Shark World Championship returns to NOTL

Still a risk of unexploded ordnance on Lakeshore property

Queen Street pretty in pink

Peaches Cafe for community

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GREG SYKES
Niagara Region has several land transfer agreements, lease agreements and memorandums of understanding with the federal government for the lands, dating back to the 1980s.

According to the public works report, federal officials have assessed the risk level of the military explosives as “medium,” meaning there is a “remote possibility” of unexploded devices being present, which if not handled correctly, have the potential to cause a catastrophic event, possibly leading to loss of life.

The committee approved a staff recommendation to request the federal government either assume funding obligations and provide expertise to deal with the issue, and thereby allow the region to proceed with removal of infrastructure and creation of a wetland area, or alternatively, determine whether return of the lands in an “as is” state is a preferable solution, recognizing the

The old treatment plant lagoons and ponds on the Lakeshore Road property have to be cleaned up, and the region will pay for the removal of the sewage treatment facility, but says it doesn’t have the money or expertise to remove unexploded military devices. (Photos supplied)
Budget covers remediation, not explosives removal

Continued from page 2

difficulties associated with remediation and removal of infrastructure, the report says.

The region does not have the expertise to develop the scope of work or assess qualifications to retain an expert or contractor to do the work, the committee was told last week.

The report continues to say that full-scale clearance, if undertaken, will be “extremely expensive, challenging, and unpleasant,” but it did not include a dollar figure related to what estimated remediation costs may be.

Kaiser explained there are two issues with the old sewage treatment property. When the region took it over, it agreed to return it to Parks Canada in the condition it was in when the treatment plant was built.

There was absolutely no talk of unexploded ordnance at that point, and if there is, the region was not told about it, she said.

“It was never suggested. There was no discussion around unexploded ordnance, all this time,” she said. “It came as a surprise.”

This work is on hold based on the risk assessment, says the public works report.

A revised scope of work is currently being developed to remove all equipment, fixtures and other items from buildings, and process tanks onsite.

“The buildings will be emptied, sealed and abandoned in satisfaction of all applicable laws and regulations,” the report says.

The design and construction for this revised scope is scheduled for 2023 to 2024.

The region wants to get it done, said Kaiser, but can’t do anything as long as Parks Canada says there is some risk.

“In a statement to The Local, Lindsay Jones, manager of capital projects for the region’s water-wastewater engineering division, said in current agreements, it is agreed that the land would be returned to Parks Canada following decommissioning of the site.

In consideration of the fact that the land will be reverted back to ownership of the federal government, should they prefer the land to be remediated, “it would be necessary for the region to receive the necessary funding from them to undertake the work.”

Without funding, the region would “remediate to the site within ability and then transfer the lands ‘as is,’” which Jones said is also an option in the agreement.

There is currently $2 million available in the budget for this project, said Jones.

“It is anticipated that it would be highly unlikeable that public access to the lands would be permitted in the future given the documented conditions of the lands, regardless of remediation efforts,” said Jones.

Even if a full-scale ordnance clearance were to be conducted to allow for remediation, only “areas of the site currently impacted by wastewater infrastructure” would receive clearance, still leaving portions of the site with a risk, said Jones.

The statement from Jones did not specifically address an emailed question about claims that the site has already been cleaned of unexploded ordnances, which both Kaiser and Harmony residents say has occurred, although Kaiser said she was not certain what part of the Lakeshore property — she recalls there was a clean-up of the rifle range.

Jones reiterated information contained in the report brought to public works, saying that an assessment of the area has been conducted, and that there is a “medium” risk of unexploded military devices, which could create a catastrophic event, and possibly lead to loss of life.

There is hope that one day this property can be open to the public as greenspace, but regional representatives don’t sound optimistic. (Supplied)
New hospital won’t solve healthcare problems

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism Initiative

A new $3.6-billion hospital planned to be built in south Niagara Falls within the next four years won’t be a local solution to backlogs and hospitals being overwhelmed with patients — a problem being felt across the province.

That’s according to Michael Hurley, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees’ Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, and the union’s senior research officer Doug Allan, who were in Niagara Falls Thursday to reveal a 21-page report called “The Hospital Crisis: No Capacity, No Plan, No End,” citing data from Statistics Canada and the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Hurley said Niagara has been “hampered” in recent years due to the province reducing services at local health-care sites, such as Fort Erie and Port Colborne’s urgent care centres, which have recently seen a significant reduction in hours of operation, as well as after-hours emergency services shut down at Welland Hospital.

Niagara-on-the-Lake’s hospital site closed its doors in 2015.

People from smaller towns and cities in the region deserve access to healthcare in their own backyards — not just those in Niagara Falls and St. Catharines — where a new hospital opened about 10 years ago, the report says.

“There’s a mindset for these mega hospitals, but there’s a vibrant role played by community hospitals,” said Hurley to members of the local media Thursday.

Allan said Niagara needs more than 1,700 staff dedicated to inpatient services than what is currently offered, and another 225 beds over the next four years to address a “very serious problem” in the region and the rest of the province.

Hurley said although a new state-of-the-art facility is expected, the real problem is inadequate staffing.

“If it’s not staffed, it’s of no use,” he said.

“People are retiring, and people are walking away from the profession,” he said, referring to the importance of job retention in healthcare and creating additional positions.

He said local sites “save a lot of lives” in smaller, rural communities, citing industry, highways where many accidents occur and farming as reasons why local facilities need to be protected.

Turning them into outpatient clinics and offices for family physicians is “completely impractical and dangerous,” said Hurley.

According to the report, Ontario has 33,775 fewer positions in its hospitals per capita compared to other provinces, which equates to about 18 per 100,000 fewer workers.

“Something different is happening in Ontario,” said Allan.

The largest part of the staff deficit for Ontario is in nursing and inpatient services, says the report that was released Thursday.

Ontario has 0.285 full-time equivalent workers per 100 populations in inpatient services compared to 0.395 in other provinces across Canada.

“If Ontario had the same ratio of inpatient health care workers, there would be another 16,201 full-time inpatient jobs in our hospitals. That would allow a lot more hospital beds and inpatients and help solve the capacity crisis we are currently experiencing,” reads the report.

To address the needs in Ontario, brought on mostly by growth and an aging population, 8,000 new beds are required over the next four years, not 1,000, which the province is suggesting, according to Hurley and Allan.

Workloads are just not “doable” at Ontario hospitals, as doctors, nurses and other providers are feeling a sense of “despair, defeat, and exhaustion” by having to go above and beyond — they work overtime, don’t take breaks and work extra weekends.

“Even if you do all that, the quality of care never comes close to what you believe these patients are entitled to,” said Hurley. “That’s why you’re seeing people walk away.”

Nursing agencies are being brought in and individuals employed with them have the convenience of working the same hours Monday to Friday and are paid “two or three times as much,” according to Hurley.

“Why would you want to stay?” Hurley asked, referring to those who are burnt out and leaving for another career.

Privatization is not the direction to take, he said, as it would be “one per cent more expensive for the province, and that especially for nursing, it would be “two or three times” more costly.

Ontario healthcare budget is more than $25 billion, and addressing the concerns laid out in the report would be “a tiny fraction” of the overall budget, said Allan.

In hospitals, employment has increased by 3,210 since the onset of COVID-19 three years ago in the first quarter of 2020, an increase of 1.2 per cent, or 0.4 per cent per year.

“This is a shockingly small increase considering the burden COVID and long-COVID have placed on healthcare, being cared for in half-waves has hit 1,289 per day, an all-time high, 22 per cent higher than when the government was elected in June 2018. After the hospital crisis and the cancelation of tens of thousands of surgeries with COVID, hospital bed occupancy has already returned to 95 per cent, “a dangerously high level, even as the number of surgeries has not returned to pre-COVID levels.” Demand for staffed beds will increase further when hospitals are able to bring surgeries back to the number performed in 2019, says the report.

Both Allan and Hurley said they hope the recent report will catch the attention of the provincial government.

COVID aside, the need for hospital care due to population growth and aging has expanded at a much faster rate, as we shall see,” the report says.

The long-term decline in spending on hospital staff is also a major area of concern in the report.

Spending by hospitals on employee compensation has declined as a percentage of total spending, falling from 64 per cent in 2005-06 to 59 per cent in 2020-21 in Ontario, it says.

The Progressive Conservatives ran on a promise in 2018 of ending hospital hallway healthcare, the report adds, but “in fact, the problem has gotten worse.”

The number of inpatients
At the beginning of this year’s Shaw Festival playbill, artistic director Tim Carroll is having a conversation with an anonymous Shaw Friend. Carroll asks, if you could only pick one play to see this season, what would it be?

Shaw Friend: Ah — then it has to be the play and the cast. Carroll asks, if you could only pick one play to see this season, what would it be?

Tim Carroll: A bit counter intuitive, isn’t it? Not at all. I think to myself, ‘Hang on, if TC has programmed this play, know- ing full well that it will only get an audience if it is amazing — well, then it probably is."

FC: May I quote you on that?

Noel Burn's Blithe Spirit ‘a light comedy about death’

Sharon Burns The Local

Coloured in hues of pick- me, moss and juniper, the well-to-wall carpeting and two-storey-long draperies of the living room of Charles Condomine’s house in Kent evokes a desire to pack up a few belongings, step inside and move right in.

But this is just the set for Noel Coward’s Blithe Spirit now at the Shaw Festival Theatre. And, after a seance brings back a dead wife, audience members will be happy they stayed in their seats.

Charles is played by Damien Atkins, who expertly uses voice modulation to portray surprise and outrage. He is a novelist in search of material for his upcoming book about a ‘ paranormal medium.’ He hosts a dinner party, and invites Madame Arcati, a role designed for the magnificent Deborah Hay; to conduct a seance. It works too well, and Arcati conjures Charles first wife, Elvira, played by Julia Course. Elvira is only too happy to be back among the living, languidly pouring herself, and her flowing dress and lime green toresses, over the long chesterfield as she tries to seduce Charles. Charles’ second, and (for now) very alive wife, Ruth (Donna Soares), is suitably freaked out.

Blithe Spirit is brimming with comic conceptions: neighbours Dr. and Mrs. Bradman, played by David Adams and Jenny L. Wright, and maid Edith (Kathleen Gauthier). The play, and the gorgeous set, descend into chaos as Coward’s characters explore love and marriage.

Madame Arcati is one of the great characters in theatre, and director Mike Payette made an exceptional choice in choosing Hay to play this robust character who relishes dry martinis and sandwiches, but not red meat before a seance.

“Make it a rule never to eat red meat before I work. It sometimes has an odd effect,” says Arcati.

This is a role requiring great physicality of Hay, whose comedy is reminiscent of Carol Burnett or Lucille Ball. The audience is introduced to her character as she shakes her body out after a seven-mile bicycle ride to the Condomine’s house. Watch- ing Hay, as Arcati, put herself into a trance pre-seance, is a master class in slapstick.

Set and costume designer James Lavose must have completed a PhD in colour theory. The colours of the suits and dresses complement the greens of the set. Think: spice, pumpkin and honeycomb, amethyst, lavender and orchid.

The Shaw ensemble is no stranger to improvisa- tion. A Cheshire and The Lion played at the festival’s first year under Carroll’s artistic leadership. Audience mem- bers were asked to throw a ball onto the stage to direct the next move of the play. For example, a character may be asked what she was thinking at that precise moment. Carroll likes improvisa- tional theatre to sport. “All we know is what the characters want, not what words they will use to get it. It could all go wrong. But then, why do we watch sport? Because, until the game starts, every result is possible.”

“How they interact with each other is just good fun,” said Barb. “This is the place to come if you want to laugh.” The Babus have been in- volved with the Shaw Guild since 2006, and see many of the Shaw productions. “There are some amazing plays here this year, really and truly,” said Terry. The Game of Love and Chance is on at The Spiegeltent until Oct. 8 and runs between one hour, 50 minutes to two hours, 15 minutes, including two intermissions. For information or tickets visit shawfest.com.

Noel Coward’s Blithe Spirit ‘a light comedy about death’

Sharon Burns The Local

The Game of Love and Chance, now in the Spiegeltent, is a romantic comedy written by Pierre de Marivaux and first performed in 1730. It is different every time it is performed because each performance is impro- vised by the Shaw Festival ensemble.

At the beginning, audience members assign roles for the cast with a roll of the dice. Actors start with a premise in which two nobles, Silvia and Dorante, are to marry. But they, unbeknownst to each other, decide to dupe the apparel and character of Ar- lequin, Dorante’s valet, and Lisette, Silvia’s maid. Dorante and Silvia (as valet and maid) fall in love, as do Lisette and Arlequin (as the no- bles), but, before all is revealed, questions arise regarding mar- riage and social class.

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Facebook can censor stories, but not passion for local journalism

The blackout has officially begun.

Meta, the internet giant that owns Facebook and Instagram, is doing exactly what it promised: blocking news content from the eyes of all Canadian users. If the Niagara-on-the-Lake Local hasn’t disappeared from your social media feeds just yet, it will at any moment.

Instead of our trusted local journalism, users will encounter this brief message if they visit The Local on Facebook or Instagram: “People in Canada can’t see this content. In response to national legislation, news content can’t be viewed in Canada.”

That legislation, of course, is Bill C-18, a Liberal government law designed to force Big Tech (i.e. Meta and Google) to compensate media outlets for “stealing” our content and selling lucrative ads all around it.

To be clear, Village Media (which operates the Local’s website), has never supported this deeply flawed bill — nor the prevailing wisdom behind it.

Bored digital, our growing roster of local news websites has thrived in the era of Facebook and Google, leveraging the massive reach of these platforms to help deliver the high-quality community journalism you’ve come to depend on. Does Meta ‘steal’ our content? Absolutely not. The truth is we happily post it there, knowing full well that every click of a Facebook link leads right back to The Local.

Not anymore. Rather than pay up, Meta is wiping away any trace of legitimate news from the feeds of Canadian users. No more links to The Local headlines. No more sharing articles. And nobody — not the Trudeau government, and not the media outlets that lobbyist hard for C-18 — can pretend to be surprised. Facebook gave us all plenty of advanced warning.

Truth be told, Village Media has seen this day coming for quite awhile. Although you may not have noticed, the amount of journalism appearing in your Facebook feed has slowly dwindled in recent years, so much so that we’ve been busy working on our own in-house version of a social media platform. It’s exciting stuff, but more on that later.

In the meantime, let me be absolutely clear on one thing: The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local is not going anywhere, not online or in print. Facebook or no Facebook, we are as committed as ever to being your hometown source for up-to-the-minute news and information, free of charge and accessible to all.

What can you do as a loyal reader? Here is what I tell anyone who asks.

• Visit us often. Heck, make us your homepage, at notllocal.com. To borrow a quote from Dave Dawson, one of our veteran Village editors: “I like to think of our site as the virtual water cooler of our time — a place where you come every day, often many times a day, to check the pulse of the community!”

• If you haven’t already, please subscribe to our free email newsletter at notllocal.com/daily. It arrives in your inbox every afternoon at 3 p.m., full of hyperlocal headlines you won’t find anywhere else.

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What can you do as a loyal reader? Here is what I tell anyone who asks.
On March 17, 2023 I booked accommodation at the King George III Inn so that my wife and I could come to the Peach Festival and enjoy the theatre.

Imagine our surprise when yesterday evening (Aug. 10), only a few hours before we were due to book in, we were advised that our booking had been cancelled. Obviously there was no point to try and get accommodation elsewhere in NOTL so we could not enjoy the Peach Festival and have had to cancel our theatre tickets.

In our view the Township should revoke the operating licence of the property.

Andrew D. Stilburger
Editor’s note: This inn was closed, with a site proposal to build condos.

This is my alert to the Niagara-on-the-Lake community.

Have you heard about the three-storey condo building (17 units) coming to our neighbourhood?

This is not Parliament Oak. This is not the Rand Estate.

This is a small lot off King Street South zoned single family, about to entertain a condo tower, should the developer’s amendment to our residential bylaw be approved.

Thus, a continuation to the saga of poor town planning.

The location is 733 King Street. Please . . . join the fight for our community and its beauty.

Oppose this condo. Oppose this application to amend our residential bylaw.

Please Contact aimer@notl.com to register your opposition to this poor judgment, and to be included in the in-person/virtual public meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 12 at 6 p.m.

If this official plan amendment is approved, there will be more three-storey condo buildings coming next to you.

The worst thing you can do is nothing.

Barbara Weaver
King Street

Accessed the park traveling north on the Guadeph Line, and turning east on Hwy 7 toward the town of Rockwood, which is adjacent to the park itself.

The primary reason for staying here was to be able to visit an equestrian show our granddaughter was competing in at the Angelstone Equestrian Centre in nearby Erin, Ont. We did, however, want to do some hiking at the area. The Erasmosa River flows through this conservation area and a reservoir created offers swimming, fishing, canoeing and kayaking activities. In the Rockwood reservoir you can paddle around small islands, past towering cliffs and through narrow channels. It is quite scenic.

The location of the conservation area along the Niagara Escarpment offers some unique sights along the two hiking trails. Top on my list to see were the large numbers of geological features called glacial potholes. These are rock creations made during periods of glacial melting, when very high water flow caused harder rocks to spin in a confined area and wear down the limestone rock underneath.

I had become aware of potholes elsewhere on the escarpment, but was amazed to discover the quantity (more than 200) and size of the ones located at Rockwood. A well-maintained trail and boardwalk takes you through this area.

An interesting historical site to see is the remains of the Harris Woolen Mill Ruins. This substantial structure is located at the end of the hiking area. It is currently fenced off for security and safety, but quite visible.

The mill was founded in 1867. The stone building (now the ruins) was built in 1884 to replace the original wooden building which was lost to fire. The Harris family continued its operation until 1925, before they closed it down due to competition from other mills. The conservation authority acquired it in 1958 but another fire in 1967 reduced it to the current state.

Further on, across a bridge, we followed a lane to the other geological feature that is an attraction in the area — huge caves. The two that we examined were quite deep and interesting to view. Care should be taken and deep-explorer tests of these areas are required.

This is an interesting area for a few days of camping or for a day visit. The unique sights to explore and other outdoor activities to be enjoyed make it too on our list.

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NOTL ambassadors welcome visitors, answer questions

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A group of volunteers established during the COVID-19 pandemic in the heritage district of Niagara-on-the-Lake has grown to play an important role in the overall experience of tourists who visit in the summer months.

Known as ambassadors, a few dozen Shaw Guild members, a group of people who help support the Shaw Festival, came together in 2020 to create the Ambassador program. The initial mandate was to assist with making sure protocols and mandates were being abided by, but since then, their purpose has become much more than that — they are a team of people who help visitors find shops and restaurants, hand out maps, and provide as much information to out-of-town guests as they can.

There are about 60 people who are part of the all-volunteer collective, operated under the umbrella of Niagara-on-the-Lake Tourism.

They can be found during the day from May to early September, Friday through Sunday and on holiday weekend Mondays, walking the downtown area or stationed at a kiosk on Queen Street in front of the chamber of Commerce offices.

In 2021, the town was successful in getting a grant for the ambassadors, which helped pay for shirts and other accessories such as literature racks for information that is handed out to passersby.

"Maps are the most popular and best tool we’ve got," said Laurie Harley, one of the group’s co-leaders and founders who helped get the initiative underway in 2020 when she was president of the Shaw Guild.

In 2022, ambassadors recorded 9,200 engagements, stops from people asking for advice about various things to do.

"This year we’re well on our way to breaking that record," said Harley, adding that an engagement doesn’t include someone asking about where they can find a public washroom, and that the Old Town appears to be much busier now that bus groups are pouring into the area like they did pre-pandemic.

This year, ambassadors have interacted with visitors from at least 37 countries, said Harley, noting there appears to be a lot of people from Mexico this summer.

At the start of tourist season, the ambassadors take part in training, which also includes visits to popular destinations such as the Landscape of Nations, wineries, Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre and the NOTL Museum — places they often direct guests to.

They hear inquiries about what restaurants best suit guests’ tastes, and what there is to do for kids.

"We call ourselves storytellers — but we’re not tour guides," said Harley.

"We literally have something for every visitor depending on what they want to do."

What are some unusual inquiries they receive, or facts that some people from outside the area were unaware of?

"There’s a lot of people who don’t realize we’re so close to the United States," she said, referring to Fort Niagara being visible only a stone’s throw away over the lower Niagara River.

Ambassadors assist “not just the visitors, but the stores, too,” said Harley, noting a time one local merchant asked them for advice on how to dispose of a dead skunk in front of their storefront.

People often ask about what the winter is like in Niagara-on-the-Lake — how much snow the town gets and how cold it can be.

"If you think it’s pretty in the summer, you ought to come back at Christmas," Harley said is a stance often given to those who ask.

The majority of the group consists of people from Niagara-on-the-Lake — all of whom are proud of their hometown and enjoy sharing everything it has to offer.

A key to their approach is being helpful “without being invasive,” said Harley.

"There are people who want to talk to you, and there are others who just want to do their own thing."
New wine-lovers’ guide a father and son project

Mike Balsom
The Local

Father and son bonding activities can take many tradition- al forms — a weekend fishing trip, a round of golf followed by some fun on the 19th hole, maybe a trip to a ball game. So when Andrew Perrie of Niagara-on-the-Lake and his father Bill of Orangeville, spent a year working together on a new wine lover’s guide proved to be the perfect father-son activity.

The result of their bonding experience is the Perries’ new book, Niagara: A Wine Lover’s Guide: Their year’s work covers 75 wineries in the Niagara region, each featured in a two-page spread containing a brief description of the winery, a couple of photos, and a description of a “writer’s choice” wine selection.

“We partnered up at a pub,” says the estate agent from Revel Realty about the genesis of the idea. “I told him I wanted to do more with him, and I suggested we do a book about wine. We embarked on it last spring. I commissioned him to do the writing and he took most of the photos, too.”

Andrew was about four years old when his parents married. Bill later started a family with his second wife, and for a number of years Andrew didn’t see much of his father. He began to reconnect with his dad when his first son Hudson was born just over seven years ago.

“This experience just brought us closer together,” the 36-year-old tells The Local. “I don’t let it get to every single winery with him, but we connected to talk about every one of the wineries, we tasted wines together and collaborated on the design of the book, too. It was great to do this with him. It helped to strengthen the adult relationship we’ve developed.”

“We already have a very strong father-son relationship,” says Bill on the phone from Orangeville, “and doing the book just strengthened the bond a little more.”

The elder Perrie is originally from Dundee, Scotland, and has maintained his thick Scott- ish brogue. Known as “Canada’s Pub Guy,” he has hosted radio shows and podcasts about the topic, and has written guides to the province’s pubs and its craft brewing industry. As well, he collaborated with two others on a novel called The Black Horse Drovers: A Year in the Life of a Small Town Ontario Pub.

Bill was also one of the owners of Falcon Brewing Company in Ajax, Ont. Andrew and his father are currently involved together in the ownership group of a traditional pub in Orangeville.

Neither of the Perries is a wine connoisseur, says Andrew. “We just said what we felt,” he says. “We tasted the wines and talked about what we liked about them. We picked up the random tastes and scents. Whatever we sensed, we wrote it down.”

That is part of the charm of Niagara: A Wine Lover’s Guide. A foreword from Stephanie Petruccio, sommelier and manager of Palantine Hills Estate Winery, delves into the details of Niagara’s terroir and the science behind growing grapes in the region.

Once that’s out of the way, the rest of the books 161 pages are written in layperson’s terms. For example, for NOTL’s Byland Estate Winery, their writer’s choice is the 2018 oaked chardonnay. “They get right to the point about what they loved about their selection.”

“This wine has a bright yellow hue with an aroma of fresh yellow peach, pineapple, lemon and pear,” write. “Crisp, with perfect acidity.”

“The wine world it’s hoppy or it’s not hoppy. In the wine world the sense vocabulary is so much wider, so your experiences are so different. Watching him try to break down what he was experiencing with the wines,” Andrew says about Bill. “In the beer world it’s hoppy or it’s not hoppy.”

Andrew has promised to have copies of the book available at Revel’s 235 Four Mile Creek Road office. And for every softcover copy sold there at $20 he promises to match the price as a donation to Joe Pillitteri’s Terry Fox Run campaign.

“The book will come in handy with clients. As a real estate agent, Andrew is often asked about Niagara’s wines from potential clients, especially those from out of town exploring the possibility of owning a home here. “I’ve always catered a Niagara experience to people who come in from out of town,” he says. “Every buyer who come here to Niagara-on-the-Lake, I now give them a copy of the book as a gift. You can’t sell an experience of living in Niagara-on-the-Lake without including wine.”

The younger Perrie says the creation of the guide has opened up the possibilities for future bonding experiences with his father.

“I would like to do something like this again,” says Perrie, who has contributed to the Cottage Life program on HGTV and also volunteered as a reporter on local cable station YourTV. “But I would love to film it, and turn it into a show, where we’re not only tasting the wine but tasting the culinary offerings as well.”

Niagara: A Wine Lover’s Guide is available at Revel Realty or as a Kindle e-book or other hard- or softcover editions online through amazon.ca.
Rainy start turned into a peach of a day

Sharon Burns  
The Local

Despite a rainy start, Niagara-on-the-Lake’s biggest street festival was a huge success.

At least three local farmers were selling baskets of peaches while enjoying music from three different spots of the closed-down street.

The steamed corn engine, as always, was a hit.

Leon Martin, from Aylmer, Ontario, explained the process: “We are steaming corn with a steam engine to heat the water to steam the corn in barrels. The husk is on the cob when it gets cooked, and that adds extra flavour.”

His brother, Ronald Martin, was responsible for ensuring the fire was stoked and the steam had just the right amount of pressure, water and heat to cook Niagara corn.

“This is our big festival,” said Leon. “This is my fifth year here, but I promised the gentleman I bought this from that I would continue to come here.”

The 1800s-era steam engine has been a part of the Peach Festival for 14 years.

“Steamed sweet corn is the only way to go,” said Leon, whose grandchildren Mia Weber, 9, and Tait Weber, 11, worked husking and buttering the corn.

Vendor Shelby Marshall, from Stoney Creek, who partners her business, Tread Forward Fundraising, with eight Canadian Mental Health Associations around Ontario including Niagara, said that the festival is “good, it’s crazy busy. The rain has passed, so everyone is in a good mood.”

“We do an apparel fundraiser,” said Marshall. “Ten per cent of the proceeds stay within the region.”

Marshall was also handing out Canadian Mental Health Association Niagara’s brochure detailing crisis services, safe beds and counselling information available in the Niagara region.

The Irish Harp owner Jovie Joki, flanked by co-owner Jeremy Buckland (left) and host/server Caleb Knutson (right), said that “it’s going very well at the peach festival today.”

People of all ages and talents danced to the sounds of the ‘30s, ‘40s and ‘50s provided by The Toronto All-Star Big Band.
Peachy-keen day for St. Vincent de Paul Peach Festival

Mike Balsom
The Local

Sunday's weather couldn't have been any better for the St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church's annual Peach Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"We certainly lucked out," organizer Ted VanderKaay said. "It's a perfect, beautiful day with sunshine and no humidity. I think turnout today exceeds last year.

The church runs their own festival every year a day after Saturday's larger version on Queen Street, organized by the NOTL Chamber of Commerce. VanderKaay was thankful Sunday didn't see the same interruption by rain that happened the previous day.

VanderKaay, co-chairs Terry and Sharyn Choules and a group of fellow organizers started planning the event every January. Top of the list is always ensuring that the requisite 110 volunteers are in place and that the equipment, tents and barbecues are lined up for the second Sunday in August.

"They have it down to a science by now, with very little changing from year to year. For the first time, though, they were set up to accept electronic payments, making things convenient for attendees. There also was one other unavoidable difference for 2023. Unfortunately, food prices have increased this year," VanderKaay told The Local. "We were afraid of getting some pushback because we had to increase our prices to cover the costs. But that's happening everywhere across the board."

Those increased prices didn't seem to stop the 600 take-home peach pies, 100 more than at last year's festival, from selling out. By 1:15 p.m., there were just a couple dozen left for sale, while the line-ups at the barbecue and the dessert tables were steady throughout the lunch period.

"And of course, ripe, juicy red haven peaches were being sold by the basket. As always, there was plenty for kids to do, with many of the youngest taking the opportunity to fish in the 'pond,' while others opted to get their face painted for the occasion.

For the adults, the ever-popular jewelry table was a hit as was the annual book sale, with a selection that would rival a big box store. Musician John Libera provided a musical background from the steps of the church.

Though the peach festival is a fundraiser that helps the church maintain the cemetery and the parish hall around the corner on nearby Davy Street, VanderKaay insisted it's not about the money.

"It's more about a sense of community coming together," he said. "Whether it's parishioners, community members, tourists, that's the primary focus. If we make money doing it, that's fantastic. But that's not our main focus."

A group of volunteers at the St. Vincent de Paul Peach Festival getting the corn husked. (David Gilchrist)

Volunteer chef Ted Van der Zalm at the barbecue. (Mike Balsom)

Rene and Cez Beronia bought two of the 600 peach pies for sale at the St. Vincent de Paul Peach Festival Sunday. (Mike Balsom)

Amira Alkaisi watches as her sister Alina gets a tattoo at the church Peach Festival. (Mike Balsom)

Church festival volunteer Carmen Giordano looks after the corn on the cob at the peach festival. (Mike Balsom)

Hope and Hal Grant of Halaloo Balloons making some balloon animals. (Mike Balsom)
Chamber turns Queen Street pink

Mike Balsom
The Local

With almost 500 people dressed in pink Sunday night, onlookers on Queen Street would have been excused for expecting an outdoor screening of the new Barbie movie, with all its shades of pastel pink.

The gathering was for the annual outdoor event hosted by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce and NOTL Tourism, this year dubbed the Shades of Rose Dinner.

“It’s usually called Shades of Summer,” Chamber and Tourism NOTL president and CEO Minerva Ward told The Local Sunday night. “As you know, we’re elevating our wine industry. This is an ode to our Niagara-on-the-Lake wine industry, especially the rose wines that are made here.”

As pink as the outfits were, many attendees were pouring pre-ordered beverages of a similar shade as they sat down to enjoy their bring-your-own meals, many prepared with the same care as a five-star chef.

Linda Ridgeway, owner of a new local business called Bubble Taps, was on site with one of her three Italian Ape Piaggio vehicles, all outfitted with beverage taps. She was also pouring drinks while diners lined up to snap photos at a display set up by another local business, Selfie Mode.

For the first time, two tables were awarded prizes. Engel and Volkers real estate broker Nancy Bailey’s table won the Best Dressed Award, while Nancy Hummel and Victoria Gilbert’s table was chosen as Best Decorated.

As a non-profit organization, the NOTL Chamber uses the money raised from the annual event to fund many of its programs and services. As well, a portion is always donated to a worthy cause.

“A portion is going to the restoration of the cenotaph,” Ward explained. “Obviously, we are here in the shadow of the cenotaph, and the NOTL Legion is raising funds for that. We felt it would be a noble, worthwhile gesture to support that cause.”

The event capped a busy weekend for the Chamber, following as it did the annual Peach Festival, with a section of Queen Street blocked off to traffic all weekend.

“The town is a wonderful partner for all of our events,” Ward said. “They help us make the transition between these two events as seamless as possible.”
THE NOTL Local August 16, 2023

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Love Where You Live: SUPPORT Local
Every car tells a story at Kinsmen Show and Shine

Mike Balsom
The Local

A record 500-plus classic and collectible cars covered every corner of the Parks Canada lands surrounding the Niagara-on-the-Lake Kinsmen Club Sunday for its 23rd annual Show and Shine. As impressive as that was, even more so were the stories behind many of the much-loved and obsessively-cared-for vehicles on display. And every vehicle there had a story.

Fortndel resident Tom Spence's red Corvette featured a license plate reading "58FUELIE. "It's one of 104 built with this combination," said Spence of his striking 1958 classic with an impressive red lacquer finish, "with this motor, fuel injection and an automatic transmission. Being red in '58, it might have been one of about 25 built. White was the most common colour back then."

Spence has owned the car since 2014, but he had his eye on that exact Corvette 37 years earlier. "It had just been restored then, with this same paint," he explained. "That lacquer paint is pretty rare. You can't even explain. "That lacquer paint, then, with this same paint, " he earlier.

Spence bought other Corvettes along the way, but kept hoping he could somehow acquire the '58. He finally convinced the owner to part with it nine years ago. "I had to trade this car because it had sat in underground parking," Spence told The Local. "The fuel system went bad, and the bumpers corroded, but I didn't want to take the body off the frame. It took a couple of years of steady work to restore it."

Spence is proud that all the gauges, the door panels and the steering wheel are original from 1958. He had the bumpers and trim work re-chromed and did some work on the interior, insisting on attempting to bring it back as close to its original condition as possible. And he wanted to make it drivable. "Back then, people would see this car and think it's a race car," Spence said. "But General Motors was trying to make this car into an economy version, with an automatic transmission and lower horsepower. It's great to drive!"

Kinsmen Club member and event organizer Ken Slingerland couldn't believe the turnout of both participants and browsers for the club's biggest fundraiser of the year. "We typically gross $15,000 to $20,000 on this," Slingerland said. "It supports a lot of the things we do, including Cystic Fibrosis research and the Girl Guides and Pathfinders, who have their meeting right here in our hall!"

NOTL resident Howard Bogusat was there with his green 1934 Chevrolet that looked like a classic Hot Wheels toy this reporter had as a kid. The former owner of MB Foods in Virgil has only had the car for about eight years. "I bought it as is," said the 77-year-old. "I usually drive sports cars. My daily drive is a Porsche Panamera hybrid. I shocked a lot of people when I first drove up in this thing."

Bogusat was coming home from his cottage one day when he spotted a 1935 Chevy that piqued his interest. He started looking for a similar car online. It took him a while to take the plunge and put an offer. This year's Show and Shine was only the fourth car show that he's entered. But he loves driving the '34.

"It has power steering, it steers really easily," he says. "When I drive around in it I get a lot of thumbs up. It's kind of a nostalgic for that simpler time."

"I bet 50 people have stopped to take a photo of the tray," laughed Ross. "Though no awards were handed out at the show, if there had been one for the best story behind the car, the bells may have been a lock. Ross said the car, though, did win the Manager's Choice Award at the General Motors Show 'n Shine earlier this year."

Slingerland told The Local that the early days of the Kinsmen event did feature awards, but the club decided to change it to more of a friendly gathering a few years ago. "It's a race summer event for our club," Slingerland said. "Right from the start it's been a good fit for us. We carry it on, and a lot of the collectors look, forward to this show. And we're seeing more and more younger people beginning to show their cars. Everybody tells us it's one of the best shows around."

NOTL resident Howard Bogusat and his '34 Chevy. (Mike Balsom)

Steve Bogusat (Mike Balsom)
Mike Balsam
The Local

Lauren Minnes, Taylor Hulley and other members of their ensemble, Minuscule, are getting a crash course on the ins and outs of life as touring musicians.

The pair and seven others packed their gear into a couple of vehicles and headed toward the north part of the province to play a series of shows. Wednesday night, Minuscule headlined a concert at the Imperial Theatre in Thunder Bay, opening sets by fellow Niagara musicians Rita Visscher and the Daydreamers and Electric Wildlife.

Here’s the catch — Rita, the Daydreamers and both members of Electric Wildlife are also northern touring musicians, such as Queenston resident Tony Dekker, the leader of the Juno-nominated Great Lake Swimmers, Danno O’Shea from St. Catharines-based My Son the Hurricane, and Nick Loylko from The Marvellous.

“They’ve all done this extensively,” Minnes says, “and they’ve reached out to give us some tips to keep us safe and healthy on the road. We’ve never done this before. It’s so important to learn how to pace yourself when food and sleep and everything is thrown off. And it’s important to carve out space for yourself and respect each other’s boundaries.”

The diminutive Minnes packs a surprisingly powerful punch with her voice, whether as a duo with her life and music partner Hulley, as a solo act, or as the leader of Minuscule, which includes as many as 15 female singers, as well as Hulley, Na- niagara-based Daydreamers and other such services.

Dubbed their Northshore Tour of Ontario, a bare-bones version of the band will play gigs in five different towns, including a homecoming show to be present to enjoy it, but at the same time we’re shooting some video, rehearsing and taking care of social media.”

The homecoming show is scheduled to run from 7 to 10 p.m. Admission is by donation, and food and drink will also be available on a pay-what-you-can basis.

Minuscule, with Laurel Minnes, in a photo from one of her videos.  

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Minuscule

Love, Oh Da Dee and Singing Sand often combine gospel and folk sounds, while Over You finds Minnes throwing some hip-hop-style cadences into the mix. Only the plaintive, mournful song features Minnes solo singing without the choir. It’s a song she’s never intended to release or play live, one she wrote to help deal with the tragic loss of a close friend.

“I recorded it alone in the house by myself,” she recalls. “Jordan, closest friends told me the song helped them and encourage me to let other people in on this feeling, this connection. It’s hard one to sing live, and it’s one that I get the most feedback from complete strangers.”

For the Northshore tour, Minnes had to bring a smaller version of Minuscule on the road. “It was difficult to imagine doing this with less than the whole crew of Minuscule’s, as I call them,” she explains. “But it would have been too difficult to do with all of us. We’ve had to pinch some pennies and make some strategic choices.”

Fortunately, Niagara’s Minuscule fans will have a chance to experience the full Minuscule punch next Wednesday, Aug. 23, in rural Niagara-on-the-Lake. All three acts will perform a homecoming show at 1672 Concession 6 Road in the backyard of friend Mike Palmieri’s home.

“I don’t think we’ve ever done a show where we’ve all been present,” laughs Minnes about the large group of singers, “there’s always one or two who can’t make it. But it will be a grand showing of the ‘squites for sure.”

Minnes and company are looking forward to being back home and playing with and for friends, but they’re also soaking in the beauty of the north for the time being.

“IT’s been just gorgeous here the last few days,” she raves. “This is a dream come true, to be on Lake Superior at Wild Goose Bay. We’re loving our surroundings and learning to be present to enjoy it, but at the same time we’re shooting some video, rehearsing and taking care of social media.”

These homecoming shows are scheduled to run from 7 to 10 p.m. Admission is by donation, and food and drink will also be available on a pay-what-you-can basis.

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Meridian
The Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club held its Junior Championships this past weekend. The three winners were familiar names, with two of them having won their divisions twice previously, and the other one, Sam Walker and Keira Dexter won the Junior Boys and Girls divisions respectively, both winning their third straight championship. And Gavin Tomcsuzk won for the second straight year in the Bantam Boys division.

Some familiar names are NOTL Golf Club winners

Some familiar faces are NOTL Golf Club winners

Martha Cruikshank took her ninth Women’s title, with a score of 173, five better than co-runners-up Ginny Taylor and Lisa Allen. Cruikshank also had three Senior Women’s titles at the NOTL Club to her name. It was a Taylor sweep for the Senior championships. Ginny Taylor edged Lisa Allen in a playoff for the Women’s Senior title, while her husband Jon beat Paul Dickson by two strokes to claim the Men’s Senior title, his second in a row. Head pro Keith Vant handed out the hardware on the course Sunday evening. Full results are as follows:

- **Mens Champion**: Greg Grigjanis Meusel 143
- **Runners up**: Matt Szczurko 151, Jon Taylor 154
- **Womens Champion**: Martha Cruikshank 173
- **Runners up**: Ginny Taylor 178, Lisa Allen 178
- **Mens Senior Champion**: Jon Taylor 154
- **Runners up**: Paul Dickson 156, Jon McMacken 160, Steven Warboys 160
- **Womens Senior Champion**: Ginny Taylor 178 (winner in 1 hole playoff)
- **Runners up**: Lisa Allen 178, Dianna Dimmer 179
- **Legends Cup 80+ Champion**: Warren Tutton (9 holes) 38
- **Mens D Flight Champion**: Martin Wagner 185
- **Runners up**: Bill Baitinger 199, Noel Morris 216
- **Womens C Flight Champion**: Sandy Boyer 208
- **Runners Up**: Carolyn Poor 210, Caroline Cochran 211
- **Mens C Flight Champion**: Johnson Hu 178
- **Runners up**: Mike Henry 179, Todd Watson 180
- **Womens B Flight Champion**: Sharron Marlow 199
- **Runners up**: Marie Ellison 205, Cathy Taylor 217
- **Mens B Flight Champion**: Rob Chadey 168
- **Runners up**: Kevin McLean 171, John Reynolds 175
- **Womens A Flight Champion**: Maria Townley 177
- **Runners up**: May Chang 180, Cathy Murray 202
- **Mens A Flight Champion**: Rob Reimer 162
- **Runners up**: Dan Reagan 167, Drew Porter 171
- **Womens Super Senior Champion**: Carroll Baker 171
- **Runner up**: Margot Richardson 185
- **Mens Super Senior Champion**: Gary Syagging 157
- **Runners up**: Ted Carmichael 158, Rick Jakes 159

Mike Balsom
The Local
Sharks return to NOTL for World Championship race

For the first time in almost 15 years, the Sharks are coming home, as the Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club hosts the world championship of the sailboat designed, and at one time built, in town.

The popular sailing yacht was originally designed and built by George Hinterhoeller in 1959, and intended to handle local sailing conditions. His son, Richard Hinterhoeller is the chief race officer for the regatta.

To be held from Aug. 20 to 25, the Shark World Championship is a special event this year, said Orla Morgan, public relations director of the sailing club — the race hasn’t been held in Niagara since 2009. The club is expecting more than 40 boats, and while most sailors are Canadian, crews are coming from as far away as Germany and Austria.

"We give them a loaner boat," explained Morgan. "They bring their own sails and everything is weighed to conform to a class."

Morgan said the Shark community is like no other. "Every Wednesday night, they’re out there racing. They have their own course. We have past world champions in the fleet and we have people who are brand new to sailing."

"It’s one of those things," she explained. "You can buy a Ferrari or you can buy a Corolla. They’re the Corolla. If you’re new to sailing, you can smash into things and it’s going to take it. It will bounce right off because it is just so well designed."

The sailing club uses Sharks for their adult sailing program on Tuesday and Thursday nights.

The activity at the club on Melville Street will be similar to last year’s Canada Summer Games. Sailors will be camping on the property and boats from other clubs will be docked. The international jury is billeted with club members.

Last year’s Shark championship was held in Austria.

"Every four years it takes place in Europe and then it travels around North America," said Morgan.

The Shark World Championship starts on Sunday, Aug. 20, with measurement, weigh-in and launch. It runs until Friday.

Sharon Burns
The Local

Located in the Village of St. Davids. Original owners. Many custom upgrades, 6 appliances, California Shutters, custom blinds included, 2 bedrooms on main level, one presently used as den. Custom kitchen with island and bar stools included, formal dining area with a walk out to private 16 x 12 ft deck with custom retractable awning. Deck area features custom plantings and a water fountain. Extra large green space in the rear increases privacy. Back inside there is a gas fireplace in the great room and ceiling fans in bedrooms and great room. Downstairs in the family room is a fireplace, vinyl plank flooring plus a large bedroom with a 10 x 10 walk-in cedar lined closet. Lower lever windows all have vinyl blinds. There is a large storage area plus rough for a future bath. Other features include a 3 stage water filter, central vac, double attached garage with automatic door opener, interlocking stone driveway and corner unit location provides extra windows for natural light with a bonus window over kitchen sink. MLS #40434955
Two cross-lake swimmers defeated by Lake Ontario

Sharon Burns
The Local

While two swimmers put their hearts and souls into attempts to cross Lake Ontario last week, departing from Queen’s Royal Park early Friday morning, neither reached their destination in Marilyn Bell Park as hoped early Saturday morning.
CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU

HELP WANTED

GENERAL FULL TIME LABOURER WORKERS REQUIRED

General seasonal full-time laborer workers required. Duties include pruning, tying, suckering, canopy management and harvesting. Must be willing to work long hours, including weekends from March to November. Must be fit and enjoy working outdoors in all weather conditions. No education required but preference with vineyard experience will be given. Wage $15.83/hour. Own transportation. Fax resumes 905-468-2365. Only applicants to be interviewed will be contacted.

NOTICES

To place an Obituary or In Memoriam in our Classifieds, please contact Julia at: julia@notllocal.com or 905.934.1040 Deadline is Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

Sell your unwanted items or advertise your garage sale in our CLASSIFIEDS

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PUZZLE ANSWERS

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU

ACROSS:
1 Statue of Liberty material
7 Got together
10 Buddy
13 Dry gulch
14 Law's grp.
15 Cab
16 Dry gulch
17 Passing
18 Thanhapole's poet William --- Bryant
20 Very strong winds
21 First lady
22 Laughing guy
24 "Thanatopsis" poet William --- Bryant
26 Large handbag
29 Noah's boat
30 Dumped in Boston harbor
31 Homeless child
32 Thick slice
34 Thick slice
38 Bart Simpson's driver
41 Wine valley
42 Terse
44 Cuss
45 Affirmative signal
46 Control board
48 Nothing
49 In Theodore D."Mamma Mia" mamma
50 Fidgety
51 Pursue ardently
52 Nudge
53 Resolute
54 Anticipate
55 Postage stamp
56 The crack of dawn
57 Euphoria
58 Fen
59 posters
60 Bart Simpson's driver
61 Zilch
62 Burdened
63 Heptathlete's specialty
64 Uninformative schedule info.
65 Medical prioritization
66 Aboard
67 Male offspring
68 Male offspring
69 Fast rabbit relative
70 Fall flowers

DOWN:
1 Grav
2 Are you out ---? (Poker)
3 Grav
4 Cops in general
5 Another view
6 Baloney
7 Postal delivery
8 One of the old empire builders
9 Cold comforts?
10 Trunk
11 Aboard
12 Burdened
13 Creosote
14 Burdened
15 Aboard
16 Violet
17 Rips
18 Nod
19 End it
20 Gales
21 Eve
22 Comic
23 Cops in general
24 Cops in general
25 Lots of things to do
26 Fans
27 Gains
28 Former Yugoslav dictator
29 Sires
30 Tea
31 Waif
32 Slab
33 Sunup
34 Sunup
35 Sirens
36 "Mamma Mia" mamma
37 Euphoria
38 Fidgety
39 Postage stamp
40 Medical prioritization
41 Resolute
42 Affirmative signal
43 Postage stamp
44 Playing card
45 Dancing pair
46 Aboard
47 Nudge
48 In Theodore D.
49 In Theodore D.
50 Fast rabbit relative
51 Grav
52 One of the old empire builders
53 Creosote
54 Anticipate
55 Postage stamp
56 The crack of dawn
57 Euphoria
58 Fen
59 posters
60 Bart Simpson's driver
61 Zilch
62 Burdened
63 Heptathlete's specialty
64 Uninformative schedule info.
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