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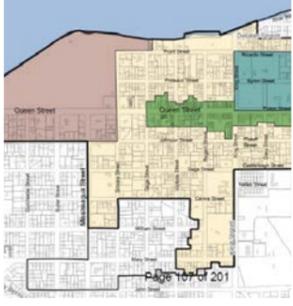
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# The Lake Report

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



Vol. 8, Issue 23 Canada's most-awarded community newspaper June 12, 2025



## Town looks at expanded protection for historical buildings

Dan Smeenk  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is studying whether or not it should expand the heritage conservation district around many buildings centred around Queen and Picton streets. The district would be put in to preserve the historical look and feel of that part of NOTL and protect it from significant alteration. "I think it's the right thing to do," said Lyle Hall, chair of the Niagara Foundation, a registered charity that looks to protect historical architecture in Niagara-on-the-Lake. "It should have been done earlier, but at least it's being done now."

*Continued on Page 4*

# Cycling for a cure

## Ride to Conquer Cancer raises record-breaking \$20.61 million



Cyclists power down Line 1 Road toward the finish line Sunday, completing their 200-kilometre journey in the Ride to Conquer Cancer. The two-day event drew 4,400 riders and wrapped up in Niagara-on-the-Lake, raising more than \$20 million. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

<p>Andrew Hawlitzky The Lake Report</p> <p>For the first time, the annual Ride to Conquer Cancer started in Niagara-on-the-Lake last Saturday as 400 cyclists pedalled from Peller Estates and traversed</p>	<p>200 kilometres, to Hamilton and back, to raise millions in the fight against cancer. The Princess Margaret Ride to Conquer Cancer, held June 7 and 8, brought 4,400 cyclists and 550 volunteers to Niagara-on-the-Lake and raised a record</p>	<p>\$20.61 million for research at Toronto's Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. Construction at the usual Niagara Falls finish spurred organizers to find a new space to host the event, said co-founder Steve Merker.</p>	<p>"We were looking at mixing it up, Peller said they'd love to host us, and our riders are thrilled to be here in the heart of wine country," said Merker, who is also the foundation's vice-</p>
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*Continued on Page 8*

# Proposed York Road hotel and restaurants grounded by airport

Dan Smeenk  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

A hotel and two restaurants may be coming to the area of 524 York Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake council

heard last Tuesday. But a bylaw, an objection from the airport and rules surrounding the two are likely to keep this project in limbo for a little while. The new development is being proposed as an extension of the current Staybridge Suites and Holiday Inn hotels, which are owned by the same person who is proposing this project. The hotel and restaurant complex would also have a 247-car parking lot, 11 biking spaces, and 11,373 square metres of area occupied. It would be bordered by Glendale Avenue on the east, Queenston Road on the south, York Road on the north and Counsell Street on the west. The site is distinguished by its proximity to the Queen Elizabeth Highway and by the diversity of what surrounds it. "The surrounding lands include conservation, residential, commercial, industrial and institutional uses," said John Federici, senior planner at Niagara-on-the-Lake. The restaurants would have outdoor areas outside

*Continued on Page 2*



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# York Road hotel plans grounded by airport

*Continued from Front Page*

that would be well-developed outdoor patio-type construction around the Cousell Street side.

Registered planner David Falletta, whose employer, Bousfields, is working with the owner on this site, sees this addition as making the hotel and restaurants a nice area to walk around and sit outside.

“Where Counsell Street bends, there’s a great opportunity,” said Falletta at last week’s planning committee of the whole. “We want to create a really walkable, interconnected site.”

Federici said during the meeting that while there weren’t objections from most parties to the hotel and restaurants, there was one exception.

The Niagara District Airport is not happy with the proposed height of the hotel: 10 storeys, which, in this case, would be approximately 33 metres.

The airport argues that the hotel at this height, in this place, violates federal airline zoning regulations, particularly one that prohibits building higher than



A proposed development on York Road would include a hotel and two restaurants. The Niagara District Airport objects to the hotel’s height. SOURCED

140 metres above sea level around the airport.

Dan Pilon, CEO of the Niagara District Airport, explained to The Lake Report the impact of having tall buildings in the area of the airport for pilots flying through this part of the Niagara peninsula.

The airport sits on land lower than the parts of Niagara-on-the-Lake close by, which are higher up on the escarpment.

“When you fly over the tip of the escarpment, you lose all that space,” Pilon said. “140 metres above sea level is the federal zoning regulations max.”

The proposed hotel and

restaurant are roughly four kilometres southeast of the airport, and would fall into the area where building would be restricted.

The architectural plans for the hotel indicate its finished floor level would be 116.5 metres.

Pilon said the way to look at the zoning regulations would be to have a plan for a large amount of development within the airport’s area over a long period of time.

This would allow them to analyze the impact of the development all at once, rather than one project at a time.

“We don’t want to look

at this on a building-by-building approach because we believe that will be long and expensive,” said Pilon. “If we want to open the zoning regulations, we should do it once.”

Falletta said they are looking for an exemption to the regulation that keeps buildings below 140 metres.

In this case, building to the height that Bousfield’s client wants would require an exemption from the town’s airport zoning regulations, which Falletta said would not be easy, showing that this development is not likely to be completed for some time.

“It’s a very difficult process in some circumstances,” said Falletta. “It takes a little bit of time.”

Federici said that no comments from the public have been submitted either for or against the proposed development.

The next step for Bousfields is to submit their application for the hotel and restaurants to be reviewed and potentially approved. It is not clear yet when that will happen.

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## Regional transit introduces flat \$3.50 rate, local rides now cost 50 cents more

Paige Seburn  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Travelling across the Niagara region, for those who ride the bus to cities and towns outside their own, is about to get simpler and cheaper.

But as Niagara-on-the-Lake awaits the arrival of scheduled bus routes to get around town, its local transit fare is going to see a 50-cent bump.

Niagara Region Transit is launching a new One Fare, Anywhere system this summer, which is a single, unified bus fare of \$3.50 across the region, replacing locally and regionally distinct fares.

It also announced a discounted benefit pass for more equitable and affordable transit access.

When the unified fare starts July 1, single-ride fares, which allow two hours of travel in any direction with unlimited transfers and no extra fees, will change from \$3 locally and \$6 regionally to a flat \$3.50 across the board.

This means fares for adult, senior and youth riders using Microtransit — the shared-ride transit that can be used within NOTL itself, formerly NRT OnDemand — will rise to \$3.50 from \$3.

Transfers from Microtransit to buses that travel outside NOTL will not include a separate regional fare.

Added costs for travellers, like the increase for local travel, will be offset by savings on regional travel, says Niagara Transit Commission general manager Carla Stout.

“The key message is that transit is growing,” said Stout. “And it’s growing



Under the new system, riders boarding at Niagara College can travel to St. Catharines or Niagara Falls for \$3.50 — down from the previous \$6 fare. PAIGE SEBURN

by leaps and bounds in Niagara.”

Currently, no conventional bus routes are operating within NOTL itself and the Microtransit system involves planning and booking a ride in advance.

However, four regional routes run between Niagara College and both St. Catharines and Niagara Falls.

Adult riders will see fares on those routes drop from \$6 to \$3.50, and seniors and youth will see them drop from \$5.

Stout said this new fare program will simplify things for transit users in the Niagara region and will mean “a significant increase in ridership.”

“This is the first time that we’ve really flattened the map in Niagara, where it doesn’t matter where you live, you still get to pay a local fare to go where you need to go.”

This new fare program is the latest step in a decade-long plan to invest in the regional transit system’s growth, Stout said, which includes plans to add a fixed-route transit system for places like NOTL.

“Essentially, our master plan is looking at reintroducing the bus to Niagara-

on-the-Lake,” she said.

This process began after NOTL’s council, along with six other municipalities in the Niagara region, voted in favour of amalgamating all of the region’s transit services in 2021.

Kids 12 and under will still ride free, but day passes will no longer be available.

As for multi-ride and monthly passes, instead of adults paying \$26.50 for a local 10-ride card or \$45 for a regional one, they will now pay \$31 for a single 10-ride card that works on both local and regional routes.

Seniors and youth, who previously paid \$22 for a local card or \$40 for a regional one, will now pay \$20 and \$25, respectively, for a single, all-access 10-ride card.

For a 31-day pass, rather than paying \$85.50 for a local one or \$160 for a regional one, adults will now pay \$100 for a single, all-access pass, valid throughout the entire region. Seniors will pay \$55 and youth \$75, both down from \$63 for local and \$130 for regional passes.

“So if you’re a person who is living in Niagara-on-the-Lake, but you want to apply for a job in, let’s say, Welland,” Stout said.

“That’s now \$100 a month after July 1.”

“That makes a significant difference to somebody who can’t afford \$160.”

For context, youth are ages 13 to 17, adults are 18 to 64 and seniors are 65 and older.

Stout said changes were made “to simplify the system,” since “it’s been fairly confusing.”

“It’s very hard to manage a system that not only has different levels of service on different vehicles, but also different fare structures,” she said.

Stout said Niagara Region Transit also partnered with region-managed social assistance offices to announce the discounted, \$50-per-month Transit Benefit Pass.

“The transit benefit pass is the realization of a pass product that’s been needed in Niagara for years,” said Stout.

She said the goal is to make transit more affordable for people and families on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program benefits, or for those qualifying based on low-income criteria, which the region uses the 2022 Statistics Canada Low Income Measure to evaluate.

“This could affect up to 50,000 people in Niagara,” she said, adding that there is no cut-off for how many of these discount passes the region can give out.

“Not only is transit growing, but transit is for everybody,” she said.

People can start applying for the discounted pass on June 16.

The full breakdown of the fare changes can be found at [nrtransit.ca/news/one-fare-and-transit-benefit-pass](http://nrtransit.ca/news/one-fare-and-transit-benefit-pass).

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## Solstice celebration returns to Ryerson Park

Paige Seburn  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

As the summer solstice approaches, Ryerson Park will once again host Drumming Down the Sun — a celebration of yoga, music and the longest day of the year.

Organizer Loretta Pietrobon has marked the solstice in Niagara-on-the-Lake since 2014, with only two cancellations in that time.

This year’s gathering is June 20, with yoga by Rianna Reid at 7 p.m., followed by handpan drumming from



Sun worshippers will drum down the sun for summer solstice on June 20 at Ryerson Park. FILE/RICHARD HARLEY

Jeff Seed around 8 p.m.

“It’s very open-ended,” said Pietrobon. “Just walk to the park and find a spot

where you can get a good view of the sunset.”

There are no tickets, no registration and no food,

water or alcohol provided. Participants are welcome to bring their own instruments and join in.

For the first time, Pietrobon must pay a \$100 special event fee and is asking for small donations to help offset the cost.

Parking is limited, so attendees are encouraged to walk or bike.

The tradition was inspired by Carla Carlson’s original Lakeside Park event in Port Dalhousie, and Ryerson Park has hosted the NOTL version since 2015 for its sunset views.

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# Town proposes **expanded protection** for historical buildings

Continued from Front Page

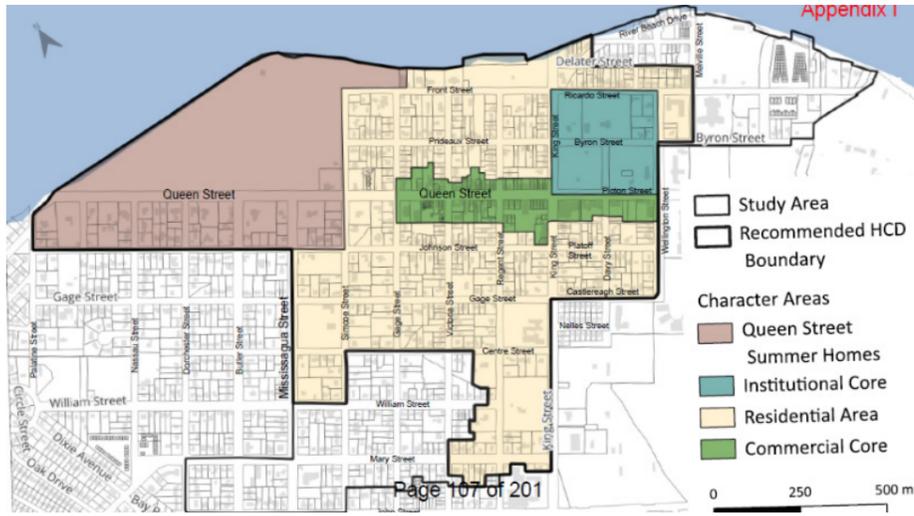
The Queen-Picton area has had a municipal heritage designation around it since 1986, which gives heritage protection to the area from Prideaux Street and Johnson Street to the north and south and Gate and Wellington streets to the west and east.

What would change if the study were adopted is that the town would expand its protection to a much larger area, going from a large section of the lakefront to as far south as John Street West.

Kirsten McCauley, the town's director of community and development services, says work to officially increase the heritage district area started last year.

"The work that's been completed is doing the review of the expanded boundary to looking at heritage attributes and contributing properties," she said.

What would also change are the dates of the buildings protected. In its study, the town showed which buildings would be protected by splitting the proposed heritage conservation district into three



The town of NOTL is looking to expand the area centred around Queen-Picton are where heritage buildings are protected. SUPPLIED/TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

eras: The rebuilding period after the War of 1812 from 1814 to 1829; the period of economic and industrial growth from 1830 to 1859; and the peak tourism period from 1860 to 1914.

There would be 527 buildings in the Queen-Picton area total in the new boundaries, of which 257 are considered historically significant or "contributing" to the town's heritage.

In February, the town put a one-year restriction on developments in the Queen-Picton area while the study is being completed, and the planning committee

of the whole discussed the proposed expansion during its meeting last Tuesday.

The town is currently in phase one of three of its study.

Steve Burke, NOTL's manager of policy and heritage planning, said to town council last Tuesday that the boundary could still be developed, but the heritage of the whole area would still have to be preserved.

"This would not freeze things in time," he said. "This is a guiding process ... We want to protect the character of that district."

Some residents may ask:

Why is the stop date for the area at 1914?

Burke said the period between the First and Second World wars was, architecturally, a more stagnant period in NOTL's history, particularly when it came to the town's physical buildings — this is why it was not singled out.

"The physical change is what we're looking for," said Burke. "If there isn't physical change, it's hard to make an argument around that period of significance."

The major concern from councillors in the government's proposal is the omis-

sion of the town's dock area from the heritage conservation district.

The area near Melville Street was once a marshland, and the construction of docks in that area in 1832 is seen as an essential part of NOTL's history.

"It's where Niagara-on-the-Lake started," said Coun. Gary Burroughs.

Burke responded by saying that the character of that area has changed sufficiently over time to no longer warrant heritage status.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor also echoed Burroughs' concerns, though acknowl-

edged the difficulty Burke had in justifying the preservation of the dock area under the technical definition of the act.

Beyond the concerns about particular areas, Hall said he believes that while this new study is a step in the right direction, it has to go beyond a study.

"Towns like Niagara-on-the-Lake are rare," said Hall. "There are not a lot of places with buildings in Canada going back more than 200 years ... It would be a shame if council didn't put their weight behind their promises on heritage."

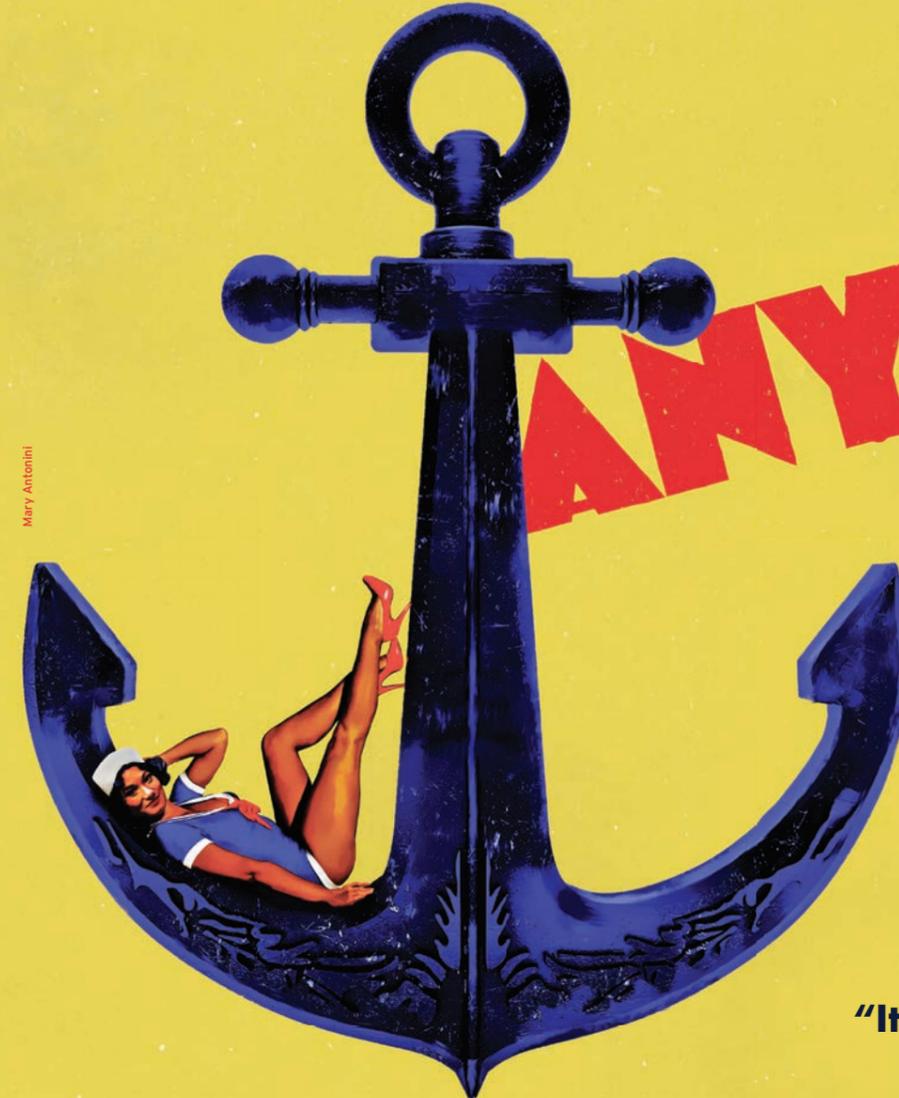
The second phase of the study would involve planning to create the heritage conservation district, while phase three would involve its actual creation. There is no word yet on when either of these phases will happen.

In 2003, Niagara-on-the-Lake was the first municipality to be named a national historic district by the Province of Ontario.

The planning committee of the whole meets again on July 8 at 6 p.m.

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Cmdr. Adam Dawik, of the Polish Army Veterans Association of America, Toronto post 114, leads the parade on Byron Street for the 108th anniversary of the arrival of the first volunteers of the Kościuszko Military Camp. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

# Ceremony honours Polish soldiers

Maddy Gordon  
The Lake Report

A large crowd assembled on Sunday to remember the soldiers who died at Camp Kościuszko in NOTL more than 100 years ago.

Twenty-six soldiers who died of influenza while in training are buried at the Haller Army Cemetery. This year was the site's 106th pilgrimage in their honour, and the 108th year since the first volunteers arrived at the training camp.

Members of the Polish community, including those in NOTL and beyond, gathered to honour the Polish and Canadian volunteers who left home to train at Camp Kościuszko before heading to Europe to fight for Poland's independence.

Zig Misiak, an author and historical reenactor whose family fled Poland when he was an infant in 1950, said the connection be-

tween Canada and Poland is long-lasting and significant, especially in NOTL.

"This goes back to pre-World War I when Canadian soldiers of Polish ancestry were already joining the Canadian Army," Misiak said. "(Thousands) trained here and then ended up going over to Europe and fighting alongside the Canadian soldiers."

He added that after the war's official end date on Nov. 11, 1918, now known as Remembrance Day, some Canadian soldiers went to Poland to support the country's restoration after receiving its independence.

"It really just started to become a Poland on its own again," Misiak said.

This vast history makes the high number of Polish figures who attended the pilgrimage unsurprising.

In a speech to the assembly, Witold Dzielski, ambassador of Poland to Canada, said coming to NOTL and

the pilgrimage feels like "coming home."

"This place is very dear to me personally," Dzielski said. "This is a place which is well recognized by Canadians, not only the Polish community."

"Most of the highest-level conversations between Polish and Canadian leaders begin with talking about this place," he added.

Other members of the community, such as Sophie Poradzisz, also hold a special place for Haller Army Cemetery and the pilgrimage.

She came from Mississauga with two of her friends to commemorate the people who stayed in town.

"Every year, we commemorate this place, because we are so grateful that these soldiers, in 1918, when Poland was still under partition ... decided to come here," Poradzisz said.

Poradzisz also said she attends the pilgrimage every

year to honour Elizabeth Ascher, a NOTL-born journalist who cared for the soldiers in training during the 1918 influenza outbreak.

"This is unbelievable because she could have gotten contaminated helping the sick soldiers," Poradzisz said.

Ascher received several Polish medals. One was the Polonia Restituta, which is the highest honour a foreigner could receive in 1922, according to NOTL Museum archives. Ascher received the medal for her efforts in restoring Poland during and after WWI.

The pilgrimage, which included a Catholic mass and parade to the nearby cenotaph to lay wreaths, was well-attended, speaking to the strength and size of the local Polish community.

"We are patriots. We love everything related to Polish people, Polish freedom," Poradzisz said. "That's why we're here."



From left: Father Mieczyslaw Burdzy leads the Catholic mass following the parade, including communion. The Lincoln and Welland Regiment Band commemorates the gathering with music. Edward Kurtz receives a diploma from Dawik and the Polish Army Veterans Association of America. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

## 10K run is part of Polish celebration

As part of the weekend's Polish pilgrimage, participants race in the International Hallers' Run, held on Saturday and won by Damian Kabat, #540. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



**In closing ...**

We at Ginger Restaurant would like to thank everybody for their support over the last 28 years. We will be closing our doors for the last time on June 15.

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# Library celebrates 225th anniversary with summer bash

Andrew Hawlitzky  
The Lake Report

Longtime residents may remember borrowing books in the courthouse base-ment before 1972, but the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library's 225th anniversary last Saturday introduced a modern rebranding to the community.

The library's summer kick-off drew families for games, art and story time, while staff soft-launched a new logo, colour palette and signage funded by an anonymous donor and designed by St. Catharines firm Form & Affect.

The rebrand is meant to modernize the library's appearance, match town colours and signal that its services go beyond lending books.

"It was time to update and better show what we do," said Stephanie Oliver, the library's marketing and communications lead.

"It will always be books,

but we offer so much more as well," said Oliver.

Beyond lending books, the NOTL Public Library serves as a community hub offering arts workshops, tech help, reading clubs, rentable games and free family events.

Chief executive Laura Tait said months of staff planning explored options to improve community understanding of what the library offers.

"Accessibility was front of mind and increasing our awareness in the community, we saw a rebrand would really help to do that," said Tait.

"Everyone's really surprised about how old we are," said Tait.

Board co-chair Wayne Scott traced that longevity to the library's original purpose.

"I was surprised to learn that the original library was also a place where tools were shared, so right from very early days it was more



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa reads "The Book with No Pictures" to children. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

than just books," said Scott.

Behind the library, the Matthew and GiGi Cater returned for a fourth year with their Mountainview LemonAID stand, fund-raising to send children served by Family and Children's Services Niagara to summer camp.

"All the stands are donated by Mountainview,

so every dollar raised goes back to the kids; it's run by kids, and it's amazing what they can do," said Coun. Adriana Vizzari, volunteer supervisor and library board member.

Niagara Regional Native Centre outreach worker Jasmine Black handed out free children's books by Indigenous authors and pro-

vided details on the centre's summer programs.

"We want kids to see that Indigenous culture is alive right here in their community," said Black.

A watercolour workshop run by Kasia Przybyl from the Trisha Romance Art Fund taught kids to paint like Monet-inspired landscapes.

"It's really fun, it's a way to keep the arts alive and get kids interested," said Przybyl.

The NOTL Ukesters came and performed songs for the families attending the summer kick-off, and the Yellow Door Theatre students performed a few songs from their repertoire in the first hour of the event.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa came to read "The Book with No Pictures" to the kids in attendance.

Two inflatable castles, cotton candy and a free bar-becue kept lineups moving behind the library.

Town recreation staff used the event to launch the Get Active NOTL passport, a Parks and Recreation Month challenge that asks residents of all ages to complete ten listed activities — such as hiking, swimming or visiting a playground — before June 30 for a chance at prizes and a healthier summer.

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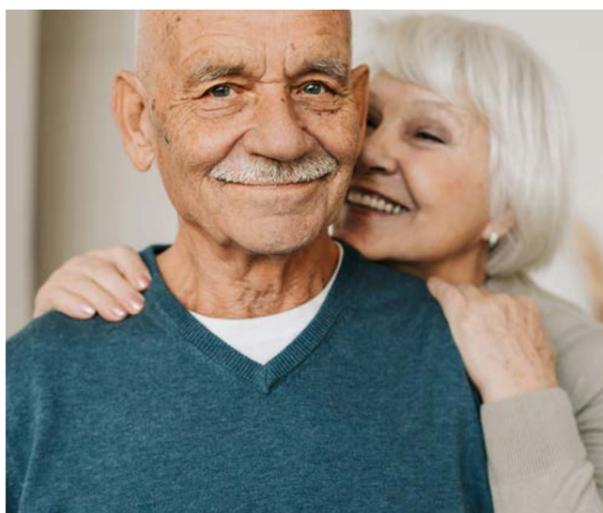
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# Michael Buck: from **L'il Beaver** to leader at native centre

Paige Seburn  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

For many Indigenous children and youth in Niagara, an Indigenous friendship centre can be more than just a place to go — it can be where they first feel seen.

During National Indigenous History Month, the Niagara Regional Native Centre is celebrating that legacy — and so is the director of programming Michael Buck, who grew up in its programs and now helps lead the next generation.

The Niagara centre has served the region for over 50 years and currently serves about 2,000 Indigenous people annually. Buck began his journey there nearly 30 years ago.

It all started when he joined the Li'l Beavers of Ontario Program at the Niagara centre as a child — a program Buck says shaped his life.

“The generosity was there to explore who you want to be,” said Buck in an interview.

“When you feel safe and you feel comfortable, then you can be confident in who you want to be,” he said. “And I think that foundation came from Li'l Beavers.”

The program gave Indigenous children and youth the opportunity to build relationships and celebrate cultural identity through group-based social, recreational and cultural activities, he said.

It was more than just a program, Buck said — it was a foundation of belonging, free from stigma.

That foundation is something he's passionate about maintaining, he said.



Michael Buck, director of programming at the Niagara Regional Native Centre, plays lacrosse — a sport deeply rooted in Indigenous culture. Buck grew up attending the centre's youth programs and now helps lead the next generation, continuing a legacy of connection and belonging. PAIGE SEBURN

“We just want to give them the confidence to navigate the spaces that they already belong to,” he said. “They just need the confidence to explore them and be themselves.”

Buck said the centre stopped offering Li'l Beavers in 1995 due to a loss of funding. Over time, more structured programs were introduced — including Akwe:go, for children aged 7 to 12 and Wasa-Nabin, for youth aged 13 to 18 — offering one-on-one support and other services.

“I am excited for my child to start to be at the centre,”

Buck said.

“My grandmother was a big part of the centre growing up, so we were always there. My mother, and now me, and now my child.”

The centre runs a suite of other children and youth services, Buck said, including the Indigenous Child & Youth Mental Health program, the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program and the Healthy Living Kids program.

Programs differ from mainstream programs because of the access to Indigenous culture and tradition, “teaching folks, at the start,

just to be proud of who they are and see other folks who are proud of who they are,” Buck said.

“And then eventually start to decolonise some of their own spaces,” he said. “I think that's the core to our programming.”

He said the children and youth team also actively participates in and organizes community events, like its Youth and Elders Conference, March Break and Summer Camps.

The centre also works with EarlyON and FACS advocates to ensure wrap-around support, he said.

The focus on children and youth shapes the centre's broader offerings since it emphasizes the life cycle approach, Buck said, naturally fostering intergenerational engagement.

“There's constant coordination and collaboration,” he said.

Buck said the Youth and Elders Conference is designed to foster this intergenerational engagement to create ongoing relationships beyond the centre itself.

“So that when they see each other out, or they're at another event, or they're just at the grocery store — they

can say hi and it's a little bit more casual,” he said.

Buck left Niagara for Toronto in 2010 and later served as senior program advisor for children and youth at the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres from 2019 to 2024.

“There's a lot of folks (at the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres) that were in Li'l Beavers as well,” he said. “You can see yourself and your own success there.”

Still, his connection to Niagara never faded — a bond that played a part in bringing him back to the region and the centre, he said.

“There's this real opportunity for four generations of people — just from my family — engaging with the centre,” said Buck.

Now back in Niagara, Buck is proud to support Indigenous children and youth, helping them find the same sense of belonging that shaped his own path.

“We all are there together, working together, ultimately for a good. I think that's what most people want when it comes to job satisfaction,” he said.

Buck said jobs can sometimes make you feel like two different people — one at work and another at home or with friends — but he's found something different at the centre.

“At the centre, it really lets you just be one person. I don't have to disconnect,” he said.

“I'm an Indigenous man working at an Indigenous organization in my own community. I think there's something beautiful in that,” said Buck.

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## Cancer ride starts in NOTL, raises more than **\$20 million**

*Continued from Front Page*

president of corporate and community partnerships.

Merker thanked events staffer Edmark Delmacio for performing “O Canada” and acknowledged the recent political turmoil in the United States.

“In light of the gong show south of the border, hearing our anthem sung so proudly has an extra special meaning,” said Merker.

The money raised this year pushes the ride's 18-year total to more than \$321 million, funding breakthroughs in cancer treatment and diagnosis. Each participant pledged at least \$2,500.

About 400 riders tackled the 200-kilometre, two-day “Classic” route that started from Peller Estates and ended at McMaster University in Hamilton on Saturday. They were joined by the 4,000-plus riders trekking from Toronto's Sherway Gardens.

Then, on Sunday, both groups departed from Hamilton and headed east to Niagara-on-the-Lake, arriving there after five hours.

Team Steve's Cyclepaths raised \$1.05 million this year, pushing its lifetime contribution past \$14 million.

“It's an emotional day, but everyone supports everyone to get to the finish,” said rid-

er Andrea Kraus, who rode Saturday for her brother, a prostate cancer survivor.

David Morrison, who has ridden since the first event 18 years ago, has never missed a start line.

“Which of our families hasn't faced cancer, so coming back every year is the least I can do,” said Morrison.

Carrie Morris rode her 12th tour six months after preventive surgery revealed stage-zero breast cancer.

“Early detection changed my story completely,” said Morris. “My goal was simply to be here today riding with all of you.”

Peller Estates regional



Riders aged 12 to their 80s roll out from Peller Estates, each pledging at least \$2,500 as the Ride to Conquer Cancer starts. ANDREW HAWLITZKY

manager Tim Coons said organizers are already discussing a return to NOTL next year.

“Like many Canadians

our staff have lost loved ones to cancer, so raising a glass with riders at the line means a lot,” said Coons, adding that the winery

“can't wait to welcome everyone back next year.”

Niagara Regional Police guided rolling closures on John Street, Railroad Street and Concession 1 while cyclists enjoyed warm, haze-free weather.

Before the riders began their five-hour journey, Merker urged spectators to “carry the fire forward” by booking their own cancer screenings and considering a bike seat next June.

“Our sweat is nothing compared to patients' tears,” he said. “Together, we're pedalling toward a day when nobody fears that diagnosis.”

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# NOTL defends 'wine country' identity

Paige Seburn  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The conversation around Niagara-on-the-Lake's identity as "wine country" isn't over.

A debate over how the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake defines itself in its new tourism strategy has divided councillors, residents and even caught the attention of Toronto media.

At the heart of the controversy is the town's decision to reword the phrase 'wine country' to 'food and wine' in its vision statement — a move some say broadens the town's appeal beyond wine, while others argue it downplays a defining feature of NOTL.

Council approved the revised wording but its destination marketing organization, Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake can still use it for marketing.

But disagreement persists over the statement and whether the town has explained the change clearly enough — especially following a May 30 statement that left a councillor questioning the town's commu-



FILE PHOTO.

nication on the issue.

A new June 5 statement from Tourism NOTL states the town is firmly behind keeping the label alive, backing its use by both the tourism board and local businesses.

"It's not damage control whatsoever," said the tourism board's executive director, Kathy Weiss, in an interview.

"There is a strong relationship between the town and Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake," she said. "We just wanted to clear up any misconceptions that there's not support there."

The statement states that through a collaborative approach, the tourism board and the town aim to grow

tourism in a steady, long-term way.

"We are continuing to move forward as partners," said Weiss.

In past years, Weiss said the relationship between the town and the tourism board faced challenges due to "a lack of confidence" from the town in the board's ability to fulfill its role.

But that dynamic has since improved significantly and collaboration is now strong, "which is great," Weiss said.

According to the statement, the tourism board plans to lead marketing efforts, while the town plans to focus on services and amenities that support both visitors and residents.

"It's certain, from a marketing perspective: We are wine country," said Weiss. "We are still going to be using wine country as a tagline."

She added that — despite some public confusion suggesting otherwise — the town fully supports continuing to use the term in all of the tourism boards' marketing initiatives.

"Unfortunately, it just kind of blew up and got,

you know, misconstrued that we're not going to be allowed to use that."

Weiss said the statement comes as negative press about the issue circulates across the province.

"We just wanted to stop that in its tracks," she said.

"Because it's making it look like we're not working together — and we are very much working together."

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa did not respond to a request for comment by press time. However, in the tourism board's statement, he said, "Niagara-on-the-Lake's recently approved tourism strategy marks a step forward in embracing the full variety of experiences our town offers."

He continued and stated: "By working closely with Tourism NOTL, we aim to ensure that all tourism sectors, from our wineries, historic landmarks, vibrant small businesses, to culinary experiences and more, are all thoughtfully represented and supported. The term 'wine country' remains a valued part of our Niagara-on-the-Lake identity."

[paigeseburn@niagaranow.com](mailto:paigeseburn@niagaranow.com)



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



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*This tiny column gives tips to help promote kindness in our lives and spread joy and happiness.*



**Contributed by Patty Garriock**

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- Malala Yousafzai

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## Baby groundhogs poke their heads out

Photographer Dave Van de Laar spotted a heartwarming spring scene near Fort George on Wednesday morning — a couple of baby groundhogs huddled near their den, with their mother keeping watch just steps away.



## Opinion

# ‘Corruption and democratic erosion.’ Not Trump – here



**THE TURNER REPORT**

Garth Turner  
 Columnist



House sales in Niagara have tanked while listings soar. Buyers have record choice, but are short on confidence.

Summer in paradise. In this town we boil and chill at the same time.

First, the steamy part. From that winter’s afternoon when I shared a Balzac’s coffee with Stuart McCormack — and heard his vision for a rebel army of rebellion-minded citizens — until his standing-room-only blowout meeting last month, it’s been a textbook revolt.

In a few months NOTL has birthed a political revolution — with elected officials (starring our lordly mayor) letting it happen.

They have a logo, money, social media creds, volunteers, a structure, manifesto and a cause.

Plus now they have targets. Results are in from a significant public survey the rebs conducted, tabulated and analyzed. In the crosshairs is the way current local politicians are viewed (think measles), development and tourism (outta control) and the fact we now have a “strong” mayor (with weaker support).

It’s never a good thing when normally docile folks believe councillors are in

the pockets of developers, that the town’s government is anti-family or that public matters are shielded from, well, the public. But here we are.

“There is visible support for a leadership change in the next election,” says the group, “alongside deep concerns about corruption, integrity and democratic erosion.” And this is Niagara-on-the-Lake. Not the White House. (Although both have real estate guys in charge.)

The issues are legion. Most have been referenced in this pathetic column in recent months. Scads of new hotel rooms approved. Highrise condos sprouting. Trees slaughtered. Heritage structures compromised. Gutless regs on Airbnbs. Too few long-term rentals, families or kids.

Unchecked development. Loss of character. The Mississauganization of a truly unique, historic, bucolic place.

But, mostly, it’s about the elected not listening.

“Residents feel ignored,”

say the rebels. “Widespread frustration that council members and staff do not listen to or respect public input, especially on contentious development issues. Dismissive behaviour: Reports of councillors ignoring delegations, being on phones during meetings and predetermined agendas.”

So, lots of bitching and moaning. Grievances and anger. A year ago a good chunk of the town protested outside town hall. To no avail. This year it’s war. They want inside.

Now let’s talk about your chilling house.

Since our home ownership rate is well north of 80 per cent, real estate’s a big deal here. You may have noticed more For Sale signs sprouting along with the dandelions, and the occasional starving realtor sleeping in her Range Rover. In a word, the market’s capitulated.

“It shows the quick impact that the global/American geo-political environment has had,” says Bosley

broker Patrick Burke. Indeed, sales so far in 2025 are the lowest in more than a decade and a half. This week there are 3,300 available listings, the highest number ever, while sales have tanked far below the 10-year average.

Logic says things should be better. Mortgages in the low four per cent range are OK by historic standards. Lenders are eager. There are new incentives to save for and finance a house (like our absurd new tax dodge, the FHSA). Bidding wars are over. And buyers have a cornucopia of choice.

But one ingredient is in short supply — confidence. No wonder. Tariffs. Elections peppered with warnings. Layoffs. Maybe a recession. Plus Trump, Trump and more Trump.

Well, oodles of supply and tepid demand usually mean sellers throwing in the towel, accepting low-ball offers.

Burke admits to “stagnant and downward pressure on pricing.” Average sale prices have dipped only modestly as the amount of available inventory soars past six months (during the 2021 rush we were down to a week or two).

But wait. Here’s a bargain. That Old Town waterfront home listed a few months ago at \$12 million was chopped to just nine. What a relief.

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

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## Update from **senior housing** advisory group

Dear editor:

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Senior Housing Advisory Group is pleased to share an update on our efforts to help shape a stronger, more inclusive future — one where residents of all ages can continue to call this town home, comfortably and confidently.

Over the past few months, we've been hard at work, meeting with town council and potential development partners to explore ways to bring more senior-friendly housing options to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

These conversations have been inspiring and full of possibility, as we imagine

how thoughtful planning today can benefit our entire community tomorrow.

We've also had the opportunity to speak with several land developers who are showing real interest in being part of the solution. These early discussions have been promising, with a shared understanding that smart, community-minded development can play a big role in meeting the needs of our aging population.

While nothing is set in stone just yet, these partnerships are a hopeful step toward turning ideas into action.

One key moment in our recent efforts was a meet-

ing with the town, where we learned that senior housing is not currently part of the Official Plan or the scope of work in either the Community Development or Economic Development Office.

That's a challenge — but also an opportunity.

We're planning to make a delegation to council in the coming weeks where we'll formally present our vision and make the case for its inclusion in town planning and development efforts.

We believe that prioritizing senior housing isn't just a seniors' issue — it's a community issue. It's about keeping families together,

supporting caregivers, and making sure that long-time residents don't have to leave the place they love as their needs change.

We're passionate about this work, but we know we can't do it alone. We're counting on the energy, ideas, and support of the entire town to help bring this vision to life.

So let's keep the conversation going. If you have thoughts or questions, or simply want to learn more, don't hesitate to connect with us.

*Cindy Grant*  
NOTL Senior Housing  
Advisory Group

## Queen Street patios need a **serious makeover**

Dear editor:

Considering the eye-watering cost of staying in a local hotel, it seems NOTL considers itself a "high-class" venue.

Yet our historic downtown does nothing to support that

image with the unattractively constructed sitting areas outside four restaurants. They definitely lower the tone.

They were never intended to be permanent and, if they are to become permanent, they should fit in with the

ambiance of the street.

Signage and shop frontages have to adhere to more contextual rules, so there should certainly be similar requirements for outside structures.

Wrought iron and striped

awnings come to mind, rather than the rough-looking backyard lean-to appearance they currently represent.

A little pride in our downtown, please.

*Ann Handels*  
NOTL

## Home prices dip, but ownership **still elusive** for many



### BOTTOM LINE

Steve McGuinness  
Columnist



This five-bedroom home at 17 Coach Dr. in Old Town is for sale for \$1,288,000. House prices are coming down.

Shelter is our most basic human need, addressed by our housing market. Housing costs are the biggest budget expense in most households, spanning the generations.

Many millennials and Gen Xers still aspire to become new homeowners. Meanwhile, boomers are increasingly tapping into their home equity nest egg, as their retirement savings deplete more rapidly, coping with affordability challenges and more uncertain investment yields.

Our residential real estate market continues to slump. Despite recent Bank of Canada interest rate drops, the days of cutthroat home bidding wars are well behind us.

Single-family home prices in Ontario fell for the third consecutive month in April, although the month-over-month decline of 0.7 per

cent was less than February to March's decline (3.2 per cent) and January to February's decline (2.4 per cent).

The average price of a single-family home in Ontario declined year-over-year from \$950,800 in April 2024 to \$901,200 last month, a 5.2 per cent drop. Listing numbers and the average days on the market before sale are both up.

Landlords are also renewing leases at lower rents. In the first quarter, Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area rents declined 2.2 per cent from a year ago. Even in downtown Toronto, the average cost of a one-bedroom apartment is down to \$2,224 — nearly \$400 below the record peak in October 2023.

Despite these recent drops, housing remains unaffordable to many. The ratio of the home price index to average household

disposable income was 8.52 for the Niagara region in February.

This means it costs more than eight-and-a-half times a worker's average annual earnings to afford to purchase an average home here. Fortunately, this is still 29 per cent lower than in Toronto and 11 per cent lower than in Hamilton.

Meanwhile, governments at all levels are proposing new solutions to deliver more affordable housing faster. The new Carney government has promised to double the annual pace of new homebuilding "on a scale not seen since the Second World War."

The plan includes the creation of Build Canada Homes, a national agency that will develop affordable housing on public land and offer billions in low-cost financing to speed up construction.

The province is also looking to fast-track housing construction by exerting more control over municipalities. Queen's Park will expand controversial minister's zoning orders and standardize municipal development fees.

Municipalities use development fees to build infrastructure, such as sewers or roads, to support housing. Development charges will now be due at occupancy instead of upfront during the permitting process. The province believes these fees can be punitive and hurt the cash flow of homebuilders seeking to get shovels in the ground.

In upcoming columns, we will explore whether home ownership still makes sense as a key financial goal and under what conditions. We will also explain government tax incentives (like the home buyers' plan and first home savings account) and the mortgage lending policies, promoted by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, that can assist in certain circumstances.

*Steve McGuinness was a senior adviser to major financial institutions during his Bay Street career and is now retired in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Send your personal finance questions to him at smcgfinplan@gmail.com.*



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.  
Category: REGIONAL FOOD

**They may sound undesirable but these charred tougher pieces cut from a brisket point are a staple of Kansas City BBQ.**

Last issue: TV "Q"

Clue: The title of this limited series starring Anya Taylor-Joy refers to an opening in chess.

Answer: What is Queen's Gambit?

Answered first by: Bob Wheatley

Also answered correctly (in order) by:

Sue Rautenberg, Susan Hamilton, Daniel Smith, Jane Morris, Mike Gander, Jeff Lake, Lynda Collet, Wade Durling, Esther VanGorder, Jim Dandy, Nancy Rocca, Howard Jones, Margaret Garaughty, Marla Percy, Catherine Clarke, David Spencer, Sheila Meloche, Lynda Hosty, Margie Enns, KC King

Email answers to [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto: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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Elizabeth Gordon, Executor of the Estate for the **Estate of Norman J. Edmondson** (Deceased March 31st, 2025) 1591 Concession 4 Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0  
June 2, 2025

### NOTICE TO CLAIM PERSONAL BELONGINGS

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to advise that the Estate of Norman John Edmondson located at 1591 Concession 4 Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, L0S 1J0, is in the process of being administered. Any persons who have left personal belongings at this property are hereby requested to make arrangements to retrieve their items.

All items must be collected no later than June 30th, 2025. Unclaimed property may be considered abandoned and will be disposed of at the discretion of the estate.

To arrange a pickup or verify ownership, please contact the undersigned at the contact information provided above.

Proof of ownership will be required.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Gordon, Executor – Estate of Norman J. Edmondson

### Contact Information:

Mark Gordon  
416 729-3752  
Email: [mark\\_gordonca@yahoo.ca](mailto:mark_gordonca@yahoo.ca)

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# What makes these **two development proposals** different



**ARCHITEXT**

Brian Marshall  
Columnist



Drawings of two different project proposals. Left is the hotel proposed for 222 Gate St. and right is an apartment proposal for 1839 Four Mile Creek Rd. One of them is good, sympathetic design — the other is not, says Brian Marshall.

There are two proposals that have been floated before residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake recently and both will require town council approval for rezoning to allow the projects to proceed.

The first is for a 29-unit apartment building proposed to be located in that curious arm — a strip comprised of a row of single residential lots on either side of Four Mile Creek Road — of the Virgil urban area zone district, which extends down to East & West Line.

The second proposal is for the construction of an 18-suite hotel, which can be more correctly described as an expansion of the existing 124 on Queen Hotel and Spa, on lands owned by that business located at 222 Gate St. in Old Town.

Now, this column will not visit the question of whether Old Town needs another 18 hotel rooms, nor will we consider the issues associated with shoehorning an apartment building onto a lot barely large enough to contain it on the periphery of Virgil.

Rather, let's take a few minutes to examine the architectural design of 222 Gate St. and 1839 Four Mile Creek Rd., respectively, as a study in contrasts.

The streetscape of Gate between Queen and Johnson is entirely composed of traditional building forms, the majority of which are residential dwellings ranging in height from a single one-storey cottage to three two-storey homes. On the other side of Queen this streetscape character continues as it does (with a couple of exceptions) on Johnson.

In fact, the proponent's application includes a full streetscape study and has utilized same in the understanding of the proposed building's design.

Architecturally, this design is of the New Traditional school and draws on the Georgian, neoclassical and Second Empire styles — evident in many Old Town historic buildings — in its form, height, massing, elements and presentation.

Even the choice of the stucco cladding is a nod to the materials commonly used in the surrounding neighbourhoods and its colour, white, ensures and maintains a continuity with the uniformly light coloured buildings on Gate.

In short, this building, if constructed as proposed, will blend with, complement and positively contribute to the existing streetscape.

The streetscape of Four

Mile Creek Road between Pleasant Lane and East & West Line is a completely different proposition.

Here, the streetscape is dominated by one-storey dwellings with the occasional punctuation by a two-storey or one-and-a-half-storey home.

Set on generous lots with distinct separation, brick-clad ranch bungalows (typical of the latter half of the 20th century) make up the stylistic majority, while the remainder are largely late 20th and early 21st-century expressions of common builder forms, all set under gable or hip roofs.

Into this existing streetscape, the proponent has applied to build a three-and-a-half-storey (above grade), 11.28 metre (37 feet) tall, flat-roofed apartment with exterior finishes comprised of white brick, white vertical siding and what ap-

pears to be stucco coloured dark grey set off by both black metal and natural wood appointments.

Stylistically, the design could best be classified as a commercial expression of 21st-century modern; a distinct visual disruption to the existing streetscape, something that will be accentuated by the proposed building's height and massing.

While the application attempts to draw a precedent from the Radiant Care Pleasant Manor building, I would offer that the four-storey flat-roofed building cited is located on Pleasant Lane and, as such, is not a part of the Four Mile Creek streetscape.

Further, the part of Pleasant Manor that is within the Four Mile Creek streetscape (albeit not within the Pleasant Lane to East West line portion) is not only set

much further back than the proposed apartment building — partly ameliorating the building's height and massing — but also constructed of materials (brick & stucco) with a direct relationship to other dwellings on the street and is set under a hip roof.

Despite the proponent's consultants' assertions to the contrary, with the exception of the front setback at 13.61 metres, the proposed design pays no respect to the existing streetscape nor does it draw any inspiration from the neighbourhood.

Indeed, it will disrupt, dominate and negatively impact a relatively bucolic part of Four Mile Creek Road in Virgil.

Good design and fine architecture is nearly always contextually appropriate with, and sympathetic to, its setting within a neighbourhood or streetscape.

I have said it before and will say it again ... Good design costs no more than bad design, but bad design will scar a street, neighbourhood and community for decades.

And besides, good design is a lot less contentious.

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

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# Nothing funny about **old-school discipline**



**ROSS'S RAMBLINGS**

Ross Robinson  
Columnist

As Ross the Rambler, I avoid sarcasm or meanness. I pick a subject, and sometimes try to make a point — usually with a smidge of humour. There's no humour in this week's Ramblings.

We've learned the Robert Land Academy in West Lincoln has closed permanently after some 47 years as a military-style boarding school, typically with between 75 and 105 students.

It had no affiliation with the Canadian Armed Forces. Online sources list annual tuition at \$68,000. During my high school years at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary in St. Catharines, a couple of



my pals were sent there — in hopes of curing some serious discipline issues.

Everything changes, usually for the better. Hearing of the closure bumped me back to 1960, in Etobicoke. I was in Grade 4 at Park Lawn Public School.

My dear mom, a former teacher in northern Ontario near Cochrane in the 1930s, saved all my report cards. They showed OK marks — but clearly, I was more interested in recess, sports and fun.

Mr. MacPherson, unaffectionately known to students as "Big Mac," was the principal — and a strict disciplinarian. He was a large man and, out in the schoolyard or on the playground, always seemed to be in a bit of a bad mood. He was usually glowering.

I have no memory of why my pal Bill Armour and I were called to his office that day. But there we were — just Big Mac, Armour and me.

He no doubt gave us his

version of what we'd done wrong, then told us to put out our right hands at waist level, palms up.

He went over, closed his office door, and opened the top left drawer of his desk. Out came the dreaded strap — a thick piece of dark brown leather, about 10 feet long and three inches wide.

We were about to get "the biffs." That was the accepted punishment for behaviour Big Mac deemed unacceptable. No questions asked. Just hold out your hands and get whacked.

Bravely — and with no choice — we obeyed. After a few seconds of dramatic pause, he raised his arm, held the strap high and said: "Stay still. Don't move."

Down came the strap on my palm. Then the same for Armour. Once each — and then a second time, for good measure.

"Now, get back to your classroom."

This is a totally out-of-character Ramblings, but for some reason, I want to get this story out.

Not bitter. Things change. I can't even imagine such a scenario in 2025.

Wow, eh?



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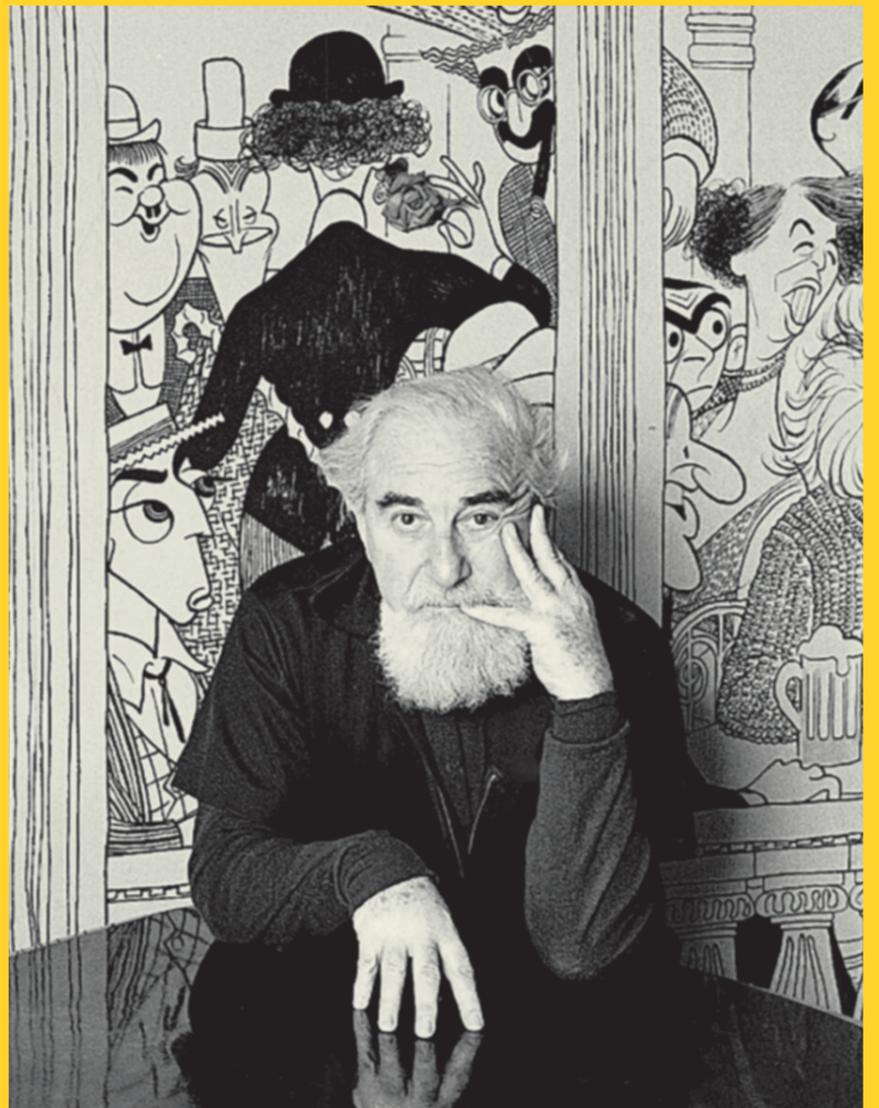
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# URBAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

## EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST 2025 – 2027

### The Opportunity

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from qualified candidates to serve on the Town's Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP). The UDRP is a voluntary technical review panel established to provide the Town Planning Department with objective, professional urban design advice on development applications and municipal projects. The advice from panel members will improve the quality of urban design and architecture within the municipality, ensuring that projects fit within the Town's unique contexts. The UDRP achieves this by making recommendations to Staff on the design and potential physical and aesthetic impact of proposed buildings, structures, landscapes, streetscapes, parks, and infrastructure projects to guide the refinement of development proposals and public realm projects.

Council seeks six (6) members to sit on the Urban Design Review Panel for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake for the remainder of the term of Council or until a successor is appointed:

- Two (2) Architects/Urban Designers
- One (1) Landscape Architect
- Three (3) individuals with demonstrated expertise related to urban design: Planner, Heritage Planning Professional, Engineering, Environmental Design, Green Technologies, etc.

The UDRP is strictly an advisory body to Staff. It does not have the authority to approve or refuse projects, or make policy decisions on land use.

### Qualifications

It is desirable that members have membership and/or certification in relevant professional design associations, such as the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA), the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects (OALA), the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI), the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP), the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP), the Professional Engineers of Ontario (PEO), or similar or related associations in other provinces or federally. Specific experience in urban design is essential.

### Other Requirements

Members shall:

- Have access to a computer and an email address to receive meeting invitations and agenda packages with large files.
- Have a demonstrated commitment to, and interest in, the Niagara-on-the-Lake community.
- Be objective and have an open mind in order to fully consider the application/project/matter.
- Be able to provide constructive input to a broad range of design related questions.

Members must be:

- At least 18 years of age
- A Canadian citizen or permanent resident
- Not employed by the municipality

### Term

- Now through February 2027 (or until a successor is appointed)

### Time Commitment

- The meetings will take place monthly or on an as needed basis. Additional meetings, or meeting cancellation, will be at the call of the Director of Community and Development Services based on application submissions.
- UDRP members will be provided with materials for review a minimum of three (3) weeks in advance of the meeting. Members are requested to attend the meeting prepared with specific items/input for the application based on their area of expertise.
- Attendance at training sessions (online and in-person professional development) may be required from time to time.

### Selection Process

Members shall be appointed through a selection process based on qualifications and experience. Appointments to the Urban Design Review Panel are made by Town Council. Only one member of any particular firm may be allowed to sit on the Panel at the same time.

### Submissions

Expressions of Interest in the form of a cover letter should include an overview of applicant's interest and qualifications related to urban design, with specific reference to the following:

- Due to the technical nature of the Panel, academic qualifications are important. The EOI should provide any academic credentials, as well as any membership/ association/ certification within the applicable professional organization. Applicants should demonstrate their experience in urban design review and peer review for a variety of project scales and types.
- Individuals with a diversity of training will be viewed favourably; however, it should be noted that appointments would be focused to the area of expertise.
- As a group, the UDRP should include a balance of expertise as indicated in the composition breakdown. The EOI should include professional expertise and experience, demonstrating a breadth of knowledge of urban design where applicable.
- The focus of the UDRP is to provide independent expert advice to Staff and applicants. It is not required that a panel member be a resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake; however, the EOI must demonstrate an understanding of the urban design pressures within the Niagara-on-the-Lake community, as well as a familiarity of the Town itself.
- Prior experience on other urban design review panels will be viewed favourably.

Expressions of Interest may be submitted at:

[clerks@notl.com](mailto:clerks@notl.com)

The deadline for submission is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, July 4, 2025.

### Further Information

For further information on the UDRP, please see the link below:

<https://www.notl.com/committees-council-recruitment>

Contact:

For information on the submission or selection process:

Grant Bivol, Town Clerk

[clerks@notl.com](mailto:clerks@notl.com)

Or

For general UDRP matters:

Kirsten McCauley, Director of Community and Development Services

[kirsten.mccauley@notl.com](mailto:kirsten.mccauley@notl.com)

# Wild times as Meszaros scores **trifecta** with 37

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

There were some wild times on the links of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club this week — and it wasn't just Mother Nature delivering more bad weather.

On Monday, the forecast disrupted play again and then on Tuesday, a wily coyote put in a brief appearance and a hungry hawk met its match when a flock of smaller birds chased it off.

Meanwhile, on the fairways, Jim Meszaros was continuing an incredible hot streak.

Meszaros was top dog in Tuesday's Woofs league, shooting 1-over 37 — for the third straight week.

Grant Williams was low net with 32 and Randy Churchill won the hidden hole (#5). Gary Stuggins was closest to the pin on #4.

Judy Mantle had the hot hand in Tuesday's 18-hole



Jennifer Meszaros tied for third low net in the 18-hole women's league play this week while her husband Jim extended his Woofs league winning streak with his third consecutive 37. FILE PHOTO

women's league, taking low net honours with 70 and third-lowest gross with 96 — and needing only 28 putts to accomplish it.

Other top low gross shooters were: Louise Robitaille (85) and Carroll Baker and Yolanda Henry (91). Low net: Cheryl Yamamoto, Henry and Baker (73), and May Chang,

Cathy Murray and Jennifer Meszaros (78).

Robitaille was closest to the pin on #4 and other top putters were Murray (30) and Baker and Henry (32).

The nine-hole women's league's game of "Fairways and Putts" on Tuesday was won by Bonnie Lamourie, with 29.

Deborah Williams had

the longest drive on #8 while Marlene Sibbald and Suzanne Watson both carded birdies.

Weather forced cancellation of Monday's Business Ladies league.

Last Thursday in the club's men's league, Al Kavanagh and Rob Reimer shot matching 1-over par 37 to win low gross. Kavanagh and Michael Sanders shared low net with 31.

Brock Sansom made the longest putt on #2 and Jared Mines boomed the longest drive on #3. Don Cruikshank was closest to the pin on #4 and Dan Vukovich was closest on #9.

Birdies earned Joe Doria (#1) and Glen Murray (#5) gross skins worth \$55 while Keith Dexter (#7) and Sanders (#8) won \$95 net skins.

The prize in the weekly putting contest has ballooned to \$500 this week as Rai Lauge, Ron Planche and Sam Ridesic all missed their chances at claiming the prize.

### Toy Safety & Eye Protection

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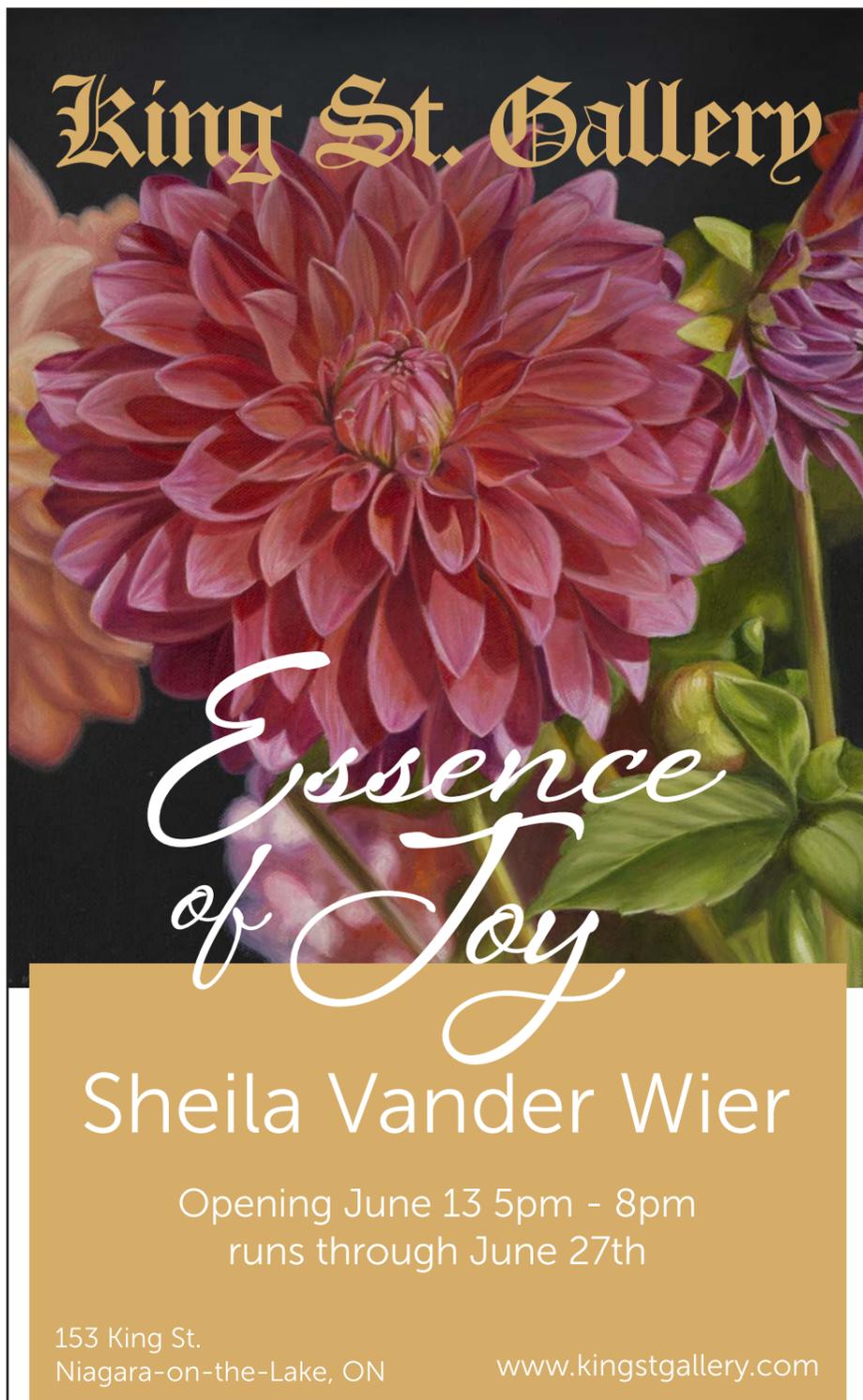
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**Across**

- 9. Hair cleaner (7)
- 10. German measles (7)
- 11. Chatter (7)
- 12. Anxious (7)
- 13. Emphasize (9)
- 15. Astonish (5)
- 16. Decent (11)
- 20. First prime minister of India (5)
- 22. Chinese revolutionary leader (3,3-3)
- 24. Type of chair (7)
- 26. Poorly matched (7)
- 27. Demolish (7)
- 28. Cooking vessel (7)

**Down**

- 1. Sterile (7)
- 2. Largest desert (6)
- 3. On an upper floor (8)
- 4. Depression from lack of company (10)
- 5. Make beer or ale (4)
- 6. Spain and Portugal (6)
- 7. Last (8)
- 8. Walked like a duck (7)
- 14. Put out (10)
- 16. Practise (8)
- 17. Wrist band (8)
- 18. Indefinite person (7)
- 19. Fishermen (7)
- 21. Yet to arrive (6)
- 23. Squalid (6)
- 25. Supporting ropes (4)

### Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9							
11							
13							
18							
20							
24							
27							

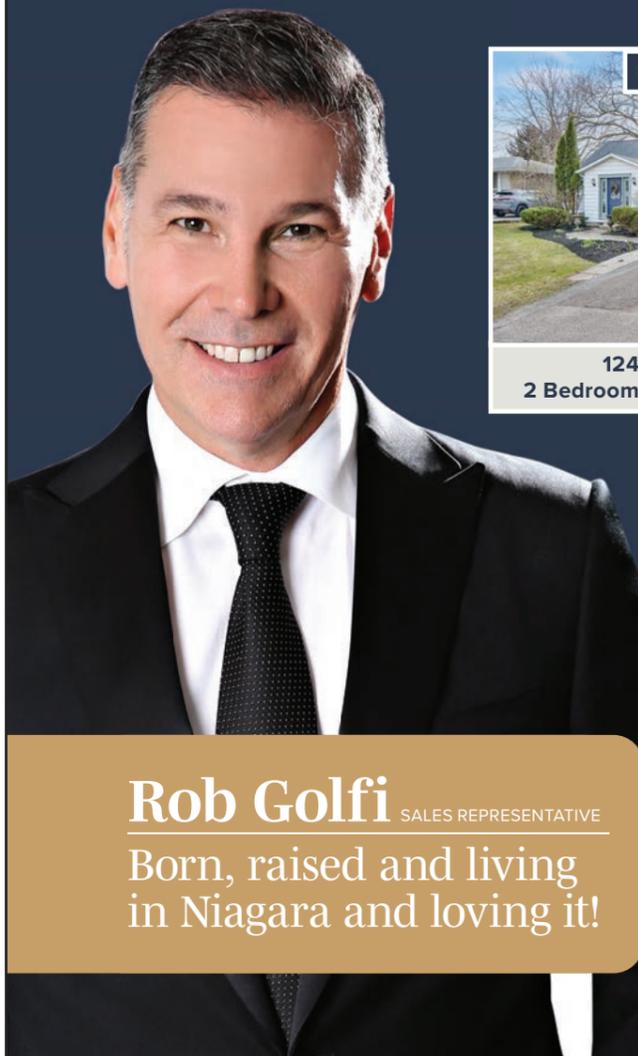
Last issue's answers

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10							
13							
17							
22							
25							
31							
34							

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



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# The bun gets it done

Janet Carnochan is the most notable founder of the Niagara Historical Society (the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum). She took up the post of principal at the age of 32 for the Niagara Public School in 1872 (quite the scandal at the time) and later moved up to be the vice-principal of the local high school. She is also the first president of the Niagara Historical Society, which started in 1895 and was integral to the building of the museum on Castlereagh Street.

Janet didn't just preserve history — she made it. She gathered some of the most prized artifacts in our collection, authored dozens of publications, and led the charge to build Ontario's very first community museum. Now, in 2025, we're channelling the spirit of Janet and her iconic bun as we celebrate 130 years of getting things done. Because we all know that when you need to get down to business, you pull your hair up and get to it!

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## Gentle giants of the garden



**GROWING TOGETHER** 

Joanne Young  
Columnist



A sum and substance hosta, left, and an elegans hosta. Joanne Young says hostas are a low-effort way to bring bold beauty and elegance to your garden.

Shady gardens are always a bit more challenging to design. After all, it does greatly limit your choices of plants.

One sure way of getting the full look is the use of hostas. They can make a hard-to-landscape area a lush paradise.

Hostas are beloved by gardeners for their lush foliage and ease of care. While there are thousands of varieties ranging in size, colour and texture, huge hostas that can reach several feet in height and width, also provide a striking architectural presence to any landscape.

These gentle giants can transform shady corners into vibrant focal points, offering both beauty and resilience.

Some giant hostas can grow to an impressive four to five feet wide and three to four feet tall, with leaves measuring more than a foot long.

Their bold foliage, which comes in a variety of greens, blues and golds, makes them ideal for creating structure and contrast in shade gardens. They also provide much texture to the landscape.

Their thick, quilted-looking leaves are not only visually appealing but also more resistant to pests like slugs. When massed together, giant hostas can mimic the look of tropical plants, providing a lush, almost jungle-like atmosphere in temperate climates.

Hostas thrive in partial to full shade, though some varieties — especially those with yellow or chartreuse foliage — tolerate more sunlight.

Giant hostas prefer rich, well-drained soil with consistent moisture. Mulching helps retain water and suppress weeds, while compost improves soil structure and fertility.

It's important to give huge hostas space to grow. These plants take a few years to reach their full size, but when they do, they have earned a place of honour. Gardeners should plant them at least three to five feet apart to allow for mature spread.

For visual interest, contrast large-leaved hostas with fine-textured plants or use them near water features, where their reflection enhances their beauty.

When space allows, a collection of giant hostas in different hues creates a stunning tapestry of colour and texture.

There are some amazing large leaf varieties to choose from. One of the fastest-growing varieties is one called Empress Wu, with a blue-green leaf that will grow four feet high and six feet wide. Each leaf is over one foot in diameter.

When planted surrounded by plants with fine textures such as ferns, the leaves will appear even larger.

A more recent sport (offspring) of Empress Wu hosta is Wu-La-La. Like

Empress Wu, Wu-La-La grows four to six feet high and even wider, but has more distinct markings on its leaves. The main portion of the leaf is blue-green but has a bright lime to apple-green margin.

One hosta that I use a lot in designs is Sum & Substance, which is lemon-yellow in colour and grows two to three feet tall and three to four feet wide. I love how the bright coloured leaves illuminate a darker, shady area.

T-Rex hosta, with green leaves, generally grows six to seven feet wide and two to three feet high. Its leaves are some of the largest, each measuring up to 18 inches long.

Some large growing blue leaf hostas are Elegans and Big Daddy. There are many different varieties to choose from.

Huge hostas are more than just big plants — they're statement pieces that elevate the design of shade gardens. With their impressive size, durability and aesthetic versatility, these perennial powerhouses offer years of enjoyment with relatively little upkeep.

Whether you're a seasoned gardener or a newcomer, adding a few giant hostas to your landscape will bring bold beauty and peaceful greenery to your outdoor space.

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

## NOTL's public pools opening soon



The public pools around NOTL are set to open soon. The Memorial Park pool opens on June 21 and 22, then officially opens for the season on June 29. The St. Davids pool and the Simcoe Park wading pool open June 29. The Virgil splash pad has been open since May 12.

## Obituaries

### Guido 'Willie' Dal Bianco



DAL BIANCO, Guido (Willie) —

Suddenly on June 8, 2025, at Niagara Ina Grafton Gage Village, at the age of 94. Reunited with his Beloved wife Betty. Devoted father of Marcella, Elizabeth, Robert, & Heather

Adored grandfather of Megan (Trevor), Lindsay, Richard, Jennifer (Louie), Ashley (Chris), Christopher and Reghan. Great grandfather of Vanin, Reese, Luke and Layla. Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. The family would like to extend a special thank you to the Visiting Angels and care team at Ina Grafton Gage Village.

The family will receive friends at Morse & Son Funeral Home, 5917 Main St., Niagara Falls on Saturday, June 14, 2025, from 1 to 3 p.m. with a service to celebrate the life of Guido "Willie" at 2:30 p.m. at the funeral home. Cremation to follow.

In lieu of flowers an expression of sympathy, those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Alzheimer's Society of Niagara. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)



### Ian Mell



MELL, Ian Robert —

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden passing of Ian Robert Mell, at his home in St. Davids on Saturday, May 24, 2025, at the age of 67. Beloved partner of Diane Shaw. Adoring father of Richard. Dear brother of Susan, and cherished uncle of Kirsty and Anna-Lee.

Fondly remembered by many aunts, uncles, cousins, friends and colleagues.

Desperately missed by his beloved animals, his "little girl" Lexi, Sweetie, Mya, Miss Mew, Hunter, and Granddog Junior.

Arrangements entrusted to Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. A celebration of Ian's life will be held at a future date. As an expression of sympathy, those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Farley Foundation ([www.farleyfoundation.org](http://www.farleyfoundation.org)). Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)



### Kahlin Holmes



HOLMES, Kahlin Blythe —

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Kahlin Blythe Holmes, age 39, on June 2, 2025. Kahlin was born and raised in Queenston.

She attended Laura Secord and St David's elementary schools and Sir Winston Churchill High School before going on to study theatre at Brock University and attend graduate school in urban development at Toronto Metropolitan University. Kahlin travelled the world, living in Toronto and briefly in Melbourne, Australia before settling in St. Catharines with her husband, Anthony Ciavarella. She was enmeshed in the cultural life of the

city and contributed to it in many ways. She organized the Better Cities Film Festival and was involved in events with the Niagara Artists Center, Suitcase in Point, and other downtown organizations. On foot with her dog, or on her bicycle, Kahlin was a familiar and friendly face. Working as a consultant specializing in community engagement, Kahlin advocated for the design of built environments around the city that were tailored to people, and she was committed to public spaces that were useful, beautiful, and safe. As a founder of the Fitzgerald Community Garden, she created a way to bring people together to plant and grow food on common ground. She was relentlessly optimistic about people and the possibility of social and political change. Her energetic feminism, global outlook, sharp moral instincts, and her gracious humour were a beacon—inspiring and contagious to everyone she touched. Kahlin spent her last days peacefully, surrounded by family and loved ones. She is survived by her husband Anthony, her mother Janice and father Mark, her brothers Eben and Nathan, their partners Ange and Kristin, her niece Holly, her Ciavarella family in Melbourne, her dog Pony, a robust community garden, the flower beds and plants that dot her home, and countless friends and neighbors. She will be deeply missed but never forgotten. Kahlin is forever.

For those wishing to send gifts, donations can be made to the Fitzgerald Community Garden via e-transfer to Fitzgerald Neighbours, [fitzneighbourhood@gmail.com](mailto:fitzneighbourhood@gmail.com), Toronto Dominion Bank.

# What Huntington's teaches us about neurodegenerative diseases



**DR. BROWN**

Dr. William Brown  
Columnist

Huntington's disease may be an uncommon cause of dementia, but at the cellular level has something important to teach us about other neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal degeneration and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly known as ALS.

Huntington's is caused by a mutant gene which creates multiple repeats of a triplet of nucleotides: Cytosine, adenine and guanine. The number of repeats can vary in affected neurons from as few as twenty to several hundred.

Given that each CAG triplet codes for the amino acid glutamine, the result is that proteins coded by the Huntington's gene become cluttered with far too many copies of the glutamine to function properly, and in the

end, kill affected neurons.

That's the story told by V. M. Rajagopal and Sarah Gelfman in their recent study "Accumulating gene errors drive Huntington's disease," in the March 20 issue of the journal *Nature*.

The authors suggest that Huntington's disease begins with a long period lasting several decades during which the number of repeats in single brain cells remains less than 40 in patients even though they carry the abnormal Huntington's gene.

However, much past 80 repeats, the number of repeats begins to rise steeply, and past 150 repeats, crosses a threshold beyond which the accumulating CAG repeats become toxic enough to kill brain cells.

The lesson Huntington's teaches here is that this disease is biphasic. There's a long asymptomatic period during which the number of CAG repeats rises slowly, during which treatment might be expected to be most effective in stopping the rise in the number of repeats.

However, once beyond the threshold for the number of repeats and treatment, however clever, might be too late.

That's, of course, the argument for treating patients



with Alzheimer's disease as early as possible — when there are no clinical features of the disease, but biomarkers such as PET scans and assays for beta-amyloid and tau are positive.

However, treatment of Alzheimer's by targeting accumulations of beta-amyloid and even tau proteins is controversial these days because the underlying amyloid hypothesis, which guided the development of drugs for the last few decades, may be flawed and in need of a major rethink.

It's not that monoclonal antibodies (mabs) designed to target accumulations of beta-amyloid don't work — they do.

Almost all the drugs recently developed for Alzheimer's manage to clear the brain of beta-amyloid well. The critical question centers on whether the accumulation of beta amyloid is a side show to a much

more fundamental disorder affecting lysosomes in neurons as Professor Ralph Nixon of New York University suggests.

Controversial too is whether the current crop of drugs slows, never mind stops, cognitive decline in meaningful ways for patients with Alzheimer's.

Compounding those key issues are growing questions about fraud in some of the clinical studies in Alzheimer's, described in detail by Charles Piller in his 2025 book, "Doctored."

These and problems highlighted by the *New England Journal of Medicine* about the manner in which some of these drugs were approved by the American Food and Drug Administration are serious enough to warrant review and hopefully prompt new hypotheses and treatments for Alzheimer's.

The temptation to fib and fraud or even exaggerate claims isn't new to medicine and science in general, but has become more common in recent years when pharmaceutical companies play outsized roles in designing, supervising and even writing the papers supporting their claims.

The reasons are clear: Developing new drugs is a very expensive business and companies stand to lose hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars, if drugs fail in clinical trials.

Unfortunately, few physicians know enough about clinical trials design and analysis to critically review complex trials — hence the ceding of the heavy work to companies only too happy to lend a hand.

For much the same reasons, reviewing clinical trials requires a very professional review process, which takes a lot of time for the best journals to which manuscripts have been submitted for review.

The Huntington's disease study was elegant, and the implications are important for other neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease, because the authors were able to show that at the cellular level, the impact of the disease was bi-phasic.

There is an initial long, slowly evolving course without symptoms, followed by a much shorter accelerated course associated with progressive cell death and symptoms and clinical progression.

That's important because

the window for successful treatment of neurodegenerative diseases is usually well before symptoms develop, and perhaps explains why treatments employed when the first symptoms develop may be too late to prevent progression of the disease.

Finally, given that the prevalence of diseases such as dementia reaches 30 to 50 per cent in the 80s and higher in the 90s, is the word disease even applicable, given that almost every system and organelle in cells begins to fail in late life?

Those failures are part of the cumulative wear and tear of life, and while the quality of life and even some longevity can be improved by lifestyle changes, in the end, there is an end.

No biological system is immortal — so far.

A good read on the subject of aging is the 2024 book, "Why We Die," by Venki Ramakrishnan, who shared the Nobel Prize for work on the structure and function of ribosomes.

*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.*

## Share moments, not measles.

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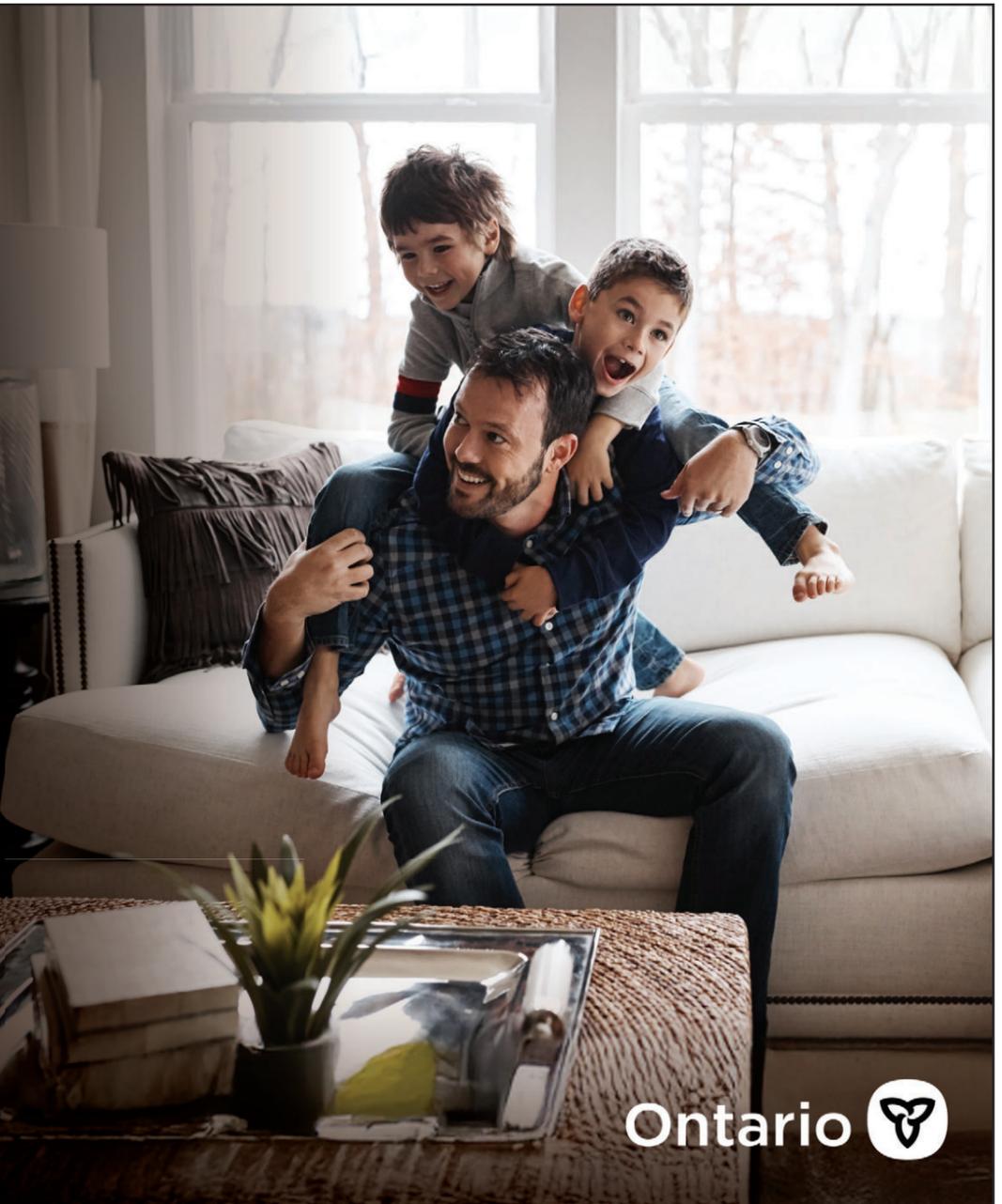
Vaccination doesn't just protect you, it also protects your family and your community, especially at-risk groups like babies or people with weakened immune systems.

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[ontario.ca/measles](https://ontario.ca/measles)

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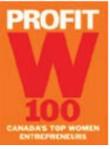
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