Farmers feel criticism levelled at them unfair

Penny Coles
The Local

Last week’s march for seasonal farmworkers didn’t sit well with some local farmers, who felt they were being unfairly targeted with complaints that imply they mistreat their workers.

The protest was intended to bring attention to racism, discrimination, bullying, and poor conditions for workers, as well as to call for resident status, with the same rights for them as for all Canadians.

Not all farmers who objected to the implications of the march were willing to be named, but one who is always open with The Local is Erwin Wiens, who has a small group of offshore workers who return every year.

The biggest objection to last week’s article was the claim that migrant farmworkers pay into the Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance, but can’t collect it.

That is incorrect. When a farmworker who has worked in Canada retires, he can collect an amount based on the amount he or she has paid into it, like all Canadians.

He has one worker who is now 58, and has been coming to Canada to work for 32 years.

“He says he’ll keep coming to work here until he doesn’t want to, and when that time comes, he’ll get the maximum.”

Employment insurance benefits are also available, but not for workers to collect for the four months or so they aren’t working, says Wiens. They can collect special benefits under circumstances such as sickness and paternal leave.

Kit Andres, one of the organizers of last week’s march, agrees migrant farmworkers can collect CPP and EI.

“Farmworkers who had or have temporary status (through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program or Temporary Foreign Workers Program-Agricultural Stream) and meet the conditions to apply, can collect CPP and certain EI special benefits (including sickness benefits) as long as they have a valid work permit (which expires every Dec. 15 for SAWP workers).

Seasonal farmworkers are excluded from collecting EI regular benefits when they are laid off for the season, and farmworkers without status (undocumented workers) are completely excluded from any social supports,” says Andres.

“What sometimes ends up happening when a worker is sick or injured is that they are simply deported and replaced before they’re able to apply for compensation. That’s another reason why farmworkers and other...
Community allotment gardens a go

Newark Park the chosen location

Community allotment gardens a go

Newark Park the chosen location

Penny Coles
The Local

Coun. Norm Arsenault was hoping for one of the garden plots Monday night, if the town approved a community allotment garden, as requested by resident Julian Trachsel. Councillors gave their approval for the project, but it has turned out to be such a popular idea, Arsenault discovered, there are no plots left to be had—they’ve all been reserved.

Town staff have reduced the number of plots Trachsel was hoping to rent out, to just 32, with two larger, raised plots. If it goes well there could be a second phase next year with an increase in the number of allotments. And Trachsel has already allocated plots, mostly to people who have supported him and donated funds for the project, he added.

Trachsel spoke to councillors in August, he asked for a location on town property, with access to water and a faucet. He was pleased with the location the town is providing, in Newark Park, with an entrance from Niven Road, but was surprised to hear the recommendation in the staff report that “all costs be the responsibility of the garden group, through the garden coordinator,” who is Trachsel.

That would include $5,500 for the water and faucet installation. He asked for “a 50-50 split if not 100 per cent” be paid by the town, otherwise, “I’d have no cushion for unexpected operating costs throughout the season.”

He has a list of rules and regulations for a consistent garden appearance, to be monitored by volunteers, Trachsel told councillors, including a three-foot wire mesh border to keep the bunnies out — no other size or design will be accepted.

As for deer, he is keeping his fingers crossed and hoping for the best that they don’t get into the allotments — a chain link fence around the area is too expensive, he said, and he has no other solution. He has pledges of $20,200 to cover the start-up costs, he told councillors, and he has looked for grants that might be applicable, but has had no luck so far.

He has several reasons for wanting the project to proceed, including that it will further public engagement, will encourage people to spend more time outside, staying fit and having fun, and it “converts part of a little-used green space to be more creatively used and more environmentally friendly.” He is also hoping it will encourage children to learn about food sources.

The town property that is being provided will allow for 32 10’ by 10’ plots, plus two 5’x10’ raised beds for those with mobility issues. He had originally hoped for 70 plots, but is now hoping for a sustainable project that can grow. Although the staff report said there is no funding available for the community allotments, Arsenault made a motion that the town cover the $5,500 for water and faucets from the capital reserves, which was unanimously approved.

However, Trachsel warned, some of those who contributed to the $20,200 in pledges have said their donation depends on the garden being ready for this year’s planting season, and although parks and recreation director Kevin Turcotte said he couldn’t guarantee that, he would do his best to make it happen.

For more information, Trachsel can be reached at Newarkparkcommunitygarden@gmail.com

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Numbers of infections, hospitalizations rising

Penny Coles
The Local

With the number of COVID cases and accompanying hospitalizations starting to creep up again in Niagara, a regional order to bring back a mask mandate and proof of vaccination requirements remains on the table if needed.

Dr. Mustafa Hirji, Niagara’s chief acting medical officer of health, says he is hoping the region can continue to align with the provincial decision for individuals to make personal decisions about their risk, but he is disappointed the messaging from the province hasn’t been stronger in promoting voluntary wearing of masks.

“It’s a little frustrating that they have been basically radio silent about COVID over the last couple of weeks,” he says.

And he is “absolutely leaving the door open for masking and proof of vaccinations,” should COVID cases go sideways.

Outbreaks have been increasing in Niagara since mid-March, even before restrictions were lifted last week. Hirji says he’s hoping that information alone will be enough to encourage people to wear masks, and get booster vaccinations, which remain the best tools in stopping the spread of infection.

Most of the outbreaks are in hospital facilities, long-term care and retirement homes and other congregate living situations, he says.

“It’s difficult to know what’s happening in schools, with no record of infections unless parents report them, but it’s likely there are a fair number of cases “that I’m afraid we’re blind to.”

Hirji often compares what is happening in Ontario and across the country to other countries that are typically ahead of Canada. Countries in Europe, such as France, Austria and Switzerland, are broadly similar to Canada, he said, in the way they have regulated cases, and now show a surge of infections, hospitalizations and intensive care admissions after lifting restrictions. Their cases are close to numbers during the peak of omicron.

Some European countries have chosen to reinstate restrictions, such as a mask mandate, as a result of their upward trajectory. Hirji fears the same might happen in Ontario, adding an increase in deaths, and refers to the already-increasing numbers as a “new wave,” saying it could be as bad as the last one.

“At just because we have a lot of immunity (through vaccinations) out there doesn’t mean we can expect hospitalizations will be okay, but they won’t go up as much as they did in the last wave. If there are hospitalizations, a small number of people will die. I do worry suddenly we’ll see an increase in deaths as we go through this next wave. We want to prevent this, to prevent human suffering.”

And people who come out of the hospital may have long-COVID, he added. “It’s important to prevent this.”

In Niagara, testing indicates a 14 per cent positivity rate, far higher than during other waves. Outbreaks are up 160 per cent since mid-March, hospitalizations for people with COVID are up 94 per cent in the same time period, and the number of patients primarily being treated with COVID has jumped by 182 per cent.

The data from wastewater testing also shows an upward trend, both in the region and across the province, he says.

Hirji also presented data that indicates an unvaccinated person is 37 per cent more likely to become infected with COVID, 490 per cent more likely to be hospitalized, and more than 700 per cent more likely to be admitted to intensive care.

He showed figures that indicate those in the lowest income categories may suffer the most from COVID, including more deaths. They may not have easy access to good health care, and may not seek treatment as quickly. “It’s disappointing that those who are the least well-off will feel the greatest impact of COVID,” he says.

In addition to stronger messaging about wearing masks and getting fully vaccinated, Hirji says he’d also like to see the province put out more messaging about how to access medical treatment, and make pathways to treatment easier.

“We also need to build a culture of staying home if you’re sick, including providing pay for sick days.” Those without sick pay “are more likely to come to work and spread infections.”

The province should already be working on a plan for re-introducing a mask mandate, and proof of vaccinations, if necessary, two initiatives Hirji says have a lot of public support.
continued from page 1

migrant workers are calling for permanent resident status, so they can access full benefits and healthcare when sick or injured, without risk of deportation.

The issue of workers not wanting to stay on certain farms is more complicated. They can move from farm to farm to go where the work is, if the farmers agree, says Wiens — he has workers who will move to other farms to pick apples. But they are under contract, and if they want to move because they don’t like their living conditions or they feel they’re being treated badly, they need to call the Jamaican or Mexican consulate or liaison officials, numbers they are given.

Some workers are afraid to do that, fearing they will be sent home, he says. If they ask not to return to a particular farm the next season, their names will be put in a pool, and they may not be offered a contract, Wiens explains.

When workers come to Canada, their contract is with a specific employer. "Where the problem in the system lies is there are some bad employers. They exist. There are bad employers everywhere. That’s human nature. And you can’t change it through legislation."

What legislation can do is determine set working conditions, including living arrangements and hours of work, and make them consistent, he says.

To the comments at the march that farmworkers work long days with no overtime, Wiens says, their rate of pay, this year set at $15 an hour with housing, and a maximum number of hours they can work, is spelled out in the contract they sign. That is negotiated with and agreed upon by all involved, “enshrined in legislation.” And it’s necessary for the employer, who has work that has to be done at a specific time.

There is no overtime, he agrees, also as spelled out in the contract, but that applies to all workers in the Canadian agricultural sector, not just those who come to the country under seasonal workers programs.

“No Canadian in the agricultural sector is paid overtime or holiday pay. They work many hours in a short period of time and then they’re done. It couldn’t work any other way.”

But overall, the program is a huge benefit to developing nations, to huge lineups of workers who want to come here, and to the farms, who need them, says Wiens.

The march also called for ‘urgent and permanent changes to ensure immigration rights instead of partial, time-limited programs.’ Wiens agrees that the process for farmworkers who want permanent residence in Canada should be easier — he has been going through it with one of his Jamaican workers for the last three years. It’s an expensive and costly process, he says, and his employee, nicknamed Obama, “should be a Canadian. His family should be Canadian.”

Wiens is willing to sponsor him, and is doing everything he can to help him.

“I have said that to everyone who will listen,” says Wiens. “We’re now three years into the process, and we want to bring his family over here.”

The process is slow, however, for all who wish to come to Canada, he points out, and in response to the comments made at the march, he adds, “not all farmworkers want to come here permanently. Most are happy to go home, they are content with their lives there. They are all entitled to apply though.”

The problem with the process is “a shortfall of the Canadian government, for anybody who wants to come to Canada.”

Most who do successfully apply look for work other than in the agricultural industry, some going to school to develop trades, and they do well, Wiens says.

He would love for Obama to stay on the farm forever. “He would have a job here as long as he wants it, but I would never hold him back. The reality is the world would be his oyster.”

As Kit Andres said during the march last week, and Wiens agrees, those who come under the seasonal workers programs “all want to come to Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

“They want to come to this community, and many of them have been coming for decades. There is everything they need here for them, places they can congregate. Even the housing is better here. Most have access to satellite TV and Internet, and they have better mobility.”

The NOTL farmers who called The Local shared their concern that they are being blamed for the mistreatment and poor living conditions farmworkers experience in other regions of the province. They speak of well-maintained living quarters inspected by Niagara Region every year, and the fact that many farmers treat their workers like family, going above and beyond anything they are required to do to make them comfortable. One spoke of arranging Sunday morning church services on the farm for them.

They praise the dedication of the health inspectors, who won’t approve a farm that doesn’t meet standards spelled out for them, and surmise maybe the same standards aren’t upheld in other areas.

Before employers can hire foreign farmworkers through the federal program, they must pass that regional inspection. If there are any infractions found, inspectors will return to ensure they’ve been corrected, before forwarding their report to the Service Canada, which administers the program — if living conditions don’t pass inspection, farmers will not be able to participate in the program.
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Two sides to every story, including last weekend’s march

There is absolutely no doubt farmworkers who come to Canada are treated better today than they were when the seasonal workers program began more than 50 years ago. The question is, have we, as a country and a society, come far enough?

Those who advocate for farmworkers believe there is more work to be done.

Most farmers, at least here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, believe they treat their employees exceptionally well, as if they are family, and go far above and beyond what is mandated by government programs. Most of them here in NOTL probably do.

How many don’t is unknown, and without having names and specific complaints, it’s difficult to know what to do about it. There are avenues to lodge complaints, but workers fear it would end up with them being sent home, never to be accepted into the seasonal program again, and they can’t afford that. So if they are ill treated, they must be staying and putting up with it, biting the bullet for the sake of their families at home, and then they do it all over again the next year. Maybe for the rest of their working lives.

Also at issue to the question of rights. As one letter-writer pointed out along with many phone calls, The Local printed-ed incorrect information last week. Farmworkers who come to Canada have benefits they didn’t have decades ago, including CPP when they retire, and some EI special benefits, although, not for workers on contract during the time they’re unemployed, but that same rule applies to all Canadians. We’re told there can be snags in collecting some of those benefits, because the underlying issue is about much more than two sides of a labour dispute. It’s the charge that it’s coming from a place of discrimination, and it’s true. Right.

Many of us have likely at some point in our lives been on one or the other side of an employer/employee relationship that didn’t go well, but maybe not as many because of race or colour. That’s a very different situation, and much harder to fix.

What is very hurtful to many farmers, good men and women in our community, is the feeling they’re all being painted with the same broad strokes. That’s really unfortunate for those who are really doing their best for their employees, but hear the message, and feel it’s aimed at them as well, in their community, in a very public forum. And without specific complaints, how do we avoid it?

To all the farmers’ business owners, volunteers and community members who wholeheartedly reach out their arms in welcome and do their best to offer a good life in Canada for those who not only are essential to our food supply but a part of our community for a large part of the year, thank you.

Last weekend’s march gave us all something to think about, to talk about, and maybe to do something about, so that those who took part in it will never feel the need to march again.”

Penny Coles
The Local
Shovels hit the ground mid-March

Continued from page 6

life, there is hopefully a lesson. How can we apply ourselves moving forward when we see the warning signs of such an event?

During the Thundering Waters years of conversation, I had to admit that when a larger force is in play, it can and will do everything in its power to maintain the power. In this case, once the initial deal was signed and nobody was publicly made aware of it, it was going to be hard to walk it back. It had already sunk its roots in, with the brutal irony of the roots was about to rip up in Canada.

Money has a big mouth, and admittedly, it is a hard mouth to close, even if what it is yelling about is wrong. If you yell back, as I did many times, you will be chopped at by said mouth, or it will turn around and yell to the public how you’re just a special interest tree hugger. It may even around and yell to the public and admittedly, it is a hard power to maintain the power. I had to admit that when a event?

How can we apply ourselves moving forward when we see the warning signs of such an event?

Regarding the article on the front page of The Local (March 23, Farmworkers ask for same rights as all Canadians), I must say I was very dis-appointed with the inaccurate content. There seems to be a never-ending trail of fake news, and it seems now that The Local with this article has joined the parade.

Firstly, the correct term for these people is temporary for-eign worker and not migrant worker. I google searched “am temporary foreign workers collect CPP if they pay CPP benefits” and presto it says that TFVs are able to collect EI sickness benefits. They can also get CPP if they have made enough contributions. A deeper dive shows that TFV’s can’t collect loss of work ben-efits, which is not a factor, as they are here on a work visa with an employer-guaranteed minimum of 240 hours of pay/ work over six weeks, but they can claim special benefits such as sickness, maternity and pa-rence leave. They are also pro-ected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the workplace safety and insurance act, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the occupational health and safety act. This information took me under ten min-utes to find, and definitely changes the narrative of the article.

I was very interested in Ga- briels’s story of the sacrifices he made, and continues to make, to earn money for his family back in Mexico. A pertinent piece of missing information is that under the SAPW (seasonal Afield Program) no worker can stay in Canada beyond eight months a year, and they have to leave Canada to return home for Christmas.

This means that Gabriel has left Canada 21 times and leaves me to wonder that if the conditions are so bad for Ga- briel, and if he is being bullied and mistreated, and if the pres-ure to produce is so bad, and if the living conditions (which are annually inspected by the local regional government as part of the qualifications to requests TFVs) are below his standards, and if leaving his young family is so traumatic, and the work so difficult with his herniated discs, then why has he voluntarily returned to the same employer 20 times (Mexican TFVs have the right to change employers)?

Thank goodness Gabriel was here and that his employ-er pushed to have him seen at Hamilton General for his open heart surgery, one of the best hospitals for this procedure in the province, and arguably the country.

It is important to note that TFVs receive a health card and have the same access as every Canadian to our health care system. They also have their own drug plan.

I must say shame on Ms. Coles for not perform-ing her journalistic duties of fact-checking prior to print. It is this kind of fake news that creates mistrust amongst the community. The article should clearly read ‘temporary for-eign workers have same rights as all Canadians.”

Kevin Watson
NOTL

Kudos to town for fixing potholes

Kudos to the town staff for rectifying so timely the concerns brought to them on Monday, March 21. By Wednesday, March 23, the potholes on Concession 6 near St. Michael Catholic School were repaired, and the blockage in the creek near Tri- us Estate Winery was cleared.

The follow-up call was also much appreciated. Well done!

Laurene Nickelt
NOTL

Shameful a sovereign nation can’t be protected

All this money and time the countries of the world have spent to fund the United Nations, since 1945. All the money and time that NATO countries spent to fund NATO. It seems completely useless if the world can’t find a way to protect a sovereign nation from invasion, in this day and age. What good is any of this? Shameful.

Steve Sliamsky
NOTL

Please sign petition for equal rights

The current and for-mer migrant farm workers who led Nicaragua’s first Unite Against Racism march to demand full and permanent immigration status for all, would like to thank the com-munity for participating in this last week event in Virgil. It was a great success and en-couraged them to continue speaking up for migrant rights. Migrants urge you as their neighbour to join them in the call for equal rights for all migrants, refugees, and undocumented people by signing and sharing the peti-tion at statusfor.ca.

United we are stronger!

Kit Andres
Migrant Workers Alliance for Change

Reader takes exception to COVID numbers

I would respectfully like to address Dr. R.G. James’ letter (The Local, March 16). Dr. James had quoted that approximately 38,000 deaths in Canada were from COVID. It’s important to note that the 38,000 died with COVID, not from COVID. The other co-morbidities listed on their death certificates were 38 per cent dementia or Alzheimer’s; 33 per cent pneumonia; 15 per cent hypertensive disease; 13 per cent sciatric heart disease; 13 per cent respiratory fail-ure, 12 per cent diabetes. And the list goes on. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Pre-vention), the national public health agency of the U.S., has acknowledged that 75 per cent of the deaths with COVID had four or more co-morbidities and 94 per cent had two or more co-morbidities.

The doctor also had ex-pressed that “after two years and approximately 38,000 deaths from COVID in Canada versus 900,000 in the U.S., to suggest that our vastly improved per-formance over our southern neighbour is not due to our very successful vaccination policy is so disheartening.”

When you look at the num-ber of people testing positive for COVID compared to the deaths with COVID, the U.S. ratio of death is 0.012 and Can-ada’s is 0.011. With the vaccina-tions not stopping the spread of the virus our survival rate seems to be very simi-lar to the US.

Shannon Sherwood

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Migrant Workers Alliance for Change

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Letters! We want letters!

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

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It’s fitting that Shaw Festi-
vale’s first 2022 presentation in-
one of its signature theatres is a
play that was part of its last pre-
pandemic full season.

Cyrano de Bergerac has
turned to the Royal George
Theatre with the same actors
in the lead roles, in a play
adapted by the same writer
and helmed by the same direc-
tor, with a set that seems as if
it never left the stage.

All of that amounts to a
very, very good thing.

Tom Rooney is back as
the title character. He perfectly
embodies Cyrano, a confident,
boastful raconteur who uses
his eloquent and at times ac-
broads words as effectively as he
does his sharp sword.

But his hubris fails him in
his desire to capture the heart
of his cousin Roxane, expertly
played once again by Deborah
Hay. In her company, he can’t
see beyond the end of his own
nose to his endearing qualities,
hung up as he is on his prom-
inent proboscis. Its grotesque-
ness makes it the centre of
many jokes, though these are
rarely told to the swashbuck-
lor’s face.

Enter Jeff Irving, return-
ing as the handsome yet va-
pid beau-hunk Christian de
Neuvillette. His supermodel
good looks catch the eye of
anyone?) and the 1987 Fred
Rooney portrayal of the
Cyrano of De Bugno. His
unique role as it is
enduring. Written in the late
1890s by Edmund Rostad,
Cyrano de Bergerac is based
loosely on the life of a real per-
son and set in the 1640s during
the Franco-Spanish War.

Originally written entirely
in verse, it was an immedi-
ate hit upon its premiere in
France in 1897. There have
been a number of translations
and adaptations through the
years, with a half-dozen film
and television adaptations of
the story. And many, many
more if you include cartoon
reellings (Cyrano de Bugno,
anyone?) and the 1987 Fred
Shaw’s stage. She has done a
marvellous job in bringing
out both the pathos and the
humour in this story of unre-
quited love.

The Royal George is used
as it utmost by director Chris
Abraham. Characters enter
and exit through the doors be-
hind the back row, continuing
their dialogue up and down the
aisle. It sets an almost immersive
experience as if they were sitting alongside
the theatre goers can see past the
character’s outstanding phys-
ical trait to both the pain and
love within his heart. The au-
dience can feel his desire for
Roxane to choose his soul
over Christian’s beauty, to love
him for what he is. And they
also feel his fear of stopping
out of the shadows to profess
his love. Rooney endears him-
to the audience, wearing
Cyrano’s emotion on his face.

Act Two begins on the
battlefields of the war and
stands out as a tour de force
for the production, with the
humorous feast a prelude to
the swashbuckler’s face.

Tom Rooney and Jeff Irving
star as Christian and Roxane
in the Shaw Festival production of Cyrano de Bergerac. (David Cooper)
Tribute at community centre to thank essential workers

Almost 1,400 origami cranes are now on display at the community centre, marking the second-year anniversary of provincial closures due to COVID.

“Little did we know at that time how COVID would affect us all,” said Lise Andreana, chair of the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, which undertook the project of the 1,000 cranes in January. It is intended to honour and thank the many essential workers who have contributed to our health and safety during the last two years, while putting their own health on the line so that critical services and operations continued.

“This art installation, featuring colourful origami cranes,” said Andreana, “honours those unsung heroes.”

She saw it as a simple project to execute, but one that would make a large, beautiful impact for all to enjoy. At last Thursday’s opening of the display, she shared the ancient Japanese legend that inspired it, explaining how the crane, considered a mystical or holy creature, is rumoured to live for a thousand years. It promises anyone who folds a thousand origami cranes will be granted a wish by the gods, or bring happiness and good luck. They can be made by one person or by several in a group.

It involved 45 volunteers to make it happen, she said, spending hundreds of hours folding, stringing, and installing the cranes, including many made by Lord Mayor Betty Disero and CAO Marnie Cluckie, who also helped coordinate the installation with town staff. “Marnie and Betty know firsthand how hard it was,” she said, thanking them for their enthusiasm.

Disero told the crowd of about 40 people gathered for the occasion that a lot of people were afraid at the start of the pandemic, and uncertain about what the future would hold. But there was a group of people that worked and put the community ahead of themselves, frontline workers, healthcare workers and emergency services, who put themselves at risk to keep others safe, and who have earned our gratitude, said Disero, and who deserve the tribute the display represents, she said.

“All of us, collectively over the last two years, have pulled together and done what we need to do to get through this pandemic,” she said, calling on everyone present to say thank you to any frontline workers, whether a nurse or doctor, an EMS, a pharmacist or a grocery store worker.

“Please tell them thank you, and please be kind when you speak to them. I know in my heart of hearts we do appreciate the work they’ve done for all of us. They really need our support.”

Although the installation is complete, there is work still to be done, and the help of the public is still required. “The art installation is scheduled to run through April 7,” said Andreana.

After the show ends, strings of cranes will be donated to essential workers. The public is invited to nominate an essential worker to receive a strand of origami cranes from the exhibit. It doesn’t have to be an essential worker as designated by the province, she said.

“You can nominate anyone you consider essential, anyone who helped you get through the last two years. We all have someone in our lives who has helped us during the pandemic.”

Send suggestions in an email to office@niagarapumphouse.ca.

There were at least 45 volunteers involved in creating and installing the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre origami crane display at the community centre. On hand for the opening last week were volunteers Patti Knipe, Gail Kerr, Susan Ashukian, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Pumphouse board chair Lise Andreana, Joanne Morandin and Aimee Medina.

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The Local Sales for the Past Decade

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

10 PEREZ STREET
$3,050
MLS 40210564 • Christopher Bowron and Nicole Vanderperk

513 GATE STREET
$1,699,000
MLS 40223330 • Thomas Elltoft and Weston Miller

11 VINCENT AVENUE
$1,610,000
MLS 40211064 • Thomas Elltoft and Weston Miller

375 MISSISSAUGA STREET
$1,999,000
MLS 40208653 • Thomas Elltoft and Kim Elltoft

1581 CONCESSION 2 AVE
$2,359,000
MLS 40077440 • Christopher Bowron and Nicole Vanderperk

94 TANBARK ROAD
$2,339,000
MLS 40178301 • Thomas Elltoft and Weston Miller

627 SIMCOE STREET
$1,398,000
MLS 40140724 • Thomas Elltoft and Jane Elltoft

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Christopher Bowron*** 905-468-2269
Kim Findley* 905-941-3726
Randall Armstrong* 905-651-2077
Victoria Bolduc* 905-941-3276
Phillip Bowron* 905-348-7629
Bonnie Grimm* 905-468-1256
Nicole Vanderperk* 905-941-4585

Viviane Elliott* 905-468-2142
Tristan Elliott* 905-380-8012
Jane Elliott* 905-888-8776
Chery Carmichael* 905-941-5276
Bryan Goodale* 905-685-2458
Christine Bruce* 905-328-8703
Linda Williams* 905-401-4240

Caroline Polgrafia* 905-933-4983
Patricia Akerman* 905-293-4989
Weston Miller* 289-213-8681
Giovanni Rodriguez Martinez* 905-325-2145
Ricky Watson* 603-246-2337

***Broker of Record  ** Broker  *Sales Representative
Penny Coles
The Local

Seven years go, Tanya Rice’s sister organized a 50th birthday for her, and because she knows how much Rice loves animals, asked for donations to Niagara Cats Rescue instead of gifts.

Every year since then Rice, who has become one of the organization’s committed volunteers, has assisted with annual fundraisers to help to fulfill their mission: to shelter, nurture and socialize abandoned and homeless cats in a loving, home-like environment until they are adopted to their forever homes.

That first year, she didn’t consider herself a fundraiser, but wanted to do something to help. She decided to turn a personal Christmas tradition into an event to raise money for cat rescue.

She and her husband Peter typically held a post-Can-dileight Stroll open house at their home, and since they had been feeding a pregnant feral cat. She and her husband decided to keep two beautiful kittens of the litter, “taking volunteering to the next level.”

She is also fostering their fifth cat, four of which found homes. Phoebe is up for adoption now.

This non-profit charity group, operated 100 per cent with volunteers, is hosting their annual spring fundraiser this Saturday, with a raffle and a spring flower sale, to help pay for veterinary care, including emergency visits, and spaying and neutering assistance.

It offers a foster program as well as an adoption program with the local Pet Valu store on Niagara Stone Road, which helps find suitable permanent homes for unwanted or abandoned cats.

Every cat adopted from Niagara Cats Rescue is spayed or neutered, and has a microchip inserted by the vet during that procedure, says Rice.

The organization also provides continued long-term veterinary care, shelter, food and spaying and neutering release programs for feral cat colonies where domestication is not possible. Volunteers trap cats, sometimes fatal, and sometimes cats who have been socialized. If they’re microchipped they can be returned to their owner.

But often, and even more so during the last two years of the pandemic when parents were working from home and kids were attending school virtually, families have taken a kitten into their home, and when it didn’t work out for them, let it loose outdoors. “Now mom and dad are back to work, and kids are back to school, socialized cats are being abandoned and are showing up at back doors,” says Rice.

And when people find these cats, they don’t always know there is a cat rescue organization in their community. We want to educate people, to tell them we have the means to humanely trap these animals, and see if they’re microchipped. We have a website and a Facebook page we can use to help find their homes.”

These cats can usually be adopted, but foster homes are needed until families can be found for them, says Rice.

Niagara Cats Rescue fundraiser this Saturday, April 2, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., is at 456 Line 2 in NOTL.

There will be eight-inch and 10-inch pots with tulips and daffodils, decorated with pussy willows and decorative grasses, says Rice. They will sell for $25 each, cash only. There will also be a raffle, with tickets at $2 or three for $5, for items such as a Fossil leather handbag, spa products and wine, and 100 per cent of ticket sales going to Niagara Cats Rescue.

Volunteer Tanya Rice, shown with Phoebe, the cat she is fostering, is holding a fundraiser at her home, with potted spring plants for sale. Last year’s sale in her driveway earned $2,300 for the organization. (Photos supplied)
Red Roof Retreat director finds role rewarding

Penny Coles
The Local

As Red Roof Retreat gradually reopens, helping special needs kids and their families across the region, board members are meeting regularly to plan for the future of the organization.

With Stefanie Bjorgan at its helm as founder and executive director, the Red Roof Retreat volunteer board eager to steer it through a gradual return to full strength and the many programs offered pre-pandemic, which included an adult day program, a summer day camp, recreational programs, school trips, day visits, and horseback riding.

Board members have come together from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, each bringing a skill to the board that helps shape the direction and mission of Red Roof, as it continues to develop, even after many years of providing respite and recreational programs to children and young adults.

Brodie Townley has been one of those board members for the last five years. He moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2015, and was looking to get involved in the community, he says, when he met long-time board member Ward Simpson, and one of Red Roof’s staunchest supporters, at the golf club. Townley was hooked by his enthusiasm.

“We talked about Red Roof, and I liked the idea of it being a community charity, as opposed to one of the big-name organizations,” says Townley. “The fact that it’s a real hands-on role, getting involved in events, appealed to me.”

Townley, retired from a career with ScotiaBank in the treasury department — the last 12 years spent in the Bahamas — brings financial expertise to the board.

He is quick to admit that when he began volunteering he knew nothing of the needs of the children Red Roof serves, or of organizations that provide such assistance.

“I had no family or friends in that situation, no experience in dealing with the challenges these kids and their families face,” he says.

“It has been a real eye-opener to me, how big the need is.”

Fundraising has so far been a pretty minor part of his role, with most of the fundraising events already well-established, he says, and Red Roof has been fortunate in the support it receives from the community; although there is always a need for funds to successfully operate programs.

“Stuff is a driving force in that department, and always has been. It’s hard to say no to her, and she has no problem asking for help. Whatever she needs, whether it’s money, or help with snowplowing or laying gravel at The Ranch (one of the Red Roof properties), she has a way of finding it.”

Being on the board, he says, “you see the direction Red Roof is going, you see the face of Red Roof, and the local aspect that is so appreciated by people. I had no idea of the need right across the region, and what Red Roof is able to do.”

The programs now available for children and families “wouldn’t happen if it weren’t for Stefanie,” he added.

“Going back in history, children with the kinds of challenges some children face might have become wards of the state, their parents unable to care for them. “We’ve come a long way since then. Parents wanted to keep their kids at home, and mon-

ey became available for par-

ents to spend to help them.”

As children become young adults, the need for support continues, and Red Roof has developed programs for them and their families, says Townley.

“Sitting on the board, he has seen that while Red Roof is a local charity, its reach has grown, as has its need to have policies in place that reflect its size and growth. And that is a challenge for him, to help work on policy and governance issues, and to have them more formalized than they have been, "formalized in a very positive way, to guide Red Roof into the future, and putting down procedures for moving forward.”

That’s the major skill he has brought to the table, he says, now that COVID is in the rear-view mirror. During the pandemic, “everything ground to a halt. Now it’s time to think about moving forward.”

Red Roof has a great group of people on its board, and from his perspective, the work they do is very rewarding.

“The board encourages its members to be involved. It’s a very up-front group, and you can see its successes.”

“The best part, he says, is going to The Ranch when there is a program or a day camp with kids there, “and you see the look on their faces. They’re ecstatic to be there. It gives you such a good feeling to see that.”

As a parent of two adult children, he can appreciate how much that means to children and their parents, and also how much the respite means to parents, giving them time to spend with the rest of the family, the brothers and sisters who don’t always get the attention parents would like to give them.

“That’s why the shutdown has been so difficult. The kids missed the programs, and the families didn’t get a break. Caring for them is 24 hours a day, and that has been a real challenge.”

Red Roof is looking for more volunteers to start rebuilding its programs, and for new board members “to bring new blood, different views, and different ideas to the table, to look at all the opportunities to help lead the board as it looks forward. And to put their hands up when something needs to be done, whatever it may be.”

Great event, great cause

Maria Mavridis of Anchor Niagara, Stacey Mulholland supporting Anchor, and Elise Gastarino, founder Pink Pearl Canada, at a recent Pink Pearl fundraiser held at BarbEe and RuffEe’s, with 100 per cent of proceeds going to Pink Pearl Foundation. The event was sold out within a day, says Mavridis, who was still waiting to hear the fundraising total at press time. (Photo supplied)
When Liz Hawley was taken suddenly in a tragic collision the summer of 2020, she left behind a family devastated by their loss. Liz was a strong, loving, generous spirit, motivated by faith, and an inspiration to others. She was also an exceptionally creative and talented designer, with incredible taste, and over the course of decades, amassed an eclectic assortment of all kinds of interesting items, fabulous finds of furniture and accessories, says her husband John.

She had at various stages in her life rented them out for photo shoots or themed weddings, sold them from a gift store she had in Garrison Village until John needed the space, and stored them to stage model homes. She sometimes had really unusual, interesting wonderful way of collecting things. She must have decorated “way back when,” he says. She loved doing it, letting her creativity show.

It’s been an emotional time going through her collection, some of it going back to a long-ago trip to France, “way back when,” he says. Liz “had this crazy, varied, wonderful way of collecting really unusual, interesting things. She sometimes had plans to use them to make something else, so some might be of interest to people who are looking for something unique, that might present an opportunity to create something,” says John.

“They’re lots there that I recognize. I remember where we were when we got it, what we did with it. It feels good to be going through it, and doing something with it.”

Proceeds from the sale will go to a cause that was very important to her, Rising Angels, which helps women who have been abused or exploited in the sex trade. Its mission is to bring education and awareness to the commercial sexual exploitation of women, and to provide supportive services and safe environments for them.

The Hawley Family is having a contents sale of Liz Hawley’s Warehouse Niagara.

The sale is being held Saturday and Sunday, April 2 and 3, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at 360 York Road, Unit 19. Cash or e-transfers will be accepted.

We would like to invite our NOTL neighbours and friends to our public sale.

All proceeds from this sale will be donated to Liz’s favourite charity RISING ANGELS.

Cash or e-transfer accepted.

• Industrial Shelving • Furniture (Antique/New) • Staging Items • Antique Hardware • Doors • Wood • Chairs of all sorts • China • Lamps • Dinnerware • Pillow Fabric • Books • Shelving • Signage • Vintage suitcases • Print Art • Mirrors AND MORE!

View more photos at https://tinyurl.com/lyckww2th
Notice of Open House and Public Meeting

PROPOSED NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN
Niagara Region has prepared a new proposed Niagara Official Plan, and will hold an open house and public meeting, pursuant to subsection 17.5 and 17.6 of the Planning Act R.S.O. 1990, as amended.

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, April 7, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
It will be held virtually.
The purpose of the open house is to present the new proposed Niagara Official Plan and give an opportunity to ask questions.

PUBLIC MEETING
Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
It will be held virtually as part of a Special Regional Council Meeting.
The purpose of the public meeting is to present the new proposed Niagara Official Plan and give an opportunity for the public to provide input.

PURPOSE OF THE NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN
The proposed Niagara Official Plan will shape the physical, economic and social development of the region over the next 30 years. It sets out objectives and policies that will, among other matters:

• Identify how and where growth will happen
• Help protect Niagara’s natural environment and address our changing climate
• Ensure Niagara has an adequate and diverse supply of housing
• Plan for our future infrastructure needs and ensure they’re properly funded
• Create the right conditions to attract and retain jobs in Niagara

As the proposed Niagara Official Plan will apply to the entire Niagara Region planning area, a location map has not been provided. Consultation has taken place on background work and draft policy. A final proposed Niagara Official Plan will be available for review and comment at niagararegion.ca/official-plan from the date of this notice.

HOW TO REGISTER TO ATTEND AND PROVIDE INPUT
Register to attend the April 7 open house at niagararegion.ca/official-plan.

To provide input orally at the April 28 public meeting, please pre-register with the Regional Clerk at clerk@niagararegion.ca before 9 a.m. on Friday, April 22, 2022. For more information, visit niagararegion.ca/government/councilspeakingatcouncil.

Due to efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and protect all individuals, Council Chamber at Regional Headquarters will not be open to the public to attend meetings until further notice. To view a live-stream meeting proceeding, without the ability to provide oral submissions, please visit niagararegion.ca/government/council.

To provide written input, please either mail your comments to the Office of the Regional Clerk, Niagara Region, 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Ontario, L2V 4T7 or email clerk@niagararegion.ca by 9 a.m. on Friday April 22, 2022.

If you are not able to attend, or would like more information, including information on appeal rights, you can provide input or ask questions by emailing makingourmark@niagararegion.ca.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara on the proposed official plan, you must make a written request to the Clerk c/o Regional Clerk, Niagara Region, 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, P.O. Box 1042, Thorold, Ontario, L2V 4T7, or email clerk@niagararegion.ca. Such requests must include the name and address to which such notice should be sent.

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to participate in meetings or events, please let us know in advance so that arrangements can be made in a timely manner. Special accessibility accommodations and materials in alternate formats can be arranged by contacting Niagara Region’s Accessibility Advisory Coordinator at 905-685-4225 ext. 3252 or accessibility@niagararegion.ca.

Any personal information is collected under the authority of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 13 and may be used in an appendix of a staff report, published in the meeting agenda, delegation list and/or the minutes of the public meeting and made part of the public record. Niagara Region collects this information for the purposes of making informed decisions on the relevant issues and to notify interested parties of Council’s decisions. It may also be used to serve notice of an Ontario Land Tribunal hearing. Information collected, used and disclosed is in accordance the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). Questions about this collection and disclosure should be directed to the Access & Privacy Office at 905-896-6000 ext 3779 or FOI@niagararegion.ca.

Notice first issued in the newspaper on March 31, 2022.
St. Davids president Steve Burrows and Past International Director Don Noland, visiting from Missouri, present Lord Mayor Betty Disero with a Melvin Jones Award at last Thursday’s Lions meeting. (Penny Coles)

St. Davids Lions Club honours lord mayor

It’s not often the public sees Lord Mayor Betty Disero caught off guard, but the St. Davids Lions certainly managed to surprise her at their Thursday night meeting last week when they presented her with the Melvin Jones Award, the highest form of recognition given by Lions Clubs worldwide, for humanitarian ideas and services.

Disero told the members gathered for their regular meeting that she’d been invited to the club for dinner, but was unable to stay, having a regional council meeting to attend. However, she took the time to drop in and chat with members before dinner.

When club president Steve Burrows introduced her as a special guest, and called her to the podium, she still didn’t know she was about to be honoured for her support of the St. Davids Lions Club.

“Lord Mayor Betty, Burrows said, “has always championed the St. Davids Lions Club at every opportunity. She helps spread our brand in the community.”

She has sold tickets at the grocery basket game at the carnival, he said — she promised to do so again this year — and with her husband Dan, and with friends, has attended many Lions fundraising activities, including barbecues and fish fries.

She has helped by providing service projects for the Lions to perform. Burrows said, “has always championed the St. Davids Lions Club at every opportunity. She helps spread our brand in the community.”

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“This means the world to me,” said Disero, emotionally wiping away tears. “I couldn’t receive it from a better group of people. I’m beyond words to describe how much the St. Davids Lions Club has given back to the community.”

The Lions dinner had several members from other clubs attending, in the area for a division convention being held in St. Catharines. Don Noland, a past international director from St. Louis, Missouri, was asked to present the Melvin Jones plaque and pin to Disero.

Meanwhile St. Davids Lion Al Snider, an international director, was in Russellville, Arkansas for a Lions convention being held there.
Food needed for Easter and throughout coming months

Continued from page 1

have Easter hampers to fill, and we really need to get stocked up for the coming months.”

The Niagara Lions are holding a food drive April 16, at Hendriks Independent on Queen Street and Phil’s Independent in Virgil, and that will help to stock up after Easter, “but I don’t see any other food drives happening,” says Grant.

“We really need this wonderful community to once again show their generosity,” she said.

“We are pleased to see food coming in, and people are again showing their generosity, but we need a lot more.”

Children will be receiving candy for their Easter baskets, she says, thanks to Hendriks, who has already dropped off two truckloads of food, including a big box of candy that will be enough for all the families with children.

The food bank also welcomes cash donations, which helps them buy what isn’t donated, says Grant, and to accommodate those with special diets.

Newark generally banks on giving away turkeys and hams – each family gets one or the other, but more prefer turkeys.

Also high on their list of food items they need are the extras that go with a holiday dinner – including turkey stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, cans of pineapple to go with the ham, tins of gravy, and canned juices.

Newark buys potatoes, onions and carrots, and volunteers are thankful for Jim Walker of Walker’s Country Market, who will drop off fresh pies, “literally made that morning,” hot out of the oven, to add to the Easter hampers at the last minute before they’re delivered April 14.

For a list of food that is needed all year long, visit https://www.newarkneighbours.ca/donate-to-the-food-bank

The Newark Neighbours Thrift Shop will be closed for the Easter holiday, from Wednesday, April 13 until Tuesday, April 19.

(Newark Neighbours food bank volunteer Genevieve Lawrence shows how empty the shelves are, just before Easter. (Photo supplied)
Planting seeds of change in Niagara’s farmland

Jane Andres
Special to The Local

This week marks the 10th anniversary of the passing of Isbrand Boese. A refugee from the war in Ukraine, he arrived in Niagara in 1930 with his parents and five siblings. Within a few decades the Boese family had created a legacy that would change the direction of the agricultural industry.

Rereading his obituary recently brought back memories of a delightful afternoon in 2008 spent with Isebrand Boese. Fred and Art eagerly initiated an animated conversation, each one finishing the other’s sentences, a character trait the twins were well-known for, before Art passed away in 2017. There was soon plenty of laughter and longing, recalling old memories and local family dynamics.

The Boese family fled Ukraine like thousands of other families in the 1920s and ’30s. Thirteen-year-old Brandy arrived in Niagara with his parents, five siblings and just a few suitcases in hand. Thanks to MCC (Mennonite Central Committee) and the good credit (Mennonite Central Committee) and the good credit of Mennonites already established in the community, his parents were able to purchase a 16-acre farm in Beamsville based on only a handshake and a $1.75 down payment. Within four years they bought a much larger farm on Hunter Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake, severing their equipment and Mennonite community ties. The cherry picker, Brandy recognized their equipment and Mennonite community ties. The cherry picker, it’s now an essential piece of equipment in the orchards, which raises harvesters in a bucket that allows them to work safely, instead of relying on ladders prone to tipping in soft soil.

Up until that time pesticides were hauled around the farm on a stone boat or wagon, a two-man operation. Art and Fred grew up in the orchards, which raises the idea of being an agricultural innovator during those years, developing the idea of the cherry picker. It’s now an essential piece of equipment in the orchards, which raises harvesters in a bucket that allows them to work safely, instead of relying on ladders prone to tipping in soft soil.

Those two men operated a small operation, Brandy explained. They would mix things up! They would mix things up! And it wasn’t all work – they bought homes in north end of Lake Street in St. Catharines. It quickly became one of the largest in Canada, shipping Niagara’s premium peaches, tender fruit, and tomatoes across North America, with a staff numbering almost 1,000 at its peak.

Niagara was experiencing a post-war economic boom, with McKinnons (later GM) and manufacturing plants sprouting up on former farmland. Competing with the abundance of manufacturing jobs, the Boese family had to find new ways to attract a dependable labour force.

The cannery advertised out west, attracting many young women from Winnipeg and the prairies in search of employment (and husbands). The arrival of eligible women certainly injected new life and romance into the social life of local churches!

As he pointed out familiar faces in the photo albums, Brandy told us about Mennonite friends and relatives entrenched in deep poverty in Paraguay after fleeing Ukraine in the Second World War. Having been a child refugee himself, he had a heart for people who shared that experience.

The Boese family sponsored hundreds of these families to enable them to come to Niagara. Within a year or two these same families were buying homes in north end St. Catharines, thanks to the guarantee of steady employment and Mennonite community ties.

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Continued on page 17
Continued from page 16

Brandy's story then took us on an unexpected turn as he opened another large book, scanning the pages until his finger alighted on one particular page. It was a book about the Japanese internment in Canada. He told us about hearing first-hand the stories of Japanese descendants who were working for a nursery in Vineland. They had lost their homes, all of their belongings — everything confiscated by the Canadian government in the 1940s, despite the fact that they were Canadian citizens who had lived here for multiple generations.

He invited several of the men to work on his Port Dalhousie farm. With surprising candour, he told us how this decision drew the ire and a racist diatribe of a man then the reeve of St. Catharines, and later the mayor. It was a decision to hire Japanese workers, assisting them to create a farm market.

Brandy and Smith in-...
Mike Balsom

Niagara Predators owner Robert Turnbull says his team had a fabulous 2021-2022 season playing out of Virgil’s Mediterranean Credit Union Arena. “The whole staff has been great,” he tells The Local. “We like the rink, we like the people, we like the location.”

Turnbull says the Great Merit Junior A Hockey League team he also managed and coached this year is committed to staying in town, after having moved here from Toronto last fall.

Turnbull met with NOTL Parks and Recreation manager Kevin Turcotte and supervisor of recreation Dan Maksenuk Monday afternoon to lay out his wish list for next season. A key element on that list is improved access to ice time.

“Because of the age of our players, we have kids in university and some that work,” Turnbull says. “We had 3 p.m. practices most weeks. We need a later practice time in order to get everybody there. For the Europeans and the billeted players it’s no problem. But to the Europeans and the billeted players it’s no problem. But to the Europeans and the billeted players it’s no problem. But to

We brought that up before, when we discussed maybe building something,” he daries, “but I can work with what we have right now provided we have better access to it. I’m hoping to take this team to the next level, and to do that you need access to training, either on site, or next door.”

Prior to the move to NOTL, the Predators placed out of North York’s Cardan Ice Sports, the home arena to the GMHL’s Renegades, who bounced Niagara from the playoffs a week ago. That facility features six rinks and tight dressing rooms, and also provided a workout room for players.

“We had at least three practices a week there. Turnbull rebuffed “all the kids skated in the morning. And we had the gym there. But with so many teams playing there, it was a bit of a nightmare, with people running up and down the hallways while a game was going on.”

Turnbull considers his meeting with Turcotte and Maksenuk to have gone very well. He expects to hear back from them within three to four weeks. He’s hoping the town can fulfill his requests to make the upcoming 2022-2023 season go more smoothly.

St. Davids Pool may be repaired or replaced

St. Davids residents may not be getting a new pool anytime soon, but at least fundraising committee members can now investigate repairing it to ensure it stays open, until money is available to replace it.

At Monday’s council meeting, the mandate of the pool fundraising committee was changed to allow members to look at repairing as well as replacing the aging structure.

A design for a new pool that comes with a $5 million price tag was approved in 2019, but since then, the town has gone through rounds of funding applications with no luck, and without a grant from other levels of government, committee members haven’t started on raising its portion of the cost. They have received donations of about $52,000 to date.

On Monday, council reaffirmed its commitment to repairing or replacing the St. Davids pool, and added that the committee could discuss all possibilities to keep the pool open and in proper repair.

Coun. Gary Burroughs, a member of the pool committee, said he’s glad council is giving the committee clarity.

“Several of us on the committee thought we could find a solution to the repair issue,” he said. Coun. Allan Bisback said he was initially hesitant about supporting the idea of looking at repairing the existing facility.

“We all expressed our support for a new pool in St. Davids three years ago,” he said. But then the pandemic came along, and with it the inability to raise funds.

He said he’d be disappointed if the focus becomes the repair of the pool only, “because I actually think one day, maybe two years, three or four years from today, the money will start flowing from upper levels of government.” Unfortunately it is not flowing right now, he added, but cautioned the committee not to lose track of the possibility of a new pool — that there could be two tracks, one to consider repairs, and one to focus on replacement.

Lord Mayor Betty Dise-ro reminded councillors of other municipalities using newer solutions for facilities, such as containers rather than new buildings. “They look amazing,” they’re a third of the cost, she said, again urging councillors to check out projects in Welland and St. Catharines that have gone that route.
CROSSWORD

Across:
1 Raises
4 1 G
8 Strikebreaker
12 Siestas
14 Egg layers
15 Father of a leveret
16 Superstar
17 Wanes
19 Old Peruvian native
20 Aligned
21 Open
22 Enormous
23 Abominable snowman
24 Scrutinize
25 Study
27 Mar ---
29 Evil
30 E.g. A O L
33 Four pecks
36 Secr
37 BINGO!
38 T
39 Merchant ship’s capacity
41 Immediately
42 Dentists’ grp.
43 “Death --- Expert Witness” (P D James)
44 Is adjacent to
46 Homo sapiens
47 Frequently, poetically

Down:
1 Unity
2 Padre
3 Spout
4 The Oval Office
5 Heaves
6 Onset
7 User
8 Shiva
9 Canadians
10 Arcs
11 Beat
13 Sleigh
18 Strangleholds
26 Edge in
28 Retool
29 Boa
31 Shoo
32 Pawn
33 Beam
34 U S D A
35 Stand up to
36 T N N
40 Nat
45 Etched
48 Saline
50 Montreal ---, now the Washington Nationals
51 Gray matter
52 Cape
53 Beadplate of Zeus or Athena
54 Brigham Young University city
55 Antique auto
56 Depositors’ protective
57 Longtime “Tonight Show” host Jay
58 Carlo
59 Rounds

SUDOKU

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from March 23, 2022

Across:
1 Ups, 4 Thou, 8 Scab, 12 Naps, 14 Hens, 15 Hare, 16 Idol, 17 Eases, 19 Inca, 20 True, 21 Overt, 22 Vast, 23 Yeti, 24 Vet, 25 Read, 27 Gras, 29 Bad, 30 I S P , 33 Bushel, 36 Tong, 37 Aha, 38 E S T, 39 Tonnage, 41 Now, 42 A D A, 43 Of an, 44 Lies on, 46 Man, 47 Oft, 48 Sent, 49 Deli, 51 Bah, 52 Cape, 56 Flux, 58 Carlo, 60 Hers, 61 Depp, 62 E-mail, 63 Egos, 64 Into, 65 Mind, 66 Dive, 67 Coos, 68 Ones, 69 Sox.

Down:
1 Unity, 2 Padre, 3 Spout, 4 The Oval Office, 5 Heaves, 6 Onset, 7 User, 8 Shiva, 9 Canadians, 10 Arcs, 11 Beat, 13 Sleigh, 18 Strangleholds, 26 Edge in, 28 Pr provide new eqipment, 29 Boa, 31 Shoo, 32 Pawn, 33 Beam, 34 U S D A, 35 Stand up to, 36 T N N, 40 Nat, 45 Etched, 48 Saline, 50 Expos, 51 Brain, 53 Aegis, 54 Provo, 55 Essex, 56 F D I C, 57 Leno, 59 Ammo.

To place your classified ad, contact Karen: classified@notllocal.com

Deadline: Mondays at 3 p.m.
NOTL Skating Club holds first showcase in two years

Two skaters returning from provincials will skate their programs

Local Staff

Niagara-on-the-Lake Skating Club’s Ashleen Hale came home with a bronze medal from the Skate Ontario Provincial Championships, held last weekend in Mississauga.

Hale earned third place in the Gold Women event. She also placed fourth in her STAR 9 event.

Ophelia Xie competed in the provincial championship in the STAR 5-U13 Women event, finishing eighth.

Based on the results of their placement at the championships, both skaters have earned a spot on the Skate Ontario development team. “Throughout the year, this team will have the opportunity to attend development camps, where they will train with Skate Canada technical specialists and elite-level athletes from across the country,” says public relations chair Darlene Dortono.

The NOTL Skating Club is extremely proud of their accomplishments, “considering the last two years of very limited ice time, shutdowns and competition cancellations. Throughout all that, these two kept their sights set on and achieved their goals,” says Dortono.

Both girls will be skating their programs this Friday, April 1 at the club's program showcase, coinciding with the annual NOTL STAR Challenge, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Meridian Arena in Virgil, the first showcase since the pandemic.

This is also a time for pre-junior, junior and intermediate Star figure skaters to practice their routines, in a safe and non-competitive environment. For the first time in two years, eager skaters will have a chance to showcase all they’ve learned for friends and family.

Ashleen Hale, who won a bronze at the recent provincial championships, is holding Skate Ontario’s Vincent van G.O.A.T., who travels the world cheering on all Skate Ontario skaters. He just returned from his recent trip to the Beijing Olympics.

Skater Ophelia Xie with coach Judi Boyle-Krzeczkowski. (Photos supplied)