Debate over delegated authority gets heated

When councillors debated a motion intended to impose an end date to the delegation of authority approved in March, the tense discussion that ensued came more about whether councillors believe Lord Mayor Betty Disero and interim CAO Sheldon Randall have overstepped their authority.

The discussion occurred during Wednesday’s continuation of last week’s council meeting, when Councillor Norm Arsenault presented a motion asking that the delegation of authority come to an end Aug. 24, the date of the next council meeting.

It came into effect March 17, when the Town was declared a state of emergency, and was approved to allow the lord mayor and interim CAO to make decisions quickly, without waiting for a council meeting.

Since then, any decisions made by the lord mayor and interim CAO were later approved by council, although not unanimously. Some councillors have said they want a more detailed account, which has so far not been available to them.

Disero opened Wednesday’s discussion on a personal note, saying she felt the motion, which was presented to them in big, bold, red type, was “belittling, demanding, hand-slapping or scolding of some kind,” when she feels proud of the work that has been done through the authority delegated to her and Randall.

To remind councillors, and ensure the public understands what has been initiated through the delegation of authority, she listed some of the many decisions made “to protect the health and safety for the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake,” including closing facilities; explaining essential services; helping residents who need help; instituting the parking prohibition when too many visitors were coming to town and there were no services; reopening washrooms; instituting the COVID complaint line; organizing an appreciation night for frontline workers; sending food and supplies to long-term care facilities; continuing to provide services while working with a reduced complement of staff; continuing grass-cutting and parks and road maintenance; continuing the hanging basket program; offering children’s camps; and banning the use of tents and barbecues in town parks.

From the time the delegation of authority was approved, Disero said, she and Randall talked to councillors every day, until March 30, when the first special council meeting was held and councillors were given regular updates.

“We weren’t getting any pushback on our decisions,” she said.

In May, regular committee and council meetings began, with council making decisions, and weekly updates continued, with no dissension until Disero and Randall “tweaked” a decision made by council regarding the closure of Queen Street, changing some of the details of the trial.

Continued on page 2

Spike in COVID cases a reminder to be vigilant

The number of COVID-19 cases has spiked in Niagara-on-the-Lake, with no indication of their origin.

The number of reported cases was at 29 on Monday, and by Tuesday, had jumped to 31.

When Niagara Region Public Health began breaking down the numbers by municipality at the end of May, NOTL had 21 known cases. There was one new case in June, two new cases last week, a jump of five Saturday, and two more by Tuesday.

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The Regional acting medical officer of health, Dr. Mustafa Hirji, says there was a “very small number” of cases — he wouldn’t give an exact number — which were unrelated, and he can’t pinpoint how those people contracted the disease.

“We just don’t know,” he said, categorizing them as community transmission. Of the nine new cases, he said, the rest are considered close contact, meaning family, friends or co-workers of those first cases.

“What we have is a small number of cases, and spread...
July 30, 2020

The NOTL Local

Councillors split on issue as defeated in a tie

Continued from page 1

In her video, she says, “I have no concerns with the (emergency) group, but that the ‘status quo’ should remain for now, but giving an end date of Aug. 24 would give council time to analyze whether it needed to continue.”

Coun. Allan Bisback said he looked at the motion as extending the delegated authority; with an end date.

Coun. Gary Burroughs, Wendy Cheropita and Clare Cameron all spoke in favour of the motion.

Burroughs has indicated in recent weeks he thinks it’s time for the decisions of running the town should be returned to the council table. He reiterated his concern at last week’s meeting, saying there should be more participation by all council representatives, and that he hasn’t understood the urgency of some of the decisions that were made without council’s input. His support of the motion, he said, “is not in any way a criticism of some of the work that has been done by the (emergency) group,” but because he believes council needs to be more involved.

After thanking the emergency group for their work, Coun. Wendy Cheropita said the motion “is not personal.” This is about all of us working together as a team, drawing on our collective strengths.”

Cameron said she was supporting the motion because “nine elected minds are better than one. We’re better together, we’re better as a collective, that’s how I hope to work as a councillor.”

“It’s how she wants to work, which has found us impossible in recent weeks, she said. “My goal is to try to represent the people I was elected to serve. Bylaws (that delegate authority) has made it difficult to feel adequately informed in order to fulfill this role that was put into by residents within this community.”

Nothing in the motion on the table would strip powers from the very “important role of the head of council,” she said, but she was looking forward to working collectively, with “the full complement of council, and the talent around the council table.”

The motion, she said, would work as a reminder that we won’t need to do any face-to-face contact and work that has been done by the (emergency) group, “but I don’t want to be the first municipality to take away delegated authorities.”

He doesn’t want to handcuff the lord mayor, CAO and staff while they’re trying to respond to a time of a pandemic, he said. “This is premature. This is an un-called-for at this time,” he said. “We need to show that we support our leaders right now.”

He said he hadn’t heard any credible reasons that the decisions made haven’t been good ones.

This is still in the middle of a pandemic, folks, and this pandemic is not leaving any time soon.”

The motion was lost on a tie, with Couns. Arsenault, Burroughs, Cameron and Cheropita supporting it, and Bisback, John Wiens, Wiens and Disero voting against it.

Given the length of time we’ve been in the pandemic, people may have lost some of their rights and restrictions may be getting a “little closer to their friends than they should be.”

“But we don’t want to give the impression that it’s okay. We’ll start seeing results from Stage 2 and then Stage 3. We have to be diligent until we know we’re in the clear.”

She also suggests wiping down surfaces before taking them into the house, and washing new clothing before wearing it.

These “are good tips that will help you protect,” she says.

“We’re using every tool we have to keep people safe. We’re just at the beginning of this, not the end. The next step, whatever it is and when ever it comes, we’ll continue to watch to see the impact on the community. We have to move forward. We have to be extra cautious.”

She says, those to whom have become more lax in recent weeks, “go back to what we were doing in March and April and tell anyone to panic. This isn’t a panic situation. I just want you to be cautious.”

And especially important, she says, “don’t go into crowds of people if you don’t have to.”

In her video, she says, “I don’t say this to scare you. I say this to protect you.”

If confirmed cases has increased, the Region’s number of confirmed cases has increased, she said, “somebody decides that we won’t need to do anything quickly after Aug. 24.”

She suggested that if COVID numbers continued to rise, the goal should be to look after the safety of the town “by staying the course, until at least the end of August, calling the motion “a very knee-jerk reaction to something that will not be in the best interests of our residents.”

Arsenault, who had made the motion that was presented to council in large, bold, red type, as Disero pointed out, said he meant no offence by it, and apologized — in just the wanted the change he was asking for, but giving an end date of Aug. 24.

The motion was lost on a tie, with Couns. Arsenault, Burroughs, Cameron and Cheropita voting in favour of the motion, and Couns. Gary Burroughs, Wendy Cheropita and Clare Cameron all speaking in favour of the motion.

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When “the time to ease up,” Disero said there were no delegates, “we don’t want to give the impression that it’s okay.”

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Dock Area shoreline protection to proceed

Penny Coles
The Local

An ongoing issue of funding to complete much-needed work on the waterfront has been resolved.

Council has approved spending $300,000 on projects in the Ball’s Beach parkette this summer, within the time frame of the provincial permit that allows the work to be completed.

The Town has been trying to manage soil erosion and flooding since 2017, the first year of seriously high water levels, which occurred in 2019.

Those two summers caused significant damage to the shoreline in the Dock Area, and put a historic culvert and public infrastructure at risk, says a town staff report.

An erosion plan has been implemented in small parts as funding became available, and when water levels were low.

On July 18, waterfront resident Ron Simkus, a mining engineer who keeps Dock Area residents abreast of water levels and soil erosion issues, sent an email to councillors, town staff and residents, saying the next 30 days will provide “ideal conditions for work in the water,” and fall within the time frame of the environmental permit to allow the work to be completed.

Simkus said his email was sent to support Town environmental supervisor Brett Ruck, who had a report to present to council asking for the funding for the project. The Dock Area resident wanted to add his voice, and that of his neighbours along the waterfront, to the urgency of the situation.

The work should have been done in 2018, he said, but the Town was not able to get the provincial permit in time. The even higher levels of 2019 weren’t expected, and the in-water work had to wait.

It needs to be done this year, he says, because current conditions could mean high water levels again in 2021.

In the last two weeks, Simkus says, town surveyors have been staking property boundary lines along the parkette, and several trees have been marked with paint for removal.

About 100 large, expensive anchor stones, boulders and cobble, have been piled in the parkette since the spring of 2018, but the work was put on hold while the Town waited for the provincial permit, which allows the in-water work to be done outside the fish-spawning season.

The groyne installation, which involves placing anchor stone in the water to create a small peninsula at an angle to the shore, can be completed within the allowed time, councillors heard from Ruck at last week’s council meeting. The in-water portion of the project is only expected to take about three weeks.

The groyne in the lake acts like a breakwater, Simkus explained. Boulders placed along the shoreline prevent waves from taking soil with them as they wash back into the lake.

The report to council says additional stone will be necessary to complete the groyne, estimated at $140,000, which includes the material delivered and placed.

The boulder berm is un-budgeted, and will cost about $100,000. The balance of $60,000 is required for park restoration.

Councillors approved the $300,000 to allow the project to go ahead. Whatever work is not completed will be included in 2021 budget considerations.

There may be a need for park closure while the work is done, councillors heard, but once more detailed information is available, residents will be notified.

Safety and fun on the water

Tim Bala of Paddle Niagara, teaching paddle boarding to a group of kids with instructor Maddie Leblanc, says the water off the beach at Queen’s Royal Park and at Ball’s Beach has never been cleaner. He started his group in the water at Ball’s Beach Monday because it was windy on the lake, then moved to some shade beside Queen’s Royal for land lessons.

Although the beach at Queen’s Royal has been posted as unsafe for swimming due to the E. coli level twice this year, both times for 24 hours after a storm, parents of the kids he takes out on Lake Ontario are not worried about water quality, he says — they’re local, they know the beach, and they understand there is a sewer outlet off to the side. The paddle-boarders avoid that area and go further out into the lake. The Region is testing the water not because it’s a beach, but as part of an ongoing Town sewer improvement project. (Penny Coles)
As more businesses and services reopen, we must all continue our efforts to protect each other.

Wear a face covering where physical distancing is a challenge or where required.

Continue to practice physical distancing, stay two metres apart even in gatherings.

Continue to wash hands frequently.

Get tested if you are worried you may have COVID-19, or have been exposed to the virus.

Inside or out, stay safe. Save lives.

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Police ask for protest protocols

Penny Coles
The Local

With horse and carriage protests taking advantage of the busiest corner in town during one of the hottest summers on record, and the four discussions will become even more heated than they have been, town councillors are talking about what can be done to keep everyone safe.

At a discussion about the options at last week’s council meeting, one of the suggestions put forward by Coun. Betty Duerro was to look at creating a buffer around the area on King Street where drivers line up with their horses and carriages. She’d like to give them exclusive use of that space and a feeling of safety and protection.

Duerro also asked staff to look at setting up a session on defusing or de-escalating difficult situations related to public protection.

The second suggestion was to develop a new protocol that would set out an agreement from those involved, including the protesters, the horse and carriage companies, and the Town.

On July 24, the Niagara Regional Police posted a plea on their website, saying they were “taking the unprecedented step to publicly request all sides to enter into meaningful discussions and negotiations that speak to the core issues of the dispute, and find some resolution.”

As background, the NRP requested an animal rights group began protesting the use of horse-drawn carriages in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2017. “In the three years, counter protestors supporting the horse-drawn carriage businesses have also become involved in protests; the opposing groups ultimately both expressing their rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to lawfully peaceful assembly and protest,” the news release says.

The duty of the police “is to remain neutral and maintain public peace and safety.” The police are continual monitoring the situation, and their efforts have not led to charges of any kind. “There have been many reports, police calls for service, meetings, along with investigations resulting in cautions, and also officer discretion for both sides. We have reviewed the applicable case laws as they apply to peaceful assembly, and sought legal counsel from the office of the local Crown Attorney.”

The police have taken part in the negotiation of two good faith protest guidelines to date, one in 2018 and another in 2019. While not legally binding, the guidelines established a framework for peaceful protest and behaviour. The 2019 protocol ultimately went unsigned by some of the parties involved.

“Our officers will continue to do their duty as it relates to all parties involved in the ongoing dispute over animal rights and the carriage businesses in NOTL,” says Inspector James McCaffrey in the NRP release. “We will maintain our neutrality and continue to manage the situation using discretion, education, and where required, enforcement. We will continue to avail ourselves to both sides for discussion, as the maintaining of the public peace and safety for all those involved and the community remains paramount to our officers.”

With their request for discussions and negotiation, the police are looking for “a resolution that will be agreeable for both sides, the community of NOTL, and its many visitors.”

At last week’s council meeting, all of Disero’s motions were approved.

Laura Sentinéal, attending the virtual council meeting, thanked councillors for their support, and for their efforts to make the corner on King and Queen Street a safer, more peaceful place for her horses and drivers.

Sentiñéal, who with her husband Fred and family operate Sentinéal Carriages, says she would be happy to have some distance around their pathway, where they line up, to keep the protesters at a distance.

“That space, she says, is the horses’ ‘safe, relaxing, happy place to be.’ To keep the protesters out of their space would certainly be advantageous.”

It was good of Duerro to include Sentinéal staff in her offer of resolution training, she added. She also said she would be willing to discuss another protocol.

She signed the first agreement, but last year, had hired a lawyer to help the business through the protests, who suggested she shouldn’t sign it.

“I agreed to it verbally, but I didn’t feel comfortable signing it,” she told The Local.

However, she said she would take part in any discussions about a protocol if the Town and the police felt it could help resolve some of the recurring issues.

“Tm happy to cooperate with whatever the Town and police feel is constructive and helpful.”

She has developed her own company protocol, she said.

“We don’t engage with the protesters. We’re just going out there and doing our job.”

What really pleased her about the discussions amongst councillors, she said, was the request for staff to have a look at the options and rights of the municipality.

During recent years of discussions, town representatives have told there was little they could do, with the right to peacefully protest enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

However, as Crown lawyer pointed out, “the Charter of Rights is strong, and rightly so, but it is not an absolute right to protest.”

Several councillors agreed it should be within the jurisdiction of the municipality to assign a specific area for a protest, without interfering with the livelihood of the horse and carriage companies, and asked staff to seek legal advice to determine the rights of the municipality.

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Cooling off on a hot day

Memorial Park pool has been opened, opening Saturdays and Sundays, and extending weekday hours. There are now family swim times, and the pool can be rented for up to 25 people. Hannah Gilchrist and her grandmother Claudia have enjoyed the morning lane swims. Claudia has reserved a lane every day since the pool has opened, and occasionally two, so her granddaughter can swim with her. Saturday afternoon, a group of Davids residents rented the Old Town pool for a community gathering, since their St. Davids pool remains closed for the season. (Penny Coles)
The residents have dredged their backyard or an outdoor place without bylaws being adhered to or enforced, and by not having the roadway properly prepared or maintained, the email says.

The Halowiskis say their parents sold part of their property to the developer of the subdivision, and since then, there have been ongoing problems with regard to fencing, drainage and trespassing, with no support from the Town.

The owners of the laneway also say they have offered to work with the Town, and have "on numerous occasions stated that we would allow the Town on the property to suppress the dust."

The email says they understand the majority of all this took place a long time ago, and many councils ago, but we are hoping for a solution that will prevent every going on way too long and we are looking for a resolution to the conflict once and for all.

The tour company hasn’t operated this summer, but was hoping to before the end of the season. (Penny Coles file photo)

The Pedal Pub requires a regional licence to operate, but councillors have issues with safety and noise. The tour company hasn’t operated this summer, but was hoping to before the end of the season. (Penny Coles file photo)

The Pedal Pub requires a regional licence to operate, but councillors have issues with safety and noise. The tour company hasn’t operated this summer, but was hoping to before the end of the season. (Penny Coles file photo)

Neighbours pay for dust control spraying

The increased frustration of the homeowner on Hickory Avenue, wanting a solution to an extreme dust problem that seriously impacts the use of their backyards, is evident in recent emails emailed to the Town, asking for immediate action.

It doesn’t sound like they will be offered a solution any time soon, at least not from the Town.

After a presentation to the planning committee Monday, July 6, and a request in emails following the presentation for some answers, residents of the Courtland Valley Subdivision in St. Davids were hoping to hear a solution at the July 20 council meeting.

Instead, interim CAO Sheldon Randall, when ques-
tioned by Coun. Clare Cam-
eron during the reconvened council meeting this week, said it would take some time to go through decades of documen-
tation, that the report could be available by the August council meeting, that councillors might have to go in camera to discuss it.

The residents have dredged up documents indicating there has been a problem since 2006, one that goes back to the orig-
inal subdivision agreement. The houses border Dyck Lane, a gravel road which is privately owned and provides access to three homes.

Every time a vehicle uses the lane, a large cloud of dust is created for those homeowners, says Krahn, who was asking the Town to take responsibility and remedy the situation.

This is the third council residents have approached for help. The dust affects their health and their quality of life, says Krahn, because of a situa-
tion the Town created.

Residents subjected to ex-
cessive dust say they can’t enjoy their backyard or an outdoor meal, and patio tables, chairs and even plants have to be washed down regularly.

There have been presenta-
tions to council going back to 2015, petitions signed by the residents, and correspondence repeating their quest for the

The Halowiskis say the de-
veloper should have been held accountable for laneway access and its subsequent mainte-
nance. However, the Town al-
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stand the majority of all this took place a long time ago, and many councils ago, but we are hoping for a solution that will prevent every going on way too long and we are looking for a resolution to the conflict once and for all.

Krahn, while thanking
Pandemic fatigue will lead to more cases of COVID-19

First the good news. The Province has announced one-time funding of up to $4 billion, partially funded by the federal government, to help municipalities maintain services while facing increased costs due to COVID-19. There are no details to say how the money will be divided between 444 municipalities — that information will come in the following weeks.

Given the costly services it is expected to protect, such as transit, public health, and helping the homeless and vulnerable in society, it could be expected our regional government may see the lion’s share of whatever may be directed this way.

Lord Mayor Betty Doores says the Region sent a report outlining their needs to the Province, representing all 12 municipalities. That was the strategy agreed upon by all mayors, thinking it would give them a stronger voice. But at the same time she expects she will have the opportunity to present a case for Niagara-on-the-Lake’s unique needs as a community that relies heavily on tourism, and the devastation to the local economy. Let’s hope for more desperately-needed good news on that front, because what we’re hearing from local businesses is that they need help, and soon.

The bad news is the spike in local cases of the virus. Niagara-on-the-Lake has seen a jump of nine new cases recently, and although not a large number, that means we have nine local people, friends, neighbours, and loved ones, who are now dealing with this frightening disease.

We don’t know how sick they are, or even if they have symptoms. We don’t know whether they need help, or are well looked-after by family and friends. And we don’t know how the disease was introduced to the community.

The original cases are from unknown transmission, the rest categorized as spread by close contact. The Niagara Region Public Health officer has cited privacy issues in the past, but in this case, he says he doesn’t know how the first cases were introduced to the community.

What we do know is we have to continue to be cautious.

There’s a term we’re hearing, which could explain the spike here, and in many other cities and towns across the country. It’s called pandemic fatigue, and it’s causing people to let down their guard, much too soon.

If we’ve been a little care- less, we may need a big wake-up call, but it’s a shame the reality of our friends and neighbours being sick is what’s reminding us.

Listen to the experts — it’s selfish not to. Avoid large gatherings. Stay within your household. Wash and sanitize your hands often, and when physical distancing isn’t possi- ble, wear a face covering.

We may be suffering from pandemic fatigue, but that’s nothing to the suffering that could come from COVID-19, either for ourselves or those we put at risk. Stay the course.

Penny Coles
The Local

Chamber works toward recovery, welcoming tourists safely

Eduardo Lafforge Special to The Local

As we welcome back visi- tors to our community, there is something that they have added to their luggage: Trust.

We are all tourists in a while, and we have always tak- en for granted we will arrive back home in the same con- dition that we left. Reopened does not mean recovered, but the last three weeks I proud- ly witnessed all the hours of preparations and changes the tourism industry of Niagara-on-the-Lake invested to ensu- re our visitors and guests feel welcomed and safe in this new tourism environment.

Stage 2 of our Recovery Plan included trying different options to allow for the re- opened physical distancing and build trust from visitors and residents alike. The key to suc- cess is being able to shift when situations shift. Our health and the health of our business- es rely on us getting comfort- able with change, and adapt- ing swiftly and nimblly when it presents its challenges. After all the negative feedback we thought might be in the sur- veys of Queen Street, we were surprised to see how much the community was supportive of the street closure trials.

During the closure of the office of the Chamber of Com- merce and Tourism NOTL, we never stopped working, de- spite that most of the staff was laid off. We made a Recovery Plan that we have been follow- ing since early May, and a Re- covery Guide, available online on our website. We also pro- duced a three-times-a-week newsletter free to all those who wanted to subscribe. It con- tained government resources, as well as protocols and guide- lines from various associations and institutions, such as The Retail Council of Canada, The Canadian Chamber of Com- merce, CIAO and TIAC, and the World Travel and Tourism Council, all available on our website without login or pass- word.

The seemingly endless meetings that all teams, large or small, have had to consid- er every aspect of our visitors’ and guests’ needs, also includ- ed analyzing the potential fears of all residents.

Many of us moved to Ni- agara-on-the-Lake after vis- iting as tourists. The destina- tion has been one of the most recognized tourism brands in Canada, for the last 35 years at least. Traffic and a certain amount of people on the street are part of a tourism destination. Managing it would be beneficial for both residents and visitors alike. We are a living community that works together toward our common good.

The Chamber of Com- merce and Tourism NOTL are proud of being inclusive associations, welcoming ev- eryone. We have received some extremely disturbing comments recently, and we want everyone to know we cherish and adhere to the Ca- nadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code. We will not tolerate any form of racism or racial profiling, based on place or ethnic origin, colour, race, citizenship, sex or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital or family status, disability, creed or age. Niagara-on-the-Lake wel- comes everyone.

Find your moment! Wel- come back, we missed you.

To see Mike Balsom’s rec- ent interview of Eduardo Laf- forge, go to https://youtu.be/ sdxlC91gFpU

Views from the couch

Donal Combe Special to The Local

Say I Do is a series about a dress designer, an inter- ior designer and a chef who team up to create memorable weddings. The team mem- bers focus their talents to create magically appropriate fairytale weddings for ex- traordinarily ordinary men and women. It is a shame- lessly sentimental series. I loved it, you will love it.

Donal Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to go 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.

Letter to the editor

Letters! We want letters!

If you have a letter to the editor you would like to see published, please send it to pensy@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.

Auchterlonie on Astrology

Bill Auchterlonie Special to The Local

Monday, Aug. 3: The full Moon is today at 11:58 a.m., at 11 degrees Aquari- us. Emotions are high, and added tensions come from Venus and the north node of the Moon, and Mercury op- posite Saturn. Pride in what you’ve accomplished some- how isn’t enough today. Be careful.

It was Aug. 3, 1951 that the world first said hello to Marcel Dionne, who would go on to a great career in the NHL.

The entire Auchterlonie on Astrology is also on The NOTL Local Facebook page and also on my Podcast: www.auchterlonieastrology.ca.
Larry W. Chambers
Hanna Levy
Eva Liu
Special to The Local

Modern medicine has had a wonderful impact in the last 50 years, but health care can do harm as well as good, as recent events with hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 have shown. Experts expressed concern in May when U.S. President Donald Trump touted hydroxychloroquine, a malaria drug, as a “game changer” ready for immediate use for the treatment of COVID-19 and claimed to be taking it himself. They warned that his promotion of the drug could spark wide misuse by the public, with potentially fatal side effects.

Decisions about the safety and effectiveness of drugs are based almost entirely on what is known as a randomized controlled trial (RCT), in which patients are randomly assigned to receive a treatment of interest. Since May, RCTs on the effectiveness of hydroxychloroquine in the treatment of COVID-19 have reported that the drug produces little or no reduction in the mortality of hospitalized COVID-19 patients when compared to control group patients who received standard care. It is certainly not the hoped-for “miracle treatment” to COVID-19.

The situation with hydroxychloroquine highlights the importance of not being persuaded by “miracle drugs,” such as those advertised on TV, and that there are risks associated with every medication. The lessons learned from these events are important for anyone, especially for people with underlying health conditions like heart disease and stroke, diabetes, long-term lung disease, and cancer (who are at increased risk of COVID-19. As well, the more underlying conditions an individual has, the greater the risk of both COVID-19 and hydroxychloroquine. For example, heart failure, atrial fibrillation, high blood pressure, diabetes, long-term lung disease, and need to you with the assistance of your friends, family and health care practitioner the following:

• Are you taking your medications as prescribed?
• Are you able to obtain your drugs in your community?

Are you not feeling you have a morbid and civil obligation? The other comment made was, “even after you isolate, they don’t test again.” I then thought we have the right to request this even though it may have to wait two weeks for the result (unacceptable). The next comment made was, “well, I won’t die from it.” There is a possibility you might not, however.

I just got off the phone with another young person in their late 20s working part-time who was advised by their employer to go and get tested, and being responsible, they are going to do it. They also shared with me the story that had just recently gone to a clinic to be tested and was asked by a nurse due to the test if they had any symptoms. When the response was no, the nurse said, “you really don’t need to have a test, and next time if you don’t display any symptoms, you should not have one test.”

Then I get an email from a relative which headlined “Inhaled steroids, Silver Bulllet Off-label use for COVID-19 treatment”

Why do people send these emails if they haven’t checked the facts. Since them, this Facebook post has been removed. This doctor seemed to elude to the fact that this steroid is what has kept numbers lower in countries like Taiwan, Singapore and Iceland. The reason Taiwan numbers are low are: they introduced a strict travel ban immediately, they anticipated high demands for masks, thus the Taiwan mask miracle; they used technology to trace suspected patients and tracked their whereabouts during their 14-day quarantine. In Taiwan, quarantine were supplied free food and books, and Taiwan rolled out a welfare program giving those in quarantine $30 a day during that period. Singapore was similar.

Iceland from the beginning did contact tracing as well as aggressively testing for the virus on a per capita basis at the highest rate in the world.

Come on people, make sure, when you believe your health may be compromised, to get tested. As a family physician in Washington D.C. said to me, “this is a very dangerous and easily transmissible virus”.

I know many in the healthcare field are doing their best and are working relentlessly with sick patients, however, staff doing the testing do not have a crystal ball. When any patient goes in to be tested, the response should be “great, you’re here to get tested... let’s get it done”. Nobody should be intimidated.

Not only do you have a moral obligation to protect yourself, family and friends, but the people you come in contact with around you with whom your immune systems may be compromised.

Shirley Madun
NOTL

Are there reasons why you are not taking the medications?
• Are you keeping track of how you are doing while you are taking them?
• Are you feeling you have no support as to how to overcome these.

They can also help with opening packages some drugs are in, reading small print on drug labels and reminding you to take your medication. To be safe, take medication only at the time and dosage at which they are prescribed. The essentials of medication use are as follows:

• Medication is not a panacea.
• There is a reason why you were prescribed what you are taking and how to reduce the impact of disease
• For example, best results for high blood pressure occur when you take your prescribed medication while also managing your diet and physical activity.

Nothing in over the counter medications are safe for you to take.

• Think long term. Some medication, such as sleeping tablets, may give you the illusion of being pain free.
• Remember not all over-the-counter medications are safe for you to take.

• Music may help increase energy levels and improve your mood.
• It may help reduce pain by triggering your body to release endorphins - natural chemicals produced by the body that decrease pain.
• Mindfulness helps your body respond differently to side effects of your medications to stay informed.
• Self-hypnosis is a way to reduce your attention to something other than your pain.
• Acupuncture therapy uses needles to balance energy channels in the body and this may help reduce pain and other symptoms.

A very important fact is that people must at risk may be the group that is least able to afford a review of their medication. Physicians have a responsibility to help you design and decide what drugs you are taking, not just the ones they prescribe.

Family and friends can be helpful if you have concerns about taking medications and should be encouraged to talk about your medicines. By understanding your present routine for managing drugs you are taking, it may be possible to identify potential problems and how to overcome these.

In order to help you be the best you can be.

Larry W. Chambers has authored 175 articles and books concerning disease prevention (e.g. dementia), quality improvement in long-term care homes, palliative care and innovative approaches for continuing professional development. He is research director of the Niagara Regional Campus, School of Medicine, McMaster University. Eva Liu and Hanna Levy are medical students at the Niagara Regional Campus, McMaster University School of Medicine. They are interested in improving community wellness of frail older adults in NOTL by narrowing the benefits (physical and brain) gap, diverging housing options for older adults, and increasing economic activity within the community that also increases ability of our minds to interact with people and ideas.
Newark Neighbours no longer collecting goods at Cornerstone

Our heartfelt thanks go out to this generous community who continue to support us with monetary donations, food donations and other assistance for our non-profit organization.

A special note of gratitude to the volunteers at the NOTL Rotary Club who assisted us with the two special community donation pickup days, and to all the households who donated such quality items to us. We will have a wonderful selection of goods once we are able to open our thrift store.

Sincere thanks to the group of parishioners from St. Mark’s Anglican Church, who organized a food drive for us and again, to those households who contributed to these donations. This food drive was timely and nicely stocked our food bank.

Please note that we can no longer accept clothing and household donations at the Cornerstone Community Church. We are taking a pause until we can reopen our thrift store. Thank you for your donations. It has been such a pleasure working with Pastor Jeff Martens and his church members who were so accommodat- ing to us. Thank you to the youth volunteers as well who came to our rescue when we needed help.

Our focus remains on serving our food clients on a weekly basis. Non-perishable food can be dropped off at our 310 John Street location on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings, between 10 a.m. and 12 noon.

We are so fortunate to have folks within our community who continue to donate food to us on a regular basis, and we want you to know how much this is appreciated by us and our food clients.

Safety, noise are problems

Continued from page 5

Town on the second route, which goes through the resi- dential neighbourhood. The suggested route would travel along Butler Street, through Butler’s Burial Ground and over a narrow bridge, used by pedestrians, and then through Garrison Village. The wide bicycle would take up the whole width of the path, which would be unsafe for ped- estrians who would have to move off it, councillors were told by interim CAO Sheldon Randall.

It’s loud, and not appropri- ate for a residential neighbour- hood, he added.

“When it comes to lifestyle and safety of residents,” said Coun. Wendy Cheropita, “this is something all residents are against. As much as it is some- thing visitors like, I would say it negatively impacts residents.”

Cheropita suggested there might be other areas in Niagara where the Pedal Pub would be welcome.

“I may not be putting this group out of business, but it will be providing them with an opportunity where they would be welcomed,” she said.

“I think there is a place for it, but I have some serious con- cerns about the routes that are going through town,” agreed Coun. Norm Arsennault.

In addition to safety, he added, “it has kind of a carnal feel to it. I agree there are better places where it could do quite well, but I’m not in support of keeping it here.”

Coun. John Wiens said he was disappointed last year when the Legion issued a li- cence for the Pedal Pub compa- ny to operate in NOTL, with- out asking the town councillors whether they approve of the operation. For him, he said, the answer is a “big no, because of safety, and because of the noise and singing going through resi- dential areas. I don’t think it’s appropriate.”

Although Coun. Alan Bis- hack also said he is safety is- sue, he asked about discussing al- ternative routes with the business owner, but was told by Randall he didn’t think there could be routes that wouldn’t unduly re- gional roads or through residen- tial neighbourhoods.

“There are a lot of challeng- es with this. I’m not sure we can achieve a route that will not have an impact on residents,” said Randall.

Coun. Gary Burroughs suggested council recommend to the Region that the licence not be renewed, and Coun. Clare Cameron asked that the recommendation include that council discussed safety, traffic congestion and proximity of routes to residential areas as their main concerns.

Randall said the comments would be forwarded to the Region, and the Town could discuss a bylaw banning pedal pubs from Town roads.

Skateboard Park construction underway

Work on the new Skateboard Park in the Virgil Sports Park, which was initially scheduled for completion by the end of July, began last week. It’s being funded through a partner- ship of the Town and the Virgil Business Association, with an expected completion date of September or October. A second phase, with the addition of a pump track, is planned, but fundraising will be required. (Penny Coles)
Music Niagara presents two virtual concerts this weekend

Karen Lade
Special to The Local

Due to the pandemic, our wondrous musicians, performers and Music Niagara Festival team have moved everything to virtual events. The Music Niagara Festival is bringing music to you, with our new At Home Series, which provides the essence of what we planned for 2020 before the pandemic. This past weekend, a large audience tuned in to watch Emma Meinrenken’s premiere, and participated in the live Great Debate with Tom Allen.

On Sunday, Aug. 2 at 4 p.m., our Music Niagara At Home season continues with a most exceptional and affecting recital by Lithuanian pianist, Victor Paukstelis, also an artist, will perform virtually for Music Niagara Sunday. (Photo supplied)

Pianist Victor Paukstelis, also an artist, will perform virtually for Music Niagara Sunday. (Photo supplied)

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Pianist Victor Paukstelis, also an artist, will perform virtually for Music Niagara Sunday. (Photo supplied)
Dogs leashed, feelings unleashed during weekly walk

For Rob Thibault and a group of area men, a regular Monday night walk with their dogs is crucial to their mental health. Thibault, who runs a part-time dog training school called TBones K9 in St. Catharines, started Niagara Men’s Canine and Chat as a Facebook group in January. He organized the first group walk in early February, reaching out to friends, co-workers and students at his school, and hasn’t missed a Monday since.

The father of three adult children suffers from PTSD due to a childhood trauma. Thibault has been through more than five years of group therapy to deal with his emotional issues, but maxed out the time he could spend in the system. He was looking for a forum in which he could discuss mental health challenges when it dawned on him.

“I’ve got lots of friends,” says Thibault, “but nobody has any time. All of my friends have dogs, and lots of other guys have dogs, but don’t have time to go to a bar. It was really easy to just get a group together and go for a walk.”

A huge fan of the Outlet Collection at Niagara, the St. Catharines resident decided to hold the outings there. “It’s an ideal situation. There’s shopping, and shade, and water, and the whole thing is dog friendly!” Though they have met up in other locations, most Mondays are spent at the Niagara-on-the-Lake shopping centre.

The group has felt welcomed since day one, though Thibault remembers a drone tailing them during one of their first walks. He assumed they were being observed out of curiosity by mall security, but there has never been an issue. In fact, he says, they are often left alone to walk after store closing hours.

The group meets Monday nights at 7 p.m. outside of Tim Hortons. The only rule is that dogs must be leashed. Some will stop in to pick up a coffee before walking. The dogs, of course, are central to the evening. The canine companions are what gets the walkers out of the house. But it’s clear these walks mean much more to the men involved.

Thibault himself suddenly lost his “heart dog,” Athena, a seven-year-old boxer-cane corso cross, to liver cancer in April. Talking about her brings tears to the 45-year-old’s eyes. “She was the reason I got into dog training,” Thibault says. “She was an amazing dog, and she totally saved my life. When I lost her, I knew I had to continue these walks.”

A week after losing Athena, Thibault found his current companion, an apricot poodle he named Evil. She is already a star in his training classes, having earned four certificates in just three months.

Word caught on about the Monday night group walk. Thibault left a message on HTZ-FM’s morning show answering machine. The Facebook group got a few hits after that, and since then, the walks have grown in popularity, though there has never been more than five walkers at a time.

“I’m okay with that,” he says. “It’s just marvellous to have a fluid, changing place for guys to come if they just need to vent, or need a place to hang. It’s nice to be able to be there.”

“It’s always a dynamic conversation,” adds Thibault. “We’ll talk about work, or whatever is going on in somebody’s life. Almost always someone has a way to relate, even directly. All sorts of emotions come up. Everything from having a great laugh, to the odd tear here and there. We’ve had a lot of discussion about struggling with finances during COVID, with guys feeling that they have to be the primary breadwinner.”

This past Monday my dog Cocoa and I were the fifth of each species to join the walk. The two of us were immediately welcomed and joined in step with the physically-distanted guys. While circling the mall three more times, the conversation was light, but it was clear that one other newcom- er was thankful for some sympathetic ears.

Hoots is one of Thibault’s co-workers in his full-time job with an auto parts distributor. Having shared his relationship problems with Thibault, he was encouraged to join in for the first time this week.

“It’s hit me really hard,” says Hoots. “Rob told me I had to come out, and I’m glad I did. It’s exactly what I needed. I’m from Hamilton, and I live in the Falls now, so I’ve lost a lot of friendships. It’s hard to speak to people about what’s going on, but I feel I can talk to these guys.”

Adds Darren, who with his dog fed were Thibault’s students, “you find common ground with people you didn’t know you had. With guys, we’re macho.

Continued on page 11
‘This is the place where people can share’

Ryan and Roo, Rob Thibault and Evil, Darren and Jed, and Hoots and Mercules meet at the Outlet Collection at Niagara for a weekly dog walk and chat.

(Mike Balsom)

we’re tough, we don’t want to talk about some things. But when there’s other guys involved, it’s easier, because you realize you’re not the only one that’s gone through something kind of difficult.”

Research backs up what Darren posits. A recent article in Harper’s Bazaar stated that about five percent of men are comfortable seeking mental health services, and also quoted a British study that found that 2.5 million men admitted to having no close friends. Shortly after Thibault’s first walk, he stumbled upon another article, this one about a British man who started a similar group for similar reasons, called Dudes & Dogs Walk & Talk.

“The thing that I’m trying to fight against is that norm,” says Thibault. “I go out of my way to be very open and genuine with everyone who comes. I want them to know this is the way that I am, this is the way that it is, and this is the place where people can share.”

Thibault says his girlfriend is very supportive of his efforts to create a forum for men to support each other. That same Harper’s article pointed out how common it is for women to feel heavily burdened with being the only emotional crutch on which their male partners can lean. Groups like this one can ease some of that burden.

What about the dogs? Evil, Mercules and Jed, as well as newbies Roo and Cocoa, are all well-behaved. After a brief sniff, they fall in line and walk calmly through the outdoor space. Curious onlookers smile at the sight of five grown men walking their canines together.

Thibault, in fact, convinced Darren and Jed to join the first walk as part of their training. “I’ll be honest,” says Thibault, “it’s something I use very heavily. When I got my poodle, because of the COVID situation, this was one of the few opportunities to socialize her. I welcome that as another reason for guys to come out.”

Niagara Men’s Canines and Chat will be meeting this coming Monday at 7 p.m. at the outlet mall. Thibault encourages anyone interested to visit the Facebook group for more information.
Expanded Konzelmann patio a draw

Kim Wade
Special to The Local

Konzelmann Estate Winery has expanded its patio for the summer season, with a great response.

“You really get a sense that our guests are so happy to be back and able to enjoy a glass of wine in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake,” says Andrew Niven, director of marketing.

Retail manager Fabrianne Thorpe was on hand Saturday to attest to this fact. As part of her duties, she also manages the patio, with its increased demand. The weekends are busy and she believes that the demand is high enough that they could open during the week, she says. At present, the patio is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

With many of the guests visiting the winery coming from Quebec and the GTA, they could expect an even greater demand as the Niagara Region moves into Stage 3 of the provincial mandate. An increased demand, adds Thorpe, “is a good problem to have.”

The patio has operating for just over three years, opening in mid-May. This year the launch was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions with their fourth weekend behind them. Niven explained that in order to ensure the safety of their guests, “we’ve increased seating and expanded the footprint of the original patio slightly, in order to better compensate for the loss of space.” Guests are greeted at a shaded sanitization station, seated and wait ed on by staff wearing masks. Before guests are seated, the tables are properly cleaned and sanitized. There is also a flow of traffic with arrows on the ground to further ensure proper physical distancing. The seating area is made up of nicely shaded picnic tables with umbrellas, and a few Muskoka chairs are available in the fenced area.

On offer on the patio are a variety of Konzelmann Estate wines and their specialty, the fabulously refreshing Peachwine Sangria. All prices for the beverages include a souvenir GoVino glass to take home. They are also offering a charcuterie box, individually packaged boxes with a selection of meats, cheese, crackers, nuts, fruit, and breads. On Saturdays, Konzelmann welcomes Johnny Rocco’s wood oven pizza wagon to add to their menu. For dessert, Konzelmann has added Marble Slab ice cream to the menu with flavours made exclusively for the winery, including Baco Noir and Peachwine, rich vanilla ice cream, infused with peaches.

“We’ll be looking to expand our food offerings over the next couple weeks, which has been an ask from many of our guests,” adds Niven.

“We at Konzelmann feel so fortunate that we are able to welcome back our guests. Above everything else, it’s great to see our people walking through the doors again. The recent shift has been a positive one at the winery; giving us the opportunity to slow down a little and focus on guest experience,” says Niven.

His comment resonates with three out-of-town guests who were enjoying the patio Saturday: Isabella Zhoe, Sonja Bilic and Jen Huynh sampled wine and pizza on the extended patio. They were looking for something to do, and decided on Konzelmann for a “Girl’s Day.” Bilic, from Hamilton, was familiar with Konzelmann and had suggested that her friend come from Toronto to join her on the patio for some wine and sunshine, because “we love wine,” and “it’s patio season.”

As the summer continues, people looking for a Konzelmann tasting experience will be happy to know the winery is looking forward to increasing some of their tours and tasting events. Niven assures that, “over the next couple of weeks, we’ll begin to safely expand our on-site experiences; bringing back the popular Junk Food Wine Pairing Experience, as well as on-site (private) tours.”

Peachwine Sangria Recipe

1 bottle of Konzelmann’s Peachwine
½ bottle of Sparkling Riesling
¾ cup of white grape juice
Fresh Ontario peaches and berries mixed in

The patio is open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from now until Aug. 31, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. The retail store is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tastings are by reservation. You can book online through konzelmann.ca or call 905-935-2866.

Johnny Rocco’s popular pizza adds something a bit different to the winery patio.

Playgrounds reopen

Daniel Kulchar removes the fencing from around the Virgil Sports Park playground Friday, as Niagara reaches Stage 3 of recovery. (Penny Coles)

Isabella Zhoe, Sonja Bilic and Jen Huynh enjoy a girls’ day out at Konzelmann Estate Winery. (Photos by Kim Wade)
Are you a descendant of a British Home Child?

Kim Wade
Special to The Local

When people think of the historical significance of Niagara-on-the-Lake, they may not go too far back past the War of 1812. They are often told of the battle of Queenston Heights, the story of Laura Secord and the importance of Fort George. Yet, as quaint town in what was historically the capital of Upper Canada, we are steeped in a history that goes beyond 1812 and into an era of a different significance.

In his lecture, Was your Grandmother a British Home Child?, David Hemmings explains that Maria Susan Rye’s work in Niagara has had far-reaching effects on our town, our country and beyond. His lecture on British Home Children was part of the July series at NOTL’s museum.

As Hemmings, president of the museum board, explains, NOTL’s “strategic location in the War of 1812 made it a key target for invading troops. Its history is not only local, but national in the consequences of its inhabitants’ courage and endurance. Later in the 19th century, Niagara-on-the-Lake became the feeder home for the distribution of 5,300 British Home Children to farms and homes in Eastern Canada, and a few to the United States.”

The descendants of most of these girls still live in North America, but may be unaware of the work of Rye’s organization. Connecting the town to their ancestry “enhances the cultural heritage value of Niagara-on-the-Lake at a very personal level. Telling this story is important to our town’s significance to prospective cultural heritage visitors.”

Hemmings explained that Rye rose as a dominant figure in England in the 1860s, during a time when women were beginning to have a voice in social and political arenas. With the support of the British and Canadian governments, by 1867 she had established an emigration system for so-called ‘gutter children,’ mostly girls and young women, who were taken from the slum conditions and work houses of British cities and shipped to Canada. Rye’s goal was to have these children start a new life in Canada, away from the poverty and disease of urban life, by being “adopted, fostered or hired” into new families or married off into “good Christian marriages.”

To our modern sensibilities, this project may seem cruel or drastic, yet Hemmings reminds us that the treatment of children in the 19th century was fundamentally different than our current perspectives. Respect for your elders, ‘speak when you’re spoken to,’ Sunday school every week, corporal punishment of children, and a failure by governments to provide for their children all changed after World War II, he said. “Our view of children today is all based on the ‘nanny state’ laws that were enacted in the late 1940s and early 1950s. It has now been two generations for this view to sink in, and the conditions which Maria Rye saw in the late 1800s are difficult for us to understand today in the western hemisphere. As a result, our harsh treatment of Maria Rye’s organization, the forerunner in BHIC emigration, mirrors our current view of what should have happened then.”

Rye established homes for the children on either side of the Atlantic, one in Pembridge, England and the other in NOTL. With the help of her sisters and other women, she relocated about 5,300 children to Canada. Other like-minded emigration organizations relocated tens of thousands more. Unfortunately, records of these children have been difficult to obtain and trace. One of the difficulties has been tracing ship manifests for the names of the children. Children may have changed their names due to adoption, fostering, marriage, or as Hemmings explains, due to embarrassment over being labelled as a British Home Child.

One of Hemmings’ goals with this research is to gather information on the children using a database to catalogue the research. In 2019, the museum began collecting information on British Home Children, including their spouses and children.

Cataloguing and organizing a database of this kind is a daunting task, but Hemmings says he is up to it. Challenging projects have always been in my blood. The database on the Niagara-on-the-Lake website contributes not only to our local history, but also to clients of Library & Archives Canada, our national archive in Ottawa, and other regional archives in Eastern Canada. Having a single spreadsheet makes searching names much easier for family members and researchers. However, the relevance of a database is important, and the easiest way to demonstrate that is to engage living descendants. My motivation to do this research is satisfied by descendant satisfaction, and more interest in visiting the cultural heritage sites in Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

Hemmings asks if anyone knows if their grandmother or great-grandmother was a British Home Child, please contact him. He would be happy to talk to you and gather information for the museum’s database. He can be contacted at hemmingsdd@gmail.com.

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 the next day for public viewing. Upcoming lectures include: July 30, Sarah Kaufman hosts a Q & A session online entitled Ask the Curator. Aug. 13, Barbara Worthy – Virtual Scandal & Gossip Tour of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Aug. 20, John Henry – The Cayuga and her consorts: Remembering those beloved Niagara-to-Toronto steamer...
Winery event held with safety guidelines

Kim Wade Special to The Local

Sangria and summer – a perfect combination

What better way to cool down on a hot afternoon than with the challenge of choosing your favourite sangria recipe? This Sunday, Lakeview Wine Co. hosted their Sangria Festival on the back lawn outside at separate tables to tasting time and were seated outside the retail store remained closed, with curbside pickup for sales of lemonade. There were time slots for arrivals at Sangria Fest, and the retail store remained closed, with curbside pickup for wine.

Emily Wedderspoon and Ethan Churchill greet arrivals to the annual Sangria Fest at Lakeview, a low-key event this year due to COVID-19. (Photos by Kim Wade)

Try and were given a DIY kit of fruit to put the finishing touches on the experience. Recipes were created by the staff and incorporated wine selections from three out of the eight brands that Lakeview represents. The recipes also showed how when it comes to sangria, all wine options are open. Staff included EastDell Riesling, Lakeview Cellars Vidal Icewine, EastDell Summer Rose, EastDell Pinot Noir, FRESH Sparkling Riesling and fresh peaches.

Jack’s Sangria
1 bottle of EastDell Riesling 
½ cup orange juice 
½ cup of white sugar 
1 lemon sliced 
1 lime sliced 
1 green apple, cored and sliced 
1 can of lemon soda

Emily’s Sangria
1 bottle of FRESH Satin Red 
1 litre of Sprite 
1 litre of lemonade 
2 limes 
1 cup of pineapple 
1 cup of cherries

Andrew’s Sangria
1 bottle of EastDell Summer Rose 
1 bottle of FRESH Sparkling Riesling 
2 cups of fresh strawberries 
2 cups of fresh peaches 
1 jug of lemonade
**DYCK, LOUISE (LILI)** — At United Mennonite Home in Vineland on Monday, July 20, 2020, a few weeks short of her 93rd birthday. Beloved wife of the late George (2011) and dear mother of George (Teresa) Dyck of Vineland, Linda (Henry) Friesen of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Alvin Dyck of Hamilton. Loved grandmother of Tera (Ethan), George, and one great-grandchild on the way. Dear sister of Henry (Merna) and the late Helen (2018).

A brief COVID friendly, graveside memorial was held on Wednesday morning, July 22nd at Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Many thanks to Tallman Funeral Homes for their assistance with the arrangements. Sincere thanks to all the staff at United Mennonite Home for taking care of our mother, especially these last few months. We also wish to acknowledge Dr. Gruber and Dr. David Reimer for their roles in our mother’s well-being over the years. If desired, memorial donations may be made to the United Mennonite Home or Heart & Stroke or Canadian Bible Society. “Our mom was a good mom.” Online condolences at www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca.

**MUSTE, WILHELMINA (MINNIE)** — Born in the Netherlands, April 22, 1934, passed away peacefully on July 26, 2020 at Heritage Place in Virgil. Minnie was predeceased by her husband Dan Muste in 1983. She is the mother of Maarten (Susan), Dinie (Matthew Magee 2019), Henry and Dan (Joanne). Minnie also has six grandchildren, James Muste, Andrea (Emeric) Muste-Hudson, Heather Muste, Jessica (Jared) Kingswood, Nicole (Martin) Reeve, Derek (Chelsea) Muste. Minnie was also great-grandmother to Athena, Murray, Lucy, Adaline, Deacon (2016), Lorelei, Ezra and Jon. Minnie enjoyed working in the greenhouse and had a green thumb for growing prize orchids. She also valued the friendships she made while she worked in the Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital. Minnie spent many Happy Hours walking the Niagara-on-the-Lake trails.

As family we wish to express our thanks for the friendly staff and the wonderful care our Mom received in the last few years at Pleasant Manor/Heritage Place. As per Minnie’s wishes, there will be no funeral service. In Minnie’s memory, enjoy a walk on the beautiful paths of Niagara.

Online condolences at www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca.
The Shaw Festival has cancelled performances and public events through Sept. 15, but has not given up on a fall and holiday season.

Tim Jennings is continuing the juggling act he began performing when the theatre was shut down, working with ever-changing provincial and public health regulations and guidelines, in the hope he can safely open the theatre.

His concern, as it always has been, is not only what will work for the Shaw, but to resume bringing theatre-going visitors to Niagara-on-the-Lake to help local businesses and the Niagra-ara economy. And his focus is local businesses and the Niagara region.

Although opening the theatre is his goal, he has to remain flexible, knowing how quickly things can change.

At the moment, provincial guidelines will allow only 50 people in the theatre, no matter the capacity. He’s also looking in every direction at the possibility of grants, to help fund performances that will not likely make a profit with reduced seating.

As much as he wants to present a season, “there’s an affordability issue,” he says.

“Another challenge will be getting casts sorted out. All acting contracts were cancelled, although some are still not cancelled, working with the public health department on how to do that.

Details of protocols and safety measures are expected to be released in the coming weeks, in conjunction with guidance from Public Health and the Town, and following the directives of all government and public health agencies.

Tickets for Charley’s Aunt, Flush, and A Christmas Carol continue to be available online.

Shaw hoping for fall opening of three productions

Penny Coles The Local

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His concern, as it always has been, is not only what will work for the Shaw, but to resume bringing theatre-going visitors to Niagara-on-the-Lake to help local businesses and the Niagara region. And his focus is on possibilities.

“I’m so used to knowing what we can do, of being the guy with the information,” he says. “But I have no information. Things are changing daily.”

He says that without running, — he knows the ultimate goal, for everyone, is keeping the public safe.

“We just have to stay open to the idea of changes, and possibilities.” Based on the provincial framework for reopening businesses, and the further extension of the state of emergency, most of the season’s productions have been cancelled.

Left on the Shaw calendar are Charley’s Aunt and Flush, through September and October, and A Christmas Carol, in November and December, but even those are not a certainty.

Charley’s Aunt, he says, “is closest to the deck” but has a large cast, an issue that might not be surmountable. “It may be easier to do other things,” says Jennings.

All three productions are scheduled to be performed at the Royal George Theatre, a small theatre.

Flush and A Christmas Carol “are small enough, but it will depend on the numbers we can have in the theatre.” He’d like to see at least 30 per cent capacity, he says. Although opening the three productions is his goal, he has to remain flexible, knowing how quickly things can change.

At the moment, provincial guidelines will allow only 50 people in the theatre, no matter the capacity. He’s also looking in every direction at the possibility of grants, to help fund performances that will not likely make a profit with reduced seating.

As much as he wants to present a season, “there’s an affordability issue,” he says.

Since larger groups, up to 100, are permitted outside, he’s also looking at outdoor productions as an option, although the Shaw has never done that before.

Once he has a better idea of a realistic schedule, it will take four to six weeks to prepare. “This isn’t something we can do quickly,” he says, although he hopes to have plans in place to more forward as quickly as possible.

Another challenge will be getting casts sorted out. All acting contracts were cancelled, although some are still in the area and continuing to work as Shaw employees, others have returned to permanent homes, and some will have to be juggled to accommodate the new schedule, but that work can’t begin until Jennings knows what the schedule will look like.

Since the pandemic led to the first round of cancellations, and in his involvement helping the Town through recovery decisions, Jennings has continued to be conscious of the $220-million impact the Shaw has on the economy of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Region.

“I don’t even care if we lose money, as long as we don’t lose a lot of money,” he says, if opening means helping local businesses get back on their feet.

“Trying to get the road blocks out of my way to make that happen. That’s still the job, to do what is needed to make it work.”

The question now, he said, is also one of doing it safely, and waiting for word from the public health department on how to do that.

Details of protocols and safety measures are expected to be released in the coming weeks, in conjunction with guidance from Public Health and the Town, and following the directives of all government and public health agencies.

Tickets for Charley’s Aunt, Flush, and A Christmas Carol continue to be available online.