It’s an emotional, engaging and mist to our current pandemic. A local legend of the Maid of the centuries, from the Haudenosaunee, takes the audience along on a whirlwind ride spanning centuries. It’s a thoroughly entertaining lesson, all conveyed wordlessly via more than 70 different puppets, versatile stage props and an atmospheric soundtrack. It’s the vision of Shaw artistic director Tim Carroll, in collaboration with renowned puppeteers Alexandra Montagnese and Mike Peterson. The three-year preparation process included research trips to town and then the Whitehouse at 630 King Street, known as Miss Younig’s School, is widely acknowledged, but despite its significance, the future of the heritage-designated building remains a question mark. It’s now owned by Gary Chahinian, a real estate broker from Toronto, who was selling the property in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

It was one of four historic homes Robert and Dorothy Ure had owned in the Old Town. Robert passed away in the spring of 2014, and Dorothy about six months later. Robert was a surveyor who was known for making good deals on houses before they were officially put on the market. Although their Centre Street house at Mississauga Street was the best-known of their properties, they lived in the house at 630 King Street, which is thought to have been built around 1816, but possibly even earlier. They had undertaken several renovations of the King Street home over the years, says Chahinian, but never completely the task. Under the white clapboard siding, he says, is an original log dwelling, built by a military carpenter — the same one who built Fort George.

The Ures were known to frequent antique and garage sales, buying pieces Dorothy felt to be suitable for heritage homes, but rather than being restored, the houses they owned became storage properties for their purchases, he says. All have been sold — the King Street house, Between Palliard and Cottage Streets, was the last to go. The one on Centre Street, known as the Breakenridge Ure House, is now in the process of an extensive restoration by the current owner. The historic value of the house at 630 King Street, known as Miss Young’s School, is widely acknowledged, but despite its significance, the future of the heritage-designated building remains a question mark. It’s now owned by Gary Chahinian, a real estate broker from Toronto, who was selling the property in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

A Short History of Niagara

Alexandra Montagnese and Mike Peterson fulfill a vision of Shaw artistic director Tim Carroll, with A Short History of Niagara, a 30-minute puppet show about Niagara’s history, and maybe come back and see some plays after that.”

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A Short History of Niagara

Alexandra Montagnese and Mike Peterson fulfill a vision of Shaw artistic director Tim Carroll, with A Short History of Niagara, a 30-minute history of Niagara.
Owner says house will not be torn down

The significant historic home at 630 King Street may predate the War of 1812, although the exact date of its construction is uncertain. (Donald Combe)

The Local recently received a call from Oakville resident Anita Grewel, who is interested in the future of the King Street house. She and her husband, frequent visitors to NOTL, a town they have come to love, put an offer on the property in 2015. It was not accepted, and as she recalls, no count¬er-offer was made.

But she had a hard time letting it go, and is still disap¬pointed in the outcome, with questions about what had oc¬curred and what will happen to the house.

Every time they visit the town, they make a point in driving by, she says, to see if anything has changed, or if it’s being restored.

Several years ago, she com¬plained to the town about the condition of the house, its wooden siding and the roof, and the property, which she felt was not being maintained.

In recent visits, she says, she noticed the clapboard has been painted, and the grass cut, but she considers it "the bare minimum" for such a significant property. "It’s a special place," she says. "I would love to have re¬stored it, and I’m still disap¬pointed that we weren’t able to purchase it.”

Over the years, she has had various conversations and ex¬changed emails with the town’s heritage planners, first Leah Wallace, then Denise Horne, and with planner Jessie Austip. When Grewel was consid¬ering putting in an offer, she knew there was a possibility it would be designated by the town under the Ontario Heri¬tage Act, and was asking about regulations regarding the reno¬vation of a heritage home.

It wasn’t that the designa¬tion would have influenced the decision to purchase it, she said. She was planning to re¬store, not tear it down, and was seeking guidance in what was involved in restoring a design¬ated heritage home.

When she learned Chahin¬ian, the selling real estate agent, had purchased it himself, she was concerned about a few is¬sues, and remains so.

She’s not sure why there was never a counter offer, and there were no conditions on hers, although it was before asking price.

She is hoping the house won’t be torn down, and feels very passionately that it should be restored.

Shah heard the owner had plans to give the building to the town or someone who might move it off the property, and she’s afraid that if it is unsuccess¬ful, it might be torn down.

Chahinian, who was then a ReMax broker but is now inde¬pendent, says there was noth¬ing untoward about his offer to purchase the property.

There were other offers, but they all had conditions, he says, which were turned down by the executor, who was repre¬senting relatives who live over¬seas — he bought nieces and nephews of the Ures, who had no children.

He fully disclosed he was buying it, he says, and although there were local agents who might have questioned the sale, thinking he was planning to flip it, "that was six years ago.”

He still owns it, and has no intention of selling, he adds.

His decision still to be made is what to do with it.

He says he discussed the possibility of moving the build¬ing with the Municipal Heritage Committee. He offered to do¬nate the house to the town, if a piece of property could be found for it, "but there was no interest”.

Craig Larmour, the town’s planning director, says the property was designated in De¬cember, 2015, by the town.

He’s not aware of any con¬sideration involving the dona¬tion of the dwelling, nor any intention of the owner to de¬nial it, he says.

Coun. Clare Cameron, in her second term as a MHC commit¬tee member, remem¬bers there was some discussion with the owner, but she’s not sure whether an application had been made.

The MHC has looked at the house in previous terms, she says, and any alterations to desig¬nated attributes of the property or demolition, would require a permit and review by the MHC.

For example, she added, there is a beautiful carved fire¬place inside which dates from the 1790s.

In addition to its cultural significance, exterior and in¬terior portions of the building were considered of heritage value and included in the her¬itage designation.

The house was originally known as Miss Young’s School, and is connected to the ear¬ly settlers in Niagara. George Young, the carpenter, was a private in the Lincoln Militia in the War of 1812, and in addi¬tion to the construction of Fort George, also supervised the construction of Fort Erie and Fort York. He had been a founding member of St. An¬drew’s Church.

Beginning in 1825, Miss Young operated a private school in the building.

"The one-and-a-half storey, dwell¬ling represents a high de¬gree of craftsmanship, with its squared log construction and dove-tailed corners,” the desig¬nation description says.

Although the exact date of construction is unknown, it could have been before the War, and survived the burning of the town by American forc¬es, the designation document states.

Janet Camouchin’s History of Niagara magazine dates the house around 1816, with salvaged materials from older buildings lost during the War.

The original log structure and the wood clapboard sid¬ing are mentioned as heritage attributes, along with the brick chimney stack, and other exter¬nal features.

Inside, the original post and beam structure, the fire¬place hearths and mantels, pine floors and rafter system are noteworthy “and embody the heritage value of the house.”

Chahinian says he was sur¬prised by the designation, as was the executor of the estate.

"Inside it’s just a mish-mash of stuff. When the previous owners did some restoration, they took away most of the historic materials,” although he recognizes the significance of the log structure underneath the siding.

He says he bought the house on the urging of his mother and his wife.

They have been visiting the town for years, and although he hasn’t made any decisions about what he will do with the house, “it probably will be a summer home for us.”

He said he was "50/50” on the idea of buying it, "but they were 100 per cent. They had to convince me.”

At the time they were dis¬cussing it, Chahinian says, their youngest son was doing a project for his Etobicoke school on early schools in Ontario, including the one run by Miss Young. He’d heard his par¬ents talking about it at home, and told his teacher he knew about the school from his dad, who was thinking of buying it.

“That seemed a special sign to me that I should buy it,” says Chahinian.

He says he has had the outside clapboard painted to freshen it up, and has some¬one going every two weeks to maintain the property.

Until he knows what he’s going to do with it, that’s the best he can do.

He is still hoping to donate the building to someone who will move it, “but I haven’t had any offers.”

Otherwise, he will restore it. He won’t let the property go, he says.

“I reached out to the her¬itage committee, and had no interest from the town.”

It hasn’t been a finan¬cial investment for him, he ex¬plains — although he paid just over $300,000, that money in¬vested in a Toronto property that didn’t require the same amount of work would have brought him a much larger return.

Six years later, Grewel is still not over the disappointment of losing the house, which she would have loved to restore. "I love old houses and history," she says. "I wanted to do some¬thing good with the house, and not let it down.”

She can’t go back in time, but she believes the future of this house, and its preser¬vation, is important, and hopes to come to town one day to see that happening.

“We take a lot of road trips to the U.S., and we like to visit historic places. They do a way better job of preserving their history than we do.”
Booming voice, electric car attract attention for town crier

Mike Balsom Special to The Local

For town crier Tom Pekar, it all started at a wedding at Queenston Heights 30 years ago. It was what he calls a pe- riód costume wedding. They brought in the town crier from Birdrock, to act as master of ceremonies for the reception. He did a fabulous job,” Pe- kar said. I decided that if I ever had the chance to be a town crier, that’s what I wanted to do.”

Little over a 10 years ago the opportunity arose for the Virgil resident, when the city of Port Colborne was accepting applica- tions for the position. Pekar applied and was offered the op- portunity to be the city’s official town crier.

When the plans began for the celebration of the bicentennial of the War of 1812, Pekar joined the committee and offered his services. He became the “Boop- er” of Niagara, who did every- thing the town crier would do, minus ringing the bell. Since that time, he has been fulfilling that role in an unof ficial capaci- ty in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Pekar is a natural as a town crier. “I’ve always been loud, al- ways been boisterous,” he tells The Local. “I’ve always been kind of a stand-up comic type of guy. As a teenager, I was a folk singer, and was in several different bands, all those collec- tions of people who never really took themselves seriously.”

“I’ve always had no fear of speaking in public,” continues Pekar. “That’s the number one attribute you have to have. Sec- ondly, you have to love people, you gotta love your community, and those are things that I just naturally fell into.”

People in the region meet him as the new town crier. “The job is that I get to meet some of the most seemingly ordinary but amazing people who are the lifeblood of the community,” he says. “The volunteers, the un- sung heroes. And I get to brag on them, those people who are not looking for any recognition whatsoever.”

His love of people was ev- ident, as was his wry sense of humour, at the recent grand opening of The Scented Market on Queen Street.

About 65 people lined up for the grand opening of The Scented Market on Queen Street Saturday. It’s the second location for the company that will allow him to add a commercial insurance coverage rider to his policy.

Beyond taking the vintage car on his town crier gigs, Pe- kar, a dentist for the past 39 years, drives the Morrison each day from his Virgil home to his practice on Merritt Street in St. Catharines.

“The only time I don’t drive it is if there’s a thunderstorm coming, or if it’s less than 2 de- grees,” Pekar says. “I stay to the right side of the road as a cour- tesy. I have my lights flashing all the time so I can be seen and recognized. Most people wave and say hello.”

He describes the experience of driving the open air EV as primitive. “There’s the wind in your face, the sound of the tires, and nothing else. The best way I can explain this is when you made the transition from your tricy- cle to your first bicycle, and you were going so fast you could go any direction, that’s what driving this is like.”

By the time he arrives home each night to his wife Judith, Pe- kar says he is unsuited from the full-body driving experience.

“Tom Pekar was on-hand in his role as town crier to help celebrate the opening of The Scented Market on Queen Street Saturday. (Photos by Mike Balsom)"
Research ensured accurate depictions of history

Continued from page 1

Montagnese lauded Shaw board member Tim Johnson, director of the LON 360° In- digenous Education Initiative, and executive producer of the film RUMBLE: The Indians Who Roared The World, for giving his knowledge in craft- ing that side of the show.

On stage, the props are in- geniously created, and many of them can be flipped and knocked over to use multiple surfaces to depict different eras and even the vast universe.

Peterson and Montagnese, both dressed head to toe in white, dance around each oth- er, communicating with their movements, their eyes and their hands as they gracefully lead and accompany their orig- inal puppets over the simple yet deceivingly complex table-top setting. Peterson refers to it as mi- cros choreography.

All the while, the bold, lift- ing soundtrack, featuring mu- sic by Ryan Cowl, and sound effects that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions by Ryan Cowl, and sound effects that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can be mistaken for re- actions that in the outdoor setting can 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**Skyway twinning construction date set**

Penny Coles  
The Local

The date of a construction start on the twinning of the QEW Skyway has been announced, and the acquisition of property has begun. It was 2017 when a representative of the Ministry of Transportation spoke to the town council about what had been chosen as the preferred option for an eight-lane skyway across the town.

He explained a second bridge would be constructed north of the existing bridge for the QEW-bound traffic, and that the current structure would remain for vehicles going toward Niagara. Twinning, he explained, would allow the existing skyway to be used without interruption while the new one is being built.

Natalie Tremblay, spokesperson for Minister of Transportation Caroline Mulroney, said the design work is being completed, and the ministry is working toward obtaining the necessary approvals for the project. The current target construction start date is 2024. Once construction gets underway, it is anticipated it will take approximately four years to complete the twinning.

Some realignment of municipal roads was expected, with about 70 locations where “properties will be required” to allow the work to proceed, the ministry representative said, with the hope the sales would be settled “amicably,” and expropriation only as a last resort.

At least one property in the area of Queenston Road and Niagara Stone Road has been sold to the province for the project, but there are more to come.

The project is expected to cost in the hundreds of millions of dollars, with a more exact price tag available once design details are finalized.

**Honk Mobile offers parking options**

Penny Coles  
The Local

There are new options to pay for parking in town, for residents and visitors who are expected to phase out the current pay-and-display meters. 

Honk Mobile has been an option for residents and visitors, that are offered a code at a parking meter. Or motorists can download the Honk app, for free, at www.honkmobile.com or via the Apple Store or Google Play if they think they will use it more than once, including in locations other than NOTL. Bypost officers can determine whether parking has been paid for through Honk through the license plate number on a car. 

Parking rates remain the same, but there is a “convenience fee” of 25 cents. Once drivers have paid for parking, they can choose to receive a text alert update when their time is about to expire, and add more time without getting back to their vehicle. “If you’re sitting in a restaurant and you receive an alert that your time is running out, you can add time without leaving the restaurant,” says Arseneault.

The Honk app also offers a contactless payment option for drivers who wish to pay for parking and manage a session directly from their phone. In its rollout of Honk parking in towns and cities across North America, including Toronto and Hamilton, in the region, it’s available in Niagara Falls, and at Niagara College.

There are options for those who want to use it as a “one-off,” says Arseneault, when it’s a simple matter of scanning a code at a parking meter. Or motorists can download the app, for free, at www.honkmobile.com.

**Airport emergency landing handled with no injuries**

When an emergency was declared at Niagara District Airport Saturday evening, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire Department and Emergency Services rushed to the scene to wait for the aircraft arrival. 

Airport crews also prepared for an emergency landing. 

Fortunately, says airport CEO Dan Pilon, the pilot was able to land safely, with some damage to the plane, but no injuries.

Firefighters responded to the scene, to stand by, but were not needed. The plane landed “without incident,” says Chief Nick Ruller. The aircraft was a six-passenger amphibious plane heading home from Port Huron, Michigan.

The pilot identified mid-air that one of its front wheels was not available for landing, and it had broken off, says Pilon, and is set into the front float, it would have caused some damage to that portion of the plane. 

Landing on the ground was likely a safer alternative than a landing on water, he says. 

“The pilot did a masterful job of landing safely” with three out of four wheels intact. There were no significant issues, no reason for anyone to be engaged, he says.

While landing in that situation “isn’t the best way to test emergency preparedness, it was a good exercise to ensure the emergency response at the airport, he says. “It was the best case scenario for all concerned!” 

The aircraft, a single prop Dr. Havilland DHC-2 Beaver, is the type of aircraft that might be used for a trip to a cottage or a small group on a fishing trip, and is based at the Niagara District Airport, says Pilon.

In 2019, the airport saw 45,000 movements, and although that number dipped as a result of the pandemic, it’s been “slowly creeping up again.” With many take-offs and landings, “you know situations like that can occur. It’s good to know all emergency plans came together.”

And good to know that the pilot was able land safely and avert significant issues, he added.

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The pilot identified mid-air that one of its front wheels was not available for landing, and it had broken off, says Pilon, and is set into the front float, it would have caused some damage to that portion of the plane. 

Landing on the ground was likely a safer alternative than a landing on water, he says. 

“The pilot did a masterful job of landing safely” with three out of four wheels intact. There were no significant issues, no reason for anyone to be engaged, he says.

While landing in that situation “isn’t the best way to test emergency preparedness, it was a good exercise to ensure the emergency response at the airport, he says. “It was the best case scenario for all concerned!” 

The aircraft, a single prop Dr. Havilland DHC-2 Beaver, is the type of aircraft that might be used for a trip to a cottage or a small group on a fishing trip, and is based at the Niagara District Airport, says Pilon.

In 2019, the airport saw 45,000 movements, and although that number dipped as a result of the pandemic, it’s been “slowly creeping up again.” With many take-offs and landings, “you know situations like that can occur. It’s good to know all emergency plans came together.”

And good to know that the pilot was able land safely and avert significant issues, he added.
The message hasn’t changed: Vaccinations are the answer

Old Town streets were busy this holiday weekend — possibly as busy as they were pre-pandemic.

With restaurants and coffee shops finally available for indoor dining, and most businesses open, although with pandemic protocols, many of us see a sign of normalcy returning. We can do much of what we did before COVID, including small, safe gatherings, and a huge part of that is feeling confident in our vaccination status and that of those around us. We’re no longer as much about weighing every decision we make regarding how safe it is to go out, or whether every time we leave the house, questioning whether it’s necessary.

Learning about Shaw Festival openings on outdoor stages was welcome news, and this week, beginning Saturday, there will be indoor performances for those who loved the last Sherlock Holmes play, Sherlock Holmes and the Ravenel Case launches the Shaw’s long-awaited return to indoor theatre. The return of art shows, outdoor events, sporting activities, fundraisers for important causes are all signs of more good things to come, although protocols must still be followed.

We would not be where we are without vaccinations, but acting chief medical officer of health Dr. Mustafa Hirji shared his message this week that there is more to be done.

It may seem like a broken record to some, but it’s the answer to all of us. Vaccinations must increase for more positive change. If we all want to stop wearing masks or worrying about physical distancing, if we want to be sure our hospitals and intensive care units won’t be overcrowded from cases of the Delta variant, if we really want to put this pandemic behind us, we need to raise our vaccination rates.

His take on how to accomplish this is interesting.

Only about eight per cent of those still unvaccinated are the resident activists strongly against vaccinations and spreading misinformation on social media, he says. They make more noise than their numbers would suggest, and it will be difficult to change their minds.

Then in the middle of those who aren’t vaccinated is a group who are hesitant, but can be persuaded, and that effort has been stepped up. Those who provide primary care health, and others in the health care system, are encouraging people to be vaccinated, and by sharing the facts, that is working.

But the largest number, Hirji says, is those he describes as “complacents.” They aren’t necessarily against vaccinations, they just haven’t found it convenient, haven’t bothered to make an appointment or take time out of their lives to be vaccinated. They plan to take that step eventually, but haven’t got around to it yet.

Across the province, and the country, vaccination rates are rising. This is largely due to the focus of public health units, which are moving to pop-up and walk-in clinics, to make it easy for those who are merely “complacent” about vaccinations.

And since that group makes up the largest number of those who are avoiding getting it done so far, that’s where efforts will have the biggest payoff.

Watch for pop-up clinics in more community centres, possibly in shopping malls, and even in schools, where a large number of young people eligible for vaccinations may be reached. Niagara Public Health is in the process of scheduling pop-up clinics in social hubs and busy community spaces, to increase the percentage of Niagara residents who are vaccinated.

So what can we do to encourage these groups?

In the meantime, vaccinations will greatly reduce the likelihood of contracting COVID, reducing the risk by almost 100 per cent the risk of becoming severely ill or dying.

One interesting conversation I have had with friends and families is how those who are fully vaccinated can handle social events with people who are not vaccinated or have not been completely vaccinated at the rate we are seeing and that of others may be put in situations where they have to choose to either change the environment or invite others to change their ways.

The future may or may not include vaccine passports, but like the seatbelt, I choose to do what I can to protect myself, and I still choose not to smoke, but I can tell them to stop blowing smoke in my face.

As for smoking a mask, I choose to do that for two reasons.

The first is I will minimize my chances of getting COVID, and secondly I don’t want to smoke on my street, and the street will be comfortable without a seatbelt.

In the future when we have to go deep to examine our choices, and our reasons for doing or not doing something that we are told we must do. I remember I was one of the last to buy a seatbelt. I was so against wearing a seatbelt that it was 10 years before I bought one. I rationalized that it was my fault if I wanted to ram my head through my windshield, who are you (the government) to tell me I can’t.

I now know that my reasons were flawed, and today I feel uncomfortable without a seatbelt.

So as we move forward as we hope for a new and improved world, I wish my wish that we stop the politics and the conspiracy theorists and look to what is going to be best for us as individuals, and for society as a whole. If you want to wear a mask or not, and if you want to get the vaccine or not, those are choices that only you can make, but it is important to respect the choices of others, unless those choices put you in danger.

My job is not to tell people what to do, but to be equally protective. Our choices are not to get my friends to stop smoking, but to tell them to stop blowing smoke in my face.

The future may or may not include vaccine passports, but like the seatbelt, I choose to do what I can to protect myself, and I still choose not to smoke, but I can tell them to stop blowing smoke in my face.

If the future may or may not include vaccine passports, but like the seatbelt, I choose to do what I can to protect myself, and I still choose not to smoke, but I can tell them to stop blowing smoke in my face.
"Ode to Heritage Trail

You have been given a new life.

In spring, we love visiting all the muddy puddles. Coming home soaked in dirt.

In summer we love taking our shoes off and grounding ourselves with nature.

In fall we enjoy walking on the frozen ditches, making tracks ourselves.

Some of these activities will be gone with the change of the new path.

But we hope that the adventures will still be countless.

Thank You,

Amika Versteeg—Versteeg’s children enjoyed the Heritage Trail before it was restored. They called it the Jangle Path. This photo was taken in 2020, from Charlotte Street, toward East and West Line. (Photo submitted)"
Newark Neighbours celebrating 50 years of helping community

The summer of 2021 has been a busy one so far for Newark Neighbours. Given the easing of COVID-related restrictions, we were thrilled to open our Thrift Shop the week of June 14. It has been wonderful to welcome back all our regular shoppers and friends and to meet so many new ones that have now discovered our space more appealing.

During the extended closure of the Thrift Shop to ensure of the Thrift Shop to attract so many new ones who have encountered off-leash dogs on the Commons, the sight of a large dog bounding toward them can be disconcerting, and in some cases terrifying. This is also the reason why many individuals who regularly donate food and other supplies. Due to the addition of the refrigerator, we are able to receive and store a wide variety of fresh produce and herbs from Community Garden, grown and maintained by the town Communities in Bloom Committee.

Beginning this week, we are so very fortunate to be the recipient of a large donation of fresh vegetables and produce from the Farmers’ Market at the Village. Huge thanks to Rose and Ken Bartel of Bartel Organics, Olsen Family Farms and Bee Inspired Farms for their very generous donation of a wide variety of produce. Our clients are so pleased to have such a wide variety of fresh vegetables.

For a list of other items that are currently required to support of our “Food Bank,” please visit our website https://www.newarkneighbours.ca/.

As you can see from our redesigned logo, 2021 is the 50th anniversary of Newark Neighbours. Our board of directors, volunteers and members are humbled to know we are carrying on the legacy begun by Peggy Anderson and others back in 1971. Stay tuned for more information about a celebration planned for September to mark this important milestone and stone honouring the past, and celebrating the future.

Hoping to read several letters on the topic of lack of dogs on the Commons, I am dismayed by the lack of honesty.

The issue in question has little to do with people who walk their dog on leash until they reach the gravel path that Parks Canada has allowed to be an off-leash area, and almost everything to do with the ones who don’t.

All too often, when walking, running or biking on the paved trails traversing the Commons, I have encountered off-leash dogs crossing the trail, or standing in the middle of it, obstructing the way of other trail users. In many cases, their owners appear to be oblivious to what their dogs are doing, whether it’s because they are looking at their phone or talking to someone.

It’s also a normal occurrence to see people park their car by Kinman Hall or in the lot at the end of Charlotte Street, open the back door or hatch, and let their dog out to go on a mad run through the Commons or down one of the trails, unsupervised and out of control.

For other users of the Commons, the sight of a large dog bounding toward them can be disconcerting, and in some cases terrifying. This is also the reason whyForbidden to do anything that would interfere with the Commons, and in the grassed areas.

As it’s simple as dog walkers supervising their dogs and keeping them on-leash when they encounter off-leash dogs and keeping them on-leash when they encounter off-leash dogs on the Commons continuing to be an off-leash area. It provides a great, safe place for dog walkers to let their dogs run and play. But I’d also like for people to be more courteous about keeping their dogs on-leash when walking on the multi-use paved trail system that runs through the Commons, and in the grassed areas.

The issue is not the presence of dogs, per se, but the people who are walking them. I had an unpleasant reminder of this recently when my wife and I were walking on the gravel path (on-leash) down the treeline beside the soccer fields in Memorial Park. As we got close to the end of the treeline, a man and off-leash dog came off the paved trail leading to Fort George and strode into the parking lot. When his dog turned and started making a beeline toward ours, I asked him: “Could you call your dog, please.” He called once, the dog did not respond, and the man ignored the suggestion. When the dog went up to my wife and began licking her, he asked the man to call his dog and put it on a leash, reminding him at the same time that where we were was an on-leash area.

What transpired next astounds me. The scene shot is that the man declared, loudly, that we were “insane.” His rationale, he explained, was that as we were dog owners, we should have no problem with his dog approaching us or our dog that it was insane for us to be upset that it had. He saw that we were dog owners, he shouted, so we had to like dogs and he hadn’t seen a dog jump up and bite someone. He’s almost 14, and being approached by a large dog like him. We’re both seniors. If a large dog jumped on my wife, chances are it would knock her over. And while we don’t mind our own dog expressing affection to us, of being courteously treated.

If people would only do that, I might not find myself cringing the next time someone assumes that “he’s very friendly” as their dog rushes toward me and my dog. And not having to hear, yet again, “Oh, he’s never done that before.”

Terry Davis

NOTL
White-tailed deer often seen on the Commons

A lovely wild animal being spotted with increased regularity in the Old Town and elsewhere is the white-tailed deer.

On social media, residents frequently post sightings of the animals as they wander through town, sometimes feeding on plants in residents’ gardens. My favourite sighting last year was when several emerged from a ditch, crossed the road in front of me as I was driving, and disappeared on the other side to continue on their way following one of the creek beds that go through the Old Town. I was able to drive around the block and photograph them as they emerged from the creek bed, crossed another road to once again disappear into the undergrowth on their trip through town.

Deer can be commonly spotted on the Commons, and there appears to be a sizeable herd in that area, as well as along Lakeshore Road in the former national Department of Defence properties and into the Niagara Shores Park. On one early morning walk at Niagara Shores, I encountered one on the trail in front of me. It, however, spotted me first and disappeared quickly into the surrounding forest.

The other morning, I spotted these two feeding quietly in the area of Fort George. I understand their presence on the Commons, and in the forest near the Commons, may be one of the concerns that Parks Canada has with the off-leash dog area currently under review. But I’ve never heard of dogs chasing the deer. Coyotes do, if the opportunity presents itself. But that is nature.
Renowned artist’s exhibit opening at Pumphouse

Kim Wade

Special to The Local

We all have heard the proverb that necessity is the mother of invention. This quote has often been associated with what Plato wrote in The Republic. What Plato really wrote was something closer to “our need will be the real creator.” This phrase more accurately reflects a life-changing time in Lynn Dooly Marek’s life when, as a starving art student in a foreign land, she had to get creative in more ways than one.

Born in Montreal, raised in Athens, Greece with her ambassador grandfather, Dooly Marek adopted a cosmopolitan spirit at a young age. She began her art education at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ont. Yet, it seems it was when she spent, to borrow the title of Peter Mayle’s book, A Year in Provence, that made the most lasting impression on her. “To paint in Provence is to change one’s way of life. The subjects of my paintings were inspired by the beauty and lifestyle in Provence, and I still love the idea of being there,” she says.

Lynn Dooly Marek’s exhibit, Bistros & Marchés of the World…where it all began! opens at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Thursday, Aug. 4. (Kim Wade)

As a young person making ends meet, Marek found herself short of funds. She had a bank account and cheques from her parents, but made the mistake of misjudging her financial worth, repeatedly on a Friday afternoon, with “pas dargent,” no money and no ability to receive funds until Monday morning. Dooly Marek had to get creative, figuratively and literally.

“So I went to one of the top cafes in Aix-en-Provence. It’s called Les Deux Garçons, and I said if I do a painting of your cafe will you pay me 20 francs? I mean it was pittance but I was a student. They said ‘oui,’ so I did it right there on the Saturday. They gave me my money and that’s where it all began,” she explained.

Finding she had time on her hands in between her classes, Dooly Marek began drawing and painting around Aix-en-Provence more regularly. At first, she was hesitant to sketch out in the open. “I went to the flower marche nearby and I sat behind a pot with flowers so nobody would see me doing a drawing. I sat there with all my stuff and I did this very simple sketch. I didn’t even know how to paint properly.” Eventually she returned to Canada and submitted some of her drawings to the Reader’s Digest in Montreal. She recalls the art director took one look at this simple drawing she made from behind a flower pot and exclaimed, “where have you been all my life!” This drawing was displayed on the back of the cover of October, 1986 edition. Since then, she has continued to illustrate and paint cafes, bistros and markets across Europe and Canada.

Her works are on display in the Salon des Beaux Arts at the Carrousel du Louvre, in Paris, France, as well as in private and public collections around the world, including in the office of the mayor of Toronto. She has received the order of La Société Académique Arts-Sciences-Lettres, an old academic/arts society in France, centered around the university of Montreal. She currently teaches figure/life drawing to the animation students at Durham College.

“With a shared bathroom above and lived in a small apartment, I needed to eat. I mimicked the world, Dooly Marek calls wistfully. The smell coming up, and it was much more simplistic. Marek was motivated by a need or life. No, at the time, Dooly Marek had not been associated with what the creator was the creator. “need” was not bound up in an existential wakening. It was not fuelled by the desire to create a lasting impression on her. “To paint in Provence is to change one’s way of life. The subjects of my paintings were inspired by the beauty and lifestyle in Provence, and I still love the idea of being there,” she says.

Dooly Marek is pleased to be able to display her work at the Pumphouse, after being approached by staff to see if she was interested in staging an exhibit after they saw her work at an art show in Toronto. She is enthusiastic about the Pumphouse and its work, “At a time when everyone yearns to connect, images of cafes and markets will transport the viewer back to a simpler way of life. The subjects of Lynn Dooly Marek’s mixed media artworks - be it a figure, street scene or landscape - express a feeling of relaxation and health, and a slow pace of life that keep the observer grounded,” says the Pumphouse website about the upcoming exhibit.

Lynn Dooly Marek’s exhibit, Bistros & Marchés of the World…where it all began! opens at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Thursday, Aug. 4. For more information please visit https://niagara-pumphouse.ca/ or call 905-466-5455.

To learn more about this international award-winning artist and her work visit: www.lynndoolymarek.com. Lynn Dooly Marek’s exhibit, Bistros & Marchés of the World...where it all began! will run from Aug. 4 to 29. The opening reception will be held Aug. 8. For more information please visit https://niagara-pumphouse.ca/ or call 905-466-5455.

Jam sale

David Greaves, Esther Giesbrecht, and Frank Giesbrecht were on the lawn of Grace United Church this weekend selling the jam the church is famous for — and having David Greaves of Greaves Jam helping to make the jam doesn’t hurt. They will be back at it on Labour Day Weekend with their annual Jam, Bake and Book Sale and their Mystery Table, Saturday, Sept. 4. (Mike Balsom)

Lynn Dooly Marek’s exhibit, Bistros & Marchés of the World…where it all began! opens at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Thursday, Aug. 4. (Kim Wade)

One of Lynn Dooly Marek’s paintings graced the cover of a Reader’s Digest magazine when she was exhibiting her work in Montreal. (Photo supplied)

Renowned artist’s exhibit opening at Pumphouse

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Greg Sykes is ranked in the top three realtors out of nearly 1,700 agents in the Niagara Real Estate Board, and has been selling and investing in real estate for nearly 15 years in Niagara.

Once a professional musician and contemporary Christian music songwriter, Greg is now a full-time realtor who leads a team of six agents, called The Sykes Team, at Re/Max Niagara. They are a powerhouse bunch, who have already sold more than 100 homes in Niagara in 2021 alone.

But the most exciting part of this story is that Greg and his family now reside in Old Town, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Just a couple of blocks from the water, Greg’s new home caught his attention last January, while he was looking at the morning’s latest listings, just moments after the house was listed for sale. He raced to the home in his pyjamas and made an offer from the kitchen, he says.

Greg’s brother, Jeff Sykes, and his family also live in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Jeff owns and leads one of Niagara’s premier landscape design and construction companies, Sykes Landscaping. Greg and his forever love are now completely renovating their new home near Gage and Butler Streets, and design plans are underway for a major overhaul of the already beautiful treed backyard, which will of course be handled by none other than Sykes Landscaping.

Greg and Jeff were born and raised in Windsor, Ont., and moved to Niagara almost 20 years ago to set up shop for themselves in the beautiful Niagara Region.

He was living in Virgil when his two children were born, and they spent their early years in Virgil. After a time living in St. Catharines, he’s happy to be back in town.

“Life can be so fast-paced, but in Niagara-on-the-Lake, there is just the most beautiful tone of serenity and appreciation for life. Getting out for walks, chatting with the neighbours and enjoying the most beautiful town in Canada is a privilege that I will never take for granted, and I’m grateful to be able to call Niagara-on-the-Lake home.”

Sykes says he’s excited to announce that plans are also in the works for a real estate office in town, with those details to be rolled out in the coming months.

He’s also still having fun with his music, and has even found a way to use his creativity and love of music in his real estate business, writing songs to accompany his listings on social media to help his clients market their properties to a broader audience.

Life seems to have come full circle, says Sykes, who is overwhelmed at his good fortune, able to live and work at a job he loves, close to his brother and family, in a town anyone would feel proud to call home. “It feels so good to be back.”

Submitted by
ReMax Greg Sykes

FREE HOME EVALUATION
CALL OR TEXT GREG DIRECT
905.329.3484

This market is wild and the average sale price of a Niagara-on-the-Lake home is now nearing $1,200,000. If you want to know what your home is worth, call Greg now for a free evaluation.

GREG SYKES real estate TEAM

GARY DEMEO  MICHELLE ZAPPETELLI  GREG SYKES  DEBI CHEWERSDA  CAMERON JONES
The museum treasure sale drew an impressive crowd Monday, with the fundraiser contribution to day-to-day operations. (Mike Balsom)

Local author Jean Baker will be autographing and selling her new historical novel at the NOTL Museum Saturday. (Barbara Worthy)

PigOut’s roast was a hit at the NOTL Museum’s treasure sale. (Glenn Connell)

Liberation mayhem, mystery and a summer fair.

The Community Courtyard at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum has become a welcome place for post-pandemic community gatherings.

It was part of the pig roast and treasure sale Monday, and on Saturday, Aug. 7, from 10 a.m. to noon, the museum hosts the launch of Albatross Hall, a new novel from local author Jean Baker, a seasoned journalist with a passion for historical research.

Albatross Hall is an imposing Elizabethan mansion, and the home of an ancient aristocratic family, providing the backdrop for a drama filled with treachery, highway robbery, betrayal, and witchcraft, interwoven with the likes of Napoleon, Wellington, Burgoyne, and other military adventurers.

Copies of the book will be available for $27, and the author herself will happily sign your copy.

The following weekend, on Saturday, Aug. 14, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sorella Niagara Collective will be hosting a Summer Art and Crafts Market in the courtyard and on the museum lawns. Sorella means ‘sister’ in Italian, and the two founders of the collective, Bianca Sorrenti and Stephanie Panucci, sisters in spirit, formed their collective to support businesses owned and operated by women.

The multi-vendor market will be an example of promoting a variety of women-led artisan businesses, and offers a variety of products: handmade jewellery both Bohemian and elegant, antique and vintage clothing, mixed media artworks, art décor, pottery and more.

There will be musical entertainment all day, rain or shine.

For more information, visit www.NOTLMuseum.ca, or call 905-468-3912.

This year’s Terry Fox T-shirt is a result of the Fox family partnering with the Metis Nation BC to create the 2021 design, celebrating Terry’s heritage, with a lineage that can be traced to his maternal grandmother, Mary Ann Gladue. Traditional Metis floral beading represents the flowers from the land on which Terry’s ancestors lived. Volunteers Sarah Pillitteri (right) and Joan King (left) will be selling the shirts at Phil’s valu-mart this Sunday, Aug. 8 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. On Aug. 9, don’t miss CBC’s presentation of The Power of One, at 8 p.m. This event in support of cancer research features diverse stories of hope, courage and resilience, told by iconic Canadians, inspired by the legacy of the Terry Fox Marathon of Hope. This year’s run is Sept. 19. It will once again be a virtual event, One Day Your Way. Since NOTL started the run in 1991, this community has raised over $1,000,000 for cancer research. To continue to support the Terry Fox Foundation go to TerryFox.org to register. #Try Like Terry.
TO SERVE YOU SAFELY

1573 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil

THE NOTL Local
August 4, 2021

THE NOTL LOCAL

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To Serve You Safely

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Creek Road Paints

TO SERVE YOU SAFELY
Shades of Summer returns, with a twist

Penny Coles
The Local

The Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake has a fun fundraiser coming up to benefit two important causes.

The club’s first annual golf tournament, to be held later this month, will support the Niagara Nursery School enrichment project, and an international organization which provides 3D prosthetic limbs for children.

Rotarians Penny Milligan and Howard Kudlats are putting together a first-class event, with a long list of prizes, including a BMW for the first player to make a hole in one on one of the par 3 holes.

While the local Rotary Club is noted for annual events such as the Simcoe Park pancake breakfast and barbecue on Canada Day, the Simcoe Park pancake breakfast is noted for annual events such as the Annual Peach Celebration, which is the result of the grant they received from the government grant of $23,200.

Each of these events will be for 80 people only, and will be held outdoors at each location. They will be very similar to the Shades of Summer Dinner on Queen Street, with guests purchasing a table for eight people and bringing all of their own food and decor for the evening. In other years, local musicians will contribute to the ambiance, and the pleasure of seeing people enjoy themselves under the stars at one of the annual favourite events.

All COVID-19 protocols and restrictions will be strictly adhered to during the events. More information can be found at www.niagaraonthelake.com/kanga of summer or by calling 905-468-1950.

Legion moves forward with outreach program

Penny Coles
The Local

The Royal Canadian Legion is moving forward with its outreach program designed to help those suffering from social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a goal of filling some of the specific needs in the community, especially for veterans and seniors.

The branch received a government grant of $33,200 from the New Horizons Seniors Program to fund the outreach, and has taken some time to determine what services are most needed in the community.

Home visits and wellness checks, digital connectivity and healthy food were expected to top the list, and in reaching out to ask seniors and their families, those services were indeed identified as priorities, says legion past president Al Howse.

The legion recently purchased a refrigerator for each of these events in collaboration with some of our outstanding cultural institutions,” says Eduard Lafforgue, president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism NOTL. “These partnerships will allow us to keep the tradition alive and highlight the extraordinary contribution of these institutions to the Niagara-on-the-Lake experience.”

Each of these events will be for 80 people only, and will be held outdoors at each location. They will be very similar to the Shades of Summer Dinner on Queen Street, with guests purchasing a table for eight people and bringing all of their own food and decor for the evening.

As in other years, local musicians will contribute to the ambiance, and the pleasure of seeing people enjoy themselves under the stars at one of the annual favourite events.

All COVID-19 protocols and restrictions will be strictly adhered to during the events. More information can be found at www.niagaraonthelake.com/shades_of_summer or by calling 905-468-1950.

Local Staff

Shades of Summer, an annual dinner event hosted by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, will be held this year, but like everything else, with a twist.

Instead of one large event on Queen Street, details from the annual event, the Palace Celebration, there will be three smaller events, held at local cultural institutions, including the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre on Thursday, Aug. 19, the NOTL Museum, Thursday, Aug. 26, and the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts, Thursday, Sept. 9.

This year’s Palace Celebration, a tradition of Shades of Summer dinner events on Queen Street that were scheduled for this month have been cancelled, and are planned to return Saturday, Aug. 13 and Sunday, Aug. 14, 2022.

The Peach Festival and subsequent dinner on Queen Street have been Niagara-on-the-Lake’s favourite events for years. We are very excited to keep the tradition of Summer Dinner going by hosting several smaller events in collaboration with some of our outstanding cultural institutions,” says Eduard Lafforgue, president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism NOTL. “These partnerships will allow us to keep the tradition alive and highlight the extraordinary contribution of these institutions to the Niagara-on-the-Lake experience.”

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“They may be just three or four years old when they lose a limb,” she says, “and prosthetics are expensive. One might have to wait a number of years for a new prosthetic.”

This new funding and the ability to make it possible, provides new prosthetics for children as their body changes and grows, making movement easier and giving them the ability to participate more in activities at school and in their community.

The fund-raising proceeds from the tournament will be split between these two wonderful organizations.

Players can register online at www.niagaraonthelake.org/Rotary or call at Kudlats at 905-708-8579 or Milligan at 506-640-3002 for more information.

Rotary organizing fundraising golf tournament

This idea came together,” said Kudlats, “out of a need to bolster outreach services were indeed identified as priorities, those services are most needed in the community, especially during the pandemic, says Howse.

The program was created by and is co-ordinated by legion committee chair Elizabeth Richards, and two legion members who are members of the committee and make home visits. Jackie Dickinson, a long-time member, and Amy Casey, new to the legion, have a list of seniors, and lawn chairs in their cars, and will stop by as often as they can to chat.

That’s an important task, and one that could use more volunteers, which would allow for more frequent and longer visits, and an expansion of their list of seniors and veterans, says Howse.

He stresses looking after veterans has been a mandate for the legion since its inception, and it’s helping with one of the goals of the legion since its inception, working with, but as the program becomes better known, we hope to expand.”

The legion now has a dedicated phone line, email address and website for the outreach program, and volunteers are hoping to hear from more family members about what they can do for their senior loved ones.

To access the outreach program, call 905-246-4739, email legion124outreach@gmail.com, or visit www.legion124outreach.ca.

With other community organizations such as Newark Neighbours and the library is part of the program.

The legion is partnering with the library by providing hotspots for seniors who don’t have internet access, he says, and has also purchased tablets to distributing to seniors, so they can visit virtually with family members, do research on topics that interest them, or for entertainment — watching movies, or even visiting museums that are online. Offering some training goes hand-in-hand with access to the internet, he adds, and is part of the outreach services legion volunteers are offering.

“We’re also looking at arranging cheaper ways for seniors to access the internet, seeing what’s available that can help them.”

If there are needs the legion has missed through this process, says Howse, “reach out to us and we will try to help. At the moment we have a small group of seniors we’re working with, but as the program becomes better known, we hope to expand.”

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Legion moves forward with outreach program

Penny Coles
The Local

The Royal Canadian Legion has already been generous, but is hoping to help the facility contribute to the ambiance, and the pleasure of seeing people enjoy themselves under the stars at one of the annual favourite events.

In other years, local musicians will contribute to the ambiance, and the pleasure of seeing people enjoy themselves under the stars at one of the annual favourite events.

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Legion moves forward with outreach program

Penny Coles
The Local

The Royal Canadian Legion is moving forward with its outreach program designed to help those suffering from social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a goal of filling some of the specific needs in the community, especially for veterans and seniors.

The branch received a government grant of $33,200 from the New Horizons Seniors Program to fund the outreach, and has taken some time to determine what services are most needed in the community.

Home visits and wellness checks, digital connectivity and healthy food were expected to top the list, and in reaching out to ask seniors and their families, those services were indeed identified as priorities, says legion past president Al Howse.

The legion recently purchased a refrigerator for Newark Neighbours, so they could store more fresh food for those in need, he says.

“They’re very, very happy with the fridge we provided, and it’s helping with one of our goals. When we reached out to seniors, access to healthy food was one of the concerns we heard.”

Family members also told legion volunteers they were concerned about their senior relatives needing more social contact, especially during the pandemic, says Howse.

The program was created by and is co-ordinated by legion committee chair Elizabeth Richards, and two legion members who are members of the committee and make home visits. Jackie Dickinson, a long-time member, and Amy Casey, new to the legion, have a list of seniors, and lawn chairs in their cars, and will stop by as often as they can to chat.

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The family of Flora Bjorgan would like to invite you to a celebration of her life.

Sunday, August 15, 2021 at Red Roof Retreat at 2:30 p.m.
1594 Concession 6, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Bring a lawn chair and umbrella if needed. Refreshments provided.

OBITUARY

PROBST, JEANETTE LOIS—Peacefully, with family by her side, on July 29, 2021 at the Greater Niagara General Hospital at the age of 72. Beloved wife of Heinz for 52 years. Loving mother of Eric (Karen) and Jennifer Merritt (Jeff). Proud grandmother of Emma and Eric Merritt and Ethan Probst. Sister of Richard Wittard and sister-in-law of Christine Probst. She was missed by Kathy O’Flaherty (Denis). Special friend of Joan Lane. Survived by many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her parents Ben and Lois. Jeanette will be missed by her feline friends Boris and Natasha. Cremation has taken place. Visitation and funeral service were held at Morse & Son Funeral Home, Niagara Falls on Tuesday, August 3, 2021. Private family internment will take place at Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery at a later date. For those who wish, memorial donations may be made to Grace United Church or to the Lincoln County Humane Society. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com.

IN MEMORIAM

NOV 17, 1951 - AUG 4, 2020

In loving memory of Brent Christopher Carver. One year has already passed without you, rivers of tears of sorrow and joy have been shed and, above all, memories of wonderful times together are shared and treasured every day.

Love always, family and friends.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE
There are several special interest groups: golf, mahjong, euchre, bacchus, pub-night and brunch to name a few,” says Dorothy.

Now, there is an avid gardening group of nine volunteers ready to get started. The FOSD Garden Group joined the NOTL Adopt-a-Park program, and we adhere to all the safety rules.

Several years ago, the St. Davids subcommittee of Communities in Bloom wanted to enhance the centre of our village and make it more pedestrian-friendly. It was decided to create two gardens at the intersection of Four Mile Creek Road and Yolk Road. One is a lovely lavender garden in front of the Avondale convenience store, and beautiful lavender plants were added this year.

Across the street, there is another garden with a large Com- munities In Bloom International Championship sign. This is a native pollinator garden. Pollinator plants lure pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, to their garden, by offering rewards, including pollen, nectar and oil.

The most important thing that bees do is pollinate. Pollination is needed for plants to reproduce, and many plants depend on bees and other insects as pollinators.

Honey bees are the world’s most important pollinators of food crops. Farmers would be unable to manage without bees.

One-third of the food we consume each day relies on pollination, mainly by bees. Bees are important for the food production of all the other animals and birds, and are vital for the preservation of ecological balance and biodiversity in nature.

FOSD volunteers chose sections of the gardens to weed, adding additional native pollinators and mulch. This process provides ownership, pride and satisfaction. Teamwork is evident as gardeners interact, discuss and help one another.

We discovered weeds are flowers too when you get to know them.

The gardens were created in 2016. Thanks for funding goes to the St. Davids Communities in Bloom subcommittee, the Niagara Restoration Council, the St. Davids Ratepayers Association, the St. Davids Lions Club, Lewiston Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club, and the town. When working together, great things happen.

A special thank you to the Niagara Restoration Council for their generous contribution of native, perennial pollinator plants, assistance with planting, the attractive information signs and performing maintenance.

Garden group members created a map of the garden which includes 31 amazing types of native pollinator plants.

Local, community-based groups: golf, mahjong, euchre, bacchus, pub-night and brunch to name a few,” says Dorothy.

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