

Georgina THE POST

Serving all Georgina Communities and the Greater Pefferlaw Area

Town acquires land for MURC and new fire hall on Woodbine

Town council has approved planning amendments to the South Keswick Development Area to make way for a \$30 million Multi Use Recreational Centre (MURC) on Woodbine Ave.

Seventeen-acres (seven hectares) of parkland has been created on the west side of Woodbine Ave. between Ravenshoe Sideroad and Glenwoods Ave. for the proposed MURC and 2.4 acres (one hectare) of adjacent land will be used for a new fire hall to serve south Keswick.

The lands, which are owned by Camlane Holdings, represents a redistribution of its parkland dedication to the Town for the Simcoe Landing subdivision.

The 75,000 sq. ft. proposed MURC is a \$32 million sports complex that was identified in a 2014 Recreational Needs Assessment study.

But at the March 28 council meeting Simcoe Landing resident Mike Waddington called into question whether or not the need is still there, four years after the study.

He reminded council that the “needs study” was based on a third of the MURC users coming from out of town and population projections that have since been downgraded.

“With East Gwillimbury going ahead with their rec centre it now means this third is gone and we’re likely to build a white ele-

phant,” he said adding, population projections since the “needs study” was conducted explained that the earlier projections were incorrect.

He said the East Gwillimbury facility would be located five minutes south of Keswick, a drive that should not prevent users from enjoying this facility. “If the five minute drive is an issue, then we should probably ask those in Pefferlaw how they feel about the 25 minute drive it is going to take to get to the MURC,” he said.

In addition, Mr. Waddington cited the results of the Town’s public consultation poll which asked taxpayers to comment on how they would like to see their tax dollars spent. “Tied for last place on that chart were recreation programs and new facilities,” he said. “Yet here we are, only three months later, discussing a proposed new facility for recreation.”

He suggested the town go forward with acquiring the land, building the fire hall, “but then move slowly building the rest” until the Town can produce a sustainable business plan.

“If the argument for going full steam ahead with the MURC right now is because our town deserves it or we should have one, well, that’s not logic speaking, it’s pride, it’s greed and it’s jealousy of those surrounding towns who actually pulled this

off financially.”

Addressing councillors representing Wards 3, 4 and 5 who might sometime in the future be asked by their constituents “where their facilities are, you’ll be able to tell them all the eggs in that basket are sitting in Keswick.”

In response to Mr. Waddington’s presentation, Regional Councillor Naomi Davison said council and staff are monitoring the progress of the East Gwillimbury recreational facility “and if East Gwillimbury does indeed build a facility five minutes down the road that we can use, we can alter the timeline for our facility accordingly,” she said.

The Director of Special Capital Initiatives Marc Pourvahidi said while population forecasts may not have materialized, they are based on scientific projections and “you cannot build half a gymnasium or half a swimming pool,” he said adding, growth will happen and the Town should not wait for growth to happen and then build.

Mayor Margaret Quirk said council’s plans to acquire the park land is a step further in a methodical approach to the MURC.

“Once we have that we can look at all of the other, the financial, the business plan, the design. We are not moving ahead tomorrow to dig a hole and build the MURC.”



Sandy Young



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Getting our voices heard

When I was at the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority board meeting on Friday, March 23 a woman from Uxbridge made a deputation to the board and said something I found truly interesting and very profound. Sitting around the board table were 15 elected officials--Mayors and Regional Councilors. She looked at them all and said, "When I gave you my vote, I lost my voice."

WOW! When you think about that statement, does it ever pack a punch. Truer words were never spoken.

How many times have we voted for politicians and when they get into office, they stop listening to us? Sometimes I get the feeling they interpret our votes to mean they can go along on their merry way and make decisions without worrying about what we have to say.

We no longer have a voice--even though they bring in policies and spend money on projects that were never part of the election platform that got them elected in the first place. And, many times the promises that were made during their campaign, never get delivered.

Let's look at the \$80 million the Town of Georgina plans on spending over the next few years. (Add it up: \$32 million for the MURC; \$30 million for the Civic Centre; \$7 million for a new fire hall in Keswick; \$4 million for a new library at the MURC; \$7 million to rehabilitate West Park.) I expected that a Town Hall meeting would have been called as an opportunity to give us a voice in these decisions, but that hasn't happened. (I've already addressed this in an earlier editorial so I won't go on about it again.)

But what I will go on about is how we can get our voices back. How about this for an idea? Why not get organized and create a ratepayer's association? I'll bet if there was a group that had a few thousand members, elected officials would have to listen. It

could even called the Ratepayers Association of Georgina or "RAG" for short.

Representatives of the organization could sit in on all of the council meetings and report to the membership what is going on through a newsletter or a private social media site. The membership could be polled on issues and a position could be established based upon what the membership wants. RAG could then address council with the mood of the group.

Pefferlaw has had a ratepayers association for years and there is no reason why their example couldn't be expanded to include all of Georgina. Regional chapters could be established to focus on issues arising in different geographic locations such as Keswick, Sutton/Jacksons Point and Pefferlaw. Or, the chapters could be organized within their respective Wards or neighbourhoods.

I think the time has come for us to have a voice again on matters of civic interest and something like this might just do it.

**Karen Wolfe,
 Editor**

(P.S. To read the Letters to the Editor section please go to page 6.)

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Publisher/Editor
 Karen Wolfe
 (705) 437-1216
 karen.wolfe@sympatico.ca

Proofreader
 Nancy Pickering

Advertising Sales & Inquiries
 Karen Wolfe
 (705) 437-1216
 karen.wolfe@sympatico.ca

Distribution Inquiries
 (705) 437-1216
 www.thegeorginapost.com

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Georgina Dragon Boat Club marks 15 years

A smoldering idea among a small group of cancer survivors looking for a way to keep fit caught fire in 2003 and has evolved into a winning dragon boat team.

The Georgina Dragon Boat Club now has 100 plus members and participates in at least six regattas a year.

According to Leone Coburn, the Director of Membership for the club, the early days were filled with fun, laughter and a few missteps.

Only months after organizing, the crew attended their first regatta at Lake Wilcox and eagerly skipped into a loaned boat—backwards. It was described as “kind of a Keystone Cops approach to dragon boat racing.”

Shortly after, through donations and fund-raising efforts, the club was able to purchase their first boat and have since acquired two more—the

Spirit of the Lake and Bemis Ajidamoo—an Ojibwa name meaning Flying Squirrel. Each boat is 12 metres in length and weighs approximately 682 kilograms.

While many of the original 20-woman team members were cancer survivors, that is not the

case today.

Ms. Coburn says over the years they have been joined by women of all ages who are looking for an opportunity to stay fit and enjoy the camaraderie of competition. And, the club is now mixed as men have joined the teams.

Ms. Coburn says the teams are now a force to be reckoned with at a regatta but new members who are new to the sport are always welcome.

The club practices twice a week at the Boston Pizza docks



A crew of 20 paddlers and a sweep in the rear make a team of Georgina Dragon Boat competitors.

and the regattas are never more than four hours away. “We make them into a real social event,” she says.

Registration began this week at the Ice Palace in Keswick and interested paddlers are encouraged to email:

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Pefferlaw Ice Pad roof completed



Workers have completed the roof over the Pefferlaw Ice Pad at the Pefferlaw Lions Community Centre and the structure sits ready to extend the skating season next winter and provide a covered space for summer sports activities and community gatherings. The \$1 million project received a Canada 150 Commu-

nity Infrastructure grant of \$315,000 from the federal government in 2015 and the Town of Georgina approved the additional funding of \$738,546 required for the project. The ice pad roof and attached picnic shelter were constructed using pre-engineered steel and took just over a month to erect.

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Protest letter campaign to Premier



Keswick resident and Newmarket High School student Nelson Mahmoudi (centre) surrounded by citizens opposing the Maple Lakes Estate development in the North Gwillimbury Forest, is the first of his supporters mailing letters to Premier Wynne asking her to intervene and stop the development.

Approximately 30 people were on hand Sunday, April 8 to mail letters to the Premier of Ontario in protest of the approved Maple Lake Estates development in the North Gwillimbury Forest. The letter campaign was organized by Keswick resident, Nelson Mahmoudi, a high school student at Newmarket High School. "This is a provincially significant wetland that can't be destroyed because of the interests

of a development company," Mr. Mahmoudi told the crowd. "We cannot allow this to go through. This is not the end of it, this is just the beginning of the battle." The protest campaign was also attended by Jack Gibbons, spokesperson for the North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance, Georgina Ward 3 Councillor Dave Neeson, Trillium Party of Ontario candidate David Loft and the Ontario Liberal candidate Lorelea Carruthers.



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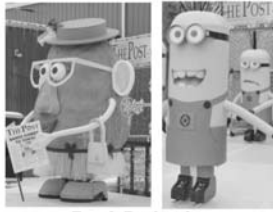
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Letters to the Editor

Thanks for your editorial of March 24th that deals with the Town's approach to confronting the problems caused by some Airbnb style rentals.

As a taxpayer, I am disturbed by the action of Georgina's CAO Winanne Grant to spend \$60,000 to \$80,000 on a sole source, consulting contract. But to add insult to injury the consultant she promoted to Council has no experience in the short term rental field.

Do we have a bigger problem at Town Hall than short term rentals? This isn't the first time in the last year that a sole source contract has been doled out without a competitive process. As you pointed out, the short term rental issue has already been dealt with by another municipality. I'll wager that many others have dealt with it in Haliburton, Muskoka and Georgian Bay. Why is The Town of Georgina a member of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, if not to share knowledge, expertise and when possible a bunch of taxpayer dollars?

I happened to be at Council the night they approved this project. There was no push back by any Councillor about the amount of money or the process. There was disappointment expressed by Councillor Neeson as to why it would take so long. After some perfunctory chatting, Ms. Grant's will was approved. I would prefer that our elected Council run our Town. To be fair, Ms. Grant did point out that while her chosen consultant had no expertise in the matter, he could start right away. I suggest Ms. Grant write a column in your paper explaining to taxpayers the Town's policy on discretionary spending and our competitive bidding process.

On the bright side. With the consulting bar set so low, and the lack of process, it does offer some new opportunities. Can I offer mammograms or dentistry services? I have no experience with either, but I can start right away, and for a lot less than \$60,000 to 80,000.

**Yours truly,
WR Trainor, Ward 4 Taxpayer.**

I read with interest Ms. Carruthers' acceptance of the Ontario Liberal nomination for the York-Simcoe Riding in the March 24 edition of the Georgina Post. I found it amaz-

ing that she had the discriminatory audacity to (quote) "fight for fairness and to fight against a group of wealthy Conservatives who would set us backwards" (end quote). I find that statement ironic, especially considering the track record and reputation of the Liberal party. The 'big boss' in Ottawa, you know:

- the one who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and has never had a real job in the private sector;
- the one who calls himself a middle class feminist but who is in reality an entitled elitist;
- the one who has hosted private fundraisers with Chinese billionaires;
- the one who breached ethics rules enjoying vacations on the private island of Aga Khan;
- the one who invited a convicted terrorist to lunch in India;
- the one who has pushed the government's market debt through the \$1 Trillion barrier

Or, how about the 'provincial bosses' in Queen's Park:

- the ones who doubled Ontario's net debt in the last 10 years through irresponsible and negligent spending;
 - the ones who have crippled the medical system and its support infrastructure since coming to power;
 - the ones who have allowed electricity prices to exponentially spiral to rates never seen before;
 - the ones who have been at the forefront of numerous scandals and broken promises;
 - the ones who have burdened Ontario with debt interest of \$1 billion a month making us the most indebted sub-sovereign (non-national) government in the world;
 - the ones who have increased the GDP from 27% in 2003 to 37% and rising currently.
- Ms. Carruthers was also quoted as saying "I will be a fierce, passionate advocate for our local environment". Yet her party, in Ottawa, cancelled the Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund which is a grassroots, community-led effort supported by more than 200 local projects to protect our drinking water and our environment.

I agree with Ms. Carruthers when she says "it's only fair that in Ontario, if you work hard, you should be able to earn a living to provide for your family". Unfortunately, because of her party's stratospheric and irresponsible spending, that has been extremely difficult to achieve for thousands of Ontario families in a Liberal political climate.

**Respectfully, Wayne Downey
Sutton West, Ontario**

Council approves short list of possible sites for Georgina Arts Centre

A short-list of possible future locations for the Georgina Arts Centre and Gallery (GACG) was approved by council on Wednesday, April 4. Town staff will spend the next few months determining the feasibility of each suggestion in cooperation with representatives from the GACG.

According to the Town's Manager of Culture, Phil Rose-Donohoe, the possible locations were divided into two categories—a "new build" and renovation of the current site.

The six locations for the "new build" scenario included: a) dedicated space at the proposed Multi Use Recreational Complex (MURC) in Keswick; b) dedicated space at the new proposed Civic Centre; c) space at the Stephen Leacock Centre in Keswick; d) a new building located on site with the Clear Water Farm on Lake Drive; e) a new building attached to the LINK in Sutton and; and f) a new building at the current location on High St. in Sutton.

These options will be assessed, evaluated and compared against the feasibility of renovating the current building.

The evaluation will consider a list of crite-

ria including location, capital costs, operating costs, timing, accessibility, partnership and fundraising opportunities.

On October 11, 2017, Mr. Bill Major, Chair of the Board of Directors for the GACG, went before council and asked the Town to partner with the gallery in its search for a long-term alternative to their High Street home.

He explained that a Town assessment of the building's condition in Sutton determined that the GACG would need to spend approximately \$600,000 to put the facility

in good repair. As tenants of this Town building, he explained that the amount was beyond the resources of the GACG. A further \$160,000 in repair expenditure would also have been required by the Town. Mr. Major attended the April 4 council meeting and said he

welcomed the Town's assistance in exploring location opportunities for the gallery. He said the goal is to have both the Town and the GACG Board working cooperatively to successfully find a future home for the gallery.

"We are crossing our fingers that nothing major is going to go wrong at our present building," he said.

Staff is expected to bring additional information forward after the GACG Board has an opportunity to discuss the locations approved by council.

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Tennyson Tidbits

We would like to send our sincere birthday wishes out to Helen Glover of Keswick who will celebrate her 99th birthday on April 12. Cheers, Helen!

WOW! Trystin Verdoold is turning 11 on April 17. Seems like only yesterday that we announced his first birthday in this paper. Happy Birthday, Trystin!

Well, even though we got a few inches of snow late last week, the fact that the ferry to Georgina Island began operations at the end of March tells us spring can't be far off!

Local Rogers TV programming in Georgina is now available to everyone with a computer and the internet. In addition to being broadcast on TV on Channel 10, the programs are now being streamed

on-line. If you do a Google search for "Rogers TV Georgina" you'll find a list of Rogers programming when you reach their site. Dates and times are available so you can watch on-line at the same time they are being broadcast on television.

Dave Harding, Ward 5 Councillor, will be leading a group of citizens in Pefferlaw for a Spring clean-up on Earth Day on Sunday, April 22. Participants should show up at the Pefferlaw Lions Community Centre at 10:00 am. Workers will be invited to a BBQ from noon until 2:00 pm. Garbage bags and gloves will be provided. This event is sponsored by the Pefferlaw Lions Club and the Town of Georgina. For further information contact Dave Harding at (905) 716-4607.

Fallen soldier receives street honour



Anne Wilson, the mother of Warrant Officer Robert Wilson, a Canadian soldier killed in 2008 after a roadside bomb exploded in Afghanistan, accepted a street sign signifying the street that has been named in honour of her son. The street is located in the Simcoe Landing subdivision in

Keswick and Ms. Wilson was joined by members from the Sutton Legion during the sign dedication by Mayor Margaret Quirk at a council meeting on March 28.. Mr. Wilson grew up in Keswick, graduated from Sutton District High School and was a career soldier.

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Getting together at Club 55 Pefferlaw

The seniors' club in Pefferlaw, Club 55, has been in existence for over 18 years. Members over 55 look forward to the camaraderie and companionship of like-minded citizens who enjoy card games, the odd game of pool and a little bit of exercise. Currently members are gearing up for the York Region Summer Games held from May 1 to June 21. One of the Club's featured activities is their monthly luncheons held on the first Monday of every month at the Pefferlaw Lions Community Centre for \$5.00. Club 55 Pefferlaw has approximately 80 members and annual dues are \$10 a year or \$20 for membership in all three Georgina senior clubs. Their luncheons and euchre tournaments help raise money that is donated to various charity organizations such as the Morning Glory



and Sutton District High School Breakfast Clubs, the Georgina Food Pantry, Hospice Georgina and bursary sponsorships. *Photo above: The crowd at a recent Euchre Tournament. (Bottom) Club Treasurer Jan Osborne addresses members at the April luncheon.*

Sutton Fair live auction draws huge crowd



A live fundraising auction at the Kin Hall on Saturday night, April 7 drew a terrific crowd who were there to help raise money for the Sutton Agricultural Society which sponsors the Sutton Fair. Above, holding up auction items are Lauren Mew, 2017 Senior Fair Ambassador, Wendy Page, President of the Sutton Agricultural Society and Samara Aabo, the 2017 Junior Fair Ambassador.

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Beth Cowper Fung, the Director of the Nurse-Led Practitioner's Clinic in Sutton, brought her staff and supporters together on Tuesday, March 27 to share a piece of cake and refreshments as a gesture of appreciation for their hard work in setting up the Clinic's new home at 152 High Street in Sutton.

The Clinic was forced to move after a devastating fire earlier this year at their former location on Dalton Road.

"This all about saying thank you," Ms. Cowper Fung said as she listed the names of those who had come forward with supplies, equipment and labour.

The Clinic serves 3,000 patients in 4,000 sq. ft. of newly renovated space. The location is temporary until their new building on Lake Drive in Jackson's Point is completed next year.

That Easter Bunny can really make a mess!



(Above) Aubrey Black, 2, and cousin Lyla Sims, 2, excitedly gather a basket of eggs at the Kid's Easter Party sponsored by the Port Bolster Hall Board on March 24.

(Below) The Easter Bunny and his assistant pause for a moment to pose with some of the children that had finished the egg hunt and traded their baskets in for a prize before going inside the hall for more activities, crafts and refreshments.



GACG celebrates women in the arts over two centuries

A very interesting presentation by Steeve and Ewa Chwojko and sponsored by the Georgina Arts Centre and Gallery captured the artistic works of women throughout 2,000 years of civilization. Many of the female artists featured were described as "the forgotten women artists, many of them Canadian, that wait in the wings to be escorted out of anonymity."

Entitled "Women. The Artist. 2,000 Years", was held at the Link on Sunday, April 8 and was attended by approximately 60 patrons of the arts. It featured live music, a silent auction and refreshments.

The event was part of the GACG's fundraising program which supports its children and adult art programming in addition to various presentations.



Great crowds at Fanfest 2018



The cast of Paw Patrol was a huge hit at the Keswick library during its third Annual Fanfest event. This youngster checks out Skye—one of the fan favourite characters

The library was bustling at the seams with young fans dressed as all of their favourite super heroes and television stars. Right photo, Madison Ferris, 3, gets set to take off in her Super Woman costume as she waits patiently to see her favourite Paw Patrol characters, Skye and Chase.



Seven-year old Lily Middlebrook kneels before the King at the Knight of the Realm at a Fanfest display and takes an oath of allegiance prior to being knighted in a formal ceremony. She pledges to keep her room clean and do her homework as Dad, Jordan Middlebrook is a witness.

Tyke and Novice hockey banquet



With the hockey season in Georgina now over, the Georgina Blaze Tyke and Novice teams celebrated their accomplishments at a banquet on Monday, April 4.

(Top photo) Ethan Van Dyke receives the Ken Hackenbrook Trophy for Most Dedicated House League player.



(Centre) Dylan Forget is awarded the OMHA Player of the Year trophy from coach Leo Baker and association president Dave Weller.



The success of the Novice Double A Georgina Blaze team captured the President's Cup at the banquet.



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Coming Events & Announcements

Encore! A York Region-based adult chorus will present "All Nature Sings" on Sun. Apr. 15 at 3:00 pm at Sharon-Hope United Church in Sharon.

The Georgina Historical Society will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary at the regular members meeting at 7:00 pm on Tues. Apr. 17 at the York Region Police meeting room in Sutton.

Routes is planning a visit to the ROM on Wed. Apr. 18. Cost is \$15 in advance. Pick up locations in Sutton and Keswick. Call (905) 722-4616 for further details.

Don't forget to pick up a flat of pansies from Hospice Georgina locations throughout Georgina on Sat. Apr. 21. For pre-orders call (905) 722-9333.

Are you ready for the 4th Annual Trivia Night at the Link on Sat. Apr. 21 at 7:00 pm sponsored by Jericho Youth Centre.

The York Region Police Choir will perform at the Salvation Army Community Church on Sat. Apr. 21 at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$10 per person at the door or (905) 722-5534.

On Sat. Apr. 21 the Ravenshoe United

Church will feature a Choir Concert and Dessert Auction at 7:00 pm. \$10 per person. Repeat performance by choir on Sun. Apr. 22 at 2:00 pm. Refreshments will follow. Call Marilyn at (905) 476-7367.

A Bat Chat, featuring Gail Lenters from Shades of Hope will take place at the Pefferlaw Library on Sat. Apr. 21 at 2:00 pm. Following the discussion, attendees can create a bat house. Bring a Phillips screwdriver and wear work clothes. Call (705) 437-1514 for details.

The Lake Simcoe Gardeners will present "The Newest in Easy Care Perennials" at 7:30 pm at Keswick United Church on Mon. Apr. 23.

An afternoon of gospel and contemporary selections by "Freedom Bound" a male chorus will be held on Sat. April 28 at 2:00 pm at St. James Anglican Church in Sutton. Admission is \$15. Light refreshments and bake sale. Call (905) 722-3726.

Come to the Swing into Spring event hosted by Trinity United Church in Cannington on Sun. Apr. 29 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Spaghetti supper, local artisans and concert at 7:00 pm.

It's that time of year again! The Udora Leaskdale Lions Club will be hosting their Annual Canoe River Run on Sat. May 5 and this year's event will be made even more special as a Georgina 200 Birthday celebration. Register at 8:00 pm on the Zephyr Sideroad.

Everything you need to live, work and play in Georgina—all under one roof. Book your space soon for the Discover Georgina show on Sat. May 5 and Sun. May 6 at the Ice Palace in Keswick.

Time to round-up your spelling team for the Grate Groan-Up Spelling Bee to be held at the Udora Hall on Fri. May 11 at 6:30 pm. Sponsored by Friends of the Library. Call (905) 476-5762 for more information.

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