Stone Eagle Winery details revealed

Penny Coles
The Local

Call the wine high-end, top-shelf, ultra-premium — those who know the Stone Eagle brand will understand the new winery planned for Niagara-on-the-Lake must be top of the line, doing justice to the wine to be produced and served there.

Councillors at Monday's planning meeting got a look at the design of what was described as a $40 million investment, co-owned by Two Sisters’ Melissa Marotta and Angela Marotta, proposed for the corner of Niagara Stone Road and Niven Road.

Marotta told councillors Stone Eagle will offer “a premium winery experience,” continuing an elevated level of education provided at Two Sisters Winery. The restaurant, she said, is intended “to enhance the wine experience,” with food curated for that purpose.

Two Sisters’ sommelier Dieter Unruh referred to the Stone Eagle brand, developed at Two Sisters, as “an experiment of what it is possible to create in Niagara.” The wine has proven to be very popular with customers, he said, and led to the idea of Stone Eagle Winery, confirming they are ultra-premium wines.

The winery property is actually three different lots totalling 40 acres, with more than 80 per cent to be planted in grapes — more than 30 acres are already planted. Councilors heard at Monday’s virtual public meeting required under the planning act.

The town is now in the midst of processing the application for a site-specific zoning amendment to permit an estate winery and all its secondary uses on a rural property. Attending the meeting...Continued on page 3

NOTL Golf Course set to open Friday

Club dining room opened March 23

Mike Balsom
The Local

Avid golfers are lining up to be chosen to be in the first foursome teeing off this Friday morning at 8 a.m. as the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club reopens for 2022.

“I don’t know exactly how we’ll make the choice,” laughs NOTL Golf Club owner John Wiens Monday. “There are quite a few people who have requested it already. We may do some kind of a lottery to choose the first group.”

Wiens and his wife Jill opened the restaurant on March 23 and had originally targeted Monday, April 4 as the opening day for the golf course. But Mother Nature had different plans.

“We had that snow two weeks ago, and it stayed quite cold for the whole week,” he tells The Local. “We couldn’t get much work done out there other than blowing twigs off the course. Then it was so damp, we’d be making ruts on the fairways, so we had to stop. And then last week we had quite a bit of rain.”

Wiens credits course superintendent Mike Magwood and his team of five for working as much as they could around the poor weather conditions to get the course ready for golfers.

With Monday’s sunshine, the full crew was out working on final preparations to bring the course up to the standard for which it is known. Before Friday morning they still needed to rototill and edge the bunkers, continue to roll and blow the greens and remove loose branches left by winter’s harsh weather.

Members and others who frequent the nine-hole course will notice the absence of a large old elm tree near the sixth green. The tree was removed by a crew last Tuesday.

“Our arborist told us last fall that it had to come down,” Wiens confirms. “We were going to take it down this winter, but we had too much snow and couldn’t get the trucks out there. It’s wet again now, and we still need to get the stump and some bigger branches removed there too.”

Plans were afoot to cut the traps. Wiens says, “People can finally lift the pins when they are putting, and we’re putting the rakes back in the sand traps.”

Continued on page 11

Let’s help our neighbours and our community recover by shopping local and buying local!

Wayne Gates, MPP Niagara Falls riding. Proudly representing Niagara Falls, Fort Erie & Niagara-on-the-Lake. 905-357-0681
Mask up, pleads Hirji as infections rise

Penny Coles
The Local

Monday morning, about 50 students from St. Catharines high schools walked out of class to protest against sexual violence, and to demand a change in the curriculum at both school boards.

Bronte Ibbotson, now in Grade 12 at Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School, said there were three protest sites in St. Catharines Monday: Eden High School, Sir Winston Churchill Collegiate and Denis Morris Catholic High School.

The former St. Michael Catholic Elementary School student called it a national protest, organized and advertised on walkonticlice on Instagram, and referred to herself as one of the organizers.

At 10 a.m. Monday, “students walked out of school to protest against sexual violence and demand a change in the curriculum,” she said.

“Students gathered to raise awareness about sexual assault and harassment. This protest was a call for action and change in our education systems. Consent education needs to be mandated in elementary and high school curriculums. Students from Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School, Eden High School, Laura Secord Secondary School, and St. Francis Catholic Secondary School joined forces in front of Eden, she said. She led the group, along with another student from Holy Cross, and two others who were the leaders in the online Instagram movement created last May, #protestbreakaway.

“This account was created to raise awareness about gender-based violence and empower young students. It was also used to spread the word about the walkout,” she said.

“Our four main calls to action are safe learning and living environments for all students, responsive and accountable administrations, mandatory consent education from kindergarten to postsecondary, and to collect and publicize data on sexual assaults in educational institutions,” she said.

“Students just need to feel safe and heard,” said Ibbotson.

She told The Local students were coming and going from other schools, and given that it was put together quickly, “I was really pleased with the support we received.”

She was also pleased with the respectful behaviour of those protesting.

“Last October, hundreds of students protested outside Sir Winston against a reported incident of sexual assault at the school, and what they felt was an inadequate response from school or board administration.

That protest, which was much larger, got out of hand, said Ibbotson.

Jennifer Pellegrini, communications officer for the Niagara District Catholic School Board, said Tuesday, “We understand a number of our Niagara Catholic students attended a protest at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School in St. Catharines yesterday. We are unaware of any other students participating.”

Niagara Catholic values student voices and encourages students to speak out when they see injustice, she said, adding,

“It is our expectation that when students choose to participate in protests, they will conduct them in a way that appropriately represents their families and their schools, and are respectful of others.”

Pellegrini said she hadn’t heard of anything disrespectful or inappropriate at the protest.

“It’s just a regular reminder that students are out in public, and that is the expectation.”

Ibbotson said she didn’t think there was inappropriate behaviour at either school. “I didn’t see anything vulgar at all. We just all came together in support of the cause, and it seemed like a really positive, peaceful event. We’re just asking for change.”

Although she wasn’t at the Sir Winston protest, she saw photos and signs, and talked to students who were there, and she said they believe they too were respectful.

Another Holy Cross student at Eden’s protest spoke of a powerful message. “Today we stood together as students, and more importantly as a community who have been directly and indirectly affected by the taboo surrounding SA awareness. It was so powerful to feel that movement,” said Fechi Oneyebule, in a statement to The Local.

Another also spoke about respect, “I believe that when people come together as a community to implement change, it happens,” said Eden student Jenna Meier. “We might be younger, but that doesn’t mean we can’t use our voices.”

Eden student Marlin McLaughlin said students “have experienced second- and first-hand the underlying culture of disrespect in our community. We are not here to attack anyone or ‘out’ any abusers.”

And they didn’t, said Ibbotson, reiterating there was no shaming or outing on signs or in chants.

Ibbotson says the students hope to continue to raise awareness and fight for consent education within schools across Canada.

She’s been working on this since she was in elementary school, knowing students who suffered some degree of assault, she said.

“We are tired of being silenced. We just want change.”

Carolyn Loconte, communications officer for the District School Board of Niagara, said Eden principal Sharon Burns talked to the students outside her school.

The DSBN, Loconte says, supports students’ “democratic right to share their voices in a variety of ways, including holding a safe and respectful walkout like students did yesterday.”

Burns went to check on the students, they told her they appreciated her support, and talked about how they were showing their support for part of a national movement, Loconte said.

“With the DSBN, we are continuously working with students, staff, and external partners on ways we can take action to combat sexual violence in the community and in schools. We have and are implementing programs and strategies that are working together building and sustaining positive school cultures.”

Ontario school curriculum is determined by the Ministry of Education, she added.
to describe the project were NOTL town planner Josh Salisbury, and representing the applicant, architect Bill Hicks, planner Mary Lou Tanner of NPG solutions, the two co-owners and the sommelier.

Councillors were told the proposal meets all provincial and regional legislation and land-use policies, including the Greenbelt plan, and the town’s own official plan policies, which require site-specific zoning for an estate winery.

Secondary uses include a retail sales area, a restaurant also to be used for special functions, a kitchen with commercial cooking equipment and a dry-food area (described as a pantry), two large covered terraces, and a wine-tasting area. Some of those areas are larger than secondary use square-footage allows for, Salisbury explained.

The winery will face Niagara Stone Road, with a long, meandering driveway, and a complete onsite production facility at the back of the building, where there will be space for crushing, barrel storage, aging of wines and bottling, as required by the town for an estate winery.

The 142-space parking lot at the front will be heavily landscaped with trees, Hicks said.

Councillors asked questions about the height of the building, and were told the main section is not going to be as high as Jackson-Triggs Winery, not including the cupola at the front, but will be higher than Stratus Vineyards — the two near-by wineries.

“The main part of the building is consistent with other wineries,” explained Hicks, with an increase in height coming from the cupola at the front and the screened mechanical equipment. There are windows “tucked into the facade, so it doesn’t look like a two-storey building.”

The hotel planned for the Village property across Niven Road will be taller than the winery, Tanner told councillors.

Coun. Gary Burroughs asked about the plan to connect the winery to the municipal sewer system, although wineries on rural property are expected to build their own septic system. He was told the owners have applied to the region for permission, hoping to connect to the Niven Road system, which takes sewage to the Lake-shore Road treatment plant. Waste from wine production would be trucked off-site.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero’s concern was for the residents of Perez Road, off Niven Road, opposite the entrance to the production facility. The route from Perez to Niagara Stone Road will be busy, she said, and could be noisy with the big trucks travelling that route. Turner said she would ask that another look be taken at the alignment of the roads, to see if a change could be made.

When Coun. Clare Cameron asked for a more defined explanation of what was described as the restaurant/function space, councillors were told it would likely be open to the public at least five days a week, but could be used for functions such as a gathering for a wine club, or a winemaker’s dinner, on other days.

The two terraces outside will be used for wine-tasting, and when asked about plans for weddings and other events which might be noisy for nearby residents, Marotta-Paolicelli said the focus will always be on the wine, and if there are such events, there would be no music.

Salisbury told councillors the town has received letters of support from the public, and although Monday’s meeting was an opportunity for residents to ask questions or express any concerns about the project, there were no members of the public in attendance to speak.

The next step in the application process is for a staff report to be prepared and presented to councillors at a future committee of the whole meeting.
Old Town residents concerned about coyotes

Penny Coles
The Local

Carol Perrin is becoming increasingly frustrated with the coyote problem in her neighbourhood — again.

“It’s certainly nothing new — it has been a subject of concern for many years, but seems to have increased in recent weeks,” Perrin says she’s lived in The Village for 20 years, and she feels the situation is worse now than it’s ever been.

There are three videos circulating, she says, one showing a coyote following — looking like it’s chasing — a woman dragging her dog to her front porch, screaming.

A second, like the first captured by a front door camera, shows a couple sitting on their porch. A coyote went right up onto the porch, as the couple grabbed their dog and huddled inside.

The most recent shows a coyote at Lower Canada and Confederation Drive, on Sunday. Perrin says she’s only heard the story, not seen the video, but apparently a coyote followed a woman walking her small dog. There were two cars honking, and four people yelling, trying to chase it off, but the noise didn’t deter it.

“The coyote made its way down Confederation Drive, went into a few open garbage bags, and disappeared into a backyard. It’s pretty standard these days to walk in the neighbourhood and end up speaking to someone who has had to deal with coyotes, both in sightings, and ‘stalking,’” says Perrin. “It seems to be all we talk about these days in the hood.”

And rightfully so, she adds, “as some coyotes have become more brazen.”

Perrin says some of the locals have been able to determine that it may be two particular young male coyotes “who appear to be the most brazen and courageous with people and pets (not to mention garbage!).”

A recent Village Community Association (VCA) newsletter mentions that “there have been several recent sightings of ‘an aggressive coyote approaching residents, both day and evening,’ and asks residents to be aware of their surrounds, keep their dogs on a leash, and cats indoors. It says the association is working with the town and Coyote Watch Canada to find ways to ensure our safety in The Village.”

Mona Babin, president of the VCA and author of the newsletter, says she hears mostly from members of the VCA, as opposed to the older subdivision of Garrison Village.

Although her newsletter is only distributed to The Village residents, she is reaching out to friends in Garrison Village to help distribute it to their neighbours, who are also concerned about the coyotes.

Having lived in The Village for about six years, Babin has heard stories of coyotes before, but saw her first when out for a walk last Sunday. She admits to feeling uncomfortable — she didn’t have a dog or a stroller with her, but still felt she needed to keep her distance.

“It’s a beautiful animal, not massivce, but everything I’ve heard has made me uncomfortable,” she says.

Babin understands why residents are nervous, and she wants the current situation to end “as quickly as possible.”

But she finds herself well-intentioned people who like to feed wildlife, believing they’re helping the animals.

“Animals can figure it out for themselves. They do it. “

Continued on page 5

We need gardens!!

THE NOTL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY is still looking for gardens for our OPEN GARDEN TOUR ON JULY 9

If you have a “gardener’s garden” of any size or description, from vegetable gardens to a bright display of annuals and anything in between, please consider submitting your garden for inclusion in the tour.

Visit our website www.notlhortsociety.com for more details and complete your submission.

We are once again looking forward to showcasing the variety and scope of different and beautiful gardens throughout our community.
Eliminating food sources the only solution

Continued from page 4

don’t need help,” she says. Without food sources in the two subdivisions, they’ll go back to eating what they find in the fields where their dens are, and where they should be staying.

“If a coyote knows he can find his breakfast on a porch, that’s where he’ll head. That’s his Starbucks. And that’s exactly what is happening.”

Babin adds, “we can live together well” but it is going to be an ongoing problem if residents don’t eliminate food sources.

During Monday evening’s committee of the whole meeting, Lord Mayor Betty Disero and CAO Marnie Cluckie spoke of the coyote situation, and Cluckie said, as she did last week, that safety is of the upmost importance, and the town is taking the concerns very seriously. She listed the steps they are taking, including reaching out to the Niagara Regional Police, the Lincoln County Humane Society, and Coyote Watch Canada. This week, she added the Ministry of Natural Resources to her list, and said there is talk of holding a community meeting.

Cluckie’s message to residents was to make a lot of noise when confronted by a coyote, and call 911 in a situation such as a coyote cornering a human, or showing signs of rabies.

She said more extreme measures, such as shooting or relocating a coyote, are not legal, except in the case of an extremely aggressive animal.

Disero told Cluckie although she knows the town is doing everything it can, “I’m not sure the perception of the public is that we’re doing everything we can. I know you and staff are working hard and trying to come to terms with what we can and can’t do with regards to coyotes, and I appreciate the extra hours,” she said, but the public perception remains that it’s not enough.

Her calls are coming from a larger area than Garrison Village and The Village, she added, taking in John and Centre Street. She also told Cluckie in her walks, she has noticed town parks don’t all have lids on their garbage cans, and garbage is overflowing, asking that staff “do something in our own house” that they are asking residents to do.

Cluckie says the town has a letter coming out, with a new educational package that will be distributed through the VCA, and that she will ask staff to ensure garbage cans have lids.

Bunny needs a name

Penny Coles
The Local

The popular annual Bunny Trail event is back after a two-year absence, and is expecting a visit from the Easter Bunny.

“Keep an eye out for our new bunny friend that will be hopping down to enjoy some fun at the Niagara Nursery School Bunny Trail, and Kinsman egg hunt,” says nursery school executive director Candice Penny.

But before the bunny arrives, she’s looking for some help from the community. “Our new friend needs a name,” says Penny.

If you think you have a good name in mind, please submit your suggestions to the Niagara Nursery School board at niagaranurserydirector2@gmail.com by April 14.

The winning name will be announced on social media on Friday, April 15, the day before the event. The Bunny Trail is April 16, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Niagara-on-the-Lake community centre.

The morning will include a bake sale, touch-a-truck, balloon animals, an Easter photo booth, and the always popular Kinsmen Easter egg hunt.

NNS is hoping for support, and is accepting cash donations, or baked goods for the bake sale table. Please contact niagaranurserydirector2@gmail.com for more information.

This is the 45th annual Kinsmen Easter Egg Hunt,” he says. “We have three age groups: three and under, four to six, and seven to 10. There will be three special eggs, in each age group, for a special prize,” says Slingerland.

“We are hoping for good weather, and a good turn-out.”

Penny Coles
The Local

Niagara Nursery School wants help naming the bunny who will visit the Bunny Trail April 16. (Photo supplied)
Biking in NOTL close to biodiversity

Owen Bjorgman Special to The Local

Spring is performing its usual dance involving a series of teases, shocks, and back-and-forth moments. While nature moves forward with bird and frog calls in uniform motion, seemingly unbothered by the shifts in temperature, Niagara-on-the-Lake residents may have the temptations to get their bikes out.

This is what relatively warmer weather does to Canada across the nation. The jet stream is going to divide the cold and warm in abrupt measures for the next month or so, with huge swings of T-shirt weather and moments of putting the toupee back on. On the days we appreciate the changes, do you think about getting your bike out? I know I do.

The pinholes of agreeable weather will eventually become routine, and this is when NOTL’s locals and tourists alike get their bikes moving.

I have been fortunate to have published some articles on where to hike, and even where to canoe or kayak here within our municipal borders. Given the change of season, now I’d like to talk about how you can bike among the biodiversity.

These spots are based on bike routes that can get you closer to our wildlife, unique ecosystems, and environments that can give you a healthy sense of escape. Let’s start off with some family-friendly areas, the kind where you could even take the kids with their training wheels.

Two Mile Creek Conservation Area features an agreeable paved path through a forested floodplain that takes walkers and bikers alike close to the banks of NOTL’s second-largest watershed. While taking note of the small hills leading down into the valley from both directions, once you are down there, the trail is perfect for families and first-time bikers who want to see rainbow trout, herons, eastern garter snakes, and the occasional beaver. This all takes place among humongous water-loving willows and a rare stand of elm trees.

Take it from a kid who grew up here. I tip my adult hat to Queenston and the surrounding areas for being able to maintain an adventurous but excellent area to cycle about. A creek carves its way through a heavily forested valley near Willowbank Hill, and there are two public access points to the wondrous Niagara River. There are paved and gravel hills alike, with flat stretches in between to enjoy both the history and natural heritage of this now quiet village.

Keeping the wheels spinning with the family-friendly theme, let’s consider some approaches that may involve a bit of gravel or dirt, but wouldn’t be considered an unsafe environment.

There’s the Heritage Trail starting near the corner of John and King Street, leading southbound to East West Line. This public trail is enjoyed by bikers, hikers, and runners alike.

Continued on page 7
Let's see something positive

Re: (Number of infections and hospitalizations rising, The Local, March 30)

Very true. But let's stop this false narrative that vaccinations stop the spread. It's has already been proven that they don't stop the spread, but hospitalization and death cases. We do have lot of immunity from vaccination and natural immunity, which keeps being ignored. If it's difficult to know what's happening in school, let's not assume it must be something bad.

Let's have some hope and see some positives.

Agata Surowka
NOTL

Lots of great biking trails for all ages and skill levels

Continued from page 6

and dog-walkers. It follows a narrow but invesible habitat corridor also utilized by coyotes, deer, and foxes as their surrounding rural habitat is developed. Its entire duration is flat, and the wide trail can get you close to nature without making a major exit out of the town.

Virgil Conservation Area also offers a surprising length of bike trails. Never far from Four Mile Creek or its associated reservoir ponds, it is teeming with turtles and bird-life. This is one of my favourite locations for beaver and snapping turtle sightings in NOTL.

Now, for those who are reading this and thinking, “I want some adrenaline”, well, considering how flat the municipality of NOTL is, our south end is entirely bounded by the rugged Niagara Escarpment and its associated trails.

Mountain bike owners can casually ride the rim of the UNESCO-listed Niagara Escarpment along the Bruce Trail. By casual, I am referring to the sublime yet approachable nature of the Bruce Trail from Queenston to St. Davids. Of course, you can expect a few hills, roots, and rocks along the way, but nothing a bike with front suspension can’t handle.

However, this is where I and my dorky teenage buds used to develop our essential mountain biking skills. In the same area, and at users’ discretion, a mountain biker can find ferocious steep downhill sections through Canada’s richest forest ecosystem, and sometimes, this downhill route is combined with various jumps and berms created by enthusiastic locals.

In summary, keep an eye on that forecast. All outdoor activities are upon us, and with a little dose of temptation from the weather gods, you may find yourself biking NOTL in a way that is waiting to happen.

I would like to first of all, thank The NOTL Local for putting a call out to NOTL residents asking for donations of medical supplies to be shipped to my cousin Maksym, who is now helping the army in Ukraine. A special thank you to those who donated the medical supplies requested. I delivered the box Thursday evening to the MEEST courier agent in Niagara Falls who was driving it and other boxes to Toronto Friday morning.

Even though articles inside the box were to be medical supplies only, I did sneak in a T-shirt I purchased at the St. John’s Ukrainian Church in St. Catharines, which said, ‘Make Borschot Not War!’

Shirley Madsen
NOTL

Local doctor trusts public health figures

In last week’s letters (Reader takes exception to COVID numbers, NOTL Local, March 30) a letter writer castigates information in an earlier letter by Dr. James. Evidently she has no medical background, blaming the co-morbidities as skewing COVID-19 deaths. COVID-19 causes pneumonia — needing extra oxygen support and maybe ventilatory support. Oxygen lack causes ischemia of the heart. Respiratory and heart failure are the end results.

I trust our public health doctors to judge the illness and death numbers as they occur. I accept that our Canadian death rate from COVID-19 is half or less than that of the U.S.

I do agree that our more successful vaccination rates are better than the U.S. andapplaud the vast majority of Canadians who obey public health rules, or mandates, including masking, distancing and extra sanitation, for our current standing in the world.

Elizabeth Oliver-Malone MD (retired anesthesiologist)
NOTL

Thanks for Ukraine support

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NOTL

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.

Winter’s last gasp

Photographer Dave Gilchrist came across these ice accretions along the walking path below the NOTL Golf Course last Thursday. The ice accumulation along the shore during a bitterly cold few days turned opaque, dripping and disappearing with the following days’ higher temperatures and rainfall.

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Sales Representative
905.339.3780

April 6, 2022
Award announced to help Indigenous musicians

Local music producer offers $10,000 award

Mike Balsom
The Local

Long-time Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Mike Denney spent much of his life unaware of the culture and struggle tied to his own Indigenous roots. His mother Gloria was Lower Mohawk of the Six Nations. As a family, he says, there was little talk about her nationality, on the street to inquire about her ancestry, she was to say anything but Indigenous.

“My mother never at tended any of the resi dential schools,” he tells The Local. “But it opened up the conversations to questions that I have had for her. I never have real ly spoken about my own Indigenous background. It was always there, but it was never a talking point. But with everything that is going on in this country I began to educate myself about my upbringing and who I am as an Indigenous person.”

“And it had a profound effect on me as an Indig enous business leader,” continues Denney. “As someone in a certain posi tion in the music industry I wanted to create some thing that could help give some Indigenous artists a chance.”

That chance will come via the new Henry Armstrong Award, announced online last Wednesday at a virtual press conference from his home. The suc cessful Indigenous appli cant will receive $10,000 and a year’s worth of mem bership by Denney and other principals involved with his record label, MDM Recordings.

Denney named the award in honour of both his grandfather, Lloyd Henry, and his mother, whose surname was Armstrong. Denney’s role was to find out more.”

On the day last May when ground-penetrating radar revealed the bodies of 215 children on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia, he realized one of the reasons behind that instruction.

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“And it had a profound effect on me as an Indig enous business leader,” continues Denney. “As someone in a certain posi tion in the music industry I wanted to create some thing that could help give some Indigenous artists a chance.”

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Award application portal opens April 19

Continued from page 8

uity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. When the idea for the award came to Denney’s mind, he ran it by Amero and others in the MDM family, and they loved it unanimously.

“I am really excited by it,” Amero says. “Especially in country music, there hasn’t been a lot of space and elevation for Indigenous people. Mike sees the need and in some ways he’s answering the call of the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission). It’s a big deal that I’m part of a label that sees the value in that.”

Denney insists he hasn’t created the award in an attempt to find his next important country music signing. In fact, he anticipates that most of the applicants will not be country music performers.

“It’s open to all genres by Indigenous musicians,” he says. “We’re going to probably see more from the hip hop, folk and roots areas. I’m not looking to sign a new act to MDM, I’m looking to help the winner along in their career.”

The $10,000 is to be split into two payments, the first $5,000 coming at the start of the mentorship program. For a year, the winner will meet with MDM experts once a month to learn about radio promotion and tracking, social media use, media publicity and other important aspects of a successful career in music. The second $5,000 payment will come at the end of that year.

“The cash award is my own personal money,” Denney explains, “and the mentorship part with the various people under the MDM umbrella is a really important piece. It’s exciting to see just where this award can go. The response has already far exceeded what we thought we would get right out of the gate.

“The portal at henryarmstrongaward.ca opens for submissions on April 19 and will remain open until May 13. A jury composed of music industry professionals will then vet the submissions. The goal is to announce the winner on National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21. Denney is thinking bigger in the long run, too. His goal within five to seven years is to increase the amount of the award to $100,000, with the support of some of the bigger players in the music industry. To that end, he plans to apply for charitable status for the Henry Armstrong Award.

Amero, who says he still faces racism regularly as he tours around the country, sees the announcement of the award as a big step toward forcing change in the industry. “It’s hopeful that people like Mike are making an effort to be sure that there are these spaces,” he says, “and that the voices in those spaces are valued and allowed to be part of the change.”

“I understand that I can’t change what happened in the past,” says Denney, “but maybe I can be part of something positive going forward.”

MDM Recordings is home to singer-songwriter Don Amero of Cree and Métis heritage, who is also an activist for Indigenous communities. (Photo supplied)
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Continued from page 1

wave of the pandemic, golf courses were one of the first activities allowed. The outdoor nature of the game, combined with the vast landscape of a golf course, meant that physical distancing was still possible to maintain. That led to Wiens seeing some interesting statistics over the past two summers.

“We generally have a 60-40 split between members and green fees on the course,” he says. “The last two years we were up to 82 per cent member play, and had very little green fees play. We have quite a social membership here. The golf club became sort of their home away from home when the golf club became sort of their social membership here. The last two years we saw some interesting statistics over the past two summers.

He adds that junior membership (ages 11 to 18) shot up. When most years the club has around 20 junior members, that doubled last year, and most of them seem to be returning for 2022.

Wiens will be breaking in the club’s new head professional, Keith Vant, this summer. The 29-year-old from Niagara Falls is taking over from Billy Simkan, who left for a hand teaching professional role at Peninsula Lakes in Fonthill.

Vant, a graduate of Niagara College’s professional golf management program, comes to NOTL with seven years of experience working at Legiana Golf, a private club in Portugal. He’ll be joined by assistant pro Cam Zappa.

“Keith knows the industry and he knows how to work the league,” Wiens says. “The members are talking to him already, and he’s hitting in very nicely. We will roll out the league stuff the next couple of weeks. We can get back to shotgun starts again and we’ll be able to gather for prizes after too. We’re all excited about that.”

As the season is set to begin, Wiens is asked whether or not he puts much stock into predictions about what this summer’s weather is expected to be like. The Farmer’s Almanac predicts a warmer and rainier than usual April and May, followed by a summer a bit cooler and rainier than normal. September and October are expected to be warmer and rarer than normal.

“I do read as much as I can about the weather,” he confirms. “I check the weather between eight and 10 times a day. Things can change quickly. Most of the summer we’re in a nice little pocket here, with the river and the lake, and the escarpment behind us keeping some of the moisture and bad weather away. It’s the east winds we have to look out for — they can cause trouble.”

East winds be damned, Wiens is anticipating a very successful summer on the course, in the dining room and on the patio. “I really think people will be wanting to travel and be on the move,” he says. “It’s going to be a good year.”

Wild turkey scuffle
made for great photo

David Gilchrist
Special to The Local

On occasion in town, one is able to catch sight of wild turkeys, especially at this time of year.

In the past, we have had wild turkeys causing problems for people walking or riding their bikes, and there have been news-worthy articles about folks being chased by them.

If you happen to be driving by the former Department of National Defence property on Lakeshore Road, you can usually see a number of them in the grassy areas. I believe some of the town’s folk on neighbouring properties feed them during the long winters. With the bordering wooded area, this is an ideal location for them and there appears to be a healthy population.

In Ontario, the original wild turkeys were extinguished by habitat loss and over-hunting about 100 years ago. Since then, however, thanks to hunters and conservationists, they have been reintroduced and once again inhabit wooded areas throughout the province.

I happened to be driving in this area on Monday and two males were running along the fence line, one seemingly chasing the other. I pulled into the entrance area, but by then they had joined some others a distance away, closer to a wooded area. Next, I heard a car honking and, realizing the turkeys may have been frightened, headed back. Sure enough the two males had taken flight and crossed Lakeshore Road. One had trouble finding its way through the fencing and fanning their tails before launching themselves at each other.

A great photo opportunity presented itself.

Recently, I posted a video of deer running across Lake- shore Road and jumping the fence into the DND property in the early morning. During this season, we should be aware of the turkeys in the area too.

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Wayside Chapel to hold sunrise service

Penny Coles
The Local

Although the Living Water Wayside Chapel was still roped off last weekend, the guest book inside shows about 20 visitors have stopped in during the last couple of weeks, some of them travellers who have come a long distance.

Comments are written by people visiting from far away places — one in Arabia, others from Spain, the U.K., Antigua, Columbia, and Canadians from coast to coast.

That’s not unusual, and is evidence the tiny white chapel on the Niagara River Parkway is providing its intended service.

Rick Meloen, a member of the Faith Fellowship Christian Reform Church in Niagara Falls, is one of the locals occasionally called upon to do maintenance work on the chapel, which was built in 1965. Although he is too young to have been part of the discussions around its conception, he says, the chapel was intended as an outreach project for the church, as ‘a place where people could stop for a moment of quiet meditation, here on the parkway, with nature close by, before continuing on their way.”

The location is on an appealing corridor well-travelled by visitors to the area, especially during the summer, giving them an opportunity for a break from their busy days, at a small, but inspiring stopover for a few minutes of respite. Or as Meloen says, “a place for a passive sort of witness, not in-your-face, but a quiet spot to stop and say a prayer while travelling.

Most years, Meloen says, the guest books indicate they have more than 10,000 visitors stop by.

“I remember one day when a few of us were working, a couple asked if they could sit inside for a moment. He was a minister, his wife said, “and he has always wanted to preach to a full church.”

It was kept open during the last two years of the pandemic, with the hope that visitors would respect COVID restrictions, a jug of hand sanitizer beside the guest book is a sign of the times.

Fortunately, there has been very little vandalism over the years, he adds — most maintenance is routine, carried out by a small group of church volunteers.

About 50 years ago, a decision was made to hold an Easter morning sunrise service at the chapel, outdoors, of course — the inside pews would accommodate about eight people, and the annual event typically draws about 50 participants. Occasionally visitors passing by will stop, but most participants are local, some coming back year after year.

The chapel closes for the winter, and is opened to signal the Easter season. This year’s service is Sunday, April 17, at 7 a.m.

Meloen usually plays a role in a brief Easter morning play, and then minister Dr. Brian Ross offers a short service, followed by traditional Easter hymns.

From beginning to end, it is held to about 20 minutes, for the comfort of those who are gathered, standing the entire time, on what can be a very chilly morning.

“We’ve done it surrounded by snow, in wind and rain,” says Meloen. “The most memorable services are when we get here, the sun starts to rise in the east, the birds are singing, the weather is good, and we can watch the sun come up. Those are the perfect mornings, the ones you want to remember.”

Many will remember the chapel at a different spot, on the parkway but further south, beside what became a private home. That was actually its second home, says Meloen — it was originally on the property where it is now, closer to Line 2, on the site of what is now Walker’s Country Market. When the move from Line 6 was necessary, about 10 years ago, Meloen says, Jim Walker generously offered the site, and has been a helpful steward, ensuring the area around it is kept tidy. “It’s very good of him to allow the chapel to be here.”

Wayside Chapel to hold sunrise service

Patrick Brown coming to NOTL for meet and greet

Penny Coles
The Local

Marlene Galliot, an employee of the municipality of Markham and a resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake, has experience organizing political campaigns — she ran as a Conservative party candidate herself in a federal election in the riding of Scarborough-Rouge River.

She is a mother of four, a former immigration consultant, and also a wedding officiant and planner.

Her role this Saturday, April 9, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, will be that of a campaign organizer, as part of the Patrick Brown team. Brown, running for the Conservative leadership, will be at her home on Line 3 for a two hour meet and greet, which she arranged.

She has other locations planned for the coming weeks, but first, she wants to introduce him to locals. Galliot says she has met each one of the leadership candidates, and has decided Brown is the best man for the job.

She knows him well, she says, and believes his background, both with the Conservative party and as mayor of Brampton, a large municipality with a diverse population, makes him the right choice.

She is opening up her large yard, which she also uses to host weddings, and is hoping for good weather. To hedge her bets she’s also cleaning out her barn, her workshop for wedding decor items, in case it rains.

The meet and greet with Brown is at 972 Line 3, this Saturday, April 9, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.
Give your kitchen, furniture or RV an extra life!

As with any piece of cabinetry or furniture, after years of use, the finish can look worn or dated. With scratches, stains, knicks, paint peeling, out of style hardware or finish, or maybe it is just the wrong color, there are many reasons to consider refreshing a project. At Nine Lives Custom Refinishing, we have spent the past 5 years painting thousands of kitchens and pieces of furniture to give them a refreshed look and extra life.

When the company started out of a garage in St. Catharines over 5 years ago, owner Kevin Coyle had always envisioned Nine Lives becoming a leader in the refinishing industry. What started out as only furniture refinishing and naturally evolved to include kitchen respraying, a mobile spray truck capable of painting exterior projects like man/garage doors and shutters, and in the past 6 months, added an umbrella company called Niagara Custom Refinishing that offers automotive spray finishing as well, they have quickly become Niagara’s Leading One Stop Custom Refinishing Shop through steady growth and expansion.

Kevin believes the key to the company's success is the dedication of the team to keep customers happy with the end result, “The business of refinishing kitchens and furniture is not an easy job nor is it a glamorous one” says Coyle, “We are constantly striving to improve and to make the customers experience a pleasurable one, and the option of refinishing not only saves the client money, but also keeps old kitchens and furniture out of landfills.”

Nine Lives now boasts a 5000 sq. ft. facility at 2136 Alanport Road in Thorold that features a full showroom, offices and a large shop with a full production line to meet the demand for this ever-expanding business. They also have a separate 1200 sq. ft. shop with a full automotive spray booth, pro paint mixing system and two lifts for the automotive work and metal projects. To keep up with the demand, they also house a staff of twelve talented specialists including spray finishers, installers, preppers, administrators, and consultants and operate a fleet of six vehicles to complete multiple projects each week.

What really makes them a unique company for your kitchen renovation though is that on top of offering refinishing, they also offer door refacing, new hardware, quartz countertops and appliances, all from their one-stop shop. They have also partnered with many great companies to be able to offer numerous options for custom doors, a large variety of materials and styles of countertops, custom upgrades from carpenters and so much more.

On top of all of that, Nine Lives Custom Refinishing started offering a new service last year for custom trailer and RV Refinishing! That’s right, they will even take your home away from home and modernize it to give it that residential feel! They can transform those dated looking kitchen cabinets, built in cupboards and vanities into modern spaces. With professional spray equipment and high-end paint, their expert team will give your space a like new, factory finish for a fraction of the cost of a full renovation. As with kitchens, they also offer customization for counter tops, upholstery and exterior vinyl wrapping.

To finish this up, if you want to give your kitchen, dining room table, built in entertainment unit, garage door, shutters, golf cart, sports car or even your RV some extra life or an update, give Niagara’s Leading One Stop Custom Refinishing Shop a call today. You won’t be disappointed.

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Vanities
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& Much More

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IT’S HOME IMPROVEMENT TIME!
Tips for seniors returning to the skies

After skipping a year due to lockdowns, many seniors are facing the challenge of having lots of family to visit and just one holiday season in which to do it. It’s a nice problem to have, but it might mean taking a plane to quickly cover more ground, even if it’s not something you do very often. Fortunately, following just a few quick tips before hitting the airport can help you up move through security screening with ease and make flying a breeze.

Remember your mask: Even with vaccinations in place and some measures being lifted, you still need a mask when you get to the airport.

Pack your liquids properly: Liquids going in your carry-on bag should be in containers of 100 millilitres or less and should all be able to fit in a single resealable one-litre bag. Prescription and non-prescription medications are exempt, but you should make sure they’re clearly labelled. Either way, they should be removed from your carry-on when going through screening.

Understand allowable extras: You can also bring medical supplies, equipment and mobility aids on board with you in addition to the two carry-on bag limit.

Find more tips and information from the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority. You’ll find a page dedicated to seniors and special sections for people with limited mobility or medically necessary equipment on their website at catsa-acsta.gc.ca.

www.newscanada.com
How to protect yourself from fraudsters targeting seniors

From telephone calls to suspicious emails or text messages, fraudsters take advantage of the pandemic to prey on consumers’ fears, often targeting seniors. But, like the old saying goes, “If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.” It’s important to be very cautious when receiving any kind of message that appears to be from a bank or financial service asking for personal or financial information. No matter how official it may look, Canadian banks do not ask for this kind of information by email or text. Staying in touch with your local branch is a safe way to verify your concerns.

If you suspect that a call, email or text is not legitimate, call your branch and let them know. Here are some tips from the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada on what else you can do if you think you may have been the target of financial fraud:

1. Change your online banking and email account passwords.
2. Ask the bank to place a fraud alert on your account.
3. Review credit card and bank statements for unknown charges or ask a trusted loved one to do so.
4. If you think you were targeted, call the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501.
5. Find more information and resources to protect yourself at canada.ca/money.

Did the Canada Revenue Agency really contact you?

Last year, about 100 Canadians a day were victims of a scam! Many of these scams imitate the CRA’s programs and services to gain access to your personal and financial information. So, how can you avoid getting tricked?

Here are three tips to avoid being scammed by someone pretending to be from the agency:

1. Know how to recognize a scam
   • Scammers may insist they need your personal or financial information, such as your SIN or credit card details, to send you a refund or collect a payment. Beware when you get any message, whether it’s by telephone, mail, text or email, that requests this information.
   • Callers may use threatening or coercive language to scare you into paying a phoney debt. Know that the government will not demand immediate payment or threaten you with arrest.
   • Fraudsters may urge you to visit a fake website where you’re asked to verify your identity by entering personal information. The CRA will not email you a link asking you to fill in an online form with personal or financial details.

2. Protect yourself from identity theft
   • Monitor your tax accounts by registering for My Account or My Business Account. Once registered, sign up for email notifications, which will notify you of changes made to your accounts or if paper mail from the agency was returned.
   • Use unique and complex passwords for your CRA and online banking accounts. You can set up a personal identification number (PIN) in My Account or with the help of one of the CRA call centre agents to help confirm your identity for future calls.

3. When in doubt, check your online account
   • If you receive a call, letter, email or text saying you owe money or have received a refund, check your My Account or call the CRA at 1-800-959-8281.
   • If you think you may have been the victim of a scam or have been tricked into giving personal or financial information, contact your local police service.

He wanted to toast all the memories we shared. We can do that.
Pink Pearl helps young women with cancer

Anchor Niagara! a huge supporter

Penny Coles
The Local

Elise Gasbarrino can remember as if it was yesterday, sitting in a waiting room at the Juravinski Cancer Centre, a terrified young woman diagnosed with ovarian cancer. The waiting room is full, the other women considerably older, with their own fears, but of a very different kind.

She also remembers going through chemotherapy, a 21-year-old with an uncertain future, again the youngest in the room, surrounded by others also battling cancer, but at very different stages in their lives than the young university student with so much ahead of her. “It’s a time when you’re making life-defining decisions,” she says, finishing university, maybe living at home and thinking of going out on your own, deciding on a career path, all while having fun with friends. And so much at stake, including fertility issues, and emotional relationships.

“The conversations are very different than for someone at a later, defined time in their lives.”

She looks back on that time, feeling fortunate that at least she had her mother with her, to comfort her and to be a second pair of ears, through everything from diagnosis, chemotherapy, to follow up appointments, always hoping the news would be good, fearing it might not.

She also says she had a great group of friends who often accompanied her, especially welcome when she was going through eight hours of chemo, five days a week.

She becomes emotional thinking about what it must have been like for the many young women going through similar experiences during the last two years, on their own, without a mother or friend by their side to provide support during doctor’s appointments, or for company during the long, lonely hours of chemo. Heart-breaking to even imagine, and yet the pandemic made it necessary.

As Gasbarrino recovered from cancer, her parents Mary and George — all Chautauqua neighbourhood residents — and her sister Melaina, along with many friends and family members, helped organize a fundraiser for Juravinski, the first one a gala dinner for 250 people at Casa Roma. But along the way, Elise began to think about the elements that were missing when she was going through her diagnosis and treatments — a way to connect to women her own age going through a similar experience, facing the same fears, at the same stage of their young lives, and a way to help each other understand and face those fears together.

“There were support programs for women with cancer, but for those who are younger, there was no peer support,” she says.

The Gasbarrinos’ annual fundraiser became support for Pink Pearl, a charitable organization formed by Gasbarrino with a small team focused on bringing young women affected by cancer together, through the Pink Pearl Foundation.

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Continued from page 16

...kind of peer support, social gatherings and innovative programs that Elise envisioned, but until then, were not available.

It was also before the day of the many networks and support groups found on the internet, which now bring women with similar stories together, offering a kind of support, but not the programs Elise offers.

There have been many fundraisers since, as the organization has grown, providing effective and fully-funded programming, mostly through community fundraisers and with no government support, for young women between the ages of 18 and 40, battling cancer of any type.

The very first program was a wellness retreat, Gasbarrino says, with just 10 women, each able to bring women with similar stories together. They have had to be virtual overnight stays, although they will share what is available — that doesn’t typically happen with organizations such as Pink Pearl. But her programs were developed with help from medical personnel, and she has a doctor, and nurse and social workers on her board. They understand how little help is available for young women with cancer, and how badly it’s needed. They are willing to hand out support packages, with information that has been developed with the help of health care professionals.

“We’ve really grown within the hospital system,” she says.

Gasbarrino was at Cork’s Wine Bar and Eatery last Friday to celebrate a cheque of almost $17,000 from Anchor Niagara, an organization Maria Mavridis of Cork’s has developed to create fundraising events that not only help fund charities such as Pink Pearl Foundation, but support the local businesses where they are held. This most recent event was at BarBea and Ruffino’s.

Anchor Niagara has been a great source of funds for the foundation, with regular Purse Ringo events, and an annual dinner at Ravine Vineyards.

There are more coming up. Mavridis has one in Niagara Falls organized for June 11, featuring Cat & Nat, two women who are known for using their comedy to bring women together through entertaining dinner parties and other events. A portion of the proceeds from that event will go to Pink Pearl.

The fall gala dinner at Ravine Vineyards, Eat, Drink, Pink, held last November with pandemic restrictions, has become Anchor Niagara’s signature event for Pink Pearl, and will be held again this fall, as will a neighborhood run in support of Pink Pearl this summer.

Empty shelves a good sign

John Hawley, with his daughter-in-law Briarne Hawley, stand in an almost-empty warehouse space, where the collection of furniture and accessories accumulated over decades by Liz Hawley were stored. A sale held last Saturday was a successful fundraiser for her favourite charity, Rising Angels. (Photo supplied)
Anchor Niagara raises funds for Niagara Charities

Pink Pearl Foundation will always be supported

Penny Coles
The Local

Maria Mavridis, a busy businesswoman and mother, continues to fulfill a promise made to her mother many years ago.

That promise motivates and energizes her, she says, but those who know her understand her passion and drive to help others also comes from her own strength, and from her heart.

Maria’s mother Vera was diagnosed with breast cancer in her early 30s, and lived through the progression of the disease for 13 years. During that time, Maria recalls, Vera volunteered for the organization that raised money to fight cancer, promoted awareness of the disease, and offered support to others who were going through treatment.

She was a young mother then, battling cancer herself with three young daughters at home to care for, and helping other women mostly in their 60s and 70s. Before she died, she asked Maria to carry on her volunteer activities.

Maria’s mother was her inspiration for Anchor Niagara, a local events company Maria founded to promote partnerships and sponsorship throughout the Niagara Region, raising money for local charities.

Her position as a Niagara businesswoman with many friends and contacts in the hospitality industry, and her drive to organize charitable events came together, allowing her to help offset costs for fundraisers, festivals and other events, while at the same time promoting and supporting local businesses.

Maria says many people attend fundraisers assuming items such as food, venue and entertainment are donated. Often they are not, and especially during the pandemic, both not-for-profits and businesses in the hospitality industry have suffered.

With restrictions lifted, it has become easier to begin planning events, and Maria has had a long list of applications from charities looking for assistance.

She goes through each one, meets with applicants, and looks at “what they’ve done so far, what they have, and what they need.” She also looks at whether they are passionate about their charity as she is about Anchor Niagara. She says, “I don’t want to be about some fundraising job they’ve been given to.”

When Maria heard about Pink Pearl, which helps young women with cancer, and met founder Elise Gasbarrino, who was treated for ovarian cancer in her early 20s, she knew Elise shared her own story.

When she was invited to attend one of the retreats for young women battling cancer, she realized “everyone’s raising money for cancer research, but not to help these women when they need support to live their lives. That’s when it hit home for me.”

Through her friendship with Elise and Elise’s sister Melaina, they have all developed friendships with some of the young women they’ve met through Pink Pearl, “and we’re not just a couple of them. It’s really tough.”

It’s also made Maria wish she had her mother’s business sense to make it work, and she reminds herself there are costs.

Maria recognizes she and Anchor Niagara have helped cancer victims in some way, but one of the reasons Anchor Niagara was started, she says, “she knew what was needed in the way of programs and support.”

“Pink Pearl hits all the reasons Anchor Niagara was started,” she says. “Elise knew what was needed in the way of programs and support. They do so many amazing things quarterly, but she needed someone to shout it from the roof tops. That’s what I do.”

“Pink Pearl is not the only charity on her radar. She has a Boys II Men concert coming up on June 4 at White Oaks Resort and Spa — another of her partnerships, and often a venue for her fundraisers. This is a special concert for her, she says. “They have always been one of my loves, and it was always a dream of mine to see them there, but I could never get tickets.”

They have one song in particular that has special meaning for her. A Song for Mama — about a mother who was a guiding force for her children, and always there for them — was played during her mother’s funeral, and it will always remind Maria of her mother’s and her importance in her family’s life.

Maria says she may have gone out on a limb with this one — “her love for the band made her think a concert in NOTL would be a sell-out, but she is discovering it is as easy as she thought it would be, at least not yet.”

She remembers the day she had to ask Bob, her father, for $80,000 to cover the cost of the band upfront, and says he has always been her biggest supporter, a financial backer when she needed one, and has never said no when she asked for help — he agreed instantly — that day, as he always does.

Fortunately, he trusts her business sense to make it work, and she reminds herself there is still time for ticket sales.

The concert is a fundraiser for the Hotel du Vaser Rehabilitation Centre, she says, and she has another event coming up, one of her popular Purse Bingos, for Pathstone Mental Health.

There are other fundraisers for Niagara charities in the works, she says, but while she helps other organizations, it’s clear Maria and Anchor Niagara will always be there for Elise and the work she does to help young women with cancer. Maria has raised more than $176,000 for Niagara charities through Anchor Niagara, and the need continues to grow, however each time she organizes an event, she gives back to the community in some way. Last fall, she was presented with the Community Impact Award, given out by Women in Niagara, a council of the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce.

She was humble in her acceptance — she doesn’t do what she does for recognition — but accepted that it would not only raise awareness for her own organization, but could help in her promise to raise money and awareness for other community charities.

Penney Coles
The Local
Canadian Cancer Society  
Société canadienne du cancer  

Due to covid restrictions, no fund raising events are planned as of yet in our area but you are encouraged to use the CCS website for information and to donate to this worthwhile cause.

You can contact CCS by using  
1. online: cancer.ca  
2. phone: 1 800 268 8874  
3. mail: CCS  
55 Clair Ave W Suite 500, Toronto, M4V2Y7  

Your donations will support those in Niagara dealing with cancer. Please give today.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Susan Weaver 905 468 2928

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April 2022           Volume 2 • Issue 6

**Local News**

The kitty featured in the last issue of the Gazette has gone missing. Jack Jack Jr. (Aka Squishy) has been gone missing since March 26 by Line 4 at Trail of Lights. If anyone sees this grey beauty please email joyousnotlkids@gmail.com.

**Hometown Happenings**

If you’re out for a walk around town keep your eyes peeled for positivity rocks like this “kindness” one found at St. Mark’s Church!

**Interview with Elina Moussi, II**

A while ago I did a cover of a song by my favourite band, Pierce the Veil, and posted it on my Instagram. The singer of the band commented on the post. My Instagram handle is elmoussi.

**Local Kid-Friendly News**

**Contest Alert!**

Using any art form, use your imagination to depict what summer in Niagara-on-the-Lake means to you. It can be anything from a poem about swimming in the lake at Queen's Royal Park to a drawing that shows you playing at the Virgil splash pad. The winner will be announced June first in the Gazette and receive a gift certificate to the Old Town treat shop of their choosing. If you are new to town and have not spent a summer here yet, depict what you are looking forward to most about spending summer here in NOTL!

Send submissions to joyousnotlkids@gmail.com. GOOD LUCK!

**SUBMISSION INFO**

The hope for this page is to get kids involved and interacting with the community in a positive way. We welcome submissions for all categories from kids of any age. Please keep the reviews positive and all submitted content appropriate for kids of all ages. Please send all submissions to joyousnotlkids@gmail.com and in the subject line please put the category for which you are submitting. Thank you.
**EASTER COLOURING CONTEST**

Brought to you by NIAGARA NURSERY SCHOOL, PHIL’S INDEPENDENT, MAPLE LEAF FUDGE & these generous sponsors.

Get out your markers, crayons, coloured pencils and enjoy! Drop off your entry to:

Maple Leaf Fudge, 114 Queen St., NOTL or
Phil’s Independent, 1551 Niagara Stone Rd., Virgil

to be eligible to win one of two beautiful gift baskets courtesy of Maple Leaf Fudge and Phil’s Independent.

Age categories are, 5 & under and 6-10 years old. Contest closes Tuesday, April 12 at 5 pm.

**NAME:**

**AGE:**

**PHONE:**

**EMAIL:**

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**HOP ON DOWN TO THE BUNNY TRAIL!**

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 16th, 9am – 11.30am

**WHERE:** Community Centre, 14 Anderson Lane, Niagara-On-The-Lake

**KINSMEN CLUB OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE**

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**Easter COLOURING CONTEST**

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**Maple Leaf Fudge**

World’s Finest Fudge. A Niagara tradition since 1967.

114 Queen St., NOTL

www.mapleleaffudge.com

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**Silk’s Country Kitchen**

1501 Niagara Stone Rd., Virgil

905-468-7241

silkscountrykitchen.com

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**Summer Art Camp for Children & Youth**

Agas 5 to 12 | In-studio Monday-Friday, 9AM - 4PM

247 Ricardo St, NOTL

Register Today

Weekly spots are still available for July & August,

niagarapumphouse.ca/programs

Healing Arts for Kids provides free summer art camp for disadvantaged children & youth in the Niagara region through the support of the Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

For more info, contact 905-468-5455

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**The O’Connor Team**

905 327 5589 cell | 905 468 4214 office | theoconnorteam.ca
**Local SPORTS**

**Predator owner, coach names top players**

Mike Balsom

**The Local**

When the Niagara Predators announced their team awards last Saturday, it was no surprise that the one-two punch of Reese Bisci and Dante Massi led the way with five awards between them. And their top goalie award went to a Swedish phenomenon who had laced up for Niagara since late November.

To choose the award winners, team owner, coach and general manager Robert Turnbull consulted with his assistants Connor Shipton and Samantha Marson, as well as one of his U.S. scouts who spent a lot of time at Virgil Meridian Credit Union Arena watching the Predators play. Following is the list of honours.

**Reese Bisci - Best Defensive Forward, Most Improved, Rookie of the Year**

The 5’9” Welland native was a shoo-in for Rookie of the Year. Playing in his first Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League season, Bisci notched 13 goals and 19 assists, his 32 points in 36 games making him the sixth highest scoring Predator this year.

“He started at right wing on the fourth line,” Turnbull told The Local. “We moved him to centre, and he worked his way up to the first line. He started making plays around him better. He killed penalties and won faceoffs at a 75-percent clip.”

As well, in game after game all season the 20-year-old was regularly the first forward back in the Predators zone to help out the defensive corps. And he certainly earned the Most Improved award as he stepped up late in the season when Swedish forwards Emil and Jesper Eriksson didn’t return to the team following the Christmas break. Ten of his goals came in the final 13 games of the Predators 28-game season.

“I’m hoping he’s coming back next year,” Turnbull adds. “He told me it was the best time he’s ever had playing hockey, so that’s a promising sign. He skates, he back-checks, he by far was our most improved player.”

**Dante Massi - Heart Award, Most Valuable Player**

Massi finished the season with 74 points, leading all Predators with that total. His 59 assists placed him in the top 10 in the GMHL. The Niagara Falls native, just 5’7” tall, played like a much bigger skater, throwing his shoulders into opponents while fighting for the puck in both the offensive and defensive zones. Massi played every minute all season with 100 per cent effort, earning him most valuable honours.

“The Heart Award is for the guy who puts their team on his back,” Turnbull explained. “Dante is the guy that made this thing go all season. When he was at his best everyone was at their best. He grew as a player and as a person this season.”

At 21 years old, Massi will be ineligible to play for the Predators next year.

**Alexander Insulander Leadership Award**

Insulander was the Predators’ leading goal scorer, with 31, and ended up second to Massi in total points with 57. Originally playing on a line with fellow Swedes Jesper and Emil Eriksson, his production dipped a bit when those two left the team. The now 22-year-old Insulander was often seen encouraging the other Predators before, during and after games.

“He did so much, both on and off the ice, arranging extra practices and other things,” Turnbull said. “He was run-ner-up for MVP and a couple of other awards too. He talked to the players on the bench, in the dressing room, on the ice. All the things you need from a leader on a daily basis, Alexander brought it.”

**Brenden Morin - Best Defenceman**

This award came down to 21-year-old Welland native Morin and Swedish defend-er Pontus Madsen. Though Madsen was given a little more ice time all year as a pure defenceman, Turnbull said Morin shone in the one-on-one situations. Madsen outscored Morin, with 31 and 26 points respectively, but Morin was a stalwart pres-ence on the blue line all season.

“Pontus carried the puck a lot, but he got caught a lot, too,” Turnbull said. “When I went through all the strengths and weaknesses, there were actually three guys that could have won this award, but Morin edged out the others.”

**Oskar Spinnars Nordin - Best Goaltie**

In the short time he was with the Predators, Oskar Spinnars Nordin built a reputation as one of the GMHL’s best goal-ies. Before leaving for the Bis-marck, North Dakota Bobcats of the National American Hockey League, the Swedish import had a record of seven wins and three losses, a 1.90 goals against average and a 0.952 save percentage in 10 games between the pipes. Though Niagara used six other goaltenders during the season, Spinnars Nordin was by far their standout. With him in the crease, the team, who played with a short bench early in the season, always had confidence their goalie would give them a chance to win.

Following his late Novem-ber departure, it took some time for the Preds to truly find their groove again. In Bismarck, Spinnars Nordin amassed 17 wins, three losses and two shootout losses, along with a 2.88 goals against average.

**Dawson Walker - Coach’s Award**

Forward Dawson Walk-er played in 36 games for the Predators this year. The 19-year-old from Niagara Falls scored two goals and eight as-sists, but it was his attitude and work ethic that earned him the recognition.

“I always award a player that works their butt off,” Turnbull explained. “He may not have gotten the same amount of ice time, but he supported the players on the bench, never complained, and asked for ad-ditional help when needed. He skated hard at every practice, arrived early, stayed late. Dawson by far stood out.”

**Copperchione Most Sportsmanlike Player**

Through 21 games with the Predators, the 21-year-old Port Colborne native had a single penalty for a total of two min-utes spent in the box.

“Considering the number of goals he got,” said Turnbull, “and the areas he had to work in to get those goals, he played smart as a power forward and stayed out of the penalty box.”

Though he joined the team about a month into the sea-son, Copperchione immediately

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Reese Bisci is a triple award-winner. (Photos supplied)
Continued from page 22
made an impact. He finished
the year with 22 goals (includ-
ing five game-winners) and 13
assists. His experience with the
Pelham Panther and Caledonia
Corvairs of the Greater Ontar-
io Junior Hockey League (GO-
JHL) was a boost to the Preda-
tors roster.

Durham Roadrunners win the
Southern Division
After knocking the Preda-
tors out of the second round of
the Russell Cup playoffs three
games to one, the North York
Renegades faced the first place
Durham Roadrunners for the
South Division title. Through-
out the seven-game series the
home ice advantage seemed to
be a factor, with the hosts win-
ning each of the seven games.
The final two games went to
overtime, and Durham won
the seventh game, a 3-2 thrill-
er on their home ice to clinch
the South. They now face the
Northern Division winners, the
Temiscaming Titans, in a sev-
en-game series for the Russell
Cup title.

Sailing season has started
The Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing
Club kicked off their 2022 season
Sunday. With ice flowing down
the river it looked like it might not
happen, but an ice jam upstream
in the gorge kept the river open.
Afternoon Delight (Rob Vander-
perk with Andy Berti, 909) and
Rampant (1012, Levi Harper)
came first and second respec-
tively in two races last weekend,
Sunday afternoon and again on
Monday. (Photo supplied)