

PTSD dogs lend helping paws

Story on Page 20



Volunteers train seven golden retrievers for The Valhalla Project Niagara, set to launch in March, that will help veterans and first responders deal with the post-traumatic stress disorder. **More photos at niagaranow.com** DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Reduction in services? **Rubbish**

Garbage pickup changes don't mean less garbage collected, says region

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake councillors agree more education is needed about garbage collection changes to dispel a common perception that the services are being reduced.

Catherine Habermehl, director of waste management for the Region of Niagara, outlined for town council's committee of the whole meeting Monday how the new system will work.

"It is still the same volume material. It's just a different way of being collected," she said.

The new every-other-week waste collection service, starting on Oct. 19, was approved by Niagara Region



Lord Mayor Betty Disero says the region and Niagara-on-the-Lake are still going to collect the 'smelly' portion of the garbage weekly. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

in October 2019.

The region is switching to biweekly collection to increase waste diversion, as 50 per cent of what residents put in their garbage bag is

organic material that should have been placed in their green bin, Habermehl said.

A typical garbage bag picked up in Niagara is comprised of 36 per cent garbage

and 14 per cent recyclable material. Only 48 per cent of low-density residential households use green bins in

Continued on Page 2



This week Dr. William Brown talks about sex and seniors. SOURCED

It's true, seniors can enjoy sex and love late in life

Story on Page 8



A coyote carcass near Brown's Point plaque on Niagara River Parkway. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Ministry investigating dumping of coyote carcasses

Story on Page 9



College president Dan Patterson and Canopy's vice-president Jeff Ryan. SUPPLIED

Niagara College partners with Canopy Growth again

Story on Page 2



**Peninsula
Flooring Ltd.**

13 Henegan Road
Virgil Business Park

(905)-468-2135
www.peninsulaflooring.ca

**DESIGN
SHOWROOM**

Wood • Luxury Vinyl
Carpet • Tile

*From Top Designer
Names and Brands*

 Serving Niagara Since 1977
PHARMASAVE Canada's most affordable pharmacy
Age has its privileges!
20%* off for those over 60
TWICE a month third Wednesday AND last Thursday.
*Regular-priced merchandise only. Excludes prescriptions, Philips Sonicare & Muse products, special orders, lottery, transit passes and codeine products. Applicable to 60 and over.

Pharmacy: 1882 Niagara Stone Rd | Virgill | 905.468.2121
Apothecary: 233 King St | Niagara-on-the-Lake | 905.468.8400
www.simpsonspharmacy.ca | Free Delivery From Both Locations

Garbage pickup changes aim to increase use of green bin

Continued from Front Page

Niagara, she said.

If the region's diversion rate is increased by at least one per cent, that means 2,000 fewer metric tonnes of waste per year will end up in a landfill, Habermehl told councillors.

By switching to biweekly collection, the region hopes it will be able to hit its target goal of a 65 per cent of diversion rate.

Habermehl said the "yuck factor" might be a reason residents often don't use green bins because they may not want to touch the organic material and it is convenient for them to throw everything in one bag rather than sorting the waste.

"Without a policy change, you're not going to get that behavioural change," she said.

The new service was also introduced based on best practices among other municipalities and to cut costs on annual contracts, Habermehl said.

She stressed the new collection is not a reduction in services as the volume of collected garbage will remain the same. Residents will still be able to purchase additional garbage tags if required.

Garbage will be picked up by two waste collection companies: Miller Waste

Systems Inc. and GFL Environmental Inc. The region currently has a contract with Emterra Environmental.

Recycling and organics will still be collected every week. Leaf and yard waste will be picked up weekly, branches eight weeks per year and Christmas trees every year.

Curbside collection of large appliances and scrap metals will require advance arrangements and will be limited to a maximum of four items per household per collection.

Diapers remain a concern for many families. People with medical conditions, a licensed home day care, or households with two or more children under the age of four currently qualify for an exemption allowing one extra bag.

When biweekly collection starts, residents who are eligible for an exemption will be able to put out two clear bags of diapers every week, with no other garbage inside. In order to receive this service, residents are encouraged to register with the region.

The region will also look at making an amendment to the contract to allow residents to put out diapers regardless of how many children they have.

The facility at Walker Environmental, which processes green bin waste as part of



Catherine Habermehl, director of waste management for the Region of Niagara, explains how the new garbage collection service will be delivered. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

its contract with the region, doesn't have the technology to accept diapers in the green bin. Other municipalities, like Toronto, do permit diapers in the green bin.

Industrial, commercial and institutional businesses, outside of downtown business areas, will be able to put out eight containers, bags or cans, with no garbage tags, every two weeks.

The current contract with Emterra is "very low-cost," Habermehl said, and the new contract pricing has increased due to higher labour, insurance, fuel, vehicle and technology costs.

The town's interim chief administrative officer, Sheldon Randall said, in

his opinion, the region's last contract was "extremely underbid."

"When you underbid a contract, you will inevitably have performance problems throughout the life of that contract," he told councillors.

"It's obvious (Emterra has) a real challenge staffing their trucks for collection and ... likely now the employees that are going to be paid to operate these trucks are going to be paid a better living wage than what the current contractor provided their employees."

The region's next steps are to inform area residents of the changes and to launch a new web and mobile ap-

plication that will send collection day reminders and notifications for any service interruptions.

Councillors in Niagara Falls have been vocal about opposing the collection change. If that city opts out from the program, the costs could go up for the remaining regional municipalities, Habermehl added.

Coun. Allan Bisback said he was "concerned" about the perception that the service is being reduced while the costs are going up.

"That's a communication challenge ... That's what I get when I talk to residents. They don't understand."

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said there was "no ques-

tion" there will have to be communication with the residents that will focus on the environmental benefits of the new collection service.

"When people talk about a reduction in service, we have to remind them that most people think garbage is the smelly garbage ... What they really want to get rid of is smelly diapers, the wet waste, the bones, the vegetables. And the region and Niagara-on-the-Lake are still going to collect that portion of the garbage weekly," she said.

"So, really, all we're reducing is some packaging that is not eligible for recycling."

Niagara College, Canopy partner in joint vineyard venture

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

A new partnership between Canopy Growth and Niagara College will see the school take over operation of the former Coyote's Run vineyard for at least the next 10 years.

And the lease arrangement will only cost the college \$10 a year.

The Concession 5 vineyard next to Canopy Growth's Niagara-on-the-Lake Tweed Farms greenhouse will be maintained and operated by the college's Learning Enterprises Corporation.

Canopy purchased the

land from Coyote's Run Estate Winery in May 2019 for almost \$10 million. Two lots of land were purchased at that time — the larger lot of just under 60 acres which was purchased for \$9.1 million will be leased to the college. Canopy Growth will retain the smaller five-acre lot which was purchased for just under \$900,000.

When the company bought the vineyard officials said they intended to find an "experienced grape grower" to maintain the vineyard sustainably, a statement from the college said.

"(Canopy Growth) found a trusted partner in Niagara College, which has been a

leader in wine education for 20 years," the statement said.

Niagara College boasts the first and only commercial teaching winery in Canada and is committed to maintaining an environmentally and socially sustainable vineyard.

The school also operates the first commercial cannabis production program in the country.

Steve Gill, general manager of the college's learning enterprise, called the partnership a win-win.

"Our wine students gain experience at a second Niagara vineyard, Canopy benefits from our dedication to minimizing impact on its

greenhouse operations, and Niagara-on-the-Lake residents gain good neighbours through our commitment to maintaining the vineyards with sustainable farming practices," Gill said in the statement.

College president Dan Patterson said grape growing and wine production is integral to Niagara's economy.

"We applaud Canopy Growth's decision to preserve the vineyards on this Niagara-on-the-Lake property," Patterson said.

"We are proud to be a part of this historic new partnership that bridges Niagara's established wine industry



Coyote's Run Estate Winery was sold to Canopy Growth last May. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

with its emerging cannabis production industry, and we're dedicated to applying our expertise in a manner that will benefit our students and the community."

The new location will serve as a secondary production space for the teaching winery, where students

will be exposed to different terrain and grape varieties than at the college's on-campus vineyard.

The land at the newly-leased vineyard is situated in the sub-appellation of Four Mile Creek — a variance from the college's St. Davids Bench location.

 **Love AT FIRST DIP**
Pre-order your freshly dipped strawberries. 

1822 NIAGARA STONE RD, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE 905-468-3224 · 1179 FOURTH AVE, ST. CATHARINES 905-641-1666 · harvestbarn.ca

Town considers merging Queenston and St. Davids fire halls, yet again

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report



The Queenston fire hall was built around 1977. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA/FILE PHOTO

The future of the Queenston fire hall will be reviewed by Niagara-on-the-Lake's town staff who will investigate if combining the St. Davids and Queenston fire stations is a viable idea.

NOTL council approved a town staff report on the Queenston station at the committee of the whole general meeting Monday. A formal decision has still to be made at the next council meeting on Feb. 24.

Some of the other recommendations in the report included investigating potential locations and developing a funding strategy for a new consolidated fire station and analyzing the St. Davids facility and its operations.

Amalgamation of two fire halls has been in discussion since at least 1971, the report says. At the time, there were also two reports from the Office of the Fire Marshal recommending amalgamating Station 2 in St. Davids and Station 4 in Queenston.

One of the earlier reports, prepared presumably by a fire chief sometime in the 1970s, also suggested firefighters would resign "en masse" if amalgamation was forced onto them.

During Monday's meeting, Coun. Allan Bisback asked the town's fire chief Nick Ruller for his take on it.

Ruller said there was a meeting held for about 40 firefighters from all five stations on Sunday where they had an opportunity to ask questions about the report.

"There is definitely an emotional attachment that comes from our members. They're members of the community, they invested a lot into the organization," Ruller said.

"I think the membership is understanding of the information ... Overall, I'm definitely not seeing that type of concern amongst our members."

The 5,200-square-foot fire hall in Queenston was built around 1977.

It fails to meet current standards in regard to health and safety and doesn't have enough space to operate effectively.

The station doesn't have a separate bunker gear stor-

age room, a direct capture diesel exhaust removal system, an office for the district chief, a shower and a change room for female firefighters, a decontamination room, fitness area, janitorial room and automated backup power, town staff said in the report.

The demand for service within District 4 (Queenston) has remained relatively consistent, according to the report. Over the past 15 years, Queenston personnel have been dispatched to incidents across the town on an average of 128 times each year.

In 2019, the station's resources were dispatched 58 times in total, representing a 55 per cent decrease in demand compared to the 15-year average.

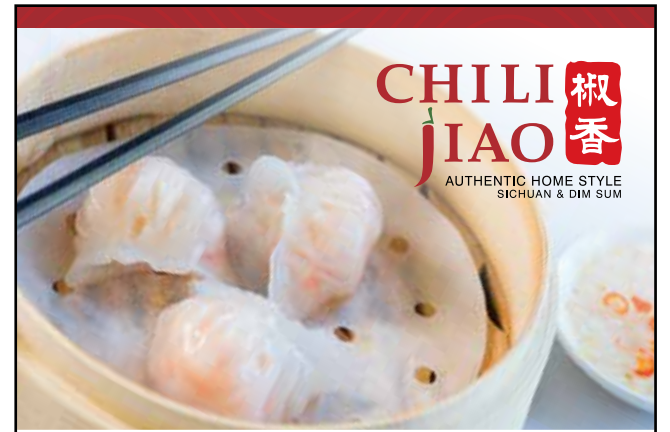
"Although Station 4 resources have seen a decline in their utilization on initial

responses, the firefighters and apparatus prove valuable to provide coverage and surge capacity for the municipality during a large-scale incident," staff reported.

The 2017 building condition assessment of Queenston's fire hall, prepared by WalterFedy architecture and engineering firm, estimated the station would require \$572,100 in total up until 2046 for repair and maintenance costs.

The town's fire and emergency services department presented two options to council: to adopt the report as recommended or to receive the report as information only.

Town staff recommended choosing the first option as it would allow council to make an "informed decision" in the future regarding the Queenston fire station.



CHILI JIAO
AUTHENTIC HOME STYLE
SICHUAN & DIM SUM

Craving Chinese, but want to stay in?

Try Chili Jiao's takeout or delivery.

You will love our authentic fresh flavours and quality ingredients!

Combo for 2 starting at
\$35.99

Combo for 4 starting at
\$59.99

Combo for 6 starting at
\$89.99

Free delivery with minimum \$35 order.

Authentic Sichuan & Dim Sum | North American Classics Menu | Signature Dishes
chilijiao.com | 905-468-6114 | 271 Mary Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON

St. David's VETERINARY CLINIC | stdavidsvetclinic.com

February Promo - **25% off!**
Comprehensive bloodwork, thyroid testing and urinalysis

House-calls available | 905.262.8777

the IRISH HARP pub

MUSIC TRIVIA

MONDAY NIGHTS @ 7PM

- FREE TO PLAY
- TEAMS UP TO 6
- PRIZES FOR TOP 3 TEAMS
- RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED

NIAGARA'S NAME THAT TUNE LIVE WITH LEE

THEIRISHHARPPUB.COM/ENTERTAINMENT

TIDBITS

Town approves \$45K for site work at Cannery Park

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake approved an additional \$45,000 to complete site works at Cannery Park. The decision will not impact taxpayers as the project will be fully funded through development charges. The decision still needs formal approval at the Feb. 24 council meeting.

Prohibited parking on Line 3 Road is possibility

If formally approved by council on Feb. 24, there will be prohibited parking on Line 3 Road, starting at an intersection at Line 3 Road and Concession 6 Road, and ending 600 metres east down Line 3 Road. Town staff recommended restricting parking in order to relieve congestion and improve safety for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.



The
GATE HOUSE
KITCHEN & CAFÉ
905.357.2038 | 142 Queen Street | Niagara-on-the-Lake
THEGATEHOUSE.CA

WINTER MARKET MENU

BY TREADWELL

Two Courses | \$25
Three Courses | \$30





TLR

Editor-In-Chief: Richard Harley
Managing Editor: Kevin MacLean
Publisher: Niagara Now
Design & Layout: Richard Harley
Advertising: Rob Lamond
Staff: Brittany Carter, Dariya Baiguzhiyeva, Jill Troyer, Tim Taylor, Eunice Tang
Contributors: Denise Ascenzo, Linda Fritz, Ross Robinson, Brian Marshall, Tim Carroll, Susan Des Islets, NOTL Writers' Circle, Jim Smith, Jaclyn Wilms, Collin Gooddine, Plunger Patrol, and many more members of the local community



Contributed by Norm Arsenault:

Modern household cleaning products are expensive, and often damaging to the environment, so a great green alternative is to make some yourself. Safe and environmentally-friendly substitutes use ingredients such as baking soda, soap flakes, lemon, cornstarch and vinegar. It's quick to find recipes for them on the internet;



Contributed by Patty Garriock

To all the days, now and hereafter, may there be happiness, memories and laughter.

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Email:

Letters: editor@niagaranow.com
 Story Ideas: editor@niagaranow.com
 Advertising: advertising@niagaranow.com

Phone

Newsroom: 905-359-2270
 Advertising Department: 905-246-4671

Office Address

496 Mississagua St., NOTL, Ontario, Canada.

Mailing Address

PO Box 724, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S1J0

Have a lead on a story?

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

Interest in advertising?

Call 905.246.4671 or send an email to advertising@niagaranow.com

Editorial

Same stuff, different way

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Organic garbage is wet, gross, smelly, it can ooze, attract unwanted rodents, make a mess – you get the picture.

But that is precisely why it needs to go in your green bin, not your green garbage bag.

So, let's dial back the sky is falling hysteria and hype over the Region of Niagara's plan to introduce more residents to their green bins – the three-foot tall plastic container that fewer than half your neighbours use to get rid of their wet, gross, smelly organics.

Yes, the region is indulging in a bit of social engineering here – forcing us to only put out garbage bags every second week starting this October, while at the same time directing us to start using the green bin for all the organics.

And that messy stuff will be picked up every week. No change in that – you just have to put it into a compostable bag that goes into a solid plastic

container instead of into a thin plastic bag. Seems like a no-brainer. Same stuff, different way.

The knee-jerk reaction in many quarters since the region announced this change last fall is we'll have all sorts of problems (illegal dumping, smelly trash, etc.) because there is an assumption that people won't comply.

Maybe. But we hope that is not the case. We hope we're collectively better than that.

What is being asked is not difficult, it just requires a commitment to do what is best for our environment. And, in some cases, it requires a wee bit of effort and forethought. Hey, at one time none of us use blue bins, but look at us now.

Before you jump on the noisy bandwagon that this is all bad, please stop and think about what actually is being asked of us. It is not too onerous.

"What about the diapers?" Yes, that is a problem. But the region is working on viable solutions.

"But we're paying more and getting less service!" Well, costs do go up,

and as many folks across Niagara discovered with the region's current, low-ball trash contract with Emterra, maybe low-bidders are not always the wisest choice.

"But we're getting less service!" Um, not really. Though that could be true if people do not adapt and insist on putting all that wet, gross, smelly stuff into their green bags instead of their green bins. And maybe there will be hiccups, perhaps trucks will fill up sooner than expected, chances are the new system won't be perfect from the get-go.

However, it will be a far sight more responsible than what we've been doing thus far. The problems will get fixed and we will no longer have to be embarrassed by our region's historically low trash diversion rates.

Rather than railing and wailing about how wrong this movement is, let's see if we can make it work. We look forward to the day when green bins are out front of every home on every street every "garbage" day.

editor@niagaranow.com



Kudos for not abiding by town's PR restrictions

Dear editor:

It was both disturbing and heartening to read Richard Harley's Feb. 6 editorial "Journalists don't answer to public relations depts."

In the editorial an email from the Town of NOTL's communication department was reprinted requesting that all media inquiries regarding the town go through the author of the email and that journalists refrain from speaking directly to staff and Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

While Harley gives the PR person the benefit of the doubt, saying the "intent might seem friendly," I don't share his confidence.

One of the prime roles of journalism in a free society is to hold people in power accountable for their actions. To do this, journalists must be free to speak to sources directly and dig deep to uncover the facts behind a story.

The email from NOTL's PR person is directly opposed to this. In essence they are wanting to be a filter who decides who a journalist can speak to, what information they receive and when.

I have no doubt journalists can be perceived by those with power as a nuisance who need to be managed. And, frankly, journalists don't always get it right. But what's the alternative? A society where press releases, misinformation, and spin dominate the news media?

While some may argue we are already there, it is the approach taken by The Lake Report and other responsible journalists that give me hope.

Kudos to Richard Harley for reprinting the email and stating in no uncertain terms The Lake Report's journalists will continue to directly contact politicians and town officials when they feel it is necessary.

That is what citizens expect from journalists and I refuse to waste my time reading a newspaper that does not follow this principle.

Stewart Hall
 NOTL



Ginger
 RESTAURANT

Winter Hours: Wednesday to Sunday
 5pm - 9pm
 Tel: (905) 468-3871
 390 Mary Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Serving Fresh Asian-Fusion Cuisine In a Cozy Atmosphere

OPINION

Dr. Brown: Sex and seniors

Physicians are often uncomfortable about discussing sexuality with older patients



Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

Three years ago, I wrote a column about sex and the elderly as a promo for an upcoming Infohealth session. We struggled to find a suitable headline and finally settled on “Sex and aging,” with sex leading off and aging in a supporting role.

The reason is simple: sex isn’t simply a matter of hormones, mechanics, infirmity and age. Maybe, but you wouldn’t know that from prestigious medical journals such as the New England Journal of Medicine and the Lancet, which have had nothing much to say about sex and aging for the last 20 years.

That speaks to me about the uneasiness journal editors and physicians might have discussing the subject both in print and moreso, face to face in the office. And when patients do, it’s often with an endocrinologist, gynecologist or urologist, most of whom are more concerned with chemistry and plumbing than the actual business of making love.

By contrast there’s no shortage of sex therapists out there, which tells us that the public wants help but can’t find it with their regular physicians – often too embarrassing for patient and physician alike.

One or two clicks away on the internet and we’re almost as well-informed on the subject, as most physicians dare to go even with mainline health care groups such as the Mayo and Cleveland clinics.

Those sites cover hormonal changes such as estrogen and testosterone deficiencies associated with aging, the pros and cons of doing something about them and advice on the effects and potential risk-adverse



side effects of drugs such as Cialis and Viagra for men, as well as long lists of medications that might get in the way.

Those websites are far outweighed by other sites and TV ads, which offer this or that “natural boosters,” including testosterone-boosting agents and other “natural” compounds to help performance, the main target being male consumers worried about impotence.

But as much as the mechanics of sex, hormonal therapies and other health aids may be important, there’s much more at stake. Sex may not be the be all and end all for some, but for many in later life, it’s still important, and the importance goes well beyond the act.

Sex can be one of the most intimate and satisfying activities we engage in. It’s hard to find a play or novel where sex, in some fashion doesn’t play an important role. And the sex needn’t be overt – just watch the BBC series “Pride and Prejudice” and you’ll see my point – it’s all about gestures and facial expressions and flirting.

A great deal of our body’s machinery, including our brain, was invested by evolution with ensuring that sex was compelling and rewarding. Richard Dawkins, the famous Oxford evolutionary biologist, in his book, “The Selfish Gene” suggested that it was all about passing on our genes.

Maybe he was right from the perspective of evolution but I’m sure he would be the first to agree that sex is so much more than genes (see

Richard Prum’s 2017 book, “The Evolution of Beauty: How Darwin’s Forgotten Theory of Mate Choice Shapes the Animal World”).

The 1960s and ‘70s were the era of Masters and Johnson and their bestseller, “The Human Sexual Response.” Two students in the class ahead of me in medical school went on to specialize in sex counselling – one a gynecologist, the other an obstetrician, and together they launched sex therapy in London, Ont.

However, their audience was made up mostly of the young and middle-aged, with a nod to anyone much older than 60, beyond which in those days was the great hush, “They don’t really do it, do they – at their age?”

Well, many do and for the most part enjoy it. So, there! Sex is not only common, but enjoyable, perhaps not with the same rabbit-like lust and athleticism of youngsters, but with a little creativity, lots of patience, tenderness and humour, just as much, or more, fun.

There’s no denying there are hurdles to sex and, for that matter, almost every activity as we grow older. No surprise here. We’re not nearly as limber as we were, and cramps act up at the most inconvenient times.

And, of course, there is the usual litany of hurdles such as erectile dysfunction, dryness where there used to be plenty of lubrication, and other stumbling blocks such as vascular disease, diabetes, and especially low back pain, to name some of the more common challenges.

Let’s face it, sex isn’t the hurried athletic performance it once was – but then again, thank goodness. It all comes down to common sense, dealing with whatever impediments there might be, accepting those limitations we can’t change, patience, plenty of creativity and humour. If you can’t laugh with someone or at yourself, you’re in trouble at any age – but especially in the later years of life.

And what about love? No surprise, love works hand in hand with sex; satisfying sex is one of love’s rewards and by its very nature, love encourages partners to meet the needs of their partner, not simply themselves.

And satisfying the needs of someone else where sex is concerned varies from showing thoughtfulness, and warmth, to embracing and cuddling and sometimes more. Of course, sex can be enjoyed without love, but it’s so much better combined with the gift of love.

That’s why one of the reasons we enjoy TV series such as “The Last Tango in Halifax”, “As Time Goes By” (Lionel gets all the best lines where sex is concerned), and “Downton Abbey.” Each portrays sex in later life and, by and large, the jury is in – sex is fun at any age.

Enjoy Valentine’s Day. 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.

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH YOUR RETURNS?
8.8%* Since Inception
TFS, RESP, RRSP & RRIF Eligible

Portland Private Income Fund
Private Debt
Best 5 Year Sharpe Ratio
1st Place**

Portland Private Income Fund
Private Debt
Best 5 Year Return
1st Place**

Portland Private Income Fund
Investing Primarily in Private Debt Securities

- CAPITAL PRESERVATION
- REDUCED MARKET RISK
- INCOME
- ACCESS

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FUND CALL: 905-708-8111
OR EMAIL: BMATTERN@MANDEVILLEPC.COM

*Inception Date January 7, 2013, Annualized returns on Series F as at November 30, 2019
**The awards are based solely on quantitative performance data of 207 Canadian hedge funds to June 30th, 2018 with Funddata Canada managing the collection and tabulation of the data to determine the winners. There is no nomination process or subjective assessment in identifying the winning hedge funds. The Sharpe ratio is a measure for calculating risk-adjusted returns. The Sharpe ratio is the portfolio return in excess of the risk-free rate divided by the volatility of the portfolio.
Brought to you in part by PORTLAND INVESTMENT COUNSEL
The Fund is only available to certain investors who meet eligibility or minimum purchase requirements such as “accredited investors”. Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses all may be associated with investments. The Fund is not guaranteed, its value changes frequently and past performance may not be repeated. The Fund is not publicly offered. A redemption fee of 3% within 18 months and 2% within 19 to 36 months applies. Mandeville Private Client Inc. is a Member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada and a Member of the Canadian Investor Protection Fund. Mandeville Private Client Inc. is a registered trademark of Portland Holdings Inc. and used under license by Mandeville Private Client Inc. PORTLAND, PORTLAND INVESTMENT COUNSEL and the Clock Tower design are registered trademarks of Portland Holdings Inc. Used under license by Portland Investment Counsel Inc.

Hear Better Niagara

100% Independent

Payment Plans Available

Niagara-on-the-Lake
1630 Niagara Stone Rd.
905-468-4999

Call us today to book your complimentary hearing test

NIAGARA AIRBUS
DRIVERS/GUIDES WANTED

Niagara Airbus is looking for drivers and guides, French English and German speaking. Hourly wage plus gratuities. Late model fleet. We require 2 weekends per month, clean driving record, 9 or more years experience with a G-class; drivers require class-F licence and USA police clearance.

Send résumé to kellys@niagaraairbus.com

BROCK BUILDERS INC. CUSTOM HOME BUILDERS + RENOVATORS

Mark Holmes 905 262 0895 BrockBuilders.ca
Niagara-on-the-Lake



The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation. Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated. Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published. Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 724 Mississauga St., NOTL.

The Lake Report

Pensions and salaries **can't** keep up with taxes and rising costs



Dear editor:

Last month we received a pension increase from the federal government.

Thank you.

But due to the CRTC's do-nothing policy, Rogers was able to increase its internet access rate to us by over 128 per cent of the pension increase.

Rogers did this by eliminating a long-standing discount we had been receiving, Rogers also has cut costs by only using frontline representatives and eliminating its client loyalty/retention department.

Rogers was not concerned that we seek other providers, such as Bell, which, when contacted, advised that its system indicates Bell does not service our area, notwithstanding our next-door neighbour uses Bell for their internet. Bell was to have someone call back in 24 to 48 hours but that expired more than two days ago. Is Bell not calling back because it has an agreement with Rogers?

By the way, Bell also eliminated our neighbour's internet discount. I surmise price-fixing does not exist, just as it does not with gasoline.

Our local government wants to collect 8 per cent more

tax. I am guessing that will in itself also significantly exceed the pension increase. While government is also cutting back on our waste disposal service, spending monies on suits i.e. the Rand Estate (notwithstanding the design revision of what looks like a nice structure), and who knows what else.

Food costs are soaring, quality and choice reducing, staff being laid off, including the seniors who must work to survive (employment insurance costs increase / need more taxes to compensate) due to self-checkout and other greed tactics.

Is this because we now have higher minimum wages? Well, those increases and more are gone.

Stores hire many people part-time to avoid paying benefits, but one cannot live on part-time wages or no job. The government should require the hiring of full-time employees when there are multiple part-time positions and also force these large companies to provide re-employment assistance.

Who is going to buy food when there are no jobs?

William Hargreaves
NOTL

Council caved to tourism interest in passing 'political' budget

Dear editor:

In my Jan. 9 letter to the editor, ("On budget, councillors need to think like owners"), I wrote the following with respect to the upcoming budget review and subsequent approval: There are two types of budgets: The business budget (owners and stakeholders) and political budgets. Which one are we getting?

Now we know the answer: We are getting, as is typical with politicians, The Political Budget – aka The Tourist Budget.

Our lord mayor and council once again bowed to and were beaten into submission by the demands and outright threats of the tourism industry interests.

At Lord Mayor Betty Disero's first coffee meeting, in St. Andrew's Kirk Hall, it was reported that a representative of the B&B community threatened "legal class action" if the town did not back down from pending plans that would increase B&B operating costs.

Clearly a class act by these self-interested owners and a transparent attempt to leverage the town, knowing there had already been much negative media coverage over our legal cost issues.

It is patently clear by ignoring the hundreds of concerns and constructive criticism debated during the budget process, aka, "we want to be transparent campaign," they once again have proven to be tone deaf to the residents' wishes.

That is, until the next re-election dog-and-pony show when they want our votes.

The residents of Glendale, St. Davids, Virgil and anyone

living outside the Queen Street and closed corridor known as Old Town in reality do not figure into any budget deliberations. As I said, it is a political / tourism budget.

Accordingly, by the actions of a few, a big portion of the increased revenue stream has blown up in their faces.

Name and shame: In recent weeks it has been reported that we have upward of 90-plus illegal rentals in town. Clearly this presents the town and the legal B&B owners, who apparently know the names and addresses of the offenders, the opportunity to name and shame these bad actors.

Some Niagara regional media already publish the names of pending drunk-driving cases. Perhaps if we publish the offending cottage or B&B owners' names it may well draw the attention of the Canada Revenue Agency.

If they are not paying licensing or other fees, are they declaring their rental income for tax purposes?

Finally, also on the subject of rentals. It appears that a home can be sold and suddenly pop up as a rental without the neighbour being advised of such a change in usage. No lawns signs, nothing. All of a sudden just another noisy rental next door on an otherwise quiet residential street.

It has happened several times in my immediate area, plus one of the worst noise and foul language offenders is an absentee, rental landlord.

Council should review our bylaws. Better still, freeze the rentals at the current level and review the situation every two years.

Samuel Young
NOTL

Remember who **pays** teacher salaries and benefits

Dear editor:

Many articles have been published in various papers and reported on various broadcasts, but all have failed to mention and remind the public about the true source of the money paid to the various teaching groups that are holding rotating strikes.

The taxpayers of Ontario pay their salaries and benefits. The various elected Ontario provincial governments just forward the funds!

The teachers are ticking off the customer – the taxpayer.

Gordon Ray
NOTL

NOTL council continues **poor** financial planning

Dear editor:

The escalating cost of the proposed new St. Davids pool has been making headlines of late and now a fundraising campaign is planned – but no one volunteered to join that campaign.

Where are all the people from St. Davids who at one time made presentations to council to have a pool built in their part of town?

When I was on council, we did a survey back in the late 1990s about replacing the St. Davids pool, and found many of the users did not live in NOTL, but were from Stamford.

Why did Coun. Clare Cameron, who is from St. Davids, not put her name forward for this committee?

Council as of late has been beating up a lot of the local business people, like St. David's Cold Storage and developer Rainer Hummel (who responded with a lawsuit), so perhaps it's not surprising that none of them are stepping forward either.

Can Lord Mayor Betty Disero and council afford to move ahead with the St. Davids pool and put the municipality further in debt by a few million more dollars if those that want the pool aren't willing to be the primary fundraisers?

For those of us who have been in NOTL longer than most of council we remember when the users of a facility were the ones that raised all of the funds, such as the hockey associations with the two arenas, the arts community for the Pumphouse, etc.

This lord mayor and council are spending like there is no tomorrow.

By emptying reserves, deferring infrastructure, building debt, giving away grants and fighting everything in the courts or the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, they are financially crippling a town that once had the best infrastructure, the highest reserves and the lowest debt in the entire Niagara Region.

Jamie Slingerland
NOTL



Pauline Reimer Gibson
Audiologist

Pauline Reimer Gibson is an Audiologist with over 20 years of experience who loves helping people of all ages in the community. Julia Dick is the Front Office Coordinator and a longtime resident of Virgil. Call Julia today to book a complimentary hearing test.

Book a complimentary hearing test today at 905.468.9176

504 Line 2 Road, Virgil ON

A global leader in hearing healthcare.

amplifon



Flooding is coming this spring and we are **running out of time** to prevent it

The following letter has been sent by United Shoreline Ontario to mayors, MPs, MPPs and other political leaders. A copy was submitted to The Lake Report.

Dear editor:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is urging people to prepare for Lake Ontario 2020 water levels “at or above the 2019 water levels.”

Water levels were kept high in Lake Ontario from June through to Dec. 31, 2019 to “protect the safety of shipping” (Plan 2014 L-Limit + 200 cubic metres per second).

It was not until January 2020 that the International Joint Commission opened the Moses-Saunders Dam near Cornwall intermittently to allow outflow of 10,400 cubic metres per second, but it was too late.

The L-Limit and the F-Limits of Plan 2014 disproportionately transferred the injury and the risk to the shoreline, and now shoreline residents find their safety and their homes threatened.

In Ontario, the local government is the first level of response for emergency management in flooding, including prevention and preparedness.

However, the local government can vote not to help, leaving homeowners to their own devices to ward off a large-scale flood.

The provincial and federal governments have not transferred emergency funds to the local level to prepare, nor has a pre-emptive, landscape-level flood mitigation plan been implemented.

United Shoreline Ontario launched a Social Vulnerability Survey to take a snapshot of who lives on the shoreline. This data can be filtered by postal code, if requested. A summary of the first 540 responses received from around Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River upstream of the dam is available online.

We also have a video that looks at these same early results and makes a public pleading for urgent and broad government action in flood preparedness and prevention. Governments must take social vulnerability into consideration when implementing policy.

United Shoreline Ontario is requesting that all shoreline MPs and MPPs turn their attention toward advocating for emergency preparedness on behalf of their constituents.

We are asking that the federal and provincial government fund a comprehensive shoreline emergency management strategy for the anticipated 2020 floods.

The shoreline is socially vulnerable and the shoreline cannot be left alone to ward off widespread flooding and erosion.

We know this is coming. We are running out of time and a proactive, co-ordinated approach is the best chance of averting catastrophic damages and even death.

Your constituents would welcome your immediate attention to this matter.

Sarah Delicate
President
United Shoreline Ontario

Tourist shuttle is a great idea. We suggested it **30 years ago**

Dear editor:

Thirty years ago, the town council of that time asked for volunteers who would be interested in forming a committee to look into facilitating public tourist parking.

On this committee was Dr. Ed Lemon (a brilliant man, who was snubbed by the then-council), Bob House (a town councillor who was responsible for building the sidewalk to Virgil), Blanche Quinn (who has lived here forever), Dick Davis (who had lived here for many years) and myself (having spent a few years past in town). There were two others, but my memory evades me, sorry.

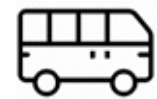
Blanch, Dick and I quietly formed a subgroup, with the result that there were two reports.

The three of us suggested that the town-owned property (where now stands the library) at the edge of town be used for parking with a shuttle service to bring tourists to the main street.

And here we are, 30 years later, still trying to find the solution. In The Lake Report on Feb. 6, (“Old Town parking a problem, councillors agree, but there’s no quick and easy fix, so far”), Couns. Wendy Cheropita and Alan Bisback both mentioned the same idea of a shuttle.

Good luck to our great council with the decision.

Caroline Rigby
NOTL



Marotta lawyer paints his client as a **victim** when he’s the one suing

Dear editor:

I write with respect to the letter to the editor in the Feb. 6 edition of The Lake Report from Michael Melling, one of the lawyers for Two Sisters, Solmar and Benny Marotta.

Let me first say that I doubt I am the only one who finds it peculiar in the extreme for Mr. Marotta’s lawyer to be acting as a PR mouthpiece for Mr. Marotta in a local newspaper.

After all, he hardly needs more space dedicated to his side of the story related to the Rand Estate debacle given that this newspaper has set aside prime copy space the last few weeks for posed pictures of Mr. Marotta, illustrations of the proposed new hotel and convention centre surrounded by what appears to be a mature tree canopy and, in my view, less than objective reporting on the legal saga related to the Rand Estate.

Melling, in his sententious writing style attempts to paint his developer client as a victim and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and SORE and the many residents it speaks for as, without evidence, intransigent and the aggressors in this protracted melodrama. This is just plain ridiculous.

He neglects to point out that the offers to settle to which he refers relate to legal proceedings he himself initiated on behalf of Mr. Marotta. No one forced Mr. Marotta to appeal to the Conservation Review Board, the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal or the Superior Court.

And now it appears that Mr. Marotta is appealing the

recent court decision to the Court of Appeal, rather than accepting the authority of the town to designate the Rand Estate under the Heritage Act.

The town and SORE have been forced to respond to the bully legal tactics of Mr. Melling and his client, an inconvenient fact for Mr. Melling apparently as he sees this opposition as a scandalous waste of town resources.

As to why “not one, not two, but three” offers to settle weren’t accepted by the town or SORE, it is a virtual certainty that these offers would be aggressively promoting the merits of Two Sisters, Solmar and Mr. Marotta proceeding with development of the Rand Estate including a convention centre and 170-unit subdivision (all, of course, ignoring the historical and cultural landscape of the town).

I look forward to Mr. Melling denying this. Through all of this it is important to note that the only legal proceeding initiated by the town was the prosecution and injunction application arising from the outrageous decimation of the Rand Estate landscape in November of 2018.

Melling’s client bought the Rand Estate knowing full well what the town viewed as acceptable development. They would be well aware of the very divisive two-year debate in 2009-2011 before our council narrowly approved the Romance Inn.

If I might be so bold as to suggest that if Mr. Melling’s client wants to gain the support of the town and its resi-

dents, he should bring forward a building proposal that conforms with what our official plan says is permitted, abandon plans to turn a portion of the Rand Estate into a subdivision and replant the historic landscape and trees that have been so senselessly destroyed.

Michael Howe
President
The Niagara Foundation

Editor’s note: Mr. Howe’s reference to The Lake Report devoting “prime copy space” to Marotta’s revised plans for development of the Rand Estate is correct. This development and various plans for the site have been a major, contentious issue in NOTL for more than 10 years now. In the past month alone, the developer, the town and SORE have faced off in court, a judge has ruled against the developer in that case, Marotta has submitted revised development plans to the town, and in turn he has said he is appealing the court’s ruling. With respect, to not report on all the latest twists and turns in this saga would be an irresponsible disservice to our town and our readers. Others may choose to ignore this important issue, but we will not. As for his suggestion of “less than objective reporting” on the legal saga (not editorials or other opinion pieces, but fundamental news reporting), we respectfully invite Mr. Howe to point out the specific instances to which he refers.



Locals Supporting Locals
1634 Four Mile Creek Road • 905-468-7815
Proud Supporters of The Lake Report



van noort flower studio

10 stem tulip bunches
\$9

Town launches campaign for \$5M St. Davids pool

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Construction of a new St. Davids swimming pool is moving forward – with a much bigger pricetag than originally estimated – and community volunteers are being recruited to help raise money to pay for it.

The project's initial cost of \$2.5 million to \$3 million, has ballooned to \$5 million due to expanding it to six lanes from the original four, adding solar panels on the rooftop and some other internal amenities, said Kevin Turcotte, the town's manager of parks and recreation.

The town applied for a \$4.7 million joint federal-provincial Community, Culture and Recreation grant under Ottawa's infrastructure program. It provides a maximum of \$5 million for an individual project.

The grant funding consists of a 40 per cent federal contribution, 33.33 per cent from the province and the town responsible for contributing 26.67 per cent. The town allocated \$100,000 for



A design of the proposed St. Davids pool on York Road. SUPPLIED

the project in 2020.

"The design can always be modified, depending on funding levels. The project will be scaled to meet our budget," said Turcotte.

Grant applicants should know this spring or summer how much they will receive, according to the provincial program guidelines.

The pool's construction, originally scheduled

to start after the summer season ends in 2020, will depend on the grant results and how much money is raised through fundraising, Turcotte said.

Last fall, the St. Davids and District Lions Club donated \$10,000 for the pool.

In addition to the St. Davids Ratepayers Association sponsoring the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Classic

Tournament that raised \$32,000 for the pool, the town also recently received a "miscellaneous donation" of \$1,000 from a construction company, Turcotte said.

In November, town staff placed an advertisement looking for fundraising committee members. The ad in the Niagara This Week newspaper and posted on the town's website received

"zero response" from the community, Turcotte said. Another posting in December also yielded no applicants.

At the committee of the whole planning meeting on Feb. 3, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said she will reach out to the St. Davids Ratepayers Association and the St. Davids Lions Club to ask each of the organizations to provide two members for the committee.

Couns. Gary Burroughs and John Wiens also volunteered to join.

Allen Snider, a former president of the St. Davids Lions Club, said he doesn't see the town being able to afford to have an indoor pool and had he seen an advertisement looking for committee members, the Lions Club would have put some names forward right away.

"It is not that there isn't any interest," Snider told The Lake Report. "I don't remember seeing the ad myself or whatever it was. I just feel like people didn't see it."

After the lord mayor contacted the club, there was a

lot of interest from people, he said, so the club members picked Susan Snider and Joe Typer to sit on the committee.

"Our Lions Club is excited to start the fundraising," he said, adding the funds from the upcoming golf tournament in June will also go toward the project.

Turcotte said he thinks a lot of people were waiting to hear the grant results before applying to the committee.

"Because a grant will give us a good idea of how much contribution the town will have to give through fundraising and/or through the capital budget," Turcotte said in a phone interview. "I think a lot of people are waiting to see the results of that to see the next steps."

Once the committee is filled, the town will work on setting a "realistic goal" of how much money is required for the new pool, Turcotte said.

Interested residents can apply by filling out a form under the St. Davids Swimming Pool Committee category on the town's Committees and Boards 2018-2022 webpage.

The Lake Report

NOTL readers *love* The Lake Report and we *love* our readers. With the winter season upon us and printing/distribution/staff costs at an all-time high, we need a little *love* to keep the news and top-quality journalism coming to every home in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

We realize this is a big ask and we don't make it lightly. **We need your help.**



What The Lake Report brings to your community

- Current, factual and non-partisan news for Niagara-on-the-Lake residents, delivered free to every home
- Dozens of important, exclusive NOTL news stories that you will not read in any other community publication
- A newspaper that does not shy away from holding our elected officials accountable for decisions that affect us all
- We ask the tough questions that need to be asked and explore complex issues that need to be addressed
- Support for countless NOTL charities and organizations
- A way for NOTL residents to stay informed about upcoming events and happenings
- An outlet to voice your opinions about matters that affect your town, your life
- In-depth feature stories about Niagara-on-the-Lake history, arts, sports, recreation and the people who live in our community
- Provides local jobs for local residents
- A special, unique paper for our special, unique town and community
- Resident discount program that helps businesses and residents
- Glossy, professional visitor guide magazines that support the NOTL business community and tell the world about all the great things our town has to offer

How you can help keep local news alive in NOTL

Donations of all sizes are welcome, of course.

Bronze – \$200

Your Perk: A heartfelt thank you in print

Silver – \$500

Your Perk: A large heartfelt thank you in print

Gold – \$1,000

Your Perk: A really big heartfelt thank you in print

Platinum – \$5,000

Your Perk: A *ginormous* heartfelt thank you and photograph in print

Lake Report Member – \$10,000

Your Perk: A massive heartfelt thank you in print, advertising discounts, photograph in print. An invitation for two people to an exclusive annual Lake Report gala dinner, a free half-page ad to promote the organization/charity/business of your choice

Lake Report Ambassador – \$20,000

Your Perk: A massive heartfelt thank you and photograph in print, invitation for four people to an exclusive annual Lake Report gala dinner, advertising discounts, Lake Report swag bag, two free half-page ads to promote the organization/charity/business of your choice

We need your help

Your donation helps to ensure that real, relevant community news continues to flourish in Niagara-on-the-Lake and that we can deliver it to every NOTL home every week.

Email transfers with password Donation can be sent to editor@niagaranow.com. Cheques payable to The Lake Report can be mailed to the NOTL Post Office, L0S1J0, PO Box 724, or dropped at our office at John and Mississauga street in Old Town.

Glendale renaming should **commemorate** history of area: Friends of Laura Secord

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake council was urged to commemorate its rich local history and culture in the new Glendale District development during a committee of the whole general meeting Monday.

More streets, places and infrastructure should reflect the town's heritage and local landscapes, the Friends of Laura Secord president Caroline McCormick and vice-president David Brown told councillors Monday.

"We realized there are many other stories to be told and places to be recognized as part of our broader mandate," McCormick said.

The presenters asked the town to recognize and commit to renaming the new Glendale District to reflect the rich local history and heritage.

The current working title of the proposed development zone, Glendale District, is an extension of a St. Catharines street nomenclature and has no "real affiliation" with the actual place, Brown explained.



Glendale's planned Main Street, between Glendale Avenue and the outlet mall. NIAGARA REGION ILLUSTRATION

The area was traditionally used for hunting and travel by Indigenous people. These paths were adopted by settlers as earliest formal roads and have since become "major arterials," such as Queenston Road or York Road, that are used on a daily basis, Brown said.

Some other historic characteristics that define the region also include the old Garden City Racetrack, located where the Outlet Mall is currently situated, the Lampman family estate (a home to a Canadian poet Archibald Lampman), the Niagara Regional Native Centre located not far from the original Iroquois Trail,

and Ten Mile Creek, which served as a barrier, a conduit and a resource.

Laura Secord, a prominent local heroine, also crossed the creek near the village of Homer during her 1813 trek.

The town could draw on the area's rich history to make sure the names of streets, subdistricts, parks, monuments and infrastructure are locally relevant and celebrate significant people, history and landscapes of the area, Brown said.

Another suggestion was to rename the proposed Main Street between the Outlet Collection mall and

Niagara on the Green to commemorate pioneering women, including Black women, Indigenous women and female settlers, and placing a monument at the entrance roundabout. Some of the suggested women included Laura Secord, Harriet Tubman, Eliza Fenwick, Chloe Cooley, Margherita Howe and others.

Some of the project's costs could be covered through corporate donations and fundraising, Brown added.

The last proposal was to engage the community and industry leaders in identifying and selecting people, places and events that will be commemorated in streetscapes, parks, neighbourhoods in the new Glendale District development.

"Recognizing these places, people and heritage would be a remarkable statement of both our local identity and our national and international significance," Brown said.

Niagara-on-the-Lake council unanimously approved four motions in principle and asked staff to come back with a report.

Ministry investigating dumping of **coyote carcasses**

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Investigators have not determined whether an offence was committed after coyote carcasses were found in a ravine along the Niagara Parkway.

About 10 coyotes were spotted last week by a fisherman who then contacted authorities.

Some of the dead coyotes have actually been there since March 19, 2019, said Niagara Parks Police chief Paul Forcier. His officers visited the scene several times last year, Forcier said, explaining sometimes the same incident can be reported multiple times.

The coyotes were found in three spots, "likely dumped from the same general area at street level," Forcier said in an email response to The Lake Report.

"Some were dumped as



A coyote's carcass near Brown's Point. DARIYA BAIGUZHIYEVA

far as 60 feet down the embankment."

The bodies were left to naturally decompose as it wasn't safe to send officers into the gorge to retrieve the bodies, said Forcier.

Jolanta Kowalski, a senior media relations officer for the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, said as the carcasses were thrown down a steep embankment adjacent to the

Niagara River, it was initially hard for conservation officers to access the site.

They were able to reach the location by boat on the afternoon of Tuesday, Feb. 11.

"Unfortunately, due to the length of time the carcasses had been exposed to the elements it was difficult to determine if an offence had been committed," Kowalski said in an email.

The ministry has jurisdiction on the matter involving coyotes but not all coyote-related incidents are reported to the ministry as it depends on the circumstances, Forcier said. If coyotes are struck by a vehicle, Niagara Parks wouldn't contact the ministry in that case, for example.

"We would act on complaints, for instance, sightings near the recreation trail which we have not had for quite a very long time," he said.


The ministry investigates any suspected poaching incidents, said Kowalski.

In most cases, conservation officers will visit the scene where coyotes were discovered and try to determine if there has been any non-compliance with regulations under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.

Legally, hunters can hunt coyotes in this area under a valid small game licence.

"Dumping of carcasses on private land without permission is illegal," said Kowalski. "Hunters are encouraged to dispose of carcasses – and pelts that have no commercial value – safely and ethically. Some municipal dumps may accept carcasses but you are encouraged to check before you go."

Anyone with information on the incident can contact <https://crimestoppersniagara.com/>.



Looking for a way to contribute?

Are you looking to give back to the Niagara-on-the-Lake community?

The Lake Report is looking for extra help with advertising sales, and we're hoping there are volunteers out there who would spend some time helping us out. Volunteering with NOTL's favourite newspaper is a fantastic way to give back to your community. The paper, which is delivered free to every home in NOTL, support countless local charities and initiatives and informs readers about truly important issues you won't find covered in any other local publication.

If you're interested, give Rob Lamond a call at 905-246-4671, or send an email to roblamond@niagaranow.com

Support The Lake Report



Guiding Hand

Seniors Help at Home
Professional, compassionate services

inspire • empower • support

Tamara Mac Donald
289.228.8736
www.guidinghand.ca
guidinghandniagara@gmail.com

The Lake Report

Your contribution matters

The Lake Report encourages readers to support the businesses that advertise with us. **These businesses allow us to operate and keep the paper free and independent.**

When you're looking for a service or product, check The Lake Report and support someone who lives in your hometown. There are plenty of great businesses inside to choose from — **don't forget to mention you saw them in The Lake Report!**

The Lake Report would also like to acknowledge and thank those who have made financial contributions to the paper. **Your donations and contributions help support young, local journalists, as well as student interns, local charities, and so much more.**

We encourage all residents to support The Lake Report through an annual "voluntary" subscription. We suggest just \$50/year (less than \$1 per issue) per household. **That's less than most people spend on coffee.**

Larger donations are also greatly appreciated.

Donations can be made online at www.lakereport.ca, or cheques can be mailed to the NOTL Post Office, L0S1J0, PO Box 724.

Please make cheques payable to The Lake Report.

- Richard Harley

valentines
2020
thursday



Lady & The Tramp
\$99 for 2 Lovers

Ruffino's
Naples-on-the-Lake PASTA BAR & GRILL

FAMILY DAY MONDAY!



KIDS EAT FREE!!



COMMUNITY

LIDA KOWAL MBA, CPA, CMA
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT



- Personal Tax • Corporate Tax • Small Business Specialist •
- Accounting & Bookkeeping Services •

FREE LOCAL PICK UP FOR SENIORS
 1627 Niagara Stone Road, Unit B2, Virgil, ON

For appointment call
905-468-5300

*Tax preparer is approved by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)



Everyone is welcome to attend our
Volunteer Celebration Party
 Thursday, April 9th, 2020 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
 Join us for an evening social and come see our upgraded facilities

Opportunities for Artisans
 of hand-made, high quality wearable art
 Be a Part of our Fashion Show on May 24th, 2020
 Visit niagarapumphouse.ca/opportunities/artists



CLARE'S HARLEY-DAVIDSON Niagara

590 York Rd Niagara on the Lake ON L0S1J0
 905-684-4647 www.claresharleydavidson.com

Pauline Reimer Gibson is an Audiologist with over 20 years of experience who loves helping people of all ages in the community.



Book a complimentary hearing test today at
905.468.9176

504 Line 2 Road, Virgil ON 

Pauline Reimer Gibson Audiologist
 A global leader in hearing healthcare.

CORPORATE FACILITY SUPPLY



7 Neilson St. St. Catharines
 905 68-CLEAN

"The Nice Guys with Cleaning Supplies"

Cleaning Products, Cleaning Equipment, Paper Products, Safety Supplies and Odour Control



Eurocleaners

An experienced European cleaning lady to clean Your house/condo/office — fast, efficient and sparkling clean!

For more information
 Call Alina! 416-995-4499 | alinakoszalina@hotmail.com

Warren

RENOVATIONS

905.468.2127

PLUMBING, HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

905-988-6263

HAMBLET'S

ROOFING • SIDING • WINDOWS

Let The Professionals Handle It!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<h2>The Lake Report</h2> <p>COMMUNITY FAVOURITES: Legion Fish Fry every Thursday 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Duplicate Bridge at the Community Centre Tuesdays and Fridays at 1 p.m.</p>			
16	17	18	19
Days of Wine and Chocolate - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Writers' Circle - 2 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Pumphouse Needle Felting a Brooch - 1 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse	Family Day NOTL Public Library Closed NOTL Community Centre Closed Niagara Ice Dogs Meet and Skate - 10 a.m. - Fort George Skating Rink Flag raising - Virgil Women's Institute - 10:30 a.m. - Town Hall	Agricultural Committee - 10 a.m. - Council Chambers Tumble Tots - 9 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Beginners Guide to Zero Waste: Laundry - 6 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	NOTL Toastmasters - Niagara College Danforth Campus STEAM Story Time: Explorers - 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Chess Club - 5 p.m. - Library Black History Month - 2 p.m. - RiverBrink Art Centre Wellness Talk with Society RSVP 905 905-9059 - 9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. - Royal Henley Community Centre
23	24	25	26
Days of Wine and Chocolate - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Info Session Q and A for Senior Help at Home - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - JazzyOke Singalong Sundays - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Club 55 The Writers' Circle Rising Spirits Celebration - 7 p.m. - The Old Winery Restaurant Teen Literary Alliance - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	Council - 6 p.m. - Council Chambers Canadian Cancer Society Volunteer Tea - 2 p.m. - St. Vincent de Paul Church Parish Hall Famous and Infamous: Harry Nyquist by Peter Kemball - 2 p.m. - NOTL Museum Books and Babies - 11 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Beer and Books: The Farm - 7 p.m. - The Old Winery Restaurant	Mardi Gras Gathering with Entertainment RSVP 905 935 1800 - 2 p.m. - Royal Henley Heritage Trail Committee - 2 p.m. - Council Chambers NOTL Horticultural Society February Meeting - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Urban Design Committee - 5 p.m. - Council Chambers Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	Black History Month - 2 p.m. - RiverBrink Art Centre Chess Club - 5 p.m. - Library STEAM Story Time: Explorers - 11 a.m. - Library German Conversation - 9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. - Community Centre Legion General Meeting - 7 p.m. - R

Know of a local event? Tell us. Submit it directly to www.niag

Report

CALENDAR

PIN ME UP!



Feb. 13 - Feb. 29

UPPER CANADA MECHANICAL
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE
905-651-0470

KeepRite

Ravenshead Homes inc.
www.RavensheadHomes.com
Renovations ~ Additions ~ Inspections
289 969 5991

GUS KORONEOS DENTURE & IMPLANT SOLUTIONS

- NO REFERRAL REQUIRED
- ON SITE LAB TO GIVE YOU THAT PERFECT SMILE!

Niagara-on-the-Lake 1630 Niagara Stone Rd. 905-468-4444

www.niagaradentures.com
Relines and Repairs While You Wait

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	13 Homeschooler Drop in - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Valentines Floral Workshop - 7 p.m. - Ferrox NLH Workshop: More Moves #1 - 7:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Makery Madness: Decal your Kitchen Aid - 6:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	14 Days of Wine and Chocolate - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Film: Journey to Justice - 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Museum Light Up Heart Cards - 10 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Valentines Social RSVP 905 935 1800 - 1 p.m. - Royal Henley PA Day Film: Toy Story 4 - 2 p.m. - NOTL Public Library PA Day Fun at the Rink - 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. - Fort George Skating Rink Coffee with Curator - 11 a.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum	15 Days of Wine and Chocolate - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Shaw Festival Film Series: Official Secrets - 3 p.m. - Shaw Festival Theatre Safari Niagara Zooniversity - 12:30 p.m. - Bass Pro Shops Book Launch Authors: Joanna Hathaway and Nicki Pau Preto - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Colours to Dye For Lecture by Sandra Lawrence - 10 a.m. - NOTL Museum
19 - 7 p.m. - El J Patterson Arctic - 11:45 a.m. - NOTL Public h film series - rt Museum Alzheimer's - 35 1800 - 2 ion Group - a.m. - NOTL	20 Customer Experience and Technology Committee - 4 p.m. - Council Chambers Flag raising - Kinsmen Club - 1 p.m. - Town Hall Homeschooler Drop in - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NLH Workshop: More Moves #2 - 7:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	21 Yoga with Jenny - 10 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Days of Wine and Chocolate - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Double Film: Remember Africille and Black Mother, Black Daughter - 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Museum Forty Creek Whisky Tasting at Navy Hall - 7 p.m. - Navy Hall Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	22 Flag raising - World Think Day - 10 a.m. - Town Hall Days of Wine and Chocolate - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Shaw Festival Film Series: Once Upon a Time in ... Hollywood - 3 p.m. - Shaw Festival Theatre Babarinde Williams Drums et al - 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library
26 h film series - rt Museum - NOTL Public Arctic - NOTL Public ion Group - a.m. - NOTL mbership - CL Branch 124	27 Homeschooler Drop In - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Oddities of the Universe with Dr. Brian Pihack - 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Tinker Thinker - 6 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Homeschooler Drop in - 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library	28 Film: Speakers of the Dead - 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Museum Yoga with Jenny - 10 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Homeschool: Fantastic Food and Nutrition - 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	29 Brew your own Kombucha - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Canadian Food and Wine Institute Indoor Goat Yoga - 1 p.m. - Small Talk Vineyards

J&S Performance Husqvarna

905-468-9735 Sales & Service

Snowblowers, Chain Saws, Mowers, Power Equipment ...

Service and Repairs to all makes and models

901 East West Line, RR2, Niagara-on-the-Lake

(289)-868-9603 oldtowngoodies.ca

29 QUEEN ST.

ICE CREAM - SANDWICHES
PUZZLES - GAMES - LUGBAGS

Grace United Church
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario
222 Victoria Street 905-468-4044

Sunday Service @ 10:30 a.m.
Check us out at
www.graceunitedchurch.com

TRAVELLING?
Don't let your house be a burden to friends or family?
Contact Nancy at :

ATTENDANTS HOMEWATCH
905.468.7111

J&S CONSTRUCTION

RENOVATIONS - CUSTOM BUILDS - ADDITIONS - DECKS & FENCES
"Putting Niagara Residents First"

WWW.JS-CONSTRUCTION.CA 289.697.5757

Hometown Traveller

Paring down our 'stuff' so we can travel the world



Graham McMillan and his wife Susan ride along the Mekong River during a visit to Laos. SUPPLIED

Graham McMillan
Special to The Lake Report

How much "stuff" do you own? You've probably never done an inventory, but you know it's a lot.

Nature abhors a vacuum, we are told, and so it is that empty spaces in our homes cry out to be filled — and continue crying, while our stuff accumulates, gradually filling the garage, the basement, the spare bedrooms. It is an embarrassment of riches; we are awash in stuff.

Don't get me wrong, I'm no Gandhi. I enjoy stuff as much as the next guy. It's comfortable, comforting, and much of it is actually useful and necessary.

But experiences, the happiness experts tell us, are a far better route to contentment than possessing more stuff. As retirement beckoned, my wife and I decided to heed these experts.

We determined to sell the house, leave the confines of our comfortable western bubble, pare down our possessions, and travel the world together during this golden moment in time where opportunity, interest, finances and good health intersected.

But what to pare, and what to keep? Granted, we could rent a big storage unit and store virtually all our worldly goods. But since we planned to be gone for multiple years, the accumulated storage costs made it

more economical to minimize, dispose of as much as possible, and upon our return, replace only what we needed. For planning purposes, we decided to keep only what would fit in a 5-foot by 5-foot storage unit.

In our favour, we are a childless couple, so we only had our own stuff to deal with. And we already fancied ourselves minimalists. Despite this, it was still daunting how much we owned.

We first addressed clothing. My wife retired first and over the next several months, she gave away most of her sizeable wardrobe of office attire. Watching her lady friends enjoy free "shopping" excursions in her closet was a cathartic experience. In due course my retirement day arrived, but oddly, when I emulated her lead, the hordes of "shoppers" eager to snap up my dapper clothes never materialized, forcing me to donate all but what I would need for our travels.

We began a series of successive waves of household paring. The first wave was the "easy" round; this was things we didn't really want or need in the first place, but hadn't gotten around to tossing — old electronics, tools we never used, unwanted gifts, car parts, a paraglider I hadn't flown in the last decade, things we discovered in little-used drawers.

As we pulled into the nearby Goodwill pick-up

site time and again, my wife's convertible car piled high, we were soon on a first-name basis with the staff. The weekly garbage pickup became epic, using containers borrowed from neighbors. Craigslist helped a lot.

The next round of paring involved stuff that could be economically replaced in a few years' time. Electronics become cheaper each year, and often sport new features. Styles and fashions change. There was little value in returning to a storage unit filled with obsolete or outdated things.

So we sold our TVs, stereos and other electronics, or gave them to friends. We chose not to keep sofas and other large furniture items. Several items, including a leather sofa, were sold through a consignment store. Although the merchant took a hefty percentage, it was still better than paying for storage. When the time comes to replace them, we can always check back at these same consignment stores.

Our family friends' children were starting piano lessons, so we loaned them our lovely upright piano. They are enjoying it for now, and in five years' time, we will reassess depending on whether the kids are still into piano. Likewise several comfy chairs and recliners were loaned to friends for their use, on the condition we might or might not

reclaim them some day.

Our beloved cappuccino machine went to our foster daughter. A bed frame and dresser went to a young lady who was furnishing her own apartment for the first time. Mattresses were a particular problem to dispose of, because many charities won't accept them, but we ultimately found a group that accepted them for refugees south of the border.

Books posed a singular problem for me. My book collection was not vast, but it wasn't tiny either. The mere presence of these books in our home gave me some pleasure. But the reality is, I knew I wouldn't read most of them ever again. And if I did choose to enjoy them, it would be in audible format, which I generally prefer over print.

The physical books were just decorative souvenirs and an ego crutch when I wanted to appear or feel literate. I donated boxes of them to the local library.

The cloud helped tremendously. I scanned many of our important documents and records. Fortunately, I had digitized and indexed most of our photographs years ago; I can access them quickly and easily from anywhere in the world. It had been a laborious but worthwhile process.

But we hadn't destroyed our original physical photo albums, even though we hadn't opened them in years. Reluctantly, I took

People from Niagara-on-the-Lake travel to some of the most interesting places on Earth and we'd like to hear about your vacations.

So, if you have ever wanted to be a travel writer, here is your chance. Send us a travelogue story about your vacation, along with some photos.

It's impossible to include everything, but stories ideally should be 250 to 600 words and focus on a unique, quirky or particularly interesting aspect of your trip. It can be about a vacation you have just taken, one you're on now (lucky you!), or a holiday you took a few years ago.

Sometimes, just a picture is worth a thousand words. So, if you aren't able to write a story about your trip, send us two or three snapshots from your holiday and we will try to publish some of them.

In all cases, smartphone photos are perfectly acceptable. Just make sure each digital image you send us is around 1 to 2 MB in size. Include destination information and the names (from left) of everyone in each photo. And tell us who took the photo, if possible.

As a bonus, bring along a copy of The Lake Report and include it in your photo!

Send your stories and photos to editor@niagaranow.com and be sure to write TRAVEL in the subject line.

Happy trails.

this final, irreversible step, which was strangely disconcerting.

We saved the most precious of our kitchen dishes and cutlery. Many other items went to Goodwill, but only after a friend guided my wife through the thought process of how easily much of it could be replaced. We preserved the art and photography on the walls of our home, and several pieces of small furniture that meant something to us.

We had two cars, one of which was leased. Fortunately the lease term was nearly up, so we simply returned it to the dealership. We left the other with a friend, who sold it privately for us. Last of all, we found loving homes for our two beloved cats. We both agreed they were among the most difficult "possessions" to shed.

It's hard to describe the feeling that our remaining earthly possessions now fit inside such a tiny space. It hearkened back to when we were 18 and first leaving for college, when all our worldly possessions fit neatly inside our car. It was nearly that exhilarating, and nearly that scary.

And then we headed off on our grand adventure, with two suitcases each in tow, and my bicycle. In hindsight, I would say even then, we seriously overpacked.

I won't understate the difficulty of the process

of getting to that stage, but I can say the result has been so worth the process. We feel light and unencumbered as we travel the world. The occasional lack of creature comforts has only served to make us even more appreciative of all the good things we have in our lives, both physical, social and experiential.

Far from suffering, we have been humbled and amply blessed along the way by family, and by friends old and new, whose remarkable generosity and hospitality have made our adventure so very special. Their open sharing of their homes, their social circles, and their lives has touched and enriched us deeply. It's also brought us into contact with many others whose lives are far less rich than ours in terms of opportunity and physical well-being.

Our journey isn't for everyone, and I don't mean to imply a value judgment on others who, for a thousand good reasons, choose a more conventional path. It's just our unique journey.

For us, paring down has made us more thankful, and has made us appreciate just how rich and blessed we all are, how little we truly need, and what things in life truly matter.

Sure, the stuff inside that five-by-five storage unit is important. But there's so much more to experience in the big world outside it.

Travel light.

ESTD 2002
CAROLINE
- CELLARS -
FAMILY ESTATE WINERY



THE
FARMHOUSE
Cafe

Open Daily Year-Round

Bring this ad in for a 10% Lunch Discount

Valid Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday in February. Cannot be used Feb 17th.

For more details and hours, visit our website or give us a call.

www.CarolineCellars.com 905.468.8814 1010 Line 2, Virgil

Overnight parking ban could be a thing of the past

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
 The Lake Report

If formally approved by council on Feb 24., Niagara-on-the-Lake residents will be able to park on streets overnight.

At the committee of the whole general meeting Monday, councillors approved removing the 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. parking prohibition.

The overnight parking and ticketing for on-street has been a hot topic among NOTL residents.

Following concerns from The Village residents in regard to an overnight parking prohibition in their neighbourhood, a survey was conducted in 2017 and staff came back with a report recommending amending the parking bylaw and removing the overnight parking prohibition.

There were also consultation sessions held in all five urban areas. Based on the low turnout and received responses, the majority of residents didn't use or require on-street parking and when they needed to



Carrie DeBon shows a parking ticket her daughter received for parking overnight in front of their house on Andres Street in Virgil in the summer. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA/FILE PHOTO

park on the street, they had no problems finding a spot, town staff said in a report.

The previous town council didn't take any further action at the time.

A technical memo prepared by Parsons Engineering in 2019 stated the original intent for over-

night parking prohibition was to allow road maintenance and was no longer needed as the town doesn't perform maintenance activities during these hours.

"From the conclusions provided in the technical memo, the removal of the 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. parking

restriction should be considered based on updated town policies which render it obsolete," town staff said in the report.

"Its removal would also provide an alternative to a permit system and potentially alleviate parking issues or concerns in local-

ized areas where on-site parking space is limited."

Lord Mayor Betty Disero also made a motion on Monday to move a no-parking sign at the intersection at Jordan street and Garrison Village Drive somewhere further to allow for a more clear view when residents are crossing that intersection.

She said the issue was brought up during her discussions with the area residents back in 2017.

Interim chief administrative officer Sheldon Randall said it would be a "political move" rather than a "technical decision" based on factual data. Without having data to back the motion, he said he would have a challenge supporting it.

Disero agreed, saying it was political.

"My point is: this is something that these residents feel strongly about. And I don't believe those people who wanted to be allowed to park all night will disagree with it, so for the sake of peace in The Village, I'm asking that we move that parking prohibition."

Initially, Disero suggested moving the sign five feet or 1.5 metres from the curb.

Randall said town staff would change the location of the parking sign but they would review the site using "rationale" instead of "randomly picking a number" and then would report back to council.

"We know there's a desire from council to gain some more space. Leave it with us and we will report back in an information report on what we've changed it to," he said.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said she drives through the intersection "all the time." When people go straight through the intersection exiting from Jordan Street and if there are parked cars on the corner, it's difficult to see if anyone's coming along Garrison Village Drive, she said.

Disero's motion to direct staff to review the intersection to increase site lines and come back with an information report was then approved.



BLISS IS 20!

"Thank you to our incredible community for your support over the past 20 years. My heart overflows with love and gratitude for each of you." - Sandra

Enjoy these **blissed-out** deals for the month of February

\$20 for select services with new talent

20% off Aveda products (travel size excluded)



Receive a ballot to enter into our Bliss draw for exciting prizes when you purchase Aveda products or make a donation to Red Roof Retreat. You could win one of our three prizes!

1. Haircuts for a year (certain restrictions apply)
2. \$500 Aveda basket with his & her products
3. Case of wine with gift cards from big Marcos and Grazi Cafe

In support of:



(905) 468-5344 | 1501 Niagara Stone Road, Virgil

@BLISS_AVEDA

@THISISMYBLISSAVEDA

GAMES



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

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

Down

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

Crossword Puzzle

Last issue's answers



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



REYNOLDS REGIER HOMES



DIRECT: 905.468.4214
125 QUEEN ST. NIAGARA ON THE LAKE



58 JOHNSON STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,995,000
MLS ID #30773587



41 BROCK STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,175,000
MLS ID #30788451



4 RAMPART STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,295,000
MLS ID #30781731



720 KING STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,650,000
MLS ID #30769475



8 UPPER CANADA DR., NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$725,000
MLS ID #30788428



765 LAKESHORE ROAD, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,725,000
MLS ID #30754879



478 GATE STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$895,000
MLS ID # 40781095



502 LAKESHORE ROAD, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,100,000
MLS ID # 30775346

ATTENTION INVESTORS
2 UNITS



Michelle Reynolds
Broker

[REYNOLDSREGIER.COM](https://www.reynoldsregier.com)

Stefan Regier
Sales Representative



NFC Realty, Brokerage, Independently Owned & Operated



Don't quit: Epilogue as prologue

An excerpt from "Don't Ever Quit: A Journal of Coping with Crisis & Nurturing Spirit," by Mike Keenan, a member of the NOTL Writers' Circle. From Part One – Epilogue As Prologue.

Mike Keenan
Special to The Lake Report

I was tired. Perhaps that helped me acquiesce, adopt a passive mode, not of resignation, but rather a calm objectivity that saved my life. Speed was the other contributing factor. Once initiated, impossible to stop, concluded in mere seconds. Ordinarily, those brief fragments of time don't seem to carry much import, yet, in mere moments, life dramatically changes. The bang from a gun. The thrust of a knife. The diagnosis from a health care specialist.

All day long, I'm roofing on our house, as long as there is light. I finish the first storey, and ever so proud of my handyman talents, I work majestically higher on top of the second storey in the thin air with the birds and large deciduous trees that inhabit the blue sky. What a view! I survey the entire neighbourhood, watch cars drive by, admire children play, scrutinize quarrelling blue jays. Worn out, I decide to pack it in and make my descent. It's rapid. About 32 feet per second if my high school physics is correct. I cover the 25 feet to the ground in less than two seconds. What happens in that interval is remarkable.

A cautious step on the ladder, and the entire contraption, connecting

second storey to first, gives way. Support legs, moments before, firmly dug into the finished first storey shingles, slide over the precipitous edge of the eaves, dispatching me towards a mean collision with destiny below.

Extraordinary phenomena rapidly ensue, reminding me of a parallel sequence twenty-five years earlier—an automobile accident when I traversed an elevated, icy viaduct in wintry Toronto. What transpired then as on the falling ladder is that I experienced each affair from outside my body, dispassionately – like an objective observer, culled for jury duty.

In less time that it takes for me to vocalize my name, I instinctively adopt a strategy. Incurably presumptuous! A strategy! I'm amazed how my inventive mind swiftly works during this catastrophe. Initially, I try to make contact with the first storey roof, slow my rate of decline and minimize impact. In microseconds, my forearms and elbows, rigidly extended, make violent contact, but fail to slow down my plunge.

Next, I perceive solid concrete, close to the house and farther out, softer ground. Again, in milliseconds, I lean forward, causing my body to hit and roll like an old high school football drill. The concussion is shattering, akin to that of a detonated explosive. The aluminum ladder bangs crazily off the eaves and slams into the ground below.

It bounces several times before ending in a noisy halt near the roadway. Falling off the ladder, my halt is immediate: THUD!

Flat on my back, squinting skyward, immobile, breathing slowly, speculating whether or not my back is broken, perhaps my neck. I worry about my lower trunk, considering my earlier troubles with disintegrating lumbar discs, but the impact transports me into unfeeling shock.

Neighbours who hear the thud and terrible clanging of the run-away ladder, scramble across their grass yards towards the crater. Someone instinctively summons an ambulance. I hear Diane from inside the house cry out, "Oh, no!" I hear feet scampering in my direction.

Fearing gross movement, I decide it's best to carefully assess damage. Already spread-eagled, I meticulously move the fingers of each hand slowly in succession to ascertain if they function and also the toes of both feet. Mercifully, all fingers and toes respond with movement and only the foot that took the bulk of the impact when rolling is extremely painful. Am I in such deep shock that I'm incapable of assessing my plight? Clad in shorts and T-shirt, I'm filthy, bleeding, covered in dirt and tar from the shingles, scraped against during the fall. Body tattooed with abrasions, I'm a mess. Nonetheless, I miss the calamity of concrete by mere inches. Leaning during the fall occasions my escape from severe injury. Instead of sculpting concrete, my impact destroys a harmless bed of flowers. Perennials I hope.

The ambulance arrives in record time. After examining my vertebrae,

head and other vital parts, the attendants splint my wounded foot in a pillow, following prescribed St. John's Ambulance protocol. They snugly attach me to a spinal board, and the two gaunt attendants, straining from my weight, lift me into the rear of the ambulance. Ludicrously, after all that has transpired, they almost drop the spinal board on its way up. Again, in burlesque fashion, they transport me over the bumpiest roads in town to the hospital where x-rays are taken and a doctor methodically surveys my battered parts.

The astonished doctor pronounces that the x-rays reveal no fractures, and that I'm intact, but to be sure, to use crutches for a few days. Despite the fact that it's Sunday, he says that I can work on Monday, and that in a few days I can revert to one crutch. By Friday, no crutch.

Why was I saved? Who saved me? Me? For what purpose? How can the human mind work so quickly, so powerfully? I know one thing for certain. As soon as the pain and soreness subside, I will put my knee pads back on, my baseball cap, the blue building-supply apron that carries my nails, and I will ascend that unfaithful ladder and finish off the upper roof.

Mike Keenan's "Don't Ever Quit" is available in paperback format from Amazon: <https://tinyurl.com/tokod5r> (\$19.99) and in e-book format: <https://tinyurl.com/veybavvj> (Kindle), <https://www.kobo.com/ca/en/ebook/don-t-ever-quit> (Kobo) and <https://tinyurl.com/vp6vd4w> (Barnes & Noble) at \$9.99.

Palatine Hills supports Heritage Trail with wine order fundraiser



Palatine Hills Estate Winery's Charles Neufeld with The Heritage Trail Committee's Tony Chisolm. Palatine will donate 25 per cent of designated wine orders to trail restoration. BRITTANY CARTER

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Palatine Hills Estate Winery is supporting Niagara-on-the-Lake's Heritage Trail by donating 25 per cent of pretax revenue from the sale of each bottle or case of wine.

Customers just need to designate the Heritage Trail as the recipient of the donation when making their purchase.

The Heritage Trail Committee is working on restoring the old rail line that runs from St. Davids into Old Town. The committee is raising money to transform the path into a multi-use recreational trail. Preserving the past is part of Palatine Hills' mandate and the Upper Canada

Heritage Trail has deep history in Niagara, said a statement from the winery.

"With help, it can be revived and provide a route for active transportation and a safe passage for bikes, hikers and green/fitness initiatives," the statement said.

The fundraiser runs until July 1, 2020, and wine orders can be placed online through www.palatine-hillsestatewinery.com/wine-shop, or by printing a copy of the order form and either faxing it to 905-646-5832, emailing to wine@palatinewinery.com or by bringing it in person to the winery at 911 Lakeshore Rd., NOTL. (Don't forget to make note of the Heritage Trail fundraiser when ordering.)

Legion awards winners of the Annual National Poster and Literary Contest



The Royal Canadian Legion holds the Annual National Poster and Literary Contest to foster and perpetuate remembrance amongst the youth through creative arts, Lori Beak co-chair of the Youth and Education Committee said.

More than 170 entries from Grade 1 to Grade 12 students were received by the Legion Branch 124 in 2019.

From Jan. 28 to Jan. 31, Beak, along with co-chair Stan Harrington, Lieutenant-Colonel Doug Johnson and one of the contest judges Penny-Lynn Cookson travelled to local schools to hand out the awards for each winner.



POPS! 3:
music of the knights
Saturday, February 15 at 7:30pm
Sunday, February 16 at 2:30pm
FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre
for tickets: 905.688.0722
niagarasymphony.com

ALL the greatest hits from SIRS
ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER, PAUL McCARTNEY & ELTON JOHN

nso
niagara symphony orchestra
bradley thachuk
music director



Delicious Red Velvet Macaroons are a great Valentine's treat idea. COLLIN GOODINE

COOKING WITH COLLIN

A Valentine's Day treat for **someone special**

Red Velvet Macaroons

Collin Goodine
Special to The Lake Report

This Valentine's Day surprise your loved one with a classic French cookie. With the time, effort and patience these beautiful macaroons (or macarons, en francais) take to make, your partner will truly know how you feel about them, and how special you are.

These macaroons might take a few tries to master, but they are cookies that everybody should have in their back pocket. Happy Valentine's Day, everyone.

Directions:

For the ganache: Place chocolate into food processor and mix until chocolate is like coarse meal or pea size. Bring cream, salt, cinnamon to a boil. Pour over the chocolate and mix until smooth, 10-15 seconds. Do not over-mix. Set aside at room temperature until ready to use. When finished, place in the fridge. Reheat on a double boiler or in microwave.

For the cookie: Place first four ingredients into a bowl together. Sift through a fine strainer twice to remove any undesirables. Set aside.

Place egg whites into a stand mixer and, using the whip attachment, mix on medium speed until egg whites begin to come together.

Add cream of tartar. Continue to mix on high until soft peaks begin to form.

Reduce speed and add 1/3 sugar until dissolved. Continue this process until you are out of the sugar.

Return the mixer to high and mix until stiff peaks form when you lift the whip out. (You should be able to turn the bowl of egg whites over your head and have them stay in the bowl.)

Fold in the almond flour mixture in four stages, until both mixtures are incorporated and the batter is glossy and all clumps of ground almond are gone.

Place the batter into a piping bag without a tip, or with a round tip (not star). Now you are ready to bake.

Line a sheet pan with parchment paper. Starting in the upper left corner, pipe the batter into small rounds (about the size of a loonie) straight onto the paper. Move 1 inch to the right and pipe another the same size. Continue to do this until all the batter is gone.

Lift the sheet pans and lightly drop them from 4 inches off the counter, onto the counter. This helps remove a little air out of the cookie and create the "feet" or a smooth flat bottom. Repeat 3-4 times.

Preheat oven to 300F. Place cookies into the oven for 16 minutes.

Allow cookies to cool.

Flip cookies over and fill every other one with chocolate ganache (from a piping bag). Use just enough to cover the cookie when they are pressed together. Place the other cookie on top and push together gently.

Enjoy.

Ingredients for ganache:

13 oz bitter sweet chocolate
1 cup 35% cream
Pinch pink sea salt
Pinch cinnamon

Ingredients for the cookie:

100 g almond flour
160 g icing sugar
20 g red cocoa powder
5 g cinnamon
100 g egg white (room temp)
1/4 tsp cream of tartar
35 g white sugar



It's time to vote.

Vote at: www.lakereport.ca

STAY FIT NOTL



Danielle Lepp and Jena Slingerland performing cable chop/twist. STAY FIT NOTL

Cable machine full body workout

Jaclyn Willms
Special to The Lake Report

Here's a full body workout for those days you don't have much time, or when it's busy at the gym. Head over to the cable machine and try out these four exercises to strengthen and work your whole body.

1. Cable row with bar attachment
2. Cable bicep curl with bar attachment
3. Triceps push down
4. Cable chop/twist

For videos on how to perform these stretches correctly visit [@niagarafit](https://www.instagram.com/niagarafit) on instagram.

Join the FITSIDE
The Healthiest Take Out + Smoothie Bar | 358 Mary St. NOTL **FITSIDE** Express

EXPLORING PHOTOS

WITH JIM SMITH



Dewey McCourt

Everyone in town knew Dewey McCourt and his family. In 1946, he bought the Brock Theatre, and it this composite picture taken that he is seen on the left holding his daughter Hilary. Tickets were 10 cents for children, 15 cents for students and 42 cents for adults. On Saturdays, a long line of us kids would wait for the theatre doors to open for the 2 p.m. movie. The film always started with a cartoon and a news reel. Mr. McCourt also ran the Town Taxi, having a new Cadillac with the phone number Howard 8-3211.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH



Looking for a way to contribute?

Are you looking to give back to the Niagara-on-the-Lake community?

The Lake Report is looking for extra help with advertising sales, and we're hoping there are volunteers out there who would spend some time helping us out. Volunteering with NOTL's favourite newspaper is a fantastic way to give back to your community. The paper, which is delivered free to every home in NOTL, support countless local charities and initiatives and informs readers about truly important issues you won't find covered in any other local publication.

If you're interested, give Rob Lamond a call at 905-246-4671, or send an email to roblamond@niagaranow.com

Support The Lake Report

LONEY CONSTRUCTION

Renovations
Fine Carpentry
Staircases
Kitchens
Additions
Custom Cabinetry
Wine Cellars
Cathedral Beam Ceilings

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE


See our work at loneyconstruction.com

Advertising inquiries?
Email advertising@niagaranow.com
or call Rob at 905.246.4671

Did you know?

The Lake Report's printer sources 100 per cent of its paper fibre from industry leading paper mills, which use quick-growth, sustainable, renewable plots of land, rather than clear-cutting forests.

The ink is also vegetable-based.



St. Davids-Queenston United Church

1453 York Rd. St Davids
905-262-5242
www.stdavids-queenstonuc.ca
Minister: Rev. Rick Hawley

Sunday Worship
10:30 a.m.
+ Sunday School

All welcome!
Sunday 10:45am

redbrickchurch.ca

1775 Niagara Stone Road
Niagara United Mennonite Church



ARCHITEXT

Short-listing the pros

Brian Marshall
Featured

Now that we've met with the potential contractors, it's time to check the references (a minimum of three) they provided you with.

In last week's column I suggested these should represent projects the contractor had completed in the last year, three to five years ago, and six to 10 years ago, respectively.

Questions such as – "Did they finish on-time and on-budget?", "Was their work satisfactory?", "Were they called back later to fix any issue and, if so, how did they respond?" and "How has their work stood up over time?" – are representative



Narrowing the field. SUPPLIED/BRIAN MARSHALL

of the lines of inquiry you might make.

Essentially, the primary objective of a reference check is to both determine if the contractor was professional in all aspects of the work and the lasting quality of the work. Further, insight into a contractor's level of ongoing customer communication and responsiveness to customer inquiries are very helpful in predicting the optimum method to manage your reno project.

Based on the results of these reference checks, it should be possible to

short-list three contractors that you believe will best match the requirements of your renovation. Now, prior to asking for quotes, it's necessary to define what you are asking them to quote on. In other words, you need drawings that will form the scope-of-work for your project.

Luckily, sourcing potential architects and/or designers follows the same general steps we've identified for finding a general contractor.

To complement this, you should have a list of referrals generated from your earlier

discussions with the "long-listed" general contractors to aid in your search. However, while it is important to be sympathetic with your contractor, it is absolutely vital to fully resonate with your designer to achieve maximum liveability from your renovation.

Design is a visually interpreted discipline, hence professionals always maintain a representative portfolio of their work. Always review their portfolio and ask yourself whether what you see makes your heart sing.

If the answer is "no," continue your search. If the answer is "yes," then share with them the design criteria you developed (if you're following the process outlined in my previous articles) and ask for their high-level concept response.

If you like what you hear, it can weigh towards them being short-listed but still check their references.

Next week, a design to quote.

The Rennie
Seniors Apartments *by Signature*



584 ONTARIO STREET
ST. CATHARINES, ON

WWW.RENNIEAPARTMENTS.COM



South Landing Inn still operates today



Linda Fritz
Exclusive/The Lake Report

South Landing was one of the earliest resting places for travellers in the village of Queenston. There is, however, some debate about when it was built and when it actually became an inn.

Over its lifetime the inn's names have included Prospect House, Frontier House and River Landing. The name South Landing was implemented in the late 1940s. There was a West Landing and an East Landing on the U.S. side of the Niagara River.

The land was originally owned by businessman Thomas Dickson, a cousin of Alexander Hamilton. He supposedly built a house on the lot. Dickson's known residence in Queenston is located on Queenston Street, very close to the site of South Landing. That building was heavily damaged during the War of 1812, but was later rebuilt. That house and its barn can still be seen today.

Whether South Landing was built before the War of 1812, and if it survived the damage caused by American troops, is also cause for speculation. There is an intriguing statement in the diary of John Le Couteur that may indeed refer to an inn run by Dickson.

Below is an excerpt from "Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot," edited by Donald E. Graves and published by Carleton University Press in 1993.

24 September 1814
"Saturday. Got to

Queenston. A lovely day, but shining dimly on that lovely village – It will be long before it is restored to its peaceable attractions. It is melancholy to see such wanton destruction as the broom of war has made in it, it is a palace of desolation. We are in quiet possession of Colonel Dickson's fine large house, with the 89th (Regiment) light bobs, it being the only one with windows left in it. As the big wigs were sure to take the best rooms, I mounted at once to the garret where the Yankees had broken nothing, the doors & other windows being safe & the room snug. At night I turned down, not in, all standing, with my blankets above & bearskin below me."

Did Le Couteur describe the inn or Dickson's Queenston Street home? One person who read the diary suggests that the fact the house in question was three storeys, and that there were "best rooms" for the big wigs means it was indeed the inn. This reader also points out that Le Couteur states there was more than one room in the garret by the use of the word "doors." All of this is pure speculation.

This commentator also refers to the Edward Walsh painting of Queenston Upper Canada (ca. 1803, 1807) as evidence of a large house with a two-storey veranda facing the river. He believes that the house's location and veranda point to it being South Landing.

Jean Huggins, in an essay about South Landing, states that there is a water colour dated 1831, by James Pattison Cockburn showing a building that could be South Landing.

The present building is generally believed to date from 1827. Dickson sold the property in 1841.

By 1883, it was owned by the Wadsworth family.



The old South Landing Inn in Queenston. DARIYA BAIGUZHUYEVA

According to the General Directory and Gazetteer of Lincoln and Welland County in 1856, Daniel Wadsworth was the proprietor of the Suspension Bridge Hotel. A second Wadsworth, John, ran the Traveller's Home.

By the turn of the 20th century, yet another Wadsworth, this time James, was in charge. Rum running had been going on well before Prohibition in the United States, and James was best known as a bootlegger. He kept his liquor supply under the very high steps of the building. James Wadsworth was known to have smuggled people as well, at \$50 a head.

Miss Margaret Dressell bought the building in 1910. She named it the Riverview Inn, although villagers continued to refer to it as the Wadsworth House.

Many of those injured in the Niagara Falls Park and River railway accident on July 7, 1915, were cared for by Miss Dressell at the inn. The railway car, which was overcrowded by picnickers who were trying to escape a rainstorm on Queenston Heights, derailed as it descended toward the boat dock in the village.

The South Landing building we see today originally consisted of eight rooms, with one bathroom on each floor. People would have tea on the veranda in the 1920s. Full-course meals cost between 25 and 35 cents as late as 1949.

In 1953, a second female proprietor came on the scene. Rie Bannister, a talented weaver, opened the South Landing Craft Centre. A true entrepreneur, she wanted to run a weaving co-operative and school.

The rooms in the inn were intended for use by guest instructors. Although Mrs. Bannister provided them with room and board, she could not afford to pay them. As a result, few of the invited lecturers accepted the invitation to spend time in the village.

Undaunted, Mrs. Bannister undertook the teaching work herself, and opened the inn to students who would stay from a few days to a week. Hundreds of people from all parts of Canada and the United States made an annual trip to the South Landing Craft Centre to buy supplies and take refresher courses with her.

According to one commentator, they came both by car and by the busload! Many local people learned to weave at the craft centre, and remember Mrs. Bannister fondly.

In 1981, the old South

Landing building became the property of Tony and Kathy Szabo, who owned the motel across the road. They modernized the old inn, and continued to welcome guests.

South Landing Inn recently changed hands again and another upgrading has taken place.

Today, there are visitors who come to Niagara on the Bike Train from Toronto and stay at the inn. Those guests who come by car can leave them behind and rent bikes that are conveniently located in the car park. They can then make a leisurely excursion to Queenston Heights or the wineries located along the Niagara River Parkway.

A very pleasant way to spend a holiday..

More Niagara's History Unveiled articles about the past of Niagara-on-the-Lake are available at: www.niagaranow.com



COMMUNITY



We invite you to submit photos and stories for consideration in this section. Send your submissions to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to be featured.



The Lake Report's Brittany Carter was in Costa Rica last week. Here's a shot of a beautiful Costa Rican sunset. Welcome back to the cold, Brittany!



Spicy chilis and hot rides

Clare's Harley Davidson Niagara held a chili cook-off last Thursday to help raise money for a local charity. All donations from the event went toward Community Support Services of Niagara, a non-profit organization that helps seniors and adults with disabilities to live independently in their homes by providing services such as home maintenance and repair, transportation, laundry and light cleaning, a lunch out, Meals on Wheels, assessing safety at home, and friendly visiting or a phone chat.. [Read the full story and see more pictures at www.niagaranow.com.](http://www.niagaranow.com) DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA



THE GOLDEN PLUNGER

With Betty and Jane

Club 55



Krystal Drachuk and John Danieluk accept the Golden Plunger for Club 55 . THE GOLDEN PLUNGER

Even though it was early afternoon when we arrived, the place had a club-like atmosphere. The pub food was hearty, well-priced and delicious. You'll find Club 55 located where it can be easily accessed from the QEW. They also boast plenty of parking. We can boast about their washrooms. Club 55 has clean, accessible and bright bathrooms. Brightest rooms in the whole place. These washroom facilities have left their exotic past behind and been given a fresh update. They are roomy and an overall good match with the family-owned, live music venue. We were made to feel like valued members. Club 55 restrooms earned their place among our elite Gold Plunger award winners, with 3.5/5 Golden Plungers.

3.5/5 Golden Plungers



NOTL DART LEAGUE

Each week, dart teams face off at local restaurants and pubs. Find scores here weekly, exclusive to The Lake Report.

Silks Jini	157
Legion Guzzlers	138
Close Shavians	132
Legion Guyz	121
Legion Airs	110
SandTrap	107
Silks Legends	98
Legion Dartbags	74



Tarot of the week

Lisa Tache/Special

DATE: Feb. 13, 2020

This is really one of the deck's most optimistic cards and a welcome addition to any reading. You can be assured

that good things are coming your way when you see this card. It's often known as the WISH card. It's a pat yourself on the back and say well done card. The Nine of Cups represents attainment, achievement & happiness. It encourages you to be thankful for what you have. When you do that, you'll end up having even more. Your heart is overflowing with love and appreciation for everything you have created in your life? You could not be happier! The Nine of Cups tells you to count your blessings. All the hard work in your life has been successfully accomplished. Your relationships, work, lifestyle and well-being have provided you with complete emotional fulfillment. Life is good!

ASK YOURSELF THIS

How can I make my wishes come true?

RIDDLE ME THIS

Forwards I am heavy, I sure weigh a lot. But when I'm backwards, I certainly am not. What am I?

Last Week: I fit in with others like me, but I don't talk. I create pictures, but I can't see. What am I?

Answer: A puzzle piece

Also accepted: Crayon/Pencil Crayon

Answered first by: Richard Maxwell

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Margie Enns, Gary Davis, Kathy Neufeld, Jacob Willms, Pam Dowling, Sylvia Wiens, Julia Klassen, Jennifer Risdon, Sheila Meloche, Susan Pohorly, Bob Wheatley, Katie Reimer, Steven Hall, Jakob Kuzyk

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



Show your loved one how much you love them with a gift from Rocky Mtn this Valentine's Day.

Gift boxes available, or a heart-shaped box of chocolate-dipped strawberries. Pre-order now and we will have them ready the day you want to pick them up.

Niagara Outlet Collection 905.685.5500 or Queen St. in the historic district 905.468.0800.





FEATURED LOCAL STORY



Graham Bettes with his service dog Maverick. Bettes is a co-founder of the Valhalla Project Niagara. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Helping veterans, first responders with PTSD

NOTL's Graham Bettes works with group spearheading program for people dealing with trauma

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Graham Bettes is one of the team members standing behind a local organization that aims to help veterans and first responders with post-traumatic stress disorder.

As a military veteran who also served as a police officer in the Greater Toronto Area for almost 30 years, Bettes, 49, was diagnosed with PTSD about seven years ago.

He says he's noticed "big gaps" in the information provided to people struggling with the disorder, some of whom didn't know how to cope with it.

Bettes, who received counselling credentials after taking an online and practicum-based master's

degree program from Yorkville University, says there are "a myriad of concerns" to take into account during treatment, like selecting a therapist, making lifestyle changes, learning coping skills or whether a person needs to take medication or have a service dog.

"You kind of have a road map with the other conditions. PTSD is like a self-guided tour," he says.

Along with a team comprised of a professional dog trainer Melodi Doiron, Niagara Regional Police officer Ken Bettes, St. Catharines Fire Service veteran Shawn Bennett and Ryan Madill, president of the St. Catharines Professional Firefighters Association, Bettes spearheaded the Valhalla Project Niagara, which is set to launch on March 22.

"Everybody in our program has PTSD. So when we say we understand the symptoms, we know what it is like to have nightmares, to not have a sleep, to cry every day, to not leave the house for days because you just can't," he says.

The non-profit Valhalla Project Niagara, which has been in the works for the past year, is an umbrella organization providing mental health treatment and education to veterans and first responders.

It includes two programs: Learn 2 Live Again, a five-day residential program teaching basic information about PTSD and how to cope with it, and an additional seven-day Valhalla Service Dog program. A spouse or a family member will be welcome to join the second program and learn

how to work with a service dog during these additional seven days of training.

As Bettes practises behavioural therapy, the programs won't focus on processing traumatic events, but rather how to deal with anxiety, utilize basic tools to battle depression or learn breathing techniques.

The programs will be offered for free at the Cave Springs Camp in Lincoln.

One of the project's goals is to eliminate the long fostering process for PTSD service dogs and reduce costs associated with it.

"When people think of service dogs, our thought process is immediately brought to (guide dogs). There's a whole fostering process involved with that, so dogs don't even begin training until they're two years old, and the dog has

most likely bonded with another person," Bettes says.

"We look to eliminate that fostering process, to give a handler two weeks of hands-on drilling and training with their dog under the watchful eye of a trainer and then we send them home."

There are currently seven service dogs who are trained by Doiron and six other volunteers. The golden retrievers received foundational training in November and December and are now at an intermediate level of training.

By the start of the program in March, the dogs will have already learned the entire course, so the Valhalla Project is rather intended to teach the handlers how to use their service dogs, Doiron explains.

"PTSD dogs need to work with their handler right at

a young age. They need to be alerted to the physical changes in someone experiencing anxiety, depression, heart palpitations," Doiron says. "A young puppy working with their handler all day will start picking up on those cues."

Bettes has also been running a Veterans Jiu-Jitsu Niagara program for veterans and members of the armed forces and emergency services. The training is offered every Sunday at 9 a.m. at Evolve MMA gym on Welland Avenue in St. Catharines. The program is not limited to people with PTSD and anyone within the target demographic is welcome to attend.

"It's part-training, it's a part-support group. Sometimes people just chat, don't even take part in anything," Bettes says.

2.65% GIC

30 Months, or the option to cash out at 18 months.

Because life happens.

VISIT [PENFI.CA/INVESTING](https://penfi.ca/investing) >

PenFinancial
Credit Union