.

As the Centre continues to grow its programming and community impact, fundraising remains an essential part of ensuring that these opportunities continue for years to come. That is why we are excited to launch the Aurora Cultural Centre 50/50 Lottery.

Unlike a traditional donation campaign, the lottery offers a simple and engaging way for supporters to contribute to the Centre while participating in the excitement of a growing jackpot. Half of all ticket sales will be awarded to the Grand Prize winner, while the remaining proceeds help support arts and cultural programming throughout our community.

Funds raised through the lottery will help support a wide range of initiatives, including performances, exhibitions, educational programming, artist opportunities, and community outreach activities.

For many participants, the appeal will naturally be the chance to win. But the true prize is knowing that every ticket purchased helps strengthen the cultural life of Aurora and creates opportunities for people of all ages to experience the arts.

There are opportunities to win throughout the campaign:

- **Early Bird Draw #2 ($1,000 Cash Prize): December 3, 2026**
- **Grand Prize 50/50 Draw: December 19, 2026**

Whether you are a long-time supporter of the Centre or are discovering us for the first time, I invite you to consider taking part. Every ticket purchased represents more than a chance at a cash prize. It is an investment in community, creativity, education, and the artists who help make Aurora a vibrant place to live.

For tickets and complete lottery details, visit SupportAuroraCulture.ca.

(Editor's Note: Must be 18+ and located in Ontario at the time of ticket purchase.)

50 Victoria Street, Aurora Town Square | auroraculturalcentre.ca

Aurora | TOYOTA
669 WELLINGTON ST. E., AURORA
(905) 727-1948 | 1-866-979-3635
TOYOTA GENUINE
DASH CAM
SERIES 2.0 – FRONT CAMERA
Capture every moment on the road with connectivity at your finger tips.
STARTING AT $834.98 + TAX INSTALLED
www.auroratoyota.ca

THE AURORAN

Sports • News • Coming Events
Classifieds • At Your Service

Flooring Superstore
TOP CHOICE AWARD MARK OF EXCELLENCE
OUR 8TH YEAR IN A ROW!
READER FAVOURITE AWARDS
Your friendly local flooring experts
Floors Direct NORTH
NEWMARKET SHOWROOM
105 Harry Walker Pkwy N.
Unit 1, Newmarket, ON L3Y 7B3
T: 905-235-4400 | Sales@floorsDirectnorth.ca
www.floorsdirectnorth.ca

VOL 28 | NO. 6 | 905-727-3300 TheAuroran.com FREE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 19, 2026

SAC Saints roll to fifth straight CISAA championship with 37-8 win over Selwyn House Gryphons

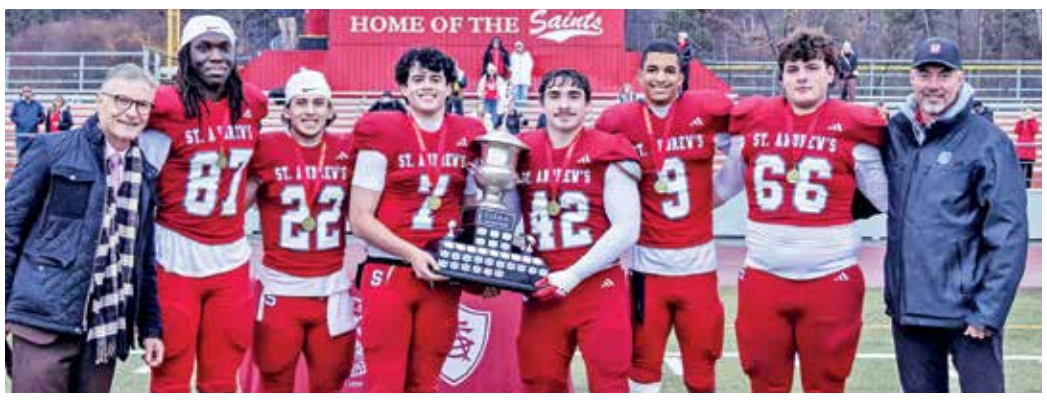


Photo by Paul Mosey/St. Andrew's College

BY JIM STEWART
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The St. Andrew's College Saints defeated Selwyn House Gryphons 37-8 last Wednesday afternoon to capture the CISAA Senior Football championship at Yuill Family Field in north Aurora.

The Saints qualified for the CISAA title game by defeating the Bill Crothers Colts 45-23 in the semifinals.

Star running back Christian Giguere scored five touchdowns to corral the Colts. The Gryphons—who hail from Montreal—earned their Finals berth with a narrow 13-12 win over the Upper Canada College Blues at Queen's University's Richardson Stadium.

SAC Head Coach Marcello Lio credited the efforts of a number of Saints to ensure his club's fifth consecutive CISAA title.

"There was a lot of hard work put in by the players and I'm pleased with the outcome. The important thing for teenage boys is to respect the process. 'Drive for Five' has been a motto for us since training camp. Offensively, our line has led us all season. They came up big again on Wednesday. In terms of scoring, Giguere did the majority of our scoring all season and scored another touchdown against Selwyn even though he was ill. Our quarterback Beau Johnston has been so steady and has made some big throws for us. Our kick returner and wide receiver William Chowhan has been lights out as a receiver and he's only in Grade 11. He almost took one to the house in the championship game on a kick return. He returned two for touchdowns in the playoffs."

After extolling the offensive and special team performances that have been at the heart of the team's success, Coach Lio praised the play of two of his defensive stalwarts: "Our middle linebacker Ethan St. Pierre has been great as a linebacker but he's also performed very well as an offensive guard and a fullback. He anchors our defense and is a super athlete – a team leader, one of our captains, and a three-year veteran. A player that has made our linebackers' jobs easier is Simon Davidson who's been a menace to offensive lines. He matched up really well in our games in the USA against players he'd be competing with for scholarships to NCAA schools."

Many of the players applauded by Coach Lio figured prominently in the CISAA championship game. Chowhan scored two touchdowns to lead the Saints' offense. Johnston and Giguere added one touchdown each. Kicker George Ince hoofed a field goal and added four converts to round out the home side's scoring in the romp over Selwyn House.

The Saints-Gryphons tilt was played in somber climatic conditions befitting Remembrance Day, but the Yuill Family Field turf withstood the persistent rain and periodic wintry mix. Coach Lio added, "It was a little slick out there midway through the second quarter, but the rain let up a bit at half-time. We had to make some adjustments between pass and run in the conditions, but the weather was not a factor. The turf was good throughout."

Another factor that has been evident throughout the Saints' season, according to Coach Lio, has been the team's work ethic.

"We saw the fruits of our labour in the playoffs and hard work led to our success. We've been able to produce well-rounded, good citizens. The culture-building was an undertaking of mine back in 2019 and we've steadily increased in-season workouts, we've playing games south of the border for better competition, and we've been competing successfully down there, especially adjusting to American rules, and winning three games.

"Our 16U team has been growing and had its best numbers ever this year. We have a big staff that has played at the next level so the future of the program is promising. As a collective, we've also had an amazing level of support from our administration."

That kind of support, coupled with a methodical infusion of "winning football culture" has created an impressive run for SAC's First Football team. Coach Lio—who teaches Math and serves as the Head of Sifton House on campus—discussed a trap that his squad did not fall into as it prepared for the championship game versus the Gryphons.

"We beat Selwyn 43-0 at Homecoming, but our players weren't overconfident and they respected their opposition. Our attention to detail—both by the coaching staff and players—was extraordinary. We've had targets on our backs for the last four years as defending champs, but on Wednesday, we executed."

Clearly, the game plan worked for Coach Lio as his Saints rolled to a 29-point victory and their fifth consecutive CISAA victory on Wednesday

In the sporting world, there's a word reserved for teams that win five championships in a row: Dynasty.

Junior Tigers rally for five first-period goals in five minutes to capsize the Caledon Admirals 9-3

BY JIM STEWART
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Aurora Tigers scored five first period goals in five minutes and fourteen seconds to erase an early 2-0 deficit, and capsized the listing Caledon Admirals 9-3 on Friday night at the ACC.

The Junior Tigers fell behind early and it appeared the plucky Admirals could skate to an easy road victory based on the first 10 minutes of play.

Just 93 seconds into the game, Admirals rangy centre Lucas Cameron glided to the edge of the crease and tipped Evan Greco's nifty cross-slot pass high over Colby Booth-Housego's right shoulder and below the crossbar to open the scoring.

Before the midway point of the first frame, Austin Sylver spun around in the slot after being set up by Caledon Captain Nicholas Wlodarczyk, and shoveled the puck along the ice past Booth-Housego to give the opportunistic Admirals a 2-0 lead.

After Booth-Housego made a pair of rapid-fire rebound saves to keep the fleet-skating visitors from going up by three, the Tigers struck back when speedy Javian Nei fed Captain Anrijs Bundzenieks in the Caledon zone.

Bundzenieks's smooth playmaking was on full display as he drew defenders to himself in the slot and slid the puck to Nic Ferrante who one-timed the nice feed from the left edge of the crease past Admirals' goalie Jacob Saldanha at 12:40.

Ferrante's sixth of the season initiated a rapid-fire series of goals that could have been the fastest five in the Junior Tigers' 59- year history.

Less than two minutes after Ferrante got the Tigers on the board, lanky power forward Sheamus Gunn one-timed a pass from Gianfranco Rosella from the slot and tied it 2-2.

At 16:26, the passing talents of the Tigers' top line manifested themselves when Ferrante finished a flashy tic-tac-toe play with Nei and Bundzenieks.

Thirty-five seconds later, Davis Castle fed Bundzenieks between the circles who faked a pass to Ferrante on the doorstop—drawing multiple defenders—and slid the puck to Nei who snapped it into the wide-open net to make it 4-2 for the heated-up home side.

It was Bundzenieks's third assist in five minutes.

Fifty-three seconds after Nei's ninth, Colton Bain one-timed the puck on a nice set up by Connor Hollebek and Tigers' leading scorer Max Skinner.

Nei, the playmaking centre who came over to the Tigers last year in a mid-season trade with the Toronto Patriots, was at the epicenter of Aurora's first period eruption. He dished out two assists and scored a goal in less than five minutes.

The Union College commit described what fueled the dramatic rally over the hard-working Admirals: "Our line knew what we wanted to do after we got down by two goals early. We were jamming the net and creating opportunities. We were bringing the game to them and our entire team rode the momentum."

After acknowledging that none of the teams he's played for has ever scored five goals in five minutes, Nei explained what the offensive surge demonstrated about his hockey club—especially after

Continued on page 14



NewRoads Automotive Group™
Mazda Subaru Toyota Honda Chrysler Dodge Jeep RAM MAB
Caring For Our Community newroads.ca



New chapter begins for Gilliland as Deputy Mayor of Blue Mountains

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Rachel Gilliland's time as a local lawmaker in Aurora came to a close at last week's Council meeting, but she's not done with municipal politics; on October 26, the two-term local Councillor was elected Deputy Mayor of The Blue Mountains.

At her final Council meeting at Aurora Town Hall on November 10, Gilliland thanked Ward 2 residents for putting their trust in her since 2018, and for her Council colleagues for lessons learned along the way.

"My family story in Aurora goes actually back to the 1950s where my great-grandmother actually had lived here. My husband went to school here and his mom actually had a restaurant here many years ago in the 80s. Ultimately, this is where Brad and I raised our family. When I think about all those years, I feel very fortunate that I got to add my own chapter to our family story by serving as a mentor and serving Aurora on Aurora Council," she said

"I still remember the day when I put my name forward back in 2018, there were about 28 candidates – and I do remember what it felt like to ask people for their trust for the very first time, and eight years later, that's what stays with me and how often people took the time to tell me what mattered most to them. Sometimes it was at Council meeting and sometimes it was an email or a conversation when we ran into each other around Town. Some of the conversations I appreciated most were with people who saw things differently than I did. They made me ask better questions and think harder about the decisions we made here today and yesterday and the day before."

Serving the residents of Ward 2, she continued, was a "pleasure and a privilege," and something she said she "really loved."

Addressing municipal staff, she thanked them for "the calls you returned, the questions you answered, all the hard work you did between meetings to turn Council decisions into something residents can see and actually use."

"You guys were the backbone of so much we were able to accomplish. I'm especially grateful for the times I brought an idea to you and you helped me think it through to work out the details and find a way to make it happen. So much of that work happened behind the scenes and I want you to know how much I appreciate it and so does the Town," she said. "Finally, congratulations to Aurora's incoming Council, to those returning and to those taking their seats for the very first time. I hope you find as much meaning in serving the Town as I have. There's a lot of people who care deeply about Aurora and are ready to work for you.

"As many of you know, my next chapter will be in the municipal service as Deputy Mayor in the Town of Blue Mountains. This community has also been a part of my life for many years, and to the people in Aurora who reached out and cheered me on, I want you to know that that really meant a lot to me and I will carry what I've learned at this table into that role."

Final word was dedicated to her husband, Brad, and their daughters.

"Thank you for all the evenings that started with me saying, 'I should be home soon.' By now, you all know what 'soon' really means. Girls, you learned that a quick trip to the Farmers' Market with mom was never a 30-minute shop. I'd stop to talk to one person, then another, and eventually get around to buying what I actually came for. Serving on Council meant late nights, missed dinners, family plans, and sometimes I had to shift. You all gave up some of your time so I could give mine to Aurora. I know what I've asked from you and…it meant to the world to me that you kept cheering me on. When I look back, I will always be grateful to the Town where we raised our family, that gave me the chance to serve the people who helped me make it home."

Closing out their final meeting, Gilliland was on the receiving end of tributes as well, including outgoing Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, who was her seatmate at the Council table for the last four years.

"We were friends before I was elected and we remain friends throughout," he said. "There have been differences, of course, but I could always count on you to be well-researched and thoughtful in your opinions, so I thank you for that. I wish you and Blue Mountains where you're now residing…I think there's going to be a tremendous benefit for them with the experience and judgment you have. I wish you well in your new position as Deputy Mayor out there. Our loss is their gain, but I hope we can visit soon."



Rachel Gilliland
Photo courtesy of the Town of Aurora

Added Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim: "Congratulations on your election in the Blue Mountains. One thing that I've known you for is that once you put your mind to something…you never quit. I know that if you're going to take responsibility for something, it's going to get done. That's the image that resonates with me."

"The other image that resonates with me is how you told me my last motion was moot," he noted with a chuckle, before continuing his light-hearted theme. "But I think one of the things that you and others have done is giving me a thicker skin… so when my wife yells at me, I don't cry anymore! You're also a supporter of density targets when it comes to development, so thank you very much. We are going to miss you and thank you for your contributions these eight years."

Strange Advance's Drew Arnott appreciates the personal connections to fans as his new wave-synth rock band criss-crosses Canada

BY JIM STEWART
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Drew Arnott is fully energized by the prospect of playing in towns he's never visited before.

He's also looking forward to mingling with fans in Ontario as Strange Advance rolls into Aurora and St. Catharines at the end of November before performing on Bowen Island in British Columbia in the New Year.

"This is an opportunity to rev up the engines again," he says. "I'm still writing on a nightly basis, but when I play shows, we're well aware that no one wants to hear the new songs. Opening the new chapter of Strange Advance in 2022 has created a resurgence for us—suddenly, there's big interest in 80's music, and it's all about playing the songs that our fans want to hear. For me, it's been about looking back and saying 'Wow, I lived through that.' When you're in the moment, you're not always aware of the significance. They were phenomenal times.

"In retrospect, I enjoy the memories, but it's become way more meaningful now to perform our songs and meet our fans. Our favorite part is after the show when we meet people and hear their stories and how they tell us that our songs have been played at weddings and funerals—in really meaningful moments in their lives."

Arnott is looking forward to performing those meaningful songs like "Worlds Away," "We Run," "The Second That I Saw You," "I'll Be the One to Cry," "Kiss in the Dark," and "Prisoner", at the sold-out David De Simone Performance Hall inside Aurora Town Square on November 26.

The engaging lead singer, drummer, and keyboardist wants to "meet the people of Aurora—to meet the fans. I've never been to Aurora. When we were touring in the 80s, we didn't tour enough when we had the opportunities and didn't take time to meet our fans often enough. We were arrogant and stupid. We didn't take enough photographs with them. We were in it for the music and we turned down so many tours, especially Darryl [Kromm]. He's a recluse now—he always had that sensibility."

When Kromm turned down the opportunity to go back on the road with Strange Advance in 2022, Arnott forged ahead with a new lineup featuring a lead singer to replace his long time on-stage and writing partner.

"Because Darryl wouldn't go on the road, we had to have another singer and guitarist. We went to see a band in Winnipeg that was covering our songs. The lead singer sang "Worlds Away" and we realized that Sean [Dillon] was a great performer. I despise the spotlight but he loves it. When we started touring again, I was petrified. I'm not a natural performer and I was holding on to the mic stand so tightly which kept me from being paralyzed."

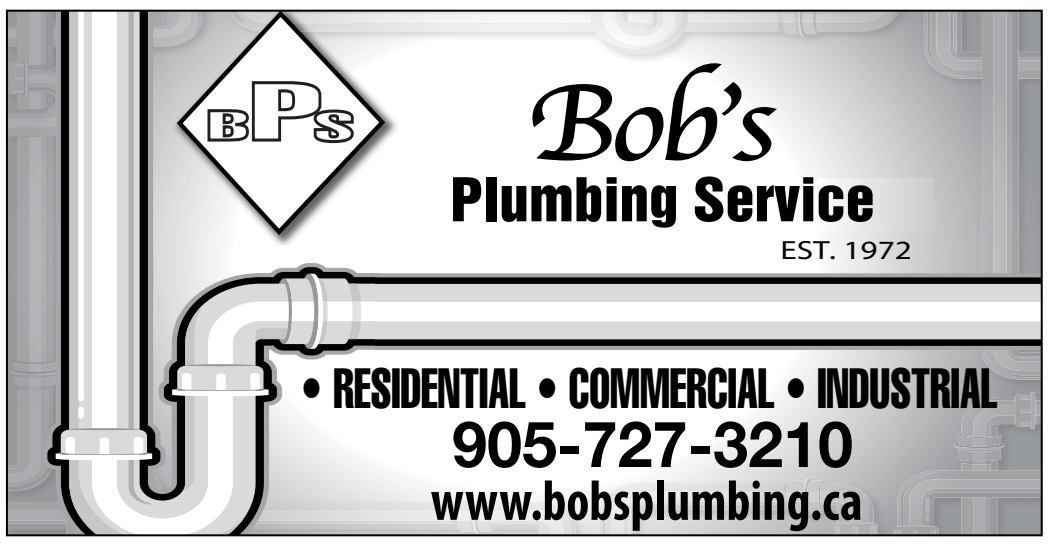
Arnott described how his next audience helped him overcome the on-stage jitters: "We did another date and I performed 'We Run.' The audience started singing the rest of the song back to me. I closed my eyes on stage and listened to them singing "We Run"—I was overwhelmed—it was so emotional and so touching."

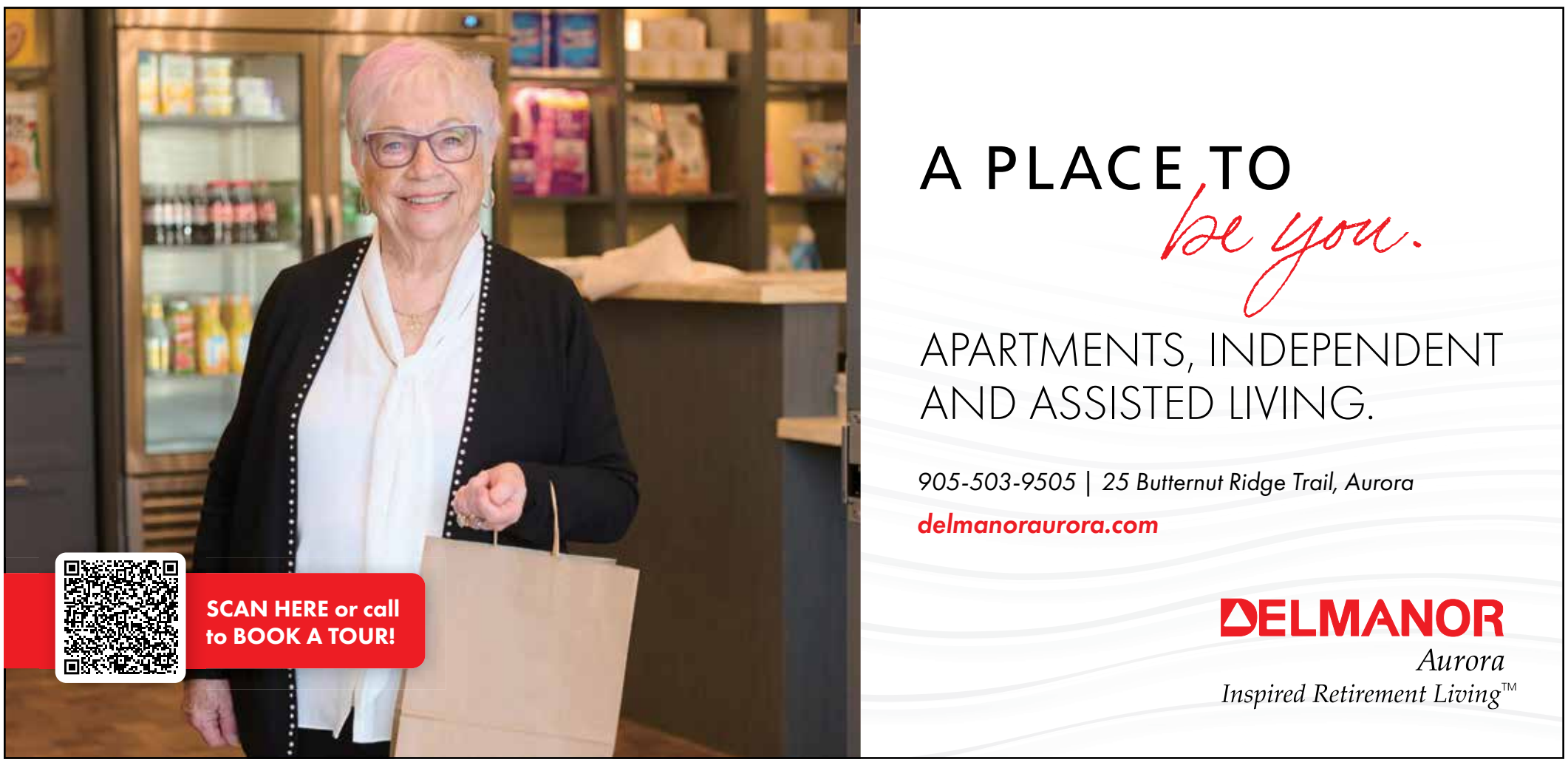
Arnott's connection to the audience has been one of the most satisfying aspects of travelling across the country and performing in a variety of venues. Another satisfying element is sharing lead vocal duties with Sean Dillon.

Both are supported on stage by Ian Cameron, who plays guitar and violin as well as backing vocals; Rob Bailey who plays keyboards; Ross Friesen who plays drums and chips in with backing vocals; and Peter Trotzuk who replaced Alexander Boynton in 2024 as the band's bass guitarist.

Arnott is pleased with the band's lineup and offered a contrast between Strange Advance in the 1980s and the 2020s: "First of all, this time out is so different. In the 80s, we were spoiled with a major label. We did some dates where we opened for Tina Turner. We didn't tour our first album and we started touring with two albums under our belt. We missed out on a number of opportunities to be an opening act and get more stage

Continued on page 17





Weese thanks community for "opportunity to serve" at final Council meeting



Ron Weese

Photo courtesy of the Town of Aurora

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ron Weese expressed his gratitude to the community for the "opportunity to serve" Ward 1 – and Aurora as a whole – in his final Council meeting as its representative on November 10.

Weese, who balanced his role as Ward 1 Councillor with the responsibilities as President of Sport Aurora, began his final speech as a local lawmaker by thanking all the candidates who put themselves forward in the 2026 Municipal Election.

"It is an unselfish thing for you to come forward and you're to be commended for all your efforts," said Weese, who did not seek re-election on October 26. "For those who will be sworn in next week, I congratulate you for your successful campaigns and I look forward with confidence to the next four years and beyond. Let me also thank Councillors Thompson and Kim for their successful campaigns that bring years and years of experience to the new Council. I think we're in pretty good hands. Four years ago, I was blessed by family and friends who worked tirelessly to teach me how to run for office and how to get elected. So, I thank them for that confidence and support. That doesn't happen all the time, those of you who have gone through it know what I'm talking about.

"When I was elected, I was given some advice by someone with experience that I think I should share with the Councillors, if you don't mind: first of all, meet the staff…. You've been very helpful in everything that you've done in advising me throughout the term. I think it's an important bit of investment that Councillors need to have because you're committed to resident support and you really are skilled at everything you need to have in management. I'm completely impressed with it. They also introduced me to people in the department that helped me in my work of serving the community and serving the residents. The depth and understanding and care that they have for the community of this staff and spread through the entire staff….is a valued resource we have in this community."

Thanking Ward 1 residents for the confidence they placed in him as their Councillor in 2022, Weese said he "enjoyed almost every encounter" with residents and saluted them for their efforts to stay engaged, particularly through the development and re-invigoration of Ratepayer Associations within Ward 1.

"It's really inspiring to see how they contribute to this community and engage so readily when asked," he said. "They're really clearly volunteers that have their own neighborhoods and the Town at heart. More importantly, the residents are the reason we exist. Their interest should never be forgotten, and I think that's an important thing to remind ourselves all the time.

"My last thanks go to my family who have endured the ups and downs of being on Council. I thank them for their support, their patience, usually some of their opinions. They've all lived in this Town with me and our family and Town Park area for 40 years. They ground me," he said. "Eileen was born in Aurora and has seen the transformation of this Town over the years. To say she's engaged is an understatement. She recalls fondly of playing tennis on Wellington Street under the tree canopy that was there when she was young. Discretion, however, doesn't allow me to tell you how many years ago that was. Daughter Celeste and son Nelson have been residents in Aurora their entire lives and have been active in community in various and many ways. Daughter Samantha moved to Oakville and continues to have roots in this community. My six grandchildren consider Aurora a home.

"As for me, I intend to stay engaged with our community through sport and other areas that I enjoy and hope to stay out of the way of my family who have a long 'honey do' list for me! I will never forget the time I've spent on Council, the people I have met because of that role and the friendships built that matter to me the most of all. I have great expectations for Aurora and I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve."

Among those paying tribute to Weese at their final Council meeting were outgoing Councillors Rachel Gilliland (Ward 2) and Wendy Gaertner (Ward 3), as well as Councillor Harold Kim who was re-elected by Ward 6 residents last month. (Ward 5's outgoing Councillor, John Gallo, paid tributes to his colleagues at their September meeting)

"Ron, sport and recreation are your wheelhouse, and I really enjoyed working with you on a few of those initiatives. Your care for this community came through in a way you kept the people who use our parks and recreation facilities at the centre of those conversations," said Gilliland. "I want to thank you for bringing that perspective to Council a lot."

Added Gaertner: "I would like to express my respect for Ron Weese. I don't believe any Councillor in their first term has ever accomplished as much as you did."

Kim, in the final Councillor address of the evening, joked that while people say one human year is equal to seven dog years, "one year of a Councillor's life is worth three years of a regular human life" – and might be even more challenging in Ward 1.

"I think Ward 1 it is probably exponential because it's one of the more challenging wards because not only do you have different ethnic backgrounds, you have social economic divides, you have the Promenade, Stable Neighborhoods. You've got the full gamut," he said, hailing Weese for his caring nature, which he added was reflective in many areas, including his work advocating for anti-renoviction legislation in the community.

"I know that there's a lot of ratepayers' associations and other resident groups that you led and participated in. You had the strength and energy to commit to them and lead, so I thank you so much for that."

Library set to get into the holiday spirit early with Jingle Jubilee

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The festive season is in full swing in Aurora with church bazaars in the books and Santa Under the Stars set to take over Yonge Street on Saturday night, but that's just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to local Christmas activities for the whole family.

On Saturday, November 28, the Aurora Public Library will host its annual Jingle Jubilee, a full afternoon of family fun from 1 – 4 p.m., just prior to the second evening of Aurora's Christmas Market, a stone's throw away at Aurora Town Square.

This year's Jingle Jubilee will include Joyful Tunes with FAME School of Performing Arts, ornament and craft-making, the Jack Frost Show from Top Talent Entertainment, a community sing-a-long, the chance to write letters to Santa, and the opportunity to meet the Man in Red himself.

"This will be our second year and it's all about bringing our community together and celebrating the magic of the holiday season," says Susan Collins, Community Event Coordinator for the Aurora Public Library. "It is a family-friendly event for all ages, for all cultures and different backgrounds, and an opportunity for people to come together to enjoy some festive entertainment while getting into the Christmas spirit.

"FAME is joining us for three different performances, we also have Jack Frost from Top Talent Entertainment, with a holiday magic show. Then we also have crafts and Christmas games and letters to Santa, and the highlight that everybody always looks forward to is Santa and his Elves. He will be making a special appearance at 3 p.m. so people can line up to see Santa, get their picture taken, and we're hoping that families will come out, spend some time with us, and enjoy all the festivities."

The holidays are also a season of giving and the Aurora Public Library is recognizing this by once again setting up a Giving Tree in their Living Room space where people can pick tags identifying a community need, such as those identified by the Aurora Food Pantry, off the tree and secure the need written on it to ensure the holidays are all that much brighter for those in the community experiencing challenges.

Some of the items include non-perishable food donations, but also socks, mittens, and other winterwear, says Collins.

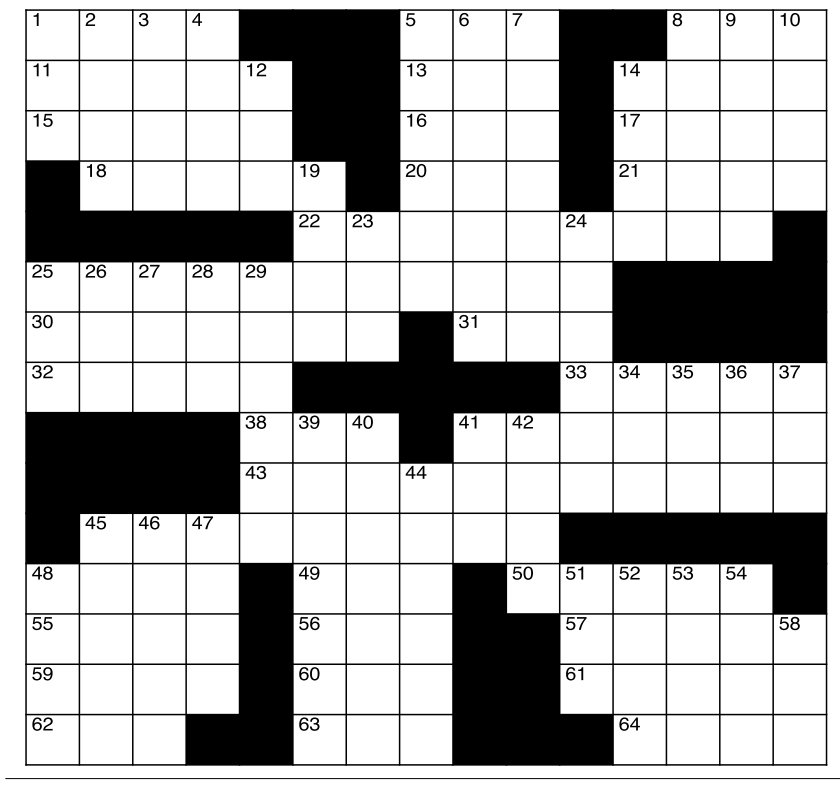
"It's about looking beyond ourselves and remembering that every small, little gesture can make a difference," says Collins. "Libraries play such an important role in bringing our communities together. They serve as more than a place for lifelong learning; they're spaces where people can connect, learn, and discover and experience new things. We like to celebrate a variety of cultural, educational, and community events throughout the Library and the Jingle Jubilee is just another wonderful way to open those doors, celebrate together, and create an overall sense of community. It's a way to connect all the different cultures, faiths, and traditions, no matter whether they celebrate Christmas or Hannukah, Diwali, or Kwanzaa – simply just being together to enjoy the festive spirit with something for everyone."

For a full roster of Jingle Jubilee activities, visit aurorapl.ca.



CROSSWORD

Puzzle No.TANOV1926 • *Solution in Classifieds*





CLUES ACROSS

1. Insect feeler
5. Central processing unit
8. Part of (abbr.)
11. Typical
13. Tall, rounded vase
14. __ Alto, California city
15. Lustrous, velvet-like fabric
16. "Fresh Prince of __ Air"
17. Hebrew calendar month
18. British surgeon who discovered bone disease
20. Agreement between debtor and creditor (abbr.)
21. Elongated part of anatomical structure
22. Acts slowly on
25. Keeps a little too safe
30. Greek seaport
31. "Baba O'Riley" rockers
32. Vision
33. Potassium nitrate in mineral form
38. Midway between northeast and east
41. Not a pro
43. Give a new look
45. Sensational
48. Nobel Prize-winning physicist
49. Annoy constantly
50. Vaccine developer
55. Lying down
56. Type of language (abbr.)
57. Flat-bottomed boat
59. Smallest or slightest
60. Bind
61. Speeds
62. The products of human creativity
63. Consume food
64. Ancient Greek sophist

CLUES DOWN

1. A young canine
2. As fast as can be done
3. Soviet moon probes
4. Sharp spasm of pain
5. One who adheres to a specific art movement
6. Show parts of
7. Unfasten
8. San Diego ballplayer
9. Santa
10. Rocky peaks
12. "Matt Houston" actor Horsley
14. A written agreement between two sides
19. Beginning to end (abbr.)
23. Greek goddess of the dawn
24. Not written in any key
25. Organized missions
26. Seven
27. Work unit
28. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
29. Broadway legend Bernadette
34. Belonging to a thing
35. Vietnamese offensive
36. Bitterly regret
37. Make a mistake
39. Newborn child
40. A combined landmass
41. Satisfaction
42. Hilly peninsulas in Denmark
44. Young swine
45. Type of sword
46. Siskel's partner
47. Brood of pheasants
48. Hindu model of ideal man
51. Suitable in the circumstances
52. La __ tar pits
53. Unstressed-stressed metrical foot
54. California wine country
58. Badly

Junior Tigers rally for five first-period goals in five minutes to capsize the Caledon Admirals 9-3

From page 11

falling behind 2-0 on home ice: "It shows our character and resilience and determination. We needed points tonight to move up in the standings. Our team isn't getting too high and it isn't getting too low during games, but our morale is really high right now after this win."

The first period onslaught described by Nei carried over into the middle frame. Mobile Tigers' defenseman Nick Frasca fed the cycling Tristian Scott who made the extra move past a Caledon defender between the circles and popped the puck past a lunging Saldanha to extend Aurora's lead to 6-2.

Less than five minutes into the final frame, Gunn snapped his second of the game over the right shoulder of Saldanha after receiving a pass between the circles from Frasca to make it 7-2.

After a four-minute double-minor was assessed to Admirals' defender Phillip Roberto for injuring Bundzenieks with a high stick on the Aurora captain's breakaway, Caledon turned the tables on the Tigers' power play.

Admirals' penalty killer Alex Fegaras finished a 2-on-1 breakaway by rifling the puck high blocker side past Booth-Housego for an emphatic short-handed goal at 6:28 to narrow Aurora's lead to 7-3. It was Fegaras's fifth of the season.

However, the Tigers' power play overcame the ignominious surrendering of a shortie. The ever-weaving Rosella created space off the left wing in the Admirals' zone and banked his pass off a Caledon defender past Saldanha with exactly two minutes left in Roberto's double-minor.

Rosella's fortuitous bounce earned assists for Ferrante and Michael Murphy and restored the Tigers' five-goal lead.

With 5:15 left, the swift-skating Bain tallied his second of the game—from former Admiral Hollebek and Skinner—to close the scoring.

To magnify the visitors' frustration, Booth-Housego foiled a 2-on-0 offensive zone incursion by Caledon with a spectacular sliding save with 1:03 left in the game—a kind of exclamation point by Tigers. The Admirals—after a promising start to the season under recently-departed Head Coach Brandon Villamere—slumped to their fifth consecutive loss.

The Tigers completed their home-stand sweep on Saturday night by edging the last-place Toronto Warriors 5-3. Budzenieks scored one goal and added two assists to lead the surging Tigers—winners of six of their last seven games.

Nei, Gunn, Frasca, and Jackson Zinkie added one goal each. The Tigers never trailed, nudged their record to .500 (11-11-0-0), and moved into sixth place in the OJHL East standings.

Fighting Food Insecurity in Aurora

Fans are reminded to bring non-perishable food items for the Aurora Food Pantry on Friday, November 20 when the Tigers host the North York Rangers at 7 PM. The Tigers are teaming up with the local charitable organization "Hockey Ends Hunger" to battle food insecurity in Aurora. "Bring Food, Support Local. Be a Game Changer."

SUPPORT LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS

AT YOUR Service

CENTRAL VACUUM

MAPLE VAC CENTRE
30 Years
2414 Major Mackenzie Dr., Vaughan
CENTRAL VACUUM PROBLEMS?
We will come to you and fix it fast.
Are you experiencing any of the following?
Low or no suction · Loud or unusual noise
Won't power on/off · Burning or electrical smell
SCAN ME
(905) 832-8227
In-home service by trusted technicians · All makes & models
Family-owned and operated for 30+ years
Proudly serving Vaughan • Aurora • King • Caledon

ELECTRICIAN

DANIEL'S ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION
Electrical Lights • Chandeliers
Ceiling Fans • Tracklights • Repairs
Cable Light • Clean Chandeliers, Etc.
Established 2001
Cell: 416-456-5336 | dagwtw5@gmail.com

PEST CONTROL

GOT MICE?
PEST ZERRO.ca
Servicing All of Your Pest Control Needs, Call:
647.200.2687.

INTERIOR & EXTERIOR RENOVATIONS

ABATE CONSTRUCTION LTD.
HOME RENOVATION CONTRACTOR
For Complete Interior & Exterior Projects
Bathrooms • Kitchens • Flooring • Home Upgrades
Full Service Renovations · Licensed & Insured
Reliable & Professional · Financing Options Available
Proudly Serving Aurora & The GTA
BOOK A FREE CONSULTATION
647.808.6644 abateconstruction.ca

PROPANE

PROPANE AND APPLIANCE SALES
• RESIDENTIAL
• COMMERCIAL
• INDUSTRIAL
INSTALLATIONS
SERVICE • DELIVERY
Carling Propane Inc.
24 HOUR SERVICE
866-952-0146
CARLING PROPANE INC.
Toll Free 1-866-952-0146 www.carlingpropane.ca

CLEANERS

TOPMAX Cleaning Services
RELIABLE PROVIDERS
FREE
Call for a FREE ESTIMATE
Our Services: OFFICE • MEDICAL • DAYCARE
COMMERCIAL • JANITORIAL
647 333 3760

RENOVATIONS/FENCES/DECKS

SUMMER RENOVATIONS INC.
Build/Repair Fences
Build/Repair Decks
BIG OR SMALL GIVE US A CALL!
(Free Estimates) 647-287-7168

RENOVATIONS/REMODELING/LANDSCAPE

A&A IDEAL RENOVATION
Home Remodeling • Electrical Plumbing
Kitchen & Bathrooms • Finished Basement
All Flooring Tiles • Hardwood Laminate
Drywall • Painting • Deck & Fences
Fully licensed and insured. One year warranty on all labour. NO JOB TOO SMALL!
416-219-4530 Alex 416-625-4441

CONCRETE

DO YOU HAVE SUNKEN CONCRETE?
Liftec Slabjacking Inc.
"We raise sunken concrete"
DO NOT REPLACE
WE RAISE SUNKEN CONCRETE
At A Fraction Of The Cost Of Replacement
Call Today For A Free Estimate!
www.liftec.ca ~ 1-866-280-7770

LANDSCAPING/RENOVATION

SUNSET BEECH
TREE CARE
Pruning • Removals
Consulting • Bracing • EAB
647-989-3509
irbryant@gmail.com

AD
If you are reading this ad, our advertising works!
TO ADVERTISE CALL
905-727-3300 EXT 102

TREE SERVICE

BORA TREE SERVICE
CLEAN TREE REMOVAL & MORE
CALL or TEXT: (416) 820-4050
WILL BEAT ANY QUOTE

CREMATION

RR Roadhouse & Rose FUNERAL HOME
Call us for more information
• Dignified
• Respectful
• Inexpensive
Affordable Cremation Services
www.roadhouseandrose.com | 905-895-6631

PAINTING

S & S PAINTING
TOP QUALITY GUARANTEED
30 YEARS EXPERIENCE • AURORA RESIDENT
416-520-6252

WINDOWS/EAVES/EXTERIOR

REX WINDOWS & HOME
Exceptional window, eaves & exterior cleaning
(647) 393 7397
info@rexwindows.ca
Contact for a free quote

DRIVEWAY PAVING

ONTARIO TAR & CHIP
Tar and Chip is an economical alternative to asphalt paving with a rustic country appearance, that also provides a solid surface and is a solution to ruts washout and potholes.
Country Driveways, Tar and Chip, Recycled Asphalt, Grading and Gravelling, Free Quotes.
tarandchip.ca • info@tarandchip.ca • 647.456.2010

PAINTING/HOME IMPROVEMENTS

FOUR SEASONS PAINTING & HOME IMPROVEMENTS
Please Inquire About Our Senior Services & Discounts.
2 professional hardworking guys
15% OFF PAINTING PROJECTS
TILING • WASHROOM /KITCHEN RENO • INTERLOCK RELEVEL
FENCES • ROOF REPAIRS/TROUGHS • FOUNDATION PARGING
ELECTRICAL/PLUMBING • CONCRETE REPAIRS• LOCKS-INSTAL/REPAIR
Call Claudio 416-723-4860 or, 905-727-0862
fourseasonsrenos@gmail.com

Thank You
FOR SUPPORTING A LOCAL BUSINESS

TO ADVERTISE, PLEASE CONTACT 905-727-3300 EXT 102

Ontario Legion Health aims to bring healthcare closer to veterans

From page 1

The Ontario Command of the Royal Canadian Legion formally launched their new Ontario Legion Health kiosks at the Aurora branch on Friday morning.

Initially rolling out to eight Legion branches across the Province, the kiosks were dedicated on Friday, November 13, to mark the end of Veterans Week.

Ontario Legion Health (OLH) is a kiosk that provides important health screening services on the spot, including risks related to mental health, cardiovascular health, and general lifestyle issues.

The OLH kiosks operate in a similar way to blood pressure-reading kiosks that can be found in pharmacies, grocery stores, and other locations. Using an app in conjunction with the kiosk itself, the person using the kiosk will be screened and have their blood pressure, weight, and body mass index taken. The results are automatically and immediately directed to a Nurse Navigator for interpretation. The Nurse Navigator, in turn, will telephone the user directly to discuss the results.

The speed in which a user can get a response was demonstrated at last week's launch in front of a host of dignitaries, including Ontario Minister of Citizenship Graham McGregor, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services Michael Parsa, MPPs Dawn Gallagher Murphy and Laura Smith, Aurora Mayor Tom Mrakas, and representatives from several health organizations, including the Sunnybrook Veterans Centre.

"This pilot program, driven by the vision and the leadership of Ontario Command, introduces a new community health screening option for veterans, their families, and everyone else in the community," said Pamela Sweeney, Executive Director of the Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command. "It combines walk-in PharmaSmart kiosk access, the Ontario Legion Health App, and a virtual nurse navigator with direct connections to a growing network of health partners.

"OLH is designed to improve access in rural and remote communities and to reach people who may be hesitant, angry, frightened, embarrassed or distrustful of traditional health settings. By placing a simple entry point inside trusted Legion branches, OLH offers another way to begin potentially accessing health services without an appointment, long travel, or the confusion of navigating services alone."

Ontario Command, she added, is pursuing a funding partnership with the Provincial Government, through the Ontario Health Innovation Pathway Grant, to expand services beyond the eight first kiosks. They are also pursuing private funding partnerships as well to expand their mandate.

At last week's launch, however, the support already there from Provincial representatives was clear, including through a message sent ahead of the launch by Premier Doug Ford.

"Whether someone is looking for guidance, reassurance, or help navigating available services, Ontario Legion Health is making it easier to get started," said Ford in a statement. "By connecting trusted Legion branches with health screening technology, digital tools, and nurse navigation, this new model makes it simpler for veterans, their families, and community members to take the next step on their health journey. The initiative also builds on the Legion's outstanding role as a trusted gathering place where people can find connection, support, and service close to home."

These sentiments were echoed by McGregor, who hailed the OLH launch as an "innovative community-based model" that will make a difference in many areas, including mental health, cognitive health, and chronic disease risk assessment for seniors, veterans, rural residents "and many others who face barriers accessing traditional healthcare settings."

Joined by MPP Smith, who has a focus on the Soldiers Aid Commission, MPP Parsa said this is "the just next step" in ensuring "no veteran or family member who has sacrificed so much is left behind."

"Ontario Legion Health will help veterans and families and will continue to be a hub for members of our community, not just in Aurora, but in surrounding communities who attend the Legion," he said.

Just before the kiosk was demonstrated – and the results analysed – in real time, the impact of the machine and its associated program were underscored by Dr. Jocelyn Charles, Medical Director at Sunnybrook Veterans Centre, and President-Elect of the Ontario College of Physicians.

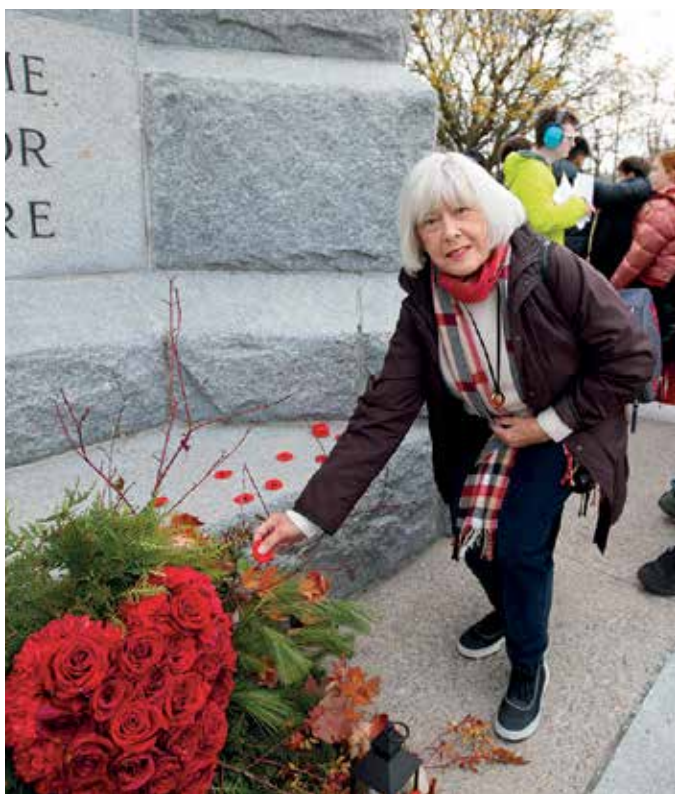
"Our Canadian Armed Forces receive excellent, timely, well-coordinated care while they're in service to Canada, which they should have. However, when our Canadian military transition to civilian life, it's a major adjustment for them, and it's made even more difficult when they encounter challenges in accessing the health care that they need," she said. "Not receiving timely access to care has a significant impact on their health outcomes and their quality of life. We really, really need to change that.

"As a family physician, I see and I am disturbed by the barriers to accessing health care across our province, but it's particularly disturbing when it's our veterans who served our country. Through Ontario Region Health, veterans will have access to health care. I think this is totally amazing. I'm a big believer that we need more access than just having people come to my office."



Auroran photo by Brock Weir







AURORA REMEMBERS

Aurora residents had many opportunities to Remember the fallen and pay tribute to those who served with two services at the Cenotaph and Peace Park by the local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. While the larger-scale parade and service took place Sunday, November 8, the anniversary of the end of the Armistice was marked on Remembrance Day itself – Wednesday, November 11 – with dignitaries and community groups assembling to lay wreaths at the monuments within the park, student groups coming together for poignant words and music, and residents at large placing their poppies at the end of the service. **Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger**

AURORAN CLASSIFIEDS

SERVICES

WE PAY CASH FOR SCRAP vehicles any size. We also buy construction and farm equipment. Open 7 days a week. Call 905-859-0817 (Peter).

ALL JUNK REMOVAL
BASEMENTS • YARDS
GARAGES • GENERAL CLEAN-UPS
SMALL MOVES • ODD JOBS
Very Reasonable Rates
Call to enquire:
905-832-9655
or, text pictures to:
416-876-2219

SUPPORT Local BUSINESSES

ROOM FOR RENT

FURNISHED ROOM FOR RENT in Country Home on 10 acres, shared kitchen, $160 per week. References required, gentleman preferred. Call Donna at 647-209-6447 or John at 647-206-5930.

SERVICES

!!! WANTED !!!
WE PAY FOR GOLF BALLS
Pay $0.15 to $0.40 per ball
Year Round! Pick-up Available
416-889-9365. Peter
NO MIN QTY OR NO MAX!!

Not everyone needs your services all the time, but if you want to be there when they do, advertise:

CALL 905-727-3300 EXT 102

PUZZLE SOLUTION

S	A	B	A	■	■	■	T	A	E	■	■	T	R	A
I	P	M	E	T	■	■	E	I	T	■	E	R	E	M
M	A	A	R	P	■	■	L	S	A	■	D	E	B	A
■	N	I	B	A	S	■	G	A	N	■	I	B	A	R
■	■	■	■	■	L	A	I	R	O	S	N	E	S	■
R	E	T	S	L	O	H	P	U	E	R	■	■	■	■
R	U	E	T	A	M	A	■	E	N	E	■	■	■	■
E	R	T	I	N	■	■	■	■	■	T	H	G	I	S
■	■	■	■	O	H	W	■	S	U	E	A	R	I	P
■	■	■	■	T	C	E	T	O	R	P	R	E	V	O
■	S	E	T	A	T	I	S	E	H	■	■	■	■	■
S	U	R	C	■	A	V	I	■	T	E	G	A	P	■
R	A	D	A	■	L	E	B	■	■	E	N	A	P	■
O	L	A	P	■	N	R	U	■	■	L	A	S	U	■
T	C	P	■	■	U	P	C	■	■	■	P	L	A	P

Education IRL

"Today, I teamed up with the growers at Blue & Silver Farm to test a 3D-printed robot I designed. It picks berries, but without hurting the fruit." By solving real problems in the community, Pickering College students aren't just preparing for the real world—they're in it.

PICKERING COLLEGE

An Independent Day and Boarding School Since 1842.
Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 in Newmarket.

THiNGS... you ought to know

NOVEMBER 20 – 21

Alice in Wonderland JR. at The Country Day School – Fall down the rabbit hole into the wacky world of Wonderland! In this fast-paced, 60-minute musical adaptation of the Disney classic, young Alice finds herself in an upside-down world as she journeys toward self-discovery. Featuring iconic characters like the White Rabbit, the Cheshire Cat, and the Queen of Hearts—plus timeless songs like "The Unbirthday Song" and "Painting the Roses Red"—it's a magical theatrical adventure the whole family will love. Join us on Friday, November 20, at 6:30 p.m. or Saturday, November 21, at 1:00 p.m. for this delightful Grade 4-6 production in The Country Day School's Performing Arts Centre, 13415 Dufferin Street in King City. Tickets are $20 and can be purchased online at www.cds.on.ca/tickets.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21

The Town of Aurora's Santa Under the Stars Parade returns to Yonge Street tonight from 6 – 8 p.m., travelling south from Orchard Heights Boulevard to Murray Drive. This night time parade is full of magic, with beautifully decorated floats, incredible marching bands and a few special guests including the Jolly man-in-red himself. Remember to bring your letters for Santa as Canada Post will be out collecting them before the parade begins. For more information, visit aurora.ca/santaparade.

* * * *

York Symphony Orchestra presents Brahms and Schuman tonight at 7.30 p.m. at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street. The soloist for YSO's next concert has just added co-winner (along with Christie Cheung) of YSO's inaugural concerto competition to his long list of awards. Oliver (Zihuan) Xu will play Brahms' only Violin Concerto, followed by the full orchestra in Schumann's Symphony No. 4. Please note that the Saturday night start time is earlier this season. Tickets at Eventbrite.ca or at the door.

NOVEMBER 27 – 29

The Town of Aurora will host the first of its two Christmas Market weekends at Aurora Town Square. Enjoy the holiday season at Aurora's Christmas Market - one of the Top 100 Festivals and Events in Ontario! This event is filled with good cheer, hands-on workshops and activities, fantastic seasonal vendors, food vendors and more. Check out different vendors on-site each night. The Market will be held each evening from 5 – 8.30 p.m. For more information, visit aurora.ca/christmasmarket.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28

FIRESIDE HOLIDAY MARKET, second-annual event in support of mental health programs – today from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Northridge Community Church, 15338 Leslie St, Aurora, ON. Shop local for gifts, crafts, jewelry & baked goods. Free admission, FREE parking & festive family fun. FREE photos with Santa! @sisterz_co_

DECEMBER 4 – 6

The Town of Aurora will host the second of its two Christmas Market weekends at Aurora Town Square. Enjoy the holiday season at Aurora's Christmas Market - one of the Top 100 Festivals and Events in Ontario! This event is filled with good cheer, hands-on workshops and activities, fantastic seasonal vendors, food vendors and more. Check out different vendors on-site each night. The Market will be held each evening from 5 – 8.30 p.m. For more information, visit aurora.ca/christmasmarket.



CELEBRATING DIWALI – Diwali was celebrated at Aurora Town Square on Friday, November 6, with an evening of fun for the whole family, including a Bollywood dance workshop, the Diya lighting, free samosas, and much more. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

Strange Advance's Drew Arnott appreciates the personal connections to fans as his new wave-synth rock band criss-crosses Canada

From page 12

experience to learn how to be the main act. Through it all, music has always moved me. Essentially, I'm a songwriter. I started off as a drummer who picked up keyboards so I could learn how to write songs. I was very proud of 'Worlds Away.' There are lots of elements and layers to the song. It was all me – and to be able to put it all together into what I'd consider my masterpiece was very satisfying, but the story behind the production of 'We Run' was phenomenal. We had so many contributions and it was amazing how it all came together. I had the world's best talent producing the song, including engineers and producers from Pink Floyd, REM, and The Eurythmics."

I was fortunate to see the original incarnation of Strange Advance perform those perfectly-produced songs at the Ontario Place Forum in September of 1985. It was a spectacular experience watching the dynamic duo of Arnott and Kromm deliver their fusion of new wave, progressive rock, and synth-rock sounds from the Forum's rotating stage – synched with a pulsating light show that illuminated the lakeshore on a perfect late Summer night.

During our phone conversation, the amiable Arnott remembered the Ontario Place performance as "weird" and expressed his displeasure with his band's preparation for the gig.

"When we played Ontario Place, we had only played two college dates—one of them was at University of Waterloo. It was culture shock for us. I was used to being the drummer so I was used to observing from behind the safety of my cymbals. Now, I'm out front on stage and playing keyboard and singing. In actual fact, I loved it. Ontario Place was a special venue. Outdoors—that's the kind of show that gets me excited."

The ageless Arnott—who notes that "I still feel that I'm that guy at Ontario Place" – is also excited about playing on Bowen Island in the New Year in a 140-seat theatre: "Bowen Island is off the coast of Vancouver. Rob Bailey—our keyboard player—lives on the island. Getting to do a show in a small space creates some challenges, but it's way more fun these days working within different parameters. You get spoiled in the smaller venues, too, being closer to the audience. Our big question becomes: How do we deliver our arena show in a smaller venue?"

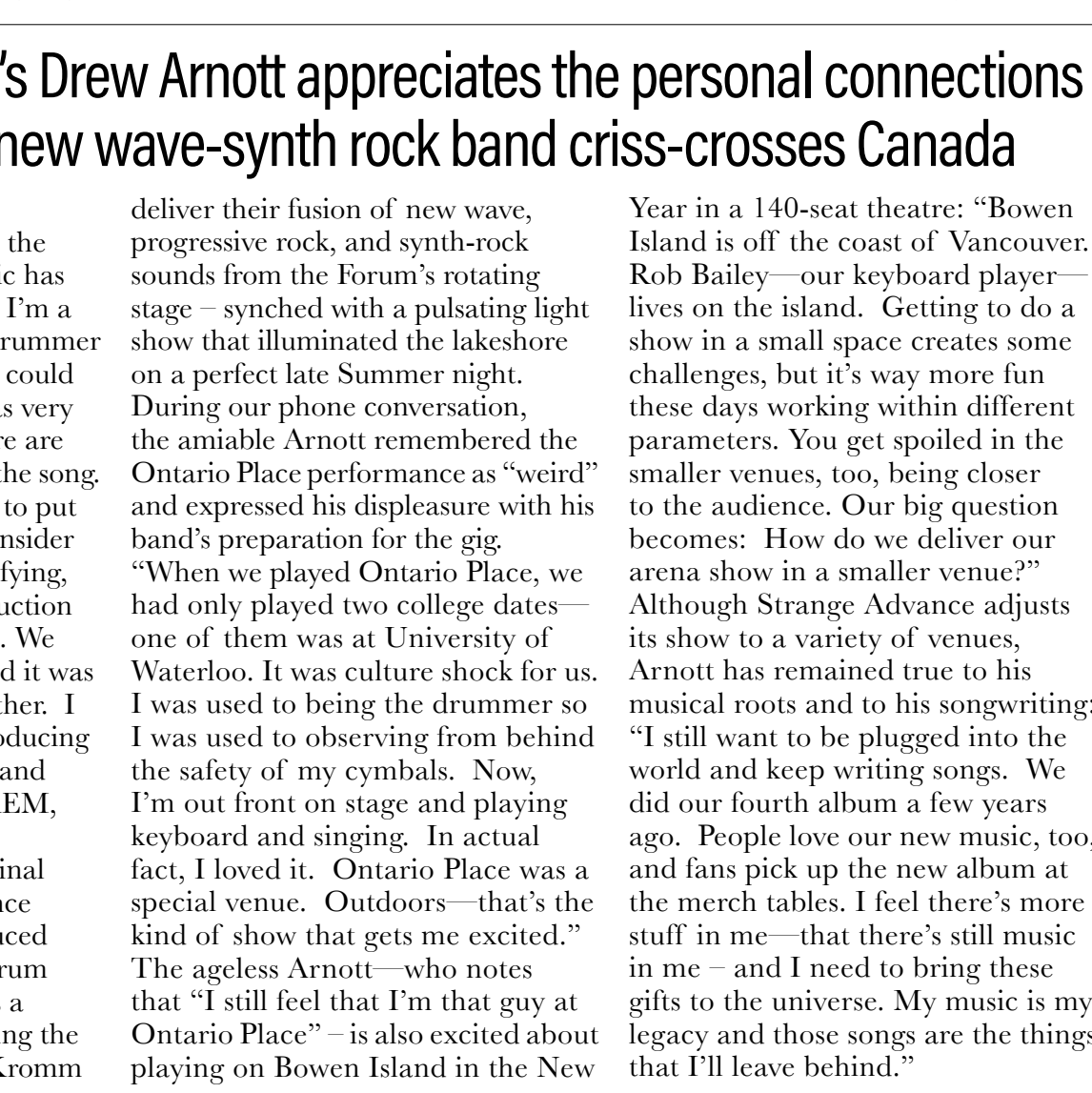
Although Strange Advance adjusts its show to a variety of venues, Arnott has remained true to his musical roots and to his songwriting: "I still want to be plugged into the world and keep writing songs. We did our fourth album a few years ago. People love our new music, too, and fans pick up the new album at the merch tables. I feel there's more stuff in me—that there's still music in me – and I need to bring these gifts to the universe. My music is my legacy and those songs are the things that I'll leave behind."

LANDO
LIGHTING

LIGHT THAT
TRANFORMS
EVERY SPACE

Elevate your home with our exclusive collection of modern chandeliers. Timeless design. Exceptional quality. Unforgettable impact.

NEW COLLECTION





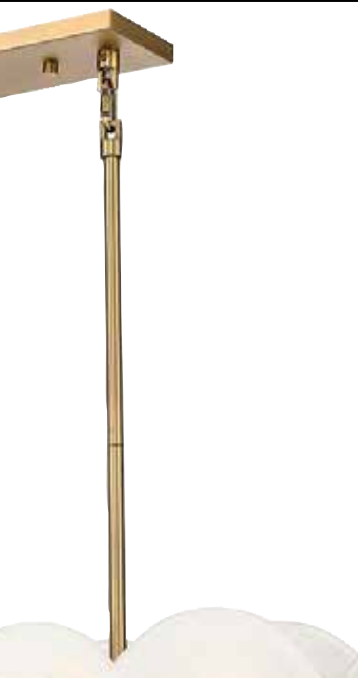
GLASS DROP

A dramatic statement of modern elegance.



ALABASTER GLOW

Soft. Sophisticated. Simply stunning.



CRYSTAL RAIN

Refined luxury that catches every eye.

PREMIUM QUALITY
Built to last. Designed to inspire.

MODERN DESIGN
Sophisticated styles for every space.

PERFECT FOR ANY ROOM
Dining rooms, foyers, living spaces & more.

EXPERT SERVICE
Lighting experts here to help.

BRIGHTEN YOUR WORLD
VISIT OUR SHOWROOM
See the beauty. Feel the quality.
Find the perfect light for your home.

210 Clarence St., Brampton ON L6W 1T4
905.453.6403
www.landolighting.com
@landolighting

In Brampton LANDO LIGHTING GALLERIES

ST. ANNE'S SCHOOL

Apply now for September 2027!

Join girls from around York Region in this unique opportunity to be a St. Anne's School Cygnet. Girls will thrive in an inspirational and progressive learning environment creating a culture of exploration, discovery, and achievement. The school's focus on STEM/STEAM, community giving, leadership, and wellness will develop well-rounded, global-minded citizens. Is your daughter ready to build the vision and fabricate the legacy that will be St. Anne's School?

At St. Anne's, we:

- Encourage exploration without inhibition
- Strengthen confidence and encourage risk-taking
- Diminish media-driven expectations
- Promote teaching and learning strategies that support girls
- Embolden an 'I can do anything attitude'
- Build leadership capacity for a complex and uncertain world
- Foster sisterhood and promote lifting each other up
- Construct self-belief
- Push back against injustice
- Inspire truth
- Celebrate equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Develop student voice



September 2027 may feel far away, but the path to an incredible future starts now. Apply today and take the first step toward a school experience like no other.

Scholarships and bursaries are available.

For more, visit **www.stannes.ca** or apply now at **www.stannes.ca/admission**.

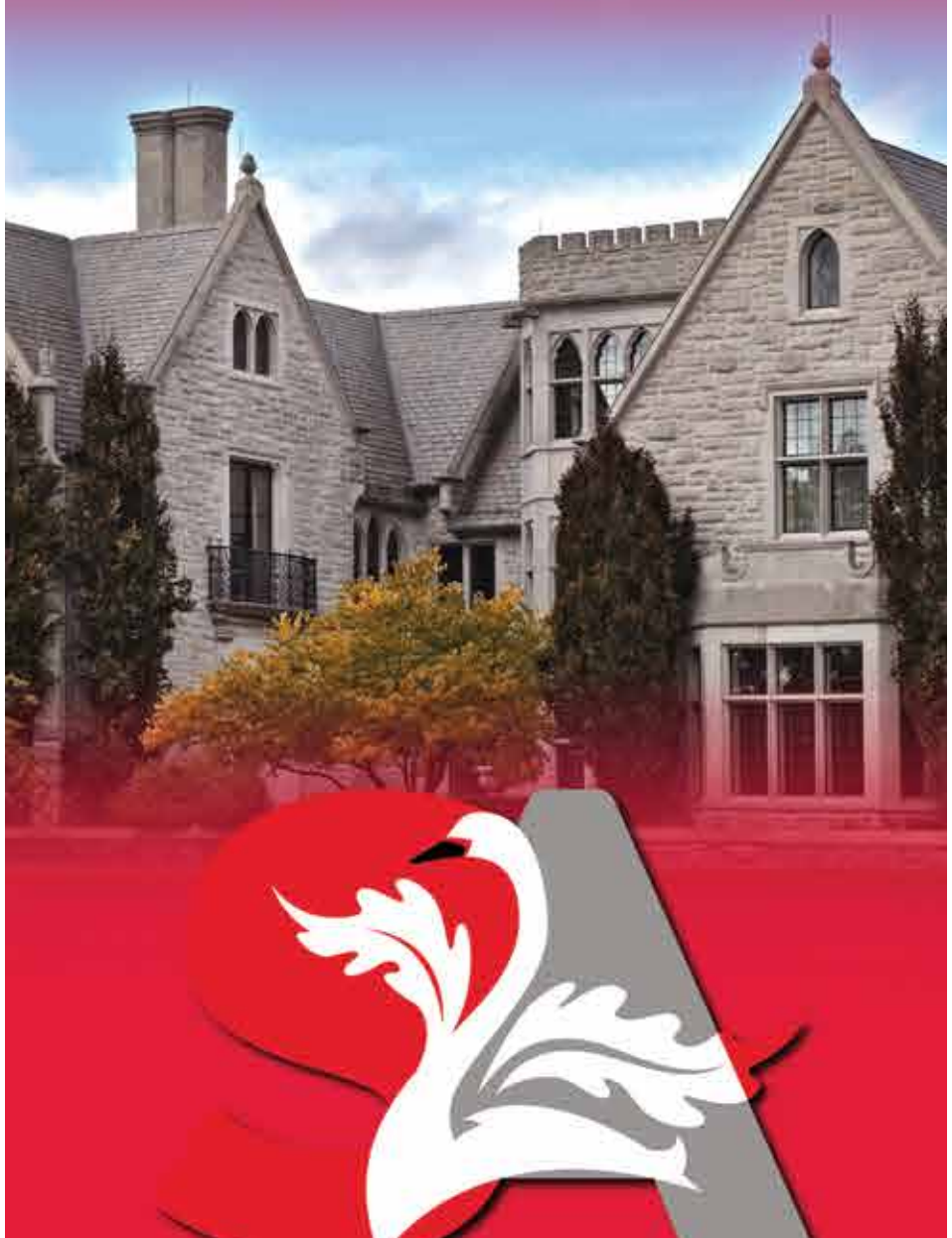
Open House

December 2, 6:30–8 p.m.



Be inspired!

Watch our video at stannes.ca/domything



ST. ANNE'S SCHOOL

GRADES 5-12 ALL GIRLS' SCHOOL

306 St. John's Sideroad
Aurora, Ont. L4G 4B4

www.stannes.ca info@stannes.ca

YouTube

Find your hidden talents, master an established interest, or unleash a passion. Our all-girls setting provides a safe, nurturing, and caring environment to build opportunities to think, discover, expand confidence, and foster a natural inclination to be yourself.



Be...

Brave
Strong
Curious
Powerful
Fierce
Creative
Confident
Bold
Adventurous
Compassionate

Be all of these things at **St. Anne's School.**