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Aurora put on a big party for our country's 150th birthday. See page 3

Susie Kockerscheidt/Metroland

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NEWS

York Region drownings prompt water safety caution

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With the drowning deaths of two young people in York Region in two weeks, the Canadian Red Cross is raising concerns about water safety.

"To have two in a row is horrendous," master instructor trainer David Ferguson said.

"It's terrible. And all the families are affected and all the friends are affected. It's heart-wrenching."

On June 17, a four-year-old girl called 911 after her 20-year-old babysitter, a non-swimmer, had accidentally gone into the deep end of a backyard pool in Newmarket.

The young woman died June 23.

A 19-year-old man from Toronto was confirmed dead July 2 after he was pulled from Lake Simcoe

at Sibbald Point Provincial Park on July 1.

A second man who tried to rescue him was revived.

Drowning is usually the second most frequent type of accidental death in Canada, behind motor vehicle collisions, Ferguson said.

A Red Cross study released in June 2016 showed 3,696 people drowned in Ontario from 1991 to 2013.

Ontario made up 31 per cent of 11,903 drowning deaths in Canada during that time.

Drowning can happen quickly and victims often don't exhibit signs that onlookers expect, Ferguson said.

Drowning usually doesn't look like it does in the movies or on TV,

● See SOME, page 2



Barb Hammond photo

A 19-year-old man from Toronto was confirmed dead July 2 after he was pulled from Lake Simcoe at Sibbald Point Provincial Park on July 1.

COMMUNITY

Aurora Bridge Club may have to move to Newmarket

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Aurora's bridge club could be forced to relocate to Newmarket.

The bridge club was established more than four decades ago and continues to grow its membership. The club has close to 1,000 players who have played at their tables and 250 official members. Over 90 per cent of the membership is over 60 years of age and 60 per cent is from Aurora.

Currently, the club calls Aurora's old library home, but the town has made the decision to demolish the building in the near fu-

ture, leaving the club searching for new accommodations that will not only be able to hold a large number of playing tables but also fulfil specific needs of the membership.

"We provide an outing for seniors to socialize and an opportunity to learn something new," Aurora Bridge Club's Olly Smolak said to town council. "We cannot operate with the town's support and we want to work with the town to ensure the club can continue."

Coun. Harold Kim thanked him for the service the club provides and for keeping the "rowdy

seniors" away from the mall and loitering at town hall.

Mayor Geoff Dawe pointed out the minutes of the club's meeting in 2015 acknowledged the threat to its tenancy and asked what efforts the club has made in finding a new space.

"We have looked at other accommodations but can't seem to find the right fit for the right rent," Smolak replied.

While the lease agreement and low rent at the current building allows the club to provide members affordable fees to play, simi-

● See CLUB'S, page 7



Mike Barrett/Metroland

Jane Demers and others at the Aurora Bridge Club wonder what their next play will be as the town has decided to demolish the old library leaving the club without a sufficient alternative.

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