

SENIOR SCAPE: Aurora's Got Talent!

By **Jim L. Abram**

I had the distinct honour of attending Season 7 of the Senior Star competition at the Aurora Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion on June 19, presented by Chartwell Retirement Residences.

Senior Star is a singing and musical instrument competition open to anyone 65 years young and older who is a Canadian resident. This isn't just a talent show; it is a celebration of seniors in Canada. The top two videos from Aurora compete against others from across Canada in the finals to be held in November in Niagara Falls. Good luck and 'break a leg' to all the talented performers! John Lemme, who sounds a lot like James Taylor, served as the Master of Ceremonies. Our judges were Renate Naghavi, director of the York Region Community Choir, Dan Lenz, co-conductor of the York Regional Police Male Chorus, Sheryl Thomas of Marquee Theatrical Productions and Judy Marshall, CEO of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

Bud Ibbotson sang the George Jones favourite, 'She Thinks I Still Care' with tremendous diction and excellent guitar playing. Gloria Mae Weir shared an inspirational rendition of Eric Clapton's 'Tears in Heaven'. What a wonderful range of voice! Doug Riley sang 'His Eye Is on the Sparrow', a song by Lauryn Hill. Trudy Yetman enjoys singing oldies like the tune she shared with us, 'Just Because' which brought us all joy, peace and contentment. The Country and Western stylings of Jean Tucker offered a passionate version of 'You Ain't Woman Enough to Take My Man' that rivalled even Loretta Lynn.

The enthusiastic crowd got clapping to Sal Amenta's accordion playing of a dance medley of a wide range of popular songs. Pauline Cawthorne sang like a violin singing Leslie Uggams' 1960 hit 'Love is Like a Violin'. John Dowson wowed the crowd singing the Roger Miller classic 'King of the Road' with the entire audience singing right along with him. The only thing missing was the campfire.

The Aurora Seniors Centre's very own Bud Switzer boomed out 'Through the Eyes of Love' hitting the money note at the end. Bud has been competing in Senior Star for six years and placed third at the national competition in 2012. Bud is clearly having a blast! Big Al Hache brought his talent and his own groupies to cheer him on as he channeled the spirit of Rita McNeal singing 'Working Man'. Al led the entire crowd in a sing-a-long as he lived up to his motto: H.O.P.E. 'Helping Other People Every day.

The third place winner was Gene Manchester. Or was it Paul Anka. I couldn't tell the difference as he sang 'My Way' looking, sounding and having the stage presence of Paul Anka.

Our second place finisher was Judith McCoubrey who hit a high note with the crowd singing 'The Impossible Dream'. I guess she found a way to have her voice heard amongst her nine sisters and seven brothers!

The first place winner was Jean-Paul Reymont singing and dancing 'If I Were a Rich Man'. Jean-Paul's lively presentation was entertaining and passionate. Good luck to Judith and Jean-Paul as they advance to the Senior Star Finals!

NEW ACTIVITY!

Have you ever wanted to sing with a group, but are not interested in singing with a choir? Well, now's your chance! Come and join us as we sing some very popular tunes on Thursday mornings at your Aurora Seniors Centre, from 10.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. in the Priestly Rooms. The words will be provided so there is no memorization required. Just show up on Thursday mornings - singers and non-singers - for a great time! Perhaps you can be Aurora's next 'Senior Star'!

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.