



NOTLers send books to Jamaican elementary schools | Page 3

Dig by the docks reveals 'menagerie' of historical artifacts

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

An archeological dig at the site next to the King George III Inn has turned up a trove of artifacts from

over a century ago, painting a vague picture of life by the Niagara River from a time gone by.

Mike Pitul, an archeologist with Detritus Consulting Ltd., says the old hotel at 61 Melville St.

in Niagara-on-the-Lake has been resting on a "plethora" of historical artifacts.

This dig was part of a larger process of preparing the site for a potential condominium development, that would replace the inn

on the site once known as the American Hotel.

Originally, Pitul and his team went in looking for the structural remains of the Niagara Harbour and Dock Company's warehouses, he said.

The company operated from 1831 to the late 1840s, according to the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Over the course of a seven-day archeological dig, which started on Aug. 8, the team did find

some remnants of the warehouses, Pitul said.

However, ceramic household items comprised the majority of the artifacts.

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Rainbow crosswalk vandalism part of troubling trend: Experts

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A small stretch of painted pavement has become the site of a symbolic battle in Niagara-on-the-Lake

The town's new rainbow crosswalk was targeted by vandals for a fourth time in early August. This time they left a message on the painted asphalt reading "Die f- -gs," and "f- -k gay people."

The letters BLM were written as well, presumably referring to the social justice movement, Black Lives Matter.

Attacks on LGBTQ+ symbols like these are not unique to NOTL. They are playing out on a national scale.

A report from Statistics Canada shows police-reported hate crimes targeting people's sexual orientation rose to 423 in 2021 from 265 in 2019.

That's about a 60 per cent increase in two years.

Continued on Page 6

Swimmer conquers the river again

This time with his hands tied, Dylan Rumsey swims for Pathstone



Dylan Rumsey and 13-year-old Liam Berry emerge from Lake Ontario after swimming the Niagara River on Saturday. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Julia Sacco | The Lake Report

Dylan Rumsey swam 12 kilometres down the Niagara River on Saturday – with his hands tied.

"It was definitely easier than expected," said Rumsey, who completed his second annual

swim in around two hours and 30 minutes.

He didn't do it all alone, though.

Thirteen-year-old Liam Berry decided to join Rumsey, 26, in his support of Pathstone Mental

Health, but kept his hands free.

"Well, I saw him do it last year and I was just amazed," Berry told The Lake Report.

He explained that one day while he was out for ice cream with family friend Rumsey, they

decided they would swim from the Queenston Boat Launch to Queen's Royal Beach together.

"Bringing Liam out is a prime example of just believing in

Continued on Page 16

NOTL crew races to glory in Shark regatta – winning by a foot

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

After almost a week of racing on Lake Ontario, the Shark World Championship in Niagara-on-the-Lake was decided by the narrowest of

margins.

Less than one foot. And a single point.

After 10 races over six days, the regatta came down to the finale on Friday.

In the last race, Crunch, with the NOTL Sailing

Club's Josh Wiwcharyk, Chris Clarke and Alex Letchford aboard, nosed out a Sarnia crew by barely a foot.

That gave the Wiwcharyk's team fifth spot in the race and just enough

points to edge fellow NOTLers Levi, Jacob and Malcolm Harper for the overall championship.

The Harper brothers' boat, Rampant, ended the final race in second place and second overall in the

regatta.

The top two crews were so evenly matched over the week that only a single point separated them in the end.

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NOTLers send books to Jamaican schools

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A few Niagara-on-the-Lake residents are giving students in Jamaica the gift of reading — one book at a time.

Over the coming weeks, more than 3,300 donated books will be en route to six schools in Jamaica.

"I believe literacy is something that really holds the world up," said Betty Knight, one of the organizers of the project.

On Monday, 32 boxes of books were secured to pallets and stored in farmer Abe Epp's packing barn.

Soon, the boxes will be picked up by Food For The Poor Canada, a charitable organization that aims to improve the lives of people across the Caribbean and Latin America.

Dave Hunter, Tracey Dau and Stuart McCormick, as well as Coun. Gary Burroughs, were among those who were part of Monday's process.

Literacy has always been important to Knight and she believes everybody should have the opportunity to learn how to read and write.

She recalled how, on her 50th birthday, she was in Sierra Leone, West Africa, helping to build a school.

"That journey taught me that building a building, it's just a building. It's what's inside that building that counts," she said.

Knight has been leading this project with Hunter for four years now.

The two met while serving on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library's board from 2018 to 2022.

They were inspired by Epp, who decided he wanted to help bring literacy to more schools in Jamaica after visiting a school during a trip to the island many years ago.



Students at Half Way Tree Primary School in Jamaica with some of the books sent from NOTL last year. SUPPLIED

Knight and Hunter decided to build on this idea, got Epp involved and started collecting books.

The most recent data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics shows that in 2014, Jamaica's adult literacy rate — the share of adults aged 15 and older who can read and write — was 88.1 per cent.

That a rate has been increasing over the years — in 1999, adult literacy was just 79.9 per cent.

They reached out to libraries across the region to see what they did with their discarded books and if they would contribute.

Libraries in NOTL, Grimsby, Fort Erie and Welland provided books that otherwise would have been given away.

For the last few years, Hunter and Knight have been working with professors Hope Mayne and Leonie Clarke from the University of Technology in Kingston, Jamaica.

Together, the pair pick out schools in Jamaica, typically in rural areas, that are in

need of supplies.

After that, Food For The Poor Canada — with whom Hunter and Knight have been working for two years — picks up the boxes and ships them to Jamaica. Once there, Food For The Poor Jamaica delivers them to the schools.

Other people in NOTL are contributing in their own ways. Andrew Niven from Konzelmann Estate Winery, for example, donated the boxes in which the books are packed, Knight said.

This year, six of the 32 boxes will be going to Hague Primary and Infant School thanks to Dau, who's also a volunteer at the Farmworker Hub in Virgil.

About five years ago, Dau volunteered at the Peach Pickers Picnic for farmworkers, where she met five Jamaican workers.

They're all very close friends still, she said.

When she visited two of them this past January in Jamaica, she met one of their daughters who works in the education system.

The woman reached out to

Dau a few months later and explained that her school, Hague Primary and Infant School, doesn't have a library.

She asked Dau if she would help bring in proper supplies and books so that they can build one.

Dau didn't hesitate and started to collect as many books and supplies as she could — and she was very successful.

She reached out to the Buy Nothing Niagara-on-the-Lake Facebook group and ended up getting boxes of donations, she said.

"I think it ended up being like 500 or 600 books, and then somebody donated — I want to say it was — almost 40 brand new sets of Crayola pencil crayons," she said.

She also got dozens of notebooks, pens and pencils to send over.

However, she wasn't sure how to get the supplies to Jamaica until another volunteer told her about Knight.

"I reached out to her and she was more than happy to help out," said Dau.

During Knight's volunteer work in Sierra Leone, she said she was able to see the difference reading makes in people's lives.

"Even bringing books into schools, these kids then take the books home. And it may be the only time any kind of written material arrives inside their home," she said.

Literacy in developing nations countries is different than it is here, Knight said.

Data from the Institute for Statistics shows the countries where adult literacy rates are 60 per cent or less are primarily in West and Central Africa and South Asia.

She hopes to help give more people, including adults, the opportunity to read, noting, "You can change the world, not the whole world, but the part you touch."

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Title of world champ comes down to **one foot**

Continued from Front Page

Points are awarded based on a boat's finish in each race and the Crunch ended the regatta with 57 to Rampant's 58, a razor-thin margin.

Third place overall, with 69 points, was Rocket Appliance and the team of Dave Castle, Dane Broe and Jessica Broe-Vayda from the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club.

And the Amicus, crewed by NOTL sailors Mark Schantz, Dave Schantz and Ken Greer won the regatta's 25-kilometre long-distance race and received the Bill Metzger Trophy.

The George Hinterhoeller Award, named for the man who invented the Shark in NOTL, was presented to Jinnie Gordon for her commitment to promoting women's sailing and for her dedication to the Shark class.

"The trophy has not been awarded since 2014," Wiwcharyk told The Lake Report.

Crews from the host Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club performed well all week, regatta chair Rod Gardner said.

In all, 48 crews participated in the 56th world championships, coming from Austria, Germany, the United States and Canada.

Thirteen different Sharks were raced by 43 members of the NOTL Sailing Club, Gardner said.

As well, "there were over 50 volunteers needed to run the daily program," he said.

Sharks, which were first built by George Hinterhoeller in NOTL in 1959, "remain the most prolific keel boat in Canada," Wiwcharyk said.

"The boats have proven highly durable and are highly scrutinized to ensure 'level' racing and fair competition according to World Sailing specifications," he added.

"The class continues to attract high-quality veteran and youth sailors looking for great racing and a great community," he said.



PHOTO GALLERY
See more pictures at niagaranow.com



Top: Regatta chair Rod Gardner, with world champions Chris Clarke, Alex Letchford and skipper Josh Wiwcharyk. Bottom left: Jinnie Gordon, honoured for helping boost women's involvement in sailing, celebrates receiving the Hinterhoeller award. Middle: Members of NOTL's world champion team, sailors Alex Letchford, Josh Wiwcharyk and Chris Clarke, arrive back on shore Friday. Right: NOTL's Harper brothers, Levi, Jacob and Malcolm, celebrate their second-place finish in the world championships. DAVE VAN DE LAAR/JIM SCHACHT

Minimal waste for world shark sailing tournament

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

One week, 48 boats and only two bags of garbage.

Thanks to Sailor for the Sea's Clean Regatta protocols, this year's Shark World Championship in Niagara-on-the-Lake was able to be as eco-friendly as possible.

Laurel Gordon, who

spearhead this initiative on behalf of the NOTL Sailing Club, said that she had been wanting to implement more eco-friendly behaviours when she came across Sailor for the Sea.

Gordon explained that as sailors, they don't use a lot of fuel in their boats and rely on the wind – so, why not go as green as possible?

"My goal was just to have everything reusable, recyclable or compostable. So, when Sailor for the Sea came to light, I thought, 'This is the perfect program. Let's just adopt all the measures that we possibly can,'" she said.

The most vital step was securing compostable containers for meals, she said,

which they served two of each day.

"Border City Papers in Niagara Falls carries a wonderful line of compostable dishes and cutlery, so that was a natural choice to go with them," she said.

Along with compostable dishes, cutlery and cups, the sailing club also provided filtered water with the "wa-

ter wagon," reusable drinking vessels and an increased number of compost bins in the surrounding area.

"We let all the competitors know ahead of time so that they didn't come unprepared," she said.

Gordon said that for big events, the sailing club hopes to continue to follow the protocols.



Laurel Gordon holds one of the bags of compost.

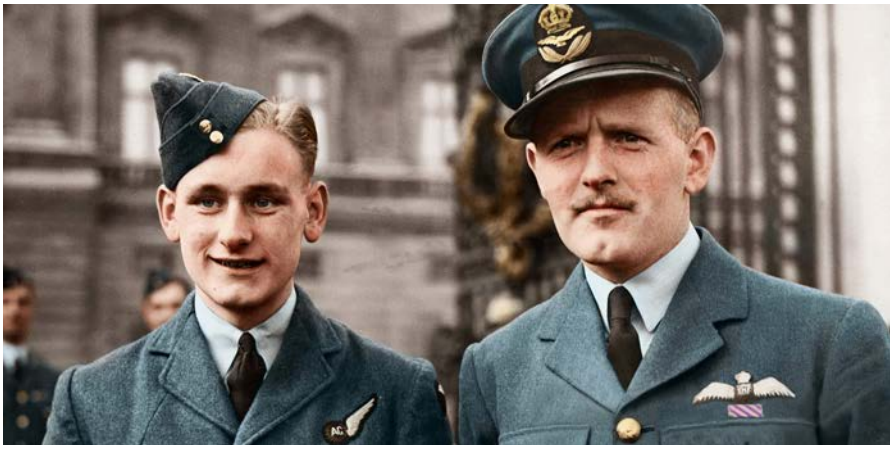


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Left: Sgt. John Hannah and Flying Officer Clare Connor at their medal investiture ceremony. Right: Clare Connor and his wife Betty leave his Distinguished Flying Cross investiture at Buckingham Palace.

MISSING IN ACTION

‘Outstanding coolness, courage and devotion to duty’

In both world wars, there were men killed in action or who died in service who had a connection with Niagara-on-the-Lake but for various reasons were not commemorated on either the memorial clock tower cenotaph in Old Town or the Niagara Township war memorial in Queenston. In some cases, they lived for only a brief time in Niagara and had no family here when the monuments were built. In other instances, they had lived near McNab, not then part of NOTL or Niagara Township. While their names are not read out at the ceremonies at these monuments on Remembrance Day, they too should be remembered.

Ron Dale
Special to The Lake Report

Clare Connor had a relatively brief association with Niagara-on-the-Lake.

He is remembered in the history of the Niagara-on-the-Lake branch of the Royal Canadian Legion in its 1987 publication, "Sixty Years of Remembrance," by Cathy Macdonald, Idella Serafini and Sue Swayze.

Connor is listed among those who were residents of NOTL "immediately prior to enlisting."

Born in Toronto on May 10, 1913, he was the youngest son of consulting engineer Arthur Connor and his wife Florence Grace Harris.

Connor received a sound education and on graduation from the University of Toronto he became a book-keeper.

He wanted to be an air force pilot and, in 1937, as Nazi Germany was becoming increasingly aggressive, war seemed imminent.

He tried to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force but he was told he was too old and the maximum age of recruits was 21. The RCAF was a small organization at that point and joining before the war was difficult.

Connor was determined and decided to sail to England and try to join the Royal Air Force, which

accepted recruits under the age of 25.

Armed with a copy of a new birth certificate signed by his mother, listing his birth year as 1914, Connor was able to arrange to work his passage to England aboard a cattle boat in January 1938.

His brother Desmond was living in England at the time and his sister Frances had moved to England in 1937 so he had relatives to stay with on his arrival. Both Desmond and Fran served in the Second World War.

Clare was accepted in the RAF and excelled in his training – but he may have also concealed the fact he was 25. His death record listed him as being 21 in 1940.

When he completed initial training on multi-engine aircraft on July 9, 1938, he was promoted to acting pilot officer.

He was confirmed as a pilot officer on Oct. 3, 1939, on receipt of his wings, and assigned to the 83rd Squadron, RAF, flying Hampden twin-engine bombers.

He met Elizabeth Cave Collier at a pub in Bridgewater, Somersetshire, near his airbase at Westonzoyland and the couple fell in love.

They were married on March 16, 1940, and in August they moved to

Brattleby, near the RAF base of Scrampton where Connor's squadron was posted.

It was a nerve-racking time for Betty Connor, pregnant with their first and only child. Three nights each week the Hampden bombers climbed into the sky, destined for targets in Holland and Germany.

No doubt Betty listened for the sounds of the returning aircraft, acutely aware when fewer landed than had taken off earlier in the night.

On the night of Sept. 15, Connor flew his Hampden bomber on a raid over Antwerp. The bomber was heavily damaged by flak (anti-aircraft artillery) and caught fire.

Two of the four crew members bailed out.

The fire was so intense that part of the aluminum deck of the aircraft melted and the ammunition for the machine guns started to explode.

Connor remained at the controls while the radio operator, Sgt. John Hannah fought the flames.

Miraculously, Connor was able to nurse the plane back to base. For that incredible act of bravery, Hannah was awarded the Victoria Cross while Connor received the Distinguished Flying Cross and also was promoted to flying officer.

On Nov. 4, 1940, on the return from a successful bombing raid on Kiel, Germany, his plane was once more hit by flak and heavily damaged.

Again, Connor tried to fly the stricken aircraft back to England, but this time his luck ran out just short of his goal.

He crashed into the sea off Spurn Head, Yorkshire. His body was recovered and buried at St. Cuthbert Church in Brattleby.

Betty Connor gave birth to a daughter and named her Clare, after her late husband. When it was safe to travel, in 1945, Betty took Clare to Canada and eventually remarried. She died in Montreal in 2018.

She would never forget her heroic first husband who showed, according to his Distinguished Flying Cross citation, "outstanding coolness, courage and devotion to duty."

Her sacrifice should also be remembered and honoured..

On the heels of The Lake Report's 53-part "Monuments Men" series, which exhaustively documented the story of every soldier commemorated on the town's two cenotaphs, Ron Dale's "Missing in Action" stories profile Niagara-on-the-Lake soldiers who died in wartime but are not listed on the town's monuments.

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Rainbow crosswalk vandalism part of **troubling trend**, experts say

Continued from Front Page

According to a report published in June by the U.S. Anti-Defamation League, there were 356 documented extremist – and non-extremist – incidents against the LGBTQ+ community in the United States from June 2022 to this past April.

Of those incidents, 305 were harassment, 40 were vandalism and 11 were assaults.

Just as the symbols of the LGBTQ+ community are targeted with hate, so too are its people.

For the first three months of 2023 Egale, a Canada-wide LGBTQ+ advocacy group, documented 6,423 instances of online hate messaging and anti-trans protests targeted at the community.

Many of the posts documented by the group can be read on its webpage for the Pride Unravelling project.

Egale describes the targeted harassment as a “rising tide of hate” which can “no longer be ignored.”

Community activists and diversity experts contend the targeting of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s crosswalk isn’t just part of a national trend, but a historical one.

Margot Francis, an associate professor at Brock University’s centre for women’s and gender studies, said a lot of anti-trans talking points are nothing new.

“These ideas have circulated for a long time, probably a couple of centuries,” Francis said.

One argument often marched onto the political stage is that educating children about LGBTQ+ identities is a form of child grooming, pedophilia or indoctrination.

Francis remembers when she co-founded a student advocacy program called Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia in 1993 – much of the rhetoric stemmed from Christian groups.

“There was a lot of mobilization by Christian parents against the idea of human rights for LGBT students,” she said.

Francis said conservative religions “never actually followed the larger societal trends,” even as the LG-



Left: Joshua Russell, co-chair of OUTniagara. Above: Dr. Samah Sabra, Niagara College’s manager of workplace diversity, equity and inclusion. She said hate groups typically are loudest when social activists are making the most gains. SUPPLIED

BTQ+ community gained more acceptance.

She said the groomer narrative has “come back with a vengeance.”

“There is an authoritarian kind of string that is gaining more popularity and legitimacy throughout the Western world,” she added.

The York Catholic District School Board’s decision not to raise the pride flag in May was a “super troubling” example of the authoritarian shift in politics, she said.

In her work as a professor, Francis said she hears “over and over again” about the “lack of any kind of comprehensive sex education” in Catholic schools.

More locally, Natalia Benoit, a school trustee for the Catholic board representing Niagara-on-the-Lake, also tried to pass a policy that would have prohibited schools from raising the Pride flag.

Benoit’s motion framed the policy change as an attempt to “promote education instead of indoctrination.”

The motion made an exception for the Catholic faith after proposing a prohibition on employees advocating for students on “any partisan, political or social policy issue.”

A spokesperson for the Catholic school board of Niagara said the board does not support Benoit’s view.

The People’s Party of Canada, led by Maxime

Bernier, also frames LG-BTQ+ activism as indoctrination.

On its policy page, the far-right party frames itself as the protector of women and children, just as it frames LGBTQ+ activism as a threat to those same groups.

“I think people here in Canada are emboldened by what they see in the United States.”

JOSHUA RUSSELL
CO-CHAIR, OUTNIAGARA

Bernier’s tactics are similar to those of the Republican party in the United States.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis pushed through a law to prevent “classroom discussion about sexual orientation or gender identity in certain grade levels.”

Infamously dubbed the “Don’t Say Gay” law, it was somewhat less infamously called the “Anti-Grooming Bill” by DeSantis’ spokesperson Christina Pushaw on Twitter.

Pushaw said people who are against the law are probably also groomers.

Samah Sabra, director of equity, diversity and inclusion at Niagara College, said pushback like this often comes when social activists are making the most gains.

“When an equity-deserv-

ing group gains rights they have fought hard for, the gains come with increased visibility,” she said.

As minority groups like transgender people become more visible, it becomes harder for prejudiced people to ignore them, she added.

“It might feel to them like their world is changing and they are not yet ready or equipped to respond to that diversity,” she said.

The problem may be that people take comfort in the “sameness” of their neighbours, Sabra said.

And they are more likely to oppose change if they see “difference as threatening rather than enriching.”

Sabra stressed the importance of using education to combat the fear.

Joshua Russell, co-chair of OUTniagara, said the perceived increase in transgender people is best explained by increased acceptance of the community.

The activist pointed out that adults and seniors, not just kids, are coming out as trans in greater numbers.

“They see that there’s a place for them,” he said, and that makes them more comfortable about coming out.

Russell, an openly gay man, remembers when he was young and “coming to terms” with his sexuality.

“I heard a lot about the dangers of sex education,” he said.

Growing up as a gay man, there was much fear over the AIDS epidemic and

much worry about the gay community indoctrinating children into the “promiscuous gay lifestyle,” he said.

Russell said the fear that children are “under threat” from the LGBTQ+ community is a “false narrative.”

And the groomer narrative is an easy way to attract support, too.

“No matter who you are, you might agree that children are worthy of protection,” Russell said.

But he thinks the threat is greater when children are not allowed to freely express themselves.

A report from the Canadian Medical Association supports Russell’s view.

The study involving 6,800 adolescents found that transgender kids are five times more likely to think about suicide and 7.6 times more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual kids.

The authors of the report said transgender kids receiving gender-affirming therapy think about suicide at a similar rate to non-transgender kids.

Gender-affirming care, according to the Canadian Paediatric Society, may include psychiatric counseling, hormone replacement therapy and gender-affirming surgery.

Gender-affirming surgery is a sex change operation and it is the target of much concern by right-wing political pundits.

For example, the People’s Party of Canada refers to

gender-affirming surgery as “mutilation” and argues any form of sexual reassignment surgery should be unavailable to minors.

The Canadian Paediatric Society, however, points out that these surgeries are restricted to people who are 18 years and older.

Francis explained the fixation on transgender people best.

“Trans people, especially, have become a larger-than-life symbol for what social conservatives seem to describe as a world upside down,” Francis said.

They are also easy to target, she added.

While some news pundits have argued that anti-trans bigotry is filtering into the Canadian media system through American media, Russell thinks the hate has always been here at home.

“I think people here in Canada are emboldened by what they see in the United States,” he added, pointing to the People’s Party as an example of how American political trends can get picked up in Canada

However, Russell also argued that Canada’s multi-party political system somewhat insulates the country from discriminatory legislation like the “Don’t Say Gay” bill.

He argued that while there are probably plenty of people in Canada who would support anti-trans legislation, they haven’t amassed the power to make an impact at the federal level.

When The Lake Report informally surveyed the community in late 2021 about how they felt about the crosswalk, a slim majority of respondents were in favour at 51 per cent.

Another 5.8 per cent said they did not care and 42.8 per cent said they were against it.

Despite Russell’s optimism, he is concerned the rhetoric of the People’s Party will give momentum to hate movements – opening the door for people who may hold similar views.

“I don’t think we should be complacent,” he said.

“These small symbols of hate are certainly indication that there are people out there who would support such policies.”



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Dig by the docks reveals 'menagerie' of historical artifacts

Continued from Front Page

"It's really a menagerie of artifacts spanning, quite probably, a good 100 years or more," he said.

He cited pots, plates, glass bottles and the remains of wooden chests and barrels among the findings.

One of his team members found a sipping cap for a baby's bottle amongst the ruins.

Everything they find at digs like these tells a "piece of the story," Pitul, who's been in archeology for 13 years, added.

That story, however, is in the early stages of being told: Pitul said he and his team still have to assess everything they uncovered and he couldn't get too specific about their findings.

Blythwood Homes is the real estate developer that bought the Melville Street site in June 2021, with plans to build a condo, subject to town council's approval.

Rob Mills, president of Blythwood Homes, said the dig has drawn considerable



Bottles, teapots and ceramic shards of all shapes and sizes are just a few of the historical artifacts recovered from underneath the parking lot of the King George III Inn. Mike Pitul, the archeologist contracted to do dig up the parking lot, described the findings as a "menagerie of artifacts" SUPPLIED



interest from neighbours.

"Residents keep crossing into the archeological site wanting to take pictures," he said.

Mills said his staff had to keep the area gated off to the safety hazard posed by the heavy machinery used during the dig.

August's dig was the fourth stage in a series of archeological assessments the developer was conducting.

Not all development sites require a stage four dig.

However, Pitul learned in the first three stages that

the site had "quite a lot of historical euro-Canadian material," due to the harbour and dock company once using the land as a warehouse site.

According to the Ontario Heritage Trust, which works to conserve and protect Ontario's historical sites and landmarks, the company employed over 400 people and was one of the busiest ports in Upper Canada when it peaked in the 1830s.

After salvaging as much historically significant material as Pitul could,

the Melville Street condominium is ready to move onto the next stage, he said.

Archeological digs are "part of the planning process," he said, and don't usually cause delays for developers.

They allow people enough time to salvage anything they can find and learn as much as possible from the site before anything gets destroyed by future development.

"You cannot do any construction or anything prior to having

the archeological dig completed," Mills said.

But he also thought it would be smart to start early in case they found something with "high significance" during the dig. That way, his team could deal with it properly before moving on to construction.

Mills said his construction workers are filling in the holes left by the dig to prevent any potential injury to people.

He expects to present the development project to council in the fall, at which point they can move to the

next stage of the project and sort out some of the landscaping.

There may be small changes to the design after hearing input from residents and the town's advisory committees, he added.

Residents are going to see a "large landscape passageway" down Melville Street, he added, once the project is completed.

"I think it'll be a huge improvement for people walking along Melville," Mills said.



MICHELLE REYNOLDS

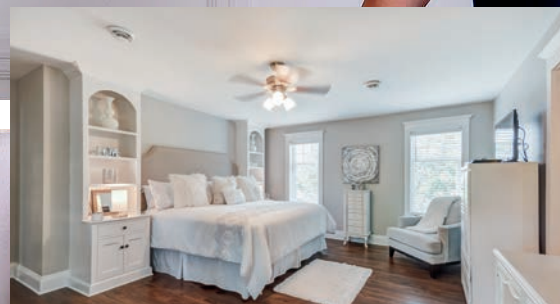
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TLR

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Contributed by Patty Garriock

“Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all.” - Emily Dickinson

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Firefighters welcome hot rods



Russell Robinson and his 1939 Chevy pickup at the Virgil Firehall car show on Sunday. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Editorial

Community-building personified

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Swimming the Niagara River from Queenston to Queen's Royal Beach is a daunting prospect at the best of times.

Those waters can be swift-moving and tricky.

The 12-kilometre journey is not for the faint of heart and to see Niagara-on-the-Lake's Dylan Rumsey tackle it successfully – twice – to raise money and awareness for Pathstone Mental Health is impressive.

To know that he literally did it this past weekend with his hands tied (!!) is phenomenal, though a bit unusual. We all enjoy a challenge, but doing what Rumsey did is really exceptional.

Kudos also to 13-year-old Liam Berry, who joined Rumsey (hands-free, though), doing it in honour of his late brother Ben Jeffries.

This kind of selfless effort and community-building is to be applauded.

They are among several similar examples of outstanding community efforts in this week's edition of The Lake Report.

Who doesn't enjoy a slice of pie? Or two?

This week, at Cornerstone Community Church on Hunter Road, 260 delicious peach pies were collected by pie lovers who, through their \$20 donations, helped to support the annual Terry Fox Run (yet another superb community event in NOTL).

The pies raised more than \$5,000, which will be contributed to Joe and Mike Pillitteri's Team Pillsy – which is aiming to raise another \$100,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation again this year. And the team hopes to top the \$1 million all-time fundraising mark.

We have no doubt they'll do that, and more, thanks to their dedication and the generosity of the community.

Meanwhile, the NOTL Sailing Club played host all last week to the Shark

World Championship, the pinnacle of competitive sailing for one of the most popular small sailboats in the world.

And, fittingly, the Shark was conceived and first created here in Niagara-on-the-Lake by George Hinterhoeller, whose son Richard was race director for the championships. Talk about your six degrees of separation.

Among other awards earned by NOTL sailors, not only local boats place first and second in an amazingly close-fought competition, but the sailing club took environmental concerns to heart and was able to feed and entertain hundreds of people over the week in a way that produced almost no garbage.

Think about that: No overflowing garbage cans like you'll typically find at many big community events.

Laurel Gordon, who headed the project for the club, aimed to ensure that everything was reusable, recyclable

or compostable. Mission accomplished.

Gordon and the sailors proved that when people take the environment to heart large undertakings like the world championship regatta could serve hundreds of meals without generating tons of trash for landfills.

It's a message many other organizations can take to heart.

And finally, thanks to Abe Epp, Dave Hunter, Betty Knight, Tracey Dau, Stuart McCormick, Coun. Gary Burroughs, Andrew Niven and others, more than 3,000 books will soon be arriving at six schools in Jamaica.

It's an important and selfless effort that no doubt will pay big dividends for the children who benefit from the donation.

Because, as Knight reminded us, we can all do our part. “You can change the world, not the whole world, but the part you touch.”

editor@niagaranow.com

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Letter of the Week

Heads up: Falling tree branches an **accident** waiting to happen

Dear editor:
I'm reminded of the untimely death of a young boy almost 20 years ago, who was killed by a falling branch while visiting the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton.

I am also aware of what happened at the San Antonio Zoo this past spring when a very large tree branch fell from a cedar elm and injured five children and two adults.

Closer to home, I'm sure that some of you may be aware that a woman in Toronto's Trinity Bellwoods Park was struck and killed by a sizeable falling tree branch in July this year.

As a matter of fact, this was the second death that has occurred in the same park due to falling tree branches.

Here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, I have been concerned for some time about a few large dead oak trees that are, to my knowledge,

either on Parks Canada or the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's property.

They are located at the confluence of John Street and the Niagara Parkway.

An accident is waiting to happen.

It's apparent that several large branches have already fallen from these trees.

Parks Canada and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake need to be more attentive to the ongoing health of the surrounding trees within the adjacent woodlot to safeguard not only the health of the trees but also the safety of the travelling public.

A systematic tree management maintenance program needs to be implemented forthwith. Regular ongoing inspections of all trees that are proximate to the public should be conducted.

In the case of Parks Canada, it should either contract the removal of



Reader John Morley is concerned these dead trees on John Street could injure or kill someone if they aren't taken down promptly. SUPPLIED

the affected dead trees or secure the services of the Niagara Parks Commission at a reimbursable cost to this provincial agency.

It would be my hope that the removal of these trees would be done in an expeditious manner before an accident occurs.

There is no excuse for inattentiveness especially when the safety of the travelling public is at risk.

Get on with the removal of these trees to avoid costly litigation expenses in the future.

John Morley
NOTL

Apartment proposal is **inappropriate**

Dear editor:
As residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake for 50-plus years, we have seen incredible development changes in our once-perfect community.

But over the years, as developers grasped the potential of profiting from those who chose to preserve and maintain this community, the quaintness and charmed ambience is shattering.

Our elected officials have to curtail the over-development of our town and resist the lure of creating excessive and expensive housing for the profit of greedy developers.

By now the community should know there is a public meeting on Sept. 12, regarding the proposed building of a 17-unit, three-storey apartment on King Street.

The building is to be tucked into a contrived lot that was assembled through three successful applications to the committee of adjustment.

Each application requested minor variances to accommodate the building of a single-family residence.

Now that the variances have been granted a multi-unit residence is planned. All that is needed is a zoning change and maybe some more minor accommodations to squeeze it in.

This proposal rings more alarm bells for overall planning directions and processes of the town.

Even though the official plan designates this area as single-family, an individual has felt confident enough to invest large sums of money, time and the skills of qualified ex-NOTL town planners to put forward this inappropriate building.

Was there not a point in time when the town staff or elected officials should have strongly advised the developer that the proposal is unacceptable? Do we now have to invest our tax dollars to use staff and the public's time to explain the obvious?

The densification in this area of town is quite intense. Within the last few years, the apple and pear orchards, the vineyards and green space that once filled the

land between King, Anne and Victoria streets have been developed into a large subdivision.

The neighbourhood school is gone and only the memories of children on the creative playground (built by parents) are but distant recollections.

We have welcomed a plethora of new neighbours. We have lived with construction vehicles, trucks with their back-up beeping, the early-morning pounding of construction and all the related inconveniences of new builds. We are intensified to the max.

In our disbelief that such a proposal is being submitted for consideration, we became more aware of the municipal governance process – and in particular, the power of the committee of adjustment (appointed by council) and its quasi-judicial powers.

Its power supersedes those of our elected officials, to the point that if council disagrees with a decision, then it has to launch a formal appeal process.

There is no elected council representative on the committee, but members receive advice from town staff.

The committee's decision is final unless council appeals it.

In the case of the King Street apartment proposal, the committee could change the official plan to accommodate a zoning change in an area that already fulfills its density and housing quotas.

These decisions can potentially be made by three unelected officials and only two of them have to be in agreement.

We strongly urge all residents to look to their neighbourhoods, backyards and empty lots. A proposal for an apartment could be coming to your street.

For detailed information about the proposal, visit the Town of NOTL site www.bit.ly/727King or email amecs96@gmail.com. Register with the clerk's office at clerks@notl.com to attend the Sept. 12 public meeting and be allowed to speak.

Jim and Erika Alexander
NOTL

Council needs to **listen** to its urban design experts

Dear editor:
Kudos to The Lake Report for providing reasoned, detailed coverage of what to me appears to be more than just "Council rejecting input from advisory committee," (Aug. 24).

Rather it seems to be a full frontal assault to diminish the role of professional input from well-qualified volunteers who sit on advisory committees to assist council and staff in deliberating and making decisions about what is good for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in the context of urban design and heritage preservation.

I am unaware of any professional designations held by any member of the current council, which leads me to believe they don't have any particular expertise in urban design or heritage issues.

Further, perhaps some-

one can explain what a hotel wedged into a residential neighbourhood has to do with Bill 23 and Bill 109, designed to presumably respond to the housing crisis?

To me this smacks of the same attitude Premier Doug Ford has exhibited in ignoring his own housing task force's recommendations and forging ahead with his ill-advised and illogical approach to the housing crisis in Ontario.

He has abdicated responsibility for protecting the Greenbelt and agricultural land in favour of sweetheart deals with some very rich developers who will profit at our expense and will likely do more damage than good for the housing of Ontarians.

Citizen advisory boards are an integral part of the checks and balances we require at the local level

to protect this most basic and engaging part of our democracy.

Perhaps Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and Deputy Lord Mayor Erwin Wiens should listen a little bit more to the advice of the well-qualified volunteers on their advisory committees and ask more challenging questions of staff in protecting their citizens' interests in responding to development proposals.

Presumably Mr. Ford and Housing Minister Steve Clark were totally unaware of what Mr. Clark's chief of staff was handing out to their developer pals, or at least didn't have independent advisers to alert them to the \$8.2-billion boondoggle?

It is interesting that the one housing development the town was sued over in the previous administration for the delays caused by the interim control by-law is

still sitting unbuilt across from the Old Winery at the entrance to Old Town.

And yet that developer has the temerity to submit a new application to modify the approvals issued for his property at Queen and Mississagua streets to allow an 81-room hotel on the site variously approved in the past for a 12-room country inn (2005) and a 24-room hotel (2007).

If our mayor and council will not stand up to the bully tactics of developers and will blithely acquiesce to Mr. Ford's and Mr. Clark's steamrolling over the municipal bedrock of democracy, we're afraid of what Niagara-on-the-Lake will look like before we have another opportunity to vote them out of office.

A sad day for NOTL and the province of Ontario.

Bob Bader
NOTL



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This Ontario Gothic Cottage at 226 Victoria St. shows the typical form and verandah. Brian Marshall says it's a great example of the architectural style. SUPPLIED

Training our eyes on the world of Gothic Revival



ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall
Columnist

In architecture, the term “revival” is applied to the various design schools that use visual styles that echo the elements of a previous architectural era.

Generally speaking, revivalist architects do not attempt to recreate copies of historic buildings but rather utilize the shapes, forms and decorative elements of earlier eras to evoke a sympathetic sense of the original.

To illustrate, we can draw on one example of Greek Revival mentioned in last week's column (“NOTL is home to grand expressions of neoclassical design,” *The Lake Report*, Aug. 24) – Willowbank is not a copy of an actual ancient Greek building.

In fact, it was a modern house of its period which was appointed with decorative elements of the classical orders that recalled the classical Greek building.

That said, let us return to Britain of the 17th and 18th

centuries wherein the Romantic movement amongst the educated classes permeated art, literature and architecture.

This movement had underwritten the popularity of the Regency, neoclassical and Greek Revival styles of architecture, but Romantic architects were not primarily classicists.

Indeed, their focus was on developing picturesque designs that would heighten sensibilities, provoke imagination and cultivate “feelings.”

As such, they drew inspiration from historic and international forms of every stripe in pursuit of the picturesque.

So it was that, while most academics of the time denigrated medieval architecture as a crude and valueless product of the Dark Ages, there were a few brave souls who chose to explore the expressive nature of Gothic decorative elements – doors, windows, trim, etc. – which might be applied as features in their designs.

Likely the first major British house incorporating fully expressed Gothic features was Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill in 1754.

Not only was Wapole the scion of a monied influential family and the son of former British prime minister Sir Robert Walpole, but he also went on to establish Strawberry Hill Press

which published many works of literature that celebrated the “Gothic” and spawned a genre that included Mary Shelley's “Frankenstein” published in 1817.

The Gothic style gained popularity and these picturesque homes began appearing across the nation – a trend that continued until 1840, when the new Gothic Revival parliament buildings were completed and the style became dominant in British architectural design.

A decade earlier, the Gothic Revival crossed the Atlantic and initiated a spate of pattern books, including Loudon's *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm & Villa Architecture* and A.J. Downing's *Cottage Residences*.

Broadly circulated in Ontario, these pattern books fuelled a province-wide appetite for Gothic Revival homes, which was to last into the 20th century.

Without question, the most popular expression of residential Gothic Revival in the province was a derivative of Downing's *Cottage Residences* (Design IV – An Ornamental Farmhouse).

Built so frequently across the province from 1840 to 1900, it came to be known as the Ontario Gothic Cottage.

Commonly, it was a one-and-a-half-storey brick

home with a gable end roof and a centred main entry in its three-bay facade.

A tall, forward-facing gable broke the roof line directly above the front door that held a single gothic arched window (or occasionally, the arch might be semi-circular or segmental).

A full-width porch or verandah – depending on the height on the main floor above grade – spanned the facade with turned or chamfered columns, and often sported ornate decorative trim.

Fanciful bargeboard that ranged from a plain sawtooth to ornate (carved, pierced, patterned, etc.) acted as fascia, following the roofline around the entire house and precisely patterned matched (right side to left side) on the gable slopes.

Unfortunately today, on most of these houses, the decorative bargeboard and original arched windows have been lost to weather, time and expense to repair but, if surviving, one can see how they “dressed” the house.

Amongst others, I'd point you toward two great and easily accessible examples of the Ontario Gothic here in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The first in Old Town at 226 Victoria St. which, although it's been stuccoed and had the original gable window replaced,

shows the typical form and verandah.

The other, a short hike out to 1023 East & West Ln., is an uncommon stone with brick quoins version of the cottage.

And, despite its missing bargeboard, retains the original arched gable window and a stellar decorated Gothic fanlight above the front entry – it's worth the drive just to see the fanlight.

Nearly as common as the cottage in Ontario is the Gothic Revival Farmhouse. It too, is usually a one-and-a-half-storey home but its L or H-shaped footprint provided a much larger living space.

The tall front gable is generally incorporated in association with the main entry, a door that is typically placed under the roof of a wide porch supported by turned posts.

Brick and clapboard are the most common cladding for the farmhouse, but stone and stucco also can be regularly seen.

Again, decorative bargeboard and trim were almost always included in the original 19th-century builds but, sadly, in most cases have not survived to the present day.

You can find an L-shaped example of the farmhouse in Old Town at the corner of King and Mary streets.

It's missing the original bargeboard and front porch,

but the facade and side elevation can be viewed from King and Mary respectively.

Then, set well back from the road (but still viewable), is the H-shaped footprint of the Farmhouse at 1752 Concession 2 Rd..

This house displays a rare Gothic element in Canada in its narrow and vertically accentuated centre gable above the front entry.

For a variation on the farmhouse, drive by the gorgeous three-gabled Gothic at 551 Line 1 Rd. in Virgil.

While its L-shaped footprint may or may not be original to the house, its crisp white stucco shows off the elements of a multi-gabled Gothic – a form that is more common in Niagara than elsewhere in the province.

Finally, if you are up for a drive, at 14 St. David St. W in Thorold stands Niagara's only example of High Victorian Gothic.

Completed circa 1886, this highly ornamented mansion built of Grimsby red sandstone and Queenston limestone was described by the *Globe and Mail* as “the most splendid house between Toronto and Rochester.”

Brian Marshall is a NOTL realtor, author and expert consultant on architectural design, restoration and heritage.



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Guide offers helpful tips for preventing oak wilt

Dear editor:

Responding to the discovery of a case of oak wilt at Niagara College, the Chautauqua Oaks Project, in consultation with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, has completed an inspection of the trees the project planted in Chautauqua over the last five years.

Thankfully, none were found to be displaying signs or symptoms characteristic of oak wilt.

The Chautauqua Oaks Project will continue to be vigilant with the treasured young oaks.

The neighbourhood is particularly blessed with an impressive heritage oak tree canopy and the project, with the help of the Chautauqua Residents Association, is encouraging vigilance by providing some guidelines.

Preventive action is key to managing the threat.

We urge everyone who lives under the Great Chautauqua Tree Canopy, as well as the greater Niagara-

HELP PREVENT OAK WILT

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- ❖ Do **Not** prune oak trees between April & November.
- ❖ Do **Not** bring firewood in from other areas.
- ❖ Do check oak trees for signs of Oak Wilt.
- ❖ Do report suspected signs to: inspection.canada.ca/oak-wilt

SIGNS OF OAK WILT:

- ❖ Leaves prematurely turn brown / bronze, starting at the edges & moving inwards. (Note the sharp distinct border between healthy green & discolouration.)
- ❖ Discoloured leaves appear in clusters, starting at the tips of branches. (Note not as individual leaves throughout the tree.)
- ❖ Early & sudden leaf drop, starting at the top of the tree. (Note this can also include green leaves.)
- ❖ In declining trees raised cracks or holes will reveal mats of fungus. (Note the fungus has a distinct smell similar to juicy fruit gum.)



Photos: Canadian Food Inspection Agency & Invasive Species Centre

on-the-Lake urban forest, to watch for telltale signs of oak wilt and to follow a couple of important preventive measures included in

the accompanying illustrated guide.

Leslie Frankish
Director

Chautauqua Oaks Project

Council was right to fund Pride crosswalk

Dear editor:

Letter writer Derek Collins' complaint that maintaining the rainbow crosswalk deprives residents of some democratic process ("Taxpayers deserve a say regarding costs for rainbow crosswalk," Aug. 17), declaring it "an important issue of principle" has, in fact, missed the principle at play.

Requiring some kind of survey of residents before maintaining a town asset is patently ridiculous.

Town councillors and staff don't survey resi-

dents before they plow the snow or fix pot holes; they don't hold focus groups to determine which flowers are planted in the town's spectacular gardens.

They don't survey us on when to cut the grass in the parks, or whether to permit temporary cafes and restaurants to extend onto sidewalks.

Those same councillors and staff manage quite well without having survey results on irrigation ditches, stop signs and traffic in Glendale.

And that's because of the principle of our democracy:

We elect representatives based on our assessment of their policies, experience and skills, and then empower them to work on our behalf.

That's what they do every day and what they have done in the case of the rainbow crosswalk.

We should celebrate that — and the fact that they don't have to have a survey to simply do the right thing.

Doug Mephram
NOTL

Taxpayers shouldn't pay for symbolic gestures

Dear editor:

Regarding Ernest Chan's letter, "Rainbow crosswalk only costs each taxpayer a few cents," (The Lake Report, Aug. 10), all I can say is any number divided by 18,000 tends to become minor.

The reality is the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake have faced a substantial

tax increase and may face another, so all public expenditures need to be carefully scrutinized as to purpose and efficacy.

Crosswalks are about facilitating the safe crossing of busy intersections, so the cheapest option that accomplishes this is best.

Issues, such as inclusive-

ness and a sense of welcoming, are best transmitted by individuals in the normal course of public intercourse.

I believe Coun. Erwin Wiens' view that the crosswalk should not have been paid for with tax dollars was the correct assessment.

John McCallum
NOTL



Sheri Durksen says symbols like the Pride crosswalk at the corner of Anderson Lane and Niagara Stone Road are important tools to help destroy the proverbial closet. FILE

Here's why symbols like rainbow crosswalks are important tools

Dear editor:

Society built the closet for LGBTQ+ people and gave them a choice:

1. To live in the closet in relative social safety, by our rules, which required a lifetime of pretending to be someone other than who they were with the attending loneliness, depression, increased risk of suicide and to live in fear of being found out or

2. To be true to themselves and live a life where their very existence was marginalized. They would never be able to have a family, housing was at risk, employment was perilous, they would be socially ostracized, vilified, spat on, beat up, arrested, and the threat of being murdered was very real.

As the architects of the closet, it is also up to society to kick the doors wide open, rip down the closet and bring about change.

We do this on multiple levels: through legislation that ensures equal rights and protection for people's families, health, housing, employment, education and access to services as well as through a more informal but equally important community movement that demonstrates not just a tolerance for people but an acceptance and welcoming of them.

One visible way of doing this is through symbols, which are important and ubiquitous. They provide concrete representations of qualities and ideas.

Symbols of faith let us know where we will be

welcome to worship, medical symbols let us know where to find help, team symbols unite a fan base, coloured ribbons are worn by people to show support for hurting or marginalized groups.

Symbols let us know where likeminded people are and give us a sense of safety and belonging.

The rainbow is one such symbol for the LGBTQ+ community. Its existence in our community shows that we don't just tolerate people from the LGBTQ+ community, we welcome them with open arms, they are safe here and we will stand up for them.

These symbols are only unimportant to you if you don't need them. If I am not a sports fan, the blue maple leaf or red raptor claw means nothing to me.

If I do not belong to a faith, the symbols that show our community's places of worship are not important.

If the LGBTQ+ community is not relevant to me, I will be ambivalent about the rainbow in any form.

However these symbols aren't meant for me, they are meant for the people they are important to.

If I belong to a faith, it feels comforting to see symbols of my existence recognized and embraced by community.

If I walk into a sporting event or sports bar, it feels more welcoming when I see my teams represented.

When I am a survivor of cancer or have a child with autism, it helps to have

visible support from others and it lets me know I am not alone.

If I am a member of the LGBTQ+ community, a rainbow tells me something about the town — that I am likely to be seen, welcomed and accepted. I am wanted.

Whenever there is a push for society to give voice to and include marginalized peoples, those who feel threatened by the inclusion of others sound the dog whistles — and NOTL is no different.

For those that say the democratic process requires a majority of NOTL citizens to be in favour or taxpayers shouldn't be paying for the rainbow symbols in our town, I remind you that grassroots movements for equality and inclusivity have all required the involvement of government (legislative and/or judicial) and thus taxpayers' money before they found acceptance in general society.

Movements such as abolition of slavery and child labour, voting rights for BIPOC and women, protections for people with disabilities, gender equality, sexual health/reproductive rights, labourers rights and workplace safety all had their detractors.

Most Canadian's no longer think twice about these rights as they have been accepted and normalized into our Canadian way of life.

Our LGBTQ+ family, friends, neighbours and visitors deserve no less.

Sheri Durksen
NOTL

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Grace United caps off summer with annual market and treasures sale

John Sayers
Special to The Lake Report

Grace United Church will bookend a summer of church markets in Niagara-on-the-Lake with its Festival Market on Saturday, Sept. 2.

It doesn't have a fruit theme (strawberry, cherry, peach) because only the grapes are left to be harvested.

So, what's so special about it? The legendary quality and range of jams and sauces available for sale.

Top of the list is the Colonial Sauce, with presale orders already depleting some of the stock. No one else has the scope of fruit jams that Grace's culinary magicians offer.

I have already pre-bought a case of blackberry jam, made from locally picked blackberries. Even if it weren't from a

church, one could still call it heavenly.

And then there's a batch of peach salsa, made from – you guessed it – this year's fresh Niagara peaches.

As well, we can more than hold our own compared to any other sale when it comes to home baking.

The women (and some men) of the church will be busy baking treats that will make anyone salivate – and at prices that are seriously affordable.

Although it's a sale, we won't overcharge: we recognize that all people want a treat that will fit into their budget.

Our traditional book sale has shrunk to a group of selected titles and authors, and it has been usurped by an Estate and Treasures sale to catch up on goodies that built up during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Some years ago, the market had a section described



This vase and antique Fisher-Price merry-go-round are some of the treasures at Grace United Church's annual market. The market is Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. SUPPLIED



as "Granny's Attic." This year, our Estate and Treasures sale is Granny's Attic on steroids: Fine china, silver and glassware, pictures, and some dazzling special pieces.

How special? There's a beautiful Italian glass vase, likely Murano because of

its captivating design and colour, whose value to an informed collector may far exceed the asking price.

They say knowledge is power and while we know that some pieces are extra nice, we cannot begin to determine how much some of the items are really worth.

That's up to the buyers.

Another buyer opportunity: What is the value of a special presentation glass vase signed "By R. C. Riedel 1953" and carrying a charming design that appears to honour the Universal Postal Union?

It is probably unique, and

a prudent buyer can probably find out more about its story and greatly enhance its value. We can only trace its provenance in Canada back to about 1960.

And it's not all about decorative items. Remember 1971? The Fisher-Price Merry-Go-Round remembers it because that's when it received its final copyright.

English-only wording confirms the originality. It's fine for children and grandchildren – or for the dedicated collector of vintage Fisher-Price toys.

A good friend describes complex situations as "Trying to count the angels that can dance on the head of a pin." It's a fitting way to try to describe how much is there, and what it all is, at the Estate and Treasures sale.

So, visit Grace United this Saturday, Sept. 2, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and find out.



Lucy Vollmer hands John Arghittu a peach pie at Cornerstone Community Church. A whopping 260 pies were sold to support the NOTL Terry Fox Run. MADDY GORDON

Peach Pies kickstart Terry Fox fundraising

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

A peach pie sale on Tuesday jumpstarted Joe Pillitteri's season of fundraising for the Terry Fox Run, bringing in more than \$5,000 before September's started.

In total, 260 pies were sold – 130 frozen and another 130 fresh – for \$20 each. All the funds will be given in a donation, made by Team Pillsy, to the Terry Fox Foundation.

Pies were pre-ordered and available for pickup on Aug. 29 at Cornerstone Community Church on Hunter Road. All supplies were donated.

"They were all sold out before the sale date," Pillitteri said.

Team Pillsy, Joe Pillitteri and his brother Mike, will continue their efforts with the annual Terry Fox Run on Sept. 17, followed by a fundraiser comedy show at the NOTL Community Centre on Sept. 29.

"We're trying to raise another \$100,000 this year," Pillitteri said, and added that they want to become the second team in Canada to raise \$1 million for the foundation.

They're expecting yet another enthusiastic turnout for this year's run, he added. "Niagara-on-the-Lake, per

capita, raises an incredible amount of money versus all of the other runs in Canada," he said.

Alongside the increase in donations, he added, "it's great to see that we're getting more people out each year."

Pillitteri, who started doing the run annually in 2008, said he got serious about fundraising around 10 years ago.

"I think (Terry Fox's story) is such an important message of hope and perseverance. No matter what it's getting us through."

For more information on the upcoming Terry Fox Run, visit terryfox.org.


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Peaches and ice cream at Farmworker Hub

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

The peach cafe at Cornerstone Community Church is no longer a thing of the past.

On Sunday from 6 to 8 p.m., NOTLers lined up to grab a bowl of farm-fresh peaches and ice cream for only \$2 – while helping to spread some community joy.

The social, organized by the church in support of the Farmworker Hub, featured ice cream, live music and games for everyone.

The hub invited all the farm workers in its network, with around 600 of them stopping by the church for social. Farm workers ate for free.

This year marked the return of the peach cafe, previously run by parishioners at the Cornerstone church. It used to be held on Sundays



At only \$2 a serving, guests could enjoy as much ice cream and farm fresh peaches as they could stomach during Saturday's Peach Cafe. JULIA SACCO

in August, however, its last sessions were in 2009.

In the peach cafe's previous iteration, Farmworker Hub director Julia Buxton-Cox said she doesn't think the workers were represented or directly invited – as they were this year.

"It's great to see the community out here celebrating the great work that our workers and farmers do and celebrating summer and peaches," she said.

"Our Caribbean workers are represented, our Mexican workers are here (and

we had men from Sri Lanka here," she added.

All money raised from the evening will go toward reimbursement for the ice cream since the live music was by volunteers and Dave Froese from Froese Farms donated peaches.

NOTL chef gives his neighbours a good grilling

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

For the residents of Tuscany Court, community gatherings have been few and far between this summer.

Luckily for them, Jason Parsons, executive chef at Peller Estates, lives in the Virgil neighbourhood and hosted the entire block for a get-together Sunday evening.

While the chef was busy at the grill cooking up burgers – his own recipe, plus veggie patties, and hot dogs – his wife Meg told The Lake Report the gathering was a long time coming.

"We've been trying to do this for over 10 years," she said.



Celebrity chef Jason Parsons whipped up some gourmet-level burgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers for his neighbours on Tuscany Court in Virgil. JULIA SACCO

Then, finally, everyone had a free Sunday to come out to the street and mingle among neighbours, she said.

The neighbourhood enjoyed Parsons' grilled meats

along with music and good company.

The afternoon was so fun that there are some hopes of doing it again next year.

"This is our first annual.

It was such a great turnout, we're going to do it again," said former NOTL councillor Norm Arsenault, who lives across from the Parsons.

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Last issue:
Category: DRAFTS
Clue: Drive your Jaguar out of Jacksonville on I-95 south & I-4 for a couple of hours to this city to enjoy attractions like EPCOT.
Answer: What is Orlando?
Answered first by: Claudia Grimwood
Also answered correctly (in order) by: Howard Jones, Margaret Garaughty, Lynda Collet, Randie Topps, Sylvia Wiens, Susan Dewar, Debra Jacobs, Pam Dowling, Nancy Rocca, Jim Dandy, Wade Durling, Sheila Meloche, Elaine Landray, Bob Stevens, Jacob Doerksen, Jesse Agnew
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\$16K grant from Goettler family brings new theatre program to life

Maddy Gordon
The Lake Report

Virgil's Yellow Door Theatre Project is branching out and launching a new film academy after receiving a \$16,000 grant from the Goettler Family Foundation.

After pitching the idea of a unique film academy for youth to the Goettler Family Foundation, Yellow Door Theatre Project's leaders say they were thrilled to hear the Goettlers wanted to support the project.

"We cannot thank the Goettler Family Foundation enough for their generosity and their continuing belief in what we are doing at Yellow Door," said Andorlie Hillstrom, the theatre project's founder.

The new program, to be called the Goettler Family Foundation Film Academy, will use the grant to support its instructors from Niagara College and to bring in new film equipment.



Andorlie Hillstrom, left, receives \$16,000 for Yellow Door Theatre from Lauren and Vaughn Goettler. The money will help Yellow Door open its new film academy. MADDY GORDON

The academy will run from September to May, where a group of 10 to 12 teens will have the opportunity to develop skills including script-writing, film-making and editing at a college level.

"This film academy will

be a continuation of some of the work that we've done in the past with film, but now these are actual classes we're creating," said Hillstrom.

The hope is these young people will also be able to create some wonderful

work that could someday have an opportunity for public viewing, she said.

The Goettler Family Foundation's representatives say they're equally as excited to launch the new program.

"Yellow Door's work is

really a long-lasting gift not just for our own community, but also for these young minds as well," said Jodey Porter, the foundation's grant adviser.

The program, she said, will allow its students to gain confidence and skills in the world of film and theatre, potentially opening up a pathway to a career in either industry.

"To be able to support a project like this is a true joy," she said.

This is not the first time the Goettler Family Foundation has supported the Yellow Door Theatre Project.

In 2021, while still navigating pandemic restrictions, its sponsored Yellow Door's original short film, "Red Letter Day."

The production, which tells the story of a group of girls and their high school graduation, was honoured with the Best Musical award at the New York International Film Festival in 2022.

When reflecting on the success of the short film, Hillstrom recalls the positive filming experience and tight-knit community between cast members, stating how important it is for teenagers to engage in the arts.

"This type of programming does so much for the young people involved. It encourages creativity, builds confidence and helps the kids develop new skills and a sense of accomplishment," she said.

"By giving these thoughts and feelings a voice through film, we know the program will definitely have a positive impact on the kids and the community," she added.

Registration for the program is open on Yellow Door's website, yellowdoortheatre.com, until the end of September, though classes are officially beginning earlier in the month and have limited spots.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

VIRGIL BUSINESSES ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

As construction work continues on Niagara Stone Road, Virgil businesses along the route are suffering. This special section is designed to encourage NOTL residents and readers to support those businesses. Order a pizza, book a table — whatever it takes. While it is a pain to drive the wildly bumpy roads, and the work seems to be taking forever, it's even worse for business owners and staff who are struggling. The project won't be completed until fall.



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Register online for library programs starting Sept. 1

Staff
The Lake Report

Fall is just around the corner and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library has a wide range of offerings for adults and children alike.

And this year, for the first time, on Sept. 1 the library will open registration for all programs with a virtual launch via @notllibrary on all its social media platforms.

Registration will be available via the website's event calendar.

The library is "proud to present an exciting range of programs this fall, catering to diverse interests and ages," said spokesperson Kasia Dupuis.

"From literary discussions to culinary exploration and from genealogy workshops to artistic endeavours, there's something for everyone to enjoy."

Here are some of the adult and children programs available:

Book clubs: The library has three distinct book clubs.

Beer and Books returns this fall, hosted at the Old Winery Restaurant, where monthly

meetings combine great reads with convivial conversations.

For daytime discussions, the Thursday Afternoon Book Club offers a warm and inviting atmosphere once a month at the library. This fall's lineup includes "The Sleeping Car Porter" by Suzette Mayr, "Ducks" by Kate Beaton, "Moon of the Crusted Snow" by Waubgeshig Rice, and "On The Ravine" by Vincent Lam.

And Read It and Eat delves in to different cookbook series, authors, or chefs each month, discussing and savouring recipes. October's spotlight is on Nick DiGiovanni's "Knife Drop."

The Great NOTL Library Bake-off: This monthly journey of delectable treats lets you showcase your baking skills and connect with fellow enthusiasts. Themes for each month include cookies (September), apples (October), tarts (November), and Christmas favorites (December). Share your creations over coffee and tea at the library.

Explore your heritage: The Family History with DNA program returns as genealogy expert David Hemmings holds interactive workshops exploring resources available through the library and online



There will be plenty of activities for kids at the NOTL library. RICHARD HARLEY/MIDJOURNEY

for tracing your family history and understanding DNA testing.

Unleash your inner artist: Paint Night @NOTLPL is led by artist Kasia Dupuis and the September event helps participants create a stunning hydrangea painting.

Scrabble Club: Build bridges and embrace the power of words at the new Scrabble Club. Monthly sessions let you challenge friends, expand your vocabulary and enjoy the classic word game.

Experience Wine and Words: Adam Shoalts shares his latest adventure in his book, "Where the Falcon Flies" on Thursday, Oct. 26, at Caroline Cellars. It's an intimate evening featuring captivating tales, a glass of wine and delightful treats.

Children's Programs

From babies and toddlers to school-age kids, there's something for every child to enjoy and learn.

Tumble Tots and Giggle and Grow: Parents of babies and

toddlers are invited to drop-in every Monday at 10 a.m. for the interactive Tumble Tots program. It's an opportunity for caregivers to bond, grow and connect with their children and fellow caregivers in the community. Little ones aged 2 to 4 can enjoy songs, stories, rhymes and games.

For caregivers and parents with babies aged newborn to 2, Giggle and Grow at 11:15 a.m. offers a quality one-on-one bonding experience. It features songs, rhymes, lap bounces, finger plays and brief storytimes.

Mindfulness, Creativity, and Imagination: Children ages 4 to 6 can explore mindfulness, creativity and imagination in Mindful Minis each Tuesday at 4 p.m. The mindfulness sessions integrate movement, stories and interactive activities, to nurture social-emotional development.

Creation Station: Little artists ages 4 to 6 can unleash their creativity in Creation Station, a captivating arts and crafts program Thursdays at 4 p.m. Children express themselves artistically with a variety of arts and crafts projects designed for little hands.

Captivating storytimes: Fall brings stories to wind down the

day. Families are welcome to drop in for Bedtime Stories with Sharon alternate Thursdays at 6 p.m. It's the perfect opportunity to gather and enjoy enchanting tales as a family.

Full STEAM ahead: School-age kids can delve into S.T.E.A.M. subjects (science, technology, engineering/environment, art and math) the library's engaging programs. The Lego Club, Tuesdays at 6 p.m., offers kids ages 7 to 12 the chance to take on new building challenges, work on collaborative projects and open-ended activities with everyone's favourite little plastic brick. Art Spark, led by Kasia Dupuis Wednesdays at 4 p.m., immerses young artists in various visual arts experiences, including painting and sculpture. Tech enthusiasts can join TechniCool bi-weekly on Thursdays at 6 p.m. to explore the worlds of technology and Lego, engaging in hands-on activities and problem-solving adventures.

PA and PD Days: Upcoming PA/PD days are set for Oct. 6 and Nov. 24 and from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on those days the library will be abuzz with drop-in activities including Lego, arts and crafts, scavenger hunts, tech toys and more.

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Swim for mental health a **message of inspiration** for struggling survivors

Continued from Front Page

yourself and getting it done. He's 13 years old and swam 12 kilometres and he didn't do any training either," Rumsey said.

Both swimmers are extremely passionate about the work of Pathstone Mental Health and were eager to show their support.

Rumsey is open about his mental health struggles with PTSD and drug and alcohol addiction, stemming from an experience of childhood trauma.

"For me, it's helping get a message out there and inspiring people. If I can help out a hospital or a family in need with the money side of things, that's great, too," said Rumsey.

Berry's brother Ben Jeffries tragically died at age 19 in 2016. Jeffries was a close friend of Rumsey's.

Pathstone provided grief counselling to Berry and

his family after the loss and also installed a dedicated section of their park for Ben.

Rumsey and Berry both keep fit, with Rumsey regularly boxing and Berry on the ice as a hockey player. But prep for the swim was pretty minimal.

"Honestly, I just drank some energy drinks and ate a banana and then jumped right in," Berry said.

"I didn't train or anything," Rumsey said.

He admitted that the few times he practised what swimming with his arms tied would be like he immediately went underwater.

"That made me nervous," he laughed.

When he actually got into the river, Rumsey quickly acclimated to using his two hands tied to the front of him in a scooping motion, alternating from left to right.

He said he did that pretty

much the entire way, combined with kicks. But when his left knee had enough around four kilometres in, he said he only used his right leg.

"There were a couple of times when I was severely struggling through it," he said.

"But it went well."

With the support of three boats in the water and countless family and friends waiting for them at the finish line, Berry and Rumsey completed their swim with relative ease.

"I just wrapped myself in towels," Berry said about his post-swim celebrations.

"I laid in my bed afterwards," joked Rumsey.

Last year, Rumsey raised \$14,335 for Pathstone and is optimistic that this year raised a large amount as well.

Berry said if Rumsey decides to swim the river again next year, he would love to join him.



Soccer season wraps up with **end-of-year festival**

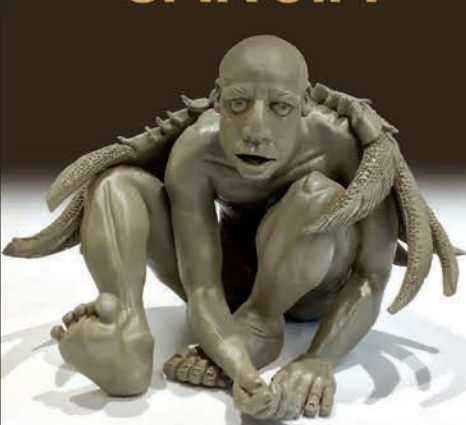
Members of the U14 NOTL soccer team, front row: Mark Baranski and coach J.P. Konik. Middle row: Vanessa Rezza, Angelina La Valle, Matthew Amodeo, Leonardo Cocozza. Back row: Taylor Nickerson, Jacob Froese, Patrick Elrod, Joshua Sasso, River Konik, Gracie Cherney, Keira Dexter, Ron Slootsky and coach Jennifer La Valle. Absent players: Jack Dill, Ilias Dritsakos, Roc Mastromatteo and Alp Rahnamayan. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Soccer Club closed off the 2023 season with its annual end-of-year festival, sponsored by Hummel Properties. On Saturday kids from all age groups from U6 to U14 took over the Virgil fields with games starting at 9:30 a.m. and finishing at 3:30 p.m. The end-of-year festival coincided with the NOTL Wolves Minor Hockey equipment swap at the Meridian Credit Union Arena, where children could recycle unneeded sports gear or grab some pre-loved threads for the upcoming season. SUPPLIED

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McCanns prevail in tough test of golf, win **Matrimonial Cup**

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

One of the toughest and most stressful competitions returned to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club on Friday as couples flailed away in the annual Matrimonial Cup tournament.

The tourney pairs couples in what is generally considered the most difficult format for dynamic duos – 18 holes of alternate shots.

It's not so difficult for the men, as women usually hit the ball straight up the fairway, away from trouble spots.

The gentlemen, on the other hand, tend to visit all corners of the course, introducing their partners to areas they never knew existed.

Some fared better than others, of course. And Dean and Susan McCann were the class of the field, shooting a net score of 70 (after handicap deductions) to win the coveted cup.



Dean and Susan McCann's net score of 70 earned them the coveted Matrimonial Cup. The alternate-shot format led to some interesting predicaments. KEVIN MACLEAN

Reigning women's club champion Martha Cruikshank teamed with her husband Don to card a respectable score of 88 and win low gross honours.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday, the nine-hole women's

league finished a two-day tournament. Players were divided into flight A for those with handicaps under 40, and flight B for those 40 and up.

Deborah Williams won the Gretchen Ormston Memorial Trophy for flight A and Bonnie Lamourie won the flight B cup.

Other winners: Diana Dimmer (longest drive) and Peggy Larder (longest putt) and a chip in on #3.

Sharon Allen was named

Player of the Day as she kept smiling while digging out of the bunkers.

Top gross scores: Diana Dimmer and Suzanne Watson (44), Larder and Susan Horne (49) and Williams (51). Net scores: Lamourie (35), Larder (36) and Watson (37).

The 18-hole women's league added a bit of mystery to their weekly competition in the form of a "blind partner" format.

Players didn't know who they were paired with until after their scores were turned in.

Cathy Murray and Judy Mantle were first, followed by May Chang and Lisa Allen. Tied for third were Martha Cruikshank and Cheryl Yamamoto, and Marg Ketcheson and Sue Sherk.

Allen shot 88 to win low gross. Cruikshank had 91, followed by Murray (93), with Mantle and Carroll Baker tied (97).

Ketcheson was low net (72), while Murray had

74, Allen and Mantle 75, and Yamamoto 78.

Mantle needed the fewest putts (31) and Allen had a birdie 3 on #2.

Men's super senior champion Gary Stuggins was top dog in Tuesday's WOOFS league, shooting 38. Darryl Fry was low net (31). Jeff Jacques was closest to the pin on #4 and Peter Chilibeck won the hidden hole prize (#6).

In Thursday's men's league action, Ricky Watson led the pack with his 2-under 34 while Michael Mott had the most Stableford points.

Other winners: Derek Merza (long drive #1), Jim McMacken (closest to pin #2), Watson (closest to pin #4), Brian Heer (longest putt #6), Mott (longest putt #7) and Zach Luis (closest to pin #9).

Paul Wilson (#7) and Ron Planche (#8) cashed in on net skins while Watson (#4), Peter Falconer (#6) and Devon Neudorf (#8 and #9) won gross skins.

Help Restore the Cenotaph

Despite its stunning exterior, internally, the Cenotaph is showing its age and is in need of restoration.



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The Centopath Committee, in partnership with the Town, is asking community members to raise the remaining funds needed and invest in this iconic monument to ensure it is preserved into the future.

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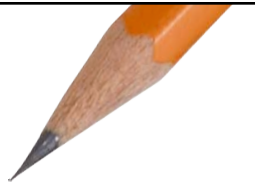
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- 10. Enduring (4-4)
- 11. Never use ill-gotten earnings (8)
- 12. Spokelike (6)
- 13. Home of Cox's Bazar beach (10)
- 15. Arrest (4)
- 16. Eye problem (4)
- 18. Some of them are Grimm (5,5)
- 21. Shaft key (6)
- 22. Chosen as a career (4,4)
- 24. Learnt of a mess in Derbyshire (8)
- 25. Tooth covering (6)
- 26. "Salome" composer (7)
- 27. Guided (7)

Down

- 2. Wear away (5)
- 3. Polar wrecker (7)
- 4. Established form of words (7)
- 6. York, from London (2,5)
- 7. Picked democratically (5,2)
- 8. Adaptable (9)
- 10. Eavesdropping (9,2)
- 14. Thoughtless state (9)
- 17. African state on the Red Sea (7)
- 18. Elaborate Hispanic parties (7)
- 19. Yak seen running wild in North America (7)
- 20. Energize (7)
- 23. Tear up sheet for this lot (5)

Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	
9					10				
11						12			
13	14							15	
16		17		18			19	20	
21					22				23
24						25			
26						27			

Last issue's answers

1	B	E	I	M	S	I	N	M	
2	T	A	S	M	A	N	I	A	3
3	R	I	D	G	S	U	D		4
4	B	R	U	N	E	I	5	N	U
5	E	E	G	I	R	O	I		6
6	O	N	A	N	D	O	F	F	7
7	C	Y	C		8	U	S	N	A
8	G	E	N	E	R	A	L	I	N
9	L	C		N		H			10
10	H	E	L	M	E	T	11	G	O
11	P	E	I	G	A	D	E		12
12	T	H	E	D	E	V	I	L	13
13	A	I	I	A	L	S	S		14
14	I	N	L	A	W	S	15	S	H
15	T	N	M	S	S	A	W		16

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



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Some great displays of tennis prowess – and mindfulness



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown
Columnist

Despite his age, 36-year-old Novak Djokovic has been at the top of men's tennis for a decade with no clear end in sight.

So far, he has surpassed his rivals of the last two decades and, as of the morning of July 16, was set to add yet another Grand Slam win to his total of 23, compared to Roger Federer's 20 wins and Rafael Nadal's 22.

With a win, Djokovic would be but one Grand Slam away from the Holy Grail of tennis by winning all four major tournaments in a calendar year.

If that's not enough intimidation for any opponent, one more win at Wimbledon would tie Federer's record of eight at Wimbledon and cement Djokovic's reputation as

the toughest opponent for any aspiring challenger to overcome on grass – and never more dangerous than at Centre Court in the final at Wimbledon.

His rival on July 16 was Carlos Alcaraz, a 20-year-old Spaniard whose prior experience on grass courts was limited to three matches and who earlier was beaten by Djokovic in the French Open final.

Alcaraz clearly suffered from a bad case of nerves during that match, causing muscle cramps and hobbling after the second set.

Tennis sages were enthralled by the brash young Spaniard's athleticism and performance last year at the US Open, albeit against a far less dangerous foe than Djokovic.

Many pundits worried that although Alcaraz easily disposed of other rivals in the run-up to the final of this year's Wimbledon, against Djokovic, Alcaraz might once more suffer from a case of nerves, this time on the centre stage where Djokovic hasn't lost for a decade.

It's a very intimidating record for any rival – even Federer and Nadal – to deal



Tennis is a game of mind and body, says Dr. William Brown. RICHARD HARLEY/MIDJOURNEY

with, and the first set seemed to confirm a possible repeat of the French Open for Alcaraz when he lost 6-1 to Djokovic.

Tennis is one of those games, especially singles matches, where what goes on in the head – concentration, focus, determination, willpower and experience in tough situations – counts as much as, or more than, sheer athleticism and motor skills for winning.

That's what made Djokovic so hard to beat for so long: he's tough mentally, has enormous experience and formidable well-honed defensive and offensive skills.

To those who watched Djokovic over the years, Alcaraz seemed to be the latest lamb led to the slaughter on tennis's most storied Centre Court at Wimbledon.

There have been many challengers to Djokovic over the last decade but, except for the odd loss, Djokovic triumphed every time, especially when it counted. He was a supreme clutch player, never more dangerous than when he was down.

But against a young opponent with a complete game including a devastating forehand, drop shot and overhead lob, great reflexes, speed and incredible court sense, who learns on the fly to adjust to different surfaces and conditions, Djokovic was up against an opponent unlike any other – as Djokovic freely acknowledged following his loss.

It's safe to say that Alcaraz made Djokovic nervous, and it showed during the match, especially in the critical second set when the two men played an incredible 32-point game with 13 deuces that lasted over 26 minutes. Ultimately, Alcaraz won the

second set.

It was one of those defining points that, if lost, can badly shake a player's confidence, which clearly happened to Djokovic. He went on to lose that set and the third set to follow, which perhaps planted in Djokovic's head that he was in a real match with an opponent with formidable skills where the outcome was uncertain and no longer his to dictate.

Following the third set, which Alcaraz won, Djokovic took an unconscionably long "bathroom break," probably to settle his nerves and perhaps unnerve his eager young opponent who seemed to be in a winning groove – a blatant example of psychological warfare, I thought.

To no one's surprise, Djokovic won the next set. Then came the all-important fifth and final set.

This time, it was Djokovic who cracked when Alcaraz broke Djokovic's serve. From watching Djokovic's face and body language, it must have finally sunk into Djokovic's head that this young opponent, unlike

so many before him, was as tough as he was, and he could lose. He did.

It was an amazing match for the ages between two very fine players, one nearing the end of his career – hopefully with some wins to come – and the other likely to be centre stage and as dominant as each of the big three were in their days on centre stage, including Djokovic.

It was also an example of just how tough tennis can be in the head, never mind the body.

Both men were very impressive and hopefully, we'll see more high-calibre matches from both players and equally talented players will emerge to challenge both Alcaraz and Djokovic.

Talking about mindfulness, this match was a case of Alcaraz focusing his mind a point at a time, never dwelling on miscues or distractions while allowing his formidable defensive and offensive talents to emerge.

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the InfoHealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.



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SEPT. 9 - COTTAGE BREW

SEPT. 10 - DUO LEEPA (BEER GARDEN 2-5)

SEPT. 14 - STUCK IN THE 90S

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SEPT. 16 - TAYLOR BROWN BAND

SEPT. 22 - BUTLER'S BACKYARD

SEPT. 23 - UNDERCOVER

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EXPLORING PHOTOS WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Back to School circa 1900

It's back to school time again for Niagara-on-the-Lake students. Here's a photograph of students in front of the former kindergarten room at 267 Davey St. Kindergarten started in Canada in 1882 and was likely in NOTL by the turn of the century. This building is located in what could be called the educational block in town. In 1854, John Crooks sold lot 39, the block of Castlereagh, King, Davy and Platoff streets, to the town for "uses of common schools and grammar Schools in the town of Niagara forever." Shortly afterward, the school buildings, including this one, were built for the community. Although most of the school buildings still stand, the only remaining educational facility on the block is the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, which offers educational exhibitions and programs in the former high school building. All the best for your first day of school, kids.

It was Tom Tomato's time to shine as a fruit



Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson
Columnist

Yes, NOTLers, strawberries, cherries and peaches enjoy a day in the sun each year here in Canada's prettiest town.

So, it was high time the plump red and under recognized tomato was put on stage with top billing.

The good folks at the Village organized a fun and respectful Tomato Festival, and sunny skies welcomed an inquisitive gallimaufry to their market last weekend.

(Full disclosure: The assistant Village Market organizer is marketing-oriented, an enthusiastic leader, a social media wizard, totally dependable, hard-working and always positive. And oh yes, she is my lovely daughter, Carrie.)

Fruit festivals are such a natural for our blessed

agricultural terroir, and a little imagination and a lot of enthusiasm combined to provide a fun morning along Niagara Stone Road.

I arrived in my red and white Canadian flag shorts, and red Montreal Canadiens sweater, to be shocked that the vendors and organizers were dressed in blue, green or other colours. Ah well, it takes a certain personality type to figure it out, eh?

A good number of the Village Market vendors got into the spirit, weaving a tomato component into their offerings.

How about tomato-scented soap from The Hive and tomato chutney from Kim McQuhae of Gryphon Ridge Highlands?

Rose and Ken Bartel from Bartel Farms featured numerous varieties of tomatoes, both regular sized and mini sized. Sabrina had sundried tomato scones on offer.

Rumours the previous day were that anyone with the given name Tom would receive a special gift.

As the Tomato Festival day approached, regrets were received from Tom Selleck, Tom Brady, Tom Mulcair, Tom Voss, Tom Davis and Tom Eltoft. They had other



Ken and Rose Bartel with young Ally Schweyer, who was the winner of the competitive tomato toss, and market co-ordinator Sharon Brinsmead-Taylor. ROSS ROBINSON

conflicting commitments, but hoped to be at the Tomato Festival in 2024.

(By the way, did you all know that Tom Thomson, the most famous member of Canada's revered Group of Seven, was never a member of the Group of Seven? Trust me, or look it up. Only in Canada, you say?)

The Village Market organizers had creatively dreamed up several games for folks to try. Children quickly took over and

showed great sportsmanship and enthusiasm for the Tomato Shotput and the Tomato Toss.

The shotput quickly became a freestyle distance event, which resulted in squished tomatoes spread all over the field. Ah well, the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry.

The Tomato Toss morphed from a game between teams of two into an ad-libbed cornhole contest. This game, which just

might surpass pickleball as Canada's fastest-growing sport, is easy to learn and easy to play.

Importantly, no sensitive neighbours have complained to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake about the noise of this entertaining game. Give it time, give it time.

NOTL is a town that doesn't miss many opportunities to provide residents and visitors with activities and recreation.

And, educational opportunities and self-enlightenment.

Is a tomato a vegetable or a fruit? I never really thought much about it, but had to do some research. The things we learn when we are out and about.

My Cassell's English Dictionary defines tomato as the red or yellow pulpy edible fruit of a trailing plant. Originally South American and formerly called the loveplant; the plant itself.

My Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus says tomato is a South American plant widely cultivated for its red fleshy many-seeded fruits. The fruit of this plant is eaten in salads as a vegetable.

So, I am confused. Whatever.

I'm going to the StageCoach for a delicious BLT, which is made great, and looks even better, thanks to two fresh tomato slices, slathered in mayonnaise. Brown bread, not toasted.

A tall glass of cold 2 per cent milk and coleslaw. Yum Yum. See ya later, friends.

Watch for the second annual Tomato Festival next year. Don some red clothes and get into the spirit.

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Clockwise from top left: Box tree caterpillars, a box tree moth, box tree moth damage on mature boxwoods and annual flowers, which Joanne Young says typically don't get killed by frost until about October. JOANNE YOUNG

Tips to keep your garden in tip-top shape this fall



GROWING TOGETHER

Joanne Young
Columnist

Let's take a look at activities to do – or not do – in your garden at this time of the season.

The first one is that now is the time to stop fertilizing any flowering or evergreen shrubs, especially if you are using any fertilizers with a higher amount of nitrogen (first number) in them.

You do not want to be promoting any new growth on the plants that may not have a chance to mature and harden off before freezing.

Instead, you want to encourage the plants to start preparing to go dormant for the winter.

However, you can still fertilize your annuals whether they are planted in the ground or in containers.

In the Niagara region, we normally do not get a killing frost until the third or fourth week of October or even later. So, keep them blooming as long as you can and enjoy them well into fall.

Sometimes in the heat of summer, the annuals will slow down in flower production and become leggy-looking.

As the temperatures begin to cool, they will usually catch a second wind and can be rejuvenated by trimming them back a bit and feeding them with a fertilizer high in phosphorus (middle number).

Remember, if a plant is a heavy bloomer, it is also a heavy feeder. Continue to deadhead your annuals to keep them performing for you.

I have written about the box tree moth a couple of times over the last two years. It has been another devastating year with many people losing their boxwood plants.

The box tree moth is a new insect that found its way into the Niagara region in 2020. As the name indicates, it is primarily found on species of Boxwood plants. The box tree moth can have two to three generations per year and therefore multiplies quickly.

The adult moth has a wingspan of about four centimetres. It has white wings with thick, dark brown borders around the entire wing. The body of the moth is also white with a few dark brown specks on it.

When the larvae (caterpillars) first hatch, they are greenish/yellow in colour with a shiny black head. As the larvae mature, they

become greener in colour with thick, black and thin white stripes along the length of the caterpillar.

It is the larvae that cause the damage to the boxwoods. The adult moth lays eggs on the underside of the boxwood leaves in clusters of 10 to 12 eggs.

The eggs hatch in three days and the young larvae feed on the underside of the boxwood leaves and start to form webs between the leaves. As the larvae mature, they become skeletonizers leaving just the midribs of the leaf.

If there is a heavy infestation it can cause the entire boxwood to brown up in a very short period.

It takes about 14 days for the larvae to mature and pupate. Pupae live about 14 days before becoming adults. The box tree moth overwinters in the larval stage, protecting itself by spinning a silky cocoon between the leaves.

Routinely examine your boxwoods for signs of chewed leaves, caterpillars, webbing and frass (a fancy term for caterpillar poop). The insect has just gone through the larval stage so you will probably just be seeing the adult moths at this time.

To control this pest, the best time to spray is when it is in the larvae stage. There is a biological control spray called BTK (*Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*). The active ingredient of the spray is safe for humans and pets

and is sold at most retail garden centres.

If you are still seeing the caterpillars feeding at this time, you can be spraying. If you are seeing the damage but not the caterpillars, hold off spraying until Sept. 15 before spraying.

Re-check your plants five to seven days after spraying to see if the spray has worked. If you are still seeing caterpillars feeding, repeat the application of BTK.

Now is also a good time to be treating lawns if you have been having trouble with white grubs. The white grub is the larval form of the Japanese beetle. You have probably seen damage over the last few weeks caused by this beetle chewing leaves and flowers.

Once the adult beetle has mated it then re-enters the soil (usually lawn areas) where the next generation will begin to feed on the roots of your turf grass, causing brown patches. If you are seeing damage, you can treat the lawn with nematodes to control them.

With the daytime temperatures starting to cool down, it is also a good time to cut back on your in-ground irrigation as plants do not need as much moisture as they did earlier in the summer.

I hope that these few tips will help keep your garden performing at its best.

Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.

Town seeks feedback on outdoor patios

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Outdoor patios became a fixture in town during the pandemic – but, originally, they were only meant to be a temporary solution.

Now, the town is looking at keeping the patios around, and it's looking to residents, visitors and business owners for their input.

Town staff are collecting feedback on a proposal to make temporary patios permanent in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Kirsten McCauley, the town's director of community and development services, told The Lake Report that about 50 people stopped by an open information session on Monday, held at the old Court House, to ask questions and share their thoughts.

The temporary patio program was introduced in 2020, amid the pandemic, to help support the town's restaurants while indoor gathering restrictions were in effect.

Then, in January, town council decided it wants to make the patio program permanent.

But before it can do so, staff is looking for ways to improve on the existing program.

McCauley said some people raised concerns

about the patios interfering with people trying to park their cars.

Some temporary patios take up street parking, which leaves drivers with fewer places to leave their cars when visiting Old Town.

McCauley said the town also needs to be mindful of accessibility and fire safety requirements in its review of the patio program.

"All of those things are considered when we're looking at whether or not we want to continue the patio program," she said.

In addition to hosting the information session, the town is also collecting information through a survey available on its Join the Conversation page.

The survey closes Sept. 8.

Lauren Kruitbosch, the town's community engagement co-ordinator, said the turnout was more than what the town usually sees at information sessions.

She said the temporary patio program "impacts lots of people," including residents, visitors and business owners.

This might be one reason for the higher-than-average turnout, she said.

Most of the feedback on the town's patio program had been positive, Kruitbosch said.

McCauley plans to bring a report on staff's findings back to council in October.



Kirsten McCauley at the courthouse collecting feedback on temporary patios. EVAN LOREE



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Kevin lives, works, and plays in Niagara-on-the-Lake, is a member of the local Rotary Club, and volunteers at Niagara PumpHouse. Call to discuss the market or just to say hello.



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