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THE AUROREDAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 25 No. 36 905-727-3300

TheAuroran.com

FREE

Week of June 6, 2024

BLAZE of GLORY

The Fire Guy kept crowds enthralled on Sunday as the Aurora Chamber of Commerce hosted the annual Aurora Street Festival. Despite a damp start and threatening skies throughout the day, the weather couldn't dampen the spirits of tens of thousands who descended on the Town's downtown core for the event. For more, see Page 12.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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ROYAL LEPAGE

Swimmer, rugby coach, member of Jamaican bobsled team among Sports Hall of Fame's Class of 2024

BY BROCK WEIR

Athletes and coaches in the areas of swimming, rugby, table tennis and track and field – one who was also a member of the iconic Jamaican bobsled team – are among the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame's Class of 2024.

Swimmer Marcel Gery and table tennis player Grace Wong are inductees in the Athlete category this year, as is

track and field star Milton Hart, who made a splash in the bobsled at the Albertville Olympics. Rounding out the Class of 2024 is Sandy Townsend, who is honoured for his career as a rugby coach.

This year's inductees were announced by Aurora Sports Hall of Fame President Javed Khan at a presentation to Council on Tuesday night.

First up was Gery, an Olympic

bronze medallist as a member of the 4x100 metre medley relay team, along with Jon Cleveland, Stephen Clark and Mark Tewksbury.

"Gery's skill and dedication were pivotal in securing this medal for Canada," said the ASHOF in his citation. "Beyond the Olympics, Marcel has won several medals for Canada at the Pan Pacific Championships

Continued on page 13

Aurora Cares aims to rally residents to fight for transitional housing

BY BROCK WEIR

A group of concerned Aurora residents has come together to call on local lawmakers to take a second look at a plan for a men's transitional housing building in the Town's south end.

Aurora Cares is a new group that aims to come together as a collective voice calling on Council to follow through on previous plans for the building, which

Continued on page 9

STORY HOUR – Pride Month activities kicked off in Aurora last week and the Aurora Public Library (APL) joined forces with Pflag York Region to host a Drag King Story Hour for families, featuring a performance from Gustav. For more, see Page 14.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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TOWN OF AURORA

NOTICE BOARD

June 6, 2024



Council & Committee Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Monday, June 10	7 p.m.	Holland Room	Heritage Advisory Committee
Tuesday, June 11	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Finance Advisory Committee
Thursday, June 13	10 a.m.	Holland Room	Community Recognition Review Advisory Committee
Thursday, June 13	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Committee of Adjustment
Thursday, June 13	7 p.m.	Tannery Room	Aurora Cultural Centre Board
Monday, June 17	7p.m.	Holland Room	Environmental Advisory Committee
Tuesday, June 18	5:45 p.m.	Holland Room	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, June 18	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council Workshop/Education Session
Wednesday, June 19	7 p.m.	Aurora Public Library	Aurora Public Library Board
Monday, June 24	6 p.m.	Tannery Room	Aurora Cultural Centre Board (ACCB)
Monday, June 24	7 p.m.	2nd Floor Atrium	ACCB Public/Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, June 25	6:15 p.m.	Council Chambers	Audit Committee
Tuesday, June 25	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Thursday, June 27	10 a.m.	Video Conference	Aurora Appeal Tribunal/Property Standards Committee (if required)

*Committee of the Whole, Public Planning and Council meetings are available to the public in-person and via live stream on the Town's YouTube channel.

What's Happening

Aurora's Community Garage Sale



Saturday, June 15 | 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Aurora Community Centre Parking Lot

Join us to see what treasures you will find!

aurora.ca/GarageSale

Online Skylight Gallery Exhibition

Exhibit presented by: Royal Rose Gallery & Gifts – The Art of Storytelling

Exhibiting the history, beliefs and traditions of Indigenous peoples and their connection to the land and their ancestors. View in-person at Aurora Town Hall in the Skylight Gallery. View online at aurora.ca/SkylightGallery. All artwork is for sale. Please contact Sarah Reynolds at sreynolds@aurora.ca if you are interested in investing and owning a beautiful artwork piece.

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JRPM
JUNE IS RECREATION AND PARKS MONTH

June is Recreation & Parks Month (J.R.P.M.) is an annual community mobilization movement that promotes the benefits of utilizing recreation and parks for your health. For full details on how you can explore Aurora's recreation programs and parks during the month of June, please visit aurora.ca/JRPM.



Preserve Aurora

The Town of Aurora has once again expanded its Preserve Aurora art collection. At the 2024 Aurora Art Show and Sale, the Town purchased "Guitar Moon" by Janet Riches. Robin McDougall, Director of Community Services, purchased "Nightfall Melody" by Owen Lutzen for the Town's youth collection. Congratulations to these talented artists!



Contact Photography Festival

We are hosting a multi-venue archival photography exhibition called "Aurora Through the Archives," as part of the 2024 CONTACT Photography Festival.

WHEN: The historical display will be offered free to the public from **May 7 to June 30**.

WHAT: Delve into Aurora's rich history through a collection of archival images that span over a century.

WHERE: The exhibition will be showcased across three venues: the outdoor space of the Aurora Armoury, the Hillary House National Historic Site, and the Royal Rose Gallery & Gifts.

For more information about the CONTACT Photography Festival in Aurora, visit AuroraMuseum.ca.



Congratulations to the following award winners:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Trevor McCleery | Stanley Weisbeker |
| Mike Bender | John Sargent |
| Irene Clement | Greg Way |
| John Clement | Rob Gaby |
| Silvana Croce | Ross Haagsma |
| Karen Fullbrook | Glen Sharp |
| Toni Monaco | Terry Pressmar |

- Dabria Peta-Dragos
- Alex & Rin Van Hemert
- Donna Lewis
- Rosa Calabrese
- Community Living Central York
- David Nisbet
- COBS Bread
- Community & Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS)

★ Congratulations to **Vern Cunningham** ★
2024 Citizen of the Year



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Federal Conservatives tap Menegakis as Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill nominee

BY BROCK WEIR

Former Richmond Hill MP Costas Menegakis is looking to return to the House of Commons.

Menegakis, who served as Member of Parliament from 2011 to 2015, was tapped by local Conservative Party of Canada members at a riding meeting last Tuesday afternoon to be their representative for Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill.

After a fraught campaign which saw two candidates denied a place on the ballot and another candidate suspending their campaign alleging a “corrupt” process, Menegakis emerged the winner against former Richmond Hill councillor Carmine Perrelli.

Members of the media were asked to leave the May 28 meeting by party official Peter Seemann citing “unfair” coverage of the race from “other” media outlets, but following his speech, Menegakis told The Auroran outside the Bond Lake Arena he was ready to “hit the ground running” as soon as an election is called.

“I know what it’s like to be in government, I know what needs to be done, and I know I can work in a team environment, certainly within the Conservative team,” he said. “I know what our community needs. I am in this community. Unlike some of the other people that ran, and I am not going to name names, I have been out on Community Clean Up Day picking up garbage, I have stood in front of the grocery store collecting food items for the food bank. I am a member of the Rotary Club, a member of the Lions Club. I am out in my community, I live in this community, so I care about my community, which is why I am doing this.

“I have fresh ideas, I have new ideas, we have a new leader, we have a fresh team, a good outlet, I think we have a good plan moving forward and, when our platform is released next year, I think

Canadians will be pleasantly pleased.”

The campaign to be Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill’s next Conservative candidate was originally a five-person race. Among the other contenders were Postmedia columnist Sabrina Maddeaux and Ward 2 Aurora Councillor Rachel Gilliland.

Maddeaux suspended her campaign at the beginning of May due to what she described as a “lack of integrity” in the election process, while Gilliland was “denied” the opportunity to be on the ballot without, she said, any reasons provided.

“I started my campaign for the federal Conservative nomination a year ago by stating that I would be running a clean campaign,” said Gilliland at the time. “I believe people deserve to have their elected officials possess the basic integrity needed when making decisions on their behalf and I am proud to say I have kept this promise. I was overwhelmed with the support I have received for my candidacy and am proud to have signed up over 580 members for the Conservative Party in Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill.”

Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) Director of Communications Sarah Fischer, however, said the Councillor did not abide by CPC rules.

“Rachel Gilliland was in clear violation of rules outlined in the CPC ‘Rules and Procedures for Candidate Nominations,’” said Sarah Fischer, the CPC’s Director of Communications. “The local Candidate Nomination Committee (CNC) recommended disqualification and the National Candidate Selection Committee upheld the local CNC decision. After review, the National Council did not accept Ms. Gilliland’s appeal of this decision.”

No further reasons were provided.

Despite these challenges, Menegakis said that, in his view, the race was not “fraught.”

“It has been clean 100 per cent,” he

said. “They can say whatever they want. I ran a very clean campaign and I am very proud of the effort and the work that my team has put in.”

Following his victory last week, Menegakis says he’s ready to continue knocking on doors between now and whenever the Federal writ is dropped.

“I happen to think the next election is not only a pivotal election but also one of the most historic in Canadian history because it will follow what I believe has been ten years by then of abysmal performance by the current Trudeau Liberals,” he said. “There has been no focus on the economy, certainly no focus on any kind of affordability issues. Young people can’t afford to buy a home in the community in which they grew up in. Seniors can’t... they’re stretching their pension dollars to eat the same way they were eating three years ago. It’s sad and I heard that door after door after door. Immigration has gone through the roof with no plan. It makes no sense whatsoever. Prior to the Trudeau Liberals, we welcomed 250,000 to 275,000 newcomers per year in Canada. We did that because we could assimilate those people, train them, bring them to Canada and they could contribute to their families and the Canadian economy. Last year over 1 million people came in. It makes no sense.

“[Trudeau] says he focuses on crime Immigration has gone through the roof with no plan. It makes no sense whatsoever. By implementing gun legislation, he’s focusing on the wrong thing. Crime has gone up, police chiefs across the country have told us that the weapons that criminals are using to perpetrate the crime are coming off the back of a car, the back of a truck, across the border with the United States. Money and focus should be put

into empowering our border services to catch these things before they come. The law-abiding sportsmen, sportswomen, outdoorsperson who has a firearms license and goes to the shooting club or is in the hunting community is not the person who has their registered weapon and goes out to perpetrate a crime. His focus has been so skewed away from reality that every year we hear the annual budget come out, it’s \$30 billion, \$40 billion, \$28 billion – at one point it was as high as a \$90 billion deficit. That is just passing the debt onto the next generations. It’s unfair. It’s time we had some common sense back in government.”



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HIKE FOR HOPE – Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leah Taylor Roy and Mayor Tom Mrakas were among the dignitaries who came out to Lambert Willson Park on Saturday, June 1, for the Hike for Hope, a fundraising event for the Aurora-based Hope House Hospice. **Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger**

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Heroes of Normandy

Death struck deeply into those who waded ashore on June 6, 1944. Struggling to quickly move from their landing craft to the sand of Normandy beach. Burdened by the heavy weight of their equipment, and the sights and sounds around them. Before them lay a terrifying array of obstacles waiting to trap, maim, and destroy anyone who attempted to challenge the terrible might of the nazi occupation of France.

Service men and women came from all across Canada. Local militia units like the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (Machine Gun) and the Essex Scottish Regiment were mobilized for active war service. These part-time "Saturday Night" soldiers were busy in their armouries and drill halls, recruiting and training its new members. Some would find themselves "storming Juno beach" on June 6th, while others arrived sometime later, joining the 3rd Canadian Division as they consolidated their foothold on the Normandy coast.

The liberation campaign slowly progressed mile by bloody mile across France until Paris was freed on August 25, 1944. In its wake were left countless dead and injured, destroyed towns and cities. Names of places became etched into the memories of the soldiers who fought in battles like Bourguébus Ridge, Carpiquet Airport, Caen, the Falaise "Gap", Vaucelles, and Verrières Ridge. The campaign to liberate France from its occupiers would end up taking the lives of 5,021 Canadian soldiers.

The number of war veterans who fought in the liberation campaign have steadily declined as the years have passed. Fortunately, some of these remarkable old soldiers are still living. They are resilient people who followed a path of duty, endured hardship, faced danger and experienced things we could never imagine. Through the National Order of the Legion of Honour medal program, the Embassy of France in Canada continues to bestow their nation's highest medal to our veterans who are proudly known as the liberators of France.

Guy Black
Recipient, Minister of Veterans Affairs
Commendation

Machell's Corners



Good start to a busy month

Summer is just around the corner and, ready to herald the season-to-be's appearance on horizon, is the sense that we're all in a rush to get there.

Don't get me wrong, this isn't necessarily the bad kind of rushing, but year after year around this time there feels to be a particular sense of urgency to get as much done as humanly possible before people apparently scatter the moment the solstice – and the school year – is in the rear-view mirror.

It's hardly a new phenomenon.

In many of our communities there is a prevailing school of thought if you're looking to reach the greatest number of people who might be interested in a community event, a municipal survey, or to provide value input on just about anything, it needs to be done before June 21, or before Canada Day at the very latest.

The idea is that most people in our communities go away for the summer, whether to their cottage or other climes. To my mind, this line of thinking is a bit outmoded due to the explosion of young families around here setting down their first roots and less likely to have a bolthole elsewhere to call their own. Additionally, in today's economic climate, there are likely fewer and fewer people who have the means to get away to a lake or another picturesque setting on a regular basis compared to previous generations.

So, as it stands, community events are coming fast and furious, with weekends packed to the proverbial gills. It sometimes feels overwhelming and harder to keep up with each passing year – but keep up we must as many of these events and observances are very important for both our collective consciousness and our sense of community.

Over the last couple of weeks, we have seen hikes for hospices, gatherings to shine a light on maladies such as Alzheimer's other forms of dementia, and in the days ahead we will have large-scale events that highlight the importance of mental health, particularly for our youth; occasions that will showcase the remarkable talent that resides within so many of our residents; and observances that will shine a light on the history of our Indigenous peoples.

Some of these events foster a sense of community for individuals who might not feel as included as they should be on a day-to-day basis, and so was the weekend that was.

On Saturday and Sunday, I had the opportunity to attend two events that are particular favourites on my calendar each and every year. First up



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

was the Aurora Public Library's annual Drag King Story Hour. Well, speaking in the most technical of terms, it was their inaugural Drag King event after several years of hosting Drag Queens both local and from within the GTHA. Queen or King, they come armed with a veritable library of inclusive children's lit – chosen to show kids that wherever they might be in their lives, and whatever their life experiences, there is always a place for them in the towns and cities they call home and within families and communities that love them.

The first few iterations of this event within Aurora were particularly well-received, but coming out of the pandemic were the subject of a small trickle of backlash, a small but no less significant pushback that crept in from larger communities.

As such, organizers can't be faulted for bringing in police to keep an eye on the proceedings, and this year was no exception. Nor was this year an exception to the feeling I had of having to be there extra early in order to be on hand for – and ahead of – any disturbances.

While this year's turnout was slightly down from years past, I am so glad to say the joy that lit up the Magna Room on Saturday morning as Gustav settled in with his chosen books was just as high as ever – and the grand total of protestors who turned out to mar the occasion was a blessed zero.

The following day brought the annual Aurora Street Festival hosted by the local Chamber of Commerce. By all appearances, it was back at full speed after trying to regain the remarkable momentum it enjoyed prior to the Global Pandemic.

Tens of thousands of people filled Yonge Street taking in more than 500 booths of products and services ranging from the conventional to the weird and wonderful, food from just about every part of the world, and music and entertainment to suit just about every taste.

What struck me, however, aside from the sheer volume of people filling the streets, was the number of people I saw waving Pride flags and wearing Progress Pride flags close to their hearts in the form of stickers in the shape of, well, hearts.

It was a sight I don't recall seeing in the more than 10 years I have been covering this event.

It might be foolish to think that these two instances are a sign that a corner has been turned after several post-pandemic years of ramped up hate speech and discrimination against the 2SLGBTQIA+ community writ large, and towards the Trans and Gender-Diverse community in particular, but these signs of solidarity certainly left me feeling more positive at the time of this writing on Monday morning than the slight trepidation I felt Friday night.

One can only hope the myriad activities that are planned to mark Pride Month for the balance of June are received with similar warmth and acceptance.

"Celebrating Pride Month has never been more important than it is right now," says Pflag York Region president Tristan Coolman. "Decades ago, our community members, parents, and allies were persecuted, threatened, became social pariahs, assaulted, and even murdered for simply trying to be who they are and defend their loved ones. Pride Month is about honouring this history. Honouring the folks who threw the first bricks at Stonewall, who marched down the streets of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver; resisting the cultural norms of their time. We honour the parents in New York, Los Angeles, Toronto and many other cities big and small who were the amongst first allies to organize and start organizations like pflag.

"Our queer elders showed up for us in the streets, they defiantly lived openly and faced acts of discrimination many of us can't fathom and their allies were there supporting them along the way. Today, we need our community and especially our allies to show up and reengage once again. Join a workshop, put a sign on your lawn, in your window, and show our community just how much real support there is for transgender and gender-diverse people in our communities. We all owe it to our elders, to their legacy to meet the moment and continue the fight and it is everyone's responsibility to ask themselves how they will respond to this call to action. You must ask yourself, how will future generations judge your actions, today."

THE AURORAN

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To submit a letter to the editor,
please send your email to
brock@lpcmedia.ca
Deadline for submissions
is Sunday at 1 p.m.

THE AURORAN

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To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to brock@lpcmedia.ca. Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.





The Aurora Museum & Archives is...

illuminating the darkness

It's hard for us to imagine the world illuminated entirely by candlelight. For millennia, regular folks would use tallow candles, sometimes lit on both ends, hence the saying. Tallow candles were made of animal fat, smelled foul, and produced very weak light. The wealthy and clergy had beeswax candles, which were odourless and produced bright, white, light. In the mid-1850s, paraffin became the dominant wax for candles. Liquid paraffin was poured into forms and the wick was secured on top. This candle-making form (85.20) is made from tin, another preferred Victorian material, and made six candles. Candle use declined rapidly in the 1870s due to the advent of the electric lightbulb. Thousands of years of illumination snuffed out – the moment a light switch was turned on.



WALKING THE SWEETGRASS ROAD

Kim Wheatley
Traditional Anishinaabe Grandmother

Pollinating your thoughts

It's the time of year when we as nature lovers find the gardener inside and lovingly release it into the green spaces we surround ourselves with, but if you live in a city chances are you are seeing human controlled spaces.

These spaces are ordered, controlled and likely pesticide infused. I mean, who wants a weed to interrupt the gorgeous, planned garden to be disrupted by an uninvited guest such as a dandelion? Hmmm, those beautiful luscious bright yellow heads always herald the blooming season and make sure to make their appearance early and often. Many folks have been taught those pesky plants don't deserve a space on our green pristine lawns or in our gardens but is that true?

Anishinaabe relationships to the land teach us that there are no weeds on earth. It is said there are only plants we have yet to develop a relationship with while learning what gifts they bring to us. Plants, it's said, are older than mankind and so hold a wisdom that is beyond human comprehension.

One thing is for sure on the heels of Earth Day it is important to remember that the Earth is your Mother.

It's not a quaint thought or an Indigenous mindset but truly the truth when it comes to life and all that it may encompass. Holding a space of "right relationship" to the Earth herself means embodying a deep respect for her endless wisdom, gift giving and lifeforce. Humans will never know more than the Earth herself but we can develop a meaningful relationship with her.

This, of course, takes time and effort wrapped in heart centered commitment to be better, do better and share better! You may ask yourself what does it take to make change or be in "right relationship"?

Anishinaabe look to creation for guidance, always utilizing the moral principles embedded in the Seven Sacred Teachings of love, respect, honesty, wisdom, bravery, humility and truth. It's said that embracing and embedding these morals no matter where you come from on the Earth will empower and direct you to the wisdoms of the ages. Wisdom is intimately tied to truth and enables a broader perspective that is a gift of time. The plant world has existed for time immemorial and interacted with all beings on earth in a myriad of ways. They sacrifice their sacred families for our human wellness. Housing, food, medicines, beauty are there for us no matter where we travel on the earth and how many have stopped to give thanks or remember to never take more than you need? It is a traditional indigenous teaching to respect the Earth by giving thanks and respecting her wisdom and sacrifices. The Earth makes no mistakes and that reliant and humble being called the dandelion works hard for all of creation. It is the pollinator food first available, it breaks up clay heavy soils, all parts of its body are edible. It sources water deep down through a hardy tap root and always creates sunshine where ever it appears with its beautiful yellow head.

I encourage you to stretch your knowledge about the land and what thrives and survives naturally allowing the land to show you have to landscape without harmful chemicals that not only kill the helpers of the earth including pollinators but eventually and slowly us humans too!

Pollinate your mind and challenge those around you to grow some new relationships to the Earth first...then grow, grow, grow!

The gift of service leads to a life of love. – Mary White

This June, York Region is celebrating Seniors Month and recognizing the important contributions older adults have made and continue to make in our communities.

The Senior Scape column would like to recognize three dynamic women whose contributions in the past and present have made their presence known as an addition to the enjoyment of our Centre and in the community.

At the grand age of 96, Stella Switzer was the Choir Chairperson who had welcomed audiences to many a choir performance. Stella was our founding member of the choir when it first had their first practice in 2006. Stella not only sang but she had also taken Arthur Murray Dance lessons and rising to become a qualified judge and emceed a few contests along the way. After the loss of her beloved husband Bud, who some of you may remember the kind man with the "Big Voice", Stella continues to contribute to a Bereavement support group by helping others get through their periods of grief as well. However, Stella will tell you that belonging to the choir is most important to her, as she states, "people make life good for you, like family and friends". Stella Switzer, you have made the choir a wonderful family and you are truly appreciated, a valued member of the choir.

Next, we come to the lady who loves dogs and people too! Welcome Sylvia Gilchrist, who has a resume that would put this writer to shame of the numerous volunteer activities she has embraced over the years. Just a few to mention: Co-Chair of The Terry Fox Run, Secretary of the Aurora Fair and Horse Show,



Senior Scape

Christina Doyle

organized the ASA dog show for three consecutive years, member of the Board of Directors for three years and the First Woman President of the Richmond Hill Squash Club. Sylvia, as our music librarian and choir co-ordinator shows no signs of slowing down as she continues to painstakingly organize and hand out choir music for each concert for over 10+ years. Last but not least we must mention that our dear Sylvia was named in 2006 the Aurora Citizen of the Year, a well-deserved award, Sylvia! She says that "staying active throughout my life, volunteering and having a good husband has kept me fit and happy all these years"! Thank you, Sylvia, for all you do for us, you are so appreciated.

Finally, if you have had the pleasure in seeing a wide variety of plays at the A.S.C. you can thank my final guest, Joan Brownlow. Retired Elementary teacher and mother of three sons who have all become competitive swimmers, it is easy to see how our Joan has risen to greater heights which includes being nominated for the "Award of Excellence in Teaching in 1995. Her love of theatre and acting along with her singing and playing piano prepared her very well to take on the Silver Stars as Director. Throughout the years Joan has been President of several organizations and Chair of various Committees, the most recent one being the Special events Committee at the Aurora Seniors' Centre. Joan will tell

you that "all the interesting experiences I have had have kept my brain active and up to date, being with people, have made my life truly memorable!"

Volunteers are special and we wish to thank all our volunteers at our A.S.C. for your selfless commitment and dedication in making our life richer. You are all appreciated for everything you do for us.

Thanks again to Stella, Sylvia and Joan for allowing me to share some of their life achievements.

Mexican Fiesta

Join us on Saturday, June 15 for an exciting evening of fun and Fiesta! Doors open at 6 p.m. – Activities will take place from 6.30 – 10.30 p.m. Enjoy a Mexican Buffet, dessert table, tea & coffee as well as a Cash Bar! Featuring a Mariachi Band, Photo Booth and Games with prizes. Tickets are \$60 apiece and will be available at Reception as of May 1. Please come out and support this ASA Fundraising event!

Friday Night Dance

Featuring a live Rock & Roll performance by the Gus Papas Band. Friday, June 7, @ the A.S.C from 7:30 – 10:30 P.M. (doors open at 7:00). Tickets are only \$15 – members/\$18 – non-members. Available now at Reception so get your tickets before they are sold out!

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday. The monthly Seniors Association bulletin is posted on our web site so for all the details on Association activities, clubs, events, bistro lunches and BBQs, sports, and movies to mention a few, and town programs, trips and other valuable information concerning the Aurora Seniors Association, take a look at www.auroraseniors.ca!

Budget Questions



INSIDE AURORA

Scott Johnston

Auroran notes it's over \$1.3M? Was it that I thought the \$6.6k in taxes on said \$800k house (and presumably a lot more in tax for a \$1.3M house) was reasonable? Or was it that I thought the percentage allocated to Aurora was appropriate?

Not knowing which of the three (or potentially more) questions were being asked, I had to respond with a less than informative "undecided."

Another question looked for feedback about debt financing and whether "the Town should continue to use debt wisely over the long term?"

One really can't check off "disagree" to this as to do so implies that you think the Town should continue to use debt, but do so unwisely. But if you agree, it assumes you approve of the Town using debt financing, either wisely or not, and this may not be how you feel.

Unfortunately, "agree" or "disagree" are the only options given, and unlike

some other questions, a response to this one is mandatory in order to continue the survey.

So, if you're undecided on this one or others like it, don't want to be pushed one way or the other, and would like to make it to the next question, the only way to do so is to take the survey twice, and answer it differently each time, so the responses balance out.

The last two questions allow you to provide any comments of your own for consideration in the budget, and the opportunity to enter your email address for a pizza dinner.

The ability to take the survey twice, or a dozen times, or even hundreds, provides some interesting considerations for these last two questions.

First, responding frequently enough with your email can really stack the odds of winning that pizza in your favour.

Second, it suggests the potential scenario of staff reporting to Council later this year that based on survey comments, what the majority of Aurorans really want is for our "Welcome to Aurora" signs to be replaced with three story tall revolving neon-lit fleury ploughs.

At the very least, that would liven up next year's budget debate.

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

What would you do with \$340.7M?

The Town of Aurora wants to find out.

Up until June 16, residents can participate in a survey to provide their thoughts on the 2025 budget. These responses will be rolled up and presented to Council later this year for consideration.

The current 2024 budget consists of \$118.6M in operating and \$222.1M in capital funds. These cover programming, snow removal, fire response, infrastructure repair and the library, amongst other things.

Curious as to what the Town wanted to know, I dove into engageaurora.ca/Budget2025 to take a look.

There are only 10 questions, nine of which simply require checking boxes, so it doesn't take too long to fill out, unless of course, you write a lengthy response to the final "any additional comments" section at the end.

I was cruising along until I hit Question 4, which basically said that an average residential property assessed at \$800,000 will pay approximately \$6,600 in taxes to the Town, Region and school board. Of this amount, the Town gets \$2,500 or 38%.

The options to check ranged from "excellent" to "very poor" (plus "undecided"), but I wasn't sure exactly what I was responding to. Was it agreement that the average home in Aurora is \$800k, when the latest real estate section in The

THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Do you support the Ontario Government's move to allow alcohol sales in convenience stores?

YES NO UNSURE

www.theauroran.com

RESULTS TO DATE JUNE 4, 2024	YES	NO	UNSURE
	14%	57%	29%

You're Invited to MPP Gallagher Murphy's SENIORS' EXPO

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June is a vibrant month filled with cultural celebrations, reflecting our nation's rich diversity.

We honour Filipino Heritage, National Indigenous History, Italian Heritage and Portuguese Heritage Months, and Pride Season.

As we come together to celebrate these cultural milestones, we also highlight our commitment to healthy, safe, and inclusive communities.

Our government has made substantial investments in environmental protection. We are investing to protect our green spaces and precious ecosystems to maintain biodiversity. To combat climate change, we are investing in climate adaptation strategies, ensuring our communities are resilient to environmental challenges such as flooding, torrential downpours, and heat waves. We are encouraging nature-based solutions such as wetland restoration and tree planting. Continuing to provide rebates for electric vehicles while expanding the necessary infrastructure will help more people make the switch to electric vehicles, reducing our reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels. The Canada Carbon Rebate supports families financially with an annual rebate

of \$1,120 for a family of four in Ontario, and new rebates announced for small businesses, while the fuel charge incentivizes eco-friendly behaviour. The Canada Greener Homes Initiative offers grants and interest-free loans for energy-efficient home improvements, reducing energy costs and emissions. This program includes loans of up to \$40,000 for deep home energy retrofits.

The Freshwater Action Plan, with a \$650 million commitment over 10 years, protects and restores freshwater ecosystems, including our beloved Lake Simcoe. Indigenous-led conservation projects have received approximately \$66 million, supporting 42 projects that establish protected areas and conserve biodiversity.

I also have joined my colleagues in York Region and the GTA to announce the National Action Plan to Combat Auto Theft. This plan focuses on disrupting, dismantling,



LEAH'S LETTER

Leah Taylor Roy, MP
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

and prosecuting the organized crime groups involved in auto theft. This builds on the National Summit on Combatting Auto Theft and recent enforcement actions that have led to the seizure of hundreds of stolen vehicles. This plan includes legislative and regulatory changes, with proposed amendments to the Criminal Code and consultations on the use of wireless devices in auto theft. It also enhances intelligence and information-sharing among municipal, provincial, regional, federal, and international police. Additionally, we are increasing the examination of shipping containers by boosting capacity at the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and incorporating new targeting tools. This plan will be continuously reviewed and updated to respond to this evolving criminal trend. By keeping our neighborhoods safe, we are investing in the future of our community.

In addition to targeted measures to combat auto theft, we are also continuing to work to keep guns off our streets. Over 1,200 firearms and 73,000 weapons were seized at the border last year. We are targeting firearms smuggling and trafficking by equipping the CBSA with x-ray machines and parcel scanners to prevent illegal firearms from entering Canada. Additionally, we have increased the RCMP's capacity to trace firearms and disrupt the illicit market. The federal government invested an additional 121 million dollars in Ontario to help fight guns and gangs.

Last year, our government announced that the first Friday of every June will be a National Day Against Gun Violence. This year, on June 7, we will raise awareness about gun violence, remember the lives lost, and reaffirm our work to end the tragedy of senseless gun violence in our communities. To mark the day, I encourage everyone to wear white in honour of the victims and survivors of gun violence.

Likewise, with the increased reports of Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and other hate incidents, the government has funded the Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives Program

(CSMARI). This program, which includes the Security Infrastructure Program (SIP), provides financial assistance to improve security infrastructure and protect at-risk communities from hate crimes. But we should not need this in our communities – it is up to us all to ensure that no Auroran feels unwelcome or unsafe. While we may have different beliefs and perspectives on current issues, this should never be translated or expressed in a way that intimidates or threatens our fellow Canadians. It is up to us all to model peace and compassion in our everyday actions and “be the change we want to see in the world.” Let us reach out to ensure that we welcome and defend our neighbours and stand up against hate and violence first and foremost here in Canada.

This June, we proudly celebrate Pride in our community. Our government is deeply committed to supporting the 2SLGBTQI+ community. We have implemented policies and programs that promote equality, protect against discrimination, and support the health and well-being of 2SLGBTQI+ Canadians. Join us for local Pride events including the Pride Parade in Newmarket on June 15 at 3:00 pm to honour and support our 2SLGBTQI+ friends and neighbors, fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for all. These events include parades, workshops, and community gatherings that celebrate diversity and promote equality.

June 21 is Indigenous Peoples Day, a day to recognize and celebrate the heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

On Saturday, June 22, come out to Aurora's Town Park to celebrate and learn more about the cultural diversity of our First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples with Indigenous Storytelling with Anishinaabe Grandmother Kim Wheatley and a live music performance by Dave Mowat and Trio. The event runs from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Visit Aurora.ca for the full schedule of events.

As we celebrate these cultural and environmental milestones, let us come together to reflect on our shared values and our commitment to a better future for all Canadians.

For more information on our initiatives and to stay updated on local events, please visit my website, and follow me on social media.

Celebrating **ENVIRONMENT WEEK** June 2-8

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TONY Van Bynen
Member of Parliament Newmarket-Aurora

Website: VanBynen.ca
Email: Tony.VanBynen@parl.gc.ca

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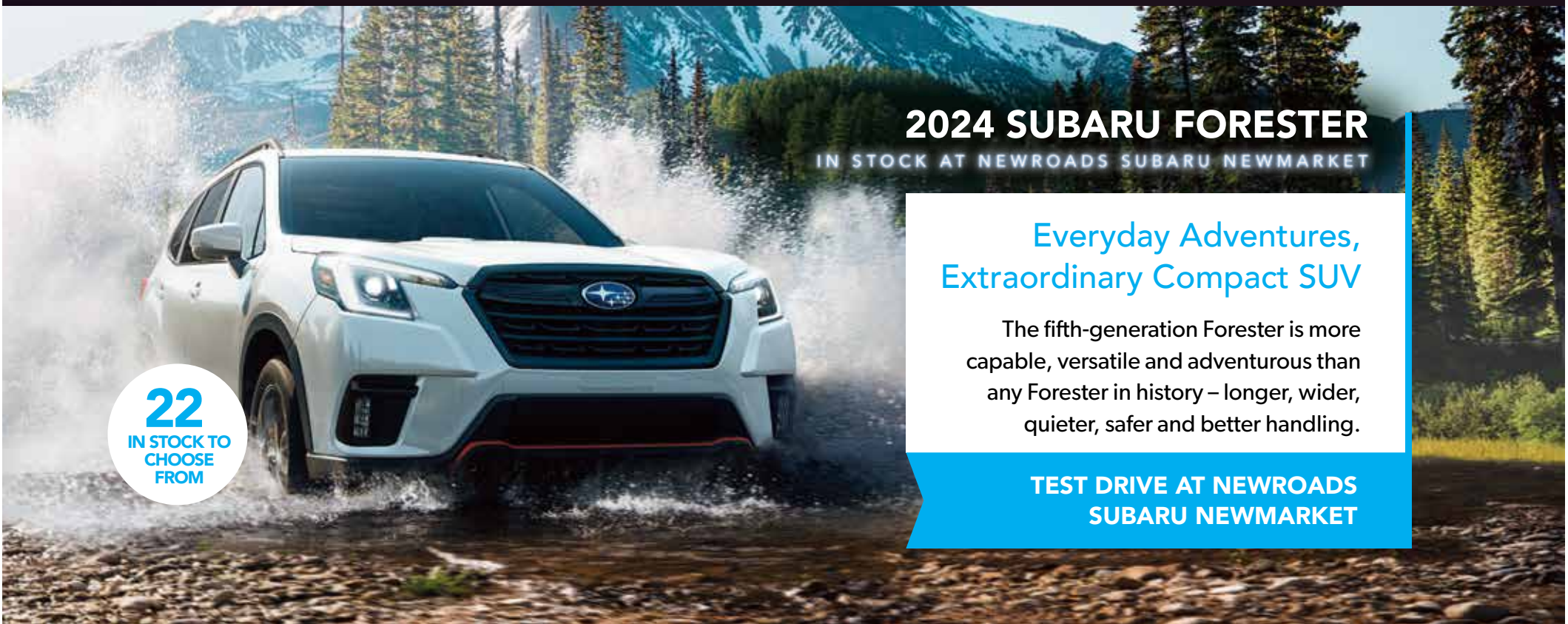
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BUSINESS & FINANCE



YCDSB joins lawsuit against Meta, citing students' social media "addiction"

BY BROCK WEIR

The York Catholic District School Board has joined a multi-billion-dollar and multi-school board lawsuit against Meta, the company following such popular social media platforms as Instagram and Facebook, as well as Snapchat and TikTok.

The YCDSB is the latest Board to join in the growing suit that calls on social media platforms and their providers to "make their products safer" and compensate school boards for the "disruption" to their mandate.

In a joint letter, Elizabeth Crowe, Chair of the YCDSB and Interim Director of Education John De Faveri said the platforms are not only having a negative impact on students, they're "rewiring the way they think, act, behave and learn."

"As a result, educators are spending increased classroom time managing issues caused by social media, administrators are forced to rework curriculum to meet the adapting needs of a student body with significant attention, focus, and mental health concerns, and the changing behavioural dynamics of the student population are causing significant shifts in the educational

landscape and huge strains on school boards' finite resources," they said.

"The impact of social media products on student learning is a multifaceted problem that requires a multipronged approach. This action will work in concert with new policy proposed by the provincial government to limit devices in the classroom. Restricting the use of devices in schools is one piece of the puzzle, but as we know, compulsive social media use outside the classroom will continue to permeate the education system and impact student learning."

Mark Brosens, Senior Communications Director for the YCDSB, told The Auroran last week that the Board has been studying the facts around the lawsuit "for quite a while" and wanted to ensure "we were doing all the proper research that was needed to ensure it was the right action for us" before joining the litigation.

"I think if you look at news reporting and conversations parents are having across the country, we're seeing everything from an increased amount of depression and anxiety in young people, all the way to sexual exploitation of both boys and girls

in Canada... both of those things by themselves are quite troubling and at the school level you're also seeing increased behavioural issues, teachers having to spend more time dealing with students who have addictions to social media products and are having problems concentrating," he said.

"School boards across the country are talking about damaged caused by social media challenges. It creates an entire situation that is really difficult for schools to manage and it has created a number of costs that school boards have to bear. What we're saying is social media companies should first of all help school boards recoup those costs, but more importantly they should be changing their product to ensure it has less of a negative health and wellbeing impact on young people."

Citing statistics from CAMH, Brosens says nearly a third of students have been found on social media for more than five hours a day and one in ten young people "feel anxious and uneasy when they don't have their cell phone on them."

"We hear from educators and staff that students are depressed, anxious, they're dealing with cyberbullying," he says. "We as a board have had to increase the amount of training that we've had to give to our staff on being aware and mitigating the effects of sexual exploitation because of what's happening on social media across the country. We have a psychology and mental health department in the YCDSB and they are incredible, hard-working people and they are struggling to keep up with the number of cases that are coming to them."

"Social media isn't the only thing that is causing these problems,

but what we're saying is that social media companies have created a product that intentionally rewards compulsive behaviour and, as a result of that, students have been given a product that is not good for their mental health and wellbeing, it doesn't provide them a safe space in the digital world, and we can look at other jurisdictions around the world that are putting measures in as a result of legislation that are making this a better place for young people. School boards can help lead the charge for creating a safer space for students online, we're happy to do that."

Boards, he stresses, aren't opposed to social media in and of itself – "we feel it is here to stay" – but they want a product that is more "beneficial," particularly for young people. The algorithm on Facebook, for example, is, he claimed, "an attempt to give one dopamine hit after another."

"We don't have any problems with social media as a way to connect with each other and as a way to build community; what we would like to see is a social media product that wasn't trying to create compulsive behaviours in those who use it. More than anything, we want to make sure that the mental health wellbeing and safety of our young people is protected in a digital space. We compliment all the other efforts that are being done at the moment such as those by the Provincial government to ban cell phones in the classroom, but what we need to have now is a larger, multi-faceted approach to solve social media's harms for young people because social media affects every aspect of their lives. We need a structural change to ensure our kids remain safe."

Aurora Cares aims to rally residents to fight for transitional housing

From page 1

would provide 55 emergency and transitional units for men on a Regionally-owned plot of land on Yonge Street, just south of the railway bridge at Industrial Parkway South.

In February, Council voted down the proposal on a 4 – 3 vote – with Mayor Tom Mrakas, Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson, Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo, and Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim voting against the plan. Affirmative votes came from Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland, and Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner.

Those who voted against the plan cited myriad concerns, including planning process and location, but Aurora Cares says they want Council members to re-open their minds based on facts and real experiences, such as those the Belinda's Place Women's Shelter in Newmarket.

All it takes, they say, is one Councillor to change their minds.

"There was disappointment from many people who participate in community services that serve food banks, food insecurity and homelessness services and a bunch of people thought it was a done deal and were kind of excited right up to a few months [before the vote]," says Aurora Cares member Steve Falk. "The Mayor was expressing his support for it and when that was suddenly and unexpectedly voted down as a zoning change, it was a real shock. It came right out of left field. It felt that we had made big progress and, for Aurora, something to be proud of. After recovering from the shock, people started to regroup and say maybe there is something we can do."

Among the main forces behind Aurora Cares is resident Adam Mobbs. He got the ball rolling on social media and momentum has only built from there.

Since the initial foundations were laid,

they have sought out expert advice on many fronts, and developed their mandate.

The decision to deny the application at the Committee level on a zoning matter, they contend, "leaves an opportunity" for Council to revisit the matter.

"One option would be a procedural avenue where a Councillor would bring it to Council and say there is an opportunity to revisit this question again. Another option that became apparent was an MZO – the Minister's Zoning Order – and that can be requested by a party like Aurora Cares or by a Councillor and the Mayor," Falk says. "One of the avenues would be to try and have one of these orders put in place so that it could be reviewed by the Province [and] it probably would be a good idea to have a ready-to-go group of supporters."

Their goal over the next few weeks is to bring even more voices into the fold, people who would be willing to come to Council to advocate on behalf of the transitional and emergency housing building, or even write to Council members with their support.

"It's a little bit of grassroots awareness-raising," says Falk. "The very sudden change in direction was a big surprise and a disappointment and they are hoping they can turn it around."

"If you just take Council, we were one Councillor's vote away from support. If you wanted to be simplistic about it, these efforts are to try and persuade one Councillor to think differently about this and to appreciate the amount of historical legacy that Town residents and community residents have had in serving this population and looking forward to solutions. Our goal is to bring to a Council member who may change, or maybe several of them might change the direction of this, that there may have been questions about this location but there was a large historical legacy of people who



Local members of the newly-formed Aurora Cares group are pictured Monday at the proposed site for a Men's Transitional and Emergency Housing building in south Aurora.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

have been working and thinking about this for maybe as much as 20 years."

Facilities such as what was proposed for south Aurora are places "where someone can step out of the cycle" of homelessness and models like Belinda's Place have proved successful.

Following Council's vote in the winter, a bid to start the process of finding other "suitable" locations for the men's transitional and emergency housing building within Aurora was successful – but the results of this survey are yet to be reported to Council.

Another motion to look at repurposing Regionally-owned properties, one proposed to Regional Council by Mayor Mrakas, also resulted in a yet-to-be-presented report.

Regardless of the outcome of either or both of these reports, Falk says that the "major concerns around a men's shelter" will be "consistent for community members."

"It doesn't matter where it is. This has been a problem anywhere in the world where people have been trying to put this kind of facility in place," he says. "It feels like that's just delaying things. Pick another location and then all the same questions

and concerns, but if you're honest about your desire to provide solutions to people, you will take a look at that location [and the \$1 million that went into planning]. I think this is a key part of our reason for focusing on this location is the amount of investment ... just throwing it away [for] something that may or may not be marginally a better solution.

"This particular location was not without considerable planning and investment and time is of the essence. It just takes years to do this kind of work. It may be fine for Councillors and the Mayors to say, 'Let's go and do a review' and meanwhile people continue to sleep in tents around the very area where the men's shelter was going to be placed and in the surrounding forests. Maybe it is not seen that way by Council and the Mayor as a delaying tactic but it delays the inevitable, which is a location has got to be chosen and plenty of time was spent on this one.

For more information on Aurora Cares, email infoauroracares@gmail.com, check out their Facebook group, or look for their booth at the Aurora Farmers' Market this Saturday, June 9, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Town Park, and again on Saturday, June 23 at the same time.

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Heritage property owners could get support from the Town

Historical Society seeks support from the municipality

BY BROCK WEIR

Owners of heritage properties throughout Aurora could soon be able to call on the Town for a helping hand.

Council last week voted to get the ball rolling on a new Heritage Grant Program for property owners.

Proposed by Mayor Tom Mrakas, the motion called for municipal staff to create just such a program aimed at “providing financial assistance” for owners to preserve and restore designated properties in consultation with the Town’s Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC).

HAC’s input, the Mayor noted in his motion, could range from the development of guidelines and criteria to determine eligibility for properties and projects, application procedures, and grant disbursements.

That, he said, would “ensure transparency and fairness in the allocation of funds.”

“Preserving and promoting our Town’s heritage is of paramount importance to the community,” said Mayor Mrakas in his motion. “There is a recognized need to support property owners in maintaining and restoring heritage buildings and sites. A Heritage Grant Program would provide financial assistance to property owners for the preservation and restoration of heritage properties.

“Such a program would contribute to the overall preservation and enhancement of our Town’s historical character and cultural identity.”

The motion was passed on consent and any future plan devised by staff will be up for further Council review before final approval.

A new grant program will not be ready for some time, but the benefits of it could come into focus at Council this week

as the Aurora Historical Society seeks municipal support for the preservation and maintenance of Hillary House National Historic Site.

Council will consider a report stemming from Aurora Historical Society co-presidents Alan Lambert and former Aurora mayor Geoff Dawe.

The letter said the AHS Board had unanimously voted to call on the Town to “enter into discussions with the Town of Aurora to explore options with respect to ensuring the long-term sustainability of Hillary House and to report back to the (AHS) membership.”

“As a result of receiving the letter, staff set up a meeting with the co-presidents to consider how best to proceed with their request,” said Robin McDougall,

Director of Community Services, in a report to this week’s Committee of the Whole meeting. “It was during those discussions that staff recommended that representatives from AHS present their request to Council for consideration. Assuming Council is interested in exploring options, the recommendations in this report will help establish next steps.

“Depending upon the outcome of the sustainability plan and the Town’s participation in that plan, it may result in both capital and operating financial implications of which the Town has not considered as part of its existing multi-year budgets. These financial implications will become clearer upon the conclusion of the Town’s consultations with Hillary House’s stakeholders.”

Petch House renovations will pave the way for future wedding chapel

BY BROCK WEIR

A formal use for Aurora’s historic Petch House will soon be a reality.

Aurora’s oldest existing home, a log house which once stood near the present-day intersection of Wellington Street East and Highway 404, which was subsequently moved, restored and reconstructed behind the Aurora Seniors’ Centre in 2014, will see new life as a civil wedding venue following a Council decision last week.

Council signed off on a renovation plan, which is estimated to cost \$50,000 funded by the Town’s Heritage Reserve Fund, on May 28.

Petch House’s future has been the subject of speculation for more than a decade.

Since it was re-dedicated after the reconstruction, it has been used for storage, a space for occasional municipal programs, and as venue for the Easter Bunny, Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, and their reindeer squad to hold court during Town-led Easter and Christmas celebrations.

The new move will allow the Town a permanent place to hold civil wedding ceremonies, a service offering that has only grown in popularity over the years, and have typically taken place on Fridays in Council Chambers.

\$50,000 will be used to make basic improvements to the structure for these purposes, including additional lighting, accessibility improvements, a security system and an upgraded floor system.

“Petch House is a desirable location for small weddings due to its central location to Town Hall, local restaurants, highway access points and natural

green space for wedding photos,” said Robin McDougall, Aurora’s Director of Community Services, in a report to Council this spring. “Guests would check in at Town Hall with Access Aurora and the delegated wedding officiant would accompany the wedding party to the Petch House to conduct the service. Petch House would also be well-used for pictures along [the Aurora Community Arboretum].

“Based on the short duration of each civil ceremony (less than 30 minutes per service) it would be staff’s recommendation to proceed with minimal improvements to the Petch House. Further additional enhancements could be considered if demand for civil ceremonies continues to rise; however, for the current expected use, a minimal level of work is needed to make this space a functioning wedding chapel that is marketable for the current trends in the wedding service industry – rustic, private/intimate, wedding-ready with no additional cost of rentals for couples looking for a small space.”

At last month’s Committee of the Whole meeting, funding and purpose were still in question as some wondered whether more money from the Reserve Fund should be spent to fully outfit the historic building, while others said the Town’s Heritage Advisory Committee was “split” on the path forward.

“I think in order to pay proper respect to Petch House and its history and how we got the developer to bring it back to Aurora and set it up, why wouldn’t we use the money in the Heritage Fund to make Petch House completely functional?” asked Ward 3 Councillor

Continued on page 17

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Week of June 6, 2024

St. Maximilian Kolbe Mustangs capture their first YRAA Varsity Girls' Rugby 15's Championship

BY JIM STEWART

The St. Maximilian Kolbe Mustangs capped their best Varsity Girls Rugby season in school history by winning the York Region 15's championship last week.

The Mustangs defeated the St. Theresa of Lisieux Lions in two straight games in a best-of-three final to secure the long-sought after YRAA title and, subsequently, punched their ticket to the provincial championships.

The series sweep versus the Lions represented a Triple Crown of championships in 2023-24 for the Mustangs. In the Fall, the Aurora high school captured both the Junior 10's and Senior 10's titles to set up the trifecta this Spring.

The Mustangs gallop into Peterborough to compete at OFSAA from June 3-5 against powerhouses like the #1-ranked defending champs Mayfield SS (Caledon) as well as #2-ranked John F. Ross CVI (Guelph) and #5-ranked Ajax and #7-ranked Uxbridge from Durham Region.

However, the daunting task of taking down these perennial provincial-caliber programs did not faze either of the Mustang captains.

Grade 12 multisport student-athlete Mikayla Young, who has committed to a soccer scholarship at Wheeling University in West Virginia in September, is the kicker for the Mustangs and is optimistic about her squad's chances in Peterborough.

"I'm hopeful that [we] can do very well at OFSAA. We'll try our best as we have all season. We started training in December for this. All the time



Photo courtesy of Coach Kate Treacy.

and effort has been put in by everyone involved so we're ready to compete."

Fellow Senior Verena Marsig, who has committed to play rugby for the Marauders and attend McMaster in Hamilton this Fall, was even more confident and was looking to leave a legacy of winning for the school she is graduating from in four weeks.

"The biggest thing last year was putting our school and Aurora on the map as having a proper, competitive rugby program. We lost in the YRAA finals last year so winning the championship this year made it even more meaningful. Now, we're representing St. Max, Aurora, and the Barbarians in the Ontario championships. We need to put up a good fight when we're representing so many. This is a great way to go out as graduating players."

The Mustangs' coaching staff—comprised of Meaghan Sheahan, Kate Treacy, and Melissa Menard—was equally enthusiastic about the team's chances in Peterborough.

Coach Kate Treacy, who also coaches Varsity Hockey, offered a voice

of experience that exuded confidence in her student-athletes.

"I've been to OFSAA for hockey and I can appreciate that anything can happen. They're passionate about rugby and they've shown it all season. They are going to be competitive at OFSAA. We told them at practice that 'It's up to you now.'"

Coach Melissa Menard noted, "This is my first OFSAA and I'm looking forward to seeing them compete against strong programs and seeing all the work they've put in this season put into practice at the provincial championships."

Coach Meaghan Sheahan, a veteran rugby coach and a former player for the Aurora Barbarians, praised her players and felt confident regarding her Mustangs' prospects in Peterborough.

"These are some of the most inspirational athletes that I've ever coached. Their debut at OFSAA will highlight the hard work, dedication, and adaptability they have shown this season."

Coach Sheahan acknowledged the vital importance of the team's

leadership group to cope with the pressures that come with a team's first trip to the provincial championships.

"We have fantastic leadership in both the forwards and the backs. Our captains—Verena and Mikayla—inspire and motivate their teammates to work together as one cohesive unit. While this may be our first time attending OFSAA, we have the advantage of being unknown to most other competitors. I have no doubt that this team will turn some heads and make a statement that St. Max is also a rugby powerhouse, not to be underestimated."

It's possible to underestimate the #14-ranked Mustangs. However, their pristine 6-0 regular season record during which they outscored their opponents 123-25 would contradict such a low seeding.

Additionally, the Mustangs' participation in two tournaments at McMaster University and Durham College earlier in May yielded a 2-1-2 record on the road—five games of vital experience that will serve them well when they perform on the pitch at the provincials in Peterborough this week.

YRP's One Metre campaign aims to change cycling behaviour

BY BROCKWEIR

Collisions involving cyclists are on the rise throughout York Region, and local officials joined the York Regional Police at their Aurora headquarters on Saturday to launch a new enforcement campaign intended to improve the situation.

The One Metre Cycling Safety Campaign launched June 1.

At an announcement which saw several dignitaries, including mayors of York Region's Northern Six communities, get on their bikes, the YRP said the campaign will run throughout this month and include increased enforcement for both cyclists and motorists.

The campaign and enforcement will be carried out with the help of drones, they say, "to identify dangerous behaviours on the road and educate drivers that cyclists must be given at



Local dignitaries gathered at the YRP's Aurora headquarters on Saturday morning for the launch of their One Metre campaign.

Aurora photo by Glenn Rodger

least one metre of space when passing."

"Every summer as cycling continues to increase in popularity, thousands of recreational and community cyclists take to the roads in York Region to make use of more than 4,000 kilometres of paved roads and more than 1,000 kilometres of cycling routes," said the YRP. "However, since 2019, six cyclists have been killed in collisions with motor

vehicles in York Region. There has been a significant increase in cyclists being involved and injured in motor vehicle collisions over the past two years. From 2022 to 2023 there was a 52 per cent increase in occurrences involving cyclists being injured in such collisions. This year to date we have seen a 34 per cent increase in occurrences involving cyclist injuries compared to this point in 2023.

"The strategic objective of the One Metre campaign is to change the attitudes of both drivers and cyclists and improve the relationship between these groups, improving driving and cycling behaviours while increasing knowledge and understanding of the laws, will lead to safe streets and safe people, two of the York Regional Police Road Safety Strategy goals."

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SUMMERHILL MARKET



The Aurora Chamber of Commerce's annual Street Festival was another resounding success, attracting tens of thousands of patrons to the Town's downtown core to shop, network, enjoy music, try some international flavours and so much more. (Top) The town brought out scores of families who made a day of it. Activities included live music at stages located at Church Street and Brookland and street curling, as tried by Mark. Among the businesses and services that took part were the Aurora Cultural Centre, represented by Suzanne, Kelly, Caitlin and Derek; St. Anne's School and Natascia, Mia and Jaclyn; Oakridge's Fashions, with Deb and Pina; and Brianne and Jules of the Residences on Yonge. Volunteers, easy to spot in their yellow t-shirts, as sported here by Aurora Chamber of Commerce staff, were integral to the success of the event.

Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger

Aurora Sports Hall of Fame announces Class of '24

From page 1

and the Commonwealth Games. His exceptional talent was further highlighted in 1990 when he set a short-course world record in the 100m butterfly in Leicester, England. This achievement cemented his status as one of the premier butterfly swimmers of his time. Marcel has been a proud resident of Aurora since 1996 and his long-standing commitment to the community has made him a well-known and respected figure in the area.

“Marcel’s contributions extend beyond the pool. He has been an active member of the Aurora community, coaching his children’s sports teams and dedicating his time to various charitable causes. His efforts in raising funds for Southlake Hospital, the Children’s Miracle Network, and the Canadian Breast Cancer Society have made a significant difference, showcasing his commitment to giving back and supporting those in need. Through his athletic achievements and community involvement, Marcel has exemplified excellence, dedication, and generosity, making him a cherished member of the Aurora community.”

Next up is Milton Hart, an educator by day and founding member of the Aurora Black Caucus.

Hart is being lauded for being recognized as “one of the fastest men in Jamaica” which has served him well both there and in Canada.

“While competing in Track and Field at York University, Milton attained numerous accolades, solidifying his status as a top-tier athlete. His achievements include being named the 1996 Most Valuable Athlete, earning the title of Ontario University All-Star in three separate years, and securing three CIAU medals. These accomplishments highlight his dedication, skill, and exceptional performance on the track. Milton’s commitment to service extended beyond athletics. He received his Queen’s Commission to serve in the Canadian Military Reserves, where he held the rank of Lieutenant. This

role exemplified his leadership and dedication to serving his country.

“For the past 20 years, Milton has been a resident of Aurora. During this time, he has served as the Vice President of the York Region District School Board, where his leadership and vision have positively impacted educational policies and practices. Additionally, as a part-time professor at Seneca College, he has shared his wealth of knowledge and experience with countless students. Milton’s passion for athletics and mentorship continued as he became a coach in the Aurora community. He co-founded Basic Speed and Agility, a program that teaches the fundamentals of sprinting, helping young athletes develop their skills and achieve their potential. His commitment to fostering athletic talent and promoting physical fitness is unwavering.”

Townsend’s 35 years of dedication to rugby is similarly unwavering – both here in Aurora with the Aurora Barbarians and internationally.

“In 2015, Sandy expanded his coaching influence by participating in the Ontario Provincial Competition at the Las Vegas 7s, further solidifying his reputation as a top-tier coach. His role extends beyond technical training; Sandy is a mentor who helps young athletes pursue their goals, maintain focus, and build confidence in themselves and their teammates. A resident of Aurora since 1997, Sandy has also been a dedicated educator at the Country Day School in King City, where he has taught rugby since his arrival. His commitment to the sport is evident in his success as both a coach and an athlete, with his induction into the Queen’s University Rugby Hall of Fame highlighting his achievements on the field.

“Sandy’s coaching experience spans multiple institutions and levels, including Lower Canada College, Country Day School, Seneca College, Toronto Rugby Union, Ontario Summer Games, and the Aurora Barbarians (since 2001). He is certified

Level 3 by Rugby Canada, enabling him to teach other coaches and further promote the sport’s development.”

Grace Wong’s talent for table tennis has also seen her take on the world – ever since picking up her first paddle at the age of seven. A resident of Aurora since 2008, she has never wavered in her love of the sport, says ASHOF.

“Grace’s exceptional talent and commitment have led her to compete in singles, doubles, mixed doubles, and team categories, where she has achieved significant accolades in each. Her recent accomplishments highlight her continued excellence in the sport. In 2023, Grace won gold medals for Team Canada at the ITTF World Master Championships in Fort Lauderdale, USA, showcasing her prowess on the international stage. Additionally, she secured impressive victories at the 94th New Jersey State Championships. In January 2023, Grace emerged victorious in the Mixed Doubles category at the

ITTF World Veteran Championships in Muscat, Oman, further solidifying her reputation as a top-tier table tennis player.

“Beyond her personal achievements, Grace has played a pivotal role in promoting table tennis within the community. She co-founded the Canada Panda Cup in the Greater Toronto Area, a tournament recognized at the national level. Her commitment to the sport extends to her volunteer work, where she advocates for women’s equality, diversity, and inclusivity in sporting opportunities. Grace’s contributions to table tennis and her efforts to foster a more inclusive sporting environment reflect her deep dedication to both the game and the community.”

Gery, Hart, Townsend and Wong will be celebrated at the Aurora Sport Hall of Fame’s induction ceremony on Thursday, November 7, which will be held for the very first time at Aurora Town Square.

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GETTING THINGS DONE

Mayor Tom Mrakas

Last week at Council, we gave final approval on a 5-1 vote (Councillor Gilliland opposed and Councillor Weese absent) for our updated Official Plan for the Town of Aurora (subject to the appeal period).

This document is more than a series of policies and maps; it is the guide for our community's growth and development over the next decade.

This plan is the result of extensive consultations with residents, businesses, and stakeholders, reflecting the diverse

voices and aspirations of our Town. Together, we have crafted a blueprint that balances progress with preservation, ensuring that Aurora remains a place where future generations can

thrive.

We have implemented policies that protect our natural environment while promoting appropriate growth. By prioritizing sustainable development, we are not only safeguarding our environment but also enhancing the quality of life for all Aurorans. Additionally, we have carefully planned growth in strategic areas such as our Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) around the GO and in our promenade area, continuing the revitalization of our downtown core while preserving our heritage.

The policies developed in the updated Official Plan will build on what makes our Town great. We are committed to ensuring that growth is managed responsibly, avoiding overdevelopment, and maintaining a balanced approach that fits the unique character of our community. This will help Aurora continue to be a great place for work-life balance.

I am excited about Aurora's continued positive growth over the next ten years. I look forward to working with residents and Council to see our collective vision become a reality and our Town continue to be one of the best places to live, not only in Ontario but in Canada.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me by email tmrakas@aurora.ca or by phone 905-726-4746. I am here for you.



Gustav kept kids and families enthralled at the APL's Drag King Story Hour on Saturday morning.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

First Drag King Story Hour a hit for APL

BY BROCKWEIR

The Magna Room at the Aurora Public Library was the scene of joy and inclusion on June 1 as the APL hosted its first Drag King Story Hour.

Held in conjunction with Pflag York Region, this was the first Drag King Story Hour hosted at APL after several seasons' similar story hours led by Drag Queens.

Nearly 40 people spanning generations filled the room as Gustav, the alter ego of Sare Thompson, led the morning with stories of acceptance, diversity and community.

While Drag Queen and Drag King story hours have seen backlash across North America in recent years, Saturday's event was protest-free, which came as a relief for Gustav and event organizers.

"I am beyond thrilled with the turnout the community gave us," said Sam Marchello, an information and programming specialist at APL, who took the lead on this event for the first time this year. "I am beyond thrilled with Gustav's performance. I'm just in general happy to be here supporting the queer community, especially as a queer librarian here in Aurora. It just makes me so happy to see our community being wonderful to everything. I am really happy."

This same sentiment was by Gustav, for whom this story hour was a first for the Toronto-based performer.

"It was so fun," said Gustav. "I have so many friends who work in the drag scene as Kings and Queens and non-gender specific performers, and it was so nice seeing what they do, seeing what I could take from that and bring into my own thing. It was such a wonderful time – the kids and parents were so sweet and it was such a wonderful community. I got great books from the library that are all about bring yourself, being inclusive – it was a lot of fun. I think the people who are afraid of drag performers and think we shouldn't be around kids, I think, come and watch this because we're just teaching it is okay to be yourself, it is okay if you're different, it's okay if families are different. It's our differences that make us unique and special."

It was "amazing," Gustav agreed, that protestors failed to turn up outside of the Library and said it could be the sign of a turning tide.

"I think it means that the people in the Province of Ontario are really coming together against people that don't think drag is right, that don't think gender diversity is right, and think that's not appropriate for kids," said Gustav. "I think the fact there were no protestors today speaks volumes that that's not a good attitude to have. We're just people, we just want to have a good time, celebrate pride, read some stories, and have fun – just like any other story time!"

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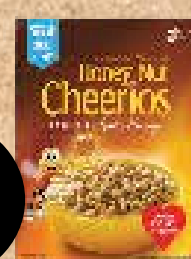
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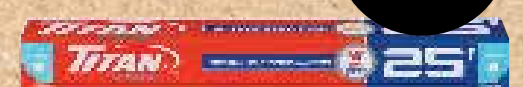
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All-way stop, traffic calming measures coming to Tamarac Trail

BY BROCKWEIR

A new suite of traffic calming measures will soon be implemented on Tamarac Trail.

Council last week, following pleas from residents, voted to install a four-way stop at Tamarac and Albery Crescent, as well as flexible traffic signs. Lawmakers have also left the door open to urban shoulder traffic calming measures and the painting of a centre line if deemed necessary going forward.

“Tamarac Trail has a significant curve near the bottom close to Henderson that greatly reduces visibility. This lack of a proper line of sight is a constant danger, especially for my children who must cross the road to reach the sidewalk where they catch the bus or walk to the park,” area resident Caitlin Harris told Council on May 28.

Tamarac, she said, is being “increasingly” used by drivers coming off McClelland Way to access Yonge Street, she contended, “resulting in heavy traffic and rampant speeding.”

“This daily reality puts everyone at risk, making it nearly impossible for my children to enjoy the same carefree experience I had in this very Town,” she continued. “We’re not asking for much – just a stop sign on Tamarac, [which] has no stop signs currently. This simple addition would slow down traffic and significantly improve the safety for all residents. It would provide peace of mind for parents like me who want [their children] to grow up in a safe environment.”

Harris’ views were bolstered by

neighbour Anne Harrison, who said the traffic conditions have been a community concern for “upwards of 18 years.”

“I am truly scared to live on that street right now the way the speeding is going on,” she said.

Added neighbour Joyce Mikros: “It’s a nightmare to live there.... It’s not safe, people are driving too fast, we have a new generation of drivers who aren’t really considerate and don’t take into account safety and children. It’s a different time but we do need to put in really strong measures. I don’t think the slow-down measures are enough. I think we need to put in two hard stops.”

Municipal staff initially recommended against the traffic calming measures that were ultimately approved by Council as the street didn’t meet prescribed traffic thresholds. While lawmakers agreed that safety was paramount, they had different views on what would prove effective on Tamarac.

Ward 2 Councillor Rachel Gilliland, for instance, said she “worried” that the stop signs would create a “false sense of security crossing the road.”

“I want to make sure we’re making the right decision here. It might be a good first step with the traffic calming,” she said, suggesting a speed hump might be more impactful.

Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo offered a similar perspective, adding that while he had “no issue” with the stop sign, he didn’t feel “that alone...is going to solve the issue.”

Continued on page 19



Deb Clark, owner of Oakridge’s Fashions, second from right, is pictured with members of the local CFUW after presenting support for their scholarship program. Contributed photo

Weekend Garden Tour aims to inspire young minds

BY BROCKWEIR

Whether you’re looking to get some fresh gardening ideas, immerse yourself in architecture, or simply to spend a nice day outdoors for a good cause, consider coming out to this Sunday’s Aurora-Newmarket Home & Garden Tour.

Hosted by the Canadian Federation of University Women Aurora/Newmarket, the June 9 event will raise funds for the organization’s Charitable Trust Scholarship Program for young women. This year’s tour aims to raise \$35,000 for the cause.

Among the Aurora stops on the tour include the residence and studio of noted artist Vicki Carruthers and a property on Steeplechase that has been “transformed” by King’s Pathways to Perennials. Newmarket stops include the Sutherland House, a Victorian architectural gem on the corner of Prospect and Timothy Streets.

“The [scholarship program] is about taking that pressure off and trying to ensure whether it is a university program, a college program, or young women who are going into apprenticeships that the money is there to support them. We wouldn’t want to see a door being closed and if it is a difference between a student being able to attend post-secondary or not, this gives them a leg up and the [financial] reassurance that they can move

forward,” says Anne Marie Devine of the CFUW Aurora/Newmarket, who notes the local chapter works with 15 different secondary schools in northern York Region for program delivery.

“100 per cent of the sponsorship dollars and advertising revenue we receive goes directly into our scholarship fund and that’s a promise we’re able to make to our sponsors and advertisers. We’re up almost \$90,000 in the last three years we’ve been able to contribute just to this initiative. The name of the tour is Come Be Inspired. People are curious about the lifestyles and the living spaces of others. We also pride ourselves on the fact we’re able to inspire these young women with this little leg up.... We’re inspired by them and we want to inspire them to continue with their education.”

Among this year’s sponsors are realtors Angela Jones and Doug Sabiston, Roadhouse & Rose, Scotia Wealth Management, the Town of Aurora, New Roots Garden Centre, Amica Aurora Promenade, H.J. Pfaff Audi, and Oakridge’s Fashions – with Oakridge’s owner Deb Clark recently contributing \$1,650 in proceeds from the store’s annual Giving Shop to the initiative.

For more, including tickets, visit cfuwaauroranewmarket.com/our-home-garden-tour.

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You don't need an economic study to tell you that prices have skyrocketed the past few years.

Any Canadian who buys groceries, fills up the gas tank, or pays rent knows that inflation has taken a big bite out of their take-home pay.

The same goes with our crumbling standard of living.

Canadians can sense that it's deteriorating in a number of ways: stagnant wages, fewer job opportunities, higher taxes, mounting debt and less money to pay the bills.

Even still, a new study released several weeks ago by the Fraser Institute confirmed what most Canadians already knew in their bones: our living standards are dropping.

The Fraser study revealed that Canadians' GDP per person – a measuring stick for gauging the income of a country's citizens – has been tumbling for the past four years. According to the think tank, we're stuck in one of the steepest and longest declines in living standards over the last four decades – and it could get even worse in the years ahead.

Numbeo, the world's largest cost-of-living database, recently released their latest Quality of Life Index by Country that looks at measures such as purchasing power, health care, safety, pollution and traffic commuting. According to the 2024 Index, Canada now sits 33rd in the world, well behind countries such as Lithuania, Slovenia and Portugal. Just over a decade ago, Canada ranked #5 in the world.

But rarely does anyone ever ask the question: exactly why are our living standards and quality of life dropping? And what's more, what can we do to stop it?

One reason they're dropping is that we've abandoned the real economy – the economy where you make things – in favour of the paper-shuffling financial economy, where wealth is traded and managed.

Another reason is that we've forgotten that in today's global economy, we're engaged in economic warfare with countries who are hungrier and shrewder. These countries have well developed economic strategies to make their



THE PRINCIPLES OF AN ECONOMIC CHARTER OF RIGHTS

By Frank Stronach

Canada's living standards continue to erode

locate a portion of its manufacturing operations in the various markets where its products are sold. But many Western companies are only manufacturing in China so they can ship products back into their home markets in order to make higher profits, and in the process, they're eroding the economy of the country where they're headquartered. It's a formula for national economic suicide.

The global economy is spinning faster and faster with each passing year, which is why Canada needs to find new and better ways to remain globally competitive. Jobs are the most precious commodity in the world, and in an effort to raise the living standards of their people, countries everywhere are fighting tooth and nail to lure investments – and the jobs that go with them – to their shores.

It's baffling to me that we don't have a national economic strategy that seeks to build on our strengths in various key industries and turn our immense natural resources into value-added products that can be sold to consumers around the world.

Another major factor for our economic decline – the one most often overlooked – is that our government has become bloated and top-heavy, and it's draining the country's wealth to meet the payrolls of massive bureaucracies in Ottawa, the provinces and many of our cities.

Our governments are too big, too intrusive, and too expensive. Businesses and taxpayers are paying for that overhead through steep taxes, and that in turn makes us increasingly uncompetitive on a global scale.

There are many other reasons for why our living standards are falling, including chronic underinvestment in product

major businesses or national champions the dominant players in key industries like pharmaceuticals, airlines and automotive. These more aggressive competitors are taking jobs from Canadians and crushing our industries one by one.

The best example of a country with this sort of strategic approach is China, the world's newest industrial giant.

I've always been a big believer that a company should

R&D by our biggest companies, a troubling lack of technically skilled trades training and education, and a repressive tax-and-regulatory environment that is stifling entrepreneurship and keeping many Canadian start-ups from growing and expanding.

But many of these problems can be fixed by adopting an Economic Charter of Rights. The Charter would put more money in the pockets of Canadians through profit sharing, straighten out our tax system, put the brakes on out-of-control government spending, and cut the red tape that has hamstrung our businesses.

Countries that apply these sound economic principles will prosper. Those that do not are destined to get left in the dust.

To learn more about how an economic charter could help restore our living standards, contact info@economiccharter.ca.

Fraser Institute Source: www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/changes-in-per-person-GDP-Income-1985-to-2023.pdf

Quality of Life Index Source: www.numbeo.com/quality-of-life/rankings_by_country.jsp?title=2024

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Petch House renovations will pave the way for future wedding chapel

From page 10

Wendy Gaertner. “I voted against this originally because I thought it just wasn't doing enough, and maybe it's the chicken-or-the-egg scenario that if we don't do everything to make it fully functional, how do we know if it is going to be truly used by the community?”

Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese offered a different viewpoint.

Citing feedback from the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC), he questioned what other funding sources have been explored and any opportunities in the offing to “replenish” the Heritage Fund.

“The Committee was a little bit split,”

said Ward 5 Councillor John Gallo of the HAC feedback. “One person had an issue with spending that money for this considering...it's stuff we would probably categorize as maintenance to a heritage building. There was another member who said they didn't have a problem with spending it....”

But, he added, he had a hesitation with allocating this funding considering the uncertainty over the Town's future Development Charge revenues.

“I am of the opinion we should step back and re-assess until we have a solid plan on an extremely serious financial issue we find ourselves in,” he concluded.

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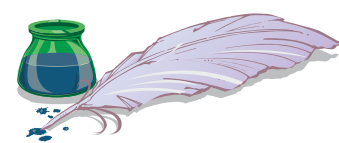
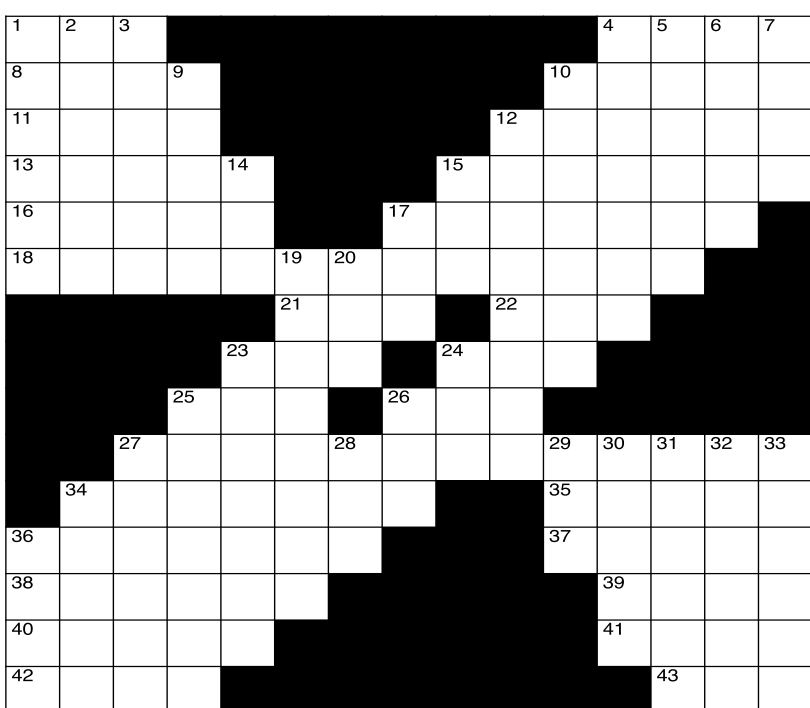
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- Something free
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- Top-quality
- Expansive
- Seizure
- People with congenital absence of pigment
- Mocked online
- Clint's son
- Body part
- Humor
- Code number

- Your physique
- Family of regulator genes
- LA football player (abbr.)
- “The Blonde Bombshell”
- Charity
- Bluish greens
- Examined closely
- A type of equation
- Stretched uncomfortably
- Indian religious god
- Clocks
- Slowly leak through
- Witnesses
- Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

- Nestlings
- Induces vomiting
- A place to eat
- Partner in the air
- Offered one's take
- Nobel-winning French biologist
- Farm animals
- Prevent from growing
- Sensationalist periodical
- Soft-bodied beetle
- Very fast airplane
- Imaginative creation
- Recipe measurement (abbr.)
- Evoked a response
- French river
- Shiny yellow minerals
- Make illegal
- U.S. military branch
- River in France and Belgium
- A woman of refinement
- Male child
- Type of medication
- German city
- Animal disease
- Mediterranean dietary staple
- Sneak out
- Radioactivity unit
- Performs on stage

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FOR SUPPORTING A LOCAL BUSINESS

All-way stop, traffic calming measures coming to Tamarac Trail

From page 16

Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson noted that while he was supportive of flexible signage in a bid to better control traffic, he was opposed to speed humps and cushions.

Mayor Tom Mrakas agreed that one measure will not solve all the issues, but said Council has set precedents in the past of implementing traffic calming measures where warrants have not been met.

“Sometimes it’s not going to 100 per cent solve it, but I think if it makes life a little bit better or a little bit safer in the area for our residents,

it’s our obligation to see how we move forward and provide those safety measures for residents,” he said. “Ultimately they (the residents) are the ones living it every day – just because it doesn’t meet the warrants doesn’t mean it’s not happening.”

The all-way stop was approved on a vote of 6 – 0, with Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese not present at the meeting. Flexible traffic signs were approved 5 – 1 with Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim voting against. The option of urban shoulders and centre lines got the green light on a 4 – 2 vote, with Councillor Gilliland joining Councillor Kim in opposition.

THINGS...you ought to know

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

The Aurora Farmers’ Market returns to Town Park today. Come by and shop local from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

The Aurora Farmers’ Market returns to Town Park today. Come by and shop local from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Aurora Performing Arts Festival will take place in Town Park today from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Do you enjoy singing, acting or dancing? Then this is the competition for you! Aurora Performing Arts Festival, presented by Marquee Theatrical Productions, in partnership with the Town of Aurora, is an exciting performance opportunity for children and youth. For more information, please email Marquee Theatrical Productions. To speak with someone directly, please call 905-726-4762 or 905-713-1040.

The Aurora Seniors Association Presents: Mexican Fiesta! From 6.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. At the Aurora Seniors Centre, 90 John West Way, Aurora. Featuring: Mexican Buffet & Dessert Bar, Coffee Tea, Mariachi Band, Photo Booth, Games with Prizes, Cash Bar. Tickets must be purchased in advance at \$60. Tickets on sale now from the Aurora Seniors’ Centre or by calling 905-726-4767. For more information please contact Sandy Bundy at ssbundy@sympatico.ca or 416-580-

7866

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

National Indigenous History Month – Celebrate and learn more about the cultural diversity of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples with Indigenous Storytelling and a live music performance by Dave Mowat and Trio happening in Aurora at Town Park.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

Aurora Garden Tour – 12 noon to 4.30 p.m. Garden Aurora presents our annual tour of nine beautiful local gardens. Owners of these private paradises will be in attendance to answer all of your questions. This is a self guided tour, rain or shine. Tickets are \$15 and available at Royal Rose Art Gallery and Petal Me Sugar Florist in Aurora. In Newmarket, tickets are sold at New Roots Garden Centre, Wild Birds Unlimited and Replenish General Store. Tickets will also be available at the Aurora Farmers Market June 15th, 22nd and same day at Garden #1. More information is available at www.gardenaurora.ca or 905-713-6660.

ONGOING

Partagez le Français: Ce groupe accueille les ADULTES / 18+ (des francophones aux débutants capables de converser) - qui cherchent à mettre en pratique leurs compétences Conversationnelle en français. Over Zoom with a nominal fee of \$2.50. RSVP by visiting meetup.com/Partagez-le-francais. For more information, email partagez.york@outlook.com.

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EXECUTIVE HOME WITH LUXURY UPGRADES

Brand new executive home in Princeton Heights, Aurora Estates! This luxurious Fernbrook Homes property features a 3-car tandem garage, white oak hardwood floors, an elegant living room with coffered ceilings, a chef's dream kitchen by Downview, a great room with 20ft ceilings, and a finished lower level with an exercise/media room, recreation room, wet bar, and spa-like bathroom.



BRAND NEW EXECUTIVE "GREEN" & "SMART" HOME

Experience eco-smart luxury in South Aurora's prestigious Royal Hill. This home features a gourmet kitchen, spa-like master suite, hardwood and porcelain floors, 10' ceilings, and an oak staircase. Highlights include a walk-out lower level, green technology, and serene views. Located close to amenities, nature, and transit for unparalleled sustainable living.



EXECUTIVE HOME: \$400K EXTERIOR UPGRADES

Nestled in a tranquil cul de sac, this executive home boasts a 4-car garage, 19ft foyer ceilings, a gourmet kitchen, and a luxurious primary suite. The basement rec room includes a theater and hockey room. Enjoy resort-style amenities: saltwater pool, cabana, sunroom, and over \$400K in exterior upgrades.



LUXURIOUS HOME WITH RESORT BACKYARD

Experience luxury living with modern finishes, hardwood floors, a gourmet kitchen, an elegant family room, luxurious bedrooms, a finished basement with an extra suite, and a stunning backyard featuring a saltwater pool and cabana. This property is the epitome of refined elegance and contemporary comfort.



ZONED FOR HOME BUSINESS, SALTWATER POOL

This fully renovated executive home in Richmond Hill boasts a 4-car garage, finished basement, solariums, and a pool with a waterfall. Perfect for remote work, it's near schools, parks, and amenities. Zoned to allow 35% of its space for home business, it also includes a sunroom, indoor hot tub, and fenced backyard.



CUSTOM-BUILT LAKE WILCOX DREAM HOME

This soon-to-be-built executive home in Lake Wilcox is situated on a 150' lot and features 4+1 bedrooms, 5 baths, a chef's kitchen with JennAir appliances, gas fireplaces, hardwood floors, and a skylit primary suite. The finished lower level and ability to personalize finishes ensure a fully customized luxury residence.



BRAND NEW - DOUBLE LOT SIZE

Discover unmatched luxury in Richmond Hill with this custom-built executive home on a premium 96' x 126' lot. Features include an open layout, 10' ceilings, gourmet kitchen, spa-like ensuite, spacious bedrooms with walk-in closets, and a bonus 38' x 126' easement providing extra space for your own enjoyment or potential for creating a building lot.



90 X 200 FT LAKE WILCOX GEM

Discover your secluded paradise in Richmond Hill's prestigious Lake Wilcox community, close to Hwy 404 for easy commuting. This versatile home offers a unique layout, a large front porch for sunsets, and a prime 90 x 200 ft lot. Near Lake Wilcox Park and amenities, it's ideal for renovation or building your dream home.



OAK RIDGES HOME WITH ADJACENT LAND

Beautifully renovated home, nearly 3000 sqft plus lower level, on a 74 x 296ft lot in Oak Ridges. Features a modern kitchen with walk-out to a pool-sized backyard, large family room with gas fireplace, formal living and dining rooms, and a primary suite with walk-in closet and luxurious ensuite. Rare chance to purchase with adjacent vacant land, totaling over 48000 sqft.



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Nestled in Express Condos, Clanton Park, this stunning corner unit features 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a den, high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows, and a gourmet kitchen. Includes private parking, a storage locker, and amenities like a pool, fitness room, BBQ facilities, and more.



ALMOST NEW BUNGALOW LIVING

Exceptional 4-bed, 3-bath bungalow featuring an open concept layout with 9ft ceilings and hardwood floors. The chef's kitchen has quartz counters, and the family room opens to a fenced backyard. Enjoy a luxurious primary suite, finished lower level, and convenient access to amenities, schools, parks, water, and highways.

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