



Stolen Cadillac found **torched**

Escalade was taken Thursday night from Virgil family's driveway



Megan Vanderlee's 2007 Escalade, below, was found destroyed in Welland after it was stolen from her driveway. SUPPLIED

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Megan Vanderlee didn't expect to wake up on Friday to discover her 2007 Cadillac Escalade had been stolen from her driveway in Virgil.

She kept her hopes up that it would be found — and later that day it was. Only it had been burned to a crisp.

Her once black family vehicle was now a torched, grey mess sitting in a Welland impound yard.

Niagara Regional Police said they discovered the



vehicle late on Friday near Biggar and Morris roads.

"They found it at 10:30 Friday night, so it must have had a good romp somewhere. I guess somebody called in a carbecue,"

Vanderlee said.

"I don't know how they got it on the (tow) truck, mind you. They must have dragged it up the ramp," she added, curious how it even got to an impound yard after.

When her insurance company said it would need to appraise the vehicle, she said, "Well, bring a dustpan."

She said the whole experience really "sucks."

"Why do you have to burn it?" she asks.

It was her husband John who discovered the truck was gone.

"He got up in the morning and went to work and came back and said, 'Uh, did you loan somebody the Cadillac last night? I'm like, 'No.'"

Continued on Page 7



Erwin and Dorothy Wiens. KEVIN MACLEAN

Essay:

An uncomfortable message about **race and tolerance**

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Erwin Wiens has big shoulders. A former police officer, turned farmer and now also a town councillor, at six foot five he is no pushover.

In the two weeks since he tossed a figurative grenade about race and inclusion into the debate about changes to Niagara-on-the-Lake's controversial, month-old parks bylaw, he says he has dealt with hate mail, calls to resign and loud criticism from some quarters.

There also have been supportive voices, but the memorable ones seem to be those that call him out.

He's OK with all that; he expected it. And as far

as Wiens is concerned, he has nothing to apologize for, because he believes everything he said is true. It was a message he has wanted to deliver for a long time and by that evening at council, he had reached a tipping point.

In some of the strong reactions condemning his words about "very wealthy, very privileged" white people, the deeper, subtler point he was trying to make was lost: Far too many people in society at large and in NOTL in particular, treat differently those whose customs, skin colour or heritage are non-white and less privileged.

Sometimes it is overt and

Continued on Page 12

Stay-at-home order should be **extended** until mid-June: Hirji

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara's COVID-19 cases are starting to trend downward but we are probably a month away from safely winding down restrictions, says the region's chief medical officer of health.

Dr. Mustafa Hirji told a news conference Monday the falling case trend is positive, but warned that it will likely be until mid-June

before cases are low enough to safely open again.

While case numbers are dropping, they're not declining as quickly as they rose, he said. "So it's going to take longer to get out of this than it did to get into it."

Asked what the chances are the Ford government will listen to public health officials, Hirji said it's a better question for political pundits.

Most public health, sci-

ence and hospital experts are recommending extending the stay-at-home order, he said. "All I can say is that, based on the science, the recommendation is actually that we need to extend" the latest shutdown.

Niagara's numbers are falling faster than the provincial average, he said, and overall there is strong evidence that vaccines are starting to play a role in reducing cases and severe illness.

Provincially, almost all COVID-19 cases are now variants, mainly the U.K.'s B.1.1.7 version, but there have also been confirmed cases of the Brazilian P.1 variant and the most recent B.1.617 variant, discovered in India, Hirji said.

"We know those variants spread more easily and because they spread more easily it's more difficult to control them and bring them down, particularly now

that they are in such high numbers."

He said while it's clear the P.1 variant is more severe, it's not certain if the B.1.617 variant is more deadly or more contagious. That variant exploded in India, but he noted it was about the same time India relaxed COVID-19 restrictions, so it's unclear if it was a result of a more serious strain, or due

Continued on Page 9



Dr. Mustafa Hirji. SUPPLIED



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Traffic, safety biggest concerns near Ryerson Park: Survey

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A town survey about problems around Ryerson Park revealed residents are concerned chiefly with crowded on-street parking, increased traffic and fears about pedestrian safety.

Friends of Ryerson Park spokesperson Brian Crow was pleased with the number of people who responded, telling The Lake Report it demonstrates “that there’s interest in the problems here.”

Respondents included Niagara-on-the-Lake residents, residents of the Chautauqua area, and people who work in NOTL or who have family here.

The top issues identified included an overflow of traffic in the area, increased street parking affecting the neighbourhood, overcrowding in the park and pedestrian safety.

48.3 per cent of all respondents said that they visit the park very often, while 48.2 per cent said that they have decreased their visits to the park recently. Roughly 30 per cent of respondents said that their decreased use of the park was due to overcrowding.

With 402 responses, the online survey attracted more participants than any previous poll, the town reported. The average response rate to other surveys was 111.

Half the respondents, 201, said they lived outside the



With just a few cars parked on the street, emergency access is blocked. EVAN SAUNDERS

Chautauqua neighbourhood, while 186 said they lived there.

The Friends of Ryerson Park group has been vocal since last year about issues near the park and its January delegation to council prompted the town’s survey.

The group has cited the influx of cars parked on side streets as a safety hazard that would prevent emergency vehicles from accessing the area.

The park’s most popular features for respondents were the view and access to Lake Ontario for swimming.

“It’s a victim of its own beauty,” Lord Mayor Betty Disero told The Lake Report.

The increased popularity of the park was pinpointed

by the survey to have occurred starting four or five years ago, with some respondents feeling that the pandemic has furthered the park’s popularity as more people search for outdoor activities that are not shut down.

Disero pointed out that the much-larger Niagara Shores Park, just west of Ryerson, was closed to vehicle traffic four or five years ago, due to “people going in there and doing wheelies, and other things they shouldn’t have done.”

She hopes that, by working with Parks Canada, which owns Niagara Shores, that facility can be reopened and some of the crowds at Ryerson Park will move over there.

“If that comes to fruition

that will open up a whole large new landscape for people to go out and look at sunsets. We’re trying to find a balance for Ryerson Park,” Disero said.

“I’m really hopeful people will get to see Niagara Shores. It’s just amazing. The sunsets are the same sunsets, and there’s a beach so people can go down and dip their feet in the water.”

Niagara Shores is still open for foot traffic, but the lack of parking has made the park less popular than its smaller counterpart.

Websites promoting Ryerson Park as a good spot to visit in NOTL were also blamed for attracting crowds to the park.

Over 49 per cent of respondents felt increased use of the park has resulted in

significant negative impacts to the area.

The number one negative impact as highlighted by the survey was on-street parking, with 302 people saying this was the worst issue happening in the area.

The survey presented three options to deal with street parking in the area. The third option – with no parking on either side of the area’s streets – was the most popular. A permit system would allow NOTL residents guests to park on the streets.

Crow expressed no worry for Chautauqua residents getting ticketed if a permit system was implemented and was excited about the popularity of the option.

“We’re really pleased the majority of the people voted for the third option when it comes to parking,” Crow said in an interview.

However, he is not sure that option is what councilors will vote for.

“We have to wait for the staff report to council. We hope that council will approve it. But it’s not a done deal,” he said.

Among Chautauqua residents the issue of overcrowding in the park was not among the top three concerns. Chautauqua residents felt that a bigger issue was pedestrian safety in the area.

“Because we live here. A lot of Chautauqua residents are the ones that walk to the park,” Crow said.

Compounding the problem of crowded street

parking is the width of the streets themselves, many only about 13 feet wide.

“They are legally a lane-way, not a street, and there are cars parking on both sides. There’s no sidewalk, no curbs, even people that ride bikes are concerned,” Crow said.

He said the main stressor for families in the area is having their kids outside on unsafe streets.

Crow emphasized the group is not trying to exclude anyone, despite some criticism to that effect. It’s about safety, he said.

“If you look at the Shaw theatre, as one example, they have a parking lot. When the parking lot gets full, they put up a sign that says you can’t enter. It’s full. That doesn’t mean they’re anti-tourist,” he said.

“Our problem down here is street capacity. The infrastructure can’t take the number of cars, whether parking or driving, that are coming through. So, it’s not anti-tourist, it’s not anti-anybody. We’re just at capacity.”

The Friends are also trying to get a sign installed along Queen Street to redirect traffic to the Queen Elizabeth Way and are pursuing the installation of speed bumps to slow down traffic.

Those options are still under review, according to Disero.

“We won’t know what staff are recommending until the report comes to council,” she said.

NOTL Rotary Club donates \$20,000 to nursery school expansion

Staff
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club is donating \$20,000 toward the Niagara Nursery School’s expansion project.

This donation will support one of six interior rooms of the new location that will carry the name of the NOTL Rotary Club. The club also will be acknowledged on the school’s “Tree of Recognition.”

The NOTL Rotary Club will be holding a golf tournament in late

summer in the nursery school’s name, with money raised going toward the \$20,000 donation.

“We are incredibly grateful and honoured to receive this remarkable donation from the Rotary Club. This is a significant contribution that will help our expansion tremendously,” said Candice Penny, executive director of the Niagara Nursery School.

The nursery school has been operating in NOTL for 49 years and notes that as more families move to town, many discover there are few child-care options.

“With no licensed child care for infants or toddlers, and a current waitlist of more than 155 children,” Penny noted the school, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Region of Niagara teamed up to expand the facility.

The expanded school means:

* The addition of infant and toddler care for children aged 18 months and younger. With the expansion there will be 10 infant care spots (there are none now), 15 toddler care spots (none now) and an additional

five school-aged spots.

* Families with multiple children of varying ages will be able to remain together at one location, easing the burden of multiple drop-off and pickup locations.

* An integrated, inter-generational focus of care will provide children with ongoing, easy access to the NOTL Community Centre’s resources.

* The addition of three new playgrounds, outfitting of age-specific children’s spaces and additional educational supplies.



Construction on the new nursery school expansion. EVAN SAUNDERS

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Simpson's offers rapid COVID testing

Not covered by OHIP, \$30 swab test is for people with no symptoms

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

A kinder, gentler and quicker type of COVID-19 test is now available to Niagara-on-the-Lake residents.

And pharmacist Sean Simpson is hopeful that his stores' vaccine supply will soon be replenished with Moderna and Pfizer doses after the province paused giving out any more AstraZeneca first-dose vaccines.

In the meantime, he urges everyone to get a shot, any shot.

"What's most important is that the first vaccine that people can access is likely the best. So, even though cases are going down, we still want to approach vaccine vaccination with a sense of urgency," he said in an interview.

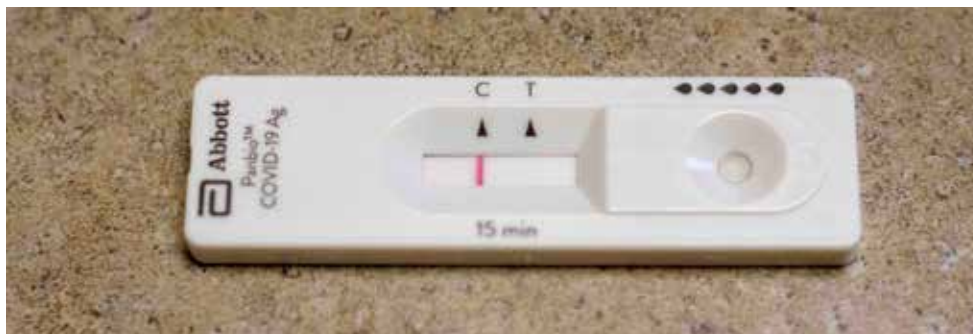
"The sooner we all get vaccinated and are afforded that protection, the sooner we'll all be able to get back to our normal lives or whatever our normal lives are going to look like."

As of this week, Simpson's two locations in NOTL have been using the new COVID rapid-test system, a "more comfortable," less invasive nasal swab test than the standard PCR test that has been in use for months.

The rapid tests, rolled out to long-term care homes earlier this year as infections and deaths soared, have been held back by the provincial government since last fall.

Simpson is happy to see them finally be widely available.

The tests are not covered by OHIP and cost \$30.



Top: Pharmacist Sean Simpson prepares a rapid COVID-19 test. Bottom: A test shows negative results for COVID-19. RICHARD HARLEY PHOTOS

They are only for people showing no symptoms, who haven't been out of the country and not been exposed to anyone with COVID, said Simpson.

While a PCR test is considered 99.9 per cent reliable, the rapid tests – with results within 15 minutes – are 99 per cent accurate, he said.

Simpson's has conducted rapid tests for a few employees of NOTL businesses and expects to do more of that type of screening.

In addition, the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, through a program with the Ontario Chamber and

federal and provincial governments, will soon roll out free rapid tests for small- and medium-sized businesses.

Simpson also sees the possibility of using rapid testing in schools, sports, essential workplaces and elsewhere to quickly screen people.

"I haven't seen the economic analysis but if you detect one asymptomatic case potentially spreading things around, and you can reduce the number of cases, then that may reduce hospitalizations, which may reduce lockdowns" – and for a relatively minor

inconvenience most people can carry on their lives without severe limitations.

In the meantime, if pharmacies like his do get more vaccines, the hundreds of people on every store's waiting list will be able to receive Moderna or Pfizer.

While the province expects more than 250,000 shots of AstraZeneca to arrive next week, those likely will be held for people's second doses.

It is unclear yet if people who already received one shot of AstraZeneca will be able to receive one of the other vaccines for their second dose.

Newark Neighbours food drive kicks off Saturday

Staff
The Lake Report

Newark Neighbours and the NOTL Rotary Club are gearing up for a porch pickup food drive this Saturday and Sunday, and are looking to residents to help ensure the event is a success.

On May 15 and 16, teams

will be picking up food donations from local porches between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

"We've been able to count on your generosity in the past. It's always been overwhelming and is appreciated very much. We're sorry to be asking but we need your help again," Newark Neighbours said in a news release.

The group notes all volunteers will wear masks and gloves, and will stay physically distanced for a contactless pickup.

Anyone wishing to donate items can call 905-468-7498 or email newark-neighbours1@gmail.com to register for pickup.

The charity is seeking dried and canned foods for

its food bank, such as soups, vegetables, chili, spaghetti, crackers, rice, cereal and granola bars.

While the Newark Neighbours thrift store at 310 John St. remains closed, the food bank is currently "well stocked" on canned tuna, stuffing mix, canned corn, oatmeal, cranberry sauce, tomato sauce and pasta.

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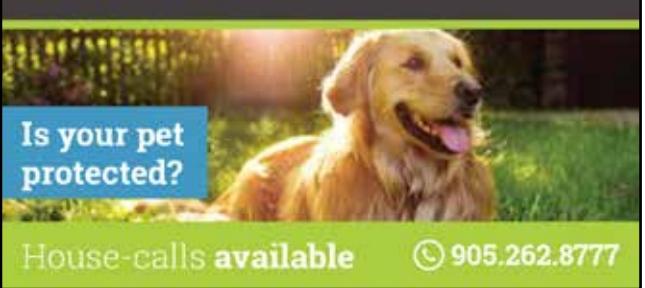
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Canada The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.



NOTL active cases: 43
Region active cases: 1,565
Region deaths: 398
Region total cases: 14,915
Region resolved cases: 12,952

*May 12 data per Niagara Region Public Health



Contributed by Patty Garriock
 "At the end of the day, all you can do is to go on. The older I get, the more I realize that just keeping going is what life is all about."
 - Janis Ian.

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Editorial: Let's learn from our mistakes

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Who is tired of lockdowns, shutdowns, restrictions, lineups, masks, sanitizers, social distancing, physical distancing, no congregating, no socializing, etc.?

Perhaps the better question is: Who *isn't* tired of all that – and more? (Plus no golf, tennis, pickle ball ... Seriously?)

But we have come this far, been through the ups and downs of an unprecedented global pandemic, so we all know the routine. (Remember when hand-washing was the buzz term? Now it's just part of our routine. Meantime, so many other phrases have since come and gone, it's difficult to recall them all.)

We have heard it all before: "Now is not the time

to let down our collective guard," "We're all in this together," "Let's be kind and caring." Cliches, absolutely. But true, undoubtedly.

What's next? All signs point to Premier Doug Ford extending our month-old stay-at-home order for another two weeks – June 2 is the date most often mentioned.

And, as other experts also have suggested, Niagara Region's chief medical officer of health, Dr. Mustafa Hirji, says mid-June is likely a better decision.

He is right and, much as we all really don't want to see our activities curtailed any longer, we owe it to each other to abide by the restrictions and do our part to try to ensure we don't get swamped by a fourth wave. (Q: Who remembers when a second

wave was just a possibility? A: Everybody. Q: Who wants to go through a fourth wave and inevitable shutdown, with more people sick and dying? A: Noooooobody.)

As pharmacist Sean Simpson mentioned this week, we are at the point where a great many people have received their first dose of COVID vaccine and many more doses will soon be available. There is light at the end of the pandemic tunnel and much as we detest the idea of staying home and curtailing our regular activities, it is the right thing to do.

Yes, we've said that before, but then Ontario reopened society too quickly, and look where it got us.

It's obvious from the science to date that getting vaccinated is one of the

key ways to wrestle this pandemic to the mat. And getting whatever shot is available is probably your wisest choice.

As Simpson told us: "The sooner we all get vaccinated and are afforded that protection, the sooner we'll all be able to get back to our normal lives or whatever our normal lives are going to look like."

That's the thing: we're not sure what normal will look like in July or September or next Christmas. But we don't want it to mean lockdown or shutdown.

So, we need to tough it out, stay home a little longer, so we can find out what that normal will be.

We've come this far. Let's learn from our past mistakes.

editor@niagaranow.com



'Respect the Neighbourhood' signs are embarrassing

Dear editor:

I guess the town is not moving fast enough for the residents of Chautauqua!

On our regular drive around town on Saturday we noticed the town was very busy. All along the Niagara Parkway every picnic table was taken and vehicles parked on the grass as the parking lots were at capacity. So we decided to take a peak at how busy Ryerson Park was?

We didn't see many people or vehicles at Ryerson Park, three of the four spaces in front of the park were taken. No speeders, no illegally parked cars, no people using the sandy beach, no loud motorcycles, though there was a quiet one right behind me, and no one monopolizing the park space. Plenty of room to put down a blanket.

However, to our astonishment, all we saw was lawn sign after lawn sign on many of the homes in Chautauqua and, we have to say, we were and are embarrassed. Lots and



A reader photographed some of the signs put up around the Chautauqua neighbourhood on the weekend. SUPPLIED

lots of signs making the neighbourhood look trashy.

One side reads "Think Safety, Slow Down" and the other "Respect the Neighbourhood." Are we to surmise that this is the only neighbourhood that should be respected?

These signs have no place in Niagara-on-the-Lake. This is totally unac-

ceptable and just outright shameful. How do you feel when you see these signs? Should these be posted throughout the Town? Did the town approve and OK these signs?

We are not familiar with the town bylaws governing lawn signs, but I can only guess, based on past areas where we lived, these

signs probably contravene the bylaws.

Is this what we've come to? A small community dictating to the town what signs should be posted on streets?

We have a 30-year-old daughter who is moving to Niagara-on-the-Lake from Toronto in June. Her favourite place is Ryerson Park. What do we tell her? That she's not welcome there?

How have we come to this? We were angry when we first saw the signs, but now we are just sad. I encourage all residents of NOTL to take a drive or walk or bike the streets of Chautauqua. Do you feel welcome? Is this an inclusive community?

Hermano and Diana Ponte
 NOTL

Editor's note: The signs were installed this past weekend on roadsides and on private property. The project was organized by the Friends of Ryerson Park, which on Sunday asked residents to only erect the signs Friday to Sunday.

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OPINION

Ryerson Park group trying to **shift the narrative**

Dear editor:

I have appreciated The Lake Report's coverage of the Ryerson Park drama over the past year. It has helped to keep all us locals up-to-date. We are very fortunate to have your newspaper. What a beautiful asset to our small community.

Personally, I have kept quiet about the Friends of Ryerson Park until I saw the articles in last week's paper, where it is now obvious that the "Friends" are trying to shift their narrative and falsify the past.

When I was first approached by the "Friends," the impassioned



Beachgoers at Ryerson Park. FILE PHOTO/SUPPLIED

speech was about "protecting our park from tourists and those who don't live in Chautauqua" and "taking back our park."

When they have their small Zoom meetings (60

people tops, not their touted 400+ supporters), the subject is not traffic mitigation and safety. The talk is about dissuading tourists from visiting, changing it so only "Chautauquaers" can park

there and limiting use of the park.

Also, they are not an open and public group. They have actively excluded people who live in Chautauqua, but don't immediately agree with the leaders' ideas.

I can't stand by and watch them try to change their narrative, only after they get called out for what they're trying to do.

Full support to Coun. Erwin Wiens. Parks are for everyone. Not just those in the neighbourhood, not just those who live in NOTL or Niagara. Everyone.

Bridgette McLachlin
NOTL

Mother feels like she is **'in jail'** due to care home's strict rules

The following letter was sent to Niagara Falls MPP Wayne Gates and a copy was submitted to The Lake Report for publication.

There is a serious disconnect between the government's COVID requirements and how some long-term care (LTC) facilities choose to interpret them.

I am an essential caregiver for my mother, who lives at Heritage Place, a Radiant Care long-term care facility in Virgil. I have received my first vaccine and am patiently awaiting my second.

I get COVID tested four times a week – twice in my mother's LTC home and twice at my local pharmacy. I'm curious to know whether the staff at the home are tested as often as I am.

On May 4, Premier Doug Ford announced that residents and their caregivers could now hug and hold hands. What wonderful news. Oh, but there is a caveat: both the resident and the caregiver must be fully vaccinated.

My mother is fully vaccinated but two days before I was to receive my second shot, the government announced that there would be a four-month wait period between the two shots.

When only 3 per cent of the Canadian population

is fully vaccinated, that leaves few caregivers with two vaccinations. I'm scheduled to get my second shot in early June. So, I will have to wait four weeks before I can hold my mother's hand or give her that first hug in over a year.

The staff and administration of Heritage Place take COVID very seriously. Unfortunately, a number of their protocols and restrictions appear to target essential caregivers. For example, the government, in 2020 revised its policy to allow window visits but Heritage Place refuses to allow them.

To ensure essential caregivers don't forget, they recently posted full-page notices on the windows in every room. If we open a window to allow for fresh air to circulate in the stuffy room, we risk being publicly reprimanded.

We are forbidden to chat to other caregivers or residents when moving to and from our loved one's room. Even though Heritage Place has nice, well laid-out grounds, outdoor visits are being restricted to three specific spots in the enclosed courtyard. We have been instructed to check first for availability.

I'm not sure how I'm supposed to be able to do this, when I'm also told to go directly to my mother's room

after being screened in. If I am fortunate enough to have a staff person confirm there is space, I am required to sanitize the chair and table, sit six feet away from my mother with both of us wearing masks. I'm required to sanitize the whole area again prior to returning to my mother's room.

When the CEO was asked for clarification, we were told that the staff work hard, the government will be introducing additional changes and that they will get back to us after that. The real irony, is that while in my mother's room, it is OK for me to be elbow to elbow with her while working on a puzzle, brushing her hair or toileting her.

Doug Ford says my mother can leave her home for essential reasons, including exercise, to buy groceries or visit a pharmacy. The LTC administration says that me pushing my mother's wheelchair on the grounds does not constitute exercise for my mother, just me.

All her food and medications are provided through the home, so there is no need to go grocery shopping or go to a pharmacy. The publicized data on the mental and psychological benefits of fresh air and importance of a change of scenery are ignored, as it doesn't constitute exercise.

My mother will be 96 years old next month. Although she has Parkinson, she is cognitively aware. She tells me she is "in jail." When I mentioned how my mother feels, the administration tells me that I can always take her home.

Like many others, that is not an option. Why are my mother and I having to pay for this disconnect between the government and the home? How many other families are facing the same struggle?

As an essential caregiver, I often feel that if I complain or raise concerns, my mother will suffer consequences from disgruntled staff. I also know there are other families at the home who feel the same way.

Recently, Dr. Roger McIntyre was quoted in the National Post as saying, "You cannot actually protect someone's physical health, and just go ahead and destroy their mental health." Another unknown author wrote, "Being old is not an illness; being old is a stage of life and those who are lucky enough to reach that stage deserve to be treated with respect."

In closing, did I mention that I get COVID tested four times a week in order to visit my mother daily?

Sandra Bott
Niagara-on-the-Lake

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Don't ignore health changes. **Get checked**

Dear editor:
Dr. William Brown's column in the April 29 issue of The Lake Report, "Not as nimble as we age, falls are major danger," caught my attention for reasons explained below. It was a reminder that everyone, especially men, should get checked out if health changes occur.



A rapid COVID-19 test. RICHARD HARLEY PHOTO

Over the last few years I have fallen or tripped. I attributed this to a lack of attention, concentration, focus or clumsiness such as tripping going up stairs and not lifting my feet enough, taking down a step ladder in the garage and tripping on my feet, or not lifting my leg high enough, thus catching the seat of my bicycle.

The latest episode occurred when I slipped on an ice-covered patio while hanging bird feeders. I've been fortunate not to have ever broken a bone except when I was hit by a car while cycling home years ago. I must add that my sense of balance is very poor. I played hockey up until my 40s but can no longer stand on skates.

I didn't think much of all of this until my younger sister, a retired registered nurse, sent the family an email that she had been diagnosed by a neurologist as having the early signs of Parkinson's. The diagnosis had been made by the same neurologist my older brother had seen previously. We are all in the seventh decade of our lives.

The email was sent to

family members "so that you know." It stated that it was very mild at this stage, just left-sided tremors in the hand and foot intermittently.

She's had them for two years, knew what was coming and that no treatment will change the progress of this neurological degenerative disease but that exercise can help slow its progress.

She says at this time no treatment is required to alleviate symptoms and nothing is bothersome yet. Any treatment is for symptom control.

My sister is also being investigated for myasthenia gravis, which my mother had around the age of 70 and that my older brother is receiving treatment for.

I wrote to her that I've had some tremors in my hands, which I can stop by tightly squeezing whatever I'm holding.

My sister replied that tremors with Parkinson's are resting tremors and that for her they can be stopped by moving her hand. She suggested getting a referral

from my family doctor to a neurologist, preferably one associated with movement disorders. Tremors are no longer considered benign, there is a cause and they need to be investigated she insisted.

My partner looked up some articles on recent studies in the "Journal of Neurology" for the treatment of Parkinson's. We couldn't see immediate treatment for this disease other than on-going exercises.

After seeing my family doctor and doing some basic tests like walking in a straight line, moving one foot ahead of the other and writing something badly (which I attributed to being on my computer) I got a referral to a Hamilton neurologist whom I will be seeing in the fall. I've already received a CT scan of my brain.

All this to say that symptoms often dismissed, especially by men, should be investigated. I am fortunate to have a sister and a partner who tend to be more

attentive to these issues than I am.

I mentioned to my sister that my mother had deadly fear of falling. My sister said our mother was very cautious and proactive about taking all necessary precautions.

She had an electric chair that helped her stand up slowly. She had a bath tub chair that raised and lowered her in the tub and she used her walker to keep herself more active. She kept walking. To quote my sister "Let's not be foolish when it's time to protect ourselves."

My sister now tells me she goes pole walking, which helps her a lot on uneven ground in parks, hills, etc. It's considered a fitness thing and is used a lot more in Europe than here. It helps with balance, cardio, upper body fitness, using your arms swinging and propelling you forward.

Charlie, her dog, gets her and her husband walking every day. Some people say they couldn't do the distances without poles. At the moment she has bursitis in her hip which limits her somewhat.

Bursitis is a painful condition that affects the small, fluid-filled sacs — called bursae — that cushion the bones, tendons and muscles near your joints. It occurs when bursae become inflamed. The most common locations are in the shoulder, elbow and hip.

**Gilbert Comeault
NOTL**



Little hope Marotta will scale back Rand Estate plan

Dear editor:

I agree with the sentiments expressed in your editorial, "Rand Estate deserves better," May 6, concerning the controversial residential development of the Rand Estate as proposed by Solmar (Niagara 2) Inc .

It seems to me that for some time now Save Our Rand Estate (SORE) has repeatedly advocated for the responsible development of the historic and iconic Rand Estate that you refer to and clearly support. (This is not a case of anti development or meddling in private business although some choose to see it as such).

However, it is difficult to see why this local citizens group, which is supported by several hundred residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake and elsewhere should be vilified by some, as you claim, for its efforts, except perhaps for those who do not value the preservation of the historical assets of the Rand Estate, including obviously Benny Marotta, even though he agrees that this is a special situation.

Those with any common sense realize that once these precious and historical assets are destroyed they are gone forever.

As you have indicated, it seems that Mr. Marotta is attempting to cram as many houses into a subdivision as he can get away with, without regard for the immediate neighbourhood and its valid and genuine concerns.

I also agree with you when you urge Mr. Marotta, out of respect for the Rand Estate history, to make it special and not just another subdivision — which common sense tells me is completely inappropriate.

However, this is no doubt just wishful thinking when reading the front-page article ("Marotta unveils 191-home subdivision plan for Rand Estate").

Mr. Marotta feels the subdivision is appropriate

and suitable when compared to other developments. This is really a senseless argument when, again using common sense, the iconic Rand Estate is unique and is not in any way comparable to other developments in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Mr. Marotta's credibility and sincerity is not held in very high regard by a great number of residents and others, as the record shows, and on many occasions in the past it has been questioned.

So his claim that SORE objects to everything are his words only and to the best of my knowledge lack any veracity. He also claims, again in his words, that:

a) His development is more suitable to Niagara-on-the-Lake than other developments. (Irrelevant for the reason above.)

b) It is a lot better than previous developments. (Irrelevant for the reason above.)

c) In answer to a question as to whether he would consider adding more green space and making this a legacy project, his reply is that there is no need to increase green space since there is already a lot.

d) He claims he has offered to work with the town and is open to its suggestions as to the most suitable solution for the development. However, we have heard this many times before, but his actions, both past and present, contradict this offer and do not support any level of sincerity.

These are contradictory, senseless and irrelevant comments made without thought by the developer and offer little in the way of encouragement that any reasonable compromise is possible when dealing with Mr. Marotta and Solmar (Niagara 2) Inc.

**Derek Collins
NOTL**

Vaccine passports seem inevitable

Dear editor:
As with the many changes we experienced post 9/11 (removing your shoes passing through airport security, limitations on liquids, 3.4 ounces in a clear plastic zip-top bag), so too we are seeing the beginnings of changes post COVID-19.

Last weekend's Vax Live Benefit Concert had an in-person, fully vaccinated audience of 17,000. In addition, the G7 summit meeting in London collaborated on how to standardize a so-called vaccine passport.

On a worldwide basis we are witnessing, in more and more countries, a move to this new type of passport. It is here to stay.

Sporting events, concerts, restaurants, international airline travel, etc. are already demanding proof of being fully vaccinated — hence, the vaccine passport.

This should not come as a surprise. Those of us who have travelled internationally have experienced similar requirements. First for the use of a passport, second perhaps a visitor

visa, third certain vaccine requirements (yellow fever, etc.) and in many countries surrendering your passport or providing a copy on arrival at a hotel destination. All these are legal norms under international travel.

I predicted many months ago that we will witness a soft opening in many larger restaurants whereby there will be separate dining sections — "a fully vaccinated section" with normal pre-COVID-19 seating and a "section for those not fully vaccinated,

with limited seating socially distanced."

Queen's Landing, The Pillar and Post, winery restaurants and others come to mind who currently have the larger seating or separate dining room capacity. Remember the smoking vs. non smoking days?

Finally a note to the non-vaxxers: Forget about international travel and your civil rights. Change is all around us. Like seat belts in cars, get used to it.

**Samuel Young
NOTL**



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Harp and Cogeco team up with lunches for care home staff

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

A lunch for care home staff and a boost for local business.

A Cogeco lunch campaign aims to spread a bit of joy to long-term care workers, while at the same time supporting local restaurants through the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Friday, the Irish Harp Pub was busy preparing lunches for the staff at Upper Canada Lodge and Niagara Long Term Care Residence, two care homes in Old Town Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Robert Rende, community relations co-ordinator for Cogeco, said the program has been going for about two months and is a way of showing appreciation for long-term care staff.

“We’re delivering lunches to long-term care homes as our way of saying thank you for all the hard work they’ve been doing,” Rende said during an interview at the Irish Harp.

“They’re putting themselves out there every day. And we want to say thank you. And this initiative was



The Irish Harp team ready to send lunches out to long-term care staff. Right: The staff again, with Robert Rende from Cogeco in the back. RICHARD HARLEY



twofold. We know because of this pandemic restaurants were hit hard. We strongly encourage people to support local, so we purchased the food from a local restaurant to say thank you for all the hard work they’ve been doing and we deliver to the long-term care staffs, to say thank you for all the work that they’ve been doing.”

He said the initiative has been received “very well” by both long-term care staff and the restaurants involved.

“I’ve seen tears, I’ve seen huge smiles. They’re very

gracious and appreciative of what we’ve been doing.”

Jovie Jokie, owner of the Irish Harp, said it’s great to be able to contribute to the community, something the Harp has done often.

“It’s always nice when we can be involved with that,” Joki said.

“And then just the business itself is so important because we need any kind of sale that we can get, and this was nice that they thought of us.”

The Harp also donated desserts for the meals, to add a little something from

the restaurant.

“We wanted to donate as well, so we added the little desserts.”

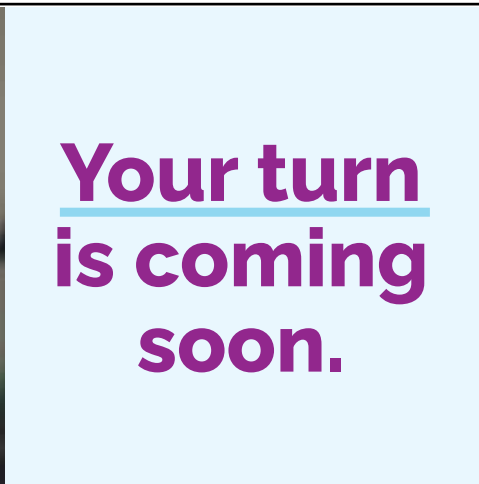
The meals were sandwiches with roasted veggies and goat cheese, and another with chicken and roasted vegetables. All lunches also included a house salad and sticky toffee desserts.

Jovie said she’s thankful to Cogeco for picking the restaurant.

“This really helped us as well. So, not only donating to them, they’re helping a business in the community.”



One of the lunches. RICHARD HARLEY



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Youth council seeks ways to **engage** fellow young folks

Fatima Baig
Special to The Lake Report

The NOTL Youth Advisory Council is working on several projects in the community to encourage youth to get involved and lift their spirits.

Some of these initiatives are packages to boost youth spirits during the pandemic, acknowledgments of historical monuments and clearing litter from NOTL parks.

“The goal of the council is to give the youth of NOTL a voice and encourage their involvement within the community,” said Janvi Ganatra, chair of the Youth Advisory Council.

The council also has a series of mental health videos on YouTube and social media to help youth cope during the pandemic. The organization is looking for partnerships from local businesses for the youth packages.

Michaiah Ivri, a member of the advocacy subcommittee of the council, joined the group because she wanted to be a voice for young people.

“I think advocacy among



The NOTL Youth Advisory Council is working on several projects to engage young people. SUPPLIED

young people is very important. Right now, we have a lot of needs and things that we need to have in our community, and if we don't join any council, our decisions are not being heard, or our opinions are not being heard, then needs are not being met,” she said.

“So, I wanted to be the voice for young people in the community to make sure our needs are being met.”

According to Ganatra, members of the council

know first-hand how the pandemic has affected young people. They've experienced it personally.

“We know right now with the pandemic, especially with youth, it's hard on mental health as well just because you're not as connected and things are changing,” said Ganatra.

Ivri noted she is a very hands-on person and hasn't been able to do some projects online.

“I have a visual arts and technology course and we

haven't been able to do some of the stuff we usually do. For example, we were supposed to make a CO2 race car and we weren't able to do that because not everybody has the material to make it,” she said.

She also knows how much social isolation and not seeing people face to face can affect somebody.

Whether it's group projects or working with the youth council, “It's been hard to connect with people. There are some people who I don't even know what their faces look like because the Zoom calls can only show so many faces,” Ivri said

Another goal of the council is to develop an exciting way to keep youth occupied and engaged, she said.

“Because we live in a small town, there is not a lot of interesting things to do and occupy us with, so we are trying to make our community more interesting, so people have more things to focus on,” she said.

The council is tackling this issue by collaborating and providing feedback to build a study hall and holding events like a trivia

night that was held on April 30. They are also working on their social media to increase youth engagement by providing youth activities, such as online challenges.

The study hall idea is just a concept at this point, with no firm plans set.

Ivri is passionate about bringing awareness about landmarks and monuments in NOTL and is working with the council to achieve that.

She is most concerned about increasing awareness about the impacts of Black and First Nations people on history in NOTL and in Canada.

The committee is collecting information and is looking to create an infographic and contact the tourist industry on NOTL, so information about landmarks and the infographic can be accessed through their website.

“I know that there are people who aren't recognized in our history that should be. They are just as much of a part of this town as anybody else, and there are things that have been

created to recognize them, but not many people know about that. We are trying to bring awareness to that so that people can appreciate these things,” she said.

The council is also collecting information through a survey about which parks contain the most litter so it can be cleaned up.

“We asked where have you seen litter in the parks so we can give the information to the proper people so that we can clean up the litter in the park and so that it can stay clean and enjoyable for people,” said Ivri.

According to Kaitlyn Lambert, another member of the advocacy subcommittee, among the areas the council wants to help clean up are Queenston Heights Park, St. Davids Lions Club, Queen's Royal Park, Simcoe Park, Cannery Park, Virgil Sports Park and Glendale Park.

The survey is accessible through the Youth Advisory Council's social media or the Town of NOTL's Join the Conversation web page. The results will be announced when sufficient information is collected.

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Hirji cautions against opening too soon

Continued from Front Page

to opening too soon.

The World Health Organization declared B.1.617 as a variant of concern on Monday.

Hirji provided a chart to compare Canada to some other countries that have opened up at different paces. In all cases, the data showed all countries that opened up before cases were very low had a spike back into unmanageable numbers that put their health care system in jeopardy.

In Niagara, about 63 per cent of COVID cases are now variants, though he suspects that number is affected by a reporting delay and it is likely the “vast majority” of cases are now variants.

Another way to look at the data is the reproductive value of the virus, he said. If it’s above one (meaning each person spreads the virus to more than one person) then numbers will go up. If it’s below one, then numbers will decline.

“In mid-February when the province reopened, that allowed the reproductive number to go back up and stay up,” Hirji said, pointing to a chart of the reproductive numbers in Niagara.

With the lockdown in place, the number has gone below one and cases are starting to decline. On Monday the reproductive number was about 0.9 — more than the second lockdown, which saw the number dip down to 0.7, he said.

“You can see that this lockdown is not as effective at suppressing the growth, or suppressing cases the way that the second lockdown was, and I think that’s again because of the variants.”

The “good news,” he said, is numbers are still going down, however it will take longer to get down to a safe level to reopen.

“We’re almost halfway back down to this point. So that’s certainly some good news but we, of course, need to stick this out for a few more weeks before we can get it down to a really low level, where hopefully we’ll be able to contain it at that level,” Hirji said.



Visitors continue to stroll Queen Street during the pandemic lockdowns. FILE/RICHARD HARLEY

He is particularly worried about the P.1 variant because “in addition to spreading more easily, it is also more severe and that’s definitely something we do not want to see continue to grow.”

He said provincial Science Table models show no matter how much cases are reduced, numbers will rebound once things reopen. It’s just a matter of how steep the curve is. “The higher cases are, the higher they’re able to rebound.”

If cases rise, it would mean hospitals continue to be overwhelmed and more people could die from the virus as a result.

Bringing down ICU numbers is an important part of being able to manage the virus, he said.

“The province had previously designated 150 people in ICU from COVID-19 was the danger level, but of course right now (we’re) up closer to 900. So even if we’ve come down, optimistically, even to maybe 600 people by the end of the month, that’s still extremely high,” he said.

“That’s higher than we were between the first and the second wave and so I do think that we do need to keep the stay-at-home order a significantly longer time so we can continue to let this number come down. We can clear people

out of the ICUs, get our hospital some relief, allow people to restart doing surgeries for cancer and some of those other important health issues.”

In Niagara, the number of hospitalizations has come down “a little bit,” Hirji said.

“And in ICU, the total number of people in the ICU remains fairly flat at this time.”

“Unfortunately we have definitely seen more deaths during this third wave, and of course that’s ultimately why we’re trying to control COVID-19, because if our hospital is overwhelmed that likely means people are going to be unfortunately dying and that’s absolutely what we’ve seen.”

“The good news is that as bad as this third wave has been and as much as it has stretched our hospitals more than ever before, we fortunately didn’t see as many deaths as we did in the second wave,” he said. He credits vaccinations.

“But we have not vaccinated everybody, and a lot of people who are at lower risk of dying, but nonetheless at risk of dying, unfortunately have passed away during this third wave. That’s absolutely why I think it’s so important to get cases very low again, so we don’t see people dying from COVID-19 and we’re able

to reopen in a fashion where we’re able to keep cases controlled, that we don’t see people unnecessarily dying in our society.”

As far as vaccinations go, he said about 56 per cent of people over 18 in Niagara have now been vaccinated.

One of public health’s priorities is to target the 50 to 59 age group with messaging to encourage them to get the vaccine, he noted.

In a couple of weeks, anyone 18 and up will be eligible to book a vaccine, and shortly after that they will target people aged 12 to 17.

“So as we get more and more vaccinations in people, it’ll hopefully be coinciding with us bringing cases down” and reopening carefully, he said.

In general, he said Canada as a country is starting to “catch up” with some of the countries that vaccinated people early.

Vaccines aren’t bullet-proof, he noted, comparing Canada to other countries with higher rates of vaccines, but that are doing worse in terms of case counts because they opened too soon, relying solely on the vaccines.

“Seychelles is actually the number one country in terms of having vaccination penetration in their society, and they are actually doing the worst in terms of having cases really surge in their society. And the big lesson I think to take away from that is that relying on vaccination alone to control COVID is probably not something that’s going to happen at least in the near term.”

Maybe it will be different once vaccination rates are “really high,” in the 80 to 90 per cent range, he said.

Seychelles opened to tourists and had a surge of cases, despite a high vaccination rate, he said.

Chile also opened up, had a surge of cases and “unfortunately they’ve had to use a lockdown now to bring their cases down.”

Cases in the United States have remained “pretty high” even though they’ve been “very successful with vaccination,” he said.

Testimonials

Since the onset of the pandemic, Treadwell has had to pivot to various takeout concepts, such as “Dev’s” Indian Takeout and British Pie Night. We have found that using The Lake Report has allowed us to successfully communicate these experiences to our local clientele on a weekly basis. Richard and Rob have been great to work with and we look forward to continuing our relationship with The Lake Report moving forward.

- James Treadwell



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Council cuts through red tape on four-way stop in Village

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative

Lord Mayor Betty Disero pushed through a motion Monday to install a four-way stop sign at the intersection of Garrison Village Drive, Perez Road and Jordan Street, at the request of residents of the Village neighbourhood.

She took issue with town staff's desire to do a study to see if the stop sign was warranted.

"Why spend thousands of dollars to find out it's not warranted? Just put it up and see how it goes," she said in an interview Tuesday.

"I think it's a good compromise for everyone all around. We're not creating a safety hazard, we're actually making it a little safer."

At Monday's committee of the whole general meeting, Garrison Village Community Association president Mona Babin presented on behalf of residents of the village. She addressed



The intersection at Garrison Village Drive, Jordan Street, and Perez Street will be updated from a two-way stop to a four-way stop to curb local fears over increased traffic and reduced safety. EVAN SAUNDERS

growing safety concerns in the area as it continues to be built up.

"Our prime objective is safety," Babin told councillors. The committee unanimously passed the proposal.

The intersection is just past the Shoppers Drug Mart plaza.

Nearly half of the village residents are paying mem-

bers of the association and the organization says it represents nearly 100 per cent of the residents in the area.

A survey by the association asked residents whether they would like a stop sign installed in the intersection and 82 per cent of the 197 respondents said yes.

"I know that normally there's guidelines of where

not to put a stop sign and normally I'm the first one to not want to interrupt my drive when I want to get somewhere," Babin said.

"But (the Village) is growing. And it's growing with a medical centre, it's growing with a future grocery," she said.

There is also an apartment complex going up at the east end of Garrison Village Drive, increasing concerns of growing traffic and adding construction traffic into the mix.

Town staff's original recommendation to address safety concerns in the area consisted of moving no parking signs at the intersection in discussion north 20 metres on Garrison Village Drive. The goal of that proposal was to increase visibility at the intersection.

When the recommendation came forward in February, the community association told the town that residents had not requested the sign change and

asked for it to be deferred. Later, the association asked that stop signs be installed instead.

"There are a number of homes with very small garages and so street parking is essential. And it's also proven, and that's based on conversations I've had with (developer) John Hawley and also staff, to slow down traffic," Babin said.

While increased noise from idling cars can be a disturbance to some residents, survey respondents were told that would be a byproduct of the stop signs, and 82 per cent agreed to the idea anyway.

"As you know, when things change people have to get used to it. So, the sooner the better in my book," Babin told council.

And while the request was amicably received, director of operations for NOTL Sheldon Randall preferred to conduct a study before interfering with existing traffic flow in the area.

"I think we all agree that

pedestrian traffic is going to become an issue over time.

I don't think we have the data yet that would back up putting in a four-way stop at this point," he told council.

The idea of delaying the stop sign installation did not sit right with Disero.

"I've never seen before a municipality that is so interested in studying before putting up a stop sign. Just put it in! It happens all the time in every municipality," Disero said.

"What bothers me is that to do a study, to figure out how to analyze it – it costs a lot of money."

Disero introduced a motion to implement the stop signs as soon as possible.

"If residents feel after a time that we shouldn't have done this, then we remove it," she told The Lake Report.

The next step is for staff to introduce a bylaw that allows the signs to be installed. "I'm hoping it will come to council on Monday," Disero said.

Museum Month: Celebrating NOTL's 'innovative,' engaging museum

Barbara Worthy
Special to The Lake Report

Each year across the country May is Museum Month and in these very different times museums around the world have continued to provide a means for communities to connect, stay involved and to stay strong together.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum has played a significant role in the community during these COVID months. Its ability to provide ongoing social and

educational programming has provided its members, and the community at large, with a feast of resources.

A recent survey reported that members find the NOTL Museum to be "one of the most innovative and forward-thinking organizations in the community." High praise indeed, but well-earned.

During a year of reduced programming the NOTL Museum hosted more than 20 virtual lectures, co-produced nearly 30 short history vignettes, offered game

nights, online weekly quizzes, community challenges and monthly documentary club gatherings.

The museum's gift shop has maintained and even grown its usual customer base with online purchases. Plus, the museum has a rigorous social media communications schedule.

Community partnerships also resulted in popular drive-thru pig roasts with PigOut Catering and the now almost legendary fundraising dinners with partners Friends of Fort

George, Ravine Winery, and local restaurateurs, Ruffino's Pasta Bar & Grill and the Garrison House.

Today, a museum is not just a place of dusty records and rarely handled artifacts. Museums around the world believe in interactive learning, immersive experiences and community engagement. The strength of the NOTL Museum lies in its ability to do all that, and to help maintain a vital and strong community.

Said one member, "For a little museum, the NOTL



NOTL Museum. FILE PHOTO

Museum thinks big."

And so, on International Museum Day – Tuesday, May 18 – and throughout the month of May, let's all celebrate how museums

just like NOTL's connect, preserve and honour our communities.

#MayIsMuseumMonth
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NOTL-born actor up for Canadian Screen Award

Brittney Cutler
Special to The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake native Ryan Belleville is nominated for best supporting actor in a comedy series at next week's 2021 Canadian Screen Awards for his performances in "Workin' Moms."

Belleville, 42, began his career with stand-up comedy shows and became the youngest actor to have his own "Comedy Now" episode in 2001.

He previously won the Phil Hartman Award for comedy and a Canadian Comedy Award, and said he is honoured to be nominated for his "Workin' Moms" role.

"We don't do this for the awards. It's nice that people actually like your work, that's a real treat," Belleville said. The awards will be presented on May 20.

He got into acting when he graduated from high school in Alberta after his family moved from Ontario. He worked as a stand-up comedian for over 20 years and has toured venues across Canada, including Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and Winnipeg. He also toured in Australia, Africa and the United States for his stand-up shows.



Actor Ryan Belleville is nominated for his role in the comedy series "Workin' Moms." SUPPLIED

But over the years, Belleville says his favourite show was on Canada Day 2019 when he performed in Mali for the Canadian Armed Forces.

Acting is in his family's blood. Both his parents

were actors and his brother, Jason Belleville, is an accomplished writer, producer and actor.

Belleville has some simple advice for aspiring actors and actresses wanting to be in the spotlight. "Get

out there and take the risk. It's more fun to take the risk and say that you tried than to never try and always wished you had."

His parents, Terry and Donna Belleville, still reside in Niagara-on-the-Lake and have lived in the same house for the last 17 years. The family moved to Alberta for business reasons, residing in Calgary for 20 years, but returned to NOTL in 1999.

The Bellevilles have both worked at the Shaw Festival in NOTL, where Terry was the director of public relations. He has also been a writer and director.

Donna joined the acting company after the family moved back to Niagara-on-the-Lake and performed nearly 20 seasons with the Shaw. Prior to their move to Calgary, she spent one season with the festival.

Like any parents, they are proud of their children and what they have become.

"What we're most proud of, this may sound corny, is the people they are. They're just really good people, terrific fathers and wonderful husbands. We're really proud of what they achieved, but the people that they are is what we're most proud of," said Terry Belleville.

Escalade stolen, torched from Virgil driveway

Continued from Front Page

She was still in shock when police called the next morning to say they had found the Escalade. "He's like, 'Oh, we found your vehicle.' I'm like, 'Yay! Oh my God, that's awesome.' He goes, 'Well, not really.'"

Her insurance company has provided a temporary vehicle for her to use.

She said she would have gladly helped out anyone who needed a ride.

"Knock on the door, I would have driven you to Welland. But no, off it went." She has no idea

who might have taken it.

She said she keeps realizing various sentimental items were in the truck too, such as her '80s CDs, movies her children liked to watch on the way to their cottage, her dog leash and even some groceries.

Police spokesperson Const. Jesse Vujasic said the incident is uncommon.

"It is not the norm. Generally we recover them intact or with minor damage. Some car thieves will destroy the stolen car for malicious reasons or to hide evidence."

RIDDLE ME THIS

I'm an instrument through which sounds are made, and yet, not something that can be played. What am I?

Last issue: I have branches, but no fruit, trunk or leaves. What am I?

Answer: A bank, river, family tree

Also accepted: Legion,

Answered first by: Sheila Meloche

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Maria Janeiro, Lida Kowal, Margaret Garaughty, Jeff Lake, K. Anne Denny, Gail Martin, Pam Dowling, Gary Slingerland, Terry Nord, Melanie Morris, Mary Drost, Margie Enns, Yvonne McMorrough, Carl Nickel, David Steele, Carol Von Pasecky, Sue Davies, Sylvia Wiens, Kulvinder Mukkar, Chris Yakymishen, Wade Durling, Melanie Clokie, Bob Stevens, Tee Bucci, Cindy Macleod, Robert Wilms, Katie Reimer

Email answers, with your name, to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize. (Subject line: Riddle me this)



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Proud winners of NOTL's Choice Awards 2020

Councillor and wife reflect on racism, inclusion

Continued from Front Page

in-your-face, but most often it is quietly polite, quintessentially Canadian.

He's lived through it with his wife, who is Asian, and their four daughters, who grew up here.

Many folks – especially on social media – will respond with “Suck it up,” “I’ve been through worse,” or “Why is everything about race?” Wiens’ contends times have changed and no one should be treated differently just because of the way they look or the customs they practise.

During that council meeting on April 26, minutes after councillors had heard a detailed presentation about problems of racism, homophobia and lack of inclusion identified in a survey by the town’s inclusivity committee, Wiens delivered his emotional and deeply personal condemnation of actions he feels serve, albeit unintentionally, to exclude people.

The parks bylaw – which now bans barbecuing in most parks – and debate about traffic and parking problems around Ryerson Park, a hugely popular site for visitors and locals to view beautiful sunsets, became the lightning rod for his venting.

But really, they were just symbols, examples of how, even with good intentions – trying to fix some obvious traffic problems – the result can be some “unintended, unfortunate consequences.” For Wiens, those decisions ultimately will exclude some people, when that was not the intent.

It was a reminder for Wiens of much more overt sentiments loudly and publicly expressed over the years, notably when Asian investors started buying wineries and investing in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

“I heard a lot from the industry and even on the campaign trail that we have to be careful about Chinese influence in town. That was overt and open. It even came up at a debate.”

“And I never spoke to it and it bothered me at that time that I wouldn’t speak



Dorothy and Erwin Wiens on their back porch. KEVIN MACLEAN

up to it,” he says in an extensive interview. But no longer.

These are difficult issues to talk about and painful for many to hear, but he wants to be clear. He’s not pointing fingers and saying NOTL residents are inherently racist, but he wants people to recognize and understand the effects of their words and actions. “Unintended consequences.”

His wife Dorothy, “the backbone” of the family’s farming operation, is widely known in town for her community and charity work – and has been acknowledged with numerous awards for her efforts.

She’s Asian, born in Brunei, the daughter of Chinese parents who fled their native land. Dorothy arrived in Canada as a young child and grew up in Fort McMurray, Alta., where she was “one of about three Chinese kids in town.” Her dad worked in the oil industry and her mom at a restaurant.

And while she is emphatic that the vast majority of people she encounters – in the community, her church, local organizations – are “wonderful” and kind, she still meets her share of outliers who readily judge a book by its cover. “It always amazes me the number of people that say, ‘Oh you don’t have an accent,’ and I say, ‘Well, I came here when I was three. This is my home. I don’t know any

other home.’ ”

Or it might be someone new working in a NOTL store, seeing a person who looks different than most locals and asking, “Oh, where are you from?” Then acting surprised to find out she’s from town. An innocuous question to some, but the message is you’re different and probably not from here. Because of the way you look.

Couple that with the stares and “polite” sideways glances many minorities deal with and a person’s day can be filled with a series of micro-aggressions that Caucasian people don’t endure. Or understand.

This is the lived experience of many people who are not white. Not insidious, but presumptive, because NOTL is not a racially diverse town, no matter how you slice the demographics. Sometimes it’s more in-your-face. “We were at one dinner thing where they talked about how the Asians come in on the buses, and the noises and all that,” Wiens says. When his wife pointed out, “That’s me, I’m Asian,” the response was, “‘Oh no, that’s not you, it’s the other ones. And I have good friends who are Chinese’ ...”

“Really, is that so?” he adds, laughing at the memory. In other words, you’re OK, because we know you. “My wife and kids shrug it off, because they live with it,” he says. “I can only imagine, because Chinese

people are more accepted than Black people. So then, you think, what happens if you’re a Black guy living in Niagara-on-the-Lake now. How welcome are you? You already put up with it all the time and it’s in your face.” Like migrant workers.

The more you talk to people who are racialized or of mixed race, you find they have learned to cope with the in-your-face confrontations, he says. Tougher to handle is “the subtleness of how they’re not welcome.”

The town’s inclusivity survey highlighted some of this behaviour and the poor treatment of some seasonal workers, mainly people of colour. And The Lake Report has written about racial incidents in the past.

Wiens notes he hears complaints about the “big, intergenerational families” who often visit NOTL and sometimes end up at picnic tables in area parks. Inevitably, those are usually South Asian families, for whom spending time together is a way of life.

Both he and Dorothy love seeing that.

“It just makes us so happy when we see big families using parks in Niagara-on-the-Lake and there’s kids playing and they’re barbecuing,” says Dorothy.

“It’s a family time and it brings a sense of joy to your heart when you see that. Unfortunately, I think we’ve gotten away from Sundays of being with family and spending time together.”

Resolving these divisive issues takes a collective approach, though, Wiens says. “I have to point my finger at myself,” he says, noting he’s a privileged, white guy – and “white privilege” has always been a phrase that makes him uncomfortable. “But the reality is, I’ve been blessed beyond what I deserve.”

It’s not just about working hard for it – most everyone does, he says. It’s about recognizing you have inherent advantages in life, because you’re white.

He credits the couple’s four daughters – now aged 22 to 28 – for his personal evolution. He also believes today’s younger generation is far more enlightened about issues of inclusion and ultimately will drive change within society.

Fear and ignorance are at the root of people’s racial reactions, Dorothy says. “They act out of fear of their own lack of knowledge. Some of them don’t even realize that they’re being discriminatory or racist. They just don’t even know.”

During the pandemic, it upsets her to see Asians, especially seniors, targeted for abuse. “But people, out of their own fear, need to blame someone else. Especially during these times of COVID, we need to be so much more gracious to people.”

“It doesn’t matter if you’re Black, if you’re white, you’re red, you’re yellow,

we’re all living through these times together. No one is exempt from this.”

Social media also can be a gathering ground for people to vent about visitors, with some remarking this spring how, “It’s always these types of people who always stop and want to take pictures with the blossoms,” she says.

“If those orchards or vineyards were yours and someone stopped because they were admiring it, would it not make you feel proud?” Dorothy says. “I certainly would be proud of saying, ‘Yeah, it’s our orchards’ and not get upset that they’re stopping and just admiring the blossoms.”

Her husband echoes that sentiment, noting too often we take our gorgeous surroundings for granted. “We have so much beauty, so many great places in Niagara-on-the-Lake, why can’t we be better at sharing them with others?”

Some argue – especially the keyboard warriors on social media – that minorities should just get over it, “sticks and stones,” or that other immigrant groups experienced the same problems and maybe worse. But the times they are a-changing.

Years ago, when Si Wai Lai and her twin brother Jimmy Lai started buying up properties in NOTL many said, “That was the end” of life as they knew it, Wiens says. “Chinese people are coming, it’s terrible. We can’t have them. And then the Asian foods came in and they started buying wineries. We can’t have them, we can’t have them.”

His response? “Why not?” Why can’t people of different cultures be welcome?”

Mennonites dealt with similar discrimination in the 1950s, as did Italians and others, Wiens says.

But instead of viewing such abuse almost as a rite of passage, he wants us all to be better.

“We should be using that as an experience, moving forward, not to do it to somebody else. If I hated people doing it to me then, what I should do is stop doing it to other people now.”



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Going Green: Start by **reducing** your growing collection of ‘stuff’



Robin Jinchereau with his single bag of garbage. SUPPLIED

Robin Jinchereau
Special to The Lake Report

You can diminish your carbon footprint by reducing or eliminating some of the products you consume or by cutting some of your waste by switching to different products.

Let’s have a look at reducing electronic waste first.

There is a waste depot in Niagara Falls at 5030 Montrose Rd. where you can drop off your old electronics: phones, laptops, desktops, radios, tuners, amplifiers, speakers, television sets and printers. Go to niagararegion.ca for more info on what can or cannot be recycled. During the pandemic, call before you go to the drop off sites to make sure they are open (905-980-6000).

Buy a new tank printer that does not use ink or toner cartridges. A typical cartridge will print 250 to 500 pages before it runs out. These new printers have four built-in tanks that you refill with liquid ink. The bottles of ink can deliver

2,500 to 5,000 pages per bottle set. At a cost of \$100 per set, this supply of ink should last a typical user a year – saving you money and reducing waste.

Purchase rechargeable batteries. Small alkaline AA or AAA batteries cost about \$1 apiece. The cost of each rechargeable battery runs about \$4 to \$5. With a life expectancy of two to seven years with 500 to 800 recharging cycles, you can save a lot of money. You’re also throwing away fewer batteries.

Check to see if the item that needs batteries can use rechargeables. Smoke detectors, for example, will not work with them. You can recycle old batteries at stores like Home Hardware or Home Depot.

What about reducing household waste? Limit your use of plastic wrap. Tupperware containers are useful for saving leftovers or if you’re a Ziploc bag fan, wash them with soap and water to reuse them more than once. Once they are unusable, you can recycle them with your

plastic bags in your grey bin. Also, don’t forget the margarine or butter containers that you bought at the grocery store are actually free Tupperware.

Recycle your food waste. Keep a small composting bin under the sink lined with a compostible bag, throw in it vegetable peels, fruit peels, paper towels, dirty Kleenex and other biologic items that can be composted. This goes into the green bin.

If you are worried that meat, fish, pork and poultry waste will start smelling funky after a couple of days under the sink, keep it in a compostible bag in your freezer and dump it into the green bin the night before collection day.

Remember that eggshells are great to prevent slugs from invading your vegetable garden, some of your plants love coffee grinds and teabags are great for roses as they acidify the soil. Bones, onion skins and garlic skins make great additions to a broth if you’re making your own soup.

If you have a renovation project house and you have leftover building materials, remember the ReStore Habitat for Humanity store on Bunting Road in St. Catharines.

Go to its website and see what the store accepts. Items like light switches, wall plugs, light fixtures, door handles and locks with keys, clean carpeting and various materials are welcome, if they are in good condition so they can be resold.

Gently used clothing can be recycled to the Salvation Army or Goodwill store. Other clothing that is not in pristine condition or old towels and rags can be dropped off at the Niagara Falls recycling centre where they will be regenerated into other materials.

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Robin Jinchereau has degrees in human biology and business administration. He is retired from a long career in the pharmaceuticals industry and has been fascinated for the last 45 years about how to reduce waste.




COMMUNITY DONATION PROJECT

Porch Pick-up Food Drive

Newark Neighbours, together with our partners from the NOTL Rotary Club are holding a porch pick-up food drive.

On Saturday & Sunday, May 15 and 16, 2021, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



Note that our volunteers will all wear masks and gloves and will respect all physical distancing restrictions, including contactless pick-up.

If you have items that you wish to donate, please call 905-468-7498 or email us at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com to register your address for pick-up. We appreciate your support!!!

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned green beans • Canned peas • Canned mixed vegetables • Habitant Soups • Chunky Soups • Canned pineapple • Soda (Soup) Crackers • Snack Crackers - any kind • Peanut Butter • Coffee or Tea • Toothpaste / Paper Towels / Kleenex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned Tomatoes • Canned Ham, Corned Beef or Spam • Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Turkey • Canned beef stew • Cream of Mushroom Soup • Rice • Bottled Juices - Cranberry or Apple • Cereal - any kind • Jams - any flavour • Jello - any flavour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned Red Kidney Beans • Canned salmon • Canned chili or spaghetti or ravioli • Canned Baked Beans • Kraft Dinner Mac & Cheese • Sidekicks & Mr. Noodle packets • Applesauce or Canned Fruit • Cookies - any kind • Granola Bars • Ketchup / Mustard / Mayonnaise / Green Relish
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We appreciate all donations of food supplies; however, we are currently well stocked on the following items: Canned Tuna • Stuffing Mix • Canned Corn • Oatmeal • Cranberry Sauce • Tomato Sauce • Pasta

Unfortunately, our Thrift Store at 310 John Street remains closed. We appreciate all your calls and offers of thrift shop donations. Please remain patient and hold your donations until we are able to re-open and accept them once again. We hope that it will be soon!!



2021 MUNICIPAL TAX REMINDER NOTICE

INTERIM SECOND INSTALLMENT

DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2021

Tax Rates as per Interim By-Law No. 5283-20

Payment may be made by mail or by drop off at the **Town Municipal Offices** at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road (PO Box 100, Virgil ON L0S 1T0). A 24-hour mail slot is located at the front (accessible drop box) and side entrances of the Town office for your convenience. Post-dated cheques are accepted. **Payment can also be made electronically from your bank account using the 19-digit roll number.**

If payment is made at a bank or other pay station, your account will be credited only **after** the Town has received settlement from the bank. Please allow **ten (10)** working days for payment processing.

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

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

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED A MORE CONVENIENT WAY TO PAY YOUR TAXES?

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For information on payment options or to sign up for eSend, visit the Town’s website at www.notl.com or contact our Finance division directly at 905-468-3266 ext. 230.

Pieces of NOTL history: The **McMillans** date back 160 years

Julie (Sciara) McMillan
Mabel (Stevens) Hunter
Special to The Lake Report

When the McMillan family's ancestors first arrived in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada was not officially a country. There were no paved roads (and no bed and breakfasts or Shaw Festival) but there was an opportunity for a life to be made. And the McMillan family still has strong ties here.

Here is a small piece of their history. Steve's grandfather, Charles "Short" McMillan, born in NOTL in 1897, was once a bellhop at the Queen's Royal Hotel, great-grandfather John McMillan, born in NOTL in 1870, worked for the town's water department and was the lighthouse/foghorn

keeper and his great-great-grandfather, James McMillan, ran the American Hotel and also owned the ferry that went from NOTL to Youngstown, N.Y. James had come from Ireland in about 1860.

Fast-forward to more recent history: Mabel (Stevens) was born in Niagara Township in 1926 and just turned 95 in January. She went to the old Railroad School that was on Concession 1. Then she attended the Niagara High School where the museum is now.

Mabel married Jack McMillan and Steve was born in the old Cottage Hospital on Queen Street in 1949. Steve married Willo Hunter in 1970.

In 1952, Jack built a house on Gage Street, between

King and Regent streets, and after he passed away in 1970 Steve and his new bride moved into it.

Steve has been a member of the NOTL Golf Club since about 1959 and one year he was the junior champion. He also played Slo-pitch when he was younger. His father, along with Harry Steele, coached the team that won the Ontario Championship in 1967 – Centennial year! That was a big feat for our little town.

After Jack died, Mabel married Eddie Hunter, who had four sons. So the family suddenly got much bigger.

A big fan of bridge, Mabel helped found the present duplicate bridge club in town. Before the pandemic came along she was still playing multiple times a

week, on Thursday nights at the NOTL Community Centre as well as other days at friends' homes.

In recent years Steve and Willo have sold their house and moved to Virgil. Steve's brother, Tom, and his sister, Julie still live here with their spouses.

The town is much different these days, as it's geared more to the tourists than the locals. There was a time we had at least four grocery stores along Queen Street along with a couple of gas stations.

There were stores you could do all your shopping at and there was no need to go elsewhere. Times have changed. In our eyes, for the better? We are not sure. As the saying goes, "The good old days!"



Julia (Sciara) McMillan, Mabel (Stevens) Hunter, Steve McMillan, Kaitlyn and Brooklyn. SUPPLIED

Hope Bradley remembers a **simpler time** for Niagara-on-the-Lake

Gail Kendall
Special to The Lake Report

Hope Bradley remembers a simpler time for Niagara-on-the-Lake, when dignitaries would arrive by helicopter at the Rand Estate, Simcoe Park hosted dances, and when everyone knew their neighbours — and had neighbours instead of short-term rentals.

Now Bradley, 94, fears development is quickly changing the landscape of Canada's "prettiest" town.

Talking with her at her home, she pushes past the multitude of historical facts about NOTL that have been documented for all to read, and offers a more personal account of her own experiences.

Born on March 11, 1927, in the Cottage Hospital on the main street in town, at her age she can still rhyme off names and dates like they were yesterday.

She and her husband Allen raised seven children, who all continue to live close to town. A close-knit family with 12 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren (and another due at the end of May), Bradley laughs that Christmas can be expensive.

Asked what the biggest change to the area is,



Hope Bradley was born in 1927 in Niagara-on-the-Lake's Cottage Hospital. GAIL KENDALL

she immediately answers: development. She remembers when Niagara-on-the-Lake was mostly fields and orchards.

Now, NOTL is filled with homes and Niagara Stone Road is the busiest she has ever seen it.

She mentions that the town was always a tourist area, especially during the war. But not like it is today.

"When I was young, NOTL was more community-focused, with families

and schools in the Old Town. Queen Street catered more to the locals, with places like Harrison's hardware store and a lumberyard where the post office is now. McClelland, the butcher, was directly across the street and at night you could fire a cannon down Queen Street and not hit a soul."

Her father, James Elliot, ran the dance hall in Simcoe Park and her mother, Isabel, known to everyone

as Daisy, provided the refreshments — ice cream, pop, hot water for tea — and became known for her burgers. Bradley would help her mother serve.

On Wednesday nights, patrons danced to a jukebox but on Saturday nights, the Bud Allen Orchestra from Thorold provided the dance tunes. Sunday nights saw a popular sing-song run by the choir master of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Bradley says people would come from miles away to join in.

When Bradley was a teenager, she remembers a boom in Mennonites coming to NOTL. She was fascinated then as she is now about how hard they work but more about how they would always help each other out.

Married in 1946 right after the war, Bradley and her husband built their first house on Queen Street, beside where the post office stands today. They and their five children soon outgrew the home and moved to an apartment across from the clock tower.

More children meant many moves around town.

Bradley worked various jobs in town, including helping to open Chateau Gardens long-term care home on Wellington Street

when she was 25. She served as the activities director until she injured herself lifting a patient, resulting in a nine-month hospital stay in Toronto.

She also worked as secretary to a couple of businesses in Toronto where she lived temporarily, but would often commute by the Cayuga ferry across Lake Ontario.

She always found her way back home to NOTL. From running a florist shop along Queen Street with a friend to becoming a founding member of the Shaw Guild, Bradley certainly had an extensive resume.

Old friend Calvin Rand, who co-founded the Shaw Festival with lawyer Brian Doherty in 1962, called on Bradley to help out in its early stages.

The only theatre used at the time was the Court House on Queen Street. Bradley would arrange to borrow furniture from residents for the plays, would help sew costumes and would literally be on hands and knees hours before the shows scrubbing the floors.

Bradley worked as a receptionist for the Shaw Festival from 1971 to 1986 under five artistic directors, beginning with Paxton Whitehead.

She left the Guild when it was suggested that a larger theatre be built behind the Court House or where the golf course is now, due to the fact she did not want to see the area overrun with parking problems and multitudes of tourists.

She has memories of dignitaries attending the Shaw Festival. She recalls the time Queen Elizabeth and Pierre Trudeau attended the theatre, along with Indira Gandhi, who arrived via helicopter, landing on the former estate of Trisha Romance.

As for what she misses most, "It's not knowing who my neighbours are. We used to be a town of year-round neighbours. Now many homes are either owned by Americans who are rarely here or snowbirds who leave for the winter."

She adds, "Some homes are not maintained, with papers piling up, and short-term rentals like Airbnbs cause problems by renting to large groups who disturb the neighbourhood with loud, all-night parties."

Bradley closes with a final thought: "I really miss the small town feel, knowing your neighbours and knowing they would always be there."

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Putting Niagara Residents First



The Lake Report wants to help recognize NOTL's Pandemic Heroes — people who have made a difference, big or small, in a positive way. You can help us recognize someone in the community by sending a bit about the person and why they're a Pandemic Hero. Please send your nominations early to editor@niagaranow.com. A special thanks to Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery for providing a bottle of sparkling wine to each of our pandemic heroes. That's the spirit!

NOTL mask makers



Left: Rachael Danieluk with her \$5 mask stand in Virgil on East/West Line. Right: Amy Post sports her homemade lip reading mask. RICHARD HARLEY

Last year when the pandemic first hit, a group of NOTLers, mostly women, gathered together to make affordable masks for residents of Niagara.

A year later, some members are still actively offering masks in the community. The initiative was spread through the town via “mask trees” which were available in most communities of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

This week's heroes are NOTL residents Rachael Danieluk and Amy Post, who belonged to two different mask groups, NOTL COVID Masks and The Sewing Aunties.

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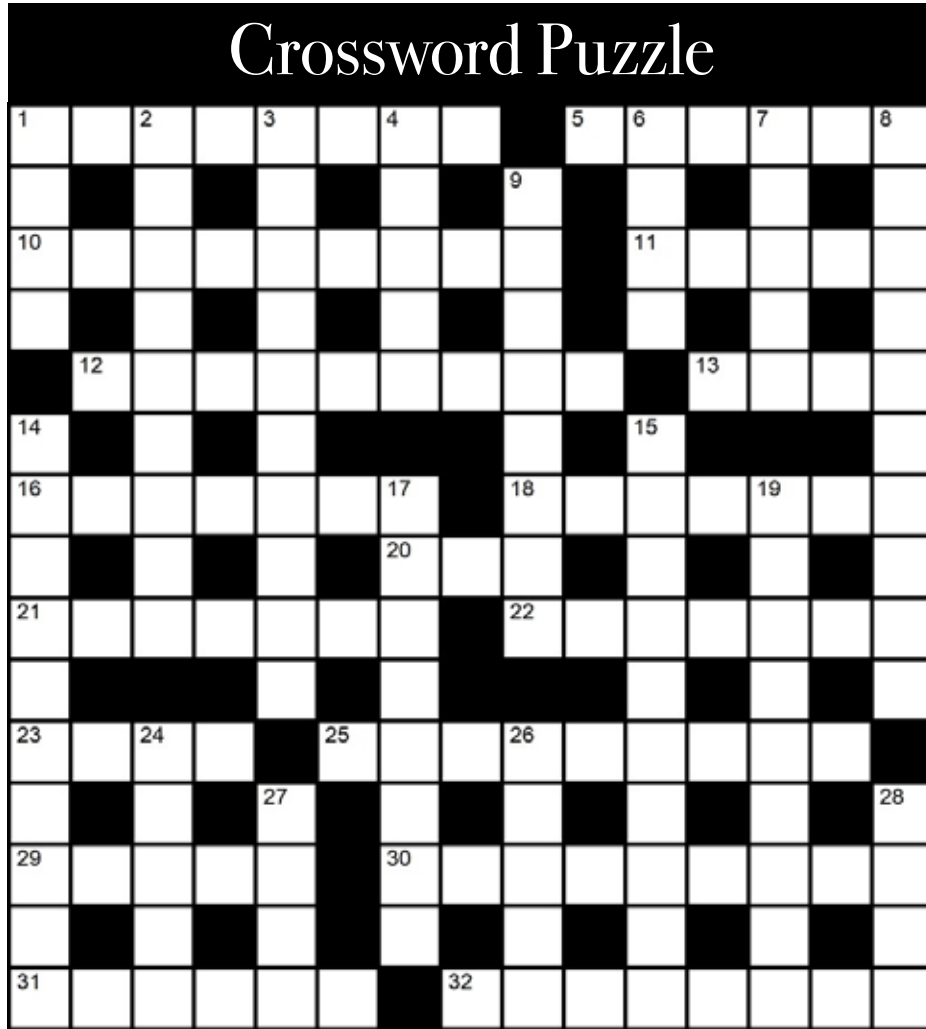
Have some fun

Across

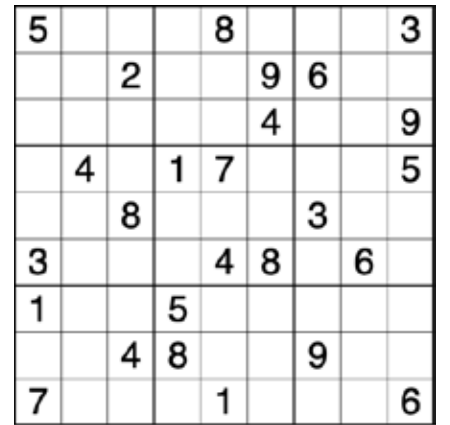
- 1. Thinly (8)
- 5. Puny person (6)
- 10. Fan (9)
- 11. Cubist's first name (5)
- 12. All ears (9)
- 13. Collection for public display (4)
- 16. Molar (7)
- 18. "The Naked Gun" star Leslie -- (7)
- 20. Tilling tool (3)
- 21. Escapée (7)
- 22. Well-being (7)
- 23. Auction (4)
- 25. Early years (9)
- 29. Poem about rural life (5)
- 30. Like stormy weather (9)
- 31. Die after seeing this town? (6)
- 32. Unexpected question (4,4)

Down

- 1. Band of cloth (4)
- 2. Frog (9)
- 3. Noticed a wise one, or a North American bird of prey (7,3)
- 4. It used to be spoken in Rome (5)
- 6. Elvis swivelled his (4)
- 7. It's got things to do (2-3)
- 8. Articulates (10)
- 9. Hot off the press (5-3)
- 14. Belligerence (10)
- 15. His athlete exercised in the best condition (10)
- 17. Pulsating (8)
- 19. Never-ending TV series (4,5)
- 24. Hoard (3,2)
- 26. Stretchy clothing material (5)
- 27. Balm ingredient (4)
- 28. Web page language (1,1,1,1)



Last issue's answers



Talk of the town: The folks who cried 'coywolf'



Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Coyote, or coywolf — that seems to be the question.

Across town, people have been spotting the furry wild canines roaming in the springtime.

Some people have been seeing what they believe to be the same white animal, while others have

sent photos of grey dogs, and the photos are coming from many areas in town — Old Town, Queenston, Virgil, etc.

So what exactly is the animal? Is it a coyote? A wolf? Or a "coywolf?"

According to a World Wildlife Foundation species expert, in response to questions from The Lake Report, they said it's likely to be an eastern coyote. But those

crying wolf aren't too far off, as the common eastern coyote does half wolf DNA — as do all domesticated canines.

"Most coyotes seen in Ontario are coyote/wolf hybrids, but we'd need DNA evidence to confirm 100 per cent. Can't tell much from a photo, unfortunately," said WWF.

So for now, all of the terms really seem to be acceptable.

Photos by Janice White, Special to The Lake Report

Others around town have spotted the animal as well. See some of their photos at niagaranow.com



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Inside the ‘Nighthawks’ diner

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

In February 2020, I was in Paris to see the Leonardo da Vinci exhibition at the Louvre. The museum was open late during the final days to accommodate the crowds, so for three rainy nights I walked alone along dark streets back to my hotel.

It was eerie. Buses, streets and bars were empty, no one was out except an occasional dog walker. Was it due to a virus story coming out of Wuhan? One night I stopped, transfixed by the bright interior of a corner café with four people: a couple dining late, a single man fingering his wineglass, and a bored waiter gazing out to the street.

It was Edward Hopper’s “Nighthawks,” painted 78 years earlier in New York

City, transferred to Paris. This is what Hopper’s paintings do. Once seen, they tenaciously lodge in your mind. You don’t forget them.

They are quiet, spare, melancholy, mysterious. They speak to solitude, our isolated states, being alone although not necessarily lonely. They resonate. They make you think.

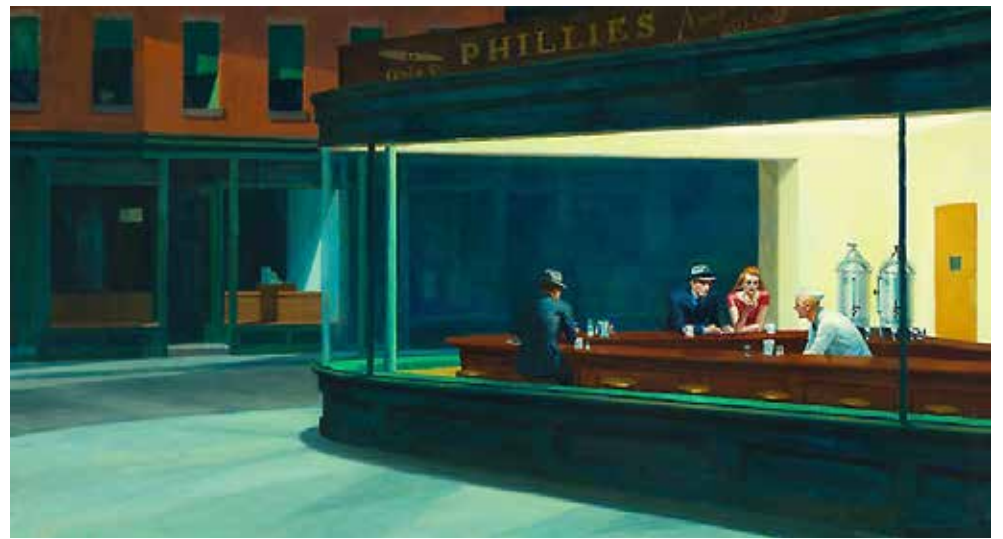
Edward Hopper is considered to be the greatest American realist artist of the 20th century. At a time of anxiety in America, Hopper began painting “Nighthawks.” The Japanese had bombed the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

Hopper did not create spur of the moment. Each canvas took a long time of solitary thought, planning and studies. But when he was ready, his interpreta-

tions of intimate American life were symbolically suggestive, dramatic and powerful. They are not narratives but reveal everyday life in familiar settings: apartments, houses, offices, cafés, on the road.

In “Nighthawks,” a few people are having a coffee in a diner, late at night. Although they are connected by the counter, the figures are detached, lost in their own thoughts. The woman examines something in her right hand, her other hand almost touches the man’s hand holding a cigarette, suggesting intimacy.

We see only the angled back of the single man and the light catching his cheek. The bending server looks out toward the street, perhaps seeing himself in the glass. Hopper’s handling of light and shadow is masterful in the sharp contrast of the fluorescent-lit interior of the diner and the dark exterior, as well as in the detailed nuances of shading on the men’s suits and



Edward Hopper, “Nighthawks,” 1942, Oil on canvas, Art Institute of Chicago. SUPPLIED

fedoras, and the woman’s skin, hair and dress.

Colour is saturated, establishing mood. The composition’s long diagonals are intersected by short verticals supporting large pane glass windows and the prow curve where there would normally be a door. The diner is topped by an ad for Phillies, America’s No.1 cigar, for 5 cents.

In the closed office building across the street,

Hopper indicates human presence even when there is absence. The windows, like eyes, have green roller blinds pulled down at different heights and on the ground floor the cash register in the empty room waits for the cashier. An unseen streetlamp casts light and shadow within these silent enclosed spaces.

Hopper continues to have an enduring influence on artists, poets, filmmakers

and now memes online, with the Simpsons, Star Trek, Batman and Superman and even Banksy at the “Nighthawks” diner.

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an art historian who taught at the University of Toronto for 10 years. She also was head of extension services at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Watch for her upcoming lecture series at the Pumphouse Arts Centre and at RiverBrink Art Museum.

Dr. Brown: Henrietta Leavitt’s leading role in mapping the universe

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

We need maps, whether the maps embedded in our brain’s temporal and parietal lobes based on past experiences, tried and true paper maps or these days embedded in GPS devices in our cars and smartphones.

They all work. But what about mapping something as enormous as the universe? That’s the challenge scientists have taken on in the last two decades using the Sloan Telescope in New Mexico. The project, called the Sloan Digital Sky Survey, was designed to create the largest map of the universe to date by using gigantic clumps of galaxies as “standard candles” for determining distances in the universe.

Those who participated in last fall’s physics course at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library might remember Henrietta Leavitt, a pioneering woman in a male astronomer’s world in the early 20th century.

Leavitt was tasked by her boss at the Harvard observatory with the job of



Henrietta Leavitt.
WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

identifying variable stars whose luminosities (brightness) varied in a cyclical fashion. She discovered that the periodicity with which variable stars brightened and dimmed was related to their apparent brightness, the brighter the star, the longer the cycle period and vice versa.

Once several variable stars with differing periodicities were found that were close enough to trigonometrically measure their distances from Earth, it

was possible to calibrate the intrinsic luminosities of variable stars from their relative luminosities. That allowed scientists to determine the distance from Earth for variable stars too far away to measure their distances directly.

Leavitt’s variable stars became the first “standard candles” for measuring distances to faraway stars in the 1920s.

Edwin Hubble employed Leavitt’s technique to determine the distance to nearby nebulae, such as Andromeda, and showed that the latter nebula and others like it, were separate galaxies. Then, employing the doppler effect, Hubble went on to show, as Vasco Slipher had as early as 1912, that red-shifted nebulae were moving away from Earth and moreover, that the farther away those galaxies were, the faster they were moving.

Hubble’s observations were the first solid experimental evidence that the universe was expanding and led to the Big Bang hypothesis. For such important work, neither Hubble nor Leavitt won a Noble

Prize, although Leavitt was considered for one but, unfortunately, she died before the Nobel committee made its decision.

Had Albert Einstein accepted the implications of his own field equations for general relativity in 1915, he could have won a second Nobel Prize because within months after its publication, it was apparent that his equations predicted an expanding universe, a view taken later by others such as Alexander Friedman and Georges Lemaitre.

Unfortunately, Einstein was so uncomfortable with the whole notion of an expanding universe that he inserted his famous cosmological constant into his field equations to correct for any apparent expansion of the universe. He was wrong and graciously acknowledged so in 1933 and shortly thereafter, withdrew his constant from his equations.

However, the story wasn’t over because later observations revealed the rate of the expansion of the universe was directly related to Einstein’s cosmological constant and the mathe-

matical equivalent for what became known later in the 20th century as “dark energy.” Even wrong, I think Einstein would enjoy the twists and turns of his cosmological constant, first in, then out, then restored with new meaning.

These days the standard candles for mapping the universe use much larger targets – hangovers from the earliest universe. How so? We may not know what triggered the Big Bang but within a trillionth of a second or less, the universe expanded faster than the speed of light, ensuring that the universe would be more or less uniform in every direction.

Fortunately for us and the universe, not entirely uniform because those minor differences led early on to the gravitational clumping of dark matter (enigmatic matter which doesn’t interact with light) and ordinary matter (the stuff we’re familiar which early in the universe’s history, powerfully interacted with light).

The result was the formation of shell-like structures roughly 500 million light years in diameter,

with dark matter forming the core and ordinary matter, forced outward by photons of light, forming the outer shell.

Gravity eventually compressed the ordinary matter in the outer shell enough to create galaxies and stars – and for those interested in mapping the universe – provided giant standard candles of more or less similar diameters, against which smaller (more distant) or larger (closer) shells could be compared to calculate their distances relative to Earth.

Henrietta Leavitt would be proud to learn that those who map the universe in modern times still use standard candles to measure distances to faraway star systems in much the same manner as she pioneered using variable stars a century earlier. As astronomers worldwide continue to do, so too should we, tip our hats to the female astronomer who started it all.

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.

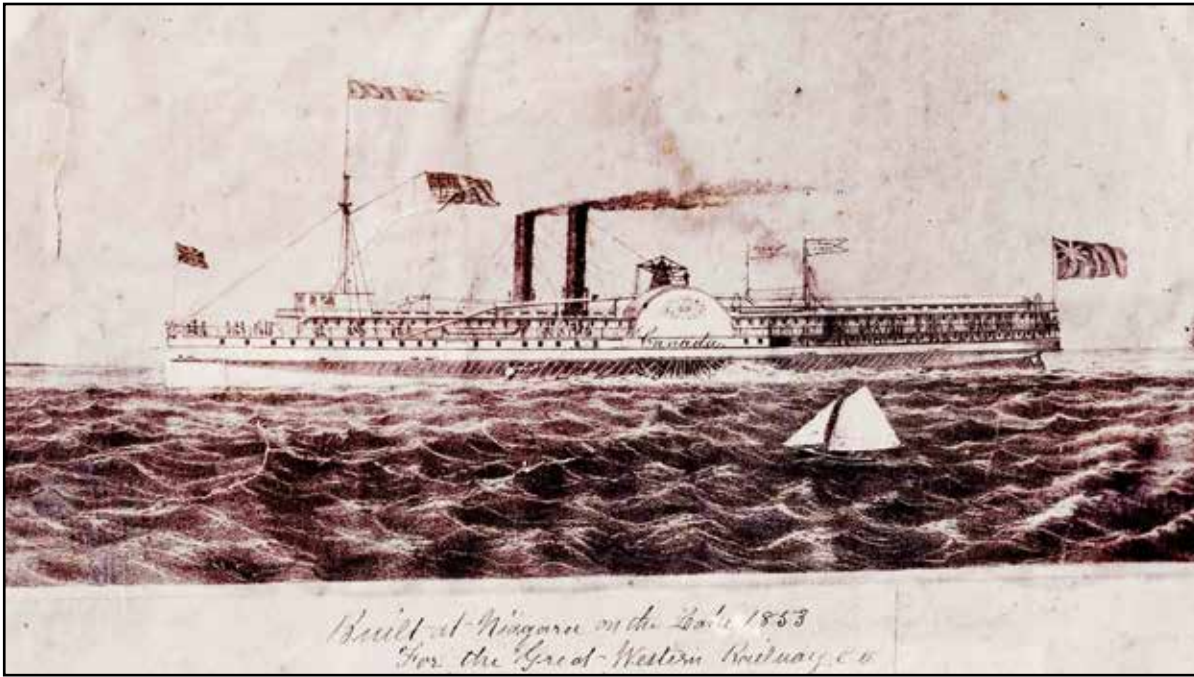


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The steamer 'Canada'

This is a print of the steamer "Canada" that was built in Niagara-on-the-Lake for the Great Western Railway in 1853. From the 1830s through to the early 1850s, Niagara-on-the-Lake was known for its shipbuilding, with a shipyard launching many elegant steamers during those years, including this one. The company-operated steamship service in connection with its trains. The steamship "Canada," captained by G.E. Willoughby, began travelling the Hamilton-to-Oswego route. By 1856, the "Canada" began service between Hamilton, Brockville, Prescott, Cape Vincent and Ogdensburg. Due to financial problems, the "Canada" was eventually sold in 1857.

Slow down: Neighbourhood signs encourage respectful driving in Chautauqua



Paul and Caroline Weiss hand out signs to Chautauqua residents on Saturday. RICHARD HARLEY

ARCHITEXT

Something's missing

Brian Marshall
Columnist



Once there were parks in every neighbourhood. SUPPLIED

It seemed that each time my father was promoted up the corporate ladder, the new position came with a relocation.

In fact, our family lived in four different houses before I reached the age of 10. In those days it didn't seem difficult to make new friends.

I recall on a couple of occasions, the moving truck had not left the driveway before one of the neighbourhood kids had come over to ask if I wanted to go to the park and play.

In the 1950s and '60s, parks were a central feature in every neighbourhood. Never much more than a short walk from the surrounding houses, the broad

expanses of green were spotted with benches and nearly always contained a baseball diamond in which impromptu ball games occurred from spring to fall.

In late autumn, the boards would go up for the local ice rink and the park remained a hub of activity through the winter.

The 1970s saw the beginning of the shift away from large parks included in the plans for subdivision. As the size of the parks diminished, the word "parkette" entered the planners' lexicon: small green spaces just barely large enough for a bench or two

and early childhood play facilities. Where a large park had hosted community activities for all ages, the parkettes supported only periodic visits by parents with young children.

This trend seemed to suit both the developers and municipal governments. More lots/dwellings per acre worked for the developers' financial return and the small parkettes cost the municipality much less in terms of ongoing maintenance.

The only problem that remained to curb this gradual movement away from parks was the "parkland dedication" requirement (current-

ly set in Ontario legislation at one hectare per 300 dwellings) for approval of subdivision plans. But it was not insurmountable for the creative.

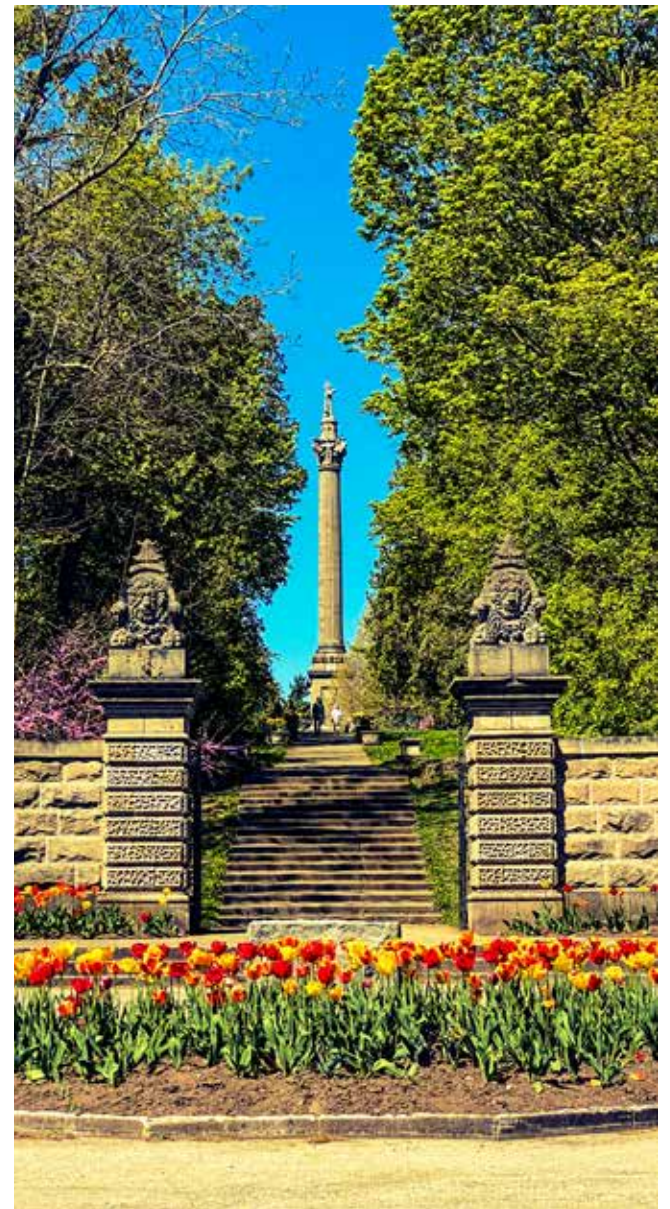
Whether it was a government or developer that first broached the concept of payment-in-lieu of parkland dedication is unknown but the idea caught on like wildfire.

After all, both sides got the result they most desired: the latter maximum yield per acre and the former lower maintenance costs plus additional revenue. Unfortunately, no one at the time stopped to consider the long-term negative impact on the neighbourhoods built without open communal spaces.

In fact, it's only been quite recently that experts have recognized the social and health issues associated with the absence of green space, which has resulted in a theoretical shift (see the region's "Model Urban Design Guidelines," April 2005).

A shame it hasn't trickled down in practice.

Kendall's Corner



A sunny afternoon with General Brock. GAIL KENDALL



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 - Bacon Cheese Burger \$16
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 - Beyond Meat Burger \$16
(lettuce, tomato & pickle)
 - Bacon Portobello Mushroom \$16
(bacon, mushrooms & Swiss cheese)
- EXTRAS:** Sautéed onions or mushrooms on a burger +\$2

DESSERTS

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- Portobello Mushroom Melt \$16
- Roast Beef Dip Sandwich \$17
- Chicken Fingers \$15
- Steak and Guinness Poutine \$17
- Reuben Sandwich \$17
- Meat Loaf Sandwich \$16
- Turkey Club Sandwich \$16
- Chicken Caesar Wrap \$16
- Buffalo Chicken Wrap \$16
- Shepherd's Pie Poutine \$16

EXTRAS: Gluten-free bread +\$2

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- Award Winning English Style Fish and Chips \$18
- Baked Chicken Curry \$18
- Bangers and Mash \$16
- Shepherd's Pie \$16
- Steak Guinness and Onion Pie \$17
- Liver and Onions \$17

EXTRAS: Mushy Peas +\$3

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 - Greek Salad \$12
 - Garden Salad \$11
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Served with mashed potatoes, peas and carrots

FRIDAY: Fish Fri-Yay \$16 - 1 piece | \$24 - 2 pieces
Haddock served with fries, homemade coleslaw, tartar sauce, & lemon wedge

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