

The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL



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Starbucks staff Saragot, Natasha (kneeling), Abbey (standing), with Murray and Mary Jane Friesen (back), Debbie Kassebaum, Maureen Kaufman, Neil Rumble, Eugene Rogers with Patricia Rogers in front, and Donna and Bill Young with McKinley, with Ruth and Alexis Dowsett (front) and staff members Joey, Jordon and Dan. (Penny Coles)

Starbucks coffee group needs a new home

Penny Coles
The Local

The permanent closure of Starbucks on Queen Street Sunday was a sad occasion for a group of locals who have been meeting often, some of them daily, at their favourite coffee shop.

It ended with some tears, dejected goodbyes to staff who have become friends, and discussions about where they would meet next. There is no question the afternoon kaffeeklatsches will continue, but no answer yet as to where.

Neil Rumble, as the original member and the de facto leader of the group, explains how it began. “I’ve come here every single day, right from the beginning. People would stop to chat, and end up hav-

ing a coffee with me. It just grew from there.”

Some knew Rumble before that, and others knew none of the 16 people who have become friends, all because of Rumble’s daily craving for a venti Caffe Americano. Not all came every day, and some have been holding off during the pandemic. In the colder months, there were tables inside pushed together across the front of the coffee shop, and as soon as the weather warmed up, they moved out on the patio. Rumble and Maureen Kaufman, another of the long-standing “Starbucksies,” as they call themselves, would arrive a little early so they could get their tables and chairs

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Historic Randwood Estate for sale at \$19 million

Penny Coles
The Local

The historic Randwood Estate, which includes two lots on John Street East in Niagara-on-the-Lake, is for sale for \$19 million.

Property owner Benny Marotta of Two Sisters Resorts told The Local Monday he is “tired of dealing with the politics” of Niagara-on-the-Lake, and “the group of people supported by the politicians.”

In a news release issued Monday, he said his intention all along was “to preserve the integrity of this heritage property

and enhance its already robust landscape for guests and the community to enjoy, while creating a beautiful establishment that would elevate hospitality in Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

The 13-acre property at 144 John St. E., and the lot next to it at 176 John St. E., were purchased by Marotta in 2016 for \$8 million.

The developer has tried to engage the Town in a dialogue to resolve concerns and issues, the news release says, but “unfortunately, the Town refused to talk. As it turned out,

the core issue was not design or proper planning, but rather, purely political. Specifically, it became obvious that the council is entirely driven by a wealthy and powerful group calling itself the SORE Association, which is determined to prevent any form of development on the properties.”

“It is tragic that the Town does not seem to understand that municipalities must protect the interests of all tax-payers and citizens and have to attract investment in order to maintain fiscal stability and provide employment,”

says Marotta. “The end of the Two Sisters proposal is a loss of over \$50,000,000 to the Town’s economy. Arriving at this decision was very difficult, but it is apparent that there is no path to amicable discussion with either the Town or SORE.”

“The position of council has always been and continues to be that we determine the heritage attributes and then see what is possible to build that will work with those heritage attributes,” says Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

“We have always just defended that position

with the legal challenge brought forward by Two Sisters,” she added, referring to ongoing legal battles over the lack of a decision on the zoning application for the project, which led to a Local Planning Tribunal Appeal, and an appeal to the Conservation Review Board over the Town’s efforts to have the property designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Some of the residents’ concerns with the Two Sisters proposal were the height and mass of the hotel, two levels of parking, the loss of mature trees,

the destruction of significant landscaping, and the fear of losing an important heritage asset.

Lyle Hall, spokesperson for SORE, has strong words for the proposed hotel development, and objects to the claim that members of SORE (Save Our Rand Estate) are opposed to any development of the property.

“That’s simply patently untrue,” he says, calling the project a “grotesque departure” from the 2011 Trisha Romance proposal, which included a smaller

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Town, SORE members battled to preserve heritage

Continued from page 1

inn and spa, and was approved by the Town after much debate and compromise.

The real issue, he says, is that the developer knew what he was buying, knew what the zoning was, and asked for significant changes to zoning to allow a much larger, five to six storey “wedding factory”

with a large banquet hall, in the middle of a residential neighbourhood. “That was what got neighbours up in arms,” says Hall. “It’s nobody’s fault but his own.”

His response to the assertion in the news release, that the Two Sisters applications have protected the heritage of the existing buildings and grounds, is “laughable. It’s outrageous. I think of the clear-cut-

ting on the grounds, and the garbage bins outside, things being thrown out the windows — we don’t know what’s going on.”

To the claims of preservation, he says, “that just isn’t the case. There has been impenetrable damage to the property.”

The property owner keeps talking about the jobs and taxes that will be lost to the town, Hall says, “but the development he

has proposed “is just not appropriate.”

He points to the other two lots, one on John Street and the other on Charlotte Street, the site of a subdivision proposal, that are not up for sale.

Hall questions whether Marotta is serious about selling the other two lots, for a price more than double what he paid for them. “Building a subdivision of a couple of hundred

homes next to a commercial property would take an enormous leap of faith,” says Hall.

Two Sisters has withdrawn zoning and site plan applications for the Randwood property at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, and its objection at the Conservation Review Board for heritage designation of the estate and the two John Street properties, the town planning director

Craig Larmour confirmed Monday.

Meanwhile, Marotta is turning his attention elsewhere, he told The Local. While he’s tired of dealing with politicians, he has not given up on investing in NOTL, he says. He intends to change his focus to building more wine facilities on property he is in the midst of purchasing.

Pharmacy COVID testing must follow provincial protocols

Penny Coles
The Local

Simpson’s Pharmacy has been doing about 15 to 20 asymptomatic COVID-19 tests daily for about a week, so far with only negative results.

Pharmacist Sean Simpson says he hopes it stays that way, and expects it will. “If we do see any positives, we’ll follow the protocol,” which includes notifying the person who tested positive.

Testing is by appointment, and the requirements, as set by the Ministry of Health, are very specific, beginning with being symptom-free.

The test is an anterior nasal swab, says Simpson, describing a nose swab to a depth of about half an inch to an inch — not the really deep ones we’ve heard about at the assessment centres. “It’s pretty simple, just in the medium or lower part of the nose.”

It’s funded by the Prov-

ince for those who meet the guidelines, he says.

The swab is sent for testing, and the results are posted in about four days on a government website.

The pharmacy is seeing mostly residents who want to be tested before they visit loved ones in long-term care, says Simpson.

Workers in long-term care also qualify for the pharmacy test, but he believes they may be getting tested at the facility where they work.

The guidelines also allow for those who are travelling internationally, including local migrant workers on their way home, to be tested at the pharmacy, but if they need a “narrower window” for results, they may be better off going to an assessment centre, where the turnaround time may be shorter by a day or two, he says.

“The easiest for us is for people who want to visit someone in long-term care, because they’re not under

stringent timelines.”

In addition to not exhibiting systems, qualifying for pharmacy testing also includes not having come in contact with anyone who is suspected of being positive.

“There has been a little bit of confusion as to what the testing is that we’re offering,” Simpson says. The guidelines, set by the Province, are out of his control, he adds, and he’s also fielding questions the pharmacy is not always able to answer.

Some residents have asked for the test because they have a medical procedure coming up, “but that’s not within our guidelines. They have to go to an assessment centre or have it done at the hospital.”

To check for results, visit <https://covid19results.ehealthontario.ca:4443/> agree

For more about testing eligibility guidelines, or to make a testing appointment visit <https://simpsonspharmacy.medmeapp.com/schedule>

Explore your creativity with jewelry

Help Indigenous children explore theirs with an art scholarship

Penny Coles
The Local

April Mitchell-Boudreau, owner and head designer of Loftan, an Indigenous, female-owned company based in Niagara, has created a holiday gift box with sustainable fashion in mind.

It allows women to have fun and explore their own creativity, she says, while making many different looks of jewelry that incorporate traditional Indigenous materials, such as wood, shell and stone.

With the arrival of COVID, she is stepping up her online presence, she says, and encouraging women to purchase her holiday BlingBOX, which is only available online.

She is donating part of the proceeds from each purchase to a fund that focuses on providing scholarships

in the arts for Indigenous students.

“I truly believe in the healing powers of the arts for all of us,” she says, “and that’s more important than ever during this time.”

When she stopped by to see Marcia Penner at the Keke Boutique, at Penner Building Centre, she played with the jewelry to show how many styles can be made with just two items — the long necklace can become two bracelets, a shortened necklace, a choker, a necklace with a clip-on crystal pendant, earrings with or without crystals, and more.

Mitchell-Boudreau is a Turtle clan Mohawk, with roots at Six Nations. Her passion when talking about her fund for children is obvious. She never knew her great-grandmother, Lydia Ruth Barnes, for which the fund is named. Barnes

was the last family member to be put in a residential school — the worst of the worst, she says, called the Mush Hole.

“I didn’t know my great-grandmother, but I’ve heard so many stories about her. That school broke her, and the generations that came before her — she was the last of the generations.”

She had a very hard life, and was a lovely soul who died too soon, as a result of the trauma, says Mitchell-Boudreau.

The line of jewelry honours her great-grandmother, and the goal of the fund, she says, is to teach the effects of colonialism and residential schools on Indigenous families, while providing arts scholarships for Indigenous children of all ages.

For more information or to order her jewelry visit loftan.com.

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Marcia Penner and April Mitchell-Boudreau play with the jewelry Mitchell-Boudreau has designed. Although a holiday gift box is only available online, Penner sells the jewelry line at Keke Boutique, upstairs at the Penner Building Centre. (Penny Coles)



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Coffee group looking for a new home

Continued from page 1

arranged, and when they were done, move everything back into place so as not to make extra work for Starbucks.

"They do such a wonderful job," says Rumble of the staff. "They've been so good to us, inside and out."

At one point, Kaufman had a plaque made proclaiming "Neil's office," which hung in the corner of Starbucks where they met for some time before the manager decided it needed to come down.

They then tried hanging it on the brick wall beside their outdoor table, but it didn't last long there before another regular patron, who had morning coffee in that corner of the patio, removed it, they say, the mark it left on the brick remaining as a reminder of their meeting place.

Much of what they say is in jest — even when they get into the scary politics south of the border, there is joking and much laughter, because in addition to being a story-teller, Rumble loves to joke.

At 85, he says, "the older I get, the happier I am, and I love to make people laugh."

He does wonder where the years have gone, he adds, and thanks his mother for his "good genes. It's not the way I lived my life, that's for sure."

With about a decade in the '90s as general manager of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, Rumble has some great stories to tell about the town and its residents. He likes to talk about the way the town handled its 3.5 million visitors when the population was only 11,500. He recalls the early days before the candlelight stroll became what it is today, when six or seven women would stand in Simcoe Park with candles and sing Christmas songs; the many times he dressed as John Graves Simcoe to celebrate historic occasions; and when he was the model for the sculptor who created the statue of Simcoe that stands in the park today.

"We love hearing all the old stories," says Patricia Rogers, "and about the people. We don't know them, but we love hearing about them."

She also loves her Starbucks venti coffee frappe one-

third sweet latte decaf with low-fat milk, extra frappe roast and no whipped cream.

It's been six years since Patricia and her husband, Eugene, who were newcomers to the town, became friends with the Starbucks group, but he jokes he still has her coffee choice written down, for fear of not getting it right when he orders it.

In the heat of the summer, when the street was busy, they all moved with their choice of drinks to a shady table in Simcoe Park, where it was less crowded and they could spread out.

They say they will continue to meet through the winter, but have to find an indoor location, although they will likely move back to the park next summer.

"We've checked out the Starbucks in Virgil," says Kaufman, although there is some concern about whether it can accommodate a large group.

They have heard the coffee and treats at Sweets & Swirls is good, and several of them have come to love Erinn Lockard and her family, who run the community centre cafe, so that is high on their list.

They will also continue to meet — safely, of course — for dinners, to celebrate birthdays and other occasions, apart from the coffee gatherings.

Some of them knew each other through the organizing of the every-other-year polo event on the Commons, which was, in its early days in the '90s, a fundraiser for the chamber, and is now a NOTL Museum event.

"Murray (Friesen), George (Dell) and I were the three amigos," says Rumble. "We met through polo, and we would sit here and talk about polo."

"Eugene and I didn't know anybody until we sat down and started talking," says Patricia.

"And they haven't stopped talking," jokes Rumble.

The discussion topics have varied over the years. "We talk about anything and everything," Rumble says, "politics, what's going on in town, COVID."

"We're all in agreement on Trump. We're more likely to



Patricia Rogers, Aleks and Ruth Dowsett, Mary Jane and Murray Friesen, Neil Rumble and Eugene Rogers (all sitting), with Maureen Kaufman, Bill and Donna Young (standing) enjoy one of the last warm days on the patio at Starbucks, just days before it closed permanently. (Penny Coles)

talk more about our own local politics," says Patricia.

"And sometimes we just all talk at the same time. Otherwise we wouldn't get a word in edge-wise," says Rumble, adding the women occasionally have their own side conversations, which gives the men a chance to talk to each other.

"We talk about family, and children," adds Kaufman.

Rumble's family is far away, in Nova Scotia, he says. "This is my family. We're all family."

Eugene says the conversations often begin with someone asking a question and everyone piping in with answers, until they end up going to Google for the correct information.

"Every day we pull up Google for something, because some people just make up stories," Ruth says, looking at Rumble.

Kaufman likes to shop, and says the women will sometimes talk about the stores in town. She shops on Queen Street, and supports local businesses. "I love the stores. We also eat in local restaurants and shop at both value-marts."

Corinne and Dieter Unruh are regulars who have been staying close to home due to COVID, and Corinne's brother, long-time firefighter Mike Vriens, who died in July, 2019, was part of the group as well.

Ruth Dowsett and her

daughter Alexis are also regulars who joined the group about six and a half years ago, and it's quickly obvious that if Rumble's acerbic banter is more often than not directed at Ruth, she is quick to give it back.

"There was this strange man always sitting here by himself," she jokes. "I took pity on him and started to talk to him."

"Things went downhill after that," adds Rumble, who admits to being "the crazy uncle" of the group.

"It's a diverse group of people who might not have been friends, but have become friends who sit here and have coffee."

For all the kidding, the affection within the group is evident when they talk of the Christmas parties Ruth hosts for them, a 50th anniversary for the Rogers celebrated with them, and the value of having people to talk to during the pandemic.

"This is keeping us happy during a difficult time, being together, and having fun," says Kaufman.

Bill and Donna Young, with McKinley, their Bernese mountain dog, knew none of the group. They live in St. Davids, but they drive to the Old Town, go for a walk and end up at Starbucks. They had an older dog, Murphy, since passed away, when they started their routine. Murphy was a good dog, but would occasionally bark at people, and

Rumble enjoyed watching, encouraging Murphy, says Donna. About two years ago, they became the newcomers to the group.

Donna says the meetings over coffee "are informative and entertaining. I love to sit and get to know everybody, and hear the stories about Niagara, especially the gossip."

And McKinley loves her puppacinno, says Donna, as the well-behaved and much-loved canine licks her Starbucks cup clean of the whipped cream.

They all have their favourites — Debbie Kassebaum likes her dairy-free oat apple coffee, only available in Canada — made with steamed oat milk and roasted apple syrup, with a clove sugar topping. However it was a hot chocolate she was after five years ago, the day she stopped at Starbucks to warm up after a Remembrance Day service, when she got talking to the group and became a regular with her puppy, Simone. "It's led to great friendships, discussions of important issues, world issues and local gossip."

Although the staff say they are sad the store is closing and they will miss their regulars, they have all been offered jobs in other Starbucks locations.

Trevor Voogt, district manager of several Niagara locations, was at the Queen Street location for its final day.

Unable to comment on the reason for the doors being shuttered, he says Starbucks

are often closed when their lease runs out. The expectation is that regular customers will visit nearby locations, such as the one in Virgil. There is also one in the outlet mall in Glendale.

The staff have "new homes" within the region, he says, and since many live in St. Catharines and other areas of Niagara, in some cases, they will be closer to home.

"It is so sad to see this close," he says of the Queen Street site. "This is not something we take lightly. For some people, it's a second home. They come here every day."

A Starbucks location in the Leaside neighbourhood of Toronto also closed Sunday, with a poster encouraging patrons to instead visit other nearby locations nearby.

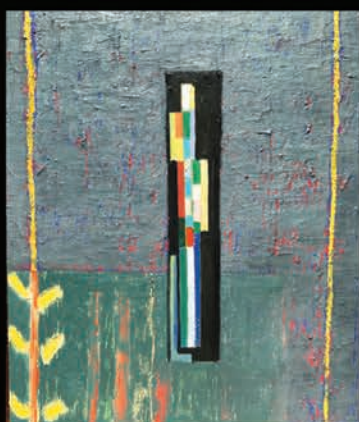
Starbucks announced in June it was restructuring its company-operated business in Canada over the next two years, with the potential of up to 200 stores being closed, "with some of those stores being repositioned," suggesting new locations might open nearby.

Starbucks is largely a company-owned chain, although Voogt described some of its coffee shops as "licensed," similar to franchises, in areas such as the main strip in Niagara Falls, locations in universities or along major highway routes, which offer different items.

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Council agrees to increased cost of nursery school expansion

Penny Coles
The Local

With a request from the Niagara Nursery School for additional funding of \$340,000 for its expansion, executive director Candice Penny was at council Monday to talk about how important the project is for the nursery school, the community, and the families whose children are on a long waiting list.

It wasn't a hard sell. Despite the hefty increase, which raised some concerns with council,

support for moving ahead with the project was unanimous. The nursery school expansion is a good investment in local families and children, necessary infrastructure and a benefit to the town, councillors agreed.

In June, 2019, a 4,308 square foot facility was approved at a cost of \$1.5 million, to be added to the east side of the community centre, beside the library, and with the main entrance on Anderson Lane. The facility will include an infant playroom with a kitchenette and a separate sleeping area, a toddler playroom, a preschool playroom with adjacent washrooms and change-rooms, and a school-aged room, in addition to office and storage spaces.

But the project has gone out to tender twice since then, while the yellow tape remains around the closed-off, eventual construction site for the expansion, and the cost has increased

to just over \$2 million.

The Town has already increased its contribution once, due to increased costs. With the new budget to cover the short fall approved Monday, it will go out for tender a third time, councillors heard.

The nursery school is committed to a \$615,000 debenture and a \$100,000 fundraising campaign. If the fundraising goal is not met, the NNS can increase their debenture to cover the outstanding amount, but can't afford more than that, Penny told councillors. Without the increased commitment from the Town, the project would not go forward.

The \$2 million will also be funded by a Ministry of Education grant of \$515,000, and \$200,000 from the Region. The Town had already committed about \$248,900 to be paid from development charges.

Niagara Nursery School has been a part of the community



With the Town approving their portion of the increased costs for the Niagara Nursery School expansion, the project can go ahead, as can the \$100,000 fundraising campaign. Lord Mayor Betty Disero announced her donation, officially launching the campaign, at Monday's council meeting. She handed over a cheque for \$1,000 to executive director Candice Penny Tuesday at the site of the new facility. (Mike Balsom)

for 48 years, serving multiple generations, and over the decades has relocated and adapted to changing needs of the families, Penny told councillors.

"Since approximately 2015, we have seen a surge in childcare needs in our community that we have since been unable to meet on a yearly basis," she said. "We are the only licensed childcare centre in our town, and the average wait time for a child is two to three years. Families who have children of varying ages often must have children in multiple childcare settings, and often must drive out of town, away from their home and work to receive childcare."

The current waitlist is up to 142 children, from infants to school-aged children, Penny said. The NNS is only licensed under the Ministry of Education for a total of 39 children, 24 preschool, and 15 of school age. With families requiring variable schedules, the nursery school can accommodate 45 to 52 children, and about 35 to 40 families.

The expansion would allow for 69 children, and again, with variable schedules, would serve 80 to 89 families, she said.

"This expansion will not eliminate our waitlist, but it will

drastically reduce it, as well as the average wait-time," said Penny.

"We simply cannot meet the needs of our community as we are now. This expansion is crucial for not only the families in our community, but also for the growth of our community as a whole," she said. "This is not a family issue, this is a community and economic issue. For local growth to be possible, we need this to be a desired place for families to live, and have a childcare centre that can meet the needs of its community."

In response to a question from Coun. Wendy Cheropita about considering changes in design or relocating the expansion to the other side of the community centre to reduce the cost, acting operations director Kevin Turcotte explained those options weren't feasible — it would cost more to go back to the drawing board to change the plans, much of the preliminary work for the site has already been done, and there are no "frills" in the plan to cut back, whether on space or design. Altering the project now would also require going back to the Ministry of Education, he added. "Changing it or moving it is not a good use of resources,"

Turcotte said.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor expressed her concern that with the increase approved and the project going out for a third tender, there could be "a significant increase in cost, and we'll be having this same discussion a few months from now."

"If COVID has taught us anything, it's taught us unpredictability, including in the cost of construction," said Turcotte. "We won't know until we go out to the market."

With the project going out to tender again, interim CAO Sheldon Randall suggested there is a possibility that the cost of lumber and other supplies, which have greatly increased during the pandemic, might come down this winter and be a benefit to the project.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said although he endorses the project, he doesn't see the price of lumber and other supplies decreasing. "I suspect they may go up even higher. I want to make sure we have our eyes wide open that because of COVID, that price may go up even higher."

The Ministry of Education has granted an extension for the project to March 31, 2021, with a closing date of the project by Aug. 31, 2021.

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**Niagara-on-the-Lake Launches First Phase of
Business Directory Initiative**

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is thrilled to launch the first phase of a new initiative to build an online business directory, to connect locals and visitors alike to businesses across Niagara-on-the-Lake. An online form is now available for businesses to submit their information to be included in the directory at no charge.

Compiling a complete public business directory is something the Town has long been considering, in order to help promote shopping in Niagara-on-the-Lake, stimulate the local economy and to streamline Town communication with the business community. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, these needs have been magnified.

"Throughout this pandemic, we have relied on the cooperation of the business community to help keep our community safe. Conversely, businesses have relied on us to keep them informed and up to date about the latest Provincial Emergency Orders, regulations, and Public Health recommendations," stated Interim CAO Sheldon Randall. "Streamlining the flow of information between the Town and its businesses, while increasing business visibility and strengthening the #ShopNOTL campaign is truly a win-win."

Town Staff is working with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, the Virgil Business Association, and Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake to collect business information. Business owners and operators who pay commercial taxes in Niagara-on-the-Lake are also encouraged to visit notl.com/businessdirectory to submit their business name, location, category, contact and website for inclusion.

"With cooler temperatures marking the beginning of the off season for local tourism, it's more important than ever to highlight all the great businesses we have here in Town," stated Lord Mayor Betty Disero. "Niagara-on-the-Lake is home to the best shops, wineries, restaurants, and services in the region; I can find everything I need for myself and my family right within our borders. Help us get the message out to #ShopNOTL and support these great businesses."

Voices of Freedom to be heard Friday

Bravo Niagara premieres *Voices of Freedom: A Musical Short Film* this Friday, Oct. 30 at 7 p.m. on bravoniagara.org/amplified and Bravo Niagara! YouTube Channel. The filming of *Freedom Train*, new music by the Blackburn Brothers, for the film took place in Voices of Freedom Park recently. (Alex Heidbuechel)

Pop-in store partners Maison Apothecare with Exchange Brewery

Local Staff

In the time of COVID-19, many businesses have been reinventing their approach to serving customers.

In the tightly-knit community of Queen Street, Maison Apothecare, producer of small batch, natural personal care and household products, shut

down in spring.

The Exchange Brewery has partnered with the Apothecare, offering them space for a store-within-a-store. Both offer 100 per cent Canadian products, including Maison Apothecare's Lemon Aide line, skincare products, essential oils and antiseptic hand sanitizers, while The Exchange Brewery continues to sell its

popular craft beers.

"It'll definitely be a win-win situation for both of us. This allows our friends at Maison Apothecare to continue to have a footprint in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and allows us at the brewery to expand and diversify our retail offerings," says Robin Ridesic, CEO and founder of the Exchange Brewery.



Exchange Brewery staff have new products to sell. (Photo supplied)

Newark planning ahead for Christmas baskets



Newark Neighbours Special to The Local

Newark Neighbours continues to serve those in need with compassion, care and concern. The generous donation of time that our volunteers give is greatly appreciated by our organization and especially by all those whom we serve.

Our recent Thanksgiving Holiday Hamper program was a great success, due to the generosity of so many individuals. Those in need received additional food and treats to make

their holiday a special one. Our heartfelt gratitude to all those who made donations, our volunteers, and those individuals who kindly sponsored some of our families.

We truly appreciate the support we have recently received from Kent Heritage Farms, Walker's Country Market, Hendriks valu-mart, Phil's valu-mart, St. Andrew's Church, Syme Jago, Adrian Goldberg, Kathy and Tim Taylor, Larry and Joan Bourk, Vicky Downes and the NOTL Communities in Bloom committee.

As we begin to plan for the next holiday just around the corner, we are fortunate that we are already being asked by folks what food items they can donate. Our needs for the Christmas Holiday Hampers

are as follows: canned ham; boxed stuffing mix; canned cranberry sauce; canned pineapple; canned or packaged turkey gravy; canned peas; beans; bottled cranberry juice; apple juice; crackers; cookies; cake mixes; Jell-O; pasta sauces; rice; canned salmon; shampoo and conditioner; soap (bar or liquid)/body lotion; paper towels.

Please check our website at www.newarkneighbours.ca for our thrift store and food bank hours. Donations of non-perishable food, clean clothing and small household items are greatly appreciated, and best dropped off between the hours of 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday to Friday.

**Laura Gibson, president
Newark Neighbours**

Who is handing out candy?

Local Staff

The Province has Halloween posters to be downloaded for those living in regions where trick or treating is permitted. Although there is always a possibility the status of Niagara could change before Saturday, at press time, trick-or-treating was still allowed. There are two choices, one for if you are giving out treats, and one if you are not. Posters can be downloaded at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-celebrate-halloween-during-covid-19>



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EDITORIAL

Despite restrictions, lots of great stuff going on

News for residents other than the 200 or so who were listening to the seven-hour council meeting Monday: as COVID cases rise in Niagara, we are getting close to a return to Stage 2 of the recovery period.

In her usual COVID update at the beginning of the meeting, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said that while numbers of new cases are trending upwards in the province, Dr. Mustafa Hirji, the Region's acting medical officer of health, didn't believe Niagara would be brought back to Stage 2, at least not for a while, as long as cases don't rise significantly.

However, later in the meeting, she had to take those words back, after receiving an email from Niagara Public Health, with Dr. Hirji saying if the numbers continue to spike, we could well be back to at least a partial Stage 2 lockdown.

About two weeks ago, some areas in Ontario, including Toronto and Ottawa, were ordered to close indoor dining, gyms and movie theatres, for at least 28 days, in a partial return to a Stage 2 lockdown.

There were 13 new confirmed cases Saturday, and 23 on Sunday, followed by a dip down to four on Monday, and seven Tuesday.

Dr. Hirji advised us last week that a spike could be expected two weeks after Thanksgiving, and unfortunately, he called it. There were still five outbreaks in long-term care homes.

It's a rollercoaster ride on its way up, and that's not what we want for Niagara. We want to see that rollercoaster over the top and on a downhill run to the finish.

The lord mayor also reported that Niagara has the first case in Canada of a dog

testing positive for COVID. The dog, who isn't displaying any symptoms, lives in a household where four people have tested positive. The CBC article indicated it's not surprising, although it's difficult to get a positive test in a family pet, which would likely occur two weeks after a family member becomes ill.

Researchers say the discovery doesn't mean dog owners need to worry, but Disero did caution pet owners about taking their dogs out for a walk.

So that's the bad news about living through the pandemic.

The good news is all the great ideas our locals are coming up with in a pandemic.

There are several fun things for kids to do on Halloween, such as events at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre and Fort George.

The Town has delivered treats to the front doors of more than 800 kids, with candy and other goodies donated by local businesses. Kudos to all involved.

And as long as the provincial rules don't change between now and Saturday, kids are allowed to go trick-or-treating, but with some cautions: wear a mask, go out in small groups, and keep a

We continue to hear from readers and advertisers who have tried to stop by to see us at our Four Mile Creek Road office, and discovered it's part of a construction zone.

Yes, we're still there, although not in person these days. With no parking, lots of noise and the inconvenience of trying to work through major renovations to the building, we are working

distance from others. Those are the pandemic guidelines. Also watch for cars, be careful on stairs, and most of all, have fun. Our kids have earned it!!

We were really impressed by the great idea of a virtual emporium for St. Mark's Anglican Church. It's a popular annual tradition, and creating the online version has been a lot of work for volunteers. A great way to do your holiday shopping!

Also great news that the Town approved the additional funding needed for the Niagara Nursery School expansion, allowing it to move forward. It's such a much needed project in a town which has a growing population of young families. Choosing child care is one of parents' most important decisions, and it hasn't been easy for many of them in NOTL.

This won't solve the problem entirely, but it will help. It's been a much-respected nursery school for generations of families, and will continue to be so for generations to come. For those of you who can afford to open your wallets to support local families, it's a good cause.

Penny Coles
The Local

Our Local office

from home, for likely another week or so. Please look for our phone numbers or email addresses on this page, and reach out if you need us.

We know the finished product will look great, and we can't wait to settle back in. See you in Virgil soon!

Penny Coles
The Local

Smile cookies raise lots of dough



All four Tim Hortons locations in Niagara-on-the-Lake donated this year's Smile Cookie proceeds to Red Roof Retreat, amounting to just over \$9,000. Celebrating the donation are Red Roof board member Ward Simpson, store managers Michele Allison of the Gateway Travel Centre and Outlet Collection coffee shops, and Lori Paterson, from the Virgil store, with Red Roof special events coordinator Claire Ellesworth. (Photo supplied)

The Niagara-on-the-Lake LOCAL

The trusted voice of our community

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LETTERS

Kudos to Owen Bjorgan

I remember a young boy, the wind in his hair and the sun on his face, exploring every nook and cranny of his yard, looking for all types of “creepy-crawlies”, unusual plants, and anything else that caught his fancy. I remember this same young boy crossing the road from his home to ours, combing our property for treasures from the natural world. I remember his mother admonishing him not to frighten Mrs. Cashin with any snakes he might unearth and want to share with the neighbours. I remember this young boy’s room, chock-a-block with the books, posters, and live specimens he so loved. I remember this young boy’s love and respect for the world around him and so it does not surprise my husband and I that he found his lifework in and among the world of nature, its flora and fauna, its creatures, its enduring beauty, its fragility.

Thank you for publishing columns by Owen Bjorgan. We have

watched this young man grow into someone who watches over the world he loves, sharing his thoughts and knowledge with the readers of The Local from time to time. We treasure our memories of Owen’s younger life and are delighted that the promise of this young boy has come to fruition in the man he has become.

Well done, Owen.

Reverend Janet and David Cashin
NOTL

Canopy not so bad, could get worse

Within the article *St. Davids Pool, Dust, other Issues Discussed at Virtual Meeting* (The Local, Oct. 15) are complaints regarding Canopy Growth’s marijuana growing operations, specifically “the sky over St. Davids is lit up as if there are search lights pointing into it” and “the strong skunk odour also continues to be a problem”. It also mentions that Lord Mayor Betty Disero is working on the matter.

My partner and I live on a property that runs behind the entire length of Canopy’s greenhouses with our house, patio, and pool situated about 300 metres back. The wind is usually blowing in our direction. When we first moved here three summers ago, before all the odour control interventions were installed by Canopy, the smell of marijuana was most definitely strong but only intermittent. We could live with it and we had a summer in paradise.

The second summer, when the warm weather arrived and we opened our windows, we discovered that they had installed five gas-powered turbines along our property line aimed at our house, spewing a chemical stench

referred to as fragrance, and a roar. Now we had the smell of marijuana, the overpowering stink of this fragrance, and a roar permeating our home and property 24/7. We could not live with this.

We investigated the legality and were told by the town bylaw officer that ‘there is no bylaw forbidding roaring, stinking turbines aimed at your house.’ I bicycled into Canopy for a discussion, and learned that both the turbines and chemical were perfectly legal; however the company was very sympathetic and the turbines were only turned on when necessary and also a fragrance-free deodorizer was eventually substituted. We could live with this most of the time, and when it was intolerable, I phoned them up and they considerately turned them off. Also, the smell of marijuana has been greatly reduced and remains only intermittent.

When this last summer arrived, we found now that there were only two turbines aimed at our house, fragrance-free but louder than ever. We never would have been able to sit outside or open our windows. We could not live with this. I phoned them up

and they haven’t been in use since. A nice summer was had.

With regards to the light, sometimes they have the lights on in the greenhouses, it is certainly noticeable, and we’d rather not have it, but I have assumed it is a normal part of greenhouse agriculture.

So in brief, we live beside the greenhouses, the smell is mild and seldom, there is never a ‘stench’, we assume we have to live with the light, Canopy has always responded to our complaints, and the town has no arrows in its quiver. However, it remains a source of worry because while Canopy has always been very considerate, we’ve been told that the roaring turbines are perfectly legal and could be turned back on at any time, for instance when there is a complaint about a marijuana smell.

I am sympathetic to others’ complaints, but I thought I’d mention our situation. We live in dread of those turbines being turned back on, so I hope that Lord Mayor Disero will work to make everyone happy.

John Boydell
St. Davids

LETTERS

Group supports parking motion

Residents for Sustainable Tourism supports the parking motion before council October 26, 2020 to have town staff study and evaluate parking pass policy and converting Old Town free parking spots to paid parking spots.

Converting existing free parking spots in the Old Town into paid parking spots will benefit the town, residents and businesses. Subject to proper public consultation and extending the resident parking pass usage time allowance from one to three hours at existing paid parking spots and from one to 24 hours at all currently free Old Town parking spots that are converted to paid spots. The benefits of a smart parking plan include:

1. Potential for an immediate increase in overall parking revenue may reduce the need to increase taxes and/or cut town services for businesses and residents during the town’s COVID budget shortfall.
2. The implementation of the smart parking system will generate the data needed by this council and future councils for making intelligent decisions regarding optimization of parking revenue, parking utilization, the need for new parking spots and where they should be located. The data collected from a smart parking system will help determine the effectiveness and cost of Parking Pass policies for residents, businesses and employee passes.
3. The hope is with the removal of free visitor park-

ing in the Old Town there will be increased parking spot availability for residents, employees and sustainable visitors.

4. The extension of resident parking permits from 1 to 3 hours at existing paid spots and from 1 to 24 hours at the converted existing Old Town free spots will make this proposal acceptable to residents so that all of the benefits listed above can be achieved. The public’s acceptance of converting free to paid spots is important because it will permit this town council and future town councils to have the information needed to decide if parking revenue optimization can generate significant increases without burdening the residents who live in the town.
5. The reduction or elimination of free parking in the Old Town in the long run will encourage the construction of paid parking by private companies, non-profits and other levels of government both in the Old Town and nearby. This can tie in with a longer term infrastructure program to reduce the impact of cars on the Old Town and to encourage unsustainable visitors to walk or ride in the Old Town and leave their cars further from the Old Town thus reducing traffic and increasing safety.
6. Businesses such as shops and restaurants will benefit from more available parking spots close to businesses, and possible parking passes or discount programs they can offer


customers to increase patronage. Employee parking passes that are more economical and have longer parking times than meters will help businesses and employees.

7. Hotels and B&Bs already encourage sustainable visitors by providing parking as required by town bylaws. Their patrons will enjoy the reduced traffic and increased safety in town.
8. Shaw Festival visitors will benefit from easier forms of payment and the smart system being programmed to provide long enough parking time for shows and allowing online extension of parking time if visitors want to visit the town.
9. The smart system will hopefully provide overnight visitor passes online so that residents with visitors can park safely without tickets overnight.

Residents For Sustainable Tourism endorses conversion of existing free spots to paid parking but does not endorse the creation of any newly created parking spots in the Old Town without the case being made with data from the smart parking system and a thorough public consultation to ensure that no newly created parking spaces adversely affect town residents.


Residents for Sustainable Tourism if permitted would be glad to cooperate with any portion of the evaluation and study of the issues in the motion.

Bruce Gitelman
Spokesperson Residents for Sustainable Tourism



Letters! We want letters!

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.






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St. Mark's launching virtual 'haute emporium' fundraiser

Penny Coles
The Local

The traditional St. Mark's Emporium will be very different this year, as all fundraisers must be during the pandemic.

As always, it remains an opportunity to find hidden treasures, purchase elegant gift baskets, vintage, upscale clothing and accessories, jewelry, linens, art, and Christmas decor items, including fresh arrangements. The difference is all those items will be available for purchasing online, in a safe, virtual emporium, says volunteer Trudi Watson.

Volunteers have worked for months to set up a special website for the fundraiser, which will allow shoppers and church supporters to view the items online, make their choices, and then send an email specifying what they would like to buy, she explains.

They will then be given a time to pick up their purchases at the Byron Street rectory, where the items are now being categorized, displayed and photographed for the virtual sale.

Payment can be made by e-transfer or credit card online, or cash or cheque when they pick up their purchase.

"It's the Haute Emporium," says Watson, one of the many volunteers organizing the fundraiser, which has taken a lot of brainstorming, beginning in July, to come up with a safe alternative to the traditional event.

The missing element, of course, is the opportunity to visit the historic Byron Street rectory for the tea and goodies typically served as an integral part of the Christmas fund-



Elizabeth Jamieson, Carol Beckman, Sally Mitchell and Trudi Watson show off some of the items being prepared for St. Mark's virtual fundraiser. (Photos by Penny Coles)

raiser, but when volunteers sat down months ago to talk about the event, the online version seemed to be the only safe way to offer it, says Watson.

However, having the empty rectory this year, after the departure of Rev. William Roberts, has been extremely helpful in organizing the goods for sale, she says, and provides "a beautiful environment" for the volunteers as they work.

The traditional bake sale, traditionally part of the fundraiser, was also cancelled, for health reasons.

Every one of the hundreds of items, from the tiniest piece of jewelry to the impressive

gift baskets filled with all kinds of goodies for all occasions and ages, is being photographed for the sale, to be displayed in lots that will change as merchandise is sold. Volunteers will be reviewing the website, refreshing it and adding items as the sale proceeds.

There are several other event volunteers the women wanted to be sure are recognized: Anjulika Chand and Lucy McEwan who organized the jewelry; Mary Webster and Keith Bullen, who took on the art, Allison Kelly who worked on the website, and David Lesvesque.

The virtual emporium will launch Nov. 2, with no closing date at this point.

"When it will end, we don't know," says volunteer Sally Mitchell. "Our goal is to get it going, and if it's a success, we'll keep it going. We're looking at it as a Christmas sale, but it could go on after Christmas."

Each Friday and Saturday following the launch, volunteers will be at the rectory for the pickup of sold items, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The merchandise for sale has all been donated by parishioners and members of the community, says Watson.

"We have a very kind and generous congregation," adds Mitchell.

The money raised will be used for the general operation of the church, she says.



Trudi Watson models a lovely coat that will be available through the St. Mark's website once the fundraiser is launched.



Trudi Watson shows off some of the upscale, gently-used clothing for sale.



Elizabeth Jamieson and Sally Mitchell display jewelry that will be available for the haute emporium fundraiser.



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Expert gardener ‘nuts about bulbs’ for three-seasons of colour



Laura Grant
Special to The Local

With the shorter days of fall, when shrubs and trees are dropping their leaves, it is so refreshing to see bulbs blooming in the garden. When we think about bulbs, we usually think of spring tulips and daffodils. But there are many wonderful bulbs, tubers and corms that bloom in the summer and fall.

As I look over my garden beds at this time of the year, a number of fall blooming bulbs are just waking up: cyclamen hederifolium, crocus sativus (saffron crocus), crocus speciosum, nerines, colchicums, and a dainty little acis autumnalis.

And now, while we enjoy the fall-blooming bulbs, is a good time to buy and plant spring-blooming bulbs.

The key to success with these underground treasures is good drainage. They can be planted among the shrubs, trees, and

perennials. Many bulbs will also grow well and naturalize in the lawn. If they are grown in the lawn, the first mowing should be delayed until the bulb leaves have turned brown.

Bulbs can be planted in layers with larger bulbs deeper in the ground and smaller bulbs above them for continuing succession of bloom. This method of planting bulbs was popular in 19th century and is known as the ‘Stinze-style.’ There are a number of stately 19th century homes in northern Netherlands that still have such flowering lawns with a stunning succession of blooms.

Some of the early bulbs suggested for such Stinze-style plantings are crocus species, galanthus (snow drops), erantis hyemalis (winter aconite) and iris reticulata. (Note: galanthus and erantis should be planted while still in leaf, as dry bulbs have a high chance of mortality). The early bulbs are a welcome food for the pollinators that are coming out of a long, cold winter.

For mid-season blooms try corydalis solida, chionodoxa, fritillaria meleagris, tulipa sylvestris, narcissus, ornithogalum umbellatum and scilla siberica. The last

two can be very aggressive. Finally, the late flowering spring bulbs suitable for Stinze-style plantings are leucojum aestivum, ornithogalum nutans, silver bells, hyacinthoides non-scripta (English bluebells), and hyacinthoides hispanica (Spanish bluebells).

To learn more about bulb planting in the Stinze-style, you can check out the website www.stinze-stiens.nl.

When planting your bulbs, the general rule is to plant them to a depth of two to three times the length of the bulb. Most prefer slightly alkaline to neutral soil with good drainage. Some bone meal added to the soil will give them a good start.

We know that squirrels love to eat our tulip and crocus bulbs. So, one of the methods I use I had learned from the Amish in Tennessee, which is to dip the bulbs in kerosene just prior to planting. It does not hurt the bulbs and will keep the rodents away. Also, a Dutch grower recommended blending a hyacinth bulb with water in a blender and watering the planted area with this cocktail. (Narcissus and hyacinths are poisonous to rodents so they will

not eat them.) Whatever method you use, be aware the squirrels are watching you! By the way, it is recommended to use gloves when handling hyacinths.

There are a number of so-called tender bulbs that are perfectly hardy in sunny, sheltered locations that you may wish to try: nerine bowdenii, lycoris squamigera (naked ladies), sternbergia lutea, camassias and gladiolus. Our local nurseries are a good source, but for those rare collectibles, Telos Rare Bulbs is a good place to find them. They are in the U.S. but will supply necessary paperwork for import into Canada. The Pacific Bulb Society website has good information, and photos of hardy and tender bulbs.

One great idea for gardens, large and small, is to create a flowering meadow instead of grass lawn. The advantages are many: food for pollinators, blooms all season long and once established, minimal maintenance is required.

To create a flowering meadow, remove grass, incorporate organic material and sand, plant the bulbs in layers, and then seed with perennials and annuals of

your choice for a succession of bloom. I would recommend buying specific plant seeds from a reputable source, rather than seed mixes. Inexpensive seed mixes may contain weeds that

can be a problem for years. Once a flowering meadow is established, the only maintenance required is a cut in early winter, after the birds have had their share of seeds.



Autumn crocuses provide colour in a fall garden. (Photos by Laura Grant)



This is a good time to plant bulbs for a spring meadow.

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Exhibit recognizes women of community significance

Penny Coles
The Local

The time for a museum exhibit entirely about women has come, says Sarah Kaufman.

As the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's managing director and curator worked to organize the exhibit in time for its Wednesday opening, she spoke of the extraordinary local women, some prominent with names easily recognized, and others who worked quietly behind the scenes, who made their mark on the community.

Aiding Kaufman in the set-up of the all-female display in the main gallery was Shawna Butts, assistant curator and education programmer.

The launch of Making Her Mark: The Women of Niagara-on-the-Lake is the prelude to a book which will feature short biographies on the women who are included in the exhibit, who have contributed to the community. It includes women such as Molly Brant, whose role in history dates back the furthest, to Chloe Cooley, Janet Carnochan, and moves forward to those whose local significance is more recent, including Margherita Howe, Laura Dodson, Donna Scott and Blanche Quinn.

The book release is now slated for January — it was expected to be out sooner, but has been held up to allow biographies of Scott, who died in March, and Quinn, in May, to be included, says Kaufman.

Brant, born in 1736, was a respected First Nations Clan Mother, and a diplomat, interpreter and ally to the British during and after the American Revolution.

Cooley was an enslaved Black woman who, in 1793, was beaten and bound by her owner and transported across the Niagara River to be sold. Her resistance on this side of the river was witnessed and brought to the attention of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, who set in motion legislation to abolish slavery.

Others include Elizabeth Simcoe, Fanny Rowley, the Wesley sisters, and Sarah Carter, and Emma Currie, who wrote a book about Laura Secord, also part of the exhibit.

Three of the NOTL women are recipients of the Order of Canada, points out Kaufman: Howe for leading the clean-up of the Niagara River; Dodson for her 30 years of working to preserve the town's heritage;



Sarah Kaufman points out the display of Margherita Howe, part of the Making her Mark exhibit which opened Wednesday. (Photos by Penny Coles)

and Scott, a successful businesswoman who was a great supporter of arts and culture, including the museum. "That's quite impressive," says Kaufman, who adds there are many "amazing women who stand out in so many different ways."

Quinn, a Second World War veteran and municipal politician, "was a firecracker," she adds.

Others featured in the exhibit are less well-known, including artists, teachers, and authors.

Kaufman refers to the well-known maxim, "well-behaved women don't make history," explaining this exhibit disproves that.

"The reality is that

everyday women don't always get the recognition they deserve, but everyday women who make a mark in their community can make a difference, and we want to feature them. We're remembering them and what they accomplished."

Much of our history focuses on the military, who have traditionally been male, she says, and it seems the right time to focus on women.

"As a student of history I didn't recall learning a lot about women."

Kaufman says she remembers coming to visit her grandmother, Nancy Clark, a veteran who came to Canada as a war bride, and who lived just

down the street from the museum, in the war-time housing. She was also an active member of the local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. "I think about her while I'm working on this exhibit," she says. Her grandmother, along with several other notable women from town, will have an honourable mention in the book.

There are about 25 women included in the exhibit, says Kaufman.

"Our hope is that women and young girls will visit the museum, see the exhibit, and be inspired. Maybe they'll see themselves as someone who can make a mark on their community."

The museum has not published a book or offered an exhibit on local women, she says, "and it's women, Shawna and myself, who are mounting this exhibit, the first one about women, by women."

Lord Mayor Betty Disero has written a prologue for the book, and made a video to play for members as they arrive for the exhibit launch, says Kaufman. "It's exciting to have this exhibit during her time as the first woman lord mayor for Niagara-on-the-Lake."

Members have been invited to Wednesday's launch, only 15 per hour, as mandated during the pandemic, and wearing masks.

This year's summer ex-

hibit, which would have been up until the end of the year, was expected to be about the Niagara-on-the-Lake waterfront, says Kaufman, but with the exhibit closed due to the pandemic, it was put on hold.

The plan now is to wind up Making her Mark in April, and opening All Along the Waterfront in May.

To allow for extra cleaning due to COVID, the Castlereigh Street museum opening hours continue to be limited to Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Call 905-468-3912 for more information or visit nhsn.ca.



Laura Secord is one of the women featured at the current exhibit at the NOTL Museum.

Increased diversity, inclusivity could improve economy

Penny Coles
The Local

Jordan Williams hopes to be a candidate representing the Progressive Conservatives in the next provincial election.

But he's not there yet, nor does the Province seem close to announcing an election, so before the serious campaigning begins, he plans to work on making Niagara-on-the-Lake a more diverse and inclusive community.

He is especially concerned about the business sector, and specifically restaurant workplaces, where a prevalent "macho" attitude can be inconsistent with inclusivity.

Williams ran unsuccessfully in the last municipal election. He stayed away from the lack of inclusivity in town, he says, although it has been on his mind for more than a decade. He had been working in Toronto, and then returned to town and took a job in the local hospitality industry, where, as a member of the LGBTQ community, he felt safer "in the closet than out in the workplace," he says.

"I didn't feel comfortable being my true self."

While there has been some forward movement since then, "there is still a way to go," he says.

The 40-year-old gets the sense Niagara-on-the-Lake is changing, but he's not so sure about Virgil. "I think

there is a lot of educating to do."

There is a "lack of a presence in the LGBTQ community, as well as overall diversity" in NOTL.

When he was running in 2018 to win a seat at the council table, "I didn't want to come out as that kind of candidate. I wouldn't have hidden what I am, but I wasn't asked." He didn't advocate for his community, he adds, because he wasn't sure whether he'd be met with hostility. "I didn't want to be the gay candidate."

The business sector is ignoring an opportunity to appeal to LGBTQ consumers, which could be a real boost to the local economy, he says.

The Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, which educates the travel and tourism sector on how to be more welcoming in the work place and how to attract the LGBTQ community, has done a study that shows 50 per cent of that community expects to travel this winter and spring, and will be choosing Ontario. Businesses that attract diversity and promote inclusivity could bring more visitors, who will spend money and stay longer than many of those currently travelling to NOTL, Williams says.

As the economy rebuilds, it could be strengthened by attracting the LGBTQ community, by making everyone feel

"welcome, comfortable and safe."

He would also like to see the hospitality industry become more welcoming as a workplace for teenagers and young adults, who may be looking for a part-time job to finance post-secondary education, or who may be thinking about a career.

He singles out two local businesses he says are already doing a great job of being inclusive: The Olde Angel Inn is very supportive, he says, and Vintage Inns, where he worked for a time, has shown through actions, not just policies, that it is committed to ensuring its employees feel safe and comfortable. "I've never worked in an environment like that before," he says.

Political action, "from the top down," also needs to occur, which is one of the reasons he says he is thinking of running for office, to make public institutions more welcoming.

Although a provincial election isn't expected any time soon, there has been talk about it happening next year, instead of the scheduled 2022 vote, and the Niagara regional party is looking at nominating candidates.

Williams says should he be successful, he doesn't want to be the "gay candidate" when there are so many other issues to talk about, but he will be an advocate for his community.

"It's a fine line, but it's time to get the dialogue going."

He has always loved the hospitality industry, and was on the verge of signing a lease on a restaurant in Toronto when COVID hit, so he is back in Niagara, and as owner and creative director of lahava.ca, is

looking forward to launching a luxury LGBTQ travel and lifestyle magazine.

He has also created a Facebook group for NOTL that promotes diversity and inclusion locally.

Inclusive NOTL+, a private group, was started just a week ago, had almost

100 members by press time. Those members were using it to discuss a diverse range of local issues, including other towns which feel more safe and welcoming, what makes them feel that way, and what can be done to implement similar practices in NOTL.



Jordan Williams (Photo supplied)



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SCHOOLS

ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

St. Michael students get creative with pumpkins

Local Staff

Kindergarten students of St. Michael School had a lot of fun outside recently, creating a pumpkin obstacle course and playing on it.

“Students had a wonderful time carrying, rolling, running and sliding the pumpkins

around the yard,” says principal Janice Barretto Mendonca. Students in Grades 7 and 7/8 had pumpkins donated by Seaway Farms, and used them to display their knowledge of positive and negative space. Space and line were the elements of design involved in the art piece celebrating Hal-

loween, says Barretto Mendonca, who added her thanks to Seaway and the Epp family for their donations of pumpkins. Students will be having their annual Orange and Black day Friday, also to celebrate Halloween, and will be dancing in the gym all day, says the principal.



Kindergarten kids play with their pumpkins donated by Epp Farms (above); Grade 8 students work on their pumpkin project (left); Nico Mirabella (right) has a rest from the pumpkin obstacle course; Jacob Dulas works on his pumpkin project; Louisa Leonovich, Elliott Epp, Ava Miele, Mila Treanor, Noah Werner, and Sophia Treanor have fun on the obstacle course; and (bottom row) Julia Rezza, Gavin Contini, Malcolm Bruce and Ava Catinari show off their projects. (Photos submitted)



Intimate artisan market at Hare Wine Co.

**Kim Wade
Special to The Local**

The Hare Wine Co. hosted an intimate Niagara Handmade Market Saturday, with just six local artisans displaying their wares in the winery courtyard.

In this new COVID era, it was much reduced from the previous two years, which attracted more than 30 vendors and hundreds of patrons from across Ontario.

The original event scheduled for early April was cancelled and rescheduled, says The Hare's event coordinator, Alex Godin. Saturday's event was set up outside the winery to ensure safety, physical distancing and traffic flow.

Katelyn MacIntyre, of 7 C Salts, was happy for the change. "It's nice to get outside," she says. She commended the winery for the set-up and the flow of patrons through the space. As she restocked her table, she explained she had to adapt her usual display due to COVID, but the show has been successful for her, almost selling out of product, and enjoying the people who stopped by.

7 C Salts is a line of handcrafted bath salts and shower steamers, developed

her in response to her own experience with anxiety and depression. As she began to take care of herself, she learned more about meditation, aromatherapy, hydrotherapy and chakras, she says. Her goal is to educate people to make self-care more intentional. Each bag of salts or shower steamer comes with an affirmation, designed "to think about or to focus on during your bath or shower," and to leave you "relaxed, reconnected and realigned."

Another artisan that has a personal story is Cheryl from Coconut Quartz. She explains she has always been attracted to crystals, and started making crystal and gemstone bracelets about five years ago. Making jewelry became a therapeutic way to calm her anxiety when her mother was diagnosed with dementia, she says, and she with an autoimmune disease. It was a much-needed creative outlet which eventually became a business.

Her creations are a unique combination of vintage up-cycling. She gathers stones and materials from her travels in Canada and abroad, although, she has not been able to travel too far at the moment. She likes to scour unlikely sources for vintage

pieces, which becomes a treasure hunt and a labour of love as she combines cast-off bits of metal with semi-precious stones and crystals to create her unique, one-of-a-kind pieces.

Kevin McClelland from Butlersburg Woodworking began his business about three years ago. He learned his skills from his father, a woodworking teacher at Stamford Collegiate in Niagara Falls. The idea of starting the business developed after his friend asked him to make a live edge charcuterie board. McClelland made the board, and then made some more to sell. The Niagara Handmade Market was his first show of the year, and he was happy to be invited to participate.

Catherine Seburn from Sew Good and Beyond says her business took off after the shutdown. She sews various items such as headbands, scrunchies, reflective dog bandanas and aromatherapy heat packs, and has sold more than 2,000 headbands, as a remedy to what she calls "isolation hair."

"It is nice to see people again, instead of talking to people through your phone or on a screen," she says, explaining she works at a dental office, is "up on infection



Catherine Seburn of Sew Good and Beyond finds the pandemic a good market for bandanas and hair bands. (Kim Wade)

control" and understands the need for precautions. She sells untouched items from her supply behind the table, rather than the items on display. However, she believes that interacting with people is also important. "We need it for our mental health."

Carrie Houle from Paper & Sunshine was also happy to attend the show, a "wonderful reprieve," and "nice to feel safe and engaged with friends." Her whimsical signs and decor can be custom-made, and she endeavours to source all of

her products from local or at least Canadian suppliers, including wood, paint, stain and stencils. "It may be difficult to promote local, but it's worth it," she says, encouraging people to buy local, and "look for things in your own backyard."

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Hydro boxes to be wrapped with winning art

**Kim Wade
Special to The Local**

The exhibition of this year's hydro box wrap contest winning paintings wraps up Saturday at the Niagara PumpHouse Arts Centre.

Among the original artworks submitted are the competition winners by artists Shelley Locke, Lois Stevens and Julia Kane.

In the spirit of community beautification, this year's theme was nature, landmarks and history in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The selected artworks will be transferred onto a vinyl wrap for hydro boxes at the Garrison Village shopping plaza, the Anderson Lane Fire Hall and the community centre.

"I was quite surprised, as Niagara has some amazing artists, and it was an honour my piece resonated with the judg-

es. It's quite special for me. My parents and son will get to see my art on display within our community," says Locke.

This award-winning artist and poet is self-taught. She has art work in private and public collections. Last year, her piece, Ode to T-Cats was chosen by the City of Hamilton for their traffic signal box wrap project. This year, her painting, The Glen, was a winner in the contest organized by the Town's Communities in Bloom and NOTL Hydro.

Lois Stevens' winning submission, Cannas on Queen, is a beautiful painting of vibrant canna lilies. Although Stevens also paints in oil and watercolour, she turned to acrylics for her winning submission. This Niagara-on-the-Lake artist and business owner says she strives to capture the beauty of the

area in her paintings, and now her painting has been chosen to add beauty to the area.

"Needless to say, I was extremely honoured to have my recent painting selected for the competition. This is a wonderful opportunity for local artists to be recognized, and bring their art to the streets of NOTL for all to enjoy," says Stevens. "I am currently working on a NOTL series of historic homes, landscapes, street scenes and bold florals. There is no end to resource material in this beautiful town we are so fortunate enough to live in."

Artist Julia Kane of St. Davids says she was honoured to be chosen one of the winners with her four-foot by four-foot

Vineyard with a View #3.

"My painting of Konzelmann Vineyards from the viewing stand is one of my favourite subjects, with the lake in the background, and sometimes the city of Toronto on the far horizon," she says.

"It will find a new home at NOTL Hydro to grace their new boardroom after the show, and I am again honoured to have them purchase this piece. I look forward to seeing the image on the hydro box at the community centre, and continue to be inspired to keep painting beautiful NOTL scenes."

The three artists received \$500 courtesy of NOTL Hydro, in addition to the gallery display at the PumpHouse. The

exhibition continues until the end of the month, after which the PumpHouse presents Ontario Between an Abstract and Figurative Vision, by Eric Ranveau, on Nov. 4. The opening reception for Ranveau will be held on Sunday, Nov. 8 at 2 p.m.

Contact the Niagara PumpHouse Arts Centre for more information and visiting protocols, niagarapumphouse.ca or 905-468-5455. The PumpHouse is open Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.



St. Davids resident Julia Kane's winning painting is of a Konzelmann vineyard.



Local artist Lois Stevens will have her painting, Cannas on Queen Street, on a hydro box in the Old Town. (Photos supplied)



The Glen, by Shelley Locke, will adorn a hydro box as part of a beautification project.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

TRICK OR TREATING AT THE PUMPHOUSE

October 31 @ 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

This Halloween, stop by the Niagara PumpHouse for our curbside, trick-or-treating solution. Families can look forward to a safer Halloween in an accessible venue. Keep checking our website for more information. <https://niagarapumphouse.ca>

HALLOWEEN AT FORT GEORGE

October 31 @ 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Bring your little goblins and ghouls for an afternoon of history and fun at Fort George National Historic Site. Learn about the history of halloween in the Regency era, while experiencing musket demonstrations and more! Children who come in their halloween costumes will get some special treats! Regular admission rates apply. For more info, visit FriendsOfFortGeorge.ca or call 905-468-6621.

ST. DAVIDS FISH FRY RETURNS

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November 12 @ 7 p.m.

Everyone is invited to attend the Annual General Meeting to be held via Zoom web conferencing platform. Only members, whose membership fees have been paid for the year, or those who have a Lifetime Membership, will be eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting; however, all are welcome to attend. Visit niagarapumphouse.ca for more information.

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Auchterlonie on Astrology

**Bill Auchterlonie
Special to The Local**

The full week of Auchterlonie on Astrology can be found on the Facebook page for The NOTL Local, and on the website <https://www.auchterlonieonastrology.ca>.

In part II of my podcast, I look at the presidential election in the USA on Tuesday, Nov. 3. Despite a morning of total confusion (Mercury retrograde) and continuing confusion

(Mars retrograde), it looks like a Trump victory at first. But Biden's not the harsh father, which was Trump's appeal four years ago. So, like a good horse race, Biden wins with a come-from-behind performance. But then again, these predictions are based on the popular vote. The Electoral College may steal another one. For a more detailed explanation check out my podcast.

Saturday, Oct. 31: The Full

Moon in Taurus is at 10:41 a.m. at eight degrees of Taurus, and eight degrees of Scorpio, respectively. Also, at eight degrees of Taurus is Uranus, retrograde. It's a day where feelings are going backwards, and the future looks like the past. On All Hallows Eve (Halloween) in 1632, a brilliant painter, Jan Vermeer, whose small pictures would capture the world, was born in the Dutch City of Delft.

Tuesday, Nov. 3: After just a

few short weeks, Mercury turns direct. The fireball turned retrograde on Oct. 15, and turns direct at 12:14 today. Finally, all those lost objects and ideas return. And a Canadian flying ace, William George Barker, was born Nov. 3, 1894. He was a Victoria Cross recipient and hailed from Dauphin, Manitoba.

Next week is the third quarter Moon in Leo - and November on the podcast.

So, until then, shine on.

LOCAL WORSHIP

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Sunday, November 1st

**Speaker:
Kevin Bayne
Message:
What's a Human?**

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SEASONAL

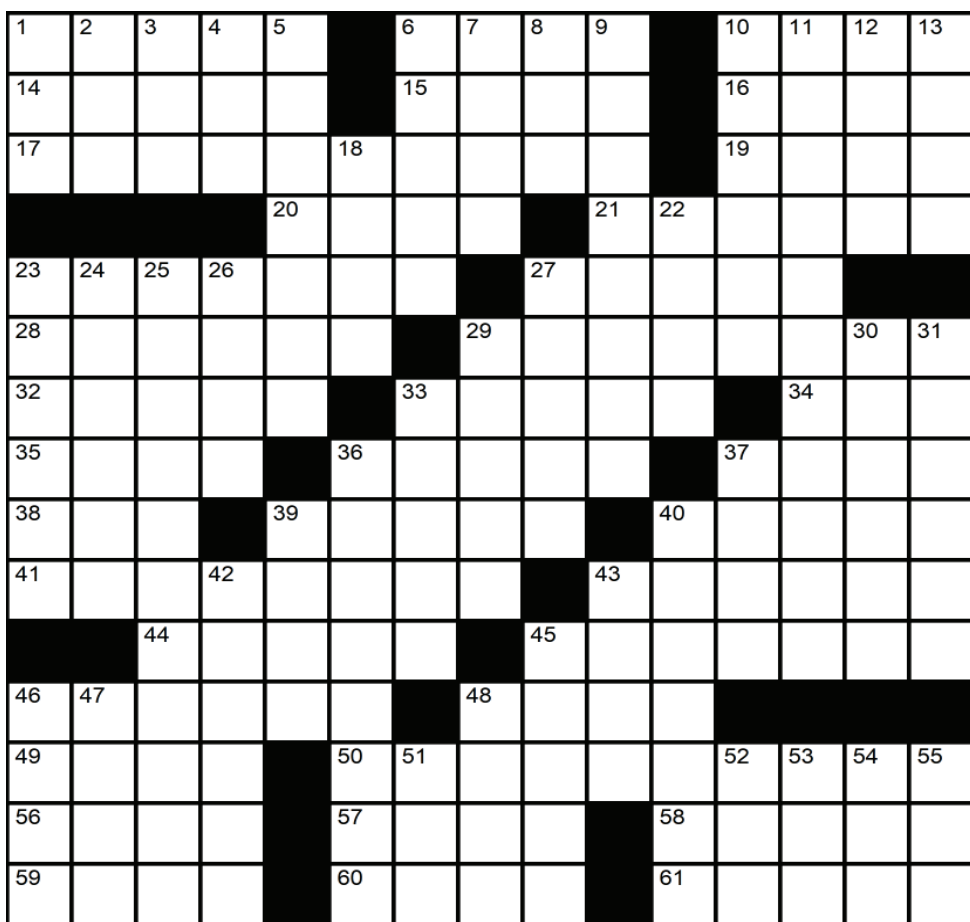
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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU



Across:

- 1 Old computer dial-up device
- 6 Adjust
- 10 Impertinent person
- 14 Fort Utah, formerly
- 15 Food scraps
- 16 Cheat
- 17 Go-ahead
- 19 Subject of study
- 20 Mazuma
- 21 Baseball scorecard listing
- 23 Scott Pelley's employer
- 27 Into a state of decline
- 28 Melts together
- 29 Airline perks
- 32 Bankrupts
- 33 Turns on the waterworks
- 34 --- Arbor, MI
- 35 Utter a shrill cry
- 36 Panamanian singer --- Blades
- 37 Gumbo essential
- 38 Second sight
- 39 Point of a tale
- 40 Seen by those with 38 Across, perhaps?
- 41 Went home to disrupt a play with no men
- 43 Volkswagen classic
- 44 Prima donnas
- 45 Mischievous ones

Down:

- 46 Horse that has not won a race
- 48 Broadcasts
- 49 'It --- rocket science!'
- 50 The Martian --- (Ray Bradbury)
- 56 "Star Wars" monastic warriors
- 57 Send forth
- 58 GWTW's Scarlett ---
- 59 New Mexico artists' colony
- 60 In order
- 61 Course halves
- 1 Auto efficiency measure
- 2 Boston Bruin great
- 3 Buck's mate
- 4 First of her kind
- 5 Found in barrels, often
- 6 Labors long and hard
- 7 Compulsion
- 8 Degree in mathematics?
- 9 Steroid hormone
- 10 Cascades peak
- 11 Flickertail State
- 12 "How obvious!"
- 13 Seckel or Bartlett
- 18 Hill products
- 22 Bear in Brittany
- 23 Magic transport

- 24 Slightly off-color, I'm in red
- 25 Put on top, wavy lines dip badly
- 26 Not one
- 27 Pitch
- 29 Name of eight popes
- 30 Register
- 31 Winds
- 33 Prepares for keeping
- 36 Wines and dines
- 37 Crude cartel
- 39 Chess turn
- 40 Official sitting
- 42 Side-to-side measurements
- 43 Where the cows come home to
- 45 Commotions
- 46 Spray finely
- 47 Largest of seven, round the world
- 48 Any of 44 Across could sing one
- 51 Care plan
- 52 Greek X
- 53 Intra-office computer system
- 54 Before
- 55 Carrier to Copenhagen, briefly

OBITUARY



ASPINALL, SCOTT—Scott Aspinall passed away on October 13, 2020 at Upper Canada Lodge after many years of declining dementia. The incredible staff at Upper Canada helped make Scott's last years and final days dignified and comfortable, and his family are grateful for their skill and kindness. We also thank Dr. Karen Berti for her constant and kind care.

Scott was born in Dumfries, Scotland and came to Canada with his family in 1957. After graduating from The University of British Columbia, he enjoyed a career in banking and finance. Scott and his wife Ruth moved from Toronto to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1991 and opened The Epicurean restaurant. When Scott wasn't working, he loved to spend time traveling and exploring the world with Ruth, skiing, playing squash, reading, sailing and doing anything outdoors. Many people in town will remember Scott biking around, even in winter, often in shorts. He was passionate about both making and sharing a glass (or two) of wine which he loved to pair with a newly discovered cheese. He will be greatly missed by Ruth, his children, Colin, Blair and Janet, granddaughters Lucy, Ella, Charlotte, Phoebe and Maya – who will always remember his blueberry pancakes and sense of adventure.



OGILVIE, CHRISTOPHER JOHN—March 19, 1968 - October 13, 2020. Christopher (Oggie) suddenly and sadly left our lives on Tuesday evening at home from a heart attack. Born in St. Catharines, he was raised and educated in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Chris will be greatly missed by his loving daughter Cassidy-Lynn (Chris), father Douglas, his cherished mom Teresa and stepdad Jack Bell, his uncle Drew, and nana Phyllis Ostrander. He was predeceased by his maternal grandparents, John and Jennie

Egoroff, his paternal granddad John Ogilvie, and his Uncle Michael Egoroff. Chris was a highly skilled heavy machine operator, and a proud 30 year member with the International Union of Operating Engineers. His memory will be cherished always in the hearts of his friends and family. Please raise a glass to Chris. Cremation has taken place. A family burial graveside service will take place at a later date and a celebration of life to be announced. Funeral arrangements entrusted to the HAINE FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL, 26 Ormond Street South, Thorold.



VANDERPERK, GYSBERTUS—Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever. Ecclesiastes 1:4. In his 96th year, Gysbertus VanderPerk passed away peacefully while being cared for by his loving family, at his home in St. Catharines, on October 22, 2020. He was a positive, cheerful man who lived out his faith and will be sadly missed by his family. Husband to the late Gerie (2012) beloved father to Bert, John (Liz), Pete (Margaret), Lydia (Bill) and Nelly (Fred), father-in-law to Rose. Cherished Opa of 16 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Gysbertus was born in Katwijk, Holland and lived through many experiences during his life of 95 years, from the Depression, WWII, he was a peacekeeper in Indonesia and later immigrated to Canada with his new wife in 1951. Gys was an avid gardener, had a greenhouse business in NOTL and worked at General Motors for 25 years. He was a passionate, involved member of Covenant Christian Reformed Church and volunteered in their Friendship club for many years, which was very dear to both him and our Mother.

Deep gratitude to the staff, nurses and care team associated with the Niagara branch of the LHIN for all their care.

Visitation was held at Covenant Christian Reformed Church, 278 Parnell Rd, St. Catharines on Wednesday, October 28th, 2020 from 10-11 a.m. with funeral service following at 11 o'clock. Interment followed at Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Beacon Christian School or a charity of your choice.





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PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from October 22, 2020

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

Across: 1 Modern, 6 Tune, 10 Ship, 14 Provo, 15 Ours, 16 Hose, 17 Green light, 19 Area, 20 Kale, 21 Roster, 23 C B S News, 27 South, 28 Allies, 29 Upgrades, 32 Ruins, 33 Cries, 34 Ann, 35 Pipe, 36 Ruben, 37 Okra, 38 ES P, 39 Moral, 40 Spook, 41 The women, 43 Beetle, 44 Divas, 45 Rascals, 46 Maiden, 48 Airs, 49 Isn't, 50 Chronicles, 56 Sith, 57 Emit, 58 O'Hara, 59 Taos, 60 So as, 61 Nines.

Down: 1M p g, 2 Orr, 3 Doe, 4 Eve, 5 Monkeys, 6 Tolls, 7 Urge, 8 Nth, 9 Estrogen, 10 Shasta, 11 North Dakota, 12 I see, 13 Pear, 18 Laws, 22 Ours, 23 Carpet, 24 Blues, 25 Slipped into, 26 None, 27 Spel, 29 Urban, 30 Enroll, 31 Snakes, 33 Cures, 36 Romances, 37 O P E C, 39 Move, 40 Session, 42 Widths, 43 Barn, 45 Riots, 46 Mist, 47 Asia, 48 Aria, 51 H M O, 52 Ch, 53 L A N, 54 Ere, 55 S A S.

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We are so proud of our clientele for following all the rules for health and safety, with vigilance. For many clients our studio is the only public outing that they are comfortable with.

The pandemic has resulted in many clients living in pain, and staying in pain, due to lack of appropriate movement.

It only takes 10 days for muscles to atrophy. For mature clientele, good movement twice a week, assistance in creating an at-home, 10-minute daily controlled movement routine, and a 20-minute walk twice a week, will completely change your posture, reduce your pain and stress, and improve your general mood.

If you are not aware of what is causing your current pain, we will work with you to determine the cause and how to relieve it.

At Pilates Emporium, we are movement specialists. Pilates was created as a therapeutic intervention, based on physiotherapy theory, to provide adapted and responsible movement patterns and increase muscle and joint strength, as well as stability with spinal mobility and health. That's what we can do for you.

These are very stressful times, particularly for people over the age of 50. With the additional worry of the second wave threatening to shut our communities down, we are vigilant with our COVID health practices, and look forward to helping clients through difficult times while keeping them safe.



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