



Mark your calendars for **Sept. 17** Terry Fox Run

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### Still some unknowns from Public Health as kids return to school

#### **Penny Coles** The Local

If Dr. Azim Kasmani has one piece of advice for parents who hope to keep their kids healthy as they return to school, it's to get them vaccinated.

Parents should be checking to see if their children's vaccinations for all the childhood diseases are up-to-date, says Niaghealth, "to prevent them from future will be." getting preventable diseases."

Without those vaccinations, "they can be kept out of school," he says. "We've sent out suspension notices, but we hope we don't have to suspend anybody."

For the annual flu shot, and a COVID booster, the fall is the time to get them, he says.

"It's still a nasty bug," he says of COVID, "and we are seeing infections, but not at the level of two to three years ago."

The same goes for hospi-

"ICU numbers are up slightly, but not at the levels we've seen before."

Although parents found last year one of increased absences for their children, kept home mainly with runny noses and other cold-like symptoms, Kasmani says he doesn't know what to expect as students head back to school.

"My crystal ball is broken," ara region's medical officer of he says. "I don't know what the

> Public Health and local school boards are in touch regularly, he says, but at this time are not talking about measures for COVID.

> "If there are any broad changes made, they would come from the province."

> He does know, however, that missing school throughout the pandemic had an impact on children. "There is so much benefit to being in school. And it's important to keep routine

> > Continued on page 2

### Farmers need help with essential irrigation system

#### **Kris Dube** The Local **Local Journalism Initiative Reporter**

Underneath more than 3,200 hectares of agricultural land in Niagara-on-the-Lake exists an irrigation system like no other in the country.

Its first components were the town's farming economy.

It's the envy of people involved in the industry, said Coun. Erwin Wiens, a local grape grower who is also council's representative on mittee meeting last week, the municipality's irrigation committee, which oversees decisions related to the sys-

mid-September, and exists them. through the passing of a private member's bill decades the area of the Virgil Dam at ago that allows the system to Four Mile Creek Road and put in place about 35 years pull water from sources such Line 3. ago, and it is a crucial part of as the Niagara River, Lake Welland Canal, explained

At an irrigation comconcern from members was raised while discussing two agenda items, related to clean-up and maintenance It runs from mid-May to issues, and who will pay for

There are two ponds in

The ponds are owned by Ontario, the Ontario Power Niagara Peninsula Conser-Generation Canal, and the vation Authority, and are a source of water for the irriga-

by the municipality, but paid structions shouldn't come out for by local growers.

However, the town's irrigation committee is now struggling with some work that has to be done, related to removing obstructions in Four Mile Creek, that would cost about \$45,000 to remedy.

an investment made by lo- the ponds, which were built cal growers since the system in 1968, mostly has to do started operating.

But the cost of repairing tion system, which is owned culverts and removing ob- ponds at the recent com-

of the growers' pockets, said Wiens, because the damage is not related to irrigation.

Erosion caused by heavy rain and thaws are to blame, not the functions of the system, he said.

"We're all in agreement Wiens estimates the val- that irrigation water is not of the system is about causing the issue," he added, \$20 million, all of which is also noting the problem at with silt build-up.

While discussing the

mittee meeting, the town's public works manager Darren MacKenzie told members that changes to the Ontario Conservation Authority Act have resulted in the NPCA no longer having funding to maintain them, other than to take care of grass cutting in the area.

Therefore, two options need to be considered by the committee, said MacKenzie.

The first consideration related to the ponds is that

RE/MAX

Continued on page 2



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#### THE NOTL Gocal

### Region waiting for guidelines from province

**Continued from page 1** 

immunizations kept up to date. Get your booster for the updated variant. Get the updated flu shot. Wash your hands regularly, and stay home when you're sick."

That last piece of advice, though, also has be addressed by society and the workplace, so that all parents have the support they need to make those decisions, whether it's to stay home because they are sick, or to look after sick children.

"It comes back to a societal situation — not all people get paid if they stay home when they are unwell. We need policies in place so they can make that information public. that choice."

departments, he added, "is removing the systemic barriers they'll follow the National Adpeople face."

uptick in COVID cases, as determined by wastewater studies, there is still some uncertainty about when the next COVID booster will be available, and where. Kasmani says Niagara Region Public Health's fall vaccination plan will follow ditions, residents of long-term provincial guidance.

available, but as soon as they are, Public Health will make bers of equity-deserving com-

In an email sent Tuesday, The role of public health he explained that after talking with the ministry, "it's likely visory Committee on Immuni-While there has been an zation (NACI's) guidance, that states it's best to wait until the fall and get an updated strain vaccine if available."

NACI also says "the focus should be on those at highest risk: people over 65 or with other high risk medical concare or congregate living fa-He told The Local last week cilities, essential workers and those guidelines are not yet medical staff, and folks who face systemic barriers or memmunities."

The federal government buys the vaccine, he says, "and we've heard there is an updated strain vaccine coming, but we aren't sure when it will be available to us. Again, priority will be for those living in long-term care and retirement homes before the general public."

Public Health will be holding clinics at the Canada One Outlet Mall in Niagara Falls, and at its offices as capacity allows, but the main focus will be on supporting long-term care, retirement homes, congregate care and living settings, as well as those who are homebound.

"We will also be holding

### NPCA wants help from town with funding

**Continued from page 1** 

the committee enters a memorandum of understanding with the conservation authority, opening better access to funding from upper levels of government to make improvements.

The NPCA has "avenues we don't have available as a town," MacKenzie told the committee, referring to funding sources from upper levels of government.

MacKenzie said during the meeting that a cleanup of the two ponds has an estimated cost of about \$425,000 and that the NPCA could potentially bring in half that amount by applying for funding from those sources.

If the committee decided not to form an agreement, the NPCA will decommission the ponds, which is their second option, he said.

move forward with exploring options related to signing a memorandum of understanding with the NPCA,



The committee voted to A dam connecting ponds in Virgil, owned by the NPCA, that are part of the town's irrigation system. (Photos by Kris Dube)

agreement.

Wiens was not in attenbut did not commit to dance at last week's commitany specific details of an tee meeting because he was

meeting with federal officials mated cost of \$100 million we can keep the irrigation about irrigation issues, he told The Local. Those discussions involved a potential for Niagara-on-the-Lake's irpartnership with Niagara Region, and the federal and provincial governments to create on-the-Lake would be able to also a topic of discussion at a new system like the one in increase the volume of water Niagara-on-the-Lake that it takes, as well as the number would serve western portions of acres the system serves. of the peninsula, said Wiens, who has also been chair of an agreement with the NPCA, the region's irrigation committee for the last 10 years.

and would also involve about \$10 million in improvements rigation system, he said. It is hoped that Niagara-

The idea of entering into

he said, is worth exploring.

"I'm always in favour of That project has an esti-finding creative ways that

A pond at Four Mile Creek Road and Line 3 that is part of Niagara-on-the-Lake's irrigation system.

system viable. We've got to

look at all avenues to make it

work." He told The Local that the irrigation system was last month's Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference, where he asked the provincial Minister of Infrastructure for support to maintain and expand irrigation in Niagara.

Wiens reiterated that Niagara-on-the-Lake's tem is "wholly funded" by growers, but noted that the town has an irrigation superintendent on its payroll to play a role in its operation.

Wiens, in his second term on council, became part of the municipal committee about five years ago.

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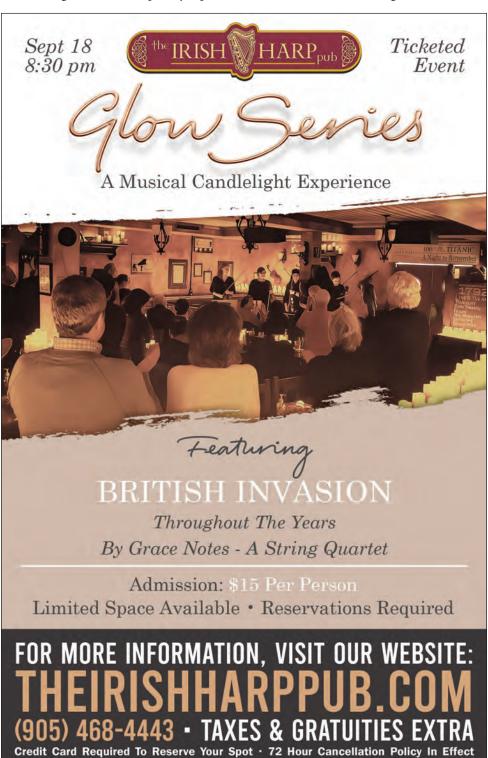
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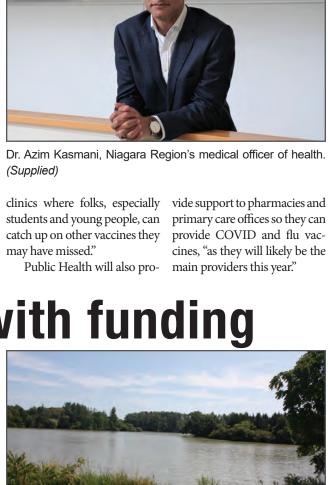


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### Feds say rifle range could be opened to public

**Kris Dube** The Local **Local Journalism Initiative Reporter** 

Recent information from the Department of National Defence provides some hope that the former rifle range on Lakeshore Road could be targeted for public use eventually, and that there isn't a great concern over possible unexploded military devices within the large field.

This confidence is despite information from the DND that 353 pieces of munitions scrap were discovered on the site as recently as 2018, including two pieces of unexploded ordnance, and there could still be some such items on the

The DND spokesperson also suggested the property is considered low risk, and if opened to the public, those using it will have to watch out for such devices and call the police if they see anything that looks like ordnance.

In correspondence with The Local, DND spokesperson Andree-Anne Poulin outlined what has taken place at the site to investigate and clear it of unexploded ordnance.

The former military training ground, on the east end of a property, has been a recent topic of discussion after the region's public works committee asked that the federal government take financial responsibility for the clean-up of the land during the decommissioning

said it has neither the skill nor the budget to handle unexploded military devices that work to decommission it.

2008 that sought out any explosives that did not explode or function as intended, including the former water treatment plant property, before a new one eventually replaced it in 2020. No ordnance was found during that investigation, said Poulin. But that survey, along with another in 2011, did not include the sewage lagoons.

"Due to the water depth and small magnetic signature" of potential unexploded devices, he said, it is not possible to investigated over the course of investigate for ordnance in the lagoons.

When the region decommissions the old plant, the possibility of ordnance needs to be taken into account, said Poulin, and disturbing the sludge is not recommended.

But he also explained that following a 2011 survey, site probes at the former rifle range have occurred.

From 2012 to 2015, the DND completed environmental and unexploded device in- have been laid against Ssovestigations on the site, which identified the presence of both environmental contaminants and the potential for unexploded ordnance.

This resulted in clearance and environmental investigations conducted in 2015 and

of the former water treatment 2016. A total of 2,947 potential Dundurn, Saskatchewan. plant to the west — the region ordnance targets were investigated over the course of the pieces were also discovered clearance.

Poulin said 573 munitions it was never told were still on scrap items were found, propthe property or included in the erly screened, packaged and sent for disposal at Canadian A survey was conducted in Armed Forces' ammunition depot in Saskatchewan.

> In that process, five suspected unexploded ordnance pieces were found and destroyed, including one three-inch mortar, one two-inch mortar and three grenades.

More work took place in 2017 and 2018 when an environmental remediation contractor and ordnance expert visited the site.

Poulin said a total of 5,229 potential ordnance targets were the remediation process, and at that time, 353 munitions scrap items were found before being screened and sent for disposal at the ammunition depot in

Two unexploded ordnance a one-inch mortar that was destroyed on site, as well as a 3.5inch unfired practice rocket.

Despite these findings in recent years, DND is "committed to ensuring the former rifle range property is made safe for parkland use," said Poulin.

"While it is difficult to completely eliminate risk" following clearance work and site investigations, DND has "assessed the former rifle range site at low-risk for future use by the community," he said.

"However, as with all former military sites, people will need to continue to use good judgement and caution when using the property," added Poulin.

If people see something that looks like it may be ordnance, they are advised to not touch it, "turn around and leave the area the same way you came in," and

The former rifle range on Lakeshore Road is now closed to the public, but that could change, says a federal spokesperson. (Kris Dube)

call local police, he said.

Originally acquired in 1908 by DND, the lands were transferred in 1947 to what is now Parks Canada.

In 1982, 23 hectares were transferred to Niagara Region for use as a sewage lagoon, and an additional 3.6 hectares was leased to the region for the operation of a wastewater treatment plant located at 1699 Lakeshore Rd.

Until 2000, the balance of the property was used by DND under lease agreement for summer militia training, and included two rifle ranges, a pistol range, a rocket range, a grenade range and a tank training and maneuvering area. There is also a small area to the west known as Niagara Shores, administered by Parks Canada. and also now off-limits to the

### 84 charges laid in Port Weller fire

**Local Staff** 

A total of 84 charges nix Products, and its three directors, with 21 counts each in connection with the explosion and massive fire on Keefer Road in Port Weller on Jan. 12, 2023.

The fire killed Ryan Konkin, 37, who was badly

He was the only employabout 6:35 a.m., followed by more explosions that went on for about 45 minutes work diligently to ensure a and were heard throughout thorough and fair legal pro-Virgil and as far away as cess. Our thoughts remain Youngstown, New York.

connection with the Keefer wards a resolution."

burned and died at Sunny- Road incident underscore brook Hospital the next day. our commitment to keeping tion released about the speour community safe," said St. ee on the premises when the Catharines Fire Chief Dave arines Fire Services. first explosion occurred at Upper in an announcement Thursday, Aug. 31.

"We will continue to with those affected by this "The charges laid in incident as we move to-

There was no informacific charges laid by St. Cath-

The first court appearance is scheduled for the end of September 2023. This appearance will mark the beginning of the court process to address the charges laid following the events at Keefer Road earlier this year.





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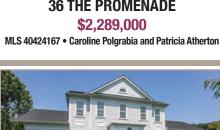
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September 6, 2023 THE NOTL Gocal

### Two new doctors coming to family health team in Virgil

#### **Penny Coles** The Local

The waitlist for a family doctor in Niagaraon-the-Lake is about to be shortened.

The Niagara North Family Health Team has two new doctors set to call the Niagara Medical Centre in Virgil home, both expected to arrive this fall.

uncertain, pending the completion of Ministry of Health paperwork.

"We are excited to welcome two long-awaited doctors to our team and hope to continue with our vision of providing health and well-being to our communities one patient at a time," says health team clinic manager Sheryl Lepp, encouraging NOTL profile sheet and drop it off at the Virgil clinic, available on the health it's a great model. Having team's website.

Dr. Anne Wilson, a very limiting." medical doctor for the last 10 years, will be the also an advantage to have much," she says. first to arrive, with a pro-

ra Falls with her husband patient, Wilson adds. and their two sons, Wildrew me to this."

Their starting dates are tra funding from the province to hire other staff, such as specialists, nurse clinic or in their own pracservices they might need — she has in the past had to pay a nurse practitioner moved to Niagara Falls, out of her own salary and she says, to be closer to her overhead.

"What's extra in a famiadministrators, are paid for by the province. I think

available for patients, and

posed start date of Oct. 1. have the time to sit down Now living in Niaga- and educate or counsel a

Wilson is a graduate of son says she is looking for- the University of Toronto ward to being part of the with more than a decade family health team model, of experience in family which she believes is able medicine, most recently to provide more services with a practice in Niagara and better care for pa- Falls. She is looking fortients, she says. "It's what ward to being in Virgil she spent some time work-Family health teams, ing in a small community Wilson explains, have ex- covering a large rural area in Northern Ontario and enjoyed it, before taking over a practice in Niagapractitioners, nurses and ra that included an oldadministrative staff, while er population with more physicians working in a complex care. She says she loved working with tice have to hire any extra seniors. "They have such interesting stories to tell."

She and her family husband's aging parents.

"The unfortunate residents without a family ly health team is these serthing," she says about the doctor to fill out a patient vices, specialized nurses, local health team and its new hirings, "is it still won't be enough."

> NOTL underyour own practice can be serviced, as is the rest of the region. "And the pop-Nurse practitioners are ulation keeps growing so

> > Family health teams,



Dr. Anne Wilson, with her two boys, eight and 10. (Supplied)

meet that need."

hours service, she says with hours that are regulated by the province.

Last April, Jill Croteau, says. the region's physician rethe time, and the town cember. needs a total of 14, based on a formula of one doc-

Coun. Sandra O'Conmodel.

told The Local.

"Doctors recognize Following more complex and hence New York State where of NOTL who is currentrequire more time, which he completed his famitranslates into an in- ly medicine residency in creased need for doctors. Plattsburgh, followed by a The exact number? I don't primary care sports medi-

However, the hiring of two new doctors she adds, and working in Toronto, "is still good news."

With a long waiting list of residents who don't thing with more of a comhave a family doctor in munity feel." NOTL, O'Connor has been advocating for another nurse practitioner, city people," and are livnot affiliated with that ing on Yorkville Avenue family health team, but instead able to see residents busy part of Toronto, but who don't have doctors. once they knew they were That nurse practitioner expecting a baby, they rewould also be able to see alized what they really

"I think that we are all to raise a family. very frustrated with the

Wilson adds, "really help fact that we don't yet have Christine — a nurse practhe nurse practitioner titioner he met while They also provide after- position in place and operating. It is still a go, but each doctor contributes making it happen with love with it, and through their time to those clinics, the Ministry of Health is challenging. We are continuing to push for it," she family doctors, learned

Later this fall, Dr. Micruitment specialist, made chael Grasic is expected a presentation to NOTL to arrive. Although his councillors, explaining the proposed start date is Nov. shortage. She said the re- 1, he says he has to work gion needed 91 more doc- out a time of notice to his tors, NOTL an additional current patients that may three — there were 11 at mean a date closer to De-

He is a family medicine physician born and raised tor for every 1,380 popu- in Mississauga, although his family at one point moved to Zagreb, Croatia, ner, who has made local where he completed his healthcare one of her pri- medical school training at orities, says she doesn't the University of Zagreb. agree that NOTL fits that He specializes in sports injuries, and says he expects "We have a population to be able to help patients time, visiting NOTL and with over 34 per cent se- at the local health team enjoying getting to know niors (65 and over)," she clinic with those kinds of the area, and hoping to problems.

that seniors' issues are school, Grasic moved to Lepp says any resident cine fellowship in Albany.

He is currently living he says, and "it's a lot of city. We wanted some-

He and his wife had thought they were "big near Bloor Street, a very wanted was a good place

When he and his wife

working in New York visited NOTL, they fell in a friend of one of the Niagara North Health Team there was a position avail-

He is very excited to be joining the health team and is looking forward to establishing a practice in the area, and to moving to Niagara with his young family — their daughter is just seven weeks old.

They soon learned, however, that there are few places to rent in NOTL that aren't tourist accommodations, and have found a place in Port Dalhousie, which they have already rented. They come to Niagara most weekends, moving in a bit at a eventually buy a house in medical town to raise their family.

> ly without a family doctor should visit niagaranorthfht.ca, click the NOTL tab, and print out a patient profile sheet.

> The clinic hours for patients of the family health team, she adds, have returned to pre-COVID: Monday and Wednesday at the Virgil Clinic (1882 Niagara Stone Road) from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday at the NOTL Clinic (101 Garrison Village Road) also from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The clinic will alternate between the two sites for Saturday clinics, from 8:25 a.m. to 12 p.m., beginning with the Sept. 2 clinic that was held in Virgil.



Dr. Michael Grasic and his wife Christine are counting down the days until they move to Niagara with their now seven-week-old daughter Lucija. (Supplied)



### Businesses seeing U.S. visitors returning

**Kris Dube** The Local **Local Journalism Initiative Reporter** 

Business owners in Niagara-on-the-Lake's Old Town are noticing similarities between this tourist season to pre-pandemic times.

And one of those indicators is the number of Americans spending time in the historic neighbourhood.

"We've seen far more U.S. customers lately," said Kevin Neufeld, owner of BeauChapeau, a hat store on Queen Street that has been in operation since 1997.

But it's not easy to say whether business is back on track entirely for local mer- a hat business with a history chants.

"It's hard to compare because so many things have Jana.

Inflation has caused evpensive, and business owners struggle to find a balance between adjusting to rising costs on their end, while keeping prices as reasonable year, everyone was experias possible for customers encing unprecedented stafflooking for some new headwear, he explained.

we all see it everywhere we few months ago. go," said Neufeld, adding that BeauChapeau also saw late, which is good," he said. a "window of opportunity" a couple of years ago when a neighbouring unit on Queen Street became vacant.

They bought The Hatter, on Avenue Road in Toronto

changed," said Neufeld, who space, which doubled in size, liveries," he told The Local. owns the store with his wife, and allowed more traffic through their doors.

erything to become more ex-started to arrive, Neufeld said some businesses in the Old Town were finding it difficult to keep a full staff.

"In the spring of this ing shortages," said Neufeld. But this appears to not be as "At the end of the day, much of an issue as it was a

"That has started to regu-

Another impact of the pandemic that seems to be part of the past are shipping and procurement probdeal with.

"This was the first sumits operations to their new where we've had on-time de-

merce seems to be "slow-When warm weather ly getting back to normal, a farm, he's aware of how break a bottom line.

ture and pointed to a few rainy weekends in the early summer dampening crucial business days.

"When you lose a week- ists back," she told the Local. end to rain in Niagaraon-the-Lake, that's money you don't make back," he back to normal." said.

"You've got to make hay when the sun is shining," younger farming days.

Neufeld also said Septem-

Street, and that the tourist dine inside. He says that com- season doesn't necessarily end after Labour Day.

Hughes-Gauld Kim but having grown up on owns Sunset Grill, also on Queen Street. She's been and all that stuff — it seems much weather can make or meeting visitors from south of the border the way she He's familiar with the used to a few years ago on the NOTL Chamber of ebb and flow of Mother Na- and sees plenty of U.S. licence plates on vehicles in the neighbourhood.

is seeing the American tour-

"It's the first summer compares to others. where it's been nice to see it

pandemic, restaurants were rant. Asked about inflation faced with several obstacles, lems that businesses had to he quipped, referring to his such as only being allowed to serve takeout for periods of time, or being required to that had closed, and moved mer in a couple of years ber and October are "very separate customers by plexibusy" months on Queen glass when it was okay to

As those restrictions came to an end, some normalcy returned.

"Fear from the pandemic to be gone now," she said.

She is also a director Commerce board, and represents merchants on Queen Street, but she hasn't seen any "One of the biggest things statistics related to how many visitors the area has seen this summer, or how this season

Hughes-Gauld staffing shortages were nev-During the COVID-19 er an issue at her restauand whether people are spending less when they go to eat — or are maybe doing so less often — she said people are definitely "watching their money more carefully."





Visitors show Queen Street is busy on a sunny September day. (Kris Dube)



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### Terry chose a positive road to take — so can we

**EDITORIAL** 

chased a T-shirt for the cer can be beaten. Terry Fox Run, we could

the day of the run.

running for someone, of- money to help others. ten year after year.

Survivors run in their ing this has a story, wheth- may be troubling us...

Mike Vriens, two men about why. We can even write our honoured by the run for

This year, if we pur- red T-shirts, to show can- er you participate in the run, make a donation, teri as a huge supporter of morning knowing they The family members of show up to cheer someone read some of the messages John van der Zalm have on, or just read the articles others had written to him a heart-wrenching story, in this week's paper about during his Marathon of as do all those who loved others who do, and think

If Terry doesn't inspire own message and drop it their courage in fighting us, he should, not necesin a box at Simcoe Park the disease, and for partic-sarily to show up at Simipating in the run them- coe Park on the day of the Everyone who takes selves when they were run, but to think about part in a Terry Fox Run being beaten down by challenges in our lives, has a story. Everyone is cancer, but wanted to raise looking at life in a more positive light, making the Every one of you read-best of whatever situation

the Terry Fox Run. He has are waiting to hear about said many times Terry in- surgery they have been spires him with his cour- waiting months for in our age and heroism, and for badly messed-up health looking at his challenges system. Or they may be

chooses a quote of Ter- supporting a loved one me that perspective is evry's — one that jumps out during whatever they have at him for how it strikes in front of them. him that particular year, and that he will likely use stay positive, because as during his comedy show Pillitteri would say, if Terwinds up his annual fundas he talks about Terry.

and as a reason to partic- that we want to help. ipate in the run, to raise money to make life better ry about his daily mara-

and facing them head-on. facing another debilitat-

All the while trying — he may be the funni- ry could do it when he est man in town, but as he faced that highway early every morning knowing do it. And we can, for all He speaks of him as an those with their stories to inspiration, as a motivator, tell, so they know we care,

"I loved it," said Terfor all those who may have thon in the quote Pillit-

We all know Joe Pillit- to get out of bed in the teri chose for this year. "I enjoyed myself so much, and that was what other people couldn't realize. They thought I was going through a nightmare running all day long."

"I love this," explains Each year, Pillitteri ing cancer treatment, or Pillitteri, "because it shows erything. If you believe in something, if you believe in anything, then working towards making it happen can reframe whatever suffering it's taking you to get through it to be a positive thing."

My message to Terry raiser, he becomes serious what was ahead, we can for the T-shirt box: If we choose his road, his kind of positive thinking, we will do a much better job of helping those who need us.

> **Penny Coles** The Local

### - *Local*Letters

### Federal inflation driving up back-to-school costs

As summer ends and last year. kids start getting their for singing the back-toschool blues this year.

caused by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Liberal government has affected every area of life — including yearly backto-school shopping for essentials.

Stationery, which includes such items as pens and paper, is up 49 per cent. Reading material is up 32 per cent. Food inflation is making it more ex-

school supplies ready, par- prices are up, and parents least. ents across the country are feeling the pressure. have their own reasons Some are cancelling their supposed to be. This was kids' extracurriculars to not Canada eight years make ends meet. Oth- ago. The inflation crisis ers are going into debt to

tin Trudeau, everything is increases so that parents broken — even back-to- can afford to buy food and school shopping.

pensive to fill a lunchbox. fuelled inflation, increas- learn. Staples like bread, crack- ing the cost of the goods ers and milk are all more we buy and the interest expensive than they were we pay. Life costs more for

all Canadians, especially Across the country, those who can afford it the

This isn't the way it's

That's why commonmake sure their children sense Conservatives and have the back-to-school our leader, Pierre Poilsupplies they need. Charievre, are fighting to bring ities that help families se- home lower prices for cure school supplies are Canadians. We will cap seeing demand skyrocket costs and stop wasteful and their resources dry government spending to bring down inflation. We After eight years of Jus- will cancel Trudeau's tax give their kids the tools Liberal policies have they need to grow and

> Tony Baldinelli, MP **Niagara Falls Riding**

#### Where's Ben?



Eden student Ben Foster continues to discover new locations in NOTL, wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. Yes, last week Ben was at a traffic circle, but as Debra Jacobs told us, the new roundabout at York Road and Glendale, which is now open.

### A man goes to the movies

#### **Donald Combe Special to The Local**

Mission: Impossible — Dead Reckoning Part One: This epic film is impossibly, unbelievably daring; impossibly long (nearly three

sible feats of daring. It is to reviews of TV movies and impossible not to love the when theatres closed during entire fantasy.

Donald Combe, who back this week.

hours), and impossibly and began sharing his reviews stunningly beautiful. It is pre-pandemic, is a retired impossible not to be swept English teacher who loves to up by this series of impos- go to the movies. He switched COVID. He made his first trip

## The Niagara-on-the-Lake

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The opinions expressed in submitted commentary, and letters to the editor,

### COMMENT

### **Specal** Letters Please leave DND land alone

Bravo to Leonard George for his letter (The NOTL Local, Aug 30) on leaving the DND property alone.

I was shocked to learn that Niagara-on-the-Lake has the lowest forest cover in the Niagara region, far below the recappears to be the perfect opremediated naturally and start to repair our forest deficit.

My wife and I were fortu-

ommended minimum. This for more than two decades. It cluding wildlife and new trees. was covered with huge conifers, portunity to leave the land to be some 80 feet tall. Almost yearly one of the older trees would fall due to natural causes. I was always astounded how quickly nate to own a cabin in a heavily an entire new ecosystem would wooded area in cottage country start around the fallen tree, in-

It seems the use of the DND for nearly a decade with no viable solution. If the land is dangerous for humans, then let's leave it alone to reforest on its own. We seem obsessed

with putting vacant land to use. Is there any better use than allands has been kicked around lowing the land to become an oxygen-generating, carbondigesting, natural engine near the centre of town, and start moving back in the right direction towards reforestation?

We can survive without more parkland, but we can't survive without oxygen. When our natural world is involved, often the best solution is just leave it alone.

> **Michael Peirce NOTL**

#### **Spocal** LETTERS Development should be transparent, straightforward

A democracy is based on laws and rules being applied equally and equitably to all people. Without favour.

In a municipality, the rules for land use are found in the Official Plan and its bylaws. When people look at buying a house or land, they inform themselves by verifying the Official Plan and respective bylaw for the property and surrounding neighbourhood. When developers evaluate the should include:

purchase of land they do the same thing. The rules of the game must be transparent.

To evaluate the proposal for the three-storey apartment (condominium) building at 727/733 King Street, the process should be straightforward. Does the proposal meet Official Plan? the existing legal Official Plan and bylaws or not?

If this proposal is to be considered then the criteria ments of the Official Plan and

1. Why significant exemptions to the Official Plan and bylaws are so compelling and unique to warrant such a major change (without favour).

2. Does the proposal have a complete application with all the analyses as required by the

3. Even with the major change in zoning, does the proposal meet the requirethe new zoning?

This proposal fails all

One example. The building will be 16 feet and 25 feet respectively from singledetached homes on Meritage Lane. The Official Plan the building. How long will requires the evaluation of impacts of a new building on surrounding low density houses and the neighbourhood. What will these impacts be and how will they be mitigated? What is the effect on

privacy, oversight, light, noise? We don't know because the developer decided no analysis was necessary.

Shadows will block sunlight for 15-plus homes around each home have sunlight blocked and will it be blocked going into homes and/or in backyards and patios? We don't know because there was no analysis provided.

If this building is approved

in contradiction to the legal Official Plan, then this town does not have an Official Plan. Residents will not be able to have trust in the laws and rules set out and developers will be encouraged to submit any and all applications they choose.

Once the rules of the game can be different for different people, there are no rules.

> **Patrick Gedge** Meritage Lane, NOTL

### - **Specal** LETTERS DND property deemed safe before sewage treatment plant was built -

on the Department of National Defence Lakeshore Road property have been determined to have unexploded ordnance in them?

Detailed below is the public announcement issued by the Niagara Region on their website:

"Niagara Region, in collaboration with Parks Canada, completed a coordinated federal and provincial environmental assessment study for the decommissioning of the existing Niagara-Wastewater Treatment Plant. This included the additional on-site buildings and structures, two aeration lagoons and two facultative lagoons.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Wastewater Treatment Plant and Lagoon Decommission-Class Environmental Assessment was completed November 2018. The existwastewater treatment plant has reached the end of new wastewater treatment have taken place? plant." (Existing Niagara-onthe-Lake Wastewater Treat- are unexploded ordnanc- starting with Niagara Shores ment Plant and Lagoon Decommissioning — Niagara did they get there? Certainly far easterly portion known Region, Ontario)

This property was deemed

exploded ordnance prior to nance!! And certainly not afthe massive excavation that was undertaken to prepare the two ponds in the 1960s.

which the decommissioned buildings and adjoining infrastructure are now located, was also approved.

Now it is being brought to the attention of the region and Parks Canada that the ponds contain unexploded ordnances. I am not certain how this could have occurred. I was an enlisted reservist for many years with the Toronto Scottish Regiment operating out of the Fort York Armoury on Fleet Street in Toronto. We were convoyed to Niagaraon-the-Lake for weapons the DND Lands and rifle range in the early 1960s. At no time was there any mortar rounds or grenades lobbed/fired into the existing lagoons or adjoining buildits service life and the facility ings. Why would anyone DND Land in its entirety is has been replaced with the even think that this could officially closed to the Cana- to construct a Military Muse- (So they now say). The con-

es in the sewage ponds, how Park and extending to the

How is it the two ponds to be safe and clear of any unhave absolutely hit live orditer the ponds were built. This becomes more of a question as to who wrote the report, In addition, the land on and how was it they came to the conclusion there are unexploded ordnances in the ponds. So how can this riddle be solved?

The second question is why was the \$10 million reserve set aside by the Niagara Region for the remediation of the Old Sewage Treatment Plant reduced to \$2 million? Could it be due to the cost of building the new sewage plant far exceeded the Niagara Region's budget by several millions of dollars? And not withstanding, the new plant opened several years behind schedule. This training and maneuvers on entire series of events continues to keep on giving and now the region is looking for funds from the Federal Government to remove unexploded ordnance!!

In the meantime, the dian taxpayer. We have been um (several thousand square struction of the breakwalls If the report states there told the property is not safe, feet and adjoining parking will take decades (remember cat's meow if we could add a not prior to the property be- as the Rifle Range. Parks

"shoreline cliffs are a clear received the "green light" and present danger to the from the federal governgeneral public both at Niag- ment (Parks Canada) to ara Shores Park and the Rifle Range." It becomes a matter of liability to Parks Canada having to insure the property and building a breakwall along the shore (at a cost of lion, including parking for tens of millions of dollars) to keep them from eroding.

Canada has stonewalled any attempt to work with them in conjunction with the Town Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Niagara Region and the NPCA to make this property accessible to the public (while protecting the wildlife plants and species at risk, wetlands, creeks and the last of the Carolinian forest).

So again, it must be questioned. Why is it Parks Canada does not want to open this property to the public?

There were no obstacles put up by Parks Canada when the Lincoln Welland Regiment requested a Memon Shakespeare Avenue).

There were no obstaing excavated as they would Canada has made it clear the cles when Project Niagara speculation that Parks Can-

construct a massive concert venue hosting upwards of 250,000 to 300,000 people over six months a year at an estimated cost of \$76 milthousands of cars on the old sewage plant property and Over the years Parks the Rifle Range. Another top-down (federal government working with Parks Canada and the Niagara Region). This entire proposal was started by the National Arts Centre, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, a consultant from Montreal and the federal government. This was fast-tracked to be open and operational within three years, but after five years of discussions, the plug was pulled by the proponents for the project in 2010, after they couldn't secure funding.

Fast forward to 2023 and the timelines have reversed. The supposed clean-up of orandum of Understanding two ponds will take years!! the backyards of the homes Project Niagara or the pro- nature park? posed military museum).

Let's do away with all the

ada has declared this property as "surplus government lands" and will sell it off to a developer to build a marina, possibly a hotel/condominium and accommodate a ferry service from Toronto. Let's do away with the speculation that there is a right of way roadway from Shakespeare Avenue allowing vehicular traffic to access the DND lands to the Rifle Range. Let's do away with the speculation that Parks Canada continues to change the plan/strategy for this property and really does want to make it accessible for the general public.

And finally, let's do away with the speculation that the Battle of Fort George took place where the current monument sits on Queen Street (near the golf course), when it primarily was fought between Two-Mile Creek and One Mile Creek on the DND lands.

We have so much to be thankful for as residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake the surrounding Niagara region. Wouldn't it just be the on the Rifle Range bordering this was not an issue with waterfront and a protected

> Finn Madsen **NOTL** resident

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### Flying high with local air rescue volunteers

#### Mike Balsom The Local

With local air search and rescue volunteers getting set for an open house, The Local was invited on a simulated rescue flight with pilot Paul Eyles, volunteer Randy Klassen, and Klassen's nephew and 809 Newark Royal Camember Elias Dau.

Upon arrival at the Niagara District Airport, Klassen, Eyles and fellow pilot Gord Tessier, members of the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) Niagara, were abuzz with excitement about the landing of a Royal Canadian Air Force Hercules C-130J aircraft on the runway. Warrant officer Tyler Ashbee invites the group onto the \$75 million plane, including Dau, in the area on an active search for a person in Lake Erie, for a tour.

Following that, the group reconvenes at a small building across from the terminal, where CASARA, or CARES Niagara as it is commonly known, is based.

The not-for-profit organization provides volunteer air and ground search and rescue services throughout Southwestern Ontario and beyond, into Ontario and Quebec as required. The Niagara unit, incorporated in 1977, primarily supports aviation safety and assists with the country's search and rescue program.

Local volunteers are trained to a high level of competency for both airborne community." and ground based search and rescue operations, with standards set by Canada's military. They are ready and available to respond to calls for help 24 hours a day seven days a week, and play a vital role in Canada's search and rescue program.

"We have three pilots currently," Klassen tells The Local. "We get some funding to cover expenses for training. We get a budget for that and have to keep within it. When we get called out on an actual mission, the funding comes be manually activated through CASARA via the Department of Defence."

THE NOTL Spocal \_

Klassen guides The Local training of the almost 40 volunteers takes place regularly. He picks up an iPad and shows an image from an app called Foreflight.

nadian Air Cadet Squadron greatest advancement in farmer's field in the Beamsaviation safety since the jet ville area earlier that mornengine," explains Tessier, ing. Eyles was to take us up to pointing out the expanding squares on the screen. "That's our meat and potatoes. They give the coordinates to us in that format and we just go out and find it."

used by the team include four-seat Cessna twin engine the use of drones (remotely piloted aircraft systems), Go Pro cameras whose high says, "we can't really respond resolution geotagged images are converted into a program called Loc8, and remote satellite communication using we remain safe while doing the InReach system.

Klassen says CASARA Niagara has been called out six times on searches since ing that it's every search and the start of the year, a much slower pace than the 16 missions the organization participated in last year.

"Four were conducted by aircraft; two were conducted by drones," explains Klassen about this year's action. "We had one in March that was a 'major' which lasted several days, and involved crews from across Ontario, and one from Manitoba. It was based out of Thunder Bay, involving a missing aircraft flying

Klassen adds that three of the six searches were "humanitarian," meaning people in the water (one boater and two swimmers), while two were for Emergency Locator Transmitters, or ELT's.

The day's flight was to be a simulation of a search for one of those ELT's. These are attached to airplanes and broadcast distinctive signals on designated frequencies. Depending on the application, ELT's may be automat-

"Air traffic control picks up the signal and relays it to JRCC (Joint Rescue Cothrough a large room where ordination Centre, in Trenton, Ontario)," Klassen says. "They call us and tell us to go and check it out."

Klassen explains that a transmitter with a training "That's probably the signal had been placed on a demonstrate what the volunteers go through on a typical

After everyone is strapped into the cockpit, Eyles goes through a detailed checklist, Other recent advances ensuring all functions on the aircraft are working.

> "As you can see," Klassen to emergencies at the drop of a hat. There's so much that has to be done to make sure an aerial search."

Klassen hands this reporter a paper bag, explainrescue volunteer's best friend.

"I've been at this for many years," Klassen laughs, "and I still get sick up there from time to time."

Shortly after lifting off, veteran pilot Eyles guides the plane to 2,000 feet over Port Dalhousie, and points out that he has begun to hear the ELT signal. Klassen draws attention to a dial on the instrument panel, locking in at a frequency of 121.775.

"That's our training sigfood supplies to a northern nal," explains Klassen, as Eyles guides the Cessna toward the ELT, careful to maintain the position of the arrow at the centre of the gauge.

Klassen begins looking out the side window in an effort to spot a marker that had been dropped on the field where the transmitter was placed, part of the property belonging to Sue Ann Staff Winery.

As the plane banks, both Klassen and this reporter spot the marker that is sending off the signal. As ically activated by impact or an attempt is made to snap



Warrant officer Tyler Ashbee gives Randy Klassen a tour of the inside of the Hercules C-130J made available for air search and rescue volunteers to use for a training exercise. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Pilot Paul Eyles going over his preflight safety checklist.

some photos from above, the inexperienced passenger responders, but we somefeels the need to hold that there quickly," says Klassen, Luckily, once back on terra called out five days later for firma, the unused bag is easily folded and put into a back person in the Beaches area of pocket.

"I forgot to take Gravol myself," Klassen laughs. "I into my supply bag. I prefer drowsy."

With members who live former career. as far away as Whitby, volunteers such as Klassen and work involved in it, too," Eyles are valuable to CASA- he adds. "We are all volun-RA Niagara as they are both teers, we don't get reimbretired and live not too far ursed for what we do. When Airport in the CASARA Nifrom the airport.

from the weekly newspaper times do need to get up paper bag close to his mouth. a retired minister who was a drone search for a missing Toronto.

Not a pilot himself, Klassen says he has great respect didn't realize until we got for those such as Eyles and up that I forgot to pack it Tessier who fly the planes. He clearly has a love for avithe ginger-based product ation and sees a bit of a conbecause it doesn't make you nection between search and

"There's a lot of teamthere's a callout, we incur agara building.

"We're not emergency some personal expenses,

CASARA Niagara's open house will include a classroom session on the basics of electronic homing (used to find people in distress) and on how to use various radio receivers and equipment. That will be followed by a basic homing exercise in the yard. Ground tours of aircraft used in their work will be conducted — no need to pack a paper bag — and there will be demonrescue operations and his strations on equipment and technology used in search and rescue.

> The open house runs Saturday, Sept. 16 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Niagara District



notllocal.com

### A sweet, buttery end to Chautauqua summer

#### **Mike Balsom** The Local

An annual tradition to conclude the summer continued in Old Town Niagaraon-the-Lake's Chautauqua neighbourhood on Labour Day.

Residents of the community gathered with friends and visitors of all ages at Chautauqua Park Monday afternoon for the annual corn roast and barbecue, hosted by the Chautauqua Residents Association.

The CRA is a not-for-profit organization which has represented the neighbourhood since 1952, helping to maintain and enhance life in the community. This largely includes working with the town to advocate for residents and presenting social events for the community to come together

and enjoy.

Association has been going on for at least 25 years.

"For me, and for many others in our neighbourhood," Miller said, "the Corn Roast is a significant community event. It is one of those rare instances where the entire community can come together in one space and see one another. And it thrills me to see that we have a new generation of young families and children back in Chautauqua."

That included the Mc-Guires — Spencer, Michaela and their two children Maven and Emery — who sat alongside longtime Chautauqua residents Charmian Entine and Rayburn Blake. Ruby Keir

brought along her young niece president Ash, visiting from California, Weston Miller, who fondly re- who was clearly enjoying her members attending the corn hot dog. And Robin Cordoroast as a child, is sure the event zo and Jeff Richardson shared some stories between bites of

Lee Chan and Wayne up, and run the event. McIsaac manned the barbecues, serving up hot dogs to the around for the entire two-hour more unified and stronger than participants. Miller gave much credit to residents Derek and Wendy Cadman, who took the time to gather the supplies, set



The Chautauqua community is stronger than ever, says Weston Miller, mostly thanks to the influx of young families, who turned out to enjoy the day and all the festivities. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

period and beyond, talking about neighbourhood news and other topics while joining in on some picnic games.

"I truly believe that the Many who attended stuck Chautauqua community is ever," stated Miller, "and that is thanks to both the new residents and established families in the neighbourhood."



Nick Barker, Rayburn Blake, Charmian Entine, Ian Gillespie, Maven McGuire, Michaela McGuire and Emery McGuire enjoy the annual Chautaugua Corn Roast with family, friends and neighbours.



Lee Chan at the barbecue.



Robin Cordozo and Jeff Richardson enjoy corn and the conversation at the annual corn roast.



Ruby Keir and her daughter Ash, visiting from California, chat

### **Public Meeting on September 12th at Town Hall YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED!**

Save Old Town From multi-residential re-zoning!

### THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

Proposal for 727/733 King Street -South End in a cul-de-sac



A 17 unit - 3 storey apartment building has been proposed by Bice Builders amongst an existing residential neighbourhood on a mere .80-acre lot. This proposal invades the privacy of neighbouring homes with balconies and windows overlooking their properties. Hours of darkness will be cast upon existing homes.

Bice Builders have applied for many more amendments to the Official Plan.

This sets precedence for all of Old Town if approved. Do you want this to happen in your backyard?

PLEASE SHOW YOUR SUPPORT AND REGISTER/ATTEND THE PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE ON SEPTEMBER 12TH 6 PM.

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

- 1. REGISTER: clerks@notl.com to attend the public or virtual meeting on Sept 12 at 6pm. File # OPA-04-2023 & ZBA 13-2023
- 2. **ATTEND:** Sept 12, 6pm at Town Hall, 1593 Four Mile Creek in Virgil
- 3. WRITE: comments to Town Clerk clerks@notl.com or to the Planner II, Aimee Alderman at: aimee.alderman@notl.com
- 4. READ MORE: Go to: www.bit.ly/727King for more information, or scan QR code:

**Submitted by the King Street Neighbourhood** 



grew up not far from the lum-

really supportive since the beginning," Mills explains.

"She was so gracious to allow

us to set up the table. I was blown away that every single

person stopped and was receptive to what I was saying.

They all took bookmarks —

men, women, everyone was

so kind."

"Marcia Penner has been

ber yard, once worked.

### Local author takes children on a magical journey

#### Mike Balsom The Local

Former St. Davids resident Kaley Mills' upcoming debut children's book is capturing attention from across the globe.

Bianca the Brave follows Bianca Monroe, a character made famous by author Katie Cross in a series of 60 young adult books, as she fights off flames threatening the forest in Letum Wood, part of Cross' fantasy world Alkarra. The fierce barefoot warrior uses her trusty sword to push the fire back, but lays down that weapon to save the life of a bird whose ability to fly has been lost to the heat.

Mills collaborated on the book with Cross, who lives in Montana. The mother of four has been working with the popular author since her last child, four-year-old Riley, was born.

"I was spending a lot of time in the nursery," Mills tells The Local, "and I was looking for an e-book to read in the dark. I stumbled on Katie's first e-book, Flame, which she offers for free. I loved it so much, so I reached out to her via email. We struck up an online friendship."

As Mills devoured more of Cross' writing during the pandemic, she began talking to Cross about the possibility of working for her.

"She asked me to send her my dreams," marvels Mills. "No one other than my mom has ever asked me that. She ended up offering me three jobs, and stressed that her company had to work for me as much as I had to work for the company."

On the phone while promoting her books at Atlanta, Georgia's annual Dragon Con event, Cross remembers that conversation well.

"I remember having a really good feeling about her right from the start," says Cross. "When we began talking about her coming on as a beta reader and editor, I just wanted to know that she would be so excited. I didn't want her to try to make me happy by saying it would be a dream to work for me. If Alkarra, my fantasy world, could bring her own dreams to the forefront, I was so happy to bring her in."

Cross has built a following around the world and won awards for Bianca's adven-



Authors Kaley Mills and Katie Cross work together at the Cross Montana home. (Supplied)

Mabel's School for Girls. Her into a younger version of the fans have become used to her prolific work habits, cranking out a YA manuscript each month. Mills felt so fortunate to become part of her mentor's development team, providing advice on character creation and continuity.

approach Cross about her idea to turn Bianca, a grownup character in her early 20s,

dragonslayer.

'We were away at a cottage in the summer," Mills recalls, "and I woke up in the middle of the night with this story burning inside of me about Bianca. I could not go back to sleep until I had writ-Soon, she was ready to ten it down. I sent it to Katie in the morning. She wrote back immediately, and said we needed to publish it."

Cross says her readers approach her often with ideas of their own for Bianca's Alkarra adventures. But this one was different.

"I'm always open to those ideas, because it's exciting to see Alkarra moving beyond me," says Cross. "But I was really floored by Kaley's manuscript. I remember the feeling in my chest. She gets it. She sees Alkarra and Bianca and

the vision I have for my company. I saw so much potential for this book and future ones to bring goodness back into the world through escapism means that Mills and Cross and magic."

The pair decided to launch Bianca the Brave via a Kickstarter campaign, which opened on Aug. 22 with the goal of raising \$13,584 (US \$10,000). They smashed that goal in 12 hours, and at press time 243 backers had pledged \$21,355 (US \$15,600).

"Katie has such a big following," says Mills. "We worked really hard to get the word out about the campaign. We estimated that we would maybe hit 30 per cent on day one. She writes young adult fantasy books, so we had no idea how a kids book would be received. By the end of that day I felt so humbled, speechless and honoured that people would believe in it."

On Saturday, Mills had a table set up to promote the crowdfunding effort at Penner Home Hardware, where her husband, Aaron, who

Mills and Cross had a chance to meet in person for the first time just before the launch. The two mothers immediately hit it off when Mills travelled to Cross' Montana home.

"I only knew her by video, so when we met in person it was like she became threedimensional," laughs Mills. "Our friendship just became so enhanced."

The Kickstarter success can give the go-ahead to illustrator Laila Savoainen of Australia to begin drawing out the entire story. As well, they are hoping the funds can be sufficient to bring in Guatemalan Andy Gonzalez to translate the story into Spanish, and Kaley's cousin Sophie, who lives in France, to provide the French translation.

"If all goes well," says Mills, who expects Bianca the Brave to be available in paperback and hardcover versions by the end of November, "we'll have women from five different parts of the world working on this."

Mills, who returned to her job this week teaching Grade two at Jacob Beam Public School in Beamsville, has already spoken to Cross about more Alkarra adventures in children's book form.

"The second book is already written," Mills says. "It's about Merrick, a little longblonde-haired boy. As we go forward, we want to show a host of minority populations. I've seen in my teaching career that little boys don't like to read. If they can see themselves in a book, then they can be successful in reading.

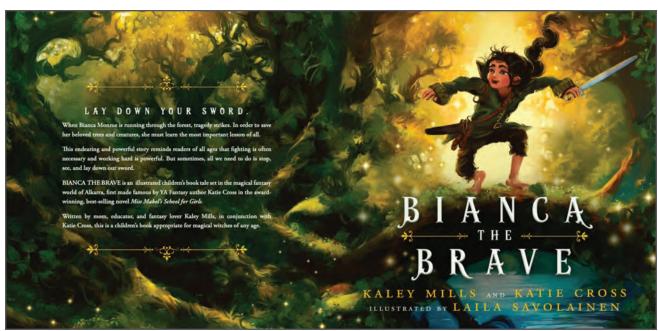
Her third Alkarra book will feature Sanna, a little girl who has vision impairment.

The Bianca the Brave Kickstarter campaign wraps up this Sunday, Sept. 10. Mills promises that once the books are ready for sale, she'll be back at Penner Home Hardware with the physical copies.

To pre-order a copy of Bianca the Brave, contact Mills at kaleymills@gmail.com.



Kaley Mills sets up a table at Penner's Building Centre to promote the crowdfunding effort for her book. (Mike Balsom)



tures in books such as Miss Bianca the Brave is sure to attract attention from the younger set. (Supplied)



Serving the Niagara Region since 2005







Joe Pillitteri and Joan King show off this year's Terry Fox T-shirts, called Dear Terry, representing the many hand-written letters he received during his run. There will be shirts available in Simcoe Park Sept. 17, the day of the run. (Penny Coles)





### Spocal Spove

#### **Loyalty Discounts for** the Locals we Love



**Local Love Recipe** presented by:



#### Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 cups white
- 3/4 cup orange juice 1/2 cup pineapple

juice

- 2 Tbsp OLiV Peach White Balsamic
- Fresh or frozen fruit (peaches, cranberries, strawberries, oranges, etc.)
- 1/4 cup Ginger Ale, Sprite, 7 UP or soda water

**Directions:** Pour wine, orange juice and pineapple juice into a jug. Add Peach Balsamic. Stir to mix well. Add fruit and mix again. Add ice to 2 large wine glasses. Add some fruit to each glass. Divide sangria between 2 glasses. Top with soda. Add fruit to rim of glass for garnish. Serves 2. ENJOY!



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### **CELLARS WINERY**



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12 September 6, 2023

### Team Pillsy setting \$1 million goal for Terry Fox Foundation

#### **Penny Coles** The Local

Joe Pillitteri, local businessman best-known for his fundraising comedy routines (and this year his appearance on The Amazing Race, a popular CTV show), is again donating his time for something he feels passionate about — raising money for the Terry Fox Foundation.

Around this time every year, The Local has the opportunity to meet with him and Joan King, local organizer of to talk about fundraising plans.

They both have the same goal — to add to the total collected from the run in NOTL — and King knows that most of it comes from Team Pillsy, which has now raised more than \$600,000 since Pillitteri started taking part, each year looking for new ways to make more money.

King says at the Simcoe Park meeting, "one day we're going to make a video of this," as Pillitteri always manages to turn it into a comedy routine, offering some of what the audience at his upcoming community centre show might hear.

As grateful as she is to Pillitteri for putting the NOTL run on the map for the money it raises, he appreciates all she does to organize it, "turning the run into something incredible."

This year Pillitteri's traditional warm-up show will be held at the home of Dave and Rita Mines Sept. 7, where he decides what stays in his routine and what doesn't go over so well with the crowd, before



the Niagara-on-the-Lake run, Joe Pillitteri and run organizer Joan King at the Simcoe Park bandshell, where King will be set up early in the morning of Sept. 17 for the run. Volunteers will also be at the entrance to the park, she says. She is hoping the town will close off the roads along the route of the run — that hasn't happened before — but she didn't have an answer from them for The Local on Tuesday. (Penny Coles)

taking to the stage at the community centre, which is being held after the run, Sept. 29.

Comics David Green and Frank Spadone are joining him — on hearing Spadone is part of the show, Pillitteri says his father Vince's reaction was "that's good he's going to be there. He's a real comedian."

However, as much as Pillitteri jokes, he couldn't be more serious about his goal of raising \$1 million since his first run in

His participation then came at a difficult time in his life, when his fledgling business was not doing well, and he was afraid of losing it. He happened to pick up a book about Terry Fox and his Marathon of Hope — one of his daughters was using it for a school project.

He says it made him realize the obstacles faced by the young man who had set out to run across Canada on one leg

to help fund a cure for cancer, and all that he accomplished in a short time, before having to stop his fundraising run because his cancer had returned.

Terry's challenges were far more difficult than anything he was facing, Pillitteri said, and inspired by Fox, he participated in the run that September, and has done so each year since. He raised less than \$400 in 2008, but his determination and commitment have seen that total increase yearly.

The 2022 NOTL run, says King, raised about \$160,000. "Of that, \$105,000 was from Ioe." He plans to beat that this month.

Pillitteri says when he thinks of Terry for inspiration, he pictures him not as the Canadian icon known around the world, but the young man "who was a son and a brother and a cousin" to a family who loved him, and he thinks of the choices Terry's family members

have made to continue his legacy and honour his name.

Pillitteri's own brush with death, rolling down a hill in a grape harvester he was demonstrating to a client, reinforced his commitment to the Terry Fox Foundation, he says.

The upcoming annual event a comedy night, but it is always an opportunity to spread the message of Terry Fox and the importance of the run.

Terry's older brother, Fred Fox, is also sharing the stage, doing the live auction with Pillitteri. Fred is in town this week he is expected to be at the flagraising at the town hall Wednesday, Sept. 6, at 5 p.m.

Pillitteri can't say enough about the women he refers to as the "Keebler Elves," working away at Cornerstone Community Church to make and sell about 260 peach pies in just a few days, and helping him get

more than \$5,000 closer to his edy show, Pillitteri had thought

"The pies were incredible, so good," he says, as was the community of people who donated the ingredients so the \$20 per pie could go to the run — Seaway Farms and Froese Farms for the peaches, St. Davids Cold Storage, Maria Mavridis of Corks, Dorothy and Erwin Wiens, and Kathy Dyck.

While locally we may know Pillitteri best for his support of the Terry Fox Foundation, he also acts as MC and auctioneer to help out Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara, FIDA, which holds a fundraiser in NOTL every year to help finance the organization's work to help the poor of Haiti, and he appears at the annual Kristen French Advocacy Centre fundraiser.

Like the Terry Fox Foundation, those organizations have to fundraise, with most of their money to continue their work coming from the public, he says.

And of course he now has at the community centre may be another claim to fame — his appearance on a recent episode of The Amazing Race, with his grape harvesters used for one of the competitors' challenges held at Chateau des Charmes Winery, before they headed off to 124 on Queen for their next challenge, and the finish at Fort Mississauga.

> His appearance was brief, which was not surprising, he noted, as the camera crew had so much to film and then narrow down into a short segment of the show, but he was very impressed by their professionalism, and he had a blast doing

> > As for the upcoming com-

about choosing a bigger venue, to be able to sell more tickets and raise more money to reach his ambitious goal, but in the end he decided not to.

He had started out at Ravine Vineyard Estate's outdoor space, and has performed in its conference centre as well, but moved to the community centre to accommodate more tables and more guests. It draws a large local crowd, which everyone enjoys.

Pillitteri talks of his father, Vince, who not only loves coming to watch his son perform, but also to see his buddies — "that's a big part of the evening

His sisters too, who organize the event, "come home talking about who they saw there and who they talked to. It's a community event, and that's important."

And in addition to selling 360 tables, everything is sponsored — by Lakeview Equipment, Seaway Farms and local wineries — including the auction items, with all the proceeds going to the Terry Fox Foundation.

"We could have a larger venue and sell more tickets, but we would be missing out on the community component,"

A Joe Pillitteri comedy night is always a sell-out. Tickets will be available soon at seawayfarms.ca, so don't miss out.

To donate to Team Pillsy, or to register for the run that begins at 9 a.m. at Simcoe Park Sunday, Sept. 17, visit terryfox.

### firefighter Mike Vriens Terry Fox run to honour NOTL volunteer died of fighters or a friend or neighbour, and it's not always the same

### occupational cancer

#### **Penny Coles** The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake lost a dedicated, beloved and highly-respected volunteer firefighter in 2019 to a type of cancer Safety and Insurance Board as an occupational disease for firefighters.

Mike Vriens had been committed to being firefighter for more than 30 years, reaching the rank of captain with Station 1, the Old Town department.

For almost seven years, he tre. battled glioblastoma multiforme, a cancer that affects the brain.

Vriens was born and raised in Niagara-on-the-Lake, says his sister Corinne Unruh, and was considered someone who made a huge impact on the town, both as a firefighter and a life-long member of the community.

He was a student at St. Vincent de Paul School in the Old Town, St. Michael in Virgil and then Niagara District Secondary School.

"He loved this town, and worked not only to support it but to help others. Once you've grown up here, it's so in your

Vriens was a member of town staff for 35 years in the someone needed something." that is listed on the Workplace roads department, and between his outdoor work, which included planting trees, and as a volunteer firefighter, "he knew a lot of people, and had a lot of friends," says Unruh.

> the local morning coffee groups that met at the community cen-

> Once he couldn't drive, "I would get him there, or somebody from the group would pick him up," she says.

> Some of the group were firefighters, and those meetings with friends meant a lot him,

> He continues to be mourned by many who knew him.

> Every year since he passed away, on July 27, a group of people have gathered at his gravesite to tell stories and remember him, she says. Some may be friends from work, others fire-

people. Some years the group is larger than others, depending on who is able to get there, and when they leave his gravesite they head to the Sandtrap Pub and Grill afterwards, she adds.

"He had so many friends, knew so many people, and he was always there to help if

"When I visit the gravesite, ry so often I see a little memorial left behind. I can sometimes tell who has been there because of what they'd left."

She says she often runs into He also belonged to one of people who will stop to chat about something that is happening in town. "They will say, 'if Michael was here, he would know about it.' He would always know what was going on. He not only talked to everybody, he was really interested in what they would have to say."

> He was also involved in many community activities, including being a regular participant in the Terry Fox Run.

> Retired principal Sharon Burns, now a reporter for The Local, was also a volunteer firefighter, and considered Vriens a friend. When she takes part in the Terry Fox run, she does it for him, she says.

She too had a horrendous battle with cancer — stage 4 breast cancer, and a double mastectomy. "It was a hell of a year," she says, but while she went through treatment, he was on the phone with her regularly, and made a huge difference in

He would talk to her about what he was going through and encouraged her to share what was happening to her. "It was the best thing for my mental health," she says. "Mike was awesome. I miss him dearly."

Certain types of cancer can be considered an occupational cancer, Burns explained — she and Vriens both had to retire from the NOTL department after they were diagnosed, as the department's insurance would no longer cover them because of their cancer history.

Vriens, she says, "was very mindful of community events, and he had walked in the Terry Fox runs for as long as I had known him."

Vriens this year, last year it paid tribute to John van der Zalm, also a pillar in the community. His sons told The Local he had fought a cancer diagnosis for seven years, and had walked the Terry Fox fundraising event for



Mike Vriens had been a firefighter for more than 30 years, and was captain of Station 1 (Old Town) when he was diagnosed with cancer.

every one of those seven years - his last one with a cane.

Burns recalls one year sitting on a bench in Simcoe Park after she, Vriens and van der Zalm While the event honours had walked the route, one on each side of her. "Mike was happy to be there in that moment, happy to be part of it, because the Terry Fox Run was fighting for a cure, fighting to raise money for a cure, and he was right in the middle of it."

Vriens is remembered as someone who showed courage, when he was fighting fires, and when he was fighting cancer.

He was much-loved by many - family, friends, firefighters and others who were touched by his life.

"I still hear from people who were very fond of him," his sister Unruh says, "people who remember him fondly."

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2023 SIMCOE PARK

September 6, 2023 13

To register
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or call Joan King
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# Proud to support the Niagara-on-the-Lake Terry Fox Run CARLOTTA LATTERIA 59 Queen St, NOTL gelatodicarlotta.com

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THE NOTL Gocal September 6, 2023

### Rescue organization overwhelmed with kittens

#### **Sharon Burns** The Local

NOTL Cats is a 100 per cent volunteer-driven non-profit rescue group of people who help to support spay and neuter, vaccination, microchip and emergency veterinarian care for cats and kittens. But they need help to finance all they accomplish.

To do that, they are holding a special bake and yard sale Saturday, Sept. 16, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"Typically, we do not do a fundraiser this late in the summer," said volunteer Tanya Rice. "We usually concentrate on spring and December, but due to the overwhelming fact that we are at our maximum capacity between the shelter itself, and our foster homes, we really need another fundraiser."

NOTL Cats has 29 kittens and four adult females in care, and one cat is expected to give birth at any time.

There are four ways to support NOTL Cats: adoption, fostering, volunteering and donations, she explains.

Virgil Pet Valu has committed to partnering with the rescue organization to find homes for kittens and cats. Lately, volunteers have been bringing felines to the store on rotating Saturdays and Sundays for a meet and greet with customers.

"Through some of that community initiative we have had some very successful adoptions," said Rice. In fact, a lovely couple

from NOTL just adopted Peter and Penelope last night. It's really nice, from a foster point of view, to see that the kittens we foster are staying in Niagara-on-the-Lake."

Coincidentally, "when we were at Pet Valu on Sunday with some of the kittens, this gentleman came in and I thought, 'ohh he looks really familiar," said Rice. "Well, he adopted one of our fosters last year, and he said, 'Look, here's Juno and he's thriving, and he's such a good boy. This is what makes fostering very rewarding."

Rice explained that post-COVID still complicates the adoption process, because of cat and kitten abandonment. "We're always looking for fosters who don't want the lifetime commitment of owning a pet, but may just want companionship, or they have the space in their home."

To be eligible to foster, a volunteer from NOTL Cats completes a quick visual home inspection to ensure there is adequate space for the cat, and that it is a safe site. "NOTL Cats provides the foster with all the supplies they need, from a litter box and toys, to a cat climber and food. A volunteer will drive to the vet if there's a medical issue, or if it's time for it to be spayed, neutered, vaccinated, etcetera, unless as a foster you're also willing to do that."

"We're just looking for caring, compassionate people who have an open heart and open mind and an open home to fos-



Dinie has been with NOTL Cats since February 2022. She is very playful, sweet and, interestingly, loves men. She would love to have a permanent home. (Photos supplied)

ter," said Rice.

Complete a contact form on the NOTL Cats website expressing interest in fostering, volunteering or adopting, and one of the volunteers will email the appropriate application.

The Bake and Yard Sale fundraiser will be held just behind Crossroads Public School, at 456 Line 2 Road.

"Our volunteers and our foster parents are contributing baked goods, and friends, family and neighbours have searched their homes or cottages this summer, and have donated items to the yard sale," said Rice.

Some of the wonderful baking includes homemade jams, honey loaf, butter tarts, date squares, brownies, banana bread and freshly made scones.

"One of the things that we're going to be very excited about is Christmas in September. We're

going to have a couple of tables just dedicated to seasonal items,"

She asks that early birds wait until 9 a.m. to arrive, as they will be addressing the needs of cats diseases such as feline leukemia. and kittens prior to starting.

spay and neuter their animals,

late and add to the number of imals. Microchipping is so valuhomeless cats, which have become a world-wide pandemic post-COVID but also to reduce the risk of pets contracting feline

could be adopted with one of them.

Rice is also an advocate for Rice reminds people to microchipping cats. "I see all the time on Lost Pets Niagara, the

able because it helps to reunite the fur babies with their owners."

Bessie and her four siblings, Barbie, Bailey, Bellini and Binxi,

are all looking for homes, and it would be great if Bessie

Rice advised, "Whether it's a cat or a dog, spay, neuter, microchip and vaccinate."

Cats and kittens available for adoption can be viewed on the NOTL Cats website (notlcats. weebly.com) or type notlcats into

#### not only to reduce the colony Humane Society Facebook page, of abandoned cats that popu- that people are missing their anthe Facebook search bar. **Pedal Pushers prepare for** palliative care fundraiser

#### **Sharon Burns** The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care is raising funds this year to help establish a new program called Ben's Compassionate Community, named for NOTL resident Ben Buholtz.

Buholtz "is very well known creased the total to \$60,000. in the community," said Palliative Care executive director Bonnie Bagnulo. "He's a Rotarian, he's a philanthropist and many people know him socially."

One year ago, Ben suffered a stroke. "He was so close to endof-life that we (palliative care) were actually called to help. However, this man has miraculously turned around and made so many recoveries," said Bagnulo.

Ben's Compassionate Community honours his recovery.

While palliative care supports patients and families who are experiencing terminal illness, Ben's Compassionate Community will provide support for paneed more of a short-term care hospital at 176 Wellington Street. completely discharge them beon their road to recovery," said Bagnulo.

"So we come out, we provide transportation, we provide the volunteers, our services, basic mobility equipment; whatever they need. Then they get better, and they're not in our care anymore, and that's wonderful."

Buholtz's wife, Jodey Porter, is totally blind.

"I lost my vision in November 2021," said Porter. Six months later, Ben had a catastrophic stroke and caregiver roles quickly changed. "It was quite uprooting," she said.

Porter, a former assistant deputy minister of health for Ontario, said that "health issues are my obsession."

"Ben's Compassionate Community is turning our perspec-

#### tive outward," said Porter. "It's reaching out, and enhancing our reach out, and make our comcapability to support" those who

other services may have missed." Last year NOTL Palliative Care's team, The Pedal Pushers, raised over \$30,000. Their major donor, the Hummel family, matched donations, which in-

"We've done the Healing Cycle ride for over 10 years and Rainer Hummel has offered to match donations up to \$25,000 again, which is just absolutely amazing," said Bagnulo.

The Healing Cycle Foundation funds and empowers the hospice palliative care community and champions the right of all Canadians to dignity, compassion, and quality in end-oflife care. Each palliative care community raises funds for its own initiatives, such as Ben's Compassionate Community.

The five-kilometre walk or ride, 10-kilometre or 25-kilometre ride, takes place Sept. 23 at 9 tients with a life-limiting illness, a.m., departing from the site of Bagnulo. "Whether they come such as stroke, "where clients the former Niagara-on-the-Lake

> opening speech and Buholtz service, we are there to support will officially start the race. "Let's them when needed."

get out there, include everyone, munity as caring and open and inclusive a community as we all can, because we are capable of that," said Porter.

To join a team ride, go to thehealingcycle.ca, click on the option "Hummel Family Pedal Pusher Challenge," and register as a business team or as an individual rider.

Donate securely through the same portal. A tax receipt will be provided for every donation at the time of donation.

Alternatively, Bagnulo said her team is more than happy to come and pick up a donation cheque. Also, if local businesses would like to participate in this fundraiser, email notlpc@bellnet.ca. All donations must be in by Sept. 13 to be included on the T-shirts.

"No one in this town should be alone when navigating a life-changing illness, at the beginning or near the end," said in and out of our service, or we Porter will be giving the cause they no longer require our



Ben Buholtz and Jodey Porter are reaching out through NOTL Palliative Care and Ben's Compassionate Community. (Supplied)



We were so grateful for the tremendous community support of our food drive held in the last several years. It is always overwhelming.

> We're asking for your generous support once again, this time to

Thank you all very much.

assist us in filling our Thanksgiving hampers for our clients.

On Saturday September 23, 2023, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If you wish to donate food in support of our Food Bank, please call 905-468-7498 or email us at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com to register your address for pick-up. We appreciate your support!

#### ITEMS REQUIRED FOR THANKSGIVING HAMPERS

- Stuffing Mix Cranberry &/or Apple Juice
- Canned Corn Snack Crackers (any type)
- Cranberry Sauce
- Canned Pineapple
- Canned green beans • Cookies - any kind or flavour
- Canned Gravy (turkey or chicken or Gravy mix
  - Applesauce or Canned Fruit • Canned peas

#### GENERAL ITEMS REQUIRED ON AN ON-GOING BASIS

- Canned Salmon Canned chili or spaghetti or ravioli mayonnaise, sauces (e.g. HP Sauce, Chunky Soups - any kind or flavour Canned Ham, Corned Beef
  - or Spam Canned Fruit Canned Beans (kidney,
  - chick-peas, lentils) • Tomato Sauce
- Pudding cups any flavour • Shelf stable milk (e.g. condensed, • Cereal and Oatmeal - any kind
  - powdered, rice, etc.) • Canned Tuna
- Condiments salad dressings, soya sauce, Worcestershire sauce etc.), dried spices, salt & pepper
- Peanut Butter Canned beef stew
- Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Turkey • Soda (Soup) Crackers
  - Canned Tomatoes Pasta
- Paper Towels / Toilet Paper • Granola Bars / Cookies
- Habitant Soups
- Sidekicks and Ramen soup packets Jams - any flavour
- Kraft Dinner • Canned Potatoes / Instant Mashed Potatoes
- Rice • Coffee (instant/regular/ decaf) Tea • Household items e.g. dish soap, laundry detergent, cleaning products
- Toiletries e.g. toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, hand and body lotion, mouthwash, feminine products

THE NOTL **Local** notllocal.com

### Ziraldo, Pratt take a walk down memory lane

### Inniskillin, VQA history documented

#### Mike Balsom The Local

The 47 boxes of documents, photographs, slides, awards, newspaper clippings and more donated by Donald Ziraldo to the Brock University Archives represent the history of the modern wine industry in Niagara.

Inniskillin Wines co-founder Ziraldo joined with Debi Pratt, who handled the fledgling winery's sales, tourism, hospitalthrough the years, to dig into some of the memories in the collection that has been deemed of important cultural significance.

"This collection is Canadian Cultural Property," explained Brock archivist David Sharron last week. "In 2013, we went through a process and identified everything in this collection and put in an application with the Department of Canadian Heritage. They certified this as important Canadian history. Not just local, not just Ontario, but all of Canada should know about this collection."

Much of the credit for the collection's existence can be given to Pratt, who worked for eight years sifting through material to determine what needed to be included.

"I didn't want to overlook anything that was key," Pratt explained, "but I also didn't want to overload David with the amount of material we had. We probably had another 50 boxes collected. Leading up to my retirement (in 2014) I didn't want to be trying to do this in two months. Sorting it out was a great trip down memory lane."

Pratt and Ziraldo relished the opportunity to ment visits by Canadian two tables in the archive's 10-floor workroom.

Ziraldo pointed to one of many slides sitting atop a light table, this one showing him sitting with Napa Valley, California, wine legend Robert Mondavi and another man.

"That's a CBC film crew guy," Ziraldo said. "They were doing a show and needed Canadian content. I told them I was heading to California and they came with me. That was the first time I met Mondavi. I handed him a bottle tasted the wine right on camera. The camera guy said 'what if he doesn't like it?' I thought it was worth the risk."

Ziraldo's days became jampacked with phone calls course meal. and appointments in 1991, the year Inniskillin rethe most prestigious award in the wine world at Vin Expo, France, for wine-Vidal icewine.

Of course, the Inniskility and public relations lin archive also contains many rarely seen and in-Kaiser, the former high school teacher whose meeting with farmer and nursery-operator Ziraldo is often credited for sparking the region's move into growing vinifera grapes.

> "He heard that I was growing hybrids and grafting vinifera vines," Ziraldo said of Kaiser, who passed away in 2017. "He came down and I gave him a dechaunac vine, and then he display of Inniskillin's came back with a bottle of wine. I was pleasantly surprised with the quality. He said 'I'll make it and you whom it was who created sell it.' I told him it wasn't the fledgling winery's first so simple, but that started label. Ziraldo suggested it our partnership."

> granted the first winery licence since 1929 by General George Kitching, then firmed that he indeed was chairman of the Liquor the first Inniskillin label Control Board of Ontario. That original licence is labels were created by a Tonot part of the collection, ronto design firm. but an October 1973 letter from Lincoln MPP Robert won at international wine Welch is. In it, Ziraldo is congratulated for his early success in producing quality wines from hybrid grapes.

A collection of photographs on display docucrease the winery's profile. it."

"Debi organized that," winter. We had the Icew-(Rush singer/bassist) Ged-Ron MacLean, those kinds awareness. When celebritend to pay attention."

There's a letter from of Gewurztraminer. He Julia Child sitting on the at educating in every intable, thanking Ziraldo for terview, every article he organizing a 1993 dinner did," said Pratt. "It created at the home of journalist a comfort zone for people

Vaughan in Toronto. Ac-A fascinating collection cording to the menu, also of Ziraldo's day planners signed by Child, the chargoing back as far as 1972 ismatic television chef was are part of the collection. served Niagara wines, in-Sharron pointed out that cluding three from Inniskillin, as part of a seven-

Ziraldo's efforts as the founding chair of the Niceived the Prix d'Honneur, agara Quality Alliance, soon to be renamed the Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA), are also evident at maker Karl Kaiser's 1989 Brock. Thick files of correspondence and copies of applications make up this part of the collection.

"We looked around stantly recognizable pho- the world for ideas," Ziraltographs of Ziraldo with do explained. "What we found was that other regions had an appellation system. We felt we needed to distinguish our 100 percent Canadian wines from blended wines. We worked on it for many years, and got particularly focused on icewine. We put the book together with all the rules and regulations."

Pratt took some time Monday to look over a wine labels through the years, while she and Ziraldo couldn't quite agree on was former NOTL resident In 1975, Inniskillin was Hartley Strauss. The Local followed up with Strauss the next day and he condesigner, while subsequent

Beside three trophies competitions sat densely packed boxes of file folders. Sharron explained that these contained certificates from awards won by Inniskillin over its his-

"I think I won a doztake another such trip last Prime Minister Pierre El- en athletic trophies in my Monday. Before their ar- liott Trudeau and former lifetime," laughed Sharron. rival, Sharron laid out a U.S. President Jimmy Car- "For Inniskillin, they had selection of items on the ter. Others show celebrities to keep a database of evtaking part in the icewine erything they won. These harvest, a stroke of genius boxes and these trophies that Ziraldo used to in- are just a small sample of

> Ziraldo acknowledged Ziraldo explained. "We the hard work of Pratt putwere trying to generate ting all the material togethactivity for Niagara in the er before turning it over to the university, where ine Festival, and we'd bring the Inniskillin name is attached to a building that dy Lee, hockey broadcaster houses the school's Cool Climate Oenology and Viof people, to create some ticulture Institute. Pratt, in turn, acknowledged Ziralties say something, people do for what he did to build the entire industry.

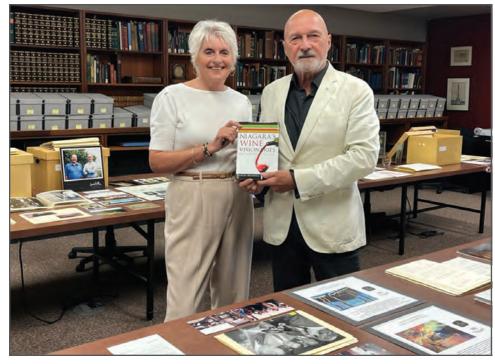
> > "Donald was brilliant



Debi Pratt and Donald Ziraldo look over a collection of photos of celebrity visits to the winery during a recent visit to the Brock University Archives. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Archivist David Sharron laid out a selection of items from the Ziraldo archives on two table in the workroom prior to the visit by Ziraldo and Pratt; Ziraldo's day planners are at the left.



Debi Pratt and Donald Ziraldo hold a copy of Linda Bramble's 2014 book that features Ziraldo as one of Niagara's wine visionaries.

try Canadian wine. That ple that did all this," said Duck types of wines, we here."

of the collection Monday, tional winery." Ziraldo felt a sense of pride and amazement.

and wine expert Michael to know why they should and recognize the peo- of that albatross of Baby

success element built con- Ziraldo. "I was really just fidence. And you don't the showman. Karl made want to forget how you got the wine, Gerald (Klose) there. Anybody writing a looked after the vineyards, book, doing a television Debi looked after the winshow, can come here. It's all ery. We just became a tough team to beat, and we action that we got." Looking at this portion became a global, interna-

we wanted to give people," "I have to acknowledge he continued. "Because

had to make it that much better to get people's attention. The simplest way to do it was to get the icewine into people's mouths. 'Wow' was usually the re-

NOTE: Digital images of some of the Ziraldo "It was an experience and Inniskillin Archive can be found online at exhibits. library.brocku.ca/s/inni*skillin/page/introduction.* 

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### **Library introduction to a Proust Questionaire**

**NOTL Public Library Staff** 

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library board and staff are interested in exploring the special place that books, reading, storytelling and libraries hold in the hearts of our community members. The power of the written and spoken word, the enchantment of libraries and childhood memories of time spent with books creates a profound tapestry of emotions and experiences.

To delve into the depths of this experience, we are turning to the insightful Proust Questionnaire. Inspired by French writer Marcel Proust, this questionnaire prompts introspection and reflection on various aspects of life, offering a unique lens through

which to examine the bond between readers and their connection to books, storytelling and libraries.

The Proust Questionnaire is designed to reveal an individual's personality, desires, and sentiments. Originally intended as a parlour game, it has since become a renowned tool for introspection. In applying this questionnaire to members of our community, we hope to uncover the multifaceted nature of our relationship with books, storytelling and libraries.

Watch this space for a regular Library Proust Questionnaire with community members. If you would like to participate in the questionnaire series, please contact Cathy Simpson at the library; csimpson@notlpl.org or 905-468-2023.

### Libraries: Building community and fostering opportunities

A Chat with Lord Mayor Zalepa



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa

#### **Adriana Vizzari NOTL Public Library** board member

and interviewed Niagaraon-the-Lake Lord Mayor blend of history, adventure Gary Zalepa. We discussed and deep character develthe vital role of libraries opment. in our community and his fond memories of childhood and a lifelong passion War by Tim Cook, which for reading.

#### **Q:** What was the first book Another non-fiction work I you remember reading, enjoyed was In the Garden and how did it impact of Beasts, by Erik Larson, a you?

Lord Mayor Zalepa: My first serious book was Lord of the Rings when I was in Q: What makes you love or Q: Did anyone read to you Grade 7 or 8. While I had recommend a book? read other books before Lord Mayor Zalepa: The that, this epic tale left a last- connection I feel with a ing impression. The rich story and its characters is characters and intricate what drives me to love and plot captivated me.

#### Q: What are you reading impact on me, whether by right now? Any recommendations for our readers?

Lord Mayor Zalepa: Cur-Master and Commander author, or genre? series, a historical fiction Lord Mayor Zalepa: Pat-

Wars. The novels delve into Commander series stands the lives of British naval officers, particularly Captain rites. The characters and Jack Aubrey and his friend, Recently, I sat down Doctor Stephen Maturin. The series offers a gripping

> Additionally, I recently finished The Necessary explores Canada's involvement in the Great Wars. historical account that fascinated me with its depth.

recommend a book. When a book leaves a profound teaching me something new or eliciting strong emotions.

#### rently, I'm on my fifth re- Q: What is your favourite book club. read of Patrick O'Brian's book of all time, favourite

set during the Napoleonic rick O'Brian's Master and

as one of my all-time favoutheir development, themes of leadership, bravery and strength, create a captivating narrative that keeps me returning to the series time and again.

#### Q: Do you have a favourite quote from a book?

**Lord Mayor Zalepa:** My favourite quote is something I'm still pondering, but I have an affinity for quotes from non-fiction works, especially from authors like Winston Churchill.

#### as a child?

Lord Mayor Zalepa: My mother read to me as a child, and I credit her for instilling the love of reading in me. We always had books in our house.

#### Q: Do you belong to a book club?

Lord Mayor Zalepa: Currently, I'm not part of any

#### Q: Did you belong to the library as a child?

Lord Mayor Zalepa: Yes, I was a member of both the NOTL and St. Catharines libraries as a child and reading played a significant role in my early years.

#### Q: Do you have a favourite childhood library memo-

Lord Mayor Zalepa: My favourite childhood library memory centres around my school's library, where I first encountered a computer lab in Grade 2. This exposure to technology sparked my interest and opened up new opportunities for learning.

Throughout the interview, the lord mayor's passion for books and libraries shines brightly. He understands the crucial role libraries play in fostering connections, nurturing interests, and providing equal opportunities to all. As we delve into the world of literature through the eyes of Lord Mayor Zalepa, we are reminded of the transformative power of libraries in shaping young minds and inspiring a lifelong love for reading.

### What's behind the fence?



The Local was asked by the town not to take a photo of the dry stone wall behind the fence of the Gateway project on Queen Street at the end of Mississagua, so all could be revealed when the project is finished, likely in an announcement in October. The work is proceeding, by the looks of things, with the wall itself expected to be finished by now. But is it? (David Gilchrist)

THE NOTL & Pocal notllocal.com September 6, 2023 17

## Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

### 3 tips to get active in your golden years

and joint pain and feelings of isolation, depression or anxiety.

Experts have long known about the con-2021 census data revealing one in five Canadians is 65 or older, there family, and our health-

Here are some tips to help you stay active:

#### Take advantage of everyday opportunities

and find ways to incorporate activity into your routine. You can try taking the stairs more often ing routine is to go with there are plenty of ideas instead of the elevator, someone else. Many out there. For some, a carrying your groceries people also do best with furry friend might just formed decision about further to your car or a dog by their side. Dogs be all the motivation you looking for group fitness of all shapes and sizes need.

(NC) Staying active as classes in your communeed daily exercise to you grow older is one nity. Many municipal- keep them mentally and of the best ways to ward ities and community physically healthy too, off age-related ailments centres offer free or dis- so your very own pooch such as disease, muscle counted classes for se- will get you out pound-

#### Go for cardio and strength

weights or bands.

#### Get out with a buddy

whenever and wherever into Canada. you can. One of the best

ing the pavement regu-

If you're thinking of buying or adopting a dog Once you're up for – especially one from nection between activity it, head to the gym to abroad - take the time and longevity, and with take part in at least 2.5 to properly research hours of moderate to where you might get the vigorous aerobic activi- dog from. Ask questions ty each week. Try using about the dog's history are a lot of us who could a treadmill, stationary and health status, what benefit from putting our bike, swimming or play- veterinary care they've best foot forward. Your ing sports. Add muscle had and what paperwork and bone strengthening and health records are care system, will thank activities at least twice a provided. Before bringweek using appropriate ing a dog into Canada resistance such as light from another country, familiarize yourself with the disease risks of that region and ensure you Every step counts so meet the specific import Listen to your body it's a sound idea to walk requirements to bring it

> There's no right way to ways to stick to a walk- stay active as you age, but



Find more information to make an ingetting a dog at inspection.gc.ca/dog-decision.

### Over 50? Then you're at risk of catching the shingles virus

burn on the hand. Typically, such pain goes away fairly quickly. However, escaping pain can be difficult.

a stubbed toe or a mild condition that can cause tem gets weaker. ongoing pain for weeks or even years.

when confronted with that occurs when the virus on one side of the body, certain health conditions, that causes chickenpox followed by a rash and reactivates in your body, blisters. The pain can be While it might be pen in those of us over age with work and other evtempting to brush aside 50 and those of us who are eryday activities. the idea that you could immunocompromised

(NC) We all experi- you might not know that treatment. This is because four weeks, some people ence pain from time to one-in-three people are at you're more vulnerable to can experience chronic time, whether it's from risk in their lifetime for a it when your immune sys-

> The first symptom is usually pain, tingling Shingles is an infection or burning that occurs

develop chronic pain, by a health condition or shingles last about two to the pain related to it.

pain long after the rash has healed.

While there is no cure for shingles, getting the shingles vaccine, which is recommended for adults over the age of 50 by the National Advisory Comand it's most likely to hap- severe enough to interfere mittee on Immunization, can greatly reduce your risk of developing this While most cases of disease and suffering from







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## Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

### Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre offers introductory art programs for older adults

efits of artmaking for seniors are well-documented. From increased cognitive & memory functions to improved moods, creative activities engage both the mind and body and in turn promote the well-being of art cre-

A program developed by the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre introduces and encourages older adults to try their hand in art activities. 'THRIVE - Introduction to Creativity for Seniors' offers no charge admission for participants aged 50 and older to these beginner-level courses.

"I am pleased to announce that through funding in-part from the More information about 468-5455.

The proven health ben- Government of Canada's the program is found at New Horizons for Seniors the Niagara Pumphouse Program, we are able to Arts Centre website, niintroduce seniors to new agarapumphouse.ca/proartistic mediums to spark grams. creativity, learn new skills, create and share memories and form new friend- ing adults 50 and over ships," says Rima Boles, as program volunteers. Art Centre Director. "It is our hope that the sessions to lend a hand to instrucencourage older adults tors during the delivery to continue with their of classes or workshops." creative journey after Boles explains. "On the participating in a preparatory course, leading to program provides them long-term positive impact the opportunity to socialfrom practicing art," she ize and meet new people

> The THRIVE program a variety of mediums in-

Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre is also invit-"We encourage seniors part of the volunteer, the from the community."

Those interested in volintroduces older adults to unteering are asked to contact Niagara Pumpcluding drawing, pottery, house Arts Centre front fused glass, photography, desk at office@niagaradigital arts and collage. pumphouse.ca or 905-



the outdoors. Sometimes cordingly. unsteady balance, arthritic joints, a lung condition or other health or mobility differences are what's making outdoor advenways to enjoy an escape expensive; it just takes out into nature.

#### Get the dirt

Try to research the lay of parts of the experience. the land at any campsite, see what you're working with. Look online or contact the destination.

location of bathroom faterrain is paved or grassy; soft or hard; steep or flat. tance. Are there places to pause for a rest?

(NC) Many of us love help you choose a trail or door activities more ac-

#### Get glamping

Short for glamorous camping, glamping is the ongoing trend of making camping more comtures uncomfortable. But fortable and luxurious. It there are still plenty of doesn't have to be fancy or some of the more complicated or uncomfortable

A raised sleeping plattrail or protected park to form or cot is a glamping go-to because it offers a more comfortable night's rest than the hard ground. Ask about the size and A bed off the ground also makes it easier to get up cilities. Find out if the in the morning, independently or with assis-

#### **Use support**

There are plenty of

to spend time in the great campsite and prepare accessible. Depending on your needs, devices could range from walking poles supportive shoes, to beach and off-road wheelchairs, or tents with wheelchair storage. You might be able to reserve, rent or borrow some of these items.

> Working with an occupational therapist (OT) can also help you discover and use tools and approaches to make camping easier for people, no matter their mobility.

> Take advantage of what will make your excursion safer and more enjoyable.

You can find more information and confirm a professional is licensed through the College of Occupational Therapists



Create Experience Connect at the art hub of the community Pumphouse 247 Ricardo Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON

Niagara











#### In-studio & Online\* Classes & Workshops Life Drawing Drop-In: Tues, Sept 5

- -26, Oct 3-24
- Wheel 101: Tues, September 12
- Collage: Further Adventures!\*: Wed, Sept 13
- Oil Portraits: Thurs, Sept 14 & Fri, Sept
- <u>Paleolithic and Neolithic Period Art</u> <u>History Lecture Series</u>: Tues, Sept 19
- <u>Chair Yoga Beyond Beginners:</u> Thurs, Oct 5-26
- Portraiture Photography Workshop: Sat, Oct 7
- Lidded Pot Workshop: Sat, Oct 14 Fused Glass: Tree Ornaments: Sun,
- **Encaustic and Mixed Media** Workshop: Sat, Oct 14
- <u>Ancient Mesopotamia Art History</u> <u>ecture Series</u>: Tues, Oct 17 & 24

#### **THRIVE** - Introduction to Creativity for Seniors

Beginner-level art workshops Intro to iPad Art with Sketches &

- Procreate New Horizons for Seniors: Oct 18 & 25
- iPad Basics: Making Connections -New Horizons for Seniors: Oct 22 & 29

Register at no charge; Spots are limited

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program



To register, visit niagarapumphouse.ca/programs § 905.468.5455 

☐ office@niagarapumphouse.ca



## Seniors Golden Years Guide

### **Experience South Korea & Taiwan**

In April 2024, a captivating journey will delve into the realms of South Korea and Taiwan, two of the world's most influential economies. Crafted to provide firsthand encounters with the present-day essence of these nations, the itinerary unveils the contemporary and thriving infrastructures intertwined with their rich and diverse historical chronicles.

Following the Second World War, both nations had to fight for their existence and many

trials and tribulations enveloped and reshaped the Korean peninsula. Korea's long and very stable dynastic rule was shattered as the country split into the communist North and the democratic South. Following the division, the South succeeded in reshaping itself, becoming one of the strongest economies in the world. But it is far more than bustling cities, for it has retained wonderful relics from its long dynastic history and the land is literally

dotted with UNESCO World Heritage Sites. As we explore its length, we will enjoy its unique cuisine, warm hospitality and magnificent scenery.

South Korea's not-to-bemissed highlights include the Jongmyo Shrine dating back to the 14th century; the spectacular Changdeokgung Palace, an exceptional example of Far Eastern palace architecture and unique design; Seoul's traditional Bukchon Hanok Village, where hundreds of hanoks (traditional houses) are clustered together, showing visitors a 600-year-old urban environment as they stroll its many alley ways; Busan, with Korea's second largest population, known for its beautiful beaches, temples, shopping, and seafood.

From South Korea, a short flight brings us to the island state of Taiwan, home to the last vestiges of the nationalist government which once ruled all of China. Although still officially in a state of conflict, the island chose a different path using its resources and relatively tiny population to create its own economy. This tiny island (just 90 miles by 250 miles) offers so much.

During our full-day city tour a visit to the National Center this is it. Accommodations have of Taipei, we'll visit Chiang Kai- for Traditional Arts introduces Shek Memorial Hall, see the the largest exhibition and perchanging of the guards and a display of taichi movement. The National Palace Museum at indigo dyeing! At Taipei 101, is a highlight, hosting a permanent collection of nearly Taipei, we'll travel to the 89th 700,000 pieces of Chinese art floor for a panoramic view of and artifacts. We'll take in the the city. trendy Ximending District and stroll the Raohe Night Market. highlights of our time in South In Northeastern Taiwan, we Korea and Taiwan. If you are explore Yilan, surrounded by both sea and mountains. Here, ly different in a travel adventure,

formance site for traditional arts in Taiwan. Try your hand the most iconic building in

These are just a few of the looking for something completebeen carefully selected to ensure our creature comforts and we have designed the journey to provide a leisurely pace full of fascinating experiences.

Book early to ensure your space on this wonderful new adventure! Reserve by November 30 and save \$200 per person! Contact CRAIG TRAVEL at 1-800-387-8890, visit craigtravel.com, or email journeys@ craigtravel.com. We look forward to hearing from you!



Tainan Chikan Tower



Korean Woman in Traditional Attire

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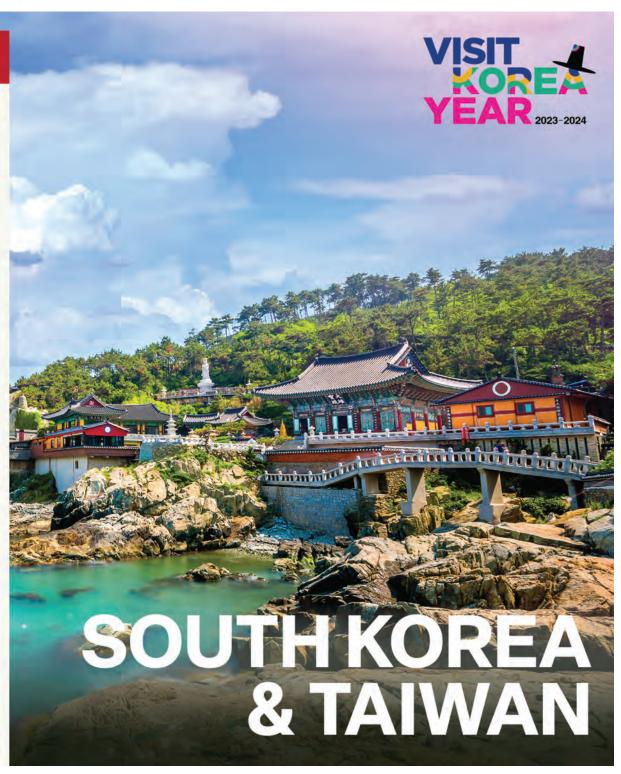
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THE NOTL Pocal September 6, 2023

### Maja Bannerman and This is Anne — Older and Wiser

### Presented at the NOTL Museum

#### **Sharon Burns** The Local

Anne, of Green Gables fame, is not the young, curious girl in Maja Bannerman's most recent iteration of the beloved series. Rather, she is a woman in her 60s who is looking through her journals and letters, reflecting on her life, and the concept of change.

This is Anne — Older and Wiser, is a 50-minute play created, compiled and performed by Bannerman and her musician partner, Rusty McCarthy.

Bannerman has always loved Lucy Maud Montgomery's novels about the intrepid Anne. The success of Montgomery's first novel, simply titled Anne of Green Gables, written in 1908, was so successful that Montgomery penned seven more novels for the series, which has since then been the inspiration for countless other books, TV shows, movies and even a musical.

The title character, Anne, an 11-year-old orphan sent to live with middle-aged siblings, is known world-wide for her is dedicated to Bannerman's long red hair, curiosity and loquaciousness.

"I identified with her," said Bannerman. "When I was young, I had bright red hair, just like her. I wanted to be her." Bannerman admired Anne's "My parents took me to see the committee, not knowing that I homestead, the house that in- was a writer and performer." spired the description of Green experience. I think they were I broke down in the car," she

play began in 2008 when her through her illness. She Elaine Anderson of the Pelham Library celebrated the we could do that. This perfor-100th anniversary of the novel. Montgomery's granddaughter, Luella MacDonald Veijalainen, was in the area, and Anderson invited Bannerman to the afternoon tea event with Luella.

look at the older Anne and reread all the books," said Bannerman. "Then I created this theatrical reading which I did off and on for several years, and about three years ago, I decided add some set pieces."

Bannerman and McCarthy will perform *This is Anne* at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, Sept. 14 at 7 p.m.

This particular performance friend, Gerda Molson, who passed away last August. Molson was the chief librarian at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Library for 35 years. "I had just moved library started a storytelling fes-

"We ran that committee Gables. I saw that when I was for 10 years," Bannerman con-16, and it was a very emotional tinued, "and during that time she became a very good friend. quite worried about me because Last year she had wanted to do a garden party and have Rusty and I perform the play The idea for Bannerman's for her friends that had helped passed away two weeks before mance is dedicated to her."

The older and wiser Anne "is more balanced," said Bannerman. "She is very aware that things change, and I think that's the strongest personal message "At that point, I decided to I get from her and Montgomery's words. It is how she speaks about change and how we have to let things go from our heart, and take new things in and learn to love them." Bannerman said that Anne maintains to make it more of a play and her curiosity and her forthrightness, but "I don't think she speaks so bluntly." Most of the play uses Montgomery's words while Bannerman added a necessary introduction, segues and

Bannerman and McCarthy performed in Prince Edward Island over five nights this August. Bannerman said there are moments of poignancy, reflection and laughter here in 1996, and in 1997 the and "it's made grown men cry. The second half of it deals a lot tival. She asked me to be on the with World War I and the way



This is Anne — Older and Wiser is a 50-minute play created, compiled and performed by Maja Bannerman and her musician partner, Rusty McCarthy. Photos were taken in The Woodbourne Inn in St. Davids, an 1839 historically designated eight-bedroom manor house which has been fully restored. (Lauren Garbutt)

Montgomery wrote about the seum, Bannerman has two war from the perspective from more performances scheduled home is very subtle."

"People loved it. I have a guest book that I bring out and people write their comments in there, and it's been great. We've had Montgomery scholars come and write their opinion, and they were supportive. And some people don't know Anne at all and have never read the series and were still touched by the play."

Besides the play at the mu-

in Toronto on Sept. 17.

She is hoping to return to PEI to perform at the Lucy Maud Montgomery Institute's 16th biennial conference in 2024, and she is looking for a place in Niagara to do a run of shows next summer.

Bannerman and McCarthy have also created a CD called This is Anne — The Music, featuring Beth Bartley and Mark Clifford of Vox Violins fame, com into your search engine.

and Doug Wilde on keys. It highlights music from the performance plus some additional music that Rusty composed. "Right now, it's a rough draft, but we are going to add some text in the sense that I will set up each piece with excerpts from the script. It won't be a telling of the performance, it will be something a little bit different."

For more information, type anneolderandwiser.wordpress.

### St. Mark's needs more voices to

#### **Penny Coles** The Local

James Bourne, the music director at St. Mark's Church, has his heart set on returning the church choir to its former glory, pre-pandemic, and to do that, he needs help.

He has the required skills, but he doesn't have the voices — the choir has shrunk in recent years, and he would like to be able to fill the church with beautiful music again, as the choir was once able to.

He arrived at St. Mark's five home, developing friendships St. Mark's choir members have always been very social — and then COVID hit, there were no services, and when they returned, there was no

choir permitted for a time.

Even when it was able to reback — a couple had passed away, others were dealing with age-related issues, and those who did return had to sing through masks, a less-thansays. Rehearsals, he adds, "were a little fraught with challenges."

Singing, he explains, "requires being relatively close to others," and issues such as physical distancing and wearing get the people, I can do it." masks, "is second best at most."

years ago, and was feeling at of that behind them, he says, are paid to augment and lead and look to the future.

Church choirs require a significant commitment of time, for regular rehearsals to prepare for a weekly performance, and also some events outside

just about being able to sing commitment.

Bourne has been a member of several renowned choirs, some professional, and feels confident he can rebuild the ideal way to make music, he church choir. "I've worked with The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, the Elora Singers, the Toronto Children's Choir — many professional choirs. I have the choral skills, so I know if can

He is also looking at bring-However, it's time to put all ing in paid leads — singers who volunteers, and bring an extra energy to the choir. It's quite common in other churches, he says, although maybe not so much in small communities.

"Our volunteers are fabulous," says Bourne. "The quality of the choir here is excellent, and has had a rich tradition in the church. I'm trying to build it back up to what it once was."

Details have not been worked out, he says. "We're looking to see what the next steps are, to building a wonderful choir with amateurs and professionals, to enrich the life of the congregation and the chorists. It could be an idea whose time has come."

In addition to the pleasure of singing with others, says long-time St. Mark's Choir member Linda Cross, she loves

the Sunday services, so it's not the social aspect of the choir.

Both she and Bourne noted turn, not all the members came it's also about making that time the exceptional camaraderie among choir members — they pointed out that isn't always the case with church choirs, but St. Mark's has been very fortunate to have choir members who get along well and enjoy spending time together.

"That helps a lot," says Cross, "when you're tired and it's cold and you don't really feel like going out on a Thursday night, or you have to get up for the early Sunday morning service and it's snowing and you really don't feel like getting out of bed, it makes it a lot easier when you enjoy spending time with the other members."

She quotes a line from a video by John Rutter on the Importance of Choir that says "even if a choir is not the greatest in after the summer, or an annual the world, the fact that they are meeting together has a social value. It has a communal value."

She feels that very much applies to St. Mark's, not that the choir members have develchoir isn't great, but sometimes at a practice when a piece isn't working out, "as a group you push through it together, working towards it getting better."

She also talks about the many social occasions they en- They can be team-building, joy, curtailed through COVID and we get to know people on but that can now resume they can be after-practice impromptu outings, birthday celebrations, a pre-season event member who was considered



Music director James Bournes is hoping to attract more great voices to build up the St. Mark's Anglican Church choir, depleted in recent years. (Penny Coles)

Christmas celebration, and other outings just to socialize, many of which include spouses and partners. Several of the oped friendships, and some as couples get together, she says, even those who are not current members — the choir is down to about eight at the moment.

"Those outings help us. a different level than just the singing."

They have had a choir

the grandmother of the group, and she is now the choir mum. "We can come together and we mesh well. I think that helps make us work as a choir."

Cross says she likes the idea of the church bringing in paid singers who can help support the small number of volunteers, "especially if they are musically trained. I know it would help me."

If anyone is interested in more information or in joining the choir, call the St. Mark's Church office at 905-468-3123, or email stmarks@cogeco.net, attention music director.



James Bourne with Linda Cross, a long-time St. Mark's choir member who enjoys the socializing as much as the singing, both impromptu visits to The Irish Harp after practice, and more formal occasions such as Christmas celebrations. (Supplied)

September 6, 2023 21 notllocal.com

### Music Niagara season concludes with celebration, reflection

#### Mike Balsom The Local

The final Music Niagara Festival concert of 2023 last Tuesday evening at St. Mark's Anglican Church encapsulated the themes of celebration and reflection that underlined the non-profit's 25th year.

Musically, it was a fitting cap to the series of 19 events held in Niagara-on-the-Lake by the festival this year. Tuesday's program was varied, with young violinists showcasing their talents, music from Ukraine and Lithuania played by skilled musicians from those countries, and a Toronto band presenting a melange of blues, reggae, Arabic and other sounds from around the

Tying it all together was comedian Mike Bullard, bestknown for his nine-year run hosting a late-night talk show on CTV and then Global television. Bullard entertained with his signature audience participation banter, ad libbing back and forth with a selection of some of the 110 guests packing the pews, before shifting gears to get serious about his four-month-long visit to Ukraine in late 2022 and early 2023.

"I've always placed great value on life," Bullard said, somberly, "but I never realized how much I take for granted in this country until I got to the war zone there. The place is World War Two-and-a-half. It made me want to live my life in a different way."

Since it broke out, the war in Ukraine has been a special topic of concern for Music Nidirector Atis Bankas, whose billed by Bankas as "Three music-making," Bankas said and one in Niagara, to support the Ukrainian cause. He continued that focus this seafeatured and celebrated musicians from Ukraine.

Tuesday's special guest, Lithuanian ambassador to a birbyne, a reed folk instru-Canada Darius Skusevicius, praised Bankas for being the first person to hold such a fundraising and awareness event.

"I am fascinated with his ability to bring different kinds of music together in one concert," said Skusevicius, prior to presenting the violinist with a pin in the shape of his home country. "This fascinating man is creating miracles, and he reminds us all that this war in the acoustic marvel that is is still going on."

More praise for the artis-Niagara's board chair Patrick Little and vice-chair Edward Barisa. Little, in a speech just before intermission, lauded the artistic director for to bringing quality music to NOTL.

"That was really encouraging and nice," Bankas said, taking the praise in stride. "But I'm already planning for next year, and we're about 60 per cent of the season booked already. We have some beautiful music, some beautiful musicians coming next year."

Tuesday's show began with young violin virtuosi Gloria Verhosvsky, Roman Nykoragara co-founder and artistic ovych and Sora Sato-Mound,

early life was spent living in Ukrainian Violin Muske-Lithuania under Soviet rule. teers." Dressed in traditional Bankas quickly mobilized last Ukrainian garb, the trio deftly year to arrange two successful took turns rotating in and out fundraisers, one in Toronto of the spotlight on a rollicking traditional Ukrainian dance composition.

They were followed by son with programming that Lithuanians Aiste Bruzaite playing a kankles, a traditional folk string instrument, and Egidijus Alisauskas playing

> Bruzaite sat behind her instrument, which resembled a cross between a harp and a zither, deftly using both hands and, for one number, brushes, to gently coax from it ethereal, beautiful sounds. Alisauskas accompanied her on his birbyne, a recorder-like instrument simple in structure but immensely powerful in sound, especially when experienced St. Mark's.

Their seven-song perfortic director came from Music mance of music from their country was capped with the premiere of an original work by Lithuanian composer Arunas Navakas, entitled Cranes. Bankas joined in on his continued commitment violin for this soaring number that emulates the grace and beauty of the large birds of the composition's title.

Following an intermission during which Bankas cut and served cake to the guests, the Two Families Band took the stage. Originally from Crimea, Ukraine, and now based in Hamilton, the ensemble consists of couples Valentyn Zadoianov and Irina Samarina, and Oleg Apostolov and Julia

of their performance. "I would love to have them back for a show of their own. They are here on temporary visas. They are highly educated and need these opportunities to continue what they were trained to do and succeeded in back in Ukraine."

Toronto's Los Variants concluded the evening, nearly blowing the roof off the church with their set of rhythmic world music. Led by drummer Vince Maccarone, Los Variants presented a lively set that laid bare the origins of the band members, who hail from Sicily, Peru, El Salvador and Algeria. Fehti Nadjem was a standout on various stringed instruments, while the vocal performance of Maryem Hassan Tollar, in Arabic, was breathtaking.

When the show was over, Bankas looked back effusively on the festival's silver anniversary year.

'We had so many beautiful shows," he told The Local. "We had a great pops series that was successful at the wineries.



Atis Bankas cuts a celebratory cake at the conclusion of a successful Music Niagara season. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

We had the Canadian premiere of a Polish composition, our Glory to Ukraine concert was a big success. We had the young musicians back. Everything was so well received. I was very pleased with the way the season went, way better than last season, definitely."

Bankas is working on arranging a lineup for a Remembrance Day event, something he says he is committed to, and possibly a holiday-themed show in December. Though he says with the support of the festival's board he is close to finalizing 2024's slate, he's not ready to reveal specific details yet.

"We will continue our collaboration with Shaw Festival, and continue all of the traditions we have started," he said. "I am sure we will bring back our Glory to Ukraine concert, because war takes no days off. We really look forward to presenting an entertaining first season of the next 25 years in



"Very, very high-quality Atis Bankas, Aiste Bruzaite and Egidijus Alisauskas performing at St. Mark's Church.

### Goettler Foundation supports Yellow Door film academy

#### Mike Balsom The Local

Will the next Scorcese, Gerwig or Spielberg come from Niagara-on-the-Lake?

The notion is not so farfetched now that Yellow Door to launch its Goettler Family Foundation Film Academy on

"It's the result of the success we had with our film Red Letter Day during the final year of the pandemic," says YDTP founder and artistic producer Andorlie Hillstrom. "It was the awards it won and what it offered the youth in the area. We didn't want to let that all lay dormant."

So Hillstrom and her team put together a proposal for the Goettler Family Foundation, which supported the production of Red Letter Day. That film was shot and produced in the Niagara area and featured many YDTP students in its cast.

The foundation's director, Jodey Porter, says she encouraged Vaughn and Lauren Goettler to back YDTP finan- young people." cially two years ago.

meeting I brought it up," says forward, getting young people lives forever."

tal health benefits in YDTP's programs, Porter felt the film academy proposal was a logical next step for the foundation's support. They reviewed the details and the film academy was

Once the funding was in place, Hillstrom worked with Lori Ravensborg, a coordinator and professor in Niagara College's Acting for Film and Television program, to design the program.

"She has been instrumental in this," Hillstrom says. "I reached out to her and she took an interest immediately. She agreed to provide us with a detailed curriculum. She has a pretty dynamic resume in film and television, and she has a

Hillstrom is equally as "At our first foundation excited to bring in Carter Vahrmeyer as the teacher for Porter. "Yellow Door is all the new program. The graduate about young people, giving of Niagara College's Cinematography and Film/Television into the performing arts, which Production program also runs Theatre Project is getting set builds confidence and changes his own company through which he has produced a Recognizing the men- number of films and music ter Day project, Hillstrom ex-

> The new film academy is designed as a two-year program for students aged 13 to 17, with sessions to be held every Friday night between September and May from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Vahrmeyer will focus primarily on the technical skills needed to produce a film, such as lighting, editing and camera operation.

> "We'll all be learning as we go," says Hillstrom. "The idea is to take small bites, to make sure they have good technical skills before they move into the actual film process itself. There will be a certain amount of writing involved in it as well."

The curriculum will also include lessons in acting for film background in working with and television, but Hillstrom of interest this year we will

til the academy's second year.

"We'll likely have someone come in and speak to the kids about the differences between film and television and theatre acting," she adds. "We'll definitely touch on that, but it's not going to be the emphasis."

In contrast to the Red I pects that the students will be working toward producing short films, with the hopes of entering some of them into future film festivals.

"Knowing some of the kids who are interested in this," she says, "I have no doubt that these will be wonderful films. There are several film festivals specifically aimed at youth. We'll see what happens, get some feedback, and see what we can build on."

Currently, the plan is to begin the Goettler Academy this month, and to work with those students exclusively over the ensuing 24 months.

"But there's been a lot of interest already," Hillstrom says. "If there is a significant amount

doesn't see those beginning un- hopefully be able to roll with it, and expand the program to take on another group next September."

For information and to register for the Goettler Family Foundation Film Academy, visit yellowdoortheatre.com.



Andorlie Hillstrom and Carter Vahrmeyer outside the YDTP studio in Virgil. (Mike Balsom)



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## - **Local**SPORTS

### Softball season wraps up with championship games

**Mike Balsom** The Local

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Minor Softball Association held four nights of playoff action at two diamonds in Virgil recently.

The Yankees took the the Pirates. Squirt title with a victory over the Blue Jays, while over at the other team of Pirates claimed

The Coaches Pitch (ages seven other diamond, the third-place the Coaches Pitch championto 10) and Squirt (ages 11 to 14) game went into extra innings ship. divisions concluded Thursday before the Reds could claim night with some exciting action. their bronze medals by beating the Learn to Play (ages three to

Earlier in the evening an-

Details on the winners of six) and Pee Wee Slo-Pitch (ages 15 to 18) were not available at press time.



The NOTL Minor Softball seven to 10 age group Pirates, with The 11 to 14 softball Blue Jays. coaches pitching. (Photos by Mike Balsom)





The 11 to 14 Pirates.



The 11 to 14 Reds.



The Tigers seven to 10 age group.



The 11 to 14 Yankees.





Softball players from seven to 14 wrap up their season with championship games, including Inalis and Zoey from the age seven to 10 Blue Jays showing off their medals.

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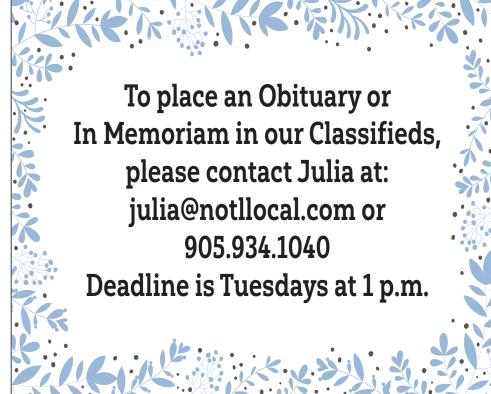
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#### **PUZZLE ANSWERS**

Sudoku solution from August 30, 2023

		_						
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
-		1.00						

69 Rye, 71 Ice, 72 Huh. Nose, 60 Cot, 61 Drab, 62 Cane, 64 Slap, 65 Ezra, 66 Lays, 49 U S B, 51 Moo, 53 Ail, 55 Ocean, 57 Spore, 58 Elegy, 59 35 Hobo, 36 Foam, 37 Lite, 38 A lot, 40 Eels, 44 Leo, 47 MHz, 25 Own, 27 Biz, 29 Off, 30 Strut, 31 Gear, 33 Tern, 34 Crud, Vista, 9 Ida, 10 Pelt, 11 Save, 12 Vial, 15 Lex, 20 Ply, 22 DDT, Down: 1 Carat, 2 Isaac, 3 Den, 4 Gere, 5 Ad in, 6 Sic, 7 Heap, 8

74 A cry, 75 Urge, 76 Been, 77 Peas, 78 Hey. Cos, 65 Ell, 67 P L O, 68 Orare, 70 Liza, 72 Hoes, 73 Tanya, 20 Meth, 51 M S T, 52 O A S, 54 Zoo, 56 lbsen, 60 C D C, 63 Zero, 42 Oil, 43 Feral, 45 Rub, 46 Atom, 48 Lure, 49 Undo, Lt Col, 26 Dab, 28 Wyo, 30 Sgt, 32 ltch, 36 Flan, 39 Fete, 41 Iran, 17 Rica, 18 Salve, 19 AAA, 20 Pen, 21 P D T, 23 Tex, 24 Across: 1 Cid, 4 Gash, 8 V I Ps, 12 Vase, 13 Edie, 14 Ideal, 16

#### CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU

	1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12					13	1				14				15
16	1	1			17					18				
19				20				21	22			23		
24			25						26		27			
			28		29		30	31			32	33	34	35
36	37	38			39	40				10	41			
42		1			43	H			44			45		
46	1	H	47			48		1			49			
50		1		Ħ	51				52	53				
			54	55						56	1	57	58	59
60	61	62	Ė	63		64		65	66			67		
68		1	69			70	71		-		72		1	
73						74					75	+		
	76					77	1		1		78			

#### Across:

- Spanish hero El ---
- Deep cut
- 8 Big cheeses 12 Flower iar
- --- Falco, Nurse Jackie
- 14 Paragon
- 16 Formerly Persia 17 Rich, in Spain
- 18 Soothing ointment

- 21 Oregon summer clock setting
- 23 Lone Star State (Abbr.)
- 24 One over a major
- 26 Small amount
- 28 Neighbor of Neb.
- 30 Noncom
- 32 Irritate
- 36 Open pastry dessert
- 39 Carnival
- 41 Nothing 42 Lubricate
- 43 Untamed
- 45 Chafe 46 Speck
- 48 Enticement
- 49 Software menu option
- 50 Crystal ---
- 51 Tucson time
- 52 West Atlantic international grp.
- 54 Menagerie

- 56 "A Doll's House" dramatist
- 60 Atlanta-based health grp.
- 63 Lettuce variety
- 65 Building extension at a right
- 67 Gaza Strip grp.
- 68 Pray in Latin
- 70 Minnelli with a zee
- 72 Weeders' tools
- 73 Country music's --- Tucker
- 74 "--- in the Dark" (Streep movie)
- 75 Appetite 76 "--- there, done that"
- 77 Podded vegetables
- 78 "--- Porter" (Johnny Cash song)

#### Down:

- Diamond weight unit
- Writer --- Asimov
- Room for relaxing
- Buddhist actor Richard ---
- Tennis server's edge
- Attack command
- Abundance
- 8 Grand view
- 9 Actress/director/producer --
- Lupino
- 10 Bombard
- 11 Preserve 12 Pharmacist's container
- 15 Latin law 20 Provide

- 22 Banned insecticide
- 25 Possess
- 27 Show --- (entertainment
- industry)
- 29 Rancid
- 30 Support column
- 31 Apparatus
- 33 Slender fork-tailed gull
- 34 Gunk
- 35 Drifter 36 Floating bubbles
- 37 Low calorie variety
- 38 Loads
- 40 Long slippery fish
- 44 Fifth sign of the zodiac
- 47 Freq. unit
- 49 Type of computer connection
- 51 Low
- 53 Suffer
- 55 Huge amount
- 57 Pollen grain 58 Lament
- 59 Small winning margin
- 60 Military bed 61 Dinay
- 62 Malacca
- 64 Strike with an open hand
- 65 Writer --- Pound
- 66 Sung poems
- 69 Whiskey variety 71 Diamonds
- 72 Bewildered response



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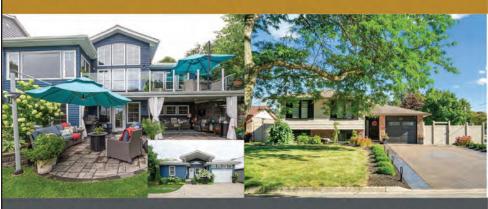


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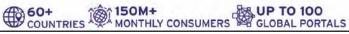
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