Families protest St. Davids pool closure

Penny Coles  
The Local  

After a long hot spell and a taste of the reality of summer without a place for families to gather and kids to cool off, St. Davids residents are protesting the Town’s decision not to open their community pool.

Most of the kids have taken lessons at the pool, many joined the swim team, and families made use of the open and lane swims. Several said they were hoping for increased swim times at the pool this summer. The summer has been so hot, other communities are keeping their pools open longer hours so residents can cool off, and instead, they’re looking at an empty pool.

“All we need is some water,” says Adriana Vizzari. “We’re hoping they’ll try to open the pool and see what happens,” she says. “We’ve already asked for the pool to stay open. We’ve raised community support and we’ve raised money. We’ve already fought this fight. I don’t know why we have to do it again.”

Once the Province cleared the way for pool openings, the Town announced it would be operating the Memorial Park pool and the Virgil splash pad. The decision to leave the St. Davids Pool closed this summer was made by the Town’s emergency control group, based on cost.

Interim operations director Kevin Turcotte says the Old Town pool “has been consistent, year after year, and is more reliable than the St. Davids facility, which is expected to be replaced for the 2021 summer.” He says he can’t be sure how the pool in the St. Davids Lions park has overwintered until the filtration system is turned on, and the pool is filled with water, and by that point, a lot of money will have been wasted if it can’t be opened without expensive repairs.

If it weren’t for costs relating to the pandemic, “I would open it and deal with mechanical problems, if there are any,” but Vizzari says once the Province announced municipalities could open their pools, there was no reason to keep St. Davids closed. “Pools were allowed once we were in phase 2. We’re not asking for anything that isn’t safe.”

The plan all along was to open the aging pool for one last season, she says, and that shouldn’t have changed.

“Old Town has Memorial Park. Virgil has the splash pad. St. Davids is once again overlooked for any family recreation,” said Vizzari.

During such “incredibly hot days” in past summers, the pool would have been full, she says. Vizzari points to a recent statement of the Life Saving Society, which has called on municipalities to open their pools.

Continued on page 3
Councillors debate making face coverings mandatory

Penny Coles
The Local

A special council meeting has been called for Thursday to discuss making face coverings mandatory in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said councilors Monday would have preferred regional council to make that decision, but at a special council meeting called for that reason, the decision was deferred.

She was quite disappointed when regional council chose not to deal with it on Wednesday. I would have actually preferred a yes or a no, rather than a deferral," she said.

Disero has been an outspoken supporter of face coverings, and says she has been receiving emails from residents and store owners saying "they feel very uncomfortable and are afraid."

Store owners tell her they can’t make it mandatory without the support of legislation, she said.

She called for the special meeting for the purpose of approving a draft bylaw with respect to face coverings in indoor spaces. Face shields, bandanas or scarves, and also the plexiglass in front of registers, would also be considered face coverings, she said.

She told councillors she has support from the Chamber of Commerce chair, the Virgil Business Association, the CEO of the Shaw Festival, and representatives from the wineries.

"It seems to me this is probably one of the major ways that we could assist our businesses and help Niagara-on-the-Lake move towards phase 3," she said, as well as controlling the potential for COVID to spread.

On Monday, some areas of Ontario were given the green light for moving into phase 3 of recovery, with more business reopenings, but Niagara was not included.

"If this was something where people decided they were not going to protect themselves, and the masks were being worn to protect themselves, maybe we could think differently, but if we don’t put it in a bylaw, this allows people to affect others, and that’s the most concerning," said Disero.

"We need to protect the health and safety of everyone. The decision not to wear a face covering for five, 10, 15 minutes when you go into a store doesn’t affect the person making the decision, it affects others."

A draft bylaw will be available for councillors and the public to see by Wednesday. The time of Thursday’s meeting had not been announced at press time.

Penny Coles
The Local

Denzil Coleman is an essential worker during the pandemic, with a sideline.

A truck driver who makes regular trips from Niagara into the U.S., he understands the importance of wearing a mask. He doesn’t go anywhere without one — one that he has made himself. And when he’s not on the road, he’s sewing them for others.

Coleman has an interesting story. He first left his home in Jamaica, and a career as a tailor, in 1987, to come to Niagara-on-the-Lake as part of the offshore farmworkers program. He spent three seasons here, returning home in between, before deciding to apply for a work permit that would allow him to stay.

"I had met a woman here, and I decided I wanted to stay here," he says. "The decision to stay did."

He got a job in a greenhouse in Fenhill, where he stayed until it closed, and then decided to get a licence to drive a truck, which he did, in 2001. After about 10 years driving for Challenger Motor Freight, he now works for John Deere, picking up parts in the U.S. and delivering them to Niagara.

And in the meantime he met a woman and developed a relationship that did work out, with NOTL native Amy Coleman, a Welland transit driver.

While he’s been laid off from work during the pandemic, she’s helped pick up supplies for the masks, all through Denzil gets much of what he needs in the U.S.

"I had the trade," he says, "and I can put it to good use. I get home Saturday night, and I spend Sunday sewing," he says.

He makes the masks in three sizes, for adults, youth and kids, and he’s the most concerned as he works with his kids, she adds.

"I have to find some more of that fabric," Denzil says.

"I can whip up about 50 in a day when he’s not driving, and then he delivers them to the Husky Travel Centre where he’s been for 23 years, and where he leaves his truck when he’s not on the road.

"I get home Saturday night, and I spend Sunday sewing," he says.

He and Amy make a regular Monday morning trip to drop off a week’s supply, and pick up some breakfast for “a truck picnic.”

He makes the masks in three sizes, for adults, youth and kids, and he’s been making them for years, he says.

"I always prefer a yes or a no, rather than a deferral," Amy Coleman, a Welland transit driver.

"I was quite disappointed when regional council chose not to deal with it on Wednesday. I would have actually preferred a yes or a no, rather than a deferral," she said.

Disero has been an outspoken supporter of face coverings, and says she has been receiving emails from residents and store owners saying “they feel very uncomfortable and are afraid.”

Amy Coleman, a Welland transit driver, has known Denzil for years, and looks forward to seeing the Coleman with their mask deliveries.

At $7, the face coverings have been very popular, “and everyone loves the different fabrics,” she says. A batch he made with a Harry Potter design was snatched up in no time, the adult sizes as quick- ly as the kids, she adds.

"I have to find some more of that fabric," Denzil says.

Congratulations class of 2020

Congratulations grads!

The Local, and all the proud parents and family members of 2020 high school and university graduates, are happy to congratulate you on your success and accomplishments.

This has been a difficult year for graduations, for parents, family members and students, as you develop this milestone as best you can, but certainly not how you have envisioned.

We speak for the community when we say well done, and we wish you all the best next year.

If we’ve missed anybody, email a photo, name and high school or university, to karen@notlocal.com

Mayah Cousens
A.N. Myer High School

Amber Harwood
Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa

Truck driver makes masks when he’s not on the road

Amy and Denzil Coleman make a trip to the Husky Travel Centre Monday mornings to drop off a week’s supply of masks. Tracy Pallieschi says they sell out quickly. (Penny Coles)
Sandra O’Connor expected to take vacant seat

Penny Coles
The Local

With very little discussion, councillors voted Monday to appoint Sandra O’Connor to fill the seat left vacant by Stuart McCormack.

Quick off the mark once the seat was declared vacant, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said it would be appointed Monday. "I think we should get it done," she said.

Councillors all agreed, although the appointment isn’t official until it’s ratified at Monday’s council meeting.

Clerk Peter Todd affirmed Monday that he had contacted O’Connor before the meeting to confirm she would accept the position if appointed, which she did.

Typically, Todd says, it’s the next regular meeting following the decision where the new member is sworn in, so it will likely be the August council meeting that O’Connor will be sworn into office.

There was a brief discussion amongst councillors about a by-election being more democratic, but it was quickly dismissed as being difficult to run a campaign or hold an election during a pandemic.

O’Connor was surprised to hear the news Tuesday morning. "I wasn’t expecting anything to happen until next Monday’s council meeting," she said.

Since hearing her appointment was a possibility, she’s been spending her pandemic time at home catching up on council and committee meetings, getting up to date on current issues, "and there are a lot of them," she said, including the most recent audit committee, to bring her up to speed on budget discussions.

O’Connor graduated from Brock University, where she studied physical and urban geography, and worked for a variety of organizations, including the Ministry of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Canada, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council.

In addition to running twice for NOTL town council, she also represented the Green Party in the last federal election.

She is accustomed to working with research and data, and that won’t change as a member of council, assuming the appointment goes ahead.

"I’m used to getting the facts before I make a decision," she says.

And she understands there will be difficult decisions to make. These are challenging times."
Residents’ group says no to overtourism, yes to sustainability
Chamber president agrees on sustainability, and collaboration with residents

Penny Coles
The Local

There’s a new group in town.

“The concerns and goals of Residents for Sustainable Tourism are not new, but the organization of residents to form a united voice is,” Bruce Gitelman, spokesperson for the group, says members are not against businesses or tourism. They enjoy all the amenities the town has to offer, that wouldn’t exist without tourists. Their goal is to prevent overtourism and create sustainable tourism in its place, which supports the economy while adding value to the quality of life of residents.

They have used the recent street closure of Queen Street as a symbol of what they stand against, that’s only one issue, Gitelman says, admitting it has been an effective tool for drawing attention to their goal of sustainable tourism. Street closure, he says has had a negative impact on nearby residents.

“It is tragic and sad what COVID-19 has done to the merchants of Queen Street. We can only pray that they get access to federal and provincial programs designed to help them,” says Gitelman.

“The experiment of closing Queen Street has been harmful to them. The majority of merchants we have heard from say business is down when the street is closed. The purpose of the closure, according to the chamber was to improve social distancing, and that has not happened.”

Residents for Sustainable Tourism members, says Gitelman, support traditional Queen Street closures for the Peach Festival and Santa Claus Parade, which are enjoyed by both visitors and residents. But ongoing street closures are an issue that has been polarizing to residents and businesses, with decisions of Town council aimed at trying to do the best it can by both. At Monday’s meeting, interim CAO Sheldon Randall said the recent closing of Queen Street was a success in that it allowed for physical distancing, but not for window shopping. In the surveys that were received from the two-weekend trial period, he says, “there were more positive than negative for the businesses, more negative than positive for the residents.”

This weekend, the NOTL Chamber of Commerce and the Town have worked out a different plan, to close off some of the parking spots on Queen Street to allow more room for pedestrians, while keeping the street open to traffic.

Sustainable tourism, he says, Gitelman, “is what sustains a a healthy vibrant town, not day-tripping gawkers who drive dangerously through narrow streets, some without sidewalks. Without sustainable tourism we would not have great shops, restaurants, theatre and wineries.”

While his group warns of the dangers of over-tourism, he says it’s understood this is a difficult year for businesses, but as they plan for a recovery stage, it’s a good time to look at what they want to build for the future, and that’s not an economy based on day-trippers.

“The first step, he suggests, is to allow parking on the main street while providing welcoming parking areas on the fringes of the Old Town, and offering incentives to those who are staying longer in town to park there.

The former hospital property or Fort George are possibilities, he says, allowing for access to the Shaw Festival (he’s a board member), and to the downtown core, with a shuttle to take visitors to the downtown core, similar to what happens with buses.

In his vision for the future, buses stopping for short visits and filling the streets with visitors who don’t stay long enough to support businesses would not be encouraged.

Bus tours “do not add to sustainable tourism. We’re not anti-tourism, we just want smart tourism. There are ways to nudge people to come and there are ways to nudge people not to come. Having parking at the entrance to town is going to nudge people to stay and shop and see a play,” says Gitelman.

“We don’t want to deter shoppers on Queen Street. Merchants, especially the clothing merchants, need to have parking in front of their stores. But traffic should be redirected from the Old Town and residential streets.”

This is the time, as businesses start planning their recovery, for the Town to start planning for the infrastructure that will encourage sustainable tourism. He says, “We recognize it will take many years for Niagara-on-the-Lake to return to pre-COVID normal. All we ask is that the safety and quality of life of residents who pay the vast majority of taxes, and elect town councilors, is first and foremost in the minds of elected officials as we rebuild tourism in a sustainable way that benefits both visitors and residents.”

Much of what Gitelman says echoes the message of NOTL Chamber of Commerce Eduardo Lafforgue, who began talking about sustainable tourism when he first took on the job. He was then focused on attracting tourists who will stay longer, as opposed to the bus tour visitors who stay for less than an hour, as being beneficial not only for businesses and the economy, but for the community.

His other goal from the beginning, he says, has been collaboration. “Niagara-on-the-Lake is a mature destination. If we don’t do something, after maturity comes decay. We have to create sustainability. And we need to do it together, working together to preserve the essence of what we are, going forward instead of backwards,” he says, adding, it has to be a collaboration with residents as part of the conversation.

Right now, he says, the focus is on the pandemic, “we need to think differently. We are in survival mode.” That means a time to be flexible, he says.

The survey results of the last two weekends are in the hands of town staff, he says, so he doesn’t know what the numbers will say about the street closure. He hopes they will be made public.

While at the moment the merchants are trying to survive the short-term, Lafforgue says, “I couldn’t agree more that in the medium and long-term, we will be planning for sustainability.”
Cyber-Seniors ready to teach technical skills

When Cindy Grant, the Town’s wellness committee chair, was trying to get the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library, available for seniors who were interested in increasing their knowledge of technology, by the Age-Friendly Niagara Network, Grant was recently introduced to Nancy Siciliana of Cyber-Seniors, a program that matches tech mentors with seniors looking for help.

Whether they want to learn how to order groceries from their families to help keep in touch, says Siciliana, or they don’t know how to use them.

Seniors can call to be set up with one-on-one help from mentors, who will teach them how to order groceries and manage their finances, she says, or even see their doctor during a video call.

Young mentors also offer instruction on how to use video calling and video conferencing apps for connecting with family, says Siciliana.

“It allows them to see and interact with other people. We’ve made it easier to alleviate the isolation and loneliness, with a tech mentor who will know the device the senior is using.”

For example, she says seniors with tablets can be taught to use FaceTime, an app built into the tablet which is easy to use.

There is no fee for the program, which is funded by grants and donations.

Mentors can also teach seniors how to join a Zoom meeting, which will provide access for Cyber-Seniors webinars.

“They can go on the website, choose a topic that interests them, and click on it to join it,” says Siciliana.

When Cindy Grant of the Town’s wellness committee presented her report to council, lifelong education was one of the priorities for a healthy community. She hopes Cyber-Seniors can help locals become more tech-savvy, more important than ever during the isolation of COVID-19. (Penny Coles/File photo)
Pandemic seems to be taking its toll on council

Challenging times, said Sandra O’Connor when she learned of councillors’ choice to appoint her to fill the vacan
council seat. It needs to be said that it’s not official until rati
fies the decision made Mon-
day night, and we all know how quickly things change
these days, but it’s expected she will be sworn in during the August council meeting.

It will be interesting to see if and how the dynamics change with a new voice at the
table. Or face on the com-
puter screen. O’Connor might find the job challenging in ways she
least expects.

There may not be a whole
lot of people listening to the
virtual meetings — there were 237 tuned in to Mon-
day’s meeting — but some who do follow them are be-
ginning to notice a change in
the tone of debate.

It’s been referred to in
oblique and direct ways by
councillors during recent
council meetings. What started out as
a discussion of road closures,
although it was mentioned
Monday that the last discus-
sion around road closure went
well between the two, there
still seems an increased level
tension, and even distrust.

In some cases, the regular
dates of council are being
turned to other subjects.

As an aside, and to be clear,
Mr. Wiens did have some
views about the Chamber, but he says what he
thinks. Nothing veiled about
it. He may have been mis-
interpreted about some of the
money that has been paid to
the chamber — at press time
there was still some ambiguity
and confusion of opinion on
that — but his point, during
discussion of a road closure,
was that the chamber should take more of a leadership role in deci-
ning and planning on business-related matters.

He’s right, but the rela-
tionship between the cham-
ber and the Town is nothing new. They have not always
been on the same side of busi-
ness-related discussions,
but they have been civil, and
although it was mentioned
Monday that the last discus-
sion about road closure went
well between the two, there
still seems an increased level
tension, and even distrust.

These are strange times.
Heighthened feelings. For
councillors and the lord may-
or, there are pressures of im-
portant decisions requiring
immediate attention, deci-
sions that could have serious
repercussions. In some cases,
life or death repercussions.

These are times that those
running for council in 2018
could never have anticipated. They would not have expected
to face issues that can have
such an impact on the health
and safety of residents, or
the success or failure of their
businesses.

In some cases, the regular
dates of council are being
used for other purposes.

Since the writer outlined
what she is the facts or need to build a new hospital,
I’ll start with the facts as I know them.

The COVID-19 pandemic is under control with two
ber of cases declining in all
the Niagara Region, Ontario and Canada.

As citizens, we have done a great job of flattening
the curve and there is no
evid
cence that we will have a sec-
ond wave provided we keep
rough housing and pushing
my way. I moved back.

Then the boys amused
themselves by picking up
my way. I moved back.

The St. Davids pool has
been swimming and taking lessons there since
I was three years old. I
didn’t want it to be open all at this season.

When I heard that the Ni-
agara-on-the-Lake pool was
reopening but the St. Davids
pool was not, I was very con-
fused. Why the NOTL pool
and not the St. Davids pool?
I was part of 4 Kids 4 Red
Roof Retreat in 2017. We
swam across Lake Erie to
raise money for this worth-
while cause. The St. Davids
pool was so accessible (I
can ride my bike from my house
to the pool) when I was training for that swim.

Next year the pool is
closed I don’t have an easy
way to keep up with my training.

The pool is closed I don’t have
an easy way to keep up with
my training. My parents can’t
take me to NOTL but it’s hard as they
work and there are so few
places available to Lake
SWIMs at the NOTL pool.

The St. Davids pool is
an amazing place to be
during the summer.

When I heard that the Ni-
agara-on-the-Lake pool was
reopening but the St. Davids
pool was not, I was very con-
fused. Why the NOTL pool
and not the St. Davids pool?
I was part of 4 Kids 4 Red
Roof Retreat in 2017. We
swam across Lake Erie to
raise money for this worth-
while cause. The St. Davids
pool was so accessible (I
can ride my bike from my house
to the pool) when I was training for that swim. I

While cause. The St. Davids
pool was so accessible (I
can ride my bike from my house
to the pool) when I was training for that swim.
Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Hickory Avenue residents need permanent solution now

Thanks you to Bill Klahn for your time and efforts taken in your excellent presentation to Town Council on Monday, July 6, regarding the seven years of an unresolved serious dust issue affecting our residents. Your history, facts, logistics, solutions were well presented.

It is our feeling that the personal impact on the taxpayers/homeowners directly affected by this ongoing, seven-year issue with repeated efforts to correct, but with no resolution in sight by the town or responsible party. We wish to address in more detail the personal impact on the taxpayers/homeowners directly affected by this ongoing issue.

1. There is an increasing volume of traffic from outside, meaning other than residential traffic, in and out of the laneway by delivery and service type vehicles as well as many residents’ visitors, most driving at excessive speeds for a narrow lane, creating more dust. The laneway was regraded this spring, which has made the situation even worse.

2. Our living space is mainly on the second floor, facing the laneway. The decks are just 20 feet away from our fence and the laneway which abuts. Because of the six-foot fence, visitors are not usually aware of the lane, and are shocked when an unseen vehicle hails through, leaving a 12 to 15-foot billowing cloud called applied, or a more theoretical, and falling onto our
cut. This is true in their core
required courses, including math, english, science, French and geography. Commonly
subjects such as business, drama, music and visual arts are taught in open, unstreamed classrooms.

Ostensibly, the provincial government is making the change to combat racism.

In a statement on Monday, July 6, Lecce said, “students, families and staff deserve an education system that is safe, inclusive, accountable, and transparent, and one that by design is set up to fully and equally
provide all students with the chance to achieve their potential.”

Nicola West M.P.P. Sam Oosterhoff, the Parliamenta-
yor Assisting to the Minister of Education, called in a YouTV interview on July 8 that “change has been in a very diverse and discrimi-
ination in ways for, example
to stream lower income and economically
stems, and to minimize the volume of traffic from outside.

But questions continued.

Would we get back into the schools before June? Would students be failed if they didn’t do well? Will universities and colleges take Grade 12 marks seriously?

Those questions were finally answered in May 19, when the Ministry of Education an-
nounced schools would remain closed until June. But what most wasn’t heard, but at least it was finally something we could plan around.

Instead of announcing changes to the Grade 9 math curriculum, would it not have made more sense for the Min-
istry of Education to use all of its resources to develop a solution for getting Ontario’s stu-
dents back into the classroom?

All we have heard is that it will be one of three options the Province announced in June:

• A full resumption of regu-
lar in-class instruction, with strict public health measures.

• A mixed model of students
attending class on alternat-
ing days or weeks, “cohort-
ed” into groups of no more than 15, with online learn-
ing during the days they’re not in class.

• Online-only learning with instruction by teachers if the risk of contracting COVID-19 is deemed to be too great.

As about the decision some time in August, now we add new questions to the mix with de-streaming.

What is the timeline for de-streaming the rest of Grade 9? Will streaming stay in place for the rest of the grades, or will all grades eventually be de-
streamed? How will colleges and universities have to adapt to a world de-streamed? Does the government have data it can share to prove these de-
streamed classrooms will im-
prove education for all students?

Furthermore, when will math teachers receive the cur-
iculum for the Grade 9 de-streamed classrooms? And how will they have enough time to develop lesson plans?

Are teachers with recent ex-
pertise in the Grade 9 math classroom being consulted in the development of this curric-
um? What support services, or will be put in place to ensure students with diverse learn-
ing styles have the chance to thrive in the de-streamed classroom? And a clash with teachers unions over class sizes, how many students will be in these de-streamed classrooms?

The focus right now should not be on these questions, but on getting students back into the schools, so teachers can teach, and students can learn.

Mike Balsom is a high school teacher at Laurel Second Second-
ary School in St. Catharines. In addition to being a regular contributor to The Local, he is also a host/reporter for Cogeco YourTV Niagara.

High school teacher questions timing of de-streaming decision

The present form of discrimi-
nation is no longer something
that has been seen in 27 years as a high school teacher, first in Eastern Ontario and then with the Dis-
trect School Board of Niagara. I would like to see that statistics that back up these statements, but the government has not been forthcoming with any data.

As advocacy groups such as the People for Education are nat-
urally applauding the move, although, I have no doubt that systematic racism via streaming might be prevalent in some ar-
es in the province.

In that same YouTV in-
terview, Oosterhoff confirmed that this September will see the beginning of the phasing out of

streaming. The following day, Premier Doug Ford confirmed that the province was ready to “do whatever it took” to get all students back into the classroom being consulted in the development of this curric-
um. And in the aftermath of a clash with teachers’ unions over class sizes, how many students will be in these de-
streamed classrooms?

The focus right now should not be on these questions, but on getting students back into the schools, so teachers can teach, and students can learn.

Mike Balsom is a high school teacher at Laurel Second Second-
ary School in St. Catharines. In addition to being a regular contributor to The Local, he is also a host/reporter for Cogeco YourTV Niagara.

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Hickory Avenue residents need permanent solution now

Thanks you to Bill Klahn for your time and efforts taken in your excellent presentation to Town Council on Monday, July 6, regarding the seven years of an unresolved serious dust issue affecting our residents. Your history, facts, logistics, solutions were well presented.

At this time, I do feel we need to address in more detail the personal impact on the taxpayers/homeowners directly affected by this ongoing, seven-year issue with repeated efforts to correct, but with no resolution in sight by the town or responsible party.

1. There is an increasing volume of traffic from outside, meaning other than residential traffic, in and out of the laneway by delivery and service type vehicles as well as many residents’ visitors, most driving at excessive speeds for a narrow lane, creating even more dust. The laneway was regraded this spring, which has made the situation even worse.

2. Our living space is mainly on the second floor, facing the laneway. The decks are just 20 feet away from our fence and the laneway which abuts. Because of the six-foot fence, visitors are not usually aware of the lane, and are shocked when an unseen vehicle hails through, leaving a 12 to 15-foot billowing cloud called applied, or a more theoretical, and falling onto our
cut. This is true in their core
required courses, including math, english, science, French and geography. Commonly
subjects such as business, drama, music and visual arts are taught in open, unstreamed classrooms.

Ostensibly, the provincial government is making the change to combat racism.

In a statement on Monday, July 6, Lecce said, “students, families and staff deserve an education system that is safe, inclusive, accountable, and transparent, and one that by design is set up to fully and equally
provide all students with the chance to achieve their potential.”

Nicola West M.P.P. Sam Oosterhoff, the Parliamenta-
yor Assisting to the Minister of Education, called in a YouTV interview on July 8 that “change has been in a very diverse and discrimi-
ination in ways for, example
to stream lower income and economically
stems, and to minimize the volume of traffic from outside.

But questions continued.

Would we get back into the schools before June? Would students be failed if they didn’t do well? Will universities and colleges take Grade 12 marks seriously?

Those questions were finally answered in May 19, when the Ministry of Education an-
nounced schools would remain closed until June. But what most wasn’t heard, but at least it was finally something we could plan around.

Instead of announcing changes to the Grade 9 math curriculum, would it not have made more sense for the Min-
istry of Education to use all of its resources to develop a solution for getting Ontario’s stu-
dents back into the classroom?

All we have heard is that it will be one of three options the Province announced in June:

• A full resumption of regu-
lar in-class instruction, with strict public health measures.

• A mixed model of students
attending class on alternat-
ing days or weeks, “cohort-
ed” into groups of no more than 15, with online learn-
ing during the days they’re not in class.

• Online-only learning with instruction by teachers if the risk of contracting COVID-19 is deemed to be too great.

As about the decision some time in August, now we add new questions to the mix with de-streaming.

What is the timeline for de-streaming the rest of Grade 9? Will streaming stay in place for the rest of the grades, or will all grades eventually be de-
streamed? How will colleges and universities have to adapt to a world de-streamed? Does the government have data it can share to prove these de-
streamed classrooms will im-
prove education for all students?

Furthermore, when will math teachers receive the cur-
iculum for the Grade 9 de-streamed classrooms? And how will they have enough time to develop lesson plans?

Are teachers with recent ex-
pertise in the Grade 9 math classroom being consulted in the development of this curric-
um? What support services, or will be put in place to ensure students with diverse learn-
ing styles have the chance to thrive in the de-streamed classroom? And a clash with teachers unions over class sizes, how many students will be in these de-streamed classrooms?

The focus right now should not be on these questions, but on getting students back into the schools, so teachers can teach, and students can learn.

Mike Balsom is a high school teacher at Laurel Second Second-
ary School in St. Catharines. In addition to being a regular contributor to The Local, he is also a host/reporter for Cogeco YourTV Niagara.
Consensus on enforcement, not contentious noise bylaw

Penny Coles
The Local

Winery representatives have made it clear that noise bylaw amendments currently under consideration could be a death toll for the special events so desperately needed for the continued success of their industry.

At the request of council, town staff have been reviewing noise as it relates to special events and outdoor locations, and how it could be better controlled.

Staff were also tasked with investigating the possibility of including a decibel level, which is missing in the current bylaw, and resources to monitor it.

An open house scheduled for March had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, and last Thursday, a virtual meeting was held, with about 25 people registered to speak to the staff recommendations that would change the bylaw based on a summary prepared by Couns. Clare Cameron and Erwin Wiens, who interviewed residents and stakeholders on the issue of noise.

Commemoration of the open house will accompany the draft in a report to council, which is recommending a fine of $300 for contraventions to the bylaw.

Several residents spoke of the shortcomings of the revisions, while representatives of wineries, along with Tim Jennings, CEO of the Shaw Festival, spoke of the harm it would cause their industries.

Andrea Kaiser, chair of The Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake, pointed out some inconsistencies in the timelines, such as the cut-off for playing musical instruments at 10 p.m., with amplified music allowed until 11 p.m.

Also, yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling and singing are permitted until 9 p.m. Kaiser was one of several speakers who questioned including singing with other disturbing noises, and called for some “breaking” of recommendations, suggesting the timeline should be consistent with a cut-off of 11 p.m.

She also pointed out a revision that refers to types of noise likely to disturb the peace is "quite subjective in nature, and therefore impossible to define when someone is actually breaking the bylaw.”

Another concern Kaiser and others mentioned was a ban on amplified music at 35 decibels affecting abutting properties.

Although staff had been asked to come up with an enforceable decibel level, several speakers said 55 decibels is too low, and is also impacted by air currents and weather.

Kaiser said it would “effectively prohibit amplified music on winery properties for permitted on-site special events.”

She spoke of the need for a balance to be struck between businesses and residents, saying “the current recommendations don’t strike that balance.”

She said she understands it’s an issue where it’s impossible to find consensus, and can only be achieved with compromise, asking that parameters to define development of a sustainable community and the local economy be considered.

Aaron Dobbin, president and CEO of the Winery and Growers Alliance of Ontario, echoed some of Kaiser’s comments, and spoke of the wine industry as an “economic driver for the province, the region, and Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

The industry is suffering during the pandemic with the cancellation of weddings and concerts, he said, but wineries continue to show commitment to their customers, and have put practices and procedures in place to safely welcome back visitors.

“We need a noise bylaw that allows wineries to continue to operate and generate revenue from events, while protecting the interests of the border communities,” he said.

The 55 decibel limit is lower than conversational speech, or a dishwasher in the next room, he said, adding people who go to a concert “don’t expect to be home for the evening news.”

He said it would “effectively prohibit a bylaw with a limit that would be impossible to put on events, and in turn hurt local jobs at wineries, restaurants and hotels.”

Del Rolfs, representing Arter-Wines Canada, which includes Jackson-Triggs Estate Winery and Inniskillin Winery, spoke of “robust tourism strategies” that include events on patios featuring local chefs and local musicians, and the “ultimate experience” of live music under the stars in the Jackson-Triggs amphitheatre, while sipping wine with vineyard as a backdrop.

The winery employs hundreds of residents, and gives back to the community through fund-raisers, he said.

Jackson-Triggs has tried through sound engineering to give a better experience for patrons while limiting the sound that moves beyond its boundaries.

“The challenge is, like with most things in life, we can’t make everyone happy. We understand this, and try to make the right choice each year to solve these problems. ”

The revised draft bylaw “would put an end to our special events and outdoor events in general,” he said.

“I would argue that this is creating a ‘whisper bylaw,’ which would not allow for even a patio or restaurant to exist, to have been sound,” Kaiser said.

Fireman president Bill Auchterlonie, who lives in an area surrounded by farmland, pointed out the wording of the draft bylaw says it applies to residential areas.

He also spoke about the need for a definition of concerns, what that would make it clear it applies to the whole town, as did the original bylaw.

Although he was assured by Rolf Wiens, the Town manager of enforcement, it is meant for the entire town, “it doesn’t say that,” said Auchterlonie.

Marion Hassebroek of Queenston Road agreed the bylaw must be written to cover all areas of the town, and also spoke of the need for more enforcement.

She lives close to a winery and when there is a party going on with outdoor music and its 11:30 p.m. she asked if a bylaw officer would be available.

When told, there are no bylaw officers on duty at night, and that she should call the police, she questioned the likelihood of them doing anything.

She was told by Wiens that the police often have more important issues to deal with, and that though they have responded a number of times, and are able to hand out fines similar to a speeding ticket, “I don’t know if they have ever been issued.”

She said rather bylaw officers or police officers have decibel metres.

Hassebroek asked that the Town increase the penalties and enforcement associated with the bylaw.

“We’ve made complaints, and noise of these fines are actually rare. How do we have here if there is no enforcement?”

Wanda Nored, a resident on the Niagara River Parkway, said she’s contacted the police regarding noise from an outdoor event and has had the event organizers have a permit issued by the municipality, “and it is up to them to enforce it.”

Other residents spoke of the need for more enforcement and higher penalties, and whether there is a saturation point for special events.

Municipal lawyer Tom Richardson, speaking for Tid Werner of Lakeshore Road, offered his legal opinion on what he sees as a problem with the draft bylaw, chief of which is the issue of the treatment of noise in agricultural areas.

The draft bylaw prohibits disturbing noises does not apply to agricultural areas. The draft bylaw says it applies to the agricultural areas, it doesn’t specify what that means, and only protects those in residential areas.

The areas where Auchterlonie and Hassebroek live, in agricultural areas, are not protected.

“The bylaw does not regulate noise in the agricultural area unless it impacts residents in residential areas,” he said.

He said there are other conflicting amendments where what would make it impossible for the Town “to use it as a tool to enforce the law when and when the public wants to be able to use the噪声 management board to quiet problems with respect to noise at special events in the Town that may wish to create a committee of concerned citizens and the various communities in town you’re hearing from tonight.”

Tim Jennings, executive director and CEO of the Shaw Festival, said the draft noise bylaw is especially problematic for those in the arts and cultural professions, with a reduced time duration for music, and singing added to noises such as shooting andooting.

He also spoke to the issue of noise limited to 55 decibels in the proposed legislation.

“The difficulty with decibel readings, and we do a lot of them in my world, is a normal household air conditioner at 100 feet is louder than a 60 decibel reading. I’m speaking at about 60 decibels. At 70 decibels, we’re not yet at the noise of a TV in the living room.”

A noise could be 76 decibels at source and 60 decibels 15 feet out, but would be unacceptable to wind changes, he said.

“The 50 decibel range is ‘realistically really low. You want to be real careful about the range of the noise you’re talking about.’

The 11 p.m. cut-off is “working in the concept of the bylaw is the real issue.”

Jennings said he looks forward to either the draft bylaw being tossed out or a return to the current one with a better method of enforcement.

Edardo Lafforgue of the Niagara Peninsula Chamber of Commerce said the restrictions in the draft bylaw will “jeopardize the re-launching of traditional major events, as well as live entertainment and music.” It would be a blow to tourism at a time when the tourism community “is just barely holding on and hoping to survive this crisis.”

Noise from special events is not normally belligerent, he said.

Other issues that were mentioned included bird bangers and short-term rental.

Young Oken of special basis human rights to live home without unnecessary noise, and the use of “propaganda cannon noise” in the vineyards behind his York Road home. He compared the sound generated by the bird banger and cannon generating “a terrible noise” every three to 10 minutes, even with doors and windows closed, and said there are alternatives for growers, although more costly.

York Road resident Jim Fish- er also spoke about the noise from bird bangers. “We went through 81 continous days in 2019 of howlter noise, beginning at half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset,” he said.

Although the Town position has been that it has no jurisdiction over what is considered a normal farm practice, Fish- er noted a Town noise bylaw could restrict the use of bird bangers, forcing growers to apply to the provinvincial Environmental Protection Board for a hearing to override a municipal bylaw.

CAROL PERRIN
905.768.3492
cperri@sothebysrealty.ca

Visit notl.com for more information about Summer Camp programming and to register your children.
Trying to make the best of a sad situation

Trudy Enns is trying to bring joy to her mother, Betty, 92, who has Alzheimer’s disease. Betty used to be a music teacher and although she can’t hear much through the window, she can read the messages Trudy writes and holds up to her.

Trudy thinks her mother is “as well as she can be, in this situation,” but she can’t really know how it’s affecting her. She’s looking more lonely, depressed, and more confused than she was, “but it’s the same for everyone. There’s no way of being sure how much of it is for her is because of the isolation caused by COVID. I really can’t tell how she’s feeling.”

Trudy, 65, is a familiar face to many in Niagara-on-the-Lake. She worked for MB Foods for 18 years, she says, and is now at the Menno-nite-run Christian Benefit Shop in St. Catharines.

She was laid off for a time because of the pandemic, and while at home, picked up a recorder that had been around for a while, and decided she’d learn how to play it. She plays the piano and viola, but although every child in elementary school seems to learn how to play the recorder, I never did.”

Music has always been a big part of family life, she says, and in the past, after helping her mother at meal time and chatting with her, Trudy would play the piano in the common area, for the enjoyment of other residents.

Now she takes her recorder. It’s a simple instrument, she says, and she’s learned a few hymns and tunes, including German folk songs. She stands outside, in the full, hot sun, and plays through the window. She also chats, is sure to smile, and sometimes makes funny faces, to get a reaction from her mother. Some days, she says, that’s easier than others. But what is most likely to draw a reaction is when Trudy and her two sisters all visit at once. “She loves to see us together. That makes her smile,” says Trudy.

Betty used to be a music teacher and although she can’t hear much through the window, she can read the messages Trudy writes and holds up to her. “It’s a simple instrument, she says, and she’s learned a few hymns and tunes, including German folk songs. She stands outside, in the full, hot sun, and plays through the window. She also chats, is sure to smile, and sometimes makes funny faces, to get a reaction from her mother. Some days, she says, that’s easier than others. But what is most likely to draw a reaction is when Trudy and her two sisters all visit at once. “She loves to see us together. That makes her smile,” says Trudy.

Music has always been a big part of family life, she says, and in the past, after helping her mother at meal time and chatting with her, Trudy would play the piano in the common area, for the enjoyment of other residents.

Now she takes her recorder. It’s a simple instrument, she says, and she’s learned a few hymns and tunes, including German folk songs. She stands outside, in the full, hot sun, and plays through the window. She also chats, is sure to smile, and sometimes makes funny faces, to get a reaction from her mother. Some days, she says, that’s easier than others. But what is most likely to draw a reaction is when Trudy and her two sisters all visit at once. “She loves to see us together. That makes her smile,” says Trudy.

Trudy thinks her mother is “as well as she can be, in this situation,” but she can’t really know how it’s affecting her. She’s looking more lonely, depressed, and more confused than she was, “but it’s the same for everyone. There’s no way of being sure how much of it is for her is because of the isolation caused by COVID. I really can’t tell how she’s feeling.”

Trudy, 65, is a familiar face to many in Niagara-on-the-Lake. She worked for MB Foods for 18 years, she says, and is now at the Menno-nite-run Christian Benefit Shop in St. Catharines.

She was laid off for a time because of the pandemic, and while at home, picked up a recorder that had been around for a while, and decided she’d learn how to play it. She plays the piano and viola, but although every child in elementary school seems to learn how to play the recorder, I never did.”

Music has always been a big part of family life, she says, and in the past, after helping her mother at meal time and chatting with her, Trudy would play the piano in the common area, for the enjoyment of other residents.

Now she takes her recorder. It’s a simple instrument, she says, and she’s learned a few hymns and tunes, including German folk songs. She stands outside, in the full, hot sun, and plays through the window. She also chats, is sure to smile, and sometimes makes funny faces, to get a reaction from her mother. Some days, she says, that’s easier than others. But what is most likely to draw a reaction is when Trudy and her two sisters all visit at once. “She loves to see us together. That makes her smile,” says Trudy.

Music has always been a big part of family life, she says, and in the past, after helping her mother at meal time and chatting with her, Trudy would play the piano in the common area, for the enjoyment of other residents.

Now she takes her recorder. It’s a simple instrument, she says, and she’s learned a few hymns and tunes, including German folk songs. She stands outside, in the full, hot sun, and plays through the window. She also chats, is sure to smile, and sometimes makes funny faces, to get a reaction from her mother. Some days, she says, that’s easier than others. But what is most likely to draw a reaction is when Trudy and her two sisters all visit at once. “She loves to see us together. That makes her smile,” says Trudy.

Music has always been a big part of family life, she says, and in the past, after helping her mother at meal time and chatting with her, Trudy would play the piano in the common area, for the enjoyment of other residents.

Now she takes her recorder. It’s a simple instrument, she says, and she’s learned a few hymns and tunes, including German folk songs. She stands outside, in the full, hot sun, and plays through the window. She also chats, is sure to smile, and sometimes makes funny faces, to get a reaction from her mother. Some days, she says, that’s easier than others. But what is most likely to draw a reaction is when Trudy and her two sisters all visit at once. “She loves to see us together. That makes her smile,” says Trudy.

Music has always been a big part of family life, she says, and in the past, after helping her mother at meal time and chatting with her, Trudy would play the piano in the common area, for the enjoyment of other residents.

Now she takes her recorder. It’s a simple instrument, she says, and she’s learned a few hymns and tunes, including German folk songs. She stands outside, in the full, hot sun, and plays through the window. She also chats, is sure to smile, and sometimes makes funny faces, to get a reaction from her mother. Some days, she says, that’s easier than others. But what is most likely to draw a reaction is when Trudy and her two sisters all visit at once. “She loves to see us together. That makes her smile,” says Trudy.
Washable and Reusable Masks
Available in multiple patterns plus solid white, ivory, pink, light blue or black
$8.99 – $14.99
Available online or instore
3770 Montrose Road, Mount Carmel Centre, Niagara Falls
905.356.1641
caswellsclothing.com

Caroline Cellars Winery
Wine Boutique and Tasting Bar
Now Open for Tastings
Reservations Only
Curbside and Local Delivery still available!
The Farmhouse Café
PATIO OPEN
Wednesday through Sunday
Reservations Only
Call 905-468-8814 to make your reservation.
Check our website for full details and service hours.
1010 Line 2, NOTL 905.468.8814 www.CarolineCellars.com

Hydrangeas ARE IN BLOOM
COME ON IN
Open Daily, 10-4
1709 Niagara Stone Rd. (905)468-1786
Niagara-on-the-Lake

Simpson’s
Serving Niagara Since 1977
Get 20% off online orders (minimum $25 before tax) with discount code LOCAL
Shop from the comfort of home at our new online store: www.simpsonsparmacy.store

NOW OPEN
TO SERVE YOU SAFELY
LET YOUR CUSTOMERS KNOW YOU ARE NOW OPEN TO SERVE THEM SAFELY!
RUNNING EVERY WEEK UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

We are now OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, but ask you kindly to adhere to the rules posted to keep everyone safe and allow for daily design to continue.
We are open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Monday to Friday, and closed on weekends until further notice.
We are still offering Curbside Pickup and Free Delivery for those who would prefer that service. Call orders to 905-329-2077 or text 905-329-2077.

Pillitteri Estates Winery
WINE, DINE & SUNSHINE
@ PILLETRI’S NEW PIZZA PATIO
NOW OPEN
THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY
11:30AM TO 8PM
SUNDAY 11:30AM TO 6PM
VISIT PILLETTERI.COM/BAReLLhead FOR MORE

TO PLACE YOUR AD, CALL OR EMAIL KAREN AT:
905•641•5335 karen@notllocal.com

Caswell’s
FINE MENSWEAR
905.356.1641
caswellsclothing.com

TO SERVE YOU SAFELY
LET YOUR CUSTOMERS KNOW YOU ARE NOW OPEN TO SERVE THEM SAFELY!
RUNNING EVERY WEEK UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

To place your ad, call or email Karen at:
905•641•5335 karen@notllocal.com
Elizabeth Martin doesn’t understand why healthy tiger lilies on Gage Street had to be removed.

(Photo supplied)

The sod was laid July 3, says neighbour Elizabeth Martin, and this photo was taken July 9. (Photo supplied)

Elizabeth Martin used to enjoy her view of tiger lilies growing from the ditch near her Old Town home.

Now her view is of a stretch of straw-coloured sod that has taken their place.

In the spring, a water-main was replaced at the corner of Gage and Victoria Streets, and in spite of that work, says Martin, the lilies came up and were healthy.

However, for some reason she hasn’t been able to discover, they were dug up in June, and replaced with sod on July 3.

She thinks the sod was watered once, before someone came to her door, to ask if she could water it.

“I’m 85 years old,” she says. “I told him I don’t think I can do that.”

Martin received a letter from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, dated July 9, saying the recent installation of the sod “was unsuccessful.”

It blames “the increase in temperature and the inability to provide a sufficient amount of water to promote healthy sod growth.”

It says the Town, the consultant and contractor will “review the sod” at the end of the 120-day warranty period and “replace all sodded areas that did not survive.”

Elizabeth Martin doesn’t understand why healthy tiger lilies on Gage Street had to be removed. (Photo supplied)
NOTL Town council decided to experiment until the weekend of July 19 closing Queen Street to traffic. It has resulted in NOTL’s only commercial street crossing Old Town being closed and as many as 22,000 cars per weekend having to use only narrow residential streets, some without sidewalks, endangering the quality of life and safety of residents and visitors.

Say no to the experiment.

Send an email to council@notl.com, subject: NO to Queen Street closure experiment

Keep informed at votersbeforetourists.com and sign up for our newsletter.
Local artist turns pandemic anxiety into art

Mike Balsom
Special to The Notl Local

Anxiety can be a strange companion. The fight-or-flight response to a perceived stressor, either real or imagined, is basically a flood of chemicals and hormones, such as adrenaline, into the system. The pulse and breathing rate quicken. Many who suffer from the affliction will find themselves unable to sit, sleep or relax. Pacing is a common activity when it hits.

For Niagara-on-the-Lake artist Filomena Pisano, anxiety has brought about a burst of creative activity, leading her on a path she never imagined was possible.

The former aesthetician, who owned her own business in the Toronto area, always loved art, and always wanted to create her own. Through her earlier years, she faced repeated criticism and rejection from teachers and others who didn’t understand her style. Lacking self-confidence in her abilities, she put aside those aspirations for many years.

In summer 2016, a freak accident on the beach in the Collingwood area became her turning point. She was struck in the head by a run-away kayak, suffering a concussion. During her recovery, she bought a sketchbook and began drawing an image of a friend. Five hours later, her mother found her still sketching. Filomena posted the sketch on her Facebook page, and the response from her friends was encouraging.

Around that same time Pisano stumbled upon a much-circulated social media post by actor/comedian Patton Oswalt. Known as 102 Days of Grief, it was a reflection on his life in the aftermath of the tragic death of his wife. Pisano became inspired to create 102 sketchbooks and set upon that journey. She quickly realized that creating art had become her way of coping with anxiety.

Sketching led to painting, and she began to immerse herself in her art. She and her husband Joe outfitted the basement at their Mississauga home with a basic studio to nurture her creativity. In the meantime, her sister had moved to NOTL, where Filomena and Joe had considered buying a summer home. Two years ago, they bought a house two doors down from her sister. It was the perfect opportunity to build the studio of her dreams. Within a few short weeks, she realized that the planned summer home was to become their permanent residence.

Pisano’s anxiety has set in once again with the pandemic. She finds herself spending as much as 14 hours a day in that studio, often in the middle of the night, continuing to use creativity to ease the symptoms. A visit to her John Street West studio reveals a number of works in progress. Many shed light on her influences - Willem de Kooning, Picasso, Frida Kahlo - she has actually created at least four different paintings of Kahlo herself.

“I can relate to (Kahlo’s) confinement to her bed,” says she. “Let’s face it, mental health challenges such as anxiety have confined my life. Have I loved my life to its fullest? My family (one son, three daughters, two grandchil dren) have, but I hold back. I relate to her suffering.”

She has also taken the time to learn as much as she can about art. She studied with local artist Ronald Boaks, and some of her abstract work shows his influence. Boaks says, “Filomena has real character. I showed her a few things and it was Wow! Very intuitive and talented. A friend for life.”

When asked about mentors, Pisano names George Brown College professor Vince Mancuso, with whom she has also studied. Mancuso describes Filomena’s style as “natural, intuitive, highly energetic and passionate.” He adds that “after a lifetime of discouragement and intimidation, her passion repressed for so long, the person she always was has burst out.”

He says it wasn’t surprising, coming to art later in life, that she struggled with some of the spatial, structural and technical ideas inherent in the art world. At the same time, many of her images, especially the sensually-aware goddesses she has painted, show an inherent in the art world.

Continued on page 20...
Music Niagara about to start its virtual season

Penny Coles The Local

Music Niagara was set to launch a series of 30 concerts, including a program to recognize the 250th birthday of Beethoven, when the pandemic cancelled plans that included some new venues.

The festival’s Karen Lade says some of those venues will be included in its virtual At Home series for its 22nd season.

Music Niagara is known for bringing world-class, diverse music experiences to intimate settings in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and will continue to do so, delivering “great music to you, wherever you are.”

“Music Niagara is unique, in that it doesn’t have a home base,” says Lade. “We make music through partnerships with NOTL venues.”

Some of this season’s performances are being filmed by Niagara College’s Broadcast team, in locations such as Château des Charmes, Pond View Estate Winery, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum and Queen’s Landing.

Others are being recorded virtually with performers who can’t get to NOTL this season, says Lade.

“We’re doing it differently for sure,” says Lade, but still bringing the “essence” of what was intended for the 2020 season.

Beethoven milestone birthday celebration will include Tom Allen’s production of The Flying Pigeons — the story of the only Canadian who met Ludwig van Beethoven — and also Music Niagara artistic director Atis Bankas’ musical performance of Beethoven Hair, an homage to the book of the same name. It’s an “amazing tale of one lock of hair and its amazing travels from 19th-century Vienna to 21st-century America,” says the announcement of the 2020 season.

It also includes “inspirational performances” by Bankas with one of Russia’s significant pianists, Victoria Kogan.

New this season is a Music and Laughter series, which this year will include Quartet to Gelato with NOTL stand-up comic, Joe Pillitteri.

There will be special performances from Emma Meinrenken on violin performing with members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, clarinetist James Campbell’s production of From Beethoven to Brazil: A Joyous Musical Journey, and the production of the Last Night of the Proms performed by members of the Niagara Proms Orchestra, conducted by maestro Sabatino Vacca, and hosted by British comedian David Green.

The At Home lineup also includes virtual performances by international festival musicians from New York, Amsterdam, and Lisbon, who were scheduled to perform in NOTL this summer. The festival will feature an At Home Performance Academy, with a new online curriculum to help young musicians between the ages of eight and 18 become polished performers.

Music Niagara welcomes donations to support its At Home series, which begins July 26. For more information visit https://www.musicniagara.org.

Mardi Gras celebration live online Saturday

Penny Coles The Local

As the Award-winning TD Niagara Jazz Festival begins its seventh year, with festival founders and creative directors Juliet Dunn and Peter Shea preparing programming and fundraising events, the world was stopped in its tracks by COVID-19, says Dunn.

It is more important than ever, Dunn says, “that we unite in healing the world through the arts, as well as through love, joy and compassion.”

With this in mind, and with support of the TD Bank Group, the festival is creating a virtual version of the popular Niagara’s Summer Mardi Gras on Saturday, July 18, from 3 to 11 p.m.

The festival brings New Orleans to the north, featuring a virtual parade, Cajun food, New Orleans classic cocktails, with beads, baubles, feathers and fun also recommended.

Here are the steps offered by festival organizers to join in on the fun:

1. Save the date: Saturday, JULY 18, and round up your “krewe” (neighbors, friends and family)!

2. Decide where to celebrate with us, and with your crew (balcony, garden, backyard, living room, etc.).

3. Watch the Mardi Gras session videos to help with steps four through eight.

4. Make (or get) a Mardi Gras mask.

5. Find your Funky outfit (beads, baubles, feathers and more).


7. Get your Cajun meal.

8. Move your dance steps, moves and grooves down.

9. Watch the parade on the Face Book or YouTube Channel at 3 p.m.

10. Party with us on July 18, and watch all bands on our FaceBook or on our YouTube Channel from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.

11. Post your photos on our social media platforms (@niagarajazz) for a chance to win 2021 festival passes.

12. Come out and see us in 2021 when we can celebrate face to face.

The event presents art from both New Orleans and Canada, and includes performances by Delhaye Marsalis and the Uptown Jazz Orchestra, Ecbir Muller’s Twisted Dixie, Red Hot Ramble, Big Smoke Brass Band, InstaChoir, The Vaudville Liars, The Big Butter and Egg Men, and more.
Ordnance stones subject of museum lecture

Ted Rumble is still hoping the Town will help preserve the 200-year-old stones

Penny Coles
The Local

Ted Rumble, a retired orthopaedic surgeon, has a lifelong interest in history, particularly military history. When he moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake, he could see a stone across the road from his house at the corner of Prideaux and Simcoe Streets. "One day, my curiosity got the better of me, and I looked more closely," he said. He is one of the oldest historical artifacts in the Old Town.

In 1807, the town was laid out in the typical British grid, with the Garrison Military Reserve, Fort George, known as the Commons today, and the Mississauga Reserve, which is today the golf course, with half of it then privately owned by a wealthy businessman and investor. In 1823, he said, when Rumble calls "the great swap," the businessman traded his part of the land on the Garrison Reserve to the British in exchange for some prime land on the Garrison Reserve.

"The reference to the ordnance boundary stones that I found in his letter written in 1823," he said. The stones were placed around the two military reserves by the British army’s Royal Engineers, to mark the boundaries between town land and military reserves, explained Rumble. The arrow was the symbol used by the Board of Ordnance (hence the B O engraved on the stones) which became the custodian of all British military property around the world.

The origin of the broad arrow is a matter of some discussion, but his favourite story, he said, is that the Royal Navy, sent scouting parties out into the woods to find trees that would be suitable for masts on the navy warships. A suitable tree was marked with an arrow pointing upwards, and there were severe penalties for anyone who cut down a tree that was marked with the board arrow, he said.

There were originally 37 stones, but 21 have gone missing, with 16 left that Rumble has been able to find in the town today.

One of the stones that still exists is number 3, in the middle of Butler’s Barracks. "It is very much at risk from riding lawnmowers, and it’s also at risk during the Kinsmen car show, which is held every August, when it’s surrounded by about 50 cars. It’s amazing it hasn’t been knocked down by now."

Boundary stone number 4 took Rumble a long time to find. It was placed in 1832, and when the Rand Estate wall was constructed in 1908, it was built on top of the stone, and nothing is part of the wall.

Stone number 5 was located close to the entrance to Heritage Trail, which was once railway land, said Rumble. "It is sunk down quite far, but it’s still in good shape."

Other boundary stones have been found under a hedge also sunk down, another tilted by tree roots but in pretty good shape, and another covered with moss.

Stone number 21, he said, is at the entrance to Queen’s Royal Park, with the gazebo in the distance. "It’s sunk down nearly flush with the ground, and with a few more years, it’s going to disappear, never to be seen again," said Rumble.

Stone number 22, at Front and Simcoe Streets near the golf cart path “is also at risk of damage from riding lawnmowers, “as it’s completely un-protected.”

The stone that Rumble can see from his house, number 23, was struck by a riding lawn mower last fall and is broken across the base. You can lift the top of the stone off. It is in urgent need of repair before it deteriorates any further," he said.

Stone number 26, best approached from the ninth tee of the golf course, is probably the best preserved of the remaining stones, with engraving and bevelling that is easy to see.

There is a lot of moss on the north side of the stone, “which confirmed what I learned in boy scouts, that moss grows on the north side of trees,” said Rumble.

Stone number 27 is also in pretty good shape, after being moved from the property line of the Charles Inn to the junior commissariat near Butler’s Barracks, he said. He hasn’t been able to discover why it was moved, and would like to see it back on Queen Street where it belongs.

Two of four stones that mark the corner of the military reserve can still be seen, one in a garden in Simcoe Park, at King and Byron Streets.

Another stone totally unprotected was recently damaged by a backhoe during obstruction at the corner of Johnson and Nassau Streets.

Rumble has asked the Town to recognize, restore, protect and celebrate the stones, which would require a partnership of the Town, Parks Canada, and the museum, he said.
The Friends of Fort George have already agreed to help.

Although there are British ordnance stones around the world, there is no other place that has 16 of the stones still in place.

The stones, he said, “are a unique historical treasure which shed a light on how our town came to be the way it is today, with beautiful green spaces such as Simcoe Park, Queen’s Royal Park and the golf course right in the middle of the Old Town.”

Rumble said it took him more than a year to find the 16 stones. “Like many people in Niagara-on-the-Lake, I like to walk, and would focus my walks on hunting for the stones.”

They were hard to find, especially the ones that have sunk down in bushes or hidden under mulch.

He said he doesn’t know how deep they go. Some have sunk below the ground. “I’m hoping one day we can get ground-penetrating radar and look below the ground for them.”

He is hoping the Town will designate the stones as historically important, and hopefully, also restore and preserve them.

He will be making a presentation to council soon to ask for that to happen, he said.

He spoke to council last December, and several councillors indicated support for Rumble’s requests, but offered differing alternatives on how to deal with them. One option was to hand the matter over to a committee that was charged with looking into the preservation of Butler’s Burial Ground, also on Parks Canada property. Others suggested the Municipal Heritage Committee and town staff should be involved, and the result was it would be discussed with staff how to best move forward with his request.

At the end of his lecture, a suggestion was made that a walking tour would make a good exploration of the ordnance stones. Rumble said it would be more than a six kilometre walk, and could maybe instead be a tour of a collection of stones, but the distance would be perfect for a bicycle tour.

Fort George opening this weekend

Fort George and the Friends of Fort George Gift Shop will be open from noon to 4 p.m. weekends during the rest of July. Although not all buildings will be reopening, there will be some changes to visitor experience, Parks Canada interpreters will be on site to answer questions, provide musket demonstrations and musical performances throughout the day. (Photo supplied)
Bee therapy to be part of B-Y’s Honey on Concession 6

Penny Coles
The Local

A local beekeeper is counting on a zoning amendment to allow him to operate an apitherapy centre, offering everything from retail bee products such as honey, royal jelly and bee bread, to treatments for medical conditions.

Edward Unger of B-Y’s Honey (bee wise, he explains), is a beekeeper who offers beekeeping classes (or did, pre-pandemic), and rents bee hives for pollination.

In addition to bee hives, his farm includes floral and herbal crops necessary for producing a high-quality honey, which has long been accepted for therapeutic use. He also keeps sheep, chickens, guinea hens, and a parrot named Chico who greets those entering his barn, a corner of which is now used to stock bee products.

He has a building permit for his new structure, now well under construction, but he wants site-specific zoning to permit on-farm diversified uses, similar to farm wineries.

He already sells bee products from the barn on his 30-acre Concession 6 property, and offers some alternative treatments.

“In Europe, apitherapy is well known and accepted,” says Unger, “but in Canada it’s new.”

He received training in Europe and is certified in Europe to perform alternative treatments, which are not regulated in Canada. He hopes they will be — there are efforts underway to have it regulated here so people can be trained here, he says.

Other treatments will wait until he has his new building finished. “It will be a cleaner setting, like a medical clinic. I won’t be working out of a barn.”

One of the treatments he now offers is bee sting therapy. He takes a bee in tweezers and squeezes it, then applies its stinger to the skin, releasing bee venom into the client. The bee dies after its venom is released.

He says it helps people with multiple sclerosis, arthritis and Lyme disease, alleviating pain and helping them move easier. He also believes it boosts immune systems weakened from chemotherapy and radiation.

He stings himself whenever he has joint pain, and he says the pain disappears.

There is no research in North America or scientific evidence of the therapeutic value of bee stings, but Unger says there is in Europe and South America. A quick look online shows there are anecdotal reports, but no evidence.

There is no doubt, however, that people have been using bee venom for medical conditions for centuries.

Unger says he has people who come regularly from Toronto and closer to home for regular treatments. He also sells a bee hut, that looks a little like a birdhouse. It comes filled with bees, and he shows his clients how to sting themselves, so they don’t have to make the trip to his barn for treatment.

Craig Robe, a senior planner with Upper Canada Consultants in St. Catharines, was at the Town’s recent planning committee meeting to explain Unger’s request for site-specific zoning.

The new, two-storey building would include a foyer, and other rooms for housing bees and processing bee-related products, and well as an office and accommodation for farm help.

When asked about the alternative treatments, he described Unger as “one of the pioneers in some of these newer treatments for illnesses such as Lyme disease.”

His treatments are “very leading edge,” Robe added, saying they would only be administered by appointment and with a trained practitioner on-site. Treatments would be by referral from a doctor, with a letter of consent.

Edward Unger demonstrates using bee venom through stinging as an alternative treatment for several medical conditions, including Lyme disease. (Photos by Penny Coles)

Unger says before bee venom is used, his client would require a letter saying he or she is not allergic to bees.

With site-specific zoning and when his new building is complete, he plans to also offer beekeeping and apitherapy — inhaling air from a bee hive — to treat respiratory illnesses, which he says requires a cleaner setting than his barn.

There has now been an open house and a public meeting on the zoning amendment, with the comments from both to be included in a staff report, which will include a recommendation to be presented to council.
BarrelHead Patio pairs pizza with premium icewine cocktails

As patios pop up across the region, restaurants are trying to maneuver their way through the provincial government’s regulations as Ontario opens up for business.

For at least this week, provincial regulations are allowing restaurants in the Niagara Region to serve patrons in outdoor areas only, while waiting for the word to move into Stage 3.

Many local restaurants and wineries have been erecting pop-up patios to serve clientele who want to enjoy the wine and cuisine that Niagara-on-the-Lake has to offer.

Zappitelli, who is the spouse of Julia Friesen of the Pillitteri clan, explains that they had certain goals in mind. First of all, they wanted to work to their strengths by highlighting what Pillitteri Estates Winery is known for. As one of the world’s largest producers and exporters of icewine, it was only natural they would want to feature icewine at the restaurant.

“We want to show that icewine can be innovative,” says Zappitelli, and not strictly a dessert wine but can be incorporated into other drinks and cocktails. They have experimented with icewine to create new cocktails and to play with new flavours by adding it to time-honoured cocktails such as the old-fashioned or martini.

One such icewine-infused cocktail that was featured last Sunday afternoon was the Blueberry Mojito, which has become so popular that Zappitelli says he is having a difficult time sourcing the blueberries to keep up with the demand. Refreshing and flavourful, the cocktail features Reserve Vidal icewine, spiced rum, muddled blueberries, fresh mint leaves, and a dash of freshly-squeezed lemon and lime juice, served over ice in a highball glass.

Because they export their wines to over 39 countries, the Pillitteri family wanted to do something that would cater to the locals, to those who have supported them all the way back to Gary’s Fruit Market. “The intent is to do something to give back to the locals who helped us get our start, which helped us to get into the international market in the first place,” says Zappitelli. In essence, “to bring us back to our roots.”

Their plans for opening the patio were pushed back due to COVID-19. Originally, they had hoped to open in May, which was delayed until July 3, “but we are rockin’ now,” says Zappitelli.

Staff are minimizing any contact with patrons and aim to make your experience as safe as possible.

Continued on page 18
Live entertainment coming to BarrelHead

Wood oven pizza and icewine cocktails are on the menu at BarrelHead. (Kim Wade)

THE NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE MUSEUM

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum presents a series of online talks in the month of July. All presentations start at 4 p.m., are free and require registration.

- July 16 @ 4 p.m. | Shawna Butts
  Some Women in Niagara-on-the-Lake’s History
  https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WH_Ee0jB7bRmgTGfHdbj9bA

- July 23 @ 4 p.m. | David Hemmings
  Was your grandmother a British Home Child?
  https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WH_W-nPwuNHQ8-uaH04zKTJSg

- July 30 @ 4 p.m. | Sarah Kaufman
  Ask the Curator
  https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WH_y3mOlB6T0Koz_PUU9ibeA

CHESS CLUB TOURNAMENTS – AGES 14+

- July 20 @ 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
  Kids Chess Club is back virtually! How to join our club:
  1. Create an account at chess.com
  2. Send your new username to notllibrary@gmail.com &
  3. To accept our invite, click HOME > MESSAGES > “You
  have been invited…” > JOIN THIS CLUB NOW
  4. To join our weekly tournaments, go to HOME > TOURNAMENTS
  and have found that we are able to do it with the
  appropriate physical distancing as per the Ontario
  government website. We’re excited about this infor-
  mation as we have a large space to utilize and can
  easily keep the live music at the appropriate physi-
  cal distancing measures. We are in the works with
  building something for the musicians to play on and
  can’t wait to get in contact with many local musicians
  hopefully come play on our patio.”

As a thank you to Niagara residents, the Pillitteri family is offering a 15 per cent discount for residents of the Niagara Region at the restaurant.

However, for those who feel more comfortable staying home, but want to enjoy the fruits of Barrel-Head’s new venture, they are offering a takeout spe-

cial. Patrons can order any two of their wood oven pizzas and a bottle of ei-
ther Team Canada Red or White for $45.

Call 905-468-3147 x333 to order takeout or walk in to pick up.

Further information on the menu or hours can be found on the Pillitteri Estates Winery website at pillitteri.com.

CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday, July 19th

Message by: Kevin Bayne
Psalm 103: Salvation

Please be advised that with the current state of COVID-19, your safety is of utmost importance to us. We
will now be live streaming our services at 10:00 am on Saturdays. There will be no in-person church service.

www.ccchurch.ca

PLACE YOUR COMING EVENT
COMMUNITY SOCIAL HERE

With or without a border, colour graphics optional.
Include your Logo! Prices starting at $20.
Deadline: Monday 3 p.m. Call Karen 905-641-5335
or email: classified@notllocal.com

LOCAL WORSHIP

To advertise your WORSHIP SERVICES in this section, please contact:
karen@notllocal.com
CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU

Across:
1 Portion
6 Totals
10 Champion
14 Hot chocolate
15 Deck division
16 Styptic pencil ingredient
17 Countertop
18 Heroic tale
19 Unconventional early 20th century art movement
20 Occult
22 Two fins
24 Very fine-grained soil
25 Suffix for a focused event
26 For ever
29 Puff
30 Huckleberry Finn’s pal
33 Boyfriend
34 Split fifty-fifty
36 Prefix: very small
37 Admits
38 Faint
39 Book ID
40 Small amount
41 Roman Earth
42 Lecher
43 Technical degrees
44 Quarry
45 Fashionable
47 Adverse criticism
48 Little Joe
49 Hit hard
50 Competent
51 wagon
52 Editions
56 Global auction website
57 Bong
58 World’s largest land
59 --- Hawkins Day
60 Scan
61 Wicked
62 How golfers want to finish every hole
63 Spanish Kisses
64 Funnyman --- Carvey
65 --- as a lobster
66 --- Bradley, five-star general
67 --- Bricker
68 Billy’s power
69 Act of kindness
70 Big banger
71 Jerry Lee ---
72 Collector’s list
73 State of high honor
74 Skipper of the Argo
75 Out of favor
76 British W W II general
77 Had eight days according to the Beatles
78 Residents of Abuja, for example
79 Gaza Strip grp.
80 Conceived
81 Its capital is Vientiane
82 --- as red.

Down:
1 Bunco
2 Sacrifice
3 Deeds
4 Underlying reason
5 Without difficulty
6 Analyze
7 Two-fold
8 Excavate
9 One of a hundred in D C
10 In case you --- noticed ...
11 Panache
12 Bad-mannered
13 --- Bradley, five-star general
14 Cocoa
15 Suit
16 Alum
17 Altos
18 Saga
19 Dada
20 Mystical
21 Tenner
22 Clay
23 E S P
24 Clay
25 Fest
26 Always
27 Gasp
28 Jim
29 Beau
30 Halve
31 In case you --- noticed ...
32 Mite
33 Terra
34 B Ss
35 Prey
36 Trendy
37 Flak
38 Four
39 Wallop
40 Versions
41 Ebay
42 Peal
43 Sadie
44 Blot
45 Evil
46 In one
47 Beso
48 Dana
49 As red.
50 Scam
51 Holy
52 Acts
53 Root cause
54 Easily
55 Assay
56 Dual
57 Dig
58 State senator
59 Hadn’t
60 Elan
61 Rude
62 Omar
63 Cash-strapped
64 E S P
65 Favor
66 A-bomb
67 Lewis
68 Wants
69 Glory
70 Jason
71 In bad
72 Monty
73 A week
74 Nigerians
75 P L O
76 Russia
77 Fly to
78 Fella
79 Webb
80 Able
81 Laos
82 Vain
83 Odor
84 Nine
85 Seed
86 Eva.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from July 9, 2020

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Sell your unwanted items or advertise your garage sale in our CLASSIFIEDS

Contact: classifieds@notllocal.com

Deadline: Mondays at 3 p.m.
Art mimics artist: colourful, bold, daring

She's not afraid to combine colours and to create works where lines don't converge in conventional ways. Her career as an aesthetician also informs much of her art, especially in her striking images of faces, with a definite emphasis on eyes.

She collects everything, even saving the hardened paint film from her palettes for use in future creations. Pisano tells the story of a reception at the Victoria Street pizzeria Pieza, the first place to publicly show her art. During the festivities, someone dropped a stack of painted plates that shattered all over the floor. Owners Laryssa and Maurizio Cesta, who continue to be huge supporters, cleaned up the mess, and set aside the pieces in a box. Many months later, they told Pisano they never threw away the detritus. Pisano lugged the pieces home, and many of them now adorn one of her favourite works, il tempo a venezia.

A bout with carpal tunnel syndrome in her right wrist is Pisano's latest challenge. Her fingers went numb about two weeks ago, leading her to consult with an osteopath in Niagara Falls as well as a Toronto sports medicine doctor. She and Joe bought a laser machine so she can do therapy on the wrist at home. She has already begun to practise painting with her left hand, which surely will open up a new world of possibilities in her work.

Lately she has begun working on large canvases. One of these pieces, Primavera (in the time of Corona), currently sits in her kitchen, awaiting to be shipped to its new owners. In a short time, she has sold many of her works, beginning with about 30 pieces during that original 2016 showing at Pieza.

Since then, Pisano's work has been shown at the University of Guelph-Humber, Artusiasm Gallery in Toronto, and locally at the Niagara Image Gallery on Niagara Stone Road. Pisano's art continues to be on display at Pieza Pizzeria, as well as at Mikreations in Virgil. She offers private consultations at her home in the Old Town. Visit her website, https://www.filomenapisano.com to find out more.

Melancholy is one of the artist's recent paintings. (Mike Balsom).