



Warehouse of Hope couldn't help others without the help of volunteers
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The Pride crosswalk was defaced again Friday morning with words of hate and profanity — this photo has been edited. (Mike Balsom)

A large gathering of residents was organized Thursday to be held Friday afternoon, to rally support and unity, but when they arrived, they learned the fourth and worst act of vandalism had occurred in time to greet them. (Mike Balsom)

Residents stand strong against hatred Pride Niagara warns hate crimes likely to escalate

Mike Balsom
The Local

About 100 people gathered at Niagara-on-the-Lake's rainbow crosswalk Friday morning to stand in solidarity against the repeated displays of hate at the site.

When they arrived at the corner of Anderson Lane and Mississagua Street, however, they were greeted by yet another act of vandalism to the important symbol of inclusivity. And this fourth time, the hate messages painted on the crosswalk earlier that day were broader and more direct, including death threats and a reference to the Black community via the "BLM" abbreviation. Old Town resident Suzin

Schiff-Malins mobilized to organize the rally Thursday, after the third incident of vandalism occurred early Sunday morning. That incident followed two prior ones that occurred just days after the installation of the crosswalk in late May.

Town staff mobilized quickly to clean up that damage, and the crosswalk was returned to its original state on Tuesday afternoon.

But Schiff-Malins felt she couldn't just stand by and do nothing. She contacted friends and connections via emails, phone calls and text messages two days later.

"This affects me viscerally," Schiff-Malins told The Local. "It affects my heart, and it

affects my humanity. Watching it continually happen, and just waiting for someone to clean it up, to me that's almost participating in the acceptance of the inevitability of such an act, and I don't want to accept that."

Schiff-Malins and others were impressed with the turnout for the gathering, which was supported by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"Suzin reached out," said Marah Minor, the town's community engagement and communications coordinator. "She expressed that she and the others wanted to show their support and stand strong together. So we arranged this on quick notice, posted about it on our social

media, and we've had a very good turnout."

The gathering included people of all ages and backgrounds. Many members of the 2SLGBTQAI+ community were there as well as their family members and friends.

George Webber strolled over from his home in the neighbourhood to show his support. "I am blown away by the turnout," said Webber. "This is just from circulating an email. This just shows that there's way more good here than there is bad."

Webber was shocked at the latest defacing of the crosswalk, and that it included a reference to the Black

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Mike Balsom
The Local

Pride Niagara Chair Enzo De Divitis is pleased that the Niagara Regional Police Services are treating the latest vandalism to Niagara-on-the-Lake's rainbow crosswalk as a hate crime.

But to De Divitis, it shouldn't have taken four incidents for that to happen.

"In my mind it definitely was a hate crime from the start," says De Divitis. "If you're not a part of a marginalized community, you

don't see the things that we do. I've seen the body language, heard the comments throughout my life. Others think that kind of stuff doesn't happen here in Niagara. Well, it does."

When the crosswalk at Anderson Lane and Mississagua Street was first vandalized in early June, just days after its installation, De Divitis told The Local that he wasn't at all surprised by the act. On the contrary, he and other members of

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Gathering shows support and unity for Pride community

Continued from page 1

Lives Matter movement. “I don’t understand what is motivating this kind of behaviour,” he said. “I can’t dig into this kind of hatred and vandalism. It’s too deep and too dark for me. We all believe that we live in a society that is loving and caring. People just want to lead a life that they’re comfortable and happy with. And then this non-

sense comes along.” For Old Town resident Ken Chan, the feeling of disappointment at seeing the latest hate message on the crosswalk was trumped by seeing his friends, neighbours and allies show their support Friday morning. “It reinforces the strength of this community,” insisted Chan. “When we are faced with hate, we are countering that with love and support for

one another. We all recognize that Niagara-on-the-Lake is an inclusive community. We cannot let these kinds of acts deter us from who we are as a community.” Chan said he believes the timing of the latest vandalism attack is symbolic of the escalation of hatred. He is certain that the perpetrator knew very well that the community would be coming together onsite Friday.

“As a former police officer,” he added, “I can say that this is now definitely a hate crime. We’ve seen it happen before where it starts with words and it escalates to physical violence. It is now time for the police to step up and send the message to the community that they are here for us all.” As residents gathered at the intersection, town staff erected pylons and barriers to

block cars from turning onto Anderson Lane. “Anybody who has a family member who is queer,” Schiff-Malins said to the group, “friends who are queer, or co-workers who are queer, which is everybody, should all stand together. Otherwise the message we’re giving is that whatever is expected is accepted, and it can’t be. And now they’ve included another group, with BLM on there. So who’s next?”

Anderson Lane. She added that seeing the number of people coming together Friday morning was a powerful reminder of the strength of community and NOTL’s commitment to respect, acceptance and understanding. Cluckie said the incident happened sometime before 4 a.m. Friday, and that the Niagara Regional Police Service has been alerted. An Aug. 4 press release from the NRPS confirms that this latest incident is being investigated as a potential hate-based crime. The legal criteria for a charge under the Hate Propaganda sections of the Criminal Code are specific in scope and done in consultation with the Ministry of the Attorney General. Once the NRPS investigation has concluded, investigators can prepare a report with the consent of the Niagara Crown’s Office for submission to the Attorney General of Ontario.



Suzin Schiff-Malins mobilized Thursday to hold a rally Friday afternoon. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Coun. Maria Mavridis speaks of her disappointment and her hope that those who are creating such hate messages are not locals.



The Pride crosswalk was defaced again Friday morning with words of hate, and included the Black Lives Matter group.



Town staff clean the crosswalk Tuesday, only to have it vandalized again Friday. (Supplied)

Coun. Maria Mavridis then expressed her pleasure at how many people showed up on such short notice. “We are one community, and we need to stand together in solidarity,” said Mavridis. “What happened this morning is really disheartening. We need to be louder with our message versus this one.” Schiff-Malins then organized the group for a photo along the span of the crosswalk. Some of the supporters opted to lay down on top of the vandalism to signify that they won’t stand for such hateful messages. Speaking to The Local later, Mavridis also addressed the inclusion of the BLM reference in the vandal’s recent attack. “When I saw that I thought, ‘really?’ So you just have hate for everybody?” she remarked. “In my heart, I really don’t think it’s someone who lives in this town. I don’t want to believe it, I really don’t.” In an email to The Local, town CAO Marnie Cluckie said though these acts hurt, “the town will stand in solidarity against this hatefulness and show that Niagara-on-the-Lake will continue to fight for acceptance, respect

and inclusivity for all people.” Anyone with information is asked to contact the lead detective at 905-688-4111, option 3, extension 1007730. Anyone who wishes to provide information anonymously is urged to contact Crime Stoppers of Niagara online or at 1-800-222-8477. Cluckie added that in light of a nearby security camera being blacked out with paint prior to last Sunday’s vandalism, the town is exploring other options to protect the community’s rainbow crosswalk. As far as Schiff-Malins is concerned, if another act of vandalism occurs, she and others will be right there, standing in support. “The only thing we can do is respond to it, to stand together,” she added. “We are acting to a bias that is full of hate and discrimination. Can you change people’s hearts or minds? Maybe not, but can we at least show support when these things happen? Yes we can. I will do this every single time if I have to.”



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Pride Niagara: All four acts of vandalism were hate crimes

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Pride Niagara and the larger 2SLGBTQIA+ community in the region would have expected such an act to occur, as it has elsewhere in Niagara.

But four incidents in about two months is more than he's seen in St. Catharines, for example, where a Pride crosswalk was installed on St. Paul Street in 2021. De Divitis is a member of that city's 2SLGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee.

Yet he says he could have predicted that last week's fourth crime in NOTL was coming.

"The more you ignore the problem, the bigger it gets," he says. "When the vandalism acts were just tire marks, people were thinking 'maybe it's just some kid horsing around.' No. Damage is damage, ignorance is ignorance and hate is hate. You have to deal with it or it will progress until someone gets the reaction they're looking for."

The fact that about 100 people showed up at the crosswalk for a demonstration of unity and support last Friday pleases De Divitis. He wasn't there for the gathering, though, and remains disappointed that no one contacted him to make him aware that it was happening.

But he's hoping that the turnout convinces the Town to get more involved and ramp up their own response to the repeated damage and acts of hatred.

"It's wonderful that the allies came out," says De Divitis, "but they're not the ones who will have to clean that crosswalk or monitor it. Municipalities have to get on it. If this happened at city hall, I think they would find out who did it immediately. What if this happened at the mayor's own house?"

He also expressed disappointment that there wasn't a bigger presence from town council at Friday's rally. Councillors Tim Balasiuk and Maria Mavridis were there, as well as town staff, but the absence of Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and other members of council was glaring in his eyes.

"I've seen it at the flag raisings we have done across Niagara," he says. "The mayors often don't show up. We often only get the female council members instead. A lot of the old school guys don't come out to those events. They should be there. This is the town, and you have to be there."

Back in June, when the crosswalk was unveiled in a ceremony, Pride Niagara was not represented at the site. In fact, De Divitis said at the time that he didn't even know the town had



Pride Niagara's Enzo De Divitis speaks out about hate crime. (Supplied)

been planning to install one.

"It's not their responsibility to get us to help with these kinds of things," says De Divitis. "But at the same time, there's strength in numbers. They need to reach out to community members, invite us to be there. When Niagara College did their crosswalk, they reached out to every group in Niagara."

Niagara's 2SLGBTQIA+ community has seen the hatred against them ramp up across the region in recent months. De Divitis explains that the increase has

a lot to do with the fact that this marginalized group for many years didn't have any kind of voice or presence.

"When we start to get some legitimacy, when we start to demand rights and dignity," he says, "some people get upset. They say 'how dare you speak up to me?'. That's what makes them ask why they don't get their own 'straight flag' or their own 'straight crosswalk.'"

The symbolism of the Pride crosswalk is an important tool in the fight for equality.

"It's an actual reminder,"

explains De Divitis, "to look in all directions. To look where you're going. You actually have to pay attention. The fact that this is triggering you so much, that you have to acknowledge someone who may not look, act or live like you, that is a big problem."

Ugly protests outside of venues holding drag queen events have become the norm. As well, in June, Pride Niagara joined others at both the Catholic and public school boards to counter-protest against anti-Pride demonstrators.

He warns that if this happens again in NOTL, and an even bigger group comes out to stand in unity and solidarity, they have to be ready for whatever might happen.

"With counter-protests, it's very different," he says. "The hate is right there, a quarter of an inch from your face, screaming at you, trying to start something violent with you. That's the next step with something like this crosswalk. When you stand together, someone's going to eventually come out to face you."



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Which artifacts will be kept, and who will keep them?

Heritage committee discussed Parliament Oak

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism Initiative

The future home of historical artifacts inside Parliament Oak School were a subject of debate recently, as were the alleged historical inaccuracies on a commemorative panel at the site.

Those two items were part of a discussion of demolishing the school building during last Wednesday's Niagara-on-the-Lake municipal heritage committee meeting.

The demolition is part of a proposal from Two Sisters Resorts to build a luxury hotel fronting King Street, with 129 suites, a restaurant, bar and event spaces, and allowing for some onsite greenspace. There will be underground parking and eight surface parking spaces.

In 2018, the District School Board of Niagara sold the 1.6 hectare King Street property to developer Liberty Sites Ltd., following community protests and failed negotiations with the town, which had made several offers to purchase the school,

which opened in 1948 and closed in 2015.

Plans related to commemoration, as well as waste management, documentation and salvage had been previously requested by the town.

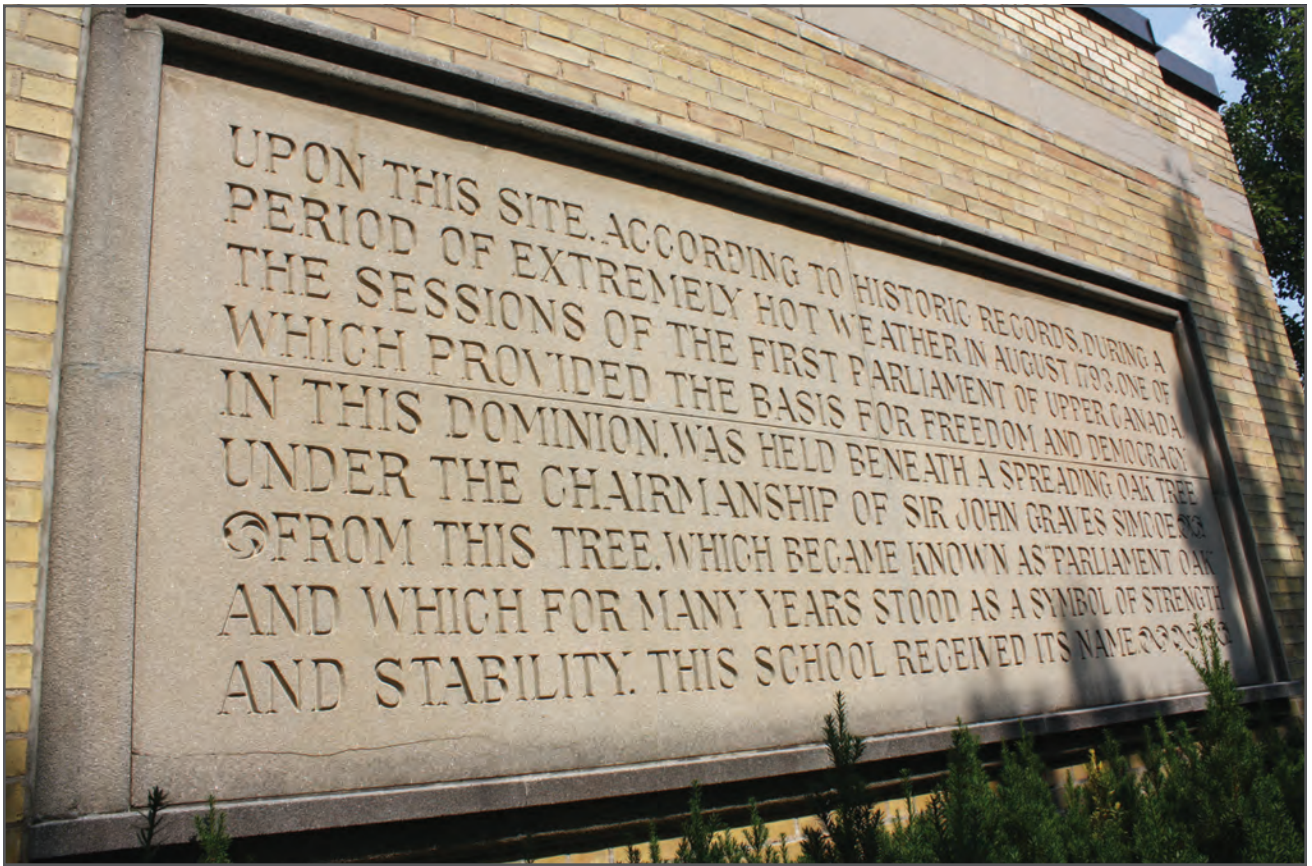
The commemoration plan was the only one of these three the committee had received ahead of last week's meeting.

At the site, there is a large stone panel facing King Street that marks one of the first sessions of Upper Canada Parliament in August 1783, for which the property is much celebrated.

That piece isn't part of current commemoration plans, which disappoints committee member David Snelgrove.

"I feel, personally, this is an error. I think it's wrong," said Snelgrove, adding that even though there is speculation this session did not occur, the school was named "on the premise that it did happen, and that the panel should be part of a commemoration wall at the site."

Lashia Jones, a heritage consultant who is part of the



One of the committee discussions was about the accuracy of the words about a meeting of parliament mentioned on this bas relief on the wall of Parliament Oak School. (Kris Dube)

team behind the proposal, said they are "not contesting" that the parliament session took place at the site, but said the "dates and times don't add up," and that according to research, Sir John Graves Simcoe, who is said to have chaired the meeting, was not in the area at that time.

The commemoration plan included in the heritage committee meeting agenda

says that on Sept. 17, 1792, Graves Simcoe held the first session of parliament for the new colony of Upper Canada, and that the "exact location" of the first session of parliament is unknown.

Possible locations include Navy Hall, Butler's Barracks, the Freemasons' Hall, or a tent located under an oak tree at the present-day location of 325 King Street, the address of the school.

"However, it is generally acknowledged that Navy Hall served as the main parliament site of Upper Canada during this time," says the report.

The second session of the Parliament of Upper Canada was held between May 31, 1793, and July 9, 1794, says the report before the committee.

Interpretive material on the concrete panel on the exterior walls of the former Parliament Oak School suggests that John Graves Simcoe presided upon a session of this parliament in August 1793, at the former school site under the shade of an oak tree.

"However, both the House of Assembly and Legislative Council were prorogued on July 9, 1793, and no further sessions of parliament were held until 1794," said the report prepared by Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Also, the diary of Elizabeth Simcoe indicates that she and John Graves Simcoe set sail for Toronto on July 29, 1793, and they remained in the Toronto area through September, according to the report.

"Therefore, it is unlikely that any parliamentary proceeding took place under an oak tree at present-day 325 King Street in August 1793."

Who should keep historical pieces on and in the school during demolition was another subject of the committee meeting.

Snelgrove suggested the municipality should have control of artifacts at the property, which are "at risk" without a plan of how to preserve them, citing a number of "unlikely but real" scenarios that could occur, such as a change in ownership of the property, or the proponent going bankrupt.

"While everything is well intended at this point in time, things can change," he said, adding "there should be a mechanism" in place to preserve the artifacts.

Denise Horne, the town's heritage planner, said that will be part of the developer's next submission in September, when a salvage and documentation plan is submitted.

Speaking to the debate over the accuracy of the panel regarding a session of parliament being held there, Horne said an additional plaque or panel could be explored to provide clarification.

"From staff's perspective, I think there's opportunity for further discussion," she said.

Sara Premi, Two Sisters' lawyer, also said more details about commemoration plans will be available next month, but that the committee has "no authority" to recommend heritage assets are transferred to the municipality. She suggested local governments often do not get involved in such a process due to the cost.

"I would encourage you to get advice from your own solicitor before you consider such a recommendation," Premi told Snelgrove.

David Riley, from SGL Planning and Design, said a site plan will be submitted "very shortly," also agreeing with Premi that plans for commemorating the site's history will be included in that document.

Jones, Two Sisters' heri-

tage consultant, agreed the salvage plan doesn't currently address the exact locations of where artifacts will be stored, but "that's certainly something we will have more discussion on with the town."

Along with the panels, other pieces the applicant has been asked to commemorate, salvage and preserve include a stone marker for a large oak tree on the property, a 1948 facade facing King Street, landscaping and trees, a mature red oak tree, an Underground Railroad art installation, a 1948 time capsule, 'Parliament Oak School' lettering, as well as slate chalkboards, brick and hardware from the building.

The applicant says it will follow a "blended commemoration approach."

"The focus should be two-fold: salvage of appropriate materials before demolition and then incorporation of these salvaged materials into the proposed redevelopment," reads the plan, included in the heritage committee meeting agenda.

"These materials should be interpreted for the public through commemorative panels and other similar interpretive material," the report says.

"The salvaged bas-relief panel, tree panel, and Parliament Oak school name panel should be installed in the landscaped feature area of the north garden, using salvaged bricks and stone from the former school. The time capsule should be displayed within the hotel lobby, or donated to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum," it continues.

A motion at the end of the discussion approved the plaque, also referred to as a bas relief panel, being included in commemoration plans, and that placing it near King and Centre streets be considered.

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‘Smart comedy’ *Playboy* met with controversy in its early years

Sharon Burns
The Local

J.M. Synge’s *The Playboy of the Western World*, currently running at Shaw Festival, turns the concept of hero status on its head. Though the play was written in 1907, and set in the 1950s, it poses a timely question of why we need heroes, and what happens when heroes fail us.

Before the play even starts, fog rolls into an ale house near a village on the coast of Mayo. The sound of wind rides on the fog and carries into the pub a stranger who identifies himself as Christy Mahon (Shane Carty), who admits he has murdered his

father.

What follows is a series of infatuations, from the bar keep, Pegeen Mike (Marla McLean), to Widow Quin (Fiona Byrne), and even the village girls who bring him gifts of eggs and a “pat of butter, for it’d be a poor thing to have you eating your spuds dry, and you after running a great way since you did destroy your da.”

The men also admire Christy’s exploits and exalt him to near-hero status, especially after he wins a village donkey race on the slowest donkey.

Christy is surprised that the villagers feel awe, not revulsion, for a man who com-

mitted parricide. “Two fine women fighting for the likes of me!” he exclaimed.

Perhaps fierce Pegeen is looking for an alternative to an arranged marriage to her cousin, the timid Shawn Keogh (Andrew Lawrie).

Maybe Widow Quin, sharply played by Byrne, is lonely. The village girls are simply starstruck by this “curiosity of a man.”

But when Christy’s father (Ric Reid), alive and somewhat well, tracks his son to the ale house, the villagers turn on Christy, even though he is no longer a murderer.

After a skirmish, and a masterfully-executed rope bind, father and son, recon-

ciled, depart from the pub to traverse the world, leaving the villagers to wonder what just happened to them in only a day and a half. Pegeen mourns her loss in the last line of the play: “Oh my grief, I’ve lost him surely, I’ve lost the only playboy of the western world.”

It’s fitting that Irish-born Canadian Jackie Maxwell, artistic director from 2003 to 2016, returned to Shaw to direct this play, written by the Irish Synge in 1871 and staged in the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre.

Maxwell set the play in the 1950s, where the grim

economic conditions in rural Ireland closely matches Synge’s setting. Originally destined for the Shaw stage in 2020, *Playboy* was shelved until after the pandemic. The theatre-in-the-round configuration of the Studio is maximized with a simple but evocative stage of bar counter, stools and bench, a warm hearth and comfortable chair.

The Playboy of the Western World, a smart comedy, is also a commentary on rural life in early 1900s Ireland. Fierce protests met the debut of *Playboy* in Dublin’s Abbey Theatre in 1907. Similar controversy followed for the next

few years as the play moved to North America.

Synge, in a preface to his play, recalls the rich and living language of the servant girls while writing *The Shadow of the Glen*. “In a good play every speech should be as fully flavoured as a nut or apple, and such speeches cannot be written by anyone who works among people who have shut their lips on poetry.”

The heavy Irish, yet melodic brogue, was difficult to understand at times, however the skill of the actors made sure meaning was conveyed in movement, tone and facial gesture.



Fiona Byrne as Widow Quin, Qasim Khan as Christy Mahon and Ric Reid as Old Mahon in *The Playboy of the Western World*. (Shaw Festival, Emily Cooper)



Jade Repeta as Susan Brady, Kiana Woo as Honor Blake and Alexandra Gratton as Sara Tansey in *The Playboy of the Western World* (Shaw Festival, Emily Cooper)



Marla McLean as Pegeen Mike, Fiona Byrne as Widow Quin and Qasim Khan as Christy Mahon. (Shaw Festival, Emily Cooper)



Qasim Khan as Christy Mahon, Jonathan Tan as Philly O'Cullen, Andrew Lawrie as Shawn Keogh, Sanjay Talwar as Michael Flaherty and Shane Carty as Jimmy Farrell. (Shaw Festival, Emily Cooper)

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EDITORIAL

One generation needs to provide safe journey for the next

Back in the 1960s, the Beatles sang *All You Need is Love*, and another English group, The Troggs, sang *Love is All Around*, written by lead singer Reg Presley.

So why is it that here, in 2023, it feels more and more like the opposite of what Presley sang in that latter tune is true.

It seems everywhere we turn these days we see signs of hatred and intolerance — whether it's someone blessing us with the middle finger salute because we maybe forgot to signal our desired left turn, or something more serious, like death threats painted on a crosswalk.

And let's get this straight, the vandalism to Niagara-on-the-Lake's rainbow crosswalk is indeed very, very seri-

ous. As Enzo De Divitis, chair of Pride Niagara, says elsewhere in this week's newspaper, every one of the four incidents of vandalism at the corner of Anderson Lane and Mississauga Street since May has been a sign of hate.

I'm old enough to have been raised during a time when anybody who was different than the majority was likely to experience becoming a repeated target of off-colour jokes, verbal abuse, exclusion and death threats. It was just accepted, sometimes expected, and very, very rarely ever corrected.

As De Divitis says, if you're not a part of the marginalized community you often don't feel the sharp pain of the digs, whether they come from co-workers, friends, family members, or, as he points out

was very common until recent years, in movies, television shows and popular music.

In my younger years, I knew what I was seeing and hearing around me wasn't right. After all, when is it ever right to treat another human, whether Black, Indigenous, gay, transgender or in any other way different from you, as less than human?

Speaking up back then was difficult, maybe even dangerous. But marginalized people have a voice in today's world. We see it in the Black Lives Matter movement, in the work that Pride Niagara does to stand up for the rights of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and in the many organizations that fight for the inclusion of people living with disabilities.

In my 29 years as a high

school teacher, I consider myself fortunate for having worked for the majority of that time at Laura Secord Secondary School, the school that is widely considered to be the most accepting in Niagara of some of these marginalized groups.

Much of my own learning about the issues faced by those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ has occurred directly from working with these bold, brave young teens as they have navigated their way through a world that is often loath to accept them.

I have seen them stand up and speak out. They helped correct me when I slipped up on their gender identity or their preferred name. I would hazard to say that the lessons these students provided me with will most likely last much

longer in my mind than any of the business concepts I taught them will in theirs.

In fact, maybe that's the key. Maybe all those anti-pride protesters who stood outside the Niagara Catholic District School Board and District School Board of Niagara offices in June, screaming their hate at parents and their children, should have to spend a day at a school like Laura Secord.

A day during which they would see the spirit, the energy, the creativity and the bravery of this next generation in action. I believe that experience would make them question their motives for their hatred and wake them up to the value in accepting people for simply who they are.

I know that actually can't happen. In fact, it's probably too dangerous to those students to

even suggest such a thing.

But I believe that this next generation — call them Gen Z or Centennials or whatever you want — will be the ones that effect this change fully.

For now, it's up to us — he Boomers, Gen X, the Millennials — to do what we can to ensure they have a safe avenue to get there.

We have to show up and speak out, as Suzin Schiff and about 100 others did last Friday, to let them know we believe in change, and we believe that all humans are equal and deserve to live without fear, without facing hatred.

To paraphrase Reg Presley, love can once again be all around us. We have to let it show.

Mike Balsom
The Local

Smaller siblings of Niagara Gorge and their seasonal secrets



Owen Bjorgan
The Local

What descriptive words do you conjure up when describing the Niagara Gorge? The words are often romantic and intense in nature. Mighty, ancient, massive, extreme and world-class. All of these adjective accolades are well deserved.

The Niagara Gorge's walls

are an average of 70 metres high, scaling rock layers that are approximately 420 million years old. However, it took a relatively mere 12,000 years for Niagara Falls to erode its way southbound to its current location.

There are also at least a dozen other gorges that are smaller in stature within the Niagara Region, which deserve equal attention for their appreciable similarities.

Perhaps you have heard of, or even visited, Decew Falls, Terrace Creek Falls, Rockway Falls, or Beamer Falls along the Niagara Escarpment. All

of these naturally protected areas share the exact same rock layers that are exposed in the great Niagara Gorge, meaning their associated canyons are just as old. They are simply not as deep or wide, but its hard to compete with your bigger sibling when it pours enough water over its brink to fill a million bath tubs per minute.

There just isn't the same water volume with the other locations, yet these spots are just as old and beautiful as the Niagara Gorge. That almost makes it more fascinating to me and the guests I love showing these spots to; the wee little gorge they are looking at is just as aged as the Niagara River's erosive work, including the same types of rock and associated habitats. It's almost like how a one-metre-tall cedar tree can be just as old as the 30-metre tulip tree.

Another key difference is that the smaller waterfalls may see a few hundred or thousand visitors a year, while millions of people observe the ever popular Niagara Gorge.

These mini canyons have some fascinating tricks up their

sleeve. One involves their relationship with Lake Ontario and temperature control.

All of these waterways have taken their thousands of years to incise their way into the Niagara Escarpment's north facing wall. Essentially, they are hollowed veins cutting perpendicular through a cliff of rock. The openings of the canyons therefore face north toward one of the largest freshwater lakes in the world.

While Lake Ontario heats up like a bath tub in the summer months, an interesting phenomenon takes place come fall. As our average air temperature begins to drop, the lake takes considerably longer to cool down. Therefore, it wafts its relatively warm air up into these protected gorges, where the warmer air becomes entrapped for a period of time.

This creates a remarkable temperature difference that you can feel on your own skin cells as you stand on the chilly Niagara Escarpment top. If it's October and you choose to step down into one of the small gorges, you will likely notice a pleasant warm ambience.



Balls Falls, experiencing unusually high water flow in the middle of summer. The canyon below traps air masses from Lake Ontario and creates unique temperature divides in the area. (Owen Bjorgan)

Sometimes, these temperature differences can be as great as five degrees Celsius.

The exact opposite situation unfolds every spring. As Canadians embrace the first T-shirt days of the year, Lake Ontario's frigid waters blow cooler air into these gorges, once again leaving such air masses stuck in the valleys. You could experience a warm breeze up top, and would have to apply your sweater once again if you were to descend lower, where snow and ice takes

longer to melt in the rocky chasms and waterways.

I find this relationship between land and water fascinating, and there is a great satisfaction in not only understanding the process, but then feeling the proof of it every spring and fall. Wondrous, powerful and quiet processes like this surround us in the unique landscape of Niagara. Go for a hike on one of our shoulder seasons and experience the sensation for yourself!

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The Niagara-on-the-Lake
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Where's Ben?

Eden student Ben Foster continues to discover new locations in NOTL, wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. Last week's was a tough one — Ben was beside the Shaw Festival Theatre, but too close to give much away.

COMMENT

Local LETTERS Hate has to be taught

I was disgusted and disheartened to learn that the Rainbow crosswalk has once again been vandalized. Disgusted by the defacement and disheartened to learn there is still so much hate in our community.

There is a song in the Rogers and Hammerstein musical

South Pacific which poignantly outlines how this hate is fostered. As a side story of the musical, a young American navy lieutenant falls in love with a Polynesian girl, much to the antipathy of some. It's called *You've Got to be Carefully Taught*, and it goes like this:

*You've got to be taught to hate and fear.
You've got to be taught from year to year.
It's got to be drummed in your dear little ear.
You've got to be carefully taught.
You've got to be taught to be afraid*

*Of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a different shade
You've got to be carefully taught.
You've got to be taught before it's too late,
Before you are six, or seven, or eight,*

*To hate all the people your relatives hate,
You've got to be carefully taught.*

What's missing, of course, in this 1949 musical is a verse about hatred of those whose sexual orientation or gender identity is different from yours. I'm glad

that Niagara Regional Police are considering the defacement of the rainbow crosswalk a hate crime. That's exactly what it is, and I hope so much that the perpetrator or perpetrators are caught and duly charged.

Linda Sauro
NOTL

Local LETTERS Parking in bike lanes is dangerous for cyclists

NOTL has made significant investments into bike lanes to help prevent fatalities among residents, farmworkers, and tourists. I don't think we need reminding how many home-made memorials are set up along the main roads around

NOTL. Cars that block bike lanes multiple hours a day force cyclists to drive with fast-moving traffic during harvest and tourist season; the most congested time of the year. Never mind that it is construc-

tion season and drivers are having to find alternate ways to get to their destination due to the construction on Niagara Stone Road.

In rural areas there is a high volume of farm vehicles hauling wide loads and trailers

to packing barns. In addition there is a steady flow of transport and delivery trucks involved once harvest begins.

Parking in bike lanes creates a dangerous situation where cyclists are forced into high speed traffic in rural and semi-rural

areas. Pedestrians, people with mobility devices, families with strollers and cycling winery tours are also put at substantial risk in places where bike lanes are obstructed.

Safety starts with common sense and respect for

others. For those parking on bike lanes — please obey the laws and structures that are already in place for the safety of everyone.

Lauren Bubnic
NOTL

Local LETTERS King Street apartment proposal unexpected

The writer of last week's Coming To A Neighbourhood Near You letter should have us all worried. No one living in this neighbourhood ever considered that a rental or condo building would be approved in the King Street backyards of numbers 727 and 733. The

builder, Josh Bice, indicated to us that he would apply for a single family home. The merging of the three rear yards was granted by the Committee of Adjustment with the condition attached that a single family home was to be built on the middle lot, and that it

could occupy no more than 15 per cent of the square footage of the middle lot.

Sadly for us and the committee of adjustment, we fell for it, hook, line and sinker. Now we are in the fight of our lives as we try to save our retirement homes from a

three-storey building, 16 feet from one home and 20 feet from another on Meritage Lane. The consulting planners, NPG, did not conduct an impact study on Meritage Lane. Why? we asked. Reply? We didn't think it was necessary.

When a neighbour asked

Mr. Bice to hold off cutting the trees down until the town evaluates a development proposal, Mr Bice responded . . . It's my land. I can do what I want.

Why are developers allowed to choose sites for intensification? Should not this

be the responsibility of the town and its residents' approval, especially in the area where it impacts the most?

Shameful.

Harold Asikyan
15 Meritage Lane
NOTL

Last stop: Kouchibouguac National Park

David Gilchrist
The Local

Our last stop in the Maritimes was at Kouchibouguac National Park along New Brunswick's Acadian coast. Described as featuring mixed-wood forests, salt marshes and ocean beaches, it seemed to be a wonderful area to explore.

After crossing the Confederation Bridge from Prince Edward Island, we followed the Acadian Coastal Drive for a spell, before crossing onto Hwy 15 N and then Hwy 11 towards Miramichi, New Brunswick. It was a pleasant drive and we were fortunate to have pulled in at Cap-Pele for a break and some information. This information building had a small museum which described the history of the vital herring industry of the area, and a newly opened coffee bar. The area around Cap-Pele would certainly be interesting to revisit some day.

Just north of Richibucto, we accessed Kouchibouguac (koo-chi-bu-gwac) National Park. It is quite a large park (238 square kilometres) and we had booked a campsite in the South Kouchibouguac Campground. The sites were huge compared to those at other parks we had been to. Ours was deep and well treed and we were quite content. At the time of year we were there it wasn't too busy either. Kouchibouguac also offers a more semi-primitive campground at Cote-a-Fabien that offers breathtaking views as

well as backcountry camping. Parks Canada oTENTik units are available to rent. These are described as a "spacious blend of tent and rustic cabin" and sleep six people. Parks also has three sites where they will supply everything for you to have a camping experience.

There are a number of hiking, biking and mountain bike trails throughout the park, and we were advised to make sure we visit Kelly's Beach. The trail consists primarily of a boardwalk that leads you over a salt marsh out onto the dune structures and Kelly's Beach.

On the boardwalk leading over the salt marsh common terns were quite active. This area boasts the second largest colony of common terns in North America. One or two were especially interesting as they repeatedly landed on the railing quite close to us. They then gazed fixedly into the waters to sight fish swimming just under the surface. Next, they would launch themselves down to catch the fish in their bill and continue flying as they swallowed their meal. This sequence was repeated several times as we watched.

Finally, the boardwalk leads to the barrier beach called Kelly's Beach, part of the 25-kilometre stretch of the barrier island chain along the New Brunswick shoreline. As this is critical breeding ground for several at-risk species, dogs are not allowed.

The day had become overcast and as I took some

photos, Claudia wandered down to the waters edge. As she walked along she spotted a Lululemon fanny pack that appeared to have been washed up on shore. Opening it, she was surprised to find a brand new iPhone turned on, a credit card that was not signed or activated, and \$42 in cash.

When she showed it to me, I remembered a school group had been boarding

a bus just as we started our hike. But they were long gone. Although the phone was on, we couldn't use it to call anyone and determined to turn it in at the office later that day. A few hours later, however, a call came to the phone and the caller asked if the owner was there. Turned out it was the father of a seven-year-old girl who had left the pack on the beach during the school trip. Needless to say he was

much relieved, after a long drive from Miramichi to retrieve the items, thanked us profusely.

Another trek we enjoyed was called the Bog Hike. This shorter walk takes you through a forested area leading to a tower. Upon climbing the tower you can view the continuation of the hike on a boardwalk over the bog area. Along the way we were impressed by the sight of nu-

merous bog plants — orchids, pitcher plants, cottonwood, reindeer mosses, etc. We also learned that this bog had started to be formed before the Egyptian pyramids had been built.

With the range of natural environments, numerous trails, rich Miqmaq and Acadian history of this area, the park, although difficult to pronounce, is an excellent one to put on a visit list.



David Gilchrist and his wife Claudia enjoyed the scenery at one last stop out east, at Kouchibouguac National Park, before heading to the other side of the country. (David Gilchrist)

Recent heavy rain reinforces need for work in Dock Area

Penny Coles
The Local

Ron Simkus has been keeping close tabs on the water levels of Lake Ontario since areas of the town were flooded in 2017, and again in 2019.

The retired mining engineer has spoken extensively with town staff in recent years about the need to protect the Dock Area from future flooding, to the extent that he jokes he sometimes has to remind himself, and others, that he doesn't work for the town.

When heavy rain last week, accompanied by thunder and lightning, caused flooding in some parts of Niagara-on-the-Lake, said Simkus, it caused the level of Lake Ontario to rise by half an inch, defying predictions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They are now expecting a drop of six inches over the next 30 days, Simkus told his 100 or so recipients of an email he sends out weekly to explain lake levels to residents, particularly those in the Dock Area.

But although that bodes well for the rest of this season, Simkus, reached in Ottawa to talk to The Local, said he believes strongly that disaster mitigation is paramount for the future, rather than waiting for the flooding of 2017 and 2019 to occur again.

The good news is that after Simkus lobbying the town for several years, a rain harvester was installed this spring in the eastern end of the Dock Area parkette as part of a stormwater drainage initiative. "And it worked. We had a heck of a rainstorm, and the rain harvester filled up just the way it was designed to do."

The town is in good hands with the recently hired director of operations Rome D'Angelo, who knows what needs to be done in the Dock Area, said Simkus, and has been pursuing a federal grant to help fund the work, estimated at about \$5 million.

"He understands it's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when, and it has to be done."

Simkus has been concerned about Ricardo Street by Nelson Park since it was underwater for days, stretching into weeks, in 2017. It necessitated road detours as stormwater sewers couldn't drain water fast enough, causing the stormwater sewers and septic sewer lines to "co-mix and ultimately overwhelm the sewage pumping station on the



These two photos supplied by local Dina Kalns shows Ricardo Street on the day of heavy rain a week ago.

south side of the street."

Fortunately, last week, he said, the level of Lake Ontario remained low enough that the stormwater surge reached the lake on its own, and the sewage pumps continued to do their job, "averting the need for other measures the town had to employ in 2017, and again two years later."

Some lessons were learned from the first flooding, allowing the town to be better prepared the second time around, but there are measures that could and should be taken in preparation for when it happens again, as he said, it surely will.

Although there are ways to predict when it could happen again, there is no way to know how high the lake will rise and how damaging it will be. The records that would help determine what to expect don't go back far enough or provide enough information, he explained.

With the possibility of a federal grant on the horizon, the town should be ready to move forward on putting mitigating plans into place, Simkus said.

In 2017 and again in 2019,

the town rented expensive portable pumps in three Dock Area locations to manage stormwater. One was used on Ricardo Street, he said, the second at the foot of Melville Street to pump water into the Niagara River by the public dock, and the third was at the west end of River Beach Drive, used to lift water from inside the parkette to the Niagara River.

He also mentioned the new condominium development now under discussion for Melville Street, and said during one meeting he seemed the only one concerned that any units on the ground floor would be vulnerable to flooding — they would be right in the path of the stormwater if the lake should rise as it has twice already.

The town didn't think that there would be a problem, but the conversation left the developer scrambling to come up with a solution.

Simkus would like to see the town purchase high-quality, portable electric pumps which can be brought out for use when and where they're needed. NOTL Hydro can ensure

the outlets are close enough and available for use when the pumps are put to work.

"In 2017, everybody was blinded," he said. "This time we can be prepared."

He recalls Prime Minister Justin Trudeau coming to town in 2017 — it was World Environment Day — and paddling a kayak along the waterfront for a photo opportunity. Simkus says he tried to point out all the sandbags that were trying to protect the shoreline, "and he looked the other way."

Since then the federal government, he added, seems to have woken up and come to the realization that it's cheaper to spend money on disaster mitigation rather than "replacing everything for everybody" with disaster relief money. And it would be well-spent in NOTL on pumps to have ready when needed.

There is a feasibility study approved by the town in 2020 to address a permanent solution for pumping in the Dock Area when the lake level reaches a point that it's necessary, but nothing has been done since. Simkus is hoping to see a de-

sign soon.

His other concern is having some work done in River Beach Park. Despite some doubts expressed to him that the parkette rain harvester would work, it has been proven successful in the recent heavy rain. He hopes the town will now consider another similar installation in River Beach Park, as part of an overall plan for the future.

The rain harvester also acts as natural filter for stormwater drainage to help reduce contaminants reaching Lake Ontario, and to filter out silts

during heavy rain.

In addition, the steel facing along the shoreline of River Beach Park has a large hole in it and needs repairing, and the municipal parking lot needs to be a permeable design to capture water, said Simkus, two projects that typically go side-by-side.

With so many variables and not enough historic information to predict exactly how high the highest lake level is likely to reach, he says, "you can't eliminate disaster occurring, but you can mitigate it, and lessen the pain."



The rain harvester in the parkette flooded, but worked, helping the water to drain away as it was supposed to. (Supplied)



June 2017: sandbags line the River Beach Park shoreline while Prime Minister Justin Trudeau kayaks along the riverfront.

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Niagara episode of Amazing Race airs Tuesday

Mike Balsom
The Local

Welland native Mark Lysakowski, an executive producer of CTV's *The Amazing Race Canada*, couldn't wait for the reality program to finally return to the Niagara Region.

"In season one, Niagara Falls was the very first place we opened up on," Lysakowski says. "We filmed that from a helicopter, showcasing one of the seven wonders of the world to begin the whole series."

The Welland Centennial Secondary School graduate has been with *The Amazing Race Canada* from the beginning. The program has taken him from coast to coast to coast, covering just about every nook and cranny of this vast country. But for season nine, he felt it was time to get back to his roots.

"I set the route for this," he explains, "and I wanted to avoid Niagara Falls this time. I wanted this to be the Niagara region show. I love Niagara Falls, but I wanted to see more of the Niagara region."

Like most reality television shows, much is kept secret before each episode is aired. But Lysakowski does reveal some particulars.

"We cover St. Catharines, Pelham, Niagara-on-the-Lake and my hometown, Welland," he says. "I wouldn't be welcomed back in my hometown if I didn't include Welland."

Production photos provided by CTV show the racers near the historic British Methodist Episcopal Church on Geneva Street in the Garden City.

As well, at the end of last Tuesday's episode,

during which Pelham native Gracie Lowes and her teammate Lily Bateman were unfortunately eliminated, a teaser for the August 15 show revealed footage of competitors rowing and driving grape harvesters.

Lysakowski admits that the rowing took place at Welland's International Flatwater Centre.

"I felt the need to showcase the Welland Canal," Lysakowski adds. "When I was a kid I swam in the canal. And I promise you that our teams will be stopped by the bridges along the canal. Everyone in the Niagara region knows if you hit a bridge, you get a 45-minute wait."

He goes on to recount his own experience with the bridges in his younger days.

"My orthodontist was in Niagara Falls," he says. "I had a deal with my mom that if we hit the bridge then I didn't have to go to the appointment. My mom (a retired math teacher and guidance counselor from Welland Centennial) would let me out of it."

Those grape harvesters that the teaser suggests the competitors have to learn to drive were indeed provided by NOTL's own Joe Pillitteri of Lakeview Vineyard Equipment. And Alana Hurov of 124 on Queen Hotel and Spa confirms that the new hotel's patio is part of next week's broadcast, though she is unable to reveal anything more due to a strict non-disclosure agreement.

Lysakowski graduated from Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson) in 1998. He began his work in television as a freelancer, and has done just about every job you could imagine that goes into pro-



Show host Jon Montgomery drops in at the General Motors plant.

ducing a program.

He cut his teeth on the likes of *Canadian Idol*, *Top Chef Canada*, *Battle of the Blades* and *Canada's Got Talent*. In 2012, he became a full-time employee of Insight Productions, the company that produces those programs for CTV/BellMedia. Today he is the senior vice-president of Insight.

Lysakowski says he has learned a lot about the country and its people through his work on all of those programs.

"I'm so lucky to be able to travel the country, to see it up close and personal," he says. "I get to tell Canadian stories about Canadian people to Canadians. That, first and foremost,

is my job, whether they're singing, dancing, cooking or adventuring."

The Niagara episode was shot back in May. NOTL resident Tracey Frena spied the cast and crew one day convening around Fort Mississauga and stuck around long enough to convince host Jon Montgomery to pose for a selfie with her and her daughter Rachel.

"Jon is our ambassador for our program," says Lysakowski. "He's fantastic,

that's what he does. He is the most recognized person and he does so much for us. He loves to pose for photos and talk to people."

The "travelling circus," as Lysakowski calls it, consists of about 86 people in total, including cast and crew. When they roll into an area such as Niagara, their shooting schedule is usually spread out over a two-day period.

And they do a great job of connecting with local residents and dignitaries.

"In St. Catharines," hints Lysakowski, "we worked with a very important member of that community. We were thrilled to be welcomed in, and I think when people see it I'm sure they'll get it. It takes me way, way back to my youth."

To see exactly how Niagara is showcased, tune into *The Amazing Race Canada* next Tuesday, Aug. 15 at 9 p.m. on CTV, or watch on the CTV mobile app or website.



Amazing Race Canada contestants Tyler and Kayleen get their next clue from Niagara Black history expert Natasha Bell inside the BME Church in St. Catharines. (Photos supplied)

RECHARGING CAREGIVERS GROUP

A group for those caring for someone with a serious illness

Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care is excited to offer Recharge Caregivers Group. This supportive program aims to be a safe space for individuals who care for others to express their thoughts, feelings, experiences and struggles with others on a similar journey.

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New St. Andrew's pastor welcomed to NOTL

Mike Balsom
The Local

For new pastor Bernie Skelding, the first 2023 installment of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church's annual Gateau and Grace gatherings last Wednesday couldn't have come at a better time.

The informal evening allowed him and his wife Jenn to share cake and conversation with congregants and visitors from the Niagara-on-the-Lake community just a few days before officiating his first Sunday service at the historic Greek Revival-style church.

Skelding comes to St. Andrew's from the Vancouver, B.C. suburb of Coquitlam, though having grown up in Stoney Creek, he is very familiar with the area.

Formerly a physiotherapist, Skelding felt the calling many years ago and became an ordained minister about 19 years ago.

"I went and took some courses," he says, "and just continued down that path. I realized quickly that that was what I was supposed to be doing."

Interestingly, he sees some similarities between his former occupation and his current one.

"It's sort of a body and soul kind of thing," says Skelding. "In physiotherapy, the therapist-patient relationship is really paramount. And in a pastoral role, the minister-parishioner relationship is



New pastor Bernie Skelding and his wife Jenn meet the St. Andrew's congregation. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

critical. There are a lot of skills that overlap."

He recognizes the differences, as well, in that one aids in physical well-being while the other focuses on spiritual well-being.

"But there's a dialogue between the body and the soul," he says. "They're connected. The health of one impacts the other."

Skelding began his physiotherapy practice in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, then moved on to Toronto before settling in Hamilton. It was in that city where he became ordained. The first church of his own was also called St. Andrew's, in Wingham, Ontario. He was there for about 11 years before moving out west.

Skelding takes over from interim minister Clyde Ervine, who led St. Andrew's since spring 2021. He was in-

ducted last Monday following a search by a committee under the auspices of the Presbytery of Niagara that began last summer.

He and Jenn, who have three adult children, feel fortunate to be settling in with the St. Andrew's community here in NOTL.

"It's such a beautiful community," says Skelding, "and I've experienced St. Andrew's to be a hospitable, welcoming, beautiful congregation of people. They've really welcomed us with open arms. I'm looking forward to getting to know them and to walking with them."

The Gateau and Grace events, held each year during the month of August, finds participants gathering on the front lawn of the Simcoe Street church to sample some cake and engage in casual con-

versation. The Skeldings were very busy meeting the congregants for the very first time.

"I was really focusing on trying to learn as many names as I could," Skelding tells The Local with a chuckle.

Following the first half hour on the lawn, the crowd moved inside to enjoy the music of Marcela Lagunas Bergos and Luis Gerardo Molina, a cello and piano duo, originally from Mexico and now residing in Ontario. St. Andrew's music director James van den Brink is responsible for organizing the musicians for the series of Wednesday events.

"I'm really excited for the congregation," van den Brink says of working with Skelding. "The church has been reinvigorated. The congregation has been able to articulate its identity through a renewal process and through our ministry of music and events like this, and we hope to see the congregation grow."

Likewise, Skelding is looking forward to working alongside van den Brink.

"He is extremely gifted in so many ways," says Skelding. "He's just a delight to get to know and to begin working with."

And for Skelding, moving back to Niagara has made him a bit nostalgic for one of his old favourites, the delicious ice cream from the old Stoney Creek Dairy that he remembers enjoying as a child. Though the business closed in 2012, he has been able to indulge in reliving those memories.



Cellist Marcela Lagunas Bergos and pianist Luis Gerardo Molina entertained at the event.



Members of the St. Andrew's congregation and the community gather on the lawn for a Gateau and Grace event.

"There's a retirement home that's there," he laughs, referring to the Amica Stoney Creek Retirement Home now on the site. "There's a little dairy parlour there that is open to the public. We have already been there to enjoy some of their ice cream."

There are two more Gateau and Grace events coming up this month. On Aug. 16,

baritone Johan Vannittersum will be singing, accompanied by John Weibe on viola and guitar. And Niagara Symphony's Zoltan Kalman, the orchestra's principal clarinetist, will be featured on Aug. 30.

The events begin on the lawn at 7 p.m., are open to the public and free of charge. Donations to the church are encouraged.

**Please
take us
home**



Peter (left) and Phoenix, bonded siblings from a litter of seven, are sweet, carefree, loving boys. At four months old, they are neutered, microchipped and vaccinated, and they're also available for adoption. Tanya Rice of NOTL Cat Rescue says their mother, one brother and sister have been adopted, and these two are hoping for their forever home. They have another brother and two sisters, Paisley and Penelope, who are not yet spayed, but will be available for adoption by the end of the month. Peter and Phoenix will be at the Virgil Pet Valu Saturday, Aug. 12, from 12 to 3 p.m., hoping they will find someone to love them. For more information about the volunteer rescue organization and the kittens up for adoption visit notcats.weebly.com/.

Region installing pedestrian crosswalk

Mike Balsom
The Local

Crews from Beam Excavating have begun work installing a new pedestrian crossing at Mississagua Street near Anderson Lane.

Jeff Black, associate director of traffic and systems at Niagara Region says the location was pinpointed by

residents of NOTL as an area of need, largely due to the presence of the NOTL Community Centre, the NOTL Public Library and the Niagara Nursery School on Anderson Lane.

Black confirms that the crossing will feature flashing lights, pavement markings, and signage warning motorists from both directions that

a pedestrian crossing is nearby. Motorists will be expected to stop when the lights are flashing.

As that section of Mississagua Street is a regional road, the cost of the installation is borne by that level of government. Black expects the work on the new crossing to be done in about two months.



The region is installing a crosswalk from Anderson Lane across Mississagua Street. (Mike Balsom)

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See faces as artist Nancy Wardle sees them

Maria H. Klassen
The Local

Nancy Wardle has always considered herself creative, but didn't start focusing on painting until a few years ago, in 2017. Now she is featured in her first solo exhibit at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, with Face It, featuring her transition to portrait painting.

Having just moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake a few years earlier, she began taking art classes at the Pumphouse learning the fundamentals, and painting many landscapes, sunsets, vineyards and architecture over the next few years.

Gradually she started adding figures into her work. Last year she made the transition to portrait painting. Wardle started with her sister-in-law's fun selfies, and then painted more of her family and relatives. In Florida during the winter, she enlarged her portrait base and began painting other people — she had found her niche.

Wardle discovered an American artist who had painted 180 faces of the people in her town. And so the idea came to Wardle to paint 60 portraits for her solo show at the Pumphouse.

Wardle works in oils and acrylics using reference photos. She paints what she loves, capturing the light on faces, and revealing the subjects' personality and character and a moment of time in each portrait.

"I hope my work creates a space from the commotion of reality, for the viewer to gaze at the faces with curiosity and ponder what the story is behind the face," Wardle says, "because face it: we all have a story."

Wardle's portraits are featured at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre from Aug. 8 to 27, with an opening reception on Sunday Aug. 13, from 2 to 4 p.m.

So wander down to the Pumphouse in the next few weeks to view these portraits. What are some of the stories you see? What is your story?



Artist Nancy Wardle with Face It, her exhibit of portraits at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre. (Supplied)

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Warehouse of Hope helps people help themselves

Sharon Burns
The Local

To say that the Niagara Warehouse of Hope runs like a well-oiled machine is an incredible understatement.

At first glance, it was chaos: volunteers' cars were parked in every available space including the lawn, people seemed to come in and out of every corner of the 6,000-square-foot warehouse, and multiple phones rang over the whirr of sewing machines and the smell of soldering small electronics.

Upon closer look, however, the warehouse and the work that goes on within is a finely-tuned mechanism of volunteers doing exactly what they're best at, right down to the synchronized coffee breaks.

This place is a wonder.

The Warehouse of Hope was founded by Mary and Ted van der Zalm in 1989, when they began gathering and storing used items in the family's garage for shipment to Tanzania. In 1990, volunteers used mostly donated materials to erect the present building, on van der Zalm's Colonial Gardens property on Broadway Avenue in Port Weller.

Ted passed away last year, yet at 80 years young, Mary, despite an injured knee, is still an active volunteer.

Now, with a logo of 'helping people help themselves,' more than 80 volunteers work at the warehouse Tuesday and Thursday mornings to sort, organize and fill shipping containers bound for countries such as Guatemala, Haiti and the Philippines. Warehouse rooms are devoted to sewing, electronics and small medical supplies. A volunteer even calibrates used eyeglasses.

As second-generation volunteer Michelle Appelman sat at a long table, the smell and sounds of fresh coffee percolating behind her, she expertly took apart pieces of a bedskirt so the sewing room volunteers can make use of the 'new' fabric to make baby layettes, diapers and tote bags.

"That's what we're all about," said Appelman. "Everything that comes here would normally end up in the landfills. For instance, Juravinski Hospital donated operating room lights and Peter, my husband, tested them to make sure they worked," before shipping them to Cuba.

In the sewing room, while several women sewed diapers and tote bags for baby layettes, and bags for mothers packed with costume jewellery and hand-made feminine hygiene pads, volunteer Willy Van de Laar explained why she was shifting sweaters and warm jackets to a separate pile.

"We ship to warm countries, and this is all going somewhere else," such as The Farmworker Hub and Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

"That's very important," added secretary Ada Boland. "Everything is donated to us by hospital systems as far away as Toronto and Hamilton." What they can't use, they donate locally.

The organization also rents medical mobility supplies to the general public, said Boland, as she pointed out walkers in the medical room, "at a price greatly reduced from what health organizations charge, because this is a way for us to also pay our bills. We're 100 per cent nonprofit."

Phil Isber is in charge of shipping. He explained that financial donations help to pay for the cost of shipping a container to countries such as Ukraine, Guatemala, and the Philippines.

In total, 10 to 12 containers are shipped each year. "As of the end of 2022, we had over 200 containers shipped. I was kind of amazed," said Isber.

A container filled Thursday with used clothing, sewing supplies, used linen, five hospital beds and about 20 or 30 wheelchairs will be shipped to Ukraine, said Isber.

Six pallets of food from Niagara Christian Gleaners has also been loaded into the container by a group of volunteers who hail from diverse careers, and now finding themselves driving tow-motor and playing loading tetris in a 40-foot trailer.

The board determines where to send containers based on factors such as: Is what they have in the warehouse needed in that country? Is there political strife or other barriers that would prevent the container from getting from the port of call to its final destination?

A while ago, said Isber, "the situation was deteriorating in Haiti. We had a container that we shipped, it landed, and it was in customs. It was cleared, yet we were told that it's too dangerous for them to go pick it up. So we had to get it re-shipped to Guatemala."

The Warehouse of Hope does not work with a specific relief organization, and their contact people are different in each country. For example, containers destined for the Philippines are floated to Port Dover where a group there finalizes the paperwork and ships the container. In Haiti, connections include a priest and a school. They distribute everything, even the medical supplies.

"We ship containers to Guatemala in conjunction with Wells of Hope," said Isber, a non-profit founded by Ted van der Zalm Jr. and his wife Miriam, who help communities access clean water, education and basic health care.

Volunteer Marie Gowsell thought she and her sister were just going to the garage sale held at the warehouse in June when her sister, Louise Tripodi, came back from getting a hamburger to tell Marie that she just



Debbie Vanderkuip, Jane Gordon, Fran Bylsma, Griffin Gallant in Grade 11 at Laura Secord, Brian Unger, and Luca Rescigno in Grade 11 at St. Francis are all volunteers for Not Just Tourists. (Sharon Burns)



Ada Boland is the secretary of Niagara Warehouse of Hope and Phil Isber is in charge of shipping. (Sharon Burns)



Grade 11 student Hayden Murray sorts, organizes and tests equipment before it's shipped. (Sharon Burns)



A group of volunteers finish loading every nook and cranny of a truck headed to Ukraine. (Supplied)

signed them up for sewing.

"She ended up volunteering herself and me to help," Gowsell said. "Both of us have sewed our entire lives, so when it involves helping people and doing what we really love to do, it was ideal."

"I'm sewing right now," Gowsell told The Local. "I brought about 50 tote bags home and I'm doing them right from scratch."

Gowsell, at 76, and Tripodi at 78, just might among the oldest volunteers at Niagara Warehouse of Hope. Besides sewing at home, they sew for hours on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at the warehouse. Well, at least Gowsell said she does. "She has a new boyfriend," laughs Gowsell, speaking of her sister.

"We're always sewing. My sister and I both sewed all our lives. I just got into this independent living home and said 'you know, what the heck, if I'm not cooking or washing clothes, what do I do?' So this has been very great for us."

Hayden Murray, a Grade 11 St. Catharines Collegiate student, has been volunteering at the warehouse since he was in Grade 6," he said. "I clocked in about 75 hours last year and I'm trying to clock in more hours this year." But it seems Murray is here for more than a graduation requirement.

"I usually help anywhere I can," said Murray, who was tidying the electronics workbench after testing kettles for safety and workability. "We mostly test electronics."

In another room, volunteers for Not Just Tourists packed small medical supplies such as needles, syringes and dressings into boxes for the Ukraine-bound container. "We will go and fill in all the nooks and crannies," said room organizer Jane Gordon.

Not Just Tourists was started by Dr. Ken Taylor and his wife, Denise, and encourages vacationers to take suitcases packed with small medical supplies to countries such as Cuba. Many airlines do not charge for baggage destined for humanitarian aid. "To Cuba alone, in

the first six months this year, in suitcases, we have sent one tonne of medical supplies," said Gordon. Donated goods come from public agencies, nursing agencies, private homes and retiring doctors' offices.

At 10 a.m., after a busy morning at the warehouse, the coffee was ready, and volunteers stopped whatever they were doing and headed for the break room. "We've developed groups and friendships," said Isber. "It's a social thing as much as it's helping people."

"It's easy to help when you are having a good time," he said.



Sisters Louise Tripodi and Marie Gowsell thought they were just going to a garage sale held at the warehouse in June, and ended up volunteering as sewers. (Supplied)

Couple donate complete series of books to Brock

Penny Coles
The Local

David Murray and Elizabeth Surtees are world travellers themselves, so it's not surprising that a beautiful set of travel books, printed between 1901 and 1921, caught their eye.

Called the Twenty Shilling Series, the rare antiquarian books, travelogues of their time, would have provided a wealth of information for travellers of the early 20th century, says Murray, as well as to those who couldn't afford to travel. The books were sold by subscription for just 15 shillings in advance, a common method for selling books at that time so publishers knew in advance how many to print for subscription, which were guaranteed sales, and how many more they speculated they could sell.

Those sold after the subscription were 20 shillings, about a week's pay for a London worker, Murray says, so expensive for a book, but cheaper than a trip they couldn't afford to take.

The couple's Twenty Shilling Series, 92 books collected over a period of about 15 years and the only complete set in Canada, has recently been donated to Brock University.

"We are book people, and have been for ages. As you approach the end of life, you look around and think, what's going to happen to all of this?" says Murray. "And you want something good to happen, rather than giving it to family that won't appreciate it. So you think of an institution that will value it, and use it for learning."

Having donated books to Brock and to Laurier universities over the years, the couple decided to gift the series — each book featuring a place or country around the world, Murray explains, with one volume dedicated to Canada — to Brock for its

library's Archives and Special Collections section.

"It will be looked after by them, and will be of scholarly value to the institution," he says.

The books, printed by publishing house Adam and Charles Black, based in London, England, are "well-decorated," he says, with high-quality colour plates, good writing and interesting covers. "You wouldn't see that kind of quality nowadays."

They are books "you might have given as a Christmas present," says Murray, "or if you subscribed to them, accumulate with pride."

It was very rewarding to the couple to build the collection, and important that it not be scattered, he said.

"We enjoyed having them. We are world travellers ourselves, and have been to many of these places. We could pick up one of these books and see how different they looked in 1922. We'll miss them, but with them at Brock, we can go and visit them any time."

Murray says he's sure if anyone knew they were there and called up Brock's special collections department, "they would be able to go and see them."

The books, he added, "are national treasures, and should be exhibited."

He found his first volume before meeting Surtees, he says, and they continued searching them out together. Collecting rare books and attending book fairs — more common in pre-COVID days — have been favourite pastimes for the local couple, who met in a bookstore in Toronto, and bonded over their mutual interests, which also include art and travel.

They were both browsing, Murray says, at a Yonge Street store that specialized in books on art.

"I had been given two



Elizabeth Surtees and David Murray, with a few volumes of the Twenty Shilling Series on the shelf in their home beside Surtees (on the left side of the photo), have now donated the complete 92-book collection to Brock University. (Photo supplied by Brock University)

tickets to the opening of an art exhibition nearby. As a single gentleman, I welcomed the opportunity to go anywhere on a Monday night, which it was. This attractive, demure lady was there also looking at books, and I said, 'I've got these two tickets. I'll give you one if you would like to go. I'm going, and you can have the other ticket.'"

He was trying not to sound like he was asking for a date, he says, and she agreed to go. "And that's how I met her."

Surtees had homes in Toronto and Elora, Murray in Toronto, and although they saw each other socially for years, "we weren't an item," he says.

Eventually they were, although they weren't married until they came to live in Niagara, which was 2001, where they first lived on Johnston Street, downsized to Gage, "500 metres around the block," and at that time donated some paintings to

Willowbank School of Restoration Arts. They have since moved to a new home on Four Mile Creek Road in St. Davids, where they live now.

The Twenty Shilling Series, Murray says, "was acquired over the years, one by one, at book fairs and bookstores, including one locally, in Port Colborne, a well-regarded antiquarian bookstore with books on all sorts of subjects."

Once you start a collection, Murray adds, "you say to yourself, you have to have the rest. We knew there was no full set in Canada, and we were going to have one. It even had its own book case."

Murray says they have donated other books of value, including an atlas to Western University. He has an interesting story to tell in relation to the ceremony held to recognize that donation, when they came across a special Shakespeare exhibit at the university.

There is one portrait

thought to be the only depiction of William Shakespeare painted while he was alive, authenticated by many experts through years of research, Murray explains. It was exhibited for a time at the Royal Ontario Museum, and an artist bought a ticket, spent his time looking at the painting and taking in the details, and after his five minutes of viewing it sketched what he remembered. After visit number four, he went home and painted a reproduction, or copy of what he saw, in exactly the same dimensions.

Murray tracked down the artist of the copy, asked if he could buy it, and when the artist named "a three-figure price," it was his.

There was only ever that one copy of the reproduction, he says, and when he was at Western, and saw the exhibit of Shakespeare, he decided to offer it to the university. After an appraisal, he was offered a tax receipt — for more than three fig-

ures, he adds — so it is now part of a special collection in Western, it too going to a good home.

Murray and Surtees are supporters of Brock, and have created two graduate student awards at the university.

Also members of the Niagara Historical Society, the David C. Murray and Elizabeth Surtees/Niagara Historical Society Scholarship in the History of Niagara is awarded each year to a master's student in history carrying out research on a local history subject at Brock.

Retired as a labour arbitrator, Murray has also created the David C. Murray Scholarship in Political Science for a master's student planning to specialize in law, human resources and dispute resolution, including labour arbitration.

Some volumes of the Twenty Shilling Series are on display on the main floor of the Brock University Library until the end of August.

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NOTL violinist celebrates 50 years with NSO

Mike Balsom
The Local

Erika Janzen exudes a youthful exuberance as she bounds into The Local's Four Mile Creek Road office. She's been invited to talk about her 50th year as a violinist with the Niagara Symphony Orchestra (NSO), and she couldn't be happier about it.

Janzen has been a member of the NSO since she was in high school, when she was able to step from the Niagara Youth Orchestra right into a seat with what was at the time called the St. Catharines Civic Orchestra.

The mother of three boys first picked up a violin as a young student at Prince Philip Public School after becoming fascinated by the instrument during a music demonstration. She enrolled in the elementary music program, run at the time by Paul van Dongen, and continued until she got to Grade 8 at Dalewood.

"Bringing your violin to school just wasn't cool then," she laughs. "So I quit. Then my dad encouraged me to go to Laura Secord Secondary School for Grade 9. It was the best thing that ever happened in my life."

Despite the popularity and prevalence of rock music in the late 1960s and early 1970s, she never cottoned on to the trend.

"It never appealed to me," Janzen says. "All these people were singing the lyrics to all these rock songs, and I wasn't interested at all."

She recalls meeting a tight-knit group of other like-minded non-rockers in the Secord music room, under the guidance of teacher Henry Goertzen.

"I re-fell in love with the violin, and I really started working at it," Janzen says. "I had some catching up to do, because I hadn't played in over a year. But in Grade 10,

I auditioned for the youth orchestra, and Paul van Dongen took me in."

At the time, the youth orchestra was affiliated with the St. Catharines Symphony, which was a semi-professional organization then. Leonard Atherton, the conductor, often came to check out the younger musicians.

"They would sort of absorb youth orchestra musicians," she explains. "That happened for me in Grade 12. They were starting an apprenticeship program, and I signed up for it. But at my first rehearsal that September they told me I was in."

Janzen admits her first performances with the larger orchestra were a bit intimidating, but the experienced professional musicians welcomed the younger ones with open arms.

"It was a pops concert at the Shaw Theatre," Janzen recalls of her debut as the 12th of 12 violins. "I can't remember what the theme was, but I know I only played in a couple of pieces for that concert. I think we got paid \$2 for each rehearsal, and \$5 for each concert back then."

Following high school, Janzen earned her BA in music at Brock University. She fell in love with Peter Janzen, an electrician, and was married after graduation. Her affiliation with the symphony continued even as she did all the paperwork for her husband's electrical business, run out of their Four Mile Creek Road home.

Music shaped the family's lives through the years. The couple's three boys all learned musical instruments, though perhaps surprisingly, it was the trumpet and French horn that they decided to take up, not any of the stringed instruments.

"I actually love brass," she laughs. "We had brass at our wedding, when people expected we would have a

string quartet."

And Peter wasn't a classical music fan when they first met. That changed quickly.

"He comes home and turns on the classical music station," says Janzen. "He programs the classical music station in his car. And he's a subscription holder (at NSO). He comes to all the concerts."

Janzen's face lights up when she tells The Local about her six grandchildren, especially about the fact that the older ones have begun taking their own music lessons.

Her favourite composer is Beethoven, but she loves anything from the late classical and romantic periods. That includes Mahler, Brahms and Tchaikovsky.

"Anything that involves a big brass and a big percussion section," she says. "Then I'm all over it. I love the power."

Looking ahead to the 75th season of the NSO, The Local points out that some of those favourites she mentioned — Mahler and Brahms in particular — are being featured this season.

"Another favourite of mine is Dvorak's *New World Symphony*," Janzen enthuses. "That's part of the first concert (Sept. 17). I'm really looking forward to that. I think we used to play parts of it in high school. I just love that symphony. And I love the holiday concerts, too. I'm a Christmas person."

She applauds the attempts that current Niagara Symphony music director Bradley Thachuk has made to appeal to non-classical audiences with programs featuring the music of pop acts such as Genesis and the Tragically Hip. This season's lineup features a show called Classic Rock Radio, when the orchestra will perform music from Queen, the Who, Foreigner and Led



Erika Janzen still can't believe the good fortune that led to her 50-year affiliation with the Niagara Symphony Orchestra. (Supplied)

Zeppelin on April 13.

"Those shows are fun," she says. "I think that's the key to attracting a wider audience, too. It's a great thing to do. I don't know all those songs, but I enjoy learning them. And it's great to see the audience enjoying them."

Janzen calls the opening of Partridge Hall at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre an "OMG" moment for her work with the NSO.

"We are very fortunate to have a hall like this in this area," she says. "In the Thistle Theatre (now Brock's Sean O'Sullivan Theatre, the NSO's past home) you often felt like you were in a bubble. Here, the sound is so good. You can hear everything on the stage that you need to hear."

Though it's no longer di-

rectly affiliated with the professional orchestra, Janzen continues to work with today's Niagara Youth Orchestra musicians, alongside her first music teacher's son, Mike van Dongen, another Niagara Symphony violinist.

"It's such a big part of my life," she says. "They are just such amazing kids. I work with the juniors, the concert orchestra, as a music coach. COVID pretty much devastated us, but it's starting to grow again. My work with them is really precious to me. I've been connected with them since 1971."

She also knows how fortunate she has been to be able to play with a professional orchestra for 50 years right in her backyard.

"It is a very good symphony," she says. "There have been a few occasions

when I haven't been able to play because of an injury or a vacation. But I have attended those concerts, and I sat back and was so impressed. I've had some of my colleagues say they've had the same experience."

And she feels lucky to have many colleagues with her on stage who have been beside her through decades. In a way, it's a continuation of that camaraderie she first felt in the Laura Secord music department way back when.

"I still look around me and say 'I can't believe that I'm here,'" she says, smiling. "I love it so much. Sitting in the middle of the orchestra, all this music happening around me, I wonder how this opportunity came my way. It's still awesome to me to this day."

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Busy weekend coming up for Music Niagara Festival

Mike Balsom
The Local

It's a youth takeover for Music Niagara Festival as young rising stars of classical music share the spotlight in four performances from Aug. 11 to 13.

Featured in three of those concerts is violinist Emma Meinrenken, a longtime student of Music Niagara's founder and artistic director Atis Banks. The 24-year-old virtuoso performs a solo recital at St. Mark's Anglican Church Friday evening, joins her fellow members of the Kiri Quartet for a performance at Grace United Church on Victoria Street Saturday, and returns to Grace United with the quartet for a masterclass Sunday afternoon.

Meinrenken recently completed her Bachelor of Music degree at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Ida Kavafian, an artist-member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and former violinist of the Beaux Arts Trio. At Curtis, she was awarded the Milka Violin Artist Prize and was also the 2023 recipient of Yale's Presser Foundation Graduate Award and a Sylva Gelber Foundation Award.

Meinrenken is currently a Master of Music student at the Yale School of Music, under the tutelage of Augustin Hadelich, the winner of a 2016 Grammy Award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo.

"Even after her 10 years of studies with me," Banks says of his former student, "she would come every Christmas break, every spring break, for a few weeks every summer to work on repertoire, while she was studying at those institutions. It's always a pleasure to work with her."

Banks refers to Meinrenken as a technical virtuoso.

"She can do anything on the violin," he raves. "Any-

thing. The rest is all about finding her own voice and interpretation, to hone her performance skills. You cannot do that by just practising or performing for a teacher. You need to perform for audiences to command and understand what works and what doesn't."

In a PBS video available to watch online from the U.S. public broadcaster's series *On Stage with Curtis*, Meinrenken's virtuosity is evident. But more importantly, she seems fully at ease in explaining to the audience the history and her reasoning behind choosing to perform pieces by Schubert and Bartok.

Music Niagara audiences have certainly been happy in recent years to provide important feedback to aid in Meinrenken's development as a performer. The young Toronto resident has been a perennial component in the festival's line-up through both solo recitals and with the Kiri Quartet.

Rounding out the quartet are cellist Matthew Christakos, violinist Jasmine Mengija Lin, and violinist Lynn Sue-A-Quan. On Saturday, they will perform works by Canadian composer Alexina Louie and French composer Maurice Ravel. In addition, they will be joined by Music Niagara Festival Performance Academy alumni for Polish composer Mateusz Czarowski's *sTREEtS*, a work for 16 stringed instruments. Czarowski's composition won the Ambassador's Prize at the second annual Eduardas Balsys young composer's competition, named after one of the most prominent 20th century Lithuanian composers.

The quartet returns to Grace United Church Sunday afternoon for a masterclass. Music lovers are invited to attend to watch the four young musicians at work. Admission is on a pay-what-you-can basis.

The venue shifts to the beautiful Ironwood Cider

House for the fourth Music Niagara event of the week-end Sunday evening. There, five talented students from Toronto's Taylor Academy of the Royal Conservatory of Music and Glenn Gould School will showcase their talents.

"They are all violinists, my students at the Conservatory," Banks explains. "They're all advanced, very, very good players, committed to violin playing."

Along with works by well-known classical composers, the students will be performing the music of Eugene Ysaye, the Belgian violinist and composer whose groundbreaking violin sonatas were composed one hundred years ago.

"As a composer, he developed his own musical language," explains Banks. "He produced a number of great students and performers. He was revered by everybody, from every country."

Indeed, Ysaye was known at the turn of the 20th century as the king of the violin. He was the principal violin of the Benjamin Bilse beerhall orchestra, which later became the Berlin Philharmonic. It's said that the likes of Franz Liszt and Clara Schumann often came to see him perform.

At 28 years old, he became a professor at the Brussels Conservatoire in his hometown, where he taught many of the greatest violinists of the time. Ysaye, a longtime friend of Claude Dubussy's, died in 1931 at 72 years of age.

"He didn't compose operas or symphonies," says Banks, when asked why Ysaye is not more well-known. "It was always music for violins, or chamber music for viola. His six sonatas are known for their totally different musical language and technique. They still remain challenging for contemporary players. It's very passionate music."

Of presenting his young students with such challeng-



Emma Meinrenken (Mike Balsom file photos)



The Kiri Quartet, with whom Meinrenken often appears.

es, Banks says, "I always want to expose them to other views of music to enrich their knowledge. Different sides of repertoire that they are performing. It's a great

experience for these young musicians."

Tickets for Emma Meinrenken's solo recital Friday Aug. 11, the Kiri Quartet performance Saturday

Aug. 12 and the celebration of the students of the Royal Conservatory Sunday are \$40 each plus HST. Visit musicniagara.org for more information.



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Emma Meinrenken with Atis Banks of Music Niagara behind her (left).

LocalSPORTS

Davis Cup and winning Canadian tennis team visit NOTL

Mike Balsom
The Local

Rosemary Goodwin could hardly contain her joy Thursday when she welcomed tennis lovers to the court on the property of Sam and Robin Ridesic in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Behind her, encased in protective plexiglas, sat the 123-year-old Davis Cup, the tennis world's most prestigious team prize.

"Get your head together," she muttered to herself as she shuffled through her notes, clearly shaken by the magnitude of the event. "The reason we're here, we have the Davis Cup, and Canada is the champion."

As the crowd cheered, she went on.



Camilla Yoxall of St. Davids poses in front of the Davis Cup. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

"As if that wasn't enough, Captain Canada," she said, "the captain of Team Canada, Frank Dancevic, born and raised in Niagara Falls, this is your home, and this is your day. And Queen's Royal Park, named in honour of a magnificent resort hotel that was built here in the 1860s, hosted some of the most prestigious and gala international (tennis) tournaments."

The location of the Ridesic's court, just across Front Street from the park, was chosen for its history, as it was at the Queen's Royal Resort that the idea of a trophy for international play came about.

It was through Goodwin's efforts that the trophy, won by the team of Felix Auger-

Aliassime, Gabriel Diallo, Alexis Galarneau, Vasek Pospisil and Denis Shapovalov, captained by Dancevic, arrived in NOTL for the four-hour event.

The stop was the final one on the Sobeys Davis Cup Champions Tour, celebrating the first time for Canada to capture the title in 122 years last year.

A food tent was set up in Queen's Royal Park, while the many visitors were encouraged to have their photos taken both with the cup and in front of a green screen, where their images would be stitched in beside those of Team Canada's competitors.

Many were in awe at the size and scope of the 110-cm tall, 107 cm in diameter, 231.5 pound trophy as they posed in front of it.

Along with the trophy came Hatem McDadi, Tennis Canada's senior vice president of high performance, along with representatives from the Ontario Tennis Association, retired Davis Cup competitors Harry Fauquier and Pierre Lamarche, Dancevic and his family, and many coaches and supporters of the Niagara Falls-born pro, a veteran Davis Cup player himself who retired from competition in 2020.

Goodwin, a director on the NOTL Tennis Club board, lauded Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa for his support back in 2013 when he advocated as a councillor for improvements to the



Tennis fan Ted Scott snaps a photo of the Davis Cup.

club's courts at Memorial Park.

"He provided the leadership that brought us the best parks tennis courts in all of the Niagara region and beyond," said Goodwin. "It was one of the best decisions that this council ever made. We're so glad to have him here."

After McDadi gave a vivid description of Canada's breakthrough 2022 Davis Cup victory, he introduced the team captain by shedding light on his guidance at last year's tournament in Spain.

"Frank and his team were on a mission," said McDadi. "What happened on the court to win was not only a tribute to the team but to Frank's leadership and the staff that helped prepare the team."

Dancevic took to the microphone and talked about his early

development as a player, driving around Niagara looking for an open court where he could get an hour or more in to practice. He would bring with him tape and string to repair the nets at some of the public courts.

"I drove by one of my old practice grounds," he laughed, "the Lions Club in St. Davids. I remember back in the day the courts were all crooked and you had to chase the balls into the forest. They've done a wonderful job repainting the courts to make it a wonderful place to train."

Dancevic thanked his local coaches for his success, including Lezlie Murch, Doug Carter and Dave Boland.

"They were always there, always welcoming," said Dancevic. "They essentially made me into the player I became. Without everybody's help, including Rosemary, it's difficult to achieve great things."

Dancevic called it "a miracle" to have the Davis Cup sitting in NOTL Thursday.

"There's so many obstacles that you have to face along the

way," he explained. "You have to have the right players, the energy, the chemistry, to have them play well at the right times. When one guy's down, another has to step in. Everyone has to get along off the court, too. There are so many moving parts that make this happen."

The ceremony concluded with Niagara Falls mayor Jim Diodati presenting Dancevic with a key to the Honeymoon City.

"This is the key to our hearts, Frank," Diodati said, "as we welcome you back to Niagara. It's one of a kind. Like you, there's not another one in the world. As the ambassador of Canada for tennis, sportsmanship and as a champion, today it's official, welcome home, thank you very much, you've made us proud."

Following Thursday's event, the Davis Cup made its way to Toronto's Sobeys Stadium where it was to go on display during Tennis Canada's National Bank Open, which began this weekend.

LocalHAPPENINGS



FISH FRY

Every Thursday
4 - 7 p.m.

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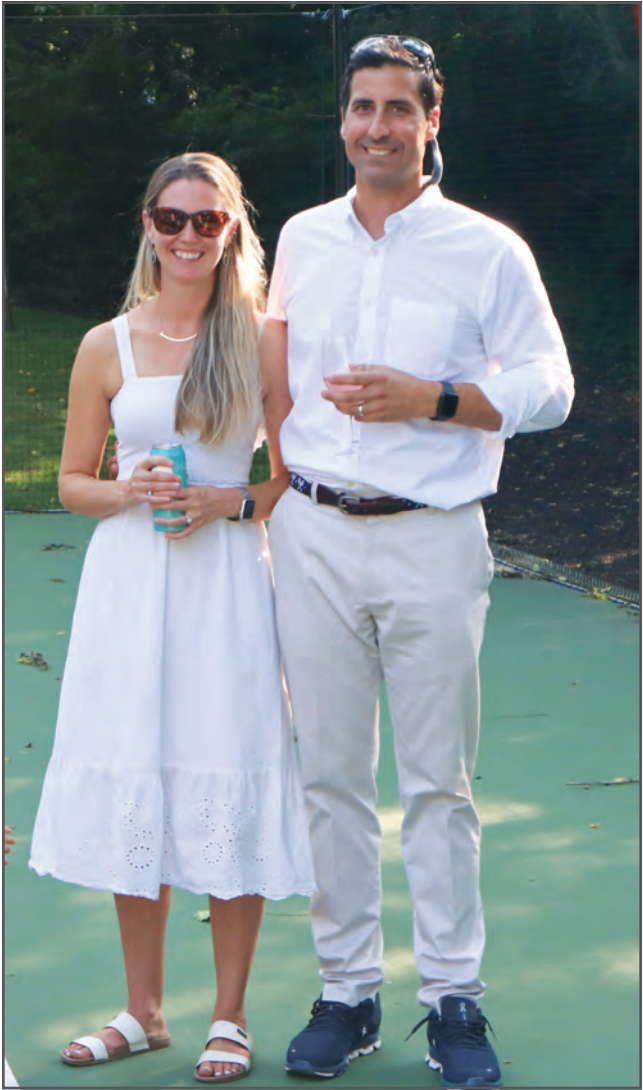
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Rosemary Goodwin welcomes Hatem McDadi, Tennis Canada's senior vice-president of high performance, to the podium.



Team Canada captain and Niagara Falls native Frank Dancevic.



Davis Cup tour event hosts Robin and Sam Ridesic.

LocalWORSHIP



Sunday, August 13th

9:45 a.m.
Cornerstone Kids Sign In
(Nursery - Kindergarten)

10:00 a.m.
Worship Gathering
Online & In-Person

Message: Michael Reimer
The Cost of
Following Jesus
(Matthew 8:18-22)

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OBITUARY

Celebration of Life
for Diane Brophy (Kerr)

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Mike and Larry

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AUGUST 2 SUDOKU ANSWER

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

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SUDOKU

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CARTER, HUGH BERNARD


Passed away, peacefully, at home in his sleep Saturday, August 5, 2023. Much loved and will be forever missed by his wife, Donna (nee Skeoch) and his daughter, Sarah and her husband, Jason Cheshire. Hugh is survived by his mother, Phyllis; predeceased by with father, Albert. Dear brother of Phillip, Mark (Linda), John, Tim, Elizabeth (Alex), Margo (Mark) and the late David. He will be missed by his sister-in-law Karen, brother-in-law, Jim (Marg) Skeoch and the late Robert Skeoch. Hugh's an uncle to many nieces and nephews and their families.
Thanks to family, friends, nurses and PSW's for their support during the last few months.
In honouring Hugh's wishes cremation has taken place. A Celebration of Life to be held from 1-4 pm on Saturday, August 19, 2023 at the **Kinsmen Hall**, 430 King Street. N-O-T-L.
In lieu of flowers, memorial donations to Kinsmen Club of N-O-T-L, P.O. Box 222, Virgil, L0S 1T0, would be appreciated. Arrangements entrusted to **Considerate Cremation & Burial Services**, 26 Nihan Drive, St. Catharines (between Lake Street & Scott Street), 289-362-1144. Online condolences may be made at CCBSCares.ca





JACOB BENJAMIN JANZEN

APRIL 10, 1942 – AUGUST 5, 2023 - It is with profound sadness and heavy hearts that we announce the sudden passing of Jake Janzen ("Sammy", "Yash") on August 5, 2023.
He leaves behind his wife (of 60 years) Maryann and children Allen & Susan, Annette & Larry, and Richard. He will be greatly missed by his grandchildren, Kaila (Alasdair) Daw, Dean (Katie) Janzen, Alyssa (Brandon) Benoit, Derrick Janzen, and Ally. As well as his great-grandchildren, Zoe & Ryan Daw, Madison & Emily Janzen, and Eloise Benoit.
Jake was born on April 10, 1942, and grew up on a farm on Hunter Rd in Niagara. He is predeceased by his parents Henry & Mary Janzen and all his siblings, Henry, Rudy, John, Nick, George (infancy), Maryanne, Anita, Luise (in infancy) and Hilda. Jake had many stories about his growing up years. They were a lively bunch.
This past April Jake & Maryann celebrated 60 years together. Family was always his number one priority, and he loved them all.
Jake loved life and had a happy personality. He often whistled while he worked and could do it in harmony to music. He liked to sing, dance and enjoyed listening to country and gospel music. He had a great sense of humor, a quick wit and enjoyed a good joke.
Jake enjoyed Hockey (Die-Hard Leaf Fan). He played "the nets" in his youth and coached minor hockey for many years. Hockey was in the family DNA as both sons and grandsons played.
Jake worked for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake for 31 years. He started out as a labourer/heavy equipment operator and for the last 20 years as the Foreman for the Roads Dept. He often said, "I had the best job!" He has enjoyed 25 years of retirement, much of it spent doing odd jobs for family as well as having fun with family, friends, and fishing at the cottage. Jake also had many great family times in Florida, and many other trips across Canada and the US.
As per Jake's wishes cremation has taken place. A private funeral will be held. A Celebration of Life will be held on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at Caroline Cellars, 1010 Line 2 Rd. #358, Virgil, Ontario from 2-5 pm.
In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Red Roof Retreat. Online condolences at tallmanfuneralhomes.ca



MITCHELL, PATRICIA MAY (NEE ROBERTS) - Passed away peacefully while holding her loving daughter's hand on Friday, August 4, 2023. Beloved wife of the late Jack Mitchell (2013); and adored mother and best friend of Donna McIntyre. Predeceased by her parents Jessie and William Roberts and siblings: Jack, George, Joan and Bruce. She is survived by sisters Bettye Southworth and Irene Nepean; and brother Donald Roberts. Patricia will be dearly missed and lovingly remembered by family and friends. Cremation has taken place. At Patricia's request, there will be no visitation or service. In lieu of flowers, a memorial donation to the charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family. "To the world she was just one person, but to one person she was the world."
Online Condolences – www.georgedartefuneralhome.com

