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notllocal.com APRIL 28, 2021 Volume 3 • Issue 17



### Being kind . . . to the environment

Riley Murray, in Grade 2 at Royal Oak Community School, and Robert Murray, in Senior Kindergarten, are combining the town's kindness initiative, which continues this week, with their Earth Day clean-up efforts. For more about the town's Shine Light, Spread Kindness campaign, visit [notl.com/kindnesscampaign](http://notl.com/kindnesscampaign).

## Agricultural workers get vaccinated

Mike Balsom  
Special to The Local

Offshore workers employed at Niagara-on-the-Lake farms were among the more than 3,000 farm workers vaccinated by Niagara Health this weekend.

In an interview on Cogeco YourTV's *The Source* program this week, migrant workers' advocate and regular NOTL Local contributor Jane Andres expressed relief that most of the workers were happy to receive their vaccines.

"This year has been a bit of an unusual one," the founder of Niagara Workers Welcome told *The Source*. "Normally we don't really have the chance to talk. We might chat in line at the airport, and the next day they go to work. But this year, with the quarantine, they all have time to talk and try to get answers. I've been on the phone non-stop for about three weeks."

The avalanche of informa-

tion and misinformation about the vaccination process was the topic of a lot of those conversations.

"There's so many Canadians even, right in my own neighbourhood, who aren't getting the vaccine and aren't wearing masks," Andres said. "It (opinions about the vaccine) did vary from farm to farm initially. But as communication has improved, it got better."

Andres pointed to confusion about the rules for the offshore workers in relation to the vaccine. "Many were under the impression that they had no choice but to get vaccinated, or that they would be sent home if they didn't get it. So there was a lot of fear and anxiety over that."

Add to that their experience last year, arriving in spring just after the first wave of the pandemic had hit, and the fact that Ontario farms were hotspots for COVID-19 outbreaks.

Continued on page 2

## Councillor disturbed by lack of inclusivity in parks

### Bylaw amendment allows barbecues in three parks

Penny Coles  
The Local

A discussion about allowing barbecues in local parks turned into an impassioned plea about inclusivity in town during Monday night's council meeting.

As a result of feedback from the public, Coun. Sandra O'Connor suggested

small propane barbecues could be allowed in three parks in town. She was presenting an amendment to the new parks bylaw, which bans barbecues in all town parks.

Niagara-on-the-Lake has parks of different sizes and with different characteristics, said O'Connor, and after discussion with staff, she

was asking that the Lions Park in St. Davids, Memorial Park in the Old Town and Centennial Park in Virgil be exempt from the barbecue ban.

At the suggestion of Lord Mayor Betty Disero, the amendment also allows for staff to report back "from time to time" on any additional parks where barbecues could be allowed.

Coun. Erwin Wiens, however, took exception to the motion, saying he was troubled by "the larger pic-

ture" the bylaw paints.

When the parks bylaw was first discussed, he suggested there was no danger to propane barbecues, and since many enjoy an outdoor meal, they should be allowed.

But he said Monday he finds the proposed amendment exclusionary.

Parks are becoming more popular, and a very large "vocal, well-heeled, privileged and well-educated group" has been using words like "overcrowding"

or "over-use," saying "we need to take back our park," when parks are public places, and should be inclusive to everybody, he said.

"I haven't heard a good reason why you can't have propane barbecues. What I have heard is that there's a possibility of camping, of people coming with tents, and while they're here they don't bring anything to our economy," he said. "Not everyone who comes to our town or lives in town can eat at our high-end restau-

rants."

Inclusion is much more than a committee or report, he said, referring to an earlier presentation of a report on inclusivity and diversity in town.

In emails to the town about the need for a bylaw, there's "even talk about 'those' people coming with their extended families and monopolizing our parks," he said, "and no one ever gets called out."

Continued on page 3



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# Reopening could come mid-June, says Hirji

Penny Coles  
The Local

The current restrictions across Ontario are unlikely to be lifted until June, when cases should be coming down and 75 per cent of the population should have received one dose of a vaccination.

The provincial lockdown is set to be lifted on May 20, but Dr. Mustafa Hirji, Niagara's acting chief medical officer of health, says he doesn't think reopening will be safe or sustainable by then.

"I'm sure that's not the

news anybody wanted to see," he says, "but the data is telling us that's going to be the situation that gets us to a sustainable reopening."

He referred to Theresa Tam, Canada's chief public officer of health, who has said health restrictions could be lifted when 75 per cent of Canadians have received their first vaccination. At the rate Ontario is now getting those first shots into arms, that could be accomplished by June, Hirji said, if there are no further problems with the supply of vaccine.

In Niagara, we're increasing vaccinations at about 5 per cent per week, with 26 per cent vaccinated at the start of last week, and 31.5 per cent with their first dose by Monday, closely mirroring the provincial rate.

However, while the provincial number of new cases has been trending downwards, with the number of daily cases dropping below 4,000 for the first time in weeks, Hirji says he can't say the same for Niagara. Only 24 new cases were reported Monday, and 33 on Sunday, when there was an average of 175 new daily cases the week

before, but those unusually low numbers early this week are likely a problem with the data reported from the province, rather than a reflection of actual cases, he said.

However, hospital and intensive care unit admissions are definitely trending upwards, and as a "lagging indicator," are expected to continue to grow "until we are well past the danger zone in ICUs."

While the provincial messaging is helping to drive down cases, Hirji said he'd like to see people doing a better job of staying home to limit infections even more.

Federal modelling is showing a 20 to 30 per cent increase in people staying home would help flatten out the upwards trajectory of cases, he said.

With the right conditions met by June, restrictions could be lifted on personal services such as hair salons and barbershops, malls might be open, stores will be able to increase their capacity, and restaurants could open with outdoor dining, Hirji said.

We may even see students back at school by late

May or early June, he added.

Physically distancing will remain, we will likely still have to wear masks indoors, and we'll continue to use a lot of sanitizer, he said. "Those are the easy measures we can continue to follow."

Although Hirji talked about vaccine possibly being diverted from Niagara to go to hotspots elsewhere in the province, where it can do a better job of saving lives, he said Monday he isn't seeing any sign of that happening. Instead, he is expecting more doses arriving in Ontario will cover those areas.

# More than 3,000 offshore workers in Niagara vaccinated

Continued from page 1

breaks in 2020. Nearly 1,800 offshore workers were infected with the virus, with three losing their lives in Norfolk County. Fear and anxiety had to have been expected.

Agricultural workers were added to the list of those essential workers eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine in part two of the province's vaccine rollout announced in March. Earlier this month, Niagara's acting medical officer of health Dr. Mustafa Hirji assured the region's seasonal workers that

they were being offered a vaccination as a benefit to their employment in Niagara, not as a requirement.

Despite that fact, the confusion continued. So Andres turned to Jamaican-born Zephie James, who lives in Niagara Falls and operates a restaurant with his wife Charmaine. Andres met James a few years ago when the couple was living in Toronto.

"When he moved to Niagara," explained Andres, "I brought him around on a local farm tour, and he really hit it off with the guys. They shared some real chemistry, and that is

how he ended up performing and cooking for the 2017 Peach Pickers Picnic. He was a real hit with the farm workers."

James received his own vaccination about a month ago. He felt it was his duty to get the message out to his fellow countrymen to get vaccinated.

In the meantime, Andres had been contacted by Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers for ideas on how to best reach Niagara's agricultural workers to promote the vaccine.

"I decided to get the message out there with Zephie," she continued. "Since he is a voice

they trust, and a great memory from the picnic, he would leave them with a positive impression. We recorded a video. The favourite song we always closed the night with was *Hot Hot Hot*, so I just changed it to *Get the Shot Shot Shot*."

She sent out the video via What's App and Facebook, and it had the desired effect amongst the Jamaicans and Mexicans working on Niagara's farms.

James has also been spreading the word back home. He told *The Source*, "I made a couple of calls to my friends in Jamaica and I got the same reaction, 'Mr. James, I'm not going to take the vaccine.' So I told them 'come on, we've been here before. We all had vaccines when we were kids. This is just another step up the line. You gotta go ahead and get it.'"

Data from the weekend provided by Niagara Health shows that 3,019 offshore workers were vaccinated on April 24 and 25 from 171 farms, bringing the total to 3,335.

Andres sees the weekend as a big success, but admits there is still a lot to do to protect the seasonal workers who are so important to the country's food supply.

"What happened last year has forced people to recognize what is happening at farms not only in Niagara but across Canada," she said. "It's really highlighted that this is a federal program, and the federal regulations need to be standard across the country. Right now, they vary from municipality to municipality. The restrictions for quarantine for Norfolk were ridiculous (in 2020) and put a lot more hardship on the farmers, with a maximum of only three per bunkhouse."

She continued, "the government was making lots of sweeping changes without consulting farm workers or their employers. The farm workers are still not being heard, and there is some concern amongst them that they will soon have to be vaccinated when they arrive at the airport. That is a really poorly-made decision on the part of the government. They have no idea what the Mexican and Caribbean workers go through to get here."



Jane Andres and Zephie James talk to Mike Balsom for a Cogeco interview encouraging offshore agricultural workers to get vaccinated. (Screenshot)



Jermaine Clarke was one of the local agricultural workers who got his shot at the Seymour-Hannah Niagara Health vaccination clinic this weekend. (Photo supplied)

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Spreading kindness



Debbie Crossthwaite loved colouring and the message of the poster (top), Elaine Stones (top right) is displaying her Be Kind poster in her window, MacKenzie DesRoches, 9, coloured her poster with enthusiasm, happy to encouraging others to be kind and Dana Harber and her daughter had fun colouring their poster together.

Inclusivity ‘near and dear’ to Wiens

Continued from page 1

He compared a compromise, by saying “we’ll give you this park,” and the townspeople have their own parks, “separate but equal,” to the deep south of the ‘60s, which didn’t work then, and doesn’t work here, he said.

People also complain about noise in the parks, he said, because “kids are screaming and playing and having fun, God forbid.”

Wiens said he had thought about the issue “long and hard. This is near and dear to me, personally.

“My wife feels it as a visible minority, my kids feel it as a visible minority, and the people who work for me are visible minorities.”

He explained he would

be abstaining, because if he voted against the amendment, it would be saying no to propane barbecues, when he would like to see them permitted in all parks. Voting in favour would be compromising his principles, “and I’m not doing that . . . I don’t want to vote on this because it’s not inclusive.”

An abstention is sometimes used when a councillor feels there is not enough information for a decision, or the vote is inappropriate for some reason, but is counted as a no vote.

Coun. Allan Bisback and Coun. Wendy Cheropita also abstained, and the remaining votes in favour of allowing barbecues in three town parks meant the amendment was approved.



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Erica & Catherine*





# Ryerson Park survey available online

## Town seeking public input before making decisions about park

**Penny Coles**  
**The Local**

After promising to look at solutions to the growing popularity of Ryerson Park, the town is asking for input from residents and visitors.

The Friends of Ryerson Park, a group of residents advocating for change, asked town councillors in January to implement “reasonable and positive remedies” in their neighbourhood park, which they had developed to mitigate issues that were having a negative impact on Chautauqua residents.

John Scott, representing the group, which now includes 204 households and 350 active members who meet regularly through Zoom, explained to councillors in January that the small residential neighbourhood, with narrow streets and lim-

ited parking, doesn’t have public facilities or nearby commercial outlets as other town parks do to accommodate the number of visitors.

Problems were exasperated by the pandemic last season, but they have been increasing for a number of years, and have now reached the point where very few residents feel comfortable using the park, Scott said. Residents are concerned once borders open and more visitors are able to come to NOTL, the problems will intensify. They were hoping for solutions to be in place for this tourist season.

Although the weather has been cool, the park has been busy over recent weekends, says Scott, and will only become more so as the season progresses.

He says the group endorses the recent parks bylaw, and members have indicated

their support to the lord mayor, the CAO, councillors and staff.

“We think the survey for the parks bylaw is the right thing to do. It’s a great idea to put the bylaw in place, and then see where it goes,” he says, referring to a Join the Conversation initiative asking residents for comments on the new bylaw, how it’s affecting them and how they think it’s working.

Ryerson Park, he added, is in a unique situation, surrounded by a small residential neighbourhood, and requires some further, unique solutions in addition to the current bylaw restrictions.

Town staff are now also seeing increased traffic within the area, which has prompted the short online survey asking both residents and visitors to share their experience with the park and

surrounding area, a town news release says.

“Niagara-on-the-Lake prides itself on its exquisite lookout points, such as the one located at Ryerson Park,” says Lord Mayor Dierro in the news release. “This park, located along Niagara Boulevard, draws in many residents and visitors with its lush green space, picnic tables, beautiful tree canopy, and most notably, its ability to host a breathtaking sunset view. While this park was considered a ‘hidden gem’ for many years, every new spring and summer season brings more and more visitors to this spectacular area of town.”

Scott says a survey for public input was always intended, and he is glad to see it offered. His concern, he says, is the timing, with the park already getting busy and the tourist season not far away.

His group offered nine recommendations in January, “all quite reasonable and not at all Draconian,” and since then he and others

from the group have met several times with staff, and with CAO Marnie Cluckie, who is taking the lead on the file, says Scott.

The survey, he says, will offer the last piece of data before town staff presents a report to council in May.

“People are frustrated. They are seeing parades of people here already. We’ve been at this for eight months.”

Residents are hoping a positive resolution to their concerns will be offered, “quickly, and in a collegial manner,” to be put into place before the tourist season is underway.

“Niagara-on-the-Lake is welcoming of all visitors and encourages the use of its well-kept parks and green space. We also realize there may be some local impacts to the increasing popularity of such spaces,” says CAO Marnie Cluckie.

“The town is seeking public input by way of a survey, to determine the use, and potential hindrances to the use,

of Ryerson Park, and to identify any concerns for neighbouring properties within the Chautauqua area. The public’s feedback will be essential in helping staff and council determine potential next steps for this area of town.”

The survey, available through the town’s Join the Conversation platform, will close on Tuesday, May 4.

Specific requests to council from the Friends of Ryerson Park included restricted parking, with passes for residents; a reduced speed limit on Chautauqua streets; clear signage of the lack of facilities, as well as unpermitted uses, including no fires, barbecues or tents, which are now banned in the town’s parks bylaw; and new directional signs at the intersection of Queen and Mississauga Streets to encourage visitors to make a left turn toward the QEW.

Residents have also asked the town to have bylaw officers enforce restrictions in the park.

### Signs of the times



The town is using digital signs to remind people to stay at home, wear masks, physical distance, and this one . . . choose kindness. (David Gilchrist)



A cool weekday, and Ryerson Park is deserted, except for some barricaded picnic tables the province has deemed unsafe for use. (David Gilchrist)



Sunset is a popular time to visit Ryerson Park, for locals and an increasing number of visitors. (Brian Crow)

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# Community Fund helps local charities

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

If you are looking for ways to support worthy local charities, you need look no further than the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Fund.

And if you represent a local charity that could use some help, reach out and let the fund committee members know about the work you do and your needs.

Mike Berlis, chair of the local fund committee, was at council last week to remind the community of the good that has been done since the fund was established five years ago, and that it can do going forward.

It was launched by former Lord Mayor Pat Darte, who was a founding director of the Niagara Community Foundation in 2000.

NOTL became the 11th municipality to establish a local community fund under the umbrella of the Niagara Community Foundation, which began with \$200,000 gifts from the Branscombe family and Meridian Credit Union.

In the last two decades it has grown to more than

\$65 million of endowed assets, and over the years has granted more than \$18 million to charitable organizations.

It has given almost \$300,000 to local organizations for pandemic responses, including the United Way, local food banks and the Niagara Health System.

Locally, the Shaw Festival, the Niagara Pump-house Arts Centre, Red Roof Retreat, Bravo Niagara!, Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service, Newark Neighbours and Niagara College are just some of the organizations that have received funding from the NOTL Community Fund.

Separate from the NOTL fund, but an option for some donors, are endowment funds that can be established under the umbrella of the Niagara Community Foundation, with grants directed specifically toward charities the fund-holder chooses.

Berlis says there are 29 local charities that regularly receive assistance from the NOTL Community Fund, and whose needs are even greater during

the pandemic, while at the same time they are unable to raise money by the events they would regularly be hosting.

Funds are held in perpetuity, with the returns being re-invested back into the community through discretionary grants.

The NOTL Community fund allows donors to make a direct impact on the charities that exist in the community, says Berlis.

In five years since it was established, almost \$700,000 has been funded to the 29 charities.

“Our aim here is to remind all of you that this fund exists, and to encourage participation, particularly at this difficult time,” Berlis told councillors.

There are nine committee members, including himself, says Berlis, as well as Nancy Bailey, Ann-Louise Branscombe, Wendy Cheropita, Pat Darte, Mario Ferrara, Brianne Hawley, Debi Pratt and Shawn Spiewak.

Berlis says he would encourage anyone who might be thinking of donating, and who wants funds to stay local, “to look us up, know we’re here, and part of

the community of NOTL.”

The pandemic, he says, “has been devastating to charities of all kinds.”

Last year, the fund gave \$420,000 to local charities.

“That’s a lot of money for a small community,” he says.

“We also want to make sure charities in the area know about us, and recognize we’re here should they

need us.”

For more information visit [niagaracommunityfoundation.org/funds/community-funds/niagara-on-the-lake](http://niagaracommunityfoundation.org/funds/community-funds/niagara-on-the-lake).



Mike Berlis, chair of the community fund committee, is celebrating its five-year milestone, and reminding people the fund is a great way to give back, and a good place for charities to reach out to if they need help. (Photo submitted)

## NOTL wins sustainability award

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

To add to its many other accomplishments, Niagara-on-the-Lake has been voted Canada’s most beautiful and sustainable events destination.

Thursday, April 22, was Earth Day, and the Sustainable Events Forum hosted a virtual event, which included the voting.

NOTL was nominated as one of the top 10 municipalities in the running for the award against other prestigious destinations across Canada. It was an honour to be chosen, says Lord Mayor Betty Disero, who thanked the forum for hosting the event and promoting sustainability efforts across Canada.

“When you look at the competition, it was very tough,” says Disero, “with a lot of great cities doing a lot for sustainability and reducing their carbon footprint.”

Votes came in from across Canada, says Disero, attributing NOTL’s success to the fact that sustainability “comes by us naturally.”

So many local events are based on agriculture, and those in the hospitality industry choose farm-to-table and other ways to respect the importance of agriculture to the

community.

“We’re a huge agricultural community and members of the farming community are by nature green.”

Support for on-demand transportation instead of an empty bus driving up and down Niagara Stone Road, composting, tree planting and tree protection, heritage preservation all contribute to sustainability, says Disero.

Success in Community in Bloom competitions, which have named NOTL the prettiest town of its size, “are not just about being pretty,” they are also about care for the environment. That’s who we are. It’s our nature, our lifestyle,” and is reflected in how the town cares about and preserves its heritage and environment.

“For sure, I know we can do better,” she adds,

explaining sustainability efforts have to be ongoing.

The other municipalities nominated in Canada’s Top 10 most beautiful and sustainable events destinations were St. John’s, Charlottetown, Halifax, Quebec City, Montreal, Banff, Vancouver, Victoria, and Whitehorse. Each was assigned a champion to represent the town and highlight the many ways it exhibits beauty and sustainability. Shari Bricks, managing director of Bond Association Management, was a champion for Niagara-on-the-Lake, acknowledging the many ways Niagara-on-the-Lake is beautiful and sustainable, and referring to the town as one that embodies a diverse, inclusive and sustainable community. To watch the two-minute video, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z63B58hDNnE>

## Pandemic friendliness



The province is allowing people to get exercise outdoors, but has closed down picnic tables, golf courses, tennis and pickle ball courts, and other amenities, in an effort to reduce COVID infection spread. The town has also barricaded the gazebo, a popular spot to visit. (David Gilchrist)

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# EDITORIAL

## Out of tragedy should come motivation to do more

Now that the tears have cleared, after reading The Globe and Mail interview with the father of 13-year-old Emily Viegas, it's time to put what is happening around us in perspective.

It's not news that COVID is beginning to affect more younger people, mostly those who are going to their essential, minimum wage jobs, and that is extremely sad, especially when paid sick leave could change that trajectory. Nor is it news that more under-20s are becoming infected, many of them family members of those workers.

But this! This is a horror story we didn't expect to hear. I'm sure people across this province, and across this country, will be shedding a tear for Emily, who became sick, quickly worsened, and

died in her bed at home. Her father was unaware of how sick she was, and was also afraid a trip to the nearest hospital, which was full with COVID patients, including her mother, would mean she'd be sent somewhere far away.

In our hearts, and minds, we're wrapping Emily's family in a giant hug, and mourning the loss of their little girl, who should still be with them.

This tragic death of one of the youngest Canadians to die from COVID should be a wake-up call to all, and especially to those in Ontario, whether we live in a hotspot such as Brampton, where Emily shared a two-bedroom apartment with her parents and brother, or the somewhat safer region of Niagara.

If this horrible loss isn't enough to galvanize us to do

more, what possibly could? Maybe the video on TV of the military marching into Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto? Or possibly the photos of the field hospital at Sunnybrook, intended to be used as a last resort, now receiving patients? How about hearing that doctors are training for the worst-case scenario of who will get needed life-saving care, and who will not? Or that Doug Ford has asked other provinces, also in this pandemic, to help out by providing more than 600 health care workers, while nine of the most open-hearted, wonderful, caring people of Newfoundland and Labrador have put up their hands in response to his pleas, and boarded a plane Tuesday.

We can't watch or read the latest news without hear-

ing that Ontario continues to break new records. Even CNN included the grim state of COVID cases in Ontario in its five top news stories Tuesday morning. Although the number of daily new cases finally dipped below 4,000 on average this last week, Ontario still has the highest number of people in hospitals and in intensive care units since the start of the pandemic, more Ornge helicopters are transferring patients from one hospital to another, and we now have the longest wait times for cancer and other kinds of life-saving, priority surgeries. As one Sunnybrook doctor said, businesses that should be considered non-essential remain open, while essential surgeries are shut down.

And Ontario isn't the only province with such distinc-

tions. It is happening in other provinces across the country, mainly Alberta, which actually has an even higher per capita number of cases.

The Ontario Science Table released more recommendations Friday, but the main thrust remains reducing essential businesses to what is really essential, having paid sick leave, and getting vaccines to essential workers and hotspots.

So far, the response from the government is to address the hotspots as priorities for vaccinations, where there is the most significant risk of serious illness and death. There was talk of topping up the federal sick pay program, but nobody is supportive, saying what is needed is direct, seamless paid days through employers.

The good news is nearly two million doses of vaccine are expected this week, but some say, still not enough to meet the demand — the capacity for delivering vaccinations to arms is still exceeding the supply. It seems increasing that supply is our best ticket off this run-away train.

In the meantime, those of us following provincial restrictions are staying at home, doing what we do, hoping to one day soon see our families and friends again. And those who are not, many through no fault of their own because they desperately need their pay cheque, will at least hopefully be able to get that shot in their arms, soon, and keep themselves and their families safe.

Penny Coles  
The Local

## 'This is what a community newspaper should feel like'

Last week, Karen Skeoch and I attended a virtual meeting of the Better Newspapers Competition, and heard those words spoken about The Local.

The annual awards are organized by the Ontario Community Newspaper Association, and since 2020 was our first full year of publication, it was our first time entering.

When we began this journey in 2019, we had a very clear mission, a definite idea about the kind of community newspaper we wanted

to publish for the good folks of Niagara-on-the-Lake. We wanted to feature the great stories of local people. We said we would have lots of photos of kids, news of what they are doing at school, and reports on minor sports. Well, sports activities are on hold at the moment, but we love photos of kids doing whatever it is they choose to do. And we want to share the stories about the arts, and cultural events, those that celebrate the town's history, and all the attributes that make NOTL an amazing

place to live, work and visit.

We love being positive and upbeat, but also won't shy away from the sad or disturbing stories — NOTL is not immune to them, but locals are good at circling their wagons around anyone who needs help, and that's always part of the story.

Politics? We do our best to report accurately and fairly, being respectful to those who have chosen the thankless task of leadership, a position where you can never please everybody. Especially during a pandemic.

We're not perfect. We make mistakes, feel horrible about them, own up to them, apologize, and hope we're forgiven.

Karen and I are so fortunate to have a great team of people we love to work with, and who do a great job. One of the awards we won was a second place in the category of general excellence, which encompasses everything about the paper, including layout of pages and ads, photos, news, sports and features. It also looks at advertising features, which were specifically mentioned as part of what we were offering in the editions we submitted for the awards.

Readers will know that Mike Balsom is a great journalist who writes features, arts and entertainment, and sports stories for The Local. We always look forward to reading his stories. Kim Wade likes to report on arts and culture stories, attend events, visit wineries and restaurants, and tell us about them. She has taken a break because of an overload at her day job, but will be back. More recently, David

Gilchrist, a great nature photographer with time on his hands during the pandemic, has been helping us out as well. Jane Andres can always be counted on to keep us up-to-date on how our agricultural workers are doing, and Owen Bjorgan reminds us of how fortunate we are to live surrounded by nature, and the importance of looking after it.

There are others who contribute, whether through columns, or letters — we love letters — or occasional stories, and we thank you all, as well as our readers, and all of you who share your stories with us.

Karen looks after her NOTL advertising customers, many of them friends she has known for years, helping to build their businesses. Julia Coles has experience and loyal customers in other areas of the region. She is creative and imaginative, coming up with great features for advertisers to help them get their message across and promote their businesses, and is always a fun, sweet person we absolutely treasure.

Rosie Gowsell-Pattison is a graphic designer (and friend) we worked with years ago at the Advance, and came onboard to look after production and layout. She's talented, and a delight to work with. We have Helen Arsenault, who wandered into our first office within weeks of us starting The Local, and volunteered to be a proofreader. She's the best, and saves us from all kinds of trouble weekly. We wouldn't want to do this without her. And Anna Tiedtke, someone many will know from the Advance days, looking after our events column — just because she's Anna and always wants to help others.

Some of you may remember Pat Darte was a partner who helped us enormously during our start-up — we knew little about launching a business. We have returned his investment so he can move on to other projects, but we owe him so much for getting us started on this venture.

All of this to say, the OCNA Better Newspaper Awards reminded us of why we decided to embark on this adventure, and reassured us that we have stayed true to our mission.

We plan to continue as we started, and strive to do even better, with your help.

We are all excited to celebrate our successes in the competition. The wonderful residents and businesses in Niagara-on-the-Lake make us proud to be the trusted voice of our community.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for letting us share your stories.

Penny Coles  
The Local

### View from the couch

Donald Combe  
Special to The Local

In *The Baker & the Beauty* (Netflix, 2020) a loving Cuban family values love, respect and hard work in their new lives as bakers in Miami.

They face challenges, but the greatest is their eldest son's relationship with an international superstar. The series is glamorous and fun, and I admire this good family.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who

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



The Niagara-on-the-Lake  
**Local**  
The Trusted Voice of Our Community

P.O. Box 430, 1596 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, L0S 1T0

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### NEED HELP? MAKE THE CALL

<b>DISTRESS CENTRE</b> For depression, distress and crisis. 24 hour help line: <b>905-688-3711</b>	<b>KIDS HELP PHONE</b> Service for youth <b>416-586-5437</b> <b>1-800-668-6868</b> (Crisis Line) kidshelpphone.ca	<b>ASSAULTED WOMEN'S HELPLINE</b> Mobile calls to: <b>#SAFE (#7233)</b> <b>1-866-863-0511</b> (Toll Free)
<b>MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS ACCESS</b> (Toll Free) <b>1-866-550-5205</b>	<b>ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS</b> Meetings every Wednesday evening 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. St. Mark's Parish Hall 41 Byron St., NOTL or find a meeting <b>905-682-2140</b>	<b>CRIME STOPPERS (TIPS)</b> <b>1-800-222-8477</b> niagaratips.com Text 274637 (CRIMES), keyword: Niagara, then your tip
<b>GAMBLER'S ANONYMOUS</b> <b>905-351-1616</b>		



# COMMENT

## Federal support programs need to go further through recovery



**MP Tony Baldinelli**  
Special to The Local

While Niagara faces the very realistic prospects of losing our second consecutive summer tourism season because of COVID-19, the federal government delivered their first budget in more than two years on April 19.

Of critical importance in this budget, was the federal government plans for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS), and the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB). Through the support of Canada's Conservatives, these emergency support programs have become essential lifelines for small businesses and their workers in many sectors across Canada, including tourism. Currently, both CEWS and CERS are scheduled to expire on June 5.

The good news is that Budget 2021 proposes to extend CEWS, CERS and the CRB. The bad news is the extension for CEWS and CERS only goes until Sept. 25, while only an additional 12 weeks will be added to the CRB.

Furthermore, the CEWS and CERS subsidy rates will begin gradually decreasing even earlier, starting on July 4, while the \$500 payment usually received in the CRB will be reduced to \$300, for the last eight weeks of the benefit.

Many travel and tourism stakeholders, both local and national, have been asking for some of these essential programs to be extended through until the end of 2021

for those who have been hardest hit.

The unfortunate reality is our Canadian travel and tourism industry will not resume right away as if switching on a light. Rather, it will take some time before we begin welcoming international and even domestic tourists back to our local destinations in Niagara-on-the-Lake and across Niagara.

Therefore, these extensions for CEWS, CERS, and CRB contained in Budget 2021 clearly fall short of business and worker needs, which is incredibly disappointing from my perspective as the local MP.

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, our tourism is heavily dependent on the summer season, and it will be devastating for many businesses and workers if the CEWS, CERS and CRB rates decrease, while COVID cases may remain high, the borders remain closed, and tourists stay away.

The government's approach to these programs also raise many questions, such as why are these critical emergency business support programs set to these arbitrary timelines decided by the federal government? In a perfect world for this prime minister, the economy could be instantly reopened as good as before after most Canadians get vaccinated.

Unfortunately for him, that is an imagined world that is separated from reality.

The world we live in today is one with a severe vaccine shortage in Canada, without widely available rapid testing devices, and an overabundance of COVID variants that are driving a severe third wave, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Another question is what

happens to CEWS, CERS, CRB, and the workers and small businesses who rely on these emergency support programs, if the variants continue unabated into the summer?

Or, what if the borders remain closed through the summer and into the fall, significantly damaging our prospects of having international tourists visit our destinations? After all, summer is the best tourism season in Niagara, but we are on the verge of losing it, once again.

If businesses don't reopen this summer, or tourism does not return in time for the summer season, the CEWS, CERS and CRB plans as laid out by Budget 2021 could be a disastrous outcome for workers and the many businesses who depend on them.

On many occasions throughout this pandemic, I have asked this federal government to do more and to do better for seasonal tourism communities like our own.

Unfortunately, Budget 2021 is further evidence that this Trudeau government still does not understand or fully consider the operations and business cycles of seasonal tourism communities, like Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, and Fort Erie. Rather, they plan to end these critical support programs too early; they fail to make rapid testing devices widely available; and there is no plan for recovery, to get our lives back to normal as quickly as possible.

Canadians deserve far better federal leadership from this government than we are getting. As Member of Parliament for Niagara Falls riding, which includes the towns of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie, I will continue to stand up for Niagara's interests in Ottawa.

## Local LETTERS

### How can we stop littering?

The included photo shows a small sample of garbage and litter along Townline Road, between East and West Line and Line 1 in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

You cannot walk a few feet without seeing discarded garbage, plastic water bottles cups and waste from McDonald's and Tim Hortons.

This is the truth about the prettiest town. How can we get signage throughout town or surrounding main roads to discourage littering and garbage dumping?

**Roger Hicks**  
NOTL

This photo indicates the garbage along a small portion of the East and West Line, leaving a resident asking for signage reminding people not to litter. (Photo supplied)



### Together, we did it!

The Nyanyas of Niagara want to thank Erinn and James of Sweet & Swirls Cafe for creating a delicious African Desert Box of sweets and African teas to savour and sip while watching Together in Concert: In Solidarity with African Grandmothers, an across-Canada virtual concert of Canadian talent celebrating the 15th anniversary of the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers Campaign.

During the viewing time

from April 15 to April 18, we had over 5,000 viewers from all over the world, and to date we have raised over \$125,000! The Nyanyas, through the purchase of the Dessert Boxes, were able to contribute \$800 to the concert fund.

All money raised by the over 160 Grandmothers groups in Canada goes to grassroots projects in sub-Saharan Africa. These projects support African grandmothers raising orphaned children due to the

HIV and AIDS pandemic and now COVID-19.

For more information about the concert and to donate, go to [www.cdngrandmothers.com](http://www.cdngrandmothers.com). You can also contact the Nyanyas of Niagara at [nyanyas2018@gmail.com](mailto:nyanyas2018@gmail.com).

Thank you Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Sweet & Swirls; together we raised funds and awareness for a very worthwhile cause.

**Terry-she Mactaggart**  
Nyanyas of Niagara

### Who would take flowers from a grave?

My mother lovingly tended her mother's, mothers-in-law and sister's as well as her husband's (my father's) grave for many years at Lakeshore Cemetery.

She planted beautiful pots with fresh flowers and in the height of the summer watered them at least three times a week. As she got older, when I was in Niagara on Sundays, I watered them to give her a break. She told me once, 'when I'm gone, don't feel you have to do this, you can't get here every other day when it's hot. Just put some silk flowers there.'

Well, last September my

dear mother passed away and just before Easter, when I removed the Christmas wreaths, I bought some beautiful, high quality silk flowers and placed some arrangements in the vases at their graves. I secured them so they wouldn't get blown away, yet when I went to check on them a week later my parent's flowers were gone.

I looked all around but found nothing, so apparently they hadn't blown away but had walked away. I replaced them, and a week later they were gone again, as well as one of my grandmother's arrangements.

I was sick and was disturbed that anyone would do that. I replaced them yet one more time and hope that whoever took all my flowers is feeling at least a twinge of a guilty conscience when looking at them. Who does that? I'm disgusted, and I'm afraid my belief that all people are inherently good has been challenged.

I hope that common decency will prevail, and this will not happen to anyone else. Respect the deceased and those who mourn them.

**Christine Beatty**  
Niagara Falls

### Letters! We want letters!

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



## NOTL LOCAL Front and Editorial Banner Bookings

### DON'T MISS OUT!

Contact us today. There are just a few dates left for these premium positions for 2021!

NOTL businesses: Call Karen at 905.641.5335 or email [karen@notllocal.com](mailto:karen@notllocal.com)

Businesses outside NOTL: Call Julia at 905.934.1040 or email [julia@notllocal.com](mailto:julia@notllocal.com)







# Welcome Greg, NOTL's New Bike Mechanic!

Submitted by  
Zoom Leisure Bikes

We're fired up to introduce Greg, the new full-time bike mechanic at Zoom Leisure Bikes. He brings a wealth of bike expertise with over 35 years of perfecting his craft. A specialist in e-bikes and all things cycling, come say "hi" and bring your bike to Greg for a spring Service!

Greg is an important addition to the Zoom team this year as we continue supporting our local community.

Other exciting things happening at Zoom in 2021:

- Front-line and essential workers who visit our store may skip the line and receive priority service!
- Valued e-bike customers - Zoom is now a full functioning Bosch-certified Service centre, meaning we're fully equipped as a charging station and service centre for e-bikes.
- Can't come to us? No

worries, we'll come to you. Free pick-up and delivery for tune-ups in the NOTL area.

- Certified Trek and Electric dealer.
- High-quality parts and accessories available for sale in-store.
- Offering bike rentals to

help those who do not have a bike to be able to get some exercise.

Call or email to make an appointment - (905) 468-2366 or info@zoomleisure.com

Proud to be here for you as an essential service!



Experienced bike repair by Greg.



## SEE NIAGARA BY BIKE



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905-468-2366

# MPP demanding Ford act to prevent patient triaging in Niagara

## Local Staff

MPP Wayne Gates, representing the Niagara Falls riding, is demanding that Doug Ford get the COVID crisis in Niagara under control, as doctors in the province take part in triage protocol training sessions.

"Frontline health care heroes are worried they'll be forced to implement the triage protocol they've been briefed on. They don't want to make the impossible decision of who is more worthy of life-saving care, like ventilators or trained ICU nurses," said Gates.

"This government is directly responsible for the surge in COVID-19 cases and resulting deaths. They have repeatedly ignored the advice of public health experts. They are more concerned with how their stakeholders may react, than doing what is desperately needed to save lives and avoid having to use the triage protocol."

Niagara has been a COVID hotspot, with 387 deaths. Some nurses are seeing two or three patients die per shift. Eighty-three patients have COVID.

Last week, Niagara Health announced that their intensive care unit capacity is at 104 per cent, level three ICU is at 164 per cent, and ICU vented bed capacity is at 125 per cent.

Lynn Guerriero, the president of Niagara Health said, "critical care capacity at Niagara Health is in a state of crisis. We've opened additional critical care beds in other areas of the hospital, but we have limited critical care-trained staff to further increase capacity."

"This government calls

them heroes, but refuses to listen to public health experts and take the actions needed to protect people, help nurses and save lives," said Gates.

"Will the premier immediately implement provincial paid sick days, ensure paid time off to get a vaccine, close non-essential businesses, and get direct financial support to workers and small businesses?"

Dr. Irfan Dhalla, a physician and University of Toronto medical professor, said "it's very worrying, when it becomes clear the cabinet isn't making science-based decisions."



Wayne Gates

## Brighter days ahead . . .



Georgia Stewart, 3, exudes cuteness and positivity as she soaks up the sunshine, making us all hope there will be brighter days ahead — soon. (Photo supplied)



# Microhabitats are all around us, including our backyards



**Owen Bjorgan**  
Special to The Local

Whether you're living out in the vast acreage of line and concession country, or even if you're surrounded by neighbours somewhere in an urban area, you've got microhabitats.

Don't go running to the doctor. Microhabitats are just smaller versions or categories of habitats for local wildlife. The word "habitat" is based on where a living thing habituates or exists based on its preferred environmental criteria, and we typically imagine them as forests, meadows, or freshwater lakes. Shrinking the scale down to both a conversational and scientific perspective, a microhabitat is a much smaller area that provides unique enough characteristics to declare it a functioning habitat.

For example, the ditch in front of your house is a microhabitat. Especially if it periodically or permanently has water

in it. The unkempt vegetation provides scores of opportunities for local insects, rodents, and amphibians to coexist peacefully. Only in biology can you say that there was a beautiful community living in the ditch.

Perhaps the ditch has a pipe or culvert passing through. Just the other day, while fishing with my dad, we watched a racoon climb in and out of a metal pipe sticking out into the river. Although it is a blatant human artifact, it still serves as microhabitat for the racoon, spiders, and even baby foxes (called kits) that might feel safe inside it.

Your gardens are microhabitats. In some cases, they may be one of the few shady refuges and hideouts for toads, and song birds which forage under the canopy of the plants. Of course, there are the countless pollinators buzzing around the flower heads, which is likely happening as you read this article.

You know that area along the house or the shed where the leaves and grass have blown in and just sat there for a while? That is now an effective microhabitat. In the direct, toasty sunlight of spring and summer, it can be a couple of degrees

cooler under that mat of vegetation. Millipedes, worms, and other important rototillers of nature hang out underneath there. Queen wasps and hornets will wrap themselves in such leafy debris to survive the entire winter. Don't be scared — you can consider it a lifetime find if you're lucky to see a big fat queen yellow jacket, sleeping coiled up in its own leaf burrito. You could almost even say it's kind of cute.

Suppose you have a favourite tree on your property, or perhaps an amicable local specimen you always enjoy walking by. Next time you really look at it, see how many microhabitat features you can count on that one tree alone.

Are there holes in this tree? An endless list of birds, mammals and bugs depend on such spots for sheltering, reproduction, and hunting for food. Do the tree roots stick out, and perhaps have a collection of moss and weeds at the base of it? That little square foot of area is where the sun doesn't shine and the lawnmower doesn't reach. The result is a microhabitat that serves as a day stopover for many small terrestrial animals.

If you have an area of land on your property which floods out every spring, and it attracts western chorus frogs, dragonflies, and other lovers of the temporary pool, you could celebrate that you have a wetland microhabitat in that one spot alone. Looking at the bigger picture, maybe one corner of a larger pond has fallen branches and logs in it. This is where turtles may bask to their sun on

the throne, and where frogs can warm up with the ability to dip away quickly. Logs are classic microhabitats no matter where you find them.

Like a fully functioning car or an employer with hundreds of employees, things are only going to run smoothly if all the smaller parts are in working order. When we protect and preserve microhabitats, they contribute to the overabundance

of large scale ecosystems. Now, we're back to talking about the big lakes, forests, and wetlands around here, the very same natural features which contribute enormous benefits to our water, soil, and air quality.

Whether you manage 100 acres, one acre, or a backyard garden patch, you have the opportunity to protect and enjoy the wonders of microhabitats right here in NOTL.



A "tip up" is a form of microhabitat, a smaller area of unique natural features which adds to the overall ecosystem. How many microhabitats can you spot in this photo, taken in Wainfleet Bog? (Owen Bjorgan)



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WHO'S WHO IN LUXURY REAL ESTATE



**91 RICARDO STREET**  
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MLS 40103180 • Christopher Bowron and Nicole Vanderperk



**46 ABERDEEN LANE**  
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MLS 40102355 • Christopher Bowron and Nicole Vanderperk



**540 SIMCOE STREET**  
**\$875,000**

MLS 40103601 • Thomas Elltoft and Kim Elltoft



**795 LINE 1 ROAD**  
**\$1,348,000**

MLS 40104562 • Giovanni Rodriguez Martinez



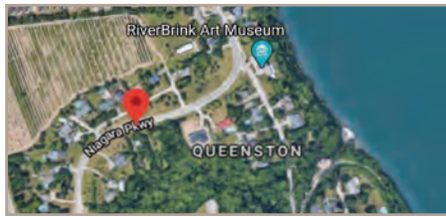
**115 WELLINGTON STREET**  
**\$3,950,000**

MLS 40095760 • Thomas Elltoft and Viviane Elltoft



**12 WEATHERSTONE COURT**  
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MLS 40102280 • Patricia Atherton and Caroline Polgrabia



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**LOT 2 – THE "MONTRACHET"**  
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**177 KING STREET**  
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MLS 40072950 • Thomas Elltoft and Kim Elltoft



**94 TANBARK ROAD**  
**\$1,925,000**

MLS 40061263 • Thomas Elltoft and Kim Elltoft



**720 KING STREET**  
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Christopher Bowron\*\*\* ..... 905-468-2269  
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Sarah Gleddie\* ..... 905-685-2458

Christine Bruce\* ..... 905-328-9703  
Linda Williams\* ..... 905-401-4240  
Caroline Polgrabia\* ..... 905-933-4983  
Patricia Atherton\* ..... 905-933-4983  
Weston Miller\* ..... 289- 213-8681  
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**109 Queen Street 905-468-3205 • St. Davids Office 905-262-6996**





NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION, ELECTRONIC OPEN HOUSE AND ELECTRONIC PUBLIC MEETING

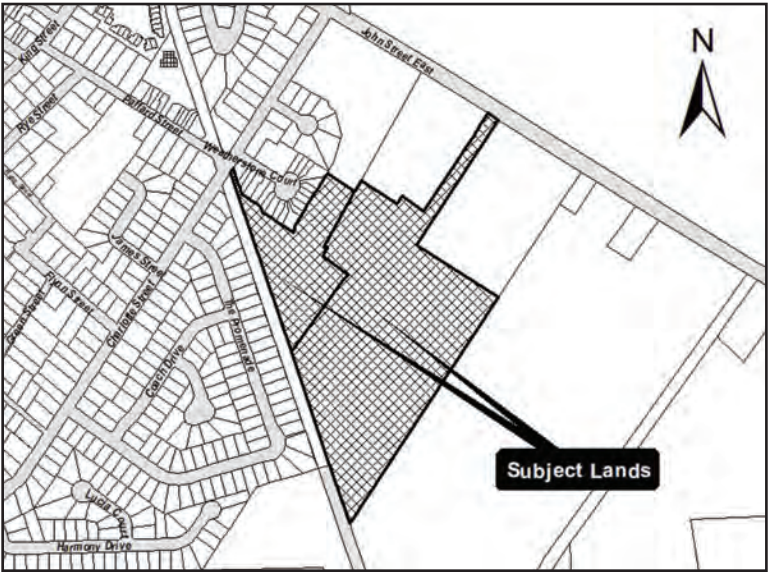
**What:** Notice of **Complete Application, Open House** and **Public Meeting** for an **Official Plan Amendment** (under Section 22 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended), **Zoning By-law Amendment** (under Section 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended), and **Draft Plan of Subdivision** (under Section 51 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended).

**When:** Open House: **Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 5:00 pm**  
Public Meeting: **Wednesday, July 14, 2021 at 5:00 pm** (or soon thereafter)

**Where:** The Electronic Open House and Electronic Public Meeting may be recorded and will be available for viewing at the following link: <https://livestream.com/notl>

**Regarding:** Files OPA-02-2020, ZBA-11-2020 & 26T-18-20-01  
200 John Street East & 588 Charlotte Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake

**What is this?**  
Applications have been received for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision on the subject lands (see the location map) to facilitate the development of 125 single-detached dwellings, 66 semi-detached dwellings and blocks of land for parks, natural areas and future development all on a private road network. A portion of the lands within the existing Urban Area Boundary are proposed to be designated Low Density Residential in the Official Plan. The Zoning By-law Amendment requests a site-specific Residential (R2) Zone for the residential lots, Open Space (OS) Zone for parks and Natural Heritage System Overlay for natural areas.



**Dialogue is encouraged:**  
**Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Hall is closed to the public due to the COVID-19 emergency and in-person meetings have been cancelled. As permitted under Provincial legislation and the Town’s Procedural By-law, Council and Committee meetings are being conducted electronically.**

You are invited to attend these meetings electronically to gather information and provide input regarding this matter.

If you wish to participate and make an oral presentation or ask questions at the Electronic Open House and/or Electronic Public Meeting, you must **register in advance** with Town Staff as noted below. Following registration, you will be provided with instructions to connect to the Open House and/or Public Meeting on your computer, tablet or telephone.

- Open House - Mark Iamarino ([mark.iamarino@notl.com](mailto:mark.iamarino@notl.com) or **905-468-6423**) (register as soon as possible but prior to 12 noon on Tuesday, June 15, 2021)
- Public Meeting - Peter Todd ([peter.todd@notl.com](mailto:peter.todd@notl.com) or **905-468-3061, ext. 228**) (register as soon as possible but prior to 12 noon on Wednesday, July 14, 2021)

Written comments on the applications are encouraged and must be submitted to Peter Todd, Town Clerk, at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0 or to the Town via email at [public.meeting@notl.com](mailto:public.meeting@notl.com) referencing the above file numbers. Unless indicated otherwise, all submissions, including personal information, will become part of the public record.

**For more information:**  
For more information regarding this matter, please contact Mark Iamarino, Senior Planner, at **905-468-6423** or via email at [mark.iamarino@notl.com](mailto:mark.iamarino@notl.com).

A copy of the applications and supporting documents for the proposal may be obtained via the Town’s website, [www.notl.org/content/public-notice-under-planning-act](http://www.notl.org/content/public-notice-under-planning-act)

If you wish to be notified of the future decision with respect to the applications, you must submit a written request to the Town Clerk including your name and the address to which such notice should be sent.

If a person or public body does not share their views in writing to the Town Clerk or orally at a statutory Public Meeting before a decision is made, the person/public body:

- a) Is not entitled to appeal the decision of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal; and
- b) May not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to do so.

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, April 28, 2021  
Peter Todd - Town Clerk

Car hits Queen Street house

Penny Coles  
The Local

On Saturday afternoon, Niagara Regional Police officers were called to Queen Street near Simcoe Street, to find a 2017 Nissan Altima had left the road and struck a house. Barb Bedell, neighbour to the house that was hit, says at this time of year, when the street is not busy, it’s not unusual for “noisy vehicles” to be racing down the street. “It’s just fortunate nobody was on the sidewalk,” she said. There were no injuries, and police are still investigating.



A car left the road and hit a historic house that was being renovated Saturday afternoon. (David Gilchrist)



NOTICE OF APPROVAL OF TAX & RATE BY-LAW  
2021 TAX RATES FOR GENERAL LEVY & SPECIAL AREA LEVIES

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake will consider a report for the 2021 Tax Rates for General Levy and Special Area Levies at the Council meeting on:

**Committee of the Whole General Meeting**  
**Monday, May 10, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
**Electronic Participation Meeting Only**

A copy of the report will be available on the Town website at [www.notl.com](http://www.notl.com) on Thursday May 6, 2021. Delegation requests to speak to the report must be arranged prior to the meeting date. Registrations to speak must be submitted to the Office of the Town Clerk in writing no later than 12:00 p.m. on May 10, 2021.

Final approval of the By-law will be considered at the May 17, 2021, Council Meeting.

For further information, please contact the Corporate Services Department at 905-468-3266.

Peter Todd  
Town Clerk



**OPEN****OPEN TO  
SERVE YOU SAFELY****OPEN****HAPPY  
MOTHER'S  
DAY****SUNDAY MAY 9 • 12PM - 8PM • 905-468-4443****DINNER FEATURES****ALMOND CRUSTED SALMON \$24**

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Lori McInnes of NOTL, and her friend Laurie Straw from St. Catharines are delighted to have won Catch the Ace, and helped out a good cause that is so important to both of them. (Photo supplied)

## Friends Lori and Laurie share Hospice Niagara jackpot

Penny Coles  
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Lori McInnes and her friend Laurie Straw from St. Catharines are the happy recipients of Hospice Niagara's Catch the Ace, a fun fundraiser that has captured the attention of many Niagara residents.

McInnes is a retired volunteer from Hospice Niagara, and became friends with Straw, a retired employee of the palliative care organization, during the years they worked together.

For a bit of fun, and to help out an organization they both care deeply about, they decided to spend \$20 a week — together — on 10 tickets.

McInnes's envelope was picked in week 13, and had the winning ace.

The lottery is similar to a 50/50 draw, with weekly prizes of 20 per cent of the draw, which for McInnes and Straw was \$3600. Because they had the ace, they also won the progressive jackpot of \$56,310.

Fifty per cent of all ticket sales goes to hospice palliative care in Niagara. Hospice Niagara helps people and families live well from the time of diagnosis of a terminal illness and during treat-

ment, through to end-of-life care and in bereavement.

Both women say in addition to the thrill of winning the jackpot, they continue to be great supporters of Hospice Niagara.

“I'm not a lottery person, and I'd never heard of it before, but apparently it's quite a common fundraiser. And if I'm going to buy a ticket, I'd like it to go to a good cause.”

Winning “is a really good feeling, knowing it is helping an important cause. I'm such a huge supporter of Hospice Niagara. It can be sad, but it's also very uplifting. It's an amazing place. I'm happy to be a winner, and to have had Hospice Niagara as part of my life for a good many years.”

Straw says in the years she was working, fundraising was always important to support the operating costs of the organization.

In their retirement, McInnes and Straw have developed what they call a “hobby business,” combining woodworking and quilting, which they both enjoy.

McInnes says her basement is given over to space for both, and between them, they know enough people who ask them to

make custom items that they keep busy without having to advertise.

“We keep ourselves busy,” she says, and with some of the proceeds they have decided to buy a sewing machine to help them out.

This was Hospice Niagara's second Catch the Ace draw, the two totalling about \$330,00, says Alicia Merry, fund development manager.

With in-person events cancelled and fundraising such an important part of covering operational costs, finding ways to safely raise money during a pandemic has been important.

In a normal year, Hospice Niagara would have a fundraising goal of \$1.8 million, but with the increased costs of operating during a pandemic, they've set their goal at \$2 to \$2.5 million, says Merry.

Fortunately, they can send out appeals to their large number of supporters, they have two annual fundraisers they've been able to hold virtually, and they also apply for any appropriate grants that could help out, she says.

The next fundraiser will be their 13th annual 5 Car Draw.

“We're really excited to get it going next week,” she says.



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# Local woman sending aid to St. Vincent

The area she comes from is covered with ash, homes damaged by volcano boulders

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

For weeks now, a volcano on the island of St. Vincent has been erupting, and covering the surrounding area with ash, forcing people from their homeland and their community.

Although there was some warning the eruption was coming, many of those who live in the area, called the red zone, had nowhere to go, says Virgil resident La Fleur Fletcher, who is collecting items to send home to the island where she was born and raised, and where her family still lives.

They have been moving around, living in various places, including sharing limited space with family, friends and at government shelters, waiting until they can go home — although they won't have much to go home to, says Fletcher. The area is a farming community, and her family members are farmers, with their land and any crops they may have had now covered in the grey ash spewed from the volcano, along with pyroclastic flow, described as a deadly mixture of superheated gases, rock and mud.

"When they do go home, there won't be anything there for them," she says.

Eruptions are expected to continue for months, and the island government is overwhelmed, without the resources to get much-needed supplies to its people.

Fletcher has been sending containers of goods home to her mother for years, and knows how to get them there.

She explains she came to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2009 with her husband Claude, who is from Jamaica. They had met when they were both working on a small cruise ship, she says. He was a cook, and her job entailed a little of everything, from looking after

cabins to working in the gift shop and serving meals in the dining room.

When Claude decided he'd like to pursue a culinary career, they came to Niagara-on-the-Lake so he could attend a culinary school that operated out of a Nassau Street townhouse, using kitchens in various restaurants around town for students to get their hands-on training.

He was able to get a visa as an international student, and they rented a small basement apartment on Simcoe Street.

However, there were irregularities about the school that were reported to immigration officials, and the school was shut down in 2010, about two months before he would have finished his program, and before he was able to receive his certification.

saved money and were able to buy a home on Concession 4, "before the prices got crazy," she says.

"I was willing to work 24/7 to stay here. It was very hard, but we made it work."

For a time she had three jobs, at the Mary Street Tim Hortons, at the Best Western, and cleaning houses.

Claude went out west to Alberta for a while to work, and now drives a truck mostly on long day trips. La Fleur has her own cleaning business.

"We eventually got our permanent residency, and now we're Canadian citizens. It has been quite a journey, but it was worth it," she says.

As part of that journey, they have been raising their 10-year-old son Akeem, who goes to St. Michael Catholic Elementary School.

**“The volcano had been showing activity last November and December, but you can never be prepared for something like this.”**

*La Fleur Fletcher*

They were told by immigration that they could stay in Canada if one of them was a student, so La Fleur began studying hospitality and restaurant management at Niagara College while Claude went to work driving a truck. Although some students did receive a refund, he did not, but was able to get a work permit.

"We loved it here, and I swore I wasn't going to leave," says La Fleur. "Everybody just accepted us. It's been perfect for us."

They both worked hard,

The last time they were able to visit her family was 2014, although they had plans to return in December, 2020, which had to be cancelled.

"The last few weeks have been terrible for me," she says, as she tried to get information about her family.

"Everybody had to leave. The volcano had been showing activity last November and December, but you can never be prepared for something like this. Mom and Dad and the rest of the family have been moving around, staying at shelters and with friends. They just moved to another house, and it's crowded, there are a lot of them together, but at least they're okay."

They have been managing to get food, she says, but

the water is not drinkable. She is trying to buy and ship water not just for her family, but for everybody who needs it. Last week she sent home a pallet of 100 cases of water, and received some donations of cash to help pay the \$640 shipping charges.

She has a shipping agent in Mississauga who she has used in the past, and they ship straight to her mother, who will hand out whatever La Fleur is able to send.

"But it's expensive. It goes by container size, not by weight. A four-foot by four-foot container costs \$450 to ship."

Locals have been helping out by purchasing goods to ship, as well as donating cash to help pay for

shipping.

For those who want to help, La Fleur has a list of items she is shipping, including water, water filtration kits, parboiled long-grain rice, cooking oil, sardines, Vienna sausages, barbecue sauce, baked beans, ketchup, jam, Kraft dinner, oatmeal and cream of wheat, sweet corn, cream corn, black-eyed peas, lentil peas, peanut butter, pasta, ramen noodles, and juice boxes; plus toiletries such as toothpaste and tooth brushes, sanitary napkins, deodorant, and toilet paper.

Donations can be dropped off at 1612 Concession 4.

The Virgil Avondale is also accepting cash donations for St. Vincent.



La Fleur Fletcher, with her son Akeem, is sending much-needed items, including water, home to St. Vincent, and could use some help. (Photo supplied)

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Thumbs down to periwinkle, says Betty Knight. (Photos supplied)

# Workshop to be on native plants

**Penny Coles**  
**The Local**

Betty Knight recently gave a successful workshop through the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library on getting your garden ready for planting.

It was so successful the library is offering a second workshop, this time so Knight can talk about what to plant in the soil, now that it's been prepared.

Knight says she has loved gardening most of her life, learning at the ankles of her mother and her grandfather. And recently, with pandemic time on her hands, she has decided to become a master gardener.

She is still considered a master gardener-in-training. Although she's completed all the necessary courses through the University of Guelph this last year, there are other hours to be completed, including a continuing education component — she has more than surpassed that requirement — and some volunteering, which she is accomplishing with her first Dishin' the Dirt workshop held in March, and next week's Diggin' the Dirt, to be held May 5 at 7 p.m.

When researching toward her master gardener designation, she's taken a "deep dive" into studying local soils, and the differences to be found in the area. That also led her to learn about biodiversity, and how to plant a garden to attract pollinators.

When she planned her first workshop, she was hoping it would lead to a series, and it has, with the next workshop to discuss the importance of planting native plants, what exactly being a native plant means, talking about invasive species, and the importance of planting for pollinators.

What is aggressive versus invasive, what is a nativar or a native plant? With the many terms, and the importance of knowing the difference, Knight says on the library website, "it is

starting to sound like ordering a coffee at Starbucks."

She explains that while there are many plants people love, such as periwinkle, orange day lilies or lily of the valley as examples, they are invasive, not indigenous plants, and provide nothing of benefit to local insects, birds and bees and all the different native pollinators that are so important to all animals, "including us."

Native plants, she says, have become "very voguey," but it's important to know what they are, their value, for example, to the caterpillars, and to the bird who eats the caterpillars, she explains. "And if they can't find what they need, they'll go elsewhere," she adds.

At a time in Canada when we're making a point of land awareness, and recognizing Indigenous people as stewards of the land, we need to be better stewards of our land, she says. "It's important for us to honour that," and to Knight, that includes choosing indigenous species of plants for our gardens. "Let's put on our coat and wear it."

When doing a virtual meeting for her first workshop, Knight felt it would be uncomfortable having faces stare at her while she talked, and asked for the video to be turned off. She realized during her presentation she was missing the reactions from those in attendance, and is looking forward this time to seeing those faces in what will feel more like an interactive workshop, and less like talking to an empty room, she says.

She also learned the importance of using scientific terms for the plants that are being discussed, realizing there can be some confusion when people use different names for different plants — for example, orange day lilies and tiger lilies are often thought of as the same, yet are "two very different things."

As soon as her workshop is

finished, she is asking Debbie Krause, program co-ordinator of the library, to send out emails she calls "grow me instead," in other words, what to plant once the non-native, invasive plants are removed. The email to all participants will include a Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority guide, "a fabulous document" on native plants that are suited to various conditions.

Meanwhile, Knight is spending much of her "pandemic free time" in her own garden, limited only by how much her "north of 60" body can withstand, addressing problems that include removing some invasive plants that have moved in.

She has also taken up her lawn of grass, an ecological equivalent of a "dead zone" to pollinators, to seed with micro-clover, which provides a pollinator-friendly lawn.

Knight's virtual workshop will be presented over Zoom. Log-in information will be emailed to all participants at least 24 hours before the event. Attendance is limited, so register as soon as possible at <https://notlpubliclibrary.libnet.info/events?v=grid>



While walking her dog Luna, Betty Knight came across some invasive species, including lesser celandine and vinca (above right), and English ivy.



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# Festival offers International Jazz Day concert

**Mike Balsom**  
Special to The Local

The TD Niagara Jazz Festival continues its 2021 season Friday, April 30 with its celebration of International Jazz Day.

In keeping with the “International” theme, executive director/artistic producer Juliet Dunn has lined up talent from Holland (by way of Cuba), the U.S. and just down the QEW in Hamilton (via St. Catharines) for an eclectic and varied survey entitled *Celebrating the Jazz Greats*.

St. Catharines native James Bryan headlines the show, which kicks off at 7 p.m. Friday. Fans of the Jazz Festival may remember Bryan as the first musician to be presented via the Festival’s Facebook page last March. As the pandemic hit, Dunn flew into motion to find an alternative to the live appearance for which Bryan had been scheduled. He ended up playing for about an hour from his home in Hamilton.

For this week’s show, he’ll once again be live from his home, and once again, it’s an online gig to replace an in-person performance that had been planned before the current provincial restrictions were in place.

“I’ve been working with a singer from Hamilton, AJ Harvey,” he explains. “We were planning to do a show as a duo (at White Oaks), but that got canned for now. When Juliet reached out about International Jazz Day, I definitely put my hand up when she asked.”

Bryan, a Juno and Latin Grammy Award-winning guitarist, producer and songwriter, has worked with James Blunt, Fefe Dobson, Nelly Furtado, Jason Mraz and many others. He will be paying tribute Friday to the great collaborations between Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong. Because Harvey is not in his COVID bubble, however, he’ll be handling the tribute solo.

It won’t be a problem for him to tackle those standards alone. His solo guitar versions of Bob Marley’s *Could You Be Loved*, and Stevie Wonder’s *Isn’t She Lovely*, from his 2017 album *By Your Side*, give those modern-day standards a fresh, Latin-influenced feel, shedding new light on the well-known numbers. He’s sure to bring more of the same Friday night.

The show begins at 7 p.m. with Cuban-born pianist Abel Marcel (full name: Abel Marcel Calderon Arias). Now living in the Netherlands, Marcel is a classically-trained composer, arranger, producer, pianist, band leader and educator. The skilled improviser

has recorded in styles from hip hop to salsa, as well as jazz and classical.

“He’s going to do some Jelly Roll Morton,” enthuses Dunn. “And he’ll do some Latin jazz and explain how the influence of Latin jazz fits into the world of jazz. He’ll tie all that together.”

Also on the bill Friday is a duo from western New York. Bassist Chris Northington hails from Rochester, while vocalist DeeAnn Dimeo was born in Niagara Falls, NY.

“I’ve known Chris for probably 20 years,” says Dunn. “We’ve brought him over to do a gig, and he’s come over to jam a few times, but we’ve never featured him before in the festival. With the border closed, we figured it would be fun to have him as part of this show.”

Dunn reveals that the duo will be performing the Irving Berlin classic *Blue Skies* as well as *My Funny Valentine*, written by Rodgers and Hart and made famous by Frank Sinatra and Chet Baker, among many others. Rounding out their pre-recorded set will be a Dimeo original composition and a jazzed-up version of a Michael Jackson number.

Following Friday’s show, the Jazz Festival continues on Sunday, May 2 with local duo Vox Violins as part of the Twilight Jazz Series.

Billed as *40 Years With Music*, it promises to be a night of nostalgia, as hus-



Bassist Chris Northington and vocalist DeeAnn Dimeo, a duo from western New York, will perform some jazz classics as part of the Jazz Festival concert Friday. (Photos supplied)



band and wife duo Mark Clifford and Beth Bartley look back on four decades of playing their Celtic-flavoured take on folk, rock and blues all across the region. Interspersed with their music will be video clips and plenty of stories gathered over that time. The show will be opened by young up-and-comers Alex George and Dexter Frank, two current Humber College music students.

Future dates in the series include Khea Emman-

uel performing the songs of Natalie Cole on May 30, and a tribute to Bill Evans featuring the Doug Mundy Duo scheduled for June 6. St. Catharines-born vocalist Sarah Jerrom and her band Dream Logic celebrate their debut CD release with a hometown show on June 20, while the series wraps up July 4 with a soul-oriented performance by Jillian Menendez of Ajax, Ontario.

Like last year, Dunn is holding out hope that most of these events, as well as

the annual Summer Mardi Gras celebration scheduled for July 24 and a three-day Emancipation Day celebration being organized in concert with the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, will be held in front of an in-person audience.

“We keep planning for the worst-case, which is just online,” she says, “because at least you’re not disappointed, and at least you know you have the show. And we’re employing musicians, and we’re bringing music to the

people.”

But when things open up, they’ll be taking the Twilight Jazz shows to partner restaurants, and livestream from there, she says.

*International Jazz Day: Celebrating the Jazz Greats* is a free livestreamed show. The Twilight Jazz Series events are ticketed, and there are Dinner and a Show options available. The Jazz Festival is also offering a season pass at one low price. Visit [niagarajazzfestival.com](http://niagarajazzfestival.com) for more information.



James Bryan headlines the International Jazz Day show, which kicks off at 7 p.m. Friday.



Abel Marcel opens *Celebrating the Jazz Greats* with some Latin jazz, online Friday, which is International Jazz Day.



# Photographer finds kingfishers in Niagara Shores Park

**David Gilchrist**  
**Special to The Local**

When I was in Grade 3, an artistic young classmate would draw, on request, wonderful pictures of popular birds. One of the birds he would draw was that of a kingfisher. An odd little bird indeed, and I was curious of its shape and colouration. I have to admit though, in all my later years, I had never actually seen one, until quite recently.

Last year, with the

pandemic putting a hold on my regular pursuit of underwater photography, to pass the time, I started photographing birds that visited our backyard feeders. We, like many folks in town, are graced with many beautiful birds and, for me, it has become a pleasing way to spend time. As the pandemic continued, I eventually started to visit the waterfront during winter to photograph the migratory birds that spend the colder months at the mouth of the river.

While venturing a bit further, at the Niagara Shores Park, I have been fortunate to get a few nice red-tailed hawk photos. It was on a walk along the shore there that I became aware of a small bird flying quite actively back and forth along the waterfront. When it landed on an overhanging branch I instantly recognized its distinctive profile in silhouette. A tuft of wild hair and long beak — a kingfisher. I was even fortunate to have witnessed, on a few occasions, the bird

diving into the water and emerging with a minnow or round goby in its mouth. Over time, I started to attempt to get closer to it, but it would always fly away. I then became aware that there were at least a pair of them flying back and forth a fair distance along the shore, occasionally coming to rest in tree branches along the way. That was last year, and I did get a few silhouette style shots but from a distance.

There are 95 species of kingfisher in the world. In our area, the belted kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) represents the species. Kingfishers are described as “a family of robust birds, with large heads, strong, pointed bills, short tails and small feet.” I found that, like a species of swallows that visit the area, the kingfishers also nest in the banks along the shoreline. They emit a distinctive ‘chittering’ sound as they fly. It’s quite noticeable.

This year, I started to spend some time again at the Niagara Shores Park. The pond attracts a number of migratory waterfowl, Canada geese as well as hawks, and I’ve even spotted an osprey flying away with a fish in its tal-

ons. Again, I started to spot what I now believe to be several kingfishers. So, for the last few weeks, when I could, I would visit the area to become familiar with where they would land. There were a few spots I scouted out, and I attempted to be in place and in position, with my camera ready, to get that photograph.

One of the problems in this location is that, as the sun rose, I wanted to get a well-lit photo to show the beautiful colouration of the kingfisher. All I seemed to be able to get, however, were silhouettes. Whenever I tried to get into a position with the sun lighting my subject, it would fly away. They seemed to have an uncanny ability to avoid me and my lens. It became an early morning endeavour to get myself up and into position behind one of the many fallen trees along the Lake Ontario shoreline, sitting quietly, hoping the bird would perch within subject distance of me and my camera. The only consolation with this lonely pursuit was the lovely scene across the lake and the quiet lapping sound of the water along the shore.

I tried several different

spots with no luck. It was actually becoming quite humorous. On one occasion, I had found the perfect perch for them to land on. I even witnessed a pair using it several times. In position, sitting on a comfortable log, out of sight (at least I thought) with my lens already prefocused on the landing spot. Would they cooperate? Ha! Not on your life. They would land on both sides of the targeted perch, too far away again, and just sit there. I would then give up and try to carefully move to get into position where they were sitting. As I crept closer, they both flew to the original perch that I had hoped they would land on.

Sigh!

I have managed, fortunately, to capture some images of these curious little creatures on my early morning sojourns. On the last occasion visiting the area, I came across another birder, sitting comfortably, totally enclosed in a camouflaged blind. He had stationed himself in a prime position to capture an image of the kingfishers. Hmm. Wonder if my wife could produce one of these with her sewing machine? Maybe next year!



The kingfisher presented a challenge to photograph from the right angle. (Photos by David Gilchrist)

A graphic for the 'Spring' section. It features the word 'Spring' in a large, pink, cursive font with a small pink flower above the 'i'. To the right is a photograph of a woman with dark curly hair, smiling and applying white face cream to her cheeks with her fingers. The background is a light blue sky with white clouds.

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The logo for 'The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local'. It features the word 'Local' in a large, red, cursive font. Above it, in a smaller font, is 'The Niagara-on-the-Lake'. Below it, in a small black box, is the tagline 'The Trusted Voice of Our Community'.

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# LocalSPORTS

## Friesen wins big in NASCAR at Bristol

**Mike Balsom**  
Special to The Local

Four weeks after making his NASCAR Cup Series debut at the same track, Niagara-on-the-Lake's Stewart Friesen's return to Bristol Motor Speedway in Tennessee was a victorious one.

The process to convert the hard surface at Bristol began back in January with the transport of 23,000 cubic feet of Bluff City Clay to the track. Friesen had the chance to test the track out on the March 28 weekend in two races, one in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series and the other his debut in the NASCAR Cup Series in the 250-lap Food City Dirt Race.

He placed 7th and 23rd respectively that weekend.

Friesen's return this past weekend was triumphant. He swept both races on the converted half-mile dirt track, earning feature victories and top prizes of \$10,000 in both events at the World of Outlaws Bristol Throwdown.

Friday night's Super DIRTcar Big Block Modifieds Series race marked the debut of that circuit at Bristol. With most races running at tracks in the Northeast of the U.S. and Canada, Friesen couldn't wait to get the number 44 Halmar-Friesen car onto the Bristol surface.

Mike Mahaney of King

Ferry, New York was out in front for the first 17 laps of the 40-lap feature. Friesen, who started the race in the eighth position, methodically worked his way through the rest of the field to pass Mahaney in lap number 18. He held off challenges by the early leader as well as Tyler Dippel, Tim Sears Jr. and St. Catharines native Mat Williamson to claim the weekend's first Big Block Modified title at the Speedway.

In an interview following Friday's contest, Friesen raved about the opportunity to run the Big Block Modifieds at Bristol. "I've wanted one of these (Bristol Motor Speedway Swords) for so long since we started coming here with the truck," he said.

He went on to add that his chance to watch the Sprint Car race, which was held just before the Modifieds event, gave him some pointers for his own event. In that race, David Gravel set a Bristol track record time of 13.6762 seconds while running on top, and Friesen tried to follow that same strategy. He also credited his NASCAR experience in March in both the Truck and Cup Series races for valuable lessons on the Bristol dirt.

A Saturday postponement forced Friesen to wait another day to complete his clean sweep.

On Sunday, Mahaney

once again jumped out to the early lead, but Friesen, who started in position 2, inched forward to overtake him in lap 8. Mahaney climbed back out front on the next lap. Then, with 16 laps to go, Friesen moved up top on the turn once again to pass Mahaney. He held on from there,

using a pick-and-roll move with the 25th place Marcus Dinkins as the decoy to fight off a final-lap challenge from 22-year-old Demetrios Drellos of Queensbury, New York, for his second win of the weekend.

The victory was Friesen's third in a row in the Super-

DIRT cars series, having won April 10 at Can-Am Speedway in Lafargeville, New York.

Following the victory, he credited his team for developing an excellent race plan Sunday, and commented on the quality of the track for modified racing, calling it

the best afternoon track he's ever seen.

Friesen and his truck team are off to Kansas Speedway in Kansas City this Saturday for the Wise Power 200, the next event on the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series schedule.



NOTL native Stewart Friesen celebrated two NASCAR wins this weekend. (Screenshot)



## Auchterlonie on Astrology

**Bill Auchterlonie**  
Special to The Local

*The full week of Auchterlonie on Astrology can be found on the Facebook page for The NOTL Local, and on the website [www.auchterlonieonastrology.ca](http://www.auchterlonieonastrology.ca).*

Friday, April 30: Today, the Sun is conjunct Uranus at 10 degrees Taurus. This aspect screams freedom, because Uranus is the planet of freedom... but what kind of freedom are we talking about here? Will all jump on the next plane and start it all over? Not necessarily. The freedom of a Sun-Uranus transit is the

freedom to be yourself. And that means different things to different people. To some, it means starting a new career or taking some bold action. To others, it means watching more Netflix. There is no one freedom that is superior to other types of freedom. The only freedom that matters is to be unapologetically yourself. Today is the 32nd birthday of the world wide web. Yes, the internet was invented by CERN scientist, Tim Berners-Lee, on April 30, 1989.

Saturday, May 1: MAY DAY! MAY DAY! It's a celebration of workers and

springtime. Today that is underlined by a perfect harmony between the Sun in Taurus and the Moon in Capricorn. Uranus and Chiron also figure prominently and positively today. So, look for a surprise that may dig deep into the past, while also promising a brighter future. And Batman turns 82 today. The caped crusader first appeared in Detective Comics Issue #27 on May 1, 1939.

Monday, May 3: Another hugely busy day with 10 astro-connections, including Mercury moving from practical Taurus into quick-witted

Gemini. And smarts are what we all need today as both the Sun and the Moon get the cold shoulder from Saturn. Be prepared to hear a lot of 'no' today. This is also the day of the third quarter Moon in Aquarius. We feel like we must have something futuristic but keep being offered a brush cut and a clarinet. Also, the godfather of the Canadian wrestling dynasty, the Harts, Stu Hart was born on May 3, 1915 in Saskatoon.

And that's AonA for this week. Next time I look at a new Moon in Gemini. So, until then, shine on!

## LocalHAPPENINGS

### TUMBLE TOTS ~ VIRTUAL STORIES, SONGS & GAMES ~ AGES 2 – 4

**April 29 @ 10:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.**

Join Rachel from the NOTL Public Library as she leads a Tumble Tots session that encourages speech development, love of reading, and letter and number recognition through stories, songs, and fun activities. Participants please visit: <https://notlpubliclibrary.org> to pre-register. Upon registration you will receive an email with information regarding ZOOM Link and a pick-up time for your fun activity kit! Participants need to be able to access Zoom.

### DIGGIN' THE DIRT WITH BETTY KNIGHT

**May 5 @ 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.**

I'm so excited I wet my PLANTS! Ah winter, without you spring would not be so sweet. Betty is Back and we invite you to join us to chat about what we need to do to get our gardens ready for the planting season. Let's talk about soil, mulching, garden tools, pruning and preparing our garden to be the best it can be. While we might think we are nurturing our gardens, during this pandemic, it may be our garden that is nurturing us. We look forward to diggin' in the dirt with you. This virtual workshop is presented over Zoom. Attendance is limited, please register as soon as possible. Zoom log-in information will be emailed to all participants at least 24 hours before the event. For more information and to register, please visit: <https://notlpubliclibrary.org/>

### PLACE YOUR COMING EVENT COMMUNITY SOCIAL HERE

With or without a border, colour graphics optional. Include your Logo! Prices starting at \$20. Deadline: Monday 3 p.m. Call Karen 905-641-5335 or email: [classified@notllocal.com](mailto:classified@notllocal.com)

## LocalWORSHIP

**CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH**

**Sunday, May 2nd**

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

Speaker: Kevin Bayne

Message: The Exile:

Jesus Brings Us Home

Live stream available

Sundays at 10:00 am

Please be advised that with the current state of COVID-19, your safety is of utmost importance to us.

[www.ccchurch.ca](http://www.ccchurch.ca)

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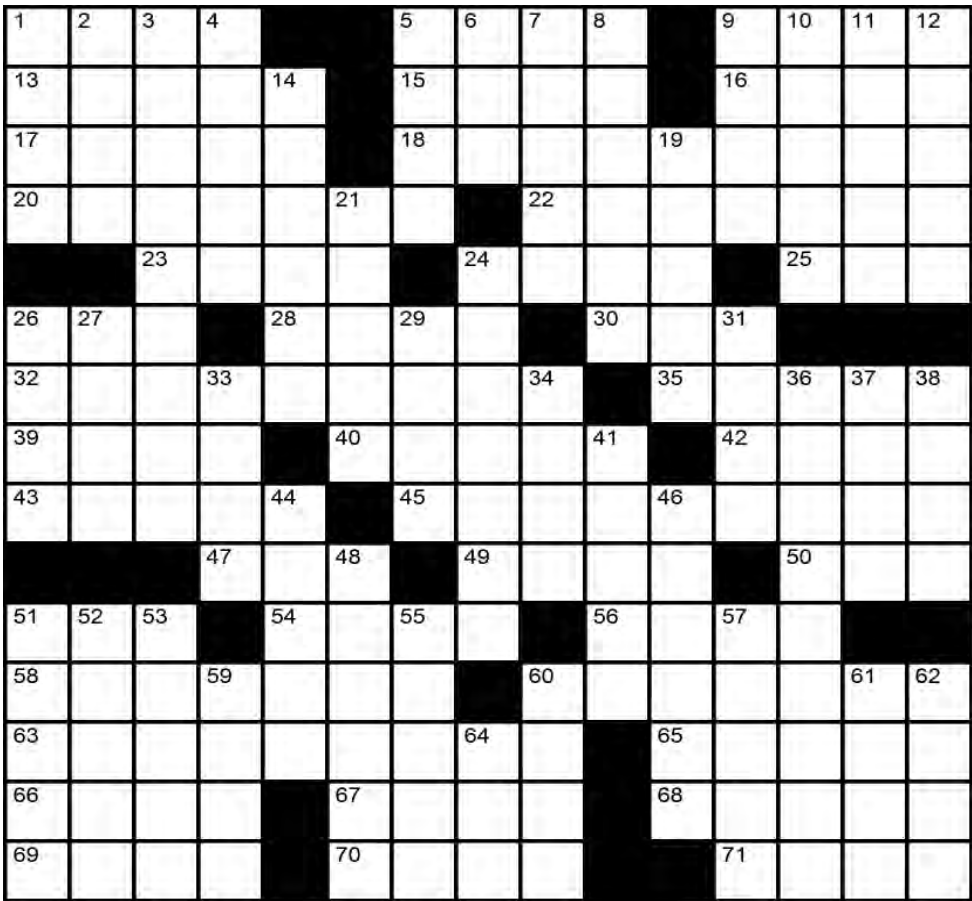


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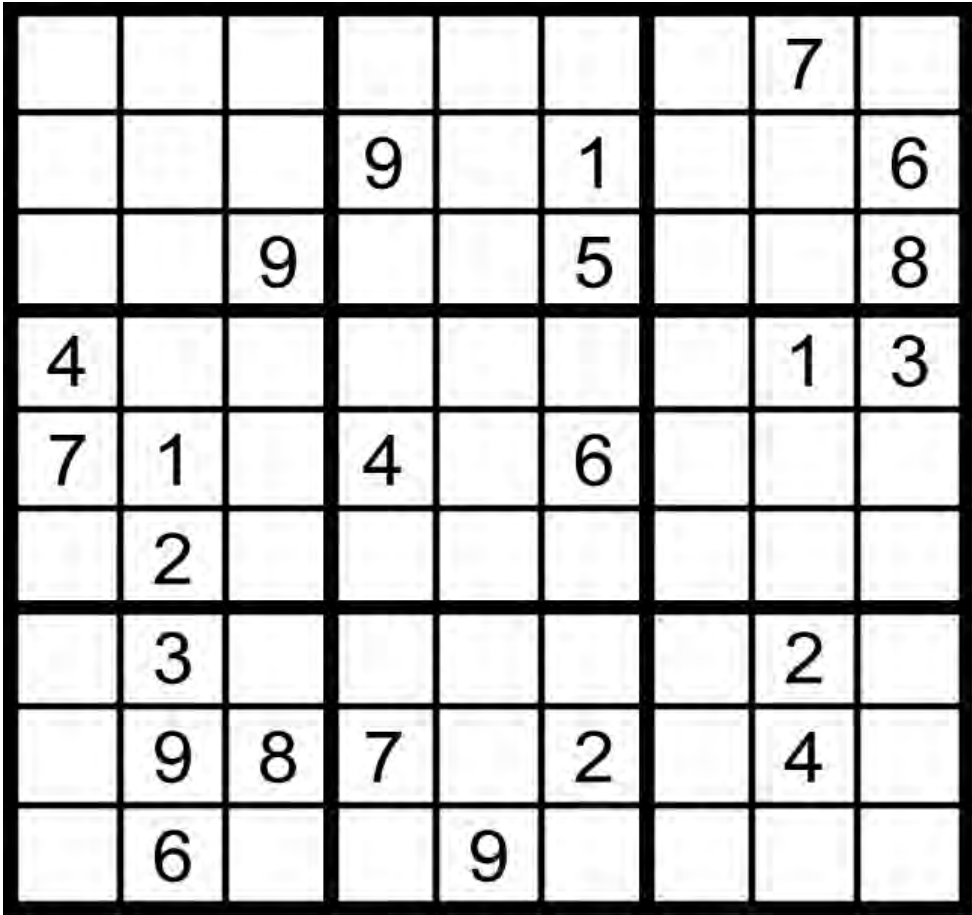


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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU



- Across:**  
1 Maker whose cars go up and down  
5 Unfortunately  
9 Old Indian coin  
13 Individualist  
15 --- Marlene  
16 Turns  
17 Weighty  
18 Thought transference  
20 San ---, California  
22 Correction  
23 4th largest Great Lake  
24 With regard to  
25 Place  
26 Contains Jets and Texans  
28 Composure  
30 Small cell  
32 Paces  
35 Common subjects in life classes  
39 Zits  
40 Delhi wraps?  
42 S M S  
43 Additional clause  
45 Financial holdings  
47 Doze  
49 Calf meat  
50 Tennis player's org.  
51 Drop in value
- 54 Small pool lining slab  
56 Burrow  
58 Unworldliness  
60 Storm  
63 Truce  
65 Ace golfer --- Els  
66 Amount  
67 "Born Free" lioness  
68 Lucifer  
69 Was completely certain  
70 Raised platform  
71 Thanksgiving dish
- Down:**  
1 "Quantum of Solace" actress --- Kurylenko  
2 Ripped  
3 Very soon  
4 Cut  
5 Either a male or a female voice  
6 Recline  
7 Filmmaker Woody ---  
8 Jagged mountain range  
9 Turkish rulers  
10 Asleep  
11 Long narrow jacket with a high collar  
12 So far  
14 Ancient artifacts  
19 Song of praise  
21 E.g. venison, beef, pork etc.  
24 Better  
26 A long way off  
27 An ellipse has two  
29 Spring  
31 Not manual (Abbr.)  
33 Person between 12 and 20  
34 Father  
36 Dominican-American fashion designer Oscar ---  
37 Way out  
38 Cease  
41 Not fresh  
44 Assesses  
46 Online attacks  
48 Pockmarked  
51 Nibble  
52 Moses' brother  
53 Easy putt  
55 Bizet's priestess in "The Pearl Fishers"  
57 Start of a divine appeal  
59 Perspective  
60 E.g. Oolong, Darjeeling  
61 Now Thailand  
62 Sawbucks  
64 Long-running Ted Danson show



OBITUARY



**PYNE, KEVIN WILLIAM** — Born in Boston, Massachusetts on February 1st, 1965. Kevin was 100% in everything he did in his life. He leaves behind his beautiful bride LeaAnn Pyne, and daughter Chloe. If you were to think of Kevin, you would think of his gracious heart and helping hands, and the strength and comfort in them. Kevin is survived by his parents Gene and Dorothy Pyne, his twin brother Keith, and his sister Kelly.

Kevin lived with a few simple credos, that are worth sharing. To live an honest life, and to be considered a good man, he was humble and capable to a fault. Anyone who had the grace to

know him would swear up and down this is one of the finest men they've ever known. His gift to the world was his perpetual kindness and an open and warm caring for others that was infectious.

Kevin loved sports, athleticism and competition. Kevin and Keith played Basketball for Stamford High school, and went on to play together at Guelph University.

One of the testaments to his character is that he was a self-made man, having learned his own business, and started his own company from scratch. Again, his hands made all the difference to the people he worked with at Pump Pro Shop, and to his friends and clients across the globe. Kevin loved being an entrepreneur, and would take any chance to talk to friends and colleagues about new ventures and ideas. It's a beautiful thing to reflect on the power of an individual. To all of us, Kevin was the big idea, and an incredible role model for how to live and live well with love and respect.

He was known for having a rock for a moral compass, and he will be remembered for always doing what was right. Kevin's most important self journey was his relationship with God. He spent endless hours in study and prayer, which were reflected in his eyes and his being, especially to those who had the gift of knowing him.

What would Kevin say of his sudden, unexpected early departure? The answer would leave an indelible mark on all of us; "It is God's plan, that's why, how you live your life is everything".

Ode to the Best Man

That while the others fall he stands, the one with the spirit that's always kind and gives.

The one who cares and listens to the others as they live.

The one who struggles silently and there no sound does make.

While though the storm surrounds him and yet onward he creates.

To him the silent call of spirit beats within his heart,

And leaves no soul untouched that in his presence parts.

The one who stands so strong but yet without the sin of pride.

He lives his life a beacon to those that pass him by.

He waivers not in uncertainty convicted carries on,

The one who leads the way to the narrow path beyond.

To know him is to understand what a human being should be,

Displays the sense of honesty and trueness we long to see.

Without this soldier saint and man

here within our midst

We are left in his shadow,

reflecting on a great example of how to be the best man.

To my loving husband Kevin,  
my heart my life my love  
With love your wife LeaAnn

Arrangements in care of MORGAN FUNERAL HOME, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, 905-468-3255. A private family service was held on Thursday, April 15, 2021. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Cornerstone Community Church – Burundi, online <http://www.notforgotten-burundi.ca/give-now>, through the church or the funeral home in honour of Kevin Pyne. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)



PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from April 21, 2021



**Across:** 1 Otis, 5 Alias, 9 Anna, 13 Loner, 15 Lili, 16 Goes, 17 Grave, 18 Telepathy, 20 Anselmo, 22 Erasme, 23 Ene, 24 In re, 25 Put, 26 A F C, 28 Calm, 30 AAA, 32 Footsteps, 35 Nudes, 39 Acne, 40 Sans, 42 Text, 43 Rider, 45 Portillo, 47 Nap, 49 Veal, 50 A T P, 51 Sag, 54 Tile, 56 Lair, 58 Naivete, 60 Tempest, 63 Armistice, 65 Ernie, 66 Come, 67 Elsa, 68 Satan, 69 Knew, 70 Dais, 71 Yams.  
**Down:** 1 Olga, 2 Torn, 3 In a second, 4 Sever, 5 Alto, 6 Lie, 7 Allen, 8 Sierra, 9 Agas, 10 Not up, 11 Nehru, 12 As yet, 14 Relics, 19 Paean, 21 Meats, 24 Improve, 26 Afar, 27 Foot, 29 Leap, 31 Auto, 33 Teen, 34 Sire, 36 De la Renta, 37 Exit, 38 Stop, 41 Stale, 44 Rates, 46 Flames, 48 Pitted, 51 Snack, 52 Aaron, 53 Glimme, 55 Lella, 57 I pray, 59 View, 60 Teas, 61 Slam, 62 Tens, 64 C S I.



# 2020 BETTER NEWSPAPER COMPETITION

## Award Winner



**General Excellence**  
(Class 4/circ. 6,500 - 9,999)

A prominent, good quality photo and local news are front and centre for readers picking up The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local. It includes excellent local news and solid community reporting. There were photos with almost every story. The arts coverage and special sections (School page, holiday, new year new interior) reflect the fact that a community newspaper should serve readers of all ages. This is what a community newspaper should feel like.



**Best Editorial**  
(circ. under 9,999)

Well developed. A good use of getting an emotional response from the reader. Good tie-in of an international incident that the world watched, to a national incident where probably not enough people watched.



**Best Feature/News Series**  
(circ. under 9,999)

Penny Coles imbues her stories about the life of a dying man with beauty and dignity. She respects and honours the task she's been given. She doesn't shy away from sadness and regret but reveals how, when nurtured, they can be transformed into something deeply meaningful.



The OCNA is a non-profit industry association comprised of roughly 240 member newspapers located throughout the province. There were 1450 entries for the 2020 Better Newspaper Competition.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake  
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