

IN GOOD COMPANY: A new beginning, a new year to catalyst positive change

By **Mayor Geoff Dawe**

Happy New Year Aurora! I wish you and your families a wonderful 2017.

Thank you to all our residents and visitors who contributed to the Salvation Army Kettle Drive during the holiday season. Your efforts will help the less fortunate in our community access programs and services that they can't afford. The local results of this campaign will be available soon, check out the Town's Notice Board and social media feeds for updates.

With the new year under way, The Town of Aurora has reaffirmed its commitment to becoming Canada's Most Active Community. Activate Aurora is an Ontario Trillium Foundation funded program designed to help move the Town's goal forward. This group created by Sport Aurora with guidance from the Canadian Sport for Life Society and endorsed by my task force on physical activity, involves local school boards, the Town, York Region Public Health, Seneca College, Sport Aurora, Southlake Hospital and the Aurora Seniors Association.

I would like to extend an invitation to residents to help us achieve our goal of becoming Canada's Most Active Community. Visit the Activate Aurora website and sign-up to track your fitness activity. Aurora's activity numbers will be added to the overall contributions for the community to help us reach our goal.

There are several ways to get active and healthy in Aurora. Club Aurora Fitness Centre is located at The Aurora Family Leisure Complex and offers its members a wide variety of both cardiovascular and weight training equipment, as well as a diverse array of programs. There are also several aquatics programs available for all ages, please consult the Town's Winter Program and Recreation Guide for more details. The Town's outdoor ice rinks are also up and running for the 2017 winter season.

Outdoor rinks are located at Town Park, Ada Johnson Park, Confederation Park and Machell Park. Please be safe on the ice and respect other users.

The Healthy Kids Community Challenge is also still an ongoing important initiative. This challenge is a province wide initiative implemented in 45 communities in Ontario, The challenge combines a community-led method with provincial coordination to help develop and implement healthy policies and programs. This challenge is being run out of the Windfall Ecology Centre with support from the Town. Currently, planning is underway for the next theme which starts in April. The theme is called the Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit. It will include wellness events at local schools, nature play pop-ups, healthy cooking programs, fun competitions and more. Stay tuned for more information to come in the next couple of months, visit windfallcentre.ca/healthykids for updates.

Don't miss the Town's local upcoming events. Visit Aurora's Borealis at Town Park every day until Family Day on February 20 from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. Enjoy beautifully lit trees and a festive atmosphere. Join family, friends and neighbours at Aurora's Arctic Adventure event happening on Monday, February 20 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Aurora Town Park. There will be many family activities including outdoor winter games, live entertainment, outdoor skating and more.

I hope that members of our business community and local residents join me at the Annual Mayor's Luncheon on Wednesday, February 15 at 12 p.m. at Oakview Terrace. At this annual event, I will be discussing relevant topics that will affect our local business community. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit aurorachamber.on.ca

Stay connected to the Town. Visit the Town's website, read the local Notice Board, subscribe to our social media feeds and sign-up for our monthly e-newsletter, Aurora Matters. My door is always open, please feel free to email me with any questions or comments about the Town at mayor@aurora.ca.

Enjoy the snowy weather!