



No parade? No way | Page 9

Helping the library in **life and death**

Planned Giving Program has residents remember the library in their will



Peter Gill, Daryl Novak and Dave Hunter have committed to include the NOTL library in their wills. JESSICA MAXWELL

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library's newest program is not about books, community connections and activities for all ages.

It's actually all that and more – and Dave Hunter hopes to see a powerful reaction across the community.

The library is launching a Planned Giving Program,

encouraging people to remember the library when they are drawing up their wills and doing estate planning.

Hunter, the chair of the committee, and two other donors are the first to contribute to the project, which they all hope will attract a lot of support for NOTL's library, an essential community hub.

"The Planned Giving Program bolsters several

focus areas for the library by raising private funds for innovative multi-generational and cultural programs," Hunter said.

Daryl Novak, Peter Gill and Hunter are the first to formally pledge funds as the Planned Giving Program kicks off during Ontario Public Library Week, Oct. 17-23.

"I heard about the Planned Giving Program that was in the works, about

a year or so ago, and my wife and I were looking at redoing our will anyways," Gill said.

They are already planning to donate to other organizations and "we've been supporting the library since we moved here 20 years ago, so it seemed like a natural fit."

Gill said he and his wife are both avid readers who are delighted to

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The old American Hotel at 61 Melville St. RICHARD HARLEY

Condos or hotel planned for former **American Hotel** site

Niagara Falls builder Blythwood Homes buys waterfront property for \$1.9 million

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The site of the former American Hotel on Niagara-on-the-Lake's waterfront could become condominiums or a hotel, says its new owner.

Blythwood Homes purchased the 61 Melville St. property for \$1.9 million on June 1 from Preiesenhammer Investments Inc.

The property is currently zoned marine commercial, but Blythwood will be seeking a change to residential zoning, company president Rob Mills said in an interview.

An open house for the property will be held Oct. 28 at 6:30 p.m., during which initial design concepts will be unveiled, he said.

The land is now undergoing an archeological assessment and Mills said so far there have been some "interesting" finds, including some plates that date back to the early 1800s.

"Apparently there are some archeologically interesting things in one corner of the site, which are being reviewed," Mills said.

He said the Niagara Falls-

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Shaw Festival's 'two Tims' find **silver linings** in pandemic challenges

Tim Taylor
The Lake Report

When the Shaw Festival announced next year's 60th anniversary season a few weeks ago, you could almost hear a huge collective sigh of relief from the far end of Queen Street. Behind the wind, a soft chant: "We made it."

Publicly, the two Tims (Tim Jennings, Shaw's executive director and Tim Carroll, artistic director) are a little bit more circumspect, but not hesitant.

"If I were to close the

books today, we would be in a significant deficit," says Jennings. "But that's not going to happen. We have a few months and we have expectations of doing well."

Tickets are selling well for this season's three remaining plays.

"If everybody continues to support us the way they have been supporting us, I think we should be in good shape.

"But it's not over till it's over, as they say."

Carroll, who took over the artistic helm of the festival in 2017, is equally optimis-

tic. He saves particular praise for the 500 or so actors, technicians and administrators of the festival: "I'd like to go on record saying, for example, our stage crews and technical team were just extraordinary. From one day to the next, they just said, 'Outdoor theatre, OK.' And went and built them."

It gave new meaning to the term "pivot."

The most recent pivot was opening seating capacity to 100 per cent, after the province allowed increased seating at larger venues.

"We were able to put our next phase of the seating plan immediately," says Carroll. "It isn't to go quite to 100%. We're still leaving a little bit of a gap between the actors and the audience. To help everyone feel a bit safer."

In the end, Jennings expects to present over 600 performances this season, almost 80 per cent of a normal season, albeit with fewer bums in seats.

"Indoors we were limited to 30 to 40 per cent, out-

Continued on Page 2



Shaw's executive director Tim Jennings. SUPPLIED



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Shaw's artistic director Tim Carroll says there have been some "aha" moments during COVID-19 that will help the theatre company grow back stronger. DAVID COOPER/SUPPLIED

After two years, festival's braintrust can heave a **sigh of relief**

Continued from Front Page

doors closer to 75 per cent. And our fall and holiday shows will get us a lot closer to normal. We're heading to near-capacity."

Both Tims point to the availability of pandemic insurance proceeds last year as a significant cornerstone for this year's success.

"That gave us a kind of optimism around how we could approach all the work for this year," says Jennings. "The insurance helped move us into 2021 in a different mindset than many of our peers."

The current chaotic year has offered many lessons.

"Definitely a lot of confirmation of what we suspected," says Carroll.

"A big concert stage like BMO (one of three outdoor stages erected just for this season's circumstances) is great for music events and not really for plays. 'Charley's Aunt' was just incomparably better in the (Royal George Theatre). We got that delightful rolling hysteria in the audience."

Making better use of the theatre's attractive grounds was also an "aha" moment.

"The outdoor venues and the ability to make use of our grounds differently has been a huge win for us," adds Jennings.

"It taught us the opportunity we have to use our grounds and even other community partners — hotels, wineries — to keep

moving forward in ways that embeds us even more widely in our community."

For Carroll, the biggest aha moment came at one of the Friday night jazz speak-easies, in one of the outdoor venues.

"It just sat there so beautifully with the sun setting behind on the Commons and a full house enjoying a night of jazz," he remembers almost wistfully. "I just thought this a wonderful new thing that we really should be offering."

He's also looking forward to measuring the success of a first-time dramatic production in the late fall — "Desire Under the Elms" recently opened in the Jackie Maxwell Theatre.

"I'm really intrigued to see how 'Desire' does in the October-November period, because if people really respond and want straight drama in that timeslot, then there is no reason we couldn't have something for everyone in the holiday season, going forward."

If the two Tims are impressed with the festival's response to the 2021 challenges, so is Brock University theatre expert Karen Fricker.

Fricker, an associate professor in Brock's dramatic arts program and a theatre critic for the Toronto Star, can't say enough about how Shaw has faced its pandemic challenges.

"The resilience of the Shaw Festival and the innovation they have showed during this time has been so inspiring," Fricker says in a telephone interview from her office at the university.

She is particularly pleased that the many interactions between Brock's dramatic arts students and the festival can resume.

Fricker attributes some of Shaw's success to the fact that it is a summer producer, as opposed to many, largely urban theatres, whose season is September through April.

"It seemed a good fit for (Shaw) to move outdoors," she says. "Other theatres did not have that opportunity

and are just now overcoming their hesitancy and programming productions early in the new year."

Fricker exudes the excitement of avid theatregoers, ready to get back in the game.

"The core theatre-going audience is really ready. In my theatre circles, people are really starting to buzz."

Carroll is optimistic that 2022 may become a season like those of the pre-pandemic past.

"We've built the 2022 season as if we'll be back to normal. Our modus operandi has been to expect the worst and plan for the best."

Find more information on the 2022 Shaw Festival at www.shawfest.com.

Planting and bulb sale supports Rotary's **End Polio Now** program

David Israelson
Special to The Lake Report

If you watch your step, you'll soon be able to tiptoe through the tulips at Simcoe Park, thanks to work by Niagara-on-the-Lake's Rotary Club and NOTL's parks and recreation department in support of the worldwide effort to end polio.

The NOTL Rotary Club will be planting tulip bulbs in the park this Friday, Oct. 22 between 9 and 11 a.m. It's part of Rotary's worldwide End Polio Now project. The parks depart-



Patricia Murenbeeld.
SUPPLIED

ment has made it possible by preparing a flower bed at the entrance to Simcoe Park and staff will assist with planting.

"Rotary International has been working to wipe out polio for more than 30 years and the goal of ridding the world of this disease is closer than ever," said Patricia Murenbeeld, president of the NOTL Rotary Club.

The planting takes place two days before World Polio Day — Oct. 24 is when Rotary seeks to raise awareness of the global effort to have a polio-free world. The tulips will grow into distinctive red flowers with a bright yellow flame pattern.

The tulip sale and planting program, now in its

second year in Canada, was started by Dutch Rotarians in 2013 and the fundraiser has spread to clubs and communities around the world.

"I'm of Dutch heritage, so it's especially nice for me to be part of a great cause ... and see beautiful tulips bloom in our town," Murenbeeld says.

The worldwide program began as a modest effort to auction off naming and sale rights to charity for a new variety of tulip. Since then, more than 1.5 million Rotary End Polio Now tulip

bulbs have been sold, generating more than \$2 million (U.S.) to fight polio.

As a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, Rotary has reduced polio cases by 99.9 per cent since the first project to vaccinate children in the Philippines in 1979. Rotarians around the world have helped immunize more than 2.5 billion children in 122 countries and, so far, Rotary has contributed more than \$1.8 billion toward eradicating this disease.

Today, polio remains endemic only in two countries,

Afghanistan and Pakistan. But it's crucial to keep working, so countries stay polio-free. If all efforts to wipe out the disease stopped today, within 10 years, polio could paralyze as many as 200,000 children each year.

The tulips in Simcoe Park will grow to between 16 and 20 inches — if you're careful not to trample them when you tiptoe around them, rather than through. Your visit to Simcoe Park may also inspire you to buy and plant End Polio Now Tulips in your own garden next year.



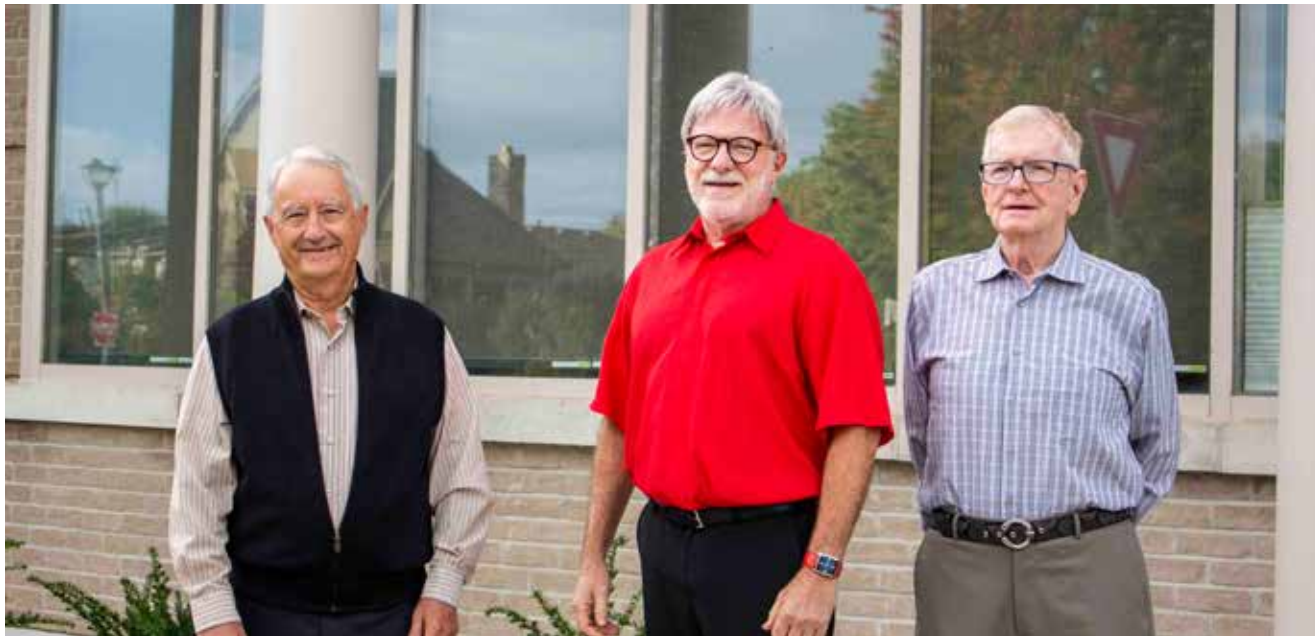
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Peter Gill, Daryl Novak and Dave Hunter have committed to include the NOTL library in their wills. JESSICA MAXWELL

Leaving a legacy to help the community

Continued from Front Page

support the library any way they can.

“Hopefully they won’t get the money for a long time,” he said with a chuckle.

In this month’s library newsletter, chief librarian Cathy Simpson noted, “Library services like the Makery are made possible with donations from organizations and individuals, including those who make planned gifts.”

Novak, who also happens to be chair of the NOTL library board, said libraries have a “complete, important relevance in today’s society” and hopes that more people can come to recognize the wide scope of resources available to support residents.

“It’s not just about research and finding a book,

it’s perfectly acceptable to go up to the librarian and say, ‘I can’t figure out how to get into this website.’

That’s a perfectly reasonable question,” Novak said.

The board chair said during his work in public libraries for a large part of his career, one of the phrases used a lot was the library is a community hub.

“Libraries are serving this wonderful, evolving role, as being both a physical place – a physical safe place, a place with activities and programs for young people – and also being a community hub, about the community, but remotely as well,” Novak said.

And when people care enough about something within the community, they will rally behind it, Hunter said.

“At a time when everyone knows the pie isn’t big enough – it doesn’t matter how you slice it, all the slices of pie are all too small for everybody – so you’ve got to make your own pie,” he said.

He noted that Niagara-on-the-Lake has a large retirement community with “high-income but, really well-qualified, high-energy people.”

An important part of building community support behind these types of programs is having conversations with people you’re close with, Hunter said.

“These two (Hunter and Novak) are both on the board and they’re both friends of mine, so, of course, when they get the initiative going they start talking to people,” Gill

said. “So I got dragged into it, happily.”

Hunter added: “When you start to do something worthwhile, you talk about it with your friends and, if they’re inclined, they’ll do something. It’s not a cold call.”

While the NOTL Public Library has always been grateful to accept a commitment from someone, Hunter said he is hoping for widespread support once people learn more about the Planned Giving initiative.

As this program launches, the three donors are looking forward to sharing more information with community members interested in learning more.

Those looking for more information can contact chief librarian Cathy Simpson at csimpson@notlpl.org.

SORE wins heritage award for Randwood advocacy

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Save Our Rand Estate, the Niagara-on-the-Lake group that has been fighting to protect and preserve the historic Randwood Estate in Old Town, has won a heritage award from the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.

“The recognition of SORE’s dedication and effort is nice and appreciated,” SORE member Lyle Hall said in an email.

Hall felt the award was more important for the

Rand Estate itself than for the group.

“What’s really nice is the Architectural Conservancy’s acknowledgment of the singular importance of the Rand Estate to not only the town but to the province,” Hall said.

“That is our biggest take-away from this award.”

The Margaret and Nicholas Hill Cultural Heritage Landscape Award is given to groups or individuals that have worked to preserve a significant cultural heritage landscape.

The award is administered by Architectural Conservan-

cy of Ontario, a charitable organization dedicated to encouraging the formation of local groups to preserve heritage buildings.

Notably, Nicholas Hill created a heritage conservation plan for the Queen and Picton area of NOTL in 1986.

Just last week, developer Benny Marotta’s Two Sisters Resorts Corp. successfully appealed a series of repair orders the town issued to be completed on the property by Jan. 25, 2022.

The appeal to delay most of the repairs until May 31 was granted by the commit-

tee of adjustment.

Hall said he was “somewhat disappointed” by the committee’s decision.

But he said the committee member’s heads were in the right space.

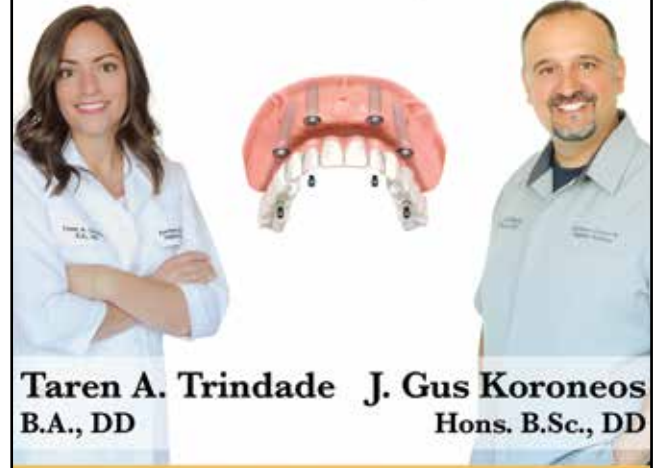
“We do not think the committee was buying most of what Mr. Marotta was trying to sell. We note that the committee has scheduled another meeting for November,” he said.

“This is not over. We continue to hope that Mr. Marotta will stop litigating every single thing the town does concerning the Rand Estate.”

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Project plants 50 new trees along the heritage trail

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Julie Clark was out for a walk when she stumbled across a tree-planting project on the Upper Canada Heritage Trail.

So, the Niagara-on-the-Lake resident decided to pick up a spade and lend a hand.

"I didn't even know it was happening until I was walking my dog," Clark said as she dug a hole.

"I saw there was two trees ready to be planted just behind my house so I figured I might as well help with these."

Clark's home borders the trail where a large group gathered for the planting project last Wednesday near the Charlotte Street entrance.

She moved into her parents' house five years ago. The property adjacent to the trail was their home for more than 30 years.

Clark has always loved the heritage trail but said she isn't too sure the restoration has been for the best.

"It was like the QEW here on the weekend," Clark laughed. "For 30 years it's just been the neighbourhood."

She was devastated by the tree removal that has taken place in the community in recent years



NOTL resident Julie Clark stumbled upon the planting project on her morning walk and began to help. EVAN SAUNDERS

between the Two Sisters Winery development, the Rand Estate and cutting that took place along the heritage trail last year.

"It was like a massacre. So, I'm really happy to see that they are putting in some new trees," she said.

The trail now has 50 new trees thanks to the project, which was sparked by a corporate donation.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in co-operation with Niagara College, Forests Ontario and Canopy Growth Corp.

planted the trees on a section of the trail south of Charlotte Street.

The project was started by Canopy Growth, which has been a longtime supporter of the heritage trail and donated \$40,000 to the initiative in 2020.

"It's important for us as a company to contribute to the community. It's about connecting the community, it's about fitness and encouraging people to get outside and enjoy the trail," said Sean Webster of Canopy.

Webster said the company has partnered with Forests Ontario on community planting projects. Planting along the heritage trail was originally supposed to happen last spring but was delayed due to the pandemic.

Nearly 20 students from Niagara College's environment and horticulture program were on hand to assist with the effort.

Trees taken down in the trail last year were mostly ash, which have been victims of the invasive emerald ash borer, said

Rick Meloen, chair of the heritage trail committee.

The ash borer has killed millions of trees across Canada, according to the federal government.

Of the 50 trees being planted, 25 were red oaks grown from seeds gathered in Chautauqua and grown at Niagara College. The others were a mix of hackberry trees and tulip trees.

The trees will benefit the canopy in the area but also serve to enhance the health of the forest along the trail, said Elizabeth Celanowicz,

chief operating officer of Forests Ontario.

"We're planting native trees, which is fantastic. There are a lot of invasive species here. Just because it's green doesn't mean it's good," she said.

Celanowicz pointed out the number of walnut trees in the area, which actually release chemicals in their seeds that kill other plants and trees trying to grow around them.

The red oaks will create more space for other plants and trees to thrive around them, she said.

Celanowicz also noted the benefit of planting the hackberry tree, which produces berries and feeds local wildlife.

"It's great to have a tree that has multiple benefits for the area," she said.

For the college's students in the nursery program, helping plant in their communities is why they enrolled.

"You want to get involved, you want to give back," student Alexis Kelsey said as she planted a red oak.

Kelsey discovered her love of planting and horticulture when she was in high school.

"I just really enjoyed it when I was in high school. I took our horticulture program there and so I thought it would be nice to pursue it."

Man accused in death of NOTL nursing home resident dies before case gets to trial

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

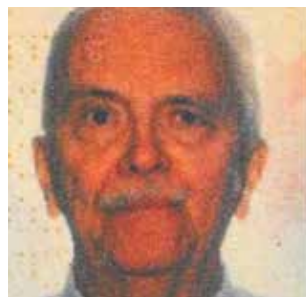
A man accused of manslaughter in the death of a fellow resident at a Niagara-on-the-Lake nursing home has died prior to his case being heard in court.

Robert Barry Stroeh, originally from Port Colborne, died Oct. 11 at the Niagara Long Term Care Residence facility on Wellington Street. He was 75.

A brief family obituary notice published online says Stroeh was predeceased by his wife Susan and his stepson Mike, and is survived by sons Eric and Kurt, and stepson Craig. The notice encourages donations to the Alzheimer's Society.



Left: Verna Traina died in 2019 after fall at a NOTL long-term care home. Robert Stroeh, who was charged with manslaughter in her death, died last week at age 75.



The entire incident appears to have been a tragedy for the families of both the victim and the accused.

In 2019, when the facility was still owned by Chartwell Retirement Residences, Stroeh was charged after a 94-year-old woman was pushed and fell. Stroeh

apparently had "serious cognitive issues."

The victim, Verna Traina, was injured on the evening of Aug. 9, 2019, and died 11 days later on Aug. 20 at Greater Niagara General Hospital in Niagara Falls.

There were several court appearances in the case over

the past two years but it was continually delayed and was still a long way from getting to trial.

From the outset, the case was handled in an unusual manner by Niagara Regional Police.

While the incident occurred in August 2019, police never revealed that someone had died in a NOTL nursing home at the hand of another resident and that officers were investigating it for nearly three months as a possible homicide.

After inquiries by The Lake Report in early November of that year, police finally released some details but refused to identify which long-term facility

was involved. But a Chartwell official at the time confirmed it happened at the company's NOTL location.

However, despite the police department's reluctance to release much information in November 2019, an earlier public report to the Niagara Police Services Board on Sept. 26, 2019, contained several details about the case.

The report stated that a woman at the Wellington Street facility was pushed by a male resident and fell, suffering a serious, life-threatening injury that eventually proved fatal.

The report said the incident occurred at about 7:45 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 9, and police responded to

the incident the next day, Aug. 10.

Minutes of that September police board meeting state there were no plans to file any charges in the case.

"An investigation into all the circumstances in this matter, including the fact that the (then) 73-year-old male was identified as having serious cognitive issues, and in consultation with the Crown attorney's office, it has been determined that charges will not be laid," the document says.

The report is from Niagara deputy police chief Brett Flynn, who was acting chief in the absence of Chief Bryan MacCulloch.

A little over a month later, however, charges were laid.



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A historic photo of the old American Hotel. See also the museum's Exploring Photos feature on Page 18. SUPPLIED

Developer hopes to build 16 condo units

Continued from Front Page

based company will proceed with a full archeological survey of the property, "so they'll be able to unearth all of these things and properly document them."

"I was hoping that we could do it like they do in Sweden, and when we renovate the property have a glass booth which would display the artifacts. But they make us send them all away," he said.

Blythwood has been developing properties in Niagara-on-the-Lake for 35 years, including projects like Bayberry Lane, near Butler's Burial Ground, and Tanbark Trail in St. Davids.

Plans for the property largely depend on the town's decision regarding zoning, Mills said.

"We had looked at a hotel, which is a viable option. The zoning allows for that — a hotel and commercial retail type operations, but we're looking more at something residential, which I think fits in more with community because there really isn't a big retail hub and we thought a hotel might be too much traffic for the area."

The company is now at the stage of putting concept plans together for the property, led by Niagara architect Emilio Raimondo.

"We're looking at probably 16 condominium units and we'll be unveiling our ideas to the area residents at that meeting," Mills said.

"Aesthetically, we're looking for something different," he said. "Like it's not just going to be exactly Georgian architecture like you'll find in other areas, but it's going to be something very distinctive and unique. So it'll give more richness and variety to the neighbourhood."

The development will be an entirely new build.

He's aware there are people who think the existing building has significant historic value, but he said the building isn't in a condition to renovate.

"Obviously it was there historically, but in terms of a valuable architectural building it's really had its day. It's in very, very bad shape. It has zero insulation and it's not that structurally sound, so it's not something that we'd contemplate renovating."

Asked if keeping the old American Hotel aesthetic for a new build could be a good idea for marketing, he said that's something the architect could look at.

"Although, you look at something like Harbor House, just fits in beautifully there in the neighbourhood, but I'm sure it's not based on any particular planning, right? There's a lot of very nice buildings in Niagara-on-the-Lake which weren't necessarily based on a historic building," Mills said.

"I think definitely the new building is going to emphasize balconies overlooking

the water. So from that point of view it will be a little bit similar."

He said if the town doesn't approve the zoning change to residential, the secondary plan is to build a hotel.

"I think a hotel would work. Honestly, we just thought that the problem with hotels is you're going to have a lot more cars and traffic, so really we thought the residents would be happier with something residential, because parking is pretty tight in that area."

He noted there is no potential in the dock area for an underground parking garage. Any parking likely would have to be at ground level.

NOTL resident, realtor and heritage preservation advocate Tom Eltoft said he was surprised at the low purchase price of the building.

Eltoft said for him, it will be "unfortunate" to see another piece of NOTL history disappear.

"Everybody's gonna say it's tired, it's old and it's been rundown. Well, it was actually an active service with people staying in it a year ago. I saw people in the hotel room, so we know that everything can be salvaged," he said.

Even if it's not economical to renovate, he thinks it would be a nice idea to have a historical design resembling how the American Hotel once looked.

"That's not a bad option. The Prince of Wales additions have always looked like it," he said.

"I was looking at that picture of the new plan they're accepting for the end of Mississauga, one that says heritage district or something on it, and it's what got me thinking, 'Why are we spending our money on identifying a heritage district, when we don't even protect the buildings that make up the heritage district?'"

Eltoft said he thinks the town needs to "get control" of development.

"Instead of playing catch-up all the time, we need to be ahead of it. We need to be allowed to finish our official plan properly, adopting the new heritage areas and all that. There's a lot of good stuff in our official plan that will help protect and guide builders and developers," he said.

"We're not going to stop development," he said, adding NOTL is known for heritage and tourism. "You know, what do they say, 'Don't kill the golden goose.' You've got to keep it protected."

"Protecting it might not always mean you have to save the building if the building's in rough shape or is so far beyond what it used to be. But it should be more about how do we keep it (so) that whatever replaces it lives within the feel of what a heritage community is."



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COVID Tracker

NOTL active cases: 1
Region active cases: 122
Region deaths: 435
Region total cases: 17,958
Region resolved cases: 17,401

*Oct. 20 data per Niagara Region Public Health



Contributed by Patty Garriock

“The highest forms of understanding we can achieve are laughter and compassion.”

- Richard Feynman.

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Editorial

About time town gets **back to business**

Richard Harley
 Editor-In-Chief

We've all had it with COVID-19.

For two years, most of us have been following the rules, patiently waiting to get back to normal, or the new normal.

But while many municipalities have started to resume annual events and services, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake seems to have missed the memo.

The town hall is still closed. Councillors haven't returned to in-person public meetings. The Christmas parade is once again cancelled and replaced with a drive-by event. Public skating is cancelled (due to staff shortages) and the arena concession stand is shuttered. The annual Candlelight Stroll is still up in the air.

The list goes on.

However, looking at other municipalities, most of them

have started to resume events and services, especially outdoor events like Christmas parades.

Right next door, Niagara Falls is having one. So is London, Ont.

Yet, our town has decided to cancel ours.

Asked why, a town official said the decision was made based on consultations with other municipalities.

But when it was pointed out that some actually are resuming their parades, the town backtracked and said, “Through various meetings, Niagara municipalities came to a similar approach in considering alternatives to the traditional Santa parade.”

So it's unclear exactly what was the basis for NOTL coming to this decision. We certainly hope the town's confusing messaging is not an attempt to simply explain away a bad decision.

This week the town of NOTL has just one active case of COVID-19. And regional cases continue to decline. Good news. If there was any time to get back to more normal activities, now would be it.

Surely a parade could happen safely, distanced if necessary, maybe with masks.

As highlighted in this week's edition, the cancellations have angered NOTLers and parents, who are concerned about the impact missing traditional events will have on their children.

And we can't really disagree with that — parades, public skating, buying fries at the arena are things many of us had the luxury of doing when we were young. It's sad to see NOTL children missing the chance to march or be on floats.

After all, it's a fragile few years parents get to share with their young ones. Before we know it, they're all

grown up.

So The Lake Report would like to encourage our town to get back to business.

Open town hall.

Get back to the council chambers for meetings.

For Pete's sake, open public skating and the concession stand.

It's probably too late for the Santa Claus parade, but let's make sure we can hold the annual Candlelight Stroll. The Chamber wants to do it. Residents want it. And 90 per cent of us are fully vaccinated.

Let's not once again get stuck in the past, like we have on so many other issues.

As someone pointed out on social media, let's not allow NOTL to become the laughingstock of Niagara.

We've said it before: The town needs to cut the red tape and get moving.

So, just do it.

editor@niagaranow.com

1916 photos are elegant depictions of historic **importance** of Randwood

John Sayers
 Special to The Lake Report

Three large 1916 garden party photographs offered to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum epitomize why Randwood is so important to the fabric of our town's history, and why Randwood must be protected.

The estate and the current gyrations with its present owner appear regularly in the media. These photographs suggest that it deserves a better fate.

All three large 10- by 14-inch photographs picture aspects of a garden party held at Randwood on Aug. 12, 1916.

No amount of Google searching has found anything special about that date. It could have been a prelude — or a follow-up — to a recruiting drive for the military. However, if you were invited to this elegant



A gathering at Randwood on Aug. 12, 1916. SUPPLIED

affair, you were clearly part of the upper echelon of Niagara-on-the-Lake society of the era.

Romance novelists salivate over period photographs such as these, with women in their finest dresses and millinery, men in their best summer outfits, and military officers in their full-dress uniforms.

Imagine a string quartet playing softly in the background as the groups carry on the buzz of their

conversations.

What did they discuss? We can only guess whether they assessed the Canadian Expeditionary Force activities on the Western Front, the beautiful weather of the warm summer's day or — perhaps more likely — the array of prominent figures visiting at the Queen's Royal Hotel.

These photographs tell us that Randwood was not just a private realm for wealthy, reclusive American

industrialists. It was a focal point for the sophisticated, educated, discerning and active residents in town, and their military neighbours in Niagara Camp.

Was it elitist and snobby? Perhaps. But they had the sensitivities and resources to support quality architectural and interior design, and the arts.

These images remind us of our local heritage, of a quality and style of life.

It is now threatened with the prospect of potentially schlocky development.

No design sensitivity. No apparent design link to any elements of local historical architecture. And the complete loss of any reminder of our town's elegant history.

Some call it progress. I call it a violation. Many thanks to our museum for preserving these reminders of a glamorous past, and a hope for a civilized future.

HEY NOTL! WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR DINNER?

← Italian Pizza Pasta or Spanish Tapas →

NAPLES-ON-THE-LAKE OR CATALONIA-ON-THE-LAKE





Rather than fight developers, **work with them**

Dear editor:

Since moving to NOTL almost two decades ago, I've noticed the relationship between our council, town officials and the development industry has been one of constant legal confrontation.

Empirical evidence teaches us that this is a zero sum game. Yes, you win some skirmishes but lose the war. The end result: we drain the treasury, residents lose and our taxes increase year over year to pay the legal costs.

Construction delayed invariably results in increased construction costs being passed along to the consumer in the form of higher housing costs.

We cannot continue to do what towns and cities have failed to achieve for centuries: stop progress and impede population growth. Accordingly we need an adult in the room to end this silliness and mediate a harmonious compromise between the town and the development parties.

Recently our council, frustrated at the present rate of development, attempted to redirect the blame at the Region of Niagara. ("We are waiting on the official plan.") I would be shocked if such a plan, when released, will handcuff planners and developers tasked with meeting the demands of the three propelling forces outlined below.

Development in the



A historic picture of the Rand Estate. SUPPLIED

next 10 to 20 years in the greater Niagara Region will resemble nothing like we have ever experienced before. Of course this will encompass all the areas within NOTL: Glendale, St. Davids, Virgil and Old Town. It will also include Queenston and eventually we will amalgamate as one, perhaps as the City of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Residents can reflect on the changes in the last 20 to 30 years – now look forward 30 years and the future picture becomes clearer.

Alternatively, revisit your former hometowns, which you no longer recognize, as former farmland, orchards, golf courses, etc. are developed, all in the name of progress. The world landscape is an ever-changing one and expending energy fighting it is an exercise in futility. Redirecting and embracing it is more fulfilling.

Clearly the Los Angeles-style road construction at the QEW and Glendale is not to redirect tourist traffic to sleepy Old Town and the heritage district. No, it portends the future population explosion synonymous with and driving the development boom.

Accordingly, at what location will our next development be? Perhaps at a rezoned Mori Gardens, by Benny Marotta, town council's arch nemesis.

Town councils in Fort Erie, Ridgeway, Wainfleet etc. have also expressed concerns over the rate of development. Newsflash: The horse has left the barn on this one and the future is here.

Additionally, our local hospitality industry, in opposing the controversial hotel tax, has attempted to equate maintaining our increased home values as being dependent on tourism. Not so.

In towns and cities across Canada, and around the world, three contributing factors are driving both construction and home price increases.

Namely: population growth (the law of supply and demand); construction costs (increased labour and material costs); escape from the big cities (population redistribution, which was accelerated by COVID and the fact Toronto is the fastest growing jurisdiction in North America).

Incidentally, concurrent with this population growth and changing demographics (ie. a younger population), our visionary elected officials closed our high school, Parliament Oak and hospital, adding to an already lagging infrastructure.

Council should partner with our regional and town planners and work with the development industry to assure a smooth transition and, in concert, commit to the longer term master plan.

Eliminate the petty squabbles and the not-in-my-neighbourhood self-interest and shortsighted diversions.

Finally, infrastructure needs will become more critical as we move forward. Start by solving our abysmal in town parking problems. But more parking meters in residential areas are not the solution.

Samuel Young
NOTL

Why did committee give developer **extension?**

Dear editor:

Regarding your story, "Most repairs to Rand Estate delayed till May," Oct. 14: Is it simply a case of naivety, reluctance due to a lack of resolve or perhaps even obstructionism?

It is not clear to me, although others probably have their own opinion.

However, we have an appeals committee that agrees to a delay and postponement of a Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake order (with perhaps more to come after another meeting on Nov. 23) so as to accommodate a contradictory developer whose past

record is well-documented and raises the serious question of trust, ("Randwood owner denies demolition by neglect," The Lake Report, July 11, 2019.)

The whole issue of heritage values and their preservation that led to the NOTL order in the first place has been created by Benny Marotta's negative attitude and to his deliberate neglect (contrary to his previous and contradictory statements) of the Rand Estate properties.

So why this accommodation? After all, the record shows he has owned the property since 2017 and

claims in the meantime to have carefully maintained it.

Given his proposal for high-density housing and a hotel at the site, it is not difficult to see the obvious tactics in his appeal of the order.

Heritage preservation is not in his development plans and is obviously an impediment to him. The record to date is really self-evident and the necessary repair work specified in the order is completely due to his neglect. So again, why the accommodation?

This committee of adjustment has an obliga-

tion to demonstrate a firm resolve in facing this aggressive and contradictory developer in the preservation of an iconic and valuable heritage asset for the benefit of all residents.

Otherwise it will probably disappear, or at the very least become unrecognizable, which would be an immeasurable loss to everyone.

In my opinion, Solmar Developments cannot be relied upon to carry out its obligations promptly under this order unless it is absolutely forced to do so.

Derek Collins
NOTL

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HALLOWEEN PHOTO CONTEST

It's time to get those costumes out! Send us your Halloween photos and we will pick the best submissions to run in our Halloween edition Oct. 28. Don't just take a static shot, try something fun and unique to make the scene pop!

REQUIRED

- Names & ages of people in photo (left to right)
- Description of costumes (in case we don't know)
- High-resolution image (phones work fine)
- Area of NOTL (Old Town, Virgil, etc.)

Send submissions to editor@niagaranow.com

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Former dentist **brews up** new adventure in retirement

Wade Taylor Davis, 77, is a retired dentist from Cincinnati, now living in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Dr. Wade Taylor Davis
Special to The Lake Report



Wade Davis. SUPPLIED

Maybe you have thought about retiring for the last 10 years.

You are now approaching 65 years old and feel doomed to die in your chair. Should you push on until the end or consider other opportunities available for vibrant, elderly people?

Well, it actually took me 10 years to decide before I came up with my answer. It had to be something based on or related to science. It had to involve working for myself and it had to focus on education. I therefore thought about the idea of becoming a brewer or distiller, which I knew nothing about, at least that's what I thought.

The first step in my journey was to find where to learn about my new, chosen profession. There are a few brewery schools internationally, but not much in

the U.S. The closest one I found was in Canada and it happened to be the only two-year graduate level brewmaster program in the world.

This sounded like what I needed so in 2017 I rode my Harley to Ontario to visit Niagara College and talk to some professors and students. Their enthusiasm was infectious and convincing, so I decided to spend the next two years living in Canada pursuing my next great adventure.

So began my transition from retirement to student. I was completely confident that I belonged in the school, even though I was the oldest in the brewing program – and in the college.

I was accepted by both

teachers and students as just another student. In my two-plus years, I was only approached by one random student who asked why someone my age would come back to college.

My standard response was, of course, that it was my next great adventure. No one else even seemed to notice me as someone different. I appreciated that, but it's also how I assumed it would be.

My first day at the college was spent trying to find my way around and going to each class, meeting the professors and getting a synopsis of each course.

I had chemistry, microbiology, a brewing class, psychology, an ingredients class, computer applications class and more. This was only one of four semesters for the program. In addition, I had one eight-hour day each week working in the brewery. It was an intense program.

There were 18 students in my class and we were paired up when working in the brewery. Nearly everyone in the class had a

previous university degree and my lab partner, another novice from Toronto, was no exception.

There were also three young female students who were very generous in helping others and telling the guys what to do. These young people were highly intelligent and motivated. To be with these amazing students was my greatest joy during those two years at the college.

Before starting brewing classes, I had absolutely no knowledge about beer other than I occasionally enjoyed a good brew. My introduction began on the first day, as my class was assigned to learn and work in the brewery.

There was a brief overview of the facility and, of course, meeting the brewmaster/professor Jon Downing (who informed me that I couldn't wear my Crocs), brewery technician Brad Barta and head brewer George Eagleson.

There were dozens of 50-pound bags of various malted grains to see along with several varieties of

hops, mostly grown at the school or from local farms. We started working with recipes created by Downing, weighing the right amount of malted grain and hops, then putting them into 50-litre tanks filled with the proper amount of hot water.

This is called the mash and was heated to a temperature designed to separate the carbohydrates from the grain. Eventually, this liquid was removed to be boiled, adding the hops, and moved into large fermenter tanks.

Yeast was added to convert the carbohydrates into alcohol and when the conversion was completed, the liquid was stored in a cold room until it was ready to be bottled or canned. That was day one and it should give you a good overview of craft brewing.

Of course, there's more to the business of beer and the school has a large on-site store where the public can purchase our brews. It is very successful and an appreciated addition to the community that I now call home.

After I completed the

brewing courses, I was enrolled in the distilling program until COVID forced the school to close.

Since I've been in both programs, interestingly there is little difference in how beer and spirits are produced. Whereas beer goes from the fermenter into storage, in distilling, the fermented liquid goes into a still where the resulting liquid boils off as pure alcohol, is captured and then stored. There are a few more steps, but you get the bigger picture.

After four years in Canada, I find retirement fulfilling and productive. I'm looking forward to my next great adventure. Any suggestions are appreciated.

Dr. Wade Taylor Davis had an active dental practice in Cincinnati for 48 years, including two years as a U.S. Navy dentist in Holy Loch, Scotland. After migrating to Canada he now lives in NOTL with his high school friend and retired Spanish professor, Dr. Mary Kilmer. Davis can be contacted at foxteeth@gmail.com.

Niagara MPs urge Niagara Region to declare **mental health** emergency

The following letter from Niagara Falls MP Tony Baldinelli and Niagara West MP Dean Allison was sent to Niagara regional council and chair Jim Bradley.

We would like to thank you and council for your outstanding efforts and leadership in navigating Niagara through the COVID-19 pandemic. It is apparent, however, that the pandemic has negatively impacted each and every resident across the region in one way or another. Illness, fatigued front-line workers, unprecedented job losses and skyrocketing inflation have all taken a tremendous toll.

While all levels of government and its representatives are aware of the issues facing our communities and have taken measures to begin to help those in distress, we believe that it is crucial to begin to address the surge in homelessness,

overdoses, addiction and suicides by supporting the request to declare a mental health state of emergency in all 12 municipalities within Niagara.

Our offices have remained open over the past 19 months and we have listened to desperate individuals who have no place to live, have been isolated from their families and have no idea what the future holds for them.

There is an overwhelming need right now for the coping tools and supports that will see people through to the other side of this pandemic.

Mental health IS health, and yet one in five people across the country suffer from symptoms of depression and anxiety. We know that these cases spill over into beyond-capacity emergency rooms and urgent care centres. Many times, people are unable to receive

the much needed care they deserve.

Parliament resumes at the end of November and this declaration of a mental health state of emergency in Niagara would be a helpful tool for us to convey the urgency and to advocate for funding increases, more support and decreased waiting lists for Niagara.

We will also continue to call on the government to move forward with establishing a three-digit suicide prevention hotline that was brought forward last year by one of our colleagues and unanimously supported.

We would like to thank Steven Soos for his tireless work and advocacy on this issue and we respectfully request that you support West Lincoln Mayor Dave Bylsma's upcoming motion when regional council meets.

Tony Baldinelli
Dean Allison

Thanks for **positive** editorial on NOTL

Dear editor:

Thanks for taking the time to remind us of all the great things in NOTL and how lucky we are to live here. I would like to add a huge shout out to everyone at the Shaw Festival theatre for providing our town with the gift of world class theatre in good times and bad without fail.

I am absolutely amazed and delighted with every offering at the Shaw year after year and enjoy having the actors, crew, creative and business people and patrons of the Shaw as an integral part of our community. They fully embrace NOTL and give us their all every day.

I visited the theatre competition in another small town in Ontario this past summer and I can tell you the experience did not compare to my bike ride down the street to our very own theatre. The nimble maneuvering of the creative and business process paid



The Royal George Theatre. FILE

off exponentially in this difficult time.

I experienced string quartets and mini plays at 10 a.m. and afternoon performances on the back lawn with actors improvising, singing, dancing and playing their instruments, making it look so easy, on a weekly basis. I had to pinch myself each time that I didn't have to wait in line for the privilege.

And on a final note, Tim Jennings made the Globe and Mail Report on Business magazine Sept. 22 due to his brilliant insight to purchase pandemic insurance. That precious back cover is reserved for Canadian business elite. Very impressive indeed. All here in our precious little town!

Beth Macdonald
Chautauqua



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Santa parade **cancelled** again, but drive-by Santa returns

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's traditional Christmas parade is cancelled this year – again – but the big man will still be coming to town.

Instead of the regular parade through Old Town, the town is again hosting “Santa Around the Town,” which sees Saint Nick cruise the

streets of NOTL in his sleigh, passing through all of NOTL's communities.

“Although the Christmas parade has been put on hold again this year, the town is excited to welcome Santa back to Niagara-on-the-Lake for Santa Around the Town,” Lord Mayor Betty Disero said in a news release.

“This event was well-loved and well-received last year and is such a great

way to spread holiday joy among our wonderful community.”

“Remaining diligent and mindful of COVID-19 restrictions and public health recommendations, town staff and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Christmas committee agree that Santa Around the Town is a great alternative to our traditional and beloved Santa parade,” said chief administrator Marnie Cluckie.

“While we certainly look forward to bringing the town's Christmas parade back in 2022, this alternative event is a great way to ensure the health and safety of our community is protected while still getting residents in the holiday spirit,” Cluckie said.

The town will release more information about Santa Around the Town, including a map of Santa's journey, closer to December.



Santa will be heading to NOTL neighbourhoods this year. FILE PHOTO/RICHARD HARLEY

No parade? No way: Residents frustrated with COVID cancellations

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

There's a lot that isn't happening again this year in Niagara-on-the-Lake. No Santa Claus parade, no concession stands at the Virgil arenas, the Candlelight Stroll is up in the air.

The continued cancellations all have two things in common. They've been done out of an abundance of caution for public health amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic – and many people aren't happy about it.

Several NOTL residents and parents are concerned some events and activities are being cancelled unnecessarily and wonder why the town can't resume more normal life – especially when other municipalities are doing just that with outdoor events like Christmas parades.

Domenic Trapasso, an Old Town resident and father, said he's worried about the impact missing important annual traditions and memories is having on the community, particularly on children.

“Our town refuses to have a Santa Claus parade. Our town refuses to open concessions at the local arena, which every single other municipality has opened. And it's a bunch of minor things, however all these things are adding up,” he told The Lake Report.

“It's making it a frustrating experience for someone who lives in the town. Also it makes it a frustrating experience for children like mine, who just want to live a normal life again and want



Patrizia, Isaac, William and Domenic Trapasso. SUPPLIED

to go back to these simple little things.”

“And I know for certain, 100 per cent, everyone I talk to with kids around my age feels the exact same way and they just don't know how to voice their opinion.”

Trapasso, who said his family is vaccinated and has followed the rules, pointed out that COVID hasn't stopped other municipalities from resuming things like public skating, “but Niagara-on-the-Lake refuses to want to move past it.”

Late Wednesday afternoon, the town announced it hopes to reopen the arenas for public skating by late October. A town official said staff shortages, not health concerns caused skating to be cancelled.

Trapasso said he's tried asking the town's parade committee why it's necessary to cancel the outdoor event, but they haven't taken him seriously and “sweep it under the rug.”

Kevin Turcotte, manager of parks and recreation for the town, told The Lake Report the decision to cancel the parade this year was made internally by the town's emergency operations group out of caution and not because of any directive from public health officials.

The decision was based on “what other municipalities were doing as well, and what their plans were,” he said.

“We were trying to kind of align with the local area municipalities that are our neighbours and see what they're doing. From my knowledge I don't think that there's too many that are going to be doing a regular, traditional parade this year,” he said.

After being told that Niagara Falls will be hosting a traditional Christmas parade Nov. 13 and asked which municipalities the decision was based on, he said, “We didn't base it off of that. We were just seeing what

other municipalities were doing. So that would be a question for our CAO.”

In response to a follow up, the town said, “Through various meetings, Niagara municipalities came to a similar approach in considering alternatives to the traditional Santa parade.”

NOTL pharmacist Sean Simpson, a lifelong resident of Garrison Village who is now raising a young family there, said “It is extremely disappointing to see events like the Santa Claus parade and Candlelight Stroll being put off yet again.”

“We can all appreciate that these events were necessarily cancelled last year, but it now feels like we have fallen into an unnecessary pattern,” Simpson told The Lake Report. “It is certainly possible that things could get worse on the COVID front, but as of the data currently available, we should be planning to resume our usual seasonal festive activities.”

Trapasso said the situation has many parents flustered.

“I'm frustrated because every other municipality in Ontario, and probably Canada, is open,” Trapasso said.

“Niagara-on-the-Lake refuses to move on. So that's my concern. And unfortunately I don't see this ending anytime soon.”

After speaking with Trapasso and asking to hear from others who share his concerns, The Lake Report received several emails from NOTL residents.

Chris Semple from Old Town wrote: “It's time for NOTL town council to explain their position on why

they continue to prevent a range of activities such as the Santa Claus parade, public skating, access to town hall, etc. from opening while other Ontario communities are safely doing so. There is nothing from the medical community that would support having activities like these prohibited.”

Angela Santelli wrote she's “seriously confused as to why we cannot have the Santa parade in NOTL when we opened our town to tourists early on during the pandemic.”

“There seems to be reasonable options available to ensure a safe outdoor event like this,” she said. “It appears that town-based decisions throughout this pandemic have been more focused on providing opportunity to tourists while neglecting the opportunity for local residents to rejoin their community.”

Stéphane Aubin, another Old Town resident, said she's “very disappointed in our town's decision to cancel” the parade.

“Writing with a true atmosphere of sadness in the air at our home. We have been abiding by the rules regarding COVID for almost two years and our progress is something to be proud of. A return to normalcy would be a pat on the back for our community for our constant following of the rules all while welcoming guests into our tourism-dependent community. Cancellation of this event is truly unnecessary when we are able to host 50,000 guests in a sports stadium without problem. Being outdoors celebrating

Christmas would be a gift for all this year.”

Mary Druce wrote that she's “disappointed and frustrated at the continued closures.”

“No Santa Claus parade, no concession stands at the arenas, no public skating, no candlelight walk. These are traditions that we look forward to each year. And for the second year in a row, there is a pause. It seems to me that the youngsters in our community are the ones that are still suffering. The area has only one active case with over 90 per cent of eligible individuals vaccinated. All other communities are open. What more does the city want in order to reopen and return to normal? Is Halloween next?”

Trapasso said there's a long list of people feeling the same.

He said while he's not typically the type to complain, this year is particularly disappointing because his son was meant to be in the parade on the NOTL Wolves' float.

“And this year they're not allowed. And so my son's disappointed. And I'm disappointed, frankly. It's a memorable thing to do for the children and the parade in general,” he said.

He pointed out that cases of COVID are declining in the region.

“When is it going to be good enough, then? COVID will always be here ... so at what point? Is it gonna be five years from now, a decade, that the town says ‘Oh, now we can do these things again.’ It's frustrating.”



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Expanded nursery school aims to help families flourish

NOTL Rotary Club, supporting parents' mental health is vital

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

For Rotary Club president Patricia Murenbeeld, donating to the Niagara Nursery School & Child Care Centre was about providing good care to entice young families to come to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

It's also about helping with parents' mental health as they raise newborns and enabling young mothers to pursue careers and education while raising a family.

"I really am supportive. I think women need that support all around the world in order to educate, implement and expand their careers," Murenbeeld said in an interview Sunday.

"Women's health and their mental health support is essential."

Supporting parents' mental health as they go through the difficult act of balancing careers and young children was important to the Rotary Club, she said.

The Rotary Club's donation of \$20,000 enabled the nursery to open its first care room for infants. Most of the school's expansion funding came from a town debenture, but the Rotary Club's donation really helped, said the school's executive director, Candice Penny.

The new facility can accommodate 10 infants from newborn to 18 months old. The entire facility hosts up to 69 kids daily but more than 70 are enrolled due to variable scheduling.

"We did this with an aspect of mental health support because the stress on families of not having proper child care can be very great," Murenbeeld said.

Supporting young parents was part of what she saw as rebuilding NOTL as a destination for families with children to live.

"We want to get NOTL's name out there as a place for families that are younger and help those young families that may be new to the area," she said.

"We're thrilled to see the demographics of Niagara-on-the-Lake are now encompassing young families once again," said Jeannie Manning, community service director for the Rotary Club.

"That just adds such a vibrancy to our community. We're thrilled with that."

Manning said having proper child care infrastructure in town validates the decisions of young families to move to the aging municipality.

Among NOTL's population of 17,511, according to the 2016 census, 10,035 residents were over the age of 50. Roughly, 2,000 were 14 years old or younger.

Manning pointed out the nursery has a wait list of more than 150 people, demonstrating the desire and need for child care in the municipality.

Rotarian Paul Lalonde agreed and said seeing the finished addition "exceeded our expectations."

"It's nice that Niagara-on-the-Lake finally has



Rotarians Jeannie Manning, Paul Lalonde, Jolanta Janny and Patricia Murenbeeld pose on one of the nursery school's playgrounds with staff members Candice Penny, Nicole Tissen and Amanda Mirabella. EVAN SAUNDERS

something to be proud of and have young families be attracted to," he said.

"You can come and have a family and you'll know you'll be looked after from birth to – well, hopefully we get a high school back."

Underscoring the importance of child care is also its accessibility for low-income families, Penny said.

"It's important that, no matter what your financial status is, you have quality care for your child," she said.

"I feel every child deserves that opportunity and every parent deserves to feel that their child is in a safe, caring environment that's going to provide

those essential needs."

About 16 of the families whose children attend the nursery are receiving subsidies to help cover costs. Penny said the nursery prioritizes families who need financial assistance to help them get affordable child care quickly.

The costs for infant care at the nursery is about \$250 per week. Prices get lower as the child ages, requiring less care and individual attention throughout the day, Penny said.

Murenbeeld said the Rotary Club is looking at supporting in-home childcare projects with the nursery school in the future as well.

"You can have child care without having to build build-

ings each time," she said.

"You want people in home (day care) that have their CPR training, first aid, who have some child care experience and all of that is supported by a hub."

Penny said running a nursery during a pandemic is additionally stressful for parents who worry about their children being exposed to COVID-19.

"It can add another element of anxiety for parents. Children do well, they are remarkably resilient and they adjust quickly," Penny said.

"But for parents, it's a little daunting because not only are you sending your child into the care of somebody you don't know but now you've got the

extra level of COVID on top of that."

And although the children are resilient, Penny pointed out that nursery school is the first real social experience for some children born during the pandemic.

"A lot of children, like in our toddler program, have never been around a lot of other people because of COVID. So, they're nervous," she said.

"But usually, once the children are through the transition period they are fine. They stop crying once mom or dad leaves – they know that if they cry then their parents will stay longer. It's their way of saying, 'How dare you leave me,'" Penny said with a laugh.

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Lt.-Col Bernard Nehring dressed up as Lt.-Col Thomas Clark at Queenston Heights. EVAN SAUNDERS

Canadian colonel honours Lt.-Col. Thomas Clark on anniversary of Queenston Heights battle

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Fort George commemorated 209 years since the battle of Queenston Heights last week with a guided tour of the area around Brock's Monument and even had a real Canadian lieutenant-colonel impersonating historic Lt.-Col. Thomas Clark.

Clark is a lesser known yet pivotal figure in the Battle of Queenston Heights and the War of 1812. He was the leader of the Lincoln Militia, which was integral in helping the British to victory on Oct. 13, 1812.

"The main fighting was done by the British professionals, but the militia and the Indigenous warriors were an important part of the whole thing," Lt.-Col Bernard Nehring said in an interview.

For Wednesday's gathering, Nehring was decked out in the traditional uniform that Clark would have worn, but there was one major discrepancy. The medals that adorned Nehring's uniform were his own, not Clark's.

Nehring's five medals were for his 22 years of home service in the Lincoln Regiment. One of the medals, the Canadian Forces' Decoration, is given to all service members after 12 years of service, "if they didn't screw up," Nehring said.

"(Clark) was a local farmer, really, but he was a commanding officer and was involved all throughout the War of 1812 and after."

He relished in his similarities with the long-dead Clark. Both served in the Lincoln Militia (now the Lincoln Regiment), both were lieutenant-colonels and

Clark lived in Niagara Falls, where Nehring now resides. Nehring lamented that Clark's contributions went largely unrewarded by the British.

"The British government did not recognize any of the militia at all. Battle honours were not granted, they were only granted to full-time regiments," he said.

"A number of people that serve in the British army received medals, if they were still alive, but not one Canadian soldier at the time."

In 2019, the Canadian government retroactively awarded some of the unrecognized regiments with battle honours. Lincoln Militia members were among them.

The guided tour, led by Amanda Gamble and Louise Leyland of the Friends of Fort George, also focused on the contributions of the Haudenosaunee in the war,

immortalized in the Landscape of Nations monument on Queenston Heights.

Leyland brought particular attention to Mohawk war chief John Norton as an example of how modern institutions should choose their leaders.

"John is, believe it or not, Cherokee. So, what's he doing as the war chief of the Mohawk?" Leyland said.

"Well, they had a real interesting way of choosing their leaders. They didn't care about lineage or prestigiousness, the Mohawk looked for competence. If only we could do the same these days."

Norton, who was of Cherokee and Scottish descent, graduated from the University of Edinburgh.

"He was well-respected and well-loved and definitely the head of the native contingency at Fort George," Leyland said.

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or a ton of feathers?

Last issue: I am an odd number. Take away a letter and I become even. What number am I?

Answer: Seven

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Council OKs plan to **expand** Old Town firehall

Expansion is about ensuring quality of life for volunteer firefighters, chief says

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Fire Chief Nick Ruller is trying to ensure the well-being of the town's roster of volunteer firefighters by expanding the fire station beside the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre and relocating administration staff.

On Monday, NOTL town councillors unanimously approved a plan to spend \$90,000 on a building consultant to expand fire station No. 1 in Old Town.

Ruller said Old Town has seen a drop in volunteers. So there's a need to increase capacity in the area and move administrative staff to the Old Town station, where they can double as active firefighters.

This would help improve response times to emergencies in the town's most densely populated area and alleviate the burden on volunteers from other districts, he said.

Expanding station No. 1 would cost around \$1.5 million, according to a low-level estimate included in a staff report.

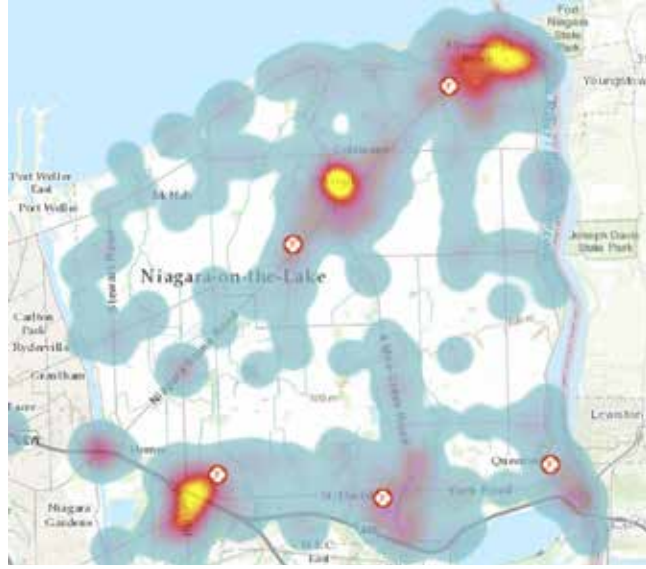
The chief said there would be minimal upkeep costs, mainly utilities and maintenance, beyond the one-time expansion expense.

For Ruller, the project is all about ensuring the town can maintain the quality of life of its volunteers and be prepared for an expanding NOTL.

"We are constantly faced with trying to manage the growth and the increased demand, as well as meet



Left: Chief Nick Ruller. EVAN SAUNDERS



Right: A "heat map" shows Old Town is one of the hot spots for fires. SUPPLIED

the public's expectations," Ruller said during an interview Tuesday.

"It's really about striking a better balance and ensuring that we don't take advantage or burn out some of those members that are contributing as volunteers."

Ruller said emergency calls have been steadily increasing over the last 25 years.

During the period of Oct. 1 to the 18 last year, the department received 20 calls. This year, the number for the same period has already reached 50.

Responder alerts "could go off four or five times a day at one station," Ruller said.

And with the volunteer model the town employs — there are some 100 volunteers compared to the department's six full-time staff — Ruller stressed the need to find balance.

"The volunteer model relies on the availability of our members' time," Ruller said.

NOTL's volunteer firefighters work full-time careers, raise families and respond to the municipality's emergencies.

"The first call can come in at 8 o'clock when you're getting your kids off to school. So, you run out of the house and you put everyone in a panic as you run out of the house to a fire call," Ruller told councillors during Monday's committee of the whole meeting.

"During the day you run a couple more. And then at dinnertime, when you're on your fourth call and you're walking out of the house and you've got a family that's relying on you — it can be very demanding for our firefighters."

"We want to strike a balance and if we can help them strike that balance then that's what we'll do."

A growing number of calls and a reduced number of volunteers can lead to what Ruller referred to as "responder fatigue."

"We really are trying to keep our finger on the pulse of what's going on from a staffing perspective so we don't leave ourselves vulnerable," he told council.

The town has not seen an increase in volunteers to match the growth in calls and some of that can be attributed to the pandemic, Ruller said.

"As a business owner, you may have a hard time finding the best staff right now so you may be taking a more hands-on approach," he told The Lake Report.

"If I'm a restaurant owner and I'm now more involved in the day-to-day than I was previously, my available time to commit to the fire department is less."

The changing demographics of Ontario are also a factor in having a steady supply of volunteers.

"We are seeing a lot more dual-income families than if we look back 30 or 40 years ago," the chief said.

With both parents working, the availability

of volunteers to rush off to an emergency call and leave their children alone shrinks.

That highlights the importance of relocating the staff from the town hall in Virgil to the community centre station, a move that was recommended by two separate auditing companies.

Short of not doing anything at all, the move is also the most economically efficient one Ruller could come up with thanks to the volunteer system.

Currently the town pays roughly \$470,000 per year in staffing costs for its volunteers. Hiring just four full-time daytime firefighters to buffer the ranks could cost an extra \$730,000 per year in salary, benefits and the necessity of promoting one to captain, Ruller said.

The pressures on NOTL's fire department are unique, Coun. Clare Cameron noted.

As there is no hospital or police headquarters in

town, firefighters are truly NOTL's first responders, heading out to nearly all incidents that occur in town, she said.

"The fire department has to pick up a lot beyond just fire. So, I support this unquestioningly," Cameron said.

"Why would we not go forward, unquestioning, with an important opportunity to help support one of the operational bulwarks of safety in our community?"

Coun. Erwin Wiens noted the current council has been supportive of the fire department, referring to the recent approval of the department's \$800,000 purchase of two new tanker trucks.

Ruller said the potential building expansion could be two years away.

The reason for getting the process started now is so the department could be ready to dig by the time any infrastructure grants or money comes forward for the actual building to be done.

The build isn't needed immediately but Ruller wants the department to be prepared for the future.

"We are trying to be proactive in how we preserve (the volunteer) model," he told The Lake Report.

"If we wait until there's too much demand on too few people, what occurs is it can be damaging for morale and you have less firefighters carrying a larger load."

"We're trying to ensure that we operate an efficient organization but not to the point that it creates any fragility."

Chautauqua Residents Association elects **new president, treasurer** at annual meeting

Staff
The Lake Report

The Chautauqua Residents Association has a new president.

The neighbourhood organization held its annual general meeting and election at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre last Thursday.

The meeting is typically

held in May but was delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Elected to serve for the 2021-2022 term are Brian Crow as president, Ruth Denyer as treasurer and Victor Tarnoy, Kurt Hamm, Margot Devlin and Weston Miller as directors. Past-president John Gleddie will also take a seat on the board as a director.

Of the seven officers and directors, Tarnoy, Denyer, Hamm and Gleddie are returning board members. It will be the first time serving for Crow, Devlin and Miller.

Members thanked the outgoing officers and directors for their service over the past number of years.

The new board will hold its first meeting Nov. 3.



Brian Crow (right in black) and Ruth Denyer (far right) are new leaders of the CRA. FILE



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NOTL may charge **at-fault** drivers

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



An accident in NOTL where two vehicles had to be transported at the cost of the taxpayer. FILE

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake could soon be charging at-fault drivers for the cost of vehicle recovery after a collision.

A report to create a 24-month pilot project to bill at-fault drivers was approved unanimously by councillors during Monday's committee of the whole meeting. The project would commence in January, if it wins full council approval.

The program, initiated by the NOTL Fire & Emergency Services department, will charge at-fault drivers an hourly rate for the use of trucks to recover and transport vehicles involved in collisions.

It's a way for the department to recoup some of its costs, fire Chief Nick Ruller said.

"It's over 30 years now we've been invoicing for motor vehicle collisions on provincial highways. We're looking to expand that to invoice for recovery costs associated with motor ve-

hicle collisions on municipal roads," Ruller said in an interview Tuesday.

The department handles roughly 150 collisions a year and about 120 of those are on municipal roads, he said.

A staff report on the project listed 14 municipalities across the province that already implement the program and four in the Niagara Region.

Ruller noted the list was not exhaustive.

Most of the municipalities listed charged \$488.40 per truck per hour, which is based on the Ministry of

Transportation's rate, Ruller said.

In Niagara, the Town of Lincoln charges \$812. NOTL is proposing a fee of \$800.

But this is subject to change as the proposal goes to the budget committee, Ruller said.

Charging \$800 per truck per hour would generate \$160,000 to \$192,000 in revenue, according to the report. At \$488.40, the town could see up to \$120,000 in revenue.

About \$36,000 of the money would be allocated to pay for a part-time administrative worker to handle the program, the report says.

The report also recommends a \$25 administrative fee to offset the costs of a motor vehicle collision database, bringing in up to \$3,000 a year in revenue.

Ruller noted that, at the moment, taxpayers are covering the costs of collision recovery.

"We're trying to look and recover some of those associated costs so that we don't have the burden being borne by every taxpayer,"

Ruller said.

He compared the program to the NOTL Community Centre.

"The initial operating costs and associated costs with the construction are something that we as taxpayers have all contributed to," he said.

"If we want to rent a room or host an event, we pay a user fee above and beyond the kind of baseline contribution."


"The cost of operating a fire service is significant. We want to ensure that, where appropriate, the costs associated with providing those services are recovered."

Coun. Wendy Cheropita encouraged Ruller to look for even more ways to recoup costs.

"Look at how you might apply this type of program to service calls where you end up servicing a carbon monoxide or fire alarm in someone's home because that's not how this team should be spending their money when they're so tasked as it is," Cheropita said during Monday's meeting.


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Winery staff take a walk to fight domestic violence

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

As a single mother, supporting women who escaping abuse holds a special place for Jannine Lavoie. "It's really important and helpful. I love being able to give back to the community," Lavoie said Saturday during a gathering in support of Gillian's Place, a non-profit organization fighting against domestic violence.

Lavoie is general manager of Two Sisters Winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake and, on Saturday, she joined staff and friends who walked a mile for Gillian's Place.

Some brought their children out to support the cause. Among the 20 or so marchers was Lavoie's daughter, Brooke Anderson, who proudly carried a sign that said "No excuse for abuse" and spoke about getting involved with the charity.

"It's nice to get a chance to be a part of something so important," Brooke said.

"Especially being a young woman, fighting for other



Two Sisters Winery co-proprietor Angela Marotta leads the vineyards staff on a mile-long walk to support Gillian's Place, a non-profit organization that provides safe housing and legal counsel for women and children escaping domestic abuse. EVAN SAUNDERS

women's rights and supporting them and their choices is really important."

Brooke, 17, said it is essential for people her age to get involved.

"I think it's important to start doing stuff like this at a young age to build your own values, know your people and know how to stand up for yourself in the future," she said.

John Fuller recently moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake from Victoria, B.C.

No stranger to charitable causes, Fuller has been looking for ways to get involved with the community and jumped at the opportunity to support Gillian's Place, he said.

"I was with the food bank for a long time and it's nice to get involved with some-

thing that's very local," he said.

But Fuller had a more personal reason for attending the walk on Saturday. Two-weeks ago, a friend of his was killed in a car crash.

"She was really involved in (Gillian's Place)," Fuller said.

"One of her mottos was actually that she was

going to quit her job and open a women's shelter herself."

Fuller said joining the walk had the dual importance of honouring her memory and contributing to a great cause.

He and other friends are currently going through her clothing collection and will be donating items to charity in her spirit, he said.

One of the most pervasive problems the world over is domestic violence against women and children, said Angela Marotta, co-proprietor of the vineyard.

"Everybody knows someone or has a friend of a friend who's gone through some form of abuse," Marotta said.

"And the children. It's all about providing a safe place for children," she said.

Gillian's Place has been providing safe havens and programs to aid women, non-binary people and children escape the cycle of violence for more than 40 years. The organization has helped more than 50,000 people escape violence, its website says.

The charity was started in St. Catharines and today it operates a large safe house in the city.

Two Sisters staff is nearly 90 per cent female, Marotta said.

When looking for charitable organizations to support, she said it was important for the company to find one that supported women.

"What better charity than a charity that provides a safe haven for those that have escaped abuse," she said.

"(Gillian's Place) also provides legal support and legal advice, so people know what their options are and can have counselling."

The Gillian's Walk event has raised \$1,173,732 for the organization in the last 15 years. This year, it is trying to raise \$120,000 by Oct. 31. About \$98,000 had been raised so far.

Donations can be made at gilliansplace.com. You can donate as an individual to the organization or add your funds to the team of your choice.

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Cool heads, hot goalies help Predators to **first place**

Kevan Dowd
Special to The Lake Report

They might be Predators on the scoreboard but they're almost gentlemen on the ice, avoiding costly penalties.

The Jr. A Niagara Predators faced-off against the St. George Ravens – the only team to beat them so far this season – Friday night and scored a 3-2 victory to put them in top spot in their division of the Greater Metro Hockey League.

Two days later they managed a 5-0 win against the Streetsville Flyers in Mississauga, solidifying that standing.

Niagara now holds a 5-1 record, but the atmosphere was tense throughout the Meridian Credit Union Arena on Friday. St. George's Kyle Munyankuge got the first goal of the game but Niagara's Alexander Insulander managed to tie it up literally at the last possible second of the first period.

Jesper Eriksson got Niagara's second goal 15 minutes into the second period and Emil Eriksson earned the Predators their third just



A linesman helps keep the peace between Predators Gino Carter Squire and Ravens' Nicholas Messier. KEVAN DOWD

40 seconds later. A minute later, St. George closed the gap with Mike Marchesan netting his team's second of the night.

A close third period had everyone on the edge of their seats but Predators goaltender Oskar Spinnars Nordin turned away everything the Ravens could throw at him for a total of 44 saves – and the game's first star.

"It's a great start, especially being in a new location, and we're really happy with the guys and I think

once we get more bodies we're going to keep on a roll," said Predators head coach Andrew Whalen.

St. George cost the Predators their only loss so far this season, which Whalen said felt like being "robbed of something," so he concedes the payback felt good.

"I think we were really just a little bit more hungry," he said, adding the players were still feeling each other out as a team when they first played St. George.

"We weren't firing the puck at first and tonight we

were just finding some of those passes and getting the shots off."

Sunday's game against Streetsville went even better with goals by Emil Eriksson, two from Jesper Eriksson, and another from both Insulander and captain Mario Zitella. Meanwhile, between the pipes, Spinnars Nordin stopped all 47 shots he faced.

Whalen and Predators general manager Johan Eriksson agree the secret to their success may lie in their team's conduct on the ice, backed up by some first-rate goaltending. Friday night in particular Whalen thinks his team's ability to turn the other cheek gave them an advantage as things got a little personal on the ice.

He admits there might be a bit of a rivalry between his team and the Ravens, both of which have the same owner, Robert Turnbull.

"I think yeah, with our owner owning both teams, I think we want to prove we're the stronger team."

Words were certainly exchanged between players during the game but only St. George seemed to pay the

price, earning three penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct.

"I'm just more proud of the guys that their character showed, they stopped from the first games where they were maybe mouthing back and now they've closed their mouths and realized the other team's going to get penalties and we're going to have chances on a power-play," said Whalen.

Eriksson also said he was impressed with the character of the group, as well as how well they work together.

"At the beginning of the season we took some unnecessary penalties and we've learned from that, we don't interact like that. We've been smarter and we just need to continue to keep cool heads," he said.

As for their goaltending, Eriksson said he has been impressed with Spinnars Nordin since they signed him, adding he thinks he plays at an Ontario Hockey League level.

"If he was born in Ontario, he'd be in the OHL. He gives us a chance to win every game," he said of the

Swede, whom Eriksson feels is facing extra shots due to his team still having a short bench.

"Our players know the other teams are getting more shots than usual right now. But they trust Spinnars Nordin."

Eriksson also praised the team's other goalie, William Fagemo, for his talent despite being two years younger than the 19-year-old Spinnars Nordin.

"He's great. No other team in the league has goalies like we do."

Eriksson feels although this coming weekend will likely present some tough competition, his team is up for the challenge to stay on top.

"We just want to keep the momentum going because we are that good and we can beat any team," he said. "Every team wants to beat the team in first place but I believe we can stay there."

The Predators play the Plattsville Lakers this Friday in Virgil. Game time is 7:30 p.m. On Sunday, Niagara travels to St. George again for an afternoon encounter.

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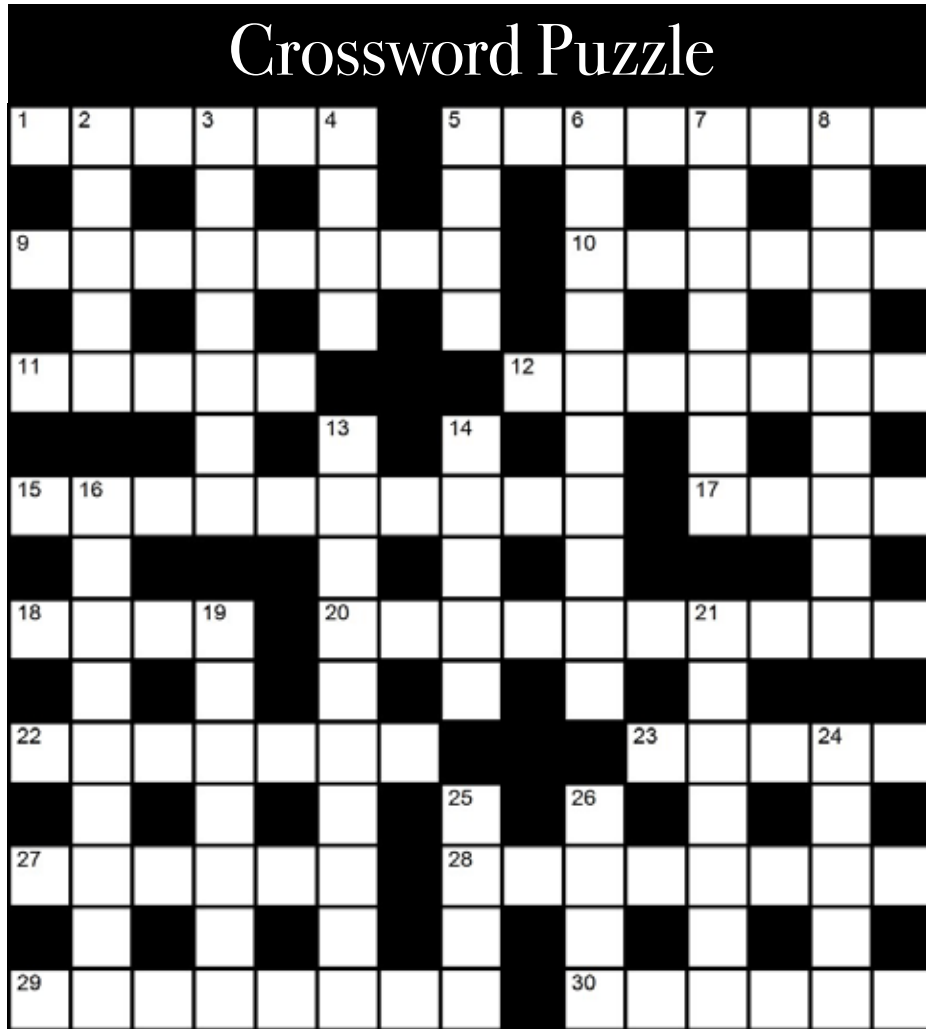
Have some fun

Across

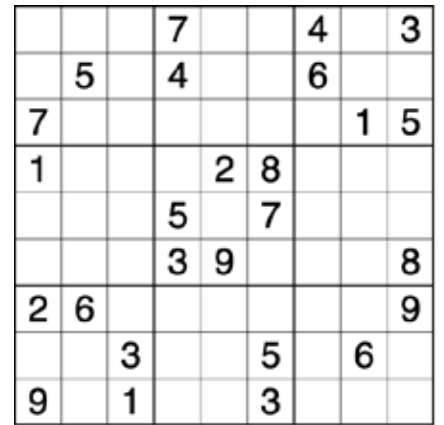
- 1. Gossamer (6)
- 5. Like many Sherpas (8)
- 9. Affliction of cats and other fur-lickers (8)
- 10. Skin condition sought by beachgoers (6)
- 11. Science of logic, quantity, shape and arrangement (Abbr.) (5)
- 12. Tacit (7)
- 15. Owner of a business (10)
- 17. Inert gaseous element (4)
- 18. Sour (4)
- 20. Place for American children in the holidays (6,4)
- 22. Galilee native (7)
- 23. Spread out (5)
- 27. Small restaurant (6)
- 28. Elongate (8)
- 29. South American boa (8)
- 30. Person in the petroleum industry (6)

Down

- 2. D-Day beach (5)
- 3. Navy vessel (7)
- 4. Spoiled child (4)
- 5. World's longest river (4)
- 6. Autopsy (4-6)
- 7. Wool fat (7)
- 8. Private room on a passenger ship (9)
- 13. Hollywood (10)
- 14. Stub (5)
- 16. Economic decline (9)
- 19. Severe (7)
- 21. Uppercase (7)
- 24. Cub leader (5)
- 25. Entreaty (4)
- 26. Keen on (4)



Last issue's answers




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'Storm Troopers'

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

"Artists shouldn't try to improve or convert ... they should only bear witness." – Otto Dix

And what horrors Otto Dix witnessed as a machine gunner in the German army from 1914 to 1918 on the Western and Eastern fronts of the First World War.

He had volunteered at the beginning, in the nationalistic surge and with a driving personal desire to "experience everything" with his own eyes.

His was an agnosticism found in his intense study of Nietzsche's philosophy, that held value in a neutral, emphatic affirmation of all phenomena of life. Dix believed that visible reality must be the subject of critical art.

He saw it and drew it, close up in the trenches, in the bodies torn apart,

bones, skulls, worms, rats, the madness, the devastation of lives and landscape and his own reflection of what it feels like to drive a bayonet into someone. He was wounded several times, won the Iron Cross, survived major battles, including the 1916 Battle of the Somme where three million fought and one million were killed or wounded in 17 days.

In 1924, he completed "Der Krieg," a virtuosic cycle of 50 etchings, aquatints and drypoints, revealing the everyday lives of soldiers on the front. It is no glorification of war.

In old age, Dix said, "The war is something animalistic: hunger, lice, mud, those insane odours. Everything is completely different ... standing in front of earlier paintings, I had the feeling that one side of reality was not being depicted at all: the ugly. War was a terrible thing but nevertheless some-



Otto Dix's "Storm Troops Advance Under Gas" from Der Krieg (War), 1924, etching, aquatint, Private Collection, New York. SUPPLIED

thing powerful. I definitely could not neglect that! You have to have seen people in this untamed state to know anything about them."

And when the killing was over, Dix returned home to Gera, and back to Dresden to the Academy of Art to continue his studies, become a professor, and a founder of the Dresden Secession Group promoting Truth, Fraternity, Art and a

movement, Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity), to portray things completely clear, naked, the "Object was Primary" in this new brand of realism.

Dix was in great demand in the 1920s and '30s as a portraitist and renowned for his no holds barred portrayals of life in Berlin during the Weimar Republic. There were disturbing canvases of the war-dam-

aged veterans, the cripples and amputees, the fat cat exploiters, the prostitutes, sexual violence and murders, which assaulted and shocked the viewer but were also a poignant provocation demanding reappraisal of a dark society acutely damaged both physically and morally.

In 1933, the Nazis came to power. Dix was dismissed from teaching, his paint-

ings were included in the "Degenerate Exhibition" of 1937 in Munich and 260 of his works confiscated as being "in violation of the moral sensibilities and in subversion of the militant spirit of the German people."

Nonetheless, near the end of the Second World War, he was conscripted into the Volkssturm, the people's militia. He fought again, was captured by the French and released from a PoW camp in February 1946. Dix didn't reflect much on the causes of war, but was prescient as a young soldier in the First World War, writing in his notebook: "Once people fought wars for the sake of religion; today it is for the sake of business and industry – a step backward."

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an art historian who taught at the University of Toronto for 10 years. She was also head of extension services at the Art Gallery of Toronto. Her current lecture series, "The Germans – Art, Faith, War" is on Zoom until Oct. 28 at the RiverBrink Art Museum in Queenston.

Dr. Brown: Climate change is here now and worse is coming

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

This year's Nobel Prize in physics represents a timely change. No black holes, gravitational waves or birth of the universe, no laser tweezers and no new particles accompanied by inflationary claims that without this or that particle – there would be no universe and no life.

The physics award this year wasn't quite so apocalyptic as the particle hype, but the tone struck by climate scientists in documents they prepared for the United Nations in the runup to the U.N. Summit on Climate later this month in Glasgow, was worrisome, and even ominous.

The evidence is clear. Climate experts agree. Human-created climate change poses a clear and present danger to life on what Carl Sagan so famously once called, our beautiful pale blue dot. Unless we put the brakes on our consumption of fossil fuels and sources



of greenhouse gasses, the livelihood and survival of humanity and countless other species will be in serious jeopardy within this century and, for sure, the next.

The Nobel committee made a statement this year in choosing three scientists whose work laid a solid foundation for climate science. In the words of the Nobel committee, this year's prize in physics was awarded with one half jointly to Syukuro Manabe and Klaus Hasselmann "for the physical modelling of Earth's climate, quantifying variability and reliably

predicting global warming" and the other half to Giorgio Parisi "for the discovery of the interplay of disorder and fluctuations in physical systems from atomic to planetary scales to climate".

Climate science is on solid ground despite vocal and often politically charged climate-change deniers. Despite the fact that climate has so many variables and moving parts, Manabe and Hasselmann developed some of the earliest reliable models for longitudinally assessing trends in climate change.

It was precisely because of those many variables and

apparent chaos, that Parisi's work was so important – because he showed how highly complex systems such as climate can be meaningfully assessed.

In the popular information piece that accompanied their summary of Manabe's and Hasselmann's contributions, the Nobel committee summarized the value of modelling climate change and then finished by asking four questions. To quote the committee's report:

"Climate models have become increasingly refined as the processes included in the climate's complicated interactions are mapped more thoroughly, not least through satellite measurements and weather observations. The models clearly show an accelerating greenhouse effect; since the mid-19th century, the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere have increased by 40 per cent. Earth's atmosphere has not contained this much carbon dioxide for hundreds of thousands of years. Accordingly, temperature

measurements show that the world has heated by 1C over the past 150 years."

"Syukuro Manabe and Klaus Hasselmann have contributed to the greatest benefit for humankind, in the spirit of Alfred Nobel, by providing a solid physical foundation for our knowledge of Earth's climate. We can no longer say that we did not know – the climate models are unequivocal."

This was followed by four key questions and answers posed by the Nobel summary.

Is Earth heating up? Yes
Is the cause the increased amounts of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere? Yes

Can this be explained solely by natural factors? No
Are humanity's emissions the reason for the increasing temperature? Yes.

There you have it from no less than the Nobel committee – one of the most respected and conservative bodies in all of science. They didn't mince words.

The evidence for climate change is real and based on solid science. It cannot have been chance that the Nobel nominating committee chose to highlight climate change this year.

The Nobel series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake library begins on Nov. 8 at 11 a.m. by Zoom. However tired we might be with Zoom these days, it worked well with this series last year.

Before the presentations you might want to look up the summaries for each of the Nobel prizes on nobel-prize.org, which provides a lot of information about the present and past prizes.

It also has details about each prize in the form of a news release, a summary for the public and the full scientific summary.

Hope to see you on Nov. 8. At least we won't be talking about COVID.

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



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EXPLORING PHOTOS WITH NOTL MUSEUM



The American Hotel

Recognize this spot? This photograph is looking from the Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club property toward Melville Street (the street running along the middle of the photo). If you were to look at this perspective today you would see the River Beach Condominiums. The building to the left with the second-floor verandah is the King George III Inn (some know it as the former Whirlpool Jet Boats building) which still exists today, painted bright white and blue. This structure was built around the 1890s and was well-known for many years as the American Hotel. It was also where the Third Battalion of the Polish Army were housed in the winter of 1917 and where the editor of the Mail newspaper and Niagara-on-the-Lake's first mayor, Alexander Davidson, died.

ARCHITEXT

Heritage treasures in Queenston

Brian Marshall
Columnist



A fine asymmetrical Saltbox. SUPPLIED/BRIAN MARSHALL

Queenston was not always the quiet little village we're familiar with today. Settled principally by Loyalists in the last quarter of the 1700s, it served as the northern terminus for the overland transportation route around Niagara Falls.

It was busy, with wharves and warehouses which, by the early 1800s had 100 homes and a population of over 300.

Despite destruction of most of the village during the War of 1812, Queenston rebuilt and remained a thriving centre for shipping until the mid-1800s when the Welland Canal largely replaced the overland route.

Of course, Willowbank, the grand Greek Revival manor built in the early

1830s for Alexander Hamilton, is sited on the brow of the hill overlooking the old village, but it is a selection of more modest examples of our built heritage that our stroll along the tree-lined streets will focus on.

Walking from the north along Queenston Street, on the corner at Dee Road, is the Hamilton-Kormos House. Originally built circa 1808, this fine five-bay brick home with its integrated pilasters is a fine example of a Loyalist Neo-classical style interpretation.

A close examination of the brickwork suggests that at some point both the main entry and window openings in the centre bay were shifted to the current asymmetrical positions. In my opinion, the

roof with eaves overhanging the cornice is not original (possibly a replacement after the burning in 1813).

Continuing south along the street, we come to a modest little white clapboard dwelling at #69. This vernacular dwelling is representative of a type of "worker's cottage" that was common in the towns and villages along the Niagara River in the first half of the 19th century. An opinion from a report on this house authored by Peter Stokes proffered that parts of the building pre-dated the War of 1812.

A few steps farther leads us to 53 Queenston, the Secord-Copeland House. A five-bay Georgian in the Loyalist tradition, this end-gabled, timber-framed two-storey

home has seen a number of alterations since the early 1840s but remains visually consistent with its original vernacular street view.

Just past Highlander Street, at #48 on the opposite side of the road, is the Brown-Bassil House. This home is a superlative example of a classic asymmetrical (main entry in the far right bay) Saltbox form with the rear roof of the two-storey portion extending back over a single-storey extension. The Saltbox form earned its name due to its distinct similarity to the period containers used to store salt.

Shifting to Princess Street, we walk back north past St. Saviour's Anglican Church, to the stone cottage at #36. Again, a structure that has seen alterations, but important as an example of rubblestone building techniques.

Around the corner is the white mid-19th century Trimble House at 4 Walnut, a "pretty-as-a-picture" L-shaped Gothic Revival home.

These are just a few of the heritage treasures to be found.

Looking to the Stars



Scorpio season brings renewal and transformation

This week we see the sun move from balancing, lawyer-like Libra into mysterious, transforming Scorpio.

Thursday, Oct. 21: A stressful, challenging day with at least one surprise awaits. Patience is more than a virtue – it's a must. "My Fair Lady," the film, was released Oct. 21, 1964. Starring Rex Harrison and Audrey Hepburn, it went on to win best picture in 1965. The play is a perennial favourite at the Shaw Festival as well.

Friday, Oct. 22: Pluto figures in the best and worst of today. Willpower and feelings work together to fix a snag at work or with a health matter. Louis Riel, Metis spiritual leader and revolutionary, was born Oct. 22, 1841.

Saturday, Oct. 23: Welcome to the Scorpio season, our yearly opportunity to get in touch with the powerful Scorpionic energy of renewal and transformation. Scorpio's symbol is the Phoenix. Scorpio's motto is "I transform." Pluto rules Scorpio. We all have areas of life that need pruning or reinventing – and when the sun is in Scorpio, we can become intentional about what we want to change in our lives – and then take the necessary action. Today would be the 96th birthday of the great, late-night talk show host, Johnny Carson, born Oct. 23, 1925.

Sunday, Oct. 24: Forward-moving Mercury is in Libra, in perfect harmony with the moon in Gemini. Good news regarding formal relationships will be easy to digest. Happy birthday number 35 to Aubrey Drake Graham, better known simply as Drake, the most successful singer-songwriter of the 21st century.

Monday, Oct. 25: The moon moves from lively Gemini into her home sign of Cancer this afternoon, but not before a sexy and generous connection with Mars in Libra. And once in Cancer comes a perfect harmony with the sun in Scorpio. It's an emotional and lazy end to the day today. Katie Perry celebrates birthday number 37 today. She has sold over 11 million albums and 81 million singles since her first hit, "I Kissed a Girl," in 2008.

Tuesday, Oct. 26: Venus in Sagittarius gets a challenge from Neptune in his home sign of Pisces. The thing with both Neptune and Pisces is that events can be magically wonderful and mysterious or dreadfully painful and addictive. Sometimes both. And sometimes at the same time. Oct. 26, 1984 was the first screening of "The Terminator" starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Linda Hamilton. It was written and directed by James Cameron, who grew up in Niagara, in Chippewa, Ont.

Wednesday, Oct 27: Neptune has more magic on tap for us today with a perfect alignment with the moon. Powerful feelings may be overwhelming to the point of confusion. But the final result will be wonderful. While he first came to fame in "Monty Python's Flying Circus," many love him most for his portrayal of Basil Fawlty in "Fawlty Towers." Today, John Cleese turns 82.

Next week, we see Mars leave Libra for Scorpio. **Please check out the new website www.lutts.ca as in Looking Up to the Stars. And you can get my free horoscope with interpretation emailed to you.**

Astrology is a form of entertainment, not a science.



Fall Virtual Lecture Series
Oct. 6 - Dec. 15
Every other Wednesday at 11 a.m. on Zoom
To register visit notlmuseum.ca



Growing Together: Time to plant spring bulbs and pull out summer bulbs



Joanne Young
Garden Columnist



Cut off stems just above bulb. JOANNE YOUNG PHOTO

I previously wrote that now is the time to be planting your “fall bulbs” or also known as your spring blooming bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, crocus, hyacinths and snowdrops to name just a few. These are winter hardy bulbs that can stay in the ground year after year.

There are other bulbs, though, that are more summer/fall blooming and are considered “tender bulbs,” meaning that they will not

survive our winters outside. Some examples of summer bulbs are: tuberous begonias, dahlias, gladiolus, canna lilies, Agapanthus (lily of the Nile), calla lilies, Eucomis (pineapple lily) and Colocasia (elephant ears).

This fall we have been enjoying beautiful, warm days and have yet to have any really cold temperatures. Once we have a light frost that blackens the top leaves of these summer bulbs, or the plants have started to turn yellow and

die back (whichever comes first), it is time to dig them up and store the bulbs for winter.

The first step is to dig up the entire plant, including the bulbs. Make sure that you are putting the shovel into the ground a distance from the plant and then working your way in so you’re not cutting through the bulbs.

When you have lifted the plants out of the ground, cut off the tops just above the bulb itself. The next step is to remove as much soil from the bulbs as possible.

If the soil is wet and hard to remove, you may want to let the bulbs sit out in the sun for a day or two to allow them to dry off before storing. You may find that when you dig the bulbs some of

them have fungal damage, such as bulb rot.

If they are badly infected, discard these bulbs so that the infection does not spread to other bulbs in storage. Before storing, you can treat the bulbs with a fungicidal dust to cut down on chance of mould and mildew. This is why it is so important to make sure the bulbs are dry before storing them.

Once the bulbs are dry, place them in a material that breathes, such as paper bags, cardboard boxes, open baskets, bushel baskets or mesh bags. Never store the bulbs in closed plastic bags or containers as plastic will keep the moisture around the bulbs and cause them to rot.

Store the bulbs in a cool,

dark, dry place, such as a fruit cellar. If you have a garage that never freezes, this can also work. Ideally, the temperature should be between 7 and 10 degrees Celsius (45 to 50F). If the bulbs freeze, they will just turn into mush.

If you are growing summer bulbs in containers, you can either store them as described above or you can store them in their pots for winter. Stop watering the pots and allow the soil in the pot to dry out before storing. Store in a cool, dark, dry place.

Now you are one step closer to putting your garden to bed for the winter.

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

Exploring Queenston on a rainy fall day

Gail Kendall
Special to The Lake Report

The usually quiet, quaint and historical village of Queenston in Niagara-on-the-Lake was buzzing with activity Saturday for “Explore Queenston.”

Doors were open at Riverbrink Art Museum, Willowbank Estate and the new Willowbank Studio, allowing visitors to view the properties and to talk with the curators, directors, students and instructors.

In addition, some members of the Queenston Residents Association took the opportunity to hold lawn sales.

Riverbrink sits at the top of Queenston Street and offers a spectacular view of the Niagara River below.

Open to the public since 1983, its exhibitions change often and events include opportunities to engage in open conversations, seminars, on-site art workshops and tours of the historical Queenston Village.

Speaking with the director and curator Debra Antoncic, along with volunteer Deborah Paine, they were both surprised at how busy they had been with visitors arriving to view the museum as well as shop for some previously loved treasures.



Sean Blank with his great dane mastiff Cas. GAIL KENDALL

The day began with a forecast of rain, which fell off and on throughout the day, but that did not keep visitors away.

Down the street and up the hill, is the magnificent Willowbank Estate, which serves as the School of Restoration Arts. It is dedicated to teaching all arts and skills related to restoration of building heritage, and uses historic buildings in need of restoration as its teaching venues.

Caitlin Wooll, director of the School of Restoration Art, greeted guests and invited people to wander throughout the main and lower floors of the mansion and encouraged visitors to speak to students along the way.

“We have had a really good turnout that’s been kind of awesome,” Wooll

said excitedly, adding the facility has just partnered with 124 Queen, a boutique hotel and spa located on Queen Street in Old Town, as well as Treadwell Cuisine.

Amanda Hansen, director of sales for 124 Queen, set up on the upper balcony of the mansion and explained the hotel has partnered with Willowbank to take care of planning and catering all its events.

“They can do anything from small intimate dinners in the bright parlour to luncheons and bridal showers on the terrace to about 250 to 300 tented,” she said.

Sean Blank is a second-year student at Willowbank with a master’s in historic preservation from an American school. He felt the need to complement the academic and theory side of

his education with a hands-on approach, so he enrolled at Willowbank.

“I think the beauty of the program is that it certainly challenged me to think differently about what I’m capable of and what I want,” said Blank. “I never thought I would be interested in the hands-on aspect, but I am increasingly drawn to that.”


Blank and his great dane mastiff Cas are often seen wandering the village.

Steps from the bottom of Willowbank Estate is the former Laura Secord school now renamed the Willowbank Studio and occupied by artists Sharon Okun and Adam Markovic.

Inside they have respectfully kept the essence of the space intact while utilizing the former classrooms and offices. Okun was busy with a wandering crowd of people in her studio classroom, which displays her own art, and explaining how her classes and workshops are evolving.

Markovic was busy with a group in the main room. It has an old apothecary feel to it, complete with authentic old bottles filled with paint-making ingredients.

In addition, walking tours of the village were taking place with many people intrigued with all that Queenston has to offer.



LET’S GET TOSSED.

The NOTL Dart League is looking for **players and sponsors** (more licensed venues to play in). Currently an eight team beer league, we’ve been playing darts every Tuesday night at 7:30 p.m. at various NOTL venues since the mid-1980s.

Must live or work in NOTL to join. Cost of membership is \$20 per player and includes an end of year banquet and awards. All extra funds raised go to community needs and support.

Contact Geoff at 289-213-9308 or our [Niagara-on-the-Lake Dart League Facebook page](#).



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Harvest Barn gets new name, mandate as **Alitura**

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The iconic Niagara-on-the-Lake Harvest Barn has a new name and with it a new mandate to be more local.

The produce market and bakery has changed its name to Alitura, which is Latin for “to feed or to nourish.” The new sign went up Monday.

Stephanie Reis, co-owner of the transitioning market, said the change was inspired by a reaffirmation during the COVID-19 pandemic of how important it is to support local producers.

“Staying true and supporting local is more important than ever coming out of this,” Reis said in an interview, adding the move is about sticking to the “core values” of the store, but bringing in more locally grown products, increasing sustainability and switching to higher-quality products.

“We’re really going to focus even more on community,” she said, noting Alitura will rely heavily on sourcing products from farmers within a



From left, Fabian and Stephanie Reis, Ray Syegco and Selah Schmoll. RICHARD HARLEY

20-kilometre radius of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

“So it’s going to be even more local, which I’m really excited about and I think all the locals will really enjoy seeing that as well.”

Reis, who also owns Ferox winery with her husband Fabian, said the store will still carry many local favourites like its bakery items, cheese sticks, hot bar and salad bar — only now everything will be

made from scratch in-house and nothing from the bakery will be frozen.

“We’re going to do our own preserves, do our own hot bar, bakery. We’re just going back to the roots,” she said, adding the bakery was once run by Mennonite farmers who focused heavily on selling local crops to area residents.

Reis has also partnered with the owners of Incho restaurant in St. Catharines, which will bring the farm-to-table experience from their restaurant to the revamped market.

Owners Ray Syegco and Selah Schmoll, graduates of Niagara College’s culinary management program, were honoured in August with a 30 under 30 feature in Foodservice and Hospitality Magazine.

Reis said the change will not affect the St. Catharines Harvest Barn location,

which is under different ownership.

She said some parts of the store will remain similar.

“Of course, there’s still going to be some stuff that’s going to be the same. I would say the biggest change in the bakery is it’s all going to be from scratch and fresh. So there’s been a lot of frozen stuff that’s going to be no longer,” she said.

She said the transition will be a gradual process, but asks people to be patient as they roll out the new store.

“But towards the end, our vision is to have everything from scratch from the bakery to the hotbar to the soups no longer frozen — all from scratch. We’re going to have a reduction in waste from all the produce. No waste, everything’s kind of brought to use.”

Her husband Fabian said sustainability is extremely important to them. Ferox received its sustainability certification from the Grape Growers of Ontario this summer, and between Ferox and their partners at Incho, they aim to bring that same vision to Alitura.

“So not only are we sustainable in the vineyard, through our vineyard practices, but also the winemaking procedures. We want to carry that all throughout the property. Because it’s all basically one property — Alitura and Ferox,” he said.

One way they will increase sustainability is to use unsold produce themselves instead of throwing it out, by making preserves and soups.

“And just like Rancourt, when Rancourt changed over to Ferox, that’s kind of how you know, Harvest Barn is now converting into Alitura, and we are locals, everyone knows who we are, we’re keeping it local. We want quality over quantity.”

He echoed that the transition is “going to take some time, but that’s what we’re working towards.”

Stephanie said she wants the community to know the ownership will still be local. She said she’s been seeing some chatter online, wondering if a large corporate owner might be taking over. But that’s not the case.

“Everything’s staying local.”

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