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## Local woman swims across Lake Ontario

By **LISA TALLYN**  
Staff Writer

Local swimmer Colleen Shields has had her share of disappointments in Lake Ontario, but that wasn't the case this past weekend.

Shields, 62, of Georgetown entered the lake at 9:35 p.m. Friday at Queen's Royal Park Niagara-on-the-Lake and 21 hours and 33 minutes later she touched the shore at Toronto's Marilyn Bell Park— earning her the distinction of being the oldest person to swim across Lake Ontario—the same week that 14-year-old Trinity Arsenault became the youngest person to make the swim.

"I feel wonderful, and I am definitely, definitely retired," said Shields, who now has made three successful crossings of the lake, once in 1999 and another in 2006. In 2006 she became the oldest woman to conquer the lake at the age of 54.

Since succeeding in 2006, Shields has at-

tempted to make the 52 km crossing again, but was unsuccessful— often due to inclement weather— but that streak ended on the weekend.

"I couldn't let it go, I had to finish it before I could retire happily," said Shields.

She says while her crossing time was significantly longer than her 2006 time of 16.5 hours, this swim "wasn't about time, it was about touching the wall and finishing."

"Mother Nature finally cut me some slack. I think I had the best weekend of the entire summer; it was flat calm for about three hours," said Shields, who was accompanied by a boat crew. Water temperature was perfect, she said, at about 21C (70F).

Shields, who trained for a year for the swim, was progressing well until she became very ill for several hours throughout the night, which along with the fact the wind had picked up resulting in one-to-two foot waves, slowed

See **SHIELDS**, pg. 9

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