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Vol. 11 No. 16

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Week of February 15, 2011

Aurora agrees to hire lawyer

The Town of Aurora is obtaining outside legal counsel to advise the Town on options related to legal expenses incurred in the \$6 million defamation lawsuit by former mayor Phyllis Morris against local bloggers Richard Johnson, Bill Hogg, and Elizabeth Bishenden, among other par-

Please see page 13

Committees "reconstituted" by Aurora

The Leisure Services Advisory Committee (LSAC) and the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) were saved from the chopping block at last week's council meeting as councillors formalized their vote to reconstitute them for the current council term.

Councillors deliberated the merits of

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This group of men proved they could cook and did so Friday night at the Aurora Seniors' Centre where they were responsible for feeding a full house of people, who took advantage of the opportunity to get fed. Cooks included, left to right, Charles Sequeira, president of the Aurora Seniors' Association, Aurora Mayor Geoff Dawe, Neighbourhood Network's Steve Hinder, MPP Frank Klees, Aurora Councillors John Abel and John Gallo, former Aurora Mayor Tim Jones and Aurora Councillor Paul Pirri. Meals, served buffet style, ranged from soups to schnitzels.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Gaertner says minutes "doctored"

By **BROCK WEIR**
Auroran Staff Writer

Councillor Wendy Gaertner threw down the gauntlet to make a code of conduct complaint against her after

she refused to apologize for accusing Town Clerk John Leach of "doctored" Town minutes.

This came down at last Tuesday's council meeting when Councillor Gaertner objected to the minutes of the December 14 council meeting which indicated the councillor moved a motion coming out of closed session that a confidential memo from the Town Solicitor pertaining to former mayor Phyllis Morris' \$6 million defamation lawsuit against three local bloggers be received.

"Minutes are to provide an accurate record of what happened," she said. "The DVD is very clear that I did not ask to move the motion. I did not raise my hand to move the motion. I would have had no knowl-

edge that I would have been assumed to be the mover of the motion. In my opinion, if the minutes stand as they are now, this record has been doctored."

This sparked a dispute between Councillor Gaertner and Mayor Geoffrey Dawe who called the councillor's comments "very offensive."

"Yes, it is offensive, but it is true!" she replied.

"It is absolutely not true," countered Mayor Dawe, before Councillor Gaertner continued the debate, asking the Town Clerk repeatedly if he had a DVD of the December 14 meeting ready to go.

After further discussion on the matter, Councillor Paul Pirri raised a point of privilege that called Councillor Gaertner on her words.

"I do feel that under section four of the Code of Conduct where it states that, 'a councillor will refrain from criticizing individual members of staff in a way that casts aspersions on professional competence and credibility' - and Councillor Gaertner stated that this would be a case of 'doctored' the record, I do think that this is definitely a slight on Mr. Leach," said Councillor Pirri. "I would move, very much so, that Councillor Gaertner either be asked to apologize or removed under section 4.5 of the procedural bylaw."

After conferring for a moment, Mayor Dawe said he agreed with Councillor Pirri that Councillor Gaertner's comments were offensive to Mr. Leach and requested she

Please see page 7

Briefly

Wanna be a sponsor?

Volunteers and organizers are putting the finishing touches on this Saturday's Mardi Gras for Southlake, the annual fundraising event for the hospital, which will be held at Dinardo's The Mansion.

But while the event is coming ever closer, there are still sponsorship opportunities and tickets available, said organizer and Aurora Councillor Sandra Humfries.

"I think you will find it very exciting that we have a couple of new kings and queens at the event," she said at last Tuesday's council meeting. "There is still some opportunity for seats available and some sponsorship opportunities on the web. It is going to be fantastic and just a great opportunity to raise some great funds for our local hospital."

For more information on tickets and potential sponsorship opportunities, visit www.mardigrasforsouthlake.com. Events begin at 5:30 pm.

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COMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

The Aurora Cultural Centre, formerly the Church Street School, presents the second in a three-lecture series "Our Aurora Heritage: Taking a Closer Look", an informative series of evening chats by local historian Jacqueline Stuart. Tonight's feature: A Virtual Mystery Tour of Aurora. Can you identify these easily-passed-by spots? Where was this camera shot taken from? How well do you know your town? Complimentary admission and light refreshments, no registration required; starts at 7 p.m. Wheelchair accessible at north entrance. For information please call 905-713-1818 or info@auroraculturalcentre.ca.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair returns to the Aurora Cultural Centre, formerly the Church Street School from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Site is fully accessible at the north entrance. For further information call 905-713-1818 or info@auroraculturalcentre.ca. Mark your calendars as well for the final indoor market of the season on March 26.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Are you ready for some heat? Warm up with classical guitar music performed by Robert Carullo. Tracie and Daniel will dance the Tango, Rhumba and Salsa in full costume and singer/actor Brent Titcomb will be featured in Bessada and Arbic's original short play, How Raven Stole the Sun. This is a fundraiser for the Yellow Brick House Second Shelter, Second Chances Capital Campaign. Tickets for the show at the Aurora Cultural Centre are available online at www.pandorasboxsalon.com or by calling 289-221-0229. They are \$35 adult; \$25 student/senior; or \$95 for a family of four.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21

The annual Arctic Adventure takes place in the Town Park today and is an opportunity to bundle up and take in some great outdoor activities such as dog sled rides, snow shoeing, skating, live entertainment, professional ice carving, fire-eating demonstration, chili cook-off and "snow" much more. The event begins at 10 a.m. and continues until 4 p.m. For further information, check the Town Website at e-aurora.ca/arcticadventure. The Aurora Cultural Centre will also be open for an afternoon of craft, music and heritage from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. There is no charge for this event.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

The Aurora Garden & Horticultural Society Annual Dessert Competition is being held this evening between 8 p.m. and 9.30 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North. Entries will be received as early as 6.45 p.m. and judging will begin at 8 p.m. Support this fundraising event which contributes to some very exciting speakers and demonstrators for members this year. Also, this would be a good opportunity to obtain a membership, (required to enter the contest).

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce hosts the Mayor's Luncheon today. Aurora Mayor Geoffrey Dawe will be the keynote speaker and will talk about the Town's development of a new strategic plan and what that will mean for businesses in

Aurora. The luncheon, sponsored by the Character Community Foundation of York Region, is being held at DiNardo's Mansion, 400 Industrial Parkway South. Please note this is a change of venue. Networking starts at 11.30 a.m., followed by lunch. Cost is \$40 for Chamber members and \$50 for guests - all are welcome but you must pre-register. Showcase tables are also available for \$30 at this event.

Fifteenth annual Aurora Optimist chess tournament takes place at the Aurora Legion today and features students from Aurora, Newmarket, Keswick, Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Markham. Event will run all day beginning at 8.45 a.m. and continuing until 3.15 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents the launch of the Great Artist Piano Series, with Canadian classical pianist Anton Kuerti in an all-Beethoven program. First in a series of four piano concerts. Tickets are \$30 or \$25 for students and seniors. Subscriptions are also available. Show begins at 8 p.m. For information or to book tickets call 905-713-1818 or info@auroraculturalcentre.ca

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Bowl For Kids Sake, presented by the Big Brothers Big Sisters of York, will hold its Aurora Community Day today from 1 to 5.30 p.m. at the Gateway Café and Lanes. Call Mary Lynn Stephenson at 905-726-2149, extension 305 to book a lane for your team.

Explore different colours, textures and designs in glass with Daniela Weston while you create your own unique stained glass sun catcher at the Aurora Public Library. Event costs \$15 which includes all materials and is open for youngsters ages 9 to 14. Event lasts two hours and begins at 1.30 p.m.

The Aurora Legion celebrates its 65th anniversary today with a Candlelight Dinner. Cocktails are planned for 6 p.m., while the dinner begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$13 a head and are available at the bar.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27

The Aurora Historical Society will hold its annual general meeting today from 2 to 3 p.m. at Hillary House on Yonge Street, followed by an Open House from 3 to 5 p.m. at which time items from the collection will be on display and AHS board members will be available to answer questions.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

Seedy Sunday happens today at the Aurora Legion from noon to 4 p.m. Seedy Saturday and Sundays are the days when the new gardening season begins in earnest. You can have an opportunity to learn more about gardening, hone and share your gardening skills, and buy or exchange vegetable and flower seeds. Details at http://www.living-rawfoods.com. For further information call 416-277-5432.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

Retired York Regional Police Chief Armand La Barge will be honoured by the Community Living Newmarket/Aurora

District at its ninth annual Community Tribute Dinner tonight. The event will be held at The Manor, Carrying Place Golf & Country Club, 16750 Weston Road in Kettleby. The dinner is the major fundraising event of the year for Community Living and all proceeds will go to support people who have an intellectual disability. Tickets are \$125 each (\$1,000 for a table of eight) and can be purchased online through the Community Living website at www.clnad.com or by calling 905-898-3000, ext. 258.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

Embarrassed by your bare wrists? Get beading! Show off your sense of style with a unique beaded backpack pin and a fashionable suede bracelet made at the Aurora Public Library from 6.30 to 8 p.m. This program is for youngsters aged 9 to 14 and costs \$8 which includes all materials.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

The Aurora Farmers' Market & Artisan Fair final day at the Aurora Cultural

Centre, formerly the Church Street School, happens today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Site is fully accessible at the north entrance. For further information call 905-713-1818 or info@auroraculturalcentre.ca.

MONDAY, MARCH 28

Annual General Meeting of the Aurora Community Arboretum will be held in the form of a Meet and Greet at 7.30 p.m. in the Aurora Town Hall.

SATURDAY, MAY 14

"I Love Rock & Roll" dinner dance takes place this evening at Dinardo's Mansion on Industrial Parkway South beginning at 6 p.m. Dance to the music of Freddie Vette and The Flames and meet and have your picture taken with Elvis Presley, who is really Kevin Mills from Richmond Hill. Tickets sell for \$60 a person, which includes a three-course meal and are available at Aurora Used Books, 95 Edward Street. Proceeds go to the Aurora-Newmarket District of Community Living.

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- BALLOONIST**
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- OUTDOOR WINTER GAMES**
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- LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**
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PARKING
Please be aware that parking in and around Town Park is limited. It is recommended that you car pool to and from this event.

All activities are weather permitting. For more information, visit www.e-aurora.ca/arcticadventure or call 905-726-4762.



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Aurora High School schedules film festival

A film festival to promote mental health awareness is coming to Aurora High School this Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m.

Open to parents and students from all area elementary and secondary schools, the festival includes four short films and a 40-minute discussion period afterwards.

"The facilitators of the discussion include a mental health professional, a representative from the Schizophrenia Society, a young individual who has experience with mental health conditions and the

filmmakers," said Aurora High School Vice Principal Ginette Denomme in a statement.

The festival facilitators are Workman Arts, a non-profit arts company that works in partnership with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

"The goal of Workman Arts is to promote a greater understanding of mental illness and addiction through film, theatre, visual art, music and the literary arts," said Ms. Denomme. "They are providing their services to the School Council to encourage the community to

increase awareness of mental health.

"These films have been reviewed and assessed by young people and deemed suitable and useful."

For this time of year with increased pressure on students about to graduate, waiting for word back from their university, college, or workplace of choice, this event is particularly relevant for both parents and students, said Aurora High School student Catherine Smith.

"Parents need to know if the students are stressed and how to deal with it," she said. "With universities coming up there is a lot of pressure connected with that for the senior students, so I think the school council really wanted to focus on that aspect, as well as wanting to talk about the stigma related to mental health and how to overcome that."

The Aurora High School Equity Club will hold a bake sale on the night of the screenings, which will take place in the school's cafeteria.

For more information on the event, contact Aurora High School at 905-727-3107.



A group of volunteers gives puppet shows to schools for free to help children understand that children with cancer may look different but inside they are all the same. The parents of La Maison Montessori House (LMMH) on Stone Road in Aurora were asked for donations that LMMH would match. Families gave close to \$1,500 which with the match was a \$3,000 donation to "Camp Quality", a camp for children with cancer that is funded via donations and is free for the sick children.

Park at Bayview, St. John's not part of developer's plans

Neighbouring residents and developers of the lands at the corner of Bayview Avenue and St. John's Sideroad came together at last Tuesday's council meeting to state their cases regarding a proposal from residents to turn part of the lot into a community park, but a change of plan still does not appear to be in the cards.

Residents Svetoslava Topouzova and her husband George Topouzov, who had appeared previously calling for a quadrant of the development be rezoned as community parkland, as well as neighbour David Lennard, approached councillors in Open Forum to make another pitch.

"That is the only woods between Aurora Road and Mulock," said Mr. Lennard. "There are more than 17 indigenous trees on this property and it is really incumbent on this new council to go up there and have a look as to what you would be destroying if you went and cut those trees down."

Councillors nodded in the affirmative when Mr. Lennard asked if they had been to the site, and Mr. Lennard reiterated that despite plans for the Daniels Corporation, to plant compensatory trees for those cut, once the mature trees are felled there is no bringing them back.

"I know the developer is a good developer, but you put up some trees to kind of augment what you cut down it is going to take 30 years for them to come up."

Ms. Topouzova expressed her concern that Town staff have not put forth their own opinions as to what the residents have proposed.

"I don't really see a lot of updates since the delegation request had been

presented to the council meeting and we would like to really see the position of the Town," she said.

From the developer's perspective, however, it was simply too late in the game to consider a change of this nature to the site plan.

Paul DeMelo, representing Daniels as a delegate, said that his client was "days away" from completing the necessary agreements to move forward with the development of a site plan for the commercial and residential components. The matter of trees and parkland has been addressed since 2000, he added.

"The trees which have been identified, specifically note the environmental effects study that came in 2007 indicated that these are not significant and were essentially landscape trees, however my client has agreed, in accordance with the Town's tree compensation bylaw, to move forward and...we are finalizing an agreement with regards to replacement, reforestation of different areas, and replanting," he said.

"We have worked with Town staff, Regional staff, planning staff, the Conservation Authority, everyone with regards to this parcel of land and any discussion or contemplation of any changes at this late point, or any amendment causes us, as you can appreciate, a great deal of concern."

Following Mr. DeMelo's presentation, Councillor John Gallo recalled that the residents came to the Environmental Advisory Committee to plead their case and while he thought the park idea was a great one, the idea came about too late.

"It is unfortunate it came about so late in the process," he said.

Wells Street to close for Arctic Adventure

Family Day, the provincial holiday which happens Monday, will see at least one street in Aurora closed.

The Town of Aurora announced last week that it will temporarily close both lanes on Wells Street between Mosley and Metcalfe Streets from about 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Family Day, Monday, February 21, for the Town's Arctic Adventure community event.

Motorists are encouraged to plan ahead and use alternative roadways in and around Aurora's Town Park.

Bylaw Enforcement Officers will be onsite and any vehicles found on the closed roadway after 5 a.m. Monday will be tagged and towed at

the owner's expense.

Residents are also reminded that the winter parking restrictions bylaw is currently in effect.

The bylaw states that from November 15 to April 15, parking is prohibited on all Aurora streets from 2 to 6 a.m.

The Town's free Family Day, Arctic Adventure event is happening from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Town Park, located at Mosley and Wells Streets. Everyone is welcome.

For more information on winter parking restrictions, visit www.e-aurora.ca/parking or call 905-726-4751.

For the latest Arctic Adventure event details and schedules, visit www.e-aurora.ca/arcticadventure or call 905-726-4762.



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Poor Ronnie

By RON WALLACE

Tickets now on sale!!

Tickets are now on sale for the first Rock and Roll party ever held in Aurora.

With any luck, the party will become an annual event.

Friday, I had the opportunity to meet the second best Elvis impersonator in the world.

Hey, that's not me talking. This professional entertainer is ranked second in the world by Elvis Presley Enterprises 2010.

His name is Kevin Mills, from the States and now living in Richmond Hill. His picture is at the bottom of this column.

He'll be part of the show, which is set for Saturday night, May 14th, at DiNardo's The Mansion on Industrial Parkway South.

I wrote about this event a few weeks ago, and may have jumped the gun a bit.

It'll cost \$60 to get in, not \$50 as I was originally told.

For that price, you'll be served a three-course meal, and there will be red and white wine on the table.

In addition, you can meet "Elvis", have your picture taken with him, and enjoy the music of Freddy Vette and the Flames, an eight-piece band from Belleville, Ontario.

According to the Vette website: "It's been (more than) 50 years since Rock & Roll first shook the world with its new sound that kids loved and parents hated. This new music was sexy, fun, and some said, dangerous. The Devil's music. Everyone from Frank Sinatra to any critic at the time said it wouldn't last.

"Boy, they couldn't have been more wrong.

"Rock & Roll from the 50's lasted well beyond that decade. The recordings of all of the great artists from that time still sell millions a year and sound as good as ever. However, nearly all of the artists who created the music are gone: Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Roy Orbison, Carl Perkins, Ricky Nelson.

"Anyone from that era will tell you that Rock & Roll was at its best and most explosive when played LIVE in front of a LIVE audience. A band rocking & rolling, sweating, giving it all, whipping the audience into a frenzy that would scare parents, politicians, and PTA groups from every small town.

"Someone has to pick up where those before left off. Freddy Vette & the Flames having been doing their part since 2002. A band seemingly plucked from fifties and transported 50 years into the future. Eight musicians and singers playing the hits of Elvis, Jerry Lee, Buddy, Fats, Chuck Berry and more. Their attention to not only the musical details but the visual presentation of this music is second to none."

So, it should be quite a night.

If 60 bucks sounds a little rich, how about \$57.50 if you can find nine more to share a table of 10 for \$575 or a table of 12 (there are only five of those, I'm told) for \$675.

A committee, headed by that eco-limo.ca guy, Alan Hayes, is also looking into getting an emcee for the night, and have a few names to work with. (Never use a preposition to end a sentence with, Ron. You know better).

Check out the group's new website at www.iloverockandroll.ca.

Net proceeds from the event will go to "Community Living, Aurora/Newmarket District".



KEVIN MILLS



This Grade 8 class picture from the Aurora Public School was taken in 1949, more than 60 years ago. Aurora Public School is better known today as the Church Street School, home of the present Aurora Cultural Centre. While the original front doors are still there, the handrails leading down the steps have been replaced. We have no idea of who the students are or who the teacher, standing in the back row, left, is. Do you?

Letter to the Editor

Wride responds to Kean letter

To the editor,

I had hoped the Town Hall address fiasco had finally been put to rest; however I feel Nigel Kean's letter (The Auroran Feb. 8/11) is so hypocritical, misleading and untruthful that it needed to be addressed (no pun intended).

It was you, Mr. Kean, who at the beginning of your term in 2003-2006 rushed to change the existing address of our Town Hall.

You did this for your own personal reason: to quote "Wow, how self-serving is that".

There was no benefit to the town and, in fact, caused much confusion as to where the Town Hall was moved to.

The 1990 council working with staff were obliged, as are all councils, to name NEW streets in town. Council of that day democratically and following procedure of the time gave the new Town Hall the address 100 John West Way.

Council at that time consisted of Gail McIntyre, Betty Pedersen, Norm Stewart, Mayor John West, Herb McKenzie, Judith Ochalski, George Timpson, Norm Weller and Tim Jones. (Evelyn Buck was not even on this council, however, you have never let facts interfere with your rants).

These were well known and respected Aurora citizens who gave many years and in some cases many decades of service for the benefit of our town, not to benefit themselves.

You state, "Councillor Buck rushed to put the Town Hall back onto John West Way".

In case you haven't noticed, it's been on John West Way ever since it was built 20 years ago.

It never did move and it's only because you and four others named a parking lot a road that the address changed in 2004.

Your statement that "these five thought they were more important even than those who gave their lives for our freedom" is outrageous, insulting, ignorant and quite frankly, just plain stupid.

You go on to state residents had no say in the original decision.

First, the address was approved in an open public meeting and anybody could have appeared before council at that time.

Secondly, there was an election immediately following this decision and people certainly could have objected with their votes; however, Mayor John West was re-elected.

None of the councils or indeed Aurora citizens between 1990-2004 had a problem with the address until you came along.

You state, "let's charge the residents more money and move the Town Hall back onto John West's street".

To begin with, it's not John West's street, it belongs to you and me and every other tax-paying citizen of Aurora.

Also, and more to the point, if you hadn't changed the address in the first place we wouldn't have had to spend any money, either in changing the address in 2004 or returning it to its proper address in 2011.

I recall you didn't seem to mind any cost associated with your motion to change the address.

In any event, I was assured in 2004 and 2011 the costs are negligible, so I don't know how you arrive at your fictitious figure of \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Perhaps your most ludicrously untruthful statement is "at least when we originally gave the Town Hall a new address we had the decency to have the public present at many meetings to voice their concerns".

You absolutely and

unequivocally did not encourage public input into your decision.

In fact you made the motion, it was seconded and voted upon without you or any of the other four proponents saying a word.

It appears, dare I say it, that it was a done deal before it even came to council.

The five of you refused to explain to the public why you were doing this, you refused to debate it with the other councillors, you did it for personal reasons defying public opinion.

Without exception every person who addressed council regarding this matter spoke against the motion, there was even a public poll that clearly indicated to leave the address alone.

You had no mandate to do this and there was no public

will to do this.

You and four other individuals ignored the rights of the 1990 council and ignored democratic process in your rush to dishonour an Aurora citizen.

The only reason it was kept alive at several public meetings was because myself and a number of other citizens appeared before council to ask you not to change the address.

It was certainly through no "decency to have the public present".

In fact I was told on two separate occasions to stop wasting council's time.

As to whether you are a sore loser, your misleading tirade in your above noted letter, speaks for itself.

Graham Wride
Aurora

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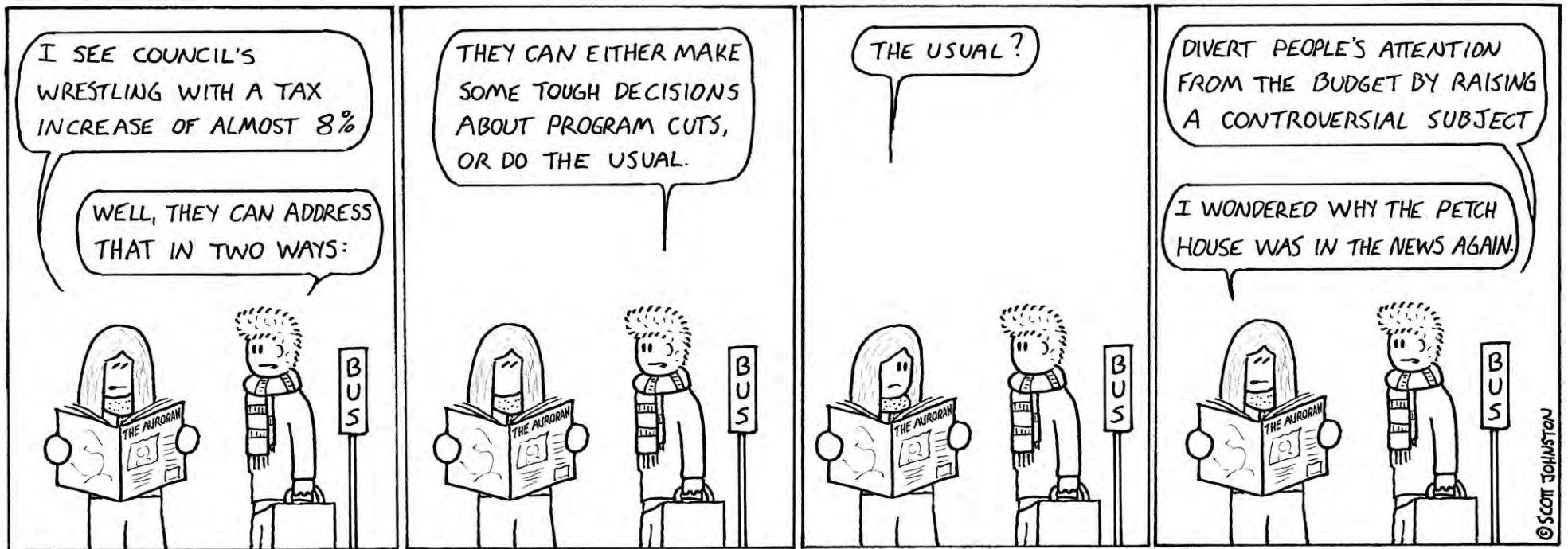
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Front Porch Perspective

By Stephen Somerville

My Aurora budget speech

I present below, for the readers' perusal, amusement and most probable ridicule, my own hypothetical Aurora Municipal Budget Speech.

I will have you know that, due to the solemnity of the occasion, I have put on my best blue suit, white shirt (with blue stripes) and a blue tie.

And I am wearing a pair of black Italian loafers that have gold buckles. (Due to self imposed austerity measures - i.e. my wife would not be too pleased - I have refrained from the budget making tradition of buying a new pair of shoes).

I then affixed a yellow and white carnation to my suit jacket lapel.

Sitting in the Aurora Town Chamber, I would have a sip of water, then at 4.35 p.m. - just after the financial markets have closed so as not to unduly alarm world markets - I would rise from my seat.

My Budget Speech would go something like this:

"Mr. mayor, councillors, ladies and gentlemen, friends, supporters, assembled guests - and my mother-in-law - good afternoon!

"It gives me a tremendous amount of pride and satisfaction to rise from my seat in this great rotunda of thought and grand debate to deliver, on behalf of the mayor and his

council colleagues, my first budget as Aurora's Minister of Finance.

"This budget is about four P's.

"It is about Perspective. It is about Prudence. It is about Priorities. But it is mostly about People.

"**Perspective:** Aurora is the fifth largest of the municipalities within York Region and growing at an enormous rate.

"So, too, is our Town's growing appetite for services and capital projects.

"The 2011 Gross Town Draft Budget is approximately \$49 million and the mayor and council colleagues are proposing a 7.82 per cent tax increase on the Town portion only of the tax billing, which translates into an extra 23 cents per day, \$7.07 per month, or only \$84.83 per year for a home assessed at \$300,000.

"**Prudence:** The mayor and his eight council colleagues have been painstakingly going through the budget items - one at a time.

"For the 2011 Operating Budget, each department was required to prepare a detailed account-by-account operating budget.

"As well, each department was asked to identify any

items of note, which are expected to have an operating impact in the 2012, 2013, or 2014 budget years.

"Council members know that you work hard and that you don't want your tax dollars dispensed like after dinner mints.

"Frugality and caution are our watchwords.

"Therefore, before looking at the budget plan in detail, the collective decision was undertaken by your mayor and your council that the Town would try to limit tax increases to 7.8 per cent this year, 8.5 per cent next year, 4.9 per cent year in 2013, and 3.7 per cent in 2014.

"**Priorities:** As this is the first budget that our new team is bringing forward, we want to send a message of focus and also to set a tone.

"From our discussions with Aurora residents, there is widespread concern about our crumbling infrastructure.

"A significant proportion of your tax dollars will go toward fixing older roads, and replacing older equipment and vehicles.

Continued next week.

Stephen can be contacted at:
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



Frankly Speaking

By Frank Klees

Question Period

What could and should be the most productive hour in the legislature's daily proceedings, too often devolves into an embarrassing demonstration of incivility and disrespect among Members, for each other and for the institution of Parliament itself.

I speak of that hour known as Question Period.

QUESTIONS BUT FEW ANSWERS

Anyone who has watched this hour-long exchange between Members of the Legislature and Ministers of the Government, will know why it's called Question Period and not Answer Period. Rarely are answers given to even the most direct of questions.

In fact, too often, responses are laced with the political or partisan message of the day without even so much as a reference to the question that was asked.

And although not justified, this is often the trigger for the babble of heckling that erupts from both sides of the House.

Regular observers of the Parliamentary Channel will know that heckling is an art form that crosses all Party lines.

They will also know that it's an activity in which I personally refuse to engage, although I must admit, that on occasion I've been tempted to enter the fray.

This column may help explain why.

GETTING THE QUESTION

Question Period is limited to 60 minutes and is held from 10:30 to 11:30 every morning from Monday to Thursday when the House is sitting.

Those 60 minutes are divided between the Opposition Parties and Backbench Members of the Government.

This makes getting a question quite a competitive process in itself.

Requests to be scheduled for a question are submitted to the House Leader, who in turn weighs the merit of that question against those from other Members.

Not an easy task for the House Leader, given the urgency of issues and the determination with which we advocate for the opportunity to put our question.

PUTTING THE QUESTION

The Speaker allows only 45 seconds for a question to be put and the same for the reply.

A further 45 seconds is allowed as a follow-up question, and in that timeframe, one hopes to accomplish two things:

First, to clearly identify the issue and the action the Minister should take; and second, to get an undertaking from the Minister to take that action.

WHEN QUESTIONS LEAD NOWHERE

Why does one get tempted to lose composure in this setting?

Consider these examples of some of my questions over the past session and the Ministers' responses:

Q- Will the Minister immediately intervene to stop the OSPCA's plans to euthanize the entire animal population at its Newmarket shelter?

A- I have no authority to intervene and I have full confidence in the OSPCA.

Q- More than 1,200 children are on a wait list for speech/language therapy in York Region and are falling behind academically and in the development of their social skills. Will the Minister immediately release the funds to ensure these children's needs are met?

A- The government has invested millions more in speech/language therapy since 2003. Get the picture?

These are serious issues and the best the Ministers can do is to wash their hands of the matter or respond with an irrelevant reference to the past.

QUESTIONS THAT LEAD TO RESULTS

I also want to share with you what CAN happen when Question Period works the way it is intended. That's why I continue to do my utmost to get my questions on the roster.

Here is one of those occasions:

Q- Cody Hughes has been told he will have to wait three years for a procedure to replace the joints in his jaw. His pain is excruciating and constant. His morphine dosage is that of a dying cancer patient. His parents are here in the gallery today.

Will the Minister agree to meet with Mr. and Mrs. Hughes immediately following Question Period to hear first-hand how desperate their son's situation is?

A- Yes, I will be glad to meet with them.

The meeting took place, the minister intervened and Cody had his operation this past month.

Not only that, but through this intervention, the Ministry of Health provided funding for more than 25 other patients who were on the wait list for the same procedure.

IT'S POSSIBLE TO GET THINGS DONE

I hope this column has not only provided some insight into Question Period, but has also given a sense of optimism that we CAN get things done.

My hope is that we could get to the point where Question Period could become the legislature's finest hour, where meaningful exchanges would lead to the kind of results that were experienced by Cody Hughes and his family.

It is possible and I'm privileged to work towards that on your behalf.

As always, I invite you to contact me with your comments, questions or advice through my website at www.frankklees.com or by calling me at 905-750-0019.

Letters to the Editor

Family Day is a bright spot in an otherwise "ugly" month

To the editor,

Another year and February has reared its ugly head again.

Unlike my November irrational inherited behaviour, February has two distinctive unsettling components that have evolved over the years.

One, and the most upsetting date to remember, is February 19th – the day that my husband, Doug, died.

The other is Valentine's

Day.

They are now both irrevocably connected in my memories and anxiety.

Needless to say as the 14th/19th approaches I get weepy, nostalgic and have gained antagonistic feelings towards red hearts.

Did you know that there is an Antivalentinism movement that tends to fall into two categories, one anticonsumerist and the other an objection to the "forced" observation of romantic

love.

There also exists the objection to Valentine's Day on the grounds that for romantically unattached people, Valentine's Day is only a magnifier of the fact that they are unattached, quite possibly against their will and efforts.

Singles Awareness Day (SAD) is a play on Valentine's Day that is usually celebrated on the 14th of February or an adjacent day to get away from the

commercialism of Valentine's Day.

Once again, someone (probably of the Hallmark variety) has capitalized on SAD.

There are cards, some of them pretty derogatory, to further accentuate being unattached on this particular day!

Believe it or not there are suggestions on what "singles" can do on Valentine's Day to take their minds off being single like:

"Pamper yourself, plan out a dinner or movie with best friends, throw a "singles party" or "Un-Valentine's Day Party" at your home.

"Singles can spend Valentine's Day in the meaningful way (other than being attached) by spending time with the needy and down-trodden.

"Instead of feeling depressed and ashamed for not having a significant other to spend the day, singles can spend Valentine's Day in a constructive manner by expressing love and affection for people around them."

Those are quotes from an Internet site devoted to Antivalentinism.

Do you believe this? Someone actually wrote/believed that if you do not have a significant other to be your Valentine, you would feel depressed and mortified.

I didn't realize that there is a stigma associated with being single – especially on Valentine's Day. What a bunch of bunk!

I know I suffer from "Noah's Arc Syndrome" - which is occasionally avoiding attending functions where everyone is "two by two".

Sometimes I still feel uncomfortable when I am the only one without her mate - my problem!

I flatly refuse to be bullied by card makers, chocolate purveyors' and the like to be made feel somewhat lacking on Valentine's Day.

You can join me in loathing February, generally.

On a different note, there is one bright spot – February 21st – Family Day.

Now that is worth celebrating!

Bonnie Tiffin
Oak Ridges

No need to increase number of police required, he claims

To the editor,

York Region's new police chief, Eric Jolliffe, continues to show flawed logic in assuming that an increase in population necessitates an increase in the police force.

He insists on spending taxpayer dollars to hire 28

new staff to a police force that is already large when considering the relative security of York Region.

While the Chief acknowledges that the crime rate fell by five per cent between 2008 and 2009, he points to continuing increased population as the reason more police are required.

Does he not realize the region's population rose by 2.8 per cent during that same time period, according to the York Region's Planning Department?

It seems more likely that the trend of an increasing population and diminishing crime rate will continue, not that new residents will bring

a sudden crime wave to the region.

Jolliffe's allusion to the increased number of bank robberies is a misnomer, and likely the only jump across crime statistic that he could manage to pull out of his hat.

While there were 31 bank robberies in the region in 2010 compared with 16 for 2009, police suspected that seven of those robberies were committed by one man, and four of them by another.

It seems unlikely that the 28 new police staff will be spending much time tracking down these two hoods.

Pointing to the fact other regions are increasing their police budgets is not reason enough for York Region to follow suit.

Peel Region may be increasing its budget, but it is rated by Statistics Canada by having a crime severity index of 56.6, while York Region's is only 44.4.

Our regional councillors should instead follow the example of Bradford-West Gwillimbury, which called on police to make cuts.

In a time when the economy is climbing out of a tough recession and public money must be spent frugally, this seems like one clear area where the bottom line can be held, if not cut back even further.

Councillor should start living up to responsibilities

To the editor,

Re: Council meeting of February 8th, 2011

I was in attendance at the above-mentioned meeting, and found Councillor Wendy Gaertner's behaviour to be absurd, demeaning and outrageous.

She managed to waste a

considerable amount of council's time, as they attempted to approve the Minutes of the December 14th, 2010, meeting and to continue with the agenda for the session.

Gaertner's nitpicking culminated in her publicly accusing Town Clerk, John Leach, of "doctoring" the December 14th Minutes, a

reprehensible action that challenges the integrity of a senior staff member.

When asked by Mayor Dawe to apologize for her remarks, she flatly refused.

In my opinion, it has been evident from the very beginning of this council's term, that Councillor Gaertner is intent on obstructing the process and progress of this Town Council.

At the December 7th, 2010, inaugural meeting, Councillor Gaertner swore an Oath of Office, committing to fulfilling her responsibilities as an elected official.

I think it's about time she started living up to those responsibilities.

Rosalyn A. Gonsalves
Long time resident of Aurora

Brian Jackson
Aurora

Still two teams needed to bowl

To the editor,

Just a quick reminder to residents of Aurora that on February 26th between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. the BBBSY Bowlathon is being held.

This is the largest fund raiser of the year for Big Brothers Big Sisters of York Region.

We are still short two teams.

Please call Mary Lynn at 905-726-2149, extension 305, to sign up or go to www.maryllyns.com

@bbbsy.ca.

You can also go to www.bbbsy.ca to support any team or bowler.

We would love to honour a Canadian military Afghan vet at the 1 p.m. event, so if you know a hero from the war please again call Mary Lynn.

Please support this great group.

Nigel Kean
Aurora Ambassador for
BBBSY bowling

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Minutes doctored, Gaertner complains

From page 1
apologize.

"I won't apologize for saying something that is true," she said. "You can make a code of conduct complaint."

When Councillor Gaertner made her displeasure with the December 14 minutes known earlier in the evening, Mr. Leach explained how it came to be that she was recorded as the mover of the motion, as he further outlined in a report that was released to both councillors and the public alike the previous week.

"At the time that this matter was considered, the motion was read out by myself and Councillor Gaertner requested a recorded vote," said Mr. Leach. "The chair, Mayor Dawe, asked for a seconder and the seconder was Councillor Buck and in doing so I believe he recognized Councillor Gaertner as the mover."

"It is unfortunate that she did not indicate at the time that she wasn't the mover because I believe the Chair, as well as myself, understood that she was. Subsequently a recorded vote was taken and the action was confirmed by Council's confirmation bylaw."

This did not sit well with Councillor Gaertner who wondered how she could have objected to herself being the

YRP issue 211 tickets

You weren't listening.

York Regional Police issued 211 tickets during last week's Operation Stay Focused blitz targeting motorists using their cell phones.

The recent blitz began February 1, the one-year anniversary of new legislation prohibiting the use of all hand-held communication devices while operating a motor vehicle.

York Regional Police assigned both uniform and plain clothes officers in unmarked police vehicles to enforce the legislation.

"Motorists who use a hand-held device while driving pose a risk not only to themselves, but to their passengers and everyone on the road around them," said Sergeant Edmond Villamere, of the York Regional Police Traffic Bureau. "Operation Stay Focused is an effort to reduce this danger on our roadways. It was shocking, not only to see motorists using their hand-held devices while behind the wheel, but to see them doing so during severe winter weather that included snow storms and reduced visibility."

Motorists observed Driving with Display Screen Visible to Driver and Operating a Hand-Held Communication Device or Entertainment Device While Driving were charged.

The set fine for these offences is \$125.

mover of the motion without knowing she was the mover. She then proceeded to lob a number of questions at Mr. Leach, asking if she raised her hand or say anything to move the motion.

"As I indicated, you did not indicate after the motion was put on the floor that you weren't the mover and at the time I would have thought and I believe it was apparent that you were," he said.

Councillor Gaertner had hardly got the words "This is bordering on..." out of her mouth before Councillor Evelyn Buck called a point of order, to which Councillor Gaertner shouted, "Excuse me! Mr. Leach is insulting my intelligence - "and Mayor Dawe then cut off her microphone to hear Councillor Buck's point of order.

"Mr. Leach has been asked several questions, has answered each of them, and Councillor Gaertner clearly doesn't accept the answer but she can keep on and I believe the recorded vote indicates her position on this so there really isn't any need for clarification," said Councillor Buck. "The fact is that Councillor Gaertner jumped the gun when she asked for a recorded vote before there was a motion on the table. She created the confusion."

Councillor Gaertner countered and said she assumed Councillor Buck would be saying the same thing if it was her in this situation. It was, she added, up to Mr. Leach to decide how "this situation will be remedied."

For Councillor Michael Thompson, Councillor Gaertner's current position was interesting compared with a previous incident.

"I believe it was the previous council that voted and said that they were placing their trust in the Clerk and the Clerk's decision," said Councillor Thompson. "So last term there was one viewpoint shared by Councillor Gaertner and this term it is completely the opposite."

Councillors eventually voted 5-4 to remove this item from the minutes and bring the memorandum back to a future council to be voted on to have the document on the public record, with Councillors Abel, Buck, Pirri, and Thompson voting against it.

Mr. Leach said the business of the Corporation would not be affected by taking it off the December 14 minutes and bringing it forward at a later date.

Last Tuesday's argument came after the December 14 minutes were examined at the January 25 council meeting, where they were removed from the agenda so that the DVD could be looked at by Mr. Leach.

At the time, Councillor Gaertner suggested Mr. Leach made the motion himself.

A Code of Conduct complaint can be filed by any councillor, Town staff, or member of the public who "has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a Member of Council or Advisory Committee has contravened the Code of Conduct."

Aurora's Integrity Commissioner, David Tsubouchi, is on the job to review all Code of Conduct complaints until his term comes to an end February 20.

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ICAMP Offers Creative Adventures with Technology

"It's going to be our 8th summer in Aurora", says Nazar Hossain. He runs the Children's Technology Workshop (CTW), which operates ICAMP™ - not your ordinary summer camp. There are laptops and LEGO pieces everywhere. The kids, instead of staring blankly into screens, are using their laptops to create something - movies, LEGO® robots that move, video-games and more.

Here's a typical week for a child at ICAMP. Day 1, plan a mission to Mars to search for life on the Red Planet and make a video game training would-be astronauts how to befriend any aliens they may encounter. Day 2, dream up and film a blockbuster movie, recounting the adventures of the mission to Mars exploration team. Day 3, engineer and build a LEGO robot, complete with a video camera and sensors to simulate a real NASA Martian exploration rover. This is just part of what a typical week could look like at ICAMP. And that's just one Adventure - there are 10 more to choose from!

"At ICAMP, children build a wide array of skills - everything from critical thinking, to storyboarding and even geometry. All of the skills they learn here

can be applied immediately to the real-world" says Nazar. "The fact that the children are in charge of their Adventure gives them a sense of ownership, which is very meaningful to them."

Watching a child work on their Adventure is highly gratifying. For example, during a recent workshop, a young girl was working on her Fashion Designer movie - a stop-frame based movie using props that she had fabricated. Her mom watched her reposition the props in careful detail to shoot the next frame of the movie. "It's incredible, she's completely immersed herself into her story and is learning about all this technology that honestly, we (my husband and I) would have a hard time teaching her about at home." The end result was a 3-minute long movie shot at 12 frames per second - for those of you doing the math, that means the girl shot more than 2,100 pictures to create her masterpiece!

"We want the kids to be really creative users of technology - that's the goal," says Nazar. The philosophy is that the computer should be an enabler - a tool to achieve a creative objective. The ICAMP environment is very fluid and collaborative - kids will walk around,

checking out one another's projects and even offer to help. Physical activity and breaks are part of a regular day, where kids will go outside and play a healthy mix of camp games. "Time outdoors is just as important as the creative learning being done indoors - the last thing we want to do is sit a child down for the whole day," says Nazar.

Believe it or not, one of the most popular questions that CTW gets is from parents wanting to register



Kids participate in CTW's LEGO Robotics Challenge to design and build a LEGO robot to complete a series of challenging missions.

themselves as well as their kids. Until CTW introduces workshops for parents, we will just have to live vicariously through our kids engaged in one of their many programs. This summer, CTW will mark 8 years of summer icamp in Aurora - icamp will be running from Aurora High School, as well as several other locations across the GTA.



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Results to Sunday, February 13




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HOUSE LEAGUE

205 Caravan Kids Black 5. 202 Caravan Kids Gold 2 - Brennan Powell 2G, Michael Pantalona 1A, Sebastian Brstilo 2A.

206 Caravan Kids Powder Blue 7 - Benjamin Fulford 1G 1A, Christopher Marton 1G, Joshua Anselmo 1G, Ian Hilgendorff 1G, Corson Haywood 1G, Ethan Edwards 1G, Jack Nicholson 1A, Kevvin O'Brien 1A, Griffin Charnley 1A, Justin Just 1G, Alexander Ko, shutout. **201 Caravan Kids Red 0.**

406 Mastermind Toys Powder Blue 4. 402 Omar's Shoes Gold 3.

607 Envirocar Kelly Green 2 - Ian Rucker 1G 1A, John Powell 1A, Jacob Fulford 1G, Jacob Fenchak 1A, Andrew Negri, shutout. **605 Lakeshore Valu Mart 0.**

603 Diamond Groundskeeping Services White 6 - C Dyer 3G, B Scott 1G, J Camplin 2A, T McKechnie 1A, A Skelhorn 1G 1A, R Callaghan 1G, H Lambrinos 1A. **611 Gmarkets Inc. - Purple 0.**

606 Aurora Chrysler Powder Blue 7 - Alex Carter 3G 1A, Jordan Elliott 2G 1A, Reese Crevelle 1G 1A, Dylan Cowell 1G. **608 Crabby Joe's Grey 2** - Connor Tripp 1G, Jack Dion 1G, Liam DeSouza 1A.

609 IOOF Aurora Lodge #148 3 - Joshua Fallavollita 1G 1A, Michael Montesanti 1G, Santino Denuzzo 1G, Christian Loria 1A, Evan Lambert 1A. **605 Lakeshore Valu Mart 2** - Daniel Della Rocca 2G, Michael Dowling 1A, Jordan Reeves 1A.

601 Municipal Engineering Solutions Red 2 - Christian Pearce 1G, Jordan Bodimeade 1G, Evan Knowles 1A, Troy Lane 1A. **607 Envirocar Kelly Green 1** - Ian Rucker 1G, Jacob Cann 1A.

807 Danny & Scotties Boys Kelly Green 4 - Ben Black 1G, Scott Dunlop 1A, Greg Rutherford 1A, Ben Goldman 2A, Michael Hosmer 1A, Declan Johnston 3G 1A, Cameron Screech 1A. **809 AHPA Teal 4** - Russell Johnson 2G 1A, Tyler Hindley 1G, Joey Stel 1G, Graham Killby 1A, Bradley Snoultan 1A.

803 Rotary Club Of Aurora White 10 - Francois Bicego, shutout, Zac Landry 3G, Matthew Niece 1G 1A, Matt Sanita 1G 1A, Justin Laird 1G 1A, Chris Sanita 2G, Cameron Pyle 1G 2A, Ethan Mills 1G, Stewart Reid 1A, Ian Coschi 2A, Oliver Jones 1A, Aaron Rival 3A, Lockhart McMann 1A, David Gonder 1A. **802 Manhattan Trophies Gold 0.**

806 Laurion Law Office Power Blue 7 - Zac Krull 1G, Sean Foxwell 3G, Tim Pare 2G 1A, Mitchell Lamantia 1G 1A, Christopher Ottman 1A, Andy Butler 1A, Matt D'Allessandro 1A. **810 Pizza Pizza Orange 1** - Christopher Broughton 1G, Nicholai Pileggi 1A, Carson Elliott 1A.

812 Municipal Engineering Solutions Burgandy 5 - Bill Haddock 1A, shutout, Josh Bell 3G, Derek Capone 1G 1A, John Sherwood 1G, Sandy Rundle-Sanderson 1A. **804 Frontline Fire & Safety Blue 0.**

805 Aurora Home Hardware Black 3 - Austin Waite 1G, Harris Riopelle 2G, Michael Tanel 1A, Ben Ashton 1A. **811 Caruso & Company Purple 1** - Rory Hamilton 1G.

801 Rogers Red 2 - Scotty Barker 1G, Brett Bond 1G, James Johnston 1A. **808 Crabby Joe's Grey 1** - Jeff Stobo 1G, Cody Child 1A.

807 Danny & Scotties Boys Kelly Green 5 - Declan Johnston 3G, Mitchell Carter 2G, Alexander MacDonald 1A, Joseph Hodgson 2A, Matthew Hall 1A, Greg Rutherford 1A, Alex Negri 1A, Michael

Hosmer 1A, Brendon McDonald 1A. **810 Pizza Pizza Orange 3** - Robert Ruscica 1G, Jonathan Jin 1G, Michael Boorn 1G, Scott Taylor 1A, Christopher Broughton 1A, Troy Foster 1A.

803 Rotary Club Of Aurora White 7 - Zac Landry 2G, Matt Sanita 2G 1A, Chris Sanita 1G 2A, Francois Bicego 1G 2A, David Gonder 1G, Aaron Rival 2A. **806 Laurion Law Office Power Blue 1** - Tim Pare 1G.

804 Frontline Fire & Safety Blue 6 - Wyatt Jones, shutout, Adam De Roos 1G, Matt Pelkola 3G 1A, Jerryd Jensen 1G 1A, Adam Ashraf 1G. **802 Manhattan Trophies Gold 0.**

808 Crabby Joe's Grey 6 - Andrew Kaszuba 2G, Morgan Walker 2G 2A, Cody Child 1G 1A, Tyler Futterer 1G, Michael Walsh 2A. **801 Rogers Red 5** - Brett Bond 1G 1A, Keith Jarvis 1G 1A, Bryn Burbank 1G 1A, James Johnston 1G 1A, Randy Sutton 1G 1A, Scotty Barker 1A, Jamie Wilson 1A.

812 Municipal Engineering Solutions Burgandy 9 - Derek Capone 1G, Josh Bell 6G 1A, John Sherwood 1G 2A, Sandy Rundle -Sanderson 1G, Ryan MacMillan 6A, Chris Downs 2G, Luc Martineau 2A, Andrew Roche 1A, Nick Armour 1A. **809 AHPA Teal 7** - Russell Johnson 5G, Michael Arcuri 1G, Bradley Snoultan 1G, Chris Grossi 1A, Michael Bitzos 1A, Joey Stel 1A.

811 Caruso & Company Purple 3 - Rory Hamilton 2G, Matt Walker 1G, Daniel Wochenmarkt 1A, Andrew Foresi 1A, Riley O'Brien 1A. **805 Aurora Home Hardware Black 2** - Jonathan Caporusso 1G, Thomas Mason 1G, Lucas Marek 1A, Joseph Veneziano 1A.

906 Ruff-N-Redi Powder Blue 0 - Jonathan White, shutout, Josh Lawlor 1G, Nick Theodoropolous 1G, Nick Moffatt 1G, Dylan Sutton 1A, Chris Falfalios 1A, David Marsillo 1A, John Dinocolantino 1A. **907 Wooder Food Safety Consulting Kelly Green 0.**

909 North York Plumbing & Heating Teal 1 - C Mulhern 1G, Francesco Vallacorsa, shutout. **904 St. Louis Blue 0.**

902 Boston Gold 4 - Trevor Rice 1G, Ward Benn 1G, Tyler Indos 1G, Jesse Borin 1G, Dylan Indos 1A, Daniel Bresolin 1A, William Allen 1A. **901 Graystones Restaurant Red 1** - Andrew Begg 1A, Cody Unger 1A.

910 Philly Orange 8 - Brian Pedron 5G, Ryan Rival 1G 1A, Ali Akbar 2A, Thomas Scougall 1A, Daniel LaFlamme 2A, Ryan St. Germain 2G 2A. **903 Optimist Club of Aurora White 1** - Andrew Walter 1G, Evan Jones 1A.

908 Crabby Joe's Grey 6 - Ryan Eberlin 1G, Quinn Harris 1G, Trevor George 2G, Tyler White 1G 1A, Marco Ghegin 1G. **905 ATS Healthcare Black 1** - Vince Duggan 1G, Matt Melito 1A.

1005 Aurora Home Hardware Black 5 - Chris Blumreisinger 2G, Justin Killens 2G 1A, Ryan Antoniel 1G, Greg Lacroix 1A, Andrew Cosentino 1A, Scott Tonello 1A, Joseph Lombardi 1A. **1009 Backyard Pool & Spa Teal 2** - Liam McGoldrick 1G, Daniel Fusco 1A, Chris Tillsley 1A.

REP LEAGUE

Tyke Select A - TNT 5. Aurora 3 - Ryan Bryden 1G, Todd Cook 1G, Charles Huxley 1G, Nicholas Giorgio 1A, Caden McHenry 1A, Anton Sopot 1A.

Tyke Select A - TNT 2. Aurora 1 - Owen Hollett 1G, Caden McHenry 1A.

Novice AA - Newmarket 3. Aurora 2 - Jake Adams 1G 1A, Daniel Gaeta 1G, Dylan DaCosta 1A.

Novice AA - Richmond Hill 4. Aurora 0.
Novice A - Innisfil 5. Aurora 2 - Jace Jackson 1G, Liam Mahoney 1G.

Novice A - Innisfil 5. Aurora 0.

Novice AE - Aurora 6. Georgina 1.

Novice AE - Aurora 5. Georgina 4.

M Atom AA - Aurora 6 - Andrew Park 2G, Jeremy Gonsalves 2A, Myles Vasilevski 2A, Anthony DiPietro 1G 1A, Harris Goan 1G 1A, Luke O'Keefe 1G 1A, Wesley Reid 1A, Andrew Wolanski 1A, Anthony Iacovetta 1G, Luke Jarvis 1A. **TNT 2.**

M Atom A - Aurora 4 - Sam Ashton 1G 1A, Ryan Cunnam 1G, Brendan Sanford 1G, Matthew McConnell 1G, Matthew Gram 1A, Jack Campbell 1A, Cory Read 1A, Colby Prymych 1A, Blair Crabbe 1A, Dylan Prescott 1A. **Bradford 1.**

M Atom A - Aurora 2 - Colby Prymych 1G, Dylan Prescott 1G, Sam Ashton 1A, Blair Crabbe 1A, Ryan Cunnam 1A, Will Sherman, shutout. **Bradford 0.**

M Atom AE - TNT 3. Aurora 2 - Ryan McCartney 1G, Alex Sandras 1A, Evan Robertson 1G, Russel Tanaka 1A.

Atom AA - Aurora 3. Barrie 0.

Atom AA - Barrie 3. Aurora 0.

Atom AA - Aurora 4. Barrie 3.

Atom A - Aurora 3 - Jaedon Jackson 1G, Ben Spittle 1G 1A, Jamie Stewart 1G, Anthony Capraro 1A. **Newmarket 2.**

Atom A - Newmarket 2. Aurora 0.
Atom A - Newmarket 2. Aurora 1 - Jaedon Jackson 1G, Carson Venneri 1A, Ryan Jamieson 1A.

Atom AE - Aurora 9 - Lucas Surace 3G, Finn Reeves 2G 1A, Adam DePiero 1G 1A, Sebastian Giorgio 1G 1A, Max Lombard 1G, Braeden Joynt 1G, Michael Fodero 2A, Thomas Morra 1A, Parker Lantz, shutout. **Mooretown 0.**

Atom AE - Aurora 6 - Stephen Silverio 2G, 1A, Thomas Morra 1G 2A, Justin Evans 1G 1A, Braeden Joynt 1G, Adam DePiero 1G 3A, Francesco Scuglia 2A, Michael Fodero 1A, Jacob Levy, shutout. **East Gwillimbury 0.**

Atom AE - Aurora 2 - Braeden Joynt 1G, Sebastian Giorgio 1G, Stephen Silverio 1A. **New Hamburg 2.**

Atom AE - Aurora 4 - Nicholas Keller 1G, Braeden Joynt 1G, Michael Fodero 1G, Francesco Scuglia 1G, Carter Wilmsmeyer 1A, Sebastian Giorgio 1A, Jacob Levy, shutout. **Richmond Hill 0.**

Atom AE - Aurora 6 - Finn Reeves 2G, Adam DePiero 1G 2A, Max Lombard 1G 1A, Thomas Morra 1G, Francesco Scuglia 1G. **NASC Falcons 1.**

Atom AE - Kingston 2. Aurora 1 - Lucas Surace 1G.

M Peewee AA - Markham 4. Aurora 3.

M Peewee AA - Aurora 6. Georgina 4.

M Peewee A - Aurora 4 - Mark Kalmisto 2G, Clayton Allen 1G, Jordan Torres 1G, Thomas Kostoff 2A, Jack O'Keefe 1A, Ryan Thornhill 1A. **East Gwillimbury 2.**

M Peewee A - Aurora 4 - Eric McGhie 1G 1A, Reid Carpenter 1G, Jack O'Keefe 1G, Stewart

Gable 1A, Colin McGoldrick 1G. **East Gwillimbury 3.**

Peewee AA - Aurora 3 - Cameron Morrison 1G 1A, Patrick Servideo 1G, Evan Woodhead 1G, Tyler Williams 2A, Jared Reeves 1A. **Markham 2.**

Peewee AA - Barrie 3. Aurora 1 - Taylor Kauffeldt 1G, Keegan Matthew 1A, Jack Pecora 1A.

Peewee AA - Barrie 3. Aurora 0.

Peewee A - Barrie 5. Aurora 2 - Evan Cherubini 1G, Mathew Tyndall 1G, Alistair Johnston 1A, Cameron Zinner 1A, Shaun Broad 1A.

Peewee A - Barrie 2. Aurora 1 - Cameron Zinner 1G, Tristan Kuchar 1A.

Peewee AE - Aurora 6 - Cameron Anderson 1G 1A, Christian Arcuri 1A, Adam Caicco 1A, Connor Downs 2G, Brendin Ramsay 2G, Nick Sansalone 1A, Michael DaCosta 1A, Nick Pearce 1G 1A, Charles Bennett 1A, Adam Leader, shutout. **Beeton 0.**

Peewee AE - Stouffville 4. Aurora 3 - Brendin Ramsay 2G, Michael DaCosta 1G, Christian Arcuri 1A, Connor Downs 1A, Nick Pearce 1A.

M Bantam AA - Barrie 2. Aurora 1 - Eddie Duffy 1G, David O'Connor 1A.

M Bantam AE - Newmarket 3. Aurora 1.

M Bantam AE - Aurora 6. Newmarket 0.

Bantam AA - Aurora 4 - Lucas Pozzebon 2G 1A, Jordan Nanos 1G, Nick Scott 1G, Konner McMillan 1A, Brett Thiessen 1A, Nic Delzotto 1A, Quentin Campbell 1A, Spencer Green 1A. **Newmarket 1.**

Bantam AA - Aurora 1 - Ryan Manson, shutout. Nick Scott 1G, Brett Thiessen 1A, Austin Lane 1A. **Newmarket 0.**

Bantam A - Tigers 6 - Liam Beresford 3G 1A, Jack Caldwell 1G 2A, Erik Balkovec 1G 1A, Paul Neophytou 1G, Mitch Arnew 1A. **Bradford 1.**

Bantam AE - Aurora 3 - Brett Bond 1G, Joel Gouveia 1G 1A, Nathan Nealon 1G 1A, Kyle Strachan 1A, Ryan McGolrick 1A. **Ajax 1.**

M Midget AA - Aurora 2. Markham 0.

M Midget AA - Newmarket 6. Aurora 3.

M Midget AA - Newmarket 4. Aurora 1.

M Midget A - Aurora 2. Newmarket 1.

M Midget A - Aurora 4. Stouffville 2.

M Midget AE - Aurora 2 - Connor McQuillan 1G, Christopher Tsianos 1G, Kyle Fedec 1A, Connor Moody 1A. **Brampton 2.**

M Midget AE - Aurora 3 - Sasha Dajia 1G, Matthew Reeves 1G, Kyle Fedec 1G, Collin Laird 1A, Paul Steiner 1A, Casy Severini 1A, Andrew Stobbe, shutout. **Brantford 0.**

M Midget AE - Oakridge 3. Aurora 2 - Casey Severini 1G, Kyle Fedec 1G, Christopher Tsianos 1A.

M Midget AE - Aurora 2 - Matthew Reeves 2G, Andrew Stobbe, shutout. **TNT 0.**

Midget AA - Newmarket 6. Aurora 4.

Midget AA - Georgina 7. Aurora 3.

Midget AE - Tigers 5. Whitby 3.



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Tigers out of playoffs

By SEAN CASEY
Auroran sports writer

The Aurora Tigers missed out on the playoffs and it's all due to age and experience, said James Richmond, Head Coach and General Manager.

"We came together as a group, but we need to work on becoming a hockey team."

Prior to the Saturday night match-up between the Tigers and the Orangeville Flyers, Richmond said the team was feeling low and sombre.

"We need to go out there and play the game. We don't want to embarrass ourselves, or the organization."

The Tigers fought through their last game of the season and came out winning two of three games last week.

They ended their season Saturday night with a 3-2 win over the Orangeville Flyers in that town. Orangeville, coached by former Tiger coach Jerome Dupont, made the playoffs.

The game was very close with Aurora narrowly beating the Flyers in shots, 34-32.

On Wednesday night, the Tigers faced off against the Huntsville Otters in another push for survival, but this time the Tigers weren't so lucky.

The loss virtually eliminated Aurora from any post-season action.

The Tigers received 44 minutes in penalties allowing the Otters to score several power play goals.

"We stopped skating and when you do that you put your stick out," said Richmond. "The players let their emotions get the best of them."

The final score of the match was 7-1.

With the stress of the playoffs lifted, the Tigers were able to focus on defeating the last place Collingwood Blackhawks in a shootout.

The Blackhawks led the match for the first two periods, but an Aurora goal in the third pushed the game into overtime.

Remaining tied after overtime, the teams were sent to a shootout.

Aurora scored on three of their attempts while Collingwood could manage only two, giving Aurora a 2-1 lead over the Blackhawks and giving them the game.

Selkies swimmers shine at meet

The Aurora Selkies Swim Team attended the Richmond Hill Winter Invitational swim meet recently and all 27 swimmers returned personal best times in at least one of their events.

The following swimmers placed: Valentin Sasarman, 1st, 50m Fly and 2nd, 100 free; Christina Smid, 2nd, 100 Fly, Myko Smid, 1st, 50 Free and Domenika Tinajero, 2nd, 50 Free.

The meet was an outstanding success for Selkies swimmers who are looking forward to their next meet in Newmarket this month.

Aurora outshot Collingwood 55-20.

"It was a tough year," said Richmond. "We didn't have much to build on."

Richmond said he wanted to thank the fans.

"We are sorry, but we will see you next year."

He said the Tigers need to work on three main areas this summer: goaltending, goal scoring and discipline.

Aurora finished the season in sixth place in the North Division with 47 points, while its arch enemy, the Newmarket Hurricanes, led the division and the league with 83 points even though they lost Sunday afternoon to the Stouffville Spirit in their final game of the year.

HUNTSVILLE 7 AURORA 1

First Period

H - Kyllian Kirkwood (Horvat, Eden) PP 5.05
H - Branden Eden (Kirkwood, Reed) PP 8.48

Second Period

H - Graham Yeo (Gibson, Reed) PP 0.03
H - Greg Whittle (Kirkwood) 5.05
A - Daniel Lisi (Gidaro, McLaughlin) PP 5.08

Third Period

H - Daniel Clairmont (Whittle, Shelley) SH 8.50
H - Daniel Clairmont (Whittle, Willmott) 15.47
H - Mitch Eden (Eden, Whittle) 16.17

AURORA 2 COLLINGWOOD 1

First Period

C - Mike Hiff (Street) PP 14.01

Second Period

No scoring

Third Period

A - Kirk Evely (Gidaro, Lisi) 19.38

Overtime

No scoring

Shootout

For Aurora: Jordan Gidaro YES; Daniel Lisi YES; Brendan Bell YES.
For Collingwood: Jacob Bauchman NO; Mike Mullay YES, Connor Watt, YES.

AURORA 3 ORANGEVILLE 2

First Period

A - Jordan Gidaro (Periera) 4.51

Second Period

O - Nicholas Vassos (unassisted) 6.17

Third Period

A - Kyle McLaughlin (Moody, Priestap) 9.34
O - Zach Pilote (Sardella, Botten) 10.34
A - Patrick Moran (McLaughlin, Priestap) 18.04



The hottest hockey team in Aurora these days is the Aurora Panther Midget girls. Ranging in age from 15 to 18, the team won the International Silver Stick title last weekend in Sarnia. Aurora won the title with a 3-0 victory over the hometown team. For the Panthers, the win marked the fifth straight tournament they have won this season. Parents of the girls, at the rear of the photograph, accompanied the team to cheer them on to victory.

Panther Midget A girls win Silver Stick tourney

While the coach thought anyone could have won the tournament, the spunky girls from Aurora took home all the hardware last weekend.

"There were quite a number of really great teams down there, any of which could have won this" said Aurora Panther coach Dan Coldwell. "I'm really proud of our girls. They patiently stuck to the game plan and they simply outworked their opponents."

When all was said and done, the Aurora Panther Midget A girls' hockey team had won the Women's International Silver Stick title, their fifth tournament victory this season.

But it wasn't a cakewalk for the winners, either.

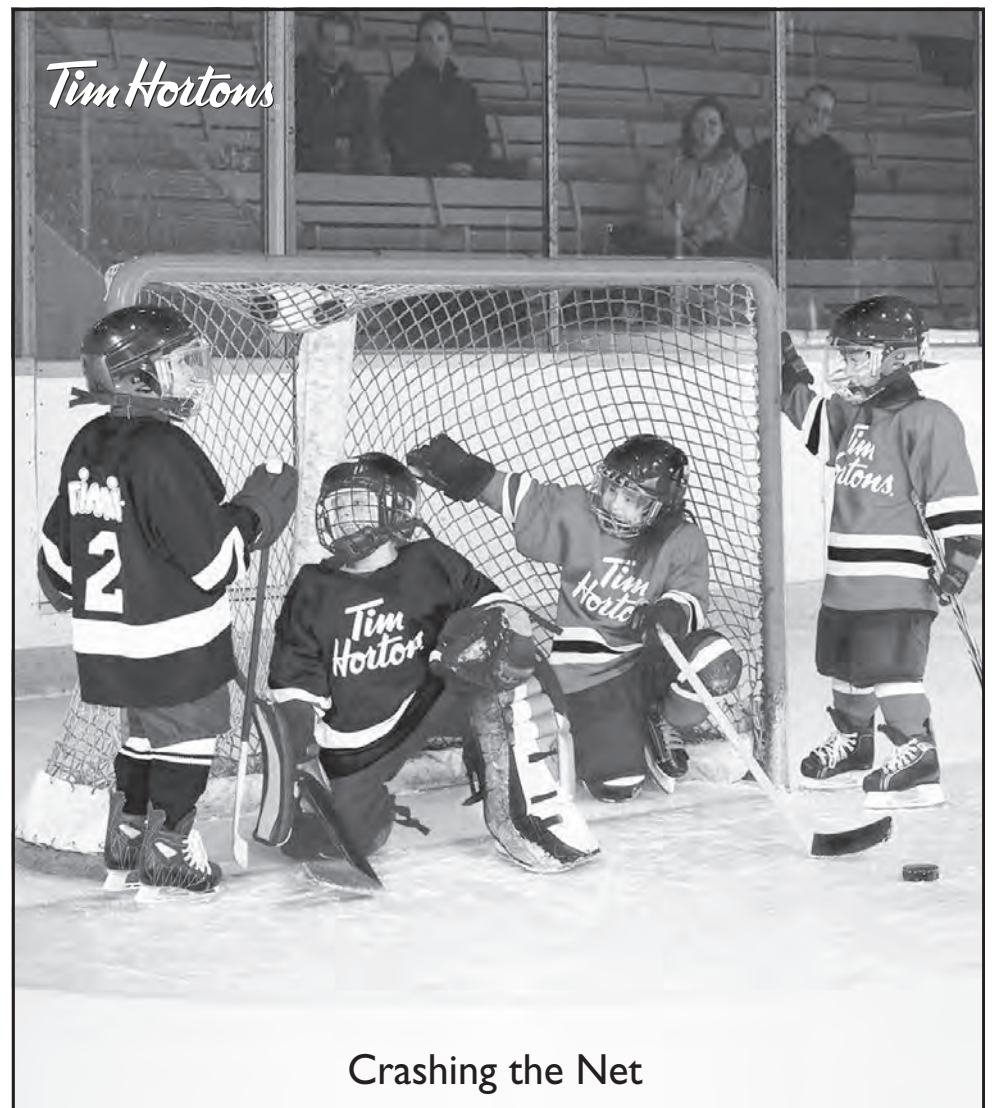
They had a problem getting to the finals when they finally defeated the Scarborough Sharks 1-0 with a goal in the fourth overtime period.

Michele Todd was the heroine when she scored with only 40 seconds remaining in the fourth overtime frame.

In the final game, Aurora blanked the Sarnia Sting 3-0 to take all the marbles.

The tournament was played in Sarnia. Goaltender Ashleigh Smith recorded the

shutout for the winners, while Aurora's Holly Thompson was named player of the game.



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The first goal is having fun.

Monday night hockey results

TEAM STANDINGS

TEAM	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pts.
Masterclean Contracting	13	3	3	81	43	29
Highland Chev-Olds-Geo-Cad	8	7	4	59	59	20
Baldwin's	9	9	1	82	85	19
Copper Creek	9	9	1	72	72	19
Rec Cycle N' Sports	8	7	3	55	52	19
FPL Aggregates	8	9	2	64	69	18
Priestly Demolition	6	11	2	67	83	14
Tom & Jerry's	6	11	2	58	63	14

WEEKLY RESULTS

Tom & Jerry's	5	Masterclean	5
Highlands Chev	2	Rec Sports	1
Priestly Demolition	7	FPL Aggregates	7
Baldwins	6	Copper Creek	1

PLAYER STANDINGS

	G	A	Pts.
John Archibald Copper Creek	16	18	34
Mark Sedore Priestly	20	11	31
Al Perkins Baldwin's	17	13	30
Tom Hussey Copper Creek	12	18	30
John Andersen Rec Sports	15	9	24
Ryan Spampinato Tom & Jerry's	13	11	24
Darren Yaremko FPL	12	12	24
Steve Kavanagh Baldwins	9	15	24
Ryan Bryce Masterclean	13	10	23
Paul Wolanski Copper Creek	11	12	23
Brad McMillan Baldwin's	11	11	22
Ed Kilroy Rec Sports	8	12	20
John Leeder Baldwin's	9	11	20
Gareth McDonald Priestly	6	14	20
Rob Carnegie Masterclean	2	18	20
Pat O'Mahoney Masterclean	12	7	19
Phil Podstatzky Priestly	12	6	18
Kevin O'Keefe Highland's	8	10	18
Ed Jackson Baldwin's	6	12	18
Craig McConnell Highland's	4	14	18
Don Nichols Copper Creek	9	8	17
Steve Robertson Masterclean	9	8	17
Glen Bince FPL	7	10	17
Alain Boudreau Masterclean	4	13	17
Jeff Sleep Rec Sports	11	5	16
Rob Blakely Masterclean	9	7	16
Doug Adair Rec Sports	7	8	15
Ken Fisher Highland's	10	4	14
Darryl Thompson Tom & Jerry's	6	8	14
Dave Caverley FPL	5	9	14
Ron VanNoort FPL	8	5	13
Gerald Briand Baldwins	6	7	13
Dave Mayberry Priestly	6	7	13
Ron Thiessen Tom & Jerry's	6	7	13
Raz Khamissa Tom & Jerry's	6	6	12
Nick Weedon Rec Sports	2	10	12
Steven MacDonald Tom & Jerry's	6	5	11
Mike O'Connor Copper Creek	6	5	11
Ken VanNoort Baldwins	4	7	11
Hugh Alcorn Masterclean	1	10	11
Murray Campbell Highland's	5	5	10
Ken Rumble Highland's	5	5	10
Vince Greco Tom & Jerry's	4	6	10
Craig Gellatly FPL	4	6	10
Chris Neale Copper Creek	4	6	10
Andrew Dalton Rec Sports	2	8	10
Scott Crabbe Highland's	6	3	9
Brandon Chappell FPL	5	4	9
Bob Nunn Baldwin's	5	4	9
Sam Speranini Masterclean	5	4	9
Brett Vickers FPL	5	4	9
Craig Donaldson FPL	4	5	9
Jody Matthews Highland's	4	5	9
David deWulf Priestly	3	6	9
Scott Thomas Tom & Jerry's	3	6	9
Mike Caicco Copper Creek	2	7	9
Ken Heinrich Rec Sports	2	7	9
Richard Fava Tom & Jerry's	1	8	9
Rob Stroud Masterclean	5	3	8
Billy Fetherston Priestly	4	4	8
Scott Harris Tom & Jerry's	4	4	8
Peter Briand Baldwin's	2	6	8
Mark Lemmon Masterclean	2	6	8
Dennis Tonello FPL	1	7	8
Les Nip Masterclean	6	1	7
Paul Gibson Tom & Jerry's	4	3	7
Gerald Briand Baldwin's	3	4	7
Jerome Flanagan Baldwin's	3	4	7
Brian McCartney FPL	3	4	7
Jason Moring Priestly	2	5	7
Dan Cote Baldwin's	1	6	7
Scott Pogue Priestly	3	3	6
Jason Hurlbut Highland's	2	4	6
Bruce Ing Highland's	2	4	6
Marty McDermott Highland's	2	4	6
Charlie Steenhorst FPL	2	4	6
Brad Wilson Rec Sports	2	4	6
Julian Dalcin Priestly	1	5	6

Committees "reconstituted" by council

From page 1
LSAC, EAC, and the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) at the previous week's General Committee meeting after Aurora CAO Neil Garbe and Town Clerk John Leach recommended their dissolution.

The mandate for LSAC had been fulfilled by the adoption of the Master Recreation Plan, said Mr. Garbe and Mr. Leach in their report to council.

Operational issues could be dealt with by staff and brought to general committee as necessary, they added.

In lieu of the committee, they proposed the director of Leisure Services hold semi-annual meetings with user groups and stakeholders to receive their input.

Their recommendation for EAC was similar in that they argued their mandate was largely finished with the adoption of the Corporate Environmental Action Plan (CEAP).

The recommended discontinuation of TSAC, however, was due to the "highly technical matters" dealt with by the committee that could be more "appropriately" handled by staff reporting directly to general committee.

Before councillors had a chance to speak to the matter, the issue was first brought up in delegations by Gordon Barnes, Aurora's current Citizen of the Year and a member of the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) who spoke about the merits and achievements of EAC.

The CEAP that EAC worked on is not in a state where it could run itself or perform easily, he said. He also said he had a problem with the assertion made in the report to council that EAC had completed its mandate.

"It was my understanding four years ago when I joined that committee that the mandate we believed we had was to respond to council when council needed advice on environmental things and to look around the community at environmental projects and bring those things to council and, in the meantime, to do things that were useful around the Town," he said. "I think working on a committee gives everyone an opportunity to learn how the environment operates and that kind of exposure will probably produce more well-informed candidates to become well-informed councillors."

Councillors appeared to agree with Mr. Barnes' assess-

ment that these advisory committees provide valuable experience to members of the community.

Councillor Sandra Humfries said their work is extremely valuable and their work allows councillors to keep their "ear to the ground" and utilize the skills of people around the committee table.

Councillor John Gallo called himself a "big proponent" of the committees.

Having been exposed to all of the endangered committees as both a councillor and citizen member, he said he was sitting at the table "to a certain extent" as a result of his exposure to committees.

"It is a venue for residents... where they can communicate to council," he said. "I know I did that when an issue came up that was of particular interest in my neighbourhood. I think if we remove those committees, what is the next step for a resident to be able to communicate their views to council? I suspect the next step [is] to choose not to go to staff and they will bring their concerns straight to council and we will probably have a line-up of individuals that will be delegating."

"If we're moving down that path it is a very slippery slope."

Councillor Chris Ballard too said he "cut his teeth" on committees and he said he was particularly "nervous" about the elimination of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee.

TSAC was the first committee he attended as a citizen and he was "absolutely appalled" by the anger and passion people had for traffic calming in their neighbourhood.

"I sit here thinking to myself, good grief, if we get rid of that committee will that land here?" he said. "Maybe a traffic committee is a calming device between that and here."

The response for TSAC was lukewarm around the table when compared to LSAC and EAC, even from Councillor Gallo who was one of the councillors sitting on the committee. It didn't fare as lucky as the other two committees when it came up for reconstitution.

"If I was to choose one of the committees that perhaps wasn't as valuable as the others it would have to probably be Traffic Safety," he said. "I agree with the report that there are a lot of technical aspects to it that many, many times when the resident

came forward we didn't have the knowledge to make any decisions. We would always refer back to staff and a report would come back and ultimately we would agree with the report. It would go off to council and off it went."

For Councillor Michael Thompson, who chaired the general committee meeting, it was important to insure there is a "conduit" between the public and council and these advisory committees fulfill that purpose.

"I took the opportunity to contact Sport Aurora [about LSAC] just to get their quick thoughts on it and while they said there were some issues with the structure and the way LSAC carried out its business they want to really have a place to share that input with us," he said.

"Most of us seem to be on the same page where, yes, it is not necessarily black or white. I think maybe we can look at the terms of reference with these different committees and identify ways to make them productive to both staff and councillors around the table."

Councillors voted unanimously to reconstitute all the

committees except for TSAC and to review their terms of reference for composition and operational issues.

While council needs to give its final approval this week, a report on the composition and operation is expected for the second general committee in March.

The approval also sees the reconstitution of the Heritage and the Economic Development Advisory committees, as well as the Recreational Trails Subcommittee, and the appointments of Councillors Ballard, Evelyn Buck, and Gallo to the Joint Council Committee for the Central York Fire Services.

"There is no finer way to get people engaged in the community than through short-term projects, ad-hoc projects, and through advisory committees," said Councillor Ballard. "I am loath to see them tossed out because their mandate has finished or not finished. As Mayor Dawe said, it is time to go back and look at what the mandate is so that people who sit on committees are clear, council is clear about who is to do what and when."

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Johnson watching Town with interest

With the court documents related to lawsuit against three named local bloggers released to the public last month, one of the named bloggers, Richard Johnson, is watching further developments at Town Hall with great interest.

The delay in the hearing scheduled for January followed the decision made by the new Town Council in the previous month to reconsider the September motion which led to the lawsuit being carried out.

Looking back at what transpired and what still lays ahead, Mr. Johnson said lessons can be learned from the experience.

"I can tell you one thing for sure: if Phyllis Morris ever starts a blog as she has suggested she may, I would hold up my experience as a prime example of what can happen in the worst case scenario to anyone that dares show a contrarian perspective," he said.

"While I played a significant role in getting Ms. Morris elected in 2006, my biggest mistake appears to have been to point out her ultimate hypocrisy from my perspective," he continued, pointing out that Ms. Morris called for increased public participation in her inaugural address as mayor, even encouraging diverse viewpoints.

"I felt compelled to be true to myself and the people of Aurora in holding our council accountable and for that I, along with others like me, are now paying a big price for sharing our political perspectives. I mistakenly thought that democracy protected freedom of speech and freedom of thought more than it apparently does. Who

could have known how petty and malicious our Town could be?"

Mr. Johnson maintains he has done nothing wrong, and said the cross-examination of Town Solicitor Christopher Cooper of his affidavit by the defence gels with that.

"[Cooper] appears to have admitted... that I have done nothing illegal and my comments and opinions have been repeatedly vindicated and yet I am still being sued for \$6 million in what appears to constitute a serious abuse of power through a classic SLAPP [Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation] lawsuit funded in large part by the Town."

From his perspective, the case raises a number of serious ethical, political and legal questions and he said he hopes the Town and Ms. Morris will be held accountable for it. Nevertheless, he said he is going to be following

future developments at Town Hall with great interest.

"How the previous council and the Town's solicitor can possibly justify their actions against the residents of Aurora is beyond me to understand," he said. "I find this all so hard to comprehend given that I honestly thought that democracy demanded the protection of free speech and freedom of thought... I've defamed no one and truth and my fundamental rights to share my opinion are my best defence. What we are going through as a direct result of Phyllis' actions is outrageous."

"While I feel that I have good reason to doubt Phyllis Morris will ever accept any responsibility for the political repercussions of any number of her own actions, I remain hopeful that we are in the process of turning over a new leaf in our municipal affairs and ultimately justice will prevail."

Council to hire lawyer

From page 1

Tuesday night, councillors voted 8-1 in favour of the motion calling for the Town's Associate Solicitor to obtain the services of George Rust-D'Eye of the Toronto-based law firm WeirFoulds LLP to, "on behalf of the Town... investigate and provide legal opinion regarding the Town's liability for legal expenses in the defamation action of Phyllis Morris against Johnson et al."

In a recorded vote, which came after an hour and a half in closed session to discuss this and two additional unrelated items on the agenda, Councillor Wendy Gaertner was the lone dissenter.

Aurora has previously retained the services of Mr. Rust-D'Eye on a number of issues.

He is expected to look into the various options the Town has in handling legal expenses incurred by the Town in the matter after the previous Town Council approved a motion that eventually led to the three named in the suit being served over the Thanksgiving weekend.

"I can tell you that there is not a lot of appetite, and I'm sure you sense that from council as a whole - not everyone on council, but council as whole - to pay anything on this," Mayor Geoffrey Dawe told The Auroran last week. "That's what I said during the election. I still find the whole thing reprehensible."

By the December 21 vote, the Town had been invoiced approximately \$42,000 in the lawsuit but no money had been spent, Mayor Dawe said at the time. Since then, however, Mayor Dawe estimates

costs billed to the Town now stand "north of \$65,000" in the \$68,000 to \$70,000 range.

When asked why Council had decided to tackle to address this financial issue, since they had been weighing their options since late December, Mayor Dawe said there were a number of procedures and processes to go through before getting to this point.

"It wasn't a lack of desire to get things done on a timely basis," he said. "There were certain processes that we had to go through and we wanted to make sure that we're doing what we needed to do."

Following the formal installation of the new Mayor and Council on December 7, Councillors voted to reverse the resolution, which led to the lawsuit, on December 21.

Although Councillors Gaertner and Chris Ballard were absent from the December 21 meeting, Councillor John Gallo voted against halting the Town's involvement in the matter. He voted in favour of Tuesday's motion.

At the time, however, Mayor Dawe and councillors were still weighing

their options on how to tackle the financial aspect of the suit.

This is the latest development in the eventful journey of the Morris suit.

On January 31, Jordan Goldblatt, lawyer for Mr. Johnson, Ms. Bishenden, and Mr. Hogg amended their notice of motion which would see them move to dismiss the case March 11.

That followed a motion filed the previous week calling for Ms. Morris to post security costs with the court.

If Mr. Goldblatt's motion is successful, it would see her pay money into the court that would ultimately go back to those named.

"We will be moving to dismiss Ms. Morris' claim, and security for costs in the alternative," said Mr. Goldblatt. "If my clients are successful, they are ensured that any legal costs awarded in their favour are paid from money held in court. The grounds for the motion are that the litigation is trivial and frivolous."

A previously scheduled hearing for the so-called Norwich order, delayed from January 13, is now scheduled to take place on March 15.

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Senior cares about soldiers

By BRIAN WARBURTON

Chess player and professional photographer, Bernie Prost is a former rock drummer, a pianist, guitarist and a vocalist.

Now he is a senior with the Aurora Seniors Association (ASA) and an outstanding person, caring, patient and understanding with a deep compassion for combat soldiers everywhere.

His compassion is lavished on Canadian soldiers returning from battle and from the indescribable strife, associated with living and working constantly in battle zones.

He also composes lyrics and scores in collaboration or alone, the results of which may require fine-tuning, but that is how the good stuff originates.

The ugly, unexpected abruptness and fury of explosives of all kinds leave combatants dead or wounded.

These words apply to combatants on both sides

of war, to men and women fighting with often-unseen men and women who in time of peace might very well be friends, associates or neighbours, but in time of war, must, or have been induced, to fight and kill for a quarrel not of their making.

The reality of Bernie Prost and friend Jim Davidson and others with feelings reaching to the depths of compassion has resulted in Bernie and Jim composing musical tributes to returning Canadian troops, and this initiative is ongoing with material constantly composed and then improved.

Music is always a work in progress until recorded and released, and with songs recorded and others in progress, the release of a CD is anticipated in the near future.

Www.forthewarrior.com offers a download of the recordings and proceeds go to organizations

supporting the injured.

The Operations and Activities committee met in February and among other matters of business, Gloria Smith made a request for the duplicate bridge players, for an electronic scoring system. The proposal was accepted by the O&A committee and must be presented to the Board for final approval.

Card players constitute a sound foundation of card activities for the Seniors' Centre.

The Centre hosts duplicate bridge, euchre, bid euchre, hand and foot canasta and poker, although gambling is not allowed.

The compulsion to play cards runs deep, and varies among those who play in a lighthearted and social frame of mind, all the way to those who take the matter of cards quite seriously.

Card players ask for little but room to play, equipped with tables and

chairs, and the addition of an electronic scoring system will assist them.

They have managed without electronic help, but perhaps now is an appropriate time to make a change.

Joe Crayden remains disappointed at the lack of snow and ice removal on the boardwalk on St John's Sideroad near Yonge Street.

Joe provided names, and says many more seniors support snow removal, and feel disappointed by lack of Town service.

Names submitted so far include, Joe Crayden, Peter Ross, Heather Lister, Margaret Philbin, Hildegard Knowles, Fran Milton, Hugh Allen, L. Gruguson, Barb Hibbet, Ralph Jamieson, Vivian Jamieson, J.M. Scoills, Irene Libbey and Harry Libbey.

These names represent the few who were asked for their opinion, and many more will provide similar replies.

Joe assures me that many more residents of Hadley Grange feel, not only dumped on by snow and ice, but also equally dumped on by the Town as not worthy of snow and ice removal on the boardwalk.

Hadley Grange is on the edge of Town, and seniors have no wish to feel neglected, and nor should they be neglected.

Fortunately, warmer weather may do what the Town neglects.

Joe has a sense of humour, and sent a picture of a senior pushing a walker with a homemade snowplow attachment.

Humorous or not, service by the Town to all residents is not a laughing matter and snow removal on the boardwalk, primarily for seniors, would not strain the budget or competence of Aurora's snow removal program.

Among the well-staffed, progressive and knowledgeable Seniors' Centre groups, are the members of the computer club, which boasts members who gained the bulk of their computer knowl-

edge in the Centre.

In addition, a growing core group of other members joined the ASA well versed in computer technology, and stand ready, willing and able to share their knowledge with anybody who wishes to enter the technology age or to improve present skills.

Check the computer page in the seniors' newsletter for details of lessons, meetings, seminars and even one on one training on occasion.

Experience with

trainees is that the first lesson is the toughest, but after that first lesson, trainees know that they possess the capability to learn and need only apply diligence to make solid progress.

The quickest entry to the computer club environment is to attend the Tuesday morning computer club meetings at 10 a.m. and talk to people.

If you require a little verbal encouragement or direction, this is where you will find it.

More than 30 residents received Queen's medal

Governor General David Johnston and Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced earlier this month that the Queen had approved the creation of a new medal to honour Canadians for their community involvement commemorating her Diamond Jubilee next year.

Continuing the tradition established in the Canadian Honours System, the new Diamond Jubilee Medal (pictured below) follows in the legacy of the 1977 Silver Jubilee Medal and the 2002 Golden Jubilee Medal, the latter of which honoured the contributions of 33 Aurora residents.

Among the Aurora recipients of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 included then-sitting Mayor Tim Jones, former mayor the late Dick Illingworth, environmental activist Ben Kestey, volunteer and former councillor Steve Hinder, Staff Sergeant David Franklin, businessman Frank

Stronach, local historian Jacqueline Stuart, Major Brian D. McCue, Marlene Lambrose, Bradford Chin, Rosalyn Gonsalves, Captain Robert Hay, and Barbara Horsman.

The new medal was unveiled at Rideau Hall one afternoon in advance of the 59th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne which fell on February 6.

"This medal is not only a reminder of our evolution, but is also an affirmation of Her Majesty's six-decade old oath of service and commitment," said the Governor General. "At the same time that this medal honours The Queen, it also affords an opportunity for the Crown to recognize deserving Canadians who have contributed so much to this nation, and who have helped to define what it means to be Canadian.

"No matter what their contributions, from what part of the country, or what field of endeavour

and regardless of age, all can agree that the past 60 years have seen some remarkable Canadians. We will honour those who represent the full breadth of our society, who take to heart the idea of service to the Country."

The Diamond Jubilee Medal will help increase the profile of volunteerism at a local and national level, added the Prime Minister, and will encourage more Canadians to volunteer and "create a more generous and compassionate country."

"It is a medal to be awarded on behalf of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of Canada to recognize significant public service and it will be awarded next year as part of the celebrations planned for [the Diamond Jubilee].

"Through more than 20 royal tours and countless official functions as our Head of State, she has earned the admiration of all who have witnessed her deep commitment to public service.

"It is with that in mind that we have chosen to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee by recognizing others who also serve in their many capacities."

The formal call to nominate those who Mr. Harper described as "those unsung heroes from all walks of life" will be launched in the spring and recipients will reflect the "diverse range of volunteer service and Canadian success stories from coast to coast."



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Aurora couple responsible for piano series at cultural centre

Thanks to the help of Aurora musicians Bonnie and Norbert Kraft, the Aurora Cultural Centre is putting the finishing touches on its new Great Artists Piano Series, which kicks off later this month with a concert by internationally renowned pianist Anton Kuerti.

In his first visit to the Cultural Centre, Mr. Kuerti's February 25 concert focuses on the work of Beethoven, including the Appassionata Sonata and a performance and discussion of the Diabelli Variations.

Laura Schembri, Executive Director of the Cultural Centre, said the 8 p.m. concert will be an intimate performance, akin to earlier performances in Mr. Kuerti's career.

"I'm not sure he has played before such a small crowd in decades and to be that up close and personal with him is going to be really exciting in a small venue like this," she said. "It is going to be really personal and beautiful."

This concert series is made possible from the contributions of local couple Bonnie and Norbert Kraft, Ms. Schembri said.

Performers and album producers, the Krafts' professional contacts led to recruiting Mr. Kuerti for the concert series.

"It is very generous and wonderful," said Ms. Schembri.

But for the Krafts, who produced two albums up for Grammy awards last weekend, including one for the Elora Festival Singers, planning this series and bringing the talent to Aurora has been a labour of love.

"I can't tell you how many tickets we've bought

for evenings downtown... and thought, wouldn't it be great if we had a concert series right here?" said Bonnie Kraft.

"Our passion is, of course, classical music and some of our fondest memories we have is playing smaller communities," she said. "It is just fantastic for the artist. It is great for the local people to have access to really good classical music and when the opportunity presented itself, as soon as I saw the really wonderful hall at the Cultural Centre I wondered if this dream could become a reality."

In planning this event, the Krafts have drawn upon artists they have become friends with throughout their professional careers, including Mr. Kuerti who was a professor when Bonnie attended university in the 1970s.

"Although I did take some classes with him, he was a huge influence not just on me but all the up and coming pianists and musicians, and he has continued to be a huge influence," said Ms. Kraft.

Making his debut with the Boston Pops at age 11, Mr. Kuerti has played with the New York Philharmonic, toured more than 40 countries, and appeared in more than 150 Canadian communities from coast to coast, often playing smaller venues like what the Aurora Cultural Centre has to offer. Despite - or perhaps due - to its size, the musicians the Krafts have contacted jumped at the chance to appear in Town.

"I think it can get quite impersonal when you're playing for a large audience," said Ms. Kraft. "All you see out there is black

nothing and it becomes very anonymous. It is not personal and although you try and connect, that type of audience is almost not made up of individuals anymore.

"When you play for a small audience, like 150 people at the Cultural Centre, you really connect with people. You communicate directly and you feel their communication back. You just sort of feel how they respond to you and it feeds. I think you feed each other and that is a very special, gratifying experience for the performer.

"You see the actual look on people's faces and, of course, the audience gets to see and almost touch the artist which is incredible. Sometimes when you are in a big hall, I hate to say it, but you might as well be watching TV."

Music producers for the mid-priced classical label Naxos, the Krafts do most of the company's North American productions including choirs, chamber music, opera, orchestra, and string quartets.

"It is fantastic, wonderful work and we've been very privileged to be able to work with some wonderful musicians that come from all over the world, and especially Canadian musicians that we've been instrumental in getting on that label as well."

Although immersed in culture, the Krafts, Aurora residents since 1994, are not "big city people" and love the community and "smaller town feel" of the Town.

"We believe very much in keeping art and culture flourishing in our communities," she said. "It's not just the big cities that need culture. We believe so much in the beauty of classical music and the importance of making it accessible to people."

Mr. Kuerti will be followed on March 25 by Jane Coop, Jamie Parker on April 29, and Elizabeth Schumann on May 27.

Based on the positive feedback received so far, Ms. Kraft envisions having a "great artists" series annually at the Cultural Centre, not necessarily based on the piano, but a variety of musical offerings.

"Seeing how the response has been so far I have every belief that it will continue," she said.

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By Christopher Watts

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The yellow brick road isn't providing the path for our journey to find our hearts, but to find the tools needed to build, upgrade, tinker and grow one of our own making.

Go make it beat.

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Family Day

FREE Skate

All are welcome!

FRANK KLEES, MPP

Invites you to join him for an afternoon of free skating and hot chocolate

When:
Family Day, Monday, February 21st, 2-4pm

Where:
Stronach Aurora Recreational Complex
1400 Wellington Street East, Aurora (west of Leslie)

Tel: 905-750-0019 • Email: fklees@frank-klees.on.ca • Web: www.frank-klees.on.ca