



**Patios
back for
another
year**

page 3

notllocal.com FEBRUARY 8, 2023 Volume 5 • Issue 6

Chloe Cooley stamp released to commemorate Black History

Mike Balsom
The Local

An important piece of Niagara-on-the-Lake history has found its way into

the world of stamp collections just in time for Black History Month.

On Jan. 29, Canada Post issued a stamp honouring Chloe Cooley, an

enslaved woman in the Niagara area. In March, 1793, her enslaver, Adam Vrooman, forced her into a boat at Queenston to sell her across the Niagara

River. Her screams of protest were witnessed by Black Loyalist Peter Martin, who took his concern to the Executive Council of Upper Canada.

The incident is believed to have led to Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe's passing of the Act to Prohibit Slavery later that year. The act banned

the importation of slaves into Upper Canada, a major first step in the abolition of slavery in the province.

A plaque commemorating Cooley's importance stands today on the Niagara Parkway at what has become known as Vrooman's Point.

"It is very special," says Brandy Ryan, director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (DEI) at Canada Post. Ryan's family settled in the early 1900s in one of the largest and most northern Black pioneer communities in Canada, Alberta's Amber Valley.

"For me, and others who have been in Canada for many generations," says Ryan, "it's special for us to see that representation and commemoration of diversity. It means so much to me and my family personally, to our legacy, for all to know that there have been Black Canadians for a long time."

Cooley's story of fortitude, resilience and strength resonates with Ryan, who tells The Local that it was a Canada Post



Canada Post has released the stamp commemorating the story of Chloe Cooley, with input from Sarah Kaufman of the NOTL Museum. (Supplied)

Continued on page 5

Village Medical Centre to open to patients Monday

Mike Balsom
The Local

With the furniture, equipment, computers and supplies scheduled to arrive Thursday morning, the Niagara North Family Health Team will be welcoming its first patients Monday to the new medical centre in The Village.

Physicians Iram Ahmed, Tim Bastedo, Karen Berti,

Samreen Malik and Pratik Kalani gathered with administrators, nurse practitioners, town council members and others Tuesday afternoon inside the state-of-the-art facility to cut the ribbon for the official opening of the centre, which also includes a bright, modern new space to house LifeLabs.

Berti escorted The Local through a tour of the

8,000-square-foot building. The facility is divided into two wings, accessed through a central waiting room immediately upon entering.

While the five doctors, who are all moving from the old Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital, will operate out of the north side of the building, the south wing will host diabetes educators, a pharmacist, mental health

professionals, social workers, nurse educators, a chiroprapist, an occupational therapist and three nurse practitioners. Each wing has its own reception station.

Unlike the current hospital site, there are no stairs to navigate, and a walk along a hallway to an elevator is unnecessary as the new centre is all on one floor, level with the parking lot.

"That was very important from an accessibility perspective," said Berti. "And for myself, it's the first time in about 25 years that I will be above ground. I'll actually see sunlight. And it's a bigger space, a better set-up. It's a perfect size."

There are 10 examination rooms for the doctors to use plus two nurse's rooms. That is a 33 per cent increase from

the eight rooms in total that are currently being shared at the old hospital. Each exam room is spacious and bright, with windows looking out at the surrounding Village.

In the south wing, the nurse practitioners will for the first time have an office separate from their exam rooms. They will be mov-

Continued on page 8



FREE HOME EVALUATION
CALL OR TEXT GREG DIRECT
905.329.3484
GREG SYKES



WHEN YOU CALL GREG, YOU GET GREG!

Temporary outdoor patios back for another season

Zahraa Hmood
Special to The Local

The road is once again clear for local restaurants, bars and wineries to open outdoor patios when spring returns to Niagara-on-the-Lake this year. The town is looking at how to make this fixture of the pandemic era a permanent feature — potentially at a cost to business owners.

The municipality has approved renewal of its temporary, seasonal patio licensing program, implemented back in 2020 to allow places to operate while adhering to Ontario's COVID-19 physical gathering restrictions, without jumping through the usual regulatory hoops.

Three years later, outdoor patios are still a hit among diners in town. Sunset Grill on Queen Street is one of 33 spots in NOTL to open an outdoor patio during the pandemic, and co-owner Kim Gauld said it's still an important feature of the business, giving its guests who aren't yet comfortable dining indoors another option.

"It's added an extra energy to the street, too. We've been getting a lot of good feedback from residents and visitors alike," she said. "The program overall, I think, is such a good addition for the town."

That positivity was echoed at the Jan. 24 general committee of the whole meeting, during a discussion on the patio program. "I've heard nothing but positive things," said Coun.

Wendy Cheropita. "It's been helpful for the business community to extend their space, but also, people love being outside."

The committee unanimously voted to extend the temporary patio program for a third time. Until Feb. 28, 2024, businesses can either apply to open a patio or renew their permits for those that are already established.

Following direction from a town report on the patio program, councillors also voted for staff to investigate how Niagara-on-the-Lake should implement a permanent patio program, including design standards for patios, the process for accepting applications, and the costs associated with operating a permanent program.

"I think it would be a great opportunity for us and for the town," Gauld said. "It makes the streets seem lively, I like the bright umbrellas that everybody has ... it adds a European flair to the Old Town."

Currently, there is no fee to apply for a permit. According to the report, town staff "will need to review the current program to assess whether fees will be implemented for future seasonal patio permits."

The report mentions key financial implications of the program, namely lost revenue from patios occupying municipal paid parking spots and the cost of staff time and resources.

"Based on similar programs requiring zoning reviews, site inspections and coordination of per-

mits across multiple departments, it may cost up to \$50,000 in staff reports," the report reads, based on an estimated cost of \$1,200 to \$1,500 per permit and 15 to 20 hours of processing time.

Gauld said it's to be expected that keeping their patio for good will involve a lot of work with the municipality, and that a potential fee would be fair — provided it's comparable to earnings the town would lose from its paid parking spots.

"We think it would be worth it," she said. "There's nothing to suggest anything's not going to be fair. They've been open to discussion."

The idea of potential changes to the program, such as charging fees, was enough to encourage a debate between councillors on the wording of staff's recommendation, opting to create and pass a motion which, as Coun. Erwin Wiens said he fears, "would paint us into a corner."

"I can't say I support a permanent seasonal patio program when I don't know what it is," said Coun. Gary Burroughs.

Almost every town department would need to be involved in the process, explained chief administrative officer Marnie Cluckie: planning services, operations, fire and emergency services and the clerk's office.

The discussion ended with staff tasked with presenting a report to council on the permanent patio program at a later date.



Outdoor patios on Queen Street, such as Sunset Grill's, have been popular, and will be back this summer. (File photo)

A SPECIAL *Congratulations* TO OUR TOP 5 OF 2022!

GROSS COMMISSIONS EARNED



FRANK WYNIA
REALTOR®



MARILYN FRANCIS
BROKER



LISA PALMER
BROKER



KEVIN STOKES
REALTOR®



ROBERT WILKINSON
REALTOR®



LISA PALMER
BROKER



ROBERT WILKINSON
REALTOR®



KEVIN STOKES
REALTOR®



MARILYN FRANCIS
BROKER



FRANK WYNIA
REALTOR®

IN UNITS SOLD

WE ARE THRILLED TO CELEBRATE OUR 2022 AWARD RECIPIENTS. THESE INDIVIDUALS EMBODY THE CORE PRINCIPLES THAT TRULY DIFFERENTIATES OUR BROKERAGE.

BOSLEY
REAL ESTATE

EST 1928

OFFICE: 905-468-8600
5-233 KING STREET,
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ON L0S 1J0
BOSLEYREALESTATE.COM

Bosley Real Estate Ltd., Brokerage
Respects the contracts of it's competitors.

Looking back: building bridges instead of barriers

Jane Andres
Special to The Local

It started out with a simple list of errands for Barbara Somerwil one summer day in 1992. A vision check was not on her agenda, but by the end of the day Barbara viewed life through a different lens.

That afternoon she had come across a fatal accident along a dangerous stretch of road in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The police were unable to identify the victim, a Caribbean seasonal farmworker.

The impact of that scene affected Barbara deeply, and she called her pastor, Rev. Douglas Mitchell from Grace United Church, for counsel. It motivated them to take a trip to visit St. James United Church in Simcoe to learn about the Caribbean Workers Outreach Project (CWOP), a program that church had started to provide care for the social and spiritual needs of migrant farmworkers.

The visit inspired them to start a chapter of CWOP at Grace United Church in their hometown. The goal was sim-

ple: to build bridges between Jamaican farmworkers and residents of NOTL.

It's Black History Month — a good time to reflect on how we have chosen to welcome our neighbours, from the early days to the present. The experience of farmworkers in Niagara is also a reflection of our local history for the past six decades.

With the establishment of the local CWOP, Grace United Church partnered with United churches in the Vineland and Lincoln area to bring up two pastors for Sunday night services in May and June, preaching on Sundays and visiting the farms on week nights.

They began annual domino tournaments, attended with great enthusiasm every May. Highly competitive cricket matches were organized every June, well-attended by both locals and their neighbours on the farms.

In addition, St. Andrew's United Church in Niagara Falls hosted an annual dinner where several hundred farmworkers and parishioners enjoyed a mix of Canadian and Caribbean

dishes followed by lively music and a message.

I was invited to help with the music in May 2005. At a meeting with Niagara area CWOP members, I was introduced to people who would prove to be a major influence in my life.

That night I met Mary-Anne Schlabach, who continues to inspire all who meet her.

A recipient of the Rotary Club's Paul Harris award for her 50-plus years of serving, she still eagerly awaits the return of her friends every spring. There is likely someone in every town in Jamaica who knows "sister" MaryAnne.

Another member, Anne-liese Pankratz, had been friends with seasonal farmworkers for many years and was well-equipped to volunteer with CWOP. She knew the location of all the farms in Niagara-on-the-Lake, having driven most of the employers to school during her 35-plus years of driving a school bus. When her husband Henry was unable to drive Sunday nights for CWOP, she took over the task. She also turned their former apple barn into a 'free shop' for farmworkers. Through her volunteer work at the MCC Christian Benefit Shop she was able to find jeans, hoodies and shirts which she then supplied to men working on farms in her neighbourhood.

A third member, Nancy Howse, began making friends with Caribbean workers in 1987 when she worked as a cashier at MB Foods in Virgil. Nancy would invite them to join her and her late husband, Bob Howse, to church on Sundays with lunch after. Excursions to Niagara Falls, Toronto and local events led to treasured friendships and enabled them to bring valuable insight to the CWOP team.

When I began assisting with the church services in 2005, CWOP was a dynamic group of dedicated people who provided social and spiritual support. On a more personal level, many of them assisted in

practical ways, such as driving workers to doctor or dentist appointments, inviting them over for backyard barbecues, or Sunday afternoon outings to Niagara Falls.

The lively Sunday night services were the highlight of the week, not only for our Caribbean friends but for us locals as well!

The great success of CWOP was determined in large part by the incredible participation and support of not only the United Church but by the whole community. Volunteers came from various backgrounds: believers and non-believers, retired farmers, teachers, musicians and retirees from many professions that brought exceptional experience.

CWOP member Carol

Miller and her friends could be found at garage sales on Saturdays, always on the hunt for warm clothing, suitcases, household items and toys for the men to bring back to their children. Retired farmers and local tradespeople assisted men searching for tools and equipment to ship home in crates and barrels at the end of the season.

Helmut Boldt first made friends with seasonal workers when he owned a small farm, and then joined up with CWOP shortly after it began in 1992. The cricket trophy was named the Helmut Boldt Award in honour of his dedication and devoted friendships that spanned 14 years.

Some of the CWOP members made trips to Jamaica to

visit their friends, staying in their homes, and visiting their churches and schools.

Enthusiastic reports and photos from MaryAnn, Nancy, Trudy Enns, Carol, and Vic and Hertha Boese inspired more locals to travel the backroads of Jamaica to visit friends and their families.

The first 25 years of CWOP were groundbreaking in many ways, bridging cross-cultural barriers that encouraged dignity and respect.

It was a tragedy that had opened Barbara's eyes to the possibilities of a caring community 31 years ago. May we learn from those who have shared their vision, built bridges instead of barriers, and shone a light on the path to move forward together as neighbours.



Carol Miller with good friend Cornelius Lewis at Orchard Park Church. (Photos by Jane Andres)



Marlies Boldt awarding the winning team with the Helmut Boldt trophy at the 2006 CWOP Cricket match.



Sunday night worship with the CWOP music team at Bethany Mennonite Church, 2007



Vivien Hutton with Herman Neufeld after a Sunday night gathering.



If your eyes feel dry, red, or irritated after using a new contact lens solution, that may signal an allergic reaction to the product. Book an appointment with us for an eye evaluation so that we can determine the most appropriate contact lens solution for you.



DR HOPKINS & ASSOCIATES
OPTOMETRY
— Sight for Life —
Care for all ages, infants to adults

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

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

Stamp commemorates diversity, Black Canadians

Continued from page 1

stamp launch in 2021 that led her to working for the crown corporation.

"They released a number of stamps for Black History Month," Ryan explains of that year. "They featured Black Canadian communities, and one of those was Amber Valley. When I saw that stamp, it was a big deal to my family to see our community get recognized. A couple of months later I got a call from Canada Post for an opportunity, and I wanted to be a part of it."

Ryan's role in promoting DEI within the organization did not include being part of the decision to actually go forward with the Cooley stamp. She explains that usually a new design is created when there are multiple requests to Canada Post to honour an important Canadian figure.

Once the decision was made, though, the crown corporation reached out to experts with knowledge of the Chloe Cooley story. One of those experts, of course, was at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

Sarah Kaufman, the museum's managing di-

rector and curator, was asked to provide input, as was educator and historian Natasha Henry, the president of the Ontario Black History Society.

"In Niagara-on-the-Lake, we know Chloe Cooley's story," says Kaufman, "but the rest of Canada doesn't. I was very excited to see that they had selected her as the stamp for Black History Month this year."

The stamp features a prominent image of Cooley in the foreground of the scenic Niagara River. The boat on which her kidnapper forcibly transported her across the river from Queenston is seen behind her right shoulder. Dark clouds loom on the horizon.

"I found some mistakes in the first design they sent," Kaufman remembers. "The boat was wrong, it didn't look like the Niagara River, or Queenston. So we talked back and forth with them, and I got to review the text (on the stamp package) as well."

Kaufman is happy with the final design, created by Lime Design and featuring an illustration by Rick Jacobsen.

"It tells a story itself," she says. "Chloe looks

very defiant and strong. It demonstrates what we know from the witness accounts from the time, that she was constantly combatting her situation, and rightfully so. It's from the perspective of Vrooman's Point. And there's a figure watching from the grounds, representative of Peter Martin."

Unfortunately Cooley's life following the 1793 incident remains a mystery. Kaufman concedes that there might be a good chance Cooley herself had no idea of the impact her kidnapping had on the lives of other enslaved individuals.

"It's a shame she might not even have known about it," Kaufman laments.

There are other important moments in Niagara's history that might lend themselves to future Black History Month commemorations.

"Solomon Moseby is a main character who has a significant story," explains Kaufman. "The riot that happened around him is also something that affected change in legislation in Canada. He would be another great candidate."

Moseby was an African-American freedom seeker who stole his enslaver's



Valerie Novacek of the Queen Street Post Office shows the Chloe Cooley stamp package. (Mike Balsom)

horse and escaped to Niagara in 1837. His enslaver tracked him down with an arrest warrant and Moseby was jailed in Niagara-on-the-Lake. More than 200 members of the local Black community camped outside the jail to protest and to obstruct Moseby's removal. Two protesters were killed during the riot. Moseby escaped and fled to England.

"Although we are a small town, we have significant national history

behind us," says Kaufman. "We've been involved in so many significant events locally, there are so many characters from the past that could potentially be on a stamp."

For Ryan, it's important that Black History Month be recognized each year, and that Canada Post continues to do its part to recognize significant moments and people.

"I didn't learn about any of the history of my people in school," says Ryan.

"Most of my colleagues didn't, either. For those of us who want to tell that story, we've been left out of the history books. Far too often those stories don't get told. I'm excited to work for an organization that tells those stories."

"It was quite an honour to be a part of the project," Kaufman adds. "I got to see the light shone nationally on Niagara-on-the-Lake, and on Chloe Cooley, who is a significant part of our history."



TD JAZZ SERIES TD TO READY COMMITMENT

Saturday, March 25, 2023 – 7pm
FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre - Robertson Theatre, St. Catharines

Cuban-Canadian singer-songwriter Alex Cuba is a Grammy and Juno Award winner who is not tied to tradition; Alex has a vast musical vision. This intimate solo concert features music from his latest album *Mendó*, winner of the 2022 Grammy Award for Best Latin Pop Album. Alex Cuba's sugarcane-sweet melodies, pop-soul hooks and powerful guitar riffs relinquish conventional stereotypes that exemplify much of the Latin music landscape. Looking to Cuban folk traditions for inspiration and mixing it with North American influences, he's always exploring, always creating something fresh and new, and always, it seems, getting it just right.



TD JAZZ SERIES TD TO READY COMMITMENT

Saturday, April 29, 2023 – 7:30pm
FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre - Partridge Hall, St. Catharines

Throughout their storied 43-year history, the Yellowjackets have recorded 26 albums, received 19 Grammy® nominations – won 2 – performed countless sold-out tours, and enjoyed worldwide critical acclaim. Consistently reinventing themselves through elevated instrumentation in their signature electro-acoustic soundscape, the current lineup showcases a collective at their prime. Their latest album *Parallel Motion* is nominated for the 2023 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Jazz Album. Russel Ferrante: piano & synthesizers | Bob Mintzer: woodwinds & EWI | Will Kennedy: drums | Dane Alderson: bass



Bravo niagara!
FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

2023

SPRING CONCERTS

Tickets
on sale now

SAVE 10%
EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT

Enter Promo Code: **BRAVOSPRING**
Valid now until Feb 15, 2023

289-868-9177

www.bravoniagara.org



maestro series Audi Niagara

Saturday, May 13, 2023 – 7:30pm
Virtual premiere

Travel musically to Buenos Aires with Astor Piazzolla's tango! Pianist Louise Bessette is recognized worldwide as an outstanding performer and promoter of 20th and 21st-century music. She is a Member of the Order of Canada, an Officer of the National Order of Quebec, and recipient of the Governor General's Performing Arts Award - 2019 Lifetime Artistic Achievement Award for excellence in classical music. Louise Bessette turns to Astor Piazzolla's Argentina for the second part of her "Piano Around the World" series, which explores sophisticated music with popular roots. She is joined by celebrated Canadian violinist Marc Djokic and cellist Chloé Dominguez performing music from their latest album *Piazzolla: Port of Call, Buenos Aires*.



maestro series Audi Niagara

Friday, June 9, 2023 – 7:30pm
FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre - Robertson Theatre, St. Catharines

Transfiguration, starring harpist Valérie Milot and cellist Stéphane Tétrault, is a total concert experience in which its artists are immersed in an all-encompassing digital and cinematographic environment. A captivating audiovisual concert-going experience, this production promises to dazzle the audience by means of projected imagery, constantly evolving from the very first notes played till the artists' final transfiguration. Transfiguration was recently nominated for Album of the Year and Concert of the Year (Modern and Contemporary Music) at the 2023 Prix Opus Gala.

EDITORIAL

It's a good news, bad news kind of week

This is Black History Month, and to commemorate it, Chloe Cooley has made it on to a stamp, her face fierce and proud, reminding us of all she suffered.

Her story led to the first legislation passed toward the elimination of slavery in Canada, and that stamp will tell her story across the country.

Also this week an article by Jane Andres, making us realize that while there is still more we can do as a community, we've made progress.

It has taken time and the help of those like Andres, Julia Buxton-Cox (who runs The Farmworker Hub), and others to remind us how important the men and women who come here every year are to us. And not just for the work they do, but as members of our community. That's a good news story, and one that can only get better.

On the subject of Black History, The Local was surprised to receive a request for a correction. We said, first last

June, and again in a recent article, that the Ontario Heritage Trust has changed the name of the Negro Burial Ground to the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground. The cemetery on Mississagua Street has been in the news recently for the work James Russell is doing to try to give names to those buried there, with few markers left to identify them, and the good news is that the town is moving forward with the hiring of an archeological company to do the research necessary before taking the next, very expensive step of preserving headstones believed to be buried in the cemetery, and which could help give names to those who lay beneath.

It is not for me to say whether the name of the cemetery should be changed. If it is offensive to Black people, then it should be their call. Or maybe, as it seems, it's actually more offensive to change it, as if it isn't enough that their

gravestones and their names have already been hidden.

Lezlie Harper, a Niagara woman proud of her ancestors who came to Canada as freedom-seekers, says the name should remain the same, calling a change revisionist history. Russell, who has spent days and days working at the cemetery, also says there is no reason to change it.

The Ontario Heritage trust says it hasn't, that the cemetery will officially remain the Negro Burial Ground. Only the plaque — one that was supposed to be unveiled at the cemetery last June, but wasn't — will be different. So while the name may not be altered, there will be no sign of it on the site. Not changing the name? Maybe not, but nobody will ever see it.

Healthcare — definitely a rant. Whatever form of privatization awaits our future, a much more immediate problem is an investment in resources — those healthcare workers

who are so important to our system. We are fortunate in this country to have universal healthcare, as damaged as it is. Please, Doug Ford, take some action to hire and train more healthcare workers, and then talk to us about private clinics.

Next up, Circle Street and the two trees the town promised would be saved in 2018, and were surrounded by protective fencing last year, although a little after construction on the new house on the lot began, after repeated reminders from neighbours about that 2018 promise. One of those trees was cut down Monday morning, based on a new arborist report that has not yet been made public.

Finally, last week Friday brought an answer from the town about the other tree on the property. The protective fencing had been moved by a subcontractor, and for a week, while neighbours again begged the town to stop it, heavy machin-

ery went back and forth over its roots, the fellow driving the equipment saying a bylaw officer had been out and said it was fine. The town said it was investigating, and a week after the fencing was moved, it was put back in its original location. The town's answers following the investigation, again a week later, was that no, the fence should not have been moved; no, the bylaw officer had not said it could be moved; and when the fencing was moved, staff took appropriate action to educate the property owner on their obligations and to ensure the fencing was reinstated in the proper location. A week later.

One tree gone for sure, and the other, well, construction is a long way from being finished. The town with a tree bylaw that applies to residents seems unable to save trees from developers.

And one final topic of the day — an earthquake was felt in Niagara by many who were awake around 6:15 a.m. Mon-

day morning. It was very brief, maybe a second or two — some said longer — but not enough to understand what it was, until we saw it on the news. Nobody has reported any damage.

Also though, that same morning we learned of the deadly earthquake that has destroyed large areas of Turkey and Syria, killing thousands of people. There is a scientific explanation about shifting tectonic plates and a fault zone that caused the devastation, but that doesn't make it any easier to make sense of the tragedy.

We felt a few seconds of a shudder or shake, and then reached for our coffee and went on with our day, while elsewhere thousands are dead, injured, homeless or still missing.

Yes, we can always find reasons for a good rant, but we must also remember how very fortunate we are to be here, in our corner of the world.

Penny Coles
The Local

Together, let's stand up to healthcare privatization

Wayne Gates, MPP
Special to The Local

Together we can stand up to healthcare privatization

We are facing an unprecedented crisis in our healthcare system. Every single day, my office is contacted by someone facing a healthcare-related issue. My staff and I hear consistently from folks dealing with extended wait times, gaps in care and delays in service.

We have a large senior population here in Niagara, and I firmly believe that every single resident of our community,

from Fort Erie to Niagara Falls to Niagara-on-the-Lake, deserves the highest-quality care possible.

But that is not what we are getting.

Let me be clear: this is not the fault of our nurses, doctors, or front-line healthcare staff. Our healthcare workers have been under an enormous amount of pressure: three years of a deadly pandemic, a larger workload from staffing shortages, increasing violence in our hospitals and the financial impacts and disrespect of Bill 124. They deserve our respect and admiration.

The real fault for this crisis

lies at the hands of our government. The provincial Conservative government is pushing forward an agenda of healthcare privatization. They didn't run on this plan — in fact, they denied support for privatization during the last election. But as we have seen from the recent announcement to expand the use of private clinics for surgeries, they are moving forward on an agenda of private healthcare.

We need to be clear about what this means for patients. When you start going down this road, we can end up with a two-tier, American-style healthcare system, which is inherently unequal. People with more money will be able to pay to get better care than middle-class and working families, who are already struggling to get by with the rising cost of living.

Additionally, this act by this conservative government will make our staffing crisis in healthcare worse, not better. Currently, we are short nearly 20,000 personal support

workers and 22,000 registered practical nurses. Many have left the profession they love due to burnout from the pandemic. This government has made the staffing crisis worse, by pushing forward Bill 124, which has kept healthcare wages below the rate of inflation.

Opening private clinics will lead to more and more healthcare workers leaving our public system for more lucrative private roles, which will continue to starve our public system of resources.

Finally, private clinics can often end up being more expensive to the taxpayer, not a cost-saver. And at the end of the day, a private clinic's obligation is not to provide exceptional care for patients — it's to make money for their shareholders.

As Canadians, we pride ourselves on taking care of one another. Our publicly-funded, universal healthcare system is one of the greatest things about this country. There's a reason we voted Tommy Douglas, the father of our public healthcare system, as the greatest Canadian, ever.

Instead of pushing forward private healthcare, we need a plan to invest in our public system. We need a substantial campaign to recruit and retain healthcare workers in our system that offers permanent, full-time positions with competitive salaries and benefits. We need

to completely scrap Bill 124 and pay our nurses and staff what they are worth. And we need to invest in our hospital system, both here in Niagara and across the province of Ontario.

I am committed to keeping up the fight to protect our

public healthcare. And I want to hear from you: on Thursday, Feb. 9 at 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., I will be hosting a healthcare town hall at the Gale Centre in Niagara Falls. I am asking my constituents to come out and have their voices heard.

Where is Ben?



Ben Foster is discovering new locations in NOTL and wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. Last week Ben apparently looked like he was at Fort George, but there is a similar entranceway by Fort Mississauga — that's where Ben was.

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

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

Village Media Regional Publisher (online sales)
John Hammill
John@villagemedia.ca
905-988-5599 ext 1157

Advertising Sales:
Julia Coles
julia@notllocal.com
905-934-1040

Graphic Designer:
Rosie Gowsell
composing@notllocal.com

News Tips: news@notllocal.com

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



View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

Wild Mountain Thyme (Netflix 2020) is a typical Irish romantic comedy set in the idyllic countryside of county Mayo. Two introvert-

ed misfits struggle in vain for the happiness they both want. In the end it all works out, but not until they have exasperated most members of the audience. Visually stunning and some lovely performances.

Donald Combe is a retired

English teacher who loves to go to the 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.

COMMENT

Ted's thoughts: is the world going to hell in a hand basket?

Ted Mouradian
Special to The Local

I keep hearing people say the world is a dangerous place today and we have to be careful where we go and what we do. Well, I did some checking and the crime rate is at an all-time low in Canada. So why are we concerned and afraid?

I believe social media, the internet and cable news have created this false narrative. For example, there is roughly six minutes of new news every day, and yet we repeat those six minutes over and over again for the next 24 hours and beyond.

We used to watch the evening news on TV or listen to it on the radio at 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. Then it was expanded to the news at noon. And now we have the morning shows to begin our day with the left-over stories from yesterday and the new stories of today. It is a constant flow of doom and gloom.

Depending on the story, we will hear it repeated every hour on the hour for days, even weeks to keep it front of mind. How many times can we watch a person being beaten by police? How many times do we see someone being accused of sexual misconduct? How many times do we watch bodies being rescued from a bombed-out building on the other side of the world?

Think about what that does to the mind when all we see is destruction and murder over and over again.

In the past, we would not have known about the earthquake in another country (or apparently a very mild one in Niagara) or the storm that wiped out half a city. We would not have known that a suicide bomber blew himself up along with 50 other people. We would not have known that a young child was kidnapped and found dead. And we certainly

would not be watching the invasion and destruction of one country by another live on TV.

There have always been wars going on in the world. There have always been child abductions. There has always been family violence. There has always been child abuse. There has always been robbery, murder and sexual assault. We simply see it all now and we see it instantly as it happens. And while it's important to know what is happening in the world, we are watching it over and over again.

In this new age of witnessing live events as they happen, repeatedly, we are inundated with so much noise that it is sometimes way too much for a person to process. Hence we are easily led to the dark side.

No, the world is not perfect and there are a lot of bad things happening today, but I believe those bad things have always been here and they will always continue to exist. Should we put our heads in the sand and suggest they are not happening? No, that is not what I am suggesting.

What I am suggesting is that separate parts of the world that have not come into modernity but still live

and govern as if it was 100 years ago. It's not us, and there isn't much we can do to change it.

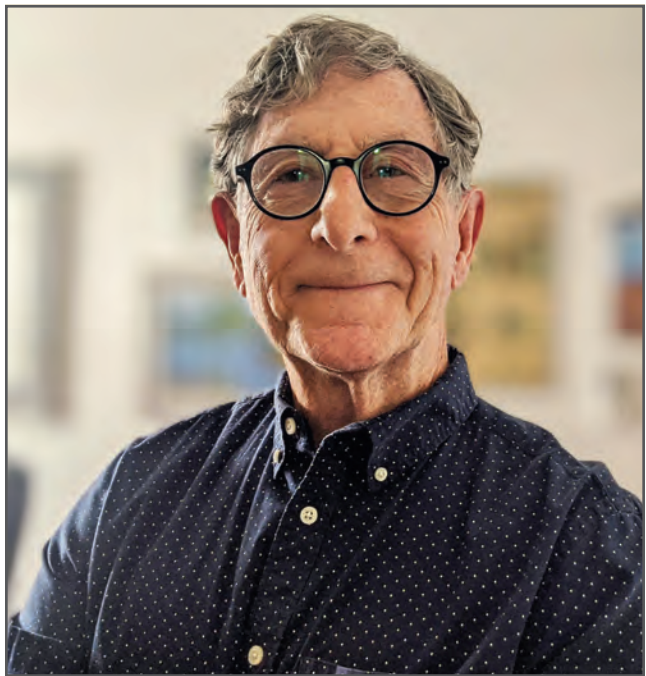
In Niagara we have come a long way.

You can go where you want to go, love who you want to love and live where you want to live regardless of your race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, without fear.

Yes, in Niagara we do hear about the odd robbery, murder, kidnapping and sexual assault, but we have to be careful that we are not making that two per cent our 98 per cent. Niagara is a very safe place to live.

We are blessed to be living where we are and maybe it's time to celebrate that and watch more local news instead of stuff that will never affect us. Does that mean we should not be aware of what is happening around the world? No, but simply put, my toilet flushed this morning so for me it's going to be a good day.

Ted Mouradian is an author and professional speaker. He is president of the 2% Factor Inc. and his videos can be seen on TikTok and Instagram. Ted can be reached at ted@the2percentfactor.com



Ted Mouradian

Local LETTERS

Too late to save tree on Circle Street

Once again, I resort to The Local newspaper to inform people of what this town is up to.

I was assured by both the CAO and the director of planning that they would honour the Jan. 18, 2018 report by arborist Robyn Pollard stating that tree #9 should not be cut down. I was also told that the contractor would have to agree to the Pollard report before a building permit was issued.

Instead of keeping their word, the town has chosen to

accept a different report by an arborist, paid by the contractor who, surprise, surprise, stated that tree #9 is dead. No! This is not happening again!

Like the tree, I am old. We may have many aches and pains but dead we are not. In my opinion the contractor wants tree #9 gone so they will be able to bring heavy equipment in without being concerned about damaging roots.

Town council and staff, we are not the enemy. And, remember, you work for us,

not the contractors. Having said that, I am unhappy to report that the contractor has won again. The tree was cut down Monday morning.

My wife has been out to look at it, and it does not look like a tree that is rotting.

Surprised? No. Disappointed? Absolutely. Considering the track record of the town, however, it is what we expected.

Gerry Beneteau
Circle Street
NOTL

Historic stone culvert should be protected

With the current construction at Simcoe and Johnson Streets, a historic item is under threat.

As far as I know, there was no mention in any of the town's public announcements that they would destroy a rare, hidden early example of one of Niagara's first attempts at a public works project.

This is actually an important discovery and deserves some documentation and preservation consideration.

It is probably one of the last of the original cut stone culvert tunnels for water to pass under the road, and will probably be destroyed. It seems only the modern construction added at both ends is breaking down. The stone tunnel so far appears

to be in good condition — not surprising.

Too bad the modern tube can't be run through end to end and preserve the original.

This is probably the last

one we have left.

This should actually be rated as an archaeological find. Where is the protection?

Chris Allen
NOTL



This stone culvert should be preserved, says Chris Allen.

No apology owed to nurses

Let me first start off by saying I have nothing but respect and admiration for what nurses have gone through during this pandemic. I could not have done it myself.

But that's not what I was addressing in my letter (Privacy in health care not a scary word, Jan. 25, The Local).

I was addressing the fact that nurses and their unions have been supporting pub-

lic healthcare which has led to disastrous outcomes. I'm not surprised that since the 1970s healthcare outcomes have been falling. That is about the time when we started making healthcare public — as such, yes, nurses and their unions are part of the problem.

Unless I'm mistaken and nurses and their unions have been advocating for privatizing healthcare.

Unless I'm mistaken

and they aren't advocating for the public system that is inherently designed to be "crumbling down around them."

Unless I'm mistaken and nurses and their unions have been advocating for abolishing the Canada Health Act.

No apology will be forthcoming.

Alexander Evans
Niagara-on-the-Lake

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

Please contact

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



Fully accessible medical centre is bright and spacious

Continued from page 1

ing in from the Virgil medical centre, where there is no separate office space for them outside of their examination rooms.

“That came out of COVID,” explained the health team’s executive director Mary Keith. “It allows for sanitation between patients. Our diabetic team (dieticians and nurses) are now able to provide holistic care together. And our multi-use space for mental health services has a moveable wall to facilitate groups.”

There was some necessary logistical planning that has gone into moving from one medical centre to another.

Berti explained that there are very few paper records anymore, so that was not an issue. She was quite positive that everything will be ready to go Monday from an information technology perspective.

And she added that a team effort was necessary for other items.

“Exam tables and other things are coming over with a moving company,” Berti pointed out. “Certain chem-



L-R: Developer John Hawley, deputy lord mayor Erwin Wiens, Dr. Karen Berti, executive director Mary Keith, Dr. Iram Ahmed, Dr. Tim Bastedo, Dr. Pratik Kalani, Dr. Samreen Malik

icals, though, we have to be careful with. With liquid nitrogen, we made sure we used that all up so we didn’t have to move it. The moving company won’t bring oxygen cylinders, so our colleagues will bring those over themselves.”

Developer John Hawley seemed both happy and relieved that the medical centre is opening next week

after the event had been pushed back twice in 2022.

“We had some troubles getting out of the gate with approvals,” Hawley said Tuesday. “But the town helped us work through that. Everyone wanted to see this get done. A lot of the delays were caused by the pandemic. And of course, we are over budget because of the pandemic, too.”

Hawley thanked the homeowners in The Village as well as the tenants in the commercial plaza next to the medical centre for their patience and cooperation. He also expressed gratitude to NOTL councillors from the last 10 years for their support of the project.

In his address, deputy lord mayor Erwin Wiens made special mention of

current councillor Sandra O’Connor for her influence in getting the project pushed forward.

“Healthcare as an infrastructure, a town needs that,” added O’Connor. “Upgrading, as we’ve done here, is very important to the health and well-being of the town. It’s very important that we continue to push for the infrastructure here to

service everyone.”

“It’s going to be very nice to be within a community atmosphere,” Berti told The Local. “Although I have very much enjoyed being at the hospital, it is a very high tourist area. Parking can be an issue there. We won’t notice that here. This is a move in the right direction for every body.”

And the space in Virgil vacated by members of the health team leaves room for new doctors to set up practices in NOTL in the future. As well, the added space offered in The Village may offer other future opportunities for expanded healthcare in town.

“We would be happy to bring in more people to collaborate,” explained Berti. “Maybe some specialist care on certain days of the week. But right now we just have to figure out how we fit in, how our workflow goes.”

She added, “We need more doctors in the area. It’s certainly a necessity. That will be our next five-year plan, how we go about recruiting more people into our two healthcare spaces. Right now, though, we’ll take some time to enjoy what we have.”



Interior view of one of the waiting rooms. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Drawing stations inside LifeLabs.



Interior view of a nurse practitioner room.



Ashley from ColourShock Media affixing room numbers to doors.



Dr. Karen Berti shows off the adjustable examination table in one of the new examination rooms.



LifeLabs interior with Stephanie Coso and Charlene Serafini.

Rotarians raise more than \$500,000 to help Ukraine

Greg Fedoryn
NOTL Rotary president
Special to The Local

The Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake, individual Rotarians, and Rotary District 7090 (including more than 70 Rotary Clubs in southern Ontario and western New York) have rallied to the aid of Ukraine.

Our local club contributed \$25,000 from community fundraising efforts to three front-line organizations that can provide direct support to Ukrainians: The Canada-Ukraine Foundation (\$2,000), Shelter Box (\$7,000), and Doctors Without Borders (\$16,000).

Our support for the Ukraine doesn't stop there.

Rotarian Jodey Porter raised a further \$72,000 from the NOTL community in support of Doctors Without Borders. "We inspired our community to give, and our capability in terms of multiplier effect for donations helped us guide monies to organizations that could best benefit those on the ground at such a time of terror and cruelty," says Porter.

Individual leadership from Rotarians Bill and Emily Charnetski raised a further \$30,000 which was directed to the Canada-Ukraine Foundation.

"The Foundation is based out of Toronto and has

done wonderful work. They take over medical teams (including equipment and materials) to do specialized surgeries and training. The trips were all paid by local donations and the medical teams consisted of volunteer professionals," says Bill.

This generous spirit runs deep in the Charnetski family. When Bill Jr. was married last summer, in lieu of gifts, he and his wife requested donations to the Canada-Ukraine Foundation. Family and friends generously donated over \$11,000.

With the added impact of matching donations from Rotary International, Doctors Without Borders, and the Canadian Government, our contribution became \$250,000.

Not only did local Rotarians raise funds, but we went to work.

Rotarian Anne Dickson says, "We spent days collecting and packing care packages consisting of supplies identified as needed priorities, including medical and personal items." Anne's commitment to help extended to providing employment for several young people who've arrived in our area from Ukraine.

In the fall of 2022, Rotary District 7090 (of which the NOTL club is a member) received a grant of \$35,000 from Rotary Inter-



Members of the Rotary Club of Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine, receiving Rotary Club shipments. (Supplied)

national to assist in sending medical equipment and humanitarian necessities to Ukraine.

Collaborating with the Rotary Club of Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine — and Warehouse of Hope, Not Just Tourists in North America, as well as AMA Hope, all humanitarian organizations — a total of more than \$230,000 of relief supplies, including 500 trauma kits, 50 hygiene kits, medical equipment, supplies, and bandages were sent and distributed in war-torn areas of Ukraine.

Rotary District 7090 Foundation Chair Sandi Chard of St. Catharines said, "It is the efforts of Rotarians in District 7090, committed to 'doing good in the world,' The Rotary Foundation and strong partnerships with humanitarian organiza-

tions, that made this project happen so quickly, and we delivered hope to Rotarians in Ukraine."

Southern Ontario and western New York Rotary Clubs were extremely supportive and worked together to secure products and helped with packing and shipping of the much-needed equipment. Five pallets carrying medical and humanitarian supplies were delivered safely to the Rotary Club of Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine, to handle proper dispersion of all supplies.

Rotary's global network extends to 1.4 million neighbours, friends, leaders and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change — across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.



**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.



NEW LISTING

678 LINE 2 ROAD UNIT 214
\$719,000
MLS 40371119 • Thomas Elltoft and Kim Elltoft



NEW LISTING

25 SORENSEN COURT UNIT 5
\$1,095,000
MLS 40372850 • Thomas Elltoft and Weston Miller



**OPEN HOUSE
SUN 2-4**

382 WILLIAM STREET
\$1,599,000
MLS 40360342 • Viviane Elltoft and Jane Elltoft



45 STONERIDGE CRESCENT
\$1,899,000
MLS 40341288 • Randall Armstrong



106 QUEEN STREET UNIT E
\$3,900 +++
MLS 40364624 • Caroline Polgrabia and Patricia Atherton



41 JAMES STREET
\$1,999,000
MLS 40355644 • Caroline Polgrabia and Patricia Atherton



21 LORETTA DRIVE UNIT 14
\$2,650+ PER MONTH
MLS 40364161 • Christopher Bowron and Nicole Vanderperk



77B BROADWAY
\$899,000
MLS 40353655 • Christopher Bowron and Nicole Vanderperk

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 Gleddie* 905-685-2458
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
Ricky Watson* 905-246-3387

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

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

St. Davids Social looking for members, meeting room

Penny Coles
The Local

In terms of population, the St. Davids of today is very different from the village it was 20 years ago.

What hasn't changed is that the 5,000 or so residents who have become villagers in those years love their community every bit as much as the 250 people who called it home before the explosion of development.

The two decades of growth can be traced to the expansion of the urban boundary of St. Davids, and the decision of the town and region that it was time for the installation of sewers in an area that had depended on septic tanks, which were old and often failing. That led to Cannery Park and the many other subdivisions that have been created since then.

Greg Ryall is one resident who bridges that enormous growth, having lived on Paxton Lane in the 1980s.

After a time in Niagara Falls, he is back in the village, living on Sandalwood Crescent, and is at the helm of St. Davids Social, which is a less formal version of the Friends of St. Davids, founded in 2018 by Greg and Dorothy Walker.

What had begun as a social club, says Greg Walker, "grew to become a resource helping to make St Davids an even better place to live."

Examples of the group's accomplishments include the establishment at Sparky's Park of a unique Little Free Library, designed in the likeness of the historic Woodbourne Inn on Four Mile Creek Road, and the creation of an active gardening group whose members maintain the pollinator gardens at the main intersection of the village and at St Davids Public School.

Both the library and the gardening group, Walker says, "remain active today as independent resources for the village of St. Davids."

The Friends group has now "returned to its roots as a social club," Walker says, providing "diverse social opportunities for the St Davids community."

Ryall says this coming together of the group of villagers demonstrates "the spirit of fostering a sense of community here in St. Davids, and investing in its future."

The membership is very much driven by the people who have relocated to St. Davids. "They have come to St. Davids by choice, at this stage of their lives."

It's an interesting dichotomy of individuals, he adds, those who have chosen to become part of the changing community, and those who have lived there a long time "and are hesitant to embrace the change."



At the Friends of St. Davids' last meeting the decision was made to donate about \$2,000 to the St. Davids Pool Fund. (Photos supplied)

To show their support for the village, its history and its future, "the final act" of the Walkers and the Friends of St. Davids, explains Ryall, was to donate about \$2,000 to the town, accumulated over the last four years, to support the St. Davids swimming pool.

It's an important part of the community now, and one that will remain so in the coming years, and the group wanted to show their commitment to the community.

"The Lions Park and pool are part of the village's rich history, and we hope it will be around for decades to come," he says.

What is missing for the community is a public place to meet — many of the recent arrivals are retirees, "and they would like a place where they can just sit and have coffee, and get to know their neighbours."

They are also looking for a location where they can meet as a group, and there are restaurants nearby, but he explains it has been difficult to reserve space. Restaurants might want a guarantee of \$20 a head, or a financial commitment upfront. Ryall stresses he's not criticizing those establishments, given what has happened to them during the pandemic, but it doesn't work for their members.

They have had to go outside of St. Davids on occasion for their gatherings, to restaurants in the north end of Niagara Falls, NOTL, the Eagle Valley Golf Club, for Christmas parties and other special occasions — wherever they could get a reservation. And they've had some great events at Ravine Vineyard Estates.

"Ravine is terrific," Ryall says. "I love the family and everything Ravine has done for the community, but it's not inexpensive. We're struggling to find a regular meeting spot in the village

without a significant cost."

The club has moved away from a paid membership, he says.

Since the early days of the Friends of St. Davids, there has been a total of more than 300 members, but today the social club has an active base of about 60-plus people, with a focus on expanding that in a post-pandemic 2023.

"The pandemic hurt us big-time," Ryall says. "People couldn't get together, and they weren't paying a membership because they couldn't get together. Any spots where we used to meet were shuttered."

The Lions Club hall on York Road is the obvious choice now as a meeting place, he says, but there are problems with that. "I'm all in with the Lions Club, but it's run by volunteers as well."

And volunteers under-

standably don't want to be responsible for issues such as setting up and cleaning the hall after an event, he adds.

Ryall says he's the newest member of the Lions Club, and hopes other social club members will also join.

The Lions have "a spectacular history with the community," he says, and they also have a great facility, with the ability to host barbecues, space to meet for coffee or breakfast, licensed space, indoors and out, and it's accessible for those with physical disabilities.

When asked about the social club using the hall to meet, he says, "they're very open to it, but they say 'if you want to use the space, join us.'"

And to that, he tells The Local, "we're working on it. That's the future, and one of our aspirational goals."

"We have really good momentum," he adds. "We're getting there."

The focus of the club is to learn about the history of the village, and to foster a sense of community and pride in the village, says Ryall.

What they don't want is to take on issues, or political debate.

While Ryall and other members have opinions about such issues as the roundabout, or the new commercial development at the corner — other than hoping it offers services they can use — that's not the point of their group.

"There would be different opinions among members, and we're not getting into the political fray."

He speaks instead of the public school, and the students of the graduating class of 2022 who were able to cel-

brate — the first class to do so in two years.

And he mentions the Harber family, owners of Ravine, and what they did for that class of youngsters.

"Our members are almost in awe of the family, and what they've done for the community."

Ryall was at the school taking pictures of the kids as they left their graduation, "faces all beaming and smiling."

And then they walked to Ravine, where there was a pizza party waiting for them. "They had a terrific party. They were having so much fun, all wanting to get in the pictures. It was a perfect setting for them that night."

And that, he says, is what the members of St. Davids Social want — to build and be part of that kind of community.



Dorothy and Greg Walker give a cheque to Kevin Turcotte, the town's parks and recreation supervisor, hoping to ensure there will continue to be a pool in their community.

Vintage arcade added to Queen Street candy shop

Sharon Burns
Special to The Local

For those reminiscing about the arcade that used to be in the plaza on the corner of Four Mile Creek Road and Niagara Stone Road, you can now get your Galaga fix in the new arcade room on Queen Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Rob Munger, owner of the Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe, has installed more than a dozen arcade games dating from the 1980s and 1990s, including Galaga, Tron and Golden Tee. Terminator 2 Judgment Day is, so far, the lone pinball machine.

Munger has been collecting arcade games for years and storing them in his garage with the intention of opening a barcade (bar plus arcade). However, he has not been able to secure a suitable location. A recent expansion in the candy store has created space for the vintage and rebuilt arcade games.

"We want to make it more of an experience, a destination," said Munger, who is also installing a fully-automated candy floss machine.

The expanded Jelly Belly wall catches the eyes of



Rob Munger, owner of the Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe, has added an arcade to his Queen Street store. (Photos by Sharon Burns)

young ones as they enter the store. "We carry literally 70 flavours," said Munger. "We will also expand our toy line and focus on retro toys to keep with the ambience of the store."

Munger, originally from Chippawa, started in the candy business while living and skiing in Canmore, Alberta. While working in a friend's candy store, he went on a buying expedition to the Candy

Expo in Chicago. Munger opened a candy store in Niagara Falls, and the one on Queen Street in 2015.

"We try to focus on everything you can't get in grocery or variety stores," said Munger. Crickets, sour balls, a five pound gummy bear and single pickles in a bag line the shelves of the store. They also offer a selection of candy originating from Japan, England and

America.

Look up to discover a ceiling embellished with "one of every Pez we had in the store for the past seven years," said Munger. And with a larger wall full of new Pez, he is bound to add to his ceiling soon.

In the arcade most games are now operable, and will be coin-operated, costing nothing more than the nostalgic price of twenty-five cents to \$1.



Vintage arcade games await at the candy shop.



Niagara Peninsula CONSERVATION
nature for all

A Niagara Peninsula Tree Planting Partnership

TREES FOR ALL

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority has partnered with local community groups, environmental agencies, and government organizations that share a common interest in helping Canada reach its goal of planting 2 Billion Trees for a better tomorrow.

Got Land?
Let's Plant

Private landowners invited to join collective efforts to bring millions of trees to the Niagara Peninsula watershed.

- 🌳 Increase tree canopy
- 🏡 Restore natural habitats & biodiversity
- 👥 Support green jobs

LEARN MORE & REGISTER YOUR PROPERTY:



scan
or visit

getinvolved.npca.ca/trees-for-all

Newark Neighbours ready for more space

Penny Coles
The Local

Newark Neighbours has come a long way since the days when founder Peggy Anderson would be seen on her daily walk from her Butler Street home to the food bank and thrift shop that dates back to the early 1970s. She'd be impressed and proud to see what the current volunteers have managed to do in recent years with the small barn on John Street, built with the help of volunteers in the early 1990s, and even more so with what they are about to do with their

new Virgil location, which triples the space they have now. But the reality is that although much of the new space will be dedicated to expanding the thrift shop, a much larger space is also needed for the food bank, which is being used by an increasing number of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents. The crowded thrift shop has always been a favourite for not only locals but shoppers from across the region who like a good deal, and about a half to two-thirds of the new space will allow it to be spread out, with lots of

room to move around comfortably, says Cindy Grant, chair of Newark Neighbours. "I'm really looking forward to the new space. Our clients will be able to shop a lot easier with more room and more aisles." With a growing need to help those facing food insecurity, the food bank in the new location will be about double the size it is now. It will be enclosed and have a side door to ensure privacy. And what will feel like heaven for the volunteers is a proper washroom with running water. In early years at the barn there was no wash-

room, but they do have an incinerator toilet now — "a fun experience sometimes, I must say," says Grant. "There are two washrooms in the new location, but I think we'll be making one of those rooms into a storage space." The thrift shop at the front and food bank to the back will be divided by a separate area for sorting items as they arrive, something Newark Neighbours doesn't have now and desperately needs, says Grant, and there will be a small office to talk to new clients and register them for food. Several years ago the

food bank adopted the use of the Canadian government's low-income guidelines, and new clients are asked for proof of income. "If they can't provide it, but explain why they're in need, we'd never turn anyone away," says Grant. "We would if we felt there was something off about their story, but that's never happened." When Anderson and a friend realized there were families in need in town in 1971, they started the food bank in a small Chautauqua storefront, and that Christmas helped 100 families, including 175 children. Many

of those who were provided with food had been drawn to Niagara-on-the-Lake's agricultural community, and were willing to work hard to support their families, often with a large number of children. Donated clothing and household goods were also available for those in need, and the barn became a favourite place for migrant farmworkers to gather on their Sunday afternoons off. Anderson would give them a large black garbage bag to fill with clothing for their families back home, for the price

Continued on page 13



Volunteers Susan Sparrow and Cindy Grant explain how the new space will be divided, with the thrift shop from the front of the store likely going back to the divider. There is some work to be done, such as creating walls to break up the space, and likely carpeting to install, says Grant. (Penny Coles)

OPEN TO SERVE YOU SAFELY

BARREL HEAD

WALK-INS WELCOME

WOOD OVEN PIZZA

THURSDAY-SUNDAY NOON-8PM

LOCALS GET 30% DISCOUNT ON FOOD DINE IN ONLY

1696 NIAGARA STONE RD, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

OPEN FOR INDOOR DINING

FULL MENU AT [PILLITTERI.COM/BARRELHEAD](https://pillitteri.com/barrelhead)

CALL FOR TAKE OUT (905)-468-1439

FOLLOW US @BARREL.HEAD

\$40 ANY TWO

\$80 FAMILY MEAL

TAKE OUT SPECIALS

LOCALS GET 30% DISCOUNT ON FOOD DINE IN ONLY

PILLITTERI ESTATES Winery

FULL MENU AT [PILLITTERI.COM/BARRELHEAD](https://pillitteri.com/barrelhead)

CALL FOR TAKE OUT (905)-468-1439

FOLLOW US @BARREL.HEAD

John Street barn remains open until move

Continued from page 12

of \$5 a bag, which helped to pay the bills for the barn.

The founder of Newark Neighbours would also be pleased to know how generous the community continues to be. In her day, when she would write letters weekly to be published in the former Niagara Advance, she would let people know what was needed. Without fail, she said, she could count on donations of the items she had asked for to arrive at the barn door.

Grant can say the same — when the food shelves are

low or there are specific items that are needed, she has only to ask. “We see it time and time again.” She laughs about the call for poultry stuffing that went out before Christmas — although the shelves are getting bare even after the “incredible bounty” of food donated for the holiday, they have enough stuffing left over to get through Easter.

Although in pre-pandemic years there were typically 35 to 40 families or individuals who would be registered for help, the number has grown significantly since then.

In recent months they’ve had more than 80 families

registered, and at Christmas they delivered hampers and gifts to 87 families, and a total of 139 individuals.

“The last two and a half years, we’ve more than doubled the people we serve, and every month it increases. In January, we had nine new clients.”

The reasons are many, as they have been over the years, including single mothers leaving difficult situations, students at Niagara College, and families who don’t have the income to cover the rising cost of food.

Newark Neighbours clients can pick up food every

two weeks, while some of the other food banks in the region have had to cut down to once a month because of food supply and the growing need for assistance, says Grant.

“Our clients are generally very grateful for whatever we can give them,” says Grant. They are selective in what they take, “but in a good way. As they walk along the aisles they’ll say ‘no, I won’t take that, I don’t need it.’ They only take what they need.”

They can’t pick up fresh produce or milk or eggs at the barn, so instead they are given PC Cards once a month

to purchase what they need, the amount depending on the number of people in the family, says Grant.

The new space can’t come soon enough for the volunteers. Grant stresses that the John Street location will remain open and accepting donations until the move, hopefully by late spring or early summer.

In the meantime, a TikTok request for food from Krista London and her son Avery has been an enormous success, and a huge amount of food is expected to arrive Wednesday — Grant can’t say enough about the youngster and his

family for doing so much for Newark Neighbours.

Volunteers are also grateful for a food drive this weekend, and have a list of items most needed: jam, honey, applesauce, puddings, canned fruit, granola bars, cookies and crackers, soda crackers, cans of chili, ravioli or Chef Boyardee products, Ramen instant soups or Mr. Noodles, rice, Side Kicks, condiments, toilet paper, Kleenex, and paper towels.

The barn may be small, but they have outdoor containers for the overflow, and are grateful to be able to fill them.

OPEN TO SERVE YOU SAFELY

Flavours of the week

Oregano Extra Virgin Olive Oil
50% off Feb 6th - 10th (limit 2 per customer)

Chocolate Jalapeno Dark Balsamic
Free with \$65 purchase Feb 11th & 12th
50% off Feb 13th - 17th (limit 2 per customer)

SHOP IN-STORE OR ONLINE
Monday - Sunday: 10 - 5
118 Queen St., NOTL | 289.868.8898
olivniagara.com

SPIRIT IN NIAGARA
SMALL BATCH DISTILLERS
FABULOUS FOOD
LOCAL NIAGARA
FARM TO GLASS
SPIRITS & COCKTAILS
VALENTINES MENU
4 COURSE EXPERIENCE
FEB 10TH-14TH
CALL TO BOOK
RESERVATION REQUIRED

SUN - THURS 11-7 | FRI & SAT 11-8
SPIRITINNIAGARA.COM | 905.934.1300
458 LAKESHORE ROAD, NIAGARA ON THE LAKE

THE FARMHOUSE CAFE
Open For Lunch Daily
Reservations Strongly Suggested
Online Booking Now Available!
Or give us a call to book
905-468-8814
Bring this ad in for 10% off lunch on any Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday in February
Cannot be used Feb. 14 and Feb. 20

Serving Niagara Since 1977

SIMPSON'S *Mark Your Calendars!*

Customer Appreciation Day
Every 3rd Wednesday of the month, everyone saves...
20% off most products*

Seniors' Day
Every Last Thursday of the month, over 60s save...
20% off most products*

*Regular-priced products only. Excludes prescriptions, sale items, codeine products, gift cards, phone cards, special orders and pharmacy services.

Visit one of our two convenient locations!

Medical Centre • 905.468.2121 • 1882 Niagara Stone Rd, Virgil
Old Town • 905.468.8400 • 233 King Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake
Shop online at www.simpsonsparmacy.ca | FREE local delivery

CAROLINE CELLARS WINERY
WINE BOUTIQUE & TASTING BAR
Open 7 Days a Week
Wine Tastings Offered Daily
Reservations Strongly Recommended for Wine Tasting
1010 Line 2, NOTL 905.468.8814 www.CarolineCellars.com

Celebrating 20 Years in Business 2002-2022

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 Julia at:
905.934.1040 | julia@notllocal.com

Reflecting on the group exhibit *Reflections*

Maria Klassen Special to The Local

Whenever I visit the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre in Niagara-on-the-Lake, I always marvel at its beautiful location, sitting as it does on the banks of the Niagara River. Even in winter it is a picturesque place.

Wandering through the new art exhibit *Reflections*, featuring diverse styles and perspectives of the participating members of the NOTL Arts Collective, I am amazed at all the artwork that includes water.

Looking at Rosie Sherman's two pieces entitled *A Perfect Day* and *Come out and Play*, capturing water, sand and sun makes me realize we don't have to fly south to enjoy these warm scenes; we just need to spend a few hours at this exhibit to transport us to warmer days and climes. Rosie works in acrylic, specializing in vibrant landscapes. She gets her inspiration from photos taken on her travels.

For all of us cloud watchers, Catherine Cullis captures the merging of sky and sea in her realistic depiction of *After the Storm*. She is a representational artist, meaning she presents objects or events as they are in real life. She has mastered the medium of pastels. Beautiful autumn colours shine through in *Princess Point*. She likes connecting with nature, choosing landscapes as her subjects.

If cottage country is your style, Rick Cullis captures the tranquil, peaceful setting of a boat on calm waters in his portrayal in *Quiet Water*. This

comes from his nautical collection. As an art teacher, Rick has worked with pencil, ink, watercolour and acrylic, switching to oils in 2017. He takes us further afield to the mountains in his *Evening Reflections*.

Tim Sullivan's *Morning Light* is a reminder of all the many lakes and islands in Ontario with a picturesque rocky shoreline. His *Fallen Tree* (at Three Mile Creek) invites us to sit and savour the peaceful water on a sunny summer afternoon. Tim gets his inspiration from local scenery: lakes, rivers, parklands and farms.

Gord Rosewarne's *Taking it Easy* portrays an effortless flight of a blue heron leaving the marshy shoreline. He uses acrylics in a variety of mediums. His favourite subjects come from his interest in wildlife. In *On a Break* Gord shows us a playful tiger in amazing detail.

Pat Haftar delights us with a country bridge in her *Lost on the Margaree*, where we can see ourselves standing and watching the water swirl by. And who hasn't wandered on the rocks through the water like those in her work *Watch Your Step*. Pat works with acrylic, watercolour, mixed media and collage.

Pat's love of colour, movement, pattern, line and texture can be seen in her work.

Sherron Moorhead's *Willow Bursting With Spring* makes us realize that blossom season is not far away, spring is coming. She paints with oil, and dabbles in coloured pencil and oil pastels. Sherron gets her inspiration from photographs.

Lakeshore Pottery has stoneware in the exhibit featuring a summer sailing scene — perhaps Lake Ontario? Ron and Barb Zimmerman handcraft their items individually in their studio, using their own designs and glazes.

The vibrant colours of autumn are reflected in Julia Kane's *Reflections of Fall*. She embraces the different styles of watercolour, vibrancy of acrylics, mixed media and contemporary poured resins. She is new to working with fused glass and painting with glass paste.

There are several pieces of artwork that take us to different places.

Lynn Weiner takes us to our own town in *Queen St. Niagara-on-the-Lake*. She enjoys drawing people and pets. She loves to work with pen and pencil, but acrylic paints are now her

preferred medium. She finds endless inspiration in the beauty of Niagara.

Ron Clavier has a detailed water scene, done in oil, in *Gondola Reflection*. His style varies with his *Reflection of Venice*. His careers as psychologist, author, neuroscientist, educator and artist have influenced his work.

Nancy Wardle's acrylic work is titled *Iris* — reflecting happiness. Her paintings come to life using vibrant colours in a loose impressionistic style. She gets her inspiration from photographs.

Lynne Gaetz wants us to use our imagination in interpreting her work *A Fragile Man*, which comes from her human nature collection. She works in mixed media. Her work is mainly figurative; she invites the viewers to ask questions.

Ron Boaks shares his *Duo*

LXXVII with us. He expresses well the resolution of the romantic modernists' dilemma, which is the balance of beauty and the sublime. He works with paints, collage, sculpture and photography.

What a unique and thought-provoking display of amazing work! This exhibit is set up from Feb. 1 to March 25 in the Joyner Gallery, at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre.



Queen St. Niagara-on-the-Lake, by Lynn Weiner (Mike Balsom)



Duo LXXVII, by Ron Boaks (Mike Balsom)



A Fragile Man, by Lynne Gaetz



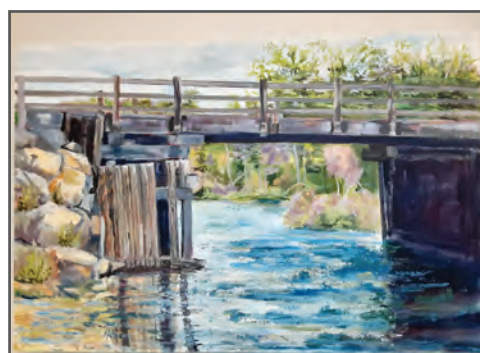
Princess Point, by Catherine Cullis (Maria H. Klassen)



Quiet Water, by Rick Cullis (Maria H. Klassen)



Fallen Tree, by Tim Sullivan



Lost on the Margaree, by Pat Haftar (Maria H. Klassen)



A Perfect Day, by Rosie Sherman (Maria H. Klassen)



Taking it Easy, by Gord Rosewarne (Maria H. Klassen)



Reflection of Venice, by Ron Clavier (Maria H. Klassen)



Reflections of Fall, by Julia Kane (Supplied)



Willow Bursting with Spring, by Sherron Moorhead (Maria H. Klassen)



Iris, by Nancy Wardle (Maria H. Klassen)

Jenny Wright in *Fall on Your Knees*, 'intense, beautiful story'

Sharon Burns
Special to The Local

Jenny Wright, a Niagara-on-the-Lake resident and Shaw Festival actor, appears as Mercedes Piper in the world premier of *Fall On Your Knees*.

"It's such a gift to work on a new piece of theatre," said Wright.

Based on the novel of the same name by Ann-Marie MacDonald, the play follows four generations of the Piper family, and is set on Cape Breton Island. Wright admits the story is "pretty intense, with some very dark material. But it is also a beautiful story. It is about a family, their dreams, secrets and memories," said Wright. "It's a Canadian story. It's Cape Breton."

"We are telling the audience this story and it's a rough ride; it's a beautiful ride and incredibly moving, but also we have to take care of the audience," said Wright as she made a large hug gesture with her arms. The audience members "go on a journey with us. I try to stay true to the words, and say them truthfully and imagine what it would be to deal with trauma."

"For the first two weeks of rehearsal, we spent a lot of time around the table really taking care of each other, because each person comes to the table with their own experiences and baggage," she said.

Friends Steffanie Bjorgan and Heather Davis did not have any qualms in making the drive from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Toronto to see *Fall On Your Knees* recently. "It touches on so many sensitive and controversial things in family, life, and society as a whole," said Bjorgan. "I appreciated the nuanced way it did so without saying the words or showing the things that could be quite triggering to some, and yet the messages came across loud and clear."

For Davis, "the message is that families are hard to understand from the outside, and people will always try to protect those they love, even if they don't deserve it."

As for feedback from an audience, Wright said, "the experience with the first audience was amazing because you hear them respond and laugh because of Hannah Moscovitch's amazing writing. But the silence in the theatre was striking to me. You could hear a pin drop. Profound. The silence feels almost kind of sacred. Because you're sharing, and they're sharing."

The play is presented in two parts, and each part is a full-length play. *Part One: Family Tree*, and *Part Two: The Diary* are directed by Alisa Palmer, MacDonald's wife, and written by Canadian playwright Hannah Moscovitch.

The play can be viewed

on the same day or over two different days. "It's an unusual idea," said Wright. "Originally 10 years ago when we were workshoping this piece it was in three parts. MacDonald is also a playwright, and when she wrote the novel she envisioned it almost like a piece of theatre."

Davis recommends seeing "both Part One and Part Two in the same day so you can discuss it between shows, and not lose momentum or connection."

For Wright, "performing a play over two parts is incredibly demanding." She admits to being "spoiled at Shaw because we have long rehearsal periods where, for every minute on the stage, we rehearse for an hour. Not the case with this," she said. "Not only were we creating this piece of theatre, we were also creating the style of it. The material is difficult, the time frame is difficult and the volume is difficult."

"Preparing for the role of Mercedes involved 'finding the language of Cape Breton,' said Wright, who spent hours listening to *Frig off, Fiona*, an event featuring Newfoundlander Ron James, Men of the Deepes, and The Barra MacNeils, among others. "This play has that East Coast vibe, vitality and humour."

Wright, who hails from Swift Current, Sask., studied in Montreal and started doing community theatre "for fun." In short order, she was "doing professional gigs, found an agent, then landed at the Shaw as an apprentice at 29 years old."

Deborah Hay, also a Shaw Festival actor, joins Wright in *Fall On Your Knees* as Frances Piper.

Fall On Your Knees closed in Toronto on Feb. 5. Cast and crew fly to Neptune Theatre in Halifax until March 5, followed by a three-week run at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

The closest venue to see this epic play is in London, Ont., March 29 to April 2. Both Davis and Bjorgan emphatically agree a trip to the Grand Theatre would be well worth it. "Make the drive and share the experience with friends who also love to read and experience theatre," said Davis.

Audience members can

also expect to see Wright in the Shaw Festival productions of *The Game of Love and Chance* and *Blithe Spirit*. Rehearsal starts mid April, allowing the actor "a week to

catch my breath."

"What I love about this is working with other humans and telling stories about other humans," said Wright. "Storytelling is primal — a

human need, and I love it. It's a way to understand the human condition and human problems and joys and failures, and everything about being a human."



Steffanie Bjorgan and Heather Davis made the trip with reporter Sharon Burns to see *Fall on Your Knees* — totally worth it, they said. (Sharon Burns)

Three NOTL restaurants among most romantic

Penny Coles
The Local

If you are planning a dinner out on Valentine's Day and want to impress, three Niagara-on-the-Lake restaurants have made OpenTable's 2023 list of the 100 most romantic restaurants in Canada.

Kitchen76 in the Two Sisters Winery, Treadwell Farm-to-Table Cuisine and The Drawing Room at the Prince of Wales should be good choices for a romantic

evening out with that special someone in your life.

The list also includes Cafe Amore and Valley Restaurant in St. Catharines, The Lake House and Vineland Estates Winery in Vineland, and Remingtons of Niagara and Table Rock in Niagara Falls.

In its news release announcing the list, OpenTable said, "Food is its own love language, but when it's served in a cozy room or a candlelit booth? Guaranteed fireworks."

The OpenTable survey says 72 per cent of Ontario residents will be celebrating Valentine's Day and plan to eat out at local restaurants where they would expect spend more than \$41 per person on a meal.

To make their list, OpenTable looked at more than one million reviews by diners, and used a similar process to come up with their best 100 restaurants in Canada last December, which included Kitchen76 and Treadwell's.



Angela Marotta and Melissa Marotta-Paolicelli of Two Sisters Winery and Kitchen76, one of the top restaurants in Canada, and one of the most romantic.



After a tour of *Fall on Your Knees* is finished, actor Jenny Wright returns to NOTL and the Shaw Festival Theatre. (Supplied)

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

ANDREWS LAW PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
Barristers & Solicitors

905.468.0081
info@rjwandrews.ca

REAL ESTATE WILLS BUSINESS

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

In music or life, *The Best Ain't Happened Yet*

Mike Balsom
The Local

Ryan Gaio remembers growing up in a Niagara-on-the-Lake full of local young musicians with plenty of places to showcase their original music.

With the upcoming release of his album *The Best Ain't Happened Yet*, and an April 1 performance at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124, he's hoping to get the ball rolling in town once again.

Gaio was in Grade 7 at St. Michael Catholic Elementary School when he first began taking guitar lessons from Bruce Jones, a Brazilian-Canadian guitarist and former frequent collaborator with the Niagara Rhythm Section.

He was inspired by a friend, Dylan Turner, who at the time was in a band called As Above So Below.

"We refereed soccer together back in the day," says Gaio, "and he was like the rock star in town. His band played the legion for one of my friend's birthday parties. I knew right then that I wanted to do



Ryan Gaio decided to learn to play guitar in Grade 7 at St. Michael in NOTL. (Supplied)

that, and Bruce was his guitar teacher."

So returning to the same venue to debut his own songs is a no-brainer for the enthusiastic

30-year-old who is now living in downtown Toronto and teaching English and history at the independent, progressive York School.

Gaio put out a CD of original songs about 10 years ago and played a show at the Sandtrap Pub & Grill. But for many years he put music on the back-burner as he finished an undergraduate degree at Western University, then hightailed it to the University of New Brunswick for a Masters in creative writing before attending teacher's college in Toronto.

"I guess I thought I needed to grow up and get a job," he laughs. "But lately I was finding that I had no passion project. I needed to do something for my soul. When I was a kid, I always said that when I grew up I wanted to be Tom Petty. In the last couple of years I just decided that I wanted to put my music out in the world and express myself."

The influence of Petty, as well as the Beach Boys, Sam Roberts and even classics from the 50s can be heard in the four songs from the album that have already hit streaming services such as Spotify.

"When I was a kid, my grandparents always had the classic oldies on their radio on their Concession 1 farm," remembers Gaio. "That specific AM radio jukebox sound stuck with me. I love those harmonies and the oldies retro sound."

Headed for a Heartache is a mid-tempo number with crunchy guitars and soaring background vocals. *Haunted* features some clever word play, a nifty piano solo and a chorus of "shoo bops" backing up Ryan's lead vocal. *So Much Younger Then* is Gaio's reminiscence about life in NOTL and attend-

ing Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School. And *Song for Cecilia* is a paean to the patron saint of music.

"It's my prayer to the rock and roll gods," he laughs about *Song for Cecilia*. "I grew up going to Catholic school, so we learned all about the saints. It's my plea to St. Cecilia to help me create some good songs."

A fifth song from the album, a love song appropriately, is set to drop on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14. The full album will be released on Spotify on March 16.

Gaio says many of the ten songs on the album were written in Niagara-on-the-Lake, while others were created during his years studying in London and Fredericton.

"They all just came to me," Gaio explains. "I didn't sit down and labour over them, I didn't force them out. They just kind of emerged. It's for that reason that I'm doing it and I'm hoping to inspire other people to do it in NOTL."

Gaio recorded the numbers with a loose collection of friends and colleagues in the Toronto area, a group he refers to as his own Traveling Wilburys.

"We recorded it in various different locations here," he says. "One of my friends has a home studio, so that became our home base. But we recorded tracks wherever we needed to, at our bass player's house, at a keyboard player's house."

The album title perfectly summarizes Gaio's positive view on life. *The Best Ain't Happened Yet* celebrates, he says, what's

gotten him to where he is now, but also looks forward to what is to come in the future.

"It's about not resting on your laurels," he says of the title song. "There's a line in it that says 'Living's only living if the best ain't happened yet.' It's the idea that you have to keep on moving on, looking to the future. My return to music fits in with that attitude."

"This has reinforced the joy in my journey, not in the destination," adds Gaio. "I'm almost sad in a way that the album is done because it's been so nice to have something to work toward. It really felt good to do, and I don't want to not do it anymore."

Another local musician, Matt Meagher, will open the April 1 show at the legion.

"We grew up together, we went to Beavers together," laughs Gaio. "He went to St. Davids Public School and Niagara District. He was in a couple of bands back in the day, Honour Among Thieves and Pindles. His music is guitar-based rock like mine."

Gaio is hoping the show at the legion is just the start of something bigger.

"I want to see shows back at Simcoe Park," he says. "I remember original rock bands playing their tunes there, I remember my guitar teacher playing at St. Mark's. NOTL is not just a tourist destination. I want to inspire other local performers to do this, I hope we can create a hub for the performing arts."

Tickets for the April 1 album release party at the Legion are \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door, and are available by visiting ryangaio.eventbrite.ca

Help Boutique shelves are bare



A volunteer at the Help Boutique, which collects food for Ukrainian families in Niagara, shows the shelves are bare and help is needed to fill them. Below is a list of food items that are needed.

- Dry goods:**

 - rice (plain), barley – hulled or pearl, buckwheat, kasha, Quaker Oats, cornmeal, rye/ wheat/millet, bread-crumbs (plain), dried soup (vegetables or bean), egg noodles, soup noodles, pasta, dried mushrooms (Costco has large containers)

Baking goods & other:

 - sugar, honey, AP Flour, baking powder, gelatin, cornstarch, vinegar (plain), oils (vegetable/ sunflower/canola/peanut), broth (vegetable/
- chicken/beef), mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, tomato paste, dill pickles, sauerkraut, coffee (instant and regular), tea, walnuts, almonds, cookies, Nutella, jam

Spices:

 - salt (plain and coarse), pepper (plain and peppercorns), garlic powder, onion powder, celery salt, cinnamon, bay leaves, poppy seeds, raisins

Bags of:

 - potatoes, onions, lemons, cabbage, carrots, beets, apples, oranges
- Canned:**

 - herring, sardines, tuna, salmon

Baby items:

 - diaper wipes and cream, formula, baby food, cereal, diapers size 3 - 5

Toiletries:

 - soap (no Irish Spring), shampoos, hand cream, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes for adults and kids, cold medicine for adults and kids, feminine hygiene pads, toilet paper, Kleenex, paper towels, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, dish soap, laundry soap

Please ensure items are not expired and are unopened.

Gift cards always welcome: Giant Tiger, Walmart, PC, Shoppers, gas cards

Please contact Shirley Madsen for drop-off address in NOTL 905-468-2325 or email donatesunflowersforukraine@gmail.com

Highs and lows for U19 Rangers in Grimsby tournament

Mike Balsom
The Local

A challenging draw in their first tournament of the year was a bit of an eye-opener for the Niagara Rangers Under-19 girls basketball team at the Grimsby Grizzlies Invitational this weekend.

After winning an exciting opener 57-56 against the Burlington Force Saturday morning, the absence of some key players caught up to the Rangers and they dropped decisions to the Toronto Triple Threat and the Stratford Revolution.

In game one the Rangers fell behind 21-10 in the second quarter but clawed back with 13 unanswered points to go ahead 23-21 with 48 seconds remaining in the half. It might have stayed that way had the Force not dropped a three-pointer with under 10 seconds to play to go into the break with a one-point lead.

In the second half, point guard Mikayla Wallace seemed to take the entire team on her shoulders, exerting control at both ends of the court. Her constant driving to the Burlington basket resulted in a 38-38 tie at the end of the third.

The lead shifted back and forth between the teams in the fourth quarter. With 2:21 left in the game, the Rangers went up 52-49 on the strength of some clutch shooting from Kyla Pylypiw. But they saw that lead slip away 32 seconds later when the Force went ahead 53-52.

Julia Diemer then dropped a crucial, much-needed three for the Rangers that was answered by a similar shot by Burlington. But Wallace scored on a lay-

up with 34 seconds left to regain the lead for Niagara.

The Rangers had a chance to put the icing on the cake after a missed shot by Burlington, but they turned the ball over under the Force basket.

With seven seconds remaining, coach Shawn Pylypiw called a timeout for his team to set a defensive strategy. Whatever he told them worked, as Ava Froese pulled down a rebound on a missed shot, passed the ball to Wallace, and the Rangers dribbled out the clock for the 57-56 victory.

Wallace finished with 23 points, including a number of them coming after she jammed her finger hard in the second half. Kyla Pylypiw added 13 and Froese chipped in 10, drawing a number of fouls under the Burlington board.

"It was a hard-fought game," said coach Pylypiw following the win. "We had never played the Burlington Force before, but they have always played at a higher level. I felt that we matched pretty well against this team and we did a lot of great things out there. To see our team stand toe to toe with them goes to show what kind of grit and grind the girls are made of."

Perhaps it was the hard-fought nature of that first game, or the absence of one of the team's starters and leaders, Tiana Hicks, that caught up to them in their second tournament game Saturday, and their Sunday contest, both disappointing losses.

The Toronto Triple Threat, the eventual tournament winner, handed the Rangers their first loss of the season Saturday afternoon.



Ranger Kyla Pylypiw sends a pass to Mikayla Wallace. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

"It was frustrating as a coach," said Pylypiw, "and frustration by the team. It was one of those gut-check moments where we realized that there is a lot more work to put forward to build toward winning a championship by the end of the season."

Sunday's loss to the Stratford Revolution was equally one-sided, knocking the Rangers out of a chance to play a fourth game for at least a bronze medal.

"It was a frustrating way to end the weekend," said a disappointed Pylypiw. "Both of those losses were really tough to take."



Amy Venneri goes for a layup.

NOTL Skating Club girls take part in two competitions



NOTL Skating Club members headed to Stratford for the December Classic Skate competition, with (left) Hailey Mitchell coming in fifth in the U10 STAR 4 division, Jamie Doucet fifth in the O13 STAR 4, Soraya Felice 13th in the O12 STAR 7, Katharine VanderKaay 17th in STAR 6, Samantha Frydryk 13th in O13 STAR 5, and Ophelia Xie fourth in STAR 6. (Photos supplied)



NOTL Skating Club members who competed in the Milton Winter Classic Skate were (left) Soraya Felice, coming 18th in the O12 STAR 7, Mary Lamky 11th in STAR 8, Katharine VanderKaay 17th in STAR 6, Samantha Frydryk 6th in O13 STAR 5, Ashleen Hale Gold in the O14 and Bronze in Gold Women, and Ophelia Xie, Bronze in STAR 6.

LocalSPORTS

Niagara Predators clip St. George Ravens' wings

Mike Balsom
The Local

The Niagara Predators made a strong statement in their 7-0 grounding of the St. George Ravens in Virgil Friday night.

"I think we took it to them pretty good," said head coach Kevin Taylor after the game. "I think it separates us from the rest of the clump; it establishes us as a team that is going to be ready to go."

Where they are ready to go is to the playoffs, hopefully as the fourth seed in the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League's (GMHL) post-season. They continue to hold down that spot with just eight games left to play, three points ahead of Northumberland in the South Division, four points over St. George and six over Tottenham.

And the league is starting

to notice. The league released their power rankings for February and, though the Predators didn't make it into the top 10, they clawed their way to an honourable mention for the first time this season after their third straight victory.

Both teams came onto the Meridian Credit Union ice ready to assert their physical dominance Friday, with St. George's Malcolm Campbell decking Niagara's Declan Fogarty just seconds into the game. But the Predators soon began to hit back with physical play of their own.

The Niagara power play faltered in the first 10 minutes of the game. Nearly successive two minute and five minute penalties to the Ravens gave the Preds some early opportunities but they failed to solve St. George goalie Owen Neomytka with the man advantage.

Later, in the 12th minute, Askar Aimanbetov took the puck in front of Neomytka and left a perfect no-look drop pass to the trailing Nick Savoie, who knocked a wrist shot behind the helpless goalie to give the Predators a 1-0 lead.

Niagara's penalty kill was under the spotlight a number of times during the second period, successfully shutting down any opportunities the Ravens were able to muster time after time.

Then, with 3:47 left in the second, Leo Savin brought the puck up the right side and fed a forward pass into the St. George zone to Timur Mirzaiants. Mirzaiants backhanded the puck to Alexander Andrews who came charging in undefended in front of Neomytka for the Preds second goal.

Just over a minute later,

Guy Manco's slapshot from the point was stopped by Neomytka, but Nolan Wyers was there waiting for the rebound. As the goalie tried to glove the loose puck, Wyers knocked it past him as he was taken to the ice by St. George's Cameron Ison.

Somehow the 3-0 lead felt a bit tenuous heading into the third period. Things started to get rough in the last 20 minutes, as St. George tempers began to flare. Late hits and some pushing after the whistle forced the Preds to push back. A total of 71 minutes in penalties, including two 10 minute misconducts to each team, was assessed during that period.

Amid all of the on-ice turmoil, Niagara ran away with the game. Mirzaiants, Ethan Boyd, Andrews and Cameron Savoie all added goals for the Predators to run the score up to 7-0.

Nick Savoie, who scored the first Preds marker, was a huge factor at the Niagara end of the ice, shutting down the Ravens attack and helping goalie Zane Clausen earn his first shutout in a Niagara jersey, only the second one for the team all season.

Twenty-year-old Mandan, North Dakota native Clausen is now 3-0 with Niagara, after coming over from the North Division's Bradford Rattlers at the trade deadline. The timing

turned out to be perfect for the Preds, who lost number one goalie Ryan Santini to a shoulder injury the same week.

"It feels good to bounce back with a new team," Clausen told The Local. "The first couple days up here were a difficult adjustment, but in Bradford, I wanted to be a starting goalie, so I wanted to take my skills somewhere else. I get to start fresh here."

Clausen showed incredible confidence and calm in stopping all 30 shots by St. George, including two great opportunities for the Ravens on breakaways.

"I try not to think too much out there," Clausen said. "I've learned pretty recently to just keep a clear mind and have fun, to not stress so much about it."

"He played a great game," Taylor said about the 6'4" Clausen. "It's the size of him. It's intimidating for a lot of shooters who come down the ice on him. He's a nice addition."

Taylor admitted that Friday's game was a statement game, but added that the real statement will be this Tuesday, when the Preds host the Ravens at Port Colborne's Vale Centre for a game rescheduled from the one cancelled during the Dec. 23 snowstorm.

"Will we roll over and allow things to happen, or are we going to continue this?" Taylor

pondered. "St. George is a good team, but sometimes they come out flat. They had some good opportunities tonight. We just have to stay focused on things."

Jaroslav Dohnal, who was involved in a third period fight, will serve a two-game suspension that will cover Tuesday's game and Friday's home contest against the eighth place Streetsville Flyers. He will be available for the rest of the weekend, though, as the Preds travel to Tottenham Saturday night then welcome the Flyers back to Niagara Sunday night.

"It's unfortunate that the game turned out that way," Taylor said of the fights Friday. "Jerry (Dohnal) got slashed, and he went after the guy, then another guy came over and slashed him, so he fought him."

There's no doubt that keeping their cool in those situations will be key as the Predators head toward their quest for the GMHL's Russell Cup.

"It's just now trying to keep everyone on an even keel," Taylor says, "to make sure they don't have personal goals, to not put personal ambitions ahead of team ambitions."

Tuesday's rematch against the Ravens in Port Colborne begins at 8:30 p.m., while Friday's game against Streetsville at the Meridian Credit Union Arena in Virgil begins at 7:30 p.m.



Preds Alex Andrews scores his first goal on St. George goalie Owen Neomytka. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Preds Zane Clausen in action against St. George.

Tournament win for the NOTL Wolves #2 Under-11

Local Staff

The U11 NOTL Wolves #2 team won the Al Boone Tournament championship in Niagara Falls recently, in an exciting win that included an overtime shoot-out.

It began with a 4-4 tie to West Lincoln, a loss to Jordan 5-3, and then the Wolves handed Niagara Falls their first loss 6-3.

The excitement continued in the semi-finals against Niagara Falls #2, when the Wolves pulled the goalie with 34 seconds left and tied the game 1-1. The game was settled in overtime and the Wolves won in a four-player shoot-out.

The final was an intense game against the Wolves U11 #1, and a tournament win 3-2.

Bench staff included Peter Flynn, Dan Plomish, Carl

Braun, Chris Hiebendaal and Mike Palmer.

Playing for the win were goalie Will Ecker, with Tessa Braun, Nathan Flynn, Amedeo Santini, Avery Warren, Cian Doyle, Vincenzo Coppola, Max Plomish, Jon Velsink, Max Lindqvist, Hudson Mclay, Nora Palmer, Matteo Raponi, Tyson Birks, Charlie Hiebendaal, Rory Smythe and Jacob VanSpronsen.



NOTL Wolves U11 team #2 play for an exciting win in Niagara Falls. (Supplied)

LocalWORSHIP

CORNERSTONE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday, February 12th

9:45 a.m.

Kids Ministry Sign In
(Nursery - Grade 8)

10:00 a.m.

Worship Gathering
Online & In-Person

Message:

Kevin Bayne
The Blessed Life, Part 1
(Matthew 5:1-12)

www.ccchurch.ca

To advertise your
Worship Services
in this section, please contact:

julia@notllocal.com

Local

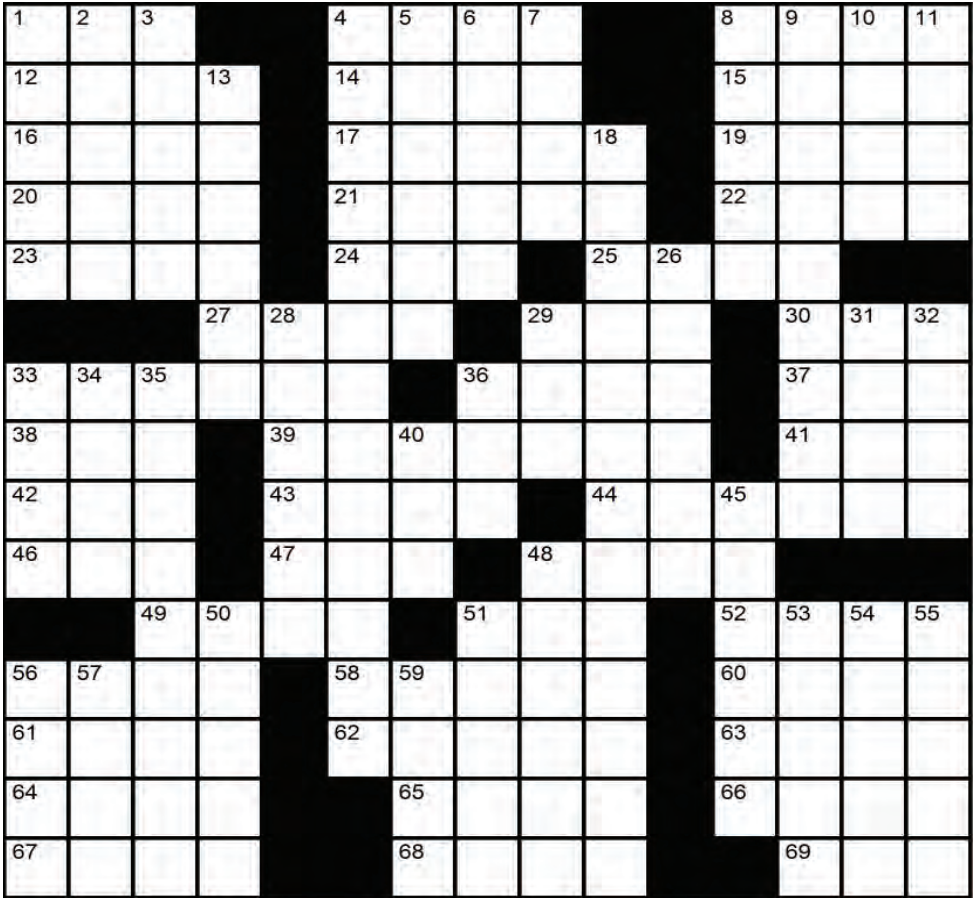
CLASSIFIEDS

classified@notllocal.com



Compassionate
Transparent
No Pressure
www.morganfuneral.com

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU



- Across:
1 Raises
4 1 G
8 Strikebreaker
12 Siestas
14 Egg layers
15 Father of a leveret
16 Superstar
17 Wanes
19 Old Peruvian native
20 Aligned
21 Open
22 Enormous
23 Abominable snowman
24 Scrutinize
25 Study
27 Mardi ---
29 Evil
30 E.g. A O L
33 Four pecks
36 Secret Chinese society
37 Bingo!
38 Time in Boston
39 Merchant ship's capacity
41 Immediately
42 Dentists' grp.
43 "Death --- Expert Witness" (P D James)
44 Is adjacent to
46 Homo sapiens
- 47 Frequently, poetically
48 Mailed
49 Specialty food store
51 Contemptuous exclamation
52 Mantle
56 State of constant change
58 Lily Munster actress Yvonne De ---
60 Not his
61 Captain Jack Sparrow actor
62 Online missives
63 Senses of self-importance
64 Wild about
65 Look after
66 Seedy joint
67 Talks lovingly
68 Singles
69 Could be bobby, red or white
- Down:
1 One
2 Army chaplain
3 Gush forth
4 Presidential workplace
5 Chucks
6 Outbreak
7 Junkie
8 Destructive Hindu deity
9 Those north of the 49th
10 Curves
11 Police officer's patrol route
13 Snow carriage
18 Wrestling maneuvers
26 Enter stealthily
28 Provide new equipment
29 Long feathery scarf
31 Get lost!
32 Minor chessman
33 Smile
34 Federal farming regulator
35 Confront
36 Channel revived as Heartland
40 --- King Cole
45 Engraved with acid
48 Salty
50 Montreal ---, now the Washington Nationals
51 Gray matter
53 Breastplate of Zeus or Athena
54 Brigham Young University city
55 Antique auto
56 Depositors' protective grp.
57 Longtime "Tonight Show" host Jay
59 Rounds

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.

EARN EXTRA CASH

Sell your unwanted items or advertise your garage sale in our **CLASSIFIEDS**

To place your classified ad, contact Julia: julia@notllocal.com
Deadline: Mondays at 3 p.m.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from February 1, 2023

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

Across: 1 Ups, 4 Thou, 8 Scab, 12 Naps, 14 Hens, 15 Hare, 16 Idol, 17 Eases, 19 Inca, 20 True, 21 Over, 22 Vast, 23 Yet, 24 Vet, 25 Read, 27 Gras, 29 Bad, 30 I S P, 33 Bushel, 36 Tong, 37 Ah, 38 E S T, 39 Tomorrow, 41 Now, 42 A D A, 43 Of an, 44 Lies on, 46 Man, 47 Off, 48 Sent, 49 Del, 51 Bah, 52 Cape, 56 Flux, 58 Carlo, 60 Hers, 61 Depp, 62 E-mail, 63 Egos, 64 Into, 65 Mind, 66 Dive, 67 Coos, 68 Ones, 69 Sox.
Down: 1 Unity, 2 Padre, 3 Spout, 4 The Oval Office, 5 Heaves, 6 Onset, 7 User, 8 Shiva, 9 Canadians, 10 Arcs, 11 Beat, 13 Sleigh, 18 Strangleholds, 26 Edge in, 28 Retool, 29 Boa, 31 Shoo, 32 Pawn, 33 Beam, 34 U S D A, 35 Stand up to, 36 T N N, 40 Nat, 45 Etched, 48 Salline, 50 Expos, 51 Brain, 53 Aegis, 54 Provo, 55 Essex, 56 F D I C, 57 Leno, 59 Ammo.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

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

Angelika & ASSOCIATES

LUXURY PROPERTIES

★ FREE ★

HOME EVALUATION

\$1,375,000

DOUBLE LOT IN PRIME LOCATION – 130 FT FRONTAGE



390 SIMCOE STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

\$989,450

END UNIT/UPGRADES



31 WINDSOR CIRCLE, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

\$3300/month

REDUCED – FOR LEASE



23 LORETTA DR, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

ADDITIONAL SERVICES WE OFFER – WE WORK HARD FOR OUR CLIENTS

- ★ clean/declutter & sort items to be donated or sold
 - ★ help to organize packing to prepare for your move
 - ★ free staging – both virtual & in-house
 - ★ renovation connections and advice
 - ★ help with estate sale/working with lawyers & family
 - ★ in-house mortgage & lawyer referrals
 - ★ free consult to improve your home for sale
 - ★ professional photography, video & drone
 - ★ up to 480 million views of your home
- ★ 5-star reviews
 - ★ largest independent brokerage in Canada
 - ★ huge agent network throughout southern Ontario
 - ★ active long list of buyers
 - ★ office with parking in high visibility area of town and roughly 4 million+ possible buyers driving by annually
 - ★ high quality brochures
 - ★ luxury presentation of your home
 - ★ personalized daily contact to meet all your needs



MCGILLIVRAY™

Trusted

Angelika Zammit is proud to have been recognized as the exclusive McGillivray Trusted Agent in the Niagara-on-the-Lake market.

Angelika & ASSOCIATES

LUXURY PROPERTIES

T. 905.468.8777
C. 289.214.4394
www.angelikazammit.com
496 Mississauga Street
Niagara-on-the-Lake



#1 BROKERAGE in the GTA.
The largest independent real estate brokerage in Canada – 6,000 Agents across 10 branches in Ontario.



HGTV Celebrity, Scott McGillivray