

Funeral home eyes south end location

If everything goes according to plan, the Aurora Chamber of Commerce will have a new dignified neighbour before the end of the year.

The long time residence of the Chapman family on land at the northeast corner of Yonge Street and Industrial Parkway South, has been identified as the new home for Thompson Funeral Home.

For nearly 80 years, the Thompson family operated funeral and other services from its Victoria Street location, just south of Wellington. At one time, ambulances were dispatched from there.

The proposed move is exciting, current Thompson Managing Director Brent Forrester said.

He told the Auroran last week a public planning meeting on the site is slated for the end of April, and if everything works out, construction could start by the end of the summer "and we hope to be in the building by Christmas".

The building, which will use about 60 per cent of a two-acre site, would share the property with a proposed medical centre.

It will be more than twice the size of the existing funeral home, with 12,000 square feet of space on two levels.

"It will be a one-storey building," he said, "but we'll have a reception room on a lower level that may also

be made available to service clubs and the public."

While the funeral home will be upscale in every facet, it will not house a crematorium.

"Everyone will want to know that," he said, "but under the law, funeral homes are not allowed to have crematoriums."

The company's six full-time staff will operate both locations for a period of time, until everyone gets used to the new site.

Plans for the existing site are unknown.

Dekkema Developments, operated by Lambertus Dekkema, has owned the Chapman site since 1999.

An earlier proposal, to construct a car dealership on the property, failed to become a reality.

"This is a good fit," Dekkema said.

Chamber of Commerce General Manager Rosalyn Gonsalves met with officials last week and has no objection to the project.

Meanwhile, Forrester has assured the town Thompson will protect a historic abutment on the property, which at one time held up a bridge that carried a radial railway over Canadian National Railway tracks.

"We have no intention of removing it," he said. "As a matter of fact, we'll even put a plaque on it."

The public meeting to decide the future of the project is slated for Wednesday, April 28.

Current Thompson Funeral Home management insists the name will never be changed.



It has been a while since the Pine Tree Potters Guild abandoned their home in Church Street School and set up operations in the new Aurora Library, but Sunday, they finally held their official opening and open house. Showing her ability at the wheel is member Crystal Von Richter.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Record numbers expected for Run

Organizers of the third annual Bob Hartwell Runner's Challenge are anticipating a registration of more than 800 runners this year.

Aurora's Dave Pearson said registrations for the April 18 half marathon are well ahead of where the group was at this time last year when 660 entrants showed up.

"Nearly 100 have registered so far," he said. "Last year at this time, we had about 10."

(A half marathon run...21.1 kilometres or 13.1 miles...is called that because the route is half a regular marathon run, i.e., the famous Boston Marathon is 26 miles in length).

Aurora's route, starting at the Town Park, and heading to the outskirts of town, has received provincial Class A certification.

"It has grown to be one of the best marathons in the province," Pearson said.

In addition to the main part of the event, the Bob Hartwell run also offers a two-person half marathon relay, a five-kilometre race and a children's "Merry Mini-Mile" race.

Bob Hartwell, a former Aurora Councillor, was an avid runner who died while running in a Toronto event in October, 2001.

It had always been his dream to

Please see page 11

Bingo starts Wednesday

Aurora's Bingo World begins operation Wednesday, March 17, in its new location on Industrial Parkway South.

Three sessions, 12,30 p.m., 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. will be held.

Watch next week's Auroran for full details of the new facility.



Popular Aurora resident, Bill Stephens died in hospital last week. See the story page 3.

Marshland issue won't go away

What should have been a relatively brief discussion as to whether council wanted improved street lighting, a boardwalk, landscaping and planting areas for the reconstruction of the St. John's Sideroad through the McKenzie Marsh developed into a full-fledged debate last week at an Aurora general committee meeting.

The discussion is expected to continue this week as council attempts to put the issue to rest.

The regional road will be widened to four lanes between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue through the marsh area at an estimated cost of \$9 million.

Construction is expected to start in June with completion in the fall of 2005 in spite of several objections over environmental concerns.

As part of the project, the town is responsible for the construction of a bicycle path, sidewalks, street lighting and a boardwalk on the north side of the roadway.

Town staff recommended funds be allocated from the appropriate development charge reserve to provide \$49,000 for the redesign and construction of upgraded street lighting and \$95,000 for the construction of the boardwalk, landscaping and planting.

After almost an hour of debate

the staff recommendation was endorsed subject to an agreement with the region that parking will be allowed on the road during non-peak hours and on weekends so citizens of Aurora can enjoy outdoor skating on the pond in winter and view the area in other seasons.

The debate got underway with a presentation by Ben Kestey representing PARKS (People Against Restructuring Known Sanctuaries) repeating his request for a bridge across the marsh area from the high point by Old Yonge Street to the railway tracks.

Kestey, who has been fighting

to save the marsh for several years, suggested a bridge of two lanes and a lower road of two lanes. He stressed that no provision had been made for parking or access for the kids to skate.

Director of Public Works Wayne Jackson told committee members that parking had been discussed but was not recommended.

Jackson said three culverts had been included in the plans, one dry, one wet and one that varies with the season and large enough to see daylight at the end.

Concern was also expressed

Please see page 14

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COMING EVENTS IN AURORA

CONTINUING

Helping Hands: Gently used clothing for women and children, at Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, every Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.30 - 11.30 a.m. For more information, call 905-727-6101.

Gamblers Anonymous, every Tuesday night, Trinity Anglican Church, Victoria Street, 7.30 p.m.

Queen's York Rangers Army Cadet Corps camping, canoeing, first aid, orienteering in two to six week camps for males & females 12 to 18. Call 905-726-8600.

Co-Dependents Anonymous, every Tuesday, Aurora United Church, 15186 Yonge Street, Aurora. 7.30 p.m.

On three consecutive Fridays in March - 12, 19, 26 - the 55-Alive Driving Refresher Course for Seniors will be held at the Aurora Public Library from 9.30 a.m. to noon. Call Kim Hinder 905-727-2816 for further information.

Girl Guide Cookies - did they miss you at your door? Call 905-841-1170 to order the chocolate and vanilla cookies. (Until March 30).

The Canadian Cancer Society, Holland River Unit, is looking for Aurora residents to be part of their residential campaign in April. For information, call 905-830-0447 or e-mail mtaylor@ccsont.org.

MARCH 13-14

All Season Tennis Centre First Polar Bear Tennis outdoor fundraising event for Bounce the Ball, a program to introduce tennis to local primary schools. McMahan Park tennis courts. To register call 905-841-8914 or visit www.astc.ca.

MARCH 15

Aurora Seniors travel to St. Agatha, near Waterloo, for an afternoon of Irish fun. Cost is \$51 for members, \$56 for non-members. Call the centre at 905-727-2816 to register.

MARCH 17

Free seminar, presented jointly by the Aurora Library and Aurora Cable Internet, studies who has access to your computer, your files and your personal information. 7 p.m. To reserve, call the library at 905-727-9493 or register on line at www.aci.on.ca. SOLD OUT. See April 6.

St. Patrick's Day Irish stew dinner, Aurora Legion from 5 to 7 p.m.

The Aurora Historical Society meets at Hillary House at 8 p.m. Guest speaker is Dorothy Duncan who will discuss her recent book "Nothing More Comforting: Canada's Heritage Food" and will bring samples. Call the society 905-727-8991.

MARCH 19

Blood donor clinic. Aurora United Church. 4.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

MARCH 20

The Registered Music Teachers of North York/York Region are presenting their annual "Teachers In Recital" at Trinity Anglican Church in Aurora at 7.30 p.m. Tickets \$10, \$7.50, and a \$25 ticket covers two adults and three children. Call (905) 727-5727.

MARCH 24

Aurora Chamber of Commerce Networking Dart Tournament at Charley FitzWhiskey's from 5.30 to 7.30 p.m. Register by calling the Chamber office at 905-727-7262.

Aurora Public Library, with Canada Customs, hosts a no-cost income tax clinic from 5 to 9 p.m. Drop in clinic is income based (individual \$20,000 - family \$25,000).

MARCH 25

Blood donor clinic. Aurora Legion. 2.30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce will be accepting reservations in person only from 10 a.m. on a first come, first served basis for the Chamber Golf Tournament to be held at Carrying Place Golf and Country Club June 16. Call the Chamber at 905-727-7262.

MARCH 27

Aurora Public Library, with Canada Customs, hosts a no-

cost income tax clinic from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Drop in clinic is income based (individual \$20,000 - family \$25,000).

Registration for softball and baseball with the Aurora Minor Ball Association at the Aurora Community Centre from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Programs are available for ages 5 to 21. Visit www.auroraminorball.ca or call 905-727-8461.

York Symphony Orchestra presents "Triumphant Spirit" at Trinity Church Aurora at 8 p.m. Call 416-410-0860 for ticket information.

"Loveboat" Theme Night at Aurora Legion. 7 p.m. Roast beef dinner & dj. \$12 per person.

MARCH 28

Aurora Optimist Recreational Hockey registration - boys and girls born 1998, 1999 - 8 - 11a.m. Aurora Leisure Complex lobby. For more information call Kim Downs 905-726-2906.

Progressive Euchre at the Aurora Legion. Register at 12.30 p.m. Play begins at 1 p.m.

MARCH 29

Aurora Rotary Club will host clubs in the 7070 district at a 'joint club' dinner meeting at DiNardo's Mansion, Industrial Pkwy S, Aurora, at 6 p.m. Open to the public.



Marilyn Redvers



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Politicians' thorn, Bill Stephens, 81, dies

Bill Stephens was in a Richmond Hill hospital last week, when he made a request that did not surprise his family.

"Move me to Southlake in Newmarket," he said. "I want to be closer to Aurora."

Bill Stephens, 81, died Wednesday in that Newmarket hospital, after a colourful lifetime in Aurora where he was loved by many, and disliked by several.

Usually, it was the politicians, didn't matter what level, didn't matter what government, who bore the brunt of the Stephens' tongue.

It made no difference to Bill. If he had a bone to pick with a politician, he'd pick it. And, he'd usually win.

The active Auroran - he was with Aurora Hydro for about 15 years (from 1972 to 1987), serving as a meter reader - tried his hand in local politics, but was never elected to office.

Services were held Saturday from St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, and many of the politicians he'd quizzed were there.

A reception followed at the Aurora Legion, a day after several Legion

members paraded to Thompson's Funeral Home to offer their respects.

"He had a keen interest in Aurora," Mayor Tim Jones said, "as evidenced by his many appearances at council meetings."

The absence of Bill Stephens from council chambers is the removal of another character link in the chain of Aurora.

"Slowly, we're losing the people who fought so hard to form this wonderful community," Jones said.

Former Board of Education trustee Ron Wallace said Stephens would phone him almost daily to discuss one issue or another.

"He'd call, wouldn't identify himself, just start right in on you," Wallace said. "And it was difficult

to argue his position." Stephens, who would have turned 82 in June, is survived by his wife, Carol, son Tom and daughters Lisa and Linda.

There are five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

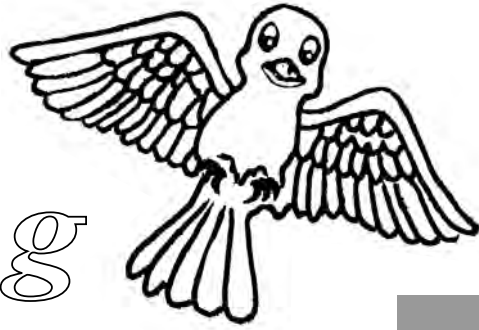
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- 5 and under
- 6 and 7 years old
- 8 to 10 years old
- 11 and 12 years old

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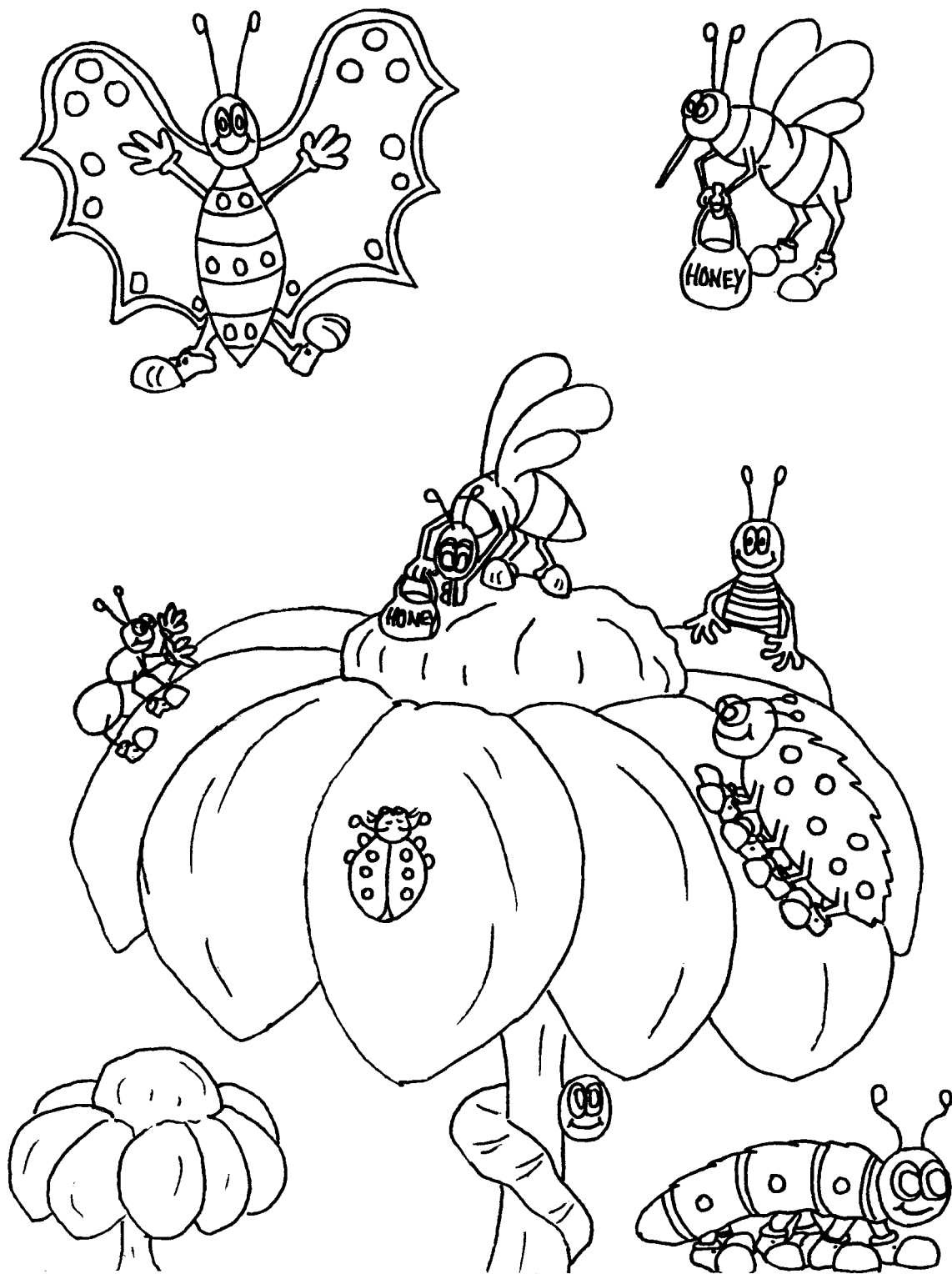
**Friday,
March 26,
2004**

Deadline for entries Thursday, March 25th.

Drop-off points include:

- OMAR'S
- CREATIVE COLOURS
- SPARKLE PHARMACY
- FABULOUS FLICKS

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Age: _____





Poor Richard

Hidden population causing headaches

*There's a hidden population,
Living throughout the town;
Nobody knows the numbers,
Causing councillors to frown!*

-Poor Richard's Scrapbook

Since the early 1960s, Aurora, like many other municipalities, had a hidden population, a group of people who didn't pay taxes, used the town's schools and facilities, but didn't officially exist.

They were illegal basement or attic apartment dwellers living in an area zoned for single family residents.

To their landlords, they were a blessing, as they often meant the financial difference between paying the mortgage and keeping or losing the house, but to their neighbours and the municipality they created problems.

By the late 1960s nobody knew how many families made up the hidden population.

The municipality could quite legally insist that an area zoned single family should remain single family, provided it could prove an illegal apartment existed.

If one was found, there was the relocation of the displaced family as rental accommodation was in short supply.

In addition, without the rent coming in, the landlord might not be able to make his payments, resulting in the loss of the home and another family on the street.

So councillors of the day closed their eyes and took no action unless complaints were received and they were forced to act.

By 1969, council had received a number of complaints from residents about the number of cars parked in the driveways or on the street for what was supposed to be a single family residence. Complaints usually included the potential decrease in the value of property.

Efforts were made to track down the illegal apartments by seeking the cooperation of the school boards and the hydro commission without success on the basis of the invasion of privacy.

Consideration was given to amending the single family zoning bylaw to include the definition of a family to include a maximum of five persons not related by blood or marriage.

This was not supported by council, on the basis that some homeowners might lose their homes without the revenue from tenants.

The issue was taken out of the municipality's hands in April, 1992, when the Bob Rae NDP government mandated basement apartments as a right and municipalities were not required to amend the zoning bylaw, but to encourage accessory units.

Council held a public meeting on October 12, 1992, which provided citizens the opportunity to express their concerns.

They included parking problems, deterioration of the property, overcrowding in the schools, potential fire-traps and lowered property values for adjacent properties.

There was also considerable criticism for the provincial government for interfering with the rights of single family homeowners in an area zoned for single families.

While the hidden population was no longer hidden all the problems remained with the municipality having little or no power to correct them.

Then, in 1995, the Progressive Conservative government rescinded the legislation and returned the control of the accessory units to the municipality.

At a general committee meeting last September, councillors directed staff to investigate the action taken recently by Newmarket to register basement apartments providing they meet all safety requirements.

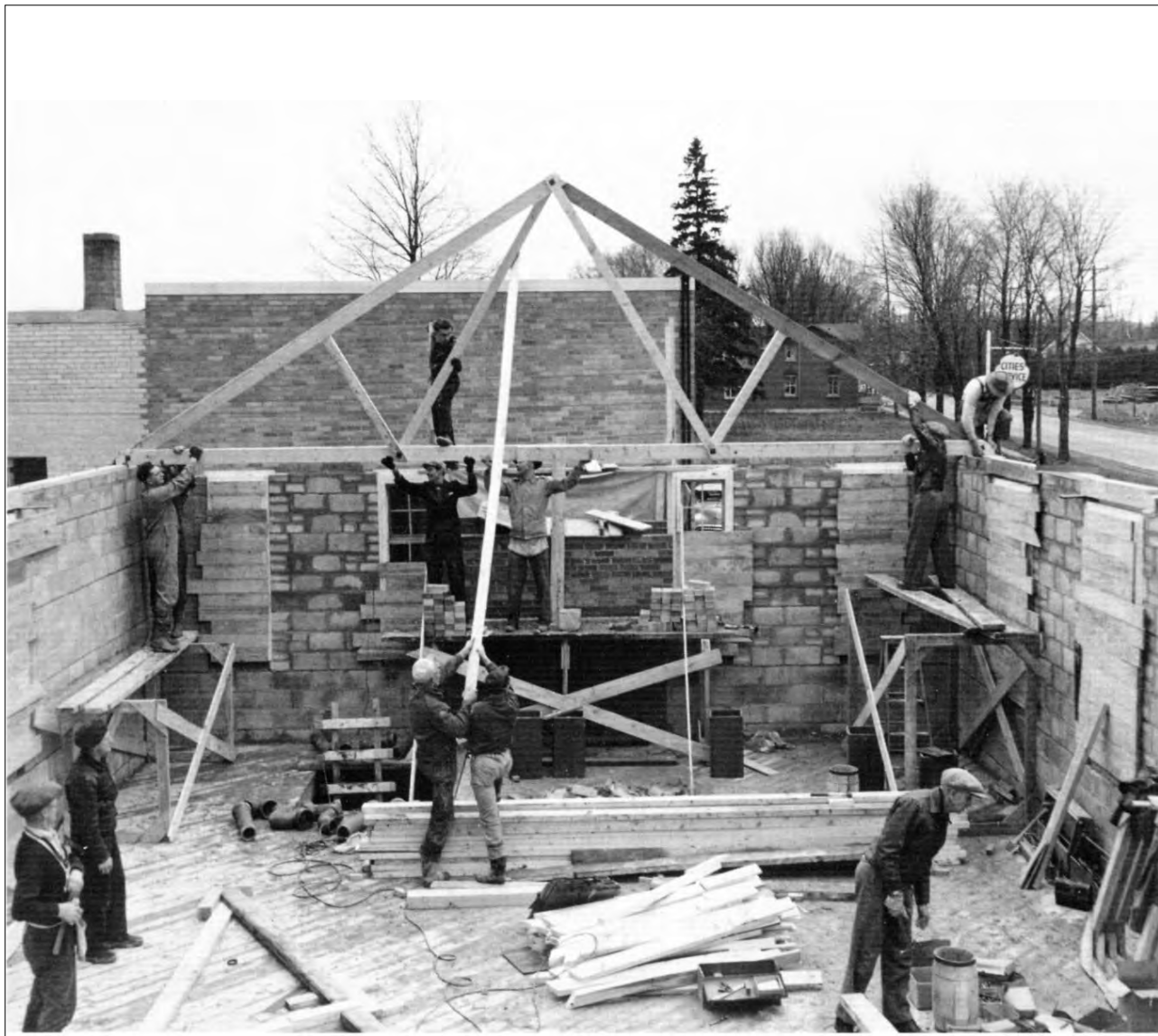
The big problem is that it was a voluntary program with no way of enforcement.

Staff reported recently and provided three options: retain the status quo and act only on complaints, appoint a task force to study the issues or make the units legal.

At general committee it was agreed to stick with the status quo, but when the report came to council there was further discussion and the appointment of a task force was approved.

It may not solve the problem, but at least council members and the public will know the issues.

It proves one again that every time the province tries to solve a problem, they create another one.



Where was it?

Pictured above is the construction of the Aurora Legion, shortly after the Second World War. This branch was active until 1974, when the existing branch on Industrial Parkway North was opened. However, when the new building opened, this one was not destroyed. It was covered, then demolished some years later. What's on the site now and where was it?

Letter to the Editor

Rethink your decision to spray lawn, she asks

To the Editor,

It's that time of year again, when the lawn care companies start calling to sign you and your neighbours up for the greenest grass in the neighbourhood.

As a mother and citizen of Aurora, I would like to ask you to once again really give some thought to whether or not you decide to have your lawns sprayed with chemicals and pesticides in the next few months.

One of the local lawn care companies promises in their brochure to "save you time, and inconvenience of do-it-yourself lawn care", thus allowing you "more time to do the things you want all summer long, and have a greener, weed free lawn."

But at what cost to our future generations?

Pound for pound, children are more heavily exposed to toxins in the environment than adults.

Proximity wise, they are lower to the ground and are more likely to put toys and hands in their mouths.

Their delicate skin more readily absorbs potential poisons as well.

Although there is currently no data on the levels of pesticide exposure in children, we cannot ignore the growing numbers of chil-

dren suffering from asthma, childhood cancers like leukemia, and learning and behavioural disabilities.

Why then do we continue to think nothing of spraying our lawns and parks with chemicals we know so little about?

As I watch the kids in my neighbourhood have fun and run around barefoot all summer long, I can't help but wonder how far a neighbour's spray travels into our yards and homes with the aid of a cool summer breeze or a rainstorm from the night before.

Our cats and dogs are also regularly exposed on their daily walks and track traces of residue right into our homes.

The number of "unknowns" linked to pesticide use today are being compared with the "unknowns" of lead contamination 25 years ago.

None of us would dare use lead paint in our homes today.

Refusal to use lawn pesticides is an easy way for all of us to contribute to a cleaner, safer and healthier environment.

So why don't we all just stop spraying unknown and potentially hazardous chemicals on our lawns, and practice prevention for our families and our neighbours effectively immediately?

I realize I cannot tell you what to do, nor do I want to.

All I ask is that you consider the future health of your kids and your neighbour's kids before making your final decision on whether to spray or not to spray this spring.

It's their generation who must face the consequences of our green lawn obsessions.

To read more about this issue, I refer you to the following web sites: Sierra Club (www.sierra.club.ca), the Canadian Environmental Law Association (www.cela.ca), or two children-specific U.S. sites, Children's Environmental Health Network (www.cehn.org) or the Centre for Children's Health and the Environment (www.childenvironment.org). It's not too late to cancel your orders or simply say "No" when the next salesperson calls from one of the local non-natural pesticide companies.

After all, a few extra dandelions never hurt anyone.

And to those of you who have made a conscious decision not to spray your lawn this spring - THANK YOU.

Happy Spring!

**Kim Sillcox
Aurora**

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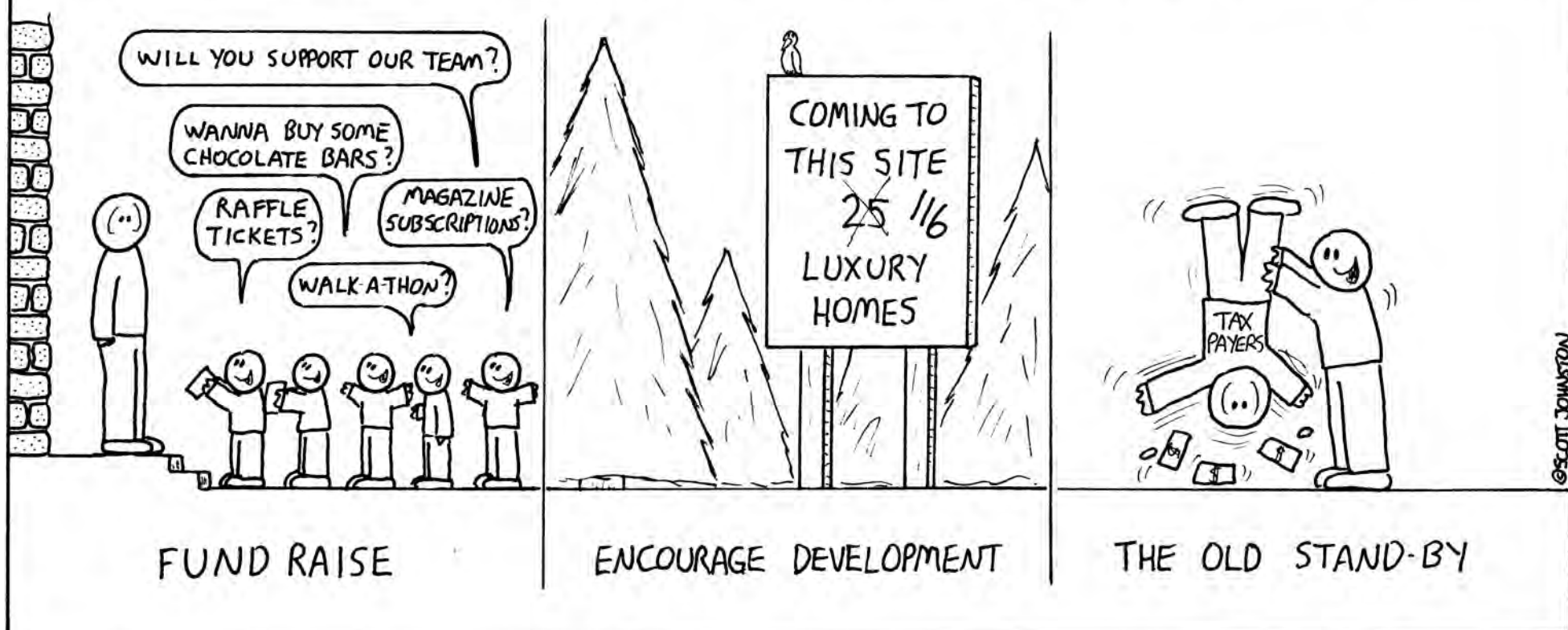
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HOW THE TOWN PLANS TO FUND THE NEW SENIORS' CENTRE AND RECREATION COMPLEX



FUND RAISE

ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT

THE OLD STAND-BY



Mayor's Report By Tim Jones

What's new in the Municipal Act?

I just received my copy of the new Municipal Act. The Municipal Act is the legislation that creates municipalities and guides the way they can operate, from the City of Toronto to the Town of Aurora.

It outlines how municipalities are governed and what powers municipalities have.

This update is a vast improvement over what municipalities had to refer to in past years through its easy to read index and simple language, but that said, it is still 396 pages long, in small print.

In quickly going through this Act from point of interest to point of interest, I would note the following definitions for your information.

224. Council - role. It is the role of Council:
- a) to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality
 - b) to develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality
 - c) to determine which services the municipalities provides
 - d) to ensure that the administrative practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of Council
 - e) to maintain the financial integrity of the municipality; and
 - f) to carry out the duties of Council under this and any other Act.

225. Head of Council - role. It is the role of the head of Council:

- a) to act as chief executive officer of the municipality
- b) to preside over Council meetings
- c) to provide leadership to the Council
- d) to represent the municipality at official functions; and
- e) to carry out the duties of the head of Council under this or any other Act.

229. Chief Administrative Officer - responsibilities:

A municipality may appoint a Chief Administrative Officer who shall be responsible for:

- a) exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality; and
- b) performing such other duties as are assigned by the municipality.

238(2) Procedural By-Laws respecting meetings:

Every municipality and local board shall pass a procedural by-law for governing the calling, place and proceedings of meetings.

In this same section there are numerous clauses which describe meetings, bylaws, records and all other components of actions of a municipal Council.

As can be seen in the descriptions used, there is still a lot of room for interpretation, some of which overlaps with other clauses and Acts and requires us to read and overlap these regulations to extract the

intent, others of which are, in my mind, still open for interpretation.

Aurora Council will be taking the time during this term to review our core services which we are mandated to identify.

This will occur after our review of the Town's Strategic Plan.

We have also requested that the Director of Corporate Services review our procedural bylaw in order to simplify some of the procedures currently identified.

Having a comprehensive Strategic Plan guides us to our long range vision in which we identify our priorities for core municipal services to our Town.

Having agreed upon procedural rules will also assist us in processing the work ahead.

If you see something in this column that you wish to respond to, I welcome your comments, either through the paper, to the Town Hall by mail - Box 1000, Aurora, Ontario, L4G 6J1 or e-mail at tjones@town.aurora.on.ca



Cathy's Corner



Cathy in blunderland

Ah, English! Whereas other languages scrape by with a hundred thousand words or so, English tops the chart with a cool million.

That's almost six times more words than German, and 10 times as many as French!

That would explain why Quebec hasn't separated yet. We talk them out of it every time. It is estimated that English has "borrowed" about 80 per cent of its words, but gee, that suggests we're giving them back. Not likely. Let's face it, we stole them and we're keeping them.

There will be no going back to the paltry 50,000 words that Shakespeare used to torture us throughout high school.

No way! We're into "creative" writing, my friends! Every year, we not only invent new words, we also invent new meanings for old words.

Such creativity makes it possible for the metrosexuals to smoke the cool dudes when it comes to getting the phat chicks.

Sadly, as Aurorans are aware, creative as I am, I haven't mastered the spelling of all one million words. I like to think that it's because I suffer from right-brain dominance.

In addition to the "ponch" that's not in Webster's good books, I have written about the "morning doves" that live in my backyard.

I see them almost every morning and they never look sad! Then, even as my "paunch" was being adjusted, in the same issue, I referred to the "bearing" of souls when I should have said "baring" of souls. I'm bashful. I have trouble baring my bearing. I am seeking therapy.

I will need it because, like 300 million other people, English is my second language.

My mother tongue is Macedonian - a language with 31 well-behaved letters comprising its superior alphabet. We spell words just the way they sound, and every letter gets to have its say.

The erratic behaviour of mischievous English letters puts Macedonians at a higher risk of phonetic convulsions.

Why does "psychology" start with a "P"? Doesn't that pseem psort of psilly?

I've never heard "W" say "uh-uh", have you?

And who can figure out "H"? Honestly, the whole language is full of holes!

I feel sorry for Ron. I have brought shame upon his good name with three spelling mistakes (okay, four if you count "ponch" twice) out of some 19,000 words I've fed to his spell check thus far.

And that's just my little corner since July. He has an entire paper to blue-pencil every week!

And spelling might be the least of his woes. Imagine an ad in The Auroran that reads: "Tired of cleaning yourself? Let Molly Maid do it!" Would Ron have to run it in the "Personal" section?

Or, how about: "Dog for Sale. Eats everything and loves children." Would Ron be biting off more than he can chew?

Suppose that Greenham's advertised: "Wonderful bargains for men with 16 and 17 necks!" Would Ron have to send a photographer?

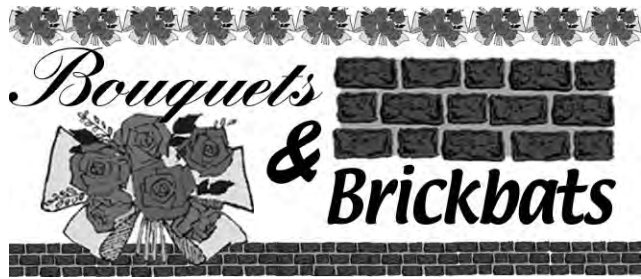
Yup, the editor deserves some relief - of the comic variety. Ron, I'd like you to meet my husband.

Among the fodder that he provides for my column is the little known "Damirism". I bet nobody ever suspected him of mangling metaphors.

But the truth is, Damir is the type of councillor who believes that "the bucket stops here!" And those who insist on "passing the bucket" are "barking at the wrong dog".

This would indicate that when it's time to "take the bull by the tail and look it in the eye", you can count on Damir. After all, he does have a degree in English - a language in which it is possible for your nose to run and your feet to smell.

Ah, English!



Bouquets & Brickbats

By DICK ILLINGWORTH

BOUQUETS to the management, staff and all the hard-working volunteers of the Community Living Association Newmarket/Aurora District for the Tribute Dinner they arranged for Poor Richard. It was a wonderful night and Poor Richard is honoured, but humble.

BOUQUETS and a Happy Birthday to Cyril (Cy) Buck on his 80th birthday which he celebrated with family and his many friends at the Factory Theatre. Cy was born on February 29th so he really is only 20 years old.

BRICKBATS to regional planning staff for scheduling a public information meeting on March 30th to outline the regional centres and corridors draft official plan amendment without checking with town officials, as that is an Aurora Council meeting night.

BOUQUETS to the operators of Aurora's Canadian Tire store and their customers for contributing to a fund for the Bullock family, who were burned out of their home recently. The couple received a cheque for \$2,000 plus a \$1,250 gift purchase card.

BRICKBATS to Poor Richard for getting his streets mixed up. The previous **BOUQUET** to the dedicated school crossing guard the kids affectionately call "Bing" is amended to read Aurora Heights Drive and Haida Drive. Sorry!

BOUQUETS to the Aurora Tigers Novice "AA" team on capturing the gold medal at a recent hockey tournament in Montreal. In the five-game tournament the Aurora team posted a 4-0-1 record, competing against teams from New York, Massachusetts and Kanata, Ontario.

BOUQUETS to the Aurora Optimist Club for holding their annual Chess Tournament for all grades of Aurora students, which was held recently at the Aurora Legion. Sorry I missed it.

BRICKBATS to members of Aurora Council for failing to stay on topic. A staff report asked a simple question. It was whether they wanted to spend extra money for a bicycle path, street lighting enhancements and the boardwalk through the marsh area of the St.John's Sideroad as part of regional construction project, or not. The discussion degenerated into a rehash of the whole project and was a waste of time and effort.

BOUQUETS to the citizens and the council of Oakville for protecting the Moraine and promoting its "green plan". An earlier battle by environmentalists to stop all development was lost at the OMB. The new plan protects 889 hectares of protected natural areas linked by corridors for wildlife, while still allowing residential and industrial development.

But **BRICKBATS** to Pickering Council for continuing to plan for new housing on the provincially proposed Greenbelt, despite a clear warning from the province that they won't allow the development to happen. Pickering's \$620,000 growth management study was paid for by developers and recommends housing for 75,000 on the agricultural preserve.

BOUQUETS to Aurora Councillor Nigel Kean and his hearty team of bowlers for raising more than \$2,200 in the recent Big Brothers and Sisters Bowl for Kid's Sake at the Aurora Bowl.

More **BRICKBATS** to members of Aurora Council for debating an update of the municipal strategic plan for more than an hour, defeating two motions and finally throwing up their arms and deferring further debate until another meeting when council was in a better mood.

Letters to the Editor

High praise for Male Chorus

To the editor,

The Residents of York Region are fortunate having the York Regional Police Male Chorus as a group of retired and active members volunteering their time entertaining various audiences not only within York Region, but world wide.

This group of ladies and gentlemen have raised substantial funds to provide better lives for others at their own expense and with the assistance of many sponsors.

Over the past 40 years, my wife and I have lived in London, Toronto, Aurora and Newmarket, Calgary

and now in New Westminster, BC.

We have yet to see a police force have a male chorus to the degree that York Region has.

We first met Lowell McClenny, a prominent member of the male chorus, through his association with the Aurora Minor Hockey Association back in 1980 at which time he coached many young hockey and lacrosse players.

Our son was fortunate to have Lowell as his coach in many other ways other than sports.

We learned late last year that this fine vocal group had made a number of

recordings, some of which we have obtained, not quite the Mormon Tabernacle or Fischer Choir but very close.

This group of ladies and gentlemen are very dedicated to providing their time and efforts to the community "In Harmony With The Community".

We sincerely wish Lowell and all the fine members of the chorus continued success and ask that the residents of York Region support their cause and work as volunteers.

**David & Maureen Grainger
New Westminster, BC**

Bureaucracy says assessment right

To the editor,

Just received a reply to my Request for Reconsideration (RfR) from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), a copy of which appears below.

It seems just a form letter and there are no specific reasons why my request was denied.

To me it is the apex of bureaucracy and as I wrote to you before, you cannot fight city hall.

Sure, I can appeal.

Should I want to challenge this bureaucratic structure? No thank you.

I will now just wait until I receive my final tax notice and see how much increase there is over the 2003 taxes.

**Tom van den Elshout
Aurora**

The letter from MPAC follows:

February 28,2004

**VANDENELSHOUT ANTONIUS P
12 JOHNSON RD
AURORA ON**

I am writing with regard to your Request for Reconsideration (RfR) filed with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

We have completed your RfR and during our review, we considered the following information.

Your concerns as outlined in your RfR; any new or additional information you may have provided; the details on file for your property, including but not limited to, the property location, building size, age and condition of the buildings; the sales information for comparable properties in the area; and the assessed values and classifications of comparable properties in the area.

Based on our analysis, we have determined the assessed value and classification of your property are correct.

If you wish, you have the option of filing a formal appeal with the Assessment Review Board (ARB) before March 31, 2004. Should you decide not to file an appeal with the ARB, your assessment will remain as shown on your Property Assessment Notice.

**Cameron Trollope
Manager, Customer Service**

Police rule on Wells St. intersection

To the editor,

This letter is in response to Mrs. B. Cordell's "Wells crosswalk not green light" letter in the March 3 edition of the Auroran.

I use Wells Street both on my way to work and my way home.

When the pedestrian crossing was installed, I called York Regional Police and asked for clarification on the intersection.

As you stated, "there is no set of lights facing Wells Street".

I was told by the police that Wells Street traffic is governed by stop signs.

Once a vehicle on Wells Street has come to a complete stop and, if the pedestrian crossing is clear, the vehicle may proceed to make the left turn.

**Sharon Virtue
Newmarket**

Town attempting to set new record

To the editor,

Re Wells crosswalk not green light, March 2, Auroran.

It appears that Mrs. Cordell is not aware of the Town of Aurora's quest to gain recognition in the Guinness Book of World Records under the category of "Most intersections having all-way stop signs or some sort of traffic signals in a town under 50,000 population".

As I understand it, the Guinness publishers aren't at all interested in whether or not the signs and signals make any sense. They're only interested in the total number.

I believe complaints from concerned citizens like Mrs. Cordell can only result in

curtailing the record pace the town is currently setting.

**S. Ivot
Aurora**

Bouquet out of date?

To the editor,

I was surprised to see one of Dick Illingworth's Bouquets to Aurora Hydro for working towards implementing a pre-authorized payment plan.

I have been on a pre-authorized payment plan with Aurora Hydro for at least 10 years, possibly as many as 15.

**G. Andrew
Aurora**

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Aurora Opera has ambitious lineup planned

The Aurora Opera Company hopes to show York Region audiences they are more than an "opera" company.

In their plans is a gala evening "Mad About Musicals" featuring all the adult company members including General Director Sarah Kyle.

The show will be filled with excerpts from all the famous musicals and is planned for Saturday, April 24 at 7p.m. in the Newmarket Theatre.

Meanwhile, Aurora Opera Kids plans a children's Gilbert & Sullivan Operetta, HMS Pinafore, featuring local Aurora kids ages 5 to 13 as part of a double bill which includes a youth opera, Orpheus & Euridice, featuring teens and children from Aurora.

It will be staged Friday, April 23, at 7 p.m. and Saturday April 24 at 1 p.m. also at the Newmarket Theatre.

Call 905-953-5122 for fur-

ther information on both productions.

The Aurora Opera Company is also hosting auditions for male leads and chorus for next season's "Hello Dolly" and "My Fair Lady".

The company is seeking men between the ages of 25 and 75, and no experience is necessary.

Call 905-841-0414 for more information.



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Chamber Ski Day

Part of the contingent from the Aurora Chamber of Commerce who attended last week's annual Ski Day, are shown here. A busload of skiers, and several others who found their own way to the hills, visited the private club of Osler Bluffs, near Collingwood, last week to enjoy a perfect day of skiing. Shown here, left to right, are Carl Koller, Mike Pisano, Sheila Kovacs, Shelley Lundquist, Ron Wallace, Stephen Forsey and Tom Beck. Kneeling is Auroran photographer Naomi Tobin, who set the camera to take this time-delayed photo.

Now Aurora, Newmarket hydro may become a unit

Based on a report from a consulting firm and preliminary analysis undertaken, Aurora Council last week endorsed a staff recommendation the management of Aurora Hydro and Newmarket Hydro continue to study the possibilities of amalgamating.

The next phase is to prepare a detailed financial assessment of the benefits of consolidating the two utilities.

In October, 2000, council adopted a bylaw transferring all the assets and liabilities of the Aurora utility to two corporations. The town retained ownership of the hydro building on the Industrial Parkway.

In 1998 the provincial government introduced legislation to restructure Ontario's electricity system and to introduce competition. The deregulation also applied to local utilities.

Utilities were forced to commercialize as a for-profit organization and restructure so as to separate their distribution network from the retail sale of electricity resulting in the creation of two corporations.

Aurora councillors and hydro commissioners spent considerable time and money to study the most appropriate of action prior to the provincially designated deadline of November 7, 2000.

Aurora decided to retain the utility in public ownership, rather than sell to

Hydro One or the private sector.

To remain a municipal utility it was necessary to become two corporations and earn a return for shareholders, the taxpayer, as well as pay a corporation tax to the province.

The two corporations were Borealis Hydro Electric Holdings and Aurora Hydro Connections.

In September, 2000, council agreed to participate in a potential merger of the municipal utilities of Aurora, Newmarket, Vaughan and Markham.

In exchange, Aurora would receive shares and debt in the combined Unipower Amalgamated Holding Company in an amount proportionate to the value of its contribution, approximately 7.11 per cent.

By mid-October, 2000, agreement had been reached to proceed with the merger creating a \$580 million conglomerate, the fifth largest in Ontario with 150,000 customers.

Local officials believed the amalgamated utility would be in a much better position to maintain stable prices as a result of increased efficiencies.

In agreeing to the merger before the deadline, utilities avoided a 33 per cent transfer tax payment to the province. Ontario Energy Board approval of the merger was expected before the end of the year.

But in June, 2001, the

wheels fell off when Vaughan decided to pull out of the partnership.

The remaining three partners agreed to continue with the reduced merger on condition the government would agree to accept the revised application as an amendment to the original and avoid the transfer tax.

In spite of meetings with the provincial finance minister, agreement could not be reached and the partnership fell apart, resulting in Aurora creating its own board of directors in mid 2002 and operating the utility as a stand alone entity.

In November, 2002, the province adopted legislation providing municipalities with the option of returning to a non-profit utility or adopting a resolution to confirm their original decision to commercialize the utility.

Council approved the confirming resolution.

In July last year the province enacted a regulation reopening the transfer tax holiday for a two-year period expiring in March, 2005.

This resulted in council reopening the issue of a merger with the previous participants.

By this time Markham and Vaughan had purchased the Richmond Hill utility and were discussing a merger, and there wasn't the same interest in involving Aurora and Newmarket.

As a result the two utilities jointly engaged the consulting firm to carry out a preliminary review.

The report listed the benefits of a merger to enhance operating flexibility that should lead to lower costs, improved service levels and better reliability through efficiencies.

The preliminary analysis indicates there is merit in further examining a merger of the utilities, in view of the transfer tax holiday.

The Aurora Hydro board of directors endorsed the further review as being in the best interest of the \$26 million utility.

Aurora Council endorsed the staff recommendations without comment or debate last week.



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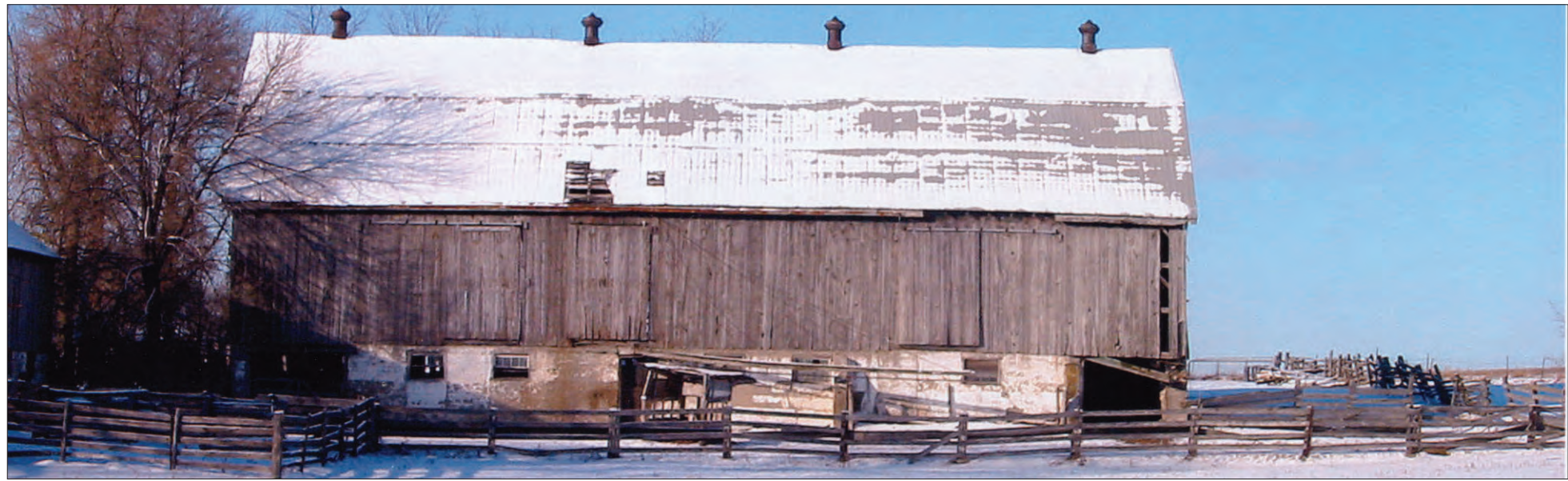


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Last of the barns

One of the few remaining barns in the district, this grand old structure on Wellington Street, between Leslie and Bayview, will soon be a pile of lumber. Most of the area is destined for redevelopment, including the construction of two ice rinks and a swimming pool, recently approved by Aurora Council.

Auroran photo by David Falconer

Town sticks with contract, but price is up

The controversial recommendation that a six-month animal control contract with

Remuneration is revealed

Prior to the 1970s the province determined the salaries of municipal members of council based on population, with the mayor receiving double the honorarium paid to members of council.

During the mid-1960s the honorarium for a member of Aurora Council was \$250 per year, plus an additional \$250, if appointed a committee chairman, and nearly all members of council headed a committee.

Municipal politicians in some of the larger urban centres objected to bureaucrats at Queen's Park setting their salaries and petitioned the province to change its way.

Then Municipal Affairs Minister Darcy McKeough agreed and amended the Municipal Act permitting councils to set their own salaries on condition that the treasurer issue a report of remuneration and expenses paid during the preceding year.

Mayor Tim Jones received remuneration of \$40,308.08 during 2003 with a travel allowance of \$7,200 and other expenses of \$2,638.25 for a total of \$50,191.33.

Councillors Nigel Kean, Damir Vrancic, Ron Wallace and John West each received \$17,479.26 in remuneration and \$1,000 car allowance.

Councillors David Griffith, Evelina MacEachern Betty Pedersen and George Timpson each received \$15,894.66 in remuneration and \$917 car allowance. Under other expenses, MacEachern received \$125, Pedersen \$1,119.66 and Timpson \$2,400.

Councillors Evelyn Buck, Wendy Gaertner, Bill Hogg and Phyllis Morris each received \$1,584.59 in remuneration and \$83 car allowance.

Kennel Inn be signed was confirmed by council last week, even though it will cost more money.

It all started last October when council was advised the town's animal control contract at \$83,000 per year with Kennel Inn would expire at the end of December and the new annual rate would climb to \$93,000.

The contract was structured to provide service Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and emergency service outside these hours.

At the time Kennel Inn had been providing the service to the town for 28 years.

However town staff was asked to get Kennel Inn to quote on various options.

To increase patrol services from 4.30 p.m. to 8 p.m. during summer months would cost an additional \$26,500.

To add Saturday patrols would cost another \$21,000 and an on-call service for weekends and after hours would cost approximately \$100,000.

Staff explained that for a three-year contract for the existing service the cost would be \$93,000 in 2004, \$98,000 in 2005 and \$106,000 in 2006.

Council recommended a one-year contract for 2004 at \$93,000.

Then, in December, Carol Mernick appeared before council representing the

Aurora Residents Pet Care Association to express concerns regarding the Kennel Inn operation.

In her presentation, she outlined what the association termed as inadequate conditions at the kennel, inaccessibility, hours of operation which made it difficult to reclaim animals and lack of information that animals were available for adoption.

With the use of photographs she stressed cages were too small and there were no outdoor runs or walking facilities. She suggested the municipality should operate the animal control centre rather than private enterprise.

D.J. Lawrence, general manager of Kennel Inn, said he was upset with the accusations and pointed out that Kennel Inn had been providing service for 29 years and now suddenly were "big, bad dog catchers".

After considerable discussion and procedural wrangling, Councillor John West said there were two sides to every story and the town had to be fair as this was the first time in 29 years the town had received complaints.

He suggested the staff report be amended to read six months instead of a year at half the quoted amount in order to provide staff with time to investigate and seek

alternatives and report back.

In spite of opposition from Councillor Evelyn Buck, who supported the staff report for a one-year contract, council supported the six-month extension 8-1.

Then, in February, council learned Kennel Inn had advised the town that due to the reduced contract period, the cost for a six-month extension had been increased to \$50,000.

Staff recommended the six-month option at \$50,000, although the one-year contract was still available for \$93,000.

Buck continued her fight for a one-year contract in order to provide staff with more time to investigate alternatives.

Other members of council argued that council had made a commitment for a six-month contract, while the delegation was in attendance and it should be honoured as the Pet Care Association had not been notified of the current discussion.

The result ended in a 4-4 tie with Councillor Damir Vrancic, committee chairman, supporting the six-

month extension at \$50,000.

At last week's council meeting, Jennifer Rice, representing the Pet Care Association, asked a series of questions as to when the staff report on alternatives would be discussed.

The report indicated Buck had moved the six-month extension at \$50,000 and when the report came to council she argued against it and called for a one-year contract.

Her motion died for lack of a seconder and the controversial report, a six-month contract, was adopted.

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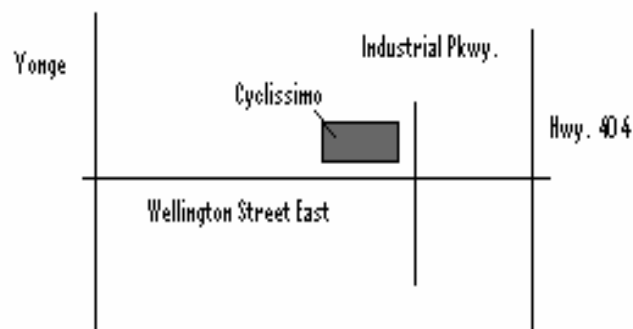
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Against Newmarket

Tough Tigers open two-game series lead

Perhaps it was not a good idea for the Newmarket Hurricanes to be the only team to defeat the powerful Aurora Tigers during regular season Provincial Junior A hockey.

So far, Tigers are not letting them forget it.

After two games in the "Yonge Street playoffs", Aurora has outscored Newmarket 11-2, letting the northerners know "it's not nice to fool around with Mother Aurora".

The Hurricanes, over the course of the season, was the only team to defeat Aurora, and, to rub salt, they did it twice.

Third game in the series was played in Aurora Tuesday night, but results were not available at press time.

The fourth game is slated for Thursday, back in Newmarket, beginning at 7.30 p.m.

And, if the Tigers keep playing the way they are playing, that should be the end of the series.

Some prognosticators, however, are seeing a five, and even six-game series before all is said and done.

In the second game, played before a full house Sunday night in Newmarket, Tiger players knew the game plan would be to go after the Hurricanes and get an early lead...and keep it.

After Friday's impressive 5-2 win, the last thing the Tigers wanted to do was let Newmarket back into the series.

Chris Whitley was back in net for Aurora and recorded

the goose egg.

Daren Machesney started for Newmarket, but was replaced late in the second by Peter Mandoli.

It seemed like Newmarket's game plan was to try to intimidate the Tigers by playing a rough style of game.

This backfired as Aurora capitalized on two of three power play opportunities in the first period alone.

Sean Scully got the Tigers going with the first power play goal and followed that fewer than six minutes later with his second goal of the night.

Sam Skwarchuk's shot from in front gave Aurora 3-0 lead after 20 minutes of play.

The second period ended up being a carbon copy of the first with Aurora dominating all aspects of the game.

The Hurricanes hole got deeper when Brendan Mulholland was handed a game misconduct for a hit from behind.

Already missing Jimmy Ball due to an injury, Newmarket's defensive core was minus two of its stars.

Andrew Hotham working low behind the Hurricanes net rebounded the puck off Machesney to give Aurora a 4-0 lead.

Joel Kitchen had the prettiest goal of the night when he worked his way across the front of the Hurricanes net and fired a shot over the glove of Machesney, ending his night between the pipes.

In came Mandoli who was flawless for the rest of the

period.

Aurora outshot Newmarket 20-8 and came away with a 5-0 lead after two frames.

The third period saw the Hurricanes going through the motions as they could sense the game was finished.

Tigers spent a big part of the period on the power play with Alex Lalonde capitalizing with a goal that was set up by Sam Skwarchuk and Joel Kitchen.

The toughest challenge Chris Whitley faced was a late breakaway which he deflected off the goal post keeping his shutout intact.

In the series opener at the Aurora Community Centre Friday night, a solid two-goal effort including the game winner by Jesse Olden help lead the Tigers to an impressive 5-2 victory.

The near capacity crowd was kept on edge for the first two periods as both teams played a tight checking game with solid goaltending at both ends.

Whitley drew the start in goal for the Tigers with Machesney getting the call for the Hurricanes.

Coming off a four-game sweep of the Collingwood Blues, the Tigers were looking to get a quick jump into the game to keep the Hurricanes at bay.

Sam Skwarchuk sent a soft floating puck along the ice that seemed to hand cuff Machesney giving Aurora a 1-0 lead late in the period.

But, less than a minute later, Newmarket struck back and the frame ended deadlocked.

Neither team could find the mark as another 20 minutes ticked by and the clubs remained knotted.

Both goaltenders came up with some incredible saves to keep the game close.

It was the third period that settled things with Tigers taking full control of the game.

The momentum of play during the first two periods seemed to wear the Hurricanes down allowing Aurora to capitalize on a few great scoring chances.

Jesse Olden got the ball rolling to break the tie and he followed it up with his second goal of the game on a tipped shot from the point.

Derek Joslin added his first goal of the playoff with a shot from the point on a power play.

The Hurricanes managed to capitalize on a power play of their own closing the gap to 4-2 before Joel Kitchen finished the scoring when he was allowed to walk in around the Hurricane defenseman and beat Machesney.

GAME SUMMARIES

AURORA 6 NEWMARKET 0

FIRST PERIOD

A: Sean Scully (Brenner, Kostka) 7.18
A: Sean Scully (Hotham, Bahen) 12.50
A: Sam Skwarchuk (Kitchen, Kostka) 14.32

2ND PERIOD

A: Andrew Hotham (Scully, Brenner) 12.37
A: Joel Kitchen (Lalonde, Skwarchuk) 13.12

THIRD PERIOD

A: Alex Lalonde (Skwarchuk, Kitchen) 4.37

AURORA 5 NEWMARKET 2 FIRST PERIOD

A: Sam Skwarchuk (Joslin) 16.18
N: Joel Sheppard (Burke, Whitehead) 16.59

SECOND PERIOD

No Scoring

THIRD PERIOD

A: Jesse Olden (Mignardi, Walker) 1.11
A: Jesse Olden (Gilbert, Mignardi) 4.38
A: Derek Joslin (Kitchen,

Lalonde) 7.34

N: Dan Falbo (Hockley) 13.08

A: Joel Kitchen (Aitken, Lalonde) 15.45

REMAINING PLAYOFF GAMES

Game Four - Thursday night in Newmarket - 7.30 p.m.

*Game Five - Friday night in Aurora - 8 p.m.

*Game Six - Tuesday night in Newmarket - 7.30 p.m.

*Game Seven - Wednesday night in Aurora - 8 p.m.

* - if necessary

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York Simcoe Express Major Atom AAA squad is ready to defend title

Can the York Simcoe Express Major Atom hockey team "threepeat" as winners of the Gold Medal in the Ontario Minor Hockey Tournament of Champions?

The defending OMHA champion Express, of the Eastern Triple A Association, will, for the second year, host the tournament at the Aurora Community Centre this weekend.

The tournament will consist of five teams, three from the Eastern Triple A Association, and two from the South Central Triple A Association competing for

the coveted OMHA Mission Cup.

The Express, in their Minor Novice year, 2001-2002, and in their Minor Atom year, 2002-2003, won the Gold Medal and the Mission Cup and are back to defend the championship.

The winning team hosts the tournament.

Players on this year's team include: Daniel Catenacci, Jeffrey Dinallo, Eric Hoey, Richard Occhipinti, Ryan Rumble, Adam Nanji, Ian Farrell, Brandon Francisco, John Livingstone, Ryan Murphy, Jeffrey Stewart, Alex

Leader, Justin Nice, Brandon Scott, Hayden Neuman and Jason Pucciarelli.

The team is led by Head Coach Pat Dinallo and assisted by Mark Murphy. The trainer is Paul Pucciarelli and his assistant is Dave Livingston. Team Manager is Nancy Catenacci.

Opening ceremonies get underway at ACC#2, Friday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m. with host/announcer Andy Frost and other special guests.

All games will be played at that rink and admission is free.

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Marathon run could attract record crowd

From page 1
organize a marathon run in Aurora, so his friends did it for him.

As in the past, competitors will sit down to a pasta dinner the night before the race, this year slated for Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School.

Proceeds from the meal will go to CAYRE (the Community Alliance for York Region Education).

Proceeds from the run itself will be forwarded to the Community Safety Village, which is scheduled to open this September at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area.

So far, the event has raised \$27,000 for the project.

Active committee member last year, Christine Gardner will play a minor role in organizing activities this year because she is in training for the Boston Marathon, which, ironically, runs the day after the Aurora event.

If you seek further information, or wish to register on line, visit www.hartwellchallenge.com.

A new sponsor this year is Aurora's Reebok, a running-shoe manufacturer with facilities on Bayview Avenue.

Officials there are offering the Outlet Store as a location to pick up race kits a day prior to the race.

Other sponsors include Hartwell Thayer Financial Services Group; Whitehots, an Aurora library book wholesaler; and the Aurora Optimist Club, sponsors of the five-kilometre race and driving force behind the Safety Village.

The committee, meanwhile, is still looking for volunteers.

It takes more than 250 people to make the event successful, Pearson said.

Anyone wishing to participate should call 905-727-8755.

Skating results

Following is a list of Aurora Skating Club Starskate Challenge results as recorded at a meet in Bradford recently.

Junior Bronze Ladies Freeskate: Fl. 1, Amy Thompson 2nd, final 8th; Fl. 2, Meghan Jones 5th; Fl. 5, Maya Goldman 1st, final 12th.

Preliminary men Freeskate: Caden Armstrong 1st.

Preliminary Ladies Freeskate: Allie Sutton 12th.

Pre-preliminary Ladies Freeskate: Fl. 1, Jordana Goldman 4th; Fl. 2, Kate Sutton 9th; Fl. 3, Emma Slimkovich 2nd, final 9th.



Following their competitions, three members of the Aurora Master Ducks take a break during the Long Course Invitational Swim Meet held in London, Ontario, recently. They are, left to right, Adam Porteous, Dave Wilkin and Russ Farquhar. Master Ducks finished third overall in the competitions against 19 other clubs. Wilkin hauled down three gold medals during the meet, while Farquhar nabbed a gold and two silvers, and Porteous scooped a pair of bronze medals. The Aurora squad sent 32 swimmers to the event.

Master Ducks finish third In swim meet

Seems only fitting that Wendy Duck should lead the Aurora Master Ducks in the Long Course Invitational Swim Meet held recently in London, Ontario.

Of the 32 swimmers from the Aurora Club, Wendy set the pace nailing down five gold medals.

Overall, Aurora finished third out of the 19 participating clubs and set three Ontario records in relays.

Local women swimmers captured a total of 21 gold, 24 silver and 11 bronze medals, and nine finished in the top five.

Following is a list of winners:

Wendy Duck, 5 gold; Wendy Puchard, 3 gold, 2 silver; Susan Allen, 3 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze; Kelly Hughes, 2 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze; Taina Sodonis 2 gold, 1 bronze; Kelly Chester, 1 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze; Janet

Mitchell, 1 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze; Andrea Sodonis, 1 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze; Judy Iannucci, 1 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze; Lori Haws, 1 gold, 2 silver; Judy Norwell, 1 gold, 2 silver; Donna Dixon, 2 silver; Nicole Egan, 1 silver, 2 bronze; Sue Deacon 1 silver, 1 bronze; Kim Carr, 1 silver, 1 bronze.

Meanwhile, the men accumulated 15 gold, 17 silver, 10 bronze medals and 15 finished in the top 5.

Jim Talbot, 4 gold, 1 silver; Dave Wilkin, 3 gold, 1 silver; Frank Sodonis, 2 gold, 2 silver; Stu Ballantyne, 2 gold, 1 silver; Lloyd Brown, 2 gold 1 silver; Russ Farquhar, 1 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze; Eric Gordon 1 gold, 1 sil-

ver; Andy Mitchell, 3 silver; Simon Meredith, 2 silver 2 bronze; Marcus Sandhar 2 silver, 1 bronze; Brian Purves, 1 silver; Adam Porteous, 2 bronze; Chuck Cundari, 2 bronze; John Walden, 1 bronze; Bill Jenkins, 1 bronze.

In relay events, swimmers captured 12 gold and four silver medals and set three provincial records.

The team of Susan Allen, Wendy Puchard, Kelly Hughes and Nancy Black set two of the three records.

The men's team, consisting of Stu Ballantyne, Marcus Sandhar, Simon Meredith and Frank Sodonis, set the other record.

Monday Night Hockey Standings, March 1

TEAM	W	L	T	GF	GA	PTS
Highland Chev Olds Geo Cad	17	4	1	98	58	35
Law Insurance Brokers	13	8	1	89	79	27
Tom & Jerry's	12	8	2	82	79	26
Rec Cycle N' Sports	10	10	2	83	77	22
Priestly Demolition	9	12	1	80	110	19
FPL Aggregates	8	13	1	48	59	17
J.J. Barron Realty	7	13	2	81	90	16
Masterclean Contracting	7	15	0	74	92	14

Results, March 1

Barron Realty	7	Masterclean	6
Rec Sports	4	Law Insurance	4
Highland Chev Olds	3	FPL Aggregates	7
Priestly Demolition	1	Tom & Jerry's	0

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Planned drive-through restaurant rejected

One up, one down, one pending.

That pretty much summarizes three plans presented to a public planning meeting in Aurora last week.

And councillors attending the meeting showed the audience one thing. They're not that crazy about drive-through coffee shops.

They rejected a proposal that included a planned drive-through Tim Horton's on Bayview Avenue, much to the delight of neighbouring residents who attended the meeting.

The Bayview Business Park application was for commercial development on a 3.4-acre parcel of land at the northwest corner of Hollidge Boulevard and Bayview Avenue.

The application included four buildings including the drive-through restaurant

Jacques Aresenault, president of the Chapman Park Ratepayers Association, told council members that in the last month extensive negotiations had occurred with the applicant and a compromise reached.

Agreement had been reached to restrict the site to one drive-through restaurant, have no parking adjacent to the north property line, delete the exit to McMaster Avenue subject to town approval, and screen the rooftop mechanical equipment. Landscaping and a few other minor changes completed the deal.

A letter was also presented from Tim Horton's listing the changes they were willing to make, including garbage storage, time of deliveries, signage, volume control of the outdoor speaker at the order station

and monitoring litter.

The applicant advised that if the application was not approved by Aurora council or if the application was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, the developer would not be required to live up to the agreement but would revert to the original application.

Town planning staff advised that due to the changes the site plan would have to be revised and the elimination of the McMaster Avenue exit would have to be discussed with the town's engineering staff.

Roger Beaman, solicitor, and David Stewart, development manager, said they had worked closely with the residents' group.

As a result several changes had been made including the elimination of a drive-through bank or financial institution at the west end and a limit of one restaurant for the development.

There would be additional walkway connections, a cedar hedge for screening and the site plan would include traffic calming measures for deliveries.

Arsenault said 30 households supported the new agreement and the neighbourhood had been canvassed for concerns.

But when the meeting opened to the public, it became apparent residents weren't all that fond of the agreement.

Several spoke in opposition to the application, worrying about traffic congestion, safety on McMaster Avenue and depreciation of their property values if the drive-through passed.

Several residents said

they would not have purchased homes if they had known what was planned for the area as they had been told the site was designated for professional offices.

They were adamant they didn't want a Tim Horton's in their backyard and pointed out that there were other Tim Horton's in Aurora and they created traffic problems.

Councillor Evelyn Buck said that while she liked Tim Horton's, she was opposed to the application.

Councillor Damir Vrancic said while he was not happy with the proposal as he didn't want the drive-through, but if council turned it down, there was the possibility of an appeal to the OMB, resulting in council losing control of the planning jurisdiction.

Councillor Ron Wallace said that while he appreciated the work of the ratepayers in negotiating a compromise, he was concerned about the potential traffic congestion and he would oppose the application.

Councillor Nigel Kean pointed out that the town's strategic plan contains objectives to ensure high quality, comprehensive community planning to protect the overall investment of citizens, and this application was not protecting the citizens and he was opposed to it.

Vrancic referred to the compromise reached with the ratepayers association saying it may be the lesser of two evils. He suggested it be referred back to staff for further review with the applicant and Tim Horton's.

The motion to reject the

application passed 4-2 with three members of council absent.

The second application was for an eight-unit town house development situated sideways on a George Street lot adjacent to Resthaven Nursing Home with a 62.3 foot frontage and a depth of 200 feet.

The official plan permits row house units, so that the proposed rezoning keeps with the policy, but the zoning does not permit row house units.

The application is to demolish the existing single family dwelling on the property, and to build two row house blocks, comprising of four two-storey units per block, for a total of eight units with 14.5 foot frontage each and a lot area of 1,507 square feet.

Resident and guest parking is via an underground garage providing 12 resident spaces and three visitor spaces accessed from a George Street ramp.

The application requires several changes to the zoning bylaw including minimum lot frontage, maximum lot coverage, minimum front and rear yard setbacks, and maneuvering space in the underground garage.

The Central York Fire Services does not support the application as submitted and requires further information. Concern was expressed about how residents and visitors would exit the garage and how fire vehicles would access the garage and end units in event of a fire.

Pearce Smith, a planner representing the applicant, said he would like the opportunity to discuss the

concerns with staff.

During the public session, citizens expressed concerns about parking on George Street, which already has problems due to the nursing home and high density of apartments in the area.

Concern was also expressed about the storage of garbage, snow removal, where children would play, and if Aurora was so short of land, it was necessary to squeeze eight units into such a small space.

Councillor Nigel Kean suggested the application be referred back to staff to clarify and resolve the many outstanding issues and hold a second public meeting.

Councillor Ron Wallace said he couldn't see how a fire vehicle could access the underground garage and if it did, it wouldn't be able to turn around.

Councillor Evelyn Buck said developers always ask for more than they expect and council should give staff directions. She added that she didn't believe it should be rezoned and would only support a duplex on the site.

With Buck in opposition, the application was referred back to staff to work with the applicant and submit a revised application to a future public planning meeting.

The third application was much simpler than the previous two and no residents showed up.

The 0.78 parcel of land is located on 268 Kennedy

Street West and contains a single detached residence and accessory buildings. The lands are designated urban residential in the official plan which permits a full range of housing types and densities.

The applicant proposes rezoning the lands to permit the creation of three new residential building lots with proposed frontages of 47.6 feet and a lot area of 5,231 square feet to the rear of the property, with frontage on Lensmith Drive. The applicant plans to keep the existing residence on the front part of the site.

Staff recommended that if council approves the application, it be amended to delete the rezoning for the front part of the lands, with no further development without a future zoning amendment.

Staff also identified a number of issues which need clarification, especially ensuring conformity with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act.

Planner David Ambrowski speaking for the applicant said there wasn't much he could add to the staff report.

He said the site was part of a larger property, which had been developed and the proposal was a continuation of that plan and the housing would be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood.

There was general agreement the application be referred back to staff to resolve the outstanding issues and proceed to the site plan stage.

Hybrid pig farm

No legislation for this industry

Long before the Walkerton water tragedy and the Nutrient Management Act designed to take a comprehensive and integrated approach to the disposal of manure and dead animals, there was a large hybrid pig farm on Bayview Avenue in what was then Whitchurch Township.

The new legislation was approved in 2002 and sets out the requirements and responsibilities for farmers, municipalities and others in the business of managing nutrients, but back in 1969 there was no such control.

The McLeod Hybrid Swine Company raised pigs in special barns to meet a growing demand by native and foreign hog producers for the McLeod super swine.

President of the company was the late Dr. Philip Jones, a consulting sanitary engineer and a professor at the University of Toronto, who worked to

1969

solve the McLeod problem of handling a daily sewage quota, equal to a town of 1,500.

Jones developed a contact stabilization method for Aurora's overloaded sewage plant, which enabled the town to increase the capacity of the plant without an expansion.

The McLeod Hybrid Swine Company was an offshoot of McLeod Management Systems Limited offering consulting and design services in barn equipment and production flow methods for hog producers.

Hybrid swine was defined as the long-term result of crossbreeding from superior specimens of large White and Landrace strains.

This controlled breeding,

with selected sires, through two generations, produces a hybrid superior to purebred sides.

The pigs lived in surroundings as germ free as possible and visitors to the barns had to don antiseptic coveralls and boots and a gauze mask was a must for anyone with the sniffles.


In addition to being germ free the McLeod swine were top producers.

The McLeod operation made available to hog raisers a collective research and top-breeding program, which they individually couldn't afford.

In the spring of 1969 the McLeod organization constructed a new barn to accommodate up to 240 swine a year.

The barn was completely climate-controlled enabling staff to maintain a maximum of factors while testing performance.

With the coming of regional government the area east of Bayview Avenue became part of Aurora and the pig farm continued to operate for several years, until overcome by the pressures of development and the super swine have been replaced by new homes.



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Publisher James Johnson made impact on Aurora

The name James Johnson won't mean much to today's residents of Aurora but back in the late 1950s and early 1960s, he played an important role in the life of Aurora and later the Progressive Conservative party in Canada.

He earned a B.A. from the University of Western Ontario, an M.A. from Brown University in Rhode Island and a PhD in economics from Indiana University.

He was assistant editor of the Financial Post and associate editor of the Stratford Beacon Herald before buying the Aurora Banner in 1958, which he sold to the Toronto Star in 1965.

He moved to Ottawa to be appointed by John Diefenbaker as the national director of the Progressive Conservative party.

He was a fierce loyalist to the chief during the Dump Dief movement of 1966 and 1967 led by past president Dalton Camp.

Johnson wrote a lively book "The Party's Over" about those hectic days.

He later purchased a string of newspaper in the Cobourg area and he died of cancer on March 25, 1988 at age 61.

While in Aurora he was very involved in local affairs and loved to write about the town.

In 1963 he wrote a book "Aurora: Its Early Beginnings", which traced the history of Aurora from its start to the turn of the century. His foreward to the book has been used on many occasions to describe Aurora.

The book is out of print.

A FREE CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP

It was in December, 1988, when Whalewest Graphics located on Leslie Street just north of Bloomington received a free membership in the Aurora Chamber of Commerce on becoming the Chamber's 500th member.

Partners Jeff Martin and Kita Joy had been operating Whalewest for 11 months and joined the Chamber to be better informed of what was going on in Aurora and to advertise their company.

A FAMILIAR CALL

"Ladies and Gentlemen, a clean ride for Jimmy Elder and the Immigrant" was a familiar call at the Aurora Horse Show, the Royal Winter Fair and other horse shows across the land.

Unfortunately the call wasn't heard at the 63rd Annual Aurora Horse Show in June, 1985. Jimmy Elder was there but the Immigrant was jumping in the big horse show in the sky.

It was always a thrill to see Jimmy ride the big horse into the show ring and watch the Immigrant kick his rear legs as he cleared a wall or any of the big jumps, as if responding to the roar of the crowds.

They were a perfect team

HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED

It's hard to believe but back in a 1905 issue of an Aurora newspaper there was a discussion about the county system of local government reminiscent of more modern debates over regional government.

Among some of the legislation proposed by the Whitney government was the repeal of the County Council Act.

It was said the establishment of the county council system was unwise and the sooner it was abolished the better it would be for the country.

Sound familiar?

Also in 1905 one of the recommendations of the Grand Jury was the approval of a system of spanking for drunkenness after the first offence.

The recommendation also included spanking without incarceration and without the option of a fine.

If enacted today, a RIDE program may not be needed.

WHEN A FIRE BUG HIT AURORA

It was in April, 1991, when York Regional Police feared a copycat arsonist was at work in Aurora, due to the number of fires since March 4 of that year.

Targets included Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School, the Public Library, a doughnut shop and a row of townhouses on McDonald Drive.

At the doughnut shop toilet paper was stuffed into a water shut-off compartment and set on fire.

Three fires were set in washrooms at the school and the library.

Several fires were set at the town houses including a 1979 Ford pickup truck and a baby stroller. Paper was also placed under a car and set on fire.

A rubbish fire was set at the base of a gas meter at the rear of the Family Trust building, which could have been more serious if flames had hit the gas lines, but more than \$400 damage was done to the meter.

The fires were quickly noticed and extinguished with minimal damage and with no injuries, but there was the potential of serious damage.

MORE ABOUT FIRES

During the period December 1, 1971, to May 31, 1972, the Aurora volunteer fire department responded to a total of 121 calls of which 60 were in Aurora, the others in adjacent municipalities or through mutual aid.

There were 19 false alarms.

One thousand, eight hundred and fifty-six officers and men responded to the calls for an average of 15 men per call at a total cost of \$15,305.50 or just over \$2,550 per month for the excellent and dedicated services of the volunteer firefighters.

McKenzie Marsh issue just will not disappear

From page 1

about environmental damage to the marshland from the salt and sand used on the roadways during the winter months. Jackson replied that with curb and gutter, damage would be minimized.

The lack of parking was a major concern as parking was prohibited on Old Yonge Street and there was no public access to either the north or south pond.

Concern was also expressed about the railway crossing on the St. John's Sideroad following the death of two persons at the Engelhard crossing.

Jackson replied he had been advised GO Transit planned to install barriers.

Councillor Evelyn Buck pointed out that in May 1994 the town handed the roadway over to the region to avoid paying maintenance costs. She also noted St. John's provided a bypass to the busy Yonge/Wellington intersection and there was an improvement in the movement of traffic.

Mayor Tim Jones tried to get the discussion back on track by asking committee members if they wanted to allocate the development charges to the boardwalk and other enhancements

as outlined in the report.

In response to a question as to whether the development charges could be used elsewhere if the report was rejected, staff replied that they had been collected for this project

Finally, the enhancements were approved subject to the region permitting parking in the evenings and on weekends.

In 1991, a traffic consultant predicted St. John's would become a six-lane highway linking up with Highway 404 about 2011 and that the region should assume control of the roadway. Aurora council agreed and asked the region to take over.

At the time St. John's was carrying about 1,000 to 1,500 vehicles per day, with about 50 per cent of the traffic originating north of the municipality. Aurora had planned to upgrade the roadway to four lanes during 1991.

The region advised it had no excess funds in the region's five-year program for the reconstruction of St. John's but did agree to improve the intersection with Bayview Avenue.

In 1998, Aurora Council sought a feasibility study

of a bridge but Regional officials said the additional cost would be in the \$11 million to \$14 million range and it was difficult to justify.

Opposition to the reconstruction continued and a petition of more than 2,000 signatures was presented to Aurora Council in 1999. The petition had little effect as regional council voted to proceed with the reconstruction.

In spite of all the objections and concerns about the environmental impact of the marshlands, which have been declared provincially significant, tenders will be called in the near future for construction to proceed.

Musical "Clue" offers numerous different endings

If you like the game "Clue" and you enjoy musicals, Theatre Aurora has something to offer during the March Break next week.

The theatre's youth group is presenting "Clue, The Musical", and tickets are still available.

The musical is based on the Parker Brothers popular board game.


This is a fun-filled family production and offers 216 different possible endings.

Each performance could be different from the one before.

Production dates are March 12,13 & 19, 20, with curtain at 8 p.m.) and March 14 & 21 for matinees

beginning at 2 p.m. For tickets and further information, call 905-727-3669.

Performances are staged at Factory Theatre, located on Henderson Drive, west of Yonge Street, in Aurora's south end.



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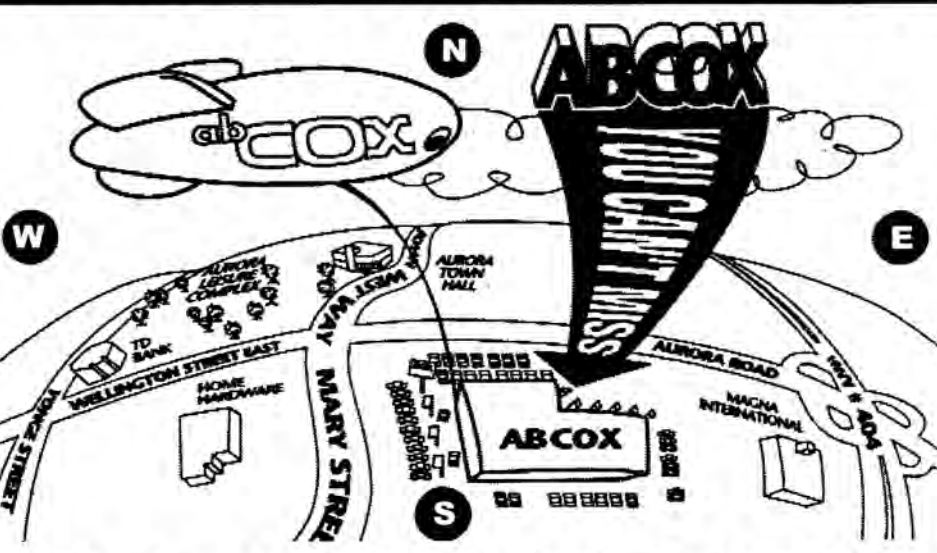
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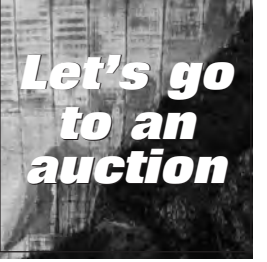
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AUCTION SALE
MONDAY MARCH 15, 2004 - 6 p.m.
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Furniture, Glass, China, Fiestaware, Artworks, Figurines, Lighting, Toys, Collectibles & Misc.
PREVIEW: 5:00 p.m. Day of Sale.
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AUCTIONEER DAVID BEASLEY, ICCA, CPPA
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Full Details At: www.auctionsfind.com/beasley
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NEW FURNITURE AND ELECTRONICS AUCTION
SATURDAY MARCH 13, 2004
ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION
105 INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY N., AURORA, ON
Preview 10am/ Auction 11am
Bob Gosse, Auctioneer, has been instructed to liquidate this superb collection of new furniture and accessories at a "NO RESERVE" auction. Approximately 25-piece sofa sets from traditional to contemporary to designer looks, from 100% Italian leather to the highest grade fabric on the market. 6 Gorgeous Dining room suites, some with matching buffets, hutches and sideboards, some in solid wood and in wood veneer, cherry, walnut, mahogany, pine, and maple finishes. Elegant bedroom outfits to include a stunning 8pc Queen Bedroom Suite in Med. Oak, and a fabulous 8pc Queen Sleigh Bed Suite with hidden drawers. Hand carved Queen Mahogany Canopy Bed. Beautiful Pine Bar with matching stools. Vegas Games Bar Counter. Huge assortment of coffee, end tables, jam cupboards, gifts, entertainment units, and lamps. Huge assortment of electronics and home theatre- 19"-61" wide screen TV's, DVD players, cordless phones, small kitchen appliances, all under warranty. Many framed pieces of art, signed and numbered "Group of Seven". Hand painted desks and Bombe Chests. Quality mattresses and box spring sets in single, double, queen and king from the most economical to the highest quality pocket coil pillow top sets on the market. Satsuma, Limoge vases, sign boards, and crystal. 32pc pots and pan sets from Germany. 65-98pc China dish sets. Cutlery and Knife sets. Tribal Art, masks, porcelain dolls, 8x11 & 5x8 carpets and bakers racks. This is a partial listing many more awesome items not listed. Subject to additions and deletions.
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16 P O T H O L E 17 O O S
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21 N A S T 22 S P O L O L
23 O R T A 24 S S W 25 W E L L
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April 23rd 2:00pm to 9:00pm

April 24th 9:00am to 7:00pm

April 25th 10:00am to 5:00pm