



**Ballet tells
story of
Japanese-
Canadian
internment**
page 8

notllocal.com JANUARY 26, 2022 Volume 4 • Issue 4



Royal Oak Community School teacher Rachel Debon makes the most of the snow with her students, sledding on Killer Hill (outside Fort George) with Grade 7 student Ruby Eltoft and Diego Rey and Grade 8 student Ethan Epp. (Photo supplied)

Niagara measures proceed with goal of safety in schools

Penny Coles
The Local

There is nothing new about Dr. Mustafa Hirji's desire to protect students and staff from COVID outbreaks in schools — he has said repeatedly and explicitly throughout this pandemic that he is concerned about disruptions to education, and the effects they have on children.

What is new is Niagara's acting chief medical officer of health being reprimanded for doing what he can to make Niagara schools safe, as students are now back to in-person learning after a holiday break that was extended first due to omicron, and then by Mother Nature as a snow storm cancelled classes across the region.

On Jan. 14, the Friday before students were expected to return to school, Niagara parents received a letter outlining some additional recommendations from Public Health, layered on top of provincial restrictions.

It wasn't long before a letter dated Jan. 15, from Dr. Kieran Moore, the provincial medical officer of health, was made public on social media, chastising Hirji for the extra measures.

Hirji told The Local he was taken aback, but not disturbed, by the tone of the letter.

"I'm certainly surprised by the degree of opposition they've expressed to what we're doing. We're guided by the science. We're guided by our concern for children and parents and teachers, and what is going to keep them safe, and we're very confident what we are doing here is the right thing to do for Niagara. I have no doubts about that. I'm surprised by the level of opposition, but it doesn't really affect me beyond that."

Moore's letter said Hirji's recommendations were made without consultation with the province, and could jeopardize the safety of students.

Hirji says his "enhancements" to provincial regulations were made in collaboration with Niagara school boards. Since then, after continued consultation, there was some tweaking.

the most impactful recommendation from Public Health calls for schools to continue reporting positive test results of students and staff, with a five-day isolation period of unvaccinated students and staff in a class where there is a positive COVID case. Originally, Hirji asked for a longer quarantine, but reduced it after consultation with

Gateway project gets go-ahead from council

Penny Coles
The Local

Town councillors have agreed that staff should move forward with a finalized design for the entrance to the heritage district, including tendering the project.

Thanks to a \$250,000 donation from resident

Gerry Kowalchuk for an updated gateway at Queen and Mississauga Streets, a final design has been approved, with some changes from what councillors saw in September.

The dry stone wall, with elements representative of Fort Mississauga, including a gated archway, has been slightly scaled

back in size. Both height and length have been reduced to accommodate the budget.

The major change since the project was last discussed at the September council meeting is putting improvements to the two corners on Mississauga Street on the south side of Queen on hold. The design

includes two "plaza" features on the corners, with seasonal planters, paving enhancements, and seating and lighting.

On Monday, councillors heard those features could no longer be accommodated within the

Continued on page 5

Continued on page 3

JO-ANN CUDMORE

SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Office 905-468-4214

Cell 905-321-8126

jcudmore@royallepage.ca

www.cudmorehomes.com

Not intended to solicit Buyers or Properties currently under contract.

Don't wait for Spring!
Buyers are waiting.

*Call me directly for your
personal property evaluation.*



Local REALTOR®
Local Knowledge.

Wine industry important consideration in tourism strategy

Representatives want all stakeholders at table

Penny Coles
The Local

With the town promising a tourism strategy within the next year to 18 months, wine industry representatives want to ensure there is input from farmers, wineries, residents and other tourism stakeholders in creating the strategy, before it becomes a document used to make decisions at the council table.

Tim Coons of Peller Estates and Andrea Kaiser of Drea's Wine Co. and Drea Kaiser Marketing, as well as continuing to work with Rief Estate Winery two days a week, were at council Monday night to provide an update on the Niagara-on-the-Lake wine industry and its impact on quality of life locally, including jobs, economic well-being and sustainability. Their goal was to ensure the industry, and the importance of its sustainability, is well-represented in any discussion of a tourism strategy.

"Our mighty industry is made up of 42 wineries right here in NOTL, over 9,500 acres of vineyards, and 179 grape growers," Coons told councillors.

There is the equivalent of more than 6,200 full-time jobs, all created from producing 100 per cent local wines — jobs in farming and agriculture, manufacturing, commercialization, and tourism, he said. "It won't be a big surprise, but our local industry in NOTL has evolved significantly over the last century."

Local farming began with fruit trees, starting with peaches and cherries, and, by the 1880s, the area had a thriving fruit-growing industry, which led to a large manufacturing and canning industry.

In the 1950s and 60s, the local demand for canning began to fall off — it could be done cheaper overseas, Coons said. By the 1970s the wine industry had begun to fill this gap, "giving the region hope for the future."

The modern wine revolution in Niagara started with industry pioneers planting some of the first vinifera grapes, he said. "Our industry has grown from infancy to 9,500 acres of vineyards in just under 50 years, simultaneously gaining a reputation as a world-class agriculture, manufacturing, and ser-

vice-based industry."

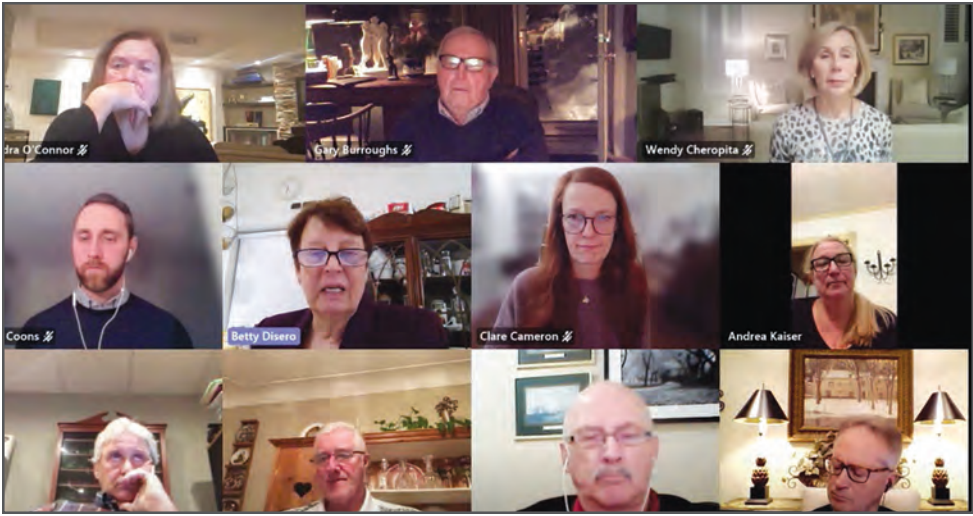
Today, Coons said, wine-making is the greatest value-added agricultural industry in the world. "You might be thinking this is a bold statement, but it's true."

About 90 per cent of Canadian agriculture is exported —almost 80 per cent of soybeans, for example, is exported to China alone, and most of the domestic consumption is used in meal for livestock, representing little to no added value for our economy.

"Soybeans are picked at \$300 per tonne, which pale in comparison to grapes that command anywhere from \$700 to \$2,500 per tonne, and add value right here in our backyard."

"In our wine industry," he continued, "we grow grapes, we farm, tend to the vineyards, and we add value through the many facets of manufacturing, commercialization and tourism — and there are a lot of people involved to make this happen."

At the heart of it all, Coons said, "it starts with our farmers, and their passion and dedication to growing some of the finest grapes in the world. We are a farming community with a rich history of family legacies dating back to the 1800s. And the great part is that is when the wine industry thrives, these



Councillors at Monday's virtual meeting can't agree that the tourism strategy must be the town's highest priority. Wine industry representatives Tim Coons (middle left) and Andrea Kaiser (middle right) were at council to ask that the industry and all stakeholders, including residents, be included in strategy discussions. (Screenshot)

legacies are protected."

Manufacturing in the industry includes winemaking, sorting, bottling, shipping, and distribution, and jobs range from winemaker and cellar hand to truck drivers and trades people. "These are high-paying, skilled jobs, right here in our community."

Another "mostly invisible" side of the industry is commercialization, he said, including product development, marketing and promotional activities "to create a really big reputation for our small town."

Value is also added by bringing NOTL wines to consumers in Canada and around the globe, mostly sold through retail, e-commerce, and restaurant channels.

"And, of course, our secret, winery tourism," Coons said, an umbrella term that includes hospitality, retail, events, tours and tastings, and restaurants, which together contribute over \$280 million to the region's economy.

With decades of involvement in the wine industry, and a father that was considered one of its pioneers, Andrea Kaiser spoke to councillors about sustainability, and a need for the industry to be profitable.

"Our community is home to the only specialty crop area in the province and the greenbelt — think about that — and so it is imperative we look at how we continue to ensure these lands are sustainable and preserved for future generations."

To protect agricultural land, three pillars of sustainability must be recognized — environment, of course, "but also community and economic well-being," Kaiser said.

"Our industry cares deeply about the environment and protecting our planet for future generations. And at the end of the day we are farmers first," committed to working within the greenbelt to secure a sustainable future.

Producing local wine ensures a sustainable future for NOTL's farming community, she said. During the last decade, farmland in the Niagara Peninsula has decreased by 4,600 acres, however in NOTL,

"we have a good news story." Farmland grew by more than 200 acres, "and as the wine industry continues to succeed, it ensures a bright future for the farming community."

"But — and this is the core of the presentation and what I'd like you to take away," she said, "to be sustainable we need to also think about community and lifestyle."

The wine industry has contributed to NOTL being named one of Canada's most liveable places, with rankings that consider entertainment venues, restaurants and theatres, scenery and natural landscapes and "we were the top place in Ontario to be given this distinction," Kaiser said.

"But what I find most interesting about the three pillars of sustainability is the one almost often forgotten — the need to be profitable to be sustainable."

A local tourism strategic plan must ensure long-term sustainability, she said.

"Certainly COVID has presented unprecedented challenges, as have so many other businesses, but even before COVID many wineries were struggling to be profitable."

Kaiser asked council to pause on any decisions related to tourism until the strategy is complete, and to work with the wine industry to create "a better NOTL for everyone."

She referenced a tourism strategy developed in the 1990s and a report put together by TEMCO, a tourism management committee led by Debi Pratt, tasked with ensuring a sustainable tourism and wine industry, and suggested a similar process be developed to put a plan in place that is good for businesses, as well as the quality of life for residents.

"What we're really asking," she said, "is don't put the cart before the horse. Do the work with the industry, our neighbours and our community, to figure out a tourism strategy, and then use it to make decisions at the council table."

Coun. Wendy Cheropita told council she sees a tourism strategy "as the number one priority" for the town, with a strategy providing a roadmap to both guide tourism and ad-

dress residents' concerns. She presented a motion asking to have the strategy put first on a list of town priorities, in part to ensure NOTL gets its fair share of tourism support.

Coun. Allan Bisback said the budget committee has also discussed the importance of a tourism strategy, but was uncomfortable with putting it first "above all else," with a total of 19 studies planned for 2022.

The impact of the motion "would be nominal," said CAO Marnie Cluckie, with it already next on her to-do list. It would take priority over planning issues, as stated in the motion, "but it would not stop the planning work. It just means I would need to focus more on the tourism strategy at this point."

Coun. Norm Arsenault also said he couldn't support making it the top priority, because it would take away the ability for staff to work to their own schedules as necessary.

Planning and zoning issues are also important, added Lord Mayor Betty Disero, asking for a delay of a week on Cheropita's motion, so it could be discussed during the budget meeting.

Cheropita said it's already in the budget, is really about process, and she did not want to see it delayed, saying she'd like to see timelines and staff allocated to it.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said he too is concerned about the 19 studies going on, and a timeline of 12 to 18 months for the tourism strategy, which is supposed to be a priority. "Everybody wants us to take care of it, and we say we're going to take care of it," he said. "Tourism has more impact on NOTL than anything else, and we're not giving us the due process it needs. I think it should be a priority." Staff should know it's a priority, he added, and it needs to be done before the election.

Coun. Clare Cameron said she shared the "discomfort that it should be a priority above all else," tying the hands of staff, without knowing what else might come up.

Cheropita's motion was defeated, with Arsenault, Bisback, Cameron, John Wiens and Disero voting against it.



NINE LIVES

Custom Refinishing

KITCHEN + FURNITURE

REFINISHING SPECIALISTS

905-321-6714

2136 Allanport Rd.
Thorold, ON L0S 1A6

BOOK A FREE QUOTE TODAY!

www.ninelivescustomrefinishing.com

Enhancements to reduce spread in schools, community

Continued from page 1

school boards, he says.

In a second letter to parents dated Jan. 21, he explained the five-day dismissal as “the minimum period of risk, and parents should be attentive of any symptoms a child may develop shortly after dismissal or even after the five days are over.”

“Where parents have access to rapid tests and are concerned about a child’s exposure to COVID-19 infection, Public Health recommends testing five days after last being around someone who had COVID-19,” his recent letter says. “Testing earlier than that may not be reliable,” he explains in his Jan. 21 letter.

In bold print, the letter says students who are vaccinated with two doses will be exempt from such dismissals. That was his clearly stated intention in the Jan. 14 guidelines that were sent to parents, although some media outlets were reporting Monday that was a change to his recommendations.

Parents of all children in a cohort where there is a positive case will be notified, and “can make an informed decision” about whether they choose to keep their kids at home, he says.

Provincial regulations do not require the dismissal of students, vaccinated or unvaccinated, when there is a positive case in their class, referring to the increased transmissibility of omicron and the negative consequences of student dismissals.

Provincial guidelines are that parents will not be made aware of positive COVID cases in their children’s schools until absenteeism reaches 30 per cent, which had occurred in 10 per cent of Ontario schools by Monday, although 28 per cent of schools had not reported their absenteeism.

Hirji’s other enhancements call for students from Kindergarten up to

wear masks, unless they have a medical note from their doctor, “in direct opposition to provincial guidance,” Moore’s letter says, and regular testing of CO2 in classrooms to ensure adequate ventilation, that is also not required by the province.

In his letter Moore says he opposes weekly monitoring because there is no correlation between CO2 levels and viral transmission.

Hirji explains high CO2 levels could indicate poor ventilation in a classroom, and moving hepa filters from other areas of the school where readings are low could improve ventilation. In limited cases, the purchase of more



Continued on page 4 Dr. Mustafa Hirji during a virtual regional council meeting. (Screenshot)

Regional council, ‘boss’ of Hirji, weighs in

Penny Coles
The Local

During last Thursday’s council meeting, there were varying opinions put forward about Dr. Mustafa Hirji’s recommendations to keep students and staff safe at school, with most councillors respecting the measures and the goals of the region’s acting chief medical officer of health.

Ron Tripp, Niagara’s CAO, reminded councillors that the decisions were made collaboratively — Tripp was also involved in discussions with the four different boards — and were based on a review of the science. An agreement about enhanced measures was formed with that input, he said. “I think we came to a place where we could all move forward and protect our kids.”

Hirji corrected one councillor who suggested Hirji had been insubordinate by not consulting with his “boss,” the provincial medical officer of health.

His only boss, Hirji clarified, is regional council.

To a criticism that he could have done a better job of communicating with councillors about the issue before it erupted in the media and took them by surprise, Hirji responded they had all received the letter that outlined his intentions, and regional chair Jim Bradley also received the letter sent by Dr. Keiran Moore, the provincial medical officer of health, which focuses on three issues: dismissal of unvaccinated students if there is a COVID case in their class, masks for Kindergarten students, and monitoring ventilation in classrooms.

Hirji explained dealing with COVID is now about managing the transition “to hopefully COVID becoming an endemic,” in a diverse province with a system of local medical officers of health making decisions based on their areas, which don’t necessarily share the same experience.

Having worked with

local school boards for the last two years, he said, “I saw an opportunity to build on the good foundation of the province.”

Hirji said he looked at what the science says, and what other boards have done, and worked with Niagara school boards to be “aggressive up front to stop infections.”

He called his additional recommendations a “made-in-Niagara enhancement” of provincial guidelines.

Councillors also commented on Hirji being criticized unfairly throughout the pandemic.

When Hirji sent his letter out to parents about the additional measures on Jan. 14, “hundreds of parents across Niagara breathed a collective sigh of relief about the safety of schools, and protecting Niagara’s children,” said St. Catharines Coun. Laura Ip.

“Let’s remember children are contracting COVID, they’re taking it home, and their parents are taking it into their

workplaces and the rest of the community.”

The vast majority of parents “do not want to spin the roulette wheel that is omicron when it comes to their children’s and their family’s safety,” she said.

Pelham Coun. Diana Huson said Hirji has been targeted throughout the pandemic unfairly, for doing his job.

She told him she was sorry to see him again “dragged into social media. I think you’re doing a great job focusing on how best to protect us from a very difficult situation.”

Grimsby Coun. Wayne Fertich suggested the region should get rid of the “acting” part of Hirji’s title.

“It would send a great message to the province that we support Dr. Hirji,” he said.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero, who has supported Hirji’s pandemic measures for the last two years on occasions when other councillors did not, told The Local she continues to support what he is do-

ing, and was surprised by the provincial response — his intention was to build on provincial restrictions. A lack of communication has been an issue in the past, however, and is key, so that councillors are not taken unaware when questioned by their constituents, she said.

“He’s starting off at a point we can all agree on, and that’s what’s best for the kids. And he’s the person who knows the epidemiology of what’s going on, and understands what’s best in the region and what we should be doing.”

She repeated what she has said in the past, that as a councillor she doesn’t have the expertise or knowledge to know what’s best, or “to call him to task.”

Every region will have its own unique issues, “and I trust what he is seeing and saying to us.”

In the past, when he has deviated from provincial regulations, it’s always to be on the side of caution, and “I would say he’s been right.”



MAC INC.

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE HOME EVALUATION

905.262.8080





Jessie MacDonald
Broker

Evan MacDonald
Sales Representative

REVEL
ON-THE-LAKE
REAL ESTATE GROUP



Andrew Perrie
Team Leader
Sales Representative

Hirji not alone in Ontario with extra measures

Continued from page 3

hepa filters than have been supplied by the province might be necessary, he says.

While schools would be expected to pay for the filters, “if there is a financial barrier to improving ventilation we would be happy to talk about that.” The last thing Public Health would want to see is “a couple of hundred dollars as the reason we’re not doing something to keep our kids safe.”

Moore’s letter was not intended to be made public, and there was much discussion at last Thursday’s regional council meeting about Niagara’s extra enhancements and the response from Moore turning very political, very quickly.

The letter referred to a lack of consultation, not only with the Ministry of Health but several other ministries and agencies, implying Hirji had been negligent by not informing them of his plans.

Hirji told The Local while he both spoke and met virtually with Moore

to let him know his intentions, he is entitled to make his own recommendations without consultation.

“There has never been an expectation we would consult with the chief medical officer of health on local recommendations or local orders. It was always expected we would let them know so they’re not caught off guard,” he says.

“I was surprised to hear that expectation that we would have consulted with them in advance,” and if that is a change in process going forward, “we will be happy to do that.”

However, he feels he fulfilled his obligation to let the ministry know his intentions.

When Moore was asked why he felt it necessary to send the letter rebuking Hirji, he said he felt the message from public health units should be “consistent and persistent,” and that he was seeking clarity.

The resulting discussions in social media, Hirji says, came after parents had already been informed of his measures — they were not a secret — but

his greater concern was that parents not lose confidence about sending their children back to school, and that they understand the measures are in place to keep students and staff safe from COVID.

Moore also said in that Niagara is alone in instituting enhanced measures, and while Hirji may have been when he made those recommendations, “the most impactful is classroom dismissal, and we’re certainly not alone in that now.”

On the issue of telling parents about a positive case in their kids’ classroom, and dismissing unvaccinated students and staff, Peterborough’s public health unit is doing the same, and both Toronto and Peel Region are recommending school boards require students in Kindergarten, both JK and SK, wear masks while attending school and on a school bus.

Perhaps the most stinging rebuke from Moore was in his questioning of the need for extra measures, which he said were not evidence-based.

He said Hirji stated

only 25 per cent of children had acquired infections in school, and 75 per cent became infected in the community, yet Niagara is not instituting additional measures to restrict community transmission.

The 25 per cent figure “was misconstrued,” says Hirji.

Through contact tracing, the region has determined that 25 per cent of children became infected by attending school or activities at school. Another 50 per cent contracted COVID outside of school, visiting friends or taking part in sports and other activities. “The other 25 percent, we just don’t know.”

All or none of those infections could have come from school, outside school or a split of the two, he says, and the 25 per cent that is known “is definitely very significant. Any infection we can stop is an infection we want to stop. If there are reasonable, common sense steps to reduce them, why wouldn’t we take those steps?”

The 25 per cent of infections that were a result of school spread occurred

last September to December, during a time when there were more strict measures in place to keep students safe, including dismissing cohorts when there was an infection in the classroom.

“If we didn’t have that dismissal, the 25 per cent would have been higher.”

That measure was effective in limiting spread in the fall, and his intention is to continue being aggressive, “to stop the spread and minimize disruption in the long term.”

“We’re in a new scenario here we haven’t experienced before, dealing with omicron in schools,” he continues. “All we’ve learned from around the world, and in schools here, means putting the best protection in place to keep students and staff as safe as possible.”

And with students just now returning to school under threat of the rapid spread of omicron, he adds, “we’re not going to know what will happen until we see what the experiences in schools are.”

With the high number of infections in the community, the most effective

tool is still getting vaccinated, “no matter what protections are in place in school.”

The decision to dismiss unvaccinated students and staff if there is a positive COVID case in their class was made to limit infection, he says, because unvaccinated people are more likely to become infected and spread it to others.

But at the same time he hopes parents will be encouraged to get their children vaccinated, “to get vaccination numbers up, protect our schools, protect those children, and keep everyone in school without disruption.”

While the choice to dismiss unvaccinated students might set them apart from others in their class, “it’s an unfortunate fact that we’re dealing with COVID-19 and the prospect that infection is going to spread in schools, and we have to take some action to protect them.”

Hirji says he hopes parents will reconsider their choice and have their kids vaccinated, “so we don’t have to make that distinction.”



—\$2,688,300 | JUST LISTED—



\$5,200,000 | SOLD



JUST LISTED | \$2,000,000



JUST LISTED | \$3,799,000



JUST LISTED | \$2,100,000



Andrew Perrie
Sales Representative



REVEL
ON-THE-LAKE
REAL ESTATE GROUP





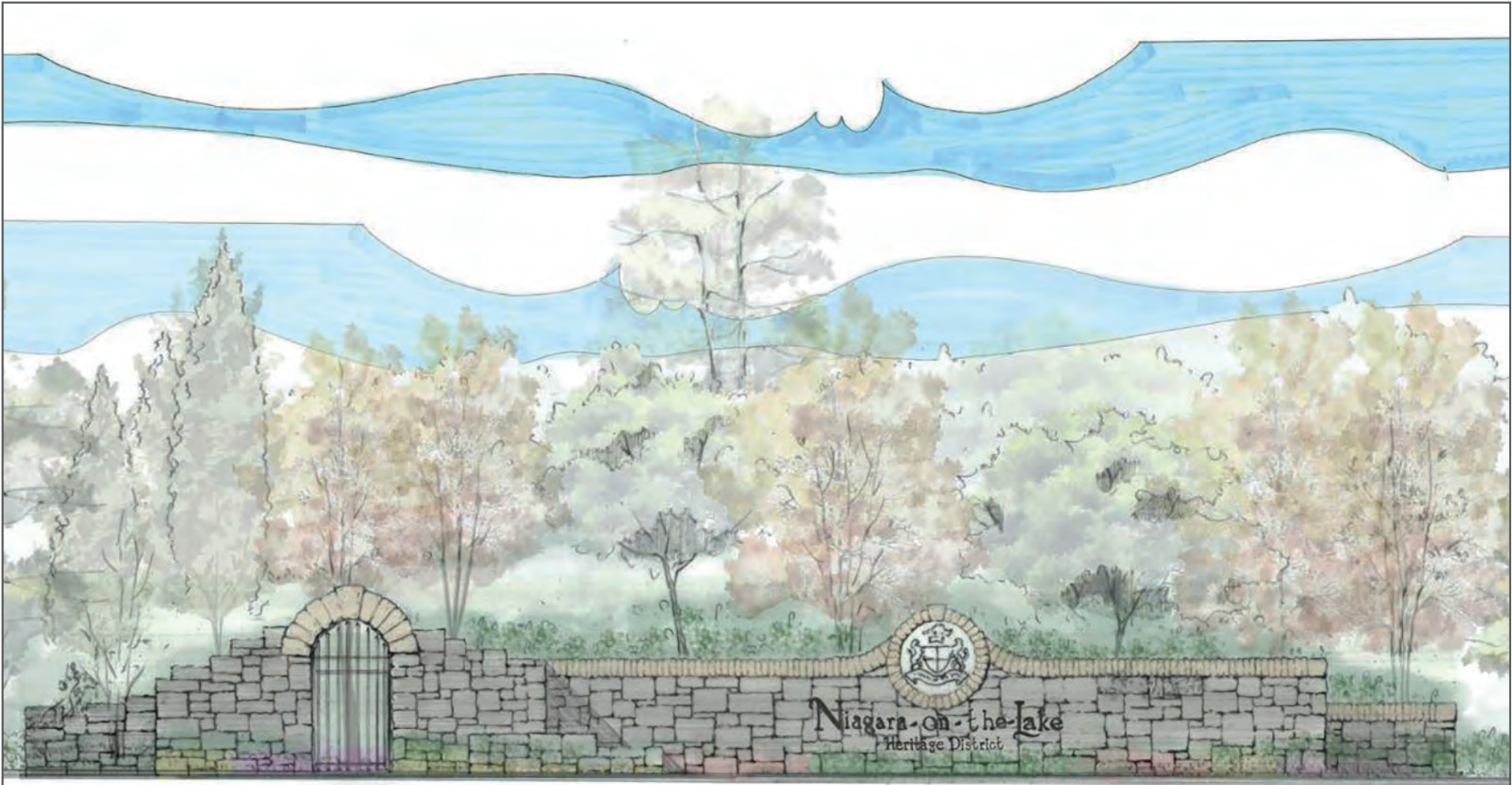
Jessie MacDonald
Broker



Evan MacDonald
Sales Representative

CALL TODAY FOR YOUR **FREE** HOME EVALUATION

CERTIFIED LUXURY HOME MARKETING SPECIALISTS
289.868.8869



This is a drawing of the design approved for the Queen and Mississagua Street intersection, although there has been no decision on whether the traffic bump-out will remain or be removed. (Supplied)

Project to be completed spring of 2023

Continued from page 1

\$250,00 budget. But with a finalized design in place, said Kevin Turcotte, Manager of Parks & Recreation, “the town can look for grants and other sources of funding, with those features “shovel ready” when the money is available to pay for them.

Plantings for horticultural beds have not been finalized, although councillors were showed a “palette” of what might be used. Smith explained there would be a combination of perennials, deciduous, evergreen and broad-leaf evergreen plantings, “so every three months, every season, there will be a change visually in the gardens.” The perennials will provide “splash

of colour,” and there is still time for a discussion about whether annuals will also be incorporated in the bed, and if so, how many.

The plantings are expected to be completed in the spring of 2023, for next year’s tourism season.

Turcotte assured council that parks supervisor J.B. Hopkins will be involved in plant selection, to make sure it ties in with the main street.

He also explained the scope of the beds can “pivot” depending on the outcome of a study of the infrastructure for that intersection currently underway, with an engineering report on the bump-out expected soon.

The height of the wall, which was one of the main concerns of residents, is about the same or lower

than what is there now, with the exception of the archway on the west side, Brad Smith, senior landscaper of Seferian Design Group, which is in charge of the project, assured councillors.

The staff recommendation, which councillors approved Monday, was to finalize the design, and move forward with a tender for the work. Tendering can begin this spring, with construction to start in September, after the peak of the tourism season.

Also recommended and approved was to go ahead with hiring Dean McLellen to build the dry stone wall, without tendering that portion of the project, which comes at a cost of \$130,000.

While the town has a policy for tendering such

projects, CAO Marnie Cluckie explained that in certain circumstances, which would include this situation, council can decide to allow single sourcing, which councillors agreed to for that particular part of the work, given McLellen’s skills and experience with dry stone walls.

They were told McLellen is the only certified master craftsman in Canada recognized by the British Dry Stone Walling Association, is also a teacher of dry stone and stone masonry, and a faculty associate at the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts.

Coun. Gary Burroughs said he was concerned that the changes to the wall were made to meet budget requirements, not to answer some of the issues brought up by residents,

asking how residents’ comments were incorporated into the final design.

The public wasn’t happy with height and length of the wall or the building material that was presented, Turcotte said. Reducing the scale of wall and making it dry stone to be more of a heritage feature, as well as taking some inspiration from Fort Mississauga, was in response to residents’ concerns. Also, an obelisk that was originally part of the de-

sign, “a sticking point with residents,” Turcotte said, has been discarded. The current design has been refined to “open up the views and help frame the intersection a little better.”

Burroughs was the only one to vote against the motion to move the project forward, because of two issues, he said - that the provisional plaza features aren’t more developed, and the fact that there will no longer be a sign at the intersection.





Martin Sheppard Fraser LLP


ERICA A. BLYTHE (VAN DE LAAR)

Don't leave your loved ones out in the cold. Call me and we can update your will together.


Wills & Estates, Real Estate and Corporate & Commercial

email: eblythe@mslawyers.com

phone: 905.354.1585




NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE DENTAL




Dr. Kevin Clark and Dr. Rebecca Zabek-Clark
Dentists
and their registered Dental Hygiene Team

369 MARY STREET
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE
www.niagaradental.ca


NEW PATIENTS WELCOME
EVENING HOURS AVAILABLE
905-468-3009



JANUARY IS GLAUCOMA AWARENESS Month



Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of vision loss and blindness worldwide. This eye disease, also known as the “sneak thief of sight”, shows no symptoms early on. This is why the majority of those with early-stage glaucoma don’t know they have it. A comprehensive dilated eye exam is the only way to detect this eye disease—caught early, glaucoma can be managed and eyesight saved.



DR HOPKINS & ASSOCIATES OPTOMETRY
— Sight for Life —

358 Mary St., Unit 7, NOTL | 905.468.8002
8 Secord Dr., St. Catharines | 905.682.9119
www.theeyedoc.ca

EDITORIAL

COVID remains a global problem that needs to be solved

Anyone who watches or reads news regularly will have their favourite COVID experts, I'm sure.

One who is popular with CBC is Dr. Isaac Bogoch, an infectious disease specialist with the University of Toronto. He is interviewed often on CBC, the

network some eschew as being a tool of the federal government. While it may get some of its funding from the government there is no indication the journalists or experts called upon to share their knowledge are working for a particular politician or party, unlike some of the U.S. networks — but

that's a different story and an editorial for another day.

Bogoch was giving us some cause of optimism this week, with indications that omicron infections may have peaked across the country. However, he said, we've heard it all before, and we've been wrong before. There is still

uncertainty in the weeks ahead.

The numbers in Niagara are looking a little better than a couple of weeks ago, when a record of 488 new infections was reached Jan. 4. The graph shows some peaks and valleys since then. On Tuesday, the region was reporting 165 more people have tested positive for COVID.

and contact management, the numbers are an underestimate of the true number of people in Niagara with COVID.

There is still so much uncertainty. Dr. Bogoch warns us that with so many cases in other countries around the world, other variants could emerge.

regionally.

The message remains as it has been for more than a year now — vaccinations are key.

Here, in our corner of the world, we have only to worry about those who don't agree with vaccinations (some of them the same people who won't listen to the experts on CBC because they're being paid by the government to say what they say) and who are not likely to change their minds.

When will parents see some child care relief

On Monday, Nunavut became the last territory to reach agreement with Ottawa on a child care agreement.

That is great news for the people in Nunavut, who have so many more struggles to deal with on a daily basis than we do.

groceries to gas, with enormous housing prices and the rising cost of mortgages.

It was last April when the federal government promised the \$30 billion, and provinces began working on agreements to get their share. Ontario was offered \$10.2 billion to help parents, based on population — taxpayers who have contributed their share of federal taxes. Yet although all other provinces and territories across Canada, each with their own child care situation, have managed to work out a deal, Ontario parents, who pay the highest fees in the country, are still waiting for a break that could amount to hundreds of dollars, for some more than \$1,000 a month, in child care savings.

country.

The need has never been greater. Is Doug Ford thinking about women who are single parents, without a support system to help with child care? Does he care about families with minimum wage pay cheques, a large portion of their income going for child care?

Niagara-on-the-Lake numbers are not so great, with 145 people in town infected, and 76.9 per 1,000 based on population. Those numbers are higher than in previous waves, with only four other municipalities currently showing a greater percentage of population infected.

The region is now posting a caveat on its statistics page, warning us that due to the omicron surge and limited availability of testing, as well as changes to case

There is talk about transitioning to an endemic, and it looks possible from where we sit. We're doing okay, and in a much better place than other countries. But with so many countries still severely under-vaccinated, we're not out of danger.

He expressed his concern that people will begin to let down their guard. "The mission is not accomplished until we have truly vaccinated the planet," he said.

That burden has to be significantly decreased, globally, not just

We can't stop trying, but globally we have a much, much bigger problem. It seems a good time to turn some of our attention outward, to other countries, and to supporting the organizations, such as Unicef, who are trying to help those who want our help.

Penny Coles
The Local

No one should stop our kids from learning safely



Wayne Gates, MPP
Special to The Local

Our kids deserve a safe return to school.

Kids, parents and education workers in Ontario deserve better. No contact tracing, no testing plan, no support for education workers, no plan for air quality, and no vaccination efforts for our schools. This was the school reopening plan that was given to us by the province.

As parents and children got ready to go back to school at the start of 2022, they were struck with several confusing last-minute decisions. Delays to returning to school — especially those you learn about days before your kids are supposed to return — are rarely welcome news. Despite these confusing delays there was still no real plan for a safe reopening for our kids, and that is what concerns me most. Kids need to be in school and they need to be safe—we can't continue to provide half measures which will put us right back in the same place with kids at home.

officer of health for the Niagara region, is introducing additional safety measures to ensure our kids can stay in school safely. Our region is making a real effort to keep the schools in Niagara safe. Ensuring high air quality and filtration, urging schools to report cases, heightened contact tracing and more were on the list of added safety measures. To me, this was all welcome news. In implementing extra measures, Dr. Hirji is recognizing that a one-size-fits-all plan is not the right way to go, and that Niagara must be cognizant of the spread that we know is occurring in schools. He knows in order to continue to keep Niagara safe, we need to be one step ahead of this virus.

This is especially important in our community because we have so many seniors. Before the rise of the omicron variant nearly one-third of community outbreaks were traced to schools. Simply put, schools were causing spread in our communities that was offering pathways for this virus to attack our parents and grandparents.

efforts to make Niagara schools safer? Local public health officials have been on the frontlines of this pandemic, and they know the local realities of how COVID-19 is spreading.

I thank Dr. Hirji for standing his ground and continuing to work with local school boards to keep schools open and safe in Niagara. To think that after provincial officials left parents in the dark about when schools will open, and provided them with an inadequate plan, they are criticizing Niagara's chief medical officer of health for making improvements — that makes no sense. Dr. Hirji has been working hard to keep the region safe and healthy during this pandemic and, frankly, understands the unique needs of the Niagara region better than the province does. I fully support his efforts.

There is much we can do to move past this pandemic, and I plan to continue to be a strong advocate alongside our local public health experts to get the job done. We continue to call on the province to make PCR tests and rapid tests accessible and free for all students, teachers, and other education workers who want them, to reduce class sizes and busloads, to provide free N95 masks for our teachers and education workers, and to immediately begin vaccination clinics in schools so that we can make it easier for kids, teachers, and education workers to get vaccinated and put an end to this pandemic. As always, I am more than willing to sit down and collaborate with the Ontario government to get this done and keep our schools open and safe.



View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

After Life (Netflix 2022, season three) is a mini series focusing on unconsolable grief

and depression, but in the end it is about the joy of living and caring for one another. The final episode is a triumph.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to go to

movies. Until he resumes going to theatres, he has graciously agreed to share his opinions, through "short and sweet" exclusives, of Netflix series and movies for The Local.

Penny Coles
The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake
Local
The Trusted Voice of Our Community

P.O. Box 430, 1596 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, L0S 1T0

Editor:
Penny Coles
penny@notllocal.com
905-246-5878

Publisher:
The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local

Graphic Designer:
Rosie Gowsell
composing@notllocal.com

Advertising Sales:
Karen Skeoch
karen@notllocal.com • 905-641-5335

Julia Coles
julia@notllocal.com • 905-934-1040

Helen Arsenault
Local Business Directory,
Local Happenings, Classified Sales
classified@notllocal.com

notllocal.com facebook.com/notllocal instagram.com/thenotllocal @thenotllocal

NEED HELP? MAKE THE CALL

DISTRESS CENTRE
For depression,
distress and crisis.
24 hour help line:
905-688-3711

**MENTAL HEALTH
AND ADDICTIONS
ACCESS**
(Toll Free)
1-866-550-5205
**GAMBLER'S
ANONYMOUS**
905-351-1616

KIDS HELP PHONE
Service for youth
416-586-5437
1-800-668-6868
(Crisis Line)
kidshelpphone.ca

**ALCOHOLICS
ANONYMOUS**
Meetings every
Wednesday evening
8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
St. Mark's Parish Hall
41 Byron St., NOTL
or find a meeting
905-682-2140

**ASSAULTED
WOMEN'S
HELPLINE**
Mobile calls to:
#SAFE (#7233)
1-866-863-0511
(Toll Free)

CRIME STOPPERS
1-800-222-8477
(TIPS)
niagaratips.com
Text 274637 (CRIMES),
keyword: Niagara,
then your tip

COMMENT

Help available to focus on wellness in 2022



Community Health and Wellness Committee Special to The Local

The year 2021 has closed, and it has been quite a ride: physically, economically, mentally and socially. COVID-19 has dominated the health scene, but there have been significant mental and social impacts too. We look to 2022 with hope and determination to make things better.

One significant aspect of our life that we could focus on is our wellness. What is wellness? It is actively working towards a state of better health and well-being through targeted intentions, choices and actions. In other words, through specifically thinking about it, and doing something about it. Keeping a positive attitude, and continuing to learn, are important aspects of our mental and social health, particularly

in these challenging times.

A good example of how to do this is to take advantage of the wide variety of virtual programs offered by our local Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library. There are several interesting sessions in January and February, ranging from Financial Literacy to Genetic Genealogy.

A new Learn & Live (Life-long Learning) program has recently been initiated in Niagara-on-the-Lake. A series of presentations were offered last October to December, titled Coming of Age: The Wellness of Learning. Planning is underway to deliver several new series in 2022 on a wide variety of topics. Visit the NOTL Public Library event calendar at notlpubliclibrary.org for details on all these sessions.

Another excellent opportunity is the Third Age Learning lectures offered in St. Catharines - the next one is scheduled (virtually) on Feb. 15, and is on Hot Zones: Why pandemics and inequality are neighbourhood-level problems, a timely topic. For more information on this program, please contact registrations@lniagara.ca

For physical activity, try the outdoor skating rink in Virgil behind the Meridian Credit Union and Centennial arena (1567 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil). This rink was generously organized by community volunteers.

Another option is to explore the Upper Canada Heritage Trail in Old Town. Phase 1 of the trail has been completed and is located on an abandoned railroad right-of-way that goes south from the Old Town, beginning near King Street and John Street, to East and West Line. It takes you through Carolinian forests and vineyards. For more information about this trail, please visit heritagetrail.ca.

Whatever you do, connecting and engaging with others and our community, despite and because of the pandemic, is important for our wellness. Plan your wellness activities now!

Stay healthy and safe.

**NOTL Community
Wellness Committee**

Local LETTERS

Grateful for letters of inclusivity

At the start of a New Year, it is time to give thanks to the editors of our local newspapers for their patience and endurance over the last 12 months in sticking to the task of informing readers what is going on locally.

In particular, their forbearance in publishing the many letters they receive from readers on all sorts of topics. In the in-

terest of free speech, they have diligently printed letters that, quite frankly, should not be printed. We should thank them for doing this. Some of the weekly scribbles are the worst. They feel that they should force feed their thoughts down our throats. At a time when inclusivity is the watchword, they should just sit down and take

2022 off, please.

How nice to read Jackie Bonic's letter. It had inclusivity written all over it. If all of us, and that is asking a lot, had Jackie's attitude to life, I am sure that the town would be much better for it.

**Peter Barwell
NOTL**

When will recognition begin?

I would like to address the substance of a letter to the editor (Where will recognition end? The Local, Jan. 12):

I would like to ask, when will recognition begin?

When will it be recognized that the LGBTQ people have given up their happiness, their family, their freedom, and their lives during the periods of the Underground Railroad, the War of 1812, the First and Second World Wars and during our very times today?

How were these losses in-

curred? In two different ways. First by direct persecution. The second by neglect. Our society today just does not care about the sacrifices the LGBTQ people have made as evidenced by the complete absence of recognition.

When will recognition begin ... with rainbow colours painted on the road? Let's see. Other populations of ours have been given Voices of Freedom Memorial Park, Black History Month, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Indigenous Remembrance Day, our nation-

al flag at half-mast for a period of one year, and 40 Billion Dollars. Surely our LGBTQ peoples deserve the same, at least as a beginning. They have earned it.

I for one am looking forward to the hundreds of thousands of dollars that I will receive in recognition and recompense for the family I could have had and for the decades I was forced to live in fear, hiding, and self-loathing.

**John Boydell
St. Davids**

Local LETTERS

Pride — for Charter of Rights and Freedoms

There's been a lot of ink dedicated lately to the rainbow crosswalk.

Everyone is entitled to their opinion. And in my opinion, I am proud of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I support the wonderfully diverse and CREATIVE commu-

nity which makes NOTL such a fabulous town. The actors, musicians, chefs, artists, writers, tourism professionals, landscape architects (etc. etc. etc.) who enrich our lives, and who (normally) help fill this town with tourists and their dollars.

So, in support of the town council's decision to install

a rainbow crosswalk, I have installed my own rainbow light show in my kitchen window. A photo of said show is attached.

All the best to everyone for 2022!

**Val Koziol
NOTL**



We are in this together

While Canadians are generous to charities, especially during times of crisis, it is difficult to keep that going for two years during a once in a generation pandemic. There was a groundswell of support for charities in the early months of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, but understandably that support is difficult to maintain as community members try to move past the crisis mode. However, at the same time, the demand for charitable services has not decreased, but instead

charities have seen a significant increase in demands for services. The result is that many charities can no longer meet the demand, as they are stretched and challenged both financially and with staffing to the point where some may not survive. Research from Imagine Canada estimated that as many as one in four charity organizations may not be able to continue to operate. We cannot ignore the crisis facing the charities Canadians and residents of Niagara depend on. Now is not the time

to give in to "pandemic fatigue". I urge you all to reflect on what you have to be grateful for and what you are able to offer others, even at this difficult time. Please consider supporting your local NOTL Community Fund through the Niagara Community Foundation, to help the local charities that do so much to support our community.

We are in this together!

**Mike Berlis
Chair, Niagara-on-the-Lake
Community Fund**



Letters! We want letters!

If you have a letter to the editor you'd like to see published, please send it to penny@notllocal.com. Please try to keep it to about 350 words. Sorry, but we won't publish anonymous letters. And please stick to the issue at hand, rather than attacking those involved. The deadline is Monday at noon.

Feature your business in our LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

The full page is made up of a
HALF PAGE AD and
HALF PAGE ARTICLE

Article word count: 450-500

Ad size: 10.25" w x 7" h

Publication Date Subject to Availability

The Niagara-on-the-Lake
Local
The Trusted Voice of Our Community

NOTL Businesses contact

Karen at **905•641•5335**
at **karen@notllocal.com**

Businesses outside NOTL contact

Julia at **905•934•1040**
at **julia@notllocal.com**



LocalARTS and CULTURE

Kimiko's Pearl an original Bravo Niagara! ballet

Story represents generations of Japanese-Canadian family

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Bravo Niagara! Festival is moving into a bold new frontier with the commission of an original ballet, and a sneak peek of the first act to premiere online on Feb. 5.

Kimiko's Pearl captures a story with deep personal meaning to mother and daughter co-founders Chris Mori and Alexis Spieldenner, while at the same time encapsulating the experience of thousands of Japanese Canadians who were detained and dispossessed during World War II.

The roots of the project harken back to Spieldenner's thesis at Duke University in 2012, "*Voices of Four Generations: A Story of the Japanese Canadian Community from Issei to Yonsei*." The project gave her a chance to delve into her own family's history in Canada, beginning with her maternal great-grand-

parents, Shizuo and Natsue Ayukawa leaving Japan to start a new life here at the beginning of the 20th century. They settled in Mission, BC, where they built a strawberry farm before they were removed from their property during the war.

With the power of a few research grants behind her, Spieldenner was able to dig deeper and deeper into her family's past, discovering along the way the struggles her ancestors faced that weren't talked about from generation to generation.

Bravo Niagara's Voices of Freedom Festival in the past has focused on the experiences of the Black, Romani and Jewish communities. When Mori decided it was time to bring her own culture to the forefront, she thought of her daughter's thesis, and reached out to some family members, one of whom sent her a dropbox full of photos neither woman had previously seen.

One photo that stood out



This is a still from the *Kimiko's Pearl* video, with Alanna McAdie as Kimiko, and Chenxin Liu and Yue Shi as Shizuo and Natsue Ayukawa. (Photo supplied)

was that of a trunk, Mori's grandfather's name and an arbitrary number painted upon it. It had been donated by Mori's aunt Hiro Kaita to the Canadian War Museum. Upon further digging, Mori

discovered that her grandfather had actually built the trunk while he and his family were being held in an internment camp in BC dubbed New Denver.

The trunk was accompanied by a poem written by Kaita after the Canadian government signed the papers for redress atoning for the treatment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War.

"The poem really sums up a lot of the feelings that the Japanese Canadians who experienced the internment felt but never talked about," Mori says.

"These repressed feelings," adds Spieldenner, "and the metaphor of the trunk holding those memories, were really powerful."

Originally, Mori envisioned a short music video, with original music from Canadian composer Kevin Lau, interspersed with some of those family photos. But the resilience of her forebears convinced her it had to become a bigger project.

"I always dreamed of presenting a ballet, so I went back to that dream," Mori remembers. "When we filmed *Menorah*, our Holocaust program, it was co-produced by Jeff Herd, the former executive director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. He came here and stayed at my dad's house. I ran the idea by him, and that's how it started."

Mori and Spieldenner brought in Howard Reich, the retired critic for the Chicago Tribune who had also helped with *Menorah*. Reich set down to flesh out the story to cover four generations in the lives of a Japanese Ca-

nadian family, with Mori's and Spieldenner's ancestors as the base.

The pearl of the title came to Mori after re-reading her aunt's poem.

"It's about how a pearl is made," she says. "It's this irritant that over the years, layers and layers develop to make the pearl. It represents the intergenerational reverberations, how it's affected every generation. There wouldn't be a Bravo Niagara! if it weren't for my parents. They started with nothing after the internment to develop a successful business."

Mori and Spieldenner put together a creative team, the majority of whom are Asian, including Lau, sound designer Aaron Tsang and choreographer Yosuke Mino. Herd signed on as director and enlisted Royal Winnipeg Ballet principal dancers Alanna McAdie as Kimiko, and Yue Shi and Chenxin Liu in the roles of Mori's grandparents. Lau gathered four expert and accomplished musicians to bring the score to life.

The character Kimiko is a 15-year-old Toronto girl who discovers an old family trunk containing a diary and keepsakes. The diary brings to life the story of her ancestors fleeing poverty to come to Canada. It takes her through the cruelties of internment brought about by the invasion of Pearl Harbour, then the family's efforts to restart their lives in post-war Toronto, where Mori's parents Tsugio and Ryuko started their business, Mori Safety.

Kimiko, a stand-in of sorts for Alexis, experiences her family's history as it

unfolds before her eyes in a tale of heroism, hope and resilience in the face of racism. The entire ballet encompasses eight movements, with the opening scene being the focus of the Feb. 5 premiere.

It is fascinating to know the story and to experience the beauty and drama of both the music and the dance in the nine-minute performance. McAdie embodies Kimiko, digging into the crate to read the diary, while Shi and Liu tell the first 40 years of the story through movement. There is joy, wonder, playfulness, toil and despair, all climaxing with the government's decision to intern Japanese Canadians following the Dec. 7, 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbour by Japan.

Art Miki, the president of the National Association of Japanese Canadians from 1984 to 1992, fought for and signed the agreement for redress with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in 1988. The settlement included a payment of \$21,000 for each survivor of internment and a \$12 million community fund. Mulroney also delivered an apology for the wartime internment policy to the House of Commons of Canada.

Miki, a third generation Japanese Canadian, experienced displacement as a child 80 years ago. He and his family were forced by the government to move from their fruit farm near Vancouver to Ste. Agathe, Manitoba, into a one-room house that they had to share with other families.

Miki lives in Winnipeg,

Continued on page 16

35 PINOT TRAIL, NOTL
\$899,000



MLS# 40199728

1 AUTUMN PLACE, , NOTL
\$1,185,000



MLS# 40200104

47 ROSE GLEN CR., NOTL
\$859,000



MLS# 40198603

725 KING STREET, NOTL
\$1,590,000



MLS# 40177781



HELEN MOSCA
SALES REPRESENTATIVE
DIRECT: 905-650-5669



AARON CHERNEY
SALES REPRESENTATIVE
DIRECT: 905-401-7915

ROYALLEPAGE

NRC Realty, Brokerage, Independently Owned & Operated



125 QUEEN ST.,
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE
DIRECT: 905.468.4214

Good samaritans save the day for Upper Canada Lodge

Penny Coles
The Local

Denise Murphy can't say enough about two young men who came to the rescue during last week's snow storm.

As the director of resident care of Upper Canada Lodge, she woke up to a different world that Monday morning, and wasn't sure how she, or anyone else, would get to the long-term care home on Wellington Street.

"The first thing I asked myself when I looked out the window is how is anybody going to get to work?"

While many businesses

could remain closed and let employees enjoy a snow day, staff at long-term care homes are essential — without them, residents wouldn't be fed or given the daily care that is a necessity, she says.

Murphy, who lives on Dixie Avenue in Chautauqua, was relieved to get a phone call from Lori Sentineal, one of the nurses at the home, to say her son would pick Murphy up.

Lori's son Wyatt had woken her up early, knowing how important it was for her to get to work and ready to drive her, and he then offered to help Murphy.

"I walked to the top of

Dixie," she says, knowing he wouldn't have made it down the street.

But that wasn't all — he spent the day driving around in his pick-up truck getting Upper Canada Lodge staff to work, through two shifts, with his friend, Maksat Shasaparov, travelling with him. They often had to help shovel around the door and walkway so the person they were chauffeuring to work could get to the truck, and to help them over the snow banks.

"We wouldn't have had any staff without them," says Murphy. "Thanks to them every resident received full

care," and not only that, "they even got the cooks to work, and residents also had a hot breakfast."

It was also important that family members who couldn't get to the home knew the staff were at work looking after their loved ones, she says.

"I just started off planning to get my mom to work," says Wyatt. "I know that with the job she does, she doesn't get snow days."

As staff called the lodge saying they couldn't get there,

Wyatt took their addresses, and went to get them, travelling to Virgil, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines to pick them up.

He works at Niagara Falls Craft Distillers, and checked in there, but other than that was going non-stop until late afternoon.

Shasaparov is an international student from Turkmenistan, who has lived with the Sentineals for about five years, and works with Wyatt. He graduated from Vineridge

Academy, and is continuing his education, but was happy to help out.

"It was an exhausting day," says Wyatt. "It was difficult to get through the snow, and I had to stay focused on driving. I got stuck a few times, but there was always someone to help us out, and we got about 10 cars out for others who were stuck. It was definitely a long day, but there were others who had a much worse day than we did."



Wyatt Sentineal and Maksat Shasaparov are glad to have the snow storm behind them, but were happy they could help out. (Photo supplied)



A snow day at school

Isaac Pereira, Eric Warren, Caleb Quiambao, Jayden Dulas and Maximo Grusso work on a snowman at St. Michael Catholic School. (Photo supplied)



**Niagara
on-the-Lake
Realty**
1994 Limited Real Estate Brokerage

*The Highest Total Volume of
Local Sales for the Past Decade*

Highest volume in Niagara-on-the-Lake from 01/01/2011 to 09/21/2021. Source MLS.



5 MERITAGE LANE
\$1,348,000

MLS 40201743 • Thomas Elltoft and Weston Miller



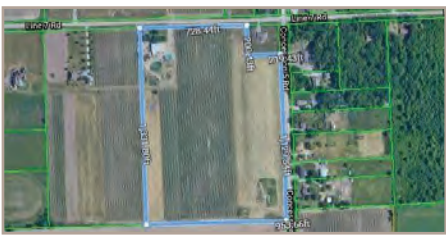
94 TANBARK ROAD
\$2,399,000

MLS 40197881 • Thomas Elltoft and Jane Elltoft



177 KING STREET
\$3,898,000

MLS 40142872 • Thomas Elltoft and Weston Miller



547 LINE 7 ROAD
\$2,198,000

MLS 40195801 • Thomas Elltoft and Kim Elltoft



50 HARMONY DRIVE
\$1,895,000

MLS 40199830 • Christopher Bowron and Nicole Vanderperk



55 WILLIAM STREET
\$1,448,000

MLS 40199154 • Thomas Elltoft and Kim Elltoft



31 RICARDO STREET LOT
\$1,498,000

MLS 40191827 • Thomas Elltoft and Jane Elltoft



20 CIRCLE STREET
\$850,000

MLS 40159131 • Cheryl Carmichael

Christopher Bowron*** 905-468-2269
Kim Elltoft** 905-380-8011
Randall Armstrong** 905-651-2977
Victoria Bolduc* 905-941-3726
Philip Bowron* 905-348-7626
Bonnie Grimm* 905-468-1256

Nicole Vanderperk* 905-941-4585
Viviane Elltoft* 905-468-2142
Thomas Elltoft* 905-380-8012
Jane Elltoft* 905-988-8776
Cheryl Carmichael* 905-941-0276
Sarah Gledie* 905-685-2458

Christine Bruce* 905-328-9703
Linda Williams* 905-401-4240
Caroline Polgrabia* 905-933-4983
Patricia Atherton* 905-933-4983
Weston Miller* 289-213-8681
Giovanni Rodriguez Martinez* 905-328-2145

***Broker of Record ** Broker *Sales Representative

109 Queen Street 905-468-3205 • St. Davids Office 905-262-6996

Eden students evacuated over unknown threat

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Eden High School was subject to an undisclosed threat this past Monday morning.

Niagara Regional Police uniform officers were called to the school at about 10:45 a.m. following the report of the received threat, and students and staff were moved at

the time into a lockdown situation while awaiting further instruction.

The Local was able to speak to a Grade 11 Eden student who preferred to remain anonymous. The Virgil resident was in the cafeteria at the time. She and her fellow students there were subsequently moved into the library by some staff members.

"An announcement came

on moving us into a hold-and-secure lockdown," the student told The Local. "We were locked down for an hour and 20 minutes."

Like many of her fellow students, she texted her parents to tell them what was happening and to assure them she was okay.

"I was a little bit scared," she admits. "We had done these (lockdowns) before, but

only for about 10 minutes. Once it started to get progressively longer, everyone was wondering what was happening, and people started feeling anxious."

She said as time went on, the students seemed to get quieter as the uncertainty continued, heightening the anxious feelings.

At about 12:10 p.m., she says another announcement

came over the PA urging all students to arrange for a ride home at that time, two hours and 35 minutes earlier than the usual dismissal time.

Carolyn Loconte of the District School Board of Niagara said the school and the board communicated directly to Eden families to provide them with essential information, and also posted information about Eden publicly to social media accounts.

Students who take transportation were bused home at that time, while those still waiting to be picked up by parents were moved to a nearby location with staff in the meantime.

"It's been a crazy year," the student said, referring to Eden's early move in December to online learning after a

COVID outbreak, and controversy over principal Sharon Burns Instagram post about heavy metal band Iron Maiden in October. "I wish it could just be normal!"

Niagara Regional Police confirmed in a Monday press release that out of an abundance of caution, students and staff were evacuated to ensure their safety while officers searched the building.

No one was physically harmed during the incident, it said. Detectives are continuing to investigate and there is no known ongoing threat to public safety at this time.

Anyone with further information is asked to contact detectives at (905) 688-4111, dial option 3 ext. 1022200. Or CrimeStoppers at 1 (800) 222-TIPS (8477).



HONoured TO BE YOUR VOICE IN OTTAWA

TONY BALDINELLI, M.P.
NIAGARA FALLS

NIAGARA FALLS/NOTL OFFICE: 905-353-9590
FORT ERIE OFFICE: 905-871-9991
TONY.BALDINELLI@PARL.GC.CA • TONYBALDINELLIMP.CA



ANDREWS LAW PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
Barristers & Solicitors

905.468.0081
info@rjwandrews.ca

REAL ESTATE WILLS BUSINESS

Proud to support local news!



Wayne Gates
MPP Niagara Falls Riding proudly representing Niagara-on-the-Lake

905-357-0681
wgates-co@ndp.on.ca



Painting by Steve

- Over 20 Years Experience
- Interior Painting
- Drywall Repairs
- Low Rates, Fully Insured

Attention to detail with the customer in mind

Call today for your FREE estimate!

cell: 905-630-7630
paintedbysteve@gmail.com

Keep being there

Keep talking



Learn more

January 26



NIAGARA ON THE LAKE MUSEUM

REOPENING FEBRUARY 3RD

FREE ADMISSION
for all Niagara residents for the month of February

Hours: Open Thursday through Monday 1 - 5 pm (closed Tues/Wed)

43 Castlereagh St. | 905-468-3912 | notlmuseum.ca



SIGN UP FOR AUTOMATED OUTAGE NOTIFICATIONS

While we try to keep outages in check, they can happen at any moment. If an outage occurs at your home or business, we'll confirm that we're aware of the outage via text or email.

Great for anybody including small businesses and those with multiple properties

Most customers are eligible for this free peace-of-mind service

NOTLhydro.com

Niagara on-the-Lake HYDRO

Pied-billed grebe can sink, rather than dive

David Gilchrist
Special to The Local

A single specimen of the pied-billed grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) was spotted originally in the marina beside Nelson Park (beside King's Point on Ricardo Street).

It was seen bobbing along and diving in among the much larger Canada geese. Its size was diminutive in comparison. It was surprisingly agile in its ability to dive and seemed to be able to stay long underwater and swim comparatively long distances. This made it difficult to determine where exactly it would surface. The following week, I observed it out

along the waterfront and was able to get a few more photographs.

This little diving grebe is one of the smallest and reportedly quite a common member of the grebe family. It gets its name due to the fact that during breeding periods its beak has a black band thus 'pied' or having two colours. Their brown bodies are built differently than the diving waterfowl commonly seen and instead of having to lift slightly out of the water and dive, they can sink quickly, much like a submarine, underwater. This is due to their ability to 'squeeze' air out from their feathers and air sacs. As they are able to achieve neutral

buoyancy in this fashion, they don't have to fight to stay underwater like other diving species. They can even submerge slowly with only their heads appearing above water.

They feed on a variety of items, including small fish, aquatic insects and other invertebrates, frogs, tadpoles and aquatic plants. In our waters, zebra mussels and round gobies would probably be utilized as a food source during winter. Another interesting fact is that they construct floating nests from vegetation. Their call is loud and unusual to hear. All in all, another interesting bird to be on the lookout for in ponds and marshes in spring and summer.



The pied-billed grebe was seen off the shore of Nelson Park on Ricardo Street. (David Gilchrist)

What's all the fuss about?

Penny Coles
The Local

Photographer David Gilchrist found birders hoping to spot a razorbill duck (*Alca torda*), a stranger to the area which has been spotted by several birders. He found birders at Queen's Royal Park looking for the elusive bird, it is only found in the North Atlantic.

"One might wonder what all the fuss is about,

spotting a razorbill," he says.

"This particular species, like the king eider spotted in December, is well out of its range and very rarely seen in the Great Lakes Region. The black and white seabird lives in colonies on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. It belongs to the auk family and is the closest living relation of the extinct great auk. They catch fish with their sharp, hatchet-like bill and are known

to dive as deep as 100 metres in search of food. So, a very interesting 'catch' to be added on a Birder's Life List."

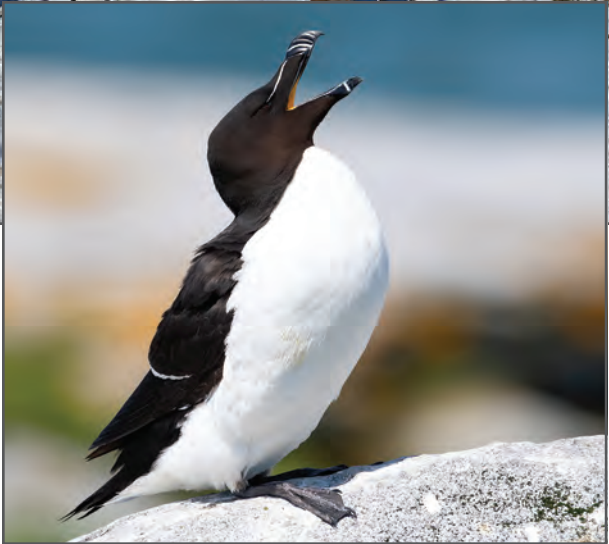
Gilchrist says he has not seen it after several days of looking. It may have moved on, although he was keeping a lookout for it this season along our waterfront. "It continues to be sighted closer to the American side, making it necessary for a scope to be used to sight it," he says.



Birder Dan Pay has the photo equipment to get a picture of a razorbill at a great distance, on the other side of the river, where it will stay. (Photo supplied)



Birders line up at Queen's Royal Park, hoping to see the elusive razorbill. (David Gilchrist)



The razorbill is not often seen in this area. (Stock photo)



JOHN BALD
BROKER
TEAM LEADER
905 984 1110



LOLITA HALE
SALES
REPRESENTATIVE
905 380 6410
LIFETIME NOTL
RESIDENT

FINE HOMES AND ESTATES OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE



TRIPLEX NEAR BROCK UNIVERSITY

On the bus route. Presently 3 units:
2- 2 bedroom, 1- 1 bedroom.
City will allow a 4th unit addition.
MLS#H4124780 | Asking \$1,299,900



5 ACRES

Country living at its best! 2157 sqft bungalow with 3 bedrooms, 2 baths and 3-car garage. Formal dining and living rooms. Separate barn with hydro. Backyard gazebo with fire pit for outdoor entertainment.
MLS#H4122672 | Asking \$1,499,900



BACKING ONTO NATURE

Bungalow living at its best! Almost 3000 sqft of finished living space on 3 levels. MF deck overlooking woodland behind. Fully finished suite in lower level with 2nd kitchen/ bath/laundry/bedroom-with walk-out! Upper loft with another bedroom and bath. Backing onto nature!
MLS#H4117804 | Asking \$1,299,000

PLATINUM AWARD WINNER 2021

Congratulations to Lolita Hale for achieving the Re/Max Platinum award level for the 2021 production in Real Estate Sales.

Only a small percentage of realtors reach this level and she has proven it can be done with honesty and hard work.

It's an honor to have her on our team.
John Bald Team Leader

And the snow just keeps on coming

An irrigation pond becomes a pretty awesome skating rink in the winter, shared by the Pillitteri family, Meyers Farms and Quiet Acres - both amazing neighbours, says Joe Pillitteri. Enjoying the rink on a recent sunny day were cousins Johnny Pillitteri and Steven Pillitteri-Smith and cousins Serafina Martinelli, Anna Pillitteri-Smith, and Juliet Pillitteri. Pillitteri says he's learned it's important to get snow off the edges of the pond to prevent them melting. "Because I love my kids and nieces and nephews so much, I use an ATV and plow blade to push all the snow to the perimeter of the pond, use the snowblower to launch it off the pond, and use the ice resurfacer to flood the ice. (Photos supplied)





**tap.**

Download the app and book a ride at the touch of a button.

**ride.**

Get picked up in just minutes. Share your ride with others heading your way.

**arrive.**

Get to work, school, practice, or wherever you need to go.



Transit for everyone.

Download and Ride or Call 289-302-2172
niagararegion.ca/transit



Try it now! \$10 Credit with promo code: **NRTPRINT**

Music Niagara and other festivals present *July in January*

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Music Niagara Festival is collaborating with 10 other classical music organizations from across the province to bring a little bit of summer to your winter.

The 11 festivals have banded together to form Classical Music Festivals of Canada (CFMC). Their website goes live Jan. 28 with the launch of *July in January*, an online event featuring live music shared by each organization.

Music Niagara founder and artistic director Atis Bankas is excited about the opportunity to introduce music lovers from Ottawa, Gananoque, Parry Sound, Picton, Stratford and elsewhere to the vast array of quality music that is perennially on the program here in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"It's a great cross-promotion for us to spread the news of our own unique character," Bankas tells The Local. "Our brand shows that we offer seasoned artists every year. It's always great to expand your reach, and maybe it will translate into increased ticket sales in the future."

The CFMC is the brainchild of violinist Mark

Fewer (artistic director of the Stratford Summer Music Festival) and clarinetist James Campbell (artistic director of Parry Sound's Festival of the Sound). The two respected musicians were speaking of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and began to brainstorm ways arts organizations could continue to connect to audiences amidst the uncertainty.

They began to focus on finding a way for festivals to join together for an off-season event as a method for connection and community building.

Like Music Niagara, the other festivals were forced to pivot to online offerings of their usual live performances over the past 22 months. Many invested in state-of-the-art audio and video recording to share livestream performances as artists became increasingly comfortable with virtual venues.

The expertise gained by the 11 artistic directors through that transformation lent itself to the idea of *July in January*.

"Our thinking was to find a way to give the gift of music as a thank you to our supporters by bring-

ing their favourite summer festivals into their home during the coldest, most isolating months of the year," says Campbell from his home in Parry Sound. "The idea is a way of bringing summer to an Ontario winter. It's free of charge, and music lovers can take a trip across the province without leaving the comfort of their home."

One after another of the artistic directors signed on to be involved. Each has put together a presentation representing some of the best of their online performances from the past 2 seasons.

Bankas says the Music Niagara faithful will recognize Emma Meinrenken performing *The Red Violin*, Mozart's birthday celebration, the trio from the *Shaw and Music* set, and the *Paris Connection* show that was held inside the new barn in the Pillar and Post Garden in summer, 2021.

As well, Thousand Islands Playhouse artistic director Eric Friesen, a former host and producer for CBC and NPR public radio, interviews each of his colleagues, giving them a chance to explain what their unique classical music festival is all about.

Campbell reflects on the

videos he has seen thus far and confirms that there is no duplication of repertoire among them. Every attempt was made to allow each festival to present something fresh and unique while representing their own musical niche.

"There is some incredibly inventive and marvelous programming going on with all my colleagues in Ontario," says Campbell. "It's very rich. And I'm amazed at how quickly they all signed on for this."

"The collegiality of each of the artistic directors was wonderful," Campbell adds. "We're all in this together. We're all friends, and this shows how united the classical music scene is in On-

tario. They all get it, that the more people know about all the festivals in Ontario the better it is for everyone."

Campbell agrees that the online presentation can only serve each festival well in giving them a chance to bring their offerings to new audiences. And it should benefit the musicians, too.

"We have a program for young artists, and our (Festival of the Sound) video features a wonderful young pianist," Campbell says. "My hope is that people will see him and he will get invitations to play at other festivals."

The festival's name, with 'Canada' in its title rather than 'Ontario', hints at potential future plans to ex-

pand the offerings beyond the provincial borders. And Campbell and the others are hoping that the website created to deliver *July in January* becomes an ongoing frequent stop for classical music lovers worldwide looking to expand their horizons.

CFMC's inaugural online festival launches Jan. 28 via the website classicalmusicfestivals.ca, and will remain available for an undetermined time following that day. It's free of charge, and visitors can peruse any or all of the 11 participating festivals. Viewers are encouraged to support the participating arts organizations by donating through links on the website.

Help for mental health problems impacted by pandemic

Penny Coles
The Local

Awareness of mental health and wellness is always an issue that requires attention, even more so during COVID.

The pandemic affects everyone, from the youngest members of society to the seniors who are struggling in isolation.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero says she's concerned about those who need help.

"This whole pandemic has brought forward the issue of mental health and wellness, and the impact of isolation. I'm afraid we don't have the resources to deal with it. Mental health problems, combined with the impact of this variant, are making it very difficult for people of all ages to cope."

There is so much focus on the pandemic and how to deal with it, says Disero, that there aren't enough people or resources to address mental health issues. "As a community we need to find ways to help those who are struggling to get through this."

It's important to talk about mental health, and reach out to others to see if there is something we can do to help, she adds. Just talking can help relieve some of the anxiety and depression others may be feeling. "I encourage everyone to call a friend, chat with them, have a conversation. It will help to feel a little less isolated."

It felt good to hear all the great stories about neighbours helping neighbours during last week's snow storm, she says, and that's something we can continue to do — the pandemic has taught us how important it is to communicate and build relationships.

"People are beginning to better understand how important it is to reach out to each other, and help each other."

The Canadian Mental Health Association assures us it is normal to be feeling increased levels of stress and anxiety due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Social gathering restrictions and economic lockdowns have remained in place far longer than was first anticipated, and many are finding the activities

and coping strategies that got them through difficult times early on in the pandemic aren't working as well as they used to.

Bell Let's Talk Day is today, Wednesday, Jan. 26. It's an annual occasion to help drive progress in mental health, and bring awareness to mental health issues.

Since 2010, Canadians have joined in conversation to reduce the stigma around mental health issues, inspire action and help create a Canada where everyone can access the mental health support they need.

For information on how to get help and for COVID-19 resources, visit <https://letstalk.bell.ca/en/covid-19>.

For tips on how to cope with stress and anxiety; loss, grief and healing; stigma and prejudice; or quarantine and isolation issues, visit <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19>

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, contact 911 immediately or go to your nearest emergency department.



Musicians to perform in recent Music Niagara Festivals are Sora Sato-Mound (top left), Donovan Locke and Alisha Oliver (top right), Emma Meinrenken (bottom left) and Atis Bankas, Victoria Kogan and Dobrochna Zubek (bottom right).



Being a good neighbour

The town is asking residents to help shovel out fire hydrants whenever they can, putting forward the request as “good, safety-minded advice,” because it will take some time to address all fire hydrants after a heavy snow fall. Fire Chief Nick Ruller thanked all those who have helped out during the recent snow storm. Resident Randy Klaassen has his own take — he shovelled out a hydrant on a neighbour’s property, saying “my motives were purely selfish, in case our house should be the one to catch fire.” Others could do the same, either out of courtesy, or “self-interest,” he suggests, and adds, “make sure the blue reflectors are visible from the street,” so drivers can see them at night. It took him about 30 minutes to chisel and shovel through the frozen berm of snow, which the snowplow made. (Randy Klaassen)



OPEN TO SERVE YOU SAFELY



SUN - THURS 11-7
FRI & SAT 11-8

OUTDOOR DINING - HEATED PATIO
TAKEOUT AVAILABLE FOR
FOOD & COCKTAILS

WEEKLY SIN FEATURE:
NEGRONI ON THE LAKE

- JUICED UP GIN
- JUICY PEACH
- CAMPARI

SPIRITINNIAGARA.COM | 905 934 1300 | 458 LAKESHORE ROAD, NOTL

Creek Road Paints
is still **mixing** things up!
Open for in-store shopping
(5 Customers at a time)

Monday to Friday - 8 am to 5 pm,
Saturday 8 am - 12 pm

Place your order in advance and
we can have it ready for you.
Call 905-468-2412.

Creek Road Paints
1573 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil

Customer Appreciation Day

February 8, 2022

ONE DAY ONLY

IN-STORE and ONLINE at
simpsonsparmacy.ca

25% OFF
Almost All Regular Priced Products*

Excludes prescriptions, special orders, sale items, codeine products, gift cards, phone cards, bus tickets/passes. Other exclusions apply, please see store for details.





THE FARMHOUSE CAFÉ
Starting January 31st -
Open For Lunch Daily
Reservations Strongly Suggested
Online Booking Now Available!
Or give us a call to book
905-468-8814

YES! WE'RE
OPEN

LET YOUR CUSTOMERS KNOW YOU ARE OPEN
TO SERVE THEM SAFELY!
RUNNING EVERY WEEK UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

To place your ad, call or email Karen at:
905.641.5335 karen@notllocal.com

CAROLINE CELLARS WINERY
WINE BOUTIQUE & TASTING BAR
Starting January 31st -
Open Daily for Wine Tasting
Now Available -
Icewine Experience Gift Packs
Coming Soon -
Valentine's Day Gift Packs
Reservations Strongly
Recommended for Wine Tasting
1010 Line 2, NOTL 905.468.8814 www.CarolineCellars.com



Pumphouse hoping for 1,000 origami cranes

Penny Coles
The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Pumphouse Arts Centre has embarked on a project that has volunteers and staff reinvigorated and enthusiastic, after two years of the emotional rollercoaster of COVID.

The arts centre is hoping to have 1,000 origami cranes say thank you to the many essential workers who have contributed to our health and safety through COVID, and it's time to involve the public in the project, which is both remarkably simple to execute, and incredibly rewarding on many levels, says board chair Lise Adreana.

An ancient Japanese legend, she explains, says the crane, considered a mystical or holy creature, is rumoured to live for a thousand years. It promises anyone who folds a thousand origami cranes will be granted a wish by the gods, or bring happiness and good luck. They can be made by one person or by several in a group.

The crane is also one of the easiest origami projects to make, says Adreana, and can be tackled by those of any age, from children and grandchildren on up.

She discovered the legend while spending time online during one of her sleepless

nights. "I'm always looking for ways to engage our community with projects that have at least some artistic component," she says.

"It's a really interesting story, and it seems like the right time, and a really intercepting way for the Niagara community to come together during COVID and say thank you."

There are many in the community who are feeling isolated and lonely, she says, including those who are used to volunteering but have had to put that on hold, and this is something fun they can do from home.

The town has been very co-operative, allowing the cranes to be hung in the windows of the community centre in the days leading up to March 22, the second anniversary of the COVID lockdowns in Ontario and across Canada.

The response has been great, and although they're asking for 1,000 cranes, says Adreana, "we could end up with 10,000. There's a lot of space in the community centre windows. The more the merrier."

The volunteers who have begun making the cranes have been very creative, using hand-painted paper. Plain white paper can be used, kids can colour it with crayons — they will all make a lovely display, she says. "I can't wait

to see them all strung up. It's going to be amazing."

The deadline for submitting cranes is March 2. With the Pumphouse closed, Adreana suggests putting the cranes in a zip-lock bag and using the drop box outside the building.

The plan, when it's time to take them down is to donate the strings of cranes to essential workers and organizations, such as local long-term care homes, as another way to say thank you.

After two years of the pandemic, the community is still eager to help people get through it, and not only is the timing perfect, but the project will be therapeutic for those who make the cranes, and for those who see them at the community centre. "It's a project that can engage everybody," says Adreana. "Our volunteers are all so excited about it."

There isn't a lot we can control during the pandemic, she adds, but this is an opportunity to create something artistic, "and that always makes you feel better."

For help, there is a YouTube video that shows an easy method of creating a traditional origami crane, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FyC7pKT-dE0>

All you need to begin with is a square of paper — six inches is a good size to start with.



The Pumphouse's administrative assistant, Jodi Eppler, has already started folding the cranes, and has received some from residents. (Photos supplied)



Cranes can be made of origami paper or plain white paper, or get creative and hand-paint the squares before folding.

OPEN TO SERVE YOU SAFELY

BARREL HEAD

PIZZA IS BACK!

TAKE OUT AVAILABLE • CALL: 905-468-3147

@BARREL.HEAD FOLLOW US

ANY TWO \$50

ANY TWO PIZZAS
INCLUDES A BOTTLE OF TEAM CANADA RED OR WHITE WINE

\$10

TAKE HOME PIZZA KIT

CREATE YOUR OWN PIZZA HOUSE DOUGH, HOUSE RED SAUCE OR HOUSE OLIVE OIL, MOZZARELLA

\$99

FAMILY MEAL

INCLUDES A BOTTLE OF TEAM CANADA RED OR WHITE

FOUR PIZZAS, TWO SALADS



OPEN

THURSDAY TO SUNDAY
NOON-8PM

EAT LOCAL SHOP LOCAL SUPPORT LOCAL
FULL MENU AT PILLITTERI.COM/BARRELHEAD

PILLITTERI
ESTATES
Winery

OUR DINING ROOM IS CURRENTLY CLOSED AND WILL REOPEN WHEN RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED

LocalARTS and CULTURE

Video of ballet's first act to premiere Feb. 5

Continued from page 8

and attended the performance of the first act of *Kimiko's Pearl*. Mori and Spieldenner were thrilled to host the man who fought so hard for the apology and compensation for those who suffered in the 1940s.

With 2022 marking 80 years since more than 20,000 Japanese Canadians were interned, Miki sees the Bravo Niagara! project as an important one to commemorate the sacrifices that were made by the community.

"There are very few people left who experienced it," Miki, a Member of the Order of Canada says. "Chris and Alexis are using a different medium to remember the past. Too often we don't use the arts enough to express our feelings. They're using a contemporary medium to tell an important story about our legacy."

Though only the first act has been captured by the video thus far, the women have plans to host the full performance of *Kimiko's Pearl* in the Niagara region some time in the future. It will involve the biggest budget for a single Bravo

Niagara! performance ever, supported somewhat by a Canada Council grant and the largesse of local arts supporters.

And, in another first for the festival, they also hope to release the full score as a CD in 2023.

It's impossible to hear the story of how *Kimiko's Pearl* came to be without making the link between how four generations of Mori's and Spieldenner's family repeatedly displayed the grit and determination needed to maintain hope and positivity in the face of adversity.

With the recent loss of Mori's father (Spieldenner's grandfather) Tsugio (Robert) Mori on Dec. 29, the timing of the premiere is even more deeply poignant.

"I'm really happy that my father was able to see the video and hear the music," reflects Mori. "He followed our journey all through the past year. He watched this and his eyes would well up with tears and emotion."

"He was very proud that his Japanese Canadian story was being told," Spieldenner adds. "And he really connected it with the community across Canada. He was supportive all along and proud that we were do-

ing this."

Of her mother Ryuko (Ricki), who passed away in 2010, Mori says, "the apology was a turning point for her. She taped (Mulroney's) apology letter to her office. She was always proud to be a Canadian, even after the government did that to them. We're finding out that that is the culture of the Japanese."

For Spieldenner, knowing that her thesis at Duke from 20 years ago was the genesis for this new creative work is awe-inspiring.

"I never imagined it would set the stage for this project," she says. "It's incredible to be able to honour my grandparents and great-grandparents with what is ultimately a story of hope that will pay tribute to the resilience of the Japanese Canadian community."

The Saturday, Feb. 5 premiere is scheduled for 7 p.m. and will include long-time CBC host Mary Ito in a discussion with Howard Reich about how the story came together. Registration is required for the free event to be hosted on the Zoom platform. For information and to register, visit bravoniagara.org/live.

Father's Trunk Written by Hiro Kaita (nee Ayukawa)

*In New Denver made by father's hand
Built of wood cut from his chosen land,
Marked with registration numbers,
Assigned by parliamentary members,
This wooden trunk scarred with travel
Hides tales too painful to unravel.*

*What is the key that unlocks
This political Pandora's box?*

*Fly open wide the sepulchre
And vent out the stifling air.*

*Make void our fears and gushing tears
And speak words pleasant to our ears
Unleash the voices, let it be heard
And listen for the promised word.*

*Compensation and apology came
Easing the hurts and feeling of shame.
Now Father we can touch, we can
feel and gently reveal our wounds
to heal*

*Father's spirit was freed on the date
of September 22, 1988*



Chris Mori's mother Ryuko 'Ricki' Mori (nee Ayukawa) at the Tashme Internment Camp, holding her youngest brother. (Photo supplied)

Warren Crosbie inducted into PGA Canada Hall of Fame

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

The honours keep coming for Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Warren Crosbie, a member of the Professional Golfers' Association since 1967.

The longtime head professional at Bayview Golf and Country Club in Thornhill, Ontario was named to the Ontario Golf Hall of Fame in 2018. In 2020, Crosbie was one of the inaugural members inducted into the PGA of Ontario Hall of Fame.

That same year, the PGA of Canada honoured Crosbie by naming its community leader of the year award after him. And on Thursday, Jan. 27, during an online awards night, Crosbie will enter the PGA of Canada Hall of Fame.

His name will be enshrined amongst past members such as Richard Zokol, Mike Weir, Lorrie Kane, Moe Norman, Cathy Sherk and Stan Leonard.

"I'm incredibly honoured to be on this list with the people in this Hall of Fame," Crosbie tells The Local. "They're some of Canada's greatest."

He's also excited that for the second year, one deserving individual will be taking home the Warren Crosbie Community Leader of the Year Award at the online event.

"Having the award named after me, it's something that is going to come up every year," he marvels. "When I look at the list of the people our awards are named after, there are only two of us who are alive - Mike Weir and myself. My name will come up every year, even after I'm gone. I think that's probably incredibly important."

Crosbie was born in 1948 in Simcoe, where he earned some money caddying at Norfolk Golf and Country Club. Eleven years later the family moved to Burlington. That's when Crosbie picked up clubs and started to play the game, joining the Chedoke Golf Club as a junior member at about 13 years old.

After high school he attended Mohawk College, graduating from their three-year business program.

"It helped me with a really good business grounding," he recalls, "which I could use to run my business in the pro shop. It's a really important role of the club professional."

While attending Mohawk, he was also working at the Burlington Golf and Country Club for the man he refers to as his mentor, John Davis, the head professional there from 1960 until 1992.

Crosbie's first head professional job of his own was at Tyandaga Golf Course, a public layout in Burlington. After 12 years there, he moved to Bayview, where he built his career and his reputation over 32 years.

He quickly became known as the consummate club pro. In a 1992 article in SCOREGolf Magazine, Crosbie calls himself "a dying breed," while author Tim O'Connor says he's "an entrepreneur and a renowned merchandiser in the industry, with a reputation so good that talented assistants want to work for him."

And that's been his focus through the years, mentoring future professionals just as John Davis did for him in Burlington. In fact, Crosbie's collective efforts to train and guide the careers of countless golf professionals is exactly why he has earned so many distinctions in the business.

Through a number of roles he took on over the years, Crosbie has continued to be involved in the development of the modern day training program for hopeful professionals. He's been right there as the golf world has adapted to changes in technology and to the changing responsibilities of the club pro.

"Our education programs for our various associations are now moving into various streams," Crosbie points out. "You have people now who are dedicated teachers and coaches, who are kinesiology people, schooled in how to make a golfer play better."

He continues, "then we have what I would call G.P.s, similar to the old-fashioned head professional like me, who manages everything. These people are retail and operations experts, who focus more on the business part of it. Our golf professionals are more educated today than they were years ago."

Crosbie taught retail and marketing in Niagara College's professional golf management program (now part of its sport management program) for a number of years. He's currently the chair of the Golf



Warren Crosbie was named to the Ontario Golf Hall of Fame in 2018. (Photo supplied)

Management Institute of Canada. Working with that organization, Crosbie was responsible for writing a number of training manuals for their education program.

He was the president of the PGA of Canada from 2006 until 2008 and was granted honorary membership status in the Professional Golfers' Association in 2008. Crosbie also served as president of the PGA of Ontario, was named an Honorary Director of PGA of America and is the chair for the Golf Canada Hall of Fame committee.

He is proud of the work he has done to help develop the PGA of Canada Benevolent Fund, which provides temporary assistance to past and present PGA of Canada members and apprentice members who find themselves in financial hardship. The fund

provides basics such as clothing, food and shelter, as well as financial assistance for mental and physical health care services to those in need.

He says he was never a tournament player of any note, and points to his skills around the green as the best part of his game. And over all those years working at golf courses, he's never had a hole in one.

"I've come really close, on the edge a few times, but I've never had one," Crosbie laughs. "I've had some good scores, but usually for nine holes. I've had a 29, a 30, a couple of 31's, but I found the problem I had was that there was always something going on at the club, always something on my mind. By the time I got back to the shop, my attention span had changed."

Crosbie is an honou-

rary member at Bayview and makes a point of getting back to the Toronto area to play a couple of rounds at his old club annually. He also hosts Bayview members when they visit the Niagara region.

Warren and his wife Deborah moved to Old Town about 12 years ago, when he retired from Bayview. He was certainly familiar with the Niagara area from a young age, as his younger brother was a goalie for the old St. Catharines Black Hawks in the 1970-1971 season.

The lifestyle of NOTL and its wineries and restaurants drew the couple to the region, and they both love the town's proximity to both Toronto and the U.S.

Crosbie does still enjoy about a dozen rounds per year, mostly divided between the NOTL Golf Club and Cherry Hill in

Ridgeway, where some high level tournaments have taken place.

But rather than walking around a stretch of nine or 18 holes, these days Crosbie's walks take him around town with Deborah and their dogs.

As he takes his rightful spot in the PGA of Canada Hall of Fame, he reflects on a local connection to his 32 years at Bayview.

"An interesting thing, one of the teaching professionals that was at the club in Toronto for some time was George Clifton," Crosbie says. "If you look at the list of professionals at the club here in town, he was the professional here in 1948, which was the year I was born."

Crosbie will be sharing space in the PGA Canada Hall of Fame with that very same George Clifton following his induction this week.

LocalSPORTS

Predators have three home games, eight away leading to playoffs

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

The Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League (GMHL) will resume its regular season this Monday, Jan. 31. That's five days later than its previously announced plans, but in line with the Jan. 19 announcement by the provincial government.

To accommodate for the rescheduling of games lost during the January province-wide shut-down of non-elite amateur sports, the season will be extended two weeks to March 6, with the 2022 Russell Cup Playoffs beginning on March 7. The league plans to have every team finish a 38-game regular season schedule by then, condensed from the usual 42.

Playoffs will remain four rounds, with the top seven teams in the North and South Division standings automatically qualifying for postseason play. The final eighth seed in each division will be determined with a single game elimination qualifier. Though the league had plans to have all three divisions meet in Temiskaming for the first truly national Russell Cup Finals,

that will have to wait until 2023.

The Niagara Predators are currently tied for third with the Durham Roadrunners in the GMHL's South Division with 38 points, just a point behind St. George and three points behind the first place North York Renegades.

The Predators will return to the Meridian Credit Union Arena ice on Feb. 4 for their first game in 46 days to host the Roadrunners, and will follow that with a Sunday afternoon trip to Windsor to face the Aces.

A glance at the remaining games on Niagara's schedule shows only three more home games for the team: the Durham game on Feb. 4 and visits by North York and St. George on Feb. 18 and 25 respectively.

Owner, general manager and head coach Robert Turnbull says he was willing to forego the home games lost in January in favour of having them played elsewhere just to ensure the games get played at all.

They'll be on the road for eight games between now and the playoffs, with a second trip to Windsor and visits to Streetsville, North York, Osha-



Pontus Madsen of the Niagara Predators before the holiday and COVID break that followed, during a home game. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

wa and two journeys to Plattsville, before winding up the season March 5 in Tottenham.

In addition, three more games, against Plattsville, St. George and Tottenham, remain to be added to their slate between now and March 6.

Turnbull believes the first round of the playoffs will be a best 2-out-of-3 format, while the semi-finals will be a best-3-out-of-5. The finals will be a seven-game series.

The extended break has given the Predators players time to return safely from their holiday trips. Turnbull says Jesper Eriksson has already arrived back in Canada from Sweden, while Madsen and Emil Eriksson were set to arrive sometime this week. As well, forward Mario Zitella has been confirmed to be returning to the team.

They'll have their first chance to practice together on Feb. 1, but Turnbull says he knows his roster hasn't been sitting idle during the off-time.

"They've been skating on ponds, I know, especially the Swedes," he says, "and they've been running as much as they can."

Turnbull hints that he's

not finished making moves and may be doing so right up until the Feb. 3 trade and signing deadline. He says he's looking at all three positions - forward, defence, goalie - with the goal of adding some physicality to the team to prepare for the run to the playoffs.

Three Predators in the top 20 in the South Division's power rankings

The GMHL recently announced their player power rankings for the first half of the season. In the South Division, three Niagara Predators hold down spots in the top 20.

Forward Dante Massi leads the way for Niagara in fifth place. Massi's 41 assists are the sixth most in the GMHL, while he currently sits in fifteenth in the league in scoring with 53 points. The Niagara Falls native is a relentless playmaker and a consistent thorn in the side of his opponents, battling against much larger players to set his teammates up for chances.

"Dante is our workhorse," Turnbull says. "We've got a lot of great hockey players, and I'm really proud of what they've achieved. And a lot of points that these guys have

gotten have come from players that weren't mentioned in the list."

At number 10 is Jesper Eriksson, the Predators leading scorer who is tied for 11th in the league in points with 56. The big-bodied, smooth-skating Swede also leads Niagara with 27 goals. He brings a European style of play to the team with his superb puck-handling skills and a knack for creating space in front of opposing goalies.

Fellow Swede Pontus Madsen is number 14 on the list and the second-highest ranked defenceman in the South Division. Though he didn't join the team until a month into the season, Madsen currently leads all Predators defencemen in points, with 23 in only 16 games.

The top spot in the South Division power rankings is held by Kory Silveiro, the division's leading scorer with 50 goals and 88 points for the 7-and-21 Windsor Aces. Santino Foti of the North York Renegades is ranked second, with Mike Marchesan of the St. George Ravens in third. Both have netted 41 goals so far this season.

Predators to participate in Skate for Alzheimers at Wayne Gretzky Estates Winery

Etobicoke mailman and recreational hockey referee Steve McNeil is back at Wayne Gretzky Estate Winery this Wednesday, Jan. 26 for his annual 1926 Skate for Alzheimer's. The 60-year-old skates for 19 hours and 26 minutes to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's. The length of time for his skate is a tribute to his mother Eunice, who was born in 1926 and battled Alzheimer's before her death.

Niagara Predators trainer and assistant general manager Samantha Marson, a former goaltender with the Lakehead University Thunderwolves and the Paul Smith's College Bobcats, skated with McNeil last year, and will be returning to the winery for the fundraiser, which runs from 12 a.m. until 7:26 p.m.

At press time, she was hoping a few of the Predators players would be joining her for the afternoon, but their attendance had yet to be confirmed.

To donate to McNeil's efforts to raise funds for the Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region, visit www.1926skate.com/donate.

Meet the Predators

Name:
Maxwell Bredin
Jersey number: 9
Age: 18
Birthdate:
September 5th, 2003
Hometown:
St. Davids, NOTL
Nickname:
Breezer
Favourite hockey player:
William Nylander
Favourite 'hype' song:
Blitzkrieg Bob by The Ramones
Hockey highlight:
My first goal in junior hockey (happened to be on the Preds)
Other sports you play:
Soccer
Favourite "cheat" meal:
Tiki Ming
Secret talent:
I can juggle a golf ball with a 60 degree wedge



LocalWORSHIP

CORNERSTONE
COMMUNITY CHURCH
Sunday, January 30th
10:00 a.m.
Worship Gathering
Online & In-Person
(Registration Required)
Child Care for Grade 8 & Under
Message:
Jeff Martens
Our services are also streamed online
Sunday's at 10 AM. Visit our website
for more information!
www.ccchurch.ca

To advertise your
Worship Services
in this section, please contact:
karen@notllocal.com



Jesper Eriksson at Meridian Credit Union Arena carries the puck down the ice.

Local CLASSIFIEDS

classified@notllocal.com



**Compassionate
Transparent
No Pressure**
www.morganfuneral.com

OBITUARY



ANDRES, LILLIAN — Lil's passing was just one instant in a full and lovely life. She was with her family for as long as she was meant to be. Not a minute longer, not a moment less. Lil was born on August 10th, 1927 in Aberdeen, Saskatchewan and passed away peacefully at Port Colborne Hospital in her 95th year on Friday, January 21, 2022. For 58 years, Lil was married to her sweetheart Henry (Hank) Andres (predeceased 2005). Dearly loved mother of Marlene (Danny) McCarthy, Linda, Bob (Mary), Larry (Ling) and Betz (Alfred) and adored by her 6 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. We will miss her dearly. Survived by sister Elsie Koop, brothers Con (Melvina) Unger, Joe (Michelle) Unger, sister-in-law Ruth Unger and many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by brothers John and Peter Unger and sisters, Anne (Cy) Mitchell, Jess (Hardy) Tiessen, Agatha (Harvey) Gossen.

Mom had a wonderful and full life; a hard worker, devoted to her family, and committed to years of volunteer service with the Children's Aid Society, the Upper Canada Lodge Nursing Home and the Christian Benefit Shop. She loved her volunteer work and when there was a need in the family, Mom was always there. A special thank you to the staff at Pleasant Manor, Niagara Falls Hospital and Port Colborne Hospital for all of their love and care for our Mom.

Under current pandemic conditions, provincial restrictions limit the number of guests at visitations, funerals and interments. All visitors must wear a face mask and practice physical distancing. For the following visitation times, funeral service and burial; relatives and friends who wish to attend must RSVP online through Lillian Andres' obituary on Morgan Funeral Home's website (www.morganfuneral.com). The life of Lillian will be celebrated on Monday, January 31, 2022 at 11 a.m., at Bethany Mennonite Church, 572 East & West Line, Niagara-on-the-Lake, with visitation one hour prior to the service. Burial will follow in Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery. Visit thebao.ca or call the funeral home (905-468-3255) for further information. If desired, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Society of Ontario or to a charity of your choice. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



CLÉMENT, MERION — Merion Clément (nee Brough) July 24, 1933, Hartlepool, England - January 20, 2022, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON.

It is with tremendous sadness we announce the passing of Merion Clément in her 89th year on Thursday, January 20th in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Beloved mother of Christina (Tina) Clément, sister to Winifred McLurg and aunt to Julie McLurg. Merion was born on July 24, 1933 in Hartlepool, England. In her early adult years, she worked as a certified law clerk in Lincoln's Inn Fields in London. Shortly thereafter she met her Swedish husband, Johan Clément, and moved to Scandinavia where she worked for the Helsinki Steamship Company. They immigrated to Canada in 1956.

Embarking on a new chapter, she became the Secretary Treasurer to the Civil Service Association of Ontario (now OPSU). Her non-stop stream of energy was evident and drove her to be a self-made entrepreneur. In 1973, with no previous knowledge of horticulture, Merion purchased Simmons Flowers Inc., established in 1894, one of Canada's largest floral businesses (then called Simmons & Son). Merion successfully grew her business with her innovative vision of establishing a tropical plant division which added greenery to corporate offices and commercial spaces. In 1987, Merion bought a four storey 100-year-old building on Parliament Street and moved the business to the up-and-coming area of Toronto known as Cabbagetown. At that time her daughter, a Bay Street insurance broker, came on board to work with her mother and together Merion and Tina continued to make Simmons a thriving business for another 35 years.

In 1986, Merion was elected President of the Downtown Toronto Business Council, making her the Council's first woman president since its inception in 1947. Merion also served as President of the Elm Street BIA, President of the Cabbagetown BIA and was on the board of directors of the St. George's Society of Toronto.

Merion enjoyed weekends at her lakeside Kawartha cottage and annual winter retreats in sunny St. Maarten where she treasured her friendships with neighbours and friends.

Merion decided to retire at the age of 79 and move from downtown Toronto. Together with Tina they moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake and enjoyed 10 wonderful years. She will be greatly missed by her Toronto friends, her community in The Village of NOTL and most of all by her daughter and best friend, Tina.

A very special thank you to Dr. Timothy Bastedo of the NNFHT and Dr. Michael Levesque of the Walker Cancer Center for all their amazing care. Thank you to Catherine and Vicky at Simpson's Pharmacy for their unbelievable support. A heartfelt thanks to Erna Antaya for her steadfast support and love throughout Merion's journey.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date. Private family arrangements have been entrusted to MORGAN FUNERAL HOME. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at at www.morganfuneral.com



OBITUARY



TREIBER, HEINZ OTTO "HARRY"
JUNE 15 1932 – JANUARY 23, 2022

Bringing an end to a wonderfully activity-filled life, Harry departed this world preceded by his beloved wife, Effie. Mourning his loss are his sister, Traudel (Eggers), and her husband, Heinz, and his niece, Christina (Letschert), her husband, Thomas, and their daughters, Jessica and Lina, all of Seligenstadt, Germany; and, here in Canada, Harry's stepdaughter, Beryl (Tupman), her husband, Jim, their sons, Lowell (Joy) and Lionel (Lauren), and great-granddaughters, Leela and Isla; as well, Harry's stepson, Scott (Bird), and his wife, Amy, and sons Matthew (Erika) and Mark (Mishelle).

Harry's life was not an easy one, but he triumphed over his difficulties with optimism, determination and hard work.

Harry was born in Stuttgart, Germany, and experienced the horrors of WWII at first hand as a young lad, being required to walk through his neighbourhood after allied bombing attacks to report any fires. Later he was moved to his grandfather's farm for safety until the conclusion of the war. When not in school, he labored on the farm. After the war he worked in a vineyard in Lausanne, Switzerland, becoming a skilled cooper and cook, before emigrating to Canada in 1956. After three years as a sous-chef on lake freighters, Harry took up permanent employment in the office of American Can Company (later Ball Packaging) in Niagara Falls until his retirement in 1993.

During his time in Canada, Harry became well known for his dancing prowess on Saturday nights at such venues as the German Village and Club Heidelberg. In addition, he was an active long-time member of the Lawn Bowling Club, the St. Albain's Club, and the Dinner Club, all of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Harry loved to travel, returning to Germany for regular visits and tours and later extending his vistas to many countries from Russia to South America. At home he planted a vineyard and dug out a basement by hand to create a private wine cellar. He took up a hobby assembling model steam trains, and then built a rail line through his gardens around the exterior of his country house to run his trains, assisted in proper regalia, by his young grandson. This hobby led to more travel: to steam train competitions as far south as Louisiana.

Harry had a remarkable ability to pick up phrases in foreign languages, in some cases becoming quite fluent, and made friends easily by addressing newcomers with a few words of their own language. He exhibited a deep affection for his family and friends, delighting in providing barbecue dinners for groups on the weekend, and generously assisting his grandsons.

Harry will be missed by anyone who had the chance to know him. His family wishes to especially thank the nursing staff of Linhaven Extended Care Home and the Dialysis Department personnel at the St. Catharines Hospital for their kind care and attention to Harry's needs.

Under current pandemic conditions, provincial restrictions limit the number of guests at visitations, funerals and interments. All visitors must wear a face mask and practice physical distancing. For the following visitation times, relatives and friends who wish to attend the visitation must RSVP online at https://www.morseandson.com/memorials/harry-treiber/4839709/index.php Available times for visitation are on Sunday, January 30, 2022, at MORSE & SON FUNERAL HOME, 5917 Main Street, between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. For further information on current pandemic protocols, please visit the Bereavement Authority of Ontario website (thebao.ca) or call the funeral home at 905-356-3550. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



SUDOKU SOLUTION

**Sudoku solution from
January 19, 2022**

5	6	3	1	9	7	2	4	8
1	2	7	6	8	4	5	3	9
4	9	8	2	3	5	1	6	7
6	8	2	9	4	3	7	5	1
3	5	4	7	2	1	9	8	6
7	1	9	5	6	8	3	2	4
8	7	6	3	1	2	4	9	5
2	4	1	8	5	9	6	7	3
9	3	5	4	7	6	8	1	2

NOTICES

**To place an Obituary or
In Memoriam in our Classifieds,
please contact Julia at:
julia@notllocal.com or
905.934.1040
Deadline is Tuesdays at 1 p.m.**

**PLEASE RECYCLE
THIS NEWSPAPER**

The Niagara-on-the-Lake
Local
The Trusted Voice of Our Community

Resident quite fawn-d of her visitors

Sally Jackson lives in the Old Town, on Balmoral Drive, backing onto Two Mile Creek. She loves to watch, and photograph, the deer who make their way into her back-yard, especially one day last week when she had a record number visit, including one missing a rack of antlers.



GREG SYKES

real estate
TEAM



CALL OR TEXT GREG DIRECT 905.329.3484



8 Harmony Dr COMING SOON

Jumbo bungalow with private backyard, call Greg for asking price!



6 Brown's Point \$3,995,000

6 bedroom, 8 bathrooms. Over 11,000 ft.

831 Concession 6

SOLD
SOLD CONDITIONALLY

\$1,790,000
42 beautiful acres

1550 Concession 4

SOLD

asking **\$899,000**
Sold to our happy clients

3 Meritage Lane

\$1,650,000
Backing onto a vineyard

2241 Four Mile Creek Rd

\$1,450,000
Just listed

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE HOME EVALUATION