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# THE AURORAN

Aurora's Independent Community Newspaper

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## King mayor a candidate



MARGARET BLACK

There are now three people seeking to carry the Liberal colours into the next federal election.

A rumour phoned into The Auroran Sunday that the Liberal Party of Canada will cancel its nomination meeting in the Newmarket-Aurora riding and has already selected a candidate for the next federal election was denied Monday by the party's latest hopeful.

King Township Mayor Margaret Black told The Auroran she would be one of three people hoping to become the riding's Liberal candidate in the next federal election.

When the rumour was suggested to another hopeful, he was skeptical.

"At this point, I have heard nothing," said nomination candidate Tim Jones. "Chris and I are still selling memberships."

Chris, the other person seeking to represent the Liberals in the next election, is Chris Emanuel of Newmarket.

Currently the Ward 7 Councillor in the Town of Newmarket, Emanuel is serving his second term on Newmarket Council.

Jones, meanwhile, served as

**Please see page 13**

## Aurora United Church to get major makeover

By **MARCIA KAYE**  
 Special to The Auroran

Call it a faith-lift.

Aurora United Church, one of the most historically significant buildings in downtown Aurora, is undergoing an interior transformation intended to enrich the worship experience and revitalize the downtown community.

The redevelopment project will dramatically expand both the quantity and quality of usable space.

The redesign, especially of the chancel area around the altar, will allow for a more interactive worship service, more creative ceremonies, richer pageantry, and much larger-scale musical productions.

There will even be room for an

orchestra.

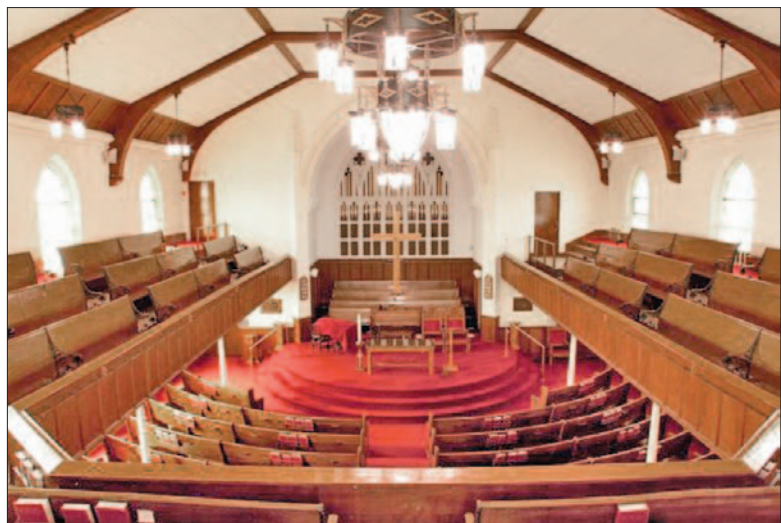
"We believe that an exciting, modern, respectful worship facility is one of the keys to creating an experience people will talk about," said Frank Pulumbarit, chief visionary who chaired the redevelopment committee for three years. "But we also look at this as an outward-facing project. This will add to the vibrancy of the entire downtown core."

As a protected heritage building, the 191-year-old church will look the same from the outside, while the metamorphosis takes place inside.

The huge project, with a price tag approaching \$750,000, represents the first major redesign of the sanctuary in at least 100 years.

It will include: a reshaped, wider chancel with added wings; a movable organ console, so the organ can slide along a channel when not needed and the organ pit covered to increase floor space; a new audiovisual system, including mic pulls and cabling for computers and projection (e.g., guitar amps can be plugged right into system); new modular choir risers that can be assembled in various configurations; a reshaped balcony to maximize sightlines; exposure of two stained-glass windows, currently

**Please see page 13**



The interior of the Aurora United Church as it looks today. By the fall, workers will have transformed it into a work of art which should enrich the worship experience and revitalize the downtown community.  
 Photo by Bob Kyriakides



The annual Spring Fling at Aurora Grove Public School was held Saturday and a highlight of the event was this stilt-walker who entertained students and parents alike. More pictures on Page 12.  
 Auroran photo by David Falconer

## Old Yonge sidewalk is rejected by staff

Old Yonge Street has history and charm, but at least for the 200 metres of it south of St. John's Sideroad, there is no sidewalk.

Despite requests from residents in the area to add a sidewalk on the east side of the road, town staff recommended to General Committee on May 19 that one not be installed.

The reason is that the current standard for sidewalk construction in town is to have 2.25 metres (7 feet, 4 inches), of which .75 m is boulevard,

and 1.5 m is sidewalk.

One residence along the stretch of Yonge Street in question where the sidewalk currently stops, is so close to the road, that even though the 2.25 metres is available, the house would be almost touching it.

Despite a majority of the residents in the area being in favour of extending the sidewalk north to St. John's Sideroad, town staff does not recommend sidewalk construction at this location.

**Please see page 12**



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# King mayor third candidate seeking to carry Liberal colours

**From page 1**  
mayor and councillor for the Town of Aurora for nearly 30 years.

Jones said Sunday he had heard there may be a third member in the race but said he had heard nothing about the party cancelling the nomination meeting.

"I don't pay much attention to rumours," he said.

He confirmed that he learned of Black's entry as a potential candidate Monday morning.

She denied that she had been selected as the Liberal candidate.

"I've already started selling memberships," she said.

Mayor Black said she would not seek to return to King Township politics if she

became the candidate for the Liberals.

"The Liberals have been after me for 10 years," she said.

The mayor, who attended high school at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School in Aurora said she has a long history with the Newmarket and Aurora area and did not consider herself being "para-

chuted" into the riding.

"I was born at Southlake," she said, "but it was York County Hospital then."

The mayor of King Township for 15 years, Ms Black lives near Schomberg.

The Auran received the anonymous phone call Sunday afternoon, in which the speaker said the Liberal Party had announced there

would be no nomination meeting in the Newmarket-Aurora riding, and that the person named to carry the Liberal colours into the next election campaign was Mayor Black.

She said she had no idea when the nomination meeting would be held.

Jones, meanwhile, noted the King mayor was one of

three candidates who want to carry the Liberal colours in the next federal election and said there was a social planned to meet Ms Black in Aurora, Thursday, June 4, at 35 Hodgkinson Crescent.

The event, organized by The Newmarket Aurora Liberal Womens Club, apparently begins at 7.30 p.m.

# Church undergoes renovations

**From page 1**

obscured by part of the balcony; uncovering of vintage cast-iron grille railings in the balcony, now hidden beneath wood panels; new computer and LCD projector screen; new hardwood floors on main floor and balcony; folding glass doors to replace rear sanctuary wall, with accommodation of overflow seating in front narthex area (the recent Easter Sunday service was standing room only); and new lighting including dimmers and spotlights.

"First, we want this to be a wonderful space to be inspired by God," Pulumbarit said. "From there, the possibilities are endless."

The church may reach out to not-for-profit organizations including theatre groups, musical productions and schools to use the space.

The redesign has generated so much excitement that the redevelopment committee can hardly keep volunteers at bay.

It might seem an ambitious project to be tackling during a recession, but for Aurora United Church, the timing is perfect.

For several years the church had had a vision for redevelopment, but there was no way to finance it.

In 2007, St. Paul's United Church in Oak Ridges amalgamated with Aurora United and last year sold its property just before the real estate market dropped.

The St. Paul's property management committee, chaired by Janice Nolan, prepared a business plan, in which St. Paul's offered to give \$710,000 - 90 per cent of the sale proceeds - to the Aurora church, and the remaining 10 per cent to outreach projects. The congregation and church council passed the business plan unanimously.

Because of the recession, it wasn't difficult for the redevelopment committee to then find contractors who could do the work on short notice.

Toronto architectural firm Black and Moffat had done the design details of the committee's concept, while DJ McRae Contracting won the construction tender.

"We were interviewing contractors on May 4 to start a week later, and none of them had a problem with the tight timeline," said Fern Beattie, chair of the redevelopment committee.

DJ McRae not only was the lowest bidder but had the most to offer in terms of enthusiasm, understanding of working with a volunteer committee, and experience in renovating and restoring churches, Beattie said.

"With this redesign, especially the flexibility of the chancel area, the physical space will now match the contemporary, vibrant, exciting nature of the

services and the congregation," Beattie said.

The church has long had a strong musical focus, with a senior choir of at least two dozen members, two 12-member handbell ensembles, a children's choir and a host of talented soloists, instrumentalists and other musicians.

The church's music program, under new music director Michael Mailley, will likely only increase when the redevelopment is completed.

With the enlarged chancel, handbell ringers will no longer have to worry about taking a step back and falling into the organ pit.

And with the new modular choir risers, choir members will no longer have to use hymn books as back cushions.

"Those choir pews were back-breakers," said choir member Crawford Heritage.

Heritage, a longtime congregant, chair of the property committee and member of the redevelopment committee, has been impressed with the professionalism and hard work of

everyone who has helped make the vision a reality.

"The abilities and skills of these people on the committees have been outstanding and the support from the congregation unbelievable," he said.

The project is expected to be completed this fall.

Until then, Sunday services will be held at 10 a.m. in the chapel at St. Andrew's College at 15800 Yonge St., just south of St. John's Sideroad. All are welcome.

For more information and regular updates on the reconstruction, go to [www.aurorau-nitedchurch.ca](http://www.aurorau-nitedchurch.ca).

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