



Gateway  
construction  
begins  
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Happy Pride Month: NOTL makes it just in time with the installation Monday evening of a rainbow crosswalk across Anderson Lane at Mississagua Street. (Mike Balsom) The town also raised a Pride flag at the town hall. (Supplied)

# Rainbow crosswalk in time for Pride month

Penny Coles  
The Local

The town has installed its first rainbow crosswalk, just in time for Pride Month. It's been in the works for two years, and was done quietly Monday evening, with no fanfare, to be in time for Pride recognition. A news release from the town Tuesday says in addition to the crosswalk at the intersection of Niagara Stone Road and Anderson Lane, the town "is proudly flying the Progressive Pride Flag at town hall." It was raised Monday, with members of Pride Niagara in attendance. The crosswalk is the same Progressive Pride design as used by the Niagara Region on St. Davids Road, "to promote the continuity of rainbow crosswalks throughout Niagara," the

news release says. "The design consists of the traditional rainbow flag with the addition (at the far end in the photo) of black, brown, light blue, pink and white stripes. The light blue, pink and white represent trans and non-binary individuals, and the black and brown represent marginalized people of colour. The painting of this crosswalk serves as a visible reminder that all are welcome in Niagara-on-the-Lake." Since a rainbow crosswalk discussion was first raised by the town's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, residents have not been entirely onboard. A public survey or referendum was suggested by some, and although the town did conduct a survey it was not to determine whether residents agreed with a rainbow cross-

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# Young farmworker dies in his sleep, cause unknown

Penny Coles  
The Local

A farmworker from Jamaica spending his first season away from home to work in Niagara-on-the-Lake has died while sleeping in his bunkhouse on Read Road. He leaves behind family that includes a six-month-old baby at home in St. Catherine Parish. Local friends who heard of his death and visited the men

in the bunkhouse say a bunkmate woke up Friday morning, and on trying to waken the man, discovered he had passed away during the night. Along with Pastor Albert Dawkins, some friends took food to the men, including their evening meal, and said they found his coworkers traumatized, grieving for the loss of a friend, a man who, like them, had made sacrifices to come to work here, wanting to make a better life for his

family back home. "They were in shock, speechless," said one local who visited the Read Road bunkhouse Friday afternoon. Some were also scared, she said, fearing that it could happen to any one of them. Pastor Dawkins said he wasn't able to obtain any more information about what had happened, although he was still trying Monday morning. He said he'd like to be able to reach out to the man's family.

"It's frustrating that I can't offer support to them. I don't even know if the family knows." The pastor of the Niagara Region Church of God and Prophecy in Niagara Falls says he visits the farmworkers when he can and reaches out to them when they're in need. Some come to his church, but they don't have much time with their work schedule. "In times of crisis, and when I'm called, I always make myself available," he said. "The

men I spoke to were really very shaken up and asked me to pray with them. They were still in a state of shock when I spoke to them on Saturday, still not knowing or understanding what happened." A friend of the farmworkers who had talked with some of the men over the weekend said they had spoken of appreciation for Dave Enns, owner of P. G. Enns Farms, who was the first to come to his farmworkers' bunkhouse Friday morn-

ing. They were thankful for the way he had taken over and handled the situation. "They said they were very grateful for the leadership and support he had provided." Enns spoke to The Local Monday morning about how difficult this has been for all of them on the farm, and still is. "We're pretty overwhelmed," he said. They were all taking the time to talk to each other about

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# Town says a small ceremony will be held in June

Continued from page 1

walk, but rather where it should be installed.

The same was asked for the location of five rainbow benches. There is now one in the Virgil Sports Park, with the others to be installed at Mary and King Street, in Niagara on the Green Park, Sparky's Park and at the Queenston Firehall — one in each of the five communities.

Although the town did receive a grant to help pay for the crosswalk and benches, there was going to be a need to find other sources of funding.

The Rotary Club of NOTL stepped up, offering a \$1,500 donation to the crosswalk project, and will be sending funds this week, says Rotarian Bill French. "We were waiting on its completion before we sent the money."

In the news release, CAO Marnie Cluckie called the crosswalk "a visible way of celebrating, supporting and

creating awareness of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Niagara-on-the-Lake."

NOTL "is a community welcoming and accepting of all," the news release says, calling on members of the community to "show their #NOTLPride by printing and hanging NOTL Pride posters throughout town and encouraging social media users to post pictures of pride colours."

A small ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held to honour and celebrate this initiative sometime during Pride Month in June, with a date to be confirmed, Cluckie said in an email to The Local.

This isn't the first rainbow crosswalk in Niagara-on-the-Lake — Niagara College beat the town to it with installations at both their campuses in 2019.

NOTL Pride posters can be found at [notl.com/sites/default/files/2023-05/NOTLPride%20Poster.pdf](https://notl.com/sites/default/files/2023-05/NOTLPride%20Poster.pdf).



Town representatives and members of Pride Niagara gathered at the town hall Monday to raise the Pride flag. (Supplied)

# Farmworker was happy the night before he died

Continued from page 1

what had happened, he added — that was really the only way to help each other. "That's the best we can do, for our workers and ourselves."

The Jamaican liaison has been out to the farm, he explained, and "has gone above and beyond" in trying to help.

The men were offered the opportunity to talk to grief counsellors, "but not too many are taking them up on it."

Enns said he has had no details from the police, other than that they found no visible signs to determine what had caused the man's sudden death, and that an autopsy would be done. "I have nothing else I can add to that."

The Niagara Regional Police response from Const. Barry Ravenek was that Friday morning at 6:20 a.m. officers went to an address on Read Road near Scott Street, in St. Catharines, regarding a medical assistance call that became a sudden death investigation.

The incident remains under investigation by detectives assigned to the Criminal Investigative Branch and the Ontario Coroner's Office, Ravenek said in an email, and the police will not be disclosing the man's identity out of respect for the next of kin.

Enns said the man was either 31 or 32, and that he had

spoken to him Thursday evening. He had ridden his bike into town, "and he was laughing. He was happy. He was good."

Sometimes it takes some confidence-building for those who are away from home and working here for the first time, Enns said, but this young man was doing well. "He had that sense of achievement and value that comes from becoming part of a team."

While Enns couldn't say for sure his family back home had been notified, he thinks they must have been, that the Jamaican liaison would have looked after that.

When asked if that was the case, the Jamaican liaison told The Local she couldn't comment.

Although the young Jamaican was staying in the bunkhouse on Read Road with 11 other men, he was working with a different team, said Enns. They'd been pruning vines and raking the brush last week.

"It's the men who were working side by side with him who are hurting the most. Grief is a strange thing. Some of the men wanted to get back to work, others wanted time to sit and reflect."

Saturday and Sunday were days to talk together if that was what they wanted, but by Monday morning they were all okay with going back to work, he said.

"This is really tough. There is a family at home who is not going to see him again. This is something that should never happen."

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# Gateway beautification project finally underway

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

The spring tulips are gone at the end of Mississagua Street, and the fencing for the gateway beautification project has arrived.

For the first time in decades there will be no plantings to greet residents or visitors as they arrive at the end of Mississagua and head to Queen Street, or toward the neighbourhood of Chautauqua. Instead, there will

be construction.

The contractor mobilized Monday morning, securing the site with construction fencing and preparing for the base of the drystone wall that was chosen as part of the design.

Once that is done, the dry stone wall, along with the Niagara-on-the-Lake lettering and town crest, will be installed, says communications manager Lauren Kruitbosch.

Additional steps will in-

clude irrigation and electrical installations, followed by planting as the last step, she says.

"The stones that have been removed are being reused on-site or at another location in town," says Kruitbosch, "and the previous trees have been spaded out and planted at the Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery."

The project is anticipated to be completed by the end of this summer, she says.

For those wondering about

the stop sign in the middle of the road, it is part of a separate project that will be addressed later this year, says Kruitbosch.

The makeover plans for the gateway to the main street, agreed to by council in January 2022 after much discussion, public input and revised designs, include a 22-metre long, 2.7 metre tall drystone wall and

entrance sign.

The project is being funded by through a donation from resident Gerald Kowalchuk's Family Foundation. He first presented his idea of a revamp of the entrance to town in 2019, and said he would like to be involved in the process.

The work is now in the hands of contractor Three Sea-

sons Landscape Group, after issues arose last year with another company initially slated to handle the project. Construction was intended to start last September and be completed by this spring, but was delayed while the town put out new tenders requests.

The project is budgeted at about \$265,000.



This is the final design that was approved by the town, and construction has begun in preparation for the drystone wall. (Supplied)

## Focus needed on heritage, arts, culture and agriculture

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Residents who checked out the list of public information centres to talk about the town's strategic plan might have found the locations interesting.

The pavilion beside the splash pad in the Virgil Sports Park Monday afternoon was one.

Sparky's Park in St. Davids was another.

This year's strategic planning process includes intentional outreach to all residents and community members, said Victoria Steele of the town's strategy and government relations office.

The town is conducting a survey online, a virtual public information session, and has presented five opportunities for in-person engagement, she added.

The in-person centres were "strategically positioned throughout the community, one in every community, and at locations where people gather and where public access is easy and accessible," Steele explained.

At these locations, staff could connect with those visiting the area specifically for the information centre, as well as engage with those passing by

and stopping to ask questions about the process, she said. "This engagement strategy has proven very beneficial so far."

Long-time resident Ingrid Regier was at the Virgil Sports Park Monday, where an information centre was set up in the pavilion by the splash pad.

She stopped by, she said, "because it gave me an opportunity to zero in on what was important to me. I'm hoping that a lot of people come, so after we can't say 'I didn't know about that.' Did you show up? Did you take what you were offered, to go and take a look at this, and to talk to these people who are right here? If you didn't go, you can't complain."

She said she was happy to see the town travelling to different areas out in the community.

"You can get more personal here because you have all these people here to ask questions directly. I think it's great. Kudos to council."

Regier said she's aware of the options for public input, including the ability to speak at council, and has done that through many councils. "For them to come out to us like this is a big bonus. Hopefully they will pay attention to what we really need

when they put the plan together, what we are concerned about. For me, it's agriculture, big-time, transportation, affordability and housing. I really hope that those sitting behind a desk in Toronto do not underestimate that we are a lovely town, and they don't have to exploit every green space here."

Steele said Monday she was happy with the turnout to the information centres, and that people spent time going through the material presented. "The quality of discussion with each person has been very insightful."

The information being presented summarized the vision or mission options that council has put forth for the next four years, including what the future looks like and what the town's purpose is in the community, explained Steele. The information centres were looking for input on priorities. In addition to more attention to heritage, she said, she's hearing "we need arts and culture to come to the surface more, and the environment. Those are the three that are really standing out so far. They are all in there (the strategic plan), but we need to make sure that they are surfacing to the top and made a priority."

With files from Mike Balsom.



Fencing has gone up so work on the gateway project at the end of Mississagua Street can begin. (David Gilchrist)



The traditional town plantings at the end of Mississagua, and the familiar landscaping, have been removed behind the construction fencing to make room for the new design. (Mike Balsom)

## Volunteers WANTED

**The Newark Neighbours volunteer team is excited to be moving to our new location at 1534 NIAGARA STONE RD., in Virgil in late June.**

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**If you would like to discuss this further, please contact us by email at [newarkneighbours1@gmail.com](mailto:newarkneighbours1@gmail.com) We look forward to hearing from you!!**



Planning director Kirsten McCauley, longtime NOTL resident Ingrid Regier, and Coun. Wendy Cheropita chat at a public information centre set up in the Virgil Sports Park. (Mike Balsom)

# Teens dig in and help out at Red Roof Retreat

Sharon Burns  
The Local

For teacher Heather Davis, “being a leader is giving back to the community.”

Last Friday, Davis led by example when she brought her class of 17 business leadership high school students to Red Roof Retreat for a day of volunteerism.

“Red Roof Retreat has been a part of my family’s life since Steffanie (Bjorgan, founder of Red Roof Retreat) taught my kids in Kindergarten, and I thought this charity would be a great choice for my students to see what a visionary leader can do to make a seemingly impossible dream come true,” said Davis.

“Steffanie inspires others to want to be the best person they can and give back to the world in any way possible.”

Many students attending Westlane Secondary School in Niagara Falls are new to Canada, said Davis. “They are coming from, for example, China, Colombia, and Afghanistan.”

“This experience was a great way to introduce them to life in rural Niagara,” said Davis. “They also had the opportunity to meet and



Shari Hartwick, Taylor Carr, Maia Pavone and Natalia Poutsoungas made some signs for Red Roof Retreat. (Photos supplied)

work with some special needs clients. Working with special needs students at school has given this class the ability to develop empathy and work on communication, while developing an understanding of what special needs individuals have to offer.”

Bjorgan is “happy to give youth from the city, or new to the country, a chance to experience farm life and exposure to peers with special needs,” she said.

Besides being impressed by how large and peaceful the area is, student Han-

nah Tan said she learned that “this organization allows parents to take a break from their responsibilities by leaving their children at this retreat. The staff members ensure that people with special needs will be given a great time in the organization, as they take care of them and provide them with fun programs they can enjoy during their stay.”

The animals at Red Roof captivated the students’ attention. Maia Pavone’s favourite part of the trip was being able to meet all of the farm animals, including

Murray the Donkey, Wilbur the Pig, the miniature horses and, especially, the newly-born kittens. “I really enjoyed playing with them, getting to know their adorable personalities, and cuddling them at the end of the work day,” said Pavone.

Devon Pham came to realize that “farm work requires lots of maintenance. The barn needs to be taken care of, the hay needs to be removed, and the lawn needs to be taken care of.”

Tan and her friend were assigned to clean the cat barn. “We both loved our

task as we played with the kittens and the bunnies while cleaning the place,” she said. “We did not even consider our task as a ‘job’ as we considered it a relaxing and healing time with the animals.”

Davis strongly believes that volunteering should be a lifelong habit and not just 40 hours that students complete to graduate. “I have volunteered at Red Roof in a variety of ways over the last 20 years,” she said. “It is filling such an important gap in the system for special needs families. It was so rewarding to see my students get stuck into doing whatever we asked them to do, while demonstrating teamwork, motivation and communication skills.”

Toward the end of the day, one student felt that they had barely made a dent in the work required around the farm. Bjorgan, who coordinated the day’s tasks, told the group of 17 teenagers that they had contributed, collectively, over 80 hours of people power. “When you hear negative stuff about today’s youth,” Bjorgan said, “here’s proof there’s lots of good ones out there who are learning to give of their time and energy.”

Kaylee Layden’s favourite part about the day was “everything!” she said. “I think this was the best field trip I’ve had during high school. I learned that giving back to the community is very important. Even though Jackson (Hernandez Garcia, a fellow student) and I were organizing a lot of the time, It was still fun to be there.”

Pham enjoyed spending time with Wilbur. “He was a fun and extroverted pig, and I hope to meet him again.”

Sam Phillips also thought that “it was truly the best school trip I have ever been on. It was such a beautiful place, with amazing people and animals. I love the purpose of this place, they have made it such a peaceful and relaxing place for people to come. I loved learning what they do and all the different things they offer. My favourite part, by far, was hanging out with the animals, they are all so calm and gentle.”

Tan says if asked “if I want to visit Red Roof for one more time, I will not hesitate to give a big thumbs up as my answer, and help Steffanie and her staff once again!”



Gillian Huggins with Wilbur the Pig.



Sam Phillips with Mini.



Sonam Dhillon and Gillian Huggins clean the paddock.

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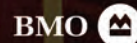
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# EDITORIAL

## Declaration of Pride support should be shouted from rooftops

This time last year, the town was asking residents to weigh in on where a rainbow crosswalk should be located, offering an online survey with some possibilities.

The present crossing at Anderson Lane received the most support, and on Monday evening, it was installed.

It's bright, it's beautiful and it's widely recognized as a symbol that everyone is welcome in

this town.

Despite unpleasant letters and downright nasty phone calls, The Local has supported a Pride crosswalk from the earliest days of discussion — on a topic that shouldn't even have needed discussion, other than the where and when.

Not everyone in town believes the public declaration a Pride crosswalk offers to a diverse community is needed or wanted.

Others think it is, and will be applauding council for moving forward with it. Fortunately, the town has chosen an inclusive design that displays not only LGBTQ2 colours, but some added to also recognize Black, Indigenous and all people of colour.

An important point to remember is this isn't just about telling visitors to town NOTL is an inclusive community, it's also

about those who live here, including our youth, who face discrimination, who need to know their community cares about them. Some suffer from depression and bullying, are at a higher risk of suicide, and can be helped by knowing they are accepted, respected, and valued — and that's what the community and people with power are saying to them by supporting and installing a rainbow crosswalk.

NOTLers should take pride in sending a message of inclusivity, not just as a symbol, but as a declaration, one that should be shouted out loud.

It may seem like just a symbol to some, but it's much more — it's a very visible public declaration that everyone is not only welcome, but valued in this community. And we need to show that with kindness and compassion.

The town has said there will be a "small celebration" of the installation of the rainbow crosswalk.

We look forward to it, and hope that indeed it becomes a big, bold celebration, and an example of how this community can come together and show its best side, its caring and compassion, to all.

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

## Glamping weekend around Hamilton a good experience



Owen Bjorgan  
Special to The Local

It's the ninth largest city in Canada and the third largest in Ontario. At the sheltered western end of Lake Ontario, the city of Hamilton conjures up a lot of images to people.

However, it is more than just a sea of grey we often view from the Burlington Skyway. It is surrounded by a lush abyss of trails and countless waterfalls that I'd love to tell you about.

I just spent the weekend hiking 45 kilometres with guests along the Bruce Trail, which follows the backbone of the Niagara Escarpment around the outskirts of Hamilton. Considering that I haven't hiked this stretch of trail since my 2014 thru-hike adventure, it was fascinating and fun to retrace the steps of my younger ghost, but also look at Hamilton from a totally refreshed and

more positive perspective.

Admittedly, I have upgraded my stance on 'The Hammer' as of this weekend. I dare say this city is a standout example, and even leader, on how a thriving metropolis can coexist with nature accessibility.

Hamilton's first and most common impression on people isn't fair. What you see from the highway, and often smell, is an industrial jungle of greys and browns. Flames leap and smoke oozes from the factories, and there is barely a naturalized shoreline in sight. Upon entering the lower inner city, poverty is up-front and very real in some areas.

But there is so much more to this area than what is on display.

Hamilton sits nestled with its urban lands divided up between areas below the Niagara Escarpment or above it (which locals refer to as 'the mountain'). The escarpment's forests and associated Bruce Trail, Chedoke Rail Trail and Dundas Valley Trail systems provide access to the ribbon of green that encloses the city centre.

The seemingly endless ac-

cess to these trails brings locals and visitors up close to the region's unique biodiversity with ease. Hamilton is the northernmost area of the Carolinian Forest Zone, so its sheltered microclimate in the 'armpit' at the end of the lake harbours some of Canada's last stands of nationally rare trees and birds, such as the sassafras trees and the Baltimore oriole the hikers and I saw.

Furthermore, there is a trail style for literally any ability. Many of the rail trails are nicely paved and wide, making them wheelchair and stroller accessible. Being historic railway routes, these trails don't necessarily have hills.

There are also broad but groomed trails that can take a family into deep woods with ease. Bikers, hikers and even horseback riders alike enjoy these stretches.

Lastly, there are still scores of classic narrow and craggy hiking routes showcasing the rugged woodsy experience some people seek. In Hamilton, you can take the Bruce Trail up close to picture-perfect waterfalls incised into the Niagara Escarpment.

There are certain stretches where the cliffs are severe, and you must practise good old common sense in their ancient and respectable presence. In the day and age of everything being ultra-safe, the hikers and I shared a conversation about how we actually appreciated seeing unadulterated natural spaces without the artificial overburden of fences, railings, signage and walkways.

It is important for humans, especially hailing from urban areas, to experience nature in a natural state. There are studies that show how such outings are beneficial to our mental health and biological needs, as we reconnect primarily with the land.

Which reminds me, like I so often do with Niagara Falls, I can close my eyes and imagine what Hamilton's geographical wonderland would have once looked like in pre-settlement times. Dozens of crystal clear waterfalls would be pouring into the Hamilton Harbour from nearly all sides, delivering freshwater to the marshes and fish-breeding grounds below.

The creeks' upper reaches would be noisily cascading through rich deciduous forests, flowing among rare species and reshaping the land during floods.

Yet, the final stretch on the two days of hiking gave us a memorable conclusion to where we are now.

The tiny historic village of Dundas, just north of Hamilton, made us feel like we had left southern Ontario altogether. It felt like you could have been in some quiet mountain town



Owen Bjorgan with guests for a Bruce Trail glamping experience in Hamilton this weekend.

from the past. At one point, you look up to see the imposingly sheer cliffs, like stately lion heads made of dolostone overlooking the Dundas Valley. A train passes at the base of the exposed rock as it traverses the wooded hillside, pairing nicely with the historic brickwork of the homes in the foreground. I have written before about how humans feel primal or nostalgic feelings when they see or hear fire, crashing waves or running water. However, there is something about the sound of a train

that takes you back in time, too.

Speaking of such a concept, the trails around Hamilton can take you back in time in an Indigenous, historic and a natural sense. I highly recommend a summer visit to the areas described.

Please be mindful that you are still always adjacent to an inner-city environment. The beauty of the trails is enjoyed most safely during daylight hours or while hiking with others. Otherwise, happy trails, and don't forget your camera.

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## View from the couch

**Donald Combe**  
Special to The Local

Evening (Netflix, 2007), although not critically acclaimed, was is well worth seeing because of the brilliant cast led by

Vanessa Redgrave and Meryl Streep. The scene is Newport in the 1950s and the glamorous world of the well-off, where all should be perfect, but isn't.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who

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

The Niagara-on-the-Lake

**Local**

The Trusted Voice of Our Community

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## Where's Ben?

Eden student Ben Foster continues to discover new locations in NOTL, wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. We had a few correct responses this week, the first from Crispin Bottomley, who explained Ben was at the Queenston boat ramp on the Niagara River, beside the scoop that was once used to help unload the sand dredgers at the sand dock beside the boat ramp.

# COMMENT

## Local LETTERS Reasonable development produces good results

An amazing local event: actual thoughtful re-thinking and a more sympathetic approach by Blythwood Homes to the proposed project on Melville Street.

Although it may not please everyone, is a vast improvement and shows that there are actually some reasonable developers in our area who can understand just how im-

portant the look of a project is, and how it fits into the local, long-establish neighbourhood that they are directly affecting. What a reasonable, civilized and thoughtful way to present a new project, and then react to the local input in a reasonable way.

It's really surprising how this is being handled by all involved, pros and cons, from

both sides thoughtfully handled.

And now for something completely different: two projects, with no thought for what they look like, how they directly effect the immediate neighbours and close surrounding area which are virtually all single- and two-storey homes, some older and historic. These are quiet, close-knit neighbour-

hoods with a long-established, pleasant feel.

First, the Parliament Oak School site proposal is so inappropriate and offensive to that neighbourhood. Is this how a local developer shows concern and thoughtfulness for our unique town? Just the act of proposing to put that particular project with that look on that site seems to be almost an act

of vandalism to that area.

This type of approach from any developer really seems to show their actual attitude toward the immediate neighbourhood.

Also the complex on Mary Street (a four-storey apartment is proposed) across from Willow Cakes and Pastries, is just more of the same.

Developers take note: If we

had more developers with the reasonable and thoughtful approach shown by the Melville condos group, far more would be accomplished. Reasonable input and proposals from both sides really seem to get results. This seems to be an unknown process to some of our larger local development groups.

**Christopher Allen**  
NOTL

## Local LETTERS Mary Street too large in scale and too tall

We are writing to present our concerns regarding the submission to the Urban Design Committee on April 26 for a proposed apartment building

at 227 Mary Street.

Our concern is specific to the scale and height of the proposed building. The proposed four-storey building is located



This shows the light that will shine into neighbouring homes, and the height of the apartment compared to nearby houses.

mid-block, and is sited in the middle of and will overlook the rear yards of 13 existing one- and two-storey homes. Theses homes have been there for decades and each homeowner has a right to enjoy the privacy, sunlight and noise levels encountered as provided by the zoning bylaws.

The proposed development will destroy virtually all visual privacy in their rear yards and through their windows into their homes. Moreover, we can

anticipate a significant increase in noise levels.

We have attached a copy of the architect's section through the properties to which we have added the sight lines from the proposed third and fourth floors, clearly showing this direct line of sight invasion of the neighbours' back yards. The drawing also clearly shows the proposed building's fourth floor is significantly higher than the current zoning

building maximum permitted height (dashed line).

It should be without question that the 13 neighbours have the right to expect new adjacent developments to respect the existing zoning and honour their expectation of continued privacy in their back yards and into their homes.

This proposed building would set a dangerous precedent for the town, whereby potentially no one house or

households will be safe from similar proposals, all in the name of increased density and developers' profits.

This proposal disrespects the town's existing unique built character and quality of life. There can be no question that it would cause the town and its residents immense harm.

**David Parker, Architect,**  
**Gordon Stratford, Architect,**  
**David Anthony, P. Eng.,**  
**John Gartner, Retired Planner**

## Local LETTERS Scale of proposed Parliament Oak Hotel

I thought your readers might be interested in the attached illustration showing the difference in height and massing of the proposed hotel compared with the Prince of Wales.

If the numerous negative comments made about commercial enterprises being located in a residential area (including the delivery, trash and related support services), the 700 food and beverage seats (almost 5.5 times the number of hotel rooms), and the egre-

gious lack of parking isn't sufficient to demonstrate the inappropriateness of this project, then perhaps this illustration will drive home the point.

This illustration was prepared by Chapman Murray Associates Architects and is shown to scale.

A project like the one proposed for Parliament Oak is likely to create pressure to extend commercial activity another two blocks along King Street. That's not what is contemplated

in the Official Plan and is, in fact, contrary to even the broadest interpretation of a compatible use for this site base on that plan.

If council wants to make King Street a commercial corridor it should be honest about it . . . not allow it to happen project by project.

To be clear, I am not suggesting the commercialization of King Street (or any other residential street in NOTL), rather, that council should either follow its Official Plan or commence

a broader process to change it after appropriate public consultation and after giving consid-

eration to the implications for the wider Old Town area. Good planning does not happen site

by site or block by block.

**Lyle Hall**  
NOTL



Chapman Murray Architects prepared this illustration to demonstrate the scale of the proposed hotel compared to the Prince of Wales Hotel. (Supplied)

# Time to approve community hub at old hospital site

**David Israelson**  
Special to The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake's town council has an unusually strong opportunity to do some long-lasting public good by supporting the Niagara Creative, Cultural & Community Hub that a group of non-profit organizations hope to establish at the town's old hospital site.

The hub would be a welcome addition and would be good for the long-term growth and well-being of the community. The organizations involved in it already include Indigenous-run Plenty Canada, Music Niagara, the Yellow

Door Theatre Project, Royal Oak Community School and the Shaw Festival.

With a roster like this, it's hard to see why the town could not move quickly to facilitate the needs of these community groups and make sure the hub happens. Some activities that would take place in the building, like Royal Oak School, are already running; others have well-thought-out plans for using the site to expand their already successful programs and work.

The track records of these arts, entertainment and educational organizations should speak for themselves as council looks at whether to extend

a multi-year lease. Allowing them to live together in the community hub would make their work even better, allowing them to share promotional and creative ideas and enabling Niagara-on-the-Lake residents to enjoy one-stop shopping for their own creative work and needs.

### Self-Financing Plan

The hub plan would be self-financing. Its proponents want to lease the property from the town and pay all operating and capital costs, so there would be no burden on taxpayers. The hub coalition has already obtained \$2 million in

donation commitments and once the hub is leased to this organization, it could manage the sub-leases of its members, meaning no administrative work for the town.

It's true that there have been proposals for other uses for the hub site. Some have dreamed of bringing back medical facilities there, for example — but the doctors and labs have been going elsewhere for years.

Others suggest that the town could reap a tidy sum by selling the property to developers. But it is zoned for use as a community facility, and in fact is the last property of this type and size that can fit the needs of small and mid-

sized community organizations.

In any case, doesn't Niagara-on-the-Lake have enough controversy already with development proposals that some residents like but others detest? Bringing the hub to the heart of Old Town would have the opposite effect — a place for everyone.

### Time to Approve is Now

Council is now waiting for staff to report on the operating costs of the hub building, and it's open to considering a lease. Waiting is fine in many cases, but if the hub partners are willing to shoulder the operating costs, it's not really necessary.

In this case, it would be

better for council to move quickly. These are challenging, uncertain times in the world, and Niagara-on-the-Lake would benefit from some quick, collaborative decisions that would instill confidence in our local leadership.

It's not that hard for council to decide now to support the Niagara Creative, Cultural & Community Hub by offering a lease now, especially a long-term lease. It would be good for council, good for the town and most of all, good for the members of our community.

*David Israelson is a writer and non-practising lawyer who lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake.*

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# Crossroads students learn to give back to their community

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

Linnea Bartel, a Grade 8 student in the Three Cs Club — Crossroads Caring Coyotes — had a busy Friday afternoon helping with the Crossroads School's Rankin Cancer Run.

She was outside on the tarmac behind the school as one of the music DJs, having helped make up a playlist that was sure to get kids dancing.

Linnea, along with a large group of energetic and enthusiastic students, was helping out with the many activities organized for students to enjoy in addition to the run, or walk, or however they wanted to participate.

As a member of the Three Cs Club, Linnea's role with most school events is to help provide music — which she says she loves — as well as being part of the set-up and cleaning crew.

"I help out at a lot of school events, fun ones, like this," she says.

Linnea can't help but understand the importance of this particular fundraiser though — like most families, hers has been touched by cancer. Her mother's two

grandparents died of cancer, and she says one of her friends lost her mother to cancer.

She knows the Rankin run helps fund research to prevent cancer, and develop programs that benefit cancer patients. "This is a fun thing to do, but it's also something we do for the community," she says.

The club is organized by teacher Michele Zoccoli for Grade 7 and 8 students.

Linnea's mother, Becky Bartel, is a Kindergarten teacher at Crossroads, and was out helping the younger children. She says the students are very fortunate to have Michele Zoccoli, "who has so much energy and enthusiasm to organize an event like this that really brings us together, and the community together."

Zoccoli says she believes strongly in the importance of involving the older students with school events, giving them the opportunity to learn about being part of their community, helping out with caring and kindness, and "taking visible leadership roles that younger students will see as something they want to do as they get older."

The students want to be involved, she adds, and

want to help others. "This club gives them an outlet to do that. You just need to ask them to do something and they do it. And the younger students watch them, and want to be part of it."

At the other end of the grade spectrum, Becky Bartel is also teaching her young students about caring and kindness, and recently a little about cancer, so she could explain the Rankin Cancer Run to them.

"We start with those conversations at their level of understanding. We don't want to scare them, but we

do want them to understand why we're doing this, and also teach them that even at their age, they can help people in a way that's important in our community. What we want most is to promote caring and kindness, right here in our school, in our community and even beyond."

Becky speaks of a trip she took to Africa, as part of a mission to help out in a school. "When I got back I talked about the children I met, and how we can help others who need our help. The kids remember the things I've told them about

the children in Africa, and they still talk about ways to help them. They can take that with them out into the community, that they can help others," she says.

It also helps the young students recognize that not all children are as fortunate as they are. "They learn not to take it for granted, and to share with others who are less fortunate. That is really important."

While the teachers jokingly described Friday's playground scene for the fundraising event as "chaos," they stress the afternoon is meant to be a fun one, with the kids encouraged to take part in the many activities available — sidewalk chalk drawing, face-painting, music and dancing, beach balls, a bubble machine, a parachute, a cheering squad and of course the run itself, with students given the opportunity to participate by moving around the track in whatever way they feel comfortable.

The Rankin family donates everything required to stage the run, including T-shirts, so every dollar raised goes to fighting cancer.



Students dancing to the music at the Rankin Cancer Run fundraising event at Crossroads School.



Meghan Dyck and Mila Doan enjoy being part of the cheering squad and the outdoor fun at Crossroads.



Crossroads teacher Michele Zoccoli high-fives the younger students as they start out on their trek around the school track for Friday's Rankin Cancer Run.



Kids having fun on the field with a parachute.



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Students line up to sign teacher Steve Holowchuk's T-shirt.



Teacher Becky Bartel and her daughter Linnea, in Grade 8, talk about the importance of helping in their community.

# Pies baked, boxed and delivered to relief sale

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

The smells of pies baking filled two church buildings last week, as a group of women used the kitchens of both Cornerstone Community Church campuses, on Hunter Road and Niagara Stone Road.

The pies were put together assembly-line style in the larger Hunter Road kitchen, but some were transported to the Virgil location to be baked and boxed, making the process a little faster, explained Dorothy Soo-Wiens, one of the organizers of the baking.

The women baked a total of 223 pies. More than 80 were sold in the community, the remainder loaded up and delivered by Soo-Wiens Friday afternoon to the New Hamburg Fairgrounds for the annual Mennonite Relief Sale, which

is held over the weekend. “People line up at 5:30 p.m. Friday just to get the pies as they get delivered,” she says.

Asked about where the recipes for the dough and fillings come from, Soo-Wiens says most of the “tried and true recipes” the women use are passed down from a cookbook called The Mennonite Treasury of Recipes. “I’m sure every Mennonite family has this recipe book. I got this for a wedding shower from Dorothy Enns (of Enns Battery and Tires) 32 years ago.”

The recipes have been passed on from the ladies from the church who baked pies decades ago, and who are now in their 80s and 90s, she says.

“Kathy Dyck and I have fine-tuned the dough and filling recipes but they are the originals from when this first

started. Erna Falk recruited me to take over from her years ago.”

The fillings included peach-rhubarb, blackberry, blackberry-peach, blackberry-rhubarb, peach, and a few grape pies, which everyone loves, says Soo-Wiens.

The pies from Cornerstone raised about \$2,500 for the relief sale, she says.

Soo-Wiens heard from the organizer of the pie sale in New Hamburg that this year only five churches participated in baking pies as compared to pre-COVID, when there were seven. “This year there were about 1,200 pies that were contributed through the five churches — two Markham Mennonite churches, two churches in Kitchener and our Cornerstone Community Church,” she says.

In all, \$333,000 was raised



Dorothy Soo-Wiens and Luanne Kulchar boxed up pies that were baked Friday, cooled and delivered to New Hamburg by 5:30 for a lineup of people anxious to buy one. (Photos by Penny Coles)

on Friday and Saturday for the Mennonite Central Committee, \$15,450 coming from pie sales.

The New Hamburg Relief Sale, best known for

its handmade quilts, raises money for relief from hunger, poverty and natural disaster and for development and peace-building activities with proceeds forwarded to

the Mennonite Central Committee, a not-for-profit relief, service and development and peace agency of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America.



Filling the pies were Diane Bundy, Janet Tan, Elvira Trimoli (laying the top crust) and Kathy Dyck.



Those rolling the dough were Julia Bartel, Kathleen Eckert, Deborah Partridge, Isolde Kroeker, Julie Taylor and Eleanor Dick.



At the Virgil Cornerstone Campus Shirley Klassen and Cathy Punter baked and boxed pies that were transported from Hunter Road.




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# A Grove of oaks for Christopher Newton

**Odette Yazbeck  
Special to The Local**

The ground-breaking tree initiative, the Chautauqua Oaks Project, helps celebrate the memory of Christopher Newton, former Artistic Director of the Shaw Festival.

The Chautauqua neighbourhood has a distinct landscape, made impressive by its 100-plus year old oak trees. The Chautauqua Oaks Project was developed to ensure the unique beauty of the Great Chautauqua Tree Canopy be preserved. After extensive study two courses of action were taken: the creation of a list of the recommended trees to

plant in Chautauqua and a plan to repopulate the diminishing tree canopy.

For the latter the project partnered with the Niagara College School of Horticulture to harvest the acorns of Chautauqua's heritage oaks. The acorns were then germinated and grown in the campus greenhouse. The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake joined the partnership to plant these new Chautauqua Oaks, as they were called, back into the neighbourhood. This partnership has proven very productive. To date over 60 Chautauqua Oaks have been planted along Chautauqua streetscapes, ready to assume their role as the future Great

Chautauqua Tree Canopy.

A bountiful crop from 2018 produced more trees than could be planted in Chautauqua this year. To share the windfall of these legacy trees a gifting program was created. Chautauqua Oaks Project founder Leslie Frankish says, "The goal is to now create groves of Chautauqua Oaks throughout greater Niagara-on-the-Lake, to create significant landscape gestures with community enriching connections."

One such grove was planted on April 23 with a community connection important to Frankish as well as the rest of Canada.

"With the passing of Christopher Newton last December, Canada lost one of its legendary artists," collaborator and friend Leslie Frankish writes. "As an artistic director Christopher infused a number of theatres across Canada with remarkable success culminating with the Shaw Festival where he remained at the helm for 23 years. As an artist, mentor and friend his impact on many lives reached far beyond just those years in time. As a living memorial of his lasting legacy, 23 trees have been planted on the lands surrounding the Festival theatre."

As majestic oaks they will in time rise far above the building and other trees, quietly enveloping the theatre in a protective embrace, and will do so

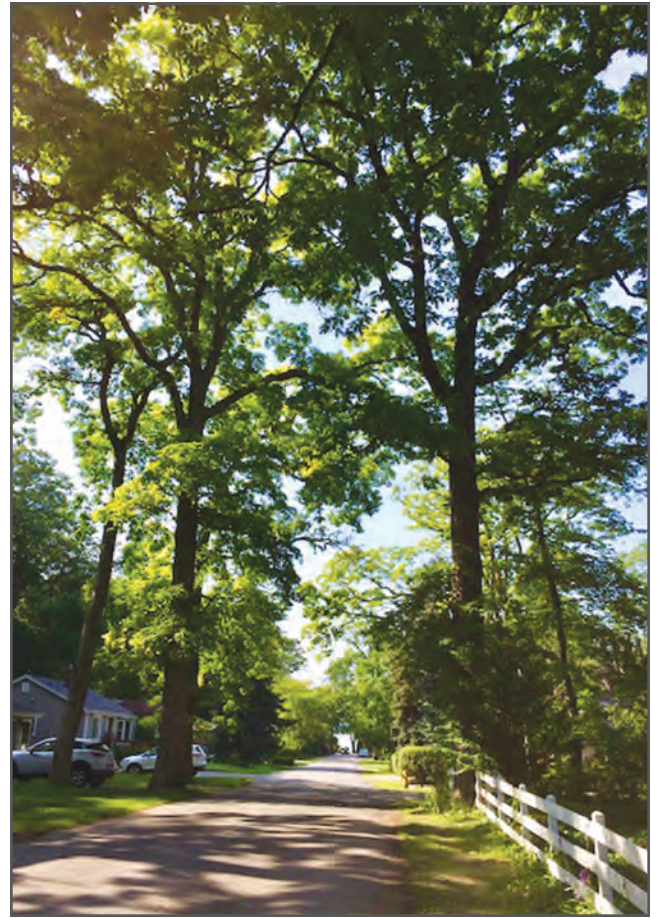
for hundreds of years to come."

Entitled Christopher's Grove, this LandArt installation is a personal tribute by Frankish with the assistance of the Chautauqua Oaks Project and a team of volunteer planters. Permission to plant was granted by the current stewards of the land: The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Parks Canada and their tenant, the Shaw Festival.

Frankish is no stranger to designing on an epic scale. One of Canada's preeminent set and costumes designers, she also served as senior production designer of the Opening Ceremonies for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics. Her designs have been featured across Canada, but it is her work with Newton that remains her greatest honour.

In her description of Christopher's Grove, Frankish writes, "The land on which Christopher's Grove has been planted has many layers of history, beginning with the millennial stewardship of the First Nations. The trees planted for Christopher's Grove were grown from acorns of first growth oaks found in Chautauqua. Heritage trees for a heritage land."

"This landscape surrounding the Shaw Festival was one of the reasons Christopher accepted the post as artistic director. On one side, the natural meadows of the commons and



Some of the parents of the new Chautauqua Oaks.

on the other side, a town with a grand heritage tree canopy. The epic scale of both . . . one expansive, the other sheltering . . . seemed the perfect setting for incubating great theatre.

"In a way Christopher's Grove is a classic denouement. A couple of themes . . . heritage landscapes, iconic trees and a legendary artist . . . intertwined companionably to add a new

meaningful layer to this historic landscape . . . and in the process creating a living memorial celebrating a remarkable man."

For more information on The Chautauqua Oaks Project (including the list of recommended trees to plant in Chautauqua), and Christopher's Grove, (including the list of the volunteer Planting Brigade) visit ChautauquaOaksProject.ca



Christopher Newton, Order of Canada and Canadian theatre legend, is remembered by colleagues. (Photo courtesy of David Cooper)

## Farmers' market opens to local vendors

**Mike Balsom  
The Local**

There wasn't a lot of fresh produce available during Saturday's kickoff of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Farmers' Market. But that didn't stop people from turning up in droves.

The massive stalks of rhubarb being offered by Bartel Organics was about the only produce seen Saturday. Elsewhere, there was coconut curry butternut squash soup, fresh breakfast scones, local honey, homemade jams and preserves and uniquely designed birdhouses up for grabs.

"We have 14 vendors here today," said Sharon Brinsmead, market coordinator. "This year we will max out at 25, which is

two more than we had last year."

Relative newcomer Colette Leier is back with her Savuti booth, offering imported artisanal designs from Africa. She is one of the vendors who chooses to attend just one day a month.

"I've had the business since 1999," Leier told The Local. "I moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake last year. It's my second year at the market and it went really well last year. It's such a great networking place. I met so many people which really helped to expand my business and connections."

"We have a lot of part-time vendors this year," added Brinsmead. "Of course, we have a lot of core vendors returning who will be here every week, and a few

new vendors joining us this year."

One of those new vendors is author Kathryn Recourt and her husband Don, who makes custom birdhouses. Kathryn was at the market last year as part of the NOTL Writers' Circle and enjoyed it so much that the couple decided to run their own booth this summer.

"I usually spend two or three hours on each one," explained Don about his brightly coloured creations. "I take a lot of special requests and do custom builds for people. And I do a lot of corporate gifts, too."

Brinsmead recognized many returning faithful customers right from the 8 a.m. opening time. Compared to last May's opening day, when the



Farmers' Market mainstay Kim McQuhae is back with her award-winning jams.

vendors were bundled up under winter coats, Saturday's sunny weather was perfect for a market visit.

"Everybody is just happy to get outside and see people they haven't seen since last year," Brinsmead said, acknowledging the social aspect of the market. "It's a community. During COVID we thrived, but we lost the community aspect. So we're really glad to have our seating area back. People can grab a coffee and go and have a chat with their neighbours."

And the vendors are happy to be back as part of their community — they've created a market family, helping each other erect their tents and carry their goods to their tables, Brinsmead added.

The Farmers' Market @ The Village runs Saturdays until Oct. 7, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 111 Garrison Village Dr.



Market favourite Ruth Bartel returns with plants. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Lori Bisback, Ezra Allard and Xavier Allard from Cheese Secrets serving customers at the opening of the Farmers' Market @ The Village.

# MOVING WATER FORWARD

## Notice of Completion Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Queenston-St. Davids Wastewater Servicing Strategy Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

**The Study**  
Niagara Region has completed a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment to explore wastewater servicing alternatives for the Queenston Wastewater Treatment Plant service area and to select and develop a preferred servicing solution. The study examined two servicing options:

- Upgrade the existing Queenston Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Decommission the existing wastewater treatment plant and redirect flows through a new sewage pumping station and forcemain to either of the sewage pumping stations in St. Davids

**Study Recommendations**  
In accordance with Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act, Niagara Region has planned this project under a Schedule "B" of the Municipal Engineers Association Class Environmental Assessment Process. A Public Information Centre was held on Oct. 5, 2022, to share information about the study and encourage interested members of the public, local business communities, and agencies to submit questions or concerns.

The study recommends upgrading the existing plant at the current location following an extensive evaluation process that included public engagement with local residents and businesses, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Niagara Region. This solution requires no capacity increases, no new facilities or new land. The preferred solution will include:

- Rehabilitation of the existing facility to maintain the plant's average rated flow capacity of 0.5 megalitres per day while continuing to meet effluent quality requirements; and
- Upgrades to meet Niagara's State of Good Repair requirements including upgrades to the treatment, electrical, control and site security systems, and repair of the existing access road

**For More Information**  
A Project File Report, documenting the planning process undertaken and key elements of the preferred design, is available for public review on Niagara Region's website:  
[niagararegion.ca/projects/queenston-st-davids](https://niagararegion.ca/projects/queenston-st-davids).

The Project File Report will be made available for public review for 30 calendar days from June 5 to July 5, 2023 at the following locations during normal business hours:

**Clerks Department  
Niagara Region**  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, PO Box 1042  
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Written comments on this Project File should be submitted to:

**Robert Stret, P.Eng., PMP®**  
Project Manager,  
Water and Wastewater Services  
3501 Schmon Pkwy., PO Box 1042  
Thorold, ON L2V 4T7  
905-658-5451  
[robert.stret@niagararegion.ca](mailto:robert.stret@niagararegion.ca)

**Rafiq Qutub**  
Project Manager,  
GM BluePlan Engineering Limited  
1266 South Service Rd., Unit C31  
Stoney Creek, ON L8E 5R9  
647-248-7813  
[rafiq.qutub@gmblueplan.ca](mailto:rafiq.qutub@gmblueplan.ca)

In addition, a request may be made to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for an order requiring a higher level of study (i.e., requiring an individual/comprehensive Environmental Assessment approval before being able to proceed), or that conditions be imposed (e.g., require further studies), only on the grounds that the requested order may prevent, mitigate or remedy adverse impacts on constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights. Requests on other grounds will not be considered. Requests should include the requester contact information and full name for the Ministry.

Requests should specify what kind of order is being requested (e.g., additional conditions or a request for an individual/comprehensive environmental assessment), how an order may prevent, mitigate or remedy those potential adverse impacts, and any information in support of the statements in the request. This will ensure that the Ministry is able to efficiently begin reviewing the request.

Requests should be sent by email or in writing to:

**Minister of the Environment,  
Conservation and Parks**  
Ministry of Environment,  
Conservation and Parks  
777 Bay St., 5th Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3  
[minister.mecp@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.mecp@ontario.ca)

**Director, Environmental Assessment Branch**  
Ministry of Environment,  
Conservation and Parks  
135 St. Clair Ave. W, 1st Floor  
Toronto, ON M4V 1P5  
[EABDirector@ontario.ca](mailto:EABDirector@ontario.ca)

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If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend and participate in meetings or events, please let us know in advance so that arrangements can be made in a timely manner. Please contact the **Accessibility Advisory Coordinator** at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 or [accessibility@niagararegion.ca](mailto:accessibility@niagararegion.ca).

This notice was first issued on May 31, 2023.

# St. Davids Spring Market returns Saturday

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

The St. Davids Lioness Lion Club Spring Market will return this year, with more vendors than ever spread out in the York Road park.

Lioness Diane Pewer, one of the organizers of the market, says last year it was warm and crowded inside the clubhouse, so the decision was made to take all the fun outdoors and make use of the spacious St. Davids Lions Park and its two covered pavilions, with lots of room for more than 50 vendors, as well as food and beverage trucks.

Most of the vendors who come have their own tents, she says, and those who don't will be located under the pavilions.

Country Boys Mobile Food Service will be there with breakfast, lunch and refreshments, as will Simple Simon, with breads, bagels



The St. Davids Lioness Lion Club members gathered recently. The club has become a branch of the St. Davids Lions Club, due to a decision by Lions International in 2021. Women can become Lions Club members or Lioness Lion Club members and hold their own events while paying Lions membership fees, but Lioness Clubs can no longer exist separately. (Supplied)

and desserts. Pierogi Me will also be there, as well as Alfie's Lemonade.

Vendors will include "many different types of ar-

tisans," she says, along with Ozzie to the Rescue, a foster-based organization run by volunteers who look for families to take on handi-

capped and abused dogs.

Also at the market will be Necklaces for Hope, colourful necklaces, bracelets and earrings that are handmade

and sold to raise money for Wellspring Niagara.

And of course the St. Davids Lions will be selling raffle tickets for the 18-foot

trailer that will be the grand prize at the July carnival, again donated by Niagara Trailers, with a second prize of \$1,000.

This year's Spring Market proceeds are going to the Niagara Children's Centre in St. Catharines, which offers programs for those aged four to 21 with physical or mental disabilities, says Pewer.

"We've helped out a lot of organizations over the years," she says, "but this time the whole committee decided they were onside with helping the children's centre."

There will be a 50/50 draw, and draws for donated prizes, she says.

The event is at the St. Davids Lions Park on York Road this Saturday, June 3, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"It's rain or shine, so I'm hoping..." says Pewer.

There is lots of room for parking, which is free, as is admission to the event.

# Leos selling town tulips at Spring Market

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Selling recycled town tulip bulbs to raise money has become a spring tradition in Niagara-on-the-Lake, this time involving the St. Davids Leos, says Bradd Anderson, leader of the local youth

branch of the Lions.

Residents and visitors have long admired the tulips on Queen Street, and several years ago, The Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society began organizing a sale of the bulbs once they were dug up by town staff, which they do every spring be-

fore planting again.

When the horticultural society didn't want to do it anymore, explains Betty Disero, the town was preparing for a Communities in Bloom Competition, and the Rotary Club of NOTL offered to take it on, both as an example of the town recycling and

to help beautify local gardens.

During the Rotary years, funds from the sale went to the town's tree fund.

But last summer, Disero was asked if the Leos could take it on, and she committed to letting them take it over as a fundraiser.

As the tulips were dug up, the bulbs were delivered to the St. Davids Lions Hall, where volunteers helped sort and wash them the first day, including Disero and Coun. Adriana Vizzari, who did some sorting and demonstrated how to clean them.

More than 1,200 bulbs have been boxed and are being stored in a cool, dark place, says Anderson, ready for the Leos to sell at the St. Davids Lioness

Lion Club Spring Market this Saturday, June 3, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Leos also held a dog wash recently, taking over the dog wash stations at Pet Valu in Virgil for a day. "It was an overwhelming success," says Anderson. "People trusted the Leos with their pets, and the Leos did a great job and had a lot of fun, and staff at Pet Valu bent over backwards to help them."

"The staff and dog owners were really pleased by how well the Leos did," he added.

Leos also organized the annual Walk for Dog Guides, and although only four people showed up for the walk, along with Leos and their families, "the

online donations exceeded our expectations," said Anderson.

The Leos have been raising money to help train dog guides, and also to donate to the building of a new, state-of-the-art Lions Foundation facility for dog guide training in Oakville.

The tulip sale, however, is for another one of the Leos' causes — a McMaster Children's Hospital oncology clinic for teens. St. Davids and other district Lions Clubs have contributed to the building of the clinic, and the Leos also decided they want to help out by supporting the clinic so that teens dealing with cancer and cancer treatments could have their own space.



Leos Dylan Kroeker, Sophia Szewczyk, Valerie Yaremchak, Hardi Patel and Xander Anderson had a great day at Pet Valu raising money to help train dog guides. (Photos supplied)



The Leos tulip team has been helping prepare for the town tulip sale, with more than 1,200 bulbs ready to go for \$5 a dozen.



# Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

## Enjoy nature at any age or ability

(NC) Many of us love to spend time in the great outdoors. Sometimes unsteady balance, arthritic joints, a lung condition or other health or mobility differences are what's making outdoor adventures uncomfortable. But there are still plenty of ways to enjoy an escape into nature.

### Get the dirt

Try to research the lay of the land at any campsite, trail or protected park to see what you're working with. Look online or contact the destination.

Ask about the size and location of bathroom facilities. Find out if the terrain

is paved or grassy; soft or hard; steep or flat. Are there places to pause for a rest?

This information can help you choose a trail or campsite and prepare accordingly.

### Get glamping

Short for glamorous camping, glamping is the ongoing trend of making camping more comfortable and luxurious. It doesn't have to be fancy or expensive; it just takes out some of the more complicated or uncomfortable parts of the experience.

A raised sleeping platform or cot is a glamping go-to because it offers a

more comfortable night's rest than the hard ground. A bed off the ground also makes it easier to get up in the morning, independently or with assistance.

### Use support

There are plenty of tools

that can make outdoor activities more accessible. Depending on your needs, devices could range from walking poles or supportive shoes, to beach and off-road wheelchairs, or tents with wheelchair storage. You might be able to re-

serve, rent or borrow some of these items.

Working with an occupational therapist (OT) can also help you discover and use tools and approaches to make camping easier for people, no matter their mobility.

Take advantage of what will make your excursion safer and more enjoyable.

You can find more information and confirm a professional is licensed through the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario at [coto.org/ot](http://coto.org/ot).



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# Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

## Whether a Biker or a Baptist



It doesn't matter if you're a Biker or a Baptist. If you prefer a church, a garden, or a pub. If you want stories and laughter or silent tranquility. A procession or a party. No matter what your budget, the only thing a funeral absolutely has to be is whatever you want it to be.

When your time comes, are you prepared? Will you burden your family with planning your funeral after you're gone? Or will you pre-plan your funeral and have it done your way? You can help your family, even after you've passed.

You buy insurance in the event something might happen to your home or vehicle, you plan your finances, and you create a Will and Powers of Attorney

to handle your affairs. Doesn't it just make sense to pre-plan your funeral arrangements?

Morgan Funeral Home has been part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake community since 1959. Founded on the principle established by funeral directors Gordon & Betty Morgan "of serving families just as we would want to be served." The team at Morgan Funeral Home continues to be available to help you or your family answer your pre-need and at-need funeral questions.

Call us to pre-arrange exactly what you want—traditional or contemporary.

## Get moving outside

(NC) Warmer weather is here, which means it's time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Check out these ideas to do just that – whatever your level of fitness.

Walking is one of the best physical activities to do while enjoying the outdoors. If you've been sedentary in recent months, start with short distances and challenge yourself to spend a little more time walking each week. You will gradually build up your strength and stamina. Using walking poles can help with bal-

ance and make walking on uneven terrain more enjoyable.

Swimming and aquatic activities like water aerobics are a fun way to cool off on hot days, improve muscle strength and boost heart health and endurance.

For people who suffer from sore or stiff joints, choosing low- or no-impact activities is important to reduce pain and stay active longer.

"Any physical activity that you like to do and that is safe for your joints is beneficial," says Trish Bar-

bato, president and CEO of Arthritis Society Canada. "Try to incorporate positive movement in your daily life. Think about what type of movement brings you joy and do more of that."

Other low-impact activities that are great practiced outdoors include cycling, yoga, tai chi, Pilates, golf, trekking and gardening.

Regular physical activity can help strengthen bones and muscles, reduce stress and improve your overall health. Find more exercise tips and videos at arthritis.ca.



## Bringing cataracts into focus

(NC) June is Cataract Awareness Month, and it's a great time to learn about the eye condition. Cataracts affect more than 3.5 million Canadians every year, making it one of the most common aging eye conditions. But it's one many people may not understand very well.

"Developing cataracts as we get older is like greying hair – it's inevitable for most people, and it can happen early on or can develop slowly over many years," says Canadian ophthalmologist Dr. Kathy Cao. "It's so important to be proactive about eye health, especially if you notice changes in your vision."

untreated, cataracts can cause significant vision loss and blindness.

At the early stages, cataracts only need to be observed – so annual eye appointments are important. When symptoms become more intrusive, it's time to discuss cataract surgery.

"While every surgery should be carefully considered, cataract surgery is one of the safest and most common procedures in the world. It's done on an outpatient basis, which means patients go home the same day of surgery, and they often start to notice vision improvements with quick recovery," says Dr. Cao.

realize there are different types of lenses for their surgery, but in fact, there are many options to meet specific vision goals.

"Your surgeon needs to understand what you as a patient want, the kinds of activities you engage in and your expectations. For example, do you rely on near vision as a bookworm or distant vision as a cyclist? Most people don't realize how much of our everyday activity is done at an arm's length, like working at a computer or putting on makeup. These are important things to think about when choosing a lens," says Dr. Cao.

If you're considering cataract surgery, you should have an informed conversation with your surgeon about your vision goals to select the cataract lens replacement that's right for you.

Find more information at seethefullpicture.ca.

### What are cataracts?

Cataracts occur when the lens in the eye becomes cloudy as natural proteins build up over time, leading to clouded vision, light sensitivity and fading colours. If left

### How to prepare

Cataract surgery involves taking out the natural lens in the eye and then replacing it with an artificial lens. When it comes to lenses, one size does not fit all. Patients may not

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# *Celebrate Seniors* Golden Years Guide

## Alpine Beauty

Avid hikers need look no further for your next adventure. The magnificent Alpine vistas of the Bavarian and Austrian Alps, a region that boasts some of the world's most spectacular mountain ranges, offers both exhilarating hiking and incomparable scenery. Along with hiking, a European journey would not be complete without taking in some measure of the historic and delightful sites that we've chosen for our group members.

Our fall journey begins in stunning Salzburg. Here, a delightful walking tour introduces us to Mozart's birthplace, the Salzburg Cathedral, the Fortress of Hohensalzburg and the charming Old Town. In the Berchtesgaden area, we walk through a pristine forest and explore the "Eagle's Nest" for views of the Bavarian Mountains and Salzburg Alps. At Mt. Watzmann, enjoy some free time to explore the walking trails in the National Park. In Munich, a city tour introduces us to world-fa-



Lake Hintersee at Sunset



Sollereck Hike

mous sites including Hofbrauhaus, Marienplatz, Nymphenburg Palace and more. At Unterammergau, our hike takes us through a nature reserve where we have magnificent views over the Ammer Valley. Stop for a delicious lunch at a mountain lodge before walking back to our hotel.

Visit one of King Ludwig II's majestic castles at Neuschwanstein. Discover a natural monument as you walk through a canyon, Breitachklamm, the deepest gorge in Central Europe. All of these are only a sampling of the adventures planned for this exciting journey. Join us September 22 to

October 5, the most comfortable time of year following the heat of summer in Europe. Mention promo code ALPINEVISTAS when you reserve your space and save \$200 per person. If you love the thrill of hiking and experiencing some of Europe's most

spectacular sightseeing, Alpine Beauty's wonderful balance of both, may be just the ticket! Call Craig Travel at 1-800-387-8890 or email [journeys@craigtravel.com](mailto:journeys@craigtravel.com). Visit [craigtravel.com/NOTL](http://craigtravel.com/NOTL) for more tour details. *Written by Robert Craig, President of Craig Travel.*

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# Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

## Are you acting out your dreams while sleeping?

(NC) We all know how important sleep is to our mental and physical health. But how you sleep can be an early indicator for later health issues. If someone has noticed that you act out your dreams, especially yelling, punching, kicking or getting out of bed, you may be living with rapid-eye movement (REM) sleep behaviour disorder, also known as RBD.

During normal REM, the time when we dream, the brain prevents movement. But for those with RBD, brain pathways are disrupted and people are able to act out their dreams. People with the condition often have very

active dreams in which they're playing sports, running or even being chased or attacked.

Sleep problems, including this one, are common in people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Although not everyone with RBD develops Parkinson's, studies suggest a strong link between having the condition and a future diagnosis of Parkinson's or related conditions. RBD can occur years before more well-known symptoms, such as tremors, stiffness or slowness. Other possible early signs of Parkinson's include constipation, depression and smell loss.

"My symptoms were

varied: a shuffling, arm tremors, loss of coordination and difficulties speaking, sleeping and focusing," says Larry Gifford, a Canadian journalist diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at age 46. "Symptoms began appearing three or four years before, but I never linked them. Through those undiagnosed years, doctors tell me I lost approximately eighty per cent of my dopamine-producing brain cells."

If you have symptoms, including acting out your dreams, talk to your doctor. Other sleep problems may mimic RBD, so it's important for a sleep specialist to confirm the diag-

nosis. Once diagnosed, a movement disorder specialist (a neurologist with expertise in Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders) can help provide care and offer an individualized treatment plan.

You also may want to

consider joining a research study. In Canada, The Michael J. Fox Foundation's landmark brain health study, the Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI), follows people with and without Parkinson's over time to learn more about how

brain disease starts and changes. It's exploring the connection between RBD and brain disease to understand who gets Parkinson's, who doesn't and why. Find more information about the study or learn how to get involved at [michaeljfox.org/ppmi](http://michaeljfox.org/ppmi).



## Tips for picking the best (and freshest) produce

(NC) A diet that is rich in high-quality, fresh vegetables and fruits can be great for your overall health, but finding the tastiest, ripest and best produce isn't always easy.

From apples to zucchini and everything in between, here are four tips on how to pick the best fruits and vegetables.

### Shop locally

Certain types of fresh produce begin to lose their nutrients just 24 hours after they are picked, but local food does not have to travel as far as food imported from other regions or countries. Shopping locally is also great for the environment as it helps reduce your carbon footprint. Choosing

local food also supports nearby farmers and other producers, which benefits the local economy.

### Opt for organic

Some studies suggest that some organic produce may contain more vitamins, minerals and micronutrients than conventionally grown fruits and vegetables. Consuming organic produce may also reduce the chemicals you're putting into your

body because it contains fewer pesticides. Most natural health food stores like Nature's Emporium carry organic produce exclusively, so it's easier to avoid pesticides on your produce.

This is also helpful if you're concerned about foods on the Environmental Working Group's dirty dozen - 12 crops that typically have the most pesticide residue in the United States. This list includes

strawberries, spinach, kale, nectarines, apples, grapes, bell and hot peppers, cherries, peaches, pears, celery and tomatoes.

### Pick produce with vibrant colour

Choose fruits and vegetables that are vibrant and show consistent colour. For the freshest options, avoid fruits and vegetables that are dull, pale or show signs of discoloration. Brown or black spots on produce

could mean it's starting to go off.

### Pick produce that feels firm

High quality, fresh produce is firm to the touch. When shopping for fruits and vegetables, be sure to give them a little squeeze to test their firmness. If produce is soft or feels mushy, it could be a sign that it's well past its prime.

Find more tips at [naturesemporium.com](http://naturesemporium.com).





# Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

## Why cleaner air at home might help summertime allergies

(NC) Sneezing, an itchy throat and scratchy, watery eyes are hallmarks of pollen season. Although they typically haunt allergy sufferers in spring and fall, some people face symptoms all year, even in summer. For those longer-term allergy sufferers, improving the quality of indoor air at home might help.



Here are some easy steps to cleaner, fresher air at home:

### Prevent mould growth

Mould spores in the air can cause an allergic reaction or a rise in allergy symptoms. Mould grows in moist environments, like bathrooms. To prevent its growth, check occasionally for leaks around your tub or shower. Ensure your bathroom exhaust fan is working and consider opening a window during a shower. Allow the shower and its door or curtain to fully dry when you're done to prevent moisture build-up. And, when cleaning mouldy surfaces, wear a mask to prevent breathing in the airborne spores and run an air purifier at the same time.

### Avoid VOCs

Many home cleaning products contain volatile organic compounds, known as VOCs, which are chemicals that can affect air quality. They can also off-gas from pressed wood



cabinets, panelling and flooring. To reduce exposure to these compounds, avoid storing cleaning products in your living area and keep only the minimum amount you need. When using them, open a window or turn on a fan. An air purifier can also help increase ventilation without opening windows. The

same advice applies if you are installing new flooring or painting a room.

### Reduce pet allergens

Dog and cat hair and pet dander in the air can affect your indoor air quality. Pets coming into the house can also track in pesticides and outdoor allergens. To reduce these allergens in

your home, vacuum area rugs and carpets regularly and consider having your fur babies sleep in a different room from you. Consider a high-quality air purifier in every room where pets spend significant time. Find more information about air purifiers for different rooms at [honeywellpluggedin.ca](https://honeywellpluggedin.ca).



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# Buzz on Pollinators: 15 trees planted on heritage trail

**Sandra Ozkur**  
Special to The Local

If you walk along the Upper Canada Heritage Trail, you will have noticed a lot of activity as of late with the installation of trees and hay along the trail. Protect our Pollinators association was formed in November 2022 with the vision of bringing awareness to the decline of pollinating insects such as native bees, honeybees, moths, hummingbirds and butterflies. This small group of volunteers have been creating pollinator awareness ever since through these regular articles.

The group's secondary objective was to create a pollinator corridor through town. Now that vision has begun to manifest with the creation of large pollinator habitats along the Heritage Trail.

Last Friday, fifteen pollinator friendly trees were planted along the first section of the trail from John to Paffard Street. These flowering trees, once established, will provide pollen and nectar for a large variety of pollinating insects, as well as habitat for caterpillars to develop into moths and butterflies. These trees have been specifically chosen for the needs

of native bees and pollinators. Next, other scrubs and native flowers will be planted in the pollinator beds that are being prepared along the pathway, and together they will create a complete ecosystem.

You will see strips of hay have been laid out in several areas to prepare the beds for the native plants that will soon be installed there. The hay has been placed in a thick mat to smother the invasive plants beneath. When it rains the hay will pack down and provide compost and will hold the moisture in the soil for the

plants to grow.

Please bear with us during this process as we know it is unsightly at this point, it takes time to prepare the beds before they will be suitable for planting. The volunteers from the pollinator planting group will be monitoring and watering these new trees and plants with the help of the town.

We would like to thank the many people that have participated in this process which includes: the planning and executing of this project, the clean-up of the underbrush, and the coordination with the town and the Heritage Trail committee. Most importantly, we would like to thank the Goettler Family Foundation for their generous donation that made this all possible.

This is an ongoing project so be sure to walk the trail regularly to see it begin to grow.



Pollinator trees are being planted by volunteers along the Upper Canada Heritage Trail. (Sandra Ozkur)



Volunteers getting dug in with pollinators.



Sandra Ozkur beside a basswood tree. (Susi Woerthle)



George Scott from Niagara Beeway is planting evening primrose. (Sandra Ozkur)

## Parkette seeded, could use some water

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Ron Simkus, a retired mining engineer who has taken it upon himself to monitor water levels in the Dock Area and consult with the town on soil erosion and other issues, is delighted to see a rain garden finally installed in the area he calls The Parkette.

He anticipates the town putting up a sign identifying the area as Balls Beach Park.

Town documents variously call it Balls Beach Park, Ball's

Beach Park, and Balls Beach Parkette (on Facebook), and that concerns him. He refers to it simply as The Parkette, and hopes the town will officially adopt that name.

Online maps are already referring to it as a park, when in reality is about 80 metres long, with no washrooms, change rooms or picnic tables planned. "It's intended to be a passive park," he says, and he fears tourists will arrive, expecting a Malibu-style beach and all the facilities usually found in a park on a beach.

Simkus calls the rain garden and the final planting of grass around it "part of a dream that has its roots dating back 40 years."

And at that time, in a 1982 report, it was called a parkette, he says.

"Today The Parkette has a living, functioning purpose. It's more than aesthetics, it's now a practical mitigation for high lake levels but also as a symbol of what 'resilience' needs to look like for Niagara-on-the-Lake as climate change evolves," he says, call-

ing it an example of "good engineering combined with green solutions and novel landscape architecture."

Even 20 years ago, a 2004 staff report by Clive Buist, then director of parks and recreation, described the passive parkette that exists today, possibly with benches, but no lighting, no picnic tables or washrooms.

"And that report called it The Parkette," Simkus says, "the purpose being that without a name, the true vision of a 'passive' park would be achieved. If you call it Balls

Beach you create a destination attraction and the passive objective is lost."

It wasn't that long ago the town posted a sign directing people to a kayak and canoe launch at the beach, and when Simkus pointed out there wasn't actually a boat launch or any of the expectations that would accompany one, and that visitors would arrive at the park looking for it, Rome D'Angelo, then newly-hired as director of operations, had it removed.

At the moment The Par-

kette isn't looking quite as it should — instead of green grass, it's turning brown.

While neighbours agreed to water the rain garden which they helped plant, and have, the area around it is the responsibility of the town. The company that hydroseeded it said it should be misted, but as of Tuesday morning, about a week after it was sprayed, it hadn't been, and looked like it was needed, says Simkus — on his agenda was yet another call to the town to see if that could be accomplished.



The rain garden in The Parkette — Ron Simkus hopes the town will stop calling it Balls Beach Park — is flourishing, thanks to neighbours who have watered it, and the area around it is hydroseeded, as the photo shows, but has been turning brown instead of green. (Photos by Ron Simkus)





## Organizers offer reminder of upcoming Cherry Festival

Mark your calendars for St. Mark's Cherry Festival, held on the grounds of the church. It's an annual favourite for parishioners, local residents and visitors, and this year will be held on July 8. Pie-makers are busy at the church hall preparing for the festival. Last year Judy MacLachlan and Gil Bryan sold fresh cherries, another annual favourite. (Supplied)

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# Bound and Determined: the story of Chloe Cooley

Sharon Burns  
The Local

Bound and Determined, the new exhibit at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, honours Chloe Cooley, an enslaved woman whose resistance compelled Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe to pass the Act to Limit Slavery in 1793.

"The museum is focusing on early black history, and in particular, enslavement that existed in Niagara-on-the-Lake," explained Sarah Kaufman, managing director and curator of the museum.

In February, Canada Post

released a stamp paying tribute to Cooley, and posted a video explaining Cooley's role in changing the course of Canadian history, with input from Kaufman, appears in the video, found on YouTube.

"After the American Revolution, the prevalence of enslavement in Canada grew, which fuelled the abolitionist movement," said the narrator. "Hearing rumours that enslavement could be banned, some decided to sell what was legally considered their property, while they could."

On March 14, 1793, in Queenston, Upper Canada,

Cooley was "bound and forcibly taken across the Niagara river and sold off into the United States slavery system" by her enslaver, Adam Vrooman, said Kaufman. Cooley resisted, but did not escape. What became of her is unknown.

Witnesses to her abduction provided testimony to Simcoe, who opposed slavery, and on July 9, 1793, he passed the Act to Limit Slavery, which included banning the importation of enslaved people to Upper Canada and ruled that the children of enslaved women would be freed when they turned 25.

The Act also created a legal refuge for those fleeing enslavement in other countries. This paved the way for at least 30,000 freedom seekers to make the dangerous journey north to Canada.

"This is the 230th anniversary of the Act to Limit Slavery and the Chloe Cooley incident," said Kaufman. "There was slavery here in Niagara," she emphasized.

"On display will be a rowboat which is very similar to the one that Chloe might have been bound in and brought across the river."

An enlarged version of the stamp from Canada Post will

be displayed, as well as information about the "development of the coloured village here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, which was south of John Street," said Kaufman. "We will have a map in the new exhibit to show where it was, and we've adapted it from the book *Slavery and Freedom in Niagara* that a local, Nancy Butler, actually worked on with Michael Power. They identified a lot of the homes and properties that were either owned or rented by black residents."

While not many artifacts relating to enslavement are in existence, Kaufman has borrowed items from the St. Catharines Museum, Ontario Heritage Trust and the Archives of Ontario, which has lent the museum "the original Act that Simcoe and the legislative assembly put forth on July 9, 1793," said

assistant curator and education programmer Shawna Butts.

The exhibit will also display "items that relate to the families here that existed, a few pieces that represent punishment tools, plus a few pieces from our collection," said Kaufman.

"We plan to unveil an original art piece for our Bound and Determined Exhibition on July 9, the anniversary of the passing of the anti-slavery legislation," said Kaufman.

"We have partnered with Natasha Henry, president of the Ontario Black Historical Society, and Rochelle Bush, a trustee at the Salem Chapel which is the Harriet Tubman church in St. Catharines," she added. "It's a really great community partnership with museum staff and individuals who are very well-versed in that early history."

Bound and Determined

opens June 2 with a \$5 admission charge for adults. "June 4 is our Janet Carnochan day and admission is free on June 4," said Kaufman. Carnochan was president of the Niagara Historical Society in the early 1900s and was largely responsible for the opening of Memorial Hall, Ontario's first purpose-built museum, and one of three linked buildings of today's museum. The exhibit closes Nov. 14.

"There is a commonly held belief in Canada that we are the 'freedom land,'" said Kaufman. However, "slavery did exist here and Chloe Cooley is who we really want to highlight, a former slave, what her fight against enslavement meant for the changes in legislation here for the anti-slavery act, and how that affected the Black community here in Niagara."



The NOTL Museum's Sarah Kaufman and Shawna Butts are proud to have the original text of the Act to Limit Slavery. (Sharon Burns)

## Ironwood celebrates Pride with Shades of Love

Sharon Burns  
The Local

Ironwood Cider House will be celebrating Pride Month with a patio party featuring food trucks, a DJ and, most importantly, a glitter bar so participants can add some bling to their ensemble.

Local food truck Chef and Bub Gourmet Ice Pops will be serving up their

all-natural gourmet popsicles and The District Tapas & Bar will offer rainbow churros. 905 Hotdog Pound, Silversmith beer and Ironwood cider and wine will be available, with music from DJ Rennie playing all afternoon.

The June 10 event is free to all ages at their Lakeshore Road site from noon to 6 p.m.

Following the patio party, Pride Niagara will host

another Queens and Cider event starting at 6 p.m. Tickets are available on the Ironwood website.

"We want to do a pride event because we had such a great turnout with the last Queens and Cider event that we did," said Robyn Brown, marketing and events manager at Ironwood. "We are a very welcoming environment."



Kristina Carpenter, Maddy Perreault, Macy Manolo, Victoria Byers and Robyn Brown were at the last Ironwood Queens and Cider event. (Supplied)

## Unpacking Indigenous baggage — at the library

Sharon Burns  
The Local

A program at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Library will unpack some of the baggage Indigenous people carry, and allow participants to update their own 'carry-on' in terms of a "better understanding of how we can help," said Terry Mactaggart, co-founder of the Learn & Live series.

Willow Shawanoo-Kechego, a long-time and active community member currently working at the Niagara Regional Native Centre's Indigenous Community Justice Program, is the key speaker June 5. Monday night's event is titled Unpacking Indigenous Baggage — Updating Your Carry-ons.

Shawanoo-Kechego is Anishinaabekwe, Ojibway from Kettle and Stoney Point, Turtle Clan. As an intergeneration-

al survivor, she has used her strengths to graduate from Brock University in 2013 with degrees in history and sociology. Throughout her tenure at the native centre she has held numerous roles and continues to be an advocate for her community.

"We will look at where we are today, discuss some of the headline history and break down some of that old luggage," said Shawanoo-Kechego. "In unity, we can bring light to the truth and start the path to reconciliation."

Learn & Live is a series of talks organized by Mactaggart and co-founder Cindy Grant.

"Cindy and myself were on the Community Wellness committee for the past four years, and we presented to the council, just before the pandemic, all of our recommendations," said Mactaggart. "One of our recommendations was life-long learning."

"Cindy and I decided to strike out on our own and formed Learn & Live, which is unique to this area." The title Learn & Live is a twist of the phrase live and learn. They chose their catchy title in the hope that participants will carry on their learning well after the presentations.

"Hopefully we can pass forward into better understanding of Indigenous concerns and issues," said Mactaggart, in reference to the upcoming talk.

In partnership with the library, which provides the venue and helps with registration, Learn & Live provides monthly programming on a variety of topics.

Unpacking Indigenous Baggage — Updating Your Carry-ons, starts at 6:30 p.m., June 5. Interested participants must register through the library website.

## Lots of 60s and 70s folk music at Legion open mic

Mike Balsom  
The Local

Just over 30 people gathered at Niagara-on-the-Lake's Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 Sunday for the latest installment of their regular open mic sessions, organized by local musician Buzz Hummer (Randy Busbridge).

The Local popped in just in time to catch the end of Colin Bradley's intriguing three-song set, as he was wrapping up with *Deep Ellum Blues*, an old folk song made famous by the Grateful Dead as a staple of their live sets. The song followed Bradley's version of Vince Gill's *My Old*

*Guitar and Me* and Al Anderson's *Some Things Never Get Old*.

Following Bradley, Keith Williams took the spotlight. After playing numbers from the Hollies and the Moody Blues, Williams' deft finger-picking highlighted a timely version of *The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald* by the recently departed Gordon Lightfoot.

Up next was D'Arcy McCallum and Geoff Senson. McCallum's banjo bore the brunt of his pre-set jokes, and though Senson wasn't playing the bagpipes, he elicited chuckles of his own in his comparison of the noisy

wind instrument to an onion. The duo started with a Scottish folk song from Ewan McColl from 1946, played a John Prine number, then harmonized nicely on a version of Creedence Clearwater Revival's *Have You Ever Seen the Rain*.

As The Local was on its way out the door, John Mulligan plugged in his shiny steel guitar, slipped his brass slide on his finger, and played a rousing, metallic version of Bob Dylan's *Highway 61*.

In all, a total of seven different acts tried their hand at the open mic session for an enjoyable afternoon of music from some talented local musicians.

# Four Paul Harris recipients celebrated by Rotary

Local Staff

Paul Harris Awards were handed out to four people by the Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake Tuesday as it celebrated another year of outstanding achievements in the community and beyond.

The annual Paul Harris Awards Gala was held at the community centre, and featured performances by young musicians from the Yellow Door Theatre Project.

“Their talented individual and ensemble performances set the tone for the amazing inspirational stories and speeches that followed as the awards were

presented,” said Rotarian Bill French.

The Paul Harris Award, named after the founder of Rotary International, is Rotary’s highest honour.

Honourees Lauren and Vaughn Goettler were recognized for their generous and diverse philanthropy, Rotarian Cindy Grant for her outstanding leadership and contribution to several NOTL community organizations, and Rotarian Jodey Porter for her service to numerous local, national and international organizations, said Friench.

Added club president Greg Fedoryn, “it was a great celebration of our success this year, and it was wonderful to recognize the

outstanding contributions of Lauren and Vaughn, Cindy, and Jodey. They inspire us to continue doing good work around the world as people of action.”

Rotary is a global network of 1.4 million neighbours, friends and leaders who volunteer their skills and resources to solve issues and address community needs, French explained, with Rotarians volunteering about 47 million hours each year and awarding \$333 million to global service initiatives.

On a local level, the Rotary Club of NOTL had the most successful fundraising year in the club’s history thanks to members’ passion and hard work, said French.



Paul Harris Award recipients Vaughn and Lauren Goettler, as well as Rotarians Cindy Grant and Jodey Porter, were recognized for their service to the community. With them is club president Greg Fedoryn at the awards gala held at the community centre. (Supplied)



Yellow Door Theatre Project students perform at the Rotary gala. (Supplied)

## Pairing of arts and wine: a sensory experience

Maria Klassen  
Special to The Local

Tucked away in two rooms, on the second floor of a European-style chateau, is an incredible art exhibit. Visit Chateau des Charmes Winery in St. Davids, and climb the stairs to the Paul Bosc Lounge and the St. Davids Bench Room. There you will find the diverse and distinctive styles of local artists belonging to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Arts Collective, which also includes several curators and galleries.

The many and varied mediums are astounding. Examples found in this exhibit include: acrylic, oil, soft pastels, mixed media collages, metallic paper prints and high definition prints, prints on metal and canvas, fused glass, charcoal on canvas and an archival photograph.

The subjects for the individual pieces are just as diverse. Mountains and forests, an assortment of flowers and trees, varying water

scenes, examples from the animal kingdom, and people and places can be found.

The winery’s director of hospitality, Martin Lindqvist says, “The winery has always been interested in supporting the arts, with exhibits year-round from out-of-town artists.” When the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre and members of the NOTL Collective approached the winery to display the work of local artists, Chateau des Charmes jumped at the chance to join forces in a partnership representing and supporting local artists.

Paul-Andre Bosc, president and CEO of Chateau des Charmes, comes from a family of winegrowers in France. His father Paul came to Canada with his young family in the 1960s, planted Canada’s first commercial vineyard to make the finest wine from European grape varieties, and founded the winery in 1978. The first building went up in 1994. There is a long tradition of

showcasing wine and art in Europe, and Paul-Andre wants to continue this tradition.

“Through this partnership, we want to contribute to Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre’s efforts to strengthening the visual arts in the community,” says Bosc. He invites guests to explore his estate winery, sipping a glass of wine, savouring the scenery, and enjoying the works of professional local artists.

The public is invited to the opening reception on Thursday, June 1, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., for an opportunity to meet some of the members of the collective and enjoy a complimentary sparkling wine while viewing stunning pieces. The show is open to the public at no charge and continues through Oct. 26.

Artwork can be purchased by contacting the artists directly.

Come by and enjoy a sensory experience for both the eyes and the taste buds — a pairing of the arts.



Members of the NOTL Art Collective, including Catherine Cullis, Darren W. Cranford and Rick Vyrostopko are displaying their work at Chateau des Charmes Winery. (Maria Klassen)

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# Niagara votes against privatized healthcare services

Mike Balsom  
The Local

The results are in from voting booths set up across Niagara by volunteers with the Niagara Health Coalition.

Almost 120 volunteers ran more than 50 voting stations across Niagara last week, giving visitors a chance to express their opinion about the provincial government's passing of Bill 60, The Your Health Act 2023, which received royal assent on May 18.

The Ontario Health Coalition, along with the Niagara group led by activist and retired teacher Sue Hotte, are concerned that the new law will lead to the proliferation of private health clinics across the province, putting a further strain on public health systems. Voting booths similar to those in Niagara were happening this weekend across Ontario.

The Niagara ballot contained two questions:

1 Do you want our public hospital services to be privatized to for-profit hospitals and clinics?

2 Do you want all of the existing sites and services of the Niagara hospitals to be maintained, protected and improved without any further cuts or closures?

Ontarians also had a chance to complete a ballot online, though only the first question was included there.

Overwhelmingly, participants voted against privatized healthcare and for the continuation of current service levels at all existing public health facilities in the region.

In a Tuesday morning press release, the Niagara Coalition revealed the results of the polls across the region. On question number one, 17,123 people voted no and 404 voted yes. On question number two, the

votes were 10,042 for yes to maintaining our hospitals and 197 for no.

"We're happy with the turnout," Hotte said Tuesday afternoon. "We only had four weeks to get the word out, and Niagara is a big area. For me, the turnout is really good. In one town I think more people turned out to vote for this than for the last election."

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, a Queen Street voting booth set up by the Niagara Health Coalition Friday attracted curious visitors, many from across the province, throughout the day.

The NOTL booth was set up just after 9 a.m. on the east side of the Court House by Pamela Wilson and Peggy Hooke. Unfortunately, they had chosen the spot usually occupied by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Ambassadors and were asked to move at around noon.

NOTL residents Barb Cowie and Jennifer Roberts took over on the other side of the Court House after that, and told The Local that there had been a steady stream of about 30 voters in their first 90 minutes.

"A lot of people who have stopped by aren't from Ontario," said Cowie. "But those who are have been telling us they were happy we're here as they hadn't voted online yet."

Gerda Ryckaert of St. Catharines was one of the voters who stopped by the booth Friday afternoon.

"My mother and father died of cancer," said Ryckaert. "I know how important it is for us to have services and friendly, helpful people in our hospitals. I am sure everybody there is so stressed and pressured there right now. This bill makes me worry that we may end up having to pay for services. Health-

care should be equal for everyone."

Irene Rutt of NOTL said she was worried about the effect the bill will have on hospital staffing.

"It's just going to take nurses and doctors from the hospitals," she lamented. "It's going to drain these services out of our public hospitals. And it's important to keep local services open. We are an aging population here, we need access to healthcare."

Co-workers Rachel LaFrance of Stoney Creek and Summer Thorp of London, Ontario were visiting NOTL on a day off.

"I work in healthcare and procurement," said LaFrance. "The government needs to support our local hospitals and our people. Pulling staff away from an already short-staffed facility to work in private facilities will just create further issues with capacity and patient-nurse ratios. That's a safety issue."

LaFrance fears Ontario's health system under Bill 60 will become similar to what Americans deal with south of the border.

"What we have is so much better than there," she added. "We need to be pouring our money into our institutions rather than taking it out. This runs the risk of increased healthcare costs as certain agencies and vendors will get more business and they will raise their prices. In a public health system, we answer to the taxpayers."

Thorp's role in healthcare is to create working relationships between the community and the institutions.

"There's this misguided expectation that private healthcare will be the panacea for everything," she said. "But there isn't any contingency planning,

especially for the vulnerable populations that I am working for. Privileged people will jump the cue, they'll push their advantage and leave out the same people who are always left out."

"It blows my mind that we still have such a shortage of family doctors," added LaFrance. "And foreign doctors shouldn't be driving Ubers. They should be able to practise their profession in Canada. We need to eliminate these wait lists for doctors."

The hope, of course, is that if enough Ontarians express

their displeasure with the new law it will force the Ford government to rethink its implementation.

"The people have spoken and are sending a message loud and clear to the Premier and the Minister of Health," said Tuesday's press release. "People were able to have a say about Ford's plan. The results show how strongly they feel. Do not privatize our hospital services and fund our hospitals so that all services and sites are maintained and enhanced."

At press time full provincial

results of the referendum were not yet available.

However, Hotte told The Local that she and other members of the Niagara Coalition planned to head to Queen's Park with their ballots Wednesday afternoon. There, they expected to gather with other coalitions from across Ontario to form a mountain out of the ballots to demonstrate to the Conservative government the number of Ontario residents who oppose an expansion of private health care services.



There was a little bit of a kerfuffle when volunteer ambassadors arrived at the Court House to find their spot taken, but they helped move the voting booth set up to ask about privatized healthcare to the other side of the steps. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Gerda Ryckaert votes while Barb Cowie and Jennifer Roberts look on.

## Mimosas at Sunset raise \$1,000 for Red Roof



Steffanie Bjorgan of Red Roof Retreat receives a \$1,000 cheque from Sunset Grill owner Kim Hughes Monday afternoon. The proceeds came from the Queen Street restaurant's Mimosa Week fundraiser, held in partnership with Konzelmann Estate Winery, represented by Andrew Niven. Konzelmann donated the sparkling wine. Hughes had planned to sell 100 mimosas at \$5 each and was pleasantly surprised that they were able to double that amount for the NOTL charity. Bjorgan said the partnership between Sunset and Konzelmann is a great indicator of the generosity that is shown to Red Roof, which offers quality respite and recreational programs to children, youth and young adults with special needs and their families. (Mike Balsom)

## Niagara Long Term Care fighting fourth outbreak

Penny Coles  
The Local

On Tuesday morning, the Niagara Region had six long-term care or healthcare facilities with COVID-19 outbreaks. One of them is Niagara Long Term Care on Wellington Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Chris Poos, director of the privately-owned facility, says the home is dealing with its fourth outbreak since the start of COVID.

This one began on May 23, and currently, he said, they have five residents and four team members who have tested positive.

"I am happy to share that everyone is managing well and experiencing mild cold-like symptoms," Poos said in an email. Following Public Health guidance, he added, "only essential caregivers may visit a

positive resident and, along with team members, must wear an N-95 respiratory mask and appropriate PPE."

When inside a long-term care home, he said, everyone must wear a surgical mask, and when the home is in an outbreak, rapid testing is required prior to entering.

"We always encourage good hand hygiene and ask that no one visits the home if they are not feeling well."

In response to questions to Niagara's public health department about an increase in outbreaks in long-term care and health care facilities, The Local received this emailed response: "Thankfully we are in a good place right now in terms of COVID-19 due to immunity from vaccines and previous infections. Public Health encourages everyone to keep up-to-date on their vaccinations, stay

home when sick and use layers of protection to help lower the risk of getting and spreading infection."

Layers of protection include wearing a mask, spending time outdoors, washing hands often and practising "respiratory etiquette," such as covering your cough or sneeze.

The number of new cases reported in the region reached a high for the last seven days on May 25, with 19, but was down to just two on May 29, the last day reported.

The number of active cases the last day they were recorded was 148 on May 28, and the 80-plus age group had the highest number of cases.

The numbers on the region's website come with a warning: due to testing availability, case and contact management guidelines, data should be interpreted with caution.

# Spring celebration at native centre a huge success

**Mike Balsom**  
The Local

The Niagara Regional Native Centre's recent Kenkwite'ne celebration of spring brought together the community in an all-ages sharing of traditional Indigenous teachings, practices and activities.

"It was an attempt to get in touch with everyone's inner baby child," says Veronica Orozco, coordinator of the regional centre's Community Action Program for Children, "to really hone in on that little spirit that sits within all of us. We wanted to have fun and engage in the outdoors and connect to nature."

To that end, Orozco (Abinoojii, Ojibway) and others at the centre organized a full day of activities that participants rotated through, including learning to create a friction fire, an archery station, hearing the creation story from an Indigenous elder, gardening, arts and crafts, and a group hand drill session.

The day began at dawn with a sunrise ceremony, led by Roger Jacklin, who tended the sacred fire throughout the day.

"We brought in some Indigenous knowledge keepers to share traditional teachings," says Orozco. "We asked them to speak to this aspect of Kenkwite'ne, which is spring. We had one of our grand-

mothers, who is Cree, share her story."

The gardening station included a chance for the kids to get their hands dirty in the soil, while the painting station focused on decorating aprons and rocks along the Kenkwite'ne theme.

"We also had a friction fire hand drill station," says Orozco, "which was kind of a tug'o'war style to get the fire started. It brought all the ages together to collaborate to get it going."

A big hit for the day was the archery station, run by Kirstyn Smith, the Niagara-on-the-Lake proprietor of Red Tail Adventures, formerly Sigma Archery.

"We were so excited to collaborate with a local company," says Orozco. "Her archery station was a real highlight of the event."

"Veronica reached out and invited me to the event," says Smith. "Someone else dropped out, and she stumbled upon my company. I was so excited to get involved."

Smith's archery fascination began a few years ago with her exposure to the Disney animated film *Brave*. She has even learned how to shoot arrows from horseback as the character Merida does in the 2012 film.

There was no horseback riding during the Kenkwite'ne event, but Smith did set up four

homemade targets and led participants through the proper way to release their arrows. Many of the kids tried to circle back to the archery station for another go at the skill.

"My main expression with my company," Smith says, "is I want people to re-wild themselves, to get back to their roots. All of this, archery, gardening, making fire, it all comes down to what we did before society took a different direction. Learning self-sustainability and getting comfortable in the outdoors is really important."

That focus makes Smith a great partner for Orozco, who was the driver behind the entire day's event.

"These land-based activities are so important to the survival of our culture," she says. "We are an urban Indigenous community centre, but unlike others we are gifted with the amount of land we have here. We can do so many outdoor activities here. We have to take advantage of that here."

With the Native Centre's summer camp coming up soon, Orozco is hoping that Smith can be a big part of it. And Jacklin hopes to see her back at the Native Centre as well.

"Things are going to grow from this event," the Ojibway elder tells The Local. "It is such a fulfilling

partnership. It will grow greatly, naturally."

The spring celebration was Smith's first attempt to bring archery to an event, rather than have participants come to her friend's farm in St. Catharines where she usually offers her instruction.

"I hand-created my own targets to bring out here today," she says. "We did a site visit first, mapping out where we would set up, with safety at the top of mind right from the start. And Roger was an ace with the arrow, by the way."

Jacklin in turn said he was impressed with Smith's open and honest character, as well as her willingness to share her knowledge with all of the participants.

As Orozco is planning to make Kenkwite'ne an annual event, she hopes Smith can return for future archery sessions. And, as the young sharpshooter is planning to offer other back-to-the-wild activities through Red Tail soon, there may be other opportunities for collaboration.

"The issue these days is all about disconnection," Orozco laments. "Kenkwite'ne was all about cultivating our relationship with that spirit. We have to reconnect our people with healthy activities that are full of balance physically, spiritually and emotionally."



Staff member William Kagesheongai and young participant Rosalynn Searay work with the bow drill together, achieving the creation of smoke, which is the first stage to creating a coal, working their way to creating fire.



Roger Jacklin and Kirstyn Smith of Red Tail Adventures worked in partnership to teach archery at the native centre's spring celebration. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

## Soccer open for the season



Beautiful sunny weather greeted almost 300 boys and girls aged four to 14 for the opening day of the NOTL Soccer season Saturday. For most coaches it was their first chance to meet their team, and it was the first time for many players to begin forming their new soccer friendships for the summer. More than 340 kids have registered for soccer this summer, including house league and interlock divisions, and travel teams who start their competitive season in June. There is still space for registrations for the Timbits division (turning four or five this year) and for the annual summer camp. Visit [notlsoccer.ca](http://notlsoccer.ca) for information.

# Lacrosse tournament renamed to honour beloved executive

**Mike Balsom**  
**The Local**

A group of former Junior B lacrosse teammates, as well as current and former club executives, gathered along with the family of Mike Jones at the Virgil arenas last weekend to honour the late lacrosse booster.

The Thunderhawks also memorialized the beloved longtime executive of the club by renaming last weekend's 39th annual minor lacrosse tournament in his name.

Jones, who grew up in Queenston and played Junior B lacrosse with the Niagara Kinsmen Warriors, precursors to the Thunderhawks, lost a 16-month battle with glioblastoma, an aggressive form of brain cancer, in January.

"This weekend has brought back so many memories," said Jones' wife, Anne Andres-Jones. "And my grandson was playing in the tournament for the very first time, with our son Eryn coaching him. Mike would have been so proud. The support of family and friends this weekend has been amazing."

Andres-Jones became a bit teary-eyed while considering that the Thunderhawks Tournament will be known as the Mike Jones Memorial going forward.

"It's a really fitting tribute to the work Mike put in, mostly behind the scenes," she acknowledged. "He did all the jobs no one else really wanted to do, but that was Mike. It was really important to him that the Junior B team be a community team, so that kids would have a chance to play."

In December, 2021, the Thunderhawks organization announced the cancellation of its Junior B program. The closure of the border to the U.S. during COVID made it impossible for members of the Tuscarora Indian Reserve, located across the Queenston-Lewiston bridge in New York state, to play in NOTL. They had become invaluable contributors to the success of Thunderhawks teams over many years.

Andy Boldt pushed on in 2022 with an intermediate team that went undefeated en route to an Ontario championship, but that team isn't running for 2023.

"He was really troubled by that," said Anne of the cancellation of the Junior B program. "He persevered, and contacted Randy Cryslar, who had been a past



Friends and former teammates came out to honour Mike Jones, including his brother Dave Jones, Dave Mines, Al Janzen, Bryn Jones (Dave's son), Rob Wilson, John Floris, Ed McIlroy, Ken Slingerland, Peter Buis, Jay Thorimbert and Steve Leavitt. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Mike Jones' family were pleased to see him honoured. Attending the celebration were Karen Jones, Dave Jones, Bryn Jones, Mike's wife Anne Andres-Jones, his son Ryan Jones, granddaughters Mia and Macy Jones, daughter-in-law Amy Jones, and Mike's mother-in-law Lois Andres.

coach and was instrumental with getting the Tuscarora boys over here. He really tried to save the team from folding."

Mike's younger brother Dave was surprised, but found it appropriate that the club decided to honour Mike.

"His work was behind the scenes," Dave told The Local. "People didn't know what he did. His dedication was amazing. I think this is very fitting. And all the people that came, it was like a high school reunion."

Three years younger than Mike, Dave remembered having a chance to play a few Junior B games with his big brother.

"He was a goalie," laughed Dave, "and I tried my hardest to score on him in practice every time. We grew up along the Parkway in Queenston where there were so many boys. Mike constantly gave me inspiration to try to beat him.

And I still have the scars to prove it."

Family and friends packed the lobby at the Centennial Arena, where a display case borrowed from the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame was on display. Featuring a jersey once worn by Jodie Engemann, whose parents Joe and Rose were instrumental in the start of the program, it also includes a tribute to Jones. Mike had previously been honoured with the Spirit of Lacrosse print for his 40 years of service to the Ontario Lacrosse Association.

Former club executive member Ken Slingerland, who first met Mike at the park 60 years ago, before either arena had been built, spoke of his longtime friend.

"We played together for 13 years," Slingerland said. "We had some terrible years, but we persevered, kept coming back and get-

ting better. He was so dedicated, he had this passion for the game. When his job (as an accountant) took him out west, he started coaching there, too. He had a full career of lacrosse for sure."

Slingerland and other former teammates made a point to visit Jones and the family while he was struggling with his disease.

"It wasn't easy to do during COVID," he remembered. "But we would gather together to sit on the veranda with him and Anne. He was in pretty good spirits right up to the end."

Ed McIlroy, who played with Mike every second year growing up, was master of ceremonies at the event. Al Janzen spoke about Mike's hard work in various roles, including as president and treasurer, with the Junior B club through the years.

Current Thunderhawks

president Chris Williams and vice-president Jay Thorimbert then presented Anne and the family with a plaque and flowers.

Thorimbert's Under-11 team was one of three Thunderhawks squads playing in last weekend's 22-team tournament. His squad came from behind to knock off the Centre Wellington Riverhawks 8-7 in Sunday's semi-final game and went on to a thrilling 7-5 win over the Kitcheners Kodiaks to capture the tournament title in their age group.

"It's huge for us to win this first Mike Jones tournament," said Thorimbert, who plays for the New York Riptide of the National Lacrosse League. "He was there when I started playing Junior B. These kids don't really know the story, but to win the first one ever at home is amazing."

Tournament convenor Lisa Alfarano told The

Local that registration numbers for some of the younger age groups was much larger than previous seasons.

"The idea of bringing back the Junior B team has come up a couple of times in board meetings," she said. "Considering the turnout we had this year in U9, where we had to make two teams this year, the U7s, and our development kids, it could potentially be a possibility in a few years."

"I was enthused to find out how many of the youngest kids are playing in the organization," Slingerland said. "They told me they had 35 paperweights playing. I think our Junior B will come back in time. There's was a tradition here since 1969, and it was one of the strongest franchises in the province. I'm sure it will be back some day."

Jones would have been happy to hear about that possibility.

# LocalSPORTS

## Holy Cross lacrosse team misses trip to provincials

**Mike Balsom**  
The Local

With exactly half of the 26-man roster hailing from Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School Raiders boys lacrosse team could easily be considered the town's unofficial high school team.

Led by NOTL residents such as Kaleb and Liam Dietsch, Noah Ostromecki, Lucas Williams, Dylan Price, Cohen Alexander and Jack Marotta, the Raiders captured the Niagara Catholic Athletic Association AA championship with a decisive 12-3 win over Saint Francis on May 16. That punched their ticket to the Southern Ontario Secondary School Association final four last Thursday.

The win against their north St. Catharines rivals capped an undefeated Niagara Catholic season for Holy Cross. It's an achievement for which head coach Corey Quinn gave the NOTL contingent lots of credit.

"The NOTL kids are a nice mix of offence and defence," Quinn told The Local. "We have leaders, we have bench players. Some are Grade 12 kids who have been playing junior and intermediate lacrosse (outside of school). They provide structure for our younger kids. Remember, we lost two years to COVID. Because of that, the younger guys like Williams and Price have been playing significant minutes this year, and contributing greatly."

Last spring, the Raiders kept things close with the Governor Simcoe Redcoats, holding them to a 3-3 tie before the Redcoats, the eventual provincial second-school silver medalists, ran



The team before practice: (back, left) Jake Cook, Dylan Price, Liam Dietsch, Kaleb Dietsch, Quinten Davis; (middle left) Noah Ostromecki, Sheldon Walker, Jack Marotta, Billy Pillitteri-Smith; and front, Liam Gatt. Missing from the photo are Cohen Alexander, Sam Walker and Lucas Williams. (Mike Balsom)

away with the Southern Ontario title in the fourth.

"We were looking like we could have won it last year," says Jake Cook, who debuted with the Raiders that year, having never played the game before. "But penalties got to us. We couldn't keep our mouths shut and we ended up losing."

The Grade 10 student was encouraged to try out in 2022 by his NOTL friends and classmates.

"I learned a lot, even though I rode the bench last year," said the defender, who went to St. Michael Catholic Elementary School. "I've had a lot more field time this year. It's great to play with all these guys I've known and grown up with."

Though the Raiders don't play Governor Simcoe in the NCAA, this season they drew the Redcoats in a sixes tournament (a hybrid of field and box lacrosse played outdoors on a smaller field) and defeated them. That gave Cook and

the others hope that they could knock off the hosts last week.

They made quick work out of the E.L. Crossley Cyclone in the morning's semi-final game. The dominant Holy Cross offensive attack enabled them to jump out to a 5-0 lead in the first period with goals from Price, Marotta, Williams, Kaleb Dietsch and Ostromecki.

Williams, who played in the 2022 Under-17 field lacrosse nationals for Team Ontario, opened the second period with a shot that beat the Bulldogs goalie on the left side of the net. After giving up a goal to the Cyclone, Holy Cross went on another run. Goals by Liam Dietsch, Kaleb Dietsch and Ostromecki gave the Raiders a 9-1 margin at half time.

Joey Young, the only Raider not from NOTL to score in the game, made it 10-1 early in the third. Forty seconds later Ostromecki fought off three defenders to pop his third goal into

the Crossley net, and Williams completed his hat trick with five minutes left in the period.

With a 12-1 cushion to begin the fourth period, Quinn rested his starters. The Cyclone capitalized on a less-experienced lineup by scoring three times in three minutes, before the Raiders tightened up on defense to shut them down. Price scored his second of the game with just under five minutes left to give Holy Cross a 13-4 victory and a chance to avenge last year's SOSSA final loss against the Redcoats, who beat Sir Winston Churchill 13-5 in the other semi-final.

In front of a crowd of almost 200 Simcoe students and staff, Ostromecki got the Raiders on the scoreboard first just 55 seconds into the game. Simcoe responded with two goals of their own to go up 2-1, then Kaleb Dietsch tied it up when he ran from behind the Redcoats net with the ball, circled

around the front and unleashed a low shot that fooled goalie Oliver Vanyo. With just a minute left, Kaleb put the Raiders back on top 3-2, beating Vanyo on the right side. But the Redcoats tied it up with just 20 seconds remaining in the period.

Governor Simcoe shut down the Holy Cross offence in the second period, holding them scoreless for the full 12 minutes. The Raiders showed their frustration, taking unnecessary penalties and being forced into costly turnovers which led to the Redcoats taking a 6-3 lead into the half.

Liam Dietsch closed the gap 2:30 into the third period, but Simcoe netted three more to go up 9-4 by the end of the third. They added a 10th goal before conceding markers by Price and Young late in the game. But time ran out on the Raiders, their provincials dream dashed with the 10-4 loss.

Addressing the team after

the loss, Quinn admitted the outcome wasn't what he had hoped for, but thanked his players for a phenomenal season, and for putting a scare into the highly-ranked Redcoats for the second straight year.

"The second half got away from us," Quinn told The Local. "I would say we outplayed them in the first quarter, but we took too many penalties that cost us in the second quarter. We found ourselves on the defensive end way too much, and when we got on offense we rushed it. Simcoe is a very good team, with a deep bench, and they were a lot more composed than us."

Quinn expressed disappointment that he wouldn't be able to bring the team, with six Grade 12 students who potentially will not be returning next spring, to the Ontario championships.

"And they had a shortened high school career," he said of his seniors. "Both of those years ended on Simcoe's field, too. We do have some really great players coming back next year, though. Half of our defence was Grade 10s, so we have a lot to build on for next year."

Though 16-year-old Kaleb Dietsch could be back next year, he may be attending school in Ottawa, if he makes the roster of the Ontario Hockey League's 67's, who drafted him in the third round in April.

"We left it all out there today," he said following the game. "It's disappointing. We worked really hard the last three months. I'm definitely going to miss these times, and I'll miss playing with my brother. Lots of great memories, lots of good times with everyone."



Holy Cross team members against Governor Simcoe: (clockwise from top left) Kaleb Dietsch, Liam Dietsch, Lucas Williams, Noah Ostromecki and. Lucas Williams. (Photos supplied)



# LocalSPORTS



John Hindle in the foreground with club members (left to right) Timo Kontkanen, Darryl Rutt and Roline Rzepka warming up on the Centennial Arena courts. (Mike Balsom)

## Pickleball tournament putting NOTL on the map

**Mike Balsom**  
The Local

The culmination of a vision that John Hindle and his fellow early members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Pickleball Club had six years ago begins next Friday at the Virgil Sports Complex.

That's when the Niagara-on-the-Lake Pickleball Classic kicks off with a demonstration by pickleball professionals and a celebration of the fledgling and often misunderstood sport. The tournament continues with men's and women's doubles matches Saturday, and mixed doubles matches Sunday.

"It's been in germination since we first started developing a vibrant club," says Hindle. "Most of Niagara's municipalities don't have a pickleball club.

They have community centres where people drop in to play. We thought that was a poor way to represent a sport. We wanted our club to be a community that would support each other in their development in the game."

Hindle says the club started with six members, then quickly grew to 16. Sixteen became 28, and 28 became 75. The growth was so phenomenal that Dan Makesenuk, who manages the NOTL Community Centre, encouraged them to start a club.

"We got such great support from Dan and from Kevin Turcotte (manager of parks and recreation)," Hindle says. "And the entire arena staff has been amazing in the lead-up to this event."

As members of the NOTL club started to get

better at the game, many of them began entering tournaments.

"Tournaments were springing up all over the province," remembers Hindle. "We looked like the Bermuda Triangle down here with nothing happening. So a bunch of us spread out entering other tournaments, watched the way they were running them, and it's finally time for us to host our own."

Hindle promises the Classic will be bigger and better than any event any of his members have played in so far.

"It will be massive," he says. "We have over 100 volunteers, plus 16 of us on the steering committee. We capped the entries at 300 players, from ages 17 to 77. The spots were filled in less than six weeks. They're coming from Alas-

ka, California, Florida and everywhere in between."

One of the things that sets it apart is the pro night on Friday.

"It's what makes this tournament special," he says. "We wanted to bring the excitement for learning pickleball. We've invited eight top pro players to play in exhibition matches that night, two women's doubles, two men's doubles and a mixed match. The pros will get a lot of time to highlight their skill."

The club is charging a \$10 fee that night, hoping to pack the seats in the Meridian Credit Union Arena. He promises a 50/50 draw and door prizes and has even arranged VIP seating right on the floor near the six courts.

YourTV will be broadcasting those matches on Cogeco channel 100 (channel 700 on Epico) as well as the tournament matches on Saturday and Sunday.

"They just laid the fibre cable this week," he says. "They have cameras shooting from up above at the centre, cameras from the back end and mobile cameras on the floor too. It is going to be an elegant presentation."

Following the men's and women's matches on Saturday the organizers and participants will be heading to the NOTL Community Centre for a dinner and dance celebra-

tion, with music provided by a live band.

All entrants are guaranteed at least three matches over the weekend, with the finalists in each of the 27 different categories, based on age and skill level, playing as many as eight games. Winners will take home gold medals, with silver and bronze going to second and third place finishers.

With play taking place simultaneously on six courts on each arena's floor, it will be a busy, buzzing weekend in Virgil. And Hindle is ready for the questions visitors may ask about those beautiful outdoor courts beside the parking lot which are verboten for pickleball play following last year's noise complaint.

"We felt we had to do something big to remove that black eye," he says. "We swallowed hard and said 'let's move on.' We also had the challenge of COVID to deal with. We felt this tournament would be a great celebration, and the club has really come together over this."

Organized using software called Pickleball Brackets, the tournament is sanctioned by Pickleball Canada. That means players' results will be entered into a national database and can be used to rank skill levels for future tournament entries.

"And we've trained 25 members to be officials for next weekend," adds Hin-

dle. "Most tournaments only provide officials in the final matches. We aim to have a referee on every court for every single match. That is not at all usual in any tournaments we've experienced."

As well, Niagara College physiotherapy students will be on hand to help some of the players work out the kinks between matches.

Speaking of working out the kinks, two weeks ago 80 club members participated in a trial tournament to test out the software and the flow of play.

"We learned a bunch and made some mid-course corrections," says the retired educator. "It gave us a chance to see what needed to change. We expect it to go on without a hitch."

As if he won't be busy enough, Hindle and his wife Alison will be welcoming friends from Tillsonburg, who will park their RV at the Hindle home. He expects many visitors will make a weekend out of the event.

"We've heard a strong indication that most people want to come down Friday night, they want to come to the pro exhibition," he says. "They'll do some late-night touring, and come to the dance Saturday. Most people will be here at least Friday and Saturday night. It's going to be a big boost to the town."

## LocalWORSHIP

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**10:00 a.m.**  
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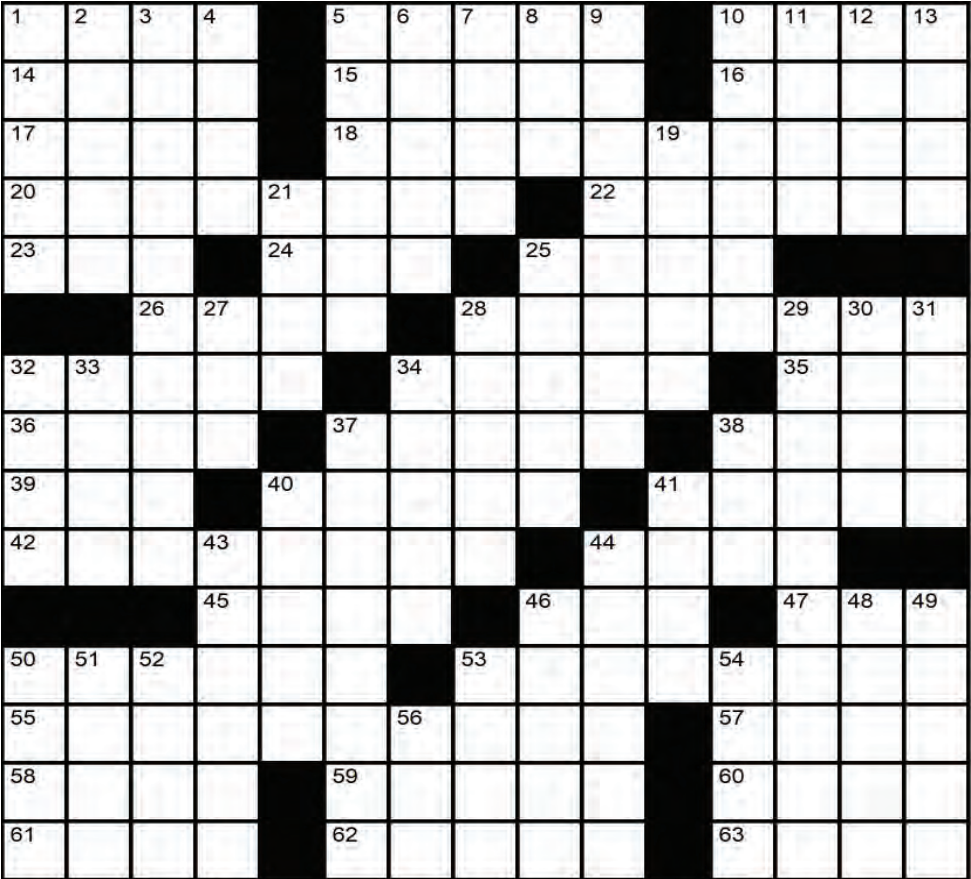
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5 Accumulate

10 Comic Chappelle

14 Dash

15 --- Hicks, who co-founded an eponymous online "List"

16 --- Jannings, first Oscar winner

17 "But, --- was ambitious, I slew him" (Shakespeare, "Julius Caesar")

18 Doubtful attitude

20 Pops the question

22 Fight sites

23 Brazilian saint

24 "--- cool!"

25 Chinese gooseberry

26 Coal Miner's Daughter Loretta ---

28 Castigatory

32 Plaudits

34 "Peace on earth, good will ---"

35 "Air America" lead --- Gibson

36 "Death --- Expert Witness" (P D James)

37 "... my --- days, when I was green in judgment ..." (Shakespeare, "Antony and Cleopatra")

38 Australian national gemstone

39 "Holy cow!"

40 Of high grade

41 Former first lady of France
- Bruni

42 Attars

44 Democratic right

45 Sawbones, briefly

46 Salon goo

47 Sucker

50 Three miles

53 Disturb oilman, or sabotage form of transportation

55 Unlettered

57 "The Joy of Cooking" author Rombauer

58 "--- the torpedoes!" (David Farragut)

59 "Divine Comedy" writer --- Alighieri

60 Decree

61 Dead tree

62 Dirty political tactic

63 Dorothy's doggy
- 11 Former Ugandan dictator

12 Passport endorsement

13 Boston's Liberty Tree, and others

19 Eighth moonwalker

21 Possesses

25 Stoner paired with Harold

27 "... from --- far country blows" (Housman)

28 Gondoliers' propellers

29 Such as Flo Ziegfeld

30 Schnitzel meat

31 She, in Sonora

32 Japanese beef considered a delicacy

33 Mysteries on high

34 Watergate evidence

37 Turns out well

38 Bran source

40 End of a glacier

41 Centennial St.

43 Salvage

44 Pretense

46 We --- Get Out of This Place

48 Target

49 Pupil of Socrates and teacher of Aristotle

50 Eyeshades, maybe

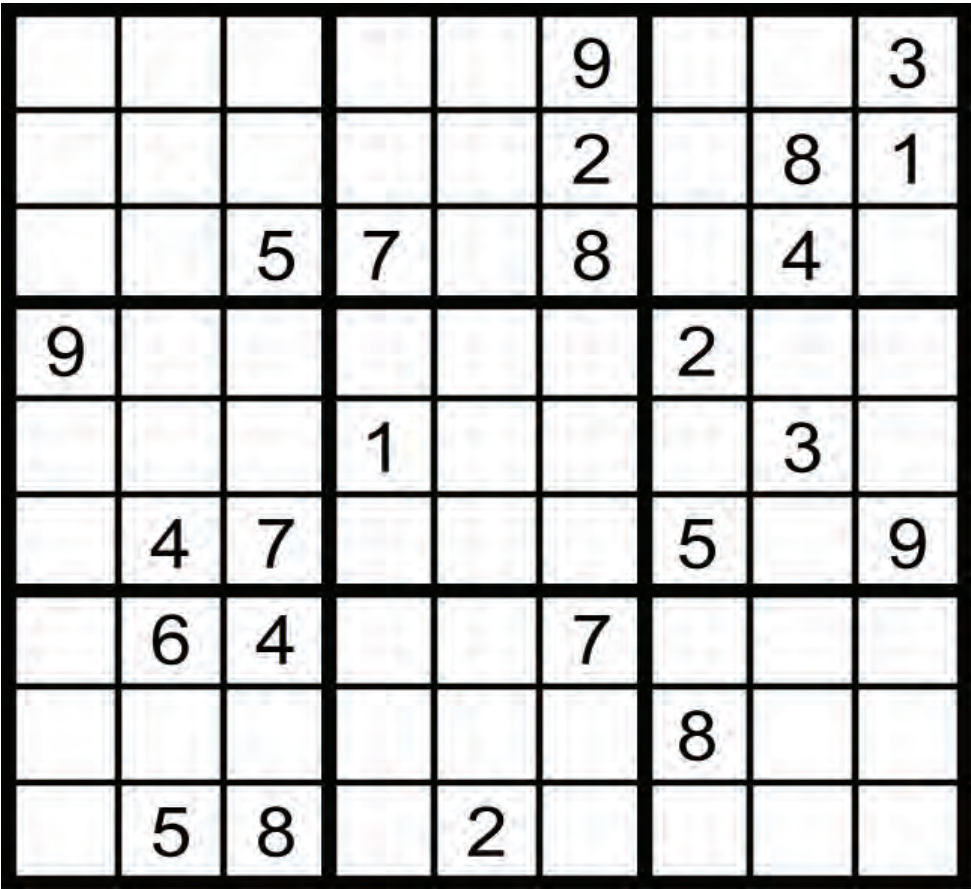
51 Flair

52 Michigan college, and where it is

53 Leo's locks

54 Fissure

56 --- + dam = lamb



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Sudoku solution from  
May 24, 2023

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

**Across:** 1 Tbsp, 5 Hoard, 10 Dave, 14 Race, 15 Angle, 16 Emil, 17 As he, 18 Skepticism, 20 Proposes, 22 Arenas, 23 Sao, 24 Way, 25 Kiwi, 26 Lynn, 28 Punitive, 32 Kudos, 34 To men, 35 Mel, 36 Of an, 37 Salad, 38 Opal, 39 Boy, 40 Super, 41 Carla, 42 Essences, 44 Vote, 45 Docs, 46 Gel, 47 Sap, 50 League, 53 Monorail, 55 Illiterate, 57 Irma, 58 Damm, 59 Dante, 60 Fiat, 61 Snag, 62 Smear, 63 Toto.

**Down:** 1 Traps, 2 Basra, 3 School days, 4 Peep, 5 Hassan, 6 On-key, 7 Ages, 8 R I P, 9 Detained, 10 Deceit, 11 Amin, 12 Visa, 13 Elms, 19 Iwlin, 21 Owns, 25 Kumar, 27 Von, 28 Poles, 29 Impresario, 30 Veal, 31 Ella, 32 Kobe, 33 U F Os, 34 Tapes, 37 Succeeds, 38 Oat, 40 Snout, 41 Colo, 43 Edging, 44 Veneer, 46 Gotta, 48 Aim at, 49 Plato, 50 Lids, 51 Elan, 52 Alma, 53 Mane, 54 Riff, 56 Ram.

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