Michele Bosc: quiet warrior

By Lauren O’Malley
The NOTL Local

Michele Bosc, of Château Des Charmes Winery, died Jan. 10, 2019, at the age of 52.

The loss of the wine industry titan will be felt throughout the field, throughout Niagara-on-the-Lake, at Château Des Charmes where she was a vice-president — and most acutely at home, where she is dearly and deeply missed by her 11-year-old son Alex, and her husband, Paul Bosc, Jr.

Michele was diagnosed with bowel cancer late last spring; an immediate and successful surgery removed the tumour, which hadn’t spread. But biopsies of 15 lymph nodes returned one positive result, so a six-month course of chemotherapy was prescribed. “Her health got worse, and has a cumulative effect. It felt like she was running a marathon, but struggling. She got to the finish line, and it was an enormous relief. Now we just had to hunker down for the recovery — but over the next several weeks she only got worse.”

“We knew she was in a battle, she just didn’t expect to lose. None of us did.”

Through the last months of her life, Michele managed to marshal the energy to attend the staff Christmas party at the family’s winery, and she “pulled off a perfect Christmas” at home, says Paul. She also fulfilled a dream by publishing her first romance novel on Dec. 11. But on Jan. 9, her bowel perforated and leaked toxins into a vulnerable and compromised system. “It was like a forest fire,” says Paul, still deeply shaken.

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Reliving good times on the farm

By Jane Andres
Special to The Local

It had all the feel of a long-anticipated reunion, adults hugging and laughing as the children watched with shy smiles, waiting to be introduced. Indeed it was a special kind of extended family reunion, one that began in the 1970s for employer and his then-employee from a distant island. Gordon Neufeld was looking forward to reconnecting with his old friend Gilbert MacDonald at the home of Gord Jr. and his wife Sandra on East and West Line. Neufeld Sr. fell in love with farming at an early age as he worked alongside his grandfather in Germany in the summer, to live in the upstairs of his house and work on the farm.

After he married, Neufeld Sr. and his wife Erma pursued their own dream of owning a farm. Back then a family could earn a simple but sufficient living on a 10 to 15 acre farm — under certain conditions. To be successful they had to have good soil, be willing to work hard and have dependable labour, especially during harvest season. The Neufelds had good soil and were willing to work hard, however, along with most farmers in Niagara in the 1960s, they suffered from a chronic shortage of dependable labour.

Neufeld Sr. remembers going to St. Catharines every morning to get help, but the workers he found were not reliable, he said. “When the peaches were ready to harvest, I couldn’t afford not to be picking just because some guys were suffering from a hangover the night before.” As a result of the shortage of reliable labour, which they had little hope of resolving, he and his wife decided to sell the farm and move to Strathroy to grow beans, barley, wheat and corn. It was an entirely different type of operation, and one that was less dependent on hired help.

Despite their initial success, the instability of the prices in the market were a cause for concern, he said. It was also a challenge moving to a tight-knit community where other farmers were less supportive and referred to them as “foreigners,” said Neufeld Sr.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11
Community grieves ‘the perfect little gentleman’

By Lauren O’Malley
The NOTL Local

Egon Epp, a local man known for so much more than his daily walks and his fine woodworking skills, was reported missing on the morning of Feb. 4, when he didn’t return home promptly from his routine walk to the post office. Tragically, Epp was found without signs of life several hours later near Navy Hall.

As sad as his death may be, the strength of his ties to our community were made evident in the hours leading up to the grim discovery.

Neighbours rallied and searched with determination. One Niagara Regional Police officer not only knew him, but his superiors had ever seen “so many people just drop everything to help.”

“My daughter was a beneficiary of a wooden rocking horse as a two-year-old,” says one neighbour who had spent the day walking through fields and woods looking for her dear friend.

“I was well-known to be out in full force, beginning their search by car around 10:45 a.m. in and around Epp’s Charleston Street neighbourhood. They later brought out foot patrols on and around Queen Street. When the much-beloved man had yet to be found by early afternoon, the police began a backyard search, using a grid format and dozens of officers along with K9 patrols, trying to cast a tight net so as not to miss him.

“Egon was one of the last of the old guard,” he says sadly. Martens recounts that a neighbour came by and informed him about Epp having gone missing. “I immediately looked around my property — I thought maybe he had wandered in to my yard to reminisce, looking for familiarity. I was hoping for that,” he says. “I was hoping for a happy ending.”

“Sadly, that wasn’t to be. NOTL fire chief Rob Grimwood says the department was called to Navy Hall for a water resource — which is likely what stirred rumours of a fire on the historic site.

Epp, a polite and friendly German man, husband and father of three, will be remembered for his kindness and generosity, his woodworking skills, and his immaculate garden. Cosmo Condina, the Epps’ neighbour of 30 years, says Epp and his wife were always together. “They loved working in their garden, and feeding the birds. They had a perfect routine, and they were the ideal neighbours. We lived next to each other for 30 years without a single conflict.”

“He was the perfect little gentleman,” says Martens. “He will be missed.”

Budget okayed with 4.48 per cent tax hike

By Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

The Town budget has passed its first round of approval, with an increase to the tax levy below target.

At the beginning of the discussion Monday evening, the rise over last year’s budget was at about 5.1 per cent. The key to levelling that was the settlement with the registered charity. Councillors agreed to pay for it out of the parking reserve rather than the tax base, further lowering the tax increase.

Councillors also agreed to defer the Byron Street parking meters and remove that capital investment from the 2019 budget, with the intention of taking a holistic look at parking in the heritage district for next year.

The increases requested from the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, the Niagara District Airport and Niagara College were approved. Coun. Clare Cameron asked for and received approval for lowering the rent of the former hospital building for Royal Oak Community School to about $6,000, bringing it to the level of last year and offering some relief for the registered charity.

Coun. Allan Bushby thanked town staff for their efforts, “working day and night” to put the budget together. “I think you learned a lot. We learned a lot too,” he said.

He also thanked treasurer Kyle Freeborn for “excellent work.” Council will ratify the budget Monday.
Sewage treatment plant completion ‘a nightmare’

By Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

Given favourable weather conditions and successful testing results, the new Niagara-on-the-Lake wastewater treatment plant could be accepting town sewage by late March or early April.

It was originally scheduled to open in the summer of 2016, “and it’s been a nightmare” getting to this point, Ron Tripp, interim CAO of Niagara Region told NOTL councillors Monday. Tripp and regional engineer Joe Tonellato were at council with an update on the wastewater treatment plant on Lakeshore Road.

region told NOTL councillor Penny Coles

Interim regional CAO Ron Tripp and regional engineer Joe Tonellato were at council Monday “in the next few weeks,” putting water through it but there is a 14-day test in place and operational, presented.

For the information they though he thanked them for the Harmony Group’s assessment completed in 2011, “and it’s being worked toward by late March or early April.”

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Tripp and regional engineer Joe Tonellato were at council with an update on the wastewater treatment plant on Lakeshore Road. Tripp said he didn’t want to go into the reasons for the lengthy delay in completing the project, which has been under one general contractor — the process is leading down a path to legal action, he said.

The next step is decommissioning the the lagoons, he said, which will be filled up, according to the environmental assessment completed in December.

That option was not what the Harmony Group has been working toward for more than a decade, but it is the solution Parks Canada has agreed to, said Tripp.

In addition to filling in the lagoons, creating a riverine wetland which will allow for natural flooding, the decommissioning project will establish the “original meaner” of Two Mile Creek, with the design expected to be completed this year and construction to begin in 2020 “pending approvals.”

Burroughs said following the meeting he was “more than disappointed” to know the wetlands won’t be retained. Up until recently, he thought that was the preferred option, he said.

The project has come in close to budget, at about $50 million, and will deliver enhanced wastewater treatment services for the Old Town and Virgil, covering an area of about 6,000 people.

The Town has failed to comply with the Ontario Heritage Act, the application says, and the intention to designate does not conform to the Town’s Official Plan.

SORE, the neighbouring group opposing development of the hotel proposed for two of the John Street properties slated for designation, called the move “audacious,” since developer Benny Marotta had said he had intended to move forward with designation himself on those two properties.

A third John Street property and one on Charlotte Street are included in the designation.

“My understanding is that we followed everything our solicitor advised us to do,” said Lord Mayor Betty Disero. “This is yet another move by Solmar and Two Sisters that has to be dealt with.”

The application is expected to be heard at the Superior Court of Justice on Church Street in St. Catharines Feb. 14, beginning at 10 a.m.
Fire station review deferred

By Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

A detailed review of the Queenston fire station has been put off until 2020.

After preparing an extensive report on the viability of the station and its history of structural problems for councillors, Fire Chief Rob Grimwood suggested some alternatives for dealing with the information in the report.

He said the next step would be a more comprehensive analysis of the station, which would include details such as the number of calls, response times, and projected growth for the area.

While “clear direction” on the future of the St. Davids and Queenston stations is needed, given recommendations over the last 40 years that the two could be combined, Grimwood offered some alternatives for the timing of the analysis.

One option, he said, would be to wait and see what the province decides to do about lower-tier municipalities, which could include redrawing boundaries.

If that happens, he said, the number of stations required and where they should be located would also change.

“There is no immediacy” for making a decision, he added. The structural problems with the Queenston building “while extensive, are historic,” and there are no planned repairs at the moment, he told councillors.

Councillors voted to have a 10-year master plan on fire stations prepared for May, 2020.

Town, region disagree on services for new contract

By Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

Despite Niagara-on-the-Lake’s dismal record of composting organic material, councillors don’t agree with some of the changes the Niagara Region is proposing to encourage a better rate of diversion.

Cameron said she would rather see “positive reinforcement and communication” employed to change behaviour, rather than efforts to force that change.

She also objected to the lack of privacy afforded to residents if clear bags are mandated.

Coun. Allan Bisback agreed, saying the information recently received from the region was that the public does not support clear bags and that option wouldn’t be pursued.

Brad Whitelaw, regional program manager, said clear bags present motivation for residents to divert their organics. The saving isn’t in the collection contract, it’s on the environmental side, he said, by making residents accountable for what’s in that bag.

Curbside auditors show the average garbage bag in Niagara contains 50 per cent organics and 14 per cent recycling, he said, and fewer than 50 per cent of residents use their green bin.

In the municipality of Waterloo, moving to every-other-week garbage pickup created a 200 per cent diversion increase, Whitelaw said.

“With regards to every other week, if we don’t make a policy change, we will be where we are right now.”

Councillors voted four-four to eliminate scrap metal pickup, and to say no to clear bags and every-other-week collection, with recycling weekly.

Coun. Gary Burroughs, committee chair, broke the tie in favour of the motion, which will be ratified next week, but the region’s decision, expected later this year, will be based on the input from other municipalities.

Super Bowl event helps kids

Earn extra cash by selling your unwanted items in our CLASSIFIEDS.
Contact classified@notllocal.com
Deadline: Mondays at noon.
Nothing ‘nefarious’ about NPCA budget

Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

Gary Zalepa, chair of the Region’s budget committee and also a member of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, says the problem with the budget presented by the agency to the Region is one of detail, and will soon be corrected.

As part of budget deliberations last week, Regional council refused to approve funding for the NPCA. The budget as presented was approved by the last term of the board, under former Fort Erie regional councillor Sandy Annunziata, before the current board was appointed, said Zalepa. That is standard practice for several agencies, and in itself is not a problem, he added.

Interim CAO David Barrie, a former Port Colborne regional councillor, could not account for about $2.5 million of the $8.87 million operating budget — money that was likely spent on items such as staff, expenses and other governance costs, said Zalepa.

He has seen the NPCA operating budget, and said he doesn’t believe there was anything ‘nefarious’ at work.

He expects the missing information to be presented to the region next week.

Although the region funds the NPCA, along with Hamilton and Haldemond County, it doesn’t have to approve funding. Withholding funding won’t impact the day-to-day operations of the NPCA, he added, as long as it doesn’t continue for too long.

LCBO could promote local wines

Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

Andrew Niven understands how much Niagara-on-the-Lake residents are looking forward to the opening of the new LCBO in Virgil.

But not all wineries may be as excited about it, he said.

As chair of the Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake and marketing director at Konzelmann Estate Winery, Niven has some concerns about the effect the LCBO, expected to open in March, may have on winery sales, and diverting tourists and locals from visiting wineries.

He would like to see a partnership between the local retail outlet and wineries, to encourage the promotion of local wines.

He hopes the presence of the LCBO and its convenience for shoppers won’t take people away from “enjoying the full winery experience, and understanding what we’re all about,” he said, but if people are going to buy wine at the Virgil outlet, “I hope they’re encouraged to buy local wine.”

He’s seen it work at the LCBO in the Beaches area of Toronto, he said, and it could work here to the benefit of the wineries, he added.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said supporting the wine industry is an important goal of the municipality, and as an advocate of the industry, she too is concerned about the potential impact of the LCBO on local wineries.

She agreed that a meeting between store management and winery representatives could be beneficial for both.

“Maybe the LCBO could have a sign that says ‘Welcome to Wine Country’,” she said, “or signs inside encouraging the purchase of local wines.”

“Maybe they could have maps of wineries for visitors. It would be great to get the LCBO to promote our wines,” Disero said she would do whatever she could to encourage a partnership between the new LCBO and wineries.
Let’s search for the good in each of us

The recent announcement of a long-time local gone missing galvanized a community, and threw strangers together with a united cause: we must find our beloved neighbour. People dropped everything, donned rubber boots, talked to strangers, plotted maps and charts, approached police officers, explored each other’s back yards, and bonded.

When the sad announcement was made that the body of the lost man had been found, neighbours connected on corners, telling their search stories, telling their Egon stories, leaning gently on one another for support.

What would it look like if we could connect and collaborate in times of joy, in times of simplicity, in times of honesty and truth? How could we all more figuratively “drop everything” to collaborate and offer support, working toward the common good of our community?

Imagine if we could all hold open minds, trust in a greater truth than our own bias. If we could have rational, calm, supportive conversations about trees, taxes, development. If we could listen to conflicting ideas and find a positive solution that doesn’t leave half the community feeling like they’ve lost a battle. If we could approach strangers as though they were friends, because we share the common goal of making our community the best it can be for everyone, not just for ourselves.

This would be dropping everything indeed: Our agendas, our prejudices, our own preferences. Let’s do that, and put on those boots.

Let’s search for and save the strength, and beauty, and community in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

- Lauren O’Malley

Voices of Freedom Park

Voices of Freedom Park on Regent Street was conceived as a way to tell the story of an important time in our history, which includes the voices of the Black people who were among our earliest settlers. The park is intended to celebrate and honour our Black history as is the month of February. Both are meant to educate us with the long-forgotten stories of people who were not given a voice, and to right the wrongs of long ago. This month is a good time to visit the park, learn from it, and take to heart the significance of Black history in our past and our future.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake

The trusted voice of our community

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

Publisher:
The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local
Advertising Sales:
Karen Skeoch
karen@notllocal.com • 905-641-5335
Julia Coles
julia@notllocal.com • 905-934-1040

Multimedia Journalist:
Lauren O’Malley
lauren@notllocal.com

Graphic Designer:
Rosie Gowsell
composing@notllocal.com

Treaty Tree

by Lauren O’Malley

From the plaque at the base of the Treaty Tree: “This 400-year-old White Oak is the official boundary marker in the first land deed in Upper Canada (now Ontario) signed in 1781 between the Chippewa and Mississauga Chiefs and the English Crown. The deed was for a 4-mile wide strip of land bounded by the Niagara River, between Lakes Ontario and Erie. ... This deed also marked the official birth of Niagara-on-the-Lake, which held its 200th anniversary in 1981.” “The white oak tree and its significance were discovered in 2012 during an investigation of the history of the war of 1812-1814 by Dave Lee and Abe Epp, Niagara-on-the-Lake residents. The assessment of the tree was done with the assistance of Andrew Hordyk, a certified arborist.”

The tree has been designated a “heritage tree” through the Trees Ontario Heritage Tree Program, a qualification that falls under the same heritage act that designates neighbourhoods and homes.

Think of this beautiful, historical tree as a perpetual candle to celebrate the birth of our town.

Buddy Andres, a former Parks Canada employee, had some information to add to the “monolith” discussed in last week’s Local Finds. The sign was installed during his tenure at Parks Canada, saying Butlers Barracks National Historic Site. It was not used as a parking sign to his knowledge, he said.
Youth council organizes book club at library

By Bethany Poltl

“Books are a uniquely portable magic.” — Stephen King

I discovered this to be true at a young age. I love books, for this reason: books can take you anywhere and teach you anything. I love reading books, looking at books, and collecting books.

Since I was little my mom and I have always frequented the local library. I loved my first trip, seeing all the books, listening to a story being told and then getting to pick out a few books to take home. This started my love of books and helped me realize there are different books for different occasions and every mood. I also grew to understand the importance of reading, of creativity and imagination.

Fast forward to the teenage years. I read an article posted by the NOTL Library on Facebook regarding book clubs. I think to myself we should try to start a book club. The positive response from the library and the NOTL Teen Literacy Alliance was born.

We started meeting in September. Our first meeting was a book tasting and Emma Burkholder, a library staff member, had a selection of amazing and diverse novels for us to vote on and choose to read. October: Carpe Diem; November: Vincent and Theo; December: My True Love Gave To Me; January: The Book Thief; February: Meet Cute; March: Here We Are; April: Inside Out And Back Again; May: The Secret Life Of Bees; June: I’ll Give You The Sun; July: The Sun Is Also A Star.

For January we discussed The Book Thief by Markus Zusak and we watched the movie. If you haven’t read or seen it yet I do not want to spoil it for you, however, I highly recommend you keep a tissue box close by. Our meeting corresponded with International Holocaust Remembrance Day. This day commemorates the devastation of the Holocaust and The Book Thief is a story that paints a glimpse into the years of the Second World War. Through books we can learn about our histories and grow from them and The Book Thief is another well-written reminder of the tragedies of the past.

For February we have chosen a light-hearted anthology of romantic stories and tales for Valentine’s Day, Meet Cute. So why should teens join our Teen Literacy Alliance? You get to share your love for books and reading with others. You make new friends and find support in our group. Research shows teens who pick up a book and read, for fun, are more likely to succeed in life, especially social life.

Teens can share reading experiences and talk about what matters to them in a safe, secure place, building emotional and mental coping strategies to help them in real-life situations.

Teens who read frequently read more fluidly, and can get their school work done faster and at a higher standard. Teens who identify with the LGBTQ+ community have found reading novels where characters are identified as LGBTQ+ helps them navigate their feelings, and they feel more accepted by peers who have read and discussed the same novel.

I could go on with statistics and research discoveries but I think the point is clear — reading is good for the mind, body, and soul.

Teens are busy people, we have heaps of extra-curricular activities and living in NOTL we need the support of our families to get us anywhere. In the spring, summer, and fall you can bike to the library if you live near the path, however, in the winter or in questionable weather, we need parents to drive us. I have had a few interested teens talk to me about wanting to come to the book club, but they have no one to drive them.

I would hope that parents, grandparents or perhaps older siblings would see the value in encouraging the teens in their lives to read and support them in driving them to our once-a-month meetings. Reading opens doors and brings so many other opportunities as well. Last year, I was acquainted with the NOTL Writers Club, run by Hermine Steinberg. I entered their Youth Rising Spirits Writing Competition and my non-fiction piece entitled “My Personal Journey into Leadership” was recognized and published in their 2018 Anthology, which you can find at our NOTL Library. This group of enthusiastic and especially talented authors supports each other and they support our NOTL Youth in their creative writing endeavors. If you are an aspiring writer or novelist you really should consider joining our Teen Literacy Alliance and we will announce when the next Youth Rising Spirits Writing Competition is open.

Our next meeting is Sunday, Feb. 24 at 1:30pm - 2:30pm. Feel free to contact me: lmyacnotl@gmail.com, follow us on Instagram at lmyacnotl or contact Emma at the NOTL library to for more information. Until then consider: J.K. Rowling “I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book.”

We want your photos!

We’d love to feature local photos, so if you have one you think our readers might enjoy, please email it to penny@notllocal.com. Deadline is Monday at noon. Thanks!

Letters! We want letters!

We have an opinion page put aside just for residents — we know you have opinions and we would love to share them. 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. The deadline is Monday at noon.
Continued from page 1

She went into septic shock. She didn’t have a chance.

“She went into septic shock. She didn’t have a chance, ” says Paul. “Not just ’I consume literature, ’” says Paul with fierce pride. “Not just ’I consume this, ’ but ’I can produce this. ’”

Show Me How to Love was to be the first of a “duet” of books. The book’s dedication page reads: “To abuse survivors, men and women, and their children who through sheer resilience demonstrate immeasurable courage by living their own lives. Fifty cents from the sale of this book, and Show Me How to Love, to the [name of the organization],”

“Halifax. Michèle’s life was her coming of age, according to Paul — finding her independence. He describes her final job: “Good news. You’re one of the first female pharmaceutical sales reps in Canada. Bad news, you’ll be in Winnipeg.” This meant Michèle took small planes to remote Manitoba cities like The Pas and Thompson, where she would have mere minutes to convince time-strapped doctors to purchase her wares.

Her success in the field was such that she was promoted to the major hospitals in Toronto’s downtown, the peak market. “They don’t have that area to just anybody,” says Paul with continued reverence for her late wife.

The last third of her life led her becoming Michèle Bosc — or even just “Michèle,” as she was known, her impact so great only one name was necessary.” There was only one Michèle. She definitely earned that recognition, says Paul.

Michèle and Paul were introduced in 2001 through a university friend of Paul’s, who set them up on a blind date — although the set-up took longer than anticipated due to incompetent timing. When they finally did meet for dinner, “it went very well,” says Paul, understandably. He was used to being “an ambassador of the wine industry,” and having to answer hundreds of questions about his work. But in this case, the conversation flowed easily both ways. “I saw even on the first date she was very bright,” says Paul, his eyes shining with the memory. “And opinionated. There weren’t too many things she didn’t have an opinion on.”

Michèle beat Paul to the punch in asking for a second date. Then they saw them attending a jazz festival in the Beaches area of Toronto, where Michèle lived at the time. Two months later they were on their way to France. “That was out of character for me,” says Paul with a chuckle. Normally two months into a relationship I would suggest we spend a whole day together — not travel to Europe.”

The rest is local history: In 2003 the successful urban couple made the dt to a rural life, and she shed her pharmaceutical career to embrace her new husbands wine industry. “She was a quick study,” says Paul, with his characteristic admiration. “She had already taken some courses for better understanding and appreciation of wine before we even met,” so it was relatively easy for her to dive in. Having married into the family, Michèle “had to overcome labels,” says the son of the family business.

“But people saw quickly she’s very smart. And she hit the ground running, with her pharmaceutical background. She had a skill set a small company couldn’t afford in an industry with many parallels with wine.”

After a matter of just a few years, Michèle’s title was vice-president of marketing and administration, she ultimately had six people reporting to her. She was a recognized leader in social media, and spoke at conferences and events all over North America on the topic. An early adopter, she paved the way for many others, using her own name (@Michelobe) as the handle for the winery, and initiating “Twistings” and other digital meet-ups for industry and non-industry folk alike.

“As I look around,” says Paul, “I see her in everything: That was her initiative, and so was that and that;” he says nodding towards posters, bot- tles and more around the winery. “She was responsible for everything from brand management to staff training, as well as all aspects of the guest experience. In a merging of skills that proves Michèle’s creativity and logic were equally strong, she was also head of the business’ IT department. When it became undeniable she would need to be replaced, Paul says he spent hours writing her job description, and then ultimately took it to the existing team and asked them to step up where they could. “She is irreplaceable,” he says.

“The next step was to engage. Had a century ago the respect she had for people — the quantity, and more about the quality, and less about the quantity, and more about the quality.”

Her life was cut short. But if you look at her life trajectory, where she started, what she made it through — the defeats — and the victories — here was a short life by contemporary standards, but it was a full life. She did a lot of good things, she was completely self-less. There are plenty of people who live longer, but don’t achieve as much. It’s less about the quantity, and more about the quality.”

“Michèle was impressed with the work they do,” says Paul with fierce pride. “Not just ’I consume this, ’but ’I can produce this. ’”

Show Me How to Love was to be the first of a “duet” of books. The book’s dedication page reads: “To abuse survivors, men and women, and their children who through sheer resilience demonstrate immeasurable courage by living their own lives. Fifty cents from the sale of this book, and Show Me How to Love, to the [name of the organization],” Paul says.

Three years ago during the Big Brothers Big Sisters Ride for Kids Sake at Chateau Des Charmes, Michèle, Alex and Paul were with actor Kim Coates of ‘Sons of Anarchy’ fame. (Paul Bosc/supplied photo)
Romance of Wine and Chocolates

The Days of Wine and Chocolate takes place over four weekends in February at 26 local wineries, which offer VQA wine and chocolate pairings — from classically sweet flavour combinations to unexpected surprises. A winery visit could be a romantic celebration for two or a girls’ getaway. A winery visit could be a romantic celebration for two or a girls’ getaway.

Building 1 is located 2.5 blocks from Queen Street in a desirable location surrounded by beautifully maintained homes. It is a classic, modern executive home with an open concept kitchen fully equipped with the latest appliances. The second main floor bedroom offers ensuite privilege with a private balcony overlooking the backyard.

The large master suite is located on the upper level and features a walk-in closet, ensuite bathroom, and private balcony. The lower level is fully finished with expansive built-in cabinets, wet bar and walkout to a private garden patio.

The large, pie-shaped lot abuts a gentle stream and features a beautiful backyard with an in-ground concrete pool. The property is located in The Village, just minutes from St. Catharines and historic old town. Almost 2000 sq. ft Side Split and outbuilding set on a rolling hill well back from Lakeshore, surrounded by trees, expansive lawns, a meandering creek and farmland. Nicely landscaped and features a beautiful backyard with in-ground concrete pool. The property is located in The Village, just minutes from St. Catharines and historic old town.

MLS 30700507. Thomas Elltoft & Viviane Elltoft.

Located in The Village, a pristine bungalow loaded is in a quiet and sought after neighborhood. The home is set back from the road and is surrounded by a mature front yard with an older oak tree and a beautiful garden. The interior features a beautiful kitchen with stainless steel appliances, a large living room with a gas fireplace, and a small bedroom on the main floor. The second floor has two additional bedrooms and a bathroom. The property is perfect for anyone looking for a quiet and peaceful setting.

MLS 30704008. Thomas Elltoft and Caroline Polgrabia.

The large master suite is located on the upper level and features a walk-in closet, ensuite bathroom, and private balcony. The lower level is fully finished with expansive built-in cabinets, wet bar and walkout to a private garden patio.

The large, pie-shaped lot abuts a gentle stream and features a beautiful backyard with an in-ground concrete pool. The property is located in The Village, just minutes from St. Catharines and historic old town. Almost 2000 sq. ft Side Split and outbuilding set on a rolling hill well back from Lakeshore, surrounded by trees, expansive lawns, a meandering creek and farmland. Nicely landscaped and features a beautiful backyard with in-ground concrete pool. The property is located in The Village, just minutes from St. Catharines and historic old town.

MLS 30700507. Thomas Elltoft & Viviane Elltoft.

Located in The Village, a pristine bungalow loaded is in a quiet and sought after neighborhood. The home is set back from the road and is surrounded by a mature front yard with an older oak tree and a beautiful garden. The interior features a beautiful kitchen with stainless steel appliances, a large living room with a gas fireplace, and a small bedroom on the main floor. The second floor has two additional bedrooms and a bathroom. The property is perfect for anyone looking for a quiet and peaceful setting.

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"Loud and fun, just the way we like it"

By Lauren O’Malley
The NOTL Local

"It’s a fun, all-ages celebration of African culture," says Debbie Krause, referring to Tales by Moonlight, half of the library's nod to Black History Month.

The local library's program and outreach coordinator is excited about this multi-media story-telling event, saying, "It will be loud and fun — the way we like it." She's not wrong, given there are djembes (a type of West African hand drum) for the first 80 (yes, eight-zero) people who attend the party — er, workshop.

Babarinde (Baba) Williams is a GTA-based drummer and trumpet player who reached out to the library and offered to contribute to the program. He says, "I reached out to your library for so many reasons. A small town library will benefit immensely from a culture-focused event like this one. A lot of small-town kids need the kind of exposure, entertainment, and information that our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings. Since drumming connects, our program brings.

He will be using the African cultural arts of hand-drumming, dance, and interactive, multi-media storytelling to engage and educate children and adults alike. "People can expect a lot of drumming, chanting, story-telling, images of animals and vegetation and articles that are not native to Canada. We have a projector that will project these exotic animals and articles to the attendees," says Williams. "There will also be a brief drumming workshop to kick off the event. Participants will be taught actually how to play the West-African Djembe drums together with the history of drumming and the role of drumming in the African society."

"They should expect to be entertained not by me, but by themselves. Just imagine attending a concert but you are the one performing alongside your spouse and children. That is what makes this event unique. Drumming is an inter-generational activity and this event is a very interactive program."

The style is call-and-response, and is designed to get everyone singing, dancing and drumming. Says Williams. "It is very evident that rhythm is the sail that the ship of music rides on. Therefore drumming together promotes a better understanding of rhythms, advanced rhythm (polyrhythm) and timing. It also inculcates in the psyche of the group members the feeling of confidence and freedom."

"The tale being told is "My turtle and the pot of wisdom." Williams says, "It is a lesson to encourage our kids that you may not be able to jump highest, run fastest or throw farthest, you can still achieve great things if you put your wits to it."

Tales by Moonlight takes place at the NOTL public library on Saturday, Feb. 16, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Registration is recommended, via the library's website, https://notlpubliclibrary.org/

The other half of the library's tribute to Black History Month is the screening of local Howard Davis' film "Cest moi" on Feb. 28 at 2 p.m. There is also a dedicated book rack of titles related to Black history featured in the library for the month of February.
Continued from Page 1

“We when heard that an offshore labour program started and our help situation was resolved, we decided to move back to Niagara. I said to my wife, ‘we’re going to be okay because we got good help coming in.’”

With two small children in tow, Sherry and Gord Jr., they moved to a small nursery purchased from the Zi-raldo family on the Niagara River Parkway. With that came an opportunity to hire a young man named Gilbert MacDonald who had recently been on a pilot program which was soon eagerly embraced by the entire agricultural community, and which has grown to bring 2,000 to 3,000 farm workers to Niagara today.

“After 12 years working for the Neufelds, MacDon-ald was invited to work year round for Inniskillin Estate Winery, an offer he accepted after the immigration details were sorted. After being sepa- rated from his family eight months every year, it was an offer too good to refuse. He already felt at home in Niagara, having made so many friends in the com- munity over the years. His involvement at Orchard Park Church continued to grow as he was now able to take on more responsibilities year round. Although it has been recently taken over by the Cornerstone Community Church he has welcomed the changes and the many new friends he is making. He continues to stay close-ly connected to his Jamaican friends on the farms and has been involved with driving farm workers to the CWOP (Caribbean Workers Out- reach Project) church services for the better part of 20 years. After a short retirement he was invited to return as a supervisor at Arietta Wines from March to October. “No more working in the winter for me,” he said. He enjoys spending more time with his family and keeping in touch with his grandchildren, of whom he is so very proud.

There is much more for the men to talk about, including the many challenges local farms are presently faced with. They agree to get to-gether for that discussion another time but for now there is much to think about and to be grateful for.

Neufeld had his arm around Teagen’s shoulders. My daughter takes after her grandpa, she’s hoping to be a farmer some day. She’s already loves driving the lawn tractor and cutting the grass.”

Teagen also helps her mom care for their laying hens and loves cupping the warm eggs as they gather them on a cold winter day.

Her grandfather was pas-sionate about farming but the special friendships he culti- vated with his Jamaican em- ployees will create a legacy he will long be remembered for.
Market tent needs repairing before spring

By Penny Coles  
The NOTL Local

You can’t get much more local than the Market at the Village, which plans to open in May for its 12th season.

The registered not-for-profit twice-weekly gatherings, Saturday mornings featuring fresh Niagara produce and Wednesday’s supper market, have become lively and popular meeting places for local families, and this coming season will be no exception, hopes co-ordinator Sharon Brinsmead-Taylor.

However, she’s run into a problem that has to be solved in the coming weeks, with the time to put up the main tent not far away.

Last year, she said, the original tent they had depended on was replaced — it had lasted 10 years — and with 2,500 to 3,000 people at most of the supper markets, they decided on a significantly larger one that allows for more events under cover.

Before it can be erected this season, it needs repairing, with extra bracing added, she said. At an estimate of more than $13,000, “this was a major blow to our budget.”

When the farmers market opened in 2007, it was conceived by developer John Hawley as a community event for those who lived in Garesson Village and The Village — a gathering place for residents who could walk there and buy local produce. It’s grown to attract about 500 people most Saturdays, and has become an event for the wider community, with prepared foods, breakfast, handmade soaps and bath products, fresh bread and baked goods, jams, jellies, pickles and preserves, and some artisans, all local to the region, as well as live music.

The SupperMarket, which opened in 2014 with a few food vendors, has grown to more than 20 food trucks and local vendors offering a wide variety of choices, with local beer and wine available. It attracts some visitors, but it’s still mostly locals who share the picnic tables and consider it a meeting place for friends and neighbours, she said.

“It’s all directed at locals, to serve them here so they don’t have to go elsewhere. It’s walkable for a lot of people and for everyone to enjoy. Many residents come out on a weekly basis, including families who gravitate to the children’s activity area, where the kids can play safely while the parents relax and enjoy some free time and socialize with other families.”

With free admission and parking, the kids’ zone and live entertainment, it operates at a break-even point most seasons — any money made from the supper market, from vendors and drink tokens, helps support low fees for Saturday’s vendors, said Brinsmead-Taylor.

“We have to pay for parking attendants, security, maintaining the field and port-a-potties, and it all adds up.”

Because of extreme heat and iffy Wednesday weather, attendance was down last season and it ended in a deficit. Brinsmead-Taylor is hoping for some corporate sponsorship, donations, or someone in the community who will be able to help out with the tent repairs, or know someone who can.

There will be a donation plaque by the tent to recognize supporters “as part of the market family,” she said.

She’s also considering a GoFundMe online request for donations, to ensure the market goes ahead as planned.

“We don’t have a heck of a lot of time to get it repaired,” she said. She’s had questions from the community, given the news of a commercial square planned for the Village in the field where the markets now take place, about whether the weekly events will continue. It will be business as usual this season, hopefully with a stronger tent, and in the future, when construction begins for the Village Square, there are sites being considered as a permanent location for the market, she said.

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Why do we read?

Zoey Bai and Treena Ray
Grade 6 at St. Michael Catholic School

We enjoy reading. J.K. Rowling’s thrilling series Harry Potter for its wonderful story plots and fantastic description of the magical wizarding world. It feels like they actually take you to the wizarding world, experiencing everything with them.

Reading allows us to have wonderful adventures. You go along with the characters in a world the author has invented. Stories can be very interesting, like mysteries. Some are fantasies which makes things impossible. You never get bored reading.

Literacy Day at St. Michael

Michael Haramina and Alex Amodeo
Grade 6 students at St. Michael Catholic School

Michael: The books I enjoy the most are Harry Potter because they are full of action, and they are just like black holes, once you start reading them you can’t stop. I read because it helps calm me and if something is bothering me, it helps me take my mind off it.

Alex: The book series I like to read is Diary of a Wimpy Kid. I enjoy reading these books because they help me come up with good puns. These books are jam-packed with funny and comical jokes. I read because it helps me learn new words. Also, it takes my mind off things. If I am very stressed out or if something is bugging me I will read.

We both agree reading is very beneficial to everyone around the world. Here are some of the benefits: stress reduction, mental stimulation, and better writing skills.

What does literacy mean to St. Michael students

By Zoe Anger and Tannin Driedger-Bradshaw
Grade 7 at St. Michael Catholic School

St. Michael Literacy day was a blast. All of the students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 dressed up as their favourite book characters to celebrate reading. Even our teachers and cleaning staff dressed up. The costumes ranged from princesses to witches and wizards. Overall we had an amazing day learning about literacy.

To us literacy means that it gives us an opportunity to think outside the box and be creative. Without literacy we would not know how to complete everyday challenges. Every time we read a book we learn something new. Whether the book is fiction or fantasy every page has new lesson.
From the heart

Tips for staying healthy

Here are some simple steps to get going for a great year.

Move more: The recommendation is for 30 or more minutes per day of activity on most days. If you’re already doing this, great. Doing more will lead to even better health. Try taking a walk on your lunch break; park farther from your destination; use the stairs instead of the elevator; be active with family and friends.

Avoid sitting or standing for long periods: If you sit most of the time either at home or work, set a timer to remind yourself to get up every 20 minutes and take a two-minute walk. Try walking meetings instead of sitting in the office.

Don’t smoke: Smoking is a risk factor for cancer, heart disease, stroke and lung disease, among others. If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do. Also minimize your exposure to second-hand smoke.

Be social: People who have active social lives tend to be healthier and happier. Having a support system helps to relieve stress and make you smile and laugh. It also helps to have that support when things go wrong.

Make time for yourself: Taking 20-30 minutes each day for yourself is a good way to clear your thoughts, feel refreshed and concentrate more effectively. Use this time to do something for yourself like read a book or go for a walk.

Eat breakfast: Eating breakfast can help increase your energy throughout the day, leading to more activity. However, it’s also important what you eat. One with fibre and protein is ideal.

Eat protein with each meal: Most of us do not get enough protein in our diets. It helps us feel full, fuels our metabolism and may help in weight maintenance. Simple protein sources include eggs, nuts, lean meats, yogurt (Greek yogurt especially) and peanut butter.

Sing and listen to music: You don’t need to get on stage in front of a crowd, and it doesn’t matter how good you are (no one needs to know). Singing has benefits that make us feel good about ourselves and can help with our health. Even listening to music can make us feel better.

Tips from Dr. Scott Lean, leading researcher in the prevention and management of heart disease —

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Rotary helps students

Laura Byers accepts a cheque from Paul Lalonde of the Rotary Club of NOTL. (Lauren O’Malley)

There are children in need in Niagara-on-the-Lake, students who don’t have access to all the enriching opportunities school life may offer to others. Those children are the reason behind The Education Foundation of Niagara, says Laura Byers, the executive director of the arms-length charity that supports local students in financial need.

The agency provides basic necessities such as nutritious food, warm winter clothing, boots and shoes, and enables students to take part in field trips and extracurricular activities. It also helps make post-secondary education accessible through bursaries, says Byers.

The foundation’s recently-launched Leadership Giving Program is investing in helping needy kids, she says, and will have a long-lasting impact on the lives of students who will be the next generation of leaders and community members.

The Rotary Club of NOTL places much importance on supporting charities that help the most vulnerable, says Paul Lalonde, chair of the club’s community service committee.

“That’s why we are so proud to be supporting The Education Foundation of Niagara in helping them provide much-needed services to students with basic essentials many of us take for granted,” says Lalonde.

“They provide such a vital service to young students and are in the perfect position to identify and meet the greatest needs locally. We know our $2,000 donation will be put to great use.”

Since 2007, the foundation has been investing in students and programs at the District School Board of Niagara. Led by a volunteer board of directors, the foundation exists through the generosity of individual donors and organizations — it receives no government funding.

It helps ensure health and success for all children, while teaching them people care about their welfare, says Byers, who has heard many success stories about students who have been helped by the agency.

For more information on the Leadership Giving Program, other foundation programs or to make a donation, visit www.efnniagara.ca or contact Laura Byers at 905-641-2929 ext. 37711 or by email at laura.byers@dsbn.org.
Female players like their on-ice girl time

By Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

Girls are welcome and encouraged to join co-ed teams in the Niagara-on-the-Lake Minor Hockey League, but this year a new program designed just for female players is also enjoying a successful season and proving its worth.

Every Saturday at 12:10 p.m., girls from the novice, atom and peewee divisions take to the ice in the Centennial arena to develop their skills and play some hockey.

The goal, says organizer and coach Brian Beccario, is to promote the game for local girls, give them some extra ice time of their own, and allow them to "own the dressing room" once a week.

"When we started in the program in November we had nine skaters," he said. "We now have 15. Our hope is to continue the program next year as well."

There was a time, a few years back, when NOTL minor hockey tried to offer all-girl teams, but the numbers couldn't sustain them, and now NOTL girls have to choose between co-ed teams locally, or travelling to St. Catharines or Niagara Falls to play, which means the local league is losing them, said Beccario.

He approached minor hockey and asked if he could give this weekly program a try, and it has become an add-on for girls between the ages of nine and 13 who are already on a local team. It is also an option for those who are from Niagara-on-the-Lake but play elsewhere, or those who have chosen to learn the sport through this all-girls program, in some cases because they're a little intimidated by joining a co-ed team, he said.

Those who are weaker players or just learning become stronger by having good female role models on the ice with them, he said.

They've also had three sessions with Kathi Plug, who provides power-skating lessons in St. Catharines for kids aged four and up, including adults. Her on-ice presence offers the girls an opportunity to learn from a strong female skater, former hockey player and another role model, said Beccario.

His daughter Luci, an 11-year-old Crossroads student, loves both playing for her co-ed team and the on-ice girl-time.

It would be difficult for her to choose which she likes better, she said — for now she's happy to make that choice. She also appreciates the skills she's learning, including moving faster — she feels the power skating classes have made her a better hockey player.

She's also made a new "best friend" from St. Davids, which is another benefit of the program — it's great for the community when kids from different schools have a chance to develop friendships, he said. "I think any ice time is a good thing," said Beccario. "Opening it up to more skaters can only be good for everybody."

Although there is a core group of girls who show up regularly, there can be anywhere from eight to all 15 on the ice, with some off to play hockey with their teams. Saturday afternoon, said Beccario. He is hoping this year's success will ensure it continues next fall.

He welcomes girls who want to give the program a try over the next four weeks, and asks them to call for more information at 905-321-2032.
Soccer registration at arenas this weekend

By Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Soccer Club is gearing up for another summer of the beautiful game. In-person registration takes place this weekend at the arenas in Virgil from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Officials from the club will be there to answer any questions.

The NOTL Soccer Club offers programs for boys and girls born in 2015 and earlier. The club’s ever-popular Timbits program is designed to encourage children to be active and to learn to enjoy the game. “The focus, especially in the early ages, is on fun and skill development. The competitive aspect of the game comes in at the older ages, when kids have learned the skills from our volunteer coaches,” says club president Ted VanderKaay. The volunteer aspect of the club, especially when it comes to the coaching, is key to its success, he adds.

According to VanderKaay, one of the mandates of the club is to give kids opportunities to play the game in their own community. “We have probably the best soccer fields in the region, as the Town staff does a great job maintaining the facilities. It would be a shame to have these kids playing elsewhere and bringing their energy to another community.”

There are opportunities as well for more competitive soccer, in the form of travel, or “rep” teams at various age groups. In fact, for the first time in many years, there will be a team wearing the Rangers colours in the men’s PSL league.

VanderKaay also wants to remind young people that there are opportunities for them to build their leadership skills and earn a bit of money over the summer as referees. The club is currently encouraging boys and girls 12 years old and up to consider taking a referee clinic with the goal of officiating games this summer.

VanderKaay assures everyone that you don’t have to show up for the in-person registration this weekend. It’s just as easy to register and pay online at www.notlsoccer.org if that’s what you prefer. And he encourages parents to register as coaches if they are at all interested. The house league season will kick off in late May for most age groups, with the Timbits division beginning in June.
NOTL native on his way to winter games

By Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Nineteen-year-old speed skater Max Brant of Niagara-on-the-Lake feels confident heading into his first Cana-
da Winter Games next week in Red Deer, Alta.

The second-year University of Calgary biological sciences stu-
dent is in his second full season at the National Team Training Centre at the Olympic Oval. With the retirement of a number of national team members following the 2018 Winter Olympics, Brant was able to move up to the Stage 3 men’s program to train under coach Arno Hoogveld.

That move has made a world of difference in Brant’s progression. In January, he set personal records in the 500, 1,000, 1,500 and 5,000 metre races, three of those coming at the Canada Cup qualifier on home ice. He credits the coaches, the staff and the facility itself for helping him get to the next level. Brant feels if he sticks to his training regimen he will exceed those personal records in Red Deer.

This is Brant’s first year as a single-sport athlete. While attending Holy Cross Catholic Sec-
nondary School he took up rowing, following in mom Wendy’s footsteps (she rowed at Denis Morris). He continued juggling that sport with his speed skating, com-
peting for three years in high school as well as last year at the Uni-
versity of Calgary. Last March, he captured the U23 Lightweight men’s Provincial indoor title.

“There are a lot of similarities between the two sports. To do well in both you need to com-
bine good timing with excellent technique,” says Brant. Rowing, however, relies on cardio endurance, while speed skating, he says, requires more muscular endurance. There is no doubt in Brant’s mind, howev-
er, that rowing helped him stay in tip top shape for his development as a speed skater.

His promotion to the Stage 3 men’s program this year forced him to make the not-too-dif-
cult decision to step out of the boat and spend more time on the oval. “At this level I wouldn’t have had the time to commit to my training regimen and balance my workload at university while also rowing.” And with his January results, the decision seems to be paying dividends.

Having begun playing house league hockey in NOTL at five years old, Brant has been on the ice now for most of his life. He enjoyed hockey, but when, at the sugges-
tion of his grandparents, he tried speed skating when he was nine, he quickly fell in love with the speed, freedom and the individualistic na-
ture of the sport. “In speed skating, you race yourself,” he says. Three years later, as he began competing provincially, he gave up hockey alto-
geber.

Just two years af-
ter giving up hockey, he moved on from the Niagara Speed Skating Club to begin training in Cambridge. “It’s a big-
ger club, and it gave me the opportunity to work with more competitive skaters. I felt the Cam-
bridge Speed Skating Club would allow me to develop more as a com-
petitive athlete.”

And his development as a competitive athlete continues. Last summer he returned to NOTL for July and August. But Brant knows this summer Calgary will be his home, as he is com-
mittted to training year round, with the goal of improving his time in all of his events, especially the 500 metres. When he does get back to town, as he did this Christmas, he takes the chance to skate with the Niagara club, where the kids he used to coach look up to him.

Looking beyond these Canada Winter Games, Brant is hoping for a berth on the national team within three or four years. Then, hope-
fully, it’s on to a World Cup and eventually, the 2026 Olympics. When that goal is achieved, it’s a given that those Niagara Speed Skating Club skaters will be cheering him on.
Pillitteri dreaming of day he drives Olympia through Virgil

By Penny Coles
The NOTL Local

Joe Pillitteri is living every boy’s dream, or certainly his — the owner of Lakeview Vineyard Equipment is making a career of operating heavy machinery, showing off grape harvesters and other farming equipment to those who might be in the market to purchase what he sells.

But he has one dream yet unfulfilled, he said — he has his heart set on driving an ice resurfacer, and he thinks it might be within reach.

He’s cautious not to use the word ‘Zamboni,’ which is not a generic term for those machines that clean the ice between hockey periods or figure skating classes. It’s a trade name that draws a hand-rap if used in error to describe another brand, such as the Olympia the Town has ordered to replace one of its aging machines used to clean the Virgil ice rinks.

Pillitteri has won the right to put his Lakeview sign on the new piece of machinery he is sponsoring, and is convinced the Town is going to let him take it to Tim Hortons so he can order coffee at the drive-through, he jokes — after all, he’s paying $25,000 to have his company name on it for the next 10 years, at $2,500 a year.

A huge hockey fan and supporter of minor hockey in town, he’s been picturing himself on the Olympia since he applied to sponsor the new ice cleaner, which is expected to be delivered to the arena in March and put into use when the ice opens again in September.

“I’ve been around equipment my whole life, and around hockey my whole life, but this is one piece of equipment I’ve never driven and I’m dying to do it. I have all sorts of plans for it,” he jokes. “I want to fulfill some childhood dreams.”

But in true Pillsy fashion, he says, “rumour has it” by the time the machine hits the ice, it might not look much like other cleaners — he included some preliminary drawings in the sponsorship application that show it in a wrap, looking more like a grape harvester than anything customarily seen on a rink.

“Tm really excited about it,” he says.

“If we look at our customer base, we have baby boomers, grandparents who are at the arena watching their kids play hockey or figure skating, and moms and dads there sometimes four or five times a week. But it’s not just about advertising — we want them to know youth sports are important to us and keeping kids healthy and it is important. If we can do something to help that in any way we can, we want to do that.”

Pillitteri and Jesse Willms, his business partner since 2014, sponsor two hockey teams, and Lakeview has donated more than $150,000 to local causes, including minor hockey, lacrosse, and KidSport Niagara, which supports kids who need financial help to participate in organized sports.

Pillitteri says that to him, the name he will always associate with the ice resurfacer at the arena is Simpson’s Pharmacy, and he’s always looked up to Ward Simpson as the ultimate example of a man and business owner who gives back to his community.

“He’s been such a good example for business owners to follow, including me, and Sean is a chip off the old block.”

Simpson’s didn’t apply for the sponsorship this time, choosing instead to open up the opportunity for others such as Lakeview, which was one of three applications.

“I had heard Joe wanted the sponsorship,” said Sean Simpson, “and was hopeful that he would get it if we didn’t participate.”