



Bus stops cause concern | Page 11

Quest for a cure: Young diabetic leads charity walk

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Except for the white patch on her arm, there's nothing to suggest 11-year-old Greta Sobol's problems are any

different from those of other kids her age.

But in April last year, Greta was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes, an autoimmune disorder that destroys the body's ability to produce insulin.

Insulin is a naturally produced hormone that helps people convert sugar into energy – but Greta's body can't make it.

Instead, the Niagara-on-the-Lake youngster has to give herself manufactured

insulin with an injection device.

The diagnosis happened on a Monday night, a few days before Easter weekend 2022.

Earlier in the day, Greta

has some blood work done after several weeks of feeling unwell.

At around midnight, the family received a call: Get Greta to the hospital



Greta Sobol.

Continued on Page 7

New varieties are bringing an early start to Niagara's peach season

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

New types of peaches are allowing farmers to start the peach season earlier, get more fruit into more homes faster and give people new produce to sink their teeth into.

Thanks to new varieties such as early blush and rising sun, Kai Wiens, a Niagara-on-the-Lake tender fruit farmer, was among those who harvested tasty peaches as early as July 5 this year — his earliest harvest ever.

"With new, earlier varieties now on stream, we are supplying the Ontario market sooner than before," Wiens told The Lake Report via a social media message

Sarah Marshall, board chair of Ontario Tender Fruit, said July 5 is even earlier than when the golden plums are ready, "which is typically thought to be the first thing that really gets harvested."

Continued on Page 3

Students celebrate first day back

A few tears and lots of excitement as kids start a new school year



Julie Saggars with eight-year-old daughter Lennon McTaggart on her first day back at Crossroads Public School. EVAN LOREE

Evan Loree | Local Journalism Initiative | The Lake Report

Here today and gone tomorrow.

The first day back to school in Niagara-on-the-Lake was a whirlwind of activity for parents, teachers and kids alike.

As students disembarked from cars and buses at the busy drop off at Crossroads Public School in Virgil they were met by teachers and support staff, many in highlighter-yellow vests, who

herded them into the school.

Parents Joe Finlayson and Sydney Bellows watched from the parking lot as their twin four-year-olds, Rio and Emme Finlayson, were escorted into the

kindergarten playground for their very first day of school.

Daughter Emme was not so happy to say goodbye, as she

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NOTL tourism sector bouncing back from COVID doldrums

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Despite some bumps in the road, this year's tourist season has exceeded expectations in Niagara-on-

the-Lake, industry representatives say.

The travel sector was one of the hardest hit during the COVID-19 pandemic and some businesses continue to deal with staffing shortages, supply issues and the

slow return of international travellers.

Still, "it's been a strong year" for the historic town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, said Minerva Ward, president of Tourism NOTL and the Niagara-on-the-Lake

Chamber of Commerce.

This year's success comes off of a strong 2022 season, she said, adding that last year was one of the best ever for Vintage Hotels.

Kelly Exelby, general manager of the Prince of

Wales hotel, said she believes it has to do with Niagara-on-the-Lake being a quiet, calming destination.

That makes it an ideal spot for those who may be

Continued on Page 2



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Terry Fox's brother raises flag in NOTL

Julia Sacco
The Lake

Fred Fox says he can feel a sense of community when he visits small towns like Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"I think in a small community everybody knows each other and who's been diagnosed with cancer. It makes it that much more meaningful," he told The Lake Report during a visit to NOTL Wednesday afternoon.

Fox, brother of Canadian legend Terry Fox, stopped by town hall for the raising of the Terry Fox Run flag alongside Joan King and

other members of the NOTL run's organizing committee. Terry Fox walked through Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1980 during his Marathon of Hope.

"All the stories, especially when I'm in Ontario or where Terry's been, hearing the personal stories of getting out there and seeing Terry when they were six years old. It's been amazing to hear those stories," Fred Fox said.

"But the most important ones are somebody walking up to me, whether it's a school event or an event like this and saying 'my daughter' or 'my dad is alive

today because of what Terry started in 1980.' That's what it's all about."

Fox said that he is amazed to see the hard work put in by organizer King and master fundraiser Joe Pillitteri along with the entire committee members who are reaching toward a goal of \$1 million raised for cancer research.

"They could be doing anything else but they've chosen Terry and the Terry Fox Foundation," he said.

This year's Terry Fox run takes place at Simcoe Park on Sunday, Sept. 17. Registration is open at www.terryfox.org.



Terry Fox's brother Fred Fox helps raise the Terry Lives Here flag at Niagara-on-the-Lake town hall on Tuesday, ahead of the Sept. 17 Terry Fox Run. JULIA SACCO

Return of American visitors helps boost summer business

Continued from Front Page

nervous to travel in a post-pandemic world, she said.

John Kinney, president of Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours in Queenston and Lewiston, N.Y., said it's been a successful season so far – and this year the season won't end until December.

"We are seeing an uptick in our business this year, which makes me feel really good because we have not been blessed with weather this year," he said.

But the company has "fared pretty well" despite some cold and wet conditions this summer.

"It's not where we would all like it to be, but it's getting normal," he said.

Both Kinney and Exelby are happy with where the travel industry is heading and what this season has looked like so far.

"You only see it getting better," Exelby said.

The Niagara Parks Commission, which boasts nature attractions such as the Botanical Gardens and the Butterfly Conservatory, has seen a return in its pre-pandemic visitation numbers – and then some.

David Adames, Niagara Parks' chief executive officer, said this season surpassed the organization's

predictions: the number of visitors to its attractions from April to August increased by 44 per cent – to 969,009.

Last year, Niagara Parks had 673,841 visitors during that time period.

"The good news of 2023 is the return of the American visitor," he said, adding that U.S. tourists are the most important market for tourism in Canada's Niagara.

The opening of the border last season helped set businesses up for a successful 2023 season, said Ward.

During the summer months in 2019, Adames said, 44 per cent of Niagara Park's revenue came from U.S. visitors – exactly where they are at this season.

"The good news of 2023 is the return of the American visitor."

DAVID ADAMES
NIAGARA PARKS CEO

"We've seen strong numbers from the U.S. market, not quite back yet to 2019 transaction levels, but certainly we returned to the same revenue levels of 2019," he said.

He pointed out that the slow return of global travellers from Europe and Asia is the reason why transactions have not yet reached 2019 levels.

Pre-pandemic international travel numbers might not return until 2025, 2026 or even 2027 for some markets, Adames added.

However, European travellers seem to be coming back more quickly than those from Asia, he said.

Visitors from China, who Ward said make up a significant portion of business at the Outlet Collection at Niagara and NOTL's icewine market, haven't yet fully returned to NOTL.

The industry also has face some staffing and supply shortages.

"I think whether you run a restaurant, a hotel (or) an attraction, staffing continues to be a major problem," said Kinney.

He's had trouble finding the right staff for highly skilled positions such as diesel mechanics, aluminum welders and jet boat captains.

"Those are positions that are difficult to fill," he said.

The food and housekeeping departments at the Prince of Wales hotel have had some staffing challenges, said Exelby, but things improved this year



John Kinney, president of Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours in Queenston, says he's happy with the 2023 tourism season. SOMER SLOBODIAN

compared to 2022.

Supply issues have continued and some days are a challenge, she added.

"Some of our food ... all of a sudden one day you get something, the next day you can't."

That leaves the restaurants "struggling at the last minute," she said.

There's also been some struggle getting furniture like chairs, tables and kitchen equipment, she said in a text message to The Lake Report.

In addition to food costs,

she said construction and repair expenses have risen and likely will never recede.

Despite the setbacks, she said that some supply problems with food products and toiletries such as shampoo, conditioner and soaps have improved this season.

"You kind of learn to deal with it and you become a magician almost," she said. "But it's (still) all very, very positive."

Though the summer is almost over, the fall and winter seasons also offer

attractions and events for tourists, said Adames.

The jet boat season will be running until early December, said Kinney, thanks to a new boat, the Freedom Jet, which gives passengers the option of getting wet or staying dry.

That gives riders the chance to experience the class five rapids and still make it to their wine tours or Shaw Festival shows, he said.

"We can run that boat anytime that the Niagara River is ice-free."



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New varieties take time and patience

Continued from Front Page

Ontario Tender Fruit works with the Vineland Research & Innovation Centre, which breeds new tender fruit varieties, to bring new varieties to Ontario farmers.

There is a demand in Niagara and across Canada for varieties that are ready earlier, said Jayasankar Subramanian, a professor of tree fruit breeding and biotechnology at the University of Guelph.

He's based at the Vineland centre and has been breeding tree fruit varieties for about 22 years.

Niagara is in the northernmost latitude of peach growing, and peaches grown in places such as Georgia or California won't grow here due to Niagara's climate, he said.

The breeding program was created to offer new varieties that would grow and thrive in Niagara.

"One of the major objectives that I put in my breeding program is to get varieties that are earlier than what is available, so that we get that earlier advantage in the market," he said.

The research facility specializes in developing new fruit and vegetable varieties that fight diseases, are better prepared to withstand extreme weather brought on by climate change and can extend and begin growing seasons earlier.

"Any variety that we release should have a baseline disease resistance for brown rot and bacterial spot," said Subramanian.

These are common diseases found on stone fruits like peaches and nectarines.

Throughout the last eight years, he's helped release three new varieties — early blush, rising sun and vee blush.

"Early blush is the earliest ripening variety that we know of," said Marshall.

Wiens added the varieties that are ready earlier allows "for a longer employment period" for the employees who package the fruits.

Such varieties not only help farmers get a head start on the peach season, Marshall said, but also helps to reduce imported fruit



Jayasankar Subramanian, a professor at the University of Guelph who is based at the Vineland campus, holds "neat peaches" — a new variety that won't be commercially available for seven to 10 years. SOMER SLOBODIAN

and increase revenue for farmers.

"If we're in the market earlier than we can try to limit the amount of imports that are coming in," she said.

"This is a very patient and slow process and you have to be lucky at many steps to get the right varieties out."

JAYASANKAR SUBRAMANIAN
PROFESSOR OF TREE FRUIT
BREEDING AND BIOTECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

Subramanian added that peaches taste better when eaten as quickly as possible, so the earlier the crop, the faster they'll get onto tables and the less residents have to rely on older, imported peaches.

She said new varieties can also help extend the growing season, which would provide more revenue for farmers over a longer period of time.

However, from first developing a variety to the time it gets into the hands of a consumer is not a fast process — in fact, it's the complete opposite.

"It takes almost a lifetime," Subramanian said.

"Any tree fruit from start to finish will take an average of let's say 20 to 25 years," he added.

The peach variety early blush was in the works since 1997 and didn't become available to growers until two years ago.

"This is a very patient and slow process and you have to be lucky at many steps to get the right varieties out," he said.

He added that it's very rare they get something they can release within 15 years.

However, it's a good feeling for a peach breeder when they finally see the varieties they've worked on for multiple years hit the markets, he said.

Subramanian said everyone is involved throughout the process on a tender fruit evaluation committee — this includes growers, packers, representatives from the Vineland research centre, people from the marketing board and nurseries.

He will give a tour to committee members and show them the peach selections that are ripened, and the members will provide their comments and input.

He said he also provides technical inputs to Marshall, who coordinates the process.

Marshall said the committee looks things like the earliness of the peach and

things that might extend the peach season.

Subramanian said everybody is involved so that "when it is released, everyone knows what they are getting exactly."

Chosen varieties will go through multiple stages, including a three year test stage.

"Because we want to make sure that what you see in one year is consistent to the next year," said Marshall.

If it's not a dud, she said, the variety will be sent to British Columbia where it'll be treated for diseases. This could take more than three years.

Eventually, the variety will also be tested in a grower setting to make sure it does well.

The next variety of peach Subramanian is working on will be targeted at generation Z and millennials, he said.


He said that group isn't fond of biting into a soft, juicy peach and getting messy — so he's looking to fix that.

It's known as the neat peach, which would be firm and crisp on the outside, but juicy on the inside.

It won't be ready for seven to 10 years, he said, but that's the type of peach that consumers can expect in the future.


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New pilot program for workers could benefit farmers

But critic fears revised rules might worsen workplace concerns of seasonal employees

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A new government program for agriculture workers could make life easier for some farmers in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

But critics say despite the program's intention to protect farmworkers from abuse, it could spell trouble for them.

The Recognized Employer Pilot, announced in August, aims to help recognized agriculture employers avoid some of the lengthy paperwork they need to fill out to hire seasonal workers from outside Canada each year.

"Anything I think to lessen the paperwork that we're already burdened with, I think, is a step in the right direction," said Phil Tregunno, owner of Tregunno Fruit Farms. His farm employs more than 100 migrant workers annually.

He plans to apply to the new program, which has been in the works for three to four years.

Beside helping farm owners cut down on paperwork, the new program is also meant to help protect workers from abuse, the government said in a news release.

The pilot, to be run under the Temporary Foreign

Workers Program, opens up to primary agriculture employers in September who have a good standing and a history of compliance with the foreign workers' program.

This includes meeting the highest standards for working conditions, living conditions and worker protections.

Samuelle Carboneau from Employment and Social Development Canada, the body that governs all streams of the Temporary Workers Program, said employers would have to show they've met these standards through their history of inspections and Labour Market Impact Assessment applications.

Those who apply for the pilot program will need to have at least three positive assessments in the past five years to be considered.

Employers have to fill out an assessment every year before applying to hire foreign workers. This is to ensure that there are no Canadian workers available to do the job and that there is a need for the workers.

If an employer's assessments have been turned down in the past, they may be denied access to the pilot program, said Carboneau.

This could also happen if they have been found non-compliant with the

workers' program or have had significant allegations against them, he said.

Tregunno estimates he has to fill out roughly 70 to 80 pages while completing the labour market assessment application. The number of pages in the applications has only grown in his 50 years of hiring seasonal workers, he said.

If some of that can be reduced it would help save a lot of time, he said.

However, there are some concerns surrounding the new program and its use of labour market assessments as its benchmark for proper working conditions.

Syed Hussan, executive director of the migrant-led organization Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, said the new program could make it easier for employers to hire more workers and to exploit them.

The labour market assessment applications tie workers to their employers, he said.

As such, he said, the assessment system allows the federal government to "give political cover" to what he said is the "indentured" nature of the relationship between the workers and their employers.

He added that it's "impossible" to identify good employers due to a small number of complaints and



Seasonal farmworkers work in a field along Lakeshore Road. SOMER SLOBODIAN

the "total failure" of the inspection regime.

"Workers don't officially complain because of the risk of reprisals, which includes eviction, deportation, starvation, homelessness, and being banned from the country," he said.

Due to the lack of complaints, he said he's worried bad actors will become recognized employers under this new program, only adding to the problem of attempting to prevent workplace abuse.

He compared it to "the worst of a Tim Hortons comment card": something that's being put out there but not being heard by those in charge.

A 2021 report from the federal auditor general, titled "Health and Safety of Agricultural Temporary Foreign Workers in Canada During the COVID-19 Pandemic," dug into

the system for inspections in agriculture workplaces.

The report concluded that Employment and Social Development Canada inspections for temporary farmworkers provided little assurance of protection for migrant workers' health and safety in the 2020 and 2021 growing seasons.

"If it's not possible to determine who's a good employer, how do you go about determining who's a recognized employer?" Hussan said.

Tregunno, however, said he does not see how the exploitation of workers would be possible because of "the oversight that we've got."

He said the same oversight "from housing, the province, the feds and the Jamaican government" will still be there to ensure workers are protected.

When employer-provided housing is required under

the Seasonal Agricultural Workers program and other agricultural streams under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, employers must meet provincial and program housing requirements, he said.

However, provincial housing requirements differ from the seasonal program rules, as an investigation by The Lake Report showed last November.

For the new pilot program, employers who apply will go through a "more rigorous upfront assessment process," said Carboneau.

That is to ensure only the best of the best employers, who are in compliance with health and safety and housing standards and have had five successful labour market assessment applications in a row, are chosen.

Hussan still has concerns. "We'll see how that actually goes," he said.

Have your say on Queen St. hotel

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Residents are finally getting their crack at a three-year-old hotel proposal.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has just received an application from Van Riesen Hotel Group Inc., owned by resident developer Rainer Hummel, to build an 81-room hotel at the corner of Queen and Mississauga streets.

Town staff scheduled an

open house meeting for the hotel proposal on Monday, Sept. 11 at 5 p.m.

As well, a public meeting on the proposal is set for Tuesday, Oct. 3, at 6 p.m.

The property is the site of the historic Ketchum-Thomson-Phillips House, which is designated on the town's register of heritage sites.

Leah Wallace, a heritage planner contracted by the developer, said in her report on the property in July that it is an "important gateway feature at the entrance to

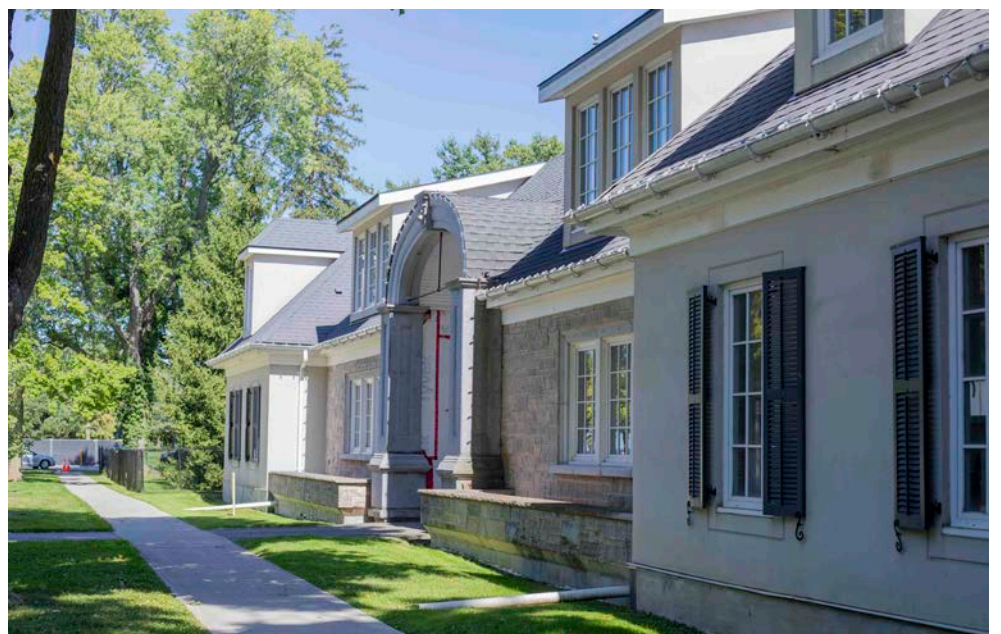
Old Town," though it is outside the town's historical district.

The developer's proposal is for a new four-storey building on the lot with 16 rooms per floor.

The existing structures on the property will be renovated to accommodate more hotel rooms, as well as a spa and restaurant.

Three levels of underground parking with 149 spots are also proposed.

Surface parking brings that up to 163 spaces.



The Phillips estate is the subject of a hotel proposal from Hummel Properties. EVAN LOREE

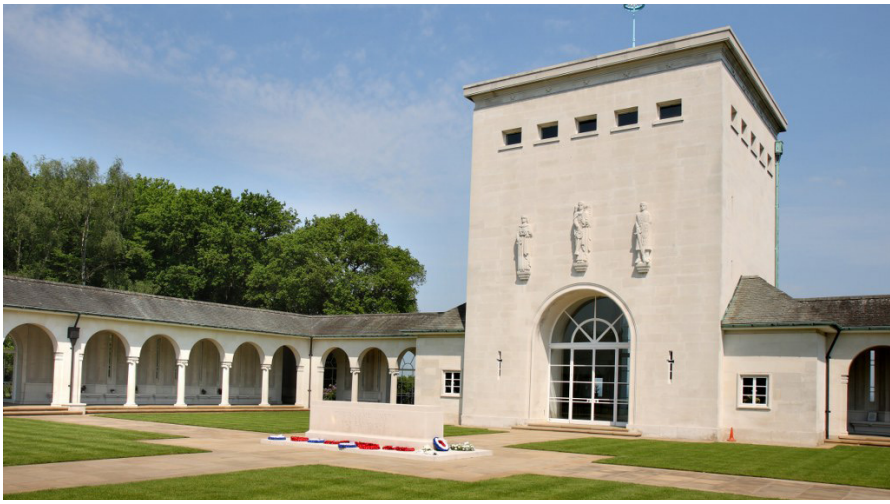


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Left: The Runnymede Memorial commemorates lost airmen whose final resting spot is unknown, like James Irvine. COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION Right: Flight Sgt. James Frederick Irving. LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

MISSING IN ACTION

‘A most efficient pilot,’ Flight Sgt. James Irvine

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

Ron Dale
Special to The Lake Report

In the mid-19th century, Robert Irvine and his wife Esther Whitman moved their family from Nova Scotia to the McNab area of Grantham Township, now part of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Irvine Road is named after the family, who farmed in the township and prospered.

George, the grandson of Robert and Esther, married Jessie Josephine James and the couple had five children, all baptized at Christ Church McNab, which is also where most of the family is buried.

Included on the tombstone marking the George and Jessie's family plot at Christ Church is an inscription commemorating their son, Flight Sgt. James Frederick Irvine, who made the supreme sacrifice in the Second World War.

Inside the church, a beautiful stained-glass window was donated in his memory.

James Frederick Irvine was born on Jan. 1, 1917. He did well in school, achieving his senior matriculation (Grade 13) before going to work for the Bank of Commerce in 1934.

He worked at branches in Thorold, Port Dalhousie and St. Catharines.

In August 1940, Irvine joined the 10th Battery of Canadian Artillery (militia) in St. Catharines. Six months later, he applied to join the Royal Canadian Air Force.

His application was accepted and on June 5, 1941, he reported to the Manning Depot in Toronto.

He was first sent to Ottawa for initial training at Rockcliffe Airbase on June 24 and then back to Toronto to take ground school at Number 1 Initial Training School on July 27.

On Sept. 2, 1941, he was in Goderich at Elementary Flight Training School and on Oct. 26 he was sent to Brantford for further training at the Service Flying Training School.

Irvine finally received his pilot's wings on Jan. 16, 1942. By March he had flown 205 hours in single- and dual-engine aircraft and was considered almost ready for active service.

After a short embarkation leave to visit his family, he boarded a ship in Halifax on March 12, arriving in the United Kingdom 11 days later.

Once in England, he was given further instruction with Operational Training Units, learning the fine details of flying a bomber at night over enemy-occupied territory. He was also

lectured on all the lessons learned about avoiding anti-aircraft artillery (flak) and dodging enemy night fighters.

On July 7, 1942, Irvine was transferred to Number 16 Operational Training Unit of the Royal Air Force, based at Upper Heyford Air Base in Oxfordshire.

A few days later he was promoted to flight sergeant and soon began active bombing operations over targets in Germany. His commander described him as "one of our most efficient pilots and a member of one of our best crews."

Skill would not be enough. During the Second World War, the casualty rate in the RAF was dreadful. In Bomber Command, 48 per cent of bomber crew were killed in action.

On the night of Sept. 10-11, 1942, Flight Sgt. Irvine's Wellington bomber took off from Upper Heyford Airfield.

His plane joined a huge assembly of 360 aircraft of the RAF's 92nd Group that had lifted into the sky from several airfields. They formed over England before heading to their target in Germany – oil refineries in Dusseldorf.

Heavy anti-aircraft flak defended the city and in the short time over the target area the 92nd group lost 30

planes. Among them was the Wellington flown by Irvine.

None of the crews who returned to base could positively identify the location of the crash that killed Irvine and his four crew members.

The plane may have crashed into the sea or might have disintegrated in the air. The men were marked as "missing."

An official note declaring that they had been killed in action, presumed dead, was issued nine months later, on Sept. 10, 1942.

With their final resting spot "known only to God," their names were inscribed on the Runnymede Memorial in Egham, Surrey, England.

Irvine's memorial stained-glass window is still installed at the church in McNab, which was deconsecrated in November 2022. The window will be preserved by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

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



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Unused ordnance could still be problem on old military land

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The fate of Niagara-on-the-Lake's decommissioned former wastewater plant on Lakeshore Road is in the hands of the federal government.

In August the Niagara Region's public works committee voted to request financial assistance from Ottawa to help in the cleanup of what is potentially unused explosive ordnance, or ammunition.

The region wants to dismantle the existing wastewater treatment plant at 1738 Lakeshore Rd. along with its existing lagoons so that it can return it to a naturalized state, which would include a wetland.

The plan is to replace the wetlands that were damaged by the construction of the new wastewater treatment plant 800 metres away. It opened in 2020.

The Battle of Fort George National Historic site adjacent to the old treatment plant underwent a similar removal of unused explosives in 2018.

The Department of National Defence removed the unexploded ordnance and returned it to the ownership of Parks Canada due to the site's national historic designation.

Once the two parcels of land are decontaminated,



The region has asked the federal government to help cover the costs of cleaning up unexploded ordnance at the former wastewater plant on Lakeshore Road. SOMER SLOBODIAN

the region must return the land to the federal government.

"The government leased the land to the region and now that the lagoons are no longer needed, the lease requires the region to return a site in a natural state that it was received," Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa told The Lake Report.

The defence department used this area as a rocket range dating as far back as 1908.

However, due to the risk of explosives on the land, a full-scale clearance is required before any remediation takes place, which would be "extremely

expensive and challenging," according to a defence department summary in the region's staff report.

Zalepa said the lagoons were there when soldiers used the property as a firing range, so there's the potential for unused ammunition on the property.

A risk assessment of the property completed by the department rated the possibility of unexploded ordnances as "medium."

If such ordnance is handled incorrectly it could "cause a catastrophic event possibly leading to loss of life," the report said.

It suggests that the risk can be mitigated by having

on-site safety briefings, pre-work surveys and selective clearance of ordnance.

Still, the cost of a full-scale clearance would be too expensive for the region, which also doesn't have the experts needed to do it.

"The costs associated with UXO (unexploded ordnance) clearance activities could be significant, including a qualified UXO contractor and full-time on-site UXO expert," the report said.

In addition to being costly, the department said a full-scale clearance would be unpleasant and challenging.

If Ottawa refuses to assist

with the necessary funding, the region wants to return the site on an "as-is" basis.

Regardless of remediation efforts, the staff report said it doesn't anticipate the public will have access to the land in the future because of the "documented conditions of the lands, regardless of remediation efforts."

Zalepa asked staff to clarify what this meant, since he was always under the impression that it would eventually be available for public use.

"When it does get cleaned up, the lagoons themselves are likely not to be touched, so there would always be some risk with the lagoon areas," Frank Tassone, the region's transportation director, told council.

He emphasized that the whole property would not be fully clear of unused ordnance.

Zalepa confirmed later with The Lake Report that it's not that the cleaned-up lands would never be available to the public.

However, in the short term while they're sorting everything out, the lands would not be available to the public, said Zalepa.

He said he'd like to see the land turned into a "natural heritage area" where people can walk and explore.

"There's not going to be any major facilities on-site, because then that involves

having to go back to remove the unexploded ordnances," he said.

Before any decisions are made it would be brought to the public, the region, Parks Canada and other partners, he said.

The Lakeshore Road site where the lagoons are located is 23.1 hectares and was traded to the region in 1965.

A second parcel of land was leased from Parks Canada to build the nearby chemical and mechanical buildings, including the two aeration lagoons, in the 1990s.

The region wants to decontaminate both pieces of land.

The region has multiple agreements with the federal government regarding the old treatment plant and the lagoon land dating as far as the 1980s.

Alternative solutions include having the region foot the bill to clean up the ordnance, or do nothing and let nature restore the land over time.

"If the government doesn't come to the table the likelihood that it stays in an as-is condition is very highly likely," said Tassone.

The staff report notes that the only thing the region can do right now is "remove all equipment, fixtures and appurtenances from buildings and process tanks within the existing site."

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Mystery solved: What causes wet spot at Navy Hall?

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Ever wonder what's going on with that spongy spot over near Navy Hall?

After a resident suggested it might be a leaky pipe that could cost the town big bucks, The Lake Report looked into it.

It turns out the land is owned by Parks Canada and the federal agency says there's a spring flowing just under the surface.

"This water is the result of a natural spring that runs under Fort George national historic site," said Parks Canada spokesperson Julia Grcevic.



This innocuous spot of ground is always wet because there's a natural spring running underneath the Fort George grounds. EVAN LOREE

Grcevic said it's not the only underground spring in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

There's another one that flows underneath King street and surfaces close to Queen's Royal Beach. And another on private property near Ryer-

son Park seeps to the surface from time to time.

Once upon a time, locals used to fill jugs with the natural spring water to bring home.

The water probably is not safe for consumption any

more, though.

Grcevic said people have long stopped drinking it because of "the rise in chemicals and pollutants being used in agriculture" that could become mixed in with the spring water.

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Young girl determined to find a cure

Continued from Front Page

immediately.
“Like any parent will tell you, one of your greatest fears is always that your child is unwell,” said her father, Jonathan Sobol.

Receiving the call was “a bit nightmarish,” he said.

Greta remembers being woken up and taken to the St. Catharines hospital, still in her red and black plaid pyjamas.

“Kid, you’ve got diabetes,” she said her dad told her in the car.

Greta was immediately admitted to the pediatric ward and her battle with diabetes began.

A year and a half later, wearing a blue and white striped shirt, she sits between her parents at their kitchen table.

The young diabetic keeps no blood tester close by. There’s no yellow biohazard container for used needles within sight.

Even the strong scent of freshly injected insulin is missing.

Her father drinks coffee on her left, her mom Ann Deuerlein is on her right. Younger sister Eve perches on her mom’s lap.

The family takes turns retelling and sharing Greta’s story.

When first diagnosed, she was injecting herself with needles five times a day, a routine the medical community often refers to as pen therapy.

“If you call it a needle, it sounds worse,” Greta said, pointing out the needles actually are very small.

Today, she uses an Omnipod, an insulin delivery device that attaches to her body and can be controlled through a smartphone to give her insulin throughout the day to help keep her blood sugars in a healthy range.

She also uses a Dexcom device to monitor her blood sugars, eliminating the need for her to draw blood to check.

Greta is this year’s youth ambassador for Sun Life’s annual Walk to Cure Diabetes, a fundraiser for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

The walk starts at 10 a.m.



Greta Sobol has been living with juvenile diabetes for almost two years. She hopes to raise awareness of the life-long illness and is leading NOTL’s Walk to Cure Diabetes. EVAN LOREE

at the Virgil sports complex in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Sunday, Sept. 10.

Her parents are co-chairing the charity drive and, in addition to fundraising for a cure, Greta’s dad says the organization helps people connect with a wider community touched by juvenile diabetes.

Greta says she has made a few friends through the research foundation, including NOTL’s Maya Webster, who was last year’s ambassador.

“Like any parent will tell you, one of your greatest fears is always that your child is unwell.”

JONATHAN SOBOL
GRETA’S DAD

It’s easier to make friends with people at the foundation’s events because they have something to talk about.

“You’re just like, ‘Wow, they are exactly like me. They know what I’m going through,’ ” she said.

With the research foundation’s community supporting her, Greta is looking to “give back” with this year’s run.

In the weeks leading up to her diagnosis, she remembers being thirsty, tired and sad.

Greta said no one noticed how often she excused herself to drink from the school fountain.

It’s the exhaustion that

stands out the most for her, though.

“I didn’t know why. I would just be like, ‘Mom, I’m sad and I don’t know why,’ and I would just start, like, crying my eyes out.”

Deuerlein takes the occasional break to wipe away a tear. She says the community was an instrumental support when she was “swimming in the amount of new information” that came with her daughter’s diagnosis.

Greta was experiencing hyperglycemia, which means that her blood had too much sugar in it.

It’s what happens when a diabetic takes in too much sugar and not enough insulin and some of the most common symptoms of hyperglycemia are thirst, fatigue and irritability.

If it goes on long enough, a diabetic person will lose weight because they are unable to convert sugar into energy.

As the sugar builds up in the body, they will attempt to dispose of the extra sugar through urination.

This is why diabetic people with high blood sugars become thirsty: the body is attempting to get rid of excess sugar.

If that lasts too long, it can trigger a coma called diabetic ketoacidosis.

For a while, Deuerlein thought her daughter was going through depression, or some mid-pandemic blues.

It was unlike their normally sociable and spunky nine-year-old to be so tired and irritable all the time.

The parents weren’t sure what was going on,

but Greta’s grandmother suggested she looked thinner during a visit to her home one weekend in early April.

That’s when Deuerlein started to wonder about diabetes.

The next Monday, Greta’s parents took her to a Life Labs in NOTL for blood work. By the end of that day, she would be at the hospital.

Normal blood sugar readings are between four and eight millimoles per litre. At the hospital that night, Greta’s was more than 30.

She misses the days when she could play dodgeball at school without interruption.

Exercise causes blood sugars to drop and low blood sugar is dangerous for a diabetic. When sugars get too low, juvenile diabetics are at risk of going into hypoglycemic shock.

At its worst, a low blood sugar can result in seizures and hospitalization.

“My hands get all shaky, and I get really sweaty and tired,” Greta said.

Sometimes Greta thinks the whole disease is just a “bad dream” and maybe she’ll wake up.

Meanwhile, she’s confidently waiting on a cure.

“It will go away. It just might take longer than I hoped it would,” she said. And if it doesn’t come, she says she’ll find one herself.

People interested in volunteering for or sponsoring the walk this Sunday can contact Deuerlein at annJDRFwalk@gmail.com.

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Contributed by Patty Garriock

“Truly, you’re here because a lot of stars blew up.
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Corn brings **community** together



From 12 days to 91 (and a half) years old, Monday's Chautauqua Corn Roast offered a little something for all ages. Here Emry, 1, enjoys some corn on the cob with her mother Michaela McGuire. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Editorial

Slow down, you're moving **too fast**

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

It's September and that means a lot of things, but especially it means that children are back at school.

You'd think that as a society – and since we were all kids ourselves once – we would not need a regular reminder that speeding in school zones, passing school buses stopped to pick up or drop off students and general boorish behaviour on the roads isn't to be tolerated.

But it seems some people didn't get the memo.

Across Niagara Region on Tuesday, police wrote 176 speeding tickets – just in school zones where radar enforcement was set up. Imagine how many other speeders elsewhere were not caught that day.

Those tickets amount to a bit of a financial windfall for the justice system – and a hit to the wallets of those caught violating the Highway Traffic Act. But it

could have been a lot bigger as officers also handed out more than 50 warnings.

The department didn't break down how many of those incidents occurred in Niagara-on-the-Lake, but we expect area drivers earned their fair share of unwanted attention from the local constabulary.

Deputy Chief Brett Flynn was on the scene in Virgil at Crossroads Public School overseeing the department's 23rd annual post-Labour Day traffic safety blitz.

Having such a senior officer involved in the program is an indicator of how serious the Niagara police take the first day back at school. And how necessary it is.

If only Niagara Regional Police could spare the officers to more often visit NOTL to keep an eye on speeders, ridiculously noisy motorcycles and drivers in need of some remedial education about how to conduct them-

selves on the highways and byways. But that's a whole other issue.

Sadly, it seems, driver re-education needs to be extended far and wide.

On Tuesday during the blitz, not far away in St. Catharines, the driver of a school bus – and, yes, children were on board – was clocked going 72 km/h in a 50 km/h community safety zone (where fines are doubled).

Not a good look nor a good idea, even if the driver and his students were running late for day one of the school year. It was 8:58 a.m.

We've all likely been guilty of exceeding the speed limit, sometimes intentionally, but too often it's really because we're all just in such a hurry to get where we feel we have to be.

What's that say about the world we live in?

Also in St. Catharines on Tuesday, a 79-year-old school crossing guard was seriously injured after she

was struck by a pickup truck that had collided with another vehicle. That second driver fled the scene.

We can only hope for the best for the injured woman, but we've seen so many of these hit-and-run cases – including several in recent years in NOTL – we are continually baffled how any driver figures they can get away with it in this era of smartphones and security cameras.

That's over and above the fact that staying at the scene is simply the right – and legal – thing to do.

So, where does this all leave us?

As a society – and individuals – we would be so much better off to slow down a wee bit, figuratively and literally. Stop and smell the roses. Dial it back a bit. Enjoy life.

So, you're stuck behind a school bus or running a bit late. Will the two minutes you might save really make all the difference?

editor@niagaranow.com



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Letter of the Week

If projects can violate official plan, then there are no rules

Dear editor:

A democracy is based on laws and rules being applied equally and equitably to all people, without favour.

In a municipality, the rules for land use are found in the official plan and in bylaws.

When people look at buying a house or land they inform themselves by verifying the official plan and respective bylaw for the property and surrounding neighbourhood.

When developers evaluate the purchase of land they do the same thing. The rules of the game must be transparent.

To evaluate the proposal for the three-storey apartment (condominium) building at 727/733 King St., the process should be straightforward. Does the proposal meet the existing legal official plan and bylaws – or not?

If this proposal is to be considered then the criteria should include:

Why significant exemptions to the official plan and bylaws are so compelling and unique to war-



Patrick Gedge doesn't think the town should bend its rules to allow a three-storey apartment condominium that he says is inappropriate for King Street.

rant such a major change (without favour).

Does the proposal have a complete application with all the analyses as required by the official plan?

Even with the major change in zoning, does the proposal meet the requirements of the official plan and the new zoning?

This proposal fails all three.

One example: The building will be 16 feet and 25 feet respectively from single, detached homes on Meritage Lane, where I live.

The official plan requires the evaluation of impacts of a new building on surrounding low-density houses and the neighbourhood.

What will these impacts be and how will they be mitigated? What is the effect on privacy, oversight, light, noise?

We don't know because the developer decided no analysis was necessary. Shadows will block sunlight for 15-plus homes around the building.

How long will each home

have sunlight blocked and will it be blocked going into homes or in backyards and patios? We don't know because no analysis was provided.

If this building is approved in contradiction to the legal official plan, then this town does not have an official plan.

Residents will not be able

to have trust in the laws and rules set out and developers will be encouraged to ignore the official plan and submit any and all applications they choose.

Once the rules of the game can be different for different people, there really are no rules.

**Patrick Gedge
NOTL**

A simple way for Solmar to fit in to community

Dear editor:

No doubt Bigfoot is a mystery, UFOs continue to puzzle society and ghosts enthusiastically go thump in the night in support of way too many TV shows.

However, to me, the biggest mystery of our time is why developers stomping into Niagara-on-the-Lake refuse to propose developments that are in sync with the town's established bylaws and unique cultural heritage.

It's not rocket science to understand that tourists flock to our town because of its architecture, its "Leave it to Beaver" neighbourhoods and its significant and world-class artistic offerings.

So why do developers like Solmar Corp. think it's in their best interests to propose a hotel right in



J. Richard Wright says developers like Solmar Development Corp. would have an easier time if they built projects that matched the area. SUPPLIED

the heritage district that seems more in keeping with an Italian mausoleum than a Federal or Georgian style hotel?

Why not a proposal similar in architecture to the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island? Or the Bedford Springs Resort hotel in Pennsylvania? Or even Queen's Landing right here at home? (I often proudly show off Queen's

Landing to visitors coming to town.)

For certain Solmar knows how to comply with local architecture since it built a beautiful retail plaza (where 11th Post restaurant resides) that seamlessly fits right into the town.

In fact, I would bet some visitors would believe it to be an original structure.

If Solmar wants to experience less resistance to its

proposals, check out Federal and Georgian architectures (St. Andrew's church is an example of Georgian), comply with the local bylaws in regard to height, and design a hotel that would make residents (and even Bigfoot) proud to show it off.

Certainly beats years of angry confrontations and litigation.

**J. Richard Wright
NOTL**

'NOTLers' is not an appropriate nickname

Dear editor:

I have been reading The Lake Report since the paper started and have been enjoying it.

Recently there has been an expression in the paper that I find very offensive – "NOTLers."

I was born and raised in Niagara-on-the-Lake and am very proud of it.

The first time I heard the term NOTLers was about a year ago. I was with some friends and they did not care for the terminology either.

This may be an expression that new arrivals to NOTL have started to use but I find it terribly offensive and unnecessary.

Just because the letters NOTL are there does not mean you can add

other letters to them. We are Niagara-on-the-Lake people and proud of it.

People from Barrie are Barrians; in Orillia people are Orillians. I could keep going but I think you get the idea.

Seeing the term NOTLER used in The Lake Report just makes me want to stop reading it.

I may not live in Niagara-on-the-Lake any more but I am down there as often as I can and have family and friends there.

Please for the sanity of the people who were born and raised there, who lived there or continue to live there, stop using that ridiculous term.

**Dolores Hindle-Derbyshire
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Let's **work together** to preserve NOTL's character



Brian Marshall
Columnist

I was walking along Queen Street last Thursday morning when I encountered a young couple visiting town, staring perplexed at a yellow sign posted in front of 228 Queen St.

I must have looked like a local, because the young man promptly asked me if I knew what this was about.

I explained that the current owner wanted to build a new hotel on the combined lots that run between Mississauga and Simcoe streets and pointed out that, because the property was currently zoned for a 24-room "boutique" hotel, application had to be made for a change in zoning.

Further, since the town's building height limit is 10.5 metres and the owner wished to build approximately 60 per cent higher than the existing limit, he would need a variance to allow for the extra height.

The couple gazed down Queen Street before turning back to me and saying, "We've been visiting Niagara-on-the-Lake for the last six years and don't recall anything else in town which is that tall. Is there?"

I replied, "Other than the centre core of the Shaw Festival Theatre building, no, there isn't."

"Have you seen what it's going to look like? I mean, will it look like it belongs on the street or is it just going to be a typical hotel you'd find any place else?" he asked.

"To be fair," I said, "the proposal does preserve the existing historic house. However, the design for the new four-storey portion facing Queen Street could very easily be described as a typical glass fronted hotel found in any number of other places."



This house at 48 Queenston St. in Queenston, a circa 1820 vernacular Georgian saltbox, has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. BRIAN MARSHALL

"So," he continued, "not only is it going to be the tallest building on the street, it is going to stick out like a sore thumb," he said.

"You know, we come here every year because we love walking the streets and being surrounded by old buildings and trees. It's so cool that as we walk, the people who actually live here smile and say good morning. Not many places have the things this town has."

"I don't understand why those people would allow someone to build a hotel, or anything else for that matter, that would cheapen the town. I mean, do they want to become a second Clifton Hill?"

They thanked me for my time before continuing their stroll down Queen Street. After they'd crossed Simcoe, I found myself shaking my head – because I, too, fail to understand why many citizens of Niagara-on-the-Lake are not more active in both

preserving and maintaining the integrity of our town's character.

Here, once again, we have a developer who is asking that legal provisions be set aside, that an exception be made to a law so that they can improve their bottom line.

And, it is clearly a normal and accepted practice in this particular sector. Witness the history and current status of proposals for the Parliament Oak property and the proposed development on Mary Street, to name just two.

Now, if I owned a manufacturing facility and made application to the Ministry of the Environment for an exemption to the laws governing toxic waste disposal, thus allowing me to dump that waste into a river because it would enhance the company's profitability, would such an overture be entertained?

I think not.

Nor would a trucking company seeking exemptions to the Highway Traf-

fic Act, nor a media firm asking for exclusion from the laws governing advertising succeed with such an overture.

But apparently, such hard and fast adherence to established legal provisions simply does not apply to the real estate sector. In that area, laws must only be observed until exceptions are granted, exemptions often justified by the developer in order to improve the profitability of a project.

In my world, corporate executives who commit their company funds to an undertaking that can only generate a return on investment provided they receive exemptions to the law might be fired as financially incompetent.

Frankly, I see no justification to ever grant an exemption to the municipal height bylaw.

Further, codification of the criteria within which the committee of adjustment assesses applications for a minor variance (start-

ing with a clear definition of the word "minor") is long overdue.

To those who suggest the town's authority is limited by the provincial Planning Act, I suggest we should immediately get our act in order within the areas under town control.

Then, if the Planning Act is so fundamentally flawed as to promote and promulgate venues whereby the rule of law can be circumvented, I have to ask whether the legislation does not actually strike at the basis of our legal system and whether a court would find such provisions to be legally enforceable.

All such conjecture aside, the fact remains that, as residents of this town, we have an obligation to be active in the preservation and maintenance of our community. It is not enough to simply go to the polls every few years, elect politicians to office and then ignore their actions until the next election.

We have a responsibility to oversee their actions and the staff they employ with our tax dollars. And we need to communicate our direction to them on a regular basis.

Moreover, there are things we can do personally to put additional tools in the hands of our elected council.

For example, the designation of historic buildings. This simple action – which costs nothing – not only preserves our shared built heritage but also comes with personal and community benefits.

On a personal level, it has been conclusively shown by studies (the most recent conducted by McMaster for the City of Hamilton in 2023 using data that spanned more than 30 years and included the largest sampling of any study ever performed in Canada) that heritage properties sell for more than comparable non-designated properties. Simply put, designation makes your house worth more.

In addition, the owners of designated properties can receive annual grants for authorized work performed on the building, defraying the cost of home maintenance.

On a broader basis, designating a property provides council with an additional level of oversight associated with the review process of infill developments on lots adjacent to the heritage asset.

This makes it less likely that a monster house will destroy your streetscape or fundamentally alter the neighbourhood.

If you're curious about the benefits and process of heritage designation, please contact me and I'd be happy to chat.

If we all work together, I believe we can enhance the community we love.

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

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



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Bus stops moved, parents and town confused

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



Parents in Garrison Village are upset over an unexpected change in bus stop locations. SOMER SLOBODIAN

When students from Garrison Village went back to school this week, an unexpected change in their transportation arrangements left the kids and their parents perplexed.

Several school bus stops in Garrison Village were mysteriously moved and Coun. Maria Mavridis said she was told that an unknown person called Niagara Student Transportation Services and requested the changes.

It's not known who made the request, but everyone agrees the changes should not have happened.

Mavridis said the old bus stops will be reinstated by the end of next week.

Parent Kristina Shepherd said a representative of Niagara Student Transportation Services told her on Tuesday that the town said it didn't want buses going through Shepherd's subdivision.

However, a representative from the town told The Lake Report it never requested such a change.

And so the mystery began, apparently.

Shepherd has two kids who have been using the bus stop at Navy Hall Circle and Confederation Drive for two years.

It's down the street from their house and a safe, quick stop for the kids to walk to.

But this week, most – if not all – of the bus stops within Garrison Village were moved to the Garrison Village Drive area up to Village Road, then down Village Road over to Niven Road.

Now, her two kids, ages

six and 10, have to walk three streets over to get to it – some kids even farther.

Shepherd wanted the issue resolved quickly and was concerned that someone surreptitiously arranged for the change.

She sees the bus stop location as a safety concern for the children in the area.

"My just barely six-year-old shouldn't have to walk around three corners to catch the bus," she said.

"I don't mind my kids walking. It's not about that at all. It's about safety and that's what I will fight for,"

she added.

In fact, on Tuesday afternoon, one driver sped past the stopped school bus in their car, even though the stop sign was out and the lights were flashing.

Shepherd originally posted on the NOTL 4 ALL Facebook group on Tuesday morning with her concerns, along with an email she received from Heather Kyle, manager of operations at Niagara Student Transportation Services, who informed her of what she said were the town's intentions.

"All bus stops for all schools at both boards were moved, unfortunately," Kyle wrote.

It turns out that apparently was at the urging of a third party, not the town and not the bus company.

Many parents were confused by the change, said Shepherd, adding that some said school buses have been going through Garrison Village for years.

"Another family on our street with an older child no longer in school said the bus always picked her up and dropped her off at the end of our street. So why the change now?"

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Public Meeting on September 12th at Town Hall

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What you need to do:

-  **REGISTER:** email clerks@notl.com to attend the public or virtual meeting File # OPA-04-2023 & ZBA 13-2023
-  **ATTEND:** Sept 12, 6pm at 1593 Four Mile Creek in Virgil at Town Hall
-  **WRITE:** comments to Town Clerk clerks@notl.com OR to the Planner II, Aimee Alderman at: aimee.alderman@notl.com

READ MORE:

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 NEWS



Clockwise from top left: At Crossroads Public School, Amanda Marquardt with her two daughters, Danica (left) and Gwen. Gwen is three and going to school for the first time. From left, Georgia Leigh and Vanessa Rezza (Grade 8,) Mila Treanor (Grade 3), Tomas Nolan (Grade 7), Christopher and Sophia Treanor (Grade 2), with Niagara Regional Police officers Mark Fortuna and Rusty Engelen. Const. Mark Fortuna teaches some St. Michael Catholic Elementary School students a little about traffic safety. Students get off the bus for their first day back. From left, Jackson Iannacchino, 3, mother Trish Taylor and Logan Iannacchino, 8, after pick-up time at St. Davids Public School. EVAN LOREE

First day of school makes parents and children a bit nervous

Continued from Front Page

stood at the fence, crying. Son Rio, on the other hand, was off mingling with the other kids. “She’s just not having it,” dad Joe said. He admitted it was emotional to see his kids enter “the next stage of independence.” Meanwhile, three-year-old Gwen Marquardt was also experiencing her first day of school. Mother Amanda Marquardt told The Lake Report her shy daughter had been looking forward to her first day. Her daughter has been “playing a lot of school” with her dolls at home. Marquardt said she and

her husband, both teachers, had been talking up Gwen’s first day of school at home. Like Finlayson, the mother of three said she was a little nervous knowing that Gwen would be exercising some independence. Trish Taylor, parent of two St. Davids boys, said it can be difficult – for her or any parent – to cope with knowing that her kids are at school missing her. “You can’t really prepare for it, to be honest,” she said. Taylor’s son Jackson is three and attending junior kindergarten at the St. Davids school. After dropping him off “he was a little bit sad” but had a great teacher to support him, Taylor said.

The consensus among kids across town was that the best part of being back is getting to see old friends. Even after spending her summer swimming and cottaging with mom Julie Sagers, eight-year-old Lennon McTaggart said she’s was glad to be back with her friends. Lennon said her favourite subject is math and that she likes “learning new things.” At St. Michael Catholic Elementary School, a few students got to hang out with regional police officers and learn about traffic safety. Constables Mark Fortuna and Rusty Engelen set up a speed trap near the school to catch motorists going over the limit.

The two officers took a few minutes to chat to some of the school kids about the importance of traffic safety. Six-year-old Christopher Treanor, among the students who got to meet the officers, lit up when he saw Fortuna show off his handcuffs. Though there were no aspiring police officers among the kids, there were a few young writers. “I’m writing a book,” said 13-year-old Vanessa Rezza. She described it as a murder-mystery. Her 12-year-old peer, Tomas Nolan, said he had written a book about a historic playoff run by the Boston Bruins. But when asked for his favourite sport, he listed hockey second to soccer.

Georgia Leigh, 13, is in her last year at St. Michael and said she was a little nervous to be moving onto high school next year. But like the other students, she was “excited” to be back with her school friends. It was a hot day to be back in the classroom, though, and not all schools are air conditioned. St. Davids Public School is only partially air conditioned. Principal Carl Glauser told The Lake Report they make do with what they have on a day like this and allow students to step into cooler areas, such as the library and portables, when they need a break from the heat.

A lot of work goes into making the first day of school possible for St Davids’ 420 students, Glauser said. “If you were to walk into every teacher’s classroom, you can tell that they’ve been in ahead of time,” he said. For him, the first day back is all about ensuring kids have a classroom ready and enough supervision to keep them safe. Glauser said he also has a lot of “personal connections” to make on the first day back, especially with the parents of new students. He said it’s important to make sure both students and teachers have a “great first day.”


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Const. Rusty Engelen uses a radar gun to monitor driving speeds near Crossroads Public School on Tuesday. EVAN LOREE

Niagara police **out in force** as school returns

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara Regional Police were out in force for the first day of school.

For its 23rd annual Traffic and Safety Awareness Day, police set up speed traps all across Niagara to catch motorists moseying too quickly through community safety zones.

“We do it as a reminder to everybody about slowing down,” said Deputy Chief Brett Flynn, who was in Niagara-on-the-Lake overseeing the blitz on Tuesday.

Police tend to concentrate their efforts in schools, he said, because drivers need the reminder that kids are back to school and crossing roads in larger numbers.

Officers had three speed traps set up in Niagara-on-the-Lake, one at each of the town’s three schools.

The team of officers spent about an hour and a half at each, first at Cross-

roads Public School in the morning, second at St. Michael Catholic Elementary School at lunch, and finally at St. Davids Public School for last bell.

Each school is also near a community safety zone.

The department didn’t break down the statistics by area, so it’s unclear how many tickets were handed out in NOTL.

But across the region, officers issued 176 tickets to drivers for various offences, mostly speeding.

They also issued 56 warnings to drivers, again for speeding.

Flynn told The Lake Report there were 10 police teams running radar across Niagara, and most of them were working in community safety zones.

“The purpose of a community safety zone is to change driver behaviour and improve safety,” the department says on its website.

Speeding fines are doubled in community safety

zones and the amounts can add up quickly.

The Ontario Highway Traffic Act fines drivers \$5 per kilometre over the posted speed limit.

That rises to \$7.50 per kilometre if the driver exceeds the limit by 20 to 29 km/h.

Early Tuesday, a team of four officers were using radar to monitor traffic speeds as drivers cruised down Niagara Stone Road, past Crossroads Public School.

Flynn said whether police issue a warning or a ticket often depends on the judgment of the officer.

“In some cases, you’re just going to see speed. It’s such an excess that probably warnings are not going to help people recognize that they need to slow down,” he said.

The region also has plans to set up automated speed cameras on Niagara Stone Road in the new year.

Four speed cameras will be shared across the region

and one will be used from January to March 2024 near Crossroads Public School.

Flynn does not think speed cameras will make traffic enforcement officers obsolete, though.

“Our visible presence in a lot of situations is a good reminder for people as well,” he said.

“I think there’s a feeling of safety, when you see police out and working in those zones,” he added.

Traffic stops on the first day of school were conducted as normal, he said.

Flynn has been policing for 33 years and says he plans to retire next February, so this is his last back-to-school operation.

“It was time,” he said, pointing out that he has lots of grandchildren to spend time with.

Looking back, he said it’s been an exciting time.

“It’s a front-row seat to some pretty incredible things, happy and sad.”



This week’s riddle is “Jeopardy!” style.
Category: TIME TO FALL INTO AUTUMN

From the Latin for “fall off,” this adjective describes trees that lose their leaves in fall.

Last issue:

Category: FAMILIAR SOUNDING TRIOS

Clue: A hair ringlet, a certificate share in a corporation and the tube of a gun.

Answer: What is lock, stock and barrel?

Answered first by: Claudia Grimwood

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Margie Enns, Lynda Collet, Bob Wheatley, Sylvia Wiens, Howard Jones, Deb Valder, Wade Durling, Jim Dandy, Gordon Yanow

*REMEMBER TO PUT “WHAT IS” FOR JEOPARDY QUESTIONS!

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Anne of Green Gables brought to life at NOTL Museum

Barbara Worthy
Special to The Lake Report

The stories of Prince Edward Island's most famous orphan girl, Anne Shirley – or Anne of Green Gables as she is more commonly known – will be brought to life at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum on Thursday, Sept. 14.

The fiery, redheaded protagonist from Lucy Maud Montgomery's internationally beloved classic book series will be at the centre of a spoken word performance of "This is Anne: Older and Wiser," a collection of stories from the perspective of Anne Shirley as a woman in her 60s.

Writer and performer Maja Bannerman, accompanied by musician and composer Rusty McCartney, will share Anne's perspective as she looks back on her childhood years in her home of Avonlea, her young and romantic self and her years of motherhood.

"All my life I've been enamoured with the Anne books," said Bannerman in



Maja Bannerman is presenting "This is Anne: Older and Wiser" on Sept. 14 at the NOTL Museum. SUPPLIED

a media release from the museum. "And so, I imagined an invitation to tea, and sitting with Anne in her parlour as she muses upon her life."

Bannerman spent several years putting on one-woman shows about unique historical figures, often characters who are part of the story of Niagara, such as Laura Secord, Maria Callas and the McFarland sisters.

She formed a duo with McCarthy in 2019 to produce shows that mix creative innovation, songs and spoken word.

Tickets are available now for the performance, which starts at 7 p.m. on Sept. 14. They are \$15 for the museum's members and \$20 for non-members.

To purchase tickets, call 905-468-3912. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is at 43 Castlereagh St. in Old Town.

Moderator's visit will celebrate Grace United's 200th anniversary

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

This year marks exactly two centuries since construction was completed on the Grace United Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Since the church's opening, parishioners have been gathering in its pews for generations.

The church has begun celebrating already, hosting its annual festival market on Saturday, prior to the 200th-anniversary celebration of Grace United's arrival.

This year's festival market featured some special anniversary additions.

"We were gifted some Saskatoon berries," said Pauline Miller, chair of the church council.

"For our anniversary jam, a Saskatoon Berry jam was developed."

The special anniversary jam was sold alongside other popular town favourites, including the quickly sold-out Colonial Sauce.

While Nov. 19 is the actual date of Grace United's anniversary, the church



Rosemary Cornell helped peddle the popular jams and sauces at Grace United Church's Festival Market on Saturday. The Colonial Sauce was sold out by the early afternoon. JULIA SACCO

has instead arranged for a special event to happen on Sunday the 24.

"The moderator of the United Church of Canada (Carmen Lansdowne) – sort of like our Pope – is coming to give a sermon," Miller said.

She added that on the actual anniversary, the previous leader of the church will also be presenting a sermon.

"We've extended to the various United churches in

the Niagara region to send somebody because obviously, we can't hold more than 100 people," she said.

Miller is hopeful for a good turnout, especially after reaching out to other congregations in Niagara.

"I think we're all, not even just the United Church, I think all the (NOTL) churches are dealing with dwindling congregations. So it's nice to reach out and be a bit more community-spirited," she said.

COMMUNITY DONATION PROJECT Porch Pick-up Food Drive

Newark Neighbours, together with our partners from the NOTL Rotary, NOTL Kinsmen and St. Davids Lions Clubs, are holding a **porch pick-up** food drive

We were so grateful for the tremendous community support of our food drive held in the last several years. It is always overwhelming. Thank you all very much. We're asking for your generous support once again, this time to assist us in filling our Thanksgiving hampers for our clients.

WHEN: On **Saturday, Sept. 23, 2023**, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

If you wish to donate in support of our Food Bank, please call **905-468-7498** OR email us at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com to register your address for pick-up.

Items required for Thanksgiving hampers



Stuffing mix
Cookies - any kind
Snack crackers (any type)



Cranberry sauce
Cranberry or apple juice
Applesauce
Canned gravy (poultry)
Gravy mix (poultry)



Canned green beans
Canned corn
Canned peas
Canned pineapple
Canned fruit

General items always needed:

Canned salmon, canned tuna, Sidekicks and ramen soup packets, canned chili or spaghetti or ravioli, peanut butter, granola bars, Chunky soup – any kind or flavour, canned beef stew, Habitant soups, canned ham, corned beef or Spam, Flakes of Ham, chicken or turkey, jams – any flavour, soda (soup) crackers, Kraft Dinner, canned beans (e.g. kidney, chickpeas, lentils), canned tomatoes, canned potatoes / instant mashed potatoes, tomato sauce, pasta, rice, pudding cups – any flavour, cereal, oatmeal – any kind, coffee (e.g. instant, regular, decaf), tea, shelf stable milk (e.g. condensed, powdered, rice, etc), paper towels, toilet paper, household items (e.g. dish soap, laundry detergent, cleaning products), condiments - salad dressings, mayonnaise, sauces (e.g. HP Sauce, soya sauce, Worcestershire sauce, etc.), dried spices, salt & pepper, toiletries (e.g. toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, hand and body lotion, mouthwash, feminine products)



Residents hope **third time's a charm** for indoor pool

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



Nancy Macri stands up during a meeting to start a petition for an indoor public pool to share how important swimming has been for her physical health. EVAN LOREE

Fully accessible options in Niagara-on-the-Lake for residents who want to swim during the fall and winter are almost non-existent – unless you fancy a dip in the chilly waters of the Niagara River or Lake Ontario.

However, some have been pushing for years to bring a public indoor pool to town and they hope this year's efforts will pay off.

At a group meeting on Monday morning at Sweets and Swirls Cafe, about 18 residents discussed how they could convince the town to invest in a new indoor pool.

The group has collected 148 online signatures and 100 in-person ones in support of a new pool.

Its Facebook group now has 103 members.

Elizabeth Oliver-Malone, who was at the meeting, said many of their group used to do aquafit, or water aerobics, at the Pillar and Post, back when Vintage Hotels offered spa memberships.

Oliver-Malone said the hotel chain discontinued the membership program during the pandemic and hasn't brought it back.

Garron Wells, also at the meeting, said it was an affordable option at the time and has left many in the group without a good location to practice aquafit.

"The pools are just available for paying guests," Wells added.

This is not the first time residents have pressed council for a pool. The last effort was in 2018 and the

first was in 2013.

Wells said she didn't take much notice of those efforts at the time, as she was able to practise aquafit at Vintage Hotels.

"Now there's nothing. Nothing for a community pool," she said.

In 2018, the town formed a committee to investigate the cost of building an aquatics centre from the ground up and concluded it could cost anywhere between \$6 million and \$12 million.

The proposal died then

and there.

Paolo Miele was on town council at the time and remains a fierce advocate for community recreational facilities.

Everything worth having costs money, Miele said, and councillors are in a position to make some hard decisions.

"You need five councillors that are not afraid to make those decisions," he said.

Cost be damned, Wells said she'd like to see a pool "before we're dead."

The group was made up of mostly seniors and Wells wasn't the only one to point it out.

Marianna Peca was one of the few at the meeting with kids in swimming lessons.

She and several other group members were on the same page when they argued the town needs a pool so kids can learn to swim.

Sheila Serio, who leads the group, said this was one of the biggest reasons she got involved.

She was inspired to get it started after reading an editorial that argued kids need public pools so they can learn about water safety and avoid drowning.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor was at the group meeting to offer the residents advice and said the bottom line for council will be the cost of the project.

However, she pointed out the town's aquatic services are different now, given people have less access to hotel pools, like those at Vintage Hotels.

"Whatever you're doing, you have to have a specific ask when you come forward," she added.

Dawn McIsaac, who runs the Facebook group, said it would be much cheaper if the town built a dome over one of its outdoor pools to make it accessible during the winter.

Collingwood took that approach in 2013 when it built an enclosure over an outdoor pool.

Peca said they could work with some of the other groups across town looking for better aquatic programs.

She suggested they work with a group in St. Davids, for example, which hopes to have the St. Davids pool repaired.

Reconstruction costs for the St. Davids pool were evaluated at \$5 million in February 2020.

Coun. Adriana Vizzari, who sat on a fundraising committee for the St. Davids Pool under the previous council, told The Lake Report council was reinstating the old St. Davids pool committee this fall.

If that committee sticks to its mandate, it will be tasked with fundraising the cost of repairing the pool in St. Davids.

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Pools are closed but splash pad a great way to **beat the heat**

With all of Niagara-on-the-Lake's community pools closed for the season as of Monday, the town urges residents to beat the late summer heat at the Virgil splash pad. It will remain open until mid-October. Three-year-old Isaiah Irvine enjoyed a cool down in the water to beat the ongoing September heat. Temperatures peaked at 31 degrees Sunday afternoon.

84 charges laid in fatal Ssonix explosion

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

St. Catharines Fire Services has laid 84 charges against Ssonix Products 2010 Inc. and its three directors in relation to the explosion that killed one of its workers in January.

Each of the three directors of the hazardous materials facility have been charged with 21 offences under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, which falls under the Provincial Offences Act.

When Ryan Konkin arrived at work early on Jan. 12 and opened the door, the Port Weller building exploded.

Konkin later died at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto from severe burns.

In a previous interview, his sister, Nicole Konkin, said before her brother was intubated he told one of the nurses that all he did was open the building door.

"The charges laid in connection with the Keefer



The first court appearance for Ssonix Products 2010 Inc. is scheduled for the end of September. The company's directors could face jail time if convicted. SUPPLIED

Road incident underscore our commitment to keeping our community safe," St. Catharines Fire Chief Dave Upper said in a news release.

"We will continue to work diligently to ensure

a thorough and fair legal process. Our thoughts remain with those affected by this incident as we move towards a resolution."

The first court appearance is scheduled for the end of September.

Ssonix Products 2010 Inc. and its directors could face fines or jail terms if convicted.

The Ontario Fire Marshal is still conducting an investigation into the explosion.

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NOTL's Kaleb Dietsch **adjusts to life** with Ottawa 67's

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

NOTL's Kaleb Dietsch knew that every new step on his hockey career path would be a learning experience.

Having just completed the week-long training camp of the Ottawa 67's of the Ontario Hockey League, he sums up the experience in a single word.

"Fast."

He knew the pace of the game was bound to be quicker in the OHL than he was used to as a standout defenceman with Niagara's minor midget Southern Tier Admirals last season.

But the speed was still an eye opener, he said in an interview from Ottawa on Tuesday.

"Everything is fast. Super fast," the Niagara-on-the-Lake native said.

The skating, playmaking decisions, puck movement



Kaleb Dietsch, wearing his customary #4, competes in an Ottawa 67's intrasquad game last week. ROSSY PASTERNAK/OTTAWA 67'S

and more all required an adjustment for the lanky stay-at-home defenceman.

"It takes a bit to get used to at first, but then you adjust," he said.

He's also adjusting to living away from home for the first time, but is settling in to the new routines that are part of the life of a junior hockey player.

Back at home, mom Natasha and dad Paul – along with scores of friends and relatives – are cheering him on and proud of his success.

Dietsch feels ready to play at the next level and is happy for the opportunity to learn and improve his game.

And he's focused on bringing a positive attitude to the rink.

Mistakes are bound to happen so when they do, it's important to quickly recognize what went wrong and learn from it, he said.

As a "shutdown defenceman," his philosophy on the ice is to "keep it simple and play smart."

"And don't do anything that you're not used to doing that might slow you down.

Assistant coach Paul Stoykewych, a defensive specialist, said, "Kaleb has done a great job immersing himself in the 67's culture."

"He has come to the rink every day with a growth mindset, trying to absorb as much information as possible from our staff and his fellow 67's teammates."

As one of the premiere organizations in major junior hockey, the 67's do things first-class, Dietsch noted.

"They treat you like a pro here," the 16-year-old said, with top-notch facilities, workout programs and coaching.

And like the pace on the ice, the expectations are high.

During camp, his days started really early, up around 6 a.m., breakfast, a team meeting and on the ice about 8.

After a practice that can stretch to about 90 minutes,

there was fitness cool down time, stretching, lunch and hitting the weight room.

Intrasquad games were part of the mix as well, but for most of camp it was living and breathing hockey development.

A third-round draft choice by Ottawa this past spring, he has committed to the team and hopes to be called up for some regular season games.

In the meantime, he'll be honing his skills with the Ottawa Jr. Senators, a junior A club and just a step away from the 67's.

School for Dietsch at the Blyth Academy's Canadian International Hockey Academy, which offers elite hockey programs for Canadian and international students, begins on Sept. 7.

It's located next door to the 67's arena and training facility, enabling Dietsch to continue his workouts while completing his schooling.

Hot putter helps Henry to **shoot 85** in women's league

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

Yolanda Henry's hot putter worked its magic as she shot 85 to lead all competitors in the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club's 18-hole women's league on Tuesday.

She needed only 28 putts on her round as she edged club champion Martha Cruikshank by one shot to take low gross honours.

Henry also tied with Cathy Murray for low net, with 71.

Other low gross scorers: Murray (90), Margot Richardson (95), and Lisa Allen and Marie Ellison (97). Other low net scorers: Ellison (72), Richardson (73) and Cruikshank (74).

Brenda Bell was closest to the pin on #4 and Cruikshank was closest on #9.

In the nine-hole women's league, Judy Wright had the longest drive on #3, while Linda Williams sank the longest putt on #5. Bunker winners were: Trish Anthony, Sharon Allen, Helen McCallum and Kathy Taylor.

In Thursday men's league play, Jim McMacken's two-under 34 led the field while Stephen Levy, Rai Lauge and Rick Shultz were tops in modified Stableford

scoring, with 23 points each.

Other winners: Devon Neudorf (longest drive #1), Stephen Jenkins (closest to pin #2), John Gursky (closest to pin #4), McMacken (longest putt #6), Patrick Craig (longest putt #7) and Dean McCann (closest to pin #9).

Gross skins winners were: Jim Meszaros #3, McMacken #5, Craig #7 and Jenkins #8. Craig also scooped a net skin on #7.

Alan Robb and Rick Janes were top dogs in the Tuesday WOOFs league, each carding a two-over 38. Todd Watson was low net with 31 and Glen Murray was closest to the pin on #4.

Robb won the hidden hole prize thanks to birdies on holes 6, 7 and 9.

In the Friday Couples league scramble, Lucy and Jeff Brookhouser teamed with Janice and Jim McMacken to shoot a fabulous four-under 32 and finish first.

Carolyn and Drew Porter, May Chang and Kevin MacLean were second with 34, followed by Peggy Larder and Gerry Shelly, Mary Holley and Steve Millward (35) and Kim and Oleh Hrycko, Wendy and Bob Lowe (36).




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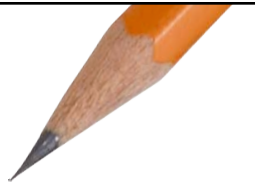
Dr. Hsien Seow, PhD, & Dr. Samantha Winemaker

Dr. Samantha Winemaker is a community-based palliative care physician in the Greater Hamilton region and Associate Professor at McMaster University. Dr. Hsien Seow is a Professor and the Canada Research Chair in palliative care and health system innovation at McMaster University. They are the co-hosts of The Waiting Room Revolution podcast and co-authors of the book, Hope for the best, Plan for the rest: 7 keys for navigating a life-changing diagnosis.





Have some fun



Across

- 1. They get in the way (9)
- 6. Long-continued practice (5)
- 10. Macchu Picchu builder (4)
- 11. Resting, like actors (10)
- 12. Canes (8)
- 13. Stretched-out rectangle (6)
- 14. Embellish (5)
- 15. Strong dislike (9)
- 18. Turn on the waterworks (4,5)
- 21. Fleecer (5)
- 24. Showy decoration (6)
- 26. Amount of sugar needed to help with medication (8)
- 27. Diversion (10)
- 28. First name in French fashion (4)
- 29. Worrier's malady (5)
- 30. Advocates of land reform (9)

Down

- 2. Communication problem for musicians in narrow streets? (9)
- 3. Rotates around a kind of heater (7)
- 4. Trapped (6)
- 5. 19th century American philosopher (7)
- 7. --, coulda, woulda (7)
- 8. Eco-conscious (5)
- 9. Raring to go (2,3,2)
- 16. Immensely powerful (9)
- 17. Suffer remorse (4,3)
- 19. Merit (7)
- 20. Hazzarding (7)
- 22. Husband of Eleanor of Aquitaine (5,2)
- 23. Piano (6)
- 25. Standard of perfection (5)

Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
					9				
10			11						
12					13				
14				15					16
			17						
18		19			20		21	22	
						23			
24	25				26				
27							28		
29					30				

Last issue's answers

1	R	E	L	I	E	F	S	5	S	U	R	V	I	V	E			
	R	C	O								P	O	E					
9	V	O	Y	E	U	R		10	L	O	N	G	T	E	R	M		
	D	B	M	I	O	E	S											
11	R	E	V	E	N	U	E	S		12	R	A	D	I	A	L		
13	B	A	N	G	L	A	D	E	S	H		15	N	A	I	L		
16	S	T	Y	E		17		18	F	A	I	R	Y	T	A	L	E	S
21	S	P	L	I	N	E		22	G	O	N	E	I	N	T	O		
24	A	L	F	R	E	T	O	N		25	E	N	A	M	E	L		
26	S	T	R	A	U	S	S		27	U	S	H	E	R	E	D		

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	9	6			2	4			
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									5
		9	6			2	8		
6	8			7					



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Artificial intelligence plays a **burgeoning** role in health care



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown
Columnist

The perfect marriage, in a technical sense, was the relationship between the computer and artificial intelligence (AI) which began in the 1940s and 1950s.

Like the best human marriages, it got better and better with time – and in the case of AI dramatically so in the last few years.

Early futurists such as William Schwartz forecast in 1970 in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that AI might “largely replace the intellectual functions of the physician.”

Now more than 50 years later, Schwartz’s claim might just come true, given the combination of powerful modern computers, self-learning computer algorithms, the ability to search an internet’s worth of data

and incorporating language algorithms to make it easy to communicate back and forth with the computer.

It is this combination that makes Schwartz’s speculation look more like the near future for medicine.

The *New England Medical Journal*, one of several top-notch publications thought so too: it recently launched a series of articles on the impact of AI on medicine as well as a new journal that links AI and medicine given the avalanche of studies from Microsoft, Google and other players.

Their achievements threaten to upend current health care practices, improve diagnostic accuracy and even help surgeons in the operating room, not so much with the knife but with on-going decision-making.

For me, much the most interesting changes with AI are in the physician-patient relationship – and in my opinion for the better.

No physician is so clever these days that he or she can keep up to date with all that’s happening in medicine. That problem only



Artificial intelligence could help doctors keep up with the latest advances in medicine. RICHARD HARLEY/MIDJOURNEY

gets worse with advances in medicine.

All that is coupled with the erosion of the relationship between physician and patient in the years before COVID, during the pandemic and since then as the relationship of trust and familiarity changed to hurried visits or worse, Zoom visits became the norm.

Here AI can help.

At the lowest level, AI acts as an assistant. It listens to the conversation between the patient and physician and provides a neat, well-organized voice and text summary at the end.

This means that physicians don’t have to dictate a

note, only edit the AI note as necessary – somewhat like having a really good assistant beside you in the room. It could also make the necessary referrals and track them.

From what I’ve seen of examples in the *Journal*, AI can do a great job at this level now.

In the next level up, AI does significantly more. After all, it has access to all the patient’s medical records and to a wealth of online information about almost every health condition, often from the best sources.

AI is thus qualified to prompt the physician to make more inquiries where

warranted, summarize the patient’s condition in the light of what is currently known and make sensible recommendations much as if a bevy of savvy physicians and other health care providers might make if they were in the room.

Then there’s the possibility of AI operating autonomously, without a physician in the room. Clearly this will be possible in the near future. Granted, AI can’t do physical examinations but is well-equipped to make use of that information should it be provided, perhaps better than most physicians do now.

Indeed, many physicians seem reluctant to examine their patients these days or some never learned how.

AI is as good or better than physicians at reading skin lesions, X-rays, CT scans and MRIs. That’s no surprise given that it learned on many more images than any skilled physician could in a lifetime.

And when it misses something, AI learns and remembers better than most physicians.

It also does an excellent job of reading electrocardio-

grams, ultrasound tests and more.

What has spectacularly changed in the last few years is the ability of AI to analyze complex data by making use of information from the internet and other sources to the point where, in certain cases, it rivals and exceeds the diagnostic and management skills of most physicians.

Though not so much surgeons – yet.

Many physicians are worried as well as are professionals in other fields such as law, but worry won’t help. What will help is working with AI to provide better, faster care than is currently available.

And remember, AI never sleeps, never takes time off and could extend the expertise of schools like U of T or McMaster or Harvard to underserved communities in cities, towns and rural areas.

AI is here to stay, worrying though it may be for some.

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



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EXPLORING PHOTOS WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Great International Railway Suspension Bridge, 1859

This is a lithograph by D.L. Glover from an original painting by Ferdinand Richards. The suspension bridge opened in 1855 and was the world's first working railway suspension bridge connecting Niagara Falls, Ont., with Niagara Falls, N.Y. It was built by Charles Ellet and completed by John A. Roebling, who also designed the Brooklyn Bridge in New York. Trains travelled on the two upper decks while pedestrians and carriages used the lower deck. The bridge was replaced by a steel arch bridge in 1897 when parts of the wood decayed over time and trains became much heavier.

'Historical artifacts' from dock dig a bit of a stretch



Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson
Columnist

A while back, I rambled about the project-delaying archeological study overkill at the corner of Simcoe and Johnson streets, where a new culvert was being painstakingly constructed.

At one point, up to nine experts met regularly at the site to ensure the integrity of the job. My mind boggled.

Now, the archeologist with Detritus Consulting Ltd. tells us the old American Hotel in the dock area was situated on a plethora of historical artifacts. Indeed, quite a lot of "historical Euro-Canadian material."

A "menagerie," he said. I had to dive for my thesaurus to confirm in my mind that the word menagerie refers to a collection of wild animals,

or an enclosure where wild animals are kept.

Perhaps a trove of stuff, or a pile of old things, would have more accurately described the items found. Apparently pots, plates, glass bottles and old barrels were among the findings. Even a sipping cup for a baby's bottle was found. All duly photographed and recorded, I am certain.

Now, I am a big fan and respecter of historical research, but where do we draw the line?

This latest dig was the fourth stage in a series of archeological assessments the developer was conducting. Who is paying for this? Ultimately, the purchasers of the condominiums.

To my untrained eye, a historical artifact would perhaps be a leather remnant of Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock's faithful horse, Alphonie. The initial "A" might have been etched on the bit or bridle.

How about a beer stein with the initials M.G.S.I.B.? Or a small beer glass with the white line near the top which told the bartender when to stop pouring?

It wasn't too long ago that a glass of ale cost a dime. Yes, a thin dime, proudly



A true artifact! Raleigh Ussery from Missouri visits NOTL and tries to use a pay phone for the first time. ROSS ROBINSON

featuring the famous Nova Scotia schooner Bluenose under full sail on a wavy Atlantic Ocean.

As we lovers of lager know, a beer now costs upward of 10 bucks in several NOTL watering holes. Plus taxes and the well-earned gratuity.

I am not complaining. Just rambling. But, it is costly to belly up to the bar nowadays. Nights out must

be planned well in advance, and entertainment budgets can be stretched. Our consumption is curtailed.

Other interesting historical artifacts would be signs from the old American Hotel. They told ladies which entrance to use, marked "Ladies and Escorts."

Don't blush now, but it wasn't that long ago that another large sign read "adult entertainment." In flashing

white lights. This, in our Old Town, only about a half kilometre from the cenotaph on Queen Street. Folks, I'm not making this stuff up.

Or how about a copy of the form customers at the Brewers Retail outlet had to fill out, detailing their desired purchase. Perhaps 24 bottles of Labatt's 50, or a dozen Molson's Export.

This form was handed to the cashier, who then went through the swinging door into the cold back room to get the beer. It was then rolled out a conveyor belt, to the waiting and thirsty customer.

That was a sweet sound, eh?

I know what I'm talking about, because in the summer of 1967, I worked at the Brewers Retail up in Huntsville for the summer. I was underage, but someone had quit suddenly, and the manager was desperate to replace him.

By the way, 56 years later, the same one-inch crack in the sidewalk in front of the store is unfixed, still causing the odd case of beer to fall off the carts, breaking a bottle or two.

But I digress as I ramble.

Or, how about an historical artifact from the energy

business, perhaps a sign from in front of one of the several gas stations in Old Town? A gallon (not a litre) of Esso or Texaco was advertised in big red numbers at about 24 cents a gallon.

Those big gas guzzling station wagons, some with fake wooden sides, the forerunners of SUVs, could be filled up for three or four bucks.

Buying gas back then didn't put a serious dent in the wad of folding money in our pockets. Now, gas is a considered cost of a road trip.

Historical artifacts teach us about our past, and help to predict our futures. Just think, someone might someday uncover some of our best china or a broken crystal wine glass. Or a hockey stick or a fancy frying pan. A yoga mat or a pickle ball bat or ball.

What lessons they will learn? What will they think of our fortunate generation?

I realize one man's junk is another man's treasure. Some clever entrepreneurs buy junk and sell antiques.

But let's not use the term "historical artifacts" lightly. Let's call a spade a spade, not a historical implement.

Just rambling ...

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PHOTO GALLERY
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Clockwise from top: Guests in all their finery, mingle, sip wine and enjoy nibblies at the NOTL Museum's Heritage Garden Party. The first mayor of what became NOTL, Alexander Davidson aka Rick Meloen, mingles with guests Peter McKinley and Tom Catcher at what was once his home. Denise Ascenzo portrayed sculptor Jacobine Jones as she chatted with garden party guests. Guests Liz Klose and Hilary Bellis sported their finest garden party attire and headgear. Deborah Williams and Catherine Novick were two of the many volunteers who made the Heritage Garden Party a success. JANICE WHITE

Garden party celebrates history

Staff
The Lake Report

About 150 people donned their summer finery – and some spectacular headgear – for a Heritage Garden Party

last Thursday in support of the NOTL Museum. The gathering, held on the grounds of Charlou, the historic home of the town's first mayor, Alexander Davidson, raised about \$15,000 for the

museum. The Johnson Street property is now owned by Patty and Bill Garriock. While guests enjoyed nibblies donated by Niagara's Finest Hotels and wine from Konzelmann Estate, they

were entertained by historic re-enactors (including Rick Meloen as Davidson). Word is there is considerable interest in making the Heritage Garden Party a regular summer celebration.



Some crops can still thrive in the fall



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

Is your vegetable garden starting to have bare areas as the harvesting of some crops comes to an end? Time is running short, but why not fill in those empty spots with a few fall crops? There is still some time left to plant some cool season vegetables and continue to enjoy fresh produce from the garden. The Farmer's Almanac says the first frost date this year for Niagara will be Oct. 16, but usually our first killing frost isn't until the end of October. Some of the vegetables that prefer cooler temperatures and that we typically

associate with spring harvesting can also be grown starting late summer to early fall. Think of autumn as a second spring. When considering what crops will work best, look for ones that will be ready to harvest in 30 to 45 days. It is a fact that many of the cool-weather favourites get even sweeter after a light frost. Why consider a fall planting?
 • Planting fall crops lets you continue growing fresh, healthy food at home. Plus, there is nothing like home-grown crisp, leafy lettuce.
 • Warm soil is key to good germination. With the summer sun warming the soil for the last few months your seedlings will grow like mad. Also, the lower air temperatures are perfect growing conditions for cool-season vegetables.
 • Cooler temperatures mean less watering and less sweating for you. Here are some vegetables to consider for late summer-early fall planting.
Leaf lettuce and other salad greens: There is

a wide variety of lettuce to choose from, in all colours, shapes and flavours. They all grow best with cooler air temperatures. The great thing about most salad greens is you can harvest what you need and more will grow to be harvested later. You can get speedy harvests from lettuce, in as little as 30 to 40 days. To prolong your harvest, be sure to snap outer leaves first and keep the centre growing point intact so the plant can keep producing new leaves.
Spinach: Fall spinach can be sown in late summer and picked throughout the fall. Sow seeds directly into the soil one inch deep around six weeks before the first frost in a sunny position in the garden. You can grow spinach in the ground, in raised garden bed or in containers. Although spinach salads sound super refreshing in the summer heat, this tender green loves the cold. Autumn spinach has more sweetness and more bolt-resistance than spring and summer greens.

Plus, it can be harvested just 30 days from the time of seeding. Gardeners in zone 6 and warmer can often overwinter spinach without protection. The greens can even regenerate from beneath a blanket of snow.
Radishes: A very fast growing vegetable, radishes can be sown in fall for quick harvests. If you grow radishes in pots then you can bring them under cover when the colder weather hits to further extend the season.
Green onions: Green onions (aka scallions) are a very cold-tolerant vegetable with optimal growing temperatures of 20C to 25C. They can survive heavy frosts once established. Plant four to eight weeks before frost.
Swiss chard: This is another hardy green that reaches an edible size in 25 to 30 days. Given some extra protection when frost threatens, chard can last well into fall. If well-mulched, you could be harvesting into late fall.
Bok choy: Another vegetable that does not like hot



Spinach is a hearty fall crop that doesn't take much time from seed to harvest. RICHARD HARLEY/MIDJOURNEY

weather, bok choy tends to be sown in spring and fall. This Asian crop, also known commonly as pak choi or Chinese cabbage, produces edible stalks and leaves. Bok choy can either be harvested as tender leaves or grown to maturity to be used in stir fries. Sow seeds directly into fertile soil around half-inch deep, sowing successively to ensure a steady supply of harvests. Bok choy is fast-growing, baby leaves can be ready within 30 days while it may take

60 days for mature plants. Sow in early fall for a crop later in the season. It's ready to harvest in 40 to 45 days. Just writing this article has made me start to crave some more fresh produce from the garden. Enjoy some time out in the garden, planting some seeds and reaping another harvest before the end of our growing season. Growing Together, Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.



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



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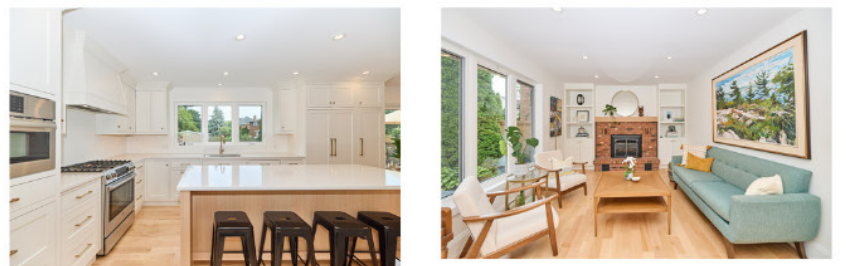

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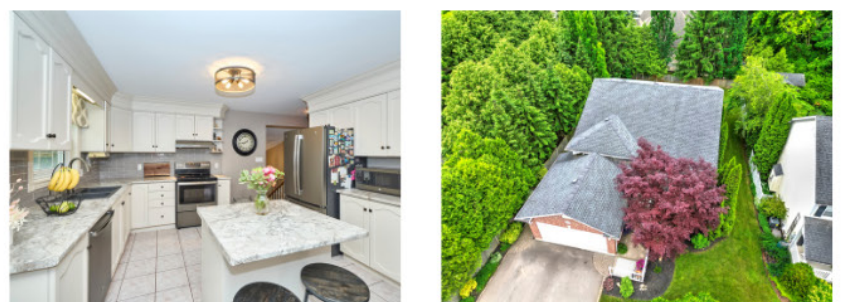
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