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Residents in Aurora's northeast will soon have greater access to the Aurora Public Library (APL) with the installation of a new "micro-branch" at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. Pictured here at the new kiosk, which could be operational as early as the end of this week before its formal dedication next week, is Mario Baleno, APL's Manager of Information Technology, Victoria Dillon, APL's Manager of Collections, and APL CEO Jodi Marr.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Library “branches out” to Aurora’s northeast with new presence at SARC

SARC Browse & Borrow to formally open June 24

BY BROCK WEIR


The Aurora Public Library is “branching out” to Aurora’s northeast with a new presence at the Stronach Aurora Community Centre.

The new micro-branch of the Aurora Public Library (APL) is the fulfilment of long-held plans to better serve residents of Aurora’s northeast, which APL CEO Jodi Marr says has historically been an area where APL has “less engagement” with residents. The kiosk, which is located across from the customer service desk at

the recreation centre, located on Wellington Street East, just west of Leslie Street, boasts nearly 200 books curated for all ages. All you need to use the micro-branch is a valid library card. Once you’ve entered your card information, the kiosk – dubbed the

Continued on page 7

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FRIENDSHIP BONDS – The Aurora Farmers' Market continued its outdoor season on Saturday where Franki, Brody and Cait stopped to make friendship bracelets while live music took over the Town Park band shell. For more, see Page 14.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Local author hopes to spark kids’ imaginations while honouring Cree grandmother

BY BROCK WEIR

Writing was an integral part of Cheryl Skory Suma’s healing process when she suffered a traumatic brain injury while skiing in 2010. It was an accident that forced her to give up her career as a speech pathologist as CEO of Exceptionalities Inc, which served York Region and South Simcoe. But in using writing to help her brain heal, she found a new voice of her own

Continued on page 9



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TOWN OF AURORA

NOTICE BOARD

July 17, 2025



Council & Committee Meetings			
Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Thursday, August 14	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Committee of Adjustment
Tuesday, September 9	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session
Tuesday, September 9	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Committee of the Whole
*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: Beth Boudreau - Birds of a Feather

Growing up in a large family in the country, Beth spent most of her childhood exploring the fields and woods nearby. This created her love of nature where even a raindrop on a leaf inspired wonder! Beth has been painting nature for many years, exploring many styles and techniques. She works in various media: acrylic, oil, watercolour and collage. Painting with vibrant colours truly reflects her love of abstracted landscapes and nature subjects - such as birds and plants. Her "Birds of a Feather" exhibition comes as a result of many years observing, listening to, and capturing the essence of all species of birds. View in-person at Aurora Town Hall in the Skylight Gallery. View online at aurora.ca/SkylightGallery. All work is for sale. Please contact Sarah Reynolds at sreynolds@aurora.ca if you are interested in investing and owning a beautiful piece of art.

WATER & WASTEWATER

RATE STRUCTURE

Share your thoughts!

Take our online survey

Help Shape the Future of Water Rates in Aurora!

Aurora is reviewing how we bill for water and wastewater services—and we want your input!

Right now, everyone pays based only on how much water they use. But as infrastructure ages and costs rise, we're exploring a new structure that's more fair, sustainable, and encourages conservation.

Take our quick survey at: engageaurora.ca/WaterRates.

Fall 2025 Program Guide

The Fall 2025 Program Guide will be available to view online starting on **August 5**. 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. or S.A.R.C.

CLOSED FOR MULTI-USE COURT RESURFACING

TRENT PARK & EDWARD COLTHAM PARK

Week of July 1 to Week of August 24

The multi-use courts at Trent Park & Edward Coltham Park will be closed starting the week of **July 1** through the week of **August 24**, weather permitting for court resurfacing.

The project includes full removal and replacement of the existing surface, installation of larger courts, acrylic colour surfacing, and fencing around the pickleball courts.

To find other courts during the closure, visit aurora.ca/Pickleball.

TAX TIME

2025 final property tax bills have been mailed out and as the deadline approaches remember, there are many easy & convenient ways to pay final property taxes – including online via your banking institution, mail or pre-authorized payment. Learn more at: aurora.ca/PropertyTaxes.

What's Happening

TD PRESENTS

AURORA'S 2025

CONCERTS IN THE PARK

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

WEDNESDAYS IN JULY AND AUGUST

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Aurora Town Park • 49 Wells Street

Concerts are free

JULY 23	Simply The Best Tribute to Tina Turner
JULY 30	No Sugar Tonight Tribute to The Guess Who, Burton Cummings & BTO
AUGUST 6	Outlaw State of Mind Tribute to Chris Stapleton
AUGUST 13	Canadian Women in Music with Krista Blondin

For complete series line-up, please visit aurora.ca/SummerConcerts

Food donations for the Aurora Food Pantry are greatly appreciated.

Licensed beverages and food options available for purchase on-site. For your seating comfort, please bring your own lawn chairs.

AURORA'S 2025

MOVIES IN THE PARK

Aurora Town Park - 49 Wells Street

Thursday, August 14
Thursday, August 21
Thursday, August 28

For more details and to see what's playing visit: aurora.ca/MoviesInThePark

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Heathwood Heights proposal headed for Public Planning meeting in fall

Residents begin petition against infill project

BY BROCK WEIR

A significant infill development proposed for the Heathwood Heights neighbourhood will come before Council at a Public Planning meeting this fall as concerned neighbours organize their opposition.

At issue is an application to transform the property located at 161 Heathwood Heights Drive. Currently the site of a single detached home, the applicants have proposed five single detached dwellings on the site.

The application was made public by Mayor Tom Mrakas earlier this month, noting that as the application is now deemed as complete, the next step is for a formal presentation at an upcoming Public Planning meeting.

Neighbours, however, are using the intervening weeks to come together to oppose the idea.

A change.org petition urging Council to reject it outright had amassed nearly 330 verified signatures by press time this week.

Those behind the petition argue that the proposal goes against the Town’s Official Plan.

They describe the infill plan as trying to “sandwich” additional homes onto the property and doing so “threatens both the ecological balance and the character of the area.”

“Aurora’s Official Plan is clear: low-density residential neighbourhoods – like Heathwood Heights – are not targeted for intensification or higher-density development,” say the petitioners, notably petition-starter Johanna Francis. “The Town has designated specific areas (called Intensification Corridors) for responsible development. 161 Heathwood Heights is not located within one of these corridors.”

This matters, they say, because it would put a higher-use density within an existing low-density neighbourhood.

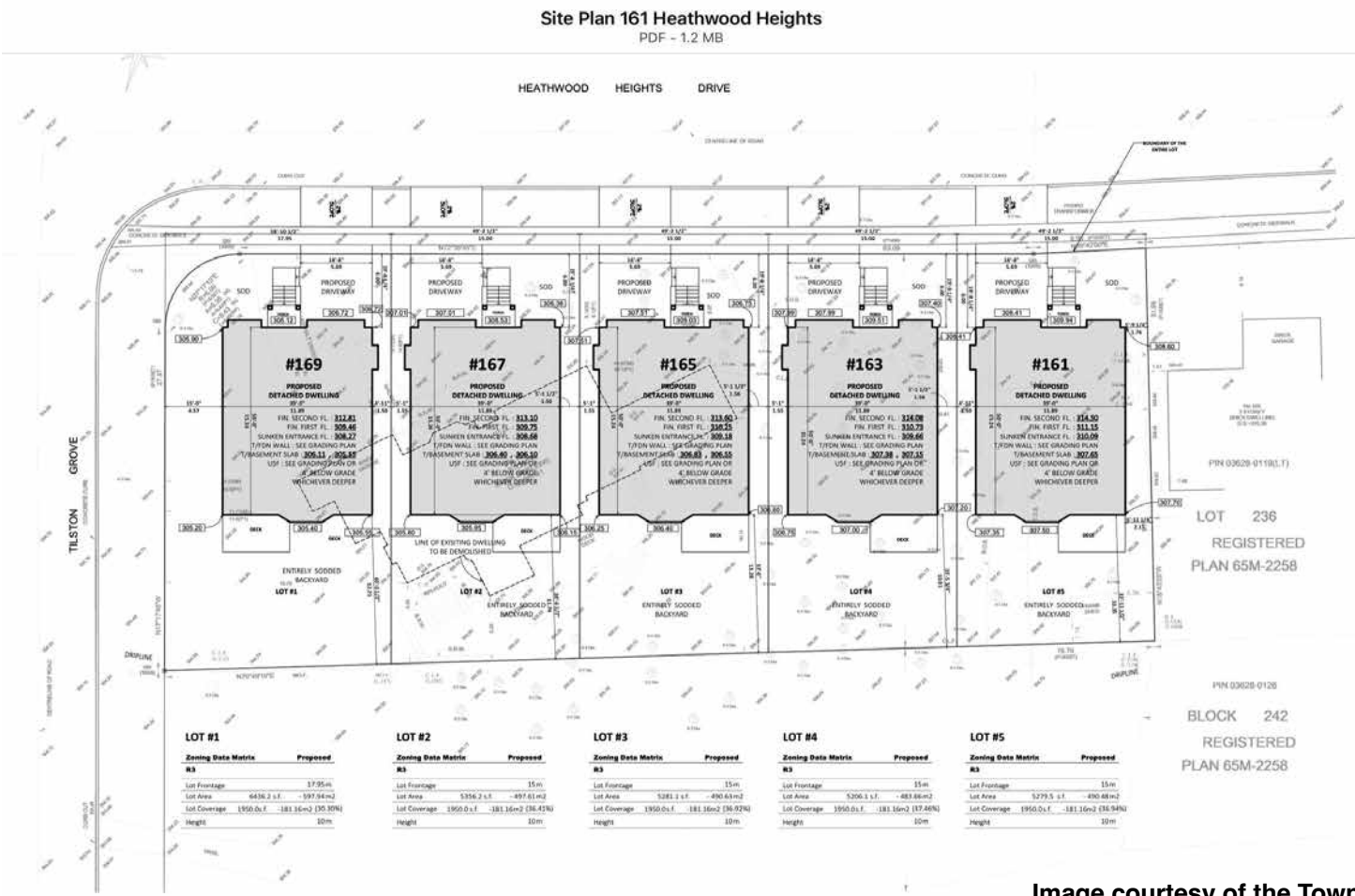


Image courtesy of the Town of Aurora

“It sets a dangerous precedent for future developments in similar areas across Aurora,” they say. “The proposed plan does not address the need for affordable or missing-middle housing, and does not align with Aurora’s overall growth strategy. It intensifies pressure around our unique trail system, disrupting natural wildlife habitats. This is a precedent-setting proposal. If approved, it could open the door to similar higher-density developments in established low-density neighbourhoods across all of Aurora.

“This isn’t just a Heathwood Heights issue – it affects the future of residential zoning throughout our Town. If this goes through, any quiet residential street could be next.”

While the Public Planning meeting will be a time for lawmakers to formally weigh in on the proposal, Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, in a communication to residents, said neighbours were “understandably

concerned.”

“I thank the Hill Ratepayers Association and leadership for being on top of this from the start and for communicating within the area, as is their mandate,” he said. “I also have received numerous calls and emails about the application, all of them in opposition. I have tried to respond to all. A month ago, before the application became public, I met with the developer and reviewed the application. At that time, I voiced strong reservations about the application and suggested, because I have been working with the Ratepayers Group closely, that this would be opposed.

“I know this application has caused alarm. This single lot is proposed to develop into five homes, demolishing the existing home, re-grading the site and altering the tree canopy. It will increase density in the area and has already raised concerns about traffic and construction. But the real issue here

is whether this application is consistent with our Official Plan and the nature of the area and whether it constitutes ‘good planning’. In my opinion, residents who have purchased/invested in their homes in this neighbourhood should expect that the character of that neighbourhood will be protected by our Official Plan. I agree with many who have concerns that this may be precedent setting.

“I will of course listen objectively to the application details and the case made by the applicant, listen to our staff and to the resident’s feedback who this affects directly. But I represent you in this regard.”

Heathwood Heights is located in the southwest quadrant of Yonge Street and St. John’s Sideroad.

Those wishing to view the petition can do so at: www.change.org/p/proposed-rezoning-at-161-heathwood-heights-please-read-and-sign-the-petition.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Roots of tomorrow:
Canada's forests need our support

The significance of forests for conservation, community benefits and human health has never been more urgent to acknowledge. Forests play many critical roles for nature and people: they provide habitat for hundreds of species, act as water filters, reduce air pollution and are places of community connection, recreation and refuge. They regulate temperature and weather patterns and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

However, many pressures, including severe storms and wildfires, invasive alien species and habitat loss, threaten these ecosystems, the benefits they provide and the relationships they support.

When our woodlands are compromised, so too is the quality of the air we breathe and the water we depend on. The well-being of every Canadian, from the bustling urban centre to the most remote rural town, is at stake.

Canada's forests make up nearly one-tenth of the world's total. We are one of the most forested countries in the world, ranking ahead of the United States and just behind Russia and Brazil. Our country boasts connected, intact forest habitats and significant terrestrial carbon stores. With around 140 native tree species, Canada has a unique role and collective duty to protect these areas.

One-third of the 426 bird species that breed in Canada rely on forests for survival. Canada's northern forests provide nesting habitat for an abundance of diverse migratory birds that winter in the U.S., Central America and beyond. From tiny warblers to large swans, it's estimated that between three and five million birds migrate south from Canada's boreal forest every fall.

The economic value of our forests is just as vital as their ecological importance. According to the Forest Products Association of Canada (fpac.ca), more than 200,000 Canadians earn their livelihood directly from forestry, sustainable agriculture and eco-tourism, contributing an impressive \$87 billion in annual revenue.

Since 1962, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has championed forest conservation, safeguarding over 1.6 million hectares of forests — an area more than twice the size of Prince Edward Island. Working in partnership with landowners, corporations, governments and Indigenous Nations, these special places deliver economic, community and health benefits.

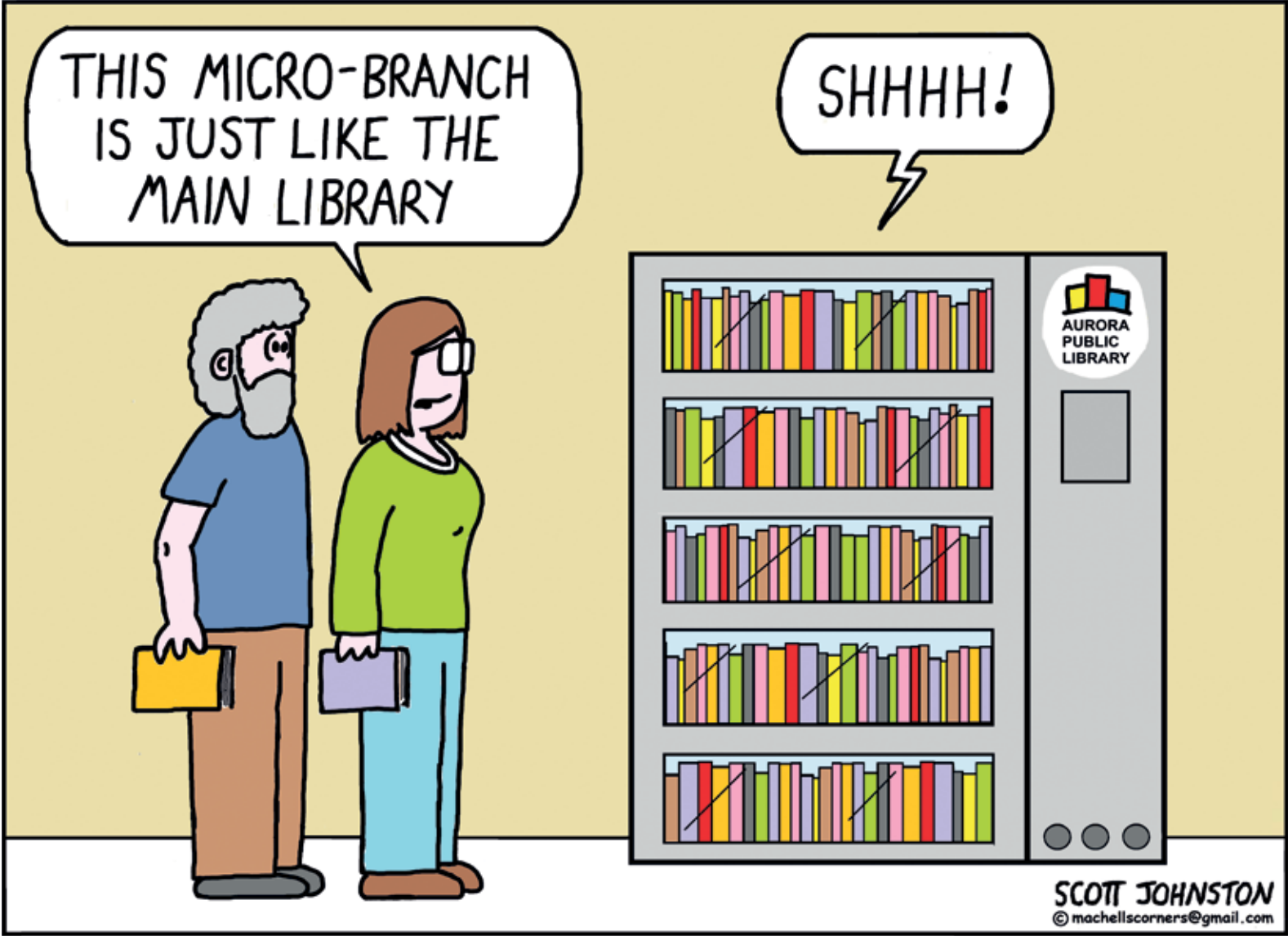
From the remote, majestic boreal forests in the north to the rich Carolinian deciduous forests in the south, Ontario's forests are hubs of biodiversity. These vast woodlands, stretching over 70 million hectares and representing 20 per cent of Canada's forests, are more than just trees — they are a living, breathing testament to nature's power.

One such special area happens to be the largest private land conservation project in Canada's history.

Located near Hearst, ON, the 145,000-hectare Boreal Wildlands site is twice the size of the city of Toronto. It is home to black bear, moose, wolves and Canada lynx along with rare birds, such as Canada warbler, barn swallow and olive-sided flycatcher. It features more than 1,300 kilometres of rivers

Continued on page 5

Machell's Corners



Learning Resilience



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

which probably served us well come March of 2020, but I'm sure it was also responsible for the vast majority of premature greys that sprang up a year or two later.

Yet, we persevered. We did our best. We did what we needed to do to secure our spots, if indeed post-secondary is the path we chose — and several of my friends even decided to do a “victory lap” of Grade 12 to not only improve their grades for the university and college battle ahead but wait until the Double Cohort bottleneck had largely cleared.

And we did so because, despite all these challenges, the importance of education was instilled in us by our teachers, parents, and guardians, every step along the way.

The importance of education is still instilled in today's students by our teachers, parents, guardians — and, indeed, our school boards who typically take this summer downtime to celebrate the myriad successes of its students throughout the year that was.

At the same time, however, it often feels that the importance of education is continually being diluted in other realms.

In the United States, for instance, the current administration tasked its Secretary of Education with dismantling her entire department in a bid to turn the oversight of the Department of Education to the States, a motley collection of 50 departments that have shown wildly varied success levels, often due to the levels of funding they have received, and with wildly different standards, including the creeping in of theology-based learning.

Canada, of course, has a similar structure with education being the purview of the Provinces rather than the Federal government, yet our own situation is not nearly as dire or disparate — but that's not to say there aren't some elements that are fraying around the edges.

Due to several factors ranging from a cap

on accepting international students and their resulting tuition, and a long-standing funding situation that now has colleges and universities across Ontario in the throes of significant layoffs, the cancellation of classes that were part and parcel of a well-rounded and varied education, and even the elimination of entire departments — the situation is fraught and does not show much sign of letting up.

Students who are lucky enough to secure a spot will continue to thrive, but, with limited spots and an ever-decreasing array of academic and course options, there will be a price left to pay by someone — and, spoiler alert, it's us.

The economic benefits of a well-trained, well-educated, and well-equipped workforce in Ontario are obvious, so why doesn't adequate funding follow? Yes, there is a reason the cap on international students was put in place, but the resulting hit on how places of higher learning operate couldn't have been clearer from the outset, and this should have been taken into account.

When numbers are being crunched at budget time, components of education — such as arts programs and other areas the powers-that-be deem electives of lesser importance — are often the first things to hit the chopping block, no matter how integral they are to the overall development of students.

The current situation is also battling against a trend we're seeing all too often around the world where so many have come to see post-secondary education, or higher education, regardless of how that's defined, as “unnecessary” or “elitist”, and something that should be decried.

That shouldn't come as too much of a surprise though as we're living in a time and place where far too many are eschewing the advice of scientists, doctors, and other members of academic field, in favour of self-proclaimed experts in any number of platforms who validate what you want to hear instead of dealing with cold, hard facts you need to know.

Is there any way to get the proverbial genie back in the bottle? Only time will tell.

In the meantime, however, I fear that, before too long, the quest for a place at a university or college in Ontario, or indeed Canada, will be a more stressful and cut-throat process than we survivors of the Double Cohort went through — and this is not exactly unavoidable.

These students, like our generation, will survive — we're a resilient bunch — but what will be the ultimate cost to them, the education system, and every one of us?

THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

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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@auroran.com

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

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



The Aurora Museum & Archives is... Looking Deeper!



Our entry for this year's Contact Photography Festival, [un] Framed and in Focus, has had its viewing extended until August 31! Our aim is to let Aurorans take a closer look into their Town's history. Photographs hold clues and stories deeper than just the subject. Did you know that Maurice "Rocket" Richard was set to be a referee in 1965 for Aurora's Pee-wee and Bantam games? Scheduling changes relegated the matches to February 26, but on February 25 the arena burnt down. It was the Rocket visit that never was. (2019.11.3)



GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor
Tom Mrakas

Last week, we held another successful Mayor's Roundtable on Sports, and I want to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who participated. It was truly a pleasure to connect with so many of our passionate local sports organizations, dedicated coaches, tireless volunteers, and community leaders.

These roundtable sessions have always been about listening—hearing directly from those who are on the ground, delivering programs, managing facilities, and supporting our athletes. Once again, what stood out to me was the incredible commitment and collaboration that exists within Aurora's sporting community.

From grassroots programs to competitive leagues, everyone came to the table with one shared goal: building a stronger, more inclusive future for sport in our Town.

During the evening, we discussed a range of important topics—from improving access to facilities and expanding programming,

to supporting volunteers and identifying areas where the Town can play a more active role in partnership. We also talked about the importance of creating space for everyone—regardless of age, ability, or background—to feel welcome and encouraged to participate in sport.

What I appreciated most was the honesty and vision in the feedback we received. These conversations matter. They help shape how we prioritize our investments, design our infrastructure, and plan for future growth. It's clear that when we come together, share ideas, and work collaboratively, we can build a stronger foundation for recreation in Aurora—one that supports health, community connection, and

opportunity.

We all know that sport plays a powerful role in our Town. It brings people together. It teaches leadership, teamwork, and resilience. And it builds a sense of belonging—not just for the athletes, but for the parents, volunteers, and supporters who show up day after day. That's why we must continue to create the conditions for sport to thrive.

Our commitment at the Town remains clear: we will continue working to ensure Aurora is a place where residents of all ages and abilities can play, grow, and thrive through sport. The insights shared at this roundtable will directly inform our recreation strategies, guide facility planning, and help us support the incredible work that so many of you are already doing in our community.

Thank you once again to all of our sports organizations for your continued dedication to sport and community. I look forward to building on this momentum—together.



MP SANDRA COBENA'S UPDATE

Sandra Cobena, MP
Newmarket-Aurora

This summer has been a time of listening, learning, and reaffirming my commitment to serve Newmarket-Aurora with purpose and integrity.

Whether in Ottawa or at home, each experience has reminded me of one clear truth: public service begins and ends with community.

In Ottawa, I was honoured to be appointed to the Standing Committee on Finance. As families face rising costs, my focus has been on demanding greater transparency and ensuring every tax dollar is spent wisely. Canadians deserve leadership grounded in responsibility and results.

Here at home, I marked my first Canada Day as your Member of Parliament

with a pancake breakfast, where I had the opportunity to connect directly with many of you.

Your concerns—particularly those related to affordability and safety—continue to guide my work in Parliament. Later that day, I stood alongside Mayor Tom Mrakas and MP Costas Menegakis at a moving

Reaffirmation of Citizenship Ceremony, which served as a poignant reminder of the shared values that bind us as Canadians. I was also proud to attend the graduation of three new Central York firefighters—young leaders who've earned our trust through courage and discipline.

At Sacred Heart High School, I had the honour of presenting the Governor General's Academic Medal, which recognizes the academic excellence and the promise of our next generation.

With Parliament in recess, I'll continue to be present across Newmarket-Aurora—meeting with residents, listening to your concerns, and working to be a strong, accessible voice for our riding in Ottawa.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From page 4

and streams, vast carbon-storing peatlands and seemingly endless stretches of interior forest. Boreal Wildlands alone stores more than 192 million tonnes of CO₂, equivalent to the average lifetime emissions of three million cars. This success story was made possible thanks to the generosity of many donors.

Here in southern Ontario, NCC continues to protect and care for forests and lands that sustain nature and communities.

Surrounded by the growing metropolis of the Greater Toronto Area, Happy Valley Forest is a natural oasis with vast ecological, historical and cultural importance. Located in King Township, it is the largest intact block of deciduous forest on the Oak Ridges Moraine. Happy Valley Forest is an outstanding example of the mature sugar maple and beech upland forests of the moraine. It is a beloved community asset with accessible and hiking trails that wind through this "old growth forest in the making." The mature deciduous interior forest supports at-risk and specialized species; visitors can watch for Acadian flycatcher, cerulean warbler and little brown bat. The natural habitats of the Happy Valley Forest help provide clean air and water for communities in the region.

NCC is exploring new and exciting opportunities to build healthy and resilient ecosystems where it matters most. With an ambitious goal to conserve an additional one million hectares of nature by 2030, NCC is leading the charge to secure our natural heritage. Our work is not just about caring for the land; it's about ensuring that our communities continue to thrive with nature.

We encourage the private sector, foundations and individuals to join us in investing in forest conservation and restoration efforts. NCC has a track record of bringing together landowners, people and communities. Clean air, clean water, nutritious food, jobs and our overall well-being depend on nature and our forests. These forests are as important for humans as they are for wildlife, creating natural spaces where people can learn about and appreciate nature.

The call is clear: protecting Canada's forests means protecting ourselves. Our natural resiliency, economic prosperity and health require us to do our part. As Canadians, we have both the duty and privilege to safeguard our forests. Let us unite and embrace this challenge with determination and care. Our forests are not just a backdrop to our lives; they are the very essence of our future.

Kristen Bernard
Associate Director of Conservation, Ontario
Region Nature Conservancy of Canada



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JULY 2025**

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Briefly

**LEFT TURN SIGNALS
COMING TO ST. JOHN’S
& WILLOW FARM**

New left turn signals will be installed by the Region of York this August at St. John’s Sideroad and Willow Farm Lane. The work will include a new eastbound left turn signal allowing drivers to turn left only on a green arrow, as well as a new westbound left turn signal allowing drivers to turn left during a green arrow and a green light when it is safe to do so. “As outlined in York Region’s Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan, left turn signals help reduce collisions and enhance the safety of all road users,” says the Region. For more information, visit York.ca/intersectionsafety.

**MOTORCYCLE DRIVER
CLOCKED AT NEARLY
300km/h**

The York Regional Police have charged a Richmond Hill man with multiple criminal and provincial offences after Police say he “attempted to dodge officers across the Greater Toronto Area.” The incident began on Friday, July 14, at around 10:30 a.m. at Bloomington and Highway 404; “[Police] observed a black Yamaha motorcycle travelling at a high rate of speed northbound on Highway 404. The YRP Air Support Unit was in the area and maintained observations of the motorcyclist. Air Support followed the motorcycle to a gas station on Elgin Mills Road, where the rider stole a quantity of gas and fled before ground units arrived. The motorcyclist then re-entered Highway 404 heading southbound, to westbound Highway 407, where he continued driving recklessly. The motorcyclist was observed lane splitting, weaving through traffic and reaching speeds in excess of 200 km/h. Eventually the motorcyclist arrived at a business on Avebury Road, in the City of Mississauga, where he attempted to evade officers by entering the building’s underground via a man-door, with the aid of an accomplice. Shortly after, he left the premises in a rideshare vehicle. Police located the motorcycle inside the building, discovering it had been fitted with a counterfeit licence plate. Officers eventually caught up with the suspect as the rideshare arrived at his residence in Richmond Hill.” Amir Hassan Monfared, 37, is charged with Dangerous Operation; Theft Under \$5,000; Stunt Driving, Use Plate Not Authorized for Vehicle; Speeding; and Drive No Insurance. The charges have not been proven.

Summer Fun at the Aurora Public Library



The Aurora Public Library has been a hive of activity this summer, offering a number of family-friendly activities for patrons. (TOP) There is a celebratory atmosphere in the Library Living Room every weekend as it plays host to themed Saturday Summer Parties – the theme of which this past weekend was Shrek. (Above) At the end of June, the Library once again hosted Gustav for Drag King Story Hour, a fitting way to end Pride Month.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger



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SARC Browse & Borrow to formally open June 24

From page 1

“SARC Browse & Borrow” – unlocks, and patrons can either check out or return books right there.

“This has been part of our strategic planning process for a while, but we’ve just been able to make it come together,” says Marr. “At the end of last year, we confirmed the space and then this year we went ahead with the procurement of the machine and the processes – we’ve been planning all this for approximately two years.”

After the construction of Aurora Town Square, Marr says this is the “next step out into partnering with the Town of Aurora and finding common space where we can join together.”

“The SARC is an active community hub and it’s also in an area of Town where we (APL) have had less engagement,” Marr continues. “When we look at our Library members, we can see that people in the northeast part of Aurora are less serviced by the Library. This is a way to get them some of the things the Library does and this is a way to serve those community members, and now we can come and do more events.

“Collections [of materials] is just a small part of what the Library does. This is a way to connect with people who are slightly further away, use the library less, and now they have the opportunity to use the Library more.”

The new kiosk and its systems represent an investment of approximately \$50,000.

Similar kiosks have seen great success elsewhere, including Barrie, which has multiple micro-branch locations throughout the city.

Aurora’s new kiosk could be up and running as early as the end of this week – with a ribbon cutting with Mayor Tom Mrakas, which members



When the kiosk is formally dedicated next week, the blue wall opposite the SARC’s customer service desk will be covered with a wrap celebrating everything the Aurora Public Library has to offer.
Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

of the public are encouraged to attend, set for Thursday, July 24, at 3.30 p.m.

As members of the APL team inspected the kiosk in its new location on Monday afternoon, it already attracted the interest of SARC patrons.

Books now in place within the kiosk represent some of the most popular items that are checked out regularly at the APL’s home branch at Yonge and Church Streets, but is a collection unto itself that was specifically secured for the micro-branch.

Each volume has an RFID tag and the kiosk machine runs a scan every time it closes to keep up-to-date on inventory, what book was taken out, and onto whose library card. When you return a book, you put it back in, and the process repeats.

“It’s just as easy as scanning your card, opening the door, and placing it on the shelf – the only rule is, if it’s

full, please don’t jam it in!” says Marr with a laugh.

The Library will continue to consult with residents as the kiosk is used and collect data on what’s borrowed and what’s returned in order to gauge what community members want in the future and they can adjust the collection accordingly.

“It’s nice, it’s bright, it holds about 196 items and is a mix of fiction, non-fiction, children’s, youth, teen and picture books,” says Marr. “You can even take things out when you’re here for a class [with one of your children], read it, and return it that same day. It will hopefully [also serve] people who are using the SARC and need something to do, and we’ll see about putting some other fun stuff into it in the future.”

Looking ahead, Marr says she would love to see these types of kiosks expand beyond the SARC to other municipal hubs, such as the Aurora

Seniors’ Centre and other recreational facilities, and points to examples elsewhere that have similar set-ups at retirement homes and more.

“This is our first new collection within the community – it’s a huge investment, but it’s worth it. This is one way for us to serve community members more fully, without building a bricks-and-mortar branch,” says Marr, adding now that the micro-branch in place, she sees an opportunity to expand APL programming to the SARC down the road.

“Sometimes [we’ll get comments on machines like these], ‘Well, I guess we don’t need librarians anymore. We’ve got this.’ I want to definitely say that librarians are key for curation and selection of materials and this machine does not replace the work that our staff does. This is just a support so that we can expand within the community and get our staff to come out and do more and other engaging events.”

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BUSINESS & FINANCE



Future finance leader honoured with Chamber’s Business Scholarship

BY BROCK WEIR

Isabelle DiPasquale dedicated her high school career not only to academics, but giving back to the Cardinal Carter Catholic High School community.

Now, as she looks towards her post-secondary education with an eye to developing a career in finance, DiPasquale is doing so with an extra boost of confidence from the local business community after she was awarded the Aurora Chamber of Commerce’s Business Scholarship, sponsored by Lenard Lind Realty.

She explored scholarship and grant opportunities to help end her high school career on the highest of notes, and said the program offered by the Chamber struck a chord because “it’s really amazing how they like to support young people.”

“I decided to apply on my own without telling anyone, and I just did it because honestly I didn’t think I would get it, but I wanted to do it right,” she tells The Auroran. “It’s a great opportunity to give back to your community and to be supported by such an amazing organization that’s willing to do this for young students.”

DiPasquale says she’s always had a passion for business and sought opportunities to flex these muscles during her time at Cardinal Carter. She became involved with the DECA business competition before too long, dividing her extra-curricular time between this, being a part of her school’s

Leadership Committee, and writing for her school newspaper as well.

Giving back didn’t get put onto the backburner when summer came around. Last summer, she balanced volunteer commitments at Toronto’s SickKids Hospital with an internship at a business here in Aurora.

“Business is what I wanted to do because it gave me so many different opportunities to give back and to lead a group of people, and it just provides so many opportunities,” she says. “I’m really hoping to become involved in the business community in the future in the same way it has supported me now.”

The next step towards that future goal is attending Western University in the fall, looking towards the Ivey School of Business.

“What stood out to me the most [with Western] is their case study method,” she says. “When I was involved in DECA, it’s a business competition that is case study-based. I learned so much from that way of learning and I’m more of a hands-on learner in that sort of way. I thought that Ivey at Western is very, very similar in the way they teach small class sizes and case study-based learning and teaching. This is how I feel I will learn the best in my university studies.”

She might not be “100 per cent decided” on her career path following university, she says she’s interested in the entrepreneurial and leadership side of things, with a



Isabelle DiPasquale is pictured with Jennifer Walker, Treasurer of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, receiving her \$5,000 Business Engaging Youth Business Scholarship sponsored by Lenard Lind Realty.

Photo courtesy of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce

particular focus in finance.

“I am really looking to make a difference and contribute to the community as a whole in whatever capacity that might be,” she says. “I’m not exactly sure what it may be yet, but I am really excited to see what ends up happening”

“Personally,” she continues, “when I first started high school, I never imagined I’d be here, so I would say to [students getting ready to enter high school this fall] to not be afraid to put yourself out there and go for opportunities. When I first started high school, I was a very shy, quiet girl, and I would never imagine I’m in the situation I am now and the reason why that occurred

was because a teacher of mine pushed me to go up for the leadership program at my school. I became a leader in my Grade 10 year, which is very unlikely for students because it usually happens in Grade 11 and 12. After that experience, I completely came out of my shell, I made lots of connections through my community, and not even just in my school [but] in my community, I was able to meet and talk and build so many great connections.

“Don’t be afraid to put yourself out there to try to go for opportunities that you may not think you get, because you never know who’s watching, or you never know what’s going to come out of it.”



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COMMUNITY BBQ – Vince’s Market held its annual Community Barbeque on Friday, June 27, at its Sharon location. The event supported the Alzheimer Society of York Region, Durham Region, and Simcoe County – which has been chosen as the grocery store’s 2025 Community Product Initiative. Each year, select items are chosen for the Community Product Initiative where a portion of the proceeds benefit the year’s select organization(s). Pictured here are Giancarlo, Neil, Amedeo, Maria, Jaime and Grace.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger



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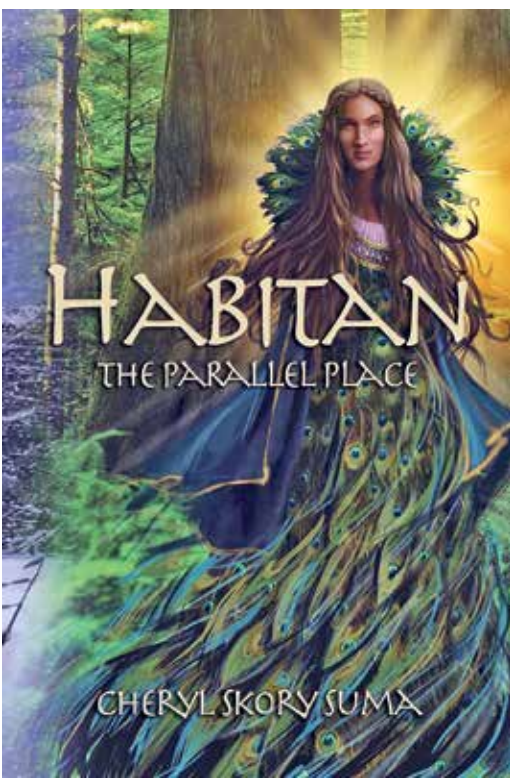
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Aurora author Cheryl Skory Suma is excited for the launch of her first novel, Habitan: The Parallel Place in August.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Local author hopes to spark kids’ imaginations while honouring Cree grandmother

From page 1

as a storyteller.

Now, while the Aurora writer has collected numerous accolades for her short stories, poetry, and creative non-fiction, she’s turning her attention to children and young adults with the publication of her first novel, Habitan: The Parallel Place.

Suma describes Habitan: The Parallel Place, the first of which she hopes are many novels inspired by the stories she told her children while they were growing up, as similar to C.S. Lewis’ Narnia series “but with a unique, Canadian-Aboriginal twist!”

A fantasy novel, much of the magic within Habitan: The Parallel Place is derived from the Cree culture, in which her beloved grandmother was raised.

A Moose Cree by birth, Suma’s grandmother, who spent time in the Residential School system, married an Englishman at the age of 17, and subsequently raised their family in Northern Ontario.

Their children, including Suma’s mother, were subject to racism as they were seen as mixed-race. As such, while Suma’s mother wanted to keep her own Indigenous heritage somewhat hidden, her grandmother never shied away from her culture.

“Habitan came from bedtime stories for my kids mixed with this wanting to recognize my grandmother because my mom was kind of ashamed of being Aboriginal and kind of walked away from it, so we didn’t know much about it growing up,” says Suma, adding her grandmother instilled in her a love of nature. “My grandmother was such a positive person and I thought, ‘No, I don’t want to shy away from it. I want to kind of nod back to it.’”

Habitan: The Parallel Place follows Melissa, Michael and Annabel who are separated from their parents as infants and develop a very special bond.

When a mysterious event transports them away from their orphanage to Habitan—a magical realm where

animals talk and powers of the mind and sorcery abound—they discover their connection runs deeper than friendship,” say publishers.

“Guided by three magical animal companions, the children must confront the wicked sorceress Oskana while uncovering shocking truths about their heritage. As they develop unexpected powers, they face a stunning revelation: they might be Habitan’s only hope for salvation.”

As her children encouraged her to transform their bedtime stories into a novel, Suma says she wanted to imbue the stories with magic, but did not want to go the way of so many other books that invent their own language to explain things. Instead, she decided to develop many of the words in a way that was inspired by the Cree language – although some words have been simplified for young eyes.

“I want anyone who speaks Cree to be able to say, ‘Yeah, when I hear this name, I know it is related to water or earth’ or ‘this spelling makes sense.’ I don’t have all the right grammar in terms of past, present, future and that kind of thing – I just tried to make it slightly simplified but still honour the language and still be true.”

In some ways, however, still being true was something of a battle.

She encountered a number of publishers along the way who wanted her water down the Cree elements, deeming them “too complicated” but she found a fit with indie publisher Chicken House Press, they thought her approach was “great and very Canadian.”

“I think storytelling is underrated,” says Suma. “There are teachers out there who really understand this and want to develop storytelling with their kids, but I think storytelling is not just something you do in English class. I think our overall language level, literacy level, vocabulary skill, all that is going to help the youth of today, whatever they go into, whatever their career is. It helps

you express your ideas, your thoughts, your feelings and, most importantly, it allows you to convince other people to buy into your idea and communicate with them, especially if you want to affect change.

“Storytelling in Aboriginal culture is a really important thing. It’s how they pass down history, it’s how they communicate, and it’s a historic thing – but I think, in modern-day, storytelling can be a way to affect change and I wish we would emphasize storytelling more in our culture.”

Habitan: The Parallel Place will be published by Chicken House Press in August, and Suma will host a publication launch party on Sunday, August 10.

For more information on the launch, email Cheryl Skory Suma at cheryl.suma@gmail.com.

Habitan: The Parallel Place will be found wherever books are sold and, Suma hopes, in public and school libraries near you.

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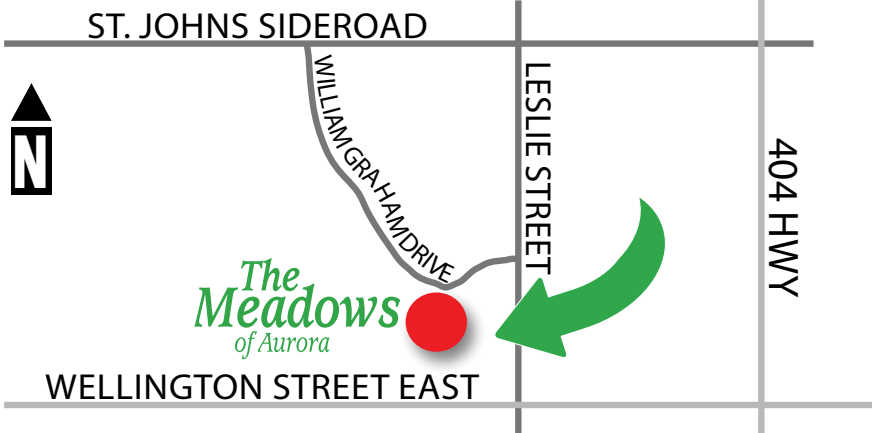
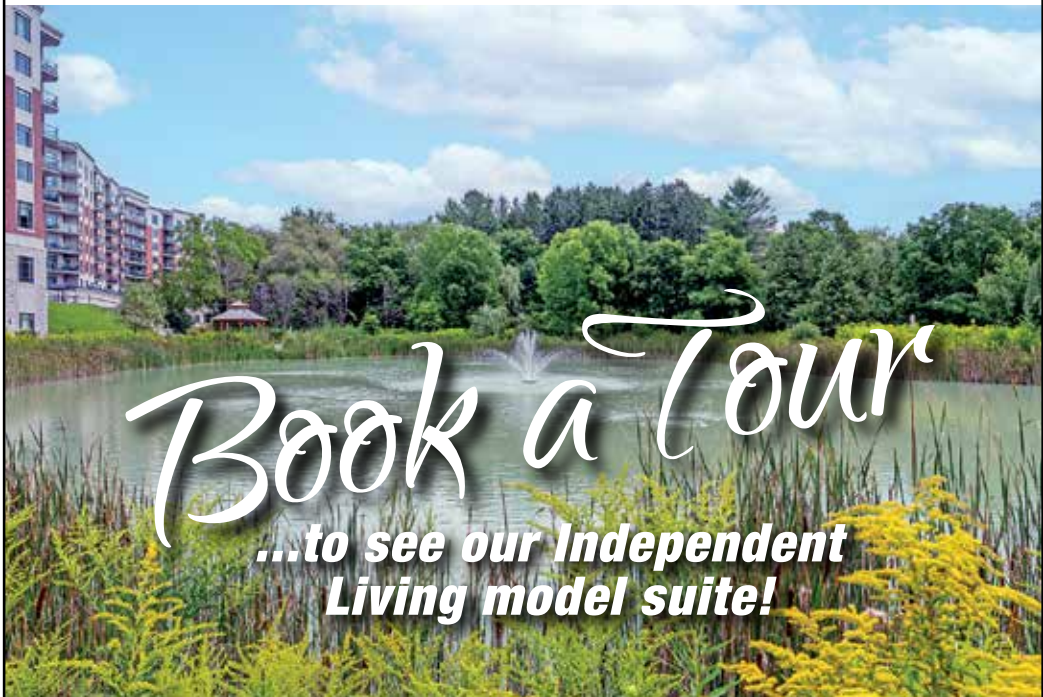
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Theatre Aurora presents a “Grand” season of firsts for 2025-26

BY BROCK WEIR

Despite entertaining Aurora residents for more than 60 years, Theatre Aurora has managed to conjure up some firsts and fresh offerings as they prepare to mount their 2025-2026 season.

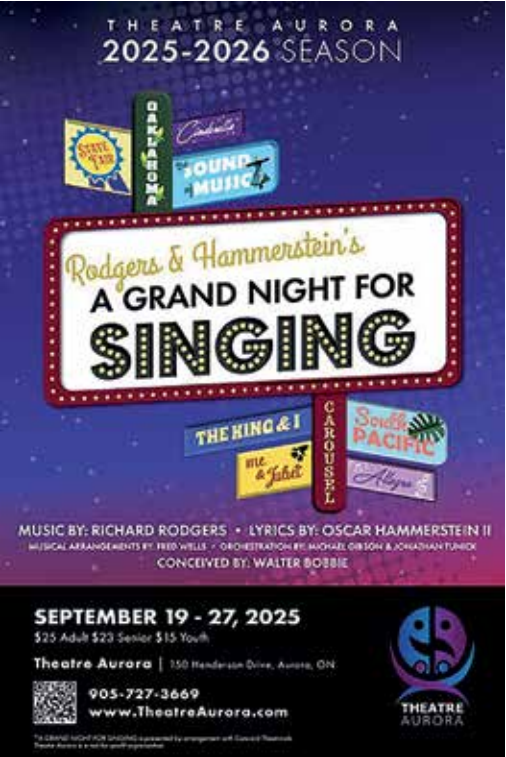
The season ahead, which begins

September 19, combines a musical revue, some time-honoured classics, and one production five years in the making – all building off the 2024-2025 season which saw record numbers flock to the Henderson Drive theatre since the global pandemic shuttered its doors.


“It’s a multifaceted kind of bringing people in,” says Theatre Aurora Artistic Director Judi Cragg. “We want new people on our stage, we love the people who come back, but we want new people as well – and I would say in the last two years, we’ve brought a lot of new people to the theatre. It was a great season, we really enjoyed it, and we’re really looking forward to the next season as well.”

As Cragg and Theatre Aurora President Neill Kernohan began laying the groundwork for the 2025-2026 season, they wanted to make sure there was something for everyone, including younger audiences and younger performers alike, who so embraced last year’s production of *The Music Man*, and *Anne of Green Gables: The Musical*, a highlight of the previous season.

“I think it’s important to always remember we are a community theatre and in order to be a vital theatre and keep going, we want to do well,” says Cragg. “We want audiences to come in and we want them to enjoy what we’re putting on, but we also need to really remember our cast and crew and all of



Images courtesy of Theatre Aurora



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the people who go into putting on our shows – we want it to be great for them as well. In addition to the children, we have quite a number of actors who are in their 60s and 70s, and at least one in her 80s who are wonderful performers, and when we’re thinking while we’re choosing shows we’re looking at all of these people. We want them to be happy – it’s an avocation for everyone.”

The season begins in earnest on September 19 not with a play, and not with what Theatre Aurora audiences might expect from a traditional musical, but a musical revue celebrating the works of Rodgers & Hammerstein.

Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *A Grand Night for Singing*, which runs on select dates and times through September 27, looks at the dynamic Broadway duo’s works, great and small, and features selections from such shows as *The King & I*, *South Pacific*, *Me & Juliet*, and *Allegro* – among others.

It signals an earlier-than-usual start to the Theatre Aurora season.

“We wanted something that would be fun, but with a smaller cast and easier to produce – not a full-scale musical,” says Cragg.

Kernohan adds that Rodgers & Hammerstein were, “the Lin-Manuel Miranda of their time,” referring to the accomplished creator of such musicals as *Hamilton* and *In the Heights*.

“Their shows were innovative, new and exciting, and people just clamored to see every new show they did,” he says. “We don’t remember that as much anymore, that’s kind of gone away, but the songs are beautiful, they’re timeless, but there are twists and turns here and there. Here, the songs are sung in a different way – there’s one old song from *The Sound of Music* that doesn’t have nuns singing it, but someone else! It does play around a little bit, but it’s really accessible, it’s uplifting, and I think it’s going to showcase our talents.”

Music will also be in the air in their second offering for the season

– but in a very different way – as Theatre Aurora presents its first ever Pantomime just in time for the holiday season.

Totally Scrooged! A Christmas Carol Pantomime by Caroline Smith runs November 28 to December 6, brings the Christmas tradition to life – fulfilling a long-held desire by Theatre Aurora to stage a family-friendly favourite like this.

“We wanted to get more kids in to the theatre and we love the fact Panto is so interactive,” says Cragg. “It’s just going to be great for the whole family. I used to take my daughter, when she was young, down to the Ross Petty pantomimes in downtown Toronto and it was so much fun for everybody, not just the kids. I remember my daughter, her friend and my friend sitting there and we’d be laughing like crazy at the innuendo-laden lines. The girls who were five would be looking at us like, ‘Why are you laughing?’ and we’d say, ‘Never mind. Never mind.’ There’s stuff in there for adults, there’s stuff for kids, and everybody gets involved in the crazy characters and just-for-fun mayhem – it’s not a classic kind of music, but there’s lots of music.”

Totally Scrooged! loosely follows the Charles Dickens classic but is imbued with the music of the 60s, 70s, and 80s, rewritten to fit the story.

Auditions for the Panto are set to begin next week and they hope to bring in some of the kids who trod the boards in *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Music Man*, along with some newcomers, into the production.


“We’re hoping it is going to be big and people are really going to enjoy it,” says Cragg.

NEXT WEEK: The New Year kicks off with a time-honoured and long-loved comedy that has entertained audiences across three centuries.


For more on Theatre Aurora’s upcoming season, including tickets, visit theatreaurora.com or call 905-727-3669.

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Cool rain was no match for “Coldplay” at Concerts in the Park



A little rain couldn't get in the way of Concerts in the Park on Wednesday, July 9, as the Town Park Band Shell hosted (clockwise from top right) X&Y: A Tribute to Coldplay. Music lovers dressed for all means of weather and came armed with umbrellas and raincoats determined to enjoy the show! The Concerts in the Park Summer Series continues Wednesday, July 16 with Ultimate 80's and Wednesday, July 23, with Simply the Best: A Tribute to Tina Turner. Concerts take place each Wednesday at Town Park from 7 – 9 p.m. at Town Park. For a full lineup, visit aurora.ca/summerconcerts.
Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

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CMHA, Six Nations community use Town Park as backdrop to healing

BY BROCK WEIR

The Canadian Mental Health Association of York Region and South Simcoe recently joined forces with members of the Six Nations community to foster a space for healing – using Aurora Town Park as a backdrop to a full day of learning.

Rise Above the Rest was an experiential workshop led by facilitators of the Six Nations Community for CMHA-YRSS staff and clients with a focus on “empowering participants with a deeper understanding of Indigenous cultures, traditions, and worldviews – fostering connection, awareness, and pride across the Community.”

The workshop was the brainchild of Sarah Caldeira, Program Lead for the CMHA-YRSS’ Recovery College, or, formally, the College of Health and Wellbeing.

The intent, she says, was to recognize the importance of “engaging meaningfully with Indigenous communities,” particularly with June being National Indigenous History Month.

“I thought it was the perfect time to create that space for learning and reflection, and the Recovery College program is really about empowering people to take charge of their recovery,



Canadian Mental Health Association York Region South Simcoe (CMHA-YRSS) staff and clients gathered at Aurora Town Park for “Rise Above the Rest,” an experiential workshop led by facilitators from the Six Nations community. The June 12 event, held during Indigenous History Month, focused on empowering participants with a deeper understanding of Indigenous cultures, traditions, and worldviews—fostering connection, awareness, and pride across the community.

Photo courtesy of CMHA-YRSS

wellness and wellbeing,” she says. “Offering the Indigenous workshop gave people a chance to learn about Indigenous culture and history in a really respectful and culturally-aware way.

“I connected with facilitators from Rise Above the Rest. They brought a more deep and cultural understanding to the session, and I thought it was really important if it was an Indigenous Workshop that it came from Indigenous people, created that authenticity from lived experience and cultural knowledge.”

As the day unfolded, participants were able to take part in a number of Indigenous games, such as lacrosse, which organizers say “got people up and about laughing and enjoying themselves,” as well as in drum demonstrations, and to witness traditional dances.

“One of the major highlights is always around the music part of things,” says Caldeira of both this initiative and other programs which have focused on Indigenous drumming on CMHA camping trips. “When it comes to the benefits, it really helps create a more culturally-aware organization. I think it’s really important when it comes to Indigenous communities and awareness that we strengthen those partnerships and continue to do so. It’s also important because we have a very diverse clientele and I think it’s really important to make sure we reflect the diversity of the community that we serve.”

CMHA-YRSS’ Jill Yeo echoes these sentiments and notes there is a therapeutic element to Indigenous teachings as well.

“When we’ve had our camping trips with the drumming, it hasn’t just been a case of enjoyment; we own many, many different drums and we have drumming sessions, and the clients, I feel, get so much out of the music in itself – just being exposed to music, listening to music, sharing music, and it does have that therapeutic effect on them,” she says. “There’s also that spiritual effect with the drums. There’s something about drums that really bring out a lot of emotion with people and we have seen that for several years at any of our events where we’ve had that with our clients.”

The CMHA-YRSS’ Indigenous Affinity Group, adds Yeo, is always working on community initiatives and says they’re always looking for volunteers – particularly from the Indigenous community to help them further develop such initiatives.

“This workshop Sarah did was the first time we’ve had this,” she says. “It’s something that hopefully next June we’ll be able to elaborate on and add more and get more clients and staff involved.”



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Week of July 17, 2025

Aurora Soccer Club's Charity Day features two engaging exhibition games to support Southlake



Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

BY JIM STEWART

The Aurora Soccer Club (ASC) hosted its Annual Charity Soccer Day on Saturday afternoon at its Industrial Parkway complex.

More than 200 spectators and supporters watched Canada edge The Rest of the World 1-0 in the lid-lifter followed by Scotland's thrilling 2-1 triumph over England in the main event.

All four intrepid squads, comprised of players ranging from 25-65 years of age, braved the sweltering 31-degree heat on the verdant south pitch and manifested one of the Club's main objectives to "inspire soccer for life."

One of those players modelling "soccer for life" was ASC President Martin Ambrose who played for The Rest of the World contingent.

Sporting Jersey #16 and surviving his shifts in the July humidity, Ambrose said he was pleased by the success of the Club's long-running event.

"The tradition of this goes back almost 40 years. We're celebrating the demographics of our teams and, hopefully, we'll continue to grow the event. It really is a celebration of the sport and there was some nice banter between the teams throughout the game."

The hospitable Club President was also satisfied to get back on the field after a prolonged absence due to injury and was happy to see three members of the extended Ambrose family suited up for the World side.

"My daughter Ciara was on the field for the first time in five years after recovering from a concussion. Her fiancé Scott was back on the

field for the first time in years, too. They've both been focused on building careers while living in Belfast, so they haven't played at all. I haven't played for years as well due to an Achilles injury. It felt tight out there, but I've been cycling to stay in shape. It was great to be back on the field."

In attendance with Ambrose to watch the exhibition games was Aurora Sports Hall of Fame honoured member Ed McNally who played 37 games for Team Canada.

McNally, who coached the ASC Hearts to an Ontario Cup championship in 2001, reflected between matches at our midfield table on how he built his upstart squad from a membership comprised of only 140 players.

"Winning with a club this size was huge. When we were playing and beating Toronto teams, we were beating clubs that had memberships over 1,000."

The 2014 ASHoF Hall of Famer has fond memories about his team's provincial championship and its third-place finish in the Nationals.

"We were a very close team and we played so well together. We recruited well and we were fit enough and good enough. I also had a great Assistant Coach and Manager John Pickering who was so valuable to the club. He treated our players like they were professionals right down to having their uniforms laid out for them pre-game in the dressing room. John organized us and was a big key to our success."

McNally, sporting his black ASHoF cap and red ASHoF golf shirt, was pleased to see the ASC's Charity Day growing.

"The best part of this event is being with the people you grew up with—so many have had great careers. To do this annually over the last 34 years is very satisfying. It started in Newmarket, but we moved it here to our fields and clubhouse where it's much better for fans and players."

Despite the friendly nature of the two exhibition games that McNally viewed on Saturday, both games were hotly-contested, engaging, and competitive.

The main event featuring England versus Scotland was kicked off by a range of dignitaries, including Mayor Tom Mrakas, Sport Aurora President Ron Weese, Aurora Sports

Hall of Fame President Javed Khan, as well as Ambrose and McNally who gathered at midfield for the coin toss and photos.

McNally, born in Paisley, Scotland, sported a navy blue tartan tam and flowing orange locks which filled the Opening Ceremonies with much merriment. Both anthems were played to celebrate the ancestry of the respective players. "God Save the King" was belted out by the English players and a pipe band version of "Flower of Scotland" stirred the Scots.

The England-Scotland game is a much-loved tradition at the Aurora Soccer Club and spectators were

Continued on page 18



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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION

The Town of Aurora is in receipt of the following Complete Applications under the Planning Act:

APPLICATION: The Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications proposes to change the existing employment uses to residential uses. The development proposes 183 dwelling units comprised of 3-storey townhouses. The development proposes two access points off Addison Hall Circle which connect into an internal private road.

PROPERTY:
25 & 55 Addison Hall Circle

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:
Block 29 & 30 Registered Plan 65M-4650

APPLICANT:
Aurora- Leslie Developments Ltd.

FILE NUMBERS:
OPA-2025-06 & ZBA-2025-06

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

All inquires regarding the proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments should be directed to Antonio Greco, of the Planning and Development Services Department, at 365-500-3103 or at agreco@aurora.ca.

Personal Information Collection Notice

The Town of Aurora collects personal information in communications or presentations made to Town Council and/or its Committees under the legal authority of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter c.P.13, as amended. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, (the "Act") public feedback to planning proposals is considered to be public record and may be disclosed to any individual upon request in accordance with the Act. If you are submitting letters, faxes, emails, presentations or other communications to the Town, you should be aware that your name and the fact that you communicated with the Town will become part of the public record and will appear on the Town's website. The Town will also make your communication and any personal information in it, such as your address and postal code or email address available to the public unless you expressly request the Town to remove it. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Town Clerk, Town of Aurora, 100 John West Way, Box 1000, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1 905-727-3123.

Dated at the Town of Aurora, this 17th day of July, 2025.


Town of Aurora 100 John West Way, Aurora, ON L4G 6J1

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A MUSICAL MARKET DAY


Music was in the air again at Town Park on Saturday as the Aurora Farmers' Market (TOP) hosted the York Chamber Ensemble at the Band Shell. Their music entertained scores of Market-goers throughout the day including (MIDDLE) Theatre Aurora's Neill Kernohan who visited Cathy and Lynn at the Catarina's Kitchen booth, and (ABOVE) Sabrina, who was serving up churros and empanadas to customers.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger




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Cultural Centre to give sneak peek of new gallery show at Farmers’ Market pop-up



Rose Zhao is pictured hard at work in her studio. Art lovers will be able to see her create in person this Saturday at the Aurora Farmers’ Market. Photo courtesy of the Aurora Cultural Centre

Rose Zhao’s work informed by career as geologist

BY BROCK WEIR

Visitors to the Aurora Farmers’ Market this Saturday will have the opportunity to see a master at work as the Aurora Cultural Centre hosts artist Rose Zhao in a pop-up exhibition ahead of her gallery show.

The work of Zhao, 88, forms the basis of *From Rocks to Brushstrokes*, which runs in the Cultural Centre’s Great Hall Gallery from July 31 through October 30. The show, as the name might suggest, charts Zhao’s work as she turned to visual art after a long career as a geologist in China before she emigrated to Toronto, and eventually Aurora.

The Centre says Zhao “finds beauty in all corners of the natural world – the rocks and soil of the earth, flowers, plants and animals, her granddaughter’s pet chicken, the deer outside her daughter’s house...” and Market patrons will get to see what sparks her creativity at Town Park on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Zhao and the Cultural Centre first connected at the Town of Aurora’s Multicultural Festival back in 2023 and Gallery Manager Samantha Jones says the Centre loves how Zhao “embraces her culture within the context of Canada.”

“We hadn’t seen any submissions before come in where a traditional Chinese practice was being used as well as also being displayed because all of her paintings are displayed on the traditional scrolls, which is a really meticulous process and you’ll see that in the exhibition,” says Jones of Zhao’s

first display at the Centre, which came as one of several participating artists in their show *Perennial Darkness*. “We thought it was so unique, especially for the Cultural Centre.”

By the time it came to curate a solo show, it may have been a tall task as Zhao is estimated to have completed more than 300 works over the years. The resulting 75 works that will be on show is the result of several studio visits where the artist arranged her works in four different groups, from which five to 20 works were selected from each.

“We want to show the wide breadth of her practice, but at the same time we want to show her journey coming from China and then coming to the States, because that’s where her family had moved, and then coming to Toronto and furthermore to Aurora,” says Jones. “We have a focus on artworks sort of documenting that journey. We see works that were created in Beijing, we also see works that were created in New Jersey and New York where her family had been temporarily, and then we also have work that was done more recently in Aurora.

“You can see her evolution of practice, but also her evolution just in the last few years of transitioning to North America and how that affected her personality and her practice.”

One of her practices, shares Jones, is a sheer love of painting in front of people, which is where the idea for the Aurora Farmers’ Market pop-up came from.

“She likes to show the materials she uses and also the amount of work that goes into the practice,” says Jones. “We decided that the best

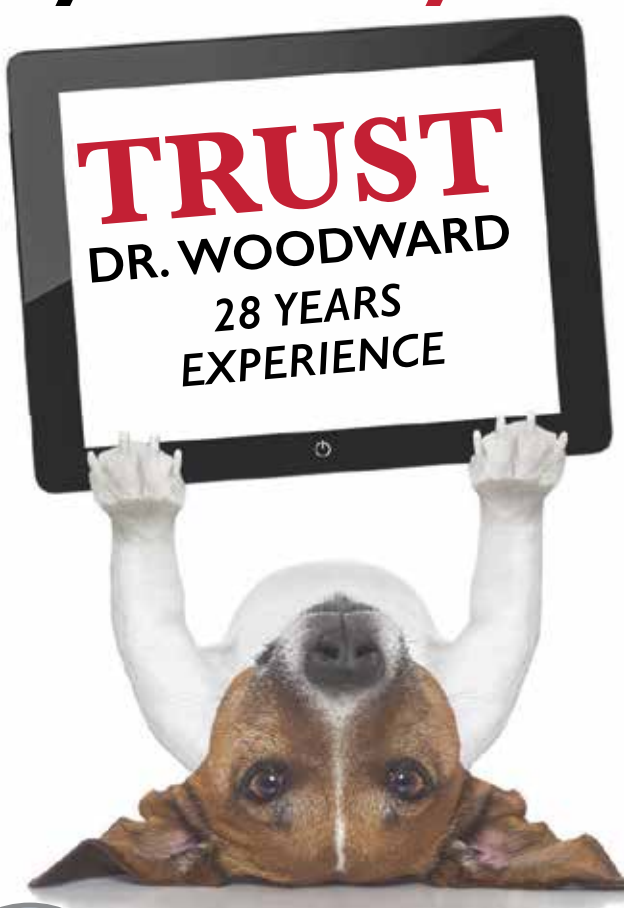
way to really give our audiences an understanding of what goes into her painting practice is just to watch her at work. Art isn’t meant to be just confined onto walls. I think we need to normalize the practice of doing art more in public. It’s not meant to be something that you do by yourself, and I think there’s this idea that an artist is supposed to be a recluse, that they’re in their studio and then they show in galleries, and that’s it.


“We’re in a time right now, I think, where we’re still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and we’re still craving socialization and I think more than ever we need to see art done outdoors and the liveliness outdoors

to keep bringing people out, just cherishing being around other people and doing hobbies around other people – and it will inspire people to do their own thing as well, especially in Aurora where we have a large and growing Asian population. We want those residents to see at the Aurora Cultural Centre we’re showing art that’s being done all around the world. We have such a diverse population and we want our residents to see that in our programming.”

For more on Rose Zhao’s *From Rocks to Brushstrokes: A Geologist’s Artistic Transformation*, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca/from-rocks-to-brushstrokes.

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Region hopes to tap into community insight through Resident Engagement Network

BY BROCK WEIR

The Region of York is hoping to connect with residents – and connect residents with each other – in a bid to foster “safer, stronger, and more caring communities across York Region.”

The Resident Engagement Network – or REN for short – was formally launched by the Region on June 26, with the tagline “Let’s REN-ew our communities – together.”

The REN is a new initiative under the Region’s Community Safety Wellbeing Plan which invites residents to “contribute to community safety planning through inclusive and collaborative engagement,” says Jenna Dolly, Program Manager, Community Development, for the Region of York.

“Residents play a really key role in

sharing lived experiences, providing insights and working together to help guide local solutions,” says Dolly. “Sometimes we hear that folks like to connect with folks that have the same lived experiences as them, understand their communities the way that they do. It just helps to have a friendly face and that connection with folks that are as local as you are.”

While Dolly says the Region does its best with engagement, this is an “intentional” effort to “ensure that we can include all voices as we refresh the plan.”

The Community Safety Wellbeing Plan began to take shape around 2020 with four key focus areas initially identified: Northern Georgina, Central Newmarket, South Central Richmond Hill and South Central Markham. Through consultations, each of the identified

areas helped identify two priority risks facing each area.

“It was mental wellbeing and housing stability in Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Markham, and mental wellbeing and economic stability in Georgina,” says Dolly. “Through the refreshing of our plan and our engagement, we’re asking folks again what are these priority risks that they feel the plan should focus on? We’re also doing a refresh of all our data so that we can layer in what the data is telling us in terms of local needs.”

As the group continues to take shape, Dolly says, at its heart, it will be “a group of volunteers and resident leaders who will help collect the feedback on what folks feel are priorities in their neighbourhoods relating to any priority risks.”

“During [the launch night] we heard folks talk a little bit about our current priority risks – mental health, housing stability, economic stability – but folks talked a lot about building safer communities by increasing a sense of belonging, wanting more connected communities, and things like that,” she says. “After the information session, we continue to engage folks to be able to participate. [If they would like] to participate, they can

visit [York.ca/communityaction](https://york.ca/communityaction) for all of the different initiatives that are happening currently under the plan. They’re also able to follow York Region social media channels. They can also participate in our community action tables, which have a variety of different communication tools that they use to connect with residents, their own social media channels, newsletters and ambassadors who are in communities sharing all of the information.

“I would just encourage residents that this is their opportunity to have their say, to be a part of our Community Safety Wellbeing plan and to have their feedback reflected in it. There’s a variety of different approaches and opportunities to get involved there. You don’t always have to do things in person. There’s a written survey, so choose...the approach that you’re most comfortable with and that you feel that is most engaging and that would reflect your voice the best and then participate.”

The REN is open to all York Region residents, but Dolly points out “participation is encouraged from individuals with lived experience, youth, seniors, newcomers, and residents from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.”

New Development Charge policies approved by Region to address housing concerns

BY BROCK WEIR

York Regional Council has approved new Development Charge (DC) policies aimed at addressing the housing crisis.

Among the key changes is a deferral in DCs – that is, money that developers are required to pay municipalities to account for a strain on infrastructure due to growth – in several key areas, including a deferral for non-luxury rental units, as long as they operate as rental units for a minimum of 40 years before their use changes; a deferral for ground-related development and deferring payment for hard-service development charges like water and wastewater until the Region issues its first building issuance; on high-rise buildings for their first two years; and more.

“We have continued taking necessary steps to create a more inclusive and accessible housing market for residents in the Regional Municipality of York,” said Regional Chair Eric Jolliffe in a statement. “While we consistently work with our partners in senior levels of government on advocacy efforts for this important work, there are actions we can proactively put in place at a Regional level by way of development charge deferrals and incentives and prioritize those struggling to find and keep housing.”

Additional measures include a first-time homebuyers’ DC-

equivalent rebate for new homes up to \$1.5 million, “passing savings to homebuyers to take effect pending receipt of new dedicated funding from provincial and federal governments to fully offset costs”; increasing flexibility for developers providing upfront financing for infrastructure; modernizing security requirements to accept Pay on Demand Surety Bonds for DC deferral agreements; and new redevelopment measures to encourage the “prompt demolition of derelict buildings.”

“This persistent effort is crucial as we implement timely updates to development charges in the Region,” said Township of King Mayor Steve Pellegrini, Chair of Finance and Administration. “Development charges are an important tool to produce infrastructure needed to support any new development. We look forward to hitting the ground running with these incentives to help encourage a variety of housing options to improve the current landscape.”

Regional Council members took a final sweep of the DC changes in a lengthy meeting at the end of June, where much of the debate focused on the intent of terms used within the motions that were up for consideration.


Concerns were also raised about the financial impacts deferring Development Charges would ultimately have on the Region and its reserve funds.

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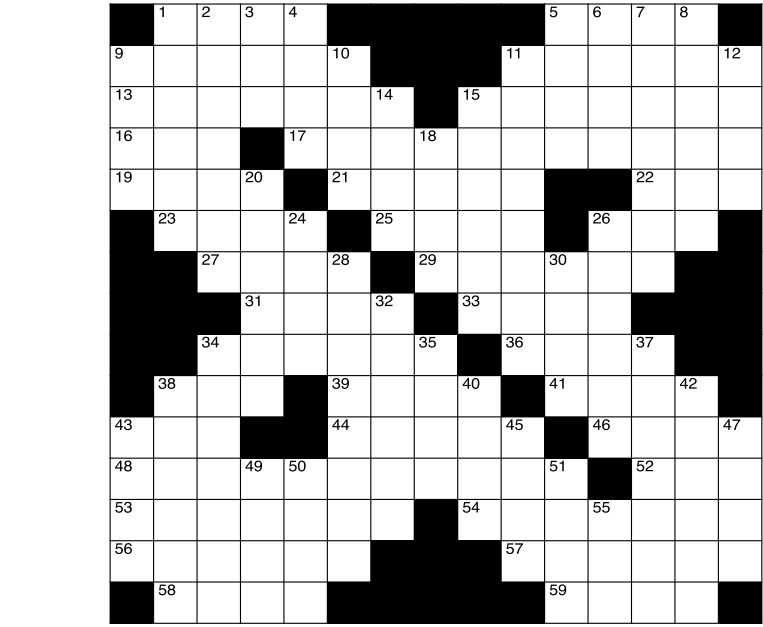


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CLUES ACROSS

1. Resorts

5. One point south of southwest

9. Musical performances

11. Matched

13. Four-footed animal part

15. Express severe disapproval of

16. Type of leaf

17. Preparatory

19. Walk heavily

21. Succulent plants

22. Rectangle of grass

23. Lump in yarn

25. Too

26. Foot (Latin)

27. Afflicts

29. Smoothed

31. Mind (Greek)
33. Tampa ballclub

34. Semitic language

36. Sheltered sides

38. Ocean

39. Electronic point of sale

41. Thrust a knife into

43. 12th month (abbr.)

44. Ringworm

46. Father of Aoris (Greek myth.)

48. Fighting back

52. Cease to exist

53. Insects in adult stage

54. Freestanding sculpture

56. Caps

57. Repents

58. Brown and Wallace are two

59. Moved quickly

CLUES DOWN

1. Goes bad

2. Yard structure

3. They __

4. Marine invertebrate

5. European river

6. Office supplies firm

7. Physically abused

8. Service stations in Australia

9. Kills

10. Liquid body substances

11. Particular to a given individual

12. Brave or noble act

14. Sicilian city

15. Conqueror

18. Elected officials

20. Type of “pig”

24. Drop of viscous substance
26. Monetary unit of Spain

28. Guarantees

30. Coloring materials

32. Reddish browns

34. Square measure

35. Will not

37. Canned fish

38. Appeared

40. Six (Spanish)

42. Took off

43. Negligible amount

45. Posts in a Greek temple

47. Witnesses

49. Phil __, former CIA

50. Places to park

51. Guns

55. Dance to pop music

THINGS... you ought to know

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16
Aurora's Concerts in the Park summer series continues this evening. From 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in Aurora Town Park, experience the Ultimate 80s: "Flashback to the era of legends – Madonna ruled the dance floor, Michael Jackson lit up the stage, Prince redefined cool and Whitney Houston hit notes we're still chasing. This show is your backstage pass to the decade that changed music forever! Produced by George St. Kitts." While enjoying the music, treat yourself to a variety of food vendors and licensed beverages available for purchase. Concert is free to attend, however if you are able, to bring non-perishable food donations to support the Aurora Food Pantry. Bring your cozy blankets and lawn chairs, gather your friends, and immerse yourself in an atmosphere of musical joy and celebration!

SATURDAY, JULY 19
The Aurora Farmers' Market will take place at Town Park today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23
Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series continues

tonight at Town Park from 6 - 9 p.m. Tonight's entertainment: Simply the Best: A Tribute to Tina Turner, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. "Karen Durrant brings Tina Turner to life in a powerhouse performance packed with hits, high energy and heart. It's more than a tribute - it's a rock and roll revival." Available for purchase, enjoy a variety of delicious food vendors and licensed beverages. Concert is free to attend, however if you are able, to bring non-perishable food donations to support the Aurora Food Pantry, it would be appreciated. Remember to bring your lawn chair and blanket!

FRIDAY, JULY 25
The Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion will host its annual Christmas in July lunch from 11.30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets in advance for \$25 per person. Come dressed festive and enjoy a traditional turkey dinner and some fun and games.

SATURDAY, JULY 26
The Aurora Farmers' Market hosts Customer Appreciation Day at Town Park today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 30
Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series continues tonight at Town Park from 6 - 9 p.m. Tonight's entertainment: No Sugar Tonight: A Tribute to The Guess Who, Burton Cummings, and BTO, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. "Celebrate the iconic sounds of Canadian rock legends with a show full of classic hits and unforgettable melodies. Pure Canuck rock nostalgia." Available for purchase, enjoy a variety of delicious food vendors and licensed beverages. Concert is free to attend, however if you are able, to bring non-perishable food donations to support the Aurora Food Pantry, it would be appreciated. Remember to bring your lawn chair and blanket!

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Support AbuseHurts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. In the current COVID climate, a greater number of people are wanting to donate or get rid of unwanted items, increasing the need for more outlets being available to receive the items. This program will provide a convenient way for people to donate or get rid of used/unwanted clothing, blankets, linens and furniture and will help lessen the amount of items ending up in landfills. Materials that were previously perceived as waste will now be seen as a valuable resource further encouraging redistribution. The items will be recycled in the following ways: To be given to individuals who are survivors of violence and are transitioning from shelters into new homes; To be sold in our store; To be sold to a textile recycler, which makes for an ongoing source of funding for Abuse Hurts enabling them to provide their services to the thousands of people that require them each year. When and Where: Monday and Wednesday, every week, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., with 30-minute time slots – only 1 drop off per time slot. If you do not have an appointment, we cannot accept your donation. The Abuse Hurts Warehouse is located at 1208 Gorham St, Unit 4, Newmarket - rear unloading dock. Visit AbuseHurts.ca to select your drop off time slot.

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Aurora Soccer Club’s Charity Day features two engaging exhibition games to support Southlake

From page 13

bedecked in Scottish and English flags and jerseys. The ardent fans took their place on the bleachers, umbrella tables, fence rails, and shaded benches. A brisk westerly breeze and strategically-placed misting fans saved the spectators and players from the oppressive humidity.

The first half was scoreless largely due to the heroics of Scotland’s keeper Stuart Watterson who flew in from Glasgow for the game. Watterson frustrated the daylights out of Coach Alan Dean’s crew. However, ASC Hearts star Colin Kilner gave the England fans something to cheer about early in the second half. The talented attacker got loose off the left wing, dribbled through two Scottish defenders, deked Watterson, and chipped the ball into the yawning cage to give England a 1-0 lead.

The Scottish side pressed for the equalizer and hemmed in the English at the East end of the pitch.

A beautiful cross from Harris McLucas off the left wing set up a brilliant header by Alec Mackrell

that beat England’s keeper Barry Kilner. Mackrell’s nugget off his noggin tied the score and capped off a sustained series of scoring chances by the Scots.

Coach Paul Cunningham’s blue-clad Scottish side took the lead minutes later when Ciara Ambrose—playing her second game of the afternoon – fired a bullet off the right wing from 15 yards into the net past Kilner.

Ambrose’s marker elated the St. Andrew’s Cross Flag-waving enthusiasts, including five spectators who joined the players’ on-field celebration.

Ambrose described her game-winning goal: “There was a fumbled ball, then a ricochet and I took a touch and then put it inside the post. It felt great, especially hearing and seeing all the fans going crazy.”

For her late-game clutch goal, Ambrose was voted Player of the Match.

The Player of the Match in Game One was Team Canada goaltender Jithin “JJ” Jerard who kept his squad

in the contest with a series of brilliant saves.

After a hard-fought, scoreless first half, the Rest of the World team pressed its territorial advantage in the second half and two big saves by Jerard kept the white-clad squad off the scoresheet.

Jerard’s counterpart in the World net—Harry Bezruchko--was particularly busy in the second half, too, repelling three scoring opportunities by Team Canada until Domenico Gullo booted a low, stealthy shot along the turf and inside the right post to give the red-clad nationals a 1-0 lead. Bezruchko and Jerard shared Player of the Match honors.

A key factor in the opening game was the World’s disallowed goal late in the second half by Sam Bawab whose top shelf marker bulged the twine and seemed to tie the game.

After officials ruled it was off-side, the World squad’s vociferous fan base disagreed vehemently. It was a tough one to accept for Bawab who characterized the disallowed goal as

“The turning point.”

“I got around the defender and posted him so I could get space. It went top corner.”

Despite the disappointment of the disallowed goal, Bawab was pleased with the quality of the game.

“Overall, it was a good, spirited game. Great competition out there and it was an edgy game, too. Both teams wanted to win. Since it was a friendly, I didn’t argue much about the disallowed goal. If that was a league game, I would have got carded.”

The ASC’s Charity Soccer Day—after much passion and athleticism on the field—closed with camaraderie in the clubhouse and pleasantries on the patio. The BBQ buffet was enjoyed by fans and players who donated \$5 per plate to Southlake Health.

The 71-year-old sports organization lived up to its mission statement by inspiring active community and connections through its myriad concessions and draws on Saturday in support of Southlake.

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In Loving Memory
Colin Campbell Mackay Sherwood
February 11, 1936 - February 5, 2025

Colin Campbell Mackay Sherwood passed away on February 5, 2025, just days before his 89th birthday. He is lovingly remembered by his devoted wife and soulmate of 65 years, Dorothy, along with their children: Stephen (Elizabeth), Michelle (Andy), Lisa, and Sandy (Todd).

He was a proud and caring grandfather to Shane, Steven, Amanda, Dale, Anthony, Jesse, Zackary, Robert, Kaylee and Joseph and a joyful great-grandfather to fourteen great-grandchildren. Family was Colin's greatest joy and deepest pride.

Born on February 11, 1936, in Toronto, Colin was a man of great character, warmth, and charm. For much of his life, he called Aurora Home, where he and Dorothy raised their four children.

Colin lived a full and meaningful life. He enjoyed a long and successful career with IBM, where he was respected not only for his intelligence and dedication, but also for his integrity and kindness. He formed lifelong friendships through his work, always ready to lend a helping hand or share a laugh.

He had a deep appreciation for music and especially loved the timeless sounds of artists like Frank Sinatra, Count Basie, and many more.

Colin was also a gifted storyteller. Whether gathered around the dinner table or during a quiet moment on the porch, he had a way of captivating those around him with tales from his youth. His stories will be lovingly remembered and retold for generations.

Colin's legacy is one of joy, compassion, generosity, and deep love. He leaves behind not only cherished memories, but a powerful example of how to live with heart. His laughter, his stories, his music and his presence will be missed beyond measure, but his spirit will live on in all who knew and loved him.



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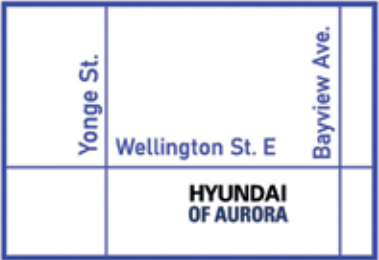


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AURORA/KING
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Senior Account Executive
ZACH SHOUB
zach@pcmedia.ca

Account Executive
KAREN NEMET
karen@pcmedia.ca

Senior Account Executive
DIANE BUCHANAN
diane@auroran.com

Art Director
SARAH DIDYCH

Published By:



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Your Local Real Estate Edge: Backed by a GLOBAL BRAND

In the dynamic world of real estate, where global trends meet local nuances, one team stands out for its unique blend of hyperlocal expertise and international reach: **Khalen Meredith and Kim Nichols, with Sotheby's International Realty.**

This article delves into how meredith•nichols leverages the prestige and powerful network of Sotheby's while maintaining an unwavering commitment to the communities of Aurora and King Township, particularly in the specialized realm of country real estate.

For many years, our team has been deeply rooted in the fabric of Aurora and King Township. We've witnessed the evolution of these vibrant communities, from the charming historic homes nestled on tree-lined streets in Aurora to the sprawling estates and picturesque farms that define the King Township countryside. This isn't just our market; it's our home. We live here, we work here, and we've raised our families here, which happens to include many canine and equine members! This intimate connection

fosters a level of understanding that goes beyond market statistics – it's about knowing the best schools, the hidden trails, the local businesses, and the unique character of each neighbourhood.

Our hyperlocal knowledge is particularly invaluable when it comes to country real estate. This specialized segment of the market demands a nuanced approach, far different from urban residential sales. It requires an understanding of zoning bylaws for agricultural land, well and septic systems, conservation authority regulations, and the intricacies of severances and easements. We've spent years cultivating relationships with local professionals who specialize in the understanding of rural properties. This extensive network, combined with our firsthand experience in valuing and marketing equestrian properties, hobby farms, and vast land parcels, ensures that our clients receive unparalleled guidance, whether they are buying a serene rural retreat or selling a multi-acre estate.

While our roots are firmly planted in Aurora and King Township, our reach extends across the globe, thanks to our affiliation with Sotheby's International Realty. This isn't merely a brand name; it's a testament to a legacy of luxury, integrity, and unparalleled service dating back to 1744. For our clients, this means access to a level of marketing excellence that is simply unmatched in the industry. Sotheby's International Realty is renowned for its sophisticated, high-quality collateral, from stunning professional photography and videography to exquisitely designed and captivating digital presentations. Each property, regardless of its price point, is presented with an artistry and attention to detail that truly sets it apart.

The power of the Sotheby's International Realty network goes far beyond beautiful marketing materials. It provides an extraordinary international reach and referral capability that is a game-changer in today's interconnected world. Imagine a discerning buyer in London, New York, or Hong Kong searching for a unique country estate or an elegant family home near Toronto. Through Sotheby's extensive global referral network, their agent can seamlessly connect them with our team. Our listings are showcased on the highly trafficked and award-winning site sothebysrealty.com, a global platform that attracts millions of visitors worldwide, ensuring maximum exposure to a qualified audience. This international exposure is particularly beneficial for our clients selling properties in Aurora and King Township, as it opens up a vast pool of potential buyers who might otherwise never discover these hidden gems.

The strength of meredith•nichols lies not only in our individual expertise but also in our collaborative team approach. With many years of collective experience in the real estate industry, our team brings a unique set of skills and perspectives to the table. This collaborative synergy ensures that every client benefits from a comprehensive and well-rounded strategy, whether they are navigating a complex negotiation, seeking expert advice on property valuation, or needing guidance through the legalities of a transaction. We believe that two heads are better than one, especially when dealing with the intricacies of real estate. Our combined experience allows us to anticipate challenges, provide creative solutions, and ultimately deliver exceptional results for our clients. In conclusion, for those looking to buy or sell real

estate in Aurora and King Township, we provide, along with Sotheby's International Realty, an unbeatable combination. We provide the deep, localized knowledge that only true community experts possess, coupled with the unparalleled marketing prowess, global reach, and referral capabilities of one of the world's most prestigious real estate brands.

When you choose meredith•nichols, you're not just hiring an agent; you're partnering with a dedicated team of experienced professionals who are committed to achieving your real estate goals, both locally and globally.

If a property move is in your future, whether near or far, please reach out to us to discuss how a partnership with meredith•nichols and Sotheby's International Realty Canada can bring about a successful outcome.

Written by: Khalen Meredith



Khalen Meredith

Broker &
Senior Vice President, Sales

c 416.318.4317
o 416.913.7930

kmeredith@sothebysrealty.ca



Kim Nichols

Sales Representative &
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RESALE HOMES IN KING CITY:

A market of opportunity and distinction

In the heart of York Region lies King City—a community known for its natural beauty, estate-style homes, and refined small-town charm. As the real estate market evolves, one segment continues to shine with both value and long-term appeal: resale homes.

While new builds may grab headlines, resale properties in King City offer an irreplaceable combination of mature neighbourhoods, custom craftsmanship, and established community feel. And for today's buyers, that makes all the difference.

WHY RESALE HOMES STAND OUT
Resale homes in King City are anything but typical. These are homes built with care, often custom-designed on expansive lots that can't be replicated in newer subdivisions. From sprawling bungalows to two-storey family estates, these homes boast character, space, and architectural variety that's hard to find elsewhere.

They also offer the advantage of location—many nestled in peaceful pockets close to top-rated schools, parks, and local amenities. Mature trees, landscaped gardens, and quiet streets are hallmarks of the area's most desirable resale properties.

A MARKET OF QUALIFIED BUYERS
The demand for resale homes in King City continues to come from a mix of families upsizing, professionals moving out of the city core, and downsizers looking for quality over quantity. Many are drawn to the blend of rural tranquility and urban accessibility that King City offers.

Today's buyer is informed and intentional. They know what they're looking for, and many are specifically seeking out well-maintained resale homes that offer immediate value—especially those with finished basements, upgraded kitchens, or income-generating potential.

THE ADVANTAGE FOR SELLERS
If you're a homeowner in King City, now is an ideal time to consider your position in the market. Well-presented resale properties are selling at strong prices, and with limited inventory, sellers are often benefiting from shorter days on market and quality offers. The Michele Denniston Real Estate Team brings years of local experience and a deep understanding of King City's unique property landscape. We help homeowners showcase the features that today's buyers value most—positioning your home for maximum return.

LET'S TALK RESALE STRATEGY
Our team doesn't just list homes—we create strategic marketing plans that highlight your property's value and attract serious, qualified buyers. From professional staging and photography to targeted online and community exposure, we ensure your home makes a lasting first impression.

King City's resale market is thriving—but it's also nuanced. With the right team and the right strategy, your home can stand out in all the right ways.

If you're thinking of selling—or simply want to understand your home's current value—connect with us today. We're proud to serve King City with local insight, proven results, and a commitment to excellence.

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Charming Family Home in Aurora **\$1,579,000**

Located in Aurora Heights, this bright and inviting home features hardwood floors, crown moulding, and a cozy family room with brick fireplace. Enjoy a renovated kitchen with walkout, spacious primary suite with custom closet, and a finished basement with rec room and office. The private backyard offers lush gardens and a multi-level deck—perfect for entertaining.

Incredible Lake Wilcox Retreat **\$2,398,000**

Set on over half an acre backing onto waterfront, this charming 3 bed & 3 bath Oak Ridges home offers bright, spacious rooms with hardwood floors and ceiling details. Family room features a floor-to-ceiling brick fireplace and pond views. Kitchen includes eat-in area. Primary bedroom boasts a balcony and ensuite with jacuzzi tub. Additional bedrooms are flooded with natural light. Lower level awaits your finishing touches—renovate or rebuild!

Elegant Ravine-Backed Home **\$4,690,000**

Over 4,500 sq. ft., this 4-bedroom, 7-bath home backs onto a ravine with pond views. Features decks, walkways, and space for pool and cabana. Classic Bordeaux style with tile mosaics and LED walls. Includes two offices, sensor cabinets, and butler's pantry. Primary suite with ensuite and heated floors. Lower level with wet bar, theater, sauna, and gym. Triple garage and smart controls.

Modern Vaughan Allegro Condo **\$739,800**

Offering 914 sq. ft., this stylish 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo features open-concept living with porcelain tile and engineered hardwood floors. The kitchen boasts stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, and walk-out balcony with city views. Building amenities include rooftop garden, fitness centre, piano lounge, and party room. Includes 1 parking spot and 24-hour concierge.

Luxury Custom Stone Home **\$4,200,000**

Over 8,000 sq. ft. of living space on 1.2 acres with western exposure. Features traditional finishes, solid oak doors, and Marley roof. Spacious rooms include cherry wood kitchen, elegant living and dining with marble floors. Primary suite with walk-ins, balcony, and spa ensuite. Resort-style grounds with pool, tennis & bocce ball courts, patios, and decks. Finished lower level with wet bar, sauna, and storage. Four-car garage and circular driveway with ample parking.

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SUMMER

renovation projects that
can add value to your home

(NC) Summer is a time to stretch your legs and enjoy the warm weather with your family and friends. During this time, many people are also looking to make upgrades to their home.

Whether you're looking to add more value to your home, make a few eco-friendly improvements or simply maximize your enjoyment, there's a renovation project for everyone. Give your home a breath of new life with these summer renovation projects that can add value to it.

1 UPDATE THE INTERIOR

If you're looking to undertake some bigger projects, first consider whether you have the necessary skills and experience to execute the project or if you should hire a professional. If you need to hire a professional, be sure to do your research beforehand and choose a contractor you feel comfortable with.

If you plan on starting with the kitchen or bathroom, items like kitchen tiles, custom cabinets or countertops could take months to arrive, so make sure to order these in advance if you are on a tight timeline. Use quality materials and make upgrades consistent with the rest of the home.

Repainting the interior in more neutral tones can go a long way. Cleaning up any scuff marks or filling small holes can bring your walls back to life.

Consider updating your decor such as the lighting, fixtures and countertops and replace or refinish worn flooring to modernize your home.

2 SPRUCE UP THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME

Summer is the best time to replace any shingles on your roof that are broken or loose to avoid water leaks. Have a maintenance professional inspect all walls for any cracks that need to be sealed to keep water out and avoid major damage.

If you're tired of seeing a sad-looking fence, it might be time to explore waterproofing or staining.

Install exterior lighting to brighten up walkways and the front of your home.

3 ECO-FRIENDLY CHANGES

Invest in new insulation and draft-sealing to help save on the energy you're using to heat or cool.

Make the switch to LED lightbulbs throughout your house. On average they last about 10 years and are around 85 per cent more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs.

Install energy-efficient windows to save on heating and air conditioning, while also increasing your home's long-term value.

4 MAXIMIZE ENJOYMENT

Complete that unfinished basement and dedicate the extra space to something you love, like working out or hosting trivia nights with your friends.

Consider starting your own herb garden or picking up some houseplants – not only can they help improve the air quality in your home, but they can also boost your mood.

It's important to inform your insurance company when you're planning a renovation to ensure your policy remains in effect. There may be additional insurance implications if certain work is not done by licensed professionals, such as electrical work or plumbing. Renovations that increase your home's value may change the classification of your policy, so whether the project is big or small, be sure to get a quote for any new coverage. Companies like Belairdirect can provide a quote in minutes and help you along every step on the road to renos. Learn more at belairdirect.com.

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5 TIPS

to spruce up your home this summer

(NC) Summer is a perfect time to enjoy the warm weather with family and friends, and it's also an ideal season for home improvements. Whether you're looking to increase your home's value, make eco-friendly upgrades or simply enhance your living experience, here are a few handy renovation tips to consider.

SEAL THE GAPS

Summer heat can drive up energy costs, so focus on making your home more energy efficient to keep it cool and reduce air conditioning costs. Have a maintenance professional inspect all walls for any cracks that need to be sealed to keep water out and avoid major damage. Upgrade insulation and seal any drafts to prevent cool air from escaping and replace any shingles on your roof that are broken or loose to avoid water leaks.

UPGRADE YOUR LIVING SPACE

If your budget allows, consider updating your kitchen, bathroom or living spaces. These are high-traffic areas that significantly impact your home's value. Even small changes like new cabinet hardware, recessed lighting or a stylish new backsplash can transform a space.

GET OUTDOORS

Take advantage of the warm weather by enhancing your outdoor spaces. Start by power-washing your deck or patio to remove dirt and grime. Consider staining or sealing the wood to protect it from the

elements and give it a fresh appearance. Adding some comfortable outdoor furniture, colourful cushions and a few potted plants can transform your backyard into a cozy retreat.

INSTALL ENERGY-EFFICIENT FIXTURES

Replace old incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs, which use less energy and have a longer lifespan. Consider installing a programmable thermostat to better manage your cooling system and help save on energy bills. Ceiling fans are also a great addition to keep air circulating and reduce the need for air conditioning. These simple upgrades can lead to significant savings and increased home comfort.

IMPROVE INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Start by changing the air filters in your HVAC system to ensure better airflow and air quality in your home. Consider adding houseplants, which naturally purify the air and add a touch of greenery to your decor. Plants like spider plants, peace lilies and snake plants are especially good at removing toxins from the air.

Don't forget to turn on the exhaust fan in your kitchen and bathrooms to reduce humidity and prevent mould growth.

If you're thinking of starting some bigger projects this summer, it's important to let your insurance provider know to ensure your policy remains in effect.

There may be additional insurance implications if certain work, like electrical or plumbing, isn't done by licensed professionals.

Additionally, renovations that increase your home's value may also affect your insurance. Whether the project is big or small, be sure to get a quote for any new coverage.

Companies like Belairdirect can provide a quote in minutes and help you along every step of the way.

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RESALE
HOMES
COLLECTIONS

Summer moves:

Tips for buying a new home this season

(NC) There’s something about summer that makes it feel like the perfect time for a fresh start—and for some, that means buying a new home. The longer days, warmer weather and flexible schedules make it easier to explore neighbourhoods, schedule viewings and manage the logistics of a move.

But before you fall in love with that front porch or start dreaming about backyard barbecues, it’s important to have a plan. Here’s how to make the most of your summer home search and how you can protect your investment from day one.

START WITH A CLEAR BUDGET

Before you browse listings or tour open houses, get pre-approved for a mortgage and understand your full financial picture. Remember to factor in additional costs like closing fees, property taxes and moving expenses.

KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

Make a list of your must-haves and nice-to-haves. Think about location, layout, commute time and even how much yard work you’re willing to take on. Summer is a busy time for the real estate market, so having a clear idea of what you want helps you move quickly when the right property comes along.

INSPECT WITH A SUMMER EYE

In the summer, it’s easier to spot issues like poor air conditioning, pests or drainage problems after a rainstorm. Take advantage of the season to carefully inspect outdoor features like roofing, siding, decks and landscaping.

PLAN YOUR MOVE STRATEGICALLY

Summer is a peak time for moving companies, so book your movers early and try to avoid week-ends and the end of the month if you can. If you’re handling things yourself, rent your truck well in advance and stock up on supplies.

PROTECT WHAT MATTERS

Your new home is more than just four walls— it’s your sanctuary, your investment and your future. Home insurance from providers like Belairdirect help protect your physical property as well as your belongings.

From fire and weather damage to theft or liability coverage, having the right policy in place means you’re prepared for the unexpected. And if you bundle your home and auto insurance, you may even qualify for extra savings—something every new homeowner can appreciate.

Buying a new home is exciting, but it also comes with plenty of moving parts. By starting with a clear plan and making smart choices along the way, you’ll set yourself up for a smooth summer move.

www.newscanada.com



MARKET UPDATE – JULY 2025

AURORA

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

\$1,329,557

AVERAGE 29 DAYS ON MARKET

NUMBER OF SALES

59

206 NEW LISTINGS

SALE TO LIST RATIO

98%

YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE

-8.01%

KING

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

\$1,921,342

AVERAGE 32 DAYS ON MARKET

NUMBER OF SALES

30

93 NEW LISTINGS

SALE TO LIST RATIO

94%

YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE

-6.47%

*The statistics provided were obtained from the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board's Market Watch JUNE 2025; Summary of Existing Home Transactions for All Home Types, JUNE 2025 + Focus on the MLS Home Price Index for Composite, JUNE 2025 for York Region's Aurora and King

Ownership housing affordability continued to improve in June 2025. Average selling prices and borrowing costs remained lower than last year's levels, as all areas of our trading market were down year over year. We saw some month over month momentum, with sales volume increasing slightly and Buyers starting to come off the sidelines, as showing levels remain consistent. In an evolving market, strategic partnering with your real estate advisors remains imperative to garnering the best results. Opportunities exist in the current landscape for Sellers and Buyers alike - whether it is leveraging tax free dollars into other investments, capitalizing on the downward trend of pricing in auxiliary markets, moving up with more favourable rates and days on market or simply buying your first home - Key Advantage is here to help.

– Provided by Key Advantage Team Royal LePage RCR Realty
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KING HOBBY HORSE FARM! ARENA W/12 STALL STABLE! 4+1BR DUPLEXED HOME! 7+ ACRES



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PICTURESQUE PRIVACY 3.1 ACRE 3105 SF 'MANOR' HOME AURORA



Scenic private at the end of an exclusive court in demand southwest Aurora! 4 car garage 3+1 parking or gardeners delight detached building! Hardwood floors! 2 stone fireplaces! Huge principal rooms! 4 spacious bedrooms! Bright prof fin w/o lower level could be inlaw suite with big rec room, 3pc bath, sauna and more!

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3300 SF AURORA SHOW STOPPER W/FIN WALK-UP BSMT!



Wow Simply Sensational new build! Soaring 11 ft ceiling ground floor! 10 ft 2nd floor & bsmt! Hwd plank! 'Open concept' plan! Main floor den! 'Gourmet' Chef's centre island kitchen w/quartz counters & butler's pantry! Huge fam room w/ custom gas fp & palatial wdws. Primary br w/enticing ensuite & organized his & hers w/1 closet! Ensuite baths & organized w/i in all bedrooms! Bright prof fin 'open concept' lower level w/u bsmt with inlaw potential!

Inquire

"GATED" PRIVACY! END SUITE! FIN BSMT! BACKS TO RAVINE!



Aurora's sought after exclusive gated community 'Stonebridge Estates'! Stone & Brick! 'Open Concept' plan! 9ft-22ft ceilings! Vaulted ceilings! Plank floors ground and second floor! 'Gourmet' centre island kitchen 'open' to entertaining sized dining & great room with custom fireplace all overlooking ravine! Professionally finished 'open concept' lower level and much more!

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EXECUTIVE 1870 SF 'BEAUTY' JUST MOVE IN TOWNHOME



OPEN HOUSE: 33-520 Silken Lauman Dr, Newmarket – Sat, July 19 & Sun, July 20 | 2-4pm - Motivated Seller!! 3 BR Condo Overlooking St. Andrews Golf with 2 balconies and gorgeous sunsets. Spacious open concept layout with updated kitchen, fireplace and custom décor! Luxurious primary suite with 5pc spa-like ensuite!

\$898,888

Projected timelines
for popular
renovation projects

HOMEOWNERS often find it beneficial to hire professional contractors when they have work to be done around the house to ensure the job gets done to code and to their satisfaction. Timelines for home remodeling projects vary depending on a number of variables, including the size of a crew as well as the scope of the project.

Once a project commences, the timeline can feel endless. The following are estimates of timelines for top remodeling projects to give homeowners an idea of how long their renovation projects may last, courtesy of Renofi, a company that provides a lending platform leveraged by credit unions nationwide to offer loans to consumers.

• **KITCHEN:** There are a lot of moving parts to a kitchen renovation, involving the services of electricians, plumbers, structural experts, and even interior design professionals. Not to mention the needs of craftspeople who can make custom cabinetry and countertops. Kitchen remodels can take anywhere from six to 12 weeks.

• **BATHROOM:** The process of a bathroom renovation typically involves demolishing the old bathroom, removing old fixtures and starting from the ground up. As with a kitchen remodel, bathroom jobs require the services of different professionals. That is why homeowners can expect three to 10 weeks for a bathroom, depending on the scope of the project.

• **FINISHING A BASEMENT:** Finishing a basement can add valuable living space to a home. Establishing a home theater space or man cave may require installing framing, insulation, utilities, drywall, flooring, and any additional needs if the finished basement will have a bathroom or necessitate additional plumbing. A finished basement project can last one to two months. But the good news is that typically the rest of the house is livable while the work is being done, so residents will not be disrupted.

• **WHOLE HOME REMODEL:** Hogan Design & Construction says that a whole house remodeling project can take anywhere from 16 weeks to 24 weeks. More involved projects can take longer.

Remodeling a home often involves a considerable investment of time and money. Knowing how long a homeowner will be inconvenienced by the work can help the household plan accordingly.



(NC) If you own a home by the water, you understand that a dock is much more than a base for your boat. It's a sundeck, a diving platform, a fishing perch and a year-round spot for stargazing and enjoying sunsets.

Compared to wood and PVC, composite decking offers a variety of colour options for incredible design flexibility.

RAILING
Enhance stability and style with a railing. Layer on convenience by installing multi-functional drink railing. This clever design uses a deck board for the top rail, creating a handy surface for holding snacks and beverages while you're taking in the sunset or welcoming the crew back from a day on the water.

EASY MAINTENANCE
To maximize leisure time, opt for durable products that withstand the elements with minimal upkeep. Aluminum and composite are particularly well-suited for water applications. These hassle-free materials won't splinter or rot and never need to be sanded, stained or refinished—just a simple soap-and-water cleaning is all it takes to keep them looking like new.

Learn more tips for building a decked-out dock at trex.com/docks.

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THE RISE OF
“House
Catfishing”
and why I’m here
to save you from it



By Julien Laurion
Real Estate

So let’s talk about catfishing. No, not the kind involving a guy in his mom’s basement pretending to be a 23-year-old yoga influencer named Skylar. I’m talking about house catfishing.

It goes like this: You’re sipping your oat milk latte, scrolling through listings, and suddenly—BAM—a house pops up that looks like Ryan Gosling personally designed it between shooting movies. Gleaming countertops. Sexy pendant lights. A rainfall shower that practically whispers sweet nothings to your soul.

Except... you show up for the showing and realize Ryan Gosling was most definitely not involved. The place smells like 17 wet dogs and possibly a disgruntled ferret. The “hardwood floors” are peel-and-stick vinyl from aisle 9 at the dollar store,

bubbling up like week-old pizza cheese. And the “spa bathroom”? More like a biohazard zone where mold colonies are plotting world domination.

Folks: you’ve just been house catfished. And let’s not kid ourselves—it’s happening more than ever.

Now, before you start blaming the sellers—or me, your friendly neighbourhood realtor and contractor—let’s get real. The market’s been absolutely bananas. Interest rates whiplashed. Inventory dried up. Buyers became choosier than a toddler in a broccoli aisle. So sellers—and some realtors—get desperate. A little Photoshop here, a conveniently cropped photo there, and suddenly that broom closet looks like a walk-in wardrobe worthy of the Kardashians.

Listen, I’m all for making a home look its best. But there’s a fine line between marketing and straight-up deception. And a lot of people in this business? They’re happily skipping across that line like it’s Coachella weekend.

Here’s the truth nobody wants to say out loud: there are agents out there selling illusions, not homes. And some homeowners are all too eager to play along. Why spend money on real renovations when a few digital edits can hide the mildew and make your shoebox look like a palace?

Well, because that’s how you end up with buyers feeling conned—and deals falling apart faster than a dollar-store door handle.

This is why my two businesses go hand in hand. As a realtor, I’m in the trenches every day, hearing what buyers actually want—and what sends them sprinting

back to their cars. As a contractor, I know how to turn “meh” into “hell yes!”—for real. No digital smoke and mirrors. No catfishing.

I’d rather tell you the truth—even if it’s uncomfortable—than have your house become “that listing” everybody laughs about over beers.

Want to sell your home for top dollar without resorting to sketchy tactics? Here’s my “Don’t Be a Catfish” playbook:

• **FIX THE FIRST IMPRESSION.** Your house has about five seconds to charm people. Cracked steps? Faded door paint? That’s the real estate equivalent of a shirtless bathroom selfie on Tinder. Let’s replace it, patch it, and make your home swipe-right-worthy.

• **LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION.** Smart renos—and smart lighting—make small spaces feel big and luxurious. But it has to be real, not CGI-level fakery.

• **HONESTY SELLS.** If there’s mold in the basement the size of Manitoba, don’t crop it out. Let’s either fix it—or price accordingly.

• **SHOWCASE THE GOOD STUFF.** Have an epic kitchen? A killer backyard? Let’s feature that—not hide it under some generic wide-angle shot.

But let’s be blunt: some agents and sellers will keep catfishing, because it “gets people in the door.”

Sure, it does. But you know what else it gets you? Angry buyers. Broken deals. Reputation hits. And in this digital age, news travels fast. Your listing might become a viral meme for all the wrong reasons.

If you want the opposite of catfishing—real value, real renovations, and real results—that’s my lane. My name’s Julien Laurion. I’m your local realtor and contractor, and my tagline says it all: “All About Homes.” I’m swinging hammers, pulling permits, and negotiating offers. I’m the guy who makes sure your house actually looks—and smells—like the photos in your listing.

So, if you’re thinking of selling—or just tired of being lured into showings that smell like a hamster cage gone wrong—call me. Let’s make your home irresistible for all the right reasons.

Because the only thing worse than house catfishing... is realizing those peel-and-stick floors are peeling before you’ve even unpacked your moving boxes.

Julien Laurion
Realtor. Contractor. Local Dad.
All About Homes.
Serving Aurora, King City, and the
communities in between.

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I’m a local Realtor who has lived in Aurora for
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