Games opening ceremony brings country together

Mike Balsom
The Local

I’ve never been a huge fan of opening and closing ceremonies at events such as the Olympics. In fact, other than Vancouver 2010, I don’t think I’ve ever sat down to watch for more than five minutes of either celebration.

Saturday evening, however, I had the distinct pleasure of experiencing first-hand the opening ceremony of the Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games at the Meridian Centre. For many it has been this little thing called the pandemic that may have gotten in the way. But Saturday’s gathering at the Meridian Centre got the ball rolling in a big way.

The energy in the building was palpable as the young athletes from each of the 13 provinces and territories paraded into the arena dressed in their team colours. Remember, these athletes are true amateurs, the best in the country at their sports, and for the most part under 23 years old. Many of them will be Canada’s future Olympians and Paralympians, and they were thrilled to be in Niagara to take this next step in their journey.

As one might imagine, Team Ontario, as the host province the last to enter, received the loudest response from the crowd. But seeing the many different provincial flags waving in the stands brought home the point that there were people from every corner of the country right here in our region.

Once the athletes were seated on the Meridian Centre surface, the ceremony began with a powerful performance featuring Juno Award winner DJ Shab, Métis fiddler Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk and, Kyle Burton of the Toronto Métis Jiggers and accomplished hoop dancer Myranda Spencer.

At one point during the performance, technical difficulties silenced the sound from the musicians, and the athletes began clapping, then starting the wave across the arena to fill the silence.

Though totally unplanned, that was a key moment in realizing the power of all of these people together in this building, celebrating the beginning of a two-week sporting event. Nothing was going to stop anyone present from enjoying this night.

A series of dignitaries then took to the Turtle Island stage, beginning with Canada Games Council (CGC) Chair Evan Johnston and Olympic champion speed skater and CGC board member Catriona Le May Doan.

Continued on page 9
Time to erase differences, live together as inclusive society

Mike Balsom
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Ken Chan is excited with anticipation for the installation of a rainbow crosswalk across Anderson Lane at Niagara Stone Road.

"The presence of a rainbow crosswalk sends a clear message," says the vice-president of administration at Brock University. "It will demonstrate to our businesses and guests that we have evolved as a society to be inclusive, respectful and accepting of each other."

Chan was present in late June when, at the end of Pride Month, a similar crosswalk was officially unveiled on Sir Isaac Brock Way, linking the Niagara Region headquarters with the Brock University campus.

"That was a very surreal moment in a very positive way," he says. "I listened to (Niagara Region) chair Jim Bradley, (Thorold mayor) Terry Ugullini and Enzo (De Dettis), chair of Pride Niagara, and looked across to see my office at Brock, and the university's residences in the background. And along the horizon I saw Niagara Falls."

"It sent a message," continued Chan, "that regardless of your background or who you love, you are welcome. For me that is a message that I can help people fight for equality of rights as human beings, that I can help people fight for the rights that I believe in, that I can help people fight for what I believe in."

"It was a journey as a young boy, questioning why I was different from my friends and family members," he says. "I first came out in the late 1990s when I applied to be a police officer (in Peel Region). I was one of the first few out officers at the time and when it was a very different culture and environment. Significant progress has been made."

He says coming out to his family was more of a gradual process.

"It's always difficult for a parent and a grandparent," he says. "People react differently. Both of our mothers are very supportive. We both lost our fathers over 20 years ago, so neither Warren or I had that conversation with them. The experience can be difficult for many, but we are truly fortunate."

He sees himself somewhere in the middle in the historic fight for equal rights. At 47 years old, Chan wasn't part of the Stonewall riots in 1969 in New York City, or even old enough to have marched with AIDS activists in the 1980s.

"Since coming out, he's led a life of a quiet sort of activism, acting as a shining example of a successful gay man comfortable in his own skin."

"Recognizing that there are more 70 countries around the world where same-sex relationships remain illegal, he has worked hard for change over his adult life."

Chan is on the board of Open for Business, an international charitable organization based in the U.K. It's a coalition of almost 40 corporations dedicated to the advancement of LGBTQ rights across the world.

"That's one of the ways that I can help people fight for equality of rights as humans," says Chan. "It's an obligation that I feel I need to fulfill. It's an opportunity to recognize and acknowledge the sacrifices made by the women and men who came before me, who put their lives and careers on the line."

"And it's also an opportunity to be a bridge to the younger generation," he adds. "The ability to be out in the workplace shouldn't be taken for granted. And there's still so much more work to be done. We have to all come together to continue the fight for equality." He also values the work put forth by the many Canadians who fought the battle for same-sex marriage in the courts, leading to the July, 2005 enactment of the federal Civil Marriage Act legalizing same-sex marriage. Chan and Duffy were married in 2015 at a ceremony in Toronto, surrounded by family and friends.

Chan admires the Anderson Lane location was not his first choice for the crosswalk. He would have preferred to see it at the corner of Queen's Parade and Wellington Streets, near the entrance to the Shaw Festival Theatre. He saw that site as another opportunity to showcase the richness of the town's arts and culture.

When asked about the back-and-forth within the community about the now-cancelled crosswalk and the debate about where it might be placed, he is graciously matter-of-fact.

I appreciate that members of the community provided feedback about the location," says Chan. "Ultimately, where it's located is less important than the fact that we're going to be getting a rainbow crosswalk. The decision has been made, and now it's time for everyone to come together to support the decision and make it a success.

Chan is also heartened by the fact the town will complement the rainbow crosswalk with matching benches in various locations. On July 25, council passed a motion to place these at Mary and King streets in town, as well as at the Queenston firehall, Sparky's Park, Niagara-on-the-Green Park and Centennial Sports Park in Virgil.

This is a time when we move away from divisive issues and come together as a community to erase differences," he says. "At the same time, we continue to look for ways to live together as an inclusive society, whether it's based on ethnic, religious, or gender identity differences."

"At the end of the day," concludes Chan, "as Canadians, we all live with each other, and are respectful of our views."
Grape shortfall in wine country ‘bad for our industry’

Rick VanSickle
The Local

Niagara grape grower Kevin Watson takes a moment to collect his thoughts on the disaster that was the fall of 2021 and winter of 2022 in Ontario. “It’s not good at all. It’s bad for our industry.”

The relentless rain in September was the immediate problem for much of the 2021 crop, but a far greater concern has emerged for the 2022 crop in the wake of the wet weather during harvest and the freezing temperatures later in the winter.

By the time spring and flowering of the buds occurred, growers noticed thousands of unhealthy vines in the vineyard. And sadly, it has amounted to widespread crop loss across the entire Niagara region that will have a devastating financial impact on wineries, especially for the smaller businesses and those who rely on growers for all or some of their grapes. There just won’t be enough to go around.

Watson pegs the loss of crop in Niagara to half of what a normal vintage will produce. Some growers and wineries fared worse than others. Chair of the Grape Growers of Niagara, Kevin Watson, says that the 2021 and 2022 growing seasons have been the hardest on record.

“Because growers needed to hang the water-logged, ‘juiced up crop’ long enough to get the sugar levels (brix) needed to make VQA wine, it led to a heavier crop with the roots sitting in the water. ‘They went into winter not as hardy as they should have been,’ he explained. ‘The vines were just weaker.’

Watson, named Grape King in 2007-2008, estimated that over-wintering vines from 2022 were being compromised at -18 C, according to VineAlert, a Brock CCCVI system for measuring bud hardness.

Watson said the two months of rain last fall laid the groundwork for the following winter. The rain caused the crop to be late. “This was because the rains diluted the flavours and we had to wait to allow the sugars to come back up. Also, when it was raining the sun was elsewhere and the buds need the sun to harden off and prepare for winter.”

He said the vines had added extra stress with the delayed harvest as well as little exposure to the sun and a late drop in winter hardiness.

“We then saw a few nights of 20/21 and unknowingly to us, damage occurred. I was cutting buds in March to determine how many buds to leave, and we were very optimistic. There were some reports of damage in the area, but I remember thinking that maybe we were spared.”

That optimism turned out to be all for naught. “It was wrong, and we sustained huge damage.”

While Watson said that next year the surviving vines will have the potential to hang at least 100 per cent of the crop, he did lose an eigre acres block of Chardonnay and damage to mostly Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling and Pinot Gris blocks. “We had a good many years of very little winter damage and it’s always in the back of your mind. Fingers crossed that we don’t have another for a while. We’re all better when we grow more grapes. And we make such great wine here in Ontario.”

Watson said his farm, with the help of crop insurance that covers up to 80 per cent of the loss, will come out of this just fine. But for this harvest, not only will the crop be drastically reduced, but he is also going to have to farm at lower temperature, anywhere from half a tonne to an acre to a tonne an acre.

Southbrook Organic Vineyards owner Bill Redelmeier, who pens an informative industry newsletter for his subscribers every month, was one of the first in Niagara to discuss the crop loss.

He had reported in an earlier newsletter that damage for Southbrook had survived the winter that hit 24.8 C at the vineyard, a devastating temperature for bud survival, which leads to loss of vines. Damage can occur as low as -20 C in Niagara and quite likely at -24 C.

Bill Redelmeier took this photo to show an example of a Southbrook vine that needs time to recover.

In an updated newsletter, Redelmeier wrote: “A couple of weeks ago, I wrote that we had survived the winter, except for a small block of Merlot. We had checked all the vines, and they seemed to be mostly alive, and we had high hopes for a reduced, but mostly normal, crop. As the spring starts to turn to summer, a different story is being told. We think that we will have lost about 75 per cent of our crop for this year.”

Plants, including grapevines, have evolved over millions of years to maximize survival, explained Redelmeier. “The vine does this in many ways, but especially by having multiple buds. The primary bud is there to send out a shoot with multiple nodes, each with leaf and flower buds. The bud at the tip (the apex, or the apical bud) sends out hormones that tell all of the spare buds that all is well, and to stay dormant. This is called apical dominance.”

If the apical bud dies, he continues, “those hormones disappear, and the dormant buds start to grow, but usually a couple of weeks later than usual. If you are in a warm climate, those second- ary buds will produce a reduced, but serviceable crop. In a climate like Canada’s, however, the crop will rarely ripen enough to give us a quality crop and the harvest date will be so late that it puts the health of the vine at jeopardy. In order to save the vine, and if the secondary buds are fine, we will go through the vineyard and remove the flowers so the plant can focus on healing itself. We lose this year’s crop, but the vines will be healthy for a full crop next year.

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Regional Council

Paolo Miele made a deputation to regional council in 2018, and has decided he would like to be a regular around the regional council table. (Screenshot)

Irrigation is another issue he would like to bring to the attention of regional council. Although the region has an irrigation committee and has been studying the issue with regard to other small farming communities, like Port Hill and Lincoln, for years, he says, “NOLT has 8,000 acres of farmland that is not getting water,” and despite the studies, the region has done nothing to help.

He’d like to see all four levels of government contribute to ensure all NOTL growers have access to irrigation, and—should he like to start by getting the region onboard.

The roundabout in St. Davids is another issue, one that comes with an expensive price tag, only in this case Miele says it’s neither needed or wanted. The majority of St. Davids residents are not happy about it, and traffic lights would be a better solution for handling the traffic at that intersection, he believes— or better yet, leave it as it is. The four-way stop that’s there now, he says, with the exception of an occasional traffic back-up, “has worked fantastically for decades.”

While Miele has been trying to encourage residents to make their wishes known, he says the region, which originally had three options on the table, has made its decision for that intersection. However, the money to pay for it will have to be included in the regional budget, likely in the next year or two — Miele says $3.5 million. “If I’m lucky and get on regional council, I’ll make sure it doesn’t happen.”

Niagara-on-the-Lake needs more regional housing, he says, and although there might not be many residents in support of it, Glendale would be a good location. He’s also concerned about health care, the doctor shortage in Niagara, the need to have at least one more nurse practitioner in town, and to hire more paramedics. When he talks to residents about regional council, “they don’t seem to see it as having as much of an impact on their lives as municipal council, at least that’s the perception I get from them. Most people are just not that concerned, until it affects them.”

Road safety, with the lack of support from the NRP is also an issue, he says, especially in the towns communities’ safety zones — the police should be watching them and ticketing speeders. “When we did the delegation about the stop signs on Four Mile Creek Road and Line 3, the mayors of the smaller communities supported us,” he says. “I realized these smaller communities weren’t getting what they need. We can help each other.” “I believe in our town,” he adds, “and I want what’s best for our town.”
Pillitteri Estates Winery Proprietor and Founder Gary Pillitteri has been awarded the Award of Distinction by Wine Growers Canada.

The Award of Distinction is the preeminent award for the Canadian wine industry and regarded as the highest form of peer recognition and appreciation. The award was presented to Gary Pillitteri of Pillitteri Estates Winery for demonstrating outstanding leadership, commitment and passion for the advancement of the Canadian wine industry. This distinguished honour was presented in a virtual ceremony held on Monday July 11th with participants from across Canada. Gary and his wife Lena began their journey of grape growing and winemaking in the 1960s when they purchased a small piece of land along Niagara Stone Road. At that time they farmed cherry trees and sold cherries along with other tender fruits at their roadside fruit stand, called Gary’s Farm Market. Gary was an early adaptor and began planting vinifera (winemaking style) grapes on his farm, culminating with him being crowned Grape King in 1981 for the quality of wine grapes. In 1993 Pillitteri Estates Winery opened on the site of the fruit market with 3 vintages of wine and Icewine available for sale. Now with sales in 38 countries, thousands of wine awards, a national brand presence and a partnership to produce the Official Wines of the Canadian Olympic Team, Pillitteri Estates Winery has become a respected and renowned member of the global wine community.

Gary acknowledges that this achievement would not have been possible without the support of his wife Lena, his children, Connie, Lucy and Charlie, his grand children and his friends. He is proud that presently there are 3 generations of family members working in Pillitteri Estates Winery.

Gary has watched the industry evolve and grow by leaps and bounds in the last 40 years. “We were told Vinifera varieties could not be grown here. But we grew them. Our wine industry was told we could not make great wine with the grapes we grew. So, we created an appellation standard, VQA, and we made great wine, red wine, white wine, sparkling wine, Icewines, winning every top world wine award. We were told that no one would buy our wines. So, we built wineries with stores and developed agrotourism which now accounts for 50% of all VQA wine sales in Ontario. We also looked beyond our backyard and exported our wines.”

The challenges continue and to combat the downturn of international tourism due to COVID, Gary renovated the winery’s patio into a new restaurant, BarrelHead Wine Pizza Patio. Locals and tourists enjoy traditional wood fired pizza, Icewine cocktails and live music.

Gary, now 86, says “When I came to Canada, I was 12 years old. All I owned was a pair of shorts and the shirt on my back. For me there was no easy path to success. If there was, I have not found it. For if I have accomplished anything in my life, it is because I have been willing to work hard.”

Gary’s nominator for the Award of Distinction, Jim Clark, President of Colio Estates Wines, noted in his nomination “Gary, you make world class wines, having won thousands of awards world wide and are one of the leading exporters of Icewine. You have invested an incredible amount of capital, time and energy into the export market. While you are promoting Pillitteri wines and Icewine at these shows your family is always waving the Canadian flag by telling yours and our story, for that, the entire industry is grateful. Gary, on behalf of the entire Canadian wine industry, we thank you for your outstanding leadership, your commitment and service. We congratulate you on an outstanding career.”

Gary Pillitteri receives Award of Distinction from Canadian Wine Industry

Three Generations of the Pillitteri Family work together at Pillitteri Estates Winery

Pillitteri Estates Winery

FAMILY | QUALITY | TRADITION

WINE STORE OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK | VISIT US FOR TOURS AND TASTINGS

WWW.PILLITTERI.COM
Why can’t we collectively do something about health care?

While COVID showed us early in the pandemic that there are problems in our health care system — and continues to show us now — the problems are not new.

We were talking about hallway patients in the province long ago, and the shortage of nurses, and all health care workers, including paramedics, who were held back from answering calls as they waited in hospitals until their patients were looked after.

Experts are looking at this pandemic as creating the perfect storm in health care, one that continues to worsen as hospital staff become more and more exhausted and disillusioned. While Dr. Mustafa Hirji and Lucia (Britbox) was enthused that could have worsened as hospital staff become more and more exhausted and disillusioned.

What can’t we collectively do something about health care?

Why can’t we make enough noise so Doug Ford will listen? What do we have to do to make him listen?

Penny Coles
The Local

Russian sage likes full sun, little water

Maria Percy
Special to The Local

This Garden of the Week is an arresting corner garden showing two sides of the house, and the owners have made good use of the lovely and reliable Russian sage (perovskia atriplicifolia).

The plant produces spiky clusters of bluish purple blooms from mid-summer into late fall. Plant them in full sun, as they can take the heat. They can flop with too much shade or too much water. This is an excellent plant for xeriscaping (a system of landscaping with water conservation as the priority) as they are drought-tolerant. Plant them with lavender, sedum or ornamental grasses if you don’t want to be watering all the time. The spikes grow from two to four feet tall, but the dramatic show is down the fence at the side of the garden. A long row of the plant stands by itself, backed by a cedar hedge, and this stunning view has definitely sparked my imagination for next year.

In this garden, the Russian sage has been used at the front of the house in the back of a mixed border. The plant looks stunning with too much shade or too much water. This is an excellent plant for xeriscaping (a system of landscaping with water conservation as the priority) as they are drought-tolerant. Plant them with lavender, sedum or ornamental grasses if you don’t want to be watering all the time. The spikes grow from two to four feet tall, but the dramatic show is down the fence at the side of the garden. A long row of the plant stands by itself, backed by a cedar hedge, and this stunning view has definitely sparked my imagination for next year.

In this garden, the Russian sage has been used at the front of the house in the back of a mixed border. The plant looks stunning against the golden coleus and red begonias. The sage shows up again in another spot in another border, but the dramatic show is down the fence at the side of the garden. A long row of the plant stands by itself, backed by a cedar hedge, and this stunning view has definitely sparked my imagination for next year.

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Garden of the Week

John and Marlene Precious, on Cottage Street, have a lovely flowing bed with great colour composition — a repetition of burgundy, yellows and reds. The judges liked their good use of focal plants (weeping white pine, Japanese maple) to carry the eye through the garden. To nominate a garden of the week, visit jointheconversationnotl.org/garden-of-the-week (Photo supplied)
Full disclosure: Three generations of my family have worked or owned shops in the Heritage District, and we still have a family member who is presently employed there on a part-time basis. We do not own any business in the Heritage District but we have numerous friends who do. I am also a member of the town’s cenotaph committee and have been for a number of years.

I realize the suggested transportation master plan is for all areas of our community, but I will try to give my feedback that directly impacts the first Heritage District in Ontario, the Queen-Picton Street corridor. I also realize that changes made to any of our town roads and sidewalks can have some effects in some ways affect the continued survival of this area.

It would appear that the individuals who prepared this draft plan were not fully aware of the history of how the Heritage District has worked over the last 100 years and thus their assumptions are not correct. Some of the suggested changes are the same as we have had in the past and the residents, merchants, Chamber of Commerce, town councillors and other groups did not feel the suggestions made, as they thought they were not appropriate.

To my knowledge not one member of the cenotaph committee or the Royal Canadian Legion was contacted with regard to the suggested changes to Queen Street. In the past any changes to the street or the change at King and Queen were always referred to those two groups for their input. Signs: Again the authors of the report were not informed that in the Queen/Picton area signs are kept to a minimum and making competition to Wosaga, Niagara Falls etc. is not appropriate, as this is a Heritage District, not a resort area. In fact the street is a site of a battle.

Crosswalks have never been put in place as again they would result in the degradation of the heritage area. So also for the last 100 years the unwritten rule is nothing from Mississauga to Wellington Street can impede the view of the iconic structure on Queen Street, our town cenotaph.

Several years ago the Ni Agara Regional Police provided the town with statistical information that showed, considering the volumes of pedestrians and vehicles, the Queen and King intersection was one of the safest in town, as was Queen Street itself.

Queen Street deliveries: I don’t think the authors of the report were given all the information they required. Some stores have no rear access or storage facilities, and some are only staffed with one person so they can’t leave the store to receive deliveries. Such deliveries can only be made in the front of the shops, apartment dwellers have the same issues with deliveries.

Flext street: A variation of this was suggested years ago but was not accepted. It sounds good on paper but in reality does not work in our Heritage District for numerous reasons, as stated by many groups including lord mayors and town councillors.

This is intriguing that this tradition continued even after Europeans began burying their dead in this open ground facing east, as can be readily seen today. We have a very rich social history, indeed.

I note that Ganaque had burial grounds in its own background by painting a strip orange in honour of Every Child Matters even though, to my knowledge, they had no residential schools.

It might be the proper time to consider some kind of recognition of our Indigenous legacy here too.

Stan Harrington
NOTL

Summer camping adventure continues in Saskatchewan

David Gilchrist Special to The Local

As Claudio and I travelled home from B.C. in our Back Pack trailer, another area on our travel list was Grasslands National Park in Saskatchewan. The parks office is located in the village of Val Marie, where former NHL star Bryan Trottier grew up. During his career, he won the Calder Memorial, the Hart Trophy and the Stanley Cup. Grasslands National Park is Canada’s only park that displays and protects the Prairie Grasslands Natural Region. It is reported to contain some of the finest intact parcels of North American mixed grass prairie habitat in existence.

The park is divided into two sections, one in the Frenchman River Valley, the West Block, where we camped during our stay, and the East Block about two hours away. It’s a fairly long, 20-kilometre drive, with the last five kilometres on a gravel road, from the village into the West Block area itself. The drive takes you past extensive farming areas, and we were able to see the spring activities on these large prairie farms. When we first entered the park, we were surprised to see a few Plains Bison off in the distance, and we stopped so that I could get a few photos from that distance. Claudio said I should get a little closer as there was a gate I could run around if necessary — lo! The bison showed no interest in us, however, as they continued to graze and I was able to get a few distant shots.

Continuing on our way along the EcoTour Scenic Drive, we came to one of several protected areas, this one a beautifully gaunt. It indicated the presence of a rare community of black-tailed prairie dogs, a large species of squirrel that is found in southern Saskatchewan, mostly within Grasslands National Park. They live in short and mixed-grass prairies and require loose soils that support their underground network of burrows. We were surprised at the number of these actively going about their business on both sides of the road. On one of our later hikes here, we were able to hear the many calls they make while communicating with the others, and got some good photos.

We stayed at what is known in the Frenchman Valley campground, which is actually fenced in. The bison are allowed to roam in the park where they wish, but campers are in a protected area. When bison were first reintroduced to the area, their natural habitat, there were 79. Numbers are now at a little over 300. One morning, when we arose, seven bison were quite close to the campground entrance. This allowed us to get some photos as we passed by in our vehicle.

During our stay, we took the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ecotour pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with the opportunity to stop at each of the Ectocut pull-offs and went on a few of the shorter hikes. Ancient tepee rings, a large rock, its surface scored with. We were pleased to get photos of a few of these while on our hikes.

The species was especially interesting as we were able to witness the spring mating rituals near the 76 Ranch area, along with several species of waterfowl active in the small river that ran through it. Other wildlife to be on the lookout for in this park are burrowing owls, greatly horned larks, pronghorn antelope, mule deer and white-tailed deer, and red and swift foxes.

We had a very pleasant camping experience at this park. The weather was very favourable and the vistas of prairie grasslands with the wonderful Saskatchewan skies made it a memorable visit.

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Crosswalks have never been put in place as again they would result in the degradation of the heritage area. So also for the last 100 years the unwritten rule is nothing from Mississauga to Wellington Street can impede the view of the iconic structure on Queen Street, our town cenotaph.

Several years ago the Niagara Regional Police provided the town with statistical information that showed, considering the volumes of pedestrians and vehicles, the Queen and King intersection was one of the safest in town, as was Queen Street itself.

Queen Street deliveries: I don’t think the authors of the report were given all the information they required. Some stores have no rear access or storage facilities, and some are only staffed with one person so they can’t leave the store to receive deliveries. Such deliveries can only be made in the front of the shops, apartment dwellers have the same issues with deliveries.

Flext street: A variation of this was suggested years ago but was not accepted. It sounds good on paper but in reality does not work in our Heritage District for numerous reasons, as stated by many groups including lord mayors and town councillors.

This is intriguing that this tradition continued even after Europeans began burying their dead in this open ground facing east, as can be readily seen today. We have a very rich social history, indeed.

I note that Ganaque had burial grounds in its own background by painting a strip orange in honour of Every Child Matters even though, to my knowledge, they had no residential schools.

It might be the proper time to consider some kind of recognition of our Indigenous legacy here too.

Stan Harrington
NOTL

Many in town laud the recent decision to recognize LGBT people’s long struggle with a coloured walk; for many it recognizes a strata of society that has been substantially present in this place from its beginning.

With a number of history is most often associated with British presence and even the upper classes, it has now opened up a broader perspective with this move, plus its park recognition of Black significance.

I can’t be alone in thinking we should also recognize our Indigenous roots; after all this area was for a long time referred to those of society that has been substantially present in this place from its beginning.

It is interesting that this tradition continued even after Europeans began burying their dead in this open ground facing east, as can be readily seen today. We have a very rich social history, indeed.

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It might be the proper time to consider some kind of recognition of our Indigenous legacy here too.

Earle Waugh
NOTL
Mike Balsom
The Local

Fairground at the Shaw Festival uses the unique talents of 14 ensemble members who come together for an immersive hour-long experience that takes place on the grounds of the Festival Theatre.

Director Molly Atkinson says it’s totally different from the similarly-titled outdoor productions from 2021, and it began with a creative meeting between the entire group.

“We just kind of chatted about the things we thought were interesting,” says Atkinson, on the line from her Niagara-on-the-Lake home. “I talked about how I wanted to create a performance to be, and the record heat when they’re not supposed to be. And the noise from nearby cars, motorcycles and birds, as well as the presence of bugs, people walking through what was supposed to be, and the record heat in the month of July brought this summer. But seeing the audience up close and personal has made it all worthwhile.

Fairground audiences will likely recognize many of those involved from 2021 Shaw productions such as Damn Yankees and Too True to Be Good. But chances are they’ve never seen them like they do in Fairground, and they’ve never experienced some of the talents that they display in the outdoor setting.

“There’s something different that you get to see from them,” explains Atkinson, “that you would probably never otherwise get a chance to see. They all jumped in and surprised me with some great ideas.” Atkinson started that first meeting with a list of questions. If you had a million dollar budget, what would you do? What is something you’ve always wanted to perform but have never had a chance to? What would your five-year-old self want to do?

“What came out of that,” she says, “were some lovely, incredible ideas. Some of them were almost impossible to do. We were working with nearly a zero budget, but we found ways to get some things done. A lot of them really surprised me.”

In Fairground, Jenny Wright follows a passion of hers, dancing with hoops and silks. James Daly, who had planned to do a movement piece but hurt his shoulder in rehearsal, shifted to creating a performance that uses vocal looping techniques. Jay Turvey performs an original song that he wrote with Shaw music director Paul Sportelli.

One actor sings a number in various different voices. One dancer on a swing, while another recites poetry that they have written over the last couple of years.

It all comes together on the grounds of the Festival Theatre, with the audience moving along from stop to stop with the performers. If it feels reminiscent of the old Shaw Fair and Fete, that’s no accident, as Atkinson had that in mind throughout the creative genesis of the program.

“It has that real joyous sort of ‘fair’ feeling that we haven’t seen at the Shaw Festival for a few years now,” she says.

In guiding the audience through the grounds, the 14 actors connect more deeply with their guests, sharing in the excitement about what lies ahead around the next corner.

“We’re all sort of it together,” says Atkinson of that connection, “enjoying each other and seeing each other in a different way. There’s an element of surprise, an element of magic in it.”

Atkinson adds that as Fairground was developing, the actors themselves became increasingly excited about the possibilities, about having a chance to flex their imagination in ways much different than the regular Shaw fare.

And the Shaw grounds itself inspired some of the performances.

“We held some of those first meetings outside,” says Atkinson. “Our designer, Paige Prystupa, was amazing. We talked about ideas. We really wanted the gardens to speak for themselves. We came up with an idea about how we wanted to move people around them.”

She says another entire list of possibilities arose from the cast based on the surroundings, and Atkinson worked with Prystupa to turn them into reality. The performances that take place in what is referred to as Linden Alley, she adds, come alive with the perfect backdrop.

“My role was to guide them,” Atkinson says of the actors, “to be an outside eye for them, and to inspire them. It turned out to be a real celebration of art, a celebration of the actors and the audience together.”

The next performance of Fairground is on Thursday, Aug. 11. There are seven more performances between then and Sept. 21, all beginning at 11 a.m. Visit https://www.shawfest.com/playbill/fairground/ for tickets and information.
Continued from page 1

The summer has brought about large crowds gathering together at several events across the region. Hirji isn’t overly concerned with the possible spread of the virus under those circumstances. “Those are outdoor events,” he said. “The ability of the virus to spread outdoors is actually greatly reduced. If we’re going to be doing activities, it’s great that they are outdoors. If you are going to be in really close quarters with a bunch of people, though, I really do think it is better to be wearing a mask.”

Hirji stressed that where vaccinations are concerned, three doses is what is needed. “With the Omicron variant, you need to have three doses to have proper protection against the virus,” he said. “The great thing about the vaccine is no matter where you are going, no matter what you are doing, it’s always there to protect you against the virus.”

In Niagara, only about 61 per cent of adults have been vaccinated with the third shot, while the rate for the first two doses was well over 90 per cent. “It’s not as high as our first two doses,” said Hirji. “But in the last couple of weeks we have seen a bit of an uptick. That might be because people are hearing about the seventh wave and recognizing the risk. There’s still a long way to go.”

Hirji believes that some strong messaging from both the provincial and federal governments would have a great effect on the numbers for the third dose. “Last year there was a lot of push by the province and the federal government to get the second dose,” he said. “Vaccine policies and requirements pushed those expectations. Lately, there’s been almost radio silence from both the province and the federal government. If they were to speak much more strongly about this, that would push people to start getting that third dose.”

He added that there has been a modest number of people opting for a second booster of the vaccine. Recent numbers have shown a seven to 10 per cent increase in the 60-plus age group getting the second booster, and about a three to five percent increase in younger age groups. “That fourth shot really gives a much smaller benefit than the first three,” Hirji said. “If you are elderly, or immunocompromised, it’s definitely going to have much more benefit. It increases your immunity in the short term, but not so much in the long term.”

He suggests that the decision on whether or not to get the fourth shot is large- ly a circumstantial one. For many, he feels the best strategy may be to wait until the fall to make the decision. “The fall and winter is when this virus is at its prime,” he said. “You may want to have better protection in the summer, but you may want to get that specific immunity when you do get that fourth shot.”

Outbreaks continue to plague long-term care homes across Niagara. It’s a situation that Niagara’s lead doctor says never really stopped, and has picked up in the last few months, but not as bad as it was 18 months ago. “Vaccines have made a huge difference,” he said. “For the most part, people in long-term care and treatment homes have four or five doses of the vaccine. It’s giving them really good protection, so that when these outbreaks do hit, it’s not hitting everyone in the home. It’s a relatively small number, and for the most part those that do get sick are not getting severely ill. They are recovering without having to go to the hospital.”

“It’s important that all of us are doing our part,” added Hirji, “because we limit the spread of infection in the community, it really limits the possibility of in- fection for our most vulnerable people in these homes.”

Just before the Aug. 1 long weekend Niagara began offering vaccinations for children younger than five years old. After only a week of these shots being offered, fewer than one per cent had been vaccinated. “I’m hoping that it’s because the launch was around the long weekend,” Hirji said. “We now have about 10 pharmacies starting up with these and we still have to get primary care physicians starting, too. Most parents get their other vaccinations for their kids from their primary care providers, so that will most likely be their preferred method of getting their children vaccinated.”

Though the infection rate for children in this age group has been very low since the beginning of the pandemic, he assumes that there are a number of factors leading to those numbers.

“Schools were closed, sports activities were cancelled,” he said. “I think they were really protected from getting the virus based on that. I don’t think that will be the case anymore. They’ll all be going back into child care, pre-school and Junior Kindergarten. We’re not going to have to make policies that protect them when they go back.”

Because of that, he sug- gests that it’s important for these younger children get vaccinated, like their older counterparts, who have had an uptake of about 50 per cent for the first shot, and 30 per cent for the second. Post-secondary institutions will soon be welcoming students back to cam- pus. Niagara College lifted its mandatory vaccination requirements in April, and Brock University followed suit in June. Hirji feels a minimum of three doses is important for all students returning to campus. “I would be very supportive of them reintroduc- ing vaccine requirements,” he affirmed. “Vaccine require- ments really kept the campuses as safe places the past two years. I did some teaching on the Brock campus. People wearing masks, everybody being vaccinated, really meant we saw almost no outbreaks there.”

The seventh wave, he warns, may not be the last. He feels for the next couple of years we are likely to experience recurring waves of COVID. “We’re seeing people getting re-infected with the virus,” he said. “Every time you get a new variant it’s like you’re fighting a new vi- rus. That is going to lead to people getting re-infections. Long term, we will see re- peated infections and all the disruptions that come with that, stress on the hospitals, chaos at our airports.”

A more sustainable way of managing the pandemic going forward is the key. “We don’t need to be doing things at the same inten- sity as we have been doing. We have a lot of the vaccine out there, we have treat- ments. We don’t need to be shutting down businesses or having capacity limits. But we also don’t need to be doing zero. We need to fo- cus on improving our ven- tilation systems, filtration of our HVAC systems to clean the air of the virus in public places. And we need to look at making paid sick days permanent so people stay home when they’re sick.”
Emily West explains Amazon in Buy Now

Emily West grew up in NOTL, lives in the U.S. now, and has written Buy Now, a book about problems with the exponential growth of Amazon. She will be back in NOTL to speak at the NOTL Public Library Aug. 16. (Photo supplied)

Author to talk about her book at library

Emily West explains Amazon in Buy Now

Emily West will be speaking at the NOTL Public Library Tuesday Aug. 16 from 2 to 3 p.m.

For more information, contact the NOTL Library at 905-268-7440.
Polo event brings best horses, players to town

Penny Coles
The Local

The Sport of Kings is coming back to Niagara-on-the-Lake on the historic commons, presented by the NOTL Museum Sept. 10.

It will bring horses and members from the Toronto Polo Club — with its reputation of having the best horses and most skilled players in the country — to town for two four-chukker games.

A traditional divot stomp, wine, beer, food, vendors, entertainment, a silent auction, a classic car parade, the Fife and Drum Corps, and of course a hat competition are all planned to make it a spectacular event.

The museum gathered a small group together Friday to talk about the much-anticipated event, after a four-year absence — it was decided in 2016 that the polo matches would be held every two years, explained Amy Klassen, director of financing and marketing for the museum, but the pandemic cancelled 2020.

“We’re really excited to be back on the commons in 2022.”

While the premium and VIP seating sold out, she says, bring a chair, pick a spot at the side of the field, and prepare to enjoy the day.

Sarah Kaufman, managing director and curator of the museum, explained the history of the event, sharing stories of the early days of polo related to the military presence in town.

Lots of events on the commons included horses, she says, beginning with soldiers who needed to perfect the skill of carrying a weapon while riding a horse, and did so by playing polo, mallet in hand, while at the same time providing entertainment for those who watched them.

Nancy Bailey, broker for Engel & Volker in Oakville, was introduced as the major sponsor of the event. As a local for more than 30 years, and having been involved first in the hospitality industry and now real estate, she says, “I love this community, I love living here, working here and playing here.”

She also loves local history, and seeing it preserved, as it is through the polo matches. And with so many new people moving to NOTL, “I want everyone to learn about the town. I’m happy to be a returning sponsor.”

Funds raised from the event go to operations and programs that present the history of the town, says Klassen, including the storage and exhibits of more than 60,000 artifacts relating to NOTL.

George Dell, who along with Neil Rumble, former manager of the Chamber of Commerce, was the organizer of the early polo events, says he is thrilled to be part of the planning, working with the polo club — he was a polo player and an announcer — to bring the great athletes, four teams of four players, and 64 top polo horses to town.

“It’s a wonderful experience to have that here, and anyone who has an extra dollar in their pockets, please contribute to the expansion.”

General admission is $15 in advance, $20 at the gate, and children under 12 get in free. Tickets are available at the museum on Castlereigh Street.

George Dell (centre) is with Juan Sarli and Emily Hurst, two members of the Toronto Polo Club who are expected to be on the commons in NOTL in September.
SWEET AS A Peach

Made with fresh local peaches, this wine is sure to be your perfect summer sipper. ONLY $18.95

Available at the winery or at konzelmann.ca
In celebration of the local peach harvest, come join us for the 30th Annual Peach Celebration on Queen Street!

Saturday August 13th 2022 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Enjoy live music & entertainment, a sidewalk sale from the merchants of Queen Street, lots of peachy delights from local bakeries and restaurants, and of course! local growers selling their fresh juicy peaches.

Enjoy music from:
The Fort George Fife and Drum Corps.
St. Catharines Pipe Band
Melodie Italiane Choir
Toronto All Star Band
The Ben Show
and much more!

PEACH PIE CONTEST AT NOON OUTSIDE THE COURTHOUSE AT 26 QUEEN ST.
Pies are to be submitted to the Chamber of Commerce office in the lower level of the Courthouse between 9 am and 11 am for the judging at noon. Prize will be awarded to the top 3 pies.
Chamber’s Peach Celebration returns to Queen Street

Penny Coles
The Local

The Peach Celebration returns this year after a two-year absence, with more to celebrate than ever — it’s the 30th annual event for Queen Street merchants and local growers to gather for the opportunity to recognize the harvest and the agricultural community.

Several local farmers will be on the main street, which is closed to traffic, to sell their peaches and also to engage with visitors, many of whom plan a trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake to coincide with the celebration.

“We’re so excited it’s finally back,” says Nicole Cripps of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, which organizes the event.

The celebration was created as a way for visitors and locals to connect with tenant fruit growers, who are an important component of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s agricultural industry, and to enjoy all kinds of peach delights — peach crepes, peach gelato and peach pie, of course — offered by local restaurants and bakeries.

This year will be no exception, says Cripps.

Fritters on the Lake will be offering apple fritters with peach ice cream, and Cheese Secrets have come up with something different — raclette, which Cripps describes as a white cheese that is melted, and which will then be scraped onto grilled peaches.

More than 50 of the Queen Street merchants are participating in the sidewalk sale, moving merchandise outside on the street, which will be closed to traffic.

The steamed corn on the cob will be back, as will the peach pie contest.

Those who want to enter their tried and true peach pie should have it dropped off at the court House between 9 and 11 a.m. Saturday, with the pie-tasting beginning at noon.

Judges will be Chris Smythe, chef of the Prince of Wales Hotel; Lord Mayor Betty Disero, and Coun. Gary Burroughs, who has been judging since the pie contest was first held, says Cripps.

The day will also feature live music and entertainment throughout the day, beginning at 10 a.m. with the Fort George Fife and Drum Corps parading down the street. The Toronto All-Star Band will be back, as will the Caribbean Steel Band, Melodic Italiane, and the St. Catharines Pipe Band. The Ben Show will be back for kids.

Cripps says “it’s going to be an amazing day, and an amazing turnout — everyone been looking forward to this for two years.”

The Peach Celebration runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 13, between Victoria Street and King Street.

Peachy weekend continues on church grounds Sunday

Penny Coles
The Local

St. Vincent de Paul Church, the originator of the Peach Festival, will hold its 32nd annual event Sunday.

For Terry Choules, organizing the event after the Sunday. He has been judging since the pie contest was first held, says Cripps.

“As in past years, and even more so leading up to this event, it’s been increasingly more difficult to get the volunteers needed for all the activities, but ‘this week people have come out of the woodwork,’ stepping forward to help.

There will be ‘peach everything’ in the treat department, including pies to be cut up and sold as slices with ice cream, he says, peach crepes, sundaes and punch. ‘Anything with peaches, we’ll have it,’ says Choules.

There will be live entertainment throughout the day, including guitarist and singer Jon Libera, face-painting and balloons for the kids, and the white elephant, jewelry, and used books tables will be back. The barbecue will feature hot dogs and burgers, PigOut will be there, and the popular corn on the cob will be available.

And the annual raffle has three terrific prizes, including two nights at the Prince of Wales Hotel, breakfast included: second prize is a spa treatment at 124 on Queen, and dinner at Treadwell’s; and the third prize a selection of local wines.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 14 at the St. Vincent de Paul Church, at 73 Picton Street.

Kinsmen classic car show back on commons Sunday

Penny Coles
The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Kinsmen are holding their 22nd annual Classic Car Show and Shine this Sunday, Aug. 14, and are expecting a great turnout.

“This will be the same show we’ve had other years,” says Kinman Ken Singerland, and judging by other events that have attracted great attendance after two years of cancellations, “we’re hopeful this will be a big crowd,” although, as always, it will be weather-dependent.

“A lot of people are looking for things to do it town. And we’re just thrilled to be able to run this again.”

The fee for classic cars is $10, and $5 for spectators, kids under 12 free. “Still a good deal in this day and age,” he says.

The event is the club’s major fundraiser, the money raised going to the many community projects the club supports, including cystic fibrosis research, which Kinsmen are committed to.

They typically have 300 to 400 classic cars, which start arriving at about 7:30 a.m., although the show doesn’t start until 9 a.m., finishing at 4 p.m., although some of the cars will begin to leave earlier.

“There are a lot of locals who come to the show, a lot of cars in garages they’re waiting to bring out. I would say about 75 per cent are local.”

The first 300 cars to arrive will receive a dashboard plaque and there will be six prizes awarded of $50 each.

The Kinsmen will be offering their usual barbecue, including the popular back bacon on a bun, and an enclosed shaded area where beer and wine is being sold.

The event is at the Kinsmen Scout Hall, on King Street at Mary Street.

Expect to see 300 to 400 classic cars at the Kinsmen Car Show Sunday. (Photo supplied)
The Unger family celebrated the grand opening of their Apitherapy Wellness Centre at their B-Y’s Honey Farm on Concession 2 Saturday. On hand for the opening were Julie Horton, Gabriela Unger, Grace Unger, Ed Unger, Stella Unger and Terry Unger. One of the first such clinics in Canada, their facility offers a number of honey- and bee-related therapies, including venom treatments and honey facials and massages. As well, they sell various honeybee products and supplements for depression, anxiety, stress reduction, healthy aging and the battle against Lyme disease. The clinic is open Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The day of the opening included craft vendors, music, food and drinks, winery booths, special speakers, and honey tasting. On Saturday, doctors and apitherapists from around the world held hands-on learning apitherapy workshops, sharing the natural alternative to healthy living through honey bees and their products. (Photos by Mike Balsom)
Lynne Gaetz, with her painting Imaginary Wars of a Solemn Man, was at the Pumphouse Sunday for the opening reception of her exhibition.

Look closely, and what do you see, in Sanctified, a painting by Lynne Gaetz.

What do you see? Take a second look. At the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, the work of local artist Lynne Gaetz is being showcased in a solo exhibition this month.

What catches the eye immediately in these paintings are the vibrant colours and the collages. In a closer second look, one is taken aback by images such as faces, heads, antlers, wings, fire, and tall hats. Gaetz says she wants people to view her work and imagine a story. She remarks, “I invite viewers to ask questions.”

Many of the paintings on display come from her Human Nature collection. The exhibit is entitled Allegories. The Oxford English Dictionary defines allegory as a piece of art that uses symbols to convey a hidden or ulterior meaning. Symbols such as horns and antlers can represent many things, something different to each viewer, and she doesn’t want to influence the viewer’s interpretation by sharing her own. There is complexity in the way her figures interact on the canvas. The words and images, which she finds randomly in magazines, seem to fit right into the collages, and add an extra dimension to the interpretation and meaning. “I want the viewers to have an emotional response to my work,” she says.

Integrating mixed media into her work came about by accident, she says. Several years ago, while she was painting a fallen buffalo, she decided to add some torn images and a gold leaf to the horns. This gave an extra measure of interest to the painting, a style she has continued to use.

Art has always been part of her life; she began drawing as a young child, she says. Growing up in Alberta brought the buffalo to her paintings. Gaetz has a Masters degree in literature, and a minor in art. She worked in the field of writing textbooks, never thinking she would make art her full-time career. She studied at universities in Calgary, Quebec City, Montreal, and an international university in India. Gaetz travelled to many parts of the world, Kenya, Turkey, Morocco and Chile, sometimes staying a year or two. Having family in Mexico took her there many times. These cultures influenced the use of vivid rich colours in her work.

She is passionate about painting, seldom does a day go by when she is not in her studio. She wants to express truth about human nature in her work, inspiring people to question her work, and their own experiences.

What will you see in the paintings?

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What will you see in the paintings?
Palliative care Shred-it event this Saturday

Penny Coles
The Local

Shred-it, an annual fund-raiser supporting palliative care, returns this Saturday.

Bonnie Bagnulo, executive director of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service, says she was fortunate to be able to hold the event even during COVID, when so much else was cancelled.

Although the Meridian Credit Union continued to sponsor the fundraiser, as it has from its earliest years, they were unable to offer their usual volunteer help or hold it at the credit union due to their internal COVID precautions.

Instead, Sean Simpson offered Simpsons Pharmacy’s Niagara Stone Road parking lot, where a safe and easy plan for drop-offs was organized. It was a great set-up, with an entrance and exit, and space for people to stop, and allow their boxes of material to be taken from trunks with no physical contact necessary, says Bagnulo.

“It was great for us all to get together, and have some fun,” she adds, “and the more opportunities we have to spread the word and raise awareness better.”

Not much has changed about the event — the cost for shredding is $8 per bankers box of documents, and $20 for three boxes. And the same set-up will be used in the Simpson’s parking lot this year.

The support and sponsorship of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Meridian Credit Union also continues.

It’s happening this Saturday, so it’s time to go through the boxes of old documents piling up in storage space in your basement.

The number of boxes and the revenue from shredding the documents in them have stayed pretty steady, says Bagnulo, partly because people who are aware of the fundraiser choose to hold on to their boxes so they can support palliative care programs.

The goal of the event has always been two-fold — it gets rid of important papers safely, avoiding the possibility of identity theft, while helping a very important local organization.

This year, she says she has heard from one local company that expects to drop off about 100 boxes. “I’m beyond excited,” she says, thinking of the many services palliative care offers.

Meridian Credit Union pays for the Shred-it trucks, so all money raised can go directly to serving palliative care clients, their families and caregivers, as well as the services it offers.

If there has been change during the pandemic, it is that the services the palliative care organization offers has increased.

Their mission and goal remain the same: To offer community support volunteers and services free of charge to help achieve optimum quality of life for their clients and their caregivers, and to ensure every individual and family living in NOTL with a life-limiting illness will have access to high-quality, coordinated hospice palliative care.

There are about 50 volunteers who visit residents in Upper Canada Lodge, Niagara Long Term Care and Radiant Care Pleasant Manor, or with almost 70 clients currently in their homes, says Bagnulo.

Volunteers are also seeing community clients about 77 currently — in the privacy of their own homes, with illnesses such as dementia, cancer, heart disease, stroke, renal failure, pulmonary fibrosis, multiple sclerosis, COPD, HIV and other auto-immune diseases, as outlined by Bagnulo in a recent presentation to the Rotary Club of NOTL.

Palliative care volunteers offer “emotional support, compassionate listening, companionship and caregiver relief in their own home and in the three local long-term care facilities.”

Volunteers are educat-ed through Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, explains Bagnulo, completing a 30-hour training course. They are also required to have a police screening as they are working with the vulnerable sector.

Volunteers go into homes from two to four hours once a week, or on an agreed-upon schedule with the client and caregiver. They can provide transportation to hospital appointments, “and provide a great deal of comfort, thus matching our motto - You are not alone.”

The palliative care organization also offers bereavement services, including one-on-one companionship. Volunteers offer support while loved ones are adjusting to their new loss, and can provide them with coping skills and guidance if necessary.

If requested, phone bereavement support can be provided for up to a year following the death of a loved one, with a volunteer calling on the phone or through Zoom if preferred.

As well, community wellness support is offered, through community events and workshops held through-out the year, with a trained facilitator conducting a group that can run once a week for three consecutive weeks.

These community events are a way to “celebrate, mourn and work through the passing of a loved one in the way of grief walks, memory boxes, celebration of life, workshops, life legacy” and other ways of supporting those grieving.

They recently started a bereavement walking group that is open to anyone grieving a loss, says Bagnulo, meeting at a designated spot in NOTL, and facilitated by bereavement support volunteers. They currently walk for 45 minutes, and meet at the end of the walk for a brief discus-sion if they choose.

The palliative care lend-ing library is full of titles that help loved ones grieve, and children understand the grief process. There are devotion-al materials such as Grief One Day at a Time, and many other titles to choose from, as well as CDs and DVDs.

Equipment available for lending to clients includes walkers, wheelchairs, transf-er chairs, canes, raised toilet seats, commodes and shower benches, ROHO brand cushion-ions, sheep skins and mattress covers.

The Shred-it event is this Saturday, Aug. 13 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., or until the two Shred-it trucks are full.

For more information call 905-468-4433.

Lemon Pepper Extra Virgin Olive Oil
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Mike Balsam
The Local

After earning a Bachelor’s, Master’s and a Licentiate (PhD) of Arts degree from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, and then moving on for further studies in music in both Paris, France and Hamburg, Germany, Victor Paukstelis felt he had something more to express. “All my life, whenever I started to draw or paint something, it felt very natural to me,” the pianist tells The Local from his home in Lithuania. “When I came back from Paris, I just decided to apply to the Vilnius Academy of Arts, and they accepted me.”

Paukstelis spent six years studying art at the academy, adding a Master’s degree in that discipline to his academic accomplishments in music. This Sunday, Aug. 14, he brings both art and music to a Music Niagara Festival performance at St. Mark’s Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Paukstelis has had a long relationship with Music Niagara, and an even longer one with festival co-founder and artistic director Atis Bankas. Bankas, also from Lithuania, studied the violin under Paukstelis’ grandaughter, Victor Radovich, who had learned from legendary Russian violinist Igor Oistrakh. “Atis was a very close friend of my mother’s,” Paukstelis says. “My mother (Tatjana) was a pianist and a teacher as well, and they had a great friendship. She often told me stories about Atis and other students of my grandfather. Atis was one of his best.”

Though he undoubtedly encountered Bankas many times when he was younger, it was when Bankas came to one of his concerts that they developed a mutual admiration for each other’s work and a friendship of their own. “Music, the musician, the 39-year-old enjoys performing the music of the masters. He considers his admiration for the works of Mozart, Bach and others as a natural influence on his drawings and paintings.

At the same time, Paukstelis says pursuing his art opened up his creativity at the piano. “When you are performing, you are playing something that is already written,” he says. “It’s important to find new things. When doing my art, I began to understand that I could find that same freedom in piano performance of each other’s work and a friendship of their own. As a musician, the pianist tells

Continued on page 19

Music meets art at St. Mark’s Church Sunday

Victor Paukstelis brings both art and music to a Music Niagara Festival performance at St. Mark’s Anglican Church this Sunday. (Photo supplied)

Bridge lessons for beginner, intermediate players

Penny Coles
The Local

If you can play any card game, and you enjoy playing cards, duplicate bridge could be for you.

Muriel and her husband Claude Tremblay have been members of the bridge club since its earliest days. Both competitive people, she says, once they began playing bridge they improved their skill level, to a point that allows them to teach others, both at the bridge club and on the cruises they enjoy, as passengers and as bridge instructors, where they have taught many players, some just beginners.

“Have you to enjoy playing cards,” she says, “and have some understanding of cards. Bridge helps develop inductive thinking skills, and develops your brain.”

Dr. Chandini Jayawardena says he played his first game at the age of 60. In addition to a doctorate in philosophy, he now has a diploma in duplicate bridge, and is a bridge director and instructor. You can learn to play at any age, he says, “and it’s not unusual for people to begin with their retirement. It uses more parts of the brain than other games, and develops strategic thinking.”

He has played bridge with other clubs, and is a huge fan of the NOTL club and its community centre. “It’s well-lit, clean and the people are friendly here!”

Muriel agrees — it’s a small club, with a zero tolerance policy — members must

Continued on page 19
‘Spectacular’ Hauber brothers to play at Bethany Sunday

Mike Balsom
The Local

Brothers Simon and Malcolm Hauber are bringing beautiful music to Bethany. They are the best, and learn from them,”

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Club goal is to be ‘friendliest’

Continued from page 18

be treated with respect, and games will always be friendly. The club stated goal is “to have the friendliest game in town.”

Heart Beckman, another level player, says, “It’s a stimulating game, and challenging. And it’s also a lot of fun.”

Munel says since it’s played with partners, it helps build communication skills. And unlike other games such as golf or tennis, you can play against stronger players. “It’s a game that you can play against others at any level. In bridge, you can end up sitting across from the best, and learn from them.” Regular games are Tuesdays and Friday afternoons at 1 p.m., with some social events also scheduled. Yeasawenda will be introducing an introduction to Bridge, a 10-lesson ACBL certification course, beginning August 26. The introductory classes will run for 10 Fridays, to Oct. 28, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The cost is $135, which includes the ACNL official test book. The first session, an open house, can be attended free, and if players want to continue, can pay their fee at noon. It’s intended for beginners, he says, and as players become more confident, they can join the 1 p.m. game.

Players don’t have to come with partners, to classes or any of the games – there will always be someone to partner with, Munel adds.

She will be leading Play of the Hand and Defence workshops for intermediate bridge players. Contact Munel Tremblay at munel@cmtn.ca for more information. For information or to reserve a place in the introduction to Bridge session, call 905.641-0767 or email chandie@sympatico.ca. For general information visit https://www.bridgeweb.ca/niagarasouthforkbridge.html.

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that you can play against others at any level. In bridge, you can end up sitting across from the best, and learn from them.”

Malcolm recently performed with his Ecole Secondaire Catholique Saint-Jean-de-Brebeuf school band at the Francophone Hub, and they will be teaming up to perform a mix of French Canadian and Celtic music, with Simon on fiddle and Malcolm on keyboards, over the two-week-long sporting event. The brothers have been studying violin since their early years. Simon took up the instrument when he was just four years old, and Malcolm began at age seven.

“I saw Simon playing and I got a bit jealous,” Malcolm says. “So I wanted to do it myself.” Both credit Niagara Symphony Orchestra violinist Mary Beth Doherty for their proficiency on the instrument. As well, attention was drawn to the symphony’s Summer Music Camps and their membership in the Niagara Youth Orchestra has allowed them to hone their skills and further develop their ability to read music.

In conversation, Malcolm and Simon often finish each other’s sentences. Their shared enthusiasm and joy for both classical and traditional folk music comes across as natural.

Simon, who will graduate from Brebeuf in June, 2023, plans to study violin at either McGill University or the University of Toronto, in hopes of eventually earning a position in a major orchestra and possibly hanging out his shingle as a violin teacher himself one day. He also leaves open the possibility of conducting in the future.

Simon also plays piano, and is equally adept at both classical violin and fiddling. He says he loves and enjoys the balance the two differing disciplines bring.

“It’s a very nice change to go from classical to fiddling,” he says. “Fiddling is very much by ear for me. The approach to learning the music is fundamentally different. Classical comes from the page, and with fiddle music, you learn it with whoever is playing it with you. You’re less bound by the music.”

Simon loves to collaborate, and says some of the most important musical experiences he’s had thus far have come from making connections at the Interprovincial Music Camp in Parry Sound. Also, this summer he spent a month at the Camp Musical des Laurentides near Saint-Sauveur, Quebec.

“I highly suggest to anyone who’s thinking of going into music as a career to branch out and meet people,” says Simon. “They (the camps) are full of other musicians. It’s a great place to grow and learn.”

The brothers are both Curtain and French horn players. In fact, Malcolm says he recently wrote that he was “professionally fluent” in French on a part-time job application to a St. Catharines fast food franchise.

Though Malcolm has also branched out to learn piano, bass guitar and even the drums, at his age he’s not sure where it will all take him.

“I think music will always be a part of my life,” he says. “I’m only going into Grade 10, so I have a lot of time to figure these things out.”

Their mother, Michele, says Malcolm also enjoys singing, and will often be asked to sit in with bands on various instruments. She’s clearly proud of the musical accomplishment of her two youngest (of four) boys.

The Haubers will be playing a Prelude at Sunday’s service at Bethany, accompanying the choir for hymns, and providing some quiet, meditative classical music during reflective moments.

Says Dick, a former uncle to Malcolm, says. “So I wanted to share my enthusiasm and joy for the violin as a career. Malcolm says. “So I wanted to share my enthusiasm and joy for the violin as a career.”

They put a huge amount of effort and dedication into their lessons. “You can tell that they put a huge amount of effort and dedication into their lessons. “You can tell that the best, and learn from them.”

During the Canada Summer Games.

Malcolm has also braved the cold, wet and windy months of December and January to play and win in the Provincial and National Fiddling Championships.

Malcolm Hauber, 14, recently performed with his Ecole Secondaire Catholique Saint-Jean-de-Brebeuf, and he and his brother are also performing at some Summer Games events. (Photos supplied)

Malcolm Hauber, 14, recently performed with his Ecole Secondaire Catholique Saint-Jean-de-Brebeuf, and he and his brother are also performing at some Summer Games events. (Photos supplied)
Tennis officials impressed with local volunteers

Penny Coles
The Local

Canada Summer Games tennis competitions began at the Memorial Park courts Sunday, and will wrap up with finals Saturday, Aug. 13.

It's taken a mammoth effort and two years of planning, says tennis club member Rosemary Goodwin, who is in charge of sports operations, one of 18 committees ensuring the games run smoothly. She has the largest contingent of volunteers required, with 25 to 30 needed to cover two daily shifts.

When she's not running home to wash and dry much-needed towels for the players, she's ensuring there is plenty of ice and water and electrolytes for them, and that everything is perfect for them on the courts. Heat mitigation is the biggest issue. She make sure there is a cooler for them courtside. They're out there playing in incredible heat for an hour and a half. Those supplies have to be replenished every 10 to 15 minutes.

Marilyn Francis, vice-president of the tennis club has also been a "brilliant organizer" of the games, she says, doing an amazing job of all the administrative details.

Goodwin says she's been "dreaming about this event, and working toward it" for a long time. But also worrying about it — there is no roadmap to follow, and so many details to be sure are looked after. But it's all worth it. "This is something so special," she says. "This is the Canada Games."

The tennis officials have been very complimentary of the volunteers, she says. Their job is to make sure it's the best possible competition experience for the young athletes, who are excited to be competing at this level, but who can also be emotional, especially when their games don't go well.

"Our volunteers are very respectful of the athletes. The officials keep telling us they've travelled across the country and to international events, attending many competitions, and without exception, they say our volunteers are amazing."

Leading up to the start of the games, in the midst of preparing for Sunday, Goodwin was invited to last Friday's Hall of Honour ceremony, where she represented her husband, the late Don Goodwin, who was one of the inductees.

Tennis is a huge part of Rosemary's life, and she candidly says everything she has learned about the game, her involvement, the people she has met and the friends she made, would never have happened if she hadn't met and married Don.

Friday night was an example of what he brought into her life, she says. There on his behalf, "I was on the receiving end of so much kindness, and so much warmth, beyond anything I've ever experienced. So many people came up to me Friday night, and at the opening ceremony Saturday night, and were so kind — I feel very fortunate. I have a wonderful life," she says. "It's been a deluge of kindness and graciousness, all because of Don."

She says he strived for excellence in everything he did, and she has tried to follow his example, especially for the summer games.

"This event is about creating experiences for peoples' lives. Don was the supremo of that. He would have loved this event. His voice, his manner, he could have taken it to another level."

In their matches Sunday, Ontario team members, which included Ray Xie (left) and Anna Raphaelle Sernghi (right), played Alberta and beat them four matches to two. There are games morning and afternoon, sometimes going into the evening, and lots of tickets left for spectators to watch. Volunteer Rosemary Goodwin says she has seen some amazing matches on the courts. (Mike Balsom)
A giant Canadian flag was ushered along the “Welland Canal” toward the Turtle Island stage by the Fort George Foot Fife and Drum Corps, followed by Waterloo’s Simone Summan singing the National Anthem.

With 19 venues being used across the region, it’s clear that the Canada Summer Games are meant to bring Niagara together. Each of the mayors from the region’s 12 municipalities paraded onto the floor. Niagara-on-the-Lake Lord Mayor Betty Duverno took her place in front of Team Ontario and enthusiastically waved to the crowd when she was introduced.

When federal Minister of Sport Pascal St-Onge officially declared the games open, the entire audience roared. That was followed by a musical performance of Steel Heart, the anthem of the games sung by Toronto artist Poeny, accompanied by a group of dancers from the Brock Badgers Dance Pak.

The Roly McLenahan Torch then arrived at the Meridian Centre to complete its month-long journey, brought in by Louis Martel, CEO of Canada Steamship Lines, who was accompanied by the crew of the CSL Welland.

Martel passed the torch to Host Society chair Doug Hamilton, who in turn passed it to a group of Ridley College rowers entering the arena in a rowing shell.

Finally, Olympic gold medalist Kristen Kit of St. Catharines, winning her medal for her role in the Canadian women’s eight rowing crew in Tokyo, received the torch. With great enthusiasm, she stepped up to the cauldron and ignited the Canada Games flame to loud applause. The ceremony ended with a stunning program that perfectly captured the spirit of the games and reflected all communities across Niagara.

A new venue at the Canada Summer Games Park and improvements to various sporting venues across the region will have that lasting effect.

But I would opine that another legacy left behind will be the inspiration, the sense of wonder, and the feeling of the entire country coming together right here in our backyard that anyone in attendance or watching on CBC streaming services surely felt Saturday.

Count me in for the Closing Ceremony on August 21.

Continued from page 1

The Fife and Drum Corps from Fort George carried the Canadian flag along the “Welland Canal.” (Ashley Northcotte)

Accomplished hoop dancer Myranda Spence performing with DJ Shub. (Haye Adams)

The Canada Games flag was carried in by Games alumni that included NOTL’s Rosemary Goodwin, (front, centre). Her late husband, Don Goodwin, who was inducted into the Games Hall of Honour Friday night. (Haye Adams)

Patricia Roberge Productions created and designed a stunning program that perfectly captured the spirit of the games and reflected all communities across Niagara.

No event has brought this many people from this many provinces and territories into the Niagara region prior to this. It was easy to sense the pride in the Meridian Centre to be hosting this event and showcasing Niagara on a national scale. The Canada Games, both winter and summer, are designed to leave a legacy in smaller communities such as Niagara. Here, the new Canada Games Park and improvements to various sporting venues across the region will have that lasting effect.

But I would opine that another legacy left behind will be the inspiration, the sense of wonder, and the feeling of the entire country coming together right here in our backyard that anyone in attendance or watching on CBC streaming services surely felt Saturday.

Count me in for the Closing Ceremony on August 21.
SAURIOL-BRUCE, CHRISTINE 1971 – 2022 —
On July 24th, Christine Sauriol-Bruce passed away into God’s graces after a long and courageous battle with cancer. She was born on March 7, 1971 in Ottawa. After graduating from Carleton University, she set her sights on the finance industry, where she finished her long career as Chief Administrative Officer in the compliance department of capital markets at RBC. On July 23rd 2005 she married her husband Michael at the Riverbend Inn and went on to have 2 amazing children, Malcolm and Madeline. Christine was a kind, loving and giving person who always put the needs of her family first. When Malcolm was born, she decided to dedicate her life to her children taking numerous breaks in her career for the benefit of her family, supporting them in their many passions and activities. Christine was an avid runner, cyclist, gardener and enjoyed spending time with friends when she wasn’t filling her home with warmth and kindness. She demonstrated so much strength and fortitude both in life and in her journey with cancer. In addition to Mike, Malcolm and Madeline, Christine is survived by her mother Michelle, father Roger, brother Marc and sister Stephanie. Arrangements have been entrusted to MORSE & SON FUNERAL HOME, 5917 Main Street, Niagara Falls. A memorial will be held on Thursday, September 22, 2022, from 2:00 – 5:00 pm, at Ravine Vineyard. In lieu of flowers donations to Hamilton Heath Sciences Foundation, Juravinski Cancer Centre would be appreciated https://www.hamiltonhealth.ca/memorialgiving Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morseandson.com

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from December 24, 2020

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

Across:
1 Not strapped
5 Mining passage
9 Welding flash
12 Disagreed comic
13 U2 lead vocalist
14 Major health scare of 2002-03
16 Chip dip
17 1 for H., or 2 for Ha
18 “Yes”
19 Anger
20 Teeny amount
22 Heard kidney org.
24 Obsure
25 Dough dispenser
26 Fingertip bars
28 Indible
31 Not for profit TV spot
34 Angel dust
35 In which two dozen merles were found
36 Run all low speed
38 Kernel
42 C.O.D. ...
43 Type of bottle with one surface
44 Daring
45 Afloat on the ocean
47 Touchdown forecasts
48 Big trade
49 Whey-faced
51 Type of pant
53 TV host — (Seasme)
54 49-c./...
57 “Love You” (Beatles hit)
59 100 square meters
60 Sir — — Arthurian knight
61 Now let me think...
64 Small snub-nosed dog
67 Smut in red
68 Kutch
71 ... ear and out ...
73 Visit
74 Doctor imprisoned on the Dry Tortugas
75 Stay still, at sea
76 Catastrophic occurrence
77 Approximately
78 Patron saint of sailors

Down:
1 Laugh loudly
2 The Apple — (Tasmanian nickname)
3 Parent company of Simon & Schuster
4 Big hotel name
5 — — hair day
6 — — Lemon, female barnstormer and navigator
7 Getaway places
8 Utarsal
9 Bat wood
10 Hike
11 Undercroft
12 Forensic TV franchise
15 “Simon — —”
21 Signal booster
23 Home of one Super Bowl team, briefly
25 Emsalas
27 Turntable speed measure
28 Yar Zivago’s love
29 NASDAQ debuts
30 Silent actor
33 It’s not quite as fine as city
33 “I was so ill that such... — of spleen...” (Shakespeare, “Henry IV”, Pt. I)
34 Author
37 Brightest Simpson
39 Nervously intiible
40 Ambiance
41 Typical Hunger Games decidue
43 Range of knowledge
46 Worship
48 “Either you do it — — will!”
50 Presumably unicorns missed it
52 Air pollution measure
54 Hikers’ helpers
55 In a suit
56 Land between China and India
58 “... — — though your heart is aching...”
59 Magazine contents
60 It’s — — move
62 Nonsense
64 “The United States are essentially the greatest...” (Mark Twain)
65 “... and — — dust shalt thou return...” (Shakespeare)
66 Bygone GM brand
68 Bridge agreement
70 Lifeblood of TV and the web
71 “— sone rumtine” (Colorado’s motto)

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Thunderhawks cap season undefeated provincial champs

Andy Boldt
Special to The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake U22 Thunderhawks participated in the annual Ontario Lacrosse Festival in Whitby in games that began for them Aug 2, tying their first game, and going on to win those that followed.

The tournament sees all age divisions from every minor association across the province participate for their respective championship. For the U22 team this was A level competition, the highest division.

Launched in 2004, the Ontario Lacrosse Festival is a 10-day event that hosts more than 500 box lacrosse teams and almost 10,000 athletes, featuring competitions for 42 provincial and national lacrosse championships for six to 21 year-olds.

The Thunderhawks started the tournament facing an unknown Gloucester Griffin team. After falling behind 3-1 starting the third period, they clawed their way back to a 4-4 tie, technically not a loss.

The second game of the contest wasn’t until the next morning versus a known opponent, Kawartha Lakes. The Thunderhawks stepped on the floor with a little more fervour and handled the weaker team for a final score of 11-3.

However, this created some over-confidence as they met their next opponent, Newmarket. The Thunderhawks fell behind 2-0 before tying the game, 2-2, moving into the third period, when calmer heads prevailed and they were able to outscore Newmarket 4-3 at the final buzzer.

Achieving first place in their pool, the Thunderhawks next met their toughest opponent of the season, the Guelph Regents. The competition was fierce and the end of their season looked closer than they wished as Guelph entered the third period up 5-2. Tough defensive play and extensive scoring opportunities allowed the Thunderhawks to score the tying goal with just 11 seconds left in the third period, sending the teams into overtime.

It was the overtime period where the Thunderhawks of the regular season shone through. Smothering defence and offensive pressure allowed for a few posts to be rung, before the game-winner twisted the twine behind the Guelph goaltender’s back, hurling the Thunderhawks into the finals.

Their final was against their initial opponents, Gloucester. However, the results were much different this game. The Thunderhawks came out with the same intensity as they had finishing the previous game, something which the Griffins were unable to match. The Thunderhawks dominated the game from beginning to the end, scoring four times to the Griffins’ one.

Congratulations to the U22 Thunderhawks for an incredible, undefeated season and being the Ontario lacrosse A champions.
New flag celebrated in Queen’s Royal Park

With the help of parks department supervisor J.B. Hopkins, the Canadian flag was raised on a new flagpole in Queen’s Royal Park, with Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Jim and Tom Caldwell, who financed the pole and flag, to raise it. (Photos by Penny Coles)

When Jim and Tom Caldwell decided they would like to work with the town to have a Canadian flag flying in Queen’s Royal Park, they were hoping it would be in time for the start of the Canada Summer Games.

And there they were Friday on a bright and clear afternoon, at the park, celebrating a beautiful new flag at the crest of the hill looking across toward Fort Niagara. Although there had been some discussion with the town initially about it being closer to the gazebo, Tom Caldwell said when he climbed the staircase that leads to the new flagpole, he felt it was where it should be.

Jim thanked the town staff, and a small committee of friends who came to him with the suggestion. “I told them I’ll see what I can do. I’ll have a chat with my brother Tom. He likes flags, especially Canadian flags, and this was a great spot to put it.”

The committee helped get the project off the ground, led by Ross Robinson, who spearheaded it, was passionate about it, and went to town council with the request for it, said Jim.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero was also a great advocate, he added.

Tom called the flag-raising “a great project to be involved in,” and said when he walked up the stairs to the top of the little hill and saw the flag, “I thought of it as a triumph. It’s the perfect spot for it.”

He mentioned the number of courageous new Canadians who come to this country to find safety and comfort in a new land, and for the possibilities they will find as they start a new life.

He gestured to a large group in the park Friday afternoon, organizing a picnic while the kids played, and watching the raising of the flag.

“It’s really fortuitous,” he said, “having a group of new Canadians here for this event.” And to make them feel welcome, he encouraged them to join the celebration and pose for a photo — they had come from Brampton to NOTL to celebrate with a relative who had just arrived in Canada for a visit, and were quite delighted to be invited to join in.

Ross Robinson, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, and Jim and Tom Caldwell unveil the new plaque at the foot of the flagpole.

Tom Caldwell encouraged a group of new Canadians to join supporters, friends and family in a photo and celebrate the raising of the flag.