

INSIDE AURORA: The Evening Before Christmas

By Scott Johnston

'Twas the Evening of Christmas in Aurora

?Twas the evening of Christmas, and in our fair town
An annual visitor was making his rounds
Of each world-wide location, on which he would call
Aurora was always his favourite of all.

Although he loved the North Pole, on his yearly roam
He considered this small town like a second home
But flying over this time new things did appear
That made Santa aware there'd been changes this year.

The first was a place that could no longer be sighted
?What happened?, he wondered, ?to Aurora United??
Then he remembered the fire, and the black smoky skies
And the thought of that loss brought tears to his eyes.

But of things that were missing, there were but a few
He was more surprised to see so much that was new
One factor that tested his team's flying powers
Was the multi-fold increase in cellular towers.

Local traffic was greater than ever before
Of road signs, lights and signals, there were many more
Even the width of the streets had not stayed the same,
Bloomington, Santa noted, had grown to five lanes.

Passing the new Joint Ops Centre, the scale of it all
Made Santa's North Pole workshop seem rather small
This LEED certified project going up in a flash,
Must have set the town back a fair pile of cash.

Just south the Leisure Complex had grown with no doubt
But at least there'd be somewhere for kids to hang out
On Bayview building sites, fences enveloped
Even the old Reebok place was being developed.

That Petch House had been rebuilt, he did not suspect
It had been sadly empty the last time he'd checked
Now the structure stood neatly, and in fine repair
But like each year before there was still no one there.

Condo development near Wellington and Yonge
Suggested more traffic at this corner to come
And on Yonge Street itself where he rarely had stops
There was a clear increase in restaurants and shops.

Needing a moment or two to ponder it all
He made Highland Gate Golf Club his next place of call
He found an open expanse near the sixteenth green,
It would be a perfect place to rest up his team.

He found it tranquil amidst the grass and the pines
When Santa stumbled across a series of signs
He read what was on them, and let out a wail
?Dear, Rudolph?, he exclaimed, ?this place is for sale!?

Flying next east of Bayview, where trees stood in June
Were all cleared lots with signs, "new homes coming soon"
?I guess that next Christmas,? he thought with a chill
?It'd mean even more stockings, I will need to fill.?

While not far away, in the same neighbourhood,
The headquarters of Bulk Barn now proudly stood.
And this year's long election, explained down below,
The residents' need for a third LCBO.

He found each corner of town displayed more and more
Infrastructure and buildings he'd not seen before
Rapid growth and development were dominant themes
It was clear that the town now bulged at the seams.

With his rounds done, St Nick left for the next town,
But breathing a sigh he took a final look down
While truly prospering, and with new growth galore
It was clear that Aurora was a small town no more.

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