



Celebrate
this year's
grads!

pages
12-14



Karl Dockstader of the Niagara Regional Native Centre has been keeping the healing fire burning. People have been stopping by since it was started last Friday, and it will continue until sunrise this Friday. The volunteers at the fire could always use food and water, and wood for the fire, he says. (Penny Coles)

Temporary fix finished at Balls Beach Park

Penny Coles
The Local

It took just a day's work to repair damages to the large stone barrier providing shoreline protection to Balls Beach Park, but it's only a temporary fix to ensure the area is safe for those walking and climbing on the rocks.

Following an "incident that led to an unfortunate groyne (rock structure) failure" at the park, town staff "took immediate action to ensure public safety in the area," says a town news release issued last Friday, including putting up barricades, caution tape, onsite signage, and hiring a security guard to prevent access into the rock area, which was originally intended to protect the shoreline and to provide a safe area to walk. That was followed by some work at the park Saturday to retrieve the rocks and put them back in place to once again make the area safe, while a permanent solution is designed.

Rankin Construction was

able to complete the work of repositioning and flattening the unstable rocks Saturday. The objective, the town news release said, was for the beach to be open and safe for public use before the Canada Day long weekend.

The town's engineering consultant was going to oversee the works, and town staff onsite "periodically," said CAO Marnie Cluckie, with a report back to staff expected once the area is deemed safe for public use.

The "incident" the town's statement referred to, that caused the unsafe conditions, took place overnight March 14, when a storm washed away some of the sand the large anchor stones were sitting on, and one of the stones was completely swept away.

It was sitting in deep water, partially buried in sand, says Ron Simkus, a retired mining engineer and Dock Area resident who monitors the water level and wave action at the beach.

Continued on page 2

Sacred healing fire keeps burning

Penny Coles
The Local

With the approach of Canada Day, there are growing calls from Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to cancel celebrations and instead use the time to grieve those who died at residential schools.

Meanwhile, the fire keepers at the Niagara Regional Native Centre on Airport Road, with respect, calm and kindness, are concentrating

on their purpose and their responsibilities, offering the community a safe and sacred place to mourn, to remember, and to share their grief with others.

They are keeping a healing fire going for seven days, 24 hours a day, for anyone who needs help working through their grief, and to pay their respects to those who were lost.

It began last Friday, at noon, and will continue until sunrise Friday, July 2.

When Karl Docksta-

der, executive director felt the need for the seven-day healing fire, the country was reeling from the news of hundreds of Indigenous children who were taken from their families to attend residential schools, recently found buried in graves on school properties. But while there was surprise and shock expressed over the horrific treatment of young children, and the responsibility of the government and church for what happened, the news was not

a surprise to the second and third generation Indigenous people who, all their lives, have heard the stories passed down through their families, says Dockstader.

Canada Day is not a day of celebration for Indigenous people, nor is Canada a country that should be celebrated, he says.

The discovery of the graves, he says, has provided an opportunity to learn more about the truth, and that, he hopes, will provoke the public

to push leaders to seek justice. "We saw that with the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which was pushed by the Canadian public, who learned about the double standard Indigenous people had to face," says Dockstader.

"The best hope is that change will come from the Canadian people. That's how change should come."

He'd been tending the fire around the clock, refreshed Sunday by a night sleeping outside, "under the stars — a

dream come true," a time of peace, he adds, and reflects on what he considers the surprising traction for cancelling Canada Day activities.

"The movement has created these kinds of conversations. This is what we hoped for."

That includes the non-First Nations people who have come to the healing fire, he adds, which has created a safe space for people talk.

Continued on page 4



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Park open now, stones safe for walking on

Continued from page 1

He said more than a year ago that the scenario at Balls Beach is very different from all but a very few other locations, with issues that result from a river and lake meeting.

“There are a number of things that come into play here,” he says, and they create a much larger challenge than would be encountered when designing shoreline protection for either a lakefront or a river, rather than the meeting of both.

He recalls being quoted on the front page of The Local in February, 2020, warning of just such an outcome, when engineers were deciding what to do with the waterfront.

He said then the groyne appeared to be collapsing into the lake, and that there was likely a drop-off in the lake bottom. The concept of the groyne was outdated and enormously expensive, he said, and suggested the town look at other alternatives.

“I don’t want to say ‘I told you so,’ I didn’t want to be right.

I was right, but I’m not pleased about it,” he says now.

The problem is there are solutions that can be designed for a lakeshore, or for a riverbank. But the solution the experts determined was suitable for Balls Beach turned out not to be, as Simkus warned.

He refers to the area of the beach as a hybrid situation, with a large river — one of the largest in the world — meeting a large lake, and creating the back eddy that kayakers and sailors have long recognized as the place where the current reverses direction and flows upstream. “There are only a handful of places like that in the world,” he says. “It plays left and right and backwards, and it turned out to be more powerful than anybody thought it was. They knew about it, but they didn’t think it was as big a deal as it turned out to be.”

The work that was carried out Saturday “went really well,” he says, creating a box for the stones that are there, on or hugging the shoreline.

Once the engineer in charge

signed off that it was safe, the fence was removed Tuesday, the security guard sent home and the area was open again for walking.

But to find a permanent solution, a forensic analysis will have to be done to solve the mystery of what happened the night of March 14, says Simkus.

Although there was wind and rain that night, it wasn’t a particularly ferocious storm, and the water levels were not high — they were similar to those in the summer of 2016, before the record high levels of 2017 that caused so much damage the town began working on a plan for shoreline protection.

“The parameters in March were not extraordinary. That’s the mystery that has everybody foiled.”

Yet the waves that night sloughed the sand away from under the anchor stone groyne to make it unstable, with some of the rocks toppling, and one washing away quite a distance and sinking in the sandy bottom.

Some of them were retrieved and put back in place Saturday, Simkus says, with

one requiring the excavator to reach as far out and as deeply as it could go.

Any final solution, he says, has to respect the back eddy, or the damage will be repeated.

“There will be a lot of people demanding a guarantee, assurances that it will not happen again,” he says, “and there will

be meetings of all parties to explore what has happened and how to go forward. But nobody is standing with their hand on their heart promising to have the solution.”

He suggests what might be necessary is “a line in the sand, beyond which you can’t go.”

The town should be looking

for a solution that is pragmatic, not outrageously expensive, and that accepts there will always be wave action “more powerful than we can defend against.”

There will always be waves coming over the top of the rocks during high water, he says, and what is pragmatic “may be a deterrent, not a solution.”



An excavator reaches deep out into the water to retrieve an anchor stone that was washed away in a storm. The work that was done Saturday was to put some of the large anchor stones back in place and stabilize the groyne to make it safe for walking, and protect the shoreline. (Photos by Ron Simkus)

Who doesn't love cupcakes?



Sean O'Donnell of Willow Cakes & Pastries, with Nicole McNulty and Carol Giang, took a quick break Tuesday morning, with the task of icing 1,600 Canada Day cupcakes ahead of them. (David Gilchrist)

Outdoors @ The Shaw: a fresh air summer fete

After a long wait, it's time for the Shaw season to get underway, with a series of concerts and events beginning July 10 on the grounds of the Festival Theatre and the Royal George Theatre.

The performances will be outdoors, on the Festival theatre grounds, and at venues described as the BMO Stage, the Humeniuk Foundation Stage, the Royal George Theatre's Gallery Patio and the Nona Macdonald Stage, affectionately known as Nona's tent.

“It's thrilling to feel the buzz of activity and anticipation. If these 15-plus months have taught us anything,

it's that we all dearly miss real human encounters and shared experiences,” says artistic director Tim Carroll.

“With this in mind, specially produced performances, concerts and curated events have been created for our audience. It's been a long and enduring journey and now it's time to say: Welcome back.”

Outdoors @ The Shaw is presented in addition to the open air performances of *The Devil's Disciple* at the Nona Macdonald Stage, *Flush* at the Humeniuk Foundation Stage, *Charley's Aunt* at the BMO Stage and the Shaw Festival's presentation of *A*

Short History of Niagara at both the Humeniuk Foundation Stage and the BMO Stage.

However, performances will only take place if deemed safe to do so, with audience numbers to all performances under capacity limits, and will continue to follow and exceed all government COVID-19 health regulations.

The Shaw has also implemented a robust Duty of Care initiative. These measures include significant infrastructure improvements and a commitment to ensuring the safety of audiences, company members and communities.

CN

COMMUNITY NOTICE

ANNUAL VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Every year, CN is required to clear its right-of-way of any vegetation that may pose a safety hazard. Vegetation on railway right-of-way, if left uncontrolled, can contribute to trackside fires and impair proper inspection of track infrastructure. The spray program is not being done for aesthetic reasons.

For safe railway operations, CN will conduct its annual spray program on its rail lines in the province of Ontario. A certified professional will be applying herbicides on and around the railway tracks (primarily along the 16 feet graveled area/ballast). All product requirements for setbacks in the vicinity of dwellings, aquatic environments and municipal water supplies will be met.

CN may use the following herbicides and active ingredients: VP480 (Dow), Esplanade (Bayer), Overdrive (BASF), Detail (BASF), Arsenal (BASF), Navius (Bayer), Gateway (Corteva), VisionMax (Bayer) using Glyphosate (480g/L or 540g/L), Indaziflam (200 g/L), Diflufenzopyr (20%), Dicamba (50%), Saflufenacil (29.74%), imazapyr isopropylamine (26.7%), Metsulfuron-methyl (12.6%), Aminocyclopyrachlor (39.5%), Paraffinic Oil (586 g/L), Alkoxylated alcohol non-ionic surfactants (242 g/L)

CN only uses herbicides that have been approved for use in Canada and in the Province within which they are applied.

The program is expected to take place from June to October 2021.

Visit www.cn.ca/vegetation to see the list of cities as well as the updated schedule.

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United Way Niagara programs are life-changing

When I was eight years old, my parents split up. I don't have many memories of my dad before then. He was always either at work or out with friends. He drank a lot and I guess my mom finally had enough. I do remember hearing them argue at night when they thought I was asleep. After my dad left, I didn't hear from him much until eventually he stopped coming around altogether.

My mom picked up more shifts at work and wasn't home much after that. She started drinking too and once she met Doug, things happened fast. We moved in with him when I was 11 and the fighting started all over again. Doug was worse than I remember my dad being. He was violent and by the time I turned 13 he was hitting me almost daily. I thought anything was better than being there so I left. I stayed at friends houses but that didn't last long either. I turned to alcohol too, to numb the pain of feeling so alone and unwanted. I ended up on the street before my 14th birthday.

I spent 10 years homeless, living in constant anxiety and fear. I was exposed to the violence of street life and witnessed too many horrible things. There were times I didn't think I would make it one more day. One of the lowest points was when I remember being caught digging through the garbage outside a coffee shop, just to find something to eat. It had been days since I had any food in my stomach and I was in so much pain.

Stepping through the doors of the youth shelter was life-changing. I was welcomed with open arms where the staff made me feel safe for the first time in my life. In my four month stay at the emergency shelter, I learned so many valuable skills. Having a roof over my head and food in my stomach was no longer my only concern.

I took advantage of every program they had and credit my success to all the

support I received in transitional housing where I was encouraged to follow my passion for photography. Today, I am no longer homeless, I am sober, I have a career I love, an apartment to call my own and a healthy vision for the future.

I learned that the place I stayed was funded by United Way Niagara – so were all the programs I attended while staying there. Without this support, I would never have been able to get off the street and be as successful as I am today. It is because of donors, like you, that these programs are able to exist.

Thank you for saving my life.

“ I was welcomed with open arms where the staff made me feel safe for the first time in my life. ”



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‘These children are immediate kin, they are all our kin’

Continued from page 1

“It’s been a long time since I’ve met people who say ‘I didn’t know what happened,’ and they feel driven to effect positive change. That’s what I draw hope from.”

The media, he adds, “is actually trying to tell these stories in a fair way.”

Kelyn Best, a 29-year-old Brock University student, was at the native centre for the healing fire Sunday. Her grandmother Norma passed away when Best was just three years old, so she has no memories of her, but has certainly heard the stories of her life, passed down through the family. From the Fort Qu’Appelle Valley region in Saskatchewan of Treaty 4, not far from Regina, her grandmother and siblings were survivors of residential schools — although Best won’t use the word school. “I don’t know many schools that have graves,” she says. “We have to be mindful of the language we use. It’s very important.”

Her grandmother and siblings were separated, according to the policy of the day, and sent to different facilities, including the Marieval Indian Residential School where 751 unmarked graves were recovered.

That was the largest hor-

rific discovery of unmarked graves to date. Those buried there were mostly children, with then news coming soon after ground-penetrating radar technology located the remains of at least 215 children buried on the property of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in B.C.

Best, her immediate family in Toronto, came to the healing fire to mourn and honour these children, her family and her community. At the healing fire, she shared her thoughts of the grandmother she never knew, and her feelings about what was done to Norma and other children, in a “space in time that allows us to grieve, and to heal together.”

To those who celebrate Canada Day, she says, “imagine mourning the loss of your loved ones while fireworks are going off all around you, with no consideration of the impacts of those actions and expressions of celebration, and what they are taking away from others.” When we celebrate, she explains, we are celebrating the perpetrators of this violence.

It’s been a rough time for her, she says, made more difficult by the knowledge that there will surely be more graves recovered, “knowing in these moments that it’s



Joyce and Blake Agnew, Phil Davis, Chris Joyce and Blake Agnew, Phil Davis, Chris Kagesheongai, and Brandon Agnew were at the healing fire Sunday for a quiet afternoon of reflection, learning, and mourning. The fire was tucked away at the back of the Niagara Regional Native Centre on Airport Road, for the community to stop by. (Penny Coles)

just the beginning. Some of these children are my immediate kin, and they are all of our kin. These searches will continue, and it touches all of us, some more broadly, some directly, and the closer it gets to home, to your family and your kin, the harder it is.”

Best says she’s grateful to the community for offering their support during what has been a very difficult time for her and many others. “I don’t know what I would have done without them.”

It’s a time to talk about whether celebrating is appropriate, she says, a comment quickly picked up by Phil Davis, a staff member of the native centre, and also a fire

keeper.

“It’s a sentiment we’re all sharing,” he says. “We’ve been trying to bring awareness to non-Indigenous people for decades, and no matter how much we speak, people aren’t listening. It’s time they did. People are beginning to do their research, they’re beginning to understand the depth of the deception of this country and what is taught about it in history,” he says, referencing the colonization “that was all about resources and power.”

The healing fire, he says,

is for anyone who wants to be part of it, to have a place for grief and to process it, “and to make the unknown known.”

Chris Kagesheongai, also a fire keeper speaks of the traditions that have been passed down through generations. It’s organized and hosted by the community, for the community, he says, and it’s important that if isn’t allowed to go out, whatever the weather. It’s a place for people to pay their respects, but it’s also a sacred place to be treated with great respect, he adds, asking that no photos be taken of the

fire itself.

“An image is just an image. It’s a better experience to be here, not to see it as an image.”

A healing fire is not a place for anger, he explains, but rather a place to let it go, to think about the spirits lost, and to offer calm, kindness, and love, which is how those at the fire are expected to treat each other.

“We can’t have anger around the fire. We have to be of a good heart and a good mind. This is about those we’re grieving for.”

Acknowledging ‘horrific legacy’ of residential schools

Penny Coles
The Local

Niagara Region Chair Jim Bradley and local mayors have released a statement acknowledging the recent “horrific reminder of the disturbing legacy” of residential schools.

It also calls for flags to be lowered across the region to recognize the recently discovered victims found in graves at schools for Indigenous children.

Flags at the Niagara-on-the-Lake town hall have been lowered since the start of the pandemic to acknowledge those who have died from COVID-19, but for the moment, they’re lowered to to honour Indigenous people buried in unmarked graves at residential schools.

“While we recognize that we cannot bring back those whose lives were taken too soon, we as a country and as individuals can acknowledge the truth about the injustices Indigenous peoples have faced, and continue to face, and can honour the memory of the lives lost,” a statement released by the town Tuesday says.

“On this Canada Day, we choose to recognize the contributions the residents, soldiers, and First Nations peoples of this region made to the development of Canada,” it continues, asking that however people choose to celebrate Canada Day, they consider

“spending time reflecting on the trauma felt and experienced by Indigenous people, and educate yourself on their great contributions to Canada’s history.”

Lord Mayor Betty Disero says she will also be meeting with Niagara Regional Native Centre director Karl Dockstader to discuss other ways to acknowledge the discovery of Indigenous children’s graves, including renaming Ryerson Park.

Although there are three people named Ryerson who figure in the history of the area, Disero says research has shown the park was most likely named after Egerton Ryerson, who was largely responsible for the residential school system in Canada, and although there has been no council decision at this point, she expects a new name will be chosen through discussion with the Niagara Regional Native Centre, and the town’s inclusivity committee.

Last week, the discovery of the remains of at least 751 individuals who died at the site of the former Marieval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan came less than two months after the graves of 215 Indigenous children were found buried at a Kamloops, B.C. residential school, a reminder that such schools “forcefully disrupted Indigenous families, deprived them of their culture, and exposed many children to extreme

forms of abuse,” the regional statement says.

“While horrific,” the statement continues, “we must face the truth that these recent discoveries in Saskatchewan and British Columbia will not be the last. These grave sites remind us that we must continue to acknowledge the injustices experienced by Indigenous people in Canada, while using these grim discoveries as a catalyst to learn the truth about the lasting intergenerational trauma that residential schools have had for Indigenous people.”

While acknowledging the flag-lowering is symbolic, Bradley and Niagara mayors are also committed to listening and learning, the statement says. “We recognize our responsibilities detailed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and are committed to taking action.”

The region and municipalities “will continue to take meaningful action by building stronger relationships with our local Indigenous groups,” as well as listening to the advice and guidance of the region’s new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

Regional Chair Jim Bradley has also committed to holding a special council meeting with the goal of educating councillors on First Nations, Indigenous and Métis issues.



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ers to safely re-create their Boba Tea or other specialty drinks safely at home. It is an enjoyable way to DIY authentic boba tea drinks at home to pass the time

while in lockdown. If you follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, we have tons of easy recipes and tutorials on how to make your drink at home.

Every month, we release blog posts on new recipes and product launches to keep you up to date with Tealise.

Pre-covid, Tealise was

a relaxing tea café where locals can enjoy their drink in a homey atmosphere. Tourists also popped by for tea tastings and immersing in Niagara-on-the-Lake's history. Luckily, we have sorted our opening protocols and are ready to re-open just in time for Canada Day's weekend on July 2nd 2021. Our hours of operation are Fridays and Saturdays 12 to 4 pm. In the meantime, locals can enjoy free 2-day local delivery on orders over \$35CAD at tealise.com. At Tealise's online site, customers can shop their favourite organic loose-leaf teas and customize their boba tea kits for themselves or as a gift (includes gift wrapping).

Be a part of our Tealise club for fun surprises and discounts by subscribing to our newsletter at tealise.com. Don't forget to follow us @TealiseTea on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube for new recipes every week. Visit us every Friday and Saturday at 1503 Niagara Stone Rd, Niagara-on-the-Lake. As we always say at Tealise: The remarkable world of healthy and invigorating teas has never been so accessible... even during a pandemic.



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EDITORIAL

Canada Day a good time for quiet reflection

Should Canada Day be cancelled?

Before being quick to answer, imagine the conversation you might have sitting around a picnic table with a group of loving, kind Indigenous people who gently and calmly share their feelings about how it affects them.

Listen to the stories of what Canadian leaders have done to their families, their loved ones, for generations.

Then decide how you feel about setting off fireworks to celebrate the day.

Cancelling the one day of the year we show our pride of being Canadians might seem unduly harsh.

Harsh? Nowhere near the horrific treatment done to children who were separated from their families and sent to resi-

dential schools, and for some, sent to graves there.

Our leaders of country and church didn't just allow it to happen, they caused it to happen, and the recent news about remains at two residential schools has compelled us to face head on a part of our history that is not that many years past.

We have become aware of intolerance that continues today, against Indigenous people and others. In this country, and all around us.

Tuesday, our town leaders declared flags lowered at town hall in honour of those buried in graves found on the grounds of residential schools.

A statement Tuesday says, "we mourn with them and are determined to support their efforts to raise awareness and see a change made for this genera-

tion of Indigenous people, and for generations to come."

On this Canada Day, the statement from the town says, "we choose to recognize the contributions the residents, soldiers, and First Nations peoples of this region made to the development of Canada. They gave so much and yet so much was taken from them. However you choose to celebrate Canada Day this year, consider spending time reflecting on the trauma felt and experienced by Indigenous people and educate yourself on their great contributions to Canada's history."

We may feel we have much in our history of which to be proud, but at what cost? There are many among us who are hurting, grieving, whose ancestors have been treated atrociously, and who continue to face in-

tolerance and injustice today.

Maybe this Canada Day can be an opportunity to learn, to reflect on what is past and how to push for change in the future. We can spend some part of the day in quiet reflection, sending our love to other families who are mourning,

still suffering from the intolerance and cruelty and horror of actions our country must take responsibility for.

Let's pause, and hope that by next year, we will have witnessed change, that those who deserve justice for the past will be able to see some progress.

We can promise never to forget, but that's not enough. We have to pledge to be better, to do more, to push harder for justice and for change. A promise we must keep.

Penny Coles
The Local

Local VOICES:

What does an inclusive and diverse NOTL mean to me

Lara Osias-Davidson
Special to The Local

It's hard to put into words what an inclusive Niagara-on-the-Lake would mean to me. My childhood was spent with a foot in two different worlds. As a child of immigrant parents, only recently have I come to realize I had an English-as-a-second-language household. Being Canadian-born, in a large urban area, I had a circle of friends from countries across the globe, and cultures that were different to the ones my parents brought over from Southeast Asia.

In a way, my entire life experience has been walking a tightrope of both cultures. I had my Filipino family, blended into Canadian society. Yet I belonged to both worlds.

Although we've only lived in NOTL for eight years, I can see there are distinct communities in this amazing and proud town, each with their own unique characteristics. There are the historical sites of the War of 1812 and Old Town, the farming community and more recently theatre and wineries. And here we all are, in this pretty-as-a-picture town we call home!

Some residents live here part-time, but are of no lesser value than the families who live full-time. We have the snowbirds, farm workers, the Mennonite community who farm elsewhere during the winter months, people who have secondary homes here. All living beside families who live

and work in the Niagara Region. Such a broad swath of demographics!

In accommodating the summer tourists, I think the town and the various communities have done a fantastic job in growing the annual festivals. I can see one day, where there could be festivals for more than our bountiful fruit! Wouldn't it be remarkable to have a Pow Wow in June for National Indigenous History Month, put up lights for Diwali in November, keep up the lights and run a German Christmas Market to coincide with Victorian Christmas? The possibilities are endless! Embrace our multicultural societies.

For a long time Canada has welcomed immigrants from many countries, and continues to do so. We are not the melting pot like our neighbours to the south. We celebrate our differences!

NOTL has a prominent place in Canadian history. I enjoy living in a town with a fort, and so many historical landmarks. This history needs to be preserved for future generations, no question there. It would also be humbling to include a recreated village or longhouse to honour the First Nation people, with their involvement. It's time to include the Iroquois Confederacy (Haudenosaunee) flag in front of town buildings and schools in the Niagara Region. We've come a long way in recognizing the Indigenous Land Statement, it warms my heart to hear it. Flying the flag would be another step towards acknowl-

edging the gift of this land.

It's been a tumultuous year. No doubt about it. Voices have been screaming to be heard, rally cries have filled the air, change demanded. More recently there have been heart wrenching discoveries of souls long buried. We all carry the responsibility to make the future better and accept that change is needed.

NOTL could do better in representing the First Nation. Niagara Parks has the Landscape of Nations, the Niagara Regional Native Centre sits quietly along Airport Road.

NOTL is rich in artistry. Why couldn't each community consult the First Nations, and have a place of honour in addition to the existing monument of significance to the War of 1812?

I'm reminded of a time I still lived in Toronto. It was 1998, in Little Italy and there was a large celebratory parade for the FIFA World Cup. Some young men were slowly driving along St. Clair West, waving an Italian flag, fans from the rival French team walked by waving their flag, and the young man in the car pulled out a French flag and cheerfully waved it in greeting. That's the spirit I'd like to see in NOTL. Whatever flag you want to fly, wave it proudly!

The Local invites submissions to our Local Voices, which we plan to offer as a regular column. Submissions can be on any topic that would be of interest to NOTL readers, and can be up to 1,000 words. Please email ideas or submissions to penny@notllocal.com.



View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

A British couple (*Trying*, Apple TV 2020) wants desperately to have a baby, and when that proves impossible, they decide to adopt. Nothing

about the adoption process is simple, especially for this couple, whose eccentricities make them unlikely candidates. The strength of the series is the strong commitment they have to each other.

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.

Strawberry Social returns



Marnie, Sarah, and other town staff pitched in and made a Strawberry Social for seniors possible this year, although as a pick-up event. (David Gilchrist)

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

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COMMENT

Bulbs add beauty to garden spring and fall



Peggy Bell
Member, NOTL
Communities in
Bloom Committee

In some centuries of their colourful history, bulbs have been used for flavouring and medicine, and they've been emblazoned on royal banners, but mainly, they're grown for their beauty.

Bulbs bring the first welcome burst of colour, signalling the end of winter.

To beginner gardeners, spring bulbs mean crocuses, daffodils and tulips, but there are more than a dozen other kinds of bulbs.

Although bulbs like full sun, they can be planted among deciduous trees that haven't leafed out yet.

To extend bloom time, plant a single variety in different locations. The sunniest spots produce the earliest flowers, shade the latest.

Planting different varieties

can yield blooms in the early, mid and late season.

For spring bulbs, the sooner you plant in the fall, the better. It's much nicer to plant on a sunny September day than in chilly November. The more time the bulbs have to put out their roots before the ground freezes, the stronger they will be.

If your earth is heavy and largely clay, add one or two inches of coarse sand in the bottom of the bulb hole you've dug, to assure fast growth of the root system.

Soak thoroughly to wash the soil in around the bulbs, eliminate air spaces and start the bulbs rooting.

After the bulbs have finished, cut off the flower head and leave the leaves to yellow and wither before cutting back. This will build up energy for next year's cycle.

Planting bulbs in groups of five or more will give you the most impressive impact.

Many bulbs such as snowdrops (winter aconite, the earliest yellow flowers), scilla, dwarf irises, chionodoxa (glory of the snow), muscari (grape hyacinths), lily of the valley, anemones,

leucojum (spring snowflake), daffodils, ranunculus, fritillarias, ornithogalum (star of Bethlehem), will naturalize or multiply over the years, creating larger clumps, making a good return on your initial investment.

The narcissus (daffodil family) have countless varieties and from the earliest to the latest will give eight weeks or more of continuous bloom.

Tulips can also have an extended bloom time by planting early, mid and late varieties.

Treat yourself to a fall teaser by planting autumn crocuses, especially the doubles that resemble water lilies.

Plant late August or early September, and three weeks later they'll be in bloom while the leaves are falling. Get to a garden centre early for the best selection.

Happy planting!

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

Local LETTERS

Proposal for Queen/Mississagua 'totally out of character'

I agree totally with the response from the Alexanders about the look of the proposed plan for this entry area (the gateway project at Queen and Mississagua Streets). I feel it is not needed to start with. My experienced gardener's eye says it looks just fine.

J.B. Hopkins and the crew do a great job as usual. The money should be used in some other area that will actually benefit the town. It is totally out of character with the look of our historic town.

It seems that when these projects are proposed, the developer or instigator seems to feel that we should just blindly accept their concept, and why are we not totally grateful for what they have decided for us, this something we really need, whether we know it or not.

Who knew?

I think our small town values are extremely important. This is what makes us a very special area.

Also the shocking presentation of the three-storey monster on the Parliament Oak school site is really another perfect example of a developer expecting us to just accept what they want, not what we actually need or can accept. Obviously there needs to be some type of development on that site, but it is also very obvious that the main problem here is how high this thing is supposed to be. This is something they should not get away with in this core area. It is really unacceptable. I would have expected a bit more concern for the people and this dense Old Town neighbourhood before this, again, almost

last minute, it seems they just think they have this area all figured out, this is how it's going to be and this is what we need, and why are we not just thrilled with their concept?

I feel that both of these ill-conceived projects need to be really looked into, and analyzed and be kept out in the open, or as more often than not, it will look like the powers-that-be are paying attention to we the people who will have to live with all this, and then suddenly they get exactly what they have planned and we are quietly by-passed.

Please take note, town officials... we are all voters, and your concern and actions will be noted.

Christopher Allen
NOTL

Vicious dog should be removed from neighbourhood

I read with great interest your article on the woman attacked by a neighbour's dog in St. Davids.

I'm the guy in the black car who came to her aid. My name is Louis Hayes and I live on Angela Crescent, around the bend from the house where the incident occurred.

On the day in question, my wife and I were returning home from a shopping trip and as we turned the corner, I could not believe my eyes. I saw a frail, petite, elderly woman being attacked by a large, heavily muscled rottweiler on the steps of a house, while an elderly couple, evidently the dog's owners, were completely incapable of controlling the dog. The poor woman was screaming and crying "Help me, help me." I hesitated to get involved, but there was no one around to help. I do think I saw one or two people run into their homes and lock the doors. Not that I can really blame them... this big, vicious dog looked like it was literally going to rip this poor woman's arm off.

I briefly thought about grabbing some leather work gloves I had in the back seat

to protect my hands in case the dog attacked me, but there seemed no time even for that.

I ran over to them and was going to grab the dog by the collar. It let the woman's arm go and lunged at me. As she tried to move away, it grabbed her by the leg. I approached again and this time the dog let her go and came after me. It chased me down the street, snarling and barking and crouching to lunge at me several times. I was doing a crazy dance to dodge the mad dog as it seemed to be trying to decide whether to go for the arm, the leg or the throat. Finally, when I was four or five houses down the street, the dog responded to the owners' calls and retreated home, where they locked it in the house.

By now, the victim had disappeared and I, badly shaken, saw no reason to stick around. I went home and thought about calling 911, but my wife did a quick search and found that NOTL had a canine control officer, so I called him. As I understand it, the police, the Humane Society and the NOTL guy all showed up at the scene at about the same time.

The next day, a police officer

called me and asked me to give a brief statement, which I did. He suggested I call the Humane Society to give them my comments, which I did. I also called the NOTL guy back to get his comments.

The police officer told me that this was a rescue dog from Toronto. He thinks it probably belonged to a drug dealer who was arrested or some similar scenario. Whatever the case, this is a powerful, vicious and extremely dangerous dog. It could easily kill a child, which is what really concerns me. There are families with young children who frequently play outside just up the street from this house.

I have been trying to find out what is going to be done with this dog, and I'm hearing different things from different people. Apparently, the owners are considering various options. I want to take this opportunity to appeal to the dog's owners: do the right thing! Have this vicious dog put down or get it out of the neighbourhood, before it kills someone.

Louis Hayes
St. Davids

Local LETTERS

Please preserve small heritage district

In 1986, the Province of Ontario designated the Queen/Picton area of Niagara-on-the-Lake as a Heritage Conservation District, and in 2003 the area was designated a National Historic District, the first in Ontario.

As well, this area was a battleground during the War of 1812, and thus we should honour this historical designation by preserving its historical significance.

Our town is made up of a large agricultural area, small hamlets and five villages. The suggested new large landscaping area on Queen and Mississagua Streets should

be placed in another location to welcome everyone to our whole town, not just at edge of the designated heritage district. May I suggest on the QEW in the Glendale area, the major entrance to our town, similar to other towns and cities in the Niagara region. Being located there, it will welcome visitors to our whole town, not just one area, where I believe it will detract from the importance of its historical significance.

Again, the Rainbow crosswalks are a good idea, but not the requested location which is at the only crosswalks, located on Queen and Pic-

ton Streets, which were put there for safety reasons. If authorized, I believe it should be placed to represent the whole town of NOTL, not one small heritage area.

We have to remember there is more than one area of NOTL, not just the designated historical area within the Old Town. Town council must stop trying to cram everything into the historical designated area by putting these and any other suggested projects in other areas of our town.

Stan Harrington
NOTL

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PUBLIC NOTICE OF HEARING

PROCEEDING COMMENCED UNDER Subsection 29(5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18, as amended

Owner: Solmar (Niagara 2) Inc.
Objector: Two Sisters Resorts Corp.
Subject: Notice of Intention to Designate
Property Address: 200 John Street East
Legal Description: Lot 145 RCP 692 Niagara Except Pt 1 to 9, 30R8436
Municipality: Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
OLT Case No. CRB1824
OLT Case Name: Two Sisters Resorts Corp. v. Niagara-on-the-Lake (Town)

PROCEEDING COMMENCED UNDER Subsection 29(5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18, as amended

Owner: Solmar (Niagara 2) Inc.
Objector: Two Sisters Resorts Corp.
Subject: Notice of Intention to Designate
Property Address: 588 Charlotte Street
Legal Description: Lot 156 RCP 692 Niagara; Part Lot 145 RCP 692 Niagara Part 1 to 9, 30R8436; S/T RO718339, S/T RO413742, T/W RO413742 (PT 13, 30R1792 Except Pt 5, 30R8436)
Municipality: Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
OLT Case No. CRB1825
OLT Case Name: Two Sisters Resorts Corp. v. Niagara-on-the-Lake (Town)

The Ontario Land Tribunal ("Tribunal") will conduct a Hearing by Video Conference for this matter. The event will be held:

at: 10:00 am
on: July 19, 2021

The Tribunal has set aside 4 days for this matter.

A livestream of the hearing will be available to the public on the Tribunal's YouTube channel:

<https://youtube.com/channel/UCxDacq6BD8wgOUfSV-yGVRA>

If you do not attend the event, the Tribunal may proceed in your absence and you will not be entitled to any further notice of these proceedings.

PARTY OR PARTICIPANT STATUS REQUESTS:

Persons who wish to participate in the hearing, either as a party or as a participant, must file a written status request with the Tribunal to outline their interest in the proceeding. Party and Participant Status Requests Forms (available at: <https://olt.gov.on.ca/appeals-process/forms/>) must be filed in advance of the hearing with the Case Coordinator, Paul De Medeiros: paul.demedeiros@ontario.ca

Status requests will be reviewed and considered by the presiding Member at the hearing. **Attendance by the requestor, or their representative, at the hearing is required for all status requests.**

Connection details for the video conference will be provided by the Case Coordinator upon receipt of the status request form.

We are committed to providing accessible services as set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. If you have any accessibility needs, please contact our Accessibility Coordinator as soon as possible by emailing OLT.COORDINATOR@ontario.ca. If you require documents in formats other than conventional print, or if you have specific accommodation needs, please let us know so we can make arrangements in advance.

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For general information concerning the Tribunal, visit our website at <https://olt.gov.on.ca> or you may contact the Tribunal's offices at 1-866-448-2248 or local (416) 212-6349.

DATED at Toronto, this 21st day of June 2021.

Becky Fong
Registrar

Owners say they'll give up dog who attacked Ming Jiang

Penny Coles
The Local

Ming Jiang, the 72-year-old who was viciously attacked by a neighbour's dog in the Cannery Park area of St. Davids on June 17, has had an opportunity to meet and thank the man who helped save her.

And she may not have to worry about walking in her neighbourhood anymore, as the owners have said they will be giving the dog back to the rescue organization they got it from.

When Louis Hayes read about Jiang in *The Local* last week, he reached out to add to her story.

He was the man in the black car who stopped to help, and lives on Angela Crescent, around the bend from the house where the attack occurred.

Without Hayes, who distracted the dog long enough for Jiang to escape, and her friend and neighbour Esther Marcos, a retired nurse who came to her aid until paramedics arrived, the outcome could have been much worse. In addition to diverting the attention of the dog, Hayes also called Ken Reid, the town's canine control officer, who arrived along with the police and an agent from the humane society.

Jiang had gone to the house of her neighbour, Linda Kenny, and knocked on the door, after her husband had done a bit of work in the neighbour's backyard to fix a drainage problem that was affecting the Jiangs — their yards back onto each other's. She

wanted to let Kenny know he was finished his work. Jiang had asked that the Kenny's aggressive dog be kept in the house while her husband was in the Kennys' yard, and she was there to say it was okay to let the dog out again.

Instead, when the front door opened, the dog sprung at her, knocking her down and sinking his teeth into her upper arm.

Jiang, a tiny woman, was screaming for help on the neighbour's porch, and Hayes, driving by, stopped, got out and approached the porch to help her.

The dog, distracted, took after Hayes, and Jiang wasn't aware of what had happened to him after that.

But he gave her the time she needed to get away, screaming, and her friend Esther, who had been working in her backyard, heard her and ran to her aid.

Esther, now retired from her job as a charge nurse at an Oakville hospital, is accustomed to the sight of blood, and knew what to do. "There was so much blood," she says, describing a section of Jiang's left arm where about six inches of skin was just hanging down. "It was really bad, just gushing blood."

Both Esther's husband Roger and another neighbour on the street called 911, Esther applying pressure to Jiang's arm until paramedics arrived.

Jiang has several stitches under her arm, on one hand, and one leg. But although the injuries will heal, she says she will always be nervous when she

is out walking and hears the dog barking.

However, Kenny says they will give their dog Rider back to the rescue organization they got him from in January.

He is about two years old, she says, and is the fourth rottweiler they've had. They've never had a problem with any of their dogs, and this was just an "unfortunate accident."

When Hayes talks about the day Jiang was attacked, he says the owners were unable to control their dog, and Jiang was screaming and crying "help me, help me."

It looked as if the dog was trying to rip her arm off, he says.

"I ran over to them and was going to grab the dog by the collar. It let the woman's arm go and lunged at me. As she tried to move away, it grabbed her by the leg. I approached again and this time the dog let her go and came after me. It chased me down the street, snarling and barking and crouching to lunge at me several times. I was doing a crazy dance to dodge the mad dog as it seemed to be trying to decide whether to go for the arm, the leg or the throat. Finally, when I was four or five houses down the street, the dog responded to the owners' calls and retreated home, where they locked it in the house."

By then, Hayes, says, Jiang had disappeared and he went home, badly shaken, and called the town's canine control officer.

Continued on page 9

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Injured woman able to thank man who stopped to help

Continued from page 8

Hayes says he was hoping, for the safety of the children on the street, the owners would do the right thing and get rid of the dog. Reid, who has been the town's canine control officer for more than 20 years, says his job is often one of mediation, trying to do what's best for all involved. In this case, all he could do was ensure the dog was no longer at large. The owners have been fined by the town, and the police and humane society have both been involved, as has the public health department, Reid says, checking to see that the dog was vaccinated. The owners were also informed by police that Jiang can initiate a civil suit for damages. John Greer, the executive director of the Niagara Humane Society, says the owners weren't willing to give the dog to the humane

society agent, but told him they would consider returning it to the rescue organization. They have been ordered to keep it muzzled outside on the street, and the dog has to be secured and under control of the owners at all times, Greer says, but other than that there isn't anything the humane society can do either. It relies on members of the public to report any more problems, including if the dog is seen outside unmuzzled, which can draw an expensive fine. In addition to a civil suit, a judge can order the dog be removed, but the humane society cannot take it from the owners, says Greer. Monday, Kenny told The Local that Rider is "a sweet little boy" who has "some quirks with strangers." They have had other rescues, are experienced with large dogs, and this is the first time they've had

any issue with any of them. When she answered the front door to Jiang, he just snuck out, she says. She's annoyed that she and her husband are being portrayed as irresponsible dog owners, which they're not, she says, and they are doing what is right for their neighbours by giving him up. They will likely get another dog, "but we won't get another big dog. We're getting older ourselves."

Ming Jiang and her husband Paul recently met Louis Hayes and his wife Toni for the first time. Ming was anxious to thank Louis for his bravery when she was attacked by a neighbour's dog. (Photo submitted)



Ming Jiang and her husband Paul recently met Louis Hayes and his wife Toni for the first time. Ming was anxious to thank Louis for his bravery when she was attacked by a neighbour's dog. (Photo submitted)

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Women suffering postpartum depression are not alone

Jessica Gale Friesen aims to help women dealing with mental illness

Penny Coles
The Local

Jessica Gale Friesen considers herself a strong woman. She is not quite 40 yet, but is already the third-generation owner and CEO of Gales Gas

Bars. She is also a registered nurse, having worked in acute and long-term care, and a person accustomed to feeling in control of her life, of “having everything covered.” She is now also a published author, with the release of *This Will Not*

Break Me, the story of her very private journey through a time when there were aspects of her life she couldn’t control. Fourteen years ago, she and her husband, high school sweetheart Ed Friesen had their first child.

When she was in labour with her son, she was given demerol, which had a negative effect on her and her baby. He had to spend some time in the neonatal intensive care unit, a “scary, isolating and difficult time” for her. She felt guilty, that it was her fault for taking the drug, and as the days went on, when she also had trouble breast-feeding, she began to view herself

as inadequate as a mother. With her background in nursing, “I thought I was more than prepared, perfectly capable of having a baby. But things didn’t go as planned.” Once home with her newborn, she found she could barely get herself dressed in the mornings. Some morning she couldn’t. She felt all she could manage was giving her son the basic necessities, feeding him and changing his diapers. The days of having a meticulously clean and tidy home were behind her. Usually a social person, she didn’t want to leave the house, or see family or friends.

“there is still a lot of pressure to do things a certain way.” Friesen says over the years she has thought a lot about that time in her life, and decided to write her feelings down, in a book that might help others. “All new moms struggle,” she says, “but I didn’t realize at the time how badly I was struggling. I didn’t realize my feelings then were extreme.”

She eventually found Baby Talk, a group for young mothers who met weekly, and shared their challenges.

It is a program put on by the Ontario Early Years Centre — visit niagara-region.ca/living/child-care/early-years/ for more information.

“Nobody said ‘you’ll figure it out.’ Instead, everybody said, ‘this is what I tried.’ That was when things started to change for me.”

It happened in a way that was “very organic,” she says, and helped her once again feel in control of her life.

“I was finally able to wrap my head around what I needed, and to look back and realize how extreme my situation was. I had come from working as a nurse in a hospital taking care of 10 patients at a time, with a multidisciplinary team, to not being able to look after one baby, and not realizing it shouldn’t be that way,” says Friesen.

When she looked back on that period in her life, and it became obvious she was suffering from postpartum depression, and she could see it for what it was, she decided to share that very personal journey

Continued on page 11

Thank you to our wonderful community for your support over the past 2 years!

My team and I are so grateful for the relationships we’ve been able to make and opportunities to serve you.

Last year we celebrated our anniversary with hand sanitizer sales. This year, we will celebrate with syringes filled with Pfizer vaccines.

We could have never imagined all that would happen when we first opened our doors in July 2019, and we will continue to adapt to continue to care for our community.

Many things have changed, yet our slogan that hangs above the dispensary stays the same: *Caring beyond the prescription*. COVID-19 cannot take that away. The process of visiting our pharmacy may look different on the surface: plexiglass barriers, floor markings and masked faces, however the cheerful greetings, friendly advice and efficient medication distribution remain unchanged- perhaps even stronger than ever.



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Putting thoughts on paper ‘cathartic,’ may help others

Continued from page 11

with others.

“Postpartum depression is not something you can easily describe. It affects everyone in a different way, but when I looked at the signs, I realized I had all of them,” she says.

“I thought a lot about it over the years, and started to write about it, putting all the dots together. It was really cathartic, and I thought that if I can put this on paper, it might help others like me. It (postpartum depression) is still not always recognized, and a lot of women don’t want to talk about it. The last thing you want is for people to think you can’t take care of your baby. When my mind was going to extremes, I was having nightmares about people taking my son from me.”

There has to be somebody to start that conversation, and there are not a lot of people willing to be that person, she adds.

“It is no longer acceptable to assume new parents will ‘figure it out,’ when people are suffering and, sometimes, dying, because they can’t see a way out.”

Friesen is a busy woman, now a business professional as well as a mom of two teens, Eddie, 14, and Camryn, 12. She and Ed are bringing up the next generation in St. Davids, where she and her two siblings were raised and went to school. But she is about to become even busier, with the virtual launch of *This Will Not Break Me*, Wednesday, June 30, at 5 p.m. Published by Ownera Media, the book will be available for purchase through retail channels, including Amazon, and at www.jessicagalefriesen.com.

Friesen will be featured in a Lunch and Learn event being presented by United Way Niagara on July 21, to discuss her book. A portion of the proceeds for the Lunch and Learn are going directly to United Way Niagara.

To purchase tickets, contact United Way, or visit her website.

Jessica Gale Friesen, with her husband Ed Friesen and Eddie, 14, and Camryn, 12, has come a long way from her postpartum days, and has found writing a book about her experiences cathartic. (Photo supplied)





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Tyler Cullen
Holy Cross



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Ayden Hillis

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Eden High School

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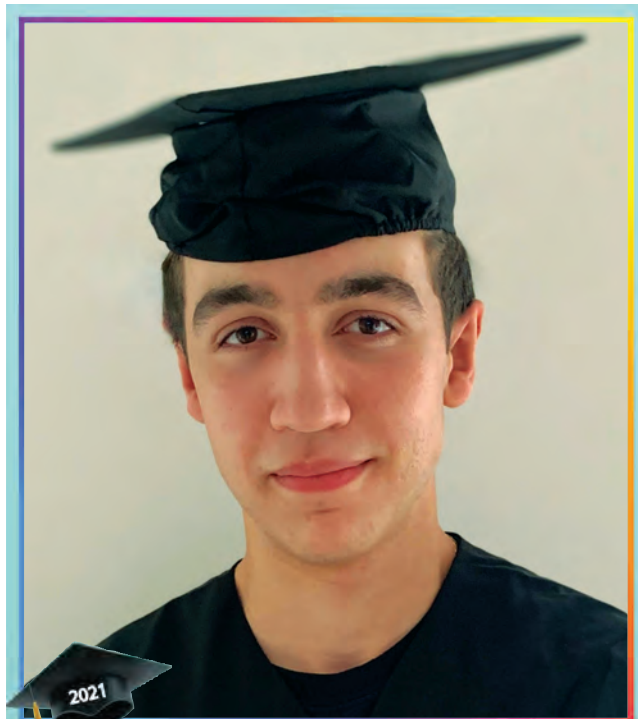
Sara Leboudec
Laura Secord Secondary School



Meggan McConnell - Brock University
*Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Concentration
in Human Resource Management (Co-op Option)*



Felicia Miele - A. N. Myer
*Fall 2021 University of Toronto Political Science
followed by Law School.*



Matthew Quinn, LPCI
Attending University of Western Ontario Fall, 2021



Lauren Skeoch
Niagara College - Educational Assistant



Liam Cadeau
Dalewood French Immersion - Grade 8



Jack Clarke - St. Davids School
DSBN Student Success Award winner



Hannah Gilchrist
St. Davids Public School



Austin Leboudec
Crossroads Public School

Council considers Old Town gateway project

Penny Coles
The Local

The project to redesign the entrance to the Old Town has run into some roadblocks.

After approval from the town's Communities in Bloom Committee, which has been spearheading the project, the Municipal Heritage Committee was the next stop for input before sending the proposal to council, which occurred Monday night.

Councillors also supported the concept project, requiring input from town staff, before it goes to the committee of the whole for a decision.

While MHC members voted to move it forward, there was far from agreement about what the entranceway should look like, with about 20 different aspects of the design that require discussion. There were also suggestions that the public should be in on the discussion, as should the town's urban design committee.

Resident Gerry Kowalchuk has donated \$250,000 to create an entrance to the Old Town, wanting a legacy project that will leave a positive lasting impression of the town on all who see it.

Although he is financing it, his goal all along, he told MHC members, has been to rely on the professionals to create an appropriate, rejuvenated landscape design to be viewed and remembered by all those who drive by the intersection of Mississauga and Queen Streets.

The chosen landscape firm for the project, Sefarian Design Group from Toronto, eventually created eight different conceptual drawings showing variations of a design. The options were narrowed down to the favoured concept by a Communities in Bloom working group, which includes two town councillors, along with Kevin

Turcotte, the town's manager of parks and recreation, and parks supervisor J.B. Hopkins, before it was presented to the municipal heritage committee at their June 8 meeting.

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

The preferred concept incorporates gardens, a low, Queenston Quarry limestone wall, the town crest and town name both on it, with an obelisk structure of granite, representing the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes. The intention is for it to be easily seen coming into town, creating a striking first impression, and would include a strong, intricate lighting plan to make sure it's just as striking at night.

The sign that now advertises events in town, just off to the side of the existing gateway, will be relocated.

The effectiveness of the street redesign, its impact on traffic flow, the placement of stop signs and the safety of pedestrians, all to be determined during a pilot project to be conducted this summer, were issues discussed by heritage committee members. Specific design features, including a limestone wall, an obelisk structure at one end, the removal of the event sign on Queen Street, and the type of trees that might be chosen were also issues considered during the virtual meeting.

The drawing they were looking at, they were told, is just conceptual, as provided by the architects, with details still to be

worked out. The obelisk, which was described as possibly an homage to the first lighthouse that was once at the water's edge, even before Fort Mississauga, seemed to be the biggest sticking point — its height, its placement on one side of the project, what it represents, whether it looks too much like a gravestone or memorial, and whether it is appropriate at all, were all points mentioned by committee members.

Despite many references to concerns over the height of the proposal and its blocking of the view of Fort Mississauga, from some municipal heritage committee members and residents who have sent letters of objections to the town, the berm and floral bed there now is actually higher, and also blocking the view of the fort, says Counc. Allan Bisback, a member of the MHC.

He didn't comment on the redesigned traffic flow, which will be a pilot project to start, leaving that up to the experts, but regarding the vista, Bisback, who walks by the area regularly, says he sees the concept design as improving the view.

Haig Sefarian, founder of the design group, says the architects tried to be respectful of the heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The design, he feels, does that, without encroaching on any views, and exposing more of the background than the current landscaping. Neither the design nor the height of the obelisk are finalized, he added.

Both the events signage that is near the current planting, and would be moved to another location, and the sign behind the floral display that changes every year, celebrating a new event, will be missed, heritage committee members said.

Counc. Clare Cameron thanked Kowalchuk for his gen-



This concept for the Mississauga/Queen Street intersection has been discussed and moved forward by the Communities in Bloom committee, the Municipal Heritage Committee and at the last town council meeting. It is just a conceptual drawing, and still has a long way to go for final approval, with a much more detailed design. (Screenshot from Communities in Bloom committee meeting)

erosity, and before making her comments, asked him not to take them personally.

She said she understands it is a work in progress, that it is just a concept, "and not a sealed deal at this time."

She praised the landscaping, for having a "more open and welcoming feel to the intersection," but said she isn't fond of the obelisk structure, which looks too much like the one in Burlington, and has a shape that "recalls gravestones and monuments."

She said she doesn't see it as something that says 'welcome to NOTL,' and feels it might be less jarring on the other side of the landscape design.

She also said she would like to see a font on the stone wall that says Niagara-on-the-Lake be one that looks less awkward, and a little more reflective of the historic nature of the town.

She told the MHC members that visitors to town will really like a selfie in front of the wall, "with some beautiful lettering behind them," but was told by Turcotte the street bump-out is being designed to discourage people crossing the road for photos, due to safety issues.

The "intention is not to have a sidewalk, or bringing people across, where it wouldn't be

safe," said Turcotte.

Sefarian addressed the font, saying they have been in touch with the town to talk about branding, and there will be further discussion about it.

MHC member Ron Dale, retired from a long career with Parks Canada as superintendent of heritage sites and now a member of the MHC, said both the limestone wall and the obelisk detract from the heritage of the area.

Jim and Erika Alexander, now retired but founders of the Friends of Fort George, wrote a letter to the town opposing the design, based on it obscuring the view of Fort Mississauga, as does the current landscaping.

NOTL Conservancy president Gracia Janes is also opposing the project.

Whatever is done at that site should open up the view of the natural historic site, they say.

Before deciding how to move forward, Bisback asked that Kowalchuk be given an opportunity to respond to some of the comments made by heritage committee members. Kowalchuk says he began this process with a commitment to create something that would leave a lasting impression on visitors to town, but without any pre-

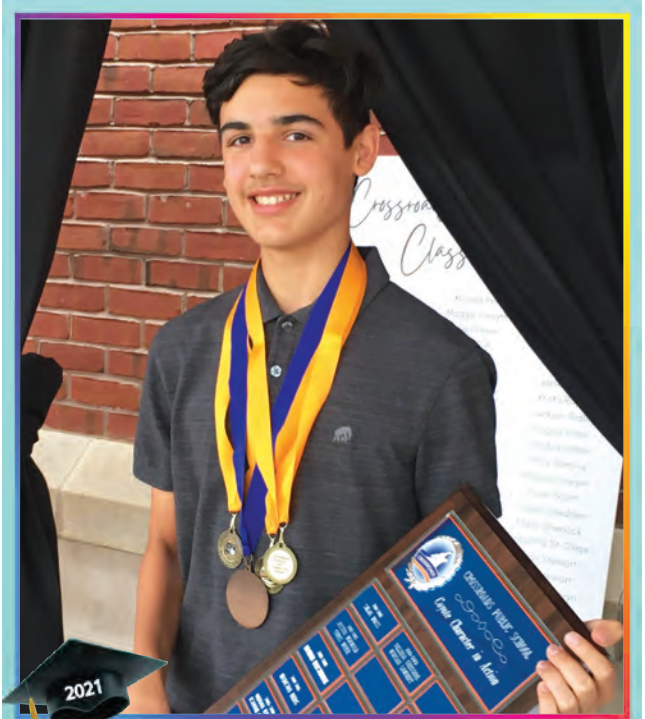
conceived notions of what it would look like. He was firm about "not second-guessing" the architects, he added, rather allowing them to "bring their best foot forward."

He acknowledged there will be a mix of people who will love it, and those that don't. "You're never going get 100 per cent approval."

He told the committee he hopes at the end of the day those involved in the decision-making, and the public, "will be somewhat flexible. "It's impossible to have everything unless of course you have a million dollar budget."

With the exception of Bisback, who chose to abstain because he felt he didn't have enough facts to move forward with the proposal, the committee voted to send it to council to look for comments from the public and make a decision on the project.

Council also voted to move it ahead, after discussion about thanking the donor and the Communities in Bloom committee for their hard work and input, and agreeing that the committee of the whole should be the decision-making body, with input from Kowalchuk and the public.



James Quinn
Crossroads Public School



Braden Sawyer
Crossroads Public School



Sam Vanderlee
GR. 8 - St. Michael Catholic Elementary





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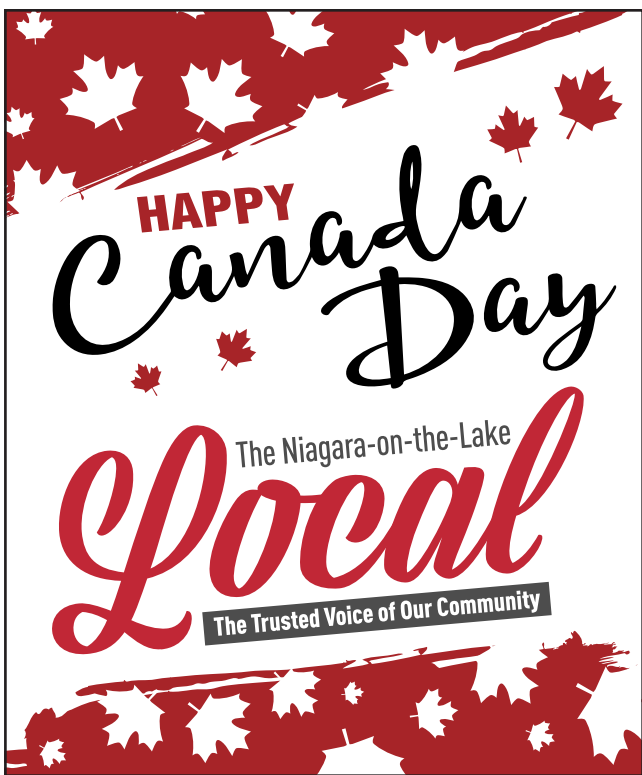
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We have winners!

The winners of the Friends of Fort George Colouring Contest were Mae Montgomery, 5, who received her prize from Kris Koldenhof of Maple Leaf Fudge, and Jack Clattenburg, 6, with his prize from Phil Leboudec of Phil's valu-mart. Thanks to both Maple Leaf Fudge and Phil's valu-mart for providing the gift baskets. Amanda Gamble of the Friends of Fort George is with them.





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Work progressing quickly on Glendale interchange

Penny Coles
The Local

If you only use the Glendale overpass occasionally, you might be surprised by the changes you see.

Clearing the area for construction in preparation for the huge, \$53.8 million project over the QEW now underway to build a new interchange began just a few weeks ago. The speed of the work and the amount that has been accomplished since is surprising, says Steve Hardaker, a Niagara-on-the-Green resident who has been following it with interest.

As a member of the Glendale Community Task Force, he has followed the progress from the early discussion stages with interest.

“There was a lot of stuff cleared at first, and now there is a lot of dirt. I was surprised how much, and how high it is — higher than the road. I don’t know where it’s all coming from,” he says.

Although a lot is happening, and quickly, it’s also surprising how little disruption there has been to traffic, Hardaker says.

There is a new set of stop lights on the south side of the interchange, and one left turn lane has been removed, but

other than that, the overpass is unchanged. The plan is for it to remain that way until the new diverging diamond interchange is completed.

Although traffic isn’t being interrupted, there is a lot going on to watch, he says, and to distract drivers, including him.

He and his wife walk a lot in the area, both of them usually with cameras, and although they chat with neighbours, he says nobody is complaining about the work.

“I don’t get any sense that the residents are impacted at all. So many are working from home anyway due to COVID, there just isn’t as much traffic as there normally would be.”

With a home backing on to Taylor Road, he hears noisy trucks and heavy equipment vehicles, making it impossible to sit outside, but although the traffic has increased, it’s not really new, he says.

Although the town was asked and agreed to lift the noise bylaw for construction, allowing work to continue around the clock, including Sundays, so the aggressive timeline for construction could be met, that hasn’t occurred yet, he says.

There is a lot of curiosity about the new diverging diamond interchange that will



Clearing the way for construction in the area around the Glendale overpass began just a few weeks ago, and a lot of dirt has been added and packed down since. (Penny Coles)

replace the overpass over the QEW, he says.

He’s never driven on one, nor have many others, with this one the first in Ontario, and only two others, both out west.

There are about 150 in the U.S., although some of them may still be under construction.

The most unusual feature is that traffic crosses to the opposite sides of the road at some point, while the other side is stopped, to allow better traffic flow, allowing drivers to make left turns without crossing traffic, thereby cutting down on opportunities for collisions.

The Glendale interchange has been an area of town with a high number of collisions, although not serious or fatal ones.

Hardaker says Glendale residents have been assured there will be an opportunity to learn about navigating through a diverging diamond before the interchange is ready to open.

While that’s the major part of the project, expected to be completed and open for traffic in November, 2022, there is more to come.

The region and the province are together working on a five-stage project that also includes:

- Reconstructing the Glendale Avenue/York Road intersection to a single-lane roundabout
- Constructing a new Airport Road loop ramp and connection road from Glendale Avenue to York Road/Airport Road intersection
- Constructing a new commuter carpool lot northwest of the interchange
- Rehabilitating the pavement on the QEW eastbound and westbound lanes between the east end of the Garden City Skyway bridge and QEW / Hwy. 405 split
- Extending the right turning lane of Glendale Avenue between Taylor Road and Niagara-on-the-Green Boulevard

Completion of all stages is anticipated for 2023.

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Rotary Club offers pop-up barbecue Canada Day

Local Staff

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club will be holding its second annual pandemic pop-up barbecue Canada Day.

The club's long-standing tradition has been a large community barbecue at Simcoe Park, but for the second time, they've had to adjust their July 1 plans.

Gary Hatton, Rotary member and Canada Day committee co-chair, says "we took it on the chin last year," having to organize a

drive-through event in a short amount of time.

So it was simple this year to repeat the activities of 2020, he says.

While there have been recent discussions about cancelling some Canada Day activities, the Rotary Club has been keeping its eye on what's going on in the community, and planning to go ahead with the fundraiser, which helps them to offer much-needed support in the community.

The Rotary Club, like other organizations, has

had to look at alternative ways to fundraise, with their large annual events cancelled, and has been fairly successful at doing that, says Hatton.

The drive-through barbecue will take place July 1 at the Niagara United Menonite Church on Niagara Stone Road. Meals will be served between 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

There are four menu options: a pig roast sandwich, a quarter-pound steak burger, two hot dogs, or a veggie burger. Each option includes a bag of

chips and a choice of bottle of water, or pop, for \$10.

There is the option of

ordering onsite the day of the event by cash-only, and the Rotary Club is also tak-

ing pre-orders through its website at www.niagaraonthelakerotary.ca.



There are some yummy meals to pick up at the Rotary Club barbecue. (Photos supplied)

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Lots to do at the library for kids this summer

Kasia Dupuis
Special to The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library is ready for another summer of exciting and engaging programming for kids of all ages.

This year, as we are seeing an ease back into in-person and outdoor programming, we are able to offer programs at the library in our outdoor spaces, complete with outdoor hand-washing stations and physical-distanced spaces, as well as continuing to offer virtual programs to participate in from the comfort of your own home.

No summer would be complete without registering for our annual Summer Reading Program. Tails & Tales is this year's program for children ages three to 13 to set their own personal reading goals, track their progress and earn their way toward a medal made in The Makery at the end of the summer. Summer Reading Passports are available at the library or by emailing notllibrary@gmail.com.

This year's Summer Reading Program team has expanded. Kasia Dupuis, children's library services associate, will be joined by Rachel Willekes, preschool programmer, as well as two enthusiastic and creative summer students. The library is proud to welcome Colin Fellows and Shaantih Sukhai to the Summer Reading Program team. The team has been working tirelessly on developing exciting, engaging and creative programming to not only keep the learning happening during summer break but to also help foster the connections and feelings of community that may have been missing these last few months. We have an out-

door, in-person children's program happening almost every day of the week, as well as virtual programs complete with free kits to keep the hands-on engagement going at home.

We're kicking off this summer on Friday, July 2 with some virtual fun and games. Our popular virtual trivia is back each Friday with topics such as All Things Disney, Pokemon, Frozen, and Lego, among others. Each week the winner will have a chance to win a themed prize pack, based on the week's topic.

We're also excited to introduce virtual Bingo games for kids on Friday mornings, too. Using the same platform as our trivia games, children are invited to play a classic game of Bingo for a chance to win a weekly prize pack. Both trivia and bingo are open to children of all ages, and no registration is required. The weekly code and theme will be posted on our social media channels and library website.

Fridays are also home to one of our outdoor, in-person Crafternoon programs, for ages four to six. Shaantih will help your child get creative and make something to be proud of during this crafty and engaging program. Create some flying fridge magnets or mix a batch of fluffy unicorn slime with her!

Saturdays are all about Science this summer. Join Colin and Shaantih in Science Fun where kids ages four to 10 can investigate some cool experiments, take part in some messy making and of course have lots of fun in this outdoor, in-person program at the library.

Mondays are home to the outdoor, in-person program called S.T.E.A.M. Explorers, where children ages six to 12 can join Colin in a weekly



Colin Fellows and Shaantih Sukhai will be helping out with children's programming at the NOTL Public Library this summer. (Photo supplied)

challenge based on science, technology, engineering, art or math concepts. Kids will get creative with their problem solving as they build rafts, construct towers and make rainbows among other fun and exciting projects.

Brave heroes and imaginative adventurers aged 12-plus are also invited to join us on Mondays for an introduction to the classic game Dungeons in Dragons. In this unique partnership between the NOTL Library and The Shaw Festival Theatre, Travis Seetoo will teach participants the basics of the game as they will explore their imaginations, learn about the magic of shared storytelling as well as receive a free kit containing their own set of DnD dice.

Mondays are also home to our popular Monday Makers programs where children aged four to 13 can get creative and learn new art skills. Join Kasia to paint a pair of fuzzy otter friends in "OTTERly Adorable!" on

July 5, and learn how to paint a mystical Narwhal — known as the unicorn of the sea — on Aug. 16. We have also added clay workshops into this summer's Monday Makers line-up including a Mini Flower Pot on July 19, and a pair of Crazy Clay Cats on July 26. These projects include a free kit containing all the materials you will need for hand-building with clay, as well as instructions to return your project to the library to be fired in a kiln. We are very excited about these workshops.

Creativity knows no age limit, so for the youngest creatives in your household, we have Mini Makers with Kasia for ages four to six. This new program has been specially designed for a younger audience, and includes a kit with all the materials to create virtually with Kasia on Zoom. Create a Summer Garden Sculpture on July 12 and then build a colourful owl complete with a tree-house backdrop on Aug. 9.

Getting crafty is one of our

favourite things to do at the library, and Tuesdays are home to the second of our Crafternoon Programs for ages seven to 12, July 6 through Aug. 17. Join Shaantih in this outdoor, in-person program where we will build a sparkly jellyfish, create a glow-in-the-dark dinosaur jar and more.

Wednesdays are all about exploring, discovering and connecting out-and-about in our community. Explorers aged three to six can take part in Wild Reads with Rachel, our preschool programmer, to enjoy outdoor story time, play fun games, and explore local parks as a small group at offsite locations in the villages of NOTL such as St. Davids, Willowbank at Queenston and Niagara Shores Park.

Kids aged 7-plus who enjoy a good scavenger hunt can join Shaantih in Clue Seekers. This weekly program takes place at offsite locations throughout NOTL. Get outdoors and become an expert clue seeker as you find the clues, seek the solutions and solve the puzzle in this outdoor scavenger hunt program.

Kids aged four to 10 can join Colin on Thursdays for Make & Explore, a new outdoor, in-person program where kids can explore the wonderful world we live in, through fun activities complete with a little something to take home each week. Colin has prepared a different project or activity that speaks to the weekly Summer Reading Program themes and highlights a different section in our recently revamped children's non-fiction collection. Investigate outer space, learn about bats and butterflies, and hear about some really weird pets in this hands-on program.

Thursdays are also home to another new program, where kids can travel to remote islands, meet new friends, dig for treasure and go fishing, virtually of course. Join Kasia in our Animal Crossing Meet-Ups for ages seven to 13 on the Nintendo Switch. Participants are required to have their own gaming system and a Nintendo Online Subscription.

For the kids who love to

tinker and investigate, we have the popular Tinker Thinker Thursdays program happening this summer with Kasia for kids aged seven to 13. This July, we will explore raft building and make our own marble mazes and in August, we will create a cranky contraption and learn about circuits as we build a light up sculpture. Both sessions include kits that contain all the materials needed to take part and "tinker thinker" with us from home.

Spend some quality family time together this summer by taking part in our Cache Me If You Can: Family Scavenger Hunt. Christine Reganti, the library's IT and Makery assistant, has hidden geocaches in secret locations throughout NOTL. To find them, register your team on our website and you will be emailed the coordinates to find on your hunt. Each time you find a hidden cache and write your team name in the log book, you will be entered to win one of two family prize packs which include books, skating passes, treats and more. July's caches are already hidden and waiting to be found before July 29, and the locations will be reset for August. Visit the library website to register your team and start searching.

Teens aged 14 to 18 are invited to join the library's newest book club, The Paper Cuts. Spearheaded by Christine and Adrianna Polito, the library's newest library services assistant, The Paper Cuts will be discussing *Stay Gold*, by Tobly McSmith, in their first meeting on July 15. Each registrant will receive a swag bag complete with their own copy of the book, an official Paper Cuts mug, goodies and more. Christine and Adrianna are also the library's TikTok dream team, creating fresh and funny content weekly. Visit @notllibrary on Instagram and TikTok to check out some of their reels.

We look forward to seeing you all this summer at the NOTL Library whether in-person or virtually. Additional program dates, details and registration are available on our website: www.notllibrary.org

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STAY GOLD
TOBLY McSMITH

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Owen Bjorgan
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On our private property on the outskirts of Virgil, a tributary of Four Mile Creek transitions from a glorified ditch and back into its original state.

When the creek crosses our property line, it is no longer linear. A meandering world of serpentine bends is guiding me through the wooded area, and there's no walking required.

I'm sitting on a giant black tire tube, courtesy of Enns Battery and Tire up the road. Two years in a row now, and usually during our first heat wave of the season, Enns gets a very excited phone call from me looking for tire tubes so I can float the daylights out of this creek.

It's not only an impossible amount of fun, but also a trip down an aqua avenue to observe local wildlife from angles and habitats rarely visited.

We started tubing as early as the middle of May this year. That's when our first unseasonally hot and dry spell settled over southern Ontario. When these conditions prevail, the creek naturally begins to desiccate.

This is precisely the time where more water is pumped



Owen Bjorgan, Dave Tebbutt, and Kirstyn Smith enjoy a tubing adventure on Four Mile Creek. (Owen Bjorgan)

into these creeks to rejuvenate their levels, allowing farmers to suck water out so they can properly irrigate the orchards and vineyards. The water typically comes from the Niagara River or the Sir Adam Beck Hydroelectric Station Reservoir.

That means that even on a toasty Niagara day, the water is surprisingly high. I plunk my bottom into the tire tube, I kick back, and what happens next is my new favourite downtime activity.

Your weightless body passes under the shady

boughs of a pine tree stand. Exiting the cool alcove, you float under the first bridge of the property, which then gives way to a sunny, grassy corner of the creek. You round the first tight corner of many, admiring the steep banks and tree roots tumbling down to

the water's edge. The trickle behind you disappears, and you find yourself on a deep and ultra-relaxing straight-away before the next bend.

On this property, the creek runs its natural course with curves and turns. This allows a series of invaluable

microhabitats to form. Where the creek makes a sharp kink in the land, it typically changes the shape of the embankment, resulting in deeper pockets of water in between sections of shallow ripples.

Continued on page 21

This space is deliberately left blank so that each of us can reflect on “our” Canada. We are not perfect, there are things we need to correct, there are stories yet to be told, there are sorrows, and there are victories, but there is only one Canada and we are glad to call it home.

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Museum presentation walks us through what to do

Kim Wade
Special to The Local

Celebrations of Canada are underway. With the nation slowly reopening as mass vaccinations roll out, many Canadians born here or those who have chosen to make Canada their home are contemplating celebrating with backyard barbecues and picnics donned in red and white dollar store regalia. Cheap flag-laden cowboy hats and maple leaf pinwheel headbands serve as the patriotic uniform to ring in the 153rd anniversary of this federation. July 1, 1876, marks the passing of the Constitution Act, which joined three separate colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick into a single Dominion within the British Empire.

The same British Empire that on July 1, 1867, appointed John A. MacDonald as the first prime minister of this new nation. MacDonald, our “founding father,” along with his government, institutionalized a system of discrimination against the original inhabitants of this land that has brought shame to our nation. Shame, despair, anger and disgust are a few of the emotions felt by citizens and residents across the country, and around the world as the remains of 215 children were found at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. More outrage ensues as the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) discovered 751 unmarked graves at the site of the Marieval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan this past week.

“The world is watching as we unearth the findings of genocide,” says FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron.

The grisly discovery of the children at Kamloops, and in light of June considered Indigenous History month, Emma Facca, summer student at the NOTL Museum, says that she found herself asking her own questions about our country’s legacy. “I was having my own personal questions, like what can I do about this? How can I start educating not just myself about this history but also the people around me? So I figured the best way to do that was to invite an Indigenous speaker to the museum, and share their knowledge with the community and we could all learn something together.”

Facca is going into her fifth year at Brock University in the concurrent education program in history and English. It is in this setting that she met Stanley “Bobby” Henry, a PhD student at Trent Univer-

sity and lecturer at Brock University. Henry holds a master of education degree from Lakehead University in Indigenous studies and is a community member of Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

Facca took Henry’s Indigenous Arts education course, which teaches students on different ways of brining Indigenous art into the classroom. “I really connected with him as a professor. I think that in his class I definitely learned a lot of unwritten history that I would’ve never known or learned about.”

As a child and grandchild of day-school residential school survivors, Henry said, “be prepared, this truth-telling is not over. We are just at the starting point of it. This truth-telling isn’t finished, and arguably speaking we are not going to see the end of it in our generation, so people also need to see that too.”

Lately, Henry has been approached by Canadians, such as Facca, looking for clarification, guidance, direction and resources on this issue. He says that he has been asked mainly one reoccurring question: What can I do?

To answer this question, he outlined six steps in his hour-long presentation, Pathway in Moving Forward, that was hosted by the NOTL Museum last Thursday.

1. “Recognize your voice and support matters.” Henry advocates for people to support the revitalization of Indigenous languages through speaking out to politicians. Ask for a change in policies, or even take an Indigenous language course yourself. Henry, who teaches a Cayuga language course at Brock, believes that language is a “way to reconnect with culture. That’s where culture dwells is in our language.”

2. “Know that this history is everyone’s history, not just Indigenous peoples.” Educate yourself about the history. Read the stories of Indigenous people, such as *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese. Read *They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples and Residential Schools*, by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is available through publications.gc.ca. Henry suggests just “google residential schools.” There is a wealth of documented history at our fingertips. “Self-education is the key to enacting the necessary change, Henry says, quoting Justice Murray Sinclair. “Education got us into this mess, education will get us out.”



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s bentwood box was constructed by Coast Salish artist Luke Marston from a single piece of red cedar, and carved to represent First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultures. During TRC events, people placed personal items into the box to symbolize their journey toward healing, and it travelled with the TRC to all of its official events.



This photo of Qu’Appelle Residential School students, in Fort Qu’Appelle, Saskatchewan, is courtesy of the Buell/Library and Archives Canada.

3. “Challenge racist attitudes you hear about Indigenous peoples.” Challenge these stereotypes. “Make it known that one or a few people’s selected views does not equate to a generalization.”

4. “Answer the questions: ‘who are we? How did we get where we are today? Where is it where we want to go? How will we get there?’” How do we forge a path together as a nation toward reconciliation with the past and Indigenous people? By asking these questions it acknowledges the issues, problems and a willingness to move forward together.

5. “Offer support to the other side when in need. Noting that reconciliation is a process, and this relationship requires consistently repairing the relationship,” adds Henry. It will not be an easy road.

6. “Individualize reconciliation.” Henry asks people to talk about your

thoughts and feelings about residential schools. Talk about what reconciliation means to you. Open these conversations with friends and family. Share your learning with these people. “Conversations are key to also enacting meaningful change,” he advises.

Almost 153 years later, our current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said of the Marieval grave site, that he was “terribly saddened,” and that it was “a shameful reminder of the systemic racism, discrimination, and injustice that Indigenous peoples have faced.”

Henry and Facca want this reminder to be a lesson. A lesson that will spark the pursuit of an education. An education through opening conversations, creating a dialogue, learning about Indigenous peoples’ cultures, language and history.

“I believe that we should do one thing, educate ourselves by reading books

and talking to Indigenous people that would be the first step in our reconciliation,” says Facca. Henry reminds us that “reconciliation is a process, not an event.” We need to educate ourselves about the past in order to move forward into the future together.

While the presentation was not recorded, a great place to start your education is through the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Report at <http://www.trc.ca/> or the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba <https://nctr.ca/>.

Henry also encourages people to contact their local Indigenous Friendship Centres that are located across the province. They are a great resource especially for Indigenous people in the area that want to reconnect with their culture and language. The Niagara Regional Native Centre is located at 382 Airport Road

in Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON. <https://nrnc.ca/>.

The NOTL Museum is also providing an opportunity to show your support to residential school survivors by organizing a bulk order of T-shirts and hoodies to support the Woodland Cultural Centre – Save the Evidence Project. Proceeds from these shirts will benefit the Save the Evidence Campaign, helping Woodland Cultural Centre restore and open the former Mohawk Institute as a space of Cultural Interpretation and Indigenous Resilience. Unisex T-Shirts are \$20 and Hoodies are \$40. Money will be due upon pick-up of your order at the Museum and will be delivered in time for you to proudly wear on Orange Shirt day on Sept. 30.

Please contact the museum for further information and how to order. <https://www.notlmuseum.ca/> or by calling 905-468-3912.

Exciting new format moves lacrosse outside

New league formed combines players from across Niagara

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Minor lacrosse players across Niagara who usually compete against each other will be playing side-by-side this summer.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Thunderhawks Minor Lacrosse Club has joined forces with organizations in Fort Erie, Lincoln, Pelham and St. Catharines to form the Niagara Lacrosse League (NLL).

Club president Chris Williams says the decision was made to unite the associations in an effort to get kids playing again, after a summer away from Canada's national summer sport.

"The club presidents got together and we came up with this format," Williams explains. "It allows us to have four teams at each age division, and we're mixing the teams. For the next two weeks, we're looking at the players and we'll separate them by talent, so each team is balanced. That means each team will have kids from all five clubs."

Williams says there was zero difficulty in getting the five associations to work together. The focus all along has been to get the youth back on the field after almost two years off.

It's a huge change in the way local lacrosse is usually run. In addition, with COVID-19 still in the picture, for the first time the action will all take place outdoors this year.

Next week the players

from all the clubs will move to the turf fields at A.N. Myer and Westlane Secondary Schools in Niagara Falls. But visitors to the fields at the Virgil sports park the past two weeks would have seen scores of kids aged three to 18 packing the fields there.

Williams says the DSBN wouldn't allow more than 10 people on the turf until Stage 2 of the province's current re-opening plan. But he was able to make an agreement with NOTL's Parks and Recreation department to get the kids onto the local fields.

Niagara Falls as the home base makes more sense to the other clubs, as it is a bit more central for parents travelling from Fort Erie, Lincoln and Pelham. According to Williams, the 80 NOTL players involved this year don't care where they play, they're just happy to have a stick in their hands again.

Because they are playing outdoors doesn't mean they'll be playing field lacrosse, though. The clubs have agreed to use a hybrid set of rules, while dividing the playing field into two, with the sidelines becoming the goal lines.

"It uses some box lacrosse rules, and some field lacrosse rules," says Williams. "Box lacrosse is usually five players plus a goalie, field is usually nine and a goaltender. What we're doing is seven-on-seven, with two attackmen, two middies, two defenders and a goaltender. Box lacrosse is the fastest game on two feet. This

hybrid game continues to be very fast because we're playing sideline to sideline, allowing for lots of ball movement."

Williams is pleased with the turnout from the local kids. Thunderhawks Minor Lacrosse usually can rely on about 110 registrations per year. Williams speculates that the slightly lower number is due to the border closure, as the club can often count on a number of American kids registering each summer. Amongst the five clubs involved, though, only St. Catharines has more kids playing.

Members from each association are involved in running the new NLL. As well, an effort has been made to ensure at least one coach from each club is part of the coaching staff at each age level. It means coaches who are usually rivals are working together and learning from each other this summer.

"These are all lacrosse people who have played the game for years," Williams says. "We came together quickly, with one goal in mind, and that was to provide the best lacrosse available in the Niagara region, from kids just starting out to kids who have been playing since they were three or four years old. It's been a pleasure to work with all these associations."

Pandemic-era rules are still in force, of course. Hand sanitizer is available at check-in tables upon entry and exit. The two-metre rule is still being enforced, and online screening before each practice

is required. Each age group is capped at 50 participants, including coaches, and as of this week, following the move to Stage 2, scrimmages, not full-on games, are being allowed.

"I haven't heard one negative comment," Williams says. "Everyone was just dying to get out. There's no other option, with the arenas closed. This is what's available, this is what COVID is allowing us to do. It's great to see them back on the fields, laughing, and playing again. It's about their friendships, their communication skills, and their mental health."

Williams has to hold back his excitement about an upcoming announcement of the names of the teams this

summer.

"We've come up with some really good Niagara region names, some really, really nice uniforms and colours. It's kind of like a secret right now. But once they come up, you'll experience the Niagara region feel. Each team will be named after something in the Niagara region."

Though registration is currently full, Williams says the club is still taking names for a waiting list of sorts. As well, they are considering starting a one-day-a-week session on the Virgil fields to introduce newcomers from NOTL to the game.

Despite his excitement for this summer, Williams does believe next summer will see

a return to the arenas and business as usual.

"Next year should go back to normal," he speculates, "where Niagara-on-the-Lake does their stuff, St. Catharines does their stuff, and so on. For now, though, we're just happy we've gotten together to do this and actually make it happen. We're not looking at the future of what lacrosse could be or should be."

"I guess the biggest word this year is adapting," Williams concludes. "We've had to adapt, we've had to bounce ideas around. It's a new league, and you know, we had to wait for the government to make their decisions. It's been challenging, but we're happy with the way it has worked out."

Lots of nature to enjoy

Continued from page 19

Logs and rocks tumble into the water and settle for a new life, where they create water dynamics which shape the stream bed into little divots and pools. In general, stream debris is an essential habitat within the habitat, creating ideal conditions for fish to lay their eggs in specific pockets of water.

After casually floating through the lazy-river stretch, you excitedly shout back to your tubing team to prepare for "the gauntlet," a fast section of creek that pushes you through a tunnel of vegetation at high speed. Of course, we're not talking about Niagara River rapids, but this is the relative excitement you get for a NOTL creek.

The creek is primarily lined with willows, their roots creating a blood red fringe along the banks while their branches close you in from above. It just adds to the aesthetics of the situation, as you end up spinning in circles and cruising through a

tube while on a tube.

While you're laughing and cruising to the next S-bend, frogs and toads hop in from the edge with a classic kerplunk salute. A muskrat swims ahead of you as if to say, hey, I do this every day. Recently, my girlfriend and I followed a mother mallard duck and her seven ducklings for the whole 20-minute duration of tubing. Last year, my brother and I tubed by a gargantuan snapping turtle, who appeared to be a rock with legs at a first glance. I picked the creature up to appreciate her reptilian stateliness, and proceeded to watch her swim upstream with no effort. A green heron flies above, his view healthy and wholesome, as the creek winds around creating scores of habitat and hunting opportunities.

Essentially, this creek is a habitat corridor for NOTL's native species to move throughout its watershed. This is also evidenced by the deer tracks leading up and down the banks, and our occasional sightings of coyotes on the property.

After the gauntlet, I'm

floating under a natural log bridge which we call shot bridge, where we sometimes tee up drinks for our thirsty friends as a halfway point surprise. After that, I'm floating through a sunny and slow area called the Florida swamp, filled with yellow water lilies and soft, grassy edges. Many twists, turns, and moments of relaxation later, I'm crawling up the bank at the other end of the property, which is where the adventure ends.

Several years ago, my friend Will Friesen and I took advantage of a flood situation, which took us past East and West Line and down past Wagg Road.

Since then, I've been joined by my mom, my brother, my best buddies, my girlfriend and my dog for tubular times. Every time I taste the fresh air and gratitude of this experience, it's a gentle reminder that we can get creative with our outdoor fun right here in Niagara.

Additionally, it is a reminder that an area of our human enjoyment is also an area of immense natural importance.



Kids have been out practising in the Virgil Sports Park, but games are being held in Niagara Falls. (Mike Balsom)



The Gauntlet section of the creek shows off red willow roots and numerous frogs. (Owen Bjorgan)

LocalSPORTS

Predators want to become a community team

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

General manager Johan Eriksson is adamant that the new Niagara-on-the-Lake Predators Junior A hockey squad will be a community team.

Having moved from Toronto, and scheduled to play

in the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League (GMHL), the Predators will be playing half of their 42-game regular season at the Meridian Credit Union Arena in Virgil. The other 21 games will take place on the road, mostly visiting their Southern Division opponents in towns such as Kingsville, Tottenham, Col-

borne, Oshawa and Durham. Locally, Port Colborne also has a team in the GMHL, the Niagara Whalers.

Eriksson says the move to NOTL is an exciting opportunity.

"For many reasons, we were looking elsewhere," he explains. "It's very difficult to run a junior team in Toronto. It's hard to get fans, it's hard to become more of a community team. It's also hard to get billets, and the ice is very expensive."

The native of Sweden says when they started to look for a new home, NOTL was the first priority on his list.

"Our owner really liked the place too," he tells The Local. "In Niagara, you have so many players coming up in Junior B and Triple-A levels. Niagara is a stronghold for hockey, and Niagara-on-the-Lake didn't have a Junior A team. For us, it worked out perfectly."

And they love the facility in Virgil.

"The rink is in good shape, it's on the newer side," he says. "There are professional-level cameras already set up, a good room for a play-by-play announcer, good locker rooms. It will be one of the better rinks in this division in the league."

Eriksson says the level of play in the Tier 2 GMHL compares nicely to the well-known Junior B loop, the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League, of which the St. Catharines Falcons and Thorold Blackhawks are members.

Eriksson feels the GOJHL actually should be designated as a Junior A league, which is something the owners of some of the clubs there have been pushing for. Players in the GMHL tend to get noticed more by scouts from the American colleges, which is a common goal for many.

Eriksson himself knows the scouting world. He moved to Canada three years ago as a scout for Swedish hockey teams. In that role he visited arenas in the American Hockey League and the



The Predators will play about half their games in the Meridian Credit Union Arena, one of the better facilities in their league.

East Coast Hockey League to report on players being eyed by teams in his homeland.

He began his affiliation with the GMHL as assistant general manager of the South Muskoka Shield of the league's Northern Division, where he spent two seasons before moving to the Predators.

Besides managing the Predators, Eriksson also works as a European liaison, player advisor, amateur representative and consultant for Pursuit Hockey Development, a Niagara-based business focused on helping aspiring players reach their goals in the sport.

Eriksson's Swedish connections mean that the NOTL Predators will most likely have up to eight players from that country, four of whom have already committed to the team. There are also a few players from Russia that are signed.

The rest of the roster will be filled out by elite hockey prospects mostly from Ontario. And Eriksson wants some local hockey players on the team as well.

"We are keeping a number of spots for local players," he says. "A lot of local kids will get invitations to our prospect camp in August. And if local players born between 2000 and 2005, especially from '03 to '05, are interested, they can

always reach out to me, night or day."

The Predators finished their most recent season (2019-2020) in last place in the GMHL's South Division, with a record of 8-32-2. But Eriksson is certain that won't be the case once the league gets the go-ahead to begin in the fall.

"Every year for the Predators so far they've been a development team," explains Eriksson. "That means they've had a roster that was two to three years younger than the other teams. This year we feel that we can go for the Russell Cup. We have some top talent coming in here now, and we've managed to raise the age level a little bit too."

The team will be coached by Andrew Whalen. Hired in April, Whalen had a long career playing professionally in the Swedish pro league Hockeyettan. He also runs his own development program year-round for both junior and pro players.

To accommodate those international and out-of-region Predators, Eriksson is looking for billet families in town. He is hoping to find spots for about 15 players, depending on whether or not some of them coming from overseas may be barred from leaving due to border closures.

Billet families are expect-

ed to provide the players with housing, food, WiFi and utilities. The compensation for the billet host is \$550 per month as well as family passes for regular season and the playoffs.

The organization is also hoping to line up volunteers to take on a number of important duties, including coordinating the billets and play-by-play announcing. The games will be streamed live on GMHL.tv. Adult tickets for the home games are expected to be about \$7 to \$8.

Barring any further COVID issues, the Predators are expected to start their main camp in the middle of September, which is when the billet families would be welcoming them into their homes. Eriksson remains optimistic that the 2021-2022 season will begin on schedule.

"We are so happy to be here," enthuses Eriksson. "We really want it to become a community team. Our players are going to be out and about, we really want them to be out there. If people have tips as to what we can do in the community, we welcome them to reach out."

For information about billeting or other volunteer opportunities, contact Eriksson by phone at 365-323-5789 or via email at j.eriksson1984@gmail.com.



Johan Eriksson, from Sweden, hopes to have some local players on the team. (Photos supplied)

LocalHAPPENINGS

FISH FRY
Thursday, July 1st 4 - 7 p.m.
Welcome to the Legion 124's
Canada Day Fish Fry - We will be making
a donation of \$2 per order to the local
Niagara Regional Native Centre.
TAKEOUT ONLY • CASH ONLY
1 or 2 piece dinner with fries and coleslaw
Drive-thru to order

Royal Canadian Legion Br. 124 | 410 King St.,
905-468-2353 | legion124@gmail.com

ST. DAVIDS LIONS DRIVE-THRU BBQ
Friday, July 2nd • 4 to 7 pm
1462 YORK RD. ST. DAVIDS
PLEASE WEAR A MASK WHEN ORDERING/PICKING UP

COMBO MEALS:	Lions Burger & Fries \$10
All meals come with bottled water. Add a soft drink for \$1	Lions CDN Burger & Fries \$12 (topped with peameal bacon)
	Lions Peameal Bacon & Fries \$10
	Leo's Hot Dog & Fries \$6

CACHE ME IF YOU CAN – FAMILY SCAVENGER HUNT PROGRAM

July 1 @ 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Have you ever wanted to try Geocaching? Join the NOTL Public Library for CACHE ME IF YOU CAN – our brand new Family Scavenger Hunt Program! During the month of July, visit different locations around NOTL and use coordinates to find hidden geocaches. For each geocache you find – don't forget to write your team name in the log book – you will be entered to win a FAMILY PRIZE PACK at the end of the month! July Registration is now open, for details and to register, please visit: <https://notlpubliclibrary.org>.

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10:00 a.m.
Worship Gathering -
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Kevin Bayne - Work Ethic

Our services are also
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at 10 AM. Visit our website
for more information!

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Local

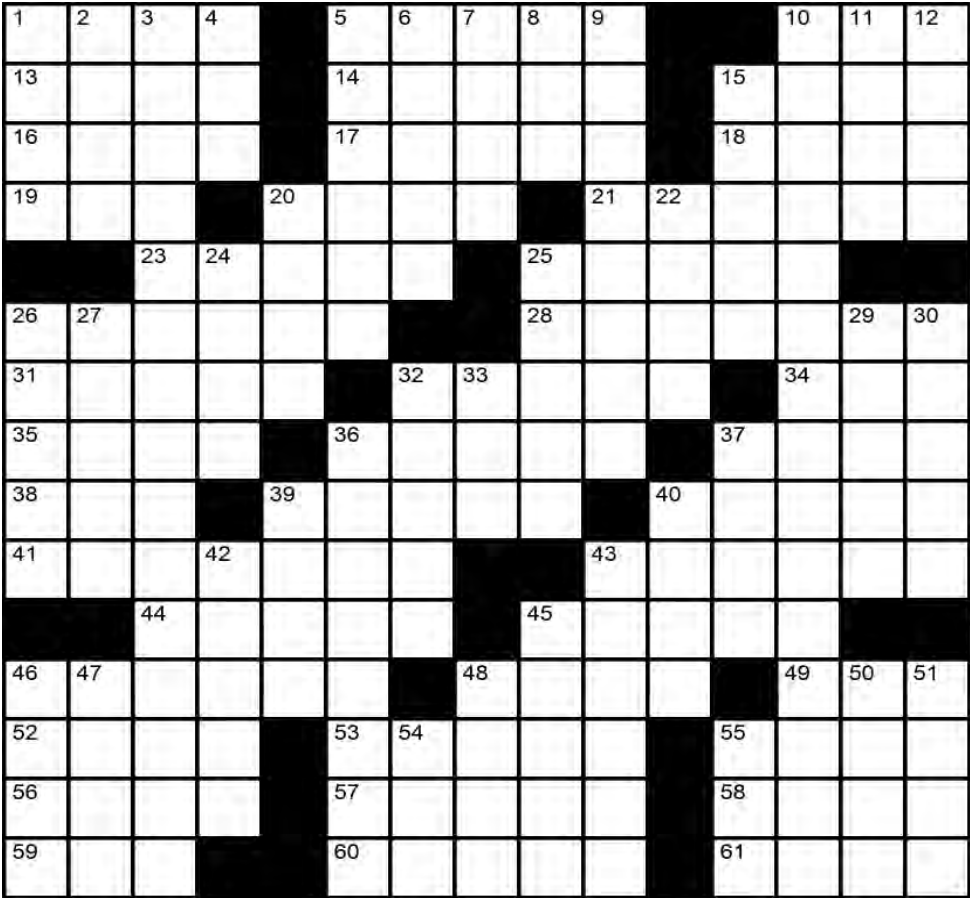
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- Across:**

1 Able was I ere I saw ---
5 The Paris subway
10 4 qts.
13 Underhand political revelation
14 Relating to birds
15 Set of three
16 Isinglass
17 Hunters' cabin
18 Radicals
19 Hard durable wood
20 Birthday party essential
21 Said to photographers
23 Inclination
25 G M builder Alfred P ---
26 Scarcely
28 First Gospel
31 Usual type of switch
32 "I miss my ---, my --- miss misses me"
34 "Halt! --- fire!"
35 Burden
36 Some embers
37 Former Georgia senator Sam ---
38 Great weight
39 Legion
40 Oater baddie chasers
41 Firefighter's water source
- 43 Captivates
44 Paws
45 Russian prison camp
46 South American cowboy
48 Little Dickens heroine
49 Plugs
52 Twice-baked bread
53 Come together
55 Chop-chop
56 Tennessee state flower
57 Happen again
58 Greek goat's cheese
59 Lobbying gp.
60 Measures
61 Old Russian ruler
- Down:**

1 Tickle Me toy
2 Star Wars princess
3 Aural atmosphere creator in films
4 Alias
5 Affliction
6 Summon
7 "There is a --- in the affairs of men ..." (Shakespeare: "Julius Caesar")
8 Syncopated piano piece
9 With uniform service throughout
10 E.g. methane and water vapor
11 Supports
12 Fail to win
15 Hallowe'en option
20 Bovine baby
22 Strong attraction
24 Sports officials (Abbr.)
25 Look happy
26 Kiosk
27 Bug
29 Physicist --- Mach
30 Fermented grape juices
32 Varieties
33 Bundle
36 Topographical outlines
37 Cosmic bang
39 Hell --- no fury like a woman scorned
40 Tab
42 Haystacks
43 Top dogs
45 Arrangement
46 Suitcase
47 Migraine feature
48 Pleasant
50 Collection of facts
51 Pole at sea
54 Butterfly catcher
55 Astern

OBITUARY



BRADLEY, LYNN LOUISE—It is with heavy hearts and sadness that we announce the sudden passing of our daughter and sister at the age of 62 at Upper Canada Lodge on Friday, June 25th, 2021.

Lynn is predeceased by her husband Carmen Topping, her father Allen Bradley, and brother Bruce. Survived by her mother Hope Bradley, siblings Robert (Shelagh), Jim (Kathy), Mary (Alvin), Allison (Henry), Paul, and sister-in-law Mary MacDougall.

Also survived by nieces and nephews Zoë, Leah and Stephan, Bradley and Courtney, Erica and Cameron, Michael and Tyler, and Abby and Allenah.

Lynn worked for the Niagara Health System for 37 years and volunteered at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Hospital after her retirement. Lynn was a life long member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and an avid traveller. A private service will be held Friday, July 2nd at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Interment to follow in the Church cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church would be gratefully acknowledged as expressions of sympathy. Arrangements entrusted to George Darte Funeral Home, 585 Carlton St., St. Catharines. Sign our online guestbook at www.georgedartefuneralhome.com



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Deadline: Mondays at 3 p.m.

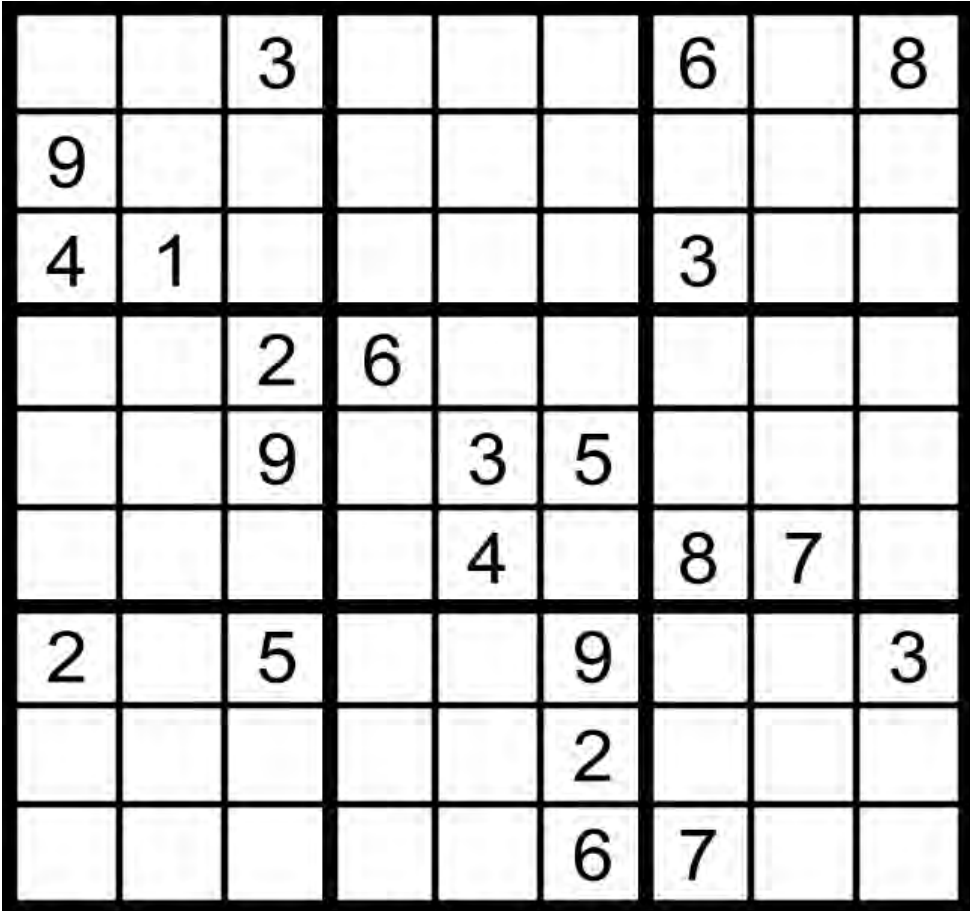
PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from June 23, 2021

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

Across: 1 Lame, 5 Sadr, 9 Edith, 14 Oral, 15 I A E A, 16 Audio, 17 Film, 18 The big bang, 20 To come, 22 Dire, 23 Story, 24 Earlier, 29 Net loss, 33 Linda, 34 Wet, 37 System, 38 Anew, 40 Trade, 42 Tomb, 43 Innate, 45 Real, 47 Tao, 48 Vitro, 49 British, 51 Essence, 53 A-line, 56 Sort, 58 A minor, 59 Amphibious, 64 Gale, 65 Nasal, 66 Noah, 67 Hits, 68 Crag, 69 Clue, 70 Tree.

Down: 1 Lotts, 2 A not, 3 Malcontents, 4 Elmore, 5 Site, 6 Ash, 7 Deed, 8 Rabies, 9 Eagerly, 10 Dub, 11 Ida, 12 Tin, 13 Hog, 19 I R A, 21 Myth, 25 List, 26 Into thin air, 27 Edema, 28 Rambo, 30 Lute, 31 Orr, 32 Starr, 34 Waive, 35 Ennis, 37 Seat, 39 Ware, 41 Del, 44 Tonsils, 46 Liam, 49 Bering, 50 Slight, 52 Cob, 54 Nolte, 55 Erase, 57 Tool, 58 Ashe, 59 A N C, 60 Mar, 61 P S A, 62 Hag, 63 U A E.



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— Local SPORTS —

Minor softball back on the diamonds

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

About 90 boys and girls hit the diamonds at Virgil Sports Park last Wednesday for the relaunch of NOTL Minor Softball.

Club president Peter Flynn explains that the pandemic aftermath forced a couple of changes to the club's divisions. The usual offering of four age groups, encompassing ages three to 14, has been pared down to two groups. Unfortunately, the squirt (nine to 11 year olds) and peewee (12 to 14 year olds) divisions will not be running this summer.

"We have the Learn to Play division for three, four and five year olds," Flynn explains, "but we added six year olds this year, because everyone lost a year last summer. We've divided them up, with three and four year olds, and then five and six year olds."

Those ages run Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m., with kids rotating through different stations, concentrating on learning the skills of the game. Flynn says the goal is to keep them moving at all times, with stations focusing on throwing, hitting and exercising for the full hour.

"We get those little three and four year olds running from home plate all the way out to the big fence on B diamond, and back," Flynn exclaims. "Then we do a cheer. I'm hearing from the parents about how happy they are to see their kids active again."

The next division, which takes the field at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, has also been revamped for 2021.

"Coaches Pitch used to be ages six, seven and eight," he explains, "but now we're doing seven, eight, nine and 10, to get back that one year that some kids missed. Unfortunately, due to COVID, and moving to a new website, we only had nine older kids sign up."

Flynn says the organization has become comfortable in its role as a "starter point" for youth interested in baseball and softball. Over the past few years he has seen more of the peewee players (ages 12 to 14) moving on to play hardball in St. Catharines or Niagara Falls, or fastpitch at the Grantham Optimist Club in St. Catharines.

The overall emphasis for NOTL Minor Softball has always been on developing skills and a love for the game. That hasn't changed with the new revamped age groups.

What has changed is a set of protocols that has required parents to keep their distance on the fields. For Learn to Play,

kids are reminded to use hand sanitizer at the start of practice. The coaches have a bucket of balls that are regularly disinfected. Kids are handed a ball to use, and that is theirs for the duration of the session. They return it at the end, when the whole bucket is disinfected once again.

Thus far, participants in both age divisions have been organized into groups that are capped at 10. This week provincial regulations loosen up enough to allow up to 25 people together for outdoor activities. Flynn says they will for now stick to the groups of 10, but the larger number may allow for them to soon move into

game play for the older kids.

Of the first sessions on the field, Flynn says, "everyone had a really good time. So many parents were commenting about how happy they were to be out there, and to see soccer out there too. And they were happy that we were able to make an agreement on the times with soccer so that some kids could do both."

Though registration is closed online, Flynn says the club will still accept some last minute registrants depending on space in the age divisions. Interested parents should call him at 905-327-1620, or send an email to info@notlsoftball.org as soon as possible.



The emphasis for NOTL Minor Softball is on developing skills and a love for the game. (Photo supplied)



Benny Bayne is ready to get back on the ball diamond. (Photo supplied)