

TOWN OF AURORA

NOTICE BOARD

November 6, 2025



Council & Committee Meetings

| Date | Time | Location | Meeting |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|---|
| Monday, November 10 | 6 p.m. | Council Chambers | Budget Committee |
| Tuesday, November 11 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Council Closed Session |
| Tuesday, November 11 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Committee of the Whole |
| Wednesday, November 12 | 10 a.m. | Holland Room | Community Recognition Review Advisory Committee |
| Wednesday, November 12 | 7 p.m. | Holland Room | Accessibility Advisory Committee |
| Wednesday, November 12 | 7 p.m. | School House Mtg Room | Aurora Cultural Centre Board |
| Thursday, November 13 | 7 p.m. | Video Conference | Committee of Adjustment |
| Monday, November 17 | 6 p.m. | Council Chambers | Special Meeting of Council (if required) |
| Tuesday, November 18 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Financial Advisory Committee |
| Tuesday, November 18 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Public Planning |
| Wednesday, November 19 | 7 p.m. | Aurora Public Library | Aurora Public Library Board |
| Thursday, November 20 | 7 p.m. | Holland Room | Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee |
| Tuesday, November 25 | 5:45 p.m. | Holland Room | Council Closed Session (if required) |
| Tuesday, November 25 | 7 p.m. | Council Chambers | Council |
| Wednesday, November 26 | 7 p.m. | Holland Room | Active Transportation and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee |
| Thursday, November 27 | 10 a.m. | Video Conference | Aurora Appeal Tribunal/Property Standards Committee (if required) |

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

What's Happening



The Town is accepting parade applications for floats and walking groups! Use your creative and festive ideas to light up our parade! Deadline to register and be part of the magic is **Friday, November 7**.

aurora.ca/SantaParade



Are you a festive decorating enthusiast? Do you have a knack for untangling lights like a pro? Register your home or business by **November 21** to join this fun, community-wide competition.

Tour runs **December 9 to 23** with big prizes to be won! All Aurora residents welcome – homes, apartments and storefronts!

aurora.ca/DeckTheHalls



November 25 at 7 p.m.
aurora.ca/WhatsOn



Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition

Featured Artists: Aurora's Royal Canadian Legion, Youth Remembrance Day Contest Winners – Artwork by local students

Through the annual National Youth Remembers Contests, the Legion National Foundation, in partnership with The Royal Canadian Legion and schools across the country, invite Canadian youth and children to honour Canada's Veterans and foster the tradition of Remembrance through visual art, poetry writing and video. Col. Fred Tilston V.C., Branch 385 in Aurora is proud to exhibit the 2025 local winners of the Youth Poster and Literary Contest. Enjoy touring this month's Aurora's Skylight Gallery exhibit, with artwork from Aurora's Royal Canadian Legion available for in-person viewing opportunities.

RECYCLING CARTS COMING TO AURORA

Arriving the week of November 3.



aurora.ca/BlueBox

New changes are coming to large item pick-up starting January 2026

Instead of leaving your items at the curb, you'll now need to call GFL to schedule your large item pick-up.

Here's what you need to know:

- Schedule your pick-up by calling GFL at 1-866-421-5625
- Place items at the curb by 7 a.m. on your collection day.
- Limit of 5 large items per scheduled pick-up.
- Collection will take place on your regular waste day.

Learn more at aurora.ca/LargeItems.

Fall 2025 Program Guide

The **Fall 2025 Program Guide** is available to view online at aurora.ca/ProgramGuide. Registration is open for Recreation and Aquatic programs. View the interactive guide and click on the code # to register online. Pay in-person at the A.F.L.C., S.A.R.C. or A.T.S.



2026 Aquatic Leadership Courses

Aquatic Leadership registration is now open for all seasons of our 2026 Aquatic Leadership courses. Full details at aurora.ca/AquaticLeadership. Register online or pay in-person at the A.F.L.C., S.A.R.C. or A.T.S.

Winterfest Camp – Junior & Senior

Register now and take a break from the cold weather as you join us for games, sports, crafts and more! Winterfest Camps are available for ages 4 to 6 and 7 to 12. Dates for our camps run **December 22, 23, 29, 30** and **January 2**. Full details at aurora.ca/Camps.

Holiday Schedules

Have fun over the holidays! We have programs and activities for everyone to enjoy. Visit our Holiday Schedules webpage for full details at aurora.ca/HolidaySchedules.

Treaties Recognition Week

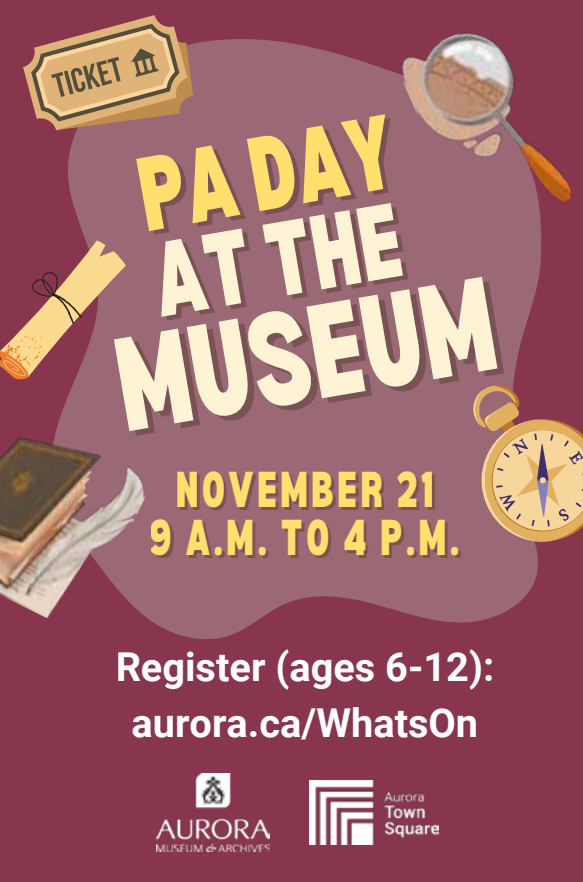
November 2 to 8



Ontario has observed Treaties Recognition Week since 2016 to encourage learning about treaty rights and relationships. This year, it takes place from November 2 to 8.

Treaties are legally binding agreements between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Aurora is located within Treaty # 13, signed in 1805, and the Williams Treaties, signed in 1923.

We are all treaty people, and understanding these agreements is an important step toward reconciliation.



NOVEMBER 21
9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

Register (ages 6-12):
aurora.ca/WhatsOn



Aurora Town Hall

100 John West Way, Aurora, ON, L4G 6J1
905-727-1375 • info@aurora.ca • aurora.ca

Accessible Formats

905-727-3123 ext. 4212
accessibility@aurora.ca



YouTube

Police focused on community outreach during Crime Prevention Week



York Regional Police Deputy Chief Kevin McCloskey speaks at the YRP's Aurora headquarters on Monday Morning at the start of Crime Prevention Week. **Auroran photo by Brock Weir**

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The importance of community outreach and action was underscored at the York Regional Police's Aurora headquarters on Monday morning as representatives from the YRP, Peel Regional Police, Toronto Police Service, and Durham came together to launch Crime Prevention Week.

Running through November 8, community outreach and engagement is an overarching theme of the week, and representatives urged residents to be partners in addressing criminal activity.

"Crime prevention isn't just a one-week campaign; it's a core function of what we do every day," said Peel Regional Police Deputy Chief Mark Dapat. "It's the foundation of what policing is all about: preventing harm before it happens and helping people feel safe where they live, where they work, and where they gather.

"This week and every week, we are highlighting the power of collaboration and the difference we make when police, government and communities come together with one shared goal – that is a safer, stronger neighbourhood."

Police services across Ontario are investing in crime prevention through early intervention, youth engagement, and partnerships that "support our most vulnerable residents," he said, adding that is a reflection of their drive to identify "local risks and address them before they lead to a crisis-driven response that our officers across the Province are responding to at alarming rates."

"The commitment to this work is a force multiplier in ensuring that police respond quickly to emergencies and relentlessly pursue criminals, and, in particular, those criminals that commit violent and serious crime," he said. "We know that no one chooses to be a victim of crime, and that prevention starts with awareness, early intervention and partnership."

The power of collaboration can be seen in Peel Region, an area he said saw a surge in pharmacy robberies in 2021 – up 238 per cent over the previous year. Incidents rose by a further 400 per cent the following year as offenders targeted narcotics, including fentanyl.

"In response to this, our robbery bureau partnered with the Ontario College of Pharmacists and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police to develop strategies that focus on prevention," he said. "Through this partnership, a provincial mandate was established for pharmacies to implement time-delayed safes in all community pharmacies. The time-delayed safe initiative was pivotal in Peel Region, leading to a significant reduction in retail robberies and a major enhancement for community safety through the reduction of the illegal drug supply being trafficked within our communities.

"The results speak for themselves. In 2023, pharmacy robberies in Peel dropped by 59%. In 2024, they fell another 75%. So far in 2025, 75%

of the attempted robberies have been unsuccessful thanks to these preventative measures. These results represent more than statistics. They represent lives protected, trauma prevented and community confidence restored."

Speaking on behalf of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, Dapat added that they're committed to developing programs and strategies that both prevent crime and support victims and survivors.

From a York Region Perspective, Deputy Chief Kevin McCloskey noted the rise of smash and grab robberies in the area, as well as distraction thefts, and criminals becoming "bolder and more brazen."

"I understand the concerns of our community members. At the end of the day, we all want to keep ourselves and our families and our property safe and secure. We should be able to enjoy the neighbourhoods we live in without feeling like we need to look over our shoulder," he said. "At York Regional Police, we believe crime prevention is a shared responsibility – and while the police may take that lead, citizens do have the chance to play a huge role in preventing crimes from occurring. Much like a triangle, crime needs three points to connect. First, you need a criminal's desire to commit a crime. Then, you need a target. And last, you simply need an opportunity. Eliminating each point of a triangle is an effective crime prevention strategy, and it begins with education and awareness, empowering all members of our community, and it starts in your neighbourhood.

"Through mentorship, through collaboration, visibility, programming, and engaging with youth, we can put a stop to crime before youth are enticed to commit the crime in the first place. Our youth engagement team continues to build bridges between police and youth because the youth are the people who are the future of our region....And as police services, we need to empower residents and commercial property owners to do little things, because at your homes and businesses, it's all the little things you can do that make a big difference in deterring criminals, allowing you to safeguard yourself and your property."

These "little things" that can have a big impact include installing security cameras and motion-detection lights outside your property, registering security cameras with police, trimming trees and shrubs in your yard to make your home more visible from the street, and improving sightlines.

"We also want members of the public to work directly with the police. Sign up for Neighborhood Watch. Sign up for our security camera registry. And of course, if you see something, say something. Look out for yourself and your neighbors, and call Police if you notice something out of the ordinary in your neighborhood. We will respond. This is how you can help us, because I can tell you, all across this province, we are working very hard to identify and arrest criminals who are committing violent offenses and other crimes."

New blue bins “rolling out” this week amid concerns

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As new recycling bins “roll out” across Aurora this week, measures are being taken to address residential concerns about the significantly larger containers.

Since the blue bin replacement was announced, residents have voiced worries about storage and how they can be handled by people with accessibility challenges.

In a statement on Tuesday, Mayor Tom Mrakas noted that the new blue bins are an initiative of the Provincial rather than Municipal government, a result of a move towards the Producer-Responsibility System that has taken the responsibility of recycling collections out of the municipality's hands to producers.

"Town staff have been trying to work with Circular Materials (CM) — the non-profit organization responsible for overseeing Ontario's new common collection system — which will manage Blue Box material collection from homes, residential buildings, and residential areas of mixed-use

properties, for over a year," said Mayor Mrakas. "Unfortunately, throughout this process, CM has provided limited responses to questions raised by both staff and municipalities. After months of uncertainty, they have rolled out a plan without offering municipalities or residents any alternative options in the Northern Six municipalities of York Region."

Mayor Mrakas said he shared the concerns expressed, particularly those related to seniors, persons with accessibility challenges, and owners of smaller properties that might have difficulty storing the larger receptacles. "To try and address these issues, I've been in contact with my colleagues from the Northern Six York Region municipalities, and we'll be meeting as soon as possible with executives from GFL to discuss what can be done," he continued. "We'll be exploring whether there are alternative options or solutions that better meet the needs of our residents. Once that meeting takes place, I'll be providing an update to the community with any next steps or possible outcomes."



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BATTERIES ARE HAZARDOUS

Do not put in garbage or recycling



For safety tips and drop-off locations near you, visit

york.ca/HHW





MP SANDRA COBENA'S UPDATE

Sandra Cobena, MP
Newmarket-Aurora

Remembrance Day is a moment to pause, reflect, and give thanks to the men and women who stood in defence of freedom, and to the families who carried that sacrifice with strength and grace. This day serves as a reminder that the peace we enjoy today was secured through their courage and unwavering commitment to defending what they believed in—values that continue to define us as Canadians.

Each soldier’s story is a thread woven into the soul of our country, a tapestry of courage, devotion, and love for our nation. They were sons, daughters, husbands, wives, neighbours, and friends who left behind the comfort of home to ensure our freedom.

They did so under a flag that still flies for hope and peace.

Here in Newmarket–Aurora, that spirit of service lives close to home. We’re blessed to share a laugh and a lesson with heroes like Jim Park, a proud Second World War veteran who landed on Juno Beach on D-Day.

Jim reminds us, “All the freedom we have came at a price. It came at the price of friends of mine.”

That truth resonated deeply this year as we marked the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial. When the call came — “They do not answer, sir” — it was hard to hold back tears.

Those words echoed through the crowd, a solemn reminder of the brave Canadians who gave everything.

Liberty is not inherited; it is defended, cherished, and passed on.

Lest we forget.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks to participants in Brook of Hope fundraiser

On behalf of Brook of Hope Home, a registered Canadian Charity headquartered here in Aurora, we’d like to thank everyone who participated and generously donated during our recent (October 14, 2025) Yoga Night fundraiser.

Celebrating our second year, it was wonderful having a chance to enjoy fellowship and a night of yoga stretching at the Aurora Public Library.

It also gave us a chance to showcase some of the work Brook of Hope Home is doing for underprivileged children in Zambia, Africa. For more information, please visit our website: brookofhopehome.ca.

Leo DiPaola
Aurora

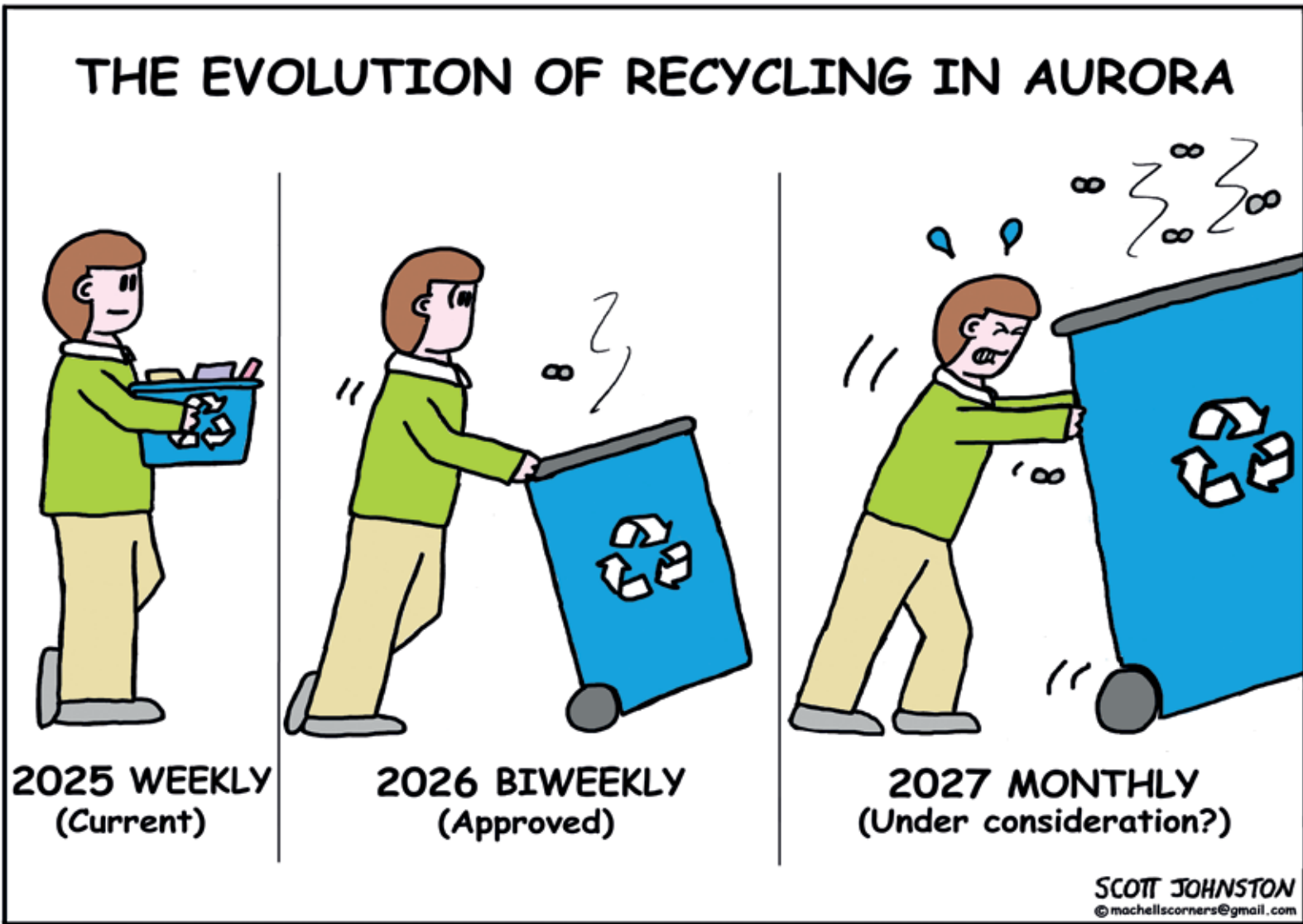
YRT offers veterans free rides in honour of Remembrance Day

On Tuesday, November 11, 2025, York Region Transit is pleased to offer free transit and On-Request service to veterans and immediate family of a deceased veteran.

Veterans must identify themselves to YRT and On-Request operators by showing a uniform, medal, beret or blazer. Immediate family of deceased veterans may ride free by presenting an item that identifies their relationship to

Continued on page 5

Machell's Corners



Remembrance and Unanswered Questions



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

under wraps.

So, I decided then and there to change that, using this “bonus” time with the patient to get down to business in figuring out what truly drives them, makes them tick, and assemble the puzzle pieces I’ve picked up along the way.

Perhaps it wasn’t the best time to announce this to them the day after they were settled in the ICU if the widened eyes poking out from the tangle of tubes about their person was any indication; after all, as you may have guessed, they are a largely private person who, perhaps, would hate this topic is even being broached in these pages, but I’m determined to make it happen.

There is some downtime ahead to take advantage of – and, of course, I’m always a firm believer in practicing what I preach.

As we approach Remembrance Day, I experience, as I suspect so many of us do, many mixed emotions – and these emotions sometimes take a different track from year to year.

In some years, my thoughts drift to my paternal grandfather, an airman, who spent far too much time in a German Prisoner-of-War camp during the Second World War. While, against incredible odds, he was able to come home, he died quite young and we missed our paths crossing by some 15 years.

Thoughts also often turn to his parents, who met and married during the First World War. His father also died quite young and while his mother lived a long and fruitful life, we again missed each other by five years or so.

Timing is everything!

In recent years, I’ve found myself thinking about her brother, previously unknown to me just under a decade ago, and what he must have experienced before paying the ultimate sacrifice for King and Country.

The questions I have for these men and

women but was never able to ask, could fill a newspaper double or triple this size, but there’s some solace that more than 15 years in this job as a reporter and then editor have afforded me many opportunities to pose some of the questions I did have to others who followed similar paths, experienced similar horrors, and were eager to share their experiences with anyone who asked.

Time was of the essence and you have to strike while the proverbial iron is hot.

There is a stereotype that those who were fortunate to come home usually expounded on their own experiences in order to somehow relive the “glory days” of their youth, but from talking to them, this was never, ever the case.

While their individual circumstances varied, whether they were fighting on the frontlines or working here on the home front, there was one overarching uniting factor: they shared their stories so us younger folk would appreciate the true horrors of war in the hopes of ensuring such things would never happen again.

Each passing Remembrance Day leaves us fewer and fewer people who are able to share their perspectives with younger generations, and while it took a while to get to this point, I think we’re sadly seeing the results of losing that lived experience from our discourse: horrors experienced by these people fading into history, leaving a door open for up-and-coming generations to downplay these unspeakable traumas, adopt an “Oh, it wasn’t THAT bad” mentality, cast doubt on what these men and women shared with us, or, at worst, dismiss them outright as fantasy, hoaxes, and conspiracies.

That old saying, “Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it,” holds no small amount of truth – and it’s not always even a matter of ignoring history; it could sometimes be simply a matter of not having access to it. And we are all the poorer for that.

Thankfully, so many veterans were generous enough with their time to share their experiences for posterity, and we are the richer for it, even if so many questions will forever be unanswered, but if only more people took the time to listen, read, and reflect on what they left behind.

I’m grateful to have some bonus time with my family member thanks to the team at Southlake Health and I’m damned if I’m not going to do my utmost to get all my outstanding questions answered and, yes, saved for posterity.

These reflections may not change the world, as the recollections of so many of our servicemen and women did, but, none of us know until we ask.

THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From page 4

the veteran, such as an identification card or service papers.

To honour the sacrifices made for all Canadians, at 11 a.m. on November 11, 2025, all YRT services will pull over to the curb for two minutes of silence, safety permitting.

York Region is also hosting a Remembrance Day Service on Tuesday, November 11, 2025, at the York Region Administrative Centre, 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket, starting at 10:25 a.m.

Region of York

The Veteran Banner

I stand at attention saluting with the navy salute to you my dear grandfather.

I am under your veteran banner feeling the winds so gently blowing near to my cheeks as if it is your kiss to your granddaughter whom in the history of war you never got to meet but from your only son your seeds of life blew into my breath of life.

When I visit again the raindrops are your tears in heaven falling to touch me in my sadness for not being able to experience our family history together but from my father and my mother I do exist to remember you.

Under all these veteran banners are the markings of our soldiers, a placement of time held in the colours along the sidewalks of our beloved Town. When you look upon all the faces, what history does it tell you? I know mine now more evidently all year long but more importantly on Remembrance Day. These tributes for your service are our conquering heroes' spirits of yesterday whom are the heartfelt beating in our country's airs of freedom.

When I gaze upon your face, dear grandfather, I sense a look of sadness which is like my own eyes.

Including in your portrait captured in time is our family's generational trait of also our nose and lips.

You have seen war firsthand, smelled the death of comrades, and spoken from your lips to pen through 65 letters sent to your wife the historical understanding of such an impact WWII had upon your life away in service.

I honored also your wife in this Remembrance my beloved grandmother Florence Kathleen Brennan who made me swear an oath when I was a young girl of sixteen that one day upon her death, I was to place her ashes into waters of the Atlantic Ocean to become entwined in an immortal bond of love once again.

Upon her passing many years later my broken heart fulfilled my promise to honor these wishes loving her and you to fulfill this bond of love for both in restful peace along the shores of the Bay of Fundy in Margaretsville, of her residence of many years watching these ocean tides of life waiting

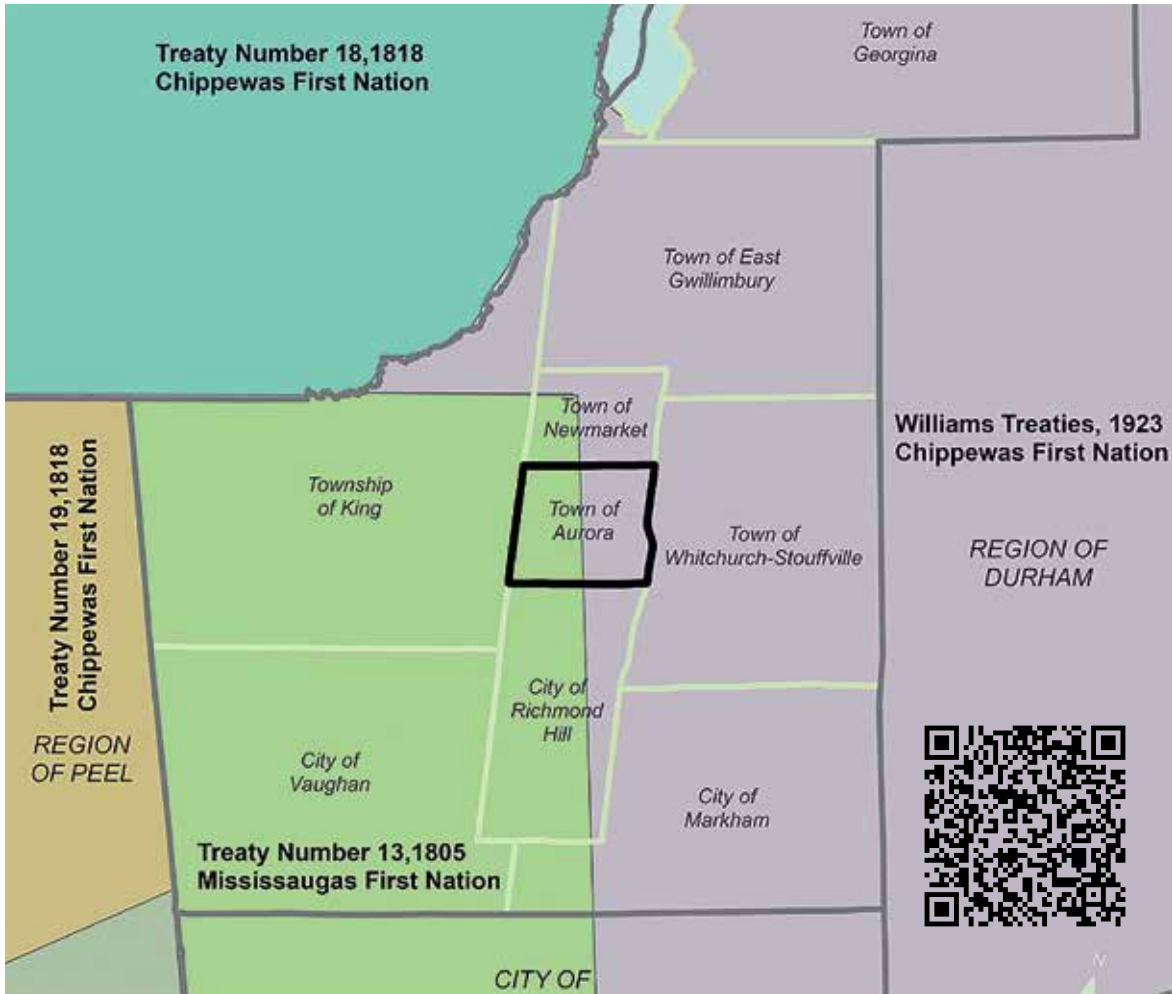
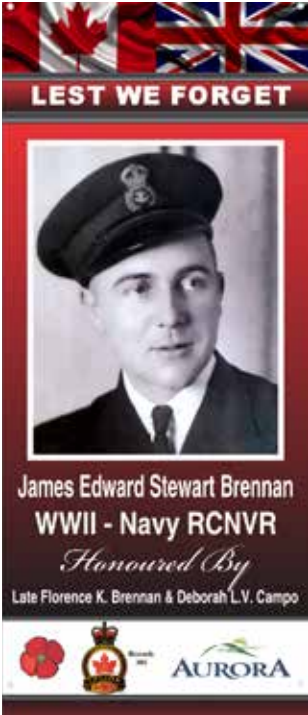
Together joined are our names in your remembrance.

The sun shall rise and set each day on this lamppost of this veteran's banner upon which displayed, I shall remember thee I shall remember your service with all the other courageous men and women honored along our streets. Thank you for your service.

James Edward Stewart Brennan RCNVR ERA (V25371) Age 30

WWII HMCS St. Croix Destroyer
181 Battle of The Atlantic
September 20, 1943, 57°.30N, - 31°,10' W

Deborah L.V. Campo
Aurora



Treaties Recognition Week

(November 2 to 8)

Ontario has observed Treaties Recognition Week since 2016 to encourage learning about treaty rights and relationships. This year, it takes place from November 2 to 8. Treaties are legally binding agreements between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Aurora is located within Treaty #13, signed in 1805, and the Williams Treaties, signed in 1923. We are all treaty people, and understanding these agreements is an important step toward reconciliation. To learn more, scan the QR code.



INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

Operation Market Garden

Frequently at this time of year as we approach Remembrance Day, the film “A Bridge Too Far” will be shown on TV. This excellent and star-studded World War 2 movie produced in 1977 chronicled Operation Market Garden, the Allied effort to push into Germany through the enemy-occupied Netherlands in late September 1944.

As the title suggests, the goal was only partially successful. While some Netherlands territory was liberated, and a few V2 rocket facilities were captured, the main bridge across the Rhine into Germany at Arnhem could not be seized, and many soldiers were killed, wounded or captured.

I never realized until reading my father's war diary after his death, that he was one of the tens of thousands of people involved in this operation.

At the time, dad was with the RCAF, and was the pilot of a Lancaster bomber based at 115 Squadron at Witchford, England. By late September, he and his crew (3 Canadians, 3 Brits and an American) had completed 28 missions, most of them at night, over France and Germany.

Overall, the missions described in his diary were harrowing, with the crew regularly navigating for several hours over unfamiliar territory in the dark, dealing with unpredictable weather and temperamental mechanical issues, while evading searchlights, flak positions, enemy fighters, and even other Allied aircraft, which often collided in the pitch-black conditions.

The thing I find most incredible

about all this, at the time dad was only 20 years old.

For their final two missions, they would be flying over The Netherlands as part of Operation Market Garden.

On the night of September 16, 54 Lancasters took off from England for the town of Moerdijk, about 20 kms south of Rotterdam. The target was a railway bridge near town, which if put out of commission, would hamper the Germans' ability to respond to the landing of Allied troops the next day. Unfortunately, the three-hour mission was only a partial success, as although the bridge was hit, it was not destroyed. Even worse for the Squadron, the plane of dad's good friends Peter Bickford and A.N. Johnston (no relation), went down and the men were killed on would have been their second-last mission. Dad actually saw that happen.

There was little time to mourn, however, as dad's crew was called to action again the following night, this time to a target not far from the first one. However, rather than bombing, the goal of this mission was to create diversions and confuse the German defenders.

As dad's plane approached the target the crew threw out bags of “window”, now referred to as chaff. It

consisted of thin strips of aluminum that clouded enemy radar, in this case with the intention of making the Germans think that gliders were coming in to land. The crew tossed out so much of it that they had an extra crew member along to assist in doing so. They stopped dropping it as they reached the target to make it look like the phantom aircraft had landed.

The crew also threw out dummy parachutists, which were one-metre-tall human-shaped figures that let off coloured flares and simulated rifle fire to make the Germans think that parachutists were landing.

In both cases on this mission, the Allied goal was to encourage the Germans to deploy their forces away from the real landings elsewhere. As dad described it in his diary, to get them “running around in circles as there were several other attacks happening at the same time.”

Many years ago, a historian in The Netherlands sent me a photo of one of the dummy parachutists from that raid that he had in his possession. It's one of the few that remain from Operation Market Garden.

It's amazing to think that it may have been one of the ones thrown from dad's plane on his final mission all those years ago.

As always, I'll be thinking of him on November 11.

Feel free to e-mail Scott
at: machellscorners@gmail.com



GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor
Tom Mrakas

Last week, I joined my fellow York Region Mayors and Deputy Mayors in Ottawa for an intensive series of meetings with federal Ministers, MPs, and national leaders — including Minister Champagne, Minister MacKinnon, Minister Anandasangaree, and Leader of the Opposition Pierre Poilievre — as well as many of York Region's own Members of Parliament.

Together, we focused on the issues that matter most to our communities: housing affordability, investments in critical water and wastewater infrastructure, and funding for transit expansion.

These are all essential to ensuring York Region continues to grow sustainably and that municipalities like Aurora have the tools and resources needed to serve residents effectively.

We also emphasized the need for meaningful bail reform — ensuring

our justice system better protects victims, supports law enforcement, and keeps our neighbourhoods safe. Public safety must remain a top priority for every level of government.

Our discussions were productive, collaborative, and forward-looking. It's clear that when municipalities, the province, and the federal government work together, we can make real progress on the challenges facing our residents.

I'll continue to advocate for our community's needs and ensure Aurora's voice — and York Region's voice — remains strong in every conversation about the future of our country.



RAISING REMEMBRANCE – The Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion’s Poppy Campaign continued last week when Branch President Bonnie Robertson and members of the Legion’s Colour Guard were joined at Town Hall by Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese and Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim, and representatives of MP Sandra Cobena and MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy – Nadia and Joanne – to raise the Poppy flag. Two Remembrance Day ceremonies will be held at the Cenotaph this year, including a parade and service this Sunday, November 9, beginning at 10.20 a.m., and on Remembrance Day itself – Tuesday, November 11 – at 10.45 a.m.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Residents support mission of incoming Retail Cannabis Task Force

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The creation of a new task force to look at the impacts of cannabis retail in Aurora has been backed by local residents who say they’ve been adversely affected by the placement of the stores – both as residents and business owners.

Council last week approved the establishment of a new Cannabis Retail Task Force that will “review the experience of the Town of Aurora since opting in to cannabis retail stores and identify issues that have arisen related to public safety, land use, business clustering, signage, community perception, and economic development.”

First proposed in a motion by Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo, the Task Force will also have its members – two members of Council, up to seven resident representatives, two members of Town Staff, and a member of the York Regional Police – “explore best practices from other municipalities regarding cannabis retail management and community impact.”

“Council has received feedback from residents expressing both support and concern regarding the number, location, and community impacts of cannabis retail stores,” said Councillor Gallo in his motion. “Municipalities currently have limited authority under the provincial regulatory framework to influence the siting and

density of cannabis retail stores, but continue to play an important role in community engagement, bylaw enforcement, public education, and advocacy to higher levels of government.

“It is in the Town’s interest to review the local impacts of retail cannabis stores – social, economic, and community – since opting in, and to identify potential strategies or advocacy opportunities to address any issues that have arisen.”

One such issue was identified at the podium at last week’s Council meeting when residents Juli and Ian Smith, along with Frank Marchese, came forward to speak about alleged illegal parking, loitering, abuse, and property value impacts related to one such dispensary on Yonge Street.

“Our quality of life has been severely impacted,” said Juli. “We every day experience many homeless or unhoused people, customers, everybody trespassing on our property, parking in front of our driveway so that we can’t get in or out at any time of day. We get a lot of cannabis garbage thrown around our property, on our property, and now we have people that come and look through the garbage hoping they’re going to find something. When we approach them, we are basically abused and verbally abused by these people who say they have the right to park wherever they want to. I have been abused many times by many customers. My husband has as well.

“On a daily basis, we have to deal with these people. Now that they spend a lot of time outside smoking, I see young families walking by with their kids and they have to be a part of this whole situation.”

The Smiths said they have asked for help from Mayor and Council, the Town’s bylaw department, and the Police to address many of these issues, particularly illegal parking, but were still waiting for

that help.

“I think it’s the municipality’s responsibility to see how they’re impacting the municipality,” said Ian. “It’s not an issue that is getting better. It’s not an issue that’s going to go away. I guess what we’re asking is we’d like to bring some attention to it. We’d like a potential task force or a board to look into how these shops and residential areas are impacting the people that live around them.”

Responding to the delegates, Councillor Gallo said their concerns haven’t “fallen on deaf ears.”

“The motion that’s on the agenda tonight is to strike a task force to try and figure out a strategy, not just for you, but there may be others in the community that are experiencing the same thing,” said Councillor Gallo, suggesting the delegates put themselves forward to serve on the task force.”

Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland, who said she’s been advocating for clear parking delineations in the area, said she hoped the creation of the task force would create some “collective solutions going forward to help the situation” and expressed “disappointment” that resources expected to come from the Provincial government to help address some of the impacts of cannabis sales did not come forward.

“We also have another two or three other complaints from neighbourhoods that are similar and, in my experience here, it really is the ownership and there are some things owners can do in order to manage the customers that they have in their stores,” said Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese.

Added Mayor Tom Mrakas: “I think we’re all looking forward to seeing the report and recommendations that come from the Task Force.”



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*14-year NHL veteran and 25-year League Exec Kris King
to be inducted into the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame*

BY JIM STEWART
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

After being drafted in 1984 by the Washington Capitals and bouncing between his OHL team in Peterborough and two AHL teams, Kris King's 14-year NHL career was a North American odyssey.

It started with two seasons as a Detroit Red Wing from 1987-1989 followed by three and a half memorable seasons with the New York Rangers.

The sturdy left winger was traded by the Rangers in December 1992 when he and Tie Domi were sent to the Winnipeg Jets for Eddie Olczyk.

King would serve as Captain of the Jets just before the franchise moved from Manitoba to the desert as the Coyotes were established in Phoenix in 1995. During his two-season sojourn in Arizona, King earned the King Clancy Memorial Trophy in 1996 for “exemplifying leadership qualities on and off the ice and for making significant humanitarian contributions to his community.”

The Award in many ways foreshadowed King's future leadership role with the NHL as the Vice President of Operations.

After helping with the transplant of the Winnipeg franchise in Phoenix, King was signed for three seasons in Toronto with the Maple Leafs from 1997-2000 which allowed him to settle his family in Aurora where he and Paula raised their family for fourteen years. The much-traveled veteran completed his NHL playing career in Chicago with the Blackhawks in 2001.

Upon retirement prior to the 2001-2002 season, King had played 849 games, tallied 66 goals and 85 assists, and amassed 2,030 penalty minutes along the way as a respected team leader on and off the ice for six franchises, including four Original Six teams.



Kris King
Photo by Glenn Rodger Photography/Aurora Sports Hall of Fame



AURORA SPORTS HALL *of* FAME

a player. He's served in an executive capacity at the NHL's headquarters in Toronto for the last twenty-five years. The long-time Aurora resident—currently residing where his roots are in Muskoka—is the NHL's Senior Vice-President of Operations.

I caught up with King during his commute from cottage country to downtown Toronto – after texting him one of my favorite Kris King Upper Deck hockey cards as an icebreaker. His action card photograph was taken during his last season in New York in 1992-93 and he was amused by the gesture.

After getting situated for our interview, the 59-year-old League exec texted me back with a concise summation of the card, the Rangers' rise to prominence, the upside to the trade to Winnipeg, and a smidge of remorse about missing the Rangers' historic 1994 Cup win: "Funny. Good team. Tough trade that worked out. Minus The Cup, of course."

We started our conversation there—

smack dab in the middle of his NHL career as he witnessed the rise of the Rangers to the status of Stanley Cup contender in 1992:

The Auroran: Let's talk about the Big Trade. You and Tie Domi get traded by the Rangers to the Jets for Eddie O on December 28, 1992. How significant was this trade for your career?

Kris King: Anytime you get dealt, it's tough, but I was quite excited. Roger Neilson was the Coach in Winnipeg. I worked at Roger's hockey schools in the summer. We had two really good seasons in New York, but we were struggling that year. Tie and I found it strange that we were both sitting out versus the Bruins. Usually at least one of us would be on the ice. Something didn't feel right when both of us were in the press box. As it turned out, we were traded that night, but it was great for us to go to the Jets—we had some great young players but they were being taken advantage of. Tie and I went to Winnipeg to give the Jets more toughness and provide the talented young players

with more room to operate. As a family move and a hockey move, it was like going home to a smaller hockey town. Paula and I loved it in Winnipeg—we still have friends from our time there. I was also put into a leadership role in Winnipeg and it was a really positive experience. I became the last Captain of the original Jets. Keith Tkachuk was the Captain, but [Winnipeg General Manager] John Paddock asked me to be the Captain so Keith could focus on his game when we were in our difficult last season in Winnipeg. I was told to ‘get us through this year’ and I was the guy chosen to lead the team during what was a tough time for the fans with the team on the move. It was an honor. It was a lame duck season in Winnipeg, but as a group, we were determined to play as hard as we could for the fans despite the move to Phoenix. There was an excitement, too, about going to Arizona, but we loved our stay in Winnipeg. It felt like home and it was a great place for our family.

The Auroran: Speaking of home and family, what was your reaction when you received your call from the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame?

Kris King: I can say honestly that I was proud and surprised, especially since Paula and I are no longer living in the community. I know how important the induction into the Hall was for Murph (2016 ASHOF Inductee Mike Murphy) and I feel the same way. We lived fourteen years in Aurora. We had our first hockey home in Aurora after living and renting in Detroit, New York, Winnipeg, Phoenix. When I signed with Toronto, we bought our home, raised our kids, and felt a connection to their school communities, too.

The Auroran: Many of those connections will be evident at Thursday's ceremony. You're about to be enshrined in the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame with a number of former

Continued on page 12

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Proposed Community Permit system for Aurora’s downtown gets initial Council support

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A Community Planning Permit System (CPP) in Aurora’s historic downtown core, which is designed to streamline the planning process and intensify the area in a way that respects existing heritage buildings, got tentative Council support last week.

The CPP System was the subject of the October 29 Public Planning meeting and was the first formal opportunity Council had to weigh in on the plan, following public open houses and presentations to citizen advisory committees.

While the proposal is designed to streamline the process, it is also intended to give the municipality more of a say in how intensification takes place, including setbacks from the street – particularly Yonge Street – and materials used to ensure it fits well within the surrounding area.

“The CPPS consolidates Zoning, Site Plan, and Minor Variance applications into one streamlined approval process,” said staff in a report before Council at the meeting. “A CPP Bylaw implements the CPPS by setting the development standards and requirements for the bylaw area. Through the CPP Bylaw, the Town is proactively setting the criteria for development in the Downtown and positioning itself to responsibly manage future growth in the area.

“The CPP Bylaw can manage future growth in the Downtown in a sensible manner. The as-of-right development concept within the CPP Bylaw area would allow for approximately 1,100 units with maximum height being six storeys north of Wellington Street and five storeys everywhere else. Although the maximum heights under this development concept are currently permitted as of right, the zero metre setback and three metre step back above the third storey on Yonge Street would create a pedestrian environment that is possibly less friendly and also less sensitive to the heritage buildings in the area, as referenced by the Downtown Urban Design Study. The lack of step back distance creates an imposing street wall and any additional massing would significantly alter the built form character of the area.

“The alternative development concept proposes greater heights but offsets the height increase by concentrating the massing of new buildings in the interior of the sites with greater step backs. By



An artist's rendering of how Aurora's historic downtown core might look with intensification behind the heritage facades. **Town of Aurora Image**

increasing the step back above the third storey to ten metres and requiring an additional ten metre step back again above the fifth storey, totalling to 20 metres of step back, the taller buildings proposed under this concept have less of an impact on pedestrian views, the heritage façade, and the street wall of Yonge Street. Through careful consideration of increased step backs, the alternative development concept introduces greater height while producing a better built form.”

At this first Council meeting getting into the details surrounding the CPP, Council voiced support of the alternative development concept, going for greater heights in the core but with greater step backs to preserve the heritage feel of the Yonge and Wellington corridor. Questions, however, still remained over the impacts such a move would have on downtown parking and on surrounding streets, particularly Temperance, which could see large builds dwarfing existing homes.

“I personally prefer the alternative option mainly because it offers more flexibility and incentivizes owners to make the necessary changes to make the downtown more vibrant and walkable and certainly makes a business case to do that,” said Ward 6 Councillor Harold

Kim. While he said he preferred the alternative option, he asked staff for assurances there is flexibility within the proposal so “we’re not going to have any regrets given that this is locked in for five years.”

Tentative support was also offered by Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, who represents the Ward that would be most impacted by the CPP, if it is ultimately approved by Council.

“Frankly, I’m emboldened by this,” he said. “I’ve lived in this community for 40 years and this revitalization of the downtown area has been a concern for 40 years or so. It’s a pleasure to see the attempts going forward. I think there’s some work left to be done that we’ve heard here and some of it is very practical, but I want to thank the group for pulling this together and the Planning staff for the work that they’ve done in it.”

Some of the work left to be done, Weese said, included the potential of looking into step backs as an opportunity to create greenspace above street level, and ensuring that any builds that result from the CPP in the years ahead be subject to pre-construction evaluations to ensure that vibrations and any other disruptions from construction won’t damage nearby heritage buildings –

commercial or residential. “From a communication standpoint, it’s important to identify what those revitalization benefits really are to the public and others,” he said. “When we talk to residents, they always talk about connectivity, walkability, all the things that this is going to provide, so I just hope we can do that.”

Also voicing support for the concept as a way to install “some guardrails in place to manage how development is done downtown” was Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo.

That said, however, he noted he hoped further details, including greater visualization on how larger builds would appear from street level, would come forward to Council before too long

“I would have really liked to have seen some type of a fly-through or a walk-through of these streets to give us a sense of what does 10 metres look like at eight-storeys versus 30 metres at nine storeys, 10 metres at five storeys,” he said. “Maybe that can still be done for Council and the public. I believe it would be very, very helpful because... I feel like that’s the big decision we’re making. What are we allowing to take place in our downtown that will never be changed? Let’s get it right. Let’s see what an average person would actually see if they’re walking through in these various scenarios.”

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Preserving heritage while welcoming growth are public concerns as Council considers downtown’s future

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Preserving existing heritage while welcoming new growth in Aurora’s historic downtown core were among the key issues expressed by residents last week at a Public Planning meeting held to discuss Aurora’s proposed Community Planning Permit System.

The system (CPP) was at the heart of Wednesday’s public planning meeting.

If approved, it will simplify and speed up planning applications in Aurora’s historic downtown core, potentially leading to significant intensification behind the area’s heritage facades, and multi-storey developments along Temperance Street.

Should the CPP be ultimately adopted by Council, it would give the municipality further controls on how the area is intensified – including the look, style and materials used in the new builds, along with how far they are set back from the landmark buildings south of Yonge and Wellington.

Area residents came out to last week’s Public Planning meeting to express their views on the proposals, and while they shared the view that revitalization is key to the downtown core’s future, the ideal way to go about it depended on perspective.

“As a resident that enjoys everything that is beautiful this Town has to offer, I feel that this proposal for the CPP system is an important one that needs to be carefully followed in order to preserve the heritage and culture of Aurora while allowing the controlled, needed growth and revitalization which is very important to the downtown core,” said Rocco Marcello, a member of the Old Aurora Ratepayers Association.

“Staff have done an excellent job identifying the key values and the areas in which we can improve on current zoning and nailing down a plan that can be utilized to allow all residents to enjoy the downtown core for many years to come.”

In his delegation, he advocated for options calling for greater setbacks from existing buildings, stating that 10-metre offsets rather than just three, will dovetail better with the neighbourhood, with smaller setbacks leading to “overcrowding,” the creation of “eyesores,” and the risk of damaging the structural integrity of the heritage properties.

Resident Sean Dean was next, questioning whether area property-owners had a buy-in to this plan, whereas long-time neighbour Angela Daust, who lives near the Amica and Aurora United Church rebuild at Yonge and Tyler said intensification already ongoing in the area has highlighted issues.

“I have a great interest in the future of Aurora, but I have a lot

of concerns about this proposed development,” she said, first addressing the issue of where people might park should intensification be welcomed.

“How many more people can you squeeze into this area? It’s to the point where I don’t know where you’re even going to put the cars on the road,” she said, before asking how infrastructure for such an influx of people in the area would be supported.

Additional concerns included construction challenges due to the area’s sandy soils and high water table, impacts to construction on nearby buildings built on rubble foundations, and the massing of large buildings compared to “little tiny historic homes.”

“What kind of daylight are they going to get? Nothing. They’re going to be growing like moss in the middle of a well,” she concluded. “Progress is good in some way, but the expense of residents should not be from the progress that’s going forward.”

Resident David Heard agreed it’s a “tough situation” but said the Downtown Core as it stands is “struggling.”

“It’s not vibrant and I would say, some people aren’t going to like this, at times it’s not clean. It’s not a place I feel like I want to shop because there aren’t destinations. I believe destinations that are successful in business are places that build community. I don’t think barbershops and dentists are really community-builders. So, what do we need? We need a vibrant space where people live, they work, and they play. Can we gain that right now in the present Downtown Core?

“I used to live downtown in the 1980s and worked locally. I dream for that day again. Hopefully soon... I want to see the Downtown Core do well, to be vibrant, but I also want to see history preserved, the facades protected. That look is a powerful look. Our downtown core has character, but it has a story – it has an incredible story of us impacting not just local economy, but global economy. I think we really need to take a look at this. I hear all the points of all the residents, I really do. We need to find balance. Right now, the present system isn’t working.

“[People] living there increases safety and pride in your community. Right now, we don’t have a lot of that.... We need a walkable community and really attractive community-built businesses in those retail stores. We need residents, without a question, maybe some affordable housing too while we’re at it. Maybe that could be a bigger plan. If we’re going to do this, we need housing and we need people that can afford housing – working with the Region, maybe working with the Province, and working with the Federal government.”

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WE REMEMBER

Electronic bikes and scooters should stay off local trails, says Council

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora’s trails system should be free of e-bikes and scooters, says Council.

Last week, local lawmakers voted in favour of developing signage and an education campaign to remind trail users that these vehicles, which have exploded in popularity in recent years, have no place on local trail systems.

While mobility aids, such as electric wheelchairs, are exempt from any bylaw as far as trail usage goes, Council have directed staff to develop a campaign “to inform residents and visitors of the existing prohibition of motorized vehicles on the trail systems” along with installing signage at trail access points underscoring that these

types of vehicles are not allowed.”

The education campaign was first brought forward by Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim and while the majority of Council thought it was a step in the right direction, Councillors Rachel Gilliland and John Gallo suggested the move was premature before pinning down exactly what the Town defines as a “motorized vehicle.”

“Aurora has one of the finest trail systems in York Region, as most of us know,” said Councillor Kim, speaking to his motion last week. “For a small municipality like ours, we have a well-planned trail system that is enjoyed by many residents, but in order to be enjoyed, users need to feel safe. With the onset of electric scooters, electric bikes, and even human-powered bikes that travel very fast, it’s been very challenging for certain segments of the population, or indeed everybody, to feel safe and enjoy the trail system.

“Our current bylaws already prohibit electric or motorized vehicles on our trails, so essentially the motion is to request that staff develop an education and communication plan to ensure every resident is aware of our bylaw and to share the trails with others for all to enjoy. I know when there’s large municipal signs, most residents will abide by them. Not all, but most, and signs are a start. These steps won’t solve all the issues, nor will it deter everyone from still using electric scooters or bikes on our trails, but I do believe this will be a step in the right direction.”

Supporting the motion was Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, who said the Town has to “protect active transportation routes.”

“The purpose of those trails is for physical activity and transportation,” he said, adding that enforcement will be the biggest challenge, including the capacity of the Town’s Bylaw Department to make that happen. “I’d like to see what happens

with respect to enforcement because we have quite a little bit of trails around here and we’re quite proud of those trails, and I’d like to see them used appropriately and safely.”

Also supporting the motion was Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner, who said she has already fielded complaints about conventional bicycle use on the trails, let alone e-bikes.

“We are already having....constant complaints about bicycle speeding. To me, that should be an indication that we shouldn’t be allowing any type of electric vehicle on our trails,” she said, noting she did not include accessibility aids under that umbrella. “We’re talking about the safety of walkers and other bicyclists on the trail – the children, a lot of seniors. If we’re having trouble with bicycles, I think that’s enough trouble.”

For some Councillors, however, more work needed to be done to consider the full definition of electric vehicles, given the number of different options currently on the market.

While Councillor Gilliland said she believed an education campaign made sense, she noted the relevant bylaws as to what constitutes a vehicle in this sense haven’t been updated since 2005. There are multiple different classes of e-bikes, she said, and it was “rare” among municipalities to issue an outright ban.

“A pedal-assist mode e-bike would be something that would be considered very common for municipalities to allow on a trail versus a motorized throttle-version of an e-bike that would not be allowed,” she said. “The Ministry of Transportation has been encouraging municipalities to develop their own bylaws around this to manage this

type of new technology.

“While I appreciate the intent and the motion and the educational piece, I feel like what we really need to be doing is pausing this motion and revising the bylaw to modernize the definition of e-bike in classes and have staff report back on whether or not we want to ban e-bikes outright or if we want to delineate what these classes are. From there, then I think it would make much more sense to be doing an educational piece after that fact so there’s no confusion. Personally, I certainly don’t want to ban e-bikes out completely without having to understand the different classes and what they mean.”

While Councillor Gallo was initially supportive of the motion, he said he was “intrigued” by the issues brought forward by Councillor Gilliland.

“I feel like this is an issue of speed rather than the mode in which someone is traveling,” he said. “I’m starting to believe that a little more thought should be put into this. If I had a scooter...and if it was not very quick and I had a choice to be on the side of the road to get around Town, if it’s treated like a bicycle versus on a trail, I would pick a trail over the road, provided there’s certain speed limits and it doesn’t pose any hazard to anyone else any more than a bicycle would.

“I would support exploring this a little further and determining what those classes are, if we want to allow one of the lower classes, and exploring that. Maybe we don’t, I don’t know, and we have to put more thought towards it – but generally, I support what we’re doing here, I support the concept [but] maybe we take a step back and re-analyze it.”

The motion was passed on a vote of 5 – 2.



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King to be inducted into Sports Hall of Fame

From page 7

NHLers—Greg Hotham (2014), Steve Vickers (2021), Mike Palmateer (2017), Mike Kitchen (2016), Jim Thomson (2023), Dave and Ryan Gardner (2019), Bob Wall (2017), Mike Murphy (2016).....How does it make you feel to join these fellow inductees?

Kris King: So many of the guys I played with when I was with the Leafs settled in Aurora and in the surrounding towns like Ballantrae and King City. Like so many NHLers who lived in Aurora, our kids had friends at school and in the neighbourhood. When we finally settled in one place, it was kind of neat. All the good memories we had in Aurora – to be recognized by the Town’s Hall of Fame after enjoying so much of my time in Aurora is something very special to me. The Hall of Fame staff in Aurora does such an amazing job. [Aurora Sports Hall of Fame President Javed Khan’s] emails show his attention to details – it’s on a different level compared to many other sports Hall of Fames. I’m looking forward to the interactions with my fellow inductees.

The Auroran: Let’s focus on your current role with the NHL. What’s the most enjoyable aspect of your job as Senior Vice President of Operations at the league’s headquarters in Toronto?

Kris King: I was retired for about two months and I had an opportunity to start work with the NHL with two of my former coaches—Colin Campbell and Mike Murphy. We were all connected to Roger Neilson so it was a great working environment. Working as a VP has allowed me to stay in the game that I’ve loved since I was a kid. I grew up around the rinks in Bracebridge. To be so lucky to get a job in the league, to be there for 25 years, and to help make sure the game is played the right way is special to me.

The Auroran: Has it helped you as an NHL executive to have played in so many of the best hockey markets in North America and what were your favourite places to live?

Kris King: We had so many different

experiences. We were young parents in Detroit. Living in Rye, New York was a big change for us. Our favourite place to play and live was in Winnipeg. Not too many guys say that about Winnipeg, but we loved it. It was smaller and it reminded me of home in Muskoka. It was a great place to raise the kids. We made so many friends—the parents of our kids’ friends. All the situations we experienced helped us learn about ourselves.

The Auroran: After re-settling your family four times and playing hockey in four cities, what was the highlight of signing in Toronto and being a Toronto Maple Leaf for three seasons?

Kris King: It was so exciting to play for the team that I grew up cheering for, but also to live in Aurora so we could buy our first house. We were so happy with the kids’ schooling, too. There was an Aurora connection on the team. Kitch [Mike Kitchen], Cujo [Curtis Joseph], and I would drive together with Murph [Mike Murphy]. We would make our way down the highway to go to work. I remember finding out as a non-restricted free agent about the possibility of playing in Toronto after coming off my second season in Arizona. My agent contacted me when I was at a wedding in Vancouver and he told me ‘we had some interest in Toronto.’ He told me later that day that he ‘had just heard from Toronto and you can go home.’ I called my dad and he was so thrilled. Playing at Maple Leaf Gardens was so great. My first game as a Leaf was the highlight. My dad was standing there along the boards behind the glass during warmups and he gave me the thumbs up and I gave him a wink. It was a special moment to be home and share it with my dad.

Kris King, Erlinda Biondic, Robert Reid, and Heather Morning will be enshrined in the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame in a community ceremony on Thursday, November 6. The 12th Annual ASHoF Induction and Celebration Evening will commence at 5.30 p.m. at the Royal Venetian Mansion.



As we mark Remembrance Day, Aurora honours all who have served in times of war and peace, and those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the country we are proud to call home.

May their courage and dedication continue to guide us, and may we always honour their legacy.




Mayor Tom Mrakas

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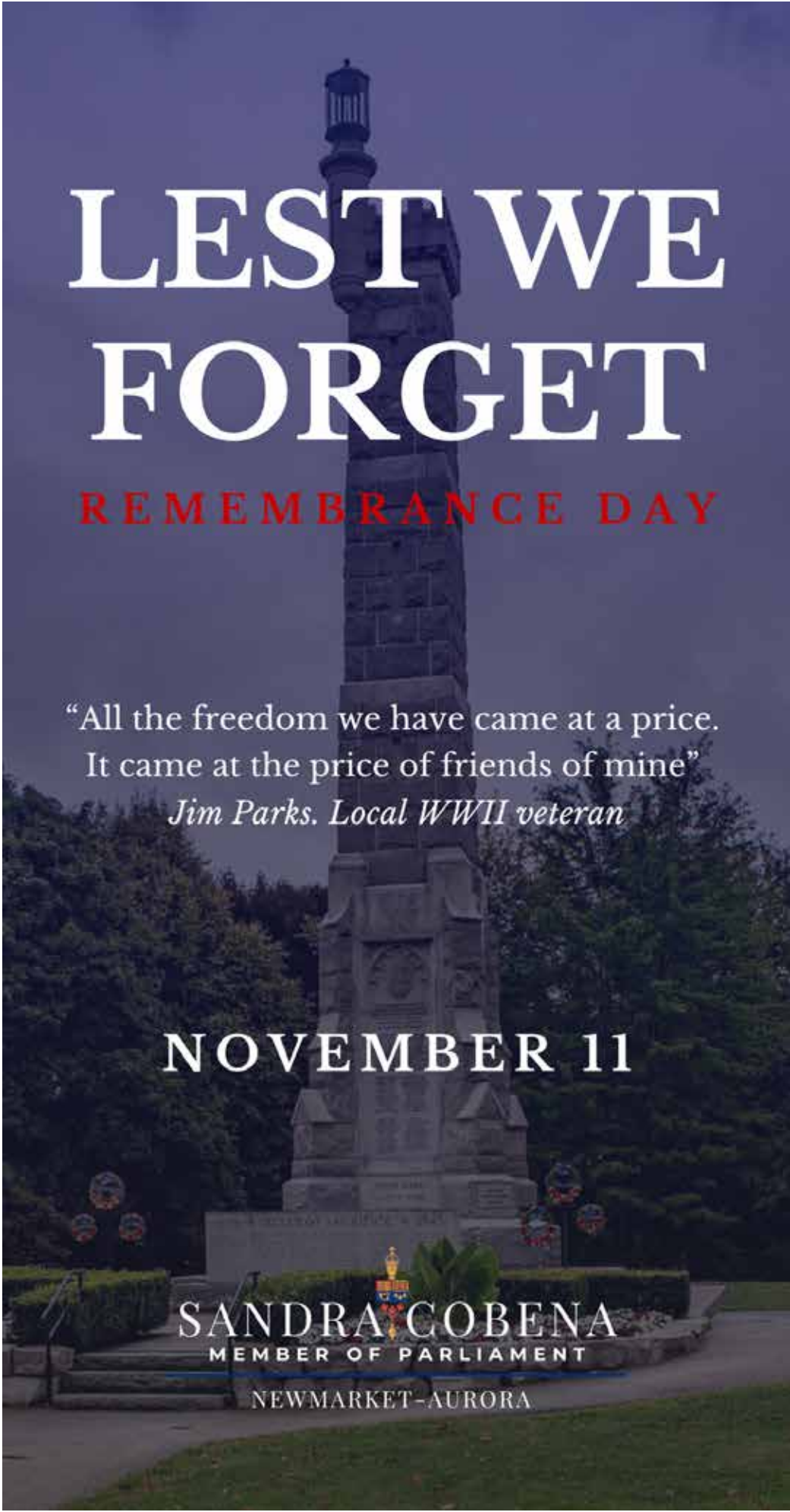
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NOVEMBER 11

SANDRA COBENA
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
NEWMARKET–AURORA






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REMEMBRANCE DAY

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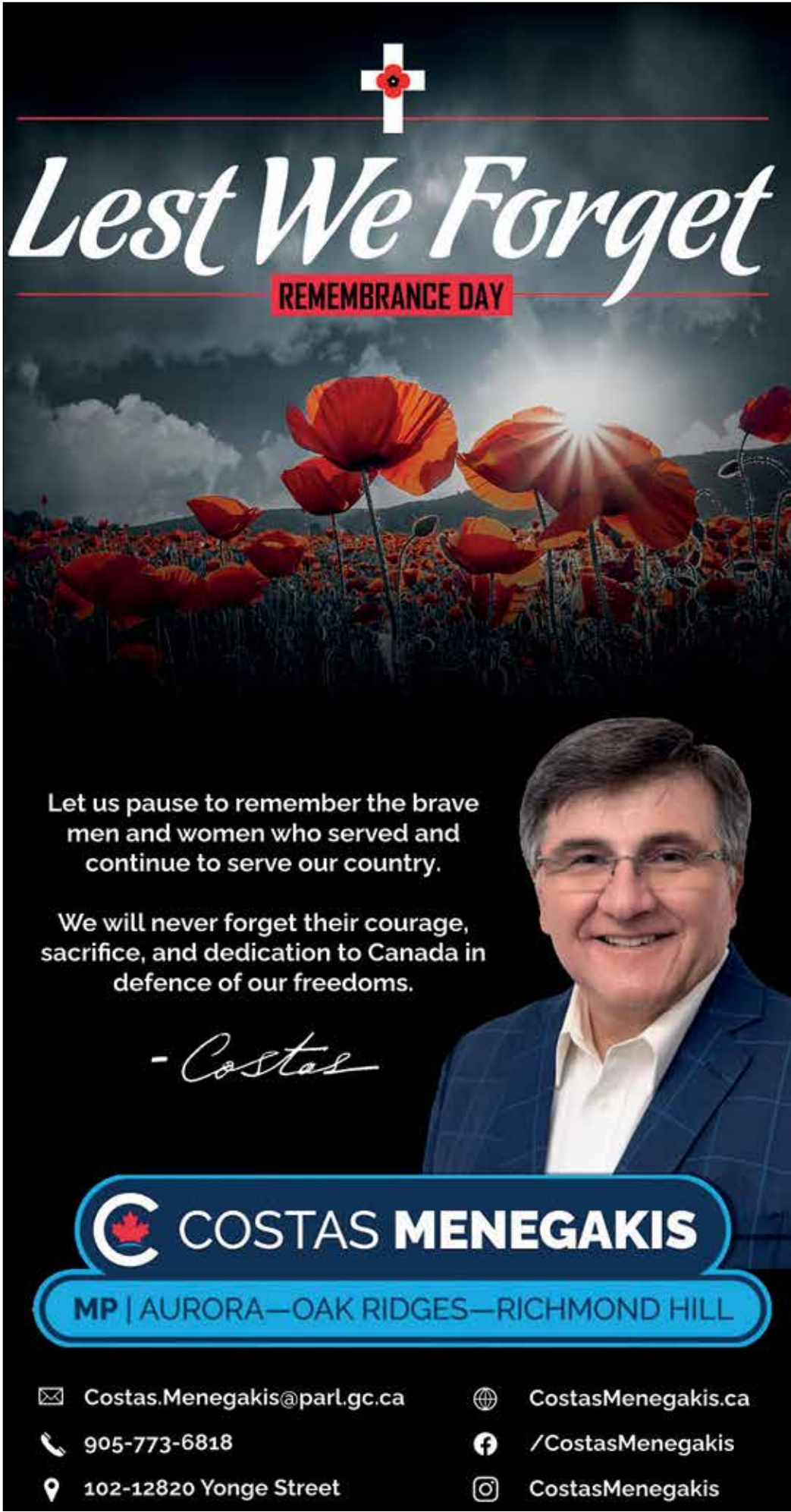
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Remembrance Day





MICHAEL PARSA, MPP
Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill

905-773-6250
michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org



Music, espionage and holiday cheer on tap at Aurora Town Square this month

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

From wartime espionage to holiday cheer, November is shaping up to be a busy month at Aurora Town Square. A sold-out screening of the documentary We Lend a Hand: The

Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes leads the Town Square-sponsored programming this month on November 12, in a program co-organized by local historian Christopher Watts. The documentary, which tells the story of 40,000 teen girls who spent the Second World War working on Canadian farms, is a fitting way to

follow Remembrance Day, and includes a Q&A session with filmmakers. A look back at heritage continues on November 25 with two performances of the play Spycraft, a two-act thriller set in 1942 in which focuses on “a middle-aged Canadian woman and hidden Jew joins Churchill’s Special Operations Executive in London during WWII as a spy in occupied France,” says the Town. “Her British male colleague is skeptical she’ll make a difference because she’s a woman – and an ‘old’ one at that. But she defies expectations and challenges the chauvinism and ageism of the times by using her invisibility as an asset and employing a classically female craft to pass coded intelligence about the Nazis to the Allies: knitting.”

are in it are big volunteers at Town Square and such a part of the Aurora community, so we’re thrilled. We talked about this with Sean way back when we brought The Rug in, we said, ‘Okay, we’re going to bring Silver Screammers here too when you’re ready,’ so this has also been another one that’s a long time coming, and we’re just so excited about it.”

Youth will have the chance to get in on the action, too, as Aurora Town Square and the Aurora Museum & Archives host P.A. Day at the Museum on November 21, which will offer youngsters a full day of “hands-on heritage fun” including the chance to curate their own mini-exhibit. “One of our biggest goals is to make the community museum accessible and to see excitement in the community for all ages in history and heritage in the museum,” says Campsall. “Things have been going so well since we opened last year, and this is another program that we think will really bring that to the community.”

As the holiday season approaches, Aurora Town Square is set to be a destination as it plays host to the Town’s annual Christmas Market. As part of the two-weekend event, Town Square will host film screenings of Elf on November 28 and Home Alone on November 30, while the Borealis Big Band will present “A Jazzy Christmas” on November 29.

“We’ve been getting into film screenings at Town Square, and we’ve seen a very good response from the community, so we’re excited,” says Campsall. “Home Alone is an absolute classic. Personally, I can sit there and recite the whole movie, so I know I have to get my own tickets for my family as well, and so it’ll be really great to enjoy it together. I think that’s one of the things that I personally enjoy most about being at Town Square during these various events and concerts and programs is being able to experience it all with the crowd that’s there, with the community members. When you see participants there enjoying a concert, you can really feel their joy.”

“We’re seeing all ages come through the space, whether it be attending a show, we just had the Blue Jays watch parties, coming by the café for a treat – it’s been fascinating to see really every different type of community member enjoying the space in one or more ways. It really does have something for everybody.”

For more information on what’s in store this month at Aurora Town Square, including tickets, visit aurora.ca/whatson.

The Aurora Town Square production of the play has been “a long time coming,” says Campsall, adding it’s been in the works since before Town Square formally opened to the public. If Spycraft shines a light on an older woman who might feel “invisible,” the flipside will be in focus on November 16 when the Town of Aurora presents the Silver Screammers, a documentary by York Region-based filmmaker Sean Cisterna, which charts the making of his short film, The Rug. Shot in Aurora, the production of The Rug was made possible through the participation of local seniors who came together to learn new skills and take on behind-the-scenes production roles.

“We were able to debut The Rug as part of our grand opening performances back a year ago, last year when Town Square opened, and so we are thrilled that the documentary about the making of The Rug, called Silver Screammers, is able to now also debut here in Aurora,” says Campsall. “We’ve worked closely with Sean Cisterna, whose film this is, and then of course a few of the seniors who

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Give the gift of Canada – and community – this holiday season at Oakridge’s Fashions

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Give the gift of Canada this holiday season as Oakridge’s Fashions launches its annual Giving Shop.

Open now at the popular boutique located in the heart of Aurora’s historic downtown, this year’s Giving Shop features an array of festive gift ideas, most of which have been sourced from within Canada, representing almost every Province.

“We really worked hard to source a lot of items that were made in Canada – and, interestingly, most by small businesses,” says Deborah Clark, owner of Oakridge’s Fashions. “There’s representation of Canada’s small businesses who make everything from small-batch chocolate in Montreal, beautiful syrups from a company in Manitoba, a line of cork earrings made by a young woman in her small business in Alberta, and Salt Spring Kitchen is back again with their jams, spreads and savoury items from Salt Spring Island, BC.”

Additional products include artisanal soaps from Edmonton, AB, organic tea from Newfoundland, and custom-made Canadian-themed coasters.

Close to home, the Giving Shop also features an array of items from York Region businesses, including a line of pickled jalapenos from a Newmarket-based small business, and Jude’s Miracle Cloth, a product made by a small-business owner in Georgina.

Proceeds from the Giving Shop will benefit several community organizations: the Canadian Federation of University Women’s scholarship programs, Rose of Sharon Services to Young Mothers, CHATS – Community & Home Assistance to Seniors, the Alzheimer Society of York Region, and emergency care at Southlake Health.

“The more the Giving Shop makes, the

more we send out the door,” says Clark. Clark, who is passionate about carrying Canadian products at Oakridge’s, began sourcing items for this year’s Giving Shop back in August. It was, she says, a painstaking but rewarding process. “You’re looking for things that are for men, women, and children,” she says, adding she has a lengthy list of criteria she hopes to fill before items end up on their shelves. “There is no end of wonderful items out there to buy. We did our very best and every year I tend to think that we have done better than the year before and I think this is true because we are getting better and better at this. It’s a process, but I think there are some really wonderful things.”

While there is an array of new products in the Giving Shop this year, there are some returning favourites at the heart of it all. Popular jams and jellies will once again be featured, along with stocking stuffer gadgets, Frasier Fir-scented candles, and faux-suede stretchable gloves.

Also returning this year is the latest installment of the Mischief Mice, a series of children’s books penned by Clark, and inspired by the Canadian-sourced felted mice which decorate the Christmas Tree at the centre of the store, which are also for sale.

This year’s story, A Wish and a Twirl, follows one of the original mice, Giselle, as she pursues her dream of becoming a ballerina in the Nutcracker, with some help from her mouse friends.

“I think this has become one of my favourite things to do,” says Clark of penning the stories.

“Whether it’s scouring the halls for vendors (at gift shows) that have Canadian products, or whether it’s figuring out what this year’s book will be, I just feel so alive when we can be doing something that is going to help others. It’s just everything to me and it is central to who I am, so it makes me excited.”



Contributed Photos

Oakridge’s Fashions is located at 15195 Yonge Street, just south of Wellington. For more information, visit oakridgefashions.com.

DOWNTOWN LIVING



Amica Aurora Promenade, a new retirement residence built in conjunction with the new Aurora United Church on Yonge Street, just north of Tyler Street, held a formal Grand Opening ribbon cutting ceremony last week, signalling its arrival in Town’s historic downtown core. Participating in the event were, from left, Derek, Betty, and Emily.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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A DINNER TO REMEMBER



On Saturday, the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion hosted its annual Remembrance Dinner, bringing the community together to break bread, remember the fallen, and highlight all the services local Legions have to offer. Among those attending this year's dinner were MPP Michael Parsa, Mayor Tom Mrakas, keynote speaker Jeremy Hood of the Aurora Museum and Archives, who delivered a keynote on the 100th anniversary of the Aurora Cenotaph, and Alan Dean, who was recognized with the Ontario Veterans Award for Community Service Excellence. A centrepiece of the evening was a performance from Aurora's North Dance Company's Inter-Competitive Team, inspired by In Flanders Fields, directed by Alex Harrington, and featuring dancers between the ages of twelve and fourteen. (Top) Mayor Mrakas, MPP Parsa and Legion officials honour Dean. Live entertainment kept attendees entertained. (Middle) Pipers added an air of solemnity. Among those with a hand in preparing the meal were Carol, Carrine, Eva, and Dana. (Above) The North Dance Company performs. Hood delivers his keynote.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger



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Southlake doctors strut their

Whiskey, Wine & MR Menswear is ongoing

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Giving back was fashion-forward on Thursday evening as Aurora and Newmarket came together for the semi-annual Whiskey, Wine & MR Menswear fashion show, benefiting local cancer care at Southlake Health.

Hosted by cancer survivor and local business leader Mike Rathke, owner of the Industrial Parkway South-based MR Menswear, the October 30 event saw eight Southlake physicians hit the catwalk in MR Menswear fashions, raising a whopping \$140,000 for the Southlake Regional Cancer Centre in the process.

“A heartfelt thank you to everyone here tonight supporting this incredible event,” said Rathke, following a moving video featuring his mother, wife, and two daughters, recalling his cancer journey and the importance of having top-quality cancer care close to home. “I’m so proud of how far this show has come since we first



MR Menswear owner Mike Rathke showcases some of the fashions from his Industrial Parkway South shop during last week's fundraiser. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

began in 2016, the impact of all of us here together – our guests, our sponsors, and our models.”

Emceeding this year's fashion show once again was Steve Hinder, who described Rathke as “stronger than any athlete or bodybuilder out there – he’s my hero.”

“Mike talked a bit about the community that we’re in and I just have to add one more thing: the Southlake Family is different,” said Hinder, Co-Chair of Southlake’s Philanthropy Cabinet. “The doctors are giving up their time tonight, together with our Physicians’ Council. ... It’s because they know it takes all of us to provide the best care possible to our patients and our loved ones, and that we’re truly in this together.”

“We all need one another to be successful in this hospital. It’s a very unique relationship, I believe, at Southlake, and one we’re all extremely grateful for.”

This was echoed by Jennifer Ritter, President of the Southlake Health Foundation, who said the auditorium at Newmarket’s NewRoads Performing Arts Centre was “filled with joy and generosity.”

“Sincere gratitude to Mike Rathke for

just pouring his heart and his soul into everything that he does,” said Ritter. “Mike is a true community champion, a pillar in our community, and an inspiration to so many of us. Mike, thank you so much from the bottom of our hearts – we’re so grateful. It makes such an impact for so many other people who came to Southlake for treatment at our Cancer Centre, which is among the top three cancer centres in Ontario, something we should all be proud of.”

“Mike, this event tonight makes such a great impact.”

While there were plenty of smiles and laughter to go around as the physicians took their turn on the runway, perhaps the most fun job of the evening went to Dr. Paul Woods, President & CEO of Southlake Health who had the honour of presenting tongue-in-cheek awards to the models, including Southlake’s Next Top Model, which went to Dr. Philip Butler.

“The best part of my job is being able to go into work every day and to work alongside these eight guys,” said Woods of the physician-models, “and there are

hundreds of colleagues in our staff each and every day. It’s truly a remarkable place to work. Thank you for putting it out there tonight, but thank you even more for what you do each and every day for the people we serve.”

The evening’s winners:

- Atrial Fabulation Award: Dr. Christopher Overgaard
- Bedside Manner Runway Glamour Award: Dr. Danyal Saeed
- Paging Dr. Runway Award: Dr. Philip Buckler
- Born to Slay Award: Dr. Matthew Laskin
- Code Blue Steel Award: Dr. Chris Coutinho
- No Complications Award: Dr. John Randle
- Smooth Operator Award: Dr. Lukasz Boba
- Veteran of Vogue Award: Dr. Peter Anglin
- Southlake’s Next Top Model: Dr. Philip Buckler

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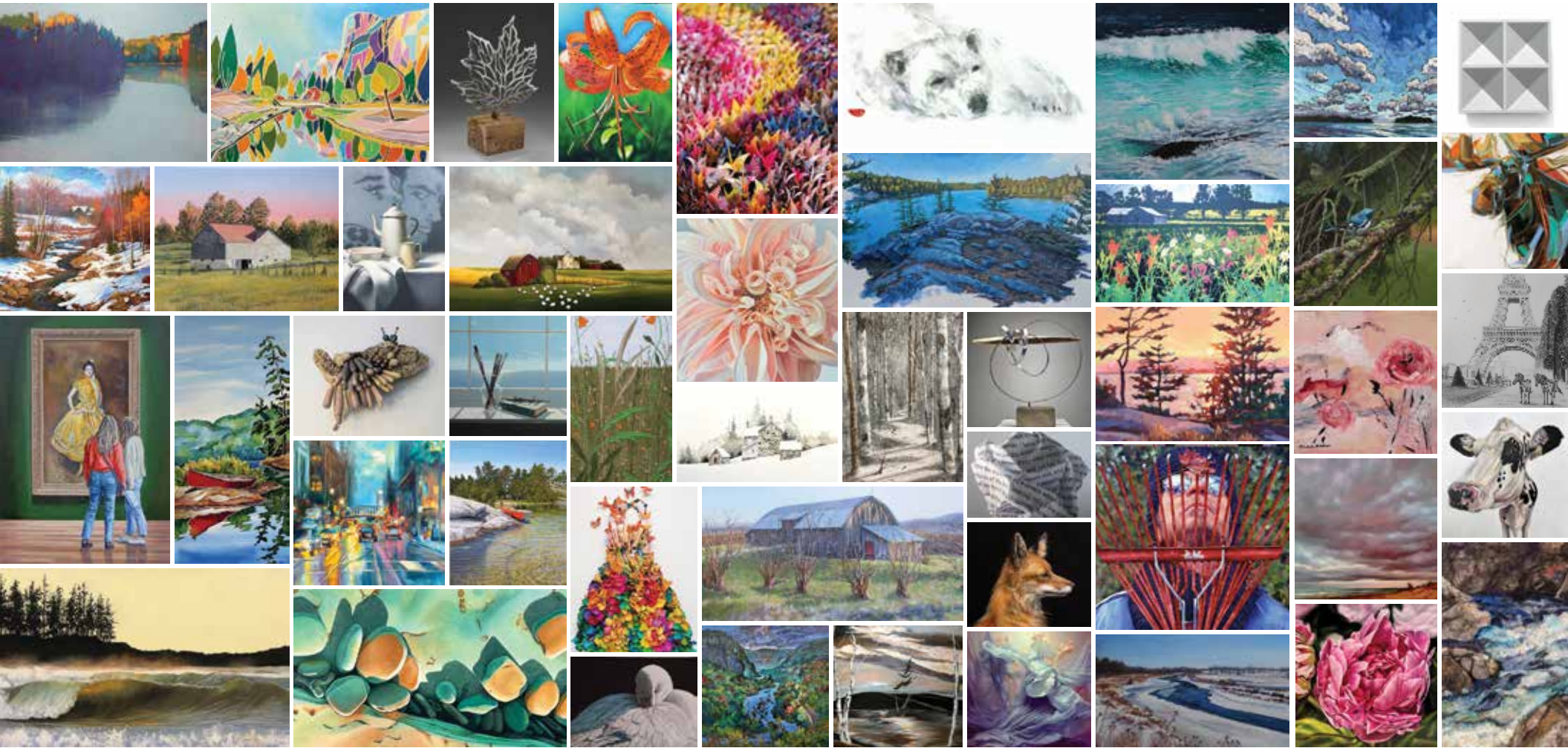
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Junior A Tigers sweep pair of games with Caledon Admirals and St. Mike’s Buzzers

Tigers’ Captain Simon Howard fires six points in wild 8-5 win over Buzzers



NCAA D2 commit Like Howard quarterbackes the Tigers’ power play in Aurora’s 4 – 1 win over Caledon on Thursday night.

Auroran photo by Jim Stewart

BY JIM STEWART

The Aurora Tigers swept a pair of back-to-back games to close out their October schedule.

On Thursday night in Caledon, Assistant Captain Cayden Smith fired the winning goal as the Tigers sunk the Admirals 4-1. Back home at the ACC on Friday night, Captain Simon Howard fired four goals and added two assists to pace the Tigers to an 8-5 besting of the Buzzers in a Halloween thriller.

Smith and Howard have been bright lights this season.

Their sublime performances over the last three games led the Tigers out of a period of mid-Fall darkness during which the team slumped to 11th place in the OJHL East. Smith’s three-goal performance last Friday versus the Hurricanes planted a seed for the Tigers’ last two games of October. Despite Smith’s marksmanship, Newmarket edged Aurora 6-4 to claim Round 3 of the Battle of Yonge Street at the ACC.

It was the gritty Assistant Captain’s first OJHL hat trick. The gracious Smith underplayed the importance of his hat trick, but noted that “It felt very good, especially since it was against my old team.”

Smith’s goal-scoring prowess provided a modicum of solace versus Newmarket, but it also provided momentum for their games versus Caledon and St. Mike’s.

Smith carried over his goal-scoring and play-making heroics to the Mayfield Recreation Complex on Thursday night versus the ninth-place, vastly-improved Admirals.

In a free-flowing first period during which no penalties were called, the Tigers struck first.

On a grievous giveaway by the Caledon defense corps, forechecking Tiger forward Kyle Butt intercepted the Admirals’ errant pass between the circles and beat left-handed goaltender Calem Yorke cleanly--snapping the puck top shelf glove side.

Butt’s unassisted goal stood up as the difference until 13:35 of the second when the Tigers finished a nice passing play.

Gianfranco Rosella feathered a feed to Smith who continued his hot hand by blasting a shot from the slot high stick side

past Yorke to give the Tigers a 2-0 lead. Smith described his game-winning goal: “I got a great saucer pass from Rosella and lifted it top corner. We executed well.”

Smith figured prominently in another picturesque goal to extend the visitors’ lead.

On the power play, Simon Howard found Smith in open space who slid a perfect pass to Nick Frasca.

The versatile new Tiger one-timed the puck from the left circle past Yorke to stake the Tigers to a 3-0 lead.

The second period also featured a spirited dustup between Aurora defenseman Bode Pearson and Caledon forward Clarence Allain during which Pearson landed more than a few haymakers.

Both spirited combatants were banished from the game for fighting, but Smith felt the Tigers were fired up by the fracas.

“It was great. The boys were really excited and it was a real momentum changer for us.”

After the prize fight behind Aurora’s net, the Admirals did get on the scoreboard with 40 seconds remaining in the middle frame. On a nice give and go with Owen Meli, Deacon King tallied his tenth of the season and solved Tigers’ netminder Matt Humphries who put forth an otherwise spectacular performance in Caledon. Humphries—who has suited up for the OHL Niagara IceDogs this season—stopped 37 of the 38 shots the Admirals fired at him to earn the W. Smith complimented his goaltender’s fine work versus Caledon, especially in the third period when Humphries stopped all 18 shots he faced.

“He’s a big game goalie. He made some big saves for us tonight, especially in the third period, and he gives us confidence. He’s so locked in and gave us an all-star performance.”

With 31 seconds on the clock, Simon Howard received a pass from Jamie Buscarini in the neutral zone, took two strides over the Caledon blue line, and blasted the puck into the empty net to close the scoring at The Ice Box.

Smith assessed the keys to victory over the Admirals: “We played a structured game tonight and we were aggressive. We shot pucks to the net and finished good chances.”

On Halloween night, the Buzzers and Tigers finished their good chances many times as the OJHL clubs treated the patrons at the ACC to an old-fashioned shootout featuring 13 goals.

After St. Mike’s forward Caiden Clair opened the scoring at 11:57 of the first period, the Tigers fired three goals in a row in less than five minutes to take a two-goal lead.

Marcus Carter, Cole Crawford, and Simon Howard scored in quick succession to build a 3-1 lead with less than three minutes to go in the opening frame.

However, the Buzzers struck back in this see-saw affair with goals by Aiden O’Toole

and Julian Campoli to tie it 3-3 before eight minutes had elapsed in the second period.

Simon Howard’s eighth of the season at 13:09 and linemate Anrijs Bundzeniek’s goal 24 seconds later restored the Tigers’ two-goal lead.

The visitors struck back early in the third period when O’Toole and Campoli both scored their second goals of the game to pull the Buzzers into a 5-5 tie.

It was all Tigers after that and the home side provided the paying customers with both a trick and a treat.

Howard completed his hat trick when he fired the game-winning goal at 9:01.

The Tigers’ Captain scored his fourth of the contest at 13:49 to give his club a 7-5 cushion over the pesky Buzzers. Thomas Leone closed the scoring when he fired an

empty netter to make it 8-5 with 1:12 on the clock.

With his impressive six-point night versus St. Mike’s, Howard moved into 16th place in the OJHL scoring race with 10 goals and 13 assists.

By earning back-to-back wins, the Junior Tigers improved their record to 7-10-0-0 and jumped into 10th place in the OJHL East—just one point behind ninth-place Markham with two games in hand.

The Tigers open the November portion of their schedule by hosting the high-flying Stouffville Spirit (13-5-0-0) on Friday, November 7 followed by a Saturday, November 8 tilt with the eleventh-place Cobourg Cougars (6-12-0-1). Puck drop for both games at the ACC is 7 p.m.



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Ava JURCHISON-OKUBO
AURORA HIGH SCHOOL

Ava Jurchison-Okubo is a dedicated Grade 12 student-athlete at Aurora High School, where she has built a strong reputation for her athletic versatility, leadership, and commitment to excellence. An active member of several school teams, Ava competes in cross country, soccer, flag football, track and field, and her greatest passion, volleyball. Her enthusiasm for sport and her positive attitude has made her a respected teammate and leader among her peers.

Ava’s love for volleyball has taken her far beyond the school season. As a member of the Storm Volleyball Club, she has honed her skills and gained a solid understanding of the game. Her hard work paid off when she helped Aurora High School compete at two OF-SAA Volleyball Championships, including a memorable bronze medal team performance in 2025 in North Bay. That success stands as a highlight in her athletic journey and a testament to her perseverance and teamwork.

Her coach, Steve Forster, speaks highly of Ava’s drive and leadership, describing her as someone with a strong desire to succeed who is always willing to take on any role needed by the team. He notes that her work ethic and leadership skills set her apart—qualities that have made her an invaluable part of the school’s athletic program.

Beyond sports, Ava is equally committed to her community. She works as a lifeguard and swim instructor at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, where she takes pride in teaching water safety and helping others develop confidence in the pool.

When she isn’t competing or working, Ava enjoys painting nature scenes, finding creativity through art. She also loves listening to Fleetwood Mac, whose music provides the perfect soundtrack for her downtime.

Looking ahead, Ava, 17, plans to pursue a career in nursing after graduation. It’s a path that reflects her caring spirit, teamwork, and dedication to helping others. With her leadership, talent, and determination, Ava Jurchison-Okubo embodies the true spirit of a student-athlete and is poised for great success in the years ahead.

Congratulations, Ava!



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Junior Tigers’ Defenseman Luke Howard commits to NCAA Division 1 Rochester Institute of Technology Tigers

BY JIM STEWART

There was more good news on the Junior A Tigers’ front this week after the club’s two-game sweep over the Caledon Admirals and St. Michael’s Buzzers.

The Aurora-based hockey club and the OJHL announced that defenseman Luke Howard has committed to the NCAA Division 1 Rochester Institute of Technology Tigers for the 2025-26 season.

The eighteen-year-old Howard is a team leader on and off the ice.

Recently, he was appointed Assistant Captain by the Tigers coaching staff.

Howard has proven to be a steady, durable defender who currently leads all

Aurora defensemen with 3 goals and 13 assists. Remarkably, the 6’3”, 185-pound US College commit has collected only 7 minutes in penalties in 17 games played this season.

Tigers’ General Manager and Assistant Coach James Thomson—in his recent interview with OJHL staff – complimented Howard’s commitment as a student-athlete.

“Luke’s dedication to growth—both on the ice and in the classroom—has been unwavering, and he exemplifies the qualities we strive to instill in our players. Luke is not only a strong leader, but also a young man of character and integrity.”

Howard’s academic prowess netted him a \$6,000 bursary from the Dairy Farmers

of Ontario to further his post-secondary education. He was one of eight OHA players recognized for their “leadership in building strong and healthy communities, [demonstrating] high academic achievement, and [being] dedicated to and [having] a passion for hockey.”

The Woodbridge native is in his second season with the Junior Tigers and has one game-winning goal so far in 2025-26. Luke’s brother, Simon, is the Tigers’ Captain and leading scorer. Both brothers showed their connection to community when they greeted guests at Sport Aurora’s annual Breakfast of Champions event alongside long-time Emcee and Tigers’ Owner/Governor Jim Thomson on October 19.

mechanical engineering as that is what I’m currently doing here in Ontario.”

The Auroran: What are your athletic and academic goals as a student-athlete at RIT?

Luke Howard: “My goal is to be a successful player in their program, win a championship, and for possible opportunities after school. Academically, I want to complete my degree as an engineer and learn many skills and strategies that come with it.”

The Auroran: How did the Aurora Tigers assist you with your college hockey placement?



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Luke took time from his post-secondary studies as well as his responsibilities with the Aurora Tigers to answer our interview questions:

The Auroran: Why did you commit to the RIT Tigers?

Luke Howard: “I committed to the RIT because playing NCAA hockey while pursuing my education has always been a major goal of mine. RIT is a great fit for me as it has great facilities, a great coaching staff, and awesome campus.”

The Auroran: What are you looking forward to the most about going to school in Rochester, NY?

Luke Howard: “I’m looking forward to the experience of playing college hockey and living away from home.”

The Auroran: What will be your major area of study at RIT?

Luke Howard: “I am planning to study

mechanical engineering as that is what I’m currently doing here in Ontario.”

Luke Howard: “Aurora gave me all the opportunities, all the confidence in me, and always made it feel like a second home. All members of the staff foster a welcoming and hardworking environment. Huge thank you to the Aurora Tigers organization!”

The Auroran: What has been the highlight of your career as an Aurora Tiger so far?

Luke Howard: “Most recently, I was named Assistant Captain! This means a lot to me as I was trusted with a leadership role with the team and is something I always wanted to achieve.”

The Auroran: What advice would you offer the younger Tigers rep players about achieving post-secondary goals as a student-athlete?

Luke Howard: “To always stay consistent, push yourself, and be a player who is coachable and understands how to take criticism. Not everything will go your way, but always stick with it!”

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BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

Spotlight



EVOLUTION GYMNASTICS
Aurora Gymnasts Shine
at Provincial Championships



Evolution Gymnastics Aurora is celebrating an outstanding season, with several athletes achieving top results at the Ontario Provincial Gymnastics Championships.

ANNA FU had a remarkable year, coming first in every competition she entered and collecting 17 gold medals in total. Known by her coach as “always fun and energetic,” Anna capped her season by earning three gold medals out of five events at Provincials.

TYLER GUDNASON has shown incredible drive and passion for gymnastics, excelling on pommel and demonstrating respect for coaches and teammates alike. His enthusiasm for learning new skills continues to impress.

BENJAMIN WATSON made significant improvements this season, medaling on all four events he competed in last year. Known for his high bar skills and being a supportive teammate, Benjamin’s dedication and growth have been outstanding.

GEORGE STEPENENKO consistently encourages and helps his teammates, takes feedback well, and approaches every session with ambition and a love for learning new skills. His positive attitude makes him a standout on the team.

These athletes highlight the dedication, skill, and teamwork at Evolution Gymnastics Aurora.

Junior Panthers edge London Devilettes
2-1 to climb back into second place
in the OWSA U22 Elite Division

BY JIM STEWART

The U22 Central York Panthers got back to their winning ways on Saturday afternoon by edging the London Devilettes 2-1 at SARC.

The Panthers suffered their worst defeat of the season when they were submerged 7-1 by the first-place Etobicoke Dolphins on October 25 at SARC.

In the bounce back win on Saturday, Panthers’ forward Zoe Ordanis opening the scoring—with assists from Abby Pak and Elizabeth Shapira—at 8:31 of the first period. Ordanis’s power play marker was her seventh of the season.

The productive Ordanis has 19 points in 17 games played.

Parker Talbot pulled the visitors into a 1-1 tie with 4:21 remaining in the opening frame.

After a scoreless second period, Audrey Martone scored the game-winning goal with 7:21 left in the game. Ellie Lewington earned the assist on the high-scoring Martone’s 11th tally.

Panthers’ goaltender Jamie Sanford turned aside 16 of the 17 shots she faced to earn the W.

With the win, the Junior Panthers moved back into second place in the 25-team OWSA U22 Elite Division.

However, much like the Blue Jays the night before, the Panthers lost a heartbreaker in overtime on Sunday as they fell 4-3 to the Cambridge Rivulettes at SARC.

After a scoreless first period, the Rivulettes fired three goals in the middle frame.

Maryn Broderick opened the scoring at 10:59. Forty-seven seconds later, Emersyn Miller made it 2-0 for Cambridge. Miller picked up her second of the period at 7:18 to stake the visitors to a three-goal lead heading into second intermission.

Cue the CYP comeback.

Fifty-four seconds into the third period,

veteran Kiera Johnson got the Panthers on the scoreboard.

Abby Pak’s power play goal at 17:37 pulled Central York to within one goal of the visitors.

Johnson’s second goal of the period with 1:50 remaining tied it 3-3, earned the team a point when that prospect looked doubtful, and sent the game into overtime.

Ordanis and Cotey earned two assists each in the spirited Panthers’ third period rally.

Alas, 2:20 into the extra period, Rachael Burt fired the game-winner for Cambridge.

The Panthers travel to London to take on the Devilettes on Saturday, November 8 and return home to host the Waterloo Ravens on Sunday, November 9.

Puck drop at SARC will be 1:20 p.m.



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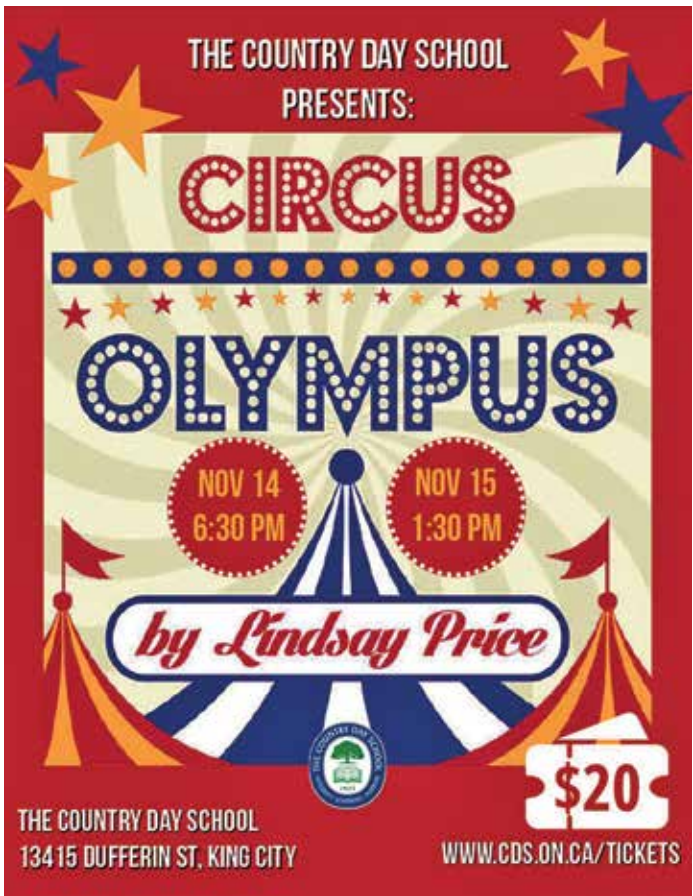
COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS



The holiday spirit is already in the air as community groups host their annual Christmas and Holiday Markets. On Sunday, the Aurora Seniors' Centre hosted their annual event, attracting scores of vendors – and customers – throughout the morning. (Top) Debbie and Carol offered fun and festive knits. (Middle) Carole and Jim of the Aurora Seniors Association welcomed guests. (Above) Auroran cartoonist Scott Johnston was on hand with his collected volumes of work.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

Step Right Up!
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The curtain is about to rise on *Circus Olympus*, a larger-than-life mythical comedy performed by a group of talented Grade 7 & 8 students at The Country Day School! After months of rehearsals, these young actors are ready to take the stage in the CDS Performing Arts Centre on Friday, November 14 at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, November 15 at 1:30 p.m.

There may not be an elephant riding a bicycle, but get ready for a whirlwind trip through ancient Greece like you've never seen before! Our cast of "Greek Geeks" will juggle, tumble, and clown their way through

some of mythology's greatest hits — from Perseus' quest for Medusa's head, to King Midas's golden touch, to Athena's showdown with Arachne.

In this fast-paced, laugh-out-loud adventure, every performer takes on multiple roles — transforming into gods, heroes, and monsters with circus-inspired flair, physical theatre, and plenty of unexpected twists. *Circus Olympus* is a high-energy celebration of creativity, comedy, and imagination — a true big-top spectacular!

So grab your toga, stretch those acting muscles, and join us as the myths come to life under the big top. Tickets are on sale now at www.cds.on.ca/tickets.

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Budget deliberations begin this week with proposed 2.2 per cent tax increase

From page 1

tonight is one I support because it’s balanced, responsible, and, above all, puts the people of Aurora first.”

This year’s proposed budget is down from the 2.9 per cent originally envisioned through the Town’s multi-year budget forecast, and includes a 0.6 per cent increase for municipal operations, 0.6 per cent for the Central York Fire Services, and 1 per cent allocated for municipal reserves.

This reduction, explained Town Treasurer Rachel Wainwright van-Kessel is attributed to cost savings related to the elimination of the consumer carbon tax, the deferral of four previously-anticipated new hires at Town Hall, and the postponement of some projects.

“Throughout the budget, staff met with the CAO and we had lots of discussions, and we really took a look at opportunities where we could find savings,” said Wainwright-van Kessel. “One of the savings that was helpful for the overall budget was savings on heating, which relates to savings on the consumer carbon tax.

“There is also some removal of inflationary increases relating to our community partners. Part of the Budget was we were trying to find savings and also not change service levels. By removing those inflationary increases, the community partners are going to come here on November 10, they’re going to share with us their budgets, and it’s going to give Council the opportunity to decide if that inflationary increase should be added back to the Budget through a Budget amendment.”

One such area Councillors questioned at the first sweep last week was the impact of removing the 1 per cent allocated for reserves. Responding to the question posed by Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland, the Treasurer said if that was removed for 2026 “we would need to remove about \$6.3 million from the Capital Plan worth of projects.”

“That would mean that if it doesn’t go into the levy this year, and we don’t double up next year, we’re going to have a shortfall in all future years moving forward.... It does have significant downstream impacts. We do need to try and work towards meeting some of our Asset Management obligations and this 1 per cent levy does go towards doing that and it helps maintain the assets we have.”

Councillor Gilliland also asked staff if there were any projects remaining within the plan that might be deferred to the following year. The Treasurer cautioned that if projects are moved down the line, they could be subject to inflation and cost more when the time comes.

“That leaves a lot of work to be done and a lot of guesstimating, but, at the same time, we’re trying to be realistic about what’s in the future for our spending,” said Councillor Gilliland.

Should the Budget pass as is, the average local homeowner whose home is assessed at \$800,000, can expect to see the municipal portion of their tax bill rise \$56.94 in the year ahead. The average homeowner can also expect to see their residential water bill rise by approximately \$19.26.

As Budget talks continue, the Region of York is looking at a 3.22 per cent tax

increase on their portion of the tax bill, with a further 1 per cent allocated for transit infrastructure.

“I know this is an election year; naturally, there will be differing opinions, but my focus remains on what matters most: delivering results for our residents and keeping Aurora moving forward,” said Mayor Mrakas in his Budget presentation last week. “Over the past year, I’ve heard from residents across Aurora – in coffee shops, on sports fields, and at community events. People have told me that the cost of living is rising and they expect their local government to show the same restraint and discipline they’re showing at home. This budget answers that call. It’s responsible, it’s balanced, and it’s built to keep Aurora fiscally strong, not just this year, but for years to come.

“This Budget continues to deliver visible results across our Town: new and upgraded playgrounds for families, more pickleball courts and sports facilities to keep our community active, trail connections that bring neighbourhoods closer together, accessibility and facility improvements across Town buildings,

replacing aging Town vehicles to improve efficiency, continued work on the Yonge Street streetscape, strengthening our historic downtown. At the same time, we’re investing in essentials: our roads, water, and sewer infrastructure – the backbone of a safe, reliable community.

“Aurora’s success hasn’t happened by accident. Even through challenging times, a global pandemic, supply chain issues, and inflationary pressures, we’ve kept taxes low, maintained services, and delivered major improvements. We’ve done it while consistently maintaining one of the lowest tax rates in the GTHA. Aurora continues to be recognized as one of the best places in Canada to live, work, and raise a family. And that doesn’t happen without discipline. It happens because we’ve made smart choices and stayed focused on what matters most: the people of Aurora. As we move forward, our goal remains clear: Keep Aurora vibrant, keep Aurora fiscally strong, and keep Aurora as one of the best places to live, work, and play. We’re not just planning for the next Budget year, we’re planning for the next generation.”



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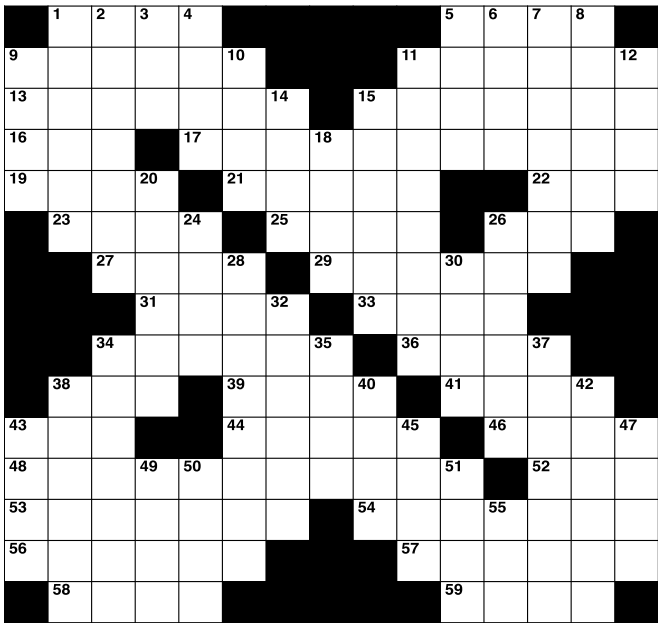


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CLUES ACROSS

1. Difficult

5. Coarsely ground corn

9. There's one for the "world"

11. Loved Romeo

13. Sticky situation

15. Pelvic areas

16. An informal debt instrument

17. Cannot be repaired surgically

19. A device attached to a workbench

21. Related on the mother's side

22. Sound unit

23. ___ Sagan, astronomer

25. Utah city

26. A disappointing effort

27. Steal goods during a riot

29. Wakes up

31. Hair salon service
33. Serenaded

34. Looked intensely

36. U.S. Air Force expert Robert F.

38. A type of cast

39. One's duty

41. Where golfers begin

43. Make a mistake

44. Semitic sun god

46. Ancient Greek City

48. Having had the head cut off

52. A place to stay

53. Unwise

54. Most unnatural

56. Dennis is a notable one

57. Ointments

58. Students' exam

59. Leaked blood

CLUES DOWN

1. Brave

2. Act of awakening

3. Jest at

4. Sandwich store

5. Chapter of the Koran

6. Dismounted

7. Small vehicle

8. Irked

9. One who earns by disreputable dealings

10. Monetary unit of Samoa

11. Long, mournful lamentation

12. Weight unit

14. Alone, single

15. Decreases

18. Indicates beside

20. Worn by exposure to the weather

24. A body of traditions
26. College students' ultimate goal

28. Amino acid

30. Nasal mucus

32. US government entity

34. Swinish

35. Legislative body in Russia

37. Grant an exemption to

38. Put in advance

40. Satisfy

42. Felt

43. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls

45. Witnesses

47. Picnic invaders

49. Gasteier and de Armas are two

50. Ancient person of Scotland

51. Cheerless

55. Unwell

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(15) Heifers - Black, bred to Black Angus bull, vaccinated
(10) Charolais cows - all bred Charolais - vaccinated
(11) Cows: (4) Black cows & calves, (4) bred cows, (3)black heifers - bred Angus/Simm X, vaccinated
(10) Charolais Cows & Calves - (4)first calf heifers with calf at side, vaccinated
(2) Charolais Cows

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NOTICE OF PASSING

LCol. MEIKLE, Cameron



It is with deep sadness that the family of Cameron Meikle announces his passing on Thursday, October 30, 2025, at the age of 40, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Cam proudly served in the military and was an adventurer at heart; he was a man who embraced life with courage, humour, and compassion. He found peace and joy in the outdoors, especially while hiking, camping, and exploring nature with his beloved dogs, Sissi and Khaleesi.

Cam is survived by his loving wife, Isabelle Cyr; his father, Tim; his sister, Jennifer McMurachy (Alastair); and his brother, Andrew (Stacy); as well as his many nieces and nephews, Evelyn, Amelia, William, Jules, Spencer, Évangéline, Hugo, Sophia, Émeric, Lydia, and Arthur. He was also a loving godfather to Lilia and Évangéline.

Cam was predeceased by his mother, Marilyn. He will be fondly remembered by his extended family, including his parents-in-law, Noël Cyr and Sylvie Allard, brothers-in-law Mathieu (Johanna) and Christian (Navpreet), and also many aunts, uncles, and friends for his generosity, quick wit, and adventurous spirit. He will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who knew him.

A Military Funeral Service will be held at the Fort Frontenac Officers' Mess, 317 Ontario Street, Kingston on Friday, November 7, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. followed by a reception from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Memorial donations may be made to AB Smith Homestead House (UHKF) or to Soldier On. Online condolences at www.GFTompkins-Township.ca



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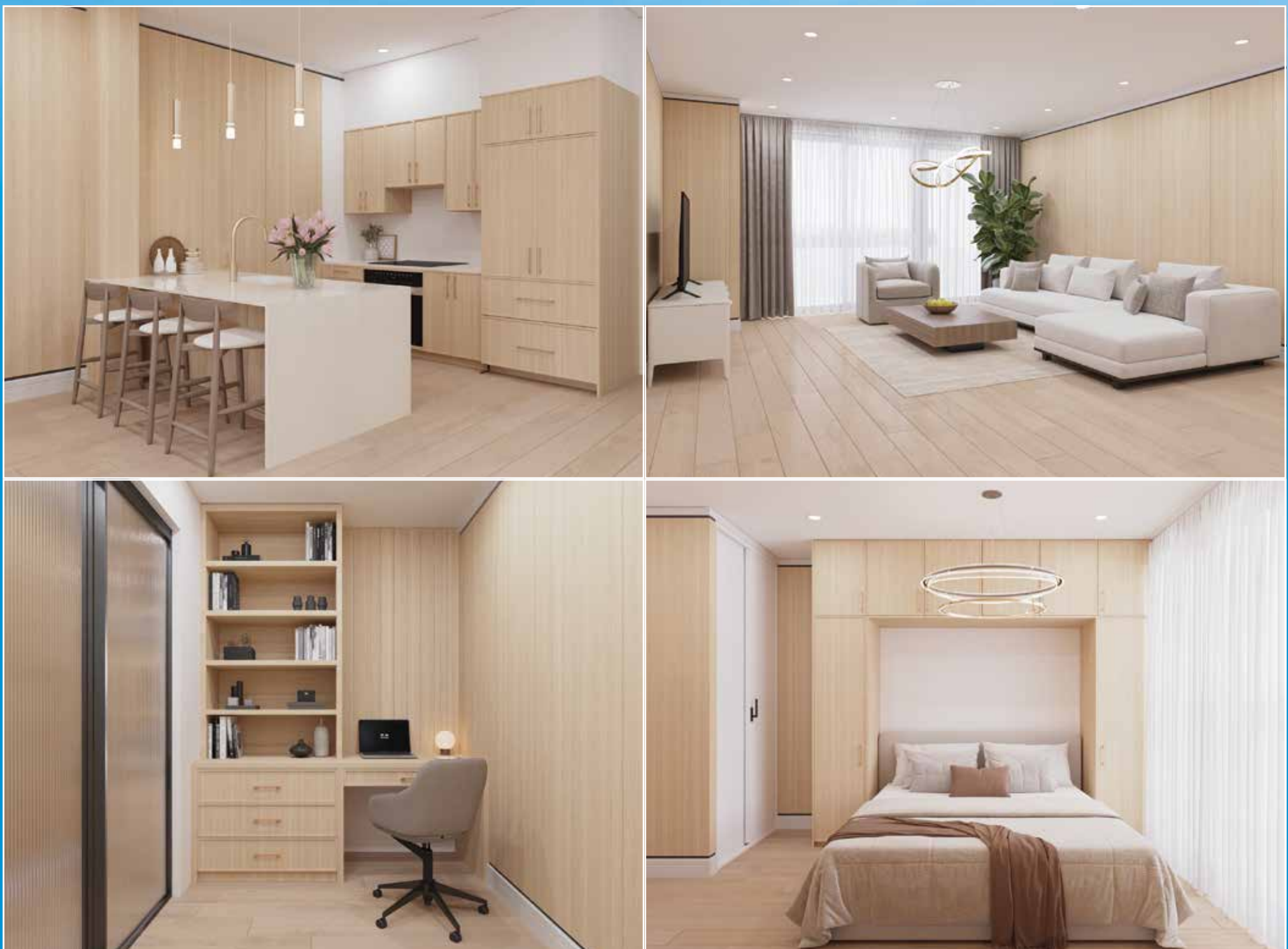


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