



Vaccine pass reactions | Page 10

Skatepark a **place** for all ages

Open house highlights importance of having spot to practise sport



Christopher Setinas, 18, does a kickflip during the skatepark open house on Saturday. RICHARD HARLEY

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Centennial Sports Park was alive with the sounds of skateboards and thumping music on Saturday for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's skateboard open house.

NOTL worked in co-operation with CJ's Skatepark in Mississauga to bring out experienced skateboarders to put on workshops for enthusiastic skateboarders who visit the park in Virgil.

The town's recreation supervisor, Dan Maksenuk,

came up with the idea for the open house.

"The skatepark was built last year so I thought, you know, we've got it, let's do something to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the park," Maksenuk told The Lake Report.

By a stroke of luck the open house was held exactly a year after the skatepark opened in 2020.

Among the skateboarding enthusiasts was six-year-old Evan Renette who was there with his mother Leslie Ryan.

"(Evan's) into scootering. We come here a lot (from

St. Catharines). He's like really, really good at scootering," his proud mother said.

Evan was taking skateboard lessons from instructor Jack Kirwin and was using a board he purchased for himself with money saved up from helping mom around the house, Ryan said.

"We don't have anyone to teach him how to use it so it's kind of been sitting around. So, this is great," she said.

"I was actually thinking they should have an organization that does skateboard and scooter lessons because

Evan comes and he watches the big kids and he's dying to do what they do."

Jay Mandarino, founder of CJ's, was at the park and enthusiastic about the town embracing skateboarding.

"This is such a great initiative and we need more of this to happen," Mandarino said in an interview.

"It's just great to see more communities doing this because people don't understand how beneficial a skatepark is to the community and to youth and children."

Continued on Page 5



Conservative MP Tony Baldinelli watches the votes come in during Monday night's election party at Spyce Lounge in Niagara Falls. RICHARD HARLEY

Baldinelli campaign celebrates **3,100-vote** victory in election

Richard Harley
Evan Saunders
The Lake Report

After a long night of waiting for ballot results, incumbent Conservative Tony Baldinelli was re-elected in Niagara Falls riding Monday, increasing his winning margin while his main competitors saw their support grow only marginally.

Inside the dimly lit Spyce Lounge at the Hilton Niagara Falls, a crowd of about 50 Tory campaigners and supporters gathered around the TVs as information came in from across the country.

While Justin Trudeau's

Liberals reclaimed a minority government nationally, Baldinelli's numbers grew steadily throughout the evening, as he defeated two-time Liberal candidate Andrea Kaiser to win the Niagara Falls riding, which includes Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie.

The race was between Baldinelli, Kaiser, NDP Brian Barker, the Green party's Melanie Holm and People's Party candidate Peter Taras.

As of Wednesday evening all 245 polls had reported in but about 2,800 mail-in ballots were still to be counted.

Continued on Page 2

World Cleanup Day scoops up parkway litter

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

More than 30 people turned out on Saturday to scoop up litter along the Niagara Parkway as part of a World Cleanup Day event organized by the town's environmental advisory committee.

In just two hours, about

a dozen large bags of recycling and garbage were picked up, said Kyra Simone, one of the organizers.

But litter was lighter than previously noted by scouts as the Niagara Parks Commission apparently did its own cleanup along the parkway the day before, one participant in World Cleanup Day told The Lake Report.

Simone, who writes The Lake Report's "Keeping it Green" environmental column, hopes the community cleanup becomes a new tradition in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club showed up to help run the event and help in the cleanup as well.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor was on hand as a member of

the environmental advisory committee.

O'Connor deferred all responsibility for organizing the environmentally conscious event to Simone and Owen Bjorgan, two young leading environmentalists in NOTL and members of the advisory committee.

"We are here today be-

Continued on Page 4



Dr. Bill Rapley cleans up litter along Smuggler's Cover during NOTL's World Cleanup Day on Sept. 18.

EVAN SAUNDERS



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Smooth sailing during Monday polling, voters say

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

Lines were short and moved steadily at Niagara-on-the-Lake polling stations as people cast ballots in the federal election on Monday.

It took NOTL resident Peter Alexander less than five minutes to vote at the NOTL Community Centre in the late afternoon.

He hadn't expected to wait very long.

"I kind of figured if I slipped in just before dinnertime or at the end of work it should be good," Alexander said.

Supervisors of the polling stations, like Sandra Bott at the community centre, said that despite

a steady flow of people there was never a huge lineup of voters. A week earlier, during four days of advance polls, some people complained of long waits.

"It's been a very fast process," Bott told The Lake Report on Monday.

"When people don't have all the information they need, we send them off to the registration desk and we have two registration officers that have been dynamite in getting people where they need to be."

At the Shaw's Festival Theatre, supervisor Wendy Lavigne said there were some short lines in the morning, but throughout voting day everything was "running really, really smoothly."

"There had been an awful lot of advanced polls that were very busy, so there was a lot of people who voted ahead of time," Lavigne said.

Some NOTL residents, like Patricia Atherton, saw no lines at the Shaw polling station upon arrival and took less than two minutes to complete the voting process from the time she walked in the door.

James Cadeau, a NOTL resident and supervisor at the Holiday Inn Express voting location in Glendale, said the only time there was a line of voters was the mid-morning.

"We wouldn't have been able to have things run so smoothly without the great team we had," Cadeau said.



Tony DeLuca checks in with, from left, Louise Rogalski and Shirley Dudeck at the Bethany Mennonite Church polling station. JESSICA MAXWELL

Baldinelli back in for term two, Kaiser **not likely** to run again

Continued from Front Page

Baldinelli had 26,511 votes (38.0 per cent), Kaiser had 23,335 (33.4 per cent), Barker polled 12,722 (18.2 per cent), Taras garnered 5,882 (8.4 per cent) and Holm had 1,364 (2 per cent).

Baldinelli's 3,100-vote plurality widened the gap between the Liberals and Conservatives in the 2019 election, when he beat Kaiser by 2,061 votes.

On Monday, before the night ended and more numbers came in, Baldinelli offered a "tentative" victory speech.

"We'll wait to see those final numbers," he said.

"But we've seen some of the results come in and some of the projections from the media so I want to say first of all thank you to the good people of Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake for tonight's result," he told the crowd, to applause.

"I think that Canadians and the good people of our riding were incredibly disappointed that the prime minister decided to put his own self-interest and that of the Liberal party ahead of theirs, by calling this \$610-million federal election campaign," Baldinelli said.



Andrea Kaiser laughs during her goodnight speech at Casa Mia on election night. EVAN SAUNDERS

"Parliament was functioning for everyone but Justin Trudeau himself, and people saw this election, for what it was, it was nothing more than a cynical power grab because Justin Trudeau thought he could win. Well, I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, we proved him wrong here in Niagara, and thank you for that."

Baldinelli and his wife Carol also celebrated their 18th wedding anniversary on election night.

Campaign manager Bart Maves said while the victory is sweet, he also saw the election as unnecessary.

"It was a really strange election to do in a pandemic," he added, noting it was difficult not being

able to have people in the campaign office.

The Tory total grew by about 1,760 votes and Maves said he wasn't sure where the additional votes came from this time around. Last election independent candidate Mike Strange got 4,997 votes.

Maves doesn't think the extra votes came entirely from Strange voters, "because the PPC ended up taking a very similar amount to what Mike had taken, and I think Mike took from Conservatives, because Mike's a Conservative, but I think he took from other people too — people who just weren't interested in politics before in any way, people that didn't vote. He took some from the NDP."

The campaign was initially worried about the potential of the People's Party to siphon away Conservative votes. That happened in some ridings but he doesn't think it occurred here.

"They had lawn signs all over the place, on every street corner. So we were nervous about it, you're watching the polling all the time, but the polling I saw around here never really had them past six (per cent)," he said.

"I think the PPC, as they've been dissecting it, they probably took 40 or 50 per cent of their vote from us, but the other 50 per cent was the same thing — anti-establishment people, anti-vax, anti-mask, no more locked down people — so they came from all walks of life too."

Historically the Niagara Falls riding has been a battle between the Liberals and Conservatives, echoing the national stage. The Tories have held the riding since 2004, when Rob Nicholson was first elected MP.

Over at Casa Mia restaurant, Kaiser and her Liberal supporters also awaited the results.

Kaiser was calm as the night got under way. Very early on she was leading the incumbent MP by a 100 votes as her supporters

were slowly trickling in to the empty tent.

"I go back and forth, like, 'I got this,' and then, 'Oh, maybe I don't,'" Kaiser said in an interview as votes started coming in.

But she stayed positive, chatting with supporters, until the polls turned.

Around 11 p.m., as the vote turned strongly in favour of Baldinelli, she was absent from the big tent for roughly 30 minutes.

She came back and entertained for another 15 minutes, until the clinking of glass was heard.

"We don't think we will necessarily have the results tonight," Kaiser said to the hushed room.

"But we have some wonderful news tonight, it looks like the CBC is projecting another Liberal government," she said to applause.

"Regardless of the outcome I have been so privileged to meet you all, to work with you all and to have you by my side."

Kaiser said she would be waiting until all the advance polls and mail-in ballots are counted before considering herself out of the race.

Read Leask, a representative of the Kaiser campaign, said 38 per cent of identified Liberals in the riding voted in advance polls.

Kaiser said she had "mixed feelings" in an interview.

"It's a bit surreal, a bit weird, but, you know what, it was always going to be a tight race," she said.

When someone joked the third time's the charm (Kaiser has run in the last two federal elections), she laughed and said, "I don't know if I could survive a third."

"Yeah, not sure I'm going to make it for a third," she repeated.

At the beginning of the night, Kaiser said she had just woken up from a much-needed nap after 36 days of campaigning.

She said after the election result is official, she is looking forward to "a whole week of napping."

In the 2019 election, Baldinelli won a smaller victory over Kaiser, securing 24,751 votes to Kaiser's 22,690. Barker received 12,566 votes and the Green party, represented by Sandra O'Connor, took home 3,404 votes.

Last election also saw People's Party of Canada candidate Alexander Taylor receive 968 votes, independent Mike Strange got 4,997 votes and Trisha O'Connor earned 358 votes for the Christian Heritage Party.



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Analysis: Federal election is over, so let's get to work on **pandemic, economy, jobs**

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

No matter what way you voted, no matter who you supported, no matter how happy or not you are with the outcome or the fact we even had a snap federal election Monday, the results did produce some intriguing storylines.

Conservative Tony Baldinelli substantially increased his winning margin over Liberal Andrea Kaiser – despite fears that the right-wing People's Party of Canada would steal support away from the Tories. And despite a last-minute pep rally visit by the PM to the riding on Sunday afternoon.

As of now, Niagara's four federal ridings are again split, with two each going to the Liberals and Tories.

In the riding of Niagara Falls, which includes Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie (three more disparate and different municipalities might be hard to find), the Liberal and New Democratic Party votes held pretty steady – but did not grow from 2019.

The Green party, whose candidate Melanie Holm was mostly invisible, saw the hard work and growth achieved by 2019 candidate Sandra O'Connor (now a NOTL councillor) implode and evaporate.

The Greens were never



MP Tony Baldinelli during The Lake Report's debate night at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery. RON PLANCHE

going to be contenders and perhaps all the internal party turmoil at the national level is to blame, but their vote cascaded downward substantially (to about 1,300, from a high of 3,400 two years ago).

It doesn't matter whether you think the People's Party reflects your values and beliefs or that it is a haven for racist, conspiracy theory loving outliers (or somewhere in between), the fact remains the PPC attracted more than 5,800 votes.

That's almost half as many people as voted NDP in this riding and it's an achievement that can't simply be dismissed. What it means in the long term is anyone's guess. Will Maxime Bernier's party continue to grow? Will he be able to remain as its leader, having failed to win his own riding again? Will

any of this matter?

Whether the party's result here and across the country is a one-time surge powered mainly by anti-vaxxers and small-I libertarian types who like to say they are "pro" personal choice, remains to be seen.

In Niagara Falls riding, the People's Party polled at 8.4 per cent and boosted its vote total by a factor of six. In fact, right across the four Niagara Region ridings the PPC had similar results.

But the party seems to be a small-town and rural phenomenon, with little voter traction in major urban centres, especially in the Greater Toronto Area. Will it remain a vehicle for people to express continued discontent with government or have we reached peak PPC?

Kudos to Kaiser and the NDP's Brian Barker

for fighting the good fight against Baldinelli's version of the "Big Blue Machine," which has dominated the riding since Tory Rob Nicholson's first win in 2004.

As ever, once elections are over and wounds are licked, it's time to move forward. Sometimes that can be tough.

Enough talk of it being a needless, expensive election and a Justin Trudeau vanity project – it certainly was both.

But the good people of Canada decided they were OK with that and rewarded the Liberals with another stint as Canada's governing party, though again with minority strings attached.

The key now is for the government – and our re-elected MP – to work on governing what on some levels seems a fractured nation.

The first task at hand: guiding us out of this pandemic (safely) and getting the economy and jobs back on track.

Minority governments can be highly productive, if all parties are willing to work together for the common, non-partisan good.

Let's see if Trudeau and the Liberals learned anything from the 36-day campaign and resulting vote.

And let's not head to the polls for another four or more years.

Police **searching** for missing NOTL man, 58

Staff
The Lake Report

Darren Werner has been missing since Sept. 16.

The 58-year-old Niagara-on-the-Lake resident was last seen in NOTL near Townline Road at 9 a.m. on that day, travelling in an unknown vehicle, according to Niagara Regional Police.

Police and his family are worried about Werner's welfare.

"It's been six days since the disappearance of Darren Werner," his ex-sister-in-law Kristyn Dekker-Davies wrote in a Facebook post on Sept. 21.

"A thorough grid search of Darren's property was completed today by NRP Tactical Unit. Obviously we did not find Darren."

Werner is the property owner of 1238 Townline Rd., which was the site of a major fire in February.

Davies said Werner's phone has been off since Sept. 16, all of his vehicles are still on his property, his bank account has not been accessed and he has not left the country.

"This is completely out of character for Darren," she wrote.

Werner's property was being used to house several

businesses including an auto-repair shop. Community members used the property to store boats, race cars, classic cars and vintage military vehicles among others.

Damages from the fire were estimated at \$2.5 million and Werner told media members the property was insured.

Werner is white, 5 foot 11 and weighs roughly 180 pounds. He has short grey hair and brown eyes.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Niagara police at 905-688-4111, dial option 3 and enter extension 1024325.

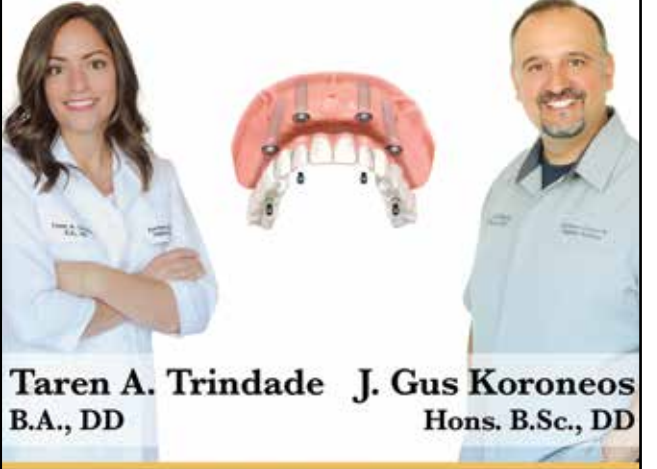


Darren Werner was last seen on Sept. 16 near Townline Road. SUPPLIED

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World Cleanup Day volunteers scoop up parkway litter

Continued from Front Page

cause of them,” O’Connor said.

The event was originally scheduled to take place in the spring but COVID-19 restrictions delayed it twice, Simone said.

Finally, the blitz was moved to Sept. 18, but not without some bureaucratic hurdles.

Since the cleanup was an organized event taking place on land owned by the parks commission it was subject to a lengthy permitting process, Simone said.

She and Bjorgan needed to get liability insurance, organize garbage pickup with the commission and get a special events permit from the town.

“We didn’t know about these hurdles,” Simone said during an interview at the event.

“I didn’t know about them either,” O’Connor laughed.

Locations along the Niagara River were chosen for their convenient parking and immediate access to the areas of the parkway that had been scouted by Simone and Bjorgan as some of the



Coun. Sandra O’Connor and Kyra Simone. EVAN SAUNDERS

most litter-filled.

Jeannie Manning, a representative of the Rotary Club, had some suggestions for how the commission could better manage litter in its parks.

“Along the parkway, we need animal-resistant garbage lids,” Manning said while gesturing to a nearby garbage bin that had no covering whatsoever.

“Every time a garbage pail fills up, before the commission can get to it, the animals— skunks and raccoons— get into it and whip it everywhere. We’re suggesting that it might be a good idea to have animal-proof lids.”

Manning said the intro-

duction of animal-proof lids would remove a lot of trash from the parks by keeping it in the bins.

The event was never intended to be a part of World Cleanup Day but, serendipitously, the dates lined up.

Manning said she picked the day not realizing the international connection.

And, by a simple twist of fate, what could one day grow into NOTL’s biggest environmental blitz had its inaugural day.

“It’s the first World Cleanup Day official event (in NOTL), so, why not do it again next year?” Simone said.

The Rotary Club is an international organization

and the NOTL chapter and other clubs in the region and across the river in the United States are collectively part of District 7090. Together, they are enacting the “Great Lakes Watershed Cleanup,” Manning said.

The plan is ambitious, covering not only the Great Lakes, but the entire Great Lakes drainage basin consisting of all the creeks and rivers associated with the watershed, Manning said.

Angela Lindfield showed up to help and shared a motivation that will probably sound familiar to most ardent trail walkers.

“I love walking this parkway and often I go by and see garbage and think, ‘Oh gosh, I should pick that up,’ but (I don’t),” Lindfield said.

It was her first time involved in a cleanup project and she said it won’t be her last.

Simone was proud of the initiative residents showed.

“I’m really glad people took me up on collecting garbage and recycling separately. There were a lot of bottles and cans, as expected,” Simone said.

The 26-year-old Simone

just finished earning a second master’s degree – in science communication at Laurentian University – is getting ready to start her PhD at McMaster’s School of Earth, Environment and Society.

On top of that she has been on the environmental advisory committee for the last year, has collected over 5,000 cigarette butts off the street around NOTL in the last few weeks, routinely organizes a small group of friends to do private cleanup events at parks, works in a lab at McMaster and finds time to write her regular columns for The Lake Report.

Dr. Bill Rapley has been involved in environmental causes his whole life and is the NOTL rep on the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. He also was a longtime employee at the Toronto Zoo.

Rapley was one of the most motivated cleaners of the day.

He perused the shore of Smuggler’s Cove picking up anything and everything that looked like junk. He even found some old pieces

of pottery that he slid into the back pocket of his trousers.

For Rapley, participating in cleanup events isn’t just about caring for the environment.

“You always have to show the example. It’s really easy to go to conferences and sit back and say, ‘We need to do this and that,’ ” Rapley said down at Smugglers Cove.

“Showing the example anyway you can is extremely important.”

Rapley recalled a tree planting years ago that had bankers and lawyers taking part.

“When you get a banker digging in the ground and putting a tree in, that’s progress,” he said.

Rapley stressed the importance of people getting in touch with the environment and said the increase in hikers throughout the pandemic could be a blessing in disguise for environmentalists.

“Once people get out and they start hiking and getting around they start to connect, right? That’s what it’s all about,” he said.

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Terry Fox Run sets stage for reunion 40 years in making

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



Heidi Sobol, left, and Joan King in front of a quilt made by Lynn Bishop. King was Sobol's Grade 4 teacher at Cardinal Newman Catholic Elementary School and hadn't seen her since the 1980s. EVAN SAUNDERS

Heidi Sobol hadn't seen her Grade 4 teacher, Joan King, in decades – until she came out to Sunday's Terry Fox Run to support her favourite elementary school teacher and raise money for cancer research.

King has been organizing the run in Niagara-on-the-Lake since 2007 and this year's event set the stage for a meeting between King and her long-ago student.

King was busy speaking with participants at Simcoe Park when a cry of, "Joan King, it's Heidi. Heidi Sobol from the fourth grade," rang out.

Sobol and King, who taught her at Cardinal Newman Catholic Elementary School in Niagara Falls, shared an embrace. The student and teacher hadn't seen each other since the 1980s.

Sobol said participating in the run in NOTL was as much about Terry Fox as it was about supporting King, whom she regards very fondly.

"She was the best. Yesterday I went through my diaries and there was a passage that went, 'February 7, 1984. Gym today, Miss King was my teacher, yay!'"

King had equally fond memories and talked about

a time she met a gentleman who used to teach at the same school.

"He said his name was Sobol. I said, 'Oh boy, I know a Heidi Sobol.' He said that's his daughter," King said.

King told Sobol's father she still has a painting that Sobol gave her all those years ago and sharing that with Sobol over Facebook brought the two together again.

"Heidi sent the most beautiful message to me. It really touched my heart," King said.

Sobol is a member of Team Tennessee, one of the top 100 fundraising Terry Fox Run teams in Canada this year. The team exceeded its \$5,000 goal by raising \$5,451, according to the national run's website.

It was her first year participating in the run, a theme that cropped up throughout the day. She got involved when her sister told her they were trying to raise \$5,000 for cancer research.

"I'm like, 'I want in.' We all do sports so why not do something like this all together," Sobol said.

Sobol knows many people whose lives have been directly affected by cancer and it becomes clear just how pervasive cancer is when her team does their pre-run ritual.

"Before each time we run we make a circle and we say who we're running for," she said.

"It's touching to hear how many people can't come up with just one name. We have to name lots of people really close to us: parents, grandpar-

ents and siblings. So, it's really a cause everyone can relate to."

"So you think of these people when you're running. Especially Terry (Fox)."

Sobol stressed that running isn't the only way people can get involved with the Terry Fox Run.

"If you can't run you can put in a donation," she said.

"Let's build the momentum, let's see this happen more and more every year so everyone participates."

Sobol was far from the only one to get involved in the run for the first time despite the threat of COVID-19.

Craig McCallum, creative director for the Wind Group Inc., was at the run with 15 of his staff members, all Terry Fox Run rookies.

"These are all volunteers, nobody had to come," he said of the staff members.

"I was expecting me and my wife but everybody's here and their dogs. We're just waiting for the kitchen sink," McCallum joked.

He said his company's involvement in the run was about living up to its corporate values.

"We want to be able to say, 'We'll be there, too,' not just put values up on the wall, but demonstrate them," he said.

His team usually takes part in the Rankin Cancer

Run in St. Catharines. But, as many said on Sunday morning, they were participating in the NOTL run because of their relationship with King.

McCallum hopes it becomes an annual tradition for the company.

Members of the Wind staff of all ages were there, with some children hoisted onto their parents' shoulders to take part. Involving youth is important, King said.

"You've got to honour these people because here they are doing (the Terry Fox Run) with their children," King said.

"And that's where you want it to start, with the kids."

One person who understood that was comedian David Green, who was there with his one-year-old daughter Charlotte.

He has participated in the run for 13 years, since he first moved to Niagara.

Green is known for the fundraisers he hosts with fellow comedian Joe Pillitteri and last week, the duo raised \$35,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation at an event.

Green says fundraising for the run is the perfect gig for him.

"It combines my two greatest passions: a love for comedy and a love for Terry Fox," Green said in an interview.

He said he is motivated by the example Fox set.

"He inspires people and brings everybody together. I want to be a part of that and to keep continuing it as well," he said.

In the bandshell at Simcoe Park, King set up a display with photos from previous runs.

There was also a quilt, created by Lynn Bishop, that was made up of T-shirts from past runs, and a huge poster of Fox, which became the centrepiece for many a photo-op.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero also was on hand and brought a companion: her mom's dog Bella.

Disero was emotional talking about a very specific segment of the population suffering from cancer.

"It's all about, for me, children's cancer. Cancer's a really awful way to pass and the more we can do for research to stop cancer the better," Disero said in an interview.

"I feel for families that have to go through it with children that are so young."

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake recently raised a flag to boost awareness for children's cancer. September is Childhood Cancer Awareness month.

"We will someday find a cure for cancer," Disero said.

Building skatepark beside other amenities a good idea, says expert

Continued from Front Page

Mandarino said towns need to promote skateparks as an outlet for youth to be physically active and form strong community bonds.

"Moreso now because of COVID," he said.

The sense of community that arises from skateboarding is its most powerful and positive effect, Mandarino said.

"It doesn't matter what nationality you are or what religion you are or what income. Everybody helps everybody," he said.

"It could be that five-year-old kid who's never been on a board, it could be a 21-year-old pro, it could be a 14-year-old or a 60-year-

old — everybody just helps everybody."

Skateboarding provides a healthy physical and mental outlet for struggling youth, Mandarino said.

"A lot of people don't realize the benefits of skateboarding. A lot of team sports are about winning. And, of course, there's nothing wrong with winning but not everyone's going to be as good as everybody else," he said.

"The suicide rate right now is going off the charts for young people."

Mandarino emphasized the importance of building a skatepark in a central location to combat the negative stigma associated with the sport.

"You know, sometimes — not so much skateboarders

— but sometimes, historically, people are selling drugs at skateparks or late at night. It really depends on where it is," he said.

Mandarino is 61 now and still skateboards. If for nothing else adults should pick up the sport for the health benefits, he said.

"I lost 20 pounds when I started skateboarding again," he said.

Sebastian McLaughlin, a 14-year-old from Bradford, has been petitioning his municipal council to invest in a skatepark in the town south of Barrie to promote healthy activities for teenagers.

"It's a great way to have confidence. It's not a team sport, it's all you — there's no pressure," McLaughlin

said in an interview.

"The community is very very cool and it just helps with your mentality."

McLaughlin said he and his buddies have to drive to neighbouring communities like Richmond Hill to skateboard and said his hope is to have a skatepark in Bradford like the one in NOTL built.

Pro-skateboarder Chris Setinas, 18, was there teaching kids like McLaughlin how to improve their technique. Setinas is from Markham and is listed as one of the top 2,000 skateboarders in the world by theboardr.com

He was happy to be helping youth get involved in the skateboarding community, which has been such a good

home for him, he said.

"It's pretty cool to see the younger kids learning and seeing them all get together," Setinas said.

The scenic atmosphere of NOTL was not lost on the co-ordinators.

"(NOTL) is a beautiful area. I said to the kids, 'Hey, we can take you for a glass of wine after but, oh wait, you guys aren't old enough,'" Mandarino joked. CJ's, the largest not-for-profit skatepark in the world, was founded by Mandarino in 2008.

He started skateboarding in the 1970s and gained fame as the first person in the world to jump over a Ferrari.

He had a picture of the moment on one of the skate-

boards he was riding at the open house.

The town used \$1,000 of a grant partially funded by ParticipACTION to promote fitness and wellness to host the event, Maksenuk said.

ParticipACTION is a non-profit organization founded in 1971 to promote physical fitness and activity in Canada.

Coun. Allan Bisback was on hand to check out the festivities.

"The thing I like about the skatepark, for me, it's bringing back some normalcy. To come out and see the kids using this — things are starting to get back to normal, and I think that's very helpful," Bisback said.

— With files from Richard Harley



FINE COLLECTIBLES BY THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND



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



NOTL active cases: 7
Region active cases: 258
Region deaths: 428
Region total cases: 17,365
Region resolved cases: 16,679
**Sept. 22 data per Niagara Region Public Health*



Contributed by Patty Garriock
 “Enjoy life ... it is a gift. Unwrap it with gratitude and love.” - Patty Garriock

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

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Editorial

Short-term rentals: Part 2

Too much industry influence

This is the second in a series of editorials about the issue of short-term rentals in our community, how they hollow out neighbourhoods, and how town council has continued to give in to pressure from the industry. As well we'll offer potential solutions to the problem.

Richard Harley
 Editor-In-Chief



They don't pay commercial tax, they pay a nominal annual fee per room and now they're being excluded from collecting Niagara-on-the-Lake's planned accommodation tax.

Short-term rentals have taken hold in our community and are having a lasting, damaging effect on our town — as they have in other towns and cities ... everywhere.

As we've stated in previous editorials, there are some people who don't even have neighbours any more, thanks to the invasion of short-term rentals.

Yet, despite the globally reported damages caused by this industry, NOTL's town council is catering to stakeholders — so much that it formed a whole specific committee to deal with the industry.

Read that again — a whole town committee for one industry. That gives the rental sector a lot of influence over our elected officials.

We don't have committees for the wine industry or the theatre industry or most other industries, let alone creating one to deal with a group that essentially should have been illegal from the outset.

While we wish this industry had never got a foothold in the community,

and we wish their operation was not allowed, it seems that the short-term rental phenomenon is here to stay. So, NOTL council needs to deal with that reality and establish some controls, like the accommodation levy and ensuring rentals are owner-occupied.

What you'll often hear from people who are on the inside of this industry is that without short-term rentals, NOTL's tourism sector would suffer.

That's egregious and there is zero evidence to support it. And charging a nominal accommodation tax, like dozens of other municipalities do, will not kill the entire short-term rental industry.

People will still come to NOTL in droves. They'll stay in hotels, regular bed and breakfasts. Or pay the nominal tax if council finds the courage to charge it across the board.

We live beside Niagara Falls, just the backwash of tourists from there will sustain our tourism, realistically.

Another issue these stakeholders like to bring up is noise complaints.

They make it look like noise and partying is the

main problem, and say they're aiming to fix it.

But noise is the least of the problems. Your real neighbours (if you're lucky enough to have them any more) can be just as loud as a group of guests.

Don't get us wrong, there is also an alarming lack of oversight for these businesses. Not regulated to the same standards as hotels, for the most part they are self-regulating — and now taxpayers must shoulder the burden for third-party compliance companies the town has to hire, like the \$45,000 Granicus Host Compliance contract signed in 2021, to help identify unregistered rentals and curb noise complaints.

But tackling issues like noise without addressing the true problems is like using a Band-Aid on a severed limb.

It's just not enough.

The real, unavoidable issue with short-term rentals is that they hollow out our communities and replace our homes with hotels.

The way the industry is allowed to operate currently allows investors to purchase homes, not to live in, but to profit from. And they sell them the same way.

It's time for our councillors to tackle these highly illegal businesses operating within our communities. It's time to recognize that you, and politicians before you, were asleep at the switch when this industry started to take over residential homes.

What's next? Do we allow retail stores in people's garages? Can we turn our kitchens into restaurants and unfairly compete with the culinary industry? Can your neighbour turn her backyard into a brew pub or winery?

It's time to get real and put an end to this dangerous, precedent-setting mistake. We need to stop all short-term rentals from operating unless the home is the primary residence of the owner. We need to stop letting investors purchase up our homes and turn them into hotels. We need to put an end to housing market increases and unfair competition for home buyers due in part to homes becoming businesses instead of places to live.

And if it's too late (it's not, despite what our politicians will tell you) then we need to rezone rentals as commercial properties and charge the appropriate taxes.

Meanwhile, the very, very least council can do is to ensure these commercial businesses collect the accommodation tax, the same as any other hotel will have to.

The Lake Report will continue to advocate for short-term rentals to be declared what they are: illegal and a blight on our town..

Next: The pros, the cons, and a look at realistic solutions.

editor@niagaranow.com

Agree? Disagree? Send your thoughts to editor@niagaranow.com.

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 Mississagua St., NOTL.



HEY NOTL! WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR DINNER?

← **Italian Pizza Pasta** or Spanish Tapas →

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





NOTL's inclusivity committee reflects on discrimination, diversity and equity

Members of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's inclusivity committee submitted the following report about the work of their group, which is comprised of Jamie Knight and Niki Walker (co-chairs), Richard Mell, George Webber, Bex McKnight, Kiera Sangster, Sandra Gruosso and Coun. John Wiens.



opportunity; working to eliminate all forms of discrimination; and responding quickly to racist and other discriminatory incidents.

Inclusivity (or inclusion) is often linked with two other equally important terms, "diversity" and "equity," under the acronym DEI.

Diversity measures the degree to which people of different races, religions, ethnicities, ages, abilities, economic classes, genders and sexual orientations are present in a specific workplace or social environment. In effect, diversity is a snapshot of the way things are.

Equity is the concept of providing fair opportunities for everyone in a diverse group, taking into account their individual needs. Equity celebrates individual differences and strives to recognize and value the good faith contributions of all members.

In NOTL, inclusivity is the focus of a town committee that was formed by council. The inclusivity committee, like the town's many other committees, is an advisory group made up of volunteers and a council member, assisted by town staff.

Committees exist to

develop expertise among committee members, provide outreach to residents and related organizations, and make recommendations to council. Committees do not have the authority to spend money or commit town resources to any initiative or ongoing work unless expressly empowered to do so by council.

Recently, for example, the inclusivity committee recommended that council consider installing a rainbow crosswalk and rainbow bench(es), like many other Ontario municipalities already have, as a way of showing that NOTL values and welcomes members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. The final decision, timing, and funding of projects such as these rest with council, as our duly elected representatives.

Over the past couple of years, DEI issues such as racism toward BIPOC (Black Ingegnous people of colour) Canadians and the ongoing legacy of residential schools have begun to enter mainstream consciousness.

At the same time, incidents of intolerance and hate crimes, such as attacks on Islamic and Asian Canadians, assaults on 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, and the defacing of Pride symbols, religious places and memorials for marginalized groups, have been rising.

Given all of these developments, and considering that people of various races,

ethnicities, religions and sexual orientations live and work in NOTL, it is more important than ever to consider how our town responds to issues of inclusivity.

Many people see DEI initiatives as a means of building a better, more just, society. These initiatives can only succeed when we bring empathy, compassion, and open hearts and minds to the table, however.

There remains plenty of room for discussion — and even vigorous debate — when it comes time to put concepts into action, but we must be willing to start from a place of respect and openness for any true debate to take place.

In the months ahead, the inclusivity committee looks forward to presenting further details about ideas and initiatives that we are debating and forwarding to the attention of council.

We trust that this introduction to the committee's work will give readers a better sense of what we do and what key words actually mean.

Most importantly, we welcome input from anyone who is interested in learning more and participating in our activities and discussions.

Please visit the town's Join the Conversation page for our committee (www.jointheconversationnotl.org/inclusivity) or reach out to us by email inclusivity.com@notl.com.

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COMMUNITY DONATION PROJECT
Porch Pick-up Food Drive

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

We were so grateful for the tremendous community support of our food drive held last May – it was overwhelming. Thank you all very much.

We're asking for your support once again, this time to assist us in filling our Thanksgiving hampers for our clients.

On Saturday, Sept. 25, 2021, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Note that our volunteers will all wear masks and gloves and will respect all physical distancing restrictions, including contactless pick-up.

If you wish to donate in support of our Food Bank, please call 905-468-7498 or email us at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com to register your address for pick-up.

We appreciate your support!!!

Items required for Thanksgiving hampers
Stuffing Mix | Cranberry Sauce | Canned Ham
Canned Gravy (turkey or chicken)
Canned Pineapple | Applesauce or Canned Fruit
Canned Corn | Canned green beans
Canned peas + other daily items

Newark neighbours
Food Bank & Thrift Shop
Niagara-on-the-Lake

Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club

Cyclists need lights and reflective clothing

Dear editor:

I am a rural resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake and also a NOTL firefighter. I have had two encounters in the last seven days that are concerning to me, and I think to others once they read this.

I live on Line 5 and I run a company in St. Catharines. I leave the house for the office at 6 a.m. typically.

As the seasons change and we get closer to fall and winter, it is quite dark in the morning, and the days in

general are getting shorter.

Twice this week I happened along a cyclist dressed in very dark clothing with not one reflector or light visible on the bike. I absolutely could not see them until I was quite close.

I find this both scary and unsettling.

As firefighters, we have seen and heard the aftermath of a needless cyclist or pedestrian vs. vehicle accidents. Horrific and unnecessary.

I am not harping on bike

lanes or "us vs. them," as my wife and I do cycle in this beautiful countryside. We do it in the light of day, with some real fear of fast-moving vehicles coming from the rear that refuse to share the road.

I am asking both cyclists and the farmers that supply bikes to our very important migrant workers to take some responsibility.

Please wear light or reflective clothing. Please ensure your bike, or the bikes you provide to

migrant staff, have proper, highly visible lights and/or reflectors.

When tragedy strikes, the stories in the papers always point at the driver, but there are two sides to every story. Yes, drivers have the responsibility to watch, but pedestrians and cyclists also have the responsibility to be safe and be seen.

Prevention takes one minute, but accidents last a lifetime.

Bill Maartense
NOTL

Celebrating that we can celebrate Thanksgiving!!
Please call ahead for a custom pumpkin arrangement for your Thanksgiving weekend.

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Cycling **side-by-side** can actually be safer, some say

Frank Hayes
Special to The Lake Report

In your Aug. 19 issue there is an article promoting a new map created for cyclists by the town's safety committee.

The map, available at www.cyclenotl.ca, contains some information that is incorrect, according to Ontario laws, at least.

For example, a highlighted box states, "Ride single file and never side by side. Follow the rules of the road at all times."

This is incorrect as it implies that riding side-by-side is illegal. It is not – there is no law prohibiting cyclists from riding two abreast on Ontario roads.

In fact, the police in Ottawa actually recently encouraged it. A June article, "The Ottawa police just endorsed cyclists riding two abreast" in Canadian Cycling Magazine spells it out.

Ottawa police on social media pointed out: "Riding side by side is actually safer. It forces vehicles to properly overtake them instead of trying to squeeze by too closely in the same lane. In larger groups, it also allows drivers to overtake the group faster by not having a long line of cyclists in a row."

I am concerned that drivers will see the notation in the cyclenotl.ca document and believe it, further exacerbating the already high friction levels between cyclists and drivers.

Cyclists are more keenly aware of the rules of the road, because most cyclists are drivers, so they know the rules of the road for cyclists as well as for drivers.



Frank Hayes rides his souped up speed bike. He's got several safety features included. RICHARD HARLEY

Many drivers barely know the rules of the road for drivers. Cyclists are killed on Ontario roads at an average annual rate of 150 per year and 43 per cent of those are hit from behind, so they never even see it coming.

Cyclists have full vehicle status on our roads, full rights to occupy the full lane, to preserve their own safety to avoid holes in the road or items in their way. Cyclists are allowed to ride two abreast, so long as they are not impeding traffic.

This means that if the oncoming lane is empty, then the driver is fully expected to cross to the other side of the road to pass a group of cyclists.

If there is oncoming traffic, preventing the driver from going to the other side of the road, then what the Ottawa police are promoting is that cyclists riding two abreast are correct in their approach by securing

their position on the road.

If they were travelling single file, it is all too easy for a driver to think they can "squeeze by" and not comply with the relatively new one-metre passing law.

In this case, it is no different to when a driver encounters a slow-moving farm vehicle: the driver must slow down and wait until there is a safe opportunity to pass. It is that simple.

But with everyone being so impatient these days, combined with a general hatred for cyclists, drivers will take all sorts of dangerous chances, risking the lives of the cyclists, but not their own, because they are cocooned in 5,000 pounds of metal, with A/C, seat belts, crumple zones, airbags, etc.

A cyclist's only protection is a one-pound helmet.

And why should cyclists have to dress for urban warfare? Heck, they are doing more to benefit the environ-

ment that someone in a car pushing out hydrocarbons destroying the planet.

I expect many drivers will be ranting by now, cyclists blow through stop signs, they speed around town, they break laws all the time. That's all true, but drivers are no better: speeding, driving distracted, running red lights, rolling through stop signs, killing pedestrians, etc.

Drivers are expected to be in full control of their vehicles at all times. And in the war of cyclists vs. drivers, the last time I checked, cyclists haven't killed any drivers.

Cyclists have an innate desire to live, we don't think it's a great idea to head out on a bike ride looking to impale ourselves on the hood of a driver's car. No good will come of that.

But instead, drivers detest cyclists, and drivers are always in such a hurry – for what? Seriously drivers, give your head a shake.

That's not just a cyclist, it's a real live person. In fact, some day it could be your son, daughter, grandchild.

Were we all not proud when our top Canadian cyclists recently took home some Olympic medals? Years of preparation that went into those medals were spent on riders' local roads.

All I am asking is that the note be removed from the cyclenotl.ca article as it is an online piece so a simple edit will have immediate effect.

To everyone who is now probably foaming at the mouth, ready to get to their keyboard with their replies to me, I acknowledge that there are good and bad cyclists, in the same way that there are good and bad drivers.

The difference being that it's the drivers who cause injury, not the vehicles. Our rural roads are littered with

signs that say "Share The Road," but maybe we are all driving too fast to see and read them, let alone absorb what they truly mean.

Almost all recent cyclist deaths have been when the cyclists were riding solo. But this year, two in particular stick in my mind.

In August, an 18-year-old boy was cycling up Avenue Road in Toronto. A large truck passed him, too closely. It hit and killed him.

The driver had to be flagged down later by drivers who saw the horrific incident, because he had no clue that he driven over a cyclist.

I think of the boy, and then I think of his parents: they lost an only child, their lives have been changed forever.

A few months back, an 11-year-old boy was killed by a driver. The child was riding his bike, trying to make the transition from the inside lane just before the on-ramp to the 407, to continue on the regular road. That's an intimidating situation for a seasoned cyclist, never mind an 11-year-old.

I really don't know what the driver was thinking, it was a bright, clear, dry day. Distracted? In a rush? It doesn't matter now because it won't bring a child back. As for his parents, how can they rationalize what has happened to their child?

All I ask is: think, people think. You have two pedals in your car and life isn't all about pressing on the right pedal. Be patient and use the left one too.

Frank Hayes is a driver and a cyclist. He lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Sorry, but Justin Trudeau's Liberals **did break promise** to seniors

Dear editor:

The election is over but this is in response to a letter from Elizabeth Oliver-Malone ("Claims against PM Justin Trudeau were false) saying the details in my Sept. 9 letter were wrong, ("More promises to be broken on seniors benefits").

While I feel she is taking poetic licence and playing fast and loose with the truth

in her interpretation, I do, however, respect her passion in attempting to defend the indefensible .

She said the recent \$500 payout was an interim payment against the now-rescheduled OAS and CPP increases in July 2022.

This one-time, paltry taxable amount is just more political puffery to deflect from the real facts. Respectfully, it is completely

false and unrelated to any promises made by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during his campaign stump speech in 2019 in New Brunswick.

It was simply an 11th-hour pitch made on Aug. 13, 2021, to attract seniors' votes. It came from Deb Schulte, the minister for seniors. It is similar to his pandering to the Quebec Liberal vote by offering \$6

billion in child care support – to a province with the premier child care program in Canada and one that did not request the money.

Furthermore, allow me to address the true facts of his 2019 New Brunswick speech as reported by Kathleen Harris of the CBC News on September 18th, 2019. Several other national news media outlets reported on his promises .

On Sept. 18, 2019, in Fredericton, Trudeau promised a 10 per cent Old Age Security (OAS) boost at age 75 and a 25 per cent increase to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) for widows. These were to take effect in July 2020 "and would be indexed to keep up with inflation."

Trudeau's promises were never implemented in July 2020, another of his hollow

promises and absolutely false. Therefore, the facts I mentioned were not wrong.

In this instance the PM's team decided to spin the 2019 promises, repackage them for their 2021 campaign and change the implementation date to July 2022 from July 2020, a full two years later. In my opinion just another pack of lies.

*Samuel Young
NOTL*



Erinn, James, Liam, Sophie, and Daphne are very happy to have our café in the NOTL Community Centre open for customers to sit down again!

For more information or to get on our weekly email list send an email to: sweetsandswirlscafe@gmail.com. The Café is currently open 9am to 3pm - Monday to Saturday. OR you can join us at the Farmer's Market every Saturday.



Traffic light needed at Anderson and Niagara Stone intersection

Dear editor:

A good start: The all-way stop at Queen and Mississagua street took long enough to plan and actually execute, but it has added to safety for all concerned. Thank you.

I see the town is adding a three-way stop at the intersection at Anderson Lane and the entrance to the library and community centre.

What about stop lights at the Niagara Stone Road and

Anderson Lane intersection, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Region of Niagara?

The community centre is reopening and this is a dangerous, busy crossing.

Involved here are pedestrians going to the housing across the road, cyclists trying to turn and cars exiting to go either way.

And this is the exit for fire trucks leaving the fire hall beside the community centre.

Lights would slow the cars racing down from the 70 km/h zone at the previous lights to the 50 km/h requirement in Old Town.

There is a long stretch from Garrison Village to Mary Street and speeding is an issue. The speed monitors really don't slow the traffic. Lights are more effective.

Surely safety-minded citizens would like to see these put in.

**Sheila Doyle
NOTL**

Lawyer challenging vaccine mandates

Dear editor:

I want to share a valuable resource for people who have chosen not to be vaccinated and are questioning their human rights.

The website is www.action4canada.com.

www.action4canada.com.

This group has retained the services of Toronto constitutional lawyer Rocco Galati.

The group's website includes liability letters that

you can use to give to your workplace, school, etc. if you are declining the COVID vaccination, to wear a mask or to have PCR testing.

**Shannon Sherwood
NOTL**

Short-term rentals aren't the problem

Dear editor:

Your Sept. 16 editorial, "Town must tax all short-term rentals," states: "We are not picking on short-term rentals."

I must be really greedy. Not only am I a short-term rental owner and a real estate agent, I am also a property manager who apparently "suckle(s) off the teat of short-term rentals." (Not my words.)

When you talk about short-term rentals artificially inflating housing market prices, you can look back 10 years and even further to see that home prices in Niagara-on-the-Lake have been twice that of the surrounding Niagara region – long before Airbnb had a significant presence.

Across Ontario there has been a trend of increasing real estate prices over the past 10 years, not specifically in tourist destinations that may be impacted by short-term rentals.

There are 255 licensed short-term rentals in Niagara-on-the-Lake. According to the 2016 census, there are 7,964 private dwellings (probably higher with all the recent development).

It's hard to believe the three per cent of homes that are short-term rentals are having such an impact on affordability in Niagara-on-the-Lake. In fact, if you look at the number of licensed short-term rentals last year, there were 340, so there seems to be a trend to fewer short-term rentals.

Note that the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has a contract with a third-party company to find and fine unlicensed short-term rentals. The town also has recommendations from the short-term rental advisory committee to further limit new licences, including a recommendation to not license properties with pools, and to no longer issue villa licences for four or more bedrooms.

Interestingly enough, I recognize the photo of the short-term rental in the cover article, "Only 12 of 255 short-term rentals eligible for new accommodation tax."

If you were to look on Airbnb, it may initially show \$1,120 per night, but when you look closer you would see a far lower nightly rate that is then inflated by nearly 30 per

cent when you add fees charged by Airbnb, and taxes. And the taxes will eventually increase by four per cent if and when a full accommodation tax is added. Neither the property manager, nor the homeowner sees the full amount that a guest pays.

You are correct on one thing: COVID has been tough, and, as you point out, a short-term rental is not a typical business model, so, very few, if any, short-term rental owners received any government assistance money.

I can attest, as a short-term rental owner, and a real estate agent and a property manager working with short-term rental owners, I am not independently wealthy and not getting there anytime soon.

If I were truly greedy, I'm sure that there are many other "industries" that I could operate in and other more affordable communities that I could live in.

Thanks for your comment at the end where you clarify that you "are not picking on short-term rentals."

**Jason Clements
NOTL**

NOTL hotel tax is a bad idea

Dear editor:

So I see town council, with the exception of three councilors, has approved a municipal accommodation tax.

It would seem to be a way of raising more money to cover the mismanagement of the budget by this council. There are a number of reasons why this tax is a bad idea.

Firstly, the town will have to manage the collection of this tax. Presumably they would have to hire someone to administer the tax. I'm not sure how the town would be able to determine how much tax to collect as currently there is no requirement to advise the town of revenue.

B&Bs are already required to administer the HST and this involves more time on our part. It is well-known that there are many illegal B&Bs, some B&Bs renting more rooms than they are licensed for and also Airbnbs.

The town has hired an outside company to investigate this area at some cost as opposed to having existing town bylaw staff carry out this function. This could also be accomplished by having bylaw officers on-call and paid, as our volunteer firefighters are, to investigate after-hour complaints as town staff generally only work 9-5.

It seems to me there are other avenues to increase funds for municipal coffers without punishing those who follow the rules.

Secondly, the tax is supposedly to finance tourism-related capital expenses such as toilets, bicycle lanes, benches and garbage cans. I am having a hard time imagining the cost of these items is so exorbitant that it requires this tax.

Bicycle paths along the Parkway and Niagara Stone Road are often ignored by cyclists so not I'm sure where these new bike lanes would be or that they would be utilized. How many garbage cans and benches are needed?

Tourism supports a large number of NOTL residents whether it be directly by owning or working in a restaurant, at the Shaw Festival and other businesses



or indirectly by the value of owning a house, yet it is the accommodations that are expected to finance this rather than the community as a whole.

And the tax is only being applied to those with five rooms or more. This tax discriminates as it ignores the majority of B&Bs with four bedrooms or less. Country inns have four or more bedrooms but for some reason four-bedroom B&Bs are not in the same category as country inns.

I am not sure if a vacation rental property with five bedrooms is charged or is exempt. A reliable source has indicated that the Bed and Breakfast Association made a deal with Lord Mayor Betty Disero that the four-and-under providers would not be affected and withdrew its opposition. It is short-sighted to think that the town will not at some point decide to extend the tax. I am unsure why the town does not consider the four-and-fewer providers as not being a tourism entity.

Asking tourists to spend more of their money on a tax besides the rental rate could have an effect on the demand or on NOTL's brand and risk being thought of as Niagara-on-the-Lake.

As well, having just started to come out of an 18-month shutdown, it seems backward when other levels of government are trying to find ways to support businesses that this government is finding ways to do the opposite.

The town should be congratulated in uniting the residents who complain about the number of tourists in town and the tourism industry. The tax was originally supposed to be 50 per cent to promote tourism to NOTL and 50 per cent to the municipality.

We already have many residents complaining about

parking and other issues tourism brings and promoting NOTL is meant to bring more tourists to town. NOTL is already well-known as a place to visit, whether it be for theatre, wineries or just a quieter place to stay instead of Niagara Falls, as evidenced by the places people come from across Canada, the U.S. and worldwide.

Coun. Allen Bisback said those NOTL residents who do not live in Old Town don't want to have to pay for tourism-related expenses. Glendale has the outlet mall. Virgil is expanding with new businesses popping up. St Davids and Queenston are surrounded by wineries and history. Projects in all localities of NOTL are funded by town revenues derived from tourism. Like it or not, tourism benefits all of NOTL.

The town has hiked accommodation licensing fees to raise funds to track down illegal short-term rental properties. Again, the onus was put on legal accommodations to pay for this endeavour as though the residents who live near and are affected by these places do not also have an interest in tracking them down.

I have written the premier, to Ontario's tourism minister and MPP Wayne Gates seeking their support in having the provincial government step in and reverse this decision. I also will be asking the regular customers who we see every year to write to council. I encourage others to do likewise.

I also noticed in your paper that council is considering a tax on bicycle riders to pay for more rural bike lanes. It makes you wonder where this will stop.

I also wonder why the hotel tax was rammed through with no consultation from the tourism industry and who it was meant to please.

I had high hopes for this council after the last election but it has been disappointing to see they can't manage the budget and are bringing in this discriminatory tax to cover their mismanagement. Can't wait for the next election.

**Doug Johnson
NOTL**

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New vaccine rules make indoor dining feel **safer**, patrons say

Businesses so far having no issues requesting proof of vaccination, but some fear pushback

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Paul and Suzanne Doran say they are feeling much safer dining indoors since Ontario's vaccine certificate system came into effect Wednesday.

Restaurant owners across Niagara-on-the-Lake said the rollout was painless and easy to implement.

"It's great, definitely," Suzanne said while she and husband Paul dined at the Sandtrap Pub & Grill on Wednesday afternoon.

She said it was a no-brainer to be feeling safer inside a restaurant knowing only people who have received two doses of a coronavirus vaccine will be allowed in.

"People have to understand it's good for everybody, it's not just for us. The certificate will protect the staff and it will help restaurant owners," Paul said.

The Dorans live in the Village development and had been making the restaurant rounds on Wednesday having gone to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club before heading to Sandtrap for an afternoon pint.

They said things were running smoothly at the golf course as well.

Over at the Olde Angel Inn, owner Kelly Turner said her staff were nervous about dealing with unruly anti-vaxxers who might want to dine in the restaurant.

Luckily, those fears hadn't come true on the first day of the certificates launch.

"No issues so far. Everyone's very co-operative and understands what's happen-



Stage Coach Family Restaurant was packed on Wednesday afternoon with double-vaccinated patrons. EVAN SAUNDERS

ing," Turner said.

"We're just telling customers on the phone if you want to sit inside we require this. Otherwise, if you want to sit outside we won't ask."

Under the new provincial rules, customers who wish to dine inside a restaurant and use other indoor facilities have to show proof they have received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine as well as a piece of government-issued identification.

Starting on Oct. 22 the province will be rolling out a QR code system to demonstrate an individual's vaccination status to an applicable business.

Customers can still dine on patios or order takeout without needing to prove their vaccination status.

Even some American travellers were offering up their vaccine certificates to get out of the rain and have a dry meal on Wednesday.

"We don't have a problem with it at all. We're already vaccinated," Michigan resident Gary Berlin said while he dined in the Angel Inn with his wife Lorraine.

The couple have been coming to NOTL for 25 years and it was their first time back since the pandemic began.

"We are very glad to be back," Gary said.

Lorraine said people who haven't gotten vaccinated have made their choice not to be protected. She said getting the vaccine was about making sure she wouldn't suffer from COVID.

Leigh Atherton, owner of The Garrison House, felt the system was pretty simple to understand.

"If you're unvaccinated, you basically have two choices: patio or takeout," Atherton said.

She hadn't had any customers sit inside the restaurant yet but said even those who were sitting on the patio were eager to show her their vaccine certificate.

Atherton said the province making the certificate mandatory makes it easy for businesses who might have been worried about alienating customers by imposing the policy themselves.

"Basically, (unvaccinated people) have made their choice, the government has made their choice and we

have no choice," she said.

She didn't have much sympathy for people who can't dine inside if they refuse to get vaccinated.

"They've made their choice," she said.

Jason Moss, executive chef at Butler's Bar and Grill, said negative reactions to the certificate have been misrepresented.

"It's mostly just chatter online," Moss said.

He said Butler's had no issues with patrons showing their vaccination status.

Loyal Abusaleemeh works at Sono's Cafe in Virgil and agreed the rollout was going well.

"Everything's good, it's easy. We've had no problems," Abusaleemeh said.

And down on Queen

Street, Stage Coach Family Restaurant was packed with customers.

Staff member Rita Delvecchio said the restaurant hadn't had any problems with enforcing the vaccine certificate throughout the morning rush but checking everyone's identification was a hassle.

Rita Mazza owns Italian Pizza & Subs in Virgil with her husband Martin. Although the couple haven't opened up their indoor dining area since the pandemic began Mazza was flabbergasted that any businesses might be against the certificate.

"(Restaurants) have lost already, how much? And now you're shutting down because you don't want to take the opportunity to be safe? I don't understand that," she said.

Mazza was genuinely shocked at the number of people in Canada who don't trust vaccines and drew on her family's history for reference. Mazza's parents came to Canada from Italy when she was 1 month old.

"(My parents) lived through World War Two, they lived through famine," she said.

"They get (to Canada) and the doc says your kids need to get vaccines. 'No problem doc,' and they just handed us over. Measles, mumps, whatever. My mom, she trusted them. They were the doctors."

She said she and her family all had a vaccination status page in the back of their passports.

"Did my mom complain that it was an invasion of privacy? No," Mazza said.

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 **Invitation to Members**

The members of Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre are invited to attend a Special Members' Meeting on Sunday, September 26th, 3:00 - 5:00 PM in our facility*. We will be presenting the revised 2021 Constitution and By-Laws followed by a Q&A. After the meeting, stay for wine & nibbles and catch up with other members.

*COVID-19 protocols will be followed

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Mike Shatkosky
Owner



Some of last year's riders in the 2020 Participate for Polio event, looking happy to be finished. From left: Wasantha Gamage, John Boot, Ken Schander, Cosmo Condina and Bill French. This year's ride/walk/roll takes place October 2 from the Lions Club Park in St. Davids. TIM TAYLOR

Participate for Polio part of worldwide Rotary campaign to eradicate disease

Tim Taylor
The Lake Report

If Bill French has his way, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club, with help from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will contribute a total of \$60,000 to help finally eradicate polio around the world.

As chair of the NOTL club's Participate For Polio Walk/Ride/Roll fundraising committee, French's goal for this year's event on Saturday, Oct. 2, is \$20,000. The Gates foundation will match two-for-one all proceeds from Rotary efforts around the world.

According to French, that's a tall order. The pandemic limits participation to 100 riders/walkers/rollers. "But we still have lots

of room before we reach 100," he said. "This effort is very satisfying. It will only be the second disease we've ever eradicated in history. We've helped reduce the number of worldwide polio cases by 99.9 per cent. But the last .1 per cent will cost as much, and be more challenging, than the first 99.9 per cent."

French said the vaccination work is harder than it was 30 years ago. "Most of the remaining hotspots are in conflict zones. So, we have to employ locals to administer the shots."

On Oct. 2, participants in the walk/ride/roll can choose to bike 13- or 30-kilometre routes or walk five kilometres. Everyone starts and finishes at the Lion's Park in St. Davids. Kick off time is 10 a.m. and the St.

David's Lions Club will hold a fundraising barbecue for all participants. All COVID protocols will be in place. Vaccines are required.

Register for Participate for Polio at <https://raise.rotary.org/Frank-Adamson/challenge1>

French retired to Niagara-on-the-Lake eight years ago, following a senior marketing career with a number of large Canadian organizations. He and his wife, Sharon, moved from Milton, Ont. He's been a Rotarian for 15 years and was president of the NOTL club in 2016.

He is proud of how much Rotary has done worldwide to combat this disease. "End Polio Now is Rotary International's largest and longest-running initiative. Over the last 30-plus years,

we've contributed more than \$2.1 billion to protect nearly three billion children."

Participate for Polio is a local initiative in support of World Polio Day on Oct. 24. This year the club is adding an educational component to its observance of the international day. On Oct. 19, world-renowned polio specialist Dr. Richard Bruno will speak virtually to the local club, comparing two of the world's most virulent viruses — polio and COVID. The presentation will be posted on the club's website following the event.

"We still have quite a huge challenge ahead of us to get that last .1 per cent and eradicate it. If you don't wipe it out totally, it can return. There's still a big hill to climb."

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I'm a building with the most stories. What am I?

Last issue: I run around backyards, but I don't move. What am I?

Answer: A fence

Also accepted: Irrigation system, garden path

Answered first by: Sheelah Young

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Larry Mantle, Margaret Garaughty, Mary Drost, Gail Benjafield, Ross Robinson, Sylvia Wiens, Maria Janeiro, Sheila Meloche, Chris Yakymishen, Susan Pohorly, Phil Wilson, Gerry Hruby, Margie Enns, Bob Stevens, Pam Dowling, Terry Nord, stevesiansky, Robert Wilms, Wade Durling, Gary Davis, Erika Janzen, Teresa Kaminski, Brenda deBartoli, Joan Busbridge, Elaine Landray, Janice Zehentbauer

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

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 **FEATURED**

Life's a **Picnix** for young Queenston entrepreneur

After COVID-19 hit, Abbie Gowans launched a unique food service in NOTL

Linda Fritz
Special to The Lake Report

As you drove through Niagara-on-the-Lake this summer, you may have noticed a giant picnic basket being towed behind an SUV.

The basket is the delivery mechanism of 22-year-old Abbie Gowans, a student, entrepreneur and Queenston resident.

Now beginning her final year at the University of Waterloo, Gowans found herself with a predicament in the spring of 2020.

An English and business major at Waterloo, she had been set to take up a co-op placement for the summer. Then came COVID. Her job disappeared.

She returned to her parents' home in Queenston and began to look for something to do. While searching the web, she discovered a picnic delivery service being offered in the Vancouver area.

She contacted the owner, who agreed that she could run a similar business in Ni-



Abbie Gowans with the Picnix trailer made by her father. SUPPLIED

agara. By August 2020, she was up and running Picnix Niagara.

Her parents, Sandra Ross Gowans and Keith Gowans, run a bed and breakfast in Queenston. Tucked up against the escarpment and next to the road that ran to the old Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, the Red Coat B&B offers a quiet and beautiful place to stay.

Abbie and her brother

Aiden, who is studying to be a pilot, grew up in the house and her first Picnix clients were visitors to the Red Coat B&B.

Once Gowans committed to her catering business, her father used his creative abilities to design and build a number of picnic baskets on wheels. These traditional looking baskets, complete with red checkered blankets, are

delivered to customers in the location of their choice – usually a park, river or lake setting.

As the pandemic continued into this summer, Gowans, after a school year of online learning, decided to continue the picnic service.

June and July were slow, hampered by the weather as well as COVID, but by August things really changed.

Most of her bookings are on weekends, but she said the weekday business is picking up.

The business relies a lot on word of mouth and guests at hotels such as the Oban Inn have enjoyed the service. Many pledge to contact Picnix Niagara when they return to the area.

Several menus are available, including regular, dairy-free, vegan and vegetarian. Each consists of five courses, and there are extras available as well, such as antipasto platters and kid-friendly menus. Full details, and reviews, are available on Gowans' website at www.picnixniagara.com.

Along with the food, Picnix Niagara also can provide umbrellas and even bocce balls. Customers arrange with Gowans to pick up the equipment after the meal.

She prepares all of her food herself and sources items locally, from farms and markets. The ingredi-

ents for each meal take into account what is in season.

Although she is returning to campus for school, her parents are helping out by running the business until the end of October.

At the moment, Gowans is the sole proprietor and worker at Picnix Niagara.

After she graduates, she plans to return to Niagara to run her fast-growing business, probably resuming again in May 2022.

She said there have been inquiries from others about franchising the operation, but because the business began in Vancouver, it is not her decision to make. However, she might need help in the future.

SPEAKING OF FUTURE

As I walked past Red Coat in June, Gowans called me over. She had made too many desserts that day and would I like to try one? I did. Not only was the presentation spectacular, the flavours were phenomenal.

Now, let's think about a restaurant in Queenston ...



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Treasures abound at Pumphouse tailgate sale

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

There were deals to be found at the Niagara Pumphouse Tailgate Treasures event on Saturday.

Penny Verbruggen of St. Catharines was one of the vendors who paid \$25 to park her vehicle, pop the trunk and sell some treasures. She was selling crafty items like stamps, handmade cards and bottles of beach glass.

"I'm a card maker and so I'm letting go a lot of my stamps that I have doubles and triples of, for example, and also Lake Erie beach glass. As I said to my mother, she cannot get to the beach any more so I bring the lake to her. And I've got nice little statements related to transformation, which is what the water does for the glass," she said.

Verbruggen said selling her crafts is something she



The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre parking lot was filled with tailgate treasures on Saturday. RICHARD HARLEY

used to do regularly at craft shows and similar pop-up markets, "until the pandemic put an end to all of that."

She normally only sells her handmade items, but included some other jewelry too, since the day had more of a garage sale feel.

"This particular show is a mix of all kinds of things," she said. "So this is a chance to kind of purge."

"It's a nice way to get back into being with people

again. I'm hoping that we're at the outer edge of the pandemic. Because after more than a year and a half, I was losing my craft show mojo — 'How do I set up? How do I do this again.' So this is wonderful."

Aimee Medina, marketing co-ordinator for the Pumphouse, said the morning kicked off early with vendors arrive as early as 6 a.m. to set up.

"And then we have a ton

of volunteers that we're really grateful for. They co-ordinated the whole thing. They did a lot of publicity work, they got vendors to sign up. So you know we can't be any more grateful than having a wonderful set of volunteers."

She said there was a steady flow of traffic, beginning early in the morning.

"Once he opened, the early birds, the professional antiquers and professional bargain hunters were here."

There were about 26 vendors, Medina said, with the proceeds from the vendor fee going to support Pumphouse programs for kids and seniors.

"(When COVID hit) we closed down for a good chunk of time so to be able to continue delivering children's programs and seniors programs this type of fundraiser will really help a lot," she said.

Ross's Ramblings:

We can't have our Pinot Grigio and drink it, too

Ross Robinson
Special to The Lake Report

Not to seem like a lifestyle coach, but perhaps we should all sit in our favourite chair for a few minutes. Relax, think tolerance, think globally, think inclusivity.

Sometimes, we want this, but not with that. Here in our precious Niagara-on-the-Lake, we sometimes seem to be a bit narrow-minded and xenophobic. Yes, we know things naturally progress and change, but sheesh, not so fast, please.

It seems that a majority of us support the clip-clopping horses pulling their carriages and happy tourists around town, taking in the sights and learning a bit of our history. But couldn't the horses refrain from defecating on our streets? (It must shock members of the Royal family during ceremonial events when one of their handsome and perfectly-groomed horses succumbs to the urge ...)

In Niagara, we love our Santa Claus Parade and our Grape and Wine Parade, but

some people would rather not see manure.

The annual Calgary Stampede parade features over 700 horses, from ranches, service clubs, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and equestrian clubs. Yes, every half hour or so, noisy and big City of Calgary street cleaners follow up, removing the horse manure and urine from the streets. Everyone yells "Yee Haw," and the parade continues.

The large machines are adorned with cowboy hat and kerchiefs, to add to the western ambience. An authentic-multi sensory experience. Sights, sounds and smells.

The RCAF Snowbirds appear in our region every few years and our Canadian hearts pump up as the highly trained and skilled pilots perform their intricate and high-speed routines just over our heads. Last time they were here, I was distressed to hear two spectators agreeing that the show was magnificent, but "Too bad about the ear-piercing sound and air pollution."

To dine or enjoy an Oast

House Barnraiser or a glass of chilled Pinot Grigio next to vineyards is an authentic experience, but those darn fruit flies keep hovering around, bugging us. And those tractors can be so noisy as they fertilize and spray the grapes.

Niagarans just love skiing in Collingwood or Ellicottville, but sometimes the drive home takes forever because of the snow. Darn, too much snow can ruin a ski weekend.

The Niagara Parkway needs no introduction, and Fort Erie to Port Dalhousie is well-known as one of the prettiest drives and rides in Ontario. But so many cars, and so, so many noise-belching motorcycles. Some locals say, "Shush up or go elsewhere."

Many NOTLers enjoy sharing our pretty and historic village with visitors from around the world.

They walk our streets, smiling and safe, and some of them enjoy picnics in our lovely parks. If we are lucky enough to visit their countries, we seek out their parks and

delight in meeting some "locals."

Why then would the Town of NOTL pass a bylaw that doesn't allow them to cook their traditional picnic foods? Can people be serious when they summon the town bylaw commandos to levy hefty fines on our visitors? For cooking delicious foods or putting up a tent to protect their children from the sun?

Folks living in Coopers-town or Whistler or Quebec City who choose to live close to the action realize they can't have their Merlot or Chardonnay, and drink it, too.

Let us stop being curmudgeonly and extend warm welcomes to the lucky people who visit our wonderful town. We can learn so much from them and help them to have a wonderful vacation.

To sum up, I have been feeling very sad of late, as so few people are enjoying the always different and so often beautiful sunsets at Ryerson Park.

Be kinder tomorrow. Welcome someone to your neighbourhood.



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Women hand out the hardware in golf competitions

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

As fall rolls in, the golf season is winding down and that means trophy season is gearing up.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club's 9 hole women's league handed out some of its hardware Monday.

Helen McCallum won the B flight trophy for a competition played earlier this month and the Carmichael Trophy for nine-hole low net medal play.

Deborah Williams was the winner of the Gretchen Ormston Memorial Trophy for low gross score in the A flight competition.

The Joy Nelles Trophy, for performance in low-net competitions, was Charlotte Kainola.

On Tuesday, the 18 hole women's league recognized the top players in the annual season-long match play competition.

Cathy Murray was the champion and Gayle Tanner was runner-up.

MEN'S RESULTS

George Davie and Keith Dexter led the pack in men's league play on Sept. 16,



Left, members of the 9 hole women's league with their trophy hardware, from left, Deborah Williams, Helen McCallum and Charlotte Kainola. Pictured at right are 18-hole league match play finalist Gayle Tanner, left, and champion Cathy Murray. KEVIN MACLEAN PHOTOS



each accruing 24 points under the modified Stableford scoring system.

Runners-up were Tim Taylor, Gerry Shelly, Greg Fedoryn and Tom Wiley with 21 points each.

Current men's club champ James Grigjanis-Meusel was where he's been most of the season – at the top of the leaderboard, shooting an even-par 36. Former club

champ Stephen Warboys was equal to the task, also coming home in even-par.

Dean McCann was the big net skins winner, scooping \$200 for his birdie (net eagle) on #8. Harry Huizer (#2) and Joe Doria (#7) also had birdies and won \$65 gross skins for their efforts. Peter Falconer (#4) and David Gagne (#9) were closest to the pin.

In WOOFs league competition on Sept. 14, Mark Derbyshire had low gross with a 1-over 37 and Jeff Jacques was low net (35). Don Allen won the hidden hole (#9) and Jim Panetta was closest to the pin on #4. Ross Smith won \$55 in the 50/50 draw.

The WOOFers season will wind down on Oct. 5 with the annual scramble.

WOMEN'S RESULTS

Some members of the club's 18 hole women's league travelled to Whirlpool Golf Club in Niagara Falls on Sept. 14.

Low gross winners were Martha Cruikshank and Yolanda Henry (87) and Lisa Allen (90). Low net winners were Sharron Marlow (74), followed by Cruikshank, Henry and Allen (76).

Marg Ketcheson had a chip-in on #2 and Henry birdied the par-3 #17, "an inch from an ace," said NOTL associate pro Ricky Watson, who witnessed the feat.

Closest to the pin winners were Ginny Green (#3), Valerie Chubey (#12), Janice White (#14) and Henry's near hole-in-one on the 17th.

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Niagara College now licensed to grow industrial hemp

Staff
The Lake Report

Commercial Cannabis Production program secures licence to grow industrial hemp

Niagara College's commercial cannabis production program has been licensed by Health Canada to cultivate industrial hemp.

Industrial hemp is a specific type of Cannabis sativa L. plant grown for a variety of uses, including home insulation, textiles, paper, biofuel, cannabidiol (CBD) for medical uses, and even food. It differs from cannabis produced for recreational purposes because it's non-intoxicating, containing 0.3 per cent or less THC.



Industrial hemp transplants take root in the Niagara College greenhouse. Niagara College recently secured a licence to grow industrial hemp for academic use in its Commercial Cannabis Production program. SUPPLIED

Getting the green light for hemp cultivation within the program is significant because it provides hands-on learning and academic research opportunities that will enable students to advance Canada's burgeoning hemp and cannabis industries when they graduate,

the college said in announcing the move.

Students will study plant genetics, seeding and germination, flower identification, harvesting and drying hemp.

With industrial hemp part of the program's portfolio, students will also learn how

to grow cannabis in the industry's three sectors: in a controlled agriculture environment (in the program's CannaBunker), in greenhouses and outdoors.

"This is a natural progression for us. The crops we're hoping to grow in the future will provide opportunities

for students to participate in all growing sectors," said Alan Unwin, the college's dean of business, tourism and the environment.

"The uses and the industries for the hemp plant and the cannabis plant are quite different so this will help them when they graduate.

It's staying on top of things that we're seeing in the industry. Our responsibility as a college is to meet that demand for the labour market."

Production of industrial hemp is already under way at the college. This summer, students grew a small field crop in the college's hop yard. The experience exposed them to growing hemp transplants from seed, germination rates, plant maintenance and hemp flower identification.

"It provides students with an opportunity to gain hands-on knowledge of outdoor hemp production," said Laurie Zuber, a horticulture technologist with the commercial cannabis. "This is a good introduction crop."

Drive-through COVID testing centre reopens at Niagara Health

Staff
The Lake Report

Niagara Health has reopened its COVID-19 drive-through assessment centre at the St. Catharines hospital due to an increase in demand for testing.

The centre is in addition to the Greater Niagara General hospital assessment centre in Niagara Falls. The operating hours for both locations are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days a week, including all holidays.

"As we enter the fall season and now that many students are back to school, we are seeing an increased need for testing," says Zeau Ismail, director of the hospital's assessment centres and vaccine clinic.

"We encourage anyone who needs a test based on the criteria to book one. This virus is highly contagious so early detection is important for managing the fourth wave."

Book a COVID-19 test appointment online or call 905-378-4647 ext. 42819

(4-CV19). Walk-ins are not accepted for COVID-19 testing at either location.

Make an appointment for a COVID-19 test if you: are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, have been exposed to a confirmed case of the virus, or live or work in a setting that has a COVID-19 outbreak.

Arrive at your designated appointment time and do not come early.

For more information, visit www.niagarahealth.on.ca/site/assessmentcentres.

Music Niagara hosts Brahms-inspired Oktoberfest series around region

Staff
The Lake Report

Music Niagara is launching Brahms Oktoberfest, an innovative new pillar of the festival's programming, targeted at diverse music lovers across the region, province and beyond.


The stirring, expressive works of German composer Johannes Brahms will serve as groundwork for a series of four performances this fall.

In tribute to the composer's storied love of beer, and to support Niagara businesses, which are key to sustaining our region's rich cultural heritage, Music Niagara is partnering with breweries around the region to spotlight their products and venues.

The festival has teamed up with Silversmith Brewing Company, the Exchange Brewery, Niagara Oast House Brewers, Niagara College and Blackburn Brew House.

Limited tickets are now available online at www.musicniagara.org/brahms-oktoberfest/.

Proof of vaccination is required to attend each show. The series kicks off Oct. 7 at Silversmith in Virgil, followed by shows at the Exchange Brewery in Old Town on Oct. 14, Blackburn Brew House in Niagara Falls on Oct. 18 hosted by comedian Joe Pillitteri, and a virtual performance at Oast in NOTL on Oct. 28.



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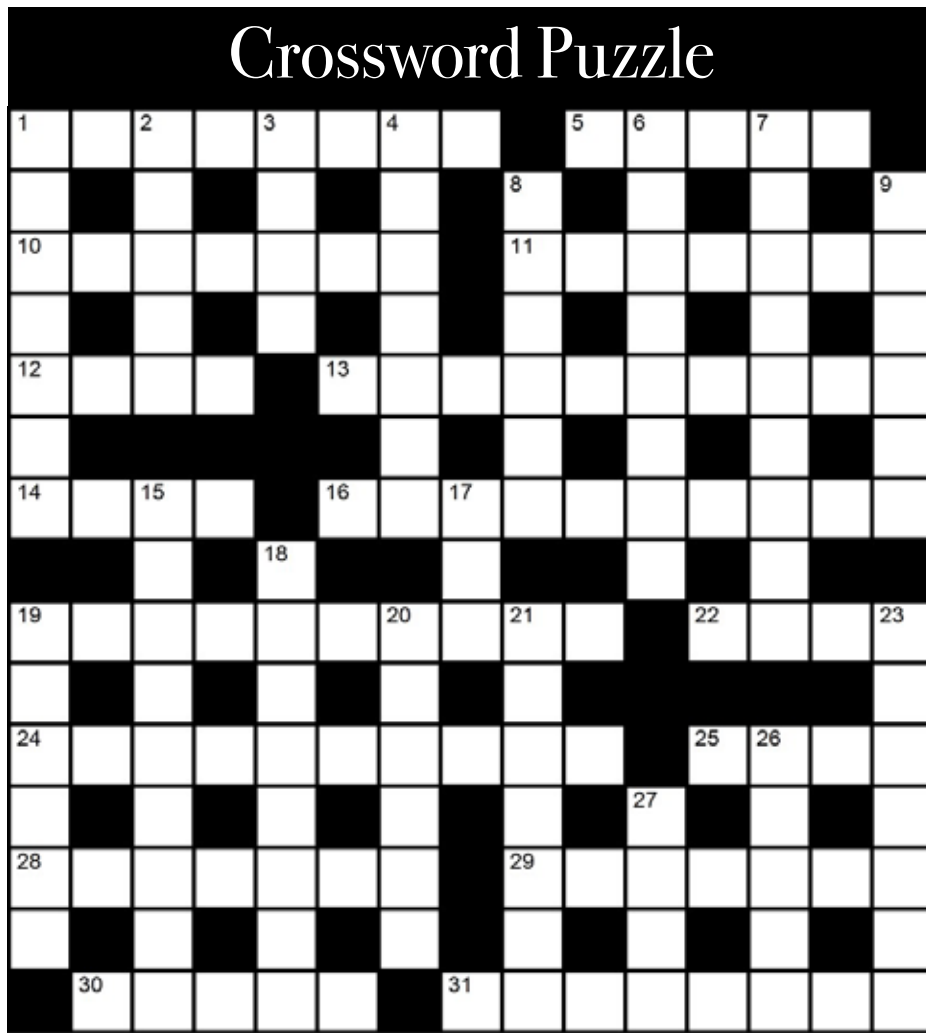
Have some fun

Across

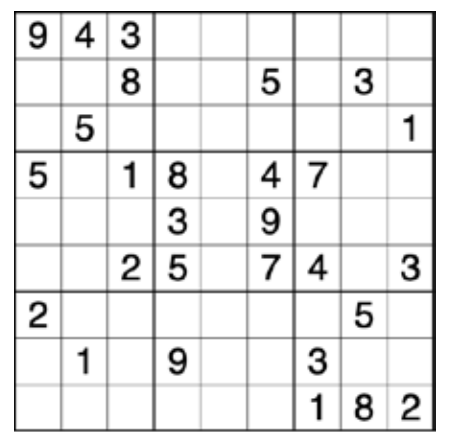
- 1. Beautiful (8)
- 5. Moves through water (5)
- 10. Unconventional (7)
- 11. Pilot (7)
- 12. Pollen gatherers (4)
- 13. When the living is easy (10)
- 14. Otherwise (4)
- 16. Artificial sparkler (10)
- 19. Corridor (10)
- 22. Yorkshireman (4)
- 24. Preceding wedlock (10)
- 25. Precious stones (4)
- 28. Shining (7)
- 29. Hollowed inward (7)
- 30. Bovine mammary gland (5)
- 31. Austrian Alpine resident (8)

Down

- 1. Farewell (7)
- 2. Plunder (5)
- 3. Paradise (4)
- 4. Lie (7)
- 6. Restaurant worker (8)
- 7. Marriage (9)
- 8. Opera by Bizet (6)
- 9. Current of air (6)
- 15. Pendent (9)
- 17. Large island in the Channel (1,1,1)
- 18. Computer information store (8)
- 19. Thin and translucent (6)
- 20. Expels (6)
- 21. Disorder (7)
- 23. Oriental (7)
- 26. Fill with high spirits (5)
- 27. Untie (4)



Last issue's answers



Caldwell barbecue supports nursery school, Newark Neighbours

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

There were laughs, burgers and hot dogs, all for a good cause on Saturday as Caldwell Securities held a charity barbecue for two good causes.

Money raised at the cookout will help both the Niagara Nursery School and Newark Neighbours.

Vincent Francescut, an insurance adviser with Caldwell, helped put the gathering together at the firm's Mississauga Street location.

He said it was a natural way for the company to give back to some important NOTL organizations.

The nursery school is close to home for Francescut, who has a one-year-old son and five-year-old daughter.

His daughter is a nursery school alumna, he said, and his son has "probably



Rick Wood, Jim Caldwell, Vincent Francescut and Tom Caldwell during Saturday's charity barbecue in support of Niagara Nursery School and Newark Neighbours. RICHARD HARLEY

terrorized the place enough just this past week that the money from the barbie will probably just cover that," he joked.

"Newark Neighbours is

also another great cause," he added.

The barbecue proceeds went to Newark Neighbours, while proceeds from a raffle went to the school.

Prizes included lunch at the Sandtrap, a carriage ride, a bathymetric map from Wow Me Too, chimney cakes from Budapest Bake Shop and bike tours.

Tom Caldwell, chairman of the company, was down from Toronto for the event.

"It's a great town to have a presence in," he said, noting the business has been in NOTL for 25 years.

"I love coming down here. We have a place in town. And when I come down. I think my blood pressure goes down about eight points as soon as I turn onto the main street."

While the event was about supporting two important organizations, it also was a chance to blow off some steam, he said.

"You know this COVID thing is wearing everybody down. Everybody is going stir crazy, and it's good to just have some excuse to just be outside, have a hamburger or hot dog, say hi to our friends," he said.

His brother Jim Caldwell, who operates the NOTL location as vice-president, said it's important to sup-

port local charities and non-profits, particularly during COVID.

"It's a very worthwhile cause and especially in these times where there's a lot of people suffering," he said.

Right now, he said Newark Neighbours' client list is up, so it's good to be able to help them out.

"Obviously there's a big need so we're happy to fill in a little bit. I don't know how much we got today, but at least it's something."

Supporting the nursery school is also important, Jim Caldwell said.

"There's obviously a need there because of the expansion they've done, so that's really why we sort of chose the two," he said.

Francescut said the office is hoping to make the barbecue an annual event and was surprised by the turnout this year, with lots of people stopping in for a bite and to make a donation.



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'The Large Blue Horses'

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

In the world of art history we lionize the French artists, applaud the Americans, admire the audacity of many British artists and are finally recognizing the stunning work of many international, Indigenous and Black artists.

What is missing here is that we have been in the midst, if not the grip, of the most provocative art of all, the German art, culture, music and literature of the last 150 years. One of the most important artists of this "German era" is the painter and printmaker, Franz Marc.

Born in 1880 in Munich, Marc was the son of a landscape painter and brother of a Byzantine art special-

ist with whom he travelled to Greece. He abandoned studies in theology and philosophy in favour of art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich.

In 1903 and 1907 Marc was in Paris, visiting the Louvre, meeting artists and absorbing works by van Gogh, Gauguin and Picasso. But it was in Munich, where his alliance with Wassily Kandinsky led to the formation in 1911 of Der Blaue Reiter, (the Blue Rider), and German Expressionism.

As Kandinsky said, "I loved riders, Marc loved horses, and we both loved blue." Their journal, "The Almanac," featured a cover with a rider charging across a landscape on a blue horse.

For both, painting was deeply spiritual and they aimed to convey that spiri-



Franz Marc, "The Large Blue Horses," 1911, oil on canvas, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. SUPPLIED

tuality and depth of human emotion through abstract forms and colours that transcended cultural and artistic boundaries. Marc's goal was to "break out space and soul."

Animal paintings were his means to express a pantheistic vision of the harmony of animals with their natural environment, their beauty and grace representing an ethereal, higher spiritual order. In "The Large Blue Horses," three harmonious, grazing horses take up foreground space, their curves echoing the red rolling hills behind them.

He wrote, "I am trying to heighten my sense of the organic rhythm of all things ..." Marc developed and employed a symbolic colour theory: blue is masculine, spiritual, pure, principled. Yellow is feminine, joyous, gentle, sensuous. Red is brutal, violent, heavy and must be overcome and opposed by the other colours.

Colours induce sensations. They affect our moods. Marc wrote an essay entitled "How Does a Horse See the World?" and his distortion of form and intense colour may be an

attempt to see the world as the animal sees it.

In 1912, the influence of Robert Delaunay's colour and futurist method led Marc to adopt sharper angles, fracturing and fragmentation which revealed his growing disenchantment with what was happening politically and socially in Germany. In his 1913, "Fate of the Animals," a forest fire consumes the burning, suffering animals.

It was prescient of the cataclysm to come. On the back of the canvas he wrote, "And all being is flaming agony" and later he wrote, "it is like a premonition of this war, horrible and shattering. I can hardly conceive that I painted it."

In 1914, Marc was drafted into the Imperial German Army as a cavalryman. He subsequently was painting military camouflage canvas covers in a broad pointillist dot style to hide artillery. In 1915, he wrote to his wife, "People with their lack of piety, especial-

ly men, never touched my true feelings. But animals with their virginal sense of life awakened all that is good in me."

The German government identified Marc as one of the most important artists that should be exempt from combat but before the order reached him at the front, he was killed instantly by shrapnel in 1916 at the Battle of Verdun.

In his knapsack were many drawings of even more sharply fragmented and angled abstract images. And, a final quote: "On the whole, instinct has never failed to guide me."

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an art historian who taught at the University of Toronto for 10 years. She was also head of extension services at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Register now for her upcoming Zoom series: "The Germans – Art, Faith and War," Thursdays, 11 a.m. to noon, Sept. 23 to Oct. 28 at RiverBrink Art Museum.

Dr. Brown: Vaccinations, freedom of choice and social responsibility

Dr. Martha Brown Truncale
Special to The Lake Report

The societal struggle with vaccine uptake is such a drama in free societies. Every nation has found a vaccinated threshold, quickly reached and achingly slow to pass.

A foot-tapping look at the vaccine stragglers' arguments for avoidance of civic duty can be frustrating. The trouble is, we need buy-in from everybody or nearly everybody to achieve practical freedom from the virus.

Alaska is a good case study. Our state has a red hot test positivity rate of 9.1 per cent. A few days ago we shattered our daily record of new COVID-19 cases. Our largest hospital hit the news last week having to implement crisis standards of care and choose patients most likely to recover.

All of this drama after an early, well-organized, state-wide vaccine rollout. My dad, living in Niagara-on-the-Lake, will recall my Alaskan forecast way back then; expect a roaring ride to 50 per cent vaccination, then a fizzle. It happened. Nine months later we are at 56.8

per cent of Alaskans fully vaccinated. That is a lot of stragglers.

What have we lost to such poor vaccination rates? In one word, freedom.

Freedom from worry. Freedom to go to work and school under reasonable conditions. Freedom from taking that vacation you rescheduled twice during the pandemic!

To be fair, no one is stopping you from going, but know that you'll have to wander amongst the sea of carriers, some violently arguing about wearing a mask in the plane cabin.

The paralysis reached by vaccine hesitation has stalled out our recovery. A lot of people are dying in the U.S., with 1,500 to 1,800 deaths each day last week, almost unacknowledged. I find this astonishing after a week where we made sure to recognize, by name, all the Americans lost on Sept. 11.

The freedom of choice in a society does inflict a burden on those trying to do the right thing. When unvaccinated co-workers are absent with repeated quarantine, it is the vaccinated who pick up the workload. And business leaders know they need a

healthy workforce.

I hate to see the argument descend into blame. Even President Joe Biden noted that our patience is running out. I have real sympathy with folks not keen on new-fangled pharmaceuticals. But with free society does come responsibility. Embrace public health measures and some curbs on your freedom, even a few barriers, until the pandemic subsides.

What incentives could help convince another 20 per cent? Well, I entered a lottery this week. I don't play the lottery but I entered my family's names in the Alaska "GiveAKaShot" drawing. It's exciting really. Eighteen drawings with \$49,000 cash prizes. Kids receive \$49,000 scholarships. I hope it entices some Alaskans to offer their deltoid for a job.

We could improve our messaging. First, public health messaging cannot be confusing. Keep it simple, really simple. Like, "Take the vaccine and you won't die."

And flip-flopping is dangerous. When the Centers for Disease Control recalled mask wearing among the vaccinated in May, I cringed. In my grocery store this

"discretion" meant almost 100 per cent of customers were suddenly maskless but I knew that 50 per cent of my fellow food shoppers were unvaccinated. It was perfect tinder for the Delta variant.

Second, we haven't reached the vaccine-reluctant with scientific information. That is not their language. In a country of Super Bowl advertisement firms, where are the 30-second TV spots with dramatic storytelling and patriotic themes? This is a major oversight in a nation mesmerized by the word freedom.

Visuals of ICUs and Americans speaking to Americans about their experience are powerful. Ironically, U.S. television is chock full of pharmaceutical ads enticing us to take the next prescription drug. With Spikevax and, yes, Comirnaty, I feel the absence of the big-sell.

Some argue that we did it all wrong. We made the vaccine free, safe and widely available. I see folks turn their finances inside out to drive a behemoth truck and hold the latest iPhone. If you can't have something, by golly, it has got to be good. Of course, we cannot restrict

access but consumer motivations have been untapped by advertising.

Free societies are then left with mandates and the fun-sponge approach. Each province and state, European Union member and Commonwealth partner is debating forms of vaccine passports. If we make access to "anything fun" a card-carrying event, perhaps the reluctant will follow. On a hopeful note, the demand for COVID-19 vaccinations tripled in Alberta, a day after a vaccine passport program was announced by the premier.

Remember all the vaccines you had to take to attend school and get various jobs in life? Mandates are not new. I had to laugh at the honest response of an American soldier I heard interviewed this summer.

He acknowledged that the only reason he had refused the COVID-19 vaccine was that it was the only time the Army ever gave him a choice. He was happy to relent once it was required. And we must allow medical and religious exemptions.

Here in Alaska, some local uniformed service

members seeking religious vaccine exemptions were recently denied by their chaplain who declared the vaccine "a miracle." He also wondered why they hadn't exercised a religious objection to the other 17 required vaccinations to hold their job.

I wish I felt comfortable traveling to Canada now. With Alaska's month-long delta-Crash in full swing and the long voyage of exposures on the way to NOTL, I have hesitated to take the risk of bringing the virus along with me. So I wait.

Pandemics end. We don't have the date. Vaccines offer a measure of control, which is a choice in free societies and will make the next months' toxic political atmosphere worse.

We just have to look at China, which reports vaccinating over 1 billion people and realize that we aren't an authoritative society. Here, it really is, the survival of the free.

Dr. Martha Brown Truncale is the daughter of Dr. William Brown, our regular health and science columnist. She is a dentist in Alaska.

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EXPLORING PHOTOS

WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Oates House

This circa 1900 photograph of the Oates House (or Captain's House) on Front Street (across from Queen's Royal Park) shows three children and a donkey in the foreground and a mother or maid in the background. This white clapboard building, also known as the Captain's House, was built in 1818 by carpenter John Brauer for Maj. Thomas Evans, an officer at Fort George in 1817-19. However, the house was named for Capt. Edward Oates, master of the Richmond Packet, who leased it so that his wife could watch for his ship returning across the lake. In 1866 and 1867, John C. Breckinridge occupied the house. Breckinridge was one of a group of Confederate refugees in Niagara after the U.S. Civil War. He, too, appreciated the view from the verandah, though his focus was on the American fort. Much later, a family named Richmond occupied the dwelling and called it the Richmond House, a name that links to both Oates and its Confederate occupants.

ARCHITEXT

There's a lesson here

Brian Marshall
Columnist



A circa 1860 Gothic Revival survivor in Virgil. SUPPLIED

When thinking of Niagara-on-the-Lake many people focus on historic Old Town as the "jewel in the crown" while consigning the majority of the jurisdiction to a distant also-ran status. This is nothing new. In fact, it has been the prevalent governing attitude for many, many decades now.

Let's focus in on one of these communities as an example.

Virgil (nee The Crossroads, nee Lawrenceville) was settled in the early 19th century. Located where the Black Swamp Road (Niagara Stone) crossed the old "Indian Trail" that would become Four Mile Creek Road, this village served to support the agricultural development of the area while providing a convenient coach stop along the nasty trip between

the town of Niagara and the Homer Bridge over the Ten Mile Creek on the way to St Catharines.

There is no question that this settlement was established with a commercial imperative. Then again, it was a very rare circumstance wherein past human urbanization did not occur with this as the primary motivator.

In fact, Old Town owes its early existence to the supply of goods and services to the military and later survival to agricultural consumers and the seasonal revenues of tourism. At the risk of over-simplification, what set the two villages apart in the

first half of the 19th century was the somewhat higher population (and associated dwellings) of Niagara due principally to the military infrastructure.

While this column is far too short to even skim the surface of over a century and a half of social evolution that produced the "us and them" divide, it is clear that one small town became a centre for tourism while the other a focus of commercial endeavours.

Perhaps this "divide," embodied in governance, can best be illustrated by two of Niagara-on-the-Lake's lost heritage buildings.

For roughly 160 years,

Gibson's Store & Post Office stood on the corner of Four Mile Creek Road and Niagara Stone. It was a hub that not only supplied goods and groceries to both villagers and farm folk, but also provided venue for social interaction.

In the early 20th century, a blacksmith shop on the north corner of the property addressed the needs of the horse and buggy folk, while almost from the first advent of automobiles, it was where one bought gas. This historic building was demolished to make way for the Village Green strip mall we see there today.

A little farther down the road was the Field House. Built in 1886, this building was a rare local example of a side-by-side double house with its substantive massing making a statement for over 120 years. It was demolished to make way for the Meridian Credit Union building constructed in 2002.

While there are historic survivors still standing in Virgil, many have been lost without protest. I ask you, would this have happened in Old Town?

Looking to the Stars



Mercury in retrograde a time for reflection

Bill Auchterlonie
Special to The Lake Report

This week sees the end of the Venus/Uranus opposition, Mars in harmony with Saturn and Mercury turns retrograde.

Thursday, Sept. 23: Since Sept. 17, Venus has been in opposition to Saturn. Today she opposes Uranus. This is a deja vu of the fixed T-square we had in July when Venus was in Leo. If back in July, Venus in Leo's dramatic displays of emotions aired out the tension, Venus in Scorpio will deal with the tension all by herself. Sometimes we need an implosion-like intensity to gain clarity on what really matters, and what needs to change. Happy birthday to "The Boss" – Bruce Springsteen turns 72 today.

Friday, Sept. 24: The moon in Taurus opposes Venus and is in the same place as Uranus. A surprise moves the future closer. Jim Henson, the puppeteer who gave us the Muppets, was born Sept. 24, 1936.

Saturday, Sept. 25: Mars in Libra gets a hand from Saturn in Aquarius, which most likely results in better health courtesy of necessity. For some, a longtime work issue is resolved. Canada's eighth prime minister, Sir Robert Borden, wed Laura Bond on Sept. 25, 1889.

Sunday, Sept. 26: It's a generous, sensuous, sexy Sunday with lively emotions supported by well-balanced Mars in Libra. It will be a day to remember with fondness. As we bask in the accomplishments of Montreal's Leylah Fernandez at the recent U.S. Open tennis championships, today Serena Williams marks birthday #40.

Monday, Sept. 27: Today, Mercury goes retrograde. Mercury retrograde in Libra is a great time to reflect, reassess, re-evaluate, "re-" anything Libra

stuff, mainly our relationships. We humans are social creatures. We can't really live without others. The other is much more than a partner; it is a mirror. With the other we bounce back and forth ideas, feelings and experiences. The act of getting something outside of ourselves and putting it out in the open is what keeps us sane, because it provides us with useful feedback. If we didn't relate to others, we would live delusional, catatonic lives. Mercury retrograde in Libra is our opportunity to do the Libra work, so we can have more honest, balanced and fulfilling relationships. Mercury is retrograde until Oct. 19. Happy birthday to Avril Lavigne, born Sept. 27, 1984.

Tuesday, Sept. 28: It's the day of the third-quarter moon, with the sun in Libra and the moon in her home sign of Cancer. It's a day for putting goals back on track, for generally reassessing progress, especially on family and relationship matters. It was 21 years ago today, on Sept. 28, 2000, that Pierre Elliott Trudeau died in Montreal.

Wednesday, Sept. 29: Even though today can be a bit stubborn and perhaps too sensitive, there's charm and imagination with financial regards and the sun and Saturn in perfect harmony encouraging the building of more security. On Sept. 29, 2008, the Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped nearly 800 points, following the collapse of Lehman Brothers and Washington Mutual. It was the start of the great crash of 2008.

Next week, we see Venus, Jupiter, Mars and Pluto taking centre stage..

Please check out the new website www.lutts.ca as in Looking Up to the Stars. And you can get my free horoscope with interpretation emailed to you.

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Bottoms up: College brewers win big in international contests

Staff
The Lake Report

Success continues to pour in for Niagara College's trailblazing brew program.

The Teaching Brewery at Niagara College won three gold medals and a Top 10 ranking at the 2021 U.S. Open Beer Championship.

For the second consecutive year, three popular student-crafted brews from the school's popular Beer 101 series captured gold at the U.S. Open: Beer 101 Bitter (in the bitter category), Beer 101 Strong Ale (old ale category), and Beer 101 Bock (bock category).

The Teaching Brewery tied for the 10th spot in the competition's list of Top 10 breweries, and was the only teaching brewery to achieve such a ranking, alongside professional breweries from across the U.S. and one other Canadian brewery (Wellington Brewery in Guelph).

The competition drew more than 8,000 beer entries representing 140 dif-



Staff and students at the NC Teaching Brewery are pictured with medal-winning beers from the U.S. Open Beer Championship, from left, head brewer George Eagleson, and students Laura Park and Nigel Findlay.

ferent styles for this year's competition.

Beer 101 Bitter and Strong Ale have consistently won medals at the U.S. Open Beer Championship and also have a history of success at the Canadian Brewing Awards.

Steve Gill, general manager of the college's Learning Enterprises – including the Teaching Brewery, Teaching Winery and Teaching Distillery – said he was honoured and humbled by the championship results.

“Back in 2007, when we were looking at starting the brewmaster program, who would have known that it would become the premier spot for beer studies that it is today,” he said. “Our students are consistently making high-quality beers

that shine among the best on the national and international stage.”

“Our entire staff and our students continue to show how their training and development in our brewing program allows them to succeed when producing at the NC Teaching Brewery,” said Craig Youdale, dean of the college's Canadian Food and Wine Institute.

“This recognition shows that our students, under instruction from head brewer George Eagleson and lead brewer Brad Barta, are taught how to brew world-class beers,” noted brewmaster Prof. Jon Downing. “Each time our Beer 101s are brewed, it is by a different group of students in different semesters, usually as a collaborative effort between two or more classes.”

Meanwhile, brewmaster students from the college tied for fourth place overall in the U.S. Open College Beer Championship, with four beer entries winning hardware.

Joel Droogh's Holstein and Jersey (milk stout) won gold; Charles Rempel's Heart in Hand (amber ale) took silver; and Andrew Plesko's Ice Kolsch Hops (classic German-style Kolsch), as well as Ryan Cook's Napoleon's Final Defeat (Belgian blonde) won bronze.

The winning beers, which all incorporate NC-grown hops, were created by students as part of their target brew projects in April. They completed the program in August and will officially graduate this fall.

“It's a wonderful feeling to see all of the blood, sweat, and tears I poured into this beer be recognized,” said Rempel, who now works at Blackburn Brew House in Niagara Falls as a packaging operator. “It's meaningful in a way to show me I'm on the right career path.”

The competition attracted entries from 11 postsecondary institutions in the U.S. and Canada.

Growing Together: Autumn garden stars bring colour to your yard



Joanne Young
Special to The Lake Report

Truth be told, going into September, most of us are kind of over our gardens for the year.

The annuals are looking tired, the perennials are starting to go dormant, the flowering shrubs have finished blooming and our trees are looking stressed from a very hot summer.

Besides a bit of fall colour, we really don't take full advantage of the season. Fall can be a wonderful season in your garden. It is also an opportunity for you to be providing some needed food for insects, birds and all of the other little critters before the long winter ahead.

There are different ways that you can make your fall garden a wonderland of



Beauty berry. JOANNE YOUNG PHOTO

excitement.

The first way is by introducing some late flowering plants into your garden. There are some shrubs and perennials that do bloom in September and even into October that can provide you with some colour.

One that has just begun to flower in my garden this past week is Bluebeard (aka Blue Mist or Caryopteris). This three-foot shrub has clusters of small bluish/purple flowers.

There are several varieties of Bluebeard available, but my favourite one is called “Sunshine Blue” Bluebeard.

This cultivar sports showy, lemon-yellow leaves all summer, which contrasts with the bluish/purple flowers in the fall making it a showstopper.

The honey bees and bumblebees love visiting this shrub when it is in bloom and it provides them with a source of food just before winter.

Another larger growing, native shrub that blooms in the fall is the Common Witchhazel (Hammelis virginiana). It has unique, spidery yellow flowers starting in late September and continuing into November.

Seven Sons tree (Heptacodium) is another large growing shrub that has clusters of white flowers in September, followed by a show of rosy pink calyces, providing interest right through October.

Some perennials that will provide flowers in the fall are: Stonecrop (Sedum), Windflowers (Anemone), Monkshood (Aconitum), Toadlily (Tricyrtis) and Turtlehead (Chelone). Also, we are all familiar with the large pots of hardy mums that are available to purchase at this time of year. Placing a few pots of mums in strategic spots where you want to catch people's attention, such as a front porch or sitting area, will add a pop of colour that you might be needing.

A second way of adding interest to your fall garden is by planting some shrubs with colourful berries. Most of the shrubs that have berries that ripen in the fall will usually hang on to their berries into early winter or whenever the birds find them.

So, not only are you enjoying their flowers in the spring or early summer, but you have a second season of interest when the berries ripen – and the birds will love you for it.

If you are creating a new garden or just filling on an empty spot, you may want to consider planting some of the following shrubs: Beautyberry (Callicarpa), Firethorn (Pyracantha), evergreen Holly (Ilex x meserveae), deciduous Holly (Winterberry, Ilex verticillata), Chokeberry (Aronia) and Highbush Cranberry Viburnum (Viburnum trilobum). Please note that with the hollies you need both a male and female plant.

A final way to make your fall garden a vibrant space is by having plants that have beautiful fall leaf colours. There are too many to even attempt to list all of them, but I will mention a few that stand out in my mind.

If you are looking at adding a larger growing shade tree on your property,

consider planting native trees. I find that most of them have beautiful fall colour; for example: red maple (Acer rubrum), sugar maple (Acer saccharum), red oak (Quercus rubra), pin oak (Quercus palustris), black gum (Nyssa) and tulip tree (Liriodendron).

There are also many shrubs that will provide you excellent fall colour. You can never go wrong with any Japanese maple as far as fall colour is concerned. They can vary from bright golden yellow to crimson red in colour. Other shrubs to consider are: Burning Bush (Euonymus), Chokeberry (Aronia), Viburnums, Fothergilla, Little Henry Sweetspire, Tiger Eye Sumac and Pagoda Dogwood. So if your garden is lacking that fall excitement, it is a great time to visit an area garden centre and see what gems you can add to your garden.

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



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