



Tennis among activities banned during lockdown
page 18

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It's volunteer week!

This is the week that many organizations in town would be recognizing their volunteers, but with no in-person events allowed, it's difficult to do that. The Local would like to say thank you to all the volunteers who make our town such a great place to live and work. Still able to do their important job are the Newark Neighbours food bank volunteers, Cindy Grant, Pat Hicks, Marilyn Rickard, Genevieve Lawrence, Susan Sparrow-Mace, Frencyne Chenier, and Marion Ollerhead. For more on local volunteers, see pages 10 and 11.

To all NOTL's dedicated volunteers, we say **THANK YOU**

Social behaviour needs to be curtailed, says Hirji

Penny Coles
The Local

The provincial lockdown extension to six weeks might not be long enough, the local acting chief medical officer warns.

Dr. Mustafa Hirji of Niagara Public Health says the climbing number of cases, including a significant number of variants of concern, may not be on enough of a downward trajectory by May 20, when this six-week

lockdown is scheduled to end, to allow a safe re-opening.

He is also suggesting there may be a decreased amount of vaccine coming to Niagara, if the province begins diverting supplies to hotspots, where it will do the most amount of good at reducing serious illness and deaths, he says.

Ontario cases have passed the peak of the second wave, he said Monday, and most parts of the province are seeing

large increases that could last for another couple of weeks, until the current restrictions have had a chance to work, and more people are vaccinated.

About 26 per cent of the region's population has received their first dose of vaccine, while two per cent have received both doses.

Hospitals and intensive care units are becoming increasingly overwhelmed, Hirji says, well past where they were during the second wave,

and that too is likely to continue, possibly for a few more weeks, which is a strong concern for the health care sector.

Tracking shows that will flatten out by about mid-May, at a number well above what is considered the danger threshold in the province.

Hirji points to the U.K. for some lessons that can be learned going forward. After a one-month lockdown last fall was

Foster family found for two-pound goat

Penny Coles
The Local

Melina Morsch was all set to take care of a two-pound baby goat, a task she has accomplished successfully before.

Morsch, the owner of Fox Den Yoga, is an animal lover, and keeps several adorable Nigerian dwarf or pygmy goats she has incorporated into all kinds of fun activities, including pre-pandemic yoga classes and family movie nights.

She doesn't breed them herself, instead working with three goat breeders, she says, and occasionally, one of the does has more kids than she can feed, rejects one, or just isn't cut out to be a mother and doesn't look after her kids, explains Morsch. The breeders will occasionally call her when there is a baby in distress, she says.

When that happens, she is used to helping out, feeding and caring for the babies to give the breeders time to look after their other animals and babies.

This time, when she re-

ceived a call to take one tiny little female who was being pushed off by her mother, she thought of the many families she knows who might love to help out during a pandemic, when their children are at home, doing online school work and missing all their recreational activities and their friends. "Life has bottomed out for so many young people," she says.

Nursing an extremely cute, tiny little creature might be uplifting and rewarding for them in so many ways, she decided, and set out to find a foster family with a post on Facebook.

She had no shortage of offers. The response was amazing, and she chose one family of animal lovers, with three young girls. She set them up with all they needed, gave them some pretty simple instructions about bottles and formula, along with a playpen and a carrier, and handed over the four-day-old kid,

Continued on page 4



Maggie Norman, 12, cuddles Fern, a six-day old foster goat. (Photo supplied)

Continued on page 5

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Pharmacies taking appointments for 40-plus age group

Penny Coles
The Local

While there are currently no vaccination community clinics scheduled in Niagara-on-the-Lake, local pharmacies and primary care doctors are now able to offer appointments to those 40 years older and up.

Niagara Stone Road Pharmacy, Simpson's Pharmacy and Simpson's Apothecary are offering AstraZeneca vaccinations to those who are eligible under provincial guidelines, which have been lowered this week to include those who are 40 and up.

Julie Dyck, pharmacist and owner of Niagara Stone Road Pharmacy says she had one phone call from a woman

who was "crying tears of joy" that at the age of 40, she could finally be vaccinated.

Dyck has just recently started her vaccination program, and so far has had one shipment of 200 doses of vaccine. She is still taking appointments, planning on doing 40 a day, and hoping for enough vaccine to continue at that rate, but also know-

ing she will have to be flexible based on supply.

She joked that she rested up last weekend, expecting this to be a busy week, and is excited to get started on her vaccination rollout.

She was happy to see the age group lowered from 55 to 40 for pharmacy vaccinations, she says, which will now include a substantial

number of people, including the younger generation we're seeing more of in town.

Asked about the number of pharmacies in Toronto and other areas that can't get rid of their supply of AstraZeneca, which is what all pharmacies are receiving, pharmacist Sean Simpson says, "I can't possibly relate."

He had a waiting list of about 600 people at the beginning of the week, and will continue to operate as he has since he began offering vaccinations, with people adding their name to the list as they become eligible.

He also encourages people to sign up in as many places as they can, and take the first appointment offered.

He is more concerned about vaccine supply, and will open up more appointments when he is sure he will receive more doses.

Dr. Mustafa Hirji, Niagara's acting chief medical officer of health, says he has heard some resistance to AstraZeneca, which is now being offered to people 40 and over, but that in many cases,



Sean Simpson continues to take names on a vaccination waiting list, now extended to those 40 years old and up. (Penny Coles)



Julie Dyck is pleased to be able to offer vaccinations to those looking for an appointment. (Photo supplied)

Virgil Avondale confirms regulations for convenience stores

Penny Coles
The Local

After last week's shutdown of non-essential businesses, town bylaw officers received a complaint about the Virgil Avondale selling T-shirts.

The specific shirt in question was being sold by the NOTL 4 All Facebook group, as a fundraiser for Red Roof Retreat, which offers recreational and respite programs for children and young adults with special needs, and their families.

Avondale makes no profit from the T-shirt, says manager Kathy Brown, who is known for her community support of many local causes, including Newark Neighbours, Socks for Change, and for offshore farm workers. This week the jar on her counter was for the people who lost their homes from the devastating volcano eruption on the island of Saint Vincent, home to many of Niagara-on-the-Lake's seasonal agricultural workers. There are items being collected to ship to the island, and the money will help pay for shipping, she says.

When a bylaw officer first visited the store on Friday, April 9, says Brown, "I talked to him and we agreed I would move some stuff to the back room until I could

talk to my home office on Monday."

On Saturday, a bylaw officer came to the store again, specifically mentioning the T-shirt, and that the visit was in response to a complaint, "but it was resolved, and we agreed to meet Monday morning with my head office."

After reviewing the NOTL and provincial bylaws, "which clearly state convenience stores can sell retail, with no mention of essential or nonessential — we are not big box stores or discount stores — they made a call to their boss and said they would get back to me," says Brown.

Last Wednesday morning, Brown was relieved to receive a call that said her store could sell all its products.

Town staff had "interpreted the bylaw" and decided it was okay for the convenience store to continue to sell non-essential items.

"I would like to thank everyone involved in their due diligence in this matter, and

doing it in a timely fashion so I wasn't left in limbo," says Brown, and "also a thank you to the bylaw officers for being very nice and respectful."

She adds, "we will not be allowing people to use this as an excuse to come

in and browse. We also ask you don't pick up items you are not buying. We only allow three people in the store at a time so we ask you to purchase what you need as quickly as possible so the next person can do the same."

"This has been a tough year on everyone," says Brown, "and we somehow have to figure out some way to work together. Can we take the time to help each other, instead of spending so much time complaining about others?"

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Steffanie Bjorgan models a NOTL 4 All T-shirt, sold at the Virgil Avondale to raise funds for Red Roof Retreat. "It's so nice to have the community, whether it be individuals, businesses or Facebook groups, keep us in their thoughts. When we can safely reopen, every dollar will help." (Photo supplied)

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Judge dismisses Hummel lawsuit against town

Developer seeking \$500,000 to offset loss of revenue from building freeze

Penny Coles
The Local

A provincial Superior Court judge has found no wrong-doing or bad faith in the current council's passing of an interim control bylaw within days of taking office.

Developer Rainer Hummel of Hummel Properties was unsuccessful in his attempt to sue the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake for \$500,000, plus costs, for a bylaw that put a temporary stop to development. His application to the court said the bylaw was enacted illegally, and in bad faith. His lawsuit alleged the bylaw was not permitted under the planning act, that there was no review of planning policies undertaken — a necessary component of the hold on development — and that the timing of the bylaw approval, at a special council meeting two days after council members were sworn in after the 2018 election, meant it was discussed improperly and did not follow the proper process.

In his decision, Judge James Ramsay says most of the council-

lors elected in the fall of 2018 were new, and had campaigned against uncontrolled development of the Old Town, and in favour of updating the Official Plan.

On Nov. 22, 2018, which was after the election but before the official swearing in of council on Dec. 3, Betty Disero asked staff to draft an interim control bylaw. After the new council was sworn in, its inaugural meeting was adjourned to the next regular meeting of Dec. 17, "or to a special meeting at the call of the Lord Mayor," the judge wrote in his decision.

On Dec. 4, Disero, at the request of a majority of councillors, called a special meeting for Dec. 5. "Under the procedural bylaw, that was short notice, but it was permitted for an emergency meeting," Ramsay's judgment says.

At the meeting of Dec. 5, council resolved to commission a study of land use planning policies. Then it enacted the interim control bylaw, which prohibited subdivision or condominium approval and zoning changes in the Old Town, Ramsay said in his judgment.

To the issue of the land use review, necessary to justify an interim control bylaw, Ramsay points to public meetings and consultations that followed, along with the commissioning of a study of some of the City of Markham's policies, and a report on them, all of which delayed the adopting of the Official Plan update, which was intended to be completed by April 1, 2019.

The summary of public submissions and the staff review of planning uses was discussed by council at its August 2019 meeting, the judgement says, and a draft Official Plan was approved. A revision was enacted by council in October, 2019, but would not take effect until appeals were exhausted. During this time the interim control bylaw was freezing Old Town development, but was to expire on Dec. 5, 2019, and was extended until Nov. 11, 2020. The interim control bylaw was repealed before that, in June, 2020, after the Official Plan amendment went into effect.

Ramsay writes that because the bylaw was repealed, Hummel's assertions that the Dec. 5

meeting of council and the interim control bylaw did not meet the requirements of the planning act are moot, and that the municipality is free from any liability because it did not act in bad faith. However he went on to address the issues of illegality, finding none, and bad faith, again finding no evidence of that.

The lord mayor was permitted to call the emergency council meeting, he says, and it was held in public, as required under the planning act. Although mention was made of the director of planning not being aware of any emergency, "that does not matter," and "interim control is by its nature urgent," Ramsay says.

He goes on to explain the planning act allows for a bylaw to freeze development for a year, to protect the public interest in suitable zoning of the area being protected, and refers to the Hummel's argument as "essentially that the town did not comply with a number of imaginary conditions related to enacting an interim control bylaw," and that, further, his job is "not to burden the town with conditions that are not required by the statute" that regulates such a bylaw.

Issues in the application against the town include that there were two interim control bylaws at the same time,

referring to one freezing cannabis-related land use, which Ramsay says was for a different purpose, and does not contravene legislation; and that the extension was illegal once the Official Plan amendment had been approved, which he also says is not restricted by the planning act.

He lists five different charges by Hummel that the town acted in bad faith — that the bylaw was driven by the lord mayor outside of the proper council process and not completed in public; that council failed to comply with its procedural bylaw regarding the announcement of the Dec. 5 meeting; that the meeting agenda was cryptic and misleading; that the bylaw was not supported by staff; and that the extension of the bylaw as enacted was without any basis and contrary to a staff recommendation.

Ramsay dismisses each of those allegations, and says, "on the whole of the evidence the case for bad faith strikes me as contrived." He says that council wanted to preserve the Old Town's heritage and considered the matter urgent, freezing the status quo, considering studies and public input, amending the Official Plan and then repealing the interim control bylaw. "That is essentially what they were supposed to do."

Hummel and the town are to make written submissions to deal with costs.

Neither Hummel nor Lord Mayor Betty Disero would comment on the decision. Disero said Monday she and others at the town have been asked not to speak publicly until they have met with their lawyers. Hummel said, "pending the appeal, we are not able to comment at this time."

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Auchterlonie on Astrology

Bill Auchterlonie
Special to The Local

The full week of Auchterlonie on Astrology can be found on the Facebook page for The NOTL Local, and on the website www.auchterlonieonastrology.ca.

Thursday, April 22: Today Venus is conjunct Uranus at 10 degrees Taurus at 9:01 p.m. When have you been truly true to your heart lately? We may think we are true to ourselves, that we listen to our feelings. But sometimes it takes a Uranus transit to shake us and show us what we really want. Jack Nicholson has 12 Oscar nominations. Oh, and 84 candles on his birthday cake today.

Friday, April 23: Mars is the planet of action, and Cancer is the sign of privacy and security — our comfort zone. Mars in Cancer may seem emotional and fragile, but he's hard as a rock and he will not hesitate to claw you if he feels threatened. Cancer is a cardinal sign after all. The upcoming six weeks are a good time to draw stronger boundaries and fight for what is important to you. Lester B. Pearson was Canada's 14th prime minister, serving from 1963 to 1968. He also won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in resolving the Suez Canal Crisis. He was born April 23, 1897.

Monday, April 26: It's time for a full Moon at 7 degrees

Scorpio. The full Moon is opposite Uranus in Taurus and trine Mars in Cancer. All full Moons in Scorpio are intense by definition (we are dealing with Scorpio energy, after all), and this one is no exception. Mars in a water sign will fuel our emotions even more, while Uranus will seek an outlet for them. The landscape architect who designed Central Park in New York City, and who also urged for the creation and preservation of a park at Niagara Falls, was born April 26, 1822. He was Frederick Law Olmstead.

And that's AonA for this week.

Next time it's the Sun conjunct Uranus on April 30.

So until then, shine on.

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Kids learn responsibility

Continued from page 1



The animal-loving family includes Emeline, 12, with Freddie, Delphine, 13, with Fern, and Maggie, 12, with West. (Photos supplied)



Fern and Freddie get to know each other.



Delphine cuddles Fern, a two-pound dwarf goat.

who they named Fern. She needs to be bottle fed every four hours, and to be held and cuddled a lot, which the girls are loving.

Emeline, Delphine and Maggie Norman, their dad Brent Norman and mom Jen Feschuk are used to animals around the house. Their two dogs, Freddie and West, have become intrigued with Fern, and the girls are really enjoying their role as a foster family.

“It’s a fantastic scenario for them,” says Morsch, with so many of their activities and their social life halted during the pandemic.

Feschuk agrees. “It’s great for the girls to have something to do at home. I feel a little like I’m back to what I was doing with the girls when they were babies, with feedings every four hours, but she usually goes right back to sleep.”

Looking after her “is more work than people might think,” she says, because Fern is so tiny and requires a lot of attention. She cries when they put her down, “so it’s lucky we have the girls who like to cuddle her.”

They take turns holding Fern, making bottles and feeding her, and have also shared some of the night feedings, says Jen.

In the short time they’ve had her, “she’s taken on more of a personality. She’s playing, hopping and jumping around, and wants to chew on everything. There are a lot of eyes on her.”

The girls are also learning to deal with the frustration of such a tiny creature requiring so much attention, she says, and realizing the responsibility that comes with it.

“They’re really bonding, and they’re learning that taking care of any animal is a big commitment. It’s a really cool experience,” she says.

They take her to the park with them, where she melts the hearts of all who see her.




They are also going to learn what it means to give Fern up in about eight weeks time.

“I’ve told them from the beginning it’s meant to be a fostering experience,” says Jen.

“That’s another important lesson in life to learn. Emeline rides at Benchview (Equestrian Centre, where Morsch boards her goats), and she’s looking forward to being able to see Fern while she’s there.”

While fostering Fern while she and her husband are at home during the pandemic has made it a little more convenient, says Jen, they probably would have offered anyway. “Our friends say they’re not at all surprised we’re doing this.”

Morsch says she was so overwhelmed with offers, and this is going so well with Fern, she may start networking for local breeders and develop a list of foster families who are interested in helping out.



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More restrictions might be needed, says Hirji

Continued from page 1

bringing cases down, the country reopened, and “things boomeranged” as the B117 variant took hold. By mid-December, it was back into lockdown, which just ended last week.

The message, he says, is an arbitrary four-week lockdown doesn’t work, and opening when cases are still high, although falling, is a mistake. It led to a “massive resurgence” of new cases in the U.K.

He is predicting it could be late June before cases in Ontario are low enough, and vaccinations high enough, for the province to be able to safely reopen.

And for that to happen this lockdown has to work — it needs to actually stop people from social interaction, he says, “and we haven’t seen that reaction with his current lockdown,” suggesting there may need to be increasing measures to get people to stay home.

The positive side is that vaccinations are working, as evidenced in the reduction of cases and serious illness and deaths in the older population of 80-plus residents.

Hirji also encouraged those who are vaccinated to continue following all protocols, including staying home and minimizing social contacts. If they don’t, it would be hard to motivate others who are not vaccinated to follow the rules, he says.

His message is, “we’re all going to do this together.”

From a high of 220 cases reported last Thursday, daily numbers across the region have ranged from 143 on Saturday to 169 Monday.

As of Monday, there were 44 cases in Niagara-on-the-Lake, for a total of 402 since the pandemic began.

The number of variant cases continues to grow in Niagara, with the likelihood that some of them are of the South African or Brazilian variant, although they have not yet been identified, says Hirji.

There have been a total of 1,459 variant cases in Niagara, with 19 confirmed the U.K. B117 mutation, the others unknown.

There is such a high number of variant cases across Ontario, provincial screening to identify the type of variant can’t keep up, says Hirji.

Variants are amounting to about 50 per cent of the cases in Niagara, and

75 per cent in Ontario. The variants are known to be more contagious, causing more serious illness.

Niagara Health released a statement Monday afternoon regarding the state of local hospitals with the rising number of infections.

“We are currently treating 71 patients who are positive with COVID-19. Of these 71 patients, 17 are in our intensive care unit. These patient volumes speak to the increase in infections and seriousness of the illness. In comparison, on April 1, we were treating 11 patients with COVID-19, which in-

cluded three patients in our ICUs,” says the message from Lynn Guerriero, president of Niagara Health, and interim CEO, and Dr. Johan Viljoen, chief of staff.

Postponement of some scheduled surgeries and ambulatory procedures is taking place, although urgent surgeries and cancer surgeries are not currently impacted.

There are ongoing transfers of critical care patients to Niagara from other ICUs in harder-hit areas of the province, the message says. “We increased our critical care capacity last week by three beds, up to 63, and

have plans to add additional beds this week. Re-deployment of staff is critical to this planning and is ongoing.”

Patients are also being moved from St. Catharines to other sites to make room for COVID patients, with volumes expected to increase, “including those who require critical care. This will further impact our delivery of health services at all of our sites.”

Niagara Health is urging everyone to remain vigilant with all public health measures, and encourage others to do the same, to reduce the transmission of the virus.



Dr. Mustafa Hirji (File photo)

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INTO

Positivity

Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it;
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EDITORIAL

Ontario in a crisis, hopefully with relief in sight

Although there have been few details announced, it's beginning to look like Ontario workers may get the paid sick leave so desperately needed to help them and their families through this pandemic, and to stop the spread of infection through workplaces.

It must come soon, and it must be based on a continuation of wages, so that workers feeling ill can choose to stay home and know it won't affect their pay cheque.

Speed is essential as hospitals and intensive care units set new records daily, and are in danger of being overwhelmed, with many patients who have been infected at their workplace.

On Tuesday, Peel and Toronto public health units, recognizing the importance of preventing more workplace outbreaks, ordered businesses with more than five COVID cases to close. That is a good

example to set across the province.

Hopefully, employees of these workplaces will continue to receive their wages.

Until this week, Premier Doug Ford has continued to direct any conversation of paid sick leave to the federal program, which is something, but not enough, and doesn't come soon enough for those working paycheck to paycheck.

The NDP has tried to push provincially-legislated sick leave for the past year, with no success.

But this is no longer a political issue, a partisan decision. It's one of life or death, for many workers, for their families, and for those who come in contact with them.

Members of the Ontario Science Table, members of the provincial Vaccine Distribution Task Force, and many other medical experts have been telling us in very strong

terms that adequate sick pay for low-income essential workers, along with redefining what is truly essential and shutting down everything else, is what is needed now.

The variants of concern, they said Tuesday is a new pandemic.

That plea came last week along with criticism of the provincial order to close playgrounds and give police special powers to pull over drivers and fine them if they haven't got a good reason for being on the road. That advice was not coming from scientists or medical experts.

In less than 24 hours Ford had reversed both those orders, and kudos to him for realizing it needed to be done, but he did not address sick leave.

On Tuesday, the Science Table members stepped up the strength of their message, calling for an easily-accessible emergency sick pay program,

paying for time off for vaccinations, speeding up vaccinations for essential workers and communities most at risk.

It also addressed the risk of people moving around the province, and people gathering indoors, though it said people could and should, for mental health, be able to meet in small groups outside.

Ford has said repeatedly he listens to his health experts, but he also listens to his cabinet, and then tries to balance what is likely at times polar opposite advice. That is no longer working, and he appears to be recognizing that.

We are approaching a health care crisis. Deathly ill patients are being moved from hospital to hospital by helicopter, tents with beds and medical equipment are being set up in hospital parking lots, intensive care units are reaching capacity, and health care workers are exhausted. The

government is dealing with those catastrophes by begging other premiers who are also in the midst of a pandemic to send health care workers and vaccine to Ontario.

Doctors are telling us they are increasingly treating entire families, who contracted COVID because one family member was infected at work.

When it was long-term care homes where most outbreaks were occurring and seniors were dying, it took a bit of time, but finally provincial governments across the country acknowledged what needed to be done and followed through. Thanks to improvements that were made and vaccinations being directed at those facilities first, there is good news on that front. Lives have been saved.

But now COVID is infecting younger people, many of them low-income, minimum wage essential workers who are looking after the welfare of

the privileged, who get to work from home at their well-paying jobs, putting themselves at risk for a foray outside to pick up groceries or sustenance at the LCBO.

How much worse does this have to get before even more drastic shutdowns are required, and the importance of sick pay to prevent workplace outbreaks is addressed?

Mistakes have been made at all levels of government, mostly from not having adequate information on which to base their decisions. That is no longer the case. If the province is indeed going to provide some relief, it must be soon, and may in fact be happening as this paper goes to press Tuesday, or as readers receive a copy of their Local Wednesday. Fingers crossed for that good news. It can't come soon enough.

Penny Coles
The Local

Gates urges Ford not to run away from his duties



Wayne Gates, MPP
Niagara Falls riding
Special to The Local

On Sunday, April 18, the Ford government sent word to the Official Opposition that they intended to shutter the provincial legislature this week. Let me say this as clearly as possible

— with record infections, record hospitalizations, and record intensive care unit admissions — now is not the time for the Premier to close the legislature, remove himself from public view and stop the necessary work of governing. We have too many important bills before the House to stop business. There are too many people counting on supports and government action to stop the work of our elected officials.

Unfortunately, as last Friday's announcements showed,

it is clear that the Premier is not on top of this public health crisis. Medical experts tell us large workplaces are the highest spreaders of COVID-19, yet Ford shuts golf courses and parks. Nurses tell us they need more supports to get vaccines into arms, yet he gives police forces powers that they themselves didn't ask for and refuse to use. We simply cannot support the Ford plan to shutter our legislative body until at a very minimum he commits to replacing police

state tactics with a public health plan to stop COVID-19. My fellow caucus members and I sent a letter to Ford's government, refuting the suspension in legislature, and we intend to reverse this course of action. We have no intention of supporting these measures until at the very least Ford's government:

- Gives Ontarians paid sick days by passing Bill 239
- Gives workers paid time off to get a vaccine
- Cancels the extraordinary police powers completely
- Shuts down non-essential workplaces
- Gives impacted local businesses and workers a new package of financial supports

Ford and his government need to provide recognition and correctness to the lackluster supports supplied to businesses. Better supports for businesses across Ontario are

required before more go under due to COVID-19. Businesses and the Ontario population should not be facing debt let alone bankruptcy from the mistakes Ford's government consistently has made over the course of this global pandemic. The small business support grant is failing and it needs immediate attention and expanded resources for our small business owners.

In the beginning of this crisis Premier Ford told us he would listen to medical professionals. In the early days, many onlookers believed he was doing just that — it's a far cry from the Ford leadership of today. Canada's top doctor has called for paid sick days, the chair of the Ontario Science Table advising him has supported the need for paid sick days. Ontario's top doctor and our local chief medical officer of health have both indicated paid sick days will reduce transmissions

raging across Ontario, and yet parks are being closed while Premier Ford continues to refuse to even vote on Bill 239 and provide paid sick days to workers and funds to businesses to support that program. I remain insistent that workers receive these sick days to not only protect themselves, but also their co-workers, their loved ones, communities, and the front-line workers of Ontario who are currently being overwhelmed with COVID cases. Ford needs to accept all the nursing support available to bolster our hospitals overrun with COVID-19 cases and fix the flawed vaccine rollout. Now more than ever, we need every available vaccine in the arms of Ontario citizens, as quickly and safely as possible.

The Ford government's plan to shut down legislature this week would allow Premier Ford to run away from his duties. It would let him abandon his legislative responsibility as Premier to answer the people of Ontario when they ask why parks are closed, yet workers aren't even eligible to go and get the shot. At the same time, COVID-19 continues to run rampant through Ontario. Now is the exact moment when we need to see leadership, not our Premier running away from these issues.

My fellow NDP caucus and I will oppose this shutdown until the criteria outlined above are met.



View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

What Would Sophia Loren Do? is a documentary (Netflix, 2021) that examines the life of American housewife Nancy

Kulik. She takes joy and satisfaction in the life of her idol, Sophia Loren. I found the connection between the two touching, and rather sweet.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who

loves to go to movies. Until he resumes going to theatres, he has graciously agreed to share his opinions, through "short and sweet" exclusives, of Netflix series and movies for The Local.



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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.

Gorge parking, creek garbage a concern



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

This article is going to carry a bit of a different tone, because it's necessary. It's a hard line to walk — maintaining the image of happy nature boy, but also being a messenger on the ground who has the ability to tell you the truth of what's going on.

But this isn't about me. It's about you, our town, and our collective health as a population.

Since the pandemic was announced more than 400 days ago, the human race has watched a series of trends run their respective courses. New patterns have emerged on how our species socializes, what makes us sick, and what makes us tick.

As I've touched on previously, the way humans have interacted with our natural spaces has been warped into positive, negative, and perplexing directions in the past year-plus. One subset of our population appears to

be getting outside more, and increasing their newfound bond with nature. Another population is waiting for rules to change, or perhaps is comfortable with the indoor lifestyle.

Things move fast. I literally have to jot down the incoming environmental incidences as they populate my mind and our newsfeeds. Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Niagara region have given me a lot to chew on recently. Here are some provoking tidbits from the past couple weeks which I found quite noteworthy.

As our leaders have been promoting how being outdoors is exponentially safer than being indoors, they recently made that concept much more inaccessible. Let's start with beach and water access.

Our neighbours in St. Catharines have recently proposed paid, and even timed parking at Lakeside and Sunset Beach, arguably two of the most popular beaches along Lake Ontario. It appears it will go through. Nothing quite like going to the beach and keeping your eye on the time, in case of a fine.

Families with youth, especially from urban or in-

ner-city neighbourhoods, depend on simple and right-of access to public natural spaces. Once we begin to monetize and categorize nature, we pass a slippery slope of no return. I'll be saying to the youth one day, "remember when we used to just go to the beach or the gorge?"

Boat launches are closed now, too. It must be difficult to socially distance in the middle of the Welland River or Lake Ontario. However, film production is allowed to continue as an essential form of work, likely because that industry draws people indoors.

There is no biological science to support these decisions.

I recently had my first personal experience with the Niagara Gorge and Whirlpool parking situation. There are three main parking areas to access this natural wonder, created by nature and time, and as of now, they are all paid parking spaces. Be aware as a local, you could get charged for parking on a gloomy, drizzling Thursday midday, even in the offseason.

The parks and bylaw officer pulled up at the same

Continued on page 8



Owen Bjorgan gets a photo of a clearing bordering Four Mile Creek.

Local LETTERS

Why can't people pick up their garbage?

During this pandemic, we know it's not the first thing on people's minds, but it should be addressed.

Every time we go out for a walk, Leslie takes a bag and a pair of tongs and picks up at least

a grocery bag full of garbage, and that's only from our house on Platoff Street to the post office, two blocks. We've found everything from Tim Hortons cups to men's socks... Why? We don't understand why people

can't pick up after themselves.

This is supposed to be 'The Prettiest Town in Canada'... Clearly we're not putting our best foot forward.

Hamish and Leslie Kerr
NOTL

Niagara Health pleads for community support

Niagara Health is experiencing unprecedented pressures and needs our community's support to help protect capacity for life-saving critical care and other patient services. The situation is serious in Niagara, as it is across the province.

More than 70 leaders from across the region are supporting Niagara Health and its healthcare providers who are working full out to care for Niagara residents. Niagara Health has written this letter to strongly urge every member of our community to follow public health guidelines 100 per cent of the time. It will save lives.

To the Niagara community, Now more than ever we are #InItTogether and need to support one another as we fight through the third wave of this dreadful pandemic.

We've vaccinated more than 24% of Niagara's residents,

beginning with those in the highest risk populations. More than 125,000 doses have been administered in our community, and the number of COVID-19 vaccinations increases each day by the thousands.

At the same time, however, there is reason for concern. Niagara Health is experiencing unprecedented pressures and is asking for your help to protect capacity for life-saving critical care and other patient services. This is also the case for hospitals across the province and beyond.

Let's remember the 379 people who contracted COVID-19 and died, along with their loved ones who are grieving these terrible losses. There are currently 1,405 active cases in our community, a number that's been growing at a concerning rate over the past number of weeks.

There have been so many

challenges thrown our way over the past 14 months. We know people are hurting and we know you are frustrated.

Now more than ever we need to support one another. Follow public health guidelines — masking, physical distancing, handwashing and keeping contact with members of your household only. Support local businesses — stores, restaurants, wineries and other merchants. And be kind.

We are #InItTogether

Bunny Alexander
Chair, Board of Directors
Niagara Health

Lynn Guerriero
President and Interim CEO
Niagara Health

Dr. Johan Viljoen
Chief of Staff
Niagara Health

Please, locals, slow down on Line 2

For the past year and a half, as my wife and I have walked around the nearby neighbourhood, we have noticed more and more CAA Slow Down signs popping up on front yards.

So, we are not alone in noticing the crazy speeds some locals are driving through populated areas. It feels like these drivers have no respect for others. It is especially frightening because there are many more young families moving into our neighbourhood. I imagine, if someone were to tear past their house at those speeds, they would be the first to be upset.

It surprises me because these are not strangers to the

community. They are local people, coming out of the subdivisions, down Line 2 to Concession 6 at breakneck speeds. We even noticed a parent running a stop sign after dropping his child off at school.

Line 2 is not a highway. Children walk and bike to school along this road and families go for walks along the street. Most of this section has no sidewalks. As a pedestrian, I have been hit twice by vehicles while on a crosswalk, so these speeds scare me. If the drivers that hit me had been going at the speeds we see in front of our house, I would not be here today. God forbid they hit a child.

Which brings me to a sec-

ond point. Why is this section of Line 2 not considered a school zone? The school zone is on Niagara Stone Road, yet 95 per cent of the children at Crossroads Public School enter the school grounds off of Line 2, not Niagara Stone Road. I know that it's a regional road and Line 2 is a town road, but does the town not care for its children as much as the region does? Surely, we could cap the speed at 40 kilometres an hour as it is on Niagara Stone Road.

I encourage as many people as possible to contact a town councillor to see what can be done. We have to protect our children.

Rudy Kuijer
Line 2



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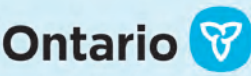
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Ontario's COVID-19 vaccine plan is helping to stop the spread and save lives. Thousands of people across the province are getting vaccinated every day.

As vaccinations continue, we need to stay the course to protect those we love. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Keep your distance.

Find out when, where and how to get vaccinated at ontario.ca/covidvaccineplan or call 1-888-999-6488 for assistance in more than 300 languages.

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Paying to hike now

Continued from page 7

time as my friend and I did. The two of us were just out to get our essential exercise in the same place we have our whole lives. Please don't interpret that as being an entitled local; I'm just stating a fact that I know many of the readers can relate to.

The officer, pen in hand, is making her way down to our vehicles. I politely stepped out of the vehicle and asked, "are you going to put a ticket on our dashboards right now if we begin hiking?" She said yes. We wanted to pay with cash, but cash wasn't allowed. My phone was dead, so I couldn't download the app required to pay for my hike. So, she suggested that I drive to a nearby corner store to purchase a Vanilla card, and come back to pay with that. What the heck is a Vanilla card, and why do people need it for hiking? With all respect, she was of course just doing her job.

I thought we were in a pandemic where we are encouraged to make less stops, touch less, and avoid indoor spaces with people, no?

Imagine if our various authorities put these kind of efforts and staffing into

outdoor education, replanting projects, and habitat enhancement.

I told the lady to have a nice day while my friend and I piled back into our vehicles, and drove up the road to find the last free parking spot.

Beaches and other 12,000-year-old natural features are being squeezed out for our citizens. Which leads me to another shocking announcement with no scientific spine — crown land camping is now illegal in Ontario. Regular camping spots are full to the brim, backcountry camping sites have quadrupled in price, and now the final, wild straw has been pulled.

In summary, nature is becoming either straight up illegal, or, on other angles, an increasingly discouraging trip out the door.

Meanwhile, places like Virgil Conservation Area have recently been victimized by disturbing amounts of litter and a small but noticeable forest-clearing event (the cleared land is painfully obvious, and reaches right down to the edge of the creek). I stood in the valley, admittedly, my blood boiling.

There is nothing quite like staring across a creek

with markedly terrible water quality (according to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority's Watershed Report Card), as more natural vegetation gets removed, and a plethora of plastics clings to the banks. But there is nothing we can do about it right now.

Wrong. I was back just a week later with my girlfriend and a select few others in my "bubble," and we cleaned that place up by filling big plastic garbage bags. It was that easy, and that productive. I will be hitting up other sites in the near future as well, before vegetation and ticks become too rampant for productive garbage cleanups, many of which are cancelled or postponed due to restrictions with no concrete end date in sight.

Ironically, it's the very deprivation from nature, and the degradation of it, that makes us sick, sick people. Welcome to spring, the season of transformation. You know what they say, you can often tell a lot about someone by the environment they live in.

Here's an emergency break I would love to see, where the province goes, "oh my gosh! The very environment that keeps us healthy and economically sound is being dismantled at an alarming rate!" Not enough of us are paying attention these days.

I take a deep breath from the keyboard. Pause. Sigh. Perhaps I could focus more on the positive? There is an enormous danger to turning a blind or ignorant eye to evolving problems. You can only sweep so much under the carpet before you trip over it.

Will NOTL trip, or rise to the occasion?



Owen Bjorgan snaps a photo of garbage beside Four Mile Creek, and of a bag of garbage he collected.



MPP frustrated as province ignores medical advice

Penny Coles
The Local

MPP Wayne Gates is beyond frustrated at the provincial government, and vows to keep up the pressure against political decisions which ignore the advice of provincial and federal top health experts.

The restrictions announced Friday, with no mention of paid sick leave, no initiatives to protect essential workers, and no further shut-down of non-essential businesses, had “everyone shaking their heads,” he says.

Sick pay is an essential tool to curb COVID, says Gates, and to be effective it has to be offered immediately, and seamlessly, so people will stay home when they’re sick, rather than going to work and spreading infection to co-workers and their families.

“Instead, more powers were given to police, without even getting the support of the police ahead of time. It was mind-boggling,” he says, referring to the decision to give police the right to pull over drivers and ask where they are

going and why. That was reversed over the weekend when police services across the province said they weren’t willing to do that.

Also disturbing was the shut-down of playgrounds, golf courses, soccer fields and other outdoor venues which have no record of outbreaks, and was against expert health advice, rather than addressing the workplaces where outbreaks are occurring, spreading to the community, and sometimes whole families, says Gates, who are showing up in hospitals and intensive care units.

On Saturday, the premier rescinded his order to shut down playgrounds in a tweet, although not other outdoor bans such as tennis and other activities, but didn’t add anything that might have been effective.

“I can’t understand, for the life of me, why the government isn’t listening to the doctors. Even doctors can’t understand why they’re not listening to doctors.”

A week or so ago, “there were a few people screaming. Now everyone’s upset. This is the richest province in the

country, and one of the richest countries in the world. There is no reason we can’t afford to pay for sick days. We can’t afford not to do it,” he says.

“As a province, we can afford sick days. And 70 per cent of the people in Ontario believe we need sick days.”

He also points to the \$22 million the province spends to fund intensive care units, a cost that is climbing every day with the need to increase capacity.

There was talk Monday about Premier Doug Ford shutting down the legislature, “when the reality is people are dying,” says Gates, accusing him of running away from his duties.

Although Ford has pointed to federal help for those who are sick, and there was some limited support offered in the new federal budget, it’s not enough to encourage people who have COVID symptoms to stay home, says Gates, the federal funding is not immediate, and it’s not seamless. “It doesn’t guarantee a continuation of wages.”

He will also continue to push for paid time off for vac-

cination appointments, and more financial support for small and medium-sized businesses struggling through the pandemic.

“We’ve got to keep doing what we’re doing,” he says, pressing the government to take the advice of medical ex-

perts to heart and act on it.

“We’re seeing so many doctors, so many mayors, even backbenchers in the Conservative Party saying we’re not going in the right direction. People are dying, and their deaths could have been prevented. Hopefully over the

next few days the pressure will get the government to do the right thing. We have to continue to put pressure on the government to change their course. I’m sure they’re starting to think like the rest of us. Let’s stop the dying. We can do it collectively.”

These magnolia trees are stars



Mike Balsom couldn’t help but stop to take a photo of these star magnolia trees on Anderson Lane. The blooms don’t last long but they are magnificent when in full bloom.



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To all NOTL's dedicated volunteers, we say

THANK YOU

We are now well into the second year of a pandemic, when the world changed, and since then, so much has changed.

What hasn't changed is the number of compassionate, energetic and dedicated individuals and members of various arts and cultural organizations, businesses, churches, schools, sports and service clubs who are the driving force behind so much that is great in our community. During this time, those who volunteer in our long-term care homes and in health care deserve an extra special thank you, for doing an unimaginably difficult job.

This week is National Volunteer Week, and for the second year, it's been difficult to recognize our wonderful volunteers in the fashion they deserve.

Many organizations are accustomed to hosting annual events for their volunteers, but that can't happen again this year. Volunteers work tirelessly and make a difference every day of the year with their expertise and energy, and they are missing that experience as much as the community is missing them.

Volunteers bring a richness to every facet of this town, and are instrumental in making it such a great place to live, work and visit.

To every person who has volunteered their time over the last year, we say thank you, and to all those who had to put their volunteerism on hold, thanks for your patience, and we look forward to seeing you again.

We have included a few of the organizations and businesses who contribute to the town in a meaningful way, and the people who make them work. To those who were missed, if anybody would like to submit a photo in the coming weeks to honour a group or a particular individual, we'd be glad to publish it.



Thank you to The Niagara Lions Club

This photo, which has all but three of the Niagara Lions Club members in it, was taken at a club meeting on Feb. 19, 2020, a month before the first COVID lockdown. The club was celebrating 100 years of Lionism in Canada. It seems so long ago and yet it was only a little over a year ago, says Dorothy Soo Wiens. Since then members have continued to do what they can in the community, raising funds and giving back to minor sports and many other local causes. The town would not be the same without its service organizations, so thank you Niagara Lions for all you do.



Shaw Guild

Sonia Johnson, Peggy Bell, Louanne Lynch, Jane Catcher, Patty Neame, Mike Fox, Sam Kingdon, David Livett, Margaret Fairman, Marie Marozzo, Ken O'Malley, Barbara Webber, Linda Murray, Brian Parr, Kathy Callaghan, Paddy Parr, Joe Cassidy, Paul Madeley, and John Hunter are Shaw Guild gardeners, just some of the many volunteers that help the Shaw Festival run smoothly. Guild members also volunteered to be ambassadors for the town on Queen Street last year, and hope to do so again this summer. *(All photos supplied)*



Leah Atherton and David Watt

Owners of The Garrison House, Leah Atherton and David Watt are often seen helping community members, including offshore workers. This month, upon hearing of a local family from St. Vincent shipping items to help those devastated by the recent volcano eruption, they loaded up their vehicle with essential items to be part of the shipment. They are just two of many individuals in town who see a need, and do what they can to help fill it.



Red Roof Retreat

While Red Roof Retreat programs are closed, volunteers continue to help on the property and with animal care. Moe and Steffanie Bjorgan continue to go in, and volunteer Linda Wiebe deserves a special thanks for going in each week to stay on top of office work. "All of these people who don't have to help, and still honour their commitment to Red Roof Retreat, certainly makes things easier," says Steffanie. "I also know, that for each of them, it gives them a sense of purpose and something to look forward to. We are so appreciative." Special thanks from Red Roof Retreat to Danielle Moss (top left), Gord Harris, Gary LaPierre, Kathy Mann, Marc Bertrand, Kim LaPierre, Linda Wiebe and Karley McKiegan. Missing from the photos is Linda Murlot.





TONY BALDINELLI

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Celebrating

OUR VOLUNTEERS

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To all NOTL's dedicated volunteers, we say **THANK YOU**

Newark Neighbours says thank you to volunteers

Penny Coles
The Local

This has been a difficult year for many, but if there has been a bright light shining through, it's the way caring, compassionate individuals have stepped up to help others in any way they can.

This is National Volunteer Week, with a theme of The Value of One, the Power of Many, highlighting "the awe-inspiring acts of kindness by millions of individuals, and the magic that happens when we work together towards a common purpose."

Volunteer Week reminds us to recognize the power of people, organizations, and sectors working together to make our community a better place for all.

Nowhere is that more evident than Niagara-on-the-Lake, and for all the good that is done,

we need look no further than Newark Neighbours, the organization that is staffed solely by volunteers and has been helping the needy in town since 1971.

The registered, not-for-profit organization currently has 39 volunteers who, pre-pandemic, would have shared the duties of running a food bank for those in need, and a thrift shop, which helps to fund the food bank and pay the bills for their John Street East location.

There are eight women who oversee the food bank, sanitizing all donations before placing food on shelves, and providing food bank clients — safely, following COVID protocols — with a selection of groceries every two weeks, as well as special holiday meals.

While the food bank has been able to stay open during

the pandemic, with the eight volunteers sharing shifts to cover two mornings a week, the thrift store is closed, says Newark Neighbours chair Laura Gibson, and the volunteers who would have spent a day each week at the shop are missing that social time.

"Everybody had their day, and they're not able to do that job for the second year. Everyone is missing their friends and fellow volunteers," says Gibson.

"We look forward to having them all return. They're anxious and willing to step forward and help. They miss the social contact, and the rewarding work they do."

Gibson says she is especially thankful to the volunteers who have continued to work through the pandemic, including the large number of volun-



There is still work to be done at Newark Neighbours, as it continues to help more clients than ever through the pandemic, and volunteers who are stepping up to do it. (Mike Balsom)

unteers who came out to help with the last three holiday hamper programs, ensuring everyone in need received a great meal and some extras last Thanksgiving, Christmas and over Easter.

"So many of our volunteers came out to help, and this was before vaccinations. We really appreciate them all stepping up for us."

"For the last 50 years, past and present volunteers — and there have been many of them over the

years — have been so dedicated to Newark Neighbours."

The community has also always been very generous and quick to respond when there was a need, she says.

There has been more need than ever during the pandemic, with an increase of about 35 to 40 per cent in the number of clients requiring help from the food bank, says Gibson, many of them families suffering a loss

in income because jobs have been lost, or hours cut.

"This really opens your eyes to what is occurring around us. People think it's not happening in NOTL, but it is. People are having hard times, and it's not their fault. It's great that we can help them through this, but we couldn't do it without our volunteers, and a very generous community."

Newark volunteers are also trying to help in other ways, she adds, such as reaching out to find volunteers who can help with taxes, or for clients who find themselves in need of housing.

It's difficult when those kinds of services are only available in St. Catharines or Niagara Falls, and there is no transportation to access them.

"People are experiencing really difficult times, with housing and other necessities. We give them emergency food and help however we can, and then get them to go through the application process. We don't turn anyone away."

Chris Hatch, a NOTL resident who is CEO of Food Banks Canada reached out to Newark recently to help them with some funding that they qualify for — they've never received any kind of government grant in the past, but it was good to know it's available, says Gibson. It can help them purchase some food items they need, and will tide them over the next six months.

"We're still getting food donations, and we're fine for now, and maybe once we're out of this lockdown, we'll have another community food drive. We're likely to need it by then."



The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre

Volunteers chair Patti Knipe has a message to Pumphouse volunteers: "During this National Volunteer Appreciation Week, the staff and Board of Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre would like to honour all our volunteers, in particular, those who have been able to help during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, we managed to hold some live events including our grand reopening in August, a few artist exhibitions, and open the Christmas season. Our volunteers took on different tasks from normal to ensure we were following COVID-19 protocols. We are certainly hopeful that 2022 will look vastly different so that we will once again be able to hold live indoor and outdoor events and we can see everyone's smiling faces. Until then, please stay safe and healthy!"



St. Davids Lions

Rick Wills, Hal Barlow, LEO Jason Christie, Ted Burrows, Janet Guy, Sue Pitman and Glenn Miller were part of the team offering the Friday fish fries, cancelled again during this recent lockdown. In the summer they offered a wildly popular Friday burger night. Both efforts are so the 79 Lions and members and 26 Lioness can continue to give back to their community in a meaningful way. Can't wait for the next St. Davids Lions Carnival, a great annual event, and thanks to all of you!



NOTL Museum

The NOTL Museum was not able to honour their volunteers this year in person, but is grateful to the heart and soul of the museum, the volunteers who support staff and make possible the many programs available in-person pre-pandemic, and virtually now that everything is shut down. Sarah Kaufman, managing director/curator, says she would especially like to thank Steve Baxter, their volunteer IT guy, "the reason that the museum staff can all work from home during this pandemic. He converted our system to a cloud, which means we can access our files from home, and then set all the staff up on laptops. We have a lot of thanks for everything he did for us. He has been a volunteer since he was a kid, and has also helped with exhibitions and collections. Thanks Steve, for aiding the ongoing engagement for the public with the museum. Also, thanks to Mary Jane Catcher, as Eliza Whitmore, Tom Catcher as William Kirby, with Joe Lapinski filming, and the many volunteers who are vital to everything the museum is able to do."

So thankful for these residents who volunteer their time in our Town!



Wayne Gates

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to all our dedicated volunteers for giving generously of your time.

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Patios to be reviewed in December, councillors decide

Penny Coles
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce president Eduard Lafforgue says he is grateful to town councillors for considering the future of patios on Queen Street.

They had a report before them this week to approve the extension of the temporary patios until January 1, 2022, and Lafforgue spoke to them at their Monday virtual meeting, hoping for an extension.

Instead, they agreed to review the program in December, and look at what they want to do for next year.

Lafforgue says he is satisfied that they will consider an extension, rather than having an end date of January, 2022.

Patios are well-liked by residents and visitors, providing a safe and enjoyable experience, he says. They are also important to restaurants, which have struggled throughout the pandemic. They are hoping for recovery to begin this fall, and patios will help them navigate through that recovery, which is expected to last until 2026, according to Tourism Canada reports.

“We will not be able to make up for lost business for a long time,” Lafforgue says.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita was hoping for a guaranteed extension throughout 2022, but

couldn't get her fellow councillors onboard. With the stability that would have offered, restaurant owners might consider upgrading and investing more in their patios, she suggested.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero says she supports patios, but doesn't like the way they stick out into the street, and are surrounded by concrete barriers, which the town requires for safety reasons. She would like to consider the long-term look of Queen Street, and told Lafforgue when it's time for that discussion, she would seek input from the municipal

heritage committee, restaurants and other businesses, the chamber, residents and council.

Coun. Allan Bisback asked for the December review to allow town staff to come back with their report of how patios are performing, with the potential of expanding the patio program for 2022, and also allowing for public consultation.

Having council support for patios is important, says Lafforgue, and the review will also give the chamber and restaurant owners an opportunity to have input in a decision for next year.



The Firehall Flame patio was popular last summer. It opened briefly this spring before being closed again for the lockdown, but hopefully will be allowed to open again soon. (File photo)

Blossom time in Niagara



David Gilchrist, on the hunt for blossoms, says it's getting harder to find them as so many orchards have become vineyards. However, he managed to find and photo these beautiful trees in blossom.

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Bravo Niagara! presents 'dream roster of artists'

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Juno Award winning Canadian guitarist Jesse Cook kicks off the 2021 Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts Amplified Membership series this Friday, April 23. It's the first in a series of six world class musical eve-

nings presented virtually by the local non-profit organization.

For a \$100 fee, members will get exclusive access to virtual concerts, meet-and-greets, interviews and more featuring some of the best jazz, classical and even folk/pop artists in the world, from April to July.

Cook, who won the 2001

Juno for best instrumental album for his *Free Fall* release, is one of the most recognized purveyors of flamenco guitar, though, as he himself admits, he weaves in elements of world music, jazz, pop, Brazilian samba and more into his music. He burst onto the scene in 1995 with the independently-released *Tempest*, which he had recently been revisiting during his *Tempest 25* tour before the pandemic hit.

Amplified members will experience Cook's talent in a pre-recorded concert and will also have the chance to meet the artist live in a post-show event hosted by Mark Wigmore of 96.3 The New Classical FM.

Bravo Niagara! co-founder and executive director Alexis Spieldenner is excited to be able to give fans a chance to meet Cook, and other artists, this summer through these virtual events. The exclusive content of the membership series, combined with the intimate and interactive sessions after, are an effort to recreate some of the connection that audiences often feel with the musicians at live shows. Spieldenner says this is a step up from last year's Amplified series, which consisted of premieres of concerts, recordings and new compositions via the Bravo Niagara! website.

Following Cook's show, Bravo Niagara! celebrates International Jazz Day a week later with a program curated by Céline Peterson, the daughter of the late pianist Oscar Peterson. Titled *Sing About Freedom*, Peterson says the show looks at the relationship of jazz and social justice, and visits topics such as civil rights, women in jazz music, and social change in general.

"Music is one of the main things that always brings people together when we're in the midst of a significant movement, as we're in right now," says Peterson. "Jazz has always been a catalyst for change, and for social justice and peace. This is the perfect opportunity and the perfect time to present something along those lines."

With the likes of John Clayton, Robi Botos, Laila Biali, Monty Alexander, Molly Johnson and more, Peterson refers to the performers for the April 30 show as a "dream roster of artists."

It's also a dream roster of influences that will be honoured during the program. The centennial of the birth of influential jazz pianist Billy Taylor will be celebrated, while the music of Chick Corea, who lost a battle with cancer in February, will also take a prominent role. A new version of jazz legend Max Roach's *Freedom Day* will debut as well.

"Dr. Billy Taylor wrote one of the most important songs of the civil rights movement," says Peterson. "Paying tribute to Dr. Taylor was very important not just to me, but also to Chris (Mori, Bravo Niagara! co-founder and artistic direc-

tor) and Alexis."

That important song is *I Wish That I Knew How it Would Feel to be Free*. Originally an instrumental recorded by Taylor and a 19-piece orchestra, lyrics were added after the shooting of U.S. President John F. Kennedy. Nina Simone's 1967 recording of the song is probably the most well-known version, though it has also been recorded by dozens of jazz, rock and pop artists through the years.

Peterson says that the shock of Chick Corea's death made it important for her to include his music in the program.

"For our Chick tribute, Robi Botos (Bravo Niagara! 2021 artist in residence and NOTL resident) has done a beautiful solo piano medley of some of Chick's songs," she says. "And Chick has done a lot of notable solo piano work throughout his career."

Peterson notes that Corea's forays into the jazz fusion and avant-garde genres, as well as his work with Miles Davis and others, made it difficult to choose exactly which aspect of his career to focus on. She admits it would take a few dedicated shows to do a full tribute to the composer, keyboardist and bandleader. But she promises the performance from Botos will stop viewers in their tracks.

Toronto-based jazz drummer Larnell Lewis, no stranger to Bravo Niagara!, has put together an amazing band for his new arrangement of the Max Roach classic *Freedom Day*. Di-one Taylor sings the lyrics orig-

inally done by Abbey Lincoln on Roach's 1960 recording. Botos plays piano on the track, another civil rights staple that was part of Roach's *Freedom Now Suite* from his album *We Insist!*.

Peterson refers to Johnson as one of Canada's national treasures, an important voice of social change. She returns with a performance recorded during pre-COVID times. And Laila Biali, whose eponymous 2018 album won the Juno Award for Vocal Jazz Album of the Year, does a moving rendition of Leonard Cohen's song *Anthem*. Singer Paul Marino and pianist Laura Driscoll, both from Chicago, round out the show.

"It's a really, really heavy day, and a really diverse list of artists," says Peterson. "Different voices, different styles of music. There's something for everybody."

In keeping with Bravo Niagara!'s desire to add a little extra to each of the six events, the show includes a conversation between recently retired Chicago Tribune jazz critic Howard Reich and composer, arranger, conductor, producer, educator and bassist John Clayton.

"I'm so excited for people to see this," enthuses Peterson. "John is one of the most important voices in jazz. Everything he does comes with a sense of peace, honesty and personality. The two of them together talk about jazz and social justice, and artists as catalysts for change. I was sitting in on their conversation, and I felt like I was a little kid listening in

on an important conversation."

Peterson is appreciative of the opportunity to curate the April 30 show for Bravo Niagara!

"Chris and Alexis have not stopped since day one of the lockdown," she says. "Their goal has always been first to showcase musical excellence, and also to support artists and keep them working. This is why they are so respected by artists internationally. They are two very special women, and their hearts are always in the right place with every single thing they do."

She continues, "the membership series is a fantastic opportunity for people to see exceptional works, support the artists and to support the organization. When you break it down, you get six fantastic concerts, for about \$17 a pop. That's exceptional, and I hope that a lot of people will choose to support it."

For the full slate of concerts, and to purchase a membership, to the 2021 Amplified Series, visit bravoniagara.org/amplified-virtual-series. Readers of this newspaper can take advantage of a 10 per cent discount by entering the code NOTLLOCAL.

Line-up for the 2021 Arts Amplified Membership series:

April 23 — Jesse Cook
April 30 — International Jazz Day's *Sing About Freedom*
May 21 — Emily Bear
May 28 — Chooi Brothers
June 11 — Royal Wood
July 9 — Stéphane Tétreault



Laila Biali (Photos supplied)



John Clayton



Robi Botos



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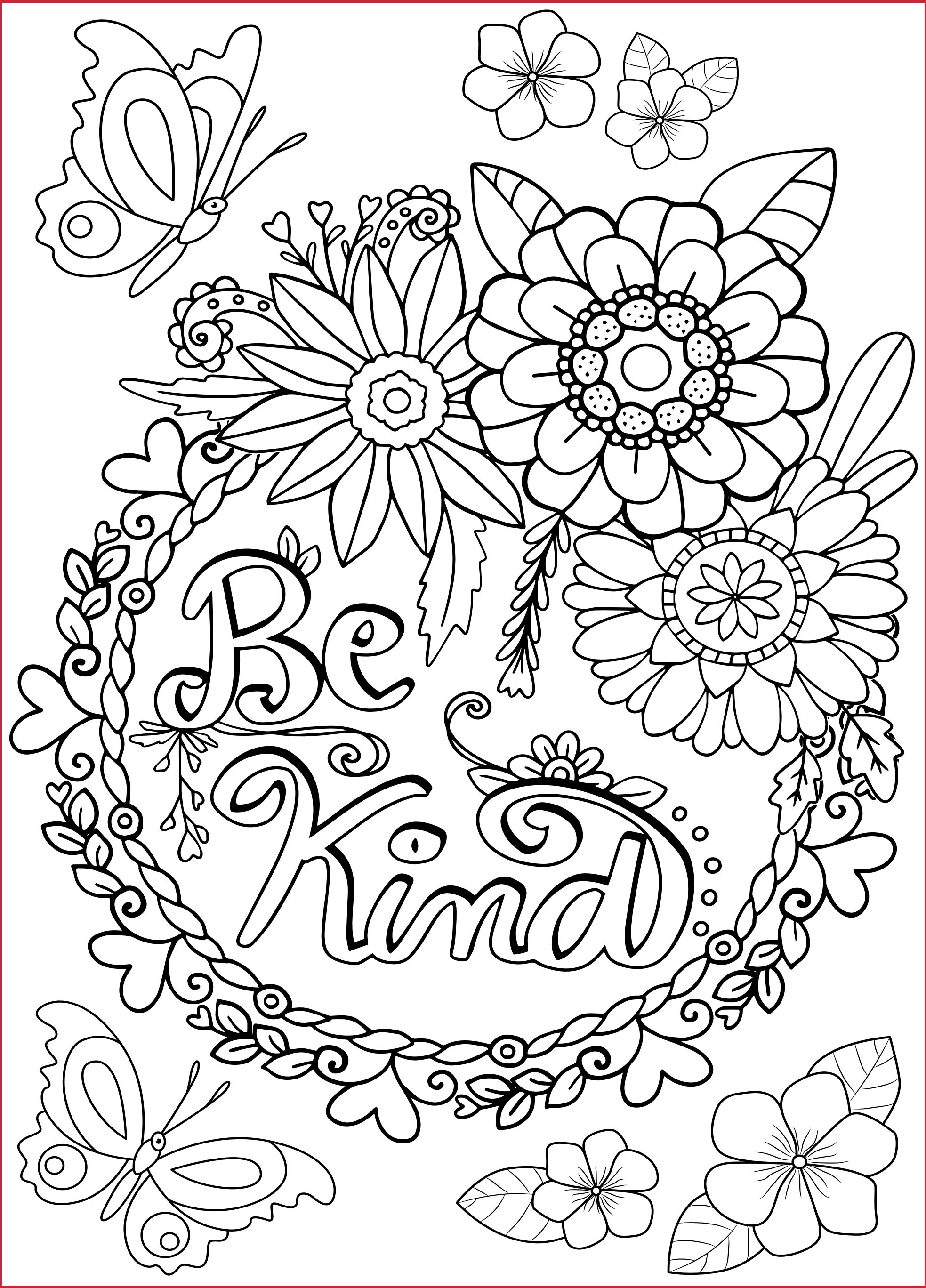
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CALLING ALL KIDS AND ADULT COLOURERS:

Please colour this picture, and put it up in a front window to encourage everyone to be kind to each other, as the Town is reminding us to be! And please take a photo of your masterpiece in the window and email it to penny@notllocal.com, and also to [#NOTLShinesLight](#) [#NOTLSpreadsKindness](#).



Please spend this week choosing kindness

Local Staff

For one week, Niagara-on-the-Lake residents are being asked to be kind.

The town's first Shine Light, Spread Kindness Campaign began Monday, designed to promote a culture of kindness throughout the community.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake has always been like a little piece of paradise for me. It is the most beautiful town, filled with the friendliest people, and is the place I am proud to call home," says Lord Mayor Betty Disero. "This kindness campaign provides a beautiful opportunity to remember and celebrate who we are as a community. Even as we go through this difficult time together, let's continue to shine our light and spread kindness out to the world. Everyone deserves kindness and respect."

"The town is inviting com-

munity members to commit to shining light and spreading kindness every day this week, and by doing so, working together to ignite light and joy in our community. One flame provides some light to a dark room but light multiple candles at once and a dark room is transformed to light," the news release says.

"I always marvel at the way a simple smile or kind word can brighten my day," says CAO Marnie Cluckie. "Kindness is truly powerful and now, more than ever, kindness really matters. Many people are hurting, frustrated, confused, lonely, anxious, sad, and the list goes on. While we are all in this pandemic together, we are all experiencing the effects of it differently. It is essential that despite the frustrations we're experiencing, that we choose to be kind to ourselves, and kind

to each other. Extending grace is one way to shine your light. Join us this week in spreading kindness and reminding ourselves and one another that we are all human and we are doing our absolute best with the challenging circumstance. May our first response always be a kind one."

To be part of the community initiative, visit notl.com/kindnesscampaign, and follow along with the town on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more information and daily suggestions on ways to spread kindness.

Kids can participate too. Parents or guardians are invited to print the activity sheet, available on the campaign website, and encourage their children to participate, and even make it a family affair.

The town is also asking the business community, churches, and other people or organizations with digital signs, bill-

boards, or lawn signs, to display kindness messages throughout the week, such as Shine Light, Spread Kindness, Kindness Matters, Be Kind Always,

Choose Kindness, or Spread Kindness, as a visual reminder to the community.

Take a picture of your sign and email it to kindnessmat-

ters@notl.com or post it to social media, tagging the town and using the hashtags #NOTLShinesLight #NOTLSpreadsKindness.



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
KINDNESS THROUGH WORDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send a kind text. Post something positive on social media. Give someone a compliment. Say "thank you" for an action/service you take for granted. 	KINDNESS THROUGH CREATIVITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make and display a Kindness Sign in your front window or lawn. (Challenge your neighbours to do the same.) Create kindness messages on sidewalks and driveways in chalk. Write a poem about kindness. Find and listen to a song about kindness. 	KINDNESS THROUGH GIVING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donate to a cause that is important to you. Pay for the order of the vehicle behind you in line. Gather your gently used items and set them aside to donate. Have dinner delivered to a loved one you know is struggling. 	KINDNESS THROUGH STEWARDSHIP "EARTH DAY" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order a reusable coffee mug and/or water bottle. Plant a garden. Conserve water. Avoid travel by vehicle. Visit notl.com/earthday for more information.
Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
KINDNESS THROUGH ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call a loved one. Support a local business by leaving a positive online review. Smile (with your eyes above your mask) and say hello (from a safe distance) to someone. Let a car merge into traffic with a wave and a smile. 	KINDNESS THROUGH SELF CARE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eat a healthy snack. Go for a walk. Spend time meditating. Complete a task you've been putting off. 	KINDNESS THROUGH THOUGHT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace a negative thought with a positive one. Write a list of things you are grateful for. Reflect on your day and find the good. Reflect on the kind of person you want to be. Could you be kinder? 	

Town explains new provincial restrictions

Playgrounds open, picnic tables off-limits

Local Staff

After receiving some criticism on social media for lagging behind other municipalities, the town's parks and recreation department had removed barriers to playground equipment in local parks.

The province made an announcement late in the day, advising of a number of addi-

tional measures coming into effect including the closure of all outdoor amenities, including playgrounds. In response, staff worked late into the evening to immediately secure play structures with caution fencing.

On Saturday, after strong criticism for health professionals and Ontario Science Table members, Premier Doug Ford tweeted advising that provincial

regulations would be amended to allow playgrounds to reopen.

"This Tweet gained traction and understandably created excitement for young children and families within Niagara-on-the-Lake," a town news release says.

Town staff, says Lord Mayor Betty Disero, waited for the official notification of an amendment to the regulation, and once the Ontario website was updated to reflect the change Monday morning, staff reopened municipal playgrounds.

According to provincial regulations, other outdoor amenities will remain closed, including outdoor sports facilities and multi-use fields such as golf courses, baseball diamonds, soccer fields, tennis, platform tennis, table tennis and pickleball courts, basketball courts, BMX parks, skate parks, portions of parks or recreational areas containing outdoor fitness equipment, picnic sites and picnic tables.

Parks or recreational areas are open to walk through and playgrounds, play structures, and equipment can be used by children if both the children and their parents can maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from others, other than a person who is a member of the same household.

Off-leash dog parks and benches in parks or recreational areas can be used if all protocols followed.

"This past weekend demonstrated just how high tensions are," says Disero, adding bylaw officers were being given a hard time by people who were not following provincial regulations.

"Let's not allow the stress of this pandemic change who we are as a community," she says. "No matter what stage we are at, no matter what the regulations say or don't say, we are still in this together even though we are apart. Please, continue to follow all rules and guidelines by keeping your distance, wearing

a mask, and washing your hands. Take care of yourselves and protect one another and Niagara-on-the-Lake will get through this as one community, united."

Town staff will continue to patrol parks to educate the public on requirements outlined in provincial regulations and public health guidelines, to support by-law officers.

"Information from the province is changing rapidly, so we understand that members of the public may, at times, be feeling confused or frustrated," says CAO Marnie Cluckie.

"The town will continue to work diligently to implement and adhere to provincial regulations and requirements as they become available, and to communicate these to the public."



Bylaw officers were at Queen's Royal Park Sunday. CAO Marnie Cluckie says they had people yelling, swearing and spitting at them, frustrated over the confusion of what they were and were not permitted to do in parks.



Queen Street was not busy Sunday afternoon, except for the gelato and ice cream stores. (Photos by David Gilchrist)



Picnickers enjoyed the tables in Simcoe Park Sunday, but by Monday morning, the province was prohibiting the use of picnic tables.

Get your sneakers ready for the step challenge

Local Staff

With outdoor exercise on the list of things we can do during a pandemic, the town is planning a revival of its popular step challenge.

Set to launch on June 1, it will be open to anyone who lives or works in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Registration will open for individual competitors as well as teams of four on Tuesday, May 18. "What better way to promote positive physical and mental health than to get outside and walk our community's picturesque neighbourhoods, parks and trails," says Lord Mayor Betty Disero. "You can be sure to see me out walking and participating in this challenge, and I invite you to do the same. Let's get stepping, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and be sure to wave hello to steppers from a

safe distance. Stay healthy, stay safe."

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Step Challenge took a hiatus in 2020 due to the pandemic. Although COVID-19 remains an ongoing concern, a town news release says staff are confident this year's competition can proceed safely, with individuals and teams collecting steps on their own while maintaining a safe physical distance from people outside of their household.

This year, the town is looking to surpass the 2019 achievement of together amassing more than 14.5 million steps, by setting the collective goal of 20 million steps, figuratively walking the 7,428 kilometres across Canada.

"This will be my first Niagara-on-the-Lake Step Challenge experience, and being a relatively competitive per-

son myself, I can't wait to hit the trails," says CAO Marnie Cluckie. "I would like to thank staff for working hard to set up this year's challenge. After an incredibly challenging year, it will do us all some good to get outside, exercise, and work as part of a team. Good luck to all participants."

The town is seeking partnerships with local businesses and organizations to promote and sponsor this well-loved challenge. Those wishing to donate prizes such as gift cards, goodies or swag can email lauren.kruitbosch@notl.com.

Prizes will be awarded every week, and upon completion of the challenge. Details of prize categories will be forthcoming. Visit notl.com/stepchallenge for more details and stay tuned on the Town's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms for more information.



NOTL BROWNIES



NOTL Brownies meet online and explore careers

Brenda Ferguson
Special to The Local

The 2nd Niagara-on-the-Lake Brownies have been online since January in virtual weekly meetings. It has been an outlet for us to continue fun activities while learning, exploring and remaining safe during the pandemic. It has been important for us to continue our meetings for the girls in the unit, as well as the guiding leaders.

It hasn't been without challenges, of course but we have all remained positive about our experience. "I feel like I have learned more in the last few months of online meetings than I have in the last few years, with all the research I have done for the meetings," said Bobbi Epp, or Sunset Owl as we like to call her. "Meetings on World Thinking Day, Black History Month, World Landmarks and more have taught me so much, and it has been nice to see the

girls without their masks on," Epp said.

It has been a fun experience for the girls. "I really liked doing our yoga meeting," said Maansi Gandhi-Malholtra, while Millie McGeachin said she is always excited for Brownies and that she enjoyed building her robot.

We do all miss being together in person. "I liked when we got to go on walks and did our community scavenger hunt for Halloween," Emilia Epp shared. However we all agreed

it's still fun to get to do crafts together online. "It still feels like an adventure," said Emily Ferguson, "I love that I get to see my friends and learn about so many things."

"The best part about Brownies is that no one is left out," Carmelina Peca expressed. "I feel safe and happy at Brownies."

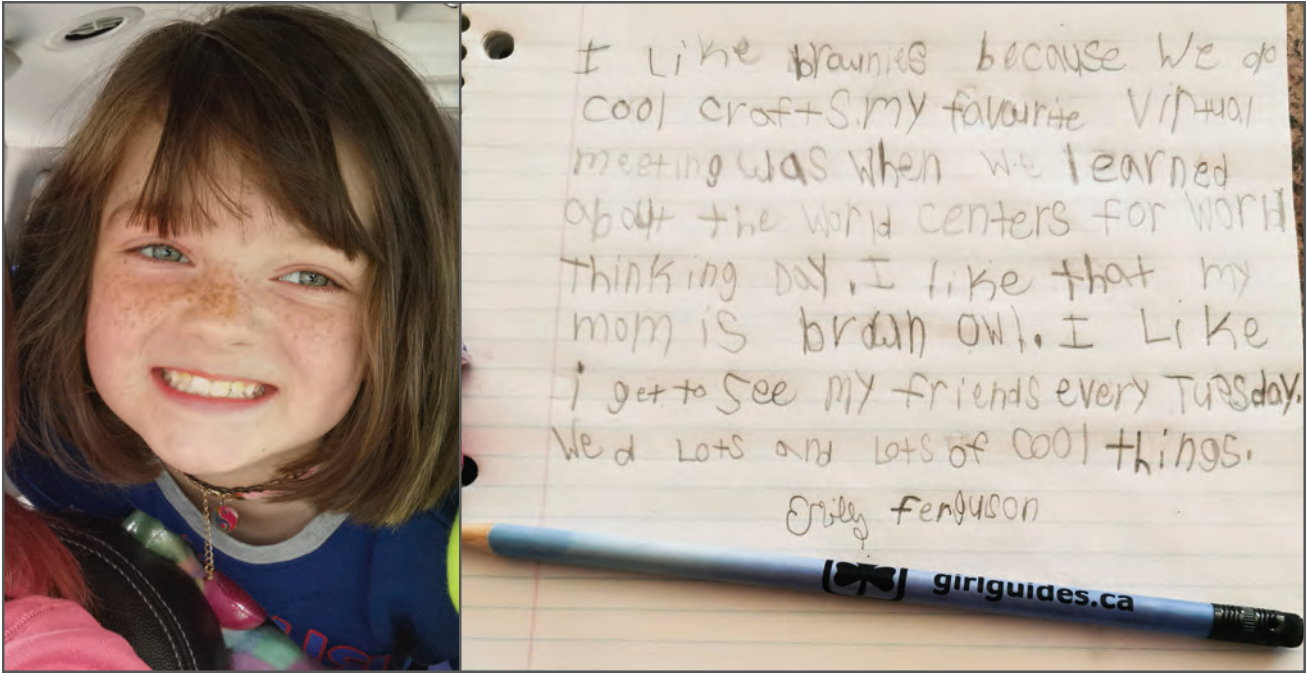
"It is great to see how engaged the girls are during our virtual meetings. The questions they come up with continually amaze us," Brenda Ferguson

(Brown Owl) shared. "My favourite part is seeing them form these friendships and bonds I have made that I will always cherish."

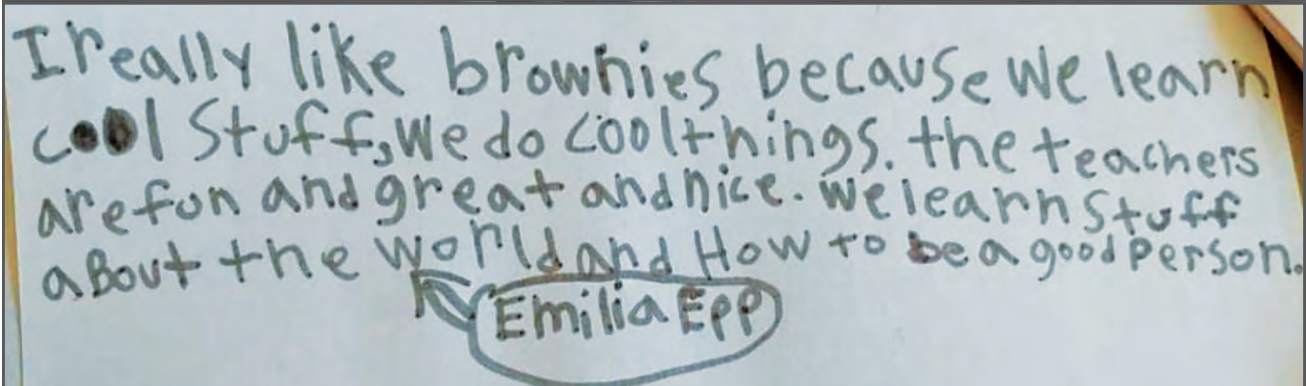
We have spent the last few meetings exploring different careers. It's great for the girls to see that no matter what their dream is, it is always possible. We have many guests planned to join us virtually to talk about their careers and to show the girls that they can be anything and do anything, and that there

are many paths that can lead them to their dreams.

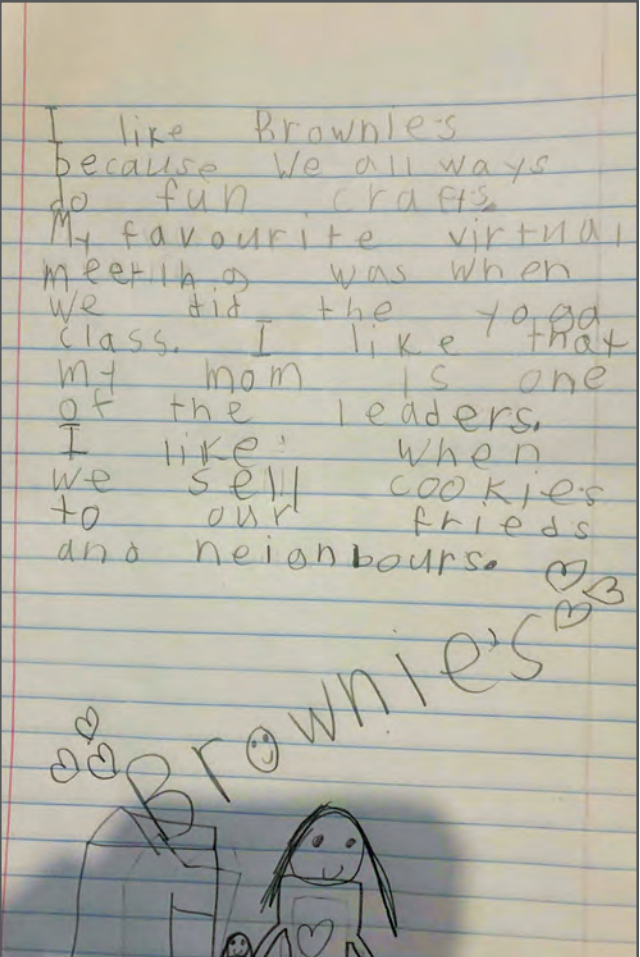
We have learned about what it is like to be a doctor in today's world from Dr. Debbie Flaherty. We also had the privilege to have Penny Coles join us for a meeting to discuss journalism and what it means to be an editor. We are so appreciative of all of our guests past and future. They have all made an impact on the girls and who knows? We may have a future journalist among us!



Emily Ferguson



Emilia Epp



Maansi Gandhi-Malholtra



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LocalSPORTS

Tennis Club seeing boom in members ready to play

**Mike Balsom
Special to The Local**

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Club has welcomed a record number of new members for this summer. According to president Hugh Dow, about 50 newcomers are ready to swing their racquets at Memorial Park. But as of last Friday's announcement from Premier Doug Ford, they will be waiting a few weeks longer to step onto the courts.

"Late (Friday) night the town advised us that all facilities were being closed, including tennis courts, effective immediately," Dow tells The Local. "We're hoping that by May 20, unless the provincial order is changed or modified by then, that's the date we're kind of working toward for the courts hopefully to be open."

Dow, who took on the president's role last October, isn't all that surprised by the delay. After many conversations with town CAO Marnie Cluckie, the club was ready to get things going soon, albeit in a modified way.

"We were just sort of ramping up, with nothing formal in place," explains Dow. "We normally get things going, depending on weather, in early to mid-May."

Those plans, of course, are now on hold.

With two new courts going in at Memorial Park, this could have been a big year for the club. The courts take the

place of the beach volleyball court near the entrance to the park, which was removed last year. They are currently awaiting final surfacing, known as colour coating, and installation of the posts for the nets.

"We're very excited about that," raves Dow. "It's been quite literally a 10-year dream to have these new courts. It will make us the largest hard court facility in the entire Niagara Region. Some of the other clubs have clay and hard courts, but we'll have six hard courts. It will become a pretty important component of the town's facilities."

The club has already been through a pandemic summer, and has learned how to adjust to the demands of the times.

"We had to put COVID protocols in place," he says of the 2020 season, "and as various protocols changed and were modified we adopted those. But throughout the entire season we had things in place such as separate entry and exit gates, social distancing. Many people wore masks on the court until they started to play. The protocols were observed by everyone."

As anyone who has been involved with or observed the club would know, though, the social aspect of tennis in NOTL is a huge part of the experience. Much of that was missing in 2020, and will most likely continue to fall by the wayside this summer.

Dow, who joined the club in 2011 after moving here from Toronto, had previous-



The NOTL Tennis Club is closed until the province and town says it can open for the season. When it does, it will have many new members ready to play, says club president Hugh Dow. (Mike Balsom)

ly been involved with tennis clubs in the big city. He can't remember another tennis club that has been so socially motivated.

"We're a very socially-oriented club," Dow avers. "The social aspect of it has historically been a very important component of how we operate. We have somewhat of an older demographic, which is obviously a factor. The majority of play, probably 85 to 90 per cent, is doubles play. And as a result our social events have been extremely well-attended."

Traditionally, Monday nights are for the men's league, women's league is on Wednesdays, and mixed doubles matches take place on Fridays. Dow says that this year there are already 75 men who have signed up for Mondays.

"That gives you some idea as to how interested people are in terms of playing together and socializing. It was something that was dramatically missed last year. We discouraged any social gatherings before and after games, and from what I could see virtually everybody adhered to that."

Dow surmises that more than 13 months into the pandemic, the pent-up demand for outdoor activities is what has led to the surge in membership. He guesses that with people still signing up, the club will end up with as many as 300 members.

"We were quite surprised, particularly, with the number of new members who have showed up," Dow says. "Our club professional Shawna Macfarlane has already had over 50 people taking lessons

with her this year. It's an indication of the level of interest, and it's been quite noteworthy, but it all came to a crashing halt (Friday)."

The decision by the province to curtail activities such as tennis and golf has left Dow and the other members of the club's board baffled. He feels often the people who make decisions such as this one don't necessarily have a good understanding of exactly what happens in these athletic endeavours.

A visit to the club's website, though, shows that positive thinking reigns supreme. A list of events begins on May 29 with a club social and a mixed round robin tournament, and even includes the annual Tennis Ball dinner dance on Sept. 17. Dow admits that there may be a bit of a question mark on some of

the early season events.

"We made it clear that these dates are really tentative," he says, "and really depend on our own judgements and obviously what the town and the province have in store for us."

"We have a really strong board this year," Dow continues. "It's a really strong team. We have a lot of things to wrestle with, but I'm really pleased to see how everybody is so involved and really does their part."

Of the delay, the board is resigned to the fact that there's not much they can do about it.

"We're just going to have to accept it," Dow says. "We're looking forward instead of looking back, though, and with the new courts hopefully available we're going to have a good season ahead of us."

LocalHAPPENINGS

FRIDAY NIGHT TRIVIA "FRIENDS"

April 23 @ 7:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Join us this Friday when the Trivia will be all about the show Friends. Gather the gang and get competitive! Join us for a virtual trivia night from the comfort of your couch. Play on your phone, computer or tablet, no app needed just a web browser. All are welcome! Log On To: CROWD.LIVE Enter This Code: ABJWW

AUTHOR TALKS JENNIFER ROBSON ~ 14+

April 28 @ 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Join us in welcoming Jennifer Robson as our next author in our 2021 Author Talk Series! Enjoy an evening with writer Jennifer Robson from the comfort of your home as she talks about her book "Our Darkest Night". Although we will be apart there will be plenty of time for questions and conversation. This free event is presented over Zoom, however, attendance is limited, please register as soon as possible by visiting: <https://notlpubliclibrary.org> Zoom log-in information will be emailed to all participants at least 24 hours before each event.

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With or without a border, colour graphics optional.
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Deadline: Monday 3 p.m. Call Karen 905-641-5335
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LocalWORSHIP

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Sunday, April 25th

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

Speaker: **Jeff Martens**

Message: **The Courthouse:
Jesus our Justifier**

Live stream available
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IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory
Jessie Thomson

Forever held dear by all fortunate enough to be part of her circle of family and friends.

Six years have already passed since April 21, 2015.

There is a link death cannot sever,
Love and remembrance last forever.

Forever missed by John and family, Janice, John (Sue), Jim and the grandchildren, Andrew, Lindsey, Megan, Kaitlyn and James.

HELP WANTED

 **Niagara Pump House Arts Centre**
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- Acts as an advisor to the Board on any and all decisions with a financial implication under consideration by the Board.

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Deadline to submit application: May 21, 2021

OBITUARY



PEARSON, SHEILA ALMA (SAMS)—It is with heartfelt sadness that the family of Sheila Alma Pearson announce her passing on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at Meadows of Dorchester, Niagara Falls, ON. Sheila was born on April 17, 1930 in Gaspe, Quebec. Beloved wife of the late Frank Sr. (2004). The simplest pleasures in life, spending time with family, brought great joy to our mother. She will be greatly missed by her children, Frank Pearson (Barb), Cathy Pearson, Gary Pearson (Bev), Amy White (late Bill), Diane Robert (Roger) and Donna Rotondi (Elio), grandchildren; Rachel, Frank, Scott (Robin), Ange, Jamie, Jess, Calvin, Carly (Casey), Jaclyn and Evan and eight great grandchildren. Predeceased by sisters; Eileen and Marina and brother Cyril.

Mom lived with dignity and grace throughout her long battle with dementia. The family would like to express our deep appreciation to the Meadows of Dorchester, especially the staff of Primrose Garden for their years of compassionate care.

Private family arrangements in the care of MORGAN FUNERAL HOME, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. For those who wish, donations can be made to Meadows of Dorchester. In lieu of flowers, Mom would love for you to enjoy time as a family at a picnic or an outing. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



SUDOKU

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

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from April 14, 2021

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

Across: 1. Amiri, 5. After, 10. Elms, 14. Pave, 15. Slade, 16. Guam, 17. Prop, 18. Poker, 19. Once, 20. Scrub, 22. Renew, 24. C A A, 25. Dalai, 27. Arthur, 29. Umpire, 32. Nadir, 34. Cataracts, 36. Tones, 40. List, 41. Nooks, 43. Memo, 44. Addis, 46. Last April, 48. Optic, 50. Used to, 51. Hannah, 54. Cabal, 56. Ado, 57. Major, 59. Noses, 63. Dubs, 65. Waugh, 67. Euro, 68. Ella, 69. Ennu, 70. Iman, 71. Step, 72. Dates, 73. Loss.

Down: 1. Apps, 2. Marc, 3. Ivor, 4. Reputation, 5. Asp, 6. Flora, 7. Macau, 13. Smeat, 21. Barr, 23. Writ, 26. Lean, 28. Trompe l'oeil, 12. Take into account, 8. Eder, 9. Reread, 10. Ego, 11. Lunch, 12. Eras, 62. Sons, 64. Sap, 66. His.

Hades, 52. Adult, 53. Noble, 55. Argue, 58. Jana, 60. Sumo, 61. 38. Emit, 39. Solo, 42. Stub, 45. Spam, 47. As an, 49. Thawed, 51. 29. U C L A, 30. Maid, 31. PT S D, 33. Asks, 35. Coll, 37. Nerd, 12. 13. Smeat, 21. Barr, 23. Writ, 26. Lean, 28. Trompe l'oeil, 12. Take into account, 8. Eder, 9. Reread, 10. Ego, 11. Lunch, 12. Eras, 62. Sons, 64. Sap, 66. His.

CROSSWORD

- Across:**
- 1 Arabian ruler
 - 5 Following
 - 10 Some providers of wood for furniture
 - 14 Prepare
 - 15 Larry --- in "The Iceman Cometh"
 - 16 Largest island in the Marianas
 - 17 Stage accessory
 - 18 Fire prod
 - 19 A single time
 - 20 Abandon
 - 22 Overhaul
 - 24 Aeronautics group.
 - 25 --- Lama
 - 27 Round Table leader
 - 29 Baseball official
 - 32 Lowest of the low
 - 34 Eye defects
 - 36 Notes
 - 40 Heel
 - 41 Sheltered spots
 - 43 Short written reminder
 - 44 Ethiopian capital --- Ababa
 - 46 "The --- Dancers" (Jean Thesman)
 - 48 About the eye
 - 50 Did, once
 - 51 "--- and her Sisters" (Woody Allen movie)
 - 54 Intriguing group
 - 56 --- Annie ("Oklahoma!")
 - 57 Battalion XO, often
 - 59 Moves cautiously forward
 - 63 Names
 - 65 Author Evelyn ---
 - 67 It replaced the French franc
 - 68 Noted scat singer --- Fitzgerald
 - 69 Boredom
 - 70 Former Mrs David Bowie
 - 71 Move
 - 72 Palm tree fruit
 - 73 Sports defeat
- Down:**
- 1 Smartphone programs
 - 2 Brandy made from pressed fruit
 - 3 Matinee idol --- Novello (d. 1951)

- 4 Disavowal
- 5 Egyptian cobra
- 6 Roman flower goddess
- 7 Consider
- 8 Garden west of Nod
- 9 Go over again
- 10 Self-esteem
- 11 Middle meal
- 12 Former Portuguese territory in China
- 13 Slander
- 21 Comedian Roseanne ---
- 23 Warrant
- 26 Bony
- 28 Deceptive decorative paintwork
- 29 Where the Wizard of Westwood coached
- 30 One of three in "The Mikado"
- 31 Formerly known as shell-shock
- 33 Inquires
- 35 Escherichia ---, potentially dangerous bacterium
- 37 Dweeb
- 38 Give off
- 39 Alone
- 42 Counterfoil
- 45 Irritating email
- 47 Straight --- arrow
- 49 Melted
- 51 Underworld
- 52 No longer a minor
- 53 Type of metal or gas
- 55 Debate
- 58 Country singer and actress --- Kramer
- 60 Japanese heavyweight contest
- 61 Subdivisions of eons
- 62 Male heirs
- 64 Plant juice
- 66 Not hers



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COMMUNITY MINDFULNESS

While the COVID-19 outbreak is affecting communities around the world, as a professional real estate advisor, I am continuing to represent clients who want or need to buy or sell a home during this time. While some of our physical real estate shops are not open or are operating with limited staff, I am still working hard and conducting the business of real estate. Though many of the ways we operate are changing, rest assured the global Engel & Völkers infrastructure we have in place provides us the added capabilities of interacting with each other and our clients instantly via chat and video conferencing — along with offering virtual showings and paperless online transaction management. As a company and as individuals, we are being diligent in protecting ourselves, our families, our clients and the communities we serve by following an abundance of caution and taking precautions to slow the spread of the Coronavirus including washing our hands, practicing social distancing and avoiding large crowds, by cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces in our homes and shops, and working with our sellers to do the same in the properties I represent. I am eating healthy, exercising, getting plenty of sleep and received my first Vaccine on April 12th. I am also educating myself and those who depend on me of the facts of this pandemic. I fully appreciate that this is not business as usual — or life as usual. With compassion and understanding that everyone is dealing with a new, hopefully short term “normal”, I am remaining positive, present and prepared to do what is necessary to personally navigate what lies ahead while also connecting with my clients, partners and others who may need to hear a calming voice or receive a helping hand. I am here and available to help if you need me.

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