



Battle of Fort George | Page 11

## CODE GREY

"Code Grey" is one in a series of stories in The Lake Report about health care in Niagara Region. In hospital parlance, "Code Grey" means loss of essential service.

### Nurse practitioner, more home care 'essential' for NOTL

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

It is no secret many residents are unhappy with the level of health care available in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

From doctor shortages to limited home care, NOTLers want – and expect – better.

Many residents don't have a family doctor – or a walk-in option.

The nearest full-service hospital is about 30 minutes

away in St. Catharines and there's no emergency or urgent care option.

Niagara Health broke ground on the new south Niagara hospital this week but it is still years and several kilometres away.

There's the modern, new Village Medical Centre in NOTL, but it is largely a fresh location for services that already existed in town.

So, looking to the future, Coun. Sandra O'Connor, who is leading

the town's quest to improve health care, says a walk-in clinic should soon be available for those without a family doctor.

That cohort is a sizable one, given the town's growth, tourism and the

population of seasonal workers.

"We are very, very close to getting our nurse practitioner position and establishing a walk-in clinic for the people

*Continued on Page 4*

### Three-storey apartment proposed for Old Town

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Residents on King Street may be getting some new neighbours, but many believed they'd be getting quite a few less.

Homeowners have a few concerns about a new three-storey apartment Butler's Development Garden Inc. is proposing to build on the edge of Old Town, at the southwest end of King Street.

Several took to the Facebook page NOTL 4U to share their views on July 15.

Meritage Lane resident Patrick Gedge said he was "shocked" when he first learned of the proposal last week.

"It was the developer who told us directly, in person, that it would be

*Continued on Page 3*

### Summer fun in NOTL parks



Kids made buttons and potted seeds at the NOTL library pop-up at Centennial Park on Monday. **Story on Page 6.** MADDY GORDON

### Police urge driver in NOTL hit-and-run to surrender

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

Niagara Regional Police are urging the motorist who left the scene after striking an 84-year-old Niagara-on-the-Lake cyclist to turn

themselves in.

After releasing photos of the type of vehicle suspected to have hit Nester Chemerika last Thursday evening as he biked along East and West Line, "We have received some tips

from the community that detectives are following up on," Const. Phil Gavin told The Lake Report Wednesday.

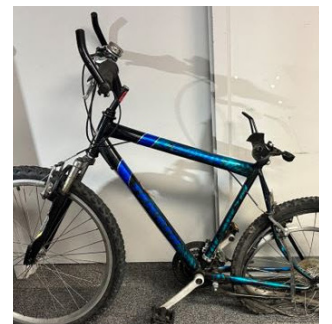
"This wasn't an event that the person who was driving could say they did not know

they struck someone," he added.

"This investigation is not going away, a person was critically injured. We strongly encourage the person responsible to contact legal counsel and arrange

for a safe and peaceful surrender."

Police noted the driver didn't offer aid to Chemerika, who was found in the north side ditch, with his



*Continued on Page 4* Nester Chemerika's bike.



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# Niagara College focuses on education after oak wilt found

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

A Niagara College official says the campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake is tackling the town's oak wilt crisis with education, transparency and staying ahead of the game.

Evan DiValentino, the associate dean at the college's school of environment and horticulture, said it will continue to deal with the invasive fungus that has spread to oak trees in town – including on its campus in Glendale.

"Our 125-acre campus here in Niagara-on-the-Lake is a prized jewel for us, but also a really important playground, if you will, a living lab for students, faculty and staff," DiValentino said.

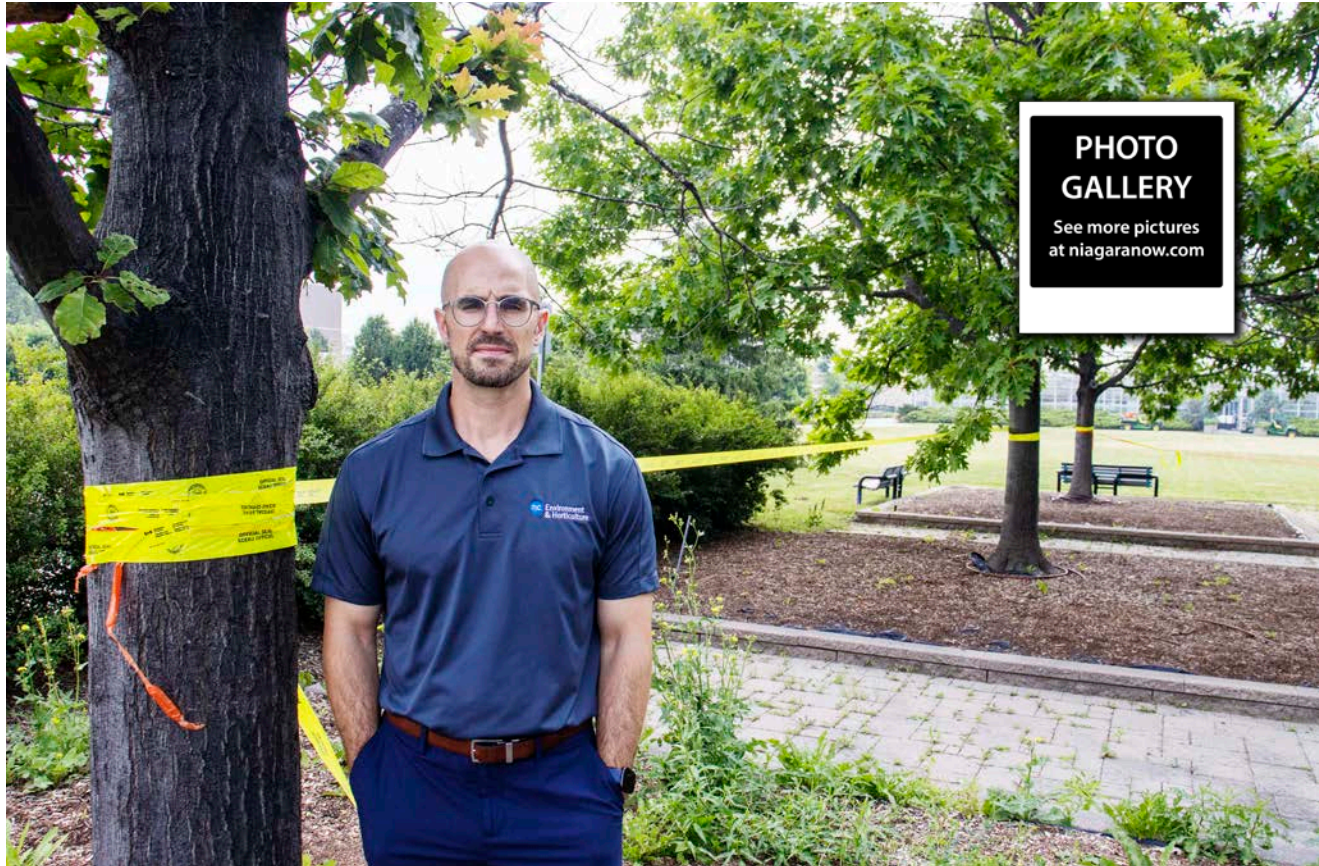
This is the third known case of oak wilt in Canada after one was found in Niagara Falls and another in Springwater, Ont., near Barrie.

DiValentino said the college will manage oak wilt the same way they're dealing with another invasive plant called phragmites.

It will need to "get in front of it, be transparent, integrate into the curriculum and enhance implied learning," he said.

"A top concern of ours is that we do this right," he said.

Oak wilt is a slow-moving disease and if it



Evan DiValentino, associate dean of Niagara College's school of environment and horticulture, stands next to an infected oak tree on campus. While only one case is confirmed, another eight trees are blocked off. SOMER SLOBODIAN

spreads can cause tree death within one season.

It can be spread through the movement of firewood, root grafting beneath the ground and sap-feeding beetles.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake confirmed the case on July 10 in a news statement.

The college confirmed in a news release on July 12 that it was on its NOTL campus.

"One of our team members first noticed poor tree health and observed the

tree over a brief period of time," DiValentino wrote in a follow-up email.

After the Canadian Food Inspection Agency announcement about the first confirmation of oak wilt in Niagara Falls, he wrote that they decided to report its potential case to the food inspection agency.

From there, the agency tested and confirmed the presence of wilt, he wrote.

"We have one tree that is officially affected, however, there are eight trees adjacent to it," said DiValentino.

"Some of them aren't doing so well," he added.

The agency went back to the college last Thursday and taped off all nine trees.

Since oak wilt can spread from root to root, DiValentino anticipates those nine trees will need to be removed eventually. The agency ordered the college to leave everything as is for right now.

"We'll be putting up signage this week as well to try and educate folks about the issue," said DiValentino.

Close to the nine oak

trees are another nine that the college is keeping an eye on.

DiValentino said he also believes this is an important learning opportunity for students who are "on the leading edge of this."

This issue is not "disconnected from climate change and (the) forest fires that we're seeing," he said, and that because of climate change, the arrival of more invasive species is inevitable.

"Climate change is, I think, one of the biggest

challenges of our generation and future generations," he said.

The wildfire season is far from done, he noted, and Canada has burned more than its previous record already — with more than 10 million hectares of land already burned.

Climate change can intensify tree diseases, including oak wilt, and increase forest vulnerability, he said in an email to The Lake Report.

Oak wilt tends to dry out oak trees, he said, and dry trees burn easier.

"Combined with more frequent and severe wildfires, it threatens the health and survival of forests," he said.

He said focusing on what can be done moving forward is important right now.

"That is where being transparent about all this and sharing it beyond the borders of the campus was really important to us," he said.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is encouraging residents to inspect their trees and look for signs of oak wilt, including dull green, brown or yellow leaves, cracks in the trunk, white, grey or black fungus, and early and sudden leaf drop.

Residents are also being told not to prune oak trees between April and November and are being asked not to move firewood.

Suspected cases of oak wilt can be reported to the agency online.

# Newark Neighbours food drive Saturday to fill empty shelves

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Newark Neighbours is holding a community food drive this Saturday to help stock the empty shelves at its new, expanded location in Virgil.

The food bank has been open since July 5 and has been very busy, said Cindy Grant, the chair of Newark Neighbours.

"We knew we had some bare shelves before we moved, but now we're in a new place with a whole lot

more shelves," she said.

"And, oh my gosh, we're really bare," she added.

The food bank is in need of non-perishable items like canned tomatoes, pasta sauce, canned soups and pastas, rice, peanut butter, ravioli and even toiletries.

"If it's a non-perishable item that you see in the grocery store, we probably need it," she said.

Since opening its doors in Virgil almost three weeks ago, Newark Neighbours has added several new clients.

She said it could be because of increased visibility or due to higher food costs.

"I think it's a bit of both," she said.

The thrift store will also be open on Saturday, so people dropping off non-perishable items can also pop in and shop.

"Come out, see our new location," said Grant.

The food drive runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1534 Niagara Stone Rd.

More information can be found at [www.newark-neighbours.ca](http://www.newark-neighbours.ca).



Newark Neighbours is hosting a food drive on Saturday to help fill its empty shelves. The food bank's chair said higher food costs have likely meant more clients. SOMER SLOBODIAN



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From left, Harold Asikyan, Beverley Asikyan, Margaret Tarnouski, Edson Tirelli, Art Droulis, Sheila Cameron, Patrick Gedge, David Rodgers, Donna Rodgers and Marjorie Gedge. EVAN LOREE

## Apartment proposal draws heavy criticism

Continued from Front Page

single-detached housing going onto that land," Gedge told The Lake Report in an interview.

Instead of being single-detached houses, the proposed building will have 17 two-bedroom units and 18 parking spaces.

"Where are people going to park?" asked Gedge.

He said if the residents of the proposed apartment have visitors, there won't be much parking available to them, and many will have to park down the street.

To build the project, developer Josh Bice first needs the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to rezone the land and amend its official plan to accommodate denser housing in that neighbourhood.

"The proposed apartment building would increase housing choice in a community where single-detached housing types and other ground-oriented developments heavily prevail," said a report from NPG Planning Solutions, which was hired by the developer to write the report.

The proposed structure would be just under 12 metres tall, which is higher than what the current zoning permits, and is slightly shorter than the 12 metres permitted by the town's official plan.

Gedge points out that while the 11.82-metre building does not seem like a significant increase, it is 20 per cent taller than its neighbouring buildings.

"Our bungalow is go-



A rendering of the proposed apartment building on King Street. SUPPLIED

ing to be dwarfed by this building," he said.

Gedge's property backs onto the currently vacant lot.

If the apartment goes up, he said he will be almost face-to-face with an exterior wall.

The planner's report describes the proposed apartment as an infill development designed to help the town provide a "range and mix of housing densities."

This would help the town meet its provincially mandated density targets, the report said.

Residents are not satisfied with the report's justification, though.

Like Gedge, some other residents were under the impression single-family homes were going to be built there.

And King Street resident Sheila Cameron said her parents severed and sold a portion of their home to Bice because they thought it would be used for single-family units.

Cameron said she can't believe the project is even being proposed.

In conversations with Bice she said he had described the lot as "peace-

ful" and a "beautiful spot."

"Never once did he say, 'You know, Sheila, I'm contemplating building a three-storey 17-unit apartment building,'" she said.

Further to that, "It just doesn't belong here," Cameron said.

Gedge agreed, adding the proposal is incompatible with the adjacent properties.

"I'd prefer that the zoning bylaw is respected," he said, adding he'd like to see single-family homes built.

Both Gedge and Cameron worried about the precedent it would set if the town approved the development.

Her neighbour Harold Asikyan said that if the zoning change is approved, "there is nothing to stop anybody buying two lots in the Old Town and building up a two-storey."

The lot takes up about 3,250 square metres, states the NPG report.

The proposed building will cover about 710 square metres – or 22 per cent – of the property.

Another 29 per cent of the property will be used for parking and 49 per cent for landscaping.

The NPG report states that access to the building will be through a 75-metre-long driveway located between 727 and 733 King St.

Neighbour Donna Rodgers said many residents never would have bought houses there had they known the vacant lot would become an apartment building.

Her husband David said many of his neighbours paid for \$3 million homes with gorgeous sunset views.

"They value their sunsets, which are beautiful out over the vineyard," He said.

But with the addition of an almost 12-metre-tall apartment building, those sunsets will "be totally wiped out," he said.

While the planner's report provides a shadow study, Gedge pointed out that it's backward.

Architectural drawings submitted with the application appear to show that shadows are cast toward the direction of the sun.

The town will hold a virtual open house for the proposal July 25 and a public meeting on Sept. 12.

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# Residents want better home care for NOTL

Continued from Front Page

who do not have a doctor in NOTL or who have doctors elsewhere and want one here,” O’Connor said in an interview.

NOTL’s population is about 18,000 and “there are 6,000 people who are not rostered with the Niagara North Family Health Team here. That’s a lot of people.”

O’Connor has been working on the issue for months, first raising it in May 2022. Her goal is to have it approved by this fall – or sooner.

“We are just working on the transition plan at the moment.”

She also wants to put more resources into palliative care.

“Following very closely behind is to advocate now for an urgent care centre for when Glendale comes online, almost doubling the population of Niagara-on-the-Lake,” O’Connor added.

Development of the Glendale area will bring thousands of new people to NOTL’s southern perimeter.

Virgil residents Leslie and Bud Moulson have a lot of qualms about the state of health care in NOTL.

While the staff who deliver the care are doing a first-rate job, they say the system itself is riddled with problems.

They shared a recent letter to Niagara Health highlighting concerns about Bud’s stay at the Niagara General Hospital with a broken leg earlier this year.

In their letter, the Moulsons reiterated the feeling of being taken advantage of as “vulnerable people” in the hospital system through excess charges and lack of resources.

In part, the letter says,



Bud and Leslie Moulson are fed up with the health care system in Niagara and want to see more home care. JULIA SACCO

“A hospital stay is a dismal experience. Imagine it without TV, phone and internet access.”

Issues ranging from high-priced web access and television fees to terrible food are sore points that the Moulsons insist could be remedied with one main change: increased home care services.

“Nobody talks about home care,” said Leslie Moulson.

“We talk about increasing the number of long-term care beds. (Premier Doug) Ford is talking about building more long-term care. Well, not all of us want or necessarily need long-term care.”

Moulson’s letter initially received no response from Niagara Health. Only The Lake Report and the office of MPP Wayne Gates got back to her.

After a second attempt, Moulson said the hospital’s patient relations department responded but offered little help.

“It was basically, ‘Thanks for writing,’” Moulson said.

“They said in regard to the cost of the patient transfer, ‘We have no control over that.’ They

said with regard to the horrendous cost of television and internet, ‘We have no control over that.’”

The hospital’s response adds that “I will ensure that feedback, as well as the concerns regarding cost, is shared.”

“Nobody talks about home care. We talk about increasing the number of long-term care beds.”

LESLIE MOULSON

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According to Statistics Canada, 30.9 per cent of NOTL’s population in 2021 was over the age of 65, compared to about 17 per cent provincewide.

In an older community like Niagara-on-the-Lake, Moulson thinks that giving people the option to “age in place” rather than in a medical environment will be beneficial to the population as a whole.

“There are lots of seniors in nursing homes who would be at home if they had home care support,” she said.

Home care would entail practices like an assessment of the residence to remove potential hazards, plus wellness checks to ensure the client is doing well, things that Moulson thinks shouldn’t be a “big deal” to offer.

Moulson detailed her husband’s hospital stay, citing how unpleasant it was to share a room with four other men.

“It’s just not ideal and the hospital is so old and painted that institutional yellow.”

She thinks a comfortable stay at home would benefit many different kinds of patients, like those with dementia awaiting nursing homes, or even Bud, who much preferred awaiting assessment at home over spending two additional weeks in the hospital.

The Moulsons emphasized the care offered by nurses and workers was exceptional, noting the problems they faced were rooted in a flawed system rather than poor service.

“I think it’s important that the people who are providing the care are acknowledged as going above and beyond because they’re stretched to the

limit,” said Leslie Moulson.

O’Connor takes a keen interest in trying to improve health care in Niagara-on-the-Lake and shares the Moulsons’ sentiments.

“I think a lot of people would prefer to stay in their homes as opposed to going into long-term care and if we had a better set up for home care, more reliable and dependable resources, that would be great for many people,” she said.

Niagara New Democrat MPP Wayne Gates is the party’s critic for long-term care and he is keeping a close eye on NOTL health care.

“We’ve had 5,400 deaths in long-term care facilities. I’ve had a lot of people in NOTL talk to us about what happened with their family members,” said Gates.

“How can we fix long-term care? How can we convince the government to invest in long-term care?”

Gates agrees with the Moulsons, saying, “Home care is probably the one thing that could fix the entire system.”

“Most seniors that I have talked to – and I’ve talked to a lot being a long-term care critic – say that they want to stay in their home.

They don’t want to be in the hospital and running back and forth from the emergency room,” he said.

Gates gave credit to the government for promising to invest \$1 billion into home care, though only “about a fifth” has been spent thus far.

He is working with different organizations to determine how best to disperse the money.

Aside from an increase in home care, Gates suggests that demanding an increase in doctors in Niagara is another important step toward improvement.

“Whether it be across the province or across my riding, I think the biggest issue is our hospital system is at full capacity,” said Gates.

“The president of the NHS and I are on the same page about this and we’ve said that we will work together in trying to reach out to doctors,” he said.

“We need more doctors. That’s certainly something that I’m getting lots of comments on from people in Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

Given Niagara’s desirable location, Gates thinks it shouldn’t be too difficult to convince practitioners to find a new home here.

“I think if we get out and fix all the other little things, that doctors need to make sure that they feel supported, then they will come to Niagara because I think everyone wants to live in Niagara.”

Above all, Gates insists universally available public health care – and not more privatization – is essential for the sake of not only Niagara, but the entire province.

“This government has decided to privatize our health care and it should never be about profit. It should always be able to care.”

# Vehicle make identified, police searching

Continued from Front Page

bicycle nearby.

On Monday, police said the suspect vehicle is a General Motors brand SUV or pickup truck.

Investigators determined it is a 1994 to 1999 GMC Yukon, Chevrolet Suburban or a GMC Sierra pickup and is either pewter metallic or silver in colour.

They released a series of photos of GM trucks that potentially match the suspect vehicle in the hopes that the public will recog-

nize the truck.

It is missing an external mirror and has damage to the passenger side front corner, investigators said.

Meanwhile, Chemerika remains in a Hamilton hospital in critical condition after undergoing two surgeries for the severe injuries sustained in the crash.

His neighbour Don Lees, who has been in close contact with the family, said Chemerika was doing somewhat better.

“He had two surgeries for his arm and his leg. He has

a broken bone in his face. I guess the muscle on the back of his leg was really ripped open,” he said.

An earlier police statement said the man was hit “by a truck or utility vehicle while cycling and the vehicle then left the scene prior to police arrival.”

The incident happened about 8:30 p.m.

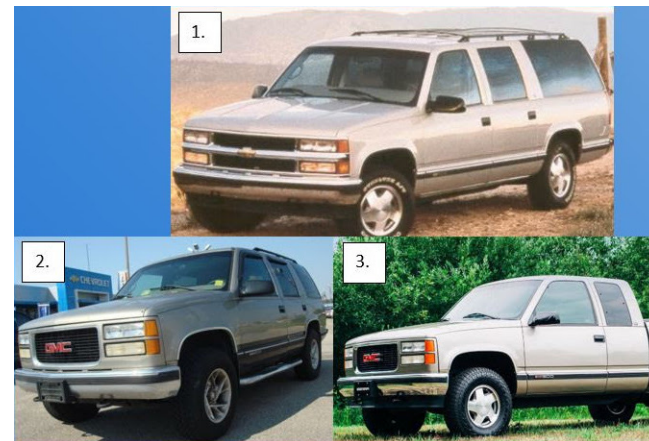
Doctors originally worried he would be paralyzed due to broken vertebrae, which turned out instead to be “wear and tear on his back,” said Lees.

“He’s in rough shape. He’s going to be in the hospital for a while. There’s no doubt about that,” he added.

Doctors estimate he will be in the hospital for about three months and then another three or four months in recovery at home, Lees said.

The motorist fled the scene after striking Chemerika as he rode along East and West Line near Concession 2.

Police are asking anyone with information or dash cam footage to contact them



Police say the suspect vehicle is either a Chevrolet Suburban, top, GMC Yukon or GMC Sierra. It is pewter metallic or silver in colour. NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE

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- With files from Somer Slobodian.



NOTL resident Tony Giordano says he's had some headaches trying to get water service from the town. EVAN LOREE

## Restrictive policies a **barrier** to better rural water services, resident says

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Rural residents in Niagara-on-the-Lake want better water services, but a regional policy may be the thing that stops them from getting it.

Currently, the region prohibits water line extensions outside urban areas. Residents in rural areas primarily get access to water through wells on their properties.

Drinking water quality, says Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa, is "probably one of the most important things a municipality needs to deliver on."

"It just needs to be sustainable," he said, meaning cost-efficient.

However, if there are issues with groundwater in rural areas of Niagara-on-the-Lake, he said the town should look to get "safe, quality drinking water" to residents.

"I am one person that is not afraid of connecting water services to people who really need it just because they're outside the urban boundary."

One of those rural resi-

dents who need it is Tony Giordano, a retired farmer. He said he's been frustrated before by the town and region's water line policies.

When he and his wife were ready to quit the business, they tried to sever a small portion of land from their old farm to build a new house for retiring in.

When he asked the town if he could connect the future house on Concession Seven to the town's water line, he was told no.

"They told me that water in the rural areas is for agriculture purposes only. But because I created a residential lot, I wasn't entitled to it."

There are some exceptions to the region's water line prohibitions, such as if they need to fix health-related issues, replace an existing line, connect to an urban area or for "necessary operating purposes."

The region's official plan says infrastructure spending should be used to "direct and support growth and development within strategic growth areas."

This has the effect of directing development towards dense urban areas where the infrastructure

exists to support it.

It also leaves rural residents with less access to municipal services, including drinking water.

"I don't think that services should be used to control growth," Coun. Erwin Wiens said in an interview.

He added he was "perplexed and flabbergasted" that the region would block people's access to clean drinking water.

Wiens has argued the issue of development is a zoning issue, not a service issue.

The intention of the policy, according to regional staff, is not just to protect farmlands from being targeted for development, but to prevent the water services from being overburdened.

The region's manager of development engineering Susan Dunsmore said water service systems in the region are designed to meet the needs of urban areas, and expansions into rural areas "would reduce the capacity in the system for the urban areas."

The policy "works effectively" to protect the water servicing systems,

said regional spokesperson Janine Tessmer.

Meanwhile, NOTL's town spokesperson Marah Minor said the limits of the town's water services aren't just a result of how many customers use them but also the length and size of the water lines.

Expansion proposals, she said, need to be investigated to see if they would overburden the waterline.

By Giordano's estimation, the nearest water line was only 100 feet from the proposed location of his future home.

And at the end of the day, he said he would be the one paying for the line extension.

This is because taxpayers offset the cost of water-line extensions in rural areas.

Minor confirmed this when she said the cost of installing a waterline can be added to a resident's property taxes.

Giordano never built his retirement home on Concession 7, though the town did grant his severance in 2000.

In 2017, he and his wife moved to a property near Church and McNab roads, which is also not on a water line.



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# MISSING IN ACTION

## Lost and presumed dead, Sapper George Brownlee

*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 cases, 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

A dark cloud seems to have hovered over the Brownlee family of St. Catharines.

Tinsmith John James Brownlee married Sara Florence "Flora" Allen in 1878 and began to raise a family in St. Catharines. Their first child, Wilfred, was born there in 1877 and was followed by five more children born before 1887.

It was in that year that bad luck started to descend on the Brownlees.

Their son Thomas, born on Feb. 18, died a week after his birth. Three years later, both John and Florence became ill. Florence died on Jan. 12, 1890, leaving John to raise his young family.

However, John died on Dec. 26 of the same year, leaving his five surviving children as orphans.

The Brownlee children were split up, with three of them being taken in by relatives. Two of the children, eight-year-old John James Jr. and six-year-old George Wellington were given shelter at an orphanage in St. Catharines.

Daughter Louise married John Elliott of Niagara-on-the-Lake and her brother George Wellington Brownlee moved in with them. George attended school in town and by 1901 was employed as a clerk in a local hotel.

George moved back to St. Catharines, became a telephone lineman and volunteered as a militiaman, serving part-time in the 7th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery.

The First World War had been raging for nine months

when George decided to enlist for overseas service on May 5, 1915.

He was already trained in the rudiments of military drill and discipline, and was immediately sent to England for further training, arriving on May 24, 1915.

With his background as a telephone lineman, he was assigned to the Canadian 2nd Division Signal Company, joining that unit in France on Nov. 12, 1915.

During the First World War armies relied heavily on telephones to convey intelligence of enemy activities, to pass along orders and to apprise headquarters of events at the front.

The telephone lines needed continuous patching and repairs as connections were frequently broken by artillery fire.

Men like George Brownlee were sent out to lay new cable, and find and repair the breaks, often under heavy enemy artillery and machine-gun fire.

On June 29, 1916, Sapper (Private) Brownlee was sent to the 27th Battalion. At that point the regiment was fighting in the Ypres Salient in Belgium.

For the next two months Brownlee worked under dangerous conditions to keep the lines of communication functioning.

In early September, the 27th Battalion was shifted from the Ypres Salient to the Somme. The bloody Battle of the Somme was a major operation that aimed to break through German lines.

In this battle, newly developed tanks were used for the first time in combat. For the first time, the "creeping barrage" would be used by artillery, laying carpets of



Sapper George Brownlee was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme in September 1916. VIRTUAL WAR MEMORIAL

exploding shells in advance of the infantrymen crossing "no man's land."

The very nature of this barrage meant that keeping phone lines functional was essential to the effective use of artillery and the prevention of "friendly fire" incidents.

The men of the 27th Battalion went over the top on Sept. 15, 1916, one phase of the larger Battle of the Somme. The Canadians achieved their goal, capturing a strategic position near the ruins of the French village of Courcellette.

George Brownlee went across no-man's land with the men of the 27th Battalion and that is where he was killed.

With the confusion of the battlefield, the ear-splitting blast of artillery, the rumble of the tanks, machine-gun and rifle fire, airplanes swooping overhead, and visibility reduced through dust and smoke, Brownlee's fate went unreported.

Roll call revealed he was missing. His body was never recovered.

No survivors of the Battle of Courcellette had seen Brownlee fall. Initially he was reported as "missing" but finally listed in army records as "previously reported missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died on or since Sept. 15 near Courcellette."

As one of the many Canadian dead whose final resting spot is "known only to God," George Wellington Brownlee, once a resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake, is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial in France.

*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.*



Top: Lily, 7, learns how to make buttons using a button-maker at the library pop-up. Bottom: Books are available for both kids and adults to check out. MADDY GORDON

## NOTL pop-up library returns for another summer of literary fun

Maddy Gordon  
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library is bringing back its outdoor pop-up library this summer.

The event is headed all across NOTL, most recently stopping at Centennial Park in Virgil this past Monday.

Kids' activities such as arts and crafts, potting seeds and story times are happening from 10 a.m. to noon on Mondays at different locations around town.

This is part of the library's busy calendar of family-friendly programs for the summer months that all ages can enjoy.

Books for both children and adults will also be available to take out from the portable library.

Seven-year-old Lily, who is visiting NOTL from Texas, said the button-making craft was the best part.

The crafts are part of a passport program where kids can collect new stamps and new buttons every week at pop-up locations.

The library's "Sunny With a Chance of Adventure" is open for registration for children aged four through 12. The summer reading program is completely free

and already has over 70 kid-dos signed up.

Those of us older than 12 can join in on the fun too, with the Rainbow of Reading project. For every book read, fill out a colour tile to add to the library's front window.

The library has also teamed up with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum this year, to present the "tiny museum" featuring historical NOTL artifacts.

The "museum" is a portable house on wheels modelled to look like the museum, with an interior exhibit.

"It's so important having free programming," said museum coordinator Karlene Ouellette, such as the tiny museum.

"You don't find accessible summer camps anymore. This offers people who might not be able to do summer camps the ability to mimic that experience."

Next week, the pop-up library will be arriving at the Community Gardens in Newark Park on Niven Road on July 24 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

More information on summer programming is available at the library website notpubliclibrary.org.

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Joseph Sitko and Frances Boot are two kayakers who want better water accessibility at Balls Beach. SOMER SLOBODIAN

## Kayakers feeling pushed out of Balls Beach

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Some kayakers are finding it challenging to launch their kayaks from Balls Beach Park.

Balls Beach is one of the few places in Niagara-on-the-Lake to safely launch kayaks into the Niagara River. However, kayakers feel it's not as accessible as it used to be.

"It's the accessibility that keeps on getting pushed and pushed and pushed further away," said NOTL kayaker Frances Boot.

Boot and Joseph Sitko, a fellow kayaker, said this is the ideal place to launch due to its calm waters, and it would be nice if they could access it more easily.

The town has spent a few years trying to figure out how they want to accommodate the kayakers, but so far, they haven't found a solution.

There were three spots near an old willow tree right near the launching spot, at the end of River Beach Drive, but the town closed it off temporarily for safety reasons in 2020.

"One of the local people on here was saying it was too dangerous for children playing to have three parking spots here," said Boot.

That was almost three years ago, and the spot is still closed with little information on when it would reopen.

"Those spots had been there for eons, it was even bigger before," said Sitko.

No studies were done at the time that proved the parking spot was a safety concern.

In July 2021, town staff recommended they reopen the spot with a hammerhead turnaround — where people wouldn't be able to park, but they would be able to unload and load their kayaks.

It would have allowed parking on the south side of River Beach Drive and Turntable Way and connected Ball Street and River Beach Drive.

However, this idea was turned down by council at the time, and the town currently has no plans to connect Ball Street and River Beach Drive.

Marah Minor, the town's spokesperson, said right now "a permanent solution is still to be determined" and the spot will remain closed until the transportation master plan comes before council in the fall.

"I'm looking forward to hearing about the master plan. I hope there's something in there for us," said Boot.

Minor made note of a municipal parking lot about 150 metres from Balls Beach where people can park for free.

However, it's difficult for a single kayaker to carry their kayak to the beach from the parking lot, especially when it can weigh upwards of 45 pounds, says Boot.

She added that many people she kayaks with are well over 50 years old and find it difficult to carry a heavy kayak that far.

"Parking on Turntable Way and the municipal parking lot at River Beach Road and Melville Street is available to accommodate drop-off of kayaks, stand-up paddle boards, and other floating devices," said Minor.

Ron Simkus, whose house sits at the corner of Turntable Way and River Beach Drive, said there's a drop-off sign on Turntable Way.

The sign is about 90 metres from Balls Beach.

Simkus has been an advocate for the restoration of Balls Beach since the flooding in 2017 damaged most of the area.

He said he and his wife store their kayaks on Turntable Way, where the drop-off location is.

"I'm 71 years old and we carry our kayaks to the shore just like everybody else," he said.

When the small parking area near the willow tree was temporarily closed off, kayakers could still park at the end of River Beach Drive — in front of Simkus's house.

"Last summer, we were able to park beside his grass, and now there's no parking there," said Boot.

In that spot is now a "no parking" sign which was put up by the town, said Simkus in an email to The Lake Report.

Boot said they just want a spot to safely drop off their kayaks close to the water.

"There's never been any restriction on people coming here or their recreational

craft, (it's) the cars that are the issue," he said.

"Everybody wants to get their car right to the water's edge and that's just not going to happen," he added.

Minor said the need for more parking at the dock area will be reviewed through the transportation master plan and the tourism strategy.

As reported by The Lake Report in 2021, the town explored options in the past, like launching from 144 River Beach Dr. where Whirlpool Jet Boats used to launch, or launching from Navy Hall.

However, Boot said there's no way to walk into the water at Navy Hall since "somebody's dumped two or three wheelbarrow barrels full of concrete there."

Minor said the need for additional kayak launch sites will be evaluated through the town's parks & recreation master plan, but added that kayakers can still be launched from Balls Beach.

Boot believes there should be more parking available on River Beach Drive close to Balls Beach to make it easier for kayakers to drop off their equipment.

This includes opening up the small parking area under the willow tree again, even if there was a permit system in place that allowed residents to park there, she said.

"Surely there has to be some more answers besides just pushing everybody out and making it impossible for us to launch here."

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**Contributed by Patty Garriock**

“You’ll never get bored when you try something new. There’s really no limit to what you can do.”

- Dr. Suess

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## Have a lead on a story?

Call 905.359.2270 or send an email to editor@niagaranow.com

## Border patrol



Photographer Frank Hayes captured this American bald eagle on the Niagara Parkway. Their numbers declined for many years, mainly due to contaminants in the environment. But the situation has improved vastly. They are flourishing in the U.S. and there are upward of 40 breeding pairs in southern Ontario. A majestic bird in flight, with a colossal wingspan. You won’t get close to them. They’ll have spotted you long before you see them.

## Editorials

# Give again to Newark Neighbours

Kevin MacLean  
 Managing Editor

We have shared this message before.

The food bank at Newark Neighbours needs help from the generous folks of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The agency is holding another food drive this Saturday and has a long shopping list of items that it requires in order to continue serving its clientele.

The good news is that part of the reason for the public appeal is that Newark

Neighbours has moved into its spacious new home on Niagara Stone Road in Virgil.

The organization now is blessed with more space than it has ever had before, both for its thrift store and its food bank.

And, as board chair Cindy Grant tells us in a story elsewhere in this edition, those new shelves are looking a bit empty.

The agency, and the people who rely on it for help, needs the good people of NOTL to step up again

and help stock this newly expanded service with non-perishable items.

The list is long, with everything from canned goods and pasta to cereal and toiletries. You’ll find the full list in this week’s paper.

We have asked this before: How is it possible that the need can be so great in a town like Niagara-on-the-Lake?

In a town blessed with so much, with such wealth and prosperity, how is it possible that Newark Neighbours needs to exist? Well, wel-

come to the reality of life in 2023, a reality many of us don’t ever have to endure.

It’s a service that the organization has been providing for more than half a century and the need keeps growing.

For some residents, Newark Neighbours is an essential service, providing food and sustenance.

We also know and trust, as you have done time and again, NOTL residents will give generously to help those who need the help of Newark Neighbours.

# A fine idea bears fruit – and vegetables

Kevin MacLean  
 Managing Editor

There’s something magical and certainly satisfying about planting a seed – or a seedling – and watching it grow.

Going back more than two years ago, Julian Traschel single-handedly convinced the Town of

Niagara-on-the-Lake to allow a community garden to be established in Newark Park, off Lakeshore Road.

Now in its second successful summer season, Traschel’s brainchild quite literally has blossomed, taking root and bearing fruit – and vegetables – as well as becoming a home for much-needed pollinators like birds,

bees and other insects.

One man’s plan, in concert with the Town of NOTL and others, means that a few dozen 10 by 10-foot garden plots are now lovingly tended and generate fresh “farm-to-table” food for NOTLers who participate.

And as Traschel told our reporter at last Saturday’s

open house, “It’s brought life to the park. If you go look at the pollinator flowers there’s so much activity over there.”

To the dedicated band of gardeners who are tending their crops in Newark Park, we offer best wishes for a bountiful harvest and look forward to many more successful growing seasons.

## We welcome your letters

The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation. Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated. Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published. Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 496 Mississauga St., NOTL.

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# A new look at affordable housing



Brian Marshall  
Columnist

Although you may not have noticed yet, in the face of 10 interest rate hikes since March 2022, the building industry has been slowly grinding to a halt.

A year ago, contractors and their subs were so busy they would ignore calls from folks looking to give them new business. Today, that is no longer the case and even the best trade companies are starting to consider layoffs due to a lack of work.

The old saying, “If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail”, is completely descriptive of the Bank of Canada’s actions, particularly with respect to the last two or three interest rate hikes.

The fact is, they are so completely focused on curbing domestic inflation (when the principal drivers of our inflation are international) that they are inevitably driving the country into a recession with marginal effects on that inflation.

At the same time, this country requires a significant level of immigration to provide an offset for our aging and retiring workforce,

adding to an already drastic shortage of housing for first-time buyers.

At the Ontario provincial level, the Ford government’s response, with the More Homes Built Faster Act (Bill 23), has been to largely double down on perpetuating the traditional sub-division development model.

This has not and will not address the housing shortage for first-time buyers where the need is for truly affordable housing, both for purchase and rental.

Interestingly, according to a recent media survey, the purchaser demand and readiness for committing to a new home purchase has not gone down – but the stumbling block for this demographic is affordability.

And, to be clear, I do not believe it is necessary nor reasonable to revisit the failed 20th-century examples of publically built housing.

Bluntly, the government is incapable of successfully managing a works budget (I cannot find a single example of a government works budget in which the costs have not wildly escalated out of control and timelines to completion were not drastically extended).

In this column over the past couple of years, we have looked at a number of different potential solutions that could, with the proper support, be undertaken.

In the Jan. 13, 2022 edition of this newspaper, it was suggested that using the blueprint of Canada’s Wartime Housing Limited – a company that could com-



An affordable housing solution from our history. SUPPLIED

plete the build of a modest house from start to finish in 36 hours – and the efficient permitting and inspection process the government put in place on their developments, would be a logical place to start.

One single trained crew could construct 240 affordable houses per year: multiply that by 100, 200 or 300 crews and you have 24,000, 48,000 and 72,000 (respectively) new homes that first-time buyers could actually afford being introduced into the market annually.

In the same period, we also looked at the example of the land-lease corporation in Martha’s Vineyard who, with the partnership of a local bank writing mortgages, are quite effectively building houses and rental accommodations to answer the affordable housing needs of the folks employed in their hotels, restaurants and other service positions.

These are dwellings built at cost plus on land that the owners of the houses do not have to pay for: two factors which go a long way to making their homes “affordable.”

Amongst other solutions, this column has explored the concept of cellular neighbourhoods and, more recently, highlighted The Village as an example of New Urbanism through traditional neighbourhood development which created a development that was at once sympathetic to the town at a much higher density.

And, while The Village cannot be said to represent affordable housing, these same principles could easily be employed in that category of development.

At this point, I’m going to step out of our neighbourhood for a quick visit to The Waters development in Alabama’s Montgomery County.

Originally this development on 1,250 acres was designed in accordance with standard “sprawl” planning criteria with the usual limited access closed loop streets on which 800 typical cookie-cutter houses would be constructed. However, this plan thankfully was junked and re-imagined.

In its place, the new plan for development was laid out as a necklace of hamlets and villages (neighbourhoods) around the large lake, with most of the land preserved as fields, forests, and waters.

Where the previous sprawl plan represented a density of 0.64 units per gross acre (or about one unit per net acre), the new plan not only preserved most of the naturalized land, but the build was much more compact (think of The Village example).

They were able to achieve over 2,500 units in the development on a lot less

acreage with a density of about six units per gross developed acre.

Further, comparing the new plan to the sprawl plan, this density resulted in substantially lower infrastructure costs and increased efficiencies.

Interestingly, the developer did not mass-grade (that’s the standard developer practice of removing all the trees and topsoil to flat-grade a building site) the sites which not only preserved the old trees but actually resulted in a cost savings of over a million US dollars per each neighbourhood!

And this was not the only standard practice this developer rethought to come up with new, novel approaches that achieved cost savings.

The final note I’d like to make on The Waters is a quote from Steve Mouzon (Common Edge 07-05-2023), the individual responsible for its planning:

“We were able to achieve a 15:1 range of values at The Waters, running from cottages to mansions and including a number of missing middle housing types ... And consider this: doubling the range by building mansions twice as expensive is hard; doing the same thing by building homes twice as affordable is much easier, and is a much more powerful tool for tackling the housing crisis.”

Why can’t we do that?  
*Brian Marshall is a NOTL realtor, author and expert consultant on architectural design, restoration and heritage.*



## Disagree with both stances on Parliament Oak hotel

Dear editor:

First of all, regarding The Lake Report’s July 13 about the “councillor not surprised” at the “ruling” against the town’s loss at the Ontario Land Tribunal, let’s be perfectly clear:

The town did not receive compensation for its legal expenses but it did not lose the appeal by Benny Marotta’s companies of the designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The four properties comprising the Rand Estate are designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. Period. Full stop.

Moreover, despite all the appeals to the various iterations of the OMB/tribunals in the past six years by Mr. Marotta’s companies with



Writers Bob and Irene Bader think the Town of NOTL should expropriate Parliament Oak and keep it for institutional use per its current zoning. FILE/EVAN LOREE

respect to the Rand Estate, not one has been successful.

It is sad that moneyed developers such as Mr. Marotta can effectively get away with bullying municipal governments by bringing appeals of town decisions to the land tribunal without facing financial repercussions when withdrawing at the last minute.

I’ve lost count of how many appeals have been

made and withdrawn on this property, but it is a failing of the provincial system and governance, not our local municipality.

We do know that Mr. Marotta’s simultaneous court challenge against the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake with respect to the legitimacy of the heritage designating bylaws was rejected and resulted in Mr. Marotta having to pay

substantial court costs to the town and SORE.

Now then, regarding your opposing op-ed views on the Parliament Oak hotel proposal (“A hotel is only option to preserve public access” and “Proposal is simply not appropriate for the location”), we are of the opinion that you are both wrong.

Aside from the historic context of the site there is one inescapable fact: the site is zoned institutional or community use depending which version of the official plan you wish to consult.

It has been determined by the most recent and prior iterations of town council in planning for the future of our town that the property is needed for a “public space” and has been publicly iden-

tified as such for years.

Just because a moneyed individual or corporation pays \$8 million for the property to build a hotel, or subdivision or roller coaster or whatever, knowing full well the property is zoned institutional/community use, should they have the right to overturn the will of the people as expressed by their government?

Maybe some wealthy developers can get away with buying Greenbelt land with the expectation the province will change it to allow development or Hwy. 413 highway lands, but we would hope our local municipal government would be more ethical and accountable than the current provincial regime.

With respect to Parliament Oak, the answer must simply be “No.”

The property is zoned institutional/community use and if you don’t want to build what is allowed and needed by the town, you shouldn’t have bought it.

Perhaps the town should expropriate the site for the value of the property as currently zoned and contract with an ethical builder to create a useful community space or institution of benefit to NOTL on a scale and design appropriate to the neighbourhood and complementary to the quaint village atmosphere of Niagara-on-the-Lake that visitors find so attractive.

*Bob and Irene Bader NOTL*

# Twelve Mile Creek ‘unsafe for recreational use,’ hydro says

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

NOTL resident Barbara Worthy says she wants to lead the charge to make Twelve Mile Creek safer for the public.

After her son Liam Neumann died rafting in the creek on June 25, Worthy says the creek needs to be “monitored much more closely.”

“That’s my mission now,” she said.

After surveying the area with friend and kayaker John Kinney, Worthy said there is a “significant lack of warning signs” along the waterway.

“There’s no signs. There’s nothing here to tell you about the dam and the water and the changing pressure,” Worthy told The Lake Report.

She noted one sign posted on a creek trail near Old Glendale Road in St. Catharines gives no warning of the dangerous waters downstream.

The sign was erected by the City of St. Catharines.

She and Kinney also pointed out there was a patch of shoreline nearby that could easily be mistaken for a launching point for kayakers.

“I was astonished to see absolutely zero advisory signage indicating swift water hazards downstream,” said Kinney, who operates Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours.

There was nothing to indicate the waters were unsafe for recreational users, he said.



Top: Liam Neumann and his mother Barbara Worthy with their dogs Brody and Louie. SUPPLIED Bottom: A shot of one of Ontario Power Generation’s danger signs as seen from a pedestrian bridge spanning the river nearby. EVAN LOREE

“I was quite surprised.” In addition to more warning signs, Worthy said she wants to see barriers to prevent public access to the river and an educational program to inform people of the dangers in the water.

She plans to create a water safety foundation in honour of her son and has set up a GoFundMe for people to donate to it.

Water flow into the creek is controlled by Ontario Power Generation, a government-owned energy company that operates 66

hydroelectric power stations and 241 dams in Ontario.

These include the Sir Adam Beck I plant in Niagara Falls and the Decew I station in St. Catharines.

Ontario Power Generation spokesperson Neal Kelly said safety is always top of mind for the utility and extended sympathies to Neumann’s family and friends.

Twelve Mile Creek, however, is “just not suitable for recreational use,” he said.

“Water levels and flows near hydro stations and

dams can change rapidly and with little to no warning,” according to the company’s website.

The power stations are also remotely operated, meaning there could be no one at the dam or station to provide help in an emergency.

The company has two videos on its website’s public safety page warning people not to fish, boat or swim near its dams.

Kelly said dams and power stations along the region’s creeks and rivers

can cause “extremely strong and dangerous currents.”

He wasn’t the only one to say recreational users should stay off the creek.

“We do not paddle up there,” said Dave Smith, secretary of Niagara-based kayaking club Peninsula Paddlers.

“That’s a really dangerous stretch of water,” he added.

Smith would not recommend anyone use that stretch of Twelve Mile Creek for recreation.

Kelly said the utility company does its best to

amplify its safety message across the community.

It does safety presentations at schools and installs danger signs and barriers along the creek where it gets hazardous, he said.

He added that some areas are rough enough that the company has to fence off the adjacent trails, but that it allows access to certain areas so people can hike along the creek.

“Communities don’t necessarily want 12-foot fences around those waterways,” Kelly said.

When a Lake Report photographer stopped by the creek near where Neumann died, a line of cement barriers spanned the creek, just downstream of a pedestrian bridge.

There was also a danger sign facing downstream a little way upstream from the bridge.

“If you are proceeding downstream, you don’t see that sign,” Kinney said.

A buoy floating nearby notified people they were entering hazardous waters.

There was a smaller danger sign on the trail near Hillcrest Avenue, but it was mostly obscured by foliage and fencing.

As well, a sign on the same path appeared to have an emergency number on it, but it was too vandalized to make out the number.

Worthy said she doesn’t know if legal action is an option at this point and that she is still figuring out who is in charge of the river.

“First of all, we have to work collaboratively,” she said.

## Shaw awards \$4,800 to NOTL charities

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

A group of fortunate charities in Niagara-on-the-Lake got an extra boost from the performing arts world Wednesday afternoon.

The Shaw Festival donated \$4,800 in discounted ticket sales to five NOTL charity groups.

The theatre company sells discounted tickets to preview shows every year and donates the proceeds to other charity groups.

Shaw community outreach director Pragna Desai said the company has been running the charity program for about 30 years now.

“We really do believe that when we thrive, the commu-

nity thrives,” said Desai.

This year’s recipients were the Canadian Cancer Society, which received \$1,300 and the Niagara Nursery School, which got \$1,000.

The NOTL Soccer Club, Music Niagara and the Niagara Jazz Festival each got \$500.

Artistic producer for the Niagara Jazz Festival Juliet Dunn told The Lake Report she plans to use the funds to pay performers at the upcoming Music in the Park concert at Simcoe Park.

“At the end of the day, it’s all about the music,” Dunn said.

While The Niagara Jazz Festival has many other costs, Dunn said she tries to use donations like these to support the artists.



Juliet Dunn, executive director of the Niagara Jazz Festival, accepts \$500 from Tim Jennings and the Shaw Festival during a cheque presentation on Wednesday at the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre. EVAN LOREE

# Passion for history alive at **Battle of Fort George**

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

For those that come out to every bi-annual celebration of the Battle of Fort George, the re-enactment is a fun tradition or getaway with the family

For the hundreds of re-enactors that come out from all over North America though, this day is the culmination of months of planning and years of studying.

This past weekend was no exception.

Chris McKay has been re-enacting for over 20 years now and works closely alongside Peter Martin in many of the major demonstrations at Fort George.

“The short story is that my dad was always interested in history and he took me to my first re-enactments when I was young,” McKay told The Lake Report.

He explained that shortly after a visit to Old Fort Erie, he fell in love with history and hasn’t looked back since.

His background and interest in history come in handy when helping plan a battle re-enactment.

“For a lot of us history, especially 1812, is very well known,” he said.

The other leads meet weeks in advance and come up with a loose script of how everything will be conducted, he said, walking the field and mapping out the re-enactment.

“At the end of the day, the story of history is what we’re trying to tell. That’s sort of the basis of what we do,” he said.

Linda Hanna’s role in the re-enactment was a little bit different, but just as intensive.

Hanna is a completely self-taught seamstress who creates uniforms in costumes for historic sites all over Niagara, including Fort George, McFarland House, the Laura Secord Homestead and Old Fort Erie.

“I started doing this 34 years ago. There was nobody in Canada doing clothing then, so I just started making things for my family.”

Hanna’s interest in the 1800s, specifically 1812, has lent itself to her craft. She cites Jane Austen movies as some fashion inspirations.

Phil and Debby Mozel portrayed the role of a surgeon and wartime nurse



**PHOTO GALLERY**  
See more pictures at [niagaranow.com](http://niagaranow.com)

Hundreds of re-enactors from across North America came out to the fort for the bi-annual Battle of Fort George re-enactment. Along with front-line soldiers roles included surgeons, fur trappers and more. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

during the weekend’s re-enactment.

For the Mozels, real life lent itself seamlessly to the characters.

Now retired, Phil Mozel had a career as a science teacher and his wife worked as a nurse.

“If you join the re-enactment community you need a job. Most of the guys will go into the line, that didn’t interest me,” Phil said.

With his background in science and love of history, portraying a surgeon made perfect sense. The

Mozels refer to online sources for their information and collect books on history.

“The ones I like the best are first-person accounts,” Phil told The Lake Report.

Phil Mozel added that the main focus of reenactments

like this is the storytelling, emphasizing that after the battle, soldiers “didn’t just go home.”

“It’s quite gratifying. A lot of people don’t know their history in general and certainly not to this specificity,” he said.

## Fun in spades at **Red Roof Retreat** summer camp

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Red Roof Retreat’s summer camp is a place full of animals, crafts, horse-drawn buggy rides and smiles.

“I just love the fact that you can see the joy on their faces,” said Shauna Press, the recreational program coordinator at Red Roof Retreat.

“I love that feeling of knowing that they’re happy, they’re doing things they enjoy,” she added.

Press has been running the six-week summer camp program at Red Roof for about seven years.

“We have themes every week, and the kids can

come and the parents can know that they can drop them off, and they’re in a safe space,” she added.

Back in March when Red Roof Retreat opened registration for the camp, it reached capacity within two days. This year, 18 more families signed up to take part.

“It’s popular because we take everybody, so it’s not exclusive to a certain disability,” she said.

For 10-year-old Amelia, one of her favourite parts about summer camp is going to the park, and being a role model to some of the younger kids.

Press said Amelia has been coming to the program since she was four.



**PHOTO GALLERY**  
See more pictures at [niagaranow.com](http://niagaranow.com)

Campers and staff at Red Roof Retreat spend some time with their favourite donkey. SOMER SLOBODIAN

“We call her our junior counsellor because she helps out with a lot of the younger kids,” said Press.

Amelia said she loves the horse and buggy rides she gets to go on because it’s led by her favourite horse on the farm, Wonder.

While animals are a huge part of the experience

— Red Roof has ducklings, a pig, a goat, horses and even a donkey — there are plenty of different activities for the kids to enjoy.

For example, there are sensory bins for kids who need and benefit from sensory play (activities that stimulate a child’s senses).

They also have arts and crafts and even do tie-dye with the kids.

“It’s just such a great environment. I love it,” said Press.

The 18 new families that joined the Red Roof this year started out in Press’ Saturday day camp to get a feel for it, she said.

“It’s kind of nice to keep the movement going,” she said.

The Saturday day camp will start up again around the same time school starts.

Anyone interested in learning more about the programs at Red Roof Retreat can visit [redroofretreat.com](http://redroofretreat.com).

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# Hometown Traveller: Exotic birding and wild

Janice White  
Special to The Lake Report

I retired to Niagara in the spring of 2019 and, while I have been doing photography for a while, my interests turned to bird and wildlife photography thanks to the outstanding nature in our region.

In the spring we have an abundance of migratory birds passing, showing off their beautiful breeding plumage. During COVID I spent many hours finding birds and wildlife to photograph.

One day on Facebook I saw a person offering bird photography trips to Costa Rica, so I started to follow him. His photographs were amazing.

Last fall I contacted some friends from Texas and together we planned a February birding trip to Costa Rica.

We were a small group – seven in total – along with our guide and our driver. Each day of the trip was quite physically demanding.

On day one, we piled into a van and headed north from San Jose.

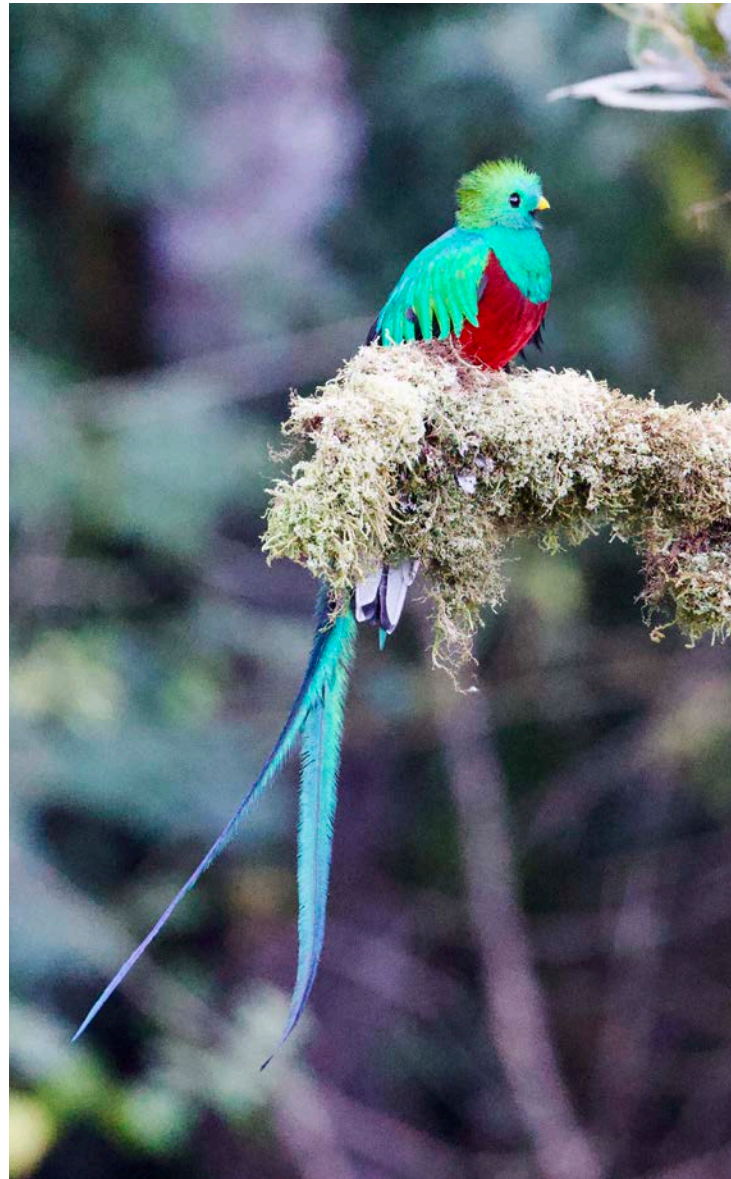
Our first destination was the Boca Tapada area, which is very close to the Nicaraguan border. To get there we drove through miles and miles of coffee and pineapple plantations. The scenery was outstanding but we were clearly off the usual tourist areas.

We spent two nights in rustic log cabins and got our first tropical bird sightings – the hummingbirds, toucans, parrots, great green macaws, warblers and other resident species had us snapping like crazy.

We didn't have to worry about sleeping in as the howler monkeys were living up to their names by 5 a.m. The second day we were taken to a farmer's field where a photography hide had been built up.

Food was put out for vultures including the beautiful king vulture, a large black and white bird. Two adults and two juveniles came to feed.

Freddy Madigral, our guide, is a native Costa Rican who has led



Scenes from the trip of a lifetime. From left: A resplendent quetzal, colourful toucan, a river in the Costa Rican highlands, poisonous green tree frog, ph

bird photography trips for more than 30 years. He is knowledgeable not only about the various birds but the country's natural habitats and history.

His company is Costa Rica Tropical Expeditions. He can be contacted through Facebook or his website, [freddymadigral.com](http://freddymadigral.com).

Madrigal was welcomed wherever we went and was able to get us entry onto private property to locate birds, which was amazing. We also got the opportunity to see how the average person lived in Costa Rica and how welcoming they were to a group of strangers.

Our next destination was the Sarapiquí region, which is part of the rainforest. Our days started early – we were normally off by 6 a.m. (and a few mornings by 5 a.m.) in order to find the birds.

In Sarapiquí, we not only saw more beautiful birds, but were also taken to a spot to photograph some poisonous frogs and snakes. We spotted the green and black poison dart frog, the red-eyed tree frog, and the strawberry poison dart frog (whose nickname is blue jeans).

Most surprising to me was how tiny the frogs were – smaller than a marshmallow. It was a little unnerving to find out that these

frogs live in the clearing where we took the photographs. The handler rummaged around the leaves until he found the one he wanted to bring out.

Next up were two poisonous snakes: the eyelash viper and the green vine snake. Here, we also briefly saw a golden collared manakin. This small bird clears a fairly large space on the forest floor of all debris and then dances to attract a mate.

Although we saw the clearing he made we weren't fortunate enough to see his mating dance.

It was in this region that we also hiked across a river and

through the rainforest to see a spectacled owl. White markings around its face make it look like it's wearing spectacles.

As we hit the road again to get high up in the mountains of the Sagre region, we found a family of howler monkeys who were waiting to be photographed. Unfortunately, we never saw a sloth, though not for lack of trying.

In Sagre, we stayed at small cabins at an altitude of 8,000 feet. Our quest during our stay in the highlands was to find and photograph the resplendent quetzal, one of the world's most beautiful birds.

We had to leave at 5 a.m. to

  
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# Wildlife adventures in Costa Rica



Photographer Janice White (centre) with others on the tour, a stately iguana and ferruginous pygmy owl. JANICE WHITE/SUPPLIED

...a spot the bird frequents in order to secure a prime location. It was quite a popular viewing spot with around 25 to 30 people there.

We went two mornings and the quetzal normally started flying through the forest around 6 a.m. The first morning it stayed in the forest and we didn't get great shots so we went back late in the afternoon but it didn't show at all.

To get to the spot we had to climb (at 8,000 feet) the equivalent of 10 flights of stairs lugging all our camera equipment. It was chilly, around 10 Celsius with a wind chill, and I was glad I brought my down jacket to the tropics.

The second morning we were lucky as both a female and male quetzal came to perches that were close to our photography spot.

Our guide has purchased property in this area and is developing it to be a "glamping" spot for birders. It's a little higher, at 10,000 feet, but will be a beautiful spot when it's completed.

Our final destination was a beach resort on the Pacific side of Costa Rica. We travelled many miles during our trip and saw a great deal of the country. Besides coffee and pineapple plantations, we drove through the cloud forest, the continental divide, the rainforest and the Pacific region.

Our final destination was the land of scarlet macaws and besides them we saw other amazing birds like the motmot, the fiery-throated hummingbird and the amazing gartered trogon. We also saw a white-face capuchin monkey.

With a pile of full memory cards and thousands of photos, it was time to pack up and head home. We enjoyed an amazing adventure even if it was physically exhausting. All told, we saw about 200 different species of birds.

If you love birds and want to see more photos, contact me by email at [oldmillphoto@gmail.com](mailto:oldmillphoto@gmail.com).



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.  
Category: DISNEY SONGS

"Feed the Birds" from this film was said to be one of Walt Disney's personal favorites.

Last issue:

Category: DISNEY SONGS

Clue: This song from "Toy Story" earned Randy Newman an Oscar nomination.

Answer: What is "You've Got a Friend in Me?"

Answered first by: Bill Hamilton

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Claudia Grimwood, Bob Wheatley, Pam Dowling, Susan Dewar, Catherine Clarke, Nancy Rocca, Marjory Walker-Barone, Lynda Collet, Jim Dandy, KC King

\*REMEMBER TO PUT "WHAT IS" FOR JEOPARDY QUESTIONS!

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Shylah Suriam lost some cabbage and beets to sticky fingers. Despite the theft, her garden is still thriving. JULIA SACCO

## Community garden **bountiful** this summer – despite theft of produce from private plots

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

In spite of the pilfering of some prime vegetables early last week, Niagara-on-the-Lake's community garden is thriving this summer.

During an open house Saturday for the Newark Park Community Garden, NOTL green thumbs showed off the fruits – and vegetables – of their labour.

“This year has been phenomenal. I think everyone is in a good mood when they come,” said gardener Shylah Suriam.

This growing season wasn't without some struggles, though.

Suriam told The Lake Report that someone came into the garden off Lakeshore Road and stole produce from her plot and a few others.

“I knew that it was a professional from the way the cabbage was taken,” Suriam said.

Both her cabbage and beets were harvested clean from the ground.

“I had a big thing of lettuce here. They just sliced it and I've never even done that,” she said.

The community garden group isn't sure who may have taken the vegetables and members are not actively searching for the potential culprit.

Suriam joked that perhaps a gang of super grannies paid the garden a visit.

Still, the band of gardeners still had plenty of reason to celebrate at the open house, hosting visitors with homemade baked goods and tours of all the impressive species.

Julian Traschel, the park's co-ordinator, said

he believes the garden has transformed the area.

“It's brought life to the park. If you go look at the pollinator flowers there's so much activity over there,” he said.

Traschel emphasized this season's focus on pollinators and maintaining a healthy park ecosystem with the help of native bees.

And if you're new to gardening – not to worry, new gardener Suriam said the garden is open to people of all horticultural levels.

“If you're a newbie, you'll do really well,” she said, adding that her neighbours on both sides help with things like bug control and maintenance.

As for theft, Traschel is hopeful that it won't happen again.

“It's a fact of life,” he said.

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# St. Davids Lions Carnival celebrates six decades of community support

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

The St. Davids Lions are hard at work getting ready to commemorate a milestone anniversary – 60 years of serving their community.

This year's anniversary is being celebrated at the annual St. Davids Lions Carnival, which runs from July 26 to 29 at the Lions Club Grounds.

Martin Forster, zone chair for the Lions, told The Lake Report that setting up for the carnival has begun already and organizers are gearing up for classic family fun.

"We're ready for a good carnival. (Last year), they came out in droves and supported us and we're hoping for the same thing this year," he said.

There will be a little extra attention paid to having a theme this year – "six decades of giving back to the community," said the Lions' entertainment chair

Ken Lamb – but Forster said they found they didn't need to change too much about the yearly carnival.

"People loved our carnival, they came out and supported us tremendously. We certainly don't want to change that," he said.

Lamb said it'll have all the classic rides and attractions, accompanied by some new features, and musical performances falling in line with the theme.

"We really tried to get representation from six decades," Lamb said.

Each musical act will represent a different decade, with bands like the Repeatles, Turntable Rock, The Hitmen and more set to perform.

And for the first time ever, Lamb has planned an entirely separate country night on Sunday. It will feature four different bands and the Lions are asking for a \$20 donation as an admission – his goal is 500 people attend. "If 500 people come out

and donate \$20, that's an extra \$10,000 that will go back into the community," he said.

Forster said that Susan Snider, the club's incoming president played an instrumental role in planning and theme organization.

"She's going to be our first female president in the 60 years of the club's life, so that's a big step for everyone," he said.

"She did a very commendable job, she got everyone on the right page."

Along with the usual family favourites like food, grocery baskets and rides, this year's carnival will feature the Lions' first dog show in support of dog guides and a section for the Leos to sell tulip bulbs.

The club is not raising any prices because it wants the carnival to focus on family fun, Forster said.

"As so many have faced higher costs with COVID, we intend to keep our prices the way we had them so that all families can enjoy it."



The St. Davids Lions Club is celebrating 60 years at this year's carnival. Musical acts playing tunes from all six decades of the club's existence will be featured. JULIA SACCO

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# Aced it: Six-year-old golfer scores hole-in-one

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

Six-year-old Kohen Barszcz loves playing golf. And after last week, he's loving it a whole lot more.

The youngster accomplished something that very few people of any age can brag about — he notched a hole-in-one.

Playing Tuesday at Eagle Valley Golf Club near St. Davids, the diminutive player stepped up to the tee on the 113-yard par-3 sixth hole.

Using his driver, he plunked his tee shot onto the green and into the hole.

Kohen, who was attending golf camp at the club, realized it was a good shot but wasn't able to see it drop in the cup, however.

"He knew it hit the green but was unsure if it went in," his mother Kristen Barszcz told The Lake Report.

"His big brother Jackson, who is eight, was also golfing with him, asking him,



Six-year-old Kohen Barszcz had a hole-in-one on the 113-yard sixth hole at Eagle Valley Golf Club. SUPPLIED

"Did it go in?" while another camper said, "A kid just hit a hole in one!"

"All the kids in his group couldn't believe it," she said.

Eagle Valley head pro

John Piccolo said in his 24 years at the club this is the first time any camper has aced a hole and Kohen is "likely the youngest ever at Eagle Valley, period."

His colleague Vincent

Friyia noted the club teaches more than 300 campers annually.

The hole-in-one was witnessed by one of the club's coaches, Ben Hebert, "and the celebration was heard by all of the campers around the front nine."

"All of the coaches were duly impressed by how developed Kohen's game is at six years old, especially his ball-striking abilities," Friyia said.

"After his hole-in-one on Tuesday he routinely had birdie chances throughout the rest of the week. The other campers, most four to five years older, were in awe of the little guy hitting seemingly everything in the sweet spot."

Teaching pro Travis Glass, who got his first hole-in-one at #9 at Eagle Valley when he was 13, noted, "The excitement all the kids got with Kohen's ace is one of the great parts of the game."

"He was the one who hit the shot but all the kids

loved being a part of it and even telling the story later to their parents."

Mom Kristen grew up in Niagara-on-the-Lake and her parents George and Debbie Enns still live here.

So do Kohen's great-great aunt and uncle, George and Nancy Nichols — and the whole family is really proud of his accomplishment.

The feat also caught the attention of officials with Golf Canada, the sport's governing body.

When told about the six-year-old's hole-in-one, Dan Hyatt, the senior manager of rules and amateur championships confirmed that it was a legitimate ace — a shot from a standard tee position to a regular-size hole.

He said it was "amazing news" and communications director Dan Pino called it a "very impressive feat" and "a pretty special accomplishment."

Dad Kevin Barszcz plays golf but Kohen now holds bragging rights as the only

one in his immediate family to record a hole-in-one.

The family lives in St. Catharines and Kohen is headed to Grade 2 in the fall.

Kohen, who is in his third summer of golf camp at Eagle Valley, was the youngest player in his group, his mom said.

"They were all so amazed and proud of him. They had never seen a hole-in-one happen."

Big brother Jackson was especially proud and supportive, hugging and congratulating him.

After his whirlwind day, that evening Kohen kept saying, "Mom, it still feels like a dream."

He usually does two weeks of golf camp in the summer and gets out for a few rounds each year, she said.

In the future, he might take some lessons with Glass at Eagle Valley and maybe even enter some junior tournaments, she said.



## St. Davids Lions Club 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Carnival

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Members of the NOTL Golf Club's nine-hole women's league and their guests gather near the first tee prior to their event last week. CATHY SAYTAR

## Henry wins Criers' Tourney with **super 70** net score

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

Yolanda Henry had a stellar day on the links Tuesday, winning the Criers' Tournament during the 18-hole women's league competition at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club.

As well, Henry had the best gross score (88), best net (72) and needed the fewest putts (just 26) to accomplish it all.

The Criers' Tournament is a modified format in which a player's net score is calculated after tossing out three of their worst scores (one each from a par 3, par 4 and par 5).

Henry, runner-up in the women's open division in last year's club championships, was tops with a net 70 on the 15 holes that counted.

Carroll Baker was second with a net 77 while Cathy Murray and Sue Sherk tied with a net 79.

For 18 holes, other top gross scores were: Baker (94), Sherk (97), Margot Richardson (98), Judy Mantle and Murray (99).

Other top 18-hole net scores were: Richardson (74), Marie Ellison and Gayle Tanner (75), and Baker (76).

The nine-hole women's league held its member/

guest day last week and 23 members welcomed 17 guests.

They celebrated the Cherry Festival with a scramble tournament and then lunch on the lakefront patio.

The winners on the day were: Kathy Taylor, Maureen Taylor, Carol McCague, Carol Newmarch, Ruth Dowsett and Kerry Mallette. Julie Sargent won the longest putt prize and Christine Merza was closest to the pin on #4.

This past Tuesday, league members with a handicap over 40 competed for the Joy Nelles Trophy and Charlotte Kainola was crowned champion.

Other winners were: Deborah Williams (longest drive on # 2) and Candace MacLean (longest putt #8). Trish Anthony won the members draw. Williams had low gross (49) and MacLean was low net (32).

In Thursday men's league action, reigning club champ Ricky Watson showed he's ready to defend his title, carding a remarkable 3-under 33.

There was a six-way tie for best modified Stableford score (21 points) and Harry Huizer was named the winner by retrogression.

Other winners: Marc Sandwell, (longest drive #1),

Matt Szczerko (closest to #2 pin in two shots), A.J. Harlund (closest to pin #4), Drew Porter (longest putt #6), Nick Pollice (longest putt #7) and Rob Chubey (closest to pin #9).

Gross skins went to: Dan Regan (eagle on #3), Patrick Craig (#2), Harlund (#4), Watson (#8) and Rob Reimer (#9). Net skins: Regan (#3) and Doug Hernder (#6).

Tuesday's WOOFs winner was Rick Janes, with a 3-over 39. Brock Sansom had low net (34) and Rai Lauge was closest to the pin on #4.

Top place in the Friday Couples league scramble went to Janice and Jim McMacken, Sheila and Larry Blight, with a score of 2-under 34. By retrogression, they edged out Lynette and Dean Sanders, Lenore and Rick Janes (34).

Third place went to Peggy Larder and Gerry Shelly, Shelley and Brock Sansom (36). Two other groups also shot 36: Carroll and Ted Baker, Suzanne and Todd Watson; Carolyn and Drew Porter, Sharron and Bernard Marlow.

Other winners: Steve Millward and Janice McMacken (closest to pin #4), Bob Lowe and Candace MacLean (longest putt #8).



### 2023 MUNICIPAL TAX REMINDER NOTICE FINAL INSTALLMENT DUE JULY 28, 2023

Tax Rates as per Final By-Law No. 5513-23

#### Payment Options:

- By **mail** or **post-dated cheque** to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil ON, LOS 1T0)
- **In-person** to the Town Administration Building (1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
- Via drop box at the Town Administration Building, front and side entrance (1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil ON, LOS 1T0)
- **Electronically** from a bank account using the 19-digit roll number
  - If payment is made at a bank or other pay station, the account will be credited only after the Town has received settlement from the bank. Please allow ten (10) business days for payment processing.

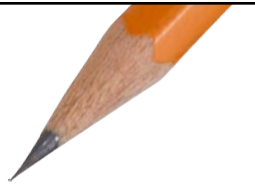
A penalty of 1.25% will be added on the first day of default and the first day of each month thereafter. To avoid penalty and interest charges, payment must be received by the Town by the due date of July 28, 2023. Penalties may not be waived.

Failure to receive a tax notice does not excuse a taxpayer from the responsibility of payment of taxes and penalty. If you have not received your tax notice, please call the Finance Division at 905-468-3266 to ensure that your correct mailing address, including PO Box number, is on file.

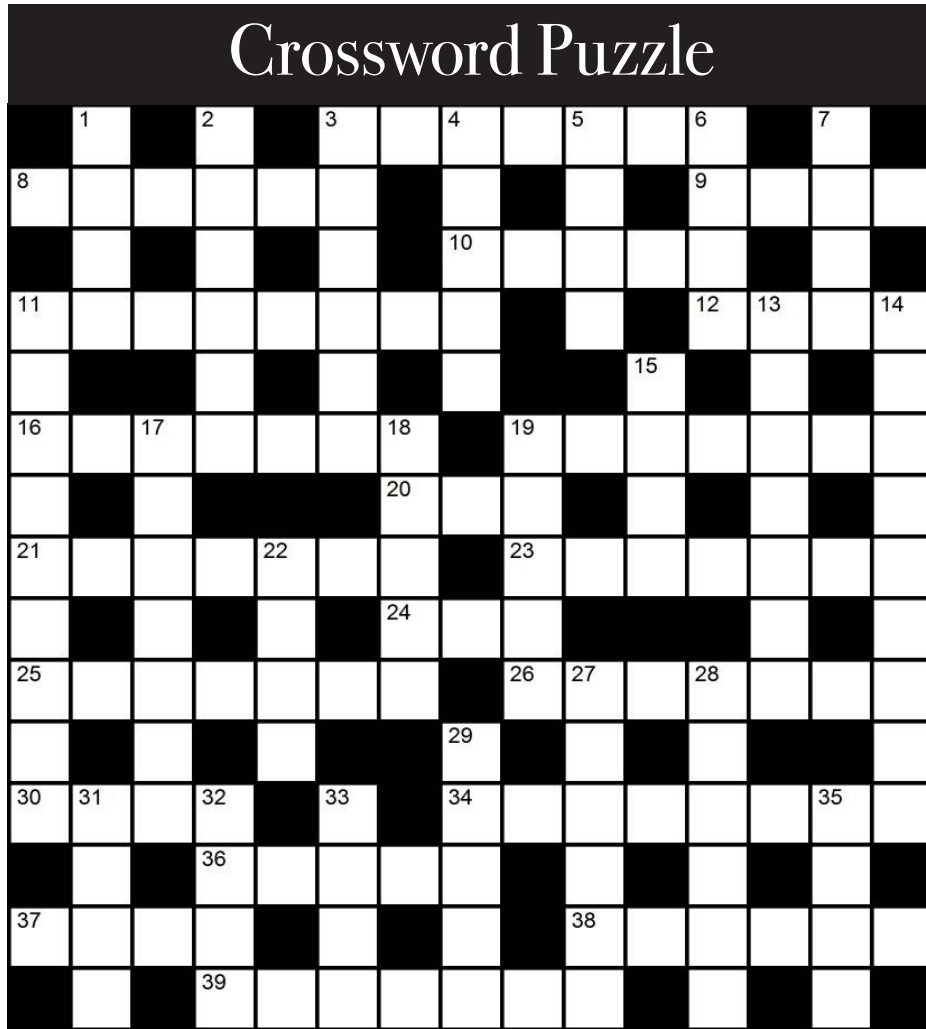
To save time and potential late fees, pay your taxes through a Pre-Authorized Payment (PAP) plan, online or through telephone banking. Property owners can also request to receive their property tax bills and notices from the Town by email through an eSend service. For information on payment options or to sign up for eSend, please visit [notl.com](http://notl.com) or call Town offices at 905-468-3266.

Thank you.

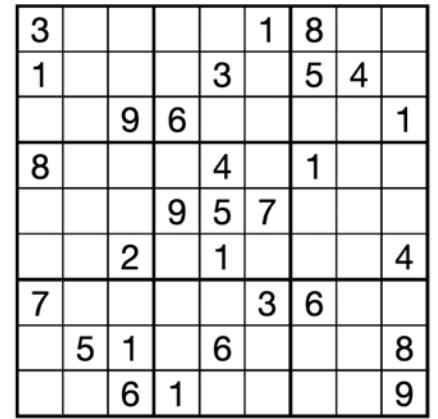
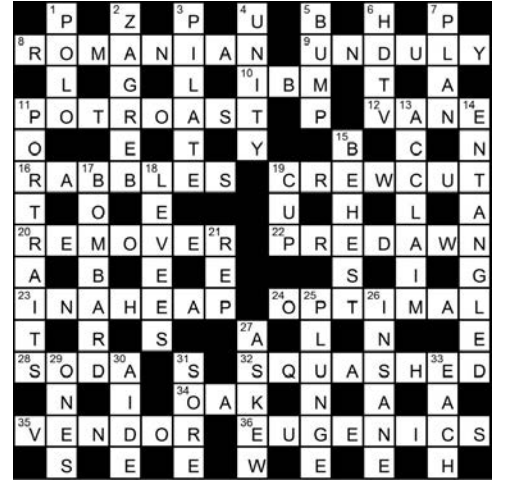
*Have some fun*



- Across**
- 3. Ringed (7)
  - 8. --- Goldberg, actress (6)
  - 9. Highway (4)
  - 10. Lax (5)
  - 11. Last (8)
  - 12. Heavy blow (4)
  - 16. Predicted (7)
  - 19. Spark off (7)
  - 20. Belonging to us (3)
  - 21. Old match (7)
  - 23. Its capital is Montevideo (7)
  - 24. Involuntary muscular contraction (3)
  - 25. Up-to-date (2,5)
  - 26. Covered (7)
  - 30. Young lady (4)
  - 34. Instruction to keep cool (4,4)
  - 36. Tyrone county town (5)
  - 37. Forbidden action (2-2)
  - 38. Vortices (6)
  - 39. Learned the ropes (7)
- Down**
- 1. North Wales seaside resort (4)
  - 2. Incentive (6)
  - 3. Shrill chirping insect (6)
  - 4. Canons (5)
  - 5. Landlocked SE Asian nation (4)
  - 6. Sketched (4)
  - 7. Father (4)
  - 11. Spreading out (9)
  - 13. Top brass (4-3)
  - 14. Death for a cause (9)
  - 15. Place (4)
  - 17. Earthquake scale (7)
  - 18. Value (5)
  - 19. Armistice (5)
  - 22. Smoke duct (4)
  - 27. Approached (6)
  - 28. Assent (6)
  - 29. Grey (5)
  - 31. "Prince ---", Borodin opera (4)
  - 32. Spoils (4)
  - 33. Individual facts (4)
  - 35. Sediment (4)



Last issue's answers



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SHANNON  
LEIGH BEATTIE\*

# Mammoths, **modern humans** and other migrants



**DR. BROWN**

Dr. William Brown  
Columnist

In the springtime of the initial four years we lived in Niagara-on-the-Lake, a female fox with a decided limp in her left leg took up residence in the culvert beneath our driveway.

With her new cubs — all cute, frisky, and playfully leaping straight up or tumbling into one another or mum — they were fun to watch.

But when the fifth spring came, no limping mother and cubs were to be seen around our home, although sightings of a fox with a limp were reported from different places in NOTL that year.

Maybe she wandered out of town, or a coyote got her, but whatever happened she was never seen again.

In the same time frame, my wife and I sometimes visited friends who owned a small island in Haliburton visited annually by a pair of loons.

They managed not only to find the same small island every year but refashioned and spruced up the previous year's nest for their coming family.

Those anticipated annual visits went on for several years until they too stopped, and like the female fox, we'll never know what became of the pair of loons.

Those loons were amazing: they managed to find the same nesting spot year after year.

They also travelled much farther than I did when I flew back and forth initially from London, Ont. or later from Boston to Stanhope Municipal Airport in Haliburton County, using GPS — or before that, Loran — to find my way even when visibilities and ceilings were poor.

So, hats off to those loons and all migrant birds that find their way without fancy electronic tools.

Migrations are common in nature. Examples include



Woolly mammoth.  
MIDJOURNEY

insects like monarch butterflies, fish such as salmon, even great white sharks and mammals from humpback whales to caribou.

The longest annual distance travelled by a single species apparently belongs to the Arctic tern: a round trip of up to 59,000 miles each year, according to The Wildlife Trusts, flying from the Arctic to the Antarctic in the winter.

Most of those migrations are related in some fashion to annual changes in weather and longer-term climate shifts, which influence the availability of food and water.

From the time when they evolved 200,000 to 150,000 years ago in Africa, modern humans dispersed repeatedly and travelled widely, reaching western Europe 55,000 years ago, Australia 60,000 years ago and the Americas 15,000 years ago.

Neanderthals also dispersed but to the best of our knowledge, never beyond Eurasia.

Earlier still, homo erectus, which in successively larger-brained versions, lasted the longest of our ancestral homo species (1.8 million to 100,000 years ago), was called the “traveller” by archeologist Mary Leakey for good reason: erectus, in later bigger-brained versions, managed to reach much of Eurasia, including what is now China and Indonesia.

Leakey also called them dimwitted because they fashioned the same hafted axes with little in the way of improvements over their long tenure — despite a brain twice the size it was at the beginning of their time.

Before homo erectus' time, what about the australopiths, those evolutionary variations on a theme of

small-brained, bipedal apes? Did they too, like their homo successors, disperse outside Africa?

The record of Lucy (*A. afarensis*) and other australopiths is that they stayed in Africa. Only our genus and species, homo sapiens, migrated far and wide, eventually to every continent.

Other species migrated widely, one example of which were mammoths, found throughout Africa, Eurasia and the Americas. The most interesting of which for me was one woolly mammoth named by his investigators as Kik.

Kik's wanderings in Alaska 17,000 years ago were tracked using his tusks, whose strontium levels reflected the strontium levels in the grass he munched each day and thus the strontium levels in the rocks on which the grass grew.

Tusks grow from the base, the oldest part of which is the tip of the tusk. By cutting the tusk into fine slices and measuring the levels of strontium isotopes in successive slices, like pages in a book, it was possible

to match those levels with known strontium levels in rock formations throughout Alaska.

Hence, they could trace Kik's wanderings throughout much of his life until he died 17,000 years ago at the age of 27, half the average age of most mammoths at death.

The record revealed that when he was young, he travelled widely but as he aged, he travelled less far and less often. Sound familiar?

Returning to foxes, in this case, arctic foxes, a recent study showed that one fox, who was tracked using a GPS emitting device attached to a collar about his neck, managed to cover an astonishing 6,400 kilometres over the 277 days he was tracked.

Probably alone, he somehow managed to find enough food and avoid predators along his marathon trek. Like all long treks by animals, this was impressive

*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.*

## NEWARK NEIGHBOURS FOOD BANK COMMUNITY DROP-OFF **FOOD DRIVE**

**When: Saturday, July 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

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Canned beef stew  
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Soda (Soup) Crackers  
Habitant Soups  
Cookies - any kind  
Canned Ham, Corned Beef or Spam  
Cereal and Oatmeal - any kind  
Canned Tuna

Canned Corn, Peas, Green Beans, other vegetable  
Canned Beans (kidney, chickpeas, lentils)  
Stuffing Mix  
Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Turkey  
Cranberry Sauce  
Pasta  
Rice  
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Tomato Sauce  
Pudding cups - any flavour  
Granola Bars / Cookies  
Canned Potatoes / Instant Mashed Potatoes

Shelf stable milk (e.g. condensed, powdered, rice, etc.)  
Sidekicks and Ramen soup packets  
Jams - any flavour  
Peanut Butter  
Kraft Dinner  
Coffee (instant, regular or decaf) / Tea  
Paper Towels / Toilet Paper  
Condiments — salad dressings, mayonnaise, sauces (e.g. HP Sauce, soya sauce, Worcestershire sauce etc.), dried spices, salt & pepper  
Household items e.g. dish soap, laundry detergent, cleaning products  
Toiletries e.g. toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, hand and body lotion, mouthwash, feminine products

**EXPLORING PHOTOS**  
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



## Greene's Livery Stable

This week's image is of the former livery stables of the Greene family. The stables were established on King Street by Michael J. Greene sometime in the late 1800s. During the 1901 visit of the future King George V and his wife Mary, Greene's carriage with white horses was chosen to escort them on a tour of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Michael's son Jack continued in the stable business on the same site up until the mid-1960s. Residents of Old Town recalled the distinct smell of the stables that wafted down King Street every hot and humid day. Today, the stables have been refurbished and are now the site of a restaurant — one can enjoy a tasty food experience at Aura on the Lake.

## My love for farmers stretches back four generations



### Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson  
Columnist

My great-grandfather Jabel Robinson was a giant in the early days of farming in western Ontario. While studying family history last week, I learned he had been the founding president of the Dominion Grange in Canada.

The Grange was the farmers union and he helped to unite this body with United Farmers' Association to increase the influence of the agricultural community in the provincial and dominion legislatures.

Jabel Robinson and his fellow farmers worked hard to improve laws in regard to drainage across railway lands and for the protection

of cattle at level crossings. And not that long ago!

Just imagine the logistics of lobbying in the days before cellular telephones and email and texting. Even before telephones and Morse code and telegraph service.

Having to meet face-to-face to discuss issues, after travelling on foot or on horseback. For the lucky people, travelling in a two-horsepower carriage.

Great-grandfather Jabel was born in 1831, in Linsdale, Buckinghamshire, just north of London.

He was a prolific journalist, and while in Canada he sent monthly letters to his hometown paper titled, "Notes from a Linslade man in the Canadian colony." So, I guess I come by my propensity to ramble honestly.

What an interesting life he had. After the Crimean War, he moved to Vicksburg, Tenn., just before the American Civil War, as a skilled carpenter.

Just as the horrible war started, his tools were burned and he returned to a long and remarkable life of



An AI generated image of an 1860s farmer.  
RICHARD HARLEY/MIDJOURNEY

unselfish public service in Canada.

He was a councillor in St. Thomas for three years and, in 1900, he was elected to represent West Elgin in Canada's House of Commons.

He served for four years as an Independent — and an Independent he remained to the end.

Always fully prepared for political debate, whenever a vote was called for, his vote recorded his personal convictions.

He was not beholden to any political party and he was no man's man. Thoroughly independent.

Back home in Middlemarch and St. Thomas, he worked tirelessly with the

Grange and entertained many distinguished guests.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Lady Laurier visited on more than one occasion.

A poem was composed by F. J. Waddell to describe Jabel Robinson in the House of Commons, titled, "When Jabel Takes the Floor."

*There's the member for West Elgin,  
With a broad and massive brow,  
When at home his avocation,  
Was following the plow.  
But now that he's in Parliament,  
His aspirations soar,  
And things are interesting,  
When Jabel takes the floor.*

Jabel Robinson accomplished so much for the agricultural community of Canada.

As a past Master of the Grange, one of the chief pleasures of his latter days in 1900 was attending a picnic in Port Stanley, on the north shore of Lake Erie.

Some 5,000 people were in attendance and this was to him an assurance of new

life and vigour coming into the organization.

Farming is a noble profession and because of the hard and smart work of our farming friends, we are able to eat nutritious food year-round.

Farmers do so much good around our town, and create such a presence.

Hardworking, healthy and handsome, they are involved in many charitable organizations in NOTL.

To name a few, how about Albrecht Seeger tooling around NOTL in his dashing red Volkswagen Bug, or Juan Neumann purposefully taking the airs along the Niagara Parkway Recreational Trail?

And Deputy Lord Mayor Erwin Wiens on his powerful motorcycle riding to Ryerson Park with his wonderful wife Dorothy for another sunset.

What a cast of characters, eh?

Take a moment this week to thank a NOTL farmer. They are all outstanding in their fields, producing food for us and doing so much good around town.

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Left: Cityline Paris hydrangea. Right: Midnight marvel hibiscus. JOANNE YOUNG



The water at Queen's Royal Park is currently safe for swimming after having high E. coli levels. SUPPLIED

## Queen's Royal Park safe to swim again

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

Beach trips are back on. After the region said high E. coli levels made Queen's Royal Beach unsafe for swimming last Thursday, the water passed testing conducted on Friday and reopened early this week.

After more testing on Monday, July 17, the water remains safe for swimming. It is not known how long the beach will remain open for swimming or if it will be closed again.

Brandon Krupa, the region's manager of

environmental health, explained that many different factors play a part in water quality and levels of bacteria like E. coli, including weather changes and wildlife.

Samples only represent a point in time, Krupa noted, so it is important for swimmers to monitor regular water sampling updates.

The water at Queen's Royal Beach is tested each Monday, Wednesday and Friday in summer. The results are updated online at niagararegion.ca about 24 hours afterward.

The next update will be posted on Thursday, July 21.

## The bold and the beautiful



**GROWING TOGETHER**

Joanne Young  
Columnist

I don't know of too many places that have more lush-looking gardens than Niagara-on-the-Lake. Everywhere you look you are surrounded by large stunning flowers that just demand your attention.

If your garden is lacking vibrancy at this time of the year and you want to add some bold plants to liven up your landscape, here are some flowering plants that have a strong summer punch.

### *Acanthus mollis* (Bear's breeches)

This perennial plant is probably more widely known for its large leaves than for its flowers, but both leaves and flowers pack a punch in the garden.

The large thistle-like leaves have long been used by the Greeks since the fifth century BC on temple roof ornaments, on wall friezes, and on the capital of the Corinthian column.

One of the best examples of its use in

the Corinthian order is the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens.

Not only do the leaves add a certain lushness to the garden, but it also has tall, architectural spikes of purple and white flowers that will grow anywhere from three to six inches tall.

Bear's breeches grow best in part shade and enjoy soil rich in organic matter. They are hardy to zone 5.

### *Ligularia*

Ligularia, commonly known as ragwort or leopard plant, is another perennial that isn't commonly used but deserves a special spot in your garden.

Like the acanthus, it sports both large, lush leaves and bold flowers mid to late summer.

There are two main species that can be found in the garden centres.

One species is *Ligularia dentata*. A cultivar of *Ligularia dentata* that I use frequently is Britt Marie Crawford, which has huge, rounded, dark burgundy leaves. The texture and size of leaves would resemble that of a large hosta.

In late summer, the bright golden-orange daisy-like flowers open up, making a striking contrast to the burgundy leaves. Britt Marie Crawford grows two to three inches tall and three inches wide.

Another species of *ligularia* commonly found is *Ligularia stenocephala* with one of the showiest cultivars named "The Rocket." It

does not resemble the previous species at all.

It still has large leaves that are dark green in colour, but instead of daisy-like flowers, it has tall, lemon-yellow spikes of flowers that can get to be five to six inches tall.

All *ligularia* prefer a part-shaded location a moist to boggy soil. They can tolerate full sun with supplemental watering.

### *Perennial hibiscus*

Another summer-blooming perennial that will add fullness to your landscape is the perennial hibiscus.

Many of us have a tropical (indoor) hibiscus or know of rose of Sharon, which is also in the hibiscus family, but there is a perennial form that is hardy to zone 5.

Sometimes you will hear it being referred to as the dinner plate Hibiscus as the flowers are about the size of a dinner plate (eight to 10 inches across). There are many varieties of perennial hibiscus in shades of whites, pinks and reds.

Most cultivars will grow three to four inches high and wide. There are also some dwarf varieties available as well.

Perennial hibiscus prefers a sunny spot in the garden. Although they can tolerate a moist to wet area, they also do well in regular soil.

Each flower only lasts for one day, but as the plant matures it can produce at least 80 flower buds.

They all do not open at

once, but gradually over three to four weeks, giving it a long bloom time.

### *Hydrangeas*

It is impossible at this time to drive through Niagara-on-the-Lake at this time and not notice the beauty of all the different varieties of hydrangeas in people's gardens.

With all the recent rain, the hydrangeas are having a great season. From the large white snowball flowers of the Annabelle hydrangeas to the pink and blue globe flowers or hydrangea macrophytes to the cone shape clusters of the white PG hydrangeas, they provide such a lushness to the gardens.

There are way too many varieties to go into individual details, but basically, all hydrangeas will tolerate full sun to part shade locations.

Because of their large flowers and leaves, they will require additional water in sunny areas. Some varieties will only grow one-and-a-half inches high and some of the PG varieties can grow as much as seven to eight inches tall.

Now is a great time to visit the garden centres to see the vast array of colours and sizes.

So, if your garden is needing something bold and beautiful, why not consider adding some of these plants to punch up your landscape?

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



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## Liam Neumann



NEUMANN, Liam – Died in a tragic accident on Sunday June 25th, in St. Catharines, Ontario, at the age of 34. Beloved son of Barbara Worthy and Ronald Neumann, brother to Jordin Neumann, uncle to Bowan and Sophia, and devoted dog parent to Brody. He is survived by members of the Worthy family: Uncle John, Ian, Jenn, Josh, Justin, Jarrod, Jake, Carri-Ann, Chelsea, Taylor, and Alex; and many members of the Neumann family including Uncle Vince, Aunt Pauline, Nancy, Christine, Jim, Peter, Denise, Karen, Lisa, Kim, Wayne, Bryan, David, Janet, and John, in Canada and abroad.

Liam was a graduate of Parliament Oak Elementary School and Niagara District Secondary School, (Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario); University of Guelph, (Bachelor of Arts, Honours, International Development); and University of Waterloo (Master of Development Practice).

Liam was a lover of all things active (hockey, basketball, lacrosse, snowboarding); a devotee of David Attenborough, poetry, classical music, and Queen; preferred all things pink; was a fearless adventurer, disobeyed countless rules, and above all was passionate, witty, and brilliant.

A citizen of the world, Liam travelled the globe his entire life. He had multi trips to Europe as a child, spent a gap year traversing Asia, travelling on a motorcycle, wagon, boat or tractor; and then as a young professional his career took him to four continents, working in project management and external relations, with a specialty in humanitarian affairs, gender equality, food security, and sustainable socioeconomic development.

He was also the recipient of numerous academic grants and awards, as well as published in the International Conference on Sustainable Development.

His travels with his beloved dog, Brody, were legendary. Brody became as well known in Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa, as he was on the streets of St. Catharines.

Liam always said he would die for his dog, and tragically he did. Brody survived, Liam did not.

Those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Liam Neumann Water Safety Awareness Program, at [gofundme.com/f/liam-neumann-water-safety-foundation](https://www.gofundme.com/f/liam-neumann-water-safety-foundation)

Cremation has taken place. Friends and family are invited to join a Service of Remembrance at St Mark's Anglican Church, 41 Byron Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake, at 2 p.m., on Monday July 31st, followed by a reception at Addison Hall. Interment will take place at St. Mark's Church Memorial Gardens. Arrangements entrusted to Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)



## John Kormos



Kormos, John — 1930 - 2023  
"As written by John Kormos"

A well lived life with his wife Elizabeth at his side for 68 years. John completed his B/A at the University of Western. He began his career teaching Phys-Ed at the Senior Public level in Woodstock. In three years time he relocated to Niagara Falls where he was appointed Vice Principal of Central Senior Public School. Soon after that John took on the position of Principal at Drummond Road Public School. John very much enjoyed his 15 years at that position. John worked at Maple Street Senior School and retired his career at F.J. Rutland Senior School in Chippawa.

After retirement John became hooked on collecting antiques. The John Kormos Antiques of Queenston became a well known reputable dealer across Canada. With the company of his wife (Liz) he took on the onerous task of restoring and refurnishing the historic Hamilton Home in Queenston. The home will be recognized by the Ontario Heritage Council with a plaque, "Hamilton – Kormos Home Circa 1808". It was in his later years that John completed his Masters of Education at the University of Buffalo. John remained active throughout his life. He participated at the YMCA, was a jogger, spent many hours kayaking on the Niagara River and especially loved playing his Old Timers Hockey. John was an avid birder from a young age. His lovely property in Queenston allowed him to enjoy many birds in his own backyard. John felt fortunate to have a keen mind for his 92 years. Much thanks to Chippewa Creek Care (Bella) for their outstanding care contributing to my well-being during the past two years. Lastly, I feel much gratitude to our caregiver Coop. She has provided Elizabeth and I with exceptional care, unconditional support and guidance. Thank you Coop! You have made these last years memorable with great pleasure. Keep it up kid!! John is survived by his wife Elizabeth (Short), his sister Mary Scranton (Jim) and brother-in-law John Short (the late Sonja). John is predeceased by his parents Valentine and Helen and brother George Kormos. John will lay to rest at St. John's (Stamford Green Heritage) Columbarium in Niagara Falls. For those who would like to remember John, a Manhattan is called for at the 5 p.m. cocktail hour. In keeping with John's wishes, cremation has taken place. Arrangements entrusted to Considerate Cremation & Burial Services, 26 Nihan Drive, St. Catharines (between Lake Street & Scott Street), 289-362-1144. Online condolences may be made at [CCBSCares.ca](http://CCBSCares.ca)



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