

# The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL



The Grist  
in St. Davids  
almost ready  
to open  
page 12

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Brian King, Mike King, Lisa Wall, Tonie Mori, Mary Krahn, Joanne Mantini and Miguel Mori were at Mori Gardens to help empty out the decades-old business. It's been sold, and some, although not all of the structures on the Niagara Stone Road property will be bulldozed. (Photo supplied)

## Mori Gardens closes after 45 years of serving the community

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Mori Gardens has closed its doors for the last time. The next step is a bulldozer to demolish some of the buildings on the property, although part of the gar-

den centre will remain. For now, at least, the Mori Nursery building on Niagara Stone Road is expected to remain as an office, and the portion of the garden centre where Tonie had her office, to the right of the large yellow entrance to

the garden centre, will also stay. The Niagara Stone Road property, which had been for sale for about five years, has now passed into the hands of Two Sisters Corp., owned by Benny Marotta. Marotta told The Local last

fall that he planned to turn his attention to "winery facilities," and expanding winery production on the property. Although Saturday was officially the last day, and a busy one with sales to help clear out the property, she

and other staff were still working Sunday, and Monday Tonie was doing deliveries to get rid of some final items. They had been using social media to post items that were for sale, and then, finally, things they were giving away, such as counters.

Many people were stopping by to take advantage of the sale, and also to say thank you and to pick up something as a memento of the local garden centre, which had been serving locals for about 45 years, says Tonie.

"So many people have told us over the last few months that this was their happy place," she says.

It was hers as well. "I used to bring my kids here when they were growing

up." Her "girls," long-time staff members, have found jobs at Country Basket Garden Centre in Niagara Falls, and her son Miguel, who has a master's degree in business and had looked after the marketing for the garden centre, is now working for another local greenhouse operation in e-marketing.

"That makes me feel satisfied, knowing everybody's taken care of," she says.

The knowledgeable staff at the garden centre, some of whom have been there for more than 25 years and have provided valuable advice helping locals plan and landscape their gardens, will be hugely missed in the

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## Medical experts, not politicians, should make medical decisions serving the community

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Betty Disero supports local business. The Lord Mayor chose not to sign an open letter that was organized by St. Catharines Mayor Walter

Sendzik and dated Feb. 24, endorsed by every one of Niagara's mayors except for Disero, but her choice was not because she's anti-business, or against businesses reopening, she says. Last week, when the letter was made public, there

was an expectation the province would move Niagara into the red zone, and also some concern that Niagara's acting chief medical officer of health, Dr. Mustafa Hirji, would object, supporting instead a continued grey lockdown.

The province did move Niagara into red, and Hirji has expressed his concern about variants rapidly spreading and causing a third wave, but he was clear



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# Sailboat grounded on U.S. side of Niagara River

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Folks on the other side of the Niagara River were as curious about the lone sailer and his boat as we were.

Last week, residents on the U.S. side saw something strange on the shore by Fort Niagara State Park, the Tribune/Sentinel reported. “Amidst the ice floes, a small, abandoned sailboat was seen bobbling on the eastern end with the waves,” a story in that paper read.

The damaged boat apparently managed to break free from its mooring at the NOTL Sailing Club, and drifted across the river into U.S. waters.

The Local reported in February that once the boat was safely tied up at the sailing club, the man aboard it, who had been living on the

boat anchored in the river since early December, had been taken to the hospital in St. Catharines by police. He was reported to be a loner, and an inexperienced sailor with mental health issues. His father, a resident of London, Ont., was expected to take him home.

Law enforcement on both sides of the border said they are fully aware of the presence of the boat now on the U.S. side, and its location is not considered a hazard. According to the U.S. Coast Guard station, the Tribune/Sentinel says, the owner has been contacted and the coast guard is awaiting the boat’s removal from the shoreline.

The same owner has abandoned two other boats of the same make and model in Lake Erie, where they remain.



Terry Duffy, editor-in-chief of a group of Western New York publications, sent this photo he took Monday, March 1 of the sailboat that was a mystery for a time on this side of the river. It became a curiosity on the New York side as well, until Duffy learned of the story behind the boat and its owner in The Local, and shared it with his readers. (Terry Duffy, Niagara Frontier Publications)

## What’s new about red

Local staff

Niagara-on-the-Lake has been in the red-control zone of provincial restrictions since Monday, with the town, and Lord Mayor Betty Disero, reminding residents to maintain safety precautions during this time of “cautious and gradual reopening.”

The message to be vigilant continues: keep a safe distance, wash your hands, and wear a mask.”

The red zone allows in-person shopping for all retail stores, with capacity limits of 75 per cent for supermarkets and other stores that primarily sell groceries, as well as convenience stores and pharmacies; and 50 per cent for all other retail, including discount and big box retailers, liquor stores, hardware stores and garden centres.

It also allows restaurants, bars and wineries to reopen with a maximum of 10 people indoors.

Additional regulations

imposed by the region require shopping and retail establishments and food and drink premises to adhere to measures which include retail stores to actively monitor and manage compliance with physical distancing and masking requirements within their business, as well as in line-ups outside their location.

In restaurants, the regional restrictions include limiting patrons to one household per table, with some restrictions. Patrons must be seated, with a two-metre minimum distance between tables, or impermeable barrier; and a limit of four people seated together. Contact information is required from patrons, and face coverings are required except when eating or drinking. Establishments close at 10 p.m. and liquor can be served to 9 p.m. Dancing, singing and the live performance of music is prohibited.

While community centres and multi-purpose facilities are permitted to reopen

in red, the town’s community centre and arenas will remain closed, with the health and safety of the public and staff in mind.

This closure does not impact the general operation of the Niagara Nursery School or the Sweets & Swirls Cafe, located within the community centre, which will remain open for curbside pickup.

In the red zone, personal care services, including hair salons and barbershops, manicure and pedicure salons, aesthetician services and spas may open, with restrictions, that include wearing a mask.

Hotels, motels, cottages, resorts and other short-term rental businesses may open, subject to provincial conditions.

Town staff remain available to serve residents online, over the phone and through arranged curbside pickup.

Visit covid19.ontario.ca for the most up-to-date information from the province and notl.com/COVID-19 for information from the town.

## Sweets & Swirls Cafe remains closed for now

### Meal orders still available for pickup

**Penny Coles**  
Local staff

The town is beginning to open more of its facilities for public use, but the community centre remains closed, for the safety of the public and town staff.

That means Sweets & Swirls remains closed for now, although it still offers its weekly meal selections, which can be picked up three days a week.

The popular cafe was closed in March in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was when owners James Cadeau and Erinn

Lockard developed their weekly meals to keep them working and bring in some income.

They were thrilled to be able to open to the public in September, when the community centre reopened, to be shut down again in December.

They lease their space in the building, but with the community centre closed, there is nobody in the building expect the nursery school children and staff, says Cadeau. All community centre programs are still cancelled, and even the public washrooms are un-

available for use.

The NOTL Public Library is opening to the public on a limited basis, but the connecting doors that lead to the community centre remain locked, Cadeau said. “Our hands are tied.”

There is some confusion about if and when they can reopen, but it will be up to the town to make that decision.

Even if they had been able to reopen this week, with the region now in the red zone, the capacity restrictions for the seating area wouldn’t have made it worthwhile, said Cadeau.



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James Cadeau and Erinn Lockard of the Sweets & Swirls Cafe continue to offer their meals, ordered for Tuesday, Saturday or Sunday pickup, at the community centre. (File photo)



# Control of COVID spread in the hands of residents

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Niagara just entered the red zone Monday, and Dr. Mustafa Hirji, our acting chief medical officer of health, already has some concerns.

The most pressing is the rate at which the number of new variant cases in Niagara is climbing.

Last week, he was looking at a total of six suspected cases of the variant, but by Monday, it had increased to 33. While that seems a big jump, he cautions it's still a small number of cases.

But variants, he added, "are what is now driving our cases to flatten out, as opposed to continuing the decline that we were seeing earlier."

Last week, variants made up about 20 per cent

of cases in the province, but that number is expected to increase to about 40 per cent by next week, he said.

The R rate, or reproductive rate, indicates that number could double in four and a half days, although the statistics from Toronto show the number of variant cases is taking seven days to double.

While there is a lag in the testing of variants to determine what kind they are, reporting the finding of variants takes about two days, with a delay time the province is trying to shorten to just one day. Although reported before lab results are confirmed, that number is "almost 100 per cent accurate," said Hirji.

With the increase in variant numbers creating a plateau earlier this week, it could lead to a spike, and

the third wave medical health officials are warning of.

Hirji said Monday he will be notifying the province about his concerns, but wouldn't expect there to be a move to tighter restrictions after just days in red.

The solution, if necessary, is the province's emergency break, with has been used to move Simcoe/Muskoka and Thunder Bay from red to grey-lockdown.

Hirji said he would be talking to the medical officers of health this week about the metrics used to make that decision.

The reopening of restaurants, bars, hair salons, gyms and other businesses this week is being handled with caution, but he stressed the best way to prevent a steep increase in cases is in the hands of res-

idents.

"It's down to our personal behaviour as citizens now whether or not we avoid that third wave," he stressed.

The new cases of variants in Niagara can be linked to Toronto and other areas, but there are a couple of cases that Public Health has been unable to trace, making community spread a possibility, although those cases were still being investigated, he said Monday.

With vaccinations expected to be the light at

the end of the tunnel, Hirji said the registration website should be available mid-March, allowing for vaccination clinics to begin as soon as Niagara has vaccine to move forward.

While there are contingency plans for Niagara if the provincial registration website is not ready on time, that would take up staff time and away from vaccinations, which are key to controlling the spread of infection.

The next group of peo-

ple to be vaccinated will be the 80-plus age group, but Hirji said he is also concerned about those from 50 to 80 years old, a group still at a "relatively high risk of passing away" if infected with COVID, once the 80-plus and long-term care residents are vaccinated.

They are also the age group most likely to be hospitalized, at a time when hospitals are already pretty full, and staff, again, are needed for vaccinations, he said.

## Spread of variants could lead to spike, third wave

Continued from page 1

that he had only been asked to supply the "context" for the data that was considered by the province when the decision to move the region into a less restrictive zone was made.

The letter, says Disero, praised Niagara Health and Public Health for protecting residents, and Niagara residents for stepping up to contain the spread of COVID-19.

It didn't mention Hirji's concerns, or that of any of the medical experts in Ontario who have expressed similar fears.

Disero wants it made clear she is not anti-business, that she didn't refuse to sign because she was opposed to having Niagara move into red and businesses being allowed to reopen. She just doesn't think it's her job as a politician to try to influence decisions made by medical health experts.

It was a tough decision not to sign, she says, and she's hoping not to become "a target," accused of being anti-business for being the only one not to sign.

"I know everybody's tired, I know everybody's frustrated, everybody wants to get back to the way things used to be. But I also think we need to listen to the qualified professionals," she says, referring not just to Hirji, but other medical experts across the province who have the same concerns.

Hearing Niagara had moved into red Friday, she says she is happy with a decision that was based on the



Lord Mayor Betty Disero



Dr. Mustafa Hirji

Ontario medical officer of health recommendation.

"I'm not opposed to red, if that's what the medical officer of health is saying is the right thing to do. I just don't think it should be a political decision."

When asked at last Thursday's regional council meeting about moving into the less restrictive zone, Hirji said he was not "super confident" about reopening, that he continues to be worried about variants spreading quickly. Last week the number of variants in Niagara went from six to 17, and by Monday, had risen to 33.

Disero says she's somewhat concerned that Hirji is not "super confident," it's the best thing to do, but she is also relieved that the provincial medical expert does have confidence in the move.

"It's a matter of two different experts interpreting information differently," she says, which is not unusual in this pandemic.

When asked about the opinion of the York Region medical officer of health, who said he thought York, with higher numbers than Niagara, was ready to move to red, Hirji said that was a "minority opinion" that other medical experts do

not agree with, and have cautioned moving forward with reopening without knowing the fast-spreading variants are under control.

Disero has said repeatedly that businesses should be getting more financial help from the province. The town has done everything it can to support local businesses, and she personally has as well all through the pandemic, advocating for more financial support, and going to bat for particular businesses who thought they were unfairly shuttered as non-essential.

"I've been very supportive of anything we can do to help businesses in different ways throughout this pandemic," she says.

She will also do anything she can to support vaccination efforts, the next step in combatting the virus.

And she reminds residents they still need to be cautious, especially with businesses reopening, to do everything they can to stop the spread.

Regional chair Jim Bradley was not asked to sign the letter, but said he wouldn't have if asked, explaining he wouldn't go against the recommendation of the region's medical officer of health.

## Business always generous at giving back to community

Continued from page 1

community, as will the business itself.

Tonie has always believed in giving back to the community that supported her business, and has contributed \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year on several important fundraisers, including an annual Passion event for

Wells of Hope, garden tours, and the Rotary Holiday House Tour.

The two businesses, the garden centre and the nursery, were entirely separate entities, and as owner of Mori Gardens, Tonie had a long lease on the property, and didn't have to give it up, but didn't want to stand in the way of the sale.

She still has some work

to clean up, and then will be ready to turn her attention to Perridiso Estate Winery on Warner Road, which she co-owns with her partner Joe Perri.

There is no break for her, no rest in between, but she likes being busy, and is looking forward to getting more involved with Perridiso, and moving on to the next stage in her life.

### Spring is in the air



Lindsey Ireland, Jolanda Henry and Sandra Marynissen are happy to have Regal Florist and Garden Centre open to the public, especially with it looking a little spring-like. (Penny Coles)

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# Kaiser offering leadership on health, jobs, climate change

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Buoyed by the experience of running for the federal Liberal Party in 2019, and the support from voters, Andrea Kaiser is excited about giving it another shot.

She has been chosen the candidate to run for the Liberals in the next federal election, which is scheduled

for October 2023, but with a minority government, could be called at any time before then.

A life-long Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, Kaiser is a businesswoman best known for her role in the wine industry. She is also a community leader, teacher, operated her family's restaurant and motel in NOTL for 10 years, was a municipal

councillor for three terms, and is the mother of two adult children.

On the October 2019 election night, when Kaiser lost to Conservative Tony Baldinelli, she told her supporters she'd be back, pledging to continue working to turn the riding red, and to be ready for the next election, "stronger than ever."

Kaiser says the run-up to the last election was rushed, giving her about three months to campaign across the large geographical area of the Niagara Falls riding, which also includes Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

This time around, she will have a much better opportunity to cover the entire riding, and to spread her message about her three top priorities: "to protect our health, rebuild our local economy, and take decisive action on climate change."

In addition to her career as director of marketing and tourism for Reif Estate Winery, she has her own business, Drea's Wine Company, carrying on the legacy passed on by her father, Karl Kaiser, who was the co-founder of Inniskillin Wines, and is credited with the birth of modern Canadian winemaking.

These days, she is helping Reif navigate its way through



Andrea Kaiser's sister, Magdalena Kaiser, her daughter Madison Lepp and her mother Sylvia Kaiser applaud her after the 2019 election, and will be her biggest supporters and helpers in the upcoming campaign. (File photo)



On election night, 2019, Andrea Kaiser addressed her supporters after a second place finish, vowing to come back stronger next time. (File photo)

the pandemic, "re-imagining" the response to the many changes in restrictions and protocols that have come along since last March, leading up to a second reopening this week. While it's been an exhausting year, she says, she is completely energized by the thought of the upcoming campaign, prepared for whatever it might look like, and whatever twists and turns it might take, based not only on pandemic restrictions but also the timing of the election.

Kaiser was proud last election to have run a positive campaign, with positive spirit and energy, and she is focused on doing the same again, although she has some concern about the aggressive tone of some of the negative comments, especially as they may affect her children and people around her.

Winery Owner Klas Reif has been "super-supportive" of Kaiser's political aspirations, she says. "He doesn't always understand the journey I'm on," she laughs, "but he respects it." However, she tries to keep her political career separate from her work at the winery, in an attempt to

shield it from any negativity toward her politics, she says.

"To me, this campaign is all about being respectful to everyone, including those with a different view and other politicians. I don't want to bring anything negative to the workplace because of my politics. It's not fair to the company that's supporting me, and is so respectful of what I'm doing, I want to be cautious of that."

She also worries about negativity affecting her children. Her son, 24, doesn't spend a lot of time on social media, but her daughter, 22, is helping with the campaign, and is more exposed to the comments "that are not so positive."

Leading up to the 2019 election, her daughter Madison did some door-to-door campaigning, and most people at the door "were quite lovely with her," says Kaiser, "but I still had to have a conversation about what to expect. Unfortunately, it's sad to say that is sort of a norm on social media. People think it's okay to make negative comments," especially on particular platforms that attract political conversations of a combative nature that surprises her. "I'm really quite dumbfounded that people think it's okay to talk like that. It's not okay."

Kaiser is looking forward to getting out on the campaign trail, whatever that will mean in a pandemic, and which, among other factors, will depend on when the election is called.

Despite criticism from the opposition, whose role it is to "question and push to make sure the government is doing its job," she is extremely proud of the Liberal government's response to the pandemic, how they dealt with a health crisis, the possibility of an economic crisis, and having to make decisions very quickly, very early on, without the science that is available today.

The financial aids that were made available, such

as the emergency wage subsidy and CERB (the Canada Emergency Response Benefit), were "honestly brilliant" in that they provided the help that was needed quickly, and kept the economy going.

"They kept businesses afloat and kept food on the table," she says. "Yes, mistakes were made here and there, but in terms of the scope of the crisis and the response to it, I feel really proud to be knocking on doors representing the Liberal party."

Kaiser says growing up, she considered politics more about the community, rather than a particular party, but looking back on her upbringing and the values her parents lived by, has come to realize "my whole life was lived by Liberal values."

Their doors were always open, to exchange students over many years, and to anyone in need, she says. Her father was a "quiet man, who wanted to see people do better." He was a strong believer in education as a way to achieve that, and "quietly helped people who needed it."

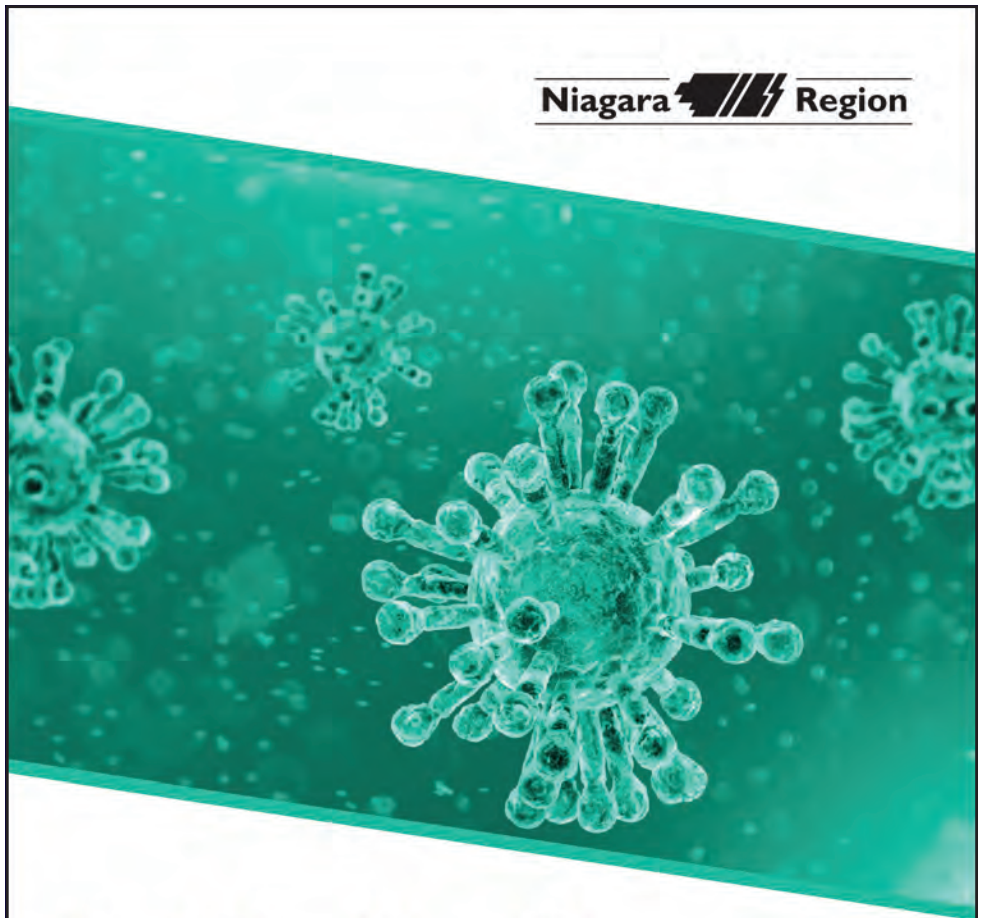
It was because of her parents that she has "this drive to participate, to make things better. It's just part of who I am."

She's taken on leadership roles in the wine industry and the community, and in 2019, when her daughter Madison became an activist for climate change, Kaiser says she decided she wanted to be part of the solution for the next generation. "I realized I could make a difference for my kids' future, with the climate crises, and the local economy."

She says she sees the stress every day for employers who are navigating their way through the pandemic. "Klaus (Reif) treats us like a family, and he bears that weight for his employees."

As a single mom during many years of struggling to

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# Campaign planning underway to cover all scenarios

Continued from page 4

look after her family, Kaiser says, "I get that it can be really stressful for a lot of people."

In addition to economic issues, Kaiser says, COVID has highlighted another priority for her, the need to reform long-term care. She was pleased to hear the federal government say it wants to work with provinces to set national standards for long-term care.

"I feel compelled to be part of a better future. I know that sounds corny," she says, adding it's a value instilled in her by her family.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to provide a strong and experienced leadership in Ottawa."

Her vision, she says, will position Niagara "to take full advantage of the post-COVID economy."

The fact that she did so well in the 2019 election was also a factor that encouraged her to run.

As the Liberal candidate

in the 2019 election, Kaiser won more votes than any other Liberal candidate — federal or provincial — in the history of the riding of Niagara Falls. "I have to give it a go. We created such momentum in such a short time leading up to that election, I was so proud of what we accomplished in just three months. Of course it wasn't the outcome I hoped for, but in that little bit of time I got to know the three communities better, and I was honoured to have so many people supporting me. The election was one of the best experiences of my life. Even though it was tough to lose, I wouldn't trade it for anything."

And the beauty of being nominated early for this election means she can take the time she needs to spend in all corners of an unusually large riding, both in terms of geography and voters, she says.

While it is difficult to plan a campaign, knowing there could be a snap election, "with a minority government, we have to be pre-



Andrea Kaiser visited a Niagara Falls restaurant with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during the 2019 federal election campaign. (Photo supplied)

pared. We are looking at all possibilities to be sure there is a plan in place, a plan for all scenarios."

Especially during a pan-

demic, Kaiser adds, "we have to be ready for all possibilities. It's ironic to think that life in 2020 has prepared us for this."

Community members who share Andrea's vision for Niagara and Canada are encouraged to support her grassroots campaign at

www.votekaiser.ca.

Find her on Facebook at VoteKaiser, Instagram @VoteKaiser, and Twitter @VoteKaiser.

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# EDITORIAL

## With red comes responsibility, we're warned

It was a little frightening to hear Dr. Mustafa Hirji, our acting chief medical officer of health, say it's up to the citizens of Niagara and our personal behaviour to avoid an increase in COVID cases and a third wave.

We're in red, and restaurants, bars and winery tastings are all awaiting our attendance. We can get our hair cut or our nails done, and we can go to the gym to work out. Well, some of us can.

We know, and have been told many times, those establishments are not the cause for community outbreaks. Those are on us. It's our activity that determines the level of safety for ourselves and those around us when we engage in those activities.

Although we are in red, we are being asked to act like we're still in lockdown, with a stay-at-home order, except for going out for essential reasons. And now, of course, non-essential reasons, like a hair cut.

Some of us may feel like we're breaking out of prison,

and heading to our nearest watering hole.

Others might say our behaviour won't change. Until we think about our favourite restaurant now open for breakfast, a weekly tradition we've been missing, or we pick up the phone to call our hair salon for an appointment. And we realize our behaviour has changed, and we are responsible for what happens next.

It's easy to relax, now that we're in red, which feels like a good place to be. But that is the behaviour we are being warned about. We've been given privileges that can be revoked quickly, at any time, if we abuse them.

We still need to be careful, remain vigilant, follow all the rules we've been told to follow this last year, which should be second nature by now.

During a press conference Monday, when Dr. Hirji spoke about his fear of being in red, one reporter asked him if the number of cases doesn't justify a move soon into orange or yellow, which are less restrictive.

His response indicated he would expect moving

back to grey-lockdown to be the more likely scenario, although when he spoke of the "emergency brake" that would take us there, he said since we had reached red, he didn't expect the province would be in a rush to put us back there.

When we think of where we want to go, who we plan to go with and what we might do there, remember, we're responsible not only for our own safety, but those around us. We can enjoy all the possibilities that are now open to us, but we should do so responsibly.

### Almost there



There is still some construction on the Four Mile Creek Road property where The Local office is located, across from the town hall. We're getting closer to moving back in, but we're not ready yet. Our phone numbers and email addresses are on this page, so please call any time. (Penny Coles)

## It's a sad day when we lose such a great community business

It was a sad day when we learned that Mori Gardens was closing.

But now it's happened, and every time we drive through Virgil along Niagara Stone Road we will be reminded. It's been 45 years for the garden centre, and the nursery was open much longer, before Leno Mori decided it was time to retire.

That drive through Virgil has already changed greatly, and will continue to. This particular change does not feel like progress, it feels like a huge, important loss to the community, a gap that can't be filled.

The highly respected family business that was valued enormously by its customers will be missed, as will the staff so many have come to know and depend on for advice over the decades.

Many of us can look around our yards at our Mori Garden purchases, and perhaps even remember with fondness the staff member who helped us choose it, or told us how to care for it. The evidence of their knowledge, their expertise, flourishes for our enjoyment.

If we belong to any service organization in town, we can likely remember a time when we needed a donation, a gift for our auction that would benefit some worthwhile cause, and Mori Gardens generously helped out. We know the Virgil Business Association

has raised more than a \$1 million to give back to the community in many ways, not the least of which is the Virgil Sports Park, all money raised through the popular Virgil Stampede. Mori Gardens and Mori Nurseries were both extremely supportive of the VBA and generous with donations to the fundraising event.

This is the time for us to say thank you, to Tonie and the Mori family, and to the staff, for all you did for us and this community.

We hope that whatever the future holds, it will be good to you.

Penny Coles  
The Local



## View from the couch

Donald Combe  
Special to The Local

The heroine of this film version of the novel, *The Secret Garden* (Netflix, 2020), brings an 'Anne Shirley' quality to this much-loved tale. I found myself delighted to be, once again, in the Secret Garden, where hope

and magic live.

*Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to go to movies. Until he resumes going to theatres, he has graciously agreed to share his opinions, through "short and sweet" exclusives, of Netflix series and movies for The Local.*



Colin Firth *Featureflash Photo Agency / Shutterstock.com*

## Baldinelli joins industry, science and technology committee



MP Tony Baldinelli  
Special to The Local

Since my last column, I wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with an

update on some of the issues, as well as work I have been doing on your behalf.

Recently, I was promoted to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. This committee will be critical to focusing on Canada's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It is currently undertaking

studies on our domestic manufacturing capacity for a COVID-19 vaccine; the accessibility and affordability of telecommunications services; and is beginning a study on supports needed for our Canadian aerospace industry.

With great fanfare, the federal government announced in early February, a deal to begin producing COVID-19 vaccines in Canada at a National Research Council of Canada facility in Montreal. Unfortunately, this facility has yet to be built, and the earliest it is expected to begin producing vaccines is in 2022.

On Feb. 18, as part of our committee hearings on the study of domestic manufacturing capacity for a COVID-19 vaccine, we had members of the federal government's COVID-19 Task

## The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL

The trusted voice of our community

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The opinions expressed in submitted commentary, and letters to the editor, are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of The NOTL Local.

# COMMENT

## Town committee to provide vaccine updates



### Community Health and Wellness Committee

Many in our community share concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic and have questions about access to vaccinations. You are not alone.

We acknowledge that information about COVID-19 vaccination planning and distribution is constantly evolving. We know that the availability of vaccines in our community, and priority groups that will be receiving them, is valued information. As such, the Community Wellness Committee chair will work with the Town to assist with written responses

and updates following major announcements concerning the COVID-19 vaccination process, and distill messaging from multiple levels of government into information that is most relevant to residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Links to websites for more complete details and information will be included as needed.

These updates will be published on the Town's website ([notl.com/COVID-19](https://notl.com/COVID-19)) and in the local newspaper(s) and will be intended to encourage residents to stay informed about this process and assist in sharing important information with residents who do not have access to the internet.

Additionally, posters providing information regarding COVID-19 vaccination information, including the Niagara Region Public Health website address and a phone number,

will be posted in the local post offices.

It is our current understanding that Niagara Region Public Health is leading the vaccination planning and distribution process. It is expected that our local health care providers will be working with the Public Health teams to deliver the vaccine. For more detailed, and the most current information, please visit the Niagara Region website at <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/default.aspx>

As you may have seen or heard in newspapers and other news outlets, all appointments for vaccines will be completed via a centralized booking system. More details about this will be made available in the days and weeks to come as we learn more from Niagara Region Public Health.

It is important to know that 100 per cent of residents, who wished to receive the vaccine, in our three long-term care homes in Niagara-on-the-Lake have received both their first and second doses. This is certainly reassuring news for that portion of residents living in our community.

For the most up-to-date statistics on the progress of vaccination delivery in our region, please visit the Niagara Region website, as noted above, and the Niagara Health System website at [www.niagarahealth.on.ca/site/vaccination-clinic](http://www.niagarahealth.on.ca/site/vaccination-clinic).

The Niagara Health website reports the vaccination progress for essential health care workers.

It is the intention that every Niagara-on-the-Lake resident:

- Stay home whenever possible.
- Practise physical distancing – maintain two metres from anyone who is not from your household.
- Practise frequent hand washing.
- Wear a mask or face covering in indoor spaces and

when two metres physical distancing isn't possible.

• Take a self-assessment if you are feeling unwell. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>

• Stay up-to-date with the latest information about COVID-19 in Ontario. Visit [covid19.ontario.ca](https://covid19.ontario.ca) for the most up-to-date information from the provincial government, [niagararegion.ca](https://niagararegion.ca) for information from the Niagara Region, and [notl.com/COVID-19](https://notl.com/COVID-19) for information regarding impacts to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

## Canadians deserve better

Continued from page 6

Force appear as witnesses. One of my questions was fortunate enough to be picked up by the National Post.

Members of the Official Opposition have been critical of this task force, which is responsible for making recommendations to the federal government on which vaccines to purchase and on which Canadian companies to back with funding for research and development of COVID vaccines.

While several of my committee colleagues brought up matters concerning potential conflicts of interests of task force members, and the lack of transparency and disclosure of the task force itself, I concentrated my questioning on the failed agreement between Canada and CanSino Biologics - a Chinese firm that was engaged to test its vaccine in Canada. Only three days after the prime minister made the announcement of this agreement, the Chinese government refused to ship early samples to Can-

ada, and the whole agreement broke apart.

The government decision to engage CanSino happened in May 2020. When that agreement collapsed, the task force was established but did not meet until June, and then it took until August for the government to order vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna.

Given this timeline and wasted efforts with CanSino, I asked why the government had wasted almost three precious months during a national pandemic crisis in its efforts to secure agreements for needed vaccines.

As a result of this three-month delay, Canada now finds itself far behind other nations in terms of waiting for vaccine deliveries. As of March 2, Canada ranks 53rd in the world in terms of vaccinations administered per 100 people. This massive failure rests entirely with this federal government. Their notion that they have procured the most robust portfolio of vaccines in the world rings hollow, when Canadians cannot get vaccinated.

Consequently, the Trudeau government has left Canada with the lowest vaccination rate, the biggest deficit, and one of the highest unemployment rates in the G7.

In January, another 213,000 Canadians lost their jobs, and according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, they fear another 160,000 to 200,000 small businesses may permanently close due to COVID-19.

This isn't how it should be. Canada can do much better and Canadians deserve much better.

It is incumbent on the federal government to secure our vaccine supply in a timely manner, and to present a detailed plan for economic recovery on the other side of this pandemic. I am hopeful to see this in the 2021 federal budget, when it is presented.

As your Member of Parliament, I will continue to ask the tough questions of this federal government, whether it be at committee or in Question Period or while engaging in debate, in the House of Commons.

## Response to an interested reader

*The Local received a question this week from reader Mary Sugden, who had driven along the Niagara River Parkway looking for Tryon's Folly, a house across the Niagara River mentioned in last week's story by Jane Andres, of the Underground Railroad (The Local, Feb. 24). Jane Andres responded with more information:*

Thank you for your interest in the story. It certainly has been fascinating to research.

It's currently a private residence and not open to the public. It's only visible from our side of the river during the winter when there are no leaves on the trees or vegetation.

Because there is so much private property on the Canadian side it is not easily accessible. One vantage point is the side parkette at the RiverBrink Art Gallery. This is an interesting view because you can see that it's actually quite a large structure at the bottom of the cellars.

Of course if you know anyone with a boat you

could get a great view of the house from the river, or from the Queenston boat launch.

Here's a link to some information as well as photos of the passages in the house that led to the secret hiding places. I talked to the curator of a little museum in Lewis-

ton whose friend had to do some work in the house recently, and remarked how very tight the tunnel and the spaces were.

<http://historiclewiston.org/freedomcrossing/>

Jane Andres  
NOTL



This photo of Tryon's Folly shows a view of the house not seen when the trees have leaves on them. Last week's edition of The Local misspelled the photographer's name — our apologies to Frank McPhee.



### Letters! We want letters!

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



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# Tree clearing underway for diamond interchange

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Work on the diverging diamond interchange that will replace the Glendale overpass above the QEW started last week, with the removal of trees beside the existing ramps, in preparation for construction of a \$53.8 million joint project of the Ministry of Transportation and the Niagara Region.

It's the first interchange of its kind in Ontario, with only two others in Canada.

The first to be built was in Calgary, opening in 2017. It was planned to reduce congestion in a fast-growing community, with a mixture of commercial and residential development nearby, similar to Glendale. Drivers, reported CBC, unaccustomed

to the design of a diverging diamond intersection, could be expected to have a sense of dislocation as they move from the right side of the road to the left on the bridge, which allows drivers to make left-hand turns without having to cross traffic.

The Calgary interchange was expected to reduce the number of collisions, by reducing the number of collision points compared with more traditional interchanges, and help with traffic flow.

The Glendale overpass has in past years been one of the sites with the highest number of collisions, although not serious or fatal ones.

Brennan Paving and Construction Ltd. has been awarded the contract of the large project, which is expected to be open to traffic until

November, 2022, with completion in 2023.

A four-metre-wide pedestrian and cycling path will run through the middle of the bridge, with signal crossings at each end.

A new parking lot for commuters to car pool will also be constructed.

The province is expected to fund 80 per cent of the cost, and the region the other 20 per cent, while the town will contribute about \$334,300 of the regional portion, explains Steve Hardaker, who as a resident of Niagara-on-the-Green has followed the project closely.

The town's contribution is expected to fund lighting, landscaping and streetscape details, he said.

Last week many trees were pushed over by heavy

equipment, clearing two large woodlots in preparation for construction, he said, but there were also many trees left standing.

He estimated on each lot, one-half to two-thirds of the trees were removed to clear a path for the overpass.

That job was expected to continue this week, and the lumber was chopped up and trucked away, he said.

The Ministry of Transportation has asked for and was given an exemption from the NOTL noise bylaw during construction, to complete the project quickly and reduce the impact on the community.

In order for the aggressive timeline for construction to be met, the town has agreed that work can continue from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., including Sundays, allowing the con-

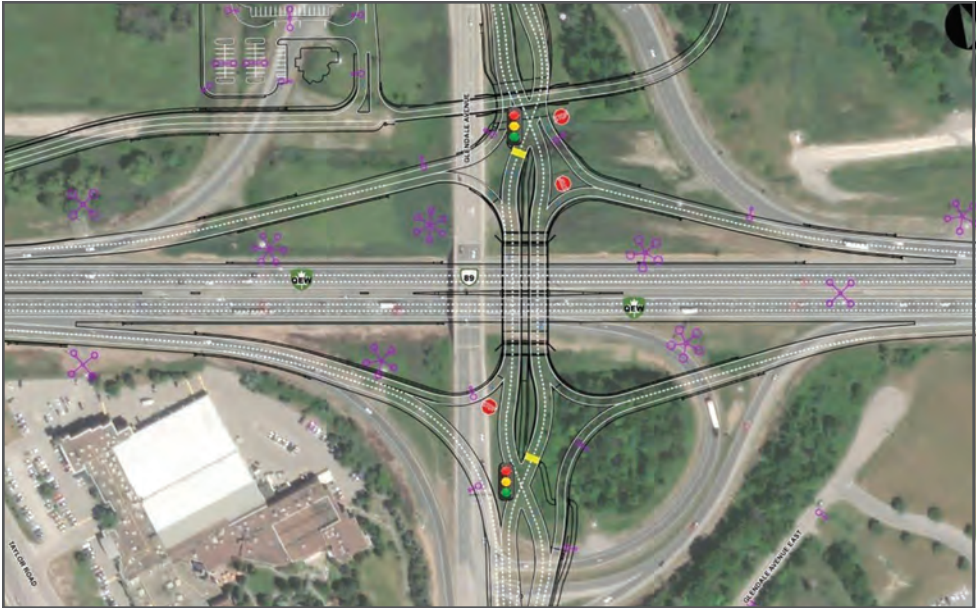


Work has begun on the clearing of trees and brush in preparation for construction of the new Glendale interchange. (Penny Coles)

tractor to schedule multiple crews.

According to regional reports, the Glendale Avenue and York Road intersection will also be constructed to a

single-lane roundabout, along with a new Airport Road loop ramp and connection road from Glendale Avenue to the York Road and Airport Road intersection.



This image from the Ministry of Transportation shows the arial view of the diverging diamond interchange when it is complete. (Image supplied)

## Calling small business owners

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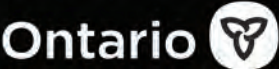
- Grants of up to \$20,000 through the *Ontario Small Business Support Grant*
- Up to \$1,000 in support for purchasing PPE through *Ontario's Main Street Relief Grant*
- Rebates for property tax and energy costs



We're working to ensure small businesses can keep employing people and serving their communities now and when COVID-19 is behind us.

Visit [ontario.ca/COVIDsupport](https://ontario.ca/COVIDsupport) to apply

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## Winter's for the birds



Those who have seen David Gilchrist's photos on social media know he does an exquisite job of capturing local birds, including a nuthatch at a bird feeder, a house finch and a horned lark.



# St. Davids fish fry set to resume this Friday

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

After a short break, the popular St. Davids Lions fish fry returns this Friday, March 5, following all the necessary protocols and with an efficiency learned through trial and error last fall.

The intention was to mirror the wildly popular Lions burger Friday drive-thru the club held during the summer, creating a successful fundraising event that would allow the club to continue contributing to the community, which it did.

Club member Bradd Anderson says they will have a table with Lions members inside the door of the hall, where orders and money will be taken. People will be permitted to wait for their order inside, with distancing and masks.

He's a huge fan and supporter of the Leo club members, the younger version of Lions, who will be



St. Davids Lions members Rob and Janet Guy, and Peter Merritt, are ready for the first fish fry of the season, following all pandemic guidelines. (Penny Coles)

working “front of house,” offering hand sanitizer, taking orders and doing the running, a welcome assistance to the Lions. “They’ve been a great help, both during the fish fries and the summer barbecue,” he says. What the club has learned from its earlier efforts, Anderson says, was how to get the food out faster. They have got their wait time from ordering to receiving food down to about 10 minutes, but he hopes that would be a maximum, with most faster than that.

In addition to raising some funds for the community and meeting their “budgeted items,” including donations to local sports,

Continued on page 11



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# Learn to prepare soil for planting at library workshop

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Betty Knight has been a gardener most of her life, learning at the ankles of her mother and her grandfather, who had about three acres of gardens.

But recently, with the pandemic giving her more time on her hands than usual, in addition to putting extra effort into her garden, she's decided to take her interest to a new level by becoming a master gardener.

Having taken courses through the University of Guelph this last year, she is now a master gardener-in-training. Since master gardeners are expected to inspire and motivate the public about gardening, there are educational and volunteer components to complete to make the title official.

Although doing that during a pandemic presents challenges, with in-person meetings and local gardening events restricted or cancelled, Knight is presenting

a virtual workshop through the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library. It's called Dishin' the Dirt, and will be held March 11, just in time to share information about how to understand your soil and prepare it for planting.

Knight will also chat about mulching, garden tools, and pruning, "preparing our garden to be the best it can be."

Knight says at the age of 62, she was a little nervous about going back to school and taking the university courses, but she ended up doing very well, all done virtually. And as she says, she had time on her hands to do it. "With the pandemic, there was nothing else to do."

She's also pursued other interest courses and projects, continuing her learning experience, and found herself delving deeper into some subjects than she ever would have expected.

She's taken a "deep dive" into studying local soils, and the differences to be

found in the area.

"Without the pandemic I don't know that I'd have spent so much time learning about soil," she says, admitting to learning about the beautiful, rich soils that produce unique characteristics of local wine a fascinating subject.

She's also learning about biodiversity, and how to plant a garden to attract pollinators.

One of her side journeys was the discovery of the problems associated with the brown marmorated stink bug in Southern Ontario. "I see it all the time," she says, and was surprised to learn it causes problems to horticultural and agricultural crops, and is the subject of a University of Guelph research project that includes investigating where it's found.

For Dishin' the Dirt, Knight wants to share some of what she's learned about the importance of soil to a garden.

"Think about it like getting a room ready to paint," she says.

There is more involved than just choosing a colour and purchasing the paint. "You have to wash the walls, fill all the holes, take off the switch plates first. It takes a lot of time before you get to the fun part of painting."

Making sure the soil is ready also takes time, from simple jobs such as cleaning your tools to the more com-

plex task of understanding the soil. Most people clean away the detritus of their garden in the fall, she says, but she's learned it's best to leave it. "I've come to appreciate all the beneficial insects that hibernate, and the importance of leaving that detritus for them until spring."

She has also changed her thinking from the nutrients added to plants to help them grow to the importance of the nutrients in the soil itself, which will feed the plants, producing a healthy garden and a healthy environment.

"I've come to appreciate I am being selfish by telling the soil what I want to plant, instead of letting the soil tell me what I should plant. I'm paying more attention to what it's telling me."

She's very excited about the upcoming workshop, and about sharing her passion and what she has learned.

"Because of the pandemic, we know more people are gardening, and spending more time at it," she says. This workshop will be about what to do before getting to the planting stages, and she's a little nervous about her first effort, but is also hoping it could lead to a series of workshops.

For more information or to register for Dishin' the Dirt visit <https://notlpubliclibrary.libnet.info/event/4853915>.



Betty Knight has been gardening for decades, but is now considering the importance of the soil, and is choosing plants that will attract beneficial pollinators and insects, such as bees, hummingbird moths and butterflies. (Photos supplied)





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# Decision on carnival opening still up in the air

Continued from page 9

and summer camps for children with diabetes or are blind, the Friday evening volunteer work is also good for the Lions members who want to stay active, and for the Leos, who are anxious to help out. With regular meetings and other events cancelled during the pandemic, the Leos are always asking for shifts at the fish fries, says Anderson.

"They've taught me how good life can be," he adds, full of praise for the enthusiasm and work ethic of the young Leos. "They are so

eager to volunteer."

The fish fries are every other Friday, beginning March 5, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the St. Davids Lions Hall at 1462 York Rd.

In another effort to aid the community, the St. Davids Lions are distributing their second lot of casserole meal packages, with about 166 meal kits being assembled Wednesday, March 3, to be provided to Newark Neighbours, St. Catharines Community Care and the Westview Centre for Women in St. Catharines.

The kits contain the ingredients and a recipe that will provide a meal for four

to six people.

Most of the food ingredients were donated by Lions and Lioness, and also through contributions from community grocery store partners, says Anderson.

The club had a budget to purchase the other ingredients that were needed, he says.

He estimated each meal at about \$5.25, and thanks to donations, the club was able to put the kits together spending only 80 cents per meal.

Between all of those fundraisers, and the extremely successful Christ-

mas tree sale, which saw the trees sold out about a week and a half earlier than usual, president Ted Burrows says the club was able to fulfill its budgeted donations to the charities they give to every year, but he's not sure how long that can last.

"Now we're trying to plan ahead, to see if we can meet those obligations next year."

The answer to that may depend on whether or not the Lions hold their annual carnival in July, says Burrows.

The club has booked the amusement rides and pony

rides for the event, but it's far from a certainty it will take place.

"We're waiting to see what happens," he says. "We'll have to make a decision, no later than the beginning of June, but maybe earlier."

Some suggestions put forward by members are options for a scaled-down event, that won't generate crowds of people, says Burrows.

One thing he's pretty sure about is that whatever happens with the carnival, the popular hamburger nights are likely to continue. Everyone had fun, the

volunteers and the customers, many of whom picked up their dinner and then spread out across the grass between the club house and the swimming pool to enjoy their dinner.

His only hesitation in considering running the barbecue again, he says, "is we don't want to wear out our volunteers."

And there is always the concern of pandemic restrictions, that have to be factored in to every decision, says Burrows.

"Because, just when you think you've got it figured out, something changes again."

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# The Grist a labour of love for local couple

**Mike Balsom**  
**Special to The Local**

Rob Begin's eyes well up with tears when he reflects on the three-year journey he and his wife Danielle have been on to get their new St. Davids restaurant off the ground.

Standing inside the converted barn at 78 Four Mile Creek Road, it's clear to any onlooker that The Grist is truly a labour of love for the couple.

"This has been a really difficult project," Rob says. Danielle, he adds, "has helped with every single aspect of it. Had I not had her support with this whole thing, we would have never gotten to the stage we're at now."

What stage are they at? The couple is almost ready to open the doors to The Grist, which promises a fun, casual dining atmosphere along with an on-site brewery in what Danielle calls a rustic modern interior.

They've gone to great lengths to honour the roots of the barn, once used as a fruit packing shed by the Fedorkow family, who farmed 60 acres now mostly occupied by a subdivision. The walls of The Grist are decorated with wood slats and panels repurposed from the original building, while the elaborate custom lighting and bright red, state-of-the-art pizza oven provide a modern contrast.

Three years ago Rob decided to leave a successful job in sales with Niagara Falls

brewery equipment manufacturer Criveller Company of Canada to take this leap of faith.

"I had a great career," he says. "I left at the height of my sales. You can imagine what level of commitment that is to walk away from your best year ever after 24 years."

Begin admits, though, that the success he was achieving helping other aspiring brewers and restaurateurs realize their dreams pushed him to move forward with his own venture.

"I realized I wasn't happy anymore," he adds, "and money became less important to me than our quality of life. After a while you say to yourself, 'am I prepared to keep going down this path and making the same money, or do we change everything in our life?'"

Change everything they did. They sold their NOTL house and, as they say on their website, they decided to blow every bit of their kids' inheritance, to finance the purchase of the barn. The couple now rents a home and spends 70 to 80 hours a week at the restaurant, preparing for that moment when they can open.

The Begins are reentering the Niagara-on-the-Lake culinary landscape after selling their previous local eatery, Garciolli's, in 1997. Located in the Mary Street plaza that now houses The Sandtrap, Garciolli's was well-known for their pleasant, friendly atmosphere and for selling



Rob and Danielle Begin are almost ready to open the doors of their new restaurant in St. Davids, The Grist. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

gourmet white pizzas long before they became trendy.

The experience they gained back then, combined with the knowledge Rob has acquired over more than two decades with Criveller, have definitely informed the new venture.

Though The Grist will offer a full menu, the focus will be primarily on pizzas and items that complement that staple. Those who remember Garciolli's will perhaps recognize some of their old favourites.

"There are several pizzas that we did remarkably well

(at Garciolli's)," claims Rob. "We'll be bringing them back in their new format. Life has changed a lot in 24 years. We have to change some of the things we did back then and improve upon them. But we are going to incorporate some of the original recipes in a new way."

On the beverage side, The Grist will offer four main brews when they open: a Secord stout, a red cream ale, an Italian pilsner and an IPA called Burning Down the House, which honours the history of St. Davids during the War of 1812. Those will

be complemented by four or five seasonal brews, as well as some guest taps reserved for other local brewers.

Other drinks will include local wines. In fact, the day The Local visited The Grist, the Begins had just returned from a tasting at Queenston Mile Vineyard in an effort to curate their final wine list.

The couple, who have been married for 28 years, have taken inspiration from many different sources for the design of the restaurant. They point to a few eateries they frequented while they spent time in Florida, places

where the atmosphere was so great, they couldn't wait to go back with their daughters Devin and Brooklynn, both now in their mid-twenties.

The interior design was all in Rob's head, Danielle says. "He's got a vision that most don't see, and it's come to fruition."

Rob says he wanted to do something that was different, where every wall has some character to it. Surprises abound in every corner. The staircase to the second floor

Continued on page 13



The Grist promises a fun, casual dining atmosphere, with a rustic yet modern interior.



Equipment for an in-house brewery complements the dining area.



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# Restaurant to offer full menu, with focus on pizza

Continued from page 12

loft, for example, features slats from old barrels basket-weaved together. Even the men's room features a support beam and doors repurposed from the old barn interior. It's obvious that much thought has gone into every detail.

That loft features a full bar area and a bandstand, with a capacity of 50, while the main floor can seat 90 at booths and tables, with another full bar looking out upon Four Mile Creek Road. And it will be easy to look out from various parts of the restaurant, with the many garage doors open during the summer months.

Besides the barn, the Begins also restored another farm building on the lot. The Fedorkows' old tractor garage and maintenance shed will play a big role in the second phase of The Grist, when they plan to open a coffee shop and Italian ice creamery to complement the restaurant. There is another 1,000 square feet of space there they hope to rent out to create another reason for their venture to become a destination for locals and tourists alike.

If the buzz created by all the action on the site is any

indication, locals are ready to try out the latest new eatery in NOTL.

"We knocked on every single door to let the neighbours know what we were planning to do," Rob says. "Every one of them was phenomenally nice to us. Since then they've been our biggest supporters all the way through, showing up with coffee and doughnuts. And the Fedorkows, who still live next door, have helped us with stuff that was part of the barn."

They didn't expect the process to take so long, but the pandemic has obviously created a road block of sorts. It's forced them to think about scaling down their menu a bit for a potentially smaller COVID-related capacity, and it's created a bit of stress at times. But Danielle says it's probably better that they weren't able to open before the pandemic, and then forced to shut down, as the overhead would have been that much more expensive.

And she is full of admiration for her husband, who has acted as his own contractor, overseeing everything every step of the way. "He's been here every second of every day, in freezing cold, no heat," adds Danielle. "It may have made for a long process, but he's been here to see it all through."

"We have a great relation-

ship," says Rob. "She's fantastic. You couldn't ask for a better person. When we get out of this thing (the pandemic) it'll make us only stronger. We've actually gained

strength in all of the difficulty that we've gone through. It actually strengthened our relationship."

He adds, "if we're able to do this, and still have this

kind of connection, when we open up it's going to be that much sweeter. It's really been a godsend."

And when they finally do open the doors, you can

expect Rob and Danielle to be there each and every day, happily welcoming guests and ensuring they experience a friendly, welcoming atmosphere.



The Begins have devoted the last three years to The Grist, and are now seeing their work come to fruition. (Mike Balsom)

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# Nolaa's keto bakeshop opens during pandemic

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Melissa Woodworth was introduced to the ketogenic diet long before it became a popular method to lose weight.

Relying on low carbohydrates, high fat and moderate protein, the value of the ketogenic diet in treating serious illnesses was recognized centuries ago, and that's what led her on a journey she is now passionate about sharing.

"It's the real 'why' behind what we're doing," she says of her decision to foray into the business world as an owner.

Between the age of three and four years old, her son Sam, now 19, suffered thousands of major seizures. Doctors at Sick Kids in Toronto could find no cause behind the seizures, and found him unresponsive to any medication they tried.

Then she met someone who recommended the paediatric neurological team at McMaster Children's Hospital, where the ketogenic diet was suggested as a treatment for Sam.

It has been considered an alternative therapy for its ability to reduce inflammation, she says, and there is some research that connects it with being beneficial for combatting epilepsy and many other diseases.

But when she began her journey with Sam 15 years ago, there wasn't a lot of awareness about diet, and it was not the easiest to maintain, with no options available to buy ready-made products, says Woodworth.

Out of necessity for Sam, she became an expert in understanding how the diet works, and the ratios of fat, protein and carbs, which are essential for achieving the state of ketosis.

After six months on the keto diet, Sam was seizure-free, and remains so to-day. In the early years, Woodworth meticulously measured every meal and snack for him, from a very limited range of ingredients, sending him off to school with his little labelled containers, where he had an educational assistant to help out. Even as a youngster, he seemed to understand the importance of the diet in his life, she says, that there was no other option for him, and no room for straying from it.

"For Sam, this was life and death. If his body went out of ketosis, we ran the risk of him having a seizure, or even dying. He couldn't take part in hot dog days, pizza days, cupcake days or any of those occasions, but he always showed great courage. He never wavered, never complained, he just did it. He developed



Hannah Nail, bakery owner Melissa Woodworth and Sage Wright will be ready for the official Thursday opening, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Photos by Penny Coles)

a sense of responsibility for himself."

He's now a Niagara College student, studying business administration, "and living his best life," his mother says.

As a mother of four, with an older daughter and two more younger children, Woodworth decided several years ago her best option for earning an income was as an entrepreneur, and began with keto granola for breakfast or snacks, under the name Nola Granolaa.

More recently, she's turned her love of baking, and her experience over the years, into a way to help others, by providing ready-made, keto-friendly, sugar-free treats and solutions, many also gluten-free, for making the diet easier for those choosing to follow it.

Nolaa Granolaa and Nola's bakeries, first in Grimsby, which opened in June, 2020, and one on Victoria Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake set to officially open this week, are named to acknowledge Woodworth's grandfather, Noel, who she considers her inspiration in life. He passed away at the age of 100, in March, 2020, before seeing this latest venture come to fruition.

"He was a huge presence in my life. He thought it was crazy that I was opening a store in the middle of a pandemic, but he also knew I always did things first and thought about them afterwards. He was more cautious, and nervous about my investment, but he believed in me, and believed in my purpose."

Her purpose has become to help anyone interested in following a keto diet, for weight loss or health reasons. Her staff understand her journey, "and know there is more to keto than eating a lot of fat. It's not just a diet, it's something you can do to improve your life."

And while opening a business during a pandemic

has been a challenge, she says, "everything at the time seems like a challenge and then it turns into a blessing. Locals have been immensely supportive, and they are the reason this location will be successful."

As the keto diet has grown in popularity for weight loss, it has created some controversy because of the amount of fat needed for ketosis, "but you still have to eat good fat," Woodworth counters. "You can't just eat bacon. There are different ways of doing keto, and it isn't only what everybody is talking about on social media. I want people to know it's more than that. People come in to the bakery looking for cupcakes, and walk out with my phone number and a plan to talk. It's a commitment to making a change, to eat healthy, and I want to help. I've met a lot of

great people on this journey, and I've loved them all."

While the bakery sells delicious, elegant cookies, doughnuts, muffins and other goodies those on a keto diet may crave, there are other products that are great solutions for every-day meal times, options Woodworth didn't have available to her when she was growing up.

"I want to be the person who can explain to others that there is so much more to keto. I want to be the person who can give to others what I needed when Sam was little. If some of these products had been available then, it would have been easier for me."

Woodworth grew up in Burlington, and raised her kids in Grimsby, but "NOTL has always been a place of wonder for me," she says. "It's such a magical place. I love the town, I love the culture,

and I love the people."

She has been visiting the town for the last 20 years, is happy to be operating a business in the Old Town, and is very excited to be moving here in April. "I'm hoping to make NOTL my home permanently," she says.

The official opening of Nola's on the Lake Bake Shop is Thursday, March 4 at 10 a.m., serving all day breakfast sandwiches, keto melts and a large selection of low carb, sugar-free treats. The address is 106 Queen St., Unit E, but turn the corner and you will find the entrance on Victoria Street.

For more information visit <https://nolaagranolaa.ca>.

Visit Nola's on the Lake - Keto Bakeshop Facebook page to learn more about the treats and food products available at the NOTL bakery.



Chocolate doughnuts fresh from the oven are sprinkled with crumbled lace cookies.



In addition to fresh-baked treats, Nola's sells keto-friendly products to help with meal preparations. Many of the products are also gluten-free.



Brianne Bousfield shows off a tray of double chocolate caramel tarts, one of the many delicacies at Nola's on the Lake keto bakeshop.



# NOTL couple feel safe wintering in Florida

Will be driving home and quarantining in April

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Jen Elliott and Colin Telfer did not make the decision to travel to Florida this winter lightly, having thoroughly researched and investigated their options before heading south. Likewise, they have done their research before deciding how they will return home in April. “We weren’t at all cavalier about making this decision,” she says.

As owners of ESkoot Niagara, which is shut down during the winter months, the couple’s lifestyle lends itself to wintering in a warmer climate.

There would be little to do for them at home, says Elliott, adding they don’t consider their trip south a vacation. They have two different homes, one in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and one in Florida, and they felt they could be just as safe wintering in Florida.

“We spend half our life in Canada and half our life here. It’s not like we go crazy like young people on March break.”

They live on the Audrey-Joan, a 44-foot boat named after both their mothers, and don’t interact a lot with others, going out mainly for groceries.

“Isolation is really easy for us on the boat. We gave this a lot of thought, and decided it’s actually healthier for us to be here, outdoors, in isolation.”

They left in early November, and although they would typically drive, with borders closed, they had to fly south.

They had ebikes waiting for them at the marina, which they can use to get around on land, but they don’t go far, says Elliott, using them mostly to get groceries.

Their boat is moored at a marina in Clearwater, on the gulf in an area of the state where COVID cases have been low, says Elliott. “We’re nowhere near the hotspots. We looked at every angle and at the end of the day we decided to do what suits our lifestyle.”

They have moved recently to the smaller community of Cortez, which they are really enjoying, and can use their ebikes to do a bit of sight-seeing.

But again, they have little interaction with others, spending most of their day outside on the boat.

Restaurants, along with other businesses, are open, but people wear masks until they sit down to eat, similar to what they experienced at home last summer.

With about 600 square feet of living space on the boat, and most of their time spent in fresh air, she says it’s a healthier lifestyle than they would have had wintering at home. “There isn’t much to do here either, but it’s better than looking out at the snow.”

But the best part of being

in Florida may have been the opportunity to be vaccinated, which Elliott and Telfer both jumped at. They were surprised to be invited along with all those 65 years and older, with snowbirds being considered part of the community, making it safer not only for them but for those around them.

“We didn’t dream that would happen,” she says. “But we’re living here, amongst the locals, and Florida was happy to give them to us.”

She says they may feel “a little braver, a little more relaxed” when going out, “but we are still pretty cautious. Our whole demographic here is pretty cautious, and our lifestyle makes it easy enough to steer clear of people.”

Other years they have participated in events at the Clearwater Yacht Club, but this year, they haven’t been in the club house.

Elliott says they hear a lot of news about what’s going on at home, including travel restrictions, from a Facebook page for Canadian snowbirds.

In the fall, the discussions were mostly about whether to go south or stay home, and now, the chatter is about how to get home safely, the many different scenarios people are choosing, and the restrictions they will face on their travels.

Throughout, there has also been some animosity on the Facebook site between those who decided to stay home and

those who carried on with their plans to move to their winter homes in the sun.

They have decided to drive home toward the end of April, having discovered they can rent a car from an agency that allows a one-way trip, and a drop-off in Canada.

They had made that decision before they knew about the extra travel restrictions, she says, because they much prefer the drive, and feel the restric-

tions make it as safe, if not safer, to travel in a car on their own. They know they will require proof of a recent COVID test before crossing the border, and they will quarantine when they get home, happy to follow all the rules, as they did last year. They also expect to have another test toward the end of their quarantine in Niagara.

And they look forward to another good summer, and a busy one, in Niagara-on-

the-Lake, despite the pandemic.

“It was really surprising how busy we were at eSkoot,” she says.

“At first we weren’t allowed to open, but when we were, everyone wanted an outdoor experience. We had a phenomenal summer.”

And their winter, as their friends know from their Facebook posts and photos, has been pretty amazing as well.



Jen Elliott and Colin Telfer on the Audrey-Joan, the boat they call home for the winter. (Photo supplied)

## Connecting with nature in winter



Local photographer David Gilchrist enjoys taking photos of nature, and recently captured vineyards in the winter, and icicles by the water.

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# Response to the human tragedy in care home facilities

## Seniors can and should be allowed to age at home longer

Larry W. Chambers  
Madeleine Smith  
Special to The Local

Staying in your home has proven to be a safer option during COVID-19. Older adults can more easily isolate in their own homes than in a congregate living setting of a care home facility, whether that be a retirement home or long-term care home.

Ninety-six per cent of people dying of COVID are 60 years and older. Care home residents account for 56 per cent (3,858 of 6,884) of all COVID deaths in Ontario. These facts also reveal who should be vaccinated.

Although Ontario has 56,500 older adults living in private retirement homes and 78,000 living in publicly-funded long-term care homes, the other 94 per cent of the 2.5 million people in Ontario 65 years and older live in other types of accommodation. Few older adults prefer moving into care homes, and many are looking for ways to stay in their own home for as long as possible.

Younger people often unknowingly harbour ageist attitudes, thinking it is best to do things for older adults,

rather than enabling older adults with the tools to continue living independently. Unfortunately, these attitudes have become entrenched in Canadian health and social legislation, including in the understanding of ‘care.’

The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) in August 2020 reported that most older adults want to live at home for as long as possible, and that more of them could.

Care homes admit individuals who are quite frail, or those living with dementia. CIHI reviewed the health status of people admitted in care homes over a one-year period. The project found that, among those living in care homes, about one in nine new admissions “could potentially have been cared for at home, provided they had access to ongoing home-care services and supports.”

We cannot separate the health and social aspects of living as frail older adults. When we are frail, we have a spectrum of health events (from acute episodes to more complex, long-term conditions) and we require a spectrum of approaches (from single interventions to long-term health-promo-

tion interventions), where distinctions between health and social aspects of life are largely meaningless.

As the per cent of Ontarians who are 60 years of age and older increases, more older adults are living with complex and long-term conditions. This requires a new approach in the distribution of finite health resources: that is, what proportion of our tax dollars should be allocated to care homes versus a range of community services to assist with the tasks of everyday life, to help stay at home? What’s more, care homes should be embraced as part of the community. For example, their restaurant services can be enabled for meals on wheels and wheels to meals programs among people living in their own homes.

The Canadian health care system, and the Canada Health Act places hospitals as the topmost priority. While this choice was justified in the last century to meet the needs of a younger population, it is less appropriate today in the context of an aging population with complex and long-term conditions and disabilities. When the Canada Health Act was the

core of the health-care system 60 years ago, older adults comprised eight per cent of the population. In 2021, older adults comprise 18 percent and in 2041 this will increase to 25 per cent.

Hospitals are designed to provide acute care to patients who need immediate medical interventions over a short, days or less, time period. The culture in hospitals is substantially different from accommodation for people living in care homes. The short visit in the hospital involves patients receiving acute care, also known as skilled care. It comprises medical, nursing, or rehabilitative services, including help taking medicine, undergoing tests (IV’s, blood pressure, etc.), or other similar services. This care is generally performed by licensed nursing personnel and certified nursing assistants.

Frail, older adults who have long-term conditions including dementia, diabetes, stroke, heart disease, lung disease live for months and years in residential settings, including their own home.

People living with these conditions can benefit from a range of services to assist with the tasks of everyday life, wherever they live. These tasks may include the six Activities of Daily Living, (ADLs) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). ADLs include: eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, continence, and transferring (ability to get out of bed/chair). In general, if you cannot do two or more of these activities, or if you are living with dementia, you will most likely need assistance. This assistance is not always long, depending on your situation, and can be provided at home as well as at care homes or assisted living centres.

IADLs include shopping, cooking, managing medications, using the phone and looking up numbers, doing housework, doing laundry, driving or using public transportation, and managing finances. These activities allow an individual to live independently in a community. Although not required to perform IADLs can significantly improve the quality of life. Often, support of one or two IADLs makes the difference between being able to stay at home versus moving to a care home.

The Ontario Ministry of Health plans for an “additional” \$111 million in 2021-2022 for the High Intensity Supports at Home program to help people with high needs transition out of hospital to home.

In October 2020, the Ministry announced a \$461



Dr. Larry Chambers says seniors can, and should, be allowed to age at home longer, with the care they need to remain there. (File photo)

million “temporary wage increase” for personal support workers in both home-care and long-term care settings during COVID-19.

Recently, the Ministry said it was investing up to \$20 million for a community paramedicine program to support older adults in their homes while they wait for a bed in long-term care. However, both the National Institute on Ageing and the Ontario Community Support Association recommend supporting people in their own home, rather than just as a temporary answer until older adults locate a space in a care home.

Supporting people to stay in their home is significantly less expensive than living in a care home. In Ontario, 38,000 people are waiting for a government-funded long-term care home bed.

To address this waiting list, the Ontario government has promised to build 15,000 new long-term care beds and update 15,000 more. Given the incoming exponential increase of older adults, this plan, which will cost taxpayers billions of dollars, is not a long-term solution. This money could be better invested - at a lower cost - in adopting policies based on the principle that every citizen should have the right to choose where they live. Instead of deferring to outdated policies that have an “institutional” mindset, a successful aging-in-place philosophy should be used when building infrastructure.

By increasing emphasis on keeping older adults in their homes, such future investments will allow more people to age in the places of their choice. Aging in place, or staying in one’s home while getting older, is a worthy consideration that provides important benefits, including honouring dignity and independence, decreasing recovery times and reducing the risk of illness, enjoying companionship with loved ones, and promoting healthy aging.

Healthy aging is mostly about busting the myths of being old. Senescence, the normal biological process of aging, limits the maximal level of physical activity, but what does the science tell us about the effects of aging on the brain? Luck is required to avoid the diseases that cannot be prevented, notably Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s; however, it is now recognized that the risk of dementia can be reduced by at least a third (as estimated by the Lancet Commission) by reducing stress, improving sleep, and by limiting the overuse of drugs both prescribed and self-prescribed, including avoiding cigarettes. There is also strong evidence that all that we know about preventing heart disease, including physical activity, reduces the risk of dementia.

Perhaps most interesting of all is the risk of isolation and the benefit of social engagement, ideally in paid or voluntary work – the more challenging the better – thanks to the brain’s enduring potential for neuroplasticity.

We should value equipping older people with the opportunity to remain in their own homes, rather than relegating them to being passive recipients of ‘care.’ The older adult demographic is looking for a life that enables them to play an even more important role in meeting society’s challenges and, as individuals, to live longer, together.

Larry W. Chambers has authored 175 articles and books concerning disease prevention (e.g. dementia), quality improvement in long-term care homes and innovative approaches for continuing professional development. He is research director of the Niagara Regional Campus, School of Medicine, McMaster University. Madeleine Smith is a medical student at the Niagara Regional Campus, Michael G. Degroote School of Medicine, McMaster University.

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#### LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: BRICKS AND BARLEY

Bricks & Barley is a local business that has been thriving in the Niagara-on-the-Lake community for over 10 years. They specialize in wood-fired pizza and craft beer, offering a unique dining experience. Their menu features a variety of pizzas made with locally sourced ingredients, and they have a selection of craft beers brewed on-site. Bricks & Barley is a popular destination for both locals and visitors, and they are proud to be a part of the local community.

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# Petrick training next generation of tennis stars

**Mike Balsom**  
Special to The Local

She trained with the likes of Eugenie Bouchard, played in the same professional tournaments as Venus and Serena Williams, and won Canadian championships at the U14 and U18 levels.

Today, former Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Charlotte Petrick is training the next generation of Canadian tennis superstars at a Toronto-area facility.

At 24 years old, Petrick has been retired from competitive tennis for three years. But she remains involved in the sport that has been part of her life since as long as she can remember. Now a Level 2 Tennis Canada certified coach, Petrick works out of the Ontario Racquet Club, where she trains youth aged six to eight in both the Performance and Progressive streams, as well as teens in a Transition program. She also runs six or seven adult clinics per week.

Now living in Etobicoke

with her boyfriend Adam Hawkswell and their French bulldog Lola, Petrick still loves the game every bit as much as she always has, despite a long struggle with a wrist injury that led her to transition from playing competitively to coaching.

Petrick grew up on the tennis court. In fact, her parents, Frank and Colleen, are both avid players who competed at a high level in the sport. They met playing at a tournament, and chose to exchange their wedding vows on a tennis court.

Charlotte first picked up a racquet at two years old when the family lived in Oakville, but started learning how to really play the game a couple of years later. By the time she turned six, she began to take things seriously, deciding she wanted to make it her career.

“At that time in Canada, there weren’t a lot of programs for that age group,” she remembers. So her parents connected with the Nick Bollettieri Academy (now known as the IMG Academy) in Florida. Bollet-

tieri, known as one of the best tennis coaches of all time, guided the careers of professionals such as Andre Agassi, Maria Sharapova, Jim Courier and Monica Seles.

Charlotte and Colleen moved to Bradenton, Florida, with Frank coming down with her three brothers when they could. Her game progressed rapidly while she trained at the top junior academy. In the meantime, she would return to Canada periodically to play in the nationals and to keep up with the Canadian system.

At 13 years old, she was chosen to be part of the Canadian National Team, which involved working with national coaches at Montreal’s National Training Centre. At that point, the family sold their Oakville home and moved to NOTL, where Frank grew up.

Like many young athletes on the track toward high-level competition, much of Charlotte’s life had been spent on the court, and not in traditional school. However, that first year the family resided in NOTL was the only one where she attended an actual school.

“My parents put me into Parliament Oak for Grade 8,” Petrick reminisces. “We were new to town and they wanted me to make friends, I guess. I had been home-schooled my whole life, and I think they just wanted me to be normal.”

She considered attending high school in Niagara, but conflicts with her training schedule made it nearly impossible. Instead, while in Montreal, Petrick completed high school courses through the Independent Learning Centre along with other tennis players, including Bouchard, all overseen by a certified teacher.

Petrick’s development on the court continued to advance. In April 2011, she won the U14 National Championship in Vancouver. Soon after, she was ranked 21st in the country in the U18 category. The following year, at only 15 years old, she captured the U18 Canadian title, beating girls much older than her.

As well, she began to play in professional tournaments around that same time, and started climbing up the ranks in the International Tennis Federation. She continued to enter pro tournaments, playing singles as well as doubles in Women’s Tennis Association events, finding success at many tournaments. At 17 years old, however, she started experiencing problems with one of her wrists.

“I had a pretty bad cyst in my left wrist,” she says. “No one knew what it was, I was getting cortisone shots like crazy, I was getting this cyst removed all the time but it just kept filling up. And I kept tearing this tendon.”

Assuming the problem was related to overuse, she was told

to take a few weeks off to rest the wrist. But as soon as she returned to the court, the tendon would tear once again. After a year and a half of struggling with the problem, she saw a surgeon, who discovered that her left ulna, a long bone in the forearm, was almost an inch longer than her right, which was straining the tendon to the point that it would continuously tear.

The solution? Doctors recommended surgery to shorten her left ulna, and then reattach the damaged tendon. They would also insert a plate to give the bone stability. She consulted with Tennis Canada, who suggested she go through the invasive procedure. In January, 2017, Petrick underwent surgery at Toronto Western Hospital.

Recovery included almost eight months in a cast. Near the end of 2017, she finally got back onto the court, and even entered a couple of events that went quite well for her. But she was still experiencing pain and a lack of strength in her left wrist. It was back to the operating table to remove the plate, which had been rubbing against her muscle.

Another six months of recovery after the second surgery and Petrick was back training at the Ontario Racquet Club with coach Yves Boulais. But it didn’t take long for her to realize that she would never regain the strength that had made her such a fierce competitor.

“I was trying to train four hours a day, but I was struggling with three-set matches,” she recalls. “My wrist would be black and blue, and I wouldn’t be able to play the following day. It was too painful, my backhand was just terrible, because I was overcompensating, trying to protect my backhand, and that was one of my best weapons my whole career.”

She made the difficult decision in early 2018 to retire. Reflecting on it now, she says she had reached such a point of frustration, dating back to when the wrist problem first developed, she had been feeling defeated for quite awhile.

“She had a good, good career in front of her, she was a good athlete, very motivated,” her rehab coach Boulais remembers. “It’s always sad to see someone have to leave a sport that she was so dedicated to. I was still hoping that she could have another surgery and she could get better, but I think at one point she had just had enough, and couldn’t see it happening.”

“By the time I finally decided to call it quits,” Petrick laments, “I had reached such a point of frustration that I kind of put it in the back of my mind. I took a year-long mental break and got a job at Willow (Cakes and Pastries) in town, which is where I met my boyfriend.”



Charlotte has traded in competition for training youngsters, and is loving it.



The action shots of Charlotte Petrick are in San Diego, in a \$25K pro tournament where she was staying with a NOTL couple, Sonja Schindeler and Rick Hrga. Sonja was the best cheerleader, says Petrick.

That, of course, is one silver lining. The other is related to the Toronto facility where she had worked on getting her game back after both surgeries. While working at Willow, she also earned her Level 2 coaching certification through Tennis Canada. In summer, 2019, Petrick contacted Boulais to ask for advice on what to do next. He offered her a job at ORC.

“For us, we were fortunate that she was able to come coach at the club,” Boulais says. “I know she didn’t have a lot of experience, but she has such a deep background in tennis. She’s a very energetic person, gets along with everyone. When you have someone like that, the rest is just learning how to do it, and she is always willing to learn, and the kids relate well to her.”

Now on the other side of the player-coach relationship, Petrick is amazed at what she sees in her job. “I called my parents on the first day,” she

says. “We’re doing these ladder drills, and the kids are so capable, they’re crushing it, really. I asked them if I was like that at six or seven. I can’t even fathom how good these kids are.”

And she is especially excited to still be involved in the game she loves so much. “I’m one of the only women coaches on staff there,” Petrick says. “You get a special kind of reaction, especially from the younger girls there, because it’s exciting having a woman on the court. I never had any female coaches. I think you have a special connection, and that makes me love coming to the courts every day.”

She has a great attitude toward her career trajectory in tennis. Petrick realizes the toll competing at such a high level can take on a young woman’s body. Besides the wrist, she dealt with back injuries and a concussion at various points in her career, and she sees what

Continued on page 18



Frank Petrick plays tennis with his daughter Charlotte in Rye Park when she comes home to NOTL. (Photos supplied)



Charlotte Petrick and her mother Colleen, who was also a competitive tennis player, outside their NOTL home when Charlotte was about seven.



# LOCAL SPORTS

## Emma Penner excited to play hockey at Dalhousie University

**Bill Potrecz  
Special to The Local**

Emma Penner is following in her twin sister's footsteps.

Avery Penner graduated from Ridley College in 2020, after committing to the University of Prince Edward Island to study kinesiology and play on the women's hockey team.

Emma graduated from Ridley last year as well, but only recently decided she would also head to the East Coast, committing to Dalhousie University in Halifax, where she will play on the women's hockey team and major in, you guessed it, kinesiology.

She grew up in Niagara-on-the-Lake, where she attended St. Michael Catholic Elementary School, and participated in a wide variety of sports — lacrosse, baseball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, track and field and cross country.

"It's such a small town, pretty much everyone you are playing hockey with you are also playing other sports with," she said. "Not many girls play sports in Niagara-on-the-Lake, so I was constantly playing with

the guys.

"They can sometimes be a lot stronger, faster and more competitive, but it gave me a little bit more drive."

Emma leaned on her sister for advice when making her final decision about her future.

"Avery loves it out there, and I've been a few times as well so knew the East Coast was where I wanted to be," Emma said.

"She went first and got her freshman year out of the way, so she could show me the ropes about what university hockey is like.

"She has nothing but great things to say about her program and what it's like to be on the East Coast. It made the decision a lot easier for me."

Emma did her due diligence as she sorted her way through various schools.

"I reached out to a number of schools in the last three years," she said. "In September, I contacted the coach at Dalhousie and got the ball rolling. We had a few meetings and instantly I knew that's where I wanted to go.

"I'm so excited. I've known for a while now that I've wanted

to go away for school and play hockey at the next level, so Dalhousie was an easy choice for me."

Dalhousie Tigers women's hockey head coach, Troy Ryan, is excited to have the 18-year-old forward on board.

"She was highly recommended from her coach at Ridley, and I have been very impressed with her professionalism, values and character throughout the recruiting process," Ryan said in a story posted on the school's web site. "Emma wants to win, and is eager to get started."

Ridley coach Amanda Wark feels Penner will excel at the next level.

"Emma is a talented player with great leadership skills, and a willingness to compete that is second to none. She will continue to grow and develop in a great program surrounded by premier coaches," Wark said.

"We will miss Emma on campus and on our team. She has left her footprint on our program, and made our team better. That's exactly what we were looking for, and all we can ask for."

Penner, who earned the most improved player award at Ridley College for her efforts in the 2019-20 season, attended Holy Cross Secondary School for two years before switching to Ridley in Grade 11.

"It's an amazing program. I would not have the opportunities I have today were it not for Ridley," she said.

Penner is taking post-graduate courses at Ridley this year, and working out with the hockey team in lieu of games due to the pandemic.

"I've just kept a positive

mindset," she said. "I was looking to play this year, but we're still fortunate at Ridley to be able to practise and train everyday with the team, because I know most teams aren't doing that.

I'm pretty lucky."

*Bill Potrecz spent 32 years as a sportswriter for Niagara dailies, covering almost every sport imaginable from high school, to*

*junior hockey, to a World Series and Stanley Cup final. By his estimation he has covered more than 1,500 junior hockey games. He now provides regional sports coverage through BP Sports Niagara.*



Emma Penner says she's lucky to be able to attend and train at Ridley College. (Photos supplied)



## LOCAL HAPPENINGS

### TEEN GAME NIGHT

March 4 @ 4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

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**Late Night Jazz Songs - Dizzy and Fay**  
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[niagarajazzfestival.com](http://niagarajazzfestival.com)

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## 'There's a life to live after retirement' from competing

Continued from page 17

some of her contemporaries continue to go through.

"When you grow up with such a different lifestyle, it's easy to get out of reality a bit," she says. "You feel that your sport is your life. But one thing that helped me with my mindset is going through those super serious injuries. I realized at the time in discussing it with my parents and my brothers that there's also a life after you retire, whether you retire at 21,

or 38, you have another entire life to live."

"From that moment," she continues, "I tried to have the mindset to keep things as level as you can, and not let injuries get you too down, because there's a lot of life to still live and a lot of stuff to still do."

And she credits her support system for helping her get through the end of her playing days and into her new role as a mentor to younger tennis players. "I'm extremely close to my parents, and my brothers, and my boyfriend has a won-

derful family. When I stopped playing, I realized things aren't as bad as they seem, and I was able to use that to help move forward."

Looking to the future, Petrick is hoping that one day soon she and Adam (and Lola) will be able to move back to Niagara. They return to town frequently to visit both sets of parents, and to spend time with friends. And when they are in town, the trip often involves a couple of matches on the courts at Rye Street Park.

"We love the city," Petrick

says, "but we are small-town people, all our friends are here. We come back to Niagara-on-the-Lake almost every weekend. Our plans are definitely to move back here some time, within a few years, probably."

And don't be surprised if when that happens, Hawkswell, whose family runs Niacon Construction, builds a few courts for Petrick so she can begin her own tennis academy right here in her hometown. It would be the next, most obvious step in Charlotte Petrick's tennis journey.

## LOCAL WORSHIP

**CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH**

**Sunday, March 7th**

**10 a.m. Worship Gathering (Online Only)**

**Speaker:**  
**Kevin Bayne**

**Message:**  
**Philippians 3:1-11**

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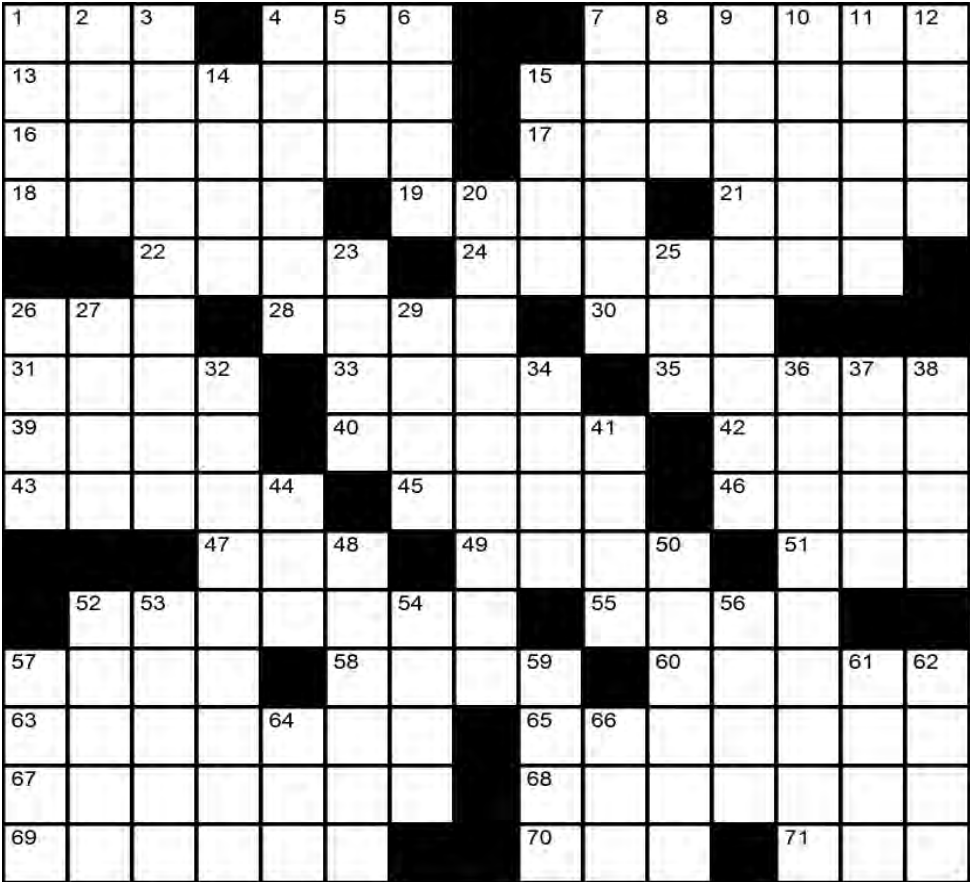
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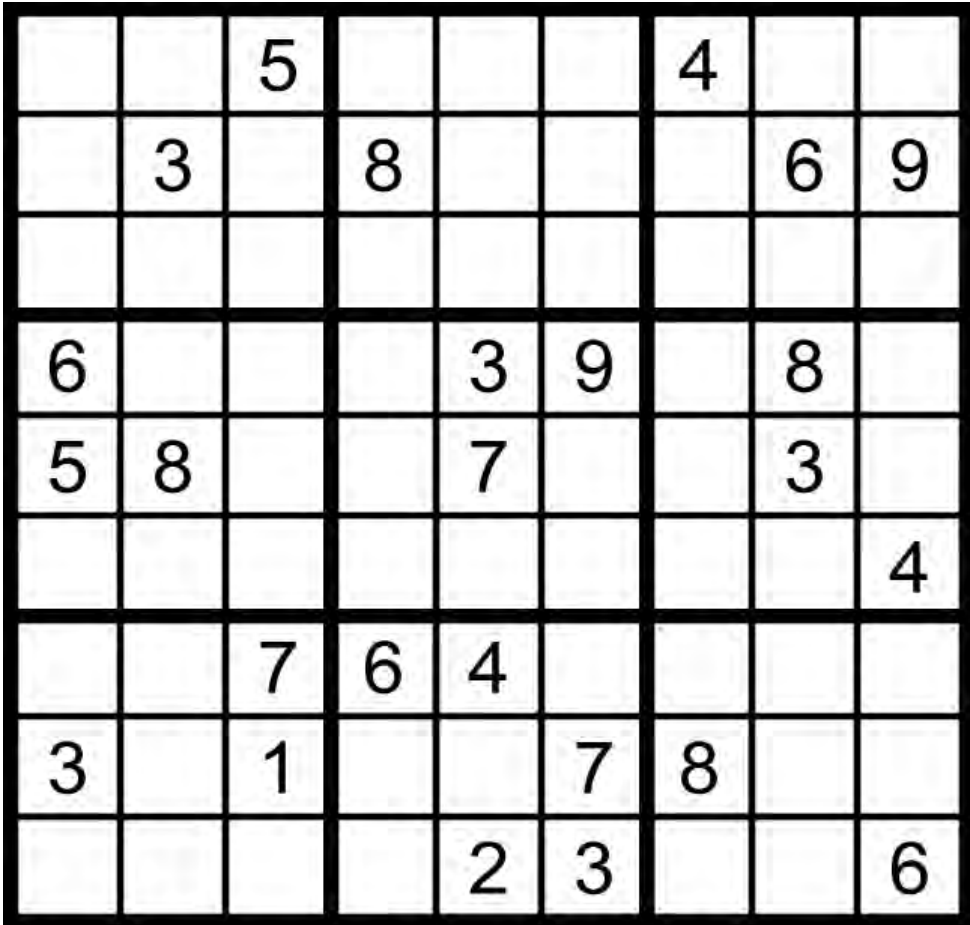
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  - 13 Difficult position
  - 15 Singer Patti ---
  - 16 Place in order
  - 17 Enclosed territory
  - 18 Approaches
  - 19 Stop!
  - 21 French part of U S?
  - 22 Christian ---, couturier
  - 24 Stock market measures
  - 26 Advanced in years
  - 28 Turn over
  - 30 Deed
  - 31 Medium for Old Masters
  - 33 Lofty
  - 35 Tales
  - 39 Chirrup
  - 40 Implant
  - 42 High time
  - 43 A lazy one just goes round and round
  - 45 Verdi's Ethiopian princess
  - 46 Dorothy's dog
  - 47 Fleece
  - 49 Statutes
  - 51 Adage
  - 52 Part of concluding question
- Down:**
- 1 Martial arts actor Jackie ---
  - 2 Drill
  - 3 Spans
  - 4 Expurgator
  - 5 Label
  - 6 Mulligan, for example
  - 7 Northern neighbor
  - 8 Disney TV network
  - 9 Unwilling
  - 10 Shave
  - 11 Tupelo "King"
  - 12 Course launch pads?
  - 14 Hindu dress
  - 15 "Trinity" author --- Uris
  - 19 in "To Tell the Truth"
  - 20 Bumpkin
  - 23 Repetitive practice
  - 25 Very cold
  - 26 Oh dear!
  - 27 Place
  - 29 Tibetan priest
  - 32 Middle-age spread
  - 34 Seduced by a swan
  - 36 He started the Teddy Bear story
  - 37 --- bene: pay attention
  - 38 Coke
  - 41 "Delta ---", Tanya Tucker hit
  - 44 And not
  - 48 Bidding
  - 50 Comfort
  - 52 Prongs
  - 53 Facilitates
  - 54 Top-of-the-line
  - 56 Extinct Mauritian native
  - 57 N Y C fashionista --- Wang
  - 59 Checks
  - 61 The "New World" symphony was written in this (Abbr.)
  - 62 Religious faction
  - 64 French wine
  - 66 Signal



OBITUARY



**SKALE, MILKA (NEE CELESTINA)**—Born in Zagorje ob Savi, Slovenia on April 29, 1929. Passed away peacefully with her daughter by her side on Monday, February 22, 2021, at Albright Manor Long-Term Care, in her 92nd year. Beloved wife of the late Vincent (2012) for 51 years. Loving mother “Mami” of Maria Glavac (Marjan), London, Peter Skale (Kathy), Caledon, Paul Skale (Ingrid), Cleveland, Ohio and Elizabeth Lukezic (Boris), Stoney Creek. Cherished grandmother, “Mama” “Mamca” to 10 grandchildren, Vanessa Pavlis (Mark) and Collin Glavac, Emily and Matthew Skale, Alex, Shawn, and Max Skale, Amalia, Nikola and Kyle Lukezic. Loving sister-in-law to Marija Celestina, USA. Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, cousins and extended family in Canada, USA, Argentina, Ireland and Slovenia. Youngest of 10, predeceased by all of her 9 brothers and sisters in Slovenia, Slavko, Emilija, France, Viko, Marija, Roska, Joze, Miroslav (USA) and Oto. She devoted her life to her faith and family. She enjoyed living at Albright Manor in Beamsville for the last four years. The family wishes to extend their gratitude to the 4th Floor Staff for their compassion and wonderful care. Thank you to Kiran and Therese for their support during Milka’s final moments. She touched so many people by her gracious and welcoming nature with her friendly smile. Thank you especially to her dear friends Cveta Kozelj and Mimi Lukezic through the years for all their support and care. Mami, you will never be forgotten and will forever be in our hearts. Visitation took place on Thursday, February 25 with a private family service on Friday, February 26, at 1 p.m., both took place at MORSE & SON FUNERAL HOME, 5917 Main Street, Niagara Falls, was livestreamed and can still be viewed at [www.facebook.com/morseandson](http://www.facebook.com/morseandson) Interment followed at Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery. Funeral mass was celebrated at St. Gregory The Great Church, 125 Centennial Pky., N., Hamilton, ON, on Saturday, February 27, 2021 at 1 p.m., was livestreamed and can still be viewed at [www.facebook.com/stgregorythegreathamilton/](http://www.facebook.com/stgregorythegreathamilton/)

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory to The Albright Foundation or to St. Gregory the Great Parish. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morseandson.com](http://www.morseandson.com)



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

**Across:** 1 C B, 4 Cts, 7 Carpet, 13 Hot seat, 15 Labelle, 16 Arrange, 17 Enclave, 18 Nears, 19 Whoa, 21 Uns, 22 Dior, 24 Indices, 26 Old, 28 Roll, 30 Act, 31 Oils, 33 Tail, 35 Yarns, 39 Peep, 40 Embed, 42 Noon, 43 Susan, 45 Aida, 46 Toto, 47 Rob, 49 Laws, 51 Saw, 52 The real, 55 Node, 57 Viet, 58 Hoyt, 60 Loves, 63 Enliven, 65 Academe, 67 Reprise, 68 Bucolic, 69 Assent, 70 See, 71 TNT.

**Down:** 1 Chan, 2 Bore, 3 Straddles, 4 Censor, 5 Tag, 6 Stew, 7 Canada, 8 A B C, 9 Reluctant, 10 Plane, 11 Elvis, 12 Tees, 14 Sari, 15 Leon, 20 Hillbilly, 23 Rote, 25 Icy, 26 Ops, 27 Liu, 29 Lama, 32 Spare tire, 34 Leda, 36 Roosevelt, 37 Nota, 38 Snow, 41 Dawn, 44 Nor, 48 Behest, 50 Solace, 52 Times, 53 Helps, 54 A-one, 56 Dodo, 57 Vera, 59 Tabs, 61 E min, 62 Sect, 64 Vin, 66 Cue.

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## LOCAL SPORTS




Matteo Giampa is heading to Alberta to play hockey, hoping to develop his skills with the junior hockey league. (Photo supplied)

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## Giampa heading out west

**Bill Potrecz**  
Special to The Local

Matteo Giampa is on the move.

The 17-year-old Niagara-on-the-Lake teen has already made arrangements for next season, committing to the Brooks Bandits of the Alberta Junior Hockey League.

"It was a hard decision, because I wanted to make the right one, but it really came down to wanting to play on the best team, and having the ability to develop as much as I can so I can move on to the next level," Giampa said. "I didn't really care what league. The ultimate goal is to go to the best situation and the best place."

Giampa, a six-foot, 176-pound forward, was selected in the seventh round (142nd overall) by the London Knights in the 2019 Ontario Hockey League draft. He spent last season at The Gunnery, a prep school in Connecticut, where he netted nine goals and 19 points in 35 games as a 16-year-old rookie.

Giampa hooked up with the St. Catharines Falcons of the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League for this season, but has been kept off the ice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He is still hoping to get on the ice at some point — the GOJHL hasn't officially canceled their season —

but is grateful to have his affairs in order looking forward.

"I'm extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to know for sure where I'm going to play next year," he said. "Especially today, when there is a lot of uncertainty in the world, it's a great feeling. I can just have my mind set on one thing and just focus on that."

"It's definitely a good thing."

Giampa was tipped off to the Bandits by a buddy.

"A friend was trying to get into a prep school and he introduced me to a guy and he was a scout for Brooks and that got the ball rolling. He's been watching me, and set up some meetings with the coaches and managers," Giampa said.

Falcons coach Tyler Bielby, who recruited Giampa for this season, feels the hard-working forward will excel in the AJHL.

"There is some really good hockey played in the AJ," Bielby said. "Matteo is motivated to be better everyday, and I think Brooks will be happy to have him. He brings a mindset and work ethic that will allow him to adapt early. Once he gets settled, I imagine he will have an immediate impact."

"His mindset is matched by few, and that is his biggest asset. He will go into camp wanting to be the best player on the ice. That attitude, mixed with

his natural skill set, won't see him be denied. This is the next step in his hockey journey, but it won't be his last."

Giampa, who continues to take classes virtually from The Gunnery, misses everything about being a hockey player.

"Definitely missing the locker room with the guys on my team. I miss competing against people and different teams," he said. "Showing up to the rink every day playing hockey, that's kind of what I live for."

He is still holding out faint hope of skating for the Falcons this season, although time appears to be running out.

"I haven't heard anything, but just crossing my fingers that it starts up again," he said. "It sucks, but I've been working out, skating, and doing school work. That's all I really have done. You just try and keep yourself busy. That's the best you can do now anyway."

*Bill Potrecz spent 32 years as a sportswriter for Niagara dailies, covering almost every sport imaginable from high school, to junior hockey, to a World Series and Stanley Cup final. By his estimation he has covered more than 1,500 junior hockey games. He now provides regional sports coverage through BP Sports Niagara.*