



Regional Pride crosswalk shows Niagara's a safe place for all
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Let's play ball!

Monday night minor softball players, seven to nine years old, were out on the diamonds, with coaches pitching. It was a perfect evening for kids and parents to be out. (Mike Balsom)



Dry stone waller mystery unravelled

Penny Coles
The Local

Menno Braam, the highly skilled person town staff mentioned as the dry stone craftsman who will build the wall at the end of Mississagua Street, says he was very surprised to hear his name in connection with a landscaping contract that is intended to begin the work this fall.

The first he learned about the project was when someone from Niagara-on-the-Lake called to ask him about taking on a completely different job, after seeing his name mentioned in The Local in connection with the gateway, he says, and sending him a copy of the article.

"I was very surprised. I knew nothing about the project."

A discussion at a committee of the whole meeting about contracting with Aldershot Landscaping, with Braam as a subcontractor to do the stone walling, referred to his particular skill in relation to the feature at the end of Mississagua Street.

Gerry Kowalchuk, the resident who is donating \$250,000 and has taken a lead in the project, is anxious for work to begin in the fall, and spoke to councillors at their June 13 meeting about the next step, which was to sign a contract for the work.

"Working plans are complete, and we're set to begin construction in September," he said.

Aldershot, which he said had submitted a quote within budget, would be the general contractor, supervising the other trades, and with very few dry stone masons in Canada,

Braam had been selected to construct the wall, "which is very important — it's the focal point of the gateway project."

"It is a definite advantage to have Mr. Braam as a sub-contractor to Aldershot Landscape Contractors," Kowalchuk said.

When asked during the meeting by Coun. Gary Burroughs about Dean McLellan, a master craftsman and dry stone waller who is an instructor at Willowbank School of Restoration Arts, parks and recreation director Kevin Turcott said McLellan offered his services, "but when it came to a contract we couldn't come to an agreement."

Although councillors expressed reservations about the issue of single-sourcing for the \$250,000 project, about half of which is the cost of the dry stone wall, CAO Marnie Cluckie explained that while a competitive process is preferred, in this situation it was a benefit for the town to meet its timeline, but more important is the matter of finding someone such as Braam with the right skills to do the specialty work.

Councillors voted to approve hiring Aldershot Landscape Contractors, with Burroughs dissenting.

Braam told The Local his fall schedule is filling up quickly, and it's a project with high visibility he would like to be part of, but as of this weekend, all he knew about the project was what he had read in The Local.

He worked with Aldershot on another job, one for the University of Toronto, and

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Innovative leader credits his pack for award

Mike Balsom
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Keith Simmonds was taken completely by surprise when he was announced as the recipient of the Innovative Leader Award as part of the 2022 Niagara Business Achievement Awards.

Announced as the recipient of one of four bestowed

awards prior to last week's ceremony hosted by the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, Simmonds was honoured as a prominent business leader who shows exemplary dedication to his community through volunteer efforts.

"I was not expecting that at all," the vice-president and general manager of Great Wolf Lodge told The Local. "Personally, I see

it as a reward for the lodge. I'm really just a small part of what we do there. Getting recognized for community things like this is pretty important to us, our pack is right into it."

The 'pack' to which Simmonds refers is the staff of approximately 850 at Great Wolf Lodge, to whom he continuously gives much credit for getting behind any and all efforts the or-

ganization puts forward to contribute to the community at large.

Simmonds has been at the helm at the Niagara Falls resort since 2006. With the hotel and waterpark completely shut down for most of the pandemic, he instituted a below-cost food takeout program for his employees, whose

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VBA supporting pickleball club with donation

Penny Coles
The Local

The Virgil Business Association has supported sports and recreation in town since its very beginning, more than 50 years ago, and is continuing to do so.

At their monthly meeting Monday to discuss what was an exceptionally successful Virgil Stampede, both in attendance and

revenue, members of the VBA decided to give \$1,000 to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Pickleball Club as a show of support.

Richard Wall, president of the VBA, says members have supported the Virgil Sports Park since its earliest days. His father, Dave Wall, spear-headed a fundraiser for the Centennial Arena, and was one of the original members of the VBA, which also helped

fund the purchase of some of the sports park property, the Meridian Credit Union Arena, the concession booth, play equipment, the splash pad, the skatepark, the picnic pavilion, and many years ago, the tennis courts.

“The Virgil Sports Park itself is important to us and our organization,” says Wall.

The VBA has steered away from political or controversial issues in the past, and is continuing to do so, but members are disappointed that activity on the pickleball court has come to a halt for now, and want to help out the club with a donation.

“I’ve never played pickleball,” says Wall, “but I’ve seen how busy the courts were when they were open. It’s disappointing to see hundreds of people being excluded from an activity they enjoy. We support health, fitness, and activities for people in our community, and that’s what the pickleball club is all about.”

In the recent court decision over a noise bylaw infraction, the courts were closed to pickleball for two years, and both the club and the town, which was also charged with contravening the noise bylaw,



The NOTL Pickleball Club is being given \$1,000 from the Virgil Business Association, which supports sports and recreation. The club was recently fined \$1,000, and the courts closed for two years, over a noise bylaw infraction.



The 2022 Virgil Stampede was an all-around success, in terms of revenue, attendance, and most important, fun. (File photo)

were fined \$1,000. The club said at the time the fine was half of what was in its bank account.

The VBA has made many donations over the years to sports and recreation, Wall says. “That’s what we do, and this is no different.”

The VBA typically has a major project targeted for the funds raised from their annual stampede, but with a two-year hiatus of the event due to COVID, members have not yet chosen a project to get behind financially.

They’ve had some discussions, says Wall, but not made any decisions. Monday’s meeting was the last until after the summer, and the discussion will resume then. “We’ve tossed some ideas around, and when we regroup we’ll be strategizing the next major project.”

In the meantime, they will continue supporting sports and recreation, as they always have.

Although “this year’s stampede was excellent from a financial standpoint,” there were some issues that needed to be addressed, most notably the disappointment of some people over rides that weren’t functioning, and longer line-ups than usual. Some of that was related to COVID issues, he says, but they dealt with them as best they could, and the ride company also did the best they could, offering refunds and free coupons to those who were dissatisfied.

There were weather problems as well on Saturday and Sunday, but Monday was a perfect day, and it seemed everyone was happy to be out enjoying the activities, says Wall.

The West49 skateboard demonstration and contest was arranged hastily, but went well, with a good crowd of spectators enjoying themselves, he says.

“That’s something we’d really like to build on for next year. West49 did a great job.” Next year, when planning isn’t so rushed, he’d like to see more locals involved, and more competitions, “although we’re not sure yet what that will look like.”

As for his overall impression of what has become a three-day event to greet the opening of the spring season, Wall says he saw lots of families with young kids having a great time, and people generally happy to be out and having fun. They were enjoying the activities, the fireworks were spectacular, and there were lots of positive comments — but in spite of the success, he had to add, “I think it’s going to be even bigger and better next year.”

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Business community weighs in on accommodation tax

Penny Coles
The Local

A much-debated municipal accommodation tax approved by council just last week goes into effect Friday.

The town will begin applying a tax of two per cent as a starting point, increasing it to four per cent by 2025, for all accommodations with five rooms or more.

It was agreed the tax will not be levied on rooms that were reserved before July 1.

The goal of the tax is to fund tourism marketing programs, and “future tourism initiatives.”

Legislation governing the tax specifies the maximum the town can keep is 50 per cent, which it has chosen to do, the other half going to the tourism branch of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce as the destination marketing organization (DMO), to be spent on marketing programs. The town’s portion will go into a special reserve, to fund tourism-related capital projects.

Councillors were told by the town’s corporate services director Kyle Freeborn that Niagara Falls gives 95 per cent of MAT revenue to its DMO, St. Catharines is a 60/40 split, and other Ontario municipalities give 100 per cent of the accommodation tax revenue to fund tourism marketing.

The only project agreed to at this point to be funded by the town’s 50 per cent is \$100,000 put aside for the NOTL Museum’s expansion project, Freeborn said.

A small advisory group of tourism stakeholders was consulted to help with the terms of the program, and another committee will be created to include up to nine tourism stakeholders to assist town staff with “governance processes,” including how the town’s portion of the money can be spent.

It has to be used to fund new tourism capital projects, and cannot replace any money already currently being spent by the town, explains Minerva Ward, president and CEO of the chamber, which will provide representation on the governance committee.

To explain the distinction, she uses the example of the information bureau in the parking lot of Fort George, already funded by the town, which

cannot now be funded by the municipal accommodation tax.

However, the town could use the tax revenue to create a new tourism information office on Queen Street — one that would be far more comfortable and suitable for welcoming tourists than the chamber office, which also uses its space for administration.

Coun. Erwin Wiens mentioned at last week’s council meeting that he doesn’t want to see the accommodation tax go “off the rails” like parking revenue, which was originally intended to offset tourism costs, but in recent years has become revenue to offset taxes.

The role of the DMO and other stakeholders on the governance committee would be to advise on capital projects the town’s 50 per cent can fund, although council will make the ultimate decisions.

Council also approved hiring a contract staff member in 2023 to be funded from the accommodation tax to implement and manage the program.

Ward was a member of the advisory committee that discussed the details of the roll-out of the tax, which had already been approved almost a year ago, after years of discussion leading up to it — for the second time.

The two previous motions to implement the tax were both approved, although not unanimously — one 6-3, the other 5-4 — but were lacking details, such as the timeline for the increase from two to four per cent, and when the tax would be implemented.

The tax was previously discussed as going hand-in-hand with a tourism strategy that would help create a vision of what tourism should look like going into the future, says Ward.

Last week, council approved moving ahead with the tax before tourism strategy consultations have even begun.

Paul Macintyre, vice-president of Vintage Hotels and until recently the chair of the chamber board, was also one of the advisory group, along with Ward, Tim Coons from Peller Estates, which includes the winery, restaurant and Riverbend Inn; the Bed and Breakfast Association; Janet Jones, a local owner of a B&B; Steve Livet of White Oaks Resort and Conference Centre; and Eric Quesnel

of 124 on Queen, which includes the boutique hotel, restaurants and Starbucks.

Macintyre is not happy with the way the input from those meetings was handled, and he believes his opinion is supported by the accommodation sector. The stakeholders who participated in two advisory committee meetings with CAO Marnie Cluckie and Freeborn had felt the discussions to be productive, Macintyre says, and had made six key proposals, which they expected to be included in the recommendations staff took to council. However, three of them were not, nor were they even discussed.

Macintyre says if he and the others in the group had known their proposals were not to be incorporated in the details, they would have all gone with delegations to council.

“I believe most of us thought our proposals were unanimously agreed upon in principle, smart, well-thought out, and a collective way forward that included tourism’s input, unique to NOTL. We also thought they would at least be presented to council for discussion and consideration,” he told The Local in an email.

The three proposals they thought had been agreed-upon but were discarded were to do with a flat room fee instead of a percentage, an exemption for corporate groups, and a delay in the implementation in the tax.

“A flat fee is easier for operators and the municipality,” says Macintyre. “Niagara Falls only charges \$2 flat per room, much less than us, and we compete with them directly in the corporate market. With a strike of a pen they just put us at a competitive disadvantage with our neighbour, and likely slowed recovery in a market that perfectly aligns with longer average stays, reduced traffic and typically business creation at low seasonal need periods.”

As far as the request for delayed timing, he says, “we simply just now got the bylaw details, which allow us to just start preparing.”

There is no “MAT switch” on their systems, he says, and now resources need to be allocated for work to be done in the middle of the season.

One proposal that was accepted was for the tax increases to be aligned with the calendar

year.

The staff recommendation council approved is for the first increase to three per cent to be implemented Jan. 1, 2024, and to four per cent on Jan. 1, 2025.

The current provincial strategy, Macintyre says, “is to offer tax incentives this summer to people travelling within Ontario, at the same time that we are launching a new tax.” The implementation of the MAT, he added, “sounds counter-productive if recovery is actually the focus this summer.”

Last week, after two voluntary terms, Macintyre officially became the out-going chair of the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism NOTL.

“A new chair will be nominated and appointed soon,” he says. “I loved every minute working with our tourism community and with all the volunteers, residents and supporters of the hospitality Niagara-on-the-Lake offers. It truly is a community-at-large achievement.”

The municipal accommodation tax “has been divisional,” especially on the back of elected officials saying that residents are paying for tourism as a reason for needing the MAT, he added.

“The commercial sector and tourism is paying their fair share with one of the highest tax levies in the region. Hotel properties within the Niagara region are taxed at a significantly higher rate per hotel unit than the average, with NOTL being singled out as the highest in Ontario,” — 2.5 times higher than the average.

The intent of the municipal accommodation tax and the legislation that governs it “is to grow sustainable tourism. Anything else is an irresponsible strategy.”

The tourism and the accommodation sector “play a great role in our community, and I believe the community agrees. We came to the table with an open mind and some strong productive suggestions that could make it work and ease the pain that everyone feels with the launch of a tax.”

The message moving forward should be “that we all pay our fair share, and we all need to be working together. Now let’s start a real, sincere, productive conversation around a proper tourism strategy and put this divisional messaging behind us.”

Ward, who had hoped the implementation of the



Minerva Ward, president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism NOTL, will forge ahead with a more robust marketing plan to be funded by the municipal accommodation tax. (Photo supplied)

tax would align with a tourism strategy, says the chamber will be working on a five-year marketing plan for sustainable tourism that can begin ahead of time.

Sustainable tourism, also the goal of the tourism strategy, means balancing the needs of businesses with the needs of residents, and that works best with high-yield tourism, which will be the goal of the five-year plan, she says.

The chamber has always had marketing plans that promote NOTL as a tourism destination, she says, through events, social media, trade shows, campaigns, brochures, magazines, and media, but the plans have been scaled to the chamber budget.

With Tourism NOTL named the DMO for the accommodation tax, “we now have the opportunity to create a more robust marketing plan that will, in addition to the things we have already done, target specific niche markets that have the potential for further development: high-yield leisure and corporate bookings (meetings, events, and conferences), to increase visitation during the off-peak months and mid-week,” she told The Local.

It would also include weddings, luxury agro-tourism enthusiasts, and elevated culinary tourists, she says, allowing the DMO to “develop tactics and campaigns to extend our tourism season into the fall and winter, thus making us more of a year-round tourism destination.”

While the DMO does not have to report how it spends MAT revenue to the town, she says she expects the chamber, in the interest of transparency and accountability, will share that information.

Tourism NOTL needs to move forward, “especially in this post-COVID era where destinations are aggressively ramping up their marketing.”

Those who “kept the lights on” during COVID will have momentum on their side, “and we must ensure we serve our tourism industry by implementing a marketing plan that will drive business to their doors.”

In the coming months, Tourism NOTL will define where the DMO’s portion of MAT revenues will be spent, Ward explains, with input from the business community, residents, visitors, and the Chamber’s tourism marketing advisory committee.

It will aim for sustainable tourism development that is “respectful of the physical, environmental, and psychological carrying capacity of NOTL, and focus on high-yield tourism.”

As a chamber, she said, “we represent our members, but as the DMO we market all of tourism and include non-member tourism businesses in our tourism campaigns. We look forward to working with the town on the development of the tourism strategy and on the continued development of a premium NOTL tourism brand, tourism that is respectful of the community, and provides strong returns to the business community.”



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Lodge opened to help community during pandemic

Continued from page 1

source of income was put on pause. Simmonds says 40,000 meals were distributed through that initiative.

As well, to keep up morale, there were bi-weekly to monthly online gatherings of his management team members, and all employees received weekly email newsletters that included updates, trivia, exercise suggestions and recipes.

But it was largely his efforts to offer the lodge as a distribution centre for rapid testing kits in 2021 that caught the GNCC's attention.

In introducing Simmonds to the audience at Thursday's event, held at the Holiday Inn and Suites in St. Catharines, Peter Van Hezewyk of CAA Niagara outlined the importance of Simmonds' move.

When the Ontario government procured the newly available kits, explained Van Hezewyk, it was announced they would be distributed to businesses free of charge through chambers of commerce. The idea was that employees would be able to self-test, learning of their asymptomatic COVID cases before entering the workplace and infecting others.

But with over 13,000 employers in Niagara, and a workforce of almost 250,000, the GNCC needed a distribution partner with facilities, staff, parking, and experience processing orders and moving people quickly and efficiently.

"The GNCC went to Keith," remembered Van Hezewyk, "and Keith simply said, 'we're all in.' When the program launched in May of 2021, businesses quickly saw the culture of efficiency and service that Keith had built."

"From the outset we supported everything the Ontario Chamber of Commerce did," Simmonds says. "We supported their 'This is Our Shot' vaccination awareness campaign. We offered our facility to the health care community as well. We were pleased as punch to see people pulling up to the building to pick up the testing kits."

Over 150,000 rapid testing kits were distributed out of Great Wolf Lodge to more than 1,000 businesses and non-profit organizations. Hundreds of asymptomatic cases were identified and isolated before they could infect others in the workplace.

"Businesses heaped praise upon the program," noted Van Hezewyk, "for improving the mental health of their employees who felt safe returning to work."



Keith Simmonds (left) receives the Innovative Leader Award from CAA Niagara's Peter Van Hezewyk at the 2022 Niagara Business Achievement Awards. (GNCC photo)

the workplace.

"Businesses heaped praise upon the program," noted Van Hezewyk, "for improving the mental health of their employees who felt safe returning to work."

Van Hezewyk added that through a full year of operations, there was not a single complaint about the pickup program.

"This speaks not only to Keith's dedication to his community and willingness to serve others, but to the skill and professionalism with which he does it," summed up the CAA Niagara president and CEO.

In his acceptance speech, Simmonds said, "Great Wolf Lodge believes that we are incredibly fortunate to be a part of the Niagara Region whether it be as an employer, a business partner or as parents in the community. To that end we are 100 per cent committed to working together in leveraging our resources in our community beyond business operations."

This spring Great Wolf Lodge was able to hold its annual fundraising car wash for the first time in

three years. Simmonds says it raised more than \$160,000 for Campfire Circle, a privately funded charity that offers opportunities for families affected by childhood cancer to attend summer camps. Previous car washes have raised more than \$250,000 for Sick Kids Hospital. As well, staff members have gathered to plant trees in Heartland Forest and have participated in rides to support Niagara Health.

Though they didn't win awards Thursday night, two NOTL organizations were also nominated for awards last week.

Spirit in Niagara (SiN) Small Batch Distillery received a nod for the Environmental Leadership Award, which was won by Bench Brewing Company Inc. of Beamsville. Just over a year in operation, SiN uses waste fruit from Niagara tender fruit farms to

create a number of different spirit products out of their Lakeshore Road facility. Owner Arnie Lepp and distiller Joshua Beach say their primary goal is to engage with the public about environmental initiatives.

Though CAA Niagara won the Business of the Year category, Shaw Festival was a finalist along with Kraun Electric and the Merani Hotel Group. Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2022, Shaw was lauded for its employment of more than 600 people, its leadership as a destination theatre in Ontario, and for putting 60 of Canada's most skilled costumers to work during the pandemic to create gowns, masks and PPE for local area hospitals, shelters, hospices and clinics locally.

A full list of the Niagara Business Achievement Award winners can be found at gncc.ca.

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Local BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: ArtSpace 106

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Meet Canadian sculptor, Peter Allan Rice at Art Space 106

Art Space 106 is proud to have Canadian sculptor Peter Allan Rice, whose work is found in private collections around the world, visiting the Queen Street galleries on Canada Day to sign his book, *Reflections in Glass and Stone*, and demonstrate how he fashions his sculptures.

His amazing work is a combination of Muskoka rock, copper and dynamic colourful glass, which he uses to create immaculate sculpture featuring a technique he can truly call his own.

Art Space 106 started life as a gallery to feature the works of international contemporary artists, with a small group of local and native artists to compliment these works. Gradually it became evident that the gallery was best suited to specialize in Canadian art, with a focus on Ontario and local artists, and has evolved to fulfill that mandate. It features artists and artisans who amongst the best, showing their work in blown glass, raku pottery, stained glass, furniture, jewellery and hand-made art cards. Its walls are adorned with canvases representing realism



as well as abstract, with mediums ranging from encaustic, cold wax and oil, monoprints, fibre, photography.

Peter is without doubt one of the best sculptors in Ontario, having been named Top Sculptor at the prestigious McMichael Gallery shows in 2017 and 2018, and in 2019, Best in Show.

He spent most of his childhood years living in rural lo-

cations within or around the great Canadian Shield. This is a strong influence in his current work, which combines rocks, wire and stained glass, and visually shows the ruggedness of our Canadian remote areas.

Peter's physical, emotional and spiritual journeys have allowed his glass to leap to new dimensions, with his unique three-dimensional

technique at the cutting edge of glass work. His artisanship captures the lonesome beauty of a windswept sky, and the rugged gentleness of rocks and trees. The use of granite and quartz bases for his work anchor the swirls of glass and metal to create sculptural landscapes totally unseen before in this medium.

Peter is helping Art Space 106 fulfill its goal of bringing

a selection of beautiful art to their galleries, and being part of the vibrant artistic community that abounds in our area.

Enjoy a browse through their two galleries and view an exceptional selection of art, from impressionism to abstract and realism — a well-curated showing to fill your wall and soothe your

soul. Art for fun, and art to express your own sense of design.

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EDITORIAL

Canada Day is changing, but change can be good

We may not be a patriotic lot, but Canada Day has always been pretty special in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

There is lots to do, and it's really heart-warming to see people out en masse wearing red T-shirts and waving little red flags. Or big ones.

We've had a rough couple of years.

Canada Day 2020 was a time of adapting, learning how to live in a pandemic world, a time when we began hearing 'everything was 'unprecedented' and we had to 'pivot,' including with Canada Day celebrations. The Friends of Fort George and Willow Cakes and Pastries tried to make us feel like we were celebrating with their take-out offerings, but it was

nothing like what we're accustomed to on this day of festivities, all thanks to Fort George, Willow, and the Rotary Club of NOTL, which on Canada Day adopts a 'go big or go home' attitude.

We looked forward to being able to enjoy our traditional festivities, but Canada Day 2021 was not the time for it. Not only were they cancelled again because of the pandemic, but there was a very sombre, subdued feeling that followed in the tiny footsteps we were seeing as symbols of the Indigenous children believed to be buried in graves on the grounds of residential schools.

There have been more since that first Kamloops discovery, and although there has been

much talk of what should be done, what needs to be done, are we really any further ahead in our quest for truth and reconciliation?

We may be more aware of our past, and taking small steps toward a more enlightened future, but we realize with the news of a year ago that we still have a very long way to go.

Now, here it is, 2022, with celebrations of our nation's birthday just days away.

The festivities are planned, and they are many. We have our Rotarians busy preparing to make the day in Simcoe Park perfect, Willow Cakes and Pastries' Catherine O'Donnell working furiously from long before dawn on a daily basis to create another magnificent

cake, and the Friends of Fort George and Parks Canada planning to keep us entertained all day long and into the night, ending with fireworks. We are grateful for all that is on offer.

But we are not truly out of a pandemic. Crowds of people pushing together may not be a great idea. We are also sharing the day with Indigenous peoples and what Canadian leaders have done to their little loved ones. Those around us, part of our community, will have a really hard time when all around them, their neighbours are setting off fireworks.

Last year, our flags were lowered to recognize their lost children, to show we were grieving with them.

This year, those flags have

taken on a very different meaning. Whether or not to fly a Canadian flag is becoming a conversation. If there are fewer to be seen this Canada Day, it won't be surprising.

Our flags have come to represent something other than patriotism, or some might say, patriotism to a different cause — the freedom movement, which is basically freedom from rule by the government we democratically elected. Our flag is no longer a symbol of pride in our country, love for our country, it is a symbol of protest about our country.

But in Canada, we also have the freedom to speak out about what we don't love, and to call for change.

What will next year bring?

More change? For better or worse? Less stress about a disease that became a pandemic? More forward movement to find some justice for those who have suffered at our leaders' hands in the past?

Our country is not perfect. But is there a place we'd rather live?

We've learned about our past since the last time Canada Day was celebrated in Simcoe Park, and have come to realize we have more to learn about how to create a better future that works for all of us.

That may be reason enough to celebrate. Maybe we'll see you in Simcoe Park. Let's eat cake!

Penny Coles
The Local

Top Childhood Memories of Nature: A Series (Part 1 of 2)



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

When we are young humans, our brain is largely uninfluenced and acts as a sponge. We soak up senses and cues from the world around us. The remarkable thing is that before the age of technology, the outdoors was seen as both a source of leisure and survival.

These days, our broad disconnection from nature leaves the majority of the western population to ac-

tively choose to engage with the great outdoors. We no longer survive directly from it. It's out there as something we can drive to, book time off for, purchase goods from, or perhaps never have to see at all if we are comfortable living such a lifestyle.

I want to dive back into time and take you on a very personal journey. I want to share with you moments of mini Owen, just having his mind absolutely blown with curiosity. These memories and short stories are so profound and electric in my mind that I argue they were already steering me to what I do professionally today.

I decided to shake up the format of this article like a

Netflix series, or perhaps a book, and here are a few chapters that will always stand out for me.

Big Snake, Ice Tea.

"Hi, I would like some ice tea and would also like to look at the huge snake you have in a bucket, there" said nobody, ever.

With the support of my parents, I checked off a childhood classic of setting up a lemonade and ice tea stand on our rural property on Concession 1. I thought it would be exciting to engage with strangers in a safe way, and make a little bit of this something called money, which adults seemed to chase after to no end. So, it must be important.

Just as we were done setting up, my cousin Shane Sherlock drove up to our house. God bless his recent departure from this world and my family, but my goodness, did he fuel a lot of my most cherished childhood memories.

In his car, he had a massive white bucket with an intimidatingly big water snake slithering around in the bottom of it. He had caught it and drove it over to my house to show me, as he understood and supported my love of all things reptilian. I forget if it was my idea or his, and neither answer would surprise me, but we decided to put this attraction piece out with the beverage stand.

I was convinced that people would be beckoned to stop their car or bicycle with a cardboard sign reading 'Big Snake! Ice Tea!' with me chanting it aloud to passersby like a nature fanboy. For some strange reason, I didn't make much money that day.

One man pulled over, though, and stepped out of his car. Whatever he drove, it was nice. Whatever he was wearing, it was nice. I will never forget him getting a glass of lemonade, and then me excitedly ripping the lid off of this bucket to show him this amazing creature. He slowly removed his fancy sunglasses and said something to the effect of "okay, then," and he quickly proceeded back to his



This is the Cool Pool, with one of the many eastern garter snakes that swam in it with Owen Bjorgan as a kid. (Photo supplied)

car door.

The Cool Pool of Serpents

Speaking of snakes, how much would you enjoy them in your pool?

At our first house on York Road, which flanks the mid-section of the Niagara Escarpment, we grew up with heaps of eastern garter snakes around us.

One day, I remember catching so many that I couldn't count them in the bucket where they were temporarily housed. So, my family and I got out a classic kiddie pool to give them more room. And then, I got in the pool too.

I recollect maybe a dozen serpents swimming and resting about in this surely bizarre environment to them. I sat in the pool with these noodle friends of mine as they slinked their way over my limbs, behind my back, and sometimes escaped the pool. All I remember is the joy, the fascination, and the happiness I felt with one of the most misunderstood creatures on the planet.

If you would like to arrange a dozen snakes for your backyard pool, please contact me, and I could make your dreams come true. Now, speaking of pools...

Lifeguard of the Snapping Turtles

As a youngster, perhaps just seven years old, I saved multiple juvenile snapping turtles from a public pool in New York when the adults of the area weren't keen at all to get into the water.

To tune into this and a few more episodes, check out the next week of The Local for Part II.

To be continued!



View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

No one but Rowan Atkinson could have made this 10 episode mini series. *Man vs Bee* (Netflix 2022) It

is a beyond absurd slapstick comedy that will delight even the most jaded. Atkinson is at his best, but the bee steals the show.

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

Local VOICES

A local farmer's dream becomes a reality

Maria H. Klassen
Special to The Local

Growing up on a tender fruit farm, a young Arnie Lepp saw good fruit thrown away every day, going to waste.

Peaches, nectarines, apricots, pears, yellow and blue plums and cherries are called tender fruit as they bruise easily. Markets for the fruit, such as stores, buy only perfect fruit as that is what the consumer wants to buy. And so, when the fruit is sorted and packed in the packing barn, there is lots of imperfect fruit that can't be sold, about 10 per cent, or 3050 tonnes a year of crops becomes waste. This amount of fruit waste had been on Lepp's mind for a long time. "It has bothered me my whole life throwing all that good fruit away," he says.

That was the motivation behind his building Spirit in Niagara Small Batch Distillers. Most distilleries make

potato or grain based spirits, Lepp wanted to use this excess fruit.

Lepp's father and grandfather were tender fruit farmers, coming to Niagara in the early 1940s. In this Mennonite home he was taught not to waste anything; having two older brothers put that theory into practice with hand-me-downs. He learned the value of things, how so many items can be repurposed.

At 21 years of age, Lepp bought his first five acres. He spent the next decade learning the cabinet-making trade, returning to full-time farming in his early 30s, when he bought more orchards. Expansion included buying Niagara Growers in 1988, a company where he bought his supplies, such as fertilizers for the orchards, and containers for the fruit.

The fruit that is not sold is often the sweetest fruit with the most juice. It is difficult to deal with this un-

used fruit as it cannot be put back into the orchards. The ripe fruit releases chemicals that will rot the next year's crop if it is left in the orchards. It is often dumped into open spaces, where it should not be. Tender fruit has always been a challenging crop to grow and market as retail stores can buy fruit at a lower cost from the south.

In 2017 Lepp started designing and planning Spirit in Niagara. He continued with his plans even during the pandemic, starting the building in 2020, opening the distillery and lounge/patio the next year. He has ample access to bruised and over-ripened fruit through his own orchards and those of other local farms. The distillery building is on his farm, on the property where he dismantled an old barn built 150 years ago. All the material from this barn was saved, the wood pressure washed, and repurposed for the new building.

This building houses the distillery, lounge and tasting bar. A press and several fermentation tanks are located in the packing area of the large open warehouse space. When the fermentation process is complete, the liquid mash goes into one of three stills, each doing a different job. The finishing process includes adding flavours to enhance the various products, choosing from a variety of 15 different herbs, two of them being juniper

and coriander. A ton of fruit waste produces 700 litres of juice, which produces 70 litres of alcohol.

The ingredients for the menu selections in the lounge are grown and produced locally from the fruits and vegetables, to the cheeses and meats, sodas and honey. Lepp used his cabinet-making skills to craft the circular tasting bar, and the inside décor, incorporating the 150 year old beams.

What Lepp says he has learned in this pandemic is the importance of small and local businesses. His dream of helping local farms reduce the amount of fruit that is wasted annually, by converting waste into an incredible taste, is now a reality.

Using local produce, working within the region, cutting transportation costs, benefit the community, local businesses and the environment.




A young Arnie Lepp growing up on a tender fruit farm. (Photos from Spirit in Niagara gallery)



Arnie's father Aron Lepp picking peaches in the 1960s.



Spirit in Niagara Small Batch Distillers.



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.



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Garden of the Week returning for nine weeks

Nominations submitted through town website

Penny Coles
The Local

After two seasons of following a strictly online process, the Garden of the Week contest is back in its original format. Members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society will be judging those nominated, front gardens only, says contest coordinator Susan Dodd, and then returning to take photographs of the weekly winners. The horticultural society is partnering with the town's

Communities in Bloom committee, says Dodd, and nominations — from owners who wish to nominate their garden, or others who admire one they've passed by, as long as they know the address — can be submitted on the town's website. The deadline for each week's nominations is Monday evening. Three judges will do their rounds Wednesday mornings, beginning July 6, and continuing for nine weeks, with the winning garden featured in the following edition of The Local. Hor-

ticultural society member Marla Percy will pick one interesting and beautiful plant from each chosen garden, and write about it for The Local, so readers, including gardeners who admire the contest winners, can learn something about what makes it a winner. Each of the nine contest winners will receive a prize of Miracle Gro products, a bottle of wine from Konzelman Estate Winery and a gift certificate from Sunset Grill on Queen Street. "This is the Year of the Garden," says Dodd, "and showcasing front gardens of residents through Garden of the Week is just one of the initiatives of the town to celebrate it."



Susan Dodd, coordinator of this year's Garden of the Week contest, loves her own front garden, and encourages others to nominate theirs to be photographed. (Photos submitted)

Learn about community centre activities

Local Staff

Learn about all the recreational activities and programs the town has to offer for all ages, at a community centre open house Thursday. Tomorrow, June 30, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the Anderson Lane community centre is holding an event for residents to explore activities that take place at town facilities.

There will be vendor booths promoting programs and activities, a bouncy castle for children, onsite instructors giving free lawn bowling lessons, door prizes, community goodie bags for the first 50 guests, free use of the community centre fitness gym all day, and special programming at the library. "This event is a wonderful way to engage residents in learning more about the rec-

reational activities and programs the town has to offer," says Lord Mayor Betty Disero. "Niagara-on-the-Lake has such a vibrant, active community who loves to get involved in all different kinds of programming. Come out and find what interests you, your friends, and your family." The event is thanks to a ParticipACTION grant to promote healthy living and physical fitness.



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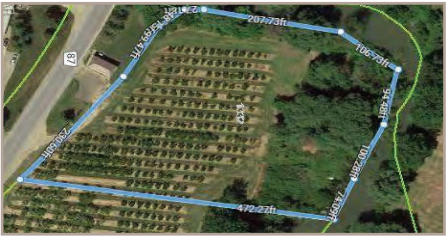
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Strawberries, socializing both a delight for seniors

Mike Balsom
The Local

Judging by the chatter and laughter heard at the community centre Monday afternoon, the return of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's annual Strawberry Social for seniors was a huge success. About 120 residents sat down in the auditorium to enjoy a lunch of sandwich-



The community centre was the place to be for lunch Monday, as town staff and council members helped serve seniors at the traditional Strawberry Social after an absence of two years. Friends Marg, Lori and Hedy enjoy a chance to chat. (Mike Balsom)



Linda Baines, Bob Fanning, Carol Fanning, Anne Auandt and Lydia Noble socialize over lunch at the community centre. (Mike Balsom)

es and salads provided by PigOut Catering, followed by ice cream and fresh strawberries from Seaway Farms. Another 280 take-out boxes, with butter tarts re-

placing the ice cream, were picked up at the side door as well. More than half of those went to residents in the town's long-term care homes.

When The Local arrived, the space was about three-quarters full. Local seniors sat at tables socializing and for many of them it was the first time in over two years. "It was great to come out and meet some new people," Brigitte Bassie said. "There were so many smiling faces. It's such a great event to bring the community together. I can't wait to see how this evolves over the years as we get back to normal."

The Strawberry Social is a long-standing tradition each June in NOTL, the town providing lunch at no charge, always finishing with fresh strawberries, during Senior's Month. Town staff and council members come out to serve the meal and chat.

After being cancelled in 2020, it returned last year as a pick-up only event. Town councillor Wendy Cheropita, who volunteered to help out at the event, was all smiles as she circulated amongst the crowd. "It's sort of like Niagara-on-the-Lake is coming to life again," raved Cheropita. "Everybody that walked in the door was so happy to socialize and to be amongst friends. People were meeting new friends and catching up with people they haven't seen in two and a half years. It was beautiful." Marah Minor, the town's



Strawberries, donated by Seaway Farms, wait for ice cream before being served. (Town of NOTL photo)

community engagement and communications coordinator, was overjoyed with how the social turned out. "It takes a lot of people to make this come to life," she said. "It's our entire communications team, as well as our parks and recreation team. It's our first year doing both pick-up and in-person, our first trial with that format. We all came together to do it and it went really smoothly." Like Cheropita, Minor said the ability to gather together in such a setting made the day a huge success. "We got really good feed-

back," Minor added. "I think everyone's just really happy to be back seeing people in person." There was a buzz about the room as conversations continued long after the last plates were picked up off of tables. Many of those conversations, between both long-time friends and new ones, continued out through the community centre doors. "People came here, I think, just to feel that things were normal," Cheropita added. "As a volunteer, it just lifts you up and gives you such beautiful energy."

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Chain of communication didn't reach to Braam

Continued from page 1

says it went very well, and he'd be happy to work with them again.

But as for the NOTL proj-

ect, "I had no idea it was happening. I wasn't contacted by anyone."

He called the mystery of how the mix-up occurred "an issue of miscommunication," and a "misunderstand-

ing — it was implied that I was involved," he said, adding he would be happy to be part of the project, if his schedule permits and the details can be worked out.

Braam and McLelland are

friends who have worked together in the past on different projects locally. McLelland explains Braam helped on an important Willowbank project, building the walls for the Blacksmith's Shop on the property. The work took place over a period of years, as part of Stone Festivals held locally.

McLelland also donates his time, including working on two projects that were fundraisers for Red Roof Retreat, alongside Menno Braam. Participants worked on a dry stone wall to replace fencing, with McLelland and Braam overseeing the project and providing the instruction.

He was surprised when Braam contacted him to tell him he'd been mentioned in connection with the gateway project.

McLelland says he "was working on the gateway project for ages," spending a significant amount of time meeting with Turcotte and town staff on the design of the dry stone wall, providing drawings and estimates, "hours and hours going over details," and then more drawings as the design changed.

He even arranged for NOTL local Perry Hartwick, owner of Upper Canada Stone, a quarry in Madoc, Ont., to donate the tonnes of stone needed for the wall. "Perry," he says, "is a saint."

Turcotte originally wanted him to be the general contractor, and McLelland says he told him that's not what he does, or his area of expertise, but that he would do the dry stone walling.

When it came time to sign the contract, however, the lack of a deposit was the deal-breaker.

"I've never done a project, ever, without a deposit. I've never had a client tell me they're not giving a deposit."

He would be bringing three men with him to work in NOTL, it would require equipment, and he couldn't agree to the 30-day payment terms Turcotte was offering.

When the gateway project didn't work out for him, it left a hole in his schedule, but that was quickly filled, fortunately for the sake of his employees, he said.

Town staff told The Local they would have a response that might clear up the mystery, but not in time for publication.

Kowalchuk, however, did respond.

Seferian Design Group, the landscape architect that worked on the design, had direct contact with the general contractor, Aldershot Landscaping, he explained.

Seferian provided details of the pricing, commencement and completion dates to him

and town staff. "Thus, neither town staff or myself spoke to Aldershot."

Since the dry stone wall is an important feature, "Aldershot also provided details of who the stone mason would be, namely, Menno Braam, including his background, experience, photos of similar projects, etc. Seferian was our representative in these discussions, which again, was communicated to myself and town staff."

Kowalchuk says he does not believe there was a misunderstanding.

The general contractor has the responsibility for the whole job, including all sub-trades. Braam is one of several sub-trades, he explained. "To my knowledge, Seferian spoke to the general contractor, not the sub-trades."

Finally, he added "Aldershot Landscaping has had experience with Menno Braam on other significant projects, and they are familiar with his work and likely his pricing."

Aldershot owner Bill DeLuca said he was excited about the project, but as he is semi-retired from the family business, he didn't know the details.

He said he would look into it, but didn't get back to The Local by press time.



Menno Braam beside a dry stone wall, showing the craftsmanship required to complete such a project. (Photo supplied)

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SIZZLING Summer ACTIVITIES

Soccer camp is back in Virgil this july



Former Canadian national soccer team player and long-time soccer coach John Di Pasquale is back with the NOTL Soccer Club's soccer camp from July 25 - 29 at the Virgil Sports Complex. Two separate sessions will welcome kids aged 6 to 9 and ages 10-plus. The camp is open to anyone whether or not they already play soccer in NOTL. Visit notlsoccer.ca to register.

The NOTL Soccer Club's summer camp is returning July 25 to 29. Hamilton Soccer Hall of Fame member John Di-Pasquale is back running the camp for two age groups: U6 to U9 in the morning (9-11:30); U 19 and up in afternoon (12- 2:30) Port Colborne native Di-Pasquale captained the U16 Ontario Boys team to a National Championship and repeated that feat in 1983 at the U18 level. He later represented Canada as a member of the U19 and U20 National teams. The retired high school teacher turned pro with the Hamilton Steelers in 1986, where he ran youth summer camps. He later coached at Niagara University and for the Hamilton Thunder of the CPSL. DiPasquale says the camp will cover skill techniques such as ball mastery, passing, receiving techniques and dribbling. Agility and foot-work will be incorporated through all of this on a daily basis. Each thematic skill set will be followed by an opportunity to "play". The emphasis is to have everyone jump into attack and make a habit of flipping to defending mode whenever there is a turnover. The camp is great for both house league and travel team players. Cost for either half-day session is \$100. Visit notlsoccer.ca for information and to register.

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Congrats to our winners!



Mike Balsom won a second place in the Ontario Community Newspapers Association for his story in The Local on the 150-plus dogs rescued from a Delater Street house. It was a sad story, but one that ended well. He is presented with a plaque by editor Penny Coles, and thanks, Mike, for doing a great job of reporting it. (Karen Skeoch)



Karen Skeoch and Penny Coles give Jane Andres (centre) a certificate for her honourable mention in the Best Columnist of the Year category for the interesting and informative columns she contributes, sharing the stories of farm workers who come to Canada to live and work for up to eight months of the year. We so much appreciate her insights, and we know our readers do too. (Ruth Aspinall)

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- Date

July 7th, 2022
- Time

11:30am - 1:30pm
- Place

Butler Funeral Home
424 Niagara Street, St Catharines, ON

Free to the community • All welcome
Call 905-646-6322 to RSVP

Butler Funeral Home - Niagara Chapel
by Arbor Memorial



NOTL Pop-Up Library This Summer

Submitted by
NOTL Public Library

This summer, the NOTL Library is once again headed out into the community with the newly re-vamped Pop-Up Library! Bringing library programs and services to all areas of the municipality is one of our latest strategic goals. Join us as we bring fun activities and our collection to a park near you.

Children ages 4-12 can enjoy activities, fun games and - of course - a fantastic storytime with Library staff. Young visitors to our Pop-Up Library locations will also be able to leave with a new read (or two) as we will have mobile check-out stations on-site - perfect for reaching those summer reading program goals. Haven't signed up for a summer of reading fun with our Summer Reading Program yet? You can do that at our Pop-Up Library!

While the activities planned are geared for kids, the Pop-Up Library is not just for children. We'll have crates of fresh, new titles for adult & teen visitors to borrow as we've put together a new collection of adult fiction and non-fiction books especially for the Pop-Up Library. Need to renew your library card, or need to sign up for one? We can help with that too!

With a variety of children's activities, books and coding toys to borrow and the opportunity to sign up for a library

card - we are excited to see you all at the Pop-Up Library all from our beautiful greenspaces in Niagara-on-the-Lake.



The Niagara-on-the-Lake Arts Collective invites you to join the fun and get to know the local visual arts community.

Enter for a chance to win great prizes including gift certificates to Sandtrap Pub & Grill!

It's easy to join:

- Visit our website to get an entry form



notlartscollective.ca

- Submit your entry form by midnight, July 1, 2022

HOW TO SUBMIT

- Email scanned or photo of completed entry to notlartscollective@gmail.com
- Drop-off in mailslot by the door at the Niagara Pump House Arts Centre, 247 Ricardo St., NOTL

Music, Muskets, Ponies and Treasures!

Find them all at NOTL Museum's
Summer Community Events

Submitted by
NOTL Museum

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is once again hosting two of NOTL's much loved community events this summer. On the annual Civic Holiday, Monday August 1, The Past is Present Heritage Festival will be held on the grounds of the Museum at 43 Castlereagh Street. And on Saturday September 10, the Commons in Niagara-on-the-Lake will resonate to the sound of thundering horses' hooves at the spectacular Niagara Polo event.

Both events honour tradition, history, and

community engagement. The Past is Present Heritage Festival will feature a variety of experiences that range from live music and historic demonstrations to bake sales, pig roasts, and treasure hunts. The event is free for all and runs from 11 am to 3 pm on August 1st.

The Niagara Polo event is steeped in history, and well known for its brilliance in sportsmanship, dramatic matches, and joyful spectators - not to mention many a designer hat or two. Generously sponsored by Nancy Bailey of Engel & Volkers Oakville, the NOTL Museum hosts the Toronto Polo Club on the historic

Commons on September 10th with live polo, classic cars, music, artisans, food and more! tickets and information visit www.niagarapolo.com.

And if you aren't in town for these great events, you can always enjoy the Museum's exhibitions, which highlight the important history of our community. The current feature display is "All Along the Waterfront", exploring our relationship with the Niagara River and Lake Ontario. The NOTL Museum is open seven days a week, from 10am - 5pm. For more information visit www.notlmuseum.com or call 905-468-3912.



NIAGARA POLO

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2022 | THE COMMONS



NIAGARAPOLLO.COM

notlmuseum.ca | 43 Castlereagh Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake

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- Fresh books for kids & adults
- Sign up for a Library card
- Register for Summer Reading
- and more!

July 8th Chataqua Park

4 Addison Ave • NOTL

July 15th Centennial Sports Park

1565 Four Mile Creek Rd • Virgil

July 22nd Sparky's Park

Tanbark Rd, NOTL

August 5th Niagara-on-the-Green Park

Wright and Young Crescent • NOTL

August 12th Chataqua Park

4 Addison Ave • NOTL

All Ages • Fridays • 10:00am - 12:00pm • Drop-In • FREE

DETAILS ON WWW.NOTLPUBLICLIBRARY.ORG • @NOTLLIBRARY

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT

Karin!



Congratulations Karin Jahnke-Haslam on your retirement from the Tourism Partnership of Niagara!

While we are happy to see you sail off into retirement, we are sad to see you go. Your contributions to growing our great region and your outside volunteer work efforts have left a lasting mark on Niagara. Niagara is in a better place as a result of your efforts and for that, we and the entire tourism industry in Niagara are grateful. Good Luck and enjoy the sunsets.

Tourism Partnership of Niagara Team.

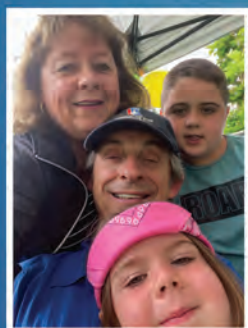
Karin Haslam is Retiring



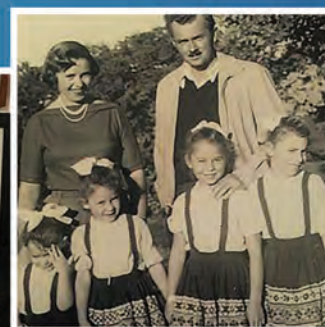
Karin Haslam is fun, fabulous, daring, caring, active, loyal, committed, witty, intelligent, sincere, professional and always smiling!!

After four decades of dedicated, hard work in many facets of banking and tourism, Karin is retiring. Her endless volunteer work included Brock University Director, NOTL Hydro, NOTL Chamber of Commerce (Chair, along with Events & Awards Chair), Niagara College Foundation Board Member, endless committees and no surprise that she was a former NOTL Citizen of the Year.

HER ONLY JOB NOW IS HAVING FUN. LET THE FUN BEGIN!!



RETIREMENT



Congratulations on a well-deserved retirement from all your family and friends. We love you and all the happiness that you bring!!!

Enjoy as you and Rolf sail off into the sunset.

Spearheaded by Janice and Debi



NOTICE OF ADOPTION

The Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara adopted the Niagara Official Plan under Section 17(22) of the *Planning Act, 1990* on June 23, 2022 by By-law No. 2022-47. Once the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approves the Niagara Official Plan, it will come in to force and effect, replacing the existing Regional Official Plan.

The new Niagara Official Plan was prepared pursuant to Section 26 of the *Planning Act, 1990* to comprehensively apply provincial policy and plans, while also addressing Regional priorities and providing direction for local community planning.

This notice of adoption is issued pursuant to Section 17(23) of the *Planning Act, 1990*.

PURPOSE AND EFFECT

The Niagara Official Plan is a long-term land use planning document that shapes and defines our community to the year 2051, with policies that set out what we protect, where and how the region will grow, and policy tools for success. The plan addresses matters such as protection of the natural environment, agriculture, source water, aggregates and petroleum, and cultural heritage and archaeology. It establishes a regional urban structure to strategically manage growth, and facilitates intensification, attainable and affordable housing, and identification of employment areas for protection. Tools such as district and secondary planning, subwatershed planning and urban design, along with supporting infrastructure and transportation systems, are important to growing sustainably and achieving complete and vibrant communities.

MORE INFORMATION

Information regarding the Niagara Official Plan is available in the Planning and Development Services Department at Niagara Region, 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON, L2V 4T7, Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. after July 4, 2022 and at niagararegion.ca/official-plan. Questions regarding the Niagara Official Plan may be directed to **David Heyworth, Manager of Long Range Planning**, by email at David.Heyworth@niagararegion.ca or phone at 905-980-6000 ext. 3476.

WRITTEN AND ORAL SUBMISSIONS

All statutory written and oral submissions made on the Niagara Official Plan have been reviewed and suggestions incorporated, where appropriate. For further information on how consultation on the proposed Niagara Official Plan for the public meeting was addressed, please refer to the relevant appendices in Information Report PDS 14-2022 and Recommendation Report PDS 17-2022 on the Niagara Official Plan website noted above.

RIGHT TO APPEAL – 2022

The decision of the Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara to adopt the Niagara Official Plan is not subject to appeal.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Under Section 17(1) of the *Planning Act, 1990*, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is the approval authority for the Niagara Official Plan adopted under Section 17(22) of the *Planning Act, 1990*. The adopted Official Plan will be forwarded to the Minister as required by Section 17(31) of the *Planning Act, 1990* for a decision.

Any person or public body will be entitled to receive notice of the decision from the approval authority if a written request is made. Requests to be notified of the decision should be sent by mail to:

Regional Director, Central Region
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 13th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2J3

Tel: 416-585-7041
Fax: 416-585-6882

Dated this 29th day of June 2022.

Marynissen Estates supports search and rescue



Randy Kaassen hands Julie Ends of Marynissen Estates a certificate recognizing the winery's support of the local search and rescue volunteers and the work they do. (Randy Klaassen)

Randy Klaassen Special to The Local

Volunteers of the local Civil Air Search And Rescue Association recently held their annual membership meeting, at which those in key leadership roles were recognized for their extra contributions to the organization.

On behalf of Marynissen Estates, retail manager Julie Enns presented some wine donations to the community volunteers in appreciation for their dedication to saving lives.

During the online meeting Alex Cuberovic, CASARA Niagara president, acknowledged those who contribute to the charity's operations, "behind the scenes."

"Without those who provide leadership to our 30 volunteers, we would not be able to maintain a 24/7/365 readiness for call outs," he said.

"These roles are everything from bookkeeping to washroom cleaning; from instructors to those who maintain vehicles,"

Cuberovic told those attending the meeting virtually.

CASARA Niagara operates from Niagara District Airport, and is assigned to searches by Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Trenton. While aviation-focused, in the last while most of the call-outs for have been to search for people missing on Ontario lakes. In addition to conducting searches with their own aircraft and vehicles, CASARA volunteers are also called upon to support crews of 424 Transport and Rescue Squadron (Trenton), which is why NOTL residents may occasionally see the large dark green Hercules aircraft at Niagara District Airport.

Last year members of CASARA Niagara volunteered more than 5,000 hours for training and call-outs. As a registered charity, CASARA Niagara depends on community donations for their base operations. For more information visit <http://caresniagara.ca>.

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

NOTL Businesses contact **Karen** at **905.641.5335** at **karen@notllocal.com**
 Businesses outside NOTL contact **Julia** at **905.934.1040** at **julia@notllocal.com**

Local volunteers involved in air search

Local air search and rescue volunteers Randy Klaassen, shown looking out the window of a Hercules out of Trenton, and Stewart Harris joined members of the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, based in Trenton, in the Hercules aircraft early in the morning of Friday, June 17. They were asked to be spotters in the search for a boater who had gone out fishing the morning before, and hadn't returned home. The OPP, NRP and Canadian Coast Guard were also involved in the search, along with three Niagara volunteers who went to Dunnville to search with a drone. CBC reported the 74-year-old man's body was found in Lake Erie June 22.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Study Completion Municipal Class Environmental Assessment York Road and Four Mile Creek Road Intersection Improvements, St. Davids, Ontario

The intersection of York Road (Regional Road 81) and Four Mile Creek Road (Regional Road 100) is located in the heart of the community of St. Davids in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The intersection is currently controlled by an all-way stop, and during peak periods motorists experience delays. The skewed angle of the intersection also creates vehicle safety issues, while there is an opportunity to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities for the intersection and vicinity.

Niagara Region, through their consultant CIMA+, has completed a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study for the subject intersection in accordance with the planning process for Schedule 'C' projects, as outlined in the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document (2000, as amended in 2007, 2011, and 2015), as approved under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act.

An Environmental Study Report has been prepared to document the planning and decision-making process for the study. By this notice, the Environmental Study Report is being placed on the public record for a 45-calendar day public review from and including, June 30, 2022 to August 15, 2022 on the project website:

niagararegion.ca/projects/regional-road-100/default.aspx

Interested persons may provide written comments to the project contacts within the 45-calendar day review period. All comments and concerns should be sent directly to the Niagara Region project manager and consultant project manager by August 15, 2022.

Maged Elmadhoon, M.Eng., P.Eng.
 Manager, Transportation Planning
 Niagara Region
 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
 Thorold, ON L2V 4T7
 Phone: 905-980-6000, ext. 3583
maged.elmadhoon@niagararegion.ca

Phil Weber, M.Eng., P.Eng.
 Senior Project Manager
 CIMA+
 500 – 5935 Airport Rd
 Mississauga, ON L4V 1W5
 Phone: 905-695-1005, ext. 6732
phil.weber@cima.ca

Section 16 Order

In addition, a request may be made to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks for an order requiring a higher level of study (i.e., requiring an individual/comprehensive EA approval before being able to proceed), or that conditions be imposed (e.g., require further studies), only on the grounds that the requested order may prevent, mitigate or remedy adverse impacts on constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights. Requests on other grounds will not be considered. Requests should include the requester contact information and full name for the Ministry. If no order request is received the project will proceed to design and construction as outlined in the planning documentation.

Visit the Ministry's website for more information on requests for orders under Section 16 of the Environmental Assessment Act:

ontario.ca/page/class-environmental-assessments-section-16-order

The request should be sent by August 15, 2022 in writing or by email to both the following contacts, as well as the project team contacts noted above:

**Minister of the Environment
 Conservation and Parks**
 Ministry of the Environment
 Conservation and Parks
 777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
 Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Director
 Environmental Assessment Branch
 Ministry of the Environment
 Conservation and Parks
 135 St. Clair Ave. W., 1st Floor
 Toronto, ON M4V 1P5
EABDirector@ontario.ca

All personal information included in your request – such as name, address, telephone number and property location – is collected, under the authority of section 30 of the Environmental Assessment Act and is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public. Personal information collected or submitted in writing will be collected, used and disclosed by members of Regional Council and Regional staff in accordance with the **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)**. The written submissions including names, contact information and reports of the public meeting will be made available. Questions should be referred to the Privacy Office at 905-980-6000, ext. 3779 or FOI@niagararegion.ca.

This notice was first issued on June 29, 2022.

Niagara Region unveils Pride crosswalk

Penny Coles
The Local

As Pride Month wraps up, it does so with the addition of a Pride crosswalk installed by the Niagara Region.

And while the rainbow crosswalk covers a wide range of diverse groups, including the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Niagara and beyond, Enzo De Divitis, chair of Pride Niagara, stressed at the unveiling the need for “supporting everyone, and being an ally to everyone. You can’t support this group, and not that

group, or support them this month, but not next month,” he said.

There was much joking about the crosswalk being in Thorold — Thorold Mayor Terry Ugolini spoke of how proud he was to have it in his municipality, while Regional Chair Jim Bradley emphasized it’s in Niagara Region. However it connects to St. Catharines, and is intended to be a symbol of welcoming and inclusivity across the region, Bradley said.

“We are proud of this initiative and want to thank all the parties involved in making this happen,” said Ugolini.

ni. “The City of Thorold is committed to supporting its 2SLGBTQIA+ community and is dedicated to being a responsive city that respects the rights, differences, and dignity of all its people. This new crosswalk shows our commitment to foster a community where every person feels like they belong,” he said.

It was completed last Tuesday, and officially recognized Friday, as traffic passed by and over it at the intersection of Sir Issac Brock Way, and the Schmon Parkway.

It’s a busy and highly visible location, much travelled



Last week Niagara Region added words of welcome to its sign outside the regional buildings on Schmon Parkway. (Penny Coles)

by regional staff, and Brock staff and students, with regional buildings on one side of the intersection, Brock University buildings on the other, and student residences on both sides, as well as a Tim Hortons and McDonald’s side by side.

The design of the Pride crosswalk was developed by the Brock University Human Rights and Equity office, in

Continued on page 19

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(limit 2 per customer)

Cucumber Melon Dark Balsamic

Free with \$65 purchase July 2nd & 3rd

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Symbol of welcoming, acceptance appreciated

Continued from page 18

collaboration with the local 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, “showing our commitment to diversity and inclusion in Niagara,” Bradley told a small crowd gathered for the event.

“Throughout the month of June and beyond, Niagara will continue to promote, educate and drive awareness to benefit local 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities within Niagara,” he said. “Our goal is to foster a community where every person feels they belong.”

The all-inclusive colours of the crosswalk, intended to represent the safety and support of all the communities who walk on it, include black and brown stripes as well as light blue, pink, and white.

“The black and brown represent 2SLGBTQQIA+ community members who are racialized, and have historically and continue to experience marginalization within our communities; the light blue, pink, and white represent transgender community members; finally, the last purple chevron intersects with the white as a reminder of the two-row wampum agreement. These colours represent the Indig-



Jim Bradley, regional chair, Sabrina Constance-Hill, chair of the Niagara Region Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Terry Ugulini, mayor of Thorold; Ken Chan, Brock University's vice-president of administration, Nancy Radclyffe, co-chair of Senior Pride Network Niagara; and Enzo De Divitiis, chair of Pride Niagara; cross the busy intersection with a new Pride crosswalk. *(Penny Coles)*

enous land we walk on and our responsibility to the land and to each other," a regional press release explained.

"We will continue to promote, educate and drive awareness of gender and sexually diverse individuals in our community as part of our efforts to build the most inclusive community possible," said Bradley.

Speakers representing Pride Niagara and Senior Pride Niagara Network expressed gratitude for the

support the crosswalk represents. They explained the importance of having a visible symbol of inclusivity, and how much has changed as such symbols become more and more common.

In his 12 years with Pride Niagara, all volunteer based, De Divitiis said it's been an effort over the years just to get municipalities to raise rainbow flags during Pride Month. There was a time if Pride Niagara wanted to attract vendors at an event,

they had to pick odd days to hold the event, he said, and pay the vendors to come. “Things have drastically changed. We have these positive spaces, safe places,” but, he explained, “nobody else can identify these spaces. You have to know what a safe space is for yourself.”

The crosswalk is a reminder of support, he said, a beacon to show everyone is supported and celebrated.

"I can't wait to see every municipality follow suit."

Representing the Senior Pride Niagara Network, for those 55 and over, Nancy Radclyffe said she feels her group has strong support from “a great group of allies.”

But it's taken a while to get there, she added.

"For 50 years we've been fighting this battle. We're talking about the same things now we've been talking about for 50 years."

She's expanding the battle now to reach more people who deal with seniors, in-

cluding care-givers and staff
in long-term care homes.

About the crosswalk, she said, “you don’t know how much this means, how it makes us stand up stronger and say yes, this is about us. Today we celebrate our successes. Today we celebrate how far we’ve come.”

Sabrina Constance-Hill, chair of the Niagara Region Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee, spoke of her identity struggles as a teenager, being dismissed, told she was confused, she was wrong, “and finding few allies, and fewer places to turn to.” Today, there are places in the community where support exists, she said, referring to the crosswalk “as a symbol of acceptance, pride, hope and opportunity.”

Ken Chan, vice-president of administration at Brock University, comes from a country where it's still illegal to be in a same-sex relationship, and told those gathered at the Pride crosswalk that he came out despite the law. He's proud to be at Brock University, "where we're supported in many ways," he said, and in the Niagara Region, "where everyone is welcome."

The crosswalk, he said, “sends a very strong message that you are safe here.”

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The things we’ve handed down – honouring Harvill Maye

Jane Andres
Special to The Local

If you were passing down a rural stretch of road on a recent Saturday night you may have noticed the tantalizing aroma of rich Caribbean spices drifting towards the

roadside. You may have slowed down as you noticed the glowing of dozens of candles lining the driveway and flickering lights lining the porch of one of several bunkhouses. You would have heard the distinct reggae beat of

lively Jamaican gospel, full of hope and grace. You may have wondered what kind of occasion could draw almost 200 well-wishers to this little cluster of bunkhouses amidst the orchards. The occasion was a candlelight service honouring

Harvill Maye, a beloved co-worker who passed away suddenly of natural causes on June 10.

In Jamaica the candlelight service would have normally marked the beginning of a series of nine-night events leading up to the funeral. Traditions that help cope with grief and loss have to be adapted when so far away from loved ones. One essential tradition that is never compromised though is the coming together to cook and share the familiar tastes of home.

Harvill’s good friend Stanford Williams was adding the final ingredients to a gigantic pot of mannish watah (goat soup), where it was simmering on the stove. A candlelight gathering is not complete without this staple to bring comfort to well-wishers.

Rohan Thompson had started marinating the jerk chicken two days earlier and was carefully tending to the chicken legs as they sizzled on the barbecue, later to top off the plates of rice and peas.

Together coworkers, friends, and neighbours mingled, reminiscing about their late friend and sharing his jokes and stories as they knew he would want them to.

On Sunday evening the next day, Caribbean Workers Outreach Project (CWOP) hosted a combination Father’s Day church service and memorial for Harvill. The theme was The Things We’ve Handed Down.

Harvill’s employer, Scott MacSween, shared the following words: “Harvill started travelling to Canada in 2002 where he worked on an apple farm just outside of Simcoe, up until 2016, at which point the apple farm sold and I was lucky enough to be able to get him transferred to our farm. With all

of Harvill’s expertise with apples, he picked up all the tasks related to pruning, thinning, and harvesting very quickly. Where Harvill really left his mark in farming, though, was when we put him in charge of irrigating all the farms along with his close friend Russell and Marlund. They did an outstanding job. It’s going to be very hard to replace Harvill.

“Harvill was a very-well respected man on our farms, not only to me, my son, and my wife, but to all of his coworkers. This was so profoundly illustrated when I suggested to the men that we should try and raise money for his family. I am proud to say that everyone gave generously.

“So Harvill, our thoughts are with you and your family. Your hard work, dedication, and friendship will never be forgotten. We are all heartbroken and we will miss you dearly. May you rest in peace.”

The memorial service also featured audio messages from Harvill’s wife, Semonea, and his daughter, Oneila, which accompanied a slideshow of family photos and touched everyone’s hearts deeply.

Semonea shared, “Harvill was a very hard-working man, very loving and kind. He’s the one who never wants anyone to feel left behind. He’s the one who is always pushing you to do better, pushing you to be the best you can be. He’s the one that would be encouraging [his coworkers] to save money, all his friends can attest to that.

“I’m just glad that he touched everyone’s heart in a good way. He made an impact on everyone that he came across. This is really hard for everybody, really hard. He was a family man, a man of principles. He was

a principled man and he did not stand for foolishness . . . I want to thank everyone for your support and outpouring of love. Thank you, thank you all. He will be missed. Not just by his family members, not just by me, not just by his children, but by people worldwide. He will be well missed. . .

“To all his friends in the field just think of the memories and remember him in a good way – all the jokes that he used to share . . . To his coworkers I just want to thank you. Thank you, thank you for caring and the support you have shown.”

Semonea went on to express how meaningful it was to them as a family that many of the friendships on the farm carried on into their lives back home in Jamaica.

The culture of care and respect at MacSween farms is beneficial not only to the men living and working on the farm eight months of the year. As Semonea would agree, this care and respect has a direct impact on the families back in Jamaica as well, grateful to know that their fathers, husbands, and sons receive the dignity they deserve.




Losing Harvill was no doubt one of their hardest experiences collectively at MacSween Farms, but the ripples of his influence will continue to inspire others.

Words of wisdom penned by a farmer, Wendell Berry, provide reassurance: “Whatever happens those who have learned to love one another have made their way to the lasting world and will not leave, whatever happens.”

May the memory of Harvill Maye, a cherished member of our community, be as robust and comforting as the special soup Stanford Williams so lovingly prepared.



Peter Reid and Stanford Williams cooking up a traditional favourite for their coworkers and friends. (Photos by Jane Andres)



Notice of Study Completion

Transportation Master Plan - Communities on the Move

In March 2020, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake initiated a Transportation Master Plan (TMP) study. A Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is intended to serve as a long-range strategic plan for Niagara-on-the-Lake to identify transportation infrastructure requirements that address existing challenges and support growth, along with policies to guide transportation and land-use decisions.

The study identified the Town’s transportation needs and opportunities through the year 2031 and recommended multi-modal operational, design, and transportation policies for the Town. Recommendations from the Transportation Master Plan will enhance connectivity between transportation modes to move people sustainably, efficiently, and safely while reducing reliance upon any single mode of transportation.

Prior to the finalization of the TMP and approval by Town Council, members of the public are invited to contribute feedback.

The Process

The Niagara-on-the-Lake TMP study was undertaken in accordance with the Master Planning process of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Municipal Engineers Association, 2000 as amended) (Class EA), which is an approved process under Ontario’s *Environmental Assessment Act*. The EA process includes public engagement and consultation. The TMP provides the framework for future projects that may require further detailed studies under the Municipal Class EA.

To learn more about the process undertaken, please visit <https://www.jointheconversationnotl.org/TransportationMasterPlan>.

Notice of Review Period

A draft TMP Report, which outlines the study’s outcome, has been prepared and is now ready for public review and consultation. This notice announces the start of the 30-day calendar review period for the TMP in accordance with the requirements of the EA process.

Public consultation is a key component of this process, and the Town wants to hear from you. The draft TMP Report will be available for review from June 30 to August 1, 2022, online at <https://www.jointheconversationnotl.org/TransportationMasterPlan>.

Members of the public are invited to review the Report and provide comments by August 1, 2022, on the Join the Conversation link noted above. Comments received help to inform and determine the final stages of the project and will become part of the public record of the study, except for personal information.

In August 2022, Council, having not yet approved or endorsed the Report, will be presented with the final draft Report and a summary of the comments received during the 30-day review period.

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Please contact the study team members listed above if you have any accessibility requirements or questions.

This notice first issued on June 29, 2022



Harvill leaves behind his wife Semonea Newman, and two children, Harvill Maye Jr., 17, and Oneila Maye, 13, as well as his father and five brothers and sisters.

Performing Arts Centre announces exciting new season

Mike Balsom
The Local

The FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines recently announced its 2022-2023 season, with a lineup of shows from September to next summer featuring an assortment of music, dance, theatre, opera, comedy and cultural experiences that are sure to appeal to just about everyone.

"That's sort of the key," director of programming and marketing Sara Palmieri said in a recent interview. "Part of being a presenter is curating, which makes us a bit different from a promoter or a road house. It's important to us to put something together that represents the world and the times that we live in."

Palmieri admitted that it felt a bit surreal to be curating an entire season of performances again after two years of live venues being shuttered off and on due to COVID-19 restrictions. She was happy to book a number of artists who were just itching to get back onto a performing arts stage to present what they've been working on since before March, 2020.

The season kicks off with the sixth annual Celebration of Nations gathering of Indigenous arts, culture and tradition Sept. 9 through 11. Juno, Gemini, Golden Globes and Academy Award winner and Companion of the Order of Canada Buffy Sainte-Marie headlines the Sept. 10 event in downtown St. Catharines.

On the musical side, Canadian talent grabs the spotlight right from the start of the sea-



Afrique en Cirque by Cirque Kalabunte is one of the acrobatic acts that will perform at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre this season.

son, with Tom Cochrane and Red Rider taking the Partridge Hall stage on Sept. 29. Five days later the Tenors make their debut at the same concert hall with their outstanding harmonies that blend classical music and contemporary pop.

Juno Award winning singer-songwriter William Prince appears in November, while other Canadian acts include Bachman and Bachman (Ran-

dy and his son Tal), Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, Cape Breton's Men of the Deeps, Jann Arden, flamenco guitar wizard Jesse Cook and Vancouver-born DJ Kid Koala.

International acts include bluesman Robert Cray, the Original Wailers (members of reggae superstar Bob Marley's original band) and 15-time Grammy winner Ricky Skaggs with his expert bluegrass band

Kentucky Thunder.

"We are finally getting to present the Wailers," a relieved Palmieri smiled. "They were scheduled before the pandemic and had to be postponed. And the picking on that Ricky Skaggs show will be phenomenal. You can't overstate how great those musicians are."

Canada's Ballet Jörgen is the first dance performance, with Anne of Green Gables - The Ballet on Oct. 7. The Aluminum Show combines movement, dance, visual theatre and humour on Dec. 29, while Ballet Edmonton makes their Partridge Hall debut in January with a mixed repertoire program under artistic director Wen Wei Want.

Opera lovers will enjoy Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom in February. The two-act opera tells the Tubman story through the singing of the Nathaniel Dett Chorale, Canada's first

professional choral group dedicated to Afrocentric music of all styles.

Comedian Shaun Majumder, who spent 17 seasons on CBC's This Hour Has 22 Minutes, brings his act to downtown St. Catharines on Dec. 1. Ali Hassan, well-known for his role as host of CBC Radio One's weekly comedy program Laugh Out Loud, performs his Does This Taste Funny? show at Partridge Hall on Jan. 17, while the Girls Night Out Sketch Comedy Troupe celebrates International Women's Day in March.

Palmieri points out that performances from Brooklyn, New York's Red Baarat, combining Indian bhangra with hip-hop and jazz, Lightwire Theatre with their presentation of the classic children's tale The Ugly Duckling, and Ukrainian quartet Dakhabrakha will be like nothing ever seen or heard in the region before.

"It's important to lean into that notion of experiencing something you might not be familiar with," she told The Local.

There's much more in the lineup, including a full season of movies at the Film House, Bravo Niagara! Festival's December presentation of the Count Basie Orchestra, a tribute to the late Gord Downie on the fifth anniversary of his death in October, and acrobatic performances from Cirque Kalabanté and Femmes Du Feu.

Palmieri urges fans of the arts to consider becoming a PAC member for \$125 plus HST. Members are able to order tickets before the general public, save up to 25 per cent off regular ticket prices, can bring friends for free to selected events, and also receive invitations to special events.

Tickets went on sale to the general public this Tuesday. For the full 2022/2023 lineup, visit firstontariopac.ca.



Juno Award winning singer-songwriter William Prince appears in November. (Photos supplied)



International acts include the Original Wailers (members of reggae superstar Bob Marley's original band).

Festival organizers glad to be back with community event

Popular Cherry Festival returns with favourites

Penny Coles
The Local

For more than 30 years the St. Mark's Church Cherry Festival has been an annual tradition that includes the highlight of the event — fresh-baked cherry pies, which quickly sell out.

After a two-year absence, the festival returns this year, along with the delicious pies and jams, and the favourite activities which make the event so popular with locals and out-of-town visitors, says Andrea Douglas, one of the organizers.

This year, there will be a slight difference to the pie sale — the pies are always made ahead of time with local cherries that have been purchased in advance and frozen.

The pies themselves, once assembled, are frozen then baked in time for festival day. For the July 9 event, only about half the pies will be baked, the other half sold frozen, unbaked, providing another option for those who choose to bake it, ready to be enjoyed.

Although there will be hundreds of pies for sale, there won't be the usual number, with the time crunch involved having to delay a decision that there could even be a festival, rather than the planning that typically begins as soon as the previous year's festival is over.

So come early if you want

a pie, says Douglas — there is no doubt they will sell out rapidly as they always do, this year likely quicker than usual.

The one event that will not be available this year is the silent auction — it takes a full year to organize, so when the decision was made that the festival could go ahead, there just wasn't enough time.

"Typically, we begin talking in January, February, about what the festival is going to look like. This year was a little different. We're just really happy it's going ahead, and the excitement is building, for sure," says Douglas.

Other traditional favourites will be back, including a barbecue with peameal bacon sandwiches for breakfast when the festival opens at 9 a.m., coffee and muffins will be served, and a little later, in time for lunch, hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages will be added to the list.

Cherry pie by the slice and the baked goods table, and there will be cherry jam, of course, cherry juice, pea soup, pickled beets, cranberry sauce, as well as beef cottage pie and lasagna, all made by a team of volunteers working away in the church hall kitchen, led by Gary Burroughs, the cottage pie and lasagna frozen.

The much-loved gently-used clothing, treasures and book sales will return, and there will be a children's area, as always, Douglas says,

with live music in the church at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. with Jim Bourne, the music director and organist at St. Mark's, providing entertainment. The Fort George Fife and Drum Corps will be performing at noon. There will also be two heritage interpreters on site, two young men "passionate about history," giving tours of the church and talking about its significant history in the community, thanks to a government summer jobs grant.

New at the festival will be the NOTL Museum's Tiny Museum, which is able to travel into the community and share stories of local history. It was built and ready to go just as the pandemic hit, so this will be the first year of its use, attending local events with museum exhibits. There are several different exhibits tailored to the small space, which be rotated as it will travel around NOTL this summer. The display at the Cherry Festival will be People of Niagara, and will tell the stories of the early settlers of Niagara, including the Loyalists, and the Black and Menonite communities.

While the festival is a fundraiser, with the money raised going to church operations, it is always more about giving back to the community, and this year that seems more important than ever, says Douglas.

While it's difficult to know what to expect in the way of a turnout, volunteers are hoping for a good crowd.

In past years, attendance has easily been more than 1,000, and maybe as high as

2,000, although it's difficult to keep track with people coming and going throughout the day, says Douglas.

There are fewer American visitors coming to town, though, she adds, and they have always loved the Cherry Festival, so their absence will likely make a difference.

"However, it feels so good to have things starting up

again. I've missed them myself, and I know others have as well," she says, as she looks forward to attending Canada Day celebrations in town as well, and is feeling more excited, and even privileged, as the Cherry Festival gets closer, to be planning it once again for the community after three years since the last one.

"We are all excited — this

is an important event for the parish, but also for the community. We love interacting with the community, seeing everyone having fun together, looking at the clothing, picking up their pies. This is really about community."

The event runs from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, July 9, at St. Mark's Anglican Church on Byron Street.



Cherry Festival volunteers Pat Kingdon, Joan Bourk and Andrea Douglas with some of the items for the popular treasure sale. (Nicholas Rowdon)

Museum curator camp runs one week in August

Local Staff

The great outdoors and the world of sports are part of the activities included at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's popular Kid Curator Camp, back this summer to the delight of amateur sleuths, curators and aspiring Olympians.

The Kid Curator Camp adventures will be offered Aug. 15 to 19.

The campers will experience Summer Sports and Games, hosting their own Curator Games to complement the Canada Summer Games, and participate in their own cricket, pickleball or lawn bowling matches. There is also a hike planned with Owen Bjorgan.

Cost is \$125 per child for the week. The camp runs from Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information and registration, please call Shawna Butts at 905-468-3915 or drop by the museum at 43 Castlereagh

Street, NOTL.

So get those running shoes, swimsuits, and bats ready - Kid Curators are coming.



The kids attending this year's museum day camp will be led on a hike by local Owen Bjorgan. (Photo supplied)



Diane Turner has made a lot of cherry pies for St. Mark's Church, and in 2019, when this was taken, the most ever. There will still be lots of pies for sale, but get there early! (File photo)

Jazz 'odd choice' for pianist with Indigenous heritage

'Jazz and swing just spoke to me,' says Sean Stanley

Mike Balsom
The Local

Before turning the focus to their upcoming summer festival, the TD Niagara Jazz Festival closes the book on their Twilight Jazz and Blooz series on July 4 with a performance by the Sean Stanley Quartet at Spirit in Niagara (SiN) Distillery.

The 1920s-themed Lakeshore Road business is the perfect setting for the group, as bandleader and pianist Stanley is a huge admirer of the music of Jelly Roll Morton and Duke Ellington, two jazz legends who reigned supreme during that decade.

Stanley admits his original compositions are heavily influenced by Ellington, and are often written with a big band in mind, though he rarely has the chance to perform with bands larger than his quartet or trio. For his Niagara-on-the-Lake performance, he promises to play a few of those originals, as well as the music of Ray Charles, Lester Young and Erroll Garner.

In the Toronto music world, Stanley is not your typical jazz pianist. He is one of very few Toronto jazz musicians with an Indigenous background (Pottawatomie/Ojibwe and Acadian) and comes from a much less privileged upbringing than the majority of his contemporaries. In addition, he overcame homelessness in his teens and is a self-taught musician, unlike many of his peers, who studied jazz at university or

college.

"It's not as common now," he says of his road to jazz, "but if you look back in the history of the music, a lot of the first black jazz players came from that kind of background. It was less institutionalized back then, there was a lot more mentorship. Louis Armstrong learned from King Joe Oliver, for instance. It was learned in a more oral sense."

A guitarist in his teens, Stanley learned to play all his favourites at the time - Red Hot Chili Peppers, Nirvana - while listening to the radio. He dabbled a bit with rap and hip hop, moved to bass, then found that he was able to learn more things on the keyboard.

When the Ray Charles biopic (*Ray*, in 2004) came out he found the inspiration he was looking for. From there, his musical palette expanded as friends led him to learn more about jazz through exposing him to the music of Louis Armstrong and his Hot Fives and Hot Sevens ensembles.

"When I heard jazz and swing for the first time, it just spoke to me," Stanley says on the line from his Scarborough home. "My grandfather on my Dad's side was a banjo player, a bluegrass musician. I heard a lot of the same rhythms in jazz."

Stanley now 35 years old, speaks of the time when he was just 15, and he, his mother and sister were forced to turn to the shelter system in Toronto. The family's struggle with homelessness resulted in

Sean not getting past Grade 9 in school.

After about a year in the shelter system, he moved with his mother and sister into the Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Homes, an 87-unit housing complex for the Indigenous community situated in south-east Scarborough. His father would drop in from time to time to stay there, too.

After about three years at the Dumont Homes, Stanley was back in the shelters, still trying to progress as a musician and taking jobs where he could find them. During this time, he found himself adopted in a way by a group of Bay Street stock traders who admired his 'hustler' spirit.

"They were a bunch of Jewish dudes," he says. "They kind of helped me along. I was a natural salesman, and I could talk to people, but I didn't have any tact. They took me in and helped me, they moulded me. I worked with them doing phone sales for about three years while I continued to work on my music."

At 21 years old he moved into an apartment on his own, and began hitting the open mic circuit as often as possible.

"I got out of that cycle basically by sheer will and determination," he tells The Local. "I learned how to save, how to budget. I got such an education from those (Bay Street) guys."

His lack of a formal musical education meant that some in the jazz world didn't



The Sean Stanley Quartet will be playing at the Spirit in Niagara Distillery July 4, a perfect, 1920s-themed location for the quartet's style of jazz. (Photo supplied)

take him seriously at first. Jazz musicians can often be elitist, and many gravitate toward playing with those they know from their days at the University of Toronto or Humber College jazz programs, for instance. He often faced prejudice, racism and classism.

He acknowledges that jazz might seem like an odd choice for a musician with an Indigenous background.

"We're native people, but we live in the city," Stanley says of him and his immediate family. "We didn't grow up learning our traditional dance and music. Living in the city we're not able to resist the strength of integration with other cultures around the world."

"I had a lot of barriers that others didn't face," Stanley adds. "Getting into the scene

was difficult at first, I wasn't good enough at reading and playing and writing it for other musicians. I had a longer learning curve."

But he put his nose to the grindstone and persevered, always working, always learning, and picking up influences along the way. Ten years after seeing that Ray Charles biopic, Stanley was playing professionally with some of the top musicians in Toronto.

During the pandemic, he turned to busking on the streets as much to keep up his chops as to earn a bit of money. So he's excited to be playing the final event of the Monday night TD Niagara Jazz Festival series.

"Juliet (Dunn, the festival's executive director and co-creator) has taken an interest in me," he says. "I appreciate that

she understands that my story is a lot different than others."

For July 4, Sean's quartet will be rounded out by bassist Chris Adriaanse, Andrew McCarthy on drums and Juno award winner Kyle Tard-Stoll on tenor sax. The show begins at 6 p.m., with doors opening an hour earlier. Ticket prices range from \$19 to \$39 with both theatre-style and table seating options.

As well, the lineup for the Summer Jazz Festival has been announced. It kicks off on July 20 with a performance by Dizzy and Fay (Mark Lalama and Amanda Walther) at Stratus Vineyards in NOTL and continues for six nights, until July 24 World Music Day at Club Lasalle and Sunset Beach in St. Catharines.

Details are available at niagarajazzfestival.com.

Sheer genius

Fred Curtis was an old-school barber and quite a dapper fellow, waxing his moustache to a point, recalls Robin Howe, who grew up in town and recently came across this photograph. Curtis was actually a town undertaker before becoming a barber, he says. This photo made the Niagara Advance back in '64 or '65 when Howe, maybe 11 or 12 at the time, happened to be in the barbershop for what he calls his 'puddin bowl' haircut. Curtis was showing him one of his antique shaving mugs, he says.



Local DJ knows how to read his audience

Mike Balsom
The Local

Marinko Jareb is much more than just the resident DJ at both Stratus Vineyards and BarBea Wine Shop and Snack Bar in Niagara-on-the-Lake. He's a music curator, a musicologist, a world traveller and Niagara's longest-running promoter and proponent of electronic dance music (EDM).

Jareb was a regular contributor to *PULSE! Niagara Magazine* for a number of years, and has also written about electronic music for Toronto's *Exclaim! Magazine*. He's been a member of the Niagara Artists' Centre (NAC) since the mid-1990s and has in-

stalled soundscapes there to enhance the gallery experience.

He has also released music and remixes under his own name, is an annual fixture at the Toronto's Cherry Beach electronic music summer parties, and will be spinning music for the NOTL Chamber of Commerce's annual Shades of Summer evening on August 22.

Born in Stuttgart, Germany, Jareb came to Canada at three years old when his family settled in Montreal. Shortly after, his Croatian father, who worked on the liners that travelled the canal, decided to move the family to St. Catharines to be closer to members of that community.

Also known as 'DJ Marinko' and 'Marinko Marinkov', Jareb first got the EDM bug during his high school days at Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School in St. Catharines. Shortly after that he connected with the owner of an independent record label in Finland, and began his career in the music industry.

"I travelled his network performing," Jareb tells the Local. "He was based in Helsinki, but we travelled to Russia, Sweden, northern Germany, the U.K., Estonia and Latvia. It was an incredible time. I got to push my creativity and see the world at the same time."

It was the late 1990s, a

burgeoning time for electronic music, a fresh new sound that was spreading via underground music clubs but pushing hard into the mainstream.

"Suddenly, the scene came to a big, crashing halt, right around 9/11," says Jareb. "Of course there were border issues, but changes happened over in Europe, too. The smaller clubs, 300 to 400 people, all closed, and I wasn't a big enough name to make it into the big spaces. I had a bit of a career crisis at the time."

To make ends meet, he began to take on day jobs, and also started supplementing his income with every DJ's bread and butter gig - working weddings. Some newly-married couples in Niagara and elsewhere may not have known at the time they were hiring such a skilled DJ for their big day.

And far from feeling that the weddings were a slog, Jareb took every opportunity to learn more about his craft.

"It actually gave me a good understanding of how music fits into people's lives," he reflects, "and brought me a bigger breadth of music. I was able to understand what makes certain songs special and important to people. Some songs might resonate with the bride and groom but maybe not with the whole crowd."

For Jareb, it was about recognizing the gaps between popular music and what might be important to a specific individual. He began to see the role that music plays in creating an atmosphere, and in sustaining a vibe or a feeling in different situations.

"I took all of those things in," he says. "I worked with Bellosound, too, a Toronto DJ service that was really forward-thinking in terms of aesthetics and design. They were very conscious of making things on stage look really crisp and cool."

When Gord's Place was still open on James Street in St. Catharines, Jareb ran the board

on Thursday nights for many years. He remembers a young Niagara Falls kid named Joel Zimmerman, known professionally as deadmau5 and one of the most successful EDM artists ever, coming in regularly.

"He was underage at the time," Jareb recalls. "He would just hang out, chit-chat with people. He was significantly younger than us, but he was soaking it all in. But he was smart, and saw the bigger picture."

When asked if there was an EDM artist or specific DJ who influenced him, Jareb points to former CFNY-FM DJ Chris Sheppard, one of the most in-demand club disc jockeys of the 1980s and 1990s. His Pirate Radio Sessions drew crowds in the biggest clubs across Canada.

Through the years, Jareb has surely influenced many like-minded individuals. And he's often the first to sing the praises of others, such as local artists Distinct Motive (Phil Shore) and Frankie Gunns (Ryan Stevens) of NOTL.

Jareb also lauds Ruffino's and BarBea owner Ryan Crawford and Stratus Vineyards estate director Suzanne Janke as two of his biggest supporters.

"I couldn't have asked for better partners than Ryan and Suzanne," he raves. "They get the fact that we are working in a very competitive industry. Everybody's trying to do something unique to differentiate themselves. They both put their faith in me."

During the early months of the pandemic, Crawford enlisted Jareb to do a series of livestream DJ sessions on the Twitch streaming platform. They got so popular that people started to come down to NOTL to visit Ruffino's because of the livestreams.

Jareb can be found at one corner of the bar at BarBea on Monday nights, sitting behind his Denon Prime Go DJ mixer attached to his laptop. He reads the room, gauging the crowd for their responses to the music he tries out, and making changes on the fly. Tonight, the selections consist of a number of obscure funk and disco remixes that provide a perfect backdrop for the visitors sipping wines and enjoying the menu.

On Saturdays and Sundays he's at Stratus from noon until 6 pm.

"Stratus is a beautiful venue, and the wines speak for themselves," says Jareb. "I'm just there to provide a relaxed, beautiful and kind of trendy backdrop to that experience. I read the demographic and try to provide the music I think they might like."

And he's looking forward to the Shades of Summer event, for which he has been providing music for about six years.

"It's a great night," he says. "It's beautiful to see that street transformed, and to see the party atmosphere. It's a real treat because it only happens once a year. It's a really beautiful event."

The indefatigable father of two shows off his new acquisition, a three-dimensional camera he plans to use to create images for his soundscapes. He also talks of his idea to rig up his bicycle so he can spin tunes while riding, with the new camera capturing the spectacle for his social media feeds (@djmarinko on Instagram).

Last year his track *Toronto Sakura* was picked up by a record label based in Cologne, Germany. Jareb says he is working on more new remixes, and is considering self-releasing his work via Bandcamp. And he has a new persona he's ready to try out.

"I have a mask, and I'm calling myself Kid Chrome," he says. "It's a way to make a distinction between my party and festival work, which will be Kid Chrome, and my work with wineries and fine dining, which will stay under the Marinko name."

A master of reading just about any crowd, you can bet that Marinko Jareb's Kid Chrome persona will find his own audience.



A Monday night regular at BarBea, Marinko Jacob draws a crowd. (Mike Balsom)



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DJ Marinko Jacob knows how to spin the tunes. (Photo supplied)

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Meet Predators' new coach and general manager

Mike Balsom
The Local

This Thursday, June 30 from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. the Niagara-on-the-Lake community centre is hosting an open house for residents to explore activities that take place at town facilities.

New Niagara Predators general manager Andrew Ferlatte and head coach Kevin Taylor will be at the community centre during that time to represent the team that plays their home games at Virgil's Meridian Credit Union Arena.

Ferlatte and Taylor are looking forward to introducing themselves to the community and to answering questions about the team's second season in Niagara.

Predators to hold open skate sessions at the Gale Centre

Also this Thursday, June 30, from 8:30 until 9:30 p.m., the Predators will be holding an open skate session for interested players at the Gale Centre in Niagara Falls. Coach Kevin Taylor says the cost to players is \$40 to participate.

Following this Thursday's skate, the sessions will move to Wednesdays, every other week, also at the Gale Centre. Any interested players from 15 to 21 years of age are welcome to come out.

Dante Massi to play with Swedish team

Dante Massi, the 2021-2022 Niagara Predators forward, has signed a contract to play professional hockey

in Sweden for the upcoming season. He'll be leaving in September for Hagfors, Sweden to play for the Viking Hockey Club. Hagfors is about 330 km northwest of Stockholm.

The speedy 5'7" forward from Niagara Falls joined the Preds last year and led the team in assists, with 59 and points, with 74. Team president and owner Robert Turnbull repeatedly

centred out Massi through the season as a team leader, one who was never afraid to dig into the corners for the puck and take on opponents twice his size.

At 22 years old now, the

graduate of St. Paul Catholic Secondary School has aged out of the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League (GMHL) and was ineligible to return to the Predators this year.



Niagara Falls resident Danti Massi, one of the Predators' top players, has aged out of the league, and is heading off to play in Sweden. (Photo submitted)



Head coach Kevin Taylor will be at the community centre Thursday. (Photo submitted)



The Niagara Predators have hired Andrew Ferlatte as their new general manager. Photo submitted)

On top of their game



With their coaches pitching to them, the seven to nine-year-olds of the NOTL minor softball league had fun improving their skills on a beautiful summer evening on the baseball diamonds. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



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REAL ESTATE WILLS BUSINESS

Games torchbearers are community volunteers

Mike Balsom
The Local

Wade Stayzer, Meridian Credit Union's chief people and culture officer, says sponsorship of the Niagara-on-the-Lake leg of the 2022 Niagara Canada Summer Games Torch Relay is a nod to the organization's historical presence here.

"Clearly, part of our roots are in Niagara-on-the-Lake," the lifelong Niagara resident says. "It goes back to the Niagara Credit Union days. When we looked at it from the symbolism perspective, that's definitely where we wanted to be, in this community."

Stayzer was chosen as one of the dozen torchbearers for July 30, when the iconic symbol of the games will make its way from Queenston Heights down to the Meridian Credit Union Arena. He'll have the honour of walking it into its final destination for the day, at about 12:30 pm.

"It's very special for me," Stayzer says. "There will be lots of Meridian folks there when I walk it into the arena. It'll be nice to bring it home, and I'm pleased to be a part of it for the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake."

Stayzer doesn't have to carry the torch to be a part of the games, though. Meridian is also the volunteer sponsor and Stayzer sits on the board of directors for the games.

"We were in pretty early," says Stayzer, who is also the credit union's vice-president of business banking.

"It's an amazing opportunity to align our culture from a volunteerism perspective. It's driving some great engagement within our organization."

As a board member, Stayzer says he under-



Linda Chang is an active volunteer who wants to help raise awareness of breast cancer. (Photos supplied)

stands the potential of the games as an economic driver for the region, as well as the impact it could have on the culture of the community, bringing the whole region together.

"The torch relay is for all abilities, it's walk, bike or roll," he explains. "That's a key piece of the Canada Games. It's the only event where the athletes and para-athletes compete at the same games. That's a really important piece for us."

Stayzer has chosen to walk for the event, saying he's not a runner. Neither is St. David's resident Linda Chang, but she has chosen a slightly faster pace for her section of the relay, which is from Line 5 to Four Mile Creek Road.

"It won't be at a fast

pace," Chang laughs, "I do stay active. I hike a lot and do a bit of yoga too. But I'm definitely not a runner."

She'll be joined by her husband Cam and their 18-year-old son William, and she couldn't be more excited to have been chosen to carry the torch.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," says Chang. "I wanted to represent a segment of the population (Asian-Canadians) that is not visible as far as being engaged in the community. We're sort of under the radar. I wanted to add some diversity to the mix."

Chang is also a breast cancer survivor, and that ordeal has certainly influenced her desire to take on the torch relay challenge.

"After you've had a life-threatening illness, you want to do something



Wade Stayzer is a volunteer and board member of the Canada Summer Games.

different all the time," she says. "You want to live life to the fullest. It sounds cliché but it's true. I would never have applied for this if I hadn't fought cancer. When you don't know how long you're going to be around you just want to do everything."

Chang's cancer was diagnosed as stage two in 2018. She underwent a year of chemotherapy and 26 rounds of radiation, and also had a double mastectomy. Through it all she did her best to continue working at the headmaster's office at Ridley College.

"I didn't want to sit at home and feel sorry for myself," says Chang. "I would have treatment, it would knock me out for five to seven days, then I would go back to work. I'd work a week, then it was back to the chemo chair."

It went on and on like that for about six months."

She became involved during that time with Wellspring Niagara, taking all of their programs that support cancer patients, and eventually became a volunteer there.

And Chang is quick to laud the staff at the Walker Family Cancer Centre in St. Catharines for providing her with the best of care.

Chang is definitely not an attention seeker, and was actually a bit reluctant to sit for this interview. But she says that part of her reasoning for wanting to be a torchbearer is to advocate for other women to take care of themselves and know the signs of breast cancer.

"Too many of us are too busy to check, too busy being moms, too busy to take care of our own well-be-

ing," Chang laments. "We must take care of ourselves. Regular self-exams and early detection are so important. We need to be proactive about it. It saves lives."

Another cause that is near and dear to her heart is the Days for Girls charity. In 2011, Chang spearheaded the formation of a NOTL chapter of the international organization that provides sustainable, reusable feminine hygiene kits for girls and women around the world.

"I love crafting and sewing, and when this came along I felt it was a great way for me to help other women, too," she says. "When I started to do it, I was handing my kits to a chapter in Ottawa. I decided to form my own team, and it was a one-woman show for a little while I helped chapters in Grimsby and Hamilton."

Eventually, local resident Linda Enns contacted her and began to help with the sewing. Enns was instrumental in growing the team, holding sewing nights at the Niagara United Mennonite Church on Niagara Stone Road. Their kits have gone to girls in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Malawi and other places through the international network. Some kits have also gone to local women through Community Care and United Way Niagara.

Enns has since taken over the operations for the local chapter as Chang stepped back behind the scenes, doing some administrative work and the occasional presentation.

As for the torch relay, Chang says even though running is not her thing, she's not doing any real preparation for July 30.

"I'm pretty active, so I don't think I'll have any problem running one kilometre," she chuckles. "I'm really too busy to think about it. I'm really just telling everyone about it, hoping to raise awareness that the Canada Summer Games are here."

Chang will also be volunteering at both the opening and closing ceremonies of the games, and hopes to be a spectator when she can, as well. And one of those events is happening right at NOTL's Memorial Park.

"I'm interested in tennis," she says, "and rowing as well. I'll be out there watching both of those events."

"This is really about people," she adds. "It's about all the 12 municipalities, and the hundreds and hundreds of us involved."

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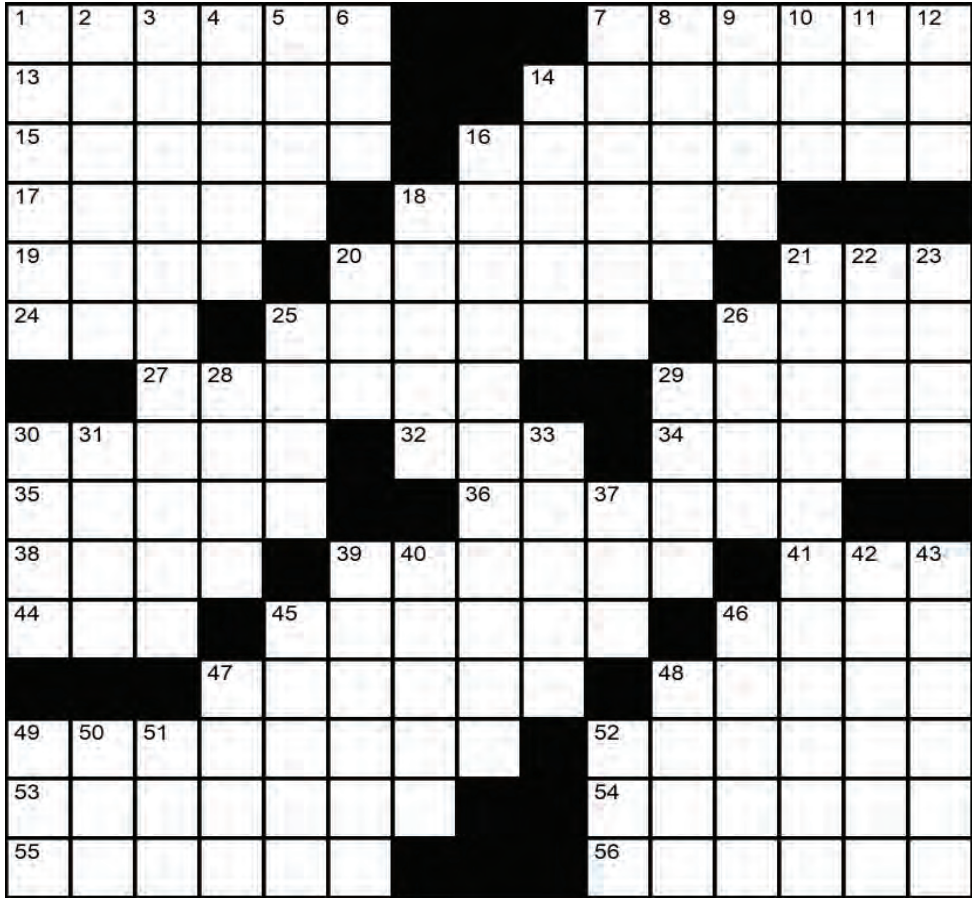
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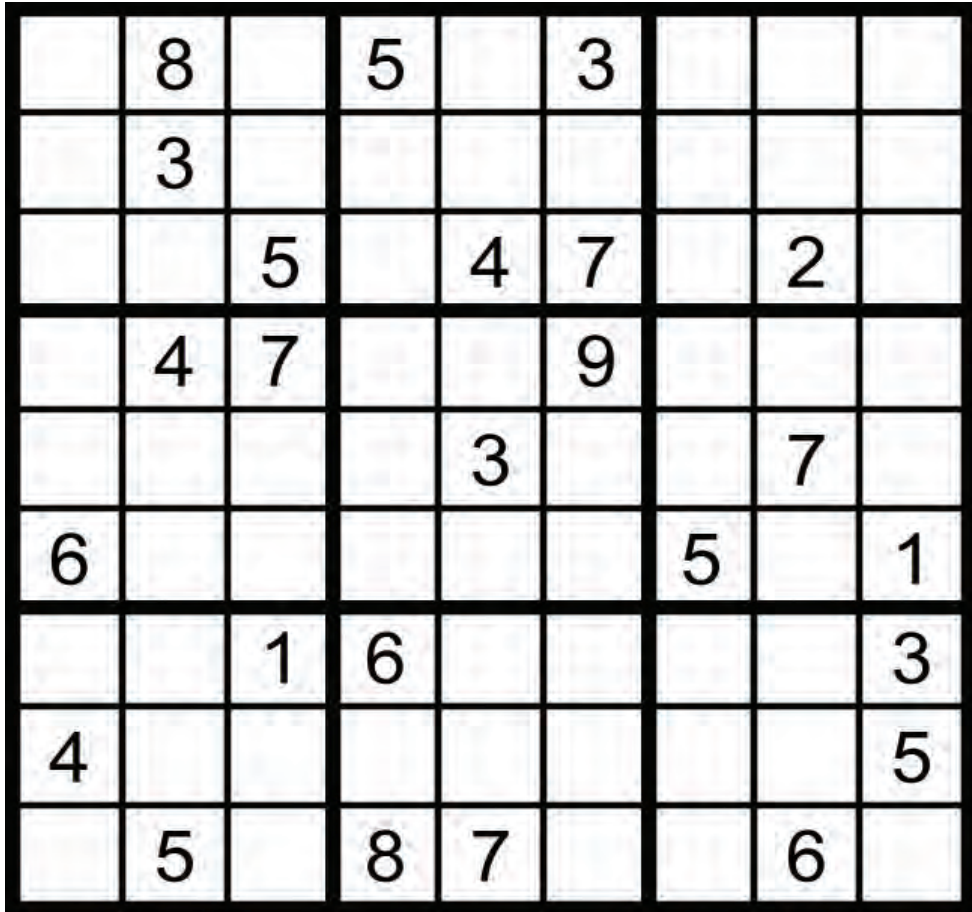
CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU



- Across:**

 - 1 Habitual practice
 - 7 National park in Tennessee
 - 13 Punctual
 - 14 Self-destruction
 - 15 In this place
 - 16 University of California campus site
 - 17 In broad daylight
 - 18 Does puzzles like this one
 - 19 Consults
 - 20 Shaped
 - 21 Dram
 - 24 "The Last Ship" channel
 - 25 Reimburse
 - 26 King Cole's fiddlers, for example
 - 27 Kind of couch
 - 29 Fine-grained rock
 - 30 Steam
 - 32 Admiration
 - 34 Buffalo Bill and Iron Eyes
 - 35 President who wrote "Liberty, once lost, is lost forever"
 - 36 Seasoned
 - 38 Father
 - 39 For the nonce
 - 41 Vase
 - 44 Social group
- Down:**

 - 1 Share the emceeing
 - 2 Bumpy
 - 3 Wise to urban ways
 - 4 Bleachers' features
 - 5 Leave out
 - 6 Chess pieces, informally
 - 7 Questionnaire
 - 8 Raised drastically
 - 9 Finishes off a cake
 - 10 Small, in Dogpatch
 - 11 "--- to a Nightingale" (Keats)
 - 12 "I object!"
 - 14 1965 civil rights march site
 - 16 Get an advance
 - 18 Bulgarian capital
- 45 Experimental kind of pig, maybe
 - 46 Your largest joint
 - 47 "Hogan's Heroes" actor --- Klemperer
 - 48 Sudden attacks
 - 49 Notorious White House intern
 - 52 Ventilate
 - 53 Pistil parts
 - 54 What Hepburn called Tracy
 - 55 Agree
 - 56 Became taut
 - 20 Gangster's foe
 - 21 ET radios nun about groups of workers
 - 22 Smooth-talking
 - 23 Lear's Pobble lost them
 - 25 They don't go off
 - 26 Norse thunder god
 - 28 Domesticated
 - 29 Surface gunk
 - 30 Deepest part
 - 31 "Nurse Jackie" lead --- Falco
 - 33 Consumer, in a diner
 - 37 "--- With Mussolini" (Zeffirelli movie)
 - 39 Puckers
 - 40 Where many participants get cold feet?
 - 42 Lower
 - 43 Wrote code within code
 - 45 Aladdin's factotum
 - 46 Member of a Myanmar ethnic group
 - 47 Lean and muscular
 - 48 Ready for harvest
 - 49 Official go-betweens
 - 50 "Little" '60s singer
 - 51 "One --- or Another" (hit Blondie song)
 - 52 Bermuda time, initially



OBITUARY



NEUFELD, THOMAS JOHN

September 5, 1951 – June 23, 2022

It is with heavy hearts our family announces the passing of Thomas.

He will be greatly missed and forever loved by his brother and sisters, Paul (Nancy) Neufeld, Charlotte (Arno) Letkemann and Rita (Peter) DeMoel, his daughter Cynthia Neufeld, son and daughter-in-law James (Shelley) Neufeld.

His grandchildren have so many fond memories of their Opa / Choo Choo Grandpa and will certainly miss him dearly; Ashton, Justina, Blake, Josie, Danya and Jolee will always hold him close in their hearts.

He leaves behind and will be fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, and extended family.

He will always be remembered for his love for dogs, motorcycles, trains, and racing. He will be missed for his great smile and loud laugh.

He was always an extremely hard worker at the many careers he had, diesel mechanic, general contractor, realtor, and building inspector.

His family extends a heartfelt and sincere 'Thank You' to all his friends, doctors, nurses, and emergency services for their care and compassion over these last couple years.

Family welcome friends to Pleasantview Funeral Home, 2250 Highway 20, Fonthill (905-892-1699) for a Memorial Service on Thursday, June 30, 2022 at 11:00 am followed by a Celebration of Life from 12:00 pm to 2:30 pm.

If so desired/in lieu of flowers, donations in Thomas's memory can be made to the Niagara SPCA and Humane Society, Welland. Please share valued memories and condolences online at pleasantviewcemetery.ca

NOTICES

To place an Obituary or
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905.934.1040
Deadline is Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from
June 22, 2022

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

Across: 1 Custom, 7 Shiloh, 13 On time, 14 Suicide, 15 Herein, 16 Berkeley, 17 Overt, 18 Solves, 19 Sees, 20 Formed, 21 Tot, 24 TNT, 25 Defray, 26 Trio, 27 Studio, 29 Shale, 30 Be mad, 32 Awe, 34 Codys, 35 Adams, 36 Mature, 38 Sire, 39 Pro tem, 41 Um, 44 Set, 45 Guinea, 46 Knee, 47 Werner, 48 Raids, 49 Lewinsky, 52 Air out, 53 Ovaries, 54 Spence, 55 Say yes, 56 Tensed.

Down: 1 Co-host, 2 Uneven, 3 Street-smart, 4 Tiers, 5 Omit, 6 Men, 7 Survey, 8 Hiked, 9 Ices, 10 L.I., 11 Ode, 12 Hey, 14 Selma, 16 Borrow money, 18 Sofia, 20 Fed, 21 Trade unions, 22 Oily, 23 Toes, 25 Duds, 26 Thor, 28 Tame, 29 Scum, 30 Bass, 31 Edie, 33 Eater, 37 Tea, 39 Purses, 40 Rinks, 42 Reduce, 43 Nested, 45 Genie, 46 Karen, 47 Wiry, 48 Pipe, 49 L Os, 50 Eva, 51 Way, 52 A S T.



Small Talk Vineyards closing for good

Rick VanSickle
Special to The Local

The colourful Niagara-on-the-Lake winery and cidery called Small Talk Vineyards and Shiny Apple Cider is closing its doors for good at the end of the month.

Owner and CEO of Small Talk, Hank Hunse, calls it “the end of an era.” His father Lambert Hunse purchased the property, located at 1242 Irvine Road, when he came to Canada from the Netherlands in 1954 along with his wife Grace. They originally had a fruit and poultry farm that the family replanted as vineyards in 1985. The then over

200-acre vineyard released its first vintage under the Stonechurch name in 1990.

Eleven years ago, Lambert’s eldest son, Hank, took over the business and began re-branding it as Small Talk Vineyards, and in June 2014 launched Shiny Apple Cider. The property is 27 acres and has 11 grape varieties under vine. Lambert passed away in June, 2020. “It was rebranded into cider because it had higher growth potential than wine,” said Hunse, who is married with four children and eight grandkids.

Hunse said the reason for the closure can be placed squarely at the feet of

COVID-19. The rebranding to include cider took off when he first introduced it to the market and did well through the first year of COVID, but started to falter into the second year. The category relied heavily on bars and festivals for its consumer base and “it just evaporated, it just died and it’s not coming back,” he said.

The Shiny Apple brand was sold to Diamond Estates last August. A neighbour has purchased the estate vineyards, Diamond is taking over the retail facility and some bulk wine and bottled wine is still for sale.

Hunse said he needs to be

off the property by the end of October and still needs to sell all the winery equipment and contents of the retail store. All the retail staff went to Diamond.

“It’s a crying shame,” Hunse said. “I wish the industry in Niagara lined up together, we need to have our own identity.” He pointed to other regions that focus on one or two grapes and work as an industry to get recognition for what they do best. He laments the fact that in Niagara the industry is fractured. There is no focus, Hunse said.

The winery/cidery will be missed in Niagara. It “prided itself on being the most fun,

colourful, happy place in all of wine country. Offering a series of distinctive ciders and wines that expose the dramatic gap between what you

say ... and what you think.”

Sadly, it doesn’t look like Small Talk will be the only victim of COVID-19

-winesinniagara.com.



Small Talk Vineyards has suffered from lost business during the pandemic, beyond recovery, and is closing its doors for good. (Facebook photo)



Junk in the Trunk

Megan Vanderlee (left) says she was happy with the turnout — of venders and shoppers — at the Royal Canadian Legion Junk in the Trunk event, and hopes there will be another one soon. Sue Bernier of St. Davids was selling necklaces to support Wellspring Niagara. (Mike Balsom)





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