Ron Simkus asks residents to comment on flaws in plan

Penny Coles
The Local

Ron Simkus, best-known in town for his concern over water levels in the dock area, is using his regular email blast to more than 100 residents to reach out to comment on flaws in plan (TMP) under consideration. The most recent draft of the plan is now available online, and is open for comments together, amend the draft plan if required, and present it to councillors for approval on Aug. 22.

Simkus is concerned about the lack of input to date on a very significant document that is being followed to presumably convince our town council to approve the plan. “The recent Deloitte audit described the shortfall of an annual road maintenance at $3 million per year,” says Simkus. “If we can’t maintain the roads we have, why are we designing new ones?”

Simkus is a retired engineer, consultant, with more than 40 years’ experience in the management of skilled operations, maintenance and engineering personnel, including serving as CEO and president of two of the world’s largest copper mines. While his qualifications are impressive, and he wants to help the town by putting them to good use, looking at how best to map out the town’s future transportation needs is clearly not his job.

However, he is feeling the responsibility of alerting residents to the importance of the transportation master plan (TMP) under consideration. “I love this town. I may not be here to see the plan implemented,” he says, “but my grandchildren may be.”

He is encouraging residents to read the document, and to let the town know where they feel it is right. If they don’t know how to post comments online, write a letter or send an email to the town, he adds.

Some of the recommendations in the plan, which was written during a pandemic, make him wonder if anyone actually went to see them to good use, looking at how best to map out the town’s future transportation needs is clearly not his job.

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No easy solution to doctor shortage in town

Coun. Sandra O’Connor is pushing to bring a nurse practitioner to town, hoping it will happen sooner rather than later.

She is concerned about the 6,000 residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake who are without a doctor in town, and this is the first step toward improving local health care for them.

With the help of Lord Mayor Betty Doern, a team of advocates that includes Bonnie Bagnulo, the executive director of the NOTL Community Palliative Care Service and representatives of the local family health team, and the backing of council, she is hoping for success. They have run into a roadblock, she says. They were told by Niagara Health at a June meeting that the funding is still in place for a nurse practitioner, but she is now hearing they have to get approval for the funding, and hoping that’s only a temporary hiccup and can be worked out — she hopes for some good news later this week.

But that is really just the first step.

This week the country’s 13 premiers began meetings for some good news later. They have run into a lack of federal funding, she says, and there isn’t a simple solution.

O’Connor, in her discussions about the need for a nurse practitioner, has learned how badly NOTL is in need of doctors, and the prognosis for attracting them is not good.

“NOTL has the highest percentage of Niagara residents over 65 of any older area, over 30 per cent in that category,” said O’Connor. “No other municipality in the Niagara Region is 30 per cent or greater.”

Dr. Karen Berti, one of the Niagara North Health Team’s family physicians, has worked and raised a family in NOTL, and remembers a time 10 to 15 years ago when the town had its own doctor recruitment committee.

That is no longer the case, she says, although the family health team is in need of doctors. They are down one, with the others dividing up the roster of those patients, but in recent years the population of town has grown more than 30 per cent, while health care resources have not, making NOTL considerably underserviced.

The Ministry of Health pays patient rosters at 1,360 per doctor, but that is based on 18 per cent of patients being over 65, says Berti.

Forty-two per cent of patients over 65 have more health issues, taking up more of a physician’s time. The majority of those moving to NOTL are over 50, she says.

“Family medicine has always been complex in nature,” says Berti.

But it’s becoming more difficult, with the growing number of seniors in NOTL, and the complex care they require. “They’re not just coming in with a cold and a cough,” O’Connor says.

O’Connor says when she talked to members of the Niagara North Family Health Team, she was told they have the longest wait list for a doctor that they have ever had.

Berti says she and some of the other doctors don’t even keep a wait list. “It just perpetuates the problem. Why would I have a waiting list when I can barely provide care for the number of patients I have?”

And it’s not just family physicians who are struggling, she adds, it’s specialists as well, creating issues with getting referrals for patients who need them, and delays for everything from imaging to surgeries.

It’s tough, and it’s everywhere, she says. “Every specialty is suffering. Every health care worker is having a difficult time.”

Doctors, nurses and all health care workers are exhausted, says Berti. Many were burned out before the pandemic, retiring or choosing to leave their profession, and it’s only getting worse.

“Retention is as important as recruitment.”

Niagara Region has had a recruitment and retention committee since 2001, with a goal of trying to attract doctors to all of the municipalities in an under-serviced region.

But it’s a competition, says Berti, and NOTL, with its high percentage of seniors taking a doctor’s work load, and no extra remuneration as determined by the province, is not attractive to new doctors.

“The cost of living, the cost of homes and office space, the gaps in the school system and the issue with transportation to some schools are all factors that discourage doctors from choosing NOTL, or some of the other municipalities, she says.

“It’s just a lack of a fundamental resource, and everyone competing for it.”

But there are some positives in local health care, she says.

Given the older population, some people have been sick, and some have died from COVID, but overall, “NOTL has done well during COVID. NOTL has a great family health team,” she adds, “and great resources. We could just use more of them.”

And at some point, as the pressure from the pandemic lessens, “there needs to be some time and energy spent on recruiting more health care workers to the town and the region.”

O’Connor says while municipal governments are not to get involved in health care, the Ontario Medical Association says municipalities have a role to play in health infrastructure.

In NOTL, the first step is bringing another nurse practitioner to town, who will work for and be paid by the Niagara Health system, she says.

Health infrastructure can also include an urgent care centre, and that is something else she hopes to advocate for in the future.

O’Connor has recently learned that Fort Erie, one of the municipalities under-serviced and competing for new physicians, has created a community health care services committee, and a bylaw was passed to allow the town to work on recruit- ing and retaining physicians.

“Fort Erie is actively seeking family physicians to join the existing medical community,” the town website says. It lists some of the incentives that will offer doctors, including “an exciting, lucrative package for new physicians that would include relocation expenses, and adds “we would be happy to showcase our community and the surrounding attractions on a site visit that we will arrange and fund for you and your spouse.”

O’Connor says she “would not discount the creation of a committee to help find us some doctors for Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

Coun. Sandra O’Connor says getting a nurse practitioner in town who can see patients not rostered in the Niagara North Family Health Team is just a first step to improving health care in NOTL. (File photo)
Public input will mean amendments to plan

Continued from page 1

change, or simply made their decisions sitting at a comput- er and looking a map.

For example, one of his biggest fears is a recommen- dation to eliminate dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs, turn- ing them into thoroughfares, such as Ball Street which is recommended for extension “through a public park and a flood zone” to connect to Riv- er Beach Drive.

All of the plans to extend dead- end streets add several acres to the res- pectful neighborhood, but there is no data to show that will solve any trans- portation problems.

“It is supposed to be a roadmap (excuse the pun, he says) for the grower to trend these streets,” he said.

The public consultation period is more than a week through its four-week dura- tion, but by Sunday he didn’t think a single person had commented. He has been delaying his e-mail voice to Join the Conversation on the town’s website, where com- ments can be submitted and posted, hoping others will add their opinions first. His will be comprehensive and lengthy, and he is hoping for more than comments of “me too” from others, thus his hesitancy to add his just yet.

He is working on a shorter document that can be used as a template for people to add their names to and submit as their comments.

He is really concerned that without sufficient public input, the document will go ahead as it is now, with no changes.

At the April 25 council meeting, councillors were asked to approve the plan, but expressed concern with some of the recommendations.

Coun. Sandra O’Con- nor spoke of some specific issues such as the St. Davids roundabout, Ball Street go- ing through a park, a road through a forested area, ex-propriation of agricultural lands to make some streets, such as Niagara Stone Road and Airport Road, into four lanes rather than two, and the impact on residential, agricul- tural and cultural resources.

She also pointed out the need for the TMP to be inte- grated with the town’s official plan, secondary plans, and those that are meant to pro- tect the town’s environment, heritage and agriculture. She said she sees “somewhat of a disconnect between the regional trans- portation plan.”

“There are areas that need to be reworked,” she said, adding she couldn’t endorse the TMP even in principle, “given what I see as serious weaknesses” in it.

Coun. Gary Burroughs also brought up four plans originally applied to the dock area, none of which are aligned with the transporta- tion plan.

“The extension of Ball Street is not what anyone wants, and yet it’s still in it,” he said.

“I don’t want to throw it off the rails,” said Lord Mayor Betty Deseo, suggesting council needs more time to study it and make changes.

With councillors agreeing there was a lot to absorb in the plan, they decided to receive the document in other plans, the 30-day consultation peri- od to go ahead, although they warned that the sum- mer is not the best time to ask for public input.

Simkus refers to the transportation master plan as a version of SimCity, a city-building video game, and says he has update that went out in his recent email blast “de- scribes the mess that the draft MTP is in.”

He calls the plan “an exer- cise of connecting roads and residential blocks like a video game, offering that as a solu- tion to a crush of additional cars infiltrating every inch of the community.”

Many people still don’t un- derstand what is in the plan, which he says, at $160,000 paid to the consulting firm for a re- port almost 170 pages long, is not good value — not through any fault of the consultants, but because there is no one on town staff to manage it.

Another issue Simkus fears is that Stantec, the con- sulting company hired to work on the master plan, is still involved, but the consult- ant who worked on it since the hiring of the company, and the one who could an- swer any questions posed by councillors or residents, is no longer with that firm. “The continuity is gone, and so are our answers,” he says.

“The Stantec project manager was engineer Brian Putre, but nobody with any- where near-equivalent cre- dentials provided direction to him from the town. The TMP is the first attempt by town operations staff to complete an engineering master plan, without skills or competency to do so, and it shows.”

He tells The Local his words are not a criticism of the staff, that the issue is the town not hiring someone with the right credentials to do the job.

“All credit to the efforts of Stantec trying to work through the document, but the TMP document is shot full of staff pet projects and SimCity designs from plan- view maps that don’t cor- rectly recognize physical details, environmental impacts and the historical context of the neighbourhoods impacted,” he says.

He also objects to the plans intent “to improve traffic flow,” without any data to support its recommendations.

“Traffic does not ‘flow’ in Old Town, rather it stops when people get within a view of the lake and want to take photos.”

Increasing Niagara Stone Road to four lanes “will turn it into the QEW,” delivering more automobiles directly into the heart of the heritage district and crushing an al- ready overloaded residential street system.

“The answer from staff to this dilemma is to lengthen and join roads within the Old Town, to compress additional cars onto every square inch of asphalt they can lay down.”

What possible benefit is that to people who actually live in the homes of Old Town?” he asks. “We have to come up with a better solution than all these cars parking on residen- tial streets.”

He has heard residents say, about the cumbersome Join the Conversation place for comments, that “the town doesn’t want our feedback, just a checkmark on the pro- cess punch list.”

He speaks highly of CAO Marnie Cladics, and says he knows that is not her intent, but that she is operating in a vacuum, and needs qualified professionals on staff to pro- duce a quality document and in August for approval.

“T’s so important to get this right,” says Simkus. “You can’t put your head in the sand and hope it’s going to work itself out, because it’s not. If you don’t say anything at all, it will be a tragedy.”

To read the draft trans- portation master plan and to make comments on it use the Join The Conversation link where the document and comments upload is available at: https://www.jointheconversationnotl.org/TransportationMasterPlan.
Laura Secord sold to Niagara Falls developer
New owner promises to respect heritage village

Penny Coles
The Local
Laura Secord Memorial School in Queenston has been sold. The Willowbank School of Restoration Arts has sold it to Canadian Niagara Heritage Inc. of Niagara Falls, owned by the Shahani family, for $2,375,000.

“We thank everyone involved for their patience over the past few months,” said Willowbank chair Patrick Little. In a Willowbank news release, a spokesperson for Canadian Heritage Niagara said “we are pleased to have acquired this property, and have agreed to permit the school to run certain classes at the site until the end of the year.” Willowbank will use a portion of the funds to discharge a mortgage and invest the balance to support school operations into the future, says Willowbank vice-chair John Scott. Willowbank purchased the building in 2012 through a partnership with the town, planning on using it to expand restoration arts classes. It was put up for sale in February, the board having decided there was no need for it in the future of Willowbank.

“The certainty of annual contributions from the investment will be a welcome supplement to the resources needed to provide our students with the best learning experience possible in restoration arts,” said Scott. The offer from Canadian Heritage Niagara wasn’t the only one, he says, but it was the one they considered the best fit for the village. “It seemed this particular group would work well in the neighbourhood.”

When Jim Armstrong, president of the Queenston Residents Association, learned the school would be sold, he said villagers support Willowbank and its survival into the future, and he wouldn’t expect the QRA to block development, although he hoped there wouldn’t be a repeat of the situation with the Parmenter Oak residential development proposal.

Now that it’s sold, he says there will be great interest in the new owners and their plans, and he hopes they recognize “this isn’t a town or a city, it’s a village. And some of the people who moved here did so to get away from an urban environment.”

He’s especially concerned with the impact any development would have on residents adjacent to the school property.

“We’ll have to be vigilant, and optimistic that the owner will do something that respects the village.”

“We are excited about the purchase,” Naveen Shahani of Canadian Heritage Niagara told The Local. “There are no plans as of yet, however we look forward to working with the town and the community in the near future for an adaptive reuse of the property that is complimentary to the village.”

“Please take comfort in knowing that we value the area and its cultural heritage significance,” he added. “With any potential plans for the future, we shall take into consideration the nature of the area around the site, as well as the impact it may have.”

In the meantime, Sharon Okan and Adam Markovic, well-established visual artists with studios in the school building, may have a few more months in their space — they haven’t spoken to the new owner or been given a timeline — but they are looking for somewhere to relocate. (Photo supplied)

NOW that it’s sold, he says, we want to stay close,” Okan said in a recent email blast. They are looking for an open-concept space, maybe a barn, to use as an art studio and woodworking space, preferably with some natural light, and would consider renting or purchasing. “Adam is skilled in renovation work and would be willing to discuss the possibility of property enhancement in exchange for a long-term lease in a beautiful place.”

If anyone knows of property that might be suitable, email inquiry@sharanokan.com.

Sharon Okan and Adam Markovic love their studios in the former school, but are now looking for somewhere to relocate. (Photo supplied)

This luxurious end-unit townhome on a quiet, rural street in the heart of! Wine Country, defines the art of gracious living. Extensive high-end upgrades, elegant interiors, and finest materials and craftsmanship throughout make this a very special offering.

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With more than 20 years experience as an exercise specialist behind her, Jennifer Olsen has not only the knowledge but a passion for helping others achieve their health and wellness goals.

Since she began her fitness journey, first as a successful competitor and then as an instructor, much has changed in her life. She has been happily married for more than 16 years, and is a busy mother of four children.

Reflecting on the time when she was a young teenager, wanting to emulate women she saw in fitness magazines, and the competitions and accreditations that followed, she knows those years taught her to push through “the hard stuff,” to get to where she wanted to be, and to become the best version of herself. That is what Jennifer intended when she created the space, and she is passionate about using it to help others reach their goals.

She is also passionate about the new, exciting programs happening at The Training Shed. One is a monthly workshop series, with topics ranging from mobility, nutrition, mindsets, and how to de-stress. The first workshop is July 20 at 7 p.m. at the studio. “You will get tactical tips on how to navigate the summer months, and still stay on track with your fitness and nutrition,” says Jennifer. “And yes, you can have your cake and eat it too!”

She is also excited to announce a brand new program launch, called FALL RE:SET, intended as a summer “hangover recovery program.” “As we all know,” says Jennifer, “we can get a little carried away during the summer holidays, and are ready to turn a new leaf come fall.” This program will include step-by-step meal planning, health workshops, and quick and tactical workouts. It will also help increase accountability, and feature a $500 prize giveaway.

Jennifer has partnered with a nutritionist to allow her clients to not only benefit from her expertise, but that of secondary coaches. Tami will be available to help women navigate the mysteries of nutrition by simplifying it, and ensuring it makes sense to you. She can help you stay away from the fad diets, and see much better results. Plus, she will be joined by Fran Notarianni, an incredible yoga and pilates instructor, who provides her training with sass and humour!

There is so much awaiting you at The Training Shed to help you feel welcome and comfortable, and to make your journey to health and wellness a pleasurable experience, along the way to successfully achieving your goals.

Contact Jennifer at 905-687-6220, thetrainingshed.co

Jennifer Olsen, owner of the Training Shed

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

**Stay Strong Workshop Series**

**SESSION 1: Summer Vacay! Staying on the rails with your diet and fitness.**

**July 20 | 7:00pm - 8:30pm**

- Great tips from fitness and nutrition pros
- Prizes and giveaways
- Refreshments and nibbles

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**FALL RE:SET**

Our 12-week program with:
- step by step meal planning
- health workshops
- quick and tactical workouts
- increased accountability

To find out more and join in the action, scan this code to book your FREE Consult!
We don’t need premiers from across the country to meet and then tell us how desperately we need a solution to health care. We know it first hand. If we haven’t had our own experience, we’ve sat and cried with a loved one while they wait for a critical surgery, listened to the devastating stories from friends about family members, from our youngest to our seniors, not getting the care they need and deserve. We hear about delays for appointments, treatment, surgeries, lack of home care, long waiting times in emergency and urgent care departments.

And long term care — the way our seniors have suffered has been a dark time in our history. We know it’s not the fault of our doctors, nurses and other health care workers. They truly are our heroes, doing their absolute best, but you would never know it from the way they are being treated.

In Ontario, we still have Bill 124, denying adequate cost-of-living wages that might help keep some nurses working (and teachers, but that’s another story). Who can blame them for retiring or seeking other professions where they’re respected and paid fairly for the work they do?

Of course it’s not just the nurses, and the solution isn’t just about money. But that would be a start. The shortage of health care workers — doctors, nurses, personal support workers — was an issue before COVID, but it has become so much worse. The pandemic is not over, and an alarming number of health care workers continue to retire or quit. They are burned out, exhausted in every way.

There is no doubt that the solution has to begin with increases in funding for health care, both at the provincial and federal level of government.

Do we want our taxes to go up? Of course not. But better our money be spent on health care than on expensive highways we could live without — we won’t all live long enough to make use of them if we don’t have doctors and nurses to look after us.

Premier Doug Ford made election promises for new hospitals here and across the province. As much as we’d love to see a new hospital in Niagara, it won’t do us any good without doctors, nurses and all the other health care workers to staff it.

We know there isn’t a quick, easy solution, but we have to start somewhere, and that has to be an investment in more resources, attracting more people to health care professions, training them, and holding on to them. It can be done, and it has to start now.

Penny Coles
The Local

Health care has to be our top priority

Heliotropes a special feature in Garden of the Week

Marina Percy
Special to The Local

The lush garden at 48 Colonel Butler Crescent has a back drop of lovely trees and perennials, but it is the splendid array of colourful annuals that stop traffic.

It’s a garden that makes you smile. Several of the beds feature a scented plant called heliotrope (Heliotropium arborescens), which was a staple of Victorian gardens. It had a revival in the 1980s and now it is hit and miss if you can find it. But it is worth the search.

The purple to lilac blooms sit primly on the top of their stems with bright, dark green foliage. Originally a tree-like plant from the Peruvian Andes, it was brought to Paris in 1760 and became a plant to be used in perfumes. More compact forms were quickly developed to create smaller bedding plants.

Heliotrope is associated with nosegays and courtships — chaste and wholesome. It has a pleasant fragrance (which unfortunately suffered from over-breeding) but if you find the sweetest smelling ones you can take cuttings for the following year. It’s a gentle plant which holds its own amid the others, and makes you take a second look.
I write in reference to your article titled Business Community weighs in on accommodation tax (June 29). Please permit me some space in your paper to address some conversations I have observed in the public domain regarding sad articles.

The initial Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) committee was a working group established to guide the rollout and implementation of MAT. This committee was composed of the division sector because it is the hotels and B&Bs of 5-plus rooms who are the ones implementing the MAT in their respective operations. From discussions with the towns CAO, the next MAT governance advisory committee will comprise residents and councillors, along with tourism stakeholders and industry. It is here that the voice of residents becomes important. A key recommendation from developing criteria and making recommendations about MAT-funded initiatives, and not discussions on the operational/rollout.

The intention of MAT is for tourism growth. It is not a tax grab on accommodation, it is not meant to reduce other taxes, it is not intended to pay for operational deficits, it is not intended to replace existing funding. It is a tax on tourism, for sustainable tourism growth. One of the key recommendations made by the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is for the legislation to be amended to ensure MAT revenues are used to grow tourism and not to replace existing funding sources in Ontario’s municipalities.

The corporate market is a highly competitive market, the corporate market is a bit more price sensitive. Niagara Falls has a flat fee of $2 per hotel room per night. Opting to impose a tax rate (two per cent and eventually levelling at four per cent per annum) as opposed to a flat fee, puts Niagara-on-the-Lake at a competitive disadvantage.

The corporate market provides the visitation, hotel accommodations, fills local restaurants, wineries, and retail spending that the town needs during the off-peak months, and mid-week. It is a market that we should be pursuing and creating competitive advantages for ourselves, and not the other way around.

Niagara-on-the-Lake’s downtown core has some of the highest parking rates in Canada. Parking in the heritage district is paid by tourists, not residents. At $5.25 an hour on Queen Street, tourists pay higher parking fees to spend money in the local economy than they pay in prime municipal-owned parking lots. This parking revenue funds municipal services.

Additionally, tourism businesses pay property taxes at commercial rates and contribute to municipal revenues. Without the MAT, tourists pay for tourism, not residents.

Beside, the town pays $70,000 a year for tourism and sustainable tourism growth. Through this strategy, future tourism capital projects and tourism initiatives will be identified and funded by the MAT. Tourism growth, tourism product development, and tourism marketing now have a dedicated funding stream through the MAT.

As the voice of business in NOTL, and the local destination marketing organization, the Chamber of Commerce will continue to invest our time and efforts on assisting industry with recovery, sustainable and respectful tourism growth, and advocating on behalf of our members and the tourism industry.

We are pleased that in a recent study to measure resident sentiment about tourism and life in NOTL. Abacus Data found that 85 per cent of NOTL residents believe that NOTL can both attract a lot of visitors and be a great place to live. This resident sentiment data is an endorsement of tourism and confirms what we already knew anecdotally: that the residents of NOTL understand and recognize the value and importance of tourism to both the economy of this town, and to their quality of lives. We are pleased that the vast majority of residents see tourism in a positive light, understands the symbiotic relationship they share with tourism and the quality of life they enjoy, that tourism funds the amenities available to them right at their doors (restaurants, wineries, the Shaw Festival, festivals, retail), and understands that there needs to be a positive relationship and not just a transactional community and tourism.

Thank you again for allowing me this space to add to the dialogue about MAT.

Minerva Ward
President & CEO
NOTL Chamber of Commerce & Tourism NOTL
Ukesters celebrate 10 years of music, ‘therapy’

Mike Balsom
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Alan Ash can hardly believe that what he and his Village neighbour Doug Widdicombe started for fun is still going strong, in fact getting stronger, 10 years later.

And his fellow members of the NOTL Ukesters celebrate their 10th anniversary last weekend with a special gathering at the St. Catharines Club on Ontario Street. It was a visit Ash paid to the Corktown Ukulele Jam in 2012 that gave him the positive, upbeat, and just happy to be able to get together to play and are also happy to accompany myself on an instrument”, Geddie explains. “I felt the ukulele was doable.”

Geddie credits Ash for making each session fun and easy for everyone to join in. Saturday was only his second chance to participate in person, and he admits he misses the novelty of the online sessions a bit. “It was kind of fun to see these people from all over Ontario, the U.S., even the east coast,” Geddie says. “They’re gone now, but on the other hand, the local community is gathering COVID because we were on Zoom. We have even a member from Australia.”

Ash says the instrument has had a bit of a renaissance since a video of Hawaii’s Fred Kamakawałokoke playing ‘Someplace Over the Rainbow’ went viral a few years ago. “The ukulele is a pretty easy instrument to learn, in relation to guitar, a piano or other instruments”, Ash says. “There’s only four strings. You can learn four chords and with those you can play hundreds of songs.”

The Ukesters range in age from 25 to 86 years old, the oldest member corresponding the border from New York state (when that border has been open) since 2018 to join in on the regular Sunday sessions held at the NOTL Community Centre. “I would say about 80 per cent of them joined not having ever played an instrument before”, Ash guesses. They’re retired, many of them, just looking for something to do. Some will take group or private lessons along the way. For many it’s a form of therapy.”

Ash, the group’s de facto leader, refers to the Ukesters as a family. People get along, there’s no toxicity between the members. He says everyone is positive, upbeat, and just happy to be able to get together to play. “We gathered high of the value of their gatherings, especially during COVID. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

PUBLIC NOTICE
INSTALLATION OF AN ALL-WAY STOP AT THE INTERSECTION OF MCNAB ROAD AND CHURCH ROAD

NOTICE is hereby given that the Council of the Corporation of the Town Niagara-on-the-Lake has amended By-Law 4308-09 to establish an all-way stop at the intersection of McNab Road and Church Road.

Currently, only McNab Road traffic is required to stop. Based on the amended By-Law, now drivers on Church Road are required to stop as well.

Drivers are urged to use extra caution at this intersection as traffic on Church Road adjusts to the new stop signs.

New stop signs will be erected on July 20, 2022, and enforcement of the all-way stop will commence immediately upon installation.

Those with questions are encouraged to contact Mike Komljenovic, Engineering Supervisor for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake by emailing mike.komljenovic@notl.com or calling (905) 468-3266.

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Ukesters gather high of the value of their gatherings, especially during COVID. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

Colin Heydon sings one of his favourites, a John Lennon song.

Colin Heydon and Alan Ash play a number together.
Barnyard animal tours close to home

Barnyard animal tours are open at 68 Niagara Street daily from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m. except for Wednesdays. No reservations required. The Lakeit family requests a contribution of $15 per person. Rabbits, chickens, a cow, turkeys, pigeons, quail, pigs, goats, sheep, alpacas, a retired race horse and more can all be found on the 15-acre property. (Mike Balsom)
Garden tour may have been ‘best yet’

Sheila Hirsch-Kalm, an honorary life-time member of the horticultural society, is best-known in town for the indomitable spirit and enthusiasm she has shown since the first Daffodil Garden of Hope was planted in Simcoe Park in 2005, now numbering nine across town, the most recent one in St. Davids.

The daffodils were intended as a symbol of hope when they bloom in the spring, as they still are, for all those affected by cancer, and as a reminder of the importance of cancer awareness.

Greeting garden tour visitors to her back garden Saturday afternoon, Hirsch-Kalm, who has relied on a walker for years due to a complication with cancer, was in a wheelchair, due to the progression of the disease. But that doesn’t dampen her enthusiasm. Her walker isn’t far away, and she can still get around on it, although her first-in-Canada, ultra-sophisticated titanium wheelchair makes mobility easier for her. She still drives, she is proud to say, having passed her third driving test since she turned 80 — she is now 86 — and has a special ‘robotic arm’ device attached to the back of her car that brings the battery-operated chair around to her when she goes out of the car, and replaces it in the back when she gets in to drive.

“If we lose our ability to drive, there is no way to get around this town,” she says. “That is worrying for a lot of people who are afraid of losing their mobility.”

Hirsch-Kalm has represented the town on a regional accessibility committee, but is disappointed in the lack of action over the years, she says. However, as she learns to live with her mobility limitations, she is also learning to garden with them.

Much of the large acreage around the York Road home where she and her husband Michael live is graced with a multitude of plants of all sizes and varieties. Sheila says she is concentrating on “transitioning” to container gardening to reduce maintenance and make it easier for her to care for them herself. She is able to keep her plants healthy, weed- and bug-free, she says, in the containers she has filled with a wide variety of plants, looking for interesting colours and textures. Against the house is a large worktable for her, where she can fill the containers to be placed around the garden.

“I can sit in my chair, hose in one hand and a glass of wine in the other, and water them,” she says, her arm sweeping across a wide expanse of a selection of plants in containers. “If I can transition, I can teach other people to as well. I hope I can help others to keep going as long as I have.”

She suggests people who are caring for elderly family members might consider doing the same, to give them the opportunity to continue gardening.

“Days like Saturday, when people come to see her and her garden, are her greatest pleasure,” she says.

She loves to chat, always has interesting stories to tell, and it’s not only the horticultural society tour that delivers people to her garden. She was expecting another group from Toronto on Sunday, and two more this coming weekend. The Toronto branch of the Rhododendron Association never misses an opportunity to visit.

Continued on page 11
Number of gardens a plus for tour participants

“I really enjoy those visits — it’s what keeps me going, keeps me in touch with people and with life.”

Cindy Grant, the organizer of this year’s garden tour, explains the format was a little different, allowing for more gardens than usual. This year, the host society asked residents to submit their gardens to be part of the tour, which was offered at no cost. That resulted in 25 gardens on the map, most in the Old Town, but Hirsch-Kalm’s was one of three on the tour in St. Davids.

Although hers has been on previous tours, the home of Wendy and Paul Kent on Queenston Road was a first. Paul says a few years ago he fulfilled one of the items on his bucket list, to have English gardens planted around the large property, and having achieved that, he was happy to open them up to the public.

Tour participants were asked to pick up bracelets and maps at the community centre before heading out to the gardens, and Grant says there were more than 700 people on the tour, a little less than previous years but still a great day.

“We keep hearing from people who are telling us ‘it’s the best tour ever,’ ” she says. “They really liked the format, and the variety of gardens.”

One local participant spoke of it as “a gift” and a “sheer delight” to wander from one garden to another “never knowing what to expect, other than something beautiful,” with gardens both designed and maintained by the owner and those professionally done.

Although there was no cost for the tour, there were donation jars at each garden, “and there was a significant amount of donations,” says Grant.

The organizers are grateful to those who shared their gardens, says Grant, and although the format was only intended to be for this year, “we’ll have to talk about it and decide what we want to do next year.”

Continued from page 10

There was a wide variety of plants and garden designs in several Old Town gardens on this year’s tour. (Karen Skeoch)

This sweet little table at a Johnson Street garden, shaded by greenery, was a favourite for many participants. (Karen Skeoch)
Diamond Estates will continue to sell the Shiny Apple Cider brand at the Irvine Road retail outlet that was formerly Small Talk. A team-building group did some clean-up at the store last week. (Photos supplied)

**Shiny Apple Cidery continues Hunse legacy**

Penny Coles
The Local

With some work to freshen up the Irvine Road retail store, the Shiny Apple Cidery has emerged to continue the Hunse legacy following the sale of the Small Talk Winery property.

Diamond Estates Wines & Spirits made the deal to take over Hank Hunse’s Shiny Apple brand last August, spearheading Diamond’s entry into the craft cider market, selling the cider through liquor stores and restaurants, which was produced by Hank Hunse on Irvine Road.

Hunse has recently sold the property, including the vineyards and all the buildings, to Rob Enns, a neighbouring farmer and one of the original Twenty Bees grape growers. Enns is now partnering with Diamond to allow it to continue producing the cider on-site, and selling it at the retail store, which will sell VQA wines alongside the popular cider, explains Diamond COO Andrew Howard.

The retail outlet will feature Fresh Wines, crafted by Lakeview from 100 per cent Ontario grapes, and available in several popular varieties. It is “the first new wine being introduced,” says Howard, and “it’s kind of cool” that it will be sold alongside the Shiny Apple brand.

The cider too comes in several varieties, all made from a base of apples, with other fruits, including peach and pineapple, added.

Howard says Enns has continued with Lakeview Estates since it took over 20 Bees. The opportunity to partner with him on the retail of the cider came about eight weeks ago. “It all happened very quickly,” he says. “It was great fortune” Enns wanted to continue to be involved. “We have a great relationship with Rob, and he wanted to continue the partnership.”

“A bunch of the Small Talk staff have stayed on in retail,” Howard adds, “and the growler program continues.”

When word got out the property was sold, there was some concern the popular growler club at Small Talk, which allowed people to fill and refill their favourite cider from the tap, would come to an end, but it hasn’t, Howard reassures those who love their Shiny Apple, and the club has continued through the period of the changeover.

Last week saw Diamond staff at a “team-building” event, with Howard himself at the the store, “hustling to put some added touches on the legacy of the Hunse family. There is so much history of the family, and the family farm,” he says, which over the years has included strawberries, tender fruit, a VQA winery, the original Stonechurch Winery, rebranded into Small Talk, and becoming Shiny Apple Cidery July 1.

“Hank has been amazing throughout the process,” says Howard, and we hope to do more work with him in the future. “We’re excited to continue the legacy of the Hunse family.”
Music, wine and beer will be back all four evenings

Pony rides for kids will be back this year.

Rides, games and great food will return

Pony rides for kids will be back again next week.

The popular pies will be back again next week.

Music, wine and beer will be back all four evenings.

Pony rides for kids will be back this year. Townsend has promised rides for kids and young teens.

Continued from page 1

The Local

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Continued from page 1

The Local

Music, wine and beer will be back all four evenings.

Pony rides for kids will be back this year. Townsend has promised rides for kids and young teens.
Collective offers opportunity to learn about visual arts community

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Arts Collective organized a second annual scavenger hunt recently, to raise the profile of local artists and art galleries in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The collective consists of a group of professional artists, curators and galleries located in Niagara. Six galleries were curators and galleries located in Niagara-on-the-Lake. local artists and art galleries in recent years, to raise the profile of several hundred artists. Participants in the recent scavenger hunt were given to of several hundred artists.

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre puts together art kits to deliver to seniors. (Photos by Maria Klassen)

The basement houses a library and archives of more than 4,000 books, maps, personal correspondence, and individual files of the Form. The main floor display, Labour of Love, shows the work of Danny Custodio. Pieces from the private collection are scattered throughout the gallery. The basement houses a library and archives of more than 4,000 books, maps, personal correspondence, and individual files of several hundred artists.

The basement houses a library and archives of more than 4,000 books, maps, personal correspondence, and individual files of several hundred artists.

Inuit sculptures are on display at Upper Canada Native Art.
Napoleon’s army takes over Fort George

A Napoleonic re-enactment was held at Fort George this weekend, with French and British uniforms filling the fort, and lots of demonstrations and battles, muskets and majesty. (Photos by Mike Balsom and Tony Chisholm)
Vintage gardens win prestigious design award

Vintage Hotels and landscape architects Seferian Design Group have received a prestigious 2022 DNA Paris Design Award for the landscape of The Gardens at Pillar and Post.

The DNA Paris Design Awards celebrate fresh and creative designs from all around the world in architecture, interior design, landscapes, products, and graphic design.

“We are honored for The Gardens at Pillar and Post to be recognized on an international scale for landscape design,” says Paul MacIntyre, vice-president of operations with Lais Hotels Properties. “Seferian Design Group took our vision of a garden space like that of Claude Monet’s in Giverny, France and not only achieved that but carved out something unique to the landscape of Ontario and to Niagara-on-the-Lake. We are proud to be able to welcome our guests and the local community to enjoy this beautiful greenspace year-round,” a Vintage Hotels news release says.

The John Street gardens opened to the public in the summer of 2020, “bringing the worlds of Giverny, France and NOTL together across six acres of greenspace,” a Vintage Hotels news release says.

The design of the gardens includes “a replica of Monet’s classic lily pond, its iconic Japanese green bridge and a stunning main promenade lined with the classic Monet rose archways,” and features a number of event spaces, including three wedding ceremony sites, the rustic Barn reception venue, the OutPost café, and, in winter, a skating rink.

The gardens are open to the public daily, starting at 9 a.m. The OutPost is open Sunday to Thursday from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Friday to Saturday from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The Notllocal.com

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Local Staff

Vintage Hotels is a winner in the Paris Design Awards in the landscape category for its beautiful John Street gardens. (Photo supplied)

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Music Niagara pays tribute to Christopher Newton

Mike Balsom
The Local

The Music Niagara Festival will pay tribute to the late Christopher Newton, the long-time Shaw Festival artistic director, who died at 85 years of age last December, with a performance of Ennio Arden this Sunday, July 17.

Newton, himself once recited the 1864 narrative poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson, accompanied by Canadian pianist Robert Silverman, for Music Niagara. Festival founder and artistic director Atis Bankas asked current Shaw artistic director Tim Carroll to honour his late predecessor with this weekend’s performance, and he loved the idea.

Carroll, of course, holds Newton, who led Shaw from 1980 until 2002, in high regard.

“When he arrived it was a time when theatres in Canada were going out of business,” Carroll explains. “It was a difficult time for the arts. The Shaw Festival was really in the doldrums, there was even talk of winding it up. To go from there to leaving with the Shaw established as one of the greatest theatre companies of North America, it was a remarkable achievement.”

“[He] wanted to get this right,” Carroll stresses to The Local. “I’m not really a performer myself, though I have done a lot of work with music in my life, a lot of operas, and work with orchestras, interspersing text with music. I did the narration for Peter and the Wolf for the Symphony on the Bay just before COVID.”

Carroll will have his first rehearsals this week with pianist Victoria Kogan, who will be playing the accompanying score written in 1897 by Richard Strauss and published as his Opus 38. He says his ability to read music will be a benefit in his preparation for the Sunday performance.

“Ennio Arden is the story of a fisherman turned merchant sailor who leaves his wife Annie and three children to go to sea with his old captain. During his journey, Arden is shipwrecked on a deserted island with two companies, both of whom eventually die. Arden remains lost and missing for more than 10 years.

When he is finally able to return after his long absence, he discovers his wife, who believed him dead, is married happily to Arden’s childhood friend Philip, and has a child by him. Heartbroken by this discovery, Ennio never reveals to his wife and children that he is still alive, as he loves her too much to spoil her new happiness. It’s a story and theme that has found its way into theatre, film and television many times over the years.”

“Pieces like ‘1862 French film’ The Return of Martin Guerre come from the same question of what you would do if your husband went missing,” Carroll says. “At what point would you get on with your life? It’s almost sci-fi in a way, in the same way that [playwright] J.B. Priestley’s works play with almost impossible time bends that show something about the real nature of life.”

The Strauss score adds to the melodrama of the poem. The sparse nature of the music means that the onus will be on the speaker, Carroll in this instance, rather than pianist Kogan, to drive the story forward. Opus 38 was never intended to be a stand-alone piece of music but instead a dramatic presentation with musical accompaniment.

Carroll says he admires Music Niagara’s Bankas for his creativity and willingness to take risks with his programming.

“I’m a little bit of a fanboy around musicians,” Carroll says, “because I’m a very bad musician myself. Music has always played a big part of my life. It’s always a treat for me to get to know a piece and to work with musicians. And Atis is a wonderful man, full of ideas.”

Carroll dabbles at guitar himself, laughing that he plays like a middle-aged man.

“I’m really very good for an amateur,” he adds. “The gulf between that and a professional is vast and unbridgeable. Every now and then when I have some time and need to switch my brain off I can learn a new piece. I enjoy all that. But there’s no hiding the fact that the gap between me and a professional player is only getting bigger.”

Sunday’s event is at St. Mark’s Anglican Church, where Carroll remembers Shaw doing a reading of A Christmas Carol in 2017, his first season at Shaw.

“It’s a lovely space,” says Carroll. “I remember thinking what a nice acoustic it has, especially for music. A church is always better for music than speaking, but I’m sure we’ll solve that issue.”

Sunday’s program begins at 7 p.m. with veteran Shaw actor Guy Bannerman performing as George Bernard Shaw. In keeping with the evening’s centerpiece, Bannerman will be reading from Shaw’s critiques of Strauss’ work.

Prior to the First World War, the two became close friends, often meeting together during the German composer’s visits to London. The playwright often wrote of his admiration for Strauss’ music and his importance in European culture.

Bannerman’s segment will be followed by a performance by the Camer-Atis Ensemble, Bankas’ chamber group, before turning the rest of the evening over to Carroll and Kogan. Tickets are $40 and available at musicniagara.org.
The book table was a popular place at the Cherry Festival, with lots of people browsing in the shade of some of the large, mature trees on the grounds of St. Mark’s. (Karen Skeoch)

Saturday’s St. Mark’s Cherry Festival was an overwhelming success, says organizer Andrea Douglas, with large crowds and perfect summer weather. There is always a lineup of people for the 9 a.m. opening, “but this year the line stretched all the way down Byron Street and around the corner at Wellington Street. That is a first!” Visitors said they were excited to have the festival return, and that they’ve missed the summer tradition. “They were delighted to be back at St. Mark’s. Their smiles said it all!” Douglas says attendance was about the same as 2019. The barbecue was busy all day and almost sold out. And with half the usual number of cherry pies available, they were gone within an hour.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita, after finishing her volunteer shift, enjoys lunch and a chat with friend Jackie Bonic.

Stephen Bedford, Peter Nixon, Gary Zalepa, Benjamin Zalepa, David Roberts, and Bill Mockler barbecue up a storm at the St. Mark’s Cherry Festival. Hidden in the back is David Hennessy.

The Fort George Fife and Drummers, led by Peter Alexander (right) entertain at St. Mark’s. Alexander encouraged young people to come out and join the completely free, federally funded group of musicians, to make sure they are able to keep going.

Judy MacLachlan and Gil Bryan sell cherries at St. Mark’s Cherry Festival — one of the most popular tables at the event. (Photos by Penny Coles)

Sarah Chan-Xie, 4, was having fun colouring in a nice and shady spot at the children’s activity centre.

The book table was a popular place at the Cherry Festival, with lots of people browsing in the shade of some of the large, mature trees on the grounds of St. Mark’s. (Karen Skeoch)
Tiny museum begins busy summer of events, festivals

By Foot and Paddle: NOTL Museum’s next lecture

Travis Hill presents Indigenous perspectives of Niagara

Barbara Worthy
Special to The Local

Travis Hill, citizen of the Tuscarora Nation, member of the Beaver Clan of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and a Fort Erie resident, will present next Thursday’s lecture at the NOTL Museum on Niagara river. Hill has given presentations on Indigenous culture and interpretation throughout Ontario and the United States.

Travis Hill will talk about the importance of the Niagara River to Indigenous people during the NOTL Museum’s next lecture. (Photo supplied)

A family visiting the Cherry Festival from out of town had a look at the People of Niagara exhibit inside the tiny museum, learning about the early settlers of the area. Janet Guy and Barbara Worthy with Louie are on hand to look after the museum as it visits St. Mark’s.

The intention of the mobile structure, which can be towed behind a pick-up truck, was also for the NOTL Museum staff to take exhibits and programs to local schools, as well as to town events and festivals, where they would be set up with displays that include changing elements of the museum’s collection.

The tiny museum has made its debut in the community, and has a busy schedule of events and festivals ahead.

Travis Hill presents Indigenous perspectives of Niagara

Travis Hill, citizen of the Tuscarora Nation, member of the Beaver Clan of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and a Fort Erie resident, will present next Thursday’s lecture at the NOTL Museum on Niagara river. Hill has given presentations on Indigenous culture and interpretation throughout Ontario and the United States.

Travis Hill will talk about the importance of the Niagara River to Indigenous people during the NOTL Museum’s next lecture. (Photo supplied)
Jazz Festival kicks off in NOTL

The TD Niagara Jazz Festival is presenting six events at six different locations over five days, starting Wednesday, July 20. It’s an ambitious program, but that’s no surprise, coming as it does from executive director and co-founder Juliet Dunn.

“We’re so excited to launch the festival,” Dunn tells The Local. “Before the pandemic, we did it over two weekends. This time, we’re starting on the Wednesday and going straight through for five days.”

Niagara-on-the-Lake plays host to the first three performances, kicking off with Dizzy and Fay for a Late Night in the Vineyard at Stratus. Then the venue shifts to Hare Wine Co. for Soul Jazz in the Vineyard Thursday, July 21, featuring Jillian Mendes and Natural Elements, and Friday with drummer Terry Clarke (formerly of the Fifth Dimension, Rob McConnell and The Boss Brass and Oscar Peterson’s band), bassist Clark Johnston and St. Catharines-born pianist John Johnston.

Brass and Oscar Peterson’s band, the Fifth Dimension, Rob McConnell and The Boss Brass and Oscar Peterson’s band, will be featured at Hare Wine Co. Friday, July 22.

“Amanda and I thought about how we could pull the listener in,” the son of a classically trained clarinetist and saxophonist player adds. “We decided it would be the opposite of screaming at them. Every musician will tell you, when they’re playing at a party and no one seems to be listening, they’ll start playing very, very quietly. When people hear their own voices, they get self-conscious and turn their attention to the music.”

Referring to his partner as her alter ego, Lalama says Fay can get totally lost in the song. “That’s what impressed me when I first heard her sing,” he adds. “She gets totally immersed in the song, and it seems completely effortless.”

Lalama is looking forward to the intimate outdoor setting at Stratus.

“Once the music starts, I have to have a relationship with the music under my fingers,” says the York University graduate. “The setting and atmosphere serve to enhance that. I love to get totally lost in the moment, and the setting can bring me to that point more quickly.”

Following the three NOTL dates, the TD Niagara Jazz Festival moves to St. Catharines for the weekend. The historic Brown Homestead is the location for a Saturday afternoon Jazz Pic Nic with singer Tia Brazda. Her 2015 album Bandsball debuted at number one on the iTunes Jazz Chart and was also ranked among the five best Canadian jazz releases of 2015 by Jazz FM 91 in Toronto.

Later Saturday the festival moves down the road to Henry of Pelham Family Estate for Sax in the Vineyard featuring the Lance Anderson Band.

The festival wraps up with a free World Music on the Beach show, starting at Club LaSalle on Arthur Street, then moving down the road to Sunset Beach.
Zubin Gatta hoping to wrestle his way to gold

Local teen will compete in Canada Summer Games

Mike Balsom
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Zubin Gatta will be representing Team Ontario in the wrestling competition at next month’s Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games.

The 16-year-old Eden High School student qualified for the 52 kg category by winning two tournaments this spring. His victory over Burhan Ahmad of Matmen Wrestling Club and Evan Liu from TecCity Wrestling punched his ticket to the games.

After winning the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA) 38 kg gold medal in 2020, also over Ahmad, the member of the Brock Junior Badgers Club at the time set his sights on this summer’s competition.

“My Dad (Kekoo) told me about the Summer Games about two years ago,” Gatta says. “It became my goal to make the team.

“It became a no-mess-around kind of guy, he works his butt off. His whole family has a great work ethic. There are high expectations for Zubin to give a full effort, and he does. He’s a great young kid and a really good athlete.”

“It’s such an amazing team, with amazing coaches,” says the youngest Gatta says. “He’s a really tough coach with the kids that he knows can be good.”

Zubin adds. “He’ll invest hours and hours with anybody who is willing to put the hours in to get better.”

Calder says despite the pandemic keeping kids like Zubin off the mat for two years, he’s seen the young wrestler working hard to continue growing in the sport. And he has grown much — Zubin was seven inches shorter and 14 kg lighter when he won that OFSAA gold in 2020.

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Local HAPPENINGS

HALL RENTAL AVAILABLE
Continued on page 24

Preparations underway on NOTL tennis courts

Work started Monday to prepare the Memorial Park tennis courts for the upcoming Canada Summer Games. Club president Hugh Dow says the club will be off the courts until next Monday, barring any unforeseen problem with heavy rains.

A spokesperson from Court Contractors said the black acrylic base layer was put down yesterday. Today they were planning to lay down the first coat of the top surface, with the courts painted blue and the perimeter painted green. (Mike Balsom)

Like the other wrestlers on the Brock squad, Gatta is thrilled with the new facility.

“We moved in two weeks ago,” Gatta says. “Our old one had only two mats, and it was actually a dance and fencing room. The new space has five UWW (United World Wrestling) mats, the same ones we’ll use at the Summer Games. It’s really spacious, you don’t have to worry about being bumped into.”

The home mat advantage might pay off in...
FORBES, ROBERT (BOB) RAOUl—passed away peacefully at the age of 67 on Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at Hospice Niagara. Beloved husband to Elly. Predeceased by his parents Jack and Joan Forbes. Dear brother to Rick (Ellen), Bruce (Kim), Brian (Corinne), Barbara (Darrell) Smart and the late Gary (1970) and Jim (2012). Brother-in-law to Werner (Nancy), Willy (Denise) and Harry (Lil). Dear Uncle and Great Uncle to many nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends at Niagara United Mennonite Church, 1775 Niagara Stone Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake on Wednesday, July 13, 2022, from 6 to 8 pm for visitation. Funeral Service will take place on Thursday, July 14, 2022, at 10:30 am followed by cremation. Donations made to Hospice Niagara, or the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated by the family.

Goodbyes are not forever. Goodbyes are not the end. They simply mean I’ll miss you, until we meet again, Love Elly.

Online condolences at www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from July 6, 2022

Across:
1 The Beehive State
5 PIN points?
9 Bring aboard
13 Baget
14 Enamity
15 Nonchalantly unconcerned
16 Bewitches
18 American Idol winner --- (Studded)
19 Block
20 Conjectures
22 --- Daigle, P.D. James protagonist
24 Pole
25 Biological duplicate
28 Shun
31 “A very high price to pay for maturity” (Tom Stoppard)
34 Acquire through merit
35 Bank link
36 Stan
37 Tote
38 Speaking point?
39 Little devil
40 Pitcher’s stat.
41 Requested in exchange for a kingdom (Shakespeare)
42 Locale of the Viminal Hill
43 Prohibition
44 Colombian cash
45 Artificial waterfall
46 Matinee favorite
48 “Chop-chop!”
50 Magic
54 Pickle
56 Chemically inactive
59 Obsolete
61 Rocky debris at the base of a hill
62 Fail to mention
63 Bean capital of S America?
64 Decline to bid
65 Charts
66 Everyone, down South

Down:
1 Employ
2 Hue
3 Heavy ordinance, briefly
4 Author --- (Hesse)
5 Sleeping problem
6 Careful attention
7 Encounter
8 Ois, for example
9 Insulting remarks
10 Crookedly obtain Thai dwelling
11 Now it makes sensed
12 Pigs’ digs?
13 Diversity
14 Trusted assistant
15 Homeland learner
16 Imelda --- (D. James)
17 ---, who had a shoe surfeit
18 Tiled target
19 Spanish saint martyred in boiling pitch
20 Amazons
21 Synthetic meat can be created in this
22 The Pearl of the Black Sea
23 Third letter of the Greek alphabet
24 Eject
25 Gazed upon
26 The door in Dorodoge, or in Texas
27 With celerity
28 Found behind the shin
29 Wher, in T
30 Ablodid target
31 Eatted in this
32 A horse
33 Top the 3:10 went
34 Mother of Uranus
35 \n36 Small tuft
37 Inert
38 Aide
39 La Porte
40 Tabloid target
41 Y'all.
42 Eject
43 Stymie
44 Engravings
45 Found behind the shin
46 Ventures
47 Letters
48 Inert
49 Small tuff
50 Machu Picchu builder
51 Chamber
52 Where the t:10 went
53 Mother of Uranus
54 Web code
55 Eatted in this
56 Small dabbling duck
57 Apex
58 clothes
59 Out of date
60 Omit
61 Scree
62 Omit
63 Lima
64 Pass
65 Maps
66 Y'all.
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other ways, too, as Calder will be helping to run the wrestling competition on Aug. 9 and 10. “I’m not one of his Team Ontario coaches,” Calder says, “but I’ll be able to give him some feedback between matches. And Heather Sweezy, Zubin’s coach on the Brock team, will be there coaching the women. It will be good for him to adjust to new coaches, good for his independence.”

Thus far in Gatta’s career that OFSAA medal has stood out as his crowning achievement. Heading into Grade 12 at Eden next year he hopes to have a chance to capture another OFSAA gold. Taking the Canada Summer Games title next month would be another major step in his development as a wrestler. In September, 2023, Zubin hopes to attend Brock University to study business and continue his association with a strong program that dominated on the mats this past year. The Badgers’ women’s team captured its seventh consecutive Ontario University (OUA) championship in April, while the men’s team secured its sixth.

Looking further ahead, Zubin dreams of making the national team in time for the 2028 Summer Olympics scheduled to be held in Los Angeles. In the meantime, Gatta will continue to hit the weights in his Old Town home, and start a strict diet about two weeks before the Summer Games.

“One week out it’s serious weight-cutting,” he says. “My sister knows how to cut weight. I will waterload the week before, then slowly cut it out the last day or two. She helps me a lot with that.”

Gatta says he hasn’t yet received his Team Ontario uniform, but expects that will happen in the last week of July.

“The whole team is heading to Atlantic City for a tournament,” he says. “I think they want the whole team to be together when we get it.”

Zubin Gatta shows off his medals, and hopes he is not done yet. (Mike Balsom)

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Gatta has hopes for many more competitions