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THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 18 No. 27 905-727-3300

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FREE

Week of April 26, 2018



ROOTED IN OUR COMMUNITY – This week marks the 100th anniversary of the Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society and the Garden Club is kicking off the celebration in style this Saturday, April 28. Pictured here are Club members Donna Lewis, Cindy Scythes and Branislava Milosevic. For more on what's about to bloom, please see Page 17. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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Downtown owners band together to revive Business Improvement Area

By Brock Weir

Local business owners have long expressed concerns with the state of Aurora's downtown core, but now traction appears to be on their side to do something about it.

Years after Downtown Aurora's last Business Improvement Area (BIA) fizzled out, momentum is backing the business owners of today as they pitch a revitalized BIA to Council, one

they argue will, in turn, help revitalize Aurora's struggling traditional commercial corridor.

The pitch was made to Council last week by financial consultant Joanne Russo, whose Russo Corp. operates out of a heritage house on Wellington Street East.

Appearing at the podium before local lawmakers last Tuesday, she requested the Town's approval in once again establishing a BIA which would be volunteer-run and dedicated to

"improving and promoting" the historic core "through investment and advocacy to build and maintain its position as Aurora's premiere shopping, business and entertainment destination."

"We want to bring our historic Downtown back to what it used to be: the jewel of Aurora," said Ms. Russo.

The initial proposed BIA would encompass Wellington Street East from Berczy Street to Yonge Street, and continue southward on Yonge Street to

Continued on page 8

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Give Back students have answered community's call

By Brock Weir

Josie Kearney knows she had advantages growing up.

She always had "toys under the Christmas tree, a meal on my plate and a bed to sleep in," but she knew she was lucky; many boys and girls here were not nearly as lucky.

But, unlike many others who simply go on with their day, the

Continued on page 21



Mayor Geoff Dawe, philanthropist Joan Kelley Walker and alumna Lauren Ott congratulate Aurora recipients of the 2018 Give Back Awards: Lauren Wilson, Alex Saeedi, Rachel In, Josie Kearney, Robert Lee, Amy Robidoux, Maiya Bertola, Madisyn Lamoure, and Tristan Hicks. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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TOWN OF AURORA Notice Board



Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Tuesday, May 1	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, May 1	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee
Tuesday, May 8	9:30 a.m.	Newmarket	Joint Council Committee
Tuesday, May 8	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, May 8	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Wednesday, May 9	4 p.m.	Holland Room	Accessibility Advisory Committee
Wednesday, May 9	7 p.m.	Aurora Cultural Centre	Aurora Cultural Centre Board

*Meetings can be viewed online by visiting aurora.ca/gcstream

Council meetings are open to the public. For a full list of upcoming meetings, please visit aurora.ca.

Public Notices

Notice of service disruptions

Please see below for the scheduled service disruption at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex (AFLC):

- On Wednesday, May 2, the indoor track will be closed from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. and the Youth Basketball drop-in from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. will be cancelled.
- On Thursday, May 10, public skate will be cancelled from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

We apologize for any inconvenience. For more information, visit aurora.ca/news.

What's Happening

Open House for stream management plan on May 1

The Town of Aurora is hosting its second Open House to review and discuss the development of the recommended approach for the Master Plan Environmental Assessment (EA) study for stream management within The Town of Aurora.

Interested residents are invited to attend the public meeting to view project information and review the project team's preliminary recommended approach to addressing stream-related issues.

There are no formal presentations scheduled. We encourage participants to ask questions and provide comments and feedback to Town staff and consultants.

Information will be collected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

The Master Plan will fulfill Phases 1 & 2 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process.

The meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 1, 2018** from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Leksand Room on the first floor of Town Hall 100 John West Way.

For more information please contact Glen McArthur, Municipal Engineer at 905-727-3123 ext. 4322 or by email at gmcArthur@aurora.ca.

February's Skylight Gallery artist - Hans Backer

This month, the Skylight Gallery will feature the works of Hans Backer.

Photography has been a lifelong passion for Hans. He is constantly inspired by nature's endless beauty. Hans endeavours to see everyday objects in a unique perspective and he uses that perspective to create a sense of peace and harmony in his artwork.

Visit the Skylight Gallery to see this exhibit. Regular viewing times are Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Aurora Town Hall, 3rd floor.

What's Happening

Register now for spring & summer programs

Registration is now open for Town spring & summer programs including aquatics and summer camps. There are many programs and activities for all ages. To view the recreation guide, visit aurora.ca/reguide.

Apply for the John West Memorial Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarship Award

The Town of Aurora is currently looking for youth candidates entering post-secondary school who have made a positive impact on the community. The scholarship is valued at \$1,000. The application deadline is **Tuesday, May 1**.

Club Aurora wellness seminar - Walk your way to good health

Register today for Club Aurora's walk your way to good health seminar on **Saturday, May 12** from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. at the AFLC. This seminar is free for Club Aurora members. For more information, visit aurora.ca/fitness.

National Youth Week starts on May 1

Please join us in celebrating National Youth Week from **May 1 to 7**. For a complete list of free events and activities for youth ages 12 to 17, please visit us online at aurora.ca/youthweek.

Summer camps Open House on May 12

Join us at the Town's Summer camps Open House on **Saturday, May 12** from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. Learn more about Town camp programs and meet some of the camp staff. For more information, visit aurora.ca/campprograms.

Yard waste collection has begun

A reminder that yard waste collection has started. Yard waste is collected with recycling every second week from April to November. Please place weeds, plant trimmings and leaves in paper yard bags, or any rigid open top container that has sturdy handles.

Remember to bundle and tie branches as follows:

- Individual branches must be no larger than 10 cm (4 inches) in diameter;
- Branches must be bundled with twine;
- Bundles must be no more than 22 kg (50 lbs) and no longer than 1.2 m (4 ft.)

Grass clippings are not collected in Aurora's curbside yard waste program. There are maximum weights for yard waste bags but no limit on the amount of yard waste placed for collection, providing that acceptable containers are used.



What's Happening



THE MOVIES IN THE PARK SERIES BEGINS EARLY WITH AN INDOOR SPRING MOVIE.

- A food donation for the Aurora Food Pantry is appreciated.
- 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. • Games and activities
- 6:15 p.m. • Movie starts
- The ice will be removed from the arena floor. Please bring your portable chairs for comfortable seating.

905-726-4762 • #AuroraMovies
aurora.ca/moviesinthepark

Arrive early to enjoy special pre-movie activities. A chance to win one free week of Summer Camp!

We reserve the right to cancel, amend or change activities.



For more information, please call 905-726-4762 or visit www.aurora.ca/artshow

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Friday, May 11 8:30 p.m.	Saturday, May 12 8:30 p.m.	Sunday, May 13 2:30 p.m.
OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION Hosted by MP Leona Alleslev RSVP: Leona.Alleslev.C1B@parl.gc.ca Adult: \$15 Child/Senior: \$10	RECEPTION Hosted by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce PERFORMANCE ONLY: Adult: \$15 Child/Senior: \$10 RECEPTION AND PERFORMANCE: \$40	MOTHER'S DAY TEA Tea offered at 1 and 4 p.m. Hosted by the Aurora Historical Society PERFORMANCE ONLY: Adult: \$15 Child/Senior: \$10 TEA AND PERFORMANCE: \$25

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End-of-driveway plowing could cost 1 – 2% tax hike

By Brock Weir

Windrows. They're a dark reality of the Canadian winter.

You can spend a good hour shovelling out your driveway to go to work in the morning, only to have the snow plow come down your street and block you in with a fresh mound to clear.

But, how much is it worth to you to make this a thing of the past?

You might just have to consider that.

This is a question that was on the lips of local lawmakers last week as Aurorans continued to dig out from this month's unusual ice storm.

Floated by Councillor John Abel on social media, and once again around the Council table last week by Councillor Harold Kim, there could be a solution to this age-old problem, but it comes with a hefty price tag.

"Yesterday, we had 262 calls to

This would be a significant change in service level. It has been estimated it is probably between 1 and 2 per cent levy increase just to provide that service and that is a very rough number, it could even be more.

Access Aurora regarding the storm over the last couple of days and a large portion of that was about windrows," said Councillor Kim at last Tuesday's General Committee meeting. "There was a lot of discussion amongst residents and Council alike on increasing the service levels to have windrow removal next winter."

Given that Aurora's 2018 Capital Budget is already a done deal,

Councillor Kim questioned how reviewing winter service levels could be back on the table.

"This would be a significant change in service level," cautioned Aurora CAO Doug Nadorozny. "It has been estimated it is probably between 1 and 2 per cent levy increase just to provide that service and that is a very rough number, it could even be more. It depends on the rigour you would want to bring to this. It is one thing to say you will eventually get to everybody's driveway to clean their windrow out. It is another thing to say you will get there within one hour of the plow going by. You would have a very different attack plan and strategy."

"The expense could be very significantly different. To consider that for the winter of 2018 to 2019, Council would have to consider a new service level recommendation going forward and to fund it in 2018 since

the budget has been done, they would have to draw on another funding source to provide that funding for 2018 with the assumption that would be in the base budget for 2019."

Winter maintenance service levels are a continual source of discussion at Council, from the timing and frequency of the plows, to the amount of snow that has to accumulate on roads before the snow removal team is ultimately deployed.

Should Council decide to up the ante and provide windrow removal in time for the snowfalls this fall and early winter, funding would come out of reserves and any further service January and beyond would be reflected on tax bills.

A notice of motion, however, would need to be put on the table by a Council member before this is fully discussed and costed out, added Mr. Nadorozny.

Sunday's Southlake Run could be a sell-out

Organizers of the annual Run or Walk for Southlake are anticipating a sell-out effort to raise money for the local hospital this Sunday.

The 2018 Run or Walk for Southlake, presented by Nature's Emporium, takes place Sunday, April 29 in Newmarket, starting at 8 a.m. At press time, participants who had already registered had helped the Southlake Foundation reach 70 per cent of their goal, with a total of \$106,248 raised at press time.

Last year, more than 1,300 participants came together to run and walk under the Southlake bridge for the first time ever and this year is looking to break that record.

The Southlake Run has its roots in the Hartwell Challenge, a fundraiser founded in memory of the late Aurora councillor Bob Hartwell, who had a passion for running.

The event regularly took place in Aurora – first at the Aurora Community Centre and then at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex – before moving north to Newmarket last year to be closer to the medical facility the run benefits.

The event now begins at the Newmarket Seniors' Meeting Place, before ending at the Southlake bridge, the iconic arch that spans the width of Davis Drive.

"In 2017, more than 1,300 participants came together to run and walk under the Southlake bridge for the first time ever," say organizers. "This year, we invite you to be a part of the 2018 Run or Walk for Southlake, presented by Nature's Emporium to help bring vital equipment to our hospital so our staff can continue to make miracles happen every day!"

Highland Automotive Professionals is proud to introduce another team member Renata Tarantino



My name is Renata Tarantino, and I have been working for Highland GM for almost one year now. I am new to the automotive industry. Prior to joining the Highland Service Team, I worked in the restaurant industry. Excellent customer service is something I strive for and take much pride in. I'm learning new things everyday, with my great team of co-workers. When I am not working I enjoy spending my time outdoors. I enjoy meeting new people and educating them on preventative maintenance for their vehicles. If you would like to set up a service appointment or have any questions I would be more than happy to assist you. You can reach me at our direct service line; 905-727-7787 ex. 238, or through email; renata@highlandgm.com

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AURORA

TOWN OF AURORA PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PASSING OF HERITAGE DESIGNATION BY-LAW

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Aurora passed the following By-law to designate the following property to be of cultural heritage value or interest:

By-law Number 6063-18, passed on April 10, 2018, to designate the "Town Park" located at 49 Wells Street and being composed of Lot 1 E/S Wells Street Plan 68, Lot 3 W/S Larmont Street Plan 68, Lots 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 S/S Mosley Street Plan 68, Lots 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 N/S Metcalfe Street Plan 68, Town Hall or Market Block Plan 68 Aurora except AU515, Town of Aurora, Regional Municipality of York, being all of PIN 03650-0056 (LT)

A copy of this By-law is available through the Town Clerk upon request.

DATED at Aurora this 26th day of April 2018.

Michael De Rond
Town Clerk
Town of Aurora
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Hockey stick theft
“a sad commentary on
community”**

I am a resident of Aurora and have been since 1990.

To show my respect and pay a small personal tribute to the Humbolt Broncos members who lost their lives or suffered terribly, like many others, I placed a hockey stick outside the front door of my residence.

It lasted a few days before it was stolen. A sad commentary indeed!

I am not a violent man and if I do find the person who took the stick, I will do no physical harm to him or her. However, I will take a picture of the culprit and forward it to you.

Hoping you would show it in your paper.

I can sleep at night, not sure how the culprit can.

Paul Wells
Aurora

**A belated thank you for
a helping hand**

This is to belatedly thank a young lady called Michelin who came to my assistance when I could not find my car keys on a bitterly cold day recently. As an elderly person, it is a struggle getting groceries, but to get outside with a cart full and realise your keys are gone, well, I was extremely upset.

Michelin realized I was distressed and told me she would not leave me alone till the situation was solved and proceeded to help me search. Luckily, we were soon informed that my keys were found inside the store. Michelin insisted on retrieving them and did not leave me until the groceries were packed away. We are so very lucky to have caring people like this young woman. Thank you again Michelin.

Alma Durkin
Aurora

**Kennedy infill
application raises
neighbour concerns**

**An Open Letter to Council
(Re: Infill development would bring six
homes to Kennedy Street lot, April 12)**

I have lived in Aurora for about 25 years and I have loved it until now.

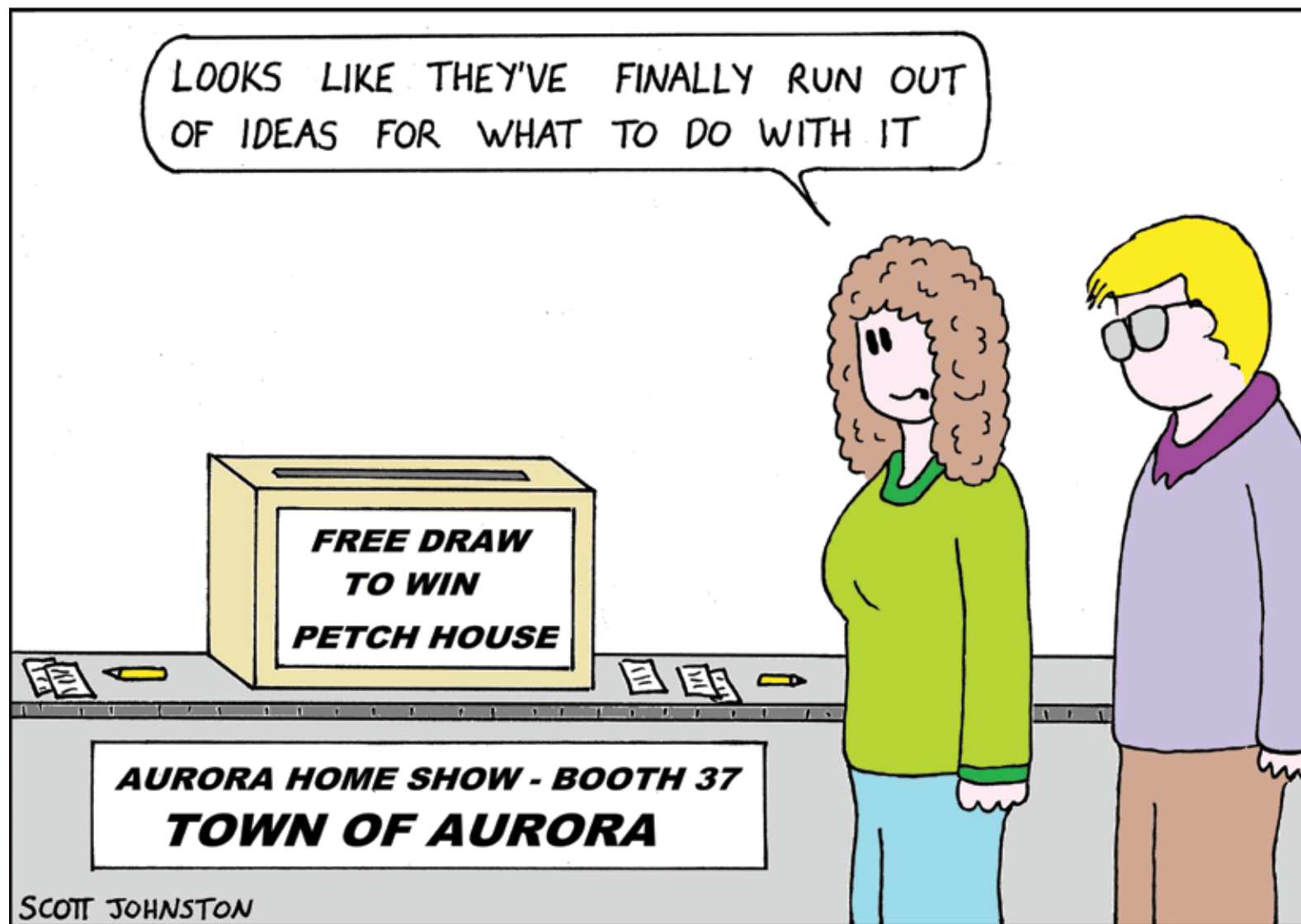
It comes as a complete surprise that you have been reviewing this application for a couple months, I think I read? Why were we not informed of this? We get details and questionnaires on relatively minor issues of road humps and so forth but not something very important like this? Thank you to Brock Weir for bringing this to our attention and it would have been much better if our Council could have done it!

I think Bill 139 has given Aurora Council the authority to make OMB type decisions. I thought I was in favour of this as we could make local decisions that were best for the Town and its residents, and we could hold our Council accountable for their decisions. Our Council could show empathy, fairness and transparency to local issues but that is not happening here.

First, I understood when I bought this house that it was flood plain behind us, so it could never be developed. Is this not true? It floods there, so who

Continued on page 23

Machell's Corners



At the epicentre of grief



**BROCK'S
BANTER**

Brock Weir

How can you find a focus for your grief when it hits so close to home?

Sadly, this is something we are now experiencing far too often.

In the aftermath of the tragic April 6 bus crash, which killed 16 members of the Humboldt Broncos hockey family, leaving 13 others injured, reaction was swift.

People from across the country, many of whom had never heard of the small Saskatchewan town outside of hockey circles, were suddenly all too aware, finding immediate identification with the community for whom hockey was its beating heart.

Neighbourhoods from Vancouver to St. John's were united, donning their own hockey jerseys, or their best green and gold, in tribute to the team. Moments of silence were held. Hockey sticks were left out in the cold, many illuminated only by a dim porch light in solidarity the victims and the families impacted by the tragedy. A record amount of money was collected to aid Humboldt and the loved ones of each individual hit hard.

Canada showed an incredible and admirable degree of unity, putting aside partisan differences to be that symbol of strength so desperately needed in the occasion.

Those movements – the jerseys, the green and gold, the hockey sticks, the donations – provided a useful way for Canadians to channel their grief, sadness and anger; emotions which, thankfully, we experience so rarely as a nation compared to other parts around the world.

But, we showed these feelings several provinces away from the community hardest hit by the tragedy. Focus was probably much different at the epicentre of the grief, something that would be incomprehensible to most of us who, once the wardrobe was changed, the donation made, the hockey sticks placed, continued to band together using the hashtag #humboldtstrong.

Now, following the tragic events on Monday afternoon, an attack on Toronto streets all too close to home, we're now at an epicentre of our own.

As we're now all too aware, 10 men and women were killed, with a further

15 injured, by a Richmond Hill van driver as they innocently went about their business.

The stories of each of the victims have not yet surfaced, but it is not difficult to imagine that some of them might have been on their lunch hour, taking a break from a nearby office tower, making their way to or from school, going out to grab some groceries, or maybe even going to pick up their kids. These stories will emerge in the coming days.

They could have been any one of us, and perhaps that has added further sting to an already unthinkable situation.

“I thank the first responders at the scene who managed this extremely difficult situation with courage and professionalism,” said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in a statement that evening. “They faced danger without hesitation, and their efforts no doubt saved lives and prevented further injuries.

“We should all feel safe walking in our cities and communities.”

Added Mayor John Tory before the tenth victim succumbed to her injuries later on Monday: “My heart goes out to the families and loved ones of the nine people killed and 16 injured in today's cowardly and incomprehensive attack in Toronto. Our city denounces this and all acts of violence and we are united in our grief over this devastating loss.

“I encourage the people of Toronto to come together in support of those affected by this tragedy and those working to keep us safe – in particular to help the police by providing information. I ask everyone to await results of the police investigation to avoid speculation. Instead, we should show the world that Toronto is a city that will not be cowed, will not be afraid and will not waver in the values we hold dear.”

Powerful words.

In just a few minutes on Monday

afternoon, as the Prime Minister put it, “walking in our cities and communities” has somehow become an act of defiance.

By doing so, people not just in Toronto but throughout the extended GTA, will follow Mayor Tory's call to “show the world that Toronto is a city that will not be cowed, will not be afraid, and will not waver in the values” it holds dear.

But who could have conceived that we would ever be at this point?

Over the next few days, people in communities like this, still in a comfortable, or perhaps uncomfortable, radius to the City of Toronto, will express their feelings in many ways.

For some, it might be heading into the city for a simple walk down the street, but other examples of individuals refusing to be cowed will emerge, each steeling our resolve not to waver in our respective values, whatever these values might be.

We're all too close to the tragedy. Donning the blue and white of the Leafs, the red and black of the Raps, or a Jays hat in solidarity might seem trivial to us, as might becoming our own hashtag in #torontostrong, but this is likely how the rest of the country might respond.

Here at home, however, there is no clear way to channel our own grief.

Over the next few days, we are likely to see public memorials held in honour of the victims. Makeshift memorials have already popped up near Finch Station, just a stone's throw from where this rampage began. However an outlet for grief manifests itself, there is no doubt our collective steely backbone will be more than evident.

Given the recent outpouring to our brothers and sisters in Humboldt, it might seem strange, surreal, almost foreign, to be on the receiving end of a further outpouring, but here we are.

April began with a tragedy that cut close to the bone of every Canadian, summoning strength from our deep, collective reserves in the process. Thankfully this strength and resolve was still close to the surface when tragedy, sadly, came knocking on our door once again.

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Aurora's Community Newspaper

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To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to letters@auroran.com.
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.



The Aurora Museum & Archives is celebrating our new exhibition:

Temple of Fame: Staging Women's Roles
(April 25 – June 10)
The 1918 production of the Temple of Fame reflected

women's active role in society during the First World War. Along with supporting the war efforts, many women in Aurora, and in Canada, were also active in suffrage and temperance movements. To learn more about Aurora, through the lens of the play, be sure to visit the Aurora Museum & Archives, which is located on the second floor of the Church Street School. This exhibition is guest-curated by Kara Isozaki, Maeghan Jerry and Sarah Kelly, combined Master of Information/Master of Museum Studies students from the University of Toronto.



POLITICS AS USUAL

Alison Collins-Mrakas

Thanks for the Memories

Well folks, this is my last column.

I was going to make next week's column my last but as next week's paper will be published on May 2nd – the day after the start of the Municipal election period begins (which is May 1st, for those that don't know already), I am calling it a day with this column.

As my regular readers know, my practice during the last municipal election was to temporarily put a cap on the pen, shut down the laptop and stop writing my column for the duration of the campaign season. And I will be doing it again for this campaign.

My regular readers know that I don't write about municipal politics, so I could, of course continue to write about the provincial, national and international issues of the day. However, as the silly season has already begun in earnest, in the interest of my own sanity, I'll just take a bit of a breather. Who knows, maybe I'll start a blog...

As an opinion columnist, I write about what I think are important issues; what I think are the important takeaways from the day's news. As folks know, I have some pretty strong opinions on many things, for better or worse, depending on your point of view. And I admit that more often than I'd like, my opinions veered towards a bit of a rant – especially when the topic of politics in sports reared its ugly head. And for that I offer a bit of a mea culpa, a half-hearted one though.

Issues around fairness and cheating in sports really drive me mad.

In particular, the hypocrisy of the powers that be, in their statements about fair play and drug free sports. What a load of hooey. Just recently, a Canadian female weightlifter Christine Girard was awarded a bronze and a gold Olympic medal from the Beijing and London Olympics (respectively), because all the medalists before her finally got caught as drug cheats.

Well, as I have said before, it's wonderful that she is finally getting the medal she deserves but nothing can compensate her, or Canadian sports fans, for missing that moment of glory and pride that winning a gold medal brings.

Getting what's rightfully yours, after the fact is just not good enough. The IOC does little if anything to enforce the rules and ensure that all athletes are competing on the same level playing field. Only the IAAF is sticking to its guns about drugs in athletics.

I guess that was a bit of a rant. It's fitting that I will end my columns with one.

I have enjoyed writing about politics these past six years. It has been truly exciting. Given the state of governance locally, provincially, nationally – and especially internationally – there is never a shortage of topics.

The US election of 2016 provided a particularly rich vein of topics to mine. And it is the gift that just keeps on giving. Though it's a gift many would like to return.

Thank you to all my regular readers for your comments, your questions, your criticisms and your best wishes. I have appreciated them all.

Cannabis Regulations - Getting The Facts

Over the past couple of months my team and I have received requests for more information regarding the upcoming legalization and regulation of Cannabis.

In order to achieve our society's goal of preventing criminals and organized crime from profiting from the illegal sale and distribution of Cannabis, while ensuring Cannabis is kept out of the hands of our Canadian youth, it is important for all of us to clearly understand the new laws and how they will be implemented and enforced.

Please join me for a Town Hall on Cannabis Regulations at Richmond Green Secondary School on Saturday, April 28th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. that I will be hosting with M.P. Bill Blair, former Toronto Police Chief and current Parliamentary Secretary to Canada's Attorney General and Minister of Justice and to the Minister of Health.

In addition to answering your questions, we will be discussing:

- How this legislation will, for the first time, make it a specific criminal offence to sell cannabis to a minor and create significant penalties for those who engage young Canadians in cannabis-related offences.
- The toughening of laws around alcohol- and drug-impaired driving.



MP'S REPORT

Leona Alleslev, MP
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

Under the Government's proposed legislation, new offences would be added to the Criminal Code to enforce a zero tolerance approach for those driving under the influence of cannabis and other drugs.

- How our Government is working with the provinces, territories, and municipalities, to make appropriate investments to train and equip law enforcement so that our communities and roads are safe for all Canadians.
- The roles and responsibilities of each level of Government, and of each Canadian, in the execution of Cannabis legalization, regulation, and public awareness.
- How other jurisdictions around the world have executed the legalization and decriminalization of cannabis, and whether or not it has positively affected crime rates.

I look forward to engaging with

you in this important conversation to ensure a safer community and country for everyone.

Please RSVP for this Town Hall on my website at www.leonaalleslevmp.ca/events

In case you missed it...

Thank you to everyone who attended the Exchanging Ideas with Your MP Town Hall I hosted on April 14 to discuss a wide range of topics from the economy and the environment, to Facebook, privacy, cyber security and democratic reform. By working together, regardless of our political stripes, and listening to ideas we agree with, ideas we do not agree with, and ideas we have not even thought of yet, we are making an investment in democracy and creating a vision for what we want our country to become.

Please Contact Me!

My office is always open for those who have questions about the Federal Government, those who need assistance with Federal services and programs, and for anyone who simply wants to stop in and say hello. Visit us at 12820 Yonge St suite 202 in Richmond Hill, give us a call at (905)773-8358, or email me at Leona.Alleslev@parl.gc.ca.

Thank you.

Public Service announcement for parents of students graduating high school

As the parent of a Grade Nine student attending Aurora High School, my wife and I receive a weekly e-mail update on what is happening at the school.

Included in this e-mail is a table that shows the number of times that my son was away or late for school, which is good.

There are also announcements about upcoming trips, exams or other newsworthy items.

Last week's e-mail contained some important information for those parents with students in Grade Twelve who will be graduating this year.

There was a list of potential scholarships. Most or all of these are available to students graduating from any of the high schools in the area.

As a public service announcement to parents of any high school in the area, below are a number of announcements from the last e-mail bulletin: grades/marks reminders, potential opportunities to save some money on your son's/daughters post-secondary education and a reminder about community hours.

Grades Reminders

Students who have applied to College/University for September 2018 are encouraged to check their OUAC/OCAS accounts to ensure all data is accurate.

Semester 1 marks were transmitted in February. Subsequent transmission periods will occur in April and late June.

It is the responsibility of all students to remain informed about their application status on OUAC/OCAS.

Scholarships

Graduating Students - Have you thought about how you are going to pay for post-secondary school? All high school graduates are eligible to apply for bursaries/ scholarships.



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

The awards are based on such criteria as academic performance, extra-curricular involvement, and student leadership. You are only eligible if you apply.

Applications are due by Tuesday, May 1st, 2018.

York Region

Children's Aid Society Award

One award of \$1,250 is given to a former Crown ward of the York Region Children's Aid Society (York CAS) who is currently receiving service from York CAS and transitioning out of CAS care in the coming year. Award criteria is available at www.charitabletrustcfuauroranewmarket.com/CAS.html.

Applications are due by Friday, April 27 at 3.00 p.m.

John West Memorial Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarship Award

The Town of Aurora believes in recognizing those who have made a positive impact in the community and inspire and give us hope for the future. The award will honour the achievements of graduating students who are entering their first year of full-time post-secondary study at a post-secondary institution. The award will be distributed to one male and one female applicant. Applicants must be

a resident of Aurora. Each scholarship has a value of \$1,000. Application deadline is May 1, 2018. For more information, visit: www.aurora.ca/leadersoftomorrow

District 16 OSSTF Human Rights Student Bursary Award

Three \$500 bursaries are available to any graduating YRDSB Student entering a Post-Secondary institution or the Workplace. Application information is available at www.d16.osstf.ca/Human-Rights. All applications are to be submitted to the District 16 OSSTF Office by 3.30pm on Friday, May 4th.

District 16 OSSTF

Status of Women Scholarship

Open to any student (female or male) entering a Post-Secondary institution. District 16 OSSTF Status of Women Committee awards: 1 - \$500.00 scholarship to a graduate going to a University and 1 - \$500.00 scholarship to a graduate going to a College or Trade School. Application information is available at <http://www.d16.osstf.ca/Status-of-Women>. All applications are to be submitted to the District 16 OSSTF Office by 3.30pm on Friday, May 18th.

Community Involvement Hours

Students who have yet to complete their 40 community involvement hours are reminded to regularly check our community involvement bulletin board outside of the Guidance Office. Students should always have their potential hours pre-approved in Guidance to ensure the activity fits the description of being a non-profit and/or charitable organization.

Remember graduating students, don't leave it until June to try and get those community involvement hours!

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Does Monday's attack in Toronto make you feel any less safe?

YES NO UNSURE

Go to www.theauroran.com to vote!

Previous poll results

Should election hopefuls be required to live in the areas they run to represent?

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
APRIL 17, 2018	79%	16%	5%

Council questions Petch House's future after splitting with wedding chapel option

By Brock Weir

Could it be splitsville for Petch House and the Town of Aurora?

The relationship between one of Aurora's oldest buildings and the municipality hit a rough patch this week after Councillor Tom Mrakas' attempts to convert the historic building into a venue for civil marriages brought up more questions than answers.

This past February, Council approved a motion from Councillor Mrakas asking for a report on the feasibility of making Petch House, which currently stands behind the Aurora Seniors' Centre, into a possible venue for civil marriage ceremonies, which are currently being held in Council chambers.

According to the resulting report, which was presented at last week's General Committee meeting, it could cost in the neighbourhood of \$35,000 to bring the restored and reconstructed log cabin up to code with electrical facilities

and an HVAC system for year-round use.

A full upgrade to allow further uses – including a new wood floor system, connection to municipal water and sewer systems, and the construction of two washrooms, among other items – could cost up to \$97,500.

With these numbers, however, Council members started a whole new discussion, a discussion which could lead to the building itself being moved from its current location, where it has stood since 2014.

Councillor John Abel, for instance, who sits on the Board of the Aurora Seniors' Association, said the Board has its reservations on converting Petch House into a wedding venue. Civil weddings are traditionally carried out by the Town on Fridays, one of the busiest days at the Seniors' Centre.

That being said, however, he said spending \$35,000 to bring the building up to code was "probably not a bad investment."

Councillor Mrakas had a similar view, stating that whatever the future use of Petch House, it is going to need electricity and an HVAC system.

"The longer we wait, the more it is going to cost, so we might as well put it in now and we can use it for something," he said. "[A wedding chapel] is not the only purpose it can be used for. Having the HVAC system and the electricity in there would allow staff to possibly have other types of events as well. This would be just the beginning of being able to use that space instead of [it] sitting there empty and useless."

But its future use might not be on that site at all.

Councillor Wendy Gaertner said she simply couldn't see Petch House being used as a wedding venue without a washroom.

"We have been trying to figure out the Petch House for years and nobody wanted it," she said. "Now the Seniors don't want it either. The thing this would be perfect for is additional use for the Seniors' Centre because it is just busting at the seams and we're not going to [build] another Seniors' Centre. Is it out of the question that we figure out how to connect the Seniors' Centre with the Petch House?"

Councillor Abel offered that the Seniors' Centre is in "dire need" of storage space and Petch House might be a solution.

"The idea was to abut it to the [Seniors' Centre] and create a door,"

The longer we wait, the more it is going to cost, so we might as well put it in now and we can use it for something," he said. "[A wedding chapel] is not the only purpose it can be used for. Having the HVAC system and the electricity in there would allow staff to possibly have other types of events as well. This would be just the beginning of being able to use that space instead of [it] sitting there empty and useless.

he said. "It is not practical to go up and down the ramp [leading to the Petch House at the entrance to the Aurora Arboretum] if we are moving tables and chairs. We could just roll that up to part of the building. That is not a bad idea."

Another potential use, he said, was something previously suggested by local landscape architect David Tomlinson, namely to have it in the Aurora Wildlife Park as a blind.

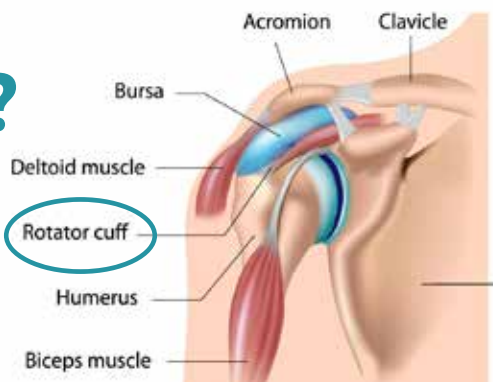
"Looking back at some of the old reports, I know we had an open call to the public and there was a long list of ideas and suggestions about Petch House, but for the Wildlife Park, the Eco Park, and those were ideas that were talked about at the time but those facilities just weren't ready," added Councillor Michael Thompson. "We chose adjacent to the Seniors' Centre and maybe Library Square is an option. I would like to get that information before making a final determination next week."

A final determination on Petch House's fate – wedding chapel or otherwise – is not likely to come this week.

There is group therapy in the offing before the idea finally makes it to the altar, with the matter heading to the Heritage Advisory Committee for their review.

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Dr. Dean McClelland

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Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Foundation receives boost from TD



Branch Associate Manager Daniel Grinberg, Cheryl Taylor, Funding Manager for the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation, and project lead Christa Sharp. Submitted photo

By Brock Weir

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Foundation's ongoing efforts to preserve and protect the local watershed received welcome support this week from TD Bank.

Representatives from the Conservation Foundation (LSRCF) were on hand at the TD Bank on Wellington Street East and Highway 404 on Friday to accept a \$5,000 donation from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.

The Foundation is dedicated to funding local environmental projects and hosts a number of initiatives across the country each year dedicated to "greening" the areas they serve.

These initiatives range from school yard naturalization projects, to the revitalization of local parkland, to environmental education and, locally, a number of tree planting days each spring.

For over 25 years, the Foundation has been working towards making local environmental projects a reality and has contributed over \$89 million to 26,000 environmental projects nation-wide.

"We work in the community and most of the people who work in our branches are in the community and we are [aware] about the different community initiatives that are out there," said Daniel Grinberg,

Branch Manager Associate for the First Commerce Drive location. "We have clients who trust us with their business, their information and their personal stories, so we want to give back and say we're thankful by helping out with a greener park or even just having nicer surroundings. I am very proud to be part of TD because it is not a one-faceted company. As we grow, we want to take our clients with us and help them grow as well. Reaching out and touching people in different ways is a huge benefit for that.

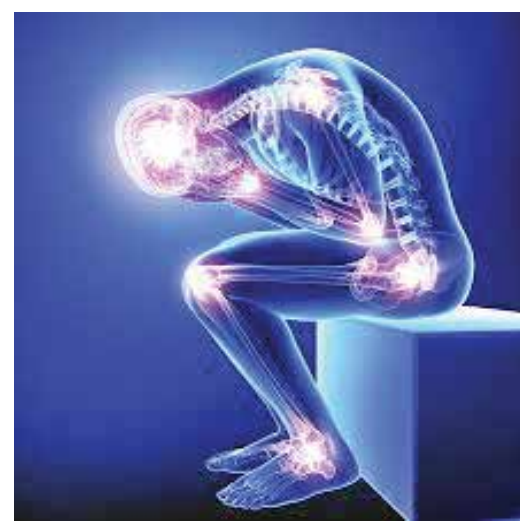
"As I am young in my career, I already know that I need to give back because it is not only good for yourself, it is good for business and it is good for the clients."

TD recently launched The Ready Commitment, a multi-year program to help open doors to what they describe as "an inclusive tomorrow."

"Many of us are concerned about the world the next generation will inherit and this is affecting our confidence in what the future holds," says the bank. "As part of The Ready Commitment, TD is committed to helping create a more vibrant planet by growing and enhancing green spaces for everyone to enjoy. Working with organizations like the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation we can work together to elevate the quality of the environment so that people and the economy can thrive."

Breakthrough Treatment For Spinal Stenosis

(Cervical/Lumbar Stenosis)



Do you experience numbness, weakness or tingling in a leg, foot, arm or hand? Do you have neck or back pain that has lasted more than one month or experience frequent headaches? You may be suffering from a condition known as spinal stenosis.

Spinal Stenosis is defined as narrowing of the bone channel occupied by the spinal nerves or the spinal cord.

Some people are born with a congenital form, but most develop spinal stenosis as part of the degenerative process. A few do not feel any effects of the narrowing, but as part of the aging process, most people will eventually notice radiating pain, weakness, and/or numbness secondary to the compression of the nerves or spinal cord.

In lumbar stenosis, the spinal nerve roots in the lower back become compressed and this can produce symptoms of sciatica—tingling, weakness or numbness that radiates from the low back and into the buttocks and legs—especially with activity.

You go to the drug store or to your doctor and get pills to help relieve your symptoms. But you find the symptoms keep returning. Alternatively, the doctor may refer you to a specialist who may tell you that surgery is needed or is an option for you.

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

Also, you may have heard that there are serious health risks associated with chronic use (or overuse) of medications that include damage to the liver, kidneys

and gut.

There is a new, natural, safe and highly effective approach that has helped many sufferers improve their lives dramatically: Laser therapy uses light to favor and accelerate the body's natural healing processes. The innovative Multiwave Locked System (MLS) Laser produces a safe, efficient and simultaneous effect on pain, inflammation and nerve conduction, exceeding the limits of traditional LLLT (Low power) and concerns of HP (High power) laser therapy.

According to multiple studies MLS laser therapy appears to be uniquely capable of decreasing the inflammation around the spinal cord and shows great promise in the battle against the devastating sequelae of this condition.

What does this mean for you?

Many of our patients have reported a 90-95% relief of their symptoms, more mobility, increased sensation and vastly improved function!

It is the very latest in medical technology, with years of clinical studies supporting its safety and efficacy and we are very proud to offer our patients effective solutions to their recent or chronic conditions.

"This new, natural, safe and highly effective approach has helped many sufferers improve their lives dramatically".

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Business Improvement area would focus on Aurora's historic core

From page 1
Church Street.

"In conjunction with the Town, we have surveyed 91 businesses and the results were overwhelmingly in favour of a BIA," said Ms. Russo. "We hope to join together with the Town to organize and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in the historical district. Our plan is to enhance our business area to create an inviting atmosphere for local businesses and neighbouring residential areas and mostly to encourage pedestrian traffic in the Downtown Core. The time is right for a BIA as the Town's Library Square project begins to take shape and the renewed emphasis on expanded

neighbourhoods comes to fruition. "Why do we do this? We do this for several reasons: we want to revitalize and beautify [Aurora's] historical centre and make it a destination for local residents to work, shop and play. We want to provide opportunities for area businesses to thrive through community events and focused advertising. Our three year plan will revitalize and beautify the Aurora Downtown Core and this will happen through the placement of benches, historic signage, lampposts, banners, murals, etc. Most importantly, we will create an entertainment hub anchored by several pedestrian-focused events that will spotlight our local businesses." Currently, she added, they're eying

five seasonal events throughout the year.

Following this initial pitch, the legislative details need to be hammered out.

According to Mike de Rond, Aurora's Town Clerk, the first step from Town Hall's perspective will be sending notices to businesses in the impacted area. The comments received at the Committee last week, if ratified by Council this Tuesday, will then be sent back to staff for a report and the wheels can officially start to turn.

That might be a formality, however, as the BIA proposal got the clear backing of Councillors.

"I am really excited," said Councillor Sandra Humfries. "What is really important is your BIA is working closely with the Town and staff so we can put [downtown] priorities together and work towards that in the budgeting process. About four years ago, we came back to beautifying the downtown and improving some buildings, sidewalk areas and benches, and it was costly, about \$200,000, but we have to make it look beautiful, we have to make it look inviting.

"People want to come back Downtown, they want to enjoy our Downtown, and it is our obligation as Council and future Councils to work towards that. Having a BIA that helps prioritize...will help Council know what is really important to businesses in our community."

Speaking in favour of the proposal, Councillor Michael Thompson noted the hard work it has taken to get to this point, but questioned how the BIA would be structured financially.

Proponents of the idea said the BIA would be financed through membership fees and sponsorship opportunities.

"We have looked at previous BIAs... and they have tacked on a levy onto property owners," said Ms. Russo. "We surveyed 101 properties and,

so far, the votes we have received to date have been very successful. The levy we're looking at is about \$400 per business owner and we're looking to the Town for support. We have completed a three-year projection that will be presented to Council."

Revitalization, said Councillor Tom Mrakas, is a "buzzword" that has been used for "quite a long time" in Aurora, and he said he was encouraged to see "movement" towards realizing that goal. Having asked Ms. Russo about the excitement level she has seen from business owners as they take their idea door-to-door, she said there is "tons of excitement" in the air.

"We all wanted to see change and we all wanted to be a part of that change and we know change is happening," she said. "Revitalizing the downtown and making it feel more historic is something we have all been waiting for. We just want to see it happen. We are all positive attitudes, all positive responses we've been receiving from local business owners."

Adding there is still a lot of work to be done before the BIA is brought to fruition, Councillor Paul Pirri encouraged organizers to "keep the faith" along the way.

"I think this is a fantastic opportunity to help revitalize the Downtown Core, get business buy-in, and support events and market the Downtown Core," he said. "There is a lot of work that is going to be involved in the next phase, which includes going out to get a formal petition through the Town, creating consultations, so good look and I look forward to supporting you along the way."

Added Councillor John Abel: "You must be extremely encouraged by the reception you've got. Keep going, and I know it is important to know how Council feels and if you're going to be supported. It looks very promising. Keep up the great work and we look forward to the next stage."

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Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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Ignoring her own advice is way of life for volunteer

By Brock Weir

Say no to yes.

It's a philosophy that once guided Nancy Black, so much so that it's emblazoned and immortalized just below her right wrist.

So many of the small, postage stamp-sized tattoos on Ms. Black's forearms have a special meaning for her, but this one is something different. It's a symbol of the fact that sometimes you have to ignore your own advice.

Ms. Black was one of 15 York Region residents and organizations honoured this month as recipients of the Portraits of Giving exhibition, which opened at Newmarket's Pfaff Automotive.

Now in its ninth year, this year's program, which is spearheaded by photographer Karen Merk, added two categories this year: Life Time Giver, which went to former Newmarket mayor Tom Taylor, and Sports, for which Ms. Black was the inaugural honouree.

Ms. Merk founded Portraits of Giving to showcase people among us who give back tirelessly to their communities, with each honouree photographed in a place within York Region that has special meaning for the work they do.

Ms. Black is pictured at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex where she coaches Aurora's Special Ducks, a local swim club for athletes with intellectual disabilities.

"Nancy Black is founder of the Special Olympics swimming team in Aurora, which led to the formation of the official local chapter, Special Olympics Ontario - Aurora," reads the citation for Ms. Black, whose induction into the Portraits of Giving Wall of Fame was sponsored by Apple Self Storage. "The organization is

celebrating its 10th anniversary and has grown to include a total of seven sports serving over 120 athletes. Nancy has held various positions and is currently Head Coach of the Special Ducks, back where she began in 2008. Her motto is 'Just Say Yes' and she believes that saying 'Yes' opens doors and opportunities, especially by volunteering."

So, about that tattoo... No regrets. "Three years ago, I had this tattooed because I was feeling, 'I'll just keep doing it, work stuff, volunteer stuff,' and that's my thing," she says about feeling a bit of burnout. "But, saying yes has opened up doors to numerous wonderful opportunities, people, things and experiences. It is just in my nature to say, 'Sure, why not?'"

Ms. Black tells The Auroran she was first inspired to give back by her mother. After her father died, Nancy was raised by a single mom who "did all kinds of things" in the community, a fact which did not go unnoticed by her young daughter.

"It certainly means a lot to be recognized," she says, thinking about how the Special Ducks began. "We were a group of adults who wanted to give back to the community, giving back to Big Brothers, Big Sisters, the Heart & Stroke Foundation, but we just wanted to pick one entity, and [wondered] how we could help people with special needs.

"One of our coaches at the time did have some knowledge about coaching swimming for people with special needs. Being recognized now is symbolic because we're at 10 years now as an official association with Special Olympics. We just wanted to give back, but had no idea where we would end up!"

Given that anniversary, it is fitting that Ms. Black was so honoured in 2018. The timing was also fitting for Aurora siblings Ian and Rod Johnson



(Top) Nancy Black shows off her "Say No To Yes" tattoo, a tattoo she has learned to disregard today, at the Portraits of Giving launch. (Above) Mayor Geoff Dawe congratulates portrait recipients brothers Ian and Rod Johnson.

Auroran photos by Brock Weir

of Johnson Financial Group, who were honoured by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce for their philanthropic activities.

The Portraits of Giving launch coincided with the fourth anniversary of the fire which devastated Aurora United Church and Rod, as Chair of the Church Council until his term ended in February, has been

instrumental in the rebuild process.

"The fire was pretty defining in terms of time and energy from myself in the last four years," says Rod. "You have no idea where your contributions might fall if you follow your interests. That has been a big interest to the community as we look forward to rebuilding."

Continued on page 25

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THE AURORAN ARTS & CULTURE



SOLD OUT SHOW – it was a sold out night of music as the Juno Award-winning Ennis sisters took the stage at the Aurora Cultural Centre on Friday Night. The world-renowned celtic/folk trio from Newfoundland and Labrador brought their closely-knit harmonies and voices to Aurora, part of their tour for their latest album, Keeping Time, which was produced by musician, author and fellow Newfoundlander Alan Doyle.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger



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Unravel the mystery of the Stradivarius with special concert next Friday

By Brock Weir

Musicians and music buffs alike have pondered the mystery of why the string instruments produced by Stradivarius seem to have personalities all their own.

For over 300 years, different theories have been offered, embraced by some and dismissed by others, but next Friday, May 4, you can have a chance to draw your own conclusions as cellist Cameron Crozman brings a 1696 Stradivarius cello to the stage of the Aurora Cultural Centre.

Crozman and his unique instrument will feature in the latest instalment of the Great Artist Music Series, this time featuring James Campbell & Friends.

Campbell, a Canadian clarinetist, is renowned for his contributions to our musical landscape, as well as his international career as a solo and chamber musician.

During this concert, Campbell will share the stage not only with Crozman but also pianist Leopoldo Erice.

According to the Aurora Cultural Centre, the concert will feature “a once in a lifetime opportunity to hear a cello crafted by 17th century Italian instrument maker Antoni Stradivari.”

“The cello received its name after the amateur 19th century Parisian cellist Abel Bonjour, who owned it until sometime after 1885,” says Jane Taylor of the Cultural Centre. “The instrument is now part of the collection of the

Canada Council for the Arts Musical Instrument Bank, thanks to an anonymous donor who passed the \$12 million instrument to the institution in 2000. The Instrument Bank competition offers Canadian musicians the opportunity to borrow some of the world’s finest stringed instruments to play for a period of three years,

often performing on the international stage. This is the first-ever time the Aurora Cultural Centre has featured an instrument with such a valuable heritage and story, which will be played by Cameron Crozman.”

Crozman was the lucky winner of the competition in 2015 and got first pick.

His choice, he says was clear from the outset.

“There is something about older instruments, particularly by certain makers,” he explains. “They do all these studies where they try to compare these old instruments which, of course, cost a lot of money – millions of dollars, sometimes – and they try to compare them to modern instruments to see if modern instruments sound better, and they are often inconclusive. Even if it is not quantifiable, I think there is something very special about playing on instruments that are very old.

“The instrument I play is from 1696. I think that is the big thing for me, being able to handle this antique. I do think the older instruments offer a personality and are really like people in that they have a certain way they want to be played, days where they are happy and days where they are not as happy. That is sort of the joy of it all.”

So, what makes it unique?

“That is the mystery that everyone tries to solve: why do Stradivarius instruments sound better; or do they even sound better?” he says. “The theory I like right now, although there is not a whole lot of proof, there was a mini ice age in Europe at the time and the wood he might have used was more dense than we have nowadays and that might have affected the sound, but that is the mystery.”

Less of a mystery is Crozman’s love of music. The son of a flautist and

Continued on page 20

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NDP is a “party for the people,” says Newmarket-Aurora candidate



Newmarket-Aurora Ontario NDP candidate Michelle Williams addresses supporters at her campaign launch in Newmarket last week. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

By Brock Weir

Ontario needs change, but for Melissa Williams, that change is not Doug Ford.

Ms. Williams, a local wellness business owner who was confirmed as the Ontario NDP Candidate in Newmarket-Aurora on Tuesday night promises “change for the better” under a Provincial government led by Andrea Horwath, a government she says will reinvest in health care, hospitals, and schools, making life more affordable for Ontarians in the process.

“I believe in a party that is for the people and a party that can stick to its promises,” Ms. Williams tells The Auroran. “I am passionate about serving the people I know in my community, that I have grown to love, and who have accepted me. That is the reason I sought the NDP nomination. I feel it is about time that the NDP had a stronghold in the riding of Newmarket-

Aurora and the NDP is reflective of the needs of a changing population.”

The seniors population is growing, she says, and support for the aging population just isn’t there. There are young immigrant families who are supporting parents, and living in Ontario simply isn’t as affordable as it once was 20 years ago.

Ms. Williams has lived in Canada for the last 18 years. A native of Zimbabwe, she emigrated to Canada from South Africa with her family where she had lived for the previous 13 years. Canada offered more opportunity for her kids, she says, more opportunity for growth, and that was the reality found.

“When I originally came to Canada, I found that starting a new life and living just seemed to be more accessible, was more affordable, and over the past almost two decades, things have become steadily harder for people to start up again,” she says. “Buying a house is kind of slipping away from many, many young families that are no longer able

to afford a house. Things like hydro costs, things like grocery shopping – it is not as easy as it was two decades ago.”

The Ontario NDP is focused on bringing about more affordability, making life more accessible for newcomers and providing Ontarians of all demographics more opportunities.

“It is about giving them the child care option, making sure their hydro bills are not almost as much as paying for half your rent, for example,” she says. “In the two decades that have gone by, life seems to be a little bit harder right now.”

From her perspective, there is one common denominator in the past two decades: the Liberal Government.

“The first thing you need to understand is the Liberals need to be shown the door,” says Ms. Williams. “They have had enough time. We tend to have a lot of promises the Liberals offer just pre-election and they have had enough time; they have had 15 years and it hasn’t come to fruition, so they need to go. Things are getting steadily tougher and it has really become a disaster. When you look at the PCs, they want to cut services more than what the Liberals have done. They have promised what the Liberals are promising with regards to cutting of the services is they will leave no stone unturned and they want to cut as much as \$6.1 billion in services, which is only going to hurt Newmarket-Aurora. That is not what we need.

“Andrea Horwath is the best choice. This is change for the better. We don’t need to move from bad to worse.”

Change for the better is change to make life more affordable and healthier.

“Under that umbrella of making life affordable and healthier, it is bringing in the pharmacare and the dental plan,” says Ms. Williams. “It is making a childcare a \$12 per day option, it is slashing Hydro by 30 per cent. It is relieving student debt. It is offering

When I originally came to Canada, I found that starting a new life and living just seemed to be more accessible, was more affordable, and over the past almost two decades, things have become steadily harder for people to start up again

affordable housing. Those are things residents in the area need to be able to understand and connect with, that this is what the NDP are offering.

“[It is about] health care, investing in hospitals, overhauling mental health care, supporting a housing system for the mental health care, creating, for example, a dedicated ministry that solely deals with mental health. [It is about] adding in extra long-term beds that are required for seniors, even looking at having a policy in place where seniors would be required, or workers and support workers would be required to spend a minimum of four hours at least with seniors. What we’re getting nowadays is people are literally spending minutes with seniors in long-term care and that is not enough. They are very under-staffed.”

In the weeks leading up to the June 7 Provincial Election, Ms. Williams says she is looking forward to “connecting on a more personal level” with the community.

“That I really exciting; that is who I am,” she says. “I am somebody who serves within the community and that is where I strive. I am looking forward to being able to be the voice for Newmarket-Aurora, being the person [residents] can rely on to be able to take their issue to Queen’s Park.”



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Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

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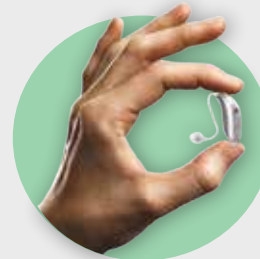
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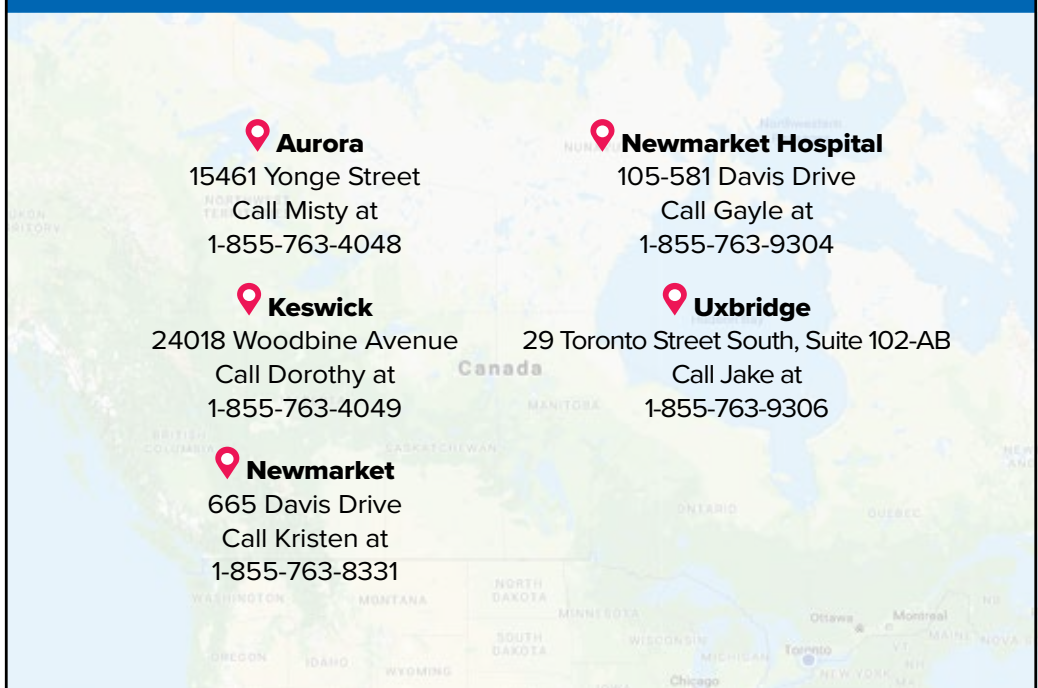
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Baseball, soccer and football clubs jostle for a piece of Hallmark lands

By Brock Weir

The gloves are off, but Aurora's sports clubs are keeping it friendly in their bids to get much needed field time as the Town looks to redevelop the Hallmark lands into sports fields.

Council members last week were asked to approve one of two designs for the lands on Vandorf Road previously owned by Hallmark. One plan would have seen the construction of two large baseball diamonds, the other would combine a diamond with a soccer pitch, both items desperately needed according to local sports clubs.

But the sports clubs will have to call it a draw – at least for the time being.

Their competing pitches to Council stalled a decision, resulting in the plans being sent back to the drawing board to ensure whatever plan ultimately rises to the top will best address their different needs.

The first club to make their pitch was the Aurora Soccer Club (ASC), represented by Martin Ambrose.

The staff proposal, he said, recommends a \$3 million budget to construct two baseball diamonds and while Mr. Ambrose stressed he was not at the podium to speak against the needs of local baseball clubs, he questioned how the Town is prioritizing needs outlined in its Master Parks and Recreation Plan.

"The rise in soccer's popularity across Canada is imminent," said Mr. Ambrose. "The Town's long-term vision is to develop the Town into a healthy, strong and complete community that provides a range of places and opportunities to live. A complete community is designed for all stages of life, and that includes places to meet, build social connections, and support healthy and active lifestyles."

"We recognize according to the Master Plan that the Aurora and King City Baseball Association has 720 players, which has been updated to 1,062 in 2017. The Canadian Soccer Association reports 2.6 million players, half a million of which are in Ontario, 59,000 registered in Aurora, 70 per cent of our members are from Aurora. The desperate shortage of playing

fields for soccer throughout the town is not a surprise. While a new facility on Wellington is most welcome, the ASC has been proactive in addressing its capacity issues."

This is an issue which will only be compounded, he said, with use of Shepherd's Bush and the potential loss of soccer fields on lands currently owned by Magna.

The ASC, he added, has already had to rent fields outside of Aurora, namely at Newmarket's Police Shed just off Bayview Avenue, and the Hallmark lands would be an ideal location for more fields "only 200 yards from our current facility."

Next up was Roy Cohen, President of the Aurora Youth Soccer Club, who was also speaking on behalf of the Aurora Football Club.

The Aurora Youth Soccer Club (AYSC) has been around for 54 years, hosting over 4,000 youth in existing programs. Older players, however, in the U19 and U29 divisions are a fast growing demographic, he said, meaning membership retention is fantastic and that can be chalked in part up to collaboration with the Town in meeting their needs.

"We see now older kids...are playing and coming out and it is a beautiful thing to see Sunday night at Craddock (Park) where parents are coming out to watch their 22 and 23 sons daughters and sons play," said Mr. Cohen. "Don't forget about us, don't forget about what we need, the kids we impact and, more importantly, the community we hold dear. It is about the kids. We're here for the kids and we want to make sure they have proper, safe facilities and we can grow this sport."

"The whole idea is inclusiveness. Our neighbours in York Region look at Aurora with high esteem and I think inclusiveness is very important. Those numbers really aren't important. I think what is important is we provide proper facilities. Aurora is growing by leaps and bounds and there are lots of great things in the future, but we can't get caught behind in sports and rec."

Last up was Jamie Cole, President of the Aurora King Baseball Association

(AKBA), also representing the Aurora Diggers softball team.

Enrolment in AKBA programs, he said, has been skyrocketing, now holding at 1,000 kids and many more being turned away. This is a trend they expect will continue, he added.

"We have done everything we can to make sure we give every child the opportunity as much as possible. We have added private diamonds in Newmarket, we have cut down on practice times and even added Sunday evening games for the kids to play. The Diggers are also at capacity. They are hoping to host the Provincial championship this year but there is no place to hold one at this time because there is already a tournament schedule that weekend and we can't hold more than one tournament in Aurora at this time."

"According to the Town of Aurora website, there are 69 soccer fields right now in Aurora. There are 18 baseball diamonds. We feel that number is a little out of balance. There have been no new softball size diamonds in approximately 15 years. The only diamond built was the Stewart Burnett diamond, which can only be used, because of the mound, by senior players, high level players. Due to the nature and pace of play in baseball, on most of the diamonds, we can only play one game. We can't play two games on one diamond, for safety reasons as well as needing the backstop area."

Two ball diamonds built together, as in one of the two proposals before Council last week, would bring many benefits to the community, he added. A primary benefit would be the ability to host tournaments. Lambert Willson Park's multiple diamonds make this Aurora's only destination for holding baseball tournaments and there is a lot of potential that is being missed, he said.

If Council ratifies the decision made at the Committee level last week, comments from each respective sports clubs will be compiled into a report and their concerns addressed at a special meeting of Aurora's Parks, Recreation & Culture Advisory Committee set for May.

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New fence bylaw would strike “balance” when it comes to property rights

By Brock Weir

It might be too late to address the fracas that started it all, but changes to Aurora's fence bylaws would strike a

“balance” when it comes to property rights down the line.

Council is set to approve a number of measures this week that would include the rights of property owners in existing legislation on the construction and placements of fences.

Municipalities nowadays generally regulate the height and description of fences when it comes to pool enclosures, but, in Aurora, bylaws are currently silent on the placement of fences when such a fence would restrict a neighbour's access to their own property.

This came to a head earlier this year with a neighbour dispute on Wells Street, where a property owner petitioned Council for action, illustrating how her neighbour's recently erected fence was only steps from the north wall of her house, impeding not only her access to her own property, but the access of utility providers.

While the new provisions will not be retroactive, they will go towards similar situations popping up again.

“The Town's Fence bylaw does not currently contain provisions that would restrict the erection of fences where access to adjacent properties would be impeded,” said Techa van Leeuwen, Aurora's Director of Corporate Services. “In the older parts of Town, there are some properties where buildings were constructed prior

to any zoning bylaw being in place and buildings may be located in close proximity to the property line. In these situations where a building is less than two feet to the property line and an adjacent property owner erects a fence on or just inside his/her property line, maintenance and repair of the building will be difficult and/or impossible without removing [a] section of the fence.

“Staff are proposing that portions of any fence erected within two feet of a building on an adjoining property be constructed with either removable panels or hinged to provide reasonable and ease of access to adjacent property owners for the purpose of maintenance and repair.”

The changes were approved at the Committee level last week and are up for final approval at this week's Council meeting, but they nevertheless raised questions.

Councillor Wendy Gaertner, for instance, questioned why Aurora couldn't require people to get permits for every fence they want to put up.

There is nothing preventing Aurora from going down that road, said Ms. van Leeuwen, but it would be costly.

“If you consider we have about 20,000 residential properties in the Town of Aurora, it would be extremely taxing on our resources and the ability to deliver that service,” said Ms. van Leeuwen. “We would require additional staff because almost every property has a fence.”

Councillor John Abel's concerns harkened back to this winter's discussion over the contentious Wells Street fencing issue.

“The owner, when they are building a fence that is less than two feet to the property line, the suggestion is there would be the ability to maintain and repair the [adjacent] building,” he said. “Are you saying that if they are going to build a fence, they will need to allow for maintenance of the building they are blocking?”

What Ms. van Leeuwen said her department was suggesting is when a fence is built in cases like these, a portion of the fence would need to be built in order to accommodate removable or hinged panels to allow for easy access to the neighbourhood property line.

If a neighbour registered a complaint with the Town, she added, the municipality would go out to investigate. If a fence was found to be non-compliant, “enforcement action” would then be taken.

Councillor Jeff Thom, on the other hand, said that while removable or hinged panels might be in place, the proposed changes do not speak to fence posts that might be in the way of a neighbour redoing their siding or repainting their homes.

“If we had removable panels or panels that were hinged completely open, then I don't think maintenance would be that difficult to work around because you would be working around that post,” replied Ms. van Leeuwen.

Councillor Paul Pirri had concerns similar to Councillor Thom's, noting that hinged panels would give one neighbour an advantage when it came to accessing a property.

“If you're putting in swinging arms,” he said, “you can't swing both ways.”

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Residents urged to register concerns on app as parking issues get tackled

By Brock Weir

Aurora residents are being urged to continue identifying potential parking and traffic problems online as Council moves to address just such a complaint on the Town's west side.

This week, Council addressed long-standing sight line issues on Lensmith Drive, off Kennedy Street West, just west of Murray Drive.

The move sees parking restrictions implemented along the south and west sides of the street from the western property limit of 38 Lensmith Drive to the corner to increase the lines of sight.

According to the report before Council by traffic analyst Michael Bat, the changes are a direct response to residents' complaints.

“Based on the analysis, sight distance will be effectively reduced by more than 40 per cent for drivers travelling in an eastbound-to-southbound direction when a vehicle is parked along the angle bend on Lensmith Drive,” he said. “Staff recommends that parking be prohibited at any time on the south and west sides of Lensmith [from the west limits of #38] to a point nine metres south of the corner radius. This will ensure that the sight distance will not be impeded for all road users when navigating around the single bend on Lensmith Drive. As a result...an estimated four existing on-street parking spaces will be limited.”

During Council's discussion of the recommendation, it was mentioned the complaints came through Mayor Geoff Dawe's office who, in turn, passed them along to appropriate staff members for investigation. Although that method ultimately brought about results, staff said Council members should encourage members of the public to take advantage of Place Speak, an app launched last year which allows Aurorans to “pin” their concerns on an online map which are then addressed by Town Hall.

“Ideally, we would like Councillors to encourage people to go on and register and put the complaints on themselves,” said

Stephanie Mackenzie-Smith, Aurora's Manager of Corporate Communications.

“If they are not comfortable or have concerns with how to do that, they can absolutely contact the Communications Department. We're also training Access Aurora [front desk staff at Town Hall] to add complaints to the system themselves.”

From the perspective of many Councillors, there are indeed many issues and problem spots that still need to be tackled.

“There are probably a number of streets that very much meet the same criteria with poor sight lines on a sharp bend,” said Councillor John Abel.

Added Councillor Tom Mrakas: “We need to look right across Town at [addressing these issues] instead of doing it piecemeal just one at a time. I remember two years ago when doing some door knocking on Hackwood Crescent... one resident mentioned to me the same issue coming around the bend: the sight lines are very poor. I brought that to the [Director of Infrastructure at the time and I am afraid] that got lost in the shuffle. I think it is something we need to look at and make sure that whole areas within the Town that fall within the same structure of street and make sure we are providing the same level of service and care for our residents.”

For some, including Councillor Sandra Humfries, who has been one of Council's most vocal proponents of bringing back the Town's former Traffic Safety Advisory Committee to listen to – and make recommendations on – such complaints, the online component is essential going forward.

“One of the things I think is really good about PlaceSpeak is that these issues, even those that come to us...will be put on the application and that will be identified as an area of concern as residents go online, they will see that's their street and will want to add some comments too,” she said. “That will make for an ease of understanding of what's going on at the Town. I believe it will be very good and I believe we have over 500 comments on there right now.”

Garden Club celebrates 100 years of deep community roots

By Brock Weir

At its founding in 1918, Canada was in the dying days of the First World War.

Resources were scarce, the country was battle-weary and, more often than not, gardeners were looking to their own plots of soil to grow vegetables to make their meals go the extra mile.

It was in this environment that the Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society first took root.

Everything, however, is cyclical and, as they prepare to mark their 100th anniversary this Saturday, new members are once again looking at their soil as a precious resource, a resource which can not only help all-important pollinators, but help them “eat local” as well.

The Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society, colloquially known as Garden Aurora, will mark its centenary this Saturday with an Annual General Meeting featuring a talk by renowned Canadian gardener Mark Cullen.

It is the first of a full slate of events to commemorate their remarkable anniversary, longevity that has been hallmarked by, well, let's let Garden Club Board Member Donna Lewis take it from here:

“Survival,” says Ms. Lewis. “We like to say we're rooted in our town and rooted in our community. The garden Club has been part of the community for 100 years. 100 years ago, they were thinking about victory gardens to help the war effort, grow your own food. Now, we're also doing victory gardens for pollinators, gardens for the 100 Mile Diet. There is a lot of information people need and you can't just go to YouTube for some of the stuff you need to know. You have to be able to go and talk to people and we have wonderful members that like to share their knowledge – they just want somebody to ask them the question.”

The first meeting of the Aurora Horticultural Society was held on April 23, 1918 at what was then Aurora's Town Hall. The first meeting came after a group



This month's ice storm delayed spring flowers, so the greenhouse at the Joint Operations Centre provided the atmosphere for this photo of Garden Club members Branslava Milosevic, Donna Lewis and Cindy Scythes head of the Horticultural Society's 100th anniversary this weekend.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

of representatives presented a 60 signature petition requesting official status for the Aurora Horticultural Society.

W.H. Fleury was elected the organization's first President, with Thomas Sisman serving as First Vice President and Dr. W.J. Stevenson serving under him.

The first general meeting was held on May 27, 1919.

Their objective from the outset was “beautifying the Town through public plantings” and educating new members about the positive effects gardening had on the environment.

This is very much the philosophy which drives the club 100 years later.

“People are very much more aware that being outside and interacting with nature is a healthy way to de-stress,” says Ms. Lewis. “New members who come to us, whether they have a plot of land or not, even just have house plants, still find the benefit of coming to us. People don't often realise that some things you have to see, touch, smell

and feel to truly appreciate what is there.”

Joining the Garden Club, adds member Branslava Milosevic, gives members “an opportunity to learn and garden beyond their yards.”

“Through talking, visiting [other gardens on their annual Garden Tour], and seeing things, it enlarges your scope of gardening and we all do work as a team,” she says. “Friendships develop and you start feeling like it is your garden family – that's what keeps us too.”

Another member of the “garden family”, Cindy Scythes, identifies the camaraderie that comes out of the Garden Club.

“I have been a member for 12 years and I am just your average home gardener,” says Ms. Scythes. “I joined because I just like to garden and wanted to talk to people about gardening. When we started 100 years ago, the objects were fairly similar to now. They were trying to beautify Aurora, it was about education and people wanting to plant.”

Since that time, says Ms. Scythes, the Garden Club has branched out once again beyond their membership to enrich the community in partnerships ranging from decorating Hillary House National Historic Site seasonally to partnering with the Alzheimer Society of York Region on building their therapy garden, which opened last year.

“There is a therapeutic piece to being in nature and working in a garden, whether you have arthritis or, as you get older, just digging in the dirt,” she says.

For many members, the Club provides more than a good excuse to dig in the dirt, it is also very much a creative outlet for participants.

“I don't do anything in my profession that is related to gardens, but I just love nature and am really very for protecting our environment and being careful with what we do to our earth,” says Ms. Milosevic. “I had a friend who was entering flower designs and, because I tend to believe I am artistic and like to experiment with different things, this got me into putting

flower arrangements together and I just love it.

“There are all kinds of skills and talents you can develop once you join. I know I can find things on the internet, but it gives you an opportunity to engage all five of your senses, which you cannot do through a website. You learn differently and you experience stuff in a much more natural, nicer way.”

As Ms. Lewis says on why they like to be known as “The Garden Club,” rather than the more formal “Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society,” she says, “We don't want people thinking we're all little blue-haired old ladies with big hats.”

There's no danger of that as they embark on their milestone year.

For a full slate of upcoming events, including Saturday's centenary meeting, as well as the popular Annual Plant Sale on May 27, visit www.gardenaaurora.ca.

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May 16
Excellence in Sport webinar series
Engaging Girls and Young Women - with Sabrina Razack.

May 30
Excellence in Sport webinar series
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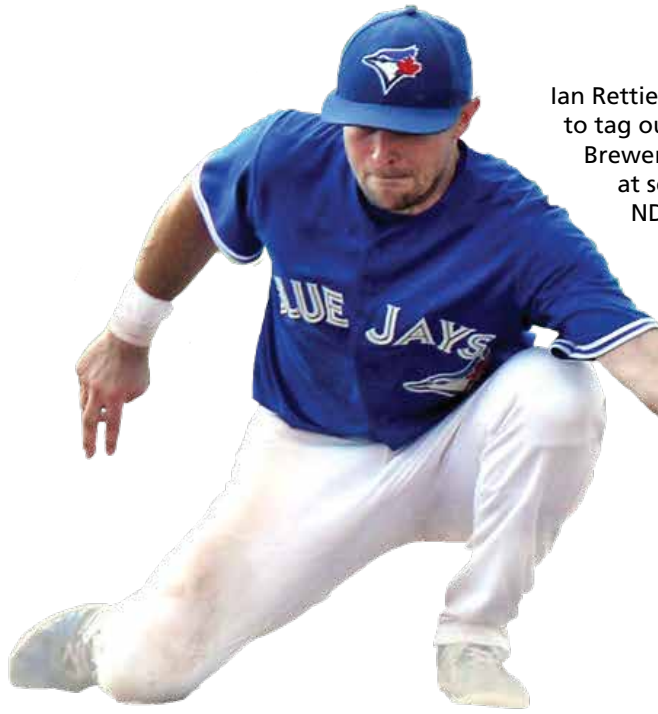
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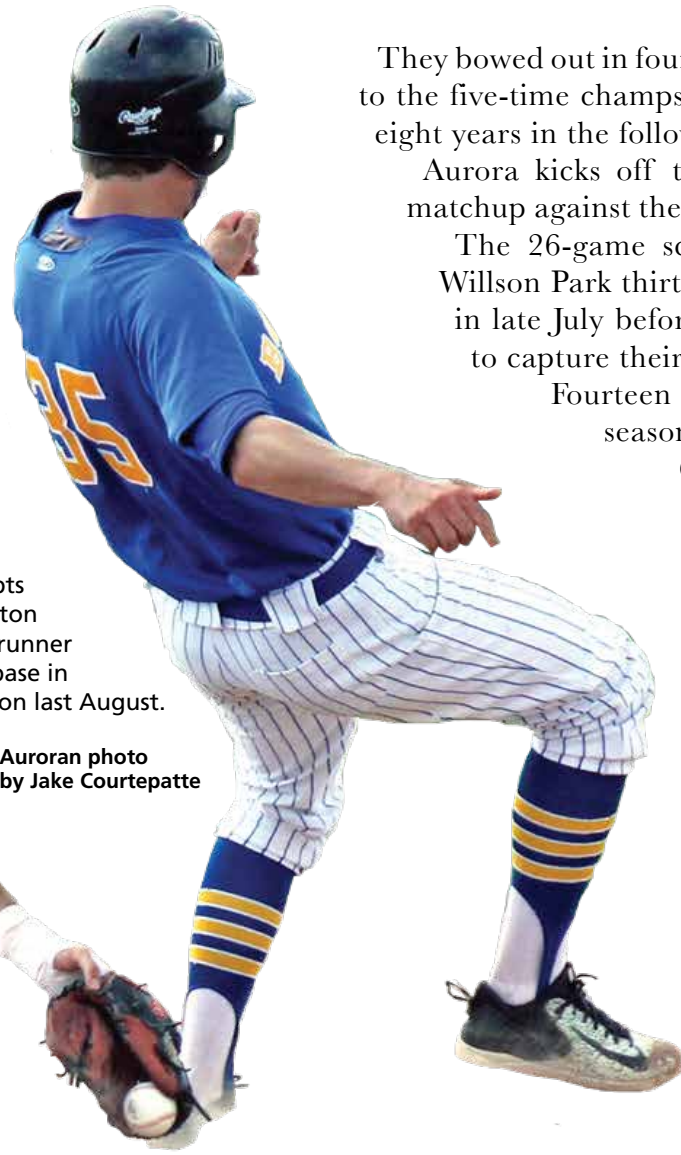
FREE Week of April 26, 2018

Aurora Jays still searching for first North Dufferin championship



Ian Rettie attempts to tag out a Bolton Brewers base runner at second base in NDBL action last August.

Auroran photo by Jake Courtepatte



By Jake Courtepatte

With spring finally blooming, the sun rises on another North Dufferin Baseball League season.

The AA senior league gets underway on May 8, just two weeks away, where the Aurora Jays will look

to capture their first ever championship, after coming within reaching distance year after year.

Aurora finished with a stellar record of 21-6-1 in the 2017 season, good enough for third in the league standings, though they met with a powerful Bolton Brewers squad in the league semifinal.

They bowed out in four games to the five-time champs, who went on to capture their sixth title in eight years in the following series with the New Lowell Knights.

Aurora kicks off their season on Tues. May 8 with a home matchup against the Orangeville Giants, set for a 7:30 first pitch.

The 26-game schedule will see the Jays take to Lambert Willson Park thirteen times over the season, which culminates in late July before the perennial powerhouses gear up to try to capture their first-ever Strother Cup.

Fourteen teams will take the field for the 2018 NDBL season, down one from 2017, with the Newmarket Cornhuskers taking an unspecified leave of absence.

The Midland Indians have also rebranded as the Midland Mariners, in a move to separate the club from the controversial "Chief Wahoo" logo of the Cleveland Indians.

As always, The Lisle Astros will host their annual tournament on the Victoria Day weekend. New Lowell will host a tournament on the Civic Holiday weekend in August.

For stats and schedules, visit www.ndbl.ca.

Longtime Aurora coach raising funds for rehabilitation

By Jake Courtepatte

Almost one year to the day, Chris Speller will never forget where he was on April 30, 2017.

Having moved away from Aurora after 35 years just one month prior, the 60-year old was walking home around 10 p.m. to his new home in Port Stanley

when he tripped over a tree root and fell thirty feet into a ridge between two tree trunks.

"From within the trees I shouted 'Help...help...I'm going to die,' but nobody came. It started to rain and I was feeling the cold. It had been a nice day, I was wearing sandals, shorts and a t-shirt."

Close to two hours later, a volunteer

firefighter was returning home from a call when he heard Speller's cries through his bathroom window, following the sounds to find Speller wedged between the trunks.

"I continued shouting, then around midnight I heard a voice 'Where are you?', to which I replied, 'I don't know.' I then heard 'don't worry we'll find you,'

Continued on page 20



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Aurora FC looking to make a mark in third League 1 Ontario season

By Jake Courtepatte

With the Jimmy Brennan era over, the Aurora FC are looking to move on under new leadership.

Close to three years after ex-pro Brennan brought semi-professional soccer to town in the form of both a men's and women's League 1 Ontario club, the executive director stepped down in December to take advantage of new opportunities.

Brennan was also key in rebranding the Aurora Youth Soccer Club to its current status as Aurora FC, putting both the semi-pro and minor clubs under one umbrella.

He left behind a men's side still looking for answers, while their female counterparts enter the 2018 season as a

.500 club on the up-and-up.

However, men's head coach Derek O'Keefe has high hopes in turning over a new leaf as a developmental program.

"In regards to the way we run League 1, and our approach for player recruitment, this has changed," said O'Keefe. "The way we are running the program this year is very youth orientated. League 1 was originally created to promote young exciting Canadian players and a pathway for them to make it to the professional game."

O'Keefe said the league must "focus on youth and promoting players from within."

"Yes we have recruited from universities this year, but not as much as previous campaigns... we are focusing on talented youth who we believe need



Aurora FC's Matthew Caguana chases the ball against an Azzurri player in a 2017 League 1 Ontario match in Aurora. Aurora photo by Jake Courtepatte

to be given their shot."

"This may take time, but if we want to make Canadian soccer better we must bring our young players through."

Leading the way for the men's side will be Morey Doner, the club captain, whom O'Keefe said brings "excellent leadership skills" to the squad.

Players to watch out for also include Max Ferrari, a "talented midfielder who is box to box and has a sharp eye to the goal," as well as Karamvir Mehmi, whose "electric speed" can be a "handful of defenders."

With a strong shift in the program, O'Keefe also wants to acknowledge the leadership behind the curtains in the budding club, like technical director Dave DiPlacido and assistant director Marco Campia, who he said have done "a tremendous job organizing the program."

Despite a lacklustre 2017 season on the field, both Aurora sides have already proved their worth as a developmental program: the women's team sent twelve Aurora players to the NCAA's division I this past fall, highlighted by the play of both Victoria Pickett and Sarah

Stratigakis, competing in the prestigious Big Ten conference.

Pickett, a native of Aurora, joined the Wisconsin Badgers for the 2017 season before being named to the United Soccer Coaches All-Midwest Region First Team and the Conference All-Big Ten Second Team.

Stratigakis, a key member of the Canadian senior women's team since joining the roster early last year, plied her trade with the Michigan Wolverines while being named to the Conference All-Big Ten Second Team as well.

On the men's side, defender Justin Broome joined the American collegiate top ranks with Stetson University of the Atlantic Sun division, notching a goal in eight games as a starter for the Hatters.

The men open their season this Saturday at home in hosting Master's Futbol in Toronto, while the women will host Vaughan Azzurri in the first half of a doubleheader.

Both clubs have moved their home turf to the new state-of-the-art field at Stewart Burnett Park for the 2018 season, a move O'Keefe said the club is "delighted" about.

Soccer coach continues recovery

From page 19

you're in good hands."

Rushed off in an ambulance around 2 a.m., it was the start of a long and arduous recovery for the healthy longtime soccer coach, one he continues to this day.

A key cog in the Aurora Youth Soccer Club wheel through coaching both minor boys and girls teams, as well as a serving member of the board, the executive club came together in organizing a fundraiser, set for this Saturday, to help offset costs of the recovery.

The "Spellatchi Retro Dance Night" at DNA Bar and Lounge in Aurora will feature live music, a silent auction, door prizes, and even an all-you-can-eat buffet, organized through Speller's longtime connections in the Aurora soccer community.

Ever the Bridesmaid, a Toronto-based band and no strangers to the Aurora community, join a live DJ to keep guests on their feet.

Money raised will go towards Speller's spinal cord rehabilitation.

"I'm determined to walk the way I did before my accident and also kick a soccer ball again," said Speller. "These are just two of the many goals I have set myself."

Walking again for the first time in late August, Speller returned to Aurora

soon after.

It was through both Southlake Hospital and a private gym in Newmarket that Speller has slowly, but assuredly, found his feet again.

"I was going four times a week (to Southlake)," said Speller. "Working hard, and I continued to recover, but unfortunately for me this program funded by OHIP only lasts for eight weeks. I was then eight months into what I was told would be a 24 month recovery process."

"So far, I'd been recovering well, but after 24 months I'm told generally not much will change. So I'm sure you can understand these are critical months to me."

He continues his recovery through the "Walk it Off" program, a private gym specialized for such a case.

"While in London, I fortunately came across an advertisement for Walk It Off, a private gym in Newmarket specifically for people with spinal cord injuries," said Speller. "It took one visit and a chat with Heather and I knew this was where my rehab would continue."

"Now in the private sector, without OHIP coverage, I continue my rehabilitation."

For more information on the event, as well as purchasing tickets, email Speller at cjspeller@gmail.com. Tickets are \$25 each.

Cello event is first for Cultural Centre

From page 10

aviolin and viola musician, he says he was "sort of expected" to play musical instruments as well. His eye was first caught by the double bass, the largest of the string instruments, but it turned out to be pretty unwieldy for a seven-year-old. So, the cello was the next best thing.

"What I really love about music is its ability to share something with other people," he says. "What is so powerful about music is it is language that can transcend words, sometimes. Sitting

listening to music, everyone experiences goose bumps because there is a moment that was just really special. That fuels my passion, trying to make people feel that."

The Great Artist Series continues on Friday, May 4. Prior to the 8 p.m. concert, Crozman will host a pre-concert talk and demo offering a behind-the-scenes look at the heritage cello. For further information, including tickets, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca or call 905-750-1742.

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Drew Mitchell, Director of Physical Literacy, Sport for Life

Amy Tepperman, Moving EDGEducation

For info or to register: activateaurora.com

See "Upcoming Local Events" (at bottom of homepage)

Local graduates have answered the call of “minga” – Activist

From page 1

Grade 12 student at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School set out to do something about it.

Her volunteer efforts, along with 19 of her peers from across York Region were recognized last week by Magna International and Neighbourhood Network with the Give Back Awards, a scholarship for students studying in the communities where Neighbourhood Network operates recognizing not grades but giving.

Receiving her award last week, Josie was recognized for her “determination to do everything she can to help those in need,” ranging from planning the annual Terry Fox Run at her school, leading Williams’ Peer Mentors, participating on the Athletic Council and spearheading Change for Change, an in-school initiative that allows students to participate in a toy drive without leaving the classroom.

“A lot about giving back was because I was fortunate to have such a great childhood,” she tells The Auroran. “One of the biggest, most-rewarding experience was Habitat for Humanity and actually going to the build site. We do a lot of fundraising for it; we raised \$1,200 at the beginning of the year and we’re working on another \$1,200 for a new build. Actually going to the site in October, we got to do a variety of jobs. Some of us were painting things, some of us were carrying wood. That was one of the most rewarding volunteer experiences that we could actually see a house being built from the ground up.”

For “social entrepreneur” Lauren Ott, who was one of the very first Give Back Award recipients, this kind of giving back exemplifies the spirit of “Minga.”

Ms. Ott first learned about “Minga,” a phrase in Ecuador’s Kichwa culture with no direct English translation, while teaching English in the South American Nation, before she embarked on a career with Me to We and, now Kits for a Cause.

“Minga has really been my compass,” Ms. Ott told the 20 assembled students, their parents, family, friends, and a host of dignitaries at last Thursday’s ceremony, scheduled to coincide with National Volunteer Week. “It is an idea built into the culture of coming together as people for the better good. Everyone here knows when you yell ‘Volunteers needed,’ you don’t see swaths of people coming together, but if you are ever in Ecuador, you call Minga, everyone, regardless of what they are doing, whether or not they know the individual who is speaking, they all come together for the common good. While I was living in Ecuador, I witnessed Mingas for families that didn’t have food. They all needed to make sure this family has lunch today.

“In a culture where we have a word for ‘loonie’, ‘toonie,’ how come we don’t have a word in English for Minga? Whether or not you realise it tonight,



Neighbourhood Network manager Steve Hinder presents the 2018 Give Back Awards to Rachel In, left, and Josie Kearney, right.

Auroran photos by Brock Weir

you are all here for a Minga.”

In all, nine students from Aurora were honoured.

This week, in the first of two instalments, the Auroran will shine a spotlight on five of these Grade 12 graduates.

MAIYA BERTOLA (Sacred Heart Catholic High School) -- To Maiya, giving back means spreading equal opportunity to everyone in the community. She volunteers for the Town of Aurora as an assistant summer camp Councillor, community tree planting events with the Aurora Community Band, and in numerous elementary schools. Maiya also helps Marquee Theatrical Productions, is a peer tutor and with her school’s Relay for Life Committee. Maiya has been inspired through her years as a volunteer for the Aurora FC stinger stars program, where she provides one on one help and coaching to children with disabilities who want to play soccer.

TRISTAN HICKS (St. Andrew’s College) – Tristan feels that volunteering has been a privilege and that there is no better feeling in the world than giving. Since 2014, Tristan has volunteered with the Highland Cadet Corps where he leads his peers and provides training to younger cadets. He has helped at the Aurora Montessori School, with the Town of Aurora Summer Camps, and is

a volunteer actor in focus Festival plays and at local baseball tournaments. He also volunteers as House Captain where he mentors middle school students and on the Andean Life Council planning events to enhance school spirit and engagement. Congratulations, Tristan.

RACHEL IN (Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School) – Ever since Rachel was a young girl, she always wanted to

help others and believes that her parents helped inspire her to give back. She has been volunteering for the Milal Mission since Grade 4, where she helps those with mental and physical disabilities. She gives back in school as a member of Best Buddies, the Peer Mentorship program, Me to We, Habitat for Humanity, as President of the Music Council, and as a math tutor. She also volunteers for compassion Canada, helping children living in poverty.

JOSIE KEARNEY (Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School) – For as long as Josie can remember, helping others has been her passion. She has the determination to do everything she can to help those in need. She volunteers in school as a planner for the annual Terry Fox Run and for Habitat for Humanity. She is the head of peer mentors, the executive of the Williams Athletic Council and as a math tutor as well. Josie gives back to the community at initiatives like Spring Tree Planting, Run for Rep, and Coldest Night of the Year. She also founded an initiative called Change for Change, where students can participate in a toy drive without leaving the classroom.

MADISYN LAMOURE (St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic Secondary School) – Madisyn says there is something very liberating, empowering and satisfying about making a difference. Madisyn began volunteering in Grade 8 with her school’s Anti Bullying campaign. She completed her Counsellor in Training Certification, volunteers as a Town of Aurora Camp Counsellor and is a leisure buddy, providing one on one support for children with disabilities so they can participate in sport and recreation programs. She also is a volunteer for the Central York Girls Hockey Association, the Newmarket Skating Club, Aurora FC, and the Aurora Skating Club.

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Students sharpen debating skills while hosting invitational

By Brock Weir

Russian meddling, Donald Trump, trade wars, and Mark Zuckerberg in the hot seat, there has been no shortage of hot headlines in 2018, but while some people might claim they have current affairs fatigue, each headline is something fresh for local debaters to sink their teeth into.

There were plenty of topics to chew on this month as Pickering College's debate team, The Polikon Society, hosted an invitational debate tournament, inviting their colleagues from Villanova College (King), Newmarket High School, Appleby College, and University of Toronto Schools for a friendly Pro-

Am, which featured impromptu and prepared rounds.

"We invited a lot of the schools we see at other debate tournaments and reached out to almost all the schools that have debate teams and we have a pretty good turnout," says student co-organizer Sophia Townsend, Grade 10.

Speaking to The Auroran ahead of the tourney, alongside fellow Grade 10 student Ava Khansari and Grade 11 student Patrick LeClaire, Sophia said in preparing the event they inevitably looked at topics that have recently been in the news and that nothing should come as a surprise to the participating the debaters.

One topic, said Patrick, was whether world religion should become a



(From left) Patrick LeClaire, Sophia Townsend and Ava Khansari.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

mandatory course in schools.

"There are controversial topics that are meant to have either side being able to win, and that is the main point," said Patrick. "Some of them could be with the President and NAFTA agreements, trade with China, trade with Canada, it could be Mark Zuckerberg and his trials, and the security of social media - which is probably going to be one of the resolutions."

As Pickering College hosted the tourney, they were limited in the numbers of their own students they could put forward. As such, many Polikon Society members were left to the organization, but that did nothing to diminish their passion.

"Certain topics that are controversial in the news where a lot of different opinions have been put out on them are the kinds of topics we like to debate because there are so many different views you can bring to the table that would give you an advantage in a debate," said Ava, adding this approach serves her well away from the formal debating table too. "I often find myself, when I am arguing with my parents over something, using my debating skills in order to bring solid arguments so that I can win an argument."

Sophia agreed: "I use my debating skills when I am talking to people, but also thinking about stuff because the debates we do are prepared. You learn a lot about new topics that I never would have been interested in or really thought about, and that makes me feel more comfortable when I am talking to people about those topics and things going on."

Debate, added Patrick, teaches him how to think of problems from many different angles.

"I think debating is a life skill that helps you communicate and get your point across very well and be comfortable speaking in front of people," he said, noting one of their aims in planning the tourney was to help younger students feel more comfortable speaking and standing up in front of crowds. "I am interested in [studying] law, and debating is an essential skill to have if I want to get into that."

Sophia said she has her eye on a similar goal.

"I never thought of law as a career path for me, but then when I started debating I thought it was super-interesting and a really great way to get your point across," she said. "That has opened my eyes to law as a career, but I am not sure where it will take me."

Ava, on the other hand, is currently planning to be a dentist, and although a dental chair is not normally the place for a good, heated argument, there are other ways she plans on using her debating skills to propel her towards the ultimate goal.

"I think debating will really help me improve my social skills and my communication skills in order to communicate with as many people as possible," she explained. "In university, debating will help me a lot with writing and communicating and I can debate in university to get more experience."

The Polikon Society is a full member of The Fulford League, a debate league open to all independent schools in Ontario.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From page 4

would build? Unless they are planning on dumping 100's of loads of soil and so forth as that would be the only way? Second, is it not an environmentally sensitive area as many birds and animals like rabbits, gophers, foxes, raccoons and so forth have nests there? What did the environment assessment state? Also, it is definitely closer than the 30 meters minimum Vegetation Protection Zone required by law. Thank you to Councillor Gaertner for noting this also. That diagram in

the proposal is not correct. Third, the layout does not match Lensmith, Kennedy or Deerhorn layout, or even Creeks Meadow as [there is] no road behind neighbours backyard. Fourth, on June 27, 2017, Council enacted Comprehensive Zoning By-law 6000-17, so there should be a 2-year moratorium on zoning changes. According to Brock Weir, Marco Ramunno is quoted as saying "This area wasn't captured within the interim control bylaw area because it

is an area that already contains larger two storey dwellings." This is not correct. There are no two storey structures. It is actually Mr. Len Smith son's property from the old farm with a pool and a garage barn. Mr. Len Smith told me before his death that he planted those trees when he was a boy, so they are over 100 years old now. Next, why are Councillors Mrakas and Thompson pushing this project so hard? What is their motivation? Thank you to Sandra Humfries

for showing some empathy in stating she would not want a road behind her backyard. Who here in a clear conscience would vote for a road behind their backyard? I would wager that none of you would, so you should vote for the same here and disallow .So, I would sit in my backyard and there would be a road? That is ridiculous! Who here has a road behind their backyard?

John Mayo
Aurora

Plans need to accommodate everyone's sports needs: Councillor

From page 15

so Council had some idea from a footprint perspective on what you could potentially put on those lands. In April, a year ago, a delegation from the AKBA came forward to Council and Council gave staff direction to come to the 2018 Capital Budget with two baseball diamonds. There was no mention of trying to combine soccer pitches, you wanted a capital budget that indicated two ball diamonds. "When we presented that to budget, Council wanted to know a breakdown of the costs. There was some concern with the amount of money that was being spent on these facilities as well as if there was an opportunity to put a soccer pitch on these lands. We have come back with a report that has addressed the concerns Council asked us to look at during the budget deliberations." The key takeaway from last Tuesday's meeting, said Councillor Thompson, is that Aurora is "a very active community."

we need it sooner rather than later," he said, suggesting a special meeting of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee be convened to discuss the matter in the month ahead. "I will support the deferral but I don't want to see us delay it. I look forward to learning the future of the Bloomington lands sooner rather than later. We have a lot of needs and we need to have a bit of a larger scale plan to accommodate everybody." Councillor Tom Mrakas added another issue that needs to be discussed is potential soccer shortfalls if soccer fields on the Magna lands are taken away as Frank Stronach continues his application to redevelop adjacent lands. "We need to have that information to make the best decision for our community and all our sports teams," said Councillor Mrakas. "At the end of the day this is a win for our sports community because we are committed to building sports fields on this land. It is just a matter of building the right ones. Once we have all that information, we will make the right decision."

AURORA CEMETERY CORP NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Take notice the Aurora Cemetery Corp. will be holding a Meeting for the purpose of electing a new board of directors. All owners (Rights Holders) are entitled to attend in person.

Date: Tues. May 8, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Location: Aurora Cemetery Office

For further information please contact the office: 905-727-9321

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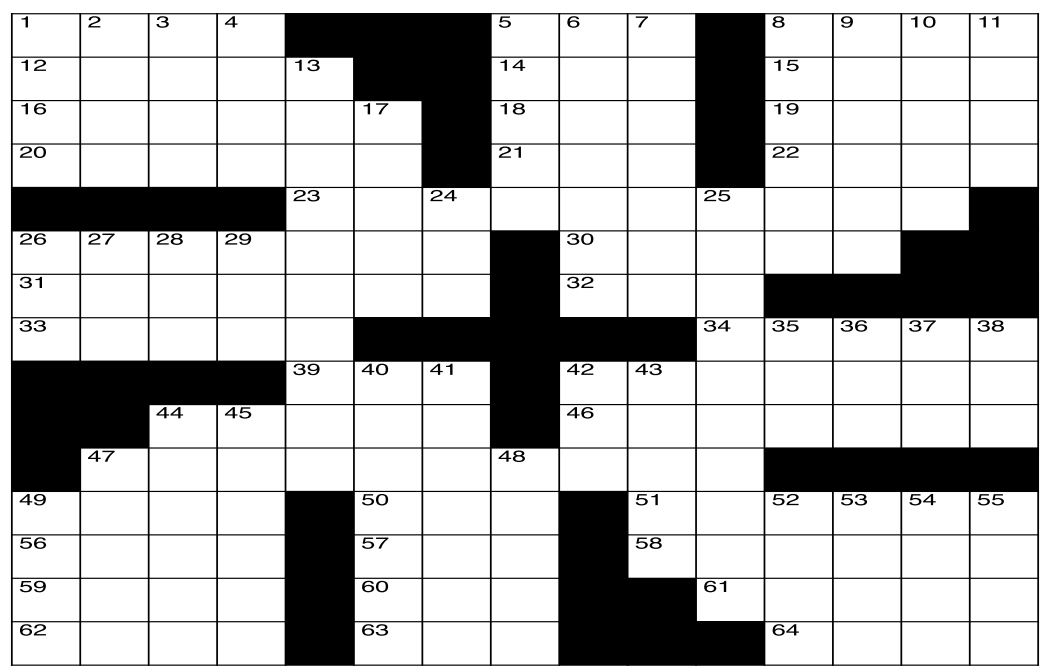
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CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. In bed | 39. Doctors' group |
| 5. Project portfolio management | 42. Crooks |
| 8. ___ Bator: Mongolian capital | 44. Fragrant essential oil |
| 12. Roamed | 46. Conjured |
| 14. Notre Dame legend Parseghian | 47. One who predicts |
| 15. Nothing (Spanish) | 49. Scarlett's home |
| 16. Not level | 50. Television network |
| 18. Self-contained aircraft unit | 51. Something comparable to another |
| 19. Baseball broadcaster Caray | 56. What a thespian does |
| 20. ___ Tomei, actress | 57. Word element meaning life |
| 21. "The Raven" writer | 58. Italian island |
| 22. Bathrooms | 59. "King of Queens" actress Remini |
| 23. Skilled inventors | 60. Jogged |
| 26. Forcefully silence | 61. Norse gods |
| 30. Remove | 62. Lazily |
| 31. The arrival of daylight | 63. Midway between northeast and east |
| 32. Split lentils | 64. Hindu queen |
| 33. "Walking Dead" actress | |
| 34. A lazy person | |

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Top Rank boxing promoter | 29. Baseball pitcher's stat |
| 2. ___ fide (Latin) | 35. Western India island |
| 3. At all times | 36. ___ Angeles |
| 4. Hindu female deity | 37. Midway between east and southeast |
| 5. Tufts of hairs on plant seeds | 38. British singer Stewart |
| 6. Edited | 40. Suggesting the horror of death and decay |
| 7. Portuguese archipelago | 41. Riding horse |
| 8. Your parents' brothers | 42. Where wrestlers work |
| 9. Pakistani city | 43. Regions |
| 10. Farewell | 44. Of a main artery |
| 11. Short sleep sessions | 45. Not classy |
| 13. Remove salt | 47. Competed against |
| 17. Drug officers | 48. Biscuit-like cake |
| 24. One and only | 49. Large ankle bones |
| 25. The Golden State | 52. Computer company |
| 26. Fabric baby carrier (abbr.) | 53. "Friends" actress Kudrow |
| 27. Quid pro ___ | 54. "Chocolat" actress Lena |
| 28. New England research university | 55. Brain folds |

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THINGS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

MARCH 10 – APRIL 28

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents Hooked on Tradition, an exhibition featuring the work of the Newmarket Rug Hooking Guild. Hooked rugs tell stories about events, people and communities. Besides their historical interest, they are visually compelling to audiences of all ages. They range from functional to decorative in use, and from primitive to modern in style. The Aurora Cultural Centre is pleased to present an exhibition of over 100 traditional hooked rugs created by members of the Newmarket Rug Hooking Guild.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26

Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School hosts Building Resilience in Anxious Teens, an interactive evening with registered psychotherapists Janice LeBlanc and Joddie Walker. They will discuss how the brain and body respond to anxiety. They will also provide strategies for parents, students and teachers to assist with anxiety in teens. The evening will also include time for questions and resources to use at home.

APRIL 28 – 29

The Aurora Lions Club will be back again at Sheppard's Bush for the Pancake Breakfast. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 28

RESCHEDULED: Aurora's Annual Community Clean-Up will take place today from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., meeting at Town Park at 8 to provide supplies, have coffee and a sweet treat before heading out to clean various locations within Aurora. BBQ for all volunteers will be held at the same location from 12 noon to 2 p.m. For more information, call 905-505-6068.

Looking for volunteer hours? Hillary House will host its annual spring cleanup today from 1 – 4 p.m. Tasks will include cleaning up debris and working with the Aurora Historical Society's landscape committee. Bring a rake, gloves and a water bottle. Call 905-727-8991 or email leigha.cooney@aurorahs.com to register.

Join the Town of Aurora tonight for an indoor movie at the SARC. Paddington 2 will be shown. There will be games and crafts from 4-6pm and the movie will begin at 6:15pm. Entrance is free, a food donation for the local food pantry is appreciated. All attendees have a chance to win a FREE WEEK of Summer Camp provided by the Town of Aurora. Please bring your own portable chairs for comfortable seating within the arena floor. Proudly sponsored by Aurora Family Martial Arts.

SUNDAY, APRIL 29

Giant Indoor Garage sale at the Aurora Seniors' Centre from 8.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (90 John West Way). White Elephant and Diamond Elephant treasures, huge book sale, famous jewellery table, Aurora Seniors Association crafters, Sew Much

Fun, Knotty Knitters, Woodshop, coffee shop and more.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2

McDonald's restaurants in Aurora will join more than 1,400 restaurants across the country to celebrate the 25th McHappy Day. On this day, \$1 from every Big Mac, Happy Meal, and hot McCafe beverage sold will go to Ronald McDonald House Charities and other children's charities across the country.

The Aurora Community Café is open today – and each Wednesday – from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, located at the corner of Victoria and Mosley (Entrance off Victoria). Now serving lunch, along with fresh baked goods, lunch, coffee, tea, juice, a DJ and live music.

FRIDAY, MAY 4

The Great Artist Music Series continues at the Aurora Cultural Centre this evening with James Campbell & Friends. James Campbell's is Canada's premier clarinetist; Member of the Order of Canada and Juno Award winner. Cameron Crozman will be joining him, playing a Stradivarius cello on loan through the Canada Council Instrument Bank Competition. Joining on piano is Leopoldo Erice. For more information, including tickets, visit www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.

SATURDAY, MAY 5

COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING DAY: Bring the whole family out to help the Aurora Community Arboretum plant over 500 trees and shrubs. Parking at 245 Industrial Parkway North. Rain or shine, so please dress accordingly. Bring your gloves, Arboretum supplies the shovels.

AURORA FARMERS' MARKET: Seasonal fresh fruits & veggies, delicious goodies and unique crafts will be waiting for you at the Aurora Farmers Market & Artisan Fair opening day from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Town Park. (49 Wells Street). Theaurorafarmersmarket.com

Pickering College will host an Open Doors event, featuring free, self-guided tours of their beautiful building and art collection. Visitors can enjoy: a free, self-guided tour of the main floor of our historic building, Rogers House, with a history wall to read and peruse; an opportunity to view our impressive art collection, including artwork from Franz Johnston, an original mural by Harold Haydon and many pieces by well known Canadian artist Fred Hagan and much more; and a viewing of a documentary film about Pickering College's 100 years+ in Newmarket. Accessible parking and lift from the ground floor to the main level of Rogers House is available upon request. For more information, call 905-895-1700 x257.

Brothers recognized for community leadership

From page 9

Finding opportunities to contribute by following your passions is a philosophy Ian shares as well.

"We have always felt pretty passionate about Aurora and the community, so we just knew it was a great way to get involved with the community, find out what's going on and figure out where you can best plug yourself in to help out," says Ian. "One of the things that is really important is you make it part of your ongoing lifestyle in terms of working in the community. It is not helpful to just get involved with something and stop.

"You have to pace yourself so you can continue being involved with things. That takes a little bit of balance. You try and figure out every year what are some of the things we can get involved with. You go with the flow, find areas where you can plug yourself in and we're always looking for something new.

Joining Mr. Taylor, Messrs. Johnson and Ms. Black in Portraits of Giving's Class of 2018 are Kirk Bowden (Newmarket), Jason Kaptyn (Richmond Hill), Robin Priestly (King Chamber of Commerce), Glenn D. Crosby (Markham), Rossana Magnotta (Vaughan), Gail Lenters (Georgina), Todd and Marcia Finlayson (Stouffville), The Franklin Club (East Gwillimbury Chamber of Commerce), Superintendent Fred Moffatt (York Regional Police), King City Fire Chief Jim Wall (York Region Fire Services) and Iman Tajadod (SMAI Young Adult).

"Giving back is what we do here in York Region," said Ms. Merk. "It is who we are and what we believe in. We're very pleased to see the impact of our efforts to bring awareness and share knowledge about social responsibility over the past nine years."

THE AURORAN CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

Freelance Reporter for Local Community Newspaper

Come join a dynamic, fast paced, growing entrepreneurial company looking for an energetic Freelance Reporter with a passion for community news. The ideal candidate will have a distinct willingness to cover local community events and issues.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Freelance reporting work for weekly community newspapers and special projects
- Will produce stories and bylines for the events they cover
- Will be paid on a freelance/contract basis per project/story
 - Generate story ideas and follow up on news tips
 - Take photographs
- Work some evenings and weekends, as required

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Diploma in journalism preferred
- Candidates should have experience working on the editorial side of the newspaper industry
- Excellent writing, editing and photography skills
 - Valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle
 - Reporting experience an asset
 - An interest in local issues is a necessity, as the majority of the writing for this role will be local



Let's Talk.

Interested and qualified candidates should forward their cover letter and resume to brock@auroran.com

SALE/RENT

APARTMENT FOR RENT

AURORA 3 BDRM MAIN FLOOR APARTMENT. shared laundry and utilities. \$1300/mo. Industrial Pkwy South. 905-642-4823

PRODUCT REVIEW needed for survey. All ages. \$3/day. Min. 10 days. If interested email: diazrandd@gmail.com

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

LOOKING for experienced, knowledgeable, on-site supervisor for the York Region area. Please email resume to: stepheno@intercity-realty.com fax: 905-597-0493 office: 905-597-0227.

WILLING TO EDUCATE:

Highly motivated individual for rewarding career in financial services. Call Amanda at 416.873.9998

TOTTENHAM: BRIGHT HOUSE,

large lot, 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath, double garage, 5 appliances, A/C, \$1800/mth + utilities. References. 613-893-2545

FOR SALE OR RENT

2500 sq ft Commercial unit on main floor. 2 separate rental units upstairs. THE PROPERTY HAS ACCESS FROM 3 DIFFERENT ROADS. Large back yard, lots of parking. 179 Main Street West, Shelburne. Paull 416 457 6829

SHEEPSKIN COAT

- Danier 100% sheepskin coat. Perfect condition. Only worn twice. Best offer. For more information and to view 905-727-6497.

SENIORS WELCOME CARRIERS NEEDED

to deliver The Auroran newspaper every Thursday. Earn money while getting exercise. Contact Cephise 416-505-2770



Advertise in The Auroran Classifieds 905727-3300 ext. 102

SERVICES



HOW SAFE IS YOUR JOB?

Start building your business today! Supplement your income by working part-time. You set your own hours.

Ask me how! Call Ruth Greaves at 1-888-240-4767

CARPET

I have 1000's of yards of new 100% nylon carpet. Will install livingroom & hall for as little as \$389.00 (includes carpet, pad & install) Call Steve 877.759.8179 carpetdeals.ca

NOTICE OF CREDITOR

All claims against the Estate of John Douglas Fleming late of the City of Newmarket, in the Province of Ontario must be claimed on or before May 31, 2018, after which date the estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims of which the Administrator then shall have notice.

FOR SALE

SNOW TIRES AND RIMS

FOR SALE BF Goodrich Used 2 years on Ford Focus 205/65 R15 (945) call 905-751-9817.

Advertise in The Auroran Classifieds 905-727-3300 ext 102

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So many
real estate
questions?



NEED ANSWERS?

Call Sean for a complimentary consultation
and get your questions answered

**Contact Sean directly at 905-717-5234
or by email Sean@SeanHerbinson.com**

Proud to have been helping Aurora residents
with their Real Estate needs for 24 Years



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Sean Herbinson Broker

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