

INSIDE AURORA: Signs of Spring

By Scott Johnston

It may be hard to believe with our roller coaster weather lately, but spring will be here within a couple of weeks.

Many people watch for the traditional signs of its arrival, such as longer days, the melting of snow, the return of robins, or the lifting of winter parking restrictions.

But these are universal indications applicable almost anywhere. There are some that are truly unique to Aurora, and that will get you out of the house after a long winter inside.

The one that's most likely to get you into the spring spirit is the annual Lions pancake breakfast in Sheppard's Bush. Nothing says spring like sitting outside with friends and neighbours on a warm(ish) sunny day, surrounded by forests that you can imagine have supplied the very syrup you're enjoying.

That the food is terrific, the location within the heart of Aurora just moments from your home, and that it all supports a good cause, are just added bonuses.

Watch for it the first few weekends in April.

Another great sign of spring is the Easter Egg Hunt at the Seniors' Centre, which features face painting, baby animals, crafts, games, and yes, if you can't wait another week to visit Sheppard's Bush, more pancakes.

Hopefully all the eggs are found by the kids that morning, and an orphaned egg is not discovered some days later by an unfortunate senior when sitting down on an unsearched chair.

Participation is limited. After all, only so many people (and eggs) can fit in the Centre, so make sure you get your wrist band in advance to avoid disappointment.

Then in mid-April we have the Home Show. Here under one roof are displayed the latest concepts in landscaping, interlock pavers, roofing options, kitchen design, water softening, basement refinishing, composting, energy efficient windows, and all manner of home improvement ideas.

You're bound to come out of SARC with a bag full of fliers and samples, and a general feeling that no matter how well and proudly you've kept up your home, it's not nearly as nice as you thought it was.

Shortly after this event the Rotary Club Frog Race will be held in Tannery Creek. These aren't real frogs, but plastic numbered equivalents that you can back for \$5 each. You can even choose to sponsor your lucky number, if the frog sporting it hasn't already been scooped.

Hundreds of frogs will float downstream towards the finish line, with the winners netting their sponsors cash prizes, and some great stories about how they won the money. You couldn't make that stuff up.

Additional winners, of course, will be the local charities and deserving organizations that receive funding from this event.

Last up in late April is the Mayor's Anti-Litter Day.

It's shocking how messy our Town can get after a long winter, but as the snow melts all the accumulated debris of the past several months reveals itself: coffee cups, newspapers, candy wrappers, fast food packaging, plastic bags, old election signs...the list goes on.

Fortunately, there are numerous Aurora residents, supported by Town staff and generous corporate sponsors, willing to pitch in to pick up all this debris.

Whether they do this out of the goodness of their hearts, or for the traditional free BBQ held afterwards, is not a box that requires checking on the sign-up sheet.

But I personally think it's a bit of both.

The result once the hundreds of bags of trash are removed is that our green spaces, waterways, and roadsides are newly refreshed. Then, the Town is truly ready for its spring close-up.

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