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Vol. 7, Issue 30 Canada's most-decorated community newspaper July 25, 2024

Grassroots protest takes aim at NOTL council decisions

Rally planned Tuesday afternoon outside town hall in Virgil

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Her grandmother Ruth Taylor was Niagara-on-the-Lake's first female councillor and Karen Taylor-Jones says the town and its politics have been important to her family for generations. Taylor-Jones is unhappy about a steady stream of new developments approved

by council and is planning a protest Tuesday to let councillors know. She's inviting everyone in the community to take part — and hoping that a large crowd of NOTLers will show up outside town hall at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, prior to the next council meeting. "The reason I decided to do this was because of my grandmother," she said. The idea was spawned

after council on June 25 approved a zoning change to allow construction of the Parliament Oak hotel — but Taylor-Jones emphasized that this isn't just about what's happening in Old Town. She's concerned about what's going on across the municipality. Suspended urban design

Continued on Page 3



Karen Taylor-Jones says the preservation of the town is an issue close to her heart. She's arranging a protest of development before Tuesday's council meeting. JULIA SACCO

Two teams crowned zone champs



The Niagara Thunderhawks' Hunter Froese rips a shot on net during the championship game against Six Nations. Froese scored twice en route to Niagara's 6-5 win. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Tracey Hope
Special to The Lake Report

In sports, it's never over till it's over. Two Niagara-on-the-Lake lacrosse teams embraced that mantra Saturday as they battled back to capture their zone championships at home in Virgil. First up were the U9 Niagara Thunderhawks. Down 6-2 to the Six Nations 2 going into the third period, Niagara exploded for eight goals in the final frame. "The team kept their composure being down four after the second period," said head coach Jared Hope. "They really left everything on the floor to pull out the win." The Thunderhawks tied it up with nine minutes left in the game and added four more en route to win the Zone 9 "C" division championship 10-6.

Continued on Page 15

Cognitive decline obvious, Biden made right decision



DR. BROWN
Dr. William Brown
Columnist

I have been a fan of Joe Biden since the days when he served as Barack Obama's vice-president. Throughout those two presidential terms Biden was loyal, collegial and Obama's bridge to Congress. Before the vice-presidency, he served in the senate where he was liked and trusted by colleagues on both sides of the aisle and was known for his gaffes and faltering speech. Politically, he was the working man's candidate who could be counted on to deliver battleground states,

which helped Biden beat Trump four years ago. And he might have repeated this time were it not for his increasingly frail appearance and sometimes halting, slurred speech. All of which were on full display and much worse in his first presidential debate with Trump. That evening, he frequently mumbled, struggled to find words, several times lost the thread of what he wanted to say and even the words, and looked blank, much as Mitch McConnell, the Senate minority leader, had famously looked more than a year ago. Leadership of any government is tough, but the presidency of the United States is perhaps the toughest — long, wilting hours, reaching tough decisions, developing consensus, showing leadership when it's needed and juggling so

Continued on Page 23



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Historic property **rezoning** approved

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's planning committee has agreed to rezone a historic property on Queen Street despite pleas from some residents and councillors to reject the proposal by developer Rainer Hummel.

The two-storey property, once owned by Coun. Gary Burroughs, is now owned by Hummel, who applied for the rezoning.

The heritage committee rejected a severance for the property in May and Hummel subsequently altered the plan, creating only one new lot, not two as originally proposed.

The decision was approved last Tuesday in a 5-3 vote, with Burroughs and Couns. Sandra O'Connor and Tim Balasiuk opposed.

Burroughs was responsible for the property's historic designation more than 20 years ago.

"My wife Sarah and I were the ones who designated that property back in 2002 and we designated it because we took so much



Gracia Janes said the rezoning of 187 Queen St. goes against the goals of the town. **JULIA SACCO**

pride in the fact that it was a real piece of history in Niagara-on-the-Lake," he said.

Burroughs said rezoning the heritage property is inconsistent with the goals of the town, which has been "spending a lot of time suggesting designations throughout town."

"Here we are taking one that's been designated since 2002 and throwing it out the window," he said.

"I'm concerned about how we can be promoting designation and not supporting designation."

O'Connor echoed Burroughs' feelings, saying that, at a time when the

town is aiming to "promote more heritage," the decision to rezone the property goes against the town's overall strategic objectives.

While there are neighbourhoods designed for intensification and development, Old Town is not one of them, she added.

Senior town planner Aimee Alderman said she believes the town is protecting heritage while allowing the opportunity for an additional dwelling to be constructed.

The planning report says Hummel's proposal ensures a "more efficient use of a large residential parcel in an urban area" and allows "appropriate residential infill."

The heritage home will remain, with the addition of an attached garage and residence above it.

Burroughs said you cannot cut up a designated property and still insist that it is being protected.

Two residents urged the town to reject the rezoning.

John Gibson asked council to take a pause and reconsider. "I don't think that heritage should be squandered away," he said.

Gibson also cited traffic concerns, adding that the implications of the addition of another driveway at the Simcoe and Queen intersection should be considered.

Gracia Janes, of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Conservancy, said Hummel's request would clear the way for the destruction of more heritage in NOTL.

"It is quite clear that the approval for this zoning request will make it easier for other development applications in an accelerating trend that will lead to a lot-by-lot destruction of heritage properties," she said.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said the rezoning proposal was much better than the original one brought to council in May.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa agreed.

"There was a lot of work done to get our modified application," he said.

Balasiuk felt positively about the plans but suggested looking into tools that can be used to maintain or retain properties as a whole.

That is to be included in the work plan.

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Decisions have 'threatened' NOTL

Continued from Front Page

committee and committee of adjustment member Allan Killin will be joining Taylor-Jones at the rally.

Killin said council repeatedly has made decisions that are not consistent with the town's official plan.

"Citizens have been writing about the official plan because they know that's the document that (the town) endorsed. But in the meantime, we've seen zero infrastructure work from the 2017 plan," he said.

Killin, an architect, said he received an email in February saying he was suspended from town committees pending an investigation.

"It turns out the suspension and the investigation were bogus," he said, adding that it was not done through the integrity commissioner.

"Somehow staff and council members, in a closed session, created circumstances where they overreached beyond their legal powers under the Municipal Act and suspended the very people who were confident to comment on urban design," Killin told The Lake Report.

He added that he is joining the rally for this very reason.

"I'm the poster boy for rejected good advice — and I'm not the only one," Killin said.

Killin said he was suspended along with another member, who was let go in January.

"When I say suspended, I mean it in quotation marks.



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa has offered to meet with Karen Taylor-Jones to discuss her concerns, but she feels that isn't going to make a difference. FILE PHOTO

There is nothing in the law that allows them to do that," Killin said.

His lawyer sent a letter to town chief administrator Bruce Zvaniga saying that what was done was outside the law.

Killin said his original goal was to receive an apology and reinstatement.

"I haven't seen either of those," he said.

On the town's website, both Killin and the other suspended member are still listed among the members of the committees.

Killin claimed that during his absence, several applications and staff recommendations have been made that are "demonstrably not in the public interest," including developments in Glendale, Queenston, St. Davids and Old Town.

"There are decisions that have affected each of the five villages and the rural areas that make up our remarkable and unique town," he said.

"It's not just one decision. It's decisions that have threatened the character of all five villages," he added.

Killin said his main goal

with the rally, in tandem with an online petition, is to bring the community together and spark discussion.

"These are instruments to counteract the global intent to keep us from talking, to keep us from getting together in public spaces to talk about what makes our town and creating documents like our provincial plan," he said.

Killin said councillors have ignored numerous recommendations from the urban design committee and they are trying to dismiss the need for the committee altogether.

"Citizens have had enough. We need more interaction," he said.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa could not be reached late Wednesday for comment on the two suspensions.

Steve Hardaker, who spoke to council last month about the highrises planned near White Oaks, said, "Glendale residents on both sides of the QEW are angry."

The approved towers "exceed accepted building heights and will overshadow some of the low-densi-

ty neighbourhoods in the area. As with Parliament Oak, council has ignored those concerns, including a 644 signature petition against White Oaks," he added.

Taylor-Jones said that after making a new Facebook page for the rally, more than 150 people joined within the first 24 hours.

She said that with a Randwood Estate rally attracting 450 protesters, she hopes to see close to 500 people outside of town hall next week.

She said she has spoken to police about having officers on hand at town hall and to direct traffic.

Zalepa is well aware of the planned rally and said council will go on with "business as usual."

"I'm going to show up and do the meeting I always do," he said in an earlier interview.

Zalepa added he isn't clear about the organizers' concerns because they have not been in touch with him.

"I'm always happy to understand better what their concerns are," he said.

"I would always appreciate more effective communication."

Zalepa said he sent Taylor-Jones an email inviting her to have a conversation with him but has yet to receive a response.

Taylor-Jones said his offer to call or email is "not a real conversation."

People interested in joining the rally can contact Taylor-Jones at k.jones55@hotmail.com.

juliasacco@niagaranow.com



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Terry Fox T-shirts on sale for national hero's birthday

Staff
The Lake Report

The team behind the annual Terry Fox Run in Niagara-on-the-Lake will be at Hendriks Independent Grocer on Sunday, July 28, selling this year's T-shirts for the run this fall.

They will be outside the grocery store at 130 Queen St. from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the day of what would have been Fox's 66th birthday.

T-shirts are \$25 each,

while long-sleeved shirts are \$35.

The Canadian legend's Marathon of Hope to raise money in the fight against cancer occurred 44 years ago.

This autumn's Terry Fox Run will take place on Sunday, Sept. 15. Participants will meet at Simcoe Park, with registration starting at 9 a.m. and the run commencing at 10 a.m.

To register online and for more information, visit run.terryfox.ca.



Famous actor and Vancouverite Ryan Reynolds, seen here in the 2024 Terry Fox Run shirt. TERRY FOX FOUNDATION

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No sewage dumped into lake after storms, region says

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

No partially treated NOTL sewage was dumped into Lake Ontario after any of the torrential downpours so far this summer, a senior Niagara Region official says.

That's in contrast to what happened in Toronto when more than 1,300 megalitres of partially treated wastewater was released into the lake last week in what is known as a bypass event.

That was enough sewage to fill 500 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

However, the region's manager of wastewater and compliance, Jason Oatley, said the heavy storms in Niagara-on-the-Lake on July 10 and 11 did not require any sort of bypass measures.

Niagara-on-the-Lake received 78.5 and six millimetres of rainfall on those days, respectively, he said.

That amount of precipitation sent about 27 million litres of water through the town's sewer and storm drains, still well within the water treatment plant's capabilities.



Despite heavy rainfall sending 27 million litres of water through the sewer and storm drains, the town's water treatment plant can handle those types of loads, says the region's manager of wastewater and compliance. FILE/RENE BERTSCHI

Oatley said the plant held up in the same manner during a torrential rainfall that hit town on June 18.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake doesn't bypass (storm or sewer water) unless there is something physically wrong with it. The plant is pretty well brand new, so it has the capacity to treat a lot of wastewater there," he said.

Comparing Toronto's aging infrastructure and the size of the city with the same factors here isn't a fair

contrast, he added.

"In a larger city like Toronto they have a lot of combined sewers. The sanitary sewer and the storm sewer have the same pipe," he said.

"But nowadays, everything that is built is called a separate sewer, so the sanitary sewer, like stuff from your toilets, goes in a separate pipe from the storm water."

Oatley explained what constitutes partially treated wastewater, meaning what

does get cleaned out of the water.

"When sewage bypasses some of the treatment, it still gets, for instance, de-screened, so that removes sticks and rags and things like that and it all gets disinfected, which means we add chlorine to it, to kill all the bacteria," he said.

"But it wouldn't get the full treatment so it wouldn't remove, say, phosphorus, or a lot of the organic material."

That might be concerning

to people in Port Weller and St. Catharines.

Unlike in Niagara-on-the-Lake, over the past few years there have been instances of bypass events there, said Oatley — areas which are also popular summer spots for NOTL residents.

The Lake Report took photos from Ryerson Park looking west toward the wastewater plant and Niagara Shores Park on June 18 after that day's heavy rainfall.

They appear to show a change in the water's colour coming out from shore.

Oatley dispelled any concerns by pointing out that the water plant's bypass pipes in that location extend 700 metres under the water and out into Lake Ontario, much farther out than the murky water seen in the photos.

"Those pictures ... appear, to me, to be typical run-off from rainfall events," he said, adding that they can still deposit bacteria, such as E. coli, into popular swimming areas.

The beach at Queen's Royal Park is the only one in NOTL that is tested regularly. It was closed from Wednesday, July 17 through at least Tuesday, July 23 due to high E. coli counts.

When that happens, the region will notify the public via its website, signage on shorelines that indicates where overflow areas are located and through traditional and social media platforms with public health announcements, Oatley said.

"The general rule is try not to be in the water for 24 and 48 hours after a major rainfall event," he said.

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Pickleballers donate \$2K to community groups

Staff
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Pickleball Club has been busy sharing the proceeds of its members' spring tournament, handing out \$2,000 in donations to three community organizations.

Proceeds from the entry fees paid by the more than 100 participants in the June tournament allowed the club to donate \$500 each to Newark Neighbours and Red Roof Retreat.

And the club also gave \$1,000 to the Central Community Centre for its Community Crew program.

The NOTL club, one of the largest in Ontario with more than 700 members, also named a new board of directors for the coming year.

The board members are Dragana Simao (president), Tim Lutton (vice-president), Kevin Van Niekerk (treasur-



The new members of the NOTL Pickleball Club board. From left, Stephanie Howcroft, Ron Pychel, Debbie Young, Tim Lutton, Dragana Simao, Kevin van Niekerk, Barb Bailey and Joy Sanguedolce. The club is donating money to local organizations. SUPPLIED

er), Stephanie Howcroft and Barb Bailey (co-directors of systems and administration), Joy Sanguedolce (social director) and Ron Pychel (director of on-site operations).

The fast-growing club has put a temporary hold on adding new members.

Players are also looking

forward to the eventual re-opening of the outdoor pickleball courts in Virgil, closed for two years by a court order over noise concerns.

The Town of NOTL purchased large acoustic panels to be mounted on the fencing around the Virgil courts but when workers tried to install the barriers in June

they were too heavy for the existing fence.

A town spokesperson said a town contractor will soon start reinforcing the fence to accommodate the weight of the noise abatement panels.

The courts could be back in operation by mid-August, the town said this week.



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Cora Long D.D.

Treasures to be found at museum festival

Barbara Worthy
Special to The Lake Report

There will definitely be gold to find on Monday, Aug. 5, when the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum hosts its Past is Present Heritage Festival, complete with historic demonstrations, live music, vendors, artisans and crafters.

The museum's treasure sale is legendary for its buried gems.

This year's treasure hunters can find antique furniture items, a seasoned trunk, framed art works, prints, vintage home décor, classic Royal Doulton china, baskets, vases, retro rackets, a penny farthing bicycle plant stand and a pair of men's riding boots that even Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock would be proud to wear.

Plus, look for the museum's popular ephemera and used book sale.

Plus: blacksmith Neil Blythin will offer historic demonstrations of his work; Niagara Handweavers and Spinners Guild will share the ancient craft of spinning; Missus Mooney will display her Cabinet of Curiosities; the St. Catharines Rug Hooking Guild will share everything you've wanted to know about rug-making; and, see displays from the Mackenzie Printery, Willowbank School of Restoration Arts, and heritage maps courtesy of Kathy Thomas.



Neil Blythin, left, and daughter Evelyn teach people about the trade and history of blacksmithing at the museum's heritage festival in 2023. FILE/EVAN LOREE

And, as always, antique muskets and firearms will be on display, with Victor Packard and Barbara Cole. The Tiny Museum will also be on site for children and families to explore.

For all you die-hard explorers, make sure you check out the museum's special Queen Street Digital Scavenger Hunt. Clues to be found on the day.

A festival always needs

This year's festival is expanding to include a selection of artisans, curated by Sorella Niagara, and Castlereagh Street in front of the museum will be closed to host some of Niagara's best artisan women-run businesses.

music, and so live music will be provided throughout the day by Niagara Old Tyme Fiddlers, Aaron Berger, and more.

Finally, if you're a hungry treasure hunter, look no further than the classic pig roast, courtesy of PigOut, and Lokanta Mediterranean Cuisine.

The Past and Present Heritage Festival will take place in the museum's community courtyard and front lawn.



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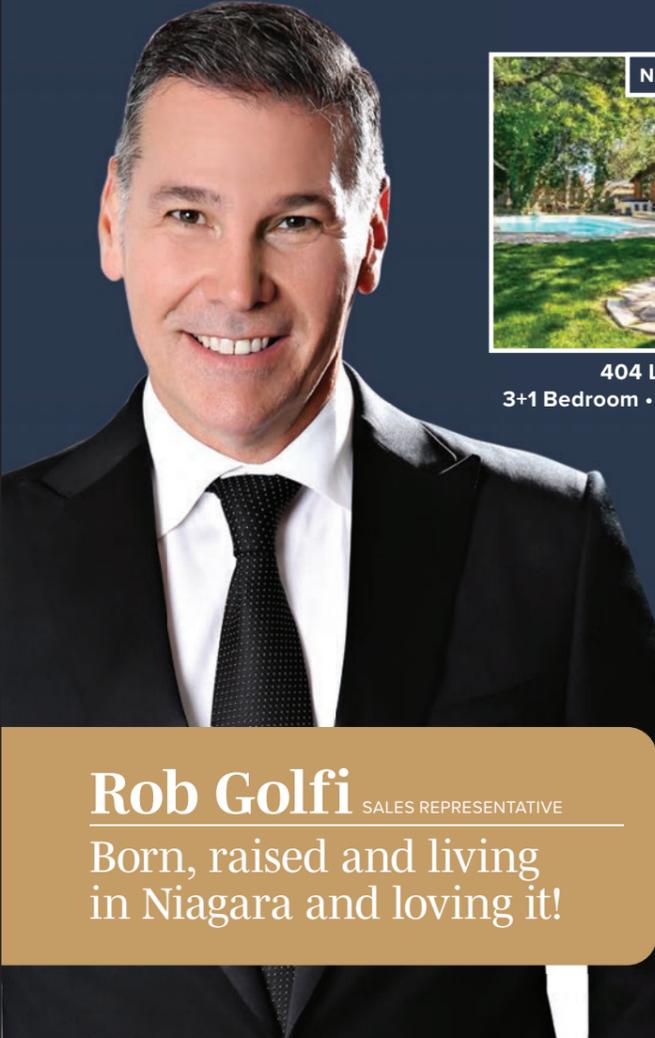
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Tiny Museum gets \$5,000 power boost

Staff
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is getting a shot of energy from one of the province's power suppliers, which will support its community outreach work — including its mobile museum, the Tiny Museum.

Ontario Power Generation, which generates half of the electricity for the province, has awarded the museum with a grant of \$5,000 through its Power for Change Project. "We have many wonderful community events during the summer months,"



The Tiny Museum.

said Sarah Kaufman, the museum's managing director, in a media release.

"This funding helps the Tiny Museum to be a part of them, and to truly take our museum, and history,

'out of the box.'"

The mobile museum was created as a pint-sized version of the actual museum on Castlereagh Street, based on an original "tiny house" design.

The museum's staff use it to curate portable exhibits from its collection, for educational and outreach projects throughout the region.

The exhibits and artifacts are presented in enclosed but viewable display cases and drawers, with a children's activity tent area set up beside the structure.

The Ontario Power Generation's Power for Change

Project was designed to give back to Ontario and to the communities where the government-owned corporation operates.

"This grant is a testament to Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's dedication and the impactful work it is doing for the community," said Nicole Fabbro, vice president of Niagara operations at Ontario Power Generation.

The Tiny Museum can be visited at the upcoming Pumphouse Arts weekend, the town's Peach Festival during the second weekend of August, and the museum's Past is Present Festival on Aug. 6.

Closed for a week due to E. coli, Queen's Royal Beach reopens

Staff
The Lake Report

Queen's Royal Beach in Niagara-on-the-Lake was declared safe for swimming again on Wednesday, July 24 — after being closed for a week due to high E. coli levels.

The closure has been a regular occurrence the past several summers, especially after heavy rainstorms.

The torrential rains last week are suspected to have caused the elevated E. coli counts.

Storm water runoff and animal waste are among the factors that can heighten E. coli levels.

The beach water quality page on the region's website and a sign at Queen's Royal Beach warned people to stay out of the water as of last Wednesday, July 17.

A year ago at this time, Queen's Royal also was closed due to unsafe E. coli levels.

Queen's Royal Park, home to the town's iconic gazebo, is a popular destination for visitors and residents alike.

Its beach is the only waterfront area in NOTL that is tested regularly by Niagara Region.

Several years ago, the

region stopped checking the water quality at the small Ryerson Park beach, about two kilometres west of Queen's Royal.

For much of the past month, the shoreline at Ryerson Park has been covered in heavy algae.

Depending on annual assessments and public usage, the region tests 19 beaches around Niagara one or more times weekly.

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JUST LISTED 32 THE PROMENADE - \$1,150,000

NEW

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COUNTRY LIVING 899 LINE 1 - \$849,000

NEW

Charming 3-bedroom, 1-bath home nestled on a sprawling 200x200 country lot, located on a coveted street known for its tranquility and charm. This property offers a canvas for personalization, promising endless possibilities to create your dream rural retreat.

WATERFRONT 4 FIRELANE 6A - \$1,185,000

Welcome to this exceptional 2 bed, 2 bath waterfront home that seamlessly blends rustic charm with modern elegance. What sets this waterfront home apart is its versatile design, offering the unique ability to convert back to two separate living quarters. Waterfront living may be closer than you think.

VINEYARD VIEWS 1213 CONCESSION. 6 - \$1,850,000

Discover unparalleled luxury and privacy in this exquisite country estate. This modern farmhouse offers panoramic vineyard views from every room. Situated on a 200x200 lot this 4 bedroom home features custom finishes, and meticulous design and stunning outdoor spaces.

PORT DALHOUSIE 12 CORBETT AVE - \$849,000

Welcome to your charming sanctuary in the heart of Port Dalhousie! This fully renovated bungalow, is just a leisurely stroll from the tranquil shores of Lake Ontario. With over 1,700 square feet of finished living space, this 3+1 bed / 2bath home offers the ultimate comfort for living and entertaining.

18 GARRISON VILLAGE DRIVE - \$1,099,000

SOLD

Located within Garrison Village, this two-storey 4 bed/3.5 bath dwelling with separate pool house spans over 1,900 square feet of carefully curated living space. Adding to the allure is the separate pool house, which boasts its own kitchenette, loft bedroom, bathroom, and cozy living area.

135 GATE STREET - \$3,485,000

SOLD

Nestled in Downtown Niagara-on-the-Lake, 135 Gate Street offers an unparalleled living experience in a custom-built masterpiece that redefines luxury. Boasting over 4,000 square feet of living space, this meticulously designed home combines modern elegance with timeless charm.

WATERFRONT 6 FIRELANE 14D - \$549,000

NEW

Located within the serene enclave of the Share Co-Operative, discover the charm of cottage #6 in the "Pinegrove Owners" community. This rare gem offers an opportunity to create your own haven amidst the tranquil backdrop of Lake Ontario. A unique chance to own a retreat for weekends.

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Promises Made...

- *"All of the Town's plans state that any development should be "in sympathy" with the surrounding area. A strong message that policies, bylaws and provincial regulations need to be followed, will set the tone for future development; sadly a weak response will also set the tone."*

Erwin Wiens | In response to Save Our Rand Estate candidate survey during 2018 election campaign

- *"Awareness has to be brought to residents with an opportunity for consultation and an equitable process. I would like to see [Parliament Oak/Virgil school sites, former hospital] in public use."*

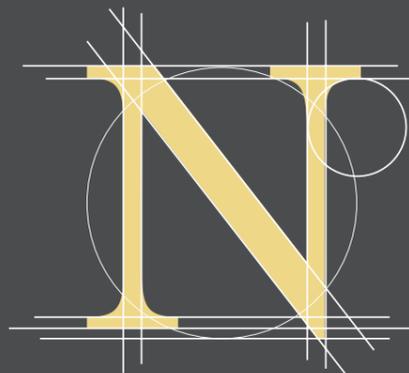
Adriana Vizzari | In response to Niagara Foundation candidate survey during 2022 election campaign

- *"It is the Town's job to uphold and protect the heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake. I believe that any developer looking to build in NOTL should be informed of the OP and heritage act, during the pre-consultation meeting, and during the process to avoid any misunderstanding of what is acceptable, contextual architecture development for our town."*

Maria Mavridis | In response to Save Our Rand Estate candidate survey during 2022 election campaign

- *"I will work with fellow Council colleagues and the Lord Mayor to maintain the institutional zoning for Parliament Oak."*

Wendy Cheropita | In response to Niagara Foundation candidate survey during 2022 election campaign



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Contributed by Patty Garriock

“We always attract into our lives whatever we think about most, believe in most strongly, expect on the deepest level and imagine most vividly.” - Shakti Gawain

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Editorial

Building a future for NOTL seniors

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

From the outset, The Lake Report has been pleased to support and write about the research project led by Michael Ennamorato and Stephen Ferley to determine the housing needs of Niagara-on-the-Lake seniors as they move through the aging process.

As we have documented in detail, the survey found that maintaining independence with their housing situation is a major fact of NOTL life for seniors.

It is noteworthy that 79 per cent of the town's households are lodged in single detached dwellings and in 73 per cent of cases the primary household maintainer is 55 years or older.

Asked about their future housing plans, many seniors intend to arrange additional services to help them maintain that independence in their day-to-day living.

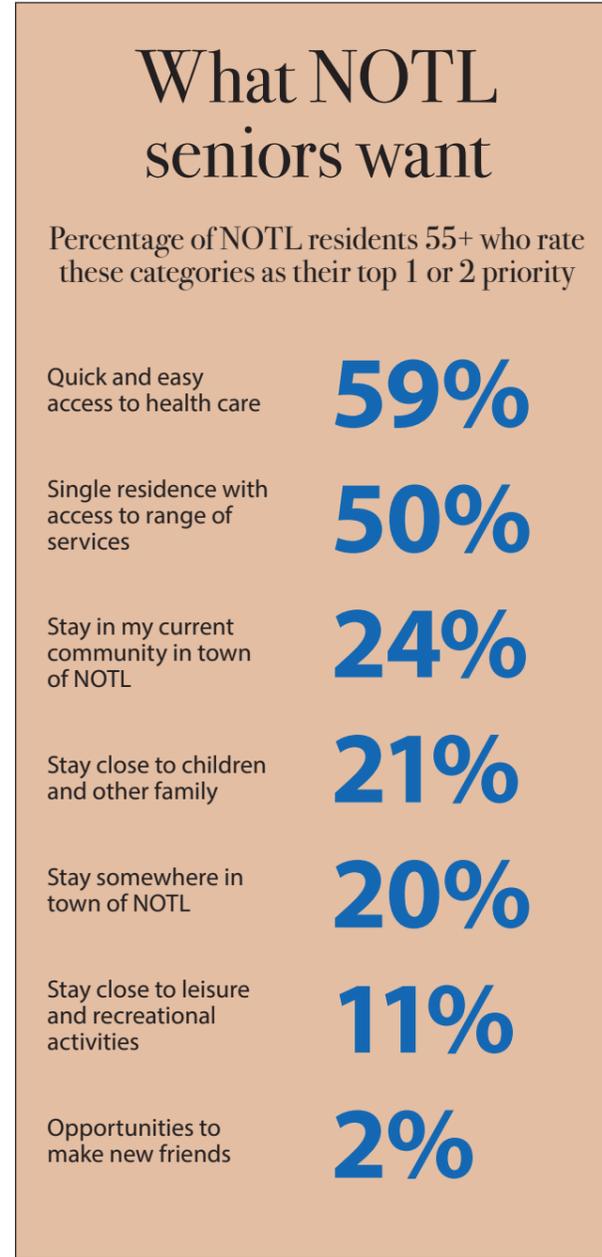
And 60 per cent of our seniors report they are likely to move to a smaller, more manageable home to retain their independence. Importantly, they prefer the downsizing to be within NOTL.

The survey ranked the importance of several factors for seniors in making any decisions on their future housing needs.

They make it quite clear that access to health care services (not necessarily a local hospital, but other established medical facilities or clinics) is a critical and overarching consideration.

It was ranked by 59 per cent as their first or second most important factor.

Also very high in im-



portance — ranked first or second by 50 per cent of seniors — is the option of a single residence with access to a range of services over time.

For NOTL specifically, there is another critical tier of needs: The distinct appeal of the local community.

One in every four of our seniors has an extremely local element in their future

housing preferences: They want to stay even in their current community within the town. And a further one in five would like to stay somewhere in NOTL.

The accompanying chart highlights some of the key statistics in this category.

Significant tension arises from the juxtaposition of these survey facts.

Our seniors appreciate

their current independent way of life. They're committed to NOTL. They want to stay here as they age.

But the existing housing stock may not be sufficiently diverse to accommodate their age-related needs. And this tension will only increase in the coming years.

Two short lines within the 44 pages of the survey report address the situation: “Future housing responsibilities fall across several levels of government — municipal, regional, provincial and federal as well. And the developer community as a whole will have a significant role to play in translating plans into action.”

The Lake Report and the researchers agree that many — or all — of those elements should be involved.

We'll be speaking to Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa in-depth about the survey results and possible next steps for the town and others.

We'll report back on how he and council plan to approach this opportunity to make what could literally be some life-changing decisions for the town's senior population.

Meanwhile, we urge all members of council, our regional member Andrea Kaiser and our provincial and federal representatives to make sure they also read and study the survey report — and pay more than just lip service to these very real concerns about the future of life in NOTL.

Together with the private sector and others, they have the chance to do something innovative and groundbreaking right here in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Let's make it happen.

CORRECTION: A July 18 photo caption accompanying a story about books being sent to Jamaica incorrectly identified Abe Epp as Dave Hunter. The Lake Report regrets the error.

We welcome your letters

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

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Town needs moratorium on building

This is an edited version of a letter to members of NOTL council. A copy was submitted to The Lake Report for publication.

Since this council began its term, there seems to have been more proposals to increase development in all areas of Niagara-on-the-Lake than ever before.

If there are any restrictions and/or rules outlined in the official plan, it seems attention to that document is non-existent as oversized, over-height, commercial, residential and multiples have been or soon will be approved throughout our community.

Too many applications are being tentatively approved and moving to the next stage in a whirlwind process. Too much is being requested; too much is being accepted without the town fully investigating long-term ramifications. And municipal bylaws have been amended or set aside to accommodate all the proposals.

We respectfully suggest that council propose a

moratorium on all building projects so a thorough review can be conducted to grasp the big picture and make sure this town's unique history is not going to be dismissed to make way for development.

Residents have loudly voiced their objections — supported by well researched documentation — while ill-conceived decisions, based on weak and creative wordsmithing are pushing the developments through.

This council was elected because of promises to represent the citizens of NOTL and maintain the unique and historic character of this town: the first capital of Upper Canada, a pivotal site of the War of 1812 and an architectural gem.

Our history has been captured and preserved by federal and municipal property owners, who have expressed their conservation values through the maintenance of their sites, homes and their continued vigilance against a modern invasion of those who seek

personal financial benefit at everyone's expense.

We respectfully ask council to impose a moratorium and form a council-citizen board to review current actions. Take a deep breath, slow down and make decisions based on our history and our future vision.

Among the development proposals that we are concerned about are: Randwood (191-plus units proposed), Parliament Oak hotel, 17-unit condo complex on King Street, hotel at Queen and Mississauga, lot severed on heritage-designated property at Simcoe and Queen, highrise towers at White Oaks and near the Hilton Garden Inn, 160 homes and townhouses in Virgil, and expansion of the Cannery subdivision in St. Davids.

Each of these proposals brings a slew of infrastructure issues that will ultimately affect all residents through our tax levies. Damages and effects reach far into the future, when the opportu-

nity to reverse or rethink decisions is long past.

When greenspace is covered with buildings and paved for parking lots, where will the rainwater go? Will rain or raw sewage back into the surrounding basements?

Do we solve that problem by opening the tap and allowing overflow sewage to pour into Lake Ontario? Who pays to clean up the basements because the town did not make the right decisions?

We suggest that a community forum be created to discuss where this town is going and how to address the infrastructure and other issues that will affect generations to come. This town is fortunate to have numerous retired professionals, with the work experience and skills to make our town a better place.

They have publicly offered their opinions and solutions. Heed their warnings. Ask for their volunteer help.

Jim and Erika Alexander
NOTL



The sound for Canada Day at Simcoe Park was too low to hear. It should be fixed for next year, says one writer.

Agreed, more sound needed at Simcoe Park

Dear editor:

In response to July 5's editorial, "We love ya, Canada Day, we just can't hear ya," I completely agree with the editor-in-chief.

Back in 2016, when we were deciding to buy our NOTL home, we enjoyed many concerts at Simcoe Park.

And when we finally started living here, this strange sound restriction rule came into play. A town permit is required to have amplified sound in the park.

I get it, more than 50 per cent of our town population are seniors. However, I lead music therapy groups in several long-term care homes in the area, and let me tell you, we aren't quiet.

Growing up in eastern Europe, my family (all mu-

sicians) was always participating in city celebrations.

I sang in many open-air concerts for the national days and other spring-through-fall celebrations.

We lack it here. We have our own young talents that have no opportunities to perform for the town citizens and guests. Look at the Yellow Door Theatre Project.

The only time they performed this past year was during a cold and wet Christmas parade.

Give local musicians the stage. Put in a professional sound system. Let us celebrate and hear them.

Sincerely, a disappointed musician and music therapist.

Aksana Kavaliyova-Moussi
NOTL

Trump, Biden, a bullet and what the future holds



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner
Columnist

The lovely lady with the brown doodle chatted while my dog Hoovered hers. She's in NOTL with husband and pooch from Pittsburgh.

One week earlier a bullet whizzed through Donald Trump's ear, at a rally 33 miles from her home, up Highway 8 in Butler.

"It was Jesus that brushed it away," she said. And that was a cue to get Cody out

of her doodle's bottom and keep moving.

American politics has seldom been like this. Maybe never.

On this side of the river, we'll have to deal with a situation new in our lifetimes. Religion, race, tribalism, patriotism and a battle between left and right make the coming presidential vote a rising risk to wealth.

Trump's a cult now. The Democrats dumped Joe. Financial markets are preparing for the former president to be the next one.

Polling shows 62 per cent of Canadians think Trump will be bad for us. From tariffs to a potential border tax, a weaker loonie and shredded free-trade deal — it makes six in 10 of us pick Biden. But that guy is gone. So the Trump reality grows.

Outside the post office I ran into Jim Caldwell.



Jim Caldwell.

Like his brother, Tom (also a NOTLer), he's a financial guy.

Their wealth management business has been around for decades. Long enough, I figured, to yak about what Donald (and Jesus) may have in store. Plus what to do about it. We made a date to talk.

If the Democrats keep the White House, it's status quo. The American economy chugs along. Stock markets (lots of new highs lately) focus on profits and interest rates. The U.S. stands with

Ukraine and NATO. Debt romps higher.

But what if Trump wins? All we know is what he says. Lower interest rates and corporate tax breaks. Fewer green regs and drill-baby, drill. The stock market will love it. Bond prices will go up, yields down — for a while.

The concern is more stimulus, trade tariffs and protectionism, plus more deficit and a mass deportation of newcomers is a recipe for inflation.

Inevitably the bond market reacts as investors demand higher rates. The Fed hikes. Plus, Trump would have to move fast on his agenda. As a former president he has only four years ahead, with mid-term elections in 2026 — which could see a Democratic revival.

Does this mean investors,

especially NOTL retirees who abhor losses, should run to cash or GICs?

Nah, says Caldwell. Don't be a wuss — history proves those who make sudden moves to avoid risk end up creating more of it.

"This is all noise," he insists. "You should invest and stay invested. Own good equities and be diversified — not one or two stocks, but a whole basket of companies. We don't know what Trump will do. Maybe cut taxes again, stimulate growth and the market."

"Sure, I have concern about tariffs and Canada. We're the fly next to the elephant, yes, but why try to predict these things? Maybe this is all overblown — what one man can actually do."

True enough. History proves investors who slept through the 1987 crash, the

dot-com crash, Y2K, 9/11, the credit crisis or COVID did just fine. In fact, studies show accounts of dead people — untouched for decades — outperform those of active investors.

The best advice: invest through exchange-traded funds rather than individual stocks for less risk and more diversification. Hold some fixed-income (like bond funds or preferreds) to balance equity risk.

Don't OD on maple. Keep a quarter of your portfolio in U.S. dollar-denominated assets. And stuff your TFSA and other registered accounts, since our taxes have only one direction to go.

So, yeah, ignore Trump. Even if He isn't.

Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.

garth@garth.ca



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Councillors continue **assault** on heritage



Brian Marshall
Columnist

To suggest I am completely incensed over the actions of town staff and our elected council regarding the application to rezone the property at 187 Queen St. would be an understatement.

The application is to rezone the property and allow for a severance of the lands into two lots.

This came before councillors during the committee of the whole planning meeting held July 16 (see item 8.2 on its agenda).

Now, for those of us who don't recognize the street number, we are talking about the property on the corner of Queen and Simcoe streets, which received a Part IV designation in 2002 as the Chrysler-Burroughs House, but which has also been known as the Chrysler-Rigg House and the Roslyn Cottage.

Back in the April 6, 2022, edition of this newspaper, I wrote about this property ("Arch-i-text: A reflection of change") and concluded that piece with the following statement:

"The Chrysler-Burroughs House is a heritage jewel for not only its age and prominent position on Queen, but because it is a living demonstration of how a dwelling evolved in response to the changes in society during the 19th century and continues to bear witness 100 years after that."

It's a heritage jewel that, as I mentioned, the town and province designated in 2002, which includes both the original deep lot and the buildings thereupon.

The application from July 16 was brought before the municipal heritage committee during its meeting on May 1 — albeit proposing to carve the lands up into

three lots at that time — together with a staff recommendation largely supporting approval.

In an 8-1 vote, the committee rejected the application and all of staff's recommendations, citing three reasons.

First, because the original lot was an intrinsic heritage asset to the property and any alteration to that asset would diminish the historic value preserved within the designation.

Second, the severance would force the creation of a new driveway onto Queen Street, drastically altering what is now the "front lawn" (let alone the impact such a change would make to the historic Queen streetscape).

And finally, the applicant proposed to build a garage addition on the heritage house, effectively destroying the historical façade.

The committee did suggest that, should the proponent rework their application to address the members' issues, and return that revised application to the municipal heritage committee, it would be fairly considered under its own merits.

But that is not what happened.

Town staff did "work with the applicant" to revise the application, but that revision was not presented to the committee in its May 10 meeting for review.

Instead, six days later, it was presented to the council for approval of the rezoning — an anomaly voiced by Coun. Gary Burroughs, which was deflected by Kirsten McCauley, the town's director of community and development, and subsequently ignored by the majority of the council.

When questioned about the process associated with allowing the severance of a portion of designated lands, McCauley replied that it would be necessary to "revise" the designation such that it did not include the proposed severed portion — intimating that to be a simple administrative action, which would later return to council for its approval.



The Chrysler-Burroughs House on Queen Street has had a Part IV heritage designation since 2002. Brian Marshall writes that altering the designation of a heritage property will have a negative impact on its historical value and that of the street. SUPPLIED

What was not explained was that altering (repealing) a designation is not simple and the process is clearly defined in provincial legislation, which underwrites the Ontario Heritage Trust, the provincial oversight body.

So, let's look at the legislation for a moment. In the Ontario Heritage Act, Section 31.1, the law speaks to this action in the following manner:

"Subject to subsection (2), where the council of a municipality intends to repeal a bylaw or part thereof designating property, it shall cause notice of intention to repeal the bylaw or part thereof to be given by the clerk of the municipality in accordance with subsection (3). R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18, s. 31 (1)."

In Section 31.2, it goes further to specify:

"Where the council of a municipality has appointed a municipal heritage committee, the council shall, before repealing a bylaw or part thereof designating property, consult with its municipal heritage committee. R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18, s. 31 (2); 2002, c. 18, Sched. F, s. 2 (14)."

Furthermore, the act requires that any proposed alteration of an existing designated property be "published in a newspaper having general circula-

tion in the municipality" containing the following information:

an adequate description of the property so that it may be readily ascertained;

a statement of the reason for the proposed repealing bylaw; and

a statement that notice of objection to the repealing bylaw may be served on the clerk within 30 days of the date of publication of the notice of intention (to repeal).

Moreover, despite Premier Doug Ford's gutting of heritage protection in this province, the More Homes, More Choice Act 2019 Schedule 11 still allows for objections to the action provided they are filed within 30 days.

So, one is forced to ask about the validity in legal terms of this council's vote on rezoning to allow severance on a designated property, since the Ontario Heritage Act specifically forbids an action that might adversely affect the heritage assets contained within the designation.

I suppose a councillors' endorsement of the rezoning application in principle may be within their authority, but certainly not approval of an application without compliance to the legal provisions and due process contained within provincial legislation.

Thus, the council vote in the planning meeting — with the regular gang of five comprised of Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and Couns. Erwin Wiens, Wendy Cheropita, Adriana Vizzari and Maria Mavridis voting in favour of the application and defeating the votes against placed by Sandra O'Connor, Burroughs and Tim Balasiuk — to move this application forward to a vote in the next full council meeting must be considered highly questionable.

It is also interesting to note that the five members of council who voted in favour in this case have also acted as a voting bloc, supporting all of the recent controversial development applications.

This list includes the Parliament Oak hotel, the new developments in St. Davids, the lifting of height restrictions on the proposed White Oaks development in Glendale, together with the applications — by the same proponent in this particular case — for a four-storey hotel addition on the property at Queen and Mississauga and requesting a provincial minister's order to allow his development in Virgil.

That's quite a record ...

If you want to watch the recorded July 16 planning meeting, you can find it on the town's website under

"Meetings, Agendas & Minutes." Scroll down to "Past Meetings" and look under the "Committee of the Whole — Planning" tab for the July 16 meeting video: notl.com/council-government/meetings-agendas-minutes.

Still, for the Chrysler-Burroughs property and the clear-cutting of the trees in Virgil's Konik Estates development, this is not yet a fait accompli since the final council votes on the applications are scheduled for its July 30 meeting.

Moreover, even if the gang of five maintains its record of voting solidarity in favour of developers during that meeting, the 187 Queen St. rezoning application will have no force in law until the heritage designation protections that apply to the property are successfully repealed in accordance with provincial legislation.

So, dear readers, I call on each and every one of you to make your voice heard clearly and unequivocally.

Call, email and write your councillors to tell them that the continued assault on the heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake is completely unacceptable and the citizens of this town expect them to vote against approving these applications.

And, in the case of the Chrysler-Burroughs property, if council ignores your voices, you may still file objections to the repealing of the heritage designation.

It is past time that we come together as one voice to save the cultural heritage landscapes of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Should we fail to stand up, should we fail to convince this council to call a halt to its approval of rapacious, insensitive and inappropriate development in our villages and countryside — now and over the next two years — Niagara-on-the-Lake, as we know it, will disappear and be transformed into just another slice of Greater Toronto Area suburbia.

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


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New development must **respect** NOTL's past



Wayne Gates
Special to The Lake Report

As we move through the summer months in Niagara, let's take the time to reflect on the rich heritage that defines both our country and our community here in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

We know how important our community is, both economically as a major beacon for tourism, but also culturally.

Niagara-on-the-Lake is the first capital of Ontario, it played a definitive role in the War of 1812, we have the oldest Catholic church and second-oldest Anglican church in Ontario right here in town, we are home to world-class wineries, restaurants,

breweries and one of the greatest theatre festivals in North America.

We cannot jeopardize what makes this town so unique with inappropriate development — and we must always hear the voices of residents before we move forward on big development projects.

I am not anti-development — utilizing smart strategies to grow our local economy and important industries such as hospitality, viticulture and tourism is important to the continued success of the town.

But it must be done with proper planning and foresight, it must be zoned appropriately, it must have input from residents and balance the wants of tourists with what residents need from their local government.

And it must respect existing neighbourhoods and communities.

Input from residents is the key concept here. Their voices must be heard loud

and clear in discussions about the town's future.

Development should not come at the expense of our cultural heritage. Rather, it should complement and preserve it for generations to come.

We must find a path forward that respects residents and neighbourhoods, and preserves what keeps this community unique, while also investing in and supporting tourism.

In 2023 alone, more than three million tourists visited the region, injecting more than \$500 million into the local economy.

These numbers underscore the importance of preserving our cultural assets — they are not just a source of pride but also a vital economic driver for our community.

Preserving Niagara-on-the-Lake's cultural heritage isn't just about protecting buildings; it's about safeguarding our identity as Canadians.

It's about ensuring that

future generations can walk these streets and feel a connection to the past, understanding the struggles and triumphs that shaped Niagara and Canada.

My support for places such as the Shaw Festival is part of what I think represents a smart way forward. The Shaw not only enriches our community with world-class theatre, and as an important economic driver, but also serves as an important part of our cultural history.

As we look to the future, let us reaffirm our dedication to safeguarding Niagara-on-the-Lake's cultural heritage.

Let us continue to support projects that honour our past, drive our economy and resonate with the spirit of our community.

Together, we can ensure that future generations inherit a town that is as rich in history as it is in opportunity.

Wayne Gates is the NDP member for the provincial riding of Niagara Falls.

Why are we ignoring **smelly sludge** at Ryerson?

Dear editor:

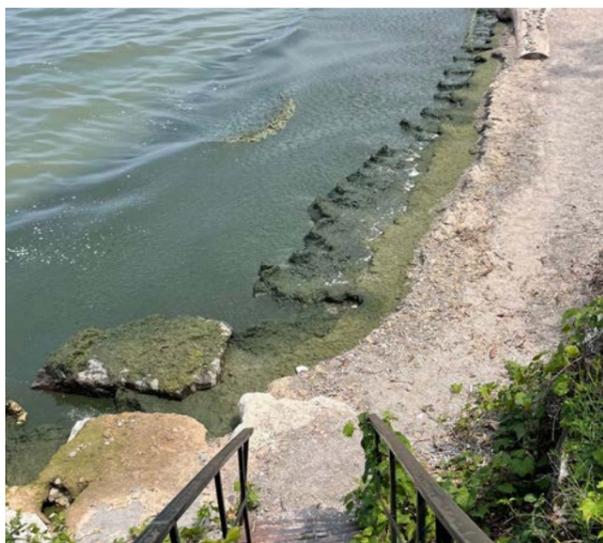
Q: When is a lake not a lake or a beach not a beach?

A: When they're, in fact, a cesspool.

For the umpteenth time this year, the otherwise scenic Ryerson Park — one NOTL's many renowned jewels — is host to the noxious smells and sludge of effluent from the nearby creek and the treatment plant to the west which the prevailing currents trap in its cove-like configuration.

Not only is this a frequent occurrence but it has become a longer and longer lasting one, of late.

And yet evidence of any remedial attempts are nowhere to be seen, leaving visitors and residents alike



The small beach at Ryerson Park in Chautauqua has been covered in thick green algae for much of the summer, letter writer Bruce Dickson says. SUPPLIED

to breathe in the stench and observe the slow lapping of slime-thickened waves as

they turn the beach into a dark, sickly green, elongated biohazard.

For a visitor-dependent destination to allow such a disgusting display to recur in full public view year over year without abatement, or even evident intervention, calls its priorities seriously into question.

Indeed, how can dreams of five-star hotel developments possibly be compatible with a de facto open sewer almost in line of sight?

It's been going on for far too long and it appears only to be getting worse.

So, let's end the ignoring, the downplaying, the buck-passing and the delays in order to put a long overdue end to this toxic embarrassment as soon as possible.

Bruce Dickson
Chautauqua

2021 report warned of Four Mile Creek **problems**

Dear editor:

The Four Mile Creek drainage area runs from about Mountain Road in Niagara Falls in the south to Lake Ontario in the north, between Concession 3 and 7.

It is the stormwater drainage outlet for St. Davids and Virgil, and also is the outlet for the Lavigne, Cole, Bright and Four Mile Creek municipal drains. It empties into Lake Ontario across Lakeshore Road, near Strawn Winery.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa's quote in The Lake Report on July 11 that over-development is not a contributing factor to the increased flooding of Four Mile Creek shows he is not familiar with the situation, nor with OPS-21-012, the April 2021 report by Brett Ruck, who was the town's irrigation and drainage superintendent at the time.

The report was also signed by then-director of

operations Sheldon Randall and chief administrator Marnie Cluckie.

This is the report referred to in Brian Marshall's column in the July 18 edition of The Lake Report about infrastructure and stormwater management.

All residents of the Four Mile Creek drainage area should read the report.

The flooding of Four Mile Creek is not new. It has just continued to get worse with the new devel-

opments in St. Davids, approved by town council and the planning department.

All development in St. Davids should have been put on hold until the recommendations in Ruck's report had been completed.

This is not responsible management of our town. A copy of Ruck's report to can be found by simply Googling OPS-21-012.

Kip Voegel
NOTL

Keep Your Eyes on the Prize This Summer

This UV Safety Month, let's focus on our little ones! Children are actually more susceptible to the harmful effects of UV rays than adults because they typically spend more time outdoors, and their ocular lenses are more transparent, allowing more UV light to reach the retina. Equip your children with UV-protective eyewear whenever they're outdoors. Hats and caps are also great additions to shield their eyes from direct sunlight.

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TEAMS OF THE WEEK

Timbits Black and Timbits Purple



The Timbits Black and Purple teams are two of The Lake Report's featured Teams of the week.

Black Team: Bottom Row (left to right): Cyrus Rezaeian, Avery Magee, Elesio Picciariello, Autumn Prah. Top Row (left to right): Georgia Sykes, Rylee Dempsey, Maxim Aftinescu, Ariana Aftinescu, Nash Demerling, Ruby Bastedo, Hudson Thwaites, Myra Garcha, Enzo Picciariello Coaches (left to right): Sam Demerling, Dan Ens. Absent: Henry Ens.

Purple Team: Pictured with coach Jordana Hernder are Scarlett Plut, Jase Wall, Tessa Disher, Gwendalyn Marquardt, Danica Marquardt, Olivia Plyley, Lincoln Pena, Jarod Hernder and Axel Evans. PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE VAN DE LAAR

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Two NOTL teams crowned champs

Continued from Front Page

Bennett Hope had four goals and Brock Friesen added three, while Auston Cwierniewski had a pair and Connor Cech chipped in with a single, the game-tying goal.

Assistant coach Gary Friesen said the team was still optimistic despite being down 6-2 but felt that if they got a couple of quick goals they could shift the momentum.

"Albeit we didn't expect to get eight unanswered," he said. "It was a really fun game. Comeback wins are some of the most exciting games."

A lot of the U9 Thunderhawks have been playing together since they were three and four years old and this championship was their first major win.

Being able to compete and win at home made it even more meaningful.

They will wrap up their season by competing in the



Many of the U9 Thunderhawks have been playing lacrosse together since they were three and four years old — this championship was their first major win. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

provincial championship tournament, the Ontario Lacrosse Festival, in Oshawa in August.

Next up on Saturday afternoon were the U13 Thunderhawks.

Trailing the Six Nations 1 team 3-2 after two periods, they scored four times in the third and weathered the storm to win 6-5 and claim the Zone 9 "B" division championship.

Four different players scored for Niagara in the final, Hunter Froese and Mason Jaekle had a pair each, with singles by James Froese and Elijah Paul.

James Froese scored what proved to be the winner on a late penalty shot.

"It was a great team win," said U13 coach Connor Watson.

"The boys really showed

their resilience, trailing the whole game. With the number of chances we had it was just a matter of time before we potted a few."

He said the coaching staff is proud of the strides the team has made this season, but added that "we have unfinished business" with the provincial championships coming up in Whitby in two weeks.

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Provide your feedback at the upcoming Public Information Centres (PICs). Registration is not required.

Drop in at the following PICs to provide your feedback:

- July 31, 2024, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre Cafe (10 Anderson Lane)
- August 1, 2024, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at St. Davids Lions Park (1462 York Road)
 - A free swim is being offered to families at the St. Davids Pool from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

 Scan the QR code to complete the survey before August 31, 2024.

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Find your reflection in the 'watermark' at Pumphouse's new exhibition

Staff
The Lake Report

A new exhibition will be ready at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre this August, from a longtime artist whose latest works invite the viewer to reflect on the enchanting world of water.

Sam Paonessa's "Watermark" art show will run from Aug. 6 to 29 in the Joyner Gallery, offering an immersive exploration of water and its multifaceted themes throughout the seasons.

An artist with a career spanning more than 40 years, Paonessa is a member of the Ontario Society of Artists and Oil Painters of America, and has garnered recognition for his mastery of plein air painting — the practice of painting outdoors with the artist's subject in full view.

Each piece in the "Watermark" exhibition showcases the artist's adept use of brushstrokes, palette knives and unconventional tools, resulting in mesmerizing



Sam Paonessa, with a career spanning over 40 years, is renowned for his mastery of plein air painting. His latest collection, "Watermark," offers an immersive exploration of water through the seasons.

compositions that celebrate the interplay of light, texture and reflection on water surfaces.

"My love for painting continues to grow as I observe the world around me," Paonessa said in a media release from the arts centre.

"I draw inspiration from nature in all its forms, from the grandest landscapes to the tiniest blossoms. The opportunity to witness nature's wonders — let alone interpret them — brings me closer to God."

His accolades include winning "Best Water" and

"Best Nocturne" in the prestigious Plein Air Salon Competition, highlighting his skill in capturing the essence of natural elements.

Paonessa's work has been featured in prominent galleries such as the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa and the Frederick Horsman Varley Museum in Markham to name a few.

His coin design, "Canadian Icons," was selected as a finalist for the Royal Canadian Mint 2017 150th Collection, commemorating Canada's sesquicentennial anniversary.

As viewers immerse themselves in "Watermark," he hopes to evoke emotions of serenity, peace, and reverence for the divine creator.

The public is invited to the show's opening reception on Sunday, Aug. 11, from 2 to 4 p.m. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with the artist, savour the artwork and connect with fellow art appreciators over refreshments and nibbles.

This event is supported by Château des Charmes, providing an assortment of fine wines.

For those interested in trying out the practice of plein air painting for themselves, Paonessa is hosting a workshop at the Pumphouse, "Capturing Nature," on Aug. 17 and 18.

Participants will learn essential techniques and principles for creating captivating landscape paintings, including detailed structures, under his guidance.

More information about the exhibit and workshop can be found at niagarapumphouse.ca.

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Minimalist 'Orphan of Chao' an exceptional treat

THE ORPHAN OF CHAO

★★★★★
(out of five)

Royal George Theatre, lunchtime one-act play, 60 minutes, no intermission. Ends Oct. 5. Translated and adapted by Michael Man. Based on "The Great Revenge of the Zhao Orphan" by Ji Junxiang. Directed by Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster.

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

"This is an old story: A child's birth will destabilize a corrupt regime founded on the murder of his family.

Themes of revenge, sacrifice, filial duty, honour, love, mortality and morality become powerfully new in this pared down riveting adaptation and gripping production.

What a path the Orphan story has taken. Its 5th Century BCE origin is believed to be "Zuo's Commentaries" and Sima Qian's 2nd century BCE historical account of the Zhao family.

The first literary adaptation as a play took place in the early years of the Yuan (Mongol) Dynasty of the 13th century when Confucian scholar Ji Junxiang's wrote "The Great Revenge of the Zhao Orphan" as a great classic drama of power conflict and payback (bao).

It was introduced to Europe in the 1730s by Jesuit



Donna Soares as Chao Tun, Lindsay Wu as Emperor Ling, with Eponine Lee and Richard Lee, in "The Orphan of Chao." Penny-Lynn Cookson says the story is timeless and the direction made for a great show. PHOTO BY DAVID COOPER

scholar Rev. Joseph Henri Prémare at a time when Chinoiserie style was all the rage with designers, artists and writers. Even Voltaire had a go at it with his "L'Orphelin de la Chine" in 1753.

More recently, it was translated and adapted as a play in 2012 by poet James Fenton for the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon. There have been many Chinese stage versions, Beijing Opera performances, a Hong Kong film, a British opera and now we have Michael Man's compelling "Orphan of Chao" at the Shaw.

The setting is the 6th century BCE. Two senior

ministers at court, Chao Tun and General Tu-An Ku, are arch-rivals in a power struggle.

Tu-An Ku falsely accuses and convinces the ruler of Jin, Duke Ling, that the Chao family are treasonous. Chao Tun and 300 of the Chao family are brutally massacred.

The ruler's pregnant daughter is married to a Chao. Chao Ting, is spared from death but her child will die unless a plan is devised to save him.

Who will have the loyalty and moral courage to sacrifice his or her own life in order that the Chao infant survives to restore the family's honour,

legacy and position?

Against a minimalist staging of a dun-coloured backdrop of Mongolian steppes, a wooden and iron grate fence becomes whatever the action requires, be it a jail, palace or humble dwelling. The focus is on performance and what that entails.

The six performers convey the story exceptionally well using the "Jingxi" Beijing Opera traditions: monologue, recitative speech, song, pantomime, dance, martial arts and gestural movements. Designations of roles: Sheng (man) and Dan (woman) are followed in attitude and voice.

Special kudos to John Ng

in the Laosheng role of the older, dignified mandarin Gongsun Chujiu, to Jonathan Tan as the ruthless Tu-An Ku and to Lindsay Wu as Chao Ting for dignity and her painfully expressive dance using long swirling scarves to evoke the agony of childbirth.

Donna Soares as Cheng Ying and Richard Lee as Hon Jue deliver the sorrow and courage required for self-sacrifice. Eponine Lee, as the grown-up Orphan Bo seeking revenge, becomes the high-spirited dynamo Xiansheng warrior who will shrilly lead the revolution.

Costumes were a combination of simple contem-

porary and traditional that worked. Colours denoted character. The taciturn bad guy Tu-An Ku wore a black military helmet and jacket.

Black for defiance and strength was right for the Orphan in black boots and puff jacket waving a banner into battle. A subdued red slid at times in denoting loyalty, integrity or courage.

The music was evocatively used for transitions of time and place. Percussion sticks, cymbals, gongs and drums complemented dramatic action and martial themes. Lighting was highly effective especially, in the final minutes of the play.

Good direction throughout made for cohesion. Michael Man has given us a timeless story relevant to courage and the sacrifices ordinary people are prepared to make to protect the values they believe in.

I was fortunate to see a performance of the Beijing Opera in the auditorium of the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in 1986.

It was three years before the Tiananmen Square massacre and inconceivable that Hong Kong would so radically change in future.

See this lunch-hour play and take part in the discussion after, if offered. Our experience was an enlightening bonus.

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an arts and culture historian, writer and lecturer living in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Music Niagara concert celebrates Ukrainian heritage amid war

Paige Seburn
Special to The Lake Report

Ukrainian refugees Victoria Biliak Katz and Olga Noskiv celebrated their heritage and the power of music as part of the Music Niagara Festival's "Glory to Ukraine" concert on Sunday, July 20.

They wore traditional attire for the presentation at St. Mark's Anglican Church to highlight their cultural pride and complement the festival's goal of celebrating Ukrainian culture through music.

Katz and Noskiv, who have family in Ukraine, believe it's essential to support their country now.

It has been more than two years since Russia invaded Ukraine, on Feb. 24, 2022.

"It's very important to us because the war is still going on," said Katz, who has been in Canada for nine



Three members of Two Families Band perform inside St. Mark's Anglican Church on Sunday. From left, Julia Kim, on the domra, Oleg Apostolov, playing double bass and Irina Samarina, playing the flute. PAIGE SEBURN

years. Her mother-in-law has been here for 10.

The ongoing conflict keeps their focus on the need for global support and awareness.

And Katz sees music as a powerful way to connect

with others and support their cause.

"Music unites people. And, because my mother-in-law, she's a musician, it's very important to her, too," she said.

They view music as a way

to bridge cultures and bring people together, making it a powerful tool for supporting their home nation and connecting with others.

"We are glad that people are still talking about Ukraine and there is this good cause to support this," said Katz.

Others also credit music for effectively celebrating Ukrainian culture.

Atis Bankas, the festival's founder and artistic director, appreciates music for its ability to overcome language barriers and express what words can't.

He played a key role in shaping the event and making sure the music resonated with the audience.

Music expresses emotions in ways he believes no other art form can match.

While visual art and spoken word are more concrete, he reserves music for uniquely expressing

complex feelings and experiences.

"Through music, we're really appealing to all kinds of people from different cultures in the world and it speaks by itself," Bankas said. "You don't have to speak the language to understand music."

The celebration of culture through music is also reflected in the vision of the festival's production manager, Colin Maier.

He views the concert as more than a performance, saying it also shows Music Niagara's strong commitment to uniting people through music.

"It connects people," he said.

He values how arts and culture can reflect the world's evolution and express political, social and economic views.

"That's kind of why I think music and the arts in

general are important," said Maier.

Commitment to the arts is evident in the community through its support for the event.

Helping make the concert possible, James Hall secured a Rotary Club of St. Catharines South donation to sponsor the celebration of Ukraine, a cause close to his heart.

"We really rely on our community sponsors. They make this all possible for Music Niagara," said Hall, a member of the festival's board.

"It's just a significant evening, like all the way around: to celebrate Ukraine, but then also how united our community is in getting behind those efforts."

Music is important in Ukrainian culture and Hall said it was special to use music to show support for Ukraine.

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Thank you!



Leslie Mann in his St. Davids basement studio with the three pieces of 3D historical structure models he will display at the Niagara Pumphouse Art Centre's Juried Art Show and Sale. RICHARD WRIGHT

Model-maker returns to his roots

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Leslie Mann has been building little structures in one way or another since he was a child.

What started with locking together Legos and stacking simple toy building blocks eventually turned into a successful adult career in Toronto as an architectural model-maker.

His passion saw him become a prolific creator of scale model structures for land developers, starting at a time in the 1970s when the provincial capital's ship and rail yard-dominated waterfront was being transformed into one of the most modern skylines in the country.

"My first commercial client was the CN Tower," the St. Davids resident says proudly.

"That was how I ended up getting started."

Originally, he had attended art school with the hopes of using his creativity to become an illustrator.

However, after recognizing how lucrative architectural scale modeling could be, and apprenticing under a few Toronto model-makers, the calls for his services picked up and the art side of his career dropped off.

"I was always so busy, I never had time to go back."

Back to creating art

Now, at 67 years old and looking for a different pace of work to complement his looming retirement years, Mann has once again pulled an about-face and is returning his focus to art.

His next endeavour? Creating 3D portraits of Niagara-on-the-Lake's historic homes, commercial

buildings and structures.

His first works, scale models of the Queen's Royal Park gazebo, the Royal George Theatre and the Sherlock Block, will be displayed at the Niagara Pumphouse Art Centre's Juried Art Show and Sale on Aug. 3 and 4.

The creative inspiration came to him, he says, after he began volunteering at the art centre.

"Since joining the Pumphouse, I have seen a lot of different medias presented from other artists and a lot of their subject matter is the architecture of Niagara-on-the-Lake, so I thought, 'Why can't I use what I know to produce something in the same sort of idea?'"

Just as he turned to creating commercial models all those years ago due to the sheer amount of work avail-

able, he is now faced with a plethora of subjects for his new focus.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake is so full of historical buildings," he says. "It is endless. My goal was to get these pieces ready to submit (to the Pumphouse) and hopefully they would accept them, and they did."

Mann believes the public will enjoy his creations as well, from both art and historic preservation points of view.

"I consider it art and something people would enjoy putting on their walls," he says.

"And in the paper you hear all the time how we must preserve our architecture. I am certainly in support of keeping these buildings alive in whatever fashion."

wright@niagaranow.com



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: WELCOME TO OUR FRUIT STAND

Try a Pink Lady, also known as Cripps Pink, the first variety of this fruit to be trademarked.

Last issue:

Category: 3-WORD RESPONSES

Clue: In 1737 Boston held its first parade celebrating what became this annual event.

Answer: What is St. Patrick's Day?

Answered first by: Jane Morris

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Margie Enns, Bob Wheatley, Pam Dowling, Susan Dewar, Jim Dandy, Kathy Humphries, Lynda Collet, Francis Murray, Catherine Clarke, Wade Durling, Nancy Rocca, Hedy Wiebe, Marla Percy, Katie Reimer, Sheila Meloche, Tuija Johansson, Esther VanGorder,

Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com, with your name, for a chance to win a \$25 Irish Harp Pub gift card every week. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

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AOCA, OSA

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Tending to the flowers



Whether it's trimming or watering, the plants and flowers that decorate Queen Street in Old Town receive plenty of tender, loving care daily thanks to the efforts of Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Chris Allen. Here he looks after the flowers on the second level of the Shaw Cafe.
DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Pledge your support for The Lake Report

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

“When there’s no one there to tell the story, there’s no accountability.”

This simple phrase is one of the main reasons journalism is essential to Canadian democracy and Canadian communities.

Without it, most of us would never know how votes went on important issues or who we might be voting for at election time.

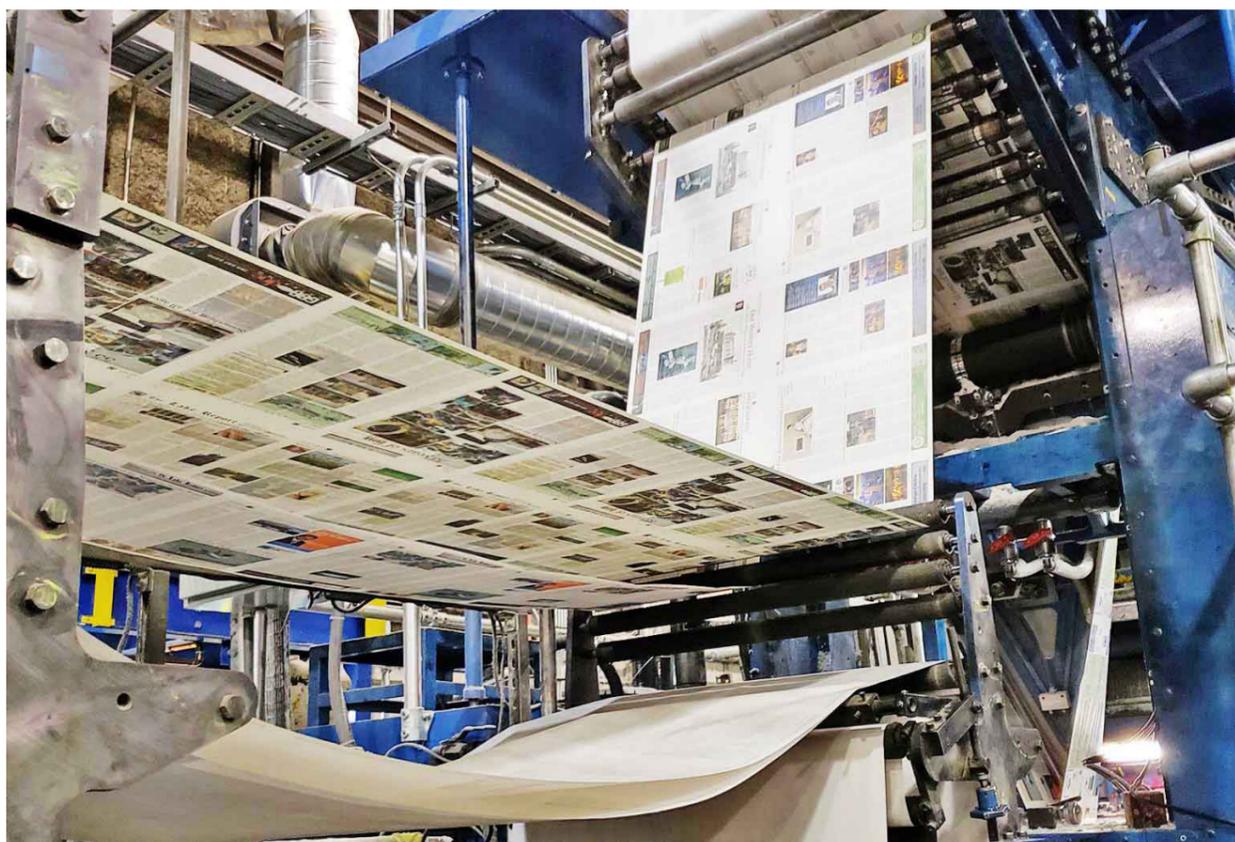
And while The Lake Report is breaking the trend and still able to employ a small staff, most traditional news agencies are suffering these days.

Today, there are more issues to cover than ever in our growing town. More stories of all kinds still to be told. And there’s less money to hire people to cover it.

At The Lake Report, we are looking to the future and want to ensure that this publication remains around to tell those stories for years to come, and as our town doubles its population.

So, we are kicking off a major “Pledge It” campaign and asking the community to invest in NOTL news.

Readers and supporters can now visit our website to



You can support your community by pledging to donate annually to The Lake Report at lakereport.ca.

pledge an annually recurring donation to support this newspaper, its staff and the journalism we create.

Pledges can be anywhere from \$100 a year to \$10,000 a year and every cent will be put to good use by supporting news that matters, journalists who care and an

editorial team that stands up to the powers that be, when necessary.

Another part of the campaign is encouraging you to consider bequeathing donations to The Lake Report.

As we all age, most of us want to leave the world a better place.

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For all these reasons, we are asking you to Pledge It and help us continue to grow and thrive.

Our initial plan would be to use donations to hire more staff to cover more issues and produce more award-winning journalism.

Frankly, there is simply too much happening for our small team to do it all right now.

But we would love to be able to bring all the news that matters to you.

Our secondary plan is to update our website (already honoured as one of the best in the province) and we hope to develop a Lake Report app.

We couldn’t be where we are now without the support of the businesses in our community who advertise with us — and the readers who patronize those businesses and read our paper.

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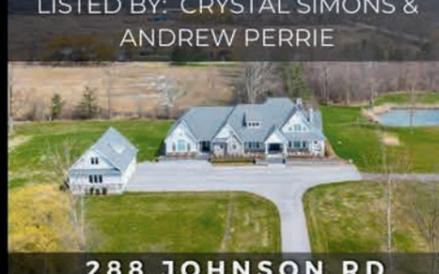
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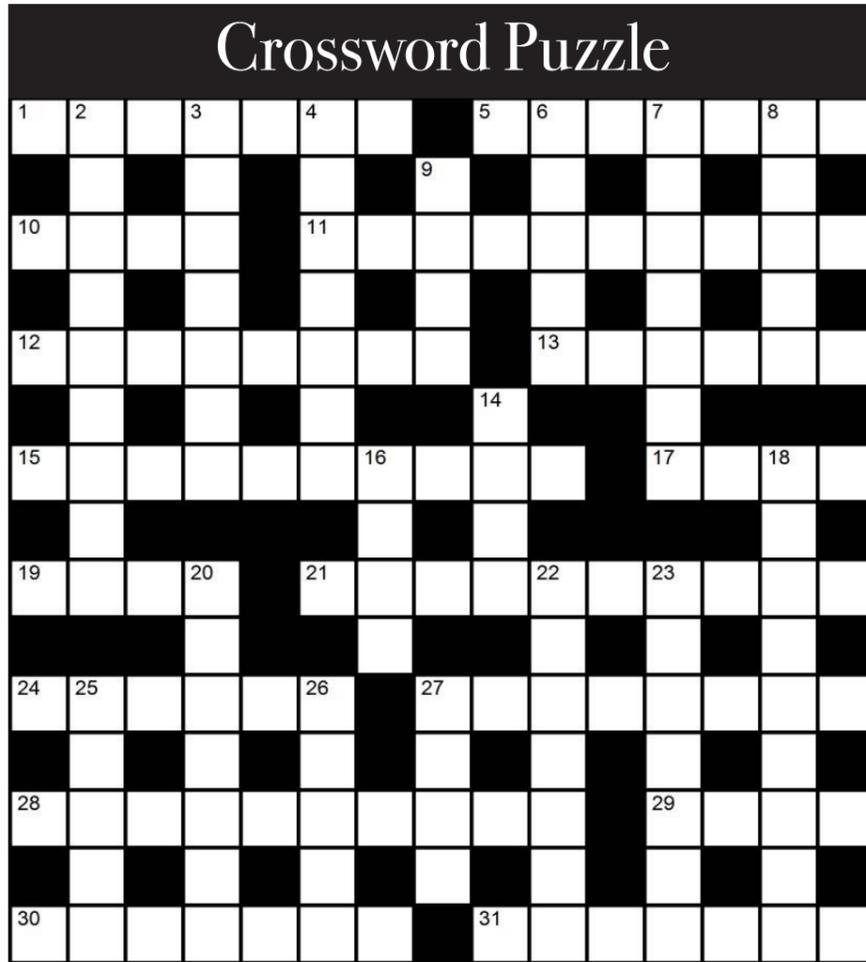


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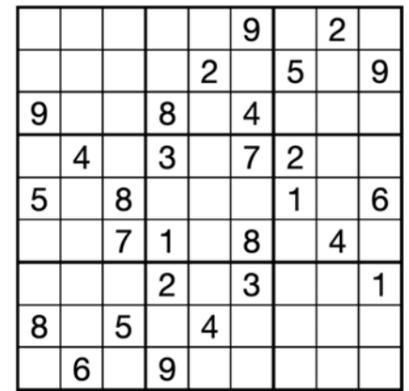
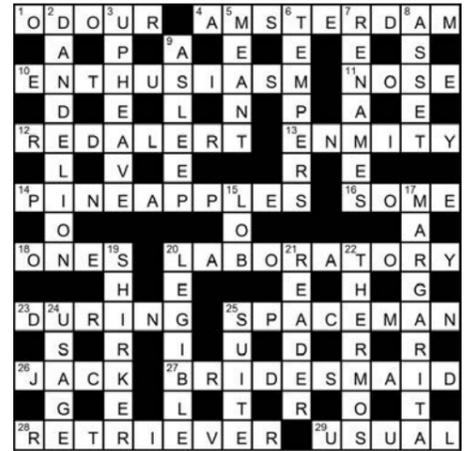
- 1. Of the red planet (7)
- 5. Family line (7)
- 10. Sandbag (4)
- 11. Hostile (10)
- 12. Balladeer (8)
- 13. Resembling a horse (6)
- 15. Yuletide visitor (5,5)
- 17. Talk irrationally (4)
- 19. Agitate (4)
- 21. Not doable (10)
- 24. Entertains (6)
- 27. Burn without flame (8)
- 28. Narrow entrance (10)
- 29. Encounter (4)
- 30. "Stand by your Man" singer (7)
- 31. Exact (7)

Down

- 2. Space traveller (9)
- 3. This evening (7)
- 4. Water-dwelling (7)
- 6. Banish (5)
- 7. Vanquish (7)
- 8. Thermoplastic yarn (5)
- 9. From a distance (4)
- 14. Greek liqueur (4)
- 16. Member (4)
- 18. Worth nothing (9)
- 20. Politician's badge (7)
- 22. Sensational novel (7)
- 23. Mohammedan (7)
- 25. Temperamental (5)
- 26. Slumbered (5)
- 27. Storage shelter (4)



Last issue's answers



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Celebrate creative spirit at Pumphouse arts festival

Staff
The Lake Report

Life in Niagara is the sweetest when you're enjoying the great outdoors and connecting with people in your community — and the folks at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre couldn't agree more.

The arts centre's annual festival, Art at the Pumphouse, is back this year and set for the first weekend of August, offering art enthusiasts a chance see how creativity thrives in Niagara, all while immersing themselves in the scenic beauty of the Niagara River's banks.

The festival will be held Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 3 and 4, offering an enriching experience filled with art, musical performances and activities for all ages outside the centre at 247 Ricardo St.

Art at the Pumphouse showcases an array of original works, including

paintings, photography, sculpture, woodwork, glass, pottery, textiles, jewelry, and more.

Bringing together artists and artisans from both the region and beyond, the event will feature more than 70 exhibitors, including NOTL's Lynn Weiner, a painter of detailed and scenic pictures of nature, communities, people and animals.

"I think what I enjoy most about the weekend is meeting and having conversations with the people who come to the event," Weiner said in a media release about the annual festival.

"It is always exciting to see someone acquire a piece that will bring them pleasure for many years to come."

This year's event also marks the debut of NOTL's Caitlin Woolf, whose ink illustrations are whimsical depictions of anthropomorphized animals such as otters, raccoons, buffalos,



More than 70 exhibitors will be at the Pumphouse the first weekend of August, showcasing their works — with some hosting demonstrations in the Walker Room Gallery or on the outdoor grounds. There's a full state of activities Aug. 3 and 4. FILE

elephants and more.

"I heard about the event several years ago and always wanted to participate," she said in the media release.

"So, I'm excited for the whole experience: meeting the other participants, engaging with art appreciators in person, and the chance for my work to reach a wider audience."

An online show will be available on the event page

from July 15 to Aug. 11, for those unable to attend in person.

It also provides a sneak peek before the event and a recap to revisit artists from the memorable weekend.

Art demonstrations will be held in the Walker Room Gallery or on the outdoor grounds, while musical performances will take place in the rose garden tent.

Here is the full schedule

of events planned for the weekend:

Saturday, Aug. 3

10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Artist Demo: Glass Art by Julia Kane, Musical Performance: John Claus

12 to 2 p.m.: Artist Demo: Wire Sculpture by Marsha Drew, Musical Performance: Electric Wildlife

2 to 4 p.m.: Artist Demo: Watercolour Painting by Pete Malaguti, Musical Per-

formance: Selena Carlson
Sunday, Aug. 4

10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Artist Demo: Acrylic Painting by Lynn Weiner

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Musical Performance: Barley Brae, Balloon Artist by Masquerade Party Services

12 to 2 p.m.: Artist Demo: Collage Art by Lynne Gaetz, Artist Demo: Paverpol by Tamara Plugers

2 to 4 p.m.: Artist Demo: Acrylic Painting by Nancy Wardle, Musical Performance: Mike Lynch, Steve Goldberger, and Friends

In addition, attendees can enjoy a delightful outdoor bistro offering a variety of refreshments and the Tiny Museum, which will be open throughout the event.

Tickets for Art at the Pumphouse are \$5. Children under 12 can attend free of charge.

Tickets can be purchased online at artatthepumphouse.ca or at the entrance on the day of the event.

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Music Lineup
Wednesday, July 24- KICK OFF
8 - 11 Live Music, Turntable Rock

Friday, July 26
4 - 6 Tribe 369 and Dreamco
6 - 8 Rock of 80's
8 - 11 Simple Gestures

Saturday, July 27
4 - 6 Amanda Lynn Parker
6 - 8 Giancarlo and the Scarfones
8 - 11 Figure Four

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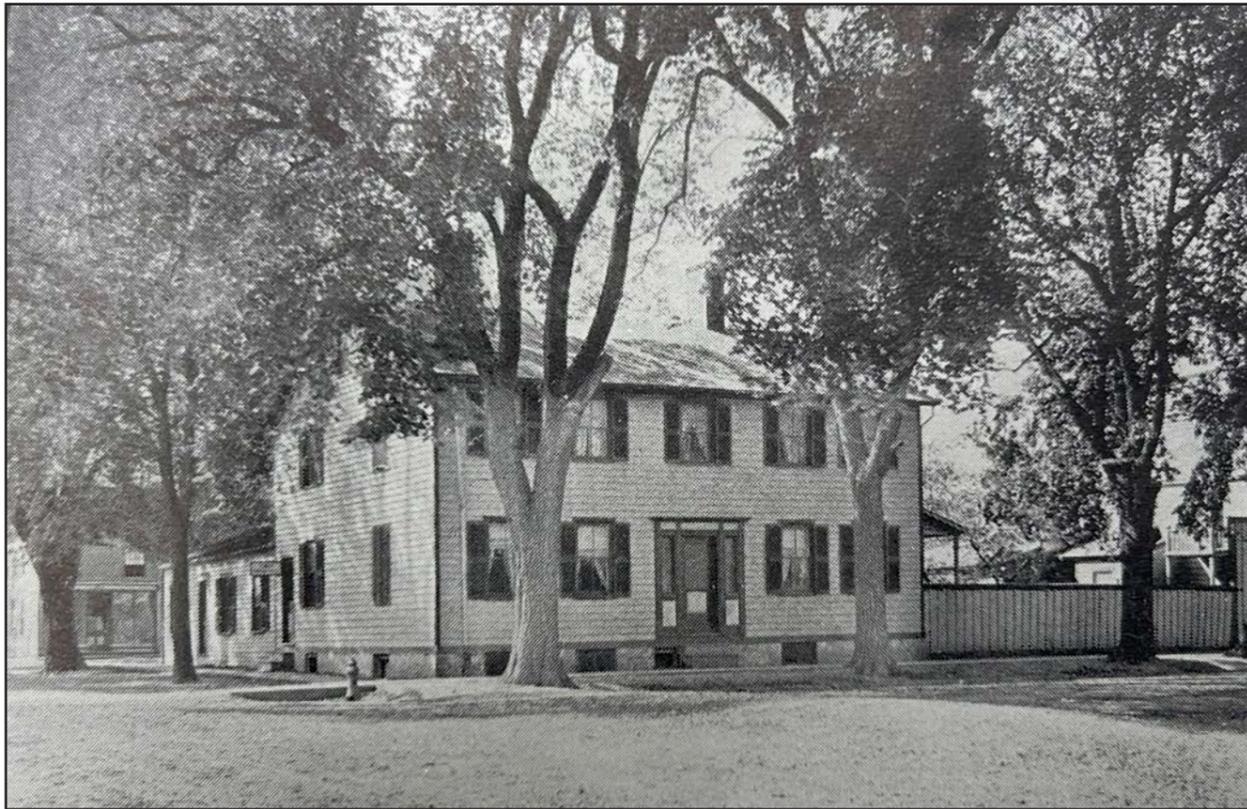
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EXPLORING HISTORY
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



The Times Newspaper building, c. 1910

Following last week's image of Queen Street, here is a close-up of the building at the corner of Queen and King streets that is now the Hatley Store. It was the home of the former Times Newspaper that existed from 1894 to 1915. On the last printing in May 1915, the editor wrote that they ceased publication due to a lack of support and because of the uncertainty of the time. That uncertainty was the start of the First World War, known then as the Great War. Our town had a huge influx of soldiers during the war with the Niagara camp training grounds. Most of the coverage continued through Elizabeth Ascher who wrote articles for the St. Catharines Standard. In 1919, the Advance was started by W.H. Harrison.

Kent Heritage Farms **teams up** with horticultural society

Paige Seburn
Special to The Lake Report

Kent Heritage Farms has been a local staple for decades.

And Paul Kent, the owner and operator of the family-run business, sees it as an emotional legacy.

Established as a poultry producer in 1958 by his Romanian mother Roza and Hungarian father Paul Sr., the business has grown to offer a diverse range of all-natural, drug-free products, including air-chilled poultry, Berkshire pork, Wagyu burgers and more.

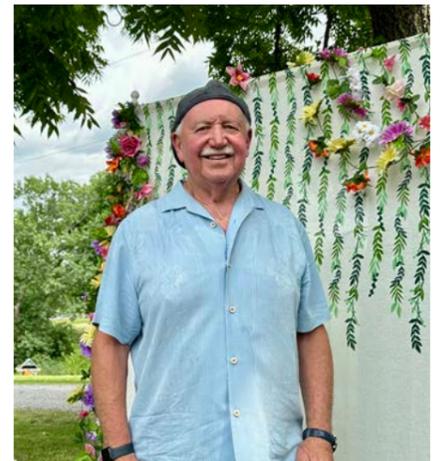
His daughter Rebecca manages sales remotely from Israel and his grandson Carson helps out when he's not in school. They represent the third and fourth generations' involvement in the family enterprise.

Kent's family legacy extends beyond the business, however, thanks to a tradition of generosity passed down through generations.

His generosity was on display Sunday afternoon with the donation of a large, delicious buffet for the NOTL Horticultural Society's "Grill and Chill"



Left: NOTL Horticultural Society members paraded pollinator plants Sunday during garden coach Joanne Young's educational presentation at the society's fundraising barbecue. From left, Jo-Ann Fraser, Sandy Bott, Kim Mustill, Margret Walker, Rebecca Carrick, Marie Gillespie, Kathryn O'Grady, Sandra Stokes, Rosemarie Liard, Francyne Chenier and Wendy Cadman. Right: Paul Kent of Kent Heritage Farms displayed his generosity on Sunday afternoon with the donation of a large buffet for the horticultural society's "Grill and Chill" fundraiser. DAVE VAN DE LAAR/PAIGE SEBURN



fundraiser on the Kent Heritage Farms property on Queenston Road in St. Davids.

As society president Cindy Grant told the crowd, the gathering supports various local horticultural projects, including two new scholarships, at Niagara College and the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture.

The organizers were delighted by the turnout for the barbecue which raised almost \$2,000, said horticultural society vice-president Jo-Ann Fraser.

"The setting was pastoral, the food delicious" and a barbershop quartet from A Cappella Niagara entertained the crowd with four-part harmonies.

Garden coach Joanne Young, The Lake Report's gardening columnist, gave a spirited and humorous presentation about the critical role of pollinator plants in supporting biodiversity and ensuring food security.

Her monologue included a "pollinator fashion show," with society members donning plant-themed hats and parading pollinator plants

among the crowd as Young explained how each one helps the environment.

Fraser noted, "Many remarked that they would be adding pollinator plants to their gardens, recognizing that these plants provide essential habitats and food sources for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators responsible for one out of every three bites of food we eat."

As the host for the afternoon affair, Kent, a long-time member of the NOTL Masonic Lodge, credited his mother's values of

kindness and charity for his own commitment to giving back to the community.

"Anything I learned about kindness and charity came from my mother. I can't take credit for anything," he said. "Whatever she instilled in me, that's what I have, and she'd be pleased."

"She used to always say, 'When there's a party on the property, the property comes alive,'" said Kent, who's also active in other local horticultural efforts.

"I've been very involved in the community most of

my life: I grew up here," he said. "I'm 72, I'm still working, I'm not retired and I'm still very active in the community."

Wendy Cadman, the horticultural society director of membership, reflected on Kent's years of goodwill and generosity.

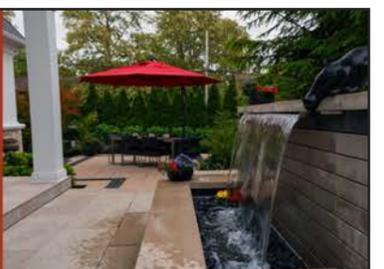
"We're very grateful," she said.

She has seen his kindness and philanthropy for many years, and said his ongoing dedication not only honours his family's legacy but also drives meaningful change in the community.

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Biden's cognitive impairments would have only progressed

Continued from Front Page

many active policy files and much, more with no let up for four solid years.

The job demands the full attention of the president, great stamina, focus, thoughtful analysis of issues, judgment, flexibility and working with all kinds of people every day.

The sweet spot for the job is probably between the age between late 40s and mid-60s, when presidents have acquired sufficient experience and possess the cognitive wherewithal to learn and manage the job effectively.

And it's not so late in their career that learning, memory and focus become more effortful, and stamina begins to wane.

Aging can be looked at in three phases. The first from before birth to the late 20s and early 30s is the period when learning in many fields is most easily accomplished and there are few impediments to acquiring new cognitive and motor skills.

The mid period, between the early 30s and early 60s, is a one of consolidation and additive learning, but perhaps not with the same facility as in the first third of life.

The last third of life is associated with slowing of almost all cognitive functions, especially toward the late 60s and early 70s, when the earliest hints of cognitive impairment begin to register on psychological tests.

These become much more common and severe in the 80s, when physical impairments increase and up to 50 per cent have significant cognitive impairments.

Such simple staging is supported by MRI studies, which reveal the earliest declines in the thickness of the neocortex by the late 20s, with atrophy of the brain



U.S. president Joe Biden's cognitive decline is obvious, says Dr. William Brown. He says stepping down was the right move.

beginning in the 30s and growing much more obvious in the last third of life.

The brain, like every other organ and system in the body, begins to show signs of aging in mid-life including age-related shortening of chromosomes, the accumulation of mutations in DNA, epigenetic modifications to genes and age-related changes in other components and systems in cells.

Returning to Biden, my sense is that if cognitive tests were carried out now, he would not fare well. He will be 82 in November and 86 had he stayed for a second term.

What we've witnessed of his frailty and cognitive impairments in his first term will surely progress. True, staff can help a lot, but they shouldn't be counted on to make presidential decisions.

In conversations about Biden, there's little talk about what any neurologist or psychologist would want to do: apply the same standards to him as they would anyone else.

Indeed more so, since U.S. presidents should be held to higher cognitive standards given the challenges of the job and the public has a right to know about his competency for office. No one Biden's age is allowed to be an airline pilot and no one 80 and

over should be allowed to be president.

Biden isn't the only one. What about senators Feinstein and McConnell, who share similar issues. Or Trump, whose increasingly unhinged tirades about this or that person or institution suggest progressive loss of emotional control as sometimes happens with frontal lobe degenerative diseases.

We should be concerned that there are no statutory requirement age limits for such high offices and no mandatory neuropsychological assessments even when the stakes are so high.

Competency for pilots and physicians is regularly assessed. Why not presidents and other senior leaders?

The fact that Biden announced on July 21 he will not seek re-election is a relief for the U.S. and for him. That took courage but was the right decision given the trajectory of where his disease is headed in the next several years.

Biden made the right decision and I hope the lesson will not go unnoticed for others in similar circumstances.

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.

Falling debris prompts inspection of Brock's Monument site

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Parks Canada has erected scaffolding around the entrance of Brock's Monument after the Friends of Fort George organization alerted it earlier this month that small pieces of mortar and debris were falling and landing at its base.

The scaffolding effort is part of a bigger plan to review the structure's integrity, according to Sara Quinlan-Cutler, the national historic site manager for Parks Canada.

As for immediate public concerns, she said nothing that's fallen so far is alarming enough to cause a closure of the monument's extended grounds.

The scaffolding was put up "out of an abundance of caution" and "there is no danger to the public," she said.

It is encased in particle board, creating a tunnel-like entrance to the 168-year-old structure.

"We wanted to just make sure that if any debris was going to fall on that front area that we would be pro-

tecting visitors and staff," she said.

"The area directly around the monument is closed to the public anyway," she added, referring to the grassy base enclosed all the way around by a three-foot concrete barrier.

Annual structural reviews Parks Canada conducts yearly safety and structural reviews of the site with the last time the monument receiving any major maintenance or upgrades being in 2009.

The last inspection in "late 2022 and early 2023" — which Quinlan-Cutler described as "a deep dive," as it had been more than 10 years since restoration work was done on the monument — determined some work was needed and a design package is being developed for those repairs.

However, with the new safety concerns, Parks Canada is going to review the site again.

"We are going to actually go ahead and commission another inspection to see what's going on with the debris and to make sure we fold whatever is happening into the design work that we

have already started," she said.

"I don't know if it's the weather events that we've had, because we have seen a lot of rain. What we are hoping to find out with this new inspection is where this new issue is coming from."

Brock's Monument is the resting place of Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock, the commanding officer of British forces in Upper Canada during the War of 1812.

He was killed on Oct. 13, 1812 at that location during an American invasion.

The current structure is the second monument to Brock and was constructed between 1853 and 1856 after the first was destroyed by a member of the Upper Canada Rebellion in 1840, said Parks Canada spokesperson Julia Grcevic.

"While not a part of the main rebellions of 1837 and 1838, a participant of those rebellions continued the cause (in 1840) with his attack on the original Brock Monument, which was seen as a symbol of the British empire," she said.

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The power of pollinators



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

Over the past few years, we have been reading and hearing more and more about the importance of pollinators.

There are many different types of pollinators, from buzzing bees, interesting beetles, colourful butterflies and moths, to songbirds.

They play a huge role in supporting all kinds of life, including humans.

Even though pollinators are small in size, they are powerful!

When someone says the word “pollinators,” the first species that probably comes to mind is the honey bee, which is indeed a pollinating insect — but, not one that is native to Canada and not even the most efficient pollinator we have.

How many bee species can you name? Maybe four or five, if you think hard enough about it.

Did you know that Canada is home to 855 species of bees, including about 400 species of bees in Ontario?

One of the most economically significant bees in Niagara, and one that you probably have not heard much about, is the blue



A monarch caterpillar on butterfly weed. JOANNE YOUNG

orchard mason bee.

It is one of the earliest bees to emerge in the spring, as early as mid-April.

They are responsible for pollinating many of our local orchards. Without them, we would not be able to enjoy the bounty of fruit being harvested right now. Just as a comparison, it would take anywhere from 10,000 to 250,000 honey bees to pollinate one acre of fruit trees. Meanwhile, it would only take 250 mason bees to pollinate that same acre of trees.

These is also the sweat bee, carpenter bee, leaf-cutter bee and at least 10 species of bumble bees in Ontario.

How often, while enjoying fresh local fruit, do you think about the fact that all of the flowers on the tree need pollination in order for fruit to grow?

Or, what about all those wonderful vegetables you harvest from your garden?

Do you think that they just magically appear?

It is estimated that 75 per cent of the food we eat has been pollinated.

As we all know, the population of bees (not just honey bees), butterflies and other pollinators have been on a steady decline.

Some of them are now considered endangered species or, in the case of the rusty patched bumble bee, extinct.

Climate change threatens native bees by creating conditions favourable to some invasive species, which leads to the spread of disease and increased competition.

The primary cause of the bumble bee’s population decline is habitat loss and land fragmentation, along with pesticide use. In other words, human behaviour is driving the decline.

Bees are part of the biodiversity on which we all depend for our survival.

The good news is that we all can make a difference in

our own gardens.

The best thing that we can do to reverse the decline of bees, butterflies and other insects is to be planting varieties that attract and feed them.

Planting native varieties are the best plants to start with. These are plants that the insects and birds are already familiar with.

Plants such as coneflowers (Echinacea), cardinal flowers (Lobelia), beardtongue (Penstemon), black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia), Joe-Pye weed (Eupatorium), false sunflowers (Heliopsis) and sneezeweed (Helenium) are great varieties to investigate.

Also, it is important to plant varieties that do more than provide food for the pollinators, but also sustains their life cycle, such as what milkweed and butterfly weed do for monarch butterflies.

This doesn’t mean that you need to replace every plant in your garden, but when you are making a new garden or maybe removing an invasive species from your yard, consider replacing it with a plant that will attract this precious pollinator.

If we each add a couple pollinator-loving plants, it will make a positive difference.

If we feed a pollinator, they will in turn provide us with the food we need to survive.

It is a win-win proposition.

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

Obituaries

Corneles Byl



BYL, Corneles “Casey” - Passed away suddenly and peacefully at home, with his loving wife and son by his side, on July 1, 2024, at the age of 73. Beloved husband of Valerie for 10 years. Loving father of Derek Byl (Chantelle Hustenowich), Christopher Byl and the late Corey

Byl (2022). Caring stepfather of Jade (Craig) Wallace and Jared Cinnamon (Jamie Swanson). Dear brother of Lane (Margaret) Byl, May (Alan) Simpson, Richard (Linda) Byl and Marinus (Beverley) Byl. Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews and friends. Casey was a longtime grape farmer, a member of OFA Niagara Chapter and an active supporter of Community Living Services and Mainstream Community Support Services. In his spare time, he enjoyed going on road trips and cruise vacations with Valerie. Cremation has taken place. Friends and family are invited to a graveside service at Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery (1483 Lakeshore Rd. Niagara-on-the-Lake) on Saturday July 27, 2023 at 9:30 am. A celebration of Casey’s life will follow at Harbour Fellowship Church (51 South Service Rd. St. Catharines) at 11 am. In lieu of flowers, those who wish may make a memorial donation to Community Living Services or Mainstream Community Support Services. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at morganfuneral.com

Robert Wilkinson



WILKINSON, Robert (Bob) Lawrence - June 7, 1941 - July 19, 2024

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Bob Wilkinson, a great and generous man beloved by all, especially the love of his life, Lynne; daughter Patti (Barry); grandchildren Daniel, Taylor; nieces and nephews Steve, Sue (Bob), Debbie (Kirk),

Mark (Peter), Terrie (Jason); great nephews and niece Matthew, Courtney and Christopher. He is pre-deceased by his father Lawrence; mother Thelma; and sister Helen (Allen).

Bob’s story is as remarkable as the man himself. He grew up in downtown Toronto on the “wrong side of the tracks” but made a real name for himself through hard work and his persuasive personality. He worked his way up from the ground floor to the executive floor as a senior sales executive at Peerless Carpets and then later at End of the Roll.

Bob loved people and he and Lynne loved to entertain people. He was a masterful storyteller who had an opinion on just about everything! He had many hobbies from horses and hearts to hockey, baseball, and golf. He enjoyed a good wager on the golf course, and he was very skilled at negotiating strokes. He loved to incessantly tease those around him, and he just loved life and the people in his life. He was generous to a fault and a deeply caring family man.

Bob, you may be gone, but you will not be forgotten. May you rest in peace.

Cremation has taken place. There will be a celebration of life for the family at a later date. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



Goettlers give again: \$5,000 to Red Roof Retreat



A grant of \$5,000 from the Goettler Family Foundation will go toward a new branch of programming at Red Roof Retreat. Executive director Steffanie Bjorgan says each of these new programs will target a specific demographic of needs so all clients can participate. Planned activities include nature walks, pumpkin carving, love nights, bowling and more. “Each time we plan an event it will target a different group,” she said. Information will be published on Red Roof’s website. JULIA SACCO


Pauline Reimer Gibson
Audiologist

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

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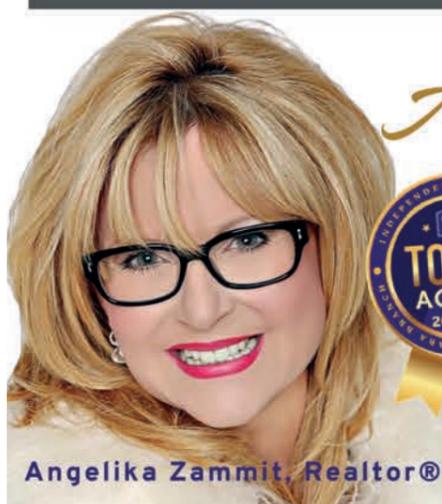


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