NOTL loses family man, community supporter

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

After an almost year-long battle against pancreatic cancer, 54-year-old Charlie Burland of St. Davids passed away Dec. 23.

The father of three boys was well-known in the community as a long-time St. Davids volunteer firefighter, and as an employer of many locals through the years via his role as president of Niagara Clifton Group, a family business which owns and operates a number of properties on Clifton Hill in Niagara Falls. In both her current role as president of Niagara Falls Tourism, and her former one as president of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, Janice Thomson knows well of his importance in both communities. “The loss is doubled due to the massive impact Charlie made on two communities,” Thomson told The Local in an email, “the tourism district of Clifton Hill in Niagara Falls, where he built on the strengths of almost 100 years of family success in the tourism attraction businesses, and the community of St. Davids in Niagara-on-the-Lake where he and his wife Lisa raised their sons.” “He was a generous contributor to both communities,” Thomson continued. “His dedication to the St. Davids volunteer fire department was long-term, and his care for his community genuine. He will be missed by many.” In 1925, his grandfather, Charles Inglis Burland, bought the property that is now operated as the Travelodge hotel on Clifton Hill. Over the years the family acquired more real estate on the north side of the popular tourist destination.

Continued on page 3
Restaurants react to sudden closure of indoor dining

Penny Coles The Local

Business owners are fed up.

Especially restaurant owners, who learned Monday they will have to close their indoor dining Wednesday, says Eduardo Lafforgue, president of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce.

“What I’m hearing is that everyone is fed up, we all are. We keep hearing the provincial people trying to explain what they’re doing, in some cases really going back to the worst part of the lockdown.”

It’s always a struggle when announcements are made to work through them and figure out who has to do what and when.

Chamber staff were busy dismantling their computers to take home, where they won’t be working for the next few weeks, their office shut down. Their icewine festivities, which have been in the planning stages since August, including an almost sold-out gala, have been postponed, and staff are busy refunding ticket sales.

Although all restaurants have to close indoor dining, at least until Jan. 26, some are opting to continue to use their outdoor patios, and offering takeout, while others are shutting down completely.

On King Street, The Irish Harp will keep their heated outdoor open, which has continued to be popular, and of farewell takeout and delivery, says owner Jovie Joki.

And the two bars, on Line 2 in Virgil, is shutting its restaurant completely, says front of house manager Jasmin Laketi, with no takeout, but will keep its wine boutique open for purchases.

With most winter activities now cancelled, there won’t be a lot going on in town and some restaurants wouldn’t be doing enough business to justify staying open, says Lafforgue.

“Some of the restaurants are closing completely because of COVID, but it’s the slow season, and January activities are being cancelled. For some, there won’t be enough takeout customers to make it worth staying open.”

An incident at Gales Gas Bar in Virgil Sunday has resulted in a plea from the owner for drivers to be more cautious of others not paying attention, she says.

“There has been a huge increase in instances of a driver not paying, has escalated to making them safer, including closing other places,” Hirji said.

Although this is difficult for everybody, Lafforgue says, “what I don’t hear is despair. I don’t feel that right now. But it may come to that if this continues throughout February and March.”

Maria Mavridis, general manager of two family businesses, Corks Wine Bar & Eatery and the Firehall Flame on Queen Street, says she closed down the smaller of the two restaurants two weeks ago and moved all her staff to Corks. Now she has 10 staff and Corks has a great patio, but it’s considered enclosed, so she can’t keep it open, and Queen Street doesn’t attract enough takeout business to make staying open worthwhile.

Also an organizer of events and fundraisers, Mavridis is busy cancelling all the arrangements for them as well, including the popular Icebreakers Comedy Festival later this month, and a Romy II Men concert that was scheduled for Feb. 5 at White Oaks Conference Centre and Spa.

Mavridis acknowledges people are sick of restrictions, but says, “I hope people will do what they need to do, because if we don’t have their part now we’ll be okay. Let’s play it safe, and hope to see the end-emic in April. And let’s remember why we’re doing this. It’s because of the shortage of staff in hospitals, in health care, in all businesses. We’ve had it happen here with staff — I had to send staff home, and we’re not the only restaurant in town doing that.”

Although “it sucks to be going through this, we’re all in it together. Do what you have to do, stay home, and we’ll get through it.”

COVID cases likely much higher than reported

Penny Coles The Local

As COVID infections surge in Niagara and across Ontario — Premier Doug Ford is calling for the current wave of omicron “a tsunami” — the real numbers are likely much greater than being reported.

While there were 492 new cases reported in Niagara Monday and 4,405 active cases — 165 in Niagara-on-the-Lake — Dr. Mustafa Hirji, Niagara’s acting chief medical officer of health, said although it hard to get a good sense of the true numbers, with the rapid spread of the omicron variant and a limited capacity for testing, “it’s probably at least two or three times higher, if not several times higher.”

The province announced new restrictions Monday to be enacted Wednesday, weeks too late, said Hirji, calling the measures reactive rather than proactive, and suggesting the delay “has allowed Omicron virus to get out of control, instead of being able to proactively address it.”

Hirji disagreed with what he called the defeatist attitude of those who say it’s inevitable they’ll get COVID as the omicron variant rac es across the community, so why bother with restrictions. He cited other countries that won’t work too soon after its restriction measures and managed to blunt the omicron effect.

Canada could have done the same, but although that hasn’t happened soon enough, he said, we need to be concerned about hospital and intensive care unit admissions.

The hope that we could at least keep the number of people requiring hospitalization low was “overly optimistic,” as the lag of new infections sending people to the hospital is starting to catch up. Although intensive care admissions are not rising as quickly, that could change within the next week or two, he said.

He advised we buy some time by getting first, second and booster vaccinations, for all eligible ages, avoiding large gatherings, or any gathering that isn’t essential; staying outdoors if possible or if gathering inside, making sure it’s in a well-ventilated area, wearing good-quality masks; and double down on physical distancing.

While Niagara has been administering about 2,000 vaccinations daily, that is ramping up to about 7,000, including those offered in public health clinics, and by primary care physicians and pharmacies.

New appointments are being offered daily, however, Hirji said. “They are being offered daily. The next available time slot is Jan. 11.”

Although the attendant at the pumps, as drivers were warned it’s a reminder to always pay attention. People need to be more careful when they drive into and out of a gas station. They often drive too quickly and recklessly, and aren’t paying attention.

Drivers getting out of their car and walking to the booth to pay should be cautious of others not paying attention, she says.

Although Hirji suggested that in the future, the province should look at including COVID vaccinations with other mandated schools in such as mea des and mumps. It would not be intended to prevent attendance for those who were vaccinated, he said, but does allow for a record of students who are unvaccinated, should an outbreak occur.

Caution urged for drivers at gas bars

Penny Coles The Local

An incident at Gales Gas Bar in Virgil Sunday has resulted in a plea from the owner for drivers to be more cautious of others not paying attention, she says.

“Although the attendant wasn’t hurt, it was a serious situation, and could have been much worse, she added.

“The gas bar attendant was just doing his job, but the driver wasn’t paying attention. People need to be more careful when they drive into and out of a gas station. They often drive too quickly and recklessly, and aren’t paying attention.”

drivers leave in a hurry.

Although it’s never happened at a Gales Gas Bar, there have been cases of attendants being killed by a gas and dash driver, she says.

Although this was not a situation of a driver not paying, it’s a reminder to drivers “to treat gas stations seriously,” says Friesen.

“Many people are in a hurry and might not be paying a lot of attention, to other customers or anyone outside a car. It’s important to realize how dangerous that can be.”
Family appreciates outpouring of community support

Welcome to NOTL New Year's baby

Local Staff

A Niagara-on-the-Lake couple have had one of the babies of 2022. Of 11 babies born on New Year's Day in Niagara, Gabriella Barde was one of them, born at Niagara Health on Jan. 1. Surprising her parents early, she was approved to move to home, limited social contacts, and follow all the precautions we’ve become accustomed to.

“Mama is happy. She was surprised and didn’t expect it to happen. Honestly, we were quite surprised. We were happy to see her this morning,” says Gabriella Barde's mother, Jessie Rose. “We were just happy to have our baby.”

"It’s a memorable day," says Niagara-on-the-Lake Deputy Fire Chief Tyrone Smolik. "We’re happy to see the first baby of the year in our community."
Irish Harp raises funds for Red Roof Retreat

Penny Coles  
The Local

While Monday wasn’t a great day for restaurants, Jovie Joki, owner of The Irish Harp Pub, was celebrating a successful fundraising drive for Red Roof Retreat, a cause the local pub has supported from its earliest days.

Having just heard the news that indoor dining will close Wednesday, Joki was preparing to pivot to outdoor dining and takeaway — her patio has a heated tent that has become a popular extension to the pub.

Throughout the month of December Joki held a 50-50 raffle each band night, typically Thursdays and through the weekend, and any time there was a special event, raising $9,000 for Red Roof, which provides respite and recreational programs to children, youth and young adults with special needs and their families in the Niagara region.

Ward Simpson, chair of the board of RR, says with two of the organization’s annual pasta dinner fundraisers cancelled, each of which would have raised about $100,000, the ongoing support from The Irish Harp has been very much appreciated.

Red Roof has also developed a Red Rovers monthly giving program, which provides the organization with a dependable base of support towards offering their services. It’s been very helpful for them to know they have that money coming in every month, says Simpson, and it’s a program they would like to expand. For more information visit redroofretreat.com/redrovers.

Joki says her goal for the Red Roof draw was to raise $10,000, but once restaurant capacities were lowered mid-December, she knew she couldn’t make that target, and matched the fundraising portion of the draw to get closer to it.

“‘Our guests have been very generous,’” says Joki. “‘Some just gave money and didn’t stay for the draw or want their share, and at least 10 times people gave their entire winnings back to Red Roof.’”

There was one draw that was won by the staff, who had each put in $20, and they too gave back their winning portion, says Joki.

“It’s a great cause, one everybody believes in,” she says, adding she was proud of her great staff for also personally supporting the organization. “It was really touching. They work for their tips, and the prize would have been a nice little bonus.”

It was the staff who sold the 50-50 tickets, and as busy as the pub has been, they seemed happy to do it, says Simpson, making it look like fun. “It looked like a real labour of love for them.”

The association with Red Roof goes back to Trevor Smyth, who opened the pub, and became close friends with Simpson, sharing a love of all things Irish. Smyth passed away in 2013, and Joki has continued to carry on with support for the local charity.

She has several special events planned for the coming months, including a bingo night with Simpson as the bingo caller, which will make for a fun evening when it’s allowed to happen, she says.

She was also planning an event for the Kewatin Festival that was supposed to happen later on this month, but that has been cancelled.

“We’re always looking for other forms of entertainment during the winter months. We had a Yuk Yuks night planned, but we’ve had to cancel that as well.”

The Irish Harp has its regulars, both locals and those from across the region who come for the atmosphere and great food, and for the coming weeks, the restaurant will turn to outside dining, takeout and delivery, hoping to resume its special events and indoor dining before too long.

Ward Simpson, Steffanie Bjorgan and Claire Ellsworth were at The Irish Harp Monday to very gratefully accept a cheque from pub owner Jovie Joki (second from left). (Penny Coles)

Ward Simpson, paintings by Steve

Painting by Steve

Did you know that brain injuries from sports, car accidents, and similar incidents could result in serious issues with your vision? Studies show that about 90% of TBI patients suffer from such visual dysfunctions. Regain any lost visual skills with neuro-optometric rehabilitation.

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Ringing in the New Year

It’s a yearly tradition to gather at the Queen Street clock tower at midnight to welcome in the New Year, and this year drew a good crowd, which dispersed about 10 minutes later. (Mike Balsom)

CADET BOTTLE DROP OFF
January 8

CADET BOTTLE DROP OFF
January 8

Locations:
• Legion 124 - 410 King St, Niagara-on-the-Lake
• St. Davids Lions - 1462 York Rd, St. Davids
• Cornerstone Church - 1570 Niagara Stone Rd, Virgil

Time: 9 am – 1 pm
Accepting all refundable Liquor, Wine, Beer bottles and cans.
Drive up and we will remove from your trunk

THE NOTL LOCAL
January 5, 2022

THE NOTL LOCAL
January 5, 2022

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Gypsy Moth: Suppressing the Invasive and Devastating Insect

The snow has just begun to fall across the Niagara Region, which means the annual gypsy moth caterpillar feeding frenzy is only a few short months away.

If you’re in rural Niagara chances are that you have already experienced this problematic pest, whether it be the annoying and constant sound as they destroy our trees or swarming our yards and patios, moving us inside.

Gypsy Moth, in their caterpillar stage, can defoliate a mature tree in a matter of weeks. The species of tree affected are native to the Carolinian forest and include maples, oaks, beech, and birch trees. Over time, this insect has adapted and will now feed on apple trees, and some coniferous species. Needless to say, they are invasive to our habitat.

Safe Tree is excited to now offer one of the most effective treatment techniques - aerial applications for caterpillar suppression. This method is ideal for rural properties, or properties just outside city limits that may be excluded from municipal spray programs.

Tree defoliation can be devastating to trees. Without leaves, the tree will not be able to produce sugar through photosynthesis, thus stunting growth. Stunted growth will make trees more susceptible to other pests and diseases, causing the tree’s health to decline further. Energy reserves are used to produce new leaves, which will likely be consumed by gypsy moths as well. The tree will continue to produce new leaves as long as it is able, but eventually this vicious cycle will take its toll, killing the tree.

“An annual treatment plan or program is the most effective way to mitigate gypsy moth and their damage. The end goal isn’t to eliminate the species, that’s merely impossible at this point. However, suppressing the species to a degree where it can coexist within our forests is achievable.” – Kaitlyn Simpson, Plant Healthcare Specialist.

Safe Tree has always been committed to protecting your trees and helping your property thrive. There are a wide variety of techniques that can be used to suppress gypsy moths, depending on the season and life cycle of the insect. From egg mass removal to pheromone trap supply and installation, our team is always prepared to protect your trees.

“We are ecstatic to provide aerial applications – it’s the most effective way to treat and protect thousands of trees. Together, we’re able to save and protect our urban canopy.” – Kaitlyn Simpson

A helicopter is used to apply the product, exponentially expanding the amount of land, or specifically trees, that can be protected. The product used for this treatment targets gypsy moths, ensuring that other plants and animals are not harmed during application. Businesses such as wineries, farms, campgrounds, and conservation areas, can significantly benefit from this treatment as their properties may be too large to protect using alternative practices.

Gypsy moths can cause issues for humans, too. Their small hairs can come in contact with skin, we potentially can experience mild to moderate pain, rash, stinging, welts and blistering. They are also quite the nuisance when you’re trying to enjoy the forest view from your patio, or a weekend away outdoors.

We are thrilled to support Niagara’s urban forest and protect the beautiful scenery that surrounds our homes. If you would like to book your aerial treatment for 2022, please contact Safe Tree by calling (289) 650-1775 or by visiting savemytrees.ca
The Niagra-on-the-Lake

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The Trusted Voice of Our Community

We know what we have to do, and do together

Lord Mayor Betty Disero
Special To The Local

On our mild and misty Christmas day, I took my mother’s dog, Bella, for a walk on the streets of St. Davids. I thought about what was happening, the extent of which we’ll never know, with testing capacity stretched to the max.

Ontario reported at least 12,000 deaths from COVID-19 and another 40,000 in hospitalizations and ICU admissions over the past year. The streets were quiet, with just a couple of cars passing from time to time.

What a year we have been through in 2021! Being in our community during the pandemic has been a learning experience of what we are made of. It has been a sobering fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has not slowed down.

In order to support the health care system, which has been stretched to the max, we have relied more on fundraising efforts and on donations. We are also now depending more on the province to decide how much money you will receive.

It is not relaxing on the province to decide how much money we will receive.

The province allowed us to continue with our Tourism Plan, which has been a hit. We are now looking at how we can make it sustainable. Currently, we are still pooled and paid out any capacity, COVID-related or otherwise.

As Hirji says, now more than ever, we need to stay home as much as possible, limit contacts, get whatever level of vaccination is needed, and take all the other precautions we’ve been asked to follow since this pandemic’s inception — we know what we’re supposed to do. And for those who are asked to self-quarantine with even mild symptoms, that’s a little more difficult, especially for those alone without a support system, but for those who need help, reach out and ask for it.

This is a wonderfully caring, supportive community, full of people who will respond wherever there is a need.

It could go on for another two or three weeks, or if we don’t do what we’re asked, it could last for much longer. Each of us has a choice to make. Please, make the right choice.

Penny Coles
The Local

Lord Mayor Betty Disero

Photo supplied

A look back at 2021 and what to expect in 2022

In 2022, I am optimistic that the Community Church/Community Centre in Glenelde will open, and Pleasant Manor can finally have a sod-turning for the Pleasant Manor expansion. The council supports these projects wholeheartedly and is ready to assist the community.

In 2020, the first year of the pandemic, council built budget improvements into parks in all areas of town, Glendale playground and basketball, Queenston Common, St. Davids Caneery Park, Virgil Skateboard Park and Old Town tennis courts. This past year, being a maintenance year, we relied more on fundraising efforts and volunteers to assist with many initiatives, such as the installation of the tennis courts in St. Davids, completing phase one of the Heritage Trail, and assisting the outdoor skating rink at the Virgil Sports Park (if it goes forward). Thank you to all the donors and volunteers who helped.

In 2023, I hope we can continue to build on the progress we have made in the past year. The council will be completing the irrigation master plan and the 

Lord Mayor Betty Disero

continued...
Gary Zalepa  
NOTL Regional Councillor  
Special to The Local

Last year at this time I reflected on what we have accomplished and what the region had expertise in developing public policy issues, such as housing affordability, long-term care, homelessness, sustainability in protecting our environment, mental health, and effective and sustainable government.

To date, some advancements have been made but many issues remain a work in progress. Gains are possible when governments act in partnership with local and both the federal and provincial governments. Here are a couple of examples:

Regional Council has made investments into housing affordability a priority. Over $30 million has been committed to support new housing units and more supportive housing for homelessness. New facilities opened as soon as Jan 2022. The support for the homeless is the result of governments collaborating. Local governments here have surplus property, the region had expertise in developing public policy issues, such as housing affordability, long-term care, homelessness, sustainability in protecting our environment, mental health, and effective and sustainable government.

would also like to keep patios beyond COVID

Would like to keep patios beyond COVID

Continued from page 6

Further details on some mobility and transit across all Niagara. Regional council has passed a motion that directs staff to continue investigating opportunities in service delivery review. Opportunities exist for corporate management functions, including human resource management, payroll, legal, asset management and other corporate functions of a municipality. Other opportunities exist, including 9-1-1 service, EMS and fire dispatch, procurement services, including tendering and contract bidding.

These suggestions also provide the opportunity for improved service delivery for residents, find efficiencies in resource allocation, and modernize local government.

Local heroes

Thanks for support of Nyanyas

The Nyanyas of Niag-ara want to thank Sweets & Swirls Cafe for all they did to make our holiday cookie fundraiser so successful. It was a real family affair! Erin and James were at the Helm but they were helped by some wonderful Christmas elves: Erin’s mother, Sylvia, and Steph, Alysa, Liam, Sophie, and Isaphene.

Two thousand cookies were made and packaged in decorated holiday boxes. A real team effort and it paid off because we raised $1,000 that will go to the Stephen Lewis Foundation’s Grandmother to Grandmother Campaign. We are very thankful to our community for purchasing these delicious cookie boxes and supporting this incredible cause. Your ongoing support continues to make an impact.

From reading our community newspaper, it appears that there are issues over whether the rainbow colours should be painted on all our town streets or if a crosswalk to show solidarity with our fellow LGBTQ+ citizens. Frankly, I don’t understand why our LGBTQ+ neighbours should be hounded with these rainbow colours being painted on asphalt for cars, horses, and people to trample, as a sign of solidarity no longer. There exists no people more persecuted in Niag-ara-on-the-Lake, Canada, and the world than the LGBTQ+. The town has previously set aside a significant site in the heart of the Town to understand, celebrate, and honour its Black history, resulting in the Voices of Freedom memorial park. To not happily and wholeheartedly do the same for my people is simply insul-

NOTL should have a park to recognize LGBTQ community

Since 2007, the Nyanyas have raised over $120,000 through small grassroots projects to help the grandmothers in sub-Saharan Africa who are caring for their orphaned grandchildren due to 2 pandemics – HIV and AIDS and now COVID-19. Through all the grandmother groups that are part of this campaign, over $36M has been raised since 2006.

Happy, healthy 2022 to you all, Nyanyas of Niagara

Regional Councillor Gary Zalepa  
(Phone supplied)  

COMMENT

Progress made in 2021; more to come in 2022

The New Year brings with it the New Year will bring. Happy New Year, everyone.

The Nyanyas of Niag-ara want to thank Sweets & Swirls Cafe for all they did to make our holiday cookie fundraiser so successful. It was a real family affair! Erin and James were at the Helm but they were helped by some wonderful Christmas elves: Erin’s mother, Sylvia, and Steph, Alysa, Liam, Sophie, and Isaphene.

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Far-reaching contribution to music industry recognized

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Duff Roman is one of 135 new appointees named to the Order of Canada on Dec. 29, 2021.

Born David Mostoway in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, Roman can now add the C.M. designation to the end of his name, bestowed upon him for his contributions to the Canadian music industry as a broadcaster and executive, and for his lifelong efforts to promote Canadian talent.

“I was pleasantly shocked to get the news,” Roman says. “I had heard that my name had been put forward to the Governor General’s office. But I wasn’t anticipating this. The importance of this award dawned on me and to be the recipient is quite stunning.”

Roman’s career in radio began as a 17-year-old disc jockey at Medicine Hat’s CHAT radio in 1955, where he went by the name Digger Dave. He spent a year there before moving to Winnipeg’s CKRC. In 1957 he returned to Medicine Hat, this time to work as their first television announcer at CHAT-TV.

“I hosted the Supper Club show. It aired at supper time, and I did interviews and covered local music. And I did all the straight announcing - commercials, station IDs, etcetera. The only two live people there were the news reporter and me.”

In the meantime, Frontier Broadcasting, led by Bill Forst, was granted a licence in 1956 to start CKSW-AM radio in Roman’s hometown Swift Current. In April, 1959, Roman succumbed to overtures from his mother to return home and accepted a position as morning show host and program director at the local station.

“I realized immediately I had made a horrible mistake,” he laughs. “I was now working for the smallest station in Saskatchewan, maybe in Canada, after having worked in major markets. I had been on the upswing of my career. I worked as hard as I could to figure out a way to get out of Swift Current without breaking my mother’s heart.”

In the fall of that same year, he was discovered by Jerry Forbes during one of the CHED radio owner’s drives along the Trans-Canada Highway. He accepted a job at the Edmonton rock and roll station, but didn’t last long there.

Roman sent a tape over to CKEY radio in Toronto, the city’s number two station behind CHUM. The tape impressed legendary Canadian businessman Jack Kent Cooke (he later gained renown as the owner of the NHL’s Los Angeles Kings, and what is now known as the NFL’s Washington Football Club), who personally invited him to work at CKEY.

Before the end of 1959, Roman’s meteoric rise had taken him to Canada’s biggest radio market. It was at Cooke’s urging, by the way, that Digger Dave became Duff Roman.

While at CKEY, Roman opened an after-hours club called A Brave New World across the street from the radio station. It was the early days of rock and roll, and the Yorkville section of the city was the music’s epicentre.

One day in 1964, a young man named David “Sonny” Thomsett walked into the club, fresh out of a stint at the Burwash Prison. Thomsett would continue to drop by after his gigs at local high schools and pester Roman to let him get up on stage. One night a couple of members of Roman’s house band were sick, so he invited Thomsett, who had changed his name to David Clayton-Thomas, and his band The Shays, to fill in.

“I had never heard any-
Continued from page 8

A new record label, Roman Records, was born. He and his brother Dan were major players in the Toronto music scene, recording singles and albums by Clay- ton-Thomas and the Shays, as well as Little Carole & The Consuls and the Puppers. The label had a string of five con- secutive hits on the CHUM charts, the major arbiter of music trends at the time.

Roman Records also worked with Leven and the Hawks, the backing band for Arkansas native and rocka- billy legend Ronnie Hawkins, who had settled in Canada. “I cut six sides with them,” says Roman. “They were used by Robbie Robertson who had settled in Canada. “I cut six sides with them,” says Roman. “They were used by Robbie Robertson who had settled in Canada. “I cut six sides with them,” says Roman. “They were used by Robbie Robertson who had settled in Canada. “I cut six sides with them,” says Roman. “They were used by Robbie Robertson who had settled in Canada. “I cut six sides with them,” says Roman. “They were used by Robbie Robertson who had settled in Canada. “I cut six sides with them,” says Roman. “They were used by Robbie Robertson who had settled in Canada.

His younger son John, 32, is completing his PhD in philosophy this year at University of Pennsylvania. Roman and his wife Sandra moved to Niaga- ra-on-the-Lake about five years ago from the Oakville area. He says it was the uniqueness, climate, histor- ical character and the laid- back wine culture that drew them to town.

Sandra volunteers with the Shaw Festival and is an active member of the NOTL Newcomers Club. Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate).

Duff has always been heavily involved in the CRTC, hearings that eventually resulted in the implementation of Canadian Content (Carcan) regula- tions, and the MAPL (Music, Artist, Production, Lyric) system of qualification which took effect in radio in 1971. The regulations continue to be a major factor in the pro- motion and success of Cana- dian musicians. As well, in 1982, he was a co-founder and founding president of FACTOR (The Foundation Assisting Cana- dian Talent on Record- ing)., an organization that continues to fund recording projects for Canadian artists today.

“I named FACTOR, along with Earl Rosen,” Roman remembers. “We went from roughly $200,000 col- lected from radio broad- casters to annually, today, a budget of $2.3 million. I did all the politicking, up to Ot- tawa to get the government interested, up to Montreal and Quebec City to get the Franciscope support for their version, Musication.”

The Order of Canada is just the latest honour to be bestowed upon the radio and music industry legend. The 83-year-old is a member of the Canadian Music Indus- try Hall of Fame and has also been honoured by both the Canadian and Ontario Associations of Broadcast- ers. At the 2019 Juno Awards in London, Ont., Roman was named that year’s recipient of the prestigious Walt Grealis Special Achievement Award. Roman and his wife Sandra moved to Niagara- on-the-Lake about five years ago from the Oakville area. He says it was the uniqueness, climate, histor- ical character and the laid- back wine culture that drew them to town.

Sandra volunteers with the Shaw Festival and is an active member of the NOTL Newcomers Club. Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate). Duff has been an original and active member of SORE (Save Our Raindwood Estate).

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Support for women leads to Order of Canada

Penny Coles  The Local

When the list of this year’s Order of Canada recipients was posted last Wednesday, Harriet Stairs was one of them, appoint- ed, as the announcement said, for improving wom- en’s opportunities in busi- ness, and helping wom- en and youth through inclusive policies, in both the corporate world and through community proj- ects.

Although Stairs is list- ed as being from Toronto, she and her husband have a home in the Old Town they purchased 21 years ago, and have had “one foot in both places” ever since, she says.

Stairs, then 55, was re- tiring from a 32-year career with the Bank of Montr- al. Her husband, Edward Mooney, was not yet ready to retire. A chartered ac- countant, his career was to retire. A chartered ac-

The two of them, all living in Toronto — Mooney has two sons, she has a son and a daughter, with a com- bined total of 10 grandchild-
ren, ranging in age from 17 down to two years old. Keeping their city home allows for more occasions to gather with family, al- though, with the arrival of COVID, she and her hus- band are spending more time in Niagara than pre- viously.

“Life is so much more simple in NOTL,” she says. “During COVID, Toronto has continued to be such a busy place. NOTL is beau-
tiful, and we love our home here. We saw it, we liked it and we bought it, and we’ve fallen in love in the com- munity.”

Stairs, like others who receive the Order of Can-
ada and wear the iconic snowflake pin representing the honour, is considered to have “changed the na- tion’s measure of success, and helped build a better Canada,” the motto of the Order.

“I am honoured, and very thrilled,” she says, “but also surprised. It’s a great honour, one I never, ever dreamed of receiving.”

Stairs’ career with BMO began in 1967, after gradu-
ating from McGill Univer-
sity in Montreal. Her first job, she recalls, was as a host for the bank at Expo 67, an exciting time to be a Montrealer. After a time in marketing, she moved to human resources, and began to work her way up. There were no women in front of her in senior management, making such move “a bit of a challenge,” as she broke through the glass ceiling “one slot at a time.”

After becoming a vice-president, she reached the position of executive vice-president of human resources, which came with a role in senior lead-

One of Stairs’ many sig-
nificant accomplishments with the BMO was creating a strategy for flexible ben-
efits, which allowed em-

employees some choice about what was better for them in their individual circum-
stances. Women made up 70 per cent of the bank’s workforce, at a time when benefits and pensions were created for men, and while the flexibility benefited both men and women, it was especially helpful for women, who were able to choose benefits to suit their needs, which were very dif-

ferent from men.

She went on to play key roles in training for young people, and the advance-

ment of women in manage-

ment.

Although she says she doesn’t have her fingers on that pulse any longer, “things have changed tremen-
dously for the better. Women can and should as-
sume more senior jobs.” There is still more work to be done, though, she adds, specifi-
cally mentioning there is not a female bank CEO, “although I don’t think it will be long before we see that. It’s been an effort to change that culture, but there has been great prog-

ress made.”

When she retired from the bank, she felt she had earned the right to take life a little easier, but also wanted to put her free time to good use. “The first part of my life was all about climbing the corpo-
rate ladder, creating new more modern policies that were future-oriented,” and having learned a lot about management along the way she felt she was young enough to use her skills “doing something worthwhile for others.”

Her next move was to Portage, a not-for-pro-
f

t established in 1985, to help give youth struggling with drug addiction a fresh start. As chair, she was able to convince the provincial government to create more beds for young people. “If you’re ready to reach out for help, you don’t want to sit around waiting for a bed,” she says. “That was the key.”

After about 15 years with that organization, she moved to work with the Psychology Foundation of Canada on a program called Kids Have Stress Too, helping to develop management along the way she felt she was young enough to use her skills “doing something worthwhile for others.”

She has also worked with Sheila’s Place, for peo-
el
d

with that organization, she

of art through education programs, and provides support and recognition for emerging artists and art organiza-

tions. There are about 250 members, mostly women, who like her have been in-
terested in art all their lives, and now want to give back.

At the age of 75, she says, “this one is me giving myself a treat. It gives me a lot of pleasure.”

She is now a McGill Emeritus Governor, after two terms on the board of governors, and her volun-
teerism with the university continues long-distance. She also spent two years on the board of Ryerson, as it transitioned from a poly-
technic institute to a uni-

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Stairs’ achievements were in corporate and non-profit sectors

Continued from page 10

When she and Mooney decided they were ready for a little slower lifestyle and a second home outside Toronto, “we thought NOTL was a lovely town, with all sorts of nice things to do. We love the theatre, and when we moved, I did two terms on the Shaw (Festival) board. I learned a lot about theatre, and about the community.”

They have met a large number of interesting people, and both love to golf, making the most of the great golf courses in the area. Mooney jokes in his Irish brogue (they share Irish roots, evidenced by an interview that featured Stairs on CHIN AM radio during last Sunday morning’s Irish show) that “now I’ll be expected to walk five paces behind her on the golf course.”

In addition to being a get-away, and a place for family to visit, their home on the corner of Dorchester and Johnson has an interesting history. It was built in 1820 on a lot at the southeast corner of Queen and Simcoe Streets, and was moved — for the first time — along Queen Street to Victoria Street, ironically, Stairs believes, to make room for the Bank of Montreal building. It was then moved again to its current location.

When family come to visit, they love to walk, play tennis, and in the summer visit the Virgil Sports Park; says Stairs. Pre-pandemic, they enjoyed the Shaw plays and events for young people.

Through her work with Portage, Stairs and her family developed a tradition of participating in an annual fundraising bike ride for the organization, and with it cancelled for two years, have created their own fundraiser, each family member riding a certain distance to raise funds (donated by Stairs) for Portage.

It’s important to her, she explained, for children to learn early in life to give back to their community. It’s a lesson she learned from her mother and father’s family, who were very supportive of their Montreal community; from her father, a surgeon, and from the private school she attended, the Sacred Heart School, founded in 1800 in the wake of the French Revolution, and run by nuns.

“Theyir mandate was to teach women to be leaders,” she says. “They had a culture of doing things for people and being aware of and looking for social justice. The nuns were great people, and well ahead of their time.”

Her recent appointment to the Order of Canada, Stairs says, has given her an opportunity to talk about her career, after a lifetime of working quietly, without seeking or receiving much public attention.

These days, google anyone who has done as much in their career and for their community as she has, and you will learn all about them. But not Stairs — she has chosen to work behind the scenes, not looking for recognition.

When Mooney speaks of how incredibly proud he is of his wife, he describes her as “an elegant lady who has worked with quiet power and design in her various roles, with the BMO and the community-based organizations where she has served.”

Although there has been no decision on how the award will be delivered, Stairs says she is hoping it will be in person later this year, in Ottawa, handed to her by the governor general, Mary Simon.

As gratifying as the prestigious appointment is, Stairs says, what means as much if not more to her are the phone calls, emails and Facebook posts from many women in the corporate and not-for-profit sectors, “some I’ve known, and others I’ve only known about,” who have reached out to thank her for her support.

The milestones in her career didn’t come easily, but as she was reaching them, she was aware of her responsibility to ease the way for the women who would follow her. That she she heard from, “from all times in my life,” telling her how much she helped them, is evidence of how successful she has been at building a better Canada, fulfilling the motto of the honour she has received.

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DECODE THE EMOJIS
Figure out the movie titles by decoding the emojis.

Send in your answers for a chance to win a $25 gift certificate for The Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe!

Send in your answers to joyousnotlkids@gmail.com. The first 10 kids to send in the correct answers will be put into a draw, and the winner will get $25 to spend at the candy shop.

1. A.
2. B.
3. A.
4. B.
5. A.
6. B.
7. A.
8. B.
9. B.
10. A.
11. B.
12. B.
13. A.
14. B.
15. A.

We might not have had a white Christmas, but with a windchill as low as -20 Celsius in Niagara-on-the-Lake last week, it sure is starting to feel like winter! Please bundle up and stay warm to feel like winter! Please last week, it sure is starting to feel like winter! Please

Sierra in Niagara-on-the-Lake winter activities! It looks like schools will be online again when classes resume next week. Good luck in the second half of this year and have a safe and healthy rest of the school year.

1. What do you want to be when you grow up?
   A. A zooologist. I want to help out animals and take care of animals in need. I want to do that because I love animals and taking care of them. When I retire from that, I want to open a restaurant or cafe in NOTL.

2. How would you change the world if you could?
   A. I would change the world by lowering the risk of animals getting extinct and keeping the food chain in order.

3. What is your ideal day in NOTL?
   A. First I would go to Sunset Grille and grab a pancake. Then I’d head to the Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe and get some candy. After that I’d head to Starbucks and get some hot cocoa and drink that at the lake. Then I’d swim and paddleboard. I’d finish the day by playing with my dogs, reading a book and listening to music.

4. What is your favourite book?
   A. My favourite book is Wings of Fire book 10, Darkhouse of Dragons. I love this book because it is a very long, action packed and dramatic. Also, it is about dragons and I love dragons. My favourite movie is Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings, which also has a dragon.

5. What do you do to help others?
   A. I help them by lightening up their day with some jokes. And, I help them with stuff at school that they need help with. With little kids at my school I always like to give them high fives and make them laugh.

6. What is a fun family tradition you have at home?
   A. Every year at Christmas we do a gingerbread house-making contest. We split up into groups, and each group makes a gingerbread house. We test the photos to Monti family to have them judge who the winner should be. It’s usually a disaster, but that’s what I like about it.

7. What is your favourite thing about NOTL?
   A. A lot of people know a lot of people and everyone really gets to know each other. I love how they do the flowers in summer, that really peaks my interest.

8. How did you keep yourself busy during COVID lockdown?
   A. By playing video games, doing a lot of art, and reading . . . like a lot a lot of reading. In about two weeks I did about 3,000 minutes of reading. I had to log it for school so I remember the exact amount.

9. What is your ideal job?
   A. I would love to be a zoologist. I want to help out animals and take care of animals in need. I want to do that because I love animals and taking care of them. When I retire from that, I want to open a restaurant or cafe in NOTL.

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Send in your answers to joyousnotlkids@gmail.com and in the subject line please put the category for which you are submitting. Thank you.
Town explains current provincial restrictions

Local Staff

The town has responded to the restrictions laid out by Ontario Premier Doug Ford Monday, to take effect Wednesday, Jan. 5, with the goal of curbing the transmission of the omicron variant and preventing any further overload of the health care system, which is at risk.

The additional public health and workplace safety measures include:

- Reducing social gathering to five people indoors and 10 outdoors.
- Limiting organized public events to five people indoors.
- Ensuring employees work remotely unless their work requires them to be on-site.
- Limiting capacity at indoor weddings, funerals, and religious services, rites and ceremonies to 50 per cent capacity of the particular room. Outdoor services are limited to the number of people that can maintain two metres of physical distance.
- Retail settings, including shopping malls, permitted at 50 per cent capacity.
- Personal care services permitted at 50 per cent capacity.
- Closing indoor meeting and event spaces with exceptions, permitting outdoor spaces to open with restrictions.
- The NOTL Public Library is available virtually, although across the province they’re limited to 50 per cent capacity.
- Closing indoor dining at restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments. Outdoor dining with restrictions, takeout, drive-through and delivery is permitted.
- Restricting the sale of alcohol after 10 p.m. and the consumption of alcohol in businesses or settings after 11 p.m. with delivery and takeout, grocery convenience stores and other liquor stores exempted.
- Closing indoor concert venues, theatres, cinemas.
- Closing indoor sport and recreational fitness facilities including gyms. Outdoor facilities are permitted to operate with restrictions.
- Public and private schools move to remote learning starting Jan. 5 until at least Jan. 17.
- School buildings would be permitted to open for childcare operations, including emergency child care, to provide in-person instruction for students with special education needs who cannot be accommodated remotely and for staff who are unable to deliver quality instruction from home.
- Visit covid-19.ontario.ca for the most up-to-date information from the province.

Due to rising COVID numbers, the St. Davids Lions will suspend the Fish Fry until further notice.

1462 York Rd., St. Davids stdavidslions.ca @stdavidslions on Facebook

Open 7 days a week for takeout 12 noon to 7 pm
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THE FARMHOUSE CAFÉ
Closed until the end of January
Not offering Takeout at this time

CAROLINE CELLARS WINERY
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Tastings Not Available at this time.
Mike Balsom Special to The Local

Samantha Marson would not set aside her hockey dreams after suffering a career-ending injury during a tournament. In her last year playing midget (under-18) hockey in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, three girls crashed her net, pushing goaltender Marson hard back against the post. She came off the ice, but stuck around to watch the rest of the tournament.

The Cambridge native went home, telling her mother that she was fine. But the next morning she had trouble getting out of bed, so they took her to the hospital.

Doctors told her she was fine. But the incident had damaged her spine, from the L3 to the L5 vertebrae, or the lower lumbar region. "I know physically I won't be able to play anymore," she tells The Local. "I want to be a general manager and a sports lawyer. Having control and being able to run a team is something I've always wanted to do. Being a woman, and taking that next step in women's hockey, if girls can't play there are other ways to still work in the sport."

Marson says she started playing hockey at two years old and signed up for minor hockey as soon as she was old enough. She first took her position between the pipes because her older brother Shawn needed a goalie to practice. "At the time between goalie and forward for the Parthers. After her injury, Marson felt strong enough to spend a season playing goalie while attending Lakehead University. She backstopped the Thunderwolves in nine games during the 2018-2019 season, finishing with a goals against average of 1.98 and recording 3 shutout victories. But she felt she was risking her health too much in the goal crease, so she switched to playing forward permanently. She also left Lakehead to attend Paul Smith's College near Lake Placid, New York. Marson recorded the first-ever goal for that school's women's hockey Bobcats team on Oct. 26, 2019, the first of her three goals that night.

"It's the atmosphere," Marson says, about why she loves the game so much. "When it comes to hockey, you always have that second family with you wherever you are. You don't get that anywhere else."

A friend told her the Predators were looking for a trainer when the team moved from Toronto to Niagara-on-the-Lake. She had some experience helping out in that role previously for other teams, so she reached out to own Robert Turnbull to express her interest.

The 21-year-old had already been attending Niagara College's sports management program, and had previously earned a few credits in kinesiology at university. She had her first aid training, then went through the process to earn her trainer's certification through the GMHL. "I've been going to move forward."

Turnbull and general manager Johan Eriksson quickly noticed how valuable Marson was becoming to the franchise, and the assistant general manager title was bestowed upon her to more accurately reflect her contributions. "She did a ton of extra work over and above being a trainer," Turnbull says. "She was doing so many jobs that Johan called me to ask if she could be given the assistant general manager title. She transports players everywhere, she follows up on players' needs, she trains timekeepers and works with play-by-play announcer Mike Frena. She's invaluable."

Turnbull says Marson has an excellent starting skill set to become a general manager. He's been working with her to guide her toward making the right moves to get into position to realize her dreams. "She's a 21-year-old with a 30-year-old's work ethic," adds Turnbull. "To me, age and gender mean absolutely nothing. If they can do the job and I can trust them, then they are the people that I'm going to move forward."

When told about Turnbull's comments regarding her work, Marson becomes humbled on the phone. "The fact that he doesn't see my gender, but instead looks at the way I work and my skills, it makes me feel really good about it," she says.

In her travels with the team for Predators' road games, Marson runs into very few other women in roles like hers. She feels like a bit of a trailblazer of sorts because of that. "Having the general manager title, it makes me feel that I'm making a difference," Marson says. "I want more females to feel that they can be included, beyond being just a scorekeeper or a trainer."

But make no mistake, she takes the trainer's role seriously. Marson had to help defendender Logan Baille deal with a knee injury suffered during the Predators' second game, a 4-2 loss to St. George on Oct. 3. She subsequently spent a number of weeks on the injured list.

"The biggest challenge is when you have to tell a player that he can't go back on the ice," she says. "You see it on their faces, they just want to play. But you have to be firm, and tell them their health comes first!"

Recognizing that she might be a role model herself, she quick to give credit to those who have inspired her along her hockey journey. "I'm pretty close friends with (three-time Olympic and four-time World Championship medalist) Sami Jo Small," says Marson. "I work at her goalie camp every summer in Oakville. I look up to (four-time Olympic medalist) Jennifer Botterill as well. I met her through Sami. Both of them have helped and inspired me. They've shown, even after they finished playing, that women can do this." Beyond her own potential role model status, Marson hopes this season with the Predators is the first step to her one day dropping the assistant from her general manager title, while adding contract negotiation to her duties. And she doesn't rule out her skills and experience qualifying her for the role of league commissioner some-where in the future.

One thing is certain about Samantha Marson. Nothing will stop her from achieving her goals.
OBITUARY


With great sadness, we announce the passing of Tsugio ‘Robert’ Mori in his 95th year on Wednesday, December 29 in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Beloved husband of the late Ryuko ‘Ricki’ Mori (nee Ayukawa), father of Christine Mori, and ‘Papa’ of granddaughter Alexis Kimiko Spieldenner.

Predeceased by his parents Hachizo and Masa Mori, sisters Fujiko, Fusako, and Yaeko, and brothers Kazuo, Shozo, and Yoshio. Survived by brother Shigeru and fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Tsugio ‘Robert’ (Bob) Mori was born on March 23, 1926 in Kิตsilo, BC. During World War II, he and his family were uprooted from his childhood home and interned in Grand Forks, BC. Despite the injustices endured by the Japanese Canadian community, Bob strove to create a better life for himself and his family.

Post-war, he set out for Toronto to begin anew and soon married his wife Ryuko (Ricki) of 57 years. They met on a “streetcar named desire,” as he often fondly recounted. Driven by an entrepreneurial spirit, ingenuity, and a tenacious work ethic, Bob and Ricki started and successfully built their own business, Mori Safety, designing and manufacturing safety harnesses.

In his retirement years, some of Bob’s favourite memories were travelling with Ricki and their dogs Koko and Daisy in their motorhome and spending time with their daughter and granddaughter. For the past ten years, he called Niagara-on-the-Lake home. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Special thanks to Dr. Timothy Bastedo and caregivers Grace Nunez and Amy Lagrimas. A private memorial service will be held at a later date. Private family arrangements in care of the Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in memory of Tsugio Robert Mori.

Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com

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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU

Across:
1 Maker whose cars go up and down
5 Unfortunately
9 Old Indian coin
13 Individualist
15 — Marlene
16 Turns
17 Weigh
18 Thought transfer
20 San ..., California
22 Correction
23 4th largest Gr
26 Contains Jets and T
28 Dr
31 Place
32 Local classes
33 Small cell
34 Financial holdings
35 Zits
36 Common subjects in life
37 Jagged mountain range
38 Individualist
39 Place
40 Ripped
41 Song of praise
42 Additional clause
43 Change
44 Weighty
45 Small cell
46 Local
47 Thought transfer
48 Paces
49 Thought transfer
50 Correction
51 Compensation
52 Small cell
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55 Thought transfer
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2 Quantum of Solace
3 E.g. Oolong, Darjeeling
4 Asleep
5 Jagged mountain range
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To place an obituary in our Classifieds, please contact Julia at: julia@notlocal.com or 905.934.1040

Deadline is Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

Sudoku solution from December 29, 2021

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The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local
The trusted voice of our community.
Reflections of haircuts, over several decades

Mike Balsom Special to The Local

The passing of Angelo DelVecchio last week prompt- ed me to reflect on my love/hate relationship with haircuts for so much of my 59 years. My earliest memories go back to my mother taking me to Alex Vitez’ barber shop in St. Catharines’ Western Hill neighbourhood, where I grew up. Invariably, I left the place with a brush cut. You might call it a buzz cut, or even a butch cut, but man, it was short.

This was the late 1960s. My brother, 11 years my senior, was wearing his hair past his shoulders. All I wanted was to be like him. He teased me once about my haircut, and after every subsequent cut I would hide under my twin bed in the room we shared to avoid becoming fodder for his teasing. I could stay there for hours on end.

When I started school at St. Anthony’s, my extremely short hair and the first syllable of my last name earned me the nickname The Bald Eagle. I despised that name.

When I started making my own decisions, and wore my hair long like my brother’s. I remember riding my bike to a barber shop on Queenston Street beside the Tasti-Treat ice cream store, not because I got a good haircut there, but because I wanted to stop for ice cream when I was done.

It took me until Grade 13 to finally settle on letting my hair do what it did back then. Before that I would comb it and blow-dry it and try to make it look stylish, but in hindsight, the absolute only year it looked good was the year I stopped doing all that.

In my 20s, I started dating a hairdresser, and my hair got serious-looking. I became her experiment. Shorter on the sides, longer on the top - not a mullet, but almost. I started my fascination with using ‘product,’ which sticks with me, literally and figuratively, today. A willing participant in bringing her ideas to life.

In my 40s, I started dating a supermodel Linda Evangelis- sa. She asked if I could cut off the first syllable of my last name with Gordie Howe’s name, but I do remember the musty scent of the entire building. They say smell is the most potent sense in evoking memories, and I think of that salon every time I am confronted by a similar odour.

I moved back to Nig- ara in 1998, and to Niaga- ra-on-the-Lake in 1999. My first haircuts were at Ferran- döi in the Old Town and at Trendz Salon with Joe Ag- notti, in Virgil. But, perhaps influenced by watching the Ice Cube movie Barbershop, I knew it was time to leave the salon in favour of the shop.

I moved walking into Angelo Barber Shop for the first time and sitting down at the back next to a table strewn with newspaper sections from various dates. A quick scan of the room showed a time capsule of sorts, tables and shelves lined with bottles of Alberto Balsam (no rela- tion) shampoo and Barbasol shaving cream coated in a centimetre of dust.

I had noticed the team photo of the Detroit Red Wings while waiting, and when it was my turn in the chair we struck up a conver- sation about hockey, and the fact that Angelo shared a last name with Gordie Howes longtime kinsmate.

I continued to go to An- gelo’s up until he retired, not so much for the haircuts, as I often would ask my wife to help me with some finishing touches when I got home. The drawing cards were the atmosphere, the conversa- tion and the experience. I never went for a shave, but Angelo always slathered on the hot shaving cream and wielded the straight razor on my neckline with precision. What a great feeling!

The last few years were interesting. Angelo’s hearing was failing, and I felt I couldn’t hold a conversation with him without almost yelling. That made things a bit dangerous when that straight razor was involved. And every visit in- volved him asking “trim, or regular?” but it seemed I re- ceived the same cut no matter which option I chose.

Walking into Angelo’s was like walking into the past. When his barber shop closed about six years ago, it marked the end of an era in NOTL, and somehow seemed to spark a renewal of the Virgil business area, as if Angelo’s retirement gave approval for the changes that followed.

Lately, I vacillate between asking my wife to cut my hair and visiting a trendy, modern barber shop in St. Catharines, where a former student of mine cuts my hair.

But nothing compares to the experience of sitting in Angelo’s chair in that authen- tic environment. He will be missed greatly.