



**Predators add
to their wins
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Young ones up to 18 months old can be cared for in the new NOTL Rotary Infant Room at the Niagara Nursery School. Enjoying their surroundings are (clockwise from top left) Ruby Bastedo, Bo Francescut with Ruby Bastedo, Adriana Friesen and Andie Stewart.

Nursery school, Rotary celebrate new infant room

**Penny Coles
The Local**

The new wooden furniture in the infant room is pretty tiny, but just the right size for the youngest little ones being cared for by Niagara Nursery School staff.

This would not have been possible before the expansion of the nursery school and child care centre, which could not previously accept infants. Or without the help of a generous community, including a \$20,000 donation from the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club. That donation was directed to furniture and equipment for the nursery school's youngest charges, with the new space named the NOTL Rotary Club Infant Room.

The expansion has given the facility a large, bright, welcoming space divided into several rooms, one which

opened up 10 spaces for infants, another for 15 toddlers in their own room, as well as space for 24 preschoolers, and 20 school-age children for before and after care. Previously, the centre was licensed for 39 children, says executive director Candice Penny, and has been increased to accommodate for 69.

The nursery school's waiting list for child care has been whittled down from 200 to 170, but the list continues to grow, says Penny, and leaves a lot of parents seeking day care for their children, especially for infants, a situation that exists across the Niagara Region.

She recalls putting her son's name on a list when she was pregnant, and he was two years old before she was offered a space for him.

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Vision for Virgil ponds includes islands, nature park

Permanent solution to current problems could be long way off

**Penny Coles
The Local**

There could be a permanent solution in the works to the ongoing problem of vandalism at the Four Mile Creek reservoir and dams, but it involves a long-term plan, and likely a lot of money.

Brett Ruck, the irrigation

and drainage superintendent and environmental supervisor at the town, has a vision for the future of the creek, the dams and the two 50 acre man-made ponds, that could allow the area to be enjoyed as a nature park by the community, while also improving the creek as an irrigation system for local farmers.

Neighbours bordering the creek and the upper and lower ponds see the area as a beautiful nature preserve, under the auspices of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

An NPCA document describes the area as "ideal for a leisurely stroll or a picnic with the family. Surround-

ed by farm fields, the Virgil Dam Conservation Area is a hidden oasis on the edge of town."

Recreational fishing for carp and large-mouth bass is a popular activity on the creek, with licences required and following provincial regulations and seasonal restrictions, the NPCA says, and canoeing and kayaking on the creek is also possible "if you can find an appropriate place to launch your boat."

In recent years, there has

been much concern amongst neighbours over recurring vandalism to the dams, which has periodically lowered the water levels, appearing to endanger habitat and wildlife.

In August, 13-year-old Morgan Mitchell wrote a letter to The Local about the creek. For most of his life, he said, he has lived on the Virgil lower reservoir, and loves to spend time "kayaking and fishing in this amazing ecosystem."

He had read an article in

The Local, by environmentalist Owen Bjorgan, about the deteriorating state of Four Mile Creek, the largest watershed in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and wrote about the problems with water flow in his area due to vandalism.

"Our section of the creek was man-made, having been flooded to supply water for irrigation in the nearby farms, but has grown over the years into a huge ecosystem,

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Shortage of child care space region, province-wide

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When the province's community-based capital projects grants came around, "we did not hesitate to submit our application. It was our opportunity to address the growing needs in our community," says Penny. "When we heard we were one of the recipients of the grant we knew this was our opportunity to help do our part in providing much-needed care spaces. We are so grateful to have been able to increase our capacity from 39 to 69 children."

The Rotary donation has contributed to the furniture and toys in the infant room, says Penny, meaning the nursery school campaign funds could be spent on other necessities.

The nursery school board continues to be active participants in conversations regarding the care needs in the community, she says, "and will continue to do all that we can to help ensure that all children and families are given equal opportunities to access affordable, high-quality early childhood education and care. Should any further opportunities present themselves to allow us to do more, we will always do what we can to help."

The nursery school has

raised \$77,718 in its expansion campaign, and is still hoping to raise the remaining \$22,282 to get to their target of \$100,000. To help them reach their goal, go to <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/pages/niagara-nursery-school-expansion-fund/>

Patricia Murenbeeld, president of the NOTL Rotary, says the donation to the infant room, knowing it would be available and equipped for young ones, is something the club wanted to do for the sake of mental health for parents in the community. Not being able to find child care is stressful for families, she says.

Rotary also wants to do more to help young families in the community, she adds, and decided helping out the nursery school is one way toward accomplishing their goal.

Murenbeeld has three daughters, and is looking forward to the April arrival of her first grandson, so the need to support young mothers by helping to provide child care spaces, not just in NOTL but across the province, is something that is on her mind, she says.

Adam Stewart, past president of the NNS board, now has his youngest in the infant room, which wouldn't have been possible without the expansion.

"We are so extremely for-

tunate and thankful to belong to a town that has an exceptional school like NNS," he says. "With the new infant program being the only licensed infant care program in NOTL, we know and trust that our youngest child is being given the individual attention she deserves, all while being nurtured and cared for. The highly trained and talented teachers not only cater to our daughter's individual schedule but they do so in a way that it feels like an extension of home."

The infant room is fully equipped with cribs, black-out blinds and a beautiful outdoor dedicated play area under the shade of the memorial tree, adds Stewart. "The infant care program is an amazing and much-needed service which caters to the changing demographic of NOTL."

Current president Amanda Mirabella was at the nursery school Sunday morning for the Rotary cheque presentation, and to say thanks to the Rotary Club for their donation. She has a son, Luca, in the preschool class, and is new to the child care centre since the start of COVID. When Luca began, he was at the other side of the building, in the former space occupied by the facility. "I had to drop him off at the gate and run," she says, due to COVID protocols. "I

felt very disconnected. Now I can have a conversation with the staff, ask about his day, see his artwork on the walls."

The difference of feeling more a part of his day isn't about changes to COVID restrictions, she says, but because having three rooms provides more space and allows more opportunities for distancing.

Rotary member Paul Lalonde took a little tour of the school Sunday, and was impressed with what he saw. "It sure is a nice facility," says the father of three teens. "The fact that NOTL has such a great space for young families, is so vital to the community. If my kids were younger, I'd love for them to be here."

"I'm so proud Rotary is so diverse, including helping young families in the community," says Rotary member Jolanta Janny Kudlats.

Rotarian Jeannie Manning adds the club is helping those in need across the region, including supporting a community garden in Fort Erie, established by Links for Greener Learning, based out of St. Catharines. "The project helps new immigrants to Canada, people of all ages, helping them to grow, harvest and prepare food," says Manning.

Rotary Club members also volunteer for a St. Catharines breakfast program, with a team preparing breakfast for more than 100 people the second Tuesday of every month. St. George's Anglican Church



On top of the slide, Rotarian Jeannie Manning was at the Niagara Nursery School Sunday for a cheque presentation to Candice Penny (standing, left), with Rotarians Paul Lalonde, Patricia Murenbeeld, Jolanta Janny Kudlats, and (kneeling, left) nursery school president Amanda Mirabella and treasurer Nicole Tissen. (Photos by Penny Coles)

on Church Street has been serving breakfast for almost 25 years, 365 days a year, says Manning.

The club also donated backpacks and school supplies to the Niagara Regional Native Centre, to be distributed to children from Kindergarten up to university, and has raised \$33,000 for polio eradication in the two remaining countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan, where the disease still exists.

"We're helping out with our international and local efforts," says Manning.

Without last season's Rotary Holiday House Tour, the club's main fundraiser, revenue from one year has had to be spread out over two years, while still committed to sup-

porting the causes the club has taken on in the past as best they can, says Murenbeeld.

This year's holiday tour, Dec. 3 and 4, is set to go ahead, with seven homes, one added to help spread out crowds and keep people safely apart, along with reduced ticket sales, and reduced hours. Proof of vaccination is required, and all COVID protocols will be followed.

The tour has been approved by the town, says Murenbeeld, and will go ahead unless there are changes to current pandemic restrictions. "What we really need is volunteers," she added, with more people needed at each site to help handle the COVID and vaccination screening.



Paul Lalonde of the NOTL Rotary, with Candice Penny of Niagara Nursery School, and Rotarians Jeannie Manning and Patricia Murenbeeld, present Penny with a cheque for \$20,000 for the new infant room at the child care centre, which includes a small area for cribs for 10 infants.



Rotarians Patricia Murenbeeld, Jeannie Manning and Paul Lalonde admire the infant room and the tiny furniture the club has helped to fund.

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Better temporary solution should be next step

Continued from page 1

supporting many species of amphibians, birds, and fish. When these incidents happen, the creek, which isn't very deep, drains so much that fish get trapped in the shallows and die. This impacts the whole ecosystem because the species that are dependent on the fish will lose their main food source. When these boards come out it takes longer than it should for the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority to replace them, and currently, our creek is experiencing one of the worst water level drops this year."

He called on the NPCA to invest in a better system for the dam.

When neighbour David Murray read the letter, and saw nothing was being done, he called the NPCA, believing a young boy trying to advocate for something important to him shouldn't be ignored.

Since then, a temporary solution has been found, with the NPCA saying they were working with town staff on something more permanent with the town.

Since then, Murray has been pushing for the relatively new CAO of the NPCA for that permanent solution, "or at least a better temporary solution," he says and recently, was told there would be a meeting at the site Friday af-

ternoon, with the NPCA and town staff. He planned to attend, with Morgan Mitchell, who was the person most entitled to hear their plan, after raising the issue, says Murray.

However, at the last minute, the meeting was cancelled, with no reason provided. Although it was a rainy day, "they didn't even use that excuse," says Murray, who is assuming there isn't a solution to present.

What neighbours are learning now, thanks to Mitchell and others, is that although the NPCA owns the area and is currently responsible for remediation, the ponds are first and foremost considered a source of irrigation for farmers, and it is the job of town staff to control the dams by removing boards so that water flows over them, ensuring enough water for farmers when they need it.

Except that somebody — possibly kids, or farmers, says Ruck, or fishermen, others have suggested — keeps removing boards from the dams, thus lowering the water level in the ponds.

And it will require the town and NPCA staff working together to find a long-term solution to prevent it from recurring.

The ponds are quite deep, Ruck says, about eight feet, but the built-up sediment, a significant issue affecting irrigation, is about six feet deep in places. When neighbours

see what looks like loss of habitat from decreasing water levels, it is the result of the large amount of sediment, he explains, and he has a plan to fix that.

The town has a permit to take water from the system for irrigation, he says, going back decades. Water is pumped from the area of the Ontario Power Generation Sir Adam Beck Generating Station reservoir on the Niagara River, and is released into the irrigation system beginning at Highway 405 and Sand Plant Hill, for about 20 or more farmers to draw water from it, through St. Davids, Virgil and eventually to Lake Ontario.

The town's provincial permit allows it to take 5,200 gallons a minute of water for irrigation, but the town only has the ability to put 2,000 gallons a minute through the system, says Ruck — it just can't pump any more than that.

And if farmers need more water than is available, it can take up to three days to get it to St. Davids, not always a timeline that works for farmers when they require it for irrigation.

Since 2011, farmers who draw water from the system have been allowed to put dams in the creek to keep water in it, he adds.

Another problem is the sediment slowing the flow of water, and Ruck's long-term vision includes a plan to deal with it, that would be consid-



When the water level appears low, it is because of the depth of the sediment, says town irrigation supervisor Brett Ruck. (Kim Killean)

erably cheaper than removing it. It could take "millions and millions of dollars to truck it away," he says.

He envisions installing traps to reduce the sediment that is slowing the flow of water, and would like to see the sediment moved and tamped down to create islands that could be used as nature parks and bird habitats, while also aiding the flow of water around them.

"From a conservation point of view, this is gold standard," he says, while at the same time helping to deliver water for irrigation purposes.

He would also like to see a weir to control the flow of water in the ponds, and ladders to help salmon move through the system.

Hundreds of salmon die because they can't get over the dams, he says. The ladders would move the salmon further along, and could be part of "an educational piece to let kids watch fish try to jump up into lower reservoir. How neat would that be?"

He's also talked to NOTL Hydro about getting power to the community park element of his plan, and has been told it's possible, with steady flow of water.

"There are all kinds of things that could be done," he says. "It's up to our imagination to see how we move forward."

Ruck was talking to the town's environmental committee last week about his vision for the creek and ponds,

and planned to share it with neighbours and NPCA staff Friday afternoon at the meeting by the pond at Line 2, but once it was cancelled, didn't have the opportunity.

Kim Killean, a neighbour of the ponds who has also been concerned about loss of habitat due to vandalism to the dams, says he met recently with Rob Shoalts, a representative of the NPCA, onsite.

Killean learned that originally, there was no wooden board retaining system on top of the concrete dam, and Shoalts was responsible for designing the current system as a stop-gap measure when the original valve system for controlling water flow became inoperable and unrepairable. Shoalts pointed out that during COVID restrictions, there has been a major uptick in vandalism on conservation property across the region, including in Virgil.

The boards that have been tampered with by vandals have now been secured, using "metal frames that essentially make the boards almost impossible to remove," Killean explains. "This was very good to see."

But he was also told it's still considered a temporary solution, require something permanent devised in collaboration by the town and the NPCA.

When The Local reached out to the NPCA, a spokesperson said "the discussions with the town are still ongoing, and there is no concrete

update we can provide at this time."

When Ruck presented his vision to the town's environmental advisory committee last week, Coun. Gary Burroughs, a member of the committee, told Ruck he was "excited about the potential of the sediment islands."

But he also asked whether it is a plan that could come to fruition in his lifetime.

That depends on the funding, says Ruck.

Farmers, he says, "aren't going to pay for moving sediment."

His idea could be considered a community project, and could qualify for funding from upper levels of government. The process would have to start with a plan, moving forward "slowly and methodically" to get the required funding. It would also require the acquisition of the property by the town, from the NPCA. "Nobody's going to give us funding if we don't own the property," says Ruck. And although that subject has been broached, and has been approved in council's recent support of the town's irrigation master plan, discussions with the NPCA haven't started.

So to answer the Burroughs' question about when the vision could become a reality, he answered, "I don't know."

The real question, says Murray, "is whether it will happen in 13-year-old Morgan Mitchell's lifetime."



This is the area where islands could create habitat and educational opportunities alike. (Owen Bjorgan)



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Town poised to move forward with climate change plans

Penny Coles
The Local

Recognizing dealing with climate change as a priority, councillors have agreed to a vision statement that says “Niagara-on-the-Lake will demonstrate leadership and innovation to protect the community’s natural beauty, charm and heritage against impacts of climate change today and into the future.”

At Monday’s planning committee meeting, councillors also enthusiastically endorsed a corporate climate change adaptation plan, which in addition to the vision statement, includes municipal goals, prioritized actions, and continuing the planning process to battle the impacts of climate change. Over the past two years, town staff and the town’s environmental advisory committee have been working with Brock University’s Environmental Sustainability Research Centre, along with six other Niagara municipalities, in a partnership called Niagara Adapts, looking at ways to protect against the impacts of climate change.

Victoria Steele and Rob Andrea, town representatives for Niagara Adapts, Kira Simone, on the town’s environmental advisory committee, and Dr. Jessica Blythe, a professor at the Brock University Environmental Sustainability Research Centre, were on hand at Monday’s virtual meeting to present the results of their discussions and recommendations to councillors.

“I think the work that has been done to date has been outstanding,” said Lord Mayor Betty Disero, following their presentation. The work and consultation with the public, the committee and staff have been amazing. This is an issue that is so important to our future.”

She urged everyone on staff, members of the public, “anybody’s who’s watching this,” to read the vision statement, and learn it. “I could not have said it better myself,” she said. “It’s exactly what we should be looking for and doing in this town. I’m so thrilled with this report and the work that’s been done by the environmental advisory committee and the members of Niagara Adapts.”

CAO Marnie Cluckie explained the purpose of the presentation was to provide council with an update on the development of the corporate climate change adaption plan for the town, which she said represents “a significant effort towards the town’s environmental sustainability efforts.” The environment, she pointed out, is one of the pillars of the town’s strategic plan, and the town needs to develop smart, balanced growth, with priorities being economic development combined with environmental stewardship, integrated with the town’s decision-making process. She said while municipalities are talking about the additional burden of the cost of dealing with climate change as it relates to infrastructure, they also have to look at the cost of not doing dealing with it — the town has seen climate change, warmer weather and the effects of both on infrastructure.

Steele explained the town will use a social media campaign for its climate change adaptation plan, to help educate and engage the community, and help it deal with climate change. “We strive to be a leader in climate change for the community.” Blythe told councillors Niagara is experiencing flooding, heatwaves, and more variable climate extremes, with local municipalities identifying finding climate change solutions as key. She said we see climate change impacting elementary school students, when blinds are closed and lights are off so kids can keep cool in their classrooms during a heat wave. We see it in the flooding of 2019, in increasingly strong winds, extreme weather events, and storm damage, and “we can expect the weather to become warmer wetter and wilder” into the future, she added. Fortunately, “we know how to adapt to climate change.”

The Niagara Adapts partnership has held workshops and public events, and has researched vulnerability to the impact of climate change, she said. Through those efforts the partnership has identified that municipalities want support with climate change data, they want guidance on how to use it for decision-making and planning, they want risk assessment, they want to know how to engage their communities, and how to protect their municipalities from climate change, she said. Niagara municipalities want to be climate leaders, she added, and to build social and ecological resilience in their communities, taking advantage of opportunities to “grow, innovate and prosper in a changing climate.” They also want a “robust,

high-quality climate change plan,” she said, to increase climate awareness across the region, and to increase the capacity of communities to protect themselves against the impact of climate change. Simone says a member of the town’s environmental advisory committee, says a survey conducted across the region, online and in-person, received more than 1,000 responses, 104 from NOTL residents, who shared their thoughts about local susceptibility to the impacts of climate change. While 78 per cent of the NOTL respondents believe climate change is real, and many said they’ve experienced it, only 20 per cent feel the municipality is prepared to adapt to climate change. After brainstorming with Niagara Adapts members, and evaluating potential actions from many different angles, the committee endorsed the Niagara Adapts report and submitted it to staff in September. It highlights goals and actions, including minimizing health and safety risks, supporting public awareness and education, incorporating climate change in design and construction, building urban forest resilience, reducing flooding risks, and incorporating climate change into the town’s Official Plan, policies, bylaws and standards. When asked about the cost of implementing climate change actions, Rob Andrea, from the town’s engineering department, said a budget has not yet been incorporated, but as each action is presented in future reports, the costs attached to it will be included. He said staff will likely look at what can be done “for the quick wins,” and what needs to be done to implement the process moving forward, taking it back to the environmental advisory committee. As reports are presented, the costs will be shown “on a project-to-project basis.” CAO Cluckie said she sees the process going forward as “a collaborative approach,” and that it will likely involve the community and council “at various checkpoints,” going back to staff, and returning to the community and council, “to make sure we’re on the right track.” She agreed staff could identify low-cost quick wins, and for actions that are bigger, long-term projects, would look at grant opportunities. Coun. Norm Arsenault, chair of the town’s environmental advisory committee, said members are now “fully engaged, and with this going forward, it has to encompass everything we do. I’m looking forward to continuing the work that has been started. I think what you’re going to get out of this is an exceptional plan for the future.”

Spirited celebration



Spirit in Niagara held its grand opening celebrations Saturday, attended by about 200 people. The small batch distillery uses freshly-fallen local fruit to make spirits at the 458 Lakeshore Road location. Master distiller and blender Joshua Beach, MP Tony Baldinelli, MPP Wayne Gates, electrical contractor Ray Hobbs and owner Arnie Lepp were on hand to cut the ribbon. (Mike Balsom)



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Resident suggests paved paths behind community centre

Penny Coles
The Local

Old Town resident Pamela Wilson is hoping the town will consider building an accessible park on the property behind the NOTL Community Centre.

She says she has support from many residents in the area for a tree-lined open space with a paved path, and “comfortable benches scattered throughout.”

Speaking to councillors at the committee of the whole meeting, she compared her vision to accessible paths

like the one at the Virgil sports park, to allow those in wheelchairs, and people with walkers and canes, to use them safely.

“A strong body of literature shows that those who spend as little as 20 to 30 minutes a day outdoors leads to better health outcomes such as blood pressure, mental health and boosted immune response,” said Wilson.

“Loneliness is also a concern in our neighbourhood,” she added, with COVID lockdowns, and when asked to stay close to home, parks

have to be nearby.

The town’s wellness committee “proposes that the town establish physical activity and physical literacy as priorities for the health of all NOTL residents.”

Her vision includes asking residents to provide a tree, a plant, a bench or a bush, and she said she has heard from people who have said they would do that.

She sometimes drives to the Virgil park, which is more accessible for walking, and she loves that trees line the park, and “it seems to make a lot of sense and good

land use” to have a similar, accessible park in the Old Town, she said.

In answer to a question from Coun. Wendy Chero-pita, Wilson says she has a group of supporters whom she believes will help organize and maintain the park.

There may already be some plans for the back area behind the community centre, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said, with the NOTL Rotary Club looking at infrastructure for activities in that area.

There also needs to be a discussion with town staff

with respect to benches and types of trees that would be suitable for that area, which is bordered by vineyards, she said.

Councillors agreed to refer Wilson’s request to staff for a response by February or March.

Nominate a deserving volunteer

Local Staff
The Local

After missing a year due to COVID, the town is once again giving out the Lord Mayor Volunteer Awards.

Online nomination forms are available, or can be dropped off at the town hall by 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 28.

If you require a printed copy of the nomination form, call 905-468-3266 or email info@notl.com to arrange for a pickup.

To nominate some-

one, the town asks for the name of someone who has demonstrated outstanding volunteerism in one of the following categories: community/civic engagement; culture (arts, music, heritage, etc); environmental efforts; diversity, equity and inclusion; sports and recreation; volunteer under 16; volunteer under 30; working with seniors; and working with youth/education.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero says she’s excited to be recognizing volunteers this year, in categories that have

been chosen to align with the town’s strategic plan.

One winner will be chosen for each category, and will be recognized at the council meeting of Monday, Nov. 22, at a virtual ceremony at <https://notl.com/content/livestream-broadcast>.

For more information, or to nominate a volunteer, visit <https://www.notl.org/volunteer-awards>.

Volunteers must reside in Niagara-on-the-Lake and be willing to have their photo published in the newspaper.

Local Staff
The Local

The town is giving out Halloween treat bags to local children again this year.

Last year, town staff and community volunteers prepared more than 700 special Halloween goodie bags for Niagara-on-the-Lake children.

This year, on Oct. 30, children can pick up their pre-ordered treat bags at one of five community fire station, between 11 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Children have to be registered by midnight Oct. 24.

Kids and parents are invited to dress up when going to pick up their bags.

All COVID-19 health and safety precautions will be adhered to during pickup. An email outlining pick-up instructions will be distributed to all registered partic-

ipants before the event date.

Allergy-friendly bags are available by indicating specific allergies on the registration form.

Residents or businesses wishing to donate can drop them off at the community centre by Sunday, Oct. 24.

With Halloween approaching, the town reminds residents to celebrate safely:

- Only trick-or-treat outside.
- Don’t go trick-or-treating if feeling ill, even if symptoms are minor.
- Minimize contact with others: stay two metres (six feet) apart and do not congregate or linger at doorsteps.
- Trick-or-treaters should consider wearing a face covering. Choose costumes that allow a face covering to be worn, making sure you can see and breathe comfort-

ably. Consider building a face-covering into your, or your child’s costume.

- Avoid high-touch surfaces and objects.
- Wash hands often and thoroughly or use hand sanitizer.

If you’re handing out candy:

- Don’t hand out candy if feeling ill or isolating.
- Consider wearing a face covering that fully covers your nose and mouth.
- Consider using tongs, or other similar tools to hand out pre-packaged candy to avoid handling treats.
- Wash hands often and thoroughly or use hand sanitizer.

The town also has posters to put on doors to indicate whether or not you are handing out candy.

For more information or to register visit: <https://notl.com/halloweengiveaway>

Town asking for input on 2022 budget

Local Staff
The Local

Want to have your say about taxes?

The town has launched a 2022 budget survey on Join the Conversation, its online engagement platform, to receive feedback from residents, business owners and community stakeholders. Until midnight on Sunday, Nov. 7, members of the public can provide their input on what

they feel should be budget priorities.

“Public engagement is essential in building a budget that reflects residents’ wants and needs,” says Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

The annual budget covers a wide range of services to support town operations and deliver programs in the community. Operating and capital budgets are designed to address programs, services, asset management, infrastruc-

ture, and council objectives.

The survey is intended to help town staff and council better understand what services residents, business owners and stakeholders value.

The Join the Conversation page also features information about how the budget works and frequently asked questions about the budget process.

Have your voice heard at www.jointheconversation-notl.org/2022budget.

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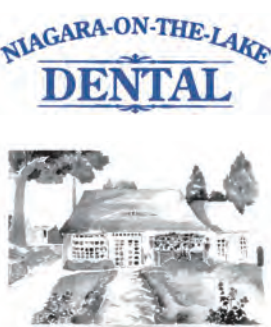
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EDITORIAL

Niagara in a good place, but could be better

As we watch some of the other provinces struggling with alarming COVID numbers, we have reason to feel fortunate in Ontario.

Not smug, though. We've kind of been there, done that, with COVID patients moved around to hospitals that have

room in their intensive care units, and MASH-like tents in hospital parking lots. We've watched the military march in, we've had health care workers from the Atlantic hospitals fly in.

But that was during the third wave, and maybe that

taught us something. We are, so far at least, managing, with a good vaccination uptake, a slow lifting of restrictions, and many people being cautious about their movements, to more or less ride out the fourth wave. We have new cases every day, and unfor-

tunately, hospitalizations and deaths — not in the high numbers that we did, but any is too many — and we hold our collective breaths hoping school outbreaks won't get any worse.

If the province decides to lift more restrictions, such as capacity limits on restaurants and gyms — and it sounds like it will in the coming days — it should be with caution, calling for staff to be vaccinated. If we have to show proof to enter somewhere we need to be vaccinated, employees should be required to show

proof to work there. It's tough when restaurants are having difficulty getting staff, but it will be worse if there is an outbreak among employees. Unvaccinated staff in workplaces that allow the public, not distancing and not wearing masks, seem like a real risk at this point, to each other and to their customers.

Although those who need to hear the message stopped listening months ago, we need to have young adults, those in the 19 to 29 age group, with the lowest vaccination rate, to step up. Some already have,

but they are still the demographic most likely to spread infection.

Parents are going to be asked to make decisions soon about vaccinating their children, aged five to 11, and many will go ahead, believing it's what's best for their kids, their schools, and the rest of their family.

Surely those over 19 can make the same decision.

Penny Coles
The Local

Time to nominate a volunteer so we can say thank you

Volunteers are essential to the many organizations and events that make Niagara-on-the-Lake the best place to live and work.

They are an essential part of any organization. Volunteers are people who love to give back to their community, and in doing so, meet people in their community and develop friendships with those who share similar interests.

each has members that manage to find new ways to raise money and support others in the community, or further afield.

It's not just service clubs, of course. There are so many groups in town, so many volunteers, that the town selection committee will have difficulty narrowing it down to one volunteer to be recognized.

In just this edition of The Local, we mention the NOTL Rotary Club, Shaw Guild volunteers, volunteer firefighters who will hand out Halloween goodie bags for kids, those who will help make the Santa event happen, those who help organize kids' sports, all the volunteers who helped make the Explore Queenston day a success, and there are so many more — every week there is at least one event requiring volunteers who turn ideas into reality.

Of course, in order for the town to recognize them, there is work to be done, and your help is required. Go to the town's website and nominate a volunteer. Every one of us knows someone who is deserving. Take a minute to think about it. Otherwise,

you may regret it when it's too late, and it will have to wait until next year. It's rewarding to volunteer, it's rewarding to thank a volunteer, and it's rewarding to see a deserving volunteer you've nominated receive one.

Volunteers needed

And on the subject of volunteers, if anyone has some spare time Dec. 3 and 4, the NOTL Rotary Club needs extra volunteers for its Holiday House Tour. It has more houses on this year's tour, to spread ticket-holders out and reduce line-ups, and with COVID protocols and vaccination proofs to check, they require more people at each of the houses. Those who regularly help out at the Christmas event always say they enjoy it — if you have been on the tour, you'll know why — and it's a major fundraiser for Rotary, allowing them to support the many great causes they have committed to. If you're interested, email dlpenman@cogeco.ca.

Penny Coles
The Local

Local VOICES

Hospital site can be part of accessibility solution

By 2026, our town and all its public and retail spaces must conform to rigid design protocols that address accessibility issues. The challenge is both complex and costly. And coming faster than anyone is really prepared for.

As a representative of the town's Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, I believe the old NOTL Hospital site can be part of our accessibility solution, and give us a wonderful opportunity to grow into a next generation tourism destination.

The hospital has been a fixture in NOTL since the mid 50s. It likely is not a strong qualifier for any form of heritage preservation status. The town has declared that they plan to offer the site for sale or disposition to other suitable uses.

An ideal vision is to demolish the hospital building and replace it with a carefully designed multi-level parking facility that is built to accommodate the needs of the entire Heritage District. This facility must feature full accessibility measures but also be designed with a facade/appearance in keeping with the heritage characteristic of this district and height regulations. Additionally it could/should include some retail and service features that prevent it from being just an ugly parking place.

The big benefit then becomes the fantastic opportunity to allow the Queen Street heritage area to become an open piazza that

can feature more permanent installations that include retail locations, cafes, and expansion areas for existing businesses. Creative imagination can expand to greater opportunities and solutions. Capacity and enhanced services become the mainstay of a thriving and growing tourist experience.

These considerations become poignant in 2025 when all retail and service operations will be required by law to be fully accessible.

Physically, the service requirements can be managed by a single lane access with load and unload positions strategically placed with timed access to minimize congestion and maximize efficiency.

It is impossible to ignore or diminish the implications of infrastructure and the related costs. A specific solution related to the parking garage is likely best served by a Public Private Participation (3P) model that addresses the bigger overall project vision. From the rev-

enues accrued by the public partner, funding can be directed to enabling and entrenching the piazza vision.

Having visited numerous European regions large and small, resident and business access to more restricted areas is easily managed by the implementation barriers that retract into the road surface to allow egress and regress on a pass card basis. It works!

There are a whole host of reasons to argue why it can't be done, and maybe we should look at why can't we do it.

Way back in the history of NOTL there existed a tollgate to enter the town. So with about two to three million visitors a year crossing into our town, maybe an electronic tollgate at "a buck a car" (not a beer) could be considered. How to do this? Ask the 407 ETR to suggest a solution as an electronic partner.

Dave Antaya
NOTL



View from the couch

Donald Combe Special to The Local

Love on the Spectrum (Netflix, 2019) is an Australian series that follows several autistic singles as they

seek romantic relationships. These portraits of human connections are sympathetically handled. I found myself totally engaged.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who loves

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



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

COMMENT

Private property, salmon, big ideas for Four Mile Creek



Owen Bjorgan
Special to The Local

I'm standing at the base of the Virgil reservoir's north dam. I hop over some matted grass, mud, and find myself balanced on some concrete pillars. Beneath my feet flows a torrent of brown water and a forlorn group of salmon.

Smack! A giant fish measuring two feet in length leaps out of the water, airborne with grace, met by a wall known as the Virgil Dam. The fish does not know the name of this manufactured structure, how high it is, or that it was implemented decades ago to allow farmers to pump water from Four Mile Creek for irrigation purposes.

The sound was symbolic of the blockade, a smack in the face to the various species of salmon which annually and instinctively migrate upstream from Lake Ontario every September to November. It was disheartening to watch this dead-end moment for these fish, which follow their behavioural blueprint to press upstream and spawn their eggs in sandy gravel banks

every fall.

Historically, prior to over-fishing plus habitat destruction of Lake Ontario's wild streams, Atlantic salmon were once densely populated in what was formerly known as Lake Iroquois, where the fish were numerous enough to reliably feed the Indigenous peoples of the lands. In modern times, Lake Ontario has been restocked with Atlantic, pink, Coho, and Chinook salmon in an effort to boost the population of this ecologically influential species.

Recently I had the opportunity to sit down with Brett Ruck of the town of NOTL, and Dr. Bill Rapley to discuss the future of Four Mile Creek and its road to recovery. Ruck presented some fresh ideas surrounding the two Virgil dams, and how they could become focal points for various environmental improvement.

Like people, when ecosystems hit rock bottom, there is only room for improvement and leading by example. Some new ideas have been floating around like the salmon were floating around the base of the dam.

Four Mile Creek is the centre of attention in NOTL's watersheds, faced with poor water quality reports, flooding issues, and reductions of habitat. It is also our municipali-

ty's largest watershed in both length and volume. I hope it continues to be the centre of attention in a positive light, because here is what may be flowing down the hatch.

As presented by Ruck and Rapley at our most recent Environmental Advisory Committee meeting, to which I was glad to contribute to the discussion, there could be newly created islands within the reservoir which serve to enhance biodiversity by means of forming habitat diversity for birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

There is a vision for a fish ladder, which would facilitate the movement of salmon, rainbow trout, pike, suckerfish, and other fish species to migrate upstream. It is hard to imagine, but all of these species once reached the base of the Niagara Escarpment in their respective spring or fall journeys.

Additionally, there is potential to add sediment filters upstream of the dams in order to capture the excess solid particulate which enters and ultimately fills the reservoirs, hence why they are so shallow and weighed down by stinky muck. A noteworthy feature of these filters is that they can be cleaned and reused, over and over again for time to come. We must ask, though,

how did this mucky situation come about to begin with?

Dozens upon dozens of private properties upstream border Four Mile Creek without an ecologically sound setup. With the historic and current removal of creekside habitat, also known as riparian habitat (the vegetation and wooded plant communities which border a waterway), there is no effective filter for sediment, pollutants, and excess nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen from entering the creek.

Given that the vast majority of land in NOTL and southern Ontario alike is private property, that means that there is a certain power in the hands of those private property owners. If you are a NOTL local with land bordering one of our creeks, you have potential to enhance your property value while also improving the water quality of our largest stream system.

I fantasize about these property owners stepping up to the plate, and saying, "Hey, I have a bunch of land which borders the creek, and I am open to participating in a tree planting or habitat restoration program which will benefit biodiversity and water quality."

When someone like that says the word, I further imag-

ine the town, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, and potential partners such as Ducks Unlimited jumping in, and saying, "Hey, we have the funds, the means, and the resources. Let's rebuild the riparian habitat so less sediment enters the creek, and it can become a cleaner waterway for recreational, educational, and ecological benefits alike."

The power of private property is a hidden conversation tool in plain sight. If the organizations and powers that be can show local citizens that it is worth their while, I think we'd be pleasantly surprised at how many people

would be on board with saving Four Mile Creek.

My only words of encouragement from both a citizen and biology perspective is this: let's not wait one year, two, or 10 years to engage potential stakeholders. Let's make the effort to move now and realistically show that NOTL can lead by example, in doing what is right for the most important resource we have on the planet — fresh water.

Time is always of the essence, and I would hate to see bureaucracy thwart the outcomes of such a bold and impressive community initiative.



Downstream of the dams, the discussed ideas could only improve the water quality for fish and other animals. (Photos by Owen Bjorgan)



Salmon pile up at the base of the dam, effectively the end of their journey which historically went all the way to the base of the Niagara Escarpment.

Local LETTERS

Report explains effects of lockdown, reader says

Government policy, however ostensibly well intentioned, must not divorce itself the facts of its results. Regrettably, as of August 2020, Ontario's COVID-related lockdown policies - enforced at Provincial, Regional and Municipal levels - did exactly that.

To cite the conclusion of a rigorous study published in April of this year, "By August (2020) there was enough information available to show that any reasonable cost/benefit analysis would show that lockdown was creating more harm than good. It is unreasonable to sug-

gest that a proper decision could not have been made in the fall when the second wave of infections hit." This study can be found at <http://www.sfu.ca/~allen/LockdownReport.pdf>

(This report, called *Covid Lockdown Cost/Benefits: A Critical Assessment of the Literature*, is by Douglas W. Allen, a Canadian economist and professor of Economics at Simon Fraser University.)

Instead, those same governments doubled-down on their arguably injurious policies, resulting, as recently reported by Statistics Canada, in more lives lost in the majority of soci-

ety than were purportedly saved. And, in doing so, they were roundly championed by the media, this paper included.

Shame on you all: lives were lost and made miserable unnecessarily despite strong warning indicators. Worse, still, despite being in positions to know as much since April of this year, none of the above has acknowledged the error. On the contrary, all are hinting at a return to lockdowns should officials so choose.

Please note, therefore, that you cannot have it both ways: you can't purport to be acting in the

public's best interests and be, therefore, worthy of that public's trust and respect while quite evidently engaging in behaviour which has been demonstrated to jeopardize those interests.

Thus, I encourage you all, beginning with this paper, to display the integrity owed to the people whom you serve and acknowledge the errors made, apologize for the ensuing damages and commit never to repeat them.

Bruce Dickson
Chautauqua

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SHOP LOCAL

Library to celebrate reopening of makery space Thursday

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

October is Canadian Library Month, with the week beginning Oct. 18 designated as Ontario Public Library Week.

Debbie Krause, community engagement coordinator at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library, says the occasion is usually a time for customer appreciation events.

The usual coffee and doughnuts are out of the question under current COVID rules, but in honour of the special week, library staff are holding an open house this Thursday from 2 to 5 p.m. to celebrate the reopening of the Makery, the library's makerspace full of 3-D printers and other devices for members to use for their own creations.

IT staff and Makery assistant Christie Reganti is excited to welcome the public back into the expansive, well-outfitted room for the hands-on experience Thursday.

"It's an opportunity for people to come in and use machines that they may not have access to in their homes," Reganti told The Local Friday. "That's really what the Makery is all about. It's a space where people come in and let their creative minds wander."

Reganti is also looking forward to welcoming more users into the makerspace for the library's special programs, which have been running in limited form since September. A session for kids is held on the first Tuesday of each month.

The second Tuesday of the month is adult Makery night, where she fires up the 3-D printer or other equipment and works with the group to make a project together. These hands-on sessions are designed to allow participants to take something home with them at the end of the evening, while they learn how to operate the high-tech equipment for their next visit.

And the learning should happen faster than in the past.

"Our new 3-D printer is a lot more reliable than our (old) ones," Reganti explained. "They kept messing up the prints, so we got a new one and it works really well. We've already printed a lot of things for the public during the lockdown for curbside pickup."

The addition of a new glowforge machine to the Makery has Reganti imagining some new possibilities, too.

"It's a laser cutter-slash-printer and it uses a laser to cut and engrave on wood," Reganti said. "You can do glass etching, certain metals you can etch on, acrylics as well. Virtually anything, as long as it's laser-compatible."

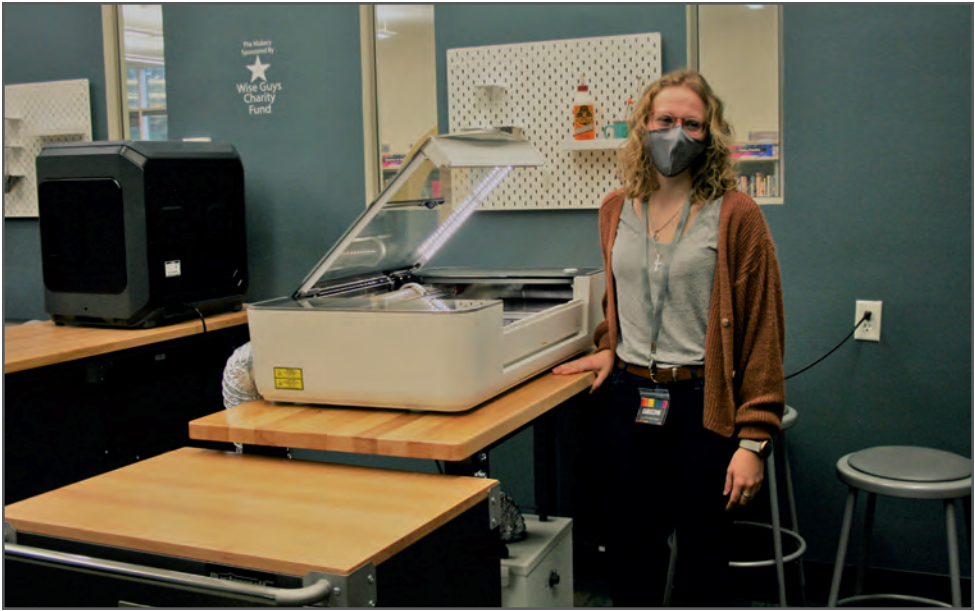
At a recent session, Reganti worked with the participants to make tea light lanterns with the glowforge. Another session focused on using the cricut machine, a computer-controlled cutting machine used to cut paper, felt, vinyl, fabric, leather, and matboard. The kids cut out their own designs to use for pumpkin decorating, just in time for Halloween.

Also on Friday, three long-time library boosters gathered to discuss the library's planned giving program.

Peter Gill and his wife have been supporters of the library since they moved to town 20 years ago. Now, thanks to the planned giving program, they will continue to contribute for years to come.

Gill met at the Anderson Lane location with friends and board members Daryl Novak (chair) and Dave Hunter (vice-chair) to discuss their decisions to name the library in their wills.

"We have supported various fundraisers that they've done," Gill, a self-confessed



Makery assistant Christie Reganti is excited to show off the glowforge in the Makery. She describes the new piece of equipment as a laser cutter/printer. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

mystery-lover, said of the library. "These two are both friends of mine and I got happily dragged into it."

Both he and his wife Judy have named the library in their wills. "We're both readers, we're both supporters, and we're delighted to support the library any way we can. This seemed like a good way. Hopefully they won't get the money for a long time, but there you go," Gill laughed.

Besides being the library board's vice-chair, Hunter is also the chair of its planned giving committee. The board decided to use Public Library Week to launch its campaign. "Planned giving bolsters several focus areas of the library by raising private funds," Hunter says. The money ends up in the NOTL Public Library endowment fund. That was created to make sure we have library services for future generations."

Hunter is quick to stress that planned giving is not about the here-and-now, but instead about some time down the road.

"The three of us have decided to make an impact

not now, but in the future," Hunter added. "That's what planned giving is all about. That private support is needed. At some point you have to put your money where your mouth is. That's what we decided to do."

Novak, in his third year as chair of the library board, adds that the board does not manage the giving program. Instead, it works with the Niagara Community Foundation to manage donations.

"They manage the funds," Novak explained. "What I did, I worked with the Niagara Community Foundation. My will says the balance of the estate goes to the Foundation, and I have an agreement with them about where the money would go. Nobody gets cash, they all get income."

In his will, Novak has also designated posthumous gifts to some animal welfare organizations and a number of local arts groups, including the Shaw Festival.

Besides nailing down a specific amount, the planned giving program can include life insurance proceeds, publicly traded stocks and securities and assets from RRSPs.

"We want to take people through the thinking process," Hunter said of the planned giving campaign. "I bet at some point someone is going to say to Cathy (Simpson, chief librarian) 'what's my money going to be used for?' Well, that's maybe 10 years down the road. What we can promise is that how we think about that is a reflection of the values I see embedded in the library and the community."

Simpson added that the library is considering ways to recognize its donors moving forward.

"All donations matter, and we welcome all and we are grateful for them all," Simpson said. "We want to rethink the whole levels and the plaques and all those things. We thank our donors and we will recognize them, as what we agree to with them and what they are comfortable with."

Information about the NOTL Public Library's planned giving program, and about services and equipment available in the Makery, can be found at notlpubliclibrary.org.



Dave Hunter, Daryl Novak and Peter Gill are all planning on leaving an endowment to the library in their wills, and ask other supporters to consider the library's planned giving campaign. The donations will be managed by the Niagara Community Foundation.



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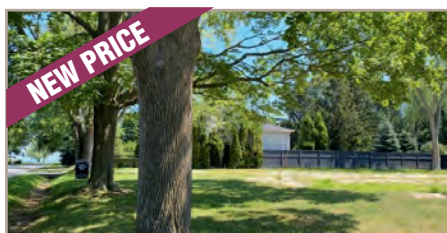
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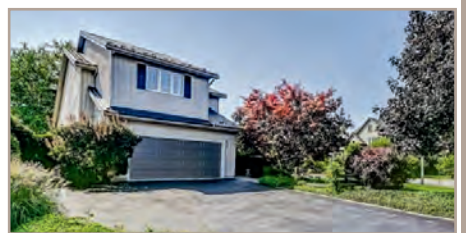
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Fraser LLP

Being accommodating and approachable is important to Erica Blythe (Van de Laar) in her practice with Martin Sheppard Fraser LLP.

She has always been passionate about Corporate Law, Real Estate Law and Wills & Estates, and is thrilled to have returned home to Niagara to practice with Martin Sheppard Fraser in Niagara Falls. She is a people person who enjoys helping others and advocating for them. Erica wants to ensure that their hopes and wishes are carried out, and help them achieve their lifelong goals, while also preserving their wealth.

She says she approaches her practice from a client-centered perspective, striving to be as helpful as possible, promising all her clients she will return their phone calls and emails in a timely manner.

She understands that decisions such as drafting a will can be an emotional task for many people, and that purchasing a home can be extremely over-

whelming, especially for first-time home buyers, and wants to help make those important life experiences as comfortable as possible.

During her time at Martin Sheppard Fraser, she has completed several purchase, sale and refinance transactions, gained extensive experience drafting and negotiating commercial and residential leases, and drafted several wills and powers of attorney.

She is often surprised to learn that many people do not have a will, or have not updated their will in decades. She always recommends that clients should strongly consider reviewing or updating their will when they purchase a new property, experience a loss in the family, change their marital status, or have children or grandchildren. Ontario has very strict rules regarding amending or altering a testamentary document, such as a will, she says, and it's important to have a lawyer to guide people through that process.

A Niagara-on-the-Lake native, Erica grew up on her fam-

ily farm, Van de Laar Orchards, where her husband Philip now works, alongside her parents, Chris and Laura, and her younger brother Nathan.

Erica received her bachelor of business management with honours from Western University, where she earned a full tuition scholarship for academic excellence and leadership. She later obtained her Juris Doctor degree from Western, where she was the recipient of several awards, including the Edward C. Elwood Q.C. Prize for the highest overall standings in Wills & Trusts, along with the Legal Leaders for Diversity Trust Fund Scholarship.

Erica was called to the Ontario bar in June 2020, and practiced at a firm outside Niagara, before being offered a job by the prestigious Niagara Falls law firm.

As part of the Martin Sheppard Fraser team, Erica looks forward to helping clients with all of their legal needs. Don't hesitate to contact her at Erica A. Blythe (Van de Laar), Martin Sheppard Fraser (mslawyers.com)

Willowbank welcomes visitors curious about building, school

Penny Coles
The Local

Despite the rather gloomy day, the light of Willowbank Estate as a unique school of restoration arts shone brightly Saturday, during the first Explore Queenston event, which opened the doors to some of its historic buildings and exhibits to showcase all the village has to offer.

Caitlin Wooll, director of the school of restoration arts at Willowbank, has worked at the estate for about five

She sensed people were enjoying being able to be out and about, and able to take advantage of the opportunity to learn what goes on inside the historic building, she says, some surprised by what they saw.

In addition to learning about the school of restoration arts, which offers a three-year, hands-on program unique in Canada focusing on skills related to conserving built and cultural heritage, visitors are fascinated by the building itself.

While the upper floor

“And we like to be able to talk about what we’re doing here. People ask about the wallpaper, the paint, and when we’re going to finish this room. It gives us a chance to explain we’re not going to restore it as a time capsule. People are surprised but also pleased to hear that we’re leaving it the way it is.”

As for classes, they have been ongoing throughout the pandemic, says Wooll.

Because they have always been small, typically eight students and an in-



Chris Thorne works in the Willowbank barn, chatting to visitors about the school for restoration arts. (Photos by Penny Coles)

years, and has organized several well-attended public events at the school in that time. She was pleased to see the number of people who dropped in to explore Willowbank Saturday, and grateful for the opportunity to showcase the school, when so many annual events have had to be cancelled.

She senses there is great interest for the historic building sitting atop the hill in the community, including among those who have seen it, but not been inside.

rooms are still being converted for additional classroom space, the main floor might also appear to be undergoing renovations to visitors seeing it for the first time.

As Wooll explains, she welcomes those conversations as an opportunity to explain the plans for Willowbank.

“It’s been really nice to see people coming through, after so long. They tell us ‘we love what you do, love to see what’s inside,’” she says.

structor, they could continue throughout the lockdown without interruption, with enough space for distancing.

“Fortunately our students haven’t lost any time,” she says, and loved being onsite for events such as Saturday, to talk about what they do.

“For some this is their first open house, and they’re happy to experience it.”

Chris Thorne was one of

Continued on page 11



Inside the main room, visitors learn about the Willowbank estate and the school, and also have an opportunity to purchase items made by the students.



Martin Sheppard Fraser LLP



ERICA A. BLYTHE (VAN DE LAAR)

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Classes have continued under pandemic protocols

Continued from page 10

the students demonstrating the skills he's learned and explaining it to the public.

In his third year at the school for restoration arts, Thorne, while doing some woodworking in the barn on the estate Saturday, tells The Local that although he is still a student, he has already started his own business.

His specialty is repairing and restoring windows

and window sashes in old buildings across the Niagara Region.

"It keeps me busy," he says, adding that the biggest problem is the difficulty in getting the materials he needs.

He grew up in a historic house in Mississauga, built in the 1830s, which his grandfather bought in the 1970s. It is one of the oldest in the area, he says, and he learned some of his restoration skills from his grandfather and father. It

was certainly part of what has fostered his love of historic restorations.

He is also a licensed archaeologist, and has worked with ASI, a Toronto firm that has done work in NOTL, on stage 3 and 4 assessments of historic sites.

While at Willowbank, he has worked on window restoration and maintenance projects.

Hie spends some of his time searching out tools in antique shops, but mostly he is out looking for old books.



Amanda Hansen, director of sales for 124 on Queen Hotel & Spa, explains the venue partnership with Willowbank, 124 on Queen and Treadwell Cuisine, which will provide catering for events held on the historic estate. Asking questions is Anne Vickers with her granddaughter Lily, 2.



Caitlin Wooll looks on while carpentry instructor Doug Vickers, Anne Vickers and granddaughter Lily admire Cashmir, a great dane mastiff who is never far from Willowbank student Sean Blank.

And clocks — he is also into repairing them, a skill that is self-taught, learned while tinkering with them over the years.

Thorne does his carpentry work in the barn, a structure as integral to Willowbank as the learning that takes place inside.

It was originally on the property of the Phillips Estate, owned by Rainer Hummel, at the corner of Queen and Mississauga Street. In the early days for the school of restoration arts, students

and staff dismantled and documented the barn, and a chicken coop beside it, and they were moved to the current site at Willowbank.

The barn bears the name of Bram and Bluma Appel, a Toronto couple who had a home in NOTL, and who were known for their support of arts and culture. The barn was donated and moved to the site by the Appel family and adapted into two workshop spaces for carpentry and masonry projects, an example of an

adaptive reuse project for the students involved in its relocation.

As Thorne works on a carpentry project in the barn, using a combination of old tools and new, which can get the job done faster, he loves what he is learning at Willowbank, and not just about woodworking. What Willowbank offers is much more, he says, including "the kinds of things we explore and discuss here that haven't reached the academic field yet."

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Retired record producer rose to top in Canada

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Lindsay Gillespie's 30-plus year career in the music business saw him brushing shoulders with the who's who of the Canadian music industry and beyond.

Evidence of his importance throughout the 1980s and 1990s line the wall of his basement entertainment room in the form of gold records presented to him by the artists whose success he helped nurture.

Teenage Head, Haywire, Lee Aaron, Maestro Fresh Wes, the Nylons, Jennifer Warnes, and Katrina and the Waves are just the ones who made the cut for the main part of the space. Others sit amongst his boxes of memorabilia in a room above his garage.

Canadian musicians such as Triumph, Dutch Mason, the Irish Rovers, Great Big Sea, Goddo, MacLean and MacLean, Shirley Eikhard, Downchild Blues Band, Domenic Troiano, Joe Sealy, Rob McConnell and the Killer Dwarfs all crossed paths with Gillespie through the years.

And on the international side of things, he worked with the likes of George

Thorogood, Motorhead, Big & Rich, Billy Bragg, Kris Kistofferson, Spencer Davis and the Arctic Monkeys.

Gillespie and his wife Julie moved to NOTL about 10 years ago after he sold his business, Music Manufacturing Services (MMS), to a Texas company. It was his final stop in a career that also encompassed working in radio and rising to the highest ranks of one of Canada's most important independent record labels.

While attending North Albion Collegiate Institute in Etobicoke, the teen-aged Gillespie knew he wanted to be involved in music. Unfortunately he was not a musician.

"But I was as interested in reading the studio credits (on album jackets) as I was the other stuff," he tells The Local. "Where it was recorded, who engineered it. And I knew I wanted to be in the business, but not being a musician, I was more interested in the recording and producing side of it."

Through David Marsden, one of the top disc jockeys at CHUM-FM, Gillespie managed to arrange a meeting with an engineer at Toronto recording studio Thunder Sound.

Upon walking in, Gilles-

pie was in awe with the size of the console in the mixing room, where the engineer was piecing together a song by Tommy Ambrose called *People City*, the original theme song to a brand new television station, CITY-TV, which was licensed in 1971. The engineer allowed the young Gillespie to stay as long as he wanted to watch him work.

He was hooked.

He enrolled in nearby Humber College's radio broadcasting program, the closest thing he could find to the recording arts at the time. But midway through his studies, Marsden offered Gillespie a chance to intern at his Lip Service Productions, run out of the basement of Thunder Sound.

Gillespie hustled to find government programs that would allow his internship to turn into a paid gig. He worked his way upstairs to Thunder Sound, and began writing and producing radio commercials and doing anything they needed done there. Top jazz musicians such as Rob McConnell, Moe Kaufmann, and Tommy Ambrose were in and out of the 24-track studio playing and singing on jingles.

In 1977, with Thunder



Lindsay Gillespie has a wall of gold records presented to him by the artists whose success he helped nurture. (Mike Balsom)



Gold records he produced went to Katrina and the Waves, Haywire, Jennifer Warnes and others. (Photo supplied)

Sound floundering, Dave Marsden left to take a job at a newish radio station in Brampton, CFNY-FM.

"CFNY had a 100,000 watt signal, which made it as powerful as CHUM-FM," Gillespie says. "Marsden went to work there, and became the program director. He called me and asked me if I would take on a producer job."

Gillespie produced all the commercials and the radio shows. From time to time he did on-air shifts for the young, free-form station, as it began to gain in popularity.

He recalls one evening when he was filling in on an overnight shift that members of Martha and the Muffins had just flown in from the U.S. with masters of their new album. They drove straight to the Brampton studios and Gillespie gave their new music its world premiere.

When a corporate broadcasting entity threatened a takeover of CFNY, Gillespie produced a song called *Working on the Radio*, written by one of his colleagues. He enlisted legendary Canadian guitarist Dominic Troiano, members

of Hamilton band Teenage Head, and eclectic violinist Nash the Slash to play on it. Gillespie even takes a verse or two on the track that can be easily found on YouTube.

For a 20 to 21 year old guy, it was a great life.

"Every second night I was at the El Mocambo," he remembers, "drinking on the record company's tab. We were on all the guest lists, saw all the great bands. It was fun and exciting, but I wasn't making a lot of money. I noticed that the

Continued on page 13



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NOTL retirement followed sale of company

Continued from page 12

record company guys wore great clothes and drove great cars. I decided that's what I wanted to do."

Gillespie reached out through his contacts, and in 1979 was hired at Attic Records to be their marketing manager.

One of the first acts he had the pleasure to work with was power trio Triumph, probably the band most closely tied to the Attic label at the time.

"Those guys were smart," he laughs. "They were professional. They knew the business better than anybody. They just chewed me up and spit me out. They knew where their royalties were, and they sold a lot of records here and in the US."

His connection with Teenage Head through CFNY became an asset for him at Attic.

"One of the first artists we broke after Triumph was Teenage Head," he says. "We did a lot of work with them at CFNY. When I went to Attic, it was a natural fit. I went from being the radio guy who could help them to being the record guy who was responsible for helping them. We had a huge success with Teenage Head."

The gold record for their second album, *Frantic City*, was the first in Gillespie's collection. He is mentioned frequently in Geoff Pevere's 2014 book *Gods of the Hammer: The Teenage Head Story*.

Besides developing homegrown talent, Attic also represented international artists in the Canadian market. Gillespie was heavily involved in the success of British-American band Katrina and the Waves and their iconic song *Walking on Sunshine*.

"We broke that at the same time as Capitol did in the U.S.," he says. "That was a huge success for us."

Gillespie still says today

that 1987's *Famous Blue Raincoat* LP by American singer Jennifer Warnes, released in Canada by Attic, may be the best record he has ever heard.

"Leonard Cohen's songs, Jennifer Warnes' voice, the production is phenomenal," he marvels. "It's just a magic record. She was a big fan of Leonard's. I don't know how you get better than Leonard Cohen as a songwriter. That was one of our big successes."

He remembers going to the Masonic Temple in Toronto with his boss to meet with British heavy metal band Motörhead, whom Attic was representing. One of the loudest bands ever, they were fronted by the very unique Lemmy Kilmister.

"Instead of listening to the Motörhead show, which wasn't my thing," Gillespie says, "we went across the street to a patio and had a couple of beers while the band was on. We went back, and Lemmy asked us how it was. We said 'great'. He said 'bull____, you guys were out drinking somewhere. I wouldn't have sat through it either!'"

His success in marketing led to him taking over the sales department. Later, he was promoted to vice-president, then finally senior vice-president. And, beginning in 1988, he began a side gig with his own company, called Music Manufacturing Services.

"One of our artists came into my office and said he got dropped from the label," Gillespie explains. "He had his master tape, and he said he had gigs coming up, and he needed product to sell at the shows. I made some arrangements to get his CDs made, and a light bulb went off that there were a lot of artists that needed this kind of service."

He leveraged his access to all aspects of the industry to help independent artists get their records made and

their covers designed and printed.

"We would take their masters and their drawings and put it all together for them," Gillespie says. "Two weeks later they would pick up their finished records, CDs or cassettes, shrink-wrapped and bar-coded. It could go in a store, they could sell it at gigs, they could do whatever they wanted."

MMS grew to the point where in 1993 he left Attic Records to focus on it full-time. MMS eventually had offices in Toronto, Montreal, St. Johns, Halifax, New York City and Nashville.

MMS became a sizeable operation, with Gillespie's roster of hundreds of independent clients competing with the major labels for time in the pressing plants. His clients were receiving the same product out of the same factories that the big acts were receiving. MMS had an art department and a mastering department to help that product look professional, too.

Under Gillespie, MMS pressed east coast band Great Big Sea's first two independent records. And their Nashville office received an order from country duo Big and Rich early in their career for 1.3 million CDs, MMS' biggest order ever.

Gillespie just might be also somewhat responsible for kickstarting the success of Nickelback.

Equally loathed and loved, the Alberta hard rockers pressed their first independent CD in 1996 through MMS.

"I've been told that someone got ahold of that record from us," Gillespie remembers, "and that led to them being signed. We would offer to send some copies out to some guys that were connected. And we did. That indie record is what got them noticed."

The band, led by the Kroeger brothers, went

on to become one of the top-selling artists of the 2000s.

And he came full circle with a couple of his old Attic acts. Shirley Eikhard and the Irish Rovers were ignored by record labels later in their careers, forced to go the independent artist route. So Gillespie and MMS helped them get their records made. He even went on the road to help the Rovers sell CDs at a few of their shows.

As the 1990s gave way to the new millennium, more and more artists were finding it hard to make ends meet. And once streaming became legal, production orders began to drop. The writing was on the wall for Gillespie.

"When we started the business, the average order was about 500 CDs," he says.

"As it got easier for the public to stream music, and indie acts started getting picked up by iTunes, the orders fell. Things were changing. I sold the company and chose to retire."

He says today he doesn't much miss the music business. He keeps in touch with a few of the artists he worked with, and is always happy to run into musicians who are still doing



Lindsay Gillespie says Jennifer Warnes' record was probably the best he has ever heard. (Photo supplied)

well financially. Some, of course, died at a young age, such as his friend Frankie Venom of Teenage Head.

He and Julie bought a house in the country here, and when he plays records in his entertainment room it's usually jazz.

As president of the Niagara chapter of the Ferrari Club of America, the couple love to drive along country roads with other fans of the Italian-designed sports cars. And he tinkers in his garage with his collection of classic motorcycles, something he has loved to do

since his days at CFNY.

He laughs when he sees that all of a sudden, music lovers have begun to purchase vinyl again.

He points to an article from 1996, when he and a partner, Jack Hawthorn, had just bought a vinyl record pressing machine for their Pickering operation. Of course, they got out of that business just before the vinyl resurgence.

"The article quotes me as saying 'I'm either a genius or an idiot'" says Gillespie today. "Turns out I was both."



Haywire was one of the bands Lindsay Gillespie (back, second from the left) produced records for — gold records. (Photo supplied)



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Chamber launches #NiagaraMyWay campaign

Penny Coles
The Local

Local businesses have a long winter ahead of them.

While we talk about recovery — residents returning to a more normal life, business owners hoping vaccinations and lifted restrictions will lead to economic recovery — the pandemic has taken its toll.

Eduardo Lafforgue, president of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, says, “we cannot stress enough how important it is for people to get out and support the businesses in their community. Small, family-owned businesses were hit hard during the pandemic, enduring long periods when they could not open their doors. They can use our

help now.”

Lafforgue, with Mishka Balsom, CEO of the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, is asking locals for support.

“In every corner of Niagara, in every municipality, in every sector — retail, seasonal, eateries, wineries — there are local businesses that can use your support,” says Balsom. “We would

love to see Niagara residents out supporting their community’s businesses, and then sharing that experience to encourage their neighbours to do the same.”

The two chambers of commerce began exploring a campaign to encourage people to shop local in 2019, pre-pandemic, before they knew what was on the horizon for the economy.

They wanted locals to consider exploring their own backyards, says Lafforgue.

They realized even then it would be better to do it in partnership, benefitting from “critical mass,” rather than going it alone, he says.

When the pandemic hit, the need for local support became even more obvious, and recently, with funding from FedDev (the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), the two chambers have launched a campaign asking Niagara residents to shop locally, and share their experiences on social media with the hashtag #NiagaraMyWay.

The goal is to “ultimately paint a broad mosaic of what Niagara means to different people, and help build a sense of community where people are encouraged to shop locally.”

Lafforgue adds, “this shows how well we can do when we are collaborating. Joining forces makes a huge difference.”

The media campaign, which was launched earlier this month, will continue to January, targeting locals, visitors from Niagara Region, Hamilton and the GTA, says Lafforgue.

Businesses interested in participating can register at gncc.ca/niagamylway/ or www.chambernotl.com/shop-local.

The campaign will highlight businesses who are taking part, and locals who frequent their businesses are asked to share their experience with #NiagaraMyWay. And if they come across a #NiagaraMyWay post or ad, they are asked to help amplify it by sharing it.

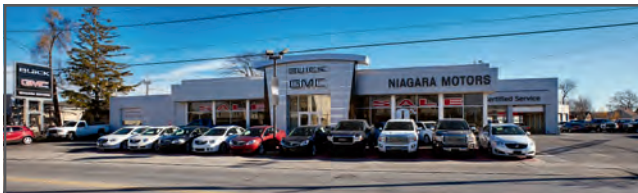
It seems the right time to grow this concept organically, with the economy hopefully on its way to recovery, says Lafforgue, with the help of locals shopping locally for everything from a coffee to clothing, gifts and groceries, encouraging their friends and neighbours to do the same.

“We can show how we shop, how we dine, and how we do it our way,” he says, “sharing our shopping experience online.”

It’s a perfect time, he adds, “because we don’t know what the fall will look like. We’re still not seeing the international tourists, and the support of locals really is essential. We’re very thankful for the support of locals who are helping keep our businesses alive.”



These are just a few of the businesses and arts and cultural organizations participating in the #NiagaraMyWay campaign: (left top) Simpsons Pharmasave, (above) Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, and (right) Pillitteri Estates Winery, Niagara Motors and the NOTL Museum. (Photos supplied)



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Submitted by
Brian Schmidt
Overhead Door
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Shaw Guild virtual garden tour offers an extra twist



Each of the three gardens is shown in June, and again in September, when they were part of the Shaw Guild Garden Tour, including an Old Town garden and two Queenston gardens. (Rene Bertschi)

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Penny Coles
The Local

A casual conversation leading to a “brilliant idea” is resulting in not only a pivotal fundraiser for the Shaw Guild, but also a virtual visit to experience Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Guild member Dave Hunter describes the seed that was planted, and how it has grown.

“I was at Peggy Bell's place, digging up some of her plants, and we were chatting about gardening and this year's garden tour,” he says. Hunter lives in St. Andrews Glen, and Bell was giving him some plants for the common areas of his neighbourhood.

Bell is a 15-year veteran of organizing the Shaw Guild garden tours, and after missing out on last year's major fundraising tour completely, due to COVID, decided that due to pandemic restrictions, it would be safer to plan for a fall tour, instead of the traditional late spring date.

Videographer Rene Bertschi and Bell had visited each garden on the tour in June, and again just before the fall date for the tour. As Hunter and Bell chatted about the videos, “Peggy came up with the idea of a virtual tour, showing the gardens in the spring, and then in the fall. It was one of those inspired moments that just popped up. It seemed incredible that Rene had all this video of

these beautiful gardens, and it suddenly struck us, look at what we've got, and what we could do with it. A garden tour of the same gardens, at two different times of year. It would be a unique approach to a virtual tour,” says Hunter.

The garden tour itself was very successful, selling about the same number of tickets the June event has in the past, and raising about \$30,000. That and funds raised from the virtual tour will help support Shaw Festival plays, says Hunter.

The 20-minute video, narrated by Shaw Festival actor Ric Reid, showcases the tour's eight private gardens in two seasons, showing the changes in colour and growth of the garden plantings over the three-month span, as well as the beautiful properties on the tour.

“This is a virtual garden tour, with an extra twist,” says Hunter.

The video does even more than that, adds Bertschi.

As he and Bell visited gardens to make the video, travelling from Queenston, along the Niagara River Parkway to the Old Town, he recorded the scenes they were passing, as guests on the tour would. The result is more of an actual experience of visiting NOTL, using some drone shots as well, including some of the town's most beautiful sites, including the gardens the town plants on Queen Street, and some of the other

highlights visitors would see, he says.

Bertschi has been making videos of the garden tour for six or seven years, and posting them on YouTube. He has also posted other videos of NOTL, some of which have received 20,000 to 30,000 views, while the garden tour videos typically get 200 to about 800 hits, of interest mainly to other gardeners. This video, combining both gardens and NOTL scenes, he hopes will be seen by many more viewers.

Now that the video is made and available to be viewed, Hunter is determined to ensure it receives a wide audience.

He says he was surprised to learn there are 19 horticultural societies in Ontario. “I even found one in Rainy River,” he says. And many more gardening clubs.

Between his efforts and Bell's, horticultural clubs, master gardeners and garden clubs have been notified and asked to share the information with their members, and the word is out on Facebook. Hunter hopes to reach many more people than could come to the actual garden tour, including the American visitors who have bought tickets pre-pandemic, and those who maybe haven't ever been on a tour and will learn about NOTL and

Continued on page 17

Video shows views of town as visitors see it

Continued from page 16

its beautiful gardens, “like the people in Rainy River,” he says.
He relates a situation he encountered on the day of

the September tour, when he was sitting in his car outside one of the gardens, and saw a couple in a car with U.S. licence plates. He got out of his car to talk to them, and found they had heard about it from the Shaw — they had

been coming to NOTL for years to see a few plays, and timed their visit with the garden tour.
“Think about that — they’re not only paying for Shaw tickets and the garden tour, they’re paying \$150

each for PCR tests to cross the border.”
The Shaw Festival is making sure everyone who comes to see a play knows about the garden tour, he says.
And this year, with the extra efforts to make the event

especially appealing, with Shaw Festival actors present in the gardens, live music, and artwork on display, “my sense is the character of the garden tour will become even richer in the next few years, thanks to the creativity of

the people on the organizing committee, a group of really great thinkers.”
To watch the virtual tour, visit shawguild.ca. The charge of \$11 provides unlimited views of the tour from Oct. 14 to Dec. 2.



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LocalSPORTS

Predators weekend adds two more wins to record

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

Niagara Predators coach Andrew Whalen is calling them the Swedish Connection.

Forwards Jesper Eriksson, Alexander Insulander and Emil Eriksson accounted for seven of the team's eight goals in a weekend which saw the Preds win two games, improving their record to 5-and-1. That leaves them alone atop the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League's nine-team south division.

And you can add goalie

Oskar Spinnars Nordin, another Swedish native, into the mix. He was between the pipes for both games, kicking away 44 of 46 shots in Friday's 3-2 win against St. George, and another 47 for a 5-0 shutout in Streetsville Sunday afternoon. The Predators never trailed either of their opponents over 120 minutes of weekend hockey.

Friday's victory over the Ravens was a sweet one for Whalen, coming as it did against the team that handed Niagara its only loss thus far two weeks ago.

"We wanted it bad," Wha-

len said Friday. "We picked it up in the third period last time against them, so it felt kind of like something was raw from that. So we paid them back for that one. The boys just played their hearts out. We played a team system and it came through."

Insulander started the puck rolling, scoring the first goal only 53 seconds into Friday's game in Virgil. The Ravens took an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty later in the period. While Niagara was pushing on the power play, defenceman Dawson Walker lost the puck in St.

George's end. It was picked up by the Ravens' Kyle Munyankuge, who scored on a breakaway.

"It was just a mental lapse," Whalen said about Dawson's costly turnover. "I kept telling them there's not a lot of oxygen going around right now, so mistakes are going to happen. It's what we do to recover from those mistakes."

Emil Eriksson's second period goal was part of that recovery. He put away a rebound off Ravens goalie Christian Lynch from a shot by Gino Carter Squire for the Preds' second of the evening. Ten minutes later Jesper Eriksson put Niagara up 3-1.

"I got a breakout," Jesper told The Local. "Emil had a good pass. I just went through to the goal and got it top shelf."

Ravens leading scorer Mike Marchesan narrowed the margin to 3-2 before the end of the second period.

With 20 minutes left to play, Whalen talked in the dressing room about concentrating on teamwork to hold off their much bigger opponents. The Predators played a flawless third, and Spinnars Nordin repeatedly came up with big saves to secure the victory.

"It's a small group right now, so we're gelling really well," Whalen said after the game. "The guys are getting great chemistry, and finding success within the system. When that success comes, they start to do it more. As a team we are coming together, and they are starting to show that on the ice."

Whalen admitted that there is a bit of a rivalry be-



Alexander Insulander scoring the first goal only 53 seconds into Friday's game. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

tween his squad and St. George, with both teams owned by Robert Turnbull. Friday's game was one of the more physical contests the Ravens have played in their six games. The Ravens took six penalties, including three for unsportsmanlike conduct, while the lone Predators penalty was on defenceman Josh Davidson for high sticking.

"I think we want to prove that we're the stronger team," Whalen said. "I'm just proud of the guys that their character is showing. They stopped after the first couple of games where maybe they were mouthing back. Now they close those mouths and realize that if the other team is going to get the penalties, we're going to have chances on the power play."

On Sunday, Spinnars Nordin picked up his second shutout of the season, this one on the road in Streetsville. The Predators scored once in the first, and four times in the third in the 5-0 victory. Again, they were outshot by the Flyers, 47-39.

Jesper Eriksson led the way with two goals and one assist. Emil Eriksson added a goal and two assists, while Insulander and captain Mario Zitella each had a goal and an assist.

The Predators continued to play both games with only 12 skaters, including just three defensemen. Defender Logan Baillie continues to sit with a knee injury suffered two weeks ago.

General manager Johan Eriksson says help on the blue line is coming this week with the arrival of Pontus Madsen, another Swedish player.

"He's played high level hockey in Sweden," Eriksson said. "He's a big, strong player, who can handle all aspects of the game. Last year he had nine goals in 21 games as a defenceman. Our young defensive core has done an amazing job, but we really need to bring in someone who can help lead the way. Adding a guy like Pontus will only make us better."

Eriksson said Madsen will arrive in time to be available for this Friday's home game. He is also close to signing two more local players to join the Predators.

Whalen was asked whether or not the addition of the new players will be a popular move amongst the 14 who have worked so hard over the first six games.

"I was joking that the guys are going to be complaining that they're not getting as much ice time when they come," Whalen said. "But we'll continue to gel well. No one takes long shifts. We roll our lines pretty fast. Everybody gets ice time. I think once they get that balance they'll be pretty good. They'll be fresh every shift and we're going to be able to produce more offence."

This Friday, Oct. 22 the Predators play host to the 3-and-2 Plattsville Lakers at 7:30 p.m. They'll be back in St. George Sunday to meet the Ravens for the third time this season. That game will be streamed starting at 3 p.m. on GMHL.tv.

Niagara on the Lake Soccer Club

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November 30, 2021

7:00 pm

Virgil Arena in the Mary Snider Room

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Only qualified persons will be contacted. (no walk ins)

LAST WEEK'S
SUDOKU ANSWER

Sudoku solution from
October 13, 2021

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

PLEASE RECYCLE
THIS NEWSPAPER



OBITUARY

EDEN, HELEN (PAT) — Passed away peacefully, at home, surrounded by her family on Tuesday, October 12, 2021 in her 88th year. Born in Dawdon, England, Pat was the beloved wife of Joseph for 65 years. Loving mother of David (Mary Frances) and Bronwen (Tony). Proud Grandma of Michele, Emily (Billy-Jim), Kathryn, Mary-Lynn, Michael and Olivia. Predeceased by her brother Tony Shaw.



Much of her childhood was spent in Wigton, and at 17 she moved to Newcastle-upon-Tyne to study nursing. She met Joe when he was still a medical student. They married in 1956, and moved to Canada with David and Bronwen in 1965 and settled in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Pat was a long-time member of the Anglican Network Church of the Good Shepherd and a member of the Graduate Nurses.

“... A life full of steady enthusiasm, walking straight to its aim ... with the calmness and confidence of one who knows the laws of God and can apply them.” — Florence Nightingale

A Private Memorial Service will take place with livestream available.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Anglican Network Church of the Good Shepherd, the Niagara -On-The-Lake Community Palliative Care Service or your favourite charity.

The Family would like to thank the staff from Right at Home, the Palliative Care Team of Home and Community Care Support Services, Dr Hutchinson and Jennifer Rondinelli, RN for the compassionate and loving care they provided.

Online condolences and livestream instructions available at www.butlerniagara.ca

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20					21					22				
23					24					25				
		26	27				28	29				30	31	32
		33					34					35		
36					37					38	39			
40					41					42				
43				44	45					46				
				47				48				49	50	51
52	53	54					55	56			57			
58							59				60			
61							62				63			
64							65				66			

- Across:**

1 Wander

5 White or Blue African river

9 Ahura ---, Zoroastrian Supreme Being

14 "... Marching --- war ..." (Sabine Baring-Gould)

15 Downright dastardly

16 Sherlock seeks them

17 Supercelebrity

18 Immeasurably long periods

19 Heavenly supporter

20 Causes house moves in California?

23 "... Venus sets --- Mercury can rise" (Pope)

24 Some

25 For each

26 Piece on earth?

28 Timber management

33 Lay

34 Wedding attendant

35 Weeding implement

36 Ironclad Mrs. Rice encrypted some FBI database entries

40 GWB, to GHWB

41 Quaintly ancient

42 Flag

43 Really?

46 "In your dreams!"

47 It never gets off the
- ground in Australia

48 Home to Jaguars but not Panthers

49 A decade

52 Sub rosa

58 Found in rings and bulbs

59 "Battle Hymn of the Republic" author

60 Pennsylvania resident famous in February

61 Fatty acid, for example

62 And the rest

63 Kansas movie barker

64 Corporate bigwigs

65 Century note

66 Double-click, perhaps
- Down:**

1 Elevate

2 Half of "The Odd Couple"

3 Pet Antonio fusses about sometime

4 Nat King Cole's "--- Lisa"

5 "Well You ---" (Thelonious Monk)

6 Trade in the elephant variety is illegal

7 Short note

8 "Lohengrin" heroine

9 Big name in antivirus software

10 Tables with frontals
- 11 Bantu language

12 Distribute cards

13 Helper, for short

21 Model --- Campbell

22 Bender

27 "Solaris" author Stanislaw ---

28 Golfer who won three British Opens and three Masters

29 Giant people-eater

30 Place to find a bargain

31 Staffs

32 Triumphant cry

33 28 Down is one of them

34 Friends

36 "--- : Miami" (CBS hit)

37 Still in dreamland

38 Superior herring?

39 "Halt! --- fire!"

44 Valiant

45 They're made in reparation

46 Far away from home

48 Up in arms

50 Cream of the crop

51 It can run while you walk

52 Flat-fish

53 Multi-user computer operating system

54 About to go off?

55 "--- Call Me MISTER Tibbs!"

56 Jot

57 "He's --- no good"

SUDOKU

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

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Across: 1 Roam, 5 Nile, 9 Mazda, 14 As to, 15 Evil, 16 Clues, 17 Icon, 18 Eons, 19 Atlas, 20 San Andreas Fault, 23 Ere, 24 Any, 25 Per, 26 Plot, 28 Forestry, 33 Poem, 34 Page, 35 Hoe, 36 Criminal records, 40 Son, 41 Olde, 42 Ins, 43 Is that so, 46 As if, 47 Emu, 48 A F C, 49 Ten, 52 Surreptitiously, 58 Onion, 59 Howe, 60 Phil, 61 Lipid, 62 Et al, 63 Toto, 64 Execs, 65 Yard, 66 Open.
Down: 1 Raise, 2 Oscar, 3 At one point, 4 Mona, 5 Needn't, 6 Ivory, 7 Line, 8 Elsa, 9 McAfee, 10 Altars, 11 Zulu, 12 Deal, 13 Asst, 21 Naom, 22 Spree, 27 Lem, 28 Faldo, 29 Ogre, 30 Thrift shop, 31 Rods, 32 Yes, 33 Pros, 34 Pals, 36 C S I, 37 Not up, 38 Cisco, 39 Or I, 44 Heroic, 45 Amends, 46 Affid, 48 At war, 50 Elite, 51 Nylon, 52 Sole, 53 UNIX, 54 Pipe, 55 They, 56 Iota, 57 Up to.

Niagara Rangers return to Virgil basketball court

Mike Balsom
Special to The Local

After a year without basketball the Niagara Rangers development program is back on the court. Coach Emily Bonisteel couldn't be happier.

"I'm excited to see the energy they bring back to the court," the third-year kinesiology student said last Saturday, the first day back. "I think missing a year is going to make it that much better. It's going to be interesting to see where these kids are two years later and two years older,"

One big change to the development league for the time being is location.

Program founder Jennifer Caughill was waiting to hear when the District School Board of Niagara would be allowing outside non-profit organizations to use their facilities. With the uncertainty revolving around that, they decided to run the program out of the old Virgil Public School until their usual home at Crossroads becomes available. That might not happen until January.

The always-positive Bonisteel doesn't see that as

a problem.

"Obviously, the floor is tile instead of wood," she laughed, "but honestly, anywhere we can get into a gym right now, I'm so beyond thankful. A net, a floor, and a ball, that's all you need. The kids are here, that's all that matters."

Another change is that COVID restrictions currently are not allowing parents to come into the gym to watch the sessions.

The Rangers are running two separate age groups each Saturday in their development league. The Grades 1 and 2 players are scheduled for 9 a.m. until 10 a.m., while the Grades 3 to 5 age group takes the floor from 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

The turnout for the younger group was quite small for the first session, and both Caughill and Bonisteel say that's due to the last-minute nature of the decision to get things rolling at Virgil Public School.

Sixteen boys and girls showed up for the older age group and they couldn't wait to begin dribbling and shooting. Bonisteel and her fellow coaches ran the group through some quick stretch-



Coach Emily Bonisteel leads the Grades 3-5 group through a shooting game. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

es then worked on dribbling and shooting technique using some fun basketball games.

Caughill adds that the Rangers will also be running two U17 travel teams this winter, one girls and one boys team. Bruce Caughill, Jennifer's husband and co-founder of the program, will be helping Jonathon Thorpe coach the boys team, while Shawn Pylypiw will coach the girls.

"Tournaments are up

and running across the province," Jennifer said. "They will be practising here (Virgil Public School) as well. We're just so lucky to have this gym as a back-up."

Bonisteel recognized many of the enthusiastic participants from two years ago, and says quite a few of them are now in their fourth year with the Rangers program. But one of the keys to a healthy program is the younger age group, and she works hard to encourage

these youngsters to stick with it.

"There's no wrong move," she said, "Even if you can't get the ball into the basket, just come out and enjoy and have fun."

There is still time to register kids in Grades 1 through 5 in one of these two Saturday morning programs. Interested parents should send an email to Jennifer Caughill at winnersdaycamps@cogeco.ca.



Emily Bonisteel works with six-year-old Luca Moreno.

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