



Have your
pets blessed
at St. Mark's
page 5



Students visit Landscape of Nations

Teachers and students from Royal Oak Community School gather around the turtle at the Landscape of Nations and spend the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation at Queenston Heights to participate in interactive activities. For more photos please see page 19. (Mike Balsom)

Indigenous healer has hope for the future, with help

Penny Coles
The Local

As it was meant to be, the ceremony at the Niagara-on-the-Lake town hall to recognize Truth and Reconciliation Day was one of both acknowledgement and education, and also a time to listen.

And for those who gathered to listen, there was much to hear and learn.

Audra Maloney, a Mi'kmaq Traditional Healer, spoke to the small crowd, many in Every Child Matters

orange T-shirts, reminding them of the goal of residential schools as summarized in a quote from Bishop Vital Grandin, a Roman Catholic priest considered a key architect of the schools. Their purpose, he said, was to instill in the children "a produced distaste for the Native life so that they will be humiliated when reminded of their origin. When they graduate from our institutions, the children will have lost everything Native except their blood."

But, said Maloney, he was wrong. What he and others

who supported the schools didn't factor in "was that our blood was our direct connection to our ancestors."

Traumas experienced through the residential school system, which impacted her family, her husband's family and so many others, "can weigh heavily on our people," she said, but "I have hope. I have witnessed many people work through their healing, release the heavy weight of trauma as we reach for our languages, our culture, our songs and our communities."

She called on all those

attending the ceremony to "personally engage" in the 94 Calls to Action, federal recommendations to acknowledge the horrifying history of the residential schools system, and to stop such abuses from happening ever again.

Maloney, whose traditional name means She Who Sees Far Like the Eagle, said the ceremony and the day it represents were "about true relationship-building, respect for another's way of seeing the world, compassion and

Continued on page 18

COVID vaccine ready at clinics

Local Staff

Niagara Region's public health department is ready to offer the recently approved Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine at its clinics.

Moderna's XBB updated vaccine offers better protection from the more recent variants of COVID-19 circulating in the community, a news release issued by the region Tuesday said.

Initially, vaccine appointments will be available to healthcare providers and high-risk individuals, including those over the age of 65; residents and staff of congregate living settings; all children six months to four years old; everyone six months of age and older with underlying health conditions; pregnant women and First Nation, Inuit or Metis individuals and their household members.

In order to make sure the most vulnerable residents receive the updated vaccine as quickly and effectively as possible, public health will also be supporting the vaccination of long-term care and retirement

home residents over the coming weeks. Following vaccination of high-risk individuals, the vaccine will be available to the rest of the population as supply permits, the news release says.

An XBB COVID-19 dose is recommended for everyone six months of age and older as long as it has been at least six months since they were last vaccinated or infected with COVID-19.

Residents can find the region's public health vaccine clinic schedule at niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/vaccination/clinic-schedule.aspx.

Appointments can be booked through ontario.ca/book-vaccine/. A limited number of appointments will be available from Oct. 3 to 14, and more appointments will be added later this month.

In addition to the Spikevax vaccine, Health Canada authorized the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty XBB-focused vaccine on Sept. 28, however details of when Niagara will receive a supply of that vaccine have not yet been shared by the province.



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Irish Harp’s \$5,000 takes cenotaph fundraiser over the top



Peter Warrick asked Jovie Joki, owner of the Irish Harp, to help raise money to restore the cenotaph, and last week she handed over \$5,000. (Penny Coles)

Penny Coles
The Local

The Irish Harp’s owner, Jovie Joki, is known for her fundraisers to help local causes, the most recent of which was the restoration of the cenotaph.

The fundraiser for the joint project of the town and the Niagara-on-the-Lake branch of the Royal Canadian Legion has now reached its \$80,500 target to tender the work that is required, sooner rather than later, to restore the cenotaph, which was celebrated for its 100-year history on Queen Street in June, 2022.

Joki says she enjoys the opportunities she has to help the community by holding fun events for patrons that allow her to contribute to many good causes, and the cenotaph is an important landmark to the town, and a cause she could embrace easily. It needs to be cared for to remain the structure it is, she says. “I feel we have to keep it up.”

Peter Warrick, as ex-military and ex-police, sits on the cenotaph committee, which is a partnership between the town, which owns the iconic landmark in its place on a municipal road, and the legion, which took on the responsibility to have its condition assessed on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. It began with extensive research by Willowbank School of Restoration Arts students, and

a 40-page report detailing repairs that were needed immediately. It also emphasized the importance of ongoing maintenance once the immediate repairs are completed.

Although at that time there was no cost associated with the work, the committee launched a fundraiser to pay for it and to also establish a fund for ongoing maintenance.

Warrick, knowing the Irish Harp’s reputation for holding fun events that also raise money for community causes, recently approached Joki about the cenotaph.

“Literally within two days of reaching out to our local community, Jovie and the Irish Harp pledged their support, and as can be seen, delivered on their promise of support to this iconic town landmark. This is truly endearing and amazing.”

The restaurant held a raffle, and offered weekly raffle tickets for a chance to win an Irish Harp basket valued at more than \$150, a draw a week for four weeks, asking patrons to raise a pint honouring local war veterans as well as contributing to the restoration of the clock tower. They raised \$5,000 in a month.

That not only meant the committee reached its goal and the town could put out requests for proposals from companies to bid on the work, says Warrick, “but also allows a trust to be managed by the town for further maintenance.

That money will be incorporated in the town’s budget.”

Now, he says, “it can live on in the community for hundreds of more years.”

The 40-page report by Willowbank students, class of 2024, provides some insight into the work needed to restore the iconic landmark, and the priority of the repairs that need to be undertaken, says Warrick, and the town is following its recommendations. “That report is very important, very comprehensive, and informs the process and the work that needs to be done. And now that the town has the money they can proceed.”

The cenotaph is an iconic landmark, says Warrick, and the only one in Canada to be on the main street in town, but also serves as “an important reminder of who came before us.”

As to its significance to residents, he adds, “anybody who loves this town should love the cenotaph.”

Although it’s possible to see some deterioration of the brick work from outside, the most immediate concern is related to water damage inside, he says.

The report lists 12 recommendations for work that should be carried out immediately, and other repairs also suggested that aren’t as urgent.

Donations can still be made to the cenotaph fund at the Virgil town hall at 1593 Four Mile Creek Rd., or the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 located at 410 King Street, via cash or cheque (made payable to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake) or online at notl.com/recreation-events/community-initiatives-events.

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Gateway project nearing completion



Although the town was trying to keep the dry stone wall and plantings at the corner of Queen and Mississagua Streets out of the public eye until the project was completed, that became a little difficult once the fencing was removed. Funded through a donation from the Gerald Kowalchuk Family Foundation, the dry stone wall has been completed by expert Menno Braam. Still to be done is some electrical and hydro work, as well as finishing the irrigation for plantings. The town says it should be done in the next week or two, and details about an official opening ceremony will be announced soon. (David Gilchrist)

First capital budget reveal shows possible 7.5% increase

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism
Initiative Reporter

Niagara-on-the-Lake is beginning to crunch numbers on its 2024 budget.

Staff presented a capital plan to councillors Wednesday — a 70-project, \$10.3-million venture that if approved as it currently sits, would represent a 7.5 per cent increase to taxpayers.

There are five projects that make up more than 50 per cent of the capital envelope, the most expensive being the second phase of a reconstruction

of Concession 6 Road between Warner and York roads. It is projected to have an impact of \$1.9 million on the capital budget.

The project with the second-highest price tag in the town's capital plan is a Hunter Road watermain replacement between Four Mile Creek Road and Concession 4, at \$1.65 million.

This is followed by \$750,000 in work to a culvert on Dorchester Street, a \$500,000 replacement of a 2009 dump truck, and \$400,000 for new parking machines.

Parking in the heritage district has been an ongoing topic since most of the metres in the area stopped accepting credit cards, and began only taking coins or payment through the HonkMobile app.

Even though the town is setting aside money for new parking machines, it could not be well into next year before any are available for purchase, said director of corporate services Kyle Freeborn, citing supply chain issues as a major factor.

“Hopefully by next spring we’re in a position where vendors come through,”

he said.

Coun. Gary Burroughs raised concerns about staff recommending that council defer a decision on a \$1.75-million overhaul of Mississagua Street until future years.

“Most residents and tourists come down that road — and it’s not attractive,” said Burroughs.

Staff later said in the meeting that this project could be supported if funds are pulled out from another area of the budget.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said she’s pleased to see infrastructure projects being prioritized.

2024 Capital Budget Highlights

Sample Capital Projects – Top 5 with highest budget (\$5.2M):
• Makes up 50% of total capital project envelope in 2024

Project #	Description	Cost	Funding
C02187	Concession 6 Road Reconstruction - Warner Road to York Road Phase 2	\$1.9M	Capital & OCIF
C01946	Hunter Road Watermain Replacement - Four Mile Creek Road to Concession 4 Road	\$1.65M	Water
C02157	Dorchester Street Culvert - Dorchester @ Gage (OMC-03)	\$750k	Grants & Debt
C02269	Replace 2009 International 5 Ton Dump + Plow Truck W235	\$500k	Water
C02125	Parking Machines	\$400k	Parking

The top five budget items equal \$5.2 million. (Screenshot)

“These are areas where you cannot not invest,” she said.

Freeborn said the budget could be approved as early as mid-December, and that kicking off the process in late September puts the municipality in

a better position when it comes to tendering and pricing.

According to the staff presentation, the capital budget is planned to be finalized on Oct. 4.

The operating budget is expected to be discussed Oct. 11.



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NOTL looking at \$1.108 million to transition fleet to electric

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism
Initiative Reporter

Niagara-on-the-Lake council is on its way to potentially spending more than \$1 million to update the town's fleet of vehicles, but there was mixed reaction earlier this week about how heavy a foot the town should have on the pedal.

During Tuesday's regular meeting, council sent a decision to the budget review committee to consid-

er \$1.108 million from the capital spending plan to be spent on converting 10 to 15 per cent of the town's trucks and cars to electric vehicles.

Staff is also recommending six electric vehicles be acquired through the upcoming budget process, and to consider facility upgrades of \$100,000, such as charging stations.

And there's more money that will be needed ahead on the road.

The budget review committee has been tasked with

evaluating whether the town should hire two new full-time employees with a cost of \$215,000, and increase its fleet replacement reserve by \$492,000 in 2024. Nearly \$425,000 of that amount impacts the tax levy. In 2023, the town put more than \$351,000 into the replacement reserve, reads the staff report before council on Tuesday — a day before the budget review committee was set to meet.

In 2021, the town commissioned a consulting

firm to conduct a fleet service review and green fleet strategy for its fleet and equipment assets to improve fleet asset management and operational efficiency, and to steadily transition towards a green fleet.

With this vision in mind, the goal is to provide an ambitious yet feasible and attainable roadmap for the town to achieve service excellence and significant greenhouse gas emission reductions in its fleet, staff said in its report.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said he's "not opposed to electric vehicles," but the town having to make such an expensive transition to them might be further down the road than what staff is suggesting.

"The technology — not a lot of folks are using it," said Wiens. "People haven't bought in," he added, noting that his household has begun the move to non-combustible-engine vehicles.

"What we probably should be doing is monitoring the situation," he said, adding there is more spending for the town ahead. "This is just phase one of an awful lot of money into our fleet."

Director of operations Rome D'Angelo said the first phase is "six to eight" electric vehicles, as well as a \$100,000-retrofit of the operations centre.

The town will also need to consider the purchase of a generator and a transformer as possible future investments.

The next spending ask, as early as 2025, could be more than \$250,000, said D'Angelo.

Wiens tabled an amendment to defer the recommendation about

converting to electric vehicles until next year's budget process, but due to a tie, that idea was defeated.

"I think we need to start now to replenish our fleet," said Coun. Sandra O'Connor, one member of council who voted against Wiens' amendment.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa also wants to hit the road with the plan quickly.

Admitting what is proposed involves a lot of "up front" costs, he estimates the bulk of it can be recovered in five years through savings on fuel and maintenance.

Coun. Gary Burroughs has also asked staff for a future update on the pros and cons of leasing versus purchasing vehicles.

During Wednesday's budget meeting, councillors reiterated positions, stated the previous day about fleet upgrades when they discussed the town's \$10.3-million capital spending plan.

Although there was still no decision on the fleet strategy during the budget committee discussions, they did agree the process to consider it will continue through budget deliberations.



The town is considering converting 10 to 15 per cent of the town's trucks and cars to electric vehicles. (Supplied)

Region to invest \$84 million in NOTL roads over five years

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism
Initiative Reporter

Niagara Region has plans to invest \$84 million in improvements to roads and bridges in Niagara-on-the-Lake over the next five years.

This information was provided to town council Tuesday morning in a presentation from Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser and Frank Tassone, the region's director of transportation services.

After Kaiser provided an overview of projects that regional council has been working on in recent months, some of it not related to roads, Tassone gave a breakdown on work currently taking place — as well as other improvements that will occur in the future.

Ten projects were touched on in the presentation.

A reconstruction of Niagara Stone Road between Four Mile Creek Road and Line 1 is nearing completion, and a community

workshop will soon be held to discuss landscaping plans as one of the last steps.

Other projects Tassone explained are in early stages include potential upgrades to Airport Road between Niagara Stone and York Roads, and the possibility of a roundabout at Townline Road between Stanley Avenue and Four Mile Creek Road.

Bridges on Line 4 and Lakeshore Road are also being looked at for future improvements.

One project that

generated some discussion is a roundabout in St. Davids, planned at Four Mile Creek and York Roads.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor said council has told the region the town does not like this option, and that businesses in the area believe they would be negatively impacted.

She said those concerns are "not being heard," and called it a "serious omission" that the project continues to move forward in its early stages, a project that has been discussed

since 2021.

The second half of the presentation involved the region's Zero Vision program, and efforts being made to address road safety.

Vision Zero is a program used in other parts of Ontario but is somewhat "new to Niagara," said Tassone, adding that other municipalities who have implemented the program have noticed a 45-per-cent reduction in speeding.

"We're building upon lessons learned in some of

the other municipalities," said Tassone.

There will be four rotating cameras at red lights in these areas as well, he added.

The program is not meant to primarily be a revenue generator, even though it will bring in money — split between the region and town — which in turn must be used to fund road safety efforts, Tassone explained.

"We want to see the infractions decrease, which tells us we're changing the behaviour of motorists."

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The regional roadwork underway through Virgil is nearing completion. (Penny Coles)

St. Mark's Church service to bless animals Oct. 4

Sharon Burns
The Local

The Reverend at St. Mark's Anglican Church is calling for all pet owners and their pets to attend their "Blessing of the Animals" service at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 4, which is St. Francis of Assisi Day.

"This is part of St. Mark's ministry to the wider community, where folks cannot only just see the church and see our rounds, but take time to be reflective, to be thankful and to think about the blessings of life in this context," said Rev. Leighton Lee.

"St. Francis was well-known for his love of the natural world and animals, and so these sorts of services where people can come and have their pets blessed and celebrated have become increasingly popular," explained Lee.

The short service will include a reading, a prayer of Thanksgiving, and individual blessings for the pets. "It's better to do it individually so we don't have cats and dogs, and dogs and dogs getting into it," said Lee, who added that the service is not just confined to cats and dogs. All pets are welcome including birds and fish, although he admits transporting fish may be a bit tricky.

This is the first service of its kind since Lee took tenure at St. Mark's in June of 2021. He noticed that "there are plenty of animal lovers in town and plenty of dog walkers," and thought the service would be a nice way to bring the community together.

"This is not an Anglican-specific event, simply for the folks of St. Mark's," said Lee. "It's not even just a Christian event. It's a community event framed within the context of an Anglican liturgy, constructed in a way that it's not sectarian. People of all faiths are more than welcome, and we hope that the service will be appropriate in that way."

"It's part of what we love to do, is have people come and see that this isn't just a church for Anglicans, but it's a place for everybody in our community and we love to be able to demonstrate that hospitality."

St. Francis of Assisi is a very famous saint within the Christian tradition, explained Lee. He was the founder of the Franciscan Order, and was well known for his love of the natural world. The fourth day of October is the day that is set aside in the Christian calendar for him to be remembered. "That's why blessings of animals tend to take place at the end of September, early October, to tie it in with his love of the natural world."



Rev. Leighton Lee says the animal blessing is an opportunity to welcome the community to St. Mark's Church. (Donald Combe)

Lavender Farm expands to include wildflowers



Melissa Achal, local residents Tony and Linda, and Robert Achal at the new 12-acre Noeb Lavender Farm on Niagara Stone Road. Owners Melissa and Robert celebrated Noeb's 14th anniversary recently with a pick-your-own wildflowers special, which Tony and Linda took advantage of with a couple of beautiful bouquets. All proceeds from the special were donated to Backpacks for Kids. (Joy Sanguedolce)



FEATURE LISTING OF THE WEEK



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EDITORIAL

Expressing our gratitude at Thanksgiving

This is National Newspaper Week, and also the week leading up to Thanksgiving. For those of you who enjoy living in a democracy, with all the associated checks and balances, ethical and balanced reporting in newspapers and on legitimate news websites are part of that system. Otherwise you end up with all your news from social media, which may be what some people are looking for in today's world, however, social media doesn't offer much in the way of alternatives for those who seek something more informative and trustworthy. We believe community news is every bit as important in its role of providing local information to residents as the large dailies that tell us what is happening in urban areas across the province, the country and the globe. If we weren't certain, we wouldn't do what

we do. Although The Local concentrates on news from our community, readers who visit our Village Media website will find much more than NOTL news, which is just as committed to being every bit as trustworthy. As we approach Thanksgiving, allow us to say that we are so very grateful to be able to keep our community informed with local news that in

some cases has a direct impact on our lives, to tell great stories about community members, and to celebrate our reputation for fair, balanced and ethical reporting. We have great reporters who are all committed to those values, and whose integrity is obvious in all they do. Thank you to our readers, our advertisers, and all those who share their stories with us. Of course we couldn't do it without you.

We feel just as strongly about our website. If you are reading our news online, you will know that all reports are fair and balanced and reporters have the same integrity, whether the content originates in NOTL or across the country, and follows a strict code of ethics set by Village Media. Whether it's provincial news on our website about the recent shenanigans of Premier Doug Ford, a significant

local event such as the Truth and Reconciliation ceremony at town hall, the budget that is not expected to be good news for local taxpayers, or the stories about the many fascinating people in our town that we love to share, we are proud to be the voice of the community, and one we hope you know you can trust.

Penny Coles
The Local

Breath of Fresh Air conference exactly what it sounds like



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

Last week, my school board coworkers and I were sent to the nation's capital for a truly unique experience at the 2023 Breath of Fresh Air conference. The subject material we discussed, dissected and distributed was surprisingly beyond the reaches of my school board job as an outdoor educator — which is why this week's article is about what we learned, and how it applies to society as a whole. I sincerely hope that every reader of every age will find this interesting. Initially, I think my coworkers and I had visions of passionate educators discussing how children played with blocks in the forest, which may have seemed like a stretch to

have nearly 300 attendees from around the country to tune in on. We were pleasantly mistaken. Instead, we found ourselves in seminars and breakout sessions involving the natural environment, politics, children, mental health, Indigenous voices and policy all braided into one. Like an ecosystem, all of these topics are intertwined in ways we sometimes don't acknowledge, and can't afford to ignore. Doctors, authors and other industry professionals regarding all of the above subjects congregated to share massively important conversations about how children are the future, and how the future lies in nature accessibility. Considering the amount of information and perspectives I absorbed, my top takeaway is how the youth of society are the canaries in the coal mine, and how the natural world is involved in this observation.

Although I have thought of this broad concept many times, it was brought into focus when one of the seminar leaders mentioned a specific scenario. She explained that when you go to a park and see kids and teenagers on top of the playground structure, such as the roof of the highest point, it represents how that demographic is underwhelmed and out of outdoor play options. Therefore, they turn to other stimuli, perhaps such as deemed inappropriate behaviour. Arguably worse is excess screen time, which is clinically and anecdotally a major generational addiction and problem. Many of the seminar leaders, including this amazing speaker, were particularly good at engaging the crowd to make you think about this societal conundrum from a personal perspective. Suddenly, I found myself rewinding into the recesses of my brain and reflecting on how I was so fortunate to have grown up when I did, and also thankful for shared experiences in nature.

I once had a beautiful and expansive swamp across the street to explore, catch animals and build forts. It's since been logged and drained. There were once four idyllic rope swings in town that my friends and I could bike to and enjoy some wild experiences. One day, we woke up and each one had been cut down. We cried, cut our knees, got lost, argued, smiled and roared with laughter during all of this. We grew amongst the trees while the trees grew around us. I don't need to dig up a study to know that we didn't have the same numbers or types of mental health issues that run rampant in today's youth. As many conversations at the conference reassured me, much of this phenomenon is linked very closely to whether nature is accessible to children. I was statistically fortunate to have grown up with the Niagara Escarpment, Bruce Trail, the Niagara River and "the swamp" just a figurative stone's throw from my door. Of course, this is blatantly not a reality for the majority of families. This is where a really interesting gentleman I talked with at conference came into play. He is a professor at an Ontario university and is a passionate player in finding a middle ground with development and green spaces. As a panelist, his talking points were particularly

potent, as the Greenbelt scandal with "flip-flop Ford" was still fresh and ripe for picking on everyone's minds. I approached him after the panel session and found some valued one-on-one time with the professor. He explained that developers are not evil, which I've always agreed with, and that green spaces can be made or preserved with the correct style of communication between a municipality and a developer. He gave an example of how a developer was initially told that they can only build 15 storeys high, but they were driven to create a 25-storey apartment. The municipality then reached a compensation with the developer, a sort of bargain if you will, where they said that they would allow the vertical growth, providing the developer created an area of "privately owned public land" in the form of green space. We're talking parks, playgrounds, forests, creeks and ponds that are accessible to anyone who lives

there and pays taxes. I love the sound of that. It would also create a less rocky relationship between local governments and big-wig developers, which we see on display so often right here in Niagara-on-the-Lake. I've always preached that in southern Ontario, the power of conservation lies largely in the hands of private land owners, considering that is precisely what most of the land falls under. It would be a remarkable win for biodiversity, growing communities and society's health if larger scale entities such as developers or corporate behemoths could agree on such a healthy middle ground. In general, kids and their mental health are a reflection of a society that we have built and perpetuated as adults. Their behaviours and challenges are a direct consequence of a world we have created and governed, and their state of education and well-being is a reflection of the shortcomings in today's orchestrated human world.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS ACCESS (Toll Free) 1-866-550-5205	ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS Meetings every Wednesday evening 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. St. Mark's Parish Hall 41 Byron St., NOTL or find a meeting 905-682-2140	CRIME STOPPERS 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) niagaratips.com Text 274637 (CRIMES), keyword: Niagara, then your tip
GAMBLER'S ANONYMOUS 905-351-1616		

View from the couch

Donald Combe
Special to The Local

The 10 episodes of *Shrinking* (Apple TV, 2023) offer a unique insight into both the personal and professional lives of several psychiatrists, one of whom starts to tell his clients exactly what he thinks, while ignoring his training and ethics. This refreshing series stars Jason Segel and Harrison Ford.

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

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

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Where's Ben?

Eden student Ben Foster continues to discover new locations in NOTL, wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. Last week, Ben visited a petting farm at the corner of East and West Line and Townline Road, as correctly identified by Nicole Cook.

COMMENT

Library interview with Dr. Tim Bastedo

Ilze Andzans
NOTL Library
Board Member

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library board and staff are interested in exploring the special place books, reading, storytelling and libraries hold in the hearts of our community members. The power of the written and spoken word, the enchantment of libraries and childhood memories of time spent with books, creates a profound tapestry of emotions and experiences. This interview series prompts introspection and reflection, offering a unique lens through which to examine the bond between readers and their connection to books, storytelling and libraries. Watch this space for interviews with an array of interesting community members.

Dr. Tim Bastedo is a family physician with the Niagara North Family Health Team. He moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2013, where he lives with his wife, two children, and their chickens and bees. I ran into Dr. Bastedo and his little girl at the NOTL Public Library on a sunny Friday afternoon. She was holding a tall, wobbly, stack of books and could barely reach the check out station. So I thought, this was a parent who definitely encourages reading, visits the library and is building memories with his children. A week later, I sat down with Dr. Bastedo in his office to talk about some of his favourite books, childhood library memories and the importance of reading in his and his children's lives.

Q. Where does your love of reading come from?

I grew up in a family of readers. My mother was a teacher and father a doctor in family practice. My parents read to me as a child and our house was filled with books. This was the 'pre-screen' era, so settling down with a good book was our quiet time; early mornings, rainy afternoons and

late night reading under the covers with a flashlight are all part of my childhood experience. As the third of four children, I was always intrigued by what my older siblings were reading and even though I would eventually be given their books, I was impatient. My books were on the lower shelves so I could easily access them. I remember climbing up on a step stool to be able to reach the top shelves on the bookcase to pull down some of the books not meant for me.

Q. What childhood memories do you have related to library visits?

I grew up in the countryside outside of Huntsville, and the public library was a central gathering point for our family if we were meeting in town or getting picked up after school. I distinctly remember the excitement when that library was built and first opened to the public; especially how it felt entering the brand new library space. I was very young then, but I remember it clearly. I spent a fair bit of time at the library as a young child and later in my high school years it became a place to hang out with my friends.

The great thing about selecting books at the library was the wide range of possible choices; different from the books we had at home. I remember one elementary school classmate who would often be at the library at the same time I was. He was allowed to check out dozens of books at a time. I definitely had 'library envy' — was he taking out something great before I had even discovered it? We did not know each other at the time, but later became good friends. Books that appealed to us were the *Hardy Boys*, *Nancy Drew* mysteries and the *Judy Blume* series.

Q. What is your favourite book of all time?

Two books stand out for me — *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and the story collection by Miranda July called *Nobody Belongs Here More than You*.

Charlie is a classic story of life lessons, about honesty and hard work to perseverance and generosity, critical values to any child's growth and development.

Miranda July is an American film director, screenwriter, actress and author. Her work includes film, fiction, monologues and performance art. Her books are quirky, funny and hard to describe — but they make me laugh out loud.

Q. What kinds of books are you reading now? (Genre/authors/fiction/non-fiction)

I read both non-fiction and fiction. At the moment, I am enjoying a compendium of essays by Malcolm Gladwell, *Talking to Strangers*, about the assumptions and mistakes we make when dealing with strangers. Running my practice at the Family Health Clinic and being the father of two active young children, I find that I don't have a lot of time to read or more precisely, to finish a book. One of the only times I can get through a book, cover to cover, is when we are on vacation or at the cottage in the summer. The stack on my bedside table is growing — and I hope to finish — the Gladwell book as well as *The Secret Life of Fungi: Discoveries from a Hidden World* by Aliya Whiteley, which is a fascinating exploration of the critical role of fungal networks on carbon storage, and how this relates to climate change. I also hope to get to a novel that came out a few years ago, *The Night Train to Lisbon*, by Pascal Mercier.

I enjoy books by Canadian authors, which I attribute to my mother's influence and Dad keeping an eye on the Globe and Mail's best-seller list. A few years ago I read *Through Black Spruce* by Joseph Boyden, which is a story of Indigenous culture and community, family ties and identity. Currently, I am reading the Giller prize-winning novel *What Strange Paradise* by



Dr. Tim Bastedo enjoys reading with his children. (Supplied)

Omar El Akkad. The main character in this book is a Syrian refugee boy who survives a passage by sea and the teenage girl who saves him. It is a compelling story of two children finding their way through a hostile world; a story of empathy and indifference, of hope and despair.

Q. Do you recommend books to family and friends?

Yes — we exchange books during the holidays and pass books on to each other when we are finished reading them. *The Whole Brain Child*, by Daniel Siegel MD and Tina Bryson PhD, is a book I have recommended. Based on the latest neuroscience research, this well-written, funny book provides strategies to nurture a child's developing mind. I urge all parents who want kind, happy and emotionally healthy kids to read this book.

Q. Do you read to your children?

Absolutely! Reading is part of our daily routine, every morning, and every evening at bedtime. One book my children particularly enjoy is *Peck Peck Peck* by Lucy

Cousins, about a woodpecker. I find that my children enjoy books with a rhythmic, rhyming and repetitive text. Boldly illustrated, and tactile, this board book is fun to read and is filled with little holes freshly pecked!

Q. What book should every kid/person read?

Anything by Shel Silverstein and of course the Canadian classic, *Paddle to the Sea* by Holling C. Holling.

The Honey Bee by Kirsten Hall, about bees; a beautifully illustrated children's board book which follows a honey bee from flowers to nectar to honey. The author is a former preschool and elementary school teacher who has written more than 100 stories for children learning to read. A video clip of the author reading from *The Honey Bee* is available online.

Q. Are there any professional reads that have helped to shape you?

Related to my profession, I like to read about evolutionary biology. In *The Selfish Gene* Richard Dawkins explores the idea that the more two individuals are genetically related, the more likely they are to behave cooperatively with each other.

In *Nature via Nurture* by Matt Ridley the author claims that genes are not unchanging little bits of DNA: their expression varies throughout a person's life, often in response to environmental stimuli.

Finally, a book that has stayed with me from my student years is the classic by Desmond Morris, *The Naked Ape*, written in 1967, that looks at humans as a species and compares us to other animals.

Q. Do you have a favourite author (dead or alive) that you would invite to dinner?

I think I would enjoy sitting at the dinner table with Shel Silverstein, author of *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, *The Light in the Attic* and *The Giving Tree*. I am sure he would be an amusing dinner guest, he would be funny and make everyone laugh; or Robert Munsch, who has such a great take on life for both children and adults.

Q. Do you have a favourite quote?

"Nothing very, very good and nothing very, very bad ever lasts very, very long" — Douglas Coupland, *Generation X*.

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

Volunteers host celebration before tackling Thanksgiving hampers

Penny Coles
The Local

Brenda Shah, long-time volunteer at Newark Neighbours going back to the days of founder Peggy Anderson, couldn't believe what she was seeing.

Anderson wouldn't have believed it either.

When Cindy Grant and the team of volunteers at the thrift store and food bank opened the doors to guests for a celebration of their new Virgil location, all they have accomplished to help the growing number of people in need in Niagara-on-the-Lake was revealed.

The highlight is the bright, beautifully decorated store front and desk — not your usual thrift store by any means — and then for the evening celebration, the clothes racks in the main space were moved to the side, the front desk turned into a wine station, and guests, many of them contributors, were given an opportunity to see what is behind the beautiful window displays seen from the street.

A tour of the building takes you through a large sorting area, with windows so volunteers can see what's happening out front, a private office space and a wash-room. The food bank, with lots of new shelving and gleaming new commercial-sized freezer and refrigerator, is in an area also separate and private, with its own entrance and comfortable waiting place for those who come in need of food — plus a beautiful, brightly painted wall mural made especially for the space by young Niagara Pump-house art class students.

"It was a really amazing evening," said Grant.

"We were all thrilled with it, all on a bit of a high that evening, and really pleased with the turnout."

There was a good crowd in attendance, "and the store looked beautiful. The team worked very hard to get it set up, and it looked really wonderful," she said, thanking the committee "for pulling it all together. It was a lot of hard work."

Peller Estates supplied the wine — they had also supplied the property for Newark's former location in recent years — and provided some high-top cocktail tables for the evening that made the space quite elegant.

And then it was back to reality, sorting and getting ready for Thanksgiving hampers — more new clients have come in to register, Grant said.

But they have had an outpouring of generosity from the community to help make it happen — their recent porch pick-up was a success, and food has continued to come in since.

The Niagara North Family Health Team asked for food donations at both their Virgil and Village locations, and Vineland Academy brought in a load of food, said Grant.

"One Old Town resident

pulled up in an SUV filled to brimming with bags and boxes of food," she said. "People have been so generous."

At one point the food room was so stacked with food to be put away "you couldn't move around the room. We're more than stocked for Thanksgiving, and probably a good way toward Christmas."

Cornerstone Community Church has already contacted her about a food drive Halloween night — they intend to distribute 1,000 paper grocery bags to people with a food list for Newark Neighbours, and pick up the full bags.

"We'll be getting a lot of food at the end of that month," said Grant.

During the evening celebration, Shah, who has just turned 90, reminisced about the small, crowded barn, about half the size of what it was when Newark moved out this spring. It had no running water, a freezer outside for food, no racks inside, just shelving for whatever clothes were dropped off — Anderson sold them at \$5 for a full garbage bag — and some stacks of food at the back.

But although volunteers understood the need to move on, she and many others loved the beautiful surroundings at the former John Street location. "I started coming in '95, I think," she said. "I'd heard a lot about Peggy, and I wanted to help. And for me, it was a chance to get to know people from town."

Shah ran a bed and breakfast and was busy in the summer, but in the winter Newark Neighbours became a place for her to meet locals, make new

friends, and feel useful.

She was one of the Tuesday group — she laughed when she said "we called ourselves the Tuesday Tarts." Some of them still volunteer, and stay in touch, enjoying social occasions with those who have retired and are still around. Shah was delighted to visit with some of them over a glass of wine at the celebration.

"They were all such good people," she said of the volunteers she worked with. "They all did so much."

But while she expressed some nostalgia for her days at the barn surrounded by nature, explaining that "Tuesdays felt like a holiday for me," she just kept shaking her head at what she was seeing and saying, "I can't believe it."

Grant is having trouble believing the amount of food that is arriving daily at their new location.

The big sign out front, asking for donations, is a help, she said, raising awareness of the need that exists in this community to drivers as they pass by. Also important is "location, location, location," with the Virgil store front in the middle of town.

As thrilled as volunteers were with their celebration, Grant added, "they are really excited to be able to help about 110 families this Thanksgiving."

Hampers were being packed Wednesday and delivered Thursday.

She feels that with their move, Newark Neighbours "has launched a new generation" of helping people in need. "And once again, this community is demonstrating its extreme generosity."



David Spence, Edna Groff, Joy Leonard and Susan Sparrow-Mace enjoy the celebration.



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa with Cindy Grant, Brenda Shah and Pat Hicks. Shah and Hicks were volunteers back in the days of Newark Neighbours founder Peggy Anderson.

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Beautiful 2 storey executive home in the village of St. Davids. This home features approximately 4000 square feet of living space. Entering into the main floor you have a formal dining room with a butlers pantry leading into the gourmet kitchen with large centre island, quartz countertops throughout. Large dinette leading out to the balcony overlooking the inground pool. Main floor family room with gas fireplace. 2nd floor features 4 spacious bedrooms, laundry room. Primary bedroom features 5pc ensuite with separate shower stall and bathtub. Wood and tile floors throughout the main 2 levels. Grade level basement features self-contained apartment with 2 bedrooms, rec room, and spacious kitchen and leads out to the inground salt water swimming pool. This home has it all. 2 gas barbecue connections, triple wide concrete drive, large double car garage with walk up from the basement. Great location close to all amenities, restaurants, wineries, shopping, theatre.



\$1,549,000 | 57 Stoneridge Cres., NOTL

Welcome to 57 Stoneridge Crescent in the exclusive Tanbark Trails in beautiful St. Davids. This custom built 2 plus 1 bedroom bungalow features open concept custom kitchen dining room and spacious great room, gas fireplace, quartz countertops, vaulted ceilings throughout, main floor laundry with access to garage, closets and large pantry. Primary bedroom has 4 pc ensuite and walk-in closet. Beautiful hickory and tile floors throughout the main floor. A great room leads out to a covered patio overlooking the large premium pie shaped lot. Lower level features a large family/rec room, 3rd bedroom and 3pc bathroom. Large double car attached garage, sprinkler system, covered eavestroughs.



\$915,900 | 15 Crimson Drive, NOTL

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Walk A Mile returns, need more crucial than ever



Mike Balsom
The Local

The numbers continue to get more staggering each and every year.

In its 2023 annual report released last month, Gillian's Place announced that 293 people lived in their St. Catharines shelter in the previous 12 months, 127 of them children. In addition, the non-profit organization's community outreach services assisted 2,017 people with legal advice, Child and Youth counselling, transitional housing support and other programs.

As well, Gillian's Place, which offers shelter as well as programs to support victims of domestic abuse, answered 10,383 crisis calls and texts over that same time.

With the annual Walk A Mile In Her Shoes fundraiser less than two weeks away, it's a good time to discuss the importance of the work done by Gillian's Place to end gender-based violence.

"It's a pervasive issue in our region," executive director Nicole Regehr told The Local. "This is an important fundraiser that really shines a light on something that is more typically kept behind closed doors. It's also a real opportunity for men to become allies and work toward ending something that has typically been a women's issue."

Having participated in the walk last year as an ambassador, I count myself amongst those male allies.

In preparation for my role as ambassador, I was welcomed into the shelter for a tour last September. I saw first-hand the common area facilities where the women and children prepare their meals and participate in important programs.

I also met some of the staff who work in the child care area and who lead workshops.

It was clear, as well, that the former Victoria School location on Niagara Street was bursting at the seams, evidence of the necessity for their Build a Safer Future Capital Campaign, designed to raise \$8 million for an additional five private bedrooms and 10 beds along with a 9,000-square foot annex to accommodate their community outreach and violence prevention programs.



Reporter Mike Balsom was an ambassador for the 2022 Walk a Mile in Her Shoes fundraiser, and will walk again this year, Oct. 14.

One of this year's ambassadors, St. Catharines mayor Mat Siscoe, recently sat down with me as well.

"The idea that gender-based violence still exists," he said, "should be offensive to anybody. As male and male-identifying allies we have to be part of the solution, we have to get the word out, and we have to raise money because the simple reality is it's awful that a place like Gillian's Place has to exist. But it absolutely does have to exist. Gender-based violence is an epidemic."

That was made official this summer when Canada's justice minister and attorney general, Arif Virani, wrote exactly that in a letter in response to a public inquest into a triple femicide in rural Ontario. And just over a week ago Siscoe and other members of Niagara's regional council voted to join more than 47 municipalities and townships across the province in declaring intimate partner violence an epidemic.

"We need more resources within the system for all levels of government to start to deal with this properly," Siscoe added.

"This lets our community know that this is a serious issue," Regehr said.

"It's one that requires our collective attention and resources to combat. We see not only the women who come to our doors but also those who aren't able to reach out safely and are losing their lives. In Canada one to two women every single week are losing their lives to femicide."

A key to stopping the femicide is education. Gillian's Place recently received a grant to develop a program for journalists and students of journalism so they can more effectively report on gender-based

violence.

The 116-page Responsible Media Reporting of Gender-based Violence and Gendered Issues Guide is now available on the Gillian's Place website, free to anyone. I plan to find time to go through the program and report on it in next week's NOTL Local after speaking to author Laura Ip, a St. Catharines regional councillor and project manager at Gillian's Place.

The goal for Walk A Mile In Her Shoes this year is \$125,000. At press

time more than half of that amount had already been pledged. It's a signature fundraiser that goes a long way to ensuring that the organization can help the most vulnerable.

"One of our most important programs is our legal program," Regehr explained. "We employ a family law lawyer. Our legal system can be daunting and difficult to navigate, especially when you are leaving a violent situation. That program is one that is completely funded through fundraised dollars."

She added that the organization needs to raise \$1 million every year to sustain its current operation. As the demand for Gillian's Place's services continues to rise, Regehr said, it's more important than ever that they continue to have that sustainability.

So once again on Oct. 14, I will be at the Pen Centre slipping into a pair of high heels to join the other male allies in the walk to end gender-based violence. I hope to see you there.

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Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

Vietnam Unveiled: A Journey of Scenery, Culture, and Cuisine

Pam and Nick, Journey Leaders Hailing from Niagara-On-The-Lake, Share Their Vietnam Experience with Craig Travel.

Niagara-on-the-Lake's peaceful setting contrasts with our vivid memories of Vietnam. As journey leaders for Craig Travel, we've accompanied numerous travellers through this enchanting country, celebrated for its captivating landscapes, vibrant culture, and mouthwatering cuisine.

The streets of Hanoi greeted us with an exciting blend of sights. You'll find rows of shoe

stores, bustling market stalls, and intrepid sidewalk vendors offering exotic snacks like worms and snakes! Amid this lively chaos, talented locals offer pedicures, manicures, and makeup artistry right on the pavement.

In contrast, Hoi An's rural charm and the serene ambiance of the beach resort provided a welcoming blend of relaxation and convenience. The accommodations throughout our journey were nothing short of stunning, and the dedicated staff consistently went the extra mile for every guest.

Picture this: You can have a tailor-made suit, skirt, or jacket measured and crafted in the morning, and it will grace your hotel room by dinnertime!

The popular scenery of Sa Pa, where emerald terraced rice fields sprawl beneath the rugged peaks of the Hoang Lien Mountains, is the very image of Vietnam's iconic green step farming. This region is a haven for various ethnic minorities and is home to Fansipan Mountain, the country's loftiest peak.

An absolute highlight of our journey was an enchanting overnight cruise along the spellbinding Ha Long Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where we explored an array of caves, grottoes, and a myriad of impressive rock formations.

We found the perfect fusion of thrill and culture on our rickshaw ride to the Temple of Literature in Hanoi, a treat for history and architecture enthusiasts alike, offering a deep dive into Vietnamese heritage. The water puppet show is another cultural gem, presenting performances infused with traditional Vietnamese music, live acts, and



Hoi An's historic canal network, a UNESCO gem.



Sa Pa's spellbinding landscapes and local charm.

captivating storytelling.

History enthusiasts will also find immense value in exploring the Củ Chi tunnels, originally excavated for wartime communication in the 1940s and extending to the borders of Cambodia. Several of these tunnels have been expanded to accommodate visitors, providing an immersive window into Vietnam's past.

Warm-hearted locals invite travellers to partake in their daily activities at local

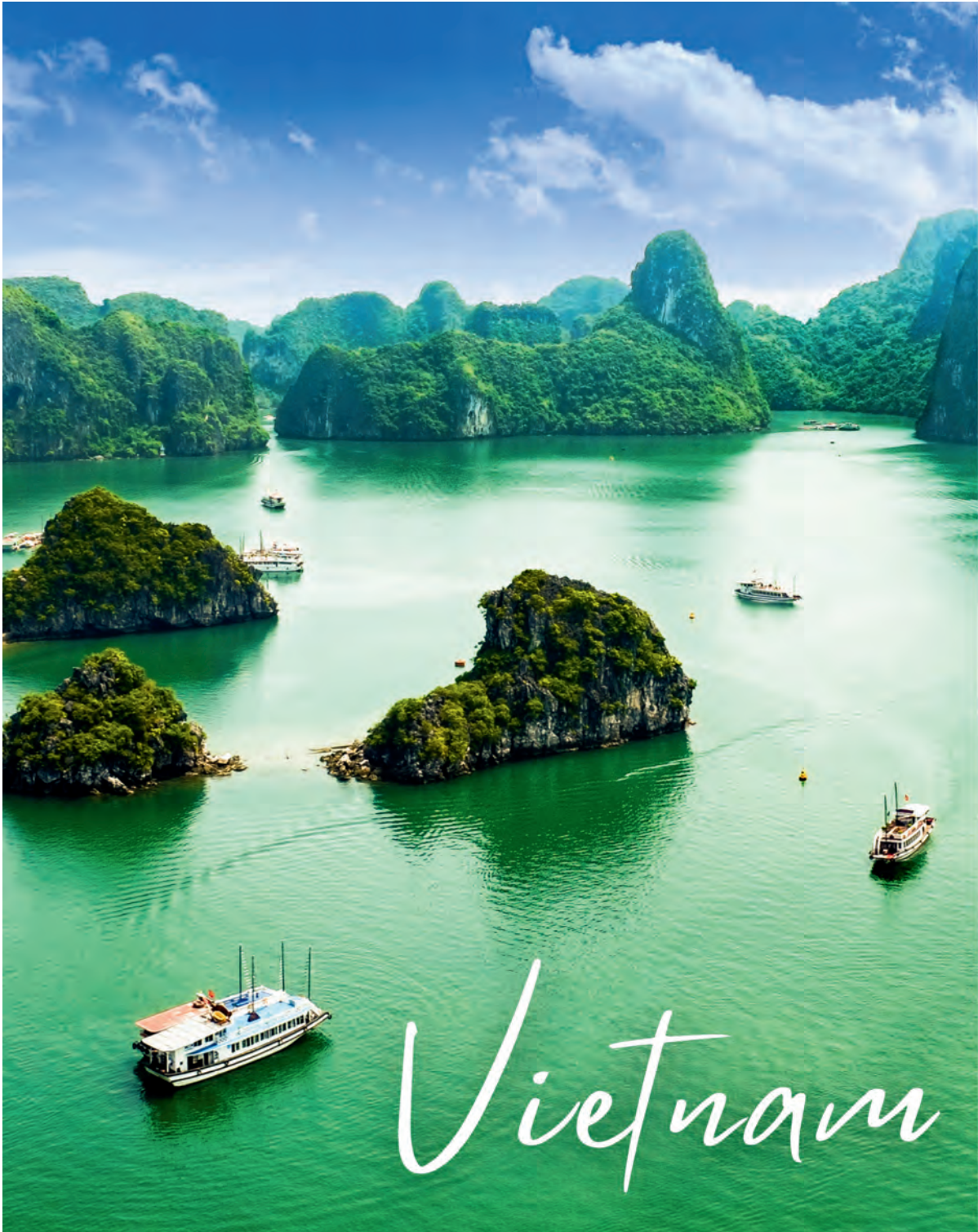
parks. Tai Chi, calisthenics, badminton, and ping pong games are just some of the options that await.

As for food, Vietnam is a true gastronomic paradise, boasting an abundance of fresh Western and Vietnamese dishes. Buffets are a never-ending circuit of delight, showcasing the nation's culinary excellence.

No visit to Vietnam is complete without savouring two culinary highlights. First, Pho,

a fragrant Vietnamese soup brimming with broth, tender meat, rice noodles, and aromatic herbs. Second, the exquisite egg coffee, a luscious concoction of egg yolks, sugar, condensed milk, and Robusta coffee, reminiscent of a crème brûlée gloriously blended into your coffee cup.

Don't miss out on saving \$200 per person when you book by November 1st. Join us in 2024 as we return to relish the beauty of Vietnam!





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Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

Travel tips for seniors



(NC) As the winter season quickly approaches, your vacation plans may be looming. Before you board your next flight, here are some helpful travel tips from the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority.

Arrive early. When planning your vacation, don't forget travel time to the airport! It is best to arrive early so you can park, check-in and get through security without the need to rush. Airlines recommend you arrive two hours ahead for domestic flights and three hours in advance for U.S. and international flights.

Ask for assistance. If you are unable to lift your baggage onto the screening conveyor belt, or if you need help removing your items from the bin after screening, you can let the screening officer know and request their assistance.

Look for the Family/Spe-

cial Needs line at security.

If you are travelling with a mobility aid like a walker or wheelchair, check if a Family/Special Needs line is available when you get to the security checkpoint. This line is designed for passengers needing more time or help with their belongings to get through the screening. If there is no line like this, let the screening officers know that you require assistance. Upon request, they'll expedite the screening process for you.

Identify your medication.

When travelling through security, medications should be removed from your carry-on bag for inspection. Prescription and essential non-prescription medications are exempt from the 100-millilitre liquid, aerosol and gel limit. Although they don't need to be in the one-litre bag with your other liquids, place all of them togeth-

er so you can easily show them at security.

Choose easy-to-remove outerwear.

When going through security, you must remove outer layers, such as hats, coats and scarves, and place them in a bin for screening. To prevent setting off the metal detector, avoid belts or clothing with large buckles, and limit the amount of jewellery you wear to the airport.

Limit inorganic products.

Are you travelling with a secret spice blend for your famous holiday dinner? Perhaps you're planning on baking with your grandkids and are bringing the ingredients. Before you pack food and spices, remember that certain inorganic powders are limited to a total combined quantity of 350 millilitres in carry-on baggage.

Find more travel planning tips, or check if an item is allowed in carry-on, at catsa.gc.ca.

Fall Programs at the Art Hub of the Community

With the change in season, Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre program offerings transition to fall-themed classes and workshops for artists of various levels and interests. Programs in a variety of medium including pottery, glass, wax, watercolor, acrylic, oil and digital art. An in-person, art history lecture series that kicked off this summer is continuing through fall with more fascinating topics.

For older adults needing an extra help with technology, an iPad introductory workshop is available for those 50+ to register. This can be supplemented with an online workshop focusing on apps such as ProCreate and Sketches. These programs are available in part by Government of Canada's New Horizons for



Seniors Program funding.

The early birds wanting to get a head start on their holiday preparations, workshops on glass tree ornaments and wreath making are open for registration.

According to Dayna Riemland, programs coor-

ordinator at Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, "We welcome art creators of all ages and skill levels to our programs. Whatever experience and expertise or preferred medium, you'll find our programs offer a great place to connect and explore your creativity."



Niagara
Pumphouse
Arts Centre

Create • Experience • Connect
at the art hub of the community

247 Ricardo Street,
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON



In-studio & Online* Classes & Workshops

- Life Drawing Drop-In: Oct 10-24, Nov 7-21
- Chair Yoga - Beyond Beginners: Oct 5-26
- Wheel 101: 2 sessions: Oct 10 or Nov 14
- Encaustic and Mixed Media Workshop: Oct 14
- Lidded Pot Workshop: Oct 14
- Fused Glass: Tree Ornaments: 2 sessions: Oct 18 or Nov 1
- Ancient Mesopotamia - Art History Lecture Series: Oct 17 & 24
- Getting the Right Start with Watercolours: Nov 2 & 3
- Mug Workshop: Nov 4
- Ancient Egypt - Art History Lecture Series: Nov 14 & 21
- Wreath Workshop: Nov 15
- Digital Painting*: Nov 1 & 8
- Beyond Colour Harmony*: Nov 8 & 9
- Video Tutorials*



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Celebrate Seniors Golden Years Guide

5 tips for healthier eyes

(NC) Your eyes are your window to the world – they allow you to do everything from perform everyday tasks to enjoy the beauty of the world around you. When it comes to your vision, it is important to be proactive. Use these simple tips to keep your eyes healthy:

Book an annual eye exam: Stay on top of regular eye exams. Less than half of Canadians report visiting their eye care professional every year. But it's only with exams that they spot underlying issues – even if your vision seems good.

Take a screen break
Our eyes need a break from all our devices. Consider following the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes look at something 20 feet away (6 metres) for 20 seconds – to minimize

eyestrain.

Eat healthy
Like our bodies, our eyes need nutrients to maintain good health. Eating foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, beta-carotene, vitamin C and E, such as fish, leafy greens and citrus fruits, can help support healthy vision.

Protect your eyes from UV light
Sunglasses and hats are not just fashion statements – they protect eyes from harmful UV light, which can contribute to the development of certain eye conditions.

Stay informed
Vision changes as we age, and common conditions like presbyopia and cataracts can develop. Yet in a survey by Alcon Canada, nearly two-thirds of



Canadian seniors aged 55 to 79 said they knew very little or nothing about cataracts. Vision changes as we age, and common conditions like presbyopia and cataracts can develop. Yet in a survey by Alcon Canada, nearly two-thirds of Canadian seniors aged 55 to 79 said they knew very little or nothing about cataracts. Many weren't fully aware of options for treatment either, including that you can choose between different types of lenses for your cataract surgery. But some more advanced lenses may be able to improve vision enough that you no longer need glasses. Find more information about your options at see-thefullpicture.ca.

How to set your grandchildren up for financial success

(NC) Many of us enjoy the opportunity to buy baby gifts, yet the cost of that cute outfit, teething toy or set of stacking blocks is surprisingly high

for its relatively short period of use. Finding something that will make a difference for years to come can feel elusive. The best gifts are often useful, unique, thoughtful and practical. For many parents and grandparents, the rising costs of education, housing and overall living are raising concerns about their children's (or grandchildren's) ability to be financially secure in the future. Here are two gift

ideas that will be sure to have a lasting impact on their lives.

Fund their Future
Many parents are already contributing to a Registered Education Savings Plan for their children, making tax-free, annual payments towards their future education costs. You could help top up this educational fund for a benefit that will make a big differ-

ence in the future. Other savings vehicles include in-trust or bank accounts in your child's name and Tax-Free Savings Accounts.

Provide lifelong support
Many people aren't aware that whole life insurance can help at key milestones in a person's life before they pass away, including the ability to access cash for a down

payment on a home, for education costs or for a supplement to their income in retirement. That accessible cash grows as you pay the premiums. As policies can be paid off within 10 or 20 years, the children in your life receive financial benefits at no additional cost to them. Find more information about whole life insurance at rbcinsurance.com/wholelife.

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Pillitteri comedy night raises \$86,795 for Terry Fox Run

Penny Coles
The Local

Terry Fox, who wanted to keep his run going when he knew he was too ill to continue, “would be so proud” to see his legacy and his dream live on in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

That was the message his brother Fred Fox brought to the community centre Friday, when he travelled to town to attend Joe Pillitteri’s comedy night.

“Thanks to each and every one of you for everything you do,” he said to the large crowd who came out, and thanks to “all the amazing individuals” like Joe Pillitteri and Joan King, he continued, for their efforts to keep the Marathon of Hope alive and helping the Terry Fox Foundation to make a difference in the lives of all those who battle cancer.

As always, there were lots of laughs during entertaining performances from the much-loved Pillitteri as well as MC David Green and Niagara Falls comic Jarrett Campbell, but there were also sombre moments when Terry Fox and the reason for the very successful fundraiser were remembered.

After a final count Sunday, Pillitteri said, “the evening generated an incredible \$86,795 between ticket sales, the bar, raffle prizes, live auction and just random acts of kindness.”

He thanked “the Herculean efforts” of his sisters Eileen Pillitteri-Smith and Caroline Martinelli, and good friend Colleen O’Gorman, for doing a great job organizing the event. “They did a lot more than yours truly to make sure we were ready for the crowd that came,” he said, “and made it easy for people to give along the way.”

What they pulled off Friday night “was incredible,” he added, along with a dedicated and willing group of volunteers. “I’m just so proud of what they did.”



Friends and family, including Eileen Lamb, Caroline Martinelli, Steve Smith, Eileen Pillitteri-Smith, Fred Fox with Joe Pillitteri, Vince and Margaret Pillitteri, Colleen O’Gorman and Terry Waud were at the community centre to support the Terry Fox Foundation. (Supplied)

He also thanked those who donated wine, food, raffle and live auction prizes, and gave a special shout-out to Ward Simpson, “an inspiration” for his long-standing support of the community, including the Terry Fox Run.

When Team Pillsy’s fundraising from the comedy night, and more than \$50,000 from his run, is

added to the NOTL run total, \$177,741 has been raised for the Terry Fox Foundation, with more money coming in, said Joan King, the local run organizer.

Pillitteri typically finishes his comedy nights with an inspirational quote from Fox, but this year chose to write a letter instead — the 2023 T-shirt

theme was ‘Dear Terry,’ with messages sent from participants over the years printed on the shirts, and an invitation to others to send letters to the Terry Fox Foundation.

“Dear Terry,” Pillitteri read, “Tonight, just like every single time we hold this show in your honour, your spirit was alive.

“I don’t think it’s an

accident that I hold you in such high regard: I’m blessed with family that loves and cares for me like yours did for you. Your brother Fred came to the show tonight. He seems nice.

“I’m surround by a team of friends, new and old, that rally around me when something bigger than all of us must get

done. I sold them all tickets to our show tonight.

“Here’s the thing I’ll tell anyone who will listen — there is no better example of perseverance and hope than you, Terry Fox. When facing any problem, I often think of you getting up early in the morning and doing what you did — head down and running ahead, doing the thing that had to get done.

“My kids always have a laugh at my ability to dig deep into big goals, especially when it comes to Terry Fox, but every person that runs, bikes or walks for the Marathon of Hope makes a difference.

“My children all participate in the run, and nothing feels like a bigger parenting win than that for me.

“I think you would be as proud of all the people in this room as you would of any of your Terry Foxers around the world. You once said, ‘I want to set an example that will never be forgotten.’ Tonight is living proof that you’ll never be forgotten. Not on our watch.”

And for a moment of quiet, after a night of comedy and much laughter, there wasn’t a dry eye in the house.



Joe Pillitteri with Fred Fox, Terry’s brother, who thanked Pillitteri and the community for keeping Terry’s legacy alive. (Supplied)



Joe Pillitteri gave a special shout-out to Ward Simpson for being such a great supporter of the community. (Supplied)

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Love Where You Live: **SUPPORT** *Local*

NOTL's Rezza brothers hitting the U.S. film festival circuit

Mike Balsom
The Local

Already veteran hip hop artists, Adrian and Lucas Rezza are quickly becoming veterans of the U.S. film festival circuit thanks to a connection with New York City-born actress Jennifer Esposito.

The brothers, former GTA residents who both moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake about eight years ago, have seven of their original songs featured in Esposito's new movie *Fresh Kills*.

The independent film is named for the former Staten Island landfill, the world's largest until it was closed in 2001. It follows the life of a mafia family from the perspective of its young female members.

"It's never been done this way before," Adrian tells The Local. "It shows how the patriarchal focus causes the family to decay over time."

"The two daughters," Lucas adds, "the oldest is just like her dad, tough, smashing heads against concrete, but she'll never be her dad because she's not his son. And the other one wants nothing to do with it at all. She has no voice, she feels she can't be herself."

Esposito, known for her work in Spike Lee's *Summer of Sam* and the television series *Blue Bloods*, plays the family's matriarch in the film she wrote and directed herself. Doménick Lombardozi (*Tulsa King*, *Boardwalk Empire*) portrays the mob boss, while Odessa A'zion and Emily Bader play

Connie and Rose, their daughters.

As the hip hop duo 80 Empire, Lucas composes the music and the beats, while Adrian writes, sings and raps the lyrics. They have collaborated in the past with some of the biggest names in the hip hop world, including Cee-Lo Green and Obie Trice and Swifty McVay of Eminem's D12 crew, and they've opened shows for Snoop Dogg.

Though the first-generation Canadians of Italian descent are dedicated family men, each married with two children, 80 Empire's music is authentic hip hop, with hard-edged lyrics that often take on life beyond the fringe. They record their music out of Lucas' Old Town basement, where a professional studio has been set up.

Things got rolling with Esposito when the brothers found her email address and sent her a message, urging her to take a look at the 80 Empire Instagram page to check out some of their music. Within 24 hours, she had begun following them, and the connection grew to the point where she realized their music would fit well with her new project.

It became official when she reached out to them for some tracks.

"She would tell us the kind of mood of each scene," says Adrian. "She wanted to evoke



Adrian and Lucas Rezza

a specific era. The film is set in the 1980s and 1990s, so we wrote some music to capture that feel. We recorded full songs, even though only a short bit of it might be used in the movie. There's one instrumental, though, that plays for about 30 seconds of the scene."

Though *Fresh Kills* has not yet been released theatrically, Esposito has been shuffling the final cut from film festival to film festival. It's been screened at festivals in San Diego and Italy, and was featured at actor Geena Davis' Bentonville Film Festival in Arkansas.

It's also been featured at New York's Tribeca Film Festival and San Jose's Cinequest this past summer, both of which the Rezza Brothers attended, where they had a chance to walk the red carpet along with the cast.

"At Tribeca, Jen pointed to us, and called us 'her guys' right in front of Spike Lee," says an incredulous Adrian. "She didn't have to do that, shout us out in front of him. And not only did she give us credit for the songs in the film, we are listed in a section for special thanks."

Their music, cinematic itself in its nature, has also found its way into other film and television productions recently. Following their attendance at Tribeca, the brothers headed to Long Island, where they attended the premier of a new television program called *Gravesend*, another 1980s mob story starring the likes of Armand Assante and Chazz Palminteri.

"We later sent Armand a new music video (shot partly at Ravine Vineyard) we shot with actor Raoul Max Trujillo (*Mayans MC*, *Apocalypse*, *Get Shorty*)," says Lucas. "He wrote back 'your stunning homage to '80s rap music, attitude and

style works so well as a short film on so many levels. I wish I had been a part of this."

And seven more of their songs appear in *Jersey Bred*, a film by writer and director Greg Russo that is currently in post-production. Their friend, actor Gino Cafarelli, connected Russo to the Rezzas, who composed the title song for the movie.

All of this has led to Adrian and Lucas developing their own ideas for some films of their own.

They have plans to shoot a documentary in Italy with their close friend Fatty Soprano, the filmmaker who has helmed a number of their music videos through the years. And they have begun formulating scripts for a short horror film and another revolving around the life of an assassin.

This weekend the Rezzas are heading back down to New York State, where they will re-

connect with Esposito for a screening of *Fresh Kills* Oct. 7 at the Hamptons International Film Festival.


And they're hoping that in the near future Esposito, like Trujillo before her, can find some time to come up and visit sleepy little Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"She has a great singing voice," Lucas says. "We want to bring her up here to record some music with us. We want to take her to Willow (Cakes and Pastries on Mary Street) and introduce her to some of Niagara's wineries."

"She's really salt-of-the-earth," adds Adrian. "She is so talented, so inspirational. And she's just so appreciative and grateful. And that's the beauty of all of this. We're at that stage in our lives where we want to work with people who value what we bring to the table. She does, and she's treated Lucas and I like family."



Raoul Max Trujillo with Lucas and Adrian Rezza in Ravine Vineyard's barrel cellar. (Photos supplied)




NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

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Jennifer Esposito taking a selfie, Lucas Rezza behind her with *Fresh Kills* producer Leslie Owen, and Adrian Rezza beside Esposito.

Calls to action ‘a hike, not a leisurely stroll’



Sabrina Shawana performs with the Strong Water Singers. (Photos by Penny Coles)

Continued from page 1

inclusivity. You can be an ally. You can be a friend. We can remember and respect our treaties together, as they were put in place for everyone’s benefit.”

For every child who did not come home, or who suffered abuse at residential schools, she said, “we pray for peace for you. We pray for the ancestors to retrieve you so you can be wrapped in the Creator’s embrace. We remember you and will not let your suffering be in vain. Instead, it will be thoughts of these children that will raise our determination even further to embrace what they were not permitted to — who we are as Indigenous Peoples.”

CAO Marnie Cluckie spoke of the importance of education about the residential school system, “and on how this legacy continues to affect Indigenous Peoples, and offer support to the many families and communities that have been affected.”

“As we come together today,” Cluckie continued, “let us remember that Truth and Reconciliation are not just words; they are actions, values and principles that guide us toward a better society.” Truth and Reconciliation Day, she said, “encourages us to listen, learn and empathize with Indigenous communities’ experiences, recognize their rich cultures and honour their resilience.”

The annual ceremony, said Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa, is intended to “honour the lost children, the survivors of residential schools, and their families and communities.”

“It is a time for us to come together to remember those who have been deeply affected by the residential school system,” he said, “and to work towards creating a better future.”

Sabrina Shawana, with a group of women she referred to as “Indigenous moms” called Strong Water Singers, was at the ceremony for the second year. She said she

sometimes finds herself saying aloud what she should have kept in her head, however, what the Anishinaabe woman said also needed to be heard.

Referring to the calls to action, she said, “they can’t just be words. They have to be followed by action 364 more days of the year.”

The walk to reconciliation, she added, “is actually a hike. It’s not a leisurely stroll — you have to put some weight into it. I hope you will help us by carrying some of that weight with us.”

Co-founder of Strong Water Singers, an award-winning group of women who got together to use music to tell their stories, Shawana said their first song, *The Longest Walk*, was written for a group of Indigenous activists who marched for months from Alcatraz Island to Washington, D.C. in 1978 to bring awareness to their cause.

The women’s second song, *Wildflower*, was performed around the Every Child Matters flag — the wildflowers, she explained, were from seeds sown by children as they played, running freely through the fields, but once the children were taken away from their families and put into residential schools, the wildflowers stopped growing.

This was the third year a Truth and Reconciliation ceremony has been held at the

town hall, and to finish the ceremony before a reflective walk through the Virgil Sports Park, the flag was raised and then lowered to remain at half staff “as a sombre reminder of the past,” said Cluckie, “and as a promise to work together to ensure a brighter future.”



Indigenous healer Audra Maloney speaks, with Strong Water Singers listening.



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa raises and then lowers the Every Child Matters flag, with the Strong Water Singers, Audra Maloney and CAO Marnie Cluckie. (Penny Coles)

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Local schools recognize National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

Mike Balsom
The Local

About 50 students from Royal Oak Community School travelled to the Landscape of Nations at Queenston Heights to participate in interactive activities for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation.

Royal Oak's Jamie Lynn Gillingham, whose Indigenous name is Diindiisii Kwe, led the students through a fun activity focusing on the seven grandfather teachings. Using seven beach balls, the member of the First Nations of the Mississaugas of the Credit, whose grandmother was a residential

school survivor, discussed the meaning of the seven rules of life — respect, love, wisdom, humility, courage, truth and honesty. After that full school activity, the various grade levels split off for age-appropriate group exercises. Gillingham taught the intermediate students how to bundle sweet-

grass, sage, tobacco and cedar to offer the four sacred medicines, while the younger students gathered at other spots with their teachers for other learning activities. In the library at St. Davids Public School, teacher Bryce Honsinger led a session for all intermediate students that focused on the Indigenous

teachings of the sanctity of and reverence for the land, and how the arrival of settlers changed all of that. Following the library session, the students returned to their classrooms where they reflected on what they learned. They wrote down on sticks their reactions to the lessons that were based on

the books *the Water Walker* and *A Stranger at Home* and a collage was created for display in the school's front hallway. Similar activities based on age-appropriate readings were completed by other classes from Kindergarten to Grade 6, all resulting in displays within their classrooms.



Jamie Lynn Gillingham gathers the intermediate students under the watchful eyes of the statue of First Nations leader John Norton.



Royal Oak intermediate students learned how to bundle the four sacred medicines with guidance from Indigenous consultant Jamie Lynn Gillingham.



St. Davids' Audrey Rapone (left) and Halle Stephens (right) display the final project from the intermediate students.



Jamie Lynn Gillingham led the students through a beach ball activity focused on the seven grandfather teachings.



St Davids teacher Bryce Honsinger delivers a lesson about First Nations and resources to intermediate students.



St. Davids Grade 2 students Nolan and Simon show off their classroom door.



St Davids students tracing their hands for a tree display on Indigenous culture.

Arctic influence evident in Pumphouse exhibit

Maria Klassen
The Local

Captivating reflections of sky and sea abound in the current exhibit *High Arctic Light* at the Joyner Gallery at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, the work of artist Janet Read. The journey through this engaging display of the Arctic landscape runs from now until Oct. 29.

Read is a painter, musician and poet. She grew up near Lake Simcoe and has always loved the water's edge. During artist residencies in Newfoundland and Ireland, she sought access to the sea. This led to a lifetime investigation of the ocean — a metaphor for strength and fragility. Water in its many forms continues to inspire her work. She says she does not use photographs, and does not work on site. Read paints from memory of what she has seen on her travels.

She says she hopes to forge a connection between her work and the audience, inviting them to experience the Arctic landscape on a deeply emotional level. Read

uses an array of mediums such as linen canvas instead of cotton, and hybrid drawing and painting on Dura-Lar. The hybrid combination consists of oil and graphite powder. Dura-Lar is a clear, glossy polyester film, used as an artwork surface for permanent inks. Her interpretation of light, colour and shape invokes an emotional resonance into a mysterious landscape.

Read says her experience in the Arctic changed her colour palette towards azure blues and icy aquas, with just a touch of reds and purples, hinting at the wildflowers of the arctic tundra or the lights hidden in the ice. Blue is a dominant colour. It can suggest the depth of an iceberg, in the layering process of her work, or the knowledge of a world rich in colour below a frozen surface. She translates her personal dialogue with the landscape into a visual language. All of her Arctic works have a sense of space and light that combine to create a transcendental experience for the viewer.

At the heart of this exhibition lies a spiritual response to the landscape



Artist Janet Read with two of her paintings on display at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre: *Tundra Light* and *Arctic Seas*. (Aimee Medina)

and the imperilled ecosystems of the North. Read says she hopes her work will heighten awareness and nurture a sense of stewardship for the delicate equilibrium of our planet. The urgent environmental challenges that confront the high Arctic include the rapid degrada-

tion of permafrost, sea ice and glaciers.

Read's ongoing body of work presents landscapes of consciousness, from being in the natural world in the Arctic, and from encounters with those for whom the high north is both wild and home.

"My paintings are re-

flective of my personal experiences, always aware the indigenous voices must be heard to tell their own stories and history," she says. "My work tells the story of a visitor, a sojourner, to a remote and sublime region of Canada."

The opening reception will be held Sunday, Oct.

15, from 2 to 4 p.m., with Read offering comments around 2:30 p.m. Come out and chat with the artist personally, savour her artwork, connect with fellow art enthusiasts over refreshments, and enjoy an assortment of wine provided by Chateau des Charmes.



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Stick curling great way to stay active during winter

Mike Balsom
The Local

When golf season winds down each fall, Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Janet Trinder's social life shifts from Eagle Valley Golf Club just outside of St. Davids to the Niagara Falls Curling Club.

There, the energetic and outgoing Trinder participates in stick curling, a form of the sport in which the rock is released from an upright position rather than from a crouch out of the hack, as most people are familiar with.

With about 45 members of the club hailing from NOTL, Trinder feels the Morrison Road location is the unofficial home for curlers from the town. And the Pittsburgh native is hoping to see more familiar faces on the ice this winter.

The club is hosting a series of Learn to Curl open houses this week, continuing to Friday, Oct. 6. Trinder invited The Local out to Tuesday morning's session to give it a try.

Sheldon Rodgers, a one-

time club president, greets this reporter in the social area of the club and helps me fit a pair of grippers over my everyday running shoes. He then walks me down to the ice surface, where he hands me a stick for our tutorial.

"Stick curling is a safer form of the sport," Rodgers says as he walks us up and down the sheet twice to gauge the slipperiness of the ice. "It's great for those people who may be able to get down in the hack but whose knees and backs can't get them back up from that position so well."

The stick is about six feet long with a plastic attachment designed to fit over the handle of the rock. After I step into the hack, Rodgers encourages me to lock my right elbow at my side and extend my arm straight out in front of me, holding the stick in the palm of my grip.

Depending on which way the rock is to be aimed, the handle begins at either the two o'clock or the ten o'clock position. To throw the rock toward the house, it takes a simple, steady walk up the ice sheet, re-

leasing the rock smoothly from the stick back in the 12 o'clock position while continuing a forward motion.

It took a few throws to get used to the smooth release, but within a couple of ends I was getting the hang of it, able to curl the rock toward a target.

Trinder curls exclusively with the stick these days, as do a handful of other NOTL residents, mostly retirees. The stick curlers play in the daytime from Tuesday to Thursday most weeks, while she says the evening curlers usually play the traditional way.

"Being able to use the stick," says Trinder, "is a way to keep us playing the game we love as it gets harder physically to get up and down all the time."

Sue Barlow from St. Davids was out Tuesday to try the sport for the first time, encouraged by two friends who play in the evenings. She was also starting to get comfortable being on the ice and pushing the rock with a stick.

Watching from up in the lounge was 91-year-old Pearl

Maves. The oldest member of the club has been curling for 70 years, though she is currently sidelined with an arm injury. Maves says she is just as comfortable curling with or without the stick.

"I'm sitting here almost crying because I can't curl this year," she tells The Local. "I still curl the regular way, but I may have to go to stick curling once I can get back on the ice. I love the feel of being down there, sliding with the rock, but there have been times I felt that I couldn't get the rock down the ice, so I switched to the stick."

Niagara Falls resident Randy Elliot curled back in high school at A.N. Myer Secondary. He drifted away from the sport but came back to it after he retired

about 12 years ago. He switches from time to time between traditional and stick curling.

"My body is starting to get older," Elliot admits. "Sometimes I get down there and can't get up that quickly. I might eventually have to go to the stick full time, and you know, there's nothing wrong with the stick. I've played against some people who use the stick and they've whupped me."

Like most curlers, Elliot and Trinder enjoy the social aspect of the game as much as they do the game itself, stick or no stick.

"The game is just to get you out here to have some fun," Elliot proclaims. "Going up there (the lounge) and talking to everyone, and meeting new people, that's a major part of senior

curling here."

Trinder, a member of the Niagara Falls club's board of directors, points out that new members who want to ease into the club can join on a trial basis for a half-year at a price of \$225.

Trinder is certain that anyone who does so will soon want to move up to a full adult membership, which is \$840 per year. A social membership, which allows you to participate in club bonspiels and social events and to play out of club for Ontario Curling Association competitions, is only \$60.

The free Learn to Curl open houses continue Thursday Oct. 5 and Friday Oct. 6 from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Get out and try it, stick or no stick, and tell Janet The Local sent you.

NOTL's Austyn Werstroh ends season with win

Local Staff

A victory at the Fall Classic at Humberstone Speedway in Port Colbourne was a great way for driver Austyn Werstroh to cap his successful season.

His father, Jamie, there to see the win, says a field of 33 drivers tried to make the feature race, with 25 starting.

Austyn finished second in his heat to qualify for the feature, where he started 12th,

and by lap 10 had made it up to third just as a caution came, bringing the field back together.

After the restart he was able to work his way past the leaders up to first, says Jamie, and didn't look back, earning his fourth victory of the year.

Austyn is a full-time driver in the mini stock division at Merrittville Speedway in Thorold, where he earned three victories out of the 15 scheduled races this season, placing him

second overall in points.

He also ran the Art Hill Classic at Ohsweken Speedway in August, which is the biggest mini stock race of the year with over 40 cars trying to qualify for one of the 25 starting positions.

Austyn was able to win his heat which put him into the feature, where he led many laps. With a late race caution he was passed, but was able to hold on for a second place finish.



Dennis Healy of NOTL throws a rock the traditional way. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Sue Barlow of St. Davids gets some stick curling lessons from Karen Lundy.



Randy Elliot throws a rock with the stick as Janet Trinder looks on.



Austyn Werstroh earns a win at Humberstone Speedway. (Supplied)



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Big third period seals win for Preds

Mike Balsom
The Local

It took a wake-up call from coach Kevin Taylor before the Niagara Predators exploded for four unanswered third period goals to knock off the Toronto Flyers 7-4 in Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League action Friday night.

Despite strong goaltending from Toronto's Tucker Clyne, the Preds cruised to a 3-0 lead early in the second period. But the Flyers clawed back with one in the second and two more in the third to tie it up with 11:18 to go.

Those two Flyers' goals in the final period came during a stretch of lacklustre play by the Predators, with turnovers and sluggish skating in the neutral zone leading to opportunities that Toronto was easily able to capitalize on.

With the score knotted at three apiece, Taylor called his players to the bench for a time-out.

"I was upset," Taylor said after the game. "I told them you can't allow a team like this (Toronto was 0-5 prior to Friday) to score three goals on you. I was upset with the way they played. My four best guys were on the ice and they walked around them."

Though he didn't share with The Local exactly what he said during the time-out, whatever it was lit a fire under his team's skates.

Reese Bisci got things rolling with a power play goal, his first of two in the second half of the third period, and defence-men Logan Baillie and Dylan Denning added singles to put the exclamation mark on the Preds 7-4 statement in front of

a home crowd in Virgil.

Baillie also scored in the second period, while Isaac Locker had a pair earlier in the game to round out the scoring for the Preds.

Niagara outshot Toronto 79-35, a lopsided result that shows just how hard Clyne worked in the Flyers' net. Thirty of those shots came in the third period.

"He played a great game," Taylor admitted. "He faced a lot of shots, but I think the seas parted for him every time he faced a shot. He saw the puck all night. We need to get some traffic in front of the net."

In the home team's net, Western New York native Mike Mankowski got his first start for his new squad since being taken by the Predators in the ninth round of this year's entry draft.

"There were a few turnovers tonight," Mankowski admitted about his team's play early in the third. "We've been playing better teams, so I think tonight we played down to their level a bit. Once they came back, though, we brought it back up. The guys responded well after they (Toronto) tied it up."

The well-travelled Mankowski comes to the Preds after stints with the Vancouver Sharks of the British Columbia Premier Hockey League and the Florida Junior Blades of the United States Premier Hockey League last year.

With first-round draft pick Denning also hailing from the Western New York area, the two have gotten to know each other well the last month or so.

"We carpool together," said the 17-year-old goaltender. "And we come over so often for both practices and games that we're starting to get to know the guys at the border, too."

Off the ice, Mankowski is taking some online classes and also holding down a job at the Under Armour outlet store in Niagara Falls, New York.

The Flyers, by the way, played Friday's game in plain white jerseys, no logos on their fronts. New owners Paul Di Risio and Melissa Hull were still awaiting delivery of their new uniforms for the team that



Preds' Logan Baillie watches as his shot beats Flyers goalie Tucker Clyne in the third period. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Dylan Denning takes the puck in the Flyers zone.

was previously branded as the Streetsville Flyers.

In contrast to the Flyers, who are now 0-8 following a three-game weekend, the Preds have played only three games this season, losing their opening match to Tottenham and beating St. George for their first win on September 22.

Their next game, this Friday against a much stronger Durham Roadrunners squad, will be a litmus test for coach Taylor's young team. He admits that he needs to see more intensity in their on-ice sessions this week to effectively prepare for a much tougher team.

"Last Wednesday in practice I spent so much time trying to get their attention that I felt like I was a substitute teacher in school," Taylor said. "And I watched the (pre-game) warm-up tonight and I saw the same lack of discipline. Maybe

it's because of the week-long breaks between games so far. It's tough."

And they'll hit the road for their first away game Saturday night, when they lace up

at Colborne, Ontario's Keeler Centre to take on the 1-2 Northumberland Stars.

Game time Friday at Virgil's Meridian Credit Union Arena is 7:30 p.m.



The Predators' Isaac Locker scored two goals Friday against Toronto.



Preds' Shane Kaplan fights for the puck against the boards.

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Income from Campaign & all other Sources\$ 1,061.54

Campaign Expenses &
Youth Education Program\$ 4,546.53

Veterans Support from Fund\$26,339.04

Balance as of September 29, 2023\$11,921.52

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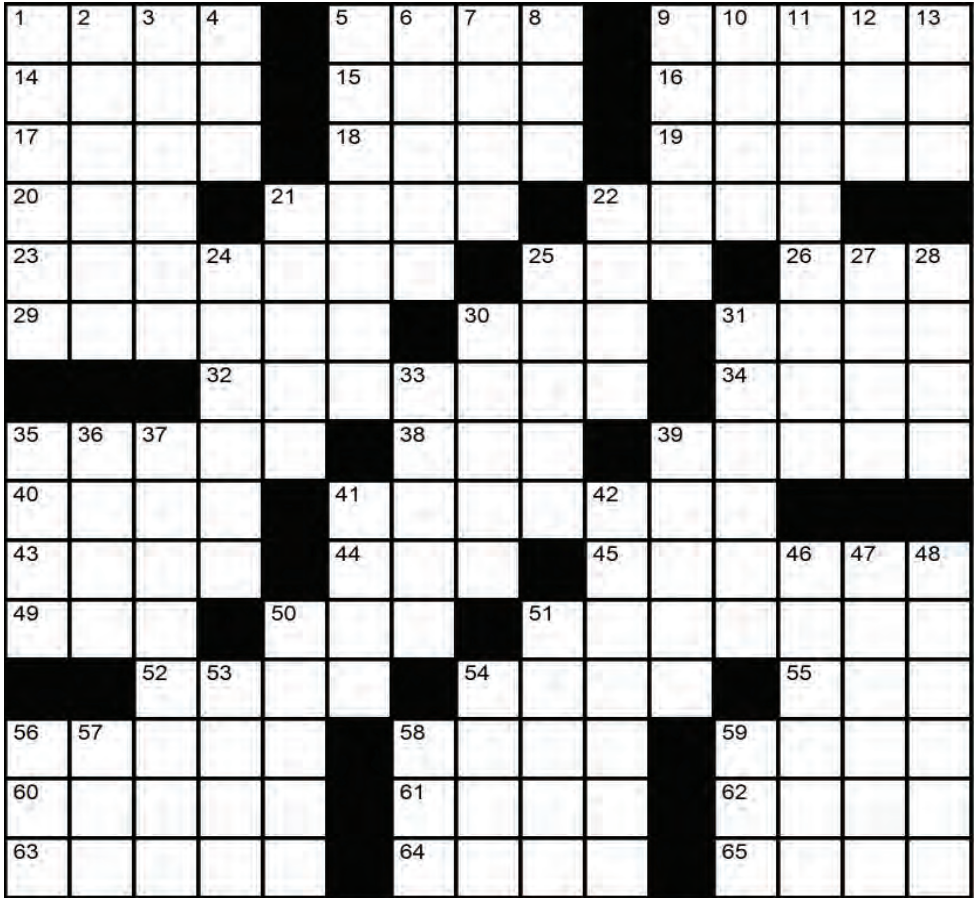
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- Across:
- 1 Urban air pollution problem

5 That's in Paris

9 Prim

14 Formerly French Sudan

15 E.g. Rice, Harvard (Abbr.)

16 Snake vulnerable to the mongoose

17 Not dissimilar

18 Salespeople

19 Syrian dynasty

20 Padre (Abbr.)

21 Prepares for war

22 Roughly speaking

23 Traditional voting day

25 West Atlantic international grp.

26 Flat panel TV type

29 Ankle injury

30 Parking area

31 Doozie

32 Undersides

34 2,000 lbs

35 Foundation

38 Tear

39 Shorthand inventor John Robert ---

40 --- calling!

41 Maturity

43 Stiff sentence

44 Missions (Abbr.)
- 45 Goad

49 Banned insecticide

50 Distress message

51 Chivvied

52 Comedians

54 Drugs (Abbr.)

55 Threat to fighters

56 Alan Ladd gunfighter role

58 Loopy

59 D-Day beach

60 Main artery

61 Piece for two

62 "Time --- My Side" (The Rolling Stones)

63 Awesome

64 Stack

65 Fix
- Down:
- 1 Mental ability

2 Bury the hatchet

3 Director/producer --- Stone

4 Kind of rummy

5 Small seedless raisin

6 Foe

7 Drinks slowly

8 Corner consoles?

9 Operation mementos

10 Decide with a coin

11 Pure

12 Plan sponsored by Sen.
- William Roth

13 Family guy

21 Spanish farewell

22 Stable food

24 Californian pine

25 Vavavoom

27 Block

28 Ordure

30 Lower abdomen

31 Pantry

33 Ensnares

35 Hairless

36 Keen

37 Computer code

39 Attendees

41 Low sounds?

42 Out with a potential partner

46 Neglect

47 Pressurize

48 Comet finder --- Halley

50 Bargain

51 German philosopher

53 Cosmopolitan (Abbr.)

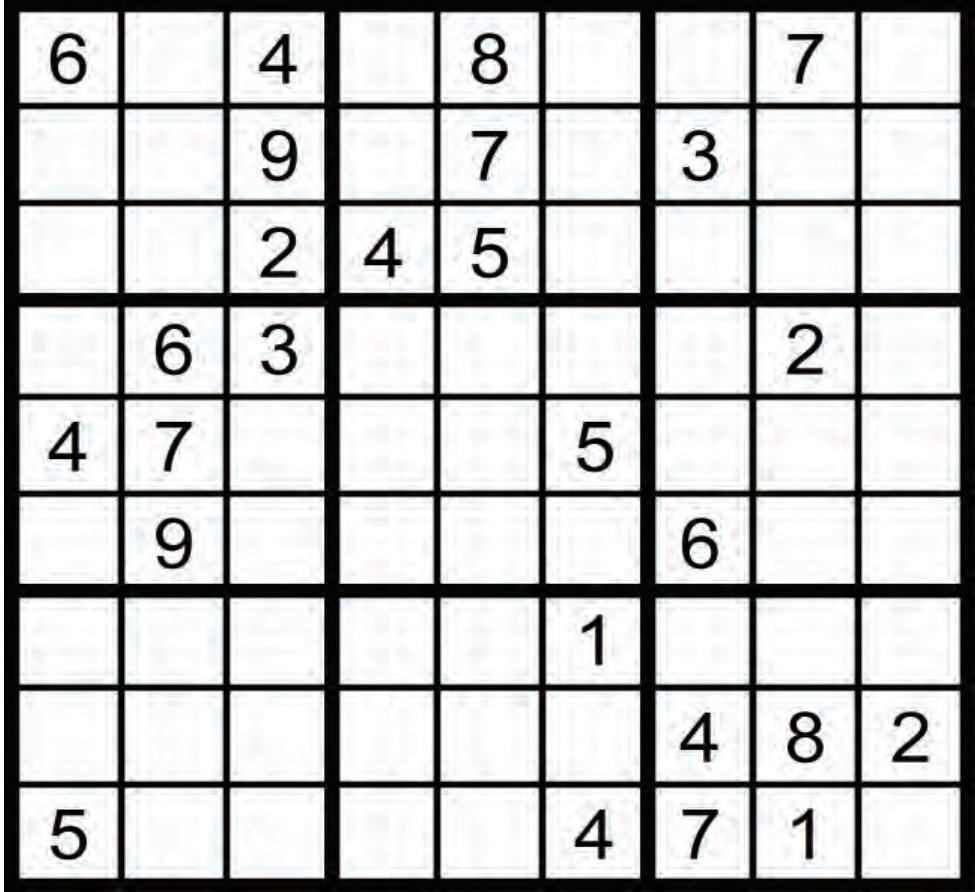
54 Second-largest Hawaiian island

56 Nordic airline

57 By what means?

58 National economic indicator

59 Actor --- Carrey



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

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Down: 1 Smarts, 2 Make up, 3 Oliver, 4 Gin, 5 Currant, 6 Enemy, 7 Slips, 8 TVs, 9 Scars, 10 Toss, 11 Absolute, 12 I R A, 13 Dad, 21 Adios, 22 Oats, 24 Sabine, 25 Omph, 27 Clog, 28 Dung, 30 Loins, 31 Larder, 33 Traps, 35 Bald, 36 Avid, 37 Software, 39 Goers, 41 Moos, 42 On a date, 46 Disuse, 47 Lean on, 48 Edmond, 50 Steal, 51 Hegel, 53 Int'l, 54 Maui, 56 S A S, 57 How, 58 G D P, 59 Jim.

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The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local

The Trusted Voice of Our Community





Chorus Niagara fundraiser supports youth programs

Mike Balsom
The Local

Vaughn and Lauren Goettler threw open the doors of their Ricardo Street home Sunday to hold a successful Scholar's Salon fundraiser for Chorus Niagara's youth programs. About 50 people joined Chorus Niagara artistic direc-

tor Robert Cooper, Salon event chair Daryl Novak of Niagara-on-the-Lake and various board members and volunteers to experience performances from nine incredibly talented young singers. Each performer was an alumnus of or currently participating in one of five Chorus Niagara programs designed to support their musical education

and aspirations. One by one, each singer addressed the audience with a bit of biographical information about themselves before explaining their reasons behind choosing the songs they were to perform.

Baritone Joel Lewczynski of St. Catharines and soprano Isabella Milano of Niagara Falls are both former members of the Side-by-Side High School Chorus, which provides talented high school singers the opportunity to rehearse and perform with Chorus Niagara for one concert during their regular season.

Lewczynski wowed the crowd with an amazing rendition of *Gethsemane*, from the musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*, saying he first tackled the song in his musical theatre class in his final year at Laura Secord Secondary School. Milano, a 2022 A.N. Myer Secondary School graduate now in her second year studying music at the University



Chorus Niagara Fundraiser guests gathered for a group shot, which included Victoria Hoshowsky-Bell, artistic director Robert Cooper, Joel Lewczynski, Adrianna Polito, Isabella Milano, Marcus Tranquilli, Alden Robinson, Emma Keltos-Scordino, Tessie Mostowy, Bailey Williams, pianist Jessica Cowan, and MC (as well as Local reporter) Mike Balsom. (Photos supplied)



Lauren and Vaughn Goettler with Chorus Niagara board chair Daryl Novak and artistic director Robert Cooper, behind the Goettler's home, which overlooks the Niagara River.



Adrianna Polito entertains at the fundraiser.



Marcus Tranquilli singing at the Chorus Niagara fundraiser.

of Toronto, closed the afternoon with a playful version of Puccini's *O Mio Babbino Caro*.

Tenor Marcus Tranquilli and soprano Adrianna Polito have both spent time as Robert

Cooper Choral Scholars.

The program provides a platform for singers between 18 and 25 years of age to explore their artistic potential and hone their vocal and choral skills through opportunities to perform as soloists and choral leaders. It comes with a \$1,000 stipend they earn as they are mentored by Cooper, one of Canada's foremost choral musicians.

Fresh off a 10-week stay in Italy where he studied with two opera groups, Tranquilli sang Donizetti's *Una Furtiva Lagrima*, while Polito chose to present French composer Gabriel Fauré's *Les Berceaux*, explaining before singing that the song's swaying nature sets up perfect-

ly the double metaphor of the rocking cradle and a ship at sea from the song's lyrics.

By the end of the afternoon, those in attendance at the salon had donated almost \$15,000 to support those programs, as well as Chorus Niagara's Children's Choir, the Associate Conductor Program, and the Theresa Pothier Vocal Scholarship, presented Sunday to 17-year-old Sir Winston Churchill student Alden Robinson.

"Your support is so crucial in providing these valuable opportunities to these talented young singers," said Cooper after the final performance of the afternoon. "We can't express our gratitude enough to you."



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