



Rotary donates \$30,000 to Doctors Without Borders
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On NOTL's front line

Erin Jarvis

This story is the first in a series, profiling all three of Niagara-on-the-Lake's nurse practitioners. This week's profile, Erin Jarvis, is the sole nurse practitioner at Niagara North Family Health Team's NOTL site.

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Erin Jarvis is one of Niagara-on-the-Lake's front-line workers.

The 36-year-old is the sole nurse practitioner at Niagara North Family Health Team's NOTL site and has been there for six years.

For her, like everyone else in the health care industry, life has changed in the new world of COVID-19. Every day she gears up in full personal protective equipment — goggles, mask, gown — to help join Niagara-on-the-Lake's fight against the virus.

The Lake Report talked with Jarvis about how things have changed in NOTL due to the global pandemic, how patients are responding to new procedures, and how she's been holding up.

She says her average day has become "quite a bit different" in the COVID-era, with not only the volume of patients, but the clinical procedures involved

in assessing them.

"We're doing essentially all phone and video conferencing, with the permission of the patient," she says.

Some patients still come into the office if it's necessary, she says, but they're trying to do as much as possible at a safe distance.

"It's sort of evolved over the last few weeks, certainly as they gather more data and evidence, it's changed our clinical practice," she says.

"So if we see anyone in office, regardless of the concern, whether or not we have concern about COVID-19, we wear full personal protective equipment, so goggles, mask, gown, gloves, and then we ask the patient to also wear a mask during the encounter and they sanitize their hands when they enter and when they leave the building, so that's quite different as well."

Jarvis says there are certain limitations when not



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Daffodils enjoy extended bloomin' season

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

An irregular winter means Niagara-on-the-Lake is enjoying an earlier and longer daffodil season this spring.

Sheila Hirsch-Kalm, a member of the NOTL Horticulture Society, thinks one of the main reasons for this is "because we had such an unusual winter, it was the winter that was never happening."

She is well-known in town for the installation of the Daffodil Gardens of Hope around NOTL at firehalls, the community centre and Simcoe Park.

"By the first week of April they were starting to open up. You would see that as you drive around and



Sheila Hirsch-Kalm visits the Daffodil Garden of Hope outside the St. Davids fire hall. JESSICA MAXWELL

outside of the firehall."

"Things started early," she says, "but what's interesting is that because now we've got the cool weather, daffodils are lasting longer, which is lovely."

Paul Zammit, a professor of horticulture at Niagara College, says that not really

having much of a winter at all and having little snow is a factor in the daffodils' longevity.

There was no deep freeze that took a long time, Zammit said.

"We didn't have the low temperatures in winter that we've typically had, or the

extended periods. There were not the massive snow drifts that needed to have a couple weeks to melt."

Snowfall is important for the lifecycle of gardens as it replenishes the moisture plants need to grow in the spring and helps knock down pests and disease.

"I'm not a huge fan of winter but our gardens do need it," Zammit said.

"I think as we went into winter, we all anticipated a bit of an early spring, considering we weren't getting that massive deep freeze and that massive pile of snow."

Because of this, as soon as the warmer temperatures come, the sun hits the soil and it warms up quick-

Continued on Page 2

How many NOTLers have COVID-19? Region won't tell mayor

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The Region of Niagara is still not releasing numbers of cases of COVID-19 by municipality, and Niagara-on-the-Lake Lord Mayor Betty Disero said she's hoping that changes.

The reason is "for the sake of privacy," Disero said in an interview Monday.

"To me it doesn't make any sense at all," she said. "Because you know, if you've got 30 cases in a municipality, how is that telling anybody who's got it?"

Disero said knowing the numbers of cases and how the virus is spreading would

be helpful for the town when planning its emergency response.

"And more importantly, for me, is the fact that, if I know we've got X number of cases in Niagara-on-the-Lake, it would be helpful for us to target out phases better," she said.

"Because if they say, 'Yeah, X people have it in Niagara-on-the-Lake, the majority of them got it through travel abroad,' then I know that we've got to focus the message more on: If you're returning, stay home," Disero said.

"If they're saying the

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Dry season likely for dock area

Richard Harley
The Lake Report



Flooding at the Navy Hall dock in 2019.
FILE/BRITTANY CARTER

The water level in Lake Ontario is not expected to match the record high of 2019, according to Brett Ruck, environmental services supervisor for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

But things could change. "I know some of the forecasts right now are that the water levels aren't going to go as high, however the government has said that in the past and actually hasn't been the case," Ruck said in an interview with The Lake Report Monday.

"So we're not letting our guard down until we feel comfortable ourselves that water levels aren't going to reach the 2018 or (2019) levels."

For now, town staff are keeping an eye on the situation, monitoring the Niagara River level twice a week.

"When (the water gets) up to a certain point, that's going to trigger us to bring in the pumps, just so that we can keep the ditches and everything clear in case of storm events," Ruck said.

Ron Simkus, a dock area resident who prepares a weekly report on lake levels,

said he's confident the town will be able to manage any flooding this year.

"This year is shaping up to be a year where we probably will get through without any kind of disaster," he said.

Simkus said the big three things that come into play with Lake Ontario levels are the Niagara River, the Ottawa River and rain.

"Any combination of two of those three is what causes the lake level to go up," he said.

The Ottawa River Regulation Planning Board has been issuing daily reports on the status of the Ottawa River, which Simkus includes in his report.

"The Ottawa (River) is doing much better this year than it did last year," Simkus said. "Last year it really

surprised everybody and went into a late spring thaw, with a huge snow pack, and, of course, it started to flood Gatineau and Montreal and that ended up backing everything up here into Lake Ontario."

That's not the case this year. "The snow pack's not as big, the spring is cool and slowly melting and all of the reservoirs in the Ottawa River Basin seem to be well in control and they feel confident they'll manage it properly this year," he said.

He called 2019 a "perfect storm" for high water in Lake Ontario.

"Last year the Ottawa (River) came into play in a big way, the Niagara River was extremely record high levels, and then it rained, so we actually got the perfect storm of three events hap-

pening at the same time," Simkus said.

"This year at least the Ottawa (River) is out of play. And what's really shaping up to be beneficial is the weather has been cool and relatively dry, so that's dampened the pressure on Lake Ontario."

The one thing that's a constant this year, and is going to leave us with high levels all year, is the Niagara River, he said.

"All the lakes upstream of us, especially Michigan and Huron and Superior, are still way, way above their average levels, and that's not going to go away soon. I think that we'll see the Niagara River flowing at record levels all year and probably going into next year as well," Simkus said.

Simkus said last year he had to pump a lot of water from his basement, but was fortunate compared to some neighbours.

"The lake level basically brings the water table under my house up," he said. "But unlike most of my neighbours, we did quite well last year."

Read the full story at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3793.

NOTL copes with COVID-19

NOTL warns tourists to stay away

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Stay away.

That's the succinct message Niagara-on-the-Lake wants tourists to hear as the town tries to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's an unusual but necessary step for a town that heavily relies on tourism.

And to make sure the message gets through, the town is promising to start issuing fines of \$750 or more to anyone defying the provincial orders against public gatherings.

This past Saturday alone, on 58 occasions, the town's two bylaw officers on duty had to urge groups of people to "move along," community and development services director Craig Larmour told council at a special virtual meeting Monday night.

Part of the problem is the Niagara Parks Commission has not closed its parking lots, so visitors, primarily from St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Hamilton and Toronto are stopping along the Niagara Parkway at facilities operated by the commission.

Many of the visitors are then travelling into Old Town and stopping at grocery stores, gas stations and convenience stores, primarily to use their washroom facilities, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said.

This is causing "great stress" on those operators, she said.

With the town declaring a state of emergency, no restaurants or stores are open. And when nature calls, people are urinating "in bushes, construction site portable toilets and behind buildings," the mayor said.

The town has asked Niagara Parks to close its parking lots, but so far has had no luck. Interim chief administrator Sheldon Randall said he hopes to hear back from the commission by late this week.

The municipality is also bringing in two more bylaw enforcement officers on

contract to help deal with the problems. The busiest times for enforcement are Thursday through Sunday.

With no provincial ban on travel and people tired of being stuck at home, there's nothing to stop them from jumping in their cars and heading to NOTL, Randall said. "We don't want them to, but they're allowed to do that."

He noted that sometimes when bylaw officers speak to visitors and tell them they're violating the rules, the response is, "They don't care."

In an aggressive effort to try to discourage tourists, the town will be setting up three large digital signs with messages warning that the town is closed, Randall told councillors.

The signs likely will be placed on the Niagara Parkway near John Street, at the roundabout in Virgil and on Lakeshore Road near East and West Line, he said.

He hopes to have the signs operating before this weekend.

The town wants visitors to know NOTL is "closed for business right now. We don't want your business right now. We want you to come back when we can accommodate you," Randall told council.

Up until now benches in municipal parks were not off-limits but the town just determined that benches are included in the provincial orders and will now be adding yellow caution tape to prohibit their use, Randall told The Lake Report.

At Monday's meeting, councillors were also told that no full-time town staff have been laid-off yet, though many contract positions have been cut.

Full-timers have been redeployed among several departments to ensure the town is able to continue to provide all the essential services the municipality requires, Randall said. Everyone who is still on the payroll is needed right now, he said, though there could be layoffs if that changes.

Daffodils sticking around this year

Continued from Front Page

er without having to melt all the snow, he said.

So, while the daffodil season, "wasn't super early, but the thing is it's staying."

"This is something that we can all enjoy because the cold actually holds things, as opposed to boom, things just explode and then they're done."

Hirsch-Kalm plans around the blooming of daffodils to open the Garden of Hope each year. One of the gardens is at the St. Davids firehall down the street from her home.

In the past, the garden has been opened anywhere from the first week of April to the first week of May. "We had to either postpone until May because they weren't open-

ing, or we had to put it on earlier in the first week of April because nature had jumped ahead of us and they were blooming."

Liette Vasseur, a professor of biology and environment sciences at Brock University, says there is a real fine line in spring.

A very cold long winter means it takes more time for the plants to come up in the spring because they are sensitive to heat, she said.

"It's great to have the flowers early but if you get a strong frost and very cold temperatures, you don't have the pollinators at that point because the pollinators don't go out when it's cold and on top of that the flowers will not last as well."

Growth is related to how much heat the daffodils



The Daffodil Garden of Hope at St. Davids fire hall.
JESSICA MAXWELL

are getting. Temperatures greater than 9C with sunshine promotes blooming.

Vasseur said in some cases the daffodils were blooming a little bit early this year.

"I know that at Brock University, close to my window, they started bloom-

ing in the second week of March just before we got stuck staying home because of COVID-19."

"So, this year they were probably a little bit earlier than normal," Vasseur said.

Read the full story at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3803



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Keep calm, eh

Linda Anderson-Kozik has updated her front garden decor with a sign focused on the pandemic. The Queen Street garden always features a seasonal theme. Now the creative Linda, with help from handy husband John Kozik, is urging everyone to Keep calm and carry on amid the COVID-19 pandemic. KEVIN MACLEAN

Long-term care outbreak is **not** COVID-19

Public health officials investigating a “respiratory outbreak” at Niagara Long Term Care (formerly Chartwell) in Niagara-on-the-Lake say the virus is neither COVID-19 nor the flu.

The virus in the NOTL

facility was confirmed not to be COVID-19 on Thursday, said Dr. Mustafa Hirji, acting medical officer of health for Niagara Region.

Public health has since listed the cause of the outbreak to be parainfluenza virus.

‘Make some noise’ Saturday for front-line workers

The town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is asking people to make some noise on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. to show appreciation for the town’s front-line workers.

The idea came up during an emergency control group meeting last week, said Lauren Kruitbosch, the town’s community engagement co-ordinator.

“We wanted to think of a creative way to thank front-line workers while engaging the whole community. We hope the community will participate,” she said.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for the town to continue our message to stay home while getting the whole Town to express their thanks to front-line workers and essential businesses that are putting our lives before their own,” said Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

The NOTL fire department will participate by driving trucks out of the bays and honking their horns and sounding their sirens. Town staff will also be participating from home with their families.

NOTL copes with COVID-19

Shaw waiting for share of **\$500M** from Ottawa

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

The Shaw Festival is counting on the federal government’s promise of \$500 million for the arts, culture and sports sectors to help the theatre company make it through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake festival is scraping by, week-to-week, extending its payroll and continuing to prepare for the day when it can return to the stage, says Shaw CEO Tim Jennings.

But receiving a portion of the \$500 million Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised last week is crucial to helping the Shaw out of the financial hole caused by the pandemic, Jennings said in an interview.

The festival remains in the dark about how much it might receive – and when.

“We are curious as to how it is going to be divided up and used and what the allowances for that money are going to be,” Jennings said.

“We’re sort of like the miners on one side of the mountain digging a tunnel toward the government digging from the other direction and hoping we meet in the middle in time.”

The festival is a major Niagara tourism draw and the second-largest theatre company in the country, behind only Stratford.

But right now, “We need a little bit of surety about the timing” of government help.

“Weeks matter at this point. We’re working week-to-week and trying to keep finding the resources we need to go on to the next week. We are definitely in the position where without help we can’t sustain forever,” he said.

For the Shaw’s staff, “We have committed to another week and another week. Every week we commit to another week out. It’s our plan to keep doing that until the government catches up with us and we get some help.”

He doesn’t foresee any

immediate layoffs, “nor do we foresee rehiring a lot of the folks who rely on us for summer work,” at least until full details of the government program are known.

Another big concern is if either the provincial or municipal shutdowns get extended, Jennings said. Right now, the province has ordered most businesses closed until mid-May and the Town of NOTL has banned large gatherings until June 30.

If the town’s order is extended, “That starts to really impact what we can accomplish this summer.”

The company needs about five to six weeks “from the time we’re allowed back into the building to when we can get the performances on stage,” Jennings said.

He’s hoping to be back on stage by July as the company has so far lost almost one-third of its 750 performances to the pandemic shutdown.

The festival is operating now on its line of credit. Its bank has been very helpful and Jennings is confident that with government and other aid, the financials will get sorted out later in the year.

In addition, he said the Shaw is one of the few Canadian theatre companies that purchased pandemic insurance, not so much for a situation like COVID-19, but “in case 10 or 15 members of the cast got sick with the flu or something.”

“We took out pandemic insurance back in 2017 and we don’t know exactly the extent of the claim yet, but we know we are in a claim situation and trying to figure out with the insurer what that looks like.”

Having the insurance “has given us some choices other folks haven’t been able to make,” but Jennings knows the claim will only cover a portion of the costs the festival incurs.

Read the full story at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3797

Niagara-on-the-Lake

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Please donate to support local news

We would like to thank everyone who has donated so far to the GoFundMe to help the paper, set up generously by Chef Ryan Crawford of Ruffino's and Backhouse.

So far there has been \$5,375 raised towards the \$30,000 goal.

We encourage anyone who can to make a donation to help us to meet this goal. All money raised goes directly towards printing and distribution costs for the paper, so we can continue to ensure NOTL's #1 newspaper reaches all members of our community during this pandemic, especially our seniors who are most at risk. Local news is more important than ever.

Make a donation at:
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The Lake Report

Editorials: We all can do better

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Sometimes the truth hurts. Or is uncomfortable. Or lays waste to our closely held beliefs. Or makes us angry.

The Lake Report reported two weeks ago about instances in which migrant workers – non-whites upon whom our agricultural sector is extremely dependent – were mistreated and racially profiled by some local businesses.

That inspired Yvonne Bredow, a Queenston resident who works at a store in Old Town, to speak out last week about the race-based abuse and encounters she has endured in town.

Bredow did not accuse everyone in Niagara-on-the-Lake of harbouring racist beliefs. That would be silly. She clearly stated – right in paragraph 4 – that she was not painting the whole town with the same brush, but was shining a light on the sort of recurring behaviour most

would like to think was left behind generations ago.

The overwhelming public reaction to Bredow's opinion piece has been positive and supportive, though she did receive some hateful messages and "backlash" from a few people, as did we.

Most of the negativity came predictably via social media, since that is the battleground of keyboard warriors nowadays.

Sadly, oddly in 2020, one of the recurring themes among the negative comments was that if you really don't like it here, you should leave. And don't dare try to change NOTL. You're just like the people who hate bird bangers. And if you come from away, leave your "outsider opinions" behind.

Good Lord. (And in a town with numerous churches, and many faiths, is it wrong to ask if any of those who share these black-and-white views are righteous God-fearing, church-going folks?)

Does anyone else see the irony of this happening in NOTL, which has a proud history of tolerance dating to the days of the Underground Railway?

Perhaps history and change have something to do with it. NOTL is not what it once was, it's grown – and is still growing – it's changed, and many people fear and hate change. Actually, does anyone really like it?

And in any small town when you dare publish something uncomplimentary about what goes on, there often is a segment of the populace that takes grave offence. In the case of Bredow's story, it is hugely embarrassing for us to collectively look in the mirror and know that some folks in NOTL are stuck in deep in a bygone era. And it makes us look bad to the outside world.

In addition, there are some who simply don't believe her story. "Didn't happen," "You're not even black," they tell the woman

born of a black mother and German father, who spent much of her life in Toronto, one of the most diverse cities on the planet.

Well, the fact that even a few people (and it IS, thankfully, a small number) took it upon themselves to deny the truth of Bredow's story in the way they did has actually proven her point.

Let's look forward. We did not take lightly the decision to publish these stories. It's an ugly saga. We weighed the consequences. But we believe it was necessary to shine a light and maybe end the complacency and ingrained attitudes that permit such racial beliefs to fester.

So, when you hear or see this happening, step up. It's not easy, but don't simply tolerate it. And if you are guilty of such behaviour, educate yourself. Yours is the minority opinion now. Because it's 2020.

We all can do better, and ultimately, NOTL can be better.

editor@niagaranow.com

NOTL wouldn't be NOTL without its volunteers

Richard Harley
 Editor

Where do we start when it comes to thanking NOTL's volunteers? There are so many – thousands, as noted this week by our lord mayor – and each plays an

important role in making our town a great place to live, work and play.

There's our firefighters, our town committee members, our dedicated fundraisers, service clubs and charitable organizations.

There's people who have

stepped up to help during the pandemic we're facing. Many are unsung and anonymous, but they all make significant contributions to making our town and our world better.

There is no shortage of people to praise during

Volunteer Week. So we offer a massive, heartfelt thank you to everyone out there who has volunteered their time to help shape our town into the vibrant community it is.

Your hard work certainly does not go unnoticed.

Stand up for yourself and educate offenders

Dear editor:

Re: Yvonne Bredow's story, "Racist attitudes a common occurrence," (The Lake Report, April 16):

I'm a minority, of sorts, in that I'm from a foreign country (America) that is often denigrated in front of me. However, I don't stay silent or slink away; I give as good as I get (with a smile on my face). Standing up for yourself or a belief, isn't mean-spirited. You'll feel better about yourself and help educate others to sensitive feelings they thoughtlessly don't comprehend.

As for coming to NOTL with the preconceived notion

that everyone here is a perfect person, well, that seems like a somewhat naive assumption that I'm sure you regret. There aren't any perfect places or perfect residents. Tolerance is a learned characteristic of humans, not innate; try to think of yourself as a teacher in this regard, not exclusively a victim.

If I lost a job (which has happened), the first thing I would want to know is why, and not decide the reason for myself. There are many unrelated reasons why this happens.

At Niagara College, arguably a very tolerant and progressive school, people

are fired in a more subtle way. If they want to get rid of, say, an assistant director, they eliminate the job title – then no more job exists for an assistant director and the person will leave with no recourse.

I will say I'm sorry for the emotional distress these events can cause. Hopefully you won't obsess about it or it might make you a bitter person.

Try to get over it and focus on the people who consider you their friend. Hopefully we will meet some time and become friends.

Dr. Wade Taylor Davis
 NOTL

Shameful, disgusting treatment

Dear editor:

First of all, a big apology is due to Yvonne Bredow for the despicable treatment she has received, ("Racist attitudes a common occurrence," The Lake Report, April 16).

This is disgusting and any person who treats people this way should be singled out for what they are – a bigot.

And to think that she was

fired for letting her employer aware of the bigotry in her business.

I would love to know the name of this store and would never do business there again.

Their name should be in this story so people realize the standards of this place of business.

I certainly hope the people

who know Yvonne will reach out to her so she will know that some people in NOTL are decent, welcoming citizens.

This is a terrible blemish and apparently NOTL is not as warm and welcoming as it would like to project. Shameful and disgusting!

Janet Vanderlagt
 NOTL

Call out racism when you see it

Dear editor:

Yvonne Bredow's story about racism in Niagara is obviously, an accusation to be taken seriously, ("Racist attitudes a common occur-

rence," April 16).

I think many of us do not do enough to combat racism. We turn a blind eye when we could call it out.

I am thankful to Ms.

Bredow for her courage but deeply saddened by her message.

Let's do better, Niagara!
David Lailey
 NOTL

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OPINION

Heartbreaking tales from U.K.'s COVID front lines

Longtime NOTL resident Susan Hall, a warden at St. Mark's Anglican Church, has been unexpectedly caught up in the COVID-19 pandemic while visiting family in Brighton, England. This is her second letter home to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Susan Hall
Special to The Lake Report

Happily, Prime Minister Boris Johnson is recovering from COVID-19 at Chequers, his summer residence. He appeared on television recently, clapping like the rest of us for the National Health Service but looked sick and acknowledged he

still had a high temperature, which is a danger sign of worse to come.

Following that he was admitted to St. Thomas's Hospital in London, an institution of which I have fond memories from when I was a research scholar there years ago.

Fortunately, even though he was sick enough to be admitted to the ICU, he managed to recover without requiring the aggressive intervention of a ventilator. He has shown himself to be a strong leader when all around is uncertain and as such he received a massive outpouring of good wishes from the whole country (including me) and, indeed,

from around the world.

What do you do all day in lockdown on your own? My day starts around 6:30 a.m., a relaxation from my usual earlier time of 6 a.m. It is not as if I have anything pressing to do at that hour but like another generation of British women of the Raj, I am conscious of the danger of relaxation of standards. Stalwart British women kept wearing their uncomfortable, constrictive corsets through the intense, enervating Indian heat. I fear if I am not similarly self-disciplined I might be overcome by lassitude and just stay in bed.

When inside I listen to BBC Radio 4. Recently, in the mornings we have been

presented with a series of heartbreaking, pandemic-related personal stories told by weeping, broken relatives of COVID victims. Surely, I thought, we get enough reality confronting us every day. Do I really want to experience such tragedy vicariously?

There is, however, something so intensely compelling about these human stories I find I am gripped and unable to leave: Like the woman from South Wales who had looked after her husband at home until he became so sick he had to go into hospital.

Read the full story at www.niagaranow.com/opinion.phtml/3779.

History repeats itself with latest pandemic

Dear editor:

In her recent letter to The Lake Report, Susan Hall made reference to the Plague in England, known to history as the Black Death.

This brought back memories of my visit to the "Plague Village" of Eyam in the beautiful Derbyshire Dales.

Three centuries ago, the inhabitants of Eyam made a heroic decision to sacrifice

themselves to their ultimate fate by isolating from surrounding villages and not spreading the disease.

The tragedy was brought about in 1665 by an infected bolt of cloth contaminated by fleas which came from dead rats rampant in the capital.

George Viccars, a tailor's assistant and recipient of the cloth, died within a week. During a six-day

period, Elizabeth Hancock buried her husband and six children.

Faced with a mounting death toll, the panicked residents decided to flee but were dissuaded by Rev. William Mompesson who directed them to build a large circle of stones encircling Eyam.

Villagers were forbidden to cross the circle in order to contain the disease and

thus protect the rest of the villages.

In recognition villagers from nearby brought food and placed it on the stones.

Most of the residents of Eyam died and today the village is memorialized for its noble sacrifice.

With the advent of COVID-19, the history of pandemics repeats itself.

Jean Baker
NOTL

Rude resident at NOTL post office

Dear editor:

It is bad enough that residents are obligated to pick up their mail from the town postal station on a regular basis as they have no home delivery.

One would have thought by now that the town might have devised a means to temporarily outsource a delivery service to handle home delivery for its residents during this COVID-19 crisis. Receiving mail is critical at any time but even more so now.

Today I waited in line to admit myself into the post office box area. I opened my box to find it overflowing. As I looked through the contents seeking the notice card I was expecting for a package that couldn't be delivered to my residential street address because I have a post office box, a man began banging on the outside glass window, shouting at me to "Read your ... expletive ... mail when you get home."

As I exited the area for the street, I told him that I was not "reading my mail" but was looking for a missing notice card. I added that he might want to "calm down as we were all in this together." His reply was even less humane.

We are all frazzled. We are all frustrated. We are all frightened. Extending a moment of compassion to a fellow resident never goes out of style.

Nancy J. Ross
NOTL

Phone scams and phishing schemes abound

Dear editor:

I think we must all be getting fraud/phishing/scammers on the phone.

Our house is averaging two a day lately. We do not answer unless we know the number. If we ignore the call and it is important they can leave a message.

But, this one was new to us. Using our computer, we ordered something from a legitimate company in Montreal, paid and received the tracking number.

We received a text on our cellphone telling us the package could not leave the centre as the address was incorrect and please give us the correct address where we wanted this package to be sent.

The text's area code was from the USA. We checked our tracking number on the computer and the package was half-way to our house, so we just deleted the message.

Just how they got our cell number and knew we had a package coming is interesting, isn't it? Especially since we also did not give the company our cell number. So people should be aware of this new to us scam.

Fraudulent or suspicious activity can be reported to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, through its website at www.antifraudcentre.ca, or by telephone at 1-888-495-8501.

Thanks,

Sandie Schulz
NOTL

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The Lake Report

The Lake Report's community calendar is postponed because of mass cancellation of events due to COVID-19.

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Town worker connects pen pals with long-term care residents

Jessica Maxwell
 The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake residents in a long-term care facility are staying connected with the community through a new pen pal program.

Tara Druzina usually works in planning and development for the Town of NOTL but when COVID-19 hit, her role shifted more to community outreach programs. She came up with the idea to start the letters for residents program.

The pen pal initiative came about after an overwhelming number of community members were reaching out to the town about how they could help others.

"We've got this whole big community assistance program going and people are very interested in helping where they can," Druzina says.

"I had a whole bunch of people ask me what they could do, and there's only so many people we needed to deliver food. So, I had to invent something that people could participate in."

This inspired Druzina to connect members of the community in a new way, through the letter exchange program.

"I came up with the idea and reached out (to those offering to help) and then I used my own personal Facebook account and sent it out that way," Druzina says.

"We thought it would be kind of easy to connect the people on the outside with the people living in assisted homes on the inside. So, we put it out there."

So far, the letters have



Lynda, a resident at Niagara LTC reads over her letter from the pen pal program. SUPPLIED

been shared with Niagara LTC Residence and Upper Canada Lodge in NOTL but Druzina hopes to share the program throughout Niagara Region.

"We're ready to reach out to the other regional homes with the program as well and see if they're interested in participating," she says.

Chris Poos, program manager of the Niagara LTC Residence, says he received an email from Druzina that mentioned how local residents had been writing letters in support of residents in long-term care and others in the community who are a little isolated right now.

"They really want to focus in on the residents in long-term care as a priority," Poos says.

It began with more than 30 letters being written by NOTL residents to long-term care residents in town and sent by email to the residences.

NOTL copes with COVID-19

Poos says the "wonderful letters of support just telling (residents) a little about themselves and how they are thinking of them during this hard time is really encouraging."

People taking time out of their day to write a letter for those who really need it is a great way to show support in the community, he says.

He hopes the program won't be a one-time letter, "that this will establish a routine, a connection between those in our community and our residents."

The recreation team at Niagara LTC is taking time to sit down with residents to read the letters and put together responses.

"There is no possibility of anything (like COVID-19) being transmitted accidentally by letter. This will be a completely safe and a great way of connecting because social isolation can be very difficult

for our seniors, especially those that normally would be getting regular visits from their families, from friends."

Exchanging the letters is "really easy because I get the replies back from the residents and I just send it off to the originating emailer, and they get it, and then they write back," Druzina says.

Poos says this time is especially difficult for residents so the staff is supporting them by "doing lots of FaceTime and Skype, which is great, but will never replace true human connection. Every little bit helps during this difficult time."

"Any little impact that can bring a smile to a senior or anybody in our community who is struggling during this time to keep a sense of normality can be uplifting and important," Poos says.

The letters have left the residents at Niagara LTC feeling cared about by the community, he says.

He thinks it's great that people are doing this without ever having met the recipient. "This is just an individual that's taking time out of their day, to reach out to someone that they have no true connection with,"

That sense of care and purpose are important to the facility's residents.

"As we're reading these letters, you're seeing that twinkle in their eye, you're seeing the smile grow, the sharing of stories," Poos says.

"The largest untapped resource that we have is our seniors, their stories and their experiences and to share that with the greater community is important."

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I have a bed but I never sleep.
I have a mouth but I never speak.
What am I?

Last Week: I am constantly overlooked by everyone but everyone has me.
What am I?

Answer: A nose

Also accepted: Heat

Answered first by: Kathy Neufeld

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Margie Enns, Kieran Jones, Howard Jones, Sylvia Wiens, Katie Reimer, Pam Dowling, Brenda Bartley, Janice Hall

Email answers, with your name, to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.

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Dr. Brown: Black Swans and the pandemic



Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

NOTL copes with COVID-19

– a full two years before the first acknowledged outbreak in humans in late 2019 in Huanan city, the site of the infamous “wet market,” in Wuhan province.

China officially notified the World Health Organization and U.S. Centres for Disease Control on Dec. 31, 2019, but it was a month later, on Jan. 30 before the WHO declared COVID-19 a “public health emergency” – a very long delay, given the rapid spread of the disease within those first few critical weeks.

COVID-19 belongs to the corona family of viruses and is most closely related genomically to the SARS-1 virus. It came as no surprise, therefore, to learn that COVID-19 caused Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in some patients akin to that observed with SARS-1 and MERS 9. However, the molecular targets and therefore symptoms and sometimes organ failures associated with COVID-19 are broader, including the heart, kidneys, bowel and other organs.

What initially surprised many was the rapidity of the spread, and potential – fully realized in some countries – for swamping health care systems, such as China’s in the early days of the pandemic, much of Western Europe, especially Italy, Spain and the U.K., and more recently New York City.

With such an explosive

spread came shortages of key items such as quality face masks, gowns and ventilators. Critically important to success or failure has been the extent to which health care systems were able to pivot to face the onslaught of COVID-19 cases. Unfortunately, the same has not been true for long-term care facilities, where containing the spread of the disease was much harder and fatality rates in older residents and patients sometimes reached 30 to 50 per cent.

But even if this pandemic and the accompanying economic chaos following the earliest discovery of this particular coronavirus in 2017, there was no way of knowing this virus would prove so socially and economically disruptive or cause so many deaths, all within two to three months, with no clear end in sight as I write.

Once COVID-19 reached humans in Wuhan province in late 2019 it was clear sailing – the virus was highly infectious and a killer for many. The reasons are the same as those which will favour future pandemics caused by other opportunistic viruses – there are lots of human hosts, almost 8 billion now, there will be little if any natural immunity, and humans travel worldwide, mixing with others along the way, at our destinations and homes when we return.

That’s the perfect storm – opportunity, poor defence

and a host (us) that spreads the virus freely and quickly.

From a molecular perspective, coronaviruses, like many RNA viruses, are simple creatures – they possess a small single strand of RNA wrapped in a glycoprotein shell and are incapable of making it on their own without the help of living cells to make copies of themselves.

Yet they can do precisely that in any species immunologically naïve enough for the virus to gain a foothold. And, like any other RNA virus, they have another trick – RNA is inherently unstable and easily mutates. That gives the virus a leg up because over the course of trillions and trillions of copy cycles, sooner or later mutants will emerge, capable of overcoming whatever defences we have acquired to earlier versions.

It’s one version of what’s been called “Evolution on the FastTrack” and no friend of humans in this case.

PS: Recent evidence suggests that the need for ventilators may not be so pressing, given the option of using CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) devices similar to those used for treating sleep apnea, as a far less invasive, less damaging to the lungs, option for some patients.

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the Infohealth series held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

Some liken the current pandemic and financial crises to Black Swan events – rare as the chance of spotting black swans (they exist in Australia, it turns out) – which catch everyone by surprise, have horrific consequences and following which, experts claim they saw it coming.

The two are linked – the pandemic threatens millions, kills many thousands and has shut down economies worldwide.

This pandemic blindsided most governments but was no surprise to those familiar with previous viral epidemics. In the past 20 years there was SARS-1 in 2003, MERS in 2012, the Zika virus in 2014 and the latest Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2013-2016.

All were lethal – Ebola was the worst, killing half those infected. In the 20th century, there were a series of viral epidemics, the worst of which was the Spanish flu in 1918-1920, which killed 50 million or more – as many as were killed in the First World War.

COVID-19, was found first in bats in China in 2017 and considered a potential threat to humans the same year

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I also want to say a big thank you to everyone who is working during this time to keep our community safe - we will not forget what you've done for us.

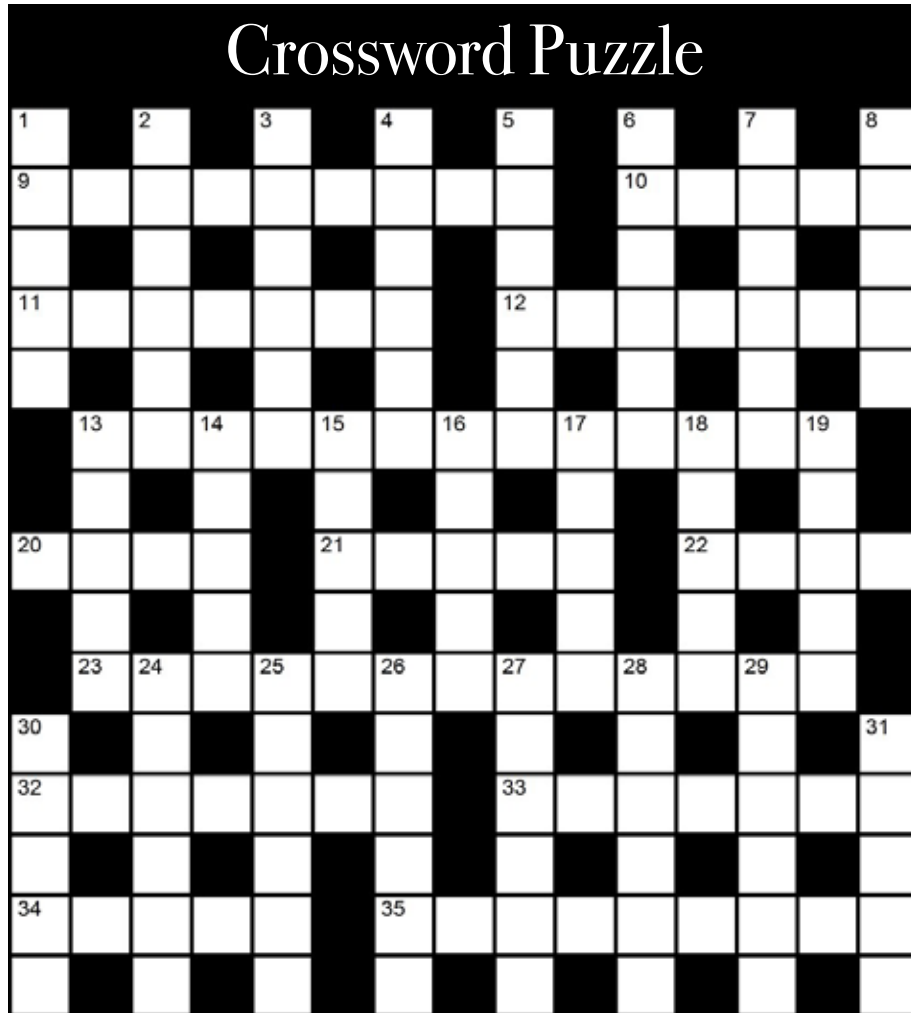
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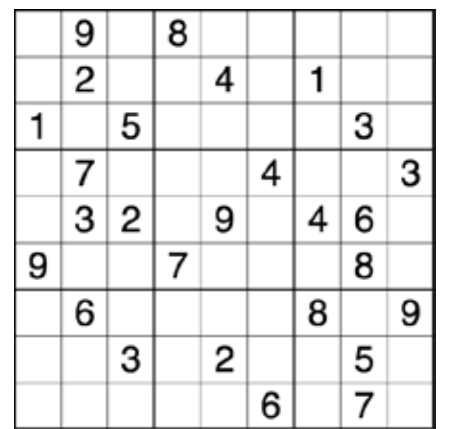
Have some fun

The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers.
editor@niagaranow.com

- Across**
- 9. Wiggler (9)
 - 10. Eight singers (5)
 - 11. Curtain calls (7)
 - 12. Trap (7)
 - 13. Debatable (13)
 - 20. Equipment for the reproduction of very good sound (2-2)
 - 21. Set apart (5)
 - 22. Irish county (4)
 - 23. Unpredictable (13)
 - 32. Tolerate (7)
 - 33. Sustain (7)
 - 34. Awaken (5)
 - 35. Appraising (9)
- Down**
- 1. Gem (5)
 - 2. Dealer in foodstuffs (6)
 - 3. Winged child (6)
 - 4. Sweet dessert (6)
 - 5. Simple life form (6)
 - 6. Dwarfed tree (6)
 - 7. Capital of Canada (6)
 - 8. Speak (5)
 - 13. Publish (5)
 - 14. Intense hatred (5)
 - 15. Hire (5)
 - 16. Island awarded the George Cross (5)
 - 17. A tenth part (5)
 - 18. Celestial body (5)
 - 19. Faithful (5)
 - 24. General escape (6)
 - 25. Maxed (6)
 - 26. Make over (6)
 - 27. Wretchedness (6)
 - 28. Son of one's brother or sister (6)
 - 29. Very handsome young man (6)
 - 30. E.g. the Romanovs (5)
 - 31. Male deer (5)



Last issue's answers



NOTL Rotary sends \$30,000 to Doctors Without Borders

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

NOTL copes with COVID-19

Jodey Porter of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club remembers a child's plea from her last stint abroad with Doctors Without Borders four years ago: "All we want is a chance."

That remark solidified Porter's commitment to volunteering.

"Those parts of the world where people just like us have their entire lives shattered, they just need a handle to save themselves and their families," Porter said.

So she said it "made sense," especially now with the global COVID-19 pandemic, to forward the remaining funds from the NOTL club's international account to assist with the worldwide emergency response led by Doctors Without Borders.

Local and international fundraising has always been part of the NOTL

Rotary's mandate; members are now pushing to raise even more money for the countries with the highest need. Through Doctors Without Borders, the local service club is sending \$30,000 to health care systems on the front lines in those developing countries.

It is also looking for more donations to bump up the amount raised. The club's chair of international services, Patrick MacNeill, said members have a target of \$50,000.

Porter, who will be taking over as chair of the international services committee in July, said the club decided to empty its remaining bank account, giving what has been raised for international use to the organization.

She has volunteered with Doctors Without Borders for 15 years, offering her services in the planning and logistics of setting

up health care systems in those developing countries.

She retired from a career as an assistant deputy minister of health for Ontario and said she was eager to be able to offer her expertise on the ground in the refugee camps abroad.

Now, her efforts are mainly remote - she said she's able to continue assisting with the "important work" being done by the organization from home.

"I think Doctors Without Borders, to me, is the organization that goes further just to help others. And with their dollars, it leverages most in terms of talent. It takes the extraordinary healing capacity of our first world, and takes it to people beyond their reach, of helping other countries," Porter said.

MacNeill said he understands that everyone will be feeling some financial strain due to the pandemic

but asks that if you can afford to make a donation to please do so.

"The Rotary stands for service above self," he said, noting many of the club's members have donated their own money to help reach the goal.

And while some of the Rotary's focus is on international relief at the moment, he said local efforts are in the works as well.

"We are so fortunate to live in such a beautiful part

of the world," he said.

Anyone looking to donate can do so by writing a cheque payable to: NOTL Rotary Foundation with the notation "MSF COVID-19 Relief Fund."

Please put cheques into an envelope with NOTL Rotary on the outside and include your name and address on the outside of the envelope to ensure you will receive a tax receipt. All cheques can be dropped off at the Meridian Credit Union at 1567

Niagara Stone Rd.

Donations can also be made by e-transfer by adding a new recipient under the name The NOTL Rotary Foundation MSF COVID-19 Relief to donations@niagaraonthelakerotary.ca.

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On NOTL's front line: Erin Jarvis

Continued from Front Page

assessing people in person, but that even seeing people on video can be helpful in diagnosing patients.

"We're quite fortunate to have video conferencing. We have a number of modules that meet the personal health information protection act requirements," she says.

"We're sort of depending on them to a certain degree to kind of gauge the severity of the illness and sort of necessitate the conversation between you and them, whether or not they need to come into the office or not."

"We're trying to limit lab tests, imaging referrals to that that's emergent," she says. "Just to limit their contact with providers, other people. Not that these things aren't important, but we're having to kind of gauge what's emergent, what needs to be addressed now, what can we kind of defer until we're sort of back to more normal functioning. So that's challenging"

It's not easy to tell people something needs to be put on hold, she says.

"We can still get things done, it just warrants a more in-depth discussion about timelines, as far as getting it done."

She says patients have been "very understanding."

"They're trying to do the best they can, we're trying to do the best that we can, and they're very grateful. They're grateful to know that there is someone here if they have a question, not that they necessarily need to come in, but that they know that someone is there if an issue does crop up. And we just kind of work through it together."

Right now "everyone is concerned" about COVID-19.

"We're concerned, people in the community are concerned. I mean it seems like everyone is being very diligent, though, in following the social distancing rules. Local businesses have been quite good — I mean the pharmacies are delivering, doing curb-side pickups to minimize interactions, so I think people feel some sense of reassurance in do-

NOTL copes with COVID-19



Erin Jarvis is one of NOTL's three nurse practitioners.
RICHARD HARLEY

ing that," she says.

As far as advice she's giving, she says she's promoting the recommendations made by public health.

"Regardless of whether you're symptomatic or not to stay at home as much as possible, to only go out for the necessities" as infrequently as possible. "If you do need to go out, maintain your six-foot social distance between people. Hand washing, don't touch your face."

Like anyone, Jarvis has to get groceries, too.

"I'm confident that the measures we're taking will protect me. I mean you can't eliminate exposures completely, I still have to go to the grocery store and such, but I'm confident that adhering to all of these rules that I'm protected," she says.

"I think to have a heightened awareness is a good thing, not to the point of feeling overly stressed or anxious."

"Worrying about it excessively doesn't change things."

If we all take these steps and follow the rules that have been outlined for us, we should feel comfortable, she says. That's not to say people shouldn't be aware, but taking the measures is all we can do, she says.

But "if you're symptomatic, then we need to address

that."

The most heartbreaking thing she's seen through the pandemic so far hasn't been related to Niagara-on-the-Lake or her personal experience, but rather what's happening in other countries like the United States.

"To see what's going on in New York City, which is eight hours away from us here, I think it's awful. I mean, a developed country like that, to have them saying that they're going to be stopping the social distancing rules and going back to normal functioning because of concerns about the economy, I find upsetting. Definitely."

The most heartwarming thing, she said, is that in Niagara-on-the-Lake, people have really looked out for one another.

"I really feel in general outside of the pandemic situation that people really look out for one another in this community, and I mean that has just been enhanced since this happened," she says.

NOTL is predominately an older community, "so in the interest of them being able to maintain social distancing, neighbours, acquaintances, everybody just helps everybody else out, looks out for each other."

"I've always noticed that about Niagara-on-the-Lake, but definitely more so now,"

she said.

Right now COVID-19 screening is a part of just about every patient encounter, she says, whether it's screening or education about the virus.

"I guess you can assume that people are aware. It dominates the newspapers, news channels, radio. But if it's not brought up by a patient, we generally as providers would, just given what's going on," she says.

If there are any talks about the patient coming into the office, they ask about symptoms of COVID-19 first.

In a lot of ways, Jarvis is just like a doctor. She can make diagnosis, she can order and interpret diagnostic tests and prescribe medicine.

She's humble when asked about what she does, saying it's nothing out of the ordinary.

When she's not busy making sure the people of NOTL are safe and healthy, she said she loves cycling, hiking and being outside.

Like all of us, she's been isolated at home when she's not at work. She lives on her own, which is a "bit of a challenge," she says.

"You know what, though, with technology we're quite fortunate right now. Basically everyone has access to technology, so that helps."

She says she's been doing lots of video chats.

"I think it makes you stop and think about the importance of social contacts. It's easy to lose touch with people. I think now, even for myself, I stop and think, 'I should check in with someone today,'" she says.

As far as staying sane at home during all of this, she says a friend dropped off a Nintendo console for her.

"I beat Dr. Mario like two days into this on original Nintendo. So that kind of sucked, because now what am I going to do?" she jokes.

Overall, Jarvis is staying positive, is in good spirits and is doing what it takes to keep things rolling.

"Life has to go on, albeit differently than it was two months ago. But you have to kind of carry on in spite of it."



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We would like to thank everyone who has donated so far to the GoFundMe to help the paper, set up generously by Chef Ryan Crawford of Ruffino's and Backhouse.

So far there has been \$5,375 raised towards the \$30,000 goal.

We encourage anyone who can to make a donation to help us to meet this goal. All money raised goes directly towards printing and distribution costs for the paper, so we can continue to ensure NOTL's #1 newspaper reaches all members of our community during this pandemic, especially our seniors who are most at risk. Local news is more important than ever.

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The Lake Report



Pauline Reimer Gibson
Audiologist

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Council OKs \$1.5M for two major streetscape projects

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has approved spending about \$1.5 million for two streetscape enhancement projects on Niagara Stone Road in Virgil and on Glendale Avenue at York Road.

However, some councillors have raised concerns about spending money on the projects in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The plans are time-sensitive and the Region of Niagara and the province required the town's decision, interim chief administrative officer Sheldon Randall told councillors during a virtual council meeting last Tuesday.

One project, in collaboration with the region, involves streetscape improvements on Niagara Stone Road between Four Mile Creek Road and the Virgil urban boundary, northeast of Line 1 intersection. Construction is supposed to start in 2021.

The estimated cost is \$1.1 million and includes street lighting, sidewalks and decorative features. The cost would be debentured over several years.

The other project, to redesign the Glendale QEW interchange, is a collaboration among the town, Region of Niagara and the Ministry of Transportation. Town staff recommended council approve proposed road enhancements in the Glendale Avenue and York Road area.

The cost-sharing estimate, including street lighting, landscaping and irrigation enhancements, is projected



Town hall. FILE/DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

to be \$334,000 plus taxes. That cost also would be debentured over several years and won't impact the town's current capital budget program.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said Virgil has been neglected and it was a "legacy project" the town had "one shot at," while Coun. Clare Cameron said there's an opportunity to enhance an area that has been "underserved" for a long time.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero noted there will be financial assistance from the province as municipalities recover from the economic impact of the pandemic.

"We will have a good opportunity from the province should we need it with our budget. I also believe that these projects are so important to our town and the future of our town that if we have to debenture in order to pay for them, that's what we'll have to do," Disero said. "The region will help us look for grants from the province on both of these projects to see our way through ... I think we should be a little visionary at this point in terms of pushing this town forward with these projects."

Coun. Stuart McCormack noted it was the "worst timing" to bring the project

forward as the community is going through an "economic pandemic."

The economic problems after the pandemic could be "potentially greater than the Great Depression," he said. "Wonderful enhancements but the timing, in my opinion, could not be worse."

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said they were "lovely projects" but said she couldn't spend taxpayers' money and borrow funds for projects in the middle of the pandemic.

"These are conditions we've never known before. We have to be diligent to make decisions given the situation we're in right now," she said at the meeting. "Our recovery isn't going to happen in three years ... We have to make different decisions today than we would've made two months ago."

Under the Virgil project plan, the town would own and maintain sidewalks and decorative features like benches, litter receptacles, irrigation and plantings. The region would look after the street lights.

Annual maintenance would add about \$133,000 to the town's operating budget and require additional equipment at a cost of \$35,000, town staff reported.

The money for street lighting in the Glendale area could

come from raising the current annual street lighting base rate for all residents, while the costs for landscaping and irrigation enhancements could be derived from raising sections of the current park and recreation operating budget annually, according to a staff report.

Under that plan, the street lights that are now property of the town would be owned and maintained by the region, while irrigation and landscaping features will become town's assets.

"Working with the region to complete these enhancements in the Glendale area will create a visually enhanced streetscape, but will come at significant cost and increase in various budgets to finance the proposed debentures over several years," staff reported.

The town won't have to pay for the project until it is completed which is expected to be in December 2023.

McCormack said he didn't see the project as a "critical infrastructure item" and said he didn't like committing to interest payments the next council would have to pay for.

"It'd be very easy to push it over to the next council as being their problem, but I do find it problematic," McCormack said.

Councillors approved the Glendale project with three members – John Wiens, Cheropita and McCormack – opposed.

In a separate vote on the Virgil project, councillors vetoed a proposed illuminated steel arch estimated to cost \$150,000, but approved the rest of the enhancements included in the staff report.

The Niagggregator: Journalist launches NOTL podcast

David Israelson
Special to The Lake Report

Everyone has a story, and the Niagggregator wants to hear yours.

The Niagggregator is a new podcast that I hope will become essential listening for people in Niagara-on-the-Lake and nearby. The idea is to have a place where we can tell our own stories — the interesting and sometimes significant things people are doing, how we respond to events, what we like, what we'd like to change.

It's simple. If you have something you want to talk about, or just something to say, you can contact the Niagggregator and let me know. Just email niagggregator1@gmail.com or send a DM (direct message) to @niagggregator. I'll get back to you as fast as I can.

The Niagggregator will put our best stories into convenient podcast episodes, so everyone can share what's going on. You'll be able to listen to the Niagggregator and find out things you might not know about Canada's most beautiful town.

We'll also gather the stories and interviews from the Niagggregator podcast and share them on the niagggregator.com website — and with important news outlets like this one, The Lake Report.

Right now, of course, we're all part of one big story — trying to manage our way through a worldwide crisis.

Most of us are staying



home, self-isolating, keeping safe distances from our friends and neighbours. Others are bravely working on the front lines.

How is it for you? Are you going out of your skull or having fun? Taking up a new hobby? Fascinated with how weird your hair can get if you can't get it cut? Written and recorded a cool song? Working on your memoirs? Embraced spring cleaning or making art out of dust bunnies?

Or are you a volunteer or front-line worker? Maybe helping to deliver food and supplies, working in an essential store or the vineyards. Or maybe you're getting help from NOTL's kind, hard-working friends and neighbours.

Whatever you are doing with yourselves and your time right now, tell us! This is Canada's most beautiful town, but it's more than just a pretty place.

Let the podcasts begin! Stay tuned, and help make the Niagggregator the place where we talk to each other — and listen.

David Israelson, producer of the Niagggregator, is a writer, journalist and communications consultant based in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

NOTL Transit offers free delivery of essential items

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

NOTL's buses are not running but the transit system is being put to good use.

The Community Transport Group, which operates the transit system in Niagara-on-the-Lake, has restructured its service to offer free delivery of es-

essential items to all residents of NOTL.

The new service will be available while municipal transit services are suspended, Casey McNab, president of the transport group, said in a media statement.

The free service is in response to COVID-19's effect on the community, "and the urgent necessity

for residents to remain at home," McNab said.

Delivery will be available Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Orders picked up from any NOTL businesses need to be prepaid.

Delivery requests can be made by calling 905-468-4132 Monday to Friday

from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. of the following day. Requests for Monday need to be made by Friday at 4:30 p.m.

The Community Transport Group will process same-day requests based on availability.

"Please stay home and let us bring what you need to you," McNab said.

We want your thoughts on COVID-19
Take our quick survey at:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/notlCOVID
Participants can enter a draw for a dinner for two at Ruffino's Pasta Bar & Grill

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Shaw staff making masks and gowns

Some 30 wardrobe staff from the Shaw Festival are using their expertise to produce masks and gowns for health care workers.

With the festival suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Shaw workers are volunteering to help out front-line workers.

Shaw CEO Tim Jennings

lauded the staff for stepping up when the call went out for homemade personal protective equipment.

“We’ve ordered several thousand more yards of fabric to donate to the public health units and have already done 650 gowns for public health and Hospice Niagara,” Jennings said in an interview.

“And we also have masks going out as far as Hamilton and Burlington and also the Niagara Region.”

The costume workers are also producing a type of headband to help health care staff whose masks are chafing their skin.

“It’s one charity trying to support another,” Jennings said.

Mayor wants COVID statistics

Continued from Front Page

majority are from people from community spread, then we’ve got to work with the essential stores that are still open to try and find out a way to assist that better, because it’s spreading within the community somehow, right? So, just knowing how people are contracting this would be helpful to try to stop it, to stop the spread.

She said just knowing regional numbers doesn’t really let the town know how it

should be responding.

“Just knowing all over the region that 50 per cent is close contact, well what does that mean? It doesn’t mean community spread, it doesn’t mean returning from home. Does that mean within the long-term care facilities? Well, our three long-term care facilities seem to be OK at the moment, so it really leaves our hands tied in terms of trying to assist or put in mechanisms in the community that will help us to overcome this crisis.”

Disero said she’s been actively trying to get the numbers from the region and will try again at Thursday’s regional council meeting.

“Hopefully, at the region meeting on Thursday enough members of council will be able to convince the medical officer of health — because they act on their own, they’re not a political body — that the numbers are large enough now that the issue of privacy is no longer relevant, in terms of the potential to identify patients.”

Bottle drive cancelled, air cadets have drop-off

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

Bottle drive donations being accepted at a NOTL drop-off location are now the sole fundraising source for the Canadian Air Cadets 809 Squadron.

The donation bin, at J&S Performance at 901 East and West Line, accepts bottle drive donations all year long.

“The drop off has been working really well for us,” says Cory Abt, president of the 809 Air Cadet Squadron Sponsoring Committee.

“We’re pushing it right now because we’ve lost our (door-to-door) bottle drive which was a big tragedy for us,” Abt says.

As far as actual funds raised this year, the squadron is unsure of where things stand. “We have no idea where we are right now because we can’t even get them picked up,” Abt said.

The 809 squadron usually raises anywhere between \$5,000 and \$7,000 each year through the bottle drive.

“I would guess we are definitely going to be down for the year,” Abt says.

One of the two main bottle drives for the year was previously cancelled due to the weather. Another bottle drive planned this weekend in Virgil has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

“That was going to kind of make up for the loss



Parent volunteer Sue Lampman sorts Air Cadet bottle drive donations. JESSICA MAXWELL

earlier in the year and get us back on track,” Abt said. “We don’t normally do one in Virgil and we’ve always wanted to. This was going to be our first one.”

He is unsure whether the cadets will be able to hit their fundraising goal for this year. “Even with the drop-offs increasing, we won’t hit our targets for the year for sure.”

The drop-off trailer is not a new tool for the cadets’ fundraising. It was introduced years ago.

Scott Ruttan was the one who started the drive when he was on the sponsoring committee. His son Jeffrey is an 809 squadron alumnus.

Scott “is the one that had the vision at the very beginning to start this thing off and it has grown significantly from when he started it. That’s for darn sure,” Abt said. “If it wasn’t for his vision on that we would be doing something else entirely.”

Jeffrey said his dad was with the sponsoring committee at the time and said,

“Well, why don’t we do something a little bit different, and the bottle drive came up, seeing as there was never a bottle return location in Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

It turned out to be an excellent fundraiser. “The whole town has come together over the years and it’s just gotten bigger and bigger,” Jeffrey said.

It began as one-day drive and “the cadets would go around with parents in different vehicles and we had a drop-off location,” Jeffrey said.

“We’d have it in the newspapers in the week leading up to ‘put your bottles out on this day,’ and then pickup bottles right at the curb. Then everything would come back to the sorting location.”

Afterward the bottles would be taken to the beer store on Dieppe Road in St. Catharines to be sorted in the back warehouse and counted by the store’s staff.

Read the full story at
www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3796

Legal rentals following rules, says NOTL B&B president

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Even though the town has shut down short-term rentals due to COVID-19, there are continuing public concerns that some rentals are still operating illegally.

A post on a NOTL-focused Facebook group said a resident in Chautauqua is continuing to see short-term rentals operating.

“What is with all the cottage/Airbnbs still booking?! Quite a few new rentals, some have been and gone already! I just don’t get it, I want to get away too but clearly now is not the time!” said the post by Stephanie Tribe.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Bed and Breakfast Association president David Levesque said the majority of rental properties still taking bookings must be ones that were operating illegally (without a licence) before the COVID-19 restrictions.

“I know for a fact that all our members are in compliance,” Levesque said. “The



NOTL copes with COVID-19

NOTL’s Blue Chair Cottage is one of many short-term rentals still listed on Airbnb. SOURCED

few troublemakers seem to be the places that did not get the memos, therefore all the illegals.”

He encourages anyone who witnesses short-term rentals continuing to operate to report it to the town.

“I think the main message is to make people understand that just purely complaining about something is not going to solve the issue. Social media is just not the way to make things happen if you notice something that you consider is not following the emergency rules,” he said.

“Just report it to the town

because they are the entity that can do something about it.”

The B&B association sent out letters to all members telling them to comply with the town’s restrictions on rental operations and has modified the association website so nobody can even search for availability until May 13.

“At the moment we’re following the provincial declaration of emergency guidelines in terms of dates,” Levesque said.

Read the full story at
www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3792

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