



Newark
Neighbours
food bank
open
page 16



Catherine O'Donnell of Willow Cakes and Pastries designed the Canada Day Cake, as she has for years, and accompanies it to Simcoe Park. This year's cake theme, she says, was a take on Alice in Wonderland, but instead of just being Alice, what if we invited the whole forest? (Nick Fearn) For more Canada Day photos see pages 12 and 13.

‘Something good must come of this,’ says grieving mother

Penny Coles
The Local

Barbara Worthy is determined to make sure something good will come of what happened Sunday evening, over a week ago. Her son Liam Neumann, 34, had been missing since June 25, last seen disappearing into a very turbulent area of Twelve Mile Creek, where

he had been rafting with his dog Brodie. The Niagara Regional Police had already stopped their active search when a member of the public reported seeing a body, and police were able to locate and recover it, caught on a long tree limb hanging out over the creek. But by Tuesday afternoon, Worthy still hadn't

had confirmation from the police — they would not make an identification until they had results from an autopsy being conducted in Toronto, and Worthy was told it might not be until Wednesday or even later this week — “hopefully before the end of the week,” before she heard. That leaves his family and friends in a “holding

pattern,” says Worthy. “We’ve been in a holding pattern since Sunday. All we can do is wait,” she told The Local. She says she’s been told red hair and red facial hair could be seen on the body. “How many gingers were there in Twelve Mile Creek?” she asks. But she knew it was

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Honouring lives lost

Jane Andres
The Local

This past Sunday young Kemar Campbell was laid to rest. He was a farmworker from Jamaica who had only been in Niagara-on-the-Lake for eight weeks when he went to sleep one night and didn't wake up. It was his first

year on the seasonal farm work program, and a first-time father to a six-month-old daughter. The hopes of his family have been replaced by the agony of loss. His family still has unanswered questions. It could take up to a year for them to receive the final

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Community services delivered in NOTL explained to council

Carrie Gleason
The Local

At what have become regular information-sharing sessions from the Niagara Region at town council meetings, commissioner of community services Adrienne Jugley provided a summary of the work her department does, both in the region and in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and some of the challenges it faces.

Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser has been organizing the sessions to update town councillors on the work at the region, including the many programs offered to residents across Niagara.

The programs includes children's services, homelessness services, community housing, seniors services and social assistance. In many of these areas of responsibility, the region's community services department acts as a municipal service manager, meaning it delivers services on behalf of the province as part of the Municipal Act. The policies in these areas are not the region's, but come from the province, Jugley explained.

Community services employs about 2,200 staff, which represents more than 50 per cent of the Niagara Region's workforce, and has an annual budget of around \$380 million — a large chunk of which is money from the province, she explained.

Children's services
Children's services is responsible for planning, funding and administering the local licensed child care system in the region.

There are currently 12,000 licensed child care spaces in the region, with a little more than 300 of them in Niagara-on-the-Lake. However, NOTL residents can access available spaces across the region, which some people do because of proximity to their workplace.

Children's services is also rolling out funding for the federal government's Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system, which aims to provide affordable child care to families for an average of \$10 per day.

When Coun. Maria Mavridis brought up the issue of waitlists for child care at the Niagara Nursery School and the closure of the Early On Centre at Crossroads Public School, Jugley acknowledged that there are waitlists for child care across the region, despite spaces being open.

The problem, she explained, is a shortage of child care providers. "The bottom line is that there aren't enough (child care providers). They go through two years of community college and then they aren't making much more than they would at a local restaurant. Considering the responsibility involved, that's quite a disincentive."

In efforts to address the

shortage, the region has partnered with Niagara College and other agencies to create a partial tuition reimbursement program as an incentive to stay in the field. "We've also been campaigning pretty hard to the province and at the federal government that funds this that they need to have more focus on the wages, because that is what's going to incentivize people to come into the profession and stay," she said.

Homelessness services
Homelessness services in the region is mainly funded by the province, with a little bit from the federal government and the region also contributing. It is responsible for homeless prevention, outreach, shelters and supportive housing.

In NOTL, most of the department's work falls under outreach, which consists of a mobile unit that comes to the community, rather than having a full-time centre here.

Jugley explained how the outreach program works. "If you see someone you are concerned about or hear of someone you are concerned about, what we ask you to do is call 211. Say you have a gentleman or a family that you are worried about, and can you please come see them, and we will send outreach, which operates seven days a week. They will come out and meet with that individual and see what we can do to get

them sorted."

"We take it for granted that there aren't these problems in NOTL," commented Coun. Gary Burroughs, "but when there are, they're taken care of very well (by the region), so thank you for that."

Community Housing
Community housing in Niagara is made up of a combination of housing owned and operated by Niagara Regional Housing (the region's local municipal housing corporation) and other not-for-profits. There is one Niagara Region Housing property in NOTL — the 40-unit building on Davy Street.

As Jugley explained, a lot of not-for-profit housing was built 25 to 40 years ago under agreements with the province and the federal government. Funding that community housing receives from the provincial government goes toward paying the not-for-profits' mortgages. The not-for-profits then provide housing to people in need from a centralized waiting list the region manages.

Currently there are about 10,000 people on the waiting list for community housing across the region, but the turnover is only about 450 to 500 units a year, which Jugley said is "very slow."

The reason for the slow turnover, she explained, is a lack of funds to build housing. The region owns enough properties that they could build 10,000 units, but they don't have the money to do so. "We are working aggressively to access any funding available to build new housing, as well as supporting the not-for-profit community to do so as well," she said.

Compared to other communities in the region, NOTL has a low core housing need, which is determined by the per-

centage of people in a community that pay more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. The average core housing need in the region is between 12 to 14 per cent, and as high as 16 per cent in some communities. In NOTL, it is lower, between five and seven per cent. "So government money will go to communities that have a high core housing need," she explained. However, the region is open to partnering with the town and any not-for-profits in the community to see if there are other ways to support more community housing in NOTL.

Seniors services
Unlike other departments under the community services umbrella, the region does not take a service manager role in seniors services. Instead, the planning and forecasting of these services comes from the ministry of health and long-term care.

Seniors services in Niagara oversees the region's long-term care homes (of which there are 957 beds), and ensures that they comply with the Fixed Long-Term Care Act. Some of the long-term care homes are owned by the region, while others are operated by not-for-profit and for-profit organizations.

The seniors services department also provides a variety of social, wellness and outreach services focused on supporting vulnerable seniors, and adult day programs including the Falls Prevention Program at Pleasant Manor in Virgil and the Adult Day Program at the community centre in NOTL.

Jugley explained that because their funding comes from the Ministry of Health, their focus is more health-centred than the municipal recreation-focused adult day programs.

The region's seniors programs are often for people who have early signs of dementia and other kinds of challenges, where they and their families are hoping to have some support during the day, she explained.


When asked by Coun. Sandra O'Connor whether or not the region recognizes that NOTL has the highest population of senior residents in the Niagara, Jugley said they do, but the decisions often come down to health needs. "Our role is more health-focused," Jugley explained. "NOTL's demographics show that our seniors are generally able-bodied, healthy, active, and independent." It is up to the ministry to forecast and plan what the needs of a community may be in terms of senior care, and for the region to apply it, although "we do advocate for what the community needs," she said.

Social Assistance
Community services is also responsible for administering the Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program to those in need in the region. Currently there are 17,500 residents in the Niagara Region collecting support from these programs. The department is "mandated to ensure that people have emergency assistance or Ontario Works assistance as they get their lives sorted," Jugley explained. About 25 per cent of those receiving support through Ontario Works are on the path to a disability program, she added.

The region is working on a poverty reduction strategy that involves working with the different communities, including on issues such as transportation, child care and housing support, "some of the 'big bucket' things that we know really help people come out of poverty and become more self-reliant and successful," she said. "Because, as we know, poverty looks different in every community."

For more information on the region's community services department, visit niagararegion.ca/government/departments/community-services.aspx.

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More awareness needed about dangerous water

Continued from page 1

him, she says, even before hearing that information.

Helping to keep her going is the determination to prevent something similar from happening to some other family.

“Something has to change,” she says.

She knows Liam had climbed out of the inflatable dingy, and he tried to get back to Brodie, to save him. Liam was seen going under the water, and didn’t resurface. Brodie and the raft drifted to Henley Island and were recovered.

Worthy says Liam must have entered the creek in a quiet spot, and got into trouble in the most turbulent part of the waterway. She believes more needs to be done to create awareness of how dangerous the area can be, and to prevent rafters from being able to enter the water.

The location also made it difficult and dangerous for searchers — the police were hampered both by turbulence and the water level, which was eventually lowered by Ontario Power Generation, allowing marine unit officers to get to the area and recover his body.



Liam Neumann with his beloved dog, Brodie. (Supplied)



Help as Newark Neighbours opens its food bank

Newark Neighbours staff member Genevieve Lawrence went right to work stocking shelves after St. Davids Lions Club member Bradd Anderson delivered a donation of meal kits. Newark opened its food bank Tuesday, with food shelves far from full. The kits include recipes with the ingredients needed to make them measured and packaged, and step-by-step instructions, and volunteers say they are always well-received by Newark clients. (Supplied)

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Farmworkers' families fear losing loved ones



Gabriel Allahdua, author of *Harvesting Dreams*, is a former migrant worker who writes a firsthand account of Canada's farm labour system. His book and Nadia Holt's *Malaika, Carnival Queen*, can be found at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library. They are seen here with Debbie Krause, community engagement coordinator at the library.

author of *Malaika, Carnival Queen*, her most recent in a series of books written for children in Grades 3 to 6.

The illustrations by Irene Luxbacher are bursting with colours and textures, and evoke the warmth and tenderness of the characters of the story.

Caribbean Creole is easily woven into the dialogue, welcoming the reader into the conversation.

Nadia Holt's writing is inspired by her childhood memories and Jamaican heritage. Both of her grandfathers travelled from Jamaica to work on seasonal farm work programs in North America. She dedicated *Malaika, Carnival Queen*, to honour her grandfather who never returned. He died while working on the seasonal program, leaving the family with many questions that were never answered.

In a quest to better understand what her grandfathers experienced, Holt made a trip to Niagara in 2021 to meet with farmworkers who worked in similar orchards. It was an illuminating experience, one that helped her gain a new understanding of the hardship they experienced to provide for their families back home.

Families of farmworkers, regardless of the sending country, share one overriding concern: the fear of losing loved ones. The worry that a family member will return home unable to work because of injury or work related illness is always on their minds. Or worse, that a family member will not return home alive. Despite the claims of various government representatives, very few have received adequate compensation due to injury, illness or death. There is no accountability between the government agencies. No one follows up on those injured or surviving families back home.

It is built into the design of the program, to detach these men and women from their humanity so we are not disturbed by tragedies on Canadian soil.

Systemic changes are needed at the provincial and federal levels.

Their children and grandchildren will be these workers' voices, writing in honour of loved ones, keeping their stories alive.

Their story is also our story, whether we choose to own it or not.

Continued from page 1

toxicology report from the coroner to learn Kumar's cause of death.

As Canadians we are removed from the harsh realities faced by every farmworker.

It is convenient that Kumar's death is already out of the news cycle.

It is convenient that we did not have to witness his friends and neighbours as they dug his grave by hand this past week.

It is convenient that we did not have to witness his mother's grieving and a young widow's tears.

It is convenient that we do not have to witness the struggles of a little girl growing up never knowing her daddy's love and support.

There is another story like Kumar's, this one about the memories of a little girl who also grew up without her father.

The story opens with

Malaika, a little girl in the Caribbean, who awakens from her sleep after a dream of a flying man carrying a basket of fruit — peaches, apples and cherries — and he hands her a mango.

In Caribbean tradition dreams can be foretellers, or reveal inner mysteries of the past. After relaying the dream to her mother and grandmother, they decide she is old enough to learn about a missing piece of her life.

They give her a picture of a young man, her father. The inscription on it was written lovingly to baby Malaika by her father before he left to work on a farm far away. He didn't return. What follows is a compelling story about a young girl who finds community and a way to cope with grief after learning about the loss of her father.

Nadia Holt, a Toronto writer and educator, is the

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Local

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: Nine Lives Custom Refinishing

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Nine Lives Custom Refinishing’s Kevin Coyle Launches Niagara Business Support Group: A Win-Win for Local Businesses

In an exciting move for the Niagara area, Kevin Coyle, the owner of Nine Lives Custom Refinishing, has launched the Niagara Business Support Group, a collective aimed at uniting and promoting local businesses.

www.niagarabizsupport.com

Nine Lives Custom Refinishing, a successful kitchen and furniture refinishing company, has made a name for itself through exceptional services and customer satisfaction over the past six years. The one-stop shopping experience they offer has gained them a loyal customer base. Through interactions with these customers, Coyle realized that many were often seeking recommendations for other local services and products. This spurred an ingenious idea.

Coyle decided to capitalize on this by creating a platform that could serve as a hub for local businesses – and so, the Niagara Business Support Group was born. The Niagara Business Support Group aims to be the heartbeat of local businesses, providing a space for them to network, gain visibility, and

share resources.

It’s a win-win situation. For the consumers, the group serves as an easy-to-navigate directory to find a treasure trove of local services, from quirky shops to professional service providers. For the businesses, it’s an opportunity to gain exposure and benefit from

shared knowledge and resources. Moreover, the group offers tools and insights into social media and online advertising, helping these businesses flourish in the digital realm.

Nine Lives Custom Refinishing stands as a testament to Coyle’s commitment to excellence and innovation. His

hands-on approach, along with his wife Carolyn, ensures that the company delivers quality products on time. With the creation of the Niagara Support Group, Coyle extends his innovation beyond his business. He is now fostering a community where local businesses can thrive together.

The collaboration between Nine Lives Custom Refinishing and the Niagara Business Support Group under Coyle’s stewardship is set to be a game-changer. Nine Lives Custom Refinishing will benefit from increased networking opportunities and shared resources, while the Niagara

Business Support Group will thrive under the guidance of a proven entrepreneur.

The foundation of the Niagara Business Support Group is anticipated to be groundbreaking, leveraging the collective strength and networking that the group provides for its members as the numbers grow. This pioneering initiative by Kevin Coyle is a testament to the innovative spirit that is also deeply ingrained in Nine Lives Custom Refinishing.

Speaking of innovation and transformation, if a kitchen or furniture makeover is what you seek, don’t let another moment slip by!

Seize the day and connect with the maestros at Nine Lives Custom Refinishing for an obligation-free quote. Give them a call or immerse yourself in a world of exquisite options on their website at ninelivescustomrefinishing.com

Experience firsthand why Nine Lives Custom Refinishing has earned its reputation as the go-to specialists for kitchen revamps and furniture refinishing. Embark on a journey to elevate your living space with elegance and panache, today!



Pictured are owners Kevin Coyle and Carolyn Coyle in the showroom where quartz counters, cabinet door colors, hardware and under cabinet lighting are displayed to give you real perspectives on what will suit your tastes.

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EDITORIAL

We may have moved on, but people of Ukraine have not

We all remember being riveted to the news when Russia invaded Ukraine about 16 months ago, in February 2022. We began donating cash and medical supplies to send overseas, and helping those who had fled to Canada. More than eight million Ukrainians have come to our country to find safety, and have been welcomed by a large Ukrainian population. But at home, their country is still under attack, their fami-

ly members left behind in danger, being injured and killed as the bombing continues. Many of those who have come to Canada are young parents, looking for a better life for their children. We have learned that their parents and grandparents have in some cases begged them to come to a place where they can be safe, but how horrible it is for them to know they are leaving behind loved ones they know to be in danger of be-

ing killed or badly injured. Those who leave pay a huge price, those who stay may pay an even greater one. Christyna Prokipchuk, a Niagara-on-the-Lake resident of Ukrainian heritage, is asking us not to forget that the war continues, that there are Ukrainians both here and at home who need our help. She is hoping to raise \$100,000 to donate to both causes — some of it to be sent to Ukraine to help

those unable or unwilling to leave, and some of it to stay here, for the Canadian Ukrainian Congress in Niagara to assist newcomers to our country. Her plea is an important reminder. Not all of us can join her cycling fundraiser, but we can all help in some way. Maybe a business can offer a recent arrival a job, or a better one than they might already have. Or provide transportation to an English

class — better still, help to teach them. We can provide furniture to those who have recently settled, dishes and other household items, toys for youngsters, food, and most importantly cash donations. We can donate through the Steppe Up fundraising cycling tour or to the Canadian Ukrainian Congress — it can be found online. We may have recently-arrived Ukrainian families as neighbours, their kids go-

ing to school with ours. What's most important is for us to remember their country is still at war. They have loved ones at home in danger, they are struggling to make a life here, and their hearts are likely torn in two. We may no longer be glued to the news, but it doesn't mean we can't still help, and share a little of our good fortune as Canadians with others in need. Penny Coles The Local

Camping in a national park on the Bay of Fundy

David Gilchrist
The Local

Leaving Niagara for a camping trip recently during one of the smoke alerts, we decided not to take the Toronto, Kingston, Cornwall, Montreal route to the East Coast and instead headed for the Peace Bridge at Fort Erie and set our Garmin for Bangor, Maine. The drive through New York State was uneventful and direct, and we enjoyed the scenery, especially when we got to Massachusetts. The drive around Boston was a nightmare with heavy traffic and construction delays

but, we got through it just as it started to rain. Drove through that for a while and headed to Black Bear Campground near Salisbury, Mass. for an overnight stay. Nothing fancy here and nothing to write about. It is the usual private campground with general comforts and amenities. But it sure was nice to hit the pillow after 12 hours on the road. Next morning, my Claudia examined the route and we made the decision to set our sites on Fundy National Park in New Brunswick, which was seven hours away. We would pass through a section of New Hampshire, the 'Live

Free or Die' state, and Maine, 'The Way Life Should Be' state, before crossing back into Canada. We were up early, coffee and oatmeal with blueberries to get us going and hit the road once again. This drive proved uneventful and we crossed back into Canada at St. Stephen's, New Brunswick. A disappointment for me was not being able to purchase Duty Free alcohol, as we had not been out of country for the requisite 48 hours (sigh). Fundy National Park, located on the west side of the Bay of Fundy is well worth the visit. At this park there are five

campgrounds offering spaces for tents, trailers, etc., but also cabins, yurts, TentTiks (a combination of tent cabin) and an area called Oasis, with what are described as duplex cabins. Our campground, Headquarters, was overlooking the nearby town of Alma, which of course boasts the 'Highest Tides in the World.' A small town with restaurants, gas and a general store, all of which provide much to the traveller. The first thing I spotted was a sign for the Alma Lobster House and we headed in that direction. Off the road a bit, but not too far. The building houses a store offering fresh seafood, but an attached restaurant and outdoor covered patio was most comfortable for a bowl of seafood chowder and a lobster roll, both of which were very delicious. The fish and chips that Claudia had was also very good and we both enjoyed the taste of down-east cooking.



It's a long drive to the Alma Lobster Shop, but once you're there, you will love the fresh lobster. (David Gilchrist)

The trail guide at Fundy National Park is extensive with five easy, 12 moderate and 13 difficult trails. They are also grouped into categories for Fundy Favourites, Family Friendly, Coastal Trails, Cycling Adventures, and Hidden Gems. These will appeal to varied skilled interest levels. Continued on page 7

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View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

Many consider *Goodbye Mr. Chips* (Netflix, 1969) a film outdated and overly sentimental; however, to me, it is a gen-

tle and heartwarming story of loyalty and love, with extraordinary performances given by Peter O'Toole and Petula Clark. Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to

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



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Where's Ben?

Eden student Ben Foster continues to discover new locations in NOTL, wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. Again last week, no answers from readers as to Ben's location — he was at the Welcome to Virgil sign by St. Michael School. Ben decided to make it a little easier this week — and had fun while he was there.

Hopewell Rocks worth a look

Continued from page 6

Universal access is also available at several areas throughout the park.

Located less than an hour away is Hopewell Rocks, another major attraction in the Fundy Bay area. It's a well-developed Day Use Provincial Park. Walking paths lead to a variety of overlooks where you can observe these wonderful creations of the tides.

We took Lovers' Arch,

which leads to a platform overlooking the main features. We also continued down to the 'floor of the ocean,' where you can walk when the tide is out.

Walking carefully along the shore, we passed a number of other features, including ET Rock and Mother-in-Law Rock, and ended up at the ocean floor access ramp near the North Beach. After our walk we were not looking forward to the walk back up to

the top, and were relieved to be able to take the shuttle ride, "The best \$2, I'll spend today," as my wife described it.

There is a world-class Interpretive Centre located at the park, with a self-guided multimedia exhibit that describes the science of the park and what can be seen on the ocean floor, and of course a gift shop and restaurant are located there as well — all of it well worth a day's stop along the journey!



Sawmill Creek Covered Bridge built in 1908, not far from Hopewell Rocks. (Photos by David Gilchrist)



A view of Alma, from the Bay of Fundy campsite.



Hopewell Rocks, natural formations made by the tide.

Local LETTERS

The Friends of the Forgotten to fundraise for cemetery restoration

The Friends of the Forgotten and Town Council have now received the final report of the Stage 1 assessment of the Niagara Baptist Church/Negro Burial Ground. Our committee and the town are working collaboratively to revitalize and restore the burial site in order to demonstrate our respect for former slaves and other citizens who built the foundation upon which our community and province now stands.

Niagara-on-the-Lake was the first capital of Upper Canada, and its place in history must be shared with all those who lived and died within our community.

The Stage 1 report was the first step in the man-

datory due diligence required by the Bereavement Authority of Ontario. Fundamentally the report confirmed the following:

- The ground is of historical, archaeological and cultural significance.
- Early assessments seem to indicate that there may be archival pieces on the site
- Stages 2 and 3 are recommended.

As a result of this, Friends of the Forgotten will now proceed with a community fundraising plan. At the outset we need to raise over \$50,000 to get Stage 2 on the way. We are ready for the challenge.

We will approach the business community, residents, foundations, the aca-

demic community, various levels of government and service clubs for contributions to this project. We are pleased to report that The Rotary Club of NOTL has already contributed \$5,000 to the project.

The full Stage 1 report and details on what is involved in a Stage 2 assessment has been posted on our website friendsoftheforgotten.ca.

Please visit our website for more information on next steps. Donations are made to the town through our website, and contributions of \$25 or more will receive a tax receipt.

We thank you for your anticipated support.

George Webber

Local LETTERS

Lack of response to Strategic Plan Survey not surprising

It should come as no surprise to Niagara-on-the-Lake that the town's strategic plan survey attracted little interest from residents.

There was very little promotion of the survey in advance of the deadline to submit responses; even if people wanted to complete the survey, it was difficult to find on the town's website; and I suspect that many people, me included, were put off by the wording of the survey questions. They appeared to have been written in a way that would result in the survey producing a preordained

outcome, rather than in one that would provide meaningful information.


While the town did set up public information centres and offer residents an opportunity to complete hardcopies of the survey, the hours in which the centres were actually open were limited.

Is it any wonder that residents did not respond to the survey? For that matter, if the half-hearted effort by Niagara-on-the-Lake to seek input from residents is representative of the broader Canadian political reality, is it surprising that

public engagement in municipal, provincial and federal politics is declining?

I hope the town goes back to the drawing board to seek broader public input on the priorities residents want council to focus on, and does not rely on the results of the survey to shape its strategic plan. That would constitute bad government, in my view, which would be much worse than the poorly conceived and implemented survey process we've just experienced.

Terry Davis
NOTL



Letters! We want letters!

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

FULL-TIME JOURNALIST WANTED:



The Local is looking for someone with excellent writing and communication skills, and who is interested in covering Niagara-on-the-Lake news. The ideal candidate should be able to work independently, ensure accuracy and balance in stories, and work to deadlines.

If you feel you are a suitable candidate for this position, please send your resume and a cover letter outlining your experience to penny@notllocal.com We look forward to hearing from you!

Journey Behind the Falls recognizes Indigenous connection

Sharon Burns
The Local

A new exhibit has been installed in the Journey Behind the Falls attraction in Niagara Falls.

A centrepiece of the new space is an area dedicated to Indigenous history and connections to the falls, including a stunning reproduction of an oil on canvas painting

by Indigenous artist Oren Lyons entitled *Maid of the Mist and the Thunder Beings*.

At an unveiling event last week, Tim Johnson, board member of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum and senior advisor to the Niagara Parks Commission, said the art is based on the original 1981 creation by Oren Lyons. After hanging in the museum of the

Native American Centre for the Living Arts, in Niagara Falls, New York, for a number of years, it was eventually donated to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian in 2011.

According to the story, which was passed on to a group of Indigenous researchers by Tonawanda Seneca Nation Chief Corbett Sundown in 1981, a young woman fell

into despair after being infected by an evil spirit. She paddled her canoe over Niagara Falls, but instead of crashing over the cataract, she landed safely at the bottom. Thunder Beings, a group of spiritual elders, led her behind the falls. They held a healing ceremony, and the young woman became extremely powerful, endowed with kinetic energy. Once she was

fully healed, she returned to her village, where she raised her family.

A placard mounted next to the artwork explains that the reproduction allows visitors to reflect that the Thunder Beings fulfilled their obligation to protect the people, much as they do today through the kinetic energy of Niagara Falls by providing power for families in Canada and

the U.S.

Journey Behind the Falls, Niagara Parks' Canadian Signature Experience, has been bringing guests up close to the mighty Niagara for over 130 years. The new exhibits celebrate the attraction's fascinating history, as well as the geological formation of the falls and how they've eroded an incredible 12 kilometres to their current location.



The photo of the old tunnel, which still exists although is not in operation, shows the challenges in digging a tunnel under the falls. (Photos by Sharon Burns)



The Journey Behind the Falls offers guests a view from three vantage points: two portals place viewers behind the cataract, while a third deck allows viewers a panorama of the Canadian Horseshoe Falls, to the right, and the American Falls to the left (and the river).



A new space at the entranceway to the elevators is dedicated to Indigenous history, including a reproduction of *Maid of the Mist and the Thunder Beings*, by Indigenous artist Oren Lyons.

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Anti-slavery act celebrated at Voices of Freedom Park

Sharon Burns
The Local

The Act to Limit Slavery was introduced by Governor John Graves Simcoe 230 years ago on July 9, 1793, right here in Niagara-on-the-Lake. However, it took another 40 years for full implementation of the act, due to objections from slaveholders in Simcoe’s parliament.

This July 9, at the Voices of Freedom Park at the corner of Regent and Johnson streets, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum will host speakers and artists to commemorate the first anti-slavery legislation in the British empire.

“It’s a very important

part of our history,” said Sarah Kaufman, managing director and curator at the museum. “It is the first piece of legislation related to anti-slavery and it happened here in Niagara-on-the-Lake. It’s a significant part of our history locally, but also provincially and nationally.”

At the park, the museum will unveil original commissioned artwork by Wayne Moore recognizing the role played by Chloe Cooley, the enslaved woman whose courageous acts of resistance were recorded by free Black Peter Martin, and which ultimately provided the impetus for Simcoe’s legislation.

In March 1793, Cooley’s enslaver, Adam Vrooman, forced her into a boat at Queenston to sell her across the Niagara River. Her screams of protest were witnessed by Martin, a loyalist, who took his concern to the Executive Council of Upper Canada.

Simcoe’s legislation banned the importation of slaves into Upper Canada, a major first step in the abolition of slavery in the province.

Kaufman said she is excited to have the museum show the piece painted by Moore, a Niagara resident and a former CFL player for the BC Lions.

“He has done some oth-

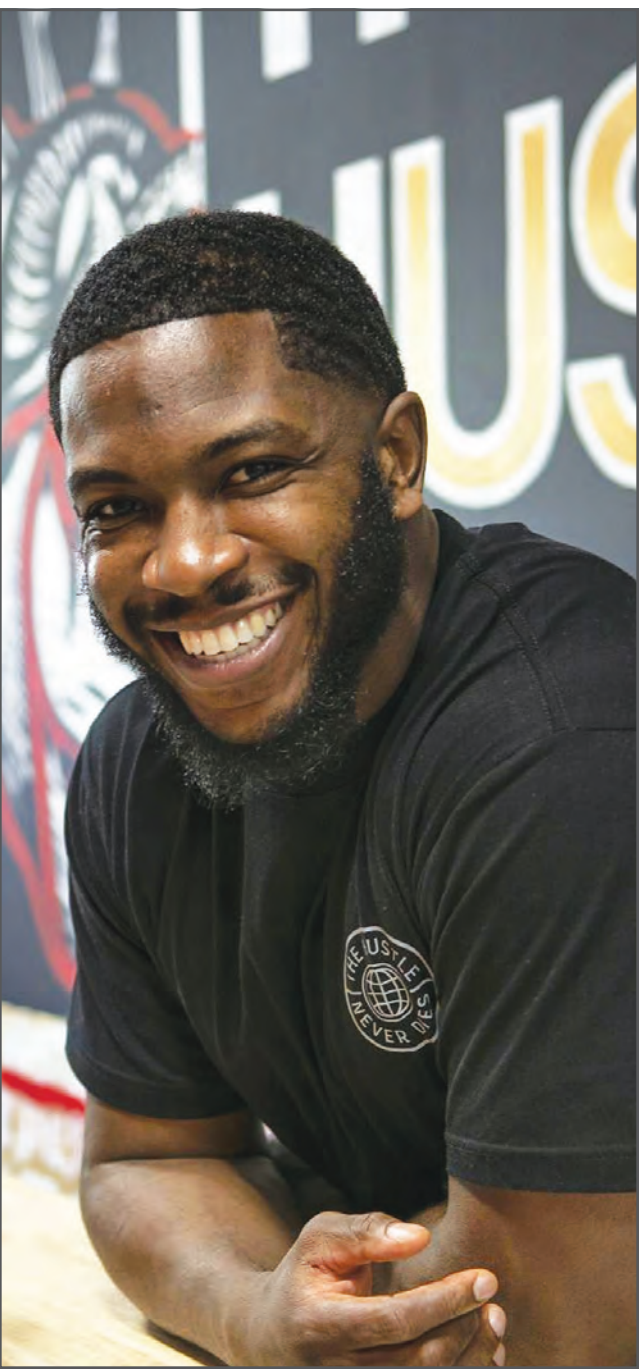
er Black history-related art pieces, and we were really inspired by his plans for this piece,” said Kaufman. “After the ceremony, the art piece will be hanging in the museum gallery until the Bound and Determined exhibition closes in mid-November.” Moore’s art will then be a part of the museum’s permanent collection.

Voices of Freedom Park, the location of the celebration, “is a community park dedicated to Black history,” said Kaufman.

Other guests attending are Rochelle Bush, (owner of Harriet Tubman Tours, as well as trustee and resident historian of the Salem Chapel, British Methodist Episcopal Church); Dr. Jean Augustine (first Black woman MP, and founder of Black History month); and Jan King-Watson (host and Black scholar, representing the NOTL Museum).

Performers include Jeremiah Sparks, from Shaw Festival; Tamiya Cox, TD Niagara Jazz Festival’s Youth Winner; and local musician Aaron Berger.

The outdoor event, Sunday, July 9, is open to everyone. “Come out and enjoy the festivities at 11 a.m. that day, and feel free to bring your chairs,” said Kaufman.



Artist Wayne Moore was commissioned to do a painting to celebrate the 230th anniversary of the Act to Limit Slavery. (Supplied)



The Chloe Cooley stamp, issued by Canada Post earlier this year, is also to commemorate the Act to Limit Slavery.



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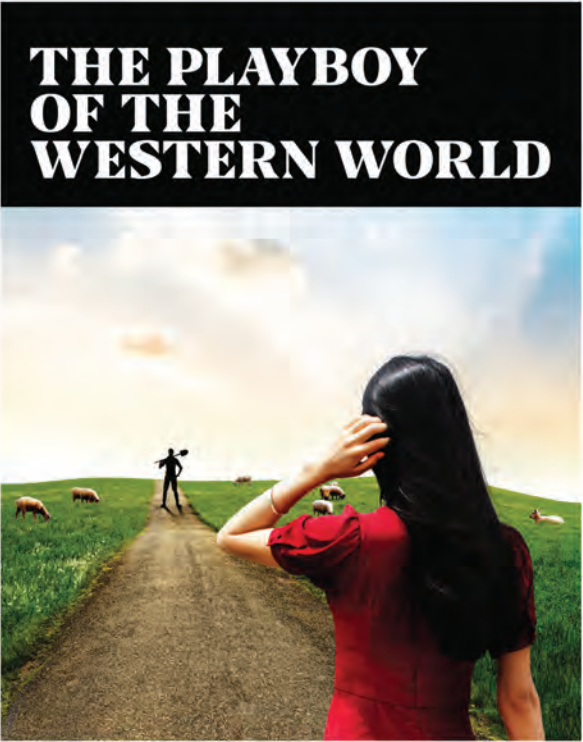
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Julie Lumsden in Gypsy. Photo by David Cooper; Donna Soares, Damien Atkins and Julia Course. Photo by Peter Andrew Luszyk.
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Fireworks at Ravine

After spending Canada Day at Ravine Vineyard listening to music and enjoying some drinks, the crowd enjoyed the finale, a fireworks display said to be one of the best. (Photos by Frank Hayes)

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CANADA DAY *in* NOTL





NOTL Rotary Club volunteers make it all happen on Canada Day in Simcoe Park. (Mike Balsom)



Chris Hatch and Jackie Donnelly serving up hamburgers and hotdogs at the Rotary Club barbecue. (Nick Fearn)



Mike and Ann Paralovos from St Davids with Sharon and Bill French from Old Town enjoying some lunch. (Mike Balsom)



Caleb, Jessica and Emma Tikaram and Florence Franzo get into the Canada Day spirit in Simcoe Park. (Mike Balsom)



Kids were able to cool off in the splash pad. (Mike Balsom)



The Jack Van Ginger band played some Canadian tunes in Simcoe Park. (Mike Balsom)



Vivan Lu has her face painted in Simcoe Park. (Nick Fearn)



Paul Lalonde shows his spirit on Canada Day. (Nick Fearn)



Katie and Charlotte Broughton of Virgil were checking out the classic cars on display for Canada Day. (Mike Balsom)



The Chicks on Sticks, Yvette Duff, and Tammy Potter, showing off some Canada Day spirit in Simcoe Park. (Nick Fearn)

CANADA DAY *in* NOTL



The crowd is greeted by Town Crier Tom Pekar, as they wait for the cake to arrive and be served. *(Tony Chisholm)*



The 41st Regiment of Foot Fife and Drum Corps from Fort George lead the cake parade into Simcoe Park. *(Nick Fearn)*



The cake, designed by Catherine O'Donnell of Willow Cakes and Pastries, arrives. The cake, eight feet by four feet, is ready to be sliced into 3,000 pieces and served to the crowd. *(Mike Balsom)*



Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser, MPP Wayne Gates and Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa help cut the gigantic Canada Day Cake. *(Joy Sanguedolce)*



The fireworks went off to end the day-long celebration, with the crowd at Fort George at more than 6,600 people for the day. *(Joy Sanguedolce)*

Bonnie Crombie attends meet-and-greet at Ferox Winery

Penny Coles
The Local

Bonnie Crombie, mayor of Mississauga and now an official candidate for the leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, and if successful a candidate in the next election for Ontario premier, visited Niagara-on-the-Lake for what was billed as a meet-and-greet.

On a warm summer evening at Ferox Winery — many in attendance praised the fine wine they were offered — the event drew a decent crowd of, not surprisingly, avowed Liberals.

One woman who had come from St. Catharines with her husband said she believes Crombie to be a strong candidate, “although not the only strong candidate,” and as a retired teacher, recognized others in attendance from her group of retired teachers from across Niagara who meet regularly. They were there to learn about the candidate, she said.

After speaking and shaking hands with several in attendance, including Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Ken Gansel, president of the Niagara Falls Liberal Association, and former Liberal MP Gary Pillitteri, Crombie was introduced by St. Catharines Coun. Kevin Townsend, who told those gathered, “Ontario needs a leader. We need someone with the energy and charisma to take on Doug Ford,

and that person is Bonnie Crombie.”

She addressed the crowd by first speaking of growing up in a family who worked hard, and instilled that work ethic in her, along with the importance of succeeding in a way that could make a difference.

Crombie also spoke of “big tent Liberalism, attracting people from all sectors of our party . . . and getting people really excited to be Liberals again.”

She said she represents a party that would not be battling with teachers, unlike Ford, who is promoting more online learning. That drew enthusiastic applause from the crowd, as were her statements that she is against private healthcare, would offer more support for nurses, and work for a greener, sustainable economy.

“The youth tell me that, to focus on climate change and the environment,” she said.

“I know I can reinvigorate our brand,” Crombie promised, “and we can fight Doug Ford.”

While Ford goes after “416” support, she said her strength is the 905 ridings. “We’re going to take those ridings.”

The Liberals have been without a leader since former party head Steven Del Duca resigned after the 2022 provincial election campaign, when the Liberals captured just eight seats.

Ontario Liberals will cast their votes on Nov. 25 and Nov. 26, with the leader to be announced Dec. 2.

Crombie is the fourth candidate officially registered in the leadership race, joining MPs Nathaniel Erskine-Smith and Yasir Naqvi, along with Liberal MPP Ted Hsu.

Gansel says in his role as president he doesn’t get involved with organizing events for candidates, but he does help get the message out to Liberal association members when they plan to come to Niagara.

Hsu, he says, will be at Pillitteri Estate Winery next week, and Naqvi on July 26.

He says he expects that in addition to making a first trip to Niagara, they might all be back again, visiting different municipalities in the riding.

He was impressed with the attendance at Crombie’s event, but not surprised — voters want to get to know the candidates and what they stand for.

Interest in elections has been declining, he says, “and the pandemic didn’t help.” But he can already see that changing rapidly in the sign-ups for membership in the Niagara riding association, which is free, and allows members to vote in November for the party’s leader.

He expects “a huge turnout” for the next provincial election, as a reaction to some of Ford’s policies, he



Niagara Falls Liberal Association president and NOTL resident Ken Gansel, with Bonnie Crombie, Ashley Waters, the Liberal candidate for the Niagara Falls riding in the last provincial election, and Gary Pillitteri, a three-term Liberal MP, from 1993 to 2004. (Photos by Penny Coles)



Nolan McIntee, Liberal leadership candidate Bonnie Crombie and Nolan’s father Del McIntee chatted at last week’s social event at Ferox Winery. Crombie was thrilled to see Del — they had worked on Art Eggleton’s re-election campaign back in 1985 in Toronto. McIntee says he plans to help Crombie “in a big way.”

says. It is expected to be held in June 2026.

“People are waking up to the fact that what happens in government does impact them,” he says, citing de-

played surgeries, closed urgent care clinics and other cutbacks to the healthcare system as just one issue that will bring out voters.

“People are beginning

to realize ‘this government affects me day to day.’ And if they want to make a change, they have to get out and put an X on that ballot.”

Youth collective needs volunteers to expand programming

Penny Coles
The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Youth Collective ended on a high note last month, with volunteers already thinking ahead to fall programs.

Caroline Polgrabia, organizer of the collective, says volunteers will take the summer to review programs, what went well and what didn’t, and are already

beginning to plan for the fall.

They are moving forward knowing the kids who attend the collective want some free time to hang out with their friends, but also like some structure, such as the registered programming that was offered in the spring — but more of it.

The weekday after-school drop-in from 4 to 6 p.m. will continue, says Polgrabia, but volunteers

hope to build on the popular community programs, such as the St. John Ambulance babysitting class, cooking classes, and the Big Brothers Big Sisters Go Girl sessions.

Also popular was Try It, which took groups of kids to places such as Grape Escape, F45 and the lawn bowling club; and Careers, taking youth to visit local businesses to learn about possibilities such as live the-

atre, aviation, agriculture and other opportunities for the future.

“Our biggest challenge at present is maintaining the daily, regular after-school drop-in, which is needed, while we build out the very popular community programs,” says Polgrabia.

“We just don’t have the supervision team to maintain both a daily drop-in program and continue to build and add registered community programs. Connecting the youth to the community is our core mandate, so we are hoping to build out the volunteer base to be able to grow all types of programming. This gives NOTL youth the greatest access to quality programming — when, what and how they want to experience and enjoy it.”

Organizers also hope to continue with a time specifically for older teens, one night a week as they did in the spring, giving them their own space, says Polgrabia.

But to offer all of that in the fall, the collective needs

more volunteers to support those programs.

There is a core group of volunteers managing camp operations and program development, she says, “and they are doing a fantastic job, but we need more bodies to help us supervise the space and help maintain our required youth-to-supervisor ratios, or we will need to limit access to the program come fall.”

There is a simple two-stage path to becoming an approved volunteer.

The first is an online application for those 18 and older, known to the existing campus staff or volunteers for more than two years, and able to provide three community references, at least one of them known or involved in the youth collective.

The volunteer application portal is open — visit cchurch.churchcenter.com/people/forms/422417.

The youth collective team will be in touch in the near future regarding next steps, or to answer any questions regarding the program, Polgrabia says.

The next stage is training and police checks.

In order to protect both volunteers and youth, volunteers must participate in a two-hour Plan to Protect information session, which provides an overview of the roles as a supervisor, and how to keep both volunteers and youth safe during program hours. Costs for the police checks and Plan to Protect training session will be covered by the NOTL Youth Collective.


Polgrabia explains the collective needs help recruiting and finding additional volunteers “to help grow the program and continue to offer this safe and welcoming space for everyone.”

In order to make the training costs effective, they are hoping volunteers will consider at least six hours a month, with three shifts of two hours, to support program delivery.

Anyone who is available and interested in supporting NOTL youth can email VOL@NOTLYouth.com.



Kids enjoyed having time to just hang out with their friends during youth collective drop-ins, but also indicated they would like more of the structured programming. (File photo)



Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

What older adults need to know about their health

(NC) As you get older, you may have wondered why you've seemed to get sick with colds or other viruses more often, taken longer to recover, or suffered complications to existing health conditions.

From childhood, our immune system matures, and we build up immunity to help protect us from many common viruses. This resilience built in youth gradually declines until around age 50, when the risk of infection and more serious complications starts to be more noticeable. As a result of our naturally weakening immune systems, older adults are more likely to face severe symptoms and potential hospitalization from infections that our younger selves could more easily fight off.

Here are three ailments you should have on your radar as you age:

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

RSV is a common respiratory virus. While most people experience mild, cold-like symptoms, this virus can be dangerous for adults aged 60 and older, and it can worsen pre-existing conditions such as asthma, COPD and congestive heart failure. RSV can have severe health impacts, including hospitalization and even death

Shingles

Shingles is a viral infection that typically causes a painful rash on one side of the body or face. It's caused by the same virus that gives us chickenpox. If you had chickenpox in the past, the virus remains dormant in your body and can reactivate later in life as shingles. It's estimated that one in three people

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

COPD is a lung disease that causes a narrowing of the airways and can progress slowly over a number of years, with most people diagnosed over the age of 40. Smoking is the leading cause of developing COPD, but there are other risk factors including family history and exposure to air pollutants.

While the cause of COPD isn't related to immune function, people living with COPD can suffer

will experience shingles in their lifetime. Fortunately, this virus is vaccine preventable.

flare ups due to common respiratory viruses such as a cold, the flu or RSV, which can worsen their condition. Although there is no cure for COPD, there are treatment options including medication and

lifestyle changes that can help to support overall quality of life. Additionally, frequent hand washing and getting your annual vaccinations can help to manage symptoms and potential flare ups.

How to make air travel easier for seniors

(NC) As you prepare to take to the skies this summer, you may have questions about how best to get through security screening. Here are some tips to help you navigate the process with confidence.

First, plan to give yourself plenty of time to get to the airport. The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority recommends that you arrive at least two hours in advance for domestic flights and three

hours in advance for U.S. and international flights. This will give you plenty of time to make your way through the airport and security screening at a comfortable pace.

Next, pack smart. When

placed in your carry-on bag, liquids, aerosols and gels must be in containers of 100 ml or less and placed in a clear, resealable 1-litre plastic bag. It's important to note that the 100 ml rule doesn't apply to prescription and non-prescription medication. If you have a daily or weekly pill separator, those are also permitted.

Your 1-litre bag, as well as any medication, will need to be removed from your carry-on baggage and placed in the bin for inspection. Remember that while you are limited to two carry-on bags per person, medical equipment and mobility aids are not included in this limit.

Ask for assistance. Air travel can be challenging, especially if you need extra support. But don't let that stop you. At the security-screening checkpoint,

there are several options. If you're travelling with a mobility aid like a walker, cane or wheelchair, check if there's a Family/Special Needs line available. This line features screening equipment that can accommodate larger items, and the screening officers can offer additional assistance if you need more time and help with your belongings.


If there is no Family/Special Needs line, let the screening officers know that you require assistance. Upon request, they'll expedite the screening process for you.

Giving yourself extra time, being mindful when packing and asking for assistance when needed will set you up for success at security screening and start your trip on a positive note. Find more information at catsa.gc.ca.

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Food bank opened Tuesday, thrift store's turn next week

Penny Coles
The Local

Newark Neighbours, the food bank and thrift shop that has been serving Niagara-on-the-Lake residents for more than 50 years, opened its food bank Tuesday in its new Virgil location.

Newark board chair Cindy Grant said they expected a good turnout — their clients are anxious to see the Niagara Stone Road storefront, which is much larger than what they have become accustomed to visiting.

And the food bank has been closed for a week, so some will be ready to load up on food.

"They're ready for a visit, and our volunteers will be ready for them," said Grant.

The move is about 60 per cent completed, she said. There is still much to be sorted, hung up or shelved in the thrift store, which will open to the public Monday, June 10, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"Two weeks ago teams of NOTL Rotary members came in to put up shelves. They're coming back this week to continue that job — huge thanks to Rotary for all they've done," Grant said.

The NOTL Kinsmen have also "gone above and beyond for us," she added. "We had a lot of stuff stored in an East and West Line barn, and they picked it up and delivered it to us, in the pouring rain — with smiles."

Newark also had two freezers they didn't need, and the Kinsmen helped them with that as well, she said.

"I called Ken Slingerland (of the Kinsmen) and he said 'what do you need.' And whatever we needed, he said, 'not a problem.' The Kinsmen have been so willing to help. They've been just great."

Although Newark has a brand-new, commercial-sized freezer, purchased through an Eco-grant from Meridian Credit Union, and loads of space for storing food, their problem is that much of the shelf space is empty.

Their food supply has been low for a while, said Grant, not as a result of the move. They are hoping Rotary will hold a porch-pickup food drive, on Saturday, July 22 — more details

to come on that, she added. "That should stock up our shelves."

Clients coming in for food enter through a side door, to an area where they can sit and wait if necessary. A large blank wall in that space is soon to be decorated — summer camp students at the Niagara Pump-house Arts Centre are going to work together on a large painting, said Grant, something food and harvest-related to brighten the space.

And new clients will be able to sit in a quiet, private office while they register to access the food bank.

There is still lots to sort — fortunately there is a large room just for that purpose.

When many large black bins arrived during the move, volunteer Susan Sparrow-Mace says, "we asked ourselves where it all came from. How did we ever have room for it in that little store?"

Two Men in a Truck helped them move, "and it took three full trucks," says Grant.

Tuesday was the day they had targeted in recent months for their soft opening, and they have worked hard to get as far as they have to be ready on that date.

"Our volunteers worked like the devil the last two weeks, in the heat and humidity, packing and unpacking."

Volunteers will be work-

ing their usual days at the food bank and thrift store, she said, but "once we're back open for our regular hours, though, we'll need more volunteers."

The move has been a long time coming, said Grant — they have badly needed more room. When Peller Estates bought Riverbend Inn, on whose property the barn was located, "we saw the writing on the wall. We were squatting on a corner of Riverbend property."

Although Peller said Newark would need to find a new home at some point, "they were not pushy at all. Peller did not kick us out. They've been very helpful."

Knowing the time would come for a move, the Newark board "got the ball rolling," and couldn't be happier with what they found in the former Lincoln Interiors store, at 1534 Niagara Stone Road, Virgil, with three times the space they had before.

The food bank opened Tuesday, and will be reopening Thursday at 9:30 a.m., continuing to be open Tuesdays and Thursdays, Newark's regular days for the food bank.

Regular thrift store hours are Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., staying open Thursday evenings until 7 p.m.

Sunday hours are noon until 4 p.m. For more information call 905-468-3519.



Cindy Grant shows off the beautiful new shelving — most of it waiting for food donations. There are lockers outside where donations can be dropped off. (Photos by Penny Coles)



Susan Sparrow-Mace is excited by a new commercial freezer, just waiting to be filled.



Rotarians Joe Will, Ken Schander and Bill French, with Cindy Grant, were at Newark Neighbours Monday to continue assembling fixtures.



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Pumphouse exhibit a walk through garden of vibrant colours

**Maria H. Klassen
Special to The Local**

As you walk through the Joyner Gallery at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, it feels like strolling into a garden. Titled *Along the Way*, the solo exhibit of Susan Garrington's captivating collection of paintings transports you into a garden of vibrant colours. Her artwork captures the essence of growth, changing seasons, and the resilience of weeds and wildflowers. Garrington takes inspiration from her childhood experiences. Her father's stories about the things he noticed outdoors and his observations of the natural world kept the

family entertained at the dinner table. His tales taught her to seek magic in the ordinary, and to pay close attention. Her mother's love for gardening shaped her keen observation skills and deep appreciation for colour, design, shapes and plants. She says she finds joy and wonder in the mundane aspects of our everyday lives. Garrington describes her work as "botanical fiction." She works outdoors creating detailed sketches of plants and wildflowers, and says, "My on-location sketches are integral to my process. They inform and underpin everything I paint. They allow me to get to know and to understand my

subject." She then transforms these sketches in her studio, using form, design, colour and patterns to create captivating and uplifting compositions. Working with watercolour, one of the safest painting mediums with the smallest impact on the environment, she aims to raise awareness about the importance of conservation and restoration, and preserving the environment in which wildflowers and plants thrive. Her exhibit will be at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre until July 30. Walk through Garrington's garden and experience the 'extraordinary beauty of the ordinary,' and embrace the wonders of nature.



Artist Susan Garrington welcomes guests to the Joyner Gallery and talks about her paintings. (Supplied)



Susan Garrington's *All You Need*. (Painting photos by Maria H. Klassen)



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Steppe Up for Ukraine fundraiser returns

Penny Coles
The Local

An avid cyclist herself, Christyna Prokipchuk is organizing her second annual fundraising cycling tour to raise money to send to Ukraine, and also to help those who have left their war-torn country to come to Niagara.

While there is war fatigue, and the people of Ukraine have slipped off our radar, the need is greater than ever, says Prokipchuk.

The event is called Steppe Up for Ukraine — the steppes are a region in southern Ukraine, an area of natural green space with the longest growing season, not unlike our Niagara region, she says, with its farmland and vineyards.

This year's ride is on Saturday, July 22, and registration is open now.

"Last year, we had lots of

newcomers from Ukraine come as volunteers. Several said they want to come back and volunteer again this year," she says.

A year later, says Prokipchuk, the war continues, but the news "is just not sexy anymore," while both people in Ukraine and newcomers to Niagara need help now more than ever.

As it did year, some of the funds raised will go to Help Us Help, a registered Canadian Ukrainian charity that has been helping in Ukraine for a long time.

This year, funds will also go to the Niagara Chapter of The Ukrainian Canadian Congress, led by Irene Newton, to help Ukrainians who fled the war and have settled here in Niagara.

"Irene has been instrumental in helping newcomers settle in the region," says Prokipchuk.

Many who arrived were

women in their 30s and 40s who had successful careers, she says, and took the first job they could get. As they settled, got their kids in school, were able to get their driver's licences and study English, they are now doing much better.

But there are no more emergency visas for newcomers, and although they work hard, improve their English and find better jobs, they need help in the meantime.

"Ten million people have left Ukraine," says Prokipchuk. "That's about one-quarter of the population. They're the ones who have the ability to leave. Those that have to stay because of martial law, brothers, husbands, sons, or who don't have the money, who aren't healthy enough, have now sustained a year of aggression. There is so much need, to care for orphans, for summer camp for

orphans. War fatigue has set in but it's not a time to give up. It's more important than ever to contribute."

She is hoping for 100 cyclists — the self-guided rides will be limited — with a goal of exceeding last year's total of \$100,000 raised.

The tour starts with a brief ceremony and blessing at St. Mary's Ukrainian Church in Niagara Falls, stops at notable Ukrainian sites along the way, and ends with some nourishing homemade Ukrainian food.

This year, there are three distances offered as part of the event: the shortest is a 20-kilometre route for those who want to get out for a spin and have some fun while supporting a great cause.

A 120-kilometre route for those who are looking for something more intense takes cyclists to Rosewood Estates Winery and back, with an option of a 60-kilometre route that ends at the turnaround point.

Riders will be organized in 'self-guided' waves by distance and speed (much like a regular weekly group ride,

where each rider respects the rule of the road).

Funds can be raised by individual riders, donations, and riders fundraising, which is required for registration.

There are also sponsorship opportunities.

For those who cannot participate at the event, but

still want to contribute, there are other opportunities to do so, by donating to a team member's fundraising page, providing sponsorship, or donating goods or services for the event day.

For more information, to register or donate visit justgiving.com/campaign/STEPPEUPforUkraine23.



The Steppe Up cycling tour begins with a blessing, as it did last year, at St. Mary's Church in Niagara Falls. (Photos supplied)



Khatia Gelashvili and Lev Prokipchuk at last year's fundraiser.



The Perogy Peddlers participated in last year's cycling tour.

New federal tourism growth strategy



Politicians toured Konzelmann Estate Winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake after announcing a new Tourism Growth Strategy, before meeting with local winemakers for a roundtable discussion on the strategy. The good news is that tourism spending is expected to fully recover by 2024 and international visitation will fully recover by 2026. Konzelmann's Andrew Niven said the announcement represents a strong commitment from the federal government to strategically grow tourism in a sustainable way, and that it was refreshing to hear NOTL identified as an industry leader. "From a wine industry perspective, his visit really seemed to complement the great things we are doing here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and it gets me even more excited about the future of our destination." Touring Konzelmann's were NOTL Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser, Jim Reschke and Claudia Konzelmann of Konzelmann Estate Winery, tourism minister Randy Boissonnault, MP from St. Catharines Chris Bittle, and MP from Niagara Centre Vance Badawey. The group had the chance to see the view of Lake Ontario from a lookout at the winery. (Sharon Burns)

Craig's Cookies just opened, already a hit

Story behind cookies as good as the cookies

Mike Balsom
The Local

After an unexpectedly successful opening weekend that began on Canada Day, Catherine McGregor and her partners in the brand new Craig's Cookie shop on Victoria Street made the decision to close their doors for a breather on Tuesday.

"This weekend was absolutely incredible," McGregor tells The Local. "We have genuinely been delightfully overwhelmed by the reaction and the response to the place. We had to shut down for a day just to restock."

The line-ups on Canada Day were long and constant, often snaking down Victoria Street. Even at Simcoe Park, as patriotic revellers took part in the festivities, there was much buzz about the decadent treats available just a few blocks away.

The new venture is a partnership between McGregor, who was a member of the Shaw Festival ensemble from 1997 to 2017, Danny Woods, and a

couple of silent, behind the scenes contributors. Just as important, though, is the partnership between McGregor and Craig Pike, the "Craig" in Craig's Cookies and another former Shaw actor.

In 2012, McGregor played Mrs. Tarleton and Pike portrayed John Brown in Shaw Festival's production of *Misalliance*.

We became close friends during that show," she says. "Our friendship has continued since then. When Craig left Shaw to move back to Toronto, he began making cookies using his grandmother's recipe and selling them on his bike to pay his rent. I got a phone call from him at 7 a.m. one day, asking me if he should open up a shop."

That was about five years ago. Not knowing much about business, or even cookies for that matter, McGregor listened as a supportive friend to Pike's ideas and realized he had a really good sense of exactly what he wanted to do with his cookie shop.

"He wanted to make it a bit more than just about



Catherine McGregor shows off some fresh-baked cookies.

the cookies," she says. "It was about inclusivity and diversity for him, making everyone feel welcome. So I encouraged him to open the shop."

Pike soon set up shop at a Toronto location and Craig's Cookies was an instant hit. In the ensuing years, four more Toronto locations followed, and Pike opened one in his hometown of St. John's, Newfoundland.

Four months ago, McGregor and Wood decided that Niagara-on-the-Lake would be an ideal location for number seven.

"He and I had been talking about the possibility of doing this here for some time," she says. "It seemed like an absolutely perfect fit. The fact is, Craig had been bringing these cookies to the green room at the Shaw, and also to house parties, for years. There's some kind of poetry in this coming back to Niagara."

Add in the fact that McGregor saw the biggest spike in sales this weekend every time the audience flowed out of the Royal George Theatre after performances, and one could make the case that Craig's Cookies is the "unofficial" cookie of the Shaw Festival.

Since leaving Shaw in 2017, McGregor has concentrated on her work in film and television, and even became a motorcycle instructor with Toronto's Rider Training Institute. Opening the new bakery is something that will allow her to channel her creative energy into something fun and enjoyable in between acting engagements.

"There tends to be more space between those jobs than there is between

shows at the Shaw Festival," says the Newmarket native. "This is another element in me finding out how I can use the skills I've developed over the last 25 years as an actor. It's really an extension of the hustling I've been doing my entire life."

Ironically, McGregor says she's never been much of a baker. In fact, because she is afflicted with celiac disease, she can't even eat most of the cookies she offers in her shop. There are, however, some gluten-free options available each day.

McGregor will be back on the stage in two weeks, preparing to take on the title role as the operator of a house of ill-repute in the Foster Festival's August production of *Jenny's House of Joy*. She'll have to pull herself away from the cookie shop most days, but is confident that everything will go smoothly.

"We have such a great staff, and I'm so especially proud of all the young people we have working for us," McGregor says, including her own son, Eli Mezon, in that group. "I think they all understand what we're trying to do. We want people to come in and have a really good experience here. We want to connect with people here."

And she credits her partners and the excellent full-time staff for keeping things clipping along and maintaining that fun, friendly atmosphere all weekend long.

When The Local visited Monday, there was a constant stream of happy peo-

ple coming in to check out the goods. Maria Rodriguez of Fonthill knew all about Craig's Cookies from her time working as a caregiver in Toronto. She could hardly contain her excitement.

"I would go to Craig's Cookies frequently," said a beaming Rodriguez. "I enjoyed all the flavours, the hospitality and the very open, accepting environment. I'm very, very excited that they've opened up here. I will be here frequently."

McGregor says Pike worked with her and her partners over the last four months to ensure the opening weekend went smoothly. He was in NOTL for Canada Day and was thrilled and excited to see the reaction.

"All of these locations are like his children," says McGregor. "This one is a bit different, though, because really, we are independent owners and operators. He was here to help us and nurture us, but now he has to let us go."

Like Pike, who uses much of his profits from his stores to fund his creative pursuits in both theatre and music, McGregor has no plans to give up her acting career to concentrate on cookies only.

"I have the Foster play next month, and a movie coming out at Christmas, too," she says. "As long as I can learn my lines while I'm baking, I'll keep going with that. Acting is my first love and will always be. But this allows me to put my passions into something I love in between."



Maria Rodriguez, with her dog Cypress, is familiar with Craig's Cookies from living in Toronto, and says she will be a regular at the NOTL bakery. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Maria Rodriguez for her first, but not last, purchase of Catherine McGregors's Craig's Cookies.

LocalSPORTS

Eden rower named to Canadian junior team

Mike Balsom
The Local

Eden High School graduate Ingrid Eshuis has officially earned her chance to compete for Canada at the 2023 World Rowing Under 19 World Championships in Paris, France.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, who captured the gold medal in the Open Women's Single at last month's Canadian Secondary School Rowing Association championships in St. Catharines, will be racing in the junior women's four Aug. 2 through 6.

Rowing Canada Aviron made the announcement last Wednesday. Eshuis, a member of the St. Catharines Rowing Club, is one of nine Niagara area rowers named to the junior team.

"Throughout the competitive selection period, our crews faced challenges and tough decisions were made," said Next-Gen program lead Chuck McDiarmid in the announcement. "But this fostered a strong sense of camaraderie and passion as we head into the regattas. I am elated for these young athletes, many of whom will make their debuts at this elite level, and I have no doubt that the nation's rowing community will rally behind and support them."

"I'm super-excited," enthused Eshuis. "It's really the opportunity of a lifetime for me. And the Olympics next year are in Paris. We'll be rowing on the Olympic course. They call us kind of the Olympic guinea pigs."

Eshuis, Eden High's 2023 oarsperson of the year award winner, has already begun to train with her crewmates in the four: Emma Goedhart and Stella Bittman, both from the Notre Dame Rowing Club, and Novella Rusman, from British Columbia's Brentwood College School.

"We were on the water all last week," says Eshuis, taking a break Tuesday before heading to a weight training session in Welland. "It's intense. We train twice a day most days, then two days a week we're on the water once and do a weight session."

Of working with Goedhart, Bittman and Rusman, Eshuis says, "we have a great crew. We have already hung out a lot just in a week with all our practices. It's been really great getting to know them."

Eshuis, who will begin her freshman year at Boston University in September on a rowing scholarship, has the luxury of training for the national team right here in Niagara. She also has the additional luxury of having Eden's head row-

ing coach, Mike Petrychanko, working with her in the women's four.

"He is fantastic," she says. "It's been really great to hear his feedback and to be coached by him."

Her usual coach with the rowing club is Michele Romak-Fisher. As Romak-Fisher is not a designated Rowing Canada coach this summer, she won't be involved in Eshuis' training for the first summer in a few years.

"The key to success for Ingrid," Romak-Fisher wrote in an email to The Local, "is that she can find the joy in every day training and maximize what she gets out of it. Her ability to learn and express her thoughts are really advanced. That helps the coach-athlete communication greatly. Ingrid gets right to the point and collaborates on how the training is contributing to strategic goals. And she has a lightheartedness that helps to not sweat the small stuff."

"I won't be there with her at the Worlds," Romak-Fisher continued. "But she is in good hands and she knows what needs to be done leading up to the race to have a peak performance. At this point I'm one of her biggest cheerleaders in the background. I'm so proud of her"

One person that will be

with Eshuis in Paris is her close friend and rowing club boatmate Makeda Harrison. They will, however, compete in different boats in the World Championships. Makeda will be teamed with Sarah Stacey of Welland's Notre Dame Rowing Club in the women's pair.

Eshuis and Harrison have rowed together for a number of years with Romak-Fisher as their coach. They competed together this spring in the Ontario Small Boat Trials. Their winning performance there in the pair is what earned them their seats on the junior national team.

"It's pretty exciting to experience Paris with her," says an enthusiastic Eshuis. "It's a dream come true for both of us. We've come up in rowing together, so it will be great to share this experience with her too."

The Under 19 championships showcase the best rowers aged 18 and under from around the world, competing in 14 boat classes over five days.

Rowers who represent Canada at this regatta, as well as at the Under 23 World Championships in Plovdiv, Bulgaria and at the 2023 Can-AmMex International Regatta in Sarasota, Florida, are expected to fund much of their own cost for their trip. Rowing Canada has launched their "Fuel



Ingrid Eshuis was named Eden High School's oarsperson of the year at the school's athletic awards event this spring. "It's so rewarding to end my high school career with this recognition," she told The Local, "and it gives me a boost of confidence as I head to Paris this summer." (Photo supplied)

Dreams, Forge Champions" campaign to support these exceptional rowers in their pursuit of excellence on the international racing stage.

To help fund Ingrid's trip to Paris next month, visit rowing-canada.org/donate-today.

Tennis for kids and adults in full swing in St. Davids

Mike Balsom
The Local

Karen Wright's mission to turn the St. Davids Lions Park into a hub of tennis activity is quickly becoming a reality.

She bristles with excitement as she tells The Local she has been able to register the St. Davids Tennis Club with the Ontario Tennis Association, complete with a list of executives.

"Bobbi Epp is our treasurer," says Wright. "I've been

teaching her kids. She's been working tirelessly, even while packing up her house to move, to get us up and running with the bank so people can pay online. And she designed our online registration forms and volunteer sign-up forms sent out this past week. She just knows how to get it all done."

The club has just wrapped up its spring session, held throughout May and June.

"We had about 25 total participating," Wright adds. "It's

been great to see many new interested kids and adults jumping onto the courts and joining in either with our scheduled programs or coming back for additional help with their game."

Wright is extremely pleased with the relationship she's been able to develop with the staff and students of nearby St. Davids Public School.

"In May, we had all the Grades 4 to 6 students, about 125 kids and their teachers, come over for a half day," says

the retired DSBN teacher. "Their principal, Carl Glauser, came over and participated too."

The kids rallied red balls over eight mini nets placed on the courts and had friendly matches between them by the end of each half-day session. Volunteers came out to divide the students up as they rotated through tennis, badminton and frisbee golf stations.

"It was a lot of fun," says Wright. "We heard a lot of laughter and saw kids who had never touched a racquet before starting to enjoy it."

A planned session last Monday for Grades 7 and 8 students at St. Davids was cancelled due to the weather.

"I went to the school and promised them we would reschedule the session for the fall," she adds. "It also gave me a chance to hand out flyers for the summer program, which starts this week. The school is excited about having kids and teachers all return to play this summer."

On the adult front, Wright says about eight new players who met each other during adult lessons and free match play on Thursdays and are now meeting up on their own to play games. Tuesday morning adult lessons have begun, and Wright hopes it leads to the club being able to eventually create tennis leagues playing out of Lions Park.

Young volunteer coaches Kendra Osa and Liam Bruce

are busy working on the summer Girls Fun Tennis and High School Tennis programs, which begin this Saturday.

"They have some great ideas to include more girls and secondary school students," says Wright, "inviting them to play tennis this summer and be ready to try out for their high school tennis teams in the fall."

Osa and Bruce are just two of a young corps of volunteer coaches, all of whom have completed their initial Tennis Canada training through the St. Davids Club. She lists Josh Adam, Ethan Bruce, Matt Ruller, Keira Dexter, David Dexter and Fiona Bell as ready to go, all earning volunteer hours toward their total of 40 required for high school graduation.

And she points out that Ste-

fan Simeunovic, who just completed his freshman year playing tennis and studying at Penn State University, has been using the St. Davids courts to train two kids from Hamilton, and offers to help out with the younger players whenever he can.

"He is ITF (International Tennis Federation) ranked," Wright says. "He had 10 singles wins and 11 doubles wins at Penn State last year. He's originally from Niagara Falls and took lessons from Dave Boland in Welland. Just watching him play is like being at the National Bank Open."

"We'll have our website up and running soon," says Wright, "and social media, too. We're building a tennis community here. It's all about having fun and loving the game."



Karen Wright is developing a community of tennis in St. Davids. (Photos supplied)



St. Davids School students, Grades 4 to 6, play on the mini-court set-up.



Volunteer coaches Liam Bruce and Josh Adam trade coaching tips.

NOTL athlete winning medals in masters' track and field

Mike Balsom
The Local

A day-long journey Sunday from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Geneva, Ohio, and back again turned out to be both challenging and rewarding for 73-year-old Steve Bogatek.

Bogatek and his wife Vienna left NOTL early in the morning, driving through sheets of rain almost the entire trip, to arrive at the USA Track and Field Midwest Region Outdoor Track & Field Championships, where he was to compete in the 80-metre hurdles, the 200-metre dash and the long jump.

"It was a non-stop thunder shower from morning to the evening," Bogatek told The Local Tuesday. "It was a disaster. At least 50 competitors quit because of the weather. I scratched myself from the 200-metre race because I didn't want to end up in the hospital."

Bogatek prevailed in the long jump, however, capturing the gold medal in the 70-plus age group with a jump of 3.22 metres. He added a silver in the 80-metre hurdle race, finishing second in the same age group with a time of 19.64 seconds, more than four seconds behind gold medalist Ernie Snodgrass.

Despite his impressive competitive spirit, Bogatek said he slowed down in that race just to finish it, as he had been dealing with some knee issues in the weeks leading up to the track meet. He also hurt his back last Friday moving an air conditioner for his 92-year-old mother, who lives in Bramp-



Steve Bogatek stands in his garage next to a partial collection of his medals from many years of track and field competitions. The 73-year-old says there are many more elsewhere in his Old Town home. (Mike Balsom)

ton.

Bogatek has been running, hurdling and training all of his life, beginning in his younger days growing up in Poland. He fled that country in the mid 1970s, when the government of Communist Party leader Edward Gierek signed a formal alliance with the Soviet Union.

The former officer in the Polish army fled to Vienna, Austria, before arriving in Canada in 1977. He became a Canadian citizen the following year.

Bogatek had taken a job as a masseuse at a private club in Toronto, however in 1979, having studied engineering in Poland, he was hired as a machine designer for Massey Ferguson in Brantford, Ontario.

"That was the best job I

ever had," he said. "I worked there for more than eight years designing combine harvesters, and I worked my way up to the top."

When Massey Ferguson went into receivership in 1988, Bogatek was out of a job. He moved to Toronto, eventually settling north of the city in Nobleton, and got his real estate licence.

It was while living in Toronto that Bogatek re-established his love for the thrill of track and field competition. He began to train with the top echelon of coaches and athletes involved with Canada's national team.

Bogatek reached into a drawer in his living room and pulled out his original photographs of the athletes that he spent time with

there. Among them were some recognizable faces of runners and jumpers who had later been exposed as steroid users.

"I didn't want anything to do with that," he said, deep concern on his face. "It was a shame what they were doing to themselves."

He reached in again and handed over a newspaper clipping. At 47 years old, Bogatek had placed fifth in the 400-metre hurdles and qualified for the Canadian Open that August. That was in a race against much younger competition, not just those in his own age group.

The father of three boys and grandfather of two jumped back into competition in 1993 as an independent athlete. He continued to compete on and off,

sometimes losing interest because of a lack of competition. But he has thrown himself into training and competing fully since he and Vienna moved to NOTL about eight years ago.

"We looked around and were considering other places, like Oakville," Vienna said, "but when we came here for a visit we really liked it. It's quiet, the shops downtown are really nice."

Most mornings Bogatek can be found running laps along the soccer fields at Simcoe Park, making use of the grass to prolong the strength of his joints. Occasionally he might be seen climbing the hills at the Brock Monument, or at Fort George. Another haunt for him is the Upper Canada Trail, just a few steps from

his Old Town home.

His regimen has been paying off recently. This February he won gold in both the 50- and 60-metre hurdles as well as in the triple jump at the Canadian Masters Indoor Championships at Toronto's York University. He also earned a silver medal in the long jump, all in the 70-75 age group.

The slim, athletic Bogatek says he eats well, too. On the day The Local visited, he and Vienna prepared a spread of cheese, fresh prosciutto from a Toronto butcher, salami and tomatoes drizzled with balsamic vinegar.

"I don't take any vitamins," he claimed. "I eat a lot of honey, and walnuts. Walnuts are really good for you."

And there's vodka. Bogatek enjoys his sour cherry vodka. He poured a glass for this reporter to taste, and indeed, this infrequent imbibor was able to understand the attraction to the light red liquid. Though there is some doubt whether or not it's what is driving Bogatek's success on the track.

He'll take a break for the remainder of 2023, he says, in an attempt to heal his ailing knee, meaning he will skip this year's Canadian National Championships in British Columbia.

He has no plans to stop competing altogether, though. Bogatek will celebrate his 74th birthday on Nov. 13, and he has set his sights on the World Masters Outdoor Track and Field Championships next August in Stockholm, Sweden.

It's a good bet that he'll be taking more medals home to hang in his garage.

Local girls win games in 'world's largest soccer tournament'



On the winning team were (left, front) Vivienne Atwood, Lucy Collins, and Antonia Cater; (back) Gemma Fratangelo, Charlotte Mannella, Daisha Necakov-Waller, Evelyn Falk, Stephanie Wassilko, Regan Doyle, Nico Vanoostveen, Taylor Jonah, and Tessa Davis. The girls are coached by Stefan Wassilko, assistant coach; Mike Vanoostveen, head coach; and Jude Atwood, assistant coach. (Mike Balsom)

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Soccer Club Under-9 girls made a big splash in Scarborough last week, winning both of their games in The Robbie Tournament.

And it wasn't just any tournament. Since 1967, The Robbie has raised more than \$1.7 million for Cystic Fibrosis Canada, and is known as the world's largest youth soccer tournament. It's named in honour of Robbie Wimbs, who was a three-year-old suffering from cystic fibrosis the year of the first tournament. Robbie lived with the disease until he passed away at 33 years of age.

NOTL played two games in the Robbie, beating Pickering 5-1 and following that up with a 5-0 shutout of Cherry Beach. Evelyn Falk scored three goals, Taylor Jonah added two, and Lucy Collins got the shutout against Cherry Beach.

It's the second year for this team playing together. Head coach Mike Vanoostveen says the entire roster consists of players who live in NOTL. Outside of tournaments such as the Robbie, they play their season in the Niagara Soccer League, in a division that also includes Grimsby, the St. Catharines Jets, Niagara United, Welland and Pelham.

Local basketball player moving to Fort Erie academy

Seen as a good move for teen who loves basketball

Mike Balsom
The Local

At 16 years old, Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Marsden Tataryn sees basketball as a way to accomplish his goals for his future. So his upcoming move to the Fort Erie International Academy is a step in the right direction.

The Crossroads Public School graduate, who has just completed Grade 10 at Laura Secord Secondary School, is heading to the academy to play basketball in September.

The former Toronto resident had originally hoped to earn a spot at Orangeville Prep, which operates out of a facility in Mono, Ontario. It is known as the elite basketball school in Canada, having funnelled eight alumni to the NBA, most famously Jamal Murray of the Denver Nuggets and Oshae Brissett, who just joined the Boston Celtics as a free agent. As well, three of the academy's 2022 graduates signed on with Division I NCAA colleges in the U.S. Tataryn participated in a three-week basketball camp there last summer and caught the eye of their coaches.

"They told me they were interested in me playing there for Grade 10," he tells The Local. "But it ended up not working out. Then, about a week and a half ago I got a text from one of their coaches, who was interested in me playing on their development team next year."

Tataryn mentioned the text to one of his trainers, Keveshan (Kev) Padachey of ProActive Chiropractic and Training Centre in St. Catharines. Tataryn has been training with Pad-

achey regularly, working on strength and conditioning and holding weekly shooting sessions at an outdoor court owned by family friends in NOTL.

"Three hours later I was eating dinner with some friends at a Mexican restaurant," recalls Tataryn. "Kev called to say he had just talked to one of the coaches at Fort Erie, and they said they wanted me to come play for them next year."

The academy is a private boarding school for Grades 6 through 12, focusing on academic and athletic excellence in both basketball and hockey. The 80,000 square metre campus is located next to Lake Erie near the Peace Bridge.

Like Orangeville Prep, it plays in the Ontario Scholastic Basketball Association against the top teams in the province. In fact, in 2022-2023, it bettered Orangeville in both the men's A and B pools.

"It really came down to education," says Tataryn. "Fort Erie is a private school, similar to Ridley, where Orangeville buses you to a public school. And the program is growing and growing. It really seems like a better family to join. And it has a 100 per cent university acceptance rate."

The 6'6", 220-pound centre fell in love with the game when he was still living in Toronto. He moved to NOTL with his family (mother Amanda Terry, father Brandon Tataryn and younger brother Grayson) in 2016.

While in Grade 5 he joined the Niagara Falls Red Raiders, and played with them for a year and a half. During COVID, there were few chances to



Marsden Tataryn has been playing with the Laura Secord Patriots for the last two years. (Supplied)

play either organized or pick-up basketball.

In Grade 9, he caught on as a leader on the Laura Secord Patriots basketball team, and returned to the Red Raiders for further club play. In Grade 10 he was called up to play a few games on the Patriots' senior team as well.

"I fully fell in love with basketball in Grade 9," he says. "I went full throttle, training non-stop. I was in the gym every day training with Mr. (Tim) Jabs and Mr. (Kyle) Nickel. Jabs told me if I wanted to play

at the university level he'd help me get there. He's a great friend; I can talk to him about anything, life or basketball."

As Secord's physical and health education program leader and basketball coach, Jabs has been committed to building a successful basketball program at Secord. He developed a popular course that focuses on the sport, and has begun to attract some serious players.

"I'm sorry to see Marsden leave Secord," Jabs tells The Local. "He was going to be a key piece of our senior team this year. But I'm really happy for him and excited to see what the future brings. He's making the right move. And it's just more proof that Secord's basketball program is growing."

This summer Tataryn is also training with Moses Balabyekkubo of Border Town Basketball.

"He's actually going to Fort Erie in September for his first year as the junior team's head coach," Tataryn says of Balabyekkubo. "So I'll be kind of following him there."

With Border Town he

is playing with much older boys in the Under-19 age group.

"On that team I'm kind of the back-up centre," he says. "I don't get a vast amount of playing time. It's tough. I'm playing against guys who will be going Division I (NCAA), who will be playing at university next year. I'm playing against guys who were on the Biosteel Canadian team. It's a grind."

But he knows taking his knocks on the court right now will help in his development.

"I was playing with the Raiders, Border Town and Secord all at the same time," he explains. "It's so much easier to play against my age group after guarding a seven-foot-tall 19-year-old."

Despite his talent, his success and his competitive spirit, you'd be hard-pressed to find a 16-year-old so grounded when it comes to his future goals.

"My ultimate dream would be to play Division I at Penn State or Villanova, or maybe Yale or another Ivy League school," he says. "But that's probably not realistic. The reality is

I'll probably end up at a Division II or Division III school as a starter."

He doesn't talk about NBA dreams, adding his brain and his education are the biggest things he has going for him. But he does hope to follow college or university with a four- or five-year stint playing professionally in Europe instead.

"I'll make some money, travel the world, and make some connections," he adds. "Then I'll come back and hopefully catch on with an NBA team in front office management, or in statistics and scouting for the NBA. I'm really good at math. That's my main focus in school."

Of making the move to a boarding student at the Fort Erie academy and leaving his friends at Laura Secord and his family behind, he's quite stoic and relaxed.

"I have always been able to fit in wherever I go," he says. "I'll kind of figure it out. And it's only 45 minutes away so I will come home on weekends. Once I'm there for a few weeks it will feel familiar. I'm really looking forward to it."

LocalWORSHIP

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COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday, July 9th

9:45 a.m.

Kids Ministry Sign In
(Nursery - Kindergarten)

10:00 a.m.

Worship Gathering
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Message:

Kevin Bayne
Jesus on Judging
(Matthew 7:1-6)

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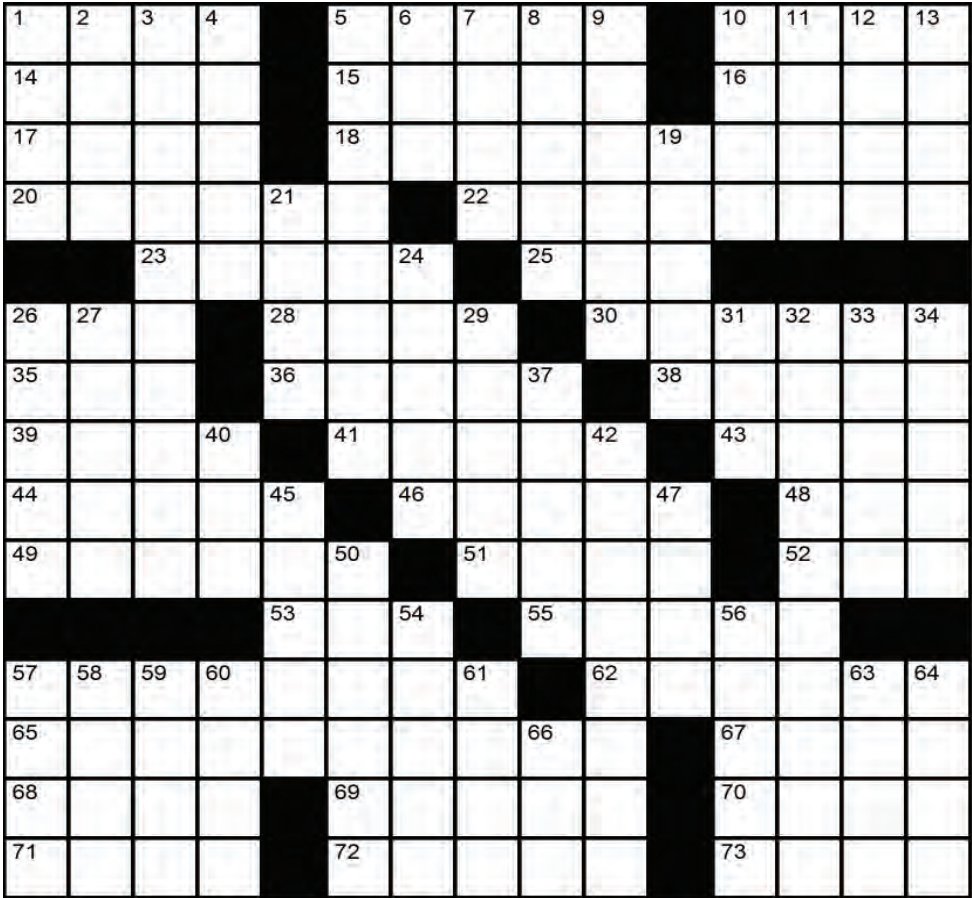
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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU



- Across:**

1 Opposite of neither

5 Protect

10 "Four and twenty blackbirds baked in ---"

14 On the ocean

15 Publish

16 Route

17 Via

18 Serviced

20 Cotton Club setting

22 Jamboree

23 Up

25 Intelligence agency

26 Not traded on a stock exchange

28 Top guns

30 Ethnic

35 In favor

36 Adeptness

38 State animal of Maine

39 The Sultan of Swat

41 Talent seeker

43 Shuttle operator

44 Behaved

46 Wished

48 Beat

49 Accidental dive

51 Feeble

52 Some foreign Government
- Down:**

1 Tub

2 Workplace regulation agency

3 Unglazed brownish-red earthenware

4 Pulls

5 Ingenious sales devices

6 World's largest economy

7 Expression of incredulity

8 Scrap

9 Despise

10 Parched

11 Small lake

12 U N nuclear watchdog

13 Swirl

19 Warning signal
- heads

53 Except

55 Comic --- Martin

57 Light metal

62 Knuckleheads

65 Suspension

67 Duration

68 First to die in the Bible

69 Untrue

70 Egyptian dancing girl

71 Dabbling duck

72 Absquatulates

73 Drip slowly
- 21 Touchdown forecasts

24 German state

26 O founder

27 Temporary peace

29 Single-masted sailboat

31 Electrically charged particle

32 Maritime refugees

33 Tea-growing Indian state

34 Inclines

37 Southern hemisphere constellation

40 "He'd make a lovely corpse" (Dickens: "Martin Chuzzlewit")

42 1,000%

45 Kind of card

47 Artificially-colored

50 Went on the lam

54 Like Mayberry

56 Travel stamps

57 "I --- my wit's end"

58 Projecting part of the brain

59 Common fertilizer ingredient

60 Shopping center

61 Height of Denver

63 Dull

64 Sudden

66 Employ

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In memory of Alexander Pewer who passed away July 5, 2021
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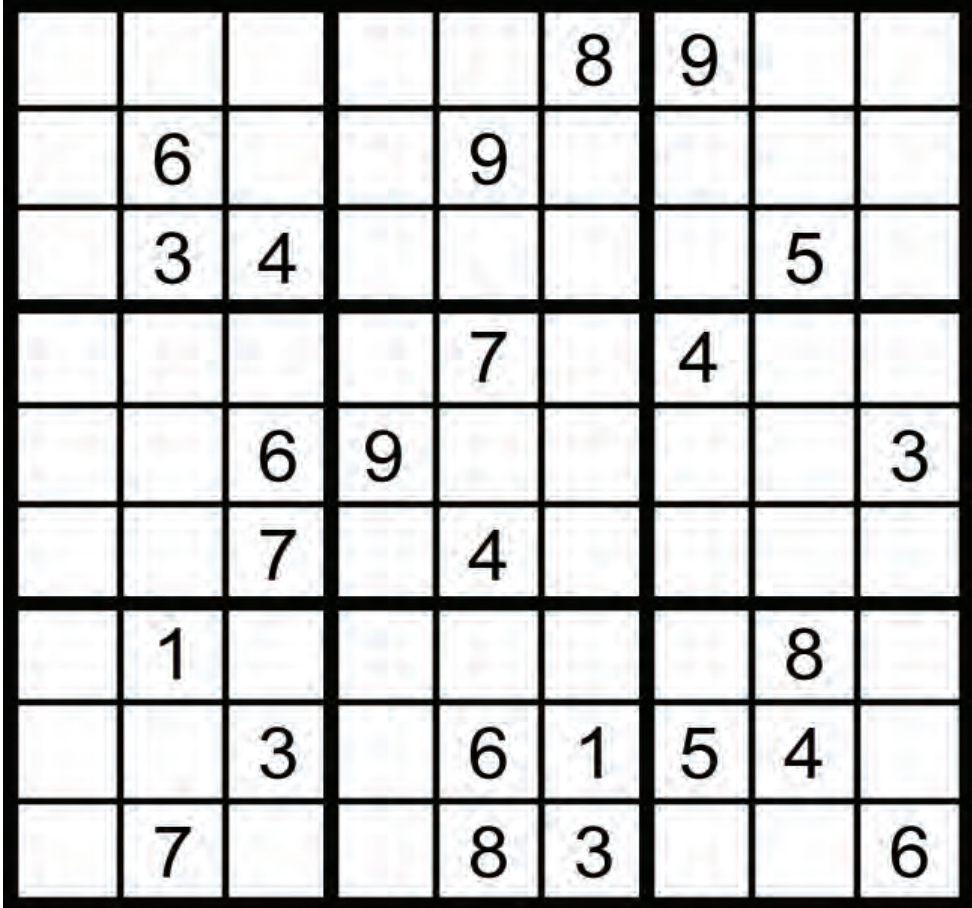
PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from
June 28, 2023

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

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

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



NOTL horses and their riders do well in competition

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Benchview Equestrian Centre had a number of riders in the Silver Series Equestrian Competition held at the Angelstone Centre in Erin, Ontario, this past weekend. Canada Day saw riders Adrianna Darte, Emma Harber, Sadhbh McGarry and Hannah Gilchrist competing in the Jumper Cross Rail Power and Speed course. The riders and their horses did well, winning a number of ribbons. Sarah Laughton competed in the Pony Hunter course, finishing well in that category. All of the riders competed in several events during the four-day event, and fortunately the rain held off for the team to complete their events. *(Photos by David Gilchrist)*



Emma Harber jumping with her horse in the Silver Series Equestrian Competition.



Hannah Gilchrist working the course.



Adrianna Darte directs Sharp Dressed Man toward a jump.



Sadhbh McGarry competing on Canada Day.



Sadhbh McGarry, Hannah Gilchrist and Emma Harber arrive ready to compete.



Sarah Laughton completes a jump with Alakazam.

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