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



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Canada's most-awarded community newspaper

September 25, 2025

Town settles another lawsuit, pays \$1M to builder over development freeze

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

When it rains, it pours.
Just one week after settling a legal dispute with John Black, the Town of

Niagara-on-the-Lake has resolved a nearly four-year legal battle with Hummel Properties Inc., agreeing to a \$1-million payout to the St. Davids-based developer.
Despite the huge financial hit, Lord Mayor Gary

Zalepa said there is some consolation in putting the matter to rest.
“It’s a disappointment that it comes to things like this,” said Zalepa. “It’s also mixed with a bit of relief knowing that the matter is closed

behind us.”
Both the Hummel and Black cases involved allegations of bad faith by the town.
Last week, the town agreed to pay \$225,000 to settle a bad-faith lawsuit

filed by Black in 2019, after it designated his property as heritage without his consent.
In Hummel’s case, the dispute began in late 2018. The company alleged the town misused an interim control bylaw to halt development

on its Niagara Stone Road property, resulting in project delays and wasted costs.
In 2021, Hummel launched a lawsuit against the Town of Niagara-on-the-

Continued on Page 3



Lake Report earns 13 more national awards for journalism

Staff
The Lake Report

The Lake Report has been singled out for another 13 national awards for its high-quality journalism, commentary and advertising.

In the Canadian Community News Media Awards announced Monday, The Lake Report and its website niagaranow.com received recognition in several categories, winning two honours for its editorials and several awards for contributors’ stories and opinion pieces.

For the first time, the awards, formerly known as the Canadian Community Newspaper Awards, included entries by publications that are online-only entities.

The competition was for stories published in 2024.

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Developer ignores stop-work order

Town says it will fine Marotta’s company \$500 daily for doing work without a permit



The developer of Parliament Oak has begun work without a permit and is continuing work despite a stop-work order from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Residents have complained loudly and the town will begin to enforce daily penalties. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Richard Harley | The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has issued a stop-work order and begun fining developer Benny Marotta’s company \$500 a day for illegally doing excavation work and removing soil from the Parli-

ament Oak hotel site because no permit has been issued.
The developer began removing soil from the property and doing some construction-related work earlier this week, the town said.
Residents circulated emails Tuesday expressing concern

about dirt being removed, saying a steady flow of trucks had been hauling soil from the site.
“I recently walked by the site twice in the last few days, but today clearly indicated that the building is underway,” resident Richard Connelly said in an email.

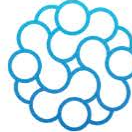
The Town of NOTL confirmed Tuesday that no permit for the work has been issued and that the developer had yet to comply with the stop-work order.
“Staff can confirm that the fill

Continued on Page 2



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Developer is asking for ‘a lot of resentment,’ says resident

Continued from Front Page

is being removed from the site and excavation activity is occurring without a permit,” chief administrator Nick Ruller said in an emailed response to questions from The Lake Report.

“There is no approved site plan for this property. Staff performed a site visit this morning and will be proceeding with enforcement, as applicable.”

Ruller said the town became aware of the illegal activity Monday and has since issued a stop-work order, which the developer, Two Sisters Resorts, ignored.

“The findings of staff were that the work continued today at this point, although we had issued a stop-work order. And consequently, staff are proceeding with enforcement through the administrative monetary penalty system,” he said.

The town will continue to fine Two Sisters daily and in the meantime will determine what further enforcement steps it will take, Ruller said.

“With any kind of enforcement, we’d monitor

the activity and then make a decision, whether we had evidence that we wanted to bring forward to pursue as far as a prosecution goes.”

The company is owned by Marotta, a developer with a history of controversy.

In 2018, he clearcut the Rand Estate, where he plans to build a hotel and subdivision. In 2022, he handed an envelope containing \$10,000 cash to a town councillor, who reported it to the town and police.

In both cases, no wrongdoing was found.

In this case, the town says it’s clear: the developer is operating without a permit and contrary to a stop-work order.

Next steps were unclear for the town as of Wednesday, but Ruller said it will keep fining the builder \$500 per day through Canada’s Administrative Monetary Penalty System.

It is not yet known if the town will seek an injunction or court order to halt the work if the developer continues to ignore the stop-work order.

Ruller said staff do not have the ability to force the



Trucks are illegally hauling dirt from the Parliament Oak site, despite a stop-work order from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake on Tuesday. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

construction to stop, but will continue to monitor the situation.

Retired lawyer and NOTL Residents Association president Stuart McCormack noted in an email the town’s bylaw states “no person” shall remove topsoil without a permit.

That could mean the drivers of each individual truck may be fined, since the prohibition is not restricted to the landowner.

Other residents included The Lake Report on emails debating whether to bring the story to national media outlets or form a line of vehicles to prevent trucks from entering or leaving the site.

Keith Connelly, who said he’s watched an estimated 200 trucks daily filled with dirt go by his home since Monday, called the whole situation “disappointing.” “We we don’t expect in

a 21st century setting in a town like Niagara-on-the-Lake that our bylaws are being ignored and a stop order is being ignored by one of the region’s best-known and wealthiest developers,” he said.

“In other words, (the developer) is just telling the town, ‘Too bad, I’m going to do what I want, and even though you haven’t given me permission to do this, I’m going to do it anyway.’

So if that’s how the developer Mr. Marotta is looking forward to doing things, then there’s a lot of resentment that’s going to build up in the town.”

Ruller said there were concerns about the site earlier in September, but at the time no violations were found.

“We did have some initial reports back on Sept. 10 that there was activity on the site and staff did go out to investigate them,” he said.

“They did not find any activity that would have warranted the need for a approved site plan or site alteration permit,” he said.

“Our initial findings essentially were that they brought some aggregate in and we’re preparing for work and that they were moving some soil on the property.”

Some asphalt, likely from the old parking area, was removed, he added, but since then the town has continued to monitor the site.

“And then we just became aware on Monday afternoon that activity on the site had started.”

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Why did town settle Black lawsuit for \$225K?

Dan Smeen
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's decision to pay \$225,000 to settle a lawsuit by resident John Black has sparked questions and confusion among some residents and officials.

Black sued the town in 2019, alleging misuse of power and bad faith after claiming his home at 27 Prideaux St. was designated as a heritage property to prevent him from making renovations.

In the aftermath of the settlement, announced last week, one question dominated public discussion: why did the town settle?

The Lake Report posed that question to councillors and officials involved in the case.

Couns. Erwin Wiens and Wendy Cheropita — who were on council when the suit was filed — and Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa all said the town had no choice.

"This was an open-and-shut case of bad faith on the part of the town," Wiens said.

Zalepa added, "I'm just going to say that the council, nine people, took advice from legal counsel to make a decision with the set of facts that were presented in the statement of allegations. I'll let that stand for itself."

The town's communications co-ordinator, Marah Minor, said: "On the advice of legal counsel, a settlement was determined to be in the town's best interest given the complex and multi-layered issues involved."

Wiens said Black was a "victim" and the facts left the town little legal ground to stand on.

"The fact is, the Blacks were mistreated," he added. Wiens also noted the



27 Prideaux St.

\$225,000 payment does not include additional legal fees, which the town said were around \$20,000.

He said he was misled by then-lord mayor Betty Disero to believe that Black had requested the heritage designation. Upon learning otherwise, Wiens said he apologized to the Blacks.

Wiens initially said, "I was completely unaware of the clandestine meetings that were taking place. I went along with it, but I was in the dark, and I'm disappointed."

After that interview, Wiens called The Lake Report to apologize and clarify that he didn't know about any "clandestine meetings."

Cheropita said she was relieved the settlement amount wasn't higher, but called it disturbing that two bad-faith cases — lawsuits by Black and developer Rainer Hummel — emerged from 2019.

She also said the lesson as a councillor was not to rely on someone's word when making a decision.

The town announced on Wednesday it settled the Hummel case for \$1 million.

Not everyone agrees with how the town handled the Black lawsuit or the decision to make the settlement public.

Former councillor Stuart McCormack, a retired

lawyer, who was on council when Black sued, questioned why the town would publicly announce the settlement.

"Why was this particular one the subject of a public announcement unless it was part of a settlement agreement that took place?" he said. "Usually, parties don't parade the results around."

Zalepa, who was a regional councillor when the lawsuit was launched, responded: "All decisions of council are public, as per the Municipal Act."

Cheropita echoed that point, saying she believed the settlement was made public due to its size: "Resident transparency is critically important."

McCormack said he couldn't determine whether the settlement was a good deal without more details, but suggested the town may have accepted Black's offer to avoid a prolonged and costly legal battle.

"The town may have just decided, 'Well, it's cheaper than fighting ... and we may or may not win,'" he said.

Tom Elltoft, a real estate company co-owner who was named in Black's lawsuit, said he was confused by the settlement.

"I have no idea if all the facts were ever presented," he said.

The town only presented the statement of claim and not the statement of defence in its original news release, which drew questions from people like Elltoft, who asked why the town wasn't giving people the full story, including his side.

The town, through Minor, said, "The statement of claim was shared to provide the context in which the claim was being advanced. The statement of defence effectively denied any wrongdoing."

Elltoft said he had

previously discussed a due diligence clause in Black's buyer's contract, which said he could have done his own research into whether his property was on the heritage listing and whether he could build a garage.

He asked why this could not have been brought up during the legal battle.

The town responded to that claim, saying: "The matter does not concern the real estate purchase itself, but rather the conduct of the town, specifically the former council. The lawsuit pertains to the improper steps taken by the town in designating the property, rather than the purchase of the property."

Some critics have also pointed to a due diligence clause in Black's real estate purchase offer.

They argue he should have known whether he could build a garage or that the property was heritage-listed, as the clause allowed him time to research.

Disero, who was lord mayor during the original lawsuit, explained how heritage listings work.

"A property is listed to provide a flag should an application come in for alteration or demolition," she said. "At that point, council only has 60 days to determine whether or not a property should be designated."

Asked whether she felt the settlement was political, in order to make her and the prior council look bad, she said, "No comment."

Coun. Gary Burroughs and former councillor Norm Arsenault — both on council at the time — declined to comment.

Lawyers for both sides — Brian Duxworth for Black and Terry Hill for the town — did not respond by press time.

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Town pays Hummel Properties \$1M in settlement

Continued from Front Page

Lake for damages over the interim control bylaw.

According to Hummel's statement of claim, then-lord mayor Betty Disero and former councillor Stuart McCormack directed the town clerk to schedule a special council meeting on the morning of Dec. 5, 2018 — just one day after the newly elected council's inaugural meeting.

The meeting was announced online on Dec. 4, giving less than 24 hours' notice, and held in-camera, meaning the public and media were not allowed to attend.

The town admitted these details in its statement of defence.

Hummel argued the process lacked transparency and violated municipal rules, with no clear notice of the meeting or its agenda. The town, in its defence, acknowledged several of the allegations in the statement of claim but denied acting in bad faith or causing damages.

In a news release following the settlement, the town noted the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled in October 2022 that the 2018 interim control bylaw was illegal. That ruling overturned a 2021 Ontario Superior Court decision.

"The Court of Appeal found that the interim control bylaw was illegal because it was beyond the town's statutory powers and violated the terms of the Planning Act," the town stated.

Hummel claimed the bylaw had significant negative impacts on its business, alleging the delays and preliminary work required by the town resulted in wasted expenditures.

Zalepa said he was unaware of any similar settlements in Ontario.

"I don't ever think I've seen anything like this in NOTL," he said.

McCormack, Disero and Rainer Hummel of Hummel Properties Inc. refused to comment on the settlement.

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Pumpkins pay for college for NOTL kid

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Amid rows of pumpkins at a Niagara-on-the-Lake farm, 12-year-old Ianto Welch is running his own fall business — one built on hard work in the field, community support and a college fund to show for it.

Pumpkin season kicks off Saturday at Front Step Farms Inc., 855 Line 1 Rd., open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pumpkins are priced between \$3 and \$7, cash preferred, with Welch greeting customers most weekends.

After trying it out last year with help from his family, the Grade 8 student is now largely running the patch on his own and says he may keep it going year after year.

Over the summer, he spent about an hour a day tending the field at the farm, where his mom, Heather Sippel, works.

“Just selling pumpkins for people to have — maybe carve them, get the seeds, roast them, maybe turn them into pumpkin pie,” Welch said.

The young grower earned \$2,000 last year, all of it put into savings for college. Although he expects a smaller yield this fall after long stretches without rain, he plans to save this year’s earnings, too.

He began planting in mid-June and set his own prices: \$3 for a small pumpkin, \$5 for a medium and \$7 for a large.

The work has been “abso-



Ianto Welch, 12, tends to his pumpkin patch at Front Step Farms, Inc. in Virgil. Sales begin Saturday and run daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. PAIGE SEBURN

lutely” hard, he said, adding he works on the patch “every day she’s at work and I’m not at school.”

For his mom, who works at the farm daily, the project has been transformative.

“It’s gotten him connected to the community a lot more than what just school would normally bring,” Sippel said. “It’s great to see him go from basically sitting, playing video games on his off time, to interacting with nature.”

She added that Welch has weathered more challenges than most kids his age, after losing his father just before the COVID-19 pandemic.

“To see him bounce back from what he was before-hand has just been amazing,” she said.

Farmer Michael Watson, originally from NOTL,

founded Front Step Farms, Inc. with his wife Sukyi Finn in Vaughan in 2005, added Virgil properties in 2014 and 2020, and made Line 1 Road the home farm in 2022.

He offered Welch the chance to take on the patch.

He and Sippel connected after Watson posted a TikTok challenging people to try farm work. A former grocery retail worker from Niagara Falls, Sippel said she was frustrated by how disconnected many people had become from food sources and decided to take him up on it.

Soon after, she joined the farm — Welch later took on the pumpkins. “Mike’s been a great help,” she said.

Watson said his aim is to bring in people who may not have a farming back-

ground but show the work ethic to learn. By giving them space on his land, he hopes to create opportunities for new farmers to thrive while allowing him and his wife to eventually step back from the day-to-day.

The patch is 100 per cent Welch’s. “No proceeds or anything. We’ve all kind-of pitched in,” said Watson.

There was plenty of land that wasn’t being used and when Sippel suggested it might be good for her son to spend time at the farm during the summer, he said he was happy to make it work.

Watson said the farm used to grow pumpkins every year and became a place where families returned season after season, where he watched children grow from strollers to teenagers.

This year’s heat has meant an earlier harvest and likely lower returns for Welch, compared to last year’s cooler, wetter summer that produced a good crop. Still, it’s “incredible how far he’s come along this past year,” Watson said.

Watson knew the patch would be just enough work for Welch and said the planting and harvest would fit neatly around his school schedule, too.

“If he got interested — then, you know, maybe it’s Ianto’s Market Garden,” said Watson.

Watson said he looks forward to seeing Welch engage with the NOTL community again this fall — something he called “fantastic to see” last year.

[paigeseburn@niagaranow.com](#)

Public Wi-Fi, extra washrooms, could come to Old Town next year

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Wi-Fi in the heritage district, more public washrooms and signs to help visitors navigate Old Town are just a few of the changes that could be coming to Niagara-on-the-Lake's busiest district next year.

Town staff presented these plans and more to council as part of a proposal to spend \$1.9 million in revenue from the municipal accommodation tax, a hotel levy charged to overnight visitors.

Council approved adding these and other projects, aimed at improving the tourist experience, to next year's budget.

The municipal accommodation tax funds are currently sitting in a municipal reserve. \$1.9 million is how much remains in the reserve as Dec. 31, 2024. The levy began July 2022.

Projects for 2026 include: installing public Wi-Fi throughout the heritage district (council approved the town to look for third-party providers); adding more public washrooms; partnering with Tourism NOTL to create physical signs to help tourists navigate Old Town, plus improved digital navigation tools; and implementing accessibility upgrades, including the



Part of the proposed municipal accommodation tax funding is to go to expand public washrooms in Old Town, like this one just behind the courthouse. DAN SMEENK

StopGap program council approved this summer.

Plans for 2027, not yet approved, include more parking, launching a "hop-on, hop-off" shuttle to Old Town, introducing a bike rental program, improving waterfront access, and adding more digital and mobile navigation tools.

When staff presented recommendations to the committee of the whole last Tuesday, some councillors questioned how hotel tax spending plans fit into budget planning.

Coun. Gary Burroughs asked why the projects for next year aren't being considered for this year. Staff did not provide an answer during the meeting. Burroughs told The Lake Report on Tuesday that he hasn't received an

answer from staff to his question.

Coun. Andrew Niven questioned whether cost breakdowns for the projects would appear in the next budget. He said it should be clear what exactly is being funded, especially given the complexity of some of the initiatives.

"Some of these projects are quite fulsome, including working with our partners at Tourism NOTL," said Niven.

He also asked who would receive revenue from potential initiatives, such as advertising over public Wi-Fi. Chief administrative officer Nick Ruller said it's too early to determine that.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita questioned why parking wasn't prioritized in this year's projects.

"I'm surprised that wasn't sort of a number one priority," she said.

She also asked how the top projects were selected and whether the town had explored sharing the cost of these projects with others, particularly for accessibility improvements.

Marah Minor, the town's communications co-ordinator, said the priorities came from the tourism master plan as well as feedback it received regarding accessibility improvements.

"Regarding specific program and funding questions, the StopGap ramp program is being launched as a pilot this year," she said. "Should there be strong uptake, cost-sharing opportunities could be explored in future years."

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa suggested exploring wireless technology — such as cell tower connectivity — instead of relying solely on Wi-Fi. Council amended the motion to include the option to pursue wireless systems.

According to the council agenda, final cost estimates will be reported in the draft capital budget.

The municipal accommodation tax is a four per cent levy charged to tourists staying in local accommodations, including hotels and short-term rentals. The rate increased this year from three per cent.

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Shaw to tear down houses on Victoria Street

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Two heritage-designated properties on Victoria Street will be demolished to make way for the new Royal George Theatre.

Niagara-on-the-Lake town council has given approval to tear down two houses on Victoria Street as part of the Shaw Festival's plan to rebuild the 110-year-old theatre.

The properties at 178 and 188 Victoria St., next to the current Royal George, house Shaw Festival administrative offices and are listed in the town's heritage registry.

Council made the decision Tuesday by approving minutes from the heritage committee's Sept. 3 meeting, which included a recommendation to demolish the houses.

Cathy Cowan, communi-



Council approved the heritage committee's recommendation to demolish 178-188 Victoria St.

cations consultant for the Shaw, said it's planning for the Victoria Street buildings to come down in late fall, "pending approvals from the town."

Shaw Festival executive director Tim Jennings, who attended Tuesday's meeting, said several conditions must still be met before the teardown can begin.

"We've still got more work to do from here," said Jennings. "But it's just an

other step in the process."

One of those steps is submitting a commemoration plan to the municipal heritage committee for its Oct. 1 meeting.

"Staff will look at it sooner than that," Jennings said.

The plan will outline how the Shaw Festival intends to honour the original Royal George Theatre.

Jennings said the festival also needs to secure site

plan approval and a vibration study before moving forward.

The site plan would confirm the design and appearance of the new theatre, while the vibration study would assess whether demolition machinery can operate without exceeding acceptable vibration levels.

Overall, Jennings said the process is going smoothly, moving as expected so far.

"There's always a bit of a question about timing. We're trying really hard to stay out of tourist season and so trying to hit all the exact markers are the trick at this point. Plus or minus a week can make a difference at this point."

The festival company plans to demolish the theatre itself early next year, with a new facility expected to be completed by summer 2028.

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Best editorial and reader engagement among firsts

Continued from Front Page

Since it began entering provincial and national competitions in 2020, The Lake Report has won a total of 144 awards, more than any other community news publication in the country.

In the latest national contest, The Lake Report, an independent company owned by three Niagara-on-the-Lake residents, competed in the largest circulation category (10,000 and up), facing off against several large chain-owned papers with much larger staffs and far more resources.

Editor-in-chief Richard Harley won five awards, including first place for Best National Editorial, for his piece on Aug. 15, 2024, “Poilievre is truly great — at pandering,” about lies and misleading statements made by Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre during a campaign-style pre-election visit to NOTL.

Harley also won third place for Best Local Editorial for his commentary on council meeting in secret to decide to appoint Andrew Niven to fill a vacant seat instead of following the past practice of choosing the next person in line on the election ballot.

In all, The Lake Report won six first-place honours, three seconds and four thirds.

The paper’s opinion writers dominated the Outstanding Columnist category, with Ross Robinson earning first place and Garth Turner taking third.

The judge commented that Robinson “has an engaging writing style that he uses to challenge conventional thinking on medical tourism, to espouse his love of travel and to skewer the NHL all-star game. Clever word play – he’d rather be a proctologist than a dentist — add some snap to his easy-flowing style.”

Entries had to consist of three consecutive columns and we entered Robinson’s pieces: “Why this Niagara-on-the-Lake lad loves to travel,” Feb. 1, 2024; “I tried to watch the all-star hockey weirdness,” Feb. 8; and “Going to Mexico to avoid Canada’s overpriced dental cartels,” Feb. 15.

The judge noted Turner brings “his wealth of knowledge on markets and real estate to The Lake Report. Despite decades of experience analyzing markets and the economy, he does a nice job of making it local for his Niagara audience.”

Turner’s column entries included his debut piece, “What now? Where does NOTL housing market go from here?” (June 20, 2024); “America, Trump and the price of NOTL real estate,” (June 27); and “Old is cool in NOTL and a prized flag rises again,” (July 4).

The Lake Report’s annual pre-Christmas edition, the final paper each year, was chosen for Best Reader Engagement.

Conceived by Harley and the newspaper’s staff, the edition featured an innovative four-page wrap that doubled as gift wrap and included 294 colourful images drawn by students at Crossroads Public School in Virgil.

The illustrations featured the Grinch, Frosty the Snowman, NOTL Wolves hockey teams, a family watching “Home Alone” by the fireplace, Christmas bulbs, Diwali lights, a menorah and more.

Nearly every child in the school participated and the judge labelled the effort a “home run” and “the clear winner in the category, combining a unique and highly creative idea, engaging young (future) readers and their families and presenting it in a way that puts your logo under Christmas trees all over town.”

On behalf of the school, principal Kate Fish said the project was one that aligned with Crossroads.

“The Crossroads Public School Coyotes are extremely proud and grateful to have been a part of this creative and collaborative initiative,” she said.

“Celebrating the diverse identities and traditions of the families in our community aligned beautifully with the ongoing work we do as a school and we are excited to participate again, this year!”

In taking first place nationally for Best Sports Coverage, the judge commended The Lake Report for the content and design of its coverage.

Entries included a front-page story by Kevin MacLean on boxer Mckenzie Wright losing by a single point in a bid to qualify for the Paris Olympics, Julia Sacco’s feature on up-and-coming swimmers Peyton and Georgia Leigh, and stories by Kevan Dowd, with compelling action photos by Dave Van de Laar, about the Jr. A Niagara Predators hockey team’s struggles on the ice.

Harley, managing editor Zahraa Hmood and the

Page 9
August 15, 2024
OPINION

Editorial

Poilievre is truly great — at pandering

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

Pierre Poilievre made a name for himself in the last few months. He's a leader who at first might seem inflexible, but he's actually quite flexible. He's a leader who at first might seem inflexible, but he's actually quite flexible. He's a leader who at first might seem inflexible, but he's actually quite flexible.

being done is solely by Meta (which runs Facebook and Instagram). The company has not agreed to pay to list abuse and in response to the laws Canada passed to help ensure journalism organizations get paid, it has banned Canadian news on its platform.

But what he's really the best at is pandering, lying and misleading.

He panders to a crowd that's not Liberal. He's willing to cut up and distort anything he says. He's willing to cut up and distort anything he says. He's willing to cut up and distort anything he says.

Here are a few examples of just how good Poilievre is at spinning tales of lies that sound so in the interest.

And, turning, there's a lot of personal misleading and contradiction to speak here, but it's all closely related. So here we go. Firstly, we asked him what his party would do to ensure it supports local journalism.

His answer?

"Free speech."

It's a lie to repeat the conspiracy, make it possible for Canadian news to be visible again on Facebook, Instagram and all other social media platforms," he said.

"And get rid of the terrible censorship laws that have taken down news services from the internet and disrupted independent local media to have a voice."

OK, it's a decent idea, there's no such thing as a conspiracy law, but we assume he's referring to the Online News Act (Bill C-18), which is aimed at ensuring that platforms compensate news providers when their content is made available on their services.

OK, it's a decent idea, but big players like Google or Meta don't even come close to Canadian media companies, and benefits from the billions of views these services produce, then companies like Google must pay for that privilege.

The law is simple, fair and in the best interests of Canadian journalism organizations — and something Google has agreed to by the way.

The only "conspiracy" being done is solely by Meta (which runs Facebook and Instagram). The company has not agreed to pay to list abuse and in response to the laws Canada passed to help ensure journalism organizations get paid, it has banned Canadian news on its platform.

So really Poilievre calls Bill C-18 a conspiracy law, which is absolutely not. He's being blatantly misleading. And to the average, misinformed voter who doesn't understand it, it could seem true.

We mean this with as little offence as possible, but he's relying on his voter base to not be smart enough to know the difference.

It might sound good and pander to the right people, but he's fighting for "free speech." But in reality, as Canada has already been a freedom of expression thanks to the Charter of Rights.

It's terrible how Poilievre has done under nine years of Trudeau. And now, of course, media and journalism is stronger than ever today."

PIERRE POILIEVRE
CONSERVATIVE LEADER

The rest of his lies lies directly to with the lies we just discussed.

We asked a question about the future of the Local Journalism Act, which is aimed at ensuring that platforms compensate news providers when their content is made available on their services.

He responds?

"It is terrible how ... local media has done under nine years of Trudeau. He's been a leader who at first might seem inflexible, but he's actually quite flexible. He's a leader who at first might seem inflexible, but he's actually quite flexible.

"We won't even print a news release without asking questions and vetting the information — as some local NOTL media organizations regularly do.

You will never find verbatim Liberal or Conservative news releases in our paper. Or from any party.

If we did, the majority of

from the LJI program is missing, out of touch with reality and just another way to pander to people who lack critical thinking skills.

Does he think that if he keeps the program running, news outlets are going to magically turn Conservative because we're so generous? It's almost cute, how ignorant he must be.

He would like you to believe Justin Trudeau is pandering, orders to organizations like The Lake Report. It's simply not true and the worst part is that Poilievre must be smart enough to know it. He's just hoping you buy his fantasy. Perhaps he is afraid that with a healthy media he plans to do with the LJI program.

His answer was that media should be "free to do what they want to do." But he's not saying that. He's saying that media should be "free to do what they want to do." But he's not saying that.

Simply, we have a choice. We can have a free press, or we can have a free press. We can have a free press, or we can have a free press.

With one hand he's cutting our income flow and giving it to billions, and with the other he's criticizing media for not being able to make enough money and saying the government shouldn't be helping keep an essential democratic institution alive.

He says, "And now, of course, media and journalism is stronger than ever today because we have the internet, which allows for more voices to reach Canadians and that competition is positive. We can't have the government try to shut down competition just to favour those who favour the political convenience of Justin Trudeau."

Again, there's a lie to speak here.

Firstly, did he just say media and journalism is doing better than ever? We thought he just said how much we're all suffering under Trudeau?

Can't this guy make up his mind?

He's just pandering again. So don't take anything he says too seriously, people. Secondly, the government isn't trying to shut down anyone. The government is trying to help keep local journalism organizations alive, largely because real journalists are the only ones who will give you the whole story.

Citizen journalism? Like you see on TikTok and Facebook, created by amateurs who don't really know what balanced journalism is, or often times people's surmises, accompanied by half-baked opinions and a general isn't really news.

Citizen journalism — a term that shouldn't even really exist because it isn't journalism — often comes with bias.

It doesn't continue to follow stories to the end. It often comes as people before a court case.

There are a lot of problems with citizen journalism and Poilievre's mindset that journalism is doing just fine because every body and everyone who just really knows what balanced journalism is, or often times people's surmises, accompanied by half-baked opinions and a general isn't really news.

But it's the ground is more like it.

We realize this is probably the longest editorial we've ever published. But, it might be one of the most necessary editorials yet.

Because one of Poilievre's tactics is to throw out so much misinformation that it's almost impossible to fact check it all, especially on the spot.

It's why he often appears to not journalists and other news organizations, but he's on another planet and it's almost impossible to have a rational conversation with someone who just makes things up.

So it's our duty as a free press — one that's going to take anything at face value from any politician — to call out Poilievre's dangerous lies. Or his inability to comprehend the truth.

Either he's lying to you and knows it. Or he's just incompetent.

And because he's not a stupid man, it's not hard to figure out. If you think critically about what he says,

Publisher and Editor-in-Chief Richard Harley earned first place for Best National Editorial for his piece on Aug. 15, 2024, “Poilievre is truly great — at pandering,” about lies and misleading statements made by Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre during a campaign-style pre-election visit to NOTL. It was one of six first-place accolades for the paper for journalism excellence in 2024. FILE

The stories ran from last Sept. 11 through the end of October and looked at new and old methods employed at Niagara-on-the-Lake’s wineries, how Niagara College prepares future generations of winemakers and vineyard managers, and the farm workers from Mexico and the Caribbean who are the lifeblood of the industry.

Former staff reporter Richard Wright’s “Summer of the Flood” series last year was runner-up in the Outstanding Reporter Initiative category.

Also a six-part series, it documented the severe water problems caused by two major summer storms, the aftermath and cleanup, as well as some possible solutions.

Harley’s design of an ad for Dr. Hopkins & Associates Optometry promoting safe viewing of the impending total eclipse earned second place for Best Ad Design.

“Anything you can do ...,” former staff reporter Richard Hutton’s front-page feature on the rising number of women making their mark in agriculture, took second prize for Best Agricultural Story.

The Lake Report’s arts reporting was recognized with a third-place national prize in the Best Coverage of the Arts category.

The paper’s “commitment to showcasing local artistic talent and cultural events is truly commendable,” the judge said.

“Through comprehensive and engaging reporting, they continue to celebrate and elevate the vibrant arts community they serve.”

The submission included a front-page Evan Loree story about the Shaw Festival struggling with a \$5.7-million deficit in 2023, a review of “My Fair Lady” by Penny-Lynn Cookson, a story about Music Niagara kicking off its 26th season, Wright’s piece on the inaugural NOTL Studio Tour, and a Paige Seburn story about artist Rick Cul-lis’ exhibition opening at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre.

The paper’s 12-page celebration of International Women’s Day, which featured contributions by five staff members, design by Rose Ellen Campbell and Harley, photography by Van de Laar and overall editing by MacLean earned third place for Best Special Section.

editor@niagaranow.com

Top: Publisher Richard Harley and “all of the students at Crossroads Public School” took home first place for Best Reader Engagement for a special holiday gift wrap that featured 294 images, all hand-drawn by the school students. Bottom: Jill Troyer, along with her husband Don Reynolds (not pictured), earned Best Rural Reporting for a six-part series on NOTL wine production called “Heartbeat of the Harvest.” Columnist Garth Turner was awarded third place for Outstanding Columnist for his column “The Turner Report.” Ross Robinson earned the top spot for Outstanding Columnist for his “Ross’s Ramblings.”

entire staff of The Lake Report won Best Multimedia Feature for “an innovative” and “creative” preview of the April 2024 total eclipse of the sun.

The two-page spread included safety tips, facts

about the eclipse, a large map of the Path of Totality and planned viewing parties.

Jill Troyer and Don Reynolds produced the Best Rural Reporting entry, the six-part series, “Heartbeat

of the Harvest.”

The judge called it an “excellent series, very well-written and presented. The opening paragraphs of the series were masterfully penned, drawing the reader in begging for more.”

Region adds surveillance, plans repairs at speed camera site amid Ford criticism

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Niagara Region paid \$3,000 to buy and install the new surveillance camera posted at the site of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s repeatedly vandalized automated speed camera on Niagara Stone Road.

The speed camera’s schedule ended in August, with no plans to extend it, but the damaged housing pole will still be replaced, said Scott Fraser, the region’s associate director of transportation planning.

“So that the site is prepared for when the (automated speed enforcement) camera returns in future,” he said, adding no timeline has been set for the replacement, which the region will co-ordinate with the camera’s vendor.

Fraser said the camera was removed by the vendor from the site because of the damage it incurred. It was chopped down last month.

Although the region says it’s seen positive results with



A closed-circuit television camera, installed by Niagara Region in September, overlooks the Niagara Stone Road site where the automated speed camera was repeatedly vandalized and later disappeared. PAIGE SEBURN

photo radar cameras, Premier Doug Ford criticized them at a Sept. 22 press conference, where he said, “I’ve had many mayors tell me, ‘We know this is a tax grab.’”

The province plans to provide funding for speed bumps, flashing signs and other traffic-calming measures to municipalities across Ontario, which Ford said are more effective at slowing drivers.

“The speed traps do not slow people down,” Ford said. “They may slow them

within the community, but there are so many other people coming throughout the community.”

Jason Misner, the region’s senior communications specialist, told The Lake Report the region is aware of the premier’s comments about automated speed enforcement and awaits “further direction from the province.”

So far, no vandalism has been captured on the surveillance camera.

Fraser said the region planned to install it while

the speed camera was still in operation, but could not “because of required timelines for procurement, delivery and installation of the camera.”

The region went ahead with the installation regardless, he said, because poles and housings have been targeted in the past whether or not cameras were present.

The camera is owned and operated by the region and is not monitored live but can be accessed and shared with investigators if incidents occur.

Fraser said using closed-circuit TV cameras is “common practice” in Niagara to keep its infrastructure safe and for public safety.

Vandalism has not led the region to change its speed camera schedule, which “prioritizes enhancing road safety in community safety zones,” Fraser said.

Data from the 2025 enforcement program is still under review and will be shared with council in future updates.

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At 96, Niagara District Airport recalls tragic debut, lasting legacy

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Niagara District Airport has been part of Niagara’s skies since 1929, witnessing aviation’s evolution from risky early flights to today’s modern operations.

Now marking its 96th anniversary, it has grown from its beginnings on the edge of St. Catharines into the certified general aviation hub it is today at 468 Niagara Stone Rd. in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

“This is really about recognizing how long we’ve been a member of the community and how that’s changed over the course of 96 years,” said the airport’s chief executive officer, Dan Pilon.

Pilon said the airport’s significance has shifted over time, from its role during the Second World War to driving Niagara’s economic growth.

“We’ve been here for a lot of really significant moments in the history of this community and we want to be here for more,” he said.

The airport’s history



Niagara District Airport CEO Dan Pilon, communications manager Megan McRae and operations co-ordinator Larry Coplen are a few members of the expansive team celebrating the airport’s 96th birthday this month. PAIGE SEBURN

includes both achievements and losses.

Just days after it opened, six people were killed in a crash, a tragedy that underscored the dangers of flying at the time.

But safety has advanced dramatically since then, Pilon said.

“Massive leaps,” he said, “when we talk about 96 years ago and the challenges that were there.”

Over the years, Pilon said, millions of dollars in investments from “different levels of the communities that support us,” have helped the airport become certified.

“That’s nothing minor,” he said, adding it means higher safety standards and the ability to handle larger aircraft.

For communications manager Megan McRae, joining the team meant discovering a history she hadn’t known: “I wasn’t aware of how

long the airport has been around.”

Her research uncovered details of a past that included an airport inn, complete with a restaurant, dancing and bus service to Buffalo and Toronto.

“I believe it was at the old location,” she said, adding

the airport was originally located within St. Catharines before moving to its current site in NOTL to make way for the QEW extension.

With roots in both communities, Pilon said the airport has “kind of got this joint history.”

As it approaches its 100th anniversary, McRae said, “It is a pleasure to be able to be part of the team and carrying the business forward.”

Looking ahead, Pilon said the focus is “transformational growth” — a theme repeated during public consultations over the past year and detailed in the airport’s master plan, which is expected to be completed this year.

He said the link airports create between communities “is massive to be able to grow” and that connection is especially important “when we talk about a community that’s grounded in tourism.”

Few airports can trace their roots as far back as 1929, Pilon added, and that longevity reflects the depth of history in the region, which “Niagara-on-the-Lake is so drenched in.”

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Red Roof Retreat scavenger hunt raises \$50K for new facility

Andrew Hawlitzky
The Lake Report

Cars fanned out across Niagara-on-the-Lake on Saturday as Red Roof Retreat’s scavenger hunt raised about \$50,000 toward building a new facility.

The third annual rally, starting and ending at the retreat’s Concession 6 property, marked the final event before crews demolish the current facility to make way for a 5,700-square-foot accessible building. Organizers say community support is essential, as the \$4-million project relies entirely on donations.

“It’s pretty exciting, but it’s funny because we’re ending on such a positive note, and then it’s going to be kind of melancholy and sad when we take the place down,” said Steffanie Bjorgan, founder of Red Roof Retreat.

Twenty cars followed 25 clues across Old Town, Virgil, St. Davids and Queenston. Each stop required teams to take photos or



The Burns family team poses in KISS costumes beside their decorated car at Red Roof Retreat. ANDREW HAWLITZKY

complete small tasks, from tracking down landmarks to having a nail painted at a local spa.

Board member Jon Taylor, who crafted all the questions for the scavenger hunt, said the event’s mix of competition and “unusual” fundraising is what keeps

people coming back. “Typically it’s dinners or golf or cocktails. But this is a contest and people love it. They say it’s the best”

Taylor said the event has grown steadily, raising \$25,000 in its first year, \$35,000 in its second and about \$50,000 this year.

For many people in attendance, the rally was more than just a game. Betty Knight, who joined with her husband, James, said supporting Red Roof feels personal. She was more than willing to pay the \$500 entrance fee.

“They’ve got to raise

four million odd dollars and each one of these cars represents \$500 in that direction.”

James Knight called Red Roof central to Niagara-on-the-Lake’s spirit.

“They live at the heart of our community. If we don’t take care of the people who

need the help the most, then we’re not a good community. That’s the beginning and the end, right?”

The expansion will replace the retreat’s small bungalow with a purpose-built space for day programs, camps and respite care. Plans also call for preserving and upgrading the iconic red barn and adding a covered pavilion for outdoor activities year-round.

Construction is expected to begin this fall, pending permits, with hopes of opening by late 2026. In the meantime, programming will continue at Kevan’s House on Concession 2 and at Cornerstone Church on Hunter Road.

“Every dollar counts,” Taylor said. “This place serves a very unique need in our community. There’s no government support. It’s all self-funded through donations.”

Donations can be made online through Red Roof Retreat’s website.

andrew@niagaranow.com



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This year's Healing Cycle will take place Oct. 18. Meet at the Memorial Park pavilion before taking off at 9 a.m. FILE

Annual **Hummel Family Healing Cycle**
for NOTL Palliative Care set for Oct. 18

Staff
The Lake Report

The Hummel Family Healing Cycle Ride is back this fall in Niagara-on-the-Lake, with participants hoping to raise \$60,000 to support local palliative care. The annual cycle ride is set to take place Saturday, Oct. 18 at 9 a.m., with fundraising individuals and

teams encouraging people to donate from now until Sunday, Oct. 19. All the proceeds will go to support Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care, which provides end-of-life care and support for residents of NOTL and their families. Alongside this, they offer caregiver relief and assistance, professional

counselling, bereavement support, mobility equipment lending, transportation and more. Participants in the event can complete a five-kilometre walk or ride, a 10-kilometre ride or a 25-kilometre ride. The ride starts from Veterans Memorial Park in Old Town, with cyclists, runners and walkers meeting at the

NOTL Tennis Club pavilion off Veterans Lane. The Hummel family has pledged to match every dollar raised, up to \$25,000. As of Wednesday afternoon, the campaign has raised \$1,150. To find out how to take part in the Healing Cycle, visit notlpc.com/event/hummel-family-healing-cycle-ride-2025.



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Ontario 

Artist Hao Wang inspired by NOTL landscapes

Andrew Hawlitzky
The Lake Report

Bright paintings, some inspired by Niagara-on-the-Lake scenery, filled Vineridge Academy's new art studio Saturday as visiting artist Hao Wang showcased months of work from his residency.

The Sept. 20 exhibition featured paintings and sculptures Wang created during his stay at the private school in Virgil.

The program, launched last year, invites international artists to live on campus and create works inspired by Niagara-on-the-Lake, giving residents a chance to see local scenery reimagined through new perspectives.

Vineridge Academy principal Michael Miao said he started the program to connect Niagara with the broader art world and hopes to expand it.

"We'd like to expand maybe with a new art studio, because this is such a beautiful town, such a good



Hao Wang stands beside one of his Niagara-on-the-Lake-inspired paintings of the Sailing Club during his exhibition at Vineridge Academy on Sept. 20. ANDREW HAWLITZKY

place for an artist and we'd like to invite more," said Miao.

Wang, who is from China and does not speak English, shared through a student translator from Hong Kong, Cyrus Au-Yeung, that the town's atmosphere has deeply influenced his art.

"He says likes the locals and the feeling of the town," said Au-Yeung. "The colours of the skies and

just the overall feeling here inspire him to draw more colourful drawings."

The exhibition included large canvases of landscapes and abstract scenes as well as sculptures made from trees. Wang used a chainsaw to cut the wood before burning it, leaving blackened, charred surfaces with rigid textures.

Cyrus explained that two of the paintings on

display were directly based on Niagara-on-the-Lake scenery.

"He really likes the landscape and is inspired by it and he wants to keep continuing," said Au-Yeung.

Miao said Wang is a long-time friend and the school was able to support his stay with food, materials and lodging. In exchange, the school retains some of the work for its collection.

The program is funded by Vineridge, which houses visiting artists in the dormitory and encourages students to interact with them. Miao said it brings an international perspective to the community while also giving artists a peaceful place to work.

He added he is now trying to invite more artists from countries including Mexico and Italy.

Residents can expect future exhibitions at the school, with dates to be announced as new artists arrive.

andrew@niagaranow.com



Artists in residence
Julie Forrester Clark
Sept 4 - November 10, 2025

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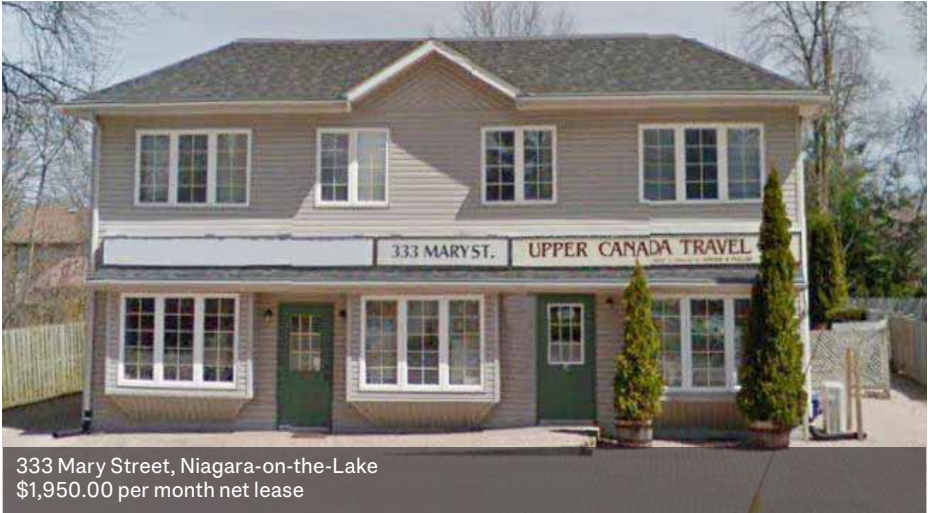


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BKind Grateful
With Bradley Hamilton
#46: If you enjoy gardening, cut some flowers and create a bouquet for a neighbour or friend, accompanied by a thank-you note. Your name doesn't need to be on the card.

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



Contributed by Patty Garriock
"The best kind of laughter is laughter born of shared memory."
- Mindy Kaling

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Opinion

The wall, the hotel and the hope



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner
Columnist

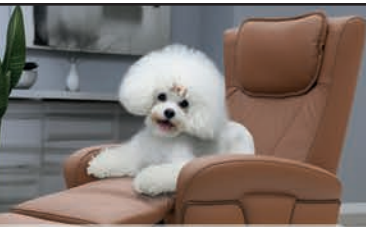
They open the front door, stand on the stoop and there it is. The Wall.
Directly across from the heritage-themed townhouses on Perez Road stands a three-storey monolith stretching the entire block. Now under construction, it's foamed in blazing yellow.
Next summer it will buzz with 42 new vacation rentals attached to a sweeping, arched 60-room hotel clad in reflective glass, looking all the world like Terminal 4 at Pearson Airport.
This is the Old Town's new signature gateway project. And some people wonder what the heck went wrong with our planning process. How did we turn into Mississauga?
"It's unlikely the people who live behind that development are ever going to see the sun again," says Stuart McCormack. "The massing of this is not consistent with the town."
McCormack was on council back in 2018 when John and Adam Hawley unveiled their plans for a commercial development on this prime eight-acre site beside the amazing Garrison Village enclave.
Then it included a small food store, an arts centre, more retail space and a squat four-storey hotel that looked like a benign apartment building.
But that was then. Four years passed. There were five revisions. The hotel morphed. The roof got higher. The food store swelled into a two-storey emporium. The retail multiplied. Parking for almost 400 vehicles emerged.
And The Wall of short-term rental units, with parking below each, sprang onto



Top: The Village Square proposal, approved in 2018 with modestly scaled buildings. Bottom: Clayfield Commons, as being constructed in 2025, with a 102-unit hotel and tourist rentals. Columnist Garth Turner wonders how the project took such a vastly different turn than what was originally presented and approved. SOURCED

the site plan. The original proposal was to have rental apartments above stores — a traditional model. But now a strung-out motel is glued to a hotel, and throws its shadow upon the neighbours.
"When I go back and look at the drawings that were used by the planning group," McCormack says, "they appear substantially different to what I'm seeing now. There were brick columns, no one-way glass on the windows, not as much massing. To a certain extent, yes, this looks like an airport hotel."
It's to be called the Clayfield, owned by Hawley's corporation and run by Hyatt. The hotel and the rentals are part of the largest commercial development in NOTL's history, which will be made up of 16 buildings.
Seven years ago residents reacted badly. Council saw a petition with 164 names on it objecting to the hotel, the height, the anticipated tourist traffic, the parking and congestion. They approved it anyway.
Since then, the project's footprint has expanded. And this time without political oversight.
How does this happen?
"This speaks to a much larger issue," McCormack says, "which is the town's willingness to delegate site approval to staff. For keynote projects, such as Parliament Oak (hotel) and this, it would be prudent for final approval to come back to council. This has the potential to dramatically change the face of the town."
"We need to make sure that what we were told is in fact what's being put up. By the way, how many of the planning staff live in Niagara-on-the-Lake, I wonder."
Sunday morning, and Perez Road has dog walkers and gardeners on one side, chain link and steel trusses on the other. How are people who live there, who bought homes once bordering an open meadow, reacting to The Wall?
"Well, it was a surprise," in the words of a couple who have lived there for years (and prefer anonymity). "We expected a commercial area, of course, but nothing of this scale and scope."
The concerns: the height. Cars. Congestion. Traffic. More tourists in a town already being loved to death.
But there is also good. Services will be expanded. More walkability. "I won't have to drive to Virgil now for a quart of milk."
They're resigned. "What are you gonna do about it?" a lady with a Lab asked. "You just have to trust the city knows what they're doing," her friend said.
Or not.
Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.
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Editorial

'Elect Respect' starts at the top

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

When Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa introduced his "Elect Respect" motion Sept. 16, residents could be forgiven for thinking it was satire. The call for greater civility in local political dialogue would carry far more weight if the mayor himself did not have a pattern of condescending and disrespectful exchanges with the very people he was elected to represent.

Respect cannot be selectively demanded — it must be practised. And Zalepa's record reveals a troubling double standard.

Take, for instance, his text to local realtor Tom Elltoft: "Where should I send your half of the bill for the Black lawsuit?"

It was not just a flippant remark. It was an unprofessional and deeply disrespectful attack on a resident,



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa needs to follow his own advice when it comes to respectful dialogue. He's demonstrated a pattern of dismissive and condescending replies to resident concerns, both at public meetings and in emails, and has all but said he doesn't care about residents' opinions when it comes to town matters. FILE

meant to intimidate and belittle. Coming from the town's highest elected official, this is not the language of leadership — it is a verbal assault.

The incident is not an isolated one. Residents who have attempted to raise legitimate concerns about development, heritage or town hall transparency have too

often been met with dismissive, patronizing responses. Instead of encouraging dialogue, Zalepa has developed a reputation for shutting it down, making people feel that their voices — and their right to question town decisions — do not matter.

And yet, here he is championing a motion called "Elect Respect."

It is a classic case of "do as I say, not as I do."

When politicians wrap themselves in the language of civility while continuing their own pattern of disrespect, the result is not unity but hypocrisy.

If Zalepa truly believes in electing respect, he should start by looking in the mirror. Respect is not earned through motions passed in council chambers — it is earned through conduct, tone and example. A mayor who publicly belittles residents cannot turn around and claim the moral authority to police the behaviour of others.

Words matter, but actions matter more. Until the lord mayor holds himself to the same standard he prescribes for others, "Elect Respect" will remain what it currently is: a hollow slogan, and frankly, a joke.

editor@niagaranow.com

Municipal heritage committee missed the mark

Dear editor:

It's hard to comprehend how the Niagara-on-the-Lake municipal heritage committee could recognize the negative impact of the Shaw Festival's Royal George construction project on the historical character of the neighbourhood around the theatre, but still approve the demolition of two adjacent heritage houses on Victoria Street.

Particularly, when the primary reason for the demolition is to create better access to the theatre construction site.

The contrast between the committee's decision and the efforts of the Swedish town of Kiruna to preserve its 113-year-old church is striking.

When it was clear that the expansion of its iron ore mine was putting the town at risk, residents voted to relocate the town to a new site three kilometres away.

They also initiated a 10-year planning process to preserve their historic 113-year-old church.

It came to fruition in early August 2025, when the church was raised off its foundations and hoisted onto a specially built apparatus with 224 wheels.

It was then rolled five kilometres to its new location over two days.

The Shaw Festival says that it would be impossible to lift the Royal George Theatre off its foundations. I don't buy it.

If Kiruna can move its 672-tonne church five kilometres, surely the festival could lift the Royal George and move it back 20 yards from Queen Street to allow the construction of a new lobby and replace the theatre's foundations.

But the festival's 10-year planning process for the George, beginning with its acquisition of Angie Strauss' Victoria Street home, has always been about demolishing and rebuilding the theatre, not about preserving it as an important part of Niagara-on-the-Lake's heritage.

When the festival's plans come to fruition, a phony wall will stand in the place of the Royal George's existing façade, and the

streetscape of both Victoria and Queen streets will, in my view, be negatively changed.

The historic feel and character of our town will be diminished, and a building that marks an important time in Niagara-on-the-Lake's past — when troops trained here before being shipped off to war — will be forever lost.

Shame on the festival for planning this destruction and shame on the Niagara-on-the-Lake municipal heritage committee for not only supporting it but also setting a precedent that will make it difficult to decline similar demolition requests in the future.

Terry Davis
NOTL

We welcome your letters

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



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: IN THE MEDICINE CABINET

Semaglutide, a drug for type 2 diabetes that's used for weight loss, is sold under the brand names Rybelsus, Wegovy and this.

Last issue category: BEAR WITH US

Clue: A 2021 study showed black bears shut down genes involved in the breakdown of bone during this period.

Answer: What is hibernation?

Answered first by: Sue Rautenberg

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Bob Wheatley, Jane Morris, Daniel Smith, Susan Hamilton, Kimberly Amaral, Lynda Collet, Jeff Lake, Claudia Grimwood, Katie Reimer, Wade Durling, Margie Enns, Howard Jones, Jim Dandy, Margaret Garaughty, Susan Dewar, Marla Percy, Nancy Rocca

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

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Make voice heard on out-of-control development practices



ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall
Columnist

Welcome to Niagara-on-the-Lake — Canada's new Wild West, wherein development overtures are flying through the air thick and fast, like bullets shot by hired gun-slingers whose actions are undeterred because, apparently, there is nary a brave sheriff to be found.

Most of the town's citizens are huddled in their homes, quietly bemoaning the apparent destruction of their formerly bucolic town streetscapes.

"How could it be allowed to go on?" they mutter. "Where are the elected officials and their trusty staff who should be proactively protecting the town from rapacious, patently unsuitable development?"

There is a great deal of hand-wringing and, occasionally, there are some folks who engage in gentle

attempts to influence the actions (or inaction) of our councillors and town staff to align with the majority's shared opinion.

Gentle because we Canadians are generally a polite people who would rather negotiate a compromise on an issue rather than outright deny it (my brilliant wife describes this as "doing the wrong thing right" — in other words, any accommodation of a bad or destructive undertaking is wrong, while acting in a civilized manner is right).

And, when this polite approach is ignored or fails to influence the outcome — as appears to be the norm over the last few years — most take one of three actions:

They retreat and allow the undertaking to go forward without further opposition. Or, they continue to repeat their unsuccessful polite overtures, hoping for a different result. Or, there are those sad folks who put up a "for sale" sign and move the heck outta Dodge — seemingly believing in the myth that their utopia is just over the next hill.

Before we go any further, let's consider just a few examples of out-of-control, "rapacious" and/or destructive development ...

While the Two Sisters Resorts' overture on the



Caissons, a watertight steel tube that acts as a stable foundation for large structures, are being installed at the site of the future Parliament Oak hotel. BRIAN MARSHALL

former Parliament Oak site is considered by most to be both rapacious and destructive development, recently it has apparently moved into the "out-of-control" category as well.

Over the past couple of weeks, earth-moving equipment has commenced working on the site and in the last few days, caissons have started to be installed.

For those who may not be aware, a caisson is a large, watertight steel tube that is drilled into the ground and filled with reinforced concrete to act as a deep, stable foundation for large

structures on sites where there is the expectation of groundwater issues.

So, the construction of the development's foundations has started.

And, to the best of our knowledge, as per a participant in a Sept. 22 meeting (which included the town's director of community and development services), staff stated that they were aware of the excavation activity on-site but, as of that date, no building permit had been issued for this project.

I suppose there may be some dubious justification for town staff to ignore work that was focused on "moving dirt" vis-à-vis issuing a stop work order; however, installation of caissons clearly crosses the line into verboten territory.

Bluntly, no one goes to the expense of installing caissons on dry land for any other reason than foundation work. Any argument to the contrary would be ludicrous.

The correct response should be to immediately issue a stop work order followed by an order to remove the illegal caissons.

After more than a week, town staff finally got around to issuing a stop work order on Sept. 23. Although they claimed it had been served,

work continued all day and, as of 4 p.m. on Sept. 24, a copy of the order was still not visibly posted on site.

Will the developer comply in the face of the pitifully small \$500/day fine? We'll see.

Shifting gears, we move to the Rand Estate, where, in August, the developer's agents filed a "new" application to approve a panhandle subdivision access street.

Note that this overture was clearly and unequivocally rejected by the October 2024 Ontario Land Tribunal decision, which determined as a "fundamental principle" that there could be "no panhandle access" and "Solmar must find another access solution."

Yet, despite the fact there was no substantively "new" information or justification for arguing that the tribunal decision was in error (typically required for a municipality to accept a "new" application, nor would it have passed the Ontario Land Tribunal's vetting process and come to a hearing), staff accepted the submission and put it into process.

Our final example is, unfortunately, the redevelopment proposal for the Royal George. At its current size — approximately 46,000 square feet (roughly similar to the above-ground

Festival Theatre footprint) — massing, form, detailing, etc., it is both rapacious and destructive in the context of the Queen-Picton heritage district.

Moreover, a slick PR campaign, continually changing — somewhat misleading — drawings/renderings and the tin halo worn by the Shaw as a cultural institution, has resulted in demolition permits for three historic buildings without further scrutiny.

Did you know that you have the right to delegate (speak to) any item included on the open agendas of town council and all of its committees?

As citizens, we have only two formal venues through which we can express our opinion. The first is our vote, once every four years.

The second is through our voice. While public open houses and surveys are important, the use of delegation is far, far more powerful.

Make your voice heard, choose to delegate through the town's website and speak in front of those who decide on the issues. You can make a change.

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



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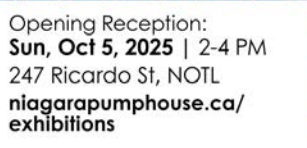
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Is our beloved NOTL an accidental dichotomy?



ROSS'S RAMBLINGS

Ross Robinson
Columnist

People who use a lot of big words are not trying to inform us. They are trying to impress us. Having said that, I have never been certain about the exact meaning of the nine-letter word “dichotomy.”

Something about two separate things at once? Sometimes, I think I am living in parallel universes here in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

I do my best to keep current with local thought. I read The Lake Report, I listen at the Legion, and I chat with people in aisle four of the Valumart. (I know, I know, the Independent.)

Between SORE and Randwood, the Parliament Oak changes, the dramatic Royal George project,

per capita policing costs across the Niagara Peninsula, “driveway or assessment-based,” the list goes on and on.

We seem to be living in the midst of so much angry emotion. Can we please give our heads a shake?

Let’s think about being kinder and more understanding about the many responsibilities of our elected town council. Each member of council put their name forward and worked hard to get elected.

The amount of reading they must do in order to keep current and provide municipal leadership boggles my mind — I feel bad when people accuse them of malfeasance.

Remember that these are not highly trained professionals, sitting on NOTL council after years of practice in the minor leagues. They are our brave neighbours and friends, doing their best.

Thank goodness for the hydro box beautification project, organized for a seventh year by the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre. For our annual Terry Fox Day event each September in and around Simcoe Park. And last week, Heritage



Together, seemingly angry locals and appreciative visitors love the floral beauty of our town. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Day news from Queenston, our “forgotten little village.” Reports from local sports, including weekly detailed news from our precious 150-year-old NOTL Golf Club.

Lots of kids’ sports and musical goings on. Accessibility upgrades and evolving accessory dwelling unit legislation.

And to think, this is a small town. Less than 25,000 people.

Now, back to the word dichotomy.

I am downtown for an hour or so almost every day, and subconsciously eavesdrop. OK, sometimes I consciously eavesdrop. Today, eleven people joined me on my walking tour. Coincidentally, all from “B” towns.

Boston, Brantford, Berlin, Burlington and Brandon. As the highly paid professional athletes regularly say on television these days, “What are the odds of that?”

Curious and respectful visitors come to our

town from many parts of the world, and almost unanimously, they marvel at our Niagara. Our vineyards and fruit farms. Our water and views of the Niagara River. “That peaceful waterway can’t be part of the world’s longest unguarded (undefended?) border.”

Think about it. It really is weird. Let’s remember, until 9/11, no passports were required.

The ever-present Escarpment and the Brock Monument watching over us. 24/7.

Again, almost unanimously, visitors comment enthusiastically about our flowers and horticulture. I do my darndest to spread the gratitude and praise around.

NOTL town staff, Chris Allen and many other private contractors and so many local residents contribute to our streetscapes, encouraged by personal gardening pride and peer pressure.

Lots of gardening peer pressure.

May I encourage NOTLers to stop for an hour or so? Take a walk or a drive along our town streets and rural roads. Marvel,

like visitors to our Niagara marvel.

This year, the flowers in the hundreds of town-hanging baskets are almost touching the ground. Is this a banner year? No doubt there are many reasons. Synergism and all that.

Not to turn into an amateur philosopher, but let me ramble back to our perceived and actual local dichotomy. Locals often seem to be angry. For a long list of reasons covering a laundry list of issues.

Real and perceived. On the other hand, many visitors to Niagara return annually or regularly. They love the vibe, the many things to do, our small town ambience.

I know, I know, there are some 110 million people living within a 10-hour drive of our town cenotaph. That’s a lot of potential visitors.

Our flowers and plants are world-class. Slow down, look left and right, smell the roses.

And the gladiolas, elephant ears and other flora.

Please forgive me. I have rambled. Let’s be kinder to one another.

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Legion honours veterans with **Decoration Day** service

Andrew Hawlitzky
The Lake Report

Fresh flags waved at Lakeshore Cemetery Sunday as Legion members and residents gathered to honour veterans laid to rest in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 held its annual Decoration Day service Sept. 21, renewing markers and flags at veterans' graves in Lakeshore Cemetery.

"The service is supposed to acknowledge each time we go to one of the graves and place the marker and the flag on each of these service members, men and women that served," said Al Howse, president of Branch 124.

"Their families have reminded us that they're veterans, and we honour their graves with the flag."

The Legion branch 124 has held Decoration Day services for decades. Volunteers place new Canadian flags on graves across local cemeteries, including St.



Veterans, family and Legion Branch 124 members gather at Lakeshore Cemetery on Sept. 21. ANDREW HAWLITZKY

Andrews, St. Mark's, St. Vincent de Paul, Christ Church McNab and St. Davids.

The practice continues a long-standing Legion tradition of recognizing community members who served in the armed forces and the Royal Canadian

Mounted Police.

Attendance this year was described as modest but heartfelt, with some travelling from outside the province to take part. The service welcomed both Legion members and residents with family ties to those who served.

"We try to encourage those in town whose parents and relatives are marked to attend this, because we're really doing it for them," said Howse.

Among those present was Amando Osias, who came in memory of his late wife, Minda, a former Air Force

nurse who served in the late 1960s.

"The reason I came here is because this is our 57th wedding anniversary today, so it's a good time to be here," said Osias.

Osias said his wife trained in Toronto after beginning her career in

Saskatoon and went on to serve at several stations as a nurse. They moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake after her service, describing life by the lake as peaceful compared to their years in Toronto.

The ceremony also served to remind residents of the Legion's upcoming remembrance activities.

Branch 124 will distribute poppies from Oct. 31 to Nov. 11, with donations supporting the Poppy Trust Fund.

The branch also plans a veterans' dinner, remembrance services at local seniors' homes, and public ceremonies on Nov. 11 at the Old Town cenotaph on Queen Street at 10:45 a.m. and at the Queenston War Memorial at 1 p.m.

The Legion continues to invite families and community members to take part in its remembrance efforts, keeping alive the memory of those who served Canada both in war and peace.

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NOTL juniors finish second in Champions golf tourney

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

Two young Niagara-on-the-Lake golfers were among the top performers at the region's annual Champion of Champions Tournament on Saturday.

Lucas Roberts-Ramos, the junior champ at the NOTL Golf Club, and Eli Perng, top junior at both the Cherry Hill Club and Eagle Valley, finished in a four-way tie for second in the tourney, played at Cardinal Lakes Golf Club in Welland.

The pair shot 80, ending up 10 shots behind the junior winner, Jack Hanna of Twenty Valley Golf Club.

Roberts-Ramos was one of the top shooters in the NOTL club's championship last month, winning the junior crown with a two-day total of 167 (77-90).

Perng, from St. Davids, is just 13, and has been honing his game by competing in a variety of junior tournaments all summer across



Left: Eli Perng, 13, of St. Davids, won the junior title at the Cherry Hill Club and Eagle Valley. SUPPLIED
Right: Lucas Roberts-Ramos captured the junior boys title at the NOTL Golf Club. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Canada and the United States.

He's coached by Tyler Glass of Eagle Valley.

Other NOTL Golf Club champs also competed in the Champion of Champions event in Welland. To qualify for the tourney players have to win their club championship or be the club's designated representative.

Men's champ James Grigjanis-Meusel shot 83

to finish in a tie for eighth, while women's winner Louise Robitaille's 89 put her in a tie for sixth.

Other competitors included: Stephen Warboys (senior men, 82, ninth), Yolanda Henry (senior women, 89, fifth), Don Allen (super senior men, eighth) and Judy Mantle (super senior women, fourth).

Meanwhile, with the golf season winding down,



leagues are wrapping up play over the next few weeks.

In Monday's business women's league, Suzanne Watson won low gross with a round of 42.

Other winners: Jen Kroeker (longest drive on #1), Kirsten Murdoch (closest to the 150 on #2), Tracey Peters (closest to the pin on #4), Sally Huck (sank the longest putt on #7) and

Mary Beccario (closest to the pin in two on #9).

Watson also topped the leaderboard in the Tuesday nine-hole women's league, shooting 45. Shelley Sansom was second with 49 and Carolyn Cochrane shot 51.

Marion MacIntyre was low net with 33, followed by Sansom (34) and Cochrane (36). Maureen Dickson was closest to the

pin in two on #7.

Al Kavanagh was top dog in the Tuesday men's Woofs league, shooting 2-over 38.

Martin Vagners was low net (32) and Stephen Fraser had a birdie on #4 and was closest to the pin. Jon Schmidt won the hidden hole (#1).

Last Thursday in men's league play, Ricky Watson and Grigjanis-Meusel shot even-par 36 to take low gross.

But the big winner was Paul Bataglia, who sank a long putt to win the weekly putting contest and take home the \$700 prize.

Other winners: Gord Paget (sank the longest putt on #2 and had the longest drive on #3), Ward Simpson (closest to the pin on #4) and Mark Derbyshire (closest to the pin on #9).

Vagners and Simpson tied for low net with 31 and five players scooped \$35 net skins: Bill Smethurst (#1), John Liotta (#3), Bill Jenkins (#6), Ron Planche (#8) and Dan Plomish (#9).

COMMUNITY DONATION PROJECT

PORCH PICK-UP
FOOD DRIVE

Newark Neighbours, together with our partners from the NOTL Rotary, NOTL Kinsmen and St. David's Lions Clubs, are holding a porch pick-up food drive. On **Saturday, Sept. 27, 2025**, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

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 and phone for pick-up. **Email is preferred.**

ITEMS REQUIRED
FOR THANKSGIVING HAMPERS:

Stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, canned gravy or mix (turkey or chicken), cranberry and/or apple juice, apple sauce, canned fruit and vegetables (corn, pineapple, green beans, peas), snack crackers, cookies

ITEMS REQUIRED ON AN ONGOING BASIS:

Canned salmon, canned tuna, Sidekicks and ramen soup packets, canned chili or spaghetti or ravioli, peanut butter, granola bars, cookies, Chunky Soups - any kind or flavour canned beef stew, Habitant soups, canned ham, corned beef or Spam, Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Turkey, Jams (any flavour), canned fruit, soda, soup crackers, Kraft Dinner, canned beans (kidney, chickpeas, lentils), canned tomatoes, canned potatoes, instant mashed potatoes, tomato sauce, pasta, rice, pudding cups (any flavour), cereal and oatmeal, coffee (any kind — instant/regular/ decaf), tea, shelf stable milk (e.g. condensed, powdered, rice, etc.), paper towels, toilet paper, household items ie. dish soap, laundry detergent, cleaning products, condiments (salad dressings, mayonnaise, sauces, HP Sauce, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, etc.), dried spices, salt & pepper, toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, hand and body lotion, mouthwash, feminine products).



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The power and importance of pollinator species

The following column was written by the late Joanne Young, garden expert and coach, and was originally published in the July 25, 2024 edition of The Lake Report. The paper will be publishing some of the highlights of her column over the next few weeks to celebrate her and her love of gardening, which she shared with the whole community.



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

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

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

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

Even though pollinators

are small in size, they are powerful.

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

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

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

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

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

They are responsible for pollinating many of our local orchards. Without



A bee on an allium flower.

them, we would not be able to enjoy the bounty of fruit being harvested right now.

Just as a comparison, it would take anywhere from 10,000 to 250,000 honey bees to pollinate one acre of fruit trees. Meanwhile, it would only take 250 mason bees to pollinate that same acre of trees.

These is also the sweat bee, carpenter bee, leaf-

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

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

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

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

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

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

The good news is that we all can make a difference in our own gardens.

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

Planting native varieties

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

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

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

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

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

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

It is a win-win proposition.

If you used a phone like this

it may be time to get screened

Over a certain age? The sooner you catch cancer, the easier it is to treat. Talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner and book a screening today.



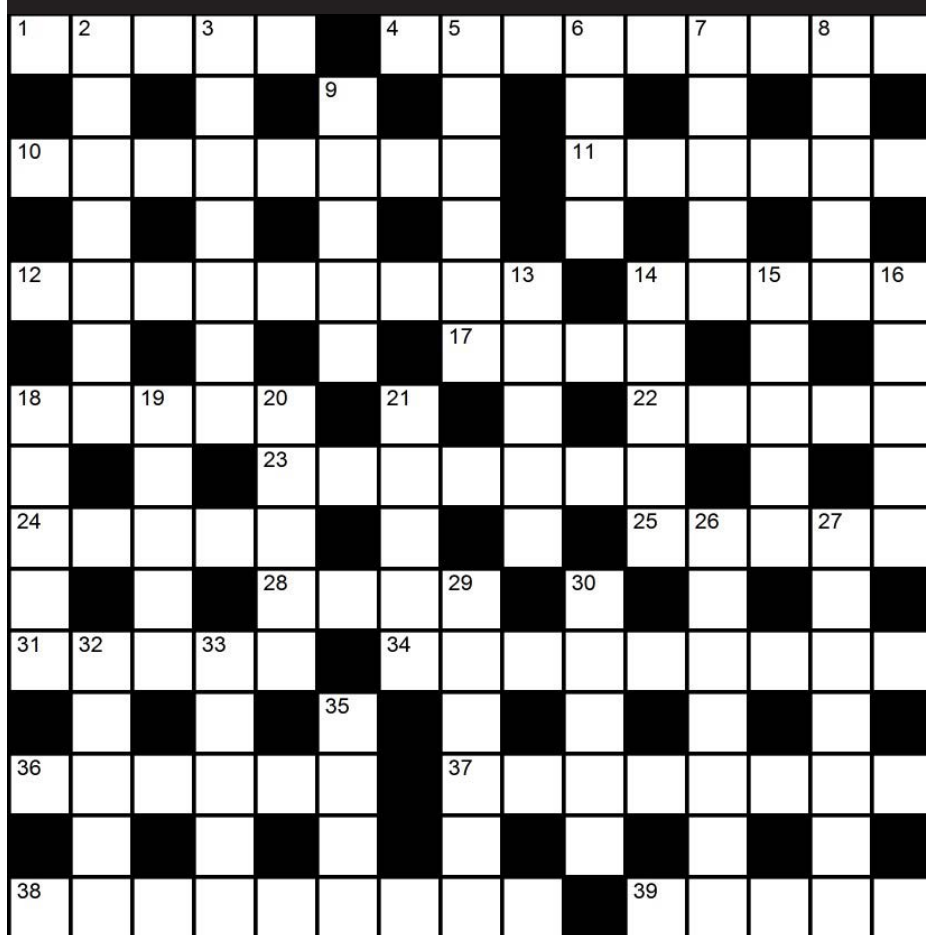


Have some fun

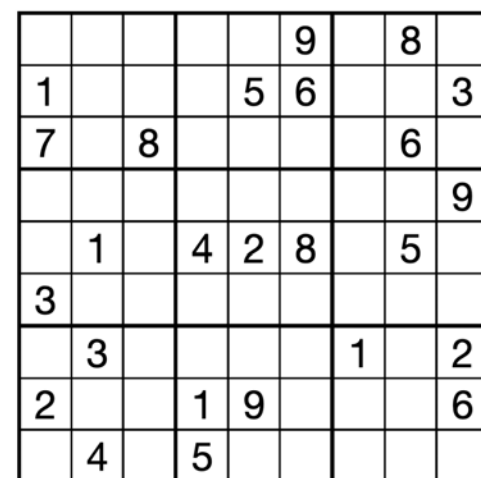
1. Charges (5)
4. Unwavering (9)
10. Wedding (8)
11. Bicycle seat (6)
12. Tonsorial tidier (9)
14. Yellowish citrus fruit (5)
17. Indian exercise method (4)
18. Type of radiation (5)
22. Sprite (5)
23. Folds (7)
24. Vision (5)
25. Vacant (5)
28. Woodwind instrument (4)
31. Academy award (5)
34. Disgusting (9)
36. Condescending (6)
37. Event (8)
38. Secondary piece of equipment (9)
39. Got up (5)

2. U S state on the Gulf Coast (7)
3. Aural membrane (7)
5. Minute (6)
6. Too (4)
7. Soft sweetmeat (5)
8. Simultaneous firing of artillery (5)
9. Native New Zealander (5)
13. Raise (5)
14. Pass into disuse (5)
15. State of confusion (3-2)
16. Destitute (5)
18. Zest (5)
19. Sorcery (5)
20. Participant (5)
21. Spanish Mister (5)
26. Bullfighter (7)
27. Lease holders (7)
29. Weirder (6)
30. Contact (5)
32. Operated by sound waves (5)
33. Residence (5)
35. Stains (4)

Crossword Puzzle



Last issue's answers



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EXPLORING HISTORY
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Sailors along the shore

Here is a glass lantern slide that features a single horse-drawn cart riding the beach surf along Lake Ontario. The two people in the cart are a man and boy (the boy driving), both wearing what appear to be seamen's peaked caps. The boy is wearing a sweater and the man, a possible peacoat. The cargo looks like what may be a short mast or boom and a bundled canvas sail.

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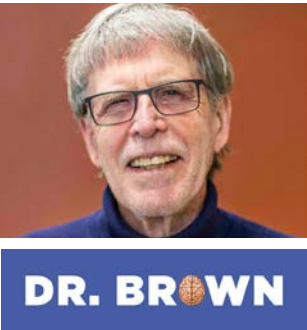
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Long-exploited China soon to be number one in science



Dr. William Brown
Columnist

Exploited by Europeans and neighbouring Japan for centuries, China has found its political, economic and military feet.

In 1945, Japan was defeated and four years later after defeating the Nationalists, the People's Republic of China was established with Mao Zedong and the Communist Party in charge, ending centuries of European colonial domination of China's major coastal cities and the grip of the warlords and the Nationalist government, the vestiges of which fled to what is now Taiwan.

That was 75 years ago, when China was largely a peasant country. Yet, in late 1950, when United Nations forces approached the Yalu River separating China and North Korea, China responded in overwhelming numbers to reverse the gains achieved by the UN forces and force an armistice between what has become a prosperous South Korea

and a nuclear-armed rogue regime in North Korea.

In the Korean War from 1950 to 1953 (often referred to as the "Forgotten War"), the Chinese army was well-led, brave, tough and respected by all who fought them in that conflict, a clear signal that China, under new leadership, was a potential new threat to Western control of the western Pacific Ocean and regional markets in the decades to come.

These days, the Chinese armed services are equal to the West and may have important advantages in the development of hypersonic missiles and long-range stealth aircraft. China now has the largest navy in terms of the number of ships in the world, stealth technologies second to or equal to the U.S. and poses the first real threat to the dominance of the U.S. Navy's big aircraft carrier groups in the western Pacific since 1945.

But the real issue for me is the intellectual capital that China has developed to offset and surpass the West, evidence for which was the announcement by the journal *Nature*: last year, for the first time, China surpassed the U.S. in the number of high-quality papers published in the best science and engineering journals in the world.

This trend has been obvious over the last few



The Chinese Academy of Sciences, the national academy for natural sciences and the world's largest research organization. LINKEDIN

years: Chinese universities rank high in the world's top 50, even the top 10 in the sciences, with the trends heading up in nearly every category in the sciences, accompanied by a relative decline in Western science institutions.

This should be a warning to the West that its intellectual leadership in the basic and applied sciences is waning quickly relative to China. And it's not just China — science in India, South Korea, Vietnam and elsewhere has matured and become increasingly self-sustaining.

Now, with all the cutbacks

head start the U.S. had in the run-up to and throughout the Second World War, when the home front was safe, unlike much of Europe, Russia and China, all of which were devastated by the war.

That and the three-quarters of a century of uninterrupted stability and a strong economy led to the U.S. dominance and attracted many students and established scientists to move to the U.S. That's why U.S. science prospered so well for so long.

However, that strength is only as strong as the foundation on which it was built and maintained.

Without that support from the national government, U.S. leadership in the physical sciences will falter and what was taken for granted in leadership in so many areas of science, may collapse with serious consequences for the US and its allies.

It's a case of breaking Humpty Dumpty, what's happening now, with no plan or even possibility of putting him together again.

That's not alarmist talk — it's recognition that it takes a long time, forward planning and good luck to establish countries of excellence in science.

These days, China is imitating what worked in the West for success in business and science by instituting major changes to its political and managerial system to create the right combination of atmosphere, encouragement and support to develop science within China.

That includes welcoming talent from abroad, just as Europe, the U.K. and the United States did for decades to build their science communities. Much of the human talent that fueled Western success came from abroad and they stayed because they received the kind of support and, in some cases, freedom not available elsewhere.

Now, the shoe may be moving to the other foot and budding and established talent from much of the world may be lost to China and other countries.

It's time to wake up or lose what's been the engine for success the U.S. and other Western countries.

Some of this material on China will be included in this year's annual review of the Nobel series beginning Wednesday, Nov. 5, when the physics prize will be discussed at the Niagara-on-the-Lake library. Book early.

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

Obituaries

Victor John Dyck



DYCK, Victor John — July 25, 1941 to Sept. 19, 2025
“It is Well with My Soul”
Victor John Dyck reached his eternal home on Sept. 19th, 2025. It took an earthy 84 years. Many spent with joy and many spent with courage. He finally has his voice back to sing with the angels. Greeted by his maker, his Saviour, his wife, his sister and his parents. His time on earth was filled by his girls, Erika his wife, two daughters Carrie and Christine and three granddaughters, Riah, Autumn, and Georgia. Many knew Vic Dyck as the grader operator for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, spending his whole career of 30 years there. And when he wasn’t getting up all hours of the night for snowstorms, he was also selflessly doing the same being an honorary Virgil Station 3 volunteer fireman. It is well with Vic’s soul as his faith and trust was in God’s goodness and he new there was hope in God’s plan. We celebrate his life on earth and his eternal life in heaven.

Please join us at the Virgil Fire Hall on Friday, Oct. 3, 2025 from 4 to 7 p.m. to honour Vic’s life, his eternal life and what he meant to all of us.
Address: 1391 Concession 6 Rd., Virgil
Online condolences at www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca



Inge Enss



ENSS, Inge —
After a life well lived we say a heartfelt farewell to our beloved Inge Enss (nee Adischkewitz) who has joined the love of her life, Reinhard (2008). She died at home, surrounded by her family, just as she had wanted. A beloved Mother to Bodo (Karen d.), Vicky (Bob), Sylvia (Ivan d.), Rosemarie (Ron), Gabriela (Ron) and Margaret (Jeff). An Oma to 16 Grandchildren and an Uhr Oma to 16 Great-grandchildren. Sister to Lore (Albert); Karen (Fred d.), Doris (John d.), Sister-in-law to Hannelore (Arno d.), and an Aunt, Cousin and Friend to so many. Predeceased by her parents Kurt and Liesbeth, sister Annemarie (Robert), brothers Rudi (Renate, nieces Doris and Marion) and Johannes; Mother-in-law Erna and Father-in-law Gustav; Sister-in-law Helga (Jack) and Sister-in-law Rosemary (Ulrich).

Mom was born on July 17, 1930 in Kraffohlsdorf, Germany and immigrated to Canada in 1951. She was the backbone of the family, small but mighty, running the farm. She enjoyed travelling, going back to Germany, down south to the islands, through the eastern States, Arizona and western Canada. Reviving her love of horses by joining CADORA and the Canadian Federation of Trail Riders, Mom volunteered at horse shows, rode in parades and took her horses on trail rides to Otter Creek. She worked at the Niagara Library which she really enjoyed.

Visitation will be held at 6 to 8 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 28 and 10 to 11 a.m. on Monday, Sept. 29 at the Niagara United Mennonite Church in Virgil, followed by a service at 11 a.m. Interment will be at Lakeshore Cemetery in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The family would like to thank the Paramed staff for taking such good care of her.
In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Heart & Stroke Foundation, VON, Salvation Army or a charity of your choice.
Online condolences at www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca.



Peter Kemball



KEMBALL, Peter R. —
Passed away at home with his loving wife at his side on Saturday September 6, 2025 in his 86th year. Beloved husband of Nancy for 60 years. Loving father of Paige (Vinayak) Bharne of Pasadena California. Caring grandfather of Sebastian and Portia. Dear brother of Ross Kemball. Fondly remembered by his nieces, nephews, and friends. Cremation has taken place. A private family service will take place at a later date. Arrangements entrusted to Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Memoires, photos, and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com

Peter Campbell King



KING, Peter Campbell —
Following a brief illness, Peter King, 83, passed away surrounded by his loving family in St. Catharines, Ontario on Sept. 14, 2025. Peter is survived by his loving wife Nancy (Howse), and was pre-deceased by his adoring first wife Barbara (Dianne, nee Richardson) in 2001.
Devoted father of Jamie (Rebecca Kamin) and Alyson (Harry Pulley). Cherished grandfather of Harrison and Halle Pulley, and Connor and Dylan King. Fondly remembered by his wife Nancy (Howse, King) and the many members of her family who deeply cared for him.

Growing up on a farm on Lakeshore Road with his parents Herbert (Bert) and Doris, Peter had strong roots in Niagara-on-the-Lake with brothers John (Barbara), Ken (Joan), Ted (Marlene), Bill (Sandra), and Steve (Anne).
Peter was a patient and engaging teacher at Niagara District Secondary School where he initiated a Model Parliament and was on the senior boys’ football team’s coaching staff.
Peter was known for his kind heart, good will and humorous spirit. He volunteered in town including with the Caribbean Workers Outreach Projects. As a husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, teacher or friend, Peter’s gentle and funny ways were well-known. We miss Peter immensely and are grateful for a life well-lived. Always in our hearts and forever in our memories, Peter will be eternally remembered and loved.
Family will receive friends at Morgan Funeral Home on Friday, Oct. 3 from 5 to 8 p.m. A celebration of his life will be held at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church on Saturday, Oct. 4 at 11 a.m. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.
As an expression of sympathy, those who wish may make a memorial donation to St. Andrews Presbyterian Church or Niagara Heritage Trail. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



Dora Garrington



GARRINGTON, Dora —
On Sept. 17, 2025, at 100 years, our beloved mother, grandmother, great grandmother, passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family’s love. Dora was an inspiration to all fortunate enough to share in her journey. We will gather to celebrate a life lived to the fullest. Dora never forgot a special occasion, always ready to feed family and friends and celebrate holidays, birthdays and accomplishments. Family always came first, especially her boys. Predeceased by her husband, Victor Garrington, brother Russell Smyth, sisters Eileen Neithercut and Alice Ptolemy. She is survived by sons Larry Garrington, Jim Garrington (Wendy).

Grandchildren Kevin Garrington (Darcy), Laura Jones (Garrington) (Shawn) and Alison Uger (Garrington)(Marc) Sandra Youritchuk (Garrington)(Donny). Great grandchildren Michael and Sophie Garrington, Aiden and Aria Jones, Owen, Jack and Avery Uger and Mason and Emma Youritchuk.
The family will receive friends at the Tallman Funeral Home 3277 King St., Vineland, on Tuesday, Sept. 23 from 6 to 8 p.m. and Wednesday Sept. 24 from 10 to 11 a.m. followed by the funeral at 11am in the Tallman Funeral Home Chapel. There will be a reception following the service in the Fireside Room at Tallman’s. Burial will take place at Pleasantview Cemetery, 2250 RR 20, Fonthill, following the reception.
The family would like to thank the staff at Ina Grafton and Pioneer Elder Care for their care and support.
Memorial donations in memory of Dora can be made to the Alzheimer Society of Niagara or Ronald McDonald House Family Room at the Marotta Family Hospital in St Catharines.
Online condolences at www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca



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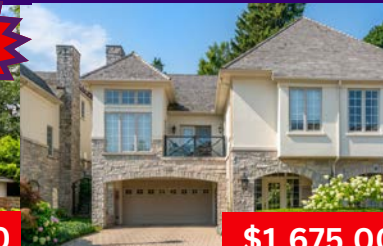
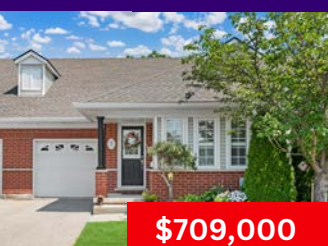
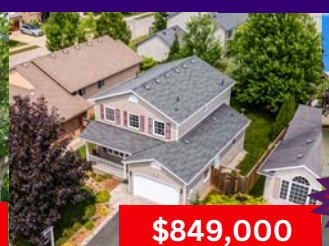
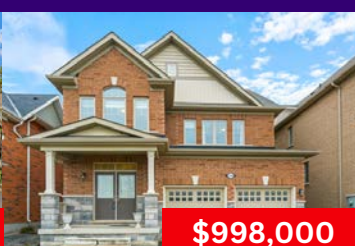
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#1 BROKERAGE IN THE GTA FOR 10 YEARS*

Angelika & ASSOCIATES
LUXURY REAL ESTATE



*Based on closed transactions in the Burlington / Niagara Right At Home Realty Office, 2022, 2023, 2024 **TRREB Jan. 1, 2013 to Dec. 31, 2022, combined units sold.
***FREE GIFT OF 10 HOURS OF PACKING AND DECLUTTERING SERVICES