

# Mayor's Report

**Tuesday, March 28, 2023**



## **TOP HAT CEREMONY**

We were thrilled to have about 150 people with us last Wednesday morning at the annual Top Hat ceremony as we celebrated the reopening of the Welland Canal and the first downbound vessel of the 2023 shipping season. This year marks the St. Lawrence Seaway's 65<sup>th</sup> navigation season in this canal.

The McKeil Marine Florence Spirit arrived two hours after the ceremony, but everyone understood that ships do not run like trains, on schedules to the exact minute.

Kevin Echlin and his team were up before dawn making pancakes for all of us, served with coffee, tea and hot chocolate by Jane Nigh and Nancy Salvage of the Port Colborne Fair Trade Committee. Many thanks to them, and to City staff who were also on bright and early to set up all the tents, tables, and a warming blaze in the fire pit.

On her first anniversary as the museum's assistant curator, Tami Nail presented the top hat to Captain Michael Rodaway, who came off the ship for a few minutes to sign the official registry and pose for photos to commemorate the day. We wish him and his crew, and all vessels through the canal, a safe and successful season.

Thank you to Corey Dutcher representing MP Vance Badawey, Mike Haines for MPP Jeff Burch, Regional Councillor Fred Davies, Wainfleet Mayor Brian Grant, and Jeff Bolan, canal supervisor with the St. Lawrence Seaway, for their

thoughtful speeches about the canal and its impact on our city. Many thanks also to Town Crier Tom Pekar, to Renee Bisson for leading us in our national anthem, and to the Rev. Jody Balint for blessing all mariners.

## **EASTER BUNNY**

Calling all children to the Promenade along West Street to welcome the Easter Bunny to Port Colborne. He'll sail in on the deck of the JW Cooper tug boat in the Welland Canal at about 10am on Saturday, April 8.

Then it's hippety-hoppity for everyone to the Vale Health and Wellness Centre for an Easter Egg hunt at 11am. It will be great to see all the children at Vale, Saturday, April 8, for crafts, activities and more. All of the details are available on our website.

## **YOUNG MAN IN PUBLIC SPEAKING AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

Each year 150 young students from across Ontario are selected to participate in Ontario's Legislative Page Program. The unique educational program for Ontario students provides an opportunity to experience the provincial legislature in action and forge new lifelong friendships with peers from all over the province.

The program is designed for outgoing, high-achieving, community-involved students who have demonstrated responsibility and leadership. Legislative Pages meet key parliamentary and political figures, and learn first-hand about Ontario's Parliament and the legislative process.

Randall Marsh, a 13-year-old A-student at Ecole St. Joseph, has been chosen to serve as a page in the four-week program at Queen's Park.

Randall is a bright young man with an optimistic future. He's one step away from provincial competition in Legion public speaking. Having recently succeeded at the school and branch levels, for his speech about Harriett Tubman and the Underground Railroad, Randall was chosen to advance to zone competition.

We know you'll do well, young man. Public speaking is no simple task, nor is public service. But both are incredibly rewarding. We wish you all the best in your public speaking, and in your public service in our provincial capital.

### **TASK FORCE ON HEALTHCARE SERVICES**

Access to quality healthcare services in Port Colborne continues to be top of mind for many residents. As I have shared in my Mayor's Report at previous Council meetings, I continue to meet with elected officials and other key stakeholders to ensure this issue stays on the radar.

To make sure residents of Port Colborne have a voice in this important issue, I am also striking a task force to focus on healthcare services in our community. The task force will have front-line workers, primary care workers, doctors, nurses, seniors, patients and more.

Right now, I'm still in the process of putting this group together. If you are interested in participating, please let me know by sending a letter of interest to my office at [mayoradmin@portcolborne.ca](mailto:mayoradmin@portcolborne.ca)

There will be more on the task force in the weeks to come.