

# The Lake Report

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Hyper-local news for Niagara-on-the-Lake



Vol. 5, Issue 47

Serving all five communities of Niagara-on-the-Lake

November 24, 2022



## NOTL fans celebrate Canada's return to World Cup

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

It's a sporting moment Canadians waited a generation for and Niagara-on-the-Lake was ready.

Team Canada returned to the FIFA World Cup tournament Wednesday afternoon and Niagara-on-the-Lake fans were out to celebrate and cheer them on.

Ranked 41st in the world, the Canadians narrowly lost 1-0 to No. 2 ranked Belgium, but NOTL fans couldn't be prouder.

*Continued on Page 2*



## Niagara-bound off-ramp at Glendale may open Thursday

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Glendale's \$54-million diverging diamond interchange is one step closer to completion.

The Niagara-bound off-ramp, which has been closed for almost two months, is slated to reopen on Thursday, Nov. 24 – weather permitting.

*Continued on Page 4*

# A new era begins in NOTL

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa outlines priorities and vows 'more listening and less talk'



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa address the crowd during the inaugural meeting of council on Tuesday, shortly after being given the mayoral chain. The meeting was held at the Court House on Queen Street and followed by a wine and cheese reception. RICHARD HARLEY

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

New Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa promised "more listening and less talk" as he stood at the podium before a half-packed Court House auditorium Tuesday night at the town's inauguration of its new council.

After promising to build bridges between the town, the region and the province throughout his campaign, Zalepa pledged "to grow and strengthen the relationships, build trust and provide leadership to council."

"I remain focused on the outcome, ensuring that those taking their oaths tonight return to you in four years, stating emphatical-

ly that they enjoyed their experience on council," he said.

In his speech, Zalepa explained that he took the time to meet with each member of the new council, as well as new regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser when setting priorities for his first term as lord mayor.

He said the town's staff will be "forced," then corrected himself

to laughs from the crowd, saying they will be "tasked" with focusing on "core strategic items" as the new council begins its four-year term.

His top priorities include economic development, the town's customer service, and increased access to public services like

*Continued on Page 2*

## Village plaza to expand with grocery store, hotel, more retail

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Developer John Hawley's vision for the Village Centre project in Niagara-on-the-Lake is one step closer to completion as work has begun on the final phase

of a major community and commercial expansion.

Heavy equipment has been on-site at the corner of Niagara Stone Road and Niven Road for several weeks, preparing the land for what eventually will be a large addition to the existing plaza.

Council approved the plans on Sept. 26.

Site plan drawings and documents from the Town of NOTL show a total of 16 buildings of various sizes, a central plaza and parking for 388 cars.

A sizable grocery store – about 14,000 square feet –

will open next to where the Garrison House restaurant now sits.

A four-storey hotel, with a restaurant and other amenities, also is planned. The hotel can have up to 60 rooms.

The town also approved several small "vacation

apartments" behind some of the commercial and retail areas.

No details about the apartments are provided in the town documents and neither Hawley nor a spokesperson for his

*Continued on Page 5*



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Top: Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa gives his first address to council at its inaugural meeting on Tuesday at the Court House. Below: Councillors sign their oaths. RICHARD HARLEY

## Council plans to hold **public engagement sessions** in communities

*Continued from Front Page*

health care and transportation.

“The process is going to include feedback and sessions and public engagement from across all our villages,” Zalepa added.

He plans to hold open public forums “every couple of months” throughout the town’s individual villages to make council more accessible to people.

Coun. Adriana Cater Vizzari, who drew a lot of support from her neighbours in St. Davids, said she was looking forward to the forums.

“I do think that people will speak,” she said when asked if residents of St. Davids would be interested in a village forum idea.

“I think as a community, we understand we need to start doing this just because it’s becoming reactionary instead of proactive when we don’t have representation.”

The forums are part of a larger strategy to make council more transparent to the public.

“It’s really going to help us build that trust and confidence with residents that their government is able to listen to them,” Zalepa said in an interview after the inauguration.

“We need to leverage the strength and reputation that we have in our agricultural sector,” he said in his speech.

The town, well-known for its winemaking industry and capacity to grow tender fruit like peaches and grapes, is heavily reliant on its agricultural sector as a source of income.

The other commercialized industry the town is known for is tourism.

“Niagara-on-the-Lake is a world-class destination. And it’s also one of the best communities in the world in which to live,” Zalepa told the audience.



He emphasized the need for a well-planned tourism strategy to fully realize the potential of that industry.

He also brought up the town’s customer service, saying he plans to improve its “capacity in responding with resident service requests.”

“Council will need to ascertain the gaps that we have in services and amenities,” he said.

The town has fewer doctors per capita than the national average and has had no hospital for years.

The need for more medical services was a hot topic during the campaign.

Zalepa also spoke of needing more transportation services.

He plans to create “greater linkages for our residents to transit in and around Niagara-on-the-Lake” and the wider region.

Zalepa laced his speech with references to Thomas Jefferson, joking that while “it may seem historically insensitive” to quote an American, he hoped there might be some “great insights” from him.

“We are called to undertake the duties of council with sincere consciousness of the task and their responsibility,” he said paraphrasing

Jefferson’s inaugural address.

Retired Rev. Robert Williams led the crowd in a prayer to start and end the gathering, and offered his congratulations to Andrea Kaiser, whom he ran against in the regional race.

Marie Louise, a traditional Indigenous knowledge helper from St. Catharines, delivered a welcoming address for the crowd as well.

Dressed in ceremonial garb, she wore a traditional ribbon skirt to honour the victims and survivors of residential schools

To her recollection and

that of the new lord mayor, this will be the first time the town has invited an Indigenous person to speak at a council inauguration.

“I think it’s only appropriate that our towns and our councillors and our people kind of honour the traditional lands but also honour us as Indigenous people,” she said.

She added that it was a good step for the town.

The members of council were sworn in as a group, speaking their pledges in unison with hands raised.

Previous Lord Mayor Betty Disero was among the crowd of about 140 people who attended the inaugural and a reception that followed.

The evening was bracketed with a processional march by three members of the Parks Canada Fife and Drum Corps and by Juliet Dunn, who opened the inauguration with “O Canada” and closed it with God Save the King.

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Top: Fans at the Irish Harp Pub get emotional watching Team Canada in the FIFA World Cup. Below: Brothers Mark Cherney, left, and Aaron Cherney enjoy some beers while they watch Team Canada. SOMER SLOBODIAN

# NOTL celebrates Canada's World Cup debut

Continued from Front Page

"We did fantastic. Canada held a soccer nation to one goal," said Mark Cherney, who was at the Sandtrap Pub & Grill with his brother Aaron.

Fans sporting bright red attire packed the Irish Harp Pub and the Sandtrap to watch the close-fought nail-biter.

Canada hasn't competed in the World Cup in 36 years.

"It's great to see a Canadian team in the World Cup," Luke Czerlau said as he watched the game with a few friends at the Irish Harp.

Pubs and restaurants around NOTL are holding viewing bashes and broadcasting the games from Qatar, including Team Canada's next two games.

Canada is in Group F and will next play Croatia on Sunday, Nov. 27, at 11 a.m. and Morocco on Thursday, Dec. 1, at 10 a.m.

The World Cup opened Sunday and runs until Dec. 18.

Since many games will be on as early as 7 a.m. due to the time difference, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario is allowing licensed bars and



restaurants to start serving alcohol as early as 7 a.m. during matches.

For Niagara-on-the-Lake Soccer Club president Carrie Plaskett, the tournament is a special time.

"The World Cup is an event that can really inspire young soccer players and help them develop a love of the game," she said in an email to The Lake Report.

"It is so special because it truly is a global event that can help kids connect with the world," she added.

For kids, the World Cup

is not only fun to watch, but it's a time to learn.

Plaskett uses the World Cup to educate her boys about the different world flags, she said.

"They follow along filling out a bracket as the games progress," she said.

Fans can watch the next two games at the Irish Harp as well as Palatine Hills Estate Winery. Both plan to open early on Thursday, Dec. 1, for the 10 a.m. game.

"We have our two TVs and we have some food specials on as well," said

Jovie Jokie, owner of the Irish Harp.

Palatine will be streaming all games that take place between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The Sandtrap, Angel Inn, Butler's Bar and Grill, Bricks & Barley and Corks Restaurant are among the NOTL spots that also will be live streaming the games, but will not be opening early on Dec. 1 for the 10 a.m. game versus Morocco.

Games can be seen on TSN and CTV, the official broadcasters for the World Cup.

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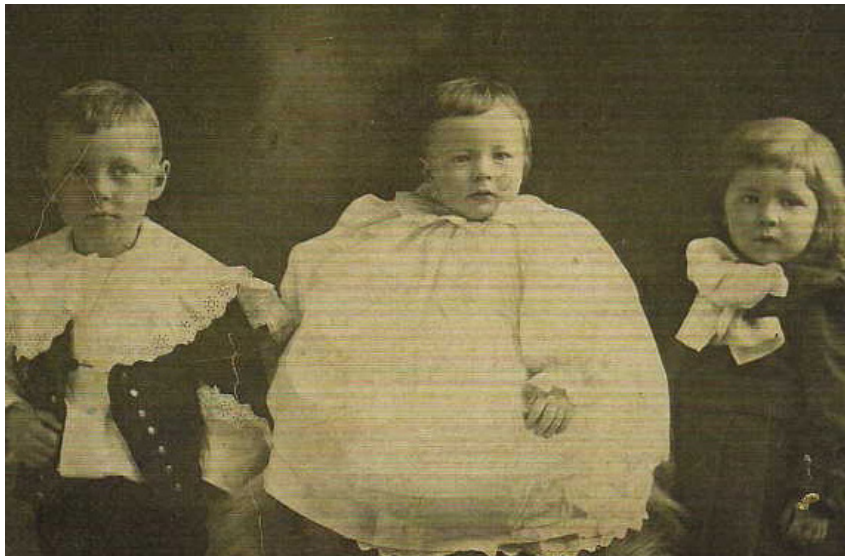
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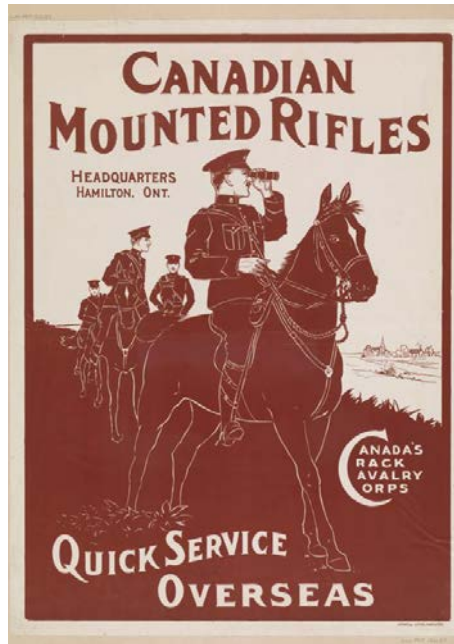
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Left: An early family photo of some of the Lowery children, Wright, age 4, Woodruff, 2-1/2, and Cliff, 1. Right: A recruiting poster for the Canadian Mounted Rifles, the regiment that Wright Lowrey joined. IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM



## Santa visits St. Davids clinic for pix with pets

Staff  
The Lake Report

Santa has seen it all in his yearly visits to St. Davids Vet Clinic.

The man in red has encountered pets on both the naughty and nice list – including the “chihuahua that year after year would try to bite Santa and a cat that left Santa a poop present on his lap,” says veterinarian Dr. Stephanie Hall.

But there have been “many, many more pets that loved cuddling for a photo and a treat.”

Pets and their owners will have the chance to meet the jolly old guy again when he visits the clinic on Four Mile Creek Road this Saturday, Nov. 26, for “Photos with Santa.”

All photos are uploaded to the clinic’s Facebook page and are available for sharing.

The annual open house drop-in, which began in 2013, runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“It’s a chance to connect with the community in a festive, fun-filled way,” said Hall.



Connor Williams, a wheaten terrier, poses with Santa at the St. Davids Vet Clinic. SUPPLIED

She encourages everyone to come out for “a good laugh as we try to capture the perfect moment with Santa.”

It’s all free but donations are welcomed and will be directed to the St. Davids Lions guide dog program, Hall said.

# THE MONUMENTS MEN

## Wright Lowrey died in trenches of Belgium

*This year marks the 100th anniversary of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s iconic clock tower cenotaph. Two years later, in 1926, the Township of Niagara unveiled its own memorial in Queenston. In recognition of those who fought and died in two world wars and beyond, NOTL historian Ron Dale has been researching the stories of the people – all men – whose names are engraved on the two cenotaphs. This is one in a series of stories documenting and remembering the sacrifices of those commemorated on the municipal memorial in Queenston.*

Ron Dale  
Special to The Lake Report

While James Hatt was the first man from St. Davids to die in the First World War, almost a year later, tragedy struck again.

St. Davids grocers Edwin and Rose Wright Lowrey received a telegram informing them that their son, Edwin Wright Lowrey, had died of his wounds on May 11, 1916.

Wright Lowrey was born in St. Davids on Jan. 25, 1896, attended school there and worked in his parents’ grocery store.

When he was 16, he enlisted as a part-time militiaman in “D” Squadron of the 2nd Dragoons, a cavalry regiment based in Welland.

As a member of this regi-

ment, he participated in occasional training, highlighted by sessions at Niagara Camp on the Commons in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

During the next three years he learned basic drill, marksmanship, horsemanship and cavalry tactics, including blood-thrilling charges with swords drawn at imaginary enemies.

This training was not of particular use in the trenches of the Western Front in France and Belgium but certainly would have stirred a young man’s dreams of glory. As the poem by Thomas Gray goes, “the paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

Lowrey was among the first of the many Canadians who enlisted for active service when war was declared, joining the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles on Nov. 28, 1914.

His previous experience in the militia and his leadership qualities were noted and he was promoted to lance corporal on Feb. 1, 1915.

During the next several months the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles stepped up their training in Canada until they were ready for service in the field. On July 18, 1915, they sailed from Halifax to England and the war.

In England they received more vigorous training and finally they were sent to France, arriving on Oct. 24, 1915.

However, nine days before their departure they had to hand in their spurs. The “mounted rifles” lost their mounts.

The unit was expected to man the trenches like regular infantrymen. By November, the unit was in the trenches, holding the line near Ploegsteert, Belgium, in the deadly Ypres Salient, a line of trenches thrust into the German-held area of the front lines.

For the next several months, the Canadian Mounted Rifles, like other regiments at the front, rotated between front-line trenches, support trenches and rest areas farther from the active battlefield.

The rest areas were a misnomer because the soldiers normally had to form work parties to dig new trenches and artillery positions, repair roads, carry supplies up to the front line and perform a myriad of other duties.

In the front lines they launched frequent patrols into “no man’s land” in the torn up, muddy, odoriferous area between Canadian and German lines.

Raids were made against German positions to try to capture enemy soldiers and at any time those in the front and support lines could be bombarded by high explosives, shrapnel or gas shells from enemy artillery.

During daylight hours

any man lifting his head above the parapet could be struck down by a German sniper.

On May 11, 1916, the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles men were manning the front line. In the early hours of the morning, the Germans launched a terrific artillery barrage on their positions.

Lance Corp. Lowrey was hit. One arm and both of his legs were blown off by an artillery shell.

According to the official report “his wounds were dressed and he was taken to No. 9 Canadian Field Ambulance (a medical facility just back of the front lines). He remained conscious until about 15 minutes before his death, which occurred about one and a half hours after being wounded.”

Like so many others who faced the hell of trench warfare, Lowrey did not meet his end in a glorious cavalry charge like some storybook hero. He was crouched in the bottom of a muddy, stinking trench, blown apart by a shell fired from a hidden position a few kilometres away.

Edwin Wright Lowrey left his parents and seven siblings to grieve his sacrifice. He is commemorated on the Township of Niagara War Memorial in Queenston and lies buried in Maple Copse Cemetery, east of the Belgian town of Ypres.

## Off-ramp was supposed to open Wednesday, now province says Thursday

Continued from Front Page

The Ontario transportation ministry originally had set the reopening for Wednesday, but issued an advisory late in the day saying it was delayed. No reason was given.

As well, a ministry official said the reconstructed Toronto-bound on-ramp should reopen sometime on next Monday, Nov. 28.

Until then, Toronto-bound vehicles can enter the highway through the temporary on-ramp via Airport Road.

With the off-ramp closed, drivers were forced to exit in St. Catharines or detour via Niagara Falls in order to get to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The new interchange in Glendale is the third of its

kind in Canada. The other two are in Calgary and Regina.

The design is meant to increase safety, reduce points where accidents can occur and provide a safer driving experience.

The interchange has been partially open since Sept. 26, but the Toronto-bound on-ramp and Niagara-bound off-ramp have both been inaccessible while construction continued.

Once both ramps are operational, the construction of a single-lane roundabout at Glendale Avenue and York Road will begin. It’s expected to be done by spring.

And by the summer of 2023, the landscaping for the roundabout and the site cleanup should be completed.

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Heavy machinery digs up the earth in preparation for the next stage of the Village development. EVAN LOREE

## Grocery store, hotel, central plaza planned

*Continued from Front Page*

company, Traditional Neighbourhood Developments Inc., were available for interviews.

“We will be issuing a press release soon and will be available at that time to discuss specifics,” Hawley told The Lake Report.

A town planning report says, “The proposed central plaza (a privately owned public space) is intended to be the focal point and gathering space.”

A unique oval-shaped outdoor “assembly hall,” beside the plaza, is also shown in the plans.

The assembly hall, or “Ark,” likely will be used as a venue for concerts and other events.

The project is mainly being built on land where the popular weekly summer Supper Market was held prior to the pandemic.

The Summer Market and Saturday farmers market are expected to move onto the existing grass area along Niagara Stone Road.

Part of the project will be built on land behind the existing commercial development and beside the new medical centre, which is due to open soon.

The architectural treatments are “consistent with and complementary to” the surrounding Village residential area and the three existing commercial buildings: Shoppers Drug Mart, CIBC bank and the Garrison House restaurant, the town report says.

The latest phase of the Village Centre has been in the planning for at least four years, going back to a public meeting in 2018 at which Hawley showcased his original plans for the project.

The expansion will add several amenities to help meet the needs of residents and to increase walkability.

Ardeh Staz, president of the Village Community Association, is especially excited about the grocery store.

“Everybody will like the grocery store,” she said, adding it will be convenient for Village residents to be able to walk to get their groceries.

The next nearest grocery stores are in Virgil and Old Town.

Staz joked that she would have liked to see the Village Centre up and running “about three years ago.”

She is less sure how the

neighbourhood feels about the hotel, but there were few objections to it back in 2018.

In addition to the grocery store, Staz thinks the neighbourhood “would like to see kind of a coffee shop” in one of the buildings reserved for retail.

“And I’m not really thinking of Starbucks, or you know, any of the name brands,” she said.

Staz said an operation like Willow Cakes and Pastries would be good for the neighbourhood.

Hawley presented the plans for the Village Centre to council’s committee of the whole on Sept. 19, requesting quick approval because he couldn’t finish off the medical building without laying some groundwork for the new commercial section.

The medical centre was about 85 per cent complete, he said at the time.

The remaining work needed to finish it includes the parking lot, stormwater and sanitation facilities.

“The urgency is we need to have the site plan approved by this committee and council in order to get the doctors in before Christmas,” he told council.

The property is divided into three separate zones but the site plan integrates the three. One piece cannot be completed without being co-ordinated with the others.

“It’s an intricate site plan,” he said. “It’s all tied together. We can’t split it out.”

Hawley started construction on the medical centre about a year ago, well ahead of the commercial expansion.

“We did that and have been doing that on a conditional permit,” he said.

The conditional permit allowed Hawley to get a jump start on the medical complex so the doctors displaced by the closing of offices in the old NOTL hospital would have a place to go sooner rather than later.

Assuming the construction of the storm water systems, parking lot and sanitation facilities are on track, the medical complex should be ready by Christmas, though Hawley has been unavailable to confirm that.

He also has not said what the estimated date is for completion for the Village Centre project.

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

### COVID Tracker

**NOTL active cases (last 28 days): 43**  
**Region active cases: 715**  
**Region deaths: 650**  
**Region total cases: 48,629**

*\*Nov. 23 data per Niagara Region Public Health. Public health warns that "Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, limited availability of testing, and changes to case and contact management practices, case counts shown (above) are an underestimate of the true number of individuals in Niagara with COVID-19. Data should be interpreted with caution." Case data for municipalities is also now being interpreted in 28-day cycles.*



Contributed by Patty Garriock

"I decided to be happy.  
 It is excellent for one's health."  
 - Voltaire

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## Bring out the sleds



Lake Report photographer Dave Van de Laar snapped this photo of people tobogganing at Fort George on Sunday, after a big blast of snow hit town.

### Editorial

## A new beginning, a new council

Kevin MacLean  
 Managing Editor

New beginnings. A clean slate. A fresh start. New opportunities. High expectations.

A new Niagara-on-the-Lake town council was sworn in Tuesday night, with fully half of the eight councillors being new faces, rookies elected to the often-thankless job of representing the interests of the residents of our fair town.

Plus a brand new lord mayor, not a rookie, but somewhat of a newcomer after being "away," serving at the regional level for the past four years.

Congratulations to all those who have begun their

term and no doubt can look forward to many long days and nights of reading reports, researching issues and listening to constituents.

Thanks and congratulations to all those who retired from council, including former lord mayor Betty Disero, who attended Tuesday's inaugural meeting at the old Court House.

A nice touch added to the evening's ceremony courtesy of Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa was allowing council members to informally introduce family members, friends and supporters in attendance – and some who were watching at home via live stream.

It's wise to remember and acknowledge those, es-

pecially family, who while not elected, are among your biggest fans and supporters. And because, with all the work that lies ahead, great sacrifice and understanding will be asked of many of them.

The inclusion of a land acknowledgement by chief administrator Marnie Cluckie and a poignant address by Indigenous traditional knowledge helper Marie Louise – her presentation apparently a first for a NOTL council inauguration – were important, modern additions to the ceremonial first meeting of the new council.

Looking ahead, there will be plenty of occasions to discuss and debate the

actions and decisions of the incoming council.

But it was refreshing to hear the new lord mayor promise "more listening and less talk" from the 2022-26 regime.

In a literal sense, Niagara-on-the-Lake town council has been renowned for its lengthy meetings that appear to run far longer than necessary thanks to lots of "talk."

In a broader sense, if Zalepa means he wants council to be more attentive to the concerns of residents, then that, too, is welcome news.

We look forward to what the next four years will bring and wish our new council all the best.

editor@niagaranow.com



## Bethany's borscht sale helps Mennonite missions

Dear editor:  
 Members of Bethany Mennonite Church want to thank the community for their support of the borscht lunch and bread sale.

A big thanks to Pat Andres and Linda Van Bergen for co-ordinating this very successful event.

Also thanks to the many volunteers who assisted.

All proceeds go to missions, both local and abroad, including the Westview Centre for Women, Mennonite Central Committee (which pro-

vides international relief for refugees) and Friends of the Mennonite Centre of Ukraine.

Sue Weier  
 NOTL

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## Residents need **final say** on development plans

Dear editor:

In his letter to the editor, developer Benny Marotta says, "A dark cloud has been lifted from Niagara on the Lake," ("Hoping new council will be open to discussions on development," Nov. 17).

Now, that's quite a statement coming from a person who has not contributed one iota to the welfare of this town.

How dare he criticize past Lord Mayor Betty Disero for not giving in to his bullying and saying he hopes our new elected council will allow him to "bring forward beautiful additions to our town."

Let's look at one of the beautiful additions he proposed.

He bought a three-acre site on Anne Street where he put forward a (beautiful addition) five-storey apartment block that would tower over the entire town.

He fought hard to get it and residents fought hard to stop it, which we did. In his mind he was thinking what a wonderful contribution he was offering.

He was turned down and eventually built 65 townhouses, not affordable housing but expensive housing that local young people could never afford.

In his opinion, it was done to improve the Old Town and the welfare of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Oh, and make money.

He then goes on to say SORE (Save Our Rand Estate), backed by Disero, has been ruthless to his family.

Marotta, the likes of SORE and our hard-working former lord mayor's whole intention was to keep this town from looking like Brampton or Bramalea, which you are hell bent on doing with your multiple housing schemes.

Let's pray our new council will stave off your "beautiful additions."

In my opinion, such controversial proposals that developers make should go to a town referendum that takes the onus and threats of court action away.

Let the town people have the final say.

*Keith Williams*  
NOTL

## The Wilderness property will **never** be developed

Dear editor:

After reading Niagara Foundation president Lyle Hall's op-ed piece in The Lake Report last week ("Niagara Foundation wants to protect The Wilderness,") I could not just sit back and let him try to sway the public's opinion on The Wilderness.

I have known Ken Reid almost my entire life and I swear he would never, ever sell that piece of property for development and anyone out there who would believe that accusation sure doesn't know anything about Ken.

After his wife Kea's death, I spoke with Ken. He told me the Niagara Foundation had made him an offer to purchase the property.

When he told me the amount I just laughed and

asked if he felt insulted. He just looked at me and said, "What do you think?"

The next time I bumped into Ken I could see how frustrated he was. Not the Ken I knew at all. He told me Kea's mom's will specified that she was to inherit so it was left in trust for transfer to her before her mother died.

The Wilderness is protected under the Ontario Heritage Act as a whole, never to be developed and has been since the mid-1990s.

Has anyone taken the time to understand that The Wilderness is Ken's home? The place where his wife grew up. The place Ken and Kea lived together.

They loved that property together. He loves that property. It's his little piece of heaven.

Mr. Hall commented about disrepair and trees falling down on the property. It's called the Wilderness, for God sakes. It's a natural forest. What do you expect?

If the Niagara Foundation was so concerned why didn't it help pay for upkeep etc.?

I'm not sure why the foundation thinks it owns half.

Therein lies another question. Lauren and Vaughn Goettler have pledged \$1 million to help preserve The Wilderness. Then why aren't they dealing with the owners of it?

How best to realize Ruth Parker's wish of preserving and maintaining the property? I don't think for one minute Ruth would want to force her family out to do so. So, who is making

Ruth's decisions for her?

Give Ken Reid a break. You all know what that property is worth and clearly the foundation has been chomping at the bit to get it since 2013.

I'm sure at this point he would be happy to accept a reasonable offer at fair market value on a property he loves just to get his life back to normal instead of having people hounding him.

Ken lost his first love and is now being forced out of his second love and all of his memories. There is something truly wrong with this.

When I was growing up in Niagara, rich or poor we were all shown the same love and respect. Not anymore.

*Karen Taylor-Jones*  
NOTL

## Marotta's anger at former mayor Betty Disero is **misdirected**

Dear editor:

We are writing in response to developer Benny Marotta's letter published Nov. 17, ("Hoping new council will be open to discussions on development).

You have finally revealed your true colours and you obviously do not really know former lord mayor Betty Disero.

Your rant and anger is totally misdirected. She was only one vote.

If you wish to speak to the lord mayor and council, get on the agenda and represent yourself, and your many numbered companies, at committee or council meetings.

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tion. Have you ever tried?

You have not been a benefit to Niagara-on-the-Lake, like you think you have. We would be glad to help you load the moving van.

*Sue and Kip Voegel*  
NOTL



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# Goodbye green: Giving away the farm to **benefit developers**



Brian Marshall  
Columnist

Perhaps it is an intrinsic part of any government that a sufficient amount of money can ensure a level of influence in policy and decision-making to the benefit of a particular group or business sector.

While on one hand I would wish this was not true, both history and the cynicism engendered by 50 years of business experience combine to make me accept that this is the way of things.

And Bill 23, the Ford government's so-called More Homes Built Faster Act (aka Bill 23), in my opinion can only be viewed in these terms. That is, it is legislation specifically geared to benefit one particular business sector in this province.

Consider that encompassed within this legislation is the loss of 7,400 acres currently protected within the Golden Horseshoe's Greenbelt.

Aside from the loss of wetlands, environmentally sensitive areas and species at-risk that are contained and encompassed within normal historic agricultural practices, the loss of some of the most productive farmlands in the country is mind-boggling.

I recall during one of my parents' early 1960s cocktail parties overhearing my father state with great disdain that, in the Duplessis government's Quebec, there was nothing that could not be obtained at the right price.

A decade later in the 1970s, after massive reforms, the government of that province had become squeaky clean (almost to the point of paranoia) in adhering to the rules of ethical conduct.

But the stories of governments (of all political stripes) that have pandered to their monied constituent groups and special interest lobbies are endemic across this country and around the world.



Doug Ford wants to sell the farm for development.

It's particularly concerning given that the last three years have amply demonstrated the requirement for local food production. Have you tried to buy lettuce lately?

Of course, we should not forget the fact real estate speculators and developers have been buying up family farms in the Golden Horseshoe for decades, land-banking those acres (typically renting them back to agricultural producers) against the day when a "friendly" government would release the land for housing developments.

It has been a tried and true practice. Just witness how the Bill Davis government

established its own "greenbelt" (in which no further development would occur) north of Toronto, between Steeles Avenue and Hwy. 7.

Then subsequent governments pushed that line some 20 kilometres north, which allowed the development of land-banked properties purchased in the 1960s and 1970s.

That's right, all of the urban sprawl north of Toronto (and also around the Golden Horseshoe) has occurred on formerly "protected" greenbelt land.

Apparently the agricultural sector that provides our food security cannot, in the Ford government's eyes, compete

with the dollars generated by the development sector.

Still, let's move past the loss of the agricultural lands to drill down on the ramifications of what the successful adoption of Bill 23 might mean to each and every property owner in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Well, first and foremost, you can expect your property tax to increase exponentially.

In Bill 23, if a developer sets aside at least 5 per cent of a new development for "affordable" homes which the legislation defines as 80 per cent of the average market price (for NOTL that would be any property priced at \$880,880 or less based on September 2022 sale stats), then that development will not have to pay the typical and historically normal charges to the municipality.

Until now, those fees were used to offset any associated increased infrastructure costs but those costs will instead be borne by property tax payers.

And, this is not the only proviso in the legislation that downloads the costs onto municipalities. There

are several other mechanisms contained in Bill 23 that will inevitably result in higher municipal taxes that you and I will be required to underwrite.

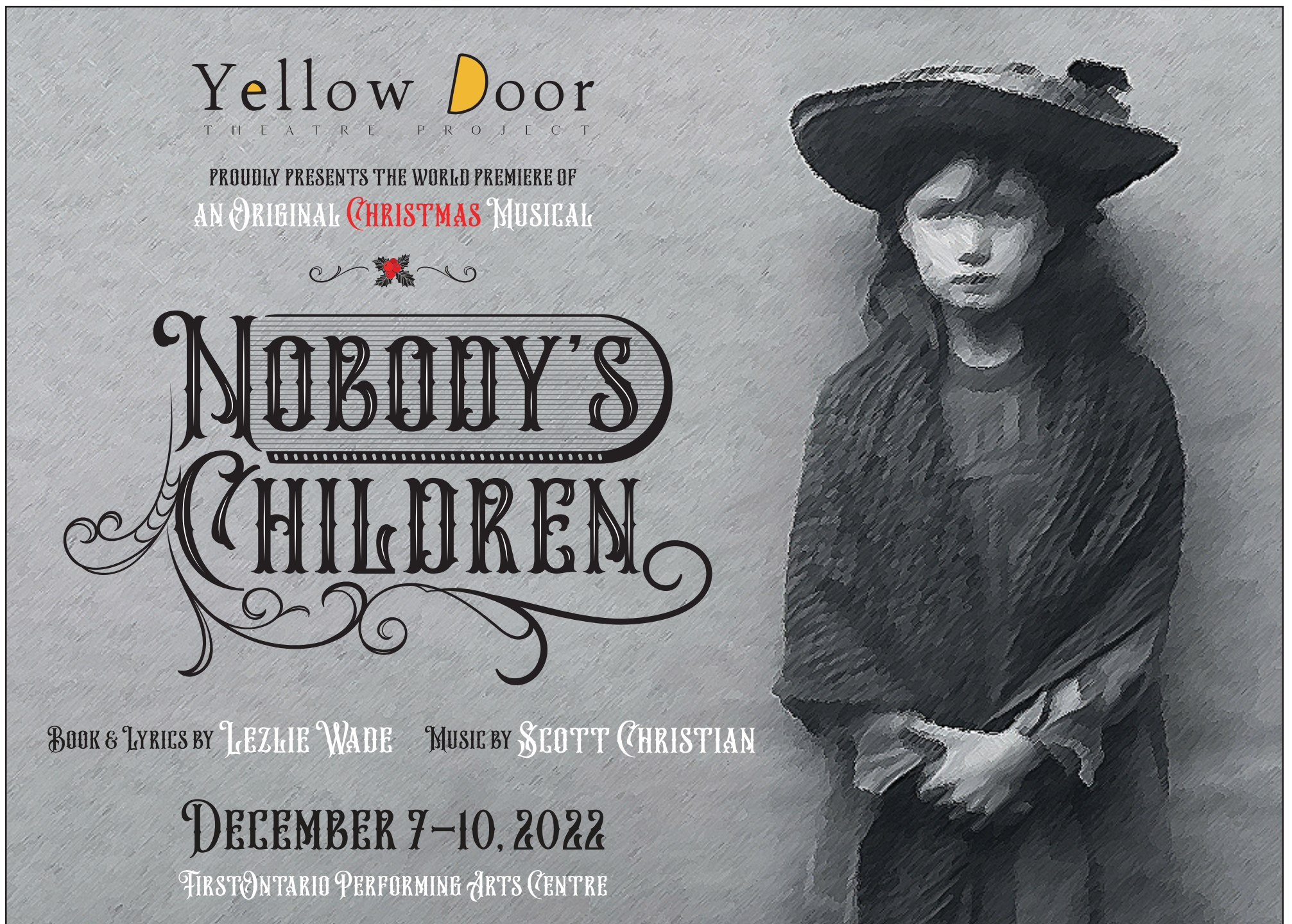
I assume Ford is hoping the local elected councils will be the lightning rod for the citizens' resultant anger, despite the fact his actions are responsible.

Last week I spoke to the gutting of heritage protection by this legislation and I outlined the loss of local municipal oversight vis-à-vis development and preserving the character of our community, so I will not "chew my cabbage twice."

Bill 23 passed second reading in the House on Oct. 26 and it is currently "in committee." We have an opportunity to stop this blatant "gimme" legislation should NOTL citizens and other communities across Ontario take action.

If that action is absent, I'm afraid we will have to brace for the inevitable impact..

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



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Doug Hollingworth helped load trees into customers' vehicles during the first weekend of the St. Davids Lions Club Christmas tree sale. JULIA SACCO

## Lions clubs run Christmas tree sales through snowy weekend

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

Snow or shine, people need Christmas trees for the holidays.

Terry Flynn and members of the Niagara Lions Club are well-stocked again and selling trees in Virgil outside Cornerstone Community Church.

And luckily for those living in and around St. Davids, the Lions Club there began its annual Christmas tree sale on Saturday, Nov. 19 – and carried on through the snowy weekend.

St. Davids Lions Club members Don Pitchko, Doug Hollingworth, Bavel Varadinek and Robert Guy were hard at work all weekend helping customers load trees onto their cars and keeping track of sales.

"The trees were delivered Saturday at 10 o'clock," said Pitchko. "By 11, the snow started coming down and it didn't stop."

The harsh weather didn't stop Pitchko, a Lions Club member for 33 years, from pitching in.

"Every day, we start at 10 in the morning and we stop at 7 at night," he said.

The weather apparently didn't stop customers either, with a substantial amount of trees being sold.

Doug Hollingworth has been with the Lions for about 34 years and said the trees at the sale are always a huge hit.

"We've had people come back saying they didn't want to throw them out," said Hollingworth. "They might drop a dozen needles over all of Christmas."

Those interested in picking up can stop by expecting assistance and good conversation from this generous group of members.

Christmas tree sales will continue until they sell out.

All proceeds will go to community causes, with the first \$1,000 earned going toward NOTL minor hockey.

## Christmas Parade button blitz is this Saturday in Virgil

Santa is coming to town early again this year – for the annual Niagara-on-the-Lake Christmas Parade on Dec. 10.

Members of the parade committee have distributed donation boxes around town, chock full of commemorative buttons that sell for \$3 each.

A team of volunteers will be selling the buttons this Saturday, Nov. 26, from 10

a.m. to 1 p.m. at Phil's Independent Grocer and Penner's Home Hardware in Virgil.

Donation boxes can be found at the Avondale stores in St. Davids and on Mary Street, Bricks & Barley, Sweets & Swirls in the community centre, the Grist, Hendricks Independent Grocer, the Sandtrap, Starbucks in Old Town and Virgil, and at Tim Hortons in Virgil.

# Reid contests Niagara Foundation's claim to half ownership of The Wilderness

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The King Street property known as "The Wilderness" is an urban oasis and Ken Reid, who lives on it, says he is confused why the Niagara Foundation worries he might sell it for redevelopment.

The 5.5-acre heavily wooded site at 407 King St. is tied up in a legal dispute between Reid and the foundation, which claims it was given a half-interest in the property via former co-owner Ruth Parker's will.

In an opinion piece published in The Lake Report last week, Niagara Foundation president Lyle Hall, speaking on behalf of the organization, said the site needs to be properly maintained and expressed concerns about it being sold and redeveloped.

Reid said that will never happen and disputes the foundation's assertion that it has a legal claim to half of The Wilderness.

"In my ideal world, it would go to somebody who would appreciate it for what it is," Reid, well-known in Niagara-on-the-Lake as the town's former animal control officer, said in an interview.

He has been living there for nearly 25 years.

"For them to say all I want is to sell it to a developer is ludicrous," he said.

When Reid's feelings were shared with Hall, he acknowledged he may have made an unfair assumption when he wrote that Reid might want a "development exit."

The Niagara Foundation is concerned about signs of deferred maintenance first uncovered by heritage consultant Jon K. Jouppien, who inspected the property in 2018.

Neither Jouppien nor the Niagara Foundation provided a copy of the inspector's report.

Hall said he could not share it due to a copyright restriction.

Parker, who was an aunt of Reid's late wife, owned a 50 per cent share of the



Ken Reid is contesting the Niagara Foundation's claim to a half-interest in The Wilderness.

property when she died in 2013.

She wrote in her will that she wanted the heritage of the property to be preserved and tasked her trustee to assign preservation of the property to an appropriate organization.

"It is my wish and desire, without imposing any obligation on my trustees, that the said property (407 King Street) be preserved in its entirety and specifically, that the heritage elements, as have been or as may be found to exist by the Ontario Heritage Foundation (sic.), or similar agency, be preserved," reads an amendment attached to the will called a codicil obtained by The Lake Report.

The executor, lawyer Peter Janzen, selected the Niagara Foundation to follow Parker's wishes.

Reid inherited half-interest in the property from his deceased wife Kea Reid, who in turn inherited from her mother Fran McKay, who was Parker's sister.

He rejects the foundation's claim to 50 per cent ownership because he thinks the executor's interpretation of the will is inaccurate.

He added the executor has failed to settle the estate in a timely fashion, which is his legal obligation.

The will does not specifically name the Niagara Foundation as the body best suited for executing Parker's dying wishes.

"She (Parker) wanted to ensure that The Wilderness had heritage protection and

that it was left up to the lawyer to decide how best to do that," Reid explained.

In a conversation outside his home, Reid was puzzled why the property needed additional protection given its heritage designation.

In an interview, Coun. Gary Burroughs said heritage designations are more of a "delay tactic" and that while the heritage committee can make requests from people with plans to renovate heritage properties, it cannot guarantee compliance from the property owners.

Hall pointed out that neither party walks away with the whole property, regardless of how the courts rule on the issue.

Reid will not inherit the 50 per cent share left behind by Ruth Parker, even if the courts rule the foundation has no claim to it, Hall said.

Asked about this, Reid said he was trusting his lawyers to figure it out in court. Reid initiated the legal action in 2018, Hall said.

Reid has rejected an offer from the Niagara Foundation to purchase his share of the property before the court rules on the legitimacy of its claim to Parker's half.

He did not disclose how much the foundation offered for his ownership stake, but described it as "well below the property value."

"It was basically just an insult offer," he said.

Hall said the foundation is not in the business of making "silly offers," but that the foundation expects to repair the property and

these expenses need to be considered as part of the offer.

"My trustee shall not be required to sell the property at fair market value," the codicil says.

Hall also wouldn't say how much the Niagara Foundation offered Reid for his share.

Reid argued that nobody who owned the property would accept less than market value.

According to Hall, Reid has not allowed the foundation onto the property to assess its need for repairs and so the organization can only speculate on how much they might cost.

Reid also said the heritage committee was wrong when it described the property in a state of disrepair.

He estimates he has spent about \$15,000 renovating and repairing the property since his wife died.

Reid acknowledged though that as he gets older it becomes harder to maintain.

"There's also a lot of taxes, maintenance, upkeep. I'm 70 years old and it's getting harder to stay on top of it," he said.

Hall said the property has been in need of additional maintenance for as long as he's been in town and pointed to the property's many downed trees as evidence of its state.

Reid argued downed trees are a natural feature of forested properties and said the town ordered him to cut down some of the more problematic ones.



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# HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE 2022



## Three's a Charm: NOTL Holiday markets are jolly and bright

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

Snow, shopping and snacking were the themes last weekend.

Thanks to the Willowbank Holiday Market, the St. Vincent De Paul Treats and Treasures Market and the Ravine Vineyard Holiday Market, eager shoppers could spend the weekend perusing handmade goods and Christmas treats.

### St. Vincent de Paul

Despite the impending snowstorm, the St. Vincent de Paul Treats and Treasures Market brought out a great crowd for the handmade gifts and snacks.

Sabina Knight, president of the Catholic Women's League, said guests were eager to shop right when the doors opened.

"We had an excellent showing at 9 a.m. this morning. The snow had me scared me all week," said Knight.

"But God was looking out for us."



Kalin Falconer, owner of Bloom & Co., sells Christmas decorations with employee Marco Bressette at Ravine winery's holiday market on Sunday. RICHARD HARLEY

The group is looking forward to its 100-year anniversary coming up next fall and will use funds from the sale to support its charitable efforts.

"We're hoping to do some good deeds with the money we raise and to celebrate in October," said Knight.

"There's a long history of service to the town and we hope to continue that work."

The sale began with seven tables of gift baskets and by the time snow began to come down, just one table

was left standing.

According to event chair Irene Pentesco, a committee of five has been working on the sale since June of last year.

Fellow CWL member Maryann Larrivee expressed gratitude for Pentesco's leadership and guidance.

"She's the driving force behind this. If it wasn't for her, we wouldn't be doing this today."

### Willowbank Holiday Market

In the midst of Saturday's winter storm, Willowbank School of Restoration Arts students and crafters were snuggled up inside for this year's Holiday Market.

Student events co-ordinator Riley McMahon took a lead role in the planning the market, with the goal of showcasing students' passions and hobbies.

"They did a Christmas market last year and invited vendors from around the area. So, I thought it

would be nice to have students featured," she said.

McMahon and organizers picked the market date in August.

"We did miss out on a couple of vendors who got snowed in," said McMahon. "There was no moving (the date)," added the director of Willowbank, Caitlin Wooll.

Those students who made it out to the sale had a unique collection of handmade goods on sale, from miso peanut butter cookies to cherrywood earrings.

Wooll had her quirky anthropomorphic animal prints available for purchase, Riley McMahon and her boyfriend Matthew Wark were selling gorgeous cherrywood coasters and ornaments, Lucien Blanchard had watercolour paintings inspired by various photographs and landscapes for sale, and JoJo Keus handmade stained glass ornaments for the occasion.

"I really just wanted to do

something simple but very cute," said Keus.

"On Christmas trees, they sparkle and even on windows, they're great."

### Ravine Vineyard

At Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery, vendors were selling lots of different goods — many of which weren't actually Christmas-themed.

But jolly old Saint Nick and his wife were there, offering kids a chance to let them know what's on their Christmas lists.

Kalin Falconer, owner of Bloom & Co. in St. Davids, brought some of her Christmas decorations to sell.

"We had some rushes of people, and then some lulls, but otherwise really good," she said of the market attendance.

With her store just down the road, she had "the benefit of a slow load-in, because we can just make a couple of trips easily."

- With files from Richard Harley

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# HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE 2022



## Christmas planter sale will benefit NOTL Cat Rescue

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

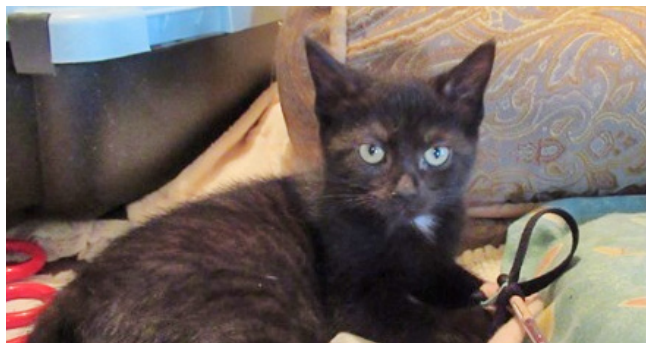
'Tis the season for the second annual Christmas planter sale and food drive for NOTL Cat Rescue.

"Last year's Christmas fundraiser selling the Christmas planters was so successful, we decided to repeat it this year," said Tanya Rice, a longtime volunteer with the organization.

NOTL Cat Rescue is a volunteer-based organization in Niagara that rescues stray cats and kittens.

The fundraiser will be held on three separate dates: Nov. 26, Dec. 3 and 4.

The sale raised about \$2,400 last year when 44 planters were sold, said Rice.



Left: Five-month-old Dee Dee is currently at NOTL Cat Rescue. The proceeds from the fundraiser will help fund her vet bills. She'll need surgery that will cost upward of \$3,500 due to a patella injury. Right: One of last year's planters. SUPPLIED

She hopes to surpass that this year. The planters will be available in different sizes, with prices ranging from \$25 to \$75.

Rice makes the planters with her mom Joyce Ruish and her three friends, Carolyn Greenfield, Sabine Barry and Lesley Pranter.

Fresh greens, such as ce-

dar, pine or spruce will be used in each planter, along with some birch sticks.

Decorations such as pine cones and Christmas bows will be added as well.

"All the money raised, 100 per cent, goes to NOTL Cat Rescue," said Rice.

The money from the planters will help cover



The rescue now has about 27 cats and kittens available for adoption.

She said many people adopted cats during lockdown, but now that most people are back to work and school, some have no time for their new pet.

"This is definitely the highest that I've seen it since I've been involved," said Rice, who has volunteered with the rescue for about seven years.

Her late sister, Jeanne, introduced her to the rescue when she threw Rice a 50th birthday party. Instead of gifts, Jeanne asked everyone to bring an item to donate to NOTL Cat Rescue.

Rice been involved ever since.

Besides the planters, there will also be a food

drive. Cat stockings will also be available for \$10 each, made by the daughter of a local foster family.

"It's also a food drive because we'll be responsible for feeding all these little mouths during the winter," said Rice.

The rescue is always in need of items like litter and cat food. Brands like Performatrin for kittens and adults, and Fancy Feast are always needed.

The fundraiser will be held at Rice's house at 456 Line 2 Rd., behind Crossroads Public School.

It will run from noon to 3 p.m. this Saturday, Nov. 26 and again on Dec. 3 and 4.

"Come out, support a local non-profit charity. Have a glass of hot apple cider with us," said Rice.

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# NOTLers honoured with **Women in Business** Awards

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

It is no secret that Niagara-on-the-Lake is home to many strong, independent businesses run by committed community leaders.

And last Friday's Women in Business Awards ceremony honoured some of them – NOTL women who are the movers and shakers behind several successful institutions in town.

In fact, NOTL women won the top honours in four of the 12 categories in the awards sponsored by the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce.

Rima Boles of the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, Catherine O'Donnell of Willow Cakes and Pastries, Stephanie Reis of Ferox winery, and Melissa Marotta-Paolicelli and Angela Marotta of Two Sisters Vineyards all shared their gratitude and pride in winning a Women in Business Award.

As well, a number of NOTL-area women were finalists for the awards, including Madison Vine of Andrew Peller Ltd. and Sarah Kaufman of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

### Rima Boles Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre

"I was honoured and speechless when they announced that I had won," Pumphouse director Rima Boles said afterward.

"Even still, it's taken a while for it to hit me."

She was nominated for her outstanding leadership in the arts as director of the Pumphouse for the past eight years.

For Boles, one of the most rewarding aspects was the



Top left: Melissa Paolicelli-Marotta and Angela Marotta of Two Sisters Vineyards took home a Women in Business Award for their charitable efforts. Top right: Catherine O'Donnell received an award for her hard work as a pastry chef and professor. Bottom left: Stephanie Reis of Ferox winery earned an award for her behind-the-scenes work. Bottom right: Pumphouse director Rima Boles was honoured with an award for her leadership. JULIA SACCO/SUPPLIED PHOTOS

public acknowledgement of the Pumphouse's role in the community and shining a light on the role of visual arts in the community.

"I am thrilled that the Pumphouse got recognition for all of the work that we do in the community," she said.

"I love that Niagara-on-the-Lake and all the great work that people do here is being represented."

### Catherine O'Donnell Willow Cakes and Pastries

Catherine O'Donnell is one of those women doing great work in town.

Founder of Willow Cakes and Pastries and pastry chef professor at Niagara College, O'Donnell actively shares her passion for baking with the community every day.

"When I won, I was so surprised because I don't win things!" said O'Donnell.

Over the years, she's

been nominated for numerous awards but has seldom won, she said.

Needless to say, she was grateful and proud to receive recognition for her hard work in the baking arts.

"I think (I was nominated) because even during the pandemic, we were still able to do things to give back to the community, especially our community because we have such an amazing one," said O'Donnell.

Among other things, her shop is famous for the Canada Day cake it produces every year for July 1 festivities.

"The Willow is what it is because of all the incredible people that work here, from our retail staff to our back staff and by being the conductor of such an amazing business, I think people see that my beliefs and core values go into everything."

O'Donnell expressed her immense gratitude to the mystery person who nominated her for the award and for the incredible ceremony itself.

"I was the only girl in my class when I went to college 42 years ago. Evolution is wonderful to see."

### Stephanie Reis Ferox winery

She couldn't make the awards ceremony itself but Stephanie Reis of Ferox winery called in from Florida to share her excitement with The Lake Report.

"I was in the company of a lot of great candidates from different kinds of businesses and experiences, so I was just so honoured to win," she said.

Reis, who has a background in sports and events marketing, believes she was nominated for all of her work behind the scenes at Ferox.

"Our brand, Ferox, is my husband's wines and

I think a lot of people assume it's all his since he's the face of it. But I take care of a lot of the background stuff."

"In our business, it's not just about making great wine. It's also making sure we deliver products to our customers and we have to tell our story," she said.

"My husband makes that a bit easier for me because he happens to make really good wine."

Reis extended her gratitude to Kristen Wakani from RBC, who nominated her for the award, as well as all those who have supported Ferox through its evolution as a company.

"We started off in 2015 with three barrels and now we're producing 7,000 cases not even 10 years later."

### Melissa Marotta-Paolicelli Angela Marotta

Two Sisters Vineyards is no stranger to awards, being

named the "Best Performing Small Winery of the Year in Canada" for 2018.

But siblings, and co-proprietors, Melissa Marotta-Paolicelli and Angela Marotta were honoured to win a Women in Business Award.

"We were nominated by Minerva Ward, who is the president of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, someone who we have gotten to know very well," said Melissa.

"She has been doing amazing things for our town and the businesses. It was an honour to be nominated by her for this particular award."

The sisters were recognized for their dedication to charitable causes, including Gillian's Place in St. Catharines and Sick Kids.

"We will continue to support all of the charities we currently are committed to, specifically Gillian's Place and Sick Kids Hospital, as both these places hold a special place in our hearts," said Melissa.

"As much as it was an honour to receive this award, we don't look for any recognition," she said.

"The idea alone that we are able to positively impact the lives of those around us is enough and we will continue to do so with charities and organizations that are important to us as a family."

The siblings also extended their gratitude to the team at Two Sisters.

"We are very proud to say that we have the most amazing staff. Without their dedication and hard work, we wouldn't be where we are today and be able to give back."

  
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# Queenston choir returns with concert

Brittany Carter  
The Lake Report

After two years, the Queenston Women's Chorus will once again be performing an annual Christmas concert, "Here We Come A-Carolling," on Sunday, Dec. 4 at 3 p.m. at Trillium United Church in St. Catharines with special guests the Niagara Star Singers.

The chorus of 30 women from across Niagara paused performances during the pandemic but Queenston's Lisa Cosens Brillon, conductor and founder of the chorus, says they are eager to get back to doing what they love.

A big part of that is giving back to the community, she says. Net proceeds from the concert will go to the Niagara Festival of Performing Arts scholarship fund and Newark Neighbours.

"We set up a music scholarship fund years ago to encourage students who are going into music and, especially, singing," Brillon says.

Net proceeds from ticket sales for each performance are donated to local and national charities, such as Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care, Nova House, Wells of Hope, Wellspring Niagara and others.

Nearly \$8,000 has been awarded to the scholarship fund since 2015.

Brillon's lifelong passion for music has led to a long career.

She began singing professionally at age 17 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree and two master's of music degrees – in voice performance and in music education.

She has been singing personally and professionally ever since, with a



The women of the Queenston Women's Chorus rehearse on Tuesdays. BRITTANY CARTER

resume that includes the role of Madame Firmin in the Toronto production of "The Phantom of the Opera" and the lead role of Elena in "I Vespri Siciliani" with the Opera Orchestra of New York at Avery Fisher Hall.

"I've been doing music since I was six years old, piano, singing, singing in choirs, and singing in festivals," she says.

She wanted to share her love of music, so she also founded a music festival that grew to become the Niagara Festival of Performing Arts.

"It is for musical theatre, classical voice, popular voice, classical piano, popular piano, strings and speech arts," she says. "It has been a lifelong, not only occupation, but passion."

That passion and commitment to music sparked the creation of the women's

choir back in 2003.

"I'm a musician and I am a singing teacher. I'm also a choral conductor. My children were getting older and I thought, 'Wouldn't it be great to have a community chorus?'"

"I just thought it would be a great thing to do for the community and I had lots of women encouraging me to do it. So I took it on and here we are today," Brillon says.

The chorus, previously named the Queenston Ladies Choir, is a staple in the community, having performed at numerous community openings, such as the NOTL Community Centre and Willowbank, as well as at St. Davids Heritage Day and for the Shaw Guild.

Its two concerts, one at Christmas and one in the spring, are the choir's big events.

This year's Christmas concert will be at a new venue in St. Catharines. They have performed at St. Mark's Anglican Church for years but due to a scheduling conflict, Brillon says they had to look elsewhere.

"I was really lucky and fortunate to find Trillium United Church at 415 Linwell Rd. in St. Catharines ... it's a beautiful venue," Brillon says.

The performance will also include a sing-a-long medley of familiar Christmas songs. There will be a reception afterward, with light refreshments.

Next spring, the chorus will hold its annual spring concert, which will also mark the group's 20th anniversary.

Tickets for the Dec. 4 Christmas concert can be purchased at the door or by contacting Brillon at queenstonwomenschorus@gmail.com.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.  
Category: THEY'RE SORT OF A BIG DEAL

**"The whole" this tortilla-and-sauce food item evolved into "the big" one for somebody in charge.**

Last issue:

Category: "Going Green"

Clue: Frogskin is a synonym for this other monetary slang

Answer: What is a greenback?

Answered first by: Larry Mantle

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Jane Morris, Jim Dandy, Richard Cook, Elaine Landray, Pam Dowling, Wade Durling, Gary Davis, Claudia Grimwood, Rocco Marchese, Sheila Meloche

**\*REMEMBER TO PUT "WHAT IS" FOR JEOPARDY QUESTIONS!**

Email answers to [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com), with your name, for a chance to win a \$20 Irish Harp Pub gift card every week. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

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# THANK YOU!

## To everyone who contributed to this year's Healing Cycle for Palliative Care



**THANK YOU** to ALL the sponsors for making our 10th-year Healing Cycle fundraiser a very successful event. A special thanks to the Hummel family! **THANK YOU** to our team of riders: Bonnie Bagnulo, Jennifer Frendo, Brian Eckhardt, Susan Sherk, Trish Anthony, Rich Merlino, The Feren Frenzy (Bonnie's family - Aunt Liz, and cousins Johnny, Kristin, Derek, Cedric, Cameron, and Serena) and Betty Disero, who joined our team on ride day. It was very wet, but we got it done. This year the team raised \$8,000 from sponsors and \$18,225 from the individual area sponsors, for a total of \$26,225. Which put us over our goal of \$25,000. With a generous matching contribution of up to \$25,000 from the Hummel Family, our total funds raised was \$51,225. The Healing Cycle Foundation did some fundraising for the event as well, for all area hospice palliative care services. Donations were dispersed among the teams, with higher amounts given to the highest fundraisers. We ended up with a check for this year's Healing Cycle ride with a grand total amount of \$61,797. Along with two trophies for the highest fundraisers and the highest individual fundraiser. This year our ride was sponsored by McGarr Realty, Penner Building Centre, The NOTL Ukesters, Simpsons Pharmasave, The Pedal Pub, Fidelity Investments, The Niagara on the Lake Rotary Club, Lead Mechanical, Bridgman & Durksen, Vince Kerrio, The Colaneri Family, Robert Phillips, Tonie Mori and Culinary Outlaw. On another note, Santa for Palliative Care completed his 700-km ride. This year he rode virtually around the island of PEI, virtually riding on their "Island Walk Trail". The hurricane interrupted his final finish so approximately 100 km was driven around the NOTL area. He was joined by William Roberts and John Royon for his final finish where he was met by his welcoming fanfare.

## Mark your calendar: Santa is coming to the community centre!

Once again this year we will be inviting children of ALL ages to come for a visit with Santa Claus at the Community Centre on Sunday, December 11th, 2022 from 10 am – 12 pm

Did you know Santa was having a sleepover? After the Parade Saturday, December 10th, Santa will be staying overnight in NOTL, so he can wake up early and visit with all the good children of ALL ages in the town. He will be available for Photo opportunities and for you to tell him "a little something" that might be on your wishlist this year.

Please join us for a complementary hot chocolate and cookie as we enjoy "Storytime with Santa" this year.

Santa for Palliative Care will be available once again this year for virtual visits, home or office visits, should you not be able to join us at the Community Centre. Please email: [santaforpalliativecare@gmail.com](mailto:santaforpalliativecare@gmail.com)



# NOTL resident was treated like a princess at Old Town spa

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Sometimes a simple gesture really can go a long way.

Since moving to Niagara-on-the-Lake eight years ago, Ruth Dowsett and her daughter, Alexis, have been regulars at the Starbucks on Queen Street in Old Town.

The original shop closed in October 2020, but was reopened under the management of 124 on Queen Hotel and Spa, enabling the mother-daughter duo to continue their daily coffee routine.

As a result, Alexis Dowsett has become a bit of a celebrity there.

Alexis is 41 and has cerebral palsy. “She’s a quadriplegic and she’s in a power chair,” said her mom.

The pair see the general manager, Eric Quesnel, almost daily, along with hotel owners David Jones and Nick Capasso. They’ve always felt welcome, said Dowsett.

A few weeks ago, the management team decided



Staff at 124 on Queen Hotel and Spa went above and beyond for Alexis Dowsett during her spa day. SUPPLIED

they’re nice people, he said, adding he wanted to treat them to something unforgettable.

“Just seeing her eyes when I saw her after the experience the next day, she was kind of like a kid in a candy store,” he said.

The staff member who helped the women throughout the day is also someone Alexis won’t ever forget.

Emily Campbell was very attentive, but there was a special moment that still stands out to the women.

When Ruth tried to tip her for her wonderful service, she politely refused.

“She turned around and she said, ‘Alexis, seeing a smile on your face and how much you enjoyed it is enough for me. I do not want any money,’” said Dowsett.

Dowsett said Alexis told her no one has ever been that nice to her.

While it was Alexis’s first trip to the hotel’s spa, she looks forward to trying it again.

Until then, she’ll be at Starbucks most days enjoying her favourite drink – a Caramel Macchiato.

to surprise the women with a day at their fully accessible spa.

“They said, ‘You know, we’d love to have you there. It’s all handicapped-equipped and we’d love for you to be our guest for the day,’” said Dowsett.

On their day, Alexis was treated like a princess, her mom said.

The spa has a lift that allows Alexis to easily get in and out of the pools. Once she transfers from her power chair to another chair, the lift will gently pick the chair up

and put her in the pool.

“It was so great to me,” said Alexis. “I want to go back again so I can tell them how great they are.”

Her favourite part of the experience was the hot pool, which is like a gigantic hot tub.

Since her muscles often seize up, the warmth of the water was soothing, she said.

“Alexis wants to go back every time I see her,” Quesnel said with a laugh.

The hotel gave the pair the spa day because



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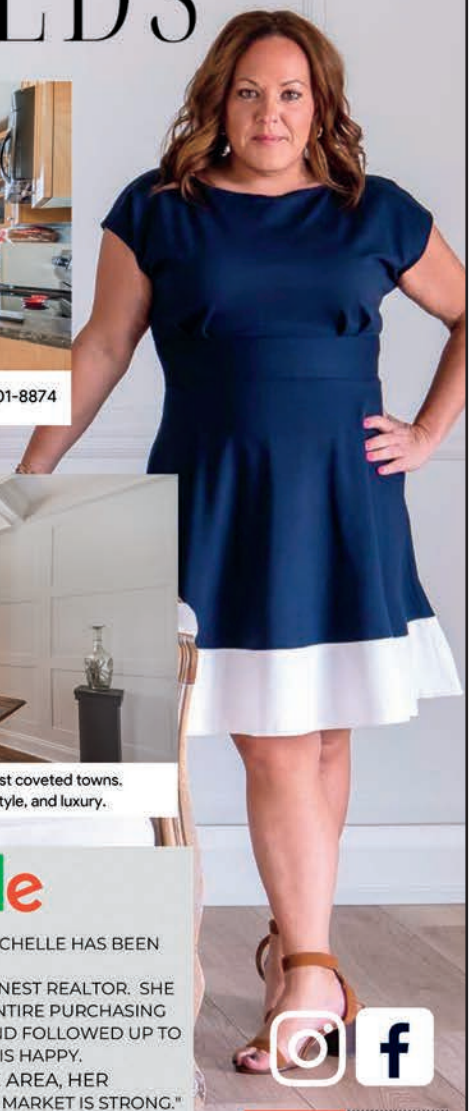
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# New book is dedicated to the history of Fort George

John Sayers  
Special to The Lake Report

It's fascinating to realize that Fort George, completed in 1802 (think of it, that's over 200 years ago), has never had a book written about it.

Until now.

No, it wasn't built as a tourist attraction and, fort-unately, a new book, "Fort George: A History," published by the Friends of Fort George, reveals its early history and the successive episodes in the life of this Niagara-on-the-Lake treasure.

What we see today is the fort that rose like a Phoenix from the remnants of its previous sad condition and was painstakingly restored in the 1930s as a Depression-era work project.

There are lots of photos and postcards of the fort in the subsequent era, but the extensive story of Fort George during the preced-



Fort George was completed in 1802. A new book reveals its early history. SUPPLIED

ing decades has now been documented by a group of authors well-known to area historians for their knowl-

edge and expertise. I could tell you about those long-ago years, but I won't – so that you will buy

the book! (It's available now and an official book launch is planned for Dec. 1.)

But I will tell you the names of the authors who contributed to this valuable history. I'll mention them in alphabetic order because they are all equally important historical resources.

The are: Tony Chisholm, (who is also president of the Friends of Fort George); Ronald Dale; Amanda Gamble; Dan Laroche; Joseph Last; Richard Merritt and Wes Turner. If those names don't resonate with you, then you need to get more involved with our local history with the Friends of Fort George and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

There is no other book dedicated solely to the history of Fort George and it's available in either hardcover or softcover formats.

You might prefer softcover for yourself but want a hardcover copy to send to your own equivalent of Great Aunt Matilda in Calgary who has everything, expects a Christmas gift

and is almost impossible to buy for.

Buy her the hardcover copy to impress her. It's a manageable 150 pages – not a big, thick book – so the postage won't blow your budget. And she will get one of the few things that she doesn't have already.

Expect to find it online at the Friends website [www.friendsoffortgeorge.ca](http://www.friendsoffortgeorge.ca) or in these restricted winter hours at the gift shops at the fort or the NOTL Museum.

And here's a tip – you can get yourself or your aunt a special author-signed copy at the book launch at Navy Hall (just Google "Navy Hall" if you don't know where it is) from noon to 2 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 1.

She will treasure it and you definitely won't get this author-signed chance again. So, I will see you there, when I will be buying a hardcover copy to send to my equivalent of a Great Aunt Matilda in Calgary.



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Rima and I met a little over 6 years ago. As the newly-elected Chair of the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre, in an attempt to get to know Rima better, I asked her "what would you do if you discovered you had painted yourself into a corner"?

Rima broke into a slow smile, laughed and said "I would never paint myself into a corner".

Over the years I have learned Rima was right. Why? Because long before she picks up a brush, her thought process begins in the corner and traces the many, prudent, methodical steps it takes to reach the light of the doorway.

Five years later, the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre stands on the threshold of a revitalized visual arts community, offering art for all.

Thank you, Rima. You have the full support of the Board of Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre and the community we serve.

**Congratulations**  
**RIMA BOLES**  
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## Yellow Door premieres **new musical**

Staff  
The Lake Report

Virgil's Yellow Door Theatre Project is presenting the world premiere of an original Christmas musical, "Nobody's Children," Dec. 7 to 10.

The play, written by Lezlie Wade and Scott Christian, and directed by Kerry Ann Doherty, will be staged at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines.

Yellow Door artistic producer Andorlie Hillstrom said the professional-calibre production features 20 Niagara-area schoolchildren between the ages of 8 and 17.

"Nobody's Children" tells the story of what happens when Mary Sharples takes a small detour on Christmas Eve not knowing it will lead her into a world of adventure, courage and friendship, Hillstrom said.

"Written in the vein of 'Oliver!' and 'Matilda,' this comedic musical, set in Victorian London, takes the audience on an exciting ride that straddles two continents," she said.

"Loosely based on the tale of the Pied Piper, this



Yellow Door Theatre Project students rehearse for "Nobody's Children." The show plays Dec. 7 to 10 at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre. SUPPLIED

adaptation includes an assortment of eccentric villains and a couple of heroes on a quest to save a group of orphans from being lost forever."

Hillstrom noted the Yellow Door company owes a debt of gratitude to its sponsors – the Lauren and

Vaughn Goettler Family Foundation, James A. Burton and Family Foundation and Bob and Lezlie Murch – for helping make the family-friendly production a reality.

Tickets are available now at the FirstOntario centre's box office.

## Willowbank opens doors for salon concert fundraiser

Staff  
The Lake Report

Queenston's Willowbank School of Restoration Arts hosted a classical music salon concert Sunday afternoon, a unique fundraiser rooted in the estate's long history.

It was the first "Reimagining Willowbank" event organized by the Willowbank Friends and Fundraising committee, led by board member Ginny Green.

The concert featured classical music from the eras, 100 years apart, during which the estate was inhabited by thriving families.

The concept behind the afternoon was to reimagine how the families of the Hamiltons and the Brights in the 1840s and 1930s may have enjoyed music and social gatherings at Willowbank.

Pianist James Bourne, music director of St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, led the concert. He was accompanied by Brock University



Pianist James Bourne, sax player Carlo Panetta and clarinet player Kaitlyn Chambers entertained at a Willowbank School of Restoration Arts fundraiser on Sunday. JANICE WHITE

music students Kaitlyn Chambers on clarinet and Carlo Panetta on alto sax.

Patrons were treated to performances from celebrated composers including Mozart, Wagner and Debussy with a finale of "The Entertainer" by Scott Joplin.

Bright family descendent Emily Bright shared amusing stories of the mischief that the children got up to

while growing up at Willowbank.

Green noted that despite the first heavy snow of the season, the concert "really came together well, all the moving parts. It truly was a great team effort and the weather co-operated."

With COVID restrictions easing, the Willowbank plans to host more of these type of events, marketing director Katie Houghton said.

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# Not pretty, but Jr. A Predators get back into **win** column

Kevan Dowd  
The Lake Report

The Jr. A Niagara Predators moved back into the win column last Friday night and earned a little redemption in the process.

Niagara's 3-1 victory over the Windsor Aces at the Meridian Credit Union Arena ended a three-game losing streak – the most recent loss being a 4-1 decision to the Aces five days prior.

With the win, the Predators up their record to 6-8-2 in the Greater Metro Hockey League's south division.

"It wasn't the prettiest but it's a win and they're excited about it so that's kind of all that matters," said Predators head coach Kevin Taylor.

It took nearly half a period before Niagara's Jaroslav Dohnal slipped one past Windsor's Justin Sheets putting the Predators out front. Declan Fogarty earned his team's second tally two seconds shy of the

11-minute mark for a 2-0 lead after 20 minutes.

Windsor narrowed the gap to just one with the only goal of the second period but Niagara's Cameron Savoie padded the difference 15 seconds into the third.

Predators' netminder Cameron Huff turned away eight more attempts by Windsor for a game total of 26 stops and the win.

While Taylor is happy with the win, he felt his team's latest two performances against Windsor could have been better.

"It's good to get the win back and get back in the win column in that aspect but it was a sloppy game. It wasn't a very pretty game."

Niagara faces a greater challenge Friday at 7:30 p.m. against the St. George Ravens who sit two spots ahead of them in their division. So far the Ravens have managed two close wins over Niagara and also took a loss.

**Read more on the Predators at [Niagaranow.com](http://Niagaranow.com).**



## On ice: Figure skaters show off their forms



Top: Abigail McCabe is mid-spin during a Monday junior and pre-junior STARSkate practice at the Centennial Arena. Left: Coco Allinotte skates by gracefully. Middle: Isla Ventresca and coach Judi Boyle-Krzeczkowski share a high-five. JULIA SACCO



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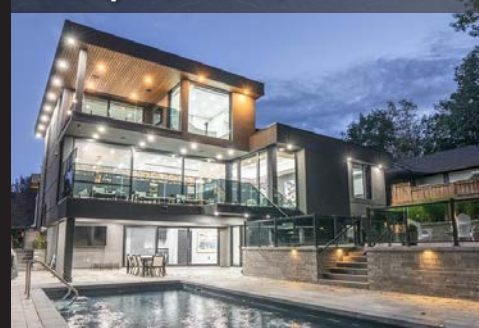
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- 5. Rubbish (5)
- 8. Incantation (5)
- 10. Russian sleigh (6)
- 11. Defence covering (6)
- 12. Having the form of a song (5)
- 13. Sister of Mary and Lazarus (6)
- 14. Resident of e.g. Nairobi (6)
- 15. Stage play (5)
- 17. Scratched (6)
- 19. Plan (6)
- 21. Cuban dance (5)
- 22. Die from lack of food (6)
- 23. Professional killer (6)
- 24. Locations (5)
- 25. Workshop machinery (6)
- 27. Pressed (6)
- 29. Grecian architectural style (5)
- 31. Go back (6)
- 32. Beast (6)
- 33. Porridge (5)
- 34. E.g. Tarka (5)
- 35. Is inclined (5)

**Down**

- 2. Rill (9)
- 3. Throw out (5)
- 4. Not in any circumstances (Poetical) (4)
- 6. Recall past experiences (9)
- 7. Sweat room (5)
- 8. Mayonnaise (5,8)
- 9. Lazy (13)
- 16. Allow to enter (5)
- 18. Storage building (9)
- 20. Cemetery (9)
- 26. Representative (5)
- 28. Oil source (5)
- 30. Part of speech (4)

### Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3		4		5	6	7	
			8			9			
10						11			
			12						
13						14			
			15		16				
17		18				19			20
			21						
22						23			
			24						
25	26					27		28	
			29		30				
31						32			
			33						
34						35			

Last issue's answers

1	G	O	R	G	E	O	U	S	S	W	I	M	S	
2	O	I	D	N	C	A	A	B						
3	O	F	F	B	E	A	T	A	V	I	A	T	O	R
4	D	L	N	R	R	T	R	E						
5	B	E	E	S	S	U	M	M	E	R	T	I	M	E
6	Y				T	E	E	M	Z					
7	E	L	S	E	R	H	I	N	E	S	T	O	N	E
8	U	D	O	S	N									
9	P	A	S	S	A	G	E	W	A	Y	T	Y	K	E
10	A	P	T	V	N									
11	P	R	E	M	A	R	I	T	A	L	G	E	M	S
12	E	N	B	C	R									
13	R	A	D	I	A	N	T	C	O	N	C	A	V	E
14	Y	E	S	S	H	D	T	R						
15	U	D	D	E	R	T	Y	R	O	L	E	A	N	

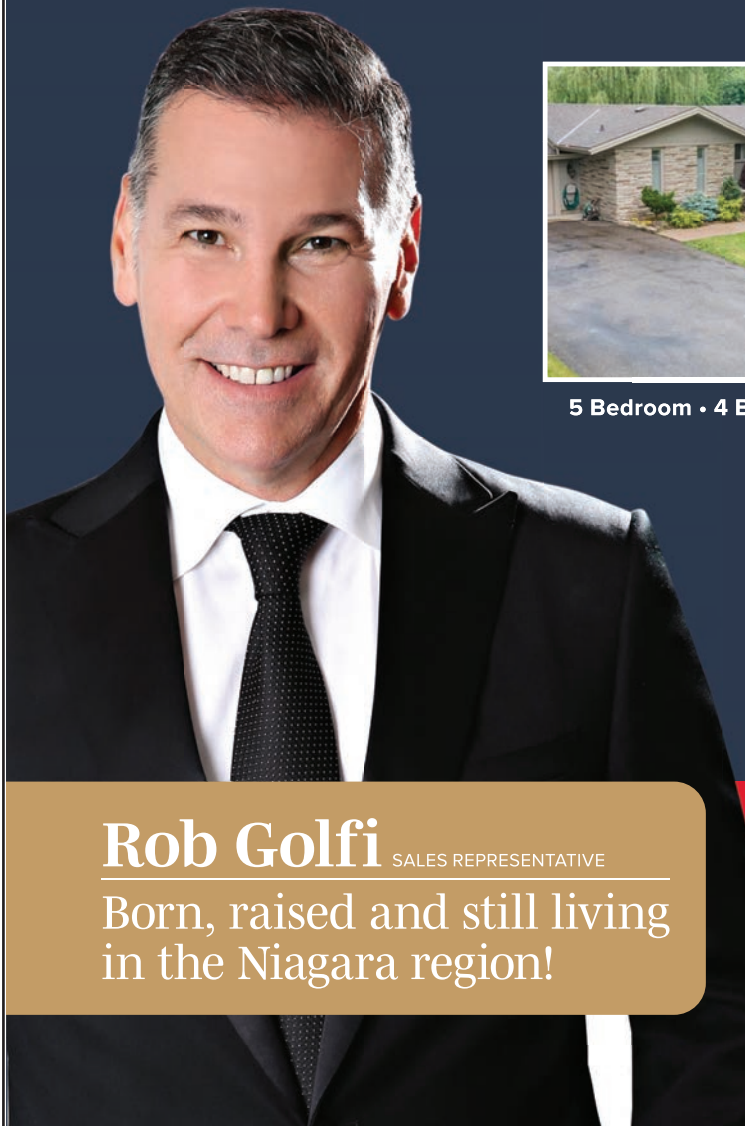
	8		1		2		
1			7		5		
				9		3	
	4	6		1		8	
	5	7			3	9	
	9			2		6	5
	7		4				
		8		6			5
		4			8		1



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# The earliest universe: When the invisible became visible



**DR. BROWN**

Dr. William Brown  
Special to The Lake Report

For much of the 20th century and the first quarter of the 21st century physics was divided between the universe of the large (galaxies, stars and other stellar bodies) and the universe of the tiny (particles and forces acting over subatomic distances).

For physicists brought up on Newtonian physics, it was hard enough to grapple with the mathematics and implications of Einstein's masterpiece – general relativity.

But for those who grasped the math, the implications were huge, masses shaped space-time and space-time told masses where to go, and at the extreme, a large mass might collapse space-time about itself to form a

black hole.

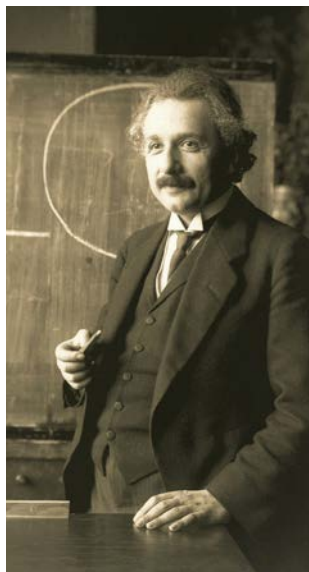
Quantum physics (mechanics) was a whole other matter. The forces and particles were beyond view.

Far more troubling was the fundamental constraint on certainty associated with quantum physics – the most important of which was Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. It states that the location of particles such as electrons can never be known with certainty, the most we can hope for is to calculate probabilities.

That was a shock to physicists familiar with Newtonian physics and general relativity. That and other features of the quantum universe, such as the lock-step entanglement of two particles at long distances, baffled many physicists – none more than Einstein – who to his death was obsessed with finding flaws with the uncertainty and fundamental probabilistic nature of quantum physics.

The conflict between quantum physics and general relativity came to a head with black holes.

Everything outside the event horizon could be explained



Albert Einstein.

by general relativity but once inside, quantum physics ruled, including as yet unproven quantum gravity, according to Stephen Hawking and Roger Penrose.

There is one area where most physicists agree the two universes came together – the first few seconds of the Big Bang.

Most astrophysicists, theoretical and experimental, agree the universe began with something very tiny, probably a quantal field, which within a trillionth of a trillionth of

a trillionth of a second expanded to the limits of the visible universe. It was propelled by something called inflation, an extremely powerful expansile force, which stretched tiny quantal variations (Heisenberg's principle in play) in the original quantal field, across the universe.

Just when the inflationary expansion reached its limits, the inflationary field transformed into the earliest "protoparticles" that in a fraction of a second transformed again into the building blocks of atoms with which we're familiar, such as electrons, protons, neutrons and their subcomponents.

Thus, in less than 1000th of a second, what had been minor variations in a tiny quantal field became random variations in energy and matter on the scale of the expanding universe in what was later called the "afterglow" of the creation of the universe.

Evidence for this was the detection in the 1960s of radio waves emanating from all points of the universe for which Arno

Penzias and Robert Wilson shared a Nobel Prize, even though others had to point out the significance of their finding to them.

Later studies revealed randomly distributed small variations in the temperature a few degrees above absolute zero in the far reaches of the universe in what was named the cosmic background radiation. This was strong evidence supporting the quantal origins for currently observed random small variations in that radiation.

The significance of these discoveries is best expressed by physicist Brian Greene in his 2020 Book, "Until the End of Time."

"Take a minute to let this sink in. Physicists describe the earliest moments of the universe using Einstein's equations, updated to include a hypothetical energy field filling space, subject to the quantum uncertainty learned from Heisenberg. Mathematical analyses of the inflationary burst reveal that it should have left an indelible imprint in the form of a specific pattern of minute temperature varia-

tions across the night sky. Sophisticated space-based thermometers built nearly fourteen billion years later by a species just coming of scientific age here in the Milky Way detect precisely that pattern."

That's some perspective.

It's fair to point out that the inflationary period in that first second, while generally accepted, has yet to be solidly proven. But the variations in temperature across the universe are well-documented and those variations are most consistent with an early period of incredible inflation in the size of the universe – much faster than the speed of light.

Remember, the speed of light is fixed, but the expansion of the universe is not.

One excellent readable source covering the earliest events in the universe and much more is Greene's book.

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.

# BARREL HEAD



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## Drawing of King Street in 1856

The American tradition of Black Friday has now been adapted into Canadian culture. However, this post-American Thanksgiving ritual may not be as intense here as it sounds like our southern friends make it out to be. In honour of this shopping frenzy, today's photograph is part of a series of images documenting the stores of Queen Street around the 1950s. The buildings shown are 54-62 Queen St. and the businesses, from left, are I.M. Billing Fine Footwear, the Eaton's Order Office and an unknown restaurant. Remember when Eaton's was one of the largest stores in Canada? This would be the season to get the Eaton's Christmas Catalogue and start circling, in red pen, all the things you'd like for Christmas. Today the stores in these buildings are, from left, Versions, Fornos Restaurant and the Sunset Grill.

## 'The Mistletoe Bride' with Tara Rosling is back and one venue is already sold out

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Dim the lights, the show is about to begin.

Niagara-on-the-Lake theatrical and TV actress Tara Rosling is looking forward to reprising Jeanette Winterson's "The Mistletoe Bride," a performance she hasn't given live since 2019.

"I'm very excited to return in-person," she said.

The show will return to Silversmith Brewery in Virgil on Dec. 20 at 7:30 p.m., where it first debuted in 2014.

"Silversmith Brewery is magical," she said.

The brewery, in a former church, creates a mysterious ambiance throughout the room by dimming the lights. Rosling then sits up on stage and simply tells the story.

The show also will be performed at the Irish Harp Pub for the first time on Sunday, Dec. 11, at 7:30



Tara Rosling will perform "The Mistletoe Bride" at Silversmith Brewery and the Irish Harp Pub. FILE

p.m. However, due to its popularity, that show is already sold out.

Rosling will also be offering a virtual Zoom performance on Dec. 22 at 7:30 p.m.

The performance is pay what you can, with 100 per cent of the proceeds from the Zoom and Silversmith

performances going to Gillian's Place, a shelter for people who are experiencing abuse.

At the Irish Harp, there will be a 50/50 draw where half of the proceeds will be donated to the same organization.

More than \$10,000 has been donated to Gillian's

Place over the years, said Rosling.

The theatrical rendition of "The Mistletoe Bride" was adapted by Canadian director Peter Hilton.

After working together at the Shaw Festival, Hilton and Rosling decided to bring "The Mistletoe Bride" to life.

The story is a bit of an antidote to Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," she said with a laugh.

Rosling describes Winterson's story as a "very evocative, highly poetic kind of dreamscape short story."

"That is part ghost story, part solstice story, part Christmas story, part rite of passage story based on an old folk tale," she said.

The story is purposely left open-ended, she said, allowing listeners to come to their own conclusions.

To reserve seats at Silversmith Brewery, call 905-468-8447. To attend virtually, email Rosling at tararosling@hotmail.com.

## Looking to the Stars

### When someone disappoints, do you **forgive or move on?**

Bill Auchterlonie  
Columnist

**Thursday, Nov. 24:** The moon in Sagittarius is feeling big while Mercury feels the need for both seeing big and correcting past mistakes. Sometimes it is best to wait for the solution to come to you. He was born in Ohio, although we think of him as Canadian for his efforts in aiding Britain during the War for Independence: Joseph Brant died this day in 1807. In some places he is also known by his Mohawk name, Thayendanegea.



**Friday, Nov. 25:** A loved one can be the source of a disappointment. Do you forgive? Do you move on? On Nov. 25, 1979, Pat Summerall and John Madden broadcast a game together for the first time, a pairing that lasted 22 years and became one of the most well-known partnerships in TV sportscasting history.



**Saturday, Nov. 26:** The moon moves from Sagittarius into Capricorn and connects with Chiron, opening an opportunity to heal a hurt from long ago. On Nov. 26, 1917, the NHL formed with the Montreal Canadiens, Montreal Maroons, Toronto Arenas, Ottawa Senators and the Quebec Bulldogs. The National Hockey Association disbands.

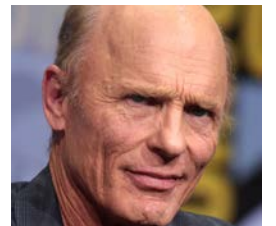


**Sunday, Nov. 27:** It's a Sunday full of bright ideas. Stand back and see how far these ideas

spread rather than forcing them on others. Happy birthday number 71 to American motion picture director Kathryn Bigelow, famous for her work on "The Hurt Locker" and "Zero Dark Thirty."



**Monday, Nov. 28:** Venus in Sagittarius connects with Uranus in Taurus, creating a bit of tension that has the potential to erupt into something new and exciting. Like a new friend or a new project. Or the surprise new conclusion you had not seen until today. Also today, Hollywood great Ed Harris turns 71.



**Tuesday, Nov. 29:** Quick, overall and in-depth describe the style of thinking and communication we see and hear today. Be courageous and brave. Be alone. Be unafraid. Be you. Musician Charles "Chuck" Mangione, born in Rochester, N.Y., turns 82 today.



**Wednesday, Nov. 30:** The first-quarter moon in Pisces is this morning. While we may all feel out of sorts, take some time to write a list of things you want to do. Happy birthday to Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain, born Nov. 30, 1835. His young self was a riverboat captain on the Mississippi, which figured prominently in some of his classic stories.

**Check out Bill Auchterlonie's podcast, Looking up to the Stars, at [www.lutts.com](http://www.lutts.com).**

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

# HISTORY *in the* VINEYARD

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Left: A weeping blue atlas cedar with snow. Top right: Holly berries. Right: Ice on spruce needles. JOANNE YOUNG

## Not essential to wrap your evergreens



**GROWING TOGETHER** 

Joanne Young  
Gardening Columnist

Well, we all knew that it was coming, against all hopes and wishes, and yes, it arrived.

Last weekend's first major snowfall is a sure sign that the gardening season has come to an end. It's all melted now, but rest assured more is on the way soon.

You may be wondering if any of the plants in your garden need to be protected throughout the winter. Here are some tips to help them survive the next few months.

I am often asked if evergreens need to be wrapped in burlap for the winter? My usual answer is "No."

If plants are properly

placed in the garden, they should not need protecting for the winter months. Why plant something evergreen if you are just going to cover it up in the winter?

That is why we plant evergreens – to enjoy their beautiful foliage when the rest of the garden has gone leafless. If you are using plants that are hardy enough for our Zone 6 climate, they do not require any extra protection.

On the other hand, if your plants are more tender or if they are going to be exposed to constant winter winds or salt spray, then wrapping may be needed.

When wrapping trees with burlap or a protective blanket, do not to wrap the shrub directly, but instead put stakes into the ground and wrap the burlap around the stakes. Sometimes, all you need is to put protection on one side of the plant to stop strong winds.

It is the cold temperatures, wind and salt that you need to protect it from – not the snow.

It is best not to cover the top of the plant as the snow will accumulate there and could end up crushing the plants. Having the snow

build up around the plant itself is a great way to insulate the plant.

Use burlap to wrap the plant because it still allows the plant to breathe. Never use plastic.

Some pyramidal evergreens, such as pyramid cedars and junipers, will tend to split during a heavy, wet snowfall.

Instead of wrapping the tree with burlap to keep the main stems from splitting, it would be better to take some of the stronger, thicker stems and tie them together with a plastic or vinyl tie or by using wire covered with a piece of old hose so that ties will not cut into the stems.

This will keep the larger stems from splitting apart and you will still be able to enjoy looking at the foliage.

The best thing that you can do for all your evergreens (needle and broad-leaf) is to give them a deep watering just before the soil freezes for the winter.

Because evergreens retain their foliage for the winter, they need to have adequate moisture available to them.

When evergreens go into the winter with dry soil,

desiccation can occur. This is particularly true for evergreens planted close to the house where they receive no natural rainfall due to roof overhangs.

You can also use an anti-desiccant spray such as Wilt-Pruf, especially on broadleaf evergreens like boxwoods, azaleas and rhododendrons.

Wilt-Pruf acts as a protective coating, holding in moisture on plant foliage and stems, substantially reducing water loss during periods of plant stress.

The spray dries to form a clear, colourless, flexible, glossy film without interfering with plant growth or materially affecting respiration, osmosis or photosynthesis.

A natural product derived from the resin of the pine tree, Wilt-Pruf can also be used on cut Christmas trees, wreaths and garland to help prevent needles from drying out quickly.

These few simple tips will keep your evergreens looking good throughout the winter season.

*Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.*

## Obituary



### Gayle Elizabeth Stokes

October 3, 1950 to June 14, 2022

Gayle drew wonderful people to her because she was wonderful and will be dearly missed. She forever enriched the lives of her loving husband Paul Madeley, stepsons Hunter and Bryson, brothers Gary and Bill, son René, their families and her marvellous friends.



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