



Simpson's offering quick, easy COVID test
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Robert Rende, from Cogeco, Adam Brooker, Tyler Dempsey, Riley Mahoney, Theresa Verier, Kayla McLean, and Irish Harp owner Jovie Joki have lunches ready for staff of long-term care homes. (Mike Balsom)

Irish Harp, Cogeco say thanks to local long-term care staff

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

The Irish Harp provided lunch Friday for 160 staff members at two Niagara-on-the-Lake long-term care homes, courtesy of Cogeco Connexion.

Irish Harp owner Jovie Joki says Robert Rende, Cogeco's coordinator of community relations out of the Burlington office, reached out to her to enlist the restaurant for their province-wide program to thank overworked staff in the sector hit so hard by the pandemic.

With Cogeco footing the bill for the food, the event was not only a big boost for those working at Upper Canada Lodge and the Niagara Long Term Care Residence, but also for Joki and her staff.

"This was very beneficial,

having such a large group order," she tells The Local. "We do try to do some specialty events, like St. Patty's Day, or Mother's Day last weekend, but this (third lockdown) has been particularly trying. It's brought down our percentages quite immensely. We're good on weekends, to some extent, but anything like this size of order really assists us."

Rende says the Irish Harp was chosen on the recommendation of YourTV's local programming and community relations manager Jack Custers. And the fact that the Harp is also a Cogeco cable subscriber made them an ideal choice locally.

"A lot of people have been hit very hard by COVID, and a lot of restaurants have

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Please help Newark Neighbours feed those in need

Penny Coles
The Local

The number of clients depending on the Newark Neighbours food bank to feed themselves and their families has increased significantly during the pandemic.

The local charity received mountains of food to help out those in need at Thanksgiving, Christmas and most recently at Easter, but it's time to start

building up the food supply again to meet the demand, which has jumped by 40 per cent, says food bank manager Cindy Grant.

The pandemic has meant people are being laid off or having their hours reduced, and are having trouble making ends meet.

Newark Neighbours is now supplying food to a total of 59 clients. Many are single or couples, says Grant, but there are some larger families. Of the 106

people, 33 are children.

When she decided a food drive would be the best way to meet their goal, Grant reached out to town CAO Marnie Cluckie, to ensure they could stage the event without contravening any COVID restrictions.

"She was great, and offered to do anything they can to support us, but also made sure we were following all the pandemic restrictions."

When Grant asked the

Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club for help with a planned porch pickup, "they came back immediately with a 'yes, anything you need,'" says Grant.

As volunteers, they have to go through COVID screening, and will take an online test on the provincial website and email it to Grant, so she has the documentation.

"We're asking any donations to have their donation on their porch, marked

with NN, to ensure it's contactless," she says.

"The Rotary Club has been so keen, wanting to know what they can do to help. So much has been cancelled because of the pandemic, I knew they would immediately agree. They're looking for ways to give back to the community. People can't get out and do what they usually do."

Locals are also being very generous not only with their time, but with

their financial donations. "They're not travelling, and they're not spending as much money as they normally would. We saw that at Christmas. They want to help out."

Typically Newark Neighbours has money earned in the thrift shop to purchase whatever food items are not donated, to supplement what is on their shelves. With the shop

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Newark Neighbours food bank volunteers, Cindy Grant, Pat Hicks, Marilyn Rickard, Genevieve Lawrence, Susan Sparrow-Mace, Frencyne Chenier, and Marion Ollerhead, are grateful to the NOTL Rotary Club for helping with this weekend's food drive, and will be sorting the food that is collected. (Mike Balsom)

Newark volunteers grateful for Rotary help

Continued from page 1

closed, they're not bringing in that revenue, but donors were generous over the holidays, she says. However they would rather fill the shelves with donated food and hold on to cash donations for specific dietary needs, such as gluten-free

items, or infants' formula or baby products.

The basic items that are donated go quickly, she says, such as cookies, crackers and coffee — just some of the items they never have enough of.

Also, Phil's val-u-mart is going to pick out a selection of eight items they can use, and put them in bags to be

purchased and left in a bin in the store, for those who would prefer to donate that way.

It will be held this weekend, May 15 and 16, and Grant is asking people to call or email to let volunteers know there will be donations on their porches to pick up, and their address. Volunteer drivers will be on the road both days from

10 a.m. to 3 p.m., both days, and are willing to travel to all corners of the Old Town, St. Davids, Queenston, Glendale and rural areas in between, to pick up food to stock Newark's shelves.

The pickup is intended to be contactless, and has received the blessing of the town, as long as all COVID protocols are followed, includ-

ing wearing gloves and masks, and physical distancing.

Rotary volunteers will do the pickups, and Newark will be waiting to sort donated items, spread out in the thrift shop area, which is closed to the public during the pandemic.

For pickup call 905-7498, or email newark-neighbours1@gmail.com.

The food bank is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, at 310 John Street East, from from 9:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. to serve food clients and accept food donations only.

The list of food items that are needed, and those they have enough of, can be found in the Newark Neighbours ad on page 4.

Initiative recognizes staff, supports restaurants

Continued from page 1

been suffering," Rende says. "This initiative was sort of two-fold. We wanted to support local restaurants during this time of need, and we wanted to reward all the long-term care staff that is putting themselves out there."

Cogeco has been making connections with restau-

rants and seniors homes all across the province in the areas serviced by the cable company. Homes in Burlington, Chatham, Windsor, Sarnia, Peterborough, Belleville, Kingston and Cornwall have all benefitted from the program. In Niagara, Tabor Manor and Linhaven have been among those previously receiving the lunches, dropped off by Cogeco and YourTV staff.

The staff at those homes have responded well to the donations.

"It's heartwarming," Rende says. "One of the homes I delivered to, the staff were knocking on the windows and holding up signs. They were so beyond grateful and happy to receive these lunches."

The restaurant owners have also shared in that gratitude. "One in Burlington

told me it helped keep their lights on for another month," adds Rende. "The Irish Harp is absolutely thrilled, and beyond gracious, to be able to do this."

In fact, Jovi was so thrilled to take part that she decided to top up each order of a chicken or vegetable wrap and garden salad with a sticky toffee for dessert, at her own cost.

The large order meant

Joki was able to mobilize a few more staff members than usual during the current take-out only restrictions on restaurants. She and the staff were in the restaurant by 7 a.m. Friday to prepare the lunches and pack them into boxes provided by Cogeco. Rende made two runs, dropping off 70 lunches to Upper Canada Lodge, and then another 90 at the Niagara Long Term Care

Residence.

Joki adds that being able to help out staff at the two homes was a big boost to employee morale.

"We love to help the community out," she says. "We also donate to Newark Neighbours during Christmas time, contributing to their canned food drive. We really like to be a part of the community, and we really hope they enjoyed the food."

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Simpson's offering COVID-19 rapid testing

Penny Coles
The Local

COVID testing for people with no symptoms and no close contact with a known case has been available at pharmacies for months, but access to a rapid antigen test, with results in 15 minutes, has only recently become available locally.

Under the same conditions — if you are asymptomatic and have had no contact with anyone who has tested positive — you can make an appointment at Simpson's Pharmacy. After an easy swab — not the painful one that feels like it's reaching your brain, but a quick "shallow" nasal swirl that could be best described as tickling — you can walk out with the reassurance of having tested negative.

Sean Simpson has been offering the more invasive PCR COVID-19 testing, free for asymptomatic individuals that meet specific criteria established by the province, for months. That includes a long list of people, including caregivers, school teachers, staff and students, farm workers, staff of long-term care and retirement homes, and visitors to those homes who require documentation before visiting.

It's the same test that is being administered at Public Health locations, and is sent to a provincial lab, with results typically taking a day or two, says Simpson.

It is also available to those who are asymptomatic but not on the list of those who are eligible, at a cost of \$160, but the rapid antigen test, costing only \$30, now provides another option for screening.

It's being used at some long-term care homes, for staff and residents, providing quick results that allow for better control of infection spread.

Simpson describes

it as "a less unpleasant" nose tickler, rather than the deep-nostril PCR test, which he calls a "brain scrape."

But it's taken the province a long time to make the rapid test available to pharmacies. More than 3.8 million rapid tests for COVID-19 were distributed by the federal government to the provinces last November, but a large number remained in storage while some provincial governments decided how best to distribute them.

Simpson says some other provinces quickly put them to use, and there was no reason he couldn't have been offering it months ago to help reduce the spread of infection, especially in workplaces, had the Ontario government moved quickly to distribute them.

Although Simpson says he's been doing about 30 PCR tests a day, the rapid test is still fairly new, and until this week, he'd done only a handful. On Monday he was beginning workplace screening. As an example of where it can be useful, he cites a construction company with workers who travel to the job site together and work together. Negative test results would ensure the safety of the workers, he says, and could be used effectively for many essential workers, such as electricians or maintenance workers entering a workplace or congregate living space.

A positive test would require a second confirmation PCR test with public health, resulting in quarantining and contact tracing, and could reduce the spread of workplace infections.

Although the province said last week it would be making the rapid test more available for workplaces, it isn't offered yet at many pharmacies, says Simpson. Earlier this week, as far as he knew, it was only offered



Sean Simpson administers a rapid antigen test that gives results in 15 minutes. (Penny Coles)

at Simpson's Pharmacy on Niagara Stone Road, Simpson's Apothecary on King Street and Morrison Pharmasave in Niagara Falls.

"It just more or less became available to the public," says Simpson.

"The government had a stockpile, and began making them available to long-term care and retirement homes, and a few other places."

He'd like to be able to distribute the rapid test to workplaces and other group settings, but at the moment, he is only permitted to administer it himself or have a trained staff member do it.

While the PCR is the "gold standard" of testing, considered 99.9 per cent accurate, says Simpson, the rapid test has only about one per cent more false negatives or positives.

Of all he's provided,

many PCRs and a much fewer number of rapid tests, by early this week, he'd only had three positives. But given that it's for those who are asymptomatic, "we don't expect a positive test," he says.

With both options, the local public health unit is notified of a positive test, and also with both, documentation can be provided if it's needed.

He envisions a move to distribution of rapid tests for regular screenings as more

workplaces open up, helping to keep workers safe until they're vaccinated.

"This would just provide them some measure of safety."

Workplaces, including long-term care and retirement homes, have different regulations, with some people being tested as often as four times a week. Some alternate the PCR test with rapid testing, he says.

"Things change minute to minute," says Simpson, and the availability of testing may change, as well as

different strategies that may come about for using them.

"It will be an evolving thing as we open up, with where and how we're testing, and when it will be required."

For more information about asymptomatic testing, visit <https://simpsons-pharmacy.ca/pages/asymptomatic-covid-19-testing>.

There is also information on the provincial website at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-testing-organizations>.

NOTL Chamber rolling out rapid tests to local businesses

Penny Coles
The Local

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce and its members, including the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, have been lobbying the provincial government for some time to let them distribute rapid COVID tests to local businesses.

A memorandum of understanding has been reached with all levels of government to do just that, says NOTL chamber president Eduardo Lafforgue, although there are still details to be worked out and more information expected next week.

The COVID-19 Rapid Screening Initiative will see participating chambers of commerce and boards of trade roll out free rapid tests for small and medium-sized businesses in

communities across the province. It will include businesses, including non-chamber members, with 150 employees or less.

The goal of the program is to identify asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic cases of COVID-19 in the workplace that might otherwise be missed, helping to curb the spread in the workplace, at home and around the community, says Lafforgue, acknowledging the Cambridge and Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chambers of Commerce for their work in putting together critical resources, such as the playbook, for the Ontario Chamber Network.

The test itself is simple, he says, but "there is an important amount of reporting that will represent a considerable effort, and will significantly stretch our resources," thanking chamber staff for their sup-

port and dedication.

Once participating chambers have signed and returned the memorandum of understanding, and it has been countersigned by the province, the chamber will be contacted directly by a government representative with more instructions on how to order. Also provided will be additional resources and an opportunity to attend an online training session, says Lafforgue.

There will be a page on the chamber website dedicated to providing the details of the rapid testing initiative, and for businesses to register if they want to participate.

All participating chambers of commerce and boards of trade are listed on the OCC website here: <https://occ.ca/covid-19-rapid-screening-initiative-ontario>.



COMMUNITY DONATION PROJECT Porch Pick-up Food Drive

Newark Neighbours, together with our partners from the NOTL Rotary Club are holding a porch pick-up food drive.

On Saturday & Sunday, May 15 and 16, 2021, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10 am to 3 pm

If you have items that you wish to donate, please call 905-468-7498 or email us at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com

• Canned green beans	• Canned Tomatoes	• Canned Red Kidney Beans
• Canned peas	• Canned Ham, Corned Beef or Spam	• Canned salmon
• Canned mixed vegetables	• Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Turkey	• Canned chili or spaghetti or ravioli
• Habitant Soups	• Canned beef stew	• Canned Baked Beans
• Chunky Soups	• Cream of Mushroom Soup	• Kraft Dinner Mac & Cheese
• Canned pineapple	• Rice	• Sidekicks & Mr. Noodle packets
• Soda (Soup) Crackers	• Bottled Juices - Cranberry or Apple	• Applesauce or Canned Fruit
• Snack Crackers - any kind	• Cereal - any kind	• Cookies - any kind
• Peanut Butter	• Jams - any flavour	• Granola Bars
• Coffee or Tea	• Jello - any flavour	• Ketchup / Mustard / Mayonnaise / Green Relish
• Toothpaste / Paper Towels / Kleenex		

We appreciate all donations of food supplies; however, we are currently well stocked on the following items:
Canned Tuna • Stuffing Mix • Canned Corn • Oatmeal • Cranberry Sauce • Tomato Sauce • Pasta

Hirji hoping for lockdown extension to mid-June

Penny Coles
The Local

While the provincial government sounds like it plans to extend the lockdown past the May 20 deadline, Niagara's acting medical officer of health is calling for a longer extension than is expected.

Although the number of cases are trending downward in Ontario and in Niagara, the decline isn't as steep as it was when cases were rising in the third wave, Dr. Mustafa Hirji said Monday.

"It's going to take longer for us to get out of this than it did to get into it," he added.

Hospital and intensive care unit admissions are still dangerously high, he said, and it will likely be mid-June before they are down to a level that would allow a safe and sustainable reopening.

He is also concerned about the number of variants — almost all new cases in the province are variants now, he says, which spread more quickly and cause more serious illness.

Although the numbers show 63 per cent of cases from April 27 to May 3 were variants, a reporting lag means variants are under-counted, he said.

There is one case of the India variant reported, but that goes back to March, and has just recently been identified, he said, and he's concerned there is more of the P.1 variant

from Brazil than the one case that has been detected.

The reproductive rate of infection in Ontario has dropped to .9, where it has settled in recent weeks, but it will be better when it's down to about .7, as it was in the second lockdown, Hirji said.

"This lockdown is not as effective, which is why we're seeing .9, and the decline is not as steep as it was," he said, adding "a handful of health units in Ontario are still above one" in their reproduction rate.

By mid-June, about 75 per cent of people will have had at least their first vaccination dose, said Hirji.

He's concerned reopening before then could lead to another increase in cases, a fourth wave, and yet another lockdown.

If the current stay-at-home order is lifted too soon, with Ontario still averaging around 3,000 new cases daily, cases will rebound, he said.

Almost 40 per cent of Niagara residents have been vaccinated with at least one dose. Among people 18 and older, that number rises to 50.6 per cent of Niagara residents, a little more than the provincial average, and 97 per cent of those in the 80-plus age group have had at least one dose, Hirji said.

The provincial minister of health, Christine Elliott, said Monday that experts are advising the government to "stay

Eligibility group	Week of April 26	Week of May 3	Week of May 10	Week of May 17	Week of May 24
Provincial age band	April 30: 55 and older	50 and older	40 and older	30 and older	18 and older
Hotspot age band	April 27: 45 and older	18 and older	-	-	-
Health conditions	Highest-risk health conditions continues	High-risk health conditions	At-risk health conditions	-	-
Cannot work from home	April 29: licensed childcare workers	Group 1	Group 2	-	-

By Monday, most of the Saturday, May 15 vaccination appointments at the NOTL community centre were booked, with some availability for Sunday, May 16. With more eligibility opening up Tuesday morning, those appointments were expected to be filled quickly. Eligibility expands this week to include more people with specific health conditions, essential workers who can't work from home, such as those in grocery stores or restaurants, and those 40 and over. Local pharmacies were expecting and hoping for Pfizer and Moderna supplies this week and next, as the province says it will try to get more vaccine to pharmacies. For more information about eligibility or vaccination clinics visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/ontarios-covid-19-vaccination-plan#phase-2>.

the course," and the province's top doctor, Dr. David Williams, said he would like to see well below 1,000 daily cases before the stay-at-home order is lifted.

Although Hirji said he has no information about provincial reopening plans, "it's the recommendation of almost every public health professional, and probably every person within the hospital sector as well," that the stay-at-home order be extended.

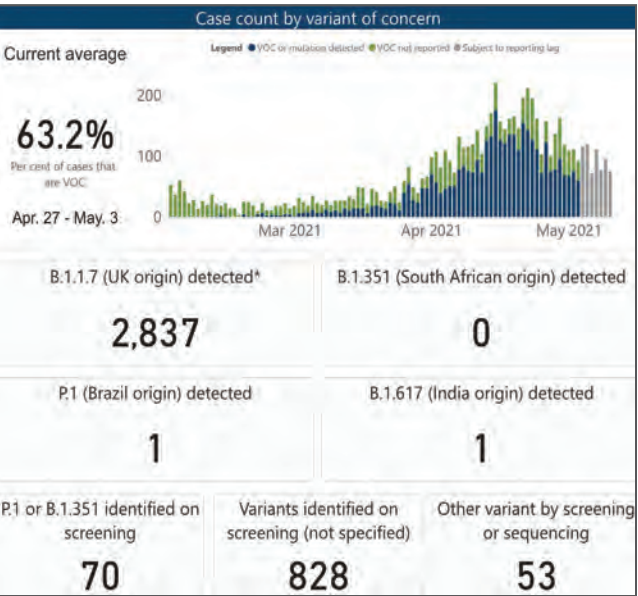
Reopening too early "would be a huge, unforced error," he added, referencing the second lockdown and a reopening before hospital and ICU admissions were under control.

It's important to extend the lockdown until those ad-

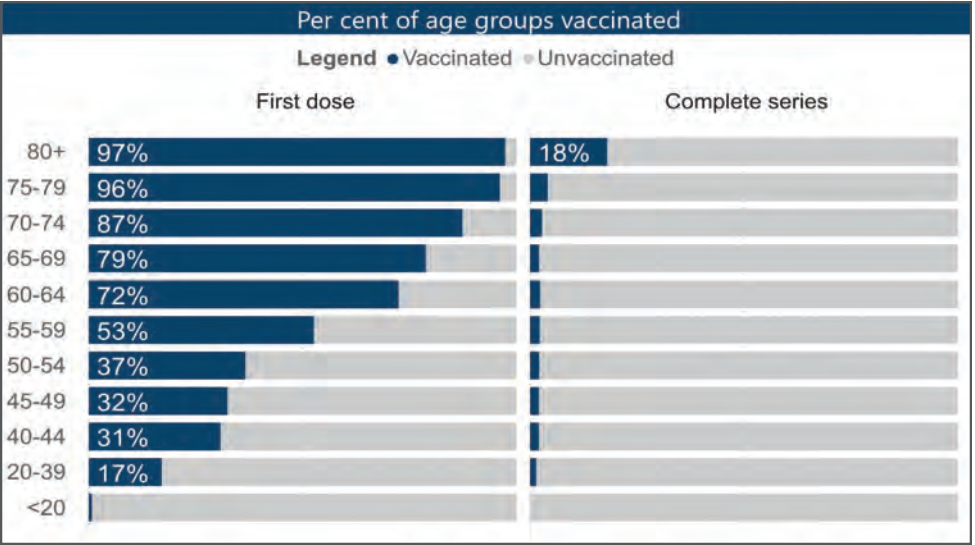
missions are reduced to the point that surgeries for cancer patients and those with other serious health issues can be resumed, he said.

While Hirji remains convinced schools could safely open before the end of the school year, he says the key condition is for cases to be down enough "that when we have a case in schools, we have the capacity to follow up with that case very quickly, figure out who was exposed, and isolate them."

However, it was the province who shut down in-person learning, and it's up to the province to decide when to reopen schools, he said.



Variants are a concern, with the time lag in reporting likely meaning there are more here than shown.



With almost 40 per cent of Niagara residents vaccinated, the number increases with age.

Investors, business owners, history enthusiasts, or simply need more space? This Victorian home built in 1896 with original wood panelling, and cabinetry, was built by John Gibbard, the renown Canadian furniture maker. This triplex features a main unit that opens onto the grand hallway and staircase. 8 Bedroom original home or Triplex, your choice...




All floor plans in the document section. Main house address is 194 Centre St. North, 2 apartments are 9A and 9B Thomas Street. Property is co-listed with MCCAFFREY REALTY INC., BROKERAGE, 131 John St. NAPANEE ON K7R1R1 613-817-8288

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Thank You NURSES

INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY

- MAY 12 -

The demands of COVID-19 on the health care system in Niagara, and across the country, have called on nurses to go above and beyond anything that should have been expected of them, and have highlighted the importance of their role in health care. The strength, courage and dedication they exhibit every day shows their commitment to giving their patients the very best care in trying times. On this International Nurses Day, and every day, we thank them for all they do.

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

EDITORIAL

Please, Doug Ford, listen to your medical experts

It's hard to understand why we're not allowed to take advantage of healthy outdoor activities such as golf, tennis and pickleball. It does not follow the advice of the Ontario Science Table experts, or really any

medical professionals. There has been lobbying, many petitions organized, signed and sent, and some hope that the premier might back down on those particular restrictions, as he did on playgrounds.

They were allowed to operate last summer, with strict protocols in place, and we weren't made aware of any outbreaks on courts or golf courses, where it's possible to put some policies in place that make more sense than

outright closures, which the experts agree are driving people indoors, where infection is much more likely to spread. All of these outdoor sports are healthy activities for all ages, and all have a social component that is almost as important, and for some people, more so, than the physical activity itself.

Nor have we heard anything about the reopening of some outdoor activities that can be enjoyed safely, and where we know no outbreaks have occurred. All of this, of course, contrary to expert medical advice. If there is going to be an extension to the stay-at-home order, and it seems most health professions feel this is essential to prevent another wave of rising cases and yet another lockdown, this would be the logical time to have another look at those decisions. Fingers crossed for some good news. It would be so good to see people out not only getting physical exercise, but having fun, with their friends or family, in

a way that can be enjoyed safely, and that could ease feelings of loneliness and isolation, and improve mental health significantly. We hadn't heard about any changes to Ontario restrictions by Tuesday afternoon, but let's hope by the time you are reading this the situation will have improved. We're trying to be kind. We're getting vaccinated, following rules and keeping each other safe. Opening up some activities as the weather warms up and the outdoors calls would seem like a small enough reward, a little olive branch, that can be enjoyed safely.

Penny Coles
The Local

Auchterlonie on Astrology

Bill Auchterlonie
Special to The Local

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

Thursday, May 13: May is a very eventful month, full of twists and turns, but if we have to pick the most important transit of the month of May, that's Jupiter's move from Aquarius into Pisces. Jupiter only changes signs once a year, and when it does, it pretty much sets the scene, and gives us that "one topic" to focus on. Jupiter is only temporarily in Pisces. Jupiter goes retrograde in June and then moves back into Aquarius in July. However, these two and a half months of Jupiter in Pisces are a great dry run for 2022, when Jupiter moves into Pisces for good. The great news about this transit is that Jupiter is very strong in Pisces, so it feels great here. In Pisces, Jupiter can be as wise, spiritual, and

big picture as he wants. The last two years or so haven't been easy. That pile-up of energy in Capricorn has been heavy and confining. Jupiter in Aquarius is overall a better placement than Jupiter in Capricorn, but since Jupiter shares the sign with Saturn (in domicile in Aquarius) it gets to play by Saturn's rules. Now that Jupiter moves into Pisces, our sense of faith and optimism will finally be restored. Seventeen years ago, on May 13, 2004, we saw the last of Frasier, the comedy on NBC. Good-bye Dr. Frasier Crane. Good-bye to Daphne, Roz and Niles. And Dad. And the dog.

Monday, May 17: On May 10 we had Mercury conjunct the north node. Now that Venus joins the north node at the same degree of Gemini, we will be like "Wait a minute, that idea, that thought, that opportunity I was presented last week is really something. It actually feels right. Yes, it is a bit frightening, but there is also that feeling of rightness.

I have those butterflies in the stomach that tell me yes, this time, I am onto something." The north node spends quite a bit of time at the 10th degree of Gemini, and when that happens, we know that we are in the eclipse season. Indeed, when we have the eclipse season, the nodes spend a lot of time at the same degree of the Zodiac. If you have planets or angles around 10 degrees Gemini or 10 degrees Sagittarius, this transit, as well as the other transits, and the whole month of May, will be particularly important for you, and can come with incredible developments and opportunities. This past Saturday was the 147th Kentucky Derby in Kentucky. The first derby was on May 17, 1875, and was won by Aristides in 2:37:75.

And that's AonA for this week. Next time, we get the first day of Gemini, and Saturn turns retrograde. And there's a lunar eclipse. A busy week indeed.

So, until next time, shine on!

Let's stop complaining about our hardships and thank those who are keeping us alive

This is the day, the week and the month to celebrate nursing.

From everything we have read, heard and seen on the news, nurses are our heroes.

In one news video about the inside of intensive care units devoted to COVID patients recently, a doctor said that without nurses, we may as well close the hospitals.

What is happening to patients in those units is hard to watch, but what is happening to the nurses who are looking after them is just as painful. Tears, exhaustion, frustration, long days with no time for breaks, ridiculous schedules, and at the end of the day, more deaths to mourn. Then they go home, often to look after families, some to isolation to protect their families, and go back to work to do it all over again the next day.

For more than a year, with

the end still a long way off.

Many thousands of them were given the time off they didn't want, to recover from COVID, infected on the job. Some, sadly, died, from trying to keep others alive. And not all those who recovered have returned to good health — we are learning about the long-term effects that may never end for them.

Of course, it's not just nurses, or those working in hospitals, it's personal support workers, doctors, and other frontline healthcare workers, in long-term care and other health facilities.

They must be very strong, they are extremely courageous, they are dedicated and committed, and surely, many of them feel they have no choice. It's not in their makeup to let patients suffer and die unattended, or they wouldn't have chosen their

profession.

We don't need a day or a week or a month to say thank you. They should be thanked every day, and recognized for who they are — the people who care for the many we hear about daily, hospitalized and admitted to intensive care units. They are doing their best to keep their patients alive, and returned to their loved ones.

The theme of this Canadian Nurses Week is We Answer the Call.

To all who have answered the call, and continue to, thank you.

May we all stop complaining about masks and closures, and think of those suffering the real hardships of this pandemic, and doing it all for others.

Penny Coles
The Local

View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

The Dressmaker (2015 Netflix) is a stunning film focusing on revenge, and that has everything in abundance. It is probably way too much, but I

was transfixed with disbelief and mesmerized at the twists and turns the plot was taking me. Kate Winslet is astonishing; it was all astonishing. See it. You'll never forget the adventure.

Donald Combe is a re-

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

The Niagara-on-the-Lake

Local

The Trusted Voice of Our Community

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

Editor:
Penny Coles
penny@notllocal.com
905-246-5878

Publisher:
The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local

Graphic Designer:
Rosie Gowsell
composing@notllocal.com

Advertising Sales:
Karen Skeoch
karen@notllocal.com • 905-641-5335

Julia Coles
julia@notllocal.com • 905-934-1040

Helen Arsenault
Local Business Directory,
Local Happenings, Classified Sales
classified@notllocal.com

notllocal.com facebook.com/notllocal instagram.com/thenotllocal [@thenotllocal](https://twitter.com/thenotllocal)

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COMMENT

Importance of maintaining vision and hearing for good health



Larry Chambers
Madeleine Smith
Special to The Local

As we age, it is common to experience vision and hearing loss. However, older adults should know the difference between changes that are normal and those that are not.

Vision changes common with the natural aging of the eye include difficulty seeing objects clearly, even close up; a decline in colour sensitivity, such as being able to distinguish colours such as blue from black; and the need for more light when reading. Often these can be corrected with a new prescription for glasses or improved lighting. These changes should be distinguished from the common eye diseases and conditions that affect older adults which include age-related macular degeneration (AMD), cataract, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and dry eye.

Hearing loss includes difficulty understanding speech, especially if the speech is distorted or embedded in noise; problems related to localizing sound; being able to hear with both ears; and increased sensitivity to loudness. Presbycusis, or normal age-related hearing loss, worsens slowly, affects both ears, but usually only results in difficulty hearing high-pitched sounds. Hearing loss is due to three causes:

- Degeneration of the cochlea or inner ear, called peripheral hearing loss.
- Central hearing loss due to brain disease, occurring much less frequently.
- Conductive hearing loss in the middle and outer ear, which is the most common type of hearing loss. This can occur due to extreme wax build-up.

In addition, vision and hearing loss may result from changes to a vulnerable brain, for example a brain not fully operational because of blood vessel disease.

Good vision and hearing

are connected to brain health. Three possible causal processes have been identified:

- Cognitive load, when you can see or hear well. The brain is receiving clear signals and is not forced to work harder to derive meaning from the message.
- Individuals who are socially engaged prevent diminished cognitive stimulation and cognitive loss. People with vision and hearing problems are more likely to become isolated.
- Hearing and seeing well helps avoid brain shrinkage, mostly of the hearing portion of the brain, which also is involved in functions like memory, learning and thinking.

What you can do to protect your vision

According to the CNIB Foundation, the following strategies can help maintain good vision and avoid eye diseases:

- Quitting smoking. Through adopting this strategy, you will reduce the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and cataracts.
- Improving your diet and maintaining a healthy weight. This reduces the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration.
- Reducing sunlight exposure. This protects the eye's retina and reduces chances of developing age-related macular degeneration and cataracts. When out in the sun, wear sunglasses with 100 per cent UV protection, even in winter.
- Preventing diabetes, for example through physical activity, reduces your risk of many kinds of vision loss, including diabetic retinopathy.
- Managing diabetes (if you already have it), significantly lowers your risk of developing diabetic retinopathy. It's particularly crucial if you have type 1 diabetes to control your blood pressure, sugar, and lipid (fat) levels.
- Drinking in moderation reduces the risk of developing cataracts.
- Taking steps to avoid eye

injuries. Injuries including a hard blow, puncture, cut, intense heat, or a chemical burn may lead to cataracts. Wear eye protection when doing sports, home repairs, or other activities that could put your eyes at risk. You should also work in a well-ventilated area if you are using chemicals.

- Getting regular eye exams. These increase the likelihood of catching age-related eye diseases in the early stages, where they often have no noticeable symptoms.

Lifetime investing in good hearing can be achieved by lowering the volume and turning off music when not actively listening. Wearing hearing protection when using power tools or travelling on subways and trains is also helpful. Playing a musical instrument throughout adulthood can help maintain listening skills, including understanding what a person is saying in noisy environments.

If your hearing quality has already decreased, you can work on becoming a more effective communicator by taking charge of your communication assertively. Ways to achieve this involve asking people to get your attention before speaking to you, suggesting that they face you, and asking them not to shout. Other techniques include learning to use strategies for handling communication breakdowns, such as knowing when to ask for a 'rephrase' instead of a 'repeat,' and how to apply a clarification strategy. Put simply, learn how to ask questions.

Is visual loss an issue for me?

You can assess the quality of your vision if you have difficulty seeing objects clearly, a decline in sensitivity, such as not being able to distinguish colours, or needing more light in order to see.

Is hearing loss an issue for me?

If any of the following statements apply to you, then you may have difficulty hearing and should be seeking help from a health practitioner:

- You sometimes feel embarrassed when you meet new people because you struggle to hear.

- You feel frustrated when talking to members of your family because you have difficulty hearing them.
- You have difficulty hearing when someone speaks in a whisper.
- You feel restricted or limited by a hearing problem.
- You have difficulty hearing when visiting.
- A hearing problem causes you to attend faith organization services less often than you desire.
- Hearing problems cause you to argue with family members.
- You have trouble hearing the TV or radio at levels that are loud enough for others.
- You feel that any difficulty with your hearing limits your personal or social life.
- You have trouble hearing family or friends when you are together in a restaurant.

Who can support me?

You and your family can work together to make vision and hearing easier. Telling your family and friends that you are experiencing vision or hearing loss will allow these people to support you better. If you have poor vision, ask your friends and family to ensure good lighting in the places where you meet. If you have poor hearing, ask your friends and family to face you when they talk to you so you can see their faces. You can also ask people to speak more clearly and loudly, but not shout. Eliminating other background noises around you can also make it easier to hear people speaking to you. Working together to see or hear better may be tough on everyone for a while, but is worth the effort.

In the community

In addition to health charities who provide services to those with hearing and vision impairments, you might also consider help from your peers. Seeking out others in the community who share in visual and hearing difficulties will enable them to relate and empathize with you better than others might.

In the health service

Continued on page 8

Local LETTERS

Why the complaints?

Have to thank the employees of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake for the efforts they have made and continue to make during this COVID-19 situation on our behalf.

I can't understand why certain people keep complaining about things, like the signage coming into town. What do they not understand? The province is in a lockdown. We have been asked to only travel for essential activities!! Being a tourist at this time is non-essential.

What I'm astounded with is the fact that the town has had to put these signs up in the first place. All the things that

the town has had to do are at the direction of the Province and their lockdown mandates!

I'm concerned about the staff at our essential businesses such as our two valu-mart locations, whose employees have to be exposed to the non-essential tourists who continue to stream into the town on weekends during the lockdown. Also, the bylaw officers who have the thankless job of reminding adult, non-essential tourists that we are in the provincial lockdown, and that is why some features in the parks are currently not available

David Gilchrist
NOTL



This is one of three messages on the signs the town has installed. The others are reminders to Mask Up, Physical Distance and Stay at Home Order. (David Gilchrist)

NIMBYism evident in Old Towner's comment

I recently had a discussion with an Old Town resident regarding the latest development proposal from a well-known developer.

This ardent SORE (Save Our Rand Estate) supporter freely stated that this developer should move his proposal away from Old Town and onto the former Mori Gardens property.

This attitude expressed in

front of witnesses epitomizes the NIMBY attitude that is at the root of the SORE protest. We all want responsible development, but hiding behind heritage preservation serves no purpose but to protect the few who only wish to enhance the value of their own properties.

Thomas Wiley
Virgil

Letters! We want letters!

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

NOTL LOCAL Front and Editorial Banner Bookings

DON'T MISS OUT!

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

NOTL businesses: Call Karen at 905.641.5335 or email karen@notllocal.com

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Celebrate International Museum Day with a virtual visit

**Kim Wade
Special to The Local**

Celebrate International Museum Day with a virtual visit to the NOTL museum

“Today, a museum is not just a place of dusty records and rarely-handled artifacts.”

Barbara Worthy, visitor and members services assistant at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, points out museums around the world embrace interactive learning, immersive experiences, and community engagement. “The strength of the NOTL Museum lies in its ability to do all that, and to help maintain a vital and strong community,” says Worthy.

May 18 is International Museum Day, and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is celebrating May as Museum Month. According to a recent survey conducted by the NOTL Museum, members found the museum to be “one of the most innovative and forward-thinking organizations in the community.”

“For a little museum, the NOTL Museum thinks big,” was one of the survey comments.

The museum has created a strong media presence with content on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as coordinating virtual exhibits on Google Arts and Culture.

Adding to the museum’s social media program, the NOTL Museum gift shop now offers online purchases of his-

torical books on topics such as the War of 1812, Indigenous history, Black history, biographies, and historical fiction. The gift shop also offers some very unique giftware for the home, historical fashion accessories, and recreations of vintage toys and games. Shipping, local pickup and curbside pickup options are available.

In spite of a year of reduced programming, the NOTL Museum has hosted more than 20 virtual lectures, co-produced nearly 30 short history vignettes, offered game nights, on-line weekly quizzes, community challenges and monthly documentary club gatherings. The museum’s community partnerships have also “resulted in popular drive-through pig roasts with PigOut Catering, and the now almost legendary fundraising dinners with partners the Friends of Fort George, Ravine Winery, and local restaurateurs, Ruffino’s Pasta Bar & Grill and The Garrison House,” adds Worthy.

This sense of community partnership and generosity, in spite of adversity, is a long tradition in NOTL. Since the Niagara Historical Society opened Memorial Hall in 1907, the world has seen three major pandemics: the Spanish flu of 1918, the Asian flu of 1957 and the Hong Kong flu of 1968.

It is the Spanish flu of 1918 that has particular significance for NOTL. It was at Camp Kos-

ciuszko where the first case of the flu in Canada was reported. The Camp was a training facility for Polish soldiers during the First World War. Exhausted Canadian nurses at the camp were supported by Polish White Cross nurses from New York State and the Grey Samaritans. This later group, founded by St. Catharines resident Countess Laura de Turczynowicz, comprised a group of young Polish women.

According to the NOTL Museum’s archives, the Polish women “worked with the American Relief Fund to provide basic necessities to dispossessed Poles during and after the war.”

All of these women joined the ongoing efforts of Elizabeth Ascher, a local reporter for The St. Catharines Standard who became an advocate for the Polish Relief Fund, collecting money, clothing and medical supplies for Polish soldiers and civilians living in their devastated homeland. She also worked to supply the soldiers at Camp Kosciuszko with decent living conditions, including winter clothing, blankets, Polish books and music. Ascher’s work with the Polish Relief Fund and her selfless care for the soldiers at the Camp earned her the nickname the Angel of Mercy. Her dedication to the Polish cause during and after the war earned her special recognition from the new Polish administration. Among her

many awards, she became the first Canadian to be awarded the Chevalier’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta.

Different resources claim that the Spanish flu took up to 20 million lives worldwide. At home, it is estimated it claimed the lives of upwards of 50,000 Canadians, 10,000 of those in Ontario alone. In NOTL, even though hundreds were infected with the flu, in the end, the virus claimed the lives of 20 Polish soldiers. These men are buried on a Polish sovereign plot in St. Vincent de Paul cemetery. This site has been the destination for an annual pilgrimage since 1920. According to assistant curator Shawna Butts, 2020 marked the first time in all these years that the usual full-scale pilgrimage was regrettably unable to take place, ironically due to another global pandemic.

Like the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918, our current pandemic has once again brought illness and loss to our community. As in the past, we face social and economic disruption in the form of quarantines, enforced mask wearing, and commercial and cultural institutional closures but if history has taught us anything, it is that as a nation, a province, and a community will make it through.

“In these very different times, museums around the



The Chevalier’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta awarded to Elizabeth Ascher is from the museum’s archives. (Photo supplied)

world have continued to provide a means for communities to connect, stay involved, and to stay strong together. The NOTL Museum has played a significant role in the community during these COVID months. Its ability to provide ongoing social and educational programming has provided its members, and the community at large, with a feast of resources,” writes Worthy.

It is good to know the NOTL Museum will be collecting and documenting how we

handle the pandemic, and how people like Elizabeth Ascher, and all the other volunteers can inspire us to continue the tradition of caring and generosity of our community.

The virtual exhibit for “Camp Kosciuszko: The Spanish Flu and the Women of the Camp” can be found on <https://artsandculture.google.com/>. More information on the museum and its virtual exhibits can be found on <http://www.nhsm.ca/> or by calling 905-468-3912.

Specialist may be needed

Continued from page 7

If your poor vision or hearing persists despite seeking help from your family, friends and community, it might be time to consult a professional. For hearing problems an audiologist is the first person to consult. If wax buildup is not causing the problem, they will start the process of assessing the benefit that a hearing aid and support service could offer.

It is important not to see the hearing aid as simply a piece of technology. It takes time to adjust to the hearing aid and to learn how to use it. The audiolo-

gist can also advise on the need for specialist advice or referral to an ear, nose, and throat department. Audiologists can also educate you on ways to improve communication in difficult listening situations.

For visual problems, see an optometrist. For sudden loss of vision in one or both eyes, go straight to a hospital emergency department. People aged over 50 should be seeing an optometrist regularly, and the common age-related problems will be detected at these visits.

If you have diabetes type 1 or 2, you will be receiving separate invitations for screening to detect retinopathy. If the optom-

etrict thinks specialist advice and assessment is required, they will make the necessary arrangements.

Larry W. Chambers has authored 175 articles and books concerning disease prevention (e.g. dementia), quality improvement in long-term care homes and innovative approaches for continuing professional development. He is research director of the Niagara Regional Campus, School of Medicine, McMaster University. Madeleine Smith is a medical student at the Niagara Regional Campus, Michael G. Degroote School of Medicine, McMaster University.

Learn about heritage gardens of the early 1800s



The Friends of Fort George will be offering a lecture on Heritage Gardens next Wednesday, May 19, at 10 a.m. It will feature what was grown in Upper Canada in the early 1800s and what you can still grow today. A zoom lecture with speakers from Fort George National Historic Site, Fort York National Historic Site and McFarland House, shown here, will look at what military and civilians were growing at the turn of the 19th century. The lecture is free for members, \$5 for non-members. To register, email admin@friendsoffortgeorge.ca. Space is limited. (Photo supplied)



2021 MUNICIPAL TAX REMINDER NOTICE INTERIM SECOND INSTALLMENT DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2021

Tax Rates as per Interim By-Law No. 5283-20

Payment may be made by mail or by drop off at the **Town Municipal Offices** at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road (PO Box 100, Virgil ON L0S 1T0). A 24-hour mail slot is located at the front (accessible drop box) and side entrances of the Town office for your convenience. Post-dated cheques are accepted. **Payment can also be made electronically from your bank account using the 19-digit roll number.**

If payment is made at a bank or other pay station, your account will be credited only **after** the Town has received settlement from the bank. Please allow **ten (10)** working days for payment processing.

A penalty of 1.25% will be added on the first day of default and on the first day of each month thereafter. To avoid penalty and interest charges, **payment must be received at the Town Municipal Office by the due date. Penalties may not be waived.**

Failure to receive a bill does not excuse a taxpayer from the responsibility of payment of taxes and penalty. **If you have not received your tax notice, please contact the Finance division at 905-468-3266 ext. 230 to ensure that your correct mailing address, including PO Box, is on file.**

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED A MORE CONVENIENT WAY TO PAY YOUR TAXES?

Save time and potential late fees by paying your taxes through our Pre-Authorized Payment (PAP) plan or through online or telephone banking. Property owners can also request to receive their property tax bills and notices from the Town by e-mail only through a new eSend service.

For information on payment options or to sign up for eSend, visit the Town’s website at www.notl.com or contact our Finance division directly at 905-468-3266 ext. 230.

Virtual meetings can effectively include nature tours



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

Virtual talks and meetings are the new normal. Statistically speaking, it is likely most of us have done one since the onset of the pandemic. What remains unclear is what the propensity of this screen time and e-meetings look like, as these options establish themselves as a permanent or preferred venue to communicate.

As many of us have made the adjustment and leap of internet faith over the past year, I have made some observations on how this could be influencing a variety of factors in our natural world, which, of course, is my ultimate professional and recreational focus in life.

I wanted to touch on the concept of doing virtual hikes. Recently, I led such a hike for the Niagara West

Green Party. I have another one coming up for the Niagara Falls Green Party, which includes NOTL in its riding area.

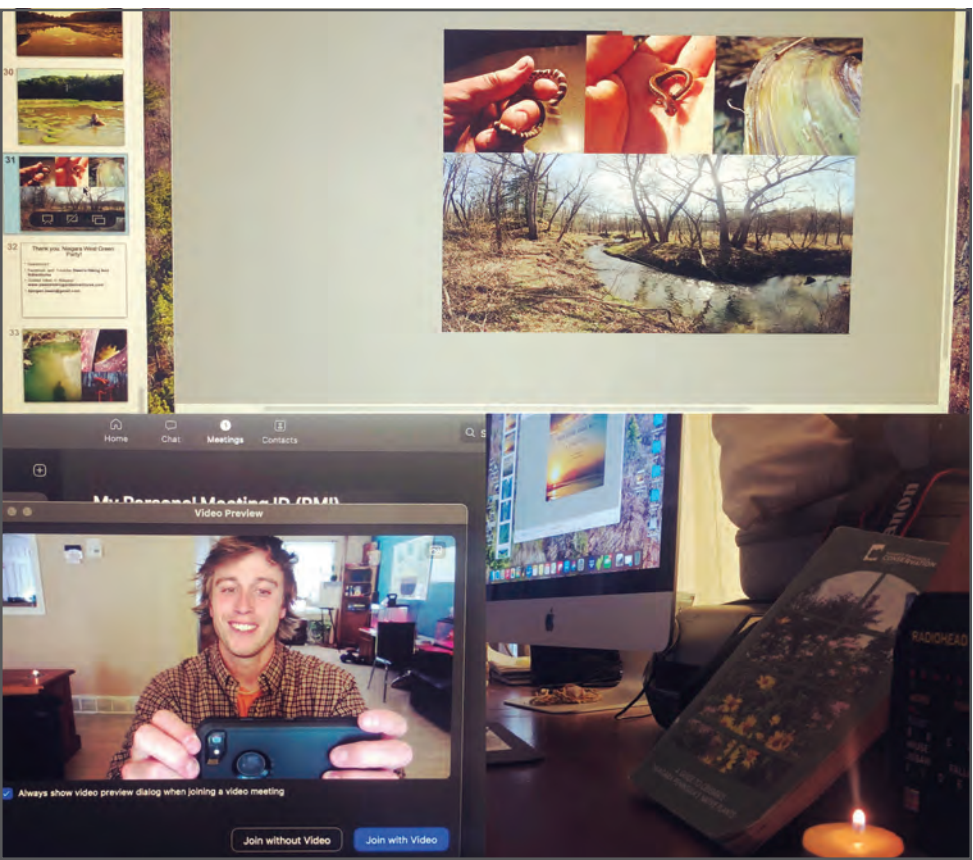
How does one participate in a virtual hike from their desk or living room? I'll explain, but first off and for the record, I'm not going to dive into party ideologies. Rather, my role as an information vector is what matters most to me. I'll talk to Liberals, Conservatives, or any legislative body who seeks useful information about Niagara Region's natural heritage. Nowadays, I give kudos to any political level giving any serious amount of attention to the health of the natural environment.

Fortunately, I have thousands of photos from my Niagara Region explorations, tours, and camp-outs over the years. I use these images of our local waterfalls, butterflies, wetlands, and frogs to inspire people about the local ecosystem. I slap them together on a powerpoint slideshow, hit the now fa-

mous "screen share" button, and I simply speak and click through. It's almost like a form of storytelling, forged by a wild visual journey with education.

To be totally transparent, I never really got stage fright or tingling nerves when I used to present in front of ten or a hundred people. To me, that was a much more physically and psychologically comfortable experience. You can read your audience. You can sense the energy and mood in the room, and your eyes or body language are free to travel from table to table.

In contrast, nowadays, sometimes I talk for 45 minutes straight, and I am essentially looking at my computer screen the entire time. There's something profoundly different about talking to my waterfalls and toad pictures without seeing another soul until the presentation is done. You know everyone is listening and watching though, as dozens and dozens of eyeballs are coming through the tiny camera on top of my com-



Owen Bjorgan continues to offer tours of Niagara's green spaces, but for now, virtually, using some of the many photos he has taken on previous hikes.

puter. Our human species, being as adaptable as we are, are figuring it out in good stride though. I am grateful to continue running actual hikes while also having the avenue to run them virtually as an option. To me, there is one unifying factor between the

Continued on page 11



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Music Niagara launching 'big auction' fundraiser

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

A full week at a private villa in Playa del Coco, Costa Rica might be just what the doctor ordered to blow off the pandemic blues. The oasis offers two bedrooms, three bathrooms, a beautiful private outdoor pool, and ocean and mountain views from every room. And it's on the docket as one of more than 30 items in next month's Music Niagara Festival Big Online Auction.

Like all non-profit organizations, Music Niagara has had to adapt to a new way of raising funds with COVID-19 in the picture.

"In March 2020, we needed to pivot our fundraising activities," said volunteer Michelle Scott, chair of fundraising for the organization, in an email to The Local. "The board felt strongly that we could not go out to the public with our traditional fundraising requests. Obviously COVID-19 restrictions curtailed music events and fundraising activities significantly. It required us to do some creative thinking, which

took time. Every idea was a moving target because of all of the uncertainty."

Last year's Big Night Gala, usually the first event on its fundraising slate, was cancelled, forcing Music Niagara to refund ticket holders. While the organization regrouped, efforts were focused on revamping the summer series of concerts, resulting in the very successful 2020 At Home Series.

Scott said the last Big Night Gala, held at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre in June, 2019, was attended by nearly 200 people.

"The tradition started many years ago," she said. "A three-course dinner, silent and live auction, dancing and guest appearances from our Performance Academy students. It has become a 'must attend' fundraising evening for many residents in Niagara. And it typically raises around \$50,000."

With the pandemic still limiting in-person attendance, Music Niagara has been forced to scale back its fundraising goals. Scott said in total, through three events, they hope to raise \$40,000 this summer.

Things started out on a very positive note with the announcement of Music Niagara's annual golf tournament, The Duet Open, scheduled for Aug. 4 at the NOTL Golf Club. When registration opened in late March, it took less than two days for all 54 spots to be claimed. In consultation with the golf club, more spots were opened up, and 18 people from the waiting list were added to the participants.

That surprised Music Niagara's general manager Karen Lade. "But again, people are dying to get out," Lade says. "We're all hoping that by August, we will still be able to make that golf tournament happen."

Lade adds that they are planning a Great Debate and Dinner event for July 13. The fundraising committee is still finalizing details for that evening, which they currently anticipate will most likely be a take-home format.

Knowing that this year's Big Night again can't happen, a number of volunteers mobilized to focus on the auction side of the annual gala, usually the most lucrative part of the evening.

Scheduled for June 5 through 20, it will be conducted through the Music Niagara website.

"We might not announce all the items until June 5," says Lade, "because we want it to be a surprise. What people have to do is, when it opens on that day at 9 a.m., they can just start bidding. You have to sign up via email through our website after May 17. The auction will close on June 20."

Among the other items up for bidding are a rare bottle of Château Lafite Rothschild, vintage 1996, a sunset cruise for six on Lake Ontario, and a 30-minute exotic car test drive with GTA Exotics.

"All of our items are generously donated by local businesses and volunteers," Scott said. "Our Big Night volunteer committee of more than 15 dedicated volunteers have all been active in all aspects of our fundraising this year."

As for the upcoming season's concerts, Lade says the organization is still working on final details for about 13 shows this summer.

"Atis (Bankas, founder

and artistic director) is still confirming a few of the musicians," Lade says. "We were focusing on only Canadian musicians again, but what we're realizing is we can only focus on Ontario musicians right now. We had some from Nova Scotia who are now saying they don't feel comfortable coming. It's changed quite a bit as the months have gone on.

We thought we'd be in a better situation by now."

Lade looks forward to unveiling some surprises for October, and the announcement of a new partnership with a local business as well.

Details on the auction, the Great Debate, and the full concert season will be on the Music Niagara website, at musicniagara.org, in mid-May.



A week at this private villa in Playa del Coco, Costa Rica is one of the auction items for Music Niagara's fundraiser. (Photo supplied)

Local arts entrepreneur awarded prestigious fellowship

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Alexis Spieldenner, co-founder and executive director of Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts, has been selected to participate in the DeVos Institute of Arts Management three-year Fellowship program.

The prestigious program out of the University of Maryland is led by founder Michael Kaiser, and president Brett Egan.

"I'm honoured to be selected as a DeVos Institute Fellow," said Spieldenner in an email. "This will be an invaluable and transformative experience, not only for me professionally, but

also for Bravo Niagara!"

"Michael Kaiser is a leader in the arts world," she continued. "I've admired his extraordinary career, leading organizations such as the Kennedy Center, Alvin Ailey, American Ballet Theatre, and the Royal Opera House. I feel very fortunate to have this opportunity to learn from Michael Kaiser, Brett Egan, and other experts in the field."

Spieldenner is the only Canadian among the six fellows chosen through the competitive application process. Next summer she will attend the first of three annual month-long intensive sessions with peers from Colombia, Singapore, Charleston, Brooklyn and Chicago. The sessions will be led by DeVos Institute executives, consultants, and other experts in the arts.

"I'm particularly excited about the global perspective on arts management that this fellowship will offer," added Spieldenner, "as well as the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with this inspiring group of arts managers from around the world."

Originally the Kennedy Centre Institute of Arts Management, it was renamed in

honour of Betsy and Dick DeVos, whose foundation contributed \$22.5 million to it in 2010. Dick DeVos, who served as CEO of Amway from 1993 to 2002, is the son of the multi-level marketing company's co-founder Richard DeVos. His wife Betsy, the former United States Secretary of Education in the Trump administration, was the Republican national committeewoman for Michigan from 1992 to 1997.

The institute's fellowship program is designed to serve entrepreneurial executives in the arts and cultural sector. The fellows chosen must be prepared to look critically at their work, challenge assumptions, and develop rigorous strategies to address the most pressing issues facing their organizations, regions, and art forms at large. The institute's website says their program is designed for individuals who have dedicated themselves to management, rather than artistic leadership.

Spieldenner says the fact that the institute emphasizes critical organizational capacities in long-term artistic planning, marketing, fundraising, board development, and financial management is exactly why

she applied.

"There are many different aspects to creating a strong, sustainable arts organization," she told The Local. "I'm eager to learn all I can to support Bravo Niagara's growth and help reach its full potential. This will also contribute to the Niagara region's rich cultural landscape, and have an impact on our community. Ultimately, stronger arts organizations lead to more vibrant communities."

With the DeVos Institute's focus on justice, advancing social change, and empathy for other perspectives and ways of life, it's a great fit for the direction that Bravo Niagara! has headed with much of its recent programming.

"The institute's belief that art, and the dialogue it provokes, is an instrument of peace strongly resonates with me," said Spieldenner. "Over the past several years, the Voices of Freedom Festival has become an important platform for amplifying underrepresented voices through the arts. The festival is one of Bravo Niagara's signature programs, and is something we will continue to focus our efforts on in the coming years."

Spieldenner and the other six fellows will attend their first four-week residency in Washington, D.C. in July, 2022. The program is provided free of charge and funded by the DeVos Family Foundation.

"The early summer timing fits perfectly into Bravo Niagara's off season," offered Spieldenner. "The fellowship program also offers ongoing mentoring, both during and between the month-long residencies. The program is designed so that all activities are applied directly to our organizations."

The DeVos Institute has served more than 1,000 organizations from more than 80 countries since its founding during Kaiser's tenure as President of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Spieldenner's peers next July hail from the worlds of dance, theatre, orchestra administration and civic cultural management.

Added Christine Mori, Spieldenner's proud mother and co-founder and artistic director at Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts, "this will be a remarkable opportunity for our organization."



Alexis Spieldenner and Christine Mori, of Bravo Niagara!, have presented the Voices of Freedom Festival as a platform for underrepresented voices through the arts. The festival is one of Bravo Niagara's signature events, and has featured Grammy-winning bassist Richard Bona. (File photo)

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Virtual tours can deliver conservation message

Continued from page 9

real and virtual hikes in Niagara — they still deliver the same message, and I would like to think that the message of conservation and enthusiasm for our natural world remains at the forefront.

Within the past few months alone, I have done virtual nature talks and walks for political parties, the NOTL Newcomers Club, the Welland Library, and a free one I organized specifically for children at home. The last one was particularly special, as I felt a universal pull to keep the youth engaged in the wonders of our natural

world. It's one of the things I am most concerned about in my spare time and on a spare thought — while kids are at home more often with increased screen time and less quality education, would their interest for nature be slipping through the cracks?

Those who understand turn into those who care, and those who care turn into voting citizens who can influence the outcome of how our natural heritage is treated. When we treat our natural surroundings with dignity and calculated respect, we benefit both biodiversity and our human civilization alike.



Pre-pandemic, Owen Bjorgan offered nature tours for kids, politicians and anyone else interested in the Niagara environment. (Photos by Owen Bjorgan)

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Long-time offshore worker planned to return this season

Instead, he died suddenly, while waiting for a flight

Jane Andres
Special to The Local

Gladstone Pusey
August 30, 1963 –
March 18, 2021
Broken Bank, Rock River,
Clarendon

A gentleman. Hard worker. Dependable. A man of his word. An honourable man.

He liked to joke, to add a little levity when the going got tough at work on the farm.

These are a few of the words his coworkers used when describing Gussy. The name on his passport was Gladstone Pusey, his surname taken from the wealthy British plantation owner who relied on the labour of hundreds of enslaved men and women in 1718.

For hundreds of years, the wealth generated by the fertile Jamaican soil had literally built empires abroad in the U.K. and Scotland.

Gussy's ancestors have deep roots in the parish of Clarendon, each one with the dream of owning their own land and providing a secure life for a family of their own.

When Gussy married Eunice over 35 years ago in

the town of Rock River, the dream was no different. He loved farming, and working the soil that his parents had farmed on. Deep pockets of rich soil allowed coffee, cocoa, sugar cane, bananas, plantains, and yams to thrive, providing rich cash crops for centuries.

Radical economic changes coming their way, however, had an immediate impact on the once self-sufficient communities. Inequitable trade policies in the 1960s allowed heavily subsidized produce, powdered milk, and chicken from the U.S. to flood the markets, forcing small scale producers and dairies out of business. The collapse of local economies precipitated the immigration of thousands to the U.K. Many Jamaicans emigrated to Canada through the domestic worker program, which allowed families to stay intact.

In the mid-1960s Ontario tender fruit farmers were in a labour crisis, with crops going unharvested. The development of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) and the promise of a steady labour force heralded a new era of progress and expansion for Niagara farmers.

Men and women from the Caribbean came up on eight-month work programs, and also had the opportunity to be sponsored by their employer to bring their families and eventually become Canadian citizens. Many of these families have continued to live in Niagara, still contributing to our communities decades later. The path to immigration was discontinued in the early 1970s when Mexico joined the SAWP.

Gussy was only 23 years old when he started working at the Froese farm, where he was employed for the next 35 years.

Like many working on local farms, he only planned to stay on the program until he had his house built and livelihood established.

With the arrival of three children, Karlene, Gladstone Jr. and Saneicka, his responsibilities grew at home. The cost of living on the island increased exponentially, and with it came the realization that there was not going to be a recovery to the Jamaican economy in the foreseeable future.

Returning to Canada each year became a way of life, not only for Gussy but

for thousands of Jamaicans.

Gussy was scrupulous with his earnings. The steady devaluation of the Canadian dollar had a direct impact on the purchasing power of his paycheque back home. Every dollar was carefully budgeted to build his house, invest in his farm, pay for his children's education, and transportation expenses, as well as set aside the necessary funds for his application fees for the following year.

After eight long months away he couldn't wait until the familiar sights of Rock River came into view. The lights in his cheery bright green home at the end of the lane were always shining bright no matter what hour he arrived home. Who could sleep when dad was coming back with a heavy suitcase full of goodies from Canada?

Turning up the path with a packed suitcase at the end of the season and a long journey home, the cheerful sight of his bright green house with pink trim lightened his steps.

He valued every moment at home for the four months he was able to be with his family. Taking no time to rest after his return, he plunged into work on his own farm.

His days started at 5:30 a.m. He was at his happiest when, after tending to the goats, he would head up the narrow path to distant fields on Gretta, his surefooted donkey. A slow cascade of golden sunlight rippling down terraced fields would warm his back. Overhead in the breadfruit tree the jabblin crows would be nattering like ladies gossiping after a church service. Later he would head back with a sack of yams, cassava, and bananas, checking first the sweetness of his Julie mangos in the yard before washing up for breakfast.

He found great delight in the three grandchildren who doted on their grandpa. Every morning his six-year-old grandchild would bring him his tea for breakfast. He would laugh when his two-year-old grandchild recently started sneaking into his bedroom before dawn, bringing him his "cutlass" (a gardening tool) and say "time to cut bush, Grandpa!"

He supplemented his income with a taxi route. His clientele knew the amiable driver well, trusting his skills as he navigated the winding roads that clung tenaciously to the mountainsides. Locally they referred to him affectionately as "Stamma," a nickname bestowed on him years earlier.

When he was here in Niagara for eight months, there were constant concerns of life in limbo, and being sep-



Typical Gussy, lightening the mood after a long day harvesting peaches during a heat wave, says Jane Andres. He is sporting three old, frayed baseball caps displaying the Jamaican colours — Jamaica proud. (Jane Andres)

arated from family when he was away from them. This weighed heavily when there was illness in the family, or during hurricane season. When monster hurricanes slammed into the island in 1988, 2004, and 2007, he and his coworkers could only pray and hope their families were safe.

Preparing to leave for such a lengthy absence required advance planning, and for those with farms, many long days to get crops planted or harvested, depending on the time of year.

The past year had been very hard financially, with grocery costs escalating exponentially due to COVID. They normally raise about 50 chickens to sell as broilers, but the rising cost of grain for their feed made it prohibitively expensive. A regular cabbage at a grocery store in a nearby city cost \$25 U.S.

It was also becoming more costly to apply for the farm work program. There are multiple trips to Kingston for their pre-flight medicals, work permits, biometrics, police checks, and more recently, COVID tests.

The pandemic created unexpected complications and increasing stress for those on the farm work program.

On March 14, 2021, Gussy arrived at the Ministry of Labour as instructed, with the rest of the farm crew, to get their pre-flight COVID test. In order to reach the Ministry by 7 a.m. many of them had to leave home around 1 a.m., or even the night before. Gussy and a co-worker were taken aside and told to go home. They were instructed to return for their flight a month later, even though they had just taken

the COVID test.

He returned home late that night after several hours of travel and no sleep. For the next two days he was distraught at the loss of income and the cost of an additional trip to Kingston.

Early on March 18, he went to the little grove behind his house to cut some fresh plantain for breakfast. He returned shortly with stomach pains, thinking it was the stress of the past week. His little granddaughter quickly brought him his cup of tea, and he thanked her, drinking it so as not to hurt her feelings. The family decided he needed to be taken to the emergency department, but they believe he suffered a heart attack, and passed away in their presence, before they arrived at the hospital.

The family was in shock. He was only 58, and had seemed in excellent health, as was indicated in his medical exam a few weeks earlier. He had already invested several hundred dollars in required tests and related costs preparing for the upcoming season.

They were forced to sell the car he used as a taxi to pay for his funeral costs.

Gussy had lived and worked eight months of the year for 35 years in our neighbourhood, longer than most of the Canadian residents. As many local farmers have emphasized this past year, men like Gussy have played an essential role in the success of Niagara's agricultural industry for the past 55 years.

He was and remains deeply loved by his family, coworkers, and Canadian friends.

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They're here! Hummingbirds complete long journey north

David Gilchrist
Special to The Local

My wife and her friend in Orangeville have been closely following the annual spring migration of the hummingbirds for the last few weeks. There is actually an app that tracks their progress and location, giving daily updates. I wondered if gambling was involved? So, "they're on their way" recently changed to "they're here!"

The app indicated the hummingbirds had, indeed, crossed into Canada. Given the weather we had been having lately all I could think was they should have stayed south for a few more weeks. Brrr!

With their supposed arrival came the next rite of spring, the search for the special feeder which had been carefully packed away last year. But who could remember where? Shed? Garage? Basement? I did find one, in a shoe box marked Hummingbird Feeder, but as it turned out, it wasn't the correct one. We were, however, eventually successful at locating the correct one — exactly where we had put it in the fall, of course.

My wife carefully prepared the prescribed solution — four parts water to one part sugar. Experts in the field are insistent that only regular white sugar and no colouring be used, as anything else can be harmful. The solution also needs to be changed regularly, as it can go bad and harm the hummingbirds. Finally, we then placed the feeder at the back of the yard close to some bushes, where we had success in previous years. To my surprise, and

actually while I was working on this article, a hummingbird appeared in our backyard, early in the evening on May 2.

Hummingbirds are small birds with a long, narrow beak used for extracting nectar from flowers. Interestingly, they have no sense of smell but can hear much better than humans (wonder how they determine that?). Another amazing thing is that they are the only birds that can fly backwards, thanks to a wingspan that usually exceeds their full length by at least one-fourth of an inch. They have the second fastest beating heart at 1,200 times per minute, only beaten by the pygmy shrew, which has a heart that beats at 1,511 beats per minute. All in all, a fascinating wee bird!

There are approximately 360 species, all of which are native to the Americas. The species that visit our area is the ruby-throated hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*). These spend the winter in Mexico and Central America before beginning the long migration north. As with other migratory species, this spring and fall event is quite impressive. More so, I feel, for the hummingbird! According to experts who track their migration, they are, despite their small size, capable of great flight. The ruby-throated variety, for example is known to be able to fly over the Gulf of Mexico non-stop, a distance of a little over 800 km. Banded specimens have been tracked travelling an average of 40 km a day on their northward journey. On their southward journey they've been tracked at substantially more kilometres

per day. (They must be in a hurry to get that perfect spot on the beach.) During migration, they may stop for periods of rest and renewal before continuing on. It is reported that they will return to the same area annually.

So, as I spotted our visitor through the window, I wondered whether this was the same little one that had graced our backyard last year. It did look kind of familiar as I watched it through binoculars, and then my camera lens. I was concerned it wasn't ruby-throated, as its throat area looked to be black. But, fellow birders assured me it was, indeed, a ruby-throated hummingbird. The males do supposedly arrive earlier than females, according to those who study such things. Most likely to set up a nest to attract an incoming female. How admirable! Such forethought!

The next few days we anxiously watched for the little guy to reappear, but didn't notice him. I was concerned about the cooler, drizzly weather that we seemed to be locked into for awhile. The little guy didn't seem to have much meat on him, so I wondered if it might be too cold for him. At least, he could get some energy from the sugar solution. Also, a concern was the lack of spring foliage on our bushes, which would offer some cover from potential predators. But if he can travel such a distance, again, just to be with us, he probably knows how to look after himself!

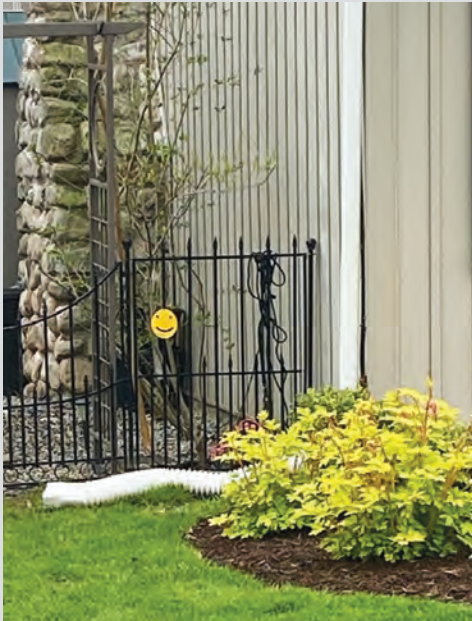
"Oh, wait, maybe that's it! Honey, where did you put the binoculars?"



The ruby-throated hummingbirds have arrived! (Photos by David Gilchrist)



These will put a smile on your face



Sarah Moorhead sent these photos she took around the Chautauqua neighbourhood, hoping to make people smile. "I've noticed these little faces popping up over the last few days, and honestly, you can't help but smile when you spot one. They are metal and hung up by a piece of fishing line, dotted around fence posts, hanging baskets, gates and trees. I walk the neighbourhood every day and it's so nice to see someone spreading a little bit of joy," says Moorhead.

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LocalSPORTS

Pickleball club members anxious to get out on courts

Penny Coles
The Local

The pickleball courts in Virgil are off-limits for now, with provincial restrictions banning many outdoor activities, but with the recent growth in popularity of the sport and the “stunning success of the installation outdoor courts,” action will likely take off as soon as rules permit.

John Hindle, president of the NOTL Pickleball Club, spoke to councillors at their Monday planning committee meeting about the partnership between the club and the town, which he would like to continue for the next five years.

Last year, the courts were surrounded by black wind-screens on three sides, and locks put on the two entries, at the request of the NOTL Pickleball Club.

That was partly due to the partnership between the club and the town, forged last year on a trial basis, setting out the responsibilities of both, including how costs and maintenance will be shared.

All play has been suspended, indoors and on the Virgil courts, due to COVID-19. When the province permits and club play resumes, there will be scheduled time for members, and always at least one court for public use, Hindle said.

On a provincial level, he



Pickleball club president John Hindle, seeing some young people out on the court last summer, couldn't stop himself from offering a few tips to improve their game. The sport is starting to appeal to a wider age group, which he encourages every chance he gets. (File photo)

told councillors, the club has signed a partnership agreement with Pickleball Ontario, which will provide more opportunities for financial support and coaching expertise, just a few of the advantages of the agreement.

The club also applied for 2022 provincial championships to be held in NOTL, but then withdrew their submission. “Restrictions of COVID would not permit us to host the superior event we would demand of

ourselves,” he said, “but we’ve been requested to resubmit when times are better.”

On the national level, Pickleball Canada is currently striving to get federal recognition of the sport, and the club is one of the league clubs in Canada to work on a national registration system, he said, telling councillors the club has never stopped working to build on its successful foundation.

With the start of the season of warm weather, club members are “cracking, going crazy,” he told The Local, itching to get out onto the courts.

When the club opened last season, with COVID protocols, about half the members were hesitant to play, but now vaccinated, he thinks they will see a big return to the courts when allowed.

Club representatives have talked many times about how they will handle provincial restrictions, depending on what is permitted.

When the club opened after the first lockdown last spring, they could only play within their household bubble. He’s hoping that won’t be the case this time, that the province

will assign colour categories with fewer restrictions.

He’s also hoping they won’t be limited to singles play, which is pretty hard physically, and a lot for some of the seniors to handle. “Given the demographics and fitness levels of some of the seniors, that’s not the workout we’re looking for.”

Pickleball is as much about the social connections, being out with friends, letting off steam and talking about family as it is about the sport, Hindle says. “The physical activity of it brings fitness and joy. Being engaged with other people when playing the game brings a feeling of mental and physical well-being.”

Members will support and follow all protocols and restrictions in place when they reopen, he says, and are hoping to see tennis, golf and pickleball all open soon.

When the courts reopen, the hours of play have been reduced to 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Last year they started an hour earlier and ended an hour later, but times were changed out of respect for nearby residents, who found activity from the courts could be noisy.

There was some discussion Monday about reducing the hours even further, closing down at 9 p.m., but councillors had little appetite for taking another hour of play away from club members and the public, “on the fly,” without consultation, said Coun. Erwin Wiens, at least until they receive feedback about the change.

Coun. Allan Bisback agreed. “We should be encouraging people to get outside,” he said. “We don’t know what this recovery is going to be like,” he added, noting the courts have lights for evening use.

The town’s noise bylaw goes into effect at 11 p.m., and closing an hour earlier gives players time to pack up their stuff and chat amongst themselves, heading home before the noise curfew begins, said Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

Hindle says the most popular time on the courts are early in the day before it gets too hot, especially for members, and then late afternoon and early evening he’s noticed a growing number of young people and families playing pickleball.

In the agreement Hindle hopes to see signed, the town

will be responsible for all future major capital improvements, in consultation with the club.

The club will be responsible for purchasing auxiliary items, such as storage lockers, ball machines, wind screens, and assorted pickleball equipment.

They agree that the club may schedule tournaments and other special events from time to time by providing the town with one month advance notice, and the town has the right to approve or deny any proposed tournaments or special events if the date and time conflicts with other events. They also agree there will not be any courts available for public use during tournaments or learn-to play events.

The club is assisting the town by maintaining a system for the general public and club members to access the gate code to enter the courts, and to be responsible for reprogramming the code when they decide it needs to be changed.

The locked gate and code were put in place last year, when it appeared people using the court for other purposes, such as cycling, were damaging them.

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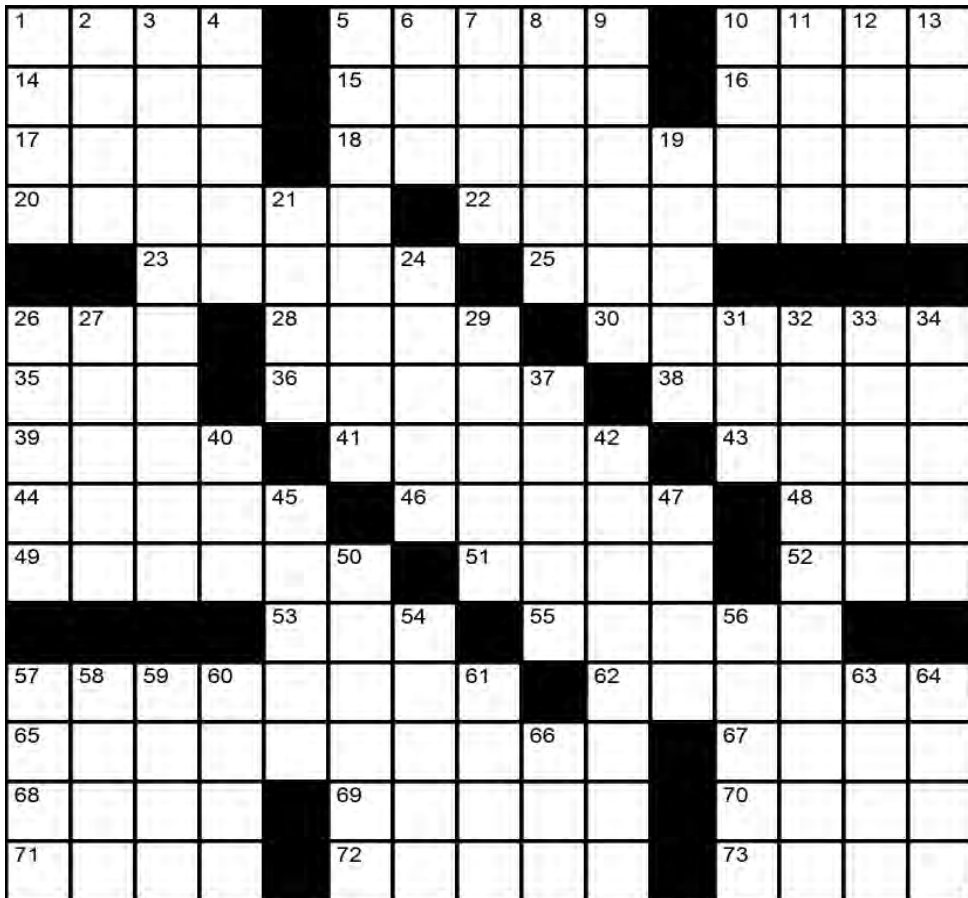
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Across:

- 1 Opposite of neither
- 5 Protect
- 10 "Four and twenty
blackbirds baked in ---"
- 14 On the ocean
- 15 Publish
- 16 Route
- 17 Via
- 18 Serviced
- 20 Cotton Club setting
- 22 Jamboree
- 23 Up
- 25 Intelligence agency
- 26 Not traded on a stock
exchange
- 28 Top guns
- 30 Ethnic
- 35 In favor
- 36 Adeptness
- 38 State animal of Maine
- 39 The Sultan of Swat
- 41 Talent seeker
- 43 Shuttle operator
- 44 Behaved
- 46 Wished
- 48 Beat
- 49 Accidental dive
- 51 Feeble

52 Some foreign Government

heads
53 Except
55 Comic --- Martin
57 Light metal
62 Knuckleheads
65 Suspension
67 Duration
68 First to die in the Bible
69 Untrue
70 Egyptian dancing girl
71 Dabbling duck
72 Absquatulates
73 Drip slowly

Down:

- 1 Tub
- 2 Workplace regulation agency
- 3 Unglazed brownish-red earthenware
- 4 Pulls
- 5 Ingenious sales devices
- 6 World's largest economy
- 7 Expression of incredulity
- 8 Scrap
- 9 Despise
- 10 Parched
- 11 Small lake
- 12 U N nuclear watchdog

13 Swirl

19 Warning signal
21 Touchdown forecasts
24 German state
26 O founder
27 Temporary peace
29 Single-masted sailboat
31 Electrically charged particle
32 Maritime refugees
33 Tea-growing Indian state
34 Inclines
37 Southern hemisphere
constellation
40 "He'd make a lovely
corpse" (Dickens: "Martin
Chuzzlewit")
42 1,000%
45 Kind of card
47 Artificially-colored
50 Went on the lam
54 Like Mayberry
56 Travel stamps
57 "I --- my wit's end"
58 Projecting part of the brain
59 Common fertilizer ingredient
60 Shopping center
61 Height of Denver
63 Dull
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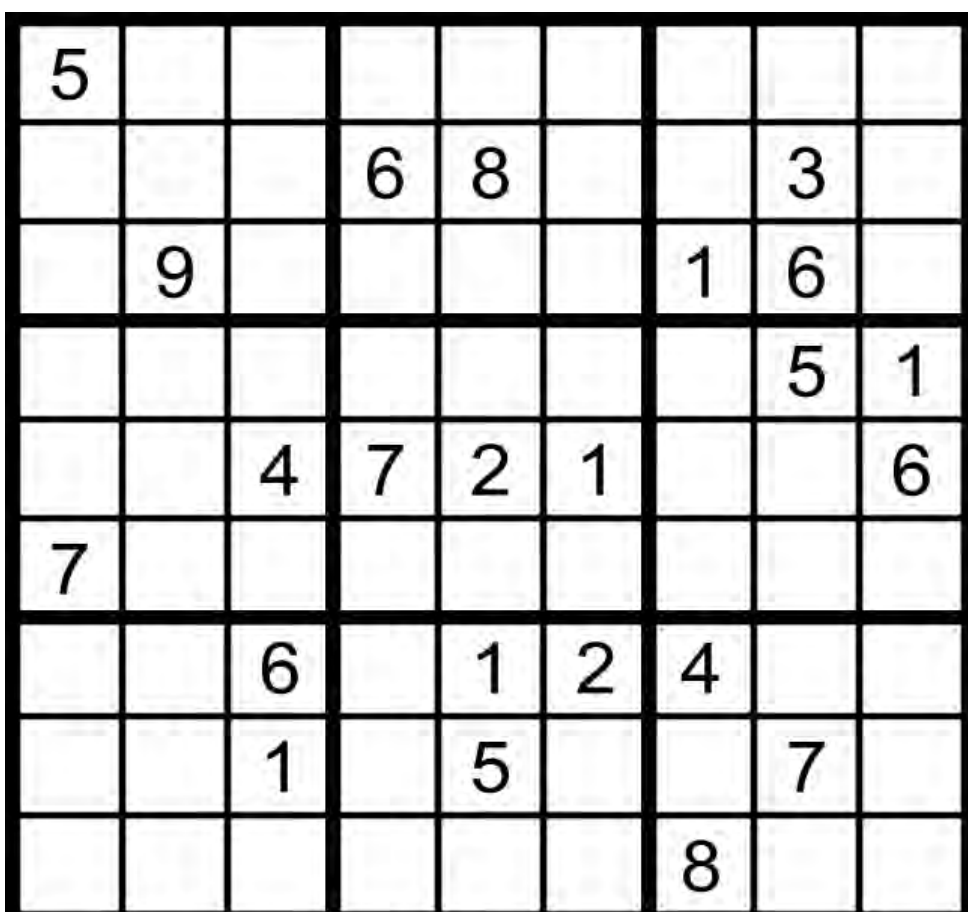
PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from May 5, 2021

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

Across: 1 Born, 5 Guard, 10 A pie, 14 Asea, 15 issue, 16 Road, 17 Thru, 18 Maintained, 20 Harlem, 22 Field day, 23 Astir, 25 N S A, 26 O T C, 28 Aces, 30 Tribal, 35 Pro, 36 Skill, 38 Moose, 39 Ruth, 41 Scout, 43 N A S A, 44 Acted, 46 Hoped, 48 Tan, 49 Header, 51 Puny, 52 P Ms, 53 Bar, 55 Steve, 57 Aluminum, 62 Idiots, 65 Moratorium, 67 Span, 68 Abel, 69 False, 70 Alma, 71 Teal, 72 Flees, 73 Seep.

Down: 1 Bath, 2 O S H A, 3 Terracotta, 4 Hauls, 5 Gimmicks, 6 U S A, 7 As if, 8 Run-in, 9 Detest, 10 Arid, 11 Pond, 12 I A E A, 13 Eddy, 19 Alarm, 21 E T As, 24 Reich, 26 Oprah, 27 Truce, 29 Sloop, 31 Ion, 32 Boat people, 33 Assam, 34 Leans, 37 Lupus, 40 He'd, 42 Ten times, 45 Debt, 47 Dyed, 50 Ran off, 54 Rural, 56 Visas, 57 Am at, 58 Lobe, 59 Urea, 60 Mail, 61 Wile, 63 Tame, 64 Snap, 66 Use.



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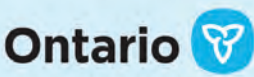


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Fixture on ball diamonds mourned by community



Ken McKay (Photo supplied)

Mike Balsom Special to The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake softball and slo-pitch communities are mourning the loss of one of their own this week.

Long-time umpire, coach, organizer and mentor Ken McKay passed away on May 3. The 76-year-old had been a fixture on local ball diamonds right up until COVID-19 shut them down last summer.

"Kenny goes way back," says Peter Flynn of the NOTL Softball Club. "He started with the girls fast-pitch, he used to coach it and ump it when it was young. I know he started out in St. Catharines, then he got into the Niagara-on-the-Lake slo-pitch when we started it, Irv Fast, Lisa Juras and myself."

Like many sports, slo-pitch experienced ups and downs in popularity over the years. After a period of waning involvement, Flynn says McKay was instrumental in getting the over-35 men's masters league going and also started the co-ed league, which as of 2019 was 12 teams strong.

To Flynn and many others, however, McKay truly made his mark on the diamonds as an umpire. For many years he worked every summer, acting as umpire-in-chief for a crew of younger officials for fast-pitch and slo-pitch games around the region.

Flynn himself was brought into the fold, and was able to learn alongside the master. "I umpired with him a bunch of times. He would get me to help out at games in St. Catharines sometimes, and he was in charge of umping my kids' league (NOTL Minor Soft-

ball) for years."

A resident of St. Catharines, McKay lived in an apartment building near the Fairview Mall. Flynn says there was a reason for that choice — the building was close to Lancaster Park, where he could leisurely walk to one of the two ball diamonds to officiate girls softball games.

But as Flynn says, McKay never shied away from making the trip to the fields at Virgil, even in recent years when his declining health affected his eyesight, resulting in the loss of his licence.

"He would actually get the bus to come umpire in Virgil," Flynn remembers. "He was definitely devoted and passionate about the sport. I picked him up whenever he would let me, and drove him home when I could."

Cameron Woodcock, a former town parks department employee, remembers meeting McKay about 10 years ago while playing fastball in Jordan. When Woodcock decided that umpiring would be a great summer job, he soon found himself running into McKay more often.

"He got me into umpiring slo-pitch," remembers Woodcock, now 23 years old. "He was definitely the one that helped me advance. He was always professional, always stood up for me, and always pushed me. He did a lot for the programs, gave them a lot of time, and he always made sure the other umps were taken care of."

Like Flynn, in recent summers Woodcock would pick up his mentor to drive him to the ballpark after his licence was taken away. "When I first started, he

would always offer a ride, I was 13, 14 years old. I was happy at the end that I got to drive him around and return the favour. It came full circle."

"On the diamond, he always kept the players loose and happy," Flynn says. "When he umpired the kids, and he taught me this, he would help the catcher, move them to the right position, and try to guide the catcher to help the pitcher. He always took time to talk to people, he was super polite. He helped us keep the kids league going, and he helped train a lot of younger umpires too."

Flynn adds that keeping the slo-pitch players loose, and amused, was also one of McKay's goals. "He always loved it when it was an 0-2 count. He would always say 'the batter has two strikes and no balls.' A lot of people texted me this week about that one."

Woodcock adds, "he never took the spotlight, the players all respected him, he was definitely honest. And at the end, when his eyesight was fading, he wouldn't do the big games, he was able to pass the torch to younger umpires to do the senior men's ball, or the men's A division. I'm sure it wasn't easy to admit it, but he was able to do that with a lot of grace."

Though McKay was less involved in both slo-pitch and softball his last few years, he was still a fixture in Virgil, and his loss is resonating amongst players, organizers and umpires across the region.

McKay, a retired accountant from TRW, leaves behind his wife, Bernice, children Dwight, Robin and Jacques, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.