

Warden lays out plans for next term

By Richard Blanchard

As he starts his second term as Simcoe County warden, Springwater mayor Tony Guergis sees council focused on the growth issues ahead.

Guergis was elected to another one year term during a recent meeting in Midhurst.

He defeated Midland mayor James Downer, New Tecumseth deputy mayor Rick Milne and Tay Township mayor Scott Warnock were nominated for the position but did not

run.

"It is a momentous time for us with growth challenging us. We must plan for the future," he told county council in his inaugural speech. "The message is that we all are the county. We are not independent.

"Each municipality and each person, we need to act as a community of 19 municipalities, two First Nations and a federal air force base."

In an interview after his election, Guergis reiterated the need for concerted action

on the pressures of growth.

"Everybody has their head around the estimate that the county will grow to a population of 667,000 by 2031.

What a challenge it's going to be to plan for the next 25 years to see that growth take place and where it will take place," said Guergis.

"There are many out there who believe that number is low and that we need to appeal to the province to see an increase. However, we can't emphasize enough the

province has made it clear that number will stand.

"All we can do is rely on the five-year reviews, but that is going to require a strong united county message to make sure the province believes that we have the ability to plan properly."

Guergis said that the ongoing growth studies require input from all residents of the county.

"We can't empower enough," he said.

Both individuals and groups will be asked during

the next year to bring their concerns about growth to a number of public information sessions.

"We want all our organized interest groups to come forward and be part of the growth process, as well as our member municipalities to all participate through the five sub-committees," he said.

The county has already held a number of public meetings on growth issues during the past couple of months and they will continue to be held.

Guergis said that his re-election was a strong vote of confidence in his past term as warden.

"It's not a part time position anymore," he said.

In the past seven years, three of the four Simcoe county wardens have served two year terms.

"Serving for another year allows you to be up to speed on all the issues," he said.

Guergis is the brother of Essa mayor Dave Guergis and a cousin of Helena Guergis, MP for Simcoe-Grey.

Election signs may be regulated

By Chris Simon

Signs, signs, every size isn't fine.

Innisfil council could be implementing restrictions on all federal, provincial, regional and municipal election signs that are put up within the town.

If approved, the guidelines would restrict signs to one square metre in area. Erection of signs would also be prohibited until 45 days before an election, and

would have to be removed within seven days after the vote.

The bylaw would apply solely to private land, since postings on public property and roads require the consent of the town.

"Many municipalities regulate election signs, in order to apply a level of control over visual nuisance without restricting the ability for candidates to advertise," said planning and develop-

ment director Rob McAuley.

"In the past, Innisfil has not regulated (the erection of) election signs."

The regulation comes after a Superior Court of Ontario case earlier this year, where the ability to regulate election signs in Vaughan was challenged as a violation of free speech. The city's bylaw was upheld, however the court recommended Vaughan conform with standard election period legisla-

tion.

In Innisfil, municipal candidate signs have previously been posted up to 10 months before an election, said McAuley.

However, provincial and federal signs are posted within 45 days before an election, he said.

"This timeframe appears reasonable to staff, and is included in many other municipal sign bylaws," said McAuley. "In order to avoid

confusion, staff are suggesting a similar time constraint."

But some councillors say the regulations should also prohibit the number of signs displayed.

"Can we put a limit to the number of signs?" Said councillor Paul Wardlaw. "That seemed to be the number one concern during the last municipal election was the number of signs."

Restrictions on the dis-

ance between signs could also be included in the regulations.

During the last municipal election, the number of signs along roadways throughout the municipality created a driving distraction, said councillor Lynn Dollin.

"This visual pollution, or whatever you want to call it, much of it was on public roadways," she said. "I'd like us to at least consider a limit per property."

Fire service helping to lower insurance rates

By Chris Simon

Insurance rates across Innisfil could be getting lower, after a recent fire department evaluation.

The Innisfil Fire and Rescue Service successfully completed a water shuttle tanker evaluation at their Alcona, Cookstown, Lefroy and Stroud stations recently.

The test — which is

administered by the Fire Protection Survey Services — proves Innisfil Fire and Rescue has relatively quick response times, something that could help residents receive lower home insurance rates, said councillor Dan Davidson.

"This certification should help in reducing some of our fire insurance costs," he said.

"The insurance companies have been made aware of this certification. The public needs to be made aware of it. When someone calls their fire insurance company, they can bring this up."

Homeowners who contact their insurance companies regarding the certification may be eligible for reduced rates, said councillor Lynn Dollin.

"It could make a good difference in people's insurance

premiums," she said.


During the two-hour test period, the fire department's flow rate averaged 1,861 litres per minute.

"This is a pretty substantial threshold our fire services was able to maintain here," said town CAO Larry Allison.

The municipality must be evaluated again by December 2012. For more information, visit www.innisfil.ca.

Church Directory

Baha'i Faith - Innisfil.....431-7139
 Bell Ewart Baptist.....456-3334
 Christ Church - St. Jude Anglican, Ivy .458-9631
 Church of God Worship Centre, Thornton
705-730-1738
 Churchill United.....456-4692
 Cookstown United.....458-9701
 Gilford United.....456-4692
 Holland Marsh Christian Reformed.....775-7291
 Holy Cross Ukrainian Church.....705-730-7999
 Holy Martyrs Roman Catholic.....775-2065
 Holy Trinity Lutheran.....775-3412
 Innisfil Community.....436-1611
 Lefroy United.....456-2098
www.lefroyunited.ca
 Living Faith Presbyterian Church...705-424-0779
 New Life Fellowship Baptist.....436-5413
 St. George's Anglican, Utopia.....458-9631
 St. James United, Stroud.....436-5225
 St. John Vianney.....726-8007
 St. John's Anglican, Cookstown.....458-1801
www.stjohnscookstown.com
 St. Paul's Anglican, Coulsen's Hill.....775-3648
 St. Paul's Anglican, Stroud.....722-7755
 St. Peter's Anglican, Churchill.....456-4396
www.stpeterschurchill.com
 Stroud Presbyterian.....721-0134
 Trinity United, Thornton.....458-9701



OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED for NEW YEAR'S DAY on Tuesday, January 1, 2008 re-opening Wednesday, January 2nd at 9:00 am.

Advertising deadline (Jan. 2nd edition): Thursday, December 27th, 5:00 pm

Public meeting on town budget planned for Jan. 9

The Town of Innisfil will host a special budget meeting early next year.

A town committee will host a public meeting to review the 2008 tax levy operating budget at the council chambers Jan. 9, beginning at 4 p.m. All residents are welcome to attend.



NOTICE TO INNISFIL RESIDENTS REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Town of Innisfil is inviting applications from residents who are interested in serving on the Innisfil Community Reinvestment Committee for a four year term. We are presently looking for two new members.

These positions are voluntary with no remuneration. Information regarding the Innisfil Community Reinvestment Committee can be obtained by contacting the Clerk's Office or visit the Town's website at www.innisfil.ca.

If you are interested in applying for this Committee, please provide a letter expressing your interest along with a resume to the Clerk by January 11, 2008. Clearly mark the envelope 'Application for the Innisfil Community Reinvestment Fund Committee'.

Paul G. Landry, Town Clerk
 2147 Innisfil Beach Road
 Innisfil, Ontario, L9S 1A1