

The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL



Justine Lakeit
raising funds,
awareness
for MS

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Fort George opens

Fort George re-enactor Shayna Mercier (right) gives the first class of the season on musket firing, her first demonstration this year. The fort opened this weekend with limited hours, Saturdays and Sundays, from noon to 4 p.m. (Fred Mercnik)

Face coverings mandatory

Penny Coles
The Local

Beginning Thursday, face coverings will be mandatory in local stores and other businesses.

Last week councillors agreed to a bylaw based on the one passed in St. Catharines, but with some changes.

The bylaw allows for a mask or other face covering, including a fabric bandana or scarf that covers the mouth, nose and chin.

Councillors agreed face shields will also be permitted, although they are not in St. Catharines.

Enclosed public spaces where face coverings are mandatory include stores, restaurants — although not while eating or drinking — shopping malls, places of worship, libraries, museums, community centres, theatres, special event venues, indoor sports and recreational facilities, gyms and yoga or dance studios, arenas, and common areas of hotels.

Employees are expected to wear face coverings, except when they are behind a barrier or in a place where the public is not allowed.

Exemptions to the bylaw include child care facilities, day camps for children, schools and post-secondary institutions, private and public transportation, hospitals, health facilities and health professional offices.

NOTL councillors decided children under 10 years old should be exempt, as well as those with medical conditions, with no verification needed.

The NOTL bylaw does not include penalties. It says enforcement will first take the form of education and voluntary compliance. Signs will be provided to local businesses, citing the bylaw number, with the intent of encouraging co-operation.

There was also a discussion about wording in the bylaw that Coun. Allan Bis-

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Busy travel centre began requiring face coverings mid-June

Penny Coles
The Local

Chris Woronchak has been dealing with a difficult situation, as he waited and hoped some level of government would approve mandatory face covering legislation.

When the Province left the issue up to municipalities, and the Region deferred a decision, the general manager of the Gateway Travel Centre pinned his hopes on the Town to help enforce what

he was already asking his patrons.

Since June 17, Woronchak, has had a sign on the front entrance to the travel centre declaring masks mandatory. On Friday, he posted a sign notifying customers of the bylaw approved by council, although he has been manning the door and telling people it doesn't go into effect until July 23.

He says about 60 per cent of the people entering the travel centre are already

wearing a mask, and when he asks those who are not to cover their faces, the majority of them do.

All told, he estimates about 90 per cent of those entering the Gateway are now wearing some sort of protective covering.

He has not refused anyone entry to the centre, but he says he felt it necessary to stress the urgency of people wearing a face covering.

"When we ask people, the response we get is more good

than bad," he says.

The comments he hears most often from those who refuse, are that it's 'too little too late, we should have done this months ago.' "I tell them that was out of my control. We're doing what we can now."

Once the seating area of the centre opens now that Niagara is included in Stage 3, patrons will be expected to have a mask on when they arrive, and order their food. The mask will also be required

when they leave their table.

The centre attracts truck drivers who stop to refuel, use the washrooms and pick up food, often on their way back from the U.S., he says, "and we have no idea what states they have visited."

He also has a large number of tourists from the Toronto area, either on their way to the Old Town or Niagara Falls, stop for a coffee and to use the washrooms.

And then there are the locals. They too pick up coffee

or food, and use the grounds of the Gateway to meet with friends, sit under the trees in chairs they bring from home, or at the scattering of picnic tables, and watch the traffic go by.

A quick glance on a weekday morning indicates it is indeed a busy, popular place, and that concerns Woronchak, leading to his mask request for customers to reduce the risk for them and staff at

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Zalepa following direction of public health

Issue expected to be debated by regional council again Thursday

Penny Coles
The Local

Gary Zalepa, Niagara-on-the-Lake's regional councillor, agrees with the town bylaw calling for masks to be

worn indoors when physical distancing is difficult.

Town councillors should do what they think is best for their residents and businesses, he says.

He doesn't, at least at this

time, agree with a regional bylaw making face coverings mandatory.

While it may seem like a contradiction, it isn't, and his reasoning is clear.

Public health falls under

the jurisdiction of the Region, and the regional head of public health, does not support mandatory face coverings.

Dr. Mustafa Hirji, Niagara's acting medical officer of health, promotes physical distancing, hand-washing, keeping hands away from faces, and wearing a mask in public places when physical distancing isn't possible.

"He doesn't feel there is a public health rationale to order it."

It there is a widespread outbreak, or the number of cases in Niagara increases significantly, that might make a difference and change the directive from the public health department, "but with none of those things happening, there is no public health reason for the doctor to order it."

The role of the regional council is to carry out the orders of their public health department, says Zalepa, and it seems clear to him — no public health order, no regional mandatory mask bylaw.

For regional councillors

to make a decision contrary to their public health directive, is, in his opinion, an "extreme overstep. If public health orders it, that's different, but that's not the case today."

He doesn't expect it will be the case when the issue is again addressed at Thursday's regional council meeting.

After an almost five-hour debate at the special council meeting called to discuss mandatory face coverings, a motion to defer a decision until Thursday was approved, on a vote from chair Jim Bradley to break a tie.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero voted against deferral, after speaking in support of a bylaw, and Zalepa voted for it.

While the vote may be different this week, Zalepa says his won't be, unless Hirji gives an order to make masks mandatory.

While NOTL and St. Catharines have passed their own bylaws, and other regional councillors have spoken in favour of the Region doing the same, Zalepa says his role is not to impose

NOTL's decision on other municipalities, without a public health order.

"But if the majority of NOTL residents and businesses are in favour of a mandatory bylaw, "that's what a municipality should do."

Zalepa says he does the grocery shopping for his family, because his wife has a lung disease, and when he goes shopping at Hendriks' valu-mart, it's never busy, but he always has a mask with him. He has worn it from the beginning, when the store was crowded and he felt there was a problem with physical distancing, and he will wear one now any time he goes into a store. He agrees that it's the right thing to do, and that "the autonomy of the municipality is paramount"

If there is a public health order from the Region, "I'll support it, 100 per cent."

Municipal government has to "stay in its own lane" and do what it's mandated to do, "and this is an issue where the Region has to stay in its lane, and listen to its own experts."

Bylaw emphasizes education, voluntary compliance

Continued from page 1

back said he thought might be "overreach." It called for businesses to adopt a policy regarding mandatory face coverings, post the policy, train people on the policy and potentially produce it for inspection of an officer, he said, adding that was a lot to ask of business owners. The wording was changed to remove that responsibility from business owners, although staff must be given some training on the bylaw.

Coun. Gary Burroughs was concerned about the lack of enforcement. "We pass bylaws because we believe that's what should happen," he said.

But with stretched resources, councillors agreed they would rather rely on education and voluntary compliance.

Craig Larmour, planning director, said if an enforceable bylaw was approved, additional bylaw officers would be required. "We just don't have the staff." A large number of complaints could be expected to come in from across the municipality, as with physical distancing, he added. "We would be thinly stretched and beyond capacity."

Following the meeting, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said if a bylaw officer is called to a business, it would be with the purpose of education, and to explain that a person cannot enter a store without a mask.

It would be very unlikely that a bylaw officer would write a ticket, without a fine approved by the court system, which councillors were told could take months, she said.

"The expectation is that if

someone doesn't want to put on a mask, they will leave." If a situation escalates, a store owner should not get in the middle of a dispute, she said — call the Town to send a bylaw officer, or, depending on the level of aggression, call the police.

More and more municipalities are legislating the wearing of face coverings, and more and more people are wearing them, she added. "I don't think people will be so terribly aggressive as to cause a fight. I just don't believe that will happen, although I could be surprised," said Disero.

The bylaw was approved unanimously, to end when the state of emergency ends or council decides to repeal it. It becomes effective Thursday, July 23, allowing seven days for signage to be prepared and business owners to adapt.

Grocery store owner calls on public for acceptance

Penny Coles
The Local

Phil Leboudec has been encouraging his customers to wear masks for months.

He estimates 80 to 90 per cent are already obliging, and he doesn't see a problem with enforcing the municipal bylaw mandating face coverings that comes into effect this week.

If there is a problem, he says, "it is more likely to come from those wearing masks than those who aren't"

The bylaw leaves lots of room for those who are unable to wear a mask for any reason, he says. It also allows him or a staff member to turn

away anyone who simply chooses not to don a face covering for the safety of others.

According to the regional health department, he says, although it hasn't made masks mandatory — at least it hadn't at the beginning of the week — it is recommending masks as another layer of protection if physical distancing is difficult.

"The bylaw is not enforceable, but it is the right way to go. It will help to create a culture of wearing masks.

He can already see that happening, with the number of customers wearing masks increasing as the weeks go by.

Those people have to remember there are many reasons why others aren't wearing masks, "and it's really none of our business. There's no point in walking around being angry. You don't know what their reason is. People need to worry about themselves, not everybody else."

And if we do that, he says, "there shouldn't be a problem."



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Phil Leboudec says bylaw "the right way to go." (Penny Coles)

Gateway a popular place for visitors, locals and truckers



Chris and Jeanette Woronchak have been asking patrons to wear masks in the busy Gateway Travel Centre. Chris says by Thursday, he will be refusing entry to those who don't have a mask and don't meet one of the exemptions. (Photos by Penny Coles)

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the centre.

He has one food tenant who was unhappy with his decision in June, fearing it would mean a loss in business.

"I believe the complete opposite, that if all of our customers were wearing a face

mask, more customers would visit our establishment." If they feel safe and secure, they would be more likely to revisit, he says, "knowing we are taking all precautions to help stop the spread of COVID-19."

Having a municipal by-law backing him was already helping over the weekend, he

says, and once it comes into effect this week, he will turn people away who are not covering their faces. And he will call a bylaw officer, although he realizes the customers will likely be gone before one arrives.

The business now has the added cost of stationing staff members at the two entranc-

es to the centre, "but we'll do that. We'll pay the cost. If this is what we have to do, so be it. Protecting people's health is well worth it."

He is hopeful the Region will also approve legislation making face coverings mandatory.

"We still have people coming from other cities, other ar-

reas of the region, where it isn't mandatory. It would reduce the risk even further if it was a regional bylaw."

He is especially concerned about what will happen when the Province allows the re-opening of the borders. "We better have something in place by then," he says.

Woronchak doesn't un-

derstand why Niagara Falls mayor Jim Diodati continues to speak out against a bylaw for his city.

"Niagara Falls is the one with the most visitors, and if they won't pass it, it makes it harder for us. It puts us at risk. We're doing what we need to do to control this virus, while others are ignoring it."



Friday, the day after council approved a bylaw making masks mandatory, Chris Woronchak added a couple of new signs to the entrance of the Gateway on York Road.

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Simpson honoured with United Way's Anita Robertson award

Penny Coles
The Local

Winning the United Way's Anita Robertson Award holds special meaning for recipient Sean Simpson, on several different levels.

"Anita and I spent a lot of time working on the United Way amalgamation," he says, when she was campaign chair and he was on the board of directors.

At that time, there were three separate districts in Niagara: St. Catharines and District; Niagara Falls and Fort Erie; and South Niagara United Ways.

Simpson says he is proud to have worked with her on the process of amal-

gamation, and seeing it flourish as the United Way of Niagara.

Robertson was killed in a plane crash with her husband Joe and 24-year-old daughter Laura in July, 2018.

"Knowing how generous Anita was, and the Robertson family, makes this a real honour. She was very genuine, and it was a real thrill to be given this award. It brings back memories of what was accomplished for United Way, and that's a nice reflection. There are certain people you will always be fond of, and Anita was one of them. She was taken far too soon, but she left a great mark on Niagara and

the United Way."

He was presented the award, appropriately, at a United Way mask sale fundraiser event at Simpson's Pharmacy last Wednesday.

When presented with his award, Simpson says he has enjoyed working with United Way, the staff and the people, helping local organizations get the funding they need, and seeing the allocation process "working to get the dollars into the most needy agencies and programs that serve so many people across our community."

He says he's most proud knowing the money raised has "touched the lives of so many people."



Sean Simpson says his respect and admiration for Anita Robertson makes the award in her name an honour to receive. (Penny Coles)

Concern mask bylaw will heighten tensions

Penny Coles
The Local

Nobody in Niagara-on-the-Lake has been more proactive than Sean Simpson when it comes to encouraging the wearing of face coverings inside public spaces, including his own pharmacy.

However, although "for the health of people in general, it's the right thing to do, I'm just not a huge fan of making them mandatory. I'm much more pro-education."

Simpson says he understands the need for the mask bylaw, with "a number of people who refuse to be educated. I think the devil is in the details, and how it's enforced."

At the pharmacy, he offers choices to those who can't or don't want to wear a mask. They can use his curbside pickup, without having to get out of their vehicle, or they can stay at home and have their order delivered.

What he worries about is for the potential for two people "coming at the wearing of masks from polar opposite directions" to become a heated argument, he says.

He points to a situa-

tion in Minden, Ontario, last week, where a dispute over wearing a mask into a grocery store resulted in police being called, and ended in a fatal shooting.

"I hope people will exercise some level of patience and understanding," he says, "and those anti-masks will come around to accepting it's for the protection of others."

As a society, he adds, we need to accept that some discomfort is necessary until we have the science, including a vaccine, to further protect us.

He is also concerned that people who have been staying at home out of a need to protect themselves, may feel more confident going out because of the bylaw, "and get bent out of shape when they see others who won't wear a mask. I'm worried about their reactions and expectations."

He doesn't want to see business owners having to become enforcers.

"It's stressful enough running a business through a pandemic, without the stress of having to enforce a bylaw. I don't want to be in the position of getting into a dispute over it."

He says people are al-

ready agitated by the pandemic, and for some, having more rules to follow will make it worse.

"There will be people who like the rules and want others to follow them, and there will be others who think there are too many rules as it is. They will feel, wrongly I believe, that rules are taking their civil liberties away. But the bigger concern is how they will

react to that. This has the potential to create more frustration on either side."

Simpson says he would like to think that people will recognize the reason behind the bylaw, rise above their individual feelings and be tolerant of others.

But he's concerned about those who won't.

"People are so reactive these days. They want to

come down hard on others. Let's just be tolerant, everyone."

He estimates about 75 per cent of his customers are already wearing a face covering when they come into the store.

"We want people to wear masks, and it seems to be pretty good already, but the refusals will come. And there is only so much you can do."

Simpson says he's hoping people will abide by the bylaw, and he won't see any aggression. Most people understand masks help to protect others, he adds, and although nothing is 100 per cent effective, "if we all take all the precautionary steps, that's better than no steps. It's better for all of us. We're all in this together."



Simpson's Pharmacy hosted a United Way fundraiser, selling masks to locals. There was a lineup to buy them while the booth was still being set up. (Screenshot from The Source)



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MS diagnosis comes as a shock for mother of two

Caroline Cellars is helping to raise funds and awareness with its new orange wine

Penny Coles
The Local

When Justine Lakeit first noticed a little numbness in her hands and fingers, she didn't think much of it.

As it became more noticeable, and spread to her torso and legs, it became enough of a concern to make an appointment to see her doctor.

She didn't for a minute expect the life-changing diagnosis she received.

Lakeit, the mother of two sons, Archer, now nine years old, and Parker, almost 11, discovered about a year ago the numbness was caused by multiple sclerosis, a disease for which there is no cure.

"It wasn't what I was expecting to hear," she says. "It was definitely a shock."

She received her diagnosis after an MRI at the Hamilton General Hospital's MS clinic. Everyone she met, she says, "was so kind, they helped make it not so scary. They described it as something manageable, and they made me feel I'd be okay. They were so honest, and so genuinely kind."

She was put on a relatively new treatment of medication aimed at slowing the disease and controlling the symptoms, but not eliminating them.

Since then, she's done her research and learned more about MS than she ever expected to, including how prevalent it is.

It's a progressive disease that affects people differently. Hers is relapsing-remitting, which describes a pattern of symptoms which alternates between relapses and being in remission.

Technically, says Lakeit, she's considered in remission, but she still has symptoms.

As both the front of house manager and events coordinator at Caroline Cellars, the Lakeit family winery, she says her hands don't always work properly, her fine motor skills "are not great," and she can tire easily.

Looking back, she realizes fatigue was the first symptom, although she didn't know it at the time.

"I was just so tired all the time," she says, but there was a lot going on for the busy mother who was raising a family and working full-time at the winery. "I never thought about it being part of something

bigger."

She understands now she had likely been having symptoms for many years. Once the disease was explained to her, "they all came together as part of the diagnosis. I can never be sure, but I remember thinking, 'now everything makes sense.'"

Lakeit explains the disease is caused by lesions on the spinal cord and brain. Multiple sclerosis is an inflammatory disease that attacks the autoimmune system, damaging nerve coatings.

Those lesions are evident on MRIs, she says. Her last one was a year ago, and she was scheduled for another in March, to see if the disease had progressed.

The pandemic cancelled that appointment, and she now has to wait until September.

"I don't feel like it's progressed," she says, "but the treatment can't change the existing damage, and I still have symptoms. Heat can bring them on, causing more numbness and fatigue. Self-care can be a huge part of the diagnosis and living with the disease. Lifestyle changes can make a difference."

Resting and scaling back on activities can be challenging, she says, but she has learned that she sometimes has to "take a breather, especially when it's hot. I'm conscious of having to pace myself."

Some days, if she does too much, "I burn out. But it's unpredictable. I can have a busy day, and be fine, and other days, I'm knocked off my feet."

It's the unpredictability of the disease that is hardest, she adds, with its wide range of symptoms, never knowing when they will return, how serious they will be, how she will be affected or what the future holds for her.

"I could live a really normal life for a long time, or things could change very quickly."

At 38, she says when she first heard the diagnosis she thought she was too young for MS, but learned it is often diagnosed between the ages of 20 to 40.

She has also learned the treatment has come a long way in recent decades. The medication she takes came on the market in 2012, and studies are working toward both a cure and a better quality of life for MS sufferers.

She has come to realize



Justine Lakeit, with her sons Archer and Parker Henry, talks candidly about her diagnosis, and a desire to contribute to MS research and awareness. (Photo supplied)

how important both research and awareness are in solving some of the mysteries of MS, and hopefully finding a cure, for her and others.

A decision that she wanted to do something to help led her to put two oranges together — an orange wine that is new for Caroline Cellars, and the orange that is the symbol of MS.

Orange wine is a broad term for skin-fermented white wine, Lakeit explains. When the grape skins are not removed, and are in contact with the juice for an extended period of time, the wine takes on an orangish hue.

Caroline Cellars made its first orange wine, a VQA Skin-fermented Vidal, in 2019.

"My diagnosis and the orange wine had nothing to do with each other at the time. But everything kind of fell into place, and it seemed like an opportunity for me to do something for the MS Society. They were really excited to work with us. It's been a partnership, and easy to get it going."

Of the 2,000 bottles made last year, Caroline Cellars is donating \$2.50 for each bottle, Lakeit says.

While it's not a huge amount of money, she adds, "our plan is to do it again next year. Orange wine is a bit trendy at the moment, and we had hoped to have a big event, a fundraising launch for it, but that didn't happen. It's definitely something we want to do in the future. And the MS Society is being really flexible. If

there's an opportunity to do something in the fall, we'll put it together."

Her commitment to raising funds, and furthering awareness, "is long-term. It's not going

anywhere. Awareness of how it affects people differently, and how it affects day-to-day lives, is important. While we may see and notice the impact on some who suffer from

the progressive disease," she says, "there are a lot of people who struggle with it, and it's not visible. Just because you don't see it, doesn't mean we're not struggling."



Niagara-on-the-Lake Passes Temporary By-law for Wearing of Masks, Face Shields, or Face Coverings

At the Special Council Meeting on Thursday, July 16, Town Council approved By-law 5248-20, to provide temporary regulations to require the wearing of masks, face shields, or face coverings in enclosed public spaces in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

These temporary regulations are consistent with the recommendations of health authorities at the Federal, Provincial, and Regional levels, which advise people to wear masks, face shields, or face coverings in public whenever physical distancing is a challenge.

Operators of businesses that are open to the public are required to post signage in accordance with the By-law, prohibiting anyone to enter or remain within the enclosed public space unless they are wearing a mask, face shield, or face covering, subject to exemptions.

The following exemptions are provided in the By-law:

- Children under the age of 10
- Persons with medical conditions which inhibit their ability to wear a mask (i.e. breathing or cognitive difficulties)
- Persons who are unable to apply or remove a mask without assistance (i.e. those accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)
- Persons who have protections, including reasonable accommodations, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code which would prevent them from wearing a mask
- Persons while assisting or accommodating another person with a hearing disability

Masks, face shields or face coverings may be temporarily removed if it impedes upon a person's ability to obtain dental, medical, cosmetic or other related services, to engage in athletic or fitness activity (including water-based activities), to participate in religious rights or ceremonies, to consume food or drink, or for emergency or medical purposes.

This By-law comes into effect on Thursday, July 23, 2020, and will remain in effect until Niagara-on-the-Lake's State of Emergency is lifted, or until it is repealed by Council. For more information, visit notl.com/COVID-19.

EDITORIAL

Let's do what we can to support local businesses

Hopefully this is the last time it will be necessary to say this: unless you have a medical reason for not doing so, please wear a mask when you enter a local store or place of business.

It's the law in Niagara-on-the-Lake as of July 23, and as others have said, it's the right thing to do. Do it for others. Out of respect for your family, friends and neighbours.

Equally important, those of you who do wear masks and have been giving dirty looks to those who don't, remember they can't see that look, and even if they could, they may have a really good reason why they can't cover their faces.

If they are just being misguided, stubborn, selfish and disrespectful of others, they won't care what the rest of us think.

So, in the words of Phil Leboudec, if we all mind our own business, we'll be fine.

No need to add stress for our store owners and staff, who have been struggling for more than four months to look after

us. We need to do this without judgement, without anger, without reacting to others, and hope they will do the same.

Now, on to traffic, another hot topic. We've had two weekends of Queen Street being closed to traffic, and last weekend, parking spaces blocked off, to allow for physical distancing.

This weekend, the Town will do much the same, opening a few more parking spaces.

Although we haven't been privy to any statistics or survey results, it's painfully obvious that other than outside the ice cream and gelato stores, there is no need to worry about physical distancing. The streets

are empty. We keep hearing about the number of vehicles coming to NOTL on the weekends, thanks to a traffic counter. While 22,000, the number that is being tossed around,

sounds like a lot, does anybody know how that compares with last year? Does the Town have those numbers? If they do, they're not sharing.

At this point, the Town was expected to have shared the results surveys that have been conducted to determine whether street closures or parking being blocked has helped or harmed business. The data has not been shared, not publicly, or with the Chamber of Commerce. Why not? What does it say? Surely online surveys can be tabulated with one click?

As was pointed out at Monday's council meeting, that data does not include the views of residents, those living close to the street and most impacted by recent Town decisions. Hopefully that will be rectified.

Some residents are talking about how much they enjoy having their downtown back.

Eduardo Lafforgue, president of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, tells us that is happening around the world — residents are delighted to rediscover their main streets.

And while that's great for them, it isn't helping local businesses. In the fall, if businesses

close and Queen Street starts to look like a ghost town, it won't be such a pretty sight.

Shopping when the Old Town is quiet, spending a few dollars at local stores and restaurants, can help. It won't replace the money spent by the millions of tourists who are not coming to Queen Street, but it will show support and put a few dollars in the till to maybe help pay for staff. And while there, remember to have patience when dealing with businesses and staff who are doing their best as they learn to navigate through this pandemic. There will be more openings, new protocols in place, and a learning experience for us all.

On Monday, resident Bruce Gitelman was at council asking for residents to be included during discussions of the recovery period, and to strive for sustainable tourism that improves the quality of life for residents rather than causing harm. So true, and if done properly, can benefit businesses as well as residents.

The irony is that the discussion is how to accommodate 3.5 million tourists in a town of 18,000 residents. Those who have been in business for a long time in NOTL will remember Neil Rumble, the manager of the chamber 25 years ago. He used to write regular columns for the old Niagara Advance, and even then, in the '90s, he spoke of the 3.5 million tourists that visited NOTL each year. One of his favourite expres-

sions was repeated at council Monday: don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

If the goose is cooked, it will be the pandemic that kills it. The wisest words said Monday: work together, collaboratively, to prevent that from happening.

One more comment that comes from a conversation at council, this one from Fire Chief Nick Ruller. He was attempting to explain that, despite the confusing acronyms, there has always been and will always be an emergency control group, an emergency management plan, and an emergency control centre, the physical location where emergency meetings are held. The committee meets quarterly even without an emergency to discuss. Last year, it was flooding and the waterfront. This year, it happens to be the pandemic.

However, the important bit he tried to stress is that this group has nothing to do with the meetings of Lord Mayor Betty Disero and interim CAO Sheldon Randall, and the decisions they make, acting with the delegated authority given to them while the Town is in a state of emergency — they are two separate entities.

Ruller also addressed the issue of minutes kept by the group, and the discussion of whether they should be made public. Councillors can read the minutes but not photocopy them or take them from the room where they are stored.

Ruller says the minutes contain sensitive information and personal about staff, in-

cluding, in some cases, their health, and also enforcement issues, that shouldn't be public.

He said he reached out to other municipalities around the Golden Horseshoe, and none are making their minutes public. Coun. Erwin Wiens, who took the opportunity to go to the town hall and look through the minutes, said he was uncomfortable reading some of the information, realizing it was not his business, and Ruller agreed that some of it should not even be shared with councillors.

Again, to end on a positive note, let's end by thanking our business community and business organizations, councillors and staff, for all doing what they can to protect us during difficult times.

And on another, sad but also positive note, kudos to CBC for its series, *Lives Remembered*. In short videos, about two minutes or so, CBC has helped friends, family and colleagues honour some of the thousands of Canadians who have died of COVID-19, including Wilma Morrison, best-known for her efforts to educate the public about Black history. She was also a dear friend, known for her warmth, kindness, humility and sense of humour. She is remembered in the video by her friend Ayodele Adewumi.

See the faces and hear the stories of a selection of lives lost to COVID at <https://news.interactives.cbc.ca/remembered/>.

Penny Coles
The Local



This photo from Saturday afternoon confirms what others, including the Chamber of Commerce president Eduardo Lafforgue, have been saying: Queen Street has been empty. He also says the demographics are changing to young families out for a walk, not stopping to shop, and he doesn't see that changing. (Fred Mercnik)



Letters! We want letters!

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



Looking Up With Bill

Bill Auchterlonie Special to The Local

Here's the one-day version of *Looking Up with Bill*. For the full week, check out the NOTL Local Facebook page, or www.lookingupwithbill.com.

Monday, July 27: Today is the first quarter Moon at 4 degrees of Scorpio, at 8:32 a.m.

This means it's a challenging day, when secret feelings are pushed to centre stage, like it or not. It's a busy start to the week, with a lot going on. Try to keep what you know and understand in an organized way that makes sense, and the rest will fall into place. Or at least a better place. It was July 27, 1927, that Frederick Banting and

Charles Best isolated insulin in a laboratory at the University of Toronto. In deference to the widespread evil of diabetes, they refused to charge for their invention, giving it away for free. Years later, enterprising crooks modified the chemical makeup of the drug and patented it so they could charge as much as they wanted.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake

LOCAL

The trusted voice of our community

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Virus a wakeup call for cleaning up the mess we've made



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

Removing ecosystem services and buffers causes a window of opportunity for viruses to emerge. That window has been blown wide open, and the entire wall is coming down. According to the World Health Organization, COVID-19 has officially topped 14.3 million cases and is trending sharply upwards.

How does deforestation, hunting rare wildlife, and polluting local rivers have anything to do with this case count?

As our expanding and demanding human population increases, we find our species simply taking up more space and exploiting more resources. Original habitats, such as rainforests, mangroves, and clean, freshwater lakes, are decreasing, and we are losing the ecosystem services that come with them.

Aside from pollution filtration, erosion prevention, and acting as carbon strongholds, let's not forget these

natural lands are also critical barriers for viruses. We tore down a few too many barriers, and the virus is out. Here we are, wearing masks and physical distancing because of it, and so far, Canadians are doing an amazing job on the grand scale.

Wearing a mask helps you protect yourself, but mostly others, during this pandemic.

We have slowly been peeling the mask off Mother Nature's face for centuries now. Her mask was protecting her internal health from human influence, while protecting us from viruses carried by her wild animals. A mask is a mask.

We chip away at the blocks of our remaining ecosystems, going deeper, curious and hungry. Our quest for meat and materials is bottomless.

The more we rummage and ruin on a global scale, the higher the odds that a virus would come out of the wild, infecting an animal, which was then transmitted to a human.

Picture a virus hiding in a cluttered, messy room. You enter the heap of mess, and curious, you need to clean it up to see what's buried in there.

First, we use deforestation to encroach and get in deeper. This is the peeling back of those protective layers that once held viruses at bay.

Rolling over that ominous pile of mess in the corner might finally reveal what's been hiding in there. This is the moment. The intrusion is parallel to wildlife and bush meat being pulled from the forests, and exposed to our unassuming human bodies. That's how it begins, in very basic terms.

This has me thinking about all of the extraordinary rollout packages we're hearing about from our governments around the world. Numbers in the hundreds of billions of dollars are being thrown around like we've never seen in our lifetime. With all this money, it would perhaps be wise to invest in our environmental and climate health.

It may be tempting to save the the situation by saving the economy, but doing so would be short-sighted, dangerous for the environment, and therefore ourselves. Initiating aggressive industries for the sake of job recovery may just be a temporary pick-me-up, but as humans, we can't help but think of ourselves first. To



As humanity encroaches on wild spaces and important ecosystems, we increase the odds of exposing our species to pandemic-inducing viruses. This photo was taken at one of Niagara's wildest spots, the Niagara Gorge. (Owen Bjorgan)

such an extent, that we forget about the very environment that supports us and our human health.

And what are we without our health?

Picture someone who lives in the same messy room I described. A messy and unhygienic environment is often an indicator of its inhabitants. If we look at ourselves and the earth as such, it's no wonder our room is such a mess and

we wake up feeling sick. You can't just sweep life's obstacles and junk under the carpet, because eventually you'll trip over that lump.

During this pandemic, top scientists from the UN are also stating that by not taking care of the planet, we are not taking care of ourselves. Science then goes into what might be further and deeper thinking. The science is telling us the earth's

biosphere (the zone on our planet where life can actually exist) is damaged, and trending downward in its function. That's our home, too. It dictates our cellular health and economy. It's all connected. It's a universal law that unifies every living and non-living entity, whether we like it or not.

Maybe this coronavirus is the alarm bell that it's time to clean up our rooms.

LETTERS

Town holds firm on St. Davids pool closure

This week we were told our St. Davids pool will not be opening this season due to costs. In the same week, our increased municipal taxes arrived in the mail. It is confusing how the community of St. Davids, that has seen exponential growth over the last 10 years, cannot sustain a pool that was gifted to it. A community that is bursting at the seams with new development, and has no other facilities to show for it.

This pool is a lifeline to the community in the summer months. Families use it for physical health, mental health, learning water safety and rec-

reation. It provides jobs for our youth and lessons for our children. During these uncertain times where kids have not been in school, all sports and activities are cancelled, the community has been under lockdown since March; it was a blessing when the Province included community pools in reopening in Phase 2.

It is a complete disappointment and embarrassment that the Town would choose to keep this pool closed.

St. Davids families are struggling to understand how this decision came to be. Why the Memorial Park pool

and not St. Davids? What rationale justifies this inequity? There has been no community engagement by council on this and St. Davids families deserve to be told why their community has been left utterly neglected.

We want answers. And if nothing else, it should be the responsibility of council to consider the impact this decision has on residents in a summer when we need our municipal government services more than ever. The Town has failed St. Davids.

Adriana Vizzari
St. Davids



Views from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

In *Stranger than Fiction*, the multi-talented Will Ferrell, Emma Thompson, Dustin Hoffman and Queen Latifah work their magic in this strange story, where the line between fact and fiction is blurred. The ending is something of a cliff-hanger, but the ending suits the viewers. A delightful film that captured my interest.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to go to movies. During the pandemic, restricted to Netflix, he has graciously agreed to share his opinions of what he is watching with "short and sweet" exclusive reviews for *The Local*.



Will Ferrell



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Two teens becoming soap entrepreneurs

Mike Balsom Special to The Local

Two Niagara-on-the-Lake teens are hoping to clean up in the soap and bath bomb business.

With encouragement from her parents, Cory and Kimberly, 15-year-old Emily Abt is in the process of transforming a hobby into a summer business. Emily had been planning to make lip gloss for family and friends when her dad discovered the Summer Company Program.

Funded by the Ontario government but administered through the Niagara Falls Small Business Enterprise Centre, the Summer Company Program offers grants of up to \$3,000 to help students start their own business. They are provided with half of the grant upon approval, and given the other half at the end of the summer. Along the way, they receive expert mentorship through sessions with small local business owners.

Though the application deadline was just four days away when she learned of it, Emily sat down with her father and completed the business plan. She was shocked, yet pleased, to learn this spring that she was a recipient of one of this year's grants.

"It was exciting. I started thinking about how much work it was going to be, and how much I'm going to learn," she says. "I've always kind of been interested in business, with my dad in business, I've always wanted to learn more, so I knew that I was going to be doing a lot of new stuff."

For the time being, the Governor Simcoe Secondary School student (she begins Grade 10 this September) has put aside the lip gloss idea. Instead, she has been developing the formulas she will use to make the soaps, body scrubs and bath bombs she will sell under her new business name, True You.

"I went through about 30 different names on my own, and I couldn't find anything that I liked," explains Abt. "Then I asked all my friends for ideas, and my best friend suggested True North. I liked the 'True' part, but didn't like the 'North' part, so I changed it."

Abt is taking a cautious approach to get True You up and running. She is using that first \$1,500 to stock up on supplies, and learning about running a business along the way.

"I've been spending it on all the different things necessary to manufacture my products," she says. "I have to order a lot of it online in

bulk, while some products I can buy at Costco. I had to pick up corn starch from a restaurant in St. Catharines, because they get it in big bags. And I bought moulds at Michaels."

Emily has been taking over the family kitchen in Virgil, whipping up batches of bath bombs she will sell via her True You Facebook page and her @TrueYouSkin1 Instagram account. But a possible bulk sale has the young business mogul even more excited.

Through Cory's business contacts (he is the managing director of HEMA North America, a company that manufactures protective systems for machines), she was able to line up a potential contract with a St. Catharines spa that has multiple locations. Her focus this week is to perfect the ingredients for six different scents to impress the owner. If she wins this contract, it will go a long way to reaching her goal of \$5,000 in sales this year.

The member of the 809 Newark Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron hasn't decided what her future career path will be. For the time being, though, she will learn as much as she can running True You with the help of the Summer Company Program.

Abt may have a little bit of friendly competition from 18-year-old Elizabeth Penner, a recent Laura Secord Secondary School graduate.

Like Abt, Penner came to the soap business through a passing interest. Following a visit to an aunt in Vancouver, the idea of taking it to another level started bubbling up.

"She is a very successful soap artist," says Penner. "We made soap together, and it was so cool to be able to put so much creativity into something so useful."

Upon her return to Virgil, she began to conduct research into bath and skin products, and began to consider making a business out of a pastime that she had begun to do for fun.

Penner calls her company Naturally Nice, with a focus on making products from either all-natural ingredients, or home grown plants and herbs. Her product line includes soaps, bath bombs, lotions and sugar scrubs, with prices ranging from \$5 to \$10.

Though she is also concentrating on online sales, she took advantage of the opportunity to showcase her wares at the Crossroads Public School Home Show this past March. The pandemic hit a week after that, throwing a wrench into her plans for further in-person

sales at similar events.

"COVID-19 did take a toll on my business," admits Penner. "Since I am just starting out, I was and still am very motivated to work as hard as I can, which for me means booking lots of shows. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend most of the shows I had booked. It was a very tough time for me."

But she took it all in stride, using the pandemic time as an opportunity to do more research. She says she made a lot of products, touching base with her customers to ensure she was meeting their needs.

Penner is foregoing college or university for the next year to concentrate on building Naturally Nice into a viable venture. Currently she rakes in about \$70 a month in sales, but sees that steadily increasing.

"I plan to continue to work hard on my business, doing the most that I can to get my name out there," she says. "Right now, due to COVID-19, I am playing it month by month, continuing to do what I love and trying to do my best at advertising and creating new products. Whatever will come within the next year, I will continue to adjust and work hard."

This summer she is balancing her business endeavours with her job as a supervisor at the Olde Tyme Candy Shop on Queen Street. She has also recently become a financial representative for Primerica, which she thinks will help to develop her business acumen.

Naturally Nice products can be ordered through Elizabeth Penner's Facebook page and through her Instagram account, @naturally_nice. She is planning on launching a website in the next few months.



Emily Abt mixes up a batch of her secret soap recipe in her Virgil kitchen. (Photos submitted)



Elizabeth Penner sold her soap products at the Crossroads Home Show in March, but has had to go online with sales since. (Mike Balsom)

Library not ready to reopen, but lots going on



Debbie Krause
Special to The Local

A big hello to the NOTL community. It seems like an eternity since I was last able to update you on the goings-on at your local public library.

The doors might still be shut, but we are very busy doing the best we can to meet the needs of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents. At this point, Laura Tait, Sarah Bowers, and I are working in the building most days, coordinating curbside pickup, delivery service, Summer Reading kits, computer access appointments — call 905-246-2037 — and planning for the fall and eventual reopening.

With Stage 3 for Niagara announced this

week, many of you might be wondering when and if we will open the doors for in-person service. Unfortunately, based on government guidelines for sanitizing and quarantine protocols, we will not resume regular service at this time. However, we continue to expand alternate services in a safe and cautious manner.

For example, we began curbside pickup at the beginning of June. This has proven to be a huge success. In fact, in the six weeks since it started, we have filled 877 appointments. Anyone with a library card can put items from our library and any libraries in the Libraries in Niagara Cooperative (LiNC) on hold. Once the hold has been captured, you will be notified and sent a link to make your pickup appointment. Thank you to all who have taken advantage of this program and for all of the

positive comments. Thank you also for the patience you have shown, and continue to extend, as routines and protocols take longer than anticipated.

For those living in St. Davids, the library lockers at the fire hall have been reopened, so you can have your books delivered there as usual.

We are very mindful of the importance of browsing for many people. There is no fair alternative to being able to look, touch, and leaf through a book that has caught your eye. However, our best effort, in lieu of in-person browsing, is Book Bundles packaged by our staff. If you need something to read but have nothing specific in mind except a favourite genre, or maybe you just want to be surprised, fill out the form on our website, and Sarah, Laura, or I will put a bundle together for you to pick up. These can be ordered for chil-

dren or adults.

If the above services require a little too much computer literacy for your comfort, please feel free to email the library at notllibrary@gmail.com or call 905-468-2023, and leave a message. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Also, if you know of anyone who is not able to access the curbside pickup because of mobility or health issues, contact me at dkrause@notlpl.org or call and leave a message.

Let me end by saying how much you are missed. The library, without people in it, is not how it is meant to be. Ironically, libraries have been working very hard over the last few years to be seen not simply as a repository of books, but rather, as a third space, community hub, a place for people to interact. How does one fulfill that role in the days of physical distancing? True, the books are getting out, the internet is accessible, but

the chit-chat has halted, there is no opportunity to check in with our regulars, and we cannot welcome our new members in person. Be assured, that is our goal. With the safety of staff and patrons in mind, that is where we are heading — it just might take a while. Until then, please take advantage of the services we are providing, and check our Facebook page and website for updates as we get closer to fall.



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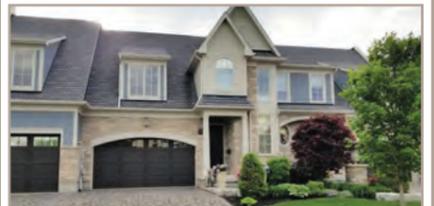
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St. Davids Lions welcome the community to burger night

Club's carnival is cancelled, but popular Lion burgers will be available

Penny Coles
The Local

This week, St. Davids Lions members would have been working at their annual carnival, welcoming visitors and raising money for the community.

Instead, club members are preparing an alternative fundraising event, hoping to engage locals and at the same time give their volunteers the connection with the public they're craving.

While carnival regulars will be missing the summer event, they don't have to miss out on the popular Lion burgers and fries, a draw for locals who enjoy the great food prepared by club members.

They are calling it "Welcome Back Lion Burgers," and will be offering a meal, which includes either a burger and fries or the "great Canadian," which adds pea meal bacon to the burger, with a drink, for \$10.

Beginning July 31, they are offering a drive-thru, no-contact meal pickup

at the Lions Park on York Road, Friday evenings, from 4 to 7 p.m.

The idea came from Lion Joe Typer, who was looking for something suitable for "COVID times" that could raise some money to give back to the community. He thought it would be fun to open the Lions' burger stand, get the grills going and volunteers involved, and "see where it goes." So far the response has been positive, and they are counting on a good turnout.

Lions members, says Typer, "do so much for the community. They've been stymied by this virus, like everyone else, but we wanted to do something positive."

"I asked who wanted to take it on," adds Typer, who is still working, "and Ed offered."

Retired club member Ed Pittman has taken on the organization of the event, made more complicated by the need to keep it as risk-free as possible.

Everything from the fried onions, an essential part of



St. Davids Lions, including Bill Brouwer, Ed and Sue Pittman, Kim and Joe Typer, and Rick Trapnell are preparing for the club's first Welcome Back Lion Burger night, Friday, July 31. (Penny Coles)

a Lion burger, to the condiments, will be handed out in containers, and the club is asking for debit or credit cards for payment, although they won't say no to cash.

They're keeping the number of volunteers at the grills to a minimum, to allow for physical distancing, but if all goes well, they hope to have the Leo club members involved once they have all the logistics worked out. "It's a whole new world, and we're trying to figure out how to

do everything safely," says Pittman.

They've worked out the logistics of delivering the burgers so no one has to get out of their vehicle — unless they choose to. Although there will be no picnic tables, Pittman says, it's a big property, and picnics are welcome — bring your own blankets or chairs, and be sure to leave

distance between each group.

The decision to cancel the 57th annual carnival, a four-day event that would have started this Wednesday, was made in April. It was a tough call to make at the time, but turned out to be a wise and necessary decision.

Last year's carnival contributed to the purchase of dog guides, the CNIB, Camp

Trillium, for children with cancer, and Camp Dorset, which provides dialysis for children with diabetes.

The club has continued to give back to the community, but without the annual fundraiser, it has been more judicious with what could be handed out, says Pittman. The Friday night dinners will help fill the reserves.

Ravine gets approval to extend busy patio

Penny Coles
The Local

Paul Harber, owner of Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery, has received approval from the Town to expand the outdoor restaurant.

He was given the answer he was looking for as Monday's council meeting wrapped up, to be reconvened Wednesday at 6 p.m.

The five-hour meeting also included an hour in camera discussion of other issues.

Harber asked for an exemption to his site plan that would allow him to put up a second tent until the end of October, or as long as weather permits, to expand the wine-tasting and dining space.

He told councillors he isn't planning on opening the indoor restaurant, even



Paul Harber received permission from council to put up a second tent, expanding space for the popular patio at Ravine. (Penny Coles)

though it's permitted in Stage 3, because he feels it would put his staff at risk.

"I don't want to start putting people inside and put our staff in harm's way, for additional revenue for us," he said.

He has a responsibility to keep staff and customers safe, while making the next few months viable for the winery to get through the winter, he told councillors.

He currently has 20 tables under the tent, which can seat six people each safely, but the majority of the tables are reserved by two people, he said.

Coun. Erwin Wiens called Ravine a "top notch organization" which plays by the rules, adding that another tent on the 34 acres of property won't impact the neighbours. Wiens made a motion to allow the second tent, which was approved by council unanimously.

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#CAMPYOUROWNADVENTURE

Local Brownies enjoy virtual summer camp

Megan Gilchrist
Special to The Local

On a recent sunny weekend, members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Brownies, Girl Guides and their families participated in the groups' first virtual camp, #CampYourOwnAdventure.

The program was designed by the 26th Orleans Girl Guide unit in Ottawa, and adapted by Niagara leaders. Although this was a completely new format for "camp" for us, it was an overwhelming success.

The camp was composed of a series of real-life activities,

interspersed with pre-recorded videos and Zoom calls over the course of the weekend. Camp programming was designed with maximum flexibility in mind, so that even if internet connectivity was a challenge, or a Brownie or Guide did not want to participate in the online portion, they could still have fun camping at home with us. Everyone followed the same basic schedule in their Adventure Challenge booklet, which was emailed to all of the families ahead of time, but could choose their own activities within each session.

Over the weekend, mem-

bers and their families participated in traditional camp activities, such as setting up a tent or shelter (outside or in their homes), taking a nature walk or hike, making S'mores, crafts, and stargazing. On Saturday, Brownies and Guides had the opportunity to choose a service project, completing a range of activities that included painting kindness rocks for their neighbourhoods, writing letters to seniors in long-term care homes, making face masks, doing waterfront clean-ups, or designing their own project to help others.

We also had two very special camp events that families

could choose to enjoy together. One was a virtual astronomy workshop with Astronomy in Action, and on Saturday evening, we joined other members of Girl Guides from all across Canada for the "Great Canadian Camp-in," a virtual campfire, with special storytelling guest, David Suzuki.

More than 20 NOTL Guiding families participated in the camp, which received rave reviews from kids and families alike. While we hope to be able to meet in person in a

safe manner in the fall, we were encouraged by this hybrid virtual camp program, as well as our very popular virtual meetings carried out in the spring.

In total, there are more than 60 youth members (ages five to 14) and 16 adult volunteers in NOTL Guiding, spread across four units that meet in the Old Town and Virgil. Guiding provides a safe, all-girl environment

that invites them to challenge themselves, to find their voice, meet new friends, have fun and make a difference in the world.

Girl Guides of Canada-Guides du Canada strives to ensure that girls and women from all walks of life, identities and lived experiences, feel a sense of belonging and can fully participate. If you'd like more information or to join in the fun, please contact Megan Gilchrist, NOTL Community Guider at 1notpathfinders@gmail.com.

What it's like being a kid living through COVID

Maele Pohorly
Special to The Local

During the virtual camp, Brownies and Girl Guides were challenged to write an article about what it's like to be a kid living through the COVID-19 pandemic in Niagara. One of the Brownies, Maele Pohorly (age seven), wrote the following account:

You might think that being stuck at home during COVID is a bad thing, but there are some good things about it also. It's true we don't get to see

our friends right now, and we don't get to do all the activities as planned, like swimming or piano lessons and gymnastics class. I even miss school lots. Sometimes I feel stuck at home and just feel like I need to get out of the house.

But there's some good stuff also. Like I get to spend more time with family. My brother and I have been playing outside together a lot, finding frogs, raising tadpoles and hunting for Monarch butterfly eggs. I can do lots of baking and trying new recipes and

lots more gardening. Missing my friends has been a big problem, but we have found new ways to connect. We call each other on Messenger and I have Zoom Brownie meetings now.

Also, we drop off small gifts and crafts to friends' houses and I have gotten many as well.

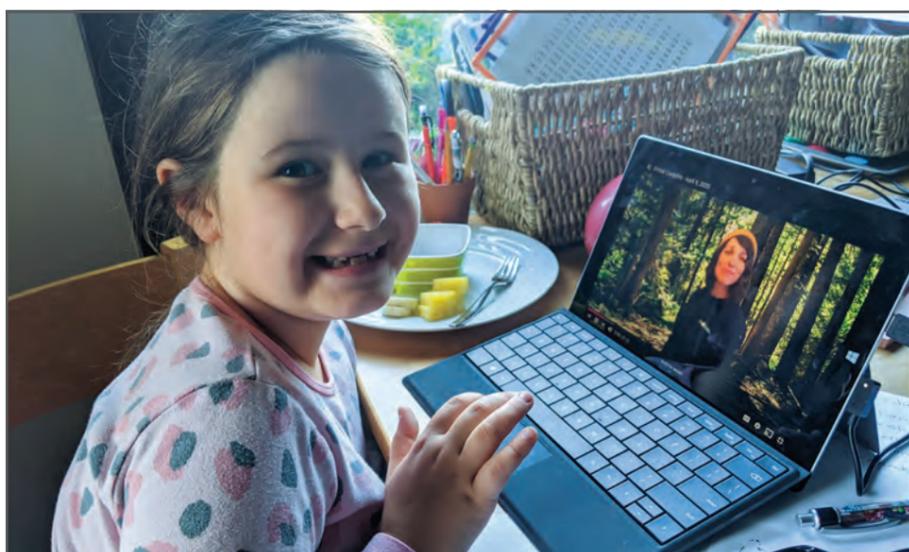
To wrap it up, being stuck at home can be hard but there has been so many good things that I can also do now. I hope you have been enjoying being stuck at home also.



Brownie Amalia Green paints friendship rocks, one of the activities embraced by the girls participating in the virtual camp-out. (Photos submitted)



Brownie Bella Gilchrist, Guider Megan Gilchrist, and Pathfinder Hannah Gilchrist enjoy S'mores during their virtual camp adventure, which included a visit from David Suzuki.



Writing about staying home during the pandemic, Brownie Maele Pohorly says she misses her friends, but is having fun doing other things.



Brownie Millie McGeachin learns how to put up a tent in her backyard, so she can enjoy the total camping experience, including sleeping in a tent.



Brownie Bella Gilchrist prepares an outdoor meal, camp-style.



Spark Emily Ferguson and her sister, Brownie Olivia, camp indoors under a tent they created for their virtual camping trip.



Brownie Greta Sobol does some outdoor exploring during her virtual camping adventure.



Brownie Lea Giessler tries an evening out under the stars from her backyard, during her virtual camping weekend.

Orzo owners hoping for extended patio

Penny Coles
The Local

Councillors want to help Maria Mavridis come up with a plan to open a temporary patio on top of two flower beds on Queen Street.

Orzo Restaurant, about 100 feet away from the four-way stop at King and Queen Streets, does not have the opportunity to use two parking spaces for a patio, similar to others on the street, because there is no parking in front of the building.

Mavridis would still be willing to pay for the parking spaces, as well as all costs associated with removing the flowers, which would be planted in boxes

or baskets around the patio, she told councillors Monday night.

“The structure will be professionally built to ensure safety, and will have reflectors for night time, with solar lighting,” she said.

Because the patio will sit overtop of the beds, so as not to harm the sprinkler system, a wheelchair ramp will be built into the deck base, not impeding the sidewalk, and will have a hand rail on each side, Mavridis said.

Her family owns two Queen Street restaurants, Orzo and Corks Wine Bar & Eatery, and both have drastically reduced seating due to the physical distancing necessary during

the pandemic, even with the reopening of restaurants in Stage 3, she said.

The small patio outside Orzo now has only 10 seats. The additional space would give them five tables, for up to 20 people. Inside, they will be able to accommodate only 18 to 20 diners.

That doesn't bring the capacity to what they need to see them through the winter, she told councillors.

Even when the indoor space opens, Mavridis said, “it worries us visitors will not be confident enough to sit inside, although we have taken every precaution and have all our protocols in place. We would love the opportunity to place an outdoor patio

temporarily, as others have done down the street.”

Although several councillors spoke in support of the patio, interim CAO Sheldon Randall said he has some issues with it, including whether the ramp slope is steep enough to meet regulations for wheelchairs.

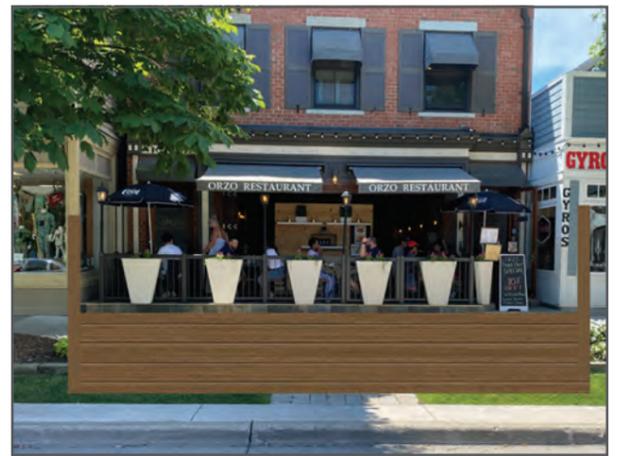
As the council meeting neared its cutoff time, with a plan to reconvene at 6 p.m. Wednesday, councillors suggested town staff meet with Mavridis to come up with a design that works.

“We need some creative thinking here,” said Coun. Clare Cameron. “I have faith that the operator, working with staff, can achieve this. Let's do

this please. Let's be empathetic.”

Randall agreed to visit the site and work on a plan with the

restaurant owners, to present to councillors at their Wednesday meeting.



The owners of Orzo Restaurant are hoping for a positive answer to their request for a Queen Street patio, but will have to wait until council continues its meeting Wednesday evening. (Virtual photo supplied)

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Museum lecture shares history of strong women of NOTL

**Kim Wade
Special to The Local**

“Historians have historically been male and interested in what is deemed ‘masculine’ history: military, political, economic, etc. and these parts of history have been, until more recently, male dominated,” says Shawna Butts, assistant curator at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

“So, there is certainly a gender divide. This divide affects historians today because it only tells one gendered perspective of history.”

Butts believes that in addition to a gender divide there exists a racial divide in historical records.

She sought to help bridge that divide last week as the museum embraces the future to take a look at the past through its summer lecture series. On Thursday afternoon, Butts presented the next instalment of the series with her talk, *Some Women of Niagara-on-the-Lake*, via the Zoom platform, covering the contributions of five women who have had an influence on the lives, politics and welfare of local residents in their time and beyond.

The five women that were the topics of the lecture were Mary (Molly) Brant, Chloe Cooley, Mary Madden Henry, Mary Elizabeth Olivia Josephine Servos, and Elizabeth

Ascher.

Following the lecture, Butts explains her motivation and her interest in women’s history “comes from the idea that history is only as complete as the voices it represents. These voices are women’s voices, but also, Black, Indigenous and people of colour’s voices as well. Many of these underrepresented histories have not been given justice in Niagara-on-the-Lake’s historical record.”

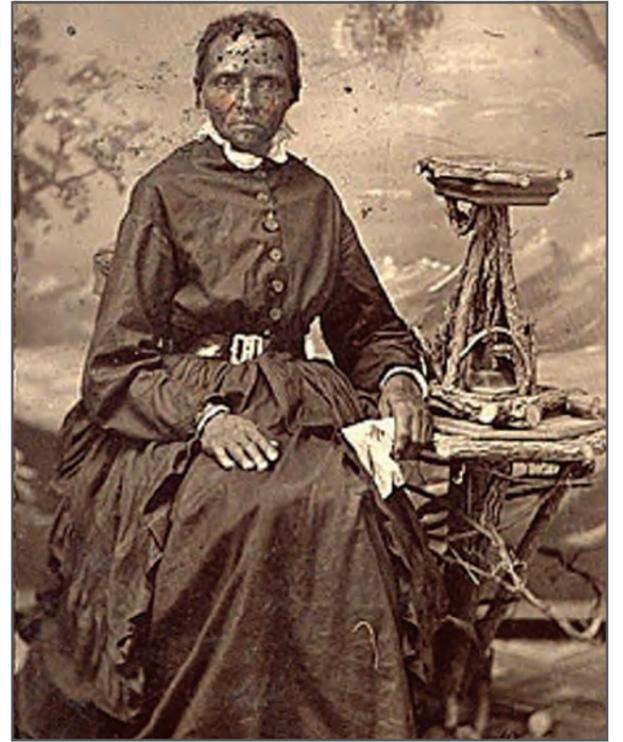
She began her lecture with Mary (Molly) Brant, also known by her Mohawk name Konwatsi’siaienni, a well-respected Haudenosaunee leader within the Six Nations community. Born in 1736 in what is now upstate New York, she became a well-respected and powerful ally to the British during and after the American Revolution. After her husband Sir William Johnson’s death, a friend of his, Col. John Butler, asked Brant to use her influence to ease the increasing tensions between Indigenous people, who fled north to Fort Niagara, and the British occupying troops. She and her family stayed in the area for about two years, before settling around present day Kingston, Ontario with some land and pension provided for her service to the Crown.

“Although she is often overlooked because of her more

famous brother Joseph Brant, or her husband Sir William Johnson, her achievements should not be ignored,” says Butts. “Mary was a very intelligent woman who was clearly at ease between these two cultures, and she was respected by the Six Nations and the Colonialists, which allowed her to use her influence on these two worlds at a vital moment in history.”

Then came the tragic story of Chloe Cooley, an enslaved Black woman who, on March 14, 1793, was beaten and bound by her owner, Sergeant Adam Vrooman, and transported across the Niagara River to America, where she was sold. Cooley’s resistance as she was forced into the boat was witnessed by a free Black man and former Butler’s Ranger, Peter Martin. Martin contacted another man, William Grisely, and the two brought the incident to the attention of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe. Simcoe set in motion legislation to abolish slavery, which began to lay the tracks for the Underground Railroad. Historical records on Cooley end with her sale, and as far as we know, she was never aware nor able to enjoy the benefits of legislation that her protest put in motion.

The third woman Butts would like us to remember is



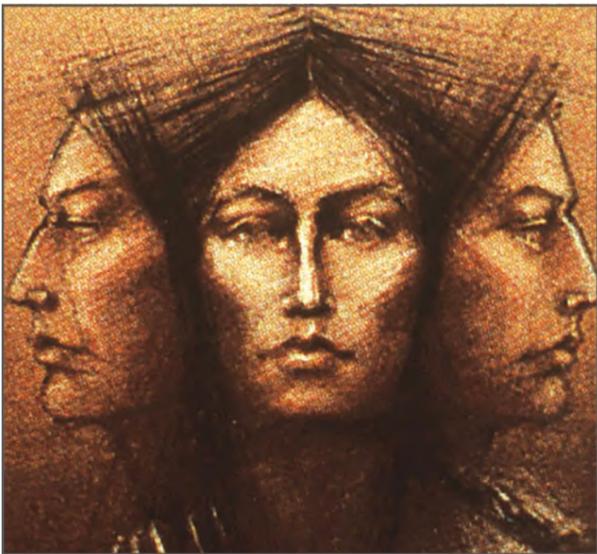
Chloe Cooley

Mary Madden Henry. During the War of 1812, Henry’s husband, a former British soldier, was the local lighthouse keeper. On May 27, 1813, American forces invaded. There were heavy casualties. Henry went out into the battlefield to bring coffee and food to the soldiers and tend to the wounded. On Dec. 19, 1813, once again, Henry displayed bravery and compassion when she took in some of the townspeople and provided them with shelter,

food and medical care after the Americans abandoned the fort and burned the town to the ground. Henry was recognized for her heroism after the war.

The fourth woman that Butts highlights is Mary Elizabeth Olivia Josephine Servos, the last person to own the Palatine Hills Homestead. She devoted her time to preserving the homestead and the museum her mother had created.

Continued on page 14



Three Faces of Molly Brant (Photos supplied by NOTL Museum)

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LOCAL HAPPENINGS

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 23 @ 4 p.m. | David Hemmings

Was your grandmother a British Home Child? https://us02web.zoom.us/join/wn_w-nPwuNHQ8-uaH04zKTJSg

July 30 @ 4 p.m. | Sarah Kaufman

Ask the Curator https://us02web.zoom.us/join/wn_v3m0iB5TCKoz_PUuRHbeA



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July 24 @ 3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

1. Send your Minecraft Username to notllibrary@gmail.com and we will invite you to join our realm. 2. To accept the invite, choose Minecraft Realms at the title screen. 3. Click the flashing envelope at the top next to the Minecraft Realms title. 4. Click Accept. We will be leaving the realm open as a creative world 24/7! Please note: there will NOT be a Library Moderator present online at all times. Mini Games will take place twice a week.

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July 27 @ 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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July 28 @ 7:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

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Personal mementos preserve history

Continued from page 13

Unfortunately, financial troubles during the Great Depression forced Servos to subdivide and sell off the property that had been in her family for five generations. She was then able to pay her back taxes and remain living on the homestead until her death on June 13, 1942 and is buried on the property.

During her life, she worked to promote and preserve her family's legacy. Even though she planned the family's treasures would remain in the family by bequeathing them to family members, the inheritors did not share her vision. Butts explains that the treasures eventually made their way to the NOTL Museum, to become "one of the most complete and unique collections from an Upper Canadian Loyalist."

Eventually the homestead was abandoned, and in 1952 was burned to the ground in a Halloween prank, Butts says, imploring listeners to take a lesson from this story.

In a world that is developing rapidly, we need to remember that the preservation of our heritage matters. If we do not fight to preserve historic buildings and collections, then we effectively erase the stories of our past, and those who have come before us. Once gone, it is almost, if not impossible, to get back."

The last woman on Butts' list was Elizabeth Ascher, an educated and highly accomplished woman who left a lasting mark on the area. Among her accomplishments, she co-founded the Newark chapter of Independent Order of the Daughters of the Empire, was the Director of the Agricultural Society, and was on the executive of the Red Cross and the Boy Scouts.

On top of her charitable work, Ascher was also a newspaper reporter and wrote for the St. Catharines Standard, and the Niagara Advance.

She is best known, according to Butts, for her work with the Red Cross during the First World War. In September, 1917, Niagara was a training camp for Polish soldiers who were to fight on the Western front. In 1918, during the Spanish flu outbreak among

the Polish soldiers stationed in Niagara, Ascher personally tended to them, putting her own life at risk, earning her the nickname, Angel of Mercy. Ascher's legacy began when she lobbied for a Polish cemetery at St. Vincent de Paul Church. In response, a Polish sovereign military burial plot was made for the soldiers who died in the influenza outbreak.

From 1919 to 1921, she used her voice as a reporter to launch a campaign to help the Polish people. Aid began to flow to Poland. For her efforts, Ascher received many awards, including The Medal of Haller and the Cross of Merit. She also was made an Honorary Colonel of the Polish Army and a Life Member of the Polish White Cross. Ascher is still honoured to this day on the second Sunday of June at St. Vincent de Paul Church.

Butts says her interest was piqued by her participation in the museum's upcoming publication about women of Niagara-on-the-Lake. "As community submissions came in for the publication, and I was reading them, I found that there were many women in NOTL history who I didn't know about."

Her interest also stems from her university courses in cultural anthropology at Guelph. "In several of our courses, we would talk about women's roles in society, and we looked at how they differ across all cultures. While we focused a lot on more contemporary women's issues, my interest in history always drove me to look at women in history."

As for finding historic accounts of women's contributions, Butts concedes, "it certainly can be difficult to research the history of a woman, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try. There are records out there, if you know where to look. The first are church/municipal records like those for births, marriages and death. These types of records will help to trace the lineage of a woman's family, including providing you with her legal name."

Women in history are often referred to by their husband's name, she says, "but a woman should not be defined by her status as a companion."

For an example, she says, Elizabeth Simcoe, wife of John Graves Simcoe who played a



Elizabeth Ascher (Photo supplied by NOTL Museum)

role in the story of Chloe Coolsey, was often afforded a certain status through her husband's position. Butts points out Simcoe kept journals that "give us today an important glimpse into the early years of Upper Canada history and provide scholars (historians, environmentalists, artists, and more), an abundance of research material due to her detailed record of her life here."

Another difficulty that also arises, says Butts, "is there are many families upon the death of an ancestor that throw away what could be fantastic archives, like letters, diaries, photographs and more, because they either don't care, don't think of local museums or don't think that a museum would want these items. But we do. These personal mementos help us to tell someone's story and allow us to preserve our history. They make great research documents, especially if written from a woman's perspective."

Butts believes it is important to celebrate of NOTL because "many of these women

are courageous environmental and heritage activists, artists, heroes, politicians and professionals, and game changers. We acknowledge our male counterparts for their contributions to these fields, so why not do the same for women?"

Registration for the lectures is free, and if you miss the lecture or would like to enjoy it again, it will be uploaded on YouTube by the next day for public viewing. The link to this lecture on YouTube is <https://youtu.be/xGbUwEcYidE>.

Upcoming lectures include, on July 23, David Hemmings asking Was your grandmother a British Home Child? as he explores the history of the British Home Child system and its ties to NOTL. On July 30, Sarah Kaufman hosts a Q & A session online entitled Ask the Curator.

All presentations start at 4 p.m. and require registration through the Zoom platform. Contact Amy Klassen to register for the registration link to next week's lecture at aklassen@nhsm.ca.

LOCAL WORSHIP

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Sunday, July 26th

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Message:
Psalms 31

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 - 15 S American flightless bird
 - 16 Light gray-brown
 - 17 How to start a pudding race?
 - 18 Bring in
 - 19 Garden tool
 - 20 Slant
 - 21 Marx or Warners, e.g.
 - 22 Adjusted
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 - 24 Place for experiments
 - 25 Series of church intercessions
 - 26 Prom partner
 - 29 Sarcastic praise
 - 31 Reluctant
 - 33 Ugly encounter
 - 34 Oil well equipment
 - 37 Arc
 - 38 Apollo 11 lander
 - 39 New in Tijuana
 - 41 Arid
 - 42 Stand-in
 - 44 Wept
 - 45 Thin pancake
 - 46 The Volunteer State (Abbr.)
 - 47 Wooden hammer
 - 50 Batter's stat.
 - 52 A long way
 - 55 Castaway locations
 - 56 Bathtub residue
 - 57 Where to find Pikes Peak (Abbr.)
 - 58 Trim
 - 59 Rent
 - 60 Saturnalia
 - 61 "Peace on earth, good will ---"
 - 62 A k a C C C P
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 - 64 Commence
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 - 4 Recognize
 - 5 Junior's voice
 - 6 Vivien Leigh's G W T W role
 - 7 Strenuous activity
 - 8 Aykroyd and Quayle
 - 9 Teetotalism
 - 10 Second-in-command
 - 11 Actress --- Rigg
 - 12 Poet --- Nash
 - 13 Wanting
 - 25 Wolf Man --- Chaney
 - 27 Off-roader
 - 28 Now
 - 30 --- Martin, cognac
 - 31 Flat panel TV type
 - 32 Belonging to us
 - 33 Pigs will
 - 34 Strengthen
 - 35 "--- Got No Strings..." (Pinochio)
 - 36 Deity
 - 40 Gravetop vase
 - 43 On a pension (Abbr.)
 - 45 Brainy
 - 46 Stopwatches, e.g.
 - 47 Light fogs
 - 48 --- in the arm
 - 49 South American ruminant
 - 51 Pop
 - 53 Kind of pond bloom
 - 54 Kingly
 - 56 Ostracize
 - 57 Drawbacks

ESTATE SALE

Outdoor Distanced Estate Sale — Saturday, July 25, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. 15526 Niagara Parkway. Jewelry, clothes, glassware, cookware, model ships, appliances, furniture, collectibles and cool retro stuff.

NOTICES

St. Mark's Cemetery
 St. Mark's Cemetery has submitted by-laws to the Registrar of the *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act 2002*. Any interested parties may contact St. Mark's Church at 905-468-3123 for information or to make copies. By-laws or amendments may be reviewed or copied at 41 Byron Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario.

These by-laws are subject to the approval of the Registrar, *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act 2002*. Telephone: Bereavement Authority of Ontario 647-483-2645 or 1-844-493-6356.

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PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from July 9, 2020

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

Down: 1 Bossy, 2 Awake, 3 Legendary, 4 Know, 5 Triple, 6 O'Hara, 7 Aerobic exercise, 8 Dams, 9 Abstinence, 10 Deputy, 11 Diana, 12 Ogden, 13 Needy, 25 Lon, 27 A-T-V, 28 The present, 30 Remy, 31 L C D, 32 Our, 33 Stop, 34 Reinforce, 35 I've, 36 God, 40 Um, 43 Pet, 45 Clever, 46 Timers, 47 Mists, 48 A shot, 49 Lama, 51 Burst, 53 Algal, 54 Royal, 56 Shun, 57 Cons.

Across: 1 Balk, 5 Toad, 9 Add-on, 14 Owen, 15 Rhea, 16 Beige, 17 Sago, 18 Earn, 19 Spade, 20 Skew, 21 Bros, 22 Tuned, 23 Yen, 24 Lab, 25 Litany, 26 Date, 29 Irony, 31 Loath, 33 Scene, 34 Fig, 37 Curve, 38 L E M, 39 Nuevo, 41 Dry, 42 Proxy, 44 Cred, 45 Crepe, 46 Tern, 47 Mallet, 50 R B I, 52 Far, 55 Isles, 56 Scum, 57 Colo, 58 Shave, 59 Hire, 60 Orgy, 61 To men, 62 U S S R, 63 N C A A, 64 Start, 65 Nets, 66 Sell.

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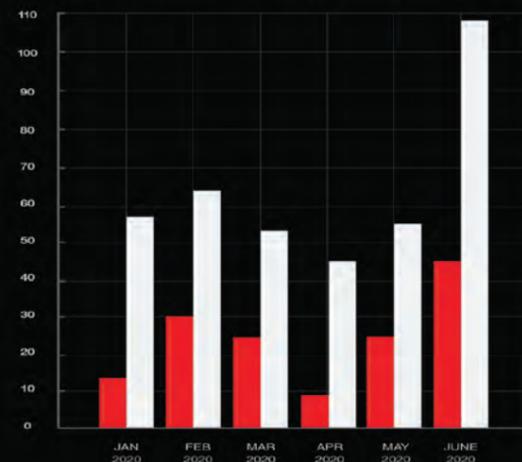
NIAGARA ON THE LAKE

NIAGARA'S LUXURY LEADER



June Market Update

● New Listings ● New Sales



\$ Sales +84% (May/June)

|| Average Sale Price \$1.14M (June)

📅 61 Days On Market (June)

*Based on residential unit sales 750k+ from ORTIS MLS® in Niagara for 2019



Aaron Cherney* Arthur Wosinski* Cheryl Marr* Dan Stefels*** Doreen Ibba* Erin Bice* Gloria Szylak**
 Heather Matte* Helen Mosca* James O'Connor* Jason Clements* Jo-Ann Cudmore* Lenore Sooknarine* Les Scott*
 Lesley Browne* Lisa Ibba* Magdalena Bator* Margie Van Gelder* Matt Miller* Michelle Reynolds**
 Perry Quinn* Peter Domarchuk* Robert Pozzobon* Sally Miller* Stefan Regier* Wendy Midgley*

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