

Where Longevity Lives
Niagara-on-the-Lake

Wellness Estates™

Information & Education Session



Image: Front rendition of the proposed Wellness Estates



Dr. Nick Vaccaro

Founder
Wellness Estates™ + RegenaLife™

AUGUST 12

4:00 PM

NOTL Community Centre | 14 Anderson Lane

Be part of the conversation.

Dr. Nick Vaccaro invites you to explore the vision for Wellness Estates and share your thoughts on whether it belongs in the future of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

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Wellness Estates™ + RegenaLife™:
Collaborating for a Healthier, Connected Community

Why I'm Holding an Information & Education Session for Wellness Estates in Niagara-on-the-Lake

By Dr. Nick Vaccaro, Founder of RegenaLife and Wellness Estates



Acknowledgment of Town Council's Process

I want to recognize the Town Council's appointment of NPG to evaluate future uses for the Old Hospital site — the proposed location for Wellness Estates. I fully support this thorough and thoughtful process.

History:

My journey began with a bold idea: what if our homes could help us live longer, healthier lives? In 2018, I launched Wellness Suites in Niagara Falls — a development focused on wellness, proactive healthcare, and longevity science, inspired by the Global Wellness Institute.

Then the pandemic hit, disrupting construction and healthcare. While we completed the project, COVID limited our ability to realize the full vision. Today, Wellness Suites offers just a glimpse of what's possible in a longevity-focused community.

In the summer of 2021, In response to a RFP from NOTL, I submitted a 176-page proposal for the Old Hospital site but unfortunately that process was not completed.

"Imagination is more valuable than knowledge." - Albert Einstein

Imagination, paired with knowledge, is transformational. That's why I'm inviting the Niagara-on-the-Lake community to explore what could be — using global research, real-world experience, and AI-powered innovation to help shape the vision for Wellness Estates.

This Is More Than Real Estate

Wellness Estates is not just a development — it's a **purpose-built** environment for **longevity, wellness, and meaningful community life**.

The RegenaLife™ Advantage

At the heart of Wellness Estates is RegenaLife, the longevity-focused company I founded. Each homeowner will receive a RegenaLife Screening — an AI-enhanced health and longevity assessment that includes:

- ✓ Biomarker analysis
- ✓ Genetic and epigenetic profiling
- ✓ Functional mobility and performance testing
- ✓ Lifestyle and nutritional review
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- ✓ **51 types of early-stage cancer**
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- ✓ **Cardiovascular disease**

Our AI-powered imaging evaluates vascular inflammation and arterial plaque, providing a **highly accurate view** of cardiovascular risk. *(A visual example is included on the inside back cover of this week's Lake Report)*

Currently, RegenaLife works with Windsong Radiology in Williamsville, NY — a top-tier diagnostic center. Clients are driven in a 2024 Cadillac Escalade for a seamless, private experience. Looking ahead, in conjunction with local Radiologists, we plan to open a licensed diagnostic imaging facility on-site (pending provincial approval), helping address Niagara's growing MRI and CAT Scan wait times to improve regional access.

DiscSeel and Regenerative Therapies in NOTL

A key part of Wellness Estates is an advanced surgical centre offering **cutting-edge regenerative therapies**. We've secured a tentative agreement (*pending project advancement*) with Dr. Kevin Pauza, creator of DiscSeel — a **nonsurgical spinal therapy** used by the U.S. Department of Defense and only available in the U.S., Japan, and China. We've begun the Health Canada approval process to bring it here.

Other planned services include:

**Each medical facility will be owned and operated by the doctors themselves, ensuring strong investment in care quality and long-term success.*

- ➔ Surgical Suite (s) (DiscSeel, private regenerative, orthopedic and plastic surgery)
- ➔ Rehabilitation & Mobility Center
- ➔ Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT)
- ➔ Licensed IV infusion clinic (NAD+, immune & nutrient therapy)
- ➔ A Regenerative Medicine Lab (pending Health Canada regulation)
- ➔ Healing Arts Centre (in partnership with Pumphouse Gallery)
- ➔ A Community Pool (pending council support)

An Invitation to the Community

Bold ideas require transparency. I'm inviting all NOTL residents to attend an **upcoming Open House at the NOTL Community Centre**. I'll present Wellness Estates, answer your questions, and — most importantly — listen to your feedback.

If there's community support, I'll continue working through Council's process. If selected, we're ready to move forward **responsibly and efficiently**, in partnership with **Gatta Homes** and in alignment with local values.

Please visit our website to RSVP — seating is limited and reserved for those who register. Thank you for your time and I hope to see you there.

Warm regards,

Dr. Nick Vaccaro BSc., D.C.

Founder of RegenaLife™ and Wellness Estates™
WellnessEstates.ca



Richard Moore.

Man who plead guilty in fatal hit-run charged again

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

A Niagara-on-the-Lake native who killed a cyclist in a hit-and-run two years ago is facing several serious new charges after a boat collided with a swimmer in Muskoka on Saturday evening, leaving a 22-year-old man with life-threatening injuries.

Richard Alan Moore, 39, is being held at the Central North Correctional Centre in Penetanguishene, Ont., pending a bail hearing on Monday, July 28, in Bracebridge.

Moore, who grew up in NOTL but now lives in Niagara Falls, has been charged with impaired operation causing bodily harm, refusing to provide a breath sample, failing to stop at an accident causing bodily harm and failing to

Continued on Page 5

Shaw says it will listen to residents

Theatre company to revise plans for Royal George rebuild after community feedback



Shaw's open house last week has changed some minds about the Royal George rebuild, after the company presented a clearer picture of why the building can't be renovated. The company says it will also adjust its design based on residents' concerns. RICHARD HARLEY

Dan Smeenck | Local Journalism Initiative | The Lake Report

After the Shaw Festival's open house last week at the Royal George Theatre, some Niagara-on-the-Lake residents are feeling more optimistic about the planned rebuild — while others remain cautious.

The proposed redevelopment

of the 110-year-old theatre has sparked a wide range of opinions in the community. Shaw held the public event last Wednesday to present its case and gather feedback.

About 90 registered attendees toured various parts of the

Royal George, where they were shown what the theatre company described as a deteriorating building in need of repair, along with its vision for a modern replacement.

Executive director Tim Jennings said the festival plans to

revise its proposed design based on what it heard from the public.

"I thought that the event went very well, and we got excellent feedback and heard some consistent concerns," he said. "We are

Continued on Page 6

Town supports developer's bid to waive \$804K in development charges

Daniel Smeenck
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has agreed to support the Parliament Oak developer in its dispute

with Niagara Region over \$804,573 in additional development charges.

Council voted 5-3 at its most recent committee of the whole meeting to send a letter to the region backing the developer's request to

waive the extra fees.

Two Sisters Resorts Corp., the company behind the proposed five-star Parliament Oak hotel on King Street, asked the town for help in contesting what it considers to be excessive

regional development fees.

Lawyer Tom Richardson, representing the developer, told councillors the region initially charged \$4,784,992 in fees. That amount rose by \$804,573 after the town and developer agreed to

add 43 parking spaces in a second level of underground parking, bringing the total to 248 spots.

All parking, except for accessible spaces, will be underground, Richardson said.

He asked council to advocate for the region to waive the additional charges, arguing other municipalities in Niagara do not apply similar fees for underground

Continued on Page 2



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new proposal for the
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‘Heartbreaking tragedy’ as three killed in fiery crash on Queenston Road

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Three people are dead after a vehicle struck a tree and burst into flames early Monday morning in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Niagara Regional Police spokesperson Const. Rich Hingley told The Lake Report that due to the severity of the injuries and damage, the identities of those involved have not yet been confirmed.

The single-vehicle crash happened around 3 a.m. on Queenston Road near Concession 6 Road, said Stephanie Sabourin, spokesperson for the regional police.

The initial investigation found that a vehicle left the road, hit a tree and caught fire.

Despite the efforts of of-

ficers and emergency crews, the vehicle was “quickly engulfed in flames,” Sabourin said, and all three occupants were pronounced dead at the scene.

The victims died inside the vehicle, said Hingley.

Detectives from the regional police’s collision reconstruction unit and the forensic services unit responded to the scene and are now handling the investigation.

They are working to identify the victims and notify their family members or persons closest to them. Several roads in the area are closed, which has resulted in traffic congestion.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation, said Sabourin.

Police declined to comment on the victims’ identities, ages, or home-

towns, citing the ongoing investigation.

In a statement from the Town of NOTL issued this afternoon, Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa called the crash “a heartbreaking tragedy” and said the town’s thoughts are with the families and loved ones of the deceased.

“While the cause of the collision remains under investigation, we know that traffic safety is an ongoing concern for many in our community,” he said.

The town’s media release states that “early indications” suggest “excessive speed” as a possible factor in the collision, but Hingley said it’s just one of several possibilities under review — and won’t be confirmed until investigators can determine it played a role.

To determine speed after

a crash, he said investigators generally look at things like the length of skid marks, measurements of debris distribution, and data from a vehicle’s onboard computer — if available. These indicators vary based on the vehicle’s size and weight.

The vehicle was gas-powered — just one of many factors being examined, like every other aspect of the crash, Hingley said.

Anyone with information is asked to contact investigators at 905-688-4111, option 3, extension 1009504.

Information can also be provided anonymously through Crime Stoppers of Niagara at 1-800-222-8477 or online at crimestopper-sniagara.ca. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for details that lead to an arrest.

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com

22-year-old left in **critical condition**

Continued from Front Page

comply with a release order.

The victim, Austin Anderson, has been in a medically induced coma in St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto since shortly after he was airlifted there following the crash.

He suffered life-threatening injuries, Ontario Provincial Police investigators said.

A family spokesperson said that thanks to the medical care he has received at St. Mike’s, Anderson’s condition has stabilized and they are hoping he is able to make a full recovery.

But until he emerges from the coma, it is not known what the future holds.

Anderson is from Keswick, near Lake Simcoe, but about a year ago, he and his family moved to Welland, his cousin Steve Anderson told The Lake Report.

Family members, including his parents, Erin and Brennan Anderson, are staying in Toronto to be near him.

Austin Anderson has been working for GGS Niagara Landscaping Inc. in Niagara Falls. Moore is also employed by the landscaping firm.

Company owner Graham Boaretti confirmed that Anderson is an employee, but he declined to say more or to speak about Moore, noting, “We’re letting the investigators do their work.”



Austin Anderson, 22, is shown in a photo from the GoFundMe page launched by his family. NOTL native Richard Alan Moore faces several charges in the Muskoka boating crash that injured Anderson. SOURCED

Anderson’s family launched a GoFundMe campaign to help support him in his recovery and the largest single donation so far is \$3,600 from GGS Niagara.

In a Facebook posting on Tuesday, Boaretti urged people to help the family and described Anderson as “one of my best friends.”

As of Wednesday afternoon, the fund totalled more than \$16,000.

The campaign notes that if Austin recovers, he could need specialized care.

Moore pleaded guilty in June to reckless driving in the death of 84-year-old Niagara-on-the-Lake cyclist Nestor Chemerika.

On Wednesday, in Superior Court in St. Catharines, Moore’s lawyer and the Crown were scheduled to set a date for his sentencing in the death of Chemerika.

But Moore’s lawyer, Jeffrey Manishen, told the court that he, the Crown and Justice Michael Bordin of Hamilton have been unable to find a day when everyone is available for the judge to deliver his sentence.

The parties plan to meet again in late August to try to determine a sentencing date.

However, the latest charges against Moore could affect that, Manishen suggested.

“There’s been a very specific personal development in the circumstances of Mr. Moore,” the lawyer said, in reference to the new charges in Muskoka, “with the result that I’m going to seek his instructions on whether, as a result of that, he wishes me to make further submissions on sentence before Mr. Justice Bordin.”

The Muskoka incident occurred about 5 p.m. last Saturday as Anderson and friends were enjoying themselves in the water at Skeleton Lake, near Bracebridge.

After the boat struck Anderson, witnesses and people on shore jumped into the water to rescue him, the OPP said.

The boat did not stop and Moore was arrested a short time later, police said.

Steve Anderson said his cousin suffered a fractured skull and serious injuries to both arms.

“One arm was broken in several places,” Anderson

said. “It took several hours of surgery” to rebuild one hand but it appeared to be successful, he added.

He noted the Anderson family is deeply concerned that Moore was already convicted of a serious offence involving the death of Chemerika, but now faces charges related to Saturday’s incident in Muskoka. “Maybe Austin’s case can be the one to create a change in the legal system,” he said.

Moore’s guilty plea in St. Catharines court in June came after Niagara Regional Police investigators determined he had struck Chemerika on July 13, 2023, on East and West Line near Niagara Street and then fled the scene. Chemerika died 12 days later in hospital in Niagara Falls.

The night of that incident, Moore had been at the NOTL Legion, where video surveillance showed him purchasing a pitcher of draught beer about an hour prior to hitting Chemerika with his pickup truck, court was told. The video did not show him consuming any beer, however.

Moore was wearing a “volunteer fire department” T-shirt at the time.

NOTL fire chief Jay Plato confirmed Moore had been a volunteer firefighter with the department but resigned about six years ago.

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Shaw to **revise Royal George plan** after community feedback

Continued from Front Page

working on incorporating some of those ideas and concerns into the updated design, which we hope to have updated for mid-August.”

Many Niagara-on-the-Lake residents who attended said they still have questions but remain open to the discussion.

Susan Addario, a local resident, said she had an open mind about the project.

“I’m interested in how they’re going to address accessibility issues,” Addario said.

Ron Simkus, a board member of the NOTL Residents Association, said the tour changed his view of the theatre’s condition.

“It was probably more in need of repair than I thought it was,” said Simkus.

“The actual theatre has to be replaced ... I don’t even think it’s a choice because there’s just not enough money you could pour into that thing to bring it up to code.”

Simkus added that the association believes significant changes are needed to improve the building’s appearance from both Queen



Shaw's executive director Tim Jennings, left, shares plans for the Royal George at an open house last week. DAN SMEENK

and Victoria streets, especially the large fly tower, which will be five feet taller than the current one.

He also said the new theatre will likely need to be larger if it remains on the same site.

The proposed size and compatibility with the surrounding heritage district have been ongoing points of contention. Several residents, including some who spoke at a recent planning

committee meeting, raised concerns.

Maria Vaneva, who owns the Wilson Guy House bed and breakfast in the Historic Old Town and is a member of the residents association, also attended the open house.

A vocal critic of the proposed design, she says her opinion did not change after the event.

The open house was “very well organized,” she said,

but it failed to address core issues for her — particularly the heritage value of the Royal George and surrounding buildings.

“These buildings have associated and contextual value (in relation to the heritage district),” she said.

Jennings said the next step is to incorporate community feedback into an updated design. He emphasized that the process will continue over several years.

Former interim chief administrative officer Bruce Zvaniga, who attended the open house as a private citizen, echoed that point.

“I’m interested in learning more,” he said. “We had a great public meeting, a lot of opinions, it’s a super part of the process, but it is a multi-step process.”

For Vaneva, the results of that process could have a direct impact on her business.

“I think I will be affected

personally,” she said. “It will affect the flow of guests coming because of the construction ... I don’t know, we have to wait and see.”

Town council must still approve a rezoning request to convert one portion of the proposed site — which is currently divided into four zoning parcels — from residential to commercial before the Shaw Festival can move ahead.

It remains unclear when council will vote on the rezoning. The whole of council met for the last time on Tuesday before they went on an August break. The town said they don’t have immediate plans to vote on the rezoning.

“No decisions are being made at this stage,” said Marah Minor, the town’s communications co-ordinator. “A recommendation report will come forward at a future committee and council meeting.”

The Shaw Festival hopes to begin construction in early 2026 and complete the new theatre by August 2028.

The project has received \$35 million in provincial funding. It’s estimated the rebuild will cost between \$75 and 85 million.

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Increased coyote sightings worry residents

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Coyotes have long been part of Niagara-on-the-Lake's landscape, but sightings this season have some residents on edge.

Wandering through gardens, stalking pets and lingering in tourist areas, the coyotes have some people too afraid to walk their dogs or let pets outside.

But the Humane Society of Greater Niagara says more sightings don't necessarily mean there are more coyotes — and the Ministry of Natural Resources says it hasn't received any recent reports from the area.

Cortnie Welychka, the humane society's senior manager of operations, said the rise in sightings is likely due to growing public awareness, more homes near natural corridors like the Niagara Escarpment, and faster information-sharing through social media and "neighbourhood networks."

"Coyotes have always been present in Niagara," she said.

As agencies and the town aim to balance co-existence with safety, officials stress the importance of not feeding coyotes, as this can cause them to lose their fear of people and become aggressive.

Some residents, meanwhile, want stronger measures to keep coyotes out of urban areas.

Welychka said NOTL offers an ideal environment for coyotes: its mix of neighbourhoods, farmland and tourist areas provides easy access to food and shelter.

Unsecured garbage, pet food, compost, bird seed and fallen fruit — plus the rodents they attract — all draw coyotes in, while thick brush, vineyards and green spaces offer cover for den-



Coyotes spotted near Delater Street in Old Town's dock area. The family of coyotes was just casually stopped in the street, itching and scratching. BARBARA WORTHY

ning and travel.

Old Town resident Sheryl Johnson said she will not take her three Yorkies, Mia, Portia and Pandora, for a walk, or let them into her backyard.

Johnson once encountered what she thinks was a coywolf — a coyote-wolf hybrid — that stalked her while walking her two Yorkie-Havanese mixes.

"I picked up both dogs and I ran," she said.

She most often sees coyotes on Ball, Delater, Ricardo and sometimes Front streets: Busy areas near hotels, beaches and tourist foot traffic.

As more subdivisions go up, coyotes are being pushed closer to town, with some appearing almost tame, coming out in daylight "in a way they have never come out before," she said.

"But they never can be tamed," said Johnson.

Last fall, a friend of hers lost her chihuahua to a coyote. All the owners heard was a rustle and a whimper, Johnson said — coyotes attack quickly and quietly.

Resident Barbara Worthy said she's seen coyotes around for years, but never this many, leaving her feeling she's living in "watchful cautiousness," she said.

"I can't go out walking

down the street at night anymore outside my house," she said, calling the issue "an inevitable problem of nature and urbanites."

A coyote once came around the corner and up Worthy's driveway in Old Town as she was getting into her car. She quickly scooped up her dog, Louie — a 10-year-old, six-pound white multi-poo — and got him inside.

"We don't want to eradicate these wonderful animals," she said. "But we don't need them to be urbanized like this."

Feeding wildlife, purposefully or not, increases the risk of conflict, said Welychka, and is banned under town bylaws.

Mike Fenn, spokesperson for the Ministry of Natural Resources, said coyotes are "opportunistic feeders" — over time, they may become aggressive and lose their fear of humans, associating people with food.

Coyotes are not inherently dangerous: that's a misconception, Welychka said. They're shy and tend to avoid humans. Aggression is rare and typically linked to feeding or habituation.

Lethal control is often misguided, she added, as removing coyotes may only make room for others to move in or breed more.

Clapping, yelling, banging pots, using air horns, waving arms or flapping a garbage bag can scare coyotes off. Spraying water or opening umbrellas also helps, she said, stressing the need for consistent "hazing."

Pet owners should be especially cautious. Welychka said small animals can look like prey and should never be left unattended, especially at dawn or dusk, "when coyotes are most active."

Dogs should be walked on short, non-retractable leashes, cats kept indoors and outdoor food sources cleaned up. Motion lights, fencing and other deterrents can also help.

Fenn said anyone who encounters a coyote should stay calm, make lots of noise, use a flashlight, avoid turning their back and never approach. "Once at a safe distance, contact 911," he said.

Marah Minor, the town's communications co-ordinator, said that while the town does not intervene in routine sightings, it may step in if a coyote poses a public safety risk.

Johnson called the town's response "problematic."

"What, they have to bite somebody before the town can do anything?" she asked.

Johnson wants signs in high-activity areas, more enforcement of property standards in those areas and relocation options explored.

"I don't want to cause (coyotes) harm," she said.

Managing them should be like bears, she said: Reduce food sources and keep out of urban areas.

Minor said the town's approach focuses on public education, with tips, reporting guidance, and safety info available on its website at notl.com/coyotes.

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EarlyON services to launch at NOTL library

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's EarlyON Child and Family Centre is reopening this September at the public library, under a new partnership between the Niagara Region and the Niagara Falls Public Library, announced on July 21.

The move follows an April announcement from the region that the program would be relocated from St.

Michael Catholic Elementary School and no longer provided by the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

The region has since paired up with the Niagara Falls Public Library, responsible for delivering EarlyON services in both Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake. EarlyON offers free services for parents, caregivers and children from birth to age six.

NOTL will have one site at the Niagara-on-the-Lake

Public Library on Anderson Lane, while Niagara Falls will have four at existing library locations.

Basically, Niagara Falls Public Library is the service provider, or employer, and NOTL's library is simply the location.

"We're renting space from the library," said Anne Andres-Jones, the Niagara Falls library board chair in an email.

"We'll collaborate with them for timing, programming and space availability."

The region's director of children's services, Satinder Klair, said programming in NOTL will begin with 10 hours a week — double what was offered at St. Michael's — with a goal of gradually expanding to 30 by early 2026.

The service provider is committed to reaching 130 hours weekly, total, across NOTL and Niagara Falls "in a graduated but fairly timely manner," said Klair in an email.

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com

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In the air and behind the scenes of **Niagara 5000**

Luxury car and plane show returns to NOTL with more high-end experiences than ever

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Strapped into a Cirrus SR22T, The Lake Report lifted off from Niagara District Airport last Wednesday to get a pre-view of the luxury experience coming to Niagara-on-the-Lake this August.

The smooth ride offered a striking aerial view of the town's vineyards, waterways and the airport's 5,000-foot runway that gave Niagara 5000 its name.

Dubbed as North America's most exclusive automotive and aviation showcase, Niagara 5000 touches down Aug. 7 to 9 with supercars, test drives, personal aviation showcases and luxury-focused activities. McMaster Children's Hospital is this year's primary charitable partner.

The airport will shut down on Saturday, Aug. 9 and transform into what event founder Alana Hurov describes as an "epic party." "It's the star of the show, really," she said.

Blending showcases of personal aviation and supercars with sips of Niagara's top wine, "The Hangar Experience" will run from 1 to 5 p.m. inside a private airport hangar, with a private party in the terminal.

Personal aviation company Cirrus Aircraft — the event's personal aviation sponsor — will offer a personal aviation showcase, featuring its SR Series and Vision Jet. Ryan Isaac, regional sales director for Canada, will be on site with the Cirrus team.

Tickets for the airport experience are \$350 per person and guests must be 19 or older. Some sponsors will be offered demo rides and others may request one, though spots are limited.

"It's kind of cool to bring Niagara-on-the-Lake and the specialty that it has — in terms of the hotel business and the tourism business and the wineries — and then bringing the lifestyle of the high-end cars, planes and travel," said Isaac.

"Just a neat kind of exposure." Hurov initially advertised the jet showcase without a specific aviation partner in mind, until Cirrus reached out and the partnership quickly took flight.

Isaac said supercars and private jets are a natural pairing, with similar target audiences. In a town like NOTL, he said, the appeal of personal aviation is all about lifestyle.

"If (NOTL) is your home, you've got a great airport here," he said. "You've got all of the facilities, like a modern terminal."

Cirrus specializes in personal aviation designed for individual or family travel and small business use. The company offers flight training through its Cirrus Approach program.

"You can have your own plane," said Isaac. "Something that opens up a completely different lifestyle."

"You can explore and go places on your own."

Once turned into an upscale lounge, the hangar will be filled with the sounds of live music and entertainment, food and wine pair-

ings from local wineries, breweries and restaurants, and displays of rare hypercars and supercars, with information sessions.

Amongst a cigar lounge and other offerings and lounges at the airport, guests can take part in boutique shopping, view floral displays by top Niagara designers and participate in a golf activation with Peninsula Lakes Golf Club.

A golf cart will take guests from the terminal to the hangar and free shuttle service will run from Hilton and Embassy Suites in Niagara Falls. One shuttle will depart from 124 on Queen. Black car service is also available for a fee through Coventry.

Thursday, Aug. 7 will feature a welcome reception at Margaritaville Cafe in Niagara Falls, a kick-off party at STK Steakhouse, and a lit-up Niagara Falls in Rolls-Royce purple.

The next day will be packed with a supercar and kids festival in support of MacKids, the Hagerty supercar parade and cruise, a "wine and wheels" day-long tour option, and a Casino Royale gala at Fallsview Casino.

The party continues at the Hilton, the event's official after-party destination, all three nights at 9 p.m.

"Essentially, we're taking over the whole region," said Hurov.

Event details, including times, ticket prices and package information, are available at niagara5000.ca. For aviation-related inquiries, contact Isaac at risaac@cirrusaircraft.com. paigeseburn@niagaranow.com



Top: Reporter Paige Seburn takes a flight in a Cirrus SR22T, soaring 3,000 feet in the sky and getting a sense of the power of the luxury private jet. Middle: Niagara 5000 organizer Alana Hurov stands with the Cirrus jet and two McLarens at the Niagara District Airport to help promote the luxury event being held on Aug. 7 to 9. Bottom: Photographer Dave Van de Laar also got to tag along on the flight, and took the chance to snap some aerial photos. This one shows the Welland Canal. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Paint it black: **No brewery approved** yet for Harvest Barn site

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Contrary to speculation in local Facebook groups and a freshly painted building, no approval has been granted for a microbrewery and farm distillery at the former Harvest Barn property in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The planning consultant for owners Fabian Reis and his wife, Stephanie, of Ferox by Fabian Reis Winery, is preparing to resubmit the application for further review.

The couple is asking the



The former Harvest Barn is no longer its iconic red and has been painted black. But no plans for the site are approved.

town for a zoning bylaw amendment to transform the property at 1822 Niagara Stone Rd., which was renamed Alitura in 2021.

They proposed making the main building a

microbrewery, using the grey barn for distilling, and adding hospitality areas, a commercial kitchen and an event tent. As well, they're seeking permission to host special events on the site.

The consultant is resubmitting the application "to address comments and questions raised by staff, agencies and the public," said the town's communications co-ordinator, Marah Minor, in an email.

Minor declined to comment about what specific concerns were raised by staff, agencies and the public, which agencies and members of the public were involved, and when those comments were submitted.

Earlier this month, the building was painted all black. A post shared to community page NOTL 4U

mistakenly reported the site "is being redeveloped" by the couple. Minor said the application has not received the necessary approvals to be in the redevelopment phase just yet.

"Any requested uses will not be permitted until the zoning bylaw amendment has been approved," she said.

The town must first receive the revised application, then municipal planning staff will prepare a recommendation report for staff and council, expected to be brought forward this fall.

Minor said the report will review changes made to the application and outline how it aligns with planning policies while responding to comments and concerns.

She did not answer questions about what happens after the report is presented this fall.

For now, the project can't proceed.

Questions to the town went unanswered about what revisions needed to be made and whether any meetings to discuss the application have been held or scheduled to date.

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com

StopGap ramp a **step** toward accessibility

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's council has endorsed the use of a new tool to make places in town more accessible, paving the way for businesses to start using them this fall.

The StopGap ramp program allows businesses to place temporary ramps outside single-step entrances, improving access for people with mobility issues. Applications for the ramps are now open.

Council decided to endorse the program during last Tuesday's committee of the whole meeting, unlocking \$7,500 in municipal funding for 15 portable ramps from the StopGap Foundation.

The town has not announced which businesses will receive the ramps, but said they will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.



A StopGap ramp at Cool as a Moose downtown.

Pamela TurnerSmith, a Niagara-on-the-Lake resident who uses a scooter, has advocated for the program for years. She was acknowledged in council's report for her efforts.

"It's been three long years," said TurnerSmith. "It's the first step to accessibility."

She called the endorsement "a huge step" that made her advocacy worthwhile.

Businesses applying for a ramp must meet certain criteria. Entrances must have a single step between two and nine inches high. Ramps must be placed in a way that coexists with the

sidewalk and be approved by the landlord if the building is leased.

Applicants must also sign an agreement with the StopGap Foundation, assume legal responsibility for the ramp, ensure it is clear of snow and ice and provide proof of \$2 million in liability insurance.

Council broadly supported the initiative, though some concerns were raised.

The proposal was discussed at the municipal heritage committee meeting on July 9 before receiving endorsement from the committee of the whole. Concerns focused on whether the ramps would interfere with the historic character of Old Town.

To address this, the town will require ramps to come in pre-approved colours that blend with their surroundings. Labels will not be permitted on the ramps.

Coun. Gary Burroughs raised safety concerns at the heritage committee meeting,

suggesting a caution sign to alert pedestrians. Coun. Tim Balasiuk recommended using reflective material.

"Some sort of reflective material (would be good)," he said.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita suggested treating the initiative as a pilot project.

"I think this is a really good initiative, and there are certainly a lot of buildings that aren't accessible," she said. "But we do run the risk of what if every business wants to have this, what if every business wants us to pay for it? ... Maybe this should be a test."

Despite concerns, TurnerSmith said the decision marks a positive step forward.

"I'm happy that the town is embracing, finally, and supporting their first step to accessibility," she said.

StopGap began in 2011 as a one-off project in Toronto. Since then, the foundation has helped install more than 2,000 ramps worldwide.

daniel@niagaranow.com



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Town releases draft of updated official plan, **seeks public input**

Staff
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has released a draft of its updated Official Plan for public and agency consultation, marking what it calls a major milestone in managing the community's future growth and development.

Council approved the release at its meeting Tuesday night, setting the stage for several months of public engagement before a final version returns for adoption.

"This is an exciting step in the planning process that reflects Council's commitment to balancing growth with the preservation of Niagara-on-the-Lake's heritage, character and agricultural lands," said Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa in a statement. "We are eager to hear more from the community as we move toward finalizing this important document."

The draft reflects initial feedback from residents and businesses gathered during earlier consultations, and aligns with the Niagara Region's new Official Plan, the 2024 Provincial Policy Statement and other legislation.

While most of the plan is complete, some sections and mapping remain in



Residents can offer feedback on the new official plan at www.jointheconversationnotl.org/officialplan

development as the town works to align them with other municipal initiatives, including the Transportation Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Engagement with Indigenous communities is also ongoing.

Key policy areas in the draft include growth management, housing, employment, agriculture, urban design, climate change and Indigenous engagement. Highlights include new affordable housing targets, strategies to manage intensification through 2051 and revised employment policies to promote innovation in the Glendale area.

Chief administrative officer Nick Ruller said the plan "lays the foundation for a sustainable, inclusive and forward-thinking future."

"We encourage everyone in the community to review the plan and share their perspectives during this next phase of engagement," he said.

The town will continue consultations through August and September, with public open houses and a statutory public meeting scheduled for the fall. Feedback from those sessions will help inform a second draft.

The document has also been submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, beginning a mandatory 90-day provincial review period required before it can be formally approved.

Residents can view the draft plan and provide comments online at: www.jointheconversationnotl.org/officialplan.



BECAUSE YOU ASKED

What events hosted by the NOTL Chamber contribute significantly to the local economic impact?

The NOTL Chamber not only supports its members through Business and networking events but also hosts Signature Events — the next is the Peach Festival Weekend — that culminates in our Shades of Summer Dinner happening in the heart of town!

Limited tables remain! Queen Street turns pink with our vibrant block party in front of the Historic Courthouse in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Sunday, August 10 at 5 p.m. Don your finest rosy or pink attire and enjoy live entertainment, Niagara-on-the-Lake wines, outdoor dining under the stars, all in the heart of the Heritage District.

Visit www.niagaraonthelake.com/shades-of-summer-2025 for more information.

Have a fabulous productive week!

For more information regarding membership, please reach out to Stacey Mulholland, Membership Officer at stacey@niagaraonthelake.com or call 289-547-7556.



Lessons from Shaw’s ‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’

**THE LION,
THE WITCH
AND THE WARDROBE**

(out of five)

Festival Theatre, 2 hours and 15 minutes, one intermission, ends Oct. 4. Adapted for the stage by Selma Dimitrijevic and Tim Carroll. Based on the novel by C.S. Lewis. Directed by Selma Dimitrijevic.

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

Between the lamppost and the great castle of Cair Paravel lies a land called Narnia, where it is always winter, snowing and silent. Ruled by a cruel authoritarian White Witch who considers any criticism or dissent treasonous, she waves her wand and turns her enemies to stone. Most of all, she fears that her arch enemy, Aslan the Lion, might return to challenge her reign. Or the possibility of unknown conquering humans, the ru-

moured sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, might appear. It is a land gripped by fear, where even the trees might be spies and the wolves are police, ready to arrest and maul. Music, singing, dancing and Christmas are no more. Only the Spirit of Narnia (Alana Bridgewater) remains in eerie, melancholic melodies caught on the wind to remind those attuned to what was and might still be. Into this realm will come those humans in the form of four children, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. They have been sent by their parents to the country house of a wise professor to keep them safe from the fierce World War Two bombing of London by Nazi Germany. What do children do when left to their own resources? Explore! There are long corridors, unoccupied rooms and, in one room, a wardrobe full of old coats. Within this wardrobe is a




Jeff Irving as Peter, Dieter Lische-Parkes as Edmund, Alexandra Gratton as Lucy and Kristi Frank as Susan in “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.” The show is running now until Oct. 4 at the Festival Theatre. DAVID COOPER

land of intrigue, adventure and danger that will change their lives forever. Narnia. In writing “The Chronicles of Narnia,” C.S. Lewis influenced the lives of millions through his books and adaptations to film, television and radio. As a boy from Belfast, unhappily boarding in English schools, Lewis was fascinated by Irish, Greek, Roman and

Norse mythologies and the occult. He also was a keen observer of animals and nature. As an Oxford and Cambridge academic and one of the most influential writers of the 20th century, he focused on themes of morality, good vs. evil, humanity’s fall from grace and redemption. In the Shaw Festival’s presentation of “The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe,” the intrepid Lucy (Alexandra Gratton) is the first to discover the secret of the wardrobe. On arrival in Narnia, she meets a kind Faun (Michael Therriault) who invites her for tea but later makes a sobbing and shameful confession that he was meant to kidnap and take her to the White Witch. What happens when personal morality conflicts with carrying out authoritarian rule? His disobedience means arrest, with terrifying consequences. Who will believe Lucy?

She is truthful and miserable when not believed. Her brother, Edmund (Dieter Lische-Parkes), the model of a sadistic schoolyard bully, jeers, taunts, lies and betrays. He is next to discover Narnia and captured, greedily falls for the White Witch’s calculated enticements of “Turkish Delight” sweets and becoming a prince. Soon, cautious Peter (Jeff Irving), the oldest of the children, and gentle Susan (Kristi Frank) also discover Narnia through the wardrobe. In danger of being found, the children are sheltered by the capable dam-building Mr. Beaver (Shawn Wright) and the sweet, practical Mrs. Beaver (Jade Repeta). These delightful puppets and their superb actor handlers are a joy to behold. Aslan, the King of Beasts, returns to Narnia and all believe that at the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more and all will be right.

But where is the Lion? The roar is there, but a deep, rich voice of righteous anger is not emanating from the small puppet lion head perched on the arm of gentle Kelly Wong. This subtlety does not impress. Awe and terror are curiously missing. Aslan, as Christ of Narnia, will sacrifice himself to save the others. Will there be a resurrection after death? Aslan gives the responsibility of defeating the Witch to the children and chooses Peter to lead the revolutionary anti-White Witch forces. They will find the Lion’s courage within themselves as they battle to victory. The lesson we are given is to find the courage to do right in the face of life’s adversities. In the words of the dancing faun, Mr. Tumnus, to be one of “Us Lions.” Penny-Lynn Cookson is an arts and culture historian, writer and lecturer living in Niagara-on-the-Lake.




PUBLIC NOTICE

TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER PROPOSAL

Signum Wireless, in accordance with its obligations under the Radiocommunications Act and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Telecommunication Facilities Protocol (2015), hereby notifies the residents in the vicinity of Ricardo St. and Nelson St. in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake of its intentions to develop a Telecommunication Tower at the location shown here consisting of :

- A 18-metre shrouded monopole telecommunication tower
- An equipment shelter at the base
- and perimeter security fencing

The purpose of the proposed tower is to provide the infrastructure for carriers to improve wireless communication services in the immediate area.



Proposed tower co-ordinates:
43.254057, -79.062562

ANY PERSON may make a written submission to the individuals listed below before **August 25, 2025**, with respect to this matter. A public meeting will be held on **August 13, 2025**, between **6 p.m. and 8 p.m.**, located at the NOTL Community Centre (14 Anderson Ln, NOTL, ON L0S 1J0) in the Full Auditorium Room.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the approval of telecommunication facilities and their design are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Government of Canada through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada.

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Town seeks to honour destroyed Glencairn

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

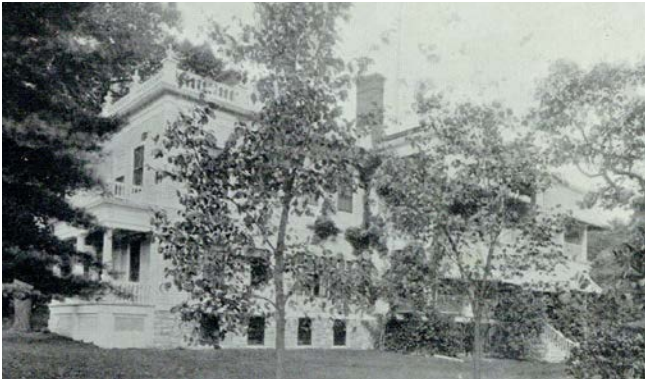
Following its destruction in a fire this spring, one of Niagara-on-the-Lake's most historic buildings is at the centre of efforts to give it the significance many feel it deserves.

The municipal heritage committee is exploring ways to commemorate Glencairn Hall, a 19th-century heritage home on 14785 Niagara River Pkwy. that was engulfed in flames the early morning of April 16.

"It has a special place in my heart for sure," said committee member Rita Trudeau. "It's a very tragic loss."

At the committee's meeting this month, Trudeau proposed ways to recognize the site's history. Among her suggestions were a roadside plaque near the former site, a historical illustration of the building and a written account of its history.

She also suggested creating a sculpture, a digital archive and an annual commemoration day for lost historical sites, which could



The town's municipal heritage committee is looking for ways to commemorate Glencairn Hall, which was burned down in a suspected arson fire in April. NOTL MUSEUM

include themed tours.

Coun. Gary Burroughs, who also sits on the committee, supported the idea of a "meaningful plaque" near the site.

However, private property concerns may affect what the town can do. Though Glencairn Hall was unoccupied when it burned down, heritage planner Sumra Zia said the owner was performing maintenance at the time.

"It wasn't 'vacant,' vacant," she said, adding that the town cannot make decisions about private property without the owner's consent.

Despite that, several committee members empha-

sized the building's historical importance.

The home stood for 193 years at its location on the Niagara River Parkway. The fire resulted in the "total loss" of the property, said Jim Kettles, operations manager for the Office of the Fire Marshall.

In June, Niagara Regional Police said it's investigating the fire as a targeted act of criminal arson.

"It just drives me insane what we lost," said committee member Brian Marshall.

Burroughs agreed the loss was significant — he visited the house once before it met its demise and said Glencairn is "one of many" buildings of historical im-

portance in town. "We are where Upper Canada started. That's why it's important," he said. "History is so important to our community."

The committee remains in the early stages of discussion. Burroughs said he's optimistic about where the ideas could lead.

"The committee itself is outstanding, and they will have some great ideas," he said. "I look forward to hearing what they will be."

The committee, which met July 9, said it may decide in September on what kind of heritage-related commemoration it'll go with.

According to the Ontario Heritage Trust, Glencairn Hall was designed by architect John Latshaw and built by Robert Hamilton Sr. in 1832.

It was later owned by prominent figures such as William A. Thomson, owner of the Erie and Niagara Railway, and John D. Larkin, owner of the Larkin Soap Company in Buffalo.

The building was also known for its classical Greek architectural style.

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Celebration of cool climate Chardonnay a boon for wine lovers

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

Hundreds of people — winemakers, wine writers and just plain wine lovers — have sipped and savoured their way through the 15th annual Celebration of Cool Climate Chardonnay, also known as i4C.

The three-day event kicked off with “School of Cool” on July 17, a full day of structured tastings and panel discussions designed for true wine nerds.

A broader audience was drawn to “Friday Night Flights,” which returned to the Niagara District Airport on July 18 this year, for a party atmosphere with wine, food and music. The grand finale was the vineyard tasting and dinner at Riverbend Inn.

Consumers got the chance to taste a plethora of international and Ontario Chardonnays, hear from experts in the industry and rub shoulders and chat with their favourite winemakers.



Wine enthusiasts mingle at Friday Night Flights at the Niagara District Airport on July 18. JILL TROYER

Winemakers had the chance to exchange notes with their counterparts about everything from climate challenges to winemaking techniques, collaborating and learning from each other.

“It certainly provides this meeting place. All the winemakers get together, particularly with the

international winemakers. Behind the scenes, they’re talking to each other and tasting each other’s wines. I think that’s helped bring the Niagara winemakers along,” explains wine expert David Lawrason.

“A lot of them have international experience or background anyway, but it’s great to see new interna-

tional people who come every year.”

One of the big debates about Chardonnay centres on the use of oak — how much, how long and how old.

For sparkling wine, the time aging in bottle is always a hot topic. The wines tasted ranged from 24 months to 12 years in bottle before release, with many in between, and there was a spirited dialogue about the relative merits.

Winemaking aside, much of the discussion was around weather. It’s the biggest wild card, with sometimes unpredictable temperatures, rain and humidity, which can increase the threat of fungus spoiling the fruit before it’s harvested.

i4C is a kind of barometer of where the industry is headed. The themes that surfaced throughout the festivities reflect current themes and future directions in the industry at large.

Decanter wine magazine’s North American editor, Clive Pursehouse, declared, “The future of wine is cool climate,” with its hallmark bright acidity and fresh flavours.

That’s good news for Niagara, which is a cool climate wine region. Its cooler temperatures give it an edge, as warming weather in cool climate regions like Burgundy is forcing earlier and earlier harvesting to protect that acidity.

One trend to emerge is the evolution and importance of premium wine.

“There’s always this issue about the pricing of the wines. Consumers who normally drink \$20 wines, say, ‘My God, why would I pay \$45 for an Ontario Chardonnay or Pinot Noir?’” says Lawrason.

“But the level of wine we’re making at that price is phenomenal, and it’s actually better value than a wine from Burgundy at the same price.”

He adds, “Canada needs to go premium. We’re not going to survive on cheap wine. We don’t make very much. All of Canada is 40,000 acres, and Oregon alone is more than that, right? We’re making a tiny amount. So when we’re making so little, and when the conditions are so difficult to make wine, then we need to be shooting really, really high.”

Lawrason says the conviction that Niagara wines are world-class is expanding, and i4C has a role in that.

“There’s an overall sense, I feel it and I hear it in the speeches, particularly at the School of Cool this year. There’s this amazing confidence now that wineries have. There’s a real push for understanding of their region, and confidence in their region, and it just keeps growing,” he says.

“This event, i4C, gives them a chance to express that, and it lets consumers experience and build on it.”



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MEDIA SPONSOR:
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Hot week for women on the links

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

The women lit it up in league competition this week at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club.

Suzanne Watson got things started by shooting a stellar 42 in one of the best rounds of the season in the Monday Business Women's league.

Other winners were: Linda Todd was by far the closest to the pin in two on #9 — thanks to holing a birdie from the fairway, Wendy Edwards had the longest drive on #1, Sally Huck was closest to the 150 on #2, Chantal Warboys was closest to the pin on #4 and Sharon Allen sank the longest putt on #7.

On Tuesday, the nine-hole women's league competed for the Joy Nelles Trophy, which is open to those with a handicap of 34.9 or higher.

Lucy Brookhouser's net score of 34 earned her the trophy by retrogression. Catherine Novick was second, also with 34, followed

by Ellen Smith and Charlotte Kainola at 38.

Other low gross scorers were: Deborah Williams (44) and Patty Garriock (47). Low net: Williams (31), Garriock (32) and Watson (33).

Williams also had the fewest putts (14), followed by Garriock and Brookhouser (15) and Watson (16).

Bonnie Lamourie sank the longest putt on #8 and Caroline Cochrane hit the longest drive on #3.

Williams rolled in a putt from off the green on #2 and Carole Matheson chipped in on #7.

In the 18-hole women's league on Tuesday, Louise Robitaille was first, with 84, while Valerie Chubey carded a blistering 88. She also won low net with a total of 68.

Diana Dimmer and Ginny Green tied with 90 to round out the gross scoring. Green (70) and Maria Townley (71) had the second- and third-best net scores.

Ron Planche had the hot hand in the Thursday men's

league last week. His 39 won low gross, tied with Al Kavanagh.

In addition, Planche tied Don Stewart for low net (30), won net skins on holes 7 and 9, plus was closest to the pin on #9.

Other winners: Kavanagh made the longest putt on #2, Tom Luck hit the longest drive on #3 and Rick Janes was closest to the pin on #4.

James Grigjanis-Meusel's birdie on #4 won a gross skin and Robert Yamamoto did the same on #8.

Other net skins went to Ward Simpson (#4) and Doug Dineley (#8).

Nobody won the putting contest so this week's prize will be \$500.

On Tuesday, Stephen Fraser was top dog in the Woofs league, firing a 2-over 38.

Jason Crowley had low net (30.5) and Bob Lowe's birdie three from about two feet away on the seventh hole earned the hidden hole prize. Rai Lauge was closest to the pin on #4.



Left: Golf fans Shauna Dickson of NOTL, her uncle Richard, left, and dad Paul, right, took in the Open Championship at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland last week. Top right: Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy finished in a tie for seventh. Bottom right: Peter Dickson on the 18th hole. Peter used to live and work in NOTL. SHAUNA DICKSON

NOTLers visit Open Championship

Niagara-on-the-Lake was well-represented at the prestigious Open Championship played last week at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland.

Among those attending were Shauna Dickson and her father, Paul, proprietor

of the Irish Design store on Queen Street.

They were on vacation in the Emerald Isle and were able to take in several days of competition at the Open.

Paul is a former member of Royal Portrush and a longtime member of the

NOTL Golf Club.

Shauna noted the record crowd was overwhelmingly cheering on Irishman Rory McIlroy in hopes he would win the Claret Jug again.

But he finished tied for seventh, behind winner Scottie Scheffler.



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Niagara nights: Symphony under the stars

NSO brings the magic of music with a concert and garden party to NOTL

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The Lake Report

Something magical is coming to the heart of Niagara-on-the-Lake this fall.

For the first time, the Niagara Symphony Orchestra will perform in the historic town — and it's bringing a party with it.

On Oct. 3, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., the NSO will take the stage at St. Mark's Church, 41 Byron St., for a one-night-only event: "Mozart & More – A Concert and Garden Party."

The evening begins with an orchestral program featuring the brilliance of Mozart, paired with the ambient beauty of Canadian composer Jordan Nobles. Under the baton of NSO music director Bradley Thachuk, audiences can expect a sonic journey that stirs the soul and uplifts the spirit.

And that's just the beginning.

Following the concert, guests will spill into the candlelit courtyard for a garden soirée featuring live music, local wine and gourmet hors d'oeuvres. Attendees can mingle with Maestro Thachuk and NSO musicians beneath a tent-covered canopy and let the music continue to dazzle — all under the stars.

One of the night's brightest stars will be Gillian Derer, a rising Canadian flutist whose performance of Mozart's Flute Concerto No. 1 is already creating buzz. With international accolades, a debut at Carnegie Hall and more than 35,000 followers tracking her every note on social media, Derer is making waves in concert halls and online. Her artistry is both virtuosic and deeply human — a combination that promises to leave the audience breathless.

"This is more than a concert," says Thachuk. "It's a celebration of music, community, and the beauty of Niagara."

One night. A thousand emotions. Discover the magic of the NSO.

Tickets are \$120 and extremely limited. This exclusive event is not part of the NSO subscription season — once it's gone, it's gone.

So don your finest garden party attire, grab a glass of Niagara's best and get ready to be swept away.

Because on Oct. 3, it's not just about hearing the music — it's about feeling it, living it and sharing it in one of Canada's most charming towns.

Reserve your seat at niagarasympphony.com.

Music, wine & wonder — Oct. 3 at St. Mark's



Rising Canadian flutist Gillian Derer will be performing Mozart's Flute Concerto No. 1 on Oct. 3 at St. Mark's Anglican Church as part of the Niagara Symphony Orchestra's "Mozart & More — A Concert and Garden Party." SUPPLIED



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BKind Grateful #37: Leave a note on a car windshield telling the person they are a positive light in this complex world and encourage them to have a wonderful day.

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



Contributed by Patty Garriock
“What will matter is the good we did, not the good we expect others to do.”
- Elizabeth Lesser

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Laura Secord Homestead in bloom

Photographer Dave Van de Laar captured this vibrant image of daylilies in full bloom at the historic Laura Secord Homestead in Queenston, bathed in the warm light of a July afternoon.

Editorial

Speak out against short-term rentals

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

On Tuesday, Niagara-on-the-Lake residents had a chance to stand up for their community.

Council heard from Stay Niagara-on-the-Lake, the advocacy group for short-term rental operators, as it made a pitch to protect the interests of short-term rental owners and preserve the status quo of exploiting NOTL’s valuable and limited homes for profit.

What’s on the table is a proposed cap on cottage rental and villa licences — freezing them at current levels with no new or replacement licences issued going forward. This is a good, common-sense decision that, hopefully, our council will support. Stay NOTL and its supporters want this stopped.

They showed up at council to make the case that this industry is essential, responsible and good for local business. But for years now, we’ve seen exactly how damaging the short-term rental industry can be, particularly with unhosted rentals.

Hollowed-out neighbourhoods. Displaced renters. Overflowing parking and noise complaints. Unfair competition with properly zoned accommodation businesses. Barely any oversight. A disappearing sense

of community.

It’s disappointing — though not surprising — that the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce sent out an email this week urging its members to show up in support of short-term rental operators.

The email stated Stay NOTL would “be making a formal delegation to council regarding these last proposed amendments to the (short-term rental) bylaw, presenting concerns and encouraging thoughtful reconsideration of the amendments.”

In asking members to support the short-term rental industry, the chamber is lobbying in favour of a privileged group of property owners who profit by turning homes into unstaffed, unregulated and unfairly taxed accommodation businesses.

Because the chamber brands itself as a voice of businesses, we must ask: How does that help retail? Restaurants? Wineries? Where is the chamber’s advocacy for workers who can’t find anywhere to live in town? Or families squeezed out of their own neighbourhoods? Or legitimate, tax-paying hotels and inns that are forced to compete on an uneven playing field?

The simple answer, proven around the globe, is that an unchecked short-

term rental industry actually hurts business. Hollowing out a community with a limited housing supply means less residents. This has a direct impact on business, both the tourism sector and the businesses we rely on as residents.

And let’s not ignore the conflict: the chamber’s chair, David Levesque, is also a current board member and past president of Stay NOTL. This call to action feels less like community-minded leadership and more like lobbying dressed up as economic development.

In a phone conversation with Levesque Monday, he said he does not own a villa or cottage rental. He owns a bed and breakfast, and doesn’t see the chamber’s email, which asks people to contact him for further information, as a conflict of interest.

He did concede that areas of NOTL are oversaturated with short-term rentals. And regardless of the suggestions Stay NOTL has for council, it’s worth remembering that these are the voices of industry stakeholders.

We’ve said this before and we’ll say it again: Niagara-on-the-Lake is not meant to be a town of lockboxes and absentee landlords. It’s a place to live. To raise kids. To build a life. And while tourism is part of that identity, it should not come

at the expense of neighbourhoods. We need balance — and we haven’t had it in a long time.

Bylaw 2025-032, passed in May, was a step in the right direction. It brought in an age requirement for short-term rental properties (eight years until a home can be used as a short-term rental), tougher parking rules, and gave town staff more tools to enforce violations. That was long overdue. But without caps on licences, the problems will continue. The town’s housing stock will continue to shrink — not just in volume, but in soul.

Tuesday’s meeting wasn’t just about a bylaw amendment. It was about whether NOTL wants to be a town of people or a town of investment properties. If you care about that future — if you’re tired of watching houses turn into ghost hotels and streets lose their character — then let council know you’ve had enough. That this town deserves better. That it’s time to put the needs of residents, workers and families ahead of speculative profit.

We know short-term rental operators will be speaking up. The chamber has seen to that. Now it’s time the rest of us spoke up, too.

This is your town. Fight for it.

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How the Royal George could be restored without affecting feel of Queen Street

Dear editor:
Is it possible to solve the problems of Royal George Theatre without demolishing and rebuilding as currently proposed?
I humbly submit these solutions to restore and preserve the existing theatre, bring it up to code, and maintain the historic character of Queen Street.

1. Foundations are a structural engineering problem and totally solvable without demolishing the existing theatre.
2. More lobby and washroom space can be simply added by expanding into the adjacent building (where we pick up tickets),

with a connection from the existing main entrance lobby.
The expanded lobby with bar and washrooms will be on the ground floor to the side of the existing theatre. The front of this adjacent building can be glass to show that it is part of the new lobby for the existing

theatre.
3. The basements with new elevator and additions to the rear of both buildings can be for the back stage functions.
Yimlei Molly Yep
Retired architect and instructor at Willowbank School of Restoration Arts Queenston

From NOTL bedsheets to soldiers' slings



THE TURNER REPORT
Garth Turner
Columnist

Liz hails from Philly. She was in town last weekend with her daughter.
“I love it,” she said in the park. “And all the Canada flags. You know we can’t fly ours any more because the MAGA people have taken the flag over.”
Just another fissure between societies. I told her the Freedom Convoy anti-vaccine rebels had tried that during the pandemic, absconding the flag and sticking it all over trucks bound for Ottawa. But we got it back. Now we’re all just happy not to be, (no offence, Liz), Americans.
Dennis Lefebvre’s also a Yank. “I live across the ditch,” he told me, as we met in a big yellow aluminum building near the mouth of the canal.
But he’s no tourist. He’s been diverting used, repaired bicycles to this side of the river since the Trump administration “took a hatchet” to the group in Buffalo that had been giving them to farm workers, refugees and migrants.
“He doesn’t understand they’d make fine Americans,” he says. “Trump doesn’t realize that everyone in America, as in Canada, came from somewhere else. They need hope. We give it.”



What started in Mary van der Zalm’s garage now cares for struggling, hurt people across the world. GARTH TURNER

We were standing in a hopeful place. It was also one of chaos. Behind us a senior citizen in shorts whipped around on a noisy towmotor, stacking pallets of former banana boxes above our heads, all of them bearing hand-written Post-it notes. The forklift’s back-up beeper was deafening.
Six feet away two women hauled fabric from bags, laying it out on eight-foot tables for inspection. These were old bedsheets from the Prince of Wales Hotel, Queen’s Landing and Great Wolf Lodge.
Behind us, piled vertically were rows of metal hospital beds, some brown, others grey, mattresses attached. Above them, shelves with wheelchairs and medical equipment bristling with tubes that Brian Springle brings in from area hospitals, old folks’ homes and clinics.
Another senior roared by with an electric pallet mover, heading for the sewing

room where Glenda Jarvis was marshalling a squad of women on machines.
They were turning those bedsheets and ripped hotel bathrobes into slings for the Ukrainian army, personal bags for new mothers in Liberia, baby blankets for Cuban infants and pads for Ugandan girls so they could go to school.
There are also tiny white outfits made for the neonatal units of local hospitals. Nurses put them on babies that don’t make it.
Above us, up a dodgy staircase, Darl Boehler stood undaunted amid sacks of eyeglasses. Thousands of them. Collected by area Lions clubs, they were being cleaned, sorted by size, put under a lensometer, graded by prescription and packaged.
One whole wall was full of bags labelled “dirty” — specs a crew of people would take home and carefully wash in the kitchen sink.
Adjacent was the comput-

er room with bins of hard drives, piles of keyboards, mice galore and laptops in various stages of surgery. Downstairs, outside the loading doors and beside the two white vans donated by Rotarians, more retired, unrelenting men were stuffing a 40-foot seagoing container.
And overseeing it all, the towering tiny figure of Mary van der Zalm. Eighty-seven and eternal.
This is the Niagara Warehouse of Hope. Mary and her squeeze, Ted, started in their garage almost 40 years ago. She now operates out of the big structure a crew of believers built in a single day and ships containers around the world with the help of at least 150 volunteers.
It costs ten grand a pop to send one of those things. Not a dollar comes from government. And not a shred of fabric, a torn jacket, a metal bed frame, a broken USB cord or plastic milk bag is wasted. (The bags are shredded, braided and made into hot-climate mattresses.)
The last container went to Guatemala days ago, where Mary’s son travels each year to build water wells for the poor. A woman just wrote a cheque for another load that will be headed for victims of Vladimir Putin’s war. A Toronto man is on his way to Cuba to meet a shipment landing there.
Lately the world needs more hope. More Canada. More Mary.
Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.
garth@garth.ca



This week’s riddle is “Jeopardy!” style.
Category: TELE VISION

In a time-traveling vision, this character sees his father Ned as a younger man and learns a thing or two about Jon Snow.

Last issue: 2X3 (TWO THREE-LETTER WORDS)

Clue: In 2022 Costco’s CFO said the \$1.50 price for this and a soda is “forever.”

Answer: What is a hotdog?

Answered first by: Bob Wheatley

Also answered correctly (in order) by:
Lynda Collet, Sue Rautenberg, Jane Morris, Susan Hamilton, Gary Davis, Paulette Kennedy, Jesse Agnew, Bruce Horak, Mike Gander, Sue Gulley, Becky Creager, Esther VanGorder, Jim Dandy, Nancy Rocca, Lynda Hosty, Randie Topps, Debbi Irving, Wade Durling, Claudia Grimwood, Howard Jones, Edna Groff, Jeff Lake, Paul O’Connor, Ardeth Staz, Margie Enns, Margaret Garaughty, Catherine Clarke, Jim Baird, Sheila Meloche, Katie Reimer, David Spencer, Sylvia Wiens

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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Poor planning decisions raise eyebrows in NOTL



Brian Marshall
Columnist

As part of the Shaw's commitment to open consultation with town residents regarding the proposed redevelopment of the Royal George, on July 16 about 90 folks were toured through the old building with various stops along the way to allow theatre representatives to explain the shortcomings of the structure and the past, present and future issues faced by the theatre company ("Shaw open house aims to address concerns on Royal George rebuild," July 17).

Based on a significant number of conversations I have had with NOTL residents, there are very few who do not understand and appreciate why the Shaw is seeking to develop a new venue.

However, there are even fewer who believe that the

theatre company's list of needs, wants and desires proposed to be incorporated within the new building can be accomplished in a contextually compatible fashion within the footprint of the Queen/Victoria property.

Nor does any unaffiliated resident that I have spoken to support the published designs.

However, the Shaw's CEO and executive director, Tim Jennings, says these drawings are just preliminary and included in the rezoning application only to satisfy that process's requirements.

The building's design, he states, is still evolving on the drafting tables of their architects and the public's concerns and input will be considered as the design develops toward completion.

The target date for publication of the final design is "late August" — apparently, in order to be made public before council's September meeting.

Given how many facets of the preliminary designs need to be reworked in order to be compatible within the heritage district streetscapes, four or five weeks may be somewhat unrealistic.

That said, it might be accomplished if all participants focus on the "need-



This proposed building in Virgil has a roof height of 15.85 metres (52 feet) — over 30 per cent higher than the current zoning height of 10.5 metres — and, if the mechanical penthouse were added it would top 64 feet.

to-haves," pare away the "want-to-haves," and then put in long hours to get it done.

For the sake of the heritage district, town residents and the Shaw, I hope they succeed in tabling a design that will work.

Next, let's wander out to 1544–1546 Four Mile Creek Rd. in Virgil, where another development application has been deemed by town staff as "complete" (which means the developer has fulfilled all the steps in the application process with town staff).

On this oddly shaped piece of property sandwiched between the road and the reservoir, the applicant has applied to "rezone the lands to Village Commercial (VC) site-specific zone, to remove the holding provision and incorporate site-specific provisions for permitted encroachments, rear yard setbacks, build-

ing height, and buffers" to construct a two-storey commercial building along the frontage of the property and, perched on the top of the bank overlooking the reservoir, a four-storey residential building in the rear.

Now, I don't have a problem with the design of the commercial building, despite it being somewhat uninspired. This building largely conforms to the existing zoning provisions and standards.

The residential building, on the other hand, is a different matter and, I opine, added almost as an afterthought when it occurred to someone that — with enough site-specific provisions — it would be just barely possible to squeeze in another building.

As proposed, this building will rise to a height (not including the mechanical penthouse) of 15.85 metres or 52 feet — significantly

above the 10.5 metres currently allowable. It will sit virtually on the edge of the bank of the reservoir and require a reduced backyard setback.

Bluntly, it will stick up like a sore thumb — for the sake of just 29 dwelling units.

Finally, they propose underground parking. Has anybody considered the level of the water table next to the reservoir? On Monday of last week, the level of the water in the reservoir was above the level proposed for the underground parking.

Oh, and by the way, this proposal will require the cutting of approximately 200 trees.

Moving on to a question: what were they thinking?

In a July 15 meeting of town council, the Two Sisters Resort Corp. petitioned the town to support the corporation's attempt to seek a reduction of Niagara Region's \$5-million development charges on the proposed Parliament Oak hotel development ("Council backs developer's fight against regional fees — with dissent," July 21, Niagara Now).

And our councillors voted 5–3 in favour of doing so.

Historically, this column has visited development charges several times, but in short, these are the fees charged to cover initial capital costs of expanding the capital infrastructure — such as roads, water, sewers, etc. — required to service the new development.

It appears the region is thinking clearly about the costs and risks associated with providing these services (see: "Arch-i-text: Points of interest and infrastructure," Feb. 13) in determining the development charges.

While apparently no one on NOTL's town staff (or many of the councillors) is, since those development charges are a paltry \$989,393.

Moreover, in what world does it make sense — even only considering the precedent — for a town council to become a de facto agent of an individual developer in their negotiations with the region?

Finally, in response to one councillor's claim that "we need" this hotel development "to happen," I would say au contraire: the only one with that "need" is the developer.

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



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NOTL needs **public**, not private, education

Dear editor:

In response to Royal Oak celebrating its 10-year anniversary of a not-for-profit community school in Old Town:

Royal Oak prides itself on being a community school, but is it really a community when you have to pay to be a part of it?

We could send our kids there, but we believe strongly in the right to a public education. If we chose to buy into a private school, this would just divert students and minimize the need for more schools in town and reduce our leverage against the school board.

Yes, I admire that there was no “sulking” and they took the matters into their own hands.

However, that determination could have been used by filing a formal complaint against the board, which would easily prove that they did not appropriately consult the parent and In-

digenous communities with an accommodation review, overruled the Governance Act of 2009, as well as ignored the last 15 years worth of census showing youth population growth, and the decision would be reversed.

Lauren Bubnič
NOTL

Scaling back new Royal George is the way to go

Dear editor:

I commend the Shaw Festival for its decision to hold a public open house at the Royal George Theatre on July 16 (“Shaw open house aims to address concerns on Royal George rebuild,” July 17).

Participants were shown firsthand some of the challenges that the Festival has overcome for decades to make the George a premier venue for live theatre in Canada.

And there are many, from the dingy, damp and cramped green room, the lack of space for dressing rooms and set storage, the crumbling foundations, a minuscule lobby, inadequate bar/refreshment area and, in particular, the lack of accessibility.

Based on what I saw and heard, I suspect most people on the tour would agree that changes to the George are overdue, and that an extensive refurbishment is needed to not only ensure that the theatre is in compliance with building, fire and accessibility codes, but also to support its continued safe operation as a centre for the performing arts.

What’s at issue isn’t the need for the George to be upgraded: it’s how the Shaw Festival intends to go about it.

Their plan is to start with a clean slate: to demolish the existing theatre and two adjacent homes now owned by the festival.

We’re being assured that that’s OK, because neither the existing theatre nor the houses can be considered historic despite their age.

In the eyes of the festi-



Letter writer Terry Davis urges the Shaw Festival to scale back the rebuild of the Royal George Theatre to keep it in line with the heritage feel of the street. FILE

val, they’ve been altered too much over the years to warrant heritage status. But if we tear down our built heritage simply because it’s evolved over time, soon there will be nothing historic left in our town.

The festival also says that it is impossible to repair the Royal George’s foundations, but it does not appear to have considered whether the existing theatre could be raised to allow those foundations to be replaced.

It’s true, as one member of the festival team said when I asked about this, that raising a building the size of the George would be a formidable engineering challenge, and that the clay speed tile and wood in its walls may not withstand the effort.

But I’d like to see the festival explore every option to preserve the theatre, while still addressing its other issues.

It may, as the festival contends, be impossible to save the George. But if that’s the case, I question the need to replace the theatre with a massive new facility that will, based on the drawings I’ve seen, significantly alter the historic feel of Queen Street and devastate the streetscape on Victoria.

And for what? A loading bay on Victoria that will apparently be used 10 times a year; a third-floor lounge and terrace overlooking Queen Street for the festival’s donors and patrons; a new two-story rehearsal hall; and a lobby that will be bigger than the existing theatre.

I hope the festival team will rethink their design for the new theatre. Not the push to make the new space fully accessible and incorporate accessible washrooms — I commend the festival for wanting to achieve this — but the

overall look and feel of the facility.

It only takes a look across the street, to 124 on Queen Hotel, to see that it’s possible to erect a large new building in Old Town’s historic core without taking away the charm and heritage feel of Queen Street or the quaintness of Victoria. Isn’t there a way to incorporate existing facades into the design of the new Royal George?

If the festival looks into this, if it takes the concerns of residents into account and makes a bona fide effort to address them, I suspect that in the long run I’ll be happy to take a seat in the new Royal George, with the wider aisles, better leg room and other improvements the theatre will offer.

But if it does not, I may find myself boycotting the Shaw Festival in the future.

It’s their choice, and mine.

Terry Davis
NOTL

NOTL is loved for its small-town charm — **please don’t ruin it**

Dear editor:

Winston Churchill once said, according to several online sources, that the Niagara Parkway was the prettiest in the world for a Sunday drive. I have heard that he also said Niagara-on-the-Lake is the most beautiful town in North America, although I could not verify this. Maybe such comments, from the famous to the average man or woman, make NOTL the second-biggest tourist destination in Canada.

NOTL certainly is a beautiful, charming, historic and quaint town now, and it’s these qualities, I’m sure, that draw both residents and tourists to the area. But, this state seems increasingly threatened by the powers-that-be and of influence into becoming just another 20th-21st century hodgepodge of mixed architecture stuffed into every little bit of greenspace or of what can be demolished, historic or not.

I shudder every time I pass a spot on Queen Street where an internationally known sign advertises ice cream because it doesn’t belong among the one-of-a-kind shops. Everyone I mentioned this to in a group to which I belong feels the same about that sign and shop.

Now, to add to this abomination, a huge monstrosity of a concrete and glass theatre is threatening to loom over the quaint little shops, casting shadows over them and the charm of the street. The people in that previously mentioned group all agree with me that the size

and facade of the proposed theatre do not belong on Queen Street at all.

This “fishbowl” does not belong on historic Queen Street any more than does a hockey arena or baseball diamond. It will be as much out of character as are the “fishbowl houses” built in the historic parts of town.

I know the Royal George Theatre is old and has structural and utility issues. But, if the exterior structure is sound, why can’t it be gutted, extended a bit to the rear and renovated? If not, then why can’t the new theatre have a front facade that fits into its surroundings while the interior is modern?

Why does a rehearsal hall and other amenities have to be built at this location, causing the demolition of three historic homes? Why can’t these facilities be built by the new actor’s residence or behind the Festival Theatre where they won’t spoil the ambience and character of Old Town?

Besides farming, it is tourism that supports the economy of this gorgeous little part of our country and keeping it beautiful, historic, charming and quaint is a huge, huge part of the attraction.

Please don’t ruin Queen Street with this “fishbowl” monstrosity, but keep it “different from everywhere else,” as Garth Turner quoted in his column last week (“The Turner Report: The NOTL dream died. So they left,” July 10).

Ann Goodin
Old Town



To the man who took **two ladders** on July 11

Dear editor:

Between 7 and 8 a.m., on Friday, July 11, a man in a grey pickup truck took two ladders from our driveway at 642 Simcoe St. Those ladders belong to a contractor and were there for him to pick up that morning.

They were not anywhere near the curb, so you could not have mistaken them for “garbage.” You had to walk

onto our property to take them.

Please, kindly return them to us so we can return them to their rightful owner.

If anyone recognizes the truck in the photo, please notify me at 905-932-4021 so we can rectify this matter.

Thank you.

Fernando Vieira
Old Town

Virgil speed camera rules may not be reasonable

Dear editor:

While I agree with Lani Parkinson that vandalism should not be tolerated (“Letter: Speed cam vandal should be charged,” July 17), I think the repeated nature of the camera destruction does point to a growing opinion that the new zone

rules are not reasonable.

Forty kilometres an hour, 24-7, all year round, for a school closed for a large portion of that time due to school hours and summer closures doesn’t make sense.

The prior law of 50km/h during school days and months seemed reasonable,

but I’m guessing some squeaky wheels got their own way over common sense.

I hear that the region is not putting in a camera to monitor the camera, so clearly, they aren’t getting the message that perhaps their whole scheme needs to

be reconsidered.

They should spend their efforts on repaving and adding turn lanes to Niagara Stone Road from Virgil to NOTL, which is a total mess.

Let’s hope.

Charles Goddard
NOTL

Must we **fall** before anyone will help us stand?

Carolyn Chandler-Hill
Special to The Lake Report

This weekend, I watched my 75-year-old parents struggle to maintain their gardens and lawn on their beautiful half-acre lake-front property in the north end of Niagara.

I know — first-world problems, right? No one fell. No one got heatstroke. They didn't ask for help.

Fortunately, my son was there and did most of the heavy lifting. But still, I saw how hard it was for them. And I know not everyone has the kind of support they have.

This is the home they've lovingly maintained for more than 40 years. It's the same place that's hosted countless reunions, celebrations, and visitors from around the world. And now, in their later years, it has become a source of physical strain instead of pride and comfort.



Carolyn Chandler-Hill says we need to be more proactive in protecting our senior population. CHATGPT

The worst part? Unless one of them ends up in the ER, there's almost no way to get them help at home without paying fully out of pocket.

Why do we wait for our elderly citizens to break a hip before we offer them a hand?

As a paramedic, I've responded to countless calls where seniors have had car

accidents because it's their only way to get groceries. I've helped people who've collapsed while shovelling snow or cutting the lawn. I've seen the aftermath of falls in grocery stores, in driveways, on staircases.

It's not that they're helpless. It's that we make it too hard for them to get help until it's already too late. Ontario Health atHome

promotes a "Home First" initiative, which prioritizes continuing recovery at home after a hospital stay. It puts patient health and safety as the top priority, ensuring each person receives "the right care at the right time and in the right place."

It's a step in the right direction: placing people in familiar environments, surrounded by the comforts of home, and often leads to faster healing and better mobility.

But the key phrase there is "after a hospital stay." Why are we only supporting people after they've gotten hurt? Shouldn't the right care at the right time be before the injury happens?

We need to talk about prevention — real, meaningful, everyday prevention. And we need to fund it.

Supporting people at home with health care dollars, before a crisis hits — through transportation assistance, home

maintenance support, meal delivery, and basic in-home services like occupational therapy — would not only reduce injuries but would be far more cost-effective than treating them after the fact.

"In general, supporting individuals at home is more cost-effective than supporting them in long-term or residential care, and certainly more cost-effective than in an acute care bed in the hospital" (Thompson, 2023).

Let's break that down. The average cost of a hip replacement in Canada is over \$7,600. Add in a hospital-acquired pneumonia, and you're looking at an additional \$6,700 to \$8,600. COVID-19? That can bring the total cost of hospitalization to \$23,000 or more (Thompson, 2023).

Compare that to \$137 for an occupational therapist in the home for an hour for an assessment, according to a 2023 report from the Cana-

dian Association of Occupational Therapists. Add in a few grab bars or non-slip rugs at under \$100 each. Or subsidized yard work that costs a fraction of what a single ER visit does.

The math makes sense. The ethics make sense. The only thing missing is action.


By 2030, Canada's population over the age of 75 is expected to double. That means we're running out of time to rethink how we care for our aging population.

We can't keep cutting costs, services and privatizing our system, crossing our fingers that people won't get hurt. Prevention isn't just compassionate — it's economically sound.

If we can send billionaires to space, surely we can help our parents stay safely on their front porch.

Carolyn Chandler-Hill is the daughter of longtime Niagara-on-the-Lake residents Betty Ann and Rick Chandler.


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2025 MUNICIPAL TAX REMINDER NOTICE

Final First Installment due July 31, 2025
Tax Rates as per Final By-Law No. 2025-031

Payment Options:

- By **mail** to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil ON, L0S 1T0)
- **In-person** or via **front or side entrance drop box** at Town Hall (1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil)
- **Electronically** from a bank account using your 19-digit roll number
 - If payment is made at a bank or other pay station, the account will be credited only after the Town has received settlement from the bank. Please allow 10 business days for payment processing.

If you did not receive a tax notice, please call the Town at 905-468-3266 ext. 0 to ensure your correct mailing address and P.O. Box number are on file. To avoid penalties and interest charges, the Town must receive payment by July 31, 2025. On the first day of default and every month after, a 1.25% penalty will be added. Penalties will not be waived.

Pre-Authorized Payment Plan (PAP) and eSend Program

Save time and potential late fees by paying your taxes through a PAP plan, online or through telephone banking. You can also request to receive property tax bills and Town notices by email via eSend. Learn more at www.notl.com/council-government/property-taxes.



Move Virgil pickleball to Queenston court

Dear editor:
Your July 10 article on the Queenston Heights pickleball courts indicates they are not being used (The Lake Report, “New Queenston Heights courts in a pickle?” page 12). Maybe the town should consider shutting down the Virgil courts to move that traffic to Queenston Heights.
The courts there are removed from any resi-

dential area, while the Virgil courts are less than 50 feet from a number of residences.
Before anyone responds with vitriolic responses like, “These people live on a sports park ... what did they expect?” We lived there for six years before pickleball and had no issue with anything in the park.
Truly, if the town had done its due diligence, it would have found that

scores of other municipalities in Canada and the U.S. did studies that resulted, in many cases, in changing plans for location and in some cases actually moving existing courts.
The reason for these decisions comes from the reports that came out of the studies, all recommending that outdoor pickleball not be located within 300 to 600 feet of any residence. Just Google “outdoor pick-

leball distance from homes in Canada.”
Add to this that the provincial guideline for impulse noise during the daytime hours is 50 decibels. The Wikipedia definition of impulse noise cites pickleball as an example. The Virgil courts have been measured at 77 decibels with only three courts active.
Rick Gallant
NOTL

Ontario is sliding toward a two-tiered, U.S.-style health care system



Waynes Gates
Special to The Lake Report

Ontario’s health care system is in crisis.
In our community in Niagara-on-the-Lake — and throughout smaller, rural communities — the promise of universal, accessible medical care is collapsing under the deeply flawed priorities of Premier Doug Ford’s government.
Year after year, the Conservative government has underinvested in primary care, abandoned rural communities and advanced private clinics at the expense of our public health system. This trend must stop.
Let’s begin with primary care. More than two and a half million Ontarians remain without a family doctor.
I have worked strongly with the lord mayor and town council to get a nurse practitioner back in Niagara-on-the-Lake, which was a big win for the community.
We have also recently worked together across all levels of government to welcome much-needed investment, attaching thousands of people to community

health centres.
But the reality is, these are patchwork solutions to a systemic and growing problem.
Across Ontario, family doctors are overwhelmed by red tape, and internationally trained physicians face endless barriers to being able to practice in our communities.
Meanwhile, this government shrugs and offers no meaningful reform.
As a result, far too many people are forced into crowded emergency rooms or left to suffer in silence.
The crisis hits smaller and rural communities especially hard. Dozens of rural hospitals have had unplanned emergency department closures over the past year, and residents in northern Ontario face even longer travel times and poorer health outcomes.
Accessing care should not depend on geography or the size of your community — yet under this government’s watch, hospitals and urgent care centres close while lives are put on hold.
Deepening this neglect is the government’s push toward privatization.
Hundreds of millions in public dollars have been funnelled toward private surgical clinics, encouraging procedures behind closed, for-profit doors. We are sliding toward a U.S.-style, two-tier health care model where wealth



Long waits for emergency room medical care are common at Niagara Health’s St. Catharines site — and at most hospitals across Ontario. FILE

becomes the determining factor in who gets treated.
Private clinics take the same OHIP funding at a premium, costing taxpayers more while drawing doctors away from public hospitals.
It’s a classic bait-and-switch: the government claims this relieves surgical backlogs, but it undermines our public system and takes dollars out of publicly delivered care and puts them into private, worsening the crisis.
It wasn’t always this way. Ontario once had world-class universal care rooted in strong public investment. Communities had full-service hospitals and urgent care centres, physicians devoted to local clinics, and people confident they’d get care in their hometown.
Today, none of that is guaranteed. Instead, cuts, understaffing, and privatization surge ahead — while residents and seniors are left waiting.

I’ve called on the government to do the right thing: invest in interdisciplinary primary-care teams, simplify administrative processes for physicians, fast-track licensing for doctors trained abroad, and restore overnight services to rural urgent care clinics.
These aren’t radical demands — they’re commonsense fixes that would improve care and save lives.
To my constituents in Niagara, we deserve better than distant promises. We deserve a health care system that answers the phone, opens its doors, and treats us all equally.
Since 2020, Ontario has fallen billions short of promised health care investments. We are at a crossroads. Will our province succumb to privatization and a fracturing two-tier system? Or, will we stand firm in our belief that health care is a right, not a privilege?
The government must reverse course: build more interdisciplinary primary-care hubs, prioritize staffing for underserved urgent care centres, stop handing taxpayer dollars to American-style for-profit clinics, and restore the public system that once defined Ontario.
Not someday. Now.
Our health depends on it.
Wayne Gates is the member of provincial parliament for the Niagara Falls riding.

New StopGap ramp program big win for accessibility

Dear editor:
I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the Niagara-on-the-Lake council for adopting the StopGap Ramp Program and kudos to Pamela TurnerSmith for her tireless effort to bring it to fruition.

I am truly impressed by their commitment to improving accessibility in public spaces.
This forward-thinking initiative will undoubtedly benefit local residents, and as a popular tourist destination, Niagara-on-

the-Lake stands to gain even more by reducing physical barriers for individuals using mobility devices, pushing strollers, or facing other access challenges.
If effectively promoted, I am confident that participat-

ing businesses will not only see increased foot traffic but will also be recognized for their leadership and goodwill in fostering a more inclusive community.
Congratulations again.
Cheryl Katz
Toronto

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To register and more information
www.redroofretreat.com/roadrally

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Carol Sherlock

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6 The Promenade.

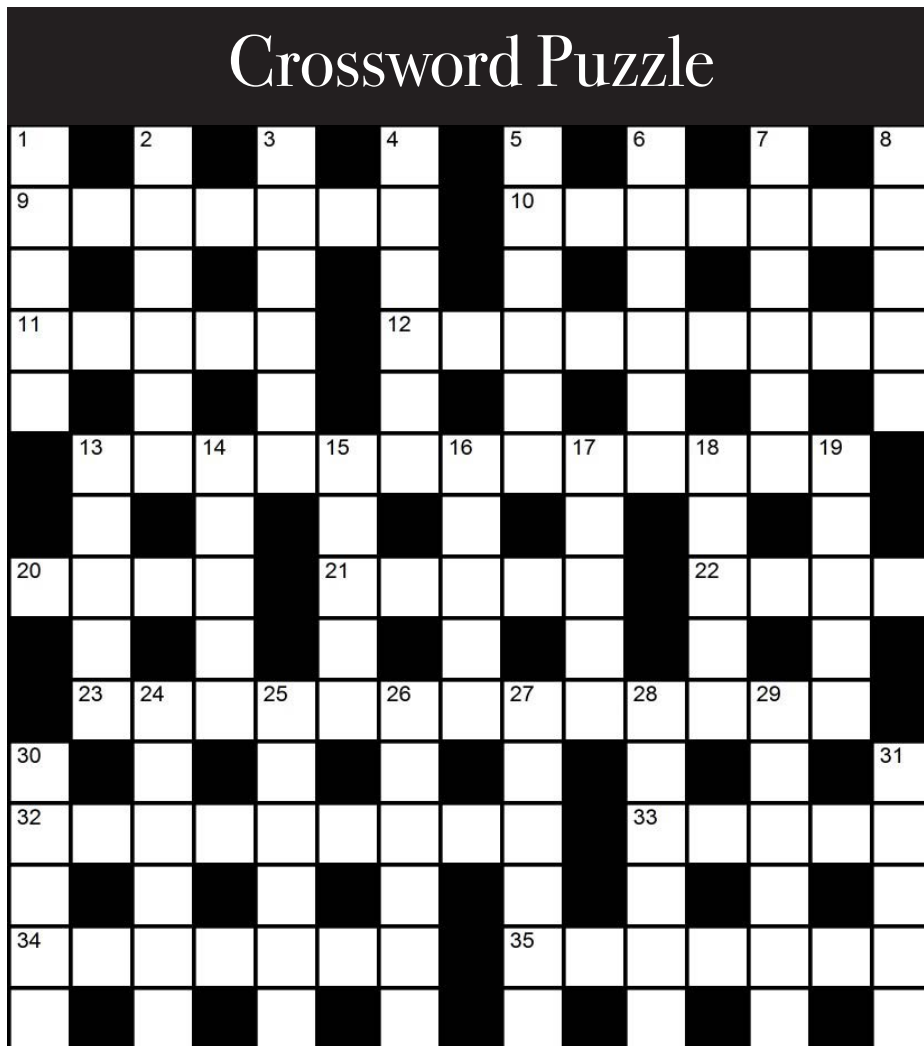
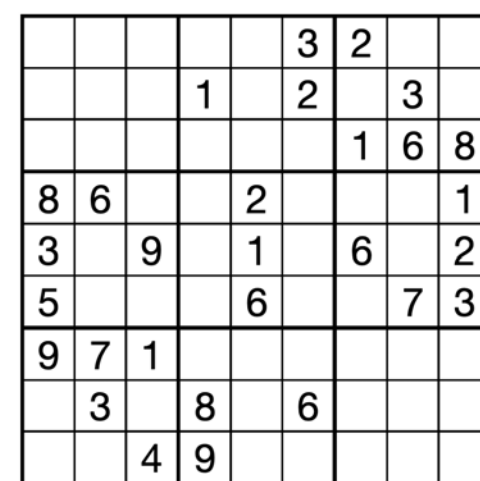


Have some fun

9. Photograph taken at very short range (5-2)
10. Kind of illusion (7)
11. Relating to sound reproduction (5)
12. Holy Communion (9)
13. Dog with wavy silky hair (6,7)
20. Leg joint (4)
21. Graded (5)
22. Wife of one's uncle (4)
23. Reflection (13)
32. Doctor (9)
33. Cost (5)
34. Typical (7)
35. Petite (3-4)

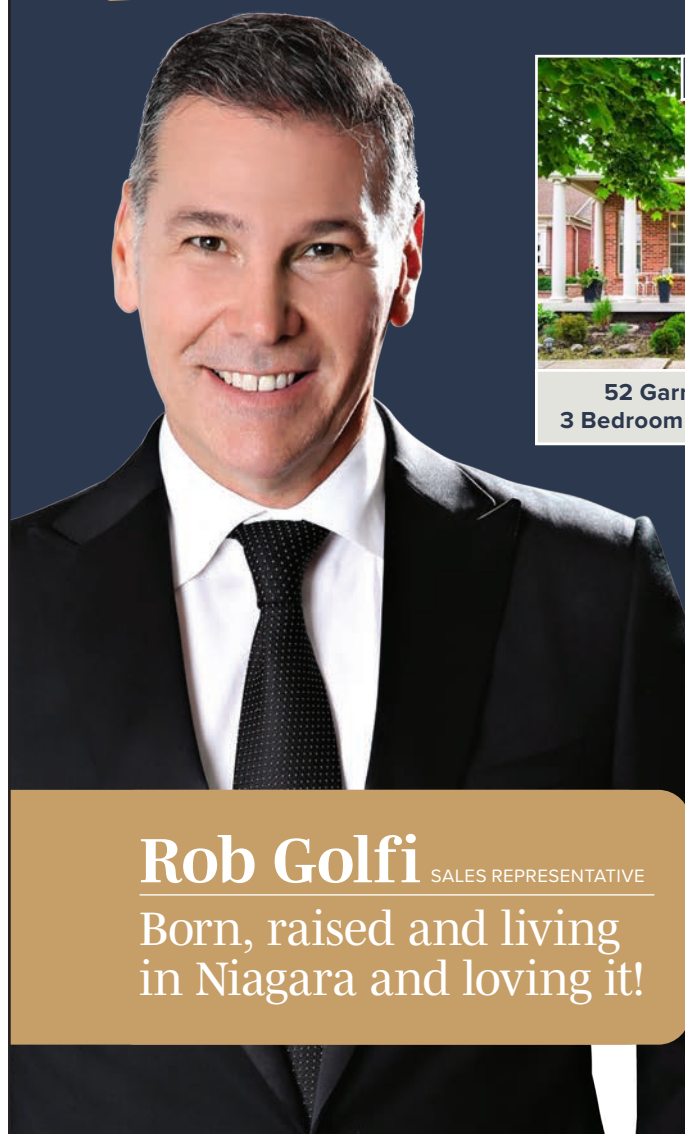
1. Fragment (5)
2. Black magic (6)
3. Make over (6)
4. Become visible (6)
5. Steel boot reinforcement (6)
6. Filter (6)
7. Operational (6)
8. Vigorous attack (5)
13. Sarcastic doubter of sincerity and merit (5)
14. Unsoiled (5)
15. Strange and mysterious (5)
16. Organisation (3-2)
17. Per --- ad astra (R A F motto) (5)
18. Resident of e.g. Basra (5)
19. Russian revolutionary leader (5)
24. One-fifth of the atmosphere (6)
25. Ethnic (6)
26. Posted (6)
27. Yearner (6)
28. Warning (3-3)
29. Source (6)
30. Atomize (5)
31. Conical tent (5)

Crossword Puzzle

[illegible]

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EXPLORING HISTORY
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International tennis tournament at Queen's Royal

With Wimbledon tennis matches coming to a close, we reflect on the major international tournaments that used to happen right here in our town. To see the best tennis 125 years ago, you would have headed to the Queen's Royal Hotel, now the site of Queen's Royal Park off King Street in the Old Town district. With six grass tennis courts, the hotel could host tournaments of the quality of Wimbledon. A tournament was established in 1886, known as The International at Niagara-on-the-Lake. It quickly became a "must-do" for the major players of the day. Over the next 25 years, all the American and Canadian champions would play The International, along with a number of Wimbledon champions. In 1895, the Canadian Lawn Tennis Association (forerunner to Tennis Canada) moved the Canadian Championships from Toronto to Niagara-on-the-Lake. In both these international tournaments, men and women were accorded equal treatment, a significant element during a time when women were denied the vote, had limited access to higher education, and were excluded from most sports. In tennis, they competed on the same stage as the men. This week's photo shows mixed doubles playing on the local courts at the former Queen's Royal.



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Joyce Brown



BROWN, Joyce —
Joyce Brown passed away in NOTL on July 18, 2025, at her home with her husband Douglas at her side.
She was pre-deceased by her parents, Herbert Steer and Doris Arkell, and her brother Richard Steer, all in the United Kingdom. and her first husband Richard Brown in Niagara-on-the-Lake. As a young woman, Joyce emigrated to Canada, living and working as a secretary, first in Vancouver and then in Montreal where she met and married Richard Brown. After a stay in the U.K., they moved to Toronto where they finished their working careers.

They retired to Niagara-on-the-Lake. Joyce was soon widowed but decided to stay in her home close to neighbors and friends. Through her activities, including with the Newcomers Club, she formed many more lasting friendships.
In the concluding chapter in her life Joyce and Douglas Newman became husband and wife and she was welcomed into the families of Donald Newman in Oakville, and Andrew Newman in Torquay, Australia in the starring role of Grandma Joyce.

In the spring of 2024, Joyce was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer. She chose to concentrate on the quality of her remaining life. She was especially thankful to have Helen Ferley as her visiting palliative care nurse. Finally, as planned, she called upon the services of MAID.

Arrangements are in the care of Morgan Funeral Home. According to her wishes, cremation has taken place, and a private interment will follow. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



Sandra Tucker



TUCKER, Sandra (nee Wicks) — 1946 - 2025
We are saddened to share the passing of Sandra Tucker on July 1, 2025, in her 79th year. She is reunited with her parents, William and Jean Wicks, and her sisters, Linda Madill, Glenna Blay and Myrna Chiasson. Sandra is survived by her husband of 60 years, Jerry, her children, Robin (Ricky) and Lyndon, and siblings, Diane Bundy, Brenda Rynberk and Glenn Wicks. Sandra will be greatly missed by extended family, friends and members of the dog show community.

Sandra was born in St. Catharines and resided in Niagara where she partnered with her husband to open Skyway Kennels in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Upon graduation, she gained valuable work experience at the Thorold Credit Union. She only had fond memories of this time and made lifelong friendships in Thorold as a result.

Sandra was an inspiration to those around her. Having persevered through chronic pain and debilitating conditions for most of her life, she continued to work alongside her husband at the family’s business. In addition to breeding award winning Irish Setters and Beagles, Sandra became a locally renowned tattooist for other dog breeders. Her strong work ethic and commitment to unparalleled pet care contributed to the success of Skyway Kennels for over 40 years.

Sandra’s life was one that embodied an indomitable fight against all that was wrong with the world. She showed unwavering support for animals, the underdog in society, and those experiencing the horrors of war in Ukraine. Nov. 11, Remembrance Day, was a sacred holiday for her for it symbolized the sacrifice of so many for what continues to be under threat today – freedom, democracy and all peoples’ right to exist.

Sandra’s dual passions – travel and music – were common threads throughout her 79 years. While international travel was no longer possible in her later years, Sandra cherished memories of past trips to Europe, China, Australia and New Zealand. Even after her strokes, Sandra continued to enjoy going to concerts and taking in live music as she was able. Her son, Lyndon, ensured that her enjoyment of music would not be impeded by her mobility issues right up until the last days of her life.

In keeping with Sandra’s wishes, cremation has taken place. The Tucker and Lakeit families welcome those who knew Sandra to attend a Celebration of Life on Friday, Sept. 12 at 5:30 pm at Caroline Cellars Winery, 1010 Line 2 Rd., Virgil. In the spirit of Sandra’s passion for live music, the family will host a meal and classic rock concert under the pavilion in her honour. Please join us in celebrating Sandra’s life.

John Kaloyanides



KALOYANIDES, John Linwood —
Sept. 14, 1934 - July 19, 2025
John passed peacefully with his loving wife and family around him on July 19, 2025. Arrangements entrusted with Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. Service details to be announced at a later date.

Bruno Laliberté



LALIBERTÉ, Bruno —
It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Bruno Laliberté on July 17, 2025, two weeks before his 75th birthday, after a long and difficult battle with COPD. He passed away peacefully at home with his wife Lorraine, his two furry boys Jake & Lou, and very close friends by his side.

He will be dearly missed by his loving wife Lorraine (his companion, his best friend, his confidant, the love of his life), grand-daughters Alanna and Shayna, sister-in-law Josée Robitaille, and many who knew him, but his memory will live on, and his great sense of humour will never be forgotten. His infectious laugh and quick wit, along with his joyful demeanour and empathy and respect for others, made him loved by so many different people.

Bruno was born on July 31, 1950, in Sherbrooke, Québec. In 1975, he moved to Ontario and worked at Canadian Acceptance Corporation Head Office in Toronto until 1979. In March 1979, he moved to Mississauga then Oakville while he worked for Ford Credit Canada Limited, at the Head office in Oakville until September 2009. After a long battle with cancer in 2008, he took early retirement in 2009 after over 30 years with Ford. In October 2013, Bruno and his wife

Lorraine moved to Niagara-onthe-Lake for a less stressful and healthier environment, and a better quality of life.

Bruno lived life to the fullest and enjoyed each and every moment of life, and he always tried to make the most of every situation. He loved the outdoors and nature, and for many years, he was an avid boater in Georgian Bay (God’s Country). He also enjoyed motorcycle trips tremendously. He had many hobbies such as gardening, woodworking, building and repairing things, to name a few.

One of his many passions was to meet new people, and he always jumped at the opportunity to even invite complete strangers walking in front of his house for a glass of vino in order to get to know them and connect with them. Bruno was the most loyal, sincere, considerate, dedicated and helpful friend one could ever have and you could always count on him if you needed help. He considered and treated everyone as a friend, even the people in his life masquerading as friends.

He strongly believed in justice, fairness, honesty, loyalty and integrity, and never hesitated to stand up and put up a good fight, always trying to make things right for individuals, neighbours, communities, organizations, etc.

Thank you to those who helped us along the way, and we will be forever grateful to Dr. Fiona Halliday, to the palliative nurses Helen and Paul of Paramed, to the entire team at the NOTL Community Palliative Care Service in Virgil, and to all the health care professionals, for their kind and compassionate care.

In keeping with Bruno’s wishes, cremation has taken place. A Celebration of Bruno’s Life will be held at a later date. As an expression of sympathy, those who wish may make a memorial donation in Bruno’s name to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care in Virgil or to the Canadian Lung Association.

Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morseandson.com.



Tim Andrews



ANDREWS, Tim —
It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Tim Andrews, aged 70, who died peacefully after a courageous battle with cancer, surrounded by his wife and friends.

Timothy Joseph Andrews was born on April 12, 1955, and raised in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Tim was a man of the earth — a dedicated farmer, a loving brother, and a quiet force in the community. He spent his life working the land with care and purpose, growing not just crops, but a legacy of kindness, resilience, and generosity.

Tim was known for his gentle spirit, his thoughtful words, and a deep respect for both nature and people. He had a special gift for nurturing young farmers — believing in them even before they believed in themselves—and many in the community credit him as a steady influence during their early years.

Though Tim never sought recognition, he was widely respected by all who knew him. He lived with humility, worked with quiet pride, and treated others with unwavering respect. His laughter was easy, his silences meaningful, and his presence grounding.

Tim is survived by his loving wife, Sandra Edgeworth, his siblings Judy (Neil) Andersen, Peg (Bill) Marshall, and Bob (Sharon) Andrews, as well as his many nieces and nephews, his cat Freddy, and his many golfing friends, fellow farmers, and the young farmers he mentored.

He was predeceased by his mother, Lorraine Andrews, his father, Stanley Andrews, and his brother, Rod Andrews.

A private family service will be held, with a celebration of life to follow later this season. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides — a cause Tim admired for its life-changing impact and strong community values.



Add drama and colour with these showstoppers



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

I am so fortunate that I have the opportunity to meet with so many gardeners and visit their gardens throughout the seasons.

No matter the season, there are always plants that are ready to show off the beauty that lies inside of them and summer is no exception.

Some of the showiest blooms open in the summer months, keeping the garden looking great.

Here are a few of the summer-blooming plants that will make you stop in your tracks.

One of the most popular families of plants known for its summer blooms is the hydrangea. There are

several species with no end of cultivars to choose from.

One of the lesser-known species is *Hydrangea quericifolia*, otherwise known as oakleaf hydrangea. As the name suggests, this species has large lobed leaves similar to those of an oak tree.

The coarse texture of the leaves alone makes this shrub stand out from the others, but the large flower panicles take it to the next level. The white flowers start to open in mid-July and gradually age to a dusty-rose pink colour and dry on the plant. This gives you an extended bloom period.

In the oakleaf hydrangea family, there are both regular height cultivars that can grow six to eight feet high (such as ‘Snow Queen’) and wide, as well as dwarf varieties that will grow only three to four feet high and wide. Some dwarf varieties are ‘Munchkin’ and ‘Sykes Dwarf.’

Oakleaf hydrangeas do best in part shade — three to four hours of sun.

Like I stated earlier, there are so many varieties of hydrangeas on the market — many of them new and improved.



Oakleaf hydrangea’s white flowers start to open in mid-July and age to a dusty-rose pink colour and dry on the plant. This gives you an extended bloom period. JOANNE YOUNG

In the Annabelle hydrangea family (with the large white snowball-like clusters of flowers) one of the improved varieties is ‘Incrediball,’ which boasts larger blooms and stronger stems.

Then there are the panicle hydrangeas (*Hydrangea paniculata*) with the large cones of flower clusters. There are also many new varieties of the big leaf hydrangeas (*Hydrangea*

macrophylla) that are repeat blooming, providing you with showy pink, white or blue flower balls over a longer period of time (mid-June to September).

Another summer showstopper is the butterfly bush (*Buddleia*). The butterfly bush is known for its long cone-like clusters of flowers on arching stems that attract butterflies and hummingbirds.

The flowers range in colour from white and yel-

low to all different shades of pink and purple. My favourite cultivar of butterfly bush is ‘Grand Cascade,’ which grows to be six to seven feet high and wide.

Its light lavender-purple fragrant flower panicles are enormous at 12 to 14 inches long — almost twice as long as most butterfly bushes. All butterfly bushes prefer a full-sun location and can tolerate dry soil once established.

There are now many dwarf cultivars of *Buddleia* that only grow to be two to four feet tall, such as the ‘Lo & Behold’ series and the ‘Pugster’ series.

One of the showiest summer-blooming perennials is the perennial hibiscus, also known as dinner plate hibiscus, as its large, colourful flowers can reach eight to 12 inches wide — the size of a plate.

Even though each flower only lasts for one day, the plant blooms over several weeks. I have seen plants produce over 60 flower buds.

Many cultivars grow to be three to four feet in height and width, though there are some dwarf varieties available. Perennial hibiscus prefer a full-sun location and can tolerate moist soil.

One of my favourite cultivars is ‘Midnight Marvel,’ which sports burgundy leaves and bright red flowers. A showstopper for sure.

So, if your garden is lacking that something special, check out these plants at your local garden centres.

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

As cool as the other side of the pillow with Music Niagara



ROSS’S RAMBLINGS

Ross Robinson
Columnist

Just last Sunday evening at St. Mark’s Church here in our old town, I marvelled at the musical and speechifying talents of Atis Bankis. This chap is an internationally respected violinist, and we are so lucky to have him with us as the Artistic Director of Music Niagara.

Both his bow hand and his left hand move so fast, so he came by his talents on the tennis courts honestly. His segues between songs lead the audience through the performances.

Music Niagara, where the world comes to play. Atis realizes I am way out of my league around

classical music, but he is always encouraging. Never condescending.

For several reasons, my life has been dominated by various sports. I would feel comfortable reading an article headlined “Gretzky, Ovechkin & Beyond.” Now here I was ready to enjoy a Classical Series evening with Music Niagara entitled “Mozart, Beethoven & Beyond.”

I felt happy to still be curious, but at the same time, sad because my life has been so lacking in music. I know so little, but am able to lose myself in this world that is so foreign to me.

Today, we are part of a celebrity society. It seems that if a celebrity is celebrated enough, the cost of a ticket is somewhat irrelevant.

Consider the upcoming Paul McCartney concert on Nov. 21 at the TD Coliseum in Hamilton. I have done some very basic research.

For a seat way up in the nosebleeds, the selling price is US \$824. Plus the accepted taxes and drip



Atis Bankis gives a nod of thanks to the applauding audience at St. Mark’s Church during Music Niagara’s Classical Series concert on Sunday. ROSS ROBINSON

fees, for a total outlay of a lot of money. Probably over \$1,000.

Compare this to my second row pew, cushion included, last Sunday with Music Niagara. An evening of nonstop classical music, with internationally acclaimed pianist Norbert Heller, who is celebrated for his technical brilliance and poetic style.

To quote the program, he is a laureate of the Beethoven Competition and a participant in the Chopin and Tchaikovsky Competitions across Europe, North America and Japan.

My seat in the second row pew at St. Mark’s was \$40 in Canadian dollars, with only GST added. Before the concert, I chatted with new friends Declan Lane and Catherine Cornell. Both very happy and involved NOTLers, and regular participants in many things artsy.

Up front, Music Niagara’s production manager, Colin Maier, was making final adjustments to the sound system. He is multi-talented and dedicated, and on this evening proved himself to also be a flawless page turner for Norbert Heller.

Talk about teamwork —

with precisely no room for timing flubs. A subtle nod of the pianist’s head, and yet another fresh page would deftly appear.

The aforementioned Paul McCartney concert in late November in Hamilton will almost certainly be sold out, at incredibly high ticket prices. The secondary markets will be active, and attendees will be thrilled, even up in the nosebleeds.

Meanwhile, we are so lucky to be enjoying Music Niagara’s 27th Summer Festival. Some 19 different performances, at five wonderful venues. Ironwood Cider House,

St. Mark’s Church, Grace United Church, Spirit in Niagara Distillery and Ravine Estates Winery.

May I simply and respectfully ask the good people of the Niagara region to consider spending some time with Music Niagara? So much variety, in such unique venues, and at such fair and reasonable prices.

Enjoy Duelling Pianos or a Cabaret with Julie Nesrallah. Nashville at Night, and then Music Niagara continues its important tradition of Glory to Ukraine.

This concert on July 27 will pay tribute to the strength and culture of the Ukrainian people — a message that resonates deeply in our world today.

There are so many new worlds out there to discover. For my experiences with Music Niagara, so stimulating, so well priced, I have to dig out my thick dictionary.

And, have an Italian friend translate the program. “Allegro moderato. Andante cantabile, ma pesto con moto.”

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- Mark F, Resident of Niagara Region

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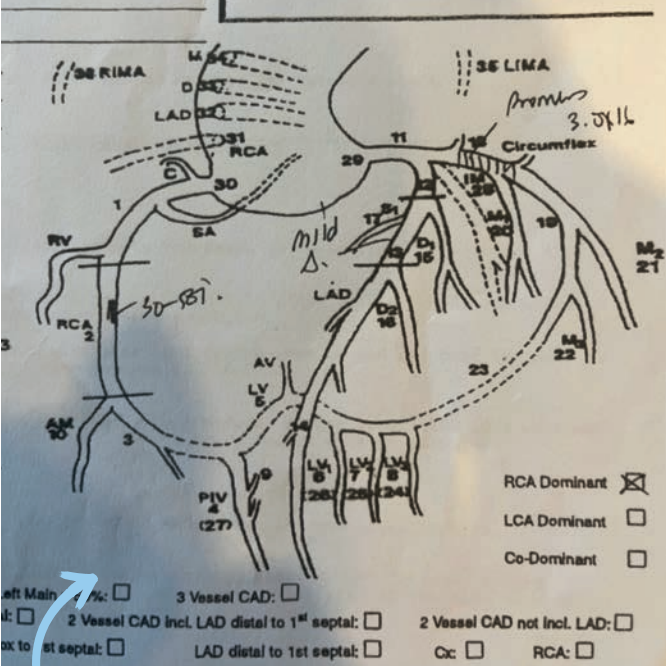
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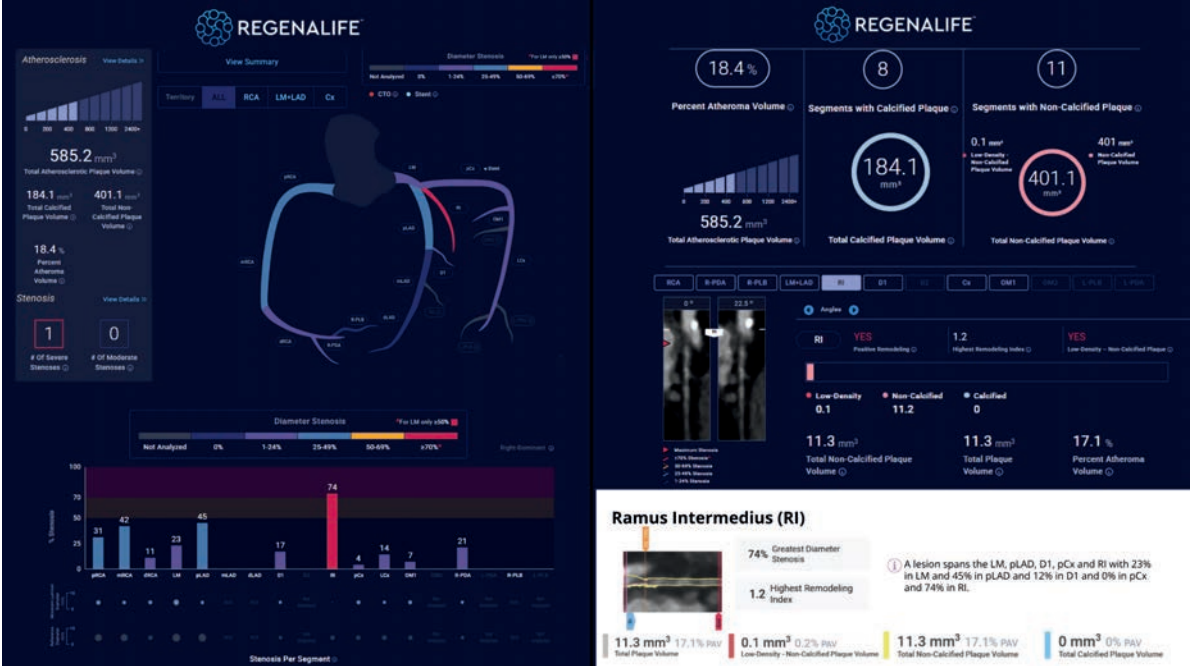
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