

The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL



Large crowd,
small church
for sunrise
service

page 13

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Morgan and Audrey Bowen get creative at the Niagara Nursery School fundraiser Bunny Trail Saturday morning, while Crystal the Bunny looks on. The community centre was packed with kids having fun, enjoying several activities offered by the nursery school. (Fred Mercnik)

Bunny Trail 'all about the kids'

Penny Coles
The Local

"The rain didn't put a damper on a fantastic family event," said Adam Stewart, the president of the Niagara Nursery School board Saturday.

"It's all about the kids, and they're having a great time."

At 10 a.m., when the NOTL Kinsmen's Easter egg hunt is traditionally beginning on the grass outside the community centre, families with children were so packed together inside the building it was hard to move, as kids lined up to be given chocolate eggs to fill their baskets.

It was the first time the egg hunt had to be moved inside due to weather, but the community centre "is the perfect venue" for the Bunny Trail, the family event organized as the main fundraiser for the nursery school, said Stewart, and everyone adapted.

"It's great to see the community come out to support us. Our govern-

ing principle is children. That's what we're always focused on, and they're having a great time."

Luanne Kulchar, at the Bunny Trail with her daughter and two grandchildren, said she remembers taking her kids to Simcoe Park in the early days of the egg hunt. Given the weather, she thought the indoor event was expertly handled.

"I'm really impressed with how well-organized the event is," she said.

Her daughter Maegen Bergeron, who remembered scrambling for eggs in the Simcoe Park as a kid, was visiting for the weekend from Kingston with her husband and two children.

She said she was having fun running into old school friends, now bringing their kids to the Easter event.

"This is like a little reunion, seeing everyone from high school here with their kids. It's a great tradition."

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'Respectable' is key for new restaurant

Penny Coles
The Local

Driving past the former Private Eyes strip club on Niagara Stone Road, it's obvious work is underway to clean it up.

The for-sale sign de-

clared the property sold just a few weeks ago, and the new owner isn't wasting any time.

Although Will Neufeld has a lot of work ahead of him, including upgrades to the electrical system before he can get a business

permit, ideally he would like to be open by June, providing great music in a completely renovated restaurant.

A Mennonite chicken farmer and grape grower, he says "respectable" is key in the transformation

of the former strip club.

Leading up to its final days before being shut down and put up for sale last October was the site of some pretty unpleasant stuff, including a stabbing — not the image Niagara-on-the-Lake wants at

one of its main entrances to town, he says.

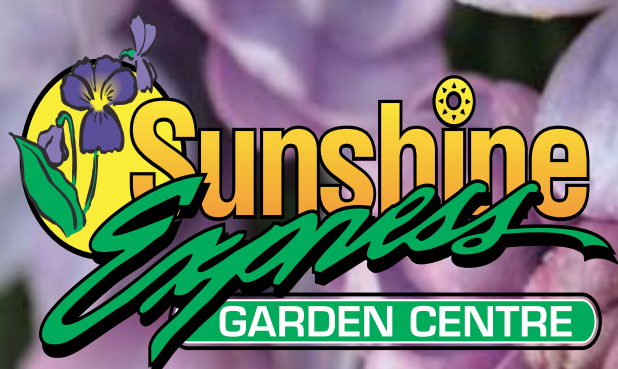
"The whole idea is to improve the image of this property."

Inside isn't so great either — it's seedy, worn, cavernous and dark — and not hard to imagine the

entertainment provided over the years.

Neufeld is working hard to erase the image, but at the same time, wants to preserve a little of

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Country rock music of choice for new restaurant

Continued from page 1

the character of the place.

The main stage is staying, for the live bands he hopes to feature.

One of the smaller dancers' stages has been removed, with the floor-space to be used as part of one large dance floor.

A third stage will remain, but is being repurposed.

Neufeld grins when he says he wanted to keep something of the original, for the sake of tradition — the inside has been cut out to allow for the bartender and supplies, and a bar top has been built on the surface of what was once a stage.

He's got more plans for the place, including the name.

"What do you think of Club Fifty 5?" he asks, for the site at the beginning of what is now a regional road, but which locals still call Hwy. 55.

He wanted Club 55, but discovered it was taken, and now he's pretty excited with the alternative.

He just wants to showcase great local bands NOTLers and visitors, from the region and fur-

ther afield, will enjoy, describing his genre of choice as country rock.

Although there has been chatter around town about a country and western bar, he says that's not part of the concept.

Before he gets to that stage, his first priority is to "clean up the building and make it pretty," inside and out.

For the exterior, he's thinking grey with black trim, he says, "something classy," with the look of an establishment that suits a visible location in NOTL.

Despite the ambitious desire for a relatively quick opening, "we're not even close," he says, with some factors out of his control, such as the necessary upgrades to meet current fire codes, and the inspection approvals which will be required before the Town issues a business permit.

His son William, an engineer, and his daughter Sarah, who both live locally, will be helping out with what will be a family business.

He hopes to offer great music and food in an environment where his family and friends will be comfortable — they're telling

him they will be there for the opening. Many have been so supportive of his goal they are offering to help, with friends showing up to dig in with cleaning up the interior — a big project, he says, which will take a while to complete.

The large space, with several rooms, is licensed for 426 people. He already has a liquor license, and while Neufeld is putting first things first, he is thinking down the road about an outdoor patio on the roof of the lower section.

"I just came back from New York City, where I saw two roof-top patios. I really like the idea, but that is a long way off. There is so much else that needs to be done first," he says.

"We're going to provide a good quality operation, a respectable operation. I remember when this place was the Rainbow Inn, and the Garden City Race Track was just over there," he says, pointing across Queenston Road.

"This place was always hopping on race day. I miss those days, and I want to see this something like the Rainbow, packed again."



William, Sarah and Will Neufeld are all pitching in to clean up the former strip club with plans for a family-run operation. (Penny Coles)



Will Neufeld, grape grower and chicken farmer, is at home on a tractor, but this time it's to cart away garbage from his new business. (Penny Coles)

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Firefighters cooking pasta

Lauren O'Malley
The Local

The Queenston Volunteer Firefighters Association spaghetti dinner is about so much more than a cheap and cheerful meal, says organizer Rob Copeland. The group's president says the fundraising event is about people.

"This goes out to the community, gets people more involved, and makes it feel like a community should feel," says Copeland. "Hopefully we'll have nice weather, and people will come out and see each other for the first time after a long, cold winter."

He continues, with emphasis, "The big thing about the spaghetti dinner is not just the idea

of fundraising, but also that the firehall is a place where people can go for help, and where we put on events that get the community involved."

Copeland says they typically expect around 200 people to attend the event, which started in 1996. It helps to fund a number of local community organizations such as Newark Neighbours, Red Roof Retreat, Niagara district firefighters, minor league sports, youth orchestras, schools, and KidSport Niagara.

"The proceeds go into a general fund, which is distributed as needed or requested," says Copeland. "We keep it as local as possible; we distribute what we can."

Proceeds come from the spaghetti dinner, which costs \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids 12 and under, and also from business-card-sized ads placed on the placemats at the dinner. The food is all-you-can-eat, and includes salad, as well as desserts provided by Erin Lockard from Sweets & Swirls Cafe. Takeout is available as well.

There are also door prizes available, provided by Queenston resident Graham Keene from his Canadian Tire store in St. Catharines.

The annual event takes place May 3, from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Queenston firehall. Any questions can be directed toward Copeland, at 905-262-4661, or robcopeland@sympatico.ca.

Help Town recognize local volunteers

Penny Coles
The Local

Recognizing volunteers is a long-standing tradition in town, says Lord Mayor Betty Disero, and one that should be continued, “no matter who is on council.”

The Lord Mayor’s Volunteer Awards will be presented at a June council meeting, and to help choose whom to recognize, Disero is asking for nominations from the public.

For more than 20 years, volunteer awards were presented in a partnership between The Niagara Advance, the community newspaper which initiated the program, and the Town

of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Because of the newspaper’s closure in November 2017, and the municipal elections the following October, a recognition ceremony was not held in 2018. Disero and town staff have agreed it is important to acknowledge citizens who contribute to the community, and will involve all three weekly newspapers in town, she said.

“When the discussion came up, we decided even without The Niagara Advance, we should be doing this. This is such a great town for volunteers, and it’s important to recognize them.”

Disero said she makes a lot of speeches about sus-

tainability, “which always goes back to budget and money. But if we didn’t have the number of volunteers and their civic pride, we wouldn’t have the town that we have. We could have all the money in the world, and it wouldn’t be the town we live in without our volunteers. Sustainability isn’t just about money, it’s about how people relate to the place they live and what they do for each other.”

Volunteerism, she said, “is contagious. People see others getting involved and they step forward. We have people in town who have been volunteering for years, decades even, and who will one day pass the torch.

Awards can help encourage the next generation of volunteers,” said Disero. “That’s why volunteer recognition is so important.”

There are so many great volunteers in town, she added, “it will be tough to just pick a few.”

The Town also encourages volunteerism, as directed in the last term of council’s strategic plan, through its volunteer talent bank. The website allows those who want to offer their services to find an organization they would like to help. An organization can also reach out to volunteers by filling out a form describing its requirements, which is emailed to all those who have regis-

tered as volunteers.

Victoria Steele, the Town’s community engagement coordinator, said the talent bank has been successful in matching volunteers to organizations, and when it’s a one-time requirement, such as an event in need of volunteers, “we usually hear in about 10 minutes that the need has been filled. It works really quickly.”

The Town is also planning another volunteer fair, set up similarly to a job fair, said Disero. Representatives of organizations, events or committees requiring help-ers will be invited to attend as exhibitors, and those interested in becoming more

engaged in the community by providing their services will also be encouraged to attend.

For this year’s awards, outstanding volunteers will be chosen in several categories: working with seniors; working with youth/education; culture (arts, music, heritage, etc.); sports and recreation; a volunteer under 21; the environment; and community/civic engagement.

Nominations can be emailed to victoria.steele@notl.com, or dropped off at the town hall, by 4:30 p.m. Monday, May 13.

The name, phone number and email address of the person submitting a nomination and the volunteer being put forward for recognition must be included, with a brief explanation (250 words or less) of why the person is being nominated.

Nominations will be reviewed by Disero, Deputy Lord Mayor Clare Cameron, and a representative from each of the three weekly newspapers. One volunteer will be selected for each category and the winner will be recognized at the June 10 council meeting. Volunteers must live in NOTL and be willing to have their photo published in the newspapers.

Wastewater treatment plant delayed again for ‘minor’ repairs

Penny Coles
The Local

The Lakeshore Road wastewater treatment plant will be delayed again, but not because of leaking, the Region reports.

Joe Tonellato, regional director of water and wastewater services, says “there are no leaks in the tanks.”

The Region is working with the contractor to address “minor issues related to the process and control” of the new plant, “which is normal when undertaking commissioning of a facility this size,” he says.

In February, Tonellato and interim Regional CAO Ron Tripp gave Niagara-on-the-Lake councillors an update on the plant, saying there was a testing process to go through, but if all went well, the plant could be online by late March or early April.

All did not go well.

It will take four weeks to get the equipment to repair the identified issues, Lord Mayor Betty Disero says she learned Thursday.

She and NOTL Regional Coun. Gary Zelepa both contacted the Region last week to enquire about issues with the testing, after being questioned about chatter on social media saying tanks were leaking and the opening would be delayed yet again.

The plant was originally scheduled to open in the summer of 2016. Tripp said at the February meeting he didn’t want to go into the reasons for the lengthy delay in completing the project, which has been under one general contractor — the process is leading down a path to legal action, he said.

In an email Tonellato sent to The Local Sunday, he says, “Being a resident of NOTL, I completely understand the importance of this plant to the community. Regional staff are engaged and fully committed to getting the plant commissioned as quickly as possible.”

“They’re doing tests,” says Disero, based on information she received from the Region Thursday, which is now on the Town’s website.

“They will keep testing and retesting until it’s ready. They found some deficiencies in instrumentation. There are just some issues, some minor stuff, to be repaired before they start commissioning the plant.”

“The 14-day functional water test at the new NOTL wastewater treatment plant was completed on March 27. During this test period, a number of process, electrical and instrumentation and control deficiencies related to the over-function and control of the facility were identified,” says the update on the Town’s website, provided by Regional staff. “These deficiencies are currently being addressed by the contractor and all must be cleared up prior to the start of the 30-day commissioning testing on sewage. We have been told by the contractor that some of the equipment needing replacement will be at least four weeks for delivery. Once all of the deficiencies are corrected, we will retest the plant on water for an additional seven days to ensure that the plant is functioning without issue. If all goes well, commissioning on sewage will begin following the successful water test.”

While the Regional update does not provide a timeline, “Do the math,” says Zelepa. “It’s not opening any time soon.”

The math says it will be more than two months before the plant is ready to begin treating sewage.

He too says he is confident the issues will be addressed, and the taxpayers will not be on the hook for any “improper workmanship.”

“Here we are years later, and I’m not happy with the delays, but we’re close to the finish line. This is a major piece of infrastructure that wouldn’t be there without this current

structure of government. Unfortunately, we’re having some problems getting it completed, but according to the information we have received, it’s nothing catastrophic.”

Zalepa says the Region has recognized it has had problems with such major projects, and is working on improving a process that has led to long delays. He sits on the Region’s procurement committee, which is looking at overhauling the process of contracting for “sophisticated projects” like the sewage treatment plant. There is also a new management system in place to have professionals working alongside regional staff, who have more experience with maintaining such systems than building them.

“I’ve been really impressed by what I’ve heard,” he says. “I feel confident staff have a handle on the commissioning process, and are working diligently to ensure it will be ready to go as soon as possible.”

He said the Region is also looking at a different scoring system when choosing a contractor — one that puts weight on factors other than the lowest bid.

“Too much focus in the past has been on the lowest bidder, which may not be the whole story. We have to do our best to manage money, but we’ve reached the point where we’ve realized the lowest bid is not always the best bid. That’s how the system has been structured. Now it will include consideration of factors such as how often contractors finish projects on time.”

Zalepa says the quality of work on large projects has suffered in the past because of the procurement process, “but the question is are the taxpayers prepared to accept the cost might be more upfront, although saving in the long run. In the past there was a lot of effort to keep the budget down, but that’s catching up to us with projects like this.”



Lord Mayor Betty Disero (Penny Coles)

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Thomson leaving chamber for new challenge

Chamber loss is Niagara Falls Tourism's gain

Penny Coles
The Local

After 18 years of advocating for local businesses and marketing Niagara-on-the-Lake as a destination for visitors, Janice Thomson is taking on a new challenge.

The president of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce and Visitor and Convention Bureau said she will be leaving the organization in good hands, with chair Paul MacIntyre, board members and staff who have a strategic plan in place to move forward. She will stay until May 15, and will help prepare the terms of a search for her replacement.

"The price of success for Janice has been hard work, determination and dedication to her job," said MacIntyre. "Dedication most of all to NOTL and its business community."

He described Thomson as "a true ambassador to every guest, new business or existing member in need of help."

"Janice is a true professional and champion of NOTL. We thank her for all her inspiration over her term and of course all her remarkable achievements," said MacIntyre.

"We as a board and community wish her nothing

but success in all her future endeavors."

Thomson's next challenge will be as president and CEO of Niagara Falls Tourism, a position she says she is approaching "with great enthusiasm and energy." She's looking forward to working with the board, staff and member businesses, and helping to optimize the destination's success as a leader in tourism in Canada, she said.

She described her years at the chamber as "a most interesting time," working with "wonderful people who invest so much of themselves in building businesses, and creating experiences that enhance the quality of life in NOTL."

Thomson said she is grateful to chamber members who have demonstrated "such a collegial spirit of collaboration" to create a tourism destination that attracts millions of visitors.

She has also valued the positive working relationship with the volunteer directors who have served on the board over the years, she said. The opportunity to "gain knowledge from the perspective of various sectors has been invaluable to me."

She said she has enjoyed working with MacIntyre, the board members, and all the

great staff she worked with over the years. "I know the board and staff will continue to take the chamber to new heights" as the current strategic plan evolves.

Thomson came to town in 1995 as owner of the Luis House, a restaurant and small inn, on the site of what is now The Irish Harp. She left an extensive career in senior executive positions in the import automotive industry, including BMW, Jaguar and Saab, to come to NOTL.

She became a member of the chamber and served on its board when the office was on King Street. When the new library was built on Anderson Lane, the chamber took over its renovated Court House space, where it was more convenient to visitors.

The board asked Thomson to lead the transition to the new location, and in 2001 she became executive director, then a four-day-a-week position.

By that time, board members had identified the opportunity for the chamber to serve as the destination marketer of the town, and worked with experts to develop the branding that would become part of their marketing strategy.

"We highlighted Niagara-on-the-Lake as the place

for people to come to celebrate, and adopted that as the defining part of our branding. Then we built on it, working with different groups. The culinary experience became Signature Kitchens, and NOTL the culinary capital of Canada, with more wine and culinary services per capita than any other part of Canada," said Thomson.

"We always focused on that message: 'Come to NOTL for a memorable experience.'"

The town was also marketed as a conference destination, with the chamber hosting many familiarization tours to show off what could be offered to conference delegates.

"A common message was 'We can make anything happen in Niagara-on-the-Lake,'" said Thomson. "We said that knowing it to be true — we have such a strong group of members we can count on to make it happen."

As an example, she recalls the year Chris Blake, then working with Music Niagara, read about a Diner en Blanc event in New York City, and asked if the chamber could organize one in NOTL — in two weeks.

"We got the community together — Celia Liu [of the Oban Inn, since passed away] tackled it with such great enthusiasm — and as we got close to the day, we asked ourselves what we'd do if we had only one table of eight. We decided we'd be satisfied with having gone through the process. We ended up with 400 people."

However, although it was a great event, it turned out to be not a simple one to recreate — the chamber learned from the Diner en Blanc organization in France that it was a franchise, permission had to be granted to host one, and there were rules to follow that didn't work well for NOTL.

Guests had to bring their own tables and chairs, as well as their food, dinnerware, cutlery and table decorations. They had to arrive by public transportation, and the location had to be kept secret until shortly before the event.

"The feedback from our guests was they wanted to park their car, go to an assigned place, and bring their food. But they wanted tables and chairs to be provided."

Now an annual White Effect dinner held at Queenston Heights provides a quality experience — it sells out, mostly to locals — while making the event uniquely Niagara-on-the-Lake, said Thomson.

The chamber's Shades of Summer, a dinner on Queen Street during the August peach weekend, also appeals to locals, with music and dancing on the street, although it attracts visitors as well who come for the chamber Peach Celebration and St. Vincent de Paul's Peach Festival.

"We work together to promote the weekend, and we



Janice Thomson was recently given the Paul Harris Fellowship Award by the Rotary Club of Niagara Falls. The award is given to Rotarians and community professionals who exemplify the highest ideal in Rotary, placing service above self. Mike Strange, Niagara Falls city councillor, representing Mayor Jim Diodati, congratulated her with MPP Wayne Gates looking on. (Photo supplied)

have visitors who come every year, making it part of their holiday planning. It's a really joyful time on Queen Street."

The Icewine Festival created by the chamber also offers "extraordinary experiences," with icewine served in ice glasses, outside at midnight as fireworks light up the sky over the street.

"People really enjoy this truly Canadian experience, and truly NOTL experience."

While most events occur in the Old Town, Thomson says, "I don't see NOTL as Queenston, St. Davids, the Old Town, rural areas and Glendale. I see it as one NOTL, and we've tried very hard to make it one cohesive community. We have members from all corners of town, and our responsibility is to represent all residents and businesses of NOTL. Heritage is so important to us, and it's not just in the Old Town, it's through all of NOTL."

"We're stronger if we all use the NOTL banner together. I consider every corner of the community an important part of what NOTL is. And we never forget the town's roots are in agriculture, hard work and welcoming hospitality."

The chamber has always had a good working relationship with the town council, the CAO and senior staff, and shares the goal "of working for the good of the town. When I've been asked to speak at conferences about our success at sustaining the brand the town presents to the rest of the world, I say it's because everyone works together, knowing it's the right thing to do," said Thomson.

"It's about the really strong connection between partners, the big corporate heart, and our businesses supporting the many groups, organizations, and churches, the non-profits and volunteers, and the strength of all those relationships. The chamber

is an advocate for businesses, but also works with residents and councils to enhance the quality of life we've all become accustomed to, and which has been achieved by all of us working together."

Although Thomson says she is "super-motivated" to take on the challenge of marketing a larger destination, with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills she's gained in NOTL, she will continue to live in the community and stay connected to it.

She didn't imagine ever leaving the chamber, but then she didn't think she'd leave her role as chair of the Niagara Parks Commission, yet she learned she was able to finish her term and move forward.

"I left a piece of my heart there, but it taught me I could move on. And I'll leave a piece of my heart here. But I'm very excited about this great opportunity, and really looking forward to it. It's a big world, but also a connected one — Niagara Falls is connected to Niagara-on-the-Lake in many ways. At the moment I feel like a kid starting a new year at school, starting fresh in a new place, but one that's familiar, and with people with whom I already have a good relationship," says Thomson.

"It was an opportunity that came up, totally unexpected, but I learned from the Niagara Parks Commission there could be new opportunities, and I'm thrilled about this one."

The 12 chamber board members are "dedicated people steering the ship, and I feel very confident they can continue to make the town even better than it is," she says.

"It's been a privilege to work here. Success has been built on its positive, entrepreneurial spirit, everyone working together and sharing in their pride of Niagara-on-the-Lake. I will always value that experience."

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NPCA funding for floodplain management cut

Agency charged with looking after local watersheds

Penny Coles
The Local

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority is dealing with some tough issues well-documented in the press and discussed by the public, but although residents might be aware of the controversies of governance and budget problems, how many understand the scope and significance of the work of the agency?

Gary Zalepa, Niagara-on-the Lake's regional representative on the interim NPCA board, says he wonders whether residents understand the importance of the agency's mandate, which includes floodplain management.

"Even after six years on town council, I didn't know the level of detail in the work of the NPCA. Perhaps that is something we can improve. It's important work."

He is learning, he says.

"I've had two recent calls from residents about Four Mile Creek, and one about Two Mile Creek, behind The Old Winery. They were concerned about the number of fallen trees and branches clogging the waterways, and possibly affecting fish habitat.

That falls within the watershed management mandate of the NPCA."

He says he made some calls, and the NPCA sent staff to look at the creeks, evaluating them to ensure there were no flooding issues and the creeks were fully functional. As long as the creeks are flowing freely, fish habitat is protected, he adds. "That's some of the important work of the NPCA in NOTL."

Nobody ever heard much about the work of the NPCA as long as it was doing its job, "and then some people found it wasn't. It's a delicate balance of economic development and environmental management."

The NPCA has recently come under siege from the Province — Premier Doug Ford has announced funding cuts for the services provided by the local agency and others across the province. The provincial transfers to the NPCA are expected to be about \$90,000, about half of what the agency was counting on for its floodplain management.

"I've asked staff how the funding cuts can impact us. We're not sure at this point," Zalepa says, "but cutting staff will have an impact. Fewer

staff means we'll probably not be as responsive, when because of climate change, we're already taxed. As an example, a 50-year storm might not be 50 years any more. We can have water issues, and they can be a massive problem."

The NPCA tests water quality at its source, he says, "ensuring it's healthy. The Region tests water once it's in our system, but the NPCA is responsible for testing to ensure water quality when it enters the system."

An auditor general's report, which identified several problems with the NPCA, included a "D grade for watershed management. That speaks to the lack of resources," he says, "to me building a case to say people should be concerned."

The NPCA has also received notice a local advocacy group, A Better Niagara, wants the number of board representatives settled in court. The dispute began during the closing days of the last term of regional council.

"While we realize the NPCA board makeup is a top priority to ABN, the governance issue is only one of the many important tasks that the board and the CAO have been working on to put this

important organization back on track," says a press release from the agency.

The board has made "various achievements in governance and internal organizational structure," to lead the conservation authority in a more "transparent and accountable path," including the hiring of an interim CAO, and continuing dialogue with the community.

Since the arrival of interim CAO Gayle Wood, the organization has engaged members of the media and various local community and nature clubs, including Friends of One Mile Creek and The Harmony Group in NOTL, so their needs and concerns are heard, the press release continues. "More meetings have been scheduled in the next quarter to ensure that the organization continues its open dialogue with every community group and sector in the three municipalities it covers."

"I understand that communications and open dialogue have been a contentious issue in the past," says Wood. "I have worked diligently to ensure that our lines of communication are wide open."

Zalepa says he looks forward to the time when NOTL can advertise and appoint a



NOTL Regional Coun. Gary Zalepa (Photo supplied)

community member with the appropriate skills to take his place on the board, which is the goal for future governance.

In the meantime, the issue of the number of representatives should not be up to the agency to resolve, he says.

"We're functioning really well together. Solving this needs to lie with the governments of the municipalities, not with the board of direc-

tors. We're hoping somebody can make it happen soon."

As a regional councillor, he's happy to have that conversation at the Region, he says.

"We want the issue at the forefront. I can't wait to get the process going, and to get someone from the NOTL community who is qualified to serve on the board. Sooner rather than later would be good."



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EDITORIAL

Why more convenient booze? Why not more health care?

Here we are hoping to hear positive steps have been made to reduce hallway medicine and a shortage of long-term care for seniors, expecting maybe some good news about more funding for education and programs for children with autism, and instead, our Conservative government is going to give us more places to buy beer and wine.

While there may be some consumers over the moon about the ease with which they'll be able to increase their alcohol consumption,

the money spent on such comforts, as our elected MPP — who isn't a Conservative — pointed out, will pad the profits of big chain stores.

The LCBO at least returns some revenue to those much-needed services, and now, thanks to the Conservatives, will be returning less.

In Niagara we have reason to be concerned about the health of our wine industry. We heard recently 50 per cent of our Niagara wineries are not profitable — wineries which seem to be keeping our grape growers solvent and our

agricultural land preserved.

It's not going to be the little wineries or craft breweries getting more shelf space to sell their products — it's much more likely it will be the biggest distributors with the cheapest booze to sell. Let's not expect to see VQA wines in corner stores.

We may end up with more locations to buy booze, but it doesn't seem like a smart move for the economy, especially in Niagara.

Penny Coles
The Local

Local grower recognized for lifetime achievements



NOTL grape grower Albrecht Seeger, two-time winner of the Cuvee Award of Excellence in Viticulture, has been recognized with the Niagara North Federation of Agriculture's 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award. He and his wife Anja (right) have been growing premium grapes for 41 years, including the oldest plantings of Riesling and Chardonnay vines in NOTL. Pictured with them celebrating at the recent awards event, held at the Twenty Valley Golf and Country Club, was Debi Pratt (left). (Photo supplied)

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

The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL

The trusted voice of our community

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LOCAL FINDS



Husband and mother-in-law buried together — why?

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

Upon thy belly shalt thou go
SACRED
to the memory of
ROBERT WILSON a native of
Sunderland County of
Durham, ENGLAND who
departed this life July 11th,
1839 aged 42 years

Farewell dear Wife and Children all
wherever you remain
The Lord of hosts be your defence
till we do meet again

Also to the memory of
CATHERINE KEO his
mother in law who departed
this life August 8, 1839
aged 65 years

This monument to Robert Wilson and his mother-in-law, Catherine Keo, holds much information, but also presents many unanswered questions. This is the most elaborate and costly monument from this time period in St. Mark's Cemetery, yet I can discern little trace of the family in Niagara. Why the serpent and the odd inscription "upon thy belly shalt thou go?" A snake is not the usual symbol to adorn a monument. Perhaps this snake is the symbol of temptation and evil as in the story of Adam and Eve. What was this Quebec family doing in Niagara? It seems odd that the mother-in-law died just a month after Robert. According to genealogical sources the mother-in-law was Catherine Gross, not Keo. What happened to Robert's wife and children? Why "Farewell dear wife and children wherever you remain?" Did his wife think they would return to Quebec? We know that Robert's wife was Isabella Mary Bonner. Although we know nothing further of her, we know two of Robert and Isabella's sons remained in the area.

Kids and technology — they know how to use it



Bethany Polt
The Local Community
Advisory Board

Oh those kids nowadays
and their technology.

Three-year-olds wearing their V-tec watches, four-year-olds swiping on their iPads, and five-year-olds using a Chromebook in class to find their favourite TVO educational games.

Kids today have it made. Ten years ago, when I was five, I had to use pencil and paper in Grade 1, and I had to practice my numbers using hand-held flash cards. Today kids can go up and touch their classroom smart board, drop and drag the correct number into the correct box and be congratulated with some cute little emoji con smiling at them for a job well done.

Elementary school kids are learning all about coding and robotics from Kindergarten onward. Yup, these kids know their technology and they know how to use it.

Take a stroll through the mall, sit at a sporting event, walk into a secondary school and you will notice the majority of kids, from about Grade 5 and up,

have a device of some sort. Kids as young as two years old know about apps and touch-screens. The majority of my teen-aged friends and classmates have at least a cell phone. You can connect to WiFi in school, so using your phone for research is free. There are many schools that promote BYOD (bring your own device). This allows for our teachers to set assignments on our Google Classroom, our D2L (also called a VLE: virtual learning environment). We can use the school Chromebooks and computers too; however if you have your own device it frees up the school tech for another student who needs it.

And what is this Google Classroom and this D2L/VLE? This is our on-line learning environment. Teachers have been using it for a few years now. You can get your assignments on this platform, you can share your work with teachers and group members, you can generate class discussion by posting your thoughts to the discussion board. Feedback on assignments is frequent, you get notifications to your phone (if you have downloaded the app), or when you log in you see there are messages there. Messages can be typed, in rubric form, and voice notes. If you have a question or need help

you can email your teacher. You can do this at anytime, in the evening when you get home or even at breakfast. You do not have to be sitting in the classroom at school. Technology connects people so they can get help more easily.

What is this buzzword:
eLearning?

The Ministry of Education has proposed that starting in 2020-2021 Ontario high school students will be required to take four eLearning courses to graduate. There have been both positive and negative responses to this suggestion. After watching an interview with Lisa Thompson, Minister for Education in Ontario, on TVO's *The Agenda*, with Steve Paikin, I understand they are still reviewing all input until May 31. Then we will have a more clear picture of how the education plan will look.

eLearning is learning online. It involves the Virtual Learning Environment (D2L/VLE). Many students are already learning online, and engaged in eLearning. During the school year or in the summer, students across Ontario can enrol to earn credits online. The reasons for doing this vary — some of us are looking to get ahead so we take a credit to advance, some students need a credit that was not of-



These are some of the many electronic devices available to kids. *(Bethany Polti)*

ferred at their school because of enrolment, other students may have had issues (health, working, truancy) where they could not complete a course in class. The Ministry of Education has a website with all the courses and curriculum units available. There are even courses for Catholic students where the course is written with the Catholic lens in mind. All these are provided through our public and Catholic school boards.

There is another op-

tion: the Ontario Virtual High School. This is a private school which offers Ontario secondary school credits. There is a cost, and these credits are completed through eLearning at your own pace. This Virtual High School is open to international students as well.

So is eLearning for every student? The technological wave is here. Most elementary school students are using technology and learning how to navigate online learning. Many high school

students already have experience. The future would suggest students will be comfortable and confident learning in this online environment. Only each individual will know if it is for them.

I find it is exciting to think how far technology has come and it is continually improving, upgrading, and evolving, so who knows how eLearning will look in a few years.

Virtual reality, A.I. and holographic projections, oh my!

LETTERS

Provincial funding cut cancels interlibrary loans

Hon. Michael Tibollo
Minister of Tourism,
Culture and Sport
minister.mtcs@ontario.ca

Dear Mr. Tibollo:

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library board wishes to express its profound disappointment in the over 50 per cent budget cut to the Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) that has resulted in the termination of all interlibrary loan delivery

service, effective April 26.

Like public libraries across Ontario, we in Niagara-on-the-Lake struggle to keep up with competing demands and resource constraints in our mission to enrich the community by providing access to the world's ideas and information and in our work to support those trying to improve themselves and their future.

To help libraries enrich and serve their communi-

ties, the Province of Ontario created SOLS, an agency that provides efficient resource sharing to help us stretch every dollar. SOLS exists so the people of Ontario have equitable access to library collections and e-resources, well-trained and skilled staff, and library services that meet common standards, regardless of where they live in the province. SOLS also provides invaluable management, planning and governance

consulting, policy templates and support for First Nations and Francophone libraries.

Without SOLS, we would be unable to provide services our community relies on. SOLS provincial and Niagara regional interlibrary loan services facilitate fast and efficient sharing of books and other materials between libraries in the Niagara Region and across the province, increasing selection and decreasing duplication,

through a shared database and courier network.

During the first three months of 2019, our library users borrowed an average of 762 items a month from libraries in the Libraries in Niagara Cooperative (LiNC) and 45 items each month from libraries outside the Niagara Region. In addition, SOLS negotiates and coordinates bulk discount purchasing of online library products such as e-books and

information databases for libraries across the province.

We urge the Government to reconsider this decision in order to continue to “protect what matters most” in the most efficient and effective way possible, through the sharing of resources via agencies like SOLS.

**Sincerely,
Madeleine Lefebvre,
Board Chair, NOTL
Public Library**

A promotional banner for the 'Junk Food Experience' at Konzelmann Estate Winery. The background is a solid teal color. On the left, there is a photograph of a bottle of Konzelmann Cabernet Sauvignon, a glass of red wine, and a jar of red, twisted candy. The text 'JUNK FOOD' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below it, the word 'experience' is written in a red, cursive script. To the right of this, the text 'Only \$20/person. Visit website for details.' is written in a small, white, sans-serif font. Below that, the website 'konzelmann.ca' is written in a white, sans-serif font. On the far right, the 'konzelmann estate winery' logo is displayed in white, with a faint circular seal in the background.



There is impressive scenery and bird habitat to be seen on Four Mile Creek before it empties into Lake Ontario. This home stretch for NOTL's largest creek is accessible by canoe or kayak. (Owen Bjorgan)

Canoe, kayak, and float through NOTL's waterways



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

Getting out onto the water can make us appreciate our surroundings from a fresh perspective.

This can be done in a number of ways.

To paint a picture of Niagara-on-the-Lake's more secretive waterways, I had to invest some time in exploring them.

If you have a canoe or kayak collecting dust or mosquito eggs somewhere, consider yourself one of the lucky ones. This may be the best time of year to get out the vessels and go exploring.

Here are a few launch spots which have provided a few surprises.

The first time I ever tied a canoe to the roof of a van and coasted a modest 70 km/hour down Concession 6, I thought we were doing all right. Suddenly, the nose of the canoe slipped violently to the left, the scraping sound sharp and

unforgettable. The canoe hung on, and after a quick fix, we were at Four Mile Creek off of Line 3. You can toss a canoe or kayak in the water either below or above the 'falls,' a weir where the water spills over like a veil. Obviously, don't go taking a selfie near this feature while floating around out there.

Supposing you head upstream, you could encounter beavers. One time, one floated motionlessly up to our canoe, and then characteristically smacked the water with that paddled tail. I remember drops hitting us from the splash. My

buddies and I imagined this experience could only happen somewhere hours north of here.

Four Mile Creek eventually flows into Lake Ontario. On days when the lake is calm, paddling west (away from the mouth of the river) along the lake's shoreline is an unrivalled little adventure.

You pass the backyards of some seriously stunning properties and estates. Toronto can be seen across the horizon on a clear day. Suddenly, you switch gears when you paddle up Two Mile Creek's mouth.

You can only imagine the ancient, sturdy canoes of aboriginals and early Europeans, approaching these towering trees on the shoreline. Almost none of Lake Ontario's shoreline resembles this now. A small creek leaks out of the forest, but once followed inside, it opens up into a picturesque marsh, akin to somewhere in Northern Ontario.

This beautiful little sanctuary is full of bird life and plenty of big snapping turtles.

The first time I explored this area years ago, I found the creek opening on Google Maps. My friend and I parked at my grandmother's place, and we portaged a huge fibreglass canoe through downtown NOTL to the beach launch. Along the way, I think we befuddled many tourists. We got photos taken, and we were dressed as if we were off to Quebec via canoe.

As I write this, I get a surge of energy simply thinking about this water option in NOTL. Prehistoric methods of exploring and travel, like floating, are a blast. That's funny, because you're certainly not blasting when you're floating. Especially when you drift from Queenston to downtown NOTL on the Niagara River.

Talk about a truly unique experience. You're floating on a massive vol-

ume of water which also serves as an international border. It boasts the highest diversity of freshwater fish in Canada. The water is most refreshing on hot and humid summer days, when the cicadas are singing nonstop.

I like the relaxing nature of this 10-kilometre drift. You can roll off your vessel and take a refreshing dip in the deep water at any time. Seeing the gorgeous boats and riding the waves of the jetboat tours is always a good laugh. It's a constantly evolving experience.

One time I was floating down the river on an inflatable air bed with a canoe paddle. Thankfully, my life jacket was on for safety and legalities. When six guys in uniform leaned over the front of the U.S. border patrol boat and saw my roasting body on the mattress, they just wanted to ask if I was okay. Yes, I was very okay.

I wanted to end this article with a reminder to all readers that these stories are anecdotal, and I can't stress enough your decision to go out on the water must be informed, prepared, and according to weather conditions. My experiences so far have been safe and sometimes unusual, so I just wanted to share some ways of accessing NOTL's amazing waters.

Be safe out there.



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MPP wants grocery store shelving for local wines



MPP Wayne Gates, outside the Virgil LCBO, talks about more shelf space for local wines. (Penny Coles)

Penny Coles The Local

If alcohol is going to be sold in Ontario grocery and convenience stores, there should be some protection in place to ensure local wines are given shelf space, says MPP Wayne Gates.

There are 350 grocery stores in the province that can now sell beer and cider, and about 70 that can sell wine, with more expected, under legislation passed by the former Liberal government.

The current provincial Conservatives announced recently they will be adding corner stores, big box stores and more grocery stores to the list of who can sell alcohol.

Gates spoke in the legislature last week asking for some

assurance Niagara wines will have shelf priority to protect an industry that gives back to the local economy, while helping to preserve agricultural lands and protect the environment.

"More money goes into the local economy when wines are local," he says — almost \$100 for every bottle of Niagara wine sold, as opposed to \$1.12 for international wines.

The \$2 billion made by

the LCBO is money spent on health care, education, and infrastructure, says Gates, and the provincial government "is talking about cuts to health care, education and infrastructure."

"When people buy their booze at the LCBO, the money goes right back to the Province to fund the services we need. Now the profits are going to go to large corporations," he says.

"The LCBO also does a really good job of preventing underage drinking," adds Gates.

The move to selling alcohol in grocery stores is happening, but the Province should ensure local wines are promoted in the LCBO and other retail outlets, he says.

"What we don't want to see is cheap international wines on the shelves of convenience stores."

Car theft, break-ins in The Village

Penny Coles The Local

A family visiting Niagara-on-the-Lake for Easter weekend woke up Monday morning to find their SUV had been stolen from a Brock Street driveway.

Sharalee Dempster had travelled from Ottawa with her husband and two children to visit her father Phil Dempster over the long weekend. They were planning on leaving Monday morning.

Instead, they ended up dealing with a police report — the Niagara Regional police

responded very quickly, said Phil — calling their insurance company to arrange a one-way rental vehicle to return home, cancelling credit cards which had been left in their SUV, and buying two new car seats for their kids. They also missed a day of work, Phil said, joking that "At least I get an extra day to spend with my grandkids."

They believe the 2013 Toyota Highlander was stolen around 1 a.m. — they later learned the credit cards were used shortly after that.

It was obvious their neighbourhood was targeted — they discovered Monday there

were break-ins to another vehicle on their street in The Village, and on McFarland Court in Garrison Village.

The theft of the SUV was a crime of opportunity, said Phil. The vehicle was packed for the return trip with a stroller, clothing, shoes, boots, and coats, and one of the coats contained a key fob in a pocket. "They must have found it quickly, and that made it easy for them."

Don't make it easy for the thieves to continue breaking into cars for spare change, he warned his neighbours. "Keep your cars locked."

Cyclist seriously injured

Local Staff

A 71-year-old cyclist from St. Davids was found unresponsive and in critical condition in a ditch in Niagara-on-the-Lake Monday afternoon.

Niagara Regional Police say they responded shortly after 1 p.m. Monday to East and West Line between Concession 6 and Townline Road, where the man was found with life-threatening injuries,

lying in the south-side ditch.

The cyclist was transported to an out-of-town hospital.

Police are asking anyone who may have information about this incident to contact investigators at 905-688-4111 ext. 5500.



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'Smashing every goal' in beverage industry

Lauren O'Malley
The Local

Zac Kvas is a man at the top of his game, doing what he loves. Now he's had the pleasure of being recognized as such, having been designated by the Ontario Hostelry Institute as among the Top 30 Under 30 for 2019.

The tall, bearded hipster is a mixologist at Wayne Gretzky Estates Winery & Distillery in Niagara-on-the-Lake, staffing the outdoor whisky bar overlooking the rink or pool,

bartending — is people."

He says he loves to ask, "What do you like? What do you like to eat? What can I make for you?" His gregariousness has found a great outlet in service. "My mom and I are the same person. She taught me everything I know about hospitality. If I overdid it, she would tell me," he says.

Cathy Kvas was the manager at the opening of Peller Estates. His sister Rachel does research and development for Arterra Wines Canada, and is also a former winner of the Top

was awarded the position as mixologist at Backhouse restaurant in NOTL, he also interviewed for another dream job: archaeological field technician. Like many other positions in his varied career, that job was secured not by experience, but by enthusiasm. "The interview was at the Ridgeway Tim Hortons," recalls Zac, a history and Indiana Jones fanatic. "I was wearing a Pirates of the Caribbean necklace, and the guy said 'I'll take you on.' I worked 96 days straight: Archaeology in the days, Backhouse at night."

He recalls one dig behind the Starbucks in town, where they found the remnants of an entire horse. "This was very rare — horses were normally used for glue or some other purpose, so this must have been a family pet."

Ultimately the call of spirits was stronger than that of the past. "I loved archaeology, but it would have been a very quiet experience, and I'm super-extroverted," says Zac. "I talked about booze all the time, so my coworker told me I really needed to do the mixology thing."

When the owners of Backhouse saw the mixology trend growing, they brought in a master to train Zac. This gave him a strong foundation — and a great desire to expand. "I always say the best way to go to school is to work," he says. "I just took it, and just kept going and going," taking the basics of the discipline one step further each time.

"Then I saw Gretzky's was opening, and I went for it," Zac says, "The goal is to be able to say that every single thing in the glass was made on-site. Spirits, shrubs, syrups, garnishes, all of it." He knew that couldn't happen at Backhouse, where they wouldn't be making spirits. So he moved on. "We've even made our own cola and root beer," he says.

Amy's work history started on her family's vineyard

"We got some of that old-rooted hard-work ethic. We're lucky we both love our jobs and our parents."

Zac Kvas

depending on the time of year.

A shelf behind him features a chemist's lineup of jars containing mysterious concoctions with colourful shapes and forms within. These are his mixtures, tinctures and infusions, used to create the cocktails for which he is now famous.

Kvas's inspiration for his inventions? "My mom was a clean-out-the-fridge cook, and that's how I bartend," he says. "What's a flavour I like? Nutella, for example. I like to use ingredients people have in their cupboards or their fridge."

He also focuses on natural, real ingredients. "Don't use grapefruit essence, or grapefruit liqueur: use real grapefruit," he says with passion. He believes a good mixologist needs to know the way around a kitchen. "I love to cook, love it, love it," he says. "I make a little bit of this, a little bit of that. Soups are like hot cocktails."

But the Niagara Falls native says there's one key ingredient in everything he does: "The biggest thing in mixology — the heart of

30 Under 30 award.

Kvas's wife Amy could also be credited for at least some of his success. "She has the best palate I've ever known. I think you're born with that," he says.

Their relationship is based very much on mutual respect. "It works so well because we're two sides of a coin. We have very different skills, we're so opposite, so it works out perfectly," says Zac.

Both Amy and Zac were born in Niagara to hard-working parents. "We got some of that old-rooted hard-work ethic," says Zac with as much pride as gratitude. "We're lucky we both love our jobs and our parents."

Both found their careers veering steadily into the service industry. After a brief stint at SportChek when he was 13 years old ("I was tall, so I looked older," says Zac), all his other career choices have been in food and beverage — restaurants, wineries, vineyards — with one distinct exception.

At around the time he



Amy and Zac Kvas are making their names in the food and beverage industry. (Lauren O'Malley)

in St. Catharines, where she picked fruit from the age of 14. Her first "real job" was at a local dog kennel. "My other passion is dogs," says the petite woman. "I got the job by writing a letter about my love of dogs. It wasn't glamorous, but I stayed there for two or three years."

Her introduction to the service industry was at a Dairy Queen, and she stayed mostly in food and beverage from then on.

Aside from her time in university where she achieved a degree in global studies (with her thesis taking her to Africa for hands-on experience with coffee farmers), Amy has graced some of the finer institutions in Niagara.

From The Good Earth bistro, she moved on to front-of-house at Dillon's Distillery, then took the wine program at Niagara College, which led to work in the cellars at Stratus Vineyards. She has now been at The Exchange Brewery for three years, where she is a manager — and from where she will be taking some time off to raise the couple's first child, expected at the end of May.

Stratus will always hold a special place in Amy's heart, as much for the things she

learned there as for the people she met — including Zac's sister. "She was always talking about this Zac guy," says Amy. "I thought 'Uh, you're a bit obsessed with your brother.' But then I agreed to let her set us up on a date, and Zac showed up with fresh, homemade cookies."

She was smitten — but he still had to achieve one more approval: Amy's dog. "Myrtle doesn't like many dogs or men, so the first real test was going to be how she reacted to Zac and his dog Cooper," says Amy. "She loved them both."

With so much experience in the culinary world, it's hardly surprising the pair would evolve to develop their own creation. Kvas Fine Beverage Company was destined to be — but nothing could have predicted its enormous success.

"When we started thinking about developing a product, everyone was talking about shrubs — so we pulled a looky-loo and, seeing that everyone was going left, we decided to go right," says Zac. Currently the business features three proprietary simple syrups: Ginger Wildflower, Northern Maple Old-Fashioned, and Lavender Jasmine.

"We were so nervous when we started up," says Amy, "but we sold out of the first run within days."

"We now do 60 cases once or twice a month. It's an amazing success story," Zac says, with a charming combination of surprise and pride.

They explain that 90 per cent of their stock goes to retailers such as Dillon's Distillery, Niagara College, Craft Arts Market, The Yellow Pear restaurant, and SRC Vinyl in Virgil. They also create private label syrups for various wineries. "Peller is our best customer ever," says Zac.

Every goal set for the company has been smashed, and more are being made and achieved every day. And with proof that no bridges have been burned in the process, their graphic designer is the wife of the head archeologist for whom Zac once worked. "We drew it on a napkin at a brewery. She knew us well, so she was able to really capture us. We love the finished product," he says.

They said they will be facing another challenge soon: Keeping all of these spinning plates — or cocktail shakers — in the air when the baby comes.

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Intimate, monthly tours help preserve cemetery

Penny Coles
The Local

St. Mark's Anglican Church "has the oldest continuously used cemetery in the province, and is the final resting place of many famous and infamous from our community," says archivist Donald Combe.

Cemeteries have always had an attraction for people who find them peaceful and calming places to walk, and St. Mark's is particularly attractive to those who like to imagine the lives of those buried there, and the history they can glean from the inscriptions on the stones, he says.

In recent years, he has been offering tours to a limited number of interested people — 10 per tour — as fundraisers for cemetery preservation.

"The maintenance cost of the cemetery is huge," says Combe, "and we try very hard to keep it looking nice. We also have a group of volunteers who do endless work to help maintain it."

The cemetery, he says, is used as a public park, much the same as Queen's Royal Park, but the church maintains it, not the Town.

"It's very peaceful, and also romantic. People walk through looking at stones of people who lived 100 years or more ago, romanticizing what happened to someone who died at age 21 and someone else who lived to be 98. They put the pieces together using their imagination — the

first wife, the second wife, the mother who died in childbirth. You can discover a lot about people by doing a little thinking, and sometimes it leads to people going on further to do some research."

The cemetery is also an arboretum, he says, with some very mature trees of many species. About 15 years ago, a bad storm felled several trees, and since then a replanting program has added about 100 mature ones to replace them. "If we hadn't done that, it would be a very different landscape. The trees are definitely a draw, and add to the charm and intrigue of the cemetery."

The topography is also the original, rolling lay of the land, and adds to the interest, he says.

Members of the public are encouraged to use the cemetery as a park, he adds, as a place to walk, and also a place of contemplation.

"It can be a five-minute experience, but something happens to change you when you walk through it."

There has been a positive response to past tours, "and I have always felt that they were valuable to the group and to the community in general," says the church sexton and historian.

"I go to the cemetery and pick out 40 monuments I think have some interest, either because of their history or the local gossip they provide, and talk about them. It's very informal. If people in the group ask questions we

can have a conversation to deal with them, and then at the end of the tour we go into Addison Hall and continue with further conversation. I also talk a little about the Addison Library, and the history of the church and its people."

Some of the graves he chooses belong to "im-

portant people" in the history of the town, others ordinary people who are forgotten, but who have interesting stories, he says.

"Usually we sell out, but if we have one person sign up, we still do the tour."

The first will be held May 3, with one a month

until October. They are two hours long and begin at 5 p.m., with refreshments and conversation afterward in Addison Hall.

The remaining tours will be held June 14, July 1, Aug. 9, Sept. 13, and Oct. 25.

Tickets are \$15 and due to the limited number for each tour must

be purchased in advance from the church office. Call 905-468-3123.

To help the trees in the cemetery, the church is holding a "Classy Trash" sale May 25, beginning at 9 a.m.

Anyone with "unwanted, unused and unneeded" treasures and tchotchkes to donate, says Combe, can call 905-468-5801.



Ginette Butler, on a tour through St. Mark's historic cemetery with Donald Combe, is learning about the monument for Elizabeth Kerr, the oldest in the cemetery. (Photo supplied)



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NOTL NEWCOMERS CLUB

April 26 @ 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

NOTL Newcomers Coffee & Conversations
Held the last Friday of the month at the NOTL Community Centre, in the Simpson Room, 14 Anderson Lane, NOTL. We meet September to June with the last coffee of the year at the end of May. The NOTL Newcomers Club is a social club for women who've moved to the NOTL community within the past three years and want to get to know people and the area. Learn more about the NOTL Newcomers at notlnewcomers.com.

FAMILY FRIENDLY ART STUDIO

April 28 @ 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Drop in to the Family Friendly Art Studio at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre. An opportunity for the family to explore art and get creative. Families are encouraged to see the exhibition in the gallery and then get their hands messy working on their own artwork in the studio. 247 Ricardo St.

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Living Desert: Robert Herman
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Website Info: niagarapumphouse.ca/exhibitions

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St. Davids Leos raise money to provide child with dog guide

Penny Coles
The Local

Zoe Abraham has been a St. Davids Leo Club member for about four years, and as often as she says it, she can't say it enough: "I love it. I love the Leos. I love the events. I love it."

Now in Grade 9 at A.N. Myer Secondary School in Niagara Falls, she joined the club when the St. Davids Lions decided to start a chapter at St. Davids Public School.

The Lions International program for young people offers them leadership, experience and opportunity, says Lion Bradd Anderson, one of the Leo Club organizers.

The goal is to encourage young people to affect positive change within their communities, develop valuable leadership skills, make new friends and have fun — and Abraham says she's doing all that and more.

With the many projects she and her fellow Leos undertake, she feels she is helping in her community. The Lions who mentor the youngsters are teaching leadership and volunteerism; she has had many opportunities to become involved in projects within and outside her community; she's met new people and made new friends; and as she will tell people every chance she gets, she's having a lot of fun.

She originally joined Leos because she had some friends who were having fun in the group, and she was thinking ahead to the volunteer hours she would need to accumulate for high school, "but I really liked it, for so much more than that — I liked the leadership opportunities, and the people I met."

When she went off to high school, she was loving the club activities so much she didn't want to quit, so she encouraged others to join her in remaining a Leo.

The "hook" to get high school students to join, she said, is telling them it's a great way to build up the 40 volunteer hours students require to graduate.

But while that may get them to join, they stay because of the many opportunities the club offers, and because they have so much fun, she said.

The club has grown to 28 members, eight from high schools — A.N. Myer and St. Paul Catholic High School in Niagara Falls, and Laura Secord in St. Catharines — making it the second largest of the 28 Leo clubs in Ontario.

The school and the club, neighbours on York Road, developed a partnership when the school was looking for donations to help purchase smart boards — interactive whiteboards that bring technology into the classroom. Students began helping out at Lions fish

fries and the annual carnival, as runners and callers for the bingo tent. Long after each classroom had a smart board, the partnership continued, said Anderson. The Lions introduced the Leo Club to keep students motivated, contributing to their community, and hopefully interesting them in becoming Lions as adults and continuing service to their communities.

But whether or not they become Lions, they are learning volunteerism and skills that will help them throughout their lives, says Anderson.

Abraham speaks of a retreat she went to in Woodstock to meet Lions from other clubs. The goal was to have a youth voice on the international level.

There were about 30 Leos attending from St. Davids and other Ontario clubs, talking about being involved with Lions International and the importance of keeping Leo clubs going for Lions clubs of the future.

The Leos took on a project during the retreat, teaming up with a local Lions member to make blankets for children, she said.

Leos, said Abraham, have partnered with businesses, hospitals and charities, and in addition to knowing they are working for worthwhile causes, "it looks good on a resume."

St. Davids Leos also help with a Niagara Health Foundation event, the Kids Ultimate Challenge annual obstacle course experience for kids aged four to 13 held at Burgoyne Woods, which raises money for the children's health unit at the St. Catharines hospital site.

"It raises an amazing amount of money, at an event for kids helping kids," said Abraham. "It was so much fun, supporting such a great event."

Last week Anderson, St. Davids Lions member and Leo Club organizer Susan Snider, and a group of Leos attended

a meeting of the Merriton Lions Club, whose members helped the local Leos purchase a dog guide.

Initially it was a fundraising goal for the Leos; the St. Davids Lions offered to help by matching the kids' fundraising efforts, and the Merriton Lions came on board by donating proceeds from their annual Dog Bowl, a five-pin bowling event the club holds to raise money for dog guides. Called "blind" bowling, participants use specialized glasses that mimic eye disease, experiencing bowling through the eyes of someone who is visually impaired. The event raises money for Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides, and by joining with St. Davids, together they were able to purchase an autism assistance dog guide for a youngster in St. Catharines.

Autism is one of six Lions Canada dog guide programs; they also provide service dogs trained to help those who are visually impaired, hearing impaired, have a medical or physical disability, or suffer from epilepsy or diabetes.

Abraham was excited

about a recent trip the Leos took to Oakville, where the Lions dog guide training centre is located, and where the youngsters met some of the puppies in training.

She can't be sure they were introduced to the dog destined for St. Catharines, and they don't know who the lucky recipient will be, but she said it felt pretty good to know the Leos' fundraising efforts were helping to train one of the adorable puppies for a child, aged three to 12, who will be assisted by the presence of the dog.

"Some child is going to absolutely adore it," she said.

The Leos have already begun fundraising for the next dog guide, she said, and will be participating in the Pet Valu walk in St. Davids in May — she's already collected \$250.

But her real passion, and her main concern, is to ensure Lions Clubs build their membership with young people.

"I'm loving it all so much. I hope to become a Lion one day, to keep this going. It's so amazing, so cool. I want to be the young person to help spearhead this."



St. Davids Leos Isabella Recine, Dawn Truong and Zoe Abraham at a Woodstock retreat, where they worked with a Lions Club member to make a blanket for a needy child. (Photo supplied)



Merriton Lions George Hostick and Dunc Tolley, St. Davids Leos Bella Recine, Ayla Jamal, and Zoe Abraham, and Merriton Lions Linda and Bill Sawrey partnered to fundraise for a dog guide. (Glenn Connell)

Large group at sunrise service on rainy Easter Sunday

Lauren O'Malley
The Local

While the rumours of its tininess might be slightly exaggerated, the Living Water Wayside Chapel on the Niagara River Parkway is very, very small.

Much too small, in fact, to accommodate the 50 or so who gather there to celebrate daybreak on Easter morning.

The little white chapel was built as an outreach project for the Faith Fellowship Christian Reform Church, and also as “a spot where people could stop and meditate and have a moment of prayer,” says Rick Meloen, an active member of the congregation.

Meloen remembers building the sanctuary in 1965, and describes its moves since, first

to another property by Line 6, but ultimately the owners of the house were selling and wanted it moved again, says Meloen.

When it was time to move it the second time, Meloen reached out to Jim Walker, of Walker’s Country Market, to suggest the mini-church return to its roots. Meloen says Walker had been having the same thought, and “graciously allowed us to put the building back on his property. And now it’s back in its original spot,” he says.

The church’s single annual organized service is the one held at dawn (or 7 a.m.) on Easter Sunday. “We’ve been doing this for over 40 years,” says Meloen. He participates in the service by acting out a brief play with another

congregant, discussing their disappointment at Jesus’ disappearance post-crucifixion. When they are assured by a third church member that Jesus has risen, and not scampered off, they are relieved, and the service proper begins.

The minister, Dr. Brian Ross, calls those gathered to step closer.

“As far as I know, none of you bites,” he says jokingly. People of all ages, many families with young children, are not unhappy to step closer to one another in the chilly drizzle of the morning.

Ross leads the group through a brief call to worship, and some favourite hymns are sung. “We sing a few familiar songs,” says Meloen, “so that we’re not asking too much of the people there.” Sure

enough, the “alleluias” are the loudest, but the crowd does an admirable job with just lyric sheets, and some strong voices hold the rest together.

There are prayers and a

brief sermon. “We keep it to only about 20 minutes, because we have to remember that there isn’t room to sit, so everyone is standing,” says Meloen.

After the service there

is fellowship creating more warmth in the cold, grey morning. “We always have someone bring out hot cross buns and coffee for after the service,” says Meloen.



About 50 people attended the sunrise service at the Living Water Wayside Chapel on a cold, grey Easter morning. (Lauren O'Malley)



Eggs galore for local kids

Olivia Taylor (left) gets chocolate eggs for her basket from NOTL Kinsman Harold Dyck Saturday morning. The annual Easter egg hunt, a long-standing popular tradition in NOTL, was moved inside the community centre for the first time because of rain. Olivia’s bright smile might have earned her some extra eggs in her basket. (Fred Mercnik)

Bob Forbes (right), president of the NOTL Kinsmen, poses next to Crystal the Bunny at the community centre Saturday morning. (Fred Mercnik)



Luanne and Larry Kulchar enjoyed the Bunny Trail and Kinsmen egg hunt — this year an egg give-away — with their granddaughter Briana Bergeron. (Penny Coles)



Jennifer and Adam Stewart, president of the Niagara Nursery School board, take a moment from the hectic activities of the Bunny Trail with their daughter Georgia and son Weston. Their oldest, Emmersyn, missed the event because she was at dance class. (Penny Coles)

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SCHOOLS

ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Students focus on giving at Lent

By St. Michael Student Council

Students of St. Michael Catholic Elementary School actively journeyed through Lent to Easter. From Mindful Monday to Fasting and Forgiveness Friday, we have focused on fulfilling the pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. As part of our journey, St. Michael students collected canned or dry goods for the local food bank, Newark Neighbours. Classes were challenged to collect 40 cans for 40 days of Lent. Many thanks to our school community for their support.



Students at St. Michael collected food for Newark Neighbours as part of their almsgiving for Lent. Pictured are Sophie McClure, Isabella Duque (a Columbian exchange student), Jahsavion Jordon, Denaesia Osbourne, Christine Dickens-Colling, Brayden Byl, Conner Mori, and Nolan Greal.



On April 2 St. Michael Catholic School students raised the flag for autism awareness, wearing their blue shirts proudly to reach out in support of World Autism Day. The many shades of blue were a visual opportunity to recognize the spectrum of different learning needs experienced by those with autism. Pictured are Eva Bell, Sophie Wassilko, Inalis Medina, Sebastian Rezza, Miguel Cruz, Logan Folino, Berlin Falk-Reay, Joseph Giunta, Ryan LeBrasseur, Phillip Leonovich, Emilia Bessey, Gemma Fratangelo, Emily Ferguson, Regan Doyle, Quinnton Robertson-Walker, and Ella DeLuca. (All photos supplied)

Grade 1 students collect milk bags for Warehouse of Hope

By Mrs. K. Lingerfelt

Students have created posters, made announcements over the P.A. system and delivered presentations to the various classes about this worthy cause. The Grade 1 class at St. Michael School has been working hard to generate excitement about milk bags. They are hoping to collect 500 bags for the Niagara Warehouse of Hope, where a team of dedicated volunteers turns the bags into mats. The mats will be used in hospitals, clinics and orphanages in countries around the world where beds and linens are scarce. Donations are gladly accepted from the greater NOTL community and can be delivered to the school's front office. So far we have collected almost 200 bags but there is still lots of work to be done. Thank you for supporting our students in this initiative.



Collecting milk bags to be made into mats are Sierra Bartolini, Sienna deSouza, Dani Werner, Victoria Vetrone, and Layla Vani.

St. Mike students recognized at science fairs

By Mrs. A. Roberto Science Fair Coordinator

Earlier this month, five St. Michael students attended the 57th Regional Science Fair Awards. The event was held at St. Catharines Collegiate. Several of our students were recognized for outstanding work on their science fair projects. Congratulations go out to Gio Contini for winning the OEETA award; Aine O'Neill for winning the Statistical Science Award; Jacob Scaletta and Matthew Li for winning the Ontario Institute of Agrology award, the Niagara Peninsula Fruit and Vegetable Growers Award, and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority award; and to Tannin Driedger-Bradshaw for winning the Brock University Chemistry award, the Manian Memorial award for outstanding chemistry project, and a third place with a bronze medal overall in the Junior category.



Yolanda Baldasaro, NCDSB superintendent, and St. Michael student Aine O'Neill at the science fair.



The winning Tchoukball students pictured are Hannah Liu, Grace Healy, Braden Grealy, Carter Lalonde, Noah Simonics, Marcus DeTorres, Amelie Merrill, and Michelle Lian.

Works of art

By Ella Murray

The St. Michael Art Club has been meeting each week on Mondays. Student leaders led our younger students in drawing and other forms of visual art. They made sculptures and abstract art. Students gathered recycled materials found at home to create these works of art: Dog and Fluff Tower; Packing Peanut Flower; and Flower Powered Power Plant. Their use of materials and their art truly reflect the idea of reuse and recycle.



Intramural Tchoukball

By Madison Giampa

All teams worked very hard and learned the skills of this new game. The winner of both the Grade 7 and 8 teams played against each other to claim victory and the first St. Michael Catholic Tchoukball Cup. The Grade 8 team took the win in the end, defeating the Grade 7s 21-13. This was a successful tournament as all involved had fun and learned new skills. Congratulations to everyone who participated.

This year our student council sports reps and teachers Mr. Costantini and Mrs. Treanor brought together the Grade 7s and 8s to start an intramural Tchoukball tournament. Tchoukball is a game where players bounce a ball off a net on a frame and try to aim it so it will bounce out of a certain area. Physical contact is not allowed.

St. Davids Lioness offer marketplace, garden centre

Lauren O'Malley
The Local

The St. Davids and District Lioness are roaring into the season with their third annual Spring Market.

On Saturday May 4, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., the St. Davids Lions Club on York Road will become an artisanal marketplace and garden centre. More than a dozen vendors will be sharing their wares,

with something for everyone, says Diane Pewer, the event's co-chair. Pewer describes painters, knitters, jewelry-makers and more. "We have Letters From Niagara," she says. "They take pictures of local things and make words with the pictures. They will also do custom work if asked." She says another vendor will be carrying a new line of natural care products for the whole family,

and Exotic Jellies from Niagara-on-the-Lake will be there with their unusual jams and jellies. She is excited about all of the sellers, including a woman from St. Davids who makes cards, and another vendor who is selling purses, as well as inserts that can make changing from one purse to another a quick and painless job.

The organization has partnered with a Niag-

ra greenhouse, and will have hydrangeas on offer. A bake table will feature only homemade goods. "Nothing is store-bought," says Pewer. "The members make everything. Pies, squares, cookies, bars — anything you can think of, we've got it."

A nickel table will offer the opportunity to draw for more than 15 items, some donated by partic-

ipating vendors; and a draw will also be held for a "fabulous spring basket with many different items," says Pewer.

Lunch will be served, as will breakfast pastries. An egg or tuna salad sandwich comes with pickles and potato chips, and costs \$5.

All profits go to some of the many charities supported by the Lioness, such as dog guides

for special skills and hearing and sight; Camp Trillium, a support centre for children with cancer; the CNIB; Project Share; Newark Neighbours; Tender Wishes, and support for the hospital fund.

Admission to and parking at the event are both free. Any questions can be directed to the group's president, Donna Peacock, at 905-354-8071.

Friends say thanks to Shoppers

Local Staff

Over the past few years, the Shoppers Drug Mart in town has generously contributed to Friends of Fort George fundraising events, including Canada Day.

Tony Chisholm, the president of the Friends, presented a plaque to David Lee as thanks for the pharmacy's continued support of Canada Day celebrations. The generosity of the local business has proven to be a very helpful measure of support from the community, he said. "They are always willing to step forward for

this local charity."

Lee said he has "been pleased to contribute needed funds to the Friend's successful Canada Day celebrations, supported by the volunteers of the Friends of Fort George."

Shoppers Drug Mart is considered a valuable partner in supporting the volunteers who work with the Friends of Fort George. Lee is planning to retire soon, so this makes the presentation that much more meaningful for him, said Chisholm. The person taking over from him is Grace Kuo, who has said she will be continuing to support

local charities.

The Friends of Fort George is a non-profit organization working in partnership with Parks Canada to preserve, promote and protect the heritage of Niagara National Historic Sites. Through special events and the operation of two gift shops, the organization generates awareness and funds to support student summer employment opportunities at Fort George and Brock's Monument. Last year the volunteer group provided funds for an additional 16 students who worked on site all summer.



Jo Anne Brytwak will be back with bake sale items for the St. Davids Lioness Spring Market. (Photo supplied)



Tony Chisholm of the Friends of Fort George says thank you to David Lee for Shoppers Drug Mart's support of Canada Day and other fort events. (Photo supplied)

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Mike Balsom
Special to the Local

Daniel Turner’s image appeared on the front page of this newspaper last week, as a member of Locals for Carriages, showing his support of the carriage business in Old Town Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Until then, perhaps your lasting memory of the 23-year-old was from Oct. 22, 2018. You may have been driving through the Old Town that morning, either to work, or maybe on your way to the polls to vote in the municipal election. You most likely spotted Turner and a group of friends and supporters across from Tim Hortons, at the corner of Mary and Mississauga Streets, urging you to get out and vote.

Or perhaps it was that afternoon, at the corner of East and West Line and Niagara Stone Road, when you saw Turner and his group waving at your car and holding placards high in front of McDonald’s or even later that afternoon, when his entourage had

moved to the corner of Four Mile Creek Road and Niagara Stone Road, in front of Silk’s Country Kitchen.

Half a year later, Turner credits his decision to be visible that day for earning him a little more than 1,400 votes, representing slightly less than 17 per cent of all ballots cast for the lord mayor’s position.

There’s no doubt the lifelong resident of NOTL brought a youthful enthusiasm to the race last fall, giving voters an alternative to the incumbent Pat Darte and the seasoned political veteran, current Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

To this day, Turner is still amazed 1,400 people voted for him. “I’m disappointed I didn’t win,” he says, “but I made so many connections, and learned so much running that campaign. I have no regrets. If I could go back a year, I still would run in that election.”

He says many people, especially those skewing to the younger part of the town’s population, have told him that he was the only reason they voted last

October. He cherishes the time he spent “knocking on about 150 doors a day, talking to people about this great town and the topics that concerned them.”

It’s clear Turner cares deeply about his hometown. The Colonel John Butler and Eden grad says it was a university co-op placement in Ottawa that made him realize how great NOTL is.

He put his name forward for lord mayor last year, he says, because he didn’t see anyone on the slate of candidates who spoke for him. The controversy over the proposed Randwood development was one motivating factor. Another, naturally, was youth retention.

By choice, Turner has kept a low profile since that election. But it’s clear he hasn’t been sitting still.

A visit to Turner’s Facebook pages show his continued involvement and interest in local issues.

He has begun the “Dan-saturner Podcast” on YouTube, going live once a week. It amounts to a casual gathering of friends around



Dan Turner runs daily, and hopes to complete a marathon this year (Photo supplied)

a table at his parents’ East and West Line house, discussing issues and problems that matter to them.

“I started the podcast to try to connect with those people who have told me they’ve been missing me since the campaign.” He has seven episodes under his belt, aiming to eventually reach 100. He plans on expanding the guest list to feature people from not only NOTL, but across the region.

Sitting still is not in Daniel Turner’s make-up. He lives by the motto that any minute not productive is a wasted one. This is a young man who taught himself to play drums in Grade 8, then guitar in Grade 9.

At 16 years old, this restless soul decided to skateboard from his home to Toronto, in one day, just to prove to himself he could. He and a friend headed out, keeping to rural roads, taking the lift bridge in Burlington and following Lakeshore Road from there.

When his friend’s leg cramped up, Turner ended up pushing him the rest of the way, reaching their final destination on Yonge Street in 11-1/2 hours.

When asked why he headed out on this journey, he answered, “to find out what my limit was, and then to try to go past it.”

He continues to push those limits on a daily basis via his favourite pursuit, running. It was something he enjoyed when he was younger, then got back into

during that stay in Ottawa.

“When you’re running, it’s you against the world. All I can think about is my breathing. When my back gets sore, and my legs get sore, I concentrate on my breathing, and I push through it.”

He would like to run a marathon by the end of 2019, but, like the skateboard adventure, he has set another goal. He wants to run, non-stop, from his home all the way to Fort Erie. Again, when asked why, he says it’s to test how far he can go. Eventually, he hopes to complete that run a second time, raising money for a yet-to-be-chosen charity.

The Brock economics graduate is currently working with the planning department at Niagara Region, helping to assemble the Region’s annual employment inventory project. He recently spoke about the project at the Region’s planning and development committee meeting.

On weekends, he is working toward a certificate in big data analytics at McMaster University.

Turner has been accepted into a master’s program in economics at the University of Toronto, but is not sure yet whether he wants to combine that major with the study of law. He would love to eventually be a university economics professor. That is, if another election run isn’t in the cards.

He’s not ruling that out. “I haven’t shown up at

council meetings since the election, though I’ve been watching them online,” he says. He still has some major concerns about development in town.

“It’s unfortunate that one issue has really taken precedence. I fear that the town’s resources aren’t as big as the developer’s, and we could end up in financial trouble if this thing drags out in court. I would have liked to have sat down with him and talked about a compromise of some sort before it got to this point.”

And he still worries a great deal about youth retention.

“We need better communication between the town staff and its residents. I’d like to see more interesting events for people of all ages in NOTL. The skateboard park desperately needs to be updated, and I’d like to re-open the discussion about an indoor pool.”

Turner feels young people did get out and vote in 2018, largely because of him and a couple of other young candidates on the ballot.

And he has heard from many under 30 they have begun to read about what’s happening in town, and are starting to be a lot more politically engaged.

“I enjoyed running in that election,” he says, “and in three-and-a-half years, if no one I can stand behind puts his or her name forward, and if enough people come to me, I’ll get involved again.”

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Playing with heart and hard work overcomes odds

Young hockey player ‘an inspiration’ to coach

Penny Coles
The Local

When Ariel Carr was about four years old, she told her dad she wanted to play hockey.

For those who know Ace Carr and his family, that would come as no surprise — he is a local Mr. Hockey, well-known for his 18 years of coaching players at all levels in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Ariel, the youngest of eight children, has grown up watching each of her older siblings on the ice.

But Ace said when his youngest told him she too wanted to learn the sport, his heart skipped a beat — there was a time when he and his wife were told Ariel would never walk, let alone tie on a pair of hockey skates. She was born two-and-a-half months premature in Hamilton, and had no movement on her left side.

She spent more than three months in the hospital as a premie, with her mother travelling back and forth daily, seven other kids at home.

Ace, always one to put things plainly, avoids medical terminology: “She had a stroke while she was in her mother’s belly,” he said, the lack of movement on one side attributed to the stroke.

“They told us she probably wouldn’t walk. The news was devastating — that was a pretty hard adjustment to make for us as parents.”

But as she grew stronger, she crawled, then began standing up, and defied the odds given her parents at the hospital. “I guess she didn’t get the memo,” said Ace.

“She walked, but there were still problems with her left side. She limped, and she had no dexterity in her left fingers.”

Ariel’s mother Denise took her daily to the Niagara Children’s Centre, and she progressed, getting stronger every year.

“I can’t say enough about the children’s centre. Everyone there is top-notch. They really went the extra mile for her,” said Ace.

So when Ariel said she wanted to play hockey, “I started taking her to hockey school. She cried at first — it was hard for her. She couldn’t keep up with the other kids.”

Ace and his other kids started spending time on the ice with Ariel, and when she was five, her left leg improved significantly. “It seemed like it happened overnight,” he said.

“Her body and brain just

seemed to start working together, and she was able to push off on the ice with her left leg. Since then she’s done really well.”

Now an 11-year-old Crossroads student, Ariel has just completed her third year in the atom division, on the championship team coached by her dad. This past season she was described as an “over-ager,” with approval from the minor hockey league for the extra year — her tiny size might have put her in danger with the bigger kids if she’d moved up to the pee-wee division with her teammates.

When she first started playing, she had trouble gripping a hockey stick with her left hand. Her strength has improved, and she has learned to compensate, said Ace.

“She’s come a long way. She’s become a good skater for her age, she’s become competitive, and she’s scored a few goals. She’s always in position, and her hockey IQ is amazing — it makes up for her size.”

He coached the team this year to work to her strengths — she would take the puck up the boards and into the corners, and others would position themselves to get the puck from there to the net.

“We worked out a system that worked for the team.”

During Ariel’s first two years with the atom division, she was coached by James Cadeau, whose son Liam was on the team.

When the coach moved up to peewee with his son, Ace, who had been assisting on the ice, took over coaching duties for the atoms.

“This was the final thing I wanted to do as a coach, to be able to coach Ariel,” he said. “It was a delight. I’ve coached all my kids now.”

“Everybody loves Ariel. She is so determined, and it’s easy to see how hard she works. If she gets a goal everyone makes a big deal of it, because they know what she’s overcome.”

And Ariel loves hockey. “It feels good to know we’ve won three times in a row,” she said of her championship team. “My teammates are really good, and we have fun together. I love playing hockey and scoring goals.”

She said she is excited to be moving up to peewee with her team. Her dad will likely be assisting with Cadeau as coach again, and she’s happy to have her father on the ice with her. “I liked having him as a coach.

He makes me work.”

Cadeau is pleased to have Ariel on his team next year, he said, calling the youngster “an inspiration” to minor hockey.

Over the years he has developed a philosophy that seemed to come naturally to him, but now he can look back on how it’s evolved, and see that it works.

It’s not about winning games, Cadeau said — to him what’s important about hockey and all minor sports is the opportunity to install confidence and self-esteem in youngsters. He has seen the life-changing effect it can have on kids.

Two years coaching Ariel confirmed that — her first year in the atom division, he watched her improve on the ice, but more important is the effect it has had on her confidence.

Cadeau recalls the first time he tried to talk to her, “she had her head down, and there were tears falling down her cheeks.” But she has become much more self-assured, and enjoys socializing with her teammates, he said.

From the beginning, “she worked as hard or harder than” any other player on the team.

“She had such heart, and she really knew what she was doing. She knew how she could contribute and we built on that. By the end of the year, it had become such a positive experience for her, and a successful experience for the team. She earned the most valuable player that year, and when I gave it to her, I told the people in the arena a little bit about her situation, and said she inspired me as a coach. She just never gave up. She may be the smallest player, but she has the biggest heart. Everyone can learn from her.”

The following year, Cadeau said, “I chose her to be on my team. She listened better than anybody, and there wasn’t anything she couldn’t accomplish. She taught me the most important thing in minor hockey is building confidence. Sometimes coaches and parents, especially in rep hockey, forget these are just kids. When you focus on building their self-esteem, that’s when they succeed. That’s far more important than winning games. But the funny thing is, as a result of building confidence on the team, the kids are learning and happy playing the game, I’m doing by job, and it works. We win games.”



Ariel Carr started her young hockey career with some challenges to overcome, but her hard work and determination paid off. (Photo supplied)

Saying goodbye to old friends



Glenn Litke is leaving Valu-mart after 37 years of “serving the grocery needs” of NOTL customers. “A big thank you to all the customers, and to the friends I’ve made on this journey,” says the grocery manager, who is set to retire May 3. The world has changed enormously from the days of pen, paper and rubber stamps to computer ordering, he says. He plans to spend more time with his wife Anita, children and grandchildren, and hang out more on their boat at the marina. He looks forward to driving a school bus in September — he loves kids, and will feel like he’s being useful, while leaving lots of time for doing other things. (Penny Coles)

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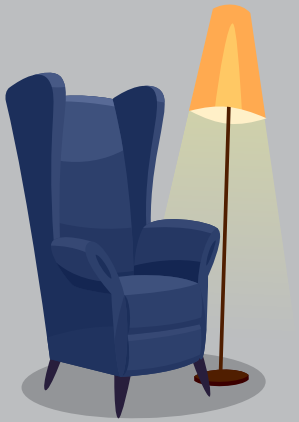
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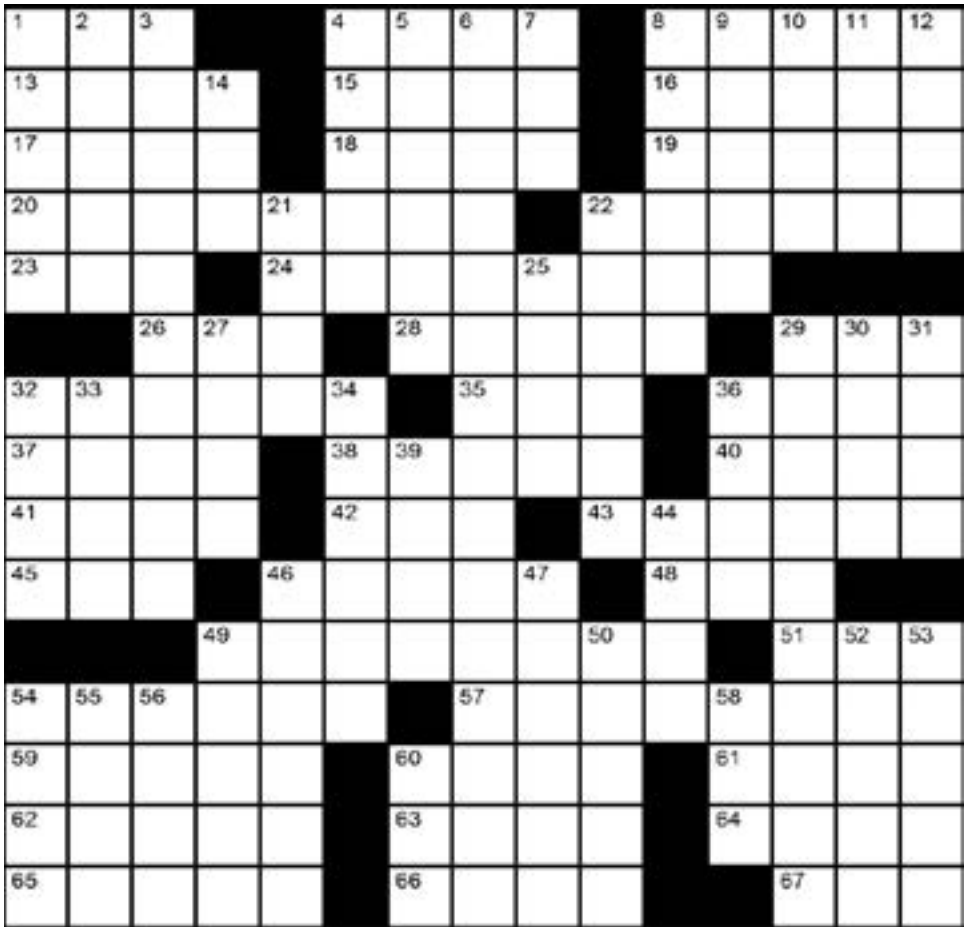
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ACROSS

- 1 School org.
- 4 Emit
- 8 Tenet
- 13 In case
- 15 Tennis ace --- Sampras
- 16 Fault
- 17 A law --- himself
- 18 Behavioral and learning problem
- 19 Refractor
- 20 Resident of Rabat, perhaps
- 22 Fragile
- 23 Sis sib.
- 24 Faith
- 26 E.g. United Way
- 28 Frightening
- 29 1/1000 inches
- 32 News exclusives
- 35 Alliance of some former Soviet countries
- 36 Buffalo Bill
- 37 Where we all started
- 38 Consequence of driving over a nail
- 40 Baking chamber
- 41 Copies
- 42 Female deer
- 43 Resident of Damascus, e.g.

DOWN

- 1 Exactly vertical
- 2 E.g. Pavarotti
- 3 Stargazer
- 4 Room
- 5 Foot controls
- 6 Type of war crime
- 7 Espouse
- 8 Arrange in battle formation
- 9 Utah senator --- Hatch
- 10 Dismal
- 11 Rolling stones lack it, but

- 45 For each
- 46 Boring
- 48 Lyric poem
- 49 Foliage
- 51 Navigational aid
- 54 Wanness
- 57 Gunfight
- 59 Elite group
- 60 Turkish currency
- 61 Software test version
- 62 Below
- 63 Arthurian lady
- 64 Bohemian
- 65 Jottings
- 66 They hatch
- 67 Distress message
- 12 Ground forces
- 14 Also
- 21 Trim
- 22 Groundbreakers
- 25 Earth goddess
- 27 Sailors
- 29 Cinema buffs
- 30 Notion
- 31 Coal Miner's Daughter, Loretta ---
- 32 Exchange
- 33 Manage
- 34 More morose
- 36 Volume of wood
- 39 Golfer's shout
- 44 Up-and-down toy
- 46 Inviting smells
- 47 Lou ---, baseballer who gave his name to a disease
- 49 Angry stare
- 50 Highways
- 52 Renaissance cherub
- 53 Remains
- 54 Annoying person
- 55 Periodic Table abbr.
- 56 Departed
- 58 Details not yet set (Abbr.)
- 60 Sheltered side

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11 Moss, 12 Army, 14 Too,
21 Corp, 22 Firsts, 25 Gata,
27 Gobs, 29 Moviegoers,
30 Idea, 31 Lynn, 32 Swap,
33 Cope, 34 Sadder, 36 Cord,
39 Fore, 44 Yo-yo, 46 Aromas,
47 Gehng, 49 Clare, 50 Roads,
52 Puto, 53 Stays, 54 Pain,
55 At No, 56 Left, 58 T B A,
60 Lee.
- Across:
1 P-T-A, 4 Spew,
8 Dogma, 13 Last, 15 Pete,
16 Error, 17 Unto, 18 A D H D,
19 Prim, 20 Moroccan,
22 Films, 23 Bro, 24 Religion,
26 N-G-O, 28 Scary, 29 Mll,
32 Scoops, 35 C I S, 36 Cody,
37 Wormb, 38 A flat, 40 Oven,
41 Apes, 42 Doc, 43 Syrian,
45 Per, 46 A drag, 48 Ode,
49 Greenery, 51 G P S, 54 Pallor,
57 Shoot-out, 59 A-team,
60 Lira, 61 Beta, 62 Infra,
63 End, 64 Arty, 65 Notes, 6
6 Eggs, 67 S O S.



Sailing through fog

As the final race in the NOTL Sailing Club Furlong racing series begins Sunday, fog settles in with a light wind for the event. It's still early in the season, and Wings approaches the finish line dodging a floating iceberg. (Cathy Andres)

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