Keith Simmonds: family man, community supporter, great friend

Mike Balsom
The Local
Long-time Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Keith Simmonds is being remembered as a larger-than-life figure who always went out of his way to support his family, his friends and the community. Simmonds lost his life in a tragic accident Saturday morning while on a charity ride with a group of about 30 friends. He was struck by a truck and was pronounced deceased on the scene.

Del Rollo, vice-president of corporate affairs for Arterra Wines, counted Simmonds as a close friend. He was also on that ride that was raising funds for Campfire Circle, a charity that operates camps in Ontario for children fighting cancer.

"Keith lived life to its fullest every day," Rollo told The Local Monday. "What was magical about Keith is that he was able to pull everyone along with him on that ride. He worked hard at it and he invested time into friendships. He truly worked hard to make sure he was involved in all of his friends' lives."

Rollo met Simmonds, who came to Ontario from western Canada to be the general manager of Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls, through the tourism industry. He credits former Jackson-Triggs winemaker Frank Helfig, now operating his own winery in Australia, for bringing the Terry Fox Show, he would sometimes pump up the crowd, donating, and he would be speechless Tuesday morning thinking about Simmonds, choking up as he spoke to The Local.

"It is that much of a loss," Pillitteri said. "Every show that I've been involved with, for as long as I've been doing comedy for charity, particularly for the Terry Fox Show, he would just say, 'what do you need?' before I could even ask. He would be at the event, he would have already raised a good amount of money from whatever he donated, and he would be throwing in meals and a massage. And he would make sure they knew that was from a massage..."
Keith Simmonds on another fundraising ride. (Photo supplied)
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The town's official plan, which guides development and growth, is in need of updating and clarification. Vaughn Goettler, Betty Disero and Gary Zalepa, who are seeking a fourth term as mayor, addressed the audience at the Royal Canadian Legion on August 31.

Goettler, who has been in office for 16 years, said he believes the current council is not experienced enough to properly run Glendale. He called for a successor to be named by council to replace him.

Disero and Zalepa, who are both seeking re-election, said they believe the council has done a good job and should continue. Disero said the town is moving in the right direction and is looking forward to the future.

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Budget, transit, policing priorities for Darte

Pat Darte
Candidate for Regional Council

I have had the good fortune to live around Niagara-on-the-Lake all my life. I have seen the major changes that have occurred over that time. The quaint little town I knew has morphed into something very different.

As far as regional things go, we need to work on a lot of issues. I have had the opportunity to get a working knowledge of what they are, how they have been handled, and possible fixes to them. I believe I have good vision and foresight.

The regional budget is obviously the biggest issue to deal with. First and foremost for NOTL, is our disproportionate share of the policing budget. We should approach it with at least getting a hybrid model. We pay the most per capita and have the least usage. This will be difficult to achieve but we need to make it happen.

Transportation is another key element. Our residents need a better accessible system. It is getting better but not fast enough. I would also like to find a system that will allow us to get much-needed labour to the businesses, schools, long-term care facilities and more. I have also worked on a plan to move traffic off Regional Road #55 at East and West Line, and follow the Niagara River Parkway to Fort George, where I had worked with federal and municipal staff to add 200 addition parking spots.

NOTL has many natural assets to be protected. We also have many opportunities to make life better here. We are poised to grow exponentially, mainly in the Glendale area. I was working with the region on this plan from the beginning. This plan will have a great impact in many ways. It will bring huge dollars in new taxes, development changes, and bolster the local economy. It will also bring new people who will help improve our labour shortages. It will bring new commercial and prestige industrial development. Our infrastructure is already able to handle at least 90 per cent of those needs with existing facilities.

I would also like to continue work I have started to put the LAKE back in Niagara-on-the-Lake. I started working on an Eco Parkway on the Parks Canada property. It would be a joint effort between federal, provincial, regional and municipal levels of government as well as local groups.

It has been my pleasure to have been involved in many different positions of authority. Some of them are: former lord mayor, former regional councilor, founding chair of the FACS Niagara Foundation, founding member of the Niagara Community Foundation, and former chair of the St. Catharines Area Heart & Stroke Foundation.

In my time I have also volunteered as a coach in hockey, soccer, baseball at many levels. I have chaired many church committees, school committees and other community groups including Polo for Heart, the NOTL Museum, the Shaw Festival, Niagara Parks Commission, NPCA, Wise Guys Charity, the YMCA Campaign, NOTL Hydro board, the Regional Economic Development committee as well as the Regional Irrigation committee.

In my life, I have owned and operated many successful businesses. I have been involved in hundreds of community events. I have been able to understand a lot of the wants and needs of people.

I would love to be able to represent NOTL and work for you to improve our community.

Each candidate for Regional Council was asked to submit 500 words telling readers a little about themselves, their priorities, and their message to voters.

Andrea Kaiser
Candidate for Regional Council

I am running to represent Niagara-on-the-Lake on Niagara regional council because I have the skills, knowledge, and experience required to deliver meaningful results for the residents of our community, starting on day one.

I have spent my life living in, working in, and serving our community, all of which positions me well to be a strong and authentic voice for Niagara-on-the-Lake in the region.

During the last term of regional council, there have been multiple examples of the region making decisions about our community without adequate regard for the views of our community. The regions recent decision to install ballasts on Four Mile Creek Road without reportedly notifying the town is one example of this misguided approach.

Regardless of the merits or demerits of the decision itself, the town, lord mayor, and regional councilor should always be consulted. If elected, I will work hard to change this “top-down” approach to decision-making at the region to ensure our community’s voice is respected.

I intend to bring the same open, authentic, and balanced approach to representing our community at the region that I used while serving as a town councillor in Niagara-on-the-Lake for three terms.

During my tenure, I championed civic engagement, heritage preservation, economic development and environmental conservation. I also earned a reputation as someone who would respond directly to the concerns of residents. Even when a resident disagreed with my position, they came to respect my willingness to sit down and honestly explain my rationale — something I think we could use more of in local politics.

My vast experience serving our community in various capacities over the past 25 years equips me with a detailed understanding of the issues facing our community. During my service on council, I chaired the following standing committees: public works, planning, corporate services, and taxation. I have also served on the Municipal Heritage Committee, NOTL Library board, as vice-chair of the Chamber of Commerce, and chairperson of Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake. I presently serve as the chair of the Ontario Sustainable Winegrowing Certification Program.

Beyond my service and volunteering, I am a local businessperson who has owned and/or operated small businesses in our community for many years. Currently, I own and operate Small Brick Winery and Dreak Wine Co., which produces award-winning wines of international acclaim right here in Niagara-on-the-Lake. I am committed to helping to build a bright future for our community based on the three pillars of sustainability: economic prosperity, environmental protection and social inclusion.

I pledge to provide a strong and authentic leadership, and a steadfast focus on achieving results for our community. Each candidate for Regional Council was asked to submit 500 words telling readers a little about themselves, their priorities, and their message to voters.

www.niagaradental.ca

Pat Darte
needs of people.

www.pifork.com
Miele’s issues include taxes, jobs, road safety

Paolo Miele  
Candidate for Regional Council

I have been a lifelong resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake. I was a town councillor from 2014 to 2018, and I have served on several committees: vice-chair of NOTL Community Policing Committee, chair, NOTL budget committee, long-time member of the Virgil Business Association, and an active volunteer with the Virgil Stampede.

My wife Adriana and I live in rural St. Davids with our three children. Sophia and Felicia attend university in Ottawa and Toronto and Michael is in Grade 6 at St. Davids Public School. I have 25 years in business, we own The Good Eats Diner and we are grape growers.

There are several regional issues important to Niagara-on-the-Lake. People have been talking to me about property taxes, economic stability and jobs, road safety and traffic, the need for more police officers in town, transit, long-term care, more medical services, agriculture, and expansion to our irrigation system.

My experience on the town council and my years of business experience are what is needed in the region, and together we will do it. I get things done. Let’s make it happen! I will work with other rural mayors and regional councillors to get our fair share of regional tax dollars re-invested in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

My promise is Niagara-on-the-Lake first. My business experience and time on the town council and various committees allow me to positively get the job done. Residents want and need to be engaged, feeling that they contribute, and making a difference.

I believe that public engagement shapes our future. I am available by phone, email, and social media.

Niagara-on-the-Lake and its needs are my commitment to you.

Each candidate for Regional Council was asked to submit 500 words telling readers a little about themselves, their priorities, and their message to voters.

Roberts promises to ‘champion NOTL interests’

William Roberts  
Candidate for Regional Council

It is remarkable to me just how much power and influence the Niagara Region has over our lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and yet, in my campaigning, to hear how little most residents know about it.

Owners of a $1 million home, for example pay about it. My campaigning, to hear how it is remarkable to me just how much power and influence what goes on in the region, even to Queen’s Park and Ottawa, to give greater voice to the priorities that NOTL deserves.

As a student, oddly enough, I loved math and physics, as well as music and theatre. Over time these interests led to me attaining a Master’s degree in divinity and then one in business. Professionally and personally my thinking is both data-driven and values-driven. A combination I will bring as your regional councillor.

One of the foremost values I take from the adage ‘don’t kill the goose that laid the golden egg’. We have a golden community in so many ways, and it must not be tarnished or diminished. ‘We have a golden community in so many ways, and it must not be tarnished or diminished.

Adaptation Plan, but there is much more we need to do. Climate change on the town. Eilenor and I from Virgil have six children and seven grandchildren who love to come to NOTL. Together we need to protect the future for all our children facing the ravages of climate change on the town.

In the tributes to the late Queen Elizabeth II I often heard the words ‘servant leadership’ to describe her. I have always believed in public service and am eager to provide you with the servant leadership required by your regional councillor.

Each candidate for Regional Council was asked to submit 500 words telling readers a little about themselves, their priorities, and their message to voters.
Council wraps up with little bit of tension, a little bit of fun

Wayne Gates MPP, Niagara Falls Riding

We have a problem in healthcare, and punishing our seniors isn’t the solution.

Protecting our universal healthcare system and improving healthcare delivery have been a main focus of mine since I was first elected. During my tenure, I’ve spent countless hours in the legislature advocating to ensure our community is receiving the healthcare it deserves, and that seniors live the last few years of their life with respect and dignity in our long-term care system.

However, Bill 7, introduced by Long-Term Care Minister Paul Calandra, is one of the most callous and cruel pieces of legislation I’ve witnessed as an MPP. The bill is designed to force seniors and those living with disabilities into long-term care homes outside of their community and away from their families.

I’ve spoken publicly on this legislation when it was passed earlier this month. Now, we’ve learned the full details of what this bill will do and it’s heartbreaking. Right from the beginning, we anticipated this government would use financial coercion to force those in hospital waiting for long-term care or home care out of their communities. The government claimed we were fear-mongering. Now we know the truth.

Hospitals will now have the ability to tell patients waiting for long-term care they must agree to enter a long-term care home up to 70 kilometres away from their community, or face paying $400 a day. That’s a one to two-hour drive to see a loved one. In northern Ontario, it’ll be up to 150 kms. That’s how this government wants to fix problems. We can’t deny the fact that we do have a serious problem in our hospitals — they’re stretched to the max and most hospital networks in Ontario face a severe staffing shortage. But ripping people away from their families and forcing them into long-term care homes 70 kms away is not a solution. It’s cruel.

Beyond the moral outrage we should all feel, workable is this heartbreaking solution? If this government is successful in opening up beds, how will this solve our ongoing staffing issues? A hospital bed without a nurse or doctor is just a piece of furniture. The healthcare crisis we faced ourselves in worse by punishing those seeking long-term care. But it can be solved if we start investing in the system and investing in people.

This government sent a message to our healthcare workers when they passed Bill 124, limiting wage increases to one per cent. After standing up as heroes in the face of one of the worst global health crises of our time, the Fed government showed them no respect.

Given mounting inflation, this cap on wages is a pay cut and a strong message that healthcare workers are not valued by this government.

We can start fixing this problem by repealing Bill 124. But it goes well beyond that — we must start investing in the healthcare infrastructure this province so desperately needs, invest in home care, hire and retain more healthcare workers and start ensuring that no matter what role you play in healthcare delivery, you’re paid a fair living wage.

This government will say policies such as Bill 7 are put forward to protect healthcare, but it will likely do the exact opposite. Legislation like this will slowly chip away at the foundation of our universal healthcare system, and it will hurt people in our community. I can’t accept that. We must do better.

Council wraps up with little bit of tension, a little bit of fun

Monday night’s council meeting was the last of this term. Some councillors, and of course Lord Mayor Betty Disero, hope to return, others were saying their goodbyes.

There was some wrapping up, with CAO Chuckie presenting an executive summary of all staff and council have accomplished, and Lauren Krutboch, manager of customer experience and communications, speaking of measurable improvements to customer service delivery that seem widely recognized and appreciated.

Over the last two weeks, members of the town advisory committee have been busy planning and working, speaking of record attendance, lessons learned, and recommendations for any changes that could improve their committee’s abilities to serve the community over the next four years.

Some of the council discussions began heated Monday; a little more than usual, in what seemed like a preview of what might become candidate debate issues.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero was thanked for her work, her communication, and her leadership, saying her goodbyes.

Coun. Cameron thanked Erwin Wiens for his ability to connect with people, for being so warm and caring, and showing pride in what council has accomplished.

Coun. Sandra O’Connor, To Coun. Norm Arsenault for his knowledge of an issue, and Coun. John Bisback for seeing all sides.

Coun. Allan Bisback, to Coun. Allan Bisback for seeing all sides.

Coun. Sandra O’Connor, to Coun. Allan Bisback for seeing all sides.

Coun. Sandra O’Connor, “for her constant grace and calm, and wonderful outfits. I hope everyone can enjoy the same personal shopper services that have brought such grace and kindness, and I really appreciate your advocacy of the local business community as well.”

About Gary Burroughs, one of her heroes, she said she recalled him shaving up at regional headquarters (where she was a member of staff) looking like he had just come off the moors, wearing rubber boots, covered in mud, and then transforming into the regional chair. “You really are a legend in this town, and it is very well deserved.”

Coun. Norm Arsenault will be remembered for his attention to detail. Coun. Al Bisback for seeing all sides of an issue, and Coun. John Wiens for his ability to connect with people, for being so warm and caring, and showing pride in what council has done, Cameron said.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero was thanked for being an example of what it looks like to fight for people’s concerns, and for the loyalty she inspires in those who believe in her. “We’re lucky to live in a place we do, and this is an amazing community I’m not going anywhere, I’ll still be here, watching you, so don’t screw it up,” Cameron joked.

And Burroughs got back at her, becoming emotional when he thanked Cameron for “being a guiding light.”

It might have been the last council meeting, but it won’t be the last we will hear from those who hope to be returned to the table when residents vote Oct. 24.

We wish all candidates the best as they enter this intense period of the election campaign, and look forward to greeting those who are successful when they are sworn in at the inaugural council meeting in November.

It’s been four years of ups and downs, even two of those during a pandemic.

Thanks to council for a productive four years.

Now we’re ready to see what the next four years will bring.

Penny Coles
The Local

Bill 7 long-term care ‘callous and cruel’

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Experiencing Ontario through provincial campgrounds

David Gilchrist
Special to The Local

Ontario has a large number of provincial parks. These offer a range of camping experiences in a natural setting. With our new Armadillo Backpack trailer, we wanted to start visiting parks that we had not had not experienced prior to this year. Grundy Lake Provincial Park was one of these. We had heard of it many years ago but, alas, never had the opportunity to visit.

The first difficulty we encountered while making plans was the provincial booking system. Gone are the days when you simply drove to a park expecting a site is available. The popularity of camping has made that next to impossible. In order to assure you have a site at the park you wish to camp at, you need to make reservations online through this booking system. Unfortunately, the system appears to be subject to abuse. What we learned from other experiences in a natural setting.

We spent two pleasant nights in the trailer camping area before moving to the Red Maple campground. The Red Maple area had been closed up until the day we were able to move into it. Both sites were quite nice and the lakes easy to walk to. At one point, we seemed to have the Grundy Lake beach area all to ourselves as we sat reading under a tree.

There are several trails in the area and we had a particularly nice hike on the trail that circles Swan Lake. The lovely smell of pine on a hot day and the cooling sensation as you walk under the canopy was most agreeable. The area, part of the Canadian Shield, has amazing geology and is quite observable on this beautiful hike.

All in all, this Provincial Park offers a wonderful camping experience, and the opportunity to enjoy quiet lakes while paddling your watercraft.

Terry Fox was not a quitter. He just ran out of time. We are the time he didn’t have.

Thank you to each and every one of you who participated in the 42nd annual Terry Fox run. You haven’t given up on his dream, a world free of cancer. You kept the spirit alive on Sunday, Sept. 18 here at Simcoe park in NOTL.

It was so wonderful to see the community come together after two years of not gathering in person. We were all here for the same purpose . . . for Terry Fox and cancer research.

We were honoured to have the chairman of the Terry Fox Foundation do his 42nd run here in our community. Together with Joe Pillitteri and his team Pillpy, they helped bring in over $150,000 for the foundations innovative cancer research. The money is making a difference, and people are living longer.

Terry Fox is an example to our youth that they can change the world with courage and compassion. Thank you to the students from Crossroads School and Vineridge Academy for being a part of this worthwhile event.

Many volunteers come together to marshal along the route, take registrations, hand out certificates, water and set up the display of past photos in the bandshell. All of you help add to the success of this event. Fruit is generously donated by Quiet Acres and Walker’s Fruit Market.

The event was both emotional and inspirational as we listened to jazz singer, Juliet Dunn’s heartfelt story and joined her in singing our national anthem.

All of you have your personal contribution to Terry’s legacy and I thank you for your continued support in keeping Terry’s dream alive.

Hope to see you Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023

Joan King
Terry Fox Run Coordinator

Grace United Church cemetery stones need repairs

Dear Rev. Maureen Elinson and parishioners of Grace United Church:

Last Sunday, I was both shocked and saddened when I visited your cemetery at Gage and Gate.

I was looking, unsuc- cessfully, for the grave of Grundy Lake Provincial Park, where David’s photographs captured a black bear crossing camp sites, a trail around the park, and great opportunities to kayak or canoe. (Photos by David Gilchrist)
Parents disturbed by racist Kindergarten worksheet

St. Davids principal agrees, apologizes

Penny Coles
The Local

Tracee Smith has made her point with a local school and the school board about offensive material given to her son’s Junior Kindergarten class.

“Now she wants to know what concrete steps will be taken to make sure it won’t happen again.”

Smith and her husband are Indigenous parents of two children at St. Davids Public School.

Last week her son, Ekki-an Christmas, came home from JK with a worksheet designed to teach students to recognize the capital letter I, and a small i.

The graphic on the worksheet showed two Indigenous cartoon children, complete in fringed clothing, headbands and a feather, with the wording that began “two little Indians are eating ice cream,” and instructions to colour the correct letters.

“Indigenous people don’t walk around with feathers on their heads, and neither do we,” she told The Local.

Smith, a member of the Missanabie Cree First Nation in northern Ontario, spoke to principal Carl Glauser and District School Board of Niagara staff, and although “they said all the right things, they apologized and said they were looking into it and were conducting an investigation, what they haven’t said yet is what is actually going to happen as a result of it.”

She has been told they don’t know where that particular worksheet came from, and understands teachers are able to choose the resources they use as curriculum supplements.

The question she had for the principal and board staff was “how do you take this paper, photocopy it 25 times, hand it out to a bunch of four- and five-year-olds, read it to them, do the exercise with them, and not know this is a problem?” asks Smith.

“The bigger picture,” she says, “is what will be done next, what kind of training will be given, what is being done now that isn’t working and what can they do more of that will work? “That is what hasn’t been communicated.”

Smith says staff she has talked to “have definitely acknowledged that they probably have to do more education and training, but how much more, and what does that mean? Until I actually explained the problem with the assignment, some of them didn’t really get it, they didn’t really understand, they asked me what’s offensive about this?”

Georgie Groat, the lead for Indigenous education with the District School Board of Niagara, “gets it,” says Smith, who works in Indigenous education herself on a national level. As founder of Outside Looking In, an organization created to empower Indigenous youth, she understands there are always limits to time and budgets, but says there has to be a better job done of training.

“The teacher who handed out the worksheet is young — she started teaching in 2017,” says Smith. “The bigger story includes what teachers are learning and not learning

Continued on page 9

The worksheet shows a stereotypical cartoon of Indigenous children. (Supplied)
Kim Sweeney, senior manager of communications at the DSBN, told The Local the principal at St. Davids, “is supporting staff to review resources from the perspective of decolonization, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism.”

The origin of the worksheet is not clear, said Sweeney. “It is not a ministry document, and it didn’t come from the DSBN.”

Sweeney spoke of “disciplinary action,” but wouldn’t share what that might look like — Smith says she certainly doesn’t want the teacher to lose her job, just taken away from her classroom.

All staff and schools at the DSBN have been notified of this incident, said Sweeney, outlining what steps are being taken to ensure teachers are more mindful of the material they choose in the future:

- The Indigenous Education team are continually working with educators to provide professional development and authentic resources to support educators with embedding Indigenous knowledge into their teaching practice to strengthen the presence of Indigenous culture, languages, history, and current realities of students.
- This will continue along with training sessions focused on understanding Eurocentric bias and how they negatively impact sovereignty-seeking individuals and communities.
- Administrators at all schools will be reminded about the necessity to review resources with a decolonization, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism lens.

This has come up at the time schools are about to celebrate Orange Shirt Day, and the DSBN recognizes National Truth and Reconciliation Day on Sept. 30 “as a whole system with every school participating. The Indigenous Education team has provided educators with a variety of grade-appropriate activities to support the learning of all students (Kindergarten to Grade 12) in the work toward Truth and Reconciliation. Students and staff are encouraged to wear something orange on that day,” Sweeney told The Local.

The DSBN has an Indigenous Education team of seven people led by Georgie Great, for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

“We know that supporting educators and staff at the DSBN is a process, and we are continually working to educate, provide PD sessions, and authentic resources to support administrators and teachers to build capacity when teaching and embedding Indigenous content and learning in their schools and classrooms,” said Great.

Her team is working toward further supporting the well-being and school experience of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students to promote student achievement, she said, and to strengthen the presence of Indigenous culture, languages, and history for all students, and assist educators to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into their teaching practice.

“We are also working with Indigenous Education Advisory Council to involve community partners in the work we are doing.”

In his letter to St. Davids school families, principal Carl Glauser said when the worksheet was brought to his attention and he re-reviewed it, “it was clear that the content was racist and discriminatory.”

He apologized on behalf of the school and DSBN, saying they were “sincerely sorry to the students, families, and entire school community that this offensive material was distributed. It should not have been used as a learning resource.”

He said the DSBN is committed to embedding Indigenous learning across our curriculum, including education on Indigenous histories, perspectives, cultures, contributions, and the current realities that exist today. And we continue to acknowledge and teach about the true history of residential schools and the impact they have — and continue to have — on families and community members across Canada.”

However, he added, “we know there is still much more work to be done as we keep our journey towards truth and reconciliation. We remain committed to being an active partner in the reconciliation process.”

Smith is ready to move forward, hoping for concrete steps to be taken, and says “there will always be more to do, but you have to start somewhere.”
Bollards in St. Davids a short pilot project

The bollards residents are seeing on Four Mile Creek Road in St. Davids are temporary, installed by Niagara region as a pilot project to slow down traffic and provide safety for cyclists.

Earlier this year she met with a group of St. Davids residents who were concerned about vehicles speeding and the safety of cyclists on the stretch of road coming from Niagara Falls to York Road. They discussed a number of options, including bollards, information she took away to determine what might work best.

The bollards offer a demarcation between the road and bike lane, protecting cyclists, and also have been proven to slow traffic. She says, “The separation between cyclists and vehicles is key.”

To residents who would prefer to have more bike lanes rather than bollards, she explains bike lanes are being implemented wherever they can be — the paved area beside the road on Four Mile Creek is wide enough to be considered a bike lane — and it’s not a matter of choosing one or the other, “it’s providing an extra level of safety,” says Ryall. “We’re trying to make our roads safe for all, not just for vehicles.”

Regional staff also looked at what other Ontario municipalities are doing and found bicycle bollards were a primary measure used by a number of municipalities. Because this is just a small pilot project, she says, there was no formal process to communicate the plan to the public, and no notice given ahead of time, although the location was chosen based on feedback received from the public.

The region will be evaluating how effective the bollards are and making recommendations for the future. Staff is also looking for input from residents about what they like and don’t like about them on the two regional roads where they have been installed: Martindale in St. Catharines and Four Mile Creek in St. Davids.

They are also on Oakdale Street in St. Catharines, a city street rather than a regional road, based on a decision made by the city.

Ryall says the bollards are flexible, will bend if hit by a car and bounce back, and will not damage a vehicle. Although they look the same, the bollards have come from two different suppliers, with a difference in the material they’re made of, and if the region moves ahead with the program, will look at which performed best.

In response to residents who are concerned about snow plows, garbage trucks, or emergency vehicles, she says even if the bollards are approved for permanent use, they will be seasonal, removed for winter. They are spaced far enough apart, at a distance prescribed under provincial legislation, that vehicles can move over to the side of the road and back when it’s safe to do so.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Regional Coun. Gary Zalepa were both at the meeting with regional staff this summer when road safety options were discussed with about 20 residents.

“The region was proposing a number of things for Four Mile Creek Road,” said Disero, but there was no notice given to the town that bollards were being installed. “After that meeting I didn’t hear anything back. The region did not keep us up to date. I assumed there would be more communication.”

Zalepa also remembered the discussion with concerned residents and some options, such as painting markings on the road to slow people down, and putting no parking signs up along one stretch of the road, which has been done.

“Bollards were discussed, but I didn’t know they were going forward with them,” he says.

However he does remember residents being especially concerned about speeding once school started and school buses were back on the road, so there seemed to be a need to move ahead quickly, and the region might have moved forward to meet that timeline.

Anyone wishing to provide feedback is encouraged to contact Niagara Region’s website under Bicycle Bollards Pilot Project - Niagara Region, Ontario.
Local Staff

Terry Weiner and Mark Gaudet, co-founders of Bikes for Farmworkers, have decided to move on to other ventures.

After seven years of refurbishing and repairing donated bicycles for migrant workers, a transition committee with GateWay Community Church are looking at ways to successfully provide safe bikes for farmworkers.

Bike project volunteers have been working with GateWay since 2019, a news release says, and have become part of the church’s community outreach work.

“The church will be leading the installation of a new management team that will oversee the day-to-day operations going forward.”

“This was an exciting venture for us,” says Weiner. “We saw a need in the community and had a great experience setting up something that was very important to the farmworkers who come here for up to eight months of the year.”

Gaudet says he and his co-founder have taken their project as far as they can and are ready to hand it off to someone to continue their work.

“Terry and I are ready to move on to other ventures. As newcomers to the community, Gaudet and Weiner noticed migrant farmworkers riding bikes, wondered where they got them from, and found out the answer was from many sources. Research pointed them to a bike repair program managed by the St. Alban’s Church in Beamsville, and they reached out to the coordinator, Mike Hahn. They learned that the farmworkers wanted bikes as a means of transportation for recreation, and to purchase groceries and other items in town. But bikes were difficult to find, other than at garage sales or abandoned at the end of a driveway, and often they were not safe. Hahn showed them how to set up a bike repair operation and gave them tips about servicing the farmworker community. They developed a 50-point checklist for all repairs and every bike went through a quality control process before being released for sale. During the first two years, local donated bikes were repaired in their garages. Gradually, Gaudet and Weiner became aware of organizations like Positive Living and Niagara Migrant Workers Interest Group (NiMWIG). With the assistance of Positive Living, they were able to secure a startup grant from the Niagara Falls Community Foundation to help them set up repair work stations.

Then, Lloyd Redekopp, co-founder of Bikes for Farmworkers, have decided to turn over the organization to others, including Ken Eden and GateWay Community Church.

“We believe this is an opportunity to enjoy their retirement has its stages, and they were ready to hand it off to others, including Ken Eden and GateWay Community Church.”

Gaudet refers to helping repair and refurbish bicycles for migrant farmworkers. Gaudet and Weiner have been working with Gates for Farmworkers, have decided to move on to other ventures.

They’ve often made donations to other local organizations involved in assisting migrant workers. Gaudet and Weiner say they will do their best to pass the proceeds, as well as any financial donations from the community, have helped to pay for the purchases of new tires and tubes, repair tools and other shop supplies. In addition, they’ve often made donations to other local organizations involved in assisting migrant workers.

Gaudet and Weiner say they will do their best to pass on as much as they can to the new team that comes forward, basically handing over a “turn-key operation.”
How should accommodation tax be spent?

Continued from page 2

big high rizes.”

Goettler warned of the potential for Glendale to become a dumping ground for intensification.

“We do need to have contexual development,” said Goettler. “Glendale residents are worried about high rises and related de-velopments. We have to make sure we listen to the residents. Schools go without saying. We have to be very focused on hu-man transit, too, as opposed to vehicular transit, bike paths and walking paths so people can get to and from safely.”

Another question dealt with how each candidate would use the proceeds of the MAT, estimated to be about $1 million in its first year.

“I’ve always been a support-er of the MAT to help pay for the infrastructure needed to welcome tourists,” said Disero. “The first million will be split 50-50. Half will be saved for municipal infrastructure re-pairs. The other half will go to tourism marketing, or a DMO, as the province calls it.”

Goettler called the MAT a mixed bag, questioning its need, and suggesting that instead of being administered by the town it should be in the hands of the restaurant and ho- tel owners who will be assess-ing the tax.

“Government is sometimes a black hole into which funds go, “ said Goettler. “Hotels would administer it and report to council what they’re doing. It’s not a tourist-friendly tax, but it must go into the right hands to target the tourists we want.”

Zalepa said he supports the tax, but thanks the current council for the process wrong. “There should be a freening up of municipal funding when this tax is collected,” he said. “That extra money should be returned to the taxpayers in a reduced levy in the 2023 bud-get. We really need to sit down with the stakeholders and find out what they want. Collecting the money and not really hav-ing a plan in advance, that’s not what they want. It’s a positive, let’s make it a positive and use it to benefit the community.”

The discussion then turned to the possibility of moving the council to a ward system.

Goettler said he originally would not have been support-ive of that move but changed his mind after speaking to a number of residents, especial-ly some in the towns farming community.

Zalepa said he is not sup-portive of a change but would like to hear more about it. He added that if it would increase voter turnout, he might change his opinion. Either way, he said a properly reviewed process would be needed before any change.

Disero said she was torn on the subject, acknowledging that government could be more effi-cient and effective with a coun-ciller representing each village, but warned that a ward system could possibly lead to some elected official not working with the entire community’s well-being at front of mind.

The evening wrapped up with more discussion on the town’s official plan, or lack thereof, and the confusion that it can create for developers.

Zalepa reiterated that the towns guidelines are not meet-ing the needs of the community. He called for better guidelines for developers, improved clarity in the rules, and strong, specific guidelines that would help the town in court and avoid minis-try tribunals, calling the towns current guidelines “wimpy.”

Goettler promised he would bring a delegation to the province to make the case that NOTL is special and unique and should not have to meet the same density requirements that are placed on the suburbs of Toronto. He also promised to fight for a UNESCO heritage designation for the town.

Disero once again defended her council’s work on develop-ment guidelines and protection of agricultural lands. She add-ed that she did not see Zalepa in the room with her when she was negotiating with the region for changes in the density map-ping. And she also shot down Goettler’s UNESCO idea, as she said the previous council applied for that designation in 2017 and was denied.

The formal part of the eve-ning wrapped up at about 8:22 pm, at which time the three candidates were able to mingle with the crowd directly.

The next session hosted by FocusNOTL will see council candidates Gary Burroughs, Maria Marrville, Richard Mell and Nick Ruller at the Royal Canadian Legion hall on King Street for a Meet and Greet on Oct. 5.

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FocusNOTL will see council candidates Gary Burroughs, Maria Marrville, Richard Mell and Nick Ruller at the Royal Canadian Legion hall on King Street for a Meet and Greet on Oct. 5.
Fundraiser to help at-risk youth

Penny Coles | The Local

Helping youth, says Laura Byers, general manager of the RRPC Innovation Foundation, is a need that is ongoing.

But with a two-year economic disruption during the COVID, “there has been a gap between what we can afford to do and what we need to do.”

The foundation, established by philanthropist Suzanne Court in 2019, supports at-risk youth in communities across the region through partnerships in education, nutrition, sports, advocacy and mental health.

The RRPC foundation is dedicated to helping youth succeed by providing opportunities that may not exist for them otherwise, and by supporting community agencies that support youth.

The foundation has established the Step Youth Empowerment Center in St. Catharines, “where it feels like home,” says Byers.

It provides a place where homeless, troubled, confused or “even just lost young people” can drop in and find the people and resources who can help them.

A fundraiser in ‘the works’ for quite a while, says Byers, is being held Saturday, Oct. 1 outside The Works, on James Street in St. Catharines, beginning at 1 p.m.

“It’s a very cool event,” says Byers, with “an incredible line-up of artists who have come together for a good cause. It’s going to be pretty amazing.”

The money raised “will provide support for a safe, dry space for youth, with free mental health counselling, and no wait list.”

It is also a “timely hub” for navigating resources in the community, she says.

Young people, aged 12 to 24, who need to talk to someone can drop by at 58 Ontario Street, at the corner of Church Street, Mondays from 9 a.m. to noon, or Fridays from 1 to 4 p.m., but should call 289-686-0067 first or email contactus@stepniagara.ca.

This event, Blues, Brews & Burgers, will feature a line-up of non-stop live music with local musicians performing from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

At 7:30 p.m., the multiple award-winning Brant Parker Blues takes the stage with his band, featuring special guest blues artist Spencer Mackenzie. The event is free, and there will be beverages and food to purchase, with 100 per cent of the proceeds going to help youth.

Mackenzie, says Byers, is a local musician “taking Niagara by storm, and has become a pretty powerful model of youth supporting youth.”

There are a limited number of VIP Early Bird front-of-the-stage tickets available for $25 per person, or a VIP table for 10 for $200. To reserve your table of 10, call Works franchise owner Marco Ciccarelli at 905-651-5412 or visit https://www.eventbrite.ca/.../blues-brews-burgers-tickets

This one is of the rooms in the Step Empowerment Centre, a safe space for youth, a place where they can find the resources they need and free mental health counselling. (Photo supplied)

Join the Niagara Health Board of Directors

Our CORE values inspire us to be EXTRAORDINARY: Compassion in Action, Driven by Optimism, Achieving Ambitious Results.

Niagara Health is a multi-site organization comprised of five sites and a growing network of community-based services, serving 455,000 residents across the 12 municipalities making up the Regional Municipality of Niagara. The team is made up of more than 7,300 employees, physicians and volunteers.

Niagara Health provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services, including Acute Care, Cancer Care, Complex Care, Emergency and Urgent Care, Kidney Care, Long-Term Care, Mental Health and Addictions, Stroke Care and Surgical Care.

Niagara Health’s Accreditations with Exemplary Standing is a clear demonstration of the team’s commitment to the highest safety and quality standards. As a community-based academic centre, teaching and learning, research, innovation, and partnership are propelling Niagara Health towards imagining a healthier Niagara. Our strong partnerships with the Niagara – Ontario Health Team - Equipo Santé Ontario Niagara (RHFT-EON), Hôpital Chau Shaver, Brock University, McMaster University, Niagara College and many others, will help us transform healthcare and work to improve the health of our community through patient-centered, innovative and sustainable health care.

A new hospital build, the South Niagara Site, is a significant priority over the next five years.

Niagara Health’s Board of Directors is expanding to enhance the overall skills and experience of the Board and to promote effective succession planning. We are recruiting new Board Directors who have demonstrated executive leadership and governance experience, and a commitment to our Vision, Purpose, and Values to join us in 2022-23 and beyond.

The Board is interested in hearing from leaders with any of the following experience profiles, and especially those with board experience:

- Legal
- Construction and Project Management
- IT and Cyber
- Finance, Audit and Risk

Niagara Health is participating in the federal government’s 50 – 30 Challenge to increase diversity in positions of influence and leadership across our organization. We welcome applications from equity-deserving groups including: women, Indigenous peoples, persons living with disabilities and people who self-identify as a member of the Niagara community.

For a detailed Board Director recruitment profile and to submit your expression of interest by Friday, Oct. 28, please visit NiagaraHealth.on.ca/BoardRecruitment

Third in a Series!

Let’s talk facts about Niagara-on-the-Lake’s infrastructure.

Penny Coles | The Local

We are not a business. We are a community. Our commitment to all who live and work in NOTL, is an improved lifestyle and enhanced opportunities in the Tourism, Agriculture and Business sectors in order to grow and maintain a thriving economy.

Better Life for Citizens

1. To help young families who work and live in Niagara-on-the-Lake, we participated in building a new and expanded nursery school at the NOTL Community Centre and a 24-hour daycare at the new Central Community Church serving the Niagara region including a recreation space for youth. TO DO Next term: Acquire funding from upper tier governments for the St. Davids Pool.

2. Worked with other community partners to keep our town alive by completing projects and new improvements in all areas of NOTL completed Phase One of the Heritage Trail, installed a community garden at Niven Park and encouraged Public Canada to open the off-kush area. TO DO Next term: Create more diverse activities for children. Start the Recreation Master Plan.

Transportation Infrastructure

1. Completed the Transportation Master Plan and sent it out to the community for input. TO DO Next term: Revise the Transportation Master Plan to home sell our community needs and ensure we exhaust all alternative solutions to the St. Davids monobahn.

2. Hwy 55 in Vinlal will be re-concepted to 2024 for better traffic flow and a more pedestrian friendly seat including buffered bike lanes, wider sidewalks, trees and pavilions.

3. We approved joining Niagara Region Transit. Today is the best week of 2022 as we have a fair formula for funding. TO DO Next term: roll out the new transit system.

Supporting Tourism and Business

1. Effectively worked with all sectors to safely navigate the peril of the Covid-19 pandemic by quickly establishing outdoor patios to help keep restaurants open, and created the ShopNOTL and Town Ambassador Program to promote and sustain local businesses.

2. To encourage a diversity of businesses, Council approved deferring development charges for industrial development and approved the Municipal Accommodation Tax to fund improvements to our Tourism infrastructure. TO DO Next term: Complete Tourism Master Plan.

I have enjoyed personally working and supporting community residents to create a youth hub for high school students; researched locations for senior assisted living; supported Honkette, an environmentally friendly water link to Toronto.

Together we can see a good path. Continue on this journey with me. I am asking for your support on October 24th.

I will continue to be your full-time Lord Mayor!

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payed for by the campaign fund in Dec. Betty Disero 2022.
Ashley Simpson’s family fundraising for Wings of Mercy

It was two B.C. police officers and a beam of light that led to the discovery of Ashley Simpson, who had been missing for almost six years. When police from B.C. made arrangements to visit John and Cindy Simpson at their Lakeshore Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake last Dec. 3, they didn’t know their daughter’s body had been found a few weeks earlier, but that was the news the police wanted to share with them.

“It was the best Christmas present we could have had,” says John, telling The Local how comforting it was to picture that beam of light on Ashley, directing the way to her remains. It wasn’t the ending they had hoped for, but it was what they expected. They needed it to be over, for the searching to end, and to finally bring her home. John had travelled to B.C. many times, and on one of his trips, met Shane Michaels, a licensed drone pilot from Alberta who wanted to use technology he was developing to find Ashley and other missing people.

It wasn’t Michaels who found Ashley, but a partnership of sorts was formed. Simpson wanted to help Michaels help other families, so they could find their missing loved ones.

At the time he was looking for Ashley, Simpson says, there were six women missing in the same area. Ashley and one of the others were found, both murdered, and the other four are still missing. It’s a mountainous, isolated area, where the police say people go to disappear, not to be found, but some are truly missing. Michaels has founded an organization called Angels of Mercy, with a goal of looking for all missing persons, anywhere in the world.

The problem, says Simpson, is that in some cases, especially in the area where Ashley disappeared, it’s difficult to know if people have purposely made themselves hard to find, possibly escaping from something that threatens them, such as an abusive relationship. “That’s a problem, identifying the missing people from the runaways,” he says. That was the initial reaction from the police when the Simpsons reported their daughter missing — that she had chosen to disappear.

“Her friends knew right away that wasn’t the case,” says John, and over the six years, there were several trips by friends and family to search for her. The first year, he went to B.C. to look for her three times, two times the second year, three the third year, and in the fourth year, he went with his daughter and granddaughter, who wanted to help.

“She was having a hard time, missing her aunt, so we took her so she could see what we were doing. But it’s hard. You get there, you have some new piece of information to act on, and you’re hoping to find something. Then you come home empty-handed, and it’s so retching for your soul.” His granddaughter, Penny Coles

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The Tenors Now and Forever

Blending classical music and contemporary pop, the award-winning and multi-platinum selling band have achieved international success, performing over 1500 live shows and hundreds of TV appearances on five continents.

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Based on the beloved Canadian novel by Lucy Maud Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables – The Ballad follows the adventures of Anne Shirley, an orphan girl sent to live on a farm in the fictional town of Avonlea, Prince Edward Island.

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Anne of Green Gables – The Ballad

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East Coast Kitchen Party

FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre
Continued from page 14

Ashley would have wanted to help search for others

then 14, "was beside her- self, devastated that we didn’t come home with Ashley.”

That’s why Simpson is so supportive of Wings of Mercy, and the help it could offer to other families.

He explains there are lots of people who operate drones, but to do searches, they have to be licensed drone pilots, and those are spread out and difficult to find.

Wings of Mercy is dedicated to creating a database of licensed drone pilots who are willing to help search in their area, and to fundraise to cover expenses. Michaels is also, through Facebook, compiling a list of missing people, and has worked on searches across North America, and in Britain and Ireland.

When Ashley went missing, news reports always included the information that she left with a pink suitcase. “That was a turning point for Shane,” says Simpson, explaining Michaels was motivated to begin work on drone technology to pick out certain colours, like that pink suitcase.

He says on the same day the police showed up at his NOTL door, in B.C. Ashley’s boyfriend, 39-year-old Derek Flavell, was being charged with second-degree murder.

There was a bail hearing — he was denied bail and his trial is scheduled for Oct. 17 to 20. 

Simpson and other family members hoped to be there for it, but it has been closed to the public to protect the identity of some of the witnesses, he explained. 

He says on the same day the police showed up at his NOTL door, in B.C. Ashley’s boyfriend, 39-year-old Derek Flavell, was being charged with second-degree murder.

While they won’t be going back to B.C. for the trial, as they had hoped, they intend to return eventually to place a memorial where Ashley was found. The RCMP, knowing that family would want to one day visit the site, which was rough to get at, have built stairs for them, Simpson says. “If she knew someone was lost, she would have been the first on the ground, wanting to search.”

The fundraiser is at the Merriton Community Centre, 7 Park Ave. in St. Catharines. It’s on Nov. 11, with a barbecue and dance, and Simpson is looking for donations for prizes and a raffle table. The proceeds will be split between Wings of Mercy and a local charity.

For more information or to donate email findashleysimpson@gmail.com

For information about Wings of Mercy visit their Facebook page.
A fundraising campaign for the second of four phases planned to rehabilitate Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Upper Canada Heritage Trail began Saturday morning, a perfect day for a fun run and dog walk.

Beginning from Memorial Park, on Parks Canada land, about 30 people enjoyed a five-kilometre run or walk on the trail while 20 people took part in the two-kilometre route for dog walkers, raising more than $7,000 for the day.

About 12 volunteers and heritage trail committee members were on hand, signing people in, accepting donations, marshalling along the routes and handing out medals, to walkers, runners and dogs who took part in the event.

Many participants were regulars on the trail, happy to be supporting the continuing rehabilitation project. Barb Gelb and Astrid Shrubbs are dog walkers who use the trail not quite daily, but several times a week. Fortunately their dogs are friends as well — Gelb’s vizsla, Lake, and Shrubbs’ Portuguese water dog have known each other since they were puppies, and look forward to walking together and to playing on the beach at Ryerson Park, and swimming in the lake.

The trial, says Gelb, “is a little escape from the road and the traffic. It feels so safe and so peaceful, and it’s easy to walk on. I just wish it was longer. It’s also great to cycle on, she adds.

Shrubbs agrees — it’s great to have a trail, other than the busy Niagara River Parkway recreational path, that’s not on the road.

She says she’s never seen a problem on the path, whether people are walking, riding or out with their dogs. “People are respectful,” she says, “and dogs have to be on leashes.”

Gary Zalepa, walking with his wife Tammy, says he grew up on the Promenade, and remembers walking to school on the path when he was a kid, and cross-country skiing on it in the winter. “We were always on the trail.”

He and Tammy had a dog for 16 years they used to walk on the trail, along with their boys when they were little. “We were always on the trail.”

They have a dog for 16 years they used to walk on the trial, along with their boys when they were little, but now, it’s just the two of them, and they use it often.

“It will be great to see it finished, and people getting more use out of it,” he says.

Tony Chisholm, one of the trail committee members and an organizer of the event, says he saw many regulars come out, but he would have liked to see more new people attend, and more donations to help with the rehabilitation, although “the sponsors have been great. I think it will take time. The first time you do anything you don’t know what to expect, but those who came out and know the trail want to support it. A lot of people I’ve seen today use it all the time.”

Chisholm and Rick Meloen, who have been on the committee from the beginning and serve as vice-chair and chair, are glad to see it used, to keep people off the road and away from traffic.
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Ike Balsom  
The Local

The announcement of a new hovercraft service between St. Catharines and Toronto’s Ontario Place, to begin as early as next summer, has people across the province agog with excitement — none more so than Hoverlink CEO and founder Chris Morgan.

The indefatigable Morgan visited the offices of the NOTL Local to sit down and talk about his plans ahead of this Thursday evening’s community information session to be held in north St. Catharines.

Since he went public with the announcement, Morgan has been swept up in a whirlwind of interview requests, leaving him with barely any time to get back to working on the project.

The announcement comes after more than 10 years of research and planning for the feasibility of a hovercraft operation between Niagara and the province’s capital. Having experienced Morgan’s mile-a-minute cadence in the hour-plus long conversation, it’s hard to imagine how he kept it all a secret during this time.

The project is a labour of love for the Aldershot, Ontario-born Morgan, who knows first-hand about the congestion on the Queen Elizabeth Way along the western edge of Lake Ontario. And, with a degree in earth sciences from McMaster University, Morgan is also armed with the knowledge of its effect on the environment.

“Kit not too late,” says the rural Niagara-on-the-Lake resident about the environment, “but we need to fix it. One word has gotten us here — greed. We need to wake up. We need to have more oxygen producing plants. And we need to get cars off the QEW. We’re hurting our ability to live on this planet.

Morgan laments the results of a study that shows the large number of trucks that cross the border from the U.S. into Niagara on their way to Quebec. He suggests they add to the congestion of the local corridor simply to avoid paying the numerous expensive tolls for a more direct route.

Politicians have been taking notice of Morgan’s concerns. This week he was called to a Standing Committee on Innovation for Sustainable Development at the House of Commons. This was at the request of Oshawa MP and committee member Colin Carrie and at the urging of Niagara West MP Vance Badawi.

He’s heard the naysayers, and he’s very aware of previous failed attempts to bridge the Lake Ontario gap in a speedier way. But Morgan is positive his venture will not meet the same fate. And the fact that he seems to have the interest and the support of local, provincial and federal government officials alike makes it all the more possible.

Working with Griffon Hoverworks design group, who has built hovercrafts in more than 41 countries, Hoverlink has developed a large-scale hovercraft that will be able to transport up to 180 passengers across the lake in a climate-controlled cabin. The trip is expected to take about 30 minutes each way between a new terminal proposed to be built on St. Lawrence Seaway lands and a smaller facility at Ontario Place. Morgan smiles as he tells of “her,” the hovercraft, that Hoverlink has one of these vessels almost ready to go and another under construction in the UK.

“She is so strong, so incredible,” he says. “There are four Rolls Royce MTU engines on her, but we’re eventually moving on to electric engines. They can run on biodiesel fuel. They are totally acceptable. We have them set up so a wheelchair can be rolled on and tethered down safely.”

He and his group have worked with the Seaway and the Coast Guard to ensure that there will be no disruptions to shipping lanes. Morgan says the target is to begin open-water testing next spring or summer, something that is required for one month before Hoverlink can begin operations. Morgan promises to stop that up to two months of testing to ensure that everything is going as planned.

Questions of noise from the craft have been posed, and Morgan insists the hovercraft will be about as quiet as a dishwasher. The noise inside the cabin will be quieter than on 737. And there is little disruption to marine life, as the craft hovers above the water level.

They have been designed with cargo pods that will allow travellers to bring along bicycles and even kayaks. But a common question is what happens when these travellers disembark from the craft?

Morgan promises three electric shuttle buses that will shuttle visitors to Niagara Falls or Niagara-on-the-Lake. Those plans have received positive feedback from mayors Walter Sendzik, Jim Diodati and Betty Osorno respectively. Across the pond, another electric bus will shuttle travellers to Union Station and a few other Toronto connecting points.

At only $30 one way, Hoverlink is basically planning to charge a dollar-per-minute for the ride. That’s a price that seems quite enticing for the convenience, especially when you factor in the cost of gas in your car and add parking to the total for a trip to Toronto.

Morgan insists no public money is going into Hoverlink’s coffers. He has aligned with a number of private investors and advisors, including Griffin Hoverworks’ global pilot trainer Rob Trussler and CFE legend Michael Pinball Clemons, who has helped with government relations.

Though he’s keeping things under wraps when it comes to looking further ahead, it’s clear Morgan has hopes even one that will secure those trucks on their way to La Belle Province across the lake at a different point.

“Hovercrafts have been around for more than 50 years,” Morgan says. “These kinds of operations are happening elsewhere around the world. It’s time to bring this to Niagara.”

Morgan and his team will be at the Grantham Lions Club at 732 Niagara Street St. Catharines Thursday. Sept. 29 for an open house community information session from 6 to 8 p.m. All are welcome.
Katie Haughton
Special to The Local

Last Thursday, the board, staff and students of the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts held a reception to mark 15 years of providing excellence in education to those studying heritage restoration.

As the only school of its kind in Canada, Willowbank offers hands-on experiential learning in restoration disciplines, says a news release about the anniversary celebration, adding that one of its most compelling aspects is the gradual restoration of the historic Willowbank mansion through its use as a “living lab.” Graduates of the program have moved on to successful careers in various aspects of heritage restoration, including a number of grads currently employed in the restoration of the parliament buildings.

Earlier this year, following a tour of Willowbank, renowned local artist Marilyn Cochrane offered to develop a painting of the mansion highlighting its 200-year history. After immersing herself in the Willowbank archives, Cochrane worked through the summer and emerged with an exceptional impression of the mansion and its living history. In her remarks at the reception she underscored that she had been “captivated” by Willowbank and all that it represents.

Her stunning work was presented to Victoria Broer, who represents the Bright-Urban family on the board of directors, and whose family foundation both facilitated the original purchase of the estate and has continued to provide operational support.

“Accepting the painting, Vikki said, “this is an incredible piece of work, and my family is honoured to have played a role in Willowbank.”

“This amazing work belongs here at the mansion,” she continued, and as a result of her generosity, those visiting Willowbank will be able to enjoy the painting prominently displayed in the Bright Parlour.

The first and only full-sized print of her work was presented to Dr. Elizabeth Oliver-Malone, who has been steadfast in her volunteer and financial support of Willowbank since its origin. Oliver-Malone still serves as the archivist and librarian for the facility. She said I was the pleasure for her and her late husband to assist in facilitating both the school and the preservation of the mansion.

The presentations were made by Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Willowbank chair Patrick Little and Cochrane.

On behalf of the board, Little offered the thanks of the board to the artist for her incredible contribution to Willowbank. “I am honoured to be a part of Willowbank,” said Cochrane. “Indeed Marilyn, we are honoured to have you,” said vice-chair John Scott.

Willowbank celebrates anniversary with painting unveiling

Willowbank chair Patrick Little, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Willowbank benefactor and director Victoria Broer, artist Marilyn Cochrane, and vice-chair John Scott celebrate the 15th anniversary of Willowbank, and a painting to mark the occasion. (Mackenzie Campbell)
Students walk through community for Terry Fox

Parent Adriana Carter Vizzari agrees. At the school to watch her children participate and cheer on about 400 St. Davids students, she was grateful to new principal Carl Glauser for encouraging his students to take part in the annual tradition.

She spoke of teaching students the courage of Terry Fox and his fight against cancer, and ensuring young kids of this generation understand the importance of what he did and carry it on. She also stressed the feeling of community the run fosters, as more than 400 students walked or ran around their neighborhood — a reminder that St. Davids is a community of families and children, and that there is where the future of the community lies.

Glauser says there was an assembly before the walk, to talk to the students about Terry’s story and his legacy, and to watch a video to get them excited for the walk.

Online donations from St. Davids families had reached about $2,000, he said, as the students prepared to head outside and walk around the block, many with stickers that read “I’m not a quitter.”

That was part of the message the kids were taught about Terry Fox, and likely reinforced by parents.

One student told The Local she was wearing it because “Terry Fox was not a quitter. It means you shouldn’t give up, you should stand up for your self and your goals.”

Another student, Hayden Rowaan, told The Local he is a competitive cross-country runner, so he knows what it means not to be a quitter. “You’re not going to stop, no matter how hard it is. You’re going to push through. Even if it hurts, even if you have a cramp, you’re going to keep on going.”

St. Davids principal Carl Glauser held an assembly for students to talk about Terry Fox and watch a video about what he accomplished. (Photos by Penny Coles)
Crossroads students took on the role of cheerleaders during the Terry Fox fun through Old Town streets. (Photos supplied)

Anjie Inglis’ Grade 1/2 students watch a short clip about belonging to a community.

Grade 3 and 4 students work together for teacher Heather Smith to build a strong sense of community in their classroom.

Learning resource teacher Tyler Lowther plays a math game with a student.

Senior Kindergarten students are welcomed back by Nancy Romanowich-McConkey and Robyn Larcombe, and learn how to be good leaders for Junior Kindergarten students.

Steve Holowchuk discusses safety in his Grade 2 physical education class.

Paul Tayler’s Grade 5/6 class starts the school year off strong, with a patterning lesson in math.

Back to school at Crossroads

Vote Pat Darte For Regional Council

- Regional Taxation especially NOTL Policing Portion
- Niagara Eco Park - “Put the LAKE back in Niagara-on-the Lake.”
- Glendale Plan - Opportunity for new taxes, jobs, and housing
- Protect our Natural Assets
- Strategic Plan for NOTL regionally
- Regional Transportation – For healthcare workers, educational, and businesses
- Hwy 55 Congestion – New route down E/W Line to Parkway with new parking at the Fort

A Proven Leader
darte4region@gmail.com
The mud was sucking at my legs from the knee-caps down. As I unloaded precious cargo out of the canoe, borderline unable to pull my legs from the powerful grip of the exposed creek bottom, my friend Nate Bachynski is heard laughing up on the bank. I am now sinking up to my waist in sandy sediment. Once all of the gear was successfully up in Nate’s care, I then sacrificed my feet for the weeks to come. Barefoot, I hauled my canoe up the bank through a patch of poison ivy, using an exposed deer trail as the only place to break through the muddy vegetation in an environment that looked more like the Congo. Just days later, I would be guiding a couple of 20-kilometre hikes with tender poison ivy bubbles on the bottoms of both feet in soggy, saturated footwear. I had no time to be bothered by this, and was instead overjoyed with a farewell salute to summer, and a two-and-a-half year filming project coming to an end. Tentatively speaking, this was the final planned filming session for the upcoming Hidden Corners: Canadian Erie nature documentary series I have been working on since lockdown times began. I have finalized the name of the documentary, as it will exclusively showcase the Canadian lands and waters of the Lake Erie. I figured that keeping busy outdoors would be personally healthy, but more importantly, I didn't want us to take our eye off the ball on appreciating the irreplaceable importance of our local ecosystems. Lake Erie’s shoreline, or Canada's south coast, did not disappoint. When we embrace a sense of wonder and conduct a sense of environmental responsibility here at home, we are inadvertently doing our part to protect the linkages of ecosystems around the world. Think about how it takes Canadians and Mexicans, in two giant countries, to keep tiny monarch butterflies from going from endangered to extinct. As we speak, the shallowest of the Great Lakes’ shoreline is behaving as a final launch spot for these remarkable insects as they begin their journey to specialized overwintering habitats in Central America. The Amazon needs dust from the Sahara, and the riverine forests of Myanmar need the glaciers of China. It is all connected — and that understatement is what inspires me to make documentaries locally and around the world. Before the mucky hilarity and wild canoe challenges on this special weekend, Nate and I actually started on foot. Firstly, we enjoyed a night of whiskey and local stories with some Simcoe locals. Night one’s local whisky endeavour deserved some sweating the next day, so we departed to roast our bodies on Long Point, a giant sand spit which projects into Lake Erie. It also happens to be what is arguably the most biodiverse locale in the nation. Our premier stop that morning was a series of raised trails which meander endlessly through a birder-watcher’s paradise. From a visitor’s perspective, it initially looks boring. What appears to be a monocrop of plant life — a sea of grasses and reeds at a monotonous height over dozens of collective square kilometres — is actually teeming with life. It looks of something bland, but is home to Blanding’s turtles, among countless other national rarities and more than 400 species of bird. What immediately caught our attention was the explosive diversity of wildlife and wild canoe challengers on this special weekend. Nate and I actually started on foot.
Canoe trip includes creek banks’ flora and fauna

Continued from page 22

insect and bird life. The filming highlight was watching a species of tern, a bird that looks like it be- longs on a soggy ocean coast somewhere, dive-bombing the water with precision and calculated authority. These birds captivated Nate and I, as we stood there like we were watching our fa- vorite sports team, cheer- ing for each smash into the water as the aerial predator hunted for nutritious fish. It’s wild footage, which I can’t wait to put into slow motion for you.

The afternoon sun was getting hot in Cana- da’s warmest region, so we decided it was time for a refreshing overnight pad- dling trip up a large creek that flows into Lake Erie.

When we arrived at the canoe launch spot, with my classic canoe Old Baldy ready for another reckoning, we watched a few locals ready for another reckon- ning trip up a large creek that flows into Lake Erie. We enjoyed a superbly relaxing sleep in our tent and bug-proof hammocks, and woke up in the morn- ing to the same muggy poison ivy bank we barely ing to the same muddy place. We pulled out the canoe and pushed it unmanned out into the current. Nate and I then swam to Old Baldy, and steered him towards a giant log in which we could climb out of the water like evolution itself and man the canoe again.

Paddling back to the ve- hicle for some time, I was contemplating the end of filming Lake Erie’s coast. There were high hope spe- cies I dreamed of finding and profiling on camera, let alone to share person- al space with, such as the eastern massasauga rattle- snake, monarch migration, or a badger. The humbling effect of humanity.

Nature is still appreciably tainted by the unavoidable effects of humanity. There are not too many creeks around that are large enough to not touch the bottom, but are close quar- ters enough to feel intimate with the ecosystem. The water quality is refreshing- ly cool due to its spring-fed nature, and there are no sounds of traffic. The canoe quietly pivoted around in the water, the lure’s splash and the nostalgic drone of dog day cicadas filling the cup of audible satisfaction.

The trees and log jams offered small windows of space to push both the canoe and our bod- ies through, but not at the same time. One of us would climb the canoe and climb the tree like an undiscovered primate species of southern Ontario. The other would sit in the back of the canoe as the monkey man in the tree pulled us halfway out onto the same tree, while hanging over the logs. The canoe person would then climb out onto the same tree, and while hanging over the flowing water, pull Old Baldy through the wooden gauntlet. Immediately after many of these blockages, there would be grand clearings of open water, gently flow- ing and eddying quietly in place. We pulled out the fishing rod and flung it into the abyss of peacefulness.

A blue heron waits in a sea of biodiversity for its next meal in Long Point. (Owen Bjorgan)

A bird that looks like it belongs on a soggy ocean coast somewhere, dive-bombing the water with precision and calculated authority. These birds captivated Nate and I, as we stood there like we were watching our favourite sports team, cheering for each smash into the water as the aerial predator hunted for nutritious fish. It’s wild footage, which I can’t wait to put into slow motion for you.

In the world of pad- dling, I personally prefer the narrower and more en- closed sections of flowing water. This situation allows you to better investigate the creek bank’s flora and fauna. I enjoy the generally cleaner nature of upstream water, where it has yet to be tainted by the unavoidable effects of humanity.

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A blue heron waits in a sea of biodiversity for its next meal in Long Point. (Owen Bjorgan)
NPCA recognizes environmental stewardship

Mike Balsom
The Local

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority held its 2020 and 2021 Conservation Awards at the West Niagara Agricultural Centre and Fairgrounds Sept. 21.

The awards recognize individuals, groups and businesses for their significant achievements and contributions in improving and restoring our local environment for the benefit of all watershed residents.

The 2021 Awards of Merit were received by a number of people with Niagara-on-the-Lake connections.

Environmental educator Kerry Kennedy of Niagara College was recognized for her dedication to numerous organizations, including Trout Unlimited-Niagara Chapter, the Niagara Falls Nature Club, Niagara Environmental Advisory Committee, and the Birds of Niagara Steering Committee.

Kyra Simone, a member of the NOTL Environmental Advisory Committee, who received the Lord Mayor's Volunteer Award for her Environmental efforts in 2021, was also recognized with an NPCA award. Simone runs a local community group that engages volunteers in environmental initiatives, and is currently enrolled in a PhD program at McMaster University’s Ecohydrology lab.

Simone’s partner, Gregory Ford, and his colleague Kiersten McCutcheon accepted an Award of Merit on behalf of their organization, Niagara Coastal Community Collaborative. Niagara Coastal works on three ecological priorities: nature-based shorelines, healthy beaches and habitat and species. They partner with regional groups to conserve the Great Lakes and have collaborated and engaged more than 500 volunteers in collecting data across 98 different sites.

The Business Award of Merit was earned by Spirit in Niagara Small Batch Distillers, founded by Arnie Lepp. His efforts to use fruit that would normally have gone to waste to create a fruit-based assortment of spirits earned the distillery the award, as well as other environmental initiatives, such as using the wastewater from their distillation process as green manure for fields and surrounding farms, allowing every stage of the fruit to be used rather than tossed away.

Lindsay Taylor also received an Award of Merit for founding ncStewards, a group of environmentally-motivated Niagara College students who promote and engage in practices that further the objective of sustainability on campus and across Niagara.

NPCA chair Rob Foster with Kyra Simone, who was recognized for her community group that engages volunteers in environmental initiatives. With them is NPCA CAO Chandra Sharma, and Natalie Green, manager, climate change and special programs. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

Rob Foster recognizes Arnie Lepp with the Business Award of Merit, with Chandra Sharm and Natalie Green of the NPCA.

2021 NPCA Award of Merit Winners are Lindsay Taylor, Kerry Kennedy, Kyra Simone, Kiersten McCutcheon (front), Gregory Ford, and Arnie Lepp.

Flavours of the Week

Honey Garlic Dark Balsamic
50% off Sept 26th - 30th (limit 2 per customer)

Black Walnut Dark Balsamic
Free with $65 purchase Oct 1st & 2nd
50% off Oct 3rd - 7th (limit 2 per customer)

NEW IN STORE!
Neil’s Real Deal Hot Sauces
Made in Ontario
Local Discount 10%
Nashville to Queenston — and stops along the way

Mike Balsom
The Local

Queenston resident Jess Rice was at a Nashville-area Target store when she got the call from Canadian-born music legend Neil Young’s people.

She had just sold her wildly popular and critically acclaimed restaurant Avo there and was trying to figure out her next move. Avo had been voted Music City’s best new restaurant in 2015. The country music royalty who call that city home were frequent guests. She was the talk of the town and in high demand.

“They asked if I catered,” she recalls of the phone call, “and I said no. Then they asked if I did private chef work and I said not usually. Then they asked if I would do it on tour, and I said no. Finally, they asked if I would do it for Neil Young, and I said ‘Yes, in fact, I would,’ because the restaurant that part still is a raw food restaurant, specializing in vegan, kosher and gluten-free menu items. That fit in well with the lifestyle of Young and his wife, actor Daryl Hannah.

Once she said yes to Young’s people, Rice had to figure out exactly how she would go about cooking on a tour bus. It was a bit of a leap of blind faith for her, not knowing what kind of equipment might be supplied for her, but leaps of faith seem to be common in her life.

Rice always thought she would end up working in the music business, but never imagined that love of food would be the vehicle that would take her there.

Born in Georgia, Rice grew up in Massachusetts and began a Fine Arts degree from Lesley University in Cambridge. She moved to Austin, Texas and Austin, Texas and finished her degree at the private, non-profit St. Edward’s University.

“I was always into music,” she says. “I worked in a record store when I was a kid. I thought I would end up in the business side of music, publicity or management. I eventually left Austin and took an internship with a public relations firm in New York City for three months and that was it.

When that came to an end, the long-time country music and bluegrass fan decided she wanted to live in Nashville, so she headed to Tennessee. While there, she made the decision to dominate animal-based and genetically modified foods as well as gluten from her diet, and began helping others do the same.

Her next leap of faith? Studying with naturopathic doctor Amy Rachiele in Indonesia, focusing specifically on raw foods. After that it was on to study with the world’s leading plant-based chef Matthew Kenney at his culinary institute in California.

On her return to Nashville she made a name for herself supplying raw food dishes to local eateries and teaching plant-based nutrition classes independently and with Metro Nashville’s Education Commission. Rice also was invited to teach knife skills to country singer Trisha Yearwood on a Nashville Food Network television show, which led to an opportunity to cook for Kelly Clarkson.

At the same time, she was working on the concept for her own restaurant, and in 2015, after two years of planning, she opened Avo and took the city by storm. A year later she sold the restaurant, and that’s when Neil Young came calling.

Her first tour with Young was in 2016, taking her to big shows such as Farm-Aid and the Outlaw Music Festival.

“Cooking on a tour bus has its challenges,” she laughs. “We kind of transformed a bus into a kitchen. It was kind of wild and crazy. But it was great, and touring with everyone. I kind of have a whole family now from that crew. Being on the road together binds you to get together like family.”

Rice doesn’t share much about what she serves artists such as Neil Young and Pearl Jam, with whom she just finished travelling for four stops from Sept. 1 through 8 in Ontario and Quebec.

But knowing that her specialty is healthy, organic foods, one can guess the general theme of the menu. In between cities, she loves to stop at local farm stands to get the freshest produce available and to actually meet the farmers who grow the food. That’s one of the traits of her new home in Niagara that she truly values.

So, how did the world-class, healthy lifestyle advocate and chef end up in Niagara?

During Young’s 2016 tour there was a stopover in Telluride, Colorado, where Hannah keeps a home. Over the course of three days, they used the stopover to film Hannah’s script for a psychedelic cowboy movie called Paradise, starring Young, Willie Nelson and Neil Young’s sons Lukas and Micah, which debuted on Netflix in spring 2018.

The cinematographer on that film, Camfield, Ontario native Adam C.K. Vollick, who had settled in the village of Queenston.

“I was cooking for everyone on the film. Willie, his sons, Daryl, so many people,” says Rice. “Adam had been running around all day shooting the movie. He was so nice, super-friendly. He came up to me to thank me for cooking. We exchanged emails and didn’t see each other for a couple of years!”

Rice has continued to cook for every one of Young’s tours since then. On one of those later tours, Vollick, who had been shooting for Young since being introduced to him by Hamilton-born music producer Daniel Lanois in 2010, ended up on the same “shadow” bus as Rice. They began to realize they had a connection. After a vacation to Europe, Rice decided to visit Vollick in Queenston to help him recover from a bicycle accident.

Rice and Vollick married at St. Catharines City Hall in January, 2020, and the months prior they welcomed their daughter Velvet Mae Vollick into the world.

Their daughter’s name is a reference to the Elizabeth Taylor film National Velvet, revealing another love of her own that enlivens Rice, her love of horses.

When she moved to Queenston with Vollick, she brought with her Jonney, a Kentucky thoroughbred she named for the country singer George Jones. He boards in Smithville, and travels with Rice to show and compete in Southern Ontario.

Rice sees some parallels between Queenston and Nashville, especially in terms of the prevalence of the vineyards and farms along the Niagara River Parkway. She can’t help but visit every farm stand she sees.

“That’s a Neil Young piece of advice,” Rice explains. “You never feel the farm stand. You see a farm stand, you stop. I always think of that when I stop.”

When she ran Avo she bought all of its produce ad-hoc from the hundred mile rule, and sees Niagara as another place where that can easily be done.

“That is some kind of spirit that I had in Nashville,” she says. “It’s really strong here in Niagara. And like the proximity to the border, because I work over there a lot, and it’s kind of nostalgic to me, too.”

A couple of years ago Rice and Vollick bought 5.5 acre property just outside of Niagara. It has a four-horse barn on it, and the perfect property for the couple to pursue their collective creative dreams.

“Our plan is to always have both a Canadian and a Nashville home base,” says Rice. “We want to turn the Nashville base into a sort of permaculture/orchard/horse haven. It will have a commercial kitchen space, too.”

Other than the week-long stint with Pearl Jam ear last month, when they got via Young’s recommendation, most of Rice’s cooking lately has been for Velvet Mac, Adam’s daughter Bijou from his first marriage, and Adam, whom she refers to as a “terrific entrepreneur.”

Over the years Rice has amassed a series of original recipes she often shares on Instagram and social media accounts, both dubbed My Poor Tired Liver. She often hopes to put them all together in a cookbook that one can imagine would also double as an incredible work of art if she succeeded both her and Vollick’s artist-}
Preds win home opener 6-3 in physical game

Mike Balsom

After a slow start, the Niagara Predators cruised to a 6-3 victory over the visiting Northumberland Stars to win their home opener Friday in their second season at the Virgil Meridian Credit Union Arena.

It was a penalty-filled Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League (GMHL) match, with the Stars assessed penalties seven times in the first period alone, including twice for unsportsmanlike conduct. The physical play of both teams pushed the older and much larger Northumberland squad to throw off the young Preds early in the game. But it was something head coach Kevin Taylor had warned his team about.

“I knew (Northumberland) was going to take a lot of penalties,” Taylor said after the game. “I was just trying to keep the guys emotionally in check.”

The slow start allowed Northumberland’s Thomas Murphy to open the scoring just over six minutes into the game. But 16-year-old Predators forward Nolan Wyers responded only 49 seconds later when he skated in unchecked and put one past Stars goalie Caeden Bellmann.

The period ended with a 1-1 tie, and with the Preds holding a five-on-three advantage for the last five seconds, when the Stars’ Justice Schlegeln was handed a five-minute major for a vicious cross-check just 32 seconds after Murphy was charged for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Niagara carried that advantage into the second period, and Anthony Tropea capitalized on it to put the Predators up 2-1. That was followed by returning forward Reese Bisciu first goal of the year on another power play later in the period, after he accepted a perfect pass from behind the net from Riley Ellis. Just over a minute later, Wais Ayubi, who had just joined the team Friday afternoon, pushed the score to 4-1 for the Preds with what turned out to be the winning goal.

“He was trying out for another team and he came over today,” Taylor said. “We signed him just today. What a bonus for a player like that. A great start to his season.”

The tables were turned early in the third when Ellis took a huge sticking penalty, allowing Murphy to notch his second goal of the game for the Stars on that power play. But Bisci answered 11 seconds later with the Preds’ fifth of the game, his second, assisted by Ayubi. Ellis then stoned for leaving his team shorthanded by scoring number six for the Preds almost exactly a minute later.

Northumberland’s Aidan Robertson scored on the power play with Preds defender Dawson Walker serving time for delay of game later in the period.

The Stars tried in vain to mount a comeback in the last six minutes, and it led to much frustration that continued to seethe to the final seconds. Northumberland’s Liam Chapman cross-checked a Niagara player hard into the boards, causing a scrum to begin, with a few punches thrown by both sides. Referees worked to calm things down quickly, and Chapman was assessed for a five-minute major at the end of the game.

When the ice was finally cleared, Taylor was happy with the result and, more importantly, with the way the team played.

“We wanted to keep the speed going,” he explained. “I think we’re a guys going fast team. It’s a bigger ice surface (than St. George’s rink, where the Preds lost their season opener 2-1 five days earlier), so it helped us. We came up with a big win, and the leadership group stepped up for us today.”

Chief among that leadership group is second-year Predators Max Bredin, wearing the captain’s C on home ice for the first time. The St. Davids resident appreciated the weight of the letter on his jersey.

“It’s a real honour,” said the 19-year-old, “especially being from NOTL.”

Taylor was pleased with the quality of play across the board.

“Leo Savin and Logan Baillie came in to help. Leo scored on the power play, and Logan got one early in the game. He also lauded the play of Predators forward Nolan Wyers, whose showy goal six minutes into the period seemed to throw off the much larger Northumberland squad and put one past Stars goalie Caeden Bellmann.

“I was just trying to do the town proud, being from NOTL. I just want to do the town proud, being from NOTL. I just want to do the town proud.”

Taylor told The Local. “And he showed great leadership tonight, too. He showed the game down and controlled the game, and it really stood out for me tonight.”

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JOSELIN, PETER EDWARD, BSC, MSC, PENG. — Born May 6, 1934 in Redhill, Surrey, UK. Passed away peacefully on September 23, 2022 at the Greater Niagara General Hospital in his 88th year. Predeceased by his parents, Frank and Irene Joselin and his sister, Dorothy Swanton nee Joselin (Ken). Loving father of Christine Forber (Andrew), Beth Joselin (Trevor Michael) and Anne Joselin. Loving grandfather of Colin (Artemis) and Thomas Forber, Connor (Mariah) and Shelah (Robbie) Charette and great-grandfather of Thornton Charette.

Graduated from Queen Mary College, London UK 1955 (Civil Engineering), then did his Masters at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA on a Fulbright scholarship. Met Mary Cleve in New Orleans, where they got married in 1957. In 1958, Peter and Mary moved back to the UK where their daughters Christine and Beth were born. Peter worked in the UK then overseas in Nigeria before the family moved to Canada in 1967. Their youngest daughter, Anne, was born soon after the family’s arrival in Canada. In 1969, they moved to Niagara Falls when Peter started working for HG Acres. He spent 27 years with Acres, rising to Project Manager, mainly for power system planning for several East African utilities. On retirement, Peter and Mary moved to Virgil, where they lived until 2020.

Peter was extremely active in the community and often took on leadership roles. He was the President of the Niagara Falls Curling Club. He was a warden at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church (Stamford), until the late ’90s. He loved sailing and was a long-time member of the Parkway and Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Clubs. Peter and Mary volunteered with Meals on Wheels for many years. Peter and Mary have been active members of Grace United Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake since moving to Virgil. Member of the Lower St. Johns River Valley Lunch Group, Niagara Falls Power Squadron. One of the founding members of the Niagara Falls Probus Group.

They were avid supporters of the performing arts. They loved to attend opera and the Niagara Falls Probus Group.

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Simmonds, Keith—Keith let out his last legendary howl on the 24th of September 2022. He was doing what he loved - riding his bike, spending time with friends and supporting a cause that was so dear to him. One of his favourite quotes was “Whether you think you can or can’t - you’re right.” True to form, Keith always chose the “I can” approach to life. As a born-and-bred Edmonton boy, Keith grew up celebrating mountains and the outdoors. He met his wife Toby in Whistler, moved to Fernie and then Invermere where they had their two boys, Ben and Nick, of whom Keith was intensely proud. The family spent a year in Red Deer before landing in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Here Keith began his Great Wolf Lodge adventure while building a sharing, caring community for all of us. His passionate, encouraging and philanthropic nature is exemplified perfectly by how he spent his last 10 days: He cycled, fundraised and laughed his way to Toronto to New York City... It was the ride of his life. Forever loved and missed by his adored boys Ben and Nick, his cherished wife Toby, his treasured mother Ellen Mae, late father David, his brother Greg (Susan), beloved nephews Braeden and David, a clan of cousins who were always there for him, a large and incredibly loving family of in-laws, friends and colleagues galore, and of course his beloved Wolf Pack.

If you have a special photo with Keith that you would like to share, please send to: bensimmonds119@gmail.com

A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday the 2nd of October, 2022 at 11:30am. Niagara Falls Convention Centre, 6815 Stanley Ave., Niagara Falls, Ontario. Reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Campfire Circle in his honour: https://campfirecircle.org/keithsimmonds

Vitez, Vladimir “VLADO”—Long-time Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, Vladimir “Vlado” Vitez died September 22, at 2pm at the St. Catharines General Hospital, surrounded by his loving family. Vlado was born on May 10, 1944 in Varazdin Breg, Croatia. In 1964 he married Estera Cor in Varazdin, and in 1967 the couple and their 2-year-old son immigrated to NOTL. Vlado worked at Cunningham Foundry in St. Catharines for 34 years. As a founding member of the Croatian National Centre in NOTL, Vlado was well-known in the Croatian community; a sports enthusiast, he loved soccer, bocce, and fishing. Vlado was an especially devoted father, always ready to sacrifice for his children’s education, and later for the care of his adored granddaughter. He built 2 homes in NOTL, and his immaculate gardens and landscaping showed the enormous pride he took in them. He was also an exemplary neighbour, never hesitating to help others in the community; and he was always ready and willing to share his knowledge, whether you asked him to or not. Vlado leaves his wife, Estera; son Walter (Cambridge, ON); daughter Gordana, son-in-law Colin Johnston, and granddaughter Ema Johnston (Virgil, ON); brother Zeljko and nephew Goran (Varazdin); as well as numerous in-laws in Murska Sobota, Slovenia, and a host of dear friends in the Niagara region.

Vlado’s family received friends at Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake from 4-7 pm. A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday the 2nd of October, 2022 at 11:30am. Niagara Falls Convention Centre, 6815 Stanley Ave., Niagara Falls, Ontario. Reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Campfire Circle in his honour: https://campfirecircle.org/keithsimmonds

kelas@notllocal.com

Deadline is Tuesdays at 1 p.m.
The disc golf course opening at the community centre was celebrated Tuesday afternoon, with a good crowd ready to try it out.

It’s a nine-hole Aceplace course, described on the company’s Facebook page “as good for veteran players to practise their short game, or for new players to try disc golf and have some fun.”

It was supported by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club, whose members helped with the installation. Although at the opening, CAO Marnie Cluckie said it would be available at a low cost to play, Rotarian Paul Lalonde jumped in to say it will be free — discs can be borrowed at no cost from the community centre when it’s open, and playing the course is free.

Town officials and Rotarians gathered at the Community Centre Tuesday for the ribbon-cutting of the disc golf course.

Local Staff

September 28, 2022