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20 Ballantrae hoops shooter can't be beaten

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STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Sew what

Cara Hawey, 8, of Stouffville carefully works with a needle and thread during craft class at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum in Vandorf yesterday. Children learn pioneer skills during the three-day March Break program. See additional photos on pages 23 and 31.

Municipalities seek power solutions

BY ROY GREEN
Staff Writer

At the same time Vaughan residents were making it clear they want no part of a gas-fired power plant, a smaller version of the idea in Newmarket might be the answer to York Region's looming shortage of electrical power.

More than 1,500 irate citizens jammed a banquet hall in Woodbridge last week to protest plans for a natural gas plant that would generate 970 megawatts of electricity — enough to power 900,000 homes.

Residents say the 14-hectare project near highways 7 and 27 is far too large and too close to residential neighbourhoods.

They're also concerned about gas exhaust

and electromagnetic fields.

But there are few similarities between that project and a proposal to build two 50-watt gas turbines in Newmarket, according to Sam Mantenuto, chief operating officer of Northland Power, the company which hopes to build the Newmarket plant.

"There are some very key differences," Mr. Mantenuto said this week. "The primary purpose of this plant is to support the area only in the event of a loss of a transmission line. It's only expected to run 800 to 1,000 hours a year, where the plant proposed for Vaughan would typically run 3,500 to 4,000 hours."

Northland Power, along with politicians in Newmarket and Aurora, met with provincial

Energy Minister Dwight Duncan in January to discuss the proposal, which could produce as much as 300 megawatts of new power.

It's designed to provide power to Newmarket-Aurora residents during peak times, leaving some generation in the hands of the local community.

The concept is getting more attention since Hydro One announced last week it was temporarily withdrawing plans to double the capacity of the 24-kilometre hydro corridor running from Markham to Newmarket. That project has also caused citizen unrest, with hundreds of residents in Markham and Aurora concerned about electromagnetic fields and

See POWER, page 14.

YORK REGION JERSEY MAKER, BARS, STORES HURTING

Layoffs fact of life without NHL

BY PATRICK MANGION
Staff Writer

This would have been about the time legions of die-hard hockey fans weighed in on the NHL's version of a meat market: the trade deadline.

Even for most fair-weather Maple Leafs fans, last-minute additions and omissions to the roster have signalled the playoffs aren't far off.

Spring and NHL playoff hockey have gone hand-in-hand for decades. So for anyone who shrugged off last month's cancellation of the season, reality may finally be setting in.

A deep run into the Stanley Cup tournament could pad the pockets of York Region's businesses and bars.

The games would suddenly take on added importance, as fans gathered en masse at their local sports bar.

Around this time last year, fans, hoisting themselves atop the Maple Leafs' bandwagon, would translate into a spike in hockey jersey sales, said Don Preston, owner of All Star Cards and Comics in Newmarket.

As with many local businesses, this season has told a different story. The company has offered sale prices several times already this year.

"You never see sales on jerseys. They sell themselves," he said.

Even Statistics Canada has pointed the finger at the frozen game, as accommodation and food service jobs fell by 20,000 last month.

When WEGZ Stadium Bar opened in Vaughan in November, general manager Steve Walker envisioned a packed house of hockey fans enthusiastically cheering on their team as every playoff game available was beamed on to any

See RESTAURANTS, page 24.

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