

The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL



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Deputy Lord Mayor Clare Cameron stomps grapes in the friendly competition at Montebello Park in St. Catharines Saturday, one of the events of the 68th annual Niagara Grape and Wine Festival. She said she managed to squeeze out four ounces of grape juice and come second in her heat. (Crispin Bottomley)



Newly-crowned Grape King John Fedorkow presses out 18 ounces of juice at Saturday's grape stomp, but Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati was the winner. The competition raised more than \$7,000 for the Walker Cancer Centre. (Clare Cameron)

St. Davids grower named this year's Grape King

Penny Coles
The Local

On a beautiful afternoon surrounded by the vineyards of Fruithaven Farms on Line 8, fellow growers and supporters celebrated with John Fedorkow as he was helped into the prestigious jacket that identifies him as this year's Grape King, and an ambassador for the industry.

In 1956, the year the first Grape King of Ontario was chosen, the position was rewarded with a crown and cape. The tradition has changed to a distinguished jacket, along with a heavy silver chain which carries the names of all

those ambassadors chosen in the intervening years.

During the presentation ceremony last Wednesday, Matthias Oppenlaender, chair of the Grape Growers of Ontario's Board of Directors, and Fedorkow traded barbs, mostly about the Grape King's age, but the respect, admiration and affection for Fedorkow was obvious from all who spoke.

Oppenlaender explained the long-standing tradition of naming a Grape King, which goes back 64 years, and joked, "they say wine gets better with age, and the older the vine-

Continued on page 4

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Town staff asked to look at improving current noise bylaw

Penny Coles
The Local

After extensive work with stakeholders and community members, council has asked staff to review some policies and gather input from the public to see where improvements can be made to the current noise bylaw.

The bylaw was written and approved in 2012, but not without lengthy debate amongst councillors and the public.

Since then, both residents and business owners have asked for changes to the bylaw, but the previous council put off an extensive review, given the amount of discussion that went into the original, and the extra work it would have put on staff to have another look at it.

Workload continues to be an issue, interim CAO Sheldon Randall told councillors. He said if there is anything new to add to the lists of issues staff is already looking at, council will have to prioritize, because at this point, he said, "everything seems to be a priority. We're struggling to complete what's on the list now."

In recent months, councillors have met with stakeholders and members of the community regarding on-going concerns of noise, and presented their findings to council Monday

at the extension of last week's council meeting.

They asked staff to investigate and gather more input from the public, and also review the special events policy, which allows wineries to hold 24 outdoor events a year. They also asked for a policy that includes penalties.

Councillors Erwin Wiens and Clare Cameron, who led the review, asked that staff look at the noise emitted from events, and consider adding an 85/20 decibel level — the current bylaw doesn't include a noise level. That number was taken for the Toronto bylaw, and is just a starting point for staff, councillors were told.

It was suggested staff consider a permit application fee for special events to help fund enforcement of the bylaw.

Since short-term rentals are also part of the noise problem, with out-of-town visitors partying and disturbing neighbours, the committee suggested applications for short-term rentals should include local contact information available to the public, and that the Town should be able to penalize owners for noise violations.

Staff could also look at increases in annual short-term licence fees and penalties for those operating without a licence, to help fund increased enforce-

ment, the report said.

Coun. Stuart McCormack suggested also asking staff to provide information about how many legal proceedings have resulted from noise violations in the last 10 years, and if there were any fines levied for violations.

He said he would like to know to what extent the previous bylaw was enforced, before deciding on changes.

Councillors agreed with that request, but not to his second suggestion, to ask staff to "plot a path forward on the use of bird bangers" — the cannon-like devices farmers use to protect grapes from birds — and possible alternatives. He suggested involving stakeholders, experts, staff, and residents in the discussion.

Coun. Erwin Wiens disagreed, saying noise related to agricultural practices is legislated by the Province. "We'd be muddying the waters very significantly if we get into that issue now," he said.

Cameron was also opposed to opening the discussion to include bird bangers, saying the committee's mandate did not include looking at agricultural practices.

The amendment to include bird bangers in the noise review suggested by McCormack failed by a six to three vote.

TOWN BRIEFS

Town to hire recruiting firm

Councillors agreed Monday to begin the process of finding a new CAO with the hiring of a headhunter — although Coun. Gary Burroughs asked that the term recruiting company be used.

Interim CAO Sheldon Randall suggested the Town should make a list of three or four suitable companies,

ask them to submit proposals, and if the proposals and costs are similar, meet with them individually in camera before making a decision.

Coun. Clare Cameron suggested putting out a request for proposals instead, saying council should be looking for the best option, not the cheapest option.

Councillors accepted Randall's two-envelope process, with proposals in one envelope for councillors to read and discuss, before opening the second envelope, which would include costs.

Cameron stressed the need to get the process underway without delay.

Chamber asking for advance

Speaking on behalf of Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce president Eduardo Lafforgue, who was not in attendance at Monday's meeting, Coun. Wendy Cheropita asked council to advance the chamber \$20,000 on next year's grant.

Lafforgue wants to set up a marketing booth at the Royal Winter Fair, which opens Nov. 1 in Toronto and runs for 10 days.

He plans to use the space to promote NOTL as an upscale tourism destination,

with luxury itineraries, including wine and wellness packages, Cheropita said.

His plans mesh with council's strategic plan, which lists promoting the town as a priority, she added.

Although several councillors suggested Lafforgue provide a report detailing how the money would be spent, there is a need for speed, Cheropita told them.

"I think it's really worth it to help the chamber change the nature of who comes to

NOTL," she added.

"In regards to spending \$20,000, I'm told there is nothing in the budget. The cupboard is bare," countered Coun. Erwin Wiens.

The agricultural committee wants money, the irrigation committee wants money, he said, adding, "we have a budget, and we've already blown it."

Councillors agreed to approve the advance in principle, and ask Lafforgue for a report to council on Oct. 7.

Committee to consider accommodation tax

A Town committee has been struck to look into instituting a municipal accommodation tax.

It will include two councillors and four representa-

tives of the accommodation and tourism sectors.

Coun. Clare Cameron, referring to rumours that there has already been a decision made to implement the

tax, when in fact discussions are just beginning, suggested the committee work with the community engagement co-ordinator on a communications plan.

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**NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE
SPECIAL OLYMPICS
ONTARIO**



St. Davids may get grinder pump assistance

Penny Coles
The Local

Residents of St. Davids living with grinder pumps are hopeful they may finally get the assistance they have sought from the Town for more than a decade.

There are about 180 homes in the village requiring grinder pumps as part of the Town's sewer system, 90 that were connected as part of the installation of the system in 2005, and the others in newer subdivisions built since then.

Those who attended a meeting last week of the Town's grinder pump committee, formed by the current council after the election, were given a thorough explanation of how the sewer system in the village works, the role of the grinder pumps and why they are necessary.

Committee members, including Councillors Erwin Wiens and Norm Arsenault and five residents, along with Town environmental supervisor Brett Ruck, were at the St. Davids Firehall Thursday to explain the recommendations they plan to present to council, which include what owners of grinder pumps most wanted to hear.

The committee recommendations to council include the Town taking over the responsibility, and the cost, of maintaining and replacing the pumps, as long as any breakdown is not the fault of the owner, such as material being flushed that shouldn't be.

They will also ask for better inspection and oversight of any grinder pumps to be installed as new homes are built.

Through each election since the installation of the St. Davids sewer system, and with each new council, St. Davids residents with grinder pumps have asked the Town for assistance with what has become a costly burden to some.

The current council decided, as its committees were formed early in the term, to create a group charged with investigating the situation, and Thursday's meeting was to present their findings to about 50 people in attendance at the village firehall.

The committee has also posted the information on the Town's online Join the Conversation, and a video of the meeting is available online. As Ruck emphasized to those at the meeting, a greater number of residents needs to be involved to help the committee make its point to councillors.



Wayne Scott, a member of the Town's grinder pump committee, explains a report and recommendations that will be presented to councillors Monday, October 7. (Penny Coles)

"This committee of council was tasked with finding a viable solution to bring forward to council," said Ruck, and was also asked to hold a public meeting before going to council.

He reminded residents several times throughout the discussion that council hasn't seen or approved the recommendations.

Previous councils have taken the position the responsibility lies with the homeowners, he said, and requests to change that have met with resistance.

Coun. Erwin Wiens also spoke of council's ongoing struggle to limit tax increases, which will be a factor in their decision.

The cost to the Town of assuming the responsibility for grinder pumps would be funded through wastewater fees, costing all taxpayers an extra \$10 a year, residents were told.

Old Town resident Wayne Scott led the discussion, beginning with an explanation of how the St. Davids sewer system differs from the traditional systems found in the rest of Niagara-on-the-Lake's urban areas.

The Town chose a low-pressure directional boring system for St. Davids, with narrow, shallow trenches for the sewer pipes. It relies on what was then new technology, and was much less expensive than the traditional gravity systems — possibly half the price, said Scott. It was also faster to install, and considered safer.

Grinder pumps were necessary in homes below the level of the sewers, such as in Bevan Heights, or those with basement plumbing, as in homes on Tanbark Road, Queenston

Road and on some of the new streets, such as Sandwood and Stoneridge Crescents, in the village.

"The system can't work without those pumps," Scott said, "and some of you have lived with this for a number of years."

The grinder pumps reduce solid matter in a large tank before pumping it uphill to the sewer system, where it then travels to a substation, and on to the Regional wastewater treatment plant in Niagara Falls.

The scope of the committee's work was to understand the context within which the pumps operate, and to prepare recommendations that ensure the system is both "reliable and equitable" for homeowners, Scott said.

He explained the St. Davids sewer system has two owners — the Town, and the homeowners with grinder pumps — and if the recommendations are approved by council, that won't change, he said.

The grinder pumps are supposed to last about 10 to 15 years, but for reasons not always clear, many have not, possibly because pumps were defective, or in some cases, due to problems with their installation.

Some homeowners still have their original pumps, which are likely to need replacing soon, others have replaced them several times. One resident said when her pump was found to be defective, E/One, the manufacturer, replaced it at no cost, but others have been on the hook for about \$2,700, in some cases because faulty installation was blamed.

One resident suggested a survey should be taken

of all homeowners with pumps, to determine what has occurred since the sewer system was installed, and provide the Town with a database to build on — a suggestion committee members accepted as being a good next step.

Also looking to the future, Scott said, the committee will recommend the

Town establish "a rigorous inspection and sign-off protocol for the developer and Town inspector."

If accepted by council, recommendations could take effect beginning Jan. 1.

The process going forward, Scott said, is for the recommendations to be presented to councillors

Oct. 7. A staff report will likely be requested, and a decision could come from council on Nov. 11.

For more information about Thursday's presentation, or to comment, visit www.jointheconversation-notl.org/grinderpumps.

Comments will be accepted until Thursday, Oct. 3.

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Fedorkow promises to be ambassador for Niagara wines

Continued from page 1

yards are, the better the wine is. If age is any indication, then this Grape King will be a great ambassador.”

The Grape King is chosen based on vineyard management and knowledge of the industry, and serves as a representative for Ontario’s grape and wine industry at events across the country.

Fedorkow’s duties started with the Mayor’s Grape Stomp last Saturday in Montebello Park, and include the 68th annual Grande Parade Saturday, Sept. 28, as part of the annual Niagara Grape and Wine Festival.

Fedorkow is a member of the Grape Growers of Ontario’s Growers’ Committee, and of the Town’s Agricultural Sub-Committee.

He has been “a valued member of several agricultural associations throughout his career. With his experience and his knowledge of all aspects of grape growing, John will be an asset as Ontario’s next grape and wine industry representative,” said Debbie Zimmerman, CEO of the grape growers’ association.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero

also spoke, thanking Zimmerman and Oppenlaender for all they do for grape growers, the town and the region, and for their lobbying efforts on behalf of the industry.

She first met Fedorkow when he was a member of the Town’s agricultural committee, she told the crowd. “He kind of scared me. He seemed like the strong, silent type.”

But she soon discovered, “in no way is he silent” in his efforts on behalf of the grape growers and the community, she said.

Fedorkow was born and raised on a mixed tender fruit farm in St. Davids, and graduated from the University of Guelph in 1980 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

Although he left the area for four years, he returned and purchased Fruithaven Farms in 1984, not far from where he grew up.

It was an old farm, planted with old varieties of grapes, he said.

“I couldn’t pull them out fast enough. I said I would never grow grapes.”

He replaced them with tender fruit and berries, including strawberries, raspberries, cling peaches, pears and plums, and opened a pick-

your-own operation.

Thirty years later, he told the crowd gathered to celebrate with him, “I’m the guy planting more and more grapes.”

He began planting wine grapes in 1999, and carried out a major expansion to the vineyards in 2008, after the St. Davids canning factory closed.

“This grape and wine industry, I’m finding it fascinating, and I’m learning a lot.”

He said he is already an ambassador for the industry, as the “pain” who gives restaurant employees a hard time if they don’t offer Niagara wines.

He admits to feeling his age, and has Oppenlaender of Huebel Grapes Estates manage his vineyards. He promised to be an ambassador for the industry, and asked everyone gathered on his farm to also “spread the word” about Niagara wines.

Being named this year’s Grape King “is a great honour,” he said, thanking the Grape Growers of Ontario, Zimmerman and Oppenlaender for their support.

He also thanked his family. “Grape growers like me can’t do amazing things with-



Camille, Debbie, John and Michael Fedorkow with Nicole McCaughey in the vineyard at Fruithaven Farms. (Photos by Denis Cahill)

out a great wife, and I have a great wife.”

He introduced their son Michael, a police officer with the Niagara Regional Police, their daughter Camille, a registered nurse in the Hamilton General critical care unit, and then, taking a breath to compose himself, he spoke of their son Alex, who died 12 years ago this spring at the age of 14.

“Spring is always a tough time for Debbie and I,” he said. But Alex is “right here behind me,” he added, offering words of encouragement to him in this new venture as Grape King.

“He is always with us, Alex.”

Fedorkow currently grows 75 acres of vinifera grapes for Peller Estates and Creekside

Estate Winery, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Syrah, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris and Semillon.

He also thanked the men who come to Niagara for the summer to work hard on the farm, and who were also part of the celebration.

“We couldn’t do this without them,” he said.



Matthias Oppenlaender, Grape Growers of Ontario board chair; Bill Schenck, GGO vice-chair; 2019 Grape King John Fedorkow; and 2018 Grape King Chris Van de Laar wait for Debbie Zimmerman, CEO of the GGO, to straighten the Grape King chains.



Grape King John Fedorkow poses with Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Joe Pillitteri at the Celebrity Luncheon in St. Catharines, held before the ceremony at Fedorkow’s Fruithaven Farms.



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dents, mother-daughter duo Christine Mori and Alexis Spieldenner, Bravo Niagara! is a not-for-profit, registered charity dedicated to producing extraordinary concert experiences featuring the world's leading Canadian and international artists, as well as the stars of tomorrow, in the Niagara Region.

This season opens Oct. 19 with Canadian superstar so-

prano Measha Brueggengosman in recital. Noted by the San Francisco Chronicle as "a singer of rare gifts and artistic intensity," Brueggengosman has emerged as one of the most magnificent performers and vibrant personalities of the day. She has given solo recitals at London's Wigmore Hall, Roy Thomson Hall, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and beyond.

Bravo Niagara's annual Voices of Freedom Festival returns Nov. 7 to 9 with musical performances, film screenings, workshops, and engaging discussions to highlight the ongoing journey to freedom.

The Voices of Freedom Concert on Nov. 8 features an all-star lineup, including headliner Monty Alexander, one of jazz music's most diverse and globally recognized piano titans. This marks Alexander's first appearance in the Niagara region. With his Harlem-Kingston Express, he blends the sounds of his native Kingston, Jamaica with the classic tradition of New York's Harlem.

The Nov. 8 concert opens with Grammy-winning Canadian drummer Larnell Lewis (Snarky Puppy) and his band, with special guest Bakithi Kumalo, legendary



MILOŠ, "Classical music's guitar hero" (BBC Magazine), returns March 15.

South African bass player with Paul Simon.

On Nov. 30, Canadian treasure Ofra Harnoy makes a rare appearance in NOTL, following the release of her much anticipated comeback album Back to Bach. Described by the New York Times as "born to the instrument," Harnoy has established herself as one of the great cellists on the world's concert stage. She is one of Canada's most celebrated personalities, and is a Member of the Order of Canada.

Harnoy has recorded more

than 40 albums, winning numerous awards and distinctions, including five Juno Awards and the Grand Prix du Disque.

The season continues in 2020 with legendary jazz vocalist Kurt Elling, declared "the standout male vocalist of our time" by the New York Times, in concert Feb. 14.

Highlights of the annual Spring into Music Series, March to May 2020, include the return of superstar classical guitarist Miloš Karadaglić on March 15, the Brubeck Brothers Quartet's

Dave Brubeck Centennial Celebration April 5, From Broadway, With Love May 2, and classical virtuosos Cho-Liang Lin and Jon Kimura Parker May 3.

Tickets and Flex Packs are on sale now.

Concerts take place at St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake and the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines.

Visit www.bravoniagara.org or call 289-868-9177 for tickets and more information.

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Canadian treasure Ofra Harnoy performs November 30.



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Harlem-Kingston
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Larnell Lewis Band
NOV 8

Ofra Harnoy
NOV 30

Kurt Elling
FEB 14

MILOŠ
MAR 15

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EDITORIAL

Consider yourself fortunate if you don't have a grinder pump

There are more than about 7,500 homes in Niagara-on-the-Lake hooked up to sewer systems, and less than 200 that require grinder pumps.

So it wouldn't be surprising if some of The Local's readers wonder why we are devoting so much of this week's editorial space to the issue of grinder pumps.

It's because these pumps have been a costly, unwelcome burden to homeowners since the day they were installed, and in the coming weeks, town staff and councillors will consider making some changes that will affect all homeowners. So I hope you will read through to the end, and maybe have a better understanding of why this is an important issue to all.

For those of you who are new in town, or who weren't particularly interested during ongoing discussions about a sewer system for St. Davids about 15 years or more ago, a little background: it was a heated, difficult issue from the beginning. Some village residents with small properties had aging septic systems that were failing. Raw sewage was ponding on their properties. It was not a healthy situation, and sewers seemed the only solution.

Homeowners on larger properties with septic systems that served them well were not happy about paying to hook up to a sewer system they didn't need, or the ongoing wastewater costs it would bring.

I'm going from memory

here, but I believe the cost of connection to each individual homeowner depended on the distance from their plumbing to the street, and I recall \$2,000 being the average dollar figure most used. If there are residents or former town staff with different information, please let me know.

Also a strong current running through the many sewer discussions of the day, both at council and public meetings held in the St. Davids Lions Hall, was the issue of development. A sewer system would open up property within the urban boundary of St. Davids for residential growth, and not all were in favour of the changes they knew would come to the village of what was then about 250 homes.

Cannery Park, which added another 235 homes, and the many new subdivisions that have been built over the last decade, wouldn't exist today if it weren't for the council of the day approving a sewer system.

But back to grinder pumps. After the meetings and often acrimonious debates about sewers and the various kinds of systems available at the time, a choice was made for one that was less costly than traditional systems, but would require grinder pumps for some homes. Those who would need them had no choice. Many spoke out against the Town staff recommendations — they were being told they would become

part of the sewer system, with pumps and containers on their property they didn't want. At that time, hydro service was not nearly as reliable as it is today, and outages were common. But residents with grinder pumps still have to be concerned — we can all imagine what happens when the pump that has to move raw sewage uphill from their basement stops working, whether it's because of a power failure or a pump failure.

I remember going for a walk one sunny, warm day in St. Davids, the day the grinder pumps were being delivered.

As I walked along Queenston and Tanbark Roads, I stopped to talk to some villagers who had gathered in driveways to discuss with their neighbours what had been dropped off, downloaded, really. These unhappy homeowners, with absolutely no say in the matter, were about to become part of the new sewer system, with these huge, shiny tanks.

The tanks, which contain the grinder pumps and also act as storage before their content is pumped uphill, were to be buried on these residents' properties, or for some, installed inside, in their basements. The tanks were a foot or two taller than the men who were examining them, and large enough in circumference that they might just have been able to wrap their arms around them.

I think many were surprised, and a little overwhelmed, by what they were being forced to take on.

In the intervening years, some homeowners have suffered great inconvenience and expense from the failure of these pumps.

Some believe the pumps chosen by the Town were not up to the task required of them, others blame shoddy installation with no oversight or inspection on the part of the Town to protect them. They have repeatedly asked

for assistance. But the issue has always come down to an unwillingness to spread the cost amongst all homeowners to benefit a few. Is that reasonable and equitable, or is it political expediency?

Not every resident chooses to use a public library, community centre, swimming pool, park, and arena, but all are expected to pay their share, and most do so willingly, understanding the benefits to the quality of life in their town.

St. Davids residents had no choice in the matter of grinder pumps, but all residents enjoy an improved quality of life when their sewer system is working.

Council will be asked in coming weeks to consider adding an extra wastewater charge of about \$10 a year to every homeowner's bill, to fund the Town taking over some of the costs of grinder pumps. This will ensure a working sewer system in St.

Davids for all residents.

It doesn't seem like a lot to ask from those who, if they were in the same situation, would likely want and expect the Town to take responsibility for the sewer system, all of it, even if it includes grinder pumps for it to operate.

Consider \$10 the cost of being a good neighbour. And remember, there but for the grace of God...

Penny Coles
The Local

LOCAL FINDS

Home Children recognized
Donald Combe
Special to The Local



On Sept. 28, we commemorate the sesquicentennial of the British Home Children. From the late 1860s to 1948, more than 100,000 children of all ages emigrated to Canada from the United Kingdom, seeking employment as farm workers and domestics. These children were sent to Canada by more than 50 organizations, including the well-known Barnardo's; The Salvation Army; and Our Western Home, in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Our Western Home opened as an orphanage, in the converted courthouse/goal on Queen Street in 1869. An English woman, Maria Rye, brought some 4,000 poor and orphaned English street children here, hoping to offer them better lives. The children stayed in Niagara before being sent to work on farms and private homes throughout Ontario. Rye was frequently absent from Niagara as she was travelling to escort more children from the slums of England to Niagara. The day-to-day operation of the home was the responsibility of Emily Bayley. The home closed its doors in 1913, but Bayley remained here until her death in 1922.

The monument in St. Mark's cemetery memorializes nine of these young children, as well as Emily Bayley.

For more information see the web page: www.britishhomechildren.com.

Sacred To The Memory of the children of Our Western Home Niagara Waiting for the adoption with the redemption of the body Rom. VIII XXIII	Ada FERRIS Died June 16, 1888 Aged 15 years	Edith HUTCHINS Died June 28, 1873 Aged 17 years
Mary DAVIS Died Oct.12 1884 Aged 16 years	SIDE Herbert RADLEY Died Feb. 13, 1870 Aged 2 Years	Elizabeth LUCAS Died Dec 21 1874 Aged 16 years
Ethel CAREY Died June 6, 1888 Age 11 years	Elizabeth SCHOFIELD Died Feb. 2, 1871 Aged 21 years	Sarah WARD Died April 8 Aged 12 years
	Caroline NEWBOLD Died Aug 13, 1873 Aged 14 years	SIDE Emily BAYLEY Died Dec. 14 1922 Aged 75 years

Correction

In last week's edition of The Local, I incorrectly identified Brenda Sharp as Brenda Clark. I apologize for the error and any inconvenience it may have caused, and thank you, Brenda, for sharing your story and for being such a good sport about the error. — Penny Coles

NEED HELP? MAKE THE CALL

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The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL

The trusted voice of our community

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The NOTL Local acknowledges the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous peoples.

Fall is a perfect time to discover the outdoors



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

I suppose I'm lucky in that my favourite hobby is one of the most inexpensive going.

Living life in the great outdoors is cheap, although like any hobby in life, there is a spectrum of intensity involved. How much time and energy do you commit daily, weekly, or yearly to your most precious activities? Usually, there is a relationship where more time invested in your hobby equates more money spent on it.

If you're into video games, it's unlikely you have just one game. If touching up your vehicle to make it sing and hum is your thing, then you know the costs that go with it. All of these costs are acceptable with a smile though, because it's your favourite hobby.

The beauty of being an outdoor enthusiast is that the overhead cost is next to nothing. Expensive equipment and clothes are helpful for bigger expeditions, or just for their longevity. On a day-to-day ba-

sis however, all that is required is a trailhead and an expanse of public land to have an amazing time. That costs nothing except taxes, I suppose.

As summer slips away (who are we kidding — summer flew by at an impossible speed, again), we enter the beautiful slumber of fall. We find ourselves conversing around this time of year, exclaiming how we're going to miss summer so much, until next year.

Then there is a transition where most people hop onto the same page, and we embrace fall for its outside time. The bugs begin to retreat, there is less humidity in the air, and gorgeous colours enter the scene.

The Bruce Trail and all of its associated side trails in Niagara-on-the-Lake are free. They are publicly accessible at any time of the year, and you can hit up this trail on foot, mountain bike, or with the dog, letting the scenery do the work for you.

There are great sections for families to visit, where kids will have plenty to explore with their eyes and their hands. Nature becomes their teacher in an instant, and just kind of

guides their curiosity along.

Times spent along the Bruce Trail and other natural spots in NOTL have shown me great returns in regard to epic life stories. Some of the most profound and memorable experiences of my childhood and recent years have happened outdoors. By myself, with family, my friends, or the dog by my side.

Close calls and scary wipe-outs, teenage-boy life chats at The Caves on the escarpment (thankfully those caves don't echo forever), walks with my parents after coming home from school... the list goes on. All of these rich memories, experiences, and bonding moments were forged in nature and cost next to nothing.

Even just being outside with the people you enjoy sparks conversations and good feelings. This is why NOTL is full of local and visiting walkers. Day and night, there are always people strolling through our town. That in itself costs nothing at all, and is a valuable experience.

At the extreme end of enjoying the outdoors cheaply, I have a lot of strategies that get me by. Some you will find quirky.

Sometimes, I'll van-camp, which involves removing the

back seats out of a minivan, laying some patio cushions and blankets, and calling it an overnight stay.

I've driven to destination hikes and crashed in it, and I've even lived out of one with cameraman Dave Tebbutt for two weeks while filming a documentary in Florida. We likely saved \$1,000, and we filled up the bank with endless outrageous stories of trying to survive in a van in Florida's wetlands and rougher neighbourhoods.

Be ready for adventure. Keep your bike in the back of your truck or van. Keep that extra pair of running or hiking shoes on standby in your vehicle. Have a separate little backpack specifically for outings with kids, or by yourself,



Owen Bjorgan is about to doze off in the van-camp setup. The canoe is tied to the roof, and the bed is on wheels, with food and comfort inside. The cost of the experience, other than gas? Just about free, like most times spent outdoors, says Bjorgan. (Photo supplied)

that is already prepacked with the essentials.

At the end of a long day, if there's that one extra thing to do, then the idea of an adventure becomes less appealing.

So be prepared to make that improvised decision to go when you feel like it, soak up fall as it sets in, and maybe discover (or re-discover) a hobby that is essentially free.



Auchterlonie on Astrology

Bill Auchterlonie
Special to The Local

Today we start a new lunar month which begins on Saturday at 2:24 in the afternoon, with the New Moon in Libra.

Thursday, Sept. 26: the Moon moves into the sign of Virgo for a few days. It was on Sept. 26, 1580 that Sir Francis Drake became the first human to sail around the world. And tennis icon Serena Williams celebrates birthday number 38 on Sept. 26. It's busy from sunrise to sunset but the more significant astro event today is Mercury at Square angle to Pluto in the evening. It looks like a day of rising tensions where ideas and willpower are in a showdown. Honesty will make things better.

Friday, Sept. 27: Avril Lavigne turns 35. And The Tonight Show began its long run on NBC on Sept. 27, 1954. The Moon continues a busy run through Virgo while Venus and Neptune are in a stressful connection that may result in a dream coming true for some.

Saturday, Sept. 28: The Moon moves into Libra at 6:02 a.m. and the New Moon in Libra is at 2:24 p.m. It's the start of a new lunar month, a time for new beginnings — especially for Librans — or for everyone,

depending on where Libra is in your chart. It was Sept. 28, 1066, that William the Conqueror invaded England, and on this date in 1987, Hilary Duff was born. A surprise late Saturday or early Sunday could be costly or bring more wealth.

Sunday, Sept. 29: the Moon in Libra is making eight contacts from early morning to late at night. The most powerful ones are conjunctions with Venus and Mercury in the evening. Beautiful and peaceful feelings and ideas and activities are just what Sunday is made for. The London Police Department, first in the world, began on Sept. 29, 1829. And goodness, gracious, great balls of fire: Jerry Lee Lewis was born on this day in 1935.

Monday, Sept. 30: Early Monday morning, the Moon moves into Scorpio and sets up an emotional day where not a lot is going on. Babe Ruth hit his 60th home run on this date in 1927. Tennis star Martina Hingis is 39.

Tuesday, Oct. 1: As October gets underway, the Moon continues in Scorpio, but with a lot more going on and with Venus making a Square aspect to Pluto, suggesting a problem with a relationship or with something else of value. A problem solved by reinventing it. Today Jim-

my Carter celebrates birthday number 95. Walt Disney World in Orlando opened its doors on this day in 1971.

Wednesday, Oct. 2: Is all about the Moon, with a move into Sagittarius just before 8 a.m., and with six connections throughout the day. The best is a connection with Venus in the evening. A bit of tension holds a lot of promise. The great comic strip Peanuts, by Charles Schultz, starring Charlie Brown and Lucy and Snoopy, was first published on Oct. 2, 1950. And Kelly Ripa was born this day in 1970.

The Podcast version of Auchterlonie on Astrology contains more information than the version which appears here in The Local. For the past few weeks I have been sharing my story of why I became interested in astrology. Starting this week, I will devote four weeks to explaining the uncanny astronomical parallels between 1776 and 2008, the American Revolution, the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the rise of Donald Trump.

So, please check out my podcast on Facebook at Auchterlonie on Astrology or visit my website Looking up with Bill at <https://www.lookingupwithbill.com/>.

Until next Thursday, remember to shine on.

LETTERS

Thanks for Terry Fox Run support

Terry Fox turned misfortune into a journey that brought us all together Sunday, Sept. 15 at Simcoe Park, to celebrate and honour our Canadian hero and continue his dream of one day finding a cure for cancer.

The community of Niagara-on-the-Lake showed tremendous generosity and support for this worthwhile fundraiser.

Thanks to each and every person who participated in the run. While pledges are still being processed, we should raise more than \$100,000 this year for Terry Fox-funded research.

We are so grateful to all the students from local schools who did their part collecting donations on the Saturday before the run, and to the Me to We group from Crossroads who cheered on participants on run day.

Many people came together

to take registrations, marshal along the route, hand out certificates and ribbons and sell shirts. So thankful to all the volunteers.

There are companies who support the run without expecting any recognition, including Tim Hortons, Walker's Country Market, Phil's valu-mart, Hendriks valu-mart, Sandtrap Pub and Grill, Cows Ice Cream, the Sunset Grill and Stagecoach Restaurant.

Grape Escape Bike & Wine tours and Queenston, St. David's Golf Courses have helped to keep the Marathon of Hope alive in NOTL.

Huge thanks also to the Lewiston-Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club, who provided a barbecue following the run, donating all proceeds to the foundation. The NOTL Kinsmen chose to have a bike and wine

tour to pay tribute to our Canadian hero, and collected funds to support cancer research.

The event was both emotional and inspiring, as we listened to the heartwarming words of cancer survivor Sharon Burns. We were led by Juliet Dunn singing the national anthem after Joe Pilitteri of Team Pillsy announced he would achieve his goal of raising \$100,000. He is the epitome of inspiration.

Special thanks to Penny Coles and The Local's meaningful coverage of all the events leading up to the run.

And thanks to Lord Mayor Betty Disero, who brought greetings from the town.

Thank you to everyone for being a part of Terry's dream this year. See you on Sunday, Sept. 20, 2020!

Joan King



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The Niagara-on-the-Lake

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Newark Neighbours volunteers Pat Hicks, Nicole Patterson, Laura Gibson and Karen McLeod give Steffanie Bjorgan (centre) of Red Roof Retreat a \$10,000 donation to offset costs of day programs and respite care. (Penny Coles)

Newark donates \$10,000 to Red Roof Retreat

Penny Coles
The Local

Newark Neighbours has been helping the needy in Niagara-on-the-Lake for more than 30 years. But the registered charity doesn't stop at assistance for those who require help

from the local food bank. For the past four years, it has been making a donation to Red Roof Retreat from the Thrift Shop sales during the month of July. The money helps to offset costs for the programs and respite care Red Roof offers children and young adults with special needs. When four Newark Neighbours volunteers, cheque in hand, arrived at The Ranch Thursday, one of three facilities operated by Red Roof, director Steffanie Bjorgan was astounded. It's not the first time Newark volunteers have dropped off

a cheque, but this one was for \$10,000, an amount far greater than Bjorgan was expecting. In addition to its food bank, Newark operates a thrift shop, which has evolved over the years to become a desirable place to shop. It offers gently-used clothing, sometimes even designer clothes, and attracts women from across the region and even from the U.S. who come to shop, expecting to find good bargains, says president Laura Gibson. It also keeps a good stock of work clothes and house-

hold items for the migrant farm workers, who also frequent the thrift shop. They turn up in numbers in the spring, especially when it opens on Sundays, to purchase what they need for the season, and at this time of

Continued on page 9

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Sunday shopping ends Oct. 6

Suzanne Vaillant
Special to The Local

As summer comes to an end, we would like to send a big thank you to those who donated items and shopped at our Thrift Store. Thanks go out as well to Chautauqua Residents Association, The Village Supper Market and Ann Loken for their donations and Twin Power Financial of St. Davids for inviting us to set up a booth at their open house where we received food and clothing donations from local residents. We couldn't do it without you. Many thanks to everyone. For those who have been asking if you can make a food donation for our Thanksgiving Dinner Program, we could use apple and cranberry juice, chicken and turkey gravy, stuffing and tinned cranberries. We appreciate your wanting to assist. Our Thrift Shop sales continue to increase, and this month we had the pleasure of donating \$10,000 to Red Roof Retreat. We are thrilled to be able to help such a worthwhile charity in our community. Just a reminder to all of our food clients, registration to receive a Thanksgiving dinner is closing Sept. 27. Please call 905-468-3519 to register. Please note that Newark Neighbours will be closed Thursday, Oct 10 and reopening on Tuesday Oct. 15 in order to put together and distribute the Thanksgiving food baskets to our clients, and giving time to our volunteers to spend the holiday with their families. Our last Sunday for shopping will be Oct 6, then we return to our regular hours of Monday to Friday 9:30 a.m. to 2:00

p.m. Our Thrift Shop is located at 310 John Street (behind Riverbend Inn). For more information, please visit our website. www.newarkneighbours.ca. We appreciate and value the generosity of our community for your donations which allows us to continue our mission of "Serving our Community with Compassion, Care and Concern." Making this mission a reality would not be possible without all of our volunteers whose time and effort we greatly appreciate.



LETTERS

Thanks for story of Bob Howse Trail

Just wanted to let you know that it touched my heart to read about the beginnings of the trail and the part Bob (Howse) played to get it started. Every time I see people on the path it makes me happy to see it being used. It is also nice to see that the youth of Niagara United Mennonite Church came up with the idea of having picnic tables for people to use as a break in front of their church.

Nancy Howse-King

Need for food bank surprises some residents

Continued from page 8

year they are stocking up on items to take home to their families.

"They're shopping like mad to take stuff home. They are really excited to be able to take nice things home for their wives," says volunteer Pat Hicks.

Sundays are the best days for retail sales, which is interesting, says Gibson.

NOTL residents generously donate items for the thrift shop, which helps farm workers purchase what they need for the season at affordable prices, and some of the money they spend goes back to the community, in part through the annual donation to Red Roof.

"Our migrant workers are part of the cycle of what Newark Neighbours does," she says. "Their Sundays at the barn are really a social time for them as well, when they see and visit with their fellow workers.

The first Sunday we open in the spring is like old home week."

Farm workers do not get assistance from the food bank — that is only available to residents in NOTL who qualify by providing the required documentation, Gibson says.

Newark will also help residents who find themselves in an emergency situation, until they can provide the documents they need to show they meet standard guidelines.

The money made in the thrift shop generally pays bills and offsets costs of the operation, which receives no government funding, but in recent years, Newark has donated all sales from the month of July to Red Roof.

It began with a modest amount, but as the shop has been tidied and re-arranged, new carpet added to smarten it up, and word has travelled about the improvements, sales have increased, says Gibson.

This year's \$10,000 cheque was a reflection of that, up from last year's donation of \$7,000.

"We're thrilled to be able to help Red Roof continue the excellent work they do in the community," says Gibson.

“

We're thrilled to be able to help Red Roof continue the excellent work they do in the community.

”

Laura Gibson

Every year, with new members on the board, along with experienced volunteers, there are new ideas, and extra effort made to improve the appearance and service of the store. "Customers say how nice it's

looking these days. Every week we try to make it neater and improve it, and we're getting great feedback."

Volunteers work extra hard getting clothing donations out for sale during the month of July, and encourage customers to shop for

What they aren't able to sell, they donate to other organizations, she says.

Bjorgan agrees that this is a great community of volunteers and organizations supporting each other.

"We're all doing what we can to help each other, and it makes us all stronger," she says, offering to help Newark volunteers with grant applications. The food bank is hoping for further renovations to the barn they use just off John Street, tucked away behind Riverbend Inn and Vineyard.

Although Newark has been serving the community for more than three decades, there are still residents who don't know what it does or how it operates, says Gibson.

While the retail store is open to everyone to shop, the food bank serves about 30 people registered to receive help, who are able to pick up food every two weeks.

"There are still residents who are surprised to learn there are people in need in

town," she says.

Although in the early days they were mostly farm families who settled in NOTL, often with large families, now they are seniors, singles and couples, individuals and young families who are struggling to make ends meet. People don't always recognize the need in town, she says, "because they're not as visible in this community."

To help them, Newark has teams of volunteers who come in on different days.

"It works really, really well. We all have fun. It's become a social event for those who volunteer, and they get to know the regular clients," says Gibson.

Newark also helps provide special occasion meals for Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving.

Next up is the Oct. 13 holiday. Those who are qualified to receive a meal should register by Sept. 27 by calling 905-468-3519, or drop by the John Street barn.



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Discover the history of heritage railway trail

Penny Coles
The Local

Rick Meloen is hoping his enthusiasm for the preservation of the Upper Canada Heritage Trail is contagious.

When the former Town roads supervisor retired in 2009, he developed an intense interest in the history of his hometown.

Since then, he has popped up in many roles. He has a small farm on Hunter Road, yet still finds time to give back to the community in many ways. He was very active in plans to commemorate the War of 1812. He's well-known as an organizer of the Niagara Parkway's tiny chapel Easter sunrise service. He was instrumental in planning the Town's Canada 150 celebrations, and he continues to volunteer with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Historical Society & Museum and the Friends of Fort George.

His focus these days came about as part of a legacy project of the 150th commemoration events — the preservation and restoration of the heritage trail.

As chair of the committee overseeing that work, he plans to lead two three-kilometre tours along a portion

of the trail, taking the opportunity to talk about its history and the effects to restore and preserve it.

The trail follows an old railway line, and it's the history of the railroad and its impact on the town Meloen wants to talk about.

"It's interesting to note where the train used to go, and to have the vision of what this trail used to look like. It was very different from what it looks like now," he says.

The Upper Canada Heritage Trail was established in 1854 as part of the first steam-powered Erie & Ontario Railway linking Niagara-on-the-Lake with Niagara Falls, and the Great Western Railway.

The railroad brought life to the town following the War of 1812, and attracted tourism and commerce.

Rail operations ceased in the mid-1950s, but the trail continues to provide a connection from the southern Niagara Escarpment to the Niagara Commons.

Tours take place Oct. 3 and 4, beginning at 5 p.m. at the entrance to the trail at the corner of John Street and King Street.

The tour will follow 1.5

kilometres of the trail, crossing Charlotte Street to East and West Line, and then heading back for a three-kilometre walk in total, says Meloen.

Organized in conjunction with the museum, the tours are "an extension of the neighbourhood walks," he says.

On a warm afternoon last week, Meloen walked part of the trail to point out some of the restoration work he hopes to see. The combination of dirt and grass makes for a good walk when it's dry, but not after a heavy rain.

"You can imagine what it looks like during the spring, or in inclement weather," he says.

The plan is for a crushed stone surface, that will retain a natural look while providing a good walking path in all seasons, although it won't be plowed in the winter, says Meloen. "We want it to be accessible most of the year."

There are many regulars who enjoy the trail, but the goal of the tours is to encourage people who have never used it to give it a try, he said.

"We hope it will be a great experience for people to learn about the history of the railway, while enjoying the trail," says Meloen.

He will also share some of the challenges of the restoration, which include an archaeological study required for the first phase, from John Street to East and West Line, and bringing heavy equipment onto the pathway while keeping it open for walking while it's under construction, says Meloen.

Phase two is from East and West Line to Line 3, phase three from there to Line 9, and from there, the most challenging section is from Line 9 to York Road.

There is also the task of making people aware that when the path borders private agricultural land, they are not to trespass or help themselves to fruit, he says. Food safety and security are a concern to the agricultural community, and the trail committee is working with farmers to ensure their property is protected.

Proceeds from the tours will go toward the restoration of the trail, to make it safer and more accessible, he says.

Parking is available at the Parks Canada lot on John Street.

Tickets are \$10 per person and participants are encouraged to wear running

shoes, bring a water bottle and dress accordingly. Reservations are required by calling the museum at 905-468-3912.

For more information on the Upper Canada Heritage Trail and the committee's efforts, visit <https://www.heritagetrail.ca/>.



Cynthia Leavitt and Barb Whittard walked on the Upper Canada Heritage Trail last week for the first time in years, they said, but they plan to do it again. Leavitt said it's changed since she used to play on it as a kid.



Pam Nowina took a break from walking the Upper Canada Heritage Trail from Charlotte Street to East and West Line for a while, saying she's sorry to see the loss of many trees on the other side of the stone wall. But with a new puppy to train, she is beginning to take short walks along the trail behind the Randwood Estate.



Rick Meloen says there isn't as much room to plant a garden at the Charlotte Street entrance as has been planted on John Street, but the area has been spruced up and has new signs. (Photos by Penny Coles)



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Cemetery tours a fun way to learn local history

Kim Wade
Special to The Local

As night falls, spirits come alive.

Well, at least their stories do, through some in-depth research, dedicated actors and a bit of artistic licence.

The Niagara Historical Society & Museum and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church have teamed up to bring a few of the prominent residents of the church cemetery alive, through a unique and immersive theatrical experience.

The Theatrical Cemetery Tours have been running since 2012, beginning at St. Mark's Anglican Church, and now are in their second year at St. Andrew's, during the 225th anniversary of the historic church.

The tour begins inside the beautiful and impressive church. Ticket holders are invited to sit in the nave with its timeworn floor boards and white panel-walled straight benches and pew boxes, harkening back to the Elizabethan style of long-gone architects of

this remarkable church.

They are joined by a cast of characters who meander into the pews as if they were congregating to hear a Sunday morning sermon. Each is dressed in a costume representative of their character, time and station.

The first encounter with the otherworldly is a ukulele-playing mystery "spirit," who greets them with a familiar diddy and a chuckle. He is their minstrel and guide, as they follow him down the aisle and out of the church into the fading

light of a warm September evening.

The path to the cemetery is lined with lanterns perched on broken tombstones, shedding additional light for the uneasy stroller wary of stepping on a resident's grave.

The first destination is the gravesite of two of the most prominent members of St. Andrew's cemetery, Ann Vansickle and William Duff Miller, portrayed by actors Jane and Tom Catcher. The stage is set and the scene begins.

All of the vignettes on the tour offer an entertaining look into the lives of some of Niagara-on-the-Lake's former inhabitants. Participants get a glimpse into their family trees, their accomplishments, and their contribution to the community. Stories tell tales of immigrant struggle, military service, and entrepreneurial spirit. Some stories have the added intrigue of a murder trial and grave robbers.

Each scene was written and directed by Barbara Worthy, and is based on the

research provided by the museum and church. Pam Mundy, assisted by Elizabeth Senson, brings these characters to life visually through her costuming talents, while the mood and ambiance is enhanced through lighting provided by Lesley Stewart and Leanne Jones.

The tours are capped at 25 participants to ensure all are given ample space to see and hear as they gather around the gravestones for each scene.

So put on your walking shoes and take a stroll through St. Andrew's graveyard at twilight. You never know who you will meet and what you will learn. Just follow the fellow in the hat playing the ukulele and sing along.

The tours will be offered for two final dates, Friday, Sept. 27 and Saturday, Sept. 28 at 6 p.m., 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are \$12 and must be purchased in advance. Call 905-468-3912 to reserve your tickets.

Cast and Crew:

Tom Catcher:

William Duff Miller

Jane Catcher:

Ann Vansickle

(wife of Duff Miller)

Judy Thornton:

Katy Young

(wife of John Young)

Stephen Steele: Erland Field

Pam Mundy:

Mrs. Charles Camidge

Denise Ascenzo:

Rachel Rutherford

Rick Meloen:

John McFarland Sr. (son

of Old John McFarland)

Geoff Senson: Willie Blain

Lesley Stewart - Lighting

Leanne Jones - Lighting

Briar Collins - Photography



Tom Catcher, Jane Catcher, Geoff Senson, Judy Thornton, Pam Mundy, Rick Meloen, Denise Ascenzo and Stephen Steele perform in the theatrical cemetery tours offered at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. (Kim Wade)



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Kyle Verhulst loves his new position at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery, and his boss Paul Harber, although Harber tells Verhulst he is the boss. (Penny Coles)

Newcomer finds his niche at Ravine winery

Penny Coles
The Local

When Kyle Verhulst moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake last spring, he hoped to find meaningful volunteer work locally.

Today, he is proud to be considered a member of the team at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery, just a short walk from his home in St. Davids. When the 36-year-old moved to the village with

his parents, he left behind a life of routine, which included a volunteer job that shaped his days and gave him a feeling of purpose. He loves his new home in Cannery Park, with the view of the vineyards

across the street, and his own space downstairs, but initially he missed his old life.

His parents, Dianna and Adriaan, made the move from their hometown of Windsor for his welfare. Dianna spoke to The Local about her son, hoping to find something to replace the activities he left behind.

Kyle was born with Down syndrome, and although he is fairly independent and self-sufficient, his parents have to think about his future, when they're no longer around, said Dianna.

His sister Katherine Sykes, a pilot, has settled in NOTL with her husband, Jeff, of Sykes Landscaping. She will one day be Kyle's legal guardian, said Dianna, "and we wanted to be here, closer to her, to help her with her baby. It was important to us that Kyle get used to living here now, instead of it coming as a shock to him one day down the road, when we're no longer here to look after him."

In Windsor, Kyle began each day with a walk through his subdivision to an Extendicare long-term care residence. For 15 years, he started his duties at 9 a.m., delivering newspapers to the rooms of those who lived in the

home. His final job of the day was to clear off the tables after lunch. When that was finished, he'd head home. In between, he would visit with residents, and became friends not only with them but with their family members who came to visit, he said.

Now he has found another job he loves, and a similar routine, although with different tasks.

When Paul Harber of Ravine read about Kyle in The Local, he phoned to ask him to come to the winery to chat.

Harber learned quickly Kyle is a social fellow with a ready smile, and loves to joke around. But as much fun as he has kidding with the other employees, he takes his work very seriously, says Harber.

He starts at Ravine at 8:30 a.m. three or four days a week, and begins cleaning and setting up the outdoor patio tables and chairs.

He's thorough and earnest, said Harber, and adheres to the routine set out for him.

When the patio area is ready for the day, Kyle moves to the gardens, which he loves tidying, and then goes home around noon.

Although his mother assumed when she reached out to the com-

munity that she would have to drive Kyle to any job opportunity he found, Harber's offer allows Kyle to head off on foot in the morning, and walk home when he's finished.

"He is a great addition to the team at Ravine," said Harber.

"He's fun to work with, and also really dedicated to his job. He's a very hard worker. He keeps the patio and gardens looking great, and he's good at customer relations. He makes everyone smile."

Turning to Kyle, Harber said, "We love having you here."

"I work hard," said Kyle, who jokes about not having time to talk. "I'm a little busy right now."

Kyle also loves to eat, and enjoys the food at Ravine as a bonus, he says. He especially loves the wood oven pizza.

He is planning to bring his family to the winery at Christmas, he said. "I'm going to have a hamburger. I love the hamburgers."

Harber explains Kyle's popularity this way.

"A coat can be made up of different fabrics of many colours. The brighter the fabrics, the more beautiful the coat. Kyle is an important part of the fabric here. He adds to the spirit and makes it a better place."

Motorcycle club aims for awareness



Members of the Sikh Motorcycle Club of Ontario visited NOTL Sunday. The club is the advocate of turban-wearing Sikhs who wish to ride a motorcycle without a helmet in Ontario, and promotes Sikhism across Canada. (Fred Mercnik)

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Virgil grow op dismantled

Local Staff

The Niagara Regional Police have dismantled a marijuana grow op in Virgil, seizing more than 1,000 marijuana plants with an estimated street value of more than \$1 million.

In the past month, police have received complaints from the community about

a large marijuana operation in greenhouses at the corner of Concession 4 and Niagara Stone Road.

As a result of the complaints, police initiated an investigation and discovered it was an illegal operation.

Last Thursday, Sept. 19, police were granted a search warrant to enter the property, and a man was arrested as he

was tending to the marijuana plants.

Police then dismantled the grow op, seizing 1,031 marijuana plants.

The man who was arrested was later released from custody without being charged.

Police say the investigation is continuing and they may proceed with charges in the near future.

Giving back to community a firefighters' tradition

Penny Coles
The Local

It's a great spaghetti dinner, but it's also so much more.

When the Queenston Firefighters Association puts on the all-you-can-eat dinner, it's a fundraiser for the community, as well as a great social event that brings locals together for a meal, a good cause, and camaraderie amongst friends and neighbours, says Rob Copeland.

A retired firefighter now volunteering with the auxiliary, Copeland says the event carries on a firefighters' tradition, to give back to their community.

Although to most of us, having brave, dedicated men and women willing to risk their lives for the safety of others is more than enough, firefighters' associations are formed to do more.

"It's a tradition with fire-

fighters long before we were around," says Copeland. "Volunteer firefighters in every community across North America do their training, commit to the time, but at the same time help the community in different ways."

They raise funds to give back to the community whenever needed, he says. In the case of the Queenston association, over past years, fundraising turkey rolls were held, then as the popularity of those events dropped off, and volunteers were looking for an alternative, Copeland suggested a spaghetti dinner.

It turned out to be more successful than they anticipated as a fundraiser, but also as a community get-together, he said.

"We started in 1996. It began as an idea to raise money. People were starting to lose interest in the turkey rolls, and

we were raising money for minor sports, so we had to find another way. I came up with the spaghetti dinner."

His wife Helena does all the cooking at home, but he got into the spirit of spaghetti as part of a team of four volunteers who do the cooking, he says.

Louis Prue is in charge of the meatballs, sauce, and salad, and while the sauce is slowly simmering the day of the event, the others get started on the spaghetti.

"We like to have it ready by 4:30. It doesn't start until 5 p.m., but there are always people who come early. It all kind of works out in the end."

Proceeds from the fundraiser, held twice a year, used to be given to minor sports. Now it's expanded to include other needs in the community, and requests that come in for donations, says Copeland.



Lucas Devries, Ross Bateman, Frank Digweed, and Rob Copeland are the cooking staff for the Spaghetti Dinner at the Queenston Fire Station. Chef Louis Prue, who is in charge of the event, is not pictured, but as Copeland says, "we never see him anyway unless we are running slow on spaghetti production, and he comes out to 'crack the whip.'" (Photo supplied)

Over the years, the tradition has become to let the chairman of that year's committee choose a local cause for the donations.

One year it was to help the St. Davids Lions Club pay for a seeing-eye dog guide for a member's blind grandson.

In 2016, donations were sent to help out after the wildfires in Fort McMurray — that year, Canadians donated \$323 million, the largest ever response to a Canadian disaster.

In 2017, proceeds were given to the local squadron of air cadets to help pay for a trip to France to commemorate the centennial anniversary of Vimy Ridge.

This year's recipient has not been decided, Copeland says.

"Sometimes we donate to just one cause. Sometimes it's many causes, or we hang onto the funds to give out during the year, wherever the need is. We've helped pay for smart boards at St. Davids School, and for the new arena in Virgil. It can go wherever it's

needed."

He says Bain Printing has helped out for years by donating the printing of placemats, which are sponsored by local businesses, and Sweets & Swirls, the community centre cafe, provides treats which help distinguish the Queenston spaghetti dinner from other events.

Copeland says the firefighters' association has also received huge support from Queenston resident Graham Keene, the owner of the Canadian Tire franchise on Welland Avenue in St. Catharines.

For the last spaghetti dinner, Keene donated a Schwinn bicycle and a Magellan handheld portable GPS unit, which was won by MPP Wayne Gates.

Gates donated it back to the firefighters' association, and it will be raffled off at the coming event.

In addition, says Copeland, when he stopped by the Canadian Tire at Keene's request, to pick up donations for this event, "I felt like I was walking

around the store with Santa Claus, in Santa's workshop."

Keene got him a shopping cart, and as they walked through the store, kept throwing great prizes into the basket.

"He gave us seven major prizes. Any one of them would've been a great prize on its own. It was incredible."

That kind of generosity to boost the firefighters' community service makes them feel that what they are doing is appreciated, he said.

"It contributes to the feeling that you, as a volunteer firefighter, and a member of the community, want to give back in another way."

The Queenston Volunteer Firefighters Association is hosting this fall's all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner at the Queenston Firehall Friday, Oct. 4 from 5 to 7:30 p.m., with spaghetti, salad, and bread.

Dinner is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 years and under.

Takeout dinners will also be available.

Grape harvest underway



Emerit Cueto Nieto carries a full basket of pinot noir grapes, harvested at Chateau des Charmes Winery to be used for their sparkling wine. The harvest is just beginning, about three weeks behind schedule, because of the late spring, said Nieto, who comes from Mexico to work on Niagara farms. (Fred Mercnik)

Arrest in gun-related incident

Local Staff

Niagara Regional Police detectives from the Criminal Investigations Branch are investigating a gun-related incident that occurred Monday morning on the Niaga-

ra-on-the-Lake campus of Niagara College.

As a result of the ongoing investigation and a search warrant at a residence in Thorold, police arrested and charged an 18-year-old man with several gun-related offences, including

pointing a firearm, uttering threats, possession of a prohibited firearm with ammunition, unauthorized possession of a firearm, and failing to comply with a probation order.

The man was being held for a bail hearing later in the day.

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Local teen takes part in Walk a Mile in HER Shoes

The 16-year-old is holding a bottle drive to raise money for Gillian's Place

Penny Coles
The Local

When Logan Fieguth first walked a mile in his mother's size eight, shiny pink high-heeled shoes — they even had a pretty little bow on them — he was just 10 years old.

But he understood well the reason behind the annual Walk a Mile in HER Shoes fundraiser for Gillian's Place, the St. Catharines centre for women and children seeking shelter from abusive homes, and help so that they would not have to return to them.

done some volunteering at Gillian's Place, and she was helping out a friend who was part of the organizing team of the event. His father and older brother weren't home, and he couldn't stay home alone, so he went off to the Pen Centre with his mother the day of the walk.

He is now 16, and about to participate in the event for the seventh time, but he still remembers learning about Gillian's Place from the speeches before the walk started seven years ago, and the woman who spoke about having gone to Gillian's Place for a safe shelter.

ple he loves and who love him treating each other so badly they might have to leave.

In the ensuing years, he has continued to participate in the event, and has learned far more about the services offered at Gillian's Place.

Now in Grade 11 at Laura Secord Secondary School, he has been given the added opportunity to share what he has learned with others, and to help those who need it.

In an effort to spread understanding among young people, Gillian's Place asked him to be a youth ambassador. In that role, he attends events and speaks about the shelter, explaining there is help available if needed, and where to find it.

He hopes his involvement will encourage anyone who hears his message to reach out for help if they are being abused, he says.

As an ambassador, he is also expected to host a fundraiser, and has decided to hold a bottle collection.

He has waited until the local Air Cadets finished their annual collection, and is now asking for empty beer, wine and liquor bottles from busi-

nesses and residents. There are bins outside his 1881 Concession 4 home, where bottles can be dropped off until Oct. 5. That day, he will be at Phil's valu-mart in Virgil, behind the store, to collect bottles, and donating the proceeds to Gillian's Place as part of the Walk a Mile fundraiser.

Next Monday, Fieguth will be interviewed at 7:10 a.m.

on The Tim Denis NewsTalk show on 610 CKTB. He's looking forward to talking about the fundraiser, and his role as youth ambassador, he says.

When Fieguth dons his now size 12, shiny pink stilettos on Saturday, Oct. 19, at the Pen Centre, he does so, he says, because "it's the right thing to do."

He will be joining a host

of men on the walk, and encourages other young men to take part and stand up against violence against women.

Donations to Logan's Well Heeled Walkers can also be made online at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/gillians-place/p2p/walkamile2019/team/logans-well-heeled-walkers/captain/logan-fieguth/>.

“It's the right thing to do.”

Logan Fieguth

The event is a men's march to end violence against women, an annual event held at the Pen Centre in St. Catharines.

The fact that he was there, by choice walking with a bunch of men, was kind of coincidental, he says.

His mother Emily had

At 10 years old, he learned that not all children have a safe haven at home, and that people who are supposed to love their children might treat them badly.

It made him think about his own family, and he says he couldn't imagine the peo-



Logan Fieguth is looking for bottle donations, and support for his team, The Well Heeled Walkers, to help Gillian's Place. (Penny Coles)

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The T-shirt: from undergarment to souvenir

Kim Wade Special to The Local

How did the simple T-shirt progress from being hidden away under clothes, to becoming a walking billboard, advertising everything from political views, business logos, rock bands,

designer names and vacation spots?

Last Thursday that question was answered by Sonya Marie de Lazzer, in the final lecture of the Art and Fashions series at the Niagara Historical Society & Museum.

In Bring me back a t-shirt:

The History of the T-Shirt and its Role in Fashioning the Tourist Landscape, de Lazzer, programming and curatorial assistant at the RiverBrink Art Museum in Queenston, delivered an informative and entertaining lecture on the history of the most ubiquitous garment in

your closet: the T-shirt.

She highlights how the T-shirt transformed from being an undergarment previous to the 1920s, into becoming a promotional medium in 1948, when Thomas E. Dewey promoted himself as a presidential candidate on a T-shirt with the slogan “Dew it with Dewey.”

Shortly after in the 1950s, Marlon Brando and James Dean sported plain white T-shirts, officially connecting this garment to a rebellious persona.

By the 1970s, the T-shirt became a blank slate for messages because of advances in silk screen printing, which made it easy, fast and inexpensive to produce T-shirts that could be personalized.

De Lazzer is most interested in the role of the T-shirt as fashion for the tourist landscape.

As a souvenir, she explains how a T-shirt is easy to carry, practical and a “product of the industry of memories.” The T-shirt becomes “walking graffiti,” tied to the cultural and geographic significance of an area or vacation spot.

It becomes tangible proof of having visited a specific place, novelty items and impulse souvenirs that display a quality or trait of a

geographic place.

She points out how we tend not to share other types of souvenirs, such as photos or trinkets, but by wearing our souvenir T-shirt, we share our vacation with the outside world. She concludes that “the importance and influence of tourist T-shirts extend far beyond that of a mere souvenir or garment, in that they prolong the tourist experience in various shapes and forms.”

After the lecture, de Lazzer explained that when Amy Klassen, museum society administrator, asked her to prepare a lecture for the series, she was very glad to contribute.

As an art historian with a specialty in Niagara Falls’ visual culture and history, it was clear de Lazzer enjoyed the opportunity to connect her research with fashion.

This lecture provided her with a fresh way to look at our connection to the tourist landscape through purchasing and wearing a souvenir T-shirt, she said. She confessed that this is the “fun side of research,” as she has learned a lot more about the T-shirt.

Doing the lecture, she said, was a fun experience overall, adding it’s “great to be researching and living in Niagara.”

In addition to being the programming and curatorial assistant at RiverBrink, de Lazzer, holds a Master of Arts (Art History) from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and is currently completing her PhD in Art and Visual Culture from the University of Western Ontario.

She is also an adjunct instructor in the department of art history and museum studies at Niagara University in Lewiston, NY, as well as a registered yoga instructor.

Although de Lazzer’s lecture marks the end of the Art & Fashion Lecture Series, a new series will start up again in January 2020.

Tickets are \$10 for the general public while Niagara Historical Society members enjoy free admission.

In the meantime, the Head to Toe exhibit currently has on display original clothing from the late 18th to mid-20th century, including some beautiful specimens of vintage dresses, hats, corsets and accessories.

This exhibit will continue to run until Oct. 31.

Unfortunately, no T-shirts are on display but you can always wear your favourite kitschy souvenir T-shirt when you visit. De Lazzer would appreciate the gesture.



Sonya Marie de Lazzer, from RiverBrink Art Museum, talks about the history of the T-shirt at the last lecture of the fashion series at the Niagara Historical Society & Museum. There are no T-shirts on display at the museum — this season’s exhibit features vintage clothing. (Kim Wade)

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St. Michael Grade 6 students were thrilled to visit the Niagara District Airport the day of the Snowbirds air show. (Photos supplied)

St. Michael students meet Canadian Forces Snowbirds

Grades 4 and 6 students from St. Michael Catholic Elementary School were invited to the Niagara District Airport Sept. 11, for a meet and greet with the famous Canadian Snowbirds.

Students were given the chance to see the planes up close, as well as being able to speak to pilots and technicians from the Aerobatic Flight Team.

It was a beautiful, exciting day that was shared with other local schools and community groups.

Many thanks to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Historical Society & Museum for bringing this extraordinary event to our town! No doubt this was a once in a lifetime opportunity for many in attendance.



Gavin Contini and Evelyn Simonics have a good look at a Snowbirds plane the day of the air show.

Cops for Cancer stop to chat with students

Last Friday, Cops for Cancer concluded the last stretch of their 500-kilometre bicycle ride for pediatric cancer research with a stop at Niagara-on-the-Lake's very own St. Michael Catholic Elementary School.

The cyclists were welcomed with cheers and applause as they rode to the front of the school.

Students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 applauded the efforts of the wonderful and dedicated men and women, who spoke to the children about their journey and their motto of 0/50/60. The students quickly grasped the idea of 0 smoking, 50 per cent of vegetables on their plate and 60 minutes of exercise a day to live a healthy lifestyle.

Cops for Cancer achieved their goal to raise more than \$200,000 with their journey, and the staff and students of St. Michael Elementary School could not be more proud.

Congratulations Cops for Cancer!



St. Michael students spoke to the men and women riding in Cops for Cancer.



Cyclists riding with Cops for Cancer stopped at St. Michael as they neared the end of the ride.



Inspired by a trip to WE Day last Thursday, students from St. Michael kicked off their year of championing social justice in their school. The group was empowered by speakers on topics such as water and food sustainability, education in third world countries and environmental issues. Celebrities such as James Arthur, Sarah McLachlan and Emilio Estevez entertained the 20,000 students gathered at the Scotiabank Centre in Toronto. WE Day is an annual youth empowerment event that celebrates the impact students have made on local and global issues. From St. Michael were Sam van Egmond (left back), Matthew Li, Treesha Ray, Tannin Driedger-Bradshaw, Zoe Anger, Grade 8 teacher Julie Scaletta, Jasmine Griese, Seth van der Zalm, and (front) Cooper Ostromeck and Anessa Raso.

A

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Hurricane season makes farm workers uneasy

Jane Andres
Special to The Local

September offers a welcome change for those who have been dealing with peach fuzz, long work days, heat and humidity.

For our neighbours on the farms, this time of year also brings a heightened awareness and daily checking of the weather networks in Mexico and the Caribbean. Hurricane season lasts from June until November, but historically the most intense storms tend to be in August and September.

for almost 30 years. It was a solitary life for him at 'the top of the world,' when his wife passed away shortly after he retired. Hosting friends from Niagara to stay at his house was a special occasion. We sat at the kitchen table while William and John, who had also worked in Niagara for many years, reminisced about the time Hurricane Gilbert smashed into the island back in 1988.

"Man, that was rough, so tough! We knew it was supposed to hit later on that day we were coming home. It was a full flight of guys (from

in the sea.

Only a few cars were waiting outside the normally busy terminal. They didn't know how to get in touch with loved ones or even find a taxi as there was no phone service on the island. They would have no way of knowing if their families were safe until they actually made it home.

After finally securing a ride to share back to St. Catherine, they were unprepared for the devastation that awaited. As they slowly picked their way through the darkened streets of Kingston, the streets were devoid of any signs of human life, due to a strict curfew. With only the car headlights for illumination, they viewed the remains of buildings strewn about like matchsticks. Every street was blocked with debris and downed hydro lines, a maze of obstructions.

This was before the days of Western Union, and they were also carrying their earnings for the entire season with them. The fear of being robbed added to their mounting anxiety.

The ride home would normally take an hour and a half. It was almost four hours of winding through formerly familiar towns, now unrecognizable, before William found his way to where his wife and children had miraculously survived the harrowing ordeal. There was no sleep for the second night in a row, but it wasn't until daylight that the full extent of the damage was revealed.

When the wind smashes into your house at 280 kilometres per hour, it is a miracle if there is anything left standing. Others returning home were not so lucky.

With a 60-kilometre wide eye of the storm, the hurricane's impact devastated the entire island. Eighty percent of

the homes on the island were destroyed, and 500,000 people were homeless. Their farms were wiped out. There would be no crops that year.

More than 200 people lost their lives, and countless more injured.

Last Sunday I was visiting some of our neighbours at Thwaites farm before they transferred to pick apples in Cobourg. Denzel Reid hails from St. Elizabeth, the "bread basket" of Jamaica, on the south-west coast. He was on the same flight as William back in 1988, and remembers well the feeling of arriving back to utter destruction. St. Elizabeth rarely feels the wrath of a direct hit, but this hurricane had left no corner of Jamaica untouched.

His parents had huddled down in a corner of their house when the roof blew off, destroying all of the contents. When the eye of the storm passed, they emerged from the debris and found shelter with neighbours, knowing it was only a short reprieve before it returned in its full fury.

Denzel was just grateful to find them and other family members alive and uninjured. He didn't return to Niagara the following spring, because there was just too much work to rebuild. It's a tough call, they say. They really needed the money to rebuild and pay for hospital bills if family members were injured. On the other hand, they needed to be there to help rebuild. There were other issues as well, such as the post-hurricane trauma their children had to deal with. Sometimes they just couldn't leave their family after what they had been through.

Asheda, a young woman whose father also worked at Abe Epp's farm, told me she never got a good night's sleep when her dad was gone, es-



Denzel Reid (Jane Andres)

"We saw on the news it was really bad but there was nothing we could do. Just pray."

John

The graphic photos and videos of Hurricane Dorian are a sobering reminder that those scenes could have been their homes, with their families picking through the rubble.

I was reminded of a conversation we had with William Rhule back in 2012. My friend Jodie Godwin, her 12-year-old daughter Leah and I were spending the night at his home, perched on the summit of one of Jamaica's highest peaks.

The road up the mountain was not for the faint of heart, with heart stopping narrow switchbacks and precipices that left little room for grace when meeting an oncoming vehicle.

William started working on Abe Epp's farm in the '70s, and continued to work there

Niagara). We boarded and were on the runway when the plane turned right around back to the airport," William said, shaking his head.

"That was bad news. The airport in Kingston was closed and we were stuck in Toronto for two days, just waiting and worrying if our families were okay. We saw on the news it was really bad but there was nothing we could do. Just pray," John added.

By the time the plane finally landed in Kingston the following evening, the anxiety among the passengers was unbearable. Normally they would have descended into a sparkling crescent of city lights surrounding the harbour. Now the plane eased down into black ink, with only an occasional runway light to suggest they weren't landing

pecially during hurricane season.

"Eight months is a really long time for a kid. I remember when he came home I would have such a good sleep."

Almost everyone working on farms in our neighbourhood has a hurricane story – the names Gilbert, Ivan, Dean, Andrew, Sandy, Irma are familiar to all of them. Some of them were here working on farms when they hit. Others experienced these hurricanes as children, but the memories are as clear as if they had happened yesterday.

In August, 2007, we attended the Peaches Café at Cornerstone Church during the Peach Festival to hear the band Newworldson perform. We had invited a number of our friends on the farms. Hurricane Dean was fast approaching the island and their fears were being realized, as it was building into a Category 5 hurricane. Pastor Ed Heinrichs prayed for them and their families before the concert started, which those attending greatly appreciated. One man said it was the first time a Canadian had shown concern or support for them during such a stressful time, and it made him feel less alone.

After the concert was over, a number of men came to our house to try to get any news online. All phone service was suspended on the island until the power was restored a few days later, so they were hungry for any crumbs of information.

During times of crisis it was a simple gesture to make our home phone available for our Jamaican neighbours to make or receive these important calls. It made all the difference to these men, knowing we would pass along such vital information if we were able to connect with their families while they were at work.

Before there were cell

phones, the only way they could contact family was to get in line at the pay phone at Virgil Variety on a Friday or Saturday night. Sometimes they would wait in line for an hour or more to make the call, only to get a busy signal. Often they would have to wait another week to get a ride into town and try again.

We heard the stories first hand after Hurricane Dean. When Tony arrived home three weeks after, he found a concrete pad where his house had once stood. He had nothing but the contents of his suitcase to start over with.

We talked to Joy, the wife of one of our neighbours at Thwaites farm. She had watched, horrified as her little flashlight illuminated the flood waters seeping in under her bedroom door in the middle of the night. She grabbed her two young children and stood on the bed, holding them in her arms all night as the waters swirled up to her waist in the dark. Almost 3,000 kilometres away, her husband spent a sleepless night on a farm in Niagara, worrying, and unable to contact his loved ones.

"It's so hard at work the next day, when you can't sleep and you can't be there to protect them. What can you do? It's enough to make you cry, but you know everybody else on the farm is going through the same thing," our neighbour Mark explained.

I often hear my Jamaican neighbours respond, "I thank God for life," or "everything good so far," when I ask how they're doing.

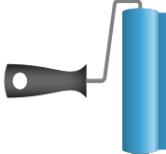
Over the past 14 years, I have gained a greater understanding of these words. For so many of them, all they have is a deeply rooted faith in God to get them through.

I thank God too for my neighbours, Caribbean and Mexican, as I still have much to learn from them.

Vests, straps for safety



In response to the death of a Mexican woman, who was hit by a truck while walking on Concession 7 at night, members of St. Andrew's Glen Homeowners Association raised \$600 and have purchased about 140 safety vests and straps for migrant workers, after consulting with some of the workers to ensure the maximum benefit for any donations raised. The donation is being considered a pilot project as the workers' season wraps up, says Audrey Pellett, and will be looked at again in the spring. Pictured are Dena Broeder, Jane Andres, Audrey Pellett, Barry Williams, Tristan Ferris, Donovan Fearon, Dave Hunter and Garfield Martin. (Photo supplied)



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IT'S HOME IMPROVEMENT TIME!

Updates essential for reliable plumbing

**Submitted by
Wellbrook Plumbing**

"Seasons, usage and age all play a factor in the efficiency of your home's plumbing system. While regular maintenance to your system will prolong its life, it's still necessary to invest in updates to keep your home comfortable and functional. If you're not sure the best way to care for your home's plumbing system, here are a few plumbing updates to make and when to make them:

Your water heater has an expiry date

Most water heaters can live for 10-15 years with regular maintenance before it's time for a replacement. Not only do old water heaters become less efficient with time, but they also have a higher risk of springing a leak or producing rusty water near the end of their lives. While this may seem like a daunting and costly update, it is critical to have access to hot water in your home for cleaning, bathing and more. If you're making the leap to a new water heater, consider a tankless water heater for better energy-efficiency and a reliable supply of hot water.

Keep your pipes and your water hot all winter long

Be prepared the next time winter comes back around in Niagara with proper pipe insulation. Pipe insulation is affordable and easy to install by

simply wrapping a foam sleeve around your exposed metal pipes that line exterior walls. Avoid insulation all together by updating your metal plumbing with plastic pipes. Not only do plastic pipes not freeze, but they also are more affordable than copper and just as durable.



When is the best time of year to buy a hot tub?

**Submitted by
Niagara Hot Tubs**

Many people who want to buy a hot tub seek out the best deals that they can find. This includes waiting for the perfect time to buy a hot tub and tracking deals to see when the best deal is offered. It is understandable, as purchasing a high-quality hot tub is a large investment, and most customers are eager to save as much as they can.

Most hot tub dealers will offer promotions as they receive promos from the manufacturers they carry. The best time of year to purchase a portable hot tub really comes down to individual circumstances.

Your intended use for the spa

When to purchase a hot tub spa depends on what you intend to use it for. If you have no desire to use a hot tub in the summer and wish to use your spa exclusively in the fall and winter months, purchasing a hot tub in the summer does not necessarily make sense for you. Transitional months, like September, are an ideal time for you to purchase a hot tub and have it installed.



If you are a year-round hot tub user, what is important in choosing when to purchase a hot tub is not necessarily when you will use it, but where it will be installed.

Where do you want to install the hot tub?

If you are installing a hot tub inside, you may not need to think about the weather outside. However, if you are installing a backyard hot tub outdoors, it may be best to purchase a hot tub in warmer months, before the winter hits and the ground freezes, which can make it difficult to install – though, definitely not impossible.

When it comes to choosing when to purchase and install a hot tub, find a trusted local hot tub dealer and work closely with them to determine the right time to purchase and install for you. They will be able

to offer recommendations and insight on whether they are able to install the portable hot tub in the space you have chosen, and if it is the right time to purchase for your needs.

Consider savings opportunities

While there are promotions and deals offered at times, do your research on any sale or promotion you see and make sure not only is it the best price but is it the best dealer to purchase from. Be wary of massive savings from dealers who do not offer customer service or support after you have purchased.

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Local teen competes in international junior tournament at White Oaks

Penny Coles
The Local

Some of the best young tennis players from around the world will be competing in Niagara-on-the-Lake this week.

One local player has been invited to compete in Niagara's first-ever International Tennis Federation Junior Championships.

St. David's Trevor Masi was given a wild card entry to the tournament, and won his first match Monday.

The 17-year-old attends the Niagara Academy of Tennis in Vineland, a private school which combines academics and tennis coaching for students in Grades 7 to 12.

Masi says he started playing tennis at a summer camp in Niagara Falls when he was four, and he's loved it ever since.

"I liked it, and I was good at it, so I just kept playing."

He's been taking lessons at the academy since he was eight, and is now training three hours a day, five days a week.

"I didn't have to qualify for the tournament," which was holding qualifying games this weekend.

"They offered me a wild card because I'm local."

He says there is just one other Niagara player, from Welland, participating in the tournament, which is for teens ages 14 to 18.

"I feel pretty good about this tournament. I've been preparing for it, and I really like playing at tournaments. I don't get nervous. When I get out on the court I feel confident."

He has played matches against some of the other competitors at other tournaments around the province, he says. "I've won some and I've lost some."

Masi played his first match against Georgetown's Alessandro Sant'Angelo, and won 5-7, 6-4, 6-4.

His second match Tuesday morning didn't go as well. Masi said he felt his serve "was not working. Just an off day." After losing the first two sets, he was done for the tournament.

Masi says while he's happy for the opportunity to compete



Trevor Masi takes a short break from practising at White Oaks Conference Resort and Spa tennis club, in preparation for his games in an international junior tournament, the first of its kind in Niagara. He played two matches before being eliminated Tuesday. (Fred Mercnik)

at a tournament of this level, on home turf, he wasn't expecting it to affect his game. "It really doesn't matter to me where I play. I enjoy tournaments wherever they are."

When he was younger, Masi says he hoped to become a professional tennis player, but his goal now is to get into a D1 university in the U.S. on a partial scholarship, with an eye to becoming an accountant.

He has become more realistic about a future in professional sports, he says, "but tennis will always be a big part of my life. I will always play tennis."

Since 2016, Giovanni Rodriguez, the head pro at White Oaks, in partnership with Tennis Canada, has welcomed professional male tennis players to Niagara's Futures tournament. It is held to honour the late Bruno Agostinelli Jr., a former White Oaks member, who achieved national and international tennis success.

Agostinelli captured two

Canadian national titles, and captained the University of Kentucky men's tennis team (D1), where he was an All-American and winner of the Male Athlete of the Year award for having reached a career-high ranking of #2 in the NCAA.

After competing in two Davis Cups and in the Rogers Cup, he turned his focus toward player development and worked for Tennis Canada as a national junior tennis coach. He was responsible for training many notable Canadian players, including Bianca Andreescu, who has won many Canadian tennis awards, and recently thrilled the tennis world by winning the U.S. Tennis Open.

Building upon the success of the previous three events, this year it was decided White Oaks would host Niagara's first-ever International Tennis Federation Junior Championships to pay tribute to Agostinelli's involvement in junior

tennis. The under-18 competition will feature elite, top-ranked boys and girls from several countries, with singles and doubles draws for both divisions.

Local tennis supporter Rosemary Goodwin says she will be at White Oaks to see some of the matches.

"I think it's a terrific event for us to have here in NOTL. I much prefer the Junior event to the professional Futures event of the past years. For starters, this is for both boys and girls, which is terrific. We're far from having equal opportunity for girls in all youth sports," says Goodwin.

This tournament "is a significant building block" to attracting more such tennis events to NOTL, says Goodwin, who is happy to have "a light shone on Trevor" locally.

There is no admission fee to watch the matches; even the finals, beginning this Friday for the doubles and Saturday for the singles, both at 9 a.m., are free.

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ROYAL OAK COMMUNITY SCHOOL GOLF TOURNAMENT

October 2 @ 1:30 p.m.

Royal Oak Community School 4th annual golf tournament is next week Wednesday, October 2nd. There's still time to sign up to play golf or just come for dinner - kids and grandparents too! Looking to support us further? Please consider donating items to our Silent Auction or Sponsoring a Hole as a way to promote your business and support ROCS. FYI - a tax receipt can be issued for any charitable donations, including hole sponsorship. Contact kim@notlrealty.com 905-380-8011 Hope to see you next Wednesday, October 2nd for a fun day in support of our community school.

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October 4 @ 5 - 7:30 p.m.

Queenston Volunteer Firefighters Association All-You-Can-Eat Spaghetti Dinner. Adults \$10, Children (12 years old and under) \$5. Proceeds to support NOTL organizations and charities. Great draw prizes! Tickets available at the door. Everyone is welcome. Takeout dinners available.

LOCAL WORSHIP



Sunday, September 29

Message:
Jeff Martens
Title:

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Ages 5 & under

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LAST WEEK'S SUDOKU ANSWERS

Answer from
September 19, 2019

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

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
				20					21	22				
23	24	25	26					27						
28							29						30	31
32						33					34			
35					36						37			
38				39						40				
41			42						43					
		44						45						
46	47						48							
49						50	51				52	53	54	55
56						57					58			
59						60					61			

- Across:**

1 Old computer dial-up device

6 Adjust

10 Impertinent person

14 Fort Utah, formerly

15 Food scraps

16 Cheat

17 Go-ahead

19 Subject of study

20 Mazuma

21 Baseball scorecard listing

23 Scott Pelley's employer

27 Into a state of decline

28 Melts together

29 Airline perks

32 Bankrupts

33 Turns on the waterworks

34 --- Arbor, MI

35 Utter a shrill cry

36 Panamanian singer --- Blades

37 Gumbo essential

38 Second sight

39 Point of a tale

40 Seen by those with 38 Across, perhaps?

41 Went home to disrupt a play with no men

43 Volkswagen classic

44 Prima donnas
- 45 Mischievous ones

46 Horse that has not won a race

48 Broadcasts

49 'It --- rocket science!'

50 The Martian --- (Ray Bradbury)

56 "Star Wars" monastic warriors

57 Send forth

58 GWTW's Scarlett ---

59 New Mexico artists' colony

60 In order

61 Course halves

Down:

1 Auto efficiency measure

2 Boston Bruin great

3 Buck's mate

4 First of her kind

5 Found in barrels, often

6 Labors long and hard

7 Compulsion

8 Degree in mathematics?

9 Steroid hormone

10 Cascades peak

11 Flickertail State

12 "How obvious!"

13 Seckel or Bartlett

18 Hill products

22 Bear in Brittany
- 23 Magic transport

24 Slightly off-color, I'm in red

25 Put on top, wavy lines dip badly

26 Not one

27 Pitch

29 Name of eight popes

30 Register

31 Winds

33 Prepares for keeping

36 Wines and dines

37 Crude cartel

39 Chess turn

40 Official sitting

42 Side-to-side measurements

43 Where the cows come home to

45 Commotions

46 Spray finely

47 Largest of seven, round the world

48 Any of 44 Across could sing one

51 Care plan

52 Greek X

53 Intra-office computer system

54 Before

55 Carrier to Copenhagen, briefly

SUDOKU PUZZLE

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

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

- Across:**
- 1 Modern, 6 Tune, 10 Ship, 14 Provo, 15 Orbs, 16 Hose, 17 Green light, 19 Area, 20 Kale, 21 Roster, 23 C B S News, 27 South, 28 Allies, 29 Upgrades, 32 Ruins, 33 Cries, 34 Ann, 35 Pipe, 36 Ruben, 37 Okra, 38 ES P, 39 Moral, 40 Spook, 41 The women, 43 Beetle, 44 Dvas, 45 Pascals, 46 Maiden, 48 Ains, 49 In't, 50 Chronicles, 56 Sift, 57 En't, 58 O'Hara, 59 Taos, 60 So as, 61 Nines.
- Down:**
- 1 M p g, 2 Orr, 3 Doe, 4 Eve, 5 Monkeys, 6 Tolls, 7 Urge, 8 Nth, 9 Estrogen, 10 Shasta, 11 North Dakota, 12 I see, 13 Pear, 18 Laws, 22 Ours, 23 Carpet, 24 Blush, 25 Slipped into, 26 None, 27 Spiel, 29 Urban, 30 Enroll, 31 Snakes, 33 Cures, 36 Romances, 37 O P E C, 39 Move, 40 Session, 42 Widths, 43 Barn, 45 Rides, 46 Mist, 47 Asia, 48 Area, 51 H M O, 52 Chi, 53 L A N, 54 Ere, 55 S A S.

LOCAL SPORTS

Wagner brothers will play against each other in NLL

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Mike Wagner of St. Davids always thought that if either of his two sons would ever make it as pro athlete, it would be as a hockey player. Following last week's National Lacrosse League draft, it's clear that probably isn't in the cards.

Instead, younger brother Johnny has joined Ryan in the ranks of the National Lacrosse League.

Last Tuesday, Johnny Wagner was chosen 34th overall in the 2019 NLL draft by the expansion New York Riptide. Johnny will have a chance to crack the inaugural line-up of the expansion team, which will begin play out of Nassau Coliseum in Long Island this December.

And, if he earns a spot with the Riptide, he will come up against Ryan, who was traded last season by the Buffalo Bandits to the Philadelphia Wings.

Though the two have ended up in the same professional indoor lacrosse league, the paths they took were quite different.

Twenty-two-year-old Johnny left his St. Davids home to attend a private prep school in Bloomfield, Michigan. As a student at the Cranbrook School, Johnny was a member of two state championship teams in both hockey and lacrosse.

Out of high school, Johnny was recruited by about 50 colleges. He chose to accept a lacrosse scholarship at Marquette University in Milwaukee, where he graduated from the prestigious applied investment management program in business. The younger Wagner brother earned All-BIG EAST (a collegiate athletic conference that competes in NCAA Division I) Second Team honours after leading the Golden Eagles with

39 points on 21 goals and 18 assists as a senior. The previous year, he earned first team honours and was named the BIG EAST Scholar-Athlete Sport Excellence Award winner for men's lacrosse. Wagner ended his Marquette career third in points (109) and goals (77), fourth in assists (32) and second in game-winning scores (seven).

Ryan, meanwhile, stayed home for his education, graduating from A.N. Myer Secondary School in Niagara Falls. That led to him attending Queen's University in Kingston, where he earned a degree in mining engineering. He didn't plan to play lacrosse at Queen's, but after meeting some members of the Golden Gaels, he decided it would be fun to play with the team. He found a spot on both the field and box lacrosse squads at the school.

While still a Queen's student, he was drafted in 2015 by the Vancouver Stealth. Now 25, Ryan already has four seasons of NLL play under his belt. The transition player has appeared in 45 NLL games since 2016, netting four goals, 15 assists and 29 penalty minutes.

Dad Mike says he signed the boys up for lacrosse when each of them was about five or six years old. At first, lacrosse was simply a sport that would be complementary to hockey. It wasn't long, though, before he, and others, realized the brothers loved the game and were pretty good at playing it.

As the boys were playing hockey in Niagara-on-the-Lake, it made sense to them and their family that they played lacrosse here as well. When Ryan started getting noticed by other clubs, such as the St. Catharines Athletics of the Ontario Lacrosse League, Mike says his older son preferred to stay loyal to the com-

munity in which he had grown up, playing most of his junior career with the Thunderhawks.

It was a connection with the Athletics, though, that resulted in Ryan being drafted. He credits Athletics assistant coach Pat McCready, who also serves as Vancouver's head scout, for putting him on the team's radar. Prior to the 2015 draft, Ryan didn't really think he would be selected. He recalls sitting with his Queen's housemates watching the proceedings, and the great feeling he had when he was chosen 42nd overall.

For Johnny, his success as a forward at Marquette meant that teams in the NLL had noticed him long before the draft. Going into last week, he was ranked 35th. He may have been ranked higher, but an internship in Minnesota and a few weeks travelling through Asia meant he hadn't played much box lacrosse in the months leading up to the big night.

Ryan and Johnny were together at Ryan's Toronto house last week when the younger brother's name was called. Ryan recalls the anticipation they both felt as the draft proceeded. And when Johnny's name was announced, they were both overcome with excitement. Johnny admits, though, that he may have ribbed his older brother about being selected eight positions higher.

As with most NLL players, Johnny and Ryan will be balancing professional lacrosse with other careers. Ryan is a technology consultant with Ernst & Young, while Johnny (known as "John" at work) began a new career in investment banking with Scotiabank in August.

With both working in Toronto, it made sense for Johnny to move into Ryan's basement. It's an arrangement that is pay-

ing off, with the pending start of the indoor season.

Johnny says Ryan has provided him with valuable advice about balancing his business career with his lacrosse pursuits. It's something with which the older brother has some experience. For Ryan, the juggling act includes trying to complete as much work as he can by the end of the day Thursday. That allows him to work remotely most Fridays, so he can travel to his games with the Wings, which are held on weekends.

As well, the two have begun training together in the mornings before work, with Ryan, again, able to impart wisdom to his younger brother. He knows what the Riptide will expect out of his younger brother when it comes to conditioning. He wants Johnny to be ready to compete for a spot on the Riptide, as the first of five weekends of training camp begins on Oct. 25.

The brothers say that it's "pretty cool" that both will have a chance to play in the professional indoor league, though they agree it would have been "even cooler" if they had ended up on the same team together.

In fact, had that happened, they may have ended up competing against each other for a spot. That wouldn't have been much of a problem, though. Both say they pushed each other growing up, and always had the same competitive drive and mentality.

Johnny says it's all about genetics. Mike played hockey for Niagara College and mom, Lainey, rowed for Denis Morris as a teen. And of course, Dad was always there coaching, first for their hockey teams, and then for their lacrosse teams. Their younger sister, Rachel, an A.N. Myer student, competes at a high level in gymnastics, and may make the news some day



Johnny Wagner #97 (Photos supplied)



Ryan Wagner

for her athletic talents.

In the meantime, Ryan and Johnny will continue to train together, and live together, in Toronto, to get ready to compete against each other in the same NLL division. With New York and Philadelphia less than two hours apart by car, Johnny even says they will likely travel together to many of their week-

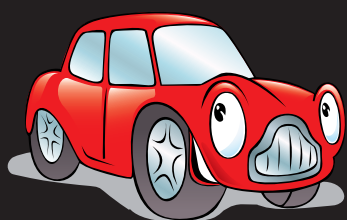
end games.

When asked if they will fly to either New York or Philadelphia on those weekends they will be facing each other, Johnny says "we'll still travel together, we just might not sit together."

On those other weekends, though, despite their destinations being different, Ryan and Johnny will be on the same journey.

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