



**Simpson's
pharmacies
sold**
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St. Davids Public School invited parents and the community to performances of *Into the Woods*, with students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 taking part in the fairy tale musical this Tuesday and Wednesday. For story and more photos see page 12. (Mike Balsom)

Soos advocates for Indigenous mobile crisis unit

**Mike Balsom
The Local**

Steven Soos admits his rebel heart often gets him into trouble, but that won't stop the self-professed dreamer from continuing his advocacy to mitigate Niagara's mental health, homelessness and addiction crisis.

After two years he finally convinced Niagara's regional councillors to invoke a state of emergency on the three issues in March. Some might have thought that victory would be the last they would hear from the 29-year-old Welland resident.

But he was just getting started.

Soos, who self-identifies as Metis based on his grandfather's background, has turned his focus to Niagara's Indige-

nous community. He wants to see government funding for an Indigenous mental health mobile crisis unit pilot project to specifically address the mental health, homelessness and addiction problem for members of that community.

"I called the NRNC (Niagara Regional Native Centre) to explain to them how I felt as an Indigenous person fighting for my emergency," Soos tells *The Local*. "I want the Indigenous community involved in this. We're disproportionately affected by these issues. We're the issue within the issue."

Soos says Willow Shawanoo, outreach coordinator at NRNC, provided him with a great summary of what a mobile crisis unit would need.

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Day of Mourning recognizes workplace fatalities, injuries

**Penny Coles
The Local**

Friday was the National Day of Mourning, and has been a regular speaker ever since. At that time Gates was the local union leader, and he had been called to the plant that morning. He walked beside Murray as he was taken out of the plant to a waiting ambulance, after being crushed while doing maintenance on a piece of equipment that had a safety bypass switch purposely disabled.

Murray was probably one of the most safety-minded employees at GM, Gates said, but he had been sent to work on that particular machine that he hadn't operated for more than

years, but didn't return home.

NDP MPP Wayne Gates was at the first Virgil National Day of Mourning, and has been a regular speaker ever since. At that time Gates was the local union leader, and he had been called to the plant that morning. He walked beside Murray as he was taken out of the plant to a waiting ambulance, after being crushed while doing maintenance on a piece of equipment that had a safety bypass switch purposely disabled.

Murray was probably one of the most safety-minded employees at GM, Gates said, but he had been sent to work on that particular machine that he hadn't operated for more than

a year, he hadn't been retrained on it, and he didn't know the switch had been bypassed.

At the ceremony this year, as every year, was Joel's wife and high-school sweetheart Wendy Murray Nicholson, and over the years her son Thomas, daughter Pam and grandchildren have often attended as well.

Gates told the small crowd gathered that GM was found guilty and fined \$250,000.

Wendy has two kids who are adults now. "People think that the fine goes to the family, but it doesn't," Gates said. Not a cent of that went to Wendy, although she had two kids to raise, food to put on the table and bills to pay.

Murray was also a minor hockey coach, and at the time of his death was coaching his son Thomas and the under-11 team. His grandsons, James and Hunter, played in the same age group this winter, and recently came home Ontario Minor Hockey Team champs.

"Imagine the pride Joel would have felt to have seen that," said Gates, "but that didn't happen, because GM cares more about money than its workforce."

Just last week, GM was fined \$325,000 after pleading guilty in its role in the death of Daniel Sevcik, who in October of 2021, after working for GM for 47 years, fell from a milling machine at the Glendale

plant. His wife Brenda Sevcik attended the 2022 Virgil ceremony, and said she recalls her husband talking about having some students at the Ontario Street plant that day in 1998 — it was a board-wide Take Our Kids to Work Day — and although she didn't know the Murray family, the day of Joel's death will always be one she remembers. When the devastating news began spreading through the plant that day, Dan, who had taken a friend's son to work, took the student home.

Like the fine against GM when Murray died, Gates said Friday, Brenda and her family didn't get a cent.

Gates told those at the Vir-

gil monument "to remember those who have died, and fight for the living. I'd like to stand here after 25 years and say it's getting better, but it's not getting better."

There are fewer workplace inspections than ever, he said.

"We have to do better. We have to know our workers will go home to their families at the end of the day."

Lou Ann Binning, president of the Niagara Regional Labour Council, said the call to "mourn the dead, fight for the living," could not be more urgent on this National Day of Mourning.

In 2023, Canada's unions

Continued on page 4

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Simpson's Pharmasaves have been sold to a large pharmaceutical company Sean Simpson calls "a good fit" for his team, with an opportunity for growth. (Penny Coles)

Simpson's pharmacies sold to national company

Penny Coles
The Local

Simpson's Pharmacy has been a family-owned and operated business in Niagara-on-the-Lake since 1977, the family held in high regard for not only the services the business offers but for their involvement in the community.

At the age of 47, Sean Simpson says he has been presented with an opportunity to have some flexibility and time to spend with his family, and has sold Simpson's Pharmasave on Niagara Stone Road and Simpson's Apothecary Pharmasave on King Street to SRx Health Solutions, which provides healthcare


and pharmaceutical services across Canada. SRx, Simpson told The Local, "is a good fit for us and our team, with the opportunity for us to grow." In a news release announcing the acquisition, SRx says its mission is to make healthcare simple, improve the wellness of Canadians, and ensure ev-

eryone has access to modern health services. For more than 10 years, SRx says, it has been providing a full range of comprehensive healthcare services, including specialty pharmacies, health clinics, nursing support and more, "to address and fill major gaps" in healthcare. As its has grown across the country, SRx says it has become one of the most accessible providers of comprehensive, integrated, and customized specialty health care services in Canada.

Brock Clancy, SRx CEO, says, "We immediately felt a strong alignment with Sean and his team, who put their full hearts into what they do." Clancy says SRx welcomes its new team members and is committed to making the transition "as seamless as possible for them and patients alike," and to "upholding and delivering outstanding service to the community. The Simpson team that you have come to know and trust will remain intact with zero disruption to service."

Simpson will remain a part of the pharmacy team, taking on the title of pharmacy liaison. "I am absolutely thrilled to be partnering with SRx to expand the services we are able to provide the local community," says Simpson. "Our family is both humbled and proud of the business that we have built here in Niagara-on-the-Lake over the past 46 years, and are extremely grateful for the outstanding support we have received from all of our loyal customers and patients. I am looking forward to being part of the SRx family and continuing the legacy of care, service, and community building that the Simpson's Pharmasave name has become known for."


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- 1/2 tsp honey
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tbsp of chia seeds

Spring has sprung, and it's crucial to take care of your eyes from the inside out. Incorporating healthy, nutrition-packed smoothies can be a great way to maintain your eye health. Try out this recipe for your next smoothie craving.


Spring Green Smoothie Recipe:

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1/2 small avocado	1/4 tsp cinnamon
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Town 'needs to address secondary suites'

Carrie Gleason
The Local

Is the town doing enough to address the affordable rental housing crisis in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

According to 27-year-old resident Scott Robinson, a delegate at the April 25 council meeting, it is not. He says the "town is actively discouraging it," by not promoting the new rules for making secondary suites in existing residential homes under Bill 23.

The provincial legislation came into effect in November 2022, allowing up to three residential units on most land zoned for one home in residential areas. While new units constructed must be compliant with building code and municipal bylaws, they would be exempt from development charges and rezoning.

At the meeting, Robinson urged council to adopt a motion to "actively and enthusiastically encourage the construction of secondary suites and accessory dwelling units."

According to data sup-

plied by Robinson, NOTL has almost three times fewer rental units than the provincial average, and young people, families, workers and seniors looking to downsize and 'age in place' are being prohibited from living in town due to lack of affordable rental units. The town, Robinson says, "is actively changing for worse" and "becoming older, richer and whiter."

To support this claim, he cited the most recent census showing that since 1996, the population of those under 25 in NOTL has dropped by 30 per cent. He also added that the number of households making more than \$200,000 per year has more than doubled in the past 10 years, and the town is almost three times less diverse than the provincial average.

The solution, he says, is for council to address the rental housing crisis in its upcoming strategic plan, actively encourage construction of secondary suits and accessory dwelling units, and have town staff create a promotional plan to encourage resi-

dents to construct additional residential units on their properties, including information about it on the town website.

Coun. Nick Ruller responded by saying that there may be "unintended consequences" by moving too quickly to change municipal zoning bylaws. "We have to be somewhat cautious to ensure we are delivering the services those residents expect when they are occupying those spaces," he said.

Town CAO Marnie Cluckie added that "Housing affordability is top of mind. There are a number of things that had to be done and still have to be done. One was alignment with Bill 23 to make sure there is an understanding. Staff are looking at that but it has to be part of the conformity exercise for the official plan and for zoning, so those pieces all have to come into alignment before we can take those actions."

Town staff reported that there have been enquiries from residents about creating secondary units on their properties, but



It was a year ago when Scott Robinson first suggested the town should address secondary suites in neighbourhoods with large lots, such as this one in St. Davids, as a way to alleviate the rental housing crisis. Now he is asking council to take action. (Penny Coles)

there is some confusion in relation to short-term versus long-term rentals. "Our goal is to keep people in the community, have youth here, have families and complete communities and, not to discourage short-term rentals, but our approach to those are different," Cluckie said.

In response to the delegation, Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and council have

requested a report from town staff on applications they have received so far under the new rules for building long-term rental suites.

When asked his thoughts on the outcome of the meeting, Robinson told The Local, "I do believe that this council supports adding rental housing, and I do believe that many of them 'get' the negative ef-

fects of our planning and zoning system, but I am not convinced that they are going to make it a priority. The exclusive anti-change NIMBY voice in town is very strong, and it would take a lot of political conviction to act against it. I really hope that this council will make addressing the rental housing crisis a priority — but I think it's going to take more work."

Council not ready to permit school demolition

Carrie Gleason
The Local

Despite the town having received a notice of intention to demolish the former Parliament Oak school building at 235 King Street, the future of the building remains uncertain.

At an April 25 Niagara-on-the-Lake meeting, council amended the recommendations of the municipal heritage committee requesting more information from the property owner after hearing a presentation from former town councillor Clare Cameron of the Niagara Foundation.

On Feb. 10, a notice of intention to demolish the building was submitted

on behalf of the property owner, Two Sisters Properties, which wants to tear down the entire school building with the exception of the 1915 Parliament Oak stone tree marker, the Castellani Statuary commemorating the Underground Railroad, the two bas-relief panels on the south side of the former school, and the large-format carved oak tree panel located on the east side of the building.

At an April 5 municipal heritage committee meeting, members responded to council's request to advise on whether any additional information was required.

At that meeting, specific artifacts from the former school were identified,

such as a 1948 time capsule and the name of the school engraved over the entranceway. The committee also requested a commemoration plan for the interpretation of the history and heritage value of the property be prepared by a qualified member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals, which would outline how the history of the site would be interpreted in the future.

They also called for a waste salvage plan.

At the town council meeting Tuesday night, Cameron provided additional background on the significance of the school building to Niagara-on-the-Lake's heritage, including its im-

portance in terms of education, post-war growth and youth, and about the original architect, Lionel Ashton Hesson. As well as listing additional artifacts of significance identified in the heritage impact assessment, the foundation asked council to request that the property developer acknowledge the site for its 67 years of use as a public school; salvage and rescue some of the building materials, including slate chalkboards, brick, and hardware; and acknowledge the architect and his work.

A motion was passed by council requesting more information from the property owner based on the recommendations of the municipal heritage committee and input from the Niagara Foundation.

Cameron also urged council to designate the property under the Ontario Heritage Act, saying demolition was "premature." Currently, the building is listed on the town's register of properties of cultural heritage, value or interest.

On March 3, a revised application for development of a hotel on the site was submitted and deemed complete. Council has 90 days from that date to serve notice of intent to designate under the act.



The Parliament Oak site commemorates the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman.



The owner of the former school building has asked for a permit to tear it down, although there is discussion about saving some of the more historic elements.

All kinds of municipal workers face risks: Plato

Continued from page 1

are committed to honouring workers killed or injured at work, and fighting for the living with a call to all workers to participate in workplace health and safety by knowing their rights, using the available tools and defending occupational

health and safety wins.

Workplace deaths are preventable, she said, yet “the latest figures show a worker somewhere in the world dies at least once every 10 seconds.”

In Canada about 1,000 worker deaths a year are recognized by governments and workers’ compensation boards,

“and we know this is just the tip of the iceberg.”

In 2021, there were 1,081 workplace fatalities and 253,397 lost-time claims in Canada, said Binning.

“Unions have fought hard to win rights and build the tools that can make safe workplaces, and create a culture of prevention even as the work changes and new hazards emerge.”

Employers must take responsibility for assessing and eradicating hazards, she said, including new and emerging hazards in workplace supply chains, with the participation of workers in prevention through health and safety committees.

“Every worker should come home safely. As workplaces have changed over the recent years, we are supporting workers in their roles to create a culture of safety and prevention, and demanding employers and governments respect their duty to create safe workplaces.”

There was a second service in NOTL Friday morning, this one organized by Fire Chief Jay Plato who wanted to mark the day as a reminder of work-related risks not only from fighting fires, but also the illnesses that are known to be associated with fighting fires.

Plato told the small contingent of fire-fighting staff, volunteers and community members

attending the ceremony, that in addition to remembering and honouring workers “who have died or suffered physical or mental injury or illness due to workplace accidents, hazards or harassment, today is also a day to collectively renew our commitment to improve health and safety in the workplace and prevent further injuries, illnesses and deaths.”

Work-related tragedies are not limited to one type of work or worker, he said. “Employees of all fields, backgrounds and ages can fall victim to an incident that prevents them from working and living fully. These incidents can also affect their families, friends, colleagues and communities.”

Municipalities such as NOTL, while small, “can be complex and demanding. From snow removal to garbage collection, road maintenance to firefighting — each and every day, there is no shortage of potentially dangerous jobs being undertaken by numerous town staff. We all have ownership to keep ourselves and each other safe.”

In NOTL, he said, “we remember and honour the life of former town employee and



NOTL Fire Chief Jay Plato organized a service to bring awareness of risks to municipal employees.



MPP Wayne Gates questions the WSIB practice of deeming, which can cut benefits to injured employees such as Jeleel Stewart.



Kit Andres advocates for fairness for all injured workers, including Jeleel Stewart. (Photos by Penny Coles)



Wendy Murray Nicholson and Lou Ann Binning in a moment of silence during Friday’s National Day of Mourning at the Virgil monument dedicated to Joel Murray and others who have died or suffered injuries from workplace accidents.

Jeleel Stewart, injured on the job, living in poverty

Penny Coles
The Local

Thanks to Jane Andres and Kit Andres, advocates for the rights of migrant farmworkers, this year’s National Day of Mourning service in Virgil also addressed the plight of Jeleel Stewart, a farmworker injured years ago when working for Mori Nurseries.

As Jane wrote in The Local last week, in March 2008, Stewart, then 34, returned to Niagara-on-the-Lake for his second year at Mori Nurseries. Two months later, his left hand was crushed by a forklift in a workplace accident.

After three months, Stewart returned home, where he continued physiotherapy and was partially compensated by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) for two years.

Although he was unable to regain the use of his hand and fingers, in 2010 he received a letter from WSIB saying that “he could conceivably find work at a gas bar in Niagara because he

still had one working hand,” says Andres, “despite the fact that he lives in Jamaica.” He was no longer entitled to compensation.

This practice is known as deeming, and MPP Wayne Gates has been trying to get it stopped.

In December 2022 he presented Bill 57 asking that WSIB not be allowed to continue the practice of deeming as it stands. The bill was not passed.

Again last week, Gates stood in the legislature and spoke of the Day of Mourning, bringing up Bill 57, how it relates to the practice of deeming, and what has happened to Jeleel Stewart, referring to Andres’ plea for him not to be forgotten.

“There’s an article in the local paper in NOTL — it’s called The Local — about a worker that was deemed,” he said in the legislature. “He was a farm worker who lost his arm (the use of his arm), and they (WSIB) deemed him.”

He explained WSIB said Jeleel, a farmer, “could pump

gas with the other arm. And because he was deemed, he’s living in poverty. Why would we not get rid of deeming? I don’t think any worker in the province of Ontario should live in poverty when they get hurt on the job.”

At Friday’s service, Gates addressed WSIB, saying “if you care about workers, stop deeming today, for the National Day of Mourning.”

Kit Andres told the small group in Virgil about learning about the devastation of a workplace death at the age of 12 as a student at Col. John Butler School when classmate Tom Murray found out his dad had died. “That has always stayed with me,” said Kit, that a parent might not return from work at the end of the day, or like Jeleel, that they will return home to their family at the end of the season injured and unable to work.

“They come here, leaving their family, knowing they may not return, or may return injured. That was the case with Jeleel,” who returned home with his hand severely damaged and unable to support his family. “Jeleel is in the hospital right now and we don’t know how long he will live.”

All workers deserve protection, whether they are Canadian citizens or migrant workers, she said, calling for WSIB to step up and do what’s right for Jeleel’s family, and for every worker who is injured.

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Maria's parents taught her to give back to the community where she lives, in any way she can. She grew up watching her mother put together events that raised awareness and funds for the community. Prior to her mother's passing after a 10-year battle with breast cancer, Maria made a promise to her mother to continue this work in her memory.

By partnering with local businesses, Anchor Niagara has successfully raised over \$170,000 for local charities and not-for-profits, and fulfilled more than 5,000 volunteer hours in 20 events in the past five years. At the same time, Anchor Niagara has been bringing business in the off-season to Niagara's hospitality industry.

As a mentor on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee, Maria is filled



Elise and Maria at Eat, Drink, Pink! 2022

with pride when she sees the young members learn and grow with its guidance. For her, mentorship plays a big role in the planning and execution of a successful fundraiser.

With the support of local venues, including White Oaks Resort and Spa, Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery and Niagara Falls Convention Centre, Anchor Niagara was able to success-

fully organize bigger events in 2022.

The Grammy award-winning Boyz || Men played in NOTL with funds supporting Hotel Dieu Shaver Foundation. The famous

mom duo, Cat + Nat entertained guests at two sold-out shows benefiting Pink Pearl Foundation, and Anchor Niagara's annual Designer Purse Bingo event at White Oaks sells out

every time.

The key to event success is that ticket sales cover venue, food and entertainment fees. The fundraising part is with the raffles, silent auction and on-site donations that guests make directly to the charity.

The annual Eat, Drink, Pink! Event returns Thursday, May 11 at Ravine.

This year's event hosts a food station, candy bar, and silent auction. Multi-platinum artists 80 Empire will be spinning tunes and filling the dance floor.

All proceeds will benefit Pink Pearl Foundation.

Pink Pearl Canada is a community-oriented charitable organization that provides support, facilitates connections and empowers self-identifying young women who are courageously overcoming the social and emotional challenges of being diagnosed with cancer across Canada. It was founded by NOTL local, and cancer survivor Elise Gasbarrino.

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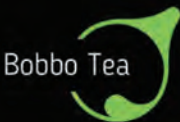
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EDITORIAL

Larger fines might help reduce workplace accidents

As MPP Wayne Gates said at the National Day of Mourning service in Virgil, it isn't getting any better.

He was referring to the number of workplace injuries and deaths, despite what seems increasingly more focus on workplace safety than ever.

The town, as Fire Chief Jay Plato said, has hired a dedicated workplace health and safety coordinator, and is likely not the only municipality to take that step. We hear of companies increasing the time each employee or department must spend — and we know time is money — following regulations intended to create a safe and healthy work environment.

It seems we're trying to do what is right, yet each year, as pretty much the same crowd gathers outside the Centennial Arena, we hear the same news.

We greet Wendy and some-

times her family members, and mourn their loss with them, their father, and the grandfather the youngsters will never know.

And we all hear that the tragedies continue, despite what seems like a strong will to prevent them.

Although GM is the local company we hear about when it comes to infractions leading to workplace fatalities, as Gates pointed out, it's not only GM. Far from it.

He also reminds us that when companies are fined, that money doesn't go to the families, not a cent of it.

The startling information we heard Friday was that the most recent death at GM cost the company \$325,000 — that was the penalty meted out just last week. How is that enough to provide an incentive for changes to be made? Shouldn't it be in

the millions?

That was part of the narrative from the crowd last week. GM was fined \$250,000 when Joel Murray died. It's 25 years later, and the fine was upped to \$325,000. How can that be right? For a life lost? Families must feel outraged at how little companies are fined, and so should we.

Fines are intended to help motivate employers to keep their employees safe, but this doesn't seem to be the case. And they certainly don't in any way make up for illnesses, injuries and loss of life.

The National Day of Mourning is intended as a reminder of how life can change for a family in an instant, because of something that is preventable. Attending a service such as the one held in Virgil Friday puts faces to losses and injuries. Having Kit Andres

speak of Jeleel Stewart reminds us too that communities who benefit from the hard work of migrant workers have a responsibility firstly to keep them safe so they can return to their families and continue to lead a productive life, and when accidents occur, to ensure they receive the compensation they deserve.

It's unfortunate that the attendance at these services isn't greater. It was noted Friday that pre-pandemic there were years when a bus-load or two of high school students would pull into the arena parking lot, delivering teens to attend the ceremony.

Maybe that is where to start making change happen, by convincing the next generation of employers and employees that they have a duty to keep each other safe.

For any parent or grandparent of a young person starting

this or her first job, and hopefully any employer responsible for the safety of their employees, attending an emotional and heart-wrenching Day of Mourning service would be motivation to pass on the dire message of safety awareness.

Maybe motivation enough for employers not to ask those untrained on equipment to work on it, for employees to say no if they are asked to, and to ensure that returning home to loved ones after a day at work is a given.

What more can we do to eliminate workplace tragedies? We can work to convince our provincial and federal governments that much stiffer penalties are needed for employers who have failed to keep their employees safe.

Otherwise, these fines will continue to be seen as just a small cost of doing business.

Twenty-five years ago, a much younger mother and reporter with kids about the same age as the Murrays sat in their living room and talked to Wendy about all she had lost that day, her kids cuddled up beside her, and left with a photo of the childhood sweethearts for the front page of what was then the Niagara Advance. That picture showed a beautiful young couple in love, with their future stretching out before them.

What happened to take that away from them and their kids was devastating, and totally preventable.

We all have a responsibility, and a part to play in putting an end to preventable accidents and the destruction of families who have a right to their future together.

Penny Coles
The Local

Changes 'up north' impacting black bears and humans



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

Now that the clock has officially struck May, some of us may already be projecting our mindsets to the May 2-4 long weekend. By means of climate and culture, this is seemingly the weekend where Canadians shift into summer living gear. It often marks the first weekend where southern Ontario goes north to cottage country.

Even without having a cot-

tage, I feel the buzz of anticipation in the air, much like the buzz of bumble bees and other insects coming to life at this time of year. However, I also have a fear — not of cottage country, but for it.

The northern landscape is changing fast. What many of us in southern Ontario, such as Niagara and Toronto, refer to as 'up north' is still very much technically southern or central Ontario. Our southern Ontario influence has not crept, but rather swept into wildlands that struggle to preserve their naturalized identity.

Case in point, let's consider how the vast majority of the shorelines in Muskoka's cottage country are technically private

property. Further to that, these shorelines are developed. On the big-name lakes of Muskoka, Rosseau and Skeleton, there are barely any appreciable stretches of fully naturalized shoreline.

A few summers ago, I was helping a friend film a wedding in Muskoka. After the last morning of collecting great footage and excess sunshine, we wanted to cool off in some nearby water. We were floored at how difficult it was to find publicly accessible water for a swim — in an area of the world that contains more freshwater per person than just about anywhere else.

Just when we finally found a woodsy stretch of shoreline and made our way down to it, we still accidentally trespassed, as we were kindly reminded by the land owner who saw us head down the hillside.

near shorelines also has ripple effects which affect populations of fish, bobcats and eagles alike.

Thankfully, these 'southern up north' developments are typically in the form of large cottages polka-dotting the shore, versus the aggressive and expansive urban sprawl we experience in southern Ontario.

For now.

The glory days of being likely to see a moose in Muskoka's cottage country are now reduced to very rare treat. It gives us pause to consider our other iconic large mammal, the black bear, and how it too is feeling the pinch of space

where south meets north.

The black bear population on the Bruce Peninsula is slowly but surely destined to become genetically different from the black bears of Barrie and beyond. Southern Ontario-style development sprawl in Collingwood and Wasaga are making it difficult for the separated bear populations to migrate and share their genes successfully.

In most of our lifetimes, I am willing to bet that Toronto's spread, like bacteria in a petri dish, will eventually physically connect to Barrie. A close look at satellite imagery showcases how only a handful of large

farm properties and woodlots remain in between.

In the meantime, previously quiet hiking trails have been inundated with visitors in recent years to the point it has prompted paid parking and crowd limits in areas that were once considered remote or secluded.

I have two itching questions about the relationship between our southern and perceived northern world. How far and how quickly will the new 'wild frontier' shift north? And will our elected officials keep their eye on the ball to preserve the character and ecosystems of the land we call 'up north'?

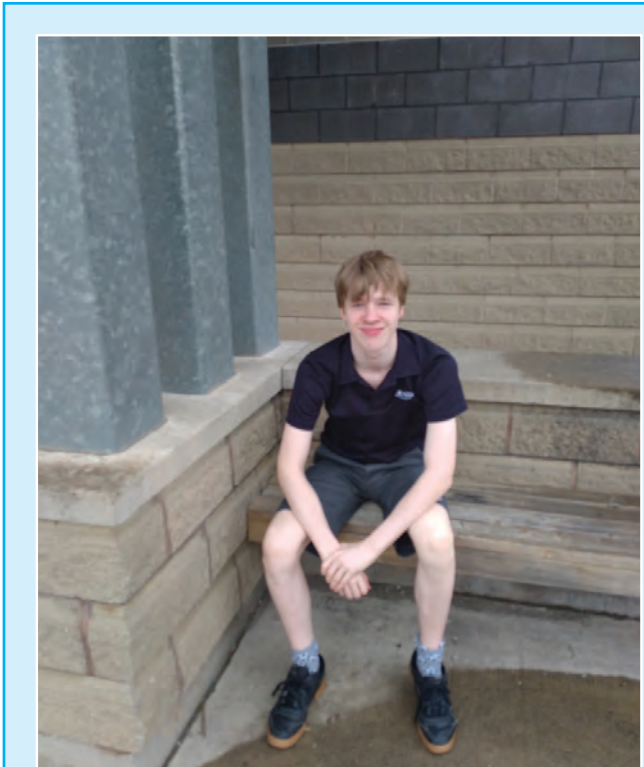
View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

In *Scenes of a Sexual Nature* (Britbox 2006), seven disconnected episodes all take place on a summer's day on Hampstead

Heath. The action and interaction is all sexually motivated, and the stories are loosely strung together to create a thought-provoking investigation of relationships. Dame Eileen Atkins and Hugh Bonneville give stellar performances.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to go to the 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.



Where's Ben?

Eden student Ben Foster continues to discover new locations in NOTL, wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. We didn't receive any answers to where Ben was last week — he was at the Niagara District Airport.

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COMMENT

—Local LETTERS Who will maintain heritage features residents are fighting to keep?—

I would like to remark on one concern that appeared to have been brushed over at the recent special council meeting dealing with the latest requests from Solmar.

This is the question of who is going to maintain all of the preserved heritage features after the Rand property subdivision development has been sold off and the developer moves on. It is SORE's position that because of the significant cultural value of the site that all the heritage features should be restored and preserved by the developer even though age and

neglect has already taken its toll. If that is the case then maintaining them after they are restored becomes extremely important.

To the question "Who will maintain the heritage features after the units are sold off?" that was posed by a councillor, the Solmar representative responded by saying that the condo corporation would take over the maintenance of the heritage features as well as all the other common areas. The councillor seemed to be satisfied with that answer and asked no further questions. Having

been on a condo board in Toronto for 18 years and also having worked for a developer, I was not satisfied with that answer and alarm bells went off for me.

I would be asking, "If these features are so important in terms of cultural heritage, then will the developer write into the condo docs that there be a continuing legal obligation on the condo board to maintain the heritage features to a certain standard? And shouldn't the town want to make sure that there is?"

I say this because this is an example of how devel-

opers wipe their hands of key features that they use to sell their projects in the first place and then the condo board is stuck with the additional expense of trying to maintain them.

The greater the ratio of additional features to the number of properties that will be sharing the expense, the higher will be the expense per owner, until it is no longer economically viable. (That would be one reason that Solmar is trying to squeeze so many units onto the site and will not support SORE's plan, which is less

dense). Then what happens? Either the condo board has to start cutting corners on the maintenance of the special features, or they have to start using them to generate additional funds. To me it seems like a bit of a conundrum, and I don't know how to solve it but I urge the town not to shrug it off, to address it now, because maintenance fees are a huge issue.

Naturally, the developer will use the restored heritage features to pitch their project, but developers usually underestimate their maintenance fees to buyers. By the

time the new owners realize just how much it will actually cost them to maintain those features the developer will be out of the picture. The quality of the condo board and the owners becomes crucially important.

In this case, all these heritage features will be openly accessible to the rest of the community, but only the new owners will be paying to maintain them. They will ask themselves, "Is that fundamentally fair?" In my experience that will become an issue.

Jackie Bonic
NOTL

—Local LETTERS Good government respects citizens

As a (relative) newcomer to Niagara-on-the-Lake, I was surprised by the handling of the public/council meeting dealing with precious heritage issues of the Rand Estate and Parliament Oak School. I am not, however, a newcomer to public meetings, council meetings or 'special' meetings — both as a resident/observer and as a reporter.

It was clearly known that a large number of residents would attend the Rand subdivision meeting, yet the doors to the meeting room remained closed and barred as the foyer of the commu-

nity centre filled up to capacity, and the temperature both inside and outside began to drop. When the doors finally opened at several minutes before 5 p.m., the room was clearly already set up and empty. This is a familiar control strategy too often used to establish hierarchy.

The immediate departure of the lord mayor was followed by the deputy mayor taking control of the meeting. I don't think anyone in the room was accustomed to a lecture on manners, behaviour or demeanour at the very start of a meeting

of citizens. The lecture was quite startling and seemed to immediately set an antagonistic and combative tone — to what end? I wondered. The heritage preservation presentation was among the best I have ever witnessed; factual, evidence-based and clearly well-researched. This seemed the essence of what Niagara-on-the-Lake is — an historical and beautiful town, (mostly) beautifully-preserved and thriving.

Many other such towns have been completely taken over by oppositional forces that in essence have destroyed them. The examples

are too numerous to detail; a rather large recent example is Toronto paving over the site of the first Parliament in the city core, and the destruction of part of Osgoode Hall grounds — forerunner, I believe to the very first Law Society establishment in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The immediate 'shushing' of the citizens during the meeting itself was also something of a shock. Whether a formal council meeting or not, respect for citizens is the hallmark of good governance, often determined by the presence and conduct of the chair.

By the time the deputy mayor called for a recess — two hours into the meeting? — the temperature in the room where the air conditioning seemed to be running full-on, became too uncomfortable for me and several others. That too is another strategy to 'thin the crowds,' as it were.

Fortunately it did not seem to work all that well.

While I was not present for the end result, local papers provided the news that preservation — not demolition — ruled the decision. One may only fervently hope that the inevitable

appeal to Ford's revamped and powered-up Ontario Land Appeal board does not turn into yet another rubber-stamped provincial approval over-riding what are, in Niagara-on-the-Lake and so many other special Ontario places, national treasures.

On a related note, one wonders how on earth a Dairy Queen ended up on the main heritage street of Niagara-on-the-Lake? I hope that — and the OLT decision — is not an indication of the town's future.

Daphne Lavers
NOTL

Ted's thoughts: on discrimination and hate



Ted Mouradian
Special to The Local

I saw this quote recently and although I don't know who said it, it made me think of what is happening in society today: 'Why are we taught to be afraid of the witches and not the people burning them alive?'

Think about this. We are taught to be afraid of the 'other' and yet we rarely question those who are telling us that the 'other' is bad. We too of-

ten accept their word as gospel even if we might know better or feel what they are saying is not right.

Let's look at what is happening in our society today, especially in the United States, but spreading to Canada and Niagara as well. Certain groups and certain people are spouting hate and division in order to elevate their point of view to the detriment of others.

Some of you reading this today believe all developers are bad, all politicians are corrupt, and you are willing to accept that certain races are inferior, that gay people are pedophiles and trans people are against God's plan, and in many cases you believe it with-

out question.

We need to stop labelling all types and groups of people as if they are all the same. Individuals are the problem, not the group.

Here is where things go off the rails. A very charismatic person who has the gift of persuasion can usually talk one or two other weaker people into believing false and misleading statements about other people. In many cases it is because these easily-led people are not happy with who or where they are. So making someone else a target or scapegoat makes them feel superior, and that they belong to something. So they follow blindly.

As the movement grows

they build up momentum with other people to the point where they get some power and may even become decision-makers who gain more and more power until laws are passed that force the rest of us to stand by and watch them burn those witches alive. Even when we know it is wrong, we feel we can't stop this moving train and stand by silent and helpless.

Now you may think that I am an alarmist. I am not. It has happened in the past and all of the signs are telling me that it is happening again. Books are being banned and free speech in the U.S. is being stifled because one group is vilifying another group. One group is trying to stop the teaching of

history because it can offend their group. This is happening today to the south of us and if you watch the political rhetoric today in Canada it could soon reach our country, if it is not here already.

We need to stop, take a breath and do some research to find out if in fact what we are being told is the truth or is it simply misinformation or fear. By the way, F.E.A.R. is 'false evidence appearing real'. Look at the evidence and stop lumping everyone in a group as the same.

There are good and bad politicians. There are good and bad developers. There are good and bad preachers. There are good and bad law enforcement

officers. There are good and bad in just about every race, religion, gender and nationality, but we have to stop vilifying the group or we will go backward into the Dark Ages and we will begin to burn people alive simply because they belong to the group we are told we must hate and fear.

I am wishing that our better selves will prevail over the next decade to prevent us from repeating history because we didn't learn from it.

Ted Mouradian is an author and professional speaker. He is president of the 2% Factor Inc. and his videos can be seen on TikTok and Instagram. Ted can be reached at ted@the2percentfactor.com.



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Addressing mental health saves money down the road

Continued from page 1

He reached out to Niagara Centre MP Vance Badawey, who is also the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services.

“He said he just needs a proposal from one of Niagara’s Indigenous-led organizations who would be willing to host this,” Soos says of his discussion with Badawey, also of Metis heritage.

Soos says the Indigenous community of Niagara works as a collective. Besides Shawanoo, Soos has also spoken to Wendy Sturgeon of the Niagara Chapter of Native Women, Jackie Poulin of NPAAMB (Niagara Peninsula Aboriginal Area Management Board) and to the Friendship Centres of Ontario, who have all supported his quest.

Asked what his vision of a mobile crisis unit would be, Soos doesn’t hesitate.

“We want cars, and there are provincial grants that will help us buy the vehicles,” he explains. “We would have a talk therapy option, too. We will show that Indigenous people can lead their own futures on this. We’ve been doing wellness and recovery forever. Look at the tradition of healing lodges.”

Soos says he has been of-



Community activist Steve Soos is now looking for government funding for an Indigenous mental health mobile crisis unit pilot project. (Don Rickers)

fered a meeting with provincial Minister of Indigenous Affairs Greg Rickford, thanks largely to the help of (Niagara West MPP) Sam Oosterhoff.

“We should be treating mental health, homelessness and addiction as public health matters with a public health response,” insists Soos, “and not as criminal or police matters. Ultimately, we want these calls rerouted away from police and to healthcare professionals, and this pilot project and Niagara’s resilient

Indigenous community will show the province and the country this is possible.”

The graduate of Trent University with a double major in international development and philosophy does his homework. That allows him to make a financial case for the mobile unit as well.

“This will save a lot of money down the road in criminal justice,” he adds, “because you are giving people culturally appropriate service. The workers of the project

will be loaded with Indigenous knowledge, therefore preventing further police escalation, criminalization and discrimination of our people. Think of the savings in police budgets when they have to respond to less.”

And there is much more that the tireless advocate has been continuing to fight for.

He’s pushing for the addition of warning labels on all alcohol products, including wines sold at all Niagara area wineries.

At press time, he was hoping to meet Paul Calandra, Ontario’s Minister for Long Term Care, during the MP’s visit to Beamsville Tuesday. He shared with The Local a letter he submitted to Calandra in advance of the meeting, in which he outlined his ideas for a companionship service for seniors, an app to match the elderly with home care workers, and the need for more support workers in LTC homes.

He has ideas and opinions on the housing affordability crisis, as well.

“Young people are exiled from the housing market,” Soos laments. “And I’ve seen seniors in Welland begging on the streets for food more than ever. Seniors and young people are facing similar issues. We’re the ones being punished the most in this affordability emergency.”

And he is certain that the emergency declaration can be used to convince the province to allow all of Niagara’s hospitals to be saved, and to get new shelters built to house the

homeless 24 hours a day and to take in victims of domestic abuse.

Soos himself has spent time on the streets. The long-time sufferer from Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and anxiety says a difficult living situation at the beginning of the pandemic led to his own addiction problems. He ended up on the street and felt abandoned by his family and friends.

As his mental health and drug addiction spiralled out of control, he began his crusade for change in Niagara. He found an ally early on in Niagara Falls regional councillor Wayne Campbell, whose daughter Katey ended her own life 10 years ago after struggling with the same issues.

In conversation, Soos, who himself has thrown his hat into the ring unsuccessfully five times for municipal councils in Peterborough, Welland and Pelham, talks a mile a minute, jumping from topic to topic, from issue to issue, his voice rising in volume. It’s easy to see why some politicians are put off by his approach.

But many are listening. Niagara-on-the-Lake regional councillor Andrea Kaiser says Soos reached out to her personally after reading in The Local about Kaiser overcoming her own struggles with anxiety at one point in her life.

Kaiser, who adds that she never hesitated to support the motion to declare an emergency in Niagara, is

impressed with Soos’ advocacy on the Indigenous mobile mental health unit.

“I think we need to be creative about solutions,” Kaiser says. “The mobile health unit is a great example of thinking outside the box. We can get so set in our ways in government. Because of his passion, his laser focus, it seems he is able to affect change more particularly on that issue because he doesn’t have to focus on everything else.”

Soos hasn’t totally given up on politics, though. He is now hoping to vie for a seat on Canada’s senate.

Since July 2016, the federal government has invited qualified Canadians to apply to be senators. An arms-length advisory board assesses nominees and applicants based on a set of criteria.

Thorold city councillor Carmen DeRose, among others, supports Soos’ application for the position. He thinks having a young senator like Soos with his motivation to do good for the community would be an asset to the upper chamber.

“I think he has a lot to offer,” says DeRose. “He’s so well-rounded, articulate and intelligent. He just has to stay clean and focus on what he’s doing. His best intentions are for the community, his fellow Canadians who have passed away with mental health and addiction problems. The senate needs some fresh blood.”

His quest for a senate seat is just one example of how he looks at every possibility. Another is how he has been sending tweets and messages to former Canadian resident Elon Musk, asking the multi-billionaire for his monetary support on the three issues.

And he’s not afraid to contact officials at all political levels in his quest to be heard. Besides taking his advocacy to all 12 Niagara municipalities and the region he has also reached out to various different ministers both federally and provincially, and promises to continue doing so.

“I want the UN (United Nations) Secretary General to issue a statement to condemn discrimination of the mentally ill, the homeless and the addicted around the globe,” he says. “And I’m going through the ambassador Bob Rae to do it. I’ll contact anybody.”

Soos says 10 to 15 people stop him on the street daily to applaud him for his efforts. He feels that his advocacy on mental health, homelessness and addiction is his destiny.

“I want Niagara to mitigate this mental health, homelessness and addiction emergency,” he says. “We may never end it completely, but I’m willing to go to war for my family and friends. The suffering needs to end in this region.”

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Youth collective begins spring sessions this week

Penny Coles
The Local

After a successful eight-week session with more than 100 registered youth, the Niagara Youth Collective will begin its spring program Monday.

Caroline Polgrabia, founder of the program designed to offer a safe space for youth, says once the winter sessions finished, volunteers “had a good debriefing discussion about what worked and what didn’t,” and also spent some time on new ideas, and how to make them work.

“The last session was about learning,” she says, and what they learned has gone into making some adjustments for the spring sessions.

One of the most important

lessons, she says, was that they weren’t drawing as many Grades 9 to 12 youth as they had hoped. “While there were some high school students who would come to the sessions and were okay hanging out with the younger group, others would say ‘this isn’t my scene,’” says Polgrabia.

To accommodate the senior members, the youth collective team has come up with one evening just for them. To begin these sessions, they have chosen Mondays from 7 to 9 p.m. for Grades 9 to 12 only, with pizza on offer, and likely some euchre games, although participation in the games is optional, Polgrabia stresses.

All other weekdays offer drop-ins for all ages from 4 to 6 p.m. to hang out, with a

variety of programs that are again optional.

Planning future sessions, Polgrabia says, “feels great this time round. It is so much less stressful, and we’re able to plan programming that reflects our volunteers,” who are both parents and community members.

For example, she says, Ben Higgins is back, offering a Raspberry PI microcontroller workshop, technology the kids seem to love. It will be limited to eight kids, but will be scheduled again if there is enough interest.

Yoga, cooking classes and chess nights are all back, as well as some special events.

Schedule

Here is the schedule for week 1, which begins Monday, May 1, as provided by the collective:

Monday — Senior Youth Night, Grades 9 to 12 only, from 7 to 9 p.m.

- Monday nights this spring session will be dedicated to senior youth to ensure they can enjoy access to the space exclusively with their own age group.
- This week, Monday, May 1, pizza and a game or two of euchre was expected. Senior youth can come out Mondays, have some fun, and maybe even play a few card games. And they don’t



Volunteer Ben Higgins works with Roc, getting the computers ready for Monday’s opening day for Grades 9 to 12.

have to worry if they don’t know how to play, there are veteran players ready to help.

Tuesday — All ages, drop-in from 4 to 6 p.m.

- All are welcome to come, network and enjoy the space. As usual, there will be snacks and there are some new spaces at the campus for them to explore and enjoy.
- Starting week 2 on Tuesday, May 7, a seven-week GO Girls program presented in partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara will begin. Space is limited to 12 youth and pre-registration is required. The program runs every Tuesday. Watch for forms to be posted in the near future.

Wednesday — All ages, drop-in from 4 to 6 p.m.

- The first week is casual and about getting back into the groove. Favourite programs like Cooking with Bobbi return in week 2, and some new programs are planned for this session.
- Watch for details and registration forms this coming week.

Thursday — All ages, drop-in from 4 to 6 p.m.

- By popular demand, Rachel is back on Thursdays for an hour of relaxation, focus and fun. Yoga with Rachel runs from 5 to 6 p.m.
- Yoga mats will be supplied, or visitors can bring their own. Dress comfortably and bring your water bottle.
- New, a five-week Raspberry PI microcontroller workshop that introduces the next level of

‘What’s Inside’ with Ben Higgins. Registration is limited to eight youth. Pre-registration is required. First come/first serve. If interest is high, the collective will look at another session in the near future.

- Registration is required, but this session is full.

Friday — All ages, drop-in from 4 to 6 p.m.

- Chess Night is back with both Learn to Play and competition formats. All ages and skill levels are welcome.
- Help celebrate the first week back in action with a taco and burrito night for Cinco de Mayo.

The youth collective thanks the Garrison House for once again supplying the SnackPLUS tacos and Burritos.



Volunteer Resa Mastromatteo pitches in to get the youth collective space ready for Monday’s spring launch. (Photos supplied)



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Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

Magical Azores Islands

The Azores, an archipelago composed of nine volcanic islands, are set in the mid-Atlantic, between America and Europe and have become a tourism hotspot in recent years. That is no surprise, as I found out on a visit there several years ago. The islands are part of Portugal and boast ideal weather, tranquil farmlands and spectacular flower-filled countryside. The exquisite baroque and co-

lonial architecture of the islands churches, town halls and city squares are reminiscent of days gone by and I recall immediately feeling at home in the delightful laid-back surroundings. Our leisurely-paced itinerary departs September 11 to 21 and will explore the four main islands...Terceira, Faial, Pico and São Miguel. We will see and feel all that these islands have to offer,

including the beautiful seascapes, active volcanoes and everything in between; a nature lovers dream. We will stay three nights on each island with sightseeing of the many highlights, plus there will be free time to relax and enjoy as you wish; perhaps a walk around one of the historic city centres; take a stroll along the cobblestone streets, a ride on a streetcar, or browse the shops.



Sao Pedro church Ponta Delgada



Azores local

The history of the islands is filled with myths and legends and possibly some truths. All of it is interesting! Some say Portuguese explorers were the first humans to arrive on the Azores; however, researchers have discovered that 5-beta-stigmaterol is present in sediment samples from between 700 and 850 CE. This is found in the feces of livestock such as sheep and cattle, neither of which are native to the islands. There is also evidence of fires from this period being used to

clear land for livestock. Researchers also discovered non-native ryegrass on the islands. Mice on the Azores suggest that these first arrived from Northern Europe, brought by Norwegian Vikings. Wherever the truth lies, the islands each have their own stories, their own unique beauty, their individual historic centres and their own charm. I invite you to peruse our itinerary and see if you agree that this is one delightful fall adventure! Visit www.craigtravel.com/NOTL but reserve

your space soon as space is becoming limited. Tour hosts, Lucy and Ross McLean look forward to sharing this fun adventure with you and I highly recommend it for those looking for a fun, kick-back getaway this September. Reserve with promo code ISLANDHOPPER and save \$200 per person! Call 1-800-387-8890 today to reserve your spot on our Magical Azores Islands journey, space is booking up fast! *Article by Robert Craig, Craig Travel President.*

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Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

3 ways to stay connected when your health isn't at its best

(NC) Life is richer when shared with people you care about and whose company you enjoy, whether it's attending a birthday party or going for a leisure stroll together.

Many of us living with chronic conditions – such as arthritis, diabetes or a lung condition like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) – may struggle with these moments because of worries about losing independence, the ability to participate in activities or feeling socially isolated as our condition progresses.

For when times feel tough, here are some reminders to help you get through:

Keep communication open

Speaking openly can lift a weight off your shoulders, even if it's uncomfortable at first. Be honest about your symptoms with trusted family, friends and health-care providers, especially if they are new or worsening. Beyond just discussing your symptoms, also talk about what fun things you and your network can do together now, and what you hope to



do together in the future.

Revisit how you manage your condition

While there is no silver bullet when it comes to managing a chronic health condition, there may be things you and your health-care providers can do to make your life

a bit easier. As your situation changes, re-evaluate what's working, what's not and make any adjustments based on your doctor's advice.

When it comes to managing a condition such as COPD, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis, a combination of phys-

ical activity, respiratory rehab programs, appropriate medications and avoiding irritants and allergens can all help maintain independence as well as reduce flare-ups and hospitalizations.

Reconnect with and grow your support system

Your doctor, family and close friends don't have to be your only source of support. Seek out groups online or via your health-care team to find people you can relate with who have the same condition.

Finding the right supports and management strategies, with help from your family,

friends and health-care team, can make a major difference in your ability to maintain independence and continue enjoying activities you love.

You can find more information about COPD management at lunghealth.ca/copd.

www.newscanada.com

What is your body telling you about the health of your brain?

(NC) Scientists know that age is the biggest risk factor for developing brain diseases, like dementia, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. Today, about six million people worldwide live with Parkinson's, including 100,000 Canadians and that number is expected to double by the year 2040 due to an aging population.

Many people are aware of the common symptoms of Parkinson's – tremors, loss of coordination, difficulty

speaking and other movement issues. However, every experience is different and there are several lesser-known symptoms and indicators that may appear years or decades before an official diagnosis, such as smell loss, depression, anxiety, fatigue, difficulty focusing and acting out your dreams.

The uniqueness of the Parkinson's experience and the variety of symptoms can make it that much more difficult for people to receive a

diagnosis. This lag not only delays when people start treatment, but it's estimated that as many as 80 per cent of cells producing dopamine, a brain chemical that fuels movement, mood and more – may be damaged by the time of an official Parkinson's diagnosis.

So, if you have symptoms, it is important to speak to a doctor. If diagnosed, a movement disorder specialist (a neurologist with additional training in Parkinson's) can

help provide care and develop an individualized treatment plan.

Currently, there is no cure for brain diseases like Parkinson's, Alzheimer's or dementia and there are no treatments to slow or stop the progression. However, researchers are working to better understand how these diseases develop, who gets them and why. Today, there are great strides being made.

For example, The Michael J. Fox Foundation's land-

mark brain health study, the Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI), has launched in certain cities across Canada. The program aims to rewrite the future of Parkinson's disease and brain health in general, by better understanding predictors of it. The goal is to help detect the disease earlier and, ultimately, understand it better to find a cure.

While the study is primarily interested in those recently diagnosed with Parkinson's

and not yet taking medication, there's also an opportunity for those over age 60 without Parkinson's disease who have lost their sense of smell or are acting out their dreams while asleep (REM sleep behaviour disorder). Those over age 60 without a known connection to Parkinson's can become a control volunteer as well. Find more information or learn how to get involved at michaeljfox.org/ppmi.

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Fairy tales come alive at St. Davids Public School

Mike Balsom
The Local

St. Davids Public School invited parents and the community to the school for two performances of *Into the Woods*, James Lapine’s fairy tale musical with music and

lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, this Tuesday and Wednesday. St. Davids Grade 4 teacher Sharon Heidebrecht had been working with a cast of 30 Grade 4 to 8 students twice a week since February to prepare for this week’s per-

formances. Two hundred Dragons sang in the choir to back up the actors on a stage set up as a fantastical forest, with Rapunzel’s castle walls made out of pizza boxes. Auditions were held in January, and by this week they were ready to take to the stage.

Paying the baker’s wife was like a dream come true for Avery Janzen, who has appeared in Linus Hand and Yellow Door Theatre productions in the past. “I have a lot of lines in this, about 65,” says Janzen, who will be attending Eden High School in September.

“We’ve put a lot of work into it. I’ve never had a role this big. I love theatre.” The cast performed Tuesday afternoon to a gymnasium filled with the cast’s counterparts from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3, who enthusiastically responded to

the portrayal of multiple princesses, princes and knights in shining armour in the weaving together of a number of familiar fairy tale characters. Performances Tuesday evening and Wednesday afternoon for the public were to follow.



Ella Parravicchino as the Witch (centre) on stage at St. Davids Public School. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Avery Janzen plays the Baker's Wife.



Chloe Roland as the Big Bad Wolf and Alina Zhang as Little Red Riding Hood, Dylan Kroeker as Jack, of Beanstalk fame, and Charlie Rowaan as Rapunzel's Prince in *Into the Woods*,



Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

3 tips for growing older with your pet

(NC) The idea of “growing old together” is a goal many of us aspire to. It doesn’t matter if that spe-

cial someone walks on two legs or four – both of your needs will change as you enter your golden years to-

gether. Age gracefully along with your furry (or scaly!) family member with these tips:

1. Stay physically active and make your space more accessible for both of you. Reduced mobility is a common aspect of aging, and it applies to you as well as your pet. You may be used to your pet running circles around you or jumping up to your highest shelves, but as you two continue together, your pet’s mobility will decrease faster than yours. Stairs can be challenging for pets to climb, particularly as they

age. Keep an eye on them and consult with your veterinarian if you have concerns about your pet’s mobility.

2. Watch what you (and your pet) eat. A good diet may be an obvious part of a healthy lifestyle, but it’s essential for both you and your pet. You may both want to try some changes to your meals as you age. Speak with your veterinarian to make sure you

are providing healthy and high-quality food for your animals.

3. Use medication responsibly for your pet and yourself. Your pet can get sick just like you, and they may be prescribed an antimicrobial medication, such as an antibiotic, to help them get better. It’s essential that you both take medications exactly as prescribed by your veterinarian or doctor. Not following the directions for medication use can cause antimicrobial resistance (AMR), which means the medications that treat bacteria, fungi, parasites and viruses are less effective, or not effective at all. This could mean your pet’s or your short-term infection is harder to treat, and can contribute to the longer-term problem of AMR.

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Flora's Walk: fundraiser for perinatal mental health care

Sharon Burns
The Local

After years of fertility treatments, Toronto mom Flora Babakhani became pregnant when she was 44 years old. Tragically, on Jan. 14, 2022, two months after she gave birth to her daughter, Amber, Flora died by suicide due to undiagnosed postpartum psychosis.

"Our health system failed her terribly," says Samantha Stanlik, who, with friend Meredith Durksen, is initiating a walk in St. Catharines to raise awareness of perinatal mental illness. The event is called Flora's Walk.

"Perinatal is a word that I didn't know the meaning of," said Durksen. It refers to the time, usually a number of weeks, immediately before and after birth.

Durksen is a new mom with a nine-month old daughter. "I work in the mental health field for the Canadian Mental Health Association here in Niagara, and I am also a registered psychotherapist working through my master's right now," she said.

"The reason for organizing Flora's Walk, for me," says Stanlik, "is the lack of conversation around perinatal mental health and how difficult it can be to access the proper support, even when you are actively trying."

Stanlik, a personal

support worker at Niagara Health's St. Catharines hospital site, works with women and babies, and is the mother of two girls, a two-year-old and a four-month-old.

"I thought I was well prepared for motherhood when, in reality, the transition was one of the hardest things I have experienced," she said. "The immense pressure we put on ourselves and the guilt we place on ourselves as parents is overwhelming sometimes."

She found herself struggling with breastfeeding and discovered accessing support, especially during a pandemic, difficult. "I'm not sure who cried more through our breastfeeding journey, my daughter or myself," she said.

"When I finally stopped putting that pressure on myself, I quit breastfeeding and sought counselling to let go of the guilt associated with it. I started to feel a change for the better."

However, it took nearly a year from the birth of her daughter for Stanlik to experience an improvement in her mental health.

"If I had known about all the wonderful businesses and support that I'm learning about as we make connections planning this walk, I feel like things could have improved earlier on," she said.

Even though it is the second year for some com-



Flora's Walk is raising money to put an end to tragic stories like that of Flora Babakhani, shown with her newborn daughter. (Photos supplied)

munities, this is Niagara region's first Flora's Walk. It will start from the Neil Peart Pavilion at Lakeside Park in St. Catharines on May 6. Over 15 different

businesses and agencies will be there, including therapists, doulas, Maternal Health Niagara, lactation support, and yoga and fitness studios.

The event "got much bigger than we thought, because, as moms, our minds are pulled in a lot of different directions," said Durksen.

Both Durksen and Stanlik's husbands, childhood friends from Niagara-on-the-Lake, have offered their support and will volunteer their time for the event.

"None of this was on my radar until I became a dad," said Kyle Durksen. "After experiencing my wife give birth to our daughter, I'm amazed at how surface level the conversation is around becoming new parents. There is a biological and psychological metamorphosis that occurs and nobody stops to ask 'how are you handling this?'"

Steve Stanlik has "seen, first-hand, how hard it can be to find the right kind of care."

"Everyone is constantly checking on the baby, rightfully so, but mom seems to fall through the

cracks," said Samantha. "Just asking how you're feeling at an appointment for the baby isn't enough to pull out the struggles one (mother) might be facing."

"We need a national strategy, a deep conversation about what to expect, what to watch for and although 'Healthy Babies Healthy Children' has this conversation before you are discharged, which is wonderful, it needs to continue at each well-baby appointment too," said Samantha.

The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program is funded by the province and delivered by local public health units.

The Canadian Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative (CPMHC) is a not-for-profit organization founded in 2021 by moms Jaime Charlebois and Patricia Tomasi, who each suffered from perinatal mental illnesses. The co-executive directors met with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in his office on Parliament Hill to commemorate World Maternal Mental Health Day, and to talk about the need for a perinatal mental health strategy.

According to the CPMHC website, a National Perinatal Mental Health Strategy should include universal screening and timely access to treatment. Their goal is that by 2032, federal, provincial and territorial governments will have passed and implemented appropriately-funded policies and legislation that are providing people timely access to perinatal mental health services, thereby substantially reducing perinatal mental illness in Canada.

People interested in attending Flora's Walk can meet at 10:30 a.m., May 6, at Lakeside Park in St. Catharines. Opening remarks begin at 11 a.m. and the walk commences at 11:30 from Lakeside Park to Rennie Park, across the bridge to Jaycee Park and back to Lakeside Park. Closing remarks and prize draws occur at 12:30 p.m.

"What happened to Flora shouldn't happen to anyone else. We need to do better," said Samantha.

Read more on Flora's story at floraswalk.ca.



Friends and young moms Samantha Stanlik and Meredith Durksen have organized Flora's Walk to provide more support for mothers suffering from perinatal mental health problems.



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Solo art exhibit by Yaelly opening at Ironwood

Sharon Burns
The Local

Ironwood Cider House on Lakeshore Road is more than a cider house — it's a place for up and coming artists to showcase their work,

including the labels on their cans. "We change our can art every year or two, depending on the number of new releases," said Robyn Brown, marketing and events manager at Ironwood.

"We gather a database of artwork submitted by local artists, and choose pieces that will help to tell the story of each product. Last year we featured a beautiful, woodland-style piece by First Nations artist Brent

Hardisty on our Heritage cider." "This year," added Brown, "we commissioned a street art/graffiti-style piece from Chris Perez for our Original. It will be called the OG, alluding to the fact it

was our first ever cider." Remy Gecelter, who goes by Yaelly for her artwork, first learned about Ironwood's interest in showcasing art when she applied to have her work depicted on cider cans.

"My whole life I've done art. I started when I was eight years old," said Gecelter. After taking a break from her work, Gecelter,

Continued on page 15



Remy Gecelter, who goes by Yaelly, will be at an opening reception of her art exhibit.

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Gallery consistently booked with varying art styles

Continued from page 14

who has no formal art training, felt she lacked professional experience. "I felt, as a self-taught artist, that I had something to prove."

Ironwood is giving her the forum to prove herself as an artist. Her first solo exhibit, called Self-Titled, "is an introduction of myself into the art world," said Gecelter. "It's a bit of a window into my soul."

"I was a very shy, introverted kid, and I found this a

way to express myself without having to speak," she explained. "I also used art to help with my mental health to get through tough times. Art is definitely a form of meditation."

Gecelter, who was born in South Africa and lives in Toronto, said, "my work is a reflection of the beautiful chaos that exists within each of us, and in this collection, I have channelled that chaos into a series of bright, bold and emotion-evoking pieces."

Using mixed media, she

has created a textured and multidimensional canvas that mirrors the layers of human emotion. A variety of colours and materials, including transferred images, acrylic and spray paint, is used to create pieces with the sponge painting method and a knife palette to give the canvas a layered and textured look.

"I draw inspiration from the world around me, but ultimately, my work is a reflection of my own inner landscape," said Gecelter. "Through my art, I am able

to explore my own vulnerabilities and share them with the world, creating a space for vulnerability and authentic connection."

The exhibit starts May 7 and runs until June 8. Gecelter, who will be there opening night, is hoping that visitors to her pop-up gallery will help to create a community canvas.

"I will be bringing a blank canvas and I will encourage everybody to add themselves to that canvas with paint," she explained. "I think it would be really in-

teresting to see what people put on that canvas."

"My hope is that each piece in this collection will evoke a response in the viewer, sparking a conversation about the complexities of the human experience," she continues. "Self-Titled" is not just a collection of art, it is a representation of the beauty and power of vulnerability, and an invitation to embrace the chaos within us all."

Exhibits in Ironwood's gallery space "began as a way to showcase collections

from our label artists," said Brown, "but I quickly realized how many extremely talented local artists we have in the area, so I decided to expand beyond just our label artists. Since then, our gallery has been consistently booked, with exhibits changing every four to six weeks. We've had a lot of fun showcasing different styles of art and allowing the artists to have creative freedom with everything, from their layout to the pieces they select to their reception parties."

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Designer Bag Bingo to raise money for student lunches

Penny Coles
The Local

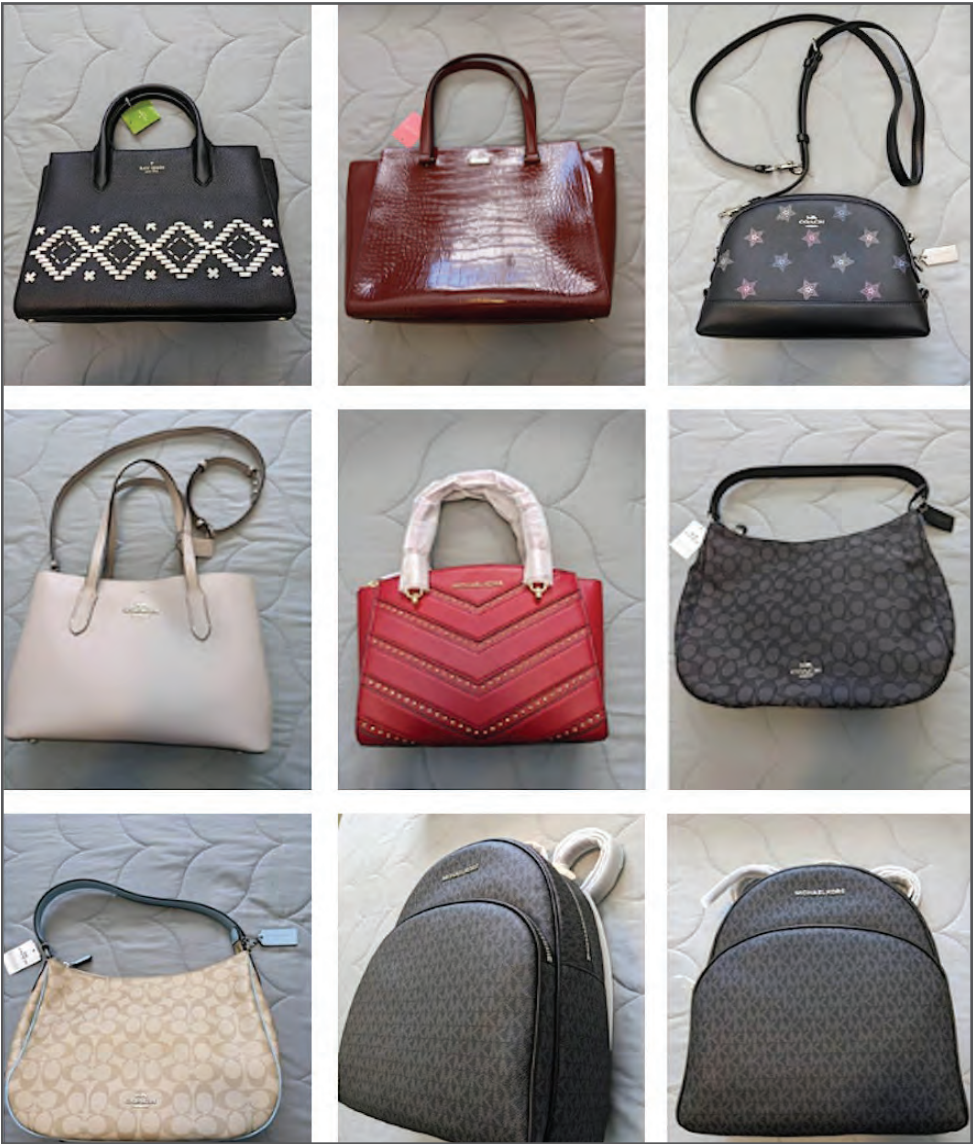
Nancy Broerse is gearing up for a major fundraiser to help provide lunches to school children across Niagara.

As chair of special events and fundraising for Business and Professional Women of Niagara Falls, Broerse has a Designer Bag Bingo in the works to support the Community Crew Lunch Program, which provides about 4,000 lunches each week to children in 30 different schools throughout the region.

The program started at Edith Cavell Public School in 2015, to ensure every child will have access to quality food every day.

A Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, Broerse is a 25-year member of the international women's advocacy group that members call the BPW. The Niagara Falls branch is the oldest in the federation, she says, which was officially recognized in Canada in 1930.

The non-profit organization advocates for equality for women worldwide, in social, financial, education and employment



There are nine games of bingo and beautiful purses to be won at Designer Bag Bingo. (Supplied)

issues, including with the United Nations, she explains.

In Canada, she adds, “we work on all levels of government for women’s equality,” going back as far as the fight for women to vote.

And although gender equality has come a long way, “it’s not come far enough. There is still lots to do,” says Broerse. “We’re not getting there fast enough. We’re still not getting equal pay for equal work.”

BPW Niagara Falls holds monthly meetings, which provide opportunities to stay informed on women’s issues, with guest speakers addressing concerns such as women in male-dominated careers and talking about the successes and obstacles to women moving upward.

Other interesting topics have been the way male politicians treat female politicians, says Broerse, which is not always with the respect they deserve, and the value of women in the decision-making process at home, in the workplace and in the community.

The group has contributed to many local causes, with a Tampon Tuesday, donations to Shaver Rehabilitation Hospital for equipment to help patients with ALS or strokes, and money to help the homeless and those suffering from mental illness. On a

larger scale, the group has advocated against female circumcision and for abortion rights.

This upcoming fundraiser is timely, with an increasing need for healthy food for students across the region, says Broerse. “There is a wait list of schools to be brought into this program. Who would have thought that we’d have this many children in need, but with the rising cost of food prices, families are struggling. There are mothers who can’t give their children breakfast or lunch, and are sending their kids to school with an empty lunch box. This is an all-around wonderful program,” she says, explaining the older students help by distributing food, and are learning about community service at an early age.

Different groups are working to eradicate hunger in Niagara schools and do it in different ways, she says, “but it’s never enough. We’re all just doing what we can to help.”

Broerse is making sure the Designer Bag Bingo fundraiser is a great event, with much more than bingo on offer for those who attend.

It will be held Friday, May 19 at Club Heidelberg in St. Catharines.

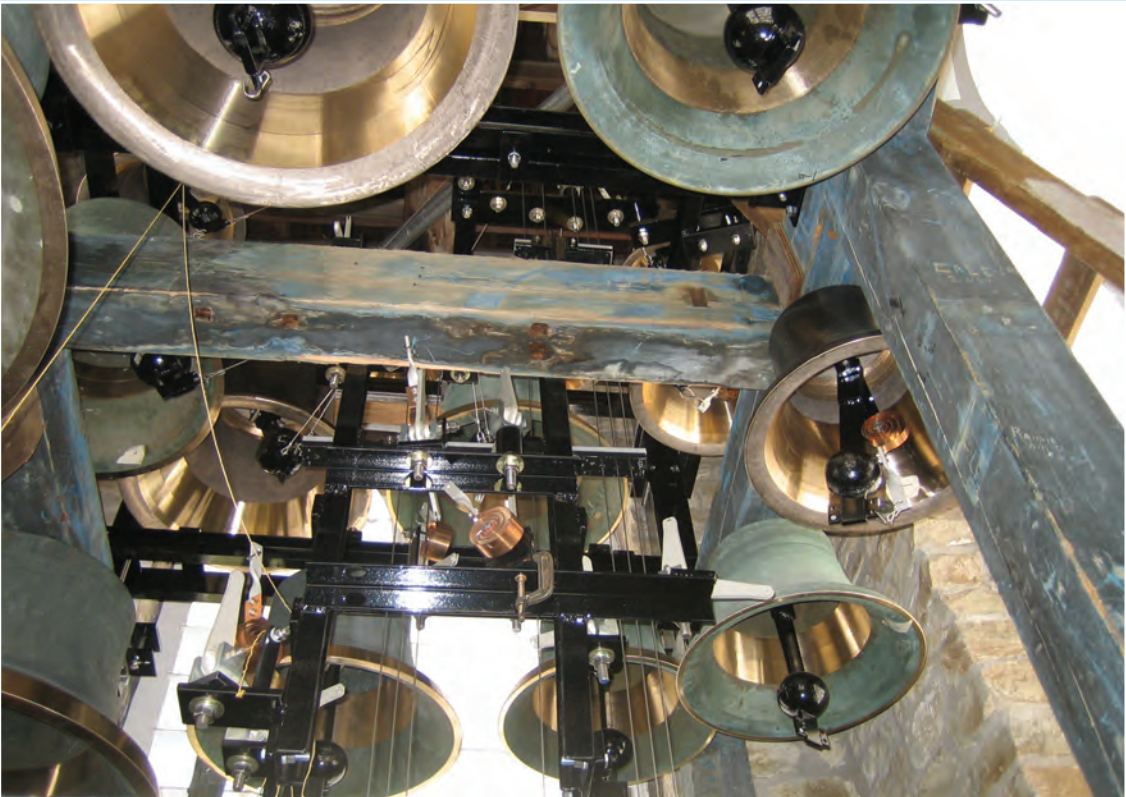
It starts at 4:30 p.m. with vendors selling crafts, artwork, jewelry, clothes and household items. There will be a silent auction, a raffle for prizes in lunch bags, four mystics, and a light supper at 6 p.m. leading up to bingo with popular entertainer Brad Baker from BB Blooms as MC.

There are great designer purses, and a grand prize game with a Kate Spade purse, two nights at the NOTL Hilton Garden Inn, and a private tour at Chateau des Charmes Winery.

Tickets are available on Eventbrite at eventbrite.ca/e/designer-bag-bingo-tickets-95287616827.

Let the bells of St. Mark’s ring out

St. Mark’s Anglican Church on Byron Street is celebrating the coronation of King Charles III Sunday, May 7, with Bernadette Secco pealing out the 19 bells of St. Mark’s on its carillon-style keyboard. The bells will ring to coronation music and hymns of celebration from 11:30 a.m. to noon. Donald Combe of St. Mark’s is encouraging locals to sit in Simcoe Park or in the churchyard and enjoy the celebration. (Supplied)



Celebrate the coronation with the Scottish Loft

The Scottish Loft is issuing an invitation to help celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. On Saturday, the Queen Street store will be hosting a short walk from the Niagara-on-the-Lake Post Office to Simcoe Park, where there will be tea and a treat waiting. The first 60 guests will receive a goodie bag and/or a Paddington Bear. The event is May 6 at 2 p.m. Dressing up is optional, but encouraged. (Supplied)

Uncertain Country new album by Great Lake Swimmers

Mike Balsom
The Local

Setting up permanent roots with his wife Tierney and their two daughters in the village of Queenston has reaped creative benefits that Tony Dekker, the Wainfleet-born leader of indie-folk band Great Lake Swimmers, could not have seen coming.

Released April 28, *Uncertain Country* is the band's eighth studio album and perhaps its best. That's saying a lot, considering the sonic beauty of the band's debut independent self-titled release from 2003, 2018's *The Wave, The Wake*, and everything in between. Their 2009 album *Lost Channels* was shortlisted for the Polaris Prize and garnered both Juno and Canadian Folk Music Award nominations.

Like the albums that preceded it, *Uncertain Country* sees Dekker praising the wonder and magnificence of the land on which we live, while at the same time expressing his deep concern for its future.

The genesis of the 15-track collection (11 songs, four quick sneak-peeks into the studio) was sparked by a 2019 trip Dekker took to Sleeping Giant Provincial Park on the Sibley Peninsula, east of Thunder Bay. He was accompanied by artist/filmmaker and fellow Queenston resident Adam C.K. Vollick and St. Catharines musician/producer Joe Lapinski.

During their journey the trio stopped at Pukaskwa National Park in Heron Bay



Tony Dekker is proud of recording his entire new album in Niagara. (Joe Lapinski)

to attend the Pic River Pow Wow. There was another detour to Manitoulin Island for a paddling session on the inland Lake Mindemoya, and they documented every step of the trek.

The goal for the three collaborators was to find inspiration from the landscape for a set of new Great Lake Swimmers songs Dekker had planned to release in 2020. But the pandemic pushed those plans back, giving him an opportunity to take the project in a different direction.

Dekker's contract with

Canadian label Nettwerk Records had expired around the same time, so he found himself unable to tour. He was also under no pressure to push a new release out into the world. So the recording process became more organic.

"It felt like we were just making demos the whole way through," he tells The Local. "Over time the demos really became the album."

The first sessions for *Uncertain Country* were held in the fall of 2020 at the Oddfellows Hall on James Street in St. Catharines, with Lap-

inski twiddling the knobs and adding some keyboards and tasteful pedal-steel guitar. Those sessions resulted in the hyper-speed title track, a requiem of sorts to a countryside long neglected.

"Rusted machinery, language and battery, years sitting idle, fading in front of me," Dekker sings, "steel fingers in the earth determining its worth, bones on the surface left to weather."

At the same time, there's a joyous feeling to the song that Dekker says came naturally to the group of musicians

who were kept from playing together during lengthy COVID lockdowns.

The second track on the album, the rolling, mid-tempo *When the Storm Has Passed*, also shows the influence of that sojourn to *Sleeping Giant*.

"Big smoke in the rear view, escape and relief in a packed bag, I'm slipping back to the country and I won't come back again."

Other song titles such as *Moonlight*, *Stay Above*, *Promise of Spring* and *Respect for All Living Things* lay bare the singer/songwriter's continued love and respect for nature.

Dekker co-produced *Uncertain Country* with Lapinski, while Vollick's photography from their 2019 trip is used in the album art and for three videos for songs from the album so far. The cover was designed by St. Catharines artist Geoff Farnsworth, and a slew of local musicians contributed to the recordings. It's bound to finally put the bountiful talent residing in the region on the national radar.

Besides those first sessions at the Oddfellows Hall, other tracks for the record were completed at Lapinski's WOW! Recording Studio, Silver Spire United Church on St. Paul Street in St. Catharines and the Balls Falls Conservation Area chapel and barn.

"They all have their own character, they all work for different reasons," says Dekker, who famously recorded the first Great Lake Swimmers LP in an abandoned Wainfleet grain silo. "It's amazing how a space will inform the way you play."

"I'm pretty proud of the fact that we recorded it all in the Niagara region," Dekker continues. "And that we called on local players, too. I have to credit Joe with that, because he's so immersed in the music

world here in Niagara."

Am I Floating in the Air and *Quiet Before the Storm* both feature a St. Catharines-based string quartet. And when Dekker envisioned that a choir would be perfect accompaniment for three of the new songs, Lapinski had a perfect ensemble in mind.

"He said he knew exactly who to call," Dekker says. "So he brought Laurel Minnes into the mix. She did a wonderful job with the arrangements for the choir. And wow! She and the choir (Miniscule) did such a great job. I was so impressed with her talent and with the whole choir."

Serena Ryder adds backing vocals to two songs on *Uncertain Country*, the beautiful, longing *I Tried to Reach You* and the third single, *Swimming Like Flying*, perhaps the best showcase for the core of the band on this record — Bret Higgins on bass, Kelsey McNulty on keyboards, Erik Arnesen on electric guitar and drummer Marshall Bureau (Ryan Granville-Martin takes the drum chair on some tracks).

The production by Dekker and Lapinski adds just enough reverb on most songs to create the ethereal quality and a wall of sound touch that drives home the message of the lyrics.

"Joe is such a true professional and a true friend," raves Dekker. "And the silver lining of the pandemic is that I got to spend all of this time working on these songs without any sort of clock. I spent a lot more time on the music than usual."

Thus far videos for three songs have been released, each produced and created by Vollick, who is well-known as Neil Young's videographer. They combine stills and footage of the trio's trip up north with scenes shot in the recording studio. Each uses a swirling, perpetual motion approach that adds an immersive, visually compelling experience to the already compelling songs.

Each track on *Uncertain Country* was written by Dekker, who holds a degree in literature, poetry and prose from the University of Western Ontario (now Western University). Listeners may want to read the lyric sheet to more fully experience the music, but when it comes right down to it, Dekker's songs could stand as poems without the music. Perhaps one day a collection of Dekker's lyrics, all illustrated by Vollick's visuals, may hit bookstores.

Uncertain Country is out now on Spotify and other streaming services. CD versions of the album are available at greatlakeswimmers.com and through the band's Bandcamp page, where you can also pre-order copies of the record on vinyl, which will ship on May 30.



Uncertain Country album cover

LocalSPORTS

Jaden Patterson wearing 'C' for Junior B Athletics

Mike Balsom
The Local

Being named captain of the St. Catharines Junior B Athletics lacrosse team last week seems to have lit a spark under Jaden Patterson.

The 19-year-old from Niagara-on-the-Lake scored the team's first goal of the season six minutes into the first period and added two more for the hat trick in Friday night's 8-7 home victory over the Cambridge Highlanders.

Patterson followed that opening game performance with two more goals and three assists in a 14-13 win on the road in London Sunday.

"We got the win, that's the most important thing obviously," he told The Local Friday night following the home opener. "More than the personal stats. I'm definitely pleased with my performance, though. I was locked in 100 per cent. I like to control the game, I like to see two plays ahead all the time."

Patterson was shocked when head coach Alec Tamas took him aside last week to tell him he would be wearing the 'C' on his jersey.

"I didn't expect it," he said. "I'm definitely honoured and thankful for the trust that my coaches have put in me."

It's Patterson's second year with the Athletics, enough time for him to have made an impression on Tamas, who also coached Patterson on the Brock Badgers varsity team that placed second in the Canadian University Field Lacrosse Association Baggataway Cup championship in November 2022.

"He leads by example," says Tamas. "It was awesome to see him come out and score the first goal and get the hat trick. He did all the little things right. He was picking up loose balls and setting good picks. He has a ton of confidence and a super high IQ for the game."

This is also the second season for the St. Catharines Junior B team wearing the double blue of the Athletics. Formerly called the Spar-



Liam Dietsch, also from NOTL, is one of the younger players on the team. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Jaden Patterson scored his team's first goal of the season at Friday night's game.

tans, the Junior B organization merged with the Junior A Athletics, the oldest sports franchise in Niagara, following the 2021 season.

The Junior B team actually has its roots in NOTL, where they were founded as the

Warriors in 1979, winning the national championship just three years later. In 1996, as the Niagara Spartan Warriors, they defeated the Orillia Rama Kings to win their second national title. After the 2001 season they became the

St. Catharines Spartans.

With the Athletics name comes a rich lacrosse history and an Old Boys network that raises funds for the organization and comes out to games to cheer each successive generation on. And wearing the captain's 'C' comes with some big responsibilities.

"There's definitely a little bit of pressure," said Patterson. "But I think the pressure comes more from having to be a leader for the rest of the team. I'm honoured to be a part of the tradition, but I'm more focused on being a good role model for the younger players."

Three of those younger players, fellow offensive players Jack Parker and Ethan Williams as well as transition man Liam Dietsch, are also from Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"I've known those guys my whole life," Patterson said. "It's cool to be able to play

with them. I'm a bit older than them, and I'm looking forward to introducing them to junior lacrosse, guiding them through and giving them advice. Playing with them is a lot of fun."

Parker, who was called up for a few games last year, scored the Athletics' winning goal Friday night and added his own hat trick Sunday in London.

"He's been a real pleasant surprise," says Tamas. "The amount of progress we've seen out of him has been off the charts. We've been looking for left O (offence) guys to step up and contribute. He's a real grinder out there, and he has that same lacrosse IQ as Patterson."

Dietsch was on Tamas' radar as an offensive player at first, but he moved him into the transition team because of his equally effective defensive skills.

"He reads the play on defence and plays the passing

lanes really well," Tamas says of the 18-year-old Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School student. "He knows when to slide and when to hold. He's been playing really well for us."

And the coach says that Williams, who was also called up to the Athletics for a few games last year, is a clutch player "with a great goal scoring ability. He seems to score the most important goals at the most important times. All those Niagara-on-the-Lake guys all have an incredible IQ for the game."

The Athletics won't have another home game at Canada Games Park until May 19, when they host the Wallaceburg Red Devils. Their next four games will see them travelling to Six Nations, Owen Sound, Point Edward and Cambridge over the next two weeks.

"That's going to be huge for us," Patterson predicted, "we'll be able to gel on the road trip, and get closer. I feel that will really translate to our game. I'm especially looking forward to next week's game at Six Nations (Friday, May 5), that will be a big test for us."

According to Tamas, last year's Athletics exceeded expectations. They finished the season in fourth place in the Ontario Junior B Lacrosse League's Western Conference (OJBLL). They went on to knock out Guelph 3-2 in the first round of the playoffs but were swept in three straight by Elora in the second round. With Patterson leading the charge he's hoping for even more for 2023.

"I expect us to build on the progress we established last year," says Tamas. "Between the Junior A and Junior B teams, I see us starting a two to three year window where we can win a lot of games and win some championships as well."

Patterson, who will begin his third year as a kinesiology student at Brock in September, hopes to get an opportunity to prove himself with the Athletics at the Junior A level. It would be the next step toward his ultimate goal to catch on in the National Lacrosse League, like Tamas and his assistant coaches Jeff Wittig, Sam Leclair and Alex Pace.

"I play the game for fun, for the love of it," insisted Patterson, "but I play because I love to challenge myself. I want to play at the highest level for as long as I can. Having those guys on the coaching staff is definitely motivating, too."

And Tamas, for one, wouldn't be surprised to see him get there.

"He has all the skills and all the tools to make it," Tamas says. "If he keeps working at it, keeps grinding like he's been, 100 per cent he has the potential to move up to Junior A and to play pro as well."

LocalWORSHIP

CORNERSTONE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday, May 7th

9:45 a.m.

Cornerstone Kids Sign In
(Nursery - Grade 8)

10:00 a.m.

Worship Gathering
Online & In-Person

Message: Kevin Bayne
Jesus Meets Peter in his
Failure (John 21:1-19)
BAPTISM

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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU

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- Across:**
- 1 Butter units
5 Au naturel
9 Sea state 5
14 Brusque
15 "... --- slayeth the silly one" (Book of Job)
16 Crackshot Oakley
17 Speech of violent denunciation
19 Bequeath
20 Least happy
21 Linked
23 Egyptian sacred bird
24 Jaunty rhythm
25 What's coming down the pike
28 Connipion
30 Winter time in Halifax
33 Turned Samoa upside down to find a terrorist
34 Not very enthusiastic
35 Cost-of-living indicator
36 Hindrances
37 Al ---, baseball's "Hebrew Hammer"
38 Zachary Taylor was one
39 Cowpoke's sweetheart
40 Not so many
41 Chessman
42 Shout to a matador
43 Foam at the mouth
- 44 Cowcatcher
45 Cool, sartorially
47 Scrabble piece
48 Signs up
51 Under close scrutiny
55 Idiots
56 State with a pelican flag
58 Be relaxed
59 Fine, black or liberal, maybe
60 Federal anti-discrimination agency
61 Deathly pale
62 Synchronize
63 Compos mentis
- Down:**
- 1 Mount for electronic components
2 Experienced by migraine sufferers
3 Stepped
4 Play grounds
5 Scottish legend
6 Single things
7 Movie medium
8 Onlooker
9 Came from behind
10 "Paper Moon" Oscar winner
11 Loose
12 "Out with it!"
- 13 Observe
18 "Black Widow" lead --- Winger
22 The --- Marbles, from the Parthenon
25 Do without
26 Customary
27 Crumb catcher
28 Put back to zero, for example
29 Impressionist
31 Extra interest
32 Possessor of "fearful symmetry" (Blake)
34 Hall, crier, car or house, perhaps
37 Give feedback
38 Erie wins scramble for beverage producers
40 Shiver of excitement
41 Raw hides
44 Polish off, or polish?
46 Depend
47 Talks up
48 Scat queen
49 Those opposed
50 Taking all the tricks
52 UN body promoting peaceful nuclear power
53 In a little while
54 Spike
57 Such as cinnabar

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OBITUARY

ART BERG
(AUG. 19, 1937 - APR. 30, 2023)



With his family at his bedside at Upper Canada Lodge, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Art Berg, aged 85 years. He leaves behind a loving family.

Loving husband to Mary for 64 years Father of Luanne (Larry) Kulchar and Bradley Berg. Loving Grandfather to Maegen (Adam) Bergeron, Matthew (Megan) Kulchar and Daniel Kulchar. Great grandfather to Brianna and Weston

Bergeron. Youngest son of Anna and George Berg (deceased). Predeceased by siblings Peter, George, Victor, Walter, Christine Dyck and Lydia Willms. Art is survived by older brothers Henry Berg of Virgil and John Berg of Vineland, sister-in-law Janice (Walter) Berg of Virgil, and many nieces and nephews.

Art was the owner of Midtown Sunoco Service Station in Virgil, Ontario for 26 years. He then did lawnmower repair in his garage until his stroke in 2006. Art and Mary enjoyed their cottage on Deer Lake in Northern Ontario for many years, then sold the cottage to buy a motor home and traveled across Canada and the United States before retiring to their home in St. Cloud, Florida. When age crept up on them, they moved to Pleasant Manor in Virgil.

Cremation has taken place.

Art will be remembered as a really nice guy, a good friend and as a Virgil volunteer fireman for 31 years.

Online condolences at www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca

BRYAN ROLLASON
BORN MARCH 27 1937 - NEWPORT WALES
PASSED AWAY APRIL 24 2021 - NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE



BRYAN attended Bassaleg Grammar School where he excelled at music and languages. He was a marathon runner and rugby player. He played the piano for the school choir and the organ at the local church for weddings and funerals.

BRYAN graduated from the University of Nottingham and became a Professor of Languages teaching at universities and schools in France, England, New Zealand, Aberystwyth, Wales, The Royal Military College Kingston, The Command and Staff College Toronto, and the NATO College in Rome, Italy. Over his life he taught every age from three to eighty. He was the author of several books on bilingual teaching and history.

In retirement, he helped his wife Julie set up Montessori schools in Newmarket and here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, "Maple Leaf Montessori School" at Parliament Oak School. He also became interested in farming and the family raised cows, pigs and ducks at a farm in the Thousand Islands.

BRYAN was always known as a family man with a great love for his wife Julie and children: Mark, Simon, Joanne, Katrina; Grandchildren: Bethany, Gareth, Victoria, and Owen; and his cat "Gato Negro".

He loved a good bottle of red wine, all things Spanish and all things Welsh being proud of his Welsh heritage till the end. His ashes will go home to Wales. He was host of the Niagara Welsh Club.

BRYAN will mostly be remembered for his sense of humour. Two years have passed and we are still grieving but have a million memories to console us.

My beloved husband,
May you rest in peace.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

A, 53 Anon, 54 Lacey, 57 Ore.
Ella, 49 Noes, 50 Slam, 52 LA E
44 Finish, 46 Hinge, 47 Touts, 48
Wineries, 40 Frisson, 41 Pelts,
Tiger, 34 Town, 37 React, 38
28 Reset, 29 Ape, 31 Spice, 32
Forgo, 26 Usual, 27 Tabledcloth,
13 Heed, 18 Debra, 22 Elgin, 25
O'Neal, 11 Unattached, 12 Give,
7 D V D, 8 Eyer, 9 Rallied, 10
4 Stadiums, 5 Nessie, 6 Units,
Down: 1 P C B, 2 Aura, 3 Trod,
62 Mesh, 63 Sane.
59 Arts, 60 E E O C, 61 Ashen,
Loons, 56 Louisiana, 58 Let go,
Tile, 48 Enlists, 51 On trial, 55
43 Rant, 44 Fender, 45 Chic, 47
Gal, 40 Fewer, 41 Piece, 42 Ole,
Rubs, 37 Rosen, 38 Whig, 39
Osama, 34 Tepid, 35 C P, 36
Future, 28 Rage, 30 A S T, 33
21 Related, 23 Ibis, 24 Lilt, 25
Broadside, 19 Leave, 20 Saddest,
14 Curt, 15 Envy, 16 Annie, 17

GUN SHOW

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GARAGE SALE**
Date: Sunday May 7, 2023
Time: 8 am-2 pm
Place: 1314 Line 3 Rd, NOTL
Details: Charity garage sale-% of
sale going to Niagara Childrens
Centre. Decor, small furnishing
and loads of baby gear, clothes
and toys. Treats for sale to benefit
NCC "Let Kids Shine" Campaign.

SUDOKU SOLUTION

Sudoku solution from
April 26, 2023

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

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