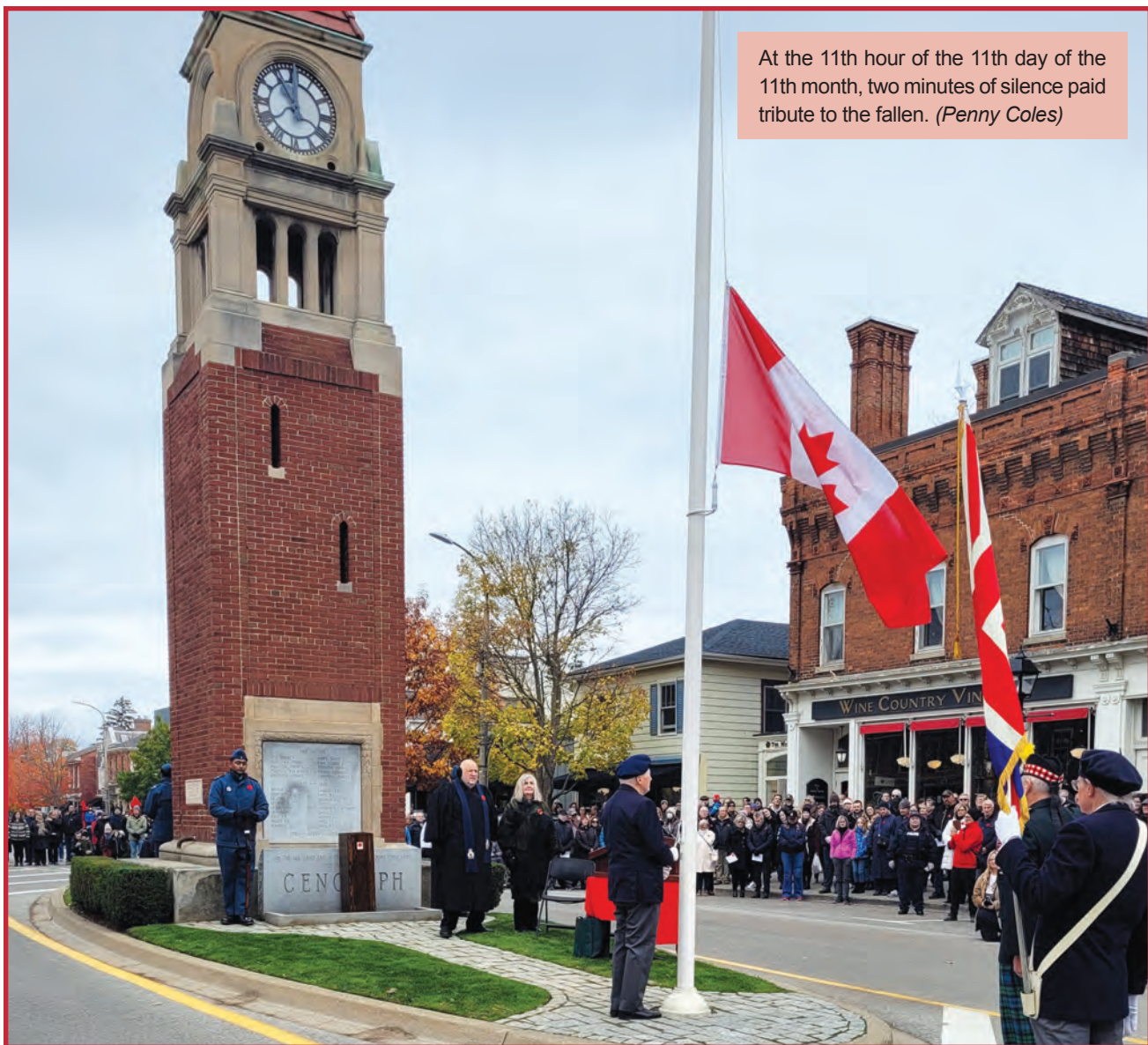




Volunteers  
deliver  
Christmas to  
Queen Street

page 11

notllocal.com NOVEMBER 15, 2023 Volume 5 • Issue 46



At the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, two minutes of silence paid tribute to the fallen. (Penny Coles)

## Community pays tribute to all who serve

Penny Coles  
The Local

It was a crisp fall day, a perfect setting for the crowd gathered at the cenotaph Saturday to remember all those who have fought for our country, and who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

For the second year, there were problems with the sound system, but voices were raised in song, Rev. Sheldon Kofsky's Call to Prayer was heard, as were readings by Rev. Judy Kofsky and Fire Chief Jay Plato, and Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser's presentation of *In Flanders Field*.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa, the only dignitary to speak —

in recent years the Royal Canadian Legion has moved away from having a representative of every level of government step up to the microphone — and it was evident Zalepa didn't need a microphone. He made sure he addressed the entire crowd, and was plenty loud enough to be heard by all.

Zalepa spoke first of the Queen Street cenotaph, the focal point of the Remembrance Day ceremony around which the crowd gathers, and a town landmark which is more than 100 years old and is in need of repairs.

"The cenotaph is a centrepiece of our community

Continued on page 14

## Chamber president asks for \$226,000 loan

Kris Dube  
The Local  
Local Journalism  
Initiative Reporter

A week after the leader of Niagara-on-the-Lake's Chamber of Commerce and Niagara-on-the-Lake Tourism went to the town's budget review committee with two separate 2024 budget requests, she returned Tuesday to town hall asking for a loan of \$226,000.

This is on top of the \$152,000 already requested as contributions to both agencies. And after councillors went into closed session for an hour and a half and debated the new request at

length, a tied vote resulted in the loan being turned down.

During her presentation last week to the budget review committee, Minerva Ward, president and chief executive officer of the chamber and Niagara-on-the-Lake Tourism, said the process to divide both organizations started in August, and that efforts to create separate boards of directors were underway.

Ward also said last week that "significant debt" had been accrued by Niagara-on-the-Lake Tourism due to costs associated with destination marketing.

Continued on page 2

## Two young people share honour of leading the stroll

Penny Coles  
The Local

When two local young people lead the annual Candlelight Stroll through the streets of the Old Town, they will be fulfilling a tradition that began 34 years ago.

Maya Webster is well-known for successfully lobbying the provincial government to provide medical coverage for a diabetes monitor that costs \$4,000. She has used one for several years,

which has changed her life by helping to control her Type 1 diabetes, and she wants to be sure it can change the lives of others like her.

In a second carriage will be Dylan Dietsch, 13, and his family. From the time of his birth with cerebral palsy, his parents, Matt and Kristen, have raised money for the Ronald McDonald House that was so important to them when Dylan was in the hospital in Hamilton, and for the Niagara Peninsula Chil-

dren's Centre, which has also been an important part of Dylan's life.

In Grade 8 now at Crossroads, Dylan is still involved in some recreational programming at the Children's Centre, says Matt, and he had a great summer at the Red Roof Retreat day camp and now enjoys Saturdays at the Red Roof Ranch.

"He'll be heading to high school next year," says Matt, hopefully to Eden Secondary School, "where he will

be able to reconnect with his friends from his special needs community."

As a teenager, Dylan is becoming more difficult to help on stairs, "and for the sake of his safety and for us, we'd like to have a chair lift," says Matt. "We have a family room we're using more as the kids get older, and it's not so bad getting him downstairs, but going up the stairs is getting to be more of a problem."

Continued on page 15



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# Loan request in addition to budget ask of \$152,000

Continued from page 1

During that meeting, it was also noted that the tourism agency has not received any Municipal Accommodation Tax revenue collected by the town because a transfer agreement has yet to be finalized.

More discussion about the accommodation tax, the tourism agency and the chamber's current finances were front row and centre this Tuesday during a tense debate.

The loan Ward was asking for is Niagara-on-Lake Tourism's piece of the 2022 MAT funding, which has yet to be doled out.

She said it could be paid back within 15 days of the money owed to the organization finally coming through.

When council re-emerged from closed session, Coun. Wendy Cheropita made a motion that the loan be approved, but that was followed by questions and concerns from around the table about where the funds should come from, and why an agreement hasn't been finalized yet, when discussions began in early 2022.

"Whatever the delays are, it didn't happen,"



Minerva Ward at a business forum she organized at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery in June. (Penny Coles)

said Cheropita, adding that she appreciates the tourism organization moving forward proactively and continuing to promote the town as a tourism destination, without being in receipt of funds they know would arrive eventually.

Chief administrative officer Marnie Cluckie said Ward and her team, along with the town, "have been working hard toward a resolution," and that she doesn't think there's any

blame to direct to either side.

A meeting is scheduled for Nov. 21, at which time Cluckie said the deal could be rubber-stamped.

"We feel we're at the final strokes with the two parties' legal counsel," said Cluckie, also noting that "agreements do take time."

Councillors also argued whether municipal accommodation tax revenue is considered taxpayer money. Both Cheropita and Coun. Gary Burroughs opined that

it shouldn't be considered tax dollars, and the loan should be drawn from those funds, if approved.

Town treasurer Kyle Freeborn said, in one way, it's all the same.

"There is usually an argument that any funds the town has are as good as tax dollars," said Freeborn, adding it can also be considered "open to interpretation."

Coun. Maria Mavridis said parking reserves would be "the best place to pull it from" because there would be no impact on the tax levy.

She also said it's not fair to hoteliers for the town to be lending out \$226,000 in MAT funds without an official guarantee it will be paid back.

"I have an obligation to the accommodation own-

ers to make sure the money they're collecting, let's be honest, on our behalf, is being spent properly," she said.

In 2017, the Ontario government issued the Transient Accommodation Regulation, which provides provisions for municipalities across Ontario to implement an accommodation tax if they choose to do so.

Last June, town council approved a MAT bylaw, resulting in this new tax of two per cent applying only to accommodation establishments with five or more rooms and for bookings made on or after July 1, 2022.

Starting in January, short-term rentals with less than five rooms will also have to pay the tax.

Accommodation providers will see the tax rise to three per cent in 2024, and four per cent in 2025.

In August of 2021, council passed a motion to implement the tax within the 2022 budget for tourism projects and to place any revenue generated into a special reserve for tourism promotion, town capital infrastructure and tourism initiatives.

In the early part of Tuesday morning's meeting, Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said he wanted more information from Ward, documents that "identify incurred expenses" related to the marketing work Ward and her team have been doing.

Ward said the funds were used for portions of staff salaries, marketing and "professional fees."

Later in the meeting, after the closed session, Coun.

Sandra O'Connor also said she was wary about the request.

"At this point, I don't feel I have sufficient documentation to be able to approve a loan of \$226,000," she said.

Coun. Erwin Wiens also said he has grave concerns with using tax money to hand over as a loan "without having enough information to guarantee the security of that funding."

Voting against the loan request were Couns. Mavridis, O'Connor and Adrianna Vizzari.

In favour were Couns. Tim Balasiuk, Cheropita, and Burroughs.

Zalepa was not in attendance when council came back from closed session, and Wiens expressed during the meeting that he would be leaving early, therefore, neither voted.

In a statement provided by Ward to The Local following Tuesday's meeting, she said Tourism NOTL has been the town's Destination Marketing Organization since 2013, and has been eligible to receive half the funds generated by MAT since 2022.

"While the MAT transfer agreement should have been given to us by the town at this time, understanding the bureaucracies of government, and acting in good faith, expecting the town to move quickly towards getting the MAT transfer agreement done, and wanting to ensure we supported Niagara-on-the-Lake's tourism industry especially in a post-covid environment," her team proceeded with their work, she said.

This involved incurring professional fees for legal, accounting and marketing.

The organization also began the implementation of some of the tactics of a five-year strategic and tac-

Continued on page 8



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# NOTL library asks town for increased funding

**Kris Dube**  
**The Local**  
**Local Journalism**  
**Initiative Reporter**

Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library had the largest request of six organizations that came forward looking for their piece of the pie within the town's 2024 budget on Tuesday morning.

The library is asking for \$886,461, which is \$63,000 more than what was granted to the organization by the municipality last year.

Two key items the library is looking for are an additional 12 hours of staffing per week

to cover youth and family programming on Saturdays, as well as a service-planning study to determine the best ways all areas of town can be accommodated as the local population grows, library chief executive officer Cathy Simpson and board chair Darryl Novak told the town's budget review committee in their presentation.

Referring to what could be done to address challenges the library might face related to growth within Niagara-on-the-Lake and all its villages, Coun. Wendy Cheropita asked if a program launched recently by the St. Catharines library, a self-serve branch that isn't always staffed,

could be explored.

"That was quite the innovative program," said Cheropita, adding this would be appropriate for the Glendale area, a part of town expected to see significant residential growth in the coming years.

Novak said this has been discussed and that he likes this idea. "That's a perfect example of the kind of thing that needs to be considered in a longer-term plan," he said, adding that building a standalone library isn't necessarily a solution, but that incorporating new ideas into already existing municipal sites could be the way to go.

Later in the meeting, Coun.

Gary Burroughs also brought up projected growth for the Glendale area.

Novak reiterated the importance of the study the library is hoping to see undertaken.

"We know enough about what's projected for Glendale that we can start working on what the service requests are and how we can best do it," he said.

After Simpson noted the proposed request equates to a 0.04-per-cent levy increase, Coun. Erwin Wiens, chair of the meeting, asked if the library board would be willing to defend itself and council if their request is granted.

"I'm okay to take the heat

as an elected official, but if I'm raising taxes for the library I expect the library board to be standing beside me saying, 'yeah, we want that raise in taxes,'" said Wiens.

To Wiens' comment, Novak responded, "absolutely."

The library is also anticipating a \$43,000 grant, and \$17,000 in donations — \$1,500 more than what was raised in 2023.

Novak said the library has enough in its reserves currently to cover capital costs related to computer equipment, but cautioned there could be a "significant" request next year.

Wiens, budget committee chair, told The Local that no

decision has been made on the six requests brought to the committee, which consists of all members of council.

"They all do their pitch of what they want and then it comes back to the next meeting, and we decide what they get."

The next budget meetings are scheduled for Nov. 22 and 28.

Wiens said it's possible that budget deliberations will be wrapped up by the Nov. 28 meeting — before the entire spending plan goes to a council meeting for a vote shortly after.

"We're closer to the end than we are the beginning," he said.

# NOTL asked to contribute \$96,000 to airport

**Kris Dube**  
**The Local**  
**Local Journalism**  
**Initiative Reporter**

The Niagara District Airport Commission is hoping for a smooth landing of funds from the local government.

On Tuesday, chief executive officer Daniel Pilon gave one of six presentations to local officials sitting on the town's budget review committee, asking for a piece of the 2024 budget.

The airport commission is coming to the town for more than \$96,000 for both capital and operating needs, but this is a small fraction of what is being asked of two other nearby mu-

nicipalities which also provide funding for the airport.

Niagara Falls has been asked for almost \$479,000 and St. Catharines' budget request is almost \$694,000.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake owns the land the airport sits on, but all three municipalities own the approximately \$20 million in assets that keep the airport in flight, said Pilon.

The federal government provided \$1.4 million to the commission in 2023, a year where 36,000 "movements" took place, aircraft either landing or taking off at the site.

Emergency services also use the site frequently, he added.

The airport's operating bud-

get in 2024 is expected to be \$963,000, with \$444,000 of that generated by revenues.

Costs include planning engagements with other projects taking place nearby that require the commission's attention, such as the twinning of the Garden City Skyway. Maintenance, IT upgrades and safety procedures such as de-icing and the prevention of potential obstacles would also be covered by this funding.

Capital pressures are pegged to be at about \$750,000 in 2024, which also requires an order being placed for a new plow truck to replace one previously gifted by the City of Niagara Falls in 2018 that will need to be taken out of service soon, said Pilon.

Asked by Coun. Sandra O'Connor about the type of clientele the airport sees, Pilon said many arrive to attend weddings in town, including a number of hockey players who attended one this summer. Pilon did not mention names, but Toronto Maple Leafs forward Mitch Marner got married in Niagara-on-the-Lake earlier this year.

Entertainers who perform at the Niagara Falls casinos and other venues have been known to use the airport, said Pilon, noting that one of them recently was Latin singer Enrique Iglesias.

A massive residential project proposed for the Glendale area at White Oaks also came up during the budget meeting.

One hurdle proponents of the 801-unit, four apartment building development will need to overcome is an exemption from height regulations related to the airport, which is only three kilometres away. Buildings within its radius can be no taller than 15 metres, but the biggest being pitched in the White Oaks project is planned to stand 82.5 metres tall.

When asked by Coun. Tim Balasiuk about whether this project could have a negative impact on the airport, Pilon appeared to select his words carefully.

He said Transport Canada will make a decision on this, but that a number of experts will

need to weigh in on the proposal through various studies.

"I don't suggest they do those often, or regularly, but certainly they have an impact," said Pilon, referring to regulation exemptions being given.

He said the Niagara airport would be affected negatively if other high-rise buildings in nearby regions and municipalities also receive exemptions related to maximum height, noting that how approaches for landing are affected is a key factor.

The town has not finalized its budget and more committee meetings are scheduled this month, ahead of council giving the final rubber stamp to the spending plan.



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# Regional transit budget debate on hold

**Kris Dube**  
The Local  
Local Journalism  
Initiative Reporter

The Niagara Region Transit route to getting its 2024 budget request approved by regional council has been extended by a few stops.

This results from the region's budget review committee deferring a decision until the transit commission and its board can find ways to save more money, and trim what was proposed as a 7.8 per cent increase for Niagara ratepayers through a special levy used to fuel the region-wide

transit service's second year of operation, which could include an increase in fares and decrease in services.

The recommendation brought to regional council on Thursday for approval aimed to see a proposed gross operating budget of more than \$83 million, and a net base special levy of \$59 million, to be apportioned between local municipalities.

The capital side of the transit commission's budget is \$23 million, with more than \$20 million of this amount expected to be covered through upper levels of government and development charges.

The price of gas, labour-related costs and maintenance needs are the biggest challenges the amalgamated transit provider is facing, Carla Stout said in her presentation to the regional budget committee.

The lifespan of a transit bus, usually 40 or 60 feet, is 12 years. The average age of the transit commission's buses is eight years old, explained Stout, stressing the importance of refurbishment, but especially replacement.

There are about 170 buses within the region-wide transit provider's fleet, 33 of them at the ripe age of about 15, she said.

And a large chunk of the

buses on the road across the region were uploaded from lower-tier municipalities when the new transit system was formed. Referring to some of the buses ready to retire, Stout said she's "not surprised given the timing — coming straight out of the pandemic."

During COVID-19 most municipalities were frozen when it came to purchasing a new fleet, she said, and the regional service is "three years behind" when it comes to purchasing new vehicles.

"I have 33 buses where I don't know if they're going to run in six months," said Stout,

and in response to a question about a switch to electric buses added that although an electric fleet would be desirable, it would also mean significant extra costs related to charging infrastructure, and that some electric buses do not have as much range as a standard, diesel-fueled bus, meaning their batteries need frequent boosts.

It could take up to 16 months for a new bus to be delivered after one is ordered — which is why time is of the essence, Stout told the committee. "As buses start to fail and come off the road, so will service." To fulfil a goal of replacing 19 of the conventional 40-foot buses is estimated to cost \$15 million.

to get where they need to go, a service shared with Grimsby, Lincoln, Pelham, Port Colborne, Wainfleet and West Lincoln.

The special levy requisition for Niagara-on-the-Lake, before the budget was put on hold last week, was set to be \$2.85 million in 2024, which is \$265,000 more than what the town put in last year.

Niagara's largest municipalities are set to pay the most.

According to a chart in the report brought to regional council last week, St. Catharines is on the hook for \$22 million, and Niagara Falls will be contributing about \$16 million. Welland was slated to pay \$6.6 million.

A motion was brought forward by Pelham Regional Coun. Diana Huson to see the budget request brought back to the transit commission at its next meeting, which is Nov. 21. She is asking that the provider investigate fare increases, reduction in service, and "capital reserve transfers with context on operational impacts," as well as revenue-generation opportunities through advertising.

Local net transit costs and incremental capital will be apportioned based on service hours, while inter-municipal service costs are apportioned to municipalities based on their share of region-wide assessment.

Niagara-on-the-Lake only uses Niagara Region Transit's OnDemand system for residents

Since council opted to send the budget back to the transit commission, Niagara-on-the-Lake Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser said Monday it might be premature to discuss what residents could be paying in 2024.

Because the program is so new, she added, "how effective it's going to be for us" is also something that's being figured out, adding she has spoken with residents who say they have had "fairly good experiences" with the service.

Kaiser told The Local it seems many potential users may not know about the service's existence, that there is lack of awareness about it.


"I think there are definitely people in the community who are in need of it," she added.




NOTL could pay as much as \$2.85 million for its OnDemand service, but regional budget committee members want the transit commission to have another look at the increases being proposed. (Supplied)

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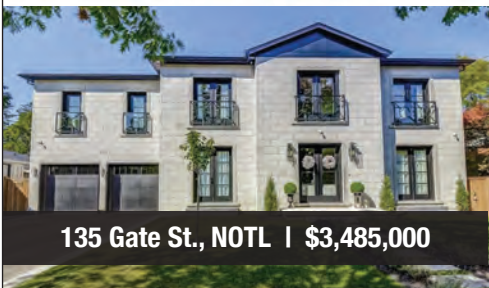


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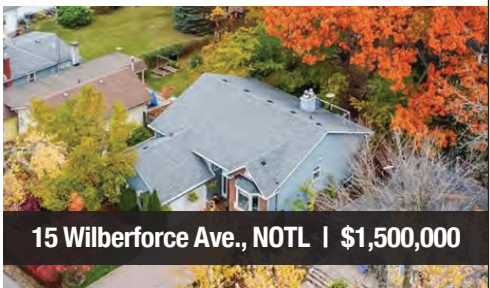
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# Museum hoping for more funding from town

**Kris Dube**  
The Local  
Local Journalism  
Initiative Reporter

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is “poorly funded” when comparing what it receives from the municipality with how much others in the region receive from their respective local government, says managing director and curator Sarah Kaufman.

During a presentation to the budget review committee Tuesday, Kaufman said the museum is seeking \$297,000 in the town’s 2024 spending plan, an increase of about \$16,000 over what was doled out last year.

She said the NOTL Museum and Welland Museum are the only two in the region that aren’t fully funded by municipalities.

The NOTL museum was given \$282,000 last year, and Welland about \$394,000.

Kaufman also provided figures for other historical headquarters in the region — noting that the Niagara Falls Museum received \$900,000 in municipal funding in 2023, and Lincoln more than \$500,000.

The museum’s other fund-

ing sources include donations, admission fees, a provincial operating grant, and project-based grants from upper levels of government.

Kaufman said there are 106 programs already planned for 2024, and visitor numbers are increasing — they are higher now than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before lockdowns started in March 2020, the museum saw an annual guest total of about 7,000 people. But about 8,000 visitors appear to be the annual average as of late, said Kaufman.

“We’re very excited about how we’re progressing post-COVID,” she told the budget review committee.

In her presentation, Kaufman broke down what the requested funds would be used for — the bulk of it, nearly \$191,000, for a portion of staff wages, which also includes the creation of a part-time maintenance position.

An additional \$28,000 is needed for building maintenance, said Kaufman, who also explained to the committee that the current maintenance person at the museum is herself — which she says isn’t working too well.

“I’m the one fixing everything, and that becomes difficult,” said Kaufman.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa asked Kaufman if partnering with the town for maintenance responsibilities is something that could be explored.

Kaufman said this was a conversation had many years ago under a previous council and chief administrative officer, but the town said at the time it “didn’t have the ability to do that.”

However the museum is “always open to looking at that again,” she added, also noting the building is owned by the museum.

Zalepa agreed this is a route that needs to be revisited.

“I think in this world of shared services, we could be more creative,” he said about accommodating maintenance needs.

Zalepa also said he’d like more information on municipal funding other museums in the region receive and how population is worked into the formula.

Kaufman told the committee that the museum will come to council next year with an update on its planned \$10-million expansion and its related fundraising efforts.



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# COMMENT

## November offers a look at 'bare bones' in wooded areas



**Owen Bjorgan**  
Special to The Local

The forest is becoming bare, seasons are changing, and the outdoors may seem a little more bleak at this time of year, to the surprise of nobody — welcome to November.

Less wildlife scurries and fewer colours paint the landscape. When green chlorophyll was no longer being replaced due to lack of sunlight, other colours became exposed. The reds, yellows, purples and oranges got knocked to the ground until we were left with a wooded world that looks more like a barcode.

As a guide, and even for my own sanity, I try to see the less obvious benefits of November outdoor excursions. The insects are hibernating, dormant or deceased, so 2024's warm-blooded targets are put on hold. Poison ivy doesn't die, but takes a moment to rest. It is not painfully cold, and the local parks and trails are no longer overcrowded. Finally, we get a glimpse of the bare bones of the land, its contours and previously enshrouded secrets.

This is the time of year where giants hiding in plain sight become exposed. Niagara's most impressive rock formations and massive trees are now more visually and physically accessible than ever.

Let's start with the oaks of

Queenston Heights along the Bruce Trail. With some individuals pushing 250 years old, I recently watched it take seven kids to connect arms around the base. The first handful of minutes hiking here will reveal the true girth of such biological legends, who have survived countless ice storms, disease attacks and even fighting during the War of 1812.

Imagine how an Indigenous fighter, a British soldier or an American could have just as well trampled that small tree without a second thought.

The adjacent Niagara Gorge has boulders the size of small houses sitting randomly in the middle of its lower forests. Their placement might seem off, but these gargantuan nuggets of limestone have tumbled to their current location at some point within the last 12,000 years — the time it has taken for the Niagara River to carve southward to its current location at Niagara Falls.

Some of these boulders are barely visible during the summer lushness, so this time of year allows us to appreciate their whereabouts and their size. If you've been down into the gorge, you may have very well been just a stone's throw away from the biggest rock you've ever seen.

Every time I see one of these boulders seemingly so out of place in the forest, I imagine the monstrously intimidating sound it must have made as it tumbled to its resting point. Around these monoliths stand some of the tallest tulip trees in

Canada, appearing as cathedrals made from wood rather than stone with their enormous and unusually straight trunks.

If we were to crawl westward along the Niagara Escarpment, we would eventually bump into Lincoln's Rockway Conservation Area. Besides the Niagara Gorge, I argue that this must be one of the best exposed rock sites on the Niagara Peninsula. This is where severe scenery meets family-friendly trails.

Before entry into the Fifteen Mile Creek valley, the creek responsible for the waterfall, you step down over the brow onto a hillside trail peppered with beech trees. These trees are known for their brilliant green in the summer, but now we see their copper-coloured leaves clinging until they are shaken off in spring. They also have an elastic bark that stretches over time, giving them an incredibly smooth appearance as they age. Humans would wish for such an evolutionary feature.

Deeper into the escarpment canyon, the trail user suddenly sees gigantic walls of exposed vertical rock above their heads. It is arguably the best example across the Niagara Region of the classic Niagara Escarpment layering arrangement; big and blocky dolostone as a cap rock, followed beneath by millions of years of alternating shales and sandstones.

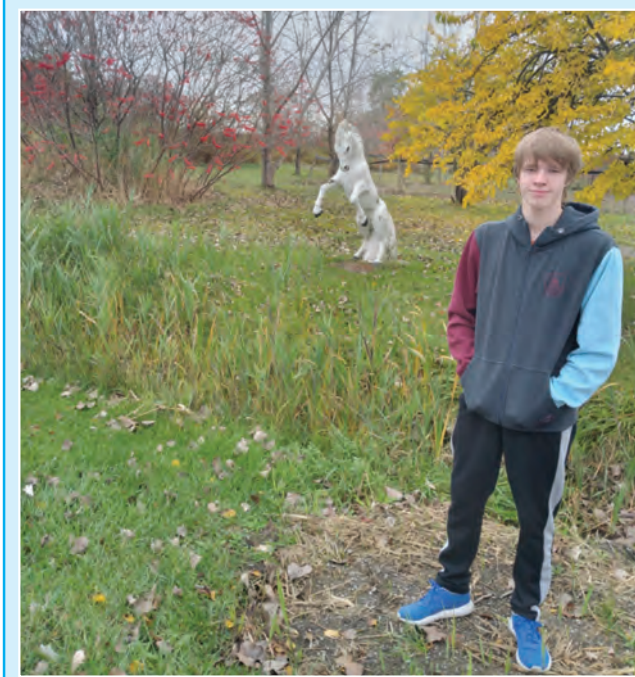
When you stand at the bottom of this rocky chasm, you can't help but feel small. That is exactly what Niagara's grandest of rocks and trees can make you appreciate.



A family gathers around one of Owen Bjorgan's favourite oaks, approximately 250 years old, near Queenston Heights. (Owen Bjorgan)



Owen Bjorgan at Rockway Falls next to some of the most interesting and ancient rock formations in the Niagara Region. (Maria Fratangelo)



### Where's Ben?

Eden student Ben Foster continues to discover new locations in NOTL, wondering how familiar others may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com. Last week Margie Enns correctly told us Ben was at the cenotaph in Queenston, dedicated to those from our area who fought in the World Wars and Korea, and located at the intersection of Niagara Parkway and Queenston Street.



## View from the couch

### Donald Combe

Special to The Local

In *Pretend It's a City* (Netflix 2021) Fran Lebowitz, the prototypical New Yorker, shares her thoughts

of this great city with director Martin Scorsese. The film has caustic wit, is funny, deeply insightful and a must-see.

Donald Combe is a retired English teacher who

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

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# COMMENT

## Local LETTERS Let's look at Old Town for a roundabout

As a St. Davids resident, I've been keeping keen tabs on the discussion regarding the proposed St. Davids roundabout.

I've become frustrated by our lord mayor's misrepresentation of our community

members' interests and his lack of balanced advocacy for which he was elected.

Given his support for the effectiveness and safety of roundabouts, I would like to forward a suggestion that a roundabout be considered

for the Queen and King Streets intersection in Old Town.

This too is a busy four-way stop, framed by businesses, and heavily trafficked by pedestrians. It's also next to a park, another parallel to

the St. Davids School proximity. Why not apply the same roundabout principles uniformly? Surely residents and council members would support this idea. It shouldn't impact the essence of the village, its businesses or pedes-

trian safety. It probably won't cost too much, so taxpayers shouldn't mind.

For clarity, I understand that York and Four Mile Roads are regional roads. Nevertheless, I believe locally elected officials should be

representing local interests and working to preserve the things that make Niagara-on-the-Lake such a special place.

**Nathan Sacevich**  
NOTL

## Local LETTERS We need more housing, not more hotels

The reason the town's planning meetings are so long is clearly that the applications are against the laws of the Town. They don't comply with either the bylaws or the Official Plan and the applications probably shouldn't have

been accepted and certainly not given the credibility of having public meetings to discuss them.

The residents rely on the town's bylaws and its Official Plan when investing in their homes and they naturally

don't want large commercial developments in their residential areas.

As to the developers' threats to take the town's rejection of their proposals to the Ontario Land Tribunal, the province has said that

it wants more housing. The Marotta and Hummel lands would mean the removal of possibly hundreds of housing units from the town. At a time when the provincial government is asking for more housing, I can't imagine why the

Ontario Land Tribunal would agree to having hundreds of potential housing units removed and replaced by hotel rooms, especially when the lands are in residential areas.

In conclusion, I strongly urge staff and council to reject

these commercial developments being located in residential areas, knowing that they are not in the community's or the province's best interests.

**Wayne Murray**  
NOTL

## Local LETTERS Canada a safe haven for 150 years

Approximately 150 years ago, the Sioux Nation, led by Chief Sitting Bull, fled to Canada to avoid retribution by the U.S. Army after the battle of the Little Big Horn.

They were met not by an army, but by a single North West Mounted Police officer

who stated they were welcome to stay, but they had to obey our laws, not use Canada as a safe haven to raid and return to the United States.

That is one of many precedents in our history.

Canada has always been a safe haven for people search-

ing safety, freedom and opportunity.

Canada remains, to this day, a refuge from terror, wars and oppression.

Immigrants built our wonderful country, but I believe there should be one simple rule for coming and

staying in Canada:

"Leave your luggage at the door."

We have all come to Canada for a clean, fresh start at life.

The turmoil and challenges of our old homes must be left there, as hard

as that is.

Part of that fresh start in Canada is Canadians must not feel threatened here for terrible events occurring elsewhere. We, with all of our own challenges, must remain a beacon of safety and hope.

If one is so caught up in

other conflicts, feel free to go there and work toward a solution, but no one in Canada should be threatened or attacked on our streets for what is happening elsewhere.

**Thomas S. Caldwell**  
Toronto & NOTL resident

# Library Interview with Joshua Chaudoreille

**Susan Elliott**  
Library Board Member

*The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library board and staff are interested in exploring the special place books, reading, storytelling and libraries hold in the hearts of our community members. The power of the written and spoken word, the enchantment of libraries and childhood memories of time spent with books, creates a profound tapestry of emotions and experiences.*

*This questionnaire prompts introspection and reflection, offering a unique lens through which to examine the bond between readers and their connection to books, storytelling and libraries.*

*Watch this space for interviews with an array of interesting community members.*

Here are the thoughts on reading and the importance of libraries from Joshua Chaudoreille, age 14, who is a recent Grade 8 graduate of Royal Oak Community School in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

**Q. What are you reading right now?**

Right now I'm reading a very interesting series of fantasy books called *The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel*, by Michael Scott.

Imagine a fantasy book with all religions and cultures, with Egyptian and Roman gods and mythologies, with twins becoming heroes. There are six in the series and I'm on number five.

I mostly read in English but my first language is French.

**Q. You are a big reader. What is your favourite book that you might want to read again?**

It's a tie between three favourites of mine.

The Percy Jackson series is so good because when I was young I really wished life was really like in the book, so I read it many times.

The Warriors series is a view from a different animal, which was very interesting.

*Aristotle and Dante* is kind of like an autobiography

because it is so realistic. It is a book about a young gay couple and what happens to them.

**Q. Did anyone read to you when you were young?**

Yes, my family read to me at bedtime or during the day when I wanted a story.

**Q. What do you like about the library?**

I like discovering new series by browsing on the shelves or if I hear about interesting books from friends.

I like that I can get books for free. I like physical books because I have lots of technology at home.

**Q. Why do you like going to the library?**

It has some quiet spaces and I can go there if I want to work or to be by myself.

I liked that when I lived in France. I could meet up with my friends at our local library and play some games or tell jokes.

In school libraries it was fun too, and I went to school every day. The librarians always suggested new books for

me. I read nearly 800 books in one year, but some are faster to read, such as a lot of Manga. I like comic books too. I enjoy reading them because there is a lot of comedy or comic relief in them.

**Q. What has been most influential in turning you into a reader?**

I think fantasy books did it because they transport me to another world and I like meeting the characters and learning about the things that we don't have now. I like to immerse myself in books, and it gives me a more optimistic outlook. Most are happy stories that turn out well.

**Q. How would you improve a library for kids your age?**

I would like more books, physical books for multiple reasons.

I like the old book smell and I like the new book smell too. I like holding books, and they are easier on my eyes than e-books.

**Q. What do you gain as a young reader?**

I think I gain more understanding about the world, and it makes me more cultured. By cultured I mean keeping up on what's happening in other countries or in historical times.

**Q. Does reading contribute to your health and well-being in any way?**

Definitely, like when I'm going to bed and reading helps calm my nerves to go to sleep. And when I'm really tired, I usually read new books all day because it makes my brain rest and then it pops and makes me want to know more and more. Reading gives me a quiet day.



Joshua Chaudoreille (Supplied)



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# Niagara College asks NOTL for \$20,000 in 2024 budget

**Kris Dube**  
The Local  
Local Journalism  
Initiative Reporter

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's financial contribution to Niagara College for almost 30 years is just one piece of the academic institution's puzzle — but it's an important one. That's according to Gord Arbeau, vice-president of advancement for the college, who formally made a request to the town's budget review committee on Tuesday for \$20,000 in 2024 to cover costs associated with renovations and repairs to the college's teaching greenhouse at its Daniel J. Patterson campus.

Having a "united front" when bringing in federal and provincial dollars, as well as corporate donations

and acts of philanthropy, depends on support from local governments, said Arbeau.

"When we meet with various upper levels of government, the expectation is that there are other parties at the table investing as well," he said, noting the City of Welland, the home of the college's other campus, also provides financial support.

NOTL has pitched in \$380,000 since 1995 to Niagara College, boosting the student learning environment and assisting with the purchase of key instructional equipment, said Arbeau.

The local economy is dependent on the success of students, many of whom graduate to take jobs at wineries, hotels and other industries in town, he said.

Fielding a question from Coun. Gary Burroughs about the college's relationship with the local horticulture and agriculture sector, Arbeau said the college's applied research capabilities are a major factor.

"In many cases, our local commercial partners are coming to us to solve a particular problem or challenge," said Arbeau, also adding that growers, as well as representatives from the tourism industry, often say they want to see more Niagara College graduates enter the local workforce.

There are plans over the next few years to expand student residences at both campuses, he added, noting that both have seen "record enrolment" after the pandemic.

A new research greenhouse is also be-

ing built at the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus.

Niagara College was one of six organizations who made requests to the budget committee, which consists of all members of council, last Tuesday.

No decision has been made on the grants request- ed, and further discussions will be held about the budget this month, before the final spending plan comes to council for a vote.



Niagara College held its fall 2023 open house for students Nov. 4. (Supplied)

# Chamber had to underwrite expenses, Ward says

Continued from page 2

tical marketing plan.

"We acted in good faith in anticipation of receiving our portion of MAT funds," she said.

"Almost a year and a half later, the town has delayed in getting us a signed transfer

agreement and our portion of MAT funds," she added.

As a result, the chamber has had to underwrite the expenses of Tourism NOTL that should have been paid for by MAT.

The cash outlay and debt that the chamber has incurred on behalf of the eligible tour-

ism entity Tourism NOTL is \$162,120.50 for July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 and \$215,577.11 for 2023, she said in her statement.

The town's delays have put the chamber and Tourism NOTL in a "very difficult position, starving the DMO of much-needed

funds while the MAT sits in an account," she said.

"It is very disappointing the decision of council today that inevitably hurts our tourism industry and our business community, hampering economic development and post-Covid recovery," she added.

In her budget presentations last week, Ward asked for \$21,000 to cover costs associated with the annual Peach Festival, the Candlelight Stroll, and Christmas decorations in the heritage district.

The tourism agency's budget request is \$131,100 — with the biggest ask in-

volving \$65,000 in salaries and wages for its visitor information centre staff.

A sponsorship of \$40,000 from the town for the annual Icewine Festival is also part of the budget request, along with costs associated with rent and the operation of the NOTL Ambassadors program.



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# McArthur Estate house tour pays tribute to Trisha Romance

**Penny Coles**  
The Local

Whether you have experienced the magical McArthur Estate evening holiday house tour, or haven't missed a year since the estate was opened to the public, there will always be surprises.

This year's theme is The Candlelight Christmas, and if the always breath-taking, spectacular home of Brenda and Blair McArthur exquisitely decorated for the Rotary Holiday House Tour isn't enough, this year Brenda has decided to pay tribute to artist Trisha Romance, from whom the couple purchased their home.

One of the traditions of the tour is Brenda graciously greeting everyone as they arrive, as she would guests to her home.

Over the years since she opened the house for the tour, she says she has had people come through the doors believing it to still be the Trisha Romance Estate.

"A lot of people want to talk about Trisha," says Brenda — some even expect to meet her, not realizing the home has been sold.

There have always been some Romance paintings in the house, but in recent months Brenda has purchased several more to hang throughout, and has asked Trisha's daughter, artist Tanya Peterson, to be at the house for the house tour. "She has all the stories to share," says Brenda — the inspiration behind the paintings, some Tanya remembers, and some Trisha has told her about over the years.

"I think I need to celebrate Trisha more this year," says Brenda. "I just

have a feeling that the time has come."

Trisha was asked early on in the days of the house tour if her home could be part of it, but she's a very private person, and wasn't comfortable with opening her home to the public, nor would she be comfortable attending the night of the tour. But Tanya is the perfect person to do that, says Brenda.

And since the decorations change every year, to have something new and surprising for those who make it a point to return on the annual tour, it was the right time to highlight Trisha Romance and her art. "I'm going to love having Tanya here," says Brenda, "to help honour Trisha, and to honour her by having her paintings here."

She is "a spiritual, kind woman. She is how all this started. Trisha brought me to this town," she says.

Brenda fell in love with the Romance Estate on John Street when she and Blair first visited NOTL. She would ask him to drive past the estate every time they came to town, before they were finally able to purchase it and call NOTL home. That was seven years ago, when they were celebrating their 30th anniversary, and decided within months of buying it that they would have the home ready in time to be part of the tour.

"We still use Trisha's nativity scene outside, which she left, and the Christmas tree. It was too big for anywhere else. My favourite day of the year is the day we put up the tree."

"I love doing this," she says of the tour. "I love the reaction from people. It's worth all the time and effort we put into it," she adds. "It gets us all into the

Christmas spirit."

People can be so overwhelmed as they arrive, it's not unusual to see them cry, she says.

And it raises a lot of money for the community. "Taking those two days doesn't seem like too much to do, and we have a lot of fun doing it."

As to the work that goes into the decorating, beginning in October, "we have it down to an art now."

"We love Christmas," she continues. And although the Rotary Club typically asks home owners not to be there for the tour, allowing the volunteers to take over, "I said I had to be here."

Rotarian Katie Aeby, one of the organizers of the tour, says that when Brenda is introduced to those who arrive at the

door, "they're so surprised, so thrilled to meet her. It makes their night."

Rose Campbell, also a tour organizer, says from the first year the estate was included, it was a huge success. "It took the Holiday House Tour to a higher level of fundraising and brand loyalty," she says, and since then has brought an amazing response from those who praise the McArthurs and all they do for NOTL.

One of those comments, Campbell says, is from Trisha Romance, who watched a video that was produced during the pandemic, and called the tour "pure magic. Brought tears to my eyes," she said, "as Silent Night played to the visions of love and care unfolding. Thank you Blair and Brenda for

sharing your gift of a true Christmas Spirit!"

As generous as the McArthurs are to open their home to the Rotary House Tour, it's not all they do to help others.

Brenda is cautious to speak of the work that keeps her busy, at times at least 12 hours a day if they are not away on holidays, and as she says, leaving her exhausted at the end of the day — she has no trouble at all sleeping at night.

She speaks of her "projects," the work she takes on, and enjoys, keeping her especially busy at this time of year. Some of it is for other people, family and friends, and much of it for the community she loves.

She was out on Queen Street Tuesday, another of her projects, having

taken charge of having the street decorated for Christmas. Although she gives credit to her team of helpers, in whatever she's doing, she's a take-charge person, a director, the creative person making sure her visions become reality.

"I have helpers who are very, very organized. My brain just goes everywhere. It's my team who keeps me focused. Having that help, a really great team of people, makes all the difference. Everyone knows what we're doing, and we all love Christmas."

As of Tuesday, the Holiday House Tour was sold out for all tours, evidence yet again of the years of success the tour enjoys, and helps to fund both local and international causes the Rotarians support.



Brenda McArthur talks of Trisha Romance in her home and her life, as she sits in the Whiskey Room, where two Romance paintings are displayed. (Penny Coles)



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# Labour of love



Brenda McArthur has taken on the task of decorating Queen Street for the holidays — a natural for her, given that she loves Christmas in NOTL. She has a great team of helpers and volunteers to make it happen, she says. On the Court House steps Tuesday McArthur, with Emma Whyte, twists garland and bows around the railings (bottom right). Derek Robins is a regular volunteer, coming out every year to put wreaths on windows — McArthur praises him, half-joking, for remembering to fluff up the bows (above). While they work outside, the Market Room in the Court House is filled with busy bees putting bows on boughs and wreaths to keep everyone supplied outside. Working on boughs are AnnLiz and her son Carter Simpson (front) and Mandy Shanks, one of the members of the town's Ambassador program, at the table beside Carter (top right). (Penny Coles)



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# GeoKids learn about rocks and connect with nature

**Sharon Burns**  
The Local

What started as a classroom exercise in charity ended up growing into a wildly popular club for young people interested in rocks, biodiversity and earth science.

Francesca Sorrenti, a St. Davids resident and educator of 20 years, started the Kids' Rock Club in 2016, when Kevin Strooband, executive

director of the Humane Society of Greater Niagara and member of the Niagara Peninsula Geological Society, was a guest in her classroom to collect donations her class had raised.

The Kids' Rock Club hadn't run for more than years, and Strooband asked Sorrenti to start it up again. "At first I was a little hesitant because I'm not a geologist and I don't have any earth

science background. But he said not to worry, there would be a lot of support for me," said Sorrenti.

"He was absolutely right. The support was incredible."

The club ran for several years before Sorrenti met Niagara Geopark founder Darren Platakis, and chair Perry Hartwick. "They came to support our monthly sessions and started talking to me about the Geopark."

Soon after, the two groups merged and the Kids' Rock Club started operating as GeoKids under the Niagara Geopark umbrella.

"This change will allow for streamlined administration, improved reach and better access to funding," said Hartwick. "The sky's the limit, really."

Last year they had 50 members aged 5 to 14 years, and this year, there is still room for more.

"GeoKids' goals are to help provide families and children opportunities to connect with nature in a fun and informative way," said Sorrenti.

"We hope that children will one day become stewards and advocates for our earth, and all the life that it supports."

On Sunday, several learning stations were set up at the community centre for the GeoKids meeting. Earth science students from Brock University, Jack Comerford, Kael Doomernik and Prestyn Sider hosted an interactive station about the layers of the earth.

GeoKid member Sam Young brought his rock collection to Grade 12 Eden student, Jonathan Vasilyev, where he discovered that he had in his collection a pretty rare gemstone, titanite, that he mined himself from the grounds of Tory Hill, Ontario. Vasilyev is a member of Niagara Geopark and he comes to every GeoKids meeting where "he provides us with the knowledge that the children need to know about rocks. He's phenomenal," said Sorrenti.

Vasilyev is only too happy to share his love of minerals with others. "It's really something that people should appreciate from our planet. Just seeing how these beautiful things can occur. How do molecules, tiny little atoms, meticulously arrange themselves into these beautiful natural works of art? Like how is that possible?" Vasilyev displayed samples from his own pyrite mineral collection, and GeoKids' members walked away with their own pyrite sample.

Olivia Cunningham was a special guest educator and local geologist who currently works in Nunavut. She explained the rock cycle to the members of the GeoKids club.

Darren Platakis' station involved identifying landmarks on an unlabelled map of the Niagara Region. "We think of the Geopark and the GeoKids as a celebration of that intersection between the geology and the culture which is everything that we have in Niagara," said Platakis.

"Our tourism is based on our geology with Niagara Falls. Our tourism is based on the geology of the Niagara Escarpment as it affects our wine industry and our climate. The Ice Age gave us our soils that we



Geologist Olivia Cunningham with Claire and Norah Weaver. (Photos by Sharon Burns)



Sam Young proudly shows off part of his rock collection.

have below and on top of the escarpment"

"Glacial activity and geology has impacted us in terms of our industry. So our quarries, our aggregate industry, it's all here in Niagara and we need to celebrate that because it's helped us develop where we are as a community," said Platakis.

Frank Racioppo, president of Queenston Quarry, also supported the Kids Rock Club and now the GeoKids. "We had a fabulous trip inside the quarry in March, where children found many fossils, right here in our very own town," said Sorrenti.

Queenston Quarry has also supported the group financially, so that Sorrenti could rent space at the community centre. Parent volunteers, parent geologists from Niagara-on-the-Lake and Brock students round out the volunteer base.

"Troy Milinkovich, a geologist, who has worked at Niagara Motors for 25 years in Virgil, has supported kiddos with learning by sharing his amazing rock collection," said Sorrenti.

Nikolic Slobodan, a local NOTL resident and geologist, donated his rock collection to the club and would like to assist in supporting the meet-ups.

Strooband was a special guest presenter in June this year, and he has also donated much of his personal rock collection to the club.

Thankfully, Brian Ferguson, also from Niagara, "gave us a place to store the club materials and Garage Pizza

donated pizza boxes that the kids use for rock boxes," said Sorrenti.

But the learning takes place outside of the community centre as well. In September, Owen Bjorgan, founder of Owen's Hiking and Adventures, and Carla Carlson, who runs Niagara Nature Tours, took the GeoKids Club around Walkers Creek and exposed them to the biodiversity that is abundant there.

Last month, the club visited Beamers Memorial Conservation Park, a Geosite, where GeoKids learned about white cedars, birds, salamanders, fossils, buckhorn trees, Eastern red cedars and hawks that live at the park.

"If it wasn't for Darren introducing us to (Geopark sites), we would never know about these totally incredible sites," said Sorrenti. "Parents said they heard about it, but had never come to visit. So a lot of them came and learned so much."

Guided educational learning experiences are scheduled for Heartland Forest Nov. 26 and Rockway Conservation Area on Dec. 10.

To register, email cooandclayforkids@gmail.com. Registration is \$40 for the year, which includes trips and indoor learning sessions. Members can bring their own personal rock collections to meet-ups to show and share with the educators and others in the group.

"We're open to donations as well from the community because it is a non-profit organization," added Sorrenti.

## Learn about impact of COVID on kids' mental health

**Sharon Burns**  
The Local

The pandemic has affected everyone, globally, yet experts say the toll on young people has been immense.

The Niagara District Council of Women is hosting *Impact of Covid-19: Focus on Youth and Mental Health in Schools* this Wednesday.

Dr. Amanda Sherman, mental health lead with the District School Board of Niagara, will address the issue of the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of youth from a Niagara perspective, providing an overview of student needs within the school system, as well as highlight-

ing the supports and services available in local schools.

Nyarayi Kapisavanhu, president of the Niagara District Council of Women, said they hope to "shed light on the intricate intersection of health, education and the overall welfare of our youth."

"Our decision to address the mental health repercussions of the pandemic stems from our deep commitment to fostering a nurturing and resilient environment for everyone and in this case, for all students," she continued.

"We hope that this discussion will serve as a catalyst for increased awareness, understanding, and action. By bringing together educators,

parents, mental health professionals, community and community leaders, we aspire to create a collaborative space for sharing insights and strategies."

"Our goal is for attendees to come away with a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by our students, some measures that have been put in place by the school boards and to inspire meaningful initiatives that prioritize mental health within our schools," said Kapisavanhu.

The free presentation will be held by Zoom, Wednesday Nov. 15 at 7:30 pm. To attend, email 1niagaracouncilofwomen@gmail.com.

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# Joe and Anita Robertson's art collection going to auction

**Mike Balsom**  
The Local

Important works of art from the collection of Joe and Anita Robertson, who died along with their 24-year-old daughter, Laura, in a plane crash in rural Maine in August 2018, are going up for auction.

Joe Robertson earned an undergraduate degree from Carleton University followed by an MBA from Harvard. With his business

partner Carman Adair, he built up Arcona Health Inc. into a national dental supply company before selling it in 1998.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake residents were well-known for their philanthropic contributions to many charities both in Niagara and beyond. In particular, they had a passion for culture, supporting the non-profit MusiCares fund and Chorus Niagara.

They also contributed

significantly to the campaign to fund the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines. The space known as Robertson Hall is named in their honour.

Visitors to the Robertsons' stately Old Town home may have been impressed by their art collection. On the other hand, as NOTL realtor Doug Widdicombe points out, the art fit so seamlessly into their home that nothing stood out as out of the ordinary.

"I don't think I ever even noticed their art," admits Widdicombe, senior vice president of sales at Sotheby's International Realty, who holds the listing for the Robertsons' home. Widdicombe was also a close friend of the Robertsons' for a number of years.

"There was nothing that jumped out as loud and brassy," he adds. "To me, that home is the quintessential example of one that is always in style. Everything was so tastefully done throughout the house, including their choice of art."

"It's a large, grandiose home," says Rob Cowley, art specialist and president of auction house Cowley Abbott. "But you really felt that the artwork was passionately chosen, and also well-presented. Everything fit the room so well and supported a warm and inviting home. The choices seemed to have been made by the collector, not by a hired designer."

The Robertson collection is being made available in two different formats. Five lots of their work are being sold via a live auction to be held at Cowley Abbott's Toronto location on Dec. 6. The rest of the collection, 21 separate pieces,

is being offered through an online auction. Cowley estimates that between the two groupings of art the proceeds from the sale could total close to \$1 million.

There's a focus on Canadian art in the collection, with the live auction including some groupings from significant Canadian artists.

"Their family room just off their entrance foyer presented so well the works of Jean Paul Lemieux," Cowley explains. "It also had a wonderful canvas from Jack Bush, *Sunset at Port Loring*. That artist was more celebrated for his work in abstraction, but he was also an incredible representative painter. It's a fantastic, calming dockside scene."

The Lemieux piece, *Femme en noir*, is estimated to be worth between \$150,000 and \$200,000, while Cowley expects *Sunset at Port Loring* to fetch between \$25,000 and \$35,000.

In addition, there is a set of four prints from William J. Bennett, each a view of Niagara Falls. The set was actually split up within the house, with two lining a hallway between the family room and the kitchen,

and the others displayed in another hallway. The four aquatints together are estimated at between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

"It felt like both Joe and Anita had their stamp on this collection," Cowley says. "It really felt like a joint effort between them. That's usually the case when everything fits so well like it did in this collection. Everyone we have talked to has spoken about how well they worked together, how close they were. That shows in the art."

Cowley Abbott has worked with the surviving members of the family, Joe and Anita's sons Clark and Taylor Robertson, who held on to some parts of the collection toward which they felt a personal connection. A portion of the company's selling commission will be donated to United Way Niagara in memory of Joe, Anita and Laura, who were great supporters of that organization.

All items up for auction are currently being displayed at Cowley Abbott's gallery located across from the Art Gallery of Ontario at 326 Dundas Street West in Toronto. The gallery is open to the

public for viewing.

The live auction, which also includes other important works outside of the Robertson collection, takes place on Wednesday, December 6 at 4 p.m. at the Globe and Mail Centre, 351 King Street East, Toronto. It will also be livestreamed online at [cowleyabbott.ca](http://cowleyabbott.ca), allowing for simultaneous in-person, telephone, absentee and real-time online bidding.

Bidding is open on the online sale of the other 21 items from the Robertson collection from Nov. 27 to Dec. 7. Visit [cowleyabbott.ca/items/1324](http://cowleyabbott.ca/items/1324) to find out more and to view the artwork.

Cowley says that considering the quality and the rarity of some of the pieces, as well as the pre-auction buzz he's heard over the offerings, he wouldn't be surprised if the auction results exceed his early estimates.

"Beyond the value and importance of the collection," says Cowley, "this is a very important opportunity for our company to tell the story of a family that was so well-loved, so connected, and so supportive of their community where they lived for so many years."



Jean Paul Lemieux's *Femme en Noir* will be up for auction. (Photos supplied)



Artwork from Joe and Anita Robertson's collection hitting auction in December includes Jack Hamilton Bush's *Sunset at Port Loring*.

## Local HOME of the WEEK

### 1 SHAKESPEARE AVENUE | \$1,175,000



Nestled in beautiful "Chautauqua" and surrounded by the area's stunning mature tree canopy, this stylishly renovated bungalow invites one to experience Niagara-on-the-Lake at its finest. With bright and crisp California contemporary finishes, this home's interior looks straight out of the pages of Architectural Digest. With an open-concept living, kitchen, and dining area, the main floor layout is ideal for entertaining. The main floor also boasts a generous primary bedroom, guest bedroom, and spa-like 3pc bath. You will find a large renovated recreation space on the lower level, perfect for a media room, office, or gym. The lower level also has a well-sized potential bedroom and 4pc bathroom. You will enjoy living just down the street from Lake Ontario and the idyllic Ryerson Park sunsets.

**Weston Miller**  
Sales Representative

**Niagara  
on-the-Lake  
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**289-213-8681**  
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# Good crowd honours those who served, and serve

Continued from page 1

pride,” said Zalepa, “a memorial to the members of our community who have given the ultimate sacrifice to protect the values and ensure the liberties we enjoy this day. It is a symbol of our common thanks to their families and loved ones.”

The names listed on the cenotaph, he said, “were our neighbours, friends, family and leaders. Niagara-on-the-Lake was a significant military location over its history, including early days of settlement of Col. John Butler and his Rangers during the American Revolution, Major General Isaac Brock’s essential partnering with our aboriginal friends in the War of 1812, a training ground for Canadian soldiers at Camp Niagara in both World Wars, and serving in the Korean War and in Afghanistan. Many of them were trained here, transported down to our dock area to board steamships bound for Montreal and ultimately Europe. The names of those that sacrificed their lives are honoured on the cenotaph.”

“Our community has recently rallied behind the project to restore the cenotaph,” continued Zalepa. “Maintenance and repairs were required. In response to this need, this caring and generous community mobilized into action.”

Volunteers came forward, including the local Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124, individuals, businesses and community groups, he said.

“What would seem a

daunting task, organizing and fundraising to achieve what was required, was quickly completed. The town and council give our sincerest thanks to those involved. The cenotaph stands for future generations as a clear example of the power of this community’s value placed in recognizing the fallen.”

Zalepa thanked all those on parade for their service “and for being here today to recognized the ultimate service of others,” including men and women of the local, provincial and federal emergency services — police, fire and EMS; members of Branch 124 of the Royal Canadian Legion, members of the Canadian Armed Forces and cadets from 809 Squadron.

He also drew attention to the poppy display on the Court House, a result of the NOTL Museum’s Poppy Project, which also decorates the museum and legion with poppies. “Many volunteers, business partners and hours have gone into displaying our community’s pride and support of those who serve and have served.”

Zalepa acknowledged 809 Squadron air cadets for remaining on vigil at the cenotaph since early Saturday morning, “a tradition that continues to show our young people’s dedication to recognizing our fallen.”

A first for the local Remembrance Day ceremony, Zalepa, a strong supporter of the local cadet organization, spoke of the graduated members of the 809 Newark Squadron who are currently serving in Canadian

forces: Sailor third class Thomas Carbone, Royal Canadian Navy, recently returned from Operation Reassurance in the Baltic; Regular Officer Training Plan Officer Cadet Dante Bell;

Sub Lt. Luca Lavoie RCN based in Esquimalt, B.C., and Sub Lt. Nathan Zalepa RCN based in Esquimalt, B.C. “Thank you all for your service,” he said. “We are proud as a community.”

And to the crowd gathered at the cenotaph, he said, “Thank you all for attending, for taking the time from your day to demonstrate your support for our forces members

and remember our fallen. It is so very important today.”

For more photos, please visit [notllocal.com/local-news/niagara-on-the-lake-remembers-7821420](https://notllocal.com/local-news/niagara-on-the-lake-remembers-7821420).



All emergency services, including NOTL’s fire department, were represented at the Remembrance Day ceremony. (Sharon Burns)



Cadets of the 809 Squadron march on to Queen Street for the Remembrance Day Service. (Penny Coles)



Members of the Royal Canadian Legion on parade. (Sharon Burns)



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa speaks without a microphone. (Penny Coles)

## St. Davids students pay tribute on Remembrance Day

**Mike Balsom**  
The Local

Visitors to St. Davids Public School last week were greeted with the students’ own version of Flanders Fields, with poppies created by students of various grades laid out row by row by the Grade 8 class under the direction of teacher Joanne Kotsanis.

Inside the gym, the entire school population, accompanied by a few parents, gathered to recognize those who fought for their country in various conflicts and peace-keeping missions over the years. The Grade 7 and 8 students led

the assembly, helping to share the story of teacher Bryce Honsinger’s grandfather, Robert Shepherd, one of the lucky soldiers who returned home after the Second World War.

A choir performed the song *Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream*, written by folk singer Ed McCurdy and made famous by both Pete Seeger and Joan Baez. Following a moment of silence and the playing of The Last Post, you could hear a pin drop as a slideshow of photographs of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and other relatives of current St. Davids pupils and teachers was displayed on a screen.



St. Davids senior student Aria Del Priore reads part of the story of Second World War veteran Robert Shepherd. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Teacher Bryce Honsinger shows a telegram his grandmother received from his grandfather during the Second World War.



Student-made poppies were lined up outside St. Davids Public School.



St. Davids Public School senior choir sings *Last Night I had the Strangest Dream*.

# Both kids, families excited to be asked to lead the stroll

Continued from page 1

“We were super-excited to hear about the stroll,” adds Matt, and grateful to know the funds raised will help make a chair lift possible and ease the transition from one level to another.

“We’re humbled to have Dylan be part of the stroll. It’s such a big event, and for Dylan to be asked to be part of it is a huge honour.”

Maya, 12, is also pretty excited to be joining the stroll, says her mother Christi. “She definitely shed a few tears” when she got over the shock and had it explained to her — she’s never been to a Candlelight Stroll, and wasn’t sure what it involved.

“She was beside herself. She’s especially excited about the carriage ride and the horses.”

Since Maya has the equipment she needs, she will donate her share of the candle proceeds to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Christi says.

When the Candlelight Stroll was started by local residents Arthur and Irene Nieuwdorp, it was from an idea Arthur had in 1988 during the lead-up to the Calgary Winter Olympics. He watched the Olympic torch relay as it travelled across the country and was inspired to create a community event that would reflect the spirit of giving and the beauty of a NOTL Christ-

mas. The funds raised from the sale of that first stroll were donated to help a young girl with cystic fibrosis.

Over the years, money raised from candle sales has been donated directly to families and children in need, or to specific causes — one year proceeds were donated to the paediatric wing of the Walker Cancer Centre. Money has gone to others in need, and in recent years has helped to support migrant farm workers, including Ceto Reid, who was injured last year on the day he was due to travel home to Jamaica.

This year, Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake is presenting an additional showcase taking place before the stroll, beginning at 2 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 1.

NOTL Museum volunteers dressed in Dickens-style period costumes will be strolling on Queen Street, with Santa Claus joining the fun and being available for pictures in front of the Court House.

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre is offering a live painting demonstration, and visitors are encouraged to engage with the artist; Shaw Festival will offer a troupe of performers presenting holiday classics, carols and musical melodies; The Niagara Star Singers will perform, as will the Queenston Women’s Chorus and young talent from the Yellow Door Theatre Project, all before the

Salvation Army Band begins its performance by the Court House steps at 6:30 p.m.

Many choirs, bands and other musical performances will be stationed along the route of the stroll, some of whom have been volunteering to entertain participants for many years.

Hosted by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, the traditional stroll will be held Friday, Dec. 1, from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., with a celebration from the Court House steps before the carriages and stroll participants begin moving through the decorated streets of the Old Town.

Candles will be sold at stalls along Queen Street between King and Regent Streets, at \$5 each — only cash will be accepted.

This year Queen Street merchants are offering 10 to 20 per cent off in-store purchases for those who have purchased candles in support of the stroll. Candles will be sold from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., or while they last.

The tradition of a food drive for Newark Neighbours also continues, and donations can be dropped off in front of the Court House.

For a list of what items are needed to help local families at Christmas, visit [newark-neighbours.ca](http://newark-neighbours.ca).

Parking is available at Fort George, and Community Transportation will be offering a complimentary



Dylan Dietsch taking part in this year’s Terry Fox fundraiser at Crossroads with his friend Ryder Rempel. (Penny Coles)

shuttle available from 4:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. between the fort parking lot and the Court House.

For more information about the event, the schedule of performers and the list of Queen Street merchants who are participating in the discount, visit [niagaraon-thelake.com/candlelight-stroll2023](http://niagaraon-thelake.com/candlelight-stroll2023).



Maya Webster is excited about taking part in the candlelight stroll — especially going on a carriage ride, but also to be able to raise money for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. (Supplied)



Where do you want to live?

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A comprehensive survey is now available, asking Niagara-on-the-Lake residents about their housing needs as they age. The survey is available online and for those without a computer or internet access. It is completely anonymous and administered by Niagara College. Please make your views known.

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Option 2: Link to the survey with your browser using this URL:  
<https://forms.office.com/r/fqxeb7fJv>

Option 3: Respondents without the internet, please call  
905-468-7498

# St. Mark's presenting two-day Sip, Savour, Shop

**Penny Coles**  
**The Local**

Volunteers of St. Mark's Church are turning a festive lunch offered for two days as part of the Rotary House Tour into a Christmas shopping event, open to the community.

Called Sip, Savour, Shop, the event includes a lasagna lunch made by Gary Burroughs and Kathy Taylor, with regular and vegetarian options.

A salad, garlic bread and a choice of delicious tarts by the much-loved Twin Sisters from Vineland will be included — a favourite of NOTL residents, says organizer Trudy Waugh, and with good cause. "They are wonderful, deep, beautiful tarts, with pastry to die for," she adds.

The 'sip' part of it means wine will also be available, with red or white from Reif Estate Winery. The lunch, including coffee or tea, is \$25, the wine is extra.

And the 'shop' is geared toward Christmas, with

many beautiful gift baskets and lots of Christmas decor items.

There will also be some jewelry, silver, crystal, china, art and some outdoor clothing — ladies jackets, coats and scarves, and purses.

Waugh and church volunteer Sally Mitchell are accustomed to organizing elegant fundraising events, the one earlier this year called the Haute Emporium, and typically have also held something similar leading up to Christmas.

Each year, the NOTL Rotary Club lines up specially-priced lunches that are available to all Holiday House Tour guests at a selection of local restaurants, for both Friday and Saturday. The club also offers one of the churches in town an opportunity to participate.

This year St. Mark's was chosen, and the volunteers decided to turn the church lunch into something similar to the fundraisers they would typically offer at

Christmas for the community, says Waugh.

"It will really make it very much into a community event — fun for volunteers and the community," says Mitchell, who estimates it will take about 30 to 40 volunteers, not all of whom are church members, working to help make the event a success.

Instead of offering the traditional bake table, Burroughs, Waugh and Susan Peacock are making a variety of gourmet soups to sell, including pea soup, roasted tomato, and butternut squash — delicious winter soups, says Waugh.

Addison Hall will be beautifully decorated by volunteer Gary Zanner.

Sip, Savour, Shop open Friday and Saturday, Dec. 1 and 2, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for shopping, with lunch served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. both days.

St. Mark's Anglican Church, at 41 Byron Street, will also be open for free guided tours by Earle Waugh and Gene Anne Smith.



Sally Mitchell and Trudy Waugh, with help from many volunteers, are organizing a fundraising event to be held Dec. 1 and 2, involving lunch, a sale of Christmas decor and more, as well as wine. (Penny Coles)

# Jayden Polgrabia wins award for philanthropy

**Penny Coles**  
**The Local**

Jayden Polgrabia, a 13-year-old student at St. Michael Catholic Elementary School, is being given an Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy award in recognition of his fundraising for FACS Niagara.

Over the last several years, Jayden, with his sister Kelly and friends, has helped organize a lemonade stand, which then grew to become an annual regional LemonAid Day, to help children served by FACS attend week-long day camps or overnight camps outside the region.

The award is given by the Golden Horseshoe Chapter of The Association of Fundraising Professionals, and is intended to recognize "service by an individual aged 10 to 23 who demonstrates out-

standing commitment to the community through direct financial support, development of charitable programs, volunteering, and leadership in philanthropy," says a news release announcing Jayden's award, which came as a result of a nomination by FACS.

Jayden told The Local he is happy to help with LemonAid events and raise money, "but it's really nice to be recognized for doing it," he adds.

An experience this summer reinforces why he likes helping. "I went to sleepover camp this summer, and I was in activities with one boy," he says. "I got to know him really well. We were in a sailboat all day together. He told me he was sponsored to come to camp. Obviously, I didn't say anything, but it made me wonder if I sent him to camp, and it made me really un-

derstand how important this program is. Not every kid just gets to go to camp."

On this year's LemonAid Day, he says, "I had two friends with me. We got to hang out for the day and customers came and we sold lots of lemonade."

And he loved doing it. "I love helping by raising money for people in need. I always try to find ways to help

every day."

His mother, Caroline Polgrabia, who admits to being pretty proud of him, originally helped turn the fundraiser into an annual event, but says Jayden didn't need any pushing to be part of it — it's who he is.

He talks of being a firefighter like his father when he grows up, "and he's just 13, so he could change his mind

a million times before then," she adds, but she wouldn't be at all surprised to see him choose a future that involves helping others.

Jayden has also played an active role in Mountainview LemonAid Day by raising awareness and encouraging participation in the event, even appearing before local municipal councils and mayors, and being part of radio,

television and print media interviews.

In 2023, more than 100 families registered to be part of Mountainview LemonAid Day, raising more than \$100,000 and funding more than 500 weeks of camp for local children served by FACS Niagara. Jayden and his family were among the top three fundraising teams this year.



Tomas Nolan, Jayden Polgrabia and Akeem Fletcher looked after a LemonAid fundraising booth earlier this year. (Supplied)

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# Ehnes Quartet returns to mark Bravo Niagara! anniversary

**Mike Balsom**  
**The Local**

It took 10 years for Chris Mori and Alexis Spieldenner to bring the Ehnes Quartet, one of the classical music world's premiere chamber ensembles, back for a Bravo Niagara! Festival show, and the organization's co-founders promise this Sunday's concert will be well worth the wait.

"We've had him (James Ehnes) back to do recitals," says Mori, "but to get the schedule of the four musicians to line up for this has been difficult. We've been working on this with him for quite a few years. We're really excited to have him back for our 10th anniversary."

When Bravo Niagara! Festival launched 10 years ago, one of its first presentations was the Ehnes Quartet at Chateau des Charmes Winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Mori had leveraged her friendship with Amy Schwartz Moretti, the quartet's second violinist, from her days as principal pianist with the Florida Orchestra, to book the renowned musicians.

On the line from Naples, Florida, where he collaborates annually with that

city's philharmonic orchestra, Ehnes fondly recalls the quartet's first Bravo Niagara! show.

"It was a magical thing, that show," says Ehnes. "The concert started outdoors, and the weather got crazy, so it ended up indoors. It was the most intimate, touching experience playing for that audience. That kind of encapsulated what Bravo Niagara! wanted to do, and what they have done so successfully."

In Ehnes' eyes, what Mori and Spieldenner have done is create wonderfully intimate musical occasions that aren't just your average, run-of-the-mill concerts.

In the interim between then and now Ehnes has returned to the festival for solo recitals, building a deep, long-standing relationship with the local organizers as well as a fondness for the town.

"I had never been to Niagara-on-the-Lake before that first concert," the Brandon, Manitoba-born Ehnes says. "As a Canadian it was always one of those places I felt I should have gone to but never did. I completely fell in love with it. Every time I go there I question why I bought a return ticket. I just want to



The Ehnes Quartet, appearing for Bravo Niagara! features Amy Schwartz Moretti, James Ehnes, Che-Yen Chen and Edward Arron. (Supplied)

stay there."

Despite his 30-plus years as a professional musician and more than 60 albums to his name, Ehnes is far from a jaded performer. In fact, he insists he still gets excited about each and every concert he does, whether solo recital, orchestral collaboration or quartet appearance.

"I've done thousands of concerts," he tells The Local. "I still get keyed up for every one of them. Any night can be a special night, unique and wonderful, beautiful and touching. There's a certain

wonderful feeling, it could be the first time playing at a particular place, or playing a particular piece, or new people hearing it for the first time."

Violinists Ehnes and Moretti will be joined in the quartet by violist Che-Yen Chen, and cellist Edward Arron. Their repertoire for the Nov. 19 show includes one of Joseph Haydn's last quartets, the second string quartet of Benjamin Britten and the first string quartet from Robert Schumann.

"Haydn wrote 69 quartets, and all of them are fantas-

tic, but this is one of his late, great quartets," says Ehnes. "I am completely obsessing over the Britten piece right now, too. It occupies such a unique, emotional space. And Schumann is one of my personal favourite composers. I love the way he wrote this piece in such an intense burst of creativity. It has both humour and beauty."

Being that the performance takes place at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre's Robertson Hall, there will be no need to seek a last-minute refuge from the

elements Sunday as they did 10 years ago.

"There's something about the atmosphere there," Ehnes says of the PAC. "I really like that hall in St. Catharines, it's really special. I'm so glad that it's there for that whole southern Ontario community."

And the acoustics will certainly work well with his 1715 Marsick Stradivarius, his faithful concert companion for more than 24 years.

Tickets for the Ehnes Quartet show, which begins at 7:30 p.m., are available through [bravoniagara.org](http://bravoniagara.org).

# The Tiny Museum brings Indigenous lessons to life

**Mike Balsom**  
**The Local**

A visit by The Tiny Museum to Virgil's St. Michael Catholic Elementary School last Wednesday brought student learning about Indigenous customs into clearer focus.

As part of Treaty Recognition Week at the Line 3 Road school, principal Emma Fera-Massi arranged to have the seven-by-16-foot mobile display owned by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Muse-

um set up outside the school near the intermediate grades' classrooms.

Tiny museum coordinator Karlene Ouellette was there to walk students through the travelling exhibit, and Niagara Catholic District School Board Indigenous lead Gary Parker dropped by for a visit as well.

Grade 6-7 teacher Kateri Marandola, who had last year received teaching on Indigenous beadwork through Parker's predecessor Brian Kon, had recently led her stu-

dents through an exercise in creating mini wampum belts.

"I had to ask Brian's permission to teach the lesson," Marandola explained. "I am not Indigenous, but because I worked with him as an ally, he allowed me to teach this to the kids. They really enjoyed learning beadwork, with the focus on allyship."

The students were taught the traditional Metis technique of loom beading. Marandola allowed each pupil to choose their own colours and to create their own designs.

When Marandola led her students out to The Tiny Museum, their faces lit up as they saw the similarities between the exhibit and what they learned in class.

"A lot of students were getting really excited about it because they recognized some of the techniques," confirmed Ouellette. "They enjoyed being able to think about it and to make the connections between the exhibits and their lessons."

The exhibit itself focused only partly on the impor-

ance of wampum beads to Canada's First Nations peoples.

"There's information here too about pottery and the tools that were used to stamp designs into it," added Ouellette. "There's some leatherwork here, and a fun little piece about an ear gauge from the Woodland period. It's approximately 800 to 1,000 years old."

"They saw the vest, the moccasins, the wampum belts there," said Marandola. "It was a huge thing in their

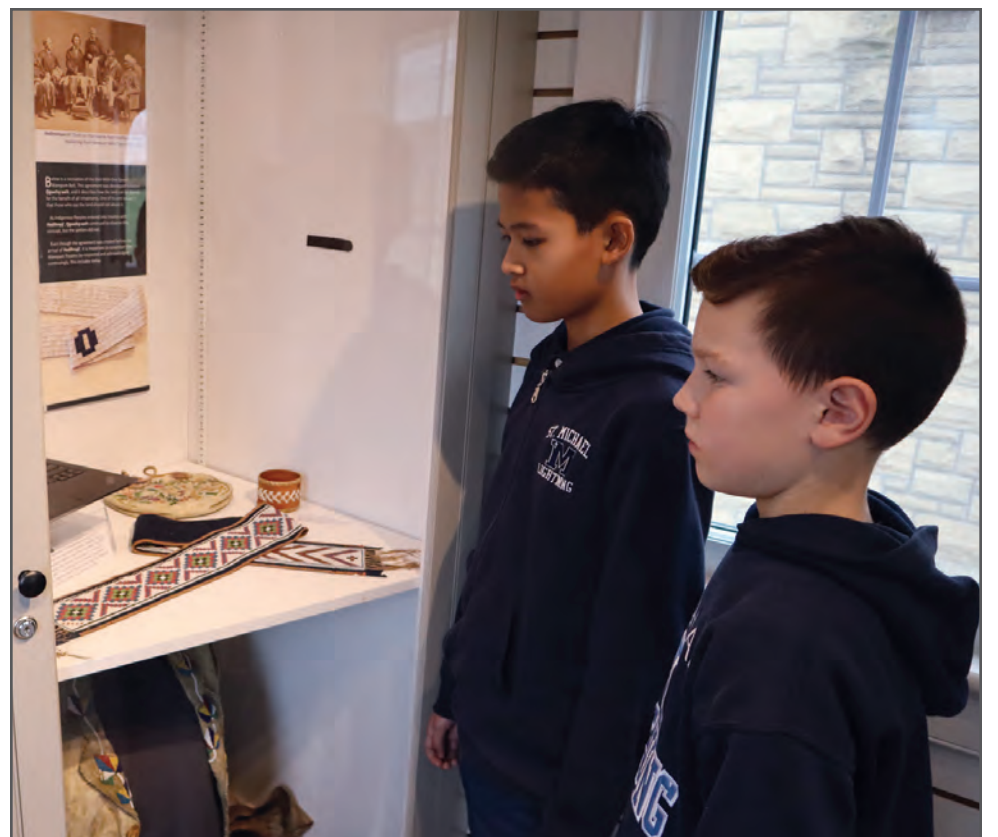
(First Nations) traditions, in how they made agreements with each other. And earlier in the day we had talked about treaty recognition, and this region in general. They were amazed to see that some of the beads were actually found in St. David's."

The beauty of it all, too, was that neither Fera-Massi nor Marandola had any inkling that the travelling exhibit would fit in so well with the student learning.

"It was totally a happy accident," laughed Marandola.



(Back) Georgia Leigh, Madeline Bruce, Gary Parker and (front) Bianca Pontsioen, Maria Francis, Olkar Bigum Amini, Grace LaValle and Marie Bowering. (Lisa Mayer)



Grade 8 student Enzo Cruz (left) and Brett Hubbard, Grade 7, examine The Tiny Museum exhibit on Indigenous traditions. (Mike Balsom)

# LocalHAPPENINGS



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St. Davids and District Lions Club

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**November 17**  
4:30 to 7:00 pm

**1 Pc Dinner - \$13.00**  
**2 Pc Dinner - \$17.00**

EAT IN or **TAKE OUT**

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# LocalSPORTS

## Preds losing streak stretches to six games



Yakov Shevchenko takes a faceoff for the Preds in Friday night's game against the Renegades. (Mike Balsom)

**Mike Balsom**  
The Local

A dismal home-and-home series last weekend against the North York Renegades has left the Niagara Predators reeling and in seventh place in the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League's South Division.

Having forced the tough first-place Renegades into overtime before losing 3-2 back on Oct. 29, coach Kevin Taylor expected big things from his team when North York paid another visit to Virgil's Meridian Credit Union Arena this past Friday.

The game started out well enough, with Niagara skating to a 3-1 lead with seven minutes remaining in the second period. Gehrig Lindberg led the Predators' early attack with two goals, while Luca Fernandez netted one on a crisp wrist shot during a power play.

But just 19 seconds later, the Renegades went on a tear. Nikolai Salov, Bryson Tillekeratne and Jake McKinstry all scored within 90 seconds to take the wind out of the Predators' wings.

North York added two more in the third to cruise to a 6-3 victory in a game that at one point seemed to be going the home team's way, despite them

being severely outplayed and even more severely outshot, 46-13. Niagara mustered just 6, 4 and 3 shots period by period.

Following Friday's loss, Taylor said the Preds took the lead by capitalizing on the few mistakes that the Renegades were making in the first half of the game.

"That's what I designed us to do," he said. "Relax, take your time, you're not going to win the game in five minutes, or in 10 minutes. You have to play 60 minutes. I told them to send in one guy to forecheck, but they started wanting to do their own thing again, and they don't seem to want to listen."

Taylor was openly frustrated with the way things fell apart for his team so quickly in the second period.

"Yes, they outplayed us," he admitted. "But they outplayed us on the outside. Then, when they got those three goals, they started taking advantage of us opening up the middle. I don't care if we get outplayed on the outside, there's no danger there. But we were losing guys on faceoffs, not picking up guys on faceoffs, not covering the point men. They scored five straight goals on us and we couldn't stop the onslaught."

A day later, Taylor was left

looking for answers once again after the Renegades handed the Predators an embarrassing 8-1 shellacking at the Canlan Ice Sports Centre in York.

Again, the Preds started out fairly strongly Saturday, with goaltender Kyle Magri making some big saves, including a stop on Joseph Martino on a two-on-one break.

Tyler Gearing, a physical forward from the 2022-2023 Predators who just returned to the team this weekend, had a great chance on North York goalie Blake Bowler in the first period. But Bowler shut the door on him. And forward Georgy Kholmovsky missed the net completely on a short breakaway.

During a stretch of four-on-four play, McKinstry put the Renegades on the board, beating Magri with a wrist shot to his glove side. But Niagara, despite being outshot 23-9 in the first period, escaped trailing just 1-0.

But for the second straight game the Renegades sounded the death knell on the Predators' hopes in the second period. Marino scored twice for North York while Evan Gupta, Christopher Rende, Maurizio Reale and Renegades captain Jedidja Somersall all added singles. Though it was a relief when Kholmovsky finally broke rookie Bowler's shutout with 1:31 remaining in the period, the second intermission began with the Preds trailing 7-1.

Gupta added his second goal of the game about six minutes into the third and the Preds were sent home with their sixth loss in a row, this one an embarrassment.

The 4-9-1 Predators host the fourth-place 8-8-0 Tottenham Raiders Friday night at the Meridian Credit Union Arena, then travel to Toronto to take on the last place 3-15-1 Flyers Saturday.

"It's a good time to get back into the win column," Taylor

said Tuesday afternoon. "Our problem is not talent and it's not coaching. They're not executing. And we have to figure out why not. In practice, we run our systems well, we're on spot. But when it comes to the games, they're not putting in the effort."

He pointed out that before this losing streak his team was at .500 with a record of 4-4-0 and feeling on top of the world.

"We were happy, and within these last five games especially things have just gone south," he lamented. "It's a lot easier to find out what's wrong, and to point fingers. And that's what people are starting to do. This is the time when accountability is number one. The accountability is on them."

Declan Fogarty, one of the Predators' top three scorers from last season, is set to return to the lineup for the first time this weekend. The recent addition of Gearing, who plays a physical brand of hockey despite his diminutive size, should add some grit, and new blueline acquisition Rujil Brar is starting to find his groove with the team after four games.

Taylor says to turn things around, he needs to see his entire team stick with the game plan Friday and Saturday.

"We don't teach these guys to skate with the puck all by themselves down to the corner to try to blind pass it through the slot," he said. "So, where's it coming from? We're not teaching them the things that they're doing during the games."

And they'll need to turn things around this weekend before facing another tough test a week later, with games against the second place Durham Roadrunners and yet another meeting on the road against North York.

Game time Friday night is 7:30 p.m.

For more Predators' game photos please visit The Local's website at [notllocal.com](https://notllocal.com)

## LocalWORSHIP

**CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**Sunday, November 19th**  
**9:45 a.m.**  
Cornerstone Kids Sign In (Nursery - Grade 8)  
**10:00 a.m.**  
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Message: Kevin Bayne A New Way (Matthew 9:14-17)  
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- Across:

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Old computer dial-up device

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Adjust

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Impertinent person

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Fort Utah, formerly

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Food scraps

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Cheat

17

Go-ahead

19

Subject of study

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Mazuma

21

Baseball scorecard listing

23

Scott Pelley's employer

27

Into a state of decline

28

Melts together

29

Airline perks

32

Bankrupts

33

Turns on the waterworks

34

--- Arbor, MI

35

Utter a shrill cry

36

Panamanian singer --- Blades

37

Gumbo essential

38

Second sight

39

Point of a tale

40

Seen by those with  
38 Across, perhaps?

41

Went home to disrupt  
a play with no men

43

Volkswagen classic

44

Prima donnas

45

Mischievous ones
- 46

Horse that has not won a race
- 48

Broadcasts
- 49

'It --- rocket science!'
- 50

The Martian ---  
(Ray Bradbury)
- 56

"Star Wars" monastic  
warriors
- 57

Send forth
- 58

GWTW's Scarlett ---
- 59

New Mexico artists' colony
- 60

In order
- 61

Course halves

Down:

1

Auto efficiency measure

2

Boston Bruin great

3

Buck's mate

4

First of her kind

5

Found in barrels, often

6

Labors long and hard

7

Compulsion

8

Degree in mathematics?

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Steroid hormone

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Cascades peak

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Flickertail State

12

"How obvious!"

13

Seckel or Bartlett

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Hill products

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Bear in Brittany

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Magic transport

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Slightly off-color, I'm in red

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Put on top, wavy lines  
dip badly

26

Not one

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Pitch

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Name of eight popes

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Register

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Winds

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Prepares for keeping

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Wines and dines

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Crude cartel

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Chess turn

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Official sitting

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Side-to-side  
measurements

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Where the cows come  
home to

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Commotions

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Spray finely

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Largest of seven, round  
the world

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Any of 44 Across could  
sing one

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Care plan

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Greek X

53

Intra-office computer  
system

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Carrier to Copenhagen,  
briefly

OBITUARY

**HOPPER, FRED ERNEST**— Passed away on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at the St. Catharines General Hospital, in his 91st year.

Predeceased by the love of his life, his beloved wife Shirley (February 2023). Loving father of Douglas Deline, Debbie Hensen, Wendy McKay, Robert Deline and Timothy Hopper. Grandfather of many grandchildren. Survived by his brother Ralph Hopper.

Fred was a dedicated member of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124.

Cremation has taken place, interment at a future date at Pleasantview Memorial Gardens.



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Deadline is Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku solution from November 8, 2023

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

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

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

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PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

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

# Andy Parks' Toad Hall jam wins at Royal Winter Fair

**Mike Balsom**  
The Local

Andy Parks of Niagara-on-the-Lake was shocked to learn last week that his Toad Hall seedless black raspberry jam had won top prize in the Raspberry Jam or Preserve - No Inclusions category at the 2023 Royal

Winter Fair. "I've always wanted to participate in the Royal Winter Fair," says Parks, who grew up in Toronto and remembers attending the fair on school excursions as a young student. "I was surprised, but I knew it was fairly unique so I was hoping that would work in

my favour. It obviously did." The award-winning jam, which is made from wild raspberries that grow right on his Lakeshore Road property, will be for sale during the annual St. Nicholas Day Craft Sale he is hosting on Dec. 2 and 3. Before this year, the sale, a collaboration with

local potter Jodie Godwin, was usually open to friends and family via invitation, but Parks, a potter as well as jam-maker, and Godwin, who have invited other artisans to offer their work, decided to make it public for its fourth year. Along with the raspberry jam, plates, bowls, mugs,

vases and other functional and artistic pottery creations from both Parks and Godwin will be available for purchase. Another local resident, Neeti Mehrota, will be selling her beaded jewelry. There will also be candles and other crafts available, and free cups of cider to anyone who comes

in to browse. Toad Hall is located at 1413 Lakeshore Road in NOTL, next to Ironwood Cider. The sale is on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact Andy at parka3@sympatico.ca for more information.



Andy Parks outside Toad Hall holding his Royal Winter Fair award-winning Seedless Wild Black Raspberry Jam. (Photos by Mike Balsom)



Pottery from local artists Andy Parks and Jodie Godwin will be for sale during their St. Nicholas Day Craft Sale.



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