



St. Davids-Queenston welcomes new minister

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The kids are back!

Kids head back to St. Michael Catholic School, after a long absence. (Photo supplied)

Red Roof getting set to start up programs

Penny Coles
The Local

It feels like it's been a long time coming, says Steffanie Bjorgan, but she and the board of Red Roof Retreat are working on reopening safely, expecting to announce an October date soon.

Bjorgan, founder and executive director of Red Roof, says most of the staff have been volunteering during the closure of their facilities due to the pandemic, and are back in the office making sure they are ready to open smoothly when the time is right to do so safely.

It's been hard on staff, but more so on the families of special needs children and adults, especially those who have been unable to attend school, with no day programs or respite to provide relief from the 24-hour care required by their clients.

There has been some financial support even during a time when the traditional fundraisers could not be held, says Bjorgan.

But limited capacities and other mandated protocols that will have an impact on program

delivery, staffing ratios, as well as all the extra supplies necessary for a safe reopening, will put a strain on their new budget.

The decision has been made to downsize the number of programs and clients to begin with, allowing them to manage the risk better, and hopefully be able to stay open if there is another lockdown.

When programs resume in October, it will be on a limited basis, says Bjorgan, with full reopening depending on many factors that will be evaluated as they go along.

"Our delivery of services will look different, but it's the best we can do."

Bjorgan says the biggest change is that they will not be reopening their St. Catharines location. Instead, the board is delighted to be partnering with Cornerstone Community Church, which has offered to donate some space at their Hunter Road location, thereby bringing all programs home to NOTL.

"COVID made us feel like we wanted to come home here,

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Couple in beached sailboat grateful for local support

Concerted effort made to rescue them, then their boat

Penny Coles
The Local

Sometimes the simplest solutions are the best, as turned out to be the case with a boat rescue last week.

Last Wednesday evening, a couple aboard their sailboat were heading from Toronto to

Smuggler's Cove Boat Club, planning to dock for a few days and spend some time in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

It was a trip they'd made before, but before they could reach their destination, their engine lost power, and there was no wind to help them complete their journey. It

didn't seem like a huge problem at the time, said John, who asked that his last name not be used.

"It started off seeming to be an inconvenience we could deal with," he said.

He and his wife, members of the Aquatic Park Sailing Club in Toronto's outer harbour, in Tommy Thompson Park, are long-time, experienced sailors. It had been a rough trip from Toronto, and they were exhausted, so they

decided to anchor, have some dinner, and with a bit of a rest and a clear head, decide what to do. A couple of small boats had stopped by, with some conflicting advice, and weighing what they were told and the conditions at the time, they felt it was a safe decision, he said.

But that quickly changed. In no time a north wind went from zero to 20 miles an hour, and they found themselves being dragged toward shore, and

then grounded amidst sand and rocks.

"It was quite terrifying," said John, as the situation became "a real problem, and we were overwhelmed, without the resources to deal with it."

The good news, as they were pushed closer to shore, was that they felt their position close to shore was safer for them, but the devastating news was that their boat was at a greater risk, with nothing they could do to save it.

A small, manageable problem suddenly seemed insurmountable for the seasoned sailors, who decided to call the Coast Guard.

Both Canadian and American Coast Guards, the Niagara Regional Police and the St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake fire departments ended up being called to the rescue.

NOTL Fire Chief Nick

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Fire department searches for bad smell on Queen Street

Penny Coles
The Local

Fire department crews were in Old Town Saturday investigating a bad odour that was reported

from the ambulance dispatch at Wellington Street, to as far as 124 Queen Street, next to Hendriks valu-mart.

“We ended up with 12 to 15 people talking to us

and telling us they were smelling an odour,” says Fire Chief Nick Ruller.

Enbridge Gas was called to determine if there was a gas leak, but couldn't find any evidence

of natural gas.

Sewer gas, “highly toxic and flammable,” was also considered a possibility, says Ruller, but monitoring tests to determine the origin of the odour couldn't detect any evidence of that either.

Tests were conducted inside buildings in the area first, and then the focus was shifted to underground infrastructure as a possible source, “but we were never able to identify the source,” says Ruller.

“Sheldon (Randall, operations manager) brought in staff, and we worked backwards trying to identify the odour.”

There was a lot of activity on Queen Street, and they weren't taking any chances, said Ruller, but they could find no sign of an explosive substance.

More than two hours after arriving on the street, in the middle of a busy long weekend, it was determined there was no risk from a dangerous

substance, and Ruller says the fire department and Enbridge left the area.

They were unable to identify the odour, he says, but considered the possibility that someone had disposed of a substance by pouring it into the sewer system.

“It worked out well in the end. I guess we'll have to wait and see if we have to go out there again. But whatever it was, it wasn't something that posed a risk to the public.”



Several fire department vehicles and firefighters, along with Enbridge Gas staff, were on Queen Street Saturday trying, without success, to locate the source of an odour that covered a large stretch of the street. (Town photo)

Family health team to move temporarily to former hospital

Penny Coles
The Local

Members of the Niagara North Family Health Team now in the medical clinic in Virgil have been granted a temporary home in the former hospital building.

They will be moving out of the medical centre in January, when their lease will expire, until their new permanent home in The Village is ready for them.

Mary Keith, the director of the family health team, was at a council meeting recently to ask to rent about

1,380 square feet of space in the old hospital building on Wellington Street for a temporary home for team members. Those who will be moving from Virgil include nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, dietitians, an occupational therapist, a pharmacist, and chiropodist, she says.

The doctors now in the Niagara Stone Road clinic are expected to sign a new lease and remain there — there isn't room in The Village building for all the health team doctors.

Simpson's Pharmacy

will stay where it is in Virgil, although one of its part-time pharmacists will work with the family health team one day a week, explains Sean Simpson.

Keith says the Virgil lease is set to expire at the end of 2021. Councillors approved a motion for a month-by-month rent agreement basis, giving the team a home until April, when construction of the Village Medical Centre is expected to be finished. It will also be home to the doctors now in the former hospital, and LifeLabs.

New route for Pedal Pub turned down by council



The Pedal Pub operation will travel the same streets as it has all season, including Mississagua and Queen Streets, which some councillors feel present a safety issue. (File photo)

Penny Coles
The Local

After struggling with a recommendation from town staff to change the route for the Pedal Pub operation, councillors could not accept it as a safe option.

The route staff recommended gets the pub off

Mississagua Street, but not off Queen Street, where it visits local businesses.

Councillors' request to staff was intended to look at whether the Pedal Pub could travel safely to local wineries, and avoid both Queen and Mississagua Streets.

The staff recommendation was for the Pedal Pub to leave its Mary Street location, head to King Street to Market Street, using the Court House parking lot for passengers to disembark and visit Forno's Restaurant and the Exchange Brewery on Queen Street.

Some councillors voted for the recommendation, saying town staff had done the job they were asked to do, which was to find a safer route.

Coun. Clare Cameron agreed with the recommendation, saying the operation hasn't had any safety issues, “and they deserve an answer from us,” rather than a referral back to staff to look at other locations.

Coun. Erwin Wiens also supported Town staff, saying they did what they were asked to do, and objected to a deferral to send them back to the business owners and ask them to rework their business model.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero voted against it — she was hoping the Pedal Pub owners could be persuaded to visit local wineries and stay off the main roads. But the business representatives told town staff their business model doesn't allow for that — the distance to travel is too far.

When the recommendation was defeated, with no alternative offered, Disero said, “therein lies the dilemma. Now it's a bit of a free-for-all, with no routes approved.”

Defeating the recommendation, explained CAO Marnie Cluckie, means the operation can continue on the routes it uses now.

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Couple rescued by firefighters, professionals free boat

Continued from page 1

Ruller said he got the call Thursday morning, just after 1 a.m., and with an automatic aid agreement for water rescues, the St. Catharines department arrived as well, towing two Zodiac rescue boats, which could have been launched from the NOTL Sailing Club.

At that point, said Ruller, although there were discussions about how to proceed, the decision was made to focus on getting the couple off the boat, and because of the weather conditions and the shallow water, the coast guard couldn't help.

Long-time waterfront resident Terry Boulton, who has been sailing since he was a child, was out watching the rescue efforts. He said he and his wife had witnessed a rescue in a similar situation more than 20 years ago, and he mentioned to emergency personnel the easiest and safest way was to walk out, help the couple off the boat and walk them to shore.

Ruller says it helped that he and some of the NOTL volunteer firefighters are also familiar with the water off Queen's Royal, and some of the challenges it can present.

Ruller had been paddle boarding in that location with his kids just the week before, and was able to pull up some pictures on his phone that helped confirm the depth of the water, he said.

Two of the firefighters walked out, and were able to get the couple into their own inflatable boat, and walk it back to shore, he said.

"Everyone was focused on getting us off," said John. "We had no idea at that time what would happen to the boat."

As disturbing as it was leaving their sailboat, not knowing how it would be affected left sitting in a combination of rocks and sand, "the important thing was we were safe, thanks to the good works of the fire department and coast guard and everyone who helped." They all took great care of us," John told *The Local* Saturday.

Once he and his wife were safe, and the boat "relatively safe" as a side benefit, John said he felt a huge relief, knowing how much worse their sit-

uation could have been.

It wasn't until Friday that they were able to figure out how to rescue the boat, and that was difficult, "not knowing who to turn to," he said.

"A bunch of people from the local boat club came out and tried to help," he said, and although they had the right idea, their boats weren't strong enough, and C-Tow, a professional marine service that helps boaters across Canada, was able to trailer boats from Barrie to help free their beached Casa Libre, a 16,000-pound Hunter 37.5 fibreglass sailboat. It was after 10 p.m. Friday when the boat was towed to the NOTL Sailing Club.

Matt Phillips, a local Bed and Breakfast owner who is also an experienced sailor, spoke with the boat owners, and watched the rescue attempts throughout the day.

C-Tow crews, aboard two tow vessels, didn't arrive on the scene until 7 p.m. Phillips describes these last two summers as a hectic time for boat rescues — another result of the pandemic, as people who have never owned or piloted boats have decided to purchase all manner of watercraft, and find themselves in trouble due to their lack of experience.

Once the crew arrived and assessed the situation, says Phillips, it took a three-hour effort "to kedge the stricken vessel off."

Phillips described the operation the locals tried earlier in the day first, which was also a kedging effort. With a rope from the top of the mast to one boat, off to the side of the sailboat, it is tipped to one side to try to lift the keel from the sand, as another boat, tied to the bow and a distance out in front, tried to pull it out.

Unfortunately the two boats trying to help were not strong enough and the thrust wasn't sufficient for the task, says Phillips.

A family on shore and their kids had also waded out in their clothes, wanting to help, as had Tim Bala from Paddle Niagara, and along with the two boats from the sailing club "they were all giving it everything they could. As a lifetime sailor myself," says Phillips, "I could feel the owners' pain and wanted them to know that if they needed any shore support, I was there

for them. I like to think fellow sailors look after each other in times of distress. I've only ever seen this kind of grounding in pictures or video, but never in person," he added. "It was indeed a sad sight to see their poor boat, through no fault of its own, now beached."

When the C-Tow crew were in the water, they followed roughly the same principle with larger boats, and after a number of "methodical, try this and try that," its crew was successful, with a cheer sounded by a ghost tour crowd from the gazebo on shore celebrating "that Casa Libre was finally 'libre,' floating freely once again," says Phillips.

"C-Tow understood the angles and exactly where and how to pull," says John. "They were professionals, and knew how to do it. And we had so many offers of help from locals, lots of people reaching out. I can't thank the community enough."

He and his wife were offered all kinds of assistance, including a place to stay, but having visited the town before they had a local hotel in mind where they were able to stay, until some friends arrived with equipment John wanted for his boat, and to take them home.

Although it was too soon to know on Saturday, and a detailed inspection would be required, it seemed the hull was intact, he said. He suspected some damage to the keel, and his boat, he said, will likely spend the winter in NOTL at the sailing club, and be repaired here.

Ruller said the fire department gets an average of two

calls a year for water rescues, and sometimes will receive calls from people who believe there is an emergency rescue required, such as when peo-

ple tubing look like they're in trouble, but when the fire department arrives they discover that's not the case.

The automatic aid agree-

ment with St. Catharines is great for the town, he added, with the larger city department having more training and more practise with water rescues.



The sailboat was dragged by the wind and waves onto the sand bar, not far offshore from the gazebo. (Photos by Matt Phillips)



The owner of the boat grounded on the sand bar just off Queen's Royal Beach helps crew members from C-Tow as they begin to set up for the rescue of his boat at dusk Friday evening.



A local family heads out to the beached sailboat Friday afternoon, hoping to help out with a local effort by two boaters from the NOTL Sailing Club to free it. Also helping with the attempt was Tim Bala, in the water beside the small boat on the right with the rigging that was intended to help lift the keel out of the water.



The owner heads out in his small inflatable to help the C-Tow crew rig his sailboat to free it from the sand.



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Airport commission looking for private management

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Big changes may soon be on the horizon for the Niagara District Airport, and chief executive officer Daniel Pilon is excited about the possibilities.

Last week the Niagara District Airport Commission released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for third-party operators interested in assuming management responsibilities of the facility.

A fixture in the community since 1929, the airport is currently operated by the commission through the municipal governments of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines. It sits on 362 acres of land owned by the town.

"We recognize the importance an airport plays in a community and in an economy," Pilon tells The Local. "We're trying to find innovative and different means of growing our asset. We have some opportunities here to see what some of this interest could look like."

Pilon expects significant responses from third parties to the RFP, despite a 2017 offering that garnered only three bids.

He is adamant that since that previous RFP the industry has seen major changes. Before the pandemic, Niagara District Airport was experiencing unprecedented growth, with 45,000 movements (arrivals and departures) in 2019.

As well, the success of scheduled service to Toronto via FlyGTA Airlines, begun in late 2016, has proven the value of the facility in bringing travellers to the region, says Pilon.

During the pandemic, however, those movements were cut almost in half. The CEO feels that with a rebound on the way for the aviation industry, now is the perfect time to put the call out for submissions.

"These scenarios are where some people will see opportunity," he says. "It's certainly been a difficult 18 or 19 months, but we'd like to think that it will create an environment where there will be significant interest. People have already and will soon be flying again. They're going to want to travel. When you have 13 million tourists a year, you need to invest in all your different modes of transportation."

The airport is a key part of the region's transportation master plan, along with GO Transit and an amalgamated regional transit service to link Niagara's 12 municipalities. With the province forecasting a regional population of 610,000 by 2041, an increase of 168,000 persons, ease of movement throughout the region becomes even more important.

Pilon expects that the bids will come from companies already in the airport management business elsewhere.

"Operating an airport is different from operating an

airline," he explains. "There's far more involved from a regulatory perspective, keeping abreast with Transport Canada. It's not uncommon for airports to be operated privately. The Hamilton airport, for example, is operated by Vantage Airport Group, who also run the Vancouver Airport. We're excited to see what interest is out there."

The airport's annual budget runs at just over \$1 million, with approximately a third of that designated for capital costs.

"It's a little on the light side," Pilon says. "In Niagara, we get a lot of bang for our buck, with the support of the municipalities, working with different grants. The capital investment is really the big item. It's what you want to have from a terminal perspective, what kind of service do you want to create, what do you want to spend to maintain the asphalt of your runways."

There have been a number of key improvements to the airport over the years. Since 2010, \$11.6 million dollars of improvements have taken place under the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, including runway rehabilitation, an expanded parking lot, improved lighting, and the new terminal.

Pilon sees a transition in management as key to the future growth of the airport's suite of offerings. Its location close to the highway and easy access for tourists to both Niagara-on-the-Lake



Airport infrastructure has been upgraded in recent years, including at the terminal. (Photo supplied)

and Niagara Falls make it a potential catalyst to attract future business to the region.

"There's also corporate travel coming in, folks staying at some of the high-end luxury accommodations in Niagara-on-the-Lake," he adds. "There's a significant portion of tourism and business travel."

With the RFP being released, the future of the Airport Commission and the financial involvement of the three municipalities is somewhat up in the air, depending on the winning submission. The possibility exists that the funding of the airport may come off the books of the three governments.

"We might see different offerings from a whole host of individuals," says Pilon. "I think, on behalf of the mu-

nicipalities, that may be the expectation, that they may not have to engage from a financial perspective. It's a bit of an unknown, but I think that's what the municipalities are expecting, that they will be removing themselves from their annual financial support"

Under any new agreement, the Niagara District Airport Commission would continue to exist and would oversee the management of the airport by the company. With a municipal election coming in October, 2022, there may be some changes to that commission and how it operates, but it will continue to guide the facility's operations.

The CEO is adamant that any successful third party partner would retain and uphold the existing leasing agreements

with businesses on-site, including the St. Catharines Flying Club and FlyGTA Airlines.

Currently, there are no plans to extend the length of the runway. At 5,000 feet, corporate jets and general aviation are easily accommodated. Domestic aircraft from Canadian cities in the range of 75 to 100 passengers can be brought in at the current runway length.

The RFP closes on October 20. Pilon expects evaluation of the submissions and the subsequent negotiation process would result in an executed agreement with a successful operator some time in February, 2022.

"We are expecting a lot of interest," Pilon says. "We're hopeful, given the attractiveness of this asset, that we see some quality submissions."



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Sept. 11 memorial service will recognize 20 years



First responders are recognized on Sept. 11, to remember their role on that tragic day in 2001. (File photo)

Penny Coles The Local

Eduardo Lafforgue, president of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, is continuing a tradition started by former president Janice Thomson by hosting a solemn occasion, as he explained, to reflect on the events of Sept. 11, 2001.

It is 20 years since that day, he said, and although last year's service was kept to a minimum due to COVID, this year will revert to the tradition which includes some speeches by officials, as well as flag-lowering and raising, and attended by first responders, who are recognized for their role in keeping society safe.

They were called out that morning, on a day like any other, to face a situation no one could ever imagine, and for that reason, they are honoured yearly at the Sept. 11 memorial service.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero will speak, as will Lafforgue.

Nearly 3,000 people lost their lives that day, from 90 countries around the world, including 24 Canadians.

There were many Americans visiting NOTL that day, and several visited the Chamber of Commerce office, some looking for news, others for places to stay the night.

In past years, there have always been a few who returned to be present at the memorial service at the cenotaph.

"We have some Americans returning now that the border is open," says Lafforgue, "but I don't think very many. It's impossible to say whether they will return for the service."

The American and Canadian flags will be lowered at 8:45 a.m., and after a moment's silence, raised again to the playing of O Canada, and the American national anthem.

Lafforgue promised at last year's quiet, scaled-down service, it would continue this year to recognize the 20th anniversary of the traumatic events of that day, and although masks will be worn and all pandemic protocols followed, it is time to resume this significant event, he says.

Police charge woman with assault

Local Staff

The Niagara Regional Police have charged a woman with assault after an August confrontation between horse and carriage protestors and supporters in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The charge is the result of an investigation into two accusations of assault, one of a 17-year-old girl and one of a 69-year-old wom-

an, on Aug. 14.

The police say there was an altercation between the girl and the woman, but their investigation showed no evidence that the teen was assaulted.

However, they say there is evidence showing a 35-year-old woman approached a protester and allegedly swatted a cell phone out of her hand.

The victim did not suffer any physical injuries as a result of the incident, the

police report says.

On Saturday, Sept. 4, Elizabeth Beattie, 35, of St. Catharines was arrested and charged with assault.

Beattie was released on a Form 10 (used by the police to compel the accused to attend court and abide by specific conditions) and a future court date.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Niagara Regional Police Service at 905-688-4111, ext.1002200.

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As house prices soar, is home ownership in Canada becoming something only the rich can afford CBC, March 30, 2021

Even if prices fall, the era of affordable houses in Canada seems to be done Globe and Mail, July 23, 2021

Feds Eye Home Equity Tax Blacklock's Reporter, July 17, 2020

Adam Zivo: Why the Conservative housing plan really is better than the others

National Post, August 28, 2021

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EDITORIAL

Enjoy what you've missed, cautiously

We've come a long way, on a journey we could never have imagined.

It's been 18 months since our world changed, when we had been hearing about something called a coronavirus for a few months by then, and it was beginning to sink in that our lives would look different, at least for a while.

As we've learned more about it, endured an ever-greater impact on our lives, it has brought out the best and worst in people.

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, we're fortunate to see the best.

Some feared this thing called COVID from the first, others have had contempt for it, but most of us just tried to do what we were being asked to conquer it.

Conversations ranged then from 'what's the big deal?' to digesting every bit of the latest news about its spread, to now focusing on vaccinations, passports, and a fourth wave.

A fourth wave? How could we have imagined...

There were 245 active

cases of people with COVID in Niagara Tuesday, nine in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

There were 564 new cases in Ontario Tuesday. On Saturday, the province reported 944 new cases, the highest in months.

There is no doubt the Delta variant is responsible.

And thanks to the election thrown into the mix of dealing with a pandemic, we hear more and more on the news about angry people, about violent protests from anti-vaxxers, anti-maskers, anti-closures, and those just generally against any efforts to curb the pandemic.

In NOTL, it seems, people have instead supported each other, helped their friends and neighbours, and although vaccination results are not released by municipality, we get the sense that this community is looking after that as well.

Congrats to all of you who are double vaccinated.

You've done what was asked of you, and should be proud of being part of the solution, not the problem.

The town is welcom-

ing user groups back to the community centre and Centennial and Meridian Credit Union Arenas, as permitted by the province, by reopening for programs, room rentals and and ice rentals. This is the first time programming and room rentals have been available at the community centre since it closed on March 13, 2020.

As we look around us, there is reason to believe life is returning to something far more normal than this time a year ago.

We're having much of our freedom returned to us, and we've earned it. But if we're not careful, we could be faced with a continuing increase of people in hospitals and intensive care units across the province, and another lockdown.

We still have to use common sense and caution as we go about our daily lives, and if we're not vaccinated, we should be.

As we face the possibility of vaccination passports, we learned that the local businesses are in favour of them — two different sur-

veys, by the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce and the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, showed between 62 and 64 per cent answered positively.

Businesses likely see it as a way to stay open, and for us, it's a chance to enjoy all that we've missed.

Let's do that, cautiously. Let's support our business-

es, who have tried to do everything right. They have earned our support.

Penny Coles
The Local

Town committee provides context to inclusivity and related issues

Jamie Knight, co-chair
Inclusivity Committee

"Inclusivity" is a word that has popped up a fair amount over the past year or two. It has been in the newspapers, on the town's website, and was the basis of a survey circulated earlier in the year.

Recently, Inclusivity initiatives have stirred some controversy, so it seems high time to give some meaning and context to "Inclusivity" and related terms, especially as they relate to our town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The use of the term "Inclusivity" is becoming increasingly frequent in workplaces, clubs and social groups, volunteer organizations, elected bodies of government, and even entire communities. For instance, in 2020, NOTL and the other municipalities that make up Niagara Region joined the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities. In doing so, the town committed to valuing diversity and respecting all residents; giving residents full access to resources and decision-making processes; promoting equal treatment and opportunity; working to eliminate all forms of discrimination; and responding quickly to racist and other discriminatory incidents.

Inclusivity (or inclusion) is often linked with two other equally important terms, "Diversity" and "Equity," under the acronym DEI. Diversity measures the degree to which people of different races, religions, ethnicities, ages, abilities, economic classes, genders, and sexual orientations are present in a specific workplace or social environment. In effect, diversity is a snapshot of the

way things are. Equity is the concept of providing fair opportunities for everyone in a diverse group, taking into account their individual needs. Equity celebrates individual differences and strives to recognize and value the good faith contributions of all members.

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, inclusivity is the focus of a town committee that was formed by council. The Inclusivity Committee, like the town's many other committees, is an advisory group made up of volunteers and a council member, assisted by town staff. Committees exist to develop expertise among committee members, provide outreach to town residents and related organizations, and make recommendations to town council. Committees do not have the authority to spend money or commit town resources to any initiative or ongoing work unless expressly empowered to do so by town council. Recently, for example, the Inclusivity Committee recommended that council consider installing a rainbow crosswalk and rainbow bench(es), like many other Ontario municipalities already have, as a way of showing that NOTL values and welcomes members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. The final decision, timing, and funding of initiatives such as these rest with council, as our duly elected representatives.

Over the past couple of years, DEI issues such as racism towards BIPOC Canadians and the ongoing legacy of residential schools have begun to enter mainstream consciousness. At the same time, incidences of intolerance and hate crimes,

such as attacks on Islamic and Asian Canadians, assaults on 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, and the defacing of Pride symbols, religious places, and memorials for marginalized groups, have been rising. Given all of these developments, and considering that people of various races, ethnicities, religions, and sexual orientations live and work in NOTL, it is more important than ever to consider how our Town responds to questions around Inclusivity.

Many people see DEI initiatives as a means of building a better, more just, society. These initiatives can only succeed when we bring empathy, compassion, and open hearts and minds to the table, however. There remains plenty of room for discussion — and even vigorous debate — when it comes time to put concepts into action, but we must be willing to start from a place of respect and openness for any true debate to take place.

In the months ahead, the Inclusivity Committee looks forward to presenting further details about ideas and initiatives that we are debating and forwarding to the attention of town council. We trust that these introductory paragraphs will give readers a better sense of what our Committee does and what key words actually mean. Most importantly, we welcome input from anyone who is interested in learning more and participating in our activities and discussions. Please visit the town's Join the Conversation page for our committee (<https://www.jointheconversation.notl.org/inclusivity>) or reach out to us by email: inclusivity.committee@notl.com.

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View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

In the performing arts it is assumed that any performance must remain faithful to the story. The thoughts of a production of Hamlet per-

formed in a swimming pool with Esther Williams is unthinkable. This film of *Cinderella* (Prime, 2021) strays so far from the intent of the original tale that I have no good word for it. Cringeworthy!

Donald Combe is a retired

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

COMMENT

From Cathy's desk: library launched strategic plan



Cathy Simpson
Special to The Local

Thank you for reading my column for The Local and thank you Penny for this opportunity to bring library news to the community each month.

The other chief librarians in the region find it amazing we have three local newspapers, and it really is quite amazing at a time when print media is under pressure from newer forms of media. But as with many things in Niagara-on-the-Lake, our newspaper situation is unique and part of a long history of firsts. The first newspaper in Upper Canada was established here, as was the first lending library.

Newspapers are going still strong in NOTL, and so is the library. Like everyone else, we've made some small and some large adjustments to our operations during the pandemic, changes that make us better positioned to serve the community now and in the future. We started to plan the library's future just before the pandemic hit, so recalibrated the process to reflect our new reality. After a short delay, we're happy to say the plan is now complete and we're excited to bring it to the community.

Library board and staff

worked hard on the plan, and received valuable input from residents about the library's next four years. We surveyed both library users and non-users, and used their feedback, along with an extensive environmental scan, to develop four strategic directions and related goals. The scan included a review of the town's demographics and economy, town council's strategic plan, the town's Official Plan, the Glendale district plan and the municipal service delivery report.

We also compared ourselves to four other public libraries of similar size (Pelham, Port Colborne, Port Hope and Thorold), using the province's annual public library statistics. We looked at our own internal statistics for the last three years, at trends in the library and information world and the larger world and we filtered all this information through the lens of the pandemic.

Finally, we asked residents, board members and staff why the library is important to the community, and heard a few themes repeated. One of the most frequently mentioned was that public libraries are more than books in a building; they're community hubs knitting the social fabric of the community together. The social fabric of communities around the world is stretched thin by the pandemic, and here's what we're doing over the next four years to help our community

rebuild and thrive:

- 1. Inspire lifelong learning, discovery and creation**
Inspiring learning, discovery and creation for all in the community through access to information, tools, technology and support services.
- 2. Build community**
Build community through partnerships conducive to communication, mutual understanding, and making connections.
- 3. Increase awareness**
Raise awareness in the community about the impact of the library and the valuable opportunities and resources it provides.
- 4. Innovate for efficient and sustainable operations**
Implement best practices to strengthen our human, capital and financial assets to enable the library to flourish and increase sustainability.

Each of these directions has several goals to guide board and staff as work plans are developed over the next four years. Our mission, vision and values have also been updated to align with the new plan and we'll review the plan quarterly to gauge our progress. Over the next few months, I'll introduce you to individual staff and board members who are putting the plan into action. You can view the complete plan on our website at notlpubliclibrary.org.

Local LETTERS

MAT should bring tax relief

I read with interest your reporting of council's latest deliberations over the introduction of a Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) in NOTL (The Local, Sept 1). While you captured the comments from those opposed to the tax, you failed to give equal consideration to the councillors that spoke for the tax.

I understand the role of a reporter is to present what was said, but sometimes it is just as important for the reporter to present what wasn't said. For example, Tim Jennings, from the Shaw, warned council that they don't have enough information and need input from the industry and that the Shaw contributes significantly to the local economy. What he doesn't say is that the MAT has been studied, first by the previous council, subjected to analysis and staff report, reviewed at committee meetings with hotel and bed and breakfast operators leading up to the last time the MAT was brought before this council, and that no jurisdiction with a similar tourism profile of NOTL (entertainment, history, culture, architecture, winery and waterfront) has ever been harmed by a MAT.

He also didn't mention that the Shaw has been in a

significant surplus financial position over the past years while continuing to accept grants from NOTL ratepayers whose taxes have increased significantly over the same time period. So for the Shaw, the ratepayers pay for tourism services and infrastructure and then Shaw accepts more money provided by ratepayers via grants. This is a sweetheart deal. He should have come to council to thank the ratepayers of NOTL.

Eduardo Lafforgue, president of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, said that the local tourism community creates value for the community, without actually saying what that value is, or attempting to quantify it. Nor did he mention that other Chamber of Commerce entities are funded by local businesses, but here in NOTL ratepayers contribute to its operating costs. Another sweet deal paid for by NOTL ratepayers. Yet he didn't come to council to thank the ratepayers. He came to ask ratepayers to continue paying the freight for tourism services and infrastructure that his members profit from.

Last, but certainly not least, was the brazen actions of the Vintage Inn Hotels that sent a lawyer to plead 'poor us.' All the while, that

since the lifting of travel restrictions NOTL tourism is booming. I've driven past the Pillar and Post and Queens Landing and see full parking lots. It seems that recovery is well under way, here as it is in Niagara Falls hotels that I understand has a MAT. The lawyer, when it was pointed out that Vintage has just raised its unadvertised and non-negotiable resort fee to \$19.95 plus tax, did not explain why that fee doesn't hurt their business, but \$8 on a \$400 a night room rate will.

The hypocrisy of all the delegations was overwhelming. But, hey, Counc. Clare Cameron, Wendy Cheropita and Gary Burroughs bought it. Sometimes using the same talking points provided by the delegations. Sad! Luckily, six other councillors saw through it and approved the next step for MAT.

Let's hope that in 2022, NOTL ratepayers see some financial relief to the tourism services and infrastructure budget, and we ask tourists to pay their fair share towards maintenance of the services we provide so that these services and our wonderful Town is here for their enjoyment for years to come.

Joe Accardo
NOTL

Thanks to council for approving accommodation tax

Residents for Sustainable Tourism is pleased that the Niagara-on-the-Lake Council has approved the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) to be considered by the finance committee for 2022.

The MAT, as intended by Ontario, will go towards tourism infrastructure and marketing. We know that it was a spirited and passionate debate by all parties, and we appreciate that it was fully discussed and reviewed. After hearing all sides of the issue, hopefully council and staff will implement the plan in as sensitive a manner as possible based on prevailing

COVID conditions in 2022. In the end, it is our hope that the voting taxpayers will see some cost recovery from the industry. At the same time we hope that the MAT helps the tourism industry by funding marketing focused on brand and building the infrastructure the industry needs to keep up with growth.

With regard to focusing tourism marketing on brand, it is our belief that Niagara-on-the-Lake should continue to be branded as the TEMCO industry committee described "a living historical community" that is a joy to live in and visit. NOTL

should be an alternative to Toronto and Niagara Falls. We would like our elected representatives to focus on "liveability before overtourism," and to that end we call for the town, tourism industry and residents' groups to be equally represented in the development of the new town tourism strategy. We look forward to building a great town for all to visit and live.

Bruce Gitelman
Spokesperson
Residents for Sustainable Tourism
Bruce@residentsforsustainabletourism.com

Letters!

We want letters!

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

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Local man makes Terry Fox Run an annual priority

Penny Coles
The Local

David Scott tied up his sneakers, showed up early in the morning at Simcoe Park and participated in his first Terry Fox Run in 1993. He hasn't missed one since.

It hasn't always been in Niagara-on-the-Lake, but wherever he has found himself on the morning of the run, he has walked the 10 kilometres (sometimes five if grandchildren are along), and through his business, Scott Construction, has raised money for the Terry Fox Foundation.

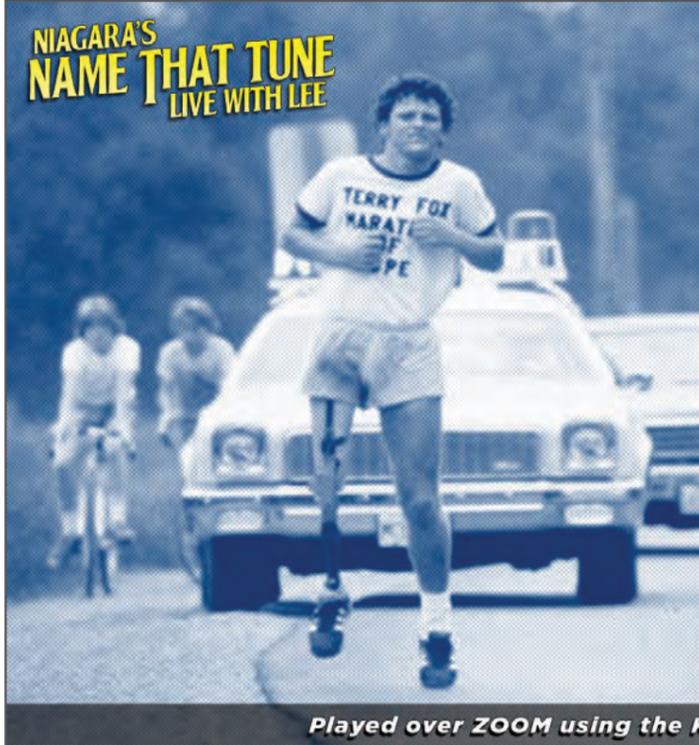
"It's not a lot of money," he says, usually around \$3,500 to \$4,500, from trades and suppliers he has met through his business.

This year, he hasn't anything planned, but expects he and his wife Linda will walk around Queenston, where they live.

Over the years, he says, they've been joined by their kids, Nathan, Dana and Matt, and grandchildren, "whoever could join us."

One year, he and Linda were on Vancouver Island on the day of the run, and went for a 10-kilometre walk.

Last year at this time, they were in Sauble Beach with Dana, son-in-law Andrew Harber, and two grand-



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children, Aiden and Emma. There was no organized run in 2020, but a One Day, Your Way event, so the family did it their way, walking five kilometres for Terry Fox.

Scott recalls that in 1993, two organizers of the run, Rosemary Chew and Paul Kent, created the concept of Dream Teams, encouraging participants to form teams and raise more money for the run. That caught his attention, and was the beginning of what has become an 18-year tradition of him not

missing a year.

Scott recalls the year Terry Fox began his run, and received little attention for what he was doing. When he came through Niagara, Scott says, "why didn't I pay more attention to what was going on, to what he was doing?"

He pays attention now. Cancer is a "very devastating disease," he says.

His father has had it and beat it, and he has friends who have not survived it.

"Linda and I have turned 70, and we've lost numerous



Linda Scott, son-in-law Andrew Harber, Aiden, Dana, Emma and David Scott walked for Terry Fox last year while on vacation in Sauble Beach. (Photo supplied)

friends to it. It's just common sense. Cancer should be beaten. It keeps rearing its ugly head, and most people have been touched by it. We should be doing what we can to stop it."

There are many worthy

causes requiring support, and people make their choices as to how they want to donate, but for Scott, it's been for cancer research. "Sometimes it feels like cancer is all around us. I latched onto it because of Terry Fox, and

his involvement. He asked others, if he couldn't finish, to keep it going. We see the sacrifice he made, running in pain every day."

That personal association with the annual run, says Scott, is what keeps him going. Through donations, awareness about early detection has been increased, and treatments improved, he says.

"I just carry on because it's a good cause. It helps others, and one day it may help me."

Coming up to add to NOTL's fundraising total, says run organizer Joan King, is another music trivia night fundraiser, Niagara's Name That Tune, Live with Lee, on Friday, Sept. 10 at 7 p.m.

It's online on Zoom, using the Kahoot app. Donations can be e-transferred to TerryFoxNOTL@gmail.com.

You can play alone, as a couple, or a group.

"Nobody knows who else is playing," says King, "so if you're not great with music trivia, but want to give it a try, this is the way to do it. It's lots of fun."



Brian Barker
Niagara Falls-Fort Erie-Niagara-on-the-Lake

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St. Davids-Queenston United Church welcomes new minister

Steve Hardaker Special to The Local

After a nearly two-and-a-half-year search, on Sunday, Sept. 5, the congregation at St. Davids-Queenston United Church welcomed their new minister, Rev. YongSeok Baek.

In the spring of 2019, long-time minister Rev. Paul James retired and moved to Penticton, B.C. He had served as minister at St. Davids-Queenston for 22 years.

Rev. Baek's journey of faith that eventually brought him to St. Davids-Queenston is a fascinating story.

Rev. Baek was born and raised in South Korea. He pursued a theological education at Hanshin University and several years later, earned a bachelor of theology and master of divinity.

In 2011, he was ordained in the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK). At the time, he was encouraged by a Canadian colleague to study

abroad.

YongSeok arrived in Canada in 2014 to begin his master of theological studies at St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon. Under the faculty members' tutelage, he received his academic and pastoral training and a call to the ministry in the United Church of Canada.

He was then called upon to be the minister of Wilkie and Cut Knife United Church in remote north-west Saskatchewan where he served for four years.

Back at St. Davids-Queenston, a search committee was meeting on a regular basis, developing their faith life story and posting job opening ads on the United Church's web services as well as in the United Church magazine, *Broadview*.

A potential new minister was found in October, 2020, but that candidate ended up turning down the position. Not to be deterred, the search committee pressed on.

Baek's appointment to the St. Davids-Queenston United Church was approved in late April 2021. Thus began an over 3,500-kilometre road-trip to come to Ontario.

He, his wife Yugene Oh and their two children, Soul and Dana, arrived in Niagara-on-the-Lake in mid-August, and he officially became the minister on Sept. 1. He and his family has settled in the Glendale area.

Baek's first service was filled with inspiration, positivity, laughter and wonderful music. He loves singing with guitar, backpacking travel, and sports.

St. Davids-Queenston United Church has once again commenced in-person worship services at 10:30 a.m. Sundays, with capacity limits. An online reservation booking form has been created on the church's website, and all those wishing to attend each week, must first make a reservation in order to avoid over capacity limits.

In addition, the church is

simultaneously live-streaming their services on their YouTube Channel for those

who feel more comfortable worshipping from home.

Steve Hardaker has lived

in Glendale for 11 years and is active in many community organizations.



St. Davids-Queenston United Church welcomes Rev. YongSeok Baek (Photo supplied)



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Harvest Festival draws good crowd at Grace United

**David Gilchrist
Special to The Local**

All was revealed on the Mystery Tables at the Festival Market at Grace United Church Saturday.

An eclectic selection of items were displayed for sale, and the weather was most accommodating for the event this year, which had been interrupted by COVID-19 last year.

A large number of community members and visitors to town were able to select from a variety of goodies at the bake table. As usual, a

large variety of jams, jellies and sauces were offered as well as fresh fruits and vegetables.

In the church hall, a giant book sale was held with a huge variety of fiction, non-fiction and special collection books available at very reasonable prices. Many people got ready for the winter reading season.

Members of Grace United are most thankful to all who attended.

Hopefully, next year all the churches in town can, once again, continue with such events that make living in our town so wonderful.



Claudia Gilchrist, Chris McQuestion, Jodi Gilchrist and Andrew Gilchrist watch over the Mystery Table at the Grace United Festival Market. (Photos by David Gilchrist)



Heinz Probst had a wonderful selection of local produce from his farm to sell at the Grace United Church Festival Market Saturday.



A wide variety of the jams, jellies and sauces Grace United is known for were available.



John Sayers and Judy Thornton look after the busy book sale at Grace United Saturday.

PPC PEOPLE'S PARTY of CANADA

COVID POLICY

A Rational Approach that Respects our Rights and Freedoms:

ISSUE

The unprecedented government response to the Covid-19 pandemic has had massively negative repercussions on Canadians' physical and mental health, economic well-being, as well as their rights and freedoms.

The standard approach to pandemic management had always been to protect the vulnerable and allow the rest of the healthy population to go about their regular lives while building herd immunity. Lockdowns of entire populations were never part of any pre-Covid pandemic planning.

This experiment was largely ineffective in reducing the spread of the virus, but caused significant collateral damage. The vast majority of Covid victims were elderly patients with co-morbidities in nursing homes that governments failed to protect. Lockdown measures will cause even more deaths in the longer term due to stress-related illnesses, depression, postponement of surgeries, drug overdose, suicide, domestic violence, etc.

Governments don't want to admit that they were wrong and are imposing increasingly authoritarian measures on the population, including vaccine passports. Both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated will suffer under a regime of segregation, constant control, and surveillance. It is illusory to believe that the virus can be eradicated. We have to learn to live with it, without destroying our way of life in the process.

FACTS

Lockdowns, mask mandates, school closures, and other authoritarian sanitary measures have not had any noticeable effect on the course of the pandemic. Regions or countries that implemented strict measures have been as impacted as those that did not.

Both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated can get infected and transmit the virus, which negates the rationale for segregation and vaccine passports.

Section 1 of Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* states that reasonable limits to our rights and freedoms can only be imposed if it has been demonstrated that they are justified in a free and democratic society. Such a demonstration has not been made for Covid restrictions, most of which are arguably unconstitutional.

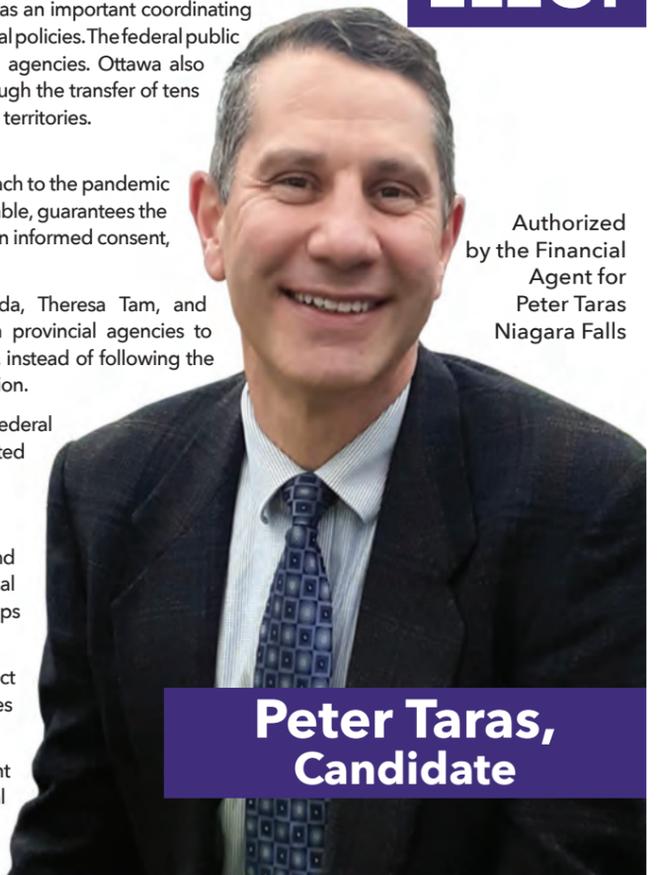
PLAN

Although most of the measures in response to the Covid pandemic have been implemented by provincial governments, Ottawa has an important coordinating role to play at the national level can influence provincial policies. The federal public health agency coordinates policies with provincial agencies. Ottawa also encouraged and supported lockdown policies through the transfer of tens of billions of dollars in financial aid to provinces and territories.

A PEOPLE'S PARTY GOVERNMENT WILL:

- Promote a rational and scientifically based approach to the pandemic that focuses on the protection of the most vulnerable, guarantees the freedom of Canadians to make decisions based on informed consent, and rejects coercion and discrimination.
- Fire the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, Theresa Tam, and replace her with someone who will work with provincial agencies to implement a rational approach to the pandemic, instead of following the recommendations of the World Health Organization.
- Repeal vaccine mandates and regular testing for federal civil servants and workers in federally regulated industries.
- Repeal vaccine passports for travellers.
- Oppose vaccine mandates, vaccine passports, and other authoritarian measures imposed by provincial governments, and support individuals and groups that challenge such measures in court.
- Support emergency provincial measures to protect the most vulnerable but stop bailing out provinces that impose economically destructive lockdowns.
- Support medical research and development of therapies to treat Covid-19 and other viral diseases.

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Don't miss Shaw Garden Tour this Saturday

**Kim Wade
Special to The Local**

“The gardens are going to look magnificent. To be more specific, the burning bushes are in their full glory and colour. The hydrangeas are going to be looking beautiful,” says Jane Catcher, convenor of the Shaw Guild’s Garden Tour Committee, when she is asked about hosting the fall version of the garden tour.

“People say to me, ‘what is a garden going to look like in the fall?’ because people’s minds are saying, ‘aren’t all the flowers spent?’ Catcher believes a fall garden still has much to offer the eye, and even the nose. “One of the gardens, for instance, has a beautiful feature plant called a Sweet William clematis, which is a fall clematis. And when your eye falls upon it, it is jaw-dropping, not only to the eye but to the nose. The fragrance that comes out of it is significant, and it is a must-see.”

The Shaw Guild’s 15th annual Garden Tour will take place this Saturday, Sept. 11, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It will feature eight gardens in total. Five are within Old Town, two are located on the Niagara River Parkway and one is in Queenston. Tickets are \$25 and are being sold online through the Eventbrite platform at www.shawguild.ca.

As the convenor of this event, one of Catcher’s primary roles was to select the gardens for the tour. She explains the guild has a bank of gardens they choose from each year. They then approach the homeowners to see if they are interested in participating. “You look for gardens that not only have a ‘wow’ factor, but there is historical significance to the home itself and then that translates into the garden. Some of the homes are historical from years past, back to the 1800s. That historical significance obviously translates through to the garden,” she says. “Some of the gardens are designed by key landscape architects. There are some features within these gardens which are really

eye-popping. One of the gardens is right on the waterfront. It has three different terraces. As you approach each of the terraces, you are just wowed with all of the details in the design.”

She continues, “There are other homes where the gardens are reflective to Old Town Niagara. It’s not all about pretty, perfectly-placed flowers, but about well-thought-out bushes, perennials and annuals too. Gardens that are really eye-catching not only from inside the home but also from outside on the street.”

“This year it will be our 15th annual garden tour and of course it was . . .” She hesitates, “I just left no stone unturned, is what I want to say, toward being able to host this event this year and not have to cancel it for yet another year,” she says with renewed confidence. In her quest to move forward with the tour, she approached the executive of the guild with her committee’s proposal for a fall version of the garden tour, as opposed to the traditional late spring event. She said that the support for the proposal was unanimous. With this idea, she then approached the homeowners. There again, the support was unanimous. She says that the homeowners felt more comfortable with a fall garden tour, especially with the uncertainty of COVID restrictions and lockdowns.

The response from the public has also been enthusiastic. “Sales are going fantastic,” Catcher raves. “We have already sold over 650 tickets. My goal was to have 750 tickets sold. We know that we are going to comfortably meet that goal because we know we sell somewhere in the range of 100 tickets on the day of the event. We also find that our sales bump in those three days before the event. People wait to see what they’re doing and they keep their eye on the weather. So far, our long-range forecast is saying that it would be an absolutely beautiful day.”

This year the Shaw Guild is making their largest fund-

raising event even more spectacular. They have added special features to each garden to enhance the experience. In each garden, there will be a certified master gardener on hand to answer questions about that particular garden. As Catcher explains, “One of the things we do in advance is that we have a meeting at every garden and we identify plants the master gardener thinks are of interest. We have beautiful tags made up for all of these plants and then should questions arise, the master gardener can answer any question about the garden that people come up with.”

Also this year, every garden, is going to have a “special

activity,” says Catcher. “It could be anything, like how to use edible flowers, it could be how to make a fall planter, and we will have two musical performers,” she adds. These special activities are not added to distract from the gardens, but to enhance the overall experience. “It’s just to add a little bit of extra ‘piece de resistance’ to the tour.”

The Shaw Guild is a volunteer organization with approximately 300 volunteers who work to support the Shaw Festival and their productions throughout the year. On the day of the Garden Tour, between 110 to 120 people will be working hard to make the total experience successful for their guests. Catcher explains

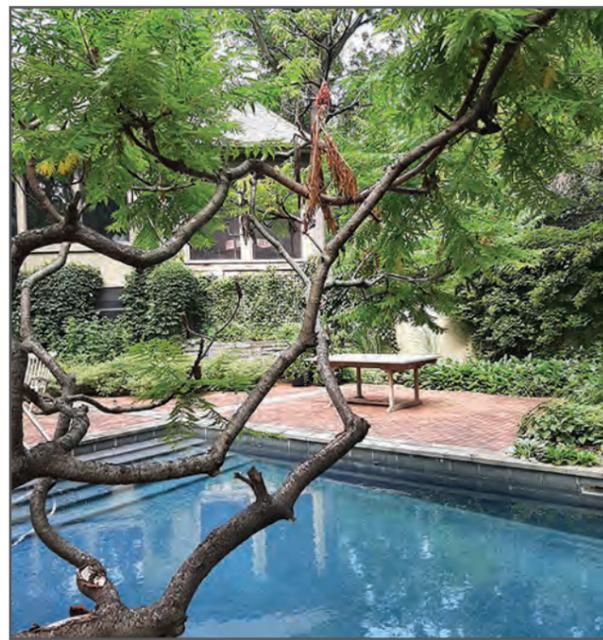
that this includes organizing everything from signage, to cash boxes, to first aid kits if the need arises. “It’s all the little details,” she says. The last week before the event is filled with “uncountable hours of volunteering” for her, her committee members, the homeowners and other guild members.

Catcher also wanted to highlight the contribution of the sponsors to make this event successful. “The sponsors are a very big part of this. Our local sponsors, who we go to time after time for all the various fundraisers that are being held in this town. Our local sponsors continue to step up and say, ‘yes, I can support that’ and ‘yes, I’d love

to support you.’ They are all community-spirited and they really step up every time. For two Christmases in a row, I am very pleased to say that everything that I purchased was local to Niagara-on-the-Lake, so I encourage people to think, really think local.”

“Never before have they needed our business like they do now,” she continues. “They need to be recognized for the continued support that they show our town, and all the various fundraising events that are being hosted.”

For more information about the Shaw Guild and the 15th Annual Garden Tour contact the Guild at www.shawguild.ca.



Gardens that will be on display for this year’s Shaw Guild Garden Tour include 83 Gage Street, two on Front Street, and a home on the Niagara River Parkway. (Photos supplied)



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Local author writes about NOTL's role in prohibition

Penny Coles
The Local

It's a small book, but a lot of work went into the research.

Local waterfront resident Terry Boulton has self-published *Smuggling on the Lower Niagara River, 1920 to 1933*. He chose the specific area and time frame, he says, because although there has been lots written about prohibition, there is little about the impact of it on this area and local residents during those years.

The focus of his book is

"how a small Canadian town became embroiled in American prohibition."

Boulton says he started his research for another book he was writing about his family history as it relates to the fishing industry, wanting to learn more about the family members he could trace back as far as 1840, who owned waterfront property and were commercial fishermen.

Family history is also why he has lived most of his life on the waterfront, and is so comfortable on the water himself.

When he started his

research in 2009, he was spending four to five hours a day, day after day, reading local newspapers on microfiche at the St. Catharines Public Library, "an arduous task, to say the least," says Boulton.

And while doing that, he was becoming more and more distracted by stories that would pop up between the social columns and other local news regarding smuggling on the Niagara River, beginning in the 1920s, and decided that would be a topic for another book. When he realized how much the research

was overlapping, as were the two stories in his head, he decided it was time to put the family history on hold — it is a larger story and a longer book — and concentrate on finishing his work on smuggling.

"For such a small book, I had to do a heck of a lot of research," he says.

He credits the writings of John Field, the first druggist at The Apothecary on Queen Street, Elizabeth Ascher, who wrote for The Standard in the early 1900s, and Joe Masters, who submitted regular columns to the Niagara Advance, for

providing "the backbone of the research," and says he also had help from many others.

He recently had his first printing of 150 copies sell out, and by the time he picked up the next printing of another 80 copies, 60 were spoken for.

Prohibition in the U.S. at that time was a moral issue, says Boulton, backed by suffragettes, and although many Americans did not agree with it, it impacted every facet of society.

While the upper Niagara was heavily involved in smuggling, particu-

larly with the large outlet for alcohol in Buffalo, the lower Niagara was less active because of the current, and also the proximity of the Coast Guard in Youngstown.

Boulton had to rely on anecdotal accounts from local newspaper articles about "rum-running" episodes, some tragic, some humorous, to paint a picture of a colourful time in Niagara-on-the-Lake history that isn't well-known.

Although there had been times in our history when

Continued on page 13

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River became dangerous for recreational boaters

Continued from page 12

governments tried to control alcohol on this side of the border, these efforts were unpopular, so that bootleggers and rum-runners were not typically disparaged — going by the anecdotal evidence he found, locals were pretty tolerant. Smugglers, he says, were usually recruited from the dock area, and commercial fishermen were particularly sought out as participants — they had the necessary skills and knowledge of boats and the river.

He found one newspaper article of the day that said at least 19 local fishing boats were employed in the practice of smuggling part-time, and he came across

information that Smuggler's Cove, now the site of a boat club, a gravel pit near Paradise Grove and even Chautauqua near the rifle range were used as suitable spots for loading boats, while locals either helped out or turned a blind eye. Farmers, Boulton discovered, were agreeable, for a price, to storing alcohol on their premises until it could be picked up for a trip across the river.

Local historian Jim Smith, who provided some photos for the book, told Boulton a story of his father, Lesley Smith, as a young boy, walking along the bank by the NOTL Golf Club, and seeing a boat, owned by someone well-known in the community, running low in the water, covered by a tarp. His

father believed booze was being smuggled, said Smith. "My dad was the last person to see him alive, as he completely disappeared."

Did locals get rich participating in rum-running? Boulton says at least three businessmen in town were reported to have made their fortune through smuggling, during a time when the risk seemed very little.

However, as American vigilance on the river was stepped up, it became more difficult and dangerous.

Evening recreational activity on the waterfront came to an end, because of the fear of locals being shot at by the U.S. Coast Guard.

And finally, when the Canadian government prohibited the export of liquor, under an agreement

with the U.S., smuggling activity wound down on the Niagara River.

Boulton retells colourful stories the way they were told originally, every quote written as he came across it in his research, and each one documented. It's a local story of the people, the waterfront, and a different way to look at the history of fishermen in the area, including some with family names we might recognize — some he had permission to use, and others he didn't name — until the coast guard began coming down hard on those they caught.

In a town rich with history that has been told and retold, mostly from 1812 on, Boulton's is not a story that's been told before.

A couple of copies of his

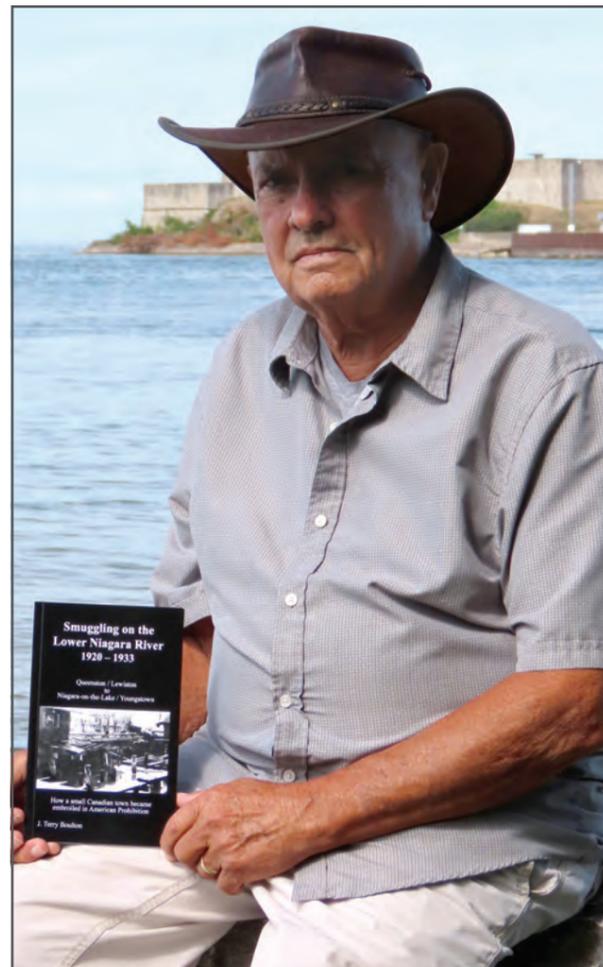
book can be found at the NOTL Public Library — chief librarian Cathy Smith has cataloged them under social science as well as history — at the NOTL Museum, and some other outlets around town, including

the Scottish Loft on Queen Street, and the Gretzky and Peller wineries.

Boulton is selling them for \$10. If anyone is interested, call him at 905-468-3765, or email him at 43tboulton@gmail.com.



Looking north, this circa 1920 picture shows the entrance to the Niagara River from Lake Ontario. The proximity of the NOTL basin to the Coast Guard Station at Youngstown, N.Y. is clearly illustrated. (From the collection of Terry Boulton)



Terry Boulton writes about smuggling on the Niagara River. (Photo supplied)

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Learn about birds in your backyard

**David Gilchrist
Special to The Local**

Although a lot of my bird photographs have been taken at various locations around town, including along the waterfront and Niagara Shores Park, I enjoy getting some of the more common species right in my own backyard.

We are blessed with a ma-

ture birch tree in our backyard, and with the presence of some beautiful mature trees on neighbouring properties, have a variety of common bird species present in the area. Cardinals, sparrows, robins, blue jays, and finches are all common backyard visitors in town, and offer year round opportunities for photographers.

Occasionally, however, rarer gems show up. Recently a pair of red-winged blackbirds and a northern flicker visited. Also, my first sighting of an eastern kingbird took place while I was sitting in the backyard waiting to take monarch butterfly photos as they landed on a flowering plant. I happened to look up at my neighbour's tree, and

noticed an unfamiliar bird sitting perched on a branch. Using the handy Merlin app on my iPhone, I was able to ID it as the eastern kingbird. The same day, but later, our backyard was graced with the lovely male northern flicker.

A pair of cardinals, and what I believe to be one of their offspring, are regular visitors. Last year we had a

nest with three eggs, two of which successfully hatched, and were raised in the immediate area of our backyard. It has been interesting to watch this. They are wonderful to see year round, and at times, they seem to actually pose for the camera.

Blue jays, with their more raucous behaviour, also make their presence known

with their loud calls almost demanding attention if the feeder is low or empty. In the spring, although kind of bullies, the grackles appear. They are larger than most birds, and do seem to displace others for a period of time. Often considered to be a nuisance bird, they have a beautiful blue colouration on their head which is quite striking to see.

Who can forget another common backyard bird — the mourning dove. These can often be spotted on a fence or tree branch, issuing their mournful cooing sound. A close-up photograph of these birds reveals some interesting colouration on the body, and a light blue 'eyeliner' around their eyes. They emit a noticeable squeak when they begin flight, and often appear ungainly while flying short distances.

The smaller stars of the backyard birding scene are the finches, the house finches and the American goldfinch. They are lovely, small birds, flitting around the area and our backyards. The males of both of these varieties are especially striking in their coloration. The loss of colour in the male house finches during winter makes it appear these have gone south, but they do, indeed, habituate the backyards year round, just less conspicuously.

Of all the backyard birds, however, it has to be the robin that seems to be the most visible, hopping about the lawn looking for worms. Many of us find their nests in strange places around the outside of our homes, and are treated to their active parenting as the ever-hungry chicks appear with their beaks always open. Special too, with the robins, is the opportunity to witness the chicks attempting to make their first flights with the parents hovering nearby, seemingly coaxing them on.

Last but not least are the varied species of sparrow, often in larger numbers, can hide in bushes and trees, taking flight at the slightest disturbance. Although the house sparrow seems to be the most common, there are some variations of the common house sparrow that show up with interesting colouration or markings.

Over the last year and a half, with staying at home being the norm, I've been glad for the simple pleasure of sitting on a comfortable covered deck watching for the birding activity in the backyard. Coffee in the morning and the occasional libation in the afternoon with my camera in hand, and at the ready, has been an important coping measure during this time. Reflecting on these simple pleasures, and writing about them, has also been a great way to help get through this period.



Common grackle
(Photos by David Gilchrist)



Male house finch



Blue jay



American goldfinch



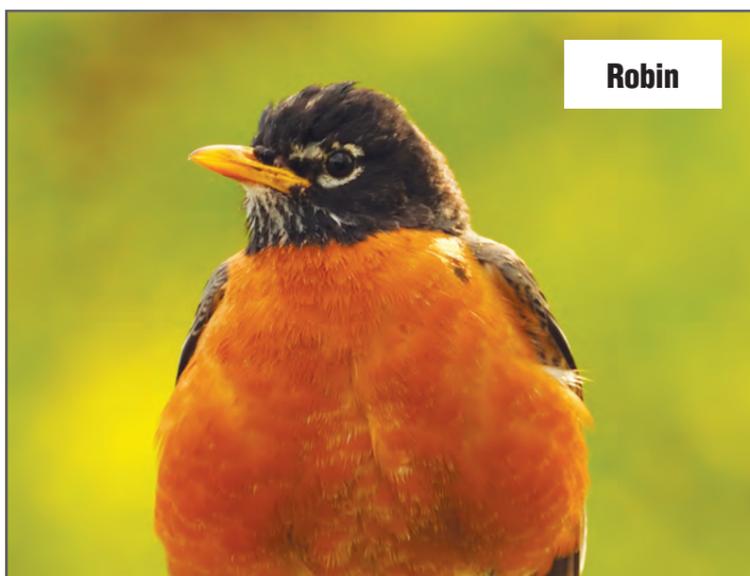
Female cardinal



Male cardinal



Mourning dove



Robin

Red Roof partnering with Cornerstone Monday to Saturday

Continued from page 1

to our community. When we got a call from Cornerstone, telling us what they wanted to do for us, it was perfect timing," says Bjorgan.

They will be offering day programs, recreation and respite, using Cornerstone, and Red Roof's Ranch and Kevan's House facilities, to a limited number of clients — they will be reaching out first to those who need it the most, says Bjorgan.

Staff, volunteers and clients 12 and over will be double vaccinated, and there will be more one-on-one support. With their limited budget, RRR is hoping for more volunteers who will come on board to help out.

Cornerstone's offer to Red Roof to share some of their program space in the church Monday to Saturday, rent-free, "is a no-lose situation for us, that couldn't have come at a better time," says Bjorgan.

Kids who are going back to school will be able to take part in weekend programs and respite care, and young adults who are no longer in school can participate in day programs throughout the week.

And heading into the fall, "all of our fundraisers will resume," starting with a garage sale Sept. 11 at The Ranch, on Concession 6.

Other donations have come in that were a surprise, including a recent cheque of \$1,400 from the sale of NOTL T-shirts by a local Facebook group.

Also a huge surprise was a donation made by local woman Glenda Smith in her will. Bjorgan calls her a "quiet donor," who made small financial gifts over the years. Her family asked for donations to Red Roof in her memory, and Bjor-

gan was overwhelmed to learn that when Smith died last December, she left \$53,000 to Red Roof, which has helped to fund operations during COVID.

Bjorgan credits Amber Dyck, mom of Megan, a 12-year-old who has been enjoying the services provided by Red Roof since she was eight, as the driving force behind the partnership with Cornerstone Church as part of their reopening.

In addition to being a mom who feels blessed to have the support of Red Roof, Amber has been a member of Cornerstone Church for the last 20 years.

As a parent with a special needs child, she learned during the recent 18 months how isolating a pandemic can be, she says.

Megan was a student at Crossroads, but when she could no longer attend school, it was also not safe to have caregivers come to the house, says Amber. Megan has respiratory problems, a weakened immune system, and was too young to be vaccinated.

Amber became the only person who could deliver all of the services Megan required, around the clock. Even physical therapy had to be delivered by video, with Amber following instructions offered online.

It was an exhausting full-time job, in a very isolated bubble, also putting stress on her husband and two older children, who were left to step in and keep the household running.

"That's been one of the hardships and tragedies of COVID, that schools and programs for special needs children have shut down," says Amber. "This community of special needs children and parents has been particularly vulnerable."

Amber is accustomed to advocating for support of Me-

gan and other families of special needs children. She calls Bjorgan a "trailblazer" who set an example of all that can be accomplished, but even with the financial support that can be accessed from the government, "it's not just the dollars we need, it's the safe support and respite for families that those dollars will pay for."

Amber recalls the first day she took Megan to a Red Roof program. It's not easy for parents to leave their special needs children in someone else's care, she says, but when she picked up Megan, "she said she felt like she'd come home. She'd found other children she could relate to, and a place where she wasn't alone, and where she could go at her own pace."

What Bjorgan has been able to accomplish "is such a blessing," says Amber, who is taking the step with her church to expand those programs locally, "to provide a special place for special needs children and their families."

She said the church board looked at what it could do internally to be more accessible and supportive, and then looked externally to see if there were programs in place they could partner with.

"Steffanie jumped out as someone already providing care, someone we could offer strategy support to help meet the needs of the community."

The church has the Sunday school and nursery space that can be used for Red Roof programs Monday to Saturday, and a base of volunteers who want to be involved, she says.

And it is planning an expansion of its space to make it more accessible than it is, she says, fulfilling one of its goals to not only support the church

community but to others with special needs.

With Steffanie as an example to follow, Amber says, she feels like she's taking on a role of facilitator, helping families through the strategic partnership between Red Roof and the church, and continuing along the path of offering "authentic inclusion."

"I feel like God has equipped me to help do this," Amber adds.

"It puts me in a position to continue to be an advocate for Megan, while taking on a broader responsibility to the larger community."

Providing a place where parents feel they can safely leave their vulnerable children in the care of someone else, says Amber, "is providing something more valuable than I can explain."



Megan Dyck, with her dog, is ready for her first day back at Crossroads. She and her mother Amber look forward to the resumption of Red Roof Retreat programs. (Photo supplied)



Karen Post, Christa Rawsthorne and Shauna Press are packing up at Ina Grafton, eager to move programming back to NOTL. (Photo supplied)

The kids are back!



St. Mike kids return to play on the playground, off-limits during the pandemic. (Photos supplied)

Berlin Falk Reay, Quinton Robertson Walker, Regan Doyle.



Students make the most of their time outside, before heading into school.

Celebrating chardonnay – the king of white grapes

Kim Wade
Special to The Local

Welcome to the second installment of the grape variety series, seeking to educate and inform, in a small way, about the common grape varieties grown in Niagara-on-the-Lake and to simplify some of the terminology surrounding grape varieties, cultivation, wine production and tasting.

There are two main goals of this series, one to give a simple introduction to grape varieties, their properties and uses, and the other to get to know the farmers, vintners and sommeliers in our area and share some of their knowledge, thoughts and insights.

This week we are discussing one of the most venerated grape varieties cultivated in Ontario: chardonnay, a vitis vinifera species of grape originally native to Europe, but now cultivated around the world.

According to the VQA 2020 Annual report, chardonnay was, as in previous years, the most produced single grape varietal in Ontario. Ontario wineries produced 2,303,949 litres or 320,087 (9L) cases of chardonnay last year.

Stephanie Pietruniak, sommelier at Palatine Hills Estate Winery, was eager to extoll the virtues of chardonnay and to provide some background

about what makes it so exceptional. “Chardonnay,” she explains, “can be grown and ripened in most winemaking regions around the world. It is highly adaptable to a wide range of climates. It is an early-budding, early-ripening variety, which means that it is perfect for Niagara region since our growing season is shorter. Since it is an early-ripening grape varietal, it means that after the ripening process chardonnay tends to lose its acidity levels quickly.”

“A well-timed harvest is critical,” she adds. “In cool continental climates, such as ours, it can display a range of flavours from citrus and green apple to white peach, melon, and blossoms.”

“Chardonnay is also highly expressive of its terroir,” Pietruniak continues. According to the VQA, “terroir describes a special set of conditions that contribute to the character of a wine.” It refers to the particularities in geology, weather pattern, soil composition and elevation of a specified area.

Each of the four sub-appellations within the regional appellation of NOTL is diverse in these characteristics. Pietruniak, explains that these characteristics affect the character of the grape, as she describes the distinct conditions at Palatine Hills Estate Winery and its location within the Ni-

agara Lakeshore sub-appellation.

“Niagara Lakeshore VQA is a sub-appellation that extends three kilometres inland, from Niagara River to the Welland Canal. The soils along Lake Ontario are reddish-brown sandy clay silt soils that encourage deep root penetration. Vines hate cold wet feet. So water retention in soils is not ideal. Ideal soil for vines is well-drained, low to moderate fertility. Grape growers want to encourage the vines to send their roots deeper in search of water and nutrients. This is what gives wine character. In order to build character, we must struggle a little bit,” she adds with a laugh.

This is where Pietruniak gets a bit more technical as she describes the soil composition of the Palatine Hills vineyards, which requires a small geology lesson. “Our vineyards have a soil composition of a reddish-hued clay loam till that has been modified by lacustrine processes.” So what are lacustrine processes? This means that soil is made up of lacustrine deposits, the fossils left behind by early freshwater species that inhabited ancient Lake Ontario, known as Glacial Lake Iroquois, when the shoreline extended up to the escarpment. This type of soil retains heat and will advance ripening of the fruit. Accord-



Stephanie Pietruniak, sommelier at Palatine Hills Estate Winery, is eager to extoll the virtues of chardonnay. (Photos by Kim Wade)

ing to Pietruniak, it also gives their terroir minerality. “Minerality cannot be replicated in the winery. Only the terroir can give this to you.”

This is where things get a little more complicated. The term ‘minerality’ is shrouded in a bit of mystery, not because people do not know what it is but more that they don’t know how to describe it. Within the wine aficionado community, there does not seem to be a consensus on whether minerality is a taste, an aroma or even a mouth feel, or maybe all three in combination. However, there does seem to be a consensus that it is a unique characteristic of the finished wine product that is transferred to the grape from the soil, especially in areas with ancient marine sediment.

Another characteristic to the Niagara Lakeshore sub-appellation is “lake effect.” Pietruniak simplifies this phenomenon. “Throughout the day Lake Ontario absorbs a lot of heat energy for its own ecosystems. This is precious heat energy from the sun.”

Lake Ontario releases this heat at night, she explains, which shortens the difference between day and night temperatures in the vineyard (diurnal range) and prolongs the ripening conditions in the area close to the lakeshore. This effect also helps reduce the risk of ground frost and reflects sun rays which promotes photosynthesis. “At Palatine Hills, we benefit from the lake effect,” she states proudly.

As for the grape itself, “chardonnay is nicknamed the winemaker’s grape,” Pietruniak says. “While it is not an aromatic grape varietal, it is highly expressive of winemaking techniques.”

She explains the difference in aroma and taste depending on whether a chardonnay is unoaked, oaked, or aged on the lees.

“For example,” she says,

“when chardonnay undergoes malolactic fermentation, it presents a wonderfully creamy or buttery texture. When oak-aged, it is toasty and nutty. When aged on the lees, it expresses autolytic notes of biscuit or brioche. Chardonnay loves to be told what to do by the winemaker.”

To clarify, malolactic fermentation (MLF) is used in a wine production and is often applied to chardonnay when the winemaker seeks to soften the acidity in the wine. This second fermentation converts the malic acid in grape must to lactic acid, like in milk, which smooths out the taste and provides a richer mouth feel to the wine. To be aged ‘on the lees’ or ‘sur lie’ refers to the wine being aged with the remaining grape solids and the residual yeast from the fermentation process.

Palatine Hills Estate Winery boasts three single varietal chardonnays. The first is an unoaked. Pietruniak says the 2018 vintage, 1812 Unoaked Chardonnay, is a staff favourite since it is a true expression of what they call the “Neufeld minerality of its terroir.”

She says their winemakers, John Jr. and Charles Neufeld, “did a wonderful job at leaving this wine unmasked and expressive of where it is from.”

The second is the 2016 Neufeld Vineyard Reserve Chardonnay. This wine spends 12 months aging in 100 per cent French oak barrels. She describes it as “a big, full-bodied buttery, biscuity, nutty, toasty wine that still expresses its primary fruit aromas and its signature minerality.”

The third chardonnay Palatine offers is their Traditional Method Blanc de Blanc Sparkling wine called Savage Brut. “This is a very unique wine that has spent 10 years on the lees (that very rarely happens). It expresses its autolytic notes of brioche pastry but most extraordinarily its primary fruit aromas of ripe golden apple, lemon, pear and blossom are still present and vibrant. After 10 years, that is so impressive. And again, the minerality just shines throughout. It is complex and effervescent (which again after 10 years should not be the case). Sorry . . . got carried away there,” she says. “But not so sorry as to take it back!”

Pietruniak has no need to apologize. Her enthusiasm for her craft is inspiring. Thank you Stephanie for the knowledge you have imparted on the king of the white grapes and its unique character, its versatility and its connection to the land it is cultivated on.



Palatine offers three kinds of chardonnay.



50th Anniversary
Newark Neighbours
Food Bank & Thrift Shop
Niagara-on-the-Lake

COMMUNITY DONATION PROJECT

Porch Pick-up Food Drive



Niagara-on-the-Lake
Rotary Club

Newark Neighbours, together with our partners from the NOTL Rotary Club, are once again holding a porch pick-up food drive.

We were so grateful for the tremendous community support of our food drive held last May - it was overwhelming. Thank you all very much.

We're asking for your support once again, this time to assist us in filling our Thanksgiving hampers for our clients.

On Saturday September 25, 2021, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Note that our volunteers will all wear masks and gloves and will respect all physical distancing restrictions, including contactless pick-up.

If you wish to donate in support of our Food Bank, please call 905-468-7498 or email us at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com to register your address for pick-up. We appreciate your support!!!

Items required for Thanksgiving hampers:

• Stuffing Mix	• Canned Gravy (turkey or chicken)	• Canned Corn
• Cranberry Sauce	• Canned Pineapple	• Canned green beans
• Canned Ham	• Applesauce or Canned Fruit	• Canned peas

General Items required on regular basis:

• Canned Tomatoes	• Canned beef stew	• Snack Crackers
• Tomato Sauce	• Canned Baked Beans	• Cereal • Oatmeal
• Canned Red Kidney Beans • Canned Tuna	• Chunky Soups	• Peanut Butter • Jams
• Canned Ham, Corned Beef or Spam	• Campbell's Soups	• Granola Bars
• Canned salmon	• Kraft Dinner	• Cake Mixes
• Canned mixed vegetables	• Mac and Cheese	• Jello - any flavour
• Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Turkey • Canned chili or spaghetti or ravioli	• Canned pineapple	• Ketchup • Mustard
• Habitant Soups	• Rice Sidekicks & Mr. Noodle packets	• Mayonnaise
	• Soda (Soup) Crackers	• Toothpaste
	• Bottled Juices - Cranberry or Apple • Cookies	• Toothbrushes • Shampoo
		• Coffee or Tea • Paper Towels • Kleenex

Local SPORTS

Predators set to begin regular season Oct. 1

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

The Niagara Predators are hitting the ice this week to get ready to finalize the team for their GMHL season opener on Oct. 1.

General manager Johan Eriksson has announced that the Predators, of the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League (GMHL), are holding a prospect camp Sept. 10 through 12 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Meridian Credit Union Arena. He's hopeful that a number of local hockey players will vie for a spot on the tier II Junior A team.

One player from Niagara Falls is eagerly anticipating his first skate with the Predators at the main team camp, starting Sept. 16.

Dante Massi, a 21-year-old St. Paul Secondary School graduate, has signed as an over-ager and will take on the assistant captain role with the team that has relocated from Toronto.

Massi brings experience from his time with

Fort Erie, Thorold and Welland of the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League (GOJHL), as well as the Niagara Riverhawks of the Provincial Junior Hockey League.

The fourth-year psychology student at Brock University says he wasn't sure what he was going to do this year hockey-wise until Riverhawks assistant coach Chris Sacco suggested he get in touch with Eriksson.

"Johan gave me a call and we had a really great talk over the phone," Massi recalls. "Things sounded really promising, sounded like things were going to be really good with this club this year. So we met, talked about the team. We have a lot of imports coming over from Europe who have played high level hockey already."

Massi admits that his junior career thus far has been a bit of a scramble.

"I didn't really put up the numbers I wanted to," he laments, "or have the success I wanted to, either personally, or team-wise. I

think this is a great opportunity to get a little bit of redemption."

Bouncing around from team to team on the Junior B and C circuits made it difficult for Massi to fully assimilate to styles and systems of play.

"I definitely struggled adjusting to team systems," he says. "That definitely cost me when I was playing in Thorold. In Fort Erie, they had me playing defence, and I had trouble adjusting to that. The Riverhawks had a spot for me when things didn't work out in Thorold."

After 20 games in his second season with the Riverhawks in 2019-2020, Massi was called up to Welland.

"I enjoyed it, it was good to be back playing at that pace. I ended up being bought out by Welland after 10 games as a call-up, and finished the season off with them. The team struggled, but it was a good group of guys



Dante Massi, a 21-year-old St. Paul Secondary School graduate, will take on the assistant captain role with the Predators. (Photo supplied)

Continued on page 18

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FRIDAY
SATURDAY

11:30AM - 9PM

SUNDAY

11:30AM - 6PM



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PILLITTERI ESTATES Winery

Local SPORTS

Club is still looking for local families to billet players

Continued from page 17

and Chris Lukey and the coaching staff were great there.”

In September, 2020, when the GOJHL was planning to return to the ice again, Welland owner Lou Savona's request for the team to sit out the season in an attempt to halt the spread of COVID was approved by the league.

That left the players scrambling to find new homes. Massi was loaned out to the Fort Erie Meteors. They had a few exhibition games, and he was looking forward to playing with his old team again, but the pandemic forced the cancellation of the entire season.

Massi has spent a lot of time on the ice this summer, assisting former pro hockey player David Cullen with his hockey school, and he feels he is ready to

begin the GMHL season.

Eriksson points out that Massi was one of his first players signed to play in Niagara this year.

“I really wanted Dante because of his very good character,” Eriksson says. “He’s a good leader, and he can play all three zones on the ice equally well. He will help us in both power play and penalty killing as well as lead the way and be one of the more experienced guys.”

With the Predators, Massi will be skating alongside the likes of Emil Eriksson and goaltender Oscar Narine, both from Sweden. Other Predators will be making the trip to Niagara from Russia and Switzerland.

Massi believes that playing with and against the many import players in the league is a chance for him to prove he can be competitive at a higher level. He’s looking at

this year as the first step in a continuing career in hockey.

“If this can lead to an opportunity in Europe, in one of the minor pro leagues, that would be great,” he says. “Or even if I could play some university hockey, in Canada, U-Sports, that would be awesome.”

Since the announcement of the team’s move to Niagara-on-the-Lake, there has been some push-back from members of the community who are still stinging from the short-lived presence of the NOTL Nationals. That 2018-2019 GMHL expansion team folded after one season playing out of the same arena.

Eriksson points out that the Predators are hardly a fly-by-night organization, having made their GMHL debut in September, 2013. As well, owner Robert Turnbull, the longtime Hamilton Red Wings (1999-2014) general manager and team president, is well-respected in the hockey community.

There have also been accusations that the GMHL is a “pay-to-play” league, and that playing in the circuit precludes athletes from finding a spot in the OHL.

“There are so many wrong ideas about this league,” Eriksson laments. “I deal with this quite a lot. You can go straight from this league to the OHL. Noah Battaglia, our number one goalie three years ago, went from the Preds to the OHL (Battaglia split the 2018-2019 hockey season between the Erie Otters of the OHL and the St. Catharines Falcons of the GOJHL).”

Of the “outlaw league” tag, Eriksson says that is not true.

“We’re just not a member of Hockey Canada,”

he says, “because we want to use imports. They come here to pursue a spot at NCAA (American college) schools. It’s very difficult to get noticed from Sweden. At least five of our Swedish players are coming here to pursue an NCAA spot. It’s about development and advancing.”

Eriksson expects the

Swedish players to arrive on Sept. 15. The other European players will arrive a few days later, pending visa and vaccination hold-ups. The club is still looking for local families to billet some of the out-of-town Predators.

The team will play an exhibition game against the St. George Ravens,

who were in the GMHL finals the past three years. They open their regular season at home against the expansion Streetsville Flyers on Oct 1.

Information about becoming a billet family or about the upcoming prospect camp can be found on the Niagara Predators Facebook page.

Team delays name change to next season

The team will play its first season in Niagara under the Predators name. GM Johan Eriksson says there were almost 50 submissions by the community of suggested names after a previous article published in the Local.

“We have narrowed it down to a couple of names, but it’s too close to

the beginning of the season to change it for this year. Our lawyers told us they had to check on the availability of names legally, and ensure we don’t infringe on any copyrights.”

“We’ll play as the Predators for one more season, then switch for 2022-2023. I’m going to talk to the people who sent us the names

that we like, and we’ll probably announce the new name maybe some time in January, in conjunction with a skills competition or sponsor night.”

The winning submission will receive the first jersey with the new team’s name and logo, as well as season tickets for the 2022-2023 season.



General manager Johan Eriksson says the team will change its name to reflect something local, but not until the new year. (Photo supplied)

Local HAPPENINGS

FISH FRY
Thursday, September 9th
4 - 7 p.m.
TAKEOUT & DINE IN
CASH ONLY

1 piece \$10
2 piece \$13
with fries and coleslaw

Legion
BRANCH 124
NIAGARA ON THE LAKE

Royal Canadian Legion Br. 124 | 410 King St.,
905-468-2353 | legion124@gmail.com

FREE FACE PAINTING FOR KIDS UNDER 12YRS, 4-7 PM

ST. DAVIDS LIONS DRIVE-THRU BBQ

Friday, September 10th • 4 to 7 pm
1462 YORK RD. ST. DAVIDS

PLEASE WEAR A MASK WHEN ORDERING/PICKING UP

COMBO MEALS:
Lions Burger & Fries \$10
Lions CDN Burger & Fries \$12 (topped with peameal bacon)
Lions Peameal Bacon & Fries \$10
Leo's Hot Dog & Fries \$6

All meals come with bottled water. Add a soft drink for \$1

Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre

Invitation to Members

The members of Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre are invited to attend a Special Members' Meeting on Sunday, September 26th, 3:00 - 5:00 PM in our facility*. We will be presenting the revised 2021 Constitution and By-Laws followed by a Q&A. After the meeting, stay for wine & nibbles and catch up with other members.

*COVID-19 protocols will be followed

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With or without a border, colour graphics optional. Include your Logo! Prices starting at \$20. Deadline: Monday 3 p.m. Call Karen 905-641-5335 or email: classified@notllocal.com

Local WORSHIP

CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday, September 12th

10:00 a.m.
Worship Gathering - In-Person & Online
Message: Kevin Bayne - All In To Worship (Up)
Our services are also streamed online Sunday's at 10 AM. Visit our website for more information!
www.ccchurch.ca

To advertise your *Worship Services* in this section, please contact:
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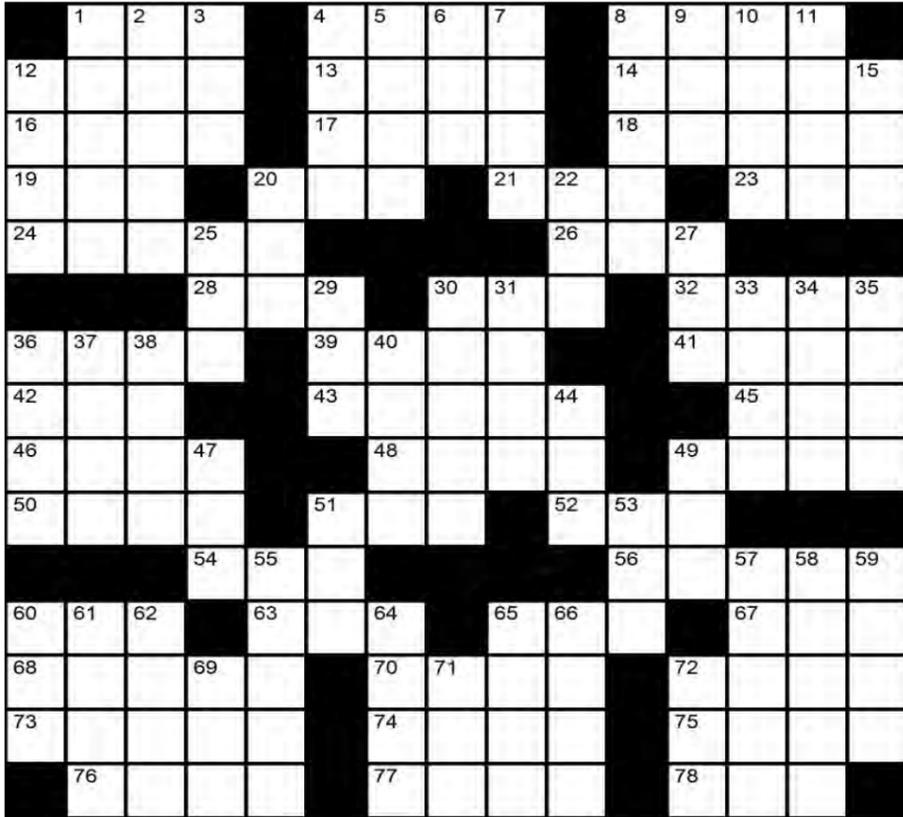
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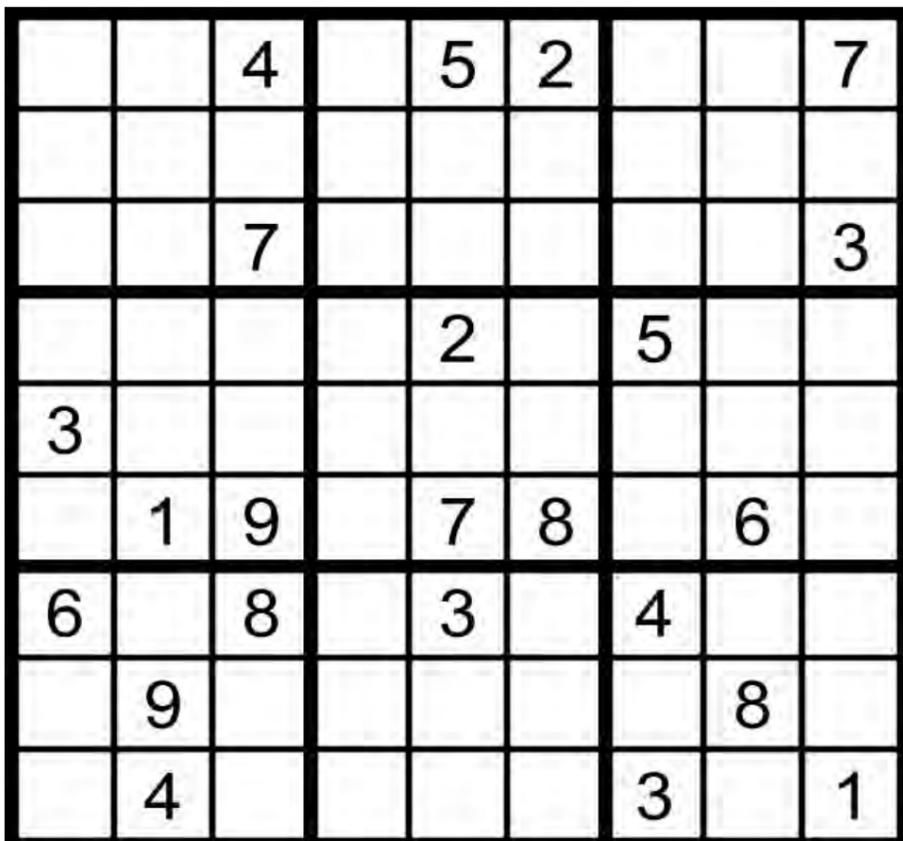


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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU



- Across:**
- 1 Spanish hero El ---
 - 4 Deep cut
 - 8 Big cheeses
 - 12 Flower jar
 - 13 --- Falco, Nurse Jackie
 - 14 Paragon
 - 16 Formerly Persia
 - 17 Rich, in Spain
 - 18 Soothing ointment
 - 19 Small cell
 - 20 Author
 - 21 Oregon summer clock setting
 - 23 Lone Star State (Abbr.)
 - 24 One over a major
 - 26 Small amount
 - 28 Neighbor of Neb.
 - 30 Noncom
 - 32 Irritate
 - 36 Open pastry dessert
 - 39 Carnival
 - 41 Nothing
 - 42 Lubricate
 - 43 Untamed
 - 45 Chafe
 - 46 Speck
 - 48 Enticement
 - 49 Software menu option
 - 50 Crystal ---
 - 51 Tucson time
 - 52 West Atlantic international grp.
 - 54 Menagerie
 - 56 "A Doll's House" dramatist
 - 60 Atlanta-based health grp.
 - 63 Lettuce variety
 - 65 Building extension at a right angle
 - 67 Gaza Strip grp.
 - 68 Pray in Latin
 - 70 Minnelli with a zee
 - 72 Weeders' tools
 - 73 Country music's --- Tucker
 - 74 "--- in the Dark" (Streep movie)
 - 75 Appetite
 - 76 "--- there, done that"
 - 77 Podded vegetables
 - 78 "--- Porter" (Johnny Cash song)
- Down:**
- 1 Diamond weight unit
 - 2 Writer --- Asimov
 - 3 Room for relaxing
 - 4 Buddhist actor Richard ---
 - 5 Tennis server's edge
 - 6 Attack command
 - 7 Abundance
 - 8 Grand view
 - 9 Actress/director/producer --- Lupino
 - 10 Bombard
 - 11 Preserve
 - 12 Pharmacist's container
 - 15 Latin law
 - 20 Provide
 - 22 Banned insecticide
 - 25 Possess
 - 27 Show --- (entertainment industry)
 - 29 Rancid
 - 30 Support column
 - 31 Apparatus
 - 33 Slender fork-tailed gull
 - 34 Gunk
 - 35 Drifter
 - 36 Floating bubbles
 - 37 Low calorie variety
 - 38 Loads
 - 40 Long slippery fish
 - 44 Fifth sign of the zodiac
 - 47 Freq. unit
 - 49 Type of computer connection
 - 51 Low
 - 53 Suffer
 - 55 Huge amount
 - 57 Pollen grain
 - 58 Lament
 - 59 Small winning margin
 - 60 Military bed
 - 61 Dingy
 - 62 Malacca
 - 64 Strike with an open hand
 - 65 Writer --- Pound
 - 66 Sung poems
 - 69 Whiskey variety
 - 71 Diamonds
 - 72 Bewildered response



OBITUARY



PARKER, ANTHONY—The incomparable Tony Parker passed away on Saturday, September 4, 2021. Tony had 75 years of adventures, and even after his brain cancer revealed itself in November 2019, he had his best year ever as a realtor, connecting many clients to their dream homes.

Tony (Antonino) was born in Sicily and raised in Australia and England, before coming to Canada in his 20s. He worked in sales nearly his whole life, selling everything from Lifesavers candy, to china and glassware, to office equipment. But it was when he turned his considerable talents to real estate that his abilities were truly able to shine. Becoming a realtor in the Old Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake at age 65, Tony earned his place as the top realtor at the local Bosley Real Estate brokerage for the past five years running. In selling homes, he helped build the local community, bringing new and old residents together, and introducing clients to his favourite local businesses. Many of his clients became friends of his, as they discovered how much genuine care he took in everything he did for them. He would not let any need go unmet, and always encouraged and supported others to succeed.

Tony was a connoisseur: he loved a fine meal, and had a wide palate, especially enjoying Indian and Thai food, stinky cheeses from England and of course, pasta. He could not resist fresh pastries, and he was able to indulge in them on his frequent trips to Europe with his partner Meg. The patisseries of Paris will miss him. He loved art and architecture, with a special passion for art deco buildings and sculptures. Tony was a film buff enjoying everything from art house favourites to documentaries to goofball comedies. He was also an avid reader of books on history, politics, and the social sciences. He delighted in learning about advances in science and technology, as befitted his optimistic nature.

Many described Tony as a consummate gentleman, which was absolutely true. Always impeccably dressed, he loved to go for drives in his new Jaguar, a car he had dreamt of owning for years. But he also had a wonderful silly side and loved to laugh. Tony was a destroyer of crosswords and a sandwich wizard, and he let his creative side flourish in the kitchen with his famous fish soups. Tony could bask in the sun for hours and lived his entire life in denial of winter.

Tony will be dearly missed by his daughter Judith and her partner Angelo; his son Steven and grandsons James and Owen; his partner Meg and her son Jeb; his sisters Anna, Marisa, his brother Frank, and many nieces and nephews. Family & friends are invited to a Celebration of Life in Niagara-on-the-Lake at an upcoming date, to be confirmed. Kindly email Celebrations of Life Toronto info@cofl.ca or call 416-817-8772 to be placed on our contact list. You will receive memorial details for Tony as they are announced. The family ask that any donations be made to Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care or United Way Niagara.



PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from September 1, 2021

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

Across: 1 Cid, 4 Gash, 8 V I Ps, 12 Vase, 13 Edie, 14 Ideal, 16 Iran, 17 Rica, 18 Salve, 19 AAA, 20 Pen, 21 P D T, 23 Tex, 24 Lt Col, 26 Dab, 28 Wyo, 30 Sgt, 32 Itch, 36 Flan, 39 Fete, 41 Zero, 42 Oil, 43 Feral, 45 Rub, 46 Atom, 48 Lure, 49 Undo, 50 Meth, 51 M S T, 52 O A S, 54 Zoo, 56 Ibsen, 60 C D C, 63 Cos, 65 Ell, 67 P L O, 68 Orare, 70 Liza, 72 Hoes, 73 Tanya, 74 A cry, 75 Urge, 76 Been, 77 Peas, 78 Hey.

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

Local man takes on role of Predators commentator

Mike Balsom Special to The Local

When the puck drops for the Niagara Predators to begin their first season playing out of Virgil's Meridian Credit Union Arena, Michael Frena will be calling the shots. And the passes, the saves and the hits.

The 2018 Niagara College broadcasting graduate has been named the play-by-play announcer for the 2021-2022 season of the Greater Metro Jr. A Hockey League's local team.

He credits his mother, Tracey, for encouraging him to apply for the position. The games will be live-streamed

on the league's gmhl.tv website.

Frena, who works full time at Phil's valu-mart in the grocery and dairy departments, can't wait to put his love of sports broadcasting to work up in the booth.

After graduating from Eden High School, Frena applied to three programs at Niagara College. He chose broadcasting - radio, television and film over both acting and game development, largely because it included an internship.

"I saw that TSN was one of the (internship) places," he says, "and I thought that would be something I would like to do one day. I always watched SportsCentre growing up, and I always thought it would be great to be on TSN or Sportsnet talking sports and recapping games."

He ended up interning at TSN 1050 radio in Toronto from February to April, 2018.

Though he didn't get a chance to sit behind a microphone there, he was put to work supporting announcers such as Brian Hayes, Jamie McLennan and Jeff O'Neil (known as Hayes, Noodles and the O-dog, hosts of the Overdrive show).

"I worked behind the scenes," Frena explains, "I would listen to Overdrive,

the Morning Show, the Scott MacArthur Show and Michael Landsberg. When they had guests on, I would take their answers in their interviews and clip them into shorter segments so they could be used later."

He also created Photo-shop templates to promote upcoming guests via Instagram.

He credits his valu-mart employer, Phil Leboudec, for graciously working around his schedule while he would stay in a Toronto Airbnb for three to four nights at a time during the internship.

While at the college, Frena gained valuable experience doing play-by-play, colour commentary and pre- and post-game interviews for various sporting events. He was able to work a number of Junior B hockey games in Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines as well as a few Niagara College Knights basketball games.

"How they do it in the NHL, these guys make it look so easy," marvels Frena. "When you get into it, it's challenging. I enjoyed doing all the different things. I'm not sure which one I like best. But I had a blast doing all of them."

When Frena graduated from Niagara, he applied for a few broadcasting jobs, but

found the industry difficult to break into.

"A lot of these places are looking for people with experience," he says. "I didn't give up, but I put it off for a little bit. Then COVID hit, and I found out that a lot of my friends who did have (broadcasting) jobs got laid off."

This appointment with the Predators is an opportunity to build his resume with some of that valuable experience needed in a changing industry.

"Any experience is a good experience," Frena says. "It's a foot in the door. It will be the first step to an even bigger step down the road. I can say I have this on my resume. I'm a little nervous, but excited for this opportunity."

Frena himself played hockey for many years in Niagara-on-the-Lake, with his father, Mike, coaching him. Once he entered high school he stopped for a year, then got back on the ice with the St. Catharines CYO program.

During his three-year college program he had little time for hockey, between school work and his job at valu-mart. But after graduating he began playing with the Sunday morning Wall-bangers league alongside his friend Ben Glauser. He ea-

gerly anticipates hitting the ice again later this month.

The Buffalo sports fan looks to legendary Sabres announcer Rick Jeanneret for inspiration as a sports broadcaster. Frena was fortunate to be taught by Rick's son Chris at Niagara College. He also names Gord Miller, Ray Ferraro, Jim Hughson and Craig Simpson as his favourites.

When asked where he sees himself in 10 years, the 24-year-old NOTL native sees a world of opportunity.

"I'd like to be doing something with sports radio, or hockey analytics," he says. "Another thing I'd like to do is voice acting, you know, doing voice-overs for commercials and TV. That really interests me as well."

First thing first, though. Right now he's looking forward to the challenges presented in taking on his new role with the new hockey team in town. That includes, of course, learning how to correctly pronounce some potentially difficult Swedish and Russian names.

"I'm going to do my best," he laughs. "I'll ask them personally. 'Hey, how do you pronounce your name, because I don't want to butcher it.' There's nothing wrong with asking them how to pronounce it. I'm really looking forward to it."



Niagara College broadcasting grad Mike Frena will be offering the colour commentary when the Predators take to the ice this season. (Photo supplied)

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