Red Roof asking for Gifts from the Heart to help 200 families

Sharon Burns
The Local

But first, let’s finish our tour. Before heading toward the back of the property, stop to admire the restored red 1952 Massey Ferguson tractor.

Visit two Flemish Giant rabbits that live in a habitat near Wilbur. Follow a long wheelchair-accessible path to the stables at the back where two mini horses, and Wonder, a 17-year-hand-pared Friesian horse, live in harmony. Wonder has an important job at Red Roof, to provide cart rides to clients.

Breakwall construction beginning soon

Mike Balsom
The Local

The federal government is investing almost $6 million for the final phase of a breakwall installation along the eastern portion of Parks Canada lands on the shores of Lake Ontario.

Niagara South MP and parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Transport Vance Badawey made the announcement Friday. The amount is part of the $557 million in infrastructure funding that was previously announced in November, 2022. Construction will begin in December to create a new 500-metre section of breakwall starting behind Fort Mississauga to combat shoreline erosion near the mouth of the Niagara River. Frequent and more severe storm events and high water levels, possibly due to climate change, have wreaked havoc on the current breakwall protection near the fort farther east toward the Parks Canada lands leased by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club.

Chris Zoetewey, Parks Canada’s NOTL-born technical services officer, confirms that this is the next step toward making the old fort, a tower of strength on Lake Ontario that was built to guard the mouth of the Niagara River following the War of 1812, more accessible from under the large brightly-coloured play structure and from under the big tent where clients meet to expand their experiences, such as community engagement, independence, connection and relationships with others, then extend from behind the fort all the way down the shoreline along the first fairway of the golf course. When the project is completed in two years, strollers will be able to walk the shore from the cairn monument to the Battle of Fort George facing Queen Street behind the fourth green of the golf course, past Fort Mississauga and down toward the clubhouse.

“It will end there in a curve, what they call a bullnose, curved into the shoreline,” explains Zoetewey, who recalls that as a kid growing up in NOTL, he frequently climbed up the shoreline to the old breakwall. “Parks Canada property basically ends at the tee box for the first hole of the golf course.” Zoetewey explains that the work will be completed over this winter and next, and will be undertaken in a curve, what they call a
Councillors, staff wrestle with meeting schedule

Kris Dubé
The Local
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Council and committee-of-the-whole meetings held during the day are less intrusive on the personal lives of town staff, says a report recently brought to local politicians. But that’s not necessarily so for politicians, and may discourage public attendance.

The report focuses on the schedule of meetings at town hall, and is an update on how a new format adopted at the start of 2023 has been working so far. This year, council and committee-of-the-whole general meetings have been held at 9:30 a.m., while committee-of-the-whole planning meetings have been called to order at 6 p.m. since the new schedule came into play. There are three meetings per month, not including the sun- ovens committees that members of council sit on.

At the Nov. 21 council meet- ing, town politicians were given two options for 2024. The first one was preferred by staff that planning meetings begin at 5 p.m. and the two other meetings in the month continue to take place at 9:30 a.m.

Coun. Gary Burroughs quickly motioned to move ahead with the option not preferred by staff — that all meetings take place after hours. He later removed his motion after colleagues raised questions and asked for more information.

Coun. Nick Bulker asked if starting planning meetings an hour earlier will improve engagement, also pointing to the “healthy agendas” staff and council-approved with.

“We should do it properly,” one councilor said.

Coun. Adriana Vizzardi said the staff report did not address council attendance, something she’d like to see. “I’d like to see some metrics on that because I don’t know if that’s true,” she said.

Coun. Sandra O’Connor also wants more information about public attendance and bistream numbers — comparing 2023 to when all meetings were previously held in the evening.

Chuckle said numbers could be related to people watching at home, but noted the town does not track in-person atten- dance. “I think moving back to the evening meetings might actually help some of those concerns,” she said, adding that daytime meet- ing seems to have gone on longer than one hour held.

She also believes there is a drop in council attendance this year.

“I think the days to move back are less intrusive on the municipality an advantage” over the day.

Several councillors, including the current group of elected officials, believe studies have shown advantages of daytime meetings in terms of getting things done.

Although not included in the report, Treasurer Kyle Freeborn told council that cost savings of about $5,000 have been realized al- ready switching to the new schedule.

Staff says studies have shown that a person’s ability to focus, decision-making skills and overall performance are better during earlier parts of the day.

Hazards posed by inclement weather and travel are mitigated with daytime meetings, accord- ing to the report, and town hall is better staffed during daytime hours to accommodate the needs of the meeting.

Limiting the number of night meetings works in favour of the town for attracting and retain- ing employees and offers the municipality “an advantage” over some of its counterparts, staff said.

With an aging demographic, daytime meetings may be preferred by members of the general public who choose to attend the proceed- ings in person, staff also noted.

Staff says it in its report that dis- advantages of daytime meetings include them posing a barrier when it comes to public partic- ipation for people who work tra- ditional daytime hours.

Daytime meetings may not be feasible for councillors with daytime jobs either, and a require- ment to attend meetings during the day may deter potential future candidates from seeking elected office, staff said.

Early meetings may hinder staff’s ability to address other as- pects of their roles and responsi- bilities within regular business hours, the report said.

There are a number of fac- tors pertaining to “employee wellness,” which include person- al lives being affected, and a len- tivestime that “does not equally offset the time incurred through evening meetings.”

Managing personal and pro- fessional time around evening meetings that do not necessarily have to be held at the end of time poses challenges,” staff said.

This is the first time the current group of elected officials in Niagara-on-the-Lake have dis- cussed their schedule.

Burroughs raised concerns publicly on a number of occasions, mostly with how crowded plan- ning meetings agenda have been.

In late October, council dis- cussed a staff report that included options on how committee plan- ning meetings attendance could be improved.

Through a motion made by Coun. Maria Mavridis, council added a step related to the amount of time speakers are given — cutting that time from 10 minutes to five.

Staff also said they will have stronger enforcement on duplica- tion — residents submitting writ- ten comments on an issue, while also repeating their position ver- bally in front of council.

With the number of ques- tions coming from calls at Tuesday’s meeting, the result was for staff to take the feedback received during the discussion, and bring another report to coun- cil with the information request- ed before any decisions are made about the 2024 schedule.

Town talks summer camp, aquatics programs

Kris Dubé
The Local
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Fewer people are using Niagara-on-the-Lake’s mu- nicipal pools but town staff are working to improve those numbers, and are looking to pitch some ideas to council in an upcoming parks and recre- ation master plan. That’s according to parks and recreation manager Kevin Turcotte, while he was fielding questions at Tuesday’s council meeting during an update on numbers for the town’s camp and aquatics programs last summer.

At Niagara Pool, there were 8,407 total users all year in 2019, but in 2023 there were 6,356 adults, seniors, and children who took at least one dip.

St. Davids pool saw 4,555 swimmers in 2019 and 3,393 in 2023. “If we start seeing a slow recovery from COVID, or is this some- thing we should be concerned about?” asked Coun. Wendy Cheropita.

Turcotte said he was spec- ulating, but that a possible factor in the decline could be an increase in residential pools being used for lessons as well as recreational swimming.

He said one step that could be pitched to council in it plans is seeking outside providers and indoor pools the town could use for offer programming.

“We’re looking at a revamp- ing of our programming for aquatic,” said Turcotte.

But there has been a slight upshift in registration for ad- vanced swimming courses, ones required for individuals moving forward with becom- ing certified lifeguards.

“That’s a positive trend up- wards, that youth are looking to become lifeguards, and we’re looking to foster that here in the town,” he said.

Summer day camp num- bers appear to be on their way back to normal since COVID, with only 226 total participants in 2020 between full-week and single-day reg- istration. It was 303 users, but those numbers climbed in 2022 with 622 reg- istrations, and dropped slightly in 2023 with 557 kids signed up.

This year, 392 kids were from Niagara-on-the-Lake, and 165 were non-residents, according to staff’s report.

Coun. Sandra O’Connor asked what the town adver- tising is, saying she believes the town should be promoted as early as possible.

Turcotte said the town usu- ally markets its summer camps and after the conclu- sion of March Break.

“We found that in the past if we advertise too early it’s kind of a turn-off to us in the weeks,” he said.

“Usually, April is the sweet spot for summer camp,” he ex- plained, referring to when the town starts advertising what it has to offer.

O’Connor said parents are anxious” earlier in the year to start planning summer for their children.

The report was received for information by council.

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New Patients Welcome!
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Region disputes police need for new hires

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism
Initiative Reporter

The Niagara Regional Police Service’s 2024 budget has been hectored by regional council until next month.

When Chief Bryan MacCulloch presented the police’s proposed $190-million spending plan, it brought a 7.1 per cent increase to what was allotted by the regional government for 2023.

After being interrogated by regional politicians for more than two hours, it was decided that the budget be sent back to the police services board and reconsidered by council on Dec. 7.

A news release from the NRQ on Monday said the board has called a meeting for Dec. 4.

The police service is asking to be accommodated with an inflationary adjustment of 4.8 per cent from the 2023 approved budget to maintain core services, and includes an additional 2.3 per cent increase for service enhancements, stabilization and growth, adding up to more than $12 million in additional funding.

“This includes the hiring of 20 new officers, plus an additional seven to fill vacancies that are currently open within the service, along with several civilian positions, MacCulloch told councillors. He also noted that another 16 officers are needed, but a request for those has been deferred to future budgets.”

The City of Niagara Falls covers costs related to the casino patrol unit, an agreement formed many years ago when the first casino opened in the honeymoon capital, and expected to exceed $5 million in 2024. Asked if the police budget could pull more from Niagara Falls, MacCulloch said that’s out of his jurisdiction. “I don’t think it’s appropriate, and I have no leverage, or ability, or hammer, to have the city pay whatever is requested,” said the chief.

When local detachments can’t meet their minimum staffing levels, which fluctuates on different days of the week and on weekends, officers are often redeployed to other areas of the region.

This occurred 715 times in 2022 and on 752 occasions so far this year.

“It’s a significant draw on resources,” said MacCulloch, also pointing to parental and sick leaves playing roles.

Lincoln Reg. Councillor Rob Foster said he was having difficulty with the request for additional programs and hires, when other agencies, boards and commissions under the region’s umbrella have all been told to hold the line.

“We’ve tried to take a responsible, incremental approach to our ask,” said MacCulloch, who also noted in the meeting that the 7.1 per cent increase started as a 9.9 per cent hike when the police board started working on its 2024 budget.

“We recognize the impact it’s having on the taxpayers of the Niagara Region, but we also recognize the increased demand and ever-increasing expectations that are being placed on us through the courts and provincial legislation,” said MacCulloch.

“Regional chair Jim Bradley questioned a number of ‘program changes’ and ‘enhancements’ as they are described in the budget report — mostly civilian positions the police service is looking to either create or expand on, at a cost of almost $5.9 million.

This also includes 20 new frontline constables.

Some of the jobs include a communications training coordinator with an annual salary of almost $148,000, and a visual content creator who would earn more than $112,000 in one year.

“I don’t know if it is this year, in fact, I know it isn’t,” said Bradley about the timing of these requests.

Bradley also said that if council doesn’t accept the budget, the police board has the ability to enter a process with what he called “O-Cops,” which is the Ontario Civilian Police Commission, a provincial adjudicator that can investigate budgetary disputes between police services and municipal governments.

“If I know it’s a bit of a defeat when you do that, but it’s an avenue that’s available,” he said, shortly before a vote was taken to send the budget back to the police services board.
A large crane recently helped deliver an industrial-sized battery to Niagara College, which will help in NOTL campus fulfill its commitment to sustainability. Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro is helping the college with energy storage in some of its academic programs.

The 250kW battery storage unit will be used by the college to store energy for peak demand management, and to support the Schools of Environment and Horticulture, and Trades.

"Energy storage will benefit the college and our community by reducing both our peak electricity demand and our strain on the local grid," said Pam Skinner, senior vice-president, college operations.

Valued at $214,000, the battery energy storage system was used at the local hydro distribution station as a prototype project and research test for renewable energies.

No longer in use by NOTL Hydro, the battery will help college operations achieve cost-savings over the next 15 to 20 years, the battery's remaining life span.

NOTL Hydro purchased the unit as part of a Government of Ontario Smart Grid Fund project to test the viability of using battery storage to increase the capacity of a distribution feeder line to support distributed energy resources, said Hydro president Tim Curtis.

In addition to the government grant, support also came from Panasonic Eco Solutions Canada, which provided the unit at cost, said Curtis.

We are proud that the battery storage unit will now be used by Niagara College for student development and their own sustainability goals," he said.

The battery storage unit will store off-peak, low emissions electricity to offset the college's use of peak electricity, which is produced from higher emitting sources, and will also minimize demand on the local energy grid during peak times when demand for power is the highest, and when the system relies more heavily on non-renewable energy sources, the news release from Niagara College explained.

The donation will also have a positive impact on student learning. Data can be harnessed from the battery for student case studies in various environmental and technology programs.

The battery is expected to save the college more than $20,000 each year.

Niagara College, which will help its NOTL Hydro purchased the unit as part of a Government of Ontario Smart Grid Fund project to test the viability of using battery storage to increase the capacity of a distribution feeder line to support distributed energy resources, said Hydro president Tim Curtis. The donation will also have a positive impact on student learning. Data can be harnessed from the battery for student case studies in various environmental and technology programs. The battery is expected to save the college more than $20,000 each year.

Council discusses changes to way budget is handled

Kris Dube
The Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Niagara-on-the-Lake council will adjust its budget process when it begins its 2025 spending plan—a process previously used by the last term of council. Through a motion brought forward by Coun. Sandra O'Connor, the town will once again form an audit and finance committee to review policy and procedures, to go over reports and to monitor significant changes, O'Connor said during last week’s regular council meeting when it was voted to move ahead with reviving the committee.

"With the new method we’re using, that has kind of gone by the wayside," she said.

O’Connor’s motion reads: “With the provision of effective municipal government by overseeing the administrative systems regarding financial accounting, reporting, internal controls, safeguarding of corporate assets, compliance with legal, ethical and regulatory requirements and the efficient and effective use of resources.”

Her motion says the audit function is “not being fulfilled” by the current budget committee, which includes all council members.

The audit committee would consist of some members of council, and those who don’t sit on it would still be able to participate in its business, says O’Connor.

A terms of reference document still needs to be completed.

Town treasurer Kyle Freeborn said an internal, or external, auditor would need to be part of the picture, but O’Connor said the last committee didn’t require one.

“I don’t see why there’s a need for an internal auditor when it’s the same as what we had before," said O’Connor.

She was also asked by Coun. Maria MAVridis if the intent of her motion was that an audit function would involve the committee going through budgets “line by line,” which O’Connor agreed is what she’s hoping for.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said he prefers the current system, with the budget being reviewed by all councillors sitting as a committee-of-the-whole.

He likes the idea of an audit mechanism, but not how it is laid out in O’Connor’s motion.

“I know I’m reviewing in detail. I’m coming prepared to do that at the level I want to do that,” he said.

Coun. Gary Burroughs said he has more than 100 budget-related questions before staff, but understands they are busy and may not have time to get to all of them.

“This kind of committee would provide that solution,” he said.

O’Connor’s motion says part of the committee’s mandate would include reviewing future budgets, 2025 and beyond, before they proceed to council.
Shoreline work to take two winters to complete

Continued from page 1

way that will ensure the her-itage value of the site.

“We have to do it during the winter to ensure we don’t damage fish habitat,” he says. “We are working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to work within that window. We are going to use a ramp that goes into the dry ditch on the outside to bring in equip-ment and materials, so we don’t have to go through the fort or use the stretch of walkway that is currently very popular, or damage the boardwalk.”

The shoreline area in-cludes many non-native and invasive tree and shrub species with root systems that have caused damage to archeological resources within the earthwork forti-fication and the surround-ing grounds. Some trees and large shrubs are also falling or at risk of falling into the water as the shore-line erodes.

Parks Canada plans to remove this vegetation to support the breakwall con-struction and then plant native grasses, selected for their minimal maintenance and water requirements. For every tree removed during this work, Parks Canada will plant two new native-species trees or shrubs in the area.

A press release from the federal government says these measures will ensure public safety, safeguard historic artifacts along the property, and protect Parks Canada administered lands leased by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club.

Zoetewey says it’s im-portant for people to stay away from the area where the work is being done over the next two years until it is safe to traverse the extended shoreline path some time in 2024.

“People don’t see the damage to the breakwall,” Zoetewey explains. “The undercutting by the wa-ter along the shoreline had been really bad. I’m excited that this work is going to address that, and that the new breakwall will meet new standards based on the changes we are experienc-ing in our environment.”

Once complete, the breakwall will help to ensure public safety and safeguard historic artifacts along the property.

A shoreline protection project is about to begin, thanks to funding from the federal government. (Photos by Mike Balsom)

Water, wastewater costs could increase more than 10 per cent

Kris Dube
The Local
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

It appears Niagara-on-the-Lake residents will be soaking up an increase on their water and wastewater bills in 2024.

During a budget review committee meeting Tuesday morning, town treasurer Kyle Freeborn told council why the cost is going up.

The town’s water fixed and variable rate is proposed to increase by 12 per cent.

Freeborn explained that the region is responsible for treating water and acts as a wholesaler when it comes to distributing it to Niagara’s 12 lower-tier municipalities, which are responsible for infrastructure and keeping it in good repair.

The wastewater budget is driven by increasing regional treatment costs and declining water volume usage, he said.

Coun. Sandra O’Connor asked why rates are increas-ing when people are using less water.

Freeborn said this helps maintain the same level of service, but also means there is “less water to help spread that cost around,” and that it is put on ratepayers as a re-sult.

The town has also taken steps to keep the increase down in 2024 by putting just $365,000 into reserves, rather than $1.05 million as a re-cent study recommended, he said in his presentation.

This has been done to “mitigate further rate in-creases,” said Freeborn, also noting that putting the full amount into reserves would cause a 19 per cent increase.

The town has “substan-tial funds in the reserve,” totalling nearly $3.7 million, nearly $2.2 million more than what was recommend-ed in the study, Freeborn said.

Forty-one per cent of the water and wastewater budget is related to regional charges, said Freeborn, and has in-creased by about $421,000 since last year.

Freeborn’s presentation was received for informa-tional purposes — council has yet to rubber-stamp its 2024 budget.

In a separate report, council also approved for information a breakdown of employee and contract costs and how they compare to last year.

The town is projected to spend more than $1.5 million on 12 full-time employees, and $82,000 on contracts.

Last year, the town spent more than $116,000 on out-side contracts, and spent $1,411 million on 12 full-time employees.

Staff said in its report that these increases are “primar-ily reflective of changes in steps within the payband and estimated increases in salary rates.”

The wastewater budget is driven by increasing regional treatment costs and declining water volume usage, he said.
Climate change as a buzzword in politics

Doug Ford debacles a four-year trend

Bill 23 not only opened the Greenbelt for housing development, threatening the sanctity of our agriculture, tourism industries and cultural heritage, but also down-loaded development costs unto municipalities, straining local budgets and passing more costs to the taxpayer.

We know now the process was tainted from the start — and the RCMP is in the midst of a criminal investigation into the whole affair.

Determining whether this was a criminal is a job left to the RCMP, but what I can say for certainty is the Ford government wasted an entire year, and put our local heritage and industry in jeopardy, without addressing our housing crisis in Ontario with thoughtful solutions and constructive policy.

There have been troubling reports about what the Ford government is doing to Ontario Place by granting a private foreign company a 95-year lease to operate a private, for-profit luxury spa, located on acres of publicly owned waterfront land, and involving hundreds of millions of dollars from the public coffers.

There has been a lack of openness and transparency from the government on this process — similar to what we have seen on Bill 23.

But what we do know is that the Ford government is trying to pay upwards of half a billion dollars of taxpayer money — approximately $650 million — to a private Austrian company for construction of an underground parking lot. To me, this is not a prudent use of taxpayer funds.

Just last week, we were able to obtain documents that suggest a close friend and former employee of the Premier, Amin Massoudi, was paid nearly $250,000 for a private communications contract while also working as Ford’s principal secretary. It appears as though Ford double-billed the Ontario taxpayer, and is trying to hide this information from the public.

We also know how Ford has managed the autism file — against the recommendations of the government’s own Autism Advisory Panel and leaving families across Ontario who have children living with autism struggling to access services.

We have watched the wait-list for services grow to more than 60,000 names.

And finally, we have this government’s healthcare debacle: while people here in our community struggle to access services and deal with
Library interview with Adriana Vizzari

Adriana Vizzari with her four youngstergers, Antonia, Gigi, Matthew and Loretta Caler, at the St. Davids book locker. (Supplied)

Cathy Simpson
NOTL Public Library CEO

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library board and staff are exploring the special place books, reading, storytelling and libraries hold in the hearts of community members. This question prompts introspection and reflection, offering a unique lens through which to examine the bond between people and their local library. (Supplied)

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library board and staff are exploring the special place books, reading, storytelling and libraries hold in the hearts of community members. This question prompts introspection and reflection, offering a unique lens through which to examine the bond between people and their local library. (Supplied)

When you walked into the Thoerd Public Library they had a YA sign for the young adults section. I remember going there and trying to read the entire YA stack starting with, Sweet Valley High and Nancy Drew. When the computer catalogue arrived, I could search for books and that felt big. It was just a weekly adventure.

Q. How do you encour-
age your children to read?

There’s so much more of-
ered at the library now for kids. There’s the program, there’s Legos, there’s all those things. When the kids were very young, it was our community hub. As a mom at home with young kids, it was a lifeline; it was where you could find other parents, too. We had the baby and toddler story times and I found library visits were something all four of us could do together. The library is so inclusive; we could enjoy the same books if there was a story time or they could go do their thing. It was an easy fit for kids of different ages.

Q. Do you read anything of your childhood favour-
ite?

Yes! Dr. Seuss is a huge, huge love in our house. Werre there a time when the Grinch wasn’t buried in my bag to read while I wait. The book lockers in St. Davids and lockers and

Q. What do you think about e-books?

I found library visits were a lifeline; it was a weekly adventure. When I was little, it was so fun to watch my kids. It’s so fun to watch my kids. It was so fun to watch my kids. It was so fun to watch my kids. It was so fun to watch my kids.

Q. Have you been read-
ing lately?

Lots of town council in-
formation packages! I just finished the two-book series, It Ends With Us and It Starts With Us by Colleen Fower. I have a couple books on my nightstand right now: Tom Lake by Ann Patchett, Mal-
colm Gladwell’s Talking to Strangers, which was a gift, and Christine Sinclair’s mem-
ory Playing the Long Game. I read it from my older girls. I read a mix of fiction and nonfiction.

Q. How do you find time to read in such a busy family?

The thing about reading is, it’s a habit. If you make a habit of reading by the side in the evening or with kids, it’s a hard stop at the end of their day. When I was little, it was an easy stop to drop in the bag at the Virgil vending machine at the Virgil arena are very helpful. We can make a quick stop to pick up the books in St. Davids or browse the books at the arena when

The people of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Ontario more broadly deserve a pro-
ger council to take a leadership role to competently manage and staff the bureaucracy, address the challenges we face, handle taxpayer dollars with prudence while investing in public services, and grant Ontarians the openness and transparency they deserve.

All in all, this adds up to a pattern — that instead of addressing the challeng-
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ger council to take a leadership role to competently manage and staff the bureaucracy, address the challenges we face, handle taxpayer dollars with prudence while investing in public services, and grant Ontarians the openness and transparency they deserve.
Penny Coles
The Local

The Nyanyas of Niagara are once again selling holiday cookies, a fundraiser to help the Stephen Lewis Foundation’s grandmothers’ campaign.

With the help of Erinn Lockard of Sweets & Swirls, the fundraiser is similar to last year’s holiday cookie sale, says Nyanya Linda Carleton, except instead of shortbread, there will be a choice of sugar cookies or ginger cookies in a decorative bag, with 20 cookies for $20. They make great treats for family members, friends or neighbours, says Carleton, and it makes fundraising simple for the small group of volunteers while supporting a great cause.

While the goal remains to help the Stephen Lewis campaign to raise money in response to the crisis faced by African grandmothers as they struggle to raise millions of children orphaned by AIDS, the focus has changed slightly to support African women of all ages in areas such as health and education, “to help them learn to protect themselves, so they can stay healthy, grow up and have their own kids,” says Carleton.

“HIV and AIDS has had devastating impacts on children and youth in sub-Saharan Africa. Stephen Lewis Foundation partners deliver HIV prevention, treatment and care that supports their multi-dimensional needs, so they can stay healthy and thrive,” says Carleton. Programs delivered by foundation partners “save and improve the lives of thousands of children and youth who are supported to access education, adhere to HIV treatment, and become active leaders in their communities.”

While Stephen Lewis himself is not as involved as he once was, he is still the impetus behind the organization, with help from his daughter.

With a small group of Nyanyas to volunteer, fundraising efforts have been simplified, says Carleton, and those interested in joining or helping out are being asked to give a couple of hours at a time for tasks such as packaging the cookies, getting people involved at a level they are comfortable with “a little at a time.”

She stresses cookies have to be pre-ordered by an email to the Nyanyas, not through Lockard. “Erinn is so lovely, doing this for us when she’s so busy. She doesn’t have time to talk orders for us.”

Orders must be emailed to Dec. 10 to nyanyas2018@gmail.com. Orders can be picked up Dec. 18 or Dec. 19 between 2 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. at Sweets & Swirls Cafe in the Community Centre.

Payment can be by e-transfer to email nyanyas2018@gmail.com; password: cookies, or cookies can be paid for by cash when picking up an order.

Carols for Christmas

At St. Saviour’s Church in Queenston, Rev. Janet Cashin and organist Michael Tansley are preparing final touches for Carols for Christmas, which will be held at the church on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 4 p.m. The Newark Singers will perform Christmas works by a variety of composers, and there will be readings, along with an opportunity for the audience to participate in some favourite carols. Admission is a freewill offering.

Every year Joan King puts out a call for help with her stocking project, and every year it comes pouring in, often from the same people who help out every year.

Last holiday season more than 100 volunteers pitched in, filling 220 stockings to deliver to the three long-term care homes in NOTL. This year will likely be about the same, with Crossroads School among the many others who are already on board to help.

King would also like to expand her project — she’s asking anyone who knows a senior living on their own to contact her, hoping to be able to deliver a stocking to them as well — she says to call her at 905-262-5898, or email joankemp10@yahoo.ca.

This year she received an unexpected offer from a new business in town. Apple Hill Apothecary is offering to make it a little easier by suggesting rather than drive to Queenston to drop off stockings, they can be left at the Niagara Stone Road store up until Dec. 19.

She will also stuff stockings if volunteers want to drop off stocking stuffers, and they have lots of small items that would be perfect to add to them.

As a thank you “for being so awesome,” those who donate will receive a little token of appreciation from Apple Hill, located at 758 Niagara Stone Road, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week.

King began stuffing stockings for seniors for Christmas in 2020, at the height of COVID-19 when most holiday volunteer initiatives were cancelled. She was concerned about the impact the restrictions would have on lonely seniors in long-term care when visitors were not permitted, and she decided there was a way to deliver some Christmas spirit to them from the outside world. Staff at all three homes were supportive, and continue to be, always saying how grateful they are when staff from The Local deliver the stockings each year, and that they look forward to distributing them to seniors, who are happy to receive them.

Stocking project expanding

Local Staff

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Queenston Women’s Chorus presents Christmas Wishes

Penny Coles
The Local

The Queenston Women’s Chorus will be presenting its season concert Christmas Wishes Sunday at Trillium United Church in St. Catharines.

The women begin rehearsing Christmas carols in September so they’ll be ready when the big day comes.

Formerly called the Queenston Ladies Choir, formed in 2003 under the direction of founder Lisa Cosens Brillon, the name was changed a couple of years ago to better reflect a wider age group the choir is attracting — the 26 singers range from 25 to 80, Brillon says, with a couple of original members still part of the group. There are also still some women from Queenston, but members now come from across the Niagara Region.

The choir has had to move around a bit for their performances. They were first held in Queenston, then moved to St. Mark’s Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and have settled now at Trillium where they performed last year, “a beautiful space” for a concert, she says.

It has steps for the singers to stand at different levels, holds a bigger audience, “and they’ve treated us really well,” she adds. They will also be holding a reception following their performance.

Rehearsals are still held at St. Davids Queenston United Church, where Brillon is the organist and choir director.

As always, Sunday’s concert will include a variety of Christmas classics, both sacred and secular, and one by Harris Loewen, retired head of choral studies at Brock University, says Brillon.

It will also feature holiday favourites such as Deck the Halls, We Three Kings, and Gordon Lightfoot’s Song for a Winter’s Night, promises Brillon.

The choir is also looking forward to singing on Queen Street, as part of a new NOTL Chamber of Commerce initiative to offer performances on the afternoon of the Candlelight Stroll. The Queenston Women’s Chorus will be singing from the steps of the Court House at about 3:45 p.m. Dec. 1, with a sample of their Christmas songs.

The Niagara Star Singers, under the direction of Lisa’s daughter, Celeste Brillon, will also be performing.

Proceeds from Christmas Wishes, Sunday, Dec. 3 at 3 p.m. will go to Newark Neighbours and the Niagara Festival of Performing Arts Scholarship Fund.

Trillium United Church is at 315 Linwell Road in St. Catharines.

Tickets are $20, $15 for students, and are available at the door.

Dianne Ticknor, pictured here with Carl Finkle and Rick Meloen, led the carol sing at the Wayside Chapel last year and will be back Dec. 9. (File photo)

Holiday singalong returns at Wayside Chapel

Penny Coles
The Local

The Wayside Chapel holiday singalong was such a success last December, it’s looking like it might be an annual event.

Organizer Rick Meloen says as the happy crowd soaking up the Christmas spirit dispersed last year, he promised it would return.

He’s hoping for another good day, although last year was a little on the chilly side — dress warmly, he cautions.

It was Albrecht Seeger, a local grape-grower, who thought of the idea of a Christmas celebration and suggested the singalong. “He’d been asking me to do this for years, and I finally agreed,” says Meloen, who was delighted with the turnout.

There will be a good mix of traditional carols as well as the rousing Christmas tunes everyone loves, and Meloen says he has learned to have more song sheets to pass around — he had said he would be happy if 10 people showed, but instead there were at least 60, as well as a tour bus of curious visitors who arrived toward the end of the event.

The Living Water Wayside Chapel singalong, on the Niagara River Parkway beside Walker’s Country Market, is Dec. 9, at 3 p.m.
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Fundraiser for fatherless families of farmworkers

The Niagara Workers Welcome is hosting an online fundraiser until Dec. 20 to support the families of neighbours who have tragically lost their lives while on the migrant farmwork program. The goal is to raise $3,000 to provide one month of groceries to three families in Jamaica.

The families of 31-year-old Kemar Campbell and 34-year-old Daniel Brown, both of whom worked on a Niagara-on-the-Lake farm and passed away in their sleep, are the first two fundraiser recipients.

When Campbell left Jamaica for Niagara, he had a four-month-old daughter and was participating in the farmwork program for the first time. Brown leaves behind two young daughters, a four-year-old and a newborn. Both men worked on the same farm and would often connect about the joys of young fatherhood and the pain of family separation.

The third fundraiser recipient is the family of Jeleel Stewart, who was permanently injured on the job at a NOTL nursery in 2008. Suffering from severed tendons and nerves in his hand has prevented him from working for the past 15 years, resulting in the severe decline of his health. He has five children.

Seasonal farmworkers are our neighbours and friends, not a disposable workforce. We are building a caring community together and that care extends to families back home in the Caribbean. No family should have to go through these tragedies alone. For Campbell and Brown’s families, it will be their first Christmas without their loved ones.

The Niagara Workers Welcome invites everyone to share and contribute to the fundraiser and show community support for the families of these men. Donations of $100 and more will be entered into a draw to win a one-night getaway at Applewood Hollow Bed and Breakfast.

For more information or to donate via eTransfer, please contact niagaraworkerswelcome@gmail.com with the memo Family Fund. For more information, visit workerswelcome Niagara.com.

Niagara Workers Welcome is a grassroots initiative dedicated to creating a caring community with our farmworker neighbours. Started by local resident and small business owner Jane Andres, Niagara Workers Welcome has coordinated welcome bags and events for 16 years. In 2023, 642 seasonal farmworkers received welcome kits containing necessities and notes of appreciation.

Jane Andres
The Local

Located only steps from historic Queen Street, this charming cottage rental known as ‘Victoria House’ stands at the heart of Niagara-on-the-Lake in the Queen Picton Heritage District. Featuring a welcoming front courtyard seating, low maintenance landscaped gardens leading to more than 1700 square feet of indoor living space. The main level highlights many character details, a bright spacious living room with gas fireplace, full height front windows and lovely kitchen dining area. Upstairs you will find 3 well appointed comfortable bedrooms and a 4 piece bathroom. A truly exceptional turn key investment opportunity in remarkable NOTL.

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Raising funds for palliative care

Rainer Hummel and the Hummel family’s $25,000 matching donation helped raise $67,083 for palliative care and Ben’s Compassionate Community, making 2023 the best year yet for fundraising and participation. Palliative Care’s Tim Taylor was the top fundraiser once again this year. Alan Ash (above) from the Ukesters, Ron Kassie, the Healing Cycle’s executive director, Raiana Schwenker, Rainer Hummel, Bonnie Bagnulo, Sean Simpson and Santa, sometimes known as Tim Taylor, celebrate the Healing Cycle success. (Photos supplied)

While he is still in town Dec. 9 Santa (right) will be greeting children of all ages at the community centre from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. for free hot chocolate and cookies, a colouring contest and children’s stories. “Just another way that NOTL Community Palliative Care Service raises awareness that children matter to us too,” says executive director Bonnie Bagnulo.
Icebreakers Comedy Fest returns for 10th year

Penny Coles
The Local

When Toronto comic Jeff Paul comes home to Niagara-on-the-Lake for the 10th anniversary of the Icebreakers Comedy Festival, those attending the shows he has organized can expect lots of laughs. For the last 10 years, he has arranged successful, sold-out comedy shows at his hometown, where he and the comics he brings with him love to perform.

In St. Michael and Niagara District Secondary School grad, says he looks forward to getting out of the big city where he performs regularly, to instead tell jokes in front of family, friends and the visitors who come for the Icewine Festival. He always has fun while he’s here, and he makes sure the comics he lines up for three hilarious nights and four shows also have a good time.

During the rest of the year, when Paul performs at festivals and comedy clubs, he says he begins making a mental list, then an actual list of comics he thinks will be a good fit in NOTL. When it’s time to reach out to those on the top of his list, he just has to hope they’re available.

He describes the end of January as the perfect time for that. Early in the New Year, he says, when people are on a “health kick,” feeling like they’ve had too much to eat and drink, too much partying and spent too much money, they swear off all the excesses of the holiday season and stay home.

But then the need to get out builds up throughout the month, as the health kick wanes off and New Year’s resolutions are mostly in the past, “and there isn’t much going on anywhere else” says Paul. That makes the comedy festival in NOTL pretty attractive for locals, visitors from around the region and tourists, especially from the U.S.

It also is planned to coincide with the Icewine Festival, which attracts visitors to town who are looking for evening entertainment.

That’s how the Icebreakers Comedy Festival began, he says, with the help of two of his high school friends, Maria Mavridis and Tim Balasnik. Paul’s wife, Kyra Williams, is also a huge help — she describes him as “the glue that holds this together.”

While the comedy festival coincides with the Chamber’s icewine celebration, “it has always been an independent event, and even if there was no Icewine Festival, we’d still be doing this.”

He also has support from his friend Paul Harbor of Rattlesnake Point Vineyard Estate Winery — he has held some shows there — as well as the MacNeill family from Niagara-on-the-Lake, House Brewers, also a great venue for comedy.

This year the festival opens Thursday, Jan. 25, and the first show is almost sold out. Locals hoping to see Joe Pillitteri emceeing at Oast get their tickets soon. The line-up for that event includes Tarrara Shevon and Jeffdemarr Rossy, one of the country’s best TV and film stars, including appearances on The Late Late Show on CBS.

It’s not difficult convincing some of the best comedians in the country, those who perform at all the major comedy festivals, as films and on TV, to come to Niagara-on-the-Lake, he says. It’s a beautiful town that has much to offer visitors, and he makes sure they see the best of it. And in return, while they’re here, they do their best work because they’re having fun themselves.

“I’ve worked with most of the comics who put on great shows. I’ve worked with them years on end and they still come up for three hilarious nights and four shows. I feel like I’ve put them up someplace nice, feed them well and give you. We put them up somewhere nice, feed them well and give them a great show.”

They stay at Colonel Butler Inn, mostly eat at the Sandtrap Pub and Grill right down the street, and can spend some time checking out the Icewine Festival.

“They like the whole experience, and I like giving them that experience.”

Paul still has a day job as a program coordinator at CTV, which he jokes about being “an 18-year entry level position,” but says it’s perfect for him — he can work from home, and it allows him to pursue his main focus, which is performing by night at comedy festivals and clubs.

Although some audience members will go to see a particular comic they like to see, one they may watch for or follow from one club to another, in his experience, Paul says, it’s typical for people to choose shows for their venue, rather than the comics performing.

This year, he is particularly pleased with the performers he is bringing to town for the 10th anniversary. “It’s a big milestone, and we have an amazing line-up of great comics. That’s why people keep coming back. They may not know the comics by name, but we’ve earned their trust. They know I bring great comics who put on great shows. And we have to appeal to a wide range of ages, from teenagers to seniors, and build their trust so that they know we’re going to bring them something new and something they’ll enjoy.”

The Pillitteri opening at Oast will be followed by two shows Friday at Corks Winemart and Eatery, the first with comic Sandra Battaglini hosting, and Ian Gordon, Jean Paul and Rob Bederikis performing.

Following that is the Meltdown, the late-night show at Corks, with its “dark and of ten dirty content.” It’s billed on the festival website as “our very own foul-mouthed festi- val founder Jeff Paul” hosting a “line-up of degenerates, includ- ing Rebecca Reeds, Nick Reyn- oldson and Hunter Culin.”

The final show, the CBC Radio Gala, is at the Court House Saturday night. It is again being recorded for BBC’s Laugh Out Loud, with the popular radio show’s host Ali Hassan emceeing the line-up of some of Canada’s top comedians, including Lianne Mauclod, Gavin Stephans, Tom Hentg, Allie Pearse, Keith Pedro and Matt Wright. The gala tickets also always sell out quickly, says Paul.

Tickets for all shows are available at www.icebreaker- comedy.com/shows.

Icewine Festival offers three weekends of celebration

Local Staff

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce will present the 29th Icewine Festival this January, with the traditional Icewine Village transforming Queen Street into a winter wonderland on two weekends, Jan. 20 and 21, and 27 and 28.

It will feature an array of ice wines from local wineries and icewine culinary treats.

Guests to the Icewine Vil- lage will be offered live entertainment, an enlightening speaker series, culinary and mixology demonstrations and more.

This new year is the Ice Bar at the Outlet Collection at Niagara, Jan. 13 and 14, with a VIP tasting of icewine from popular fire tables, Muskoka chair seating, a private bar and enhanced culinary offerings with prices priced at $150 per person.

The festival’s ballroom event, Wheels & Ice Celebration, takes place on Jan. 26 at the Court House, from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. This event features celebrated winemakers pre- serving their favourite VQA wines paired with icewine inspired culinary creations and signature icewine cocktails. The night includes live entertainment culminating in a firework display while enjoy-

ing icewine from ice glasses.

Tickets for Sparkle & Ice are $95 per person. For event details or tickets contact Tourism NOTL or visit niag- arlogantheLake.com.

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Manhattan Transfer's last Canadian performance coming up

It will be in St. Catharines, Dec. 3 for Bravo Niagara!

Mike Balsom
The Local

Those in attendance at the legendary Manhattan Transfer concert to be held Dec. 3 at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre will be the last people to see the vocal group perform in Canada. Likely ever.

The two original members of the vocal group, alto Janis Siegel and tenor Alan Paul, along with soprano Laurel Masse and Cheryl Bentyne, have decided to hang up their microphones after their current 50th Anniversary tour. Though their final concert is scheduled for Dec. 15 at Los Angeles, California’s Walt Disney Concert Hall, their farewell to Canada is scheduled for Dec. 3 at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre will be the last people to see the vocal group perform in Canada this Sunday, Dec. 3 for Bravo Niagara! Festival performance.

“They are iconic,” Bravo Niagara co-founder Christopher Quinn recently told The Local. “We are so happy to have them for their final tour. And, because they are so close to Christmas, so they will be doing some Christmas music, too.”

In an email to The Local, Siegel said: “I am determined that the decision to stop the long grind of touring and to retire is definitely the right one. But she doesn’t rule out the possibility of a few one-off trips with her singing mates some time in the future.

“I personally would love to do our 50th anniversary show in cities and countries where we haven’t been able to do it yet,” said Siegel. “It would be great to once again hit some of the places where we have toured a lot over the years, the ones we couldn’t get to on this tour.”


They soon signed with Atlantic Records and released their first major album in 1975. That same year they captured broader attention when they starred in their own 1975 CBS-TV variety series as a summer replacement for The Cher (Dino) Show. They caught on internationally a year later when Chanson D’Amour from their 1976 Coming Out album became a surprise number one hit in Europe.

The immensely influential jazz vocal group won its first two Grammy Awards in 1979 for their version of jazz fusion band Weather Report’s song Birdland. And six years later they set a record when their album Vocalises became the greatest Grammy nominated jazz album in history with 12 nominations in a single year.

After winning 10 Grammys and selling millions of records, it’s also time for the singing quartet to retire from the studio. Their final album of new recordings, 2010 Fifty, largely a collaboration with Germany’s WDR Funkhausorchester Köln, revisited many of their most beloved songs through their career with new musical accompaniment.

“I don’t think of it as a greatest hits record,” Siegel said. “It was more of a pandemic project. We really only had two big hits, in Chanson D’Amour and Twilight Zone anyway. We just really enjoyed working with them so thought it would be a great idea.”

Siegels adds, though, that their current record label, Concord, is holding onto a five CD box set that includes some unreleased tracks from the vaults. She is fervently hoping that collection sees the light of day some time soon.

Over five decades The Manhattan Transfer has worked with some of the best vocalists of the times, both live and in the studio. Siegel says it was thrilling to collaborate with Johnny Mandel on the group’s first Christmas record (1992’s The Christmas Album).

“Singing with Ella (Fitzgerald) live on The Grammy telecast was certainly a high point,” she adds. “Other collaborations that stand out for me were with Take 6, Arif Mardin, Willie Nelson, Boz Scaggs, The Modern Jazz Quartet and Arnie Kander.”

The group also has a long history with Birdland with Weather Report.

“As she reflects on the group’s final performance north of her native U.S., Siegel also has fond memories of collaborating with Canadian musicians such as Marc Jordan, Andrew Kesler and Don Broyhaup.

“And we played the Montreal Jazz Festival many, many times,” adds Siegel. “We also played Toronto and Vancouver a lot. I do wish, though, that we had toured more of Canada because we love the country.”

Lucky local fans will have a chance to say they were there when the legendary Manhattan Transfer performed for the very last time in Canada this Sunday, Dec. 3. Siegel, Paul, Masse and Bentyne will take to the stage at the PAC’s Partridge Hall at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at bravoniagara.org.

Cheryl Bentyne, Tryst Curtless, Alan Paul, and Janis Siegel of The Manhattan Transfer. (Supplied)

Strike a Pose: The Art of Self-Obsession

Local Staff

From a brush stroke to the press of a button, capturing a likeness can be a lifelong obsession, and an activity that many of us today can’t live without, says a news release from the NiagaravilleWorlds-Lake Museum.

The latest exhibition at the museum, Strike a Pose – The Art of Self-Obsession shows how the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake have been documenting themselves for centuries, whether in paint, ink, pencils, photography or pixels, providing the museum with a rich visual history.

Strike a Pose – The Art of Self-Obsession opens this weekend for the Holiday House Tours, Dec. 1 and 2, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and runs to the end of April. Sponsored by Niagara-based Selfie Mode, their Selfie Booth will add a fun and interactive element to the exhibit. Keen selfie-posers are encouraged to take a picture of themselves, which can then be included in the exhibit.

“We’re lucky to have a long history with photography here,” said the museum assistant curator Shavonna Butts. “For example, many of the pictures 1 chose for this exhibit were taken by photographers. William Quinn, who had his studio in the family home on Ricardo Street.”

Local historian Joseph Masters writes that locals used to enjoy watching Quinn set up his gear. “And once he was underneath his camera hood,” said Butts, “according to Masters, they’d give him some swift kicks in the rear!”

Luckily today, local photographers are treated a little more gently.

Before the advent of photography, the only way for people to leave behind a tangible and visible legacy was to immortalize themselves in paintings and drawings. This exhibit gives the museum the opportunity to highlight examples of early settler portraits, including Mary and Peter Servoss, John Crook, and Captain William Milley.

As well, the museum has a unique collection of miniatures, handheld portraits that were popular well into the 20th century. One rare image is that Laura Secord, created several years before her death.

Curating this exhibit has allowed Butts to show the similarities in how artists created a portrait, how photographers created a studio image and how today’s selfies are just as carefully posed, edited and shared.

Visitors are encouraged to take photographs and share them widely, with a promise that no one will receive a kick in the rear end.

For more information visit www.naelmiuseum.ca.
Trip of a lifetime coming up for local guiders

The Local

By Mike Balsom

Next July, 22 Niagara Pathfinders, Rangers and leaders plan to take the trip of a lifetime, and thanks to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Kinmen, that dream is a little bit closer.

The Kinmen, a not-for-profit youth theatre group, are providing meeting space for Sparks, Embers and Guides in the Kinmen Scout Hall, and sponsoring the trip for members to attend the interprovincial LEAP camp in 2019.

While the Guiding program is well-known for building skills such as camping and community service, purposeful travel is also an optional part of the program for the older branches. However, the pandemic put a hold on many youth members’ plans and ability to participate in this life skill and character-building opportunity — and for many, this is their first opportunity to travel outside of Canada.

Over 12 days in July, the group will visit London, Paris, Lucerne, Adelboden, Liechtenstein and Munich, and will experience many cultural, historical and geographical points of interest. They will learn about other countries, world history and politics, and how break-downs in governmental and democratic systems can impact societies. Youth members will have a voice in selecting and engaging with places that are relevant and of interest to them, with a focus on building life skills such as planning, leadership, independence and exploration of post-secondary education and career opportunities.

Participants are taking an active role in researching activities and destinations prior to departure, including similarities and differences to their lives here in Niagara. In addition, youth will develop presentations for Canada sharing at Guiding World Centres where they will have the opportunity to meet and learn from other

Kirsimen president Ray Hobbs with a cheque for guides, including Sophie Cadieux (Ranger), Daphne Cadieu (Pathfinder), Samantha Fretz (Ranger), Jessie MaceQuarrie (Ranger), Olea Behrens (Pathfinder), Krystine Behrens (Gauthier), Amanda Fretz (Gauthier), and Kim Slingerland from the Kinmen. (Supplied)

We are grateful for the support of our community, includ- ing local indie bookstores, which is why we can’t wait to share tales of our travels in 2024!

If you would like further information or to purchase cookies, please contact 1notlpathfinders@gmail.com.
Handcrafted treasures at the Pumphouse (Part II)

Maria Klassen
The Local

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre’s Holiday Market offers a wide variety of one-of-a-kind handcrafted items by talented artisans, which will be available in the beautifully decorated lobby and galleries of the Pumphouse.

Opening this Friday, Dec. 1, several vendors will be offering artwork made of glass. Glass-Cuts features pieces created through drawing and painting on glasswork, bringing thoughts and ideas to life in art form.

Silva Talmanasen works with stained glass, creating beautiful glass pieces. Julia Kane channels her love for vibrant colour into paintings and fused glass. Her unique wreaths and trees are perfect for gifting.

If you are interested in infinity cowls, Deedee Alexandre finds relaxation in selecting yarn and using statement colours when knitting them, suitable for everyone’s taste.

Lesley Edwards discovered a passion for knitting toys and ornaments, expressing creativity through yarn and needles. Unique stoneware pottery is created in the garden studio at Lakeside Pottery. Ron and Barb Zimmerman craft their own glazes, shapes, and decorations.

Peter Sobol expresses narratives through clay and glaze, infusing his pottery with vibrant colours. His whimsical creations originate from drawings and paintings.

For those with a sweet tooth, the Exotic Jelly creator Karen Mitruk developed her passion during farm harvests. Drawing inspiration from her grandmother’s canning, she crafts unique and tasty jams, jellies and marmalades.

New to the market this year is Roger Martelli, artisanal chocolate-maker, offering fudge that is creamy and rich.

Several vendors are in a class of their own. Contemporary artist Rene Iannan explores various mediums, including pastels, oils, acrylics, Paverpol sculpting and jewelry-making. Cathy Peters produces watercolour and acrylic paintings. Vibrant dyes and soft silk in her hand-dyed silk scarves add a colourful dimension to wearable art.

Simply Stitches features hand-stitched greeting cards for all occasions. There is something for everyone at the market: for someone on your gifting list, or for yourself.

Dec. 1 and the doors are open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. From Dec. 3 to 10, the doors are open from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. There is no charge for entry, but non-perishable food donations for the Newark Neighbours food bank are encouraged.

Shoppers are also asked to bring their own bag. Major credit cards are accepted. Proceeds from the event go toward programs for children and seniors, including art kits for seniors and free art camps for children and youth.

Maria Klassen
The Local

Parade buttons going fast

Parade buttons are available at local businesses, and volunteers Robin Fraser and Mike Carleton were out Saturday at Penner’s Building Centre, Bob McDonald and Guy Hamilton at Phil’s Your Independent Grocer, and Roger Schmid with his granddaughter Imogen at The Junction in St. Davids with a specialty Christmas hot chocolate they made for her. They all had a great response from supportive shoppers. Buttons will also be for sale on parade day, Dec. 9, beginning at 11 a.m. (Photos supplied)
Cat rescue fundraiser coming up Saturday

Sharon Burns
The Local

Volunteers were busy serving customers, rearranging holiday planters, and of course, talking about cats at NOTL Cat Rescue’s Saturday morning fundraiser. “This is our annual Christmas fundraiser for NOTL Cat Rescue,” said Tanya Rice, volunteer and director of fundraising. “We’re a nonprofit. We’re 100 percent volunteer driven.” Money raised will help with their trap, neuter and release programs, veterinary bills, and the cost of keeping cats and kittens in foster homes.

NOTL Cat Rescue has 17 cats and kittens up for adoption right now, but Rice stressed that “pets are not a Christmas gift, it’s a commitment. They become part of the family. If you’re going to go to a rescue centre, or a breeder, and you’re going to give a pet as a Christmas present, make sure the receiver is open to it.”

A combination of adult females and kittens are up for adoption right now while they are being cared for by foster volunteers. “We have adult females from age one who should never have had kittens and kittens as young as four months old and eight months old waiting to be adopted!”

“We are always looking for foster volunteers,” said Rice. NOTL Cat Rescue provides everything a family needs to foster, including food, litter, cat climbers, toys, and assistance. “If you want to go on vacation, we’ll take the kittens back and put them in another foster home.”

They also need volunteer drivers, “those who may be retired or semi-retired, who would be willing to drive to veterinarians’ appointments.” Their first sale was Nov. 25, but they have a second one coming up Saturday. The plants, hanging baskets, and baked goods are all made by volunteers, friends and family, and Rice assured The Local that “chocolate turtles and candy cane paws will be restocked, and we’re adding a few new baking surprises” when they extend their Floral and Bake Sale.

Support NOTL Cat Rescue Dec. 2 at 456 Line 2, behind Crossroads Public School, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tanya Rice, volunteer and director of fundraising for NOTL Cat Rescue, said Tanya Rice, volunteer and director of fundraising for NOTL Cat Rescue, said

Easy way for people to give at Christmas

Continued from page 1

of course there’s baking, animal care and crafts.

Gifts From The Heart hopes to raise more than $60,000 this year. “The need never ends,” said Brodie Townley, who has been a member of Red Roof’s board of directors for the past five years. Townley noted that Red Roof is not government subsidized, and Gifts from The Heart has always been one of its two big fundraising campaigns.

Besides The Ranch, Red Roof has two other sites in Niagara-on-the-Lake. In 2021 Red Roof’s board of directors were offered space in Cornerstone Community Church, on Hunter Road, and also very supportive of Red Roof Retreat. Cornerstone Community Church has been donating their space since we wanted to reopen in COVID. Before that, Red Roof’s recreation programs were held at a long-term care facility in St. Catharines, but pandemic restrictions made residency there difficult to maintain.

“Cornerstone has been the best. They’re such a great community. “Our staff are doing some pretty significant work,” she added, “especially in terms of medication and personal care, and that’s not something you can train volunteers in.”

One of the challenges we have is we don’t pay our staff what they can get somewhere else,” Bjorgan continued. “We would really love to be in a position where, when I do my budget, I can offer better pay for everybody.”

Red Roof offers two types of day programs, one for those with complex care who require a client/staff ratio of 1:1. “The other has one staff member working with three clients. One day program is offered at the Cornerstone complex, the other at The Ranch. Weekend respite occurs at The Ranch for children, and Keavan’s House for adults.

“We do a Saturday day camp for kids and a Thursday nights social night for youth. Rice programs are full like they used to be (pre-COVID) because we have the space at Cornerstone. Our other programs are either smaller in number, or different in how often they are offered, and that’s just due to space restrictions and staff,” said Bjorgan.

Families pay a fee for services, however fundraising is really what keeps Red Roof going. The Gifts from the Heart campaign is in its 13th year and started when then-local resident Arthur Dallack donated to double his $10,000 donation. “Well, I quadrupled it. So it was game on from there,” said Bjorgan.

“Cornerstone Community Church has been donating their space since we wanted to reopen in COVID. Before that, Red Roof’s recreation programs were held at a long-term care facility in St. Catharines, but pandemic restrictions made residency there difficult to maintain.”

Steffanie Bjorgan with her son Garrett, who has been the inspiration behind Red Roof Retreat. (Supplied)

Where do you want to live? Tell us

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.

How to access the survey?

Option 1: Scan the following QR code with your phone’s camera

Option 2: Link to the survey with your browser using this URL: https://forms.office.com/r/fqxerb7fJv

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

To donate, visit redroofretreat.com and look for the Gifts from the Heart Campaign under the events tab

There will be lots of plants for sale this weekend to support NOTL Cat Rescue. (Supplied)
Public Notice

Public Participation Meeting
Proposed Street Name Change
Townline Stamford Road (Regional Road 61) to Niagara Townline Road (Regional Road 61)

Niagara Region has received a formal request to consider changing the name of Townline Stamford Road (Regional Road 61) to Niagara Townline Road (Regional Road 61).

On the proposed change would provide that Townline Stamford Road be renamed to Niagara Townline Road.

The public participation meeting is being held during Niagara Region’s Public Works Committee as follows:

Date: Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Council Chamber, Campbell West Entrance, Regional Headquarters

To provide input orally at the Public Meeting, please pre-register with the Regional Clerk by sending an email to clerk@niagararegion.ca before noon on Monday, Jan. 8. To provide written input, please either mail your comments to the Office of the Regional Clerk, Niagara Region, and 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Ontario, L2V 4T7 or send an e-mail to clerk@niagararegion.ca by 9 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 5.

Direct any inquiries with respect to the proposed street name change of Townline Stamford Road (Regional Road 61) to Mr. Graeme Guthrie, Associate Director Transportation Engineering at 905-980-6000 ext. 3249 or graeme.guthrie@niagararegion.ca or Mr. Petar Vujic, Manager Road Safety at ext. 3238 or petar.vujic@niagararegion.ca.

Notice of Proposed Adoption of the Street Name Change By-law:
It is the intention that the proposed street name change by-law will be forwarded to Regional Council for consideration on Thursday, Jan. 25, 2024.

Accommodations for Participation
If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend and participate in the Jan. 9, 2024 meeting, please let us know in advance so that arrangements can be made in a timely manner. Special accessibility accommodations and materials in alternate formats can be arranged by contacting Niagara Region’s Accessibility Advisor at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 or accessibility@niagararegion.ca.

Personal Information Collection
Any personal information collected at public meetings or submitted in writing is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001, will be collected, used and disclosed, where applicable, by members of Regional Council and Regional Staff according to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The written submissions including names and contact information and the report of the public meeting will be made available to the public. Any information you share will only be used for the intended purpose for which it was provided. For questions or comments about privacy practices, or for more information about he administration of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act in Niagara Region programs see niagararegion.ca/government/foi.
Golf is taking young golfer Eli Perng places

Mike Balsom
The Local

He may be only 11 years old, but St. Davids Public School student Eli Perng has had a golf club in his hands for more than 10 years already.

Just back from a trip to Pebble Beach, one of golf’s meccas, where the youngster shot 80 on the short tees, Eli is not letting this week’s cold or Niagara temperatures slow down his progress. He’ll be practicing his swing all winter in the Perng family’s St. Davids living room, where his father Richard has set up a golf simulator.

The Local caught up with Richard and Eli, along with Eli’s proud grandmother Corinne Bosch of Grimsby, at Eagle Valley Golf Club and Academy. That’s where he trains with U.S. Kids-certified instructor Travis Glass.

“My grandmother bought me those plastic clubs when I was 11 months old,” says Eli. “They would set up tennis balls in a line and I would whack them with my clubs.”

Richard says his son used to sleep with those plastic clubs in his hands.

“When he celebrated his third birthday it was time to replace the toys with some actual golf clubs. Eli would spend hours in the backyard hitting balls with his new sticks and his father, a radiologist with Niagara Health and an avid golfer himself, would take him along to Eagle Valley to practise. He met Travis a year later and began to take lessons from him.”

“By seven years old he was taking individual lessons,” Glass tells The Local, “and slowly he started competing. Over the years he’s been gradually building his game and getting better and better and better. I wouldn’t say he does any specific part of his game any better than other juniors.”

Eli Perng and his father, Richard, who was caddying for him at a 2019 junior tournament. (Supplied)

He’s just very good at pretty much every part of it.”

As Eli gets older, Glass says, that all-around aspect of his game will benefit him greatly in longer tournaments. And the fact that Eli will stop at Eagle Valley to hit balls before school and return after the school day is over for more practice and lessons bodes well for his future.

The eldest of five children, Eli has fallen completely in love with the game. Though he also plays travel hockey, he does indeed need to put in the effort to hone his skills.

“I’ve been working on my swing for a very long time,” says Eli. “I feel pretty confident in it, but there are still some things I need to improve. Number one is my club head speed, and my personal trainer is helping me with that. Number two is getting my attack angle from the inside.”

That analytical approach shows through his Instagram page, @golfwitheli, where one can find evidence of his smooth, nearly flawless swing.

“That page caught the attention of Foresight Golf Canada at a tournament last year. Foresight is a manufacturer of simulator systems and launch monitors. They ended up sponsoring Eli by helping to outfit him with his own launch monitor, making it easier for him to work out the kinks.”

And it was Foresight who sent him and his father, along with three other young golfers and their chaperones, to Pebble Beach to play in the 32nd annual Legends Invitational Tournament.

“He may be only 11 years old, but St. Davids Public School student Eli Perng has had a golf club in his hands for more than 10 years already.”

For the Grade 6 student says his goal is to get a golf scholarship to an NCAA college and hopefully follow the path of his favourite golfer, Tiger Woods and the U.K.’s Matt Fitzpatrick, to the PGA Tour. According to Richard, it won’t be too long before the college scouts start paying more attention to him. He feels Eli is at a bit of a disadvantage living in Canada, though, where he can’t play golf year-round.

But that simulator in the Perng living room will be busy in between hockey games and practises from now until the courses open, though he’ll have to share it with younger siblings Winnie, Coco, Harrison and Margot and maybe even his mother, Crystal. And he’ll even play a few online golf tournaments in an attempt to keep him in the eyes of the golf world.

As for Richard, he has had to swallow a bit of a tough pill this year.

“He beats me on the golf course more than I beat him now,” he laughs. “Last year I was beating him seven out of 10 times, this year he’s beating me six out of 10. The ball is always on the fairway; he just doesn’t miss.”

A certificate from a U.S. Kids World Championship is something not many young golfers can display. (Supplied)

Follow the Local on Twitter and Instagram @notllocal.com
NOTL’s Matteo Giampa already a Griffin stand-out

Mike Balsom The Local

It hasn’t taken long for Niagara-on-the-Lake native Matteo Giampa to get comfortable in the goal crease for the University at Buffalo’s Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League team. It began Friday night at the home of the NHL’s Buffalo Sabres Union Arena. 621 fans to the sixth-floor Key Bank Center for the Renegades’ game against the Niagara area for NCAA play. It was the eighth time Giampa had appeared for his team, and the seventh game of the season against Niagara. "We saw him a couple of times," said coach Kevin Fogarty. "We know his attributes he absolutely can’t be driving down from Oakville for his first NCAA game. He accomplished that feat in the Griffin’s first game of the season, a 4-2 loss to Miami (Ohio) on Oct. 13. He was relieved to get that one out of the way so quickly. "Last Saturday Giampa sketched out his hat trick performance against the Predators. He gave the Preds up 2-0, just two minutes before Fernandez let rip a hot shot from the face-off circle to beat the Flyers’ goalie. "It sucks that I didn’t have an answer for why he’s always produced. He’s a high-skills player. That’s something we’re always looking for when we’re recruiting. He grew, got really strong, and his skating went from good to great really quickly last year," said coach Kevin Fogarty. "He capitalized on a loose puck in the third period on the strength of his leader, he’s been really great to have at his disposal. Blessing reached out to record his first NCAA goal. His skating and his strong puck protection skills. When he puts it all together and uses all of his attributes he absolutely dominates. That’s what we talk about every day about him, how do we get him to use his skating, his size and his shot all the time. When he does that he’s a tough match-up for anybody."

Goalie Mike Markowski lines up the puck for a glove save against Toronto. (Mike Balsam)

Preds’ Fernandez caps weekend with hat trick

Mike Balsom The Local

Niagara Predators forward Luca Fernandez followed a two-goal performance against North York Scorpions Sunday with a hat trick. Sunday to lead his team to a 5-1 victory over the Scorpions. The win capped off a bit of a strange weekend for the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League team. It began with the cancellation of Friday night’s scheduled contest against Durham. The Preds were hand two points by the league as the third-place Roadrunners were charged for forfeiting the game. "It’s not the way you want to get a win," said coach Kevin Taylor. "It’s still two points for us though, so it benefits us." The Preds used the icy-time that night to scrimmage and to prepare to take on the first-place Renegades once again in North York. And they came out strong Saturday night as the Preds played the Renegades and took a 2-0 lead just 7:44 into the first period. Niagara and North York traded goals the rest of the game, first, which ended in a 3-1 tie. The Renegades went up 5-3 in the second, but Nick Savoie closed the gap in the late third period and began with the Preds down by only one. But the wheels fell off for the Preds the rest of the way, with the Renegades scoring four times in the first 10 minutes of the third period, crashing to a 9-4 win, their fourth of the season against Niagara. "We outplayed them for two periods," said Taylor. "In the third period we were terrible. And we didn’t get great goaltending that night. If our goaltending had been there, I think we would have won that game," Taylor also said the team needs to get mentally tougher for games against the league’s top teams. "We get a goal or two scored against us and it’s tough for them to battle through it," he said. "We’re very fragile in that aspect. I think it’s because we haven’t strung together a lot of wins. They don’t understand that we have to work harder when we get down a goal. There’s not enough confidence from some of the guys on the team." Fernandez continued to hold a hot stick Sunday afternoon, netching a hat trick to lead his team to a convincing 5-1 over the Toronto Flyers. "The 6-27, 181 pound forward got his team on the scoreboard in the waning seconds of the first period when he tipped a shot from the blueline by his teammate Logan Baille into the net past Toronto goalie Lucas DiRinzo. In the second period Shane Kaplan tacked in a rebound past DiRinzo to put the Preds up 2-0, just two minutes before Fernandez let rip a hot shot from the face-off circle to beat the Flyers’ goal- tender on his blocker side. Georgy Kholomovs then gave the Preds a 4-0 lead when he capitalized on a loose puck near the Toronto crease. Fernandez completed his hat trick when he took a pass from teammate Declan Fogarty from behind the net and quickly let go a wrist shot to record his first NCAA goal. "I had some familiar fac-es in the crowd Sunday," said Fernandez. "My girlfriend Erin and her family were there watching the game. It was so nice to be able to get three goals in front of them, to put on a show." Outside of hockey, Fernandez is working at Pro Hockey Life, a hockey store in Oakville. "It’s a really cool job and it’s been a lot of fun," he said. "My girlfriend and I signed up for, to be a student athlete. That’s what you have to do. The team’s been great, the school’s been great. I’m handling it really well right now."
Under 18s bring home surprise gold

Mike Balsom  
The Local

Head coach Devon Neudorf never would have predicted his Niagara-on-the-Lake Wolves U18 team would leave last weekend’s Bob Merkley Memorial Regional Silver Stick tournament in Midland with the championship.

The local rep team went undefeated through five games in the three-day B-level tournament, topping their pool with two shutouts and a tie. They followed that with a 3-1 win in the semi-final against the Parry Sound Shamrocks Sunday morning, then bettered the South Muskoka Bears by the same score to take home the gold.

South Muskoka and Parry Sound were ranked numbers one and two provincially heading into the weekend.

“I’m kind of at a loss for words to some degree,” Neudorf says. “I’m really proud of how the boys all stepped up and got the job done at the end of the day. There’s a lot of talent on this team and it really came down to the attitude and the effort that they came up with.”

Neudorf credits an all-around team performance for the weekend’s success. Those first two shutout games, 2-0 over the Norfolk Knights and 4-0 against the Penetang Flames, actually capped a string of five games, going back to their previous three Niagara District League wins, during which goaltenders Quinten Davis and Braden Sawyer did not give up a goal.

“They were dominating on the ice,” says Neudorf. “The boys really controlled both of those games. We gave up maybe 20 shots against Nor- folk, and maybe 15 against Penetang. We really locked down on defence, they really bought into doing all the little things right.”

Offensively, 11 members of the 19-man roster put points on the scoreboard during the weekend, Dylan Price leading the way with five goals and two assists. Not only did Price lead the Wolves in goals and points but he also topped all tournament participants in both categories.

“We say it often in the room and on the bench when we get into these tight games,” Neudorf says, “that we need everyone to get going. But there comes a point when you’re down a goal or tied, and you need your best players to be your best players. Dylan really did that, he brought his A-game all weekend.”

The Wolves faced off against South Muskoka in their third game and came out with a 3-3 tie Saturday night with Davies between the pipes.

Davis backstopped them to a 3-1 victory in the semi-final Sunday morning, and Neudorf and his fellow coaches decided to keep him in net for the championship rematch with the Bears that afternoon, considering that he had already effectively faced the team in round robin play.

South Muskoka took an early 1-0 lead but Davis shut the door the rest of the way. Price found the net to tie it up, then Calo Zamhto took a pass at the point from Devin Hunter and ripped a shot through a screen to beat the Bears’ goaltender. Zambito added an empty-net goal to seal the 3-1 victory and capture the trophy.

The victory qualifies the Wolves for the International Silver Stick finals scheduled for Jan. 5 to 7 in Forest, Ontario. By Monday afternoon Neudorf had already booked hotel rooms for the team for that weekend.

“Niagara-on-the-Lake hasn’t won a Silver Stick since 2010-11,” claims Neudorf. “That’s 13 years.”

For now, it’s back to Niagara District League play for the Wolves. They’ll try to extend their win streak, if not their shutout streak as well, this Wednesday evening against Pelham at Virgin’s Meridian Credit Union Arena.

“Mr. Neudorf feels their first trip away as a team has made them a better, more confi- dent team, having removed the imposter syndrome they faced heading into a tourna- ment against the province’s top-ranked programs. "It was an incredible weekend for the boys," Neu- dorf concludes. "Not just on the ice, too. It was also great to come closer together as a group, everyone in the same hotel for the weekend. I know we can compete against any- one in the province, and we proved it this weekend.”

**SPORTS**

Mike Balsom  
The Local

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“We say it often in the room and on the bench when we get into these tight games,” Neudorf says, “that we need everyone to get going. But there comes a point when you’re down a goal or tied, and you need your best players to be your best players. Dylan really did that, he brought his A-game all weekend.”

The Wolves faced off against South Muskoka in their third game and came out with a 3-3 tie Saturday night with Davies between the pipes.

Davis backstopped them to a 3-1 victory in the semi-final Sunday morning, and Neudorf and his fellow coaches decided to keep him in net for the championship rematch with the Bears that afternoon, considering that he had already effectively faced the team in round robin play.

South Muskoka took an early 1-0 lead but Davis shut the door the rest of the way. Price found the net to tie it up, then Calo Zamhto took a pass at the point from Devin Hunter and ripped a shot through a screen to beat the Bears’ goaltender. Zambito added an empty-net goal to seal the 3-1 victory and capture the trophy.

The victory qualifies the Wolves for the International Silver Stick finals scheduled for Jan. 5 to 7 in Forest, Ontario. By Monday afternoon Neudorf had already booked hotel rooms for the team for that weekend.

“Niagara-on-the-Lake hasn’t won a Silver Stick since 2010-11,” claims Neudorf. “That’s 13 years.”

For now, it’s back to Niagara District League play for the Wolves. They’ll try to extend their win streak, if not their shutout streak as well, this Wednesday evening against Pelham at Virgin’s Meridian Credit Union Arena.

“Mr. Neudorf feels their first trip away as a team has made them a better, more confident team, having removed the imposter syndrome they faced heading into a tournament against the province’s top-ranked programs. “It was an incredible weekend for the boys," Neudorf concludes. “Not just on the ice, too. It was also great to come closer together as a group, everyone in the same hotel for the weekend. I know we can compete against anyone in the province, and we proved it this weekend.”
CELLOPHANE

Crossword and Sudoku

Celebration of Erika’s Eternal Life

Erika Dyck would like to let you know she is absent from her body and present with her Lord. Her life lived with faith on earth was completed November 25th, 2023. Gone home to be with her creator forever now with her Savior. We thank him for the gift of Erika.

She spent 80 years on this earth, leaving behind her husband Vic of 60 years, two daughters, Carrie and Chrissy, and their pride and joy granddaughters, Riah, Autumn and Georgia. She loved and was loved by her family, friends and her clients. As missed as she will be, we know her peace has been found in Heaven.

We invite all those who loved Erika to come and celebrate Erika’s Eternal Life on Friday, December 1st, at Caroline Cellars from 2-5 pm. Address: 1010 Line 2, Virgil.

Online condolences at www.tailmanfuneralhomes.ca.

Obituary

Reimer, Ingrid Anna Edith (nee Rahn) — It is with great sadness that we announce that our mother, Ingrid Reimer passed away peacefully at the Niagara Health Hospital in St. Catharines on Tuesday November 21, 2023 at the age of 93. She is survived by her daughters Marlene (Arthur) Moyer and Doris (Kelly) Kennedy. Beloved grandmother of Krista, Laura, Karen, Lisa (Nick), Sean (Sheida) and Robert (Brandy). Precious great grandmother to Abigail and William. She is also survived by brother Manfred (Maria) Rahn. Ingrid is predeceased by her husband Gerhard, daughter Evelyn and son-in-law Jim. She is also predeceased by brothers Werner and Guenther Rahn. Mom was born in Goldau, Kreis Rosenberg, West Prussia and immigrated to Canada in 1950. She and dad settled in Niagara and made their life farming for which we are forever grateful.

As per Mom’s wishes, a small, private family service has taken place. The family would also like to extend their appreciation to the nurses, caregivers and doctors at the St. Catharines Niagara Health Hospital.

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Sudoku solution from November 22, 2023

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

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Art students brush up on skills in friendly competition

Laura Secord Secondary School students Gab Griffin, Remy Armstrong-Juhlke and Janneke Stokely were the home team in the annual DSBN Art Battle last Thursday. Though they didn’t place in the top three, they all enjoyed the high-pressure experience of creating a piece of art in a limited time frame. Teams of three gathered at the school’s cafeteria to receive five random prompts, three of which they were to use as their theme in creating an original artwork within three hours. The Secord team’s prompts were glasses, Grandma’s ashes, and dumbo octopus, which led to a very interesting final canvas.

The team from Governor Simcoe Secondary School took top prize, while E.L. Crossley was chosen as the runner-up. Westlane Secondary was the third-place winner. The competition, entitled Juxtapose, was organized by Secord art teacher Jen Bolan as an opportunity for students to challenge their own creative thinking and meet fellow students with similar interests. The competition was judged by working artists from outside of the school system using criteria chosen collectively by the students. The art will be on display in the Laura Secord cafeteria for the remainder of this week before moving on to the atrium at the DSBN Education Centre at 191 Carlton Street in St. Catharines.

Every corner of the Laura Secord cafeteria was filled with student artists. (Photos by Mike Balsom)