



## Willowbank sells former Laura Secord school for cool \$2.2 million

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The former Laura Secord Memorial School in the village of Queenston has a new owner.

The school has been sold for just over \$2.2 million to Canadian Niagara Heritage Inc. of Niagara Falls, owned by the Shahani family.

“It’s very important to Willowbank because investing the net proceeds will allow us to use the earn-

*Continued on Page 2*



## Clerk leaving NOTL after six months on the job

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Ralph Walton, municipal clerk for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, has resigned after just six months on the job.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero confirmed Walton’s last day will be July 14 but said she could not comment on why he is leaving.

His resignation comes 13

*Continued on Page 3*

# French and British relive battles

## Re-enactors spend weekend staging Napoleonic clashes at Fort George



Fort George was the site of three pitched battles between Napoleonic troops and British redcoats and militia. After the battle, as casualties lay strewn across the plain of war, musicians play a dirge for the dead before retiring to their military tents and awaiting their brandy rations. EVAN SAUNDERS

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

If you were biking through Fort George last weekend, you may have found yourself questioning what century you were in.

And a fair question it would be, as a re-enactment of the Napoleonic wars took over the fort on July 9 and 10.

Hundreds of re-enactors dressed in historic regalia fought multiple mock pitched battles between

British and French forces on the grounds.

They even called the site their home for the weekend, sleeping in tents pitched across the fort.

“I love all aspects of history but the daily life of a soldier is the thing that I

find most interesting,” said Chicago resident and re-enactor Stan Archacki. He has been participating in re-enactments since 2007. He was on the French side of the combat over the weekend.

For Archacki and other

re-enactors, these events provide a unique form of personal education.

“The material culture, the clothing, the equipment, the cooking, the day to day activities — I really like the

*Continued on Page 9*

## Ortona: Remembering Canadian sacrifices during the liberation of Italy

*First in a series*

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

In a small seaside town in Italy in 1943, Canadian soldiers gave their lives fighting to free the country from the Nazis during the Second World War.

It was one of the most

difficult combat actions the Canadian forces would face: The Battle of Ortona.

A small group of people gathered at Inniskillin Wines in Niagara-on-the-Lake to hear the story of at least one Italian who wants to ensure the Canadians’ sacrifice is never forgotten.

“Ortona was the bloodiest, most frustrating and most depressing battle for

the Canadian army and certainly the biggest battle honour,” Angela Arnone told the assembly of residents, veterans and members of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124.

Arnone, a professional translator from Ortona, was invited to receive an award from Lord Mayor Betty

*Continued on Page 8*



Angela Arnone was in NOTL to share her experiences working with Canadian veterans to ensure the legacy of the Canadian liberation of the town of Ortona is never forgotten. EVAN SAUNDERS

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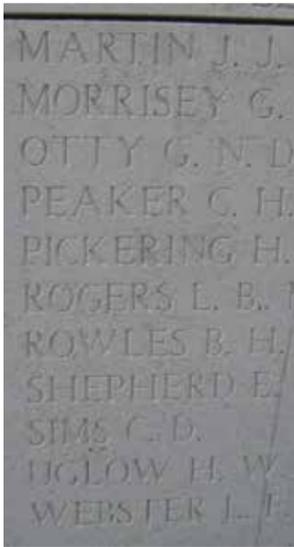
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From left: Edwin Shepherd held the rank of major but to be closer to the action, he had his rank lowered to lieutenant. Shepherd's name is inscribed on the Menin Gate memorial, reserved for those who died but their bodies were never found or identified. The bloody and muddy battlefield at Ypres. COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION/CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM



A vehicle rolled over on Niagara Stone Road on Sunday morning near Pillitteri Estates Winery. SUPPLIED

## Minor injuries in morning crash

A vehicle rolled over on its side after hitting the ditch and concrete entrance at Pillitteri Estates Winery on Niagara Stone Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Sunday.

The crash happened at 5:48 a.m. The driver sustained minor injuries, Niagara Regional Police said in an email. Police would not provide any further information.

# THE MONUMENTS MEN

For Edwin Shepherd, the path of glory led to the grave

*This year marks the 100th anniversary of Niagara-on-the-Lake's iconic clock tower cenotaph. In recognition of the cenotaph's century of service through two world wars and beyond, NOTL historian Ron Dale has been researching the stories of the people – all men – whose names are engraved on it. This is one in a series of stories to document and remember the sacrifices these combatants made. Future instalments will commemorate those named on the Queen Street cenotaph and on the municipal memorial in Queenston.*

Ron Dale  
Special to The Lake Report

Among the thousands of men who volunteered to fight in the First World War there were a relatively large number who had good reasons to keep out of front-line service without a stain to their reputation.

Men who were considered a little too old for active service, who were married with children or who worked in certain industries could enlist with the expectation that they would be assigned a task as part of the "rear echelon" – the men and women who performed the functions of documenting, feeding, clothing, housing, training and healing the soldiers.

They normally served away from battlegrounds, in less dangerous areas.

Edwin Charles Shepherd was not one of these men.

Shepherd was born in Toronto on Nov. 11, 1878, coincidentally 40 years before the end of the First World War.

His father had been a police magistrate and hotel keeper in Toronto before moving to Niagara Township to try his hand at farming when Edwin was a child.

The family then moved to North Bay to manage another hotel and finally moved to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake prior to 1911. Edwin stayed in North Bay, where he worked for the railroad in various functions, specializing in the maintenance of steam engines.

In North Bay, he met Ellen Richardson. The couple were married in Toronto on July 1, 1909, and had two sons born in North Bay: Edwin Henry in 1911 and Jack Richardson Shepherd two years later.

Shepherd had been an active militiaman, serving in the 23rd Northern Pioneers Regiment after which he was commissioned as an officer in the 97th Algonquin Rifles Regiment.

Then came the war. On March 10, 1916, he volunteered for active service,

joining the 159th First Algonquins Battalion at North Bay. The battalion trained at Niagara Camp in Niagara-on-the-Lake, where Shepherd was promoted to major.

Shepherd's battalion was shipped to England, coincidentally arriving on his birthday, Nov. 11, 1916. Here the men of the 159th were transferred to the 8th Reserve Battalion.

Sitting in England while the war was raging across the Channel must have chafed Shepherd, who wanted to get into action.

He was offered a position in a railway construction battalion, due to the expertise he developed in civilian life, but he refused that sort of posting. He was seeking glory.

Shepherd realized that infantry lieutenants were in demand on the front lines because junior officers were being killed or wounded at an incredible rate. At that time a battalion was commanded by a lieutenant-colonel, with a major as second-in-command.

The battalion was subdivided into four companies commanded by majors or captains. Each company normally had four platoons of about 50 men commanded by a lieutenant assisted by a 2nd lieutenant.

By 1916 the platoon was considered the tactical unit,

with lieutenants leading from the front while most senior officers lived less-dangerous lives. So lieutenants had a high mortality rate. Many majors and captains were killed in the war but not at the same rate as lieutenants.

Shepherd, anxious to get into action, volunteered to reduce his rank to lieutenant and in that capacity was assigned to lead a platoon of the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion that was fighting in France. While that regiment initially was mounted, it was now serving as regular infantry.

Shepherd arrived at the front on April 28, 1917, in time to participate in the 2nd Battle of Arras. His unit was then sent to the Ypres, Belgium, area to fight in the Battle of Passchendaele.

It was at this prolonged battle where, according to the official report, he was "killed by a sniper's bullet when leading his platoon to the attack on Bellevue Spurs near Passchendaele on the morning of Oct. 26, 1917."

Shepherd's death was witnessed and reported but his body was not recovered or identified. His name is inscribed on the Menin Gate and on the Niagara-on-the-Lake cenotaph.

Like Pte. Reginald Thomas, his final resting spot is "Known only to God."

## One dead, one injured in rollover

A single-vehicle crash in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Saturday left one woman dead and a man injured.

The accident occurred on York Road between Concession 1 Road and Concession 2 Road at around 10:30 p.m. Niagara Regional Police

said the vehicle was rolled over when officers arrived. An adult female was pronounced dead at the scene. An adult male was extricated from the vehicle by the NOTL firefighters and transported to a local hospital. Police said he was listed in "serious condition."

## Willowbank sale earnings will be used for operations

*Continued from Front Page*

ings for the operation of the school of restoration arts," said John Scott, vice-chair of the board of the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts.

The property, just over an acre in size, was owned by Willowbank but is no longer needed by the school.

Willowbank will use a portion of the money from the sale to discharge a mortgage and invest the balance to support school operations into the future, Scott said.

"The certainty of annual contributions from the investment will be a welcome supplement to the resources needed to provide our students with the best learning experience possible in restoration arts," he added.

No plans for the future of the site have been unveiled yet.

"We are pleased to have acquired this property and have agreed to permit the school to run certain classes at the site until the end of the year," said a spokesper-

son for Canadian Heritage Niagara.

In February, when Willowbank announced it would be putting the property on the market, Scott noted, "We've been analyzing Willowbank and what it needs to operate and be sustainable in the long-term."

"We said, 'What do we need, what don't we need?' and you come down to the fact that that particular school is not required. We basically don't use it," he told The Lake Report.

"It needs to be maintained and the resources we have we want to dedicate towards the operation of the (Willowbank) school, so it makes no sense for us to continue it and it makes all kinds of good sense for somebody else to have it."

Willowbank, an internationally acclaimed, not-for-profit, private career college, trains experts in a variety of fields related to heritage restoration, conservation and adaptive reuse of existing older buildings.

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## Weekend blaze shows need for **dedicated** firefighters

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

A weekend garage fire on Concession 2 Road was the perfect venue for Niagara-on-the-Lake's volunteer firefighters to show their stuff.

At 3:55 p.m. on Sunday, July 10, a garage fire on Concession 2 was reported to NOTL Fire & Emergency Services.

At 3:56, NOTL firefighters were on route to the scene.

By 4:02 they had arrived. At 4:07 p.m., the fire was being doused with water. No one was injured.

That marks a total of 12 minutes for the volunteers to be on scene and fighting a potentially life-threatening fire.

"For a volunteer firefighting department, it's absolutely unbelievable," deputy fire chief Jay Plato said at the scene.

Generally, it can take 10 minutes for teams to even arrive at the scene, let alone for them to already have water flowing, he said.

It's even more impressive when you consider the fire was in a rural area of town, where there is not easy access to a hydrant.

Part of what made the



The fire quickly destroyed the home's garage. MARLOU SOTTO TIRO PHOTO

team's response time so exceptional was the introduction of a new weekend dedicated-duty crew.

"Funnily enough, this is just the first weekend that (the duty crew) started," said Plato.

"We employ a duty crew now because of the weekends being busier and just with a lot more tourism and traffic in the area. The duty crew are in place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m."

The home is owned by the Skubel family, who were away at the time.

Plato said the volunteers' stellar response time prevented the fire from spreading into the attic.

"Typically, once a fire gets into an attic space it

usually starts to run and that's what takes houses down."

All five fire stations responded to the call on Sunday. Having the duty crew get there so quickly meant the next arrivals could focus on other safety measures rather than getting water flowing, said Plato.

"To be able to contain this to the garage — the crews did a fantastic job. Everything went fairly smooth based on operating guidelines."

Some neighbouring heroes also worked to make sure the fire didn't get out of hand before the firefighters arrived.

"I was in my garage when I smelled something

bad," neighbour Bill Schulz recalled.

"My first instinct was to inform my neighbour that their house was on fire. I was worried if they were inside. Thankfully, no one was at home," he said.

Schulz even got his garden hose going and started battling the blaze himself while he called the fire department.

"What mattered was the safety of the family but thankfully the family was not in the house and no one was hurt."

A cause for the fire nor total damages have yet to be determined, Plato said.

- With files from Richard Harley and Marlou Sotto Tiro.

## CAO says **staffing shortages** to be addressed

Continued from Front Page

months after the town fired his predecessor, Peter Todd, in June 2021 after eight years with the town.

Town council will have an in-depth discussion about staffing issues in NOTL and at municipalities all over the province on Monday, July 18, during an in-camera session not open to the public.

"The only thing I was told is that he was leaving," Disero said in an interview Tuesday.

"I asked if there was anything I needed to worry about at this point and I was told no."

She said chief administrator Marnie Cluckie told her the town has a plan to address staffing shortages next week with council.

"Every municipality is struggling to try and keep



CAO Marnie Cluckie. FILE

staff and hire staff. We are not exempt from that," said Disero.

In an email to The Lake Report, Cluckie said Walton resigned from the town and was not let go.

"The town is not able to disclose personal details regarding staff or their decisions," she said.

"The town extends its gratitude to Ralph for his contributions to the orga-

nization. Ralph has been critical in preparing for and ensuring the town is on track for a successful 2022 election," she added.

"The town has been fortunate to have benefitted from Ralph's professionalism, knowledge, and wide range of municipal experience."

In his short time at the town, Cluckie said Walton made an impact.

"He championed the clerk's and bylaw enforcement division with intentionality, care and professionalism. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with him."

Rumours swirled last week about Walton's pending exit.

The matter was made clear when the agenda for a special committee of the whole meeting was released over the weekend. The agen-

da for the meeting listed one item: the appointment of a town clerk.

The document also specified that Walton had delegated duties of the clerk to Cluckie for the meeting.

During a committee of the whole planning meeting on July 11, Disero's assistant Victoria Steele served as clerk. There was no mention of Walton during the meeting.

He started with the town in February and brought with him a wealth of experience in municipal management. He had previously been the regional clerk in Durham and Niagara.

He has served in various other roles in municipal governments for more than two decades.

Walton did not respond to requests for comment by publication time.

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# 'This is why I moved here,' Cherry Festival a sweet Saturday

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Who doesn't love a cherry pie?

The St. Mark's Anglican Church Cherry Festival proved a sweet success Saturday as all the fresh-baked cherry pies were sold out early. As usual.

Residents and visitors alike expressed their joy at the return of one of Niagara-on-the-Lake's most famed summer social gatherings.

"This is why I moved here," said NOTL resident Kerry Ryan.

"I wanted a community where there was lots going on. I've joined the Newcomers Club, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Social Club — the community centre, it's great."

Ryan moved from Toronto a little over a year ago and said the community spirit of NOTL is second to none.

Andrea Douglas, one of the lead organizers of the festival, said the roughly 400 cherry pies baked for the day were scooped up early.

More than 100 volunteers worked to make the festival a success, she said. From running stands to baking goods and pies, those many enthusiastic volunteers kept things going all day.

"It's really all about getting our community back



Left: The 400 cherry pies sold out by noon. Bottom left: Linda Gordon holds one of the last remaining slices of cherry pie as the festival nears its end. Bottom right: Penny-Lynn Cookson and Anjulika Chand man the jewelry booth. Chand is a member of St. Mark's congregation and has been visiting the cherry festival since she was a child. This year, she said she wanted to give back to the community.

EVAN SAUNDERS

coffee among other treats. Their fare also sold out.

"We really needed it because we've been closed for a long time," said Rogers.

Taylor said festival-goers were enthusiastic, but some left without a pie.

"They're most disappointed when they drive all the way out from Mississauga at one o'clock in the afternoon and the cherry pies have been sold out since 10," said Taylor.

"I suggested they come the night before and get a bed and breakfast."

Parishioner Anjulika Chand tried her hand at running the jewellery stand for her first time this year.

"I've been going to St. Mark's for six or seven years now but I've been coming to these festivals since we were little kids and always loved them. So, I thought this was a great opportunity to join in and help out," said Chand.

"It was nice to see everybody out, enjoying themselves and having a good time. You know, giving back to the community that we all love."

All the jewellery for sale at the church had been donated by residents and parish members, she said.

Still hungry? The Niagara-on-the-Lake Peach Festival is scheduled for Aug. 13. Watch The Lake Report for further details as the date approaches.



here and we can't believe how many people have come out today. We're kind of overwhelmed and that's a good thing," said barbecue volunteer and regional Coun. Gary Zalepa.

"I think people have an appetite to get back outside and socialize," he said.

Zalepa said he has been volunteering for the festival for about 10 years.

"I got trained by the professional — (Coun.) Gary Burroughs. The baton was

handed down, so to speak."

Zalepa is also a member of St. Mark's and said the congregation was looking forward to people visiting once more.

"A lot of parishioners are excited to do something together instead of online."

"This event is also really key for sustainability for St. Mark's and getting that back on track."

Sustaining St. Mark's, home to NOTL's oldest cemetery, was a subject of



its own at a booth near the back of the festival where Sally Mitchell was raising money for the cemetery restoration.

That graveyard is older than the town of NOTL, with its earliest burial dating back to the 1780s, said Mitchell, who sits on the cemetery board.

"We are restoring another 20 monuments this year," she said.

The cost for work done in the cemetery this year is

budgeted around \$20,000, much of that going toward headstone restoration, she said.

Volunteers did not feel like their hard work and time went to waste.

"I think the day's been very successful," said Kathy Taylor, wife of Lake Report feature writer Tim Taylor.

"Very successful," fellow volunteer Joy Rogers added.

Taylor and Rogers were running a baked good stand with muffins and

# Town says it was **unaware** Lawson Signcrafters could fill ShopNOTL order

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake did not know that NOTL's only sign-making business was capable of filling its order for ShopNOTL banners, a spokesperson says.

As reported last week, Taylor Lawson of Lawson Signcrafters expressed frustration that the municipality used an out of town signmaker for its ShopNOTL campaign.

The campaign encourages people to purchase from NOTL businesses.

"At the time, the town

was not aware that Mr. Lawson's business included the development of large banner signs as required for the ShopNOTL campaign," spokesperson Marah Minor said in an email.

Lawson Signcrafters is the only sign printing business in NOTL.

In a series of emails earlier this year, Lawson tried to contact the town and find out what kind of work it needed done for the campaign and who would be printing the signs.

He never got a response. But The Lake Report did.

"Classic Displays (in Mississauga) printed the

signs. This company has done some banners for the town in the past and has previously overseen some dismantling and installation of banners and signage on municipal flag poles," said Minor.

Minor said the project never went out to tender as the town is not required to do so for projects under \$5,000.

She said the work done by Classic Displays cost \$3,000.

Minor said the town would be considering Lawson's business for any future printing needs.

However, as of July 12, Lawson said the town had



Taylor Lawson owns the only sign making company in Niagara-on-the-Lake. EVAN SAUNDERS/FILE

not reached out to him about the project.

The town is in the process of preparing the second phase of its Shop-

NOTL campaign.

It is being funded by \$10,000 from the Region of Niagara buy local micro grant, according to a town

news release.

The program will target residents of Niagara and the Greater Toronto Area with digital advertisements, videos, social media visuals, blog posts, and radio, newspaper and GO train advertisements, the statement says.

More than 270 NOTL businesses are already part of the platform.

"The town is delighted to receive this grant to help support and enhance our ShopNOTL platform," chief administrator Marnie Cluckie said.

Details about the promotional campaign can be found at [www.shopnotl.ca](http://www.shopnotl.ca).

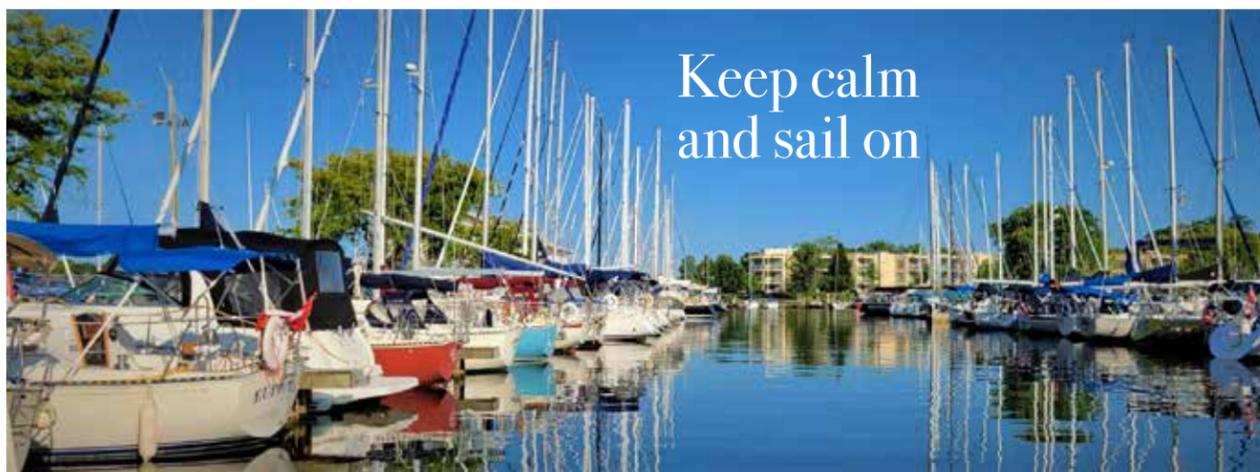
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No breeze means calm waters in the yacht basin at the NOTL Sailing Club. TONY CHISHOLM

## In-person NOTL museum lecture explores Indigenous connection to Niagara River

Barbara Worthy  
Special to The Lake Report

Indigenous Peoples' relationship with the Niagara River – its significance, influence and history – will be the focus of an in-person lecture at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum on Thursday, July 21.

Travis Hill, of the Tuscarora Nation and a member of the Beaver Clan of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, will lead the hour-long presentation of "By Foot and Paddle."

A Fort Erie resident, Hill is widely respected for his cultural knowledge.

He has been a part of the Niagara Parks team for almost 20 years and is the manager of the Old Fort Erie heritage site.



Travis Hill will lead the lecture July 21. SUPPLIED

Since the end of the last ice age, Indigenous Peoples of many nations have arrived, fought, lived or travelled through Niagara.

All have been drawn to its unique natural resources and ease of transportation, by land or water – by foot or paddle, says Hill.

Their trails and portage

routes provided the basis for many of today's modern roads and highways.

Recent archeological finds in Fort Erie also reveal the extent of a massive flint-knapping industry dating back at least 11,000 years, and shows extensive trading of tools and weapons between Indigenous groups.

"And when you see artifacts that are in fact pieces of beautiful art you know these people were not just at war, or nomadic, they had well developed communities," said Hill, who has given presentations on Indigenous culture and interpretation throughout Ontario and the United States.

The museum's lecture series offers extensive insights into the astonishing Indigenous history in Niagara, and the centuries-old significance of Niagara waterways to Indigenous people.

Hill lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. and registration is required. Tickets are free for members, \$10 for non-members.

Go to [www.notlmuseum.ca](http://www.notlmuseum.ca) to register for the lecture.

## NDP's Gates takes on job as party's critic for long-term care

Staff  
The Lake Report

New Democrat MPP Wayne Gates has been named the party's leading voice on long-term care, home care and retirement homes.

"It's no surprise this is an issue that's close to my heart. I've been saying for years long-term care was broken in Ontario – but the pandemic really showed us how bad it was," said Gates, who represents the Niagara Falls riding.

"We had seniors literally dying of thirst, living in filth for days at a time, crying out for care," he said in a media statement Wednesday.



Wayne Gates. RICHARD HARLEY/FILE

"It's disgusting our seniors were treated that way. We won't let this government ignore them. We're going to propose solutions to these problems. We'll work with them to fix it, but we won't let them ignore it any more."

He said the NDP will propose a system of seniors care "driven by the need in our communities, not the profits of corporations."

Gates said the issue is particularly important in his riding, which includes Niagara-on-the-Lake and

Fort Erie – and is home to thousands of seniors.

He will be squaring off against re-appointed Long-term Care Minister Paul Calandra, who also is the government house leader.

"One of the first things I'll say is, this file needs its own dedicated minister. Right now the government house leader is using it as a part-time job. We need someone focused on doing this job full-time," Gates said.

He said his priorities will be holding accountable any private companies that abused seniors and working to repeal Bill 124, Premier Doug Ford's low-wage bill, which caps the salaries of health care workers.



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**Canada** The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

### COVID Tracker

**NOTL active cases (last 28 days): 55**  
**Region active cases: 556**  
**Region deaths: 566**  
**Region total cases: 42,197**

*\*July 13 data per Niagara Region Public Health.*

*Public health warns that "Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, limited availability of testing, and changes to case and contact management practices, case counts shown (above) are an underestimate of the true number of individuals in Niagara with COVID-19. Data should be interpreted with caution." Case data for municipalities is also now being interpreted in 28-day cycles.*



**Contributed by Patty Garriock**  
 "Gratitude unlocks the fulness of life."  
 - Melody Beattie

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## Keeping on the grind



Sam Squanch from Fort Erie does tricks at the Virgil skateboard park on Saturday. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

### Editorial

## Dedicated firefighters protect us and our homes

Richard Harley  
 Editor-In-Chief

On Sunday, during the first weekend of Niagara-on-the-Lake's new dedicated-duty firefighter program — which sees crews working the weekends instead of just being on-call — proved just how important it is to have fire services at the ready.

In this case, NOTL firefighters were able to arrive on scene within seven minutes. They had water on the flames in just 12 minutes.

That's a big accomplishment that deserves kudos.

Seeing the photos of the aftermath, just a little bit longer and the house might have been beyond repair. It still may be, but in another scenario, those precious minutes could save the life of a family member, friend or pet. And mementoes.

That's worth it. Even if it costs the town a few extra dollars. There's no price tag on a life. And clearly, the



The aftermath of a fire on Concession 2 Road on Sunday. MARLOU SOTTO TIRO PHOTO

dedicated crew program proved its worth in this instance.

If we need evidence that it can happen to anyone, this fire happened at the parental home of one of our volunteer firefighters.

None of us are invincible, and while it's up to

each of us to make sure we take care of our homes and have proper fire prevention measures in place (smoke alarms, planned exits and even sprinkler systems), it helps us sleep a little more soundly knowing there's a team ready to leap to action when needed.

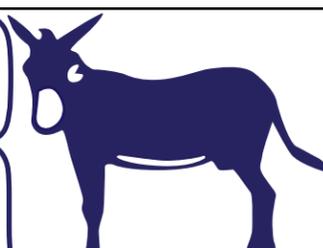
Kudos again to NOTL firefighters for jumping quickly to action.

The town's administration should recognize this important service and continue to support dedicated-duty firefighters in Niagara-on-the-Lake..

editor@niagaranow.com

### We welcome your letters

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

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## Use hotel levy revenue to give taxpayers a **break**

Dear editor:

So the town's municipal accommodation tax has been given full approval, "NOTL's 2% hotel room tax begins July 1." (The Lake Report, June 23).

It passed with Couns. Clare Cameron, Gary Burroughs, Wendy Cheropita and Erwin Wiens, who previously fought the tax by consistently voting against it while supporting the special interests, finally voting to implement it.

It seems that councillors Burroughs and Cheropita (the other two have declared they are not running) have seen the writing on the elec-

tion wall and are trying to gaslight the electorate.

Rest assured we will remind voters that these two always seem to put special interests before ratepayers.

But, folks, the fight to use part of the town's portion to offset tourism infrastructure paid for with our taxes and for the benefit and profit of the special interests, is not over.

The Local printed yet another full-page article June 29 airing the special interests continued gaslighting about the tax.

No paper has done an article from the ratepayers' point or even attempted

to put a number to the tax burden associated with NOTL's tourism infrastructure.

Councillors, especially Erwin Wiens at the council meeting, continue to resist using accommodation tax revenue to offset any of the annual approximately \$1 million of ratepayer taxes currently used to support tourism infrastructure.

It's about time the lord mayor and council put ratepayers first by voting for a more aggressive ramp up of the tax to 4 per cent and expanding the levy to all tourist rooms.

They also must codify the

use of its revenue to first offset ratepayer taxes, which pay for the tourism infrastructure, before any new tourism projects.

Kudos to Coun. Sandra O'Connor for proposing to move up the timeline so that the tax would reach 4 per cent by 2024.

Raspberries to Lord Mayor Betty Disero for her flippant dismissal of O'Connor with her "Nice try" quip.

Yes, lord mayor, it is always a nice try when proposals try to put ratepayers first.

*Joe Accardo*  
**NOTL**



## Story on farm sign had a **direct impact**

Dear editor:

Since your June 20 story (Signs of trouble: Town removes farmer's roadside ads), we have had an overwhelming number of customers stop

by and call to say the report by Evan Saunders was amazing.

We also had a local councillor phone last week about setting up a meeting to review local laws for

farmers and to see if they can be updated.

Thanks again for helping us work on our ongoing sign problem.

*David White*  
**White Orchard Farms**

## Reflections on **the Pope**, reconciliation and moving forward

Dear editor:

I wonder if you overlooked the hateful and vindictive language used by Kaspar Pold in his rant against Pope Francis, "Pope's planned apology for abuse is travesty," Letter, June 16).

Even the headline is distorted.

Online social media platforms such as Twitter have taken measures to remove such posts so as to prevent further entrenchment of hatred and incitement of vengeful acts.

I presume that a professional editor would refuse to publish the type of rage that Mr. Pold exhibited toward the Pope.

Secondly, I believe we are all enraged and horrified by what happened to our Indigenous children, their parents and families.

We are rendered speechless, however, we are in the process of bearing witness to their immeasurable pain and suffering, their ongoing grief and traumatization – an unfortunate but necessary component of the Truth and Reconciliation process.

We, too, experience anger and rage in the knowledge of the heinous acts that occurred to the children, that there was a systematic plan in place to annihilate the Indigenous culture, and the concerted efforts on the part of our politicians and religious leaders to ignore, hide, avoid and overlook sustainable rectification.

Mr. Pold says the Pope should be tried for murder as soon as he deplanes. This logic suggests that all popes, kings and queens, prime ministers and presidents be tried for injustices committed during or before their tenure.

The pain and anger that Mr. Pold might be experiencing is incomparable to the intensity of pain and suffering that Indigenous Peoples of this land have been experiencing – unless of course, he is a direct victim of the systemic abuses.

If that is the case my heart goes out to him. Recovery, rehabilitation and restoration are essential but arduous aspects of the journey toward restitution.

On initial reading I sensed his anger, but upon rereading his letter, a great sense of sadness and compassion overcame me. He is stuck in a dark place, in my opinion.

I fear he has missed the meaning of the process of Truth and Reconciliation Commission – a world-recognized model – being utilized in South American countries as well as Australia and New Zealand, and derived from the plight of the rampant apartheid in South Africa.

I am grateful and inspired by Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu. The Pope has already apologized. He is coming to bear witness to the pain of all, to ask forgiveness and to pray for all to heal, including Mr. Pold.

The central focus of the TRC is to derive truth through acknowledgement – those horrendous acts did indeed occur.

Our society must hear and listen to the stories of victims, it must ascertain the testimony of the accused perpetrators, to identify the abusers and the enablers, the

politicians and the religious, and the role of the society that allowed it.

I am hopeful that all parties come to realize there is no excuse or apology that can change what has actually happened to our Indigenous children, their parents and their families.

An apology is a necessary component. It enables forgiveness – a gift we give to ourselves. It enables victims to move forward. It is a beginning.

As with all forms of loss, all parties must go through the process of grief – not around, over or above it, but to experience it with all its sorrow.

In so doing, we too are free to move forward. Our Indigenous Peoples also have become authentic role models for all Canadians and leaders throughout the world.

My prayer for Mr. Pold is to get through his pain and to recognize that an apology is a means to an end toward healing, hope, reconciliation and peace.

*Nancy Macri*  
**NOTL**

### SAVE THE DATE

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## Ortona: Many soldiers died moments after eating Christmas dinner

*Continued from Front Page*

Disero and share her story.

She also was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal by the governor general in 2021 for her decades of work. She has organized celebrations, translated books and erected plaques, monuments and a cenotaph to commemorate the Battle of Ortona.

She told the story of the cold December battle and a momentary respite on Christmas.

On the 25th of December, amid constant fighting, shelling and death, Canadian soldiers gathered for a meal.

“In a bombed-out church at Santa Maria di Constantinopoli, members of the Seaforth Highlanders gathered in shifts for a Christmas dinner a few blocks from the fighting,” according to an article on the battle on veterans.gc.

Two musicians took it turns to perform Christmas carols on the church organ, “to play enough music to keep them cheerful and get their spirits raised so that they could go back into the fray,” said Arnone, 65.

For many of the Cana-



Left: Members of the Seaforth Highlanders sit down for their Christmas dinner. Right: Seaforth Highlanders of Canada searching German prisoners on the Moro River front, Italy. Dec. 9, 1943. LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

dians, the dinner celebration was one of the last earthly moments they had. There was no ceasefire that Christmas.

“The troops came in rotation to eat their pork and applesauce, their mixed vegetables, their Christmas pudding, their chocolate bar, their two oranges and two bottles of beer,” said Arnone.

“Then went back to the front and many of them died immediately after eating.

You will find them buried at the (Moro River Canadian

War Cemetery) and the date of death is Dec. 25, 1943.”

More than 500 Canadians died in the battle. There are more than 6,000 Canadian soldiers buried on the Italian peninsula and 1,375 of them lie in the Moro cemetery in Ortona.

“We really do respect what (Canadians) did and it cannot be forgotten,” Arnone said.

For NOTL Legion president Al Howse, it was a revelation to hear how grateful the people of Ortona are for the Canadians who laid

down their lives on the road to liberation.

“This is actually an eye opener for me that the Italian population has that same feeling (as other European nations) about what the Canadians and the Allies did,” Howse said.

“You realize that it was universally important. All of Europe needed to be liberated and it was very important that the Canadian soldiers and everyone else went to do that job.”

Arnone said it has

recently been discovered that some of the soldiers who fought in Ortona were Indigenous. At least 12 have been identified.

“So, we’ve started to celebrate them specifically because for a long time we just didn’t know. It’s very important for us to be able to honour them as well.”

Arnone said her hometown is sort of like Niagara-on-the-Lake.

“It’s a town very similar to NOTL, with acres and acres of vineyards and a decent

lifestyle. It’s a very decent place to live. It’s not rich but it’s dignified,” she said.

“And we have to thank all those Canadian boys and women for that. They didn’t know that they were saving our lives before we were even born and that’s what’s incredibly important.”

“And that’s why we shall not forget — not ‘we can’t’ — we shall not forget.”

**Next: A Christmas story from Ortona and the battle that claims 500 Canadian lives.**

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The staged battle starts with a long procession of British soldiers marching from inside Fort George to a neighbouring field where the battle will take place. Musicians play traditional military music the entire way and throughout the battle. Right: The fog of war engulfs the battlefield as muskets, rifles and even artillery are let fly. EVAN SAUNDERS PHOTOS

# Napoleonic re-enactment sends **fog of war** into the sky

*Continued from Front Page*

day to day experience of what people went through," Archacki said before taking his brandy ration.

Beyond his own interest in history, he finds the authentic experience of living a soldier's life from centuries gone by invigorating.

The re-enactment was organized by Parks Canada but relies heavily on the enthusiasm and financial investment of its volunteer soldiers.

Re-enactment enthusiasts bring along all their own equipment and outfits. From authentic soldiers' uniforms to 17th-century style military camping tents, event organizer Peter Martin said each participant could have easily invested \$3,000 of their own money in bringing history to life.

But living history isn't just a fun indulgence of interest for the volunteers. It presents the opportunity for history buffs to learn through experience and to share that hands-on learning with the public.

"I found that historical re-enactments, historic sites like Fort George and like many others here, are what I find to be a more effective way to teach history," said battle participant Sage Hallberg, who studied history at the University of Michigan.

"How to kind of get the actual message across as to what it was like — to physically kind of learn

from it and the way you learn is through touching, interacting. (It's) physical, more physical than just only through a textbook."

Fort George supervisor Dan LaRoche was excited to have the re-enactment taking place in Niagara-on-the-Lake. It is the fort's second time hosting such a gathering and organizers hope to make it a biennial tradition.

LaRoche said it bolsters the public's enthusiasm about history.

"It's shows like this that are, in many ways, the hook to get people here to learn about the stories. To learn about the stories and to learn about the history that shaped, not only the world, but the stories that helped shape our country that we know today," said LaRoche.

"And, if we're going to get on the sort of selfish end of it," LaRoche said with a laugh, "it increases awareness of Fort George."

## THE BATTLE

There were three pitched battles pitting the British military against Napoleon's French army. The battles began with a long procession of British musicians and troops marching from inside the walls of Fort George out to a neighbouring field.

The audience lined up along a bordering trail to watch the two sides engage in line battles representative of the period.



Harrison Gilbert, 11, helps run Faire Tyme Toys.

At the first battle of the weekend, 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Napoleon's army was holding the fort against a British advance. From inside the fort, the French were firing off blank cannon shots that echoed up and down the field and reverberated off the banks of the Niagara River.

"I've been around this stuff long enough that the artillery doesn't even shake me any more. I'll try to warn you next time," battle announcer Daryl Learn said after one of the first blasts of cannon fire startled the crowd.

British and French troops lined up in the field several hundred yards apart and began shooting on their commanders' orders. The fog of war filled the air as the smoke from dozens of muskets firing at once began to build up.

Learn sought to explain the tactics behind line battles, saying one of the most common questions he receives is why the troops stand in a field and fight face to face instead of employing any sort of guerrilla tactics.

"The idea was that mass firepower would easily take care of the issues. If you had a hundred muskets and they all opened fire, you're expecting about 80 to go off, and at that point aiming doesn't matter," he said.

"The wall of lead will do the aiming for you."

As the battle raged on, troops began to fall on both sides. Bodies were strewn across the plain of Fort George as the French pushed back the British assault.

One soldier took a musket ball to the stomach and screamed in agonizing pain

as he gasped his last breath before dramatically collapsing, a lifeless pile of cloth and flesh.

As men died and the battle lines faltered, the group of British musicians stood still and strong at the rear of the British line.

"The musicians are an integral part of a full-scale battle. The high pitch of the fife carries very well over the low din of musketry and cannon fire," Learn said.

"This allowed an officer to use the fife to send orders up and down the line to other officers so they could communicate effectively across large swaths of battlefield."

After the battle, the musicians played a funeral dirge and both sides retreated to their respective encampments.

## THE CAMP FOLLOWERS

No good re-enactment would be complete without its camp followers.

And followers there were. From old-time shops to starry-eyed youth enamoured with the glory of battle, the range was on display at Fort George.

"I'm a camp follower as a male. I'm going to be on the battlefield one day," said 16-year-old Terry Holly from Cobourg.

She said she was first introduced to the art of the re-enactment by her stepfather when she was seven.

"Ever since, I have been obsessed with this stuff," she said with a laugh.

"I've been learning some of the drills and stuff since I was young and I've been doing militia and helping out with that."

Terry was happy to have two friends from Cobourg with her. All three were dressed in a homespun cloth outfit which denoted them as camp followers.

Vendors set up their tents at the entryway to Fort George to make the most of the influx of visitors.

"I like helping out, I like selling the toys and I just like walking around the fort," said Harrison Gilbert, an 11-year-old employee at Faire Tyme Toys.

Harrison was operating the stand with his grandfather, Jim Gilbert.

Gilbert has been running Faire Tyme Toys since he retired about 20 years ago. He said he makes many of the toys himself but some are custom-ordered.

He was selling wooden swords, functional toy crossbows, painted wooden shields and other timely items.

And it was not lost on Gilbert that his young grandson has developed a liking and a love for what his grandfather does.

"I like (Harrison's interest) a lot. He is my only grandson. So, the fact that he likes it, he really likes it, I am very pleased with."



**"I must have flowers, always, and always."**  
- Claude Monet

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# 'He's such a perfect role model': Town unveils bench to honour Terry Fox Day

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

On a July day 42 years ago, Gloria Ghetti brought the inspirational Terry Fox to the quiet town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to be honoured at the Prince of Wales Hotel.

Now, years later, the town marked July 12 as Terry Fox Day to celebrate his historic journey.

To kickstart the special day, the town unveiled a bench in his name. On the bench is a plaque that reads: "In Honour of Terry Fox and His 1980 Marathon of Hope."

"My mother, Gloria Ghetti, brought Terry down to Niagara. She picked him up at the Hamilton airport and chartered the plane to bring him down," said



Lord Mayor Betty Disero, left, Joan King and Donna Sattin stand behind a bench in Simcoe Park dedicated to Terry Fox. SOMER SLOBODIAN

Donna Sattin, who still lives in NOTL.

She described how meaningful it is that her mother had the honour of meeting

Fox and how proud she is to see that led to a day to recognize the Canadian hero.

Sattin was invited to the

unveiling by Joan King, who has been organizing the NOTL Terry Fox Run for about 16 years.

Due to the pandemic, the

town's annual Terry Fox run has been virtual since 2020, so King wanted to do something special to honour Fox and the day Ghetti brought him to town.

"So I thought, what can we do to keep the spirit alive here now that we haven't had anything for two years?" said King.

That set in motion plans to have a day dedicated to Fox. So, she contacted Lord Mayor Betty Disero to see if July 12 could be dedicated to him.

"When she called me and said, 'Well, I'd like to do something to commemorate the visit that Terry made to Niagara-on-the-Lake,' I just said great. What would you like to do?" said Disero.

She and King went down to Simcoe Park to see if there was a bench they could put a plaque on.

Luckily, they found one that happened to be empty.

And, serendipity: The bench is located where runners line up for the Terry Fox Run in September.

"It couldn't be any more perfect," said Sattin.

Disero said they sent in the request for the plaque to the town on April 15 and it was installed by June 8.

On April 12, 1980, Fox began his Marathon of Hope from St. John's, Nfld. For 143 days, he ran close to a marathon every day, roughly 42 kilometres.

He covered a total of 5,373 kilometres until he had to stop just outside Thunder Bay.

"He's such a perfect role model," said Disero.

The annual Terry Fox Run in Niagara-on-the-Lake will be back in person this year on Sept. 18.

# TD Jazz Fest brings summer series to NOTL

Staff  
The Lake Report

The TD Niagara Jazz Festival is ramping up for its ninth annual summer festival, which will bring shows to Niagara-on-the-Lake July 20 to 22.

"It's been such a journey but here we are back to some in person events this summer," said festival runner Juliet Dunn.

"We're returning to the some of our favourite wineries and unique new venues where we like to present jazz and world music. We couldn't be happier."

She said the festival will have "something for everyone and lots of fun for the whole family."

Here's the list of shows:



Festival co-creator Juliet Dunn. RICHARD HARLEY

**Wednesday, July 20:** Late Night Jazz in the Vineyard with Dizzy and Fay, at Stratus Vineyards, NOTL.

**Thursday, July 21:** Soul Jazz in the Vineyard, Natural Elements featuring Jillian Mendez, at the Hare Wine Co., NOTL.

**Friday, July 22:** Jazz in the

Vineyard, Terry Clarke Trio, at the Hare Wine Co., NOTL.

**Saturday, July 23:** Jazz Picnic, Tia Brazda, at the Brown Homestead, St. Catharines.

**Saturday, July 23:** Sax in the Vineyard, Lance Anderson and his Quintet + Simon Wallis on sax, at

Henry of Pelham Winery, St. Catharines.

**Sunday, July 24:** World Music on the Beach, with various world music artists, at Club LaSalle, St. Catharines (a free event).

For ticket information visit, [www.niagarajazzfestival.com](http://www.niagarajazzfestival.com).

# A berry good summer



Wild cherries, raspberries and blackberries are blooming at the edges of forests around town. And they're particularly sweet this year. RICHARD HARLEY

  
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From left: Ken Schander, John Boot, Karen and Chris Hatch, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, president Greg Fedoryn, Paul Lalonde, Brian Crow and Shaun Devlin help spread sand at Queen's Royal Park. SUPPLIED

## NOTL Rotary Rocks project *inspires other communities*

Maddy Gordon  
Special to The Lake Report

Ten members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club were rockin' it last Thursday morning, shovelling and spreading 12 tonnes of sand around the Rotary Rocks project at Queen's Royal Beach.

The rocks, whose centrepiece stone is engraved with the inspirational motto, "Have you made someone's life BETTER today?", were placed on the beach in 2019 and the lake-side installation has been enjoyed by many visitors to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

But the wind and waters of Lake Ontario washed

away much of the original sand, prompting last week's rehabilitation.

NOTL Rotarian Paul Lalonde, the creator of the centrepiece phrase, wanted to focus on spreading a universal and positive message to inspire others to spread kindness throughout the world.

"The idea was that the Rotary Rocks are a place of reflection and also a call to action. So to sit there and ask yourself 'How do you make somebody's life better?' will hopefully make your life better," said Lalonde.

The club's positive message has had an impact not just locally, but over the border as well.

After hearing about the NOTL project, Rotary Clubs in Monroe Falls and Stow City Centre, Ohio, have begun working on similar designs.

And the club in Ann Arbor, Mich., as well as two others in New York state, have been inspired to start similar projects in their own communities.

"It's certainly a point of pride for the (NOTL) club," said Lalonde. "It's been incredibly rewarding to see that people appreciate it so much."

The Rotary Rocks project helps to encourage people to pause, reflect and do positive things to make the world a better place, he said.



NOTL Rotary president Greg Fedoryn. SUPPLIED

## Registration now open for *heritage trail fun run*



Maddy Gordon  
Special to The Lake Report

Body Online registration is now open for the Niagara-on-the-Lake heritage trail committee's 5K Fun Run/Walk and 2K Dog Walk.

The fundraiser is Sept. 24 but is limited to 150 runners/walkers and 50 dog-walkers. Cost is \$45

per person, excluding a credit card fee.

Registration is open till Sept. 21 but also will be available on the day of the event – if all spots are not yet filled. Cost at the check-in is \$60, cash only.

The run and walk along the Upper Canada Heritage Trail will raise money to help rehabilitate and preserve the historic route.

Each participant will receive a backpack, medal, water bottle and refreshments at the end of the race. Various prizes can be won.

The committee is looking forward to the run and for the community to play a part in protecting the trail, said spokesperson Tony Chisholm.

For more information, visit [www.heritagetrail.ca](http://www.heritagetrail.ca).



**I'm shorter than the rest,  
but when you're happy,  
you raise me like I'm the best.  
What am I?**

**Last issue: Voiceless it cries, wingless flutters,  
toothless bites, mouthless mutters. What is it?  
(And what is the riddle from?)**

**Answer: The wind. And the riddle is from The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien.**

**Answered first by: Mary Drost**

**Also answered correctly (in order) by:  
Patti Dolby, Jane Morris, Claudia Grimwood,  
Becky Creager, Bert Dandy, Pam Dowling,  
Carol Durling, Doug Bruce,  
Ted and Kim Carmichael, KC King**

**Email answers to [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com),  
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The shop carries a wide range of items. SUPPLIED

## Style Canada opens pop-up shop in town

Maddy Gordon  
Special to The Lake Report

Style Canada, an online female-led media company centred around fashion, beauty and lifestyle, has opened a summer retail pop-up called The Edit in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Located at 233 King St., the chic general store features a wide variety of products ranging from florals, clothing, baked goods, wellness and jewellery.

It is open Thursday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the month of July.

The Edit is carrying local, national and international vendors, but strives to focus

on promoting Niagara vendors, including Coconut Quartz and Pippa & Peach.

“Eighty per cent of the brands in here are Canadian, even more so the majority are local,” said Elise Gasbarrino, editor-in-chief of Style Canada and organizer of the pop-up.

The NOTL resident said she was inspired by the town’s spirit of community and women in business to open the pop-up.

“I’d love for it to continue to be a place where, after being online for so long, people can come in and see the products and brands that they haven’t experienced face-to-face yet,” said Gasbarrino.

## Aura On The Lake brings Indian cuisine to NOTL

Molly Bowron  
Special to The Lake Report

Authentic Indian cuisine has made its way to Niagara-on-the-Lake, bringing fresh spices and a new dining experience with the opening of Aura On The Lake.

The cozy restaurant at 223 King St. is owned by Nittin Sharma and his wife Anjna.

Sharma, 47, and his family have been coming to NOTL for almost 12 years and said this is his first restaurant venture.

“I always wanted to open one, so I said why not? If it’s not here, then where?”

The restaurant had a low-key soft opening on July 1.

“All in all, we had a very successful launch. Our team rose up to the challenge, the kitchen people, the service staff, and everybody came together,” he said.

“We are proud of what we achieved so far,” said Sharma, who studied at the Institute of Hotel Management, Catering & Nutrition in India.

It’s a common misconception that Indian dishes are always spicy and hot, said Sharma.



Nittin Sharma and his wife Anjna are open for business at their new restaurant at 233 King St. MOLLY BOWRON

“Many people think that they might not have the palate for it, but what we are doing here, is we are concentrating on the flavours (with) all the spices that I use.”

“If I cannot grow it, I’ll buy it. But when it comes to mixing it, I’m not buying any pre-mixes. I’m grinding everything fresh the way I want to present it.”

Aura aims to go beyond the usual perception of what Indian food is, he said, “and as our team grows, as

they gain their confidence, as they come to know their own capabilities and they explore their own creativity, our menu is going to grow.”

Along with the aroma of spices and fresh ingredients, the mango shake made with white rum and triple sec adds a refreshing touch to the experience.

As a first-time restaurateur, Sharma said his biggest concern is striking “a balance between what I like personally and what is expected out of me as a

food provider.”

With all the challenges that come with opening a restaurant, Sharma credited his wife with always having his back.

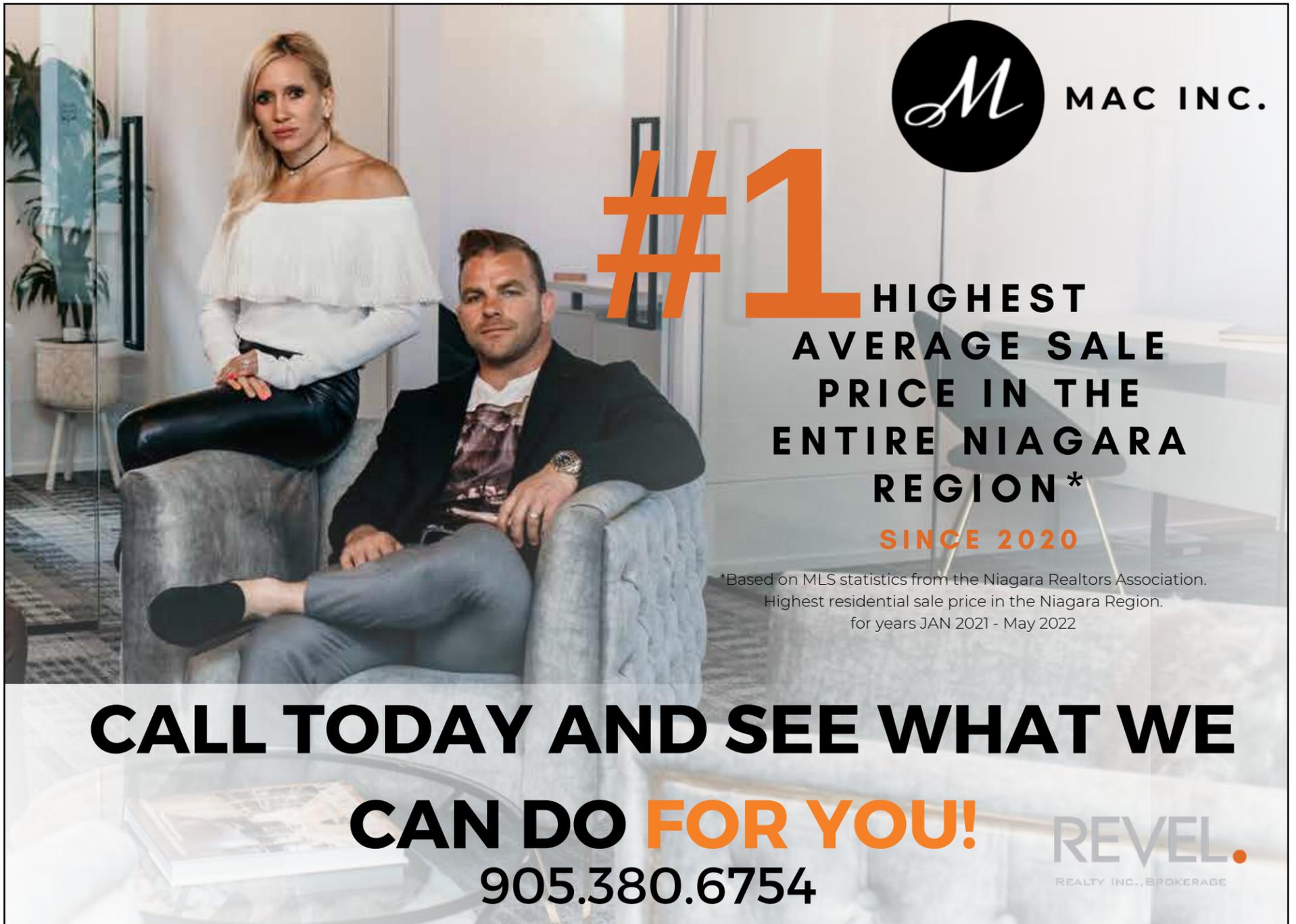
“She supported me throughout as I transitioned from being a chef in 2005 to being a taxi driver to being a nurse, to being a realtor, to being a chef again. She’s had my back every single moment.”

Sharma added, “She’s been the runner in this venture of ours. I’ve been here putting in hours, but she’s the one who listens to me when I get upset.”

“Even now her car is broken down, so she’s taken my dad’s car and gone to pick up stuff which we can only get in the GTA because there is not a single supply here who can provide me with those items.”

It’s the early days of the new venture and Sharma says they’re still learning.

“We are getting more efficient at doing it. My recipes are changing according to the feedback I’m receiving, so eventually we will get somewhere, where I think everybody will be glad to come here and try it.”



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# Help Me Rhonda can help you spruce up your home

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Help Me Rhonda, help, help me Rhonda. For 30 years, that's exactly what HMR – Help Me Rhonda's Interiors – has been doing.

Rhonda Holloway started her company in 1992, mostly doing design, furniture, draperies, accessories and colour consultations in Durham Region.

She also had a painting crew and specialized in faux finishes.

In 2005, her husband John retired as a millwright and joined the business to help Rhonda expand HMR's services.

"Before that, I was watching my clients spend over budget for important things like window coverings, accessories to finish the look, or on the other end of the spectrum their contractors were not completing the job," Rhonda says.

"So now we do in-home renovations, which include beautiful dream kitchens and master bathrooms, flooring, tile — anything



Rhonda and John can help take your home from lacking to luxury. Give them a call.

that the inside of a home needs," she says.

HMR has a wonderful team of cabinet manufacturers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers and other trades to help get the job done.

Plus John is very knowledgeable about blinds and

shutters, and has expertise at installing blinds, draperies and other essentials, Rhonda says.

He also helps her with things like furniture placement and hanging artwork.

The couple moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake a

month ago and, even though it was a scary decision giving up 30 years of clients, they wanted to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

"We absolutely love it here and find the people so kind and generous," Rhonda

says. "And the wine, of course!"

Rhonda takes a project from beginning to end, listening to the client's needs and working with their budget.

"People always ask where I get my gift from and I

have had several years of training but I do believe all true artists are born with their gifts," she says.

"There are many things I'm not talented at – like singing, but I can make a beautiful home."

"It's a passion I've had since I was a young girl."

Among the services HMR provides are colour consultations, window coverings such as blinds and draperies, furniture and upholstery, area rugs, accessories, plus kitchen and bathroom renovations.

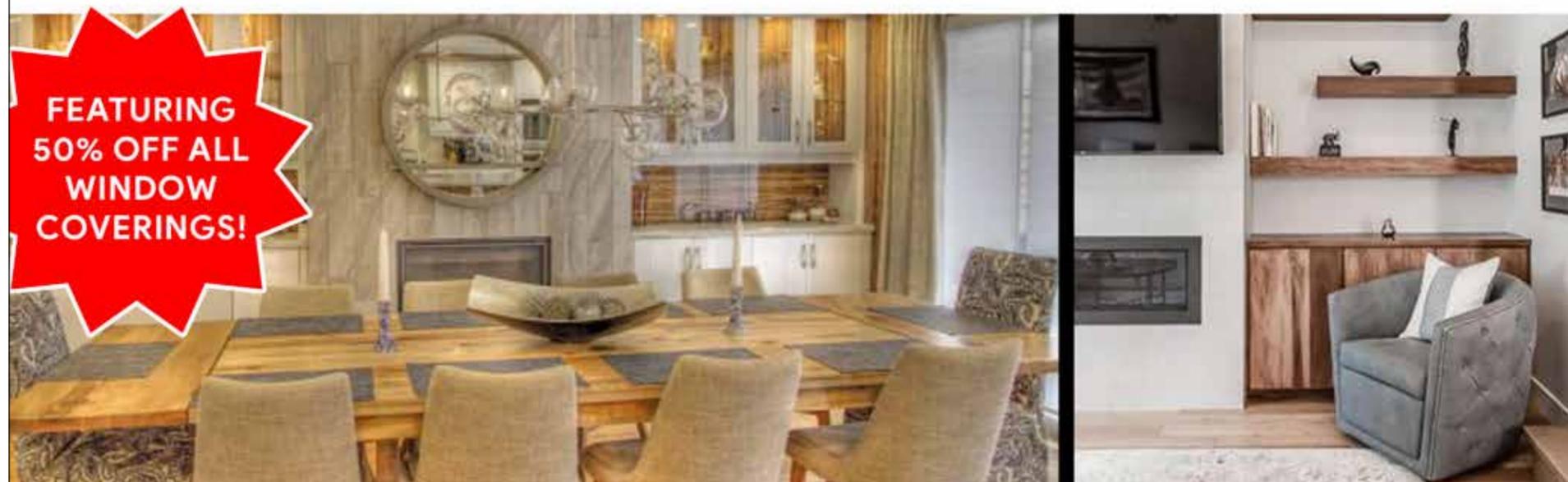
"It's a complete in-home decorating and renovation service," Rhonda says.

The company carries Sun Glow window coverings, Hunter Douglas shutters, JF Fabrics for all your drapery and upholstery needs, carpets and rugs from Minster Interiors, furnishings by companies like Elran Motion Furniture, Brentwood, Renwil, Korson, and solid wood items from Durham Furniture, plus many more.

"Call us today for a free consult and for any of your project-related questions," Rhonda says.

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- Rhonda and John

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# Women compete in Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Invitational

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

Betty Divok of Rockway Vineyards and Louise Robitaille of Niagara-on-the-Lake teamed up Tuesday to post the best score in the NOTL Golf Club's Women's Invitational tournament.

Golfers from across Niagara competed in the popular bi-annual event, which culminated in an outdoor awards presentation and luncheon near the 18th hole.

The twosomes played nine holes of aggregate team score and nine holes of alternate shot.

Other low net winners were: Flight A: Cindy Wegg and Barb Smith (first); Leah Taggart and Cathy Long (second); Michelle Fraser and Kim Eros (third).

Flight B: Martha Cruikshank and Lisa Allen (first); Pam Kilmer and Anne Trimble (second); Carolyn May and Sharron Marlow (third).

Flight C: Tillie Lopinski and Sandra MacDavid



Members of the Couples League at NOTL Golf Club were decked out in red and white to celebrate Canada Day on July 1. KEITH VANT PHOTO

(first); Lea Jensen and Sandra Barreca (second); May Chang and Linda Anderson-Kozik (third).

Tuesday was a busy day as the men's WOOFS league also played its nine-hole summer scramble, with 17 teams competing.

The foursome of Rob Yamamoto, Bill Garrioch, John Read and Dean McCann carded a spectacular 6-under 30 to edge out several teams by two shots.

Second-place teams, all

with 4-under 32, were: John Sobil, Neville da Silva, Charlie Rate, Norm Kerr and Rob Lowe; Ted Wiens, Jim Cosgrove, Don Stewart and Randy McCartney; John Reynolds, Peter Danaskas, Ted Baker and Brock Sansom; Harry Huizer, Bill Jenkins, Jack Hanna and Gary Wasylo; Rick Janes, Russ Phipps, Steve Ferley and Bill Farnell.

On Thursday, July 7, in men's league play Mark Derbyshire won low gross

while Al Bannister and Lou Puglisi were tops in Stableford points scoring.

Other winners: longest putt: Jim Meszaros (#2), John Kozik (#5); longest drive W.K. Smith (#3); closest to the pin: Ricky Watson (#4), Puglisi (#9); closest to 150 marker #8: Rob Patterson.

Neville Da Silva and Alan Robb won net skins while Derbyshire, Watson and Robb claimed gross skins.



Lisa Allen, centre, congratulates Betty Divok and Louise Robitaille, winners of the Women's Invitational on Tuesday at the NOTL Golf Club. YOLANDA HENRY PHOTO



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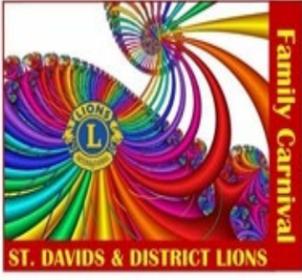


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6-7:30 pm - Love Construction  
8-11pm - Clockwork

**Friday July 22nd**  
4-5:30 pm - Randy Busbridge  
6-7:30 pm - Kyle Lamb  
8-11 pm - Vinyl Flux

**Saturday July 23rd**  
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6-7:30 pm - Jacob D'Souza  
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# 'Best team in the country,' Thunderhawk alumni reminisce about early days

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Meridian Credit Union arena was filled with fond memories on Saturday as Thunderhawk alumni gathered to reminisce about their early lacrosse-playing days in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"It is the best team in the country," alumnus Aidan Buis, 22, said at the arena.

Buis played transition for the Thunderhawks from 2016 until 2019.

"It feels really good to be back on the home court that we grew up playing on," he said.

"We learned to play lacrosse here. Probably spent three or four nights a week during the summer here."

The gathering coincided with two exhibition games featuring the U22 Thunderhawks, an undefeated squad that is shaping up as one of the best teams in Ontario.

Buis' lacrosse training in NOTL was a formative experience that continues to



Jared Hope with his son Bennett and daughter Tracy. The two youngsters are already following in their father's footsteps as lacrosse players. EVAN SAUNDERS

shape his life. He now plays for the Brock University Badgers.

He said the intensity of lacrosse has always been an attraction.

"I love the adrenalin. I love the hitting. Who doesn't love scoring a goal? Although, I don't do that very often," he said with a laugh.

But Buis plays defence, or transition in lacrosse parlance, and we trust that for every goal he may have scored over the years there was one that was prevented.

Buis has been spending his recent Friday nights teaching a clinic for kids ages three to 15 at the arena. A magnanimous act, said Tracy Hope, the wife

of another alum and mother of two budding lacrosse players.

"These boys need some cheer. What 20-year-old gives up their Friday night six weeks in a row for free?" the St. Davids resident said.

She was at the arena with her husband Jared and their two children Bennett, 6, and Catherine, 4.

Jared played for the Thunderhawks from 1989 to 2003.

"We had a lot of fun," he said.

And while he doesn't play any more he is still active in the lacrosse scene, helping with his son's team in the paperweight division.

Keeping the love of lacrosse strong across generations speaks to what Jared said he cherishes about the sport.

"It's a lot about the community. I feel like lacrosse is a small community so you get to know everyone well," he said.

But his kids' love of the sport is what has him involved these days.

"Just the kids having fun. We didn't have to come out here and play after but they just want to pick up balls, they want to shoot and they want to have fun."

The community is essential for lacrosse's health as a sport dwarfed by the popularity of hockey and basketball, he said.

"Lacrosse, it's all volunteers. It's people spending their personal time. So, it's great to see so many people out supporting the community."

The U22 Thunderhawks are undefeated in league and exhibition play.

"The Thunderhawks are doing great," said Jared. "Hopefully they can continue the streak."

Both kids had a simple, one-word response about why they enjoy playing lacrosse.

"Checking," said Bennett.

"Daddy," said Catherine, prompting a chorus of awes from her parents.

Tracy said lacrosse has been a great sport for her young children.

"With hockey you have to learn how to skate but with lacrosse you can just get out there," she said.

"So, I'm a proud lacrosse mom."

**The U22 Thunderhawks remain undefeated as they gear up for the Ontario championships. See the latest at niagaranow.com.**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### INSTALLATION OF AN ALL-WAY STOP AT THE INTERSECTION OF MCNAB ROAD AND CHURCH ROAD



**NOTICE** is hereby given that the Council of the Corporation of the Town Niagara-on-the-Lake has amended **By-Law 4308-09** to establish an **all-way stop** at the intersection of McNab Road and Church Road.

Currently, only McNab Road traffic is required to stop. Based on the amended By-Law, now drivers on Church Road are required to stop as well.

Drivers are urged to use extra caution at this intersection as traffic on Church Road adjusts to the new stop signs.

New stop signs will be erected on July 20, 2022, and enforcement of the all-way stop will commence immediately upon installation.

Those with questions are encouraged to contact Mike Komljenovic, Engineering Supervisor for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake by emailing [mike.komljenovic@notl.com](mailto:mike.komljenovic@notl.com) or calling 905-468-3266.



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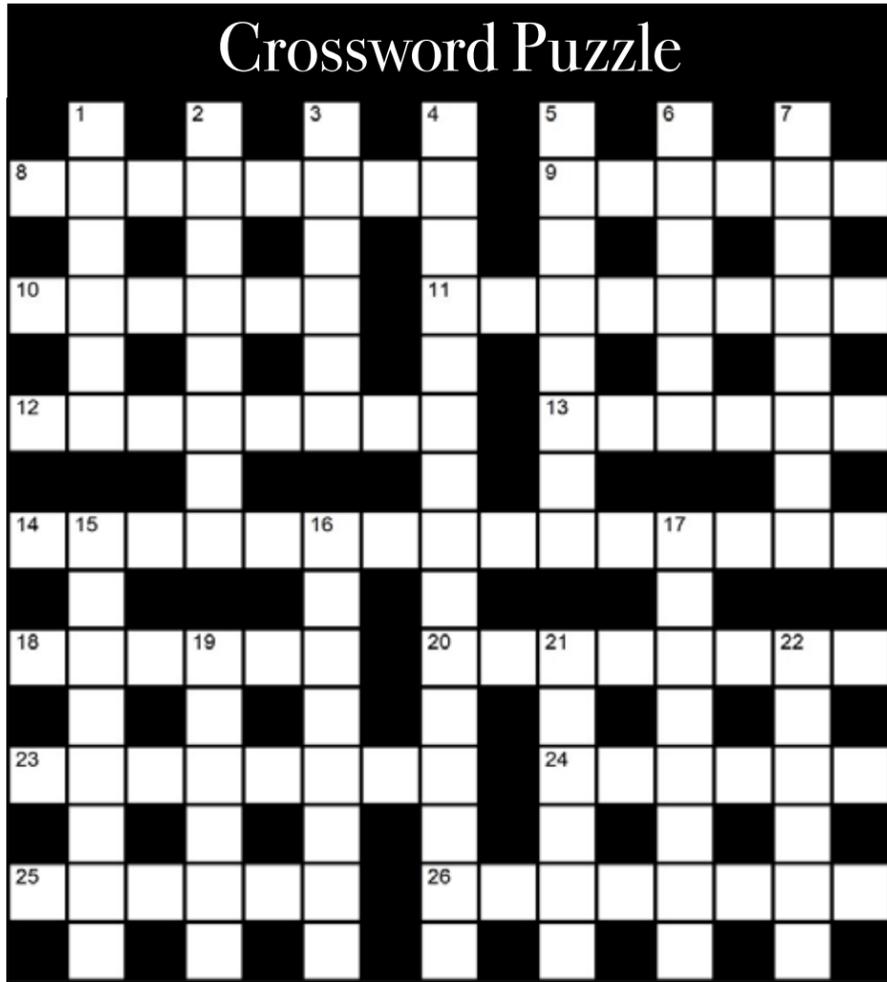
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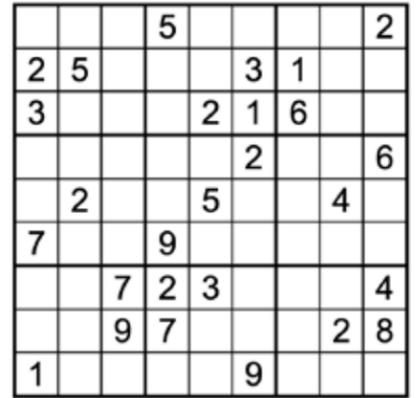
# Have some fun



- Across**
- 8. Smallest state down under (8)
  - 9. You can't get out this way (2,4)
  - 10. Sultanate in Borneo (6)
  - 11. Kind of ale (3,5)
  - 12. Switch positions (2,3,3)
  - 13. Victorious WWII force at Midway (1,1,4)
  - 14. Broad appeal (7,8)
  - 18. Knight cap? (6)
  - 20. Or go West, badly weakened (3,5)
  - 23. Old Scratch (3,5)
  - 24. Hanseatic port on the Weser (6)
  - 25. They are acquired on marriage (2-4)
  - 26. Author of "The Rivals" (8)
- Down**
- 1. Sterile (6)
  - 2. Lofty place (8)
  - 3. Dark blue powder (6)
  - 4. An enlarger (10,5)
  - 5. Coach (8)
  - 6. Impulse transmitter (6)
  - 7. Delivery professionals (8)
  - 15. Type of seal (8)
  - 16. Efforts to change society (8)
  - 17. Appeared with Nyasaland on stamps, once (8)
  - 19. Dividing line in a triangle (6)
  - 21. Turn these to gain an advantage (6)
  - 22. Oscillate (3-3)



## Last issue's answers



  
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# Here we go again: Another wave of COVID hits home



**DR. BROWN**

Dr. William Brown  
Special to The Lake Report

Just when most people have happily returned to life without a mask and social distancing, a mini surge in COVID cases involving variants of Omicron is sweeping across Canada.

Some of those cases involve residents and staff in long-term care, but most pass undetected because they're asymptomatic or no testing was done.

Similar canaries in the mine occurred in the early days of the U.K. and Omicron waves and are part of the now familiar pattern with how this virus behaves.

First a review. In late 2019, COVID (SARS-CoV-2), swept through China and much of the world and was followed by

successive waves of variants of the original virus, of which the latest variants are versions four and five of Omicron.

The original Chinese variant in late 2019 and first half of 2020 spread rapidly and led to many deaths in populations unprotected by vaccines, and especially among the elderly and those unable to mount effective immune responses.

The widespread adoption of contact tracing, social distancing and wearing masks managed to "flatten the curve" for much of the latter half of 2020 by effectively slowing the spread of the disease and reducing the impact on overwhelmed acute care facilities.

However, falling case numbers and news that effective RNA and other vaccines were on the way, created a false sense of security in the late fall and Christmas season of 2020 – just as the U.K. variant struck.

Soon case numbers skyrocketed, ICUs were full again and later-than-hoped-for vaccine deliveries meant this more highly contagious

and possibly lethal variant, hit hard, especially those in long-term care facilities, the elderly and anyone who was immunocompromised.

Unfortunately, the highly effective RNA vaccines weren't available until mid-February – too late for many.

Fortunately, when the even more transmissible and possibly lethal Delta variant arrived in the spring of 2021, most people had received their first shot of an effective vaccine and within another three to four months their second shot.

This all happened without much of the drama and formidable resistance of the antivaccination campaign that would later hobble vaccination programs, especially in the United States, but also in Canada and parts of Europe.

Mid-2021 saw another ominous note, the growing awareness that immunity even with the best vaccines, began to wane three to four months following the second dose.

This prompted first Israel (where the initial study was done), and soon other countries, to offer a booster shot and later, for much the same reason, a second booster, again with the original vaccines.

With the coming of effective vaccines and continuing distancing and masking, numbers again fell in the fall of 2021, only to explode once more over the

holiday season. This time the cause was a far easier to catch variant called Omicron, which proved to be much harder to keep out of long-term care facilities.

Fortunately, for the great majority who had received their primary and first and second booster shots, few became sick enough to require hospitalization.

For the unvaccinated, however, the high numbers of cases meant acute care facilities, particularly in the United States, were often overwhelmed before case numbers finally began to drop.

These days, theatres,

restaurants, and bars are open without restrictions – the first truly good news for most of us in close to three years.

The trouble is that Omicron has continued to evolve and the vaccines are now clearly outdated.

This raises the spectre of a new wave, again in the late fall and early winter when people are inside once more, but this time not masked or distancing and protected by less-effective vaccines.

That's the bad news that few, except the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, are talking about.

The good news is that the manufacturers of the RNA vaccines have developed updated vaccines that are effective against Omicron variants.

The not-so-good news is these vaccines will not be available until October at the earliest and possibly several months later if delays in scaling up and distribution occur as they did the first time around.

That means this winter we will be under-protected by outdated vaccines, wide

open as far as public health measures go, and facing later versions of Omicron or possibly a brand-new variant we haven't heard of yet, just as we faced the original Omicron variant a year ago.

That one stunned everyone last holiday season and winter.

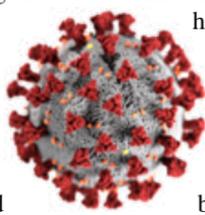
That's the worry for the fall and even this summer, if the current mini surge turns into a much larger wave of cases.

There's another worry too – whatever happened to the idea of developing a universal vaccine?

The FDA and Dr. Anthony Fauci thought the idea was very promising and possibly the only way to get ahead of this virus. Was it complacency and a shortage of funds, what with the U.S. Congress so divided and the war in Ukraine?

And Canada – what have we done to develop vaccines?

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



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## Paradise Grove Ferry – The Albino

The Niagara wharf and marina was used by more than just the Canada Steamship Lines passenger ships. Locals were very enterprising when it came to profiting from the thousands of visitors to Niagara-on-the-Lake each summer. This is the steam tug Abino, which was owned by Joseph Masters and his brothers in the early part of the 20th century. They used the boat for fishing, but also taxied people between the dock area and Paradise Grove for 10 cents per person. The Grove was a picnic spot on the Fort George reserve that had a pavilion and swings for those who wanted to get away from it all. Today, many of you drive right through this small forest on your way into Old Town from the Niagara Parkway. It is near the intersection of John Street, Queen's Parade and Ricardo Street. Note the Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club, formerly a Canada Steamship Lines building, is in the background at centre-right.

## Good design is all about context



Brian Marshall  
Columnist

One of my favourite sayings goes: "Good design costs no more than bad design, but bad design scars the streetscape for generations."

And, in my opinion, good design is fundamentally directed toward achieving contextual integration with the streetscape specifically and the community generally.

I have written extensively about the steps and criteria that lead to integration, so I will not indulge in a lengthy reiteration today but only draw on what I wrote in one of those articles: An integrative (good) design is "one that is anchored in the topography of the land, contextually appropriate within existing streetscape(s), respects the visual line-of-sight/privacy of neighbouring properties and, among other considerations, adds to the established architectural

integrity of a community." Let's visit two new builds in Old Town to illustrate this point.

On the corner of Mississauga and Anne streets, a New Traditional design in the vernacular expression is well on its way to completion. Facing onto Mississauga, its facade presents two distinct massings, each with a fairly low pitched front facing gable roof, that are linked by a short cross-gable section.

The three individual depths (relative to the property line) on the facade create the impression that the two massings were built at different times and the house evolved into its current configuration by dint of an addition.

The inclusion of brackets in the eaves and supporting the window visors, plus the oriel bay on the right massing recall historic precedent. The two masses are then tied together with the wrap-around porch principally supported by Tuscan columns, as would likely have been the case had this house actually been built in the late 19th or early 20th century.

Importantly, to New Traditional stylistic parameters, the designer has made several choices to ensure that the building only recalls history but does not pretend



Vernacular New Traditional design. BRIAN MARSHALL

to actually be historic.

The use of combined cladding types (board and batten on the first floor/clapboard on the second floor), the standing seam metal roof of the porch and oriel being a blue, the decision not to paint out the brackets and visors are all examples of these choices.

I can also appreciate how, on Anne Street, the ever-present garage included on virtually all new houses, has had the normal dominance of a yawning door on the cladding field mitigated by dropping it below grade.

When considering the gestalt achieved by the design, I think it safe to say that, at this point, it could be placed in any number of locations in Old Town and fit in. In other words, it not only works in the streetscape of its current location, but is actually contextually integrated within the integrity of the community.

Then, just down Anne Street at the corner of Simcoe, a building in the early

stages of rising, already presents a different proposition.

Set within a streetscape principally comprised of single-storey and storey-and-a-half homes, the building visually towers above its neighbours with two full storeys capped with a mansard roof, adding even more height. Its facade is dominated by the double-car garage (is there not a relatively new garage bylaw?).

The building covering, by my rough estimate, about 70 per cent of the corner lot it sits upon (in a town where lot coverage often is 33 per cent?), the Anne Street facade unapologetically dominates the streetscape.

The sheer height and length of this wall not only breaks the rhythm of the existing streetscape, it radically changes the neighbourhood's lines-of-sight while adversely impacting the privacy of adjacent properties.

To be fair, the house is fairly early in construction and its finishes may have some redeeming effect on these issues, but I doubt it. The building's huge single massing and lot coverage cannot be changed and the impact on the streetscape will remain.

I know which one I'd rather have in my neighbourhood.

## Looking to the Stars

### Acting on your feelings can inspire trust and growth

**Thursday, July 14:** The temptation to change your mind is likely misguided. Teamwork wants to be the way to go. It was July 14, 1969, that the film "Easy Rider" opened. Directed by Dennis Hopper (who also played a lead role) and also featuring Peter Fonda and Jack Nicholson, it changed Hollywood cinema forever.

**Friday, July 15:** One relationship or more is the cause of considerable frustration. Be honest and allow others room to do the same. Judged by many to be the best ever, Dutch painter Rembrandt, was born on July 15, 1606.



**Saturday, July 16:** Today, the sun is conjunct Mercury, which means we are already in the middle of the current Mercury cycle, which started on May 21. If you initiated a new project when the Mercury cycle started, now it's time to bring it to life. The first paper money, a European banknote, was issued on July 16, 1661, in Stockholm, Sweden.

**Sunday, July 17:** Venus enters Cancer tonight. It feels good in Cancer, since both Venus and Cancer speak the same language: that of emotions. This doesn't mean it's all warm and cozy. In Cancer, Venus squares Jupiter in Aries (early in the transit) and Pluto in Capricorn (later on). There is some feistiness – but that's not necessarily a bad thing. Acting upon our feelings creates an energy of honesty which facilitates trust and growth. The most educated head of state, Angela Merkel, former chancellor of Germany, turns 68 today.



**Monday, July 18:** Today, Mercury opposes Pluto in Capricorn, and two days later, the sun follows suit. Pluto oppositions are always intense because they bring to our immediate attention things that have been bottled up. When something that has been bottled up screams for release, our first reaction is to fight against it. That's why Pluto transits are associated with power struggles. When Pluto opposes Mercury and the sun, notice where your resistance is triggered, what makes you angry, what makes you feel powerless. This resistance will point to something very important about yourself – this is where Pluto is asking you to level up, and become stronger and more resilient. On July 18, 1976, in Montreal, Nadia Comăneci became the first gymnast in Olympic Games history to score a perfect 10.

**Tuesday, July 19:** Mercury moves from emotional Cancer into proud Leo. Communications are confident, if sometimes a bit too flamboyant. The first women's rights convention was held on July 19, 1848, at Seneca Falls, N.Y.

**Wednesday, July 20:** It's the third-quarter moon in Aries today, which means the sun in Cancer is 90 degrees from the moon in Aries. And the suggestion of a standoff is supported everywhere in the solar system. So lay low and keep an eye out for what unfolds. Happy birthday number 51 to Canadian actor Sandra Oh. Winner of two Emmys and a Golden Globe (for "Killing Eve"), she first caught our attention on "Grey's Anatomy."



Check out my podcast "Looking up to the Stars" with forecasts, stories, music and me. At [www.lutts.ca](http://www.lutts.ca).

*Astrology is a form of entertainment, not a science.*



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# There's much more to harvesting herbs than just clipping their leaves



**GROWING TOGETHER** 

Joanne Young  
Gardening Columnist



Basil is a great garden herb to grow. Make yourself some pesto! JOANNE YOUNG PHOTO

Nothing brings a favourite recipe to life like some fresh herbs. Even better, fresh herbs from your own garden.

Whether you have a large garden or just a couple pots on a balcony, you can grow your own herbs.

The reason herbs and edible flowers smell and taste so good is because they contain essential oils. Essential does not mean the oils are needed by the plant, but rather the term refers to their essence or aroma.

Essential oils are volatile, meaning that they will vaporize when heated. Later we will look at how this information helps us understand how and when to harvest your herbs.

Harvesting your herbs may seem like an easy task, and it generally is, but there are right and wrong ways to do it.

Knowing when to harvest herbs for optimal flavour and how to do it is important.

Cutting the stems, leaves or flowers in a particular way will ensure the plant will continue growing and producing.

Here are some helpful tips to get the most from your herbs.

\* As you are probably aware, some herbs are an-

nual, such as parsley and basil, and need to be planted every year. Other, like sage, thyme, tarragon and oregano are perennial and will come back year after year.

Harvest your leafy annual herbs, like basil, by pinching off leaves at the tips of the stems. This will encourage new growth, making the plant fuller and keep it going.

Harvest leafy perennials herbs by removing longer stems of leaves. Stemmed herbs, like lavender, rosemary, parsley and cilantro

should be harvested by cutting off outer stems at the base.

When harvesting annual herbs, you can cut back half to three-quarters of the plant at one time. For perennial herbs, never take more than one-third at a time. If harvesting herbs for flowers, remove the blooms before they are in full flower.

\*You can start to cut your herbs when they are large enough to sustain new growth. Once you have planted your herbs, whether in the garden or in pots, wait until they have started

to put on substantial growth before cutting them.

\*Timing is essential for getting herbs at their peak flavour. Since essential oils in the plants are volatile and are diminished by heat, to maximize flavour you want to be cutting them when they are most aromatic and when the tasty oils in the plants are at their highest levels.

This occurs in the morning, after the dew had dried but before it's hot outside.

\*You do not want your herbs to develop flowers unless you are using the

flowers themselves. If you use the leaves after the flowers appear, they will have a more bitter taste. To keep getting a harvest of leaves, you can pinch flowers off as they begin to show.

\*Water the plants a day before you harvest so your plants aren't stressed out.

\*It is better to harvest after a few sunny days than after a rainy spell.

\*Pick and use herbs fresh whenever you can for the best flavours. However, you are likely to get more than you can use and there is no reason to let them go to waste. The best preservation methods are drying and freezing.

To dry them, wash and dry the herbs and arrange them evenly on a tray in a single layer. When fully dry, store in jars.

An easy way to freeze herbs is to wash and chop them, and add to water in ice cube trays. When frozen, store the cubes in a bag in the freezer.

Now that you are getting the most from your herbs, the only problem left is to figure out what recipe to make for dinner tonight.

Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at [joanneyoung.ca](http://joanneyoung.ca)

## Through the bridges



Canada geese watch the John D. Leitch sail through a raised Homer Bridge. STEVE HARDAKER PHOTO

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