Conservative Tony Baldinelli returns to Ottawa as opposition leader.

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

His supporters were urging him to take the floor for his victory speech, but a cautious Tony Baldinelli wanted to be sure he and his team had actually won the Niagara Falls seat.

For much too long Monday night the race between the Conservative incumbent Baldinelli and his Liberal challenger Andrea Kaiser was too close to call. While one television station tuned to the election coverage, commenting on some of the races involving close friends and colleagues in Parliament.

Finally, at approximately 12:05 a.m. Tuesday morning, Baldinelli was ready for his victory speech.

Conservative Tony Baldinelli and his campaign manager Bart Maves were satisfied Monday night that although mail-in ballots had not been counted, they could claim victory. (Mike Balsom)

The Niagara-on-the-Lake
Local
The Trusted Voice of Our Community

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Continued on page 2
Kaiser has no plans to find out if third time’s a charm

Although there were mail-in ballots still to be counted, the difference between Baldinelli and Kaiser was enough to satisfy both of the outcome.

Liberal Andrea Kaiser thanks her supporters, who helped run a great campaign, she says, despite her second place finish. (Photo supplied)

Baldinelli: election money could have been spent on hospital

As the seasons change, so does the real estate market
Get in touch for your free market evaluation

COMMUNITY DONATION PROJECT
Porch Pick-up Food Drive

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
- Cranberry Sauce
- Canned Ham
- Canned Tomatoes
- Tomato Sauce
- Canned Red kidney Beans
- Canned Ham, Comed Beef or Spam
- Canned salmon
- Canned mixed vegetables
- Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Crabmeat
- Canned chilli or spaghetti or ravioli

General Items required on regular basis:
- Canned beef stew
- Canned baked beans
- Chunky Soups
- Campbell’s Soups
- Kraft Dinner
- Mac and Cheese
- Canned pineapple
- Rice sidekicks & Mr. Noodle packets
- Soda (Soup) Crackers
- Bottled Juices - Cranberry or Apple + Cookies
- Canned Guay (Turkey or chicken)
- Canned Pineapple
- Applesauce or Canned Fruit
- Canned Corn
- Canned green beans
- Canned peas
- Canned peas
- Canned Ham
- Canned tomatoes
- Canned red kidney beans
- Canned ham, combed beef or spam
- Canned salmon
- Canned mixed vegetables
- Flakes of ham, chicken or beef
- Canned chilli or spaghetti or ravioli

Baldinelli’s election money could have been spent on hospital infrastructure or for assistance to the local bridge commissions in his riding.

Despite his frustration that the election was held during a pandemic, he says, “it’s hard to put your life on hold,” he says. “This was already feeling the momentum, felt the positivity, but it wasn’t meant to be.”

As she sat in her backyard this morning, she says, “I’m not leaning towards it. I’ve always wondered. I’m not leaning towards it.”

Baldinelli said that he asked his volunteers to keep the money in the campaign’s bank account, and that it could be used to help pay for his next run.

“We were so grateful for the tremendous community support of our food drive held last May – it was overwhelming. Thank you all very much,” she said.

The re-elected MP concluded his speech by thanking his campaign manager Bart Maves. He also made mention of young Daniel Ferraro, a St. Paul Catholic Secondary School student, for whom he said he was “so happy for all those who worked on the campaign.”

He spoke proudly of the Conservative platform being set up with maybe his most important promise of the last 36 days — to make sure he and Daniel get out later this week to see the new Marvel movie.

One decision she has already made is to refocus her attention on Drea’s Wine Co., which she started to carry on the legacy of her father, Karl Kaiser. Her life as a candidate has taken her attention away from that, and something she wants to get back to.

“‘It’s hard to put your life on hold,’” she says. “‘This could’ve been done either way. When I woke up this morning my life could’ve looked very different and that makes it difficult to make plans. I think it’s time to make some plans for the future.’

She gave “110 per cent” of herself during this election, she says, “and at the end of the day I don’t know that there was anything I could’ve done differently that would’ve had a different outcome. I felt the momentum, felt the positivity, but it wasn’t meant to be.”

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Town, businesses prepare for vaccination proof system

Penny Coles  The Local

Patience, patience, patience. That is the plea from Lord Mayor Betty Dero to those who are asked to show proof of vaccinations to enter certain businesses and venues.

Today, Sept. 22, is the day business owners begin dealing with the provincially-mandated vaccine certification system, and customers entering restaurants, gyms, and some other non-essential businesses — retail outlets are not included — will be asked to show proof they are fully vaccinated, which means they have received their second dose of vaccine two weeks ago or more.

Town staff have put together an information package to send out to businesses and the public to help smooth the process, says Dero, with a goal of "educating and facilitating where we can." It was available Tuesday. She is also planning another of her video messages, and her message will be for residents to remember to be patient, maybe allow more time, and arrive earlier.

"These are new rules from the province, and it will take extra time to get people checked in and ensure everyone understands the new regulations," says Dero.

"I hope everyone will be patient. Staff at the town hall and businesses will have to take more time with people, and patience will be very important during this next stage."

So far, people have worked together to cope with provincial pandemic regulations "in a kind and co-operative way," added Dero, and she hopes that will continue.

NOTL vaccination rate best in region

Penny Coles  The Local

At least one more vaccination clinic planned at the community centre, Niagara-on-the-Lake is already the highest percentage of its population vaccinated.

As of last Wednesday — the results are shared weekly by public health, says Lord Mayor Betty Dero — 85 per cent of NOTL residents had their first dose, and 79 per cent were fully vaccinated, numbers that will be higher this year.

Yesterday, across the region, more than 74 per cent of Niagara residents have their first dose, and more than 68 per cent are fully vaccinated. That’s significantly higher in NOTL about 10 per cent more, says Dero, adding that doesn’t include those vaccinated outside the province, including snowbirds who were vaccinated in the U.S.

She said the number of vaccine increases took a jump when the need for a vaccination certificate to enter certain businesses and venues was announced, but have flattened out again.

The public health department is planning a vaccination clinic at the NOTL community centre next Wednesday, Sept. 29.

While the demographics of NOTL, with its senior population, is likely one reason for the municipality having the highest percentage of people vaccinated, "it also means people in NOTL are working together to pull through this pandemic," says Dero.

I’m very proud and pleased to live in a community that pulls together like this," Sean Simpson of Simpson’s Pharmacy says he’s definitely seen the number of people in town wanting to get vaccinated dwindle. He no longer has a waiting list, and he’s reduced the days he does vaccinations to about two or three a week so as not to waste vaccine.

At this point, "anyone who wants a vaccination has access to a vaccination," with lots of public health pop-up locations in addition to pharmacies making it easy. Those who are now coming in are a younger group, says Simpson.

"I’d say largely the seniors are done at this stage. I see some younger people slowly trickling in, as people get more comfortable about the safety of the vaccine. There are still a lot more who could get it, and we’re encouraging them to do so, even when they’re ready, we’re ready."

Simpson says he’s anticipating the next group of live to 11-year-olds, once vaccinations are approved for that age group. "It will be good to get another portion of the population vaccinated.”
Neighbour hoping for permanent solution to Virgil dam

Kim Killeen has a beautiful view from his home on Four Mile Creek that includes the Virgil dam and reservoir.

The pond is home to hundreds of ducks, geese, and herons, as well as lots of frogs and fish, he says.

He sees people fishing in the pond, which is also part of the nature trail that follows the creek — more fishermen than in pre-COVID years.

After vandalism to the dam this Saturday, not for the first time, about 25 feet of mud, usually under water, was left exposed, he says.

“There are a number of boards gone from the dam, and this isn’t the worst I’ve seen. The water has dropped significantly”

He has lived near the pond since 2017, but it wasn’t until 2020 that he realized it wasn’t the weather that was making the water level drop, he says.

“The water had dropped to such an extreme that the water receded about 50 feet from the shore, all along the west side of the pond at our end. The west side was a vast exposure of mudflats, and the remaining pond had a depth of only five or six inches of water at most along much of the pond. You could literally see the backs of the large fish creasing out of the water as they struggled to swim.”

He has witnessed ongoing vandalism since then, and suspects, although he has no knowledge, that the perpetrators are kids.

He says he appreciates that the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, which owns the dam and is responsible for repairing it when damaged, is usually very quick to respond after it’s been vandalized.

When Killeen contacted the NPCA in May, dam boards had been removed then as well, at a time when the carp had started spawning.

He thought then it was likely kids, although when the water is lower, there is more dry land where the fishermen set up, he says.

This most recent episode is making him question how seriously the NPCA is taking its responsibility to the area, when it has not come up with a permanent solution to the problem.

“This reservoir is built right beside a growing suburb brimming with teenagers looking for something to do,” he said in an email to the NPCA. “The lack of security on the reservoir is a serious issue. You do not even have signs telling people they will be fined for removing boards.”

It should be simple for knowledgeable people to come up with a permanent solution, he adds.

“I feel bad for what happens to nature, to the egrets and herons, the ducks and geese, when the water level drops.”

He and his neighbours are becoming “disenchanted with the failure to produce a workable solution to this ongoing problem.”

He is hoping the conservation authority “takes its role seriously,” and comes up with a solution. In the meantime, with water levels decreasing, “wildlife hangs in the balance.”

After Killeen’s recent email to the NPCA, and his frustrated call to The Local Monday morning, the dam was fixed.

He was also assured he would hear from Adam Christie, director of land operations about a permanent solution.

Christie told The Local Monday he is working on it, but it’s not simple.

“It’s a massive dam,” he says, far too large to fence off. The solution will have to be one that makes it difficult to vandalize, but will have to be in conjunction with the town, which addresses the water level when it’s being used for irrigation.

“This needs to be done in partnership, with the two organizations working out the best solution.”

The NPCA has tried to get there within 24 hours of vandalism doing their work, he says.

“We have vandalism in all of our conservation areas, all over our watersheds. We see damage to buildings, graffiti, but pulling out boards to lower the water,” he says, seems “so random, how do they even know about that?”

The need for the town to control the water level “is what makes this a bigger conversation, one that needs to be done in collaboration.”

He was planning to meet with the town this week, he says, and “I’m sure we’ll come up with something to fix it.”
To a lot of people it didn’t seem like it was the right time to start a new business. It was July 2020, in the middle of COVID when Evan and Jessie MacDonald decided to buy 1596 Four Mile Creek Rd, known by most as the old Benjamin Moore paint store. Together Jessie, Evan and Andrew Perrie had a dream to take their passion for real estate to another level.

“Everybody said we were crazy.” Looking back, everybody knows the real estate market did better than almost any other industry, but at the time, there was a ton of uncertainty. “We’ve always loved real estate. Over the past 17 years we’ve built and renovated countless houses, developed land, bought and sold houses from $90,000 to $5,200,000. Throughout the whole journey, one thing has remained constant: we love Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

“There’s something about this small town. Niagara-on-the-Lake is a final destination for everyone here and every home here is a dream home.” When Evan and Jessie MacDonald teamed up with Andrew Perrie, dedicated local realtor in NOTL, they came together with one common goal: to create a real estate service like no other. To truly take the buying and selling experience in Niagara-on-the-Lake to another level. “We call it our concierge service. We’ve found incredible success by taking on less clients and focusing on them and their needs.”

“We found that there was a gap in service in the NOTL real estate industry that we knew we could fill. We are a full-service, luxury concierge real estate team that provides constant communication with our clients and invest real marketing dollars to help get our client’s home sold and find their dream home” said Perrie.
For 36 days, we listened to election promises from all candidates.

And we went to the polling stations Monday with no idea how long well have to wait to find out who would form the next government. It was surprisingly quick, given the pre-election promises that it could take days.

Lord Mayor Betty Duerr is encouraged to see patient, kind and compassionate process may be a little cumbersome at first. It’s sad to think you could not possibly Saving their lives and hopefully we will be, for the sake of our local businesses, who have already weathered so much. The reward will be another step toward the return of normal life being able to resume some of the activities that are important to us, and we’re doing so in a safe environment.

Penny Coles

The Local
How did black bears end up in London, Goderich?

Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

Following a typically num-bered and mildly frustrating drive through the Greater To-ronto Area (GTA), my biology brain began perseverating on how rough it must feel for a bear or a moose who acciden-tally finds itself too close to this urban mecca.

What is too close? That depends on what perspective you incline in. While black bears, moose, wolves, elk and wol-ves used to occupy Toronto and southern Ontario on the map of the 1900s, bra-ba-speak- ing. In pre-colonial times, these magnificent mammals were quite at home in the ar-ea’s mixed forests — a complex salad of deciduous (oak, maple, ash and beech) and coniferous (pine, hemlock, cedar and spruce) trees, and a never-ending access to fresh water. The difference is that these forests existed with unmag-nificent contiguity and quality. The ecosystems were relative-ly undisturbed, and provided a richly productive gradient, up south to north. Our deciuous dominant forests in Ontario’s extreme south blended into the St. Lawrence mixed for-ests of central Ontario before turning into a spruce aphys in the north. Highway 401 wasn’t in its gridlocked existence, and the GTA wasn’t sprawling around the corner towards Aurora. Southern Ontario is an area where different biomes (broad geographical areas with an identifiable set of flora and fauna) collided.

So, why are these mammals only found up north nowadays? And, how do they end up down south, and make the news on occasion?

As I drive north of the GTA to head to a cottage for a fun weekend, I see the wood den-sity increase once past Barrie. There are simply larger swaths of habitat, and they benefit large mammals that require such spu-tial needs. It makes me wonder how far south the old bear, or other large mammals with similar space requirements, hap-hazardly meander down toward the GTA and other humanly popu-lated areas.

What’s fascinating about nature is that it knows no hard boundaries. According to the province and other in-dependent sources, black bear populations in Ontario “stop” at Barrie, Collingwood, and Owen Sound as their south-ern limit. Is this a coincidence? Not when you line up the maps of their perceived range and where Ontario’s most densely populated regions are.

So, how did a black bear end up in London or Goderich in July of 2020? And, how did a moose find its way dashing across busy highways in Markham in 2017?

I went straight to Google Earth and tried to assess the potential path, or habitat cor-rider, that allowed these mag-nificent creatures to land in the local news in southern Ontario. For the Goderich and Lon-don incidents, which occurred within three days of each other, I speculate that the black bears moved down the Lake Huron coast from the Bruce Penin-sula, where they have a rea-sonable and stable population. Southamphous is the rare but not impossible location in this neck of the woods where you could see a black bear — it is the last, truly large coat of dark green on the landscape cloaked in agriculture and small town.

What happens next no-body will ever know. It is re-difficult to identify a solid habitat corridor from here towards Goderich, and espe-cially London. However, there must have been just enough. To be clear, these habitat pas-sages are narrow in nature, and could never biologically support a sustained black bear population. They did, however, provide a risky but plausible opportunity for a large black animal to make it south with little notice. Animals are wandering home where we’ve built our homes. Historically, these grandiose and iconic animals lived and thrived down here in southern Ontario. There could be some-thing poetically disturbing about returning home to find out isn’t home anymore.  

I’m not a human rights ac-tivist, political activist, or any sort of activist at all for that matter, but lately, after reading some editorials … my brain was braced and welcomed by not only our direct neighbours, but also by residents from all cor-ders of the town, as others have.

For all of these interactions, we’re extremely grateful, and we feel blessed to be in a posi-

tion to live here. In regard to the somewhat controversial rainbow crosswalk that has been debated, I person-ally feel it is an unnecessary ad-dition to an already magnificent downtown. Many shops have already raised pride flag stickers on their doors, welcom-ing gay townspeople inside. Do we need to hang rainbow banners all along Queen Street, or fly a rainbow balloon over the town, before certain members of the gay community feel totally ac-cepted? We must remember t

I’ d like to end this with a heartfelt thank you to the good people of NOTL for extending such a warm welcome to both my husband and me. Let’s all continue this wonderful be-haviour, and make everyone else who arrives feel welcome and included.

Letters

Thanks, NOTL, for the warm welcome

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.

NOTL businesses contact
Karen at 905-641-5335 or karen@notllocal.com

Businesses outside NOTL contact
Julia at 905-934-1040 or julia@notllocal.com

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October 6

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Deadline:

Friday prior to publication date at noon
Penny Coles  
The Local

Eduardo Lafforgue, president of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, would like residents to have a better understanding of the role of the chamber, and how it’s funded.

A misunderstanding of some residents’ views of the chamber became evident during recent discussions about a municipal accommodation tax, he says.

Some residents believe the chamber is funded by taxpayers, and that the implementation of the accommodation tax would lower residential taxes.

Lafforgue says the Chamber of Commerce is divided into two distinct entities, both non-profit, separately incorporated but to reduce costs, jointly managed. Tourism NOTL, tasked with tourism management and development, is a subsidiary of the chamber. The model offers a financial and management model that reduces overhead and effectively governs the chamber. The model offers a financial and management model that reduces overhead and effectively governs the chamber.

Tourism NOTL is also the registered Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for NOTL, committed to the promotion, responsible growth and sustainability of tourism.

While the chamber does receive a small portion of its $1 million budget from the town, it is in return for the Information Centre at the Fort George bus parking lot, and also provides about $48,000 in sponsorship for the Icewine Festival, the Peach Celebration and the Candlelight Stroll, all events residents enjoy.

For example, the town contributes $6,000 for the Peach Celebration, which has a budget of $120,000. Chamber membership brings in about eight per cent of revenue, business services to members about six per cent. Event revenues are the main source of income for the chamber and Tourism NOTL, making up more than half. Sponsorships and advertising on chamber media make up almost 30 per cent, with the town paying about seven per cent for the Information Centre.

“I want to be completely transparent, and I do everything I can be transparent,” says Lafforgue.

The tourism strategy is expected to provide information about what visitors to NOTL contribute to the local economy, as well as the region, and the province, he said.

And that includes the many benefits to residents, including the events they enjoy: the Candlelight Stroll, the Peach Celebration, the Shades of Summer dinners, the Icewine Festival, all of which attract many locals, the selection of restaurants, the Shaw Festival, the wineries, also are enjoyed by residents, but would not survive without tourism, says Lafforgue.

“Residents are not paying more taxes because of these attractions but they are getting benefits just by being residents of NOTL,” he says.

Shades of Summer, a dinner organized by the chamber that this year was held in three different locations, was sold out an hour after tickets went on sale.

“Everyone who attended these dinners was delighted, and we were able to showcase Willowbank, the Pumphouse (Arts Centre) and the museum,” says Lafforgue.

If, when the tourism strategy is completed, and the recommendations for funding includes a municipal accommodation tax, for accommodations of five rooms or more, it would likely be the recipient of 50 per cent of the tax collected, and would be the distributor of it for tourism marketing, says Lafforgue.

The town, however, could set up another entity to be the DMO and take on that task.

He believes residents feel the tax could offset municipal infrastructure projects they are paying for, but residents use all of the town infrastructure, whereas visitors benefit from only a small portion of roads and other improvements.

The tourism strategy would be expected to set out how the tax is to be spent, and which projects it would fund. It is not expected to lower taxes for residents, and the portion of it distributed to tourism businesses through the DMO would be expected to market the town to visitors. An important aspect of the tourism strategy, he added, is that an outside, objective moderator should be tasked with deciding who should come to the table to take part in the discussions, representing both businesses and residents, and that there be an opportunity for public discussions.

“This is to be a collaborative process. That is the key word — collaboration,” he said.

Eduardo Lafforgue made a presentation to council when he first became president of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce. (Penny Coles)
Patience, kindness, compassion called for

Continued from page 3 with a physician’s note.

Children who are under 12 years of age, and those under 18 at the arena for participating in sports and recreation activities, are also exempt.

Visitors to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library, based on current provincial regulations, do not need proof of vaccination.

In all cases where proof of vaccination is required, some identification, such as a driver’s licence or health card, will also be required.

That’s until Oct. 22, when an upgraded proof of vaccination that includes a QR code should be available from the province. It will have an app that consumers and businesses can use by then, or a print-ed PDF as an option, and the process should get easier and faster, says Disero.

For specific questions about town facilities, contact Dan Makensuk, recreation supervisor, dan.makensuk@notl.com.

Residents can also call the town at 905-246-5878, says Disero, and their question will be directed to the appropriate department.

Paul Dietsch, co-owner of Sandtrap Pub & Grill, admitted to being a little nervous about adding an extra process for people entering the restaurant. He’d received little information about how it was to be handled, but was going over what he knew about the regulations with staff.

He says he hasn’t had issues with overly aggressive customers objecting to wearing masks as they enter the restaurant, and he isn’t expecting problems with the proof of vaccination regulation.

His main concern is that the public be educated so they understand the rules and what is required.

“I don’t want to have a group of four women arrive for lunch, and find that one of them has forgotten her proof of vaccination. We have to do what we’re told. I can’t take a chance on inspectors coming in here and finding we’re not following regulations.”

He believes the rule is a “step in the right direction,” to keep customers and staff safe, but was hoping for more support, such as the provision of signs, to be prepared for the implementation.

“Too many wanting to peek into the restaurants and bars, although not outdoor patios or to pick up take-out food, nightclubs, including the outdoor areas, meeting and event places; sports and fitness facilities, but not including those attending for youth recreation); and sporting events.

According to provincial regulations regarding proof of vaccination, those under 12 or people with medical exceptions and a doctor’s note for proof are exempt.

Places where vaccination proof is required include restaurants and bars, although not outdoor patios or to pick up take-out food, nightclubs, including the outdoor areas, meeting and event places; sports and fitness facilities (but not including those attending for youth recreation); and sporting events.

Casinos and bingo halls will require vaccination proof, as will theatres, concerts and music festivals.

If you need a copy of your vaccination receipt, go to the provincial vaccine booking portal or the vaccine booking hotline at 1-833-943-3900.

Rick Wood of the Toronto office of Caldwell Securities flips burgers Saturday at a barbecue held outside the NOTL Caldwell office on Mississauga Street run by Vince Franscuc. It was a fundraiser for the Niagara Nursery School, the alma mater of Franscuc’s five-year-old daughter Violet, and whose halls are currently being “torn up” by his son Beau. They were also collecting food and clothing donations for Newark Neighbours. (Mike Balsom)
Local woman Donna Seymour organizes a local run for June’s Dream Team, in memory of her friend who died of cancer. The last two years, with no community runs due to COVID, the team began at Seymour’s Virgil home and completed a physically distanced walk around her neighbourhood. This year, 22 team members participated and raised more than $14,000 for cancer research through the Terry Fox Foundation.

Photo supplied

Raquel Fassler, a cancer survivor, took part in the run with her son Victor, as well as her Old Town friends and neighbours. (Photo supplied)

Joan King, with volunteers Carolyn Dyck and Stacey Ivanchuk, were in Simcoe Park Sunday to greet those who stopped by to check out the photos, and some to run the traditional route. It was a beautiful morning with a good turnout, says King. Although final totals were not known, she expects the run to have raised $70,000 or more for the Terry Fox Foundation. (David Gilchrist)

A group of five families, with parents and kids, gathered together in their Old Town neighbourhood for the second year to participate in their second Terry Fox Run as a group. (Photos supplied)

The Wind Group chose to participate in this year’s NOTL run. (David Gilchrist)

Another successful Terry Fox run for NOTL

When Craig McCallum sent out a message to people within the Wind Group to “walk, run or crawl” five kilometres on Sunday for the Terry Fox Foundation, he says he expected he and his wife, and maybe a few others, would be participating.

He was surprised to have 15 people join the group, and also delighted at how much fun they had, he says.

The brand director of Wind Group in Niagara, which includes three brands, East Izakaya, Wind Japanese & Thai, and Ma Chinese Cuisine, in Niagara Falls and St. Catharines, says the team of employees ran and walked from Simcoe Park. Although there was no official run this year, they chose to take the route on the map Joan King recommended, which is the traditional run route, and 58 minutes later, all met back at the park, raising more than $500.

This was their first time participating in the run, and were there at the invitation of King, who had met the McCallums at Empty Bowls Charity as a volunteer.

Taking part in the run along with McCallum and his wife were the CEO of the company, Shane Connolly, and his wife, president Peter Li, regional manager Philip She and many other staff, including family members and children.

McCallum says the Terry Fox Run “has been part of all of our lives and it was a perfect match for our company core values, one of them being passion and another being integrity.”

The Group does community work in St. Catharines at Empty Bowls, Grape and Wine, and the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, and this was an opportunity to reach out to the NOTL community.

Photo supplied
Local man keeps running harder, further for Terry Fox

Penny Coles The Local

For the last few years, Sean Wright has pushed himself to run further, and raise more money for the Terry Fox Foundation.

This year, he intended to run 25 kilometres, but “a little bit of confusion” meant he ran an extra time around the five-kilometre route.

Wright, now 38, was an 18-year-old Niagara District Secondary School student when he was involved in a collision at Line 1 and Townline Road. The driver of the car he was in lost control, went into the ditch and hit the guardrail. Wright was thrown onto the road from the backseat, and sustained a severe head injury.

He graduated from high school, and worked hard to become a registered massage therapist at college. In recent years, he has been working at 124 Queen, but has been out of work recently due to COVID, although he hopes to return soon.

His first Terry Fox run was in 2016, when he walked five kms.

But then he began train- ing, and in 2018 was able to run 10 kms in 50 minutes. He completed 15 kms in one hour and 10 minutes in 2019, 20 kms in one hour, 39 min- utes in 2020, and this year, ran 28.67 kms in two hours, 27 minutes, raising about $600.

It was hard work; he said, and his mother Patti, who was watching him and count- ing laps, thought he had one more to go — his parents are Patti and Bob Wright, who retired from full-time minis- try in 2015 after 17 years as Rector of St. Mark’s.

“My body told me I was going way too far,” he said, but he kept going, determined to reach his goal. “I like running, but I didn’t plan that.”

Sean says running runs in his family — his grandfa- ther ran several marathons, his mother was a runner, and his dad a runner and cyclist. So he’s been running all his life, although as a sprinter in school, and didn’t begin train- ing seriously until recently.

He says when he was growing up, he was “the little scrawny guy,” and came to the realization that he wasn’t going to accept that “I can’t do it. I can do it.”

He has focused on a positive attitude. “Believe in yourself” is a message he lives by, and would encour- age others to as well.

College wasn’t easy, be- cause of his brain injury, which makes him forgetful, he says, but he wasn’t going to give up.

“I always had the drive to do better, and it took me an extra year, but I finished.”

When he thinks about the most recent run, which was tough, he says, “Terry didn’t have to do what he did, but he wanted to. I wanted to do this. Anything’s possible if you try. So I’m trying.”

He remembers his par- ents telling him they saw Ter- ry Fox on his Marathon of Hope through a small town near Ottawa, and feels now it’s cool to have someone like him to look up to, and to push me.”

He says he’s grateful to his friends and Terry Fox sup- porters, as well as his older brother, Ben, whom he looks up to more than anybody, for helping to push him.

Sunday was Terry’s day, he adds, and, “I was kind of running alongside with him.”

Sean Wright ran the traditional Terry Fox route multiple times to reach his 25-kilometre goal. (David Gilchrist)
The current board includes Jackie Dickieson (service officer, sick and visiting, veterans assistance); Chris Toye (treasurer, fish fry chair), Doug Pettit (membership chair); Allan Howse (leadership, cadet liaison, seniors outreach chair); Stan Harrington (youth and education); Al Magnacca (ways and means); Lori Beak (public relations officer, recording secretary); and sitting, Rhys Beak (2nd vice-president, grants and bursaries); Victor Packard (president, honours and awards); and Marg Boldt (1st vice-president, poppy chair).

And although no decision has been made yet, plans are underway for this year’s November 11 service to honour those who did not return from fighting for their country. There is a minimal plan being considered, depending on COVID restrictions, to be held at the Cenotaph, with the hope that a traditional ceremony will be possible, says Howse.

The legion is thanking all 200 businesses that allowed them to put poppy boxes on their counter to distribute poppies, and the many people who donated. Also, they say thank you to all who have continued to support their Thursday fish fry.

“We sincerely hope for better times ahead; in the meantime we will ‘Soldier On,'” says Howse.

Legion president, Victor Packard, places a new flag on a veteran’s grave in St. Mark’s Cemetery. (Photos supplied)
Crossroads Public School takes advantage of outdoor space, and offers indoor physical education classes (below) that are now permitted under provincial and school board regulations. (Photos supplied)

Jenson Paugh, Sebastian Ornelas Nevarez, Fabian Ornelas Nevarez between classes.

Angelina La Valle, Leah Luton and Maria Francis spend some time outdoors, where masks are not required.

Students take advantage of the Royal Oak asynchronous learning program in action. One of the students who is a year-long remote learner is teamed up with his classmates, Kamila Domadzks and Jacob Logue, for collaborative work from home and school. (Photos supplied)

Royal Oak uses the responsive classroom curriculum to support students’ social emotional learning and help students transition to school each day, starting the day in a supportive environment before heading into academic work.

Royal Oak Community School began its intramural sports program outside last week. Once a week, students play a supervised and structured sport to practise their skills. It gives them access to extracurricular activities that have been so limited for children through the pandemic, and they enjoy it.

Students at St. Michael enjoy outdoor time on the playground equipment, which was off-limits last year. (Photos supplied)

Jenson Paugh, Sebastian Ornelas Nevarez, Fabian Ornelas Nevarez between classes.

Angelina La Valle, Leah Luton and Maria Francis spend some time outdoors, where masks are not required.
Scott Finlay, as Brock, presents feature talks at the monument. (Photo supplied)

Brock’s Birthday Bash coming up at Queenston Hts

Local Staff

Brock’s Birthday Bash!
The Friends of Fort George is planning a birthday bash to mark the 252nd birthday of Major General Sir Isaac Brock. It will be held at Brock’s Monument on Oct. 6, as the life of the hero of Upper Canada is celebrated with special presentations highlighting his life, and birthday treats, which are being generously donated by one of the members of the Friends of Fort George.

The special day begins at 10 a.m. with a feature talk on the life and times of Brock. At 10:45, cupcakes will be served at the monument, and that will be followed by another feature talk at 11 a.m. on After the Battle of Queenston Heights: What Happened to Brock After the Smoke Cleared.

“This event provides us with a unique opportunity to focus on the life of Brock, and the contributions that he made as head of the civil government and military, leading up to the War of 1812, as well as his legacy after his death at the Battle of Queenston Heights,” says Amanda Gamble, executive director of the Friends of Fort George.

The Friends of Fort George are also running a special donation drive in honour of Major General Sir Isaac Brock. They hope to raise $1,769 to honour Brock’s birthday (Oct. 6, 1769).

All funds raised will support employment and educational programs at Brock’s Monument for the 2022 season. Follow along and help reach their goal at: https://www.canada-helps.org/en/dn/64588.

Cost for Brock’s Birthday Bash is $10 per person. Space is limited, so book your spot online at: https://friendsofortgeorge.square.site
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Russian Mennonites, intergenerational trauma, cultural sensitivity

Miranda J. Chivers Special to The Local

In 1929, the second week of September was declared Canadian Mennonite Heritage Week. This event celebrates our 150 years of contributions to Canada. But who are the Mennonites, and why is this recognition important?

Mennonites are a diversified set practicing varying degrees of social and religious conservatism, and ethnic traditions. Some hold to heritage alone. Since our immigration timeline stretches from the 1600s to the Second World War, we do not identify with either our church affiliation, our ancestors’ emigration data, or both.

My grandparents fled to Canada following the Russian Revolution. We’re known as Russian Mennonites, and we share a violent recordbranding us as intergenerational trauma survivors of cultural genocide. I grew up immersed in clan and church activity, and chomping on traditional foods like roll kuchen, fur ma worscht, and Kielke met — foods like roll kuchen, forsters, and Kielke met.

Theinsular nature of our community protected refugees from the prying eyes of outsiders. Segregation from the world was encouraged. We needed to stay alert, in case political winds shifted against us again. Vivid traumatic memories kept us alive.

After leaving Prussia and settling in southern Ukraine during the early 18th century, the Mennonites were no longer welcome under the new communist regime. Labeled as dissidents and foreigners because of their faith, wealth and German language, my grandparents watched anarchists and armois plunder and raze their villages, and torture and murder their loved ones. Employment disappeared, wealth was stolen or devalued, land expropriated, and gravesites violated. Starvation, famine, and disease took many. The evidence of our existence was quickly obliterated under a blanket of blood-soaked earth.

Ethnic cleansing actively played out under Lenin’s scorched earth policies, and then amplified under Stalin. The stalinist were exiled to Siberia or Kazakhstan. Discrimination knew no bounds. Twenty thousand German-speaking Russian Mennonites fled to the safety of North America. But from 1919 to 1921, racist government policies kept the victims in displaced persons camps abroad. My grandparents waited in Riga, Latvia. Many were trapped without reaching the shores of freedom.

When I traveled to Poland and Ukraine in 2014 to search for a deeper connection to my roots, the blatant evidence of genocide was overwhelming. I stood without permission on vacant farmland near burial grounds, across the street from a government building, and beside a committee sign on the wall.

Traumatic memories kept us alert, in case political winds shifted against us again. Vivid traumatic memories kept us alive.

At the same time, I’m incredibly grateful for our democratic rights and privileges. But walking out our altruistic platitudes requires more than head nods. Healing wounds come through active listening and deliberate action. Dismissing the ugly truth only buries it temporally.

My heart also broke while listening to our First Nations cousins. Their claim of unmarked graves. Empty promises made by governments that guaranteed protection were left untouched. Horrifying stories of forced relocations on these native grounds. This discovery should serve as a warning for us to pay attention to our political leadership and vote carefully. Treading on innocent blood stains all.

Though my backstory differs from the Indigenous, we share deep wounds of bigotry. Mine hides behind my white skin. Still I’m ashamed about the desecration of sacred soil done by the same country that grantedsanctuary to my grandparents and gave me life. We all deserve dignity and protection.

How do we also understand? First Nations crisis awakens the traumatic past.

We need to ask why this is happening. The story of our British Columbia First Nations story isn’t unique. Nor is my experience as a second-generation survivor. All refugees seek sanctuary from discrimination and political violence. Golden promises of new governments offer surety of inclusion and acceptance. But suspicion and fear accompany trauma, and trust isn’t rebuilt easily. Mennonites chose to channel this angst into compassionate works. The establishment of the Mennonite Central Committee during the Russian crisis reveals the creed of our faith. Others should not suffer siblinghood.

We know that hate has many faces, and differencedefine. This year, the First Nations crisis awakening our ancient scars. The unmarked and deserted burial grounds offer evidence of ethnic cleansing in a way that chillingly parallels the Mennonite story. It likely feels familiar to many fugitives from terror-backed regimes.

It’s hard to fathom that we were hoodwinked by our adopted country of Canada’s reality database. Forty-four were my recorded cousins. Yet this is not the place where my great grandparents were buried. I pray that the work of locating more sites and identifying the missing graves will persist until all are found. I’m thankful for the formation of the Ukraine Headstone Project to continue this restorative work.

Our ancestors’ emigration periphery is awash with evidence of the massacre. My grandparents were my recorded cousins. It’s good. But graves don’t lie. I pray that the work of locating more sites and identifying the missing graves will persist until all are found. I’m thankful for the formation of the Ukraine Headstone Project to continue this restorative work.

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Shaw partners for COVID research, testing

When the Shaw Festival wanted to return to in-person rehearsals last spring with the goal of outdoor performances, and hopefully leading to getting back on stage inside this season, they had some help.

McMaster HealthLabs (MHL), a not-for-profit group of scientists, doctors and others from McMaster University and the Research Institute of St. Joseph’s Hamilton, began an outreach project that would allow for research on workplace testing, while also keeping people in the workplace safe due to COVID.

Jodi Gilchrist, research manager, says her team took on six different workplaces, one of them the Shaw Festival.

"The project, which focused on actors who needed to return in-person at first, soon expanded to include other staff.

Working with the Shaw was a win-win for the HealthLabs to give back to their community, for those working in the theatre and all those who would benefit from seeing a performance," says Gilchrist.

"We reached out to the Shaw to partner with us on this project, to allow actors to get back to work. It’s now expanded to ushers, the orchestra, and other staff who come in contact with people inside the theatre," she adds.

The project allows for self-testing, overseen by HealthLabs people, who don’t have to be doctors or nurses, she explains. The swabs are taken back to the lab for testing, with results available within 24 hours.

Since it was to be done weekly, or even twice a week, the method of swabbing that received provincial approval was for an oral/nasal swab, not as intrusive or uncomfortable as the really deep nasal swab used by health departments, but still a highly effective PCR test.

As the number of staff requiring testing has grown, completely voluntarily but with a large uptake, says Gilchrist, about 140 to 180 people at the Shaw are being tested weekly.

In other workplaces, it will be up to the employer to call an end to the project when they decide testing is no longer necessary, but with the Shaw, it’s expected to continue until their season finishes, she says.

"Theatre is very important to me," she says.

When her team hired a Shaw actor who was then out of work due to COVID, she said, she “selfishly” saw the Shaw as an organization that could benefit from HealthLabs’ work.

"I really wanted to see the return of live theatre. The Shaw has been a big part of my life, and we wanted to give back — that’s what HealthLabs is all about. This outreach was designed to get people back to work, and to get life back to normal,” she says.

When members of the team were recently offered tickets to see Sherlock Holmes and the Raven’s Curse, she was excited to see the production, she says.

"And it happened to be my birthday! It’s been a really long 18 months, so it was great to get out as a group. We very much enjoyed ourselves.”

For Gilchrist, as much as she loved the play, she says, “I think I enjoyed watching the audience enjoy themselves even more.”

"Testing is what we do,” she adds, “but in this case we got to see the humans attached to the testing. We made it possible for these performers to be on stage, and for the audience to enjoy it. It felt nice to be a small part of something really good.”

Tim Jennings, CEO of the Shaw, agrees with the importance of the project in getting actors back on stage.

“We began participating in testing work with MHL back in the early spring when in-person rehearsals began. It let us have confidence to restart, even as we were required to rehearse outdoors and in tiny groups of 10 or less,” he says.

"The partnership was created thanks to our planning director, Jeff Cummings, and our COVID compliance manager (a new position to us this year), Alison Peddie, who brokered the relationship for us and oversees it now.”

Jennings explains many musicians and all of the actors have to work maskless — which they are allowed to do under the statute — but that comes with increased risks and safety concerns.

“Without this regular PCR testing, that added risk would also create added stress. Further, the internal knowledge that we would know quickly of a case, possibly even ahead of any potential workplace spread, is huge in ensuring we are able to ensure a safe working environment, and were able to get the shows back up and running and help the local economy restart.”

The team at MHL has been amazing, he says. "We cannot thank them enough, and for one am thrilled the partnership can be used as part of a study to show the efficacy of regular testing in managing and avoiding workplace spread.”

And more great news, he adds, “is date we have been able to avoid any cases getting into our workplace.”
It was a good turnout at the Virgil Skatepark Saturday, when lessons and demonstrations were offered by 10 instructors from CJ’s Skatepark, a non-profit organization out of Mississauga dedicated to promoting skateboard safety. CJ’s founder Jay Mandarino was also on hand to offer tips to youngsters hoping to improve their skateboarding skills. Top left, nine-year-old Oliver Morrison from NOTL gets some pointers from Mandarino. Above, Crossroads Public School students Max Ruller and Nathan Lambert get some skateboarding tips, and left, six-year-old Evan from St. Catharines takes a lesson from a CJ’s instructor. Below, skateboarders demonstrate what they can do. (Photos by Mike Balsom)
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15. Arizona city on the Colorado
16. In addition
17. Latin American dance
18. Side
19. --- Christian Andersen
20. Sharp flavor
22. Note hastily
24. 34th President
25. Moonshot program
28. Sound of a lion
30. Colorado
31. "L" operator
33. Pirate'
34. Pirate
37. Solitary
38. Mischievous
40. Blockhead
41. W
42. Shrimp
43. Not odd
44. Conductive elements
45. Piranha
46. "Rosemary'
47. "Rosemary'
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70. "Rosemary'

Down:
1. Covers rotary motion into linear motion
2. Appliance and electronics maker
3. Bill dispenser
4. Hollow gas globe
5. Orr
6. Unit of computer memory
7. Regret
8. Key with three sharps
9. Pacific country
10. Speed measure
11. Sound of a lion --- Benes
12.CLICKED
13. Valued possession
21. Prius maker
23. Choice morsels
25. Interest charge
26. Two identical things
27. Shopper adjective
28. Manage
30. Be in debt
32. Old kind of computer monitor
33. Fighter ace
35. Lower
36. "Rosemary's Baby" actress --- Farrow
37. Provides input for an amp.
38. Observe
39. Levelheaded
40. Cook in hot oil
41. Central bank
42. Artists workshop
43. Diminishing
44. Extremely
45. Snap
46. Mapp
47. Enormous
49. Kevar garments
50. Funeral woodpile
51. Kevlar garments
52. Roman wear
53. Giant
54. Map
55. Vests
56. Electronic helper just for you
57. Border
58. Old food label letters
60. Carpet cleaner (Abbr)
61. "Rosemary'
62. "Rosemary'
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72. "Rosemary'
The Niagara Predators opened up their main team camp last Thursday at the Meridian Credit Union Arena, with 15 players taking to the ice.

After holding a prospect camp the previous week, coach Andrew Whalen had his first opportunity to gather some key players on the roster to begin preparation for their first season playing out of the Virgil arena.

General manager Johan Eriksson was pleased to finally see some of the team’s Swedish imports skating alongside his Canadian signings.

Goalender Oskar Spinnars Nordin arrived in Toronto from Sweden last Wednesday. He had just one day to settle in with his Virgil billet family before shaking off his jet lag and donning his goalie equipment.

“it felt good,” Spinnars Nordin commented about his first time on the MCU Arena surface. “The guys are nice. Friday it was a lot better because the jet lag was coming off. “

Getting used to the surface is something all of the international Predators will have to do. International rinks are 15 feet wider than those in North America.

“I just have to get a feeling about the rink because it’s so much smaller than in Sweden,” Spinnars Nordin said.

“You have to do everything just a little bit faster. Here, all the guys go straight to the net. There’s a lot more offence here.”

Spinnars Nordin credited his father, Danne, for attracting him to Canada to play for the Predators. Last year he manned the net for five games with the Mora IK J20 team, playing in the highest level of the country’s junior hockey leagues.

He shouldn’t have any problem adjusting to life in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Mora is actually smaller than his new home here, with a population just under 11,000. Mora’s Smidjegrav Arena was one of two host sites for the 2007 World Junior Ice Hockey Championships.

He loves the set-up with his host family, the Rivers, in Virgil, who live just a short distance away from the rink. “They’re really nice, the home is really nice,” said Spinnars Nordin. “I have a gym downstairs, I can watch highlights of hockey and train and stretch.”

Formerly a forward in his early years, he made the switch to netminder full-time at 12 years old. He remembers his father Danne, who also played junior hockey, not being happy with his son’s decision. But Oskar was adamant that his hockey future lay in the crease.

“The position is such that everyone can see you,” he told The Local. “If you make a mistake, everybody can see that. You can be the hero, or the one everyone is talking down about. I like the pressure, having the game on your shoulders. Henrik Lundqvist and Carey Price, those are the guys I look up to the most.”

The 5’11”, 174 pound 19-year-old calls himself adventurous, having already lived away from home for four years to pursue his hockey dreams. His family is all back in Sweden. Oskar, the youngest of three children, is the first to venture to Canada except his eldest sister.

“My brother thinks it’s cool,” he said, “but my sister is a bit worried about it. But she motivates me too. She does like that I’m going out on this adventure.”

His parents are planning to visit before the end of 2021.

Spinnars Nordin is hoping the opportunity with the Predators will turn into an invitation to study and play hockey at an American college. He plans to study political science in preparation for a future career in diplomatic services.

GM Eriksson is expecting that Spinnars Nordin’s experience at the top ranks of Sweden’s junior system will take him to a leadership role with his new team. His partner in goal is another Swede, William Fagemo, whose brother Samuel was drafted in 2019 by the Los Angeles Kings.

Eriksson is still in the process of assembling the final pieces of the Predators’ puzzle to finalize the roster before the Oct. 1 kick-off of their season.

“Y ou have to do everything just a little bit faster. Here, all the guys go straight to the net. There’s a lot more offence here.”

Predators on the ice preparing for opener