Questions, concerns over $1 million clean-up continue

Penny Coles
The Local

A representative of the provincial environmental office overseeing the clean-up of the Cole Drain says the town took appropriate steps to contain and clean up the material in the drain to protect the environment.

However, the contents of that material, referred to as an organic pollutant in last week’s update from the town, had not yet been fully explained by Tuesday, leaving some to question, including one town councillor, whether spending more than $1 million on pumping out and removal of the material was necessary; or an excessive and unnecessary expenditure of taxpayers’ money.

Residents who live near the drain, concerned last week about the lack of communication from the town, were invited to a virtual meeting Thursday evening — a full two weeks after the vacuum trucks showed up in their neighbourhood very early one morning. They were given an update from environmental and drains supervisor Brett Ruck, told the material was not hazardous, and that he had seen frogs and turtles still living in the water. There was nothing further about the source of the material, but Ruck told them the cause of the incident might never be known.

One person who attended said there were only five residents, along with Ruck and acting operations director Kevin Turcotte. There were others who have property with the drain on it or nearby, who likely didn’t attend because they were unfamiliar with virtual meetings, not from a lack of interest, she said. By late last week, the clean-up operation was called off, and the vacuuming of the drain halted. The berms created to stop the flow of the drain into Four Mile Creek had been dismantled and the black water disappeared.

A neighbour said Tuesday morning there was some water in the drain from the recent rain — not a lot — but it is still black. The large blue tanks that were used to contain the contents of the drain as it was pumped out were still on-site, but she’d seen no truck activity in a few days.

She told The Local she feels confident “the town is doing as much as it can. I feel better after that meeting. I’m not as anxious anymore.”

Although she says she wishes it wasn’t going to cost taxpayers $1 million to clean up, her perspective living so close to it is a little different than others. “It’s a lot of money, but if it had been hazardous, it could have been a lot worse.”

Rural residents don’t get the same services for their taxes, she said, but this has been something significant that had them very nervous, and she doesn’t fault town staff for their quick actions initiating the clean-up.

Cluckie explained to The Local Thursday that although the material in the drain was not hazardous, the levels of concentration of some of the contents found in the lab analysis were higher than normal, and had to be prevented from reaching Four Mile Creek. The material that was pumped into the tanks was at first being sent...
The three-storey house is only 1,600 square feet, on a very small lot. (Mike Balsom)

This is a sketch of what it will look like finished. (Supplied)

September 7, 2022
THE NOTL
House on small lot meets all zoning bylaws

Draayer, who has previously developed the old Walls of Virgil property as well as the old Virgil fire hall, says he and his wife are not planning to move into the home once it is done.

“I’ll stand back and look at it once it’s complete,” he laughs. “I’ll either be in love with it and want to keep it, and rent it long-term, or I’ll sell it. I hope we can finish by Christmas.”

He insists he has no plans to run it as an Airbnb, either.

The home will feature a central staircase and a glass tube elevator that runs from the first floor to the third. The basement will contain a small rec room, a wine cellar and a rough-in for a three-piece bathroom, as well as utilities. There is a garage on the south side of the ground floor, with doors to be added to the front and back. A small bedroom or office sits on the north side, beside a three-piece washroom.

“Every bedroom has an en-suite,” Draayer says. “It’s all very small, very compact. It’s almost in a nautical design style. And there’s lots of balcony space, with five balconies.”

The showpiece of the house will be the second floor, where an open-concept layout features a kitchen, dining and living rooms, with large windows both front and back. The top floor houses the master bedroom and a smaller bedroom.

Draayer says he spoke to the neighbours whose properties abut the lot at number 729. When The Local spoke to neighbours on the street, some of them expressed dismay that no information was given to them prior to construction beginning. As well, there were no public notices posted on the property announcing applications for any minor variances.

“We proposed a plan to the town, and originally they pushed back a bit,” Draayer says. “Instead of going for any minor variances, we made a plan that stuck within the limits. Everything is to code, within code and within the zoning restrictions.”

That was seemingly confirmed by town officials. In response to questions posed by The Local, NOTL’s communications coordinator Marah Minor said in an email, “the applicant applied to construct a three-storey dwelling with a below-ground basement. Building staff reviewed the building height, and it complies with the maximum height provision of 10 metres contained in the town’s zoning bylaw. No variances have been applied for at this address. The proposal meets all zoning bylaw requirements.”

Draayer expresses frustration with the current climate for construction. Supply chain issues have meant delays in the delivery of materials and problems scheduling tradespeople to complete important steps in the process. And he’s been frustrated with delays at the town caused by staffing changes.

“His other project, an addition to the plaza on the old Walls property to house a Swiss Chalet and Harvey’s, is also being affected by those same issues. Those plans are currently in their third year without a shovel in the ground. Draayer is adamant that once 729 Line 1 is completed it will be an improvement to the neighbourhood in which he actually lives, just around the corner. It was just a weeded, grown-over bush,” he says.

“Impact of this improvement in this space. Now that the balconies are on, I think it’s starting to show its interesting character. Once the (exteriors) finishes are on it’s going to clean it up nicely.”

He adds, “we need more living spaces, more houses, more rental homes. There doesn’t appear to be enough room. The town is not opening up a lot of space to do it on, and with farming and agricultural restrictions we are running out of buildable, developable land within our boundaries. This was a scrap piece of land that would have otherwise sat as scrap. Soon it will be a fully-functioning living space.”
Involvement of ministry not clearly understood

Continued from page 1

to Moro Refining Systems, an environmental waste company in Beamsville, she said, but once the composition of the liquid in the drain was known, the region approved taking it to the regional Port Wellar water treatment plant in St. Catharines, beside Sunset Beach.

Niagara-on-the-Lake mining engineer Ron Simkus told The Local that when he heard about the smell coming from the drain, it began to sound like swine waste, old decaying matter that has been under-ground for hundreds of years in an oxygen-free environment rising to the surface. He is con-vinced it is not a spill and he is also quite certain the town didn’t need to spend an estimated $1 million checking it up.

Simkus, retired from a ca-reer of working with what lies underground, says a spill is accidental, and hazardous, and told The Local he believes that what the town saw in the Cole Drain last Aug. 17 was neither, and in an email blast he sends out regularly to more than 100 residents, he shared his view that it is swamp water.

Cluckie said The Local Thursday that although the inital lab results on the material in the drain had been received, tests were continuing on the sediment, which would provide more information on the con-tent, and also on where it had come from. The results would lead to forensic tests along the drain as part of the investiga-tion into the source.

Staff have walked the length of the drain, and have been unable to find any indi-cation of material entering it, Cluckie said.

Despite assurances that the town wants to be open and transparent, when The Local asked for the lab analysis, Mar-shal Minow, the communications coordinator, said that infor-mation would not be released without making a request through the Freedom of Infor-mation process.

CAO Marnie Cluckie said Thursday the amount of ma-terial removed from the drain was more than one million litres. Although that materi-al “has no name,” she said it is what would be expected to be found in a drain, but at higher levels of contamination than normal. She mentioned the BOD level being high.

A spill under Ontario’s En-vironmental Protection Act “is a discharge of a contaminant to the natural environment that is abnormal in quality and quantity,” Groomebridge said, and although the ministry and town continue to call it a spill, they haven’t explained how or where the contaminant was discharged.

On Aug. 17, shortly after 7 p.m., the ministry’s Spills Ac-tion Centre was notified by the town about “an unknown black material resembling sewage in the municipal ditch at Con-cession Rd 6 and Line 6 Rd in Niagara-on-the-Lake,” Groome-bridge said.

“We take all spills and threats to the environment seri-ously and respond to reports of material that has the poten-tial to cause an adverse effect to the environment.”

Groomebridge said “owners of pollutants are required by provincial law to report spills. Municipalities are also required to report spills to the ministry, unless they believe the ministry has already been notified.”

 Asked if the municipality should have known whether the material was hazardous, or if that is SAC to determine, Groomebridge said “it is the ministry’s role to respond to in-tenders such as spills that could have an adverse impact on the natural environment or human health, and to ensure that those responsible take all necessary steps to clean up any spills to the natural environment. As part of the clean-up, the responsi-ble parties must characterize the material being cleaned up and if it is determined to be a hazardous waste, disposal requirements must be followed.”

She explained the town was given verbal direction, followed up later in an email. She said the ministry did not issue an order, which is a legal document that must be followed, and that “the town has voluntarily taken steps to contain the material to the Cole Drain and carry out the clean-up.”

She said environmental officers had been to the site “frequently” to ensure that ap-propriate actions were being taken to address the spill — she did not answer when or how many times — and did not ad-dress directly what the town and Groomebridge knew whether it was hazardous material, or if the process would have unfolded differently if it had not been treated as a spill.

At last week’s council meet-ing Coun. Erwin Wiesler ex-pressed his frustration at the lack of answers from the town and the expense of the clean-up, and he continued to:

“Town staff are not being open and transparent, as they said they would be, he said, “they’re closed and opaque.”

There are three simple ques-tions that should have been an-swered by now, the councillor said, “What is it, what caused it, and are we insured for it?” If the town doesn’t know the answer to those three questions, we have a serious issue. It’s close to three weeks now, and we could know exactly what it was, what caused it, and if insurance is going to pay for it.”

While he has sympathy for the residents in the area, he said if the town was doing its job, it should have known very quickly if the material in the drain was naturally-occurring sewage.

He believes it was, and “absent any other information, the time and money spent was to clean up non-hazardous, non- lethal, non-polluting wa-te-er.”

He has had no other infor-mation from the town to tell him otherwise, “zero,” he said. His questions aren’t being an-swered either.

The installation of the berms to stop the flow of water through the drain contained whatever it was, and that should have been the end of it until the content was known and more money spent, he said.

“The question is, would you want $1 million spent on swamp water?”

Another local expert, Dr. Keith Kennedy, is a geologist with a career in environmental issues who is also trying to get to the bottom of the content and source of the material in the drain, and is questioning who on town staff had the au-thority to commit to the expen-ses.

He would expect someone from the MECP would have knowledge that would enable them to “use their eyes and noses” take some samples and get them to a lab to see if the content justified taking action.

“They’re the regulators,” he said. “They have the expertise.”

If it’s decided it’s not haz-ardous, “it becomes a matter of quantity, and not a quality issue.” Instead, it seems deci-sions were made about how to proceed “without data, without analysis, without knowing how contaminated it was.”

“That’s water under the bridge now,” he said Tuesday, after walking the length of the drain.

“The good news is there isn’t anything residual in the drain. There doesn’t seem to have been any adverse effects.”

The future should be “an autopoly,” a de-brefting of what happened, said Kennedy, “and hopefully it will be made public.”

Questions to the town, the region and to the ministry were not answered by press time.
Men needed for library’s second speed dating event

Penny Coles
The Local

Whether you’re looking for a lifelong partner or just a chance to meet new people, there is an event to present just such an opportunity, and it’s being held nearby.

The NOTL Public Library is hosting Between the Stacks, its second speed dating session, Sept 17, and it needs more men.

“Check out more than books,” the library’s website says. “Find love among the stacks,” this time for men and women between 60 and 75 years old.

Debbie Krause, the library’s community engagement coordinator, says although it might seem an unusual event for a library to organize, it meets one of its goals, “to build social connections,” especially after COVID.

“Libraries have been about much more than books for many years, and there are always discussions among staff as to what more they can do to bring people together. After the pandemic there was a sense that many were suffering from two years of limited social interaction.

“We’ve seen speed dating on TV, and thought, wouldn’t it be nice to try it in the library. We have a really good space, and the heart of the library is bringing people together, building social connections in a social structure. Only this is a little more specific.”

Offering it to a younger crowd seemed like an obvious way to start, so the first event, held in July, was for those aged 28 to 40 — people who are already used to making connections online, and using dating apps, says Krause.

When staff considered holding the event, they looked online for models to follow. They found very few held in a library, none close by, and most were in the U.S. “It’s definitely out of the box,” she says.

Staff came up with a good layout to follow to make it more comfortable and relaxed for the six men and eight women registered for the first event. They placed six square card tables throughout the library — by the fireplace, near the doors to the garden, and among the stacks, all locations offering some privacy.

The men were each given a table, on which was a list of conversation-starters in case there was some awkwardness to begin with, says Krause — safe questions such as “what did you have for dinner,” or “where have you been on vacation.”

The women rotated through the tables, with a five-minute limit for the one-on-one chats, and a brief pause in between, the two extra women having a chance to visit while they waited.

Continued on page 11

Tables will be set up around the library for Between the Stacks, the next one for those 60 to 75. (Photo supplied)
We know that muscle and joint tension and reduced range of motion in movement are our biggest enemy to living a pain free active lifestyle as we age. Pilates Emporium operating since 2009 has provided services specifically to mature clientele and perfected their practices to include the most effective strengthening and pain-relieving services. They know that the mature body has lived a full life which brings with it old injuries, new injuries, joint replacements, arthritis, general stiffness and discomfort and pain. They also know that mature bodies do not respond in the same way to all traditional therapies. Old and new injuries and scarring causes adhesions that affect the whole body, causing imbalances in posture, pulling and shortening of fascial nets, throwing off the stability of the spine, pelvis and shoulder girdle and affects overall balance. Neurostim Therapy is a non-invasive and painless microcurrent which promotes the release of adhesions, calms down the nervous system and re-establishes oxygen supply, blood flow and muscle response reducing pain. Neurostim is authorized by Health Canada to treat COVID-19 long-haul symptoms and/or asthma-related reduced airflow. Clients with Fibromyalgia, Joint Replacement, Surgical and Injury Scars, Sciatica, knee and hip pain, upper and lower back pain have benefitted from Neurostim treatments.

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Barbara Schmidt, owner of Pilates Emporium
If it isn’t swamp water, what is it?

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

The Duke (Prime, 2021) is the story of a real working-class pensioner who steals a famous portrait of the Duke of Wellington and

View from the couch

Donna Broders and Dave Hunter on Balmoral Drive are the last Garden of the Week winners for this season. This property displays specimen plants and trees. There is a large mix of mostly perennials, but also annuals, grasses and ground coverings using yellow, pinks and reds for the colour palate. The garden features kousa dogwood, Chinese wisteria and Hindi cypress as focal points. (Photo supplied)
Local LETTERS

Peach Celebration not so peachy for some visitors

It felt like an old friend had just stabbed us in the back! After a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, you would think that NOTL would want to greet its visitors with open arms. Not levy a fine on those people who had to park on the grass in order to come and spend their money at the Peach Celebration.

We are a family from Ajax, Ontario who have attended the NOTL Peach Celebration for the past many years. And, yes, we still came to visit NOTL in 2020 and 2021 during the pandemic. Although, enough of the event was on hold.

On Saturday, Aug. 13, the day of this year’s Peach Celebration, we arrived in Niagara-on-the-Lake at approximately 12:30 p.m. While overall parking was scarce, we were pleased to find space at the Hospital Lot (at Byron St.). I immediately went to the meter assigned to the lot and used the “contactless payment” method and obtained my receipt through e-mail. While I found the $24 fee a bit onerous, as we had to park on the grass field (there were no clear indications as to where not to park), we were nevertheless glad that we could now go and enjoy the Festival!

A couple of hours later, to our surprise, as we came back to our car to deliver a load of peaches and other purchases, there was a “Penalty Notice” (Parking Ticket for $30) under the windshield wiper, stating that our car was parked within the “designated space”.

The parking lot signage clearly indicates “find parking space” and we found a parking space within the area available. There were no chains, concrete barriers or otherwise clear restrictions barring parking on the grass area.

However, in reality, the bigger issue is much more than the fact a fine was levied on law abiding visitors. Most people will simply pay the $30 ticket and be done with it.

Yes, it felt like an old friend had just stabbed us in the back once again. And such I am certainly inclined to go and spend my money somewhere else next year. And from the expressions and comments of the many others who received similar tickets on that Saturday, I expect I am not alone to feel that way.

This is where a municipal penalty needs to work with the locals and the larger community in Commerce in order to ensure its visitors feel treated fairly and want to come back.

While I have appealed it, I have now paid the $30 fine.

But this family will now travel and discover more welcoming Ontario towns next year.

Robert de Savoye

Local LETTERS

Different perspective on proposed roundabout

As the self-proclaimed president of the Roundabout Appreciation Niagara I am writing to give a different perspective on the much-maligned proposed roundabout for the centre of St. Davids (The Local, Aug. 31).

Mr. Gartner indicated that “In St. Davids, [it] haven’t heard from one resident who supports a roundabout at that intersection.” There are two problems with this observation. The first is that in such an emotionally/politically charged atmosphere in St. Davids it is not surprising that supporters would keep their views to them. The second problem is that this indication is of importance only to the residents of St. Davids. Write this at a time when a little-used intersection of purely local streets, that attitude would be appropriate. However, this intersection is where 2 busy regional roads come together. This means that the issue is one affecting not just local residents but also others living in NOTL, in the Region of Niagara and beyond (because of the tourists who frequent NOTL).

Although I respect Mr. Garti- ner’s background as a municipal planner, I don’t believe that he was correct in telling councillors that “statistics show roundabouts are safer for vehicles, but not for pedestrians”. Addressing the issue of pedestrian safety, Bill Burnett in a 2021 piece entitled “Pedestrian Friendly Roundabouts” wrote: “There are some misconceptions that roundabouts pose a greater danger to pedestrians than traditional intersections with traffic signals or stop control. Roundabouts are a proven way to increase safety and efficiency for all those sharing the road—including pedestrians. Federal Highway Administration and Insurance Institute for High- way Safety studies have shown that pedestrian accidents result in roundabouts as much as a 40 percent reduction in pedestrian collisions along with other significant improvements in safety over more traditional intersections.”

He then lists 9 features of properly designed roundabouts to achieve that enhancement of pedestrian safety. A similar conclusion was reached by J.R. Stone, et al, in a 2002 study commissioned in relation to a planned roundabout in North Carolina.

Mr. Gartner does not dispute that roundabouts are safer for vehicular traffic than other forms of intersection controls. J.R. Stone noted that “The circulating traffic movements at roundabouts eliminate or drastically reduce the critical conflicts resulting from red light running, left turns against opposing traffic, right angle conflicts at corners and rear-end collisions. As a result of roundabouts significantly reduce vehicular crashes.” To that he can be added the environmental improvements that result from freer traffic flow and lower tailpipe ex- haust from idling vehicles.

As a frequent user of this intersection, I strongly support the proposal for a roundabout at the intersection being recognized as a proper design prin- ciple to protect pedestrians are followed by the region in build- ing this roundabout. Now if only the Niagara Parks Commission would build a roundabout here in Queenston at the intersection of the Niagara River Parkway and York Road/Street that would significantly improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists who have to navigate this badly designed intersection in crossing from one part of the pathway to reach the other side.

Run Fritz

Queenston

How did healthcare come to this for our seniors?

In my life I’ve been lucky and humbled to have been elected by our community four times provincially, and to my own local council before that. In all of my years of legislating I can honestly say I don’t believe I’ve seen a more cruel piece of Legislation than Bill 7.

If you think that’s a grand statement, allow me to explain to you what Bill 7 is all about to do to sen- iors and those with disabilities.

It could not be clearer that Ontario is facing a hospital crisis. Numerous emergency rooms across Ontario have entirely shut down because of a lack of staff. Nurses are leaving the profession in droves, and communities continue to struggle, to get the doctors they need to provide care for residents.

Working together, we’ve undertaken massive efforts to ensure Niagara is not a region facing these issues, but it’s clear our local health system is stressed to the breaking point. There are major issues facing our healthcare system, but certainly one of them is the fact that alternative level of care (ALC) patients are stuck waiting in our hospitals despite the need for long-term care (LTC) or home care. The reason they are there is because the province has failed to create enough long-term care beds in their communities. To compound issues, Personal Support Work- ers (PSWs) required for home- care continue to have their wages held back, to be chronically underpaid and over- worked. Instead of attracting PSWs to care for our seniors in their own homes, they are leav- ing the profession. All of this means that seniors and those with disabilities are waiting in hospital beds until their names come up on a wait-list.

The solution here should be straightforward. Pay healthcare workers and PSWs a wage that matches the level of work they do for our families. Open new, publicly-funded and available LTC beds so our loved ones know they’ll be spending their twilight years in comfortable facilities. Attract more doctors to service our communities. These are common-sense pro- posals that should be the basic responsibility of a government.

This is not what happened. Instead, we got Bill 7.

Bill 7 attempts to address this problem in the cruelest way possible. Bill 7 says explicitly that it empowers adminis- trators to share your medical information without your con- sent to private long-term care home operators, and ultimate- ly move patients without their consent. Quoting from the bill it- self, the actions “may only be performed without consent if reasonable efforts have been made to obtain the consent of the ALC patient or their substit- uate decision-maker.”

Here’s the thing – admis- trators have always already had the power to have these discus- sions and make efforts to move patients. So the only thing that changes here is the Ford govern- ment has now authorized moving seniors without their consent if they say no.

So why might a senator say no to being moved? Well, in most communities the public- funded beds are occupied. In many cases, the only homes with open beds are private, profit homes that may have records of poor care. Many of these open beds continue to be in the homes that only pro- vide air conditioning in com- mon areas, not in the private rooms where residents sleep or quarantine for days if there’s a COVID outbreak.

Though the government has yet to regulate how far they can send a loved one without their consent, leaked discussions say that some communi- ties could send patients as far as 300 km away. When I made the comment that people might be shipped to the other side of Niagara, the government insisted that seniors would have no problem getting to the other side of Niagara Region, regardless if they drive or not. This en- tire Ford government’s part-time Min- ister of Long Term Care, who is juggling several portfolios, of- fered nothing but excuses as to why seniors and those who are disabled would be happy to be sent to communities they don’t know and into homes with dubious records. We’ve seen every answer in the book so far, ex- cept any single one that contains compassion for the generation that built our province.

The other problem will be, what constitutes “reasonable efforts”? Both Ford and his part-time LTC minister have flip-flopped on whether or not patients will be threatened with paying the uninsured hospital fee if they don’t want to be shipped to a different commu- nity; that rate can be as high as $1,800 a day.

Whether they’re being bil- led or covered, both solutions are awful. Caring for the gener- ations that came before is a basic function of government. Caring for those with disabilities is a core responsibility of elected officials. How on Earth was this cruel policy more reasonable than just providing healthcare residents can count on?
Mike Balsam
The Local

With the announcement of Shaw Festivals this 2023 line-up, this week, Tim Carroll cemented his reputation as an artistic director who is willing to take chances while also honouring the sense of tradition that goes along with a 61-year-old theatre company. Works by the company’s namesake playwright and his contemporaries Edith Wharton and J.M. Synge find space on the playbill next to operas by the likes of Tom Stoppard, Helen Edmundson and Selma Dimitrijevic. There’s a trip to Narnia with Prince Caspian, three musicals, and a collaboration with Toronto’s Why Not Theatre in association with London, England’s Barbican Centre.

Noël Coward’s Blithe Spirit returns for the first time in 30 years, holiday favourite A Christmas Carol goes into its sixth straight December (if you include 2020, when it was cancelled), and contemporary Edith Wharton’s The Shadow of a Doubt is a three-act mystery drama by the author of The Age of Innocence and The House of Mirth.

Shaw’s production, in partnership with Why Not Theatre promises to be a visually stunning spectacle that stars a cast made entirely of performers from the South Asian diaspora and presents a complex hybrid of cultures balancing East and West, traditional and contemporary. It is presented in two full-length parts that takes audiences on a journey through the past in order to write their own future.

After presenting both The Doctor’s Dilemma and Too True to Be Good this year, Carroll has dug deep into Shaw’s oeuvre for two of his less-seen works soon. V.B. Woolf will be presented at the Royal George Theatre as a lunchtime one-act play, directed by Dimitrijevic. Last seen at the Shaw in 1999, the story finds two unlikely travelling companions - a writer and a young woman - meeting on a cruise and falling head over heels in love with each other. Similar to the casting of this year’s marvellous Everyday, the ensemble members will play each of the characters, known simply as X and Z, will be chosen by lottery for each performance.

Also in the line-up is The Apple Cart, the fourth time it will be performed in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Eida Holmes directs this one at the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre beginning in May. The 1928 play is a witty political satire, focusing on the power struggle between an English king and his prime minister. Originally subtitled A Political Extravaganza, it reveals much about the true nature of governmental power through a series of lengthy monologues by its characters.

It’s perhaps fitting that Shaw’s artistic director emerita Jackie Maxwell returns to the theatre that bears her name. Maxwell will helm J.M. Synge’s The Playboy of the Western World previewing on May 25. It’s the story of a man on the run after allegedly murdering his father. He becomes a bit of a local celebrity as he tells his story, attracting the attention of the women in town, until his father walks in very much alive.

First performed in Dublin in 1907, Synge’s play caused riots provoked by Irish nationalist and republicans who viewed it as an insult to the country. Written in 1901 but not discovered until 2017, Edith Wharton’s The Shadow of a Doubt is a three-act mystery drama by the author of The Age of Innocence and The House of Mirth. Gypsy was one of the victims of the pandemic in 2020, when the lockdown shut down Shaw’s planned season just days before it was to preview. Shaw gets a second chance at the popular musical inspired by the memoirs of Gypsy Rose Lee, the world’s most famous strip-tease artist, and her relationship with Mama Rose.

The music of Jules Styne and lyrics from Stephen Sondheim include Let Me Entertain You and Everybody’s Coming Up Roses. Long-time Shaw actor and director Jay Turvey directs Gypsy at the Festival Theatre. Two other musicals are on the playlist for 2023. Lear and Les Mis. Brigadoon, last seen at Shaw in 2019, returns to the Festival Theatre in November, while Rodgers and Hammerstein’s A Grand Night for Singing, a musical revue in one act featuring songs from South Pacific, The Sound of Music and others, hits the outdoor BMO stage in at the end of June.

The puppet show A Short History of Niagara returns for a third year in the outdoor setting next summer, when a new outdoor venue will host Dimitrijevic’s Mother, Daughter and Pierre de Marivaux’s The Game of Love and Chance. The latter is a comedy about an arranged marriage directed by Carroll, featuring a different cast for every performance.

Both Mother, Daughter and Love and Chance will showcase the new Speigeltent installed on the Shaw grounds. “It’s a large historic tent that we have brought over from Europe,” explained Carroll in the press release, “that was constructed at the turn of the century from exotic wood and canvas and decorated with mirrors and studded glass – a cabaret-style venue and an attraction in its own right."

The Festival Theatre will play host to the popular Noël Coward comedy Blithe Spirit and James Baldwin’s The Amen Corner. Baldwin is one of the 20th century’s most profound voices. The Amen Corner is a drama of love and hate that questions the role of the church in the Black community. Through not a musical, director and Shaw associate artistic director Kimberly Rampersad promises a repertoire of rousing songs performed by a gospel choir.

Tom Stoppard’s 1981 play On the Razzle, featuring dazzling linguistic gymnastics and playful puns, will take Royal George audiences on a fun-filled romp, while British playwright Helen Edmundson’s The Clearing, opening at the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre in August, weaves the spectre of Oliver Cromwell’s ethnical cleansing campaign against the Irish Catholics into a marriage between an Englishman and his Irish wife.

In all, 16 different productions are planned for 2023 at Shaw. We continue to build on last season’s momentum,” Carroll said. “After these past two years, it’s time to further bolster our connection to one another. A heck of a theatrical ride is about to get underway.”

The 2023 season casts, creative teams and additional Outdoor @The Shaw events and activities will be announced at a later date. Tickets will go on sale Nov. 5 for Friends of The Shaw and Dec. 3 for the public. Further updates will also be available at Shawfest.com.
Continued from page 4

“That in itself was a connection they could make,” says Krause.

Although two of the women who registered were friends, none of the other 14 knew each other before the event, and none had tried speed dating before.

It was interesting to watch them arrive, she says.

“The men all arrived first, and then the women walked in the door togeth- er. Two of them knew each other but the others were on their own. Several said they were encouraged by friends who were part of a couple. They talked about a lot of different reasons for trying it.”

Snacks, along with wine donated by Konzel- man Estate Winery, were offered, to help make it a

man Estate Winery, were

wine donated by Konzel-

lot of different reasons for

couple. They talked about a

friends who were part of a

other but the others were

making yourself very vul-

seems a bit like a social

they are doing, she adds,

five men.

Krause They have 10 wom-

women and 10 men, says

the number is capped at 10

time for each conversation

but also a very sensitive situ-

that person. It’s a fun event,

interested in connecting with

that person. It’s a fun event, 

also a very sensitive situ-

When we’re planning it, and talking about it, we

try not to forget that. What-

happens, you hope they’re prepared for that.”

The second event com-

up, with seniors, “we’re seeing a little differently. 

Those in the younger group have been on similar dating situations. They may have app fatigue, but they’ve been through it, they’re ac-

ustomed to it, it’s part of 

their life. We’re feeling very
differently about doing it 

for seniors. We don’t know

how they will deal with it.”

In order to have enough 
time for each conversation 

the number is capped at 10 

women and 10 men, says

Krause They have 10 wom-

en registered “and a very 

long waiting list,” but only 
five men.

The concept of what 

they are doing, she adds, 

seems a bit like a social 

experiment. Women are

much more willing to put 
themselves out there, to step

out of their comfort zone 

and try something new. The 

men have to be coaxed to 
give it a try. It doesn’t come 
as easily to them.”

To encourage them, she 
says, she hopes they can 

look at it as an opportunity 

to have some fun and meet 

new people. “What do you 
have to lose?”

She says she can’t guar-

ante a match, “but I can 
guarantee it will be a fun 
evening and a chance to 

make a new friend or two.”

The event for those 60 
to 75 is Saturday, Sept. 17, 

from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. 

Library membership is 

not required, and it’s open 
to everyone — it’s not lim-

ited to NOTL residents. The 
cost is $30, with re-

freshments. All participants 
must register and show 

identification at the door.

To register visit https://

www.eventbrite.ca/e/

between-the-stacks-speed-

dating-for-seniors-ages-60-

75-tickets-390568961277

There will be refreshments served at the event to help make it 

relaxing and fun. (Photos supplied)
IT’S MILLER TIME!

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NEW LISTING

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Red Roof horses provide moments of peace for client

Logan Fair, with his mother Lori, loves spending time with Wonder and Mikey. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

Mike Balsom
The Local

Logan Fair’s face lights up when he sees Wonder and Mikey, two horses who live at Red Roof Retreat, approaching from the far side of the ring. He holds out his hand to gently feed carrots to both, and periodically leans in to nuzzle face-to-face with his equine friends.

The non-verbal autistic 23-year-old St. Catharines resident first fell in love with horses while he was living with his mother, Lori, in Mexico. During a visit to a farm there, they met a Mayan shaman who suggested that Logan would benefit from riding a horse. Skeptical, Lori eventually relented and she and Logan climbed aboard for a bare-back ride through the jungle.

“She would not get off the horse,” Lori says. “That was the day Logan fell in love with them. When I did finally get him down, he stood in front, and the horse lowered his head, and they just pressed their foreheads together for the longest time.”

Realizing that something natural was happening with her son, when they returned to Canada about 13 years ago, Logan began participating in the riding program at Red Roof Retreat.

It was clear to Lori how beneficial it was for Logan to spend time with the animals. When Red Roof executive director Stefanie Bjorgan adopted Wonder a few years ago, Logan almost immediately formed a special relationship with her.

“Wonder and Logan have such an interesting bond,” marvels Lori, “more so than he has with Mikey, who is a bit more dominant. He says he is talking to her. He just puts his head up to her and they just stand there. It’s amazing!”

Through the 6’3” Logan is non-verbal, he does communicate. It wasn’t until he was 18 years old when it was discovered at a workshop that he could answer questions by spelling words out using a pencil that he learned to poke through a stencil.

“It was shocking!” Lori says incredulously. “He just kept surprising everyone during the three-day session. He moved up to a laminated letterboard, and he eventually graduated to a keyboard.”

During a visit to the farm Lori unfolds a thin cardboard which she has connected to an app on her phone. Logan’s fingers wander the keys, and the app calls out “great to meet you, Mike.”

Besides the visual evidence of Logan’s love of Wonder and Mikey, he’s been able to use his communication system to express his appreciation for the time he gets to spend with them.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to be at the farm,” he typed out to Lori before the meeting at Red Roof. She asked him what he gets from being there, and he replied, “I feel at peace.”

Bjorgan has also marveled at how communicative Logan has been since learning to use the keyboard. She watched him in his younger days show frustration when he couldn’t express himself, and she sees less of that frustration the last five years.

“He has so much spirit, emotion, soul and intellect, and for so many years didn't have any way to express it. He was an observer all of his life, and then he had this breakthrough. I often wonder how many of our other clients also have that same potential!“

Through the years Logan’s size and his frustrated behaviours, manifested in periodic fits of dysregulation (a poor ability to manage emotional responses), meant that he was often misunderstood, sometimes feared. Bjorgan believes that with Logan, as with many of Red Roof’s other special needs clients, taking the time to get to know him can be a valuable and enriching experience.

“Most of us are so busy, and we’re dealing with our own developmental stages,” she says. “We don’t have the self-confidence to step out of our comfort zones to get to know people who are so much different than us. It’s important to take those opportunities.”

In his teen years Logan moved from high school to high school, never really finding the right program to meet his needs. Last year, in an effort to give him more purpose, Lori and Logan began a clothing brand called Stay Humble, selling T-shirts with that slogan in an online marketplace (facebook.com/humble-time).

“It gives him something to feel good about, something to wake up every morning and look forward to,” Lori explains. “It’s coming along slowly, but in a good way. He’s very proud of himself. People are sending us pictures and videos.”

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Learning to communicate reveals depth of thoughts

Continued from page 10

he loves to see them, and he loves any time anybody mentions it."

The slogan comes from an interview Logan had during a workshop with the International Association for Spelling as Communication (ISC) in January, at which he participated with his siblings. He was asked if there was anything he wanted them to know about him that his sisters and brother didn’t say. His reply was, “that I’m humble.”

Besides the T-shirt business and spending time with horses, Logan, the youngest of the single mother’s four children, loves to help out with yard work in the fall, enjoys rock climbing and watches surfing videos often in his downtime.

From 2012 until the start of the pandemic, Lori had been making an annual trip to Virginia Beach, often accompanied by one of Logan’s siblings, so he can participate in the Surfers Healing camps for autistic children. The event brings together surfers across the world to take autistic kids out on the waves. Lori says she has never witnessed a more accepting, supportive and inclusive experience for her son.

About four years ago, after he had learned how to type, he began attending gatherings of a social group in Buffalo for other non-verbal autistic youth who had learned to use similar devices. Lori noticed a young girl, Kaylie, who seemed to be flirting with him.

“They were exchanging messages, and she told him she thought he was cute,” laughs Lori. “I thought, ‘is this actually happening?’ That really motivated him to get really good at typing. They didn’t see each other during COVID. When she was finally able to come to Canada, he planned a picnic for her at Red Roof. He bought her a gift.”

Kaylie enjoyed the day at the farm, however she has yet to take to Wonder and Mikey the way Logan has. But that’s okay, and she seems to be an important member of Logan’s support network as well.

“When he’s having a bad day,” says Lori, “I’ll message her mom and Kaylie will send him a message back. He’s a real romantic. He bought her some jewelry, even though she doesn’t wear jewelry. But her mom told me it’s fine, she likes just looking at it.”

Another recent surprise for Lori was the discovery, when he was 18, that Logan had a deep faith in God. He is strong and firm in his religious convictions, and this has led to some interesting conversations at their St. Catharines home.

When asked how he was so confident in his faith, Logan replied, “just look at nature, how else can you explain the wonder of it.”

Which leads one to wonder if maybe Logan sees God manifested in his quiet moments spent with Wonder and Mikey at Red Roof Retreat. One might also wonder how much of this would never have been known if Logan hadn’t learned how to finally communicate his deep thoughts and feelings to his loved ones.

“He still has a long way to go,” Bjorgan says of Logan, “but the fact that he has an outlet to show other people what a deep human being he actually is, that’s the aspect we forget about people with special needs. We’re so busy providing the physical and medical care that we forget about that side.”

It’s easy to see Logan Fair’s attachment to the Red Roof horses. With them, he writes, “I feel at peace.” (Mike Balsom)
Tickled pink to hold Together 5K Walk or Run

Mike Balsom
The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident and business owner Elise Gasbarrino is tickled pink to get the gang back together on Sept. 17. Between now and then, though, there are a few kilometres to cover.

Gasbarrino is the founder and executive director of Pink Pearl Canada. The charitable foundation provides support, facilitates connections and empowers self-identifying young women across Canada who are dealing with cancer.

Pink Pearl is holding its annual Together 5K Walk or Run, to be done any time between Sept. 10 and 17 in any neighbourhood, and following that up with the return of their Family Support Day in NOTL next Saturday, Sept. 17.

At just 21 years old, Gasbarrino was faced with a cancer diagnosis of her own. At the time, her only choice for treatment was to travel to the Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton. She rarely saw anyone near her age at Juravinski, and she desperately looked for other young women like herself with whom she might be able to share her experience.

“Nothing existed for women in their 20s,” she tells The Local, “very few organizations that supported young adults. Some supported younger kids, and others supported older people. But I was going through this while I was still in university, then I was moving away from home, getting a career. There was nothing that was specific for young adults.”

Her family banded together to show their support, organizing and formulating Pink Pearl Canada as a foundation.

It began nine years ago with a retreat at The Good Earth Food and Wine Company in Beamsville. Word caught on, and the popularity grew. Soon, women between the ages of 18 and 40 with cancer were attending retreats at NOTL locations such as White Oaks, Queen’s Landing, The Pillar and Post and The Prince of Wales hotels. Typically, these are one- or two-night gatherings for education, fellowship, relaxation and support.

Proceeds from those events, and others such as their Black and White with a Touch of Pink evenings, have helped to raise funds to expand the organization’s offerings to young women. Today, they provide post-secondary scholarships, support packages and local socials, and have begun offering one-on-one counselling services the past two years. They are also expanding their retreats into locations such as Calgary and Halifax.

Sarah Hunt will be doing the Together 5K walk next week. The 35-year-old from Cambridge, who has a rare sarcoma in the nerve bundle in her arm, discovered Pink Pearl in 2017 while searching for support online.

“I had no one to connect with,” she recalls. “It’s really different going through cancer at 29 or 30. The other people...” Continued on page 13
Continued from page 12

sitting around in the waiting room are older, retired, they have money saved up. I had just finished my masters in speech language pathology) and was starting my career.

Since her diagnosis Hunt has undergone 25 high doses of radiation and three major surgeries, which have left her with limited function in her arm.

Finding other young women with similar experiences was a huge help for her.

"If you had a bad day and something didn’t go right, it was great to have someone to talk to," Hunt says. "When you had a new struggle you could reach out and find others who had gone through the same thing. It meant a lot to know you weren’t the only one.”

Having a chance to meet fellow Pink Pearl participants in person at the retreats was a lot of fun. "Hunt’s saving grace. The opportunity to relax, share a meal or go for a swim with other women was a welcome break from the treatments and the reality of cancer.

"I found that Gasbarrino focused on the needs of the program participants. Those retreats planned for Calgary and Halifaxes this year were actually supposed to happen two years ago. The pandemic caused their cancellation and meant that all in-person retreats were out of the question. So Gasbarrino and her team shifted to an online version.

"It was good in a way, because we were able to interact with women we wouldn't normally get to," says Gasbarrino. "At our last virtual retreat we had a woman from Nunavut who was able to be a part of it, and a Canadian living in Ireland. We’ll always keep some aspect of virtual programming for our people going forward.”

Gasbarrino's family lives in the Chautauqua area after moving back to Canada from New York City. Since then, many of her Pink Pearl efforts have centred in this community, and she’s partnered with Maria Mavridis and her Anchor Niagara organization for several recent fundraisers, including one at local restaurant Ruffino’s last spring. And, in July, the Par for Pink Pearl Tournament at the NOTL Golf Club raised more than $8,000 for the foundation.

"That was huge help for her.

"Elise is amazing, supporting the younger demographic," Waters continues. "The retreats bring people together to form a network. It’s really crucial during that time to have that support system.”

Waters will once again be out there running, and she plans to be at next week’s Family Support Day events. Participants will gather casually with their spouses, partners, family and friends at Gasbarrino’s Style Canada store on King Street. They’ll be offered food and beverages, maybe do a short walk together, then have a chance to enjoy a casual after- noon at Simcoe Park or elsewhere in town.

"It could affect your fertility, your ability to take care of yourself physically, to make that move normally get to," says Gasbarrino. "At our last virtual retreat we had a woman from Nunavut who was able to be a part of it, and a Canadian living in Ireland. We’ll always keep some aspect of virtual programming for our people going forward.”

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Interview with Stephanie

Q. What are your hobbies?
A. My hobbies are hugging my family, soccer, and art.

Q. What do you want to be when you grow up?
A. I want to be a doctor, a scientist, a soccer star, and a famous artist.

Q. What is your ideal day in NOTL?
A. My ideal day would be walking by the river or on the Bruce Trail with my family, going out for ice cream at Petrulo’s or Avondale then playing on the swings with my sister.

Q. Why did you pick the art camp at the Pumphouse over any other summer camps?
A. I picked it because I love art. I went there last year, and I had a great experience.

Q. What did you like best about the art camp?
A. My favourite thing was the mini art show by the river at the end of the week when our parents came to look at our art pieces.

Q. What was your favourite art piece you made at the camp?
A. My favourite piece is the 3D landscape because it is very colorful. I tried to make it look like the outside of the pumphouse where we had our snack breaks by the river.

Q. What is your favourite thing about NOTL?
A. My favourite thing about NOTL is my house because I can walk to the pool to swim, or I can play tennis at the tennis courts.

Q. How would you change the world if you could?
A. I would change the world by planting a lot of trees to clean the air, and I would make more time to play and spend with my family.
Celebration of Nations honours matriarchs

Mike Balsam
The Local

The theme for this week’s sixth annual Celebration of Na- tions, “Honouring our Matri- archs: Restoring the Balance,” is near and dear to the heart of artistic director Michele-Elise Burnett.

“Our matriarchs are real- ly at the centre of most of our Indigenous communities,” she explains on the phone from her Wainfleet home. “Even if they’re not matriarchal-based societies, they still hold the women in those communities at a high regard and treat them with respect.”

Through her organization Kakealanicks, Burnett oversees the three-day gathering of Indig- enous arts, culture and tradition in downtown St. Catharines, taking place at and around the First Ontario Performing Arts Centre. It runs this Friday, Sept. 9 until Sunday, Sept. 11.

The weekend includes a concert by legendary Indige- nous icon Buffy Sainte-Marie, singer Shavnee Kish, originally from Niagara, and the Strong Water Singers, as well as sunrise ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings, Water Singers, as well as sunrise ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders, ceremonies, sacred fire teach- ings hosted by female Elders.

Of the matriarchal focus, Burnett adds, “they’re our life givers, our water carriers, the ones that nurture us, that in- spire us. In some of the differ- ent nations they are the ones who elect the chiefs. They watch the young men and women and how they work in the community. They guide them to their responsibilities to the community.”

Burnett feels it’s time to get the world back in balance, by lifting and supporting the youth and the men who find them- selves since colonization living instead in patriarchal societies. “It’s about finding the balance to create a healthier environment. The weekend will also fea- ture the Red Dress Exhibit, an immersive experience honour- ing the stories of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited people (MMIWG2S) from 13 Indige- nous Peoples in Western New York and Niagara.

Burnett is fresh off of cu- rating a similar installation just across the border at Artpark. The one this weekend will in- clude an audio documentary for each dress and a special “Her Moocansits Talk” teaching on Saturday at noon with some of the project’s contributors.

“It was incredible, the amount of awareness we re- ceived on the long weekend,” she says. “It’s a big part of hon- oring our matriarchs and re- storing the balance. We give their spirits a voice so that they can create awareness along this journey. I’m hoping we can take this right across Canada, right across North America.”

Coming back this year is Drums Across Canada. It de- buted as part of last year’s virtu- al celebration, when drummers in Niagara connected with oth- ers in London, Ont., St. John, NB, and Nanaimo, B.C to hold a healing drum circle that went across the nation. This year, the circle becomes even bigger.

“We started working on it right after last year’s event,” she tells The Local. “We reached out to other performing arts centres across the country, to create a bridge between In- digenous and non-Indigenous communities. It’s one of the best ways to educate people, through the arts, and we have a great connection with our per- forming arts centre here.”

Burnett and her Kakealanick- icks team helped to connect local arts centres with drum groups in their areas. This weekend, the original four will be joined by groups in Halfox, Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Mon- treal and Prince Edward Island.

“We are going to do a com- plete full circle,” she says, excite- ment in her voice. “We’re going to wrap our arms around this nation that is still healing from so many different atrocities. These drums send out healing vibrations, the songs are medi- cine. We’re going to have a call and response to create an on- going narrative about healing, love and gratitude.”

Like Drums Across Canada, many of the over 40 events this weekend will have virtual op- tions as well. That includes some of hand-on workshops, sto- rytelling, poetry and discussion sessions and music, drumming and dance demonstrations. As in previous years, fire- keeper Brian Kon will watch over a sacred fire that will burn from Friday at dawn until the close of Celebration of Nations in the backyard of the PAC. The Procession of Nations will return on Saturday, showcasing the breadth and diversity of Indige- nous peoples who live within the Niagara region and who trav- elled long distances from across Turtle Island to participate.

As well, a canoe launch will be held at Henley Island, the Metis Elders will hold a per- formance and workshop, and an Indigenous Discovery Zone will provide interactive hands- on learning opportunities and fun for the whole family.

There’s something very special about it this year,” says Burnett, “a super special en- ergy. We have women doing the sunrise ceremonies all weekend. We have Indigenous women advisors this year. We really are embracing our wom- en this year, and these women are also holding space and em- bracing our men, so we can all find that balance.”

Details on the weekend’s events can be found at celebra- tionsofnations.ca.

Buffy Saints-Marie will perform at the Celebration of Nations. (Lyle Aspinall)
How do common areas work in a condo?

Among the most attractive features of condo living are the amenities that come with it. Being able to have an intense workout, take a refreshing swim, and then laze about on a sunny rooftop terrace – all without having to leave home – is certainly a nice idea. But how does ownership of those amenities work since they are outside of your individual unit? Who pays if something breaks down? When it comes to individual units, there’s a seven-year builder’s warranty for new condominium projects.

Common elements coverage

Common elements come with the same warranty that exists for every individual unit. The only difference is that, while the unit warranty is the responsibility of the unit owner, the common elements warranty is managed by the condominium corporation. This means that the condo board is responsible for submitting warranty claims and working with the builder and the province’s new-home warranty administrator, to get issues resolved.

The Performance Audit

A key part of the warranty for common elements is the performance audit. During the first year after a building is registered, the condo corporation must arrange for an audit. The audit is conducted by a qualified individual (in most cases an engineer), and the purpose is to determine if there are any construction defects in the common elements. The results of the audit are submitted to the builder for resolution, and progress on them is tracked at regular intervals by a representative for the condo corporation.

Performance Audit

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What you can do

Unit owners are a shared owner of the common areas. If you notice a defect outside of your unit that may be a warranty issue, you can bring it to the attention of your property manager or board of directors for further action. You can also seek to become a member of your corporation’s board of directors to become more closely involved in this warranty process.

Find more information about the new home warranty for condominiums at Tarion.

www.newscanada.com

3 ways to organize your life online

It’s no surprise that Canadians are living more of our lives online. An April 2022 study from Statistics Canada reported that three quarters of Canadians use the internet more than before for activities like staying in touch with family, accessing entertainment and buying food. Here are three ways to keep your increasingly digital life organized to save time – and money.

Hit “unsubscribe”

While email is an important connection point for work and life, it can also be a source of clutter. Unsubscribe from emails you never read to make managing your inbox easier and free up precious time.

Manage automatic payments

A recent BMO survey found that about 20 per cent of Canadian subscribers pay for services they had forgotten about or subscriptions they didn’t want. Take time to review pre-authorized payments for services like streaming and fitness attached to your account.

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Newark Neighbours ‘far outgrown’ its current space

Newark Neighbours, our local food bank and thrift store, has been proudly and successfully serving Niagara-on-the-Lake residents for 50 years, over 30 years in our current location on the grounds of the Riverbend Inn/Peller Estate property.

We are very grateful for our community’s consistent and incredible support over these many years. This support has been critical to our success as a not-for-profit organization, since we must rely solely on the generosity of our donors in order to deliver our programs to the NOTL community.

Newark Neighbours has far outgrown its current building for both our thrift store and food bank. Our thrift store is receiving an increasing amount of high quality of donations on a regular basis. The space required to properly sort, organize and display the wide variety of clothing and household goods that we receive is becoming increasingly limited.

In addition, and perhaps more critically, our food bank storage capacity and ability to properly serve our food bank clients is becoming extremely limited. The number of registered clients visiting our food bank bi-monthly has increased over 100 per cent in the last two years. We are now feeding almost 150 individuals and families living in Niagara-on-the-Lake, each month.

We are now reaching out to our community and key stakeholders in an appeal for ideas and suggestions on a potential new location and space — a space to better serve our growing needs. A requirement “wish list” has been developed including a minimum of 2000-plus square feet in space. The location must be central, have ground floor accessibility and be able to afford privacy for our food bank clients. We have a detailed requirements list that is available upon request but at a minimum, it must accommodate our retail space for the thrift store and have storage for managing our non-perishable food supply, a refrigerator and freezer, and suitable space for serving our growing number of food bank clients.

We have been discussing our need for a new location with various stakeholders and organizations in the past several months. Unfortunately, to date, we have not been successful in identifying a solution. We are now publicly enlisting our community’s assistance to identify a new location, either a piece of land and/or an existing building that may be suitable for our requirements. Our timelines are flexible; however we would like to be able to re-locate within the next six to nine months.

If you have a parcel of land that we could use to construct a building or have, or know of, an existing building that would be suitable for our needs, please contact our team at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com or 905-468-3519. Our board members would be pleased to meet with you anytime to discuss any possibility.

We would be pleased to host anyone at our current location at 310 John Street East (on the Riverbend Inn property) so that you can see our current space and operations.

Thank you in advance for your past and future support and commitment to our on-going success in offering our essential service to our Niagara-on-the-Lake community.

Cindy Grant
Newark Neighbours
Special to The Local
Sean Wright will swim, not run for Terry Fox

Penny Coles
The Local

Sean Wright likes to push himself, to face challenges, to set goals and surpass them. He chooses goals he knows will require hard work, and then methodically plans what he needs to do to accomplish them. He makes lists and then methodically plans and follows them. He sets training schedules and makes sure they become part of a routine. He keeps track of details, writing them all down. This year, he has set himself the goal of swimming along the Lake Ontario shoreline to raise money for the Terry Fox Foundation, instead of running. He hasn’t decided where exactly to start — he was originally planning to go from a friend’s dock, opposite Lakeshore Antiques & Treasures on Lakeshore Road, to the gazebo at Queen’s Royal Park. Now he’s thinking that might be a little too much — he may begin his swim at Konzelman Estate Winery. He’s hoping for a distance he can handle safely in about two hours, he says, and he isn’t stopping until he gets to the gazebo. His parents Patti and Bob Wright and his big brother Ben will be waiting for him — they haven’t all been together as a family for a while, so he’s excited about that — and he hopes lots of friends “will be bootin’ and hollerin’,” cheering him on as he reaches the gazebo and climbs out of the water. “Nothing is going to stop me from finishing, except maybe lightning.”

Since 2016, when he walked five kilometres in his first Terry Fox event, one of his goals has been to do something each year that would be different, and harder than the year before. He pushed himself to train, to run, and then to run further. In 2018 he finished the 10 km Terry Fox run in 50 minutes. He completed 15 kms in one hour and 10 minutes in 2019, and 20 kms in one hour, 39 minutes in 2020.

Last year, he set his sights on a 25 km run, but “due to a little confusion” he stopped at 28.67 kms when he realized he was doing an extra lap. He finished in two hours, 27 minutes, raising about $600.

Wright, now 39, was an 18-year-old Niagara District Secondary School student in 2001 when he was involved in a collision at Line 1 and driveway Road. The driver of the car, another student, lost control, went into the ditch and hit the guardrail. Wright was thrown onto the road from the backseat, and sustained a severe head injury. He graduated from high school, and worked hard to become a registered massage therapist at college. It wasn’t easy because of his brain injury makes him forgetful, he says, but he wasn’t going to give up. “It took me an extra year, but I finished.”

In recent years, he has been working at 124 on Queen. A chart he keeps meticulously shows that since September 2014, when he started at the Queen Street hotel and spa, despite lockdowns during COVID and closures during renovations, he has given 2,311 massages. That includes another 20 for athletes competing at the recent Canada Summer Games, where he had fun volunteering. “That was an awesome experience,” he says. “These days he’s busy working out, cycling, and running. He’s added swimming at the Kinsmen Pool in St. Catharines, gradually increasing his time from 20 minutes to an hour, in preparation for his fundraising swim.

“I set myself a good schedule, what I’m going to do every day, and I abide by it,” he says. He started training last October, ramped up with outdoor runs once the weather improved, and has been increasing his weights and working with thicker resistance belts. He has also found a training mask useful. Intended to improve lung capacity and oxygen efficiency by restricting air flow as you run, he says, “I can’t believe how much it’s helped. It’s even helping me with my job, making the massages easier.”

He will do some open water swimming, likely beginning this week, being very cautious and staying close to the shoreline as he swims. He’ll have kayakers along with him for safety, but is hoping to find someone with a motorized boat to also accompany him when he swims. Despite having to work harder than others might to accomplish his goals, Wright focuses on a positive attitude, much like Terry Fox.

He won’t accept that he can’t do something — he just keeps working on it until he can. And when he feels like giving up on a goal, he pushes himself until he gets it done. “During the beginning of the pandemic I began making up my own beats and rhymes and putting them up on YouTube at SW2,” he says. So far he has 14 subscribers, and worldwide lifetime views are at 429. “I just posted my song #365. Again, don’t say you can’t or you will quit,” says Wright. “Who knows what else you can do? Don’t give up. Don’t quit.”

“If I think something is tough,” he adds, “and I don’t think I can do it, I tell myself I can. You have to prove to yourself that you can do it.”

Terry, he says, wanted to do the impossible to show it could be done. Wright wants to show that he can do this swim for Terry, he says. “I’m going to try my hardest!”

After two years, the Terry Fox Run is back in person, beginning at Simoneau Park Sept. 18, at 9 a.m. Wright is swimming the same morning, beginning around 10:30 to 11 a.m., and hopes to be finished between 12:30 and 1 p.m.

Wright can be reached at myleftyourwright@hotmail.com.
Niagara College grad competing on Top Chef

Penny Coles
The Local

A Niagara College graduate could be the winner of Top Chef Canada’s largest reward in the history of the show: $100,000, and a Lexus NX are among the prizes.

Vish Mayekar, a graduate of NC’s culinary management program in 2014, is one of 11 chefs from across the country chosen to compete for the Top Chef title in the popular Food Network series.

He tells The Local the show has already been filmed, and he is now back in Vancouver, where he is a head chef for Caffe La Tana. Sept 26 “is the big date for the premiere, and I am thrilled for all my friends and family members to be watching it.”

Mayekar lived in Niagara Falls for most of his time at Niagara College, along with a short stint in Thorold, he told The Local.

During his co-op time at college, he worked at The Marriott by the Falls, and also at the college, he worked at The Market, and a couple of the amazing professors who to this date mentor me — Chef Oldf Metzger, Chef Ari Hollo, Chef Alan Kerr and Chef Tony de Luca. These are only a few of the many incredible chefs I was fortunate enough to learn from.”

Mayekar says he has been watching the show since its first season, and with his longtime passion for competition, he knew he wanted to be a part of it. “It’s an absolute honour. You know it’s not something everyone gets to do or is able to do so being selected to compete in one of the most prestigious competitions in Canada feels amazing,” he says.

As a professional chef, Mayekar is known for his unique ingredient combinations and love for infusing flavors and spices from his Indian heritage, says a Niagara College news release.

Trained and well-versed in Indian cuisine, he is currently head chef at Peppino’s Spaghetti House and wine bar Caffe La Tana in Vancouver, B.C. He also cooks for some of Hollywood’s biggest stars every year at the Cannes Film Festival, where he is the head chef at the American Pavilion.

A member of Culinary Team Canada, he is also preparing to represent Canada on the world stage in 2024 at the IKA Culinary Olympics. He has a lot on his plate, competing in one of the most prestigious culinary events and competitions in the world.

“Just like staying busy, always being involved in things and always trying to be a better cook and a better person each day,” Mayekar grew up in Mumbai, India and fell in love with food at an early age. His passion for the culinary arts led him to enrol at NC where he made his mark not only at culinary events and competitions, but on the board of directors for the NC Student Administrative Council and as a volunteer with the international department.

News about Mayekar’s selection as a contestant on Top Chef Canada X is stirring up excitement throughout the college and its School of Culinary Arts.

“The ultimate satisfaction that an educator can have is hearing about the success of their graduates. At Niagara College, we strive to set our alumni on the right path with a relevant set of tools, but ultimately it’s their own hard work and determination that breeds success,” said Craig Youdale, dean, culinary, tourism and beverage studies.

“Our entire team is very proud of Vish, and we will look forward to cheering him on both on the set of Top Chef Canada, as well as his life’s journey.”

Another NC alumna, Erica Karbelnik, was the winner of Season 9 of Top Chef Canada, while her husband Josh Karbelnik also cooked his way to the top four.

They both graduated from NC’s culinary management co-op program in 2011, and were the first married couple to compete on the show.

Mayekar volunteered at several local wine and food events while at Niagara College, and won the prestigious Ontario Youth Award in 2014, his last year at the NOTL campus. (Mike Ford, Food Network Canada)

Top Chef Canada X will air on Sept. 26 at 10 p.m. on Food Network Canada and will be available to stream through STACKTV.

In addition to the title of Canada’s Top Chef, a cash prize of $100,000 provided by Royale Tiger Towl, and a luxury Lexus NX, the winner will receive a brand-new kitchen outfitted by KitchenAid, an exclusive farm-to-table adventure courtesy of Glad, and a $10,000 cash prize from DoorDash.

For information about Top Chef Canada, visit foodnetwork.ca.
NOTL actor transitions from theatre to TV, film
Second season of Sort Of debuts on CBC Nov. 15

Mike Balsom
The Local

To Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Gray Powell, who has a major supporting role in CBC’s Sort Of series, the accolades it is now receiving are not at all surprising. In an online review of the television series, John Powers of NPR (National Public Radio, an American media organization) says “the low-key gem is funny, tender and humane.”

Patricia Karounos of Toronto Life calls it a “true treat,” and a “smart, bold, and new- ing new series that captures the true heart of Toronto.” And the show made Vanity Fair’s Sonia Saranajy’s “14 Best TV Shows of 2021” list.

The Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television noticed the series this year; Sort Of took home three Canadian Screen Awards in April, including one for Best Comedy Series.

Created by Bilal Baig and Fab Filippo, Sort Of follows Sabi, a gender-fluid Pakistani-Canadian who prefers they/them pronouns, played by Baig. Sabi is trying to find their identity while dividing their time between a job in a bar/bookshop and their role as a nanny for two children.

Powell plays Paul, the patriarch of the family who employs Sabi. Paul has his own identity issues, especially after his wife, played by Baig, has been having an affair with Sabi. Paul has his own identity issues, especially after his wife, played by Baig, has been having an affair with Sabi. Powell says, “It’s about how unaware he is of what’s actually going on in his life, and maybe what’s actually going on with himself.”

Powell’s involvement in the ground-breaking series came about just after wrapping Min and Supersnor at Shaw Festival in fall, 2019. His agent sent him a script for a “sizable role” — an extended trailer of sorts used to pitch series ideas to networks. He auditioned for the role of Paul, got the part, and spent two days shooting in Toronto that November.

“I first met with Bilal and Fab, getting more of an idea of what the story was,” Powell explains. “The writing was great. As an actor, I was really looking forward to the chance to do the full series. In August of 2020, CBC and HBO Max both picked it up for six episodes based on the initial great premise.”

Powell calls the decision made by the two big networks a “really great surprise.”

Sort Of is a series that has come about at exactly the right time. Acceptance and understanding of gender-fluidity, honouring everybody’s right to identify themselves however they wish, is front and centre. The series is written and performed in a way that encourages the viewer to feel a genuine sense of connection and compassion for all the characters and to empathize with Sabi’s struggles.

Like their gender identity, Sabi’s entire life is really in transition, spanning their daytime world with Paul’s family and their nighttime world in the bar world with Paul’s family and partner, played by Powell. The writing was great. As an actor, I was really looking forward to the chance to do the full series. In August of 2020, CBC and HBO Max both picked it up for six episodes based on the initial great premise.

“Surprise or not, Sort Of is a series that has come about at exactly the right time. Acceptance and understanding of gender-fluidity, honouring everybody’s right to identify themselves however they wish, is front and centre. The series is written and performed in a way that encourages the viewer to feel a genuine sense of connection and compassion for all the characters and to empathize with Sabi’s struggles.”

The series is dealing with some kind of transition. “It’s about Sabi’s journey of transition. ” Powell says. “It’s about how unaware he is of what’s actually going on in his life, and maybe what’s actually going on with himself.”

CBC announced in July they were picking up the show for a second season, debuting on Nov. 15. Baig and Filippo have suggested that season two is really about love, while Powell adds there is a big focus on the family dynamic, both Sabi’s and Paul’s. Shooting has already wrapped in Toronto.

The series finished at the end of June,” he says. “It was a mix of sound stage and location shooting. For most of Pauls scenes, we are shooting at a house in High Park. It’s wonderful, but it has also been kind of tough, especially in 2020, during COVID, when the rules would change on the fly. Watching the crew and how they dealt with it all was inspiring.”

In 2020, he locked himself in-demand actor in the studio space, while on set you can sometimes tell the story with your eyes.”

He misses the energy of the rehearsal hall, but he’s a busy, in-demand actor in the studio these days. Besides Sort Of, Powell also plays Young George Eastbrock on The Hardy Boys, another Canadian-shot series that is going into its third season.

And he has a role in The End of Sex, a film that premiers during the Toronto International Film Festival on Sept. 10. One might say that Powell himself, like his character Baig and Baig’s character Sabi, is making his own transition right now, from theatre into television and film.

“I’m really grateful for the experience of Sort Of and to be able to do some exploring being on set,” he says. “I’ve been a lot of fun figuring out what this kind of storytelling is all about.”

Sabi (Bilal Baig) and Paul (Gray Powell) in Sort Of. (Photos supplied)

Gray Powell as Paul has a major supporting role in Sort Of, a CBC series returning for its second season.

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The buzz about bee misconceptions in NOTL

Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

A loss of honey bee populations is occurring while conversations about these benevolent pollinators is increasing. Standing out back of Red Roof Retreat on the outskirts of Virgil, I met up with George Scott, the president of Niagara Beeway, which is focused on protecting native fauna species and restoring native habitats in Niagara.

It took one hand shake, and within the blink of an eye, I was fully suited up in a beekeeper’s hive, hovering over one of the boxes donated to the property. Over the years, and within the bounds of private property, Red Roof Retreat has been fortunate to undertake wetland restoration, forest planting, and the installation of a new bee box without many barriers to jump through, and my family is grateful for that.

However, with the recently procured bee box located on the “back nine” acres, which includes wheelchair accessible trails, there was a surprising amount of scrutiny over the concept. I didn’t need to cut to the chase with George. His passion flew through me like a bee riding the wind.

When I asked him what he would say to those who feel concerned about managed bee colonies, introducing an introduced species from Europe nearly 400 years ago, Apis mellifera, he pointedly discussed how it is essentially the least of our worries. “It is absolutely not true that these honey bees are competing with native bees. The cycle of honey bees is different from native bees, and the same is for foods sources.”

Native honey bees are not native to the North American continent, they play a historic and currently vital role in pollinating our local forest species, meadow plants, and even our manicured landscapes such as orchards and gardens.

George estimates that approximately $1 billion of ecosystem services come from Apis mellifera and its various subspecies in Niagara Region alone. Apis mellifera and Apis mellifera are competing with native bees. They are biologically fixated, consuming honey, and waiting for the opportunity to mate. Readers, let the jokes roll!

Knowing that some people see honey bees in common settings, some may not believe that population declines are unravelling. George informs us of a stark reality that hits close to home.

“There are large areas of Niagara where there are no bees,” he explains. Habitat loss is one factor, but George wanted to set the record straight on the misconception that farmers are to blame.

“Urban areas contribute 12 times the amount of toxins and chemicals compared to rural environments. The girls of the hive are picking up the toxins and it is killing them. The chemical compounds of our past sins are now combining with our current chemical sins, making more deadly compounds.”

By sins, George is referring to previously used, and now largely banned, chemical compounds that have now recently combined with our current regulated products to create a molecularly destructive soup to all pollinators of the region.

“Our urban gardens are concrete islands, where predators have native pollinators and honey bees on a platter,” he explains. Combined with habitat loss, George also paints a picture of way bigger fish to fry.

I asked him how we can address this, and what stands in the way of such change. “We (beekers) would like to see more representation on the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCCA).” He continues. “Beekers have been trying to transfer their technology into the NPCA for some time,” as well as other layers of government.

Ecologically speaking, we are only left to work with what we are currently given. We cannot change the past, but we can start today to create a better tomorrow.

As a past Rotary Club exchange student, I was fortunate to have spent many months in a bee suit in Australia, learning about the biological, ecological, chemical, agricultural, political, and cultural world of honey bees, which benefit both society and our local ecosystems. Even if they were originally from Europe, just like most of us. Think about that before we label this insect as an invasive species.

George holds up a sleeve from the beehive and explains the intellect and language behind Aps mellifera, which I am forever learning about, considering the hive’s appreciable complexity.

“The queen is the mother, like habitat loss for our original pollinators.”

This is where George and I approach the bee hive, like a couple of space men about to investigate a rock on a newfound lunar surface. We are aware that the Niagara Region and NOTL have lost more than 90 per cent of original habitat coverage, and that we continue to hack away at an ecological system that sustains our society and pollinators alike.

George pulls the lid off the top of the box with his bare hands, and tells me he is looking for female honey bees, that make up the vast majority of the hive’s population, sometimes up to 90 per cent of the population. And they do all of the work to keep it functioning.

Males are bigger, don’t have a stinger, and spend their lives doing barely any work. They are biologically fixated, consuming honey, and waiting for the opportunity to mate. Readers, let the jokes roll!

Knowing that some people see honey bees in common settings, some may not believe that population declines are unraveling. George informs us of a stark reality that hits close to home.

There are large areas of Niagara where there are no bees.” He explains. Habitat loss is one factor, but George wanted to set the record straight on the misconception that farmers are to blame.

“Our urban gardens are concrete islands, where predators have native pollinators and honey bees on a platter,” he explains. Combined with habitat loss, George also paints a picture of way bigger fish to fry.

I asked him how we can address this, and what stands in the way of such change. “We (beekers) would like to see more representation on the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCCA).” He continues. “Beekers have been trying to transfer their technology into the NPCA for some time,” as well as other layers of government.

Ecologically speaking, we are only left to work with what we are currently given. We cannot change the past, but we can start today to create a better tomorrow.

As a past Rotary Club exchange student, I was fortunate to have spent many months in a bee suit in Australia, learning about the biological, ecological, chemical, agricultural, political, and cultural world of honey bees, which benefit both society and our local ecosystems. Even if they were originally from Europe, just like most of us. Think about that before we label this insect as an invasive species.

George holds up a sleeve from the beehive and explains the intellect and language behind Aps mellifera, which I am forever learning about, considering the hive’s appreciable complexity.

“The queen is the mother, board, from threats, to ventilation, and temperature. The hive speaks in braille, audible sound, pheromones, tactile bee dances, frequency, and written language patterns we see on the combs.” He also highlighted the complexity of how honey bees can respond to threats such as taping on the bee box, from a wood pecker, or perhaps the thumping and personal space invasion of a black bear. These insects are hardened to be intelligent as a society, almost like our own, although I often question the collective “love mind” of our own species these days.

With this complexity in mind, look no further than our own species, as to who the real invasive species is.

We need honey bees, no matter how much it stings to think about it.
Alfred Mouget died on September 1, 2022, with Nancy, his wife of 37 years, by his side. He was 92. Just days before he died Alfred said, “I have no illusions. I know my days are numbered. But I can’t complain. I’ve had a beautiful life”.

A bon vivant, architect and engineer, he was a man of relentless optimism and courage who could never tell a joke without laughing his way through the punchline. Born in the Saarland region of Germany, he and his young bride Kriemhild emigrated to Canada and settled in Montreal, where they lived happily together until her death in 1980 and where their beloved son, Yves, continues to live with wife Marie and children Thierry and Mia.

On a cruise in 1983 he met Nancy and they married soon after. Alfred’s work as an engineer on the St. Lawrence Seaway brought them to Niagara-on-the-Lake, where they found a vibrant and welcoming community, centered around the Shaw Festival Theatre, and made a home of laughter and hospitality, deep friendships and civic engagement.

A lover of poetry and ideas, Alfred could also make things with his hands: he designed and built elaborate gingerbread houses, entirely edible and ever popular at local charity auctions. In retirement he returned to an early love of painting with support from the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre. His watercolours capture both the landscapes of his youth and the farms around Niagara.

A man of strong religious belief, he had faith in an afterlife. He believed in reincarnation, Alfred hoped that when he came back he would be Ambassador to France. Salut, Your Excellency!

Friends are invited to gather and share memories on Sunday, Sept 11th at 4:00 PM at 15226 Niagara River Parkway, Service Road 66 at Line 3. Those wishing to honor Alfred with financial contributions are encouraged to donate to the Shaw Festival or the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre.
Tennis Club held its annual men’s and women’s tennis tournament. I think it is safe to say that our club has never seen such a spectacular month of tennis. With the new courts recently re-surfaced the players seemed inspired, with three of the final matches going down to the wire with third set tie-breakers determining the winners.

Many members turned out to cheer on the players and then stayed to enjoy a catered dinner under the club’s pavilion.

Results of the tournament were as follows:

**Women’s A Doubles**
- Champions: Natalie Early and Karen Rhind.
- Finalists: Amanda Thackray and Sylvia Allen.
- Score: 6-3, 4-6, 10-8.

**Women’s B Doubles**
- Champions: Nicole Marsh-Burke and Michelle Marsh.
- Finalists: Barb Kavanagh and Mary Lou Turner.
- Score: 6-4, 6-2.

**Men’s A Doubles**
- Champions: Father and son Chris and George Bandak.
- Finalists: John Pilling and Scott Lewis.
- Score: 6-1, 5-7, 10-4.

**Men’s B Doubles**
- Champions: Jim O’Gorman and Bill Devolin.
- Finalists: Jim Thackeray and Glen Saltzman.
- Score: 8-4.

**Men’s A Consolation**
- Champions: Roman Korda and Gerry McIlhine.
- Finalists: Jean Lalonde and Shawn Parker.
- Score: 8-4.

**Men’s B’ Consolation**
- Champions: Les McFarland and Terry Ratkovsky.
- Finalists: Ross Robinson and Richard Berti.
- Score: 10-4 Tiebreak after 7 All.
Women’s captain Martha Cruikshank claps as captain Harry Huizer accepts the Pro’s Cup from pro Keith Vant on behalf of the men’s team.

Each nine was worth two points, but the 18-hole match was also worth two points, meaning six points were up for grabs in each match. There were 42 possible points and at least 22 were needed to win the Pro’s Cup. The ladies obviously had quite a pep talk from their captain Martha Cruikshank as they darted out to an early lead, but the men didn’t flinch. After all seven matches finished their nine holes the score was seven to seven. The real battle for the prestigious title had just begun! The ladies had the men on the ropes when the team of Ginny Green and Robin Fosster took all six points from the strong team of Jim Panetta and Ted Wiens.

The third ladies team added four more points and there was a sense that the ladies were the ones marching to victory, but not so fast! Suddenly the tide turned on the next three matches, and maybe a little “lady luck” had something to do with it. Yours truly (Harry Huizer) hit a shot in the fourth match on the 17th hole, which not only went through a tree but somehow shot forward off a branch and miraculously ended up on the green, shocking himself and his opponents, thus turning a sure loss of a hole into a winning hole. Without this turn of fate the result would have been quite different.

The tide was now turning in the men’s favour. The ladies never quit and they lost a heart-breaking sixth match by one hole, giving the men a five to one result due to the scoring system. Sometimes the scoring doesn’t seem fair, as the ladies will certainly agree to!

The ladies dominated the final match but it was a little too late, and the men won the nail-biting finish 23 to 19.

The ladies deserved a better fate as they won many holes as the men, but a one-hole win at the night time in a few of the matches gave the men the victory and the Pro’s Cup.

The players all had their lunch on the first tee, and then came the exciting and “tearful” moment when our pro Keith Vant presented the Pro’s Cup to captain Harry Huizer, with the ladies captain Martha Cruikshank looking on, but in true sportsmanship clapping along with all the players and fans.

It was really a winning day for everyone, as could be seen from the fun and friendly chatter after the matches were completed.

For sure it was a nail-biting victory for the men in one of the most exciting club events of the year.