Ministry, parks police investigating dead coyotes

Lesley Sampson, founder and executive director of Coyote Watch Canada, has made a career of educating people about coyotes.

She’s no stranger to Niagara-on-the-Lake, where she began studying coyotes more than 20 years ago. Her research and continued efforts in town have been mostly directed toward educating residents concerned about sightings of coyotes in urban areas.

Her visit to NOTL last week, however, was quite different — one she found deeply disturbing. She had come to investigate the dumping of several dead coyotes on the steep slope of the gorge along the Niagara River.

Since The Local had received a report from a fisherman on his way home from Queenston, a heavy snowfall had covered the area, making it impossible for her to see the coyotes herself. She had only photos to go on, and no way to determine how they were killed or why they were dumped. But her guess, she says, is they were a “thrill kill.” She also used the term “slob hunters,” both derogatory terms for hunters who kill for excitement or gratification.

“This is not the behaviour of ethical hunters,” says Sampson. “This is the epitome of what conservation is not about. These people have no regard for anyone or anything.”

It’s been going on for decades, and not only in NOTL, but the deep slope down to the Niagara River, she says.

Continued on page 4

CHCH reporter Jason Gaidola reported on the news of the dead coyotes from the Niagara Parkway Recreational Trail. (Fred Mercnik)
Town looking at consolidation of two fire stations

Queenston station has been suffering from structural issues for decades

Penny Coles
The Local

Ongoing problems with the Queenston fire station that began when it was built almost 45 years ago have resulted in a move toward consolidating it with St. Davids.

Councillors were given an extensive report on the history of issues with the Queenston station Monday, and recommendations to consider: that they ask for an analysis of the St. Davids station and operations; that a report on the viability of consolidating St. Davids and Queenston stations be requested; and that a funding strategy be developed for the potential construction of a new consolidated fire station, including potential locations.

With just a few questions and little discussion, councillors agreed to all recommendations, moving toward a solution that has been discussed and deferred for decades.

In January, 2019, Fire Chief Rob Grimwood presented information on the viability of the Queenston station to council, referencing reports going as far back as 1971, six years before the facility was built, and everything he could find relating to it since.

Over the decades, councillors learned, it had been suggested several times that the Town look at a long-term plan for St. Davids and Queenston stations, including whether each of the two communities required its own facility, or whether they could be combined.

Several of the early reports referenced by Grimwood indicated there had been an ongoing consideration of closing Queenston and St. Davids stations and building a new one on York Road, or covering the two districts out of the St. Davids station.

Instead of making a decision when those reports were discussed, councillors of the day deferred the issue.

The Queenston station has had structural problems since it was built, but the contractor went out of business before those issues could be addressed, and because of its age, it has become expensive to maintain, those reports indicated.

In February, 2019, council asked staff to provide a further analysis of Grimwood’s report, with recommendations for future action.

The result of that request was the report councillors had before them Monday, which says that several years after the building of the Queenston station, an undated report with an unknown author (assumed to be the fire chief at the time) advocated for the replacement of the Queenston station rather than an amalgamation with St. Davids, as recommended by Office of the Fire Marshal report in 1971. The author cited firefighter resignations en masse if an amalgamation was forced upon the two affected stations.

In 1996, in response to recommendations made by the Office of the Fire Marshal, the report says, discussion of amalgamation of the two stations was reinitiated, with a follow-up report again recommending they be combined.

Again, no further action was taken.

It’s been an emotional issue, Fire Chief Nick Rulier told councillors Monday, when asked about the comment of years ago of possible resignations if the two stations were combined.

“Their emotional attachment to the organization,” Rulier said.

The fire chief said before presenting the report to councillors, he had called an open forum for firefighters from all stations Sunday to hear and discuss the recommendations in his report.

They understood what was being proposed, and offered constructive comments, he said.

As to the threat of years past about resignations, he said, “we’re not seeing that type of concerns amongst our members.”

Another report to council in 2006 again referenced the consolidation of the two stations, but there was no further discussion. Since then, there have been several reports on the condition of the Queenston facility, including the existence of structural defects. Some remedial work was completed, but there continued to be issues that were not addressed. In 2010 and 2018, structural engineer reports note various issues and identifying possible causes, but “didn’t come up with anything conclusive,” this report says.

The station continues to develop cracks that may require maintenance, and “it is not uncommon for these gaps and cracks to grow to a size where one can see light passing through the exterior walls,” says the report presented to councillors Monday.

The facility is also lacking in space for operating effectively or meeting current health and safety standards, and requires an estimated $20,000 for HVAC repairs.

A 2017 building condition assessment estimated maintenance and repair costs for the Queenston station, through to 2046, to total $572,100.

As for station calls, while the number within in the Queenston district remains consistent, the need to respond outside the district has declined, representing “a 55 per cent decrease in demand for Station 4 (Queenston) resources across the municipality in 2019, when compared to the 15-year average.”

Despite that decline, the report continues, Queenston firefighters and apparatus prove valuable to provide coverage and surge capacity for the municipal area during a large-scale incident.

The 2016 census shows a population of 370 people in Queenston’s urban area, with limited opportunities for residential growth.

The St. Davids urban area census shows 1,670 people, with several areas approved or designated for future residential growth, the report says.
Penny Coles  
The Local

St. Davids resident Andy Panko wants to see the village have the new pool it needs and deserves.

He’s opening up his wallet to help set it up, and is encouraging others to do the same.

The father of two kids who attended the village public school and swam in the pool in the more than 20 years ago is now the proud grandfather of a little boy who is also growing up in St. Davids. Panko hopes his grandson, along with all other kids and future kids who live in the area, will have a great pool nearby.

Panko, 66, has been semi-retired for the past six years, and is shortly to be fully-retired, he says. He’s looking forward to spending his days between his garden, his bees, model train collection and railway history articles. “I was a licensed geoscientist, and with great partners, did brownfield property development for many years. I am now happy to pursue more personal interests.” His wife Domenica has been retired for the past 13 years after 31 years as a teacher, and is busier than ever with many things on the go in all seasons, indoors and out, says Panko, who is also helping Dominica babysit their grandson when their daughter is at work.

“I remember when we raised money as a community for a new gym at St. Davids School,” he says. One of the leaders in the community who led that campaign was Bob Gule, then a St. Davids resident and kids attending the school recalls Panko.

“He was an influence to me in making this donation for the pool, based on what he did for the school gym.”

Panko met with Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Kevin Turcotte, acting director of operations, in St. Davids Thursday to hand over a cheque for $5,000. He made the decision to donate when he read in the Local that the Town is forming a fundraising committee for the pool, and is challenging others to do the same.

“I just want to give a little push to get this started,” he says.

“There are all kinds of people coming into the community. When we were bringing our kids up in St. Davids, there was almost nobody here. We were just a small community. We made sure our kids came first. These people who are moving into Carney Park don’t have swimming pools in their backyards, and the most important thing you can do for your kids is teach them how to swim.”

As the community grows, Panko says, “the pool will be full, and some of them will be bought by young people.”

Those who come to the area “couldn’t find a better school or a better neighbourhood” for raising a family, he says.

“People who live here, especially people who have just moved here, are just finding out how cool it is, how much better it is than they could ever have imagined. It’s a perfect spot, bucolic, as far as I’m concerned. But it needs a pool!”

The St. Davids Lions Club has contributed $10,000, and with the proceeds from the Town’s golf tournament, which included a donation from the St. Davids Ratepayers Association, the fund is now at about $45,000.

The pool is expected to cost $5 million, and the Town has applied for a federal/provincial infrastructure grant of $4.74 million. The 2020 budget includes $100,000 for the pool. The fundraising campaign goal will depend on the success of the grant, but is likely to be set at $1 million, says Turcotte.

The next step is to form a committee. Disero has reached out to the St. Davids Ratepayers Association and to the St. Davids Lions Club, asking each to provide two members to be involved. Couns. John Wiens and Gary Burroughs have volunteered as council representatives. Since last week’s meeting, she has received an application from one resident, she has two Lions Club volunteers, and the residents association is looking for two representatives.

Calling Panko’s donation “the spark to ignite the fundraising campaign,” Disero says, “this generous donation is a great way to launch the St. Davids Pool Fundraising Committee. The establishment of the committee will come to council on Feb. 24, 2020. Now that we have our first private donation, let’s get going!”

Applications for the committee can be found at https://notl.civicweb.net/document/15898.

Councillors drop overnight parking ban on all streets

Penny Coles  
The Local

Councillors have approved the removal of the 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. parking prohibition on all town streets.

The recommendation from town staff to lift the prohibition comes after consultation from residents in each of the five areas of Niagara-on-the-Lake, councillors heard Monday.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero told councillors she had attended all five meetings, and very few residents showed up.

Overnight parking became an issue when some residents of The Village asked that the prohibition be dropped, and surveys and community engagement sessions indicated broad support for the removal of the overnight parking prohibition, which was also supported by town staff, Monday’s report says.

Disero said there were also a small number of residents who wanted it enforced. There were heated discussions during the previous council with residents divided — those who wanted the rule enforced, because parked cars near one intersection were causing an obstructed view; and others who had garages too small for the cars they owned, and needed to park on the street.

Disero suggested a compromise: that a no parking sign be moved from its current location at Jordan Street and Girrison Village Drive to provide a better sightline, and that the parking ban be lifted.

Although there were objections about moving a sign with no input from staff or technical data about whether it should be moved, or if so, how far, Disero agreed her request was based on politics, and with advice from interim CAO Sheldon Randall, modified her request to ask that the sign be moved, but that town staff determine the best spot for it, and her motion passed.

The decision will be ratified by council Feb. 24.

Donation, challenge for St. Davids pool fund

St. Davids resident Andy Panko handed over a cheque for $5,000 to Lord Mayor Betty Disero and acting director of operations Kevin Turcotte for the St. Davids pool fund. (Penny Coles)
This is the work of ‘unethical hunters,’ says Coyote Watch head

Lesley Sampson of Coyote Watch tells CHCH the Niagara gorge is a convenient dumping spot for unethical hunters.

Love songs at St. Mark’s

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Leos raising funds for hospital teen zone

**Penny Coles**

**The Local**

Having just completed a second ambitious fundraising campaign, providing two tuition-assist dog guides for two children, the St. Davids Leos Club has embarked on another project.

The Leos’ next goal is to raise $1,500 for the MacKidds Teen Zone Project, to upgrade a teen cancer unit in Hamilton.

The McMaster Cancer Clinic is being renovated and expanded in a project that will cost $1.6 million, says St. Da-

vids Leos Brad Anderson. Lions clubs from Niagara and the Hamilton area have pledged $75,000 by January 2021 to help fund a unique area for teens undergoing treatment that will separate from the adult centre.

The St. Davids Leos Club, now 44 members strong — one of the largest, if not the largest, in Ontario, is committed to helping, says Leo Zahut Abraham.

The Leos Club has grown as members have attracted friends, both from St. Davids Public School and now from Niagara high schools attended by Leos who have graduated from St. Davids and remain members.

Chairman is spearheading the MacKidds Teen Zone campaign for her husband, and is grateful for the opportunity to help teens with cancer.

“We’re raising money to make the area more fun for teens who are in the hospital or living in homes nearby, such as the Ronald McDonald House. We’ll be helping to pay for TVs, games, and making the unit more colourful.”

The space will be used by teens during their chemotherapy or other cancer treatments.

Abraham joined the Leo Club as a Grade 6 St. Davids student. She’s now in Grade 10 at A.N. Myer Secondary School in Niagara Falls, and has continued as a club member. She was especially grateful to attend a recent graduation ceremony for dog guides in Oakville at the Lions Foundation training school.

He was recipient of the second dog, the Leos helped finance was on hand with his dad, the says, and spoke about how grateful it was to the Leos for allowing him the opportunity to have a dog guide.

Leos fundraiser by helping out at Lions fish fries and the annual carnival, and at events they have organized.

The St. Davids Lions have also contributed to their campaign, as has the Merritton Lions Club, which partnered with St. Davids on the guide dogs, through their Dog Bowl, five-pin bowling event held to raise money for dog guides.

Often referred to as “blind bowling,” it also helps educate participants on what it’s like to be blind or visually impaired, by providing them with specially-designed glasses that mimick eye disease from macular degeneration, diabetes, glaucoma or retinopathy.

In addition to making deserts and selling them at fish fries, they are now planning a game night for families to help fund the MacKidds Teen Zone, says Abraham.

It will be held Sunday, March 1, from 4 to 7 p.m., at the St. Davids Lions Club.

There will be an admission charge of $5 for adults and $2 for teens and children, who are encouraged to bring their favourite board games.

Pizza, pop and dessert, including cupcakes, will be sold as part of the fundraiser.

“I think, I made hundreds of cupcakes to help pay for the dog guides, and we were all so happy to have reached our goal. It’s hard to raise that much money from the dessert table, selling treats and popcorn, and we really appreciated the partnership with the Leos clubs.”

At the dog guide graduation ceremony, with the children who had also received training on how to handle their dogs, “we could see how important it was to Reece, the friendship he and his dog had already developed, and how happy he and his parents were,” says Abraham.

“Well like to fundraise for another dog guide in the future, but for now we’re concentrating on the kids’ zone.”

**Bird walking tour begins at Navy Hall Saturday**

A winter plumaged red-throated loon is one of the birds those on Saturday’s tour might see. (Kayo Roy)

Penny Coles

**The Local**

This Saturday, a nature group bird walk will begin at Navy Hall, one of three walks organized by the Niagara Parks Commission.

The event partners with the Canadian Raptor Conservancy and local field naturalist clubs.

The Niagara Glen Nature Centre is opening its doors for its first ever birding day, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., for the rare opportunity to get up close and personal with a red-tailed hawk, a great horned owl and a bald eagle.

Representatives from the Canadian Raptor Conservancy, Birds Canada and local birding groups will lead talks about the native bird species found in the Niagara region.

The Navy Hall walk along the east side of the Navy Pier toward the Old Town, will be led by Kayo Roy of the Niagara Falls Nature Club.

He says it’s a two-hour tour, with a good chance of seeing some land birds, such as snow buntings, “a beautiful, beautiful bird of the north,” says Roy.

There are bald eagles in the area all year round, he says, still nesting. “I hope we’ll get to see one of the two pairs in the area.”

He’s confident the group will see a red-throated loon on the lake — there were several seen earlier in the week.

There have been two bird counts recently, the first one in December covering Ontario and showing a 20 per cent decrease, says Roy.

The other was in January on both sides of the border, and the numbers not in yet, he says.

At 11 a.m., meet at Duf-

ferin Islands, for a tour led by Marie Jackin of the Bert Miller Nature Club. The walk begins at the main entrance by the Niagara Parkway, 6345 Duf-

ferin Lake Road.

At 1 p.m., meet at Brown’s Point, for a walk led by Bob Highcock and Jean Hampson of the Peninsula Field Naturalists. Begin at the parkette just north of Brown’s Point Court, on the Ni-

agara River Parkway in NOTL.

The Niagara Glen has be-

come a renowned outdoor destination for hikers, cyclists, conservationists, birders and anyone seeking an opportunity to connect with nature. In recognition of its growing popularity as a destination for nature enthusiasts, the new Ni-

agara Glen Nature Centre re-

opened in 2017, enhanced with new programming options, with a focus on school programs, outdoor programming and guided tours of the glen.

The Canadian Raptor Conservancy is one of the largest captive-breeding projects in the world. They have more than 200 captive-bred birds at their facility, regularly breeding over 15 different species each year.

Many are endangered species and some of their offspring are sent back into the wild through organized release projects around the world. All of the birds used for demonstrations are captive-bred.
Let’s all pull together for young Ariel Carr

When I first learned of Ari- el Carr, it was through her atom hockey coach, James Cadeau. He was blown away by her strength of character and determination to overcome her disability.

This little girl, smaller than others her age and with mobility problems on her left side, wanted more than anything to play hockey as all her older siblings had. It was a rough start for her, but gradually she became stronger; as she came to understand the game and how she could contribute, she became a valu- able member of her team.

Cadeau said she worked harder than anyone on the team, and she never gave up. When he handed her a puck, she was the happy 12-year-old doing what all 12-year-olds do.

When he handed her a puck, she was the happy 12-year-old doing what all 12-year-olds do.

Ariel and her family, who will attached. Those who know her, would love to have cards or messages wishing her well and sharing her mailing and email addresses for those who may want to reach out. Cards can be mailed to 100 Road Road, St. Catharines, L2R 7K6. The large Carr family lives in one of three houses on the street that is considered St. Catharines. Denise explains. She will also share emails with Ariel — they can be sent to eighteengo7@yahoo.com.

And while we’re at it, we can send some positivity to De- nise and Ace Carr, whose pain right now as parents, watching their daughter suffer, is im- possible to imagine. They are facing challenges themselves, while trying to stay strong and focus on their daughter.

This is such an amazing community when one of our own is in need. If we can do anything to brighten their day, it’s little enough. Let’s see if we can make a difference for Ariel and her family, who will know they have a community behind them.

Penny Coles

Editorial on “heated debate” balanced, says reader

I read with interest and appreciation your editorial in last week’s NOTL Local. Having watched the alterca- tion on Livestream concern- ing the heated debate con- cerning the service delivery review by Deloitte consul- tants and the reporting of same to council.

Your take on this little episode was perfectly bal- anced and insightful. I was particularly impressed by your final paragraph: “it was really gratifying to hear the diverse opinions of a strong group of councillors.” I actively campaigned in the last election for Lord Mayor Betty Duerin, Deputy Lord Mayor Clare Cameron and Coun. Stuart MacCor- mack and couldn’t think of better praise for these indi- viduals than your reasoned editorial afforded them.

Thank you for present- ing a moderate, insightful view into this fabulous Ni- agara-on-the-Lake town council. We, the citizens of Niagara-on-the-Lake, are 100 per cent behind them.

Bob Bader

LETTERS

The Niagara-on-the-Lake

The trusted voice of our community

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

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The NOTL Local acknowledges the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous peoples.

LEADERSHIP

Walter Hamilton Dickson was the son of William Dickson and Charlotte Augusta Maria Geale wife of the Hon. Walter H. Dickson of Niagara Born Sep. 19, 1813 Died March 6, 1853 Aged 39 Years

ASSISTANT EDITORIAL

Canadian senator buried in St. Mark’s by Donald Combe Special to The Local

Sacreed
To the memory of
The Hon. Walter Hamilton Dickson
Born Jan. 4, 1806
Died Aug. 30, 1885

Sacreed
To the memory of
Augusta Maria Geale wife of the Hon. Walter H. Dickson of Niagara
Born Sep. 19, 1813
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Aged 39 Years

February 13, 2020

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What will nature look like in the future?

Owen Bjorgar
Special to The Local

Let’s take a hard right turn into the future. Whether this is the near future or not, is your call. Put on your Netflix goggles, as I paint a picture of nature’s place in a dystopian world, let’s even say here in Niagara.

I’ve always wondered how the concept of nature would be psychologically perceived, and how we would com-parimentalize it, once we’ve pushed our relationship with it to an absolute breaking point.

If the following story were to hypothetically take place, the underlying condition would be that most of the eco-systems and their functions would have already been re-moved. Scarily enough, this is the current trend in reality for net forest, wetland, and other natural habitat losses across the globe and here in Niagara. Buckle up. You’re cruising into a new town.

I’m imagining these mas-sive public nature centres, where each municipality is obliged to have one, by law. These buildings are enorm-ous, maybe the size of a Walmart. When a visitor walks through the doors, they are stepping into a past world. A climate-controlled, realistic atmosphere set according to that region’s historical condi-tions prior to human influ-ence. The interior climate also adapts with the historical sea-sawings and the weather associated with it, so there is biological life in the building. It’s a bio-dome.

Small native plants and animals would grow and hop along the floor, and even scurry across the trails at visitors’ feet while they look at information signs. At this point, any creatures deemed dangerous by society are likely extinct. Now, they live on as flashing images and videos on screens, which are mounted on the walls of the nature centre. It’s like watch-ing an athlete’s highlight reel, this unpressive living thing doing what it once did best. Descriptions of how these big cats, bears, and ferocious canines once roamed the woods would be available for your reading pleasure. You would learn how they once gov-erned an entire society free of any humans, and they did so very responsibly.

At this point, will the general public’s reaction be “Whoa, cool!” or “Whoa, that’s really unfortunate?”

When you leave the na-ture centre and hop back in the car, you slowly cruise back out of town. You notice that most front yards are bleak, bare, and deserted. Others are lush and almost over-grown. You can bet these green folks are getting a nice tax break for all of that messly looking shrubbery in their front yard. Those who go the extra mile to re-wild their private prop-erties may even get some di-rect financial incentive. That’s because it’s in the best interest of the government, and our lungs to keep our air clean and keep biodiversity alive.

Property owners collect points as a sort of credit, and the credits start to rack up when you plant rare species, or cloack the rooftop with pollinator-friendly flowers. If a certain bird species is re-corded nesting in your plant-ed trees, you may earn some points for giving back to the decimated ecosystem that once was.

Now it’s time to visit the green square. Not many towns have those anymore.

There’s a waterfall and some big old oak trees tucked in there somewhere. Upon ar-rival at the place, your guide directs you to find a spot at the base of the waterfall — if you

make for the ultimate souvenir picture. You walk up to the base of the falls, bumping shoul-ders and exchanging “excuse me’s” along the way. You turn around to face the camera, and smile. Click! You and 200 oth-er people really enjoyed that moment together. You walk away with the photo.

But what did we learn?
Message for Valentine’s Day and every day

Well, Friday is Valentine’s Day, another day that is really good for some and not so good for others. We will see ads for gifts for that someone special, and of course the restaurants with their deals for a romantic evening for two. What if you are single, or just lost your loved one? Then the day is not so special. Of course that does not mean that the day is not worth celebrating.

As for me, Valentine’s Day is a very special day and has been for the last 72 years, when I spend it with the one I care for the most and the one I look after first, no matter who is in my life. Well you may have guessed, Valentine’s Day is my birthday. My mother called it the 1948 St. Valentine’s Day Massacre. She said other things as well, that I can’t put in print.

Over the years, I have had my special Valentine and the memories of those times will always be cherished. But I figured something out that makes this special day even more special as each birthday comes and goes. First off, I am blessed to be here to celebrate Valentine’s Day, because the alternative is not so pleasant.

I have a theory that there are three kinds of love. Being in love. Being loved. And being love. When we are simply love, we don’t have to be in love and we don’t have the need to be loved.

When someone needs to be loved, then that love can be toxic, and with that, odds are it won’t last long. If someone is in love with something or someone that does not have the capability of returning that love, this too can be toxic, and in this case can actually be destructive.

The third option is being love. When we are love, there is no need to be looking for love, especially in the wrong places. Of course when one is love, one can also be in love but it does not create toxicity, for the love is not out of need, but is simply love.

Many from a faith-based background are taught that love is the ultimate. This is true as long as the love begins first with one’s self, for when we can love ourselves unconditionally, that internal love rushes forth into the universe so strong that anything it touches can’t help but be pure and good.

So, here is my Valentine’s Day/birthday wish for all of you. Be love! Not just for one day and not only for a thing or another person. By simply being love, you will appreciate all those around you who need some love. You will stop trying to do what most of us do when we get into a relationship; that being… “I love you, I love you, I love you, now change!” You will accept all of those you love for who they are, the same as you would expect them to do for you.

Finally, please remember, when you are celebrating with that significant other, do what they want to do, not what you want to do. Because when you are truly love, and when you truly accept you, then every act is perfect, because true love is just that... perfect.

Happy Valentine’s Day to you all, no matter what your situation is.

Ted Mouradian is the President of the 2% Factor Inc. and the creator of the Law of Cooperative Action. He is an author and a professional speaker and can be reached at ted@the2percentfactor.com
Bill Auchterlonie Special to The Local

This week in Auchterlonie on Astrology I’ll look at the third quarter Moon in Scorpio on Saturday, Feb. 15 and the period from Thursday, Feb. 13 to Wednesday, Feb. 19.


Now, the week ahead.

Thursday, Feb. 13: It’s another day of sexy generosity. Then the Moon moves into Sagittarius tonight. But most of the day has a kind of stubborn quality to it courtesy of Saturn in Capricorn. For some this may be a scary Thursday. Fear is not an appropriate response. Honesty will conquer any challenge of this kind. It was Feb. 13, 1866 that Jesey James held up his first bank in Liberty Missouri. His take was $15,000 – an amount worth hundreds of times as much today.

Friday, Feb. 14: Happy Valentine’s Day! In spite of a restless night of sleep, this is a good Friday where the Moon makes six connections and most bring helping hands and smart ideas thanks to Jupiter in Pisces. On this day in 1876 in Brantford, Ontario, a Scottish immigrant named A. Graham Bell invented the telephone. Most of Bell’s hundreds of other inventions have yet to find an application. And in 2010, Al-exandre Bilodeau won the Gold Medal in the freestyle skiing men’s moguls event, becoming the first Canadian to win a Gold Medal during a Canadian-hosted Olympics.

Saturday, Feb. 15: It’s a serious, but positive start to the weekend as the Moon in Scorpio makes a 90-degree (square) aspect to the Sun at 5:17 p.m. It’s the third quarter Moon – a day of stubborn feelings butting against an energetic Sun. On this day in 2001, the first draft of the complete human genome was published in the journal Nature, changing the direction of medicine more profoundly than anything ever in previous history.

Sunday, Feb. 16: Today is the dreaded day when Mercury turns retrograde at 7:57 p.m., until March 11. When Mercury is retrograde we can expect trouble with communications and with communications devices. This go round the change happens at 11-degrees of Pisces and the di-rect turn around is at 28 degrees of Aquarius. So the first part of it is more likely about confused thinking. And then on March 4, the devices problems are more likely. On Feb. 16, 1923 Howard Carter opens the inner burial chamber of the Pharaoh Tutankhamun’s tomb and finds the sarcophagus. I have held the gold mask in my hands on two occasions, when I worked at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Monday, Feb. 17: This is the slowest, dreariest start to a week I can ever recall. Still, the Moon in all-knowing Sagittarius makes for a positive vibe even if there’s not much going on. Cana-das seventh prime minister, Wilfred Laurier, died on this day in 1919. He was our first French-speaking prime minister.

Tuesday, Feb. 18: Now here comes a very busy day! The Moon kicks it off by moving into Capricorn early in the morning. And the Sun winds it up by moving from Aquarius to imaginative Pisces to end the day just before midnight. There’s a lot going on and a lot of energy to burn to make things happen. Today is the birthday of the planet Pluto. US astronomer Clyde Tombaugh made the discovery on Feb. 18, 1930. While there has been debate in the past few years about Pluto’s classification as a planet, this is largely a ‘my scientists are bigger than your scientists’ kind of feud where the ones most interested in the Solar Sys-tem all agree that Pluto is a planet.

Wednesday, Feb. 19: Another busy day. This time with ideas dominating the activities. Remember Mer-cury is still retrograde so be wary that the ideas you’re discussing or thinking about are ideas that make sense and that you’re not being tricked into some sort of thought game in order to confuse you and get you on board.

Next week is the new Moon in Pisces on Sunday, Feb. 23. That and more, next week on Auchterlonie on Astrology, here in The Local. Joni Mitchell said: “We are stardust. We are gold-en.” So shine on!
Niagara College takes over ‘stewardship’ of Canopy Growth vineyard

Penny Coles
The Local

Through a partnership with Canopy Growth, Niagara College is taking over the operation of the Concession 5 vineyard next to Tweed Farms.

Tweed is best known as one of the largest medical marijuana greenhouse operations in the world, with more than a million square feet in production.

The vineyard next door to Tweed was originally owned locally and operated as Coyote’s Run Winery. It was sold in October, 2017, with unfounded rumours saying it had been sold to Canopy Growth, which did ultimately purchase it in May, 2019.

At that time, the new owners said they planned to continue wine production at the facility, but were looking for a partnership with an experienced grape grower.

Jeff Ryan of Canopy Growth announced Monday that the college will continue the operation of the vineyards. As home to the first commercial teaching winery in Canada, and the first commercial cannabis production program in the country, the college will use the 27-acre property as a "hub for learning to be enjoyed by Niagara College students for decades to come," he said.

College president Dan Patterson referred to the teaching winery’s role as taking “stewardship” of the Concession 5 property, and as an example of the “three drivers of the success” of the college: its strong commitment to industry/educational partnerships; the “unparalleled opportunities” it presents for its students; and the people and culture at the college, interwoven into the fabric of the region and all sectors of its economy, educating future employees for regional industries.

He also praised Canopy Growth for its decisions to preserve the vineyards on the Concession 5 property.

Steve Gill, general manager of the college’s Learning Enterprise Centre, which includes the teaching winery, brewery and distillery, called the partnership a win-win-win.

“Canopy benefits from our dedication to minimizing impact on its greenhouse operations, and Niagara-on-the-Lake residents gain good neighbours through our commitment to maintaining the vineyards with sustainable farming practices.”

Marc Nantel, vice-president of Research, Innovation and Strategic Initiatives at Niagara College, toasts Regional Chair Jim Bradley, Lord Mayor Betty Disero and wine industry expert Debi Pratt, with a 2018 pinot noir from the Concession 5 vineyard. (Photos by Penny Coles)

Jeff Ryan of Canopy Growth, and Dan Patterson, president of Niagara College, launch a partnership that gives the college the operation of a Canopy Growth vineyard.

February 13, 2020
THE NOTL LOCAL

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Local businesses look for staff at college job fair

Penny Coles  

The Local

Wineries were just two of the Niagara-on-the-Lake businesses hoping to attract future employees at the Niagara College job fair last week.

Most of the industry representatives at the job fair hope to hire many more employees than they expected to see at the job fair, some ready to hire on the spot.

Jamie Slingerland, director of viticulture at Pillitteri Estates Winery, welcomed Matthew Portelli, a recent graduate of a theatre arts technician program at Fanshawe College. His eventual goal is to work at the Shaw Festival, but for now, he would be happy to work at a job in hospitality, he says.

A Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, he volunteered at the job throughout high school, and has worked at other jobs in the hospitality industry.

“Theatre’s in my blood, and has been for many years,” he says.

“But for now, I’m looking for anything that could be full-time hours. I’m open to trying new things.”

His resume looks promising, says Slingerland, who was hoping to hire some seasonal workers for the retail winery shop and also for production, one for now, and more for the fall.

“Our main interest here is seeing people, getting their resumes, and doing follow-ups for those we are interested in.”

Arterra Wines was also at the job fair, looking for a job in hospitality, he says.

A Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, he volunteered at the college event for several years, and continued at the NOTL campus Wednesday to Friday.

Although most of the employees they hire will be students, some are in their final year and will stay, and others will remain on through the year, with part-time hours, says Derek Ingham, retail coordinator at Inniskillin — and a sales and marketing graduate from Niagara College.

The college job fair works well for the wineries, since so many of the programs dovetail with the employees they hope to recruit — not only the viticulture and winery program, but hospitality, sales and marketing and culinary students will all gain valuable experience, says Ingham.

The Niagara Parks Commission also had representative at the job fair, looking for about 500 seasonal, part-time employees for their many attractions.

“They’ve been at the college event for several years, and found it to be successful. Even if they get 50 resumes a day, it helps make a dent in the number they hope to hire, they said.

“The college’s annual one-stop shop for job seekers was its largest ever, hoping to attract current students, alumni and others to explore opportunities, hand out resumes, network, and meet with potential employers from a variety of industries.

“The career fair began last Tuesday at the Welland Campus, and continued at the NOTL campus Wednesday to Friday.

A record number of employers were registered to recruit full-time, part-time, co-op and seasonal positions for more than 150 employers from the Niagara region, with 60 and 55 exhibitors each day.

Exhibitors at the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus represented hospitality and tourism, horticulture and cannabis production, culinary and beverage, business, sales and marketing.
Ariel’s mom says 12-year-old is strong, but in pain
Crossroads student has long, difficult journey ahead of her

Penny Coles
The Local

Ariel Carr is a very strong little girl, says her mom Denise.

She has to be.

The tiny 12-year-old had her first surgery Friday to straighten her spine, twisted by scoliosis, in a two-and-a-half hour operation at Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto.

It involved using eight bolts to attach a traction halo to her head, two above each eyebrow and two more being added each day.

“They will continue doing that up until they get to 24 pounds,” says Ariel’s mom, who is struggling to walk 10 pounds a week.

Denise says that up until they get to 24 pounds, “says Ariel’s mom, who is struggling to walk 10 pounds a week.

She got her favourite drink from Starbucks Saturday, a double chocolate chip frappuccino, but she was in too much pain to drink it, and most of it was thrown out.

Nurses are trying to get her to take Ensure, a nutritional drink for people with health issues. She isn’t having much success with that either, but she’s so tiny, she can’t afford to lose weight, says Denise.

Ariel has been over- coming obstacles since birth, when as a premature baby she was born at three pounds, 15 ounces, with no movement on her left side.

Doctors at the time suggested she might never walk.

Ariel sleeps in Ariel’s room, and never goes far around the hospital in the washroom, and when she is lying down. Even though she can hold up high a large teddy bear given to her by her friend Brooke before she left to go to the hospital.

“Her movement is very limited. Her eyes up or down — her area of vision is very limited. She draws comfort from a large teddy bear given to her by her friend Brooke before she left to go to the hospital.

At 47 inches tall, and 43 pounds, Ariel is small for her age, but the surgery and weights could add another inch or more to her height, says Denise.

There will be at least one more surgery, which will involve shaving some bone off the top of her spine, which is now shaped almost like a candy cane, cutting into her neck. She’s been told it’s expected to be a nine-and-a-half hour operation, but that won’t happen until after the weeks in traction.

There might be a third operation, says Denise.

When Ariel went through a growth spurt recently, her ribs grew as well, causing them to grow into her hip and on her left side, and to press into her lungs. That has been causing her pain, making movement difficult, and diminishing her lung capacity, making her tire easily.

Depending on how well this stage of her treatment works, she may have to go back into the operating room to have one or more ribs removed.

Denise sleeps in Ariel’s room, and never goes far from her side. Her husband Ace plans to spell her some nights — one of them will have to be with Ariel 24 hours a day while she’s in the hospital. They have to pay for parking, food, and gas going back and forth, and since they both work at the same place, they don’t want to both be off at the same time. They’ve been warned by the hospital it could cost them $5,000 a month.

The family has set up a GoFundMe page to offset the costs. To help, visit https://ca.gofundme.com/f/ariels-scoliosis-battle.

Denise says she leaves Ariel briefly for some fresh air, but always with her cell phone, knowing Ariel also has a phone and can call her.

She sometimes uses that time to let her emotions out, crying the tears she doesn’t want Ariel to see, she says.

“When she knows I’m upset, she tells me not to be. She worries about me. Sometimes it seems like she’s the parent and I’m the child. She’s so tough, but she is in pain, and it is so hard to watch and not be able to do anything to help her.”

Denise takes her to the washroom, and for trips around the hospital in the traction chair, but it’s hard for Ariel to see much — she can’t move her head.

Ariel is spending her awake time on an iPad, which she can hold up high enough to be able to see while she’s lying down. Even when sitting, the halo prevents her from moving her eyes up or down — her area of vision is very limited.

“She’s so tough, but she is in pain, and it is so hard to watch and not be able to do anything to help her.”

Denise takes her to the washroom, and for trips around the hospital in the traction chair, but it’s hard for Ariel to see much — she can’t move her head.

Ariel’s mom says 12-year-old is strong, but in pain
Crossroads student has long, difficult journey ahead of her

Ariel has a long road ahead of her before she returns to school. She hopes to be able to play hockey again with her friends.

(Ariel Carr)

https://ca.gofundme.com/f/ariels-scoliosis-battle

Crossroads student Ariel Carr is in a traction bed in the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, with a halo bolted to her head and weights attached to the halo to straighten her spine. She is expected to be in the traction bed for six to eight weeks, with another surgery after that. (Denise Carr)
St. Michael Catholic Elementary School hosted its annual Science Showcase on Feb 5 in the gymnasium. Students in Grades 5 and 7 shared their investigations and findings with the school community and many visitors. From ice to eggs, the fermentation process or the structural integrity of a bridge, all budding scientists created eye-catching displays that riveted their audiences. Niagara Regional Science Fair – here come the students of St. Mike’s.

This Monday, St. Michael students began taking part in the Kids Helping Kids Campaign. Each of the school families has the opportunity to donate $5, which will go to the Niagara Children’s Centre and Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education. Both local agencies work in different capacities to help children right here in Niagara be the best they can be. St. Mike’s Student Council hosted an assembly modelling the crazy hats, hair and bling that make them joyful disciples, caring and serving brother and sisters in need.

Maya Hubbard researched the fermentation process.

Katherine VanderKaay and Sophie Gatt researched ice.

Chase Brown and Nicholas Vetrone looked at unhealthy drinks.

Jensen Paugh studied the strength of bridges for the Science Fair. (Photos supplied)

Five Second Rule is the title of Lucas Williams and Jake Cook’s Science Fair project.

Bling up your uniform – Joe Bowman, Nick Munera, Lucas Roberts Ramos, Ava Randell, Grace Healy, Jasmine Griese, Lila Singleton, and Mykayla Brown are joyful disciples.

Red White & Pink day – Tammin Dteger-Bradshaw, Simone Rezza, Anessa Raso, Oliver Regier, Joe Bowman, Seth VanderZalm dress up for the occasion.

Noah Kugler and Mario Galbraith have a scooter race in the gym.

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Local cinematographer working for top musicians

Mike Balsom Special to The Local

Adam CK Vollick can’t explain it. He posts “it’s a combination of work ethic and stu-
pidity.” He adds that he’s a “good hang, who doesn’t get weirded out about the stature” of the people with whom he works.

The 41-year-old Queenston resident is the go-to cin-
ematographer for rock legend Neil Young. Vollick, originally from Canfield, Ontario, has had the fortune to work with many other well-known artists on both music videos and fea-
ture films.

His most recent big-name project was MOUNTAIN, filmed in the Telluride, 9,000 feet above sea level, Vollick completed all the cinematography for the movie, which documents the recording of Colorado, Young’s latest al-
bum with his long-time band, Crazy Horse.

Using four Go-Pro cam-
eras, set up in various locations around the recording studio, as well as a Sony A7R III 35 mm, Vollick captures Young quarterbacking his long-time musical allies as they lay down the tracks for what would be-
coming the 10-song album.

The film screened simul-
taneously last October in 120 theatres around the world, timed to the release of the al-
bum. On his eponymous web-

site, the late film critic Roger Ebert enthused about Vollick’s cinematography and how it perfectly complemented the rag-tag nature of the music of Young and his band.

Vollick says MOUNTAIN
wasn’t even supposed to be a film. The 74-year-old Young, who launched his archive web-
site three years ago, is known for documenting everything he records. “I thought I was hired to just document (the sessions),” Vollick says, “so that there was a record to it.” To that end, he took a utilitarian approach to shooting with the small Go-Pro cameras, making sure he stayed out of sight of the band for the most part.

Six weeks after the record-
ing sessions, he received a call from Young’s people, inform-
ing him they had pieced to-
gether a two-hour version of his work. Vollick flew to L.A. to complete color correction on the footage, to ready it for the late October screening.

Vollick came to filmmak-
ing almost by accident. A former student in Sheridan College’s applied photography program, he began assisting in a Toronto commercial stu-
dio while still enrolled. Feeling he had learned all he could at Sheridan, he decided to leave the program before earning his diploma.

Following the Toronto ex-
perience, he moved to Hamil-
ton. Finding work in a studio with access to high-end digital equipment, he began to pho-
tograph bands as they played in the Steeltown bar scene.

A chance encounter with Bob Lanois, brother of U2’s and Neil Young producer Daniel, led to him being hired by the Lanois family to photograph a wake held in memory of an-
other brother, Ron.

About a year later, Dan La-
nois called Vollick and asked him to shoot some portraits for his 2005 album, Belladon-
na. The shoot turned into a casual rap session, and two weeks later, Lanois invited him to Los Angeles to collaborate on a stage show for his Rela-
donna tour.

The call couldn’t have come at a better time. Vollick
had left the Hamilton studio, thinking his dream had come to an end, and was selling home security systems for a friend. He quit that job, flew to L.A., and offered a full-
time job as Lanois’ in-house photographer and video artist, whose next album was Here It Is, released in 2007. The movie of the same name, shot and directed by Vollick, became his first feature-length film. It screened as a special presentation at the 2007 To-
ronto International Film Festi-
val, alongside Hollywood fare from directors such as Sean Penn, Noah Baumbach and Jonathanemme.

Lanois became the spring-
board for Vollick’s move into Neil Young’s inner circle. Young was familiar with the work Vollick did with Lanois for a project called DUB-Young called Lanois, telling him he wanted to make a re-
cord with him, and that he “wanted that kid from Canada to film it.”

Lanois and Vollick, along with Ben Howard, subsequent-
ly directed the Le Noise film, which documented the per-
formance of Young’s 2010 solo record.

He’s been working with Young ever since, brushing shoulders with the likes of country legends Emmylou Harris and Willie Nelson, as well as Young’s wife, Darryl Hannah.

Hannah, by the way, brought Vollick in as the cine-
matographer for her 2018 film, Paradox. The movie can be described as a cross between science fiction and a western, with a concert film thrown into the middle. Young stars in Paradox as the Man in the Black Hat, lurking around the fringes of the other char-
acters while playing typical Neil Young guitar riffs. Nelson briefly appears as a character named Red, while his sons

Lakas and Mikah, who peri-
odically find work as Young’s backing band, portray charac-
ters named Julehouse and The Particle Kid. It’s a surreal and masterful piece of filmmaking, for which Vollick acted as the one-man crew on camera. It can cur-
rently be seen on Netflix.

The Lanois-Young con-
nection, it’s safe to say, has chanced Vollick’s life. That’s true in his professional life, obviously, but it is also evident in his personal life.

Vollick’s first marriage ended in divorce shortly after he began his work with Lanois. He met his new partner, Jess Rice, while shooting Paradox for Hannah and Young. Rice, a chef, was hired to cook for the cast and crew. After a long day of shooting, he stumbled into Rice in the kitchen, and struck up a conversation.

A short while later, their friendship, then their ro-
mance, blossomed, while on tour with Young and his band. After Vollick suffered injuries in a bicycle accident in Niagra-
ons-the-Lake, Rice came up to Canada to help him recu-
perate. Last March, he popped the question, and last month, they tied the knot at St. Catha-
rines City Hall.

The newlyweds are getting ready to settle in at Vollick’s rented home in Queenston, where his basement is set up with the equipment he uses to continue working for Young and others.

Vollick rarely finds time for his first love — photography. NOTL residents may remem-
ber his stint as artist-in-resi-
dence at Backhouse in 2017. He speaks of two current films that will find space on his hard drive. One is his next major proj-
et, to document Young’s recent five-show run of concerts in Minneapolis, where he mixed his music with his calls for ac-
tion on environmental issues.

However, when reached for this article, he was busy putting finishing touches on a short documentary about Doug Atkins of Crystal Beach. The film was to debut at a par-
ty last Saturday to celebrate At-
s’s retirement from 40 years of serving the community as a volunteer firefighter.

Vollick speaks of that film with as much enthusiasm as he does of any of his projects with Young, Lanois, Hannah and others. It’s clear that for Adam CK Vollick (CK is his middle initial, Clayton Ken-
neath), no project is too big, or too small.

Adam Vollick at Puksaskwa National Park in Heron Bay, Ont. this summer. (Photo supplied)
It was a golden morning in Spanish Town, Jamaica.

Music and bird-song erased any memories of the dull winter my friend Jodie Goodwin and I had left behind in 1968. We were enjoying our stay at the home of Uton Bell and his young family near Upton Park. Uton came to Canada 47 years ago, but still spends time in Jamaica. He looks forward to spending a few months in Jamaica, back in the Caribbean, every year. The home of Earl “Early” Bell is where he spends his winters. Uton Bell calls Canada home, but still spends time in Jamaica.

The home of Earl “Early” Bell is a large gathering of friends and family honouring the passing of a loved one, in Kentish, a small village perched on one of the highest parishes of St. Catherine. A set-up usually takes place at the home of the deceased, each day leading up to the funeral. Often the funeral will be delayed two to three weeks to allow family members to return home from the U.S. or Canada. It is one of the most significant events for the community, as they come together to mourn and support each other during their time of bereavement.

As the journey progressed, I was no longer enjoying the view. My foot was jammed down on an imaginary brake; I was busily crouched on the brush scraping the car face of the dirt I was relieved when we reached the summit where Uton pointed out a distant ridge with little specs moving across the terrain. “Look, we’re almost there!”

The road had narrowed to a rutted path, and we included stops on the way where the precipice dropped down on both sides, and Uton hurriedly explained the weaving as he navigated every little bump and rut.

I refused to open my eyes until we finally reached a rather level area that widened out into a field of sugar cane. More than 100 people milled about in small groups, with more than a few donkeys tied up on the fringes.

I slid weak-kneed out of the SUV, taking a few minutes to steady myself, while Uton and Linnette jumped out to greet old friends. Jodie and I had started to follow but were quickly intercepted by curious locals, who welcomed us warmly. It became obvious I was Uton (Sonny, as he was known here) and Linnette were well-known in the community.

Men and women hustled around steaming pots simmering over oals in the yard of a terrace-house bangalow. The aroma of fresh pimento and jerk chicken wafted over the crowd, we savoured the aroma steadily on foot, in vehicles, and on mules.

Uton introduced me to a woman he worked on the farms back in Jamaica. It felt strange to meet people who were my neighbours eight months of the year on this distant mountaintop a world away.

They guided me through the crowd and we headed through the cane field and beyond with William Rhule, also retired from Epp’s. Jodie was off exploring, barely visible in the distance, where the far end of the ridge descended into the sea.

I was glad to have my fear of heights completely. I caught up to Jodie, where she had finished a few contented cows.

She threw her arms open as if to start soaring, and shared a story about her upcoming trip to the island. Wherever we travelled, she made herself right at home, investing herself 100 percent in what she was involved in.

The following day we had the privilege of making a driving through the final night, known as the nine-night, of the setup at another family member’s home. Uton parked by an overlook that offered a spectacular panoramic view of city lights shimmering over a distance of miles. A group of young boys came over and insisted we take their hands to guide us to the house on a good distance away. We were grateful for their assistance as it was impossible to see our way in the dark. Due to the recent downpours, the path was extremely slippery. We had no idea how treacherous it was until the dawn of the next day leading up to the funeral. Uton pointed out the tiny lights of a village straight down.

In the darkness we could hear the sounds of the nine-night band warming up. The warm glow of single bulbs starting to ten feet, illuminated the yard jammed with people coming to pay their respects and avail themselves of the plentiful amounts of Worthy Park rum.

The band was set up under a loosely draped cloth. I was impatient for the guitars to finish tuning, the vocalists to lose into their microphones. It quietly became obvious that we were not the focus of the entertainment. The drummers alternated every few songs, allowing a young boy of about 12 to display his exceptional talents. Later an elderly gentleman shuffled into the circle of musicians, coaxing some lively grooves. It took awhile before I recognized the songs as more animated versions of old hymns. Nine-night bands that provide the music at set-ups are prepared to play until the break of dawn, typically starting off with hymns and gospel choruses and evolving into reggae and popular music as the night progresses.

People were friendly and curious, but conversations dwindled once the music took off. The drummers alternated every few songs, allowing a young boy of about 12 to display his exceptional talents.

After a few songs, there was a commotion on the far side of the crowd. A Canadian visitor was dancing energetically in her own unique style, oblivious to the attention of onlookers.

An elderly gentleman beside me observed, Jodie, then looked at me quizzically.

“Shel learned to dance like that in Africa,” I offered, and laughed. It was Jodie’s first visit to the island. Wherever we travelled, she made herself right at home, investing herself 100 percent in what she was involved in.
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Win for Wolves
Sawyer Headley is on his way to scoring the winning goal as the NOTL penwee Wolves record a 1-0 win Saturday against the Port Colborne Sailors. (Fred Mercnik)

Skaters compete in Milton
NOTL Skating Club skaters at a recent Milton Winterskate competition were Jeong Lee (left), Tatum Lyric Bidal, Katharine VanderKaay, Ophelia Xie, Soraya Felice, AddiStyn Wiens and Lauren Shedden. Felice won her STAR 5 Women (U13-Grp 4) event; Bidal finished third in her Juvenile Women (U14) event and 13th in the STAR 9 Women (U14) event. Lee was fourth in STAR 5 Women (O13-Grp 1) and 10th in STAR 7 Women (O12); VanderKaay was sixth in STAR 5 Women (U13-Grp 1); Shedden 11th in STAR 5 Women (U13-Grp 5); Wiens was 12th in STAR 5 Women (U10-Grp 1) and Xie 12th in STAR 5 Women (U10-Grp 2). (Photo supplied)
February 13, 2020

**OBITUARY**

YOUNG, AUDREY GLADYS (NEE JONES) —Passed away peacefully at McNally House Hospice in Grimsby on Monday, January 13, 2020 in her 94th year. Loving wife of the late John Young (passed September 15, 2014) for 64 years. Beloved mother of Deborah and her husband Kip, Larry and his wife Janet, Steve and his wife Shelley. Proud grandmother to six grandchildren Kate, Kieran, Gregory, Paul, Stephanie and Colleen. Loving great grandmother to Deegan, Luca, Athena and Jack.

Audrey was born September 18, 1926 to the late Frederick and Pretoria Anne Jones in Niagara Falls. She attended High School in Niagara Falls and graduated as a registered nurse from Mack School of Nursing in St. Catharines. After having three children, Audrey enrolled in the University of Toronto and graduated from their Public Health program. For many years Audrey worked as a Public Health Nurse for York Region.

Some of Audrey’s happiest moments were when her bags were packed and she was travelling anywhere in the world. She enjoyed sharing amazing stories of her journeys to the Arctic and Antarctic. Her love of learning, experiencing new activities and cultures, and embracing adventure was one trademark of her personality. Audrey was very artistic and enjoyed knitting, quilting, and painting. Audrey was a terrific cook and shared her wonderful gift of gracious hospitality with so many people. She and John enjoyed many years running a Bed & Breakfast in Haliburton. Her warmth, caring personality, and terrific sense of style will be missed.

Family and friends are welcome to gather for a celebration of Audrey’s life at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at Grand Victorian Bed & Breakfast, 15618 Niagara Parkway, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Special thanks to the staff at The Royal Henley retirement home in St. Catharines and the staff at McNally House Hospice in Grimsby. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to McNally House Hospice or the Canadian Cancer Society. Arrangements have been entrusted to MORGAN FUNERAL HOME, 415 Regent St. Niagara-on-the-Lake. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com.

**CABIN FEVER SALE**

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Kim Wade
Special to The Local

On Saturday night, the moon was bright and full. Stars peeked out among the trees as skaters circled the ice to their favourite tunes at the Vintage Hotels – Parks Canada skating rink at Fort George. The skaters who braved the crisp weather were a mix of families with small children, teenagers mingles in little clumps and couples gliding hand in hand under criss-crossing strings of lights.

Near the rink, nestled among the trees, skaters relaxed in bright red Mus-koka chairs and warmed their toes by the fires. Parks Canada employee, Erin Ronfeld, explains that there are fewer rentals on these cold nights. She theorizes that new skaters tend to stay away from the rink when the weather gets chilly. It is the “more dedicated skaters that come out when it’s colder,” she says. Nonetheless, she likes watching the new skaters best. She enjoys watching new Canadians and international students try skating, many of them watching new Canadians and international students try skating, many of them for the first time. She appreciates their efforts to attempt this winter pastime. “It’s fun to see them come and try to do something that is so Canadian,” and to watch them improve.

She notes it’s a mix of locals and non-locals that come out to skate on the outdoor rink. Among those who come from out of town, she says many of them are from the Toronto area. The “locals” she sees are not necessarily from Niagara-on-the-Lake, but from across the Niagara Region, coming out to try this unique outdoor experience.

She describes how busy the rink has been lately. There have been many families seeking out ways to entertain the kids over the past few days due to the rotating teacher strikes and PA days. She says they can see around 200 people a day on a weekend, and skating is a great activity to get everyone outside in the fresh air.

Tired and hungry skaters can warm themselves by one of the gas fireplaces, or grab a hot chocolate and a snack inside the Agora. Vintage Hotel staffers, Jacob Hebbert and Nic Vanghan, explain the skating rink was formerly the Rink on the Brink that was situated in Niagara Falls near the Table Rock Restaurant. Vintage Hotels bought the rink equipment and partnered with Parks Canada to set it up at Fort George, where it has become a welcome winter fixture over the past four years. In this partnership, Vintage Hotels provides the rink, supplies the DJ and runs the concession stand inside the Agora, while Parks Canada provides the property and maintains the rink. Along with other Parks Canada staff members, Ronfeld is responsible for keeping the fires stoked, administering first-aid, and enforcing the rink rules.

Tunes on Ice is just one of many events at the rink this month. This Friday, Feb. 14, is a PA day for many schools. The rink will be open during the day from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. for an open skate, then from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. for supervised family skating, with helmet and skate rentals available. Starting at 6 p.m., there will be a special Valentine’s Day Date Skate, complete with skating to live music and a rose and chocolate treat until 9 p.m. Saturday Night Tunes on Ice returns on Saturday, Feb. 15, and runs from 6 to 9 p.m. until the end of February.

On Family Day, Feb. 17, it’s an Ice Dogs celebration from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Niagara Ice Dogs players will be at the rink from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., along with their mascot, Bones, and the Parks Canada mascot, Par-ka. There will be games and activities from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and a chance to win Parks Canada and Niagara Ice Dogs official merchandise. The family skate runs from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and then from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Further information on the rink can be found on https://www.pc.gc.ca/ en/ice/ons/fortgeorge/activ/patinoire-rink, or current rink conditions and updates can be found on the Fort George Twitter page.
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