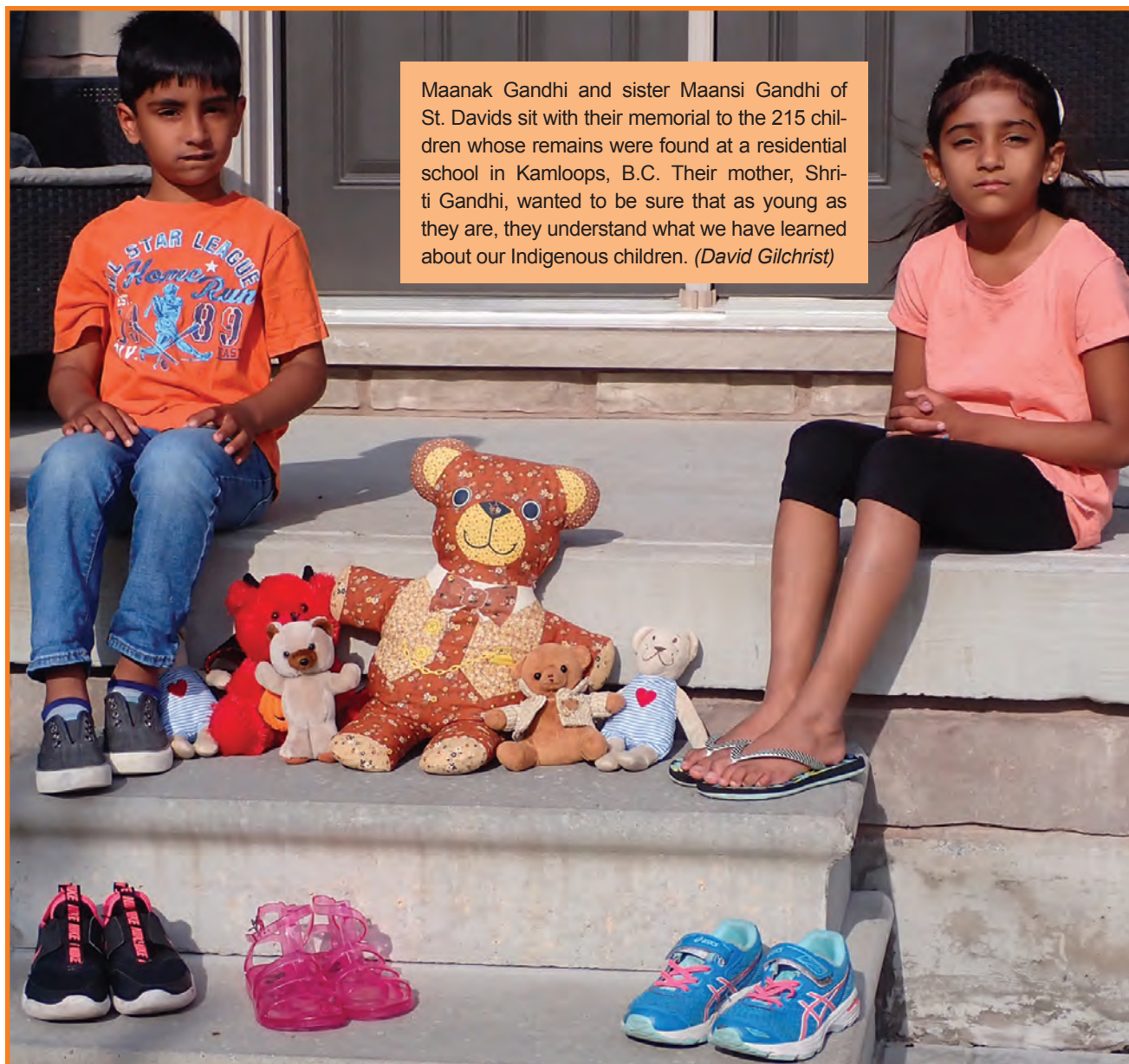




New neighbour for NOTL, new vp for Brock
page 10

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Maanak Gandhi and sister Maansi Gandhi of St. Davids sit with their memorial to the 215 children whose remains were found at a residential school in Kamloops, B.C. Their mother, Shriti Gandhi, wanted to be sure that as young as they are, they understand what we have learned about our Indigenous children. (David Gilchrist)

Communities in Bloom approves gateway design

Penny Coles
The Local

Gerry Kowalchuk and the town's Communities in Bloom committee have taken a huge step forward toward creating a gateway to the Old Town designed to leave a lasting impression on all who see it.

It's a project he began working on about two years ago, hoping to gain town support for rejuvenating the sign and flower beds at the end of Mississagua Street. After the Communities in Bloom committee gave him the go-ahead and formed a subcommittee, a landscape architecture firm was chosen, and work began in earnest on a design for the project.

The subcommittee, which includes two town councillors, along with Kevin Turcotte, the town's manager of parks and recreation, and J.B. Hopkins, parks supervisor, working with the Sefarian Design Group from Toronto and senior land-

scape architect Brad Smith, whittled eight conceptual drawings down to one final design for the gateway. And recently received unanimous approval of their conceptual drawing from the town's Communities in Bloom committee.

The next step is support from the town's Municipal Heritage Committee, expected later this month, and then approval from council in July.

The town has recently been discussing a redesign of that intersection to control and slow down traffic, hopefully also redirecting vehicles away from Niagara Boulevard and the Chautauqua neighbourhood, says Kowalchuk. It would include a bump-out at the intersection, with a three-way stop, and the elimination of the left-turn lane.

The final conceptual design chosen by the gateway project's working group includes the extra landscaping area the bump-out

Continued on page 3

St. Davids families mourn our lost children

Penny Coles
The Local

Shriti Gandhi wanted to do more.

But what could she do? She wanted to be sure her children understood what had happened to the 215 children buried on the property of the largest of the residential schools in Canada, this particular one in Kamloops, B.C.

The children she, like all of us, was shocked to hear about as the horrific news unfolded

about the discovery of their remains.

Gandhi posted a notice in her Cannery Park neighbourhood of St. Davids Monday, asking for others to join her in creating a memorial, an opportunity to mourn the children, all the children taken from the families, and some of them buried far from home, outside of their own communities and apart from their loved ones.

"I'm not sure many people will see it," she says, hoping the poster would encourage others to

put out teddy bears, or shoes, as other communities were doing, to mourn the little ones who were not returned to their families.

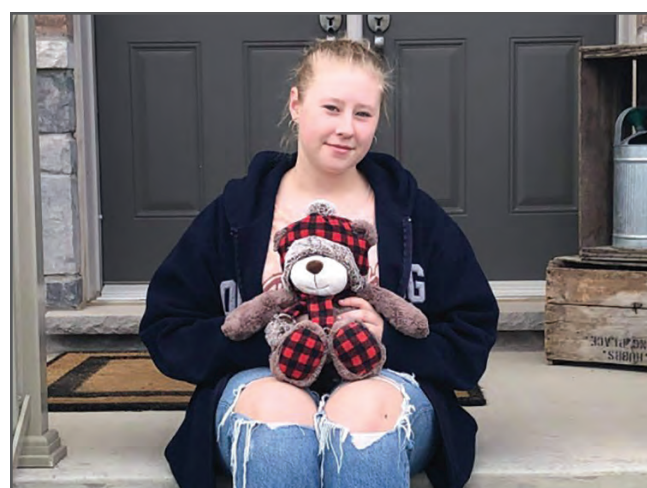
"I'm a mom, and this is the most I can do, to try to teach my kids," she says of her eight and five year old.

Just as kids have a pink shirt day to raise awareness about bullying, they have an orange shirt day as a reminder that every child matters, to raise awareness of residential schools and all the experience of children who attended them, she says.

"I'm not sure how much they talk about it in school," says Gandhi.

"Every year since my kids have been at St. Davids they've had an orange shirt day, and we've had a conversation with our kids. It can be pretty graphic, and upsetting, but I don't want them to think it's just like a crazy hat day or another fun day. We talk a lot about anti-racism. It's really front-of-mind for us."

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Sydney Robbs, 15, mourns with her neighbours.

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Rise in Indian variant feared in Niagara

Penny Coles
The Local

While the number of daily COVID cases continues to decline, Niagara and across the province, Niagara's acting chief medical officer of health is worried the variant from India is on the rise in the region.

At a virtual press conference Monday, Dr. Mustafa Hirji explained the province screens to identify variants of concern, but has no test for the Indian variant. He is concerned some of the new daily cases may be that variant, with their number being underestimated.

"I think we are a little blind to what is happening, because we can't screen for it," said Hirji.

The B1617 variant spreads more quickly than others, and causes more serious illness, he added.

Also worrisome is that studies are showing the B1617 variant is more resistant to at least the first dose of two of the vaccines used in Canada, the AstraZeneca and the Pfizer, he said, making getting the second dose as quickly as possible even

more important.

In the province and in Niagara, new COVID cases are trending downward, as are hospitalizations, he said. Admissions to intensive care units are not falling as quickly, but they are decreasing.

His fear is that while the provincial reopening schedule may seem safe based on that good news, lifting the lockdown might be premature.

"We need to be very focused on being sure we are prepared for that, before we see a repeat of the third wave with variants taking over."

Instead he suggests waiting to see what happens with this variant before lifting the stay-at-home order and progressing through the reopening steps that are to follow.

That would also allow time for public health to get back on track with its contact tracing, which it has been unable to keep up with the daily numbers of new cases.

Hirji used the U.K. as an example of what could happen in Ontario. It lifted what appeared to be a successful lockdown

when cases decreased to a level that looked safe for reopening, only to see cases rise again from the B1617 variant, due to its contact with India.

"Often what occurs in the U.K. comes to Ontario a month later," he said.

"This is a warning cloud on the horizon for us."

Hirji said the percentage of test positivity is coming down in Niagara, which should be good news, but he is concerned it means that people with mild symptoms are not getting tested.

He urges anyone with even mild symptoms to be tested to help with contact tracing and reduce any further spread of infection.

His other key message is the importance of a second vaccination dose, so that everybody is protected against B1617, thus preventing another wave as a result of the variant.

On Monday he said there were still "a few thousand" appointments available for second doses in Niagara, but he expected they would fill up quickly.

"The second dose is going to be critical."

The region has the capacity to vaccinate up to 10,000 doses a day, but is only receiving enough vaccine to do about 5,500 to 6,000 day.

Pharmacies and primary care physicians are receiving some vaccine, but not enough to do as many vaccinations as they could, he said.

Shaw Festival looking for support with 'fairness issue'

Penny Coles
The Local

Along with other arts organizations, the Shaw Festival is asking the province government to reduce reopening restrictions on the performing arts.

On a post on social media, and in an open letter from the festival distributed through the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce newsletter Monday, the Shaw is asking for fairness with other organizations.

The Facebook post says the provincial government's reopening plan is "a dead-end for performing arts, outdoor venues, festivals, and events."

"After a year of shuttered venues, lost revenue streams and amongst the most severe levels

of unemployment compared to any other industry in Canada, we are ready to safely reopen our stages for artists and audiences. But the current guidelines would leave arts and culture behind, denying arts lovers the equal access that restaurants, sports, and religious services will be allowed to offer," the Shaw Festival Facebook post says.

The Shaw is calling on the government to allow them to resume rehearsals in the first step of reopening plan, so casts and crews will be ready when performances can begin in Step 2.

The post also asks the government to allow filming inside performance spaces during Step 1, which will begin when at least 60 percent of adults have received at least

one dose of a vaccination, and COVID-19 daily case numbers, hospitalizations and intensive care admissions continue to decline, so theatres can at least offer digital content.

The Shaw is also requesting capacity limits for outdoor and indoor theatres based on square footage, "so we can maximize safe audience access in different sized venues."

These are accommodations that have already been granted to industries like sport, film and television and meetings and events, it says.

Under Step 1 as it stands now up to 10 people can gather outdoors, outdoor dining will open up to four people per table.

Continued on page 4



Celebrating with Pride

The Pride flag was raised at town hall Tuesday to recognize Pride Month in Niagara, with Darryl Dyball, one of the directors of Pride Niagara, joining NOTL CAO Marnie Cluckie and Lord Mayor Betty Disero. NOTL and all Niagara municipalities raised the Pride flag, along with the Niagara Regional Police Service, Brock University, Niagara College, the District School Board of Niagara, and the Niagara Catholic District School Board. (Town of NOTL photo)

Niagara Health has some second dose appointments

Penny Coles
The Local

As of 8 a.m. on Monday, May 31, individuals turning 80 and over in 2021 were eligible to book an earlier second-dose appointment at Niagara Health's Seymour-Hannah arena clinic, as well as other clinics or pharmacies in the region.

This follows the provincial government's announcement last week that Ontario is accelerating the rollout of second doses.

"The vaccination clinic

team is prepared to respond quickly to support the provincial government's goal of a two-dose summer," said Linda Boich, executive vice president at Niagara Health, overseeing its vaccination program.

"We've worked hard over the last three months to administer more than 133,000 first and second doses at our Seymour-Hannah arena vaccination clinic. We are eager to move to the accelerated second-dose interval beginning with people aged 80-plus and moving through the se-

quencing based on provincial guidelines."

Those eligible can rebook their second dose for an earlier date at any mass immunization clinic through the provincial booking system at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/> or by calling 1-833-943-3900. Pharmacies and primary healthcare clinics are also offering second doses.

Availability of appointments is based on vaccine supply, and second doses can be administered at a different location than the first dose.

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Plan still requires details, final approval

Continued from page 1

would provide, but could also work without it if the town decides not to go ahead with their plan for the intersection, he says.

In addition to a stone wall, one of the features is an obelisk structure that will symbolize the original lighthouse that was on the spot where Fort Mississauga now stands, says Kowalchuk. Hopkins discovered a lighthouse stood on that site in the early 1800s, before the fort was built, and although the gateway structure isn't intended to replicate the lighthouse, it represents a symbol of what was there, he says.

In presenting the preferred concept to the Communities in Bloom committee, Smith explained the chosen design would incorporate a symbolic, eye-catching representation of NOTL, with beautiful gardens and stonework. It would offer a horizontal approach with a low, 40-foot Queenston Quarry limestone wall, the town crest and town name incor-

porated in it, with an obelisk structure of granite, about 25 feet tall, representing the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes. It would be easily seen coming into town, creating a striking first impression, and would include a strong, intricate lighting plan to make sure it's just as striking at night, said Smith.

The sign that now advertises events in town, just off to the side of the existing gateway, will be relocated, says Turcotte. "That sign would detract from the feature we're trying to create, so we felt it might be better living somewhere else."

The bump-out and three-way stop, he says, would allow people to stop, enjoy the feature that is being created, and also pick up the sign that directs them to turn left to the QEW. The redesign of the intersection was suggested by the Friends of Ryerson Park, to alleviate some of the congestion they see during the tourist season in the Chautauqua area and on its narrow streets.

The whole area of the bump-out becomes part of the

gateway feature, which would also include some plantings and beautification on the two corners on the other side of the road, and could create "a smaller plaza space" to allow for those who want to stop and photograph the new gateway, explained Smith.

Kowalchuk, who moved to NOTL a little more than a decade ago, wanted to undertake a project that would reflect the love he and his wife have for their new home. He says he is grateful for how his life has unfolded, and as a way of paying forward to help others, in 2014, he set up a family fund with the Niagara Community Foundation. The fund, which he manages with one of his daughters, was created to help people in need achieve their goals, but Kowalchuk says he began some time ago to think about a donation he could bequeath to the town, and decided he'd like to see it happen while he's still alive, and can be involved in the project.

His first step, in the fall of 2019, was to ask Lord Mayor



This concept for the Mississauga/Queen Street intersection was approved at last week's meeting of the Communities in Bloom committee. It is just a conceptual drawing, stresses Gerry Kowalchuk, not a working document. It still has a long way to go for final approval, with a much more detailed design. (Screenshot from Communities in Bloom committee meeting)

Betty Disero to stop by for a chat at his Rye Street home, where he briefly outlined his idea for a rejuvenation of the existing entrance to the Old Town, making it clear he was offering \$250,000 to fund the project.

Disero set up a meeting with some town staff, and the project moved forward, following a suggestion that Kowalchuk make a presentation to the town's Communities in Bloom committee, which he did, in December of 2019.

In January, 2020, councillors agreed with a CIB committee recommendation in favour of the project, to be financed by the Gerald Kowalchuk Family Fund. They also approved the formation of the Queen/Mississauga Project, the CIB sub-committee, to create terms of reference and a work plan for the site, which led to the hiring

of a landscaping company and work on a conceptual design.

The drawings that were presented and approved by the Communities in Bloom committee, Kowalchuk stresses, are conceptual, not finalized, working drawings that would show details, such as the kinds of plantings.

He also wanted to stress that he has "high aspirations" for the project that would provide a gateway to the community, with landscaping excellence, and something to be proud of for generations to come.

The tentative timeline set out for construction was originally to begin in September, with a second phase to include planting next spring, and completion by June, in time for the next influx of tourists. With delays because of COVID and a desire "to get this right," that

has been changed, with construction to be tendered in the new year, work commencing as soon as possible after that, and planting in the spring, with completion targeted for June.



Gerry Kowalchuk is pleased with the design approved by the Communities in Bloom committee. It still must pass approval of the municipal heritage committee and town council. (Photo supplied)

Cannery Park neighbours join in mourning children

Continued from page 1

She and her husband were both born and raised in Canada, of East Indian parents.

She has recently joined the town's inclusivity and diversity

committee discussions, she says.

"There needs to be an informed conversation about our feelings of what it's like to live in Niagara-on-the-Lake."

And it's important to her to be part of that discussion, she

adds, to ensure the town she has chosen to raise her family is aware and inclusive.

She's lived in St. Davids for five years, "and I want to be sure this is a community that welcomes everyone. It's definitely top of mind for more people than ever. And today is an opportunity to show our support, to recognize what has happened in the past, and to engage our children, to talk to them and be sure they understand. We don't know a lot about this part of our history and we don't talk enough about it. We need to learn the whole of our history, not just the good parts."

It was a small group of neighbours who joined her memorial, but it was enough for her children to understand. It was a start.



Some Cannery Park neighbours joined the Gandhi family in mourning the children who died in the Kamloops, B.C. residential school, including Bharati and Shrikant Gandhi, who left shoes on their porch, and Leonardo Salvatore, 2, who took a moment to sit with his teddy bears. (Photos supplied)

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Significant historic building to get structural overhaul

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Surrounded by its picket fence, it sits as a time capsule, overlooking Butler's Barracks and the Commons. The Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters has played a role in over 200 years of military and community history.

One of the first buildings constructed as part of the Butler's Barracks complex just after the War of 1812, the historic residence is currently undergoing a substantial renovation.

Chris Zoetewey, Parks Canada technical officer (project officer) for the National Historic Sites in Southwestern Ontario, says just under 50 per cent of the building is still in its original state.

"There was a fairly substantial renovation done on it," he says, "which replaced the roof systems, and that was done during the 1980s when Parks Canada was given the property by the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake."

Budgeted at about \$800,000, the current work is part of a series of federal infrastructure investment projects initiated in 2015 at Butler's Barracks National Historic Site. Zoetewey says that the program has invested a total of over \$13 million in Niagara historical sites since that time.

Preserving the historic ma-

terials is an important priority for the current project. As much historic fabric as possible will be retained or reinforced throughout the work being done on the chimneys, kitchen walls, floors and foundation, the roofing system, and the siding, windows and shutters. As well, Parks Canada will be replacing the porch, making improvements to the drainage around the building's exterior, and upgrading utilities.

The Parks Canada website lauds the Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters for its aesthetic design, a great example of an early 19th-century Georgian-styled frame cottage. Its balanced, well-proportioned composition with little ornamentation represents a functional, efficient response to the prevailing conditions where local materials were readily used. This can be seen, for example in the extension that joins the originally detached kitchen to the main structure.

Zoetewey, who grew up in Niagara-on-the-Lake, explains that the building was used for administration.

"A commissariat officer was in charge of doing all the purchasing," says Zoetewey, "sort of a logistics person for the army. He would be buying all the foods, the bedding and everything else. It was his own personal space and office at the same time."

Acting as receiver and signing for deliveries would have been part of the commissariat officer's responsibilities. From his central location he would have had a great view of all the other activity on the base.

"When you look at the map of what is now what you see as Butler's Barracks," he explains, "there were a number of buildings around there. You see the Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters but you also see another building beside it, in the area where the Legion is now. That was the Commissariat Sergeant's Quarters. Between the two of them, they had their own staff, and they took care of getting everything that the military needed."

The historic building witnessed the training of thousands of troops throughout the 1800s to the First and Second World Wars. That's when the open landscape known as the Commons was converted into a "tent city" as part of Camp Niagara. The building became the Officer's Club and photos show the officers enjoying the grounds of this serene setting. There is even a drink recipe scrawled on the chimney wall next to the former location of their bar.

The historic building also played a huge role in the connection between the military and the local community. From 1882 through the First

World War, when Camp Niagara wasn't being used by the military, the building served as the clubhouse for the Niagara Golf Club, originally located on the site. And some locals have fond memories of dances and other social events there during its time as a community centre for local teens in the 1950s and 1960s. When Parks Canada took over the Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters in 1983, it was restored to its 1853 appearance.

This current project presents the unique challenge of rehabilitating the structure, while respecting the heritage character of the iconic building.

In 2010, Parks Canada conducted a structural assessment of the Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters to seek options as to how the interior could be finished based on potential uses of the structure and grounds.

Plans to restore the building were slated to begin in 2019. After careful review, it was determined that the original refurbishment plan would result in the loss of too much historic fabric. Parks Canada went back to work with the consultant and, together, developed a revised plan that would ensure the structural integrity of the Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters, while preserving as much historic material as possible.

When it was determined that the original wall timbers



the historic junior commissariat building while respecting its heritage character. (Mike Balsom)

should be preserved, the solution was to install new "sister" beams to provide additional support and ensure the proper stability over the long term.

As well, some contamination was discovered in some of the materials used in previous work on the structure. For structures from this era, it was common to use materials such as asbestos and lead paint, which had to be removed before the current refurbishment work could continue.

Zoetewey promises the restoration work will be sympathetic to the original building materials and techniques. The roof, for instance, will be re-created using traditional methods, with cedar shakes on a batten support system.

Work on the project is expected to last until some time in October.

"There are some pressures

on this project," Zoetewey explains. "We have COVID to look at, we have to abide by those regulations. We're limited on staff. We're meeting those challenges. Work is progressing at a pretty steady rate."

Once everything is complete, the Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters will have further potential in connecting visitors and locals to the important role this national historic site played in Canadian history.

"Parks Canada will work with stakeholders and possibly the town and other individuals," Zoetewey tells The Local, "to sort of look at the building again and see what the future can hold for it, for the town and Parks Canada. It will be similar in interpretation to Fort Mississauga. It might be open for special occasions, when resources and staffing allow."

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Shaw asking for support

Continued from page 2

Outdoor religious services can be offered with limited capacities, and day camps and campsites will be allowed to reopen.

An open letter released by the festival Monday says "the dropping COVID case-counts, coupled with the opportunity to work outdoors and online, should offer a light at the end of the tunnel for performing arts organizations, outdoor venues, festivals and events."

Instead, "as it stands, the government's recently announced Roadmap to Reopening only offers a dead-end to the performing arts at a time when we are perhaps needed most. And we need your help. In the coming days and weeks, Ontario senior officials will meet to determine the specific regulatory details of the Roadmap to Reopen, including the offices of Chief Medical Officer Dr. David Williams, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, and

public health officials."

The letter says the current guidelines will "leave arts and culture behind, denying arts lovers the equal access that restaurants, sports, and religious services will be allowed to offer."

Provincial decisions and changes expected "in the next few days will determine the fate of our stages for the next year. If we are treated with parity to equivalent peer sectors, we can look forward to a summer of outdoor performance and a robust theatre season next year. But if we are denied equitable reopening, our stages will remain dark and our artists will remain out of work for many months to come."

The letter calls for Shaw supporters to make their voices heard, demanding fairness for arts and culture in Ontario as part of the #FairnessForArts-ON campaign that Ontario performing arts organizations have launched.

"We are not asking for special treatment," the letter says, "only to be afforded the same reopening terms that equivalent peer industries have been given already."

The letter, signed "Your friends at the Shaw," and the Shaw Festival Facebook post suggest supporters visit canadianlivemusic.ca/fairnessforartson/ to send letters to the Premier, Ministers, MPPs, municipal leaders and representatives.



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EDITORIAL

Action, not words, will lead to healing

This week, we have watched and listened in horror and shock to the heart-wrenching news that the remains of 215 children were discovered at a former Residential School in Kamloops, B.C.

The news is all around us, and inside us. There is no escaping the horror of what was done in our country, to these beautiful Indigenous children, who would now be the elders in their communities.

We knew this, that there were residential schools, that Indigenous children were taken from their families. We've heard the stories

of those who survived, and we may think we know what that history has done to the Indigenous people in our country and in our community. But we can't really know, unless they were our children, or our ancestors.

In living rooms across the country, adults — parents and grandparents — were asking each other, what happened to these poor children? Were they sick? How did they die? How could they have just disappeared? Why were they buried so far from their communities, their families, the people who loved them?

Imagine a mom trying to explain to her children what they have heard. What child could possibly understand?

Yet here, in our community and across our country, parents trying to understand themselves were having to explain to their children what can't be explained. That this country of ours, of which we were so proud, allowed this to happen, and then acted as if it hadn't happened at all. That some of the leaders in our country believed Indigenous children would be better, somehow, if they were taken from the families they loved, to

become part of a society and culture that was not theirs.

The studies have been done. The reports have been written. And then nothing. Until now, when we are shocked, heart-broken, angry at those who turned away, did nothing. And we know it's just the beginning. There could be thousands

more. There are calls to do all that must be done, and that we are assured will be done.

At the Niagara Regional Native Centre, a fire was lit Monday to remember those children, songs were sung, drums were drummed. There were no words that could heal, but there was a community to gather and

mourn together. At least there was that.

There are no words to make this better. There must be action. So that sometime in our future we can explain to our children that finally, something, at least, was done.

Penny Coles
The Local

The last leg is the hardest, so this must be the last leg

The last leg is the hardest. We must be on our last leg, because it isn't getting any easier. But we are getting there. The finish line is in sight.

The Friends of Fort George announced its second Canada Day pandemic plan this week. And although Canada Day is always a great celebration, this time, the thought of it seems sad. It's usually one of the best days of the year, celebrating with friends and family, that enormous, delicious Canada Day cake provided by Willow Cakes & Pastries, the party in Simcoe Park with the sea of red T-shirts, the pride we feel as a nation . . .

Maybe not so much this year.

However, if the last leg is the hardest, and this is as bad as it gets, hey, it's not so bad after all. We can get through it.

There will be no celebrations at Fort George, but it

sounds as if we'll be allowed smallish family gatherings, and that is indeed a reason to be grateful, something to look forward to.

We're on the cusp of summer, we're starting to enjoy some warm, sunny days, gardens are being planted, and those small steps are along a path to somewhat normal. Family members are being allowed visits with their loved ones in long-term care, we're getting a glimpse of smallish outdoor gatherings, there will be some gradual reopenings, some sports, some Sunday morning services. We are still being asked to wear masks and/or physical distance outside, but that actually feels pretty normal, and some of us are anxious to get our second doses of vaccinations, which are not that far off.

Just thinking about enjoying some of those activ-

ities, being able to do some of what we've been missing, feels pretty good.

If it's the hardest leg, it's because it's been a long haul, and we're tired, so very tired of it all. But the finish line is not so far off, and we can help carry each other along to the finish, with kindness, with encouragement, with help in any way that's needed. We support our friends and neighbours, our local businesses, and each other.

Because that is what we do in Canada. We're tough, we're taught to do what is right, and that means finishing this last leg on our feet, with pride when we look behind us at what we've accomplished.

We've said it before, and we'll say it again, with conviction. Together, we can do this. Together, we are doing this.

Penny Coles
The Local



Auchterlonie on Astrology

Bill Auchterlonie
Special to The Local

Welcome to Auchterlonie on Astrology, a look at the week of June 3 through June 9, including the Sun making sweet with Saturn, and Venus getting a boost from Jupiter.

On my podcast you can also find out how to obtain your own personal birth chart, including a forecast for the year ahead. The podcast is at www.auchterlonieonastrology.ca.

Now, the week ahead:

Thursday, June 3: You be nimble, you be quick as Saturn in Aquarius is in perfect harmony with the Sun today. This makes for long-lasting changes for the better. And Venus in Cancer gets a boost from Jupiter in Pisces, making for improved financial realities, and other relationships too. Raphael Nadal turns 35 today. One of the greatest tennis players of all time, he has won 20 grand slam singles titles.

Friday, June 4: The Moon in Aries is friends with just about everything in the sky, so in spite of being super im-

pulsive, there is a lot of forgiveness in the Cosmos today. It was June 4, 1973 that Don Wetzel was granted the U.S. patent rights on a gizmo that would change the world. Don's invention? The ATM – or Automated Teller Machine.

Saturday, June 5: Today Mars in Cancer is exactly opposite retrograde Pluto in Capricorn. It's like that old jazz tune, *I Can't get Started*. Best not to push it and wait for better times ahead. Today 'Joe Who' turns 82. Joe Clark was Canada's 16th prime minister, from 1979 until early 1980.

Sunday, June 6: At 1:46 a.m., the Moon leaves impulsive Aries and settles into Taurus for approximately two and a half days. Today is slower paced, and easier going with gifts from the gods that put smiles on many faces. It was June 6, 1891 that Canada's first prime minister, John A. Macdonald, left the Earth plane after suffering a stroke at age 76.

Monday, June 7: A restless and sleepless night is not conducive to a happy start to the week, but that's likely

what we've got. A stubborn day asks for patience and honesty. This is the week of Canadian prime ministers. Today John Turner, our 17th, turns 92.

Tuesday, June 8: What a difference a day makes. Maudlin Monday gives way to Terrific Tuesday, with generous and sexy feelings all around. It was June 8, 1984 that Canada's Ivan Reitman released *Ghostbusters*, his action/comedy film starring Bill Murray and Dan Aykroyd.

Wednesday, June 9: So far, this week is like a yo-yo. One day up. Then down. Then up. Unfortunately, today is on the downside, with tensions and stresses exacerbated by worry. Be honest. And breathe. Tomorrow at sunrise is a new Moon with a lunar eclipse. We get to see it starting at about 5 a.m. Today Marty McFly, Alex Keaton and Michael J. Fox all turn 60 years old.

And that's AonA for this week. Next time it's the new Moon, lunar eclipse and more.

Until then, shine on!



View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

Meg Ryan and Hugh Jackman star in *Kate and Leopold* (Prime, 2001), the ultimate fairy tale. A story

where true love conquers time, class and credibility. It is an hour plus of all things beautiful, hopeful, and impossible.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who

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



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

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COMMENT

Update from Lord Mayor: stay safe reopening



Lord Mayor Betty Disero
Special to The Local

So here is some good news:

We're seeing more people getting their COVID-19 vaccinations, case numbers continue to decrease, the provincial stay-at-home order is slated to expire on June 2, and the province is preparing to launch its three-step recovery roadmap starting June 14 (pending achievement of its vaccination targets).

This is, no doubt, a time we have all been very much looking forward to, a time when we can start taking cautious steps toward regaining some semblance of normalcy in our lives. We can see the light at the end of the tunnel, this time, not just because of fingers crossed, but because of the vaccine and the overwhelming number of people getting it.

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, we face a unique challenge

in that we are a desirable and well-loved destination for visitors. This is a characteristic for which we have always been and continue to be proud, but we have already seen an increase in the number of visitors coming into our town to experience its rich heritage and breathtaking beauty, and we expect this will increase further once the province starts to ease restrictions.

If you're like me, the prospect of large crowds pouring into town is at least a little bit anxiety-inducing. I am thrilled that we are headed in the right direction. But the last thing I want is for us to have to take steps backwards.

As of June 2, we will be leaving the stay-at-home order period and entering into a transition period. Transitions are challenging by their nature. The messaging from every level of government will be coming fast and furious. It may be confusing. For this reason, we must do everything we can as individuals to protect ourselves and each other.

Keep a distance from those outside of your household. Plan your schedules to avoid areas during times

when they are typically busier. Always wear a mask indoors and outdoors whenever physical distancing is a challenge. Wash and sanitize your hands frequently, and don't touch your face.

If you have a COVID-related concern or wish to report contraventions of emergency orders, please email covidcomplaints@notl.com. The town will continue to do its part to protect the health and safety of the public, using every available avenue to educate about provincial regulations and public health guidelines. However, our staff resources may be stretched even further, making it difficult for them to keep up. While the staff cannot be everywhere all the time, they will do the best they can to respond to inquiries and concerns.

As always, remember to be patient with yourself and with one another. In these times of heightened stress, it is more important than ever to be kind to one another.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: we can and will get through this together.

Thank you, Niagara-on-the-Lake, for your continued cooperation.

Local LETTERS

Thanks for support for St. Vincent

Dear Friends and Residents of NOTL,

My family and I want to express our profound gratitude to you for the unbelievable donations which you have given for St. Vincent.

Your kind and generous support for the victims of the La Soufriere eruption

has really touched our hearts. This amazing generosity is allowing us to ship nine containers packed with food, cleaning supplies, baby items and water to help so many hurting people. Without your contribution, we would have not accomplished this undertaking. These items will be distributed to the needy and hurting residents of my village.

God bless you and thank you for your support and showing how much you care.

The Fletcher Family



Family friend Jayden Polgrabia, La Fleur Fletcher and her son Akeem show just some of the goods that have been sent to St. Vincent, donated by very generous locals, along with cash donations to help pay for goods and shipping. Fletcher purchased the empty barrels in St. Catharines and packed them with all kinds of goods, including food, toiletries and cleaning supplies. The barrels were cheaper for shipping than wooden crates, she said. (Photos supplied)



Letters! We want letters!

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



ATTENTION NOTL HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY GRADUATES AND FAMILIES!!

We would love to help celebrate your 2021 graduation in The *Local* in our June 30th issue.

Deadline will be Monday, June 21 at noon.

This is once again a challenging year for celebrations, and we would like to make it a little bit better by sharing your accomplishments at no charge — *this is our gift to you.*



If you would like to see your photo in the paper, please email it along with your name and school name to:

karen@notllocal.com

Ode to Purple Chariot, for its role in nature adventures

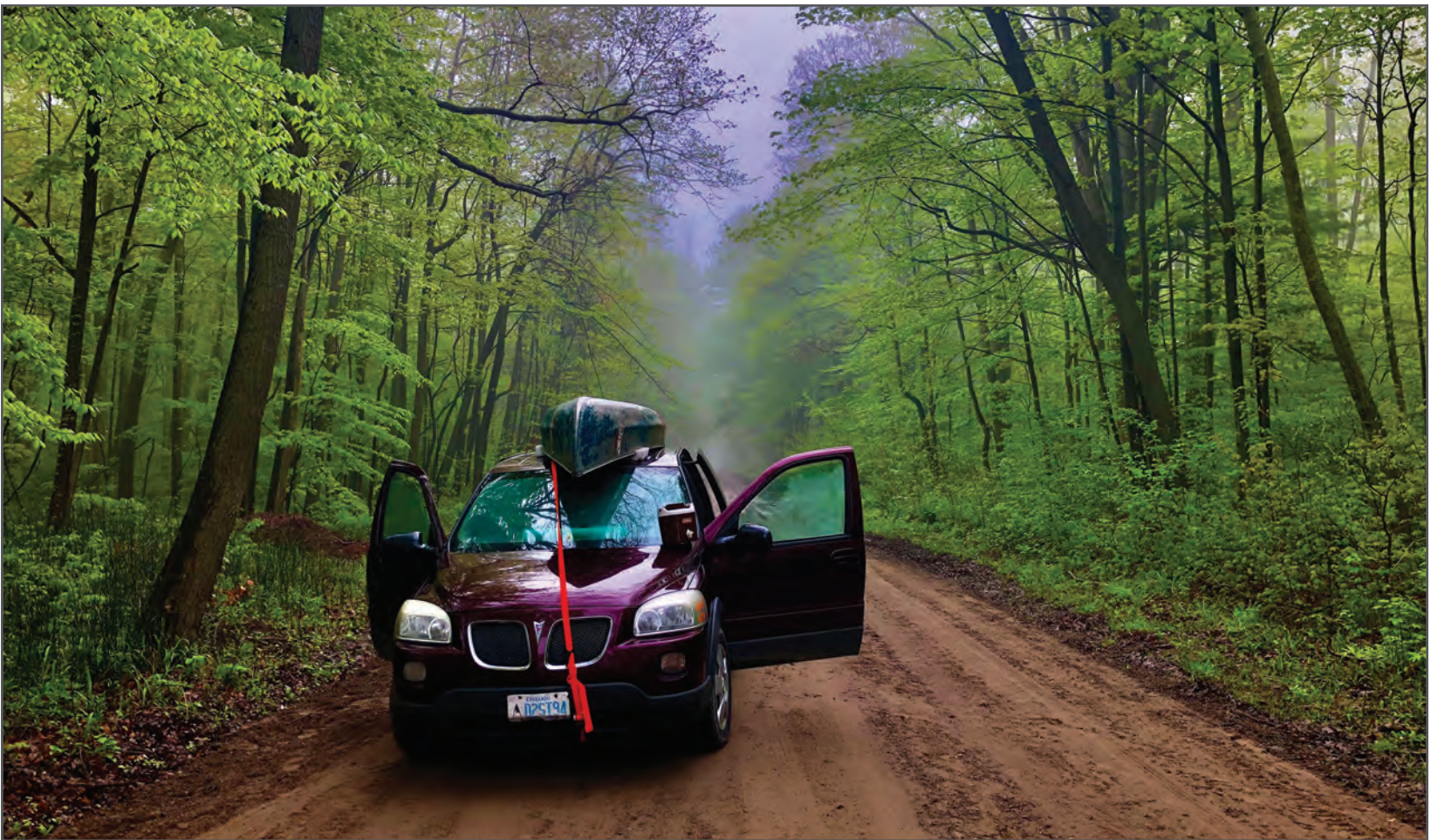


Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

It might seem unusual to write a nature article about my personal vehicle, the maroon Pontiac Montana. The ultimate family van — the too-typical vessel filled with children on the way to soccer games and school (well, when both of those are open again).

After the May long weekend's canoeing event in the Virgil Conservation Area, I felt an appreciable affinity for this vehicle all over again, which doesn't owe me a penny. I wanted to explain how this van has gotten an outdoors enthusiast like myself into, and out of, countless nature adventures over the years. So, here's an ode to the Purple Chariot.

The van may be the most commonplace type of vehicle for typical households. Funny enough though, I remember (and miss) Tuesday night hockey in Virgil with the guys. My van would pull into the arena, dwarfed by a sea of



The Purple Chariot may look like a family van, but with a canoe on its roof it's ready for a camping adventure, no tent required. (Owen Bjorgan)

pickup trucks, and humorously sticking out like a sore thumb. I would always joke how a van is essentially just a pickup truck with a permanent cover. Of course, I'm not being serious. Or am I?

I hope this article inspires any van owners, especially those with children, to make the most of getting to natural areas with this ubiquitous vehicle.

One thing that a lot of my outdoorsy friends have a laugh at is regarding my canoe loading technique. I don't have a roof rack or anything of that support

on top. So, I slide the giant aluminum canoe up on top from the back of the van. There are two foam blocks attached to the front of the canoe, so if I play my angles right and don't throw my back out, I can slide the nose of the canoe right to the front of the van. Some-

times, I tip up a little too far, and I hear said canoe nose grind the roof of the van for a moment. So, there are some appreciable linear scratches up there, the same way the Wisconsin ice sheet dragged its way across Niagara Peninsula 12,000 years ago and created the

Niagara Escarpment. For a van that just keeps on giving, and has been worked beyond its duties, who even looks at the top of someone else's vehicle anyway? I'll trade aesthetics

Continued on page 9

Special Announcement

Helen Hendriks is turning 90
Tuesday June 8th



Help make
it extra special
for Helen.

We welcome you
to walk by or drive by
for Best Wishes

2-5 pm

788 Green Street,
Niagara-on-the-Lake.



Erwin and Dorothy Wiens are thrilled to announce the marriage of their daughter
Brianna Wiens to *Daniel Harley*
on Friday, May 21. The happy couple are now residing in Stratford.



Getting canoe on top a much-practised routine

Continued from page 8

for quality outdoor fun, any day.

I then pick a random beach or bath towel. The most recent one has a psychedelic-looking jaguar face on it. It will do! I fold and layer it like some kind of homemade pasta dish in whatever parking space I'm at, and place it under the back end of the canoe. The canoe at this point is upside down, of course, so I then use my head, and press up on the seat with my skull. This effectively lifts the canoe and frees up my hands, so I can slide the specially folded towel underneath and begin to clamp the canoe down tight.

I sling the straps over the mid-section and weave them through the van side doors, so they only effectively can open halfway now. But that's okay, as I can still crawl in and out of these spaces to jump into bed after a long day of canoeing, hiking, or biking.

Yes, the bike fits back there too. Even two kayaks are possible.

Then there's the bed, which typically is composed of two thermal mats, an inflatable mattress, and several blankets. I find if you pile on the blankets, you can keep your body heat contained inside both the bed and the van itself. I have pillows, a cup holder, and an electric lantern hanging from the little hooks most people use for clothing. My clothing might be particularly dank after a day of exploring, so it can air out on top of the canoe overnight perhaps. I can lay back, read a book, and listen to the frogs while dozing off.

There's also the off-road abilities, and inabilities, of the Purple Chariot. Sometimes, the lines blur between these categories. I don't have the clearance, torque, or robust suspension of a pickup truck or SUV. However, I push



Owen Bjorgan's Purple Chariot takes him on adventures from NOTL's main street to many different natural environments. (Owen Bjorgan)

the van through the sandy backroads of Norfolk County, the winter highways of Muskoka, and the gravel of Niagara's country lanes. On the other end of the spectrum, you might

catch me on the main street of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

You can only treat a van like a truck for so long, though. The underbelly of the vehicle has a shoe string that has held up a door

guard since October, 2020.

The ultimate Canadian tool, known as duct tape, is seen holding together other variables on the vehicle. The van still continues to do epic road trips and can't

seem to lock itself down. There is simply too much nature to explore out there, and I am nearly as grateful for my van as I am these very green spaces it takes me to.



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Varied background combines security, policy

New Brock vp settling into new NOTL home

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Spotting a deer in the backyard of their Old Town home this week, Ken Chan and his husband Warren were quite certain they weren't living in downtown Toronto any longer.

When Chan was named Brock University's new vice-president, administration, back in January, the couple began hunting for a home in their favourite spot in the Niagara Region. The move here two weeks ago brings them closer to Warren's mother in Grimsby, and also allows for the more relaxed, yet active lifestyle they enjoy.

"I've been exploring the trails in Niagara-on-the-Lake both on foot, and on bicycle," says the 46-year-old Chan. "Niagara-on-the-Lake has always been one of the communities that has always been familiar to us. I'm a history buff. It's one of the communities that is seminal to the history of Canada. I'm also a fan of tourism and culture. Niagara-on-the-Lake offers all of that."

Since their arrival, the avid runner has marvelled at the opportunity to take in his new environment. His Twitter account (@thekenchan) is full of great photos of Fort Mississauga, Queen Street and the Voices of Freedom Park. The self-described newspaper junkie has also posted shots snapped while relaxing at the waterfront leafing through The NOTL Local.

"Just walking Queen Street, and the barracks, you just realize the history and the heritage of the surroundings," Chan says. "That's something that is so appealing. We are so fortunate to be able to live in such a community."

Upon assuming his new role at Brock on Tuesday, June 1, he says his first order of business is to get to know the people at the university, as well as business and community leaders in Niagara.

As VP, administration, Chan is responsible for providing leadership for the finance and information technology departments. He will also oversee campus security, infrastructure and facilities, dining services and residences.

"It's quite a diverse portfolio," he tells The Local.

Diversity is a word that applies perfectly to the career path that brought Chan to Niagara. In 1997, after completing a masters degree in business administration at City University of Seattle, Chan worked as an immigration officer for a year, before being hired by Peel Regional Police

in 1999.

"I started out as a patrol officer," he says, "then spent a year in Drugs, then a little over a year in Homicide. Then, from there I went to the province, working for a cabinet minister."

Chan spent more than four years as a senior advisor and policy director for the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, before moving to the U.K. in 2008, where he worked for two years before returning to the Ontario government. During his stint overseas, he served as then-London mayor Boris Johnson's policing and community security advisor.

"It was really one of those roles that brought together my time as a police officer and my experience as a policy advisor," he says.

Of Johnson, the current British Prime Minister and a polarizing figure to many, Chan says, "what you see on TV is what you get in person. He certainly has a background in the media. Whether he is speaking to five people or 500, he's the same."

Chan also spent time in the biotech field, and has experience in the non-profit sector as well. From 2011 to 2015 he was vice-president, advocacy, research and healthcare for Cystic Fibrosis Canada. As well, he currently sits on the board of the ALS Society of Canada.

From 2017 until just recently, Chan had been again employed with the Ontario government. Last December, he shifted from an assistant deputy minister role with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture to one that put him in the thick of things with the province's COVID-19 vaccination rollout.

As the assistant deputy minister with the vaccine distribution secretariat at the Ministry of the Solicitor General, Chan started up and then led the secretariat responsible for supporting the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force.

"The vaccine rollout is a project that one would expect all hands on deck," Chan says. "We've got multiple departments within the Ontario government and beyond, including the public health units, the hospitals, the municipalities and even the private sector working together. The task force played a key role in advising the government on the rollout."

"The role of the secretariat is to support the task force," Chan adds. "The role I played was to support the chair (first, retired General Rick Hillier, then Dr. Homer Tien), the



Ken Chan is Brock University's new vice-president, administration. (Photos supplied)

ministers and the deputy ministers in connecting the dots and pulling together the various work streams responsible for the rollout in a way that took a much more strategic view."

He's been following the progress of Niagara's vaccinations, and at press time was happy to discover that the region had surpassed the 250,000 doses milestone.

His experience with the secretariat perhaps makes Chan an ideal candidate to lead Brock into its post-pandemic future.

"I see a lot of potential there, and look forward to providing leadership and working with our partners both on campus and off in realizing what the post-pandemic environment has to offer all of us," he says. "There are very exciting times ahead for Brock."

Chan sat in on a community engagement session at the end of March, which brought business leaders together with

representatives from the university. The experience made him realize that Brock needs to play an important role in both drawing talent to Niagara and retaining it.

"We heard loud and clear what the community expects of Brock as an anchor in terms of helping the region grow," states Chan, "not only from an academic standpoint, but certainly in being an enabler of the region playing a much more critical role in overall provincial and national growth. A stronger province and country will mean much higher potential for the region."

The recent announcement of the departure of Brock President Gervan Fearon came as a surprise to Chan. However, he remains impressed by what Fearon accomplished in his role, and looks forward to working with current Provost Lynn Wells, who will become interim president of the university on July 1.

With his vast experience in many sectors of business, the Brock appointment is Chan's first in the world of academia. The lifelong learner, however, is no stranger to the academic world. He holds a number of degrees from various universities, most recently a master of forensic accounting from the University of Toronto. And he has had input in post-secondary decision-making in the past.

"I've been involved in the education sector for a number of years," he explains. "I was an alumni member of the academic board at the University of Toronto. I was also on the board of Lambeth College in London, England. I started an executive PhD in business at ESCP (École Supérieure de Commerce de Paris) in France. So I myself am now a graduate student and a grad researcher as well."

As he settles in to his new job at Brock, and as he and Warren, who works for Capital One, continue to set-

tle in to their new home in NOTL, he looks forward to a post-pandemic environment where the couple can get out and more fully explore not just their immediate surroundings, but everything the Niagara region has to offer.

For now, though, they are happy to stay in town mostly, supporting local businesses, and sampling the fare of restaurants such as the Irish Harp, Niagara's Finest Thai, pie'ZA Pizzeria and Butler's Sports Bar. But Chan is really anticipating sampling one local delicacy in particular.

"The one that I really look forward to trying," enthuses Chan, "is the fish and chips over at the Legion hall. I hear that they do make a good fish and chips, so that's certainly on my list."

As much as Brock, and Niagara Region, is in for a treat with the experience Chan brings to his new role, Chan himself is in for a treat one upcoming Thursday night.



Ken Chan and his husband Warren Duffy like an active lifestyle, and are enjoying discovering the trails of NOTL.

1812 next virtual reading for Foster Festival

Penny Coles
The Local

The Foster Festival has a premiere ready to share with the public, but for now, it has to be virtual.

Hopefully, for the last time, says festival artistic director Emily Oriold.

The festival has made its home in Niagara at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, and Oriold says the hope was to be able to present outdoor productions this summer. But with the province's three-step reopening plan, they would be restricted to performances to audiences of 10 people starting June 14, and then 25 people three weeks later — and that's if reopening proceeds as planned. The festival, founded in 2016, relies on "earned revenue" to fund its productions, and can't afford to premiere a new play under those circumstances, she explains. Community theatres and festivals that have a longer history behind them have been recipients of government grants for the arts to offset production costs, Oriold says, but as a newish group without that history, the Foster Festival wasn't eligible to receive pandemic financial support.

Once the audience is allowed to be larger, hopefully in September, they will look at multiple outdoor settings, she says, with one of Foster's "greatest hits," although they're not ready to announce the locations or the play just yet.

For now, the festival is excited to be offering the world premiere of Foster's new play, *1812*, as a virtual reading this Sunday, June 6.

Originally written as a musical, with Canadian musical theatre composer Leslie Arden, Foster decided, with Arden's blessing, to reduce the scope of it

and transition to a production as a virtual reading.

"We're seeing this pandemic as an opportunity, not a hindrance," says Oriold.

"We've kept things small, and we've kept on with online offerings."

The festival is also able to offer new outlets, such as the four-week playwriting workshops with Norm Foster, something different that has been offered for the first time on Zoom during the pandemic, she says.

And it's also allowed Foster to write more than he ever has before. Two new plays would be typical in any given year, to premiere at the festival, with productions that would take up a lot of his time. Instead, he's had quiet time in Fredericton, New Brunswick, "sitting at home, writing, keeping his brain and imagination active. He thinks of an idea, and he has to write it." He's written seven new plays since June, 2020, says Oriold, which will be produced "as quickly as possible," likely beginning next year.

"He's always exploring new genres," Oriold says of the historical background of this play, which began with a "spark of inspiration based on a true story." It's about two towns, St. Stephen, New Brunswick, and Calais, Maine, divided by a border, but connected by a bridge, and life-long friendships between people in the two communities, who are accustomed to regularly crossing the bridge to visit each other.

Overnight, a war changes their lives forever, and true to Foster plays, *1812* is built around friendship, love and loyalty, "with a lot of the laughter and heart-felt moments Norm Foster followers love to see."

The historical element and setting may be new, "but his plays are always

about a group of people, and shared experiences," says Oriold.

In any given season there might be 150 Foster plays being produced, not just across Canada, but internationally as well.

Currently, he has plays in production in Russia, Poland and Italy, translated into those languages, she says.

The beauty of a virtual reading locally, presented by the festival, the home of Foster premieres, says Oriold, is the ability to engage and support artists from all over.

But what she misses,

and looks forward to getting back to, is standing at the back of house and listening to the laughter of the audience. "Norm misses that as well. It's so much a part of why we do what we do, and we want to get back to that. We've missed two seasons now, and although this is reality, it still seems so surreal. We thought we'd be back in August, but that's changed. And we understand. We just have to wait. And we'll keep changing the plan, until this is over."

Directing *1812* is Jim Mezon, who has acted with many major theatres

across Canada, but is most closely associated with the Shaw Festival. He joined the ensemble in 1980.

He and his wife, Catherine McGregor, also a Shaw veteran, appeared together in a staged reading of the *Christmas Tree* in December, presented by the Foster Festival in 12 Niagara locations, with 12 real-life couples sharing the stage for one performance each.

Mezon has also directed for the Foster Festival, including *Wrong for Each Other* in 2018, and *Hilda's Yard* in 2019.

Also working with *1812*

is Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Barbara Worthy, as a consultant on the historic elements of the play. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum has lent and sourced some props from the 1812 era.

"We think it will go over extremely well in Niagara, when we can do this as an in-person play next year," says Oriold.

Tickets for live-streaming at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, June 6 are \$25 at www.fosterfestival.com. An online link will be emailed June 4. The livestreamed reading will be available for 72 hours.



Jon-Alex MacFarlane plays Frederick Thomas from Callais, Maine, with a musket from the NOTL Museum as a prop for *1812*. (Photo supplied)

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Eight tips for successful companion planting



Marla Percy
Past president, NOTL Horticultural Society

Companion planting: planting different plants in close proximity to one another for their mutual benefit. An easy topic, so I thought.

I could share the list passed on by my mother. But after some reading, I found most old lists were not science-based. The new information is much more complicated than anticipated.

If you are committed to companion planting, let me introduce you to *Plant Partners* (2020), by Jessica Walliser and Jeff Gillman. This book details companion planting for large- and small-scale farming, which I couldn't do justice to in a short column.

For now, here are some tips to meet your small-scale companion planting needs.

1. Everyone wants their own tomatoes. Basil planted around the base of your tomatoes will fend off hornworms, thrips and mosquitoes, plus enhances the tomatoes' flavour. If some of the basil flowers, the bees
2. Borage is another good companion for strawberries and also enhances the flavour.
3. Planting the three sisters, corn, beans and squash, together makes a perfect trio. The large leaves of squash smother weeds, and beans use the corn as support while fixing nitrogen around the roots.
4. For peppers of any kind, plant with green onions and chives, or plant with flowers such as cosmos, zinnias (single petal variety), yarrow or peppermint. These attract ladybugs, which eat the aphids, and parasitic wasps, which eat the leaf miners. If your pepper problem is white fly, then planting crimson clover nearby lures bugs which will gorge on them.
5. Nasturtiums lure insects from crops and attract caterpillars away from brassica like cabbages.
6. Peas and beans have nitrogen fixing abilities, and have increased the size of

will love it. Planting onions (leeks, shallots) near tomatoes emits a pungent odour, which masks the attractive smell of the fruit. Borage planted near tomatoes attracts many beneficial insects, which in turn may eat the pests on the tomatoes.

potato tubers when grown together.

7. Beets work well with mint, sage, cauliflower, garlic, bush beans and corn, adding minerals to the soil. Onions, garlic and chives repel red spider mites.

Peppermint repels rodents and insects, while parsley attracts hoverflies, aphids and swallowtail butterflies.

8. Finally, marigolds repel plant parasitic nematodes, which can cause twisted leaves, stems, and carry vi-

ruses and bacterial diseases. Marigolds also attract damsel bugs, which kill white fly. So plant them everywhere in your garden. (Mom was right about marigolds — she was always right.)

Go ahead! Create diversity in your garden and forget monocultures.

This is the second in a 10-week gardening column series, organized by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Communities in Bloom Committee



Basil fends off all kinds of unwanted insects, and makes tomatoes taste better, while marigolds are good everywhere.

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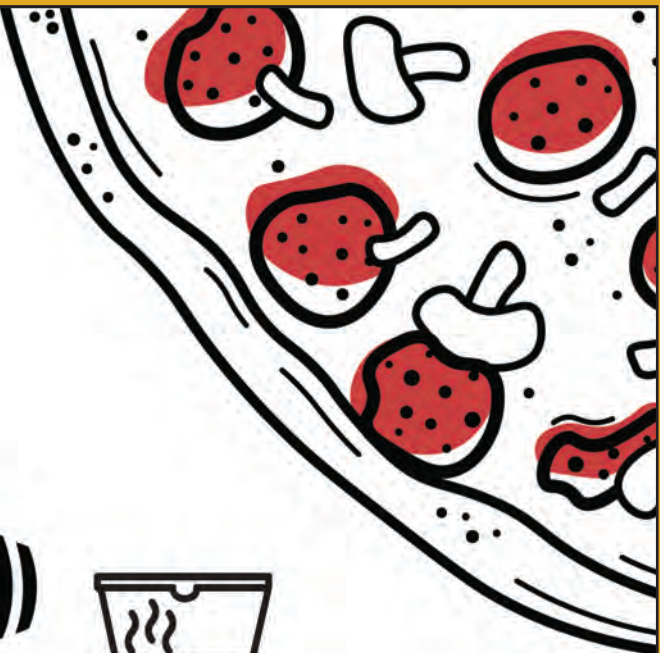
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Virtual Garden of the Week contest underway

Penny Coles
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Communities in Bloom Committee has launched the first virtual Garden of the Week Contest.

NOTL residents can submit photos of their gardens or garden features for consideration in any of the 10 categories. Submissions will be accepted over a 10-week period, follow-

ing which the Communities in Bloom Committee will narrow down each category to the top three submissions, rather than a winning garden being announced every week.

The public will be invited to vote on the shortlisted selections to determine the final winner in each category. For more information visit www.jointheconversationnotl.org/garden.

The town is receiving photos of beautiful gardens for its virtual Garden of the Week contest, organized by the Communities in Bloom committee. If you have an area of your garden that fits into one of the 10 contest categories, don't be shy! Learn more about the contest and how to submit your photo at jointheconversationnotl.org/garden.





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Cold weather, warm welcome for market vendors



Rose and Ken Bartel were a welcome sight for regulars at the Saturday market. (Photos by David Gilchrist)



Tracy Hanson of Tracy's Wine Jellies was happy to be back at The Market @ The Village.

Penny Coles
The Local

It was a cold day for the Market @ The Village opening Saturday, but for Tracy Hanson, it had all the warmth of a homecoming. She raced home three

times to get warmer clothing, she says, but despite the weather, it felt great to be outside, selling her products, and chatting with old friends and neighbours. It's been more than 25 years since Hanson began making wine jellies from

her Garrison Village home, when her husband was often away on business and she was raising three small children. She started out painting wine glasses for local wineries to sell, she says, and then began developing wine jel-

lies, combining local fruit with wine from Pillitteri Estates Winery and Riverview Cellars Estate Winery. Her wide range of products now includes jellies made with Niagara College craft beer, jelly with Lakeview Cellars Vidal Icewine, and lavender jelly made for the NEOB Lavender Boutique.

A lot has changed in her life since the early days, and during that time, the business was one of the constants in her life, the stability that helped see her through some difficult years.

At one point, the company her husband Drew was working for was restructured and sold, and he joined her, working full-time in the home business.

Then, in 2007, Drew died suddenly at the age of 51. With her kids in college and university, "the business kept me going through that time," she says. "It was the one consistent part of my life."

She recalls when she first began making wine jellies, she was driven by the desire to own a horse, which she couldn't afford. Riding had been a big part of her life as a young girl, she says, and as soon as she was able, she bought herself

a horse. It's now boarded at Gallop Stables in Niagara-on-the-Lake, where she continues to ride three times a week on the nearby trails, or indoors in the winter.

Her children are now adults, her son Ben still helping out with what became a family-run business with award-winning products sold at some of the largest markets and craft shows, as well as with wholesale and retail markets.

And by her side is her husband Vito Gelose, helping her with the business.

Hanson took her products to the Niven Road market in its early days, but since then, as her business has grown, she has become involved in some of the larger summer shows in Toronto and Ottawa, including the three-week CNE in August and Ball's Falls in October. She wasn't able to commit to the weekly farmers' market in The Village, as convenient as it was just minutes from her Colonel Butler Crescent home, where she has a commercial kitchen set up in her garage.

But with those shows cancelled for the second year, she decided to return

to the market, and she's glad she did.

"It actually felt really amazing to be back with people. I've missed that. I like talking one-on-one with people. Selling online seems like a foreign thing to me, although we had to do it to keep the business going. I love the contact with people, engaging in conversation. I met lots of people I've known over the years. It was really nice to touch base with them, and I also met lots of newcomers to town."

It was a good opportunity to reconnect with many of the farmers and vendors she's known over the years, "lovely, grounded people," she says. "It felt really good to see them again. Everyone is still helping each other out, like a family."

At one point, she would travel to 50 shows a year, then whittled it down to 10 of the largest, but Hanson says she's happy to be part of the local market again. "It's a nice way to get out and still stay close to home. I feel like I've come full circle."

For more information about Hanson's range of products, visit Tracy's Wine and Craft Beer Jellies at tracyswinejellies.com.



Anne Dickson (right), of PigOut Catering, was there with roasted chickens, which she sells with buns and sauce as a takeout meal. They will wait until the next stage of reopening before selling their popular pork, which people tend to eat in sandwiches on the grounds of the market, not currently permitted. PigOut was one of the original vendors when the farmers' market opened in 2007, shortly after the Dicksons emigrated to Canada from Scotland. With all weddings cancelled, they are able to return to the Saturday market this season. Helping Anne is Ryan Beauregard.



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Kim McQuhae of Gryphon Ridge Highlands Farm, one of the regulars at the Niven Road farmers' market, wasn't going to miss opening day.

Keep yer hat on your head, the woodpeckers are out

David Gilchrist
Special to The Local

I can't quite remember when I first heard that expression, but I think someone was calling it out a window to someone below. I sometimes use it on my grandchildren, to be greeted by strange looks! Indeed, when I hear the tap, tap, tap in the trees above, it's become a habit to readjust my own hat.

Of all the bird species found locally, woodpeckers, I find, are one of the more intriguing. There are four species of woodpecker that I've managed to photograph in the last few years — downy, hairy, red-bellied and the northern flicker. I'm always on the lookout for a red-headed woodpecker but they seem to be scarce in this part of the peninsula.

The downy, hairy and red-bellied species can often be observed in your backyard, and it was in the backyard, on the ground, that I first observed two northern flickers a few years ago. Other species of woodpeckers, known to occur in Ontario are the black woodpecker, the pileated woodpecker and the yellow-bellied sapsucker.

We've been fortunate to have attracted a pair of downy woodpeckers regularly, a red-bellied woodpecker and at least one hairy woodpecker occasionally to our backyard feeders. I've even invested some money on special woodpecker treats for one of the feeders that, unfortunately, a couple of grey squirrels seem to enjoy as well. The woodpeckers make daily trips to the feeders and are great to observe.

The downy and hairy woodpeckers are very similar in colouration, and easily confused. The hairy woodpecker, however, is a larger bird, with longer beak than

its smaller cousin. The tail feathers are also different, but that is often hard to see unless examining a photograph. The males of the downy and hairy woodpecker have a red patch on their head, which is lacking in the female.

A lot of people, when they spot a red-bellied woodpecker identify them as red-headed, but, although there is a patch of red on their head, it is not a full "helmet" that you would see on the red-headed species. It's an easy mistake, as the reddish belly on the other is sometimes hard to observe, and some birders feel this species is poorly named for that reason. The red colouration on the male red-bellied extends all the way to the crown, but doesn't on the female.

I've found the northern flicker to be a most attractive and colourful woodpecker species. I first observed two in our backyard a few years ago through one of our bedroom windows. More recently, I spotted a single one on the side of the road near John Street and the Niagara River Parkway. I've never seen other woodpeckers on the ground before and, as it turns out, flickers are known to feed on insects on the ground. On a wander through the Niagara Shores area a few weeks ago, I heard a disturbance in a tree near the shoreline and found it to be two northern flickers flapping at each other. What I thought to be a mating ritual, turned out to be a territorial dispute between two males.

The drumming sound created by the woodpecker when it is pecking at a tree is an obvious clue to their proximity. The fact that they can keep this pecking up for extended periods is made possible by a bone in their head called a hyoid bone. This bone, which wraps around the bird's head, acts as a kind

of shock absorber, and protects them from injuring themselves when pecking. They seem to prefer pecking a hole in dead trees as the heartwood in the dead tree is softer. Also, many more of the insects and the insect larvae that woodpeckers eat are to be found in this softer wood in a dead tree.

The holes they create by pecking are used as nesting holes.

If you hear a woodpecker drumming on metal fixture on your house, don't worry. They may only be doing this to mark their territory or attract a mate. Fortunately, woodpeckers don't peck at night. They are diurnal, and rest at night, but they may be another 'early' bird in the neighbourhood.

Another interesting feature of woodpeckers is their tongue. It tends to be very long and sticky — all the better to capture their favourite delicacies. They are also known to go to hummingbird feeders occasionally as their tongue can be used to get to the sweet syrup in these. I have to admit, I've never observed this happen at the hummingbird feeder in our backyard.

Woodpeckers have an amazing climbing ability enabled by the fact that most of the species have feet that have two forward-facing toes and two rear facing toes (zygodactyl feet). These also serve to help them increase their leverage when pecking at a surface. Their rigid tail feathers help to keep them in place on a tree.

Well, with another week-end approaching, my camera will be in my hands and my hat will be firmly on my head as I search for the elusive red-headed woodpecker, or maybe even the pileated woodpecker.



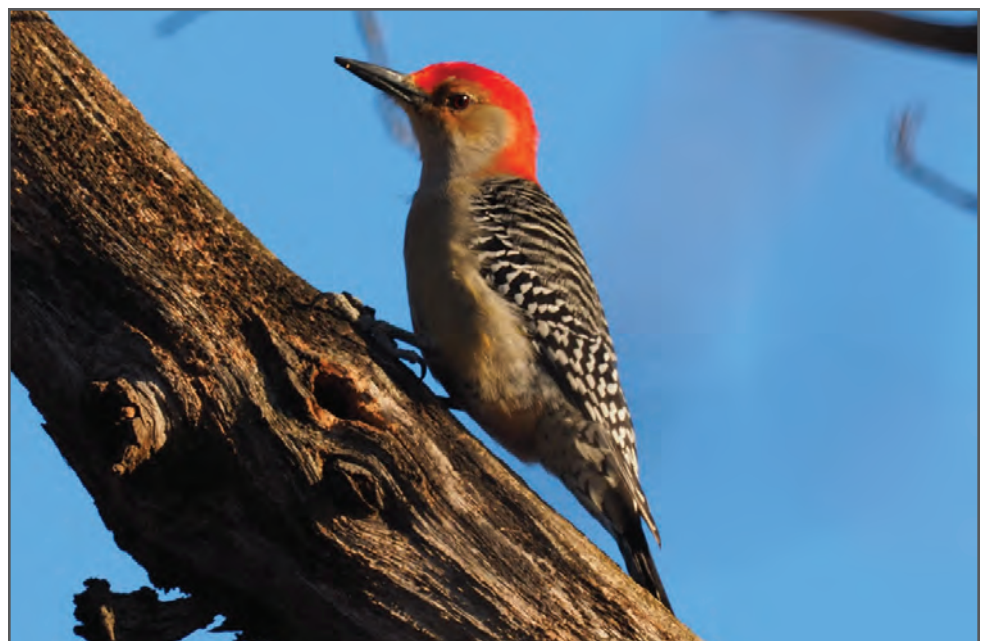
This photo of a male hairy woodpecker shows a longer beak, about the same length as its head on this species.



A male northern flicker rests after a territorial dispute with another male. Males are identified by the black 'moustache' on either side of their beak.



A female downy woodpecker searches for food on a tree branch.



The red-bellied woodpecker has expanded its range north, and is often found now in southern Ontario.



A male downy woodpecker hangs on to the underside of a tree branch. Males of this species, like the hairy woodpecker, have a dab of red on their heads. Note the shorter beak and smaller size body. (Photos by David Gilchrist)

Friends of Fort George plan Canada Day celebration

Local Staff

The Friends of Fort George will offer Canada Day packages for the second year, to help locals celebrate Canada Day safely at home.

“We are very excited to be partnering with

Parks Canada, and Willow Cakes & Pastries, to bring the community as many aspects of Canada Day as we can” says Amanda Gamble, executive director of the Friends of Fort George.

Willow Cakes & Pastries will be creating pack-

ages of six Canada Day cupcakes, that will be packaged with flags, pins, glow sticks, Parks Canada swag, balloons and more. Canada Day packages can be ordered online through the Friends of Fort George gift shop at [https://friendsoffort-](https://friendsoffort-george.square.site)

[george.square.site](https://friendsoffort-george.square.site) or by calling the shop at 905-468-6621. Packages are \$35 each and will be available for pick-up from Fort George on June 30. Delivery is also available within Niagara-on-the-Lake for a \$5 donation.

Last year more than 200 packages were sold, says Gamble, adding the Friends of Fort George “were completely blown away by the community

support we received.” There are a limited number of packages available with a deadline of June 25 for orders.

The Friends of Fort George have also created the hashtag #CanadaDay-NOTL, and hope community members will use this hashtag to share images of how they are celebrating Canada Day this year.

The Friends will be sharing images of Can-

ada Day festivities from previous years through its social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), and will be creating some special content to be shared on Canada Day. “We hope that the community will join us as we celebrate the 154th anniversary of Confederation,” says Gamble, “and we can’t wait to celebrate the 155th anniversary with everyone in 2022.”



Willow Cakes & Pastries will make cupcakes for Canada Day. (Photo supplied)

One fundraiser ends, another begins for NNS

Penny Coles The Local

As the Niagara Nursery School and Child Care Centre wraps up one very successful campaign, it launches another. The board and staff have sent out thanks to the community for support during the school’s May Matching Fundraiser, which raised more than \$10,000 for the nursery school expansion.

“With the support of the NOTL Ukesters, the St. Davids Lions Club, and countless community members, we were

able to raise over \$10,000, which will be matched by an anonymous donor, bringing the total to over \$20,000 in donations to support our nursery school expansion,” says executive director Candice Penny. “I am speechless, the community support has been so incredible,” she says, adding, “we are so fortunate to be part of such a caring and supportive community.” But their efforts are not over. Throughout the month of June, Canada Helps is running the Great Canadian Giving Chal-

lenge. For every dollar donated through Canada Helps, Niagara Nursery School will be entered to win \$20,000. The Niagara Nursery School and Child Care Centre is committed to raising \$100,000 toward the expansion, with a total projected cost of \$2,018,889, and a goal of being completed in time for a September opening. Help support the expansion program by donating at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/pages/niagara-nursery-school-expansion-fund/>



They did it! Niagara Nursery School surpassed its May Matching goal and reached \$10,825 on the final day of the campaign. “Words cannot describe how truly grateful we are to have so much support from our community,” says executive director Candice Penny, who is pictured with Massimo De Luca, Walker Meleskie, Dawson Paget, Olive Cooper, Leland Bastedo, Merritt, and Malcolm Hawley. (Photo supplied)

Local Staff

The Friends of Fort George have received partial funding for summer employment positions at Fort George National Historic Site and Brock’s Monument.

“In a normal year, the Friends of Fort George hire between 15 and 20 students to work in our Gift Shop at Fort George, as heritage interpreters at Brock’s Monument, or as part of the Infantry/squad at Fort George,” says Amanda Gamble, executive director of Fort George. “Last year, we were able to bring on four students, and this year, we will be hiring six students and are so exciting to provide Niagara’s youth with this unique employment opportunity.”

Craig Burney was hired by the Friends of Fort George in 2013, and worked as an interpreter at Fort George for 5 seasons. “When I started working as a student at Fort George in May of 2013, a colleague informed me off-hand that this would be ‘the best job you’ll ever have.’ He could not have been more correct. Beyond the immersive experiences of embodying history, with colourful uniforms, drums, cannon, and fire-smoke, there is no singular experience I have accumulated that has done so much to broaden and enrich my understanding of Canada, its people, and the world we live in.”

Burney says there is no shortage of transferrable skills “cultivated passively and actively through being a summer student.”

Responsibility and care are key, he adds, “as you are required to maintain uniforms and equipment, and operate them properly. You will be working around artifacts and heritage objects likewise. You hone your interpersonal skills, rhetoric and dialectics, and how to connect with audiences from children to well-versed experts; from hundreds of spectators to one-on-one connections.

Initiative and skills improvement are facilitated, encouraged, and rewarded, too.”

To this day, Burney says, “I often still reference my experiences working as a summer student through the Friends of Fort George in professional contexts. If there is a situation I encounter, there is always a piece of knowledge or experience as a summer student that relates. This program has equipped me in a myriad of ways, and I am extremely thankful I could benefit from this experience, and give benefit to others through it, too. I know of no one who has not been positively affected by their experiences here — it truly is the best job I have ever had.” But grants only cover

part of the wages of staff, and for the six positions. The Friends of Fort George needs to raise more than \$17,000, says Gamble. “Like all business and non-profits, we have been impacted by the pandemic and are requesting your help.”

Throughout the month of June, Canada Helps is running the Great Canadian Giving Challenge. For every dollar donated through Canada Helps, the Friends of Fort George will be entered to win \$20,000.

Help the Friends of Fort George support Niagara’s youth with these unique summer experiences by making a donation at <http://www.friendsoffortgeorge.ca/donate/index.html>



Craig Burney loved his five seasons working for Fort George as a summer student. (Photo supplied)

Tennis club set to open, rules up in air

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Last Tuesday's official opening of two shiny new courts at Memorial Park put an exclamation point on the previous weekend's return of tennis in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Parks and recreation manager Kevin Turcotte visited the court Tuesday afternoon, standing by as NOTL Tennis Club president Hugh Dow and club professional Shawna Macfarlane exchanged volleys, slamming brand new tennis balls across nets that had just been installed the day before.

Visitors to the park will notice a striking difference between the new courts and the four older, acrylic-coated cushioned asphalt surfaces, which were installed in 2012.

"We conducted a poll amongst the members as to what colour combination they preferred," Dow explains. "The two choices were the green-on-green of the four existing courts, or the blue-on-green, which tends to be the colour combination that most of the major tournaments are now using. The results came back 70 per cent in favour of the blue."

Though the new blue surface looks different, Dow is happy it is essentially the same as the established green surface that sits next to it.

"Court Contractors (of Mississauga), who built the

courts for us, did a fantastic job," Dow says. "They built the existing courts for us, too. We really wanted to maintain the same type of surface, which is why we were hoping they would be selected (via the town's bid-and-tender process). They build a really good quality court."

With the tennis competition for next summer's Canada Summer Games scheduled to be played at Memorial Park, the blue courts make sense for a tournament of that magnitude.

"We're looking at some possible renovations for the Canada Summer Games (next summer)," says Turcotte. "We're bringing a report in June to talk a little bit more about them. There may be an opportunity to change the colour (of the older courts) to match."

With the selection of Memorial Park as a host site for the games, Turcotte expects the Host Society to provide the town with about \$40,000 for any changes, additions or improvements to Memorial Park.

The new courts opened on schedule, and came in on budget, says Turcotte.

"It's a liquid asphalt installation, and it's kind of specialized," Turcotte tells The Local. "We knew it was going to stretch over two years. We constructed in the fall for the base, and you have to let the asphalt breathe a little bit. We knew we were going to paint it in the spring. We wanted to try to get

them open for summer of '21, and we hit that target."

Dow says club members have been effusive with their praise of the new courts thus far. And all six courts have been busy since the province opened outdoor activities with some restrictions on May 22.

"The feedback has been very positive," says Dow. "We've been pretty fully booked most of the time. Everyone's anxious of course to try them out and to see what they're like."

Under current regulations, only singles games can be played on local courts. According to Dow, the bulk of the action amongst club members usually centres around doubles games.

"The majority of players prefer to play doubles," he says. "There are many people who do not like playing singles. It's a much more demanding game physically than doubles. As soon as we get clearance to play doubles we'll begin our doubles leagues, which are Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings (men's, women's, and mixed leagues, respectively)."

With a boost this year in the number of members, it is expected those league nights will be more popular than ever. Dow says the more than 75 who have registered for the men's doubles league are itching to compete.

"There is some impatience from a number of members," Dow adds, "and a bit of pressure being put on the town to



NOTL Tennis Club president Hugh Dow, with club professional Shawna Macfarlane, and parks and recreation manager Kevin Turcotte celebrate the opening of two more courts at Memorial Park, just in time for the provincial reopening of tennis courts. (Mike Balsom)

relax the rules and allow us to play doubles. We are aware that in Toronto they are allowing the community clubs to play doubles."

Indeed, research into the Gwendolen, Swansea and Central Tennis Clubs in the GTA seems to show those organizations are currently allowing doubles play. Dow adds that doubles play is also being allowed at the Welland Tennis Club, as well as in Niagara Falls and St. Catharines, though The Local was unable to confirm this at press time.

"All of the municipalities basically make their own decisions on things like this," Dow explains. "All municipalities

have different situations and different opinions. That's why you get some inconsistent application across the province. In Welland, they can play doubles, but they can't put people on adjacent courts, apparently."

"I sent (town CAO) Marnie Cluckie the Toronto regulations," he continues, "and asked her to take a look at them. She was very responsive, and said she would study them, and she would table them at the next Emergency Control Group (ECG) Meeting."

That ECG meeting was held Monday morning. At press time the town was awaiting advice from Niagara's acting medical officer of health on

doubles play.

"We're hopeful with that, and obviously we'll be very grateful if in fact there is a change in the regulation," Dow adds. "There will be a stampede to get on the courts, I can tell you."

The public courts at Rye Street, St. Davids Lions Club and Garrison Village Parks are also open for play. Courts in those locations are used on a first-come, first-served basis. These parks are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Users are reminded that groups are limited to five people, including members of different households, while maintaining physical distance.



Walking for MS

Local Claudia Gilchrist, supported by family and friends, participated in the Annual Walk for MS on Sunday. Gilchrist has been walking for MS for 20 years with a group called Goldie's Gang in Welland, but due to COVID-19, the walk was virtual this year and people walked individually in their own neighbourhoods. Sunday morning was cool but sunny, and she completed 8,000-plus steps on her walk through the Old Town. This year she raised slightly more than \$3,000 with the help of her supporters, and over the years she has raised more than \$24,000. The team has raised more than \$95,000 for research into multiple sclerosis. (David Gilchrist)

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Local SPORTS

NOTL Soccer Club plots path forward this summer

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Barring any hitches that might prevent Ontario from moving into Stage 1 of the new Roadmap to Safely Reopen the Province, Niagara-on-the-Lake youth should be back on local pitches on June 21. It will be the first soccer action in local parks since 2019.

The NOTL Soccer Club released details of its upcoming season last week following months of board meetings. With ongoing uncertainty about government-imposed restrictions on outdoor play, it wasn't easy to plan for the summer.

"We spent a lot of time trying to find a path forward based on the criteria that Ontario Soccer (OSA) put forth based on the provincial system of colour zones," explains club president Ted VanderKaay. "Just when we had all that in place, we had to start from scratch with a blank canvas. We had to figure out all over again how to manage this reopening, without having true guidance."

Last week, the club published a letter via their website and social media platforms outlining the tentative plans for this summer. The sport will be organized very differently from previous seasons.

For one, all players are invited to register for house league programs only. The travel soccer program has not been confirmed, as the club awaits direction from the Niagara Soccer Association. Those who are part of that program can transition if the local Niagara Soccer League does have a season.

As well, the structure of the club's age divisions will be based on registration numbers. All house league players will be placed into training groups, rather

than teams. These groups will be capped at nine or less so that a safe maximum of no more than 10 people in one group, including a coach, can be maintained.

Every week, each training group will have the same practice plan per division, coordinated by the league, distributed to session leaders (formerly coaches), and implemented at the same time. The club speculates that the training groups may change in size and scope as regulations allow.

With the province placing a three-week minimum on each of the steps to reopening, that would mean by July 5, the club may be able to introduce games played between training groups, pending the rules of the day. Unlike previous years, though, no NOTL teams will be playing games in other communities through the informal interlock leagues usually set up for the older age groups.

It has been a long journey for the club to get to this point. Much consultation with the town's parks and recreation department, the OSA and Niagara Region Public Health was necessary to effectively plan for a safe summer of soccer.

Kevin Turcotte, manager of parks and recreation, is adamant that the town wants to see kids back on the fields this summer.

"We've worked with their board in their return-to-play guidelines using their provincial direction," Turcotte explains. "We're pretty flexible with them as far as the fields, and we've bounced a few ideas off of each other. I think they've landed on a good, solid plan to roll out."

"We just want to see kids being active," Turcotte adds. "And we want to see our facilities that we take

great pride in, being used again."

VanderKaay says that Turcotte and his staff have been very supportive.

"They recognize that it's (outdoor activity) good for kids' mental health and physical well-being," he says, "and they want to do everything they can to work with the club to ensure that we can have kids get back on the pitch, provided it's following the guidelines established by the region and the province."

As for the travel program, the change from the colour zones to the current provincial plan hasn't made anything clearer for a return to league play.

"Under the colour-coded system," VanderKaay explains, "there were restrictions put in place so that we couldn't have more than 50 people, including players, referees and coaches in a bubble that could compete. That meant that we couldn't have more than two or three teams in a division."

"Now that the colour-coded system has been thrown out the window," he continues, "Ontario Soccer is probably trying to reestablish all kinds of new protocols, but they are waiting for the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (Lisa McLeod) to give us those guidelines to see whether we can have movement between different districts or centres."

The focus this year is clearly on getting the kids back on the field, and giving them an opportunity to be active again. The registration fee for all players has been capped at \$100, and each will receive a generic club T-shirt, an alternate pinnie and a soccer ball. There will be no team photos this year and because large groups most



Club president Ted VanderKaay has released information about action on soccer pitch beginning June 21. (Mike Balsom)

likely will still be prohibited, the opening festival, or tournament, will not be held. The Timbits program will resume as normal on Saturday mornings.

As in previous years, the soccer season will end the last week of August.

As for spectators, both the club and the town remind parents that they should practice physical distancing rules as are mandated at that time by our various levels of government. The club has tentative plans to have field

marshals available on site to provide reminders.

VanderKaay says that since the details pertaining to this summer's plans were posted online, registrations via the NOTL Soccer Club's website immediately increased.

"I encourage anyone to register to ensure they have a spot in the program," VanderKaay says. "We will be somewhat limited, as we don't know the entire nature of the program yet. It doesn't matter what level of soccer that their child

plays. Register, get them into the system, and we'll all deal with anything else after the fact."

"We cannot stress enough that this is our tentative plan," VanderKaay adds. "Our intent is to get out (on the pitch) as soon as we can, and this system provides us flexibility. However, this is all subject to regulations that are put in place by the Province of Ontario, and regulated by Ontario Soccer."

To register your child, visit notlsoccer.ca.

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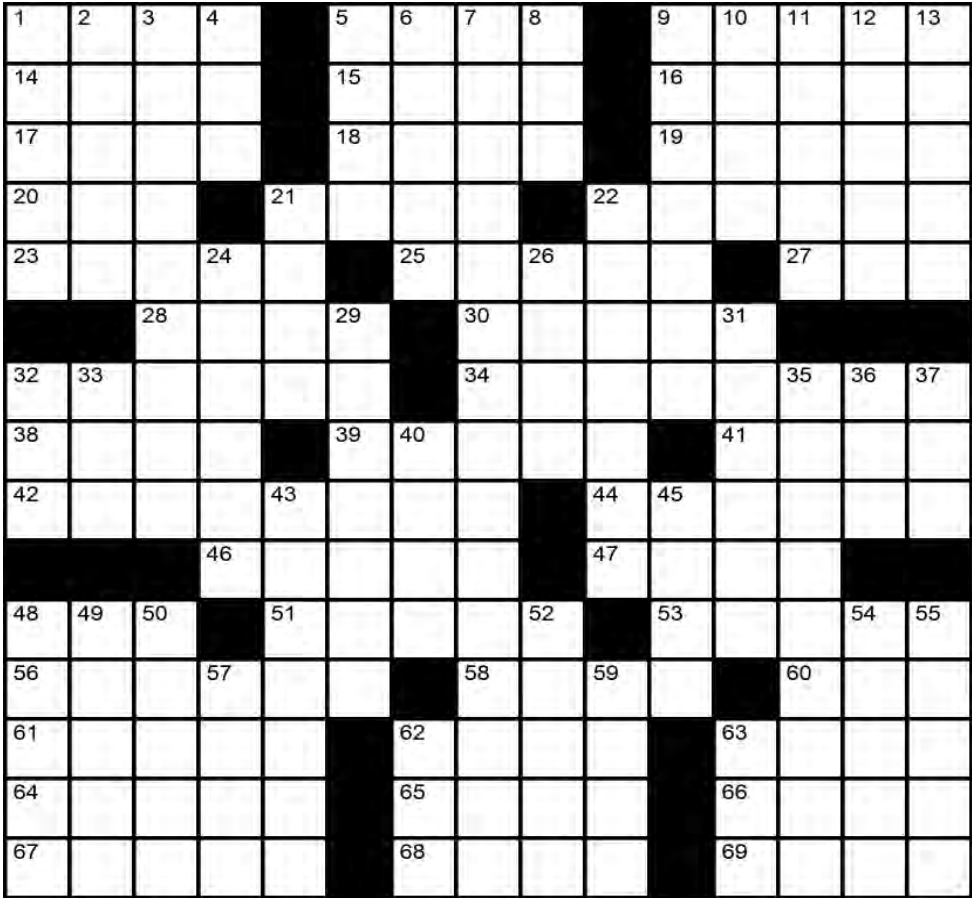
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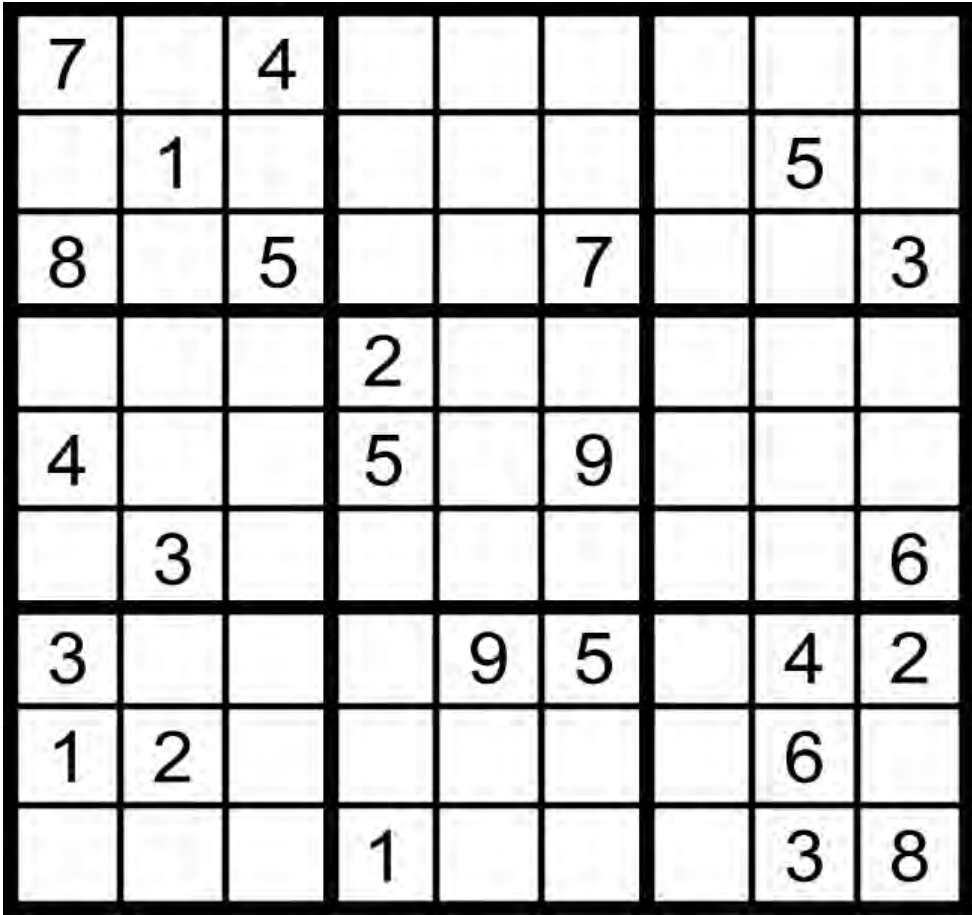


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17 Of the present month (Abbr.)
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19 Cosmetics mogul Elizabeth ---
20 Monk's title
21 Job-discrimination watchdog (Abbr.)
22 Plumping
23 Moonshine maker
25 Liable
27 Journey's end forecast
28 Swedish aircraft maker
30 Astonish
32 Take for granted
34 Hearth
38 Radiation absorber
39 "I shall not find myself so --- die" (Antony, in "Julius Caesar")
41 One up on a deuce
42 Catholic
44 Accuse
46 Wide river mouth
- 47 Flying toy
48 Batter essential
51 Fashion reminiscent of the past
53 "What happens in --- stays in ---"
56 Short stops
58 Decree
60 Web site ID
61 The first Mrs. Trump
62 Singer --- Simone
63 Split
64 Well mannered
65 International trade org.
66 Stripe
67 Breaks
68 Raised
69 E.g. Levin, Gershwin and others
- Down:
1 Short attacks
2 Ripley's slogan finishers
3 Firing
4 Posed
5 Only
6 Cry of exultation
7 Battle group main feature
8 The very end of a golf club
9 Swing in a circus
10 Skin blemish
11 Self-published author
- 12 Surgically implanted tube
13 A k a the Friendly Islands
21 Gunslinger actor Jack ---
22 Duck ---, medieval child's game
24 Exalted
26 Leave out
29 Fab Four
31 Personal assets
32 Top-fermented beer
33 Moderately dry
35 Unorthodox
36 Angular meas.
37 Peeper
40 British Prime Minister when the Constitution was signed
43 Food grasses
45 Honey factory
48 Sagas
49 Singer-songwriter --- DeGraw
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Down: 1 Raids, 2 Or not, 3 Dismissal, 4 Sat, 5 Sole, 6 Whoop, 7 Aircraft carrier, 8 Toe, 9 Trapeze, 10 Wart, 11 Indie, 12 Stent, 13 Tonga, 21 Elam, 22 On a rock, 24 Lauded, 26 Om!t, 29 Beatles, 31 Estate, 32 Ale, 33 Sec, 35 Irregular, 36 Deg, 37 Eye, 40 Pitt, 43 Cereals, 45 Hive, 48 Epics, 49 Gavin, 50 Guava, 52 Ounce, 54 Arena, 55 Sleds, 57 Snip, 59 Ladd, 62 Nob, 63 F B I.



ADD YOUR VOICE TO NIAGARA'S OFFICIAL PLAN

NIAGARA IS GROWING!

The region is forecasted to grow to a minimum of 674,000 people and 272,000 jobs by the year 2051. To guide this growth, Niagara Region is creating a new Official Plan.

The Niagara Official Plan will set out objectives and policies to shape Niagara's physical development, protect what's valuable, and balance the interests of current and future residents. Niagara is facing many growth management challenges, including; housing affordability, protecting the natural environment, minimizing impacts from a changing climate, and increasing economic prosperity. A made in Niagara solution, is being developed to address these challenges.

YOU'RE INVITED

Attend a series of virtual public information centres to learn more about key draft policy directives and core policy content that is intended to be part of the Niagara Official Plan.

Updates on other key sections of the official plan will also be provided. Background information and draft policies are now available for review through niagararegion.ca/official-plan.

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend and participate in meetings or events, contact the Niagara Region's Accessibility Coordinator at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 or accessibility@niagararegion.ca.

Information will be collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRES

Register for each of the following session at niagararegion.ca/official-plan. Video recordings will also be available online following the sessions.

If you are not able to attend, you can provide input or ask questions by emailing makingourmark@niagararegion.ca or contact David Heyworth, Official Plan Policy Consultant at 905-980-6000 ext. 3476.

Wed., June 9 | 6 p.m. GROWING REGION

- Growth Allocation and Land Needs - Draft Policies
- Regional Structure - Draft Policies
- Housing - Draft Policies
- Settlement Area Boundary Reviews -Update

Thurs., June 10 | 6 p.m. VIBRANT REGION

- District & Secondary Planning - Draft Policies
- Urban Design - Draft Policies
- Archaeology - Update

Wed., June 16 | 6 p.m. COMPETITIVE REGION

- Agriculture - Draft Policies
- Employment areas - Draft Policies
- Aggregates - Draft Policies

Thurs., June 17 | 6 p.m. CONNECTED REGION

- Transportation - Draft Policies
- Infrastructure - Draft Policies

Wed., June 23 | 6 p.m. SUSTAINABLE REGION

- Natural Environment System - Update
- Watershed Planning - Update
- Climate change - Update

niagararegion.ca/official-plan
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Aircraft on the ramp at the Niagara District Airport. (Photos by Randy Klaassen)

Niagara District Airport to have major role in region's economic recovery

Randy Klaassen Special to The Local

As the COVID-19 pandemic begins to subside, the Niagara District Airport is positioning itself to be a major part of the region's economic recovery.

At last week's annual general meeting Robin Garrett, chair of the Niagara District Airport Commission, acknowledged the skill and expertise of Daniel Pilon, chief executive officer, in enduring the pandemic. With a small staff doing a lot of work, the airport is ready to get back into operations as soon as allowed, he said.

Garrett announced the intentions of the St. Catharines Flying Club, with its 90-year history, to be back in operations this week. Soon to follow will be Greater Toronto Airlines with their passenger service connecting to the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport on Toronto Island.

The three municipalities that own the airport are Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines.

St. Catharines Mayor Walter Sendzik affirmed the airport's role in economic growth for tourism, the wine industry and international businesses.

The airport commission has engaged professional planner Rino Mostacci to develop a Master Plan for future development. Mostacci highlighted the region's estimated population growth of 37 per cent over the next 30 years, which will need expanded air transportation services.

Mostacci outlined the airport's proposal to change the runway known as 01/19 to a taxiway, to allow commercial development at the southwest corner of the airport. Also anticipated will be additional hangar facilities at the south-east end of the airport. A review of the terminal facilities, with an eye to expansion, will be needed to accommodate future passenger service.

Pilon reported that during the pandemic, Great Lakes Helicopters, based in Waterloo, has operated with success. In addition to Greater Toronto Airlines resuming service, there have been a number of other regional airline start-ups looking for facilities and servicing centres from which to operate. Pilon and staff have been working to ensure Niagara District is in a good position to be an attractive location.

Currently Niagara District Airport is one of 55 in Canada to have services of Nav Canada,

which operates the Control Tower. While the Canadian Border Services Agency suspended services for international travellers last May, the resumption of those services is expected to enhance the airport's viability for travellers, those at the AGM were told.

Pilon acknowledged the important role Ornge Medical Helicopters has in using Niagara District Airport as a patient transfer centre. Other emergency services include the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association, which supports Canadian Forces, 424 Squadron Search and Rescue.

Greg Wight, treasurer of the airport commission, reported that given the reductions of the past year, the airport's financial situation adapted, and is in reasonable shape. While COVID-19 has been devastating for the aviation industry as a whole, Niagara District is in good standing to take advantage of the public's pent-up energy to get moving again, those at the AGM heard.

This was the airport commission's second annual meeting with representatives connecting by internet. Garrett concluded with anticipation of next year's meeting being in person.



The Niagara District Airport Commission held its annual general meeting last week, releasing information about expected future growth.