Kaiser hopes to paint Niagara Falls riding red

Andrea Kaiser

Since throwing her name into the race last month, she says she has been working hard to gather support from the community, and it paid off Monday night.

With the riding encompassing Niagara-on-the-Lake, Fort Erie, and Niagara Falls, Kaiser knew she would need to mobilize her supporters in the party to get out and cast their vote for her.

And with a quick glance around the room, it was clear that was the case. Many prominent members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake community could easily be recognized within the room. A large contingent from the grape and wine industry were there to show their support.

“I think they’re excited, regardless of party, to see somebody that understands the industry, because when you are in Ottawa trying to communicate the needs of the riding, you do have that experience and understanding, and I think that’s why you may have seen some people who may not have normally been Liberal, but who were happy to support that local voice,” said Kaiser.

Continued on page 8

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Andrea Kaiser has won the opportunity to represent the Liberal Party in the Niagara Falls riding in the upcoming federal election.

At a nomination meeting held Monday night at the Royal Canadian Legion in Niagara Falls, 361 registered party members cast their vote. Kaiser came out the winner over long-time Niagara Falls city councillor Joyce Morocco. Kaiser, who served on Niagara-on-the-Lake council from 2003 until 2014, was both elated and overwhelmed to hear her name called after the two-hour voting session wrapped up. She admitted she felt the whole experience had been quite surreal up to that moment.

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Continued on page 8

Six years ago Morgan, 11, and Spencer Mitchell, 6, had a babysitter who was a volunteer at Red Roof Retreat. She took Morgan there over the summer, and explained what happened there and why it was needed. She also told him Red Roof relied on donations to operate. Morgan wanted to help, says his dad Michael, and chose the day of the Peach Celebration to sell lemonade from the driveway of their Gate Street home. He and his brother have been doing it ever since, and three years ago asked their family friend, Kevan O’Connor, if they set up their stand outside his house on Queen Street. He and his wife Lynn have been strong Red Roof supporters, and since O’Connor passed away, Lynn has still graciously allowed them to come back every year, says Michael. Over the past six years, they have raised almost $10,000. (Fred Mercnik)
Ford comes to Niagara to talk infrastructure, amalgamation

Dave Burket
Niagara Independent Newspaper Association

When Ontario Premier Doug Ford made a quick stop in Niagara last Thurs-
day to talk about money for infrastructure, he couldn’t escape without questions about amalgamation, call-
ing the number of politi-
cians in Niagara “almost comical.”

Ford was at Beemer’s Hardware Store in Fonthill to announce that Pelham is the recipient of a $136 mil-
lion provincial grant toward a nearly $8 million recon-
struction of Pelham Street, one of 24 transit projects totalling almost $74 mil-
lion planned for the Niag-
ara Region, mainly in St.
Catharines, Niagara Falls, Welland and Fort Erie.

Beemer’s Hardware
owners Lloyd Beemer and his wife, Sharyn, longtime Conservatives, were pleased to host Ford at their store, saying that a call had come earlier in the week from Ni-
agara West MPP Sam Oos-
terhoff, asking whether they were interested.

A few customers paid for items, seemingly obvi-
ous to the growing number of television cameras being mounted on tripods, tucked behind a black velvet rope
on the far side of the cash register.

“We ask that you stay on this side of the rope,” one of Ford’s communications
staff told reporters as they arrived.

Shortly before Ford’s arrival, the front door was
locked and a serious look-
ing OPP plainclothes officer in suit and tie, standing near a water fountain at the door, turned even more serious.

Entering from the back
door, Ford, accompanied by Oosterhoff, strode past
tubes of caulk, spray bottles of insecticide, and tiny tubes of Krazy Glue, to reach an acrylic lectern featuring a
sign in Tory blue reading, “FOR THE PEOPLE.”

According to a Ford spokesperson, Fonthill was one of five stops that the Premier made on his swing through Niagara, ending with a $1000-dollar-a-plate
fundraiser at a Beamsville winery, where he was greet-

Ford turned to
Oosterhoff to confirm the
number of office holders for
Niagara’s 400,000-odd resi-
dents. Oosterhoff told him
that it was 136.

“A hundred and thirty-six,” repeated Ford. “It’s
almost comical. A hundred and thirty-six politicians for four hundred thousand people. Something’s wrong. That’s just wasting taxpay-
ners’ money. But I have all the confidence in the world in Minister Clark to straighten
out any of those issues, and
make sure we respect the taxpayers, and run a leaner and more efficient govern-
ment.”

Also asked about fund-
ing for the Canada Summer
Games in 2021, being held
in Niagara, Ford wouldn’t
reveal anything definite, but
said there would be good
news announced soon.

With a concluding smile, Ford turned and headed
back past the adhesives and insect killers to depart the way he had arrived.

Oosterhoff made a point of going out to the sidewalk to speak briefly with the pair of autism protesters who had remained throughout.

Sierranni, who came from Welland to protest cuts for children with autism, said his major concern “is the current funding that was
rolled out this year — not one family has received any funding that is on the wait list, and I do not understand why it takes so long for the government to release these funds they talk about.”

Sierranni said his son was recommended to receive 10 to 15 hours a week of ther-
apy, while the family can only afford three hours out of pocket.

Inside, as the TV crews
silently packed their gear, at the register, two sales were
chalked up to security staff
— one cellphone charger, and
one jug of deck wash.

The previously serious
looking OPP officer was
— one smiling smile, as he held
up the deck wash.

“This is gonna be my
weekend,” he said, heading
out the front door.

NIAGARA WEST CONSERVATIVE MPP Sam Oosterhoff stands by Premier Doug Ford in Beemer’s Hardware Store in Fonthill. Ford was there to announce funding for transit projects in Niagara Region, and also talked about amalgamation. (Dave Burket)
Konzelmann buys Harvest Barn, Rancourt Winery

Market to continue selling fruit and vegetables for locals

Penny Coles
The Local

Harvest Barn and Rancourt Estate Winery are in new hands — but still local hands — with little expected to change at the popular fruit and vegetable market.

Erwin and Dorothy Wiens, with partners Steph- anié and Fabian Reis, the grandson of Herbert Konzelmann, have sold both operations to Konzelmann Estate Winery, in a transaction that has been in the works for several weeks.

Erwin, a soon-to-be retired police officer with the Hamilton force and a grape-grower, will continue looking after Rancourt’s 22 acres of grapes, as he had for years. It was his involvement with the winery that led to his interest in purchasing it — that and the desire to keep it locally-owned.

“Dorothy really loved what she was doing,” says Erwin. She was there every day, and she was doing, “ says Erwin.

That also made it hard to sell. “The locals and the staff were invested in it.”

Erwin says it was something he really wanted to try, more than Dorothy, as much as she enjoyed it. “I love farming, and I loved the idea of doing this. I put my back into it.” But they both came to realize it was taking up too much time, and taking away from other priorities, especially family.

“I’ve got better days, more days behind me than in front of me,” he says. “We had no time off. And being on council takes an incredible amount of time. Something had to give. It was not an easy decision.”

He is still working as a police officer, although this is his last year, and through council is on a number of boards and committees. And Dorothy is involved in a number of volunteer efforts and activities she enjoys, some of which she had to give up to make time for Harvest Barn.

Erwin is quick to say he is not complacent — they both feel very fortunate to have so much that is great in their lives, including just relaxing on the deck of the home they love and enjoying life, although they haven’t had much time for that. He hasn’t had a single swim in his backyard pool, in what has been a very hot summer, he says.

“We love an incredibly charmed life,” he says, “and this is a very positive story.”

The winery and the farm market will be in very good hands, and best of all, local. “From the beginning we wanted it to stay local, and that’s what we did. I still want to be a part of it, and I still will. I think it’s great.”

He goes on to say his wife has always been “the backbone of our family. She’s the social planner, the information gatherer. We were happy before. Now we’re ecstatic.”

Stephanie and Fabian, a vine-grower by trade with his own brand, will continue to manage the property and winemaking operations, says Erwin.

“Winemaking is in my blood. The acquisition of Rancourt allows me to step out on my own and create a product that I am proud to call my own.”

His grandfather, Herbert Konzelmann, agrees. “Rancourt will share our similar values, culture and passion; and together we hope to leverage our resources and build on the strong legacy we have developed for Konzelmann Estate Winery.”

“We will source grapes from the property and focus on making premium wines.”

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“I am both honour...
CAO retires after 37 years on municipal staff

Betty Disero was released to and a letter from Lord Mayor thank them for their support, to advise them of her plans and Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake time to retire. “I haven’t been playing well. This always thinking about work, explains her retirement this surprise. From the Town comes as no other municipal CAOs from Niagara.

CAO retires after 37 years on municipal staff

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Aga Tempelaars-Goik moved to St. Davids in August, 2017, to get away from the big city life, and brought her travel business as a consultant and owner of Empire Travel with her.

She says her passion for travel started after she completed university and began sailing around the world, while working at sea with Holland America Line cruises. After working as a travel consultant for a large company for many years, she established herself and took over Empire Travel in 2017. With more than 12 years of experience in the travel business, she says her passion for traveling, combined with the support and trust she receives from the community, and the small-town feel, the schools, the restaurants, the companies and hotels, and the support she has received from the community since moving here, is why she says she loves living in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Aga says she loves living in Niagara-on-the-Lake, the small-town feel, the schools, and the support she has received from the community since moving here. “I look forward to helping you in your travel plans,” she adds.

For more information email: aga@empiretravel.ca or phone 905-580-2204.

2nd Annual Travel Expo
Presentation Schedule
3:30 p.m. - doors open
4:00 p.m. - Holland America on what’s new with Holland America Line
4:30 p.m. - Seabourn on luxury small ship cruising
5:00 p.m. - AmaWaterways on River Cruising
5:30 p.m. - GOWAY on Custom and Private Worldwide Itineraries
6:00 p.m. - Collette on Europe Coach Tours (Feature: Croatia)
6:30 p.m. - G Adventures on Family Tours
7:00 p.m. - MSC on Family Cruising
7:50 p.m. - Closing of Expo

Aga Tempelaars-Goik, owner of Empire Travel & Luxury Travel Consultant in Niagara-on-the-Lake.
Does NOTL need CCTV?

CCTV cameras are here to stay, unless it is determined at some point that the benefits to security and safety are minor, compared with the possibility of them being misused to invade privacy.

Is it time to adopt them in Niagara-on-the-Lake? It's a consideration, although not yet decided. The NRP are in favour of CCTV, money has been spent on an operation centre, and it seems it's a concept that's catching on.

CCTV is becoming more popular as a police tool, to prevent crime, solve it, and provide evidence to take to court, especially in the UK, in major urban areas of the U.S., and now in larger Canadian cities. Anyone who is a fan of some of the British mysteries available on Netflix, and increasingly on American crime shows, could easily conclude CCTV helps solve crime and send bad guys to jail. Statistics about preventing it are not so easy to interpret, since when criminal activity decreases, there can be several factors.

Do we need CCTV on the corner of Queen and King Streets? There is a lot of activity at that intersection, of both vehicles and pedestrians, but yet little crime, and few traffic collisions. However, if there is a report of criminal activity in the area, it would be helpful to have footage as evidence. Addressing the need to respect privacy, the NRP say they don't watch the video unless a crime is in the midst of occurring, or they are investigating a crime after the fact. We have to trust they would respect that policy.

As unfortunate as it would be to have criminal activity in that very public place, it would be more so to believe CCTV might have prevented something, or helped bring to justice those involved, should the Town decide not to install it. Penny Coles

The Local

Congrats to federal candidates

The federal election isn’t until October, but the intervening months will go quickly. Hopefully voters will take the opportunity to get to know their candidates by Oct. 21.

We have been fortunate to have two strong representatives in past decades, Conservative MP Bob Nicholson and Liberal Gary Pillitteri, and we will have Conservative Tony Baldinelli, director of communications for the Niagara Parks Commission, and Liberal Andrea Kaiser, well-known in the wine industry and as a former town councillor, hoping to win the right to represent the Niagara Falls riding.

As well, Brian Barker will represent the NDP, NOTL resident Sandra O’Connor the Green Party. Alex J.C. Taylor the new Peoples Party of Canada, and Niagara Falls city councillor, hoping to win the right to represent the Niagara Falls riding. It’s a lot of activity at that intersection, of both vehicles and pedestrians, but yet little crime, and few traffic collisions. However, if there is a report of criminal activity in the area, it would be helpful to have footage as evidence. Addressing the need to respect privacy, the NRP say they don’t watch the video unless a crime is in the midst of occurring, or they are investigating a crime after the fact. We have to trust they would respect that policy.

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Penny Coles

The Local

LOCAL FINDS

Savage monument restored

Donald Combe Special to The Local

This monument has recently been dug up and restored by Willowbank School of Restoration Arts. With the help of cemetery records we can read almost all of the inscription. John Savage built two houses on Johnson Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The first a modest cottage at 89, where I live, and a larger and more impressive house at 85.

Garden of the week

The Town, the Communities in Bloom Committee and the NOTL Horticulture Society are running the Garden of the Week program over the summer months. This week’s winner is 1994 York Street, Queenston, owned by Mary Kiss. A mature garden with a lovely mix of flowering shrubs and hydrangeas, there are lots of low spreading evergreens, said the judges. “A mix of deciduous trees and evergreens are centered with a lovely red maple. The garden is calm and has many textures. It has been lovingly tended by the owners. Nomination forms are available on Join the Conversation.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local

The trusted voice of our community

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WEBSITE DESIGN

The NOTL Local acknowledges the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today.
Club 27 concert to raise money for Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an organization that allows people with ID (intellectual disabilities) to show their athleticism and compete in sport. Within our community there are hundreds of kids and adults living with intellectual disabilities. One of them is a close family member of mine. For this article, I reached out to interview the future of this community — children who are close to me. “I think it’s very nice for everyone to be given the chance for sports. Especially for their families that get to watch them be happy,” in hopes of opinion on Special Olympics. She is seven years old and my daughter. “I think everyone should have fun and be important,” said Hayden’s response, my nephew — he is five.

What do you think makes a community? Hope? “Being kind and helping each other and having fun.” And that is exactly what our first fundraiser for Special Olympics NOTL is all about. Club 27: A live rock concert experience at Jackson Triggs Amphitheatre, celebrates the music of Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain, Jim Morrison and Amy Winehouse, all who passed away at age 27. Tickets are $45 and include a glass of wine, with 100 per cent of proceeds going to Special Olympics NOTL.

To get your tickets visit Jackson Triggs website, at www.greatestatesniagara.com. For all details please follow on Special Olympics NOTL on Facebook. The fundraising committee is also collecting donations for their pop-up shop under the marquis tent that evening. To donate please contact Nancy Bailey at everyrealtors.com.

Hayden and Hope, Maria Mavridis’ nephew and daughter, say they want all kids to be able to play sports and have fun. (Maria Mavridis)

A Man Goes to the Movies

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

Experiencing this film was the correct thing for me to do. It might not be for everybody. Just when I thought I understood it, I was certain I had not understood it, nor would I ever understand it, but I remain happy I sat there trying to understand it. This wild ride through Hollywood lasts two and a half hours. I could recommend that you see it, but I am not entirely sure I should. Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to go to movies. His Facebook reviews have become popular with his friends and followers, and he has graciously agreed to share his opinions through ‘short and sweet’ exclusives for The Local.

Pollution from bus exhaust not great for Queenston

I have to tell you of my experience last Sunday at an open air recording at St. Savour’s Church in Queenston. During that beautiful service I saw and heard five coaches pass by (this was from 6:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. on a Sunday evening). What upset me most was the pollution from their exhaust that wafted our way as they struggled to get up the hill from the Whirlpool Jet docking area.

What is the benefit of tourism to this quaint historic village? When coaches are not allowed in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, why should they be allowed to ruin our roads and destroy lives of residents in the village of Queenston? Surely they can find an alternative solution if they must continue running these whirlpool jet boats from our side of the river.

I was only there for a couple of hours to enjoy a wonderful Sunday Church service. I cannot imagine how the residents have had to cope with living there. They certainly have my sympathy now. All that carbon monoxide instead of fresh summer air — it is totally wrong to have allowed this business to move there.

Sylvia Angelkotter

The Local welcomes valu-mart

Tony Hendriks of Hendriks valu-mart on Queen Street and Phil Leboudec of Phil’s valu-mart in Virgil have made the move to The Local to distribute their weekly flyers. We welcome them aboard. Don’t forget to look for the flyers in the Aug. 22 edition of The Local.

Feature your business in our

The full page is made up of a
HALF PAGE AD and
HALF PAGE ARTICLE

Article word count: 450-500
Ad size: 10.25”w x 7”h
Publication Date Subject to Availability

NOTL Businesses contact
Karen at 905•641•5335
at karen@notllocal.com

Businesses outside NOTL contact
Julia at 905•934•1040
at julia@notllocal.com
Continued from page 1

One local wine industry veteran was required to be seen Monday was the last Liberal to win the riding, Gary Pillett. Kaiser said she had not had much contact with Pillett or to the nomination meeting.

She said Pillett, as a re- tired MP, wanted to let the process unfold, “and let Joyce and I both work hard, and work independently. And at the end of the day I think he’s just excited to support whoever would win, in this case, now, me, to win the riding back.”

Both Kaiser and Moroc- co said they believe the time is ripe for the Liberals to take back the Niagara Falls riding. In April, Conservative MP Rob Nicholson announced he would not be seeking re-election this year. The 67-year-old Nicholson was first elected to Parliament in 1984 and was re-elected six more times. He has held the Niagara Falls riding since 2004.

Tony Baldinelli, the Direc- tor of Communications for the Niagara Parks Com- mission, will be trying to fill Nicholson’s Conservative shoes this October, while teacher Brian Barker will rep- resent the NDP. Other can- didates include Sandra O’Con- nor for the Green Party, Alex J.C. Taylor representing the new People’s Party of Canada, and Niagara Falls city coun- cillor and former Olympic boxer Mike Strange running as an independent.

Kaiser said though she studied politics at university, she never set out to become a pol- tician. She said her decade on council was inspired by her community asking her to step up and serve with a strong and experienced local voice.

“This time, however, she said she has been inspired by three specific individuals. “It was the strong and comp- assionate leadership of New Zealand Prime Minister Jacin- da Ardern, in the aftermath of a terrible tragedy (last May’s mosque shootings in two New-Zeal- land mosques) that reaffirmed to me that we need to be bold and to step up and set an exam- ple for our youth,” she said.

Her second inspiration is Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Perhaps somewhat sur- prisingly, Kaiser credited her 21-year-old daughter, Mad- ison Lepp, as being the third and main inspiration for run- ning for the Liberal nomina- tion. She said Lepp carries the warmth and compassion of Kaiser’s mother, and her com- mitment to fighting climate change has inspired Kaiser to become a better person.

Madison seemed flabber- gasted by her mother’s com- ments, though she did say “we both have a lot of respect and support for each other, and I’ve always encouraged her to go big or go home, and always shoot for the stars, and we both mutually support each other like that.”

Kaiser went on to say the journey of her father, the late racing champion Karl Kais- er, led to her strong entrepre- neurial spirit, and both of her parents’ core values taught her to care for her neighbors.

Having won the party nomination, she was planning to meet with riding officials early Tuesday to discuss the party’s strategy in the rid- ing for the next two-and-a- half months.

Kaiser said her focus will be getting a local voice at Parliament, one that’s real- ly passionate about tourism and agriculture, and that is concerned about investments in our community. And I’m really excited about the work that’s been done by the Liberals on climate change, and I’m really excited about making sure that we have the investments for families, seniors and youth.”

As the crowd filed out of the Legion, and Kaiser and her sup- porters headed out to celebrate her victory, she talked about her respect for Moroc- co as a fellow Liberal Party member.

With resumes that are very similar (both served on local councils, both have business and tourism back- grounds), it was expected that Monday night’s vote would be close. The riding association did not comment on the actu- al vote, and Kaiser said she hopes she and Moroc- co can work together to paint the riding red for the first time since 2004.

Port Colborne, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines have installed cameras in some ar- eas, and they have been used to catch and charge suspects in criminal acts, he said.

The police install the cam- eras, and monitor them from a Real Time Operations Centre built as part of the new Niag- ara Falls headquarters, but the Town would have to pay the $10,000 for the installation of the hardware.

The cameras provide back- up for officers on call, he said. The centre is staffed 24/7, and allows for “real time analy- sis,” but “it’s not like George Orwell’s 1984,” said Gansel. Officers aren’t watching the videos feeds 24/7, but “if they hear something is going down, they can look at the video,” and make decisions on what man- power should be dispatched.

If officers are called to in- vestigate a situation in an area covered by cameras, once they fill out a report the video can be checked as part of the in- vestigation, and taken to the crown attorney if a decision has to be made as to whether to lay charges, Gansel said.

Sean Simpson of Simpson’s Pharma- cy said there was an armed robbery at the shopping cen- ter’s King Street location last fall. A man approached the pharmacist and threat- ened with a knife, demanding drugs. The pharmacy captured some images of the assailant on video, as did cameras at the Irish Harp beside it, but they were too grainy to be of much use, and as far as he knows, nobody has been charged in the robbery. He couldn’t say whether cameras at the inter- section would act as a deter- rent — in this situation, “this guy came in from the back. It would depend on the breadth of the program whether the cameras would help. I’m not opposed to the idea of CCTV. We see lots of exam- ples where it has helped.”

If it could provide some safety downtown and a level of determent, he said, it might be worth “that small invasion of privacy.” Deroo says “there are a couple of reasons” the town is looking at installing cameras at the corner of King and Queen Street. They were recommend- ed by the NRP for “police pur- poses,” and could also be ben- eficial to the town for traffic counting and checking weath- er conditions,” she said.

Although there isn’t a lot of crime in NOTL, said Gansel, the cameras will record licence plates, and “there aren’t many names of the Old Town” without passing through that intersection. Tracking the movement of cars can be help- ful. “The quality of video is very good, he added.

The information report prepared for council said staff “will be following up on the potential location of the cam- eras and a heritage permit is required for the installation.”

The Main Street Revitaliza- tion Fund grant can be used to pay for the hardware, the report said.

Staff will also visit the Real Time Operations Centre in Niagara Falls and will continue conversations with the Niagara Regional Police about the bene- fits and potential opportunities for this system, the report said.

“Proceeding council will be further updated and a communi- cations plan for notifying surrounding businesses will be developed.”
Water levels down, but still higher than in 2017

Penny Coles  The Local

The level of Lake Ontario has dropped again, says Dock Area resident Ron Simkus.

It was down 2-3/4 inches last week, and is now 11 inches below the record high of June, 2019, says Simkus. Unfortunately, thunderstorms late last week stalled the momentum, he says, and more rain can be expected.

He is also concerned about the lack of activity on the waterfront. The Town update conducted one-on-one interviews with residents up to date on water levels. “I would like to see a plan, with dates on it, and then see them follow through.”

If there is a plan, he says, “why isn’t it being communi cated to residents?”

He says he has asked the Town what they are going to do about fish spawning, and then when the water level is substantially lower.

“The water is still up here for this time of year. We’re not out of harm’s way. It was down 2-3/4 inches Friday, Aug. 16, so there isn’t much time.

We’re not out of harm’s way, it would be unusual for there to be another this season, the water is still way up about removing the sand bags along the shoreline until after the end of September, and it will be a huge job when the time comes.

“There are no plans to relocate the shoreline, and they are still waiting for it. He would at least feel reassured to know there is a plan in place to finish the work, with a timeline, and some indication that it’s actually going to happen.

I would like to see a plan, with dates on it, and then see them follow through.”

He fears budget talks could stall it in the fall, and then when they are going to get it, but hasn’t received a response. He is also concerned about the likelihood of storms. The last major storm that tore up the shoreline with winds from the east was on May 28, and it would be unusual for there not to be another this season, however the later it comes, the lower the water will be.

“The water is still way up here for this time of year. We’re not out of harm’s way. It would be unusual for there to be another this season, the water is still way up about removing the sand bags along the shoreline until after the end of September, and it will be a huge job when the time comes. “The Town has promised a further update this Thursday, Aug. 15, during the special council meeting called to discuss the official Plan. It will begin at 4 p.m. at the community centre.

Time running out for Strategic Plan survey

The huge pile of rocks and rubble still sits idle in the Dock Area Parkette, waiting to be moved, says Ron Simkus.

Council members are in the process of developing their strategic plan for this term — what they hope to accomplish, and what they see as their priorities. They hope to accomplish, and what they see as their priorities.

They are still waiting for it. They hope to accomplish, and what they see as their priorities. They are still waiting for it.

If you participated in a focus group, please take the other survey titled Strategic Plan Survey for Focus Group Participants.

Should you require an alternate method to complete the survey, please contact Victoria Steele at 905-468-6417.

The Local

The survey should take approximately five to 10 minutes to complete. It can be found at https://www.jointheconversation.org strategic-plan.

If you participated in a focus group, please take the other survey titled Strategic Plan Survey for Focus Group Participants.

Should you require an alternate method to complete the survey, please contact Victoria Steele at 905-468-6417.
Penny Coles  
The Local

"I just wish people would realize that anything's possible if you try; dreams are possible if you try."
- Terry Fox

When Joe Pillitteri speaks of Terry Fox and all he accomplished in his short time, before being forced by illness to end his Marathon of Hope run across Canada, this is one of his favourites.

It's the one he is using this week as he prepares for an event Saturday to raise money for Team Pilloy and the Terry Fox Foundation.

Pillitteri has his dreams, one of which is to increase the contribution raised at this year’s Terry Fox Run, and to do so, he and his cousin Mike Pillitteri have upped their goal.

Two years ago, Joe issued a friendly family challenge to his cousin in his efforts to raise money for the run, setting a goal of $50,000. Last year, they decided they were in it together, and together hoped to raise $60,000. They surpassed that, donating $84,000 to the run, and plan to top that this year, aiming for a $90,000 target.

As Team Pilloy did last year, they will be holding the second annual car wash, bake sale and touch-a-truck event at the Cornerstone Church building at 1517 Niagara Stone Road Aug 17, beginning at noon and running until 3 or 4 p.m.

The women of the con-gragation are busy making “the most amazing peach pies ever,” to support the fundrais-
er, says Pillitteri.

“I don’t know what they do to them but Seaway Farms is donating the peaches, and the church is supplying every-
thing else.”

The first batch of pies were made last week, with Dorothy Wiens and Carole Wiens in charge, and they will be bak-
ing this Thursday and Friday as well. Some of the pies will be sold fresh, some frozen, but there is no doubt they will sell out quickly, says Joe — he went to get one at the end of the event but they were sold out. His sister had one for de-
sert with the family, he said, “and if I could have had five to eat by myself, I would have. They are incredible.”

“This past Wednesday and Thursday there were about five of us making the pastry and getting a first batch made and frozen,” said Dorothy Wiens.

“Pies will cost $20 as it is a fundraiser for the Terry Fox Foundation. We have all been touched by cancer one way or another, and we are excited to help in this way. Our goal is to have 250 pies made for this fundraiser.”

The car wash is a family event, Joe jokes — since he and Mike were made to work on family farms when they were kids, they carry on the tradition with their kids. “It’s like our childhood. If we had to work, so must our children.” But it was evident last year the kids had a blast, and they are looking forward to helping again this year.

Penmun Building Centre is supplying the hoses, buck-
ets and everything else they need in the way of equipment — this is a true community event, says Joe.

When he was planning the first car wash last summer and approached Pastor Peter Bayne, he readily offered the Cornerstone parking lot, a perfect location for the event. But he went one step further — he said they would provide a bake table.

“It was so ‘wildly successful’, Joe says this year it’s more like the pie sale is the main event, with a car wash added on. ‘Come buy a pie, and wait for your car to get washed. Let the kids do it for you.’

He expects to top last year’s fundraiser, which earned $6,000 for the run, setting a goal for Saturday of $7,500.

Helping Team Pilloy will be kids from Niagara schools — students from A.N. Myer, Holy Cross and Eden high schools, as well as Crossroads and St. Michael elementary schools, will be on hand to wash cars.

Pillitteri will bring tractors and grape harvesters from his company, Lakeview Equip-
ment, for youngsters to have photos taken on them for a donation.

New this year for Team Pilloy is an offer from Grape Escape Wine Tours, whose owner Rich Mell has offered to donate $25 from every team that uses their escape room until Sept 5.

We will throw in a case of VQA wine to the team who participates with the lowest time during the donation pe-
riod,” says Joe.

Team Pilloy can use any help it can get in raising funds, he says, and is looking for vol-
unteers to help out at Satur-
day’s event as well.

Also coming up is his big fundraiser, a popular annu-
al comedy night at the Jack-
son-Triggs Niagara Estate Winery, Thursday, Sept. 5. He will do what he is best at — drawing a crowd for the enter-
tainment, while raising money for a good cause.

Tickets are expected to sell out, but there are some still available at jacksentigrigsnag-
aramphitheatre.
Therapy gone to the dogs
Furry friends are providing love to those who need it most

Jennifer Chornley
Special to The Local

Therapy Tails Ontario is a Niagara-based non-profit organization whose therapy services have literally gone to the dogs.

It was founded by Tina Hill in 2010, to improve the lives of physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially disadvantaged individuals, through regular visits and programs that use the expertise of caseworkers, co-ordinators, teachers, caregivers, and parents to enhance the effectiveness of canine therapy.

Hill’s motto for Therapy Tails is “live with purpose.’

A lover of dogs, she believed that motto applied to dogs and not just people.

Therapy Tails Laura Gmaz has been volunteering with her seven-year-old Black Labrador Retriever Bella for the past five years. She has seen the positive impact of canine therapy, especially for kids who participate in the Tell Tales Reading program.

The reading program takes place in community locations, including schools, libraries and special-needs facilities, encouraging children to read to dogs in an encouraging, non-judgmental environment to help them become more social and interactive.

“With kids, they’ll be afraid of the dog at the beginning of the year, but by the end of the year they are cuddling with them, and at the same time have enhanced their literary skills,” says Gmaz.

Even though Hill passed away in 2015, her vision to encourage, non-judgmental environment to help them become more social and interactive.

Therapy Tails teams can be found at regularly-scheduled times on a weekly basis, and at community events such as Sunday’s Peach Festival at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, to raise awareness on the importance of mental health, Gmaz said.

Other programs incorporated into the organization are Paws for Respect, visits for individuals with unique special needs, and the organization’s newest program, Bereavement Recovery.

Paws 4 Respect is an anti-bullying program that uses a therapy dog to help encourage those being bullied to speak up, and make adults aware of the challenges they are facing.

The special needs program creates connections with children with autism, and not just people.

The Bereavement Recovery program works with people who have lost a loved one, especially children. Gmaz says the Therapy Tails members are trained to respond, respect and help anyone who is going through the difficulty of losing someone they were close to.

Gmaz says the organization’s volunteers are spread throughout the Niagara Region and recently has begun to expand into the Grimsby area, adding there are a handful of volunteers in the Hamilton area.

Since she began volunteering, she says, “I love being out in the community with Bella at the various locations. To see the impact she has on people, especially going into seniors’ homes, is very rewarding. Anywhere I can take my dog, I’m all for it.”

The organization is always looking for more volunteers. Therapy Tails holds evaluations four times a year with those who have expressed an interest.

Each potential volunteer is evaluated to ensure specific criteria is met, says Gmaz.

For example, to be a therapy dog, it must have manners and be comfortable being around other dogs. “And most importantly, they must enjoy being petted. That is their job. “

Therapy Tails is a donor-based organization, with no paid staff. All donations received are invested in the organization’s programming.

For more information or to be placed on the volunteer list for future consideration, visit www.therapytails.ca or email info@therapytails.ca.
It’s all about the peach

The Fort George Fife and Drum Corps parades along Queen Street to open the 29th annual Chamber of Commerce Peach Celebration. (Fred Mercnik)

Elmer Neufeld stokes his fire to steam corn on the cob, a popular tradition on Queen Street. (Fred Mercnik)

Ed Biega serves some fresh steamed corn. (Fred Mercnik)

Firefighters Dayton Kruitbosch, Derek Rooney, Katelyn Giesbrecht, Steve Labrasseur and Greg Pillitteri take their annual place on Queen Street to collect funds for muscular dystrophy. (Fred Mercnik)

Prince of Wales Chef Chris Smythe, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Chamber of Commerce President Eduardo Lafforgue, and Coun. Gary Burroughs take their job seriously as the pie contest judges at the Peach Celebration Saturday. Lida Kowal took first prize, second went to Sandy Piccolo and third was Norma Price. (Photo supplied)

Lepp Farms was on Queen Street with fresh peaches, sold by Paula Lepp, Mark Lepp and Michael Johnson. (Fred Mercnik)

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St. Vincent de Paul Church held its 32nd annual Peach Festival Sunday. Hundreds of people enjoyed a sunny day indulging in peachy delights and fresh peaches. Volunteers made 500 peach pies and almost 450 jars of peach jam. The day included a kids’ corner and live entertainment.

Peachy-keen volunteers stage Peach Festival

Serving up peach pie slices are Helena Mercer, Flavia and Tony Medina and John Mercer.

St. Vincent de Paul parish volunteers Greg McKay, Lucas Rankin, Mateo Palumbo, Angelina Palumbo, Cindy Palumbo and Gabriel Palumbo sell peaches donated by local producers.

Peach pies are a top-selling product, as displayed by Mary Wall, Diane Stanclik and Christina Sulpizio.

Brett Pether, Sarah Bellamy and 13-month-old Madelyn Pether enjoy some peachy treats and a balloon animal. (Photos by Jennifer Chornley)

Bryson Carl, 3, and his brother Mason John, 5, do a little fishing in the Kids’ Corner of the Peach Festival.
Classic musicals, mystery and comedy in Shaw’s 2020 season

Local Staff

Classic is the word for the Shaw Festival’s 2020 season. This is a season of classics across the board: classic musicals, classic comedies, classic dramas,” says artistic director Tim Carroll.

“Every single one features the brilliant writing which has always been at the centre of our mission, and for which we have assembled one of the world’s most respected casts,” says artistic director Jackie Maxwell.

The festival is focusing on Shaw’s 2020 season, directed by former Shaw artistic director Jackie Maxwell. The play was first performed on Broadway in 1959, and remains a classic, with several revivals since then.

Inspired by the famousstripepiece artist Gypsy Rose Lee, it tells the story of an ob-sessive mother who pushes her daughters into show biz, but with an unexpected result.

Also at the Royal George Theatre, Carroll will direct Charley’s Aunt, by Brandon Thomas. Jack and Charley scramble to make sure their plans to woo Kitty and Amy aren’t ruined, and need a chaperone to make it happen. Their friend Lord Fancourt Babberley takes on that role, disguised as a rich Brazilian widow — but Babberley’s charming ways soon become a distraction for the girls.

Flush is this year’s lunchtime one-act production, based on the novella by Virginia Woolf, and directed and adapted by Carroll. Flush is Elizabeth Barrett’s cocker spaniel, her only companion. The story is considered one of the most romantic of all time, told here from the perspective of the cocker spaniel.

Assassins, directed by Meg Roe, is referred to as a “darkly comic” musical re- verses, presenting nine men and women who have attempted to kill an American president. A carnival of the macabre, this ground-breaking musical puts everyone from John Wilkes Booth to Lynette “Squeaky” Fromme on display.

At the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre, Maxwell will direct J.M. Synge’s The Playboy of the Western World. This Irish comedy takes place in a small town where the only entertainer is gossip. Christy Mahon’s arrival has everyone talking. On the run after the murder of her father, she finds herself a local celebrity, not so much condemned as admired, until Dad turns up.

Eugene O’Neill’s Desire Under the Elms, directed by Selma Dimitrijevic, will be presented at the Royal George, taking a Greek tragedy and much-loved musical performance.

For more information visit notllocal.com
Daniel Abadie has been both my barber and my friend for many years, during which time I have come to admire his many, varied artistic skills and talents. Only recently, however, did I discover how extraordinarily well he paints. An upcoming exhibition at a local winery will allow you too, to know his talent as a painter.

I asked Daniel to tell me something of early life. “I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1961. Early on I started showing an interest in the arts: music, drawing, painting, writing, mostly through being exposed to them at school,” he said. “Before I completed primary school, I was asked to paint a mural in the school to honour Columbus’s discovery of the Americas. It was intended only for the holidays, but the principal was so pleased that it was kept there for years. It may even still be there.”

About his early goals and ambitions, Daniel said, “I wanted to study the arts and I loved music and wanted to study piano, but because my parents held strict religious beliefs, I wasn’t allowed to participate in any extra curricular activities, or studies. I did not return to any involvement with the arts till I was an adult.”

Art had always been part of his life as it provided an escape from life’s “crazy realities,” he said. “I grew up in an Argentina plagued by political unrest and military domination. During my high school years, I participated in a nation-wide art competition and had the honour to receive first, second and third prizes for my submissions. My early work was very different from what I do now. All the art I created in Argentina has sadly been lost.”

After high school, he said, his family did not permit him to continue any kind of post secondary studies, so he was made to find a sensible day job. “I became tired of office life very quickly. It was boring and there was nothing artistic about it. Eventually I just quit.”

I was curious as to how he became a hair stylist. He told me, “A good friend understood my problem and introduced me to barbering, and within a year, I had my own small shop in Buenos Aires. The business became very successful and I expanded my services to include women’s hair styling as well. I loved it because at last I had a chance to express myself artistically. I always considered hair my medium. Political unrest and the growing instability of life in Argentina prompted me to leave my homeland and try my luck making a life in a new country.”

At the age of 25, Daniel arrived in Canada, where he was able to build a successful career as a hair stylist, both in St. Catharines and internationally. His work as a hair stylist led him to become “a platform artist,” which took him to the four corners of the world and exposed him to all types of artistry, he said. “During this time, I was able to resume university studies and to fulfill my performing interests as a member of the Opera Ontario Company.”

Daniel also had experience as an actor. “Five years ago, I had the opportunity to spend a year as a performing member of The Caravan Stage Company, an experimental theatre company that has performed worldwide for more than 40 years. This company of over 100 performing artists travelled the east coast of North America from port to port, on board a 100-foot Thames-style sailing barge. In the evenings, the barge was transformed into a stage for performances while the audience enjoyed a circus-inspired show from seats on the shore.”

Daniel went back to university to study music, while still continuing vocal studies. Three years ago, plans were put on hold because of health issues, keeping him at home for long periods of time. This, however, allowed him to go back to the interest of his youth, painting, as there was nothing else to do. “I sat at home in front of empty canvases and painted whatever made me happy. I soon became very colour-driven in my art, as colour continued to bring happiness.”

There is to be an exhibition of Daniel’s art in Niagara-on-the-Lake at The Hare Wine Co., and he spoke with great happiness about the collection to be shown locally.

“I continue to be consumed with my interest and love of painting. My current work is the result of my passion for a style known as pointillism, a technique in which small, distinct dots of colour are applied to a canvas to form an image. The 20 pieces in this new exhibition are the result of my complete involvement with pointillism. My love of colour and joy for life are apparent as you experience my paintings.”

The Art of Daniel Abadie is at the winery on 769 Niagara Stone Rd., Aug. 23, 24 and 25, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. There is an opportunity to meet the artist each day from 4 to 6 p.m.

Daniel Abadie has been concentrating on pointillism and expressions of bold colour. Twenty of his paintings will be on display at The Hare Co. Winery Aug. 23, 24 and 25. (Photo supplied)
Art for animal advocacy at RiverBrink

Art, animals, compassion and advocacy.

Keri Cronin, art historian and associate dean at Brock University, spoke of how these are connected at the Arts for Animals discussion held Saturday at the RiverBrink Art Museum in Queenston.


Her work ties in with one of the museum’s current exhibitions, entitled Menagerie, which is a representation of animals in art history. The collection includes depictions of animals and birds by various artists, with assembled prints, paintings and sculptures highlighting the complex relationships humans have with the natural world.

Cronin says she has great interest in animal rights, animal welfare and how people can make the world a better place for animals.

She says co-existence with animals, wild or domestic, is important, especially with those who want to be activists for environmental issues, which she sees in university students.

Art for Animals focused on pieces used for animal advocacy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Though the book focuses on research dedicated as being “historically grounded,” she says many of the issues are as relevant today as they have ever been.

In her presentation, Cronin shows and explains why a variety of paintings, advertising campaigns and print articles depicted the role of animals in activism, however, advocates saw this as suffering.

It may have not been one of the “worst forms of animal cruelty,” she says, but is more about perspective and how the advocates viewed it.

Print campaigns came in the form of publications, one of which was called the Band of Mercy Advocate. This magazine focused on humane education and was a formal program, directed mostly to children, to be kind to animals. Adults were also educated through formal programs talking about how a cart horse should not be left out at night without a blanket when it’s cold and that dogs should have enough food and water.

These campaigns helped people see animals not just as tools for transportation or work, but as living, sensing beings “that get hungry, cold and scared,” she says.

“Activists really drew on art to get their message across. They spent a lot of money and, in some cases, a lot of money they didn’t have.”

A lot of very famous painters had their work brought into these campaigns, sometimes later in history, when they were not around to approve of it, she says.

In addition, many art pieces and pictures can be found in the artist’s original context. “Once the original context is put into a different context, new meanings can be made, which is a good reminder that meanings of images aren’t static,” Cronin says. There’s no universal way of reading a picture — the viewer and the context shape the meaning, she adds.

She says because paintings depicted the cropped tail as a status symbol, it became more “fashionable,” however, advocates saw this as suffering. “Moving an image out of its original context can be made, which is a good reminder that meanings of images aren’t static,” Cronin says. There’s no universal way of reading a picture — the viewer and context shape the meaning, she adds.

The thought that piqued Cronin’s interest was “how activists in the past have used art, to tell stories about animals and to try and make the world a kinder, gentler place for them.”

Cronin hopes readers of her book and discussion participants think differently about how they portray animals and the overall relationships with the people they share the planet with, no matter what environment — wild or domesticated.

To learn more about Cronin’s research and writing initiatives, visit kericronin.com.
Music Niagara wraps up great 21st festival

Nancy Smith
Special to The Local

Music Niagara Festival, culturally rich and relevant, appeals to a broad range of musical tastes. It wrapped up this weekend, after presenting international and Canadian performers, but its roots are in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

I attended 19 of the 29 concerts this year and every single performance I saw was superb. Below are highlights of a few of my favorites.

Jazz great Heather Bambrick and her quintet lit up the stage at Pondview Estate Winery with an infectious performance that energized everyone at the show. The band enjoyed themselves as much as the audience, and it was a night everyone will remember.

Last Night of the Proms was wonderful. Audience members turned up waving British flags, and sang along to their favourite British patriotic tunes. Presenting sponsor Elaine Mayo put everyone in the mood.

The Toronto All Star Big Band featured young singers and musicians playing songs made popular in the 1930s, 40s and 50s, long before any of them were born. Surrounded by local vineyards at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery, they sang wartime-era songs that new audiences and musicians are discovering generations later.

Young violinist Reed Trudel poses with Timothy Chooi at his Estate Winery, they sang.

Hilario Duran introduced concert goers to Afro-Cuban music, a complex combination of Latin Jazz with Cuban French/Spanish popular tunes made famous by The Andrews Singers and Frank Sinatra, as well as wartime-era songs that new audiences and musicians are discovering generations later.

Continued on page 19

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Seeger Farms Ltd. is looking to fill full-time positions from Feb–Sept 2020, for our Niagara-on-the-Lake vineyards. Applicants must be willing to work a minimum of 40 hours per week, including weekends if necessary, in all weather conditions at $14/hour. Duties include pruning, tying, hoeing, replanting, suckering and thinning. No education or work experience required, but would be an asset. Own transportation required. Please send resume to Seeger Farms Ltd., 16570 Niagara Parkway, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON LOS 1J0. Only applicants to be interviewed will be contacted.

Contact: anna@notllocal.com or call 905-932-2518

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SUDOKU PUZZLE
Expect Beethoven and contemporaries in 2020

The season finale, All Beethoven, was spectacular. The audience clapped throughout the program and gave the performers a roaring standing ovation. I asked Artistic Director Atis Bankas (who played in the concert) what made it so special:

“What makes musicians most happy is to see the concert hall fully occupied, sensing audience’s listening intensity, and the collective urge to applaud as an expression of great satisfaction with music and performance,” Bankas said. “All these things were present at the final concert of Music Niagara Festival. On behalf of all the musicians, I want to thank all the audiences for their support and enthusiasm that have attended this season’s concerts.”

Music Niagara’s signature concert series has ended, but stay tuned for news on upcoming performances, including the Dec. 8 Toronto All Star Big Band Christmas Concert.

Continued from page 17

ish/African influences. The audience was mesmerized by his extraordinary skill as a pianist and composer, and enjoyed the great quartet accompanying him, including sultry vocalist Adis Rodriguez.

The season finale, All Beethoven, was spectacular. The audience clapped throughout the program and gave the performers a roaring standing ovation. I asked Artistic Director Atis Bankas (who played in the concert) what made it so special.

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During Beethoven’s lifetime, Bankas said, audiences were expressing their appreciation, support and enthusiasm by clapping between movements. If the applause continued, the performers would repeat the same movement again, before continuing with the remaining movements.

“This is my official permission to do so for works of Beethoven and his contemporaries in the upcoming 22nd season of the Music Niagara Festival. On behalf of all the musicians, I want to thank all the audiences for their support and enthusiasm that have attended this season’s concerts.”

Music Niagara’s signature concert series has ended, but stay tuned for news on upcoming performances, including the Dec. 8 Toronto All Star Big Band Christmas Concert.

Elaine Mayo as Britannia at Last Night of the Proms at St. Mark’s Church. (Nancy Smith)

The Toronto All Star Big Band plays under a tent at Ravine Vineyards Estate Winery. (Cosmo Condino)

Young singers perform with The Toronto All Star Big Band at Ravine Vineyards Estate Winery. (Cosmo Condino)
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FEATURING M PERFORMANCE PARTS

YOU’VE GOT TO EXPERIENCE IT TO BELIEVE IT!

BMW is transforming Canada into M Town this summer. Featuring the BMW M3 Competition, BMW M440i, BMW M4 CS, BMW M5 Competition, and the BMW M8 Cabriolet, these cars will be making a stop at Performance BMW August 21-22. Equipped with the latest M Performance Parts, this will be one of the most extroverted BMW Beasts ever. This is your chance to discover the pure fascination of the most powerful letter in the world, and to be part of the M community.

Date: August 21-22, 2019
Time: 9am-9:00pm
Location: Performance BMW 266 Lake St, St. Catharines
RSVP: events@performancebmw.ca or call 905-934-3336

performance.ca/luxury-vehicles.htm