B&B licence denial takes unexpected twist

Penny Coles  
The Local

Owners of a Dorchester Street bed and breakfast now finally understand the details of why they were denied their licence to operate it. They have discovered it was due to a complaint made by Dan Williams, Lord Mayor or Betty Disero’s husband. They share a side property line with Jennifer Elliott and her husband Mike Sweeny. Carter Simpson is a former police officer, said the bylaw officer had no legal reason to operate it, and Telfer, a former police officer, said the bylaw officer had no legal reason to operate it, and Telfer said no to the inspection after reading the complaint after reading the law suit, dated July 21, 2021, a member of staff confirms that they don’t usually release the name of a person who makes a complaint to the town, to respect their privacy and prevent retaliation, but in this case, the individual who filed the complaint was malicious, and Telfer, a former police officer, said the bylaw officer had no legal reason to inspect their garage, so on principle, they said no to the inspection.

Continued on page 3

Carter Simpson is thrilled to carry torch

Mike Balsom  
The Local

It’s hard to come up with a better way to make a splash in a new community than taking centre stage as a torchbearer for the Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games.

Though he’s only lived in Niagara-on-the-Lake since June, 2021, 28-year-old Carter Simpson is a perfect choice to represent the town as one of 13 to carry the Roly McNelah Canada Games Torch from Queenston Heights to the Meridian Credit Union Arena on Saturday, July 30.

The Special Olympics athlete won a silver medal in alpine skiing at the 2011 Provincial Winter Games, and captured multiple medals in track and field at the 2017 Provincial Summer Games. Simpson was also the flagbearer for the opening ceremonies at the 2019 Provincial Winter Games, where he finished top 10 in all of his alpine skiing events.

“He loves anything sports,” says his mother, AnnLiz Simpson, as she, her husband Mike Sweeny and Carter make the long drive back to NOTL from a vacation on Lake Superior. “He does swim team all year, track and field and golf right now in the summer, and alpine ski racing in the winter. And he wants to try basketball and powerlifting.”

Carter Simpson and his family AnnLiz and Mike have only been in town a year. Carter is pretty pumped about being in the torch relay. He loves meeting and talking to people, and this will give him a great opportunity to do that. (Mike Balsom)
Penny Coles  
**The Local**

The list of council candidates now includes two long-time friends running together on the same platform.

Maria Mavridis and Tim Balasiuk join incumbents Allan Bisback, Gary Burroughs and Sandra O’Connor in announcing they are running for council.

Mavridis and Balasiuk have known each other since their school days in town — both went to Niagara District Secondary School, although Balasiuk (when he’s talking about paddle-boarding, he goes by Tim Bala) finished school at Ridley College.

They are the same age, 42. Balasiuk was born here, to a family that goes back several generations, and Mavridis moved to town at the age of 11, when her family bought a business on Queen Street. They both operate businesses in town, and they have the same perspective and priorities when it comes to issues.

Mavridis was the recipient of the 2021 Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce Women in Business Community Impact and Leadership Award, and a Niagara 40 Under 40 Award.

Balasiuk, who has a post-secondary degree in business marketing, lives in Virgil and has a daughter, Hope, who attends Crossroads Public School. Maria has been on a number of boards and committees over the years, including Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Niagara Nursery School, Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, Niagara Jazz Festival, and has been a mentor on the Lord Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council. She also owns and operates an organization that raises money for local charities, Anchor Niagara.

Mavridis says the time is right to serve on council. (Photos supplied)  

**SAVE THE DATE**

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Looking for a way to dispose of those confidential documents and personal papers that have been collecting dust in your file cabinet or basement?

Saturday, August 13th

9 a.m. - 1 p.m. (or until trucks are full)

At Simpson’s Pharmasave

1882 Niagara Stone Rd., Virgil

$6 per banker’s box

Three boxes for $20

All proceeds go to support Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care Services

*The Local*  

**Candidates join incumbents in election race**

Maria Mavridis, the recipient of the 2021 Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce Women in Business Award, says the time is right to serve on council. (Photos supplied)  

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Couple looking for compensation from town

Continued from page 1

Elliott’s Facebook post that said one of the garage bays “is/ will be open concept living space.” A screenshot of the post accompanied the complaint.

The town’s response also says an inspection of the garage, which was refused, “was/is required to determine the merit of the complaint,” as well as whether Elliott and Telfer were in compliance “to the planning department not renewing the building permit.”

When asked about the inspection, Elliott said she wrote a letter to the lord mayor and town councillors asking them to intervene, but she received no response, and still no licence was granted.

When asked about the inspection by The Local last summer, Lord Mayor Beth Disero said she knew the garage was being built, and that after receiving Elliott’s letter, believed there to be a problem between them and a neighbour.

It was then that Elliott and Telfer decided to seek answers and a monetary settlement through the court system, saying Williams was the person who lodged the complaint.

Once the town knew about the issue, says Elliott, “the matter should have gone before council, and you (Disero) should have declared a conflict.” Instead the town, after refusing to issue a B&B renewal because of the complaint, at first denied the complaint even existed, Elliott said, by explaining it was just a matter of a necessary inspection. “This denial continued for many months,” she said, until she learned there was a complaint, with Williams behind it.

Elliott says she decided to write the recent letter posted on social media, and send it to councillors and Disero, when she realized councillors had not been made aware of the situation or given a chance to discuss it.

“The town should have made a full disclosure, given me an apology; my B&B renewal, a couple of thousand dollars for our legal fees up to that point, and requested a full police investigation, which is still desperately required,” says Elliott in her letter.

“Since all this information is a matter of public record, I have chosen to make this letter public, hoping it may encourage you (Disero) to not ignore my concerns, as you did when thisiasco began.”

Disero, in a statement to The Local Tuesday, said “I have no details about a lawsuit.”

“I take the oath of office very seriously and act in a professional manner in service to my community. I have never used my office of Lord Mayor for my personal advantage. And for me to comment on the substance of their allegations would be to do what I am accused of and what I completely deny doing. I am duty bound not to take advantage of any information I have only because of my office of Lord Mayor to my personal advantage.”

“I will give you my own straightforward answers – I have acted with integrity, I have not sought to influence town employees for my personal advantage, I have not acted in a way that would give rise to a conflict of interest, bad faith, or undue influence. I have certainly not acted in a way that is illegal or improper.”

Williams told The Local the complaint was not made anonymously “— he signed it when he sent it to the town.” He says it was the Facebook post that made him decide to lodge the complaint and “that led me to believe they had an apartment” in the garage, and forward those comments to the town.

“Did it in my own,” he said, when asked whether Disero knew he was making the complaint. Disero did find out eventually from the town that he had filed the complaint, he said, and he did hear that Elliott and Telfer had followed up on it.

“I didn’t really think it was a big deal,” he said. He believed he had a legitimate complaint, that the garage was five feet from the property line, and has to be 20 feet if someone is living in it, “and it just got twisted up,” he said. “It got blown out of proportion.”

No charges were laid and none of the allegations have been proven in court.
Cycling Santa surprised to be a torchbearer

Mike Balsom  The Local

Tim Taylor was quite surprised to receive an email informing him that he had been selected as a torchbearer for the Niagara-on-the-Lake leg of the Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games torch relay on July 30.

“I was complete and utter surprise,” he tells The Local. “I had no notion that anyone had even nominated me, until my daughter (Kate Fish) who is in the program at Crossroads admitted that she had some time ago submitted my name. The man known locally as Cycling Santa started sweating a bit, wondering how he was going to run nearly a kilometre, but relaxed as soon as he realized he could choose how he wanted to complete his segment. He will be walking his portion of the ceremonial trek. Since June 25, the Roly McLenan Canada Games torch has been making its way through each of Niagara’s 12 municipalities. It began that day in Thorold, and will finish its journey on July 31 when it makes its way to the Meridian Centre in St. Catharines.

On June 17, all torchbearers were invited to Lock 8 Gateway Park in Port Colborne to watch the torch disembark from a Canada Steamship Lines boat, before beginning its Niagara stay.

“I didn’t have any sense of the magnitude of it until then,” Taylor says. “There were a lot of people there, and everybody was quite excited about it. Representing the community at a national event like this is really quite special.”

Though Fish’s application hinted that he might wear his Santa suit for the relay if asked, don’t expect to see Taylor decked out in red on the big day.

“I am not allowed,” explains Taylor. “I asked if I could wear my Santa for Palliative Care biking shirt, or my Santa suit, and they (the host society) told me I have to wear what I’m given. I understand that. Things could get kind of crazy if someone was allowed to do what they wanted.”

Taylor says a number of people have promised to make the journey alongside him. As many as 17 fellow members of the NOTL Rotary Club have signed up to join him.

The retired father and grand-father of two worked in the hospitality industry before shifting to public relations. He worked for national companies such as Imperial Oil, Molson and the Ontario Power Authority; his job taking him across the country.

Taylor first became an NOTL resident when he moved here with his parents as a teenager. After years of living elsewhere, about 17 years ago the Ryerson College of University of Toronto economics graduate moving back to the town to retire.

Over the past decade, Taylor has raised thousands of dollars for Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care. Every December he does the Santa suit and cycles to private parties, businesses and schools across NOTL to raise funds for the organization. The avid cyclist also participates in the Healing Cycle Foundation ride each year, and last September completed 1,000 kilometres for that organization.

During the COVID lockdowns, Taylor was able to shift to online visits as Santa, and tells The Local he was able to make appearances around the world as Saint Nicholas.

“I have a few of attributes that sort of forced me into it,” he laughs, “a long white beard and a big belly. I do it for the community, but I have so much fun doing it. At times it might be a little selfish, because I have so much fun. But it’s certainly something that I can use some money while I do it.”

He may not be wearing red as he square his torch through the 0.8 kilometre section along Four Mile Creek Road between Line 6 and Line 5, but the beard is ready, and so will Taylor’s Santa spirit.
Hans Paul no longer responsible for town facilities

The man who sharpened skates for many local kids has earned his retirement

Mike Balsom
The Local

He retired on May 31 after 36 years of working for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, but Hans Pauls wasn’t able to get to his cottage on Moon River in Bala, Ont. until just last week. “It’s been busy”, he laughs, “but we’re finally here for just a few days, and we’ll be coming back with the whole family the first week of August.”

That family includes his wife Christine, sons Ryan and his partner Rachel, and daughter Kaylyn, her husband Luke and their son, Carson. They’ll be taking advantage of the great fishing (pickerel, pike and bass) and doing a bit of water skiing as well.

He may be smiling on the dock this week, but many locals will fondly recall seeing Pauls’ smiling face at the arena, where he performed just about every task that needed to be done over almost three decades.

“Those years were some of the highlights of my career,” he reflects. “We maintained one of the best arena facilities in the whole Niagara region, when it came to the ice and the cleanliness of our building. We really took pride in our facilities. ”

As facilities supervisor, he learned working under Rivet, and it is the staff who worked alongside him to keep things in tip-top shape. He mentions how much he learned working under Rivet, and says his team of seven was crucial in the maintenance of the facilities. “As management, you’re only as good as the people who work under you,” he stresses. “And I think (manager of parks and recreation) Kevin Turcotte, (parks supervisor) JR. Hopkins and (recreation supervisor) Dan Maksimen are all great individuals, and are doing a great job.”

He remembers his early days working the Virgil Stampedes. “In the 80s and 90s, the Stampede always had horses,” he laughs. “I remember they used to use the whole field. There were so many horses. At the end of the weekend the whole field was full of horse manure. You wouldn’t believe how long it took us to clean that all up, with pitchforks, throwing it all into the back of a truck.”

And he fondly recalls the old ice resurfacer at the arena, long before the town purchased its first modern Zamboni. “It used to throw the snow up, and you could actually catch it as you were operating it,” he says. “I used to form it into snowballs and throw them at the fans. Back then you could do that. You couldn’t do it today.”

When asked what he won’t miss about his job, the 59-year-old mentions the calls in the middle of the night when an alarm would go off. “I was in charge of the monitoring of all of our buildings for security,” explains Pauls. “My wife really doesn’t miss that at all, those calls at 2 or 3 in the morning, I would go out there in the middle of the night only to find out a bird or something activated the alarm.”

Some old habits die hard, though. “We moved from Virgil to St. Davids three years ago,” laughs Pauls. “A week after re-titling, I was driving into Virgil and I found myself automatically pulling into the arena. For 36 years going into that same driveway, it was just a natural thing, to do. I said to myself, what am I doing? I don’t need to come this way today.”

Ever the NOTL booster, Pauls joined the Kinsmen Club post-retirement and is looking forward to getting involved on the other side of the community support equation. He adds that retirement so far is bittersweet, but in a good way. “I really, really enjoyed working for the town. If it wasn’t for the community, it wouldn’t have been the job that it was. I got to meet so many different people.”

Hans Paul on deck as he finally gets time to relax at his cottage. (Christine Paul)

It’s ‘all Hans on deck’ as he finally gets time to relax at his cottage. (Christine Paul)

The man who sharpened skates for many local kids has earned his retirement

Hans Paul no longer responsible for town facilities

The man who sharpened skates for many local kids has earned his retirement

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Hans Paul no longer responsible for town facilities
The fact that our young swimmers are able to attend swim meets at their local pool after two years of no meets — and for St. Davids, a year without a pool — shows how far we have come following two years of pandemic restrictions.

We know that sport is good for kids, and that it’s important for their development, and not just for physical fitness, as important as that is — experts say it has positive effects on their physical, cognitive, psychological and social health. Parents know it teaches their kids social and other valuable skills, and life lessons they will carry with them. It gives them a chance to learn about stress, depression and anxiety, and can do so in kids of any age. We used to call it letting off steam, but we’ve learned it’s much more than that, and it’s as necessary for children as it is for adults.

Parents know activity helps children sleep better, as it does for all of us. Being active, experts say, can even lead to increased school performance.

Sport can help increase self-esteem and self-confidence in children — it seemed evident that the swimmers at Saturday’s meet were feeling good about themselves. Those few who were disappointed in some of their performances were treated with compassion by their friends and the adults involved — more life lessons learned.

Parents know activity helps children sleep better, as it does for all of us. Being active, experts say, can even lead to increased school performance.

This summer seemed like an important return to pre-pandemic times with all minor sports, and we’ve seen kids on the soccer fields, we’ve watched them playing lacrosse and softball, and having fun with their friends.

There is much more going on than the learning the rules of the game as we watch them kicking a ball down a field, running around a ball diamond or swimming lengths of a pool. These great days of summer make memories for the future, and will be based on when these kids are parents and can’t wait to sign their kids up for whatever sport they choose.

Some of those involved in minor sports have said they haven’t got as many kids out this summer, and some sports and age groups are not offered because there aren’t enough kids. It’s a shame, because it’s likely once they got started they’d love it, and it’s probably more important for their social skills now than it was pre-pandemic.

But as the experts say, it has to be fun for them, and it has to be handled in a way that they feel less stress, not more, and more self-confidence, not less.

Congratulations to all town staff and parent volunteers who made Saturday’s swim meet possible, and to all the kids who participated. And thank you to all volunteers who make sports opportunities available and fun for kids. It’s such a memorable part of being a kid.

Penny Coles
The Local
The report begins with an affordance, “to address existing challenges and support growth.” The next hundred pages pretend to know what “growth” means. But the authors never quite manage to connect growth with life. Life is beautiful, growth without life isn’t.

Take, for example, “the existing population pyramid” (page 7), which is an ugly house representing an untruthful problem; in other words, the report points out that there are so many old people in Niagara of the Lake that there is sure to be a fire sale of loosely regulated property! Especially since many children won’t be able to afford to own their family estates.

Not that the report doesn’t have hopes. “The dear B.C.” shown here is an “if you build it, they will come” effect with regard to transit ridership” (page 7). Hopes, supported with re-gard to transit ridership, will come. Transit will make an effect with re-gard to transit ridership. “The dear B.C.” shown here is an “if you build it, they will come” effect with regard to transit ridership,”

At airports, doesn’t show much immediate improvement. “The dear B.C.” shown here is an “if you build it, they will come” effect with regard to transit ridership.”

We were warmly welcomed by Mike, given instructions on some of the features by his son, Carter, helped with our bike set-up, and before we knew it, we were driving off the lot, tow- ing our tiny trailer and set for our camping experiences on our way home to Ontario.

Our first major trip after picking up the new backpack was to continue west from Vermont to Fort Langley. This gave us the opportunity to visit with my wife’s brother and wife for several days. The day trip took us on some highways where the results of B.C. fires and flooding were quite obvious as we travelled. There were signs of a natural disaster which required rebuilding and work was quite obvious in those areas.

Along the highway was major pipeline construc-tion. In several areas, trees were burned right down to the high-way and it was obvious that the fires had ‘jumped’ the road and continued on the other side. Fort Langley has a mu-nicipally-run campground, Fort Camping in Brae Island Re-gional Park just on the out-skirts of the town. It provide-now comfortable sites if you happen to visit the area. I took the opportunity to walk one of the trails on the island and was able to view and photograph the lush forest growth typical to the area. It’s a pleasant walk that takes you along the bank of the Bedford Channel, ending at a tidal flat where the channel and the Fraser River meet.

The city itself is quite ac-tive, being much like Niaga-ra-on-the-Lake and quite pop-u-lar as a ‘tourist destination. I was particularly interested in touring the Parks Canada site of the old Fort Langley itself and had a great walkabout. This is touted as British Co-lumbia’s birthplace, and was a fur trading post established by the Hudson Bay Company in the early 1800s. A tour of the fort allows for a great opportu-nity to learn about the opera-tions of this fur post.

The interpretive staff were wonderful at explaining their ‘roles’ at each of the buildings. We certainly came away with a better understanding of the role it played in early colonial British Columbia.

Stay tuned for part two of Dave and Claudia’s trip across Canada.
The 59th St. Davids Lions Carnival opens Wednesday at 4 p.m. with music, rides, a wine and beer tent, and lots of games. Lions club members have been hard at work preparing for the carnival, getting the food and drinks ready, putting up the stands and booths for the Grocery Wheel, the major raffle and other games. Head over to the York Road Lions Park for the event, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, July 20 to 22, from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m., and Saturday, July 23, from noon to 11 p.m. (Photos by Bill Brouwer)

As the St. Davids Lions Carnival begins, a small group of women have been busy making pies for St. Davids Queenston United Church, to sell at the carnival. It’s a tradition that has gone on as long as the carnival, says Florence Jones, who has been making pies for about 20 years. They are all fresh, from scratch, and there is a selection of about 16 varieties of fruit and cream pies that will be sold by the slice over the four days, with about 300 to be made from Wednesday to Friday. Tuesday night McArthur, Marilyn Beatty and Jones were preparing the peach filling in preparation for Wednesday’s pies. It was hot in the kitchen, but the women were laughing and talking while they worked. The carnival opens Wednesday at 4 p.m. (Penny Coles)

Get ready to have some fun!

NIGHTLY ENTERTAINMENT FOR ALL AGES

Wednesday, July 20th
4-5:30 pm Brayden Doucette
6-7:30 pm The Bandwitztats
8-11 pm Turtable Rock

Thursday, July 21st
4-5:30 pm TBD
6-7:30 pm Love Construction
8-11 pm Clockwork

Friday, July 22nd
4-5:30 pm Randy Burdidge
6-7:30 pm Kyle Lamb
8-11 pm Vinyl Flux

Saturday, July 23rd
4-5:30 pm Matt Taylor
4-7:30 pm Jacob D’Souza
8-11 pm Cottage Brew

Young Artist Showcase Local High School Talent Saturday 2-4 pm

– – – – – – THE MUSIC LINE UP – – – – – –
Andrew Niven named Chamber board chair

Local Staff

Andrew Niven, who has served on the board of directors of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce & Tourism NOTL, has been elected as the new board chair.

Niven replaces Paul MacIntyre, whose term was up and who will continue as an ex officio member and immediate past chair.

Niven brings vast experience to the position, says a chamber news release, including serving on the board for six years and previous committee chair roles of the Icewine Festival, Candlelight Stroll, Artistry by the Lake, and golf tournaments.

He says he’s honoured to be voted on as the chair of the organization.

A resident of St. Davids, Niven is the director of marketing and hospitality at Konzelmann Estate Winery and is very involved in local organizations such as the Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the town’s customer and experience technology committee.

“It’s an exciting time for the Chamber and Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake, as visitation returns to the town after a long couple of years. There is a feeling of optimism in our industry and with our new president and CEO Minerva Ward, and an engaged executive board, the future of business and tourism in Niagara-on-the-Lake looks more promising than ever,” says Niven.

Niven, Betty Colaneri of Colaneri Estate Winery (vice chair), and Tim Jennings of the Shaw Festival (treasurer) will serve on the executive committee of the board.

The other members of the board include Kelly Exley of the Prince of Wales Hotel and Motif Inn, David Lavoque of the NOTL Bed & Breakfast Association, Kim Hughes-Gould of the Queen Street Merchants Group, Eric Moore 124 on Queen, Madison Vine of Andrew Peller Ltd, Dylan Hart of the Outlet Collection of Niagara, Kevin Neufeld of Beau Chapeau Hat Shop, and town representative Wendy Cherpita.

“Thank you to Paul MacIntyre for your tireless service to the chamber and business community and for providing guidance through our darkest days of the last two years of COVID,” says Ward. “And welcome back to the Chamber’s board of directors and for stepping up to the role of board chair, Andrew.”

Niagara Parks cutting down dead trees, replanting

Local Staff

Niagara Parks has identified about 30 dead oak trees in the Paradise Grove area on the north Niagara Parkway.

Paradise Grove is representative of a remnant black oak savannah, which is one of the rarest habitat types in Ontario, says a recent press release from Niagara Parks.

The dead oak trees, located near the Parkway and the Niagara River Recreation Trail, pose a safety risk to visitors if left standing, the release says. “This is the only reason for their removal. As a result, the Niagara Parks forestry team will be removing the identified trees beginning the week of July 25. Temporary disruptions to traffic, which will be signed, may be required on the Niagara Parkway during the felling operations.”

Before removing the trees, the team will inspect them to ensure there is no wildlife nesting in the impacted trees.

In addition, the trees will be harvested for their wood and re-purposed in the future for uses such as public park benches.

Through the Niagara Parks Foundation and its priority of tree planting on Niagara Parks property, Miller Waste Systems has donated $10,000 to cover the cost of planting 150 new trees at Paradise Grove, representing a five-to-one replacement ratio.

“Our company is proud to support this tree planting initiative, which is in lock step with our organization’s values,” says Miller Waste Systems President Denis Goulet.

“Our staff live and work in this community and we appreciate the environmental stewardship of Niagara Parks to preserve and protect the natural features along the Niagara River corridor.”

Niagara Parks will plant a variety of native tree species this fall, during cooler weather. The trees will range in size, of mostly oak, but also maple and sassafras, to ensure a diversity of tree species grow in the future in this area. Before planting, staff will undertake testing to understand soil conditions including nutrient levels, salinity, compaction, and change in moisture levels. The planting will take place this fall during cooler weather.

A diverse forest canopy is resilient to future threats such as invasive species and a changing climate. For more information about this tree-planting initiative, visit the Foundation website: www.niagaraparksfoundation.com.

Fish and chips for a good cause

On Thursday, July 21, the weekly fish fry of Branch 124 of the Royal Canadian Legion on King Street will donate $2 from each meal sold to the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. Alex Lukeby will be on hand to talk about how this money will be used. This fundraiser will be on top of $250 already raised from a barbecue in June. (Karen Skeoch)

The Highest Total Volume of Local Sales for the Past Decade

Highest volume in Niagara-on-the-Lake from 01/01/2021 to 09/22/2021. Source MLS.
Dan Turner carries torch with pride

Mike Balsom
The Local

"Just don't drop it."

Those four words were repeating in the mind of Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Daniel Turner during the 2.75-kilometre stretch of the Fort Erie leg, picking up the torch at Thunder Bay and Shimmerill Roads and handing it off to Jack Lange-laan at the end of Nigh Road. But he didn’t stop there. Like the Energizer Bunny, the avid runner kept going, completing the remaining 3.1 kilometres with the four torchbearers who followed him, winding up at the Fort Erie Leisureplex to celebrate the day. "It was a day Turner will never forget. "I'm addicted to community spirit," says the 27-year-old who ran for Lord Mayor in 2018. "I love being out there in these kinds of community events. I love all the excitement that goes on around me." Turner was surprised to discover exactly how heavy the symbol of the games was. Even an avid runner like Turner, who ran the Niagara Falls International Marathon in 2019, has to make adjustments to his stride. "It was a bit of a shock at first, much heavier than I thought," he laughs. "It's just under 10 pounds, and you know I bench press a lot more than that. But it was definitely a strain on the arms. You have to hold your arm out quite far." "And I forgot exactly how hot a flaming torch would actually be," adds Turner. "You have to hold it far enough away from your head that you don't burn your hair off." Perhaps that weight and heat were appropriate, as they may have helped Turner to reflect on the symbol the torch holds for the games themselves. "The flame is a great metaphor for the spirit of all the athletes involved," he says. "When I was handed the torch, I was kind of excited for all the people who held it before me, and all those that will get to hold it after me. It's a really cool symbol." Turner was hired in Fort Erie in 2019 and says his experience working there made him feel like it was his second home. He has since moved on in his career to work for Niagara Region’s economic development office, under director George Spezza. While he was still working in Fort Erie, though, he was involved in the planning for the torch’s stop in town. "I had a hand in helping to figure out what routes might work well for the relay," he explains. "It was me who put forward the idea of going from Crystal Ridge to the Leisureplex. It made sense for me to apply to run there because I was a part of that process." Turner adds that he would be happy to fill in for any of the remaining legs of the relay, especially the Niagara-on-the-Lake route which happens on Saturday, July 30. The torch also makes its way through Grimsby, Lincoln and St. Catharines between now and July 31. The opportunity to carry the torch has kindled his excitement for the games, which start with the opening ceremony at the Meridian Centre in St. Catharines on Aug. 6. "I'm hoping to attend that day," he says. "A friend just told me he has an extra ticket so I might join him. I'm still looking into what athletic events I might be able to attend." The graduate of Eden High School and holder of a degree in economics from Brock University says quite a few people have been asking him lately the plans to throw his hat into the race for lord mayor again for the Oct. 24 municipal election. He captured 1,400 votes, 16.8 per cent of the ballots, for third place behind Betty Duco and Pat Darte in 2018. "Not a chance," he tells The Local. "Where I'm at right now in my career I don't think it's the right time. We have a couple of options running so I'm happy to tap out this time. Well see where the town is at and where I'm at in the future. But I'll stay politically engaged and I'm happy to cast my vote!" In the meantime, he’s keeping his nose to the grindstone in the region, helping to attract new business to Niagara, and he plans on getting back to his "Dansaturner" podcasts, recording at his parents’ East and West Lane home. Perhaps his experience carrying the Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games torch will make it into a future podcast segment. "This will probably be the only time the Canada Games are in Niagara in my lifetime," says Turner. "I really wanted to be a part of it."
Rough Trade’s Carole Pope to sing at Irish Harp

Mike Balsom
The Local

A bonfire music and cultural legend is appearing at the Irish Harp this Thursday, July 21.

Carole Pope of ground-breaking 1980s Toronto band Rough Trade will perform an acoustic set, accompanied by guitarist Tim Welch, for the Irish Harp’s annual outdoor event. She promises a combination of songs from the band’s six albums and material from her solo projects.

Pope’s appearance may seem out of place with the usual musical fare on tap at the Irish Harp, but owner Joki Joki believes that is exactly the point. That’s part of the Harp’s move to expand its entertainment offerings to four nights a week, up from three.

"Because we don’t have as much tourism going on," says Joki, "it’s definitely a draw." We want people to start to know that we’re the place to go if you want something to do, or something to see, whether it be trivia, comedy or music. That’s been our focus."

He explains that she was approached by Herb Braley, a Niagara Falls-based financial advisor, who was looking for a local venue for the controversial performer. Joki jumped at the chance as she was a big fan of Rough Trade when they were releasing albums back in the 1980s.

Rough Trade was a songwriting collaboration between vocalist Pope and multi-instrumentalist Kevin Staples, which began as early as 1968 under another name. From the start the pair became known for pushing the boundaries with provocative lyrics, artful music videos and often outrageous stage antics.

Their second album, 1980’s Avoid Freud, contained the single High Conflict which was the band’s biggest hit, peaking at number 12 on Blood Lust, Deca-Dance, Sexual Outlaw, All Touch and Crimes of Passion.

Asking about her propensity to include explicit lyrics that often shone a light on what is now referred to as LGBTQ+ issues, she is very matter-of-fact about it.

"We were just writing original material for our audience," she said. "New wave, punk, cabaret, we did a little bit of everything up there. I’ve always been political and amused by people’s sexuality. You write what you know."

Though she’s released a number of singles since, her last collection of songs as a solo artist was an EP launched in 2015 called Music for Lesbians. It included a cover of the Lee Hazlewood-Nancy Sinatra chestnut Some Velvet Morning, as well as the originals Vagina Wolf and Lesbians in the Forest.

When it’s suggested that those song titles, along with Rough Trade’s work and her revealing 2000 autobiography Anti-Diva, make her something of a lesbian icon, she shakes that off.

"I just am," she says. "It’s actually so much more political now than when we first started. Back then people were in the closet. There was no outlet, there were no clubs. We were just artists. It’s more or less accepted today, but there will always be people up-tight about their sexuality. It should be a non-issue. There are so many more important issues today than sexuality."

The conversation turns to some of those issues. Her Facebook profile is full of posts about the U.S. Supreme Court’s overturning of the landmark Roe vs. Wade abortion ruling, and she talks at length on the phone about her anger.

"It’s politically motivat-" ed, says Pope. "It’s just ridiculous that it has come to this. So many women are going to suffer over this. It’s horrific, it’s like the 1950s all over again. I think it’s going to get really, really bad before it gets better."

Besides touring and re- leasing new music, Pope has been working on a musical currently in development with Broadway director Robert McQueen. Set in the mid 1980s at the height of the AIDS crisis, it follows the true story of Pope’s brother Howard, who was a guitarist and original member of the ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) movement. That organization fought to get AIDS drugs released to the people who needed them, and pushed for research and advocacy. Harold died of AIDS in 1996.

"He came to New York during that first horrible pandemic," Pope laments. "It’s really intense to relive some of those moments. I know, though, that if he were here, he would absolutely love it. It’s really a celebration of him."

"We started the process in 2015," Pope adds. "It takes years and years and years. We’re going to be workshopping it in New York in October. It will in- clude some Rough Trade music and some of my solo music."

Pope continues to re- lease new music, though she doesn’t see the need to put out a full album anymore in the streaming era. She manages her own career for the most part, has signed on to be a guest judge for season three of Canada’s Drag Race, and is in the middle of writing her sequel to Anti-Diva, which picks up just after 9/11, shortly after her move to New York City.

She says she enjoys stripping down the Rough Trade songs, many of which stand up today as electro-pop masterpieces. And the unplugged setting give her a chance to ad- lib with the audience a bit more than she can with a full band.

The 80-plus tickets for Thursday sold out in a little over a week, which wasn’t at all a surprise for Joki.

"If you look at her acoustic stuff on-line, it’s really, really good," she raves. "Most of the people we loved back in the 80s are in their 70s now, so it’s great to see them have a chance to keep playing."

St. Catharines folk-rock guitarist Ryan Thomas opens the evening at 7 p.m. Pope and Welch hit the stage closer to 9 p.m. The following evening Pope and Welch do a sim- ilar show at Casa Mia in Niagara Falls. Her full band will return to Niagara for a concert in St. Catharines on Aug. 12.

Carole Pope (Photo supplied)
Local players are a great story for the club, says Hindle. “We did amazingly well for a club that is new to that level of competition,” he says. Eitze was amazing, inspirational to us all. And he’s the most humble person, most personable man you ever want to meet.”

Thanks to Eitze and some of the other players, “we’re winning national awards in this little town of 16,000 people, in this very supportive community!”

Jerry’s wife Barb also competed at the nationals, but she doesn’t compete with Jerry in doubles, or at the same skill level — he is a more advanced player than she is.

“He moved up so quickly,” Barb says. “He couldn’t keep up with him.”

As Jerry is moving up a skill level after his recent wins, Barb jokes, “that gives the rest of us a chance at a medal!”

She explains that players are graded by skill, starting at 3.0, then moving up to 3.5, 4.0, and 4.5. And for each skill level, there are age categories.

Jerry, she says, turns 70 in August, “but he’s a young 70, very active, and very determined. He spends a lot of time watching the pros. He wants to be the best he can be. He takes it very seriously, but he’s also very calm when he plays.”

Barb and Jerry started playing with a smaller club on Arthur Street in St. Catharines, until they heard about the new outdoor facility in NOTL about three years ago, and have played there since, finding it quite different. “It’s a learning, growing club,” she says.

We got some instruction, some lessons, and Jerry kept getting better and moving up. I’m still working on it.”

Although they don’t play as a team in competitions, “I love playing against him. I play a real good game against him.”

Jerry and other competitive players in the NOTL club have benefited from their club pro, Adam Eatoch, who works with the advanced players, says Barb. “If we want to get better, we go to Adam. He gives us the tools we need to get better.”

As players get better, they look for other players at other clubs, with the same skill level, which also helps them improve.

Barb says lack of court time is hampering those who want to play every day to improve their skill level. “We can’t move forward as fast we’d like without the court time.”

Jerry explains he played hockey for 45 years, and when he stopped, he needed something else to do, and turned to pickleball.

“I thought I would give it a try, and got Bob involved, and we both really enjoyed it,” he says. “I think it’s a great way to get exercise. It’s such a shame — we just got COVID, everyone wants to play, and the courts are closed!”

He met Oriana at another tournament, and they decided to compete in the doubles competition, winning gold. “That led to the recent partnership in Kingston, and two silvers. Oriana doesn’t live near or by play in NOTL, so they don’t practice together, but will likely team up for tournaments again.”

Jerry says he has benefited from the opportunity to play with others “who were really gracious, letting me play with them. The people we’ve met through pickleball have been so nice, so accommodating, it’s been a really good experience for both of us.”

And he is really appreciative of the staff at everything they’ve done to find venues for club members to play, including the Centennial Arena.

“I’ve played in the Haig Bowl (in St. Catharines), and Virgil is much nicer. We’re enjoying that for sure. We’re really thankful for all that NOTL had done for the pickleball community. They’re doing the best they can do.”

And for what to expect or hope for in the future, Jerry says, “at his age, never knowing what’s around the corner, he takes things ‘one day at a time.’ He is just happy to wake up every day and look forward to playing, getting exercise, and enjoying himself while he does it.”

How does it feel to be a national level gold medalist?

“I feel very fortunate, very blessed to be able to play. Winning a medal is just a bonus.”

Jerry wasn’t the only pickleball club member to win gold.

Booth says club members also did not come home empty-handed from the 2022 North York Cup, held Saturday.

Club member Kris Guerrieri, along with his partner Mario Greener won gold in mixed doubles skill 3.0 (all ages), club members Scott Lapointe and Dwayne Yeager won gold in the championship is the largest pickleball event in Canada, says the national president of the NOTL Pickleball Club, says she is pleased members are returning home with six medals.

More than 20 club members competed over five days, facing fierce competition, and returning home with six medals across seven categories.

Jerry Eitze (left) and Oriana Oszip won two silvers in the double categories.

Barry Pychel & Vera (Weiran) Zhang won silver in the mixed doubles skill 3.0 (all ages).

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Pickleball club, town looking for court time

Penny Coles
The Local

Members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Pickleball Club are making the most of the courts that are available to them, and are appreciative of town staff doing their best to make up for the closure of the outdoor courts.

But they are still hoping for more court time and wondering if there are any options.

Tracy Booth, the new Niagara-on-the-Lake club president, attended her first meeting with town staff Monday to introduce herself as the current contact, meet staff, learn about the process the town is following, and discuss the efforts to find the club more space as the courts remain closed.

Her meeting was an opportunity to talk about a report that was discussed by councilors Monday evening, although there were no recommendations or decisions made.

Booth says she has heard no news on a decision about whether the town will appeal the probationary period that has closed the outdoor courts for two years, imposed along with a $1,000 fine for the town and the club, after they were charged with breaking the noise bylaw that was in place when the club was originally charged.

When the report was discussed Monday night, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, who had asked for the investigation into alternative locations for the club to play and other activities to take place on the now locked-up courts, questioned next steps.

"In terms of actions," she said, "we're no further ahead than we were a month or three weeks ago. We have no cost. We have no decision. We do not know what the town will do — the option of a fine or the club can't afford to. "But if the town appeals, we have nothing to lose."

He calls the two-year probation "cruel and unusual punishment," but adds, "the club has moved on. We don't like it, but we are being positive and asking the town to discuss our plan for next June, when the probationary period is over."

The question that needs to be answered is what's next. We will be playing outside or do we plan to play indoors?"

Hindle says the board and members have been "flabbergasted and overwhelmed by the support of the community. They support our values," he says, "not to be a cost to the community but a contributor."

The staff report looked at three options to replace the Centennial Arena courts after Aug. 22, when a staff member began to transition to ice-making for skating.

"The decision was made not to open the outdoor courts until a complaint and litigation surrounding the town's noise bylaw was resolved," the report says.

John Hindle, past president of the club, continues to be involved, particularly over legal issues as the club transitions to a new board, which he describes as "fully functioning, with great people."

The club, Hindle told The Local, will not appeal the decision on its own and is waiting to hear what the town will do — the club can't afford to, "but if the town appeals, we have nothing to lose."

He calls the two-year probation "cruel and unusual punishment," but adds, "the club has moved on. We don't like it, but we are being positive and asking the town to discuss our plan for next June, when the probationary period is over."

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The town has spent about $8,750 on modifying the arena floor to be used for pickleball by club members and the public, at no cost.

Hindle says members have been playing in the arena, and although the floor is hard and the arena stifling hot, they appreciate the town making it available.

He is also delighted to see the number of young people playing, he adds.

"Town staff considered the former Virgil school gym, the former high school gym which is now part of the Vinemidge Academy, and the Creton Hall on Line 3, as possible alternatives."

They also looked at increasing the availability in the community centre, with the possibility of some use on weekends, but as Hindle says, the community centre was not intended just for pickleball — there are other groups who also use it.

"The staff report says the pickleball club rented space in the former Virgil Public School in 2021, and could do so again. The owner "is more than happy to work with the PBC and the town," the report says, with scheduling to be worked out with the town and the club. The cost would be the responsibility of the club, at $100 per hour, minimum two hours, which would be significant if trying to replace the 12 hours a day, seven days a week the courts are open.

The Creton Hall is available to rent, the report says, but doesn't have adequate space to play pickleball, town staff determined.

Staff also looked at alternative uses for the outdoor pickleball courts that wouldn't damage the acrylic surface, that would present revenue opportunities, costs for modifications for each activity, and any potential concerns.

A long list of possibilities they looked at included ball hockey, lacrosse, basketball, volleyball, street soccer, a fitness space for activities such as yoga, core hole, and spec tennis (a new paddle sport played on a Pickleball court, with different rules than Pickleball).

Several of the sports, the report says, have the potential to damage the surface of the court, some have a cost attached for modifications, all could bring in revenue if the space is provided for a rental fee, and some could generate as much noise or more than pickleball.

When the report was discussed Monday night, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, who had asked for the investigation into alternative locations for the club to play and other activities to take place on the now locked-up courts, questioned next steps.

The report, she said, "doesn't conclude where we would go with pickleball and doesn't conclude what we would do with the courts that aren't being used."

"In terms of actions," she said, "we're no further ahead than we were a month or three weeks ago. How do we get to conclusions about what to do with the courts and what we can do for more courts?"

CAO Marnie Clackie said staff would have to do more studies, including costs, and also the due diligence necessary to ensure whatever occurred on the courts wouldn't be breaking the noise bylaw that was in place when the town and pickleball club were originally charged.

"In terms of actions," she said, "we're no further ahead than we were a month or three weeks ago. How do we get to conclusions about what to do with the courts and what we can do for more courts?"

Acting operations director Kerim Torosno warned that if the court is unlocked and used for other activities, the town would also have to be certain nobody used it for pickleball.

While Disero agreed due diligence is necessary, "this is a longer process than I'd like".

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Tracy Booth is the new president of the NOTL Pickleball Club. (Photos supplied)

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The NotlLocal
July 28, 2022

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NOTL swimmers excited for their first competition

Niagara-on-the-Lake youngsters had their first experience as a team in the Memorial Park Pool Saturday, competing against swimmers from Pelham and Dunsdale.

“The opportunity to swim is great for the kids,” says Rebecca Saylor, the town’s aquatics director, who, with her sister Rachel, was managing the scores of the meet, and organizing ribbons for the winners.

“This is the first meet in three years, and for most of them it’s their first swim meet.”

Rachel and Rebecca grew up learning to swim at Memorial Pool, then teaching others to swim, competing on the swim team and then helping to organize meets for the last 15 years.

Their grandmother was Vi Mills, whose legacy was teaching hundreds of children to swim, and to love the sport. When she died in 2020, Rachel spoke of “the extraordinary ripple effect” Vi’s life had in the community, evidenced in the local swim team that continues today, with Rebecca and Rachel still involved. “We have to attribute this to our grandmother,” says Rachel.

The sisters agree that while they might not have had any choice, they loved their involvement in the sport growing up, both the swimming and the social aspect, which is still an important component of the sport today.

While some may go on to compete all year round, the summer swim teams and meets “give the kids an opportunity to compete in a relaxed, fun environment,” says Rebecca.

“It’s great to see the kids cheering on their team, clapping and shouting from the side of the pool for the other swimmers.”

Also behind the success of the team are the coaches and the parents who help out.

The team had two staff members coaching, and several parent volunteers timing, helping to marshal the swimmers, and looking after the kids between swims.

“We weren’t even going to have a swim team this summer,” says parent volunteer Adriana Vizzari, who explained the email that went out to parents said there would be no meets, just practices. But then, between the staff and volunteers, the town decided it could work, and agreed to four meets plus the final regional competition at the end of the season at the Lincoln pool.

Typically the regional meeting is indoors at Brock University, but between a lack of staff and the Canada Summer Games overlapping, Brock couldn’t do it this year. Instead, Niagara-on-the-Lake set up the meets at membranes in the pool, and the town agreed to host them.

The town decided to use the pool because the pool isn’t used during the summer, and the pool known as the Memorial Pool.

NOTL swimmers Loretta Cater, Kacey Hill, Naomi Weaver, Sienna DeSouza and Carmelina Peca enter the pool. (Penny Coles)
Introduction to competition a good experience

Continued from page 14

year, explains Vizzari.

There are about 40 mem-
bers of the NOTL Eels, with
kids from both the Memorial
and St. Davids pools dividing
their four-day-a-week prac-
tices between the two pools.

About 25 of them took
part in the meet, says Vizzari
— some swimmers may have
signed up for other sports,
not knowing there would be
competitions on Saturday.

Although it’s an introduc-
tion to competition, says Viz-
zari, it’s not very competitive
at this level — it really is just
intended to be fun, and for
about 75 per cent of them,
it was their first experience
taking part in the swim meet
as a team.

“People don’t think of
swimming as a team sport,
but that’s the best part of it.
The kids were so excited for
the other swimmers, encour-
ging them other swimmers,
and cheering them along,” she
says. “And they were so
proud of themselves. Some
of them were just grateful
they were able to make it to
the end of their races.”

The Eels came in first
place as a team, she says, and
did well in their individual
races, “but most important
was they had a good time.”

Several parents said their
kids had never had an op-
pportunity to compete in any
sport — they were new to
the concept of racing. “That’s
the reality after two years of a
pandemic,” Vizzari says.

What the kids enjoy
most of all is the socializing,
and although they enjoyed
the races, she added, “the
swim meets are not super
competitive, they’re not in-
timidating, and they are very
inclusive.”
Announcements

Interview with Ilias

Q. What's that certain something that makes you special?
A. My soccer skills. I have played all my life. Soccer is just so fun, it's such an adrenaline rush.

Q. What is your favourite thing about Niagara-on-the-Lake?
A. My favourite thing about NOTL is that I know everyone. I am so close to everyone and shops. I also know some of the shop owners.

Q. What are your plans for the summer?
A. World domination. Just kidding. Playing outside, playing in the treehouse, camping, swimming, visiting with my cousins, maybe going to Greece.

Q. How would you change the world if you could?
A. I would give everyone a medicine that could heal them instantly because I'm good and definitely don't want world domination.

Q. Now that COVID restrictions have been lifted, what do you like to do to make up for lost time?
A. I like to go out, see people, have sleepovers, eat at restaurants. My favourite part about the restrictions being lifted is not wearing a mask.

Q. What do you want to be when you grow up?
A. A business man. I enjoy watching my family run theirs and I already have a few ideas for my own.

Q. What is your favourite book?
A. The Percy Jackson series. The series has a nice mix of fantasy and it relates to the mythology of my heritage.

Q. What do you do to help others?
A. I help people when they are hurt and comfort them when they are sad. Soon, when I am a lifeguard in a few years, I will save people from drowning. Also, my family fosters children. We've just had babies so far, we love them each so much. I like to help my mom with the babies.

Q. What is a fun family tradition you have at home?
A. For Greek Easter we decorate an epitaph which is like Christ's burial tomb (what they laid him on). Then, after that, we feast! It's my favourite because, after the sad parts, it is so fun!

Word Search: Summer Time

Baseball
Flowers
Smile
Gelato
Popsicle
Camping
Soccer
Beach
Vacation
Summer
Swim

Riddle
What 2 things can you never eat for breakfast?

Answer: Lunch and dinner

Book Review

By: Sammy D., 7

I am going to review the animated series Jurassic World Camp Cretaceous. There are some parts with violence but it is still okay for little kids to watch. The scariest part is when Darius almost got eaten by an Indominus Rex. Ben is my favorite character because he is super nice. I would recommend Jurassic World to anybody that likes dinosaurs.

Artist's Corner

Submitted by: Lily, 5

We are looking for charities in which kids can participate. If you would like your organization to be highlighted here, please send your information to joyousnotlkids@gmail.com.
Mike Balsom
The Local

This weekend’s break from the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series meant Niagara-on-the-Lake native Stewart Friesen could turn his attention to the stock car circuit as well as his charity work. And what a weekend it was, as Friesen captured two chequered flags and raised $30,000 for the Crossroads Centre for Children in Schenectady, New York.

“The school deals with all sorts of kids on the autism spectrum,” explains Friesen from his home base in Sprakers, New York. “That school was very important to us in our life with Parker. It was a great day Sunday, we had a band, a dunk tank, some bounce houses for the kids and a great chicken barbecue to go with it.”

His Halmar truck teammate Todd Bodine and his wife Janet joined Friesen, his wife Jessica and his father Jamie at Fonda Speedway for the event. Bodine, a NASCAR mainstay, even raced a modified on the dirt track, something that is a bit out of the ordinary for him.

“He grew up racing pavement modifieds in the southern tier of New York,” says Friesen. “But he moved south pretty early in his career to pursue his NASCAR deal. He knows Fonda, but he had never been there before. It was great to have him here.”

Friesen captured first place Sunday, with Jessica finishing fourth. That win followed another chequered flag he won the previous evening at Utica-Rome Speedway in a non-stop 30-lap event. That victory was his 61st at Utica-Rome.

The break from the truck series meant less travelling for Stewart and his Halmar-Friesen team.

“It’s been pretty crazy,” he says with a sigh. “We went eight weeks straight, 10 out of 12 the past three months. It was a nice breath of fresh air to have that break.”

This Saturday he’s back behind the wheel of his number 52 Toyota truck at Pocono Raceway in Long Pond, Pennsylvania. And next week the Truck Series playoff begins in Indianapolis. Friesen is currently fourth in the points standings for the series.
Preds looking for billets for hockey players

Mike Balsom
The Local

As the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League (GMHL) gets closer to its opening face-off, the season is beginning to shape up for the Niagara Predators. Preparing to begin their second season playing out of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Meridian Credit Union Arena, the team has been holding skating sessions at the Gale Centre in Niagara Falls every second Wednesday evening and each Sunday afternoon.

“We’ve had between 12 to 15 skaters out for most sessions, and goallies too,” team owner Robert Turnbull tells The Local. “I’m really pleased with the returning players from last year, and the new ones we’ve signed. I’ve seen a lot of skill, a lot of speed.”

Turnbull says that new head coach Kevin Taylor and returning assistant coach Connor Shipton are working really well together, too. “We should have a fairly strong team,” he adds. “And I don’t think we’ll go through what happened last year.”

Turnbull is clearly hoping for a year with more stability behind the bench and in the front office. After only a handful of regular season games last year, head coach Andrew Whalen resigned for personal reasons. Then in December, general manager Johan Eriksson left to take a job with a European hockey agency. Turnbull assumed both roles through the end of the 2021-2022 campaign.

The team is planning to hold a prospect camp in late August or early September, with the team’s main camp to follow a week after that.

In the meantime, the Predators are hoping to recruit a few billet families in Niagara to play host to some of the out-of-town players.

Turnbull says there are at least four players on his list right now who need accommodation. He’s also in talks with a couple of players from Europe, including a goaltender he is on the verge of signing and another skater from Ukraine who is hoping to play in Niagara.

“They need to provide the players with their own accommodations, including internet, because some of them are taking online courses,” Turnbull explains. “They are expected to help with the chores, to do what’s asked by the family. They often become part of the family.”

He adds that each billet family is paid $550 a month, and receives season tickets for the team’s home games in Virgil.

Interested families are encouraged to contact Turnbull at 416-705-9949 or via email turnbullr54@gmail.com.

Ice Dogs raising funds for minor hockey

Mike Balsom
The Local

The Niagara Ice Dogs are coming to Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Meridian Credit Union Arena for a game that will raise funds for the NOTL Minor Hockey Association.

Club president Pete Flynn explains that though the team from just down the road in St. Catharines will be playing Erie, it’s the Otters who will be the home team for the Saturday, September 9 game.

Former Ice Dogs general manager Dave Brown, who lives in Virgil, is Erie’s vice president of operations and general manager. Flynn explains that since Brown took the Otters’ GM role in 2015, he’s indicated that he has wanted to do something like this to support minor hockey in the town.

“He reached out to me and said their exhibition schedule included a home-and-home with the Ice Dogs,” Flynn tells The Local. “He thought it would be better to do their home game in Niagara-on-the-Lake instead of having the Ice Dogs cross the border and deal with all that stuff.”

The Otters will visit the Ice Dogs at St. Catharine’s Meridian Centre on Sunday, September 10.

Flynn says that ticket prices and other arrangements have not yet been finalized, and he expects to have more details by the end of this week. The NOTL Minor Hockey Association, though, stands to benefit financially from the arrangement.

“It’s an exciting opportunity,” Flynn adds. “We hope that this becomes something that we can do each and every year.”

Lightning Strikes Twice at Queenston Golf Club

Last Tuesday, July 12, at Queenston Golf Club, two local golfers playing in the same foursome beat incredible odds to each score a hole-in-one. Stephen Zettel (right) used his 26-degree hybrid to hole the 157-yard 5th hole. Three holes later, Tom Ault used his 9-wood to ace the 159-yard 8th hole. Bill Hall and Don Davidson both witnessed this amazing feat. Zettel’s ace was his third career and second at Queenston, used his 9 wood to ace the 159-yard 8th hole. Bill Hall and Don Davidson both witnessed this amazing feat.

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Virgil resident Dave Brown of the Erie Otters (Photo supplied)
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CROSSWORD
Across:
1  Unorthodox religion
2  Whip
3  Fashion and lifestyle magazine
4  "Houston, we've had a problem..."
5  To pray, to Ovid
6  "Tender" leader
7  Chop Springsteen into pieces for many retailers
8  Fly ball trajectories
9  Hate
10 — — Smith, Empress of the Blues
11  Compell
12  Boling mad
13  Hairless simpleson
14  Who could be anyone

Down:
1  Comedian's date
2  Spreads into a battle line
3  Winter bug
4  Suddenly lose it
5  Body?" (Dorothy L. Sayers)
6  Pass into disuse
7  Don't take chances
8  Ipamena stroller?
9  Kind of feldi
10  Egyptian opera
11  In plain sight
12  Indifferent
13  Nicholas was the last
14  Lead character in "First Blood"
15  "The Rite of Spring" composer — Stravinsky
16  Personal set of cards
17  Single-masted sailboat
18  "And Then There Were — " (Agatha Christie)

SODOKU

PUZZLE ANSWERS

DIETSC, GAIL PATRICIA (BOWMAN) — Went to be with the Lord on Thursday, July 14, 2022 surrounded by love. Our world lost one of the best. Family was the very center of her life.

Gail was born in Hamilton, Ontario, the eldest of three children. Her father was in the army and they moved around some, but in her teens, they moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake where Gail met the love of her life, Mike. Most of Gail’s younger years were spent making memories with their six children.

For 27 years Gail drove school bus. She loved seeing and talking with all of the children. For many years, Gail also sold Avon. It was her way of spending time with her friends...or perhaps escaping a wee bit from the chaotic schedule at home and the busy schedule of being a politician’s wife and chauffeuring kids.

Gail had a passion for gardening. She loved spending time outside in the beautiful gardens she created. She also enjoyed cross stitch, painting and decorating. There was no decorating project that she would not tackle, including taking down walls. Tell her she wouldn’t be able to do it and you threw down the challenge.

After Mike passed away, Gail was lost for many years until she met Bill Sauer. Mom was extremely blessed to have found love again.

She will be deeply missed by her children Pat (Ken), Linda (David), Michael (Maureen), Paul (Natosha), Jody ( Alicok), and Matthew (Kristen), as well as her grandchildren Bram, Melissa, Sean, Andrew, Bayley, Tiffany, Ashley, Erik, Michael, Liam, Kaleb, Justin, Tyler, Austin, Nolan, Leah, Nadra, Alwayne, Malcolm, Taya, Shaishusha, Tatiana, Isaiah, Gabby, Lyssa, Dylan and Colton. She had 22 great grandchildren with one on the way. She will be dearly missed by her sister Louise Danielluk.

We lost a special one with Gail, she saw the good in all and especially the underdog.

Gail was resting at Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake, where her family received friends on Monday, July 18th from 2-4 & 6-8 pm. Funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Vincent de Paul Church, 73 Picton Street, NOTL on Tuesday morning, July 19th at 10:30 am. Cremation followed. For those who wish, memorial donations may be made to Out of the Cold or the Canadian Cancer Society. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com
Thunderhawks ‘last game in town’ as season wraps up

Andy Boldt
Special to The Local

With the St. Catharines Jr. B and Jr. A teams both losing their respective playoff rounds this weekend, the U22 Thunderhawks are now the last game in town for those interested in watching a local box lacrosse game.

The Jr. A Athletics had three Thunderhawks alumni playing for them this season, Michael Wilson, Reid Lowe and Nathan Fehr were all defensive specialists for the Athletics. This season sees Wilson and Lowe finish their junior careers with the Athletics, as Fehr, initially playing for the B’s, was called up halfway through the season to become a regular with the Athletics. The Athletics finished the three out of five series against the Whitby Warriors in the first round of the Ontario Junior Lacrosse League playoffs.

The Jr. B Athletics were playing the Elora Mohawks in the second round of the league playoffs after defeating their first matchup with the Guelph Regals.

The Jr. B’s had one full time Thunderhawks Alumni, Jaden Patterson, earning the second leading scoring position with the Athletics, along with four U22 Thunderhawks who regularly played up to fill the Athletics roster.

Trent Hunter, the Thunderhawks’ assistant captain, and Christian Blaylock were regulars at the defensive door for the Athletics during their playoff run. Jack Parker and Liam Dietsch also had regular showings with the B’s at the offensive door, becoming the sixth and ninth leading scorers respectively during the Athletics playoff run. Ethan Williams, Hunter Ostromecki and Jordan Wiens were other Thunderhawks who played a role in the Athletics regular season roster, all getting a taste of what could be a spot for the Athletics in the 2023 roster.

The U22 Thunderhawks can be seen July 22 at 7 p.m. as they take on Owen Sound, July 23 at 9 a.m. vs Kawartha lakes, 2 p.m. vs Sudbury and 10 p.m. vs a yet to be determined opponent. Winning this late semi final game will give them the opportunity to compete in the A championship. All the U22 Thunderhawks can be seen one last time at the MCU arena as they participate in the Conradi U22 Tournament.

The Conradi has been the largest U22 tournament in the province for a few decades and has often been referred to as the real provincial championship of U22. The tournament attracts 16 teams — most tournaments only have four teams — from all over Ontario. This year sees the top six teams in the province participating. It also is held during a weekend, allowing most players to attend the tournament, unlike the provincial championships which are held mid-week, often difficult for players to get time off, in some cases from their full-time jobs.

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Come watch before they’re gone! Go Thunderhawks!

#6 Ethan Williams
Offense

#32 Jack Parker
Offense