



Don't miss St. Davids Lions/ Lioness car show Sunday
page 10



Paulino Paviuk entertains on stilts at the Peach Celebration on Queen Street Saturday. For story and more photos see pages 8 and 9. (Mike Balsom)

Fundraising swim continues to support Pathstone Mental Health

Mike Balsom
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Dylan Rumsey crushed two of his goals this weekend.

On a beautiful, still Saturday morning, Rumsey swam against the natural current from the Queenston Docks to Queen's Royal Park much faster than the four to six hours he had estimated. And the GoFundMe page he set up to raise \$12,500 for Pathstone Mental Health Foundation exceeded that total by \$340 at press time.

After making it to Navy Hall, where he ran into some stronger current, it was smooth swimming for the 25-year-old, who had jumped off a friend's boat just after 9:30 a.m. By around 11:15, his friends

and family awaiting his arrival at the end of King Street were contacting Rumsey's team on the boat, asking them to encourage him to take his time.

To a greeting from about 40 supporters, Rumsey emerged from the water onto the beach at about 11:45, completing the swim in just two hours and 15 minutes. Quite an accomplishment for someone who does not consider himself a swimmer.

The diesel mechanic at Metro Truck Group claims he prepared for the swim without really hitting the river. Instead, he had been putting in up to three hours a day in the gym, focusing on fitness and strength, and taking boxing lessons for

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Integrity Commissioner exonerates Lord Mayor

Penny Coles
The Local

In an unusual move by the town's integrity commissioner, a report written in March and intended to remain confidential has been released to the public.

The report deals with a complaint made by Colin Telfer in October, 2021, against Lord Mayor Betty Disero. He said he believed she had contravened the town's code of conduct by becoming involved in Telfer and Jennifer Elliott's request

for a bed and breakfast permit renewal, which was not granted.

The Integrity Commissioner's report gives a detailed chronology of the events, coming to the conclusion that withholding the licence "had nothing to do with the lord mayor whatsoever," and that Elliott's Facebook post indicating there was living space in the garage led to the complaint.

It said that senior staff and the town's lawyer, Terry Hill, believed it was Telfer and Elliott's "refusal to com-

ply with a legitimate inspection request about something which appeared, on the surface, to be a potential bylaw compliance issue" that prompted the withholding of the B&B licence.

Typically, Integrity Commissioner reports that find no wrong-doing, such as the investigation into the lord mayor's actions, remain confidential to protect the reputation of the person who has been absolved from committing any violation. Reports are made public when a politician has contravened

a bylaw or code of conduct.

In this case, Edward McDermott, Integrity Commissioner for Niagara-on-the-Lake, received a letter from Disero requesting that his report be made public and he agreed, asking it to be included on the agenda for council at the next available opportunity, which is Thursday, Aug. 18.

McDermott said he considered Disero's request as well as Telfer's response — he was "vigorously opposed" to making it public.

"I have also reviewed the

contents of an open letter to council (by Jennifer Elliott, dated July 15, 2022) which relates to many of the matters which were the subject matter of my investigation and decision."

"I am aware," he continued, "that these matters have now become the subject of public scrutiny and discourse," and that it would be in the best interest of the public to know the extent of the investigation and the decision made as a result.

In a letter to council published by Elliott on social

media in July, she said once the town knew about the issue, it should have gone before council, and Disero should have declared a conflict. Instead the town, after refusing to issue a B&B renewal because of the complaint, denied the complaint even existed, by explaining it was just a matter of a necessary inspection, her letter said. "This denial continued for many months," she said, until she learned there was a complaint, with Dan

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Grocery store won't be the same without Irma

Penny Coles
The Local

Irma Goulet, retiring from Phil's Independent after working for the Niagara Stone Road grocery store for 50 years, wanted to go quietly.

When she arrived at the store for her shift late last week and saw the large sign announcing her leaving, she knew that wasn't to be.

"I thought that was a bit of an overkill," she laughed, after having asked that there not be a fuss made of her decision.

She told The Local she has been saying for a year that she was going to retire when she turned 65. "I wanted to give this to myself as a birthday present,

and it's really happening."

She says she wasn't sure store owner Phil Leboudec believed she was really going. "A lot can change in a year," she said, but with her birthday looming Monday, her last day was Friday.

"I don't feel like I'm 65," she says. "I feel really good. And I'm in good health."

That was a goal of hers, to make sure she retired with her health, so she and her husband, who stopped working four years, would have time to spend together — so many people make retirement plans, and then aren't healthy enough to enjoy them, she says. She didn't want to wait too long. "I want to have time to enjoy life while I still have my health. Not everyone does.

If I wait another five years, I might not."

Goulet says they aren't planning on doing anything right away, although they are talking about travelling across Canada, but no decisions have been made about when or how.

"I've been working for 50 years," she says. "It's going to take a lot to get into the retirement mode."

Goulet started working at MB Foods when she was a high school student living in Virgil. Wally Bogusat had taken over the store from his father, who was still working in food storage, using the building across the parking lot.

She spent three years as part-time staff, going to school and sometimes



Irma Goulet has worked her last day behind Phil's service counter. (Penny Coles)

Police looking for information on visiting Hamilton couple

Mike Balsom
The Local

There is little information available beyond a Niagara Regional Police Services news release about a couple in their 70s found in medical distress at the side of the road near Byron and Wellington Streets in the Old Town early Friday morning.

Just before 1 a.m. uniform officers from the NRP responded to a call from the region's ambulance service to assist with an incident in the area.

A man and a woman on vacation from Hamilton had been found at the side of the road. The man was in critical condition and, despite attempts to resuscitate him by Niagara EMS paramedics, he was pronounced deceased at the scene. The woman was transported to a local hospital in stable condition. There is no update on her status as of press time.

Police believe the couple were out for a walk at the time. There is no evidence that points to foul play, nor any to suggest they may have been struck by a vehicle.

Detectives continue to

investigate the matter. Anyone with information about the incident is asked to contact 905-688-4111, ext. 1009219.

Police are also asking residents and business owners in the area who may

have closed circuit security cameras, doorbell video cameras, or dash cameras to review their footage for suspicious activity for the period between Thursday, Aug. 11, at 11 p.m. and Friday, Aug. 12, at 12:50 a.m.



Police are still investigating what happened to the Hamilton couple found at the corner of Wellington and Byron Street early Friday morning. (Mike Balsom)

helping her mother with farm work, and then 47 years full-time.

When she retired it was with the title of front-end manager, a job that has brought some challenges during what she calls a "strange time."

Although part of her job has been dealing with customer complaints, a challenge during the pandemic, working with people, customers and the staff, "was the best part of my job. I've seen customers come in with their babies, and they aren't babies any more."

Those who have problems want to talk to somebody they know, she says, "so they talk to me."

She has become attached "to quite a few of the customers. That's what's going to be hardest. I'm going to miss them."

She will still be doing her grocery shopping at Phil's, though, so she will be able to keep in touch with staff and will undoubtedly run into some of her former customers at the store.

And she will have lots to do to keep busy, she says.

"I knit, I read, I like ceramics painting. I'm not concerned about being bored. I've got quite a lot of interests. Now I'll have time to do more of the things I enjoy."

As much as she's been a fixture at the store for a long time, she says, "I know they'll manage. Phil has good help. That's all he needs."

She loved her job, and feels especially fortunate to have worked in this community.

"The people I work with, the people I meet, they're like family to me. I'm very thankful I was able to stay on for so long."

Leboudec says Goulet will not be easy to replace. "I know I will learn very quickly how much we perhaps took her for granted," he says.

"I've been reflecting on this day for a while. From day one, when I took over, Irma has always had my back. That is something I will always appreciate. This store has been her baby for a very long time. She's very modest about it, but over

the years she has had a profound impact on the community. It's going to be difficult not having her around."

Leboudec says for the 17 years since he took over the store, "we've worked very closely together. She's seen my kids grow up. We have had many good conversations, some about work and some personal. We can sit down and talk, unload to each other. There aren't many people you can do that with."

He agrees the staff feel like family, and sometimes exhibit family dynamics, including the occasional disagreement. But they always get worked out, "and at the end of the day, you've had a good day."

Goulet, he says, deserves a rest, especially after a difficult two years, and he's glad she's going to get it, although she will be missed at the store and in the community.

"I might own the place," Leboudec continues, "but she's been the face of it for a very long time. More people know her than know me. We're going to miss her for a whole lot of reasons."

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Disero's family members 'have a right to file complaint'

Continued from page 1

Williams, Disero's husband, behind it.

Elliott said she decided to write the letter and post it on social media when she realized councillors had not been made aware of the situation, or given a chance to discuss it.

When Disero saw that and the ensuing articles in the media, knowing she had been exonerated from any code violation and that Telfer and Elliott were aware of that, she asked that the report be made public.

"It was my only defence," she told The Local.

She had issued a statement to The Local in July saying she had never used her office of lord mayor for her personal advantage, and to comment on the the allegations "would be to do what I am accused of and what I completely deny doing. I am duty bound not to take advantage of information I have only because of my office of lord mayor to my personal advantage."

She said she had acted with integrity; had not sought to influence town employees for her personal advantage; and had not acted in a way that would give rise to a conflict of interest, bad faith, or undue influence. "I have certainly not acted in a way that is illegal or improper," she said.

The Integrity Commissioner's investigation, and March 2022 report, confirmed that, but Disero could not divulge to the public that there had been an investigation or what the report said.

Elliott and Telfer had initially said, as the report confirmed, that they originally thought a neighbour's complaint about their large garage was impeding their application for a 2020 B&B licence renewal, but didn't believe an inspection of the garage, which they said was not living space, was required, so they wouldn't let the bylaw officer in to look at it without a warrant — a warrant the bylaw department said wasn't required for a B&B inspection.

Later that year, Elliott

sent a letter to council members (including the lord mayor), saying she appeared to be having another neighbour-related issue. She requested the assistance of council to resolve the complaint and the B&B licence issue, but received no response.

Early in 2021, David Marshall, the lawyer for Telfer and Elliott, wrote to the town advising that six months had passed without a charge and the town needed to either issue a charge or close the investigation and issue the B&B licence. Several weeks later, their lawyer received correspondence from the town's solicitor, Terry Hill, saying there "was never a neighbour complaint" and that the inspection by the bylaw officer was part of the B&B licence renewal process.

But Telfer and Elliott had already been informed about a complaint, and said they were suspicious that someone who "possessed a great amount of authority" was targeting them.

In April, 2021, Telfer and Elliott began a court application to get the matter resolved, also asking for damages to cover the loss of income from being unable to operate their B&B, and their legal costs.

The town's response was to say there was a complaint, filed by Williams. It was never anonymous, but his name had not been revealed, according to town policy. When asked to allow his name to be revealed, Williams "was quite agreeable to this proposal." In regard to the complaint, the report said, it was not about anyone living in the garage, but rather that it was being converted into living space, which Williams had taken from comments on social media.

The garage borders the property of Disero and Williams, and Telfer, the report said, believed the lord mayor had interceded "and abused her authority to have bylaw enforcement improperly involved in investigating a false complaint by her own spouse, and consequently (whether directly or indirectly) resulting in the non-renewal of their

B&B licence."

Asked by Marnie Cluckie, the town CAO, and Hill, on June 23, 2021, Disero said she had not submitted any bylaw complaint. Later that day, the report said, she was shown a photo that indicated the shadow of the person taking the photo, and said it appeared to be Williams, and when she asked him, he confirmed he had made the complaint, due to the information he had read on Facebook.

"The Lord Mayor advised that she herself does not have a Facebook account and had no knowledge of this complaint by Mr. Williams prior to this time," the report said.

She also said she had not talked to staff about the complaint, which was backed by Hill, who said that staff had confirmed that to him.

Disero said when she first received the August, 2020 letter from Elliott, "she believed this was related to a dispute between Ms. Elliott and another neighbour regarding a hedge (something which the Lord Mayor had discussed with Ms. Elliott the previous year, but not since," the report said.

Telfer "expressed incredulity at the lord mayor's response." He said it was "beyond the realm of believability that a seemingly competent chief executive officer would claim not to be aware of a complaint made by her own husband, with whom she lives and presumably has daily communication, to the very corporation she leads, until one year after the complaint was made..."

Telfer asserted then that "someone...attempted to hide the existence of the Williams / Disero's involvement" in the matter. He accordingly asserted his view that Disero "...used her position of authority to influence town employees in the investigation of her husband's complaint against our property."

Cluckie also indicated she had asked a number of staff members whether they had been contacted by the lord mayor about the issue, and they all advised that they had not been contacted by or spoken to her about it.

According to Cluckie, staff would have followed the normal procedure for such a bylaw complaint regardless of who submitted it. She said if entry was denied "such that safety and bylaw compliance cannot be established, the normal result of such a scenario (irrespective of who is involved) would be the withholding of any licence application connected to the property in question."

Hill noted that the attempted inspection by a bylaw officer (following up on the Facebook post which was submitted to the town in Williams' bylaw complaint) was a different process from that carried out by the first bylaw officer on her routine inspection of the property as part of the B&B licence application process.

Regarding Hill's letter to Telfer's lawyer that said there was "no complaint," Hill clarified he intended to communicate that there was no "anonymous complaint," not that there was no complaint at all.

He also said in a February, 2022 email to Telfer's lawyer that the town would like to carry out its inspections. "If everything is in order then a licence will be issued. My client is prepared to litigate the issue but I hope your client reflects upon the language of the bylaw and allows an inspection to occur."

Hill said he felt comfortable "there was no interference" by the lord mayor. In his view, town staff handled the matter as they would any other, because Williams "is a resident of the town and has the same rights as any other resident."

What cannot be permitted, Hill asserted, is for the lord mayor to "take up his cause."

Hill expressed his confidence that this did not occur, and that Williams' bylaw complaint "was handled routinely and without intervention by the lord mayor."

Rolf Wiens, the manager in charge of building-related issues, said there was no request for any special information or to make any particular requests or comments about this matter — there was no special



Betty Disero was relieved to have the Integrity Commissioner's report, which exonerated her, made public. (Photo supplied)

attention paid to this matter compared to any others, the report says.

Disero says she requested having the report made public to answer the "false allegations" made against her, information she could not share because of the confidentiality agreement signed by both parties.

With the election season upon us, she continued, "the cabal will do what they are doing," referring to those who don't want to see her re-elected. "I encourage people to take what they hear with a grain of salt. I think the good people of NOTL will know when to believe and when not to."

There is still a court hearing to come as a result of the law suit filed by Telfer and Elliott, a separate issue to the allegations of Disero's interference and the Integrity Commissioner's report.

Disero became emotional when asked about Telfer's assertion that she would claim not to be aware of a complaint made by her husband.

"I've been in politics for 40 years," she told The Local. "My family loves me and supports me. They know the rules as well as I do. They know my obligations as a member of council. They would never do, and I would never do anything to jeopardize my career."

She says there was a time when her mother, who lives in the Old Town, complained to the region about

pot holes on a regional road. Disero didn't know about it until she read it in the paper.

She said Williams has the same right as any other resident in NOTL to make a complaint, and would never do it in such a way as to jeopardize her. As far as she knows, "he might have other complaints," she added.

He and their son Jason, who lives next door, "know not to come to me with their complaints. They know it's a conflict of interest," she said, "but they have the right to make them."

Elliott says her letter sent to council and posted on social media was written "when we learned that no one on council knew anything at all about our lawsuit, the NRP investigation and most importantly, the mayor's husband's involvement."

She says she and Telfer "were flabbergasted when we had to agree to a non-disclosure agreement regarding the Integrity Commissioner's report."

When Telfer was contacted recently by the Integrity Commissioner to have the report made public, she says, "he initially said no, because the report is extremely misleading and we are now very suspicious of her intent . . . but after reading it again, we realized that it didn't contradict my letter, in fact, it confirmed it. Colin will be writing a public letter to the IC discrediting his investigation."

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Erwin Wiens, self-avowed one-term councillor, running again

Penny Coles
The Local

Erwin Wiens let it be known often that his first term of council would also be his last.

His plan was to spend four years working at leaving the town in a better position than at the start of the term, and said he felt that by limiting himself to one term, he could speak his mind — and he has, strongly disagreeing

with his fellow councillors on occasion and criticizing council decisions.

At the top of the list of his criticisms was the 2022 budget, which he called unsustainable and irresponsible, and which he alone opposed.

Wiens recently decided he can continue to be outspoken and push for a sustainable budget if given a second term.

He says his wife, Dorothy

Soo Wiens, has been encouraging him to run, as have many others.

Speaking from Ottawa this weekend, where he is attending the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference, he says. “I’ve received a ton of emails, been in a number of meeting in the last two weeks, and I had to make a decision.”

What is prompting him to seek a second term is his de-

sire and ability to represent the agricultural community, and his ability to reach the Premier and provincial ministers on matters of importance to Niagara-on-the-Lake, he says. He’s especially concerned about the issue of irrigation, which he has been working on since before the last term of council, and has met with the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture with some progress.

Wiens sits on the regional and municipal irrigation committee, “and we’re so close to getting a commitment,” from the province, he says.

It’s so important to the agricultural community, he wants to see it through. “If I don’t champion it, who will? Who will step forward?”

He also continues to be con-

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Erwin Wiens

Experience and new ideas both important, says Cheropita

Penny Coles
The Local

With the municipal election looming and her first term on council almost behind her, Wendy Cheropita says she has been giving a great deal of thought to running again.

Rumours about the province moving on amalgamat-

ing municipalities or reducing councils gave her pause, but she has had a lot of encouragement from people to seek a second term, and has decided to run.

“It’s important to have a council with some experience,” she says. “Looking back, I realize how little I knew when I was elected and trying to get up to speed. It’s

been a constant experience of learning.”

She can put that to good use, working collaboratively, she says, if elected to the next council.

“I tend to work best behind the scenes. During an election you have to start talking about who you are and what you can do. I’m starting to do that, talking to people

and getting an idea of what they want.”

She speaks of community-based planning and a focus on forward planning, changing existing policies, by adding design guidelines and contextual zoning.

Old Town and Queenston require rezoning to preserve streetscapes, she says.

“There have been a lot

of issues with what residents consider inappropriate development. We can deal with that through rezoning, with conceptual guidelines for our communities.”

There have been a lot of tribunals the town has lost, she adds, “and the only way to change that is to change

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Wendy Cheropita

McCallum brings financial expertise, problem solving to table

Penny Coles
The Local

John McCallum has lived and worked around the world, and after a long career in finance and accounting that took him across North America, to Eu-

rope, Asia and the Middle East, the Ottawa native has settled in Niagara-on-the-Lake with his wife Helen, daughter of an Irish dairy farmer.

“Almost half of my business career has been outside of Canada,” he says. “I’ve worked in ev-

ery country you can think of and worked with every ethnic group you can think of.”

Retired, he says he’s 100 per cent available, and has the time, the interest and the experience and is ready to give back to the community that McCallums

now calls home

“My wife and I looked around carefully and there are several attributes that attracted us, as I imagine have attracted many other people, and I want to help preserve those attributes.”

That includes the community’s rich history, lifestyle and culture.

The foundation of his successful career was hard work, plain speaking, fiscal responsibility and problem solving with facts, rigorous analysis and solid team-building, and he says he will bring this approach to the role of a full time councillor for the communities that make up NOTL.



John McCallum

ing local issues and listening as council addresses them.

He says he believes “we are entering a period of scarce financial resources, and therefore prudent financial management is critically important,” and he understands that “we do not have the luxury of making mistakes.”

The lord mayor and council have done a good job in very difficult and unusual circumstances, and he looks forward to joining this team to contribute in

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Richard Mell can offer balanced perspective

Penny Coles
The Local

Richard Mell, co-owner of Grape Escape Winery Tours, and a real estate agent with Sotheby's, is a busy man. He would like to become even busier.

Mell, 38, is hoping to win one of the eight council seats up for grabs in the October municipal election.

He says he started getting the signatures needed for his paperwork months ago, so

the rumours of his running have been "out there." And in the meantime, he has had many friends reach out to him with a positive response, encouraging him to run.

His decision is not based on issues, although he did make a presentation to council about stand-up e-scooters a while ago, which didn't go his way.

If anything that showed him his strengths — to see both sides of an issue, from different perspectives, and

accept the results.

Mell says he doesn't have a particular agenda. "I just really think I can contribute, in a way that is reasoned, rational, and respectful, able to look at the pros and cons, work through the process, and understand that the results are the results. That's what council should be."

There has been a lot of talk about the transportation master plan, and with his wine tours, that is right up his alley, but his concern is not about his business, it's about safety, and what's best for everyone, residents and visitors.

"It's a big document, and the biggest issue is infrastructure, and safety on the roads."

Active transportation infrastructure and how it can be funded without major impact on residents — there is a huge tourism sector that needs to be looked after — all

need to be an important part of the discussion, he says. "I'd look at the beneficiaries of that."

Better cycling infrastructure is essential for residents and visitors, he says — the popularity of cycling is not going away.

During the pandemic, the wine tour business really decreased, forcing him to look at a different way to do business. He learned from that, he says. "We have no desire to increase the volume of our business. We actually decreased the number of bikes, and started looking at making what was already happening better. And we really enjoyed that."

Mell says he has a good group of friends who have "quite good political debates," both about what is happening in the U.S. and closer to home. "I think one of my

strengths is being able to discuss projects, issues, and problems," he says.

If someone has a problem, but no solution, "then it's really just a complaint, and it's not helpful. Come to me with a solution and we can look at

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Richard Mell

Alistair Harlond brings energy to everything he does



Alistair Harlond

Penny Coles
The Local

Alistair Harlond says he thought "long and hard" about throwing his hat in the ring for council.

As a volunteer firefighter who runs a family business, he says he really needed to process how much time he could give to the town, splitting it with the fire department, and came to the decision that not only did he really want to do this, he can give it the time it deserves to do it right.

He came to live in Niagara-on-the-Lake 20-plus years ago, he says, as a Shaw Festival actor.

He met his wife, who grew up in town, and although his childhood was far away, in a town called Shifnal, in Shropshire County in the U.K., it was a community not unlike Niagara-on-the-Lake. "It went through similar ebbs and flows, similar to this town."

It's a town with a lot of history, he says, and as an avid historian, which is one of the attractions of NOTL, it seemed to him like a great place for kids to grow up.

And that inspired him to want a place on council.

At 43, he and Irene have two children, a 15-year-old daughter, and a 17-year-old son.

His son, he says, "always says he wants to stay here. Instead of looking for a summer job, he started a lawn care and landscaping business, and he's done a great job with it. It all boils down to how much kids value this town, and that really resonates with me."

He spent two seasons at the Shaw, when Christopher Newton was artistic director, met Irene, who grew up on the family's Concession 7 farm, and knew "this was the place I wanted to call home for the rest of my life."

He now runs Richards Automotive Repair, on Concession 7.

"I feel the town is at a tipping point right now, growing exponentially. And council might be lacking some new ideas to deal with that," he says.

Harlond describes himself as a "larger than life character," and a short phone

Continued on page 16

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EDITORIAL

Thanks to all who choose to serve their community

We have a municipal election coming up on Oct. 24, and the cut-off for candidates to declare their intention to run is Friday.

Just a week ago, it looked like there might not be enough candidates to fill the eight seats at the council table.

A lot has happened since then.

Incumbents Wendy Cheropita and Erwin Wiens have announced their intention to seek a second term, and some surprise candidates have come forward. Richard Mell of Grape Escape Wine Tours has officially filed his papers, as have former fire chief Nick Ruller, who is vacationing with his family this week, and businessman and volunteer fire fighter Alistair Harlond.

That was by press time Tuesday, with a total of eight official candidates and two announced — there may be more before the week is out.

Of the 10, five are incumbents, five seeking their first

term on council. Whatever the outcome, it seems likely there will be a good balance of some experienced, returning councillors, and some fresh faces.

Being a politician at any level is a pretty thankless task, but maybe even more so at a municipal level.

It's a huge commitment, takes a lot of time, and especially in a small community, unhappy, critical residents are also likely friends and neighbours.

The formal component of being a councillor is reading reports and attending committee and council meetings, and any of the other town committees they choose to serve on. The meetings can be long, but they are important. Councillors state their positions, debate with each other and make decisions on behalf of residents that very directly impact their investment in their homes and their quality of life.

Councillors and mayors are also called on for advocating and problem-solving, again, on

issues that can have a huge impact on the lives and properties of residents.

Municipal issues such as garbage, roads, sewers, development, fire and parks and recreation, are those that most directly affect taxpayers.

Ignore municipal council debates and decisions at your peril — once made they can be life-changing. Just think about a zoning change that allows a subdivision to replace an orchard as your neighbour, and remember it's important to pay attention. You think municipal decisions don't affect you, until they do, sometimes too late.

Consider the life of a councillor — phone calls at home, at all hours, the questions and accusations when lined up at the grocery store or doing some volunteer work in the community, and one might wonder why anyone would want the job.

The fun part, the informal component, is the socializing, the community events, the celebrations

councillors and mayors are often invited to. While they might be enjoyable, they have to also be exhausting. Residents get to pick and choose which events they attend, but politicians may be barbecuing and serving food one day and picking up garbage during a clean-up the next, leaving little time for a personal life.

In NOTL, being a politician is considered a part-time job, taking time away from family, with mostly evening meetings. Many in our community are

retired, but everyone gets excited about seeing young people interested in running for council, and so they should. But balancing the pressures of a job, family and position on council would not be easy, and is a lot to expect of someone considering what they receive in return — the rewarding feeling of contributing to their community, and also the criticism and vitriol from those unhappy with their decisions.

All this to say, thank you to all municipal politicians, and

election candidates, who decide they would like a seat at the local council table, whether they are successful or not. Thanks to those who have served. And we should be especially grateful for those who continue to run, knowing what is ahead of them. Perhaps in the future, before we are quick to criticize, often without knowing all the facts, maybe we should give some thought for all they do for us.

Penny Coles
The Local

Lamb's ears stalwart perennial with velvet texture

Marla Percy
Special to The Local

Choosing one plant from this garden was difficult because there is a lot of variety and subtle colour, all blending very well. As the electric blue Stokes' aster has just one bloom so far, I've chosen a stalwart perennial, Lamb's ears (Stachys byzantina).

This is a plant grown for its subtle properties, as it provides soft silvery grey leaves, a calming and cohesive backdrop to flashier coloured flowers. Its velvet texture also adds some contrast to shinier, green material. Children love to touch them and deer and rabbits don't like them.

Traditionally, the leaves were used as bandages for wounds and bee stings, which would probably be comforting. They are perfect for this

garden, which gets ample sun, as they are drought tolerant once established. They spread but are easily kept in control. They develop tall, spiky purple flowers which can look ratty, so they can be cut back, preventing too much spreading from the seeds. They need little water and never from the top. The leaves can get brown and

smushy. Clear out any damaged leaves and the plant will fill in (it's very amenable). They hold their colour through the winter, as an added bonus.

The lamb's ears in this garden are well maintained and provide a soothing inclusion as they eye wanders though a wonderful display of colour.



View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

This film, *The Good Liar* (Netflix, 2019) has it all: Helen Mirren, Ian McKellen, twists and turns

of a great plot, suspense, intrigue, revenge, subtlety and many kinds of justice. It is perfection.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves to go to movies. Until

he resumes going to theatres, he has graciously agreed to share his opinions, through "short and sweet" exclusives, of Netflix series and movies for The Local.

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Local
The Trusted Voice of Our Community

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Garden of the Week



This week's winners are Colin and Lesley Walsh, on Paffard Street. Their garden welcomes you with a variety of pretty perennials anchored by two standard hydrangeas. The owners' creativity is displayed by many garden ornaments, with the focal point being a penny-farthing bike overflowing with many colourful annuals. To nominate a garden of the week, visit jointheconversationnotl.org/garden-of-the-week (Photo supplied)

COMMENT

Local LETTERS

Thanks for the public reminders

To the family of Matthew Wilson:

I drive down Lakeshore Road every day and have noticed the creative use of

decor to remember Matthew.

I hope that you have found peace and that time has begun to heal your hurt.

Thank you for keeping his memory alive for all of us.

Mary Janzen
Virgil

Local LETTERS

Items for Ukrainian families still needed

I would like to thank the NOTL Horticultural Society for allowing me to open up my garden to the NOTL Hort Society members for a viewing.

With that invitation I put out a request to members asking if they could donate items for Ukrainian families who have settled and will be settling in to the Niagara Region. It was short notice, however I want to thank the people who did attend and brought some of the items that were requested on the list.

If anyone, whether a NOTL Hort Society member or not, would like to donate

an item(s) you can either call me at 905-468-2325 or drop off to the Help Boutique organized by the Niagara UCC (Ukrainian Canadian Congress) at 1 Currie Street in St. Catharines. The store hours are Thursday, 3 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

They are in need of:
-sugar, flour, salt, pepper, oatmeal, oil for cooking, rice, tea, coffee, canned and dry goods, hygiene products for men, women and children, shampoos etc; kitchen utensils, including pots and pans, toasters, simple coffee makers, microwaves, sets of dishes and cutlery, glassware,

new sheet sets for double and single beds, towels, and even decent looking window curtains and rods.

Also back to school supplies: backpacks, rulers, calculators, pen/pencils, notebooks, etc.

Many of the families are now working and getting apartments, so tools are needed as well. Simple medications for children and adults, like Tylenol, Ibuprofen, vitamins for kids etc. would also be appreciated.

Slava Ukraini
Shirley Madsen
NOTL

Local LETTERS

Real change in health care needed

I remember thinking in early 2020 - at the beginning of the pandemic - if this doesn't open Canadian eyes to how bad our public healthcare system is, nothing will. Apparently, after all we've been through, Canadians continue to keep their eyes firmly shut.

If the problems of our healthcare system have only been exacerbated by COVID, why should we pursue more of the same? Change is needed, absolutely, but real change can only occur under a nimble and adaptive capitalist healthcare system.

I've never understood why Canadians have been proud of "our" (do we own it? Can I sell my portion?) healthcare system. The only two countries that share our healthcare system are Cuba and North Korea — great company we keep.

The quickest fix to our healthcare system is to simply liberate it. Let healthcare companies charge for the services they provide and hire and pay the workers they want — domestic and/or foreign.

Stop having the government set the price of services, labour and benefits

— let the markets work. Canadians in turn get to choose which healthcare companies they like best while morally paying for the services they receive.

Why on earth would we want Doug Ford in charge of our healthcare? Why can't we make enough noise so he will listen and get out of the way of Ontarians so that we can pursue the healthcare outcomes each individual desires? Open your eyes Ontario, and choose a moral capitalist healthcare system.

Alexander Evans
NOTL

Local LETTERS

Disappointed by cheap politics

I just read a letter to the editor (not in this newspaper) dragging up events of 20 years ago in Toronto politics.

Why is it that just before elections people go looking for dirt on politicians? Go back 20 years in anyone's life and you find skeletons in their closet. First, our mayor was accused of interference in a B&B dispute (of which she was found to

be not involved) and now someone wants a 20-year-old event in Toronto to be brought forward. I have had many dealings with the lord mayor and found her to be very neutral and diligent in matters. If you do not wish the lady to be the mayor, tell us what the competition will do for us. People are more interested in what is going to be done moving forward not lowballing someone to

make them look bad. Politics is a thankless job and those that put themselves forward to take these positions should be treated with respect, win or lose. These types of mudslinging happen before every election. Let's be civil and let the best candidate win on their platform.

Doug King
Queenston

Letters! We want letters!

If you have a letter to the editor you'd like to see published, please send it to penny@notllocal.com. Please try to keep it to about 350 words. Sorry, but we won't publish anonymous letters. And please stick to the issue at hand, rather than attacking those involved. The deadline is Monday at noon.

Our Canada: sights and sounds on the way home

David Gilchrist
Special to The Local

There are many wonderful sites and sights to see on a trip across country. As we had picked up our Backpack trailer in early May, many camping sites were not yet open. We were, however, able to find several by planning ahead using the internet. My wife was able to determine how far we could drive each day and look for a suitable location to camp overnight. This allowed us to see some of the sights in the area as we travelled.

Near Vernon, B.C. we camped at the private Cedar Falls Campground. It was a lovely, treed campground with a short trail nearby leading to BX Falls. In the spring, the

snowfall runoff water in BX creek cascades downhill from SilverStar Mountain. Even in early spring, we could enjoy the cedars, firs, cottonwoods, birch and ferns. I was particularly attracted to the ferns and lichens along the trail leading down the stairs to the canyon. The pool at the bottom was quite a sight, with the waters of the falls crashing over the rocks.

Another sight that we wished to visit was the scene of the Frank Slide, which is now a major attraction in Alberta. This 'slide' was a massive rock-slide that buried a section of the mining town of Frank in the early morning of April 29, 1903. Forty-four million cubic metres — 110 million tonnes of limestone — slid down

Turtle Mountain. The slide destroyed a section of the town, the CPR railway line and the coal mine. It is quite a sight to see and truly amazing to witness the volume of rock displaced. Trails allow for hikes in the area and there is an excellent interpretive centre.

A UNESCO designat-

ed World Heritage site that preserves and interprets over 6,000 years of Plains Buffalo culture is located in Alberta. It was on our wish list of sites to visit. Heads-Smashed-In Buffalo World Heritage Site is located in Alberta, near Fort McLeod. You can spot the ridge as you approach the site.



The Heads-Smashed-In Buffalo World Heritage Site is worth a visit. (Photos by David Gilchrist)

It doesn't seem that high, but it did the job. Groups of Plains Natives drove herds of bison off the cliff edge. A well-produced film showing in the interpretive centre portrays how this was done.

All the bison that fell over the cliff edge were killed, and the long process of processing

the remains for food, hides, bones, sinew, etc. began. It was a cooperative effort by the groups of Plains Natives that gathered there.

There are excellent displays of archaeological finds from the excavations conducted at the site. It was certainly well worth the visit.



The ridge where bison were driven off the cliff edge.



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Great weekend for celebrating peach harvest

Mike Balsom
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce president and CEO Minerva Ward won't declare it as such, but she heard from many members that a record may have been set at Saturday's Peach Celebration on Queen Street.

"I heard that word from several of our merchants," Ward told The Local Monday. "We had a fantastic turnout, and the weather was so good. This year is the 30th anniversary of the Peach Celebration. Every-

body was happy to see it back: the vendors, the merchants, the bands. We're having a very strong August tourism-wise."

Indeed, many locals who walked the three blocks to enjoy the music and the street performers and to sample some of the peach delicacies were amazed at the size of the crowd. The Toronto All-Star Big Band, The Tropical Steel Band and Melodie Italiano provided the soundtrack while stilt walker Paulino Pavliuk and juggler Ben Burlind wowed children and adults alike.

A number of farms were selling baskets full of the fuzzy fruit which were being scooped up quickly.

Dave Lepp of Lepp Farms lauded this year's crop for its robust qualities.

"We had a little challenge with some early weather, but the crop is really good," he said. "There's a good sweetness, and we have incredible size. The peaches are larger than usual. Some of that is because there is less fruit on the trees due to our winter. But the flavour has really come along with the heat we've had this summer."

Second generation farmer Michael Kauzlaric of Kauzlaric Farms agreed.

"We had the big rainfall in July," Kauzlaric explained, "that really helped with sizing. Then the heat came on and helped with colouring and sugar. We're really excited with the fruit quality this year."

Kauzlaric was somewhat surprised to see how many people came for the celebration.

"There are so many from outside of Niagara," he told The Local. "Lots of US bus trips it seems, too. We've participated in years

past, when we've seen visitors from all over. It's good to see them coming back after COVID."

Lepp added, "people are wanting to get out to these festivals. It's great to see people out enjoying life again. I'm loving it."

The harvest celebration continued with the Peach Festival Sunday at St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church.

Volunteer organizer Terry Choules said the church had more than 100 volunteers helping out, the most ever for the 32nd annual Peach Festival.

The church's location at the corner of Picton and Wellington Streets serves to attract a lot of those bus tours that Kauzlaric spoke about Saturday.

"We draw so many of them," Choules said, "because the buses have to come by here before parking at Fort George. And people walk right in front of the church on their way to Queen Street."

Peach pies were flying out of the back of the trailer about as fast as volunteer Sandra VanderKaay could

Continued on page 8



Domenico Orcolan dances to the beat of the steel drums on Queen Street Saturday. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Leon Martin stokes the steam engine that cooks the best ever corn on the cob for the Peach Celebration.



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Peach Festival welcomes returning U.S. visitors

Continued from page 8

load them on the edge. Choules added that the white elephant table had more items on it than ever.

"People during COVID were cleaning out their

houses when there was nothing else to do," he explained. "So now, we're getting all that stuff. I can't believe how many racks of artwork we have this year."

According to Choules, the Peach Festival typically

brings in about \$15,000 in revenue to the church, but looking around at the turnout just past noon Sunday, he was pretty sure they were going to exceed that number.

"We already sold over

\$3,500 in raffle tickets," he said, "and all the great prizes have been donated this year. This is the first year we asked the wineries for donations, and they really stepped up."

Choules was also ex-

cited to see the return of American tourists. And it certainly helped the church earn a healthy profit Sunday.

"We can tell we're seeing an abundance of tourists from the States, just

by looking at the money," he said. "And we're not giving any exchange rate on the American money, we're taking it at par. We've always had a lot of support from our American friends."



Trevor Dempsey, Blake Lepp, Brittany Lepp and Jorga Lepp sell peaches on Queen Street Saturday. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Alice and Alex Bradnam of St. Catharines enjoy a burger and some fresh peach juice at Sunday's Peach Festival at St. Vincent de Paul Church.



There were lots of activities for kids planned to keep them busy at St. Vincent de Paul Church Sunday.



Freshly picked corn on the cob is a treat at the St. Vincent de Paul Peach Festival.



Coun. Gary Burroughs, Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Prince of Wales chef Chris Smythe tally up the peach pie scores.

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St. Davids Lions, Lioness bring back car show



Rod Lemon with his 64 Firebird, Lioness Jo-Anne Skinner-Brytwak, Cheryl White and Diane Pever, Sue Pittman and her 2015 Challenger and Ken Read beside his 68 Firebird are looking forward to the return of the St. Davids Lions and Lioness Car Show and Shine Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Penny Coles)

Penny Coles
The Local

This Sunday, a joint venture between the St. Davids Lioness and Lions will bring about 100 classic cars to the Lions Park for a car show and

shine, in support of St. Catharines Special Olympics. It's been about 15 years since the popular car show has been held, says Lioness Jo-Anne Skinner-Brytwak, with other events taking place in the intervening years,

and the Lions and Lioness are happy to be bringing it back to St. Davids. "It seemed like the right time to resurrect it," she said.

The Lions will be offering their famous burgers and peameal bacon on a bun,

there will be a beer tent, music by D.J. Ryan Williams, and craft vendors to make it a day for everyone, running from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"We've had an excellent response from drivers," she said. He've really enjoyed the

at with the food, the beautiful park setting, and the family-time setting.

There is no admission fee and parking is free. The clubs are asking for donations of food or cash to Project SHARE, a Niagara Falls

organization which provides emergency food and support services to those in need.

The entry fee is \$15 per car, with one people's choice prize. There will also be a 50/50 draw and a raffle for prizes.

Virtual Public Information Session

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YWCA holding food drive for shelter meals

Mike Balsom
The Local

YWCA Niagara kicks off its very first food drive this Friday, a region-wide initiative to support the organization's shelters.

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Catherine Leniarsky, the YWCA's new community engagement director, is organizing the collection.

"There has always been a great need in our region," she tells The Local. "With the pandemic, that need was made even greater. More men, women and children are now seeking shelter. Five of our shelters serve three meals a day. That's almost 120 people that we serve three times a day every day."

Leniarsky goes on to explain that the YWCA does receive support from area food banks. But the need is increasing and they are conducting this drive to stock the shelves for those locations where they serve meals.

"Food is such a big part of our budget," she points out. "We're looking to ease that strain and to use our resources as best as we can."

Leniarsky says the organization serves a diverse group of people, and they make every effort to meet the ethnic and dietary needs of many of their clients.

"We try to make it feel like home as much as possible," says Leniarsky. "We try to make it an environment that best serves them. That can be a challenge when you only have so much food on the shelves."

New to her role after leaving a job at Royal Oak Community School in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Leniarsky works out of the Oakdale Avenue emergency family shelter in St. Catharines. In three months in her position she's already seen a huge impact on many people.

"I get to see families together, I get to see chil-

dren catching the bus and interacting," she recounts. "One of the most impactful things I've seen is probably a U-Haul showing up to move out a family. The looks on their faces, the excitement about going to their own place that the YWCA provided the resources to find, it was a really rewarding feeling."

The YWCA runs a number of shelters across Niagara. Leniarsky explained that there are traditional locations in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls that provide shelter, food and assistance to women and their families. They also recently opened one in Niagara Falls that is specifically for families led by men.

"We also have a few shelters in undisclosed locations for safety reasons," she added.

The average length of stay in their emergency homeless shelters is approximately one month. Following that, the organization helps to transition the families into one of its three transitional housing programs.

Other programs offered by the YWCA include their skills development program run out of their women's resource centre, their women's addiction recovery medication (WARM) program and workshops for youth. They also participate in anti-human trafficking advocacy.

The non-profit relies on government funding as well as funding from United Way and donations from individuals and businesses.

Items needed for the



F45 trainer Hayley Pilkington is helping Catherine Leniarsky of the YWCA with her emergency food collection. (Photo supplied)

food drive include granola bars, apple sauce, crackers, cereal, juice boxes, pasta, pasta sauce and peanut butter. Bins are located at F-45 on Niagara Stone Road, at Ravine Vineyard in St. Davids, and at Corks Wine Bar and Eatery on Queen Street, all during regular business hours.

"If you can't make it to these locations," adds Le-

nirsky, "you can always donate directly to the YW to support women and children and families in our

community currently experiencing homelessness."

To donate financially and to see a complete

list of needed food items, visit ywcaniagararegion.ca.

The food drive is on until Aug. 26.



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Gem of the Ocean tackles 'huge ideas'

Mike Balsom
The Local

At 72 years old, actor and director Philip Akin says these days he has to discipline himself to turn down offers for work to keep himself from getting too busy.

A chance to direct August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*, opening this Friday, Aug. 19 at Shaw Festival's Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre, is one of those offers that made the cut.

"Shaw treats me really well," he says. "They give me a parking spot right near the theatre. In Toronto, I have to pay \$30 to park, and either drive through rush hour or take the TTC. It becomes physically harder there."

The offers have been coming Akin's way steadily since he became the first acting graduate of Ryerson's (now Metropolitan Toronto University) Theatre School in 1975. He's had roles in more than 60 films and 20 television series, including John Byner's *Bizarre* in the 1980s.

For 15 years he was

artistic director at Toronto's Obsidian Theatre Company, focusing primarily on the works of highly acclaimed Black playwrights. In addition, Akin played the title character in Shakespeare's *Othello* at Stratford, and at Shaw he directed *Topdog/Underdog*, *Trouble in Mind* and *Of Marriage and Men*, among many others.

One of 10 plays in Pittsburgh-born Wilson's American Century Series, *Gem of the Ocean* kicks off the cycle that documents the African-American experience in the twentieth century. The play makes its Canadian premiere at Shaw this week.

"This is only the fourth play of Wilson's that has been done in Canada," Akin says on the line from his Leslieville-area home. "His work is not well-known here. Many of the top tier of black playwrights are not known here."

Akin considers Wilson's plays right up there with Shakespeare and Shaw themselves because of the way they ask the

a different way.

"He comes at big ideas," explains the Kingston, Jamaican born Akin. "What I've always wanted to see is the exploration of not just big ideas but huge ones, and not just race, from a Black perspective. And he does that."

Akin recalls discussing taking on *Gem* with former Shaw artistic director Jackie Maxwell years ago.

"We were looking at bringing some people up from the States, but it just didn't work," he remembers. "We spent about three years trying to get it to work. Every artistic director has a growing list of plays that they want to do. And it became part of Tim Carroll's list, and it just kind of worked out."

Set in Pittsburgh's Hill District, a group of historically Black neighbourhoods where Wilson was born, *Gem of the Ocean* takes on the very nature of freedom. Unrest at a local steel mill leads to suicide and rioting. As the turbulence roils around the

Continued on page 11



Do you want to run in the 2022 Municipal & School Board Election?

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THIS YEAR'S SPORTS WALL OF FAME INDUCTEES.

WHERE: MERIDIAN CREDIT UNION ARENA
(1567 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD, VIRGIL)

WHEN: FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, STARTING WITH
A SOCIAL AT 5:00 P.M. FOLLOWED BY A
CEREMONY AT 6:00 P.M.

www.notl.com/recreation-events/community-initiatives-events



Play documents African-American experience of 20th century

Continued from page 12

house at 1839 Wylie Avenue, the 285-year-old former slave Aunt Ester takes Citizen Barlow, a young man visiting from Alabama, on a spiritual journey to cleanse his soul of a crime he committed back home.

The journey finds Citizen at the bottom of the ocean, where the ship that shares the play's title resides. There, he comes across the city of bones; bodies of the enslaved Africans who died on their forced journey across the sea. He comes face to face

with his history in the process.

It's deep, meaningful and masterfully written, which is why Akin loves this play.

"What sets Wilson apart is the density of his text and the muscularity of his plays," he posits. "They have strong women's parts, and they also have strong men's parts. Frankly, that's been lacking in a lot of new writing. I find that the Black man's voice is often small and subdued."

Akin adds that if there's a theme to the 10 plays in the American Century Cycle, it's the inequities that continue to this day

based on the refusal to actively deal with the results of slavery right from the start.

"The capitalist argument is laid out very clearly by one of the characters," Akin says. "You can be a success, you just have to take it. But that didn't happen. They said things were going to be settled up after the Civil War, but that didn't happen. There is a real disconnect."

The cast, including Monica Parks as Aunt Ester, Nathaniel Judah as Citizen Barlow and David Alan Anderson playing Solly Two Kings, appreciated hearing those

thoughts brought forward in a clear, powerful and theatrical way, adds Akin.

Performing *Gem of the Ocean* in the round at the Maxwell Theatre presents some interesting challenges for the 2012 Dora Mavor Moore Award winner.

"Wilson's plays are very much naturalistic in a sense," he explains. "They're proscenium arch plays, with a room, a window, a door. I don't have any of those things. You have to come at it in a different way, and it gets abstracted in hopefully a very powerfully visual way."

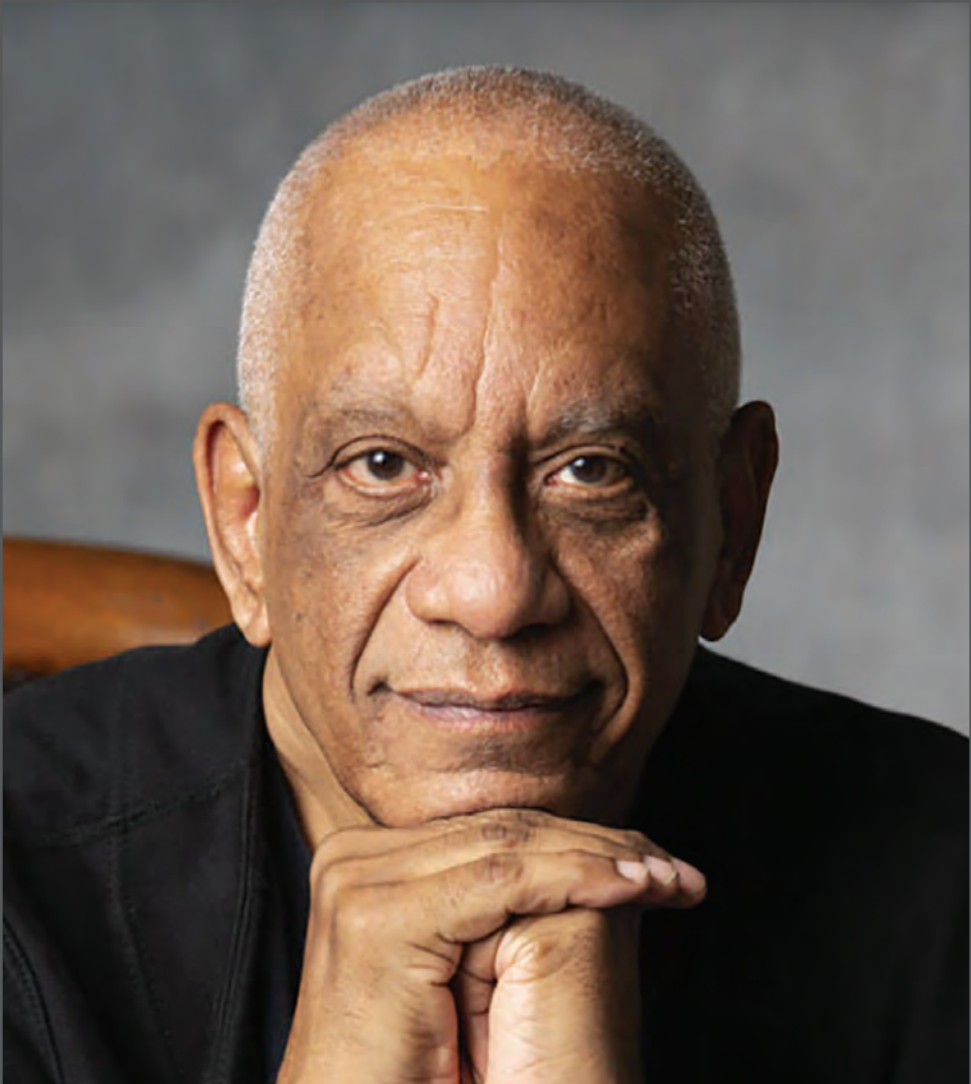
One could imagine Akin taking on the rest of Wilson's cycle in order, perhaps a play a year for another nine years. That would be in keeping with his status as a leader in the Black theatre community across Canada.

When Akin left Obsidian in 2020, the theatre established the Black Shoulders Award in his honour. Each year, he contributes to the decision-making as the prize is awarded to Black artists to assist them in pursuing their craft.

"It has an educational component, and I believe that people learn by taking

advantage of opportunities," Akin says. "We want to give out money to help people improve their craft, whether it be in props or whatever. It's not about 'here's a play I want to produce.' Most awards are structured for performers. This one has a much wider range."

Akin will be at the opening night Friday for the 6 pm performance of *Gem of the Ocean*, where he will talk about the Black Shoulders Award and the importance of the evening's performance. Tickets are available at shawfest.com.



Phil Akin directs *Gem of the Ocean*, opening this Friday, Aug. 19 at Shaw Festival's Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre. (Shaw Festival)



Monica Parks as Aunt Ester Tyler, with David Alan Anderson as Solly Two Kings and Nathaniel Judah as Citizen Barlow, in August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*. (Emily Cooper)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Niagara Region Proposed Development Charges By-law and Underlying Background Study

Niagara Region will hold a statutory public meeting pursuant to Section 12 of the Development Charges Act, 1997, as amended, to present and obtain public input on Niagara Region's proposed Transit Development Charges By-law and underlying background study.

A statutory public meeting is being held under the provisions of Section 12 of the Development Charges Act, as follows:

Date: Thursday, Sept. 29, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: This meeting will be held both electronically and in person in Council Chamber, Niagara Region Headquarters, 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold

The background study and proposed By-law is for Transit Development Charges.

To view live-stream meeting proceedings, without the ability to provide oral submissions, please visit niagararegion.ca/government/council.

Public input on the proposed development charges by-law is welcomed and encouraged. Members of the public are able to attend in person or virtually.

To provide written input, please either mail your comments to the Office of the Regional Clerk, Niagara Region, 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, PO Box 1042, Thorold, ON, L2V 4T7 or send to clerk@niagararegion.ca by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 28, 2022.

To provide input orally at the public meeting either in person or virtually, please submit your delegation request to the Regional Clerk by completing the online form at niagararegion.ca/government/council/speak-at-committee.aspx or by sending an email to clerk@niagararegion.ca before 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 29, 2022. For more information, visit niagararegion.ca/government/council/speakingatcouncil.aspx.

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to participate in meetings or events, please let us know in advance so that arrangements can be made in a timely manner. Special accessibility accommodations and materials in alternate formats can be arranged by contacting Niagara Region's **Accessibility Advisor** at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 or accessibility@niagararegion.ca.

Personal information collected or submitted in writing at public meeting will be collected, used and disclosed by member of Regional Council and Regional staff in accordance with the **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)**. The written submissions including names, contact information and reports of the public meeting will be made available. Questions about this collection and disclosure should be directed to the Access & Privacy Office at 905-980-6000 ext. 3779 or FOI@niagararegion.ca.

Date issued: Aug. 17, 2022

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Doctor's Dilemma production 'radically topical'

Mike Balsom
The Local

Sometimes current events conspire to encourage a director to update a George Bernard Shaw classic to present times. When Diana Donnelly took on *The Doctor's Dilemma* at the Shaw Festival this season, there was this little thing called the COVID-19 pandemic that made the decision to do that a no-brainer.

"I knew I was going to set the play in the here and now, in 2022," Donnelly says. "I saw (former Shaw artistic director) Christopher Newton's wonderful period production years ago (in 2000). That was really definitive. I wanted to approach it from a whole other angle to make the ideas sing out in a contemporary context."

One of Shaw's most loved and controversial plays, *The Doctor's Dilemma* has popped up once every decade since 1991 at the Shaw Festival. Following Newton's production, Morris Panych directed the play in 2010. This is the

fifth time the company has presented the play in its 60-year history.

The Doctor's Dilemma deals with questions of ethics and the value judgments made by the medical profession. At the onset of the pandemic in 2020, often the question had to be asked: who gets the ventilator and who doesn't?

"Suddenly, questions of human value were topical in the media," says Donnelly. "This play was written in 1906, when it was still okay to decide whose life has value, who should be saved. Those questions aren't overt today, but actions show values. The fact that not every country got the vaccine as quickly as others showed who the world truly values."

After meditating for the last two and a half years on sickness and death, Donnelly adds that *The Doctor's Dilemma* dares to be joyful in the face of that focus.

"There hasn't been enough dialogue about how we all have to die some time," she says, "whether from COVID or something else. So how are we going to

live, who do we want to be today. I love that question that the play proposes."

Donnelly's production, which opens this Saturday, Aug. 20, dresses the cast in high-fashion contemporary clothing designed by Rachel Forbes, on a lush, minimalist set created by award-winner Gillian Gallow, and with contemporary music from the likes of Drake, Elton John and Dua Lipa for its soundtrack.

Shaw's original script is updated in other ways as well. Since Donnelly's version is not set in England, instead of a knighthood, one character is awarded the Nobel Prize for medicine at the start of the play. The doctors themselves reflect the current reality of the medical profession, too, with many of the actors representing segments of the BIPOC population. And the oldest doctor, Sir Patrick in Shaw's script, becomes Patricia, played by Sharry Flett.

"All the characters are people you could bump into on the street," says Donnelly, who moved to

British Columbia from Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2020 to be closer to her husband, actor Jeff Meadows and his family. "All the actors really embody them so believably."

Because of the move, 2019 was the last season Donnelly spent at Shaw, when she directed Helen Moscovitch's *The Russian Play* and played Margie in *Sex*, by Mae West. She jumped at the chance to direct her first Shaw play and brought the family back to NOTL this summer to reconnect with friends.

"I walked to rehearsal every day with a bounce in my step," she raves. "The rehearsal process was incredibly joyous with the group of talented actors that I was collaborating with. And it felt really good to bring my experience as an actor with the Festival stage to my work as a director. To me it's a really sacred space."

Sanjay Tarwar plays Dr. Colenso Ridgeon, the medical professional who faces the moral and ethical dilemma. Jennifer Dubedat, portrayed by Alexis



Diana Donnelly returns to NOTL from B.C. to direct Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma*. (Photo supplied)

Gordon, wants Ridgeon to save her husband Louis, played by Johnathan Sousa. But Ridgeon's clinic is already full. How can he save Dubedat without denying treatment to someone already in his care? Throw in a love triangle, and the question becomes even more complicated.

"The play deals with doctors being treated like gods," says Donnelly. "There's so much pressure

for them to make the right decisions every day. In this play we get to watch one doctor sweat through this impossible choice, but really it's something that people in the medical profession do every day."

There is so much complexity in the relationships between the characters in *The Doctor's Dilemma*, as there is in many of the playwright's works. It's suggested that in addition to the way Shaw asks the big questions, that complexity might be the thing that truly sets him apart from others.

"He was such an original thinker," the director agrees. "He was like a one-man podcast with 10 points of view. That's why he's so important to us in 2022, when there is so much polarization in our thinking. He is always able to point out hypocrisy and grey zones."

Shaw says in his preface to *The Doctor's Dilemma*, "don't try to live forever, you won't succeed." Donnelly insists that is the spirit of her production of the play.

"In the end," she concludes, "Shaw puts forward the idea that if you really want to be immortal, you need to both love and be loved. The people you loved well will remember you, and so you live on."

"This production is radically topical," she adds. "It's fresh and it's funny and it's sexy and it's wild. The actors are incredible, the design is stunning. There's such warmth and such laughter, and it feels good to be laughing in the dark. It's a show I'm really proud of."

Shades of Summer



The turnout for the Chamber of Commerce Shades of Summer event on Queen Street Sunday was "slightly down" from expectations, but that was probably because so many who work in and operate the town's tourism-related businesses were too busy with their own operations to attend, says Chamber president Minerva Ward. The turnout still great, she said, with 60 tables sold at eight people per table, and music by the Thomas Nelson Band, and DJ Marinko. (Mike Balsom)



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Mell believes in action Harlond an avid historian

Continued from page 5

how to move it forward. Then it's constructive."

What he is hoping for more than anything is representation on council to "truly represent the community. I have so much respect for people willing to put themselves out there."

As a member of the town's equity, diversity and inclusion committee since its inception, he believes residents like to see themselves represented on the council, and people who are talking about what's important to them.

"I've always been a doer, so I thought I'd put myself out there and do the best I can. I'm all about action. If you are going to look at issues and gather information, then you have to act on it."

As a person with two jobs, the winery tours and selling real estate, it took Mell some time and careful consideration to decide whether he has the time to do what will be asked of him, and do it well.

"I've done my research about what's involved," he says, including the sometimes six-hour council meetings.

"I sleep about four hours a night, that's how I do what I do, and I have a good team. Being busy is what drives me. And I manage to fit in what I need to do."

Mell says he's watched council work on a number of issues they weren't able to tackle during the pandemic, and sees them trying to wrap up those issues now. He sees council mostly driven by issues as they pop up, and the next council will have its own issues. "I want to bring my perspective to the table, and do the most good for the most people."

Continued from page 5

conversation reveals that to be the case.

"I know I will bring a whole wealth of energy to the task, and that's something that has helped me be successful in life. I just have a passion for this town."

He considers the current council "a little lacklustre," and says "I know I can bring new energy to council. I don't have an agenda, I'm not aligned with anything, I just want to bring the passion I have for the town I love, and I'm so sincere about that."

However, there is one absolute about a job on council — preserving the town's history.

"I'm passionate about that. I know development is inevitable, but maybe we can be putting our foot on the brake a little, taking a few steps back, helping to bring about community involvement and community engagement."

There seems to be such a divide, he says, with some of the new people coming to town who love it, but could learn more about it, he says, using the volunteer fire department as an example of

what they may not understand, and that could be improved by communication, talking, listening, allowing them to have a voice and their own valid opinions.

A Glendale firefighter, he joined for the opportunity to give "100 per cent to the fire department," has loved it for the last eight years, and now, at this stage of his life, he feels he's at a point when it seems serving on council "is a calling for me. I love people, I'm engaged in the community, and I'm passionate about it. I feel like that's a good candidate for the town to have."

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Music Niagara wraps up season this weekend

Mike Balsom
The Local

Music Niagara Festival's 2022 season winds down this weekend with performances at St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Friday and Saturday.

The ebullient and entertaining Juno-nominated jazz vocalist Heather Bambrick brings her band to town for a performance ranging from Cole Porter tunes to music from one-hit wonder Stealers Wheel, and from 1970s sitcom theme music to Newfoundland folk songs.

When asked if the audience will hear her belt out a version of *The Jefferson's* theme song *Movin' on Up*, she chuckles.

"You're close," she says on the phone from her Etobicoke home. "The same creator. I'm doing a little bit of a Norman Lear kind of thing."

Originally from the Rock, Bambrick has been weaving folk music from her home province into her repertoire since her days studying vocal jazz at the University of Toronto.

"(Canadian composer) Keith Power and I worked on an arrangement of a beautiful Newfoundland folk song when we were there," remembers Bambrick. "It was the first one I did, and I performed it while I was at U of T."

She says even back then, when asked who she admired as singers, she would answer with Ella Fitzgerald and Sting, or Sarah Vaughn and Janet Jackson.

"At first I was worried I'd get to be known as Pop-Girl," she adds with a laugh. "But people embraced that idea of diversity of influence. And you certainly see it now in the jazz idiom. You just have to go into it with an open mind and an open heart, and a good work ethic and sense of creativity."

The in-demand voice actor (*Daniel Tiger's Neighbourhood*, *Blue's Clues*, numerous commercials) and Jazz-FM radio host refers to her mix of styles as a modern form of jazz fusion.

"That term always meant jazz and rock," she explains. "But jazz is now being fused with so many different genres. Back at university, yes, we improvised over (John Coltrane's) *Giant Steps*, we analyzed (Miles Davis') *So What*, and we looked at different ways to arrange *How High the Moon*. But people were pretty open-minded to other things coming into



Jazz vocalist Heather Bambrick and her band perform at St. Mark's Friday. (Photos supplied)

the mix. That set the tone for me that I'm really grateful for."

When it comes to the TV theme songs, she points out that many great composers worked on those programs.

"Charles Strauss and Lee Adams did stuff for *All in the Family*," says Bambrick. "Joe Raposo wrote the theme song to *Three's Company* and wrote for *Sesame Street*. They hired these musicians whose job it was to write tunes for various labels or bands. They wrote some pretty solid material for those shows."

As for her accompanists Friday, she says her band, heard on her 2019 album *Fine State*, is outstanding. Pianist Adrean Farrugia, Chase Sanborn on trumpet and flugelhorn, drummer Ben Wittman and NOTL resident Ross McIntyre on bass will be backing her up at St. Mark's.

Music Niagara Festi-

val founder and artistic director Atis Bankas has booked Bambrick for shows in other parts of the province, and he is happy to finally be able to present her and her band for the festival.

"She's fantastic, she has great humour, and she's a wonderful singer," he says. "She is such a fabulous, natural talent on the radio, as well, like she was born to do that. I love listening to her sing."

Bambrick's penultimate Music Niagara performance is followed Saturday by a program featuring Ukrainian-born American violinist Solomiya Ivakhiv, American pianist Steven Beck and Bankas' CamerAtis Ensemble.

Titled *Glory to Ukraine*, the musicians will be performing works by composers from that under-siege country, including Mykola Lysenko, Viktor Kosenko, Yevhen Stankovych and Vasy

Barvinsky. The Festival comes full circle with this program, as it officially began back in June with a performance from Kyiv-born pianist Mykola Suk.

"These are fantastic composers," Bankas says of the 19th century pair of Lysenko and Kosenko as well as the more contemporary Stankovych and Barvinsky. "This will be an eye-opener for the level of sophistication of their compositions. It's one of Ivakhiv's missions to spread the word about Ukrainian culture."

With the ongoing attack on Ukraine by Russia, Bankas fears a return to the days of the USSR when all culture, including music, art and even language, from the 15 Soviet republics was officially considered Russian.

"Even when I came here in 1981," the Lithuanian-born violinist says, "it didn't matter if you were from Ukraine, Geor-

gia, Azerbaijan, you were considered by people to be Russian. That's exactly what the Russians always wanted, and what this current fight is all about."

As Ukraine continues to defend its borders from Russian attacks, Bankas fears that unless the rest of the world steps in to help out, the conflict may continue for decades.

"I expected this to still be going on," he says, "but this can be stopped right now. Other countries need to respond but they are not. This is the most important issue in today's world in my opinion."

Ivakhiv's 2016 album, featuring duets between her and pianist Angelina Gadeliya, was titled *Ukraine: Journey to Freedom*. In a review in *World Music Report*, critic Raul da Gama says today that even though it was recorded long before the current war, "prophetically, Miss Ivakhiv's violin wails out for injustice; cries for

freedom."


Ivakhiv holds music degrees from Stony Brook University, the Lysenko State Academy of Music in Ukraine, and Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music. She is a member of the faculty at the University of Connecticut School of Fine Arts. This year, she was invited back to Curtis to deliver the commencement address to the class of 2022, which included frequent Music Niagara performer Emma Meinrenken.

On Friday morning at 11:30, violinist Meinrenken will be performing at Addison Hall at St. Mark's followed by an Ivakhiv masterclass for the young musicians under the umbrella of the Music Niagara Performance Academy. Saturday's *Glory to Ukraine* program begins at 4 p.m.


Information and tickets for all three events can be found at musicniagara.org.



Ukrainian-born violinist Solomiya Ivakhiv is in concert at St. Mark's Saturday, wrapping up the Music Niagara season.



JOKE



Why did two 4s skip dinner?

Because they already 8!

Answer:

Announcements

The Gazette would like to make an edit to the last issue. The Strong Museum write up was by Maansi Gandhi-Malhotra not Maanak Gandhi-Malhotra. Our sincerest apologies to Maansi! Thank you for the fantastic travel blog!

Poet's Corner: Summer Swim

By: Taleah Bucci, 12



When I go swimming at my neighbour
Dave's pool,
The water feels perfectly cool.
It is really nice of him,
To invite me over for a swim.
When Dad says all my swim lessons are done,
Then it's time for cannonball fun.
He also keeps the bugs and leaves at bay,

With a big net to scoop them away.
When it's hot, just look around,
Splash pads, sprinklers, and pools are
easily found.
So take out your floaties and pool
noodles too,
Because lots of summer fun is waiting
for you.

WORD SEARCH: SUMMER TIME

L	B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y		
J	N	E	V	H	O	A	P	L	Y		
S	K	H	F	U	M	J	L	I	X		
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E	A	P	K	Y	H	U	S	A	A		
A	P	A	R	W	W	C	D	L	R		
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V	V	Y	G	B	R	E	E	Z	E		

WATERMELON

BREEZE

PEACH

BUTTERFLY

PICNIC

PARTY

FRIENDS

HAPPY

WARM

WALK

Interview with Emily

- Q. What is your favourite thing about NOTL?**

A. My home, friends and family.

Q. What do you want to be when you grow up?

A. Work at the post office like my mom or be a teacher.

Q. How would you change the world if you could?

A. Make there be no COVID.

Q. How did you keep yourself busy during COVID lockdowns?

A. I made a COVID book, read, watched movies, went lots of walks with the doggies and mama made a backyard Virgil stampede.

Q. What is your ideal day in NOTL?

A. Walking the dogs in Old Town is the best.

Q. What is your favourite book?

A. I like any book you give me!

Q. What do you do to help others?

A. I hold the door for people.

Q. What is a fun family tradition you have at home?
- A.** We play board games together.

Q. What's that certain something that makes you special?

A. I am special because I'm really smart and I have really great friends and family.

Q. If you could piece the perfect day in NOTL together, what would it be?

A. We would go for breakfast at Silks, then swim at our pool, then go fishing at the lake and have lunch at Sunset Grill.

Q. If you could do something for charity what charity would you want to help?

A. I would do something for kids in the hospital.



Emily Ferguson, 9

Artist's Corner

By: Evelyn, 5



Family-Friendly August project courtesy of The Niagara Pumphouse

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AUGUST PROJECT



SUBMISSION INFO

The hope for this page is to get kids involved and interacting with the community in a positive way. We welcome submissions for all categories from kids of any age. Please keep the reviews positive and all submitted content appropriate for kids of all ages. Please send all submissions to joyousnotlkids@gmail.com and in the subject line please put the category for which you are submitting. Thank you.

CHARITY

We are looking for charities in which kids can participate. If you would like your organization to be highlighted here, please send your information to joyousnotlkids@gmail.com.

NIAGARA 2022 CANADA SUMMER GAMES

Zubin Gatta helps win wrestling gold for team

Local teen also takes home bronze in individual event

Mike Balsom
The Local

After being a big part of Team Ontario's wrestling gold medal win at the Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games, and adding a bronze in the individual 52 kg weight class, Zubin Gatta is reassessing where last week's competition fits into his accomplishments in the sport.

Before the Canada Games began, the 16-year-old told The Local that though he was excited to compete for his province, he didn't think the experience would match up with his OFSAA (Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations) title at 38 kg in 2020.

"That definitely changed," he said this weekend after the wrestling competition wrapped up. "Especially the team aspect of it. Getting first with this team was a really cool experience. There's a lot of guys on this team that I used to look up to at tournaments. I feel like I'm one of them now."

Gatta started out the team competition last Tuesday with a win by forfeit over Team Yukon. The territory did not have a wrestler in the 52 kg weight class to go up against Gatta so he was awarded a victory. Later that day he notched a 10-0 victory over Nova Scotia's Josh Bissett.

"I had never seen him before," Gatta said. "I didn't know anything about him. I just went in and wrestled the way I normally do. It was a pretty quick match. I won on tech (technical su-

periority)."

Wednesday began with Gatta facing Team Alberta's Fred Calingay in a match he lost 13-12.

"I should have beaten him," Gatta says. "At the last minute he picked up the deciding point."

When Ontario faced Saskatchewan later in the day, Gatta pinned his opponent, Jacob Exner, in 23 seconds, helping his team secure first place in their preliminary pool.

The long day in the gym at Canada Games Park continued into the evening, as Ontario faced British Columbia at 7:30 that evening for the gold medal.

"I pinned the kid (Noah Tam) in about 30 seconds," he says. "That was really exciting, because it was our third win in the finals, and it really got the ball rolling for the team."

Ontario defeated BC 32-16 to capture the gold medal.

Gatta's performance in the team events qualified him for Thursday's semi-finals for the individual medals. He faced Eekeeluak Avalak of Nunavut in his semi-final match.

"I went in with the plan of trying to wear him out for the first minute or so," Gatta says. "But he got in kind of quick. We knew he had that gut-wrench move that he was doing. I tried posting my arm out to defend it, but I went right over it and popped the elbow out. That finished off the match."

The disappointing loss meant that Zubin was out of the running for



Zubin with his bronze medal and competitors Eekeeluak Avalak and Fred Calingay.



Zubin Gatta wrestles an opponent at the summer games. (Leah Parker)

gold or silver individually. More crucially, he and his Team Ontario coach-

es had to make a decision on whether or not he was healthy enough to wrestle for the bronze.

"My coaches and trainers didn't want me to wrestle," he tells The Local. "But I just waited it out and wanted to see how it felt just before the match. I decided that if I taped it up a ton, and didn't use it as much, I could get through six minutes with it."

Gatta defeated Quebec's Tristan Sears for the bronze medal, winning on technical superiority.

"I took him down and turned him," recounts Gatta. "He got up again, then I took him down and turned him again, then I threw him for four points at the end."

Gatta then had a front row seat for one of the biggest feel-good moments of

the games. After capturing third place he was mat-side as "Eekie" beat Alberta's Calingay to win the gold medal, the first ever Canada Games gold won by Nunavut. Immediately after the win, Gatta was there when the 18-year-old from Cambridge Bay raced around the mat to celebrate then jumped into the arms of his coach Chris Crooks.

"I was really happy for him," Gatta says. "I know him really well. He and his whole team stayed at our house for a week a while ago. We're all really close with him."

The whole Canada Summer Games experience, beginning with the Aug. 6 opening ceremony at the Meridian Centre in St. Catharines, has been a memorable one for the

Eden High School student.

"That was way crazier than I expected," he says. "It was a huge show. There were a lot of lights and everything. It was really cool. And it was amazing how much attention there was on wrestling, a lot more than I thought there would be. I didn't expect it to be such a popular sport in the games."

Gatta is sure that his elbow injury is minor, and will not cause him any problems moving forward. He's setting his sights on the next provincials, and hopes to capture another OFSAA gold medal to add to the one he earned in 2020 when he was in Grade 9.

There's no doubt he will be the one to beat at both tournaments this coming school year.



Zubin Gatta is congratulated by his mom Farah. (Neel Bhujannavar)

NIAGARA 2022 CANADA SUMMER GAMES

Bartel ready to compete in the Canada Games

Mike Balsom
The Local

Kai Bartel feels ready heading into this week's rowing competition at the Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games. That's not surprising, as the 19-year-old just wrapped up a week of competition at the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta in St. Catharines on Aug. 7.

The Eden High and Crossroads Public School graduate is representing Team Ontario in the seven seat of the Men's Eight and, with Shane Keagan of the Ridley Graduate Boat Club, competing in the Men's Pair as well.

Bartel's interest in the Canada Summer Games was piqued when he heard Niagara had won the opportunity to host in 2021. When the pandemic pushed the games back a year, he kept his sights on earning a spot to compete for his province.

"I had two goals for this summer," The East and West Line resident tells The Local. "One was to make it to the Henley Royal Regatta in England, and the other was to row for Team Ontario."

Bartel can check both of those goals off his list.

In early July he competed for the St. Catharines Rowing Club in an eight on the River Thames, though his crew did not make it to the final of the Thames Challenge Cup. The following weekend he tried out for Team Ontario.

"We submitted our 2 kilometre ergometer scores," Bartel explains, "and they cut anyone who was over 6:30. Over two days they put us in two different fours to race over 1,000 metres. Then they switched



Kai Bartel at the Royal Henley, in his Team Ontario singlet. (Photos supplied)

the combinations about six to eight times, and totalled up our times. They took the fastest guys. I finished in the top half, to get on to the team."

His cousin Owen, a St. Catharines resident, also earned a spot on Team Ontario.

He's excited to hit the water this Wednesday, knowing that many members of Canada's Olympic Rowing team have come through these games in the past. Bartel points to Trevor Jones, who won gold in single sculls in the 2017 Canada Summer Games in Winnipeg and competed at the Tokyo Olympics, as someone whose path he would like to follow.

Bartel was an extremely busy rower at the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta,

competing in five events: under 23 (U23) men's single, U23 men's eight, senior men's eight, championship eight, and the 500-metre dash in the men's eight.

His week ended with two third place finishes, as well as a fourth and a fifth. Including heats, repechages and finals, he was on the course up to three times a day over five days.

Following that week of competition, he and his crew had to get down to preparing for this week.

"We're getting pretty fast pretty quickly," he says of the eight. "We row really well, especially for the time we've had together. The rowing community is actually quite small. I've known all these guys for a number of years already. I've rowed with some of them before,

and against some of them, too."

He'd like to think that his crews have a bit of a home advantage, as they have been training on the Henley course in St. Catharines. But Bartel says for competition the officials control the current to take away any inside knowledge the home crews might have.

But it will be nice having his parents, Paul and Leslie, as well as his two younger sisters, Emma and Kennedy, cheering him on this week.

Bartel's coach for Team Ontario is Grant Boyd, who for 18 years was the head coach at Upper Canada College in Toronto. After being guided by the St. Catharines Rowing Club's Tom Kent for the race in

England, he quickly had to adjust to Boyd's style.

"Each coach obviously has their own coaching styles," he says, "but when you look at it from an outside perspective, it's basically all the same. Some are really hard, giving you super intense workouts, while others give you longer, lower intensity workouts. But other than that, they're all the same."

At 6'4" tall and 190 pounds, Bartel is adept at both sculling (two oars) and sweeping (one oar), and says he enjoys both equally.

In high school, he concentrated on single sculling, earning a bronze medal in the 72 kg event at the 2019 Canadian Secondary Schools Rowing Association Regatta. Paul, who

rowed for both Niagara District and Laura Secord Secondary Schools during his own high school days, coached his son at Eden.

His high school rowing results, and his grades, of course, got him noticed by the University of Victoria (UVic). Bartel just completed his first year at UVic studying commerce and rowing for the Vikings varsity team.

Competing for the Vikings, his highlights this season included finishing second in the single sculls A Final at the Elk Lake Spring Regatta in March and a second place finish in the Brown Cup reserve race in April.

To get ready for his first race Wednesday, Bartel has been training with Team Ontario from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. daily. Those sessions include a great deal of time on the water. He hasn't really had any time yet to watch any of the other sports in the 2022 Canada Summer Games.

"This week, when we're staying at the Athlete's Village (at Brock University), I'll actually go see some of the sports in my free time," he says. "And I'm really looking forward to being in the closing ceremony (Sunday, Aug. 21). They've been hyping it up for the past three years."

Of course, he admits it will be that much more exciting if he's wearing a medal or two around his neck that night. And with his 20th birthday coming less than a week after the Canada Summer Games wrap-up, what a great present that would be.



Bartel rows for the University of Victoria.

NIAGARA 2022 CANADA SUMMER GAMES

Quebec edges B.C. for tennis gold in NOTL

Tents, bleachers gone, courts back to pre-Games

Mike Balsom
The Local

It took nearly eight hours Saturday to crown a winner in the Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games tennis competition at Memorial Park in Niagara-on-the-Lake. After seven matches, Team Quebec edged Team British Columbia for the gold medal 4-3.

Quebec had a chance to end things much, much earlier, as they won three of the first four matches, known in the team competition as ties.

Team Quebec's Qing Xu Kuang, 16, and 19-year-old Mélodie Collard outlasted British Columbia's Denny Bao and Leena Bennetto respectively in their singles matches, which began at 3 p.m.

Following those matches, Maxime St-Hilaire and Annabelle Xu of Quebec split their singles matches with Team BC's 18-year-old Aram Noroozian and 17-year-old Reece Carter, leaving the score 3-1 for Quebec. All they had to do was win one of the doubles matches to take the gold medal.

Team B.C., however, had something else in mind. Connor Church and Henry Ren dropped Quebec's Ange Kevin Koua and Junhee You in the men's doubles match, while BC's Alessia Cau and Emma Dong beat Josie Usereau and Naomi Xu to knot things up at 3-3 and force an extra mixed doubles match to decide the winner.

Carter and Noroozian got the nod for Team BC, while Collard and St-Hilaire were chosen by their Team Quebec coaches to take them on in the clutch situation. Quebec lost the first set, but stormed back to win the gold 5-7, 6-3, and 10-4. The deciding point was finally made at about 10:40 p.m.

Team Ontario settled for the bronze medal, defeating Alberta 5-1 Saturday morning.

"It was a real nail-biter," NOTL Tennis Club president Hugh Dow says about the final match. "I wasn't there right until the end, but a number of club members were and they said it was just unbelievable the way they went down to the wire there."

Dow was impressed by the quality of tennis on display over the six days of competition. Impressed, but not really surprised.

"I've seen some of them play before at some of the junior tournaments at White Oaks," he says. "I was anticipating a pretty high level. The older group was really playing like you wouldn't believe. There was a particular sound you don't hear that often on our courts, the sound of a tennis ball being hit really hard in the middle of the racquet on a consistent basis. And there were rallies that went on for minutes on end."

Dow, who was at the facility daily during the first week of the Canada Summer Games, says there is a bit of a bittersweet feeling now that the tents are packed up, the temporary fencing is gone and the bleachers on the north side have been removed.

"It's a bit of an anticlimax seeing the club back

the way it was before the games," he says. "I have mixed feelings. It was a wonderful experience and I think that everyone who is involved was absolutely thrilled and delighted with how everything went."

The tennis club had many members volunteering their time each day of the competition. Dow says they and non-member volunteers who gave their time worked very hard to make sure everything came off without a hitch. Many athletes Dow spoke with commented on how nice the volunteers were and how well they were treated by them.

The weather cooperated for the most part, with rain delaying play on Tuesday, forcing some matches to be rescheduled. But they were able to catch up and get everything completed on time. He gives organizers Rosemary Goodwin, Marilyn Francis and Shawna Macfarlane all the credit for ensuring everything ran smoothly.

Besides seeing the high quality of tennis and being able to watch it in the intimate, close-to-the-court

environment of Memorial Park, Dow says a highlight was watching 10-year-old Team Saskatchewan member Isabella Yan compete.

"She was amazing," Dow marvels. "She's tiny, just about to turn 11. Boy, could she move around the court. And she had to hustle, because she was playing against players who seemed to be about twice her size. It's incredible that a 10-year-old could hold her own against them. She was a real delight to watch."

Though the Canada Games staff have packed up and taken away all of the official regalia, there is at least one thing that will elicit misty memories of Aug. 7 to 12 for many club members who were involved.

Actually, make that 13 things, as the flags representing Canada's 13 provinces and territories continue to fly courtside and will be staying put.

"I was playing there yesterday," Dow says, "and I was thinking about how nice they look. It's kind of a nice memory of a wonderful week."



A highlight of the tennis matches at Memorial Park was watching 10-year-old Team Saskatchewan member Isabella Yan compete. (Miranda Langguth)



Melodie Collard and Maxime St-Hilaire win gold for Quebec in the summer games final mixed doubles match at the NOTL tennis courts in Memorial Park. (Ron Planche)

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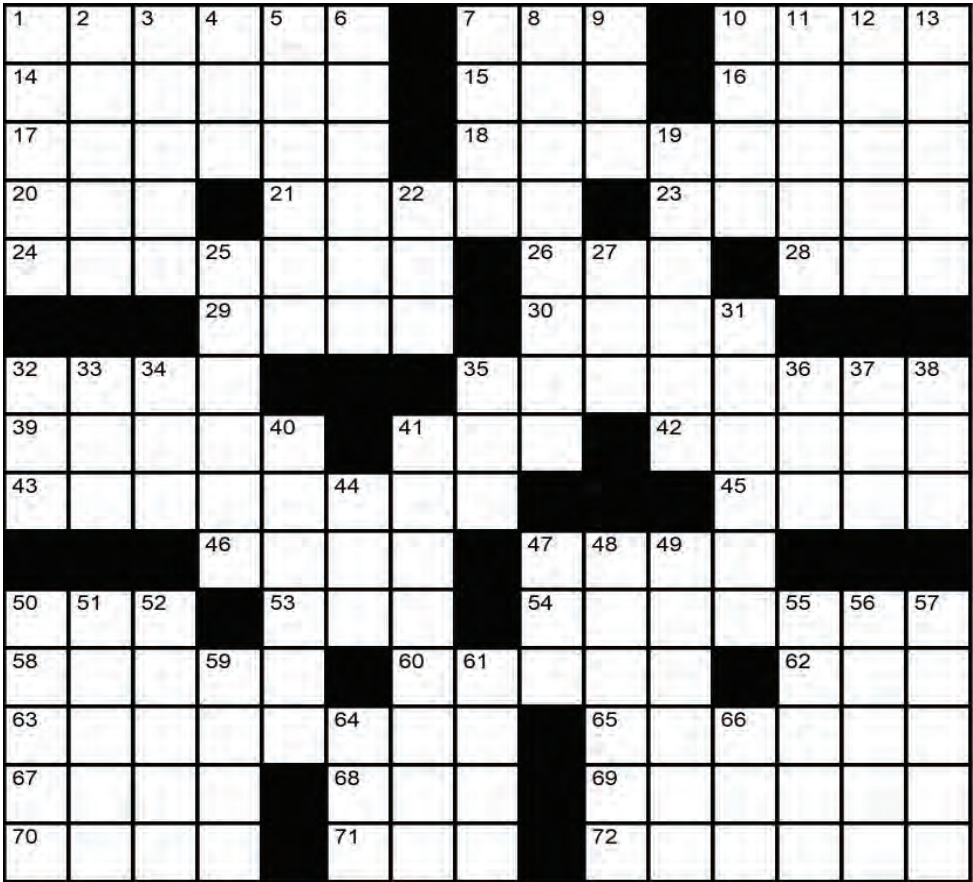
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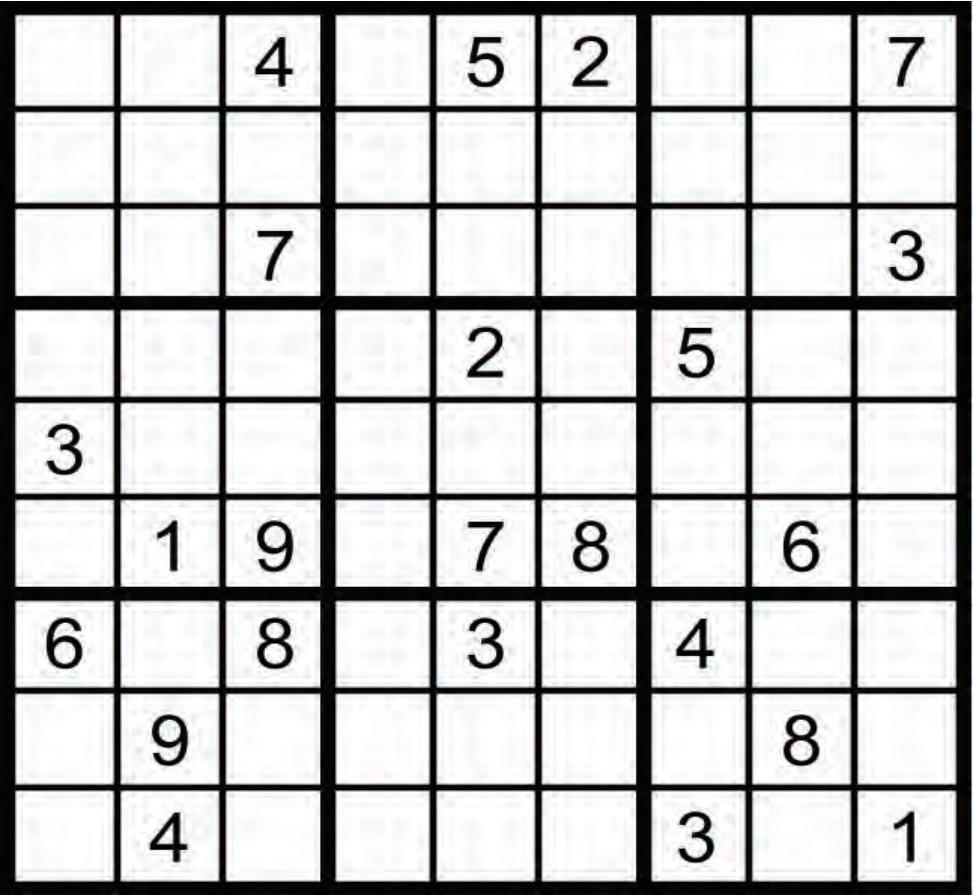


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- Across:
- 1 Name which sounds like a name
 - 7 WWW access enabler
 - 10 Salad variety
 - 14 Agreeable odors
 - 15 Akhenaten's son, briefly
 - 16 Rich Little, for example
 - 17 Render innocuous
 - 18 --- & Evelyn (body-product brand)
 - 20 Fish eggs
 - 21 Have a soak
 - 23 Long
 - 24 Touchdown turf
 - 26 "Cogito, ergo ---"
 - 28 "The buck stops here" monogram
 - 29 Banded chalcedony
 - 30 Funds for the golden years
 - 32 Put down
 - 35 Unattractive quality
 - 39 Former immigration island
 - 41 Convert into leather
 - 42 Unhand me!
 - 43 State with more corporations than people
 - 45 First Bible book after the Gospels
 - 46 Annie Oakley's employer
 - 47 Big rig brand
 - 50 Service score
 - 53 "% Daily Value" forerunner
- Down:
- 54 Saber cuts
 - 58 Scarcely detectable amount
 - 60 Arrived
 - 62 Sink a sub?
 - 63 Airplane statistic spawning confusion
 - 65 Join battle
 - 67 One more thing ...
 - 68 Beyond tipsy
 - 69 Lunkhead
 - 70 Young lice
 - 71 "Sail --- Ship of State!" (Longfellow)
 - 72 Never left
- for example
- 19 One way to deliver
 - 22 Country singer Ritter
 - 25 Home to an archer, a lion and a bull
 - 27 Web address
 - 31 Shifty types
 - 32 Low-energy source of illumination
 - 33 Malt beverage
 - 34 Queasy
 - 35 Persian Gulf federation
 - 36 And so on
 - 37 Three-striper
 - 38 Shortest-named ABBA single
 - 40 Knights fought with them
 - 41 Persist
 - 44 Go on to say
 - 47 Colorado winter time
 - 48 Visitors from afar
 - 49 Lacks what it takes
 - 50 Nile dam
 - 51 Official state dish of Texas
 - 52 Surrealist Max ---
 - 55 Intoxicating
 - 56 Well under par
 - 57 Charger
 - 59 Causes of personality clashes
 - 61 Aware of
 - 64 Ramallah-based group
 - 66 Former Portuguese Indian colony



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PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from
August 10, 2022

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

Across: 1 Monica, 7 I S P, 10 Cobb, 14 Aromas, 15 Tut, 16 Aperi, 17 Disarm, 18 Crabtree, 20 Roe, 21 Bath, 23 Yearn, 24 End zone, 26 Sum, 28 H S T, 29 Onyx, 30 I R As, 32 Laid, 35 Ugliness, 39 Ellis, 41 Tan, 42 Let go, 43 Delaware, 45 Acts, 46 Cody, 47 Mack, 50 Ace, 53 R D A, 54 Slashes, 58 Shred, 60 Got in, 62 Eat, 63 Wingspan, 65 Engage, 67 Also, 68 Lit, 69 Noodle, 70 Nits, 71 On, O, 72 Stayed.

Down: 1 Madre, 2 Orion, 3 Nosed, 4 I'm a, 5 Carbon, 6 As many, 7 Ith, 8 Sure sign, 9 P-T A, 10 Cate, 11 Oprah, 12 Beers, 13 Brent, 19 By mail, 22 Tex, 25 Zodiac, 27 U R L, 31 Sneaks, 32 L-E-D, 33 Ale, 34 Ill, 35 U A E, 36 Etc, 37 Sgt, 38 S O S, 40 Swords, 41 Try again, 44 Add, 47 M S T, 48 Aliens, 49 Cannot, 50 Aswan, 51 Chilli, 52 Ernst, 55 Head, 56 Eagle, 57 Steed, 59 Egos, 61 Onto, 64 P L O, 66 Goa.

Swim 'spreads message far and wide'

Continued from page 1

the past three months.

"I've never swam any distance like this," he said. "This proves my point I was getting across, that if you set your mind on something that seems impossible, you'll definitely be able to accomplish it. For example, with depression, someone who has depression and thinks they'll never get out of it, they need to know they can do it."

Though his attention-getting feat did raise a large sum of money, for Rumsey, that's not what it was all about.

The purpose behind Rumsey's swim was to raise awareness for mental health issues, and to encourage those who suffer from depression and other maladies to try to fight through their problems without pharmaceuticals, if possible.

"I've had PTSD since I was 14, I was diagnosed with psychosis when I was 17," he explained after catching his breath. "Doctors always wanted me to take pills. But just through the things that I've been doing I was able to manage it really well. I went to college and I got a good job, and I did it all without taking any anti-depressants."

Pathstone Mental Health is a community-based organization that provides innovative and effective

treatment for all children in Niagara struggling with mental health issues. Currently, Pathstone serves more than 570 clients at nine walk-in clinics across the region and online. Pathstone ran a weekly clinic out of Red Roof Retreat at one time, but currently Niagara-on-the-Lake is one of the region's municipalities without a dedicated location.

Among the group awaiting his arrival at Queen's Royal Park was Pathstone Foundation director of philanthropy Kim Rossi.

"This was about stigma reduction," Rossi said Saturday. "He really did a great job. We saw this story covered everywhere. He was owning all the things he himself had struggled through. He talked about it publicly. I asked him if it felt therapeutic and he said yes. Him going public gives others the strength and the will to talk about theirs, too."

Rossi admitted that yes, the money raised is important, but the impact Dylan made on stigma reduction is potentially much more impactful.

"It spreads the message far and wide in a different way," she added. "Dylan has a whole different circle of people than we do at Pathstone, his friends, family and co-workers, and he's able to engage them at a different level. One in two people will have a mental

health struggle. This fundraiser has introduced me to a whole new group of people who may want to find out how they can help Pathstone."

Almost all of those who greeted Dylan at the end of his swim were there for the start of his journey in Queenston. Many of them were wearing one of the 100 T-shirts made to support him on his journey. The Local was told that all of the shirts were sold, raising even more money than what was posted on the GoFundMe page.

Some, such as his grandparents Ron and Martina Rumsey, made numerous stops along the Niagara Parkway to track their grandson's progress.

"We're pretty worried," Ron told The Local. "I grew up right around the corner from here, and I swam across this river all the time when I was younger. I never swam against the current this far, though."

Dylan said he may have been inspired by Ron's adventures on the river, as well as those of his father Ken, who also frequently crossed the span as a youngster.

"When I was a kid, I always wanted to do that," he laughed. "But today, I one-upped them."

As far as the money, Rumsey hopes it goes toward supporting a different approach to helping youth with their mental health



Kim Rossi of the Pathstone Foundation greets Dylan Rumsey when he finishes his swim, a fundraiser for the foundation. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

struggles.

"I wouldn't mind seeing it going to something like their natural park (at their Branscombe Centre in St. Catharines)," he said. "That's the reason I chose Pathstone, because I saw that they were trying to take a more natural approach to things."

Rossi looks forward to

working with Dylan to help him decide how the organization will use the proceeds from his swim.

"I consider the struggles Dylan has gone through from a mental health perspective to be more high-risk," she explained. "He may want to designate that money to our family intervention or our more inten-

sive treatment programs. That will be up to him to decide. He's part of the process in deciding what happens next."

The GoFundMe page will remain active for another two weeks to encourage further financial support. As well, Pathstone has a link on their website for donations to the same cause.



A group of friends and family send off Dylan Rumsey as he prepares to swim from Queenston to Queen's Royal Park.



Rumsey has a small contingent of spotters with him as he swims.

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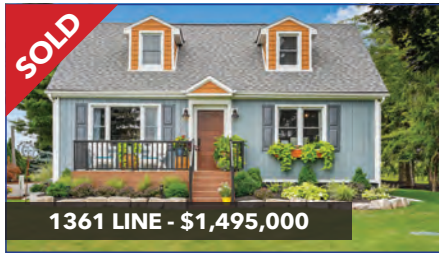
Sailing competitions underway



Monday and Tuesday were training days for summer games sailing participants, with racing beginning at the NOTL Sailing Club Wednesday at 11 a.m. and continuing daily until Saturday. Tuesday was overcast and there were few spectators, just a few visitors to town who happened to be sitting on benches in the small waterfront park beside the old custom dock. (Photos by David Gilchrist)

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