



The Lake Report



The Lake Report

brings a new, trusted local newspaper back to **Niagara-on-the-Lake.**

In this first edition, launched May of 2018, you will find a variety of topics including local politics; entertainment; opinion and editorials; featured stories and columns; history, community events, and more. The Lake Report will publish articles specific to Niagara-on-the-Lake. As a local independent newspaper, we intend to support the community by being a voice for the people, as well as highlighting the issues that affect us all. On top of great local news, each edition will contain a calendar spread of local events, open for submissions from all residents. The Lake Report intends to quench the thirst for a print newspaper in NOTL. Part of that includes featuring stories about locals, both new and old. We encourage all residents of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to send their photos and community stories to us. We will do our best to include everybody in the **community.**

All are welcome to submit events, classified listings and obituaries to be included in upcoming editions free of charge, at the editor's discretion. Each edition will be free and will be found at many local businesses and delivered to the door of many residences. The Lake Report and Niagara Now are committed to providing you with accurate non-partisan journalism with integrity. We pledge to report with truth and cover both sides of issues that are important to the community. When something is affecting NOTL, you will find it here. In the name of responsible reporting, the publication pledges to correct errors and to hold itself responsible for its reporting. All are welcome to submit letters to the paper. Please feel free to message us with any questions you may have. The Lake Report and Niagara Now retain the rights to edit all submissions and will publish based on the editor's discretion. Please enjoy our content both in print and online. Visit lakereport.ca for our e-editions and Niagara Now to keep up with great regional news content.

Bringing the news back to NOTL

Specifically for Niagara-on-the-Lake.

 **EDITORIAL**
Front page and page 4

A letter from the editor:



As the owner and editor of the The Lake Report, I want to introduce myself to new readers. I am an experienced multimedia journalist with a passion for uncovering the truth, as well as telling

stories in what I hope to be compelling ways. With a journalism degree and more than 1,000 local news stories under my belt as a reporter for the Niagara region, I consider myself a voice the community can trust.

I hope you come to think so as well.

To our readers, thank you for supporting us. Your readership has allowed us to offer the print edition you have in your hands.

Sincerely, Richard Harley.

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Region debates deadly intersection

Region needs more traffic information, suggests interim four-way stop in the meantime



A collision in April was the 14th at the same NOTL intersection in five years. (Facebook)

Richard Harley
Staff

The Niagara Region is considering options to improve safety at the intersection of Line 3 and Four Mile Creek roads in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

A report suggests an all-way stop be implemented for a period of one year while information is gathered to find the best possible long-term solution.

The matter was pushed forward after April saw what some claimed to be the 29th collision at the intersection in five years.

The collision left two people in critical condition and according to NOTL Coun. Martin Mazza, a young man once died at the intersection.

Of the Region's recorded reportable collisions, there

have been 14 at the intersection between Jan. 1, 2013 and Dec. 31, 2017.

The Lake Report also confirmed another crash occurred in March.

After April's crash, NOTL councillors demanded the Region make safety at the intersection a top priority.

Coun. Terry Flynn said the town has appealed to the Region about doing something many times before — as recently as February.

He said the challenge for the town is that Line 3 and Four Mile Creek are both regionally controlled roads.

"The Region comes back and says the intersection doesn't meet the warrants for a four-way stop," he said.

Flynn said the intersection has such a high accident rate because people are stopping and proceeding, though it's

not entirely clear why.

"(It) doesn't make sense to me ... I don't know if they're not paying attention, or if Google is telling them to go straight through and they're not thinking. I don't know."

"For some reason Line 3 seems to just be a bad road."

He said a four-way stop would help slow the flow of traffic so people aren't speeding through.

"Is it going to make it a little more inconvenient? Yes. But I would rather save lives than have somebody get to their destination a minute earlier."

Coun. Martin Mazza said the town had to fight the Region "tooth-and-nail" just to have flashing lights installed above the stop sign.

He also pointed out that more and more people are using the road.

"Ever since we extended Concession 4 from Line 2 to Line 3, locals are taking that stretch of road ... so that's even more of an important intersection now."

He said he saw the Ornge helicopter flying towards the collision in April.

"It makes me sick," he said.

On top of public safety, he pointed out that collisions come with a significant cost to taxpayers.

The entire incident April 14 saw response from multiple emergency vehicles and an Ornge rescue helicopter.

The day after the accident Niagara Region Chief Administrative Officer Carmen D'Angelo told The Lake Report he asked the public works committee to escalate a review of the intersection which was already in process after the latest accident.

"That intersection doesn't warrant that high number of motor vehicle collisions, so because there's a frequency we have to take a serious look at it," he said.

Recommendations from the report are that an all-way stop be installed at the intersection for one year; that the speed limit be reduced from 70 to 60 km/h on Four Mile Creek Rd. from 200 metres south of Line 3 to Line 2; that the town of NOTL be requested to paint a centreline a minimum of 75 metres back from the intersection on Line 3.

The options will go back to the public works committee for review.



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Plane crash lands at District Airport



A two-engine Cessna plane crash landed short of the runway after experiencing engine failure. (Richard Harley)

Flynn: soft wet ground 'saving grace' for three passengers

Richard Harley
Staff

Airport investigators have determined the cause of March plane crash at Niagara District Airport was due to engine failure.

The small two-engine Cessna plane crash-landed 300-metres short of the Niagara District Airport

runway March 31.

It had been flying to Niagara-on-the-Lake from Kingston when the engine failure occurred and it put out a distress call.

Niagara District Airport chairman Terry Flynn said the soft ground was the "saving grace" for the three passengers, who all walked away without injuries.

He also credited the pilot with a skilled landing under the circumstances.

He said they came at a low altitude because of the failed engine.

Multiple Niagara emergency services were waiting at the airport when the plane approached.

"All I can say is I was so impressed by the response from NOTL Fire, EMS, police and the airport operational staff," Flynn said.

"I wish I could say it was a routine call, but as emergency calls like that go, it went the way it should."

The plane remained at the airport until it was dry enough to remove it, though it did not infringe on the approach to the runway and the airport opened again the next day.



Primary Jet Boats dock moving to Queenston



Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours is moving its main docks to Queenston. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Staff

After 25 years of using the docks in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours is moving its primary operations to Queenston.

NOTL will remain one of the company's three locations, as well Lewiston, NY.

Whirlpool said the Queenston location provides better parking, more on-site amenities, access via the popular Niagara Falls WEGO bus

service and a free shuttle from the Floral Clock in Niagara Falls.

The company said it made "significant improvements" to its three docking locations during the winter, including a completely renovated New Orleans-style paddle wheeler boat — the Niagara Belle — which will be permanently parked at the Queenston dock and serve as a passenger centre.

The world-famous jet boats hit the rapids of the

Niagara River for the 26th season on April 28, with the first departures beginning in Queenston. Departures from Niagara-on-the-Lake are set to begin June 23 and tours on the U.S. side of the river will begin May 11.

As well, later this season, Whirlpool expects to introduce a new hybrid jet boat that includes indoor seating for passengers who want to stay dry and outdoor seats for those who want to "soak up the experience."

"We've put a lot of thought and effort into making the passenger experience we offer even better," says Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours president John Kinney.

"We can't wait to get back out on the water for another great season. There's nowhere else in the world you can experience this kind of adventure on such an amazing river."

Whirlpool opened its doors to the public in 1992 with a single boat and now has a fleet of eight 50-passenger jet boats.



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Humboldt charity golf ball hunt raises \$6,900



Hundreds of people came out to take part in a golf ball hunt fundraiser and sign their name on a flag in support of the Humboldt Broncos April 14. **Photos by Jer Houghton**

Jer Houghton
Staff

A charity golf ball hunt in support of the Humboldt Broncos raised more than \$6,900 in April.

The hunt was organized by NOTL resident Joe Pillitteri, who got the idea after hundreds of golf balls started surfacing on the property of the former site of Unison Golf System driving range on Lakeshore Rd.

Pillitteri, who recently pur-

chased the property, said the former owner told him most of the golf balls had been cleaned up, though as winter went on, balls began emerging from the ground.

"As soon as the frost lifted, they started physically popping up to the point where I thought there might be a couple hundred here ... there's a couple of thousand here now," he said, before the hunt.

Some golf balls were embedded as far as a foot into the

ground.

Once Pillitteri told the story to a few people, they started asking if they could buy the used balls from him.

Pillitteri then took to social media with the Broncos in mind.

"I was like, hold on a second ... Maybe there's something we could do that's helpful to the people that want to help, and helpful to the people that need (golf balls)."

His idea drew hundreds of people, raising the \$4,775

in just an hour — plus some donations that came in beforehand.

In total the event raised \$6,900.

Pillitteri's original goal was a few hundred dollars, though he quickly realized it would be more after a social media post for the event was shared more than 100 times.

"We're going to send every bit of (the money) from the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, not just from the sporting community, but from our town to theirs," he said.

"It's one thing to be upset about something, but, you know, these families deserve everything they can get," he said.

Pillitteri has coached hockey in some capacity since his son started playing more than seven years ago.

"The feeling of a team in hockey and what that means to kids, boys and girls all over Canada is one thing, but when I looked at picture of those boys, to me it was a lot more than just hockey."

"They were loving the journey, they were loving the process, they were loving the comradery, the brotherhood." "If this fund helps them in any way, I think it's worth it," said Pillitteri.

So far the Broncos Go-FundMe page has raised more than \$15 million.



Families braved the cold to show support for the Humboldt Broncos in April. Dozens of kids filled up bags and buckets of golf balls.



Joe Pillitteri said hundreds of golf balls popped up on his property during the winter, which gave him the idea for a charity golf ball hunt.

Gardens of Hope bloom for cancer awareness



Harrison Hopkin helps cut the ribbon to officially open the Daffodil Garden of Hope at the St. Davids Fire Station. **Photos by Richard Harley**

Richard Harley
Staff

Niagara-on-the-Lake opened its eighth Daffodil Garden of Hope in April at St. Davids Fire Hall Station 2.

The Daffodil Garden of Hope initiative was started in 2004 by 82-year-old local resident Sheila Hirsch-Kalm to pay tribute to those affected by cancer.

Hirsch-Kalm, who was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer (myelofibrosis) in 2003, said the bright yellow

gardens are meant to bring local awareness, remembrance of those we've lost, and remind people they can fight cancer every day in their own way.

Since 2004, with the help of volunteers, Hirsch-Kalm and Gardens of Hope have opened gardens at the Community Centre, Simcoe Park, the Old Hospital, Lowrey Park, Centennial Sports Park, the Old Town Fire Hall, Queenston Fire Hall and now St. Davids Fire Hall.

Around 4,000 to 6,000

daffodil bulbs are planted in each garden, Hirsch-Kalm said.

So far, through the collection of donations from local residents, Gardens of Hope has raised more than \$100,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Coincidentally, considering each bulb produces two or three flowers, there are now around 100,000 daffodils blooming around NOTL.

Hirsch-Kalm, who organizes everything from the donations to the purchasing



Sheila Hirsch-Kalm stands in front of the Daffodil Garden of Hope at St. Davids Fire Station 2.



A plaque for the Daffodil Garden of Hope.

and planting of the bulbs herself, passed responsibility on to the Station 2 firefighters after unveiling a new plaque for the garden.

"Now you need to take care of them ... or I'll come find you," she joked.

The project is supported by Communities in Bloom, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticulture Society, St. Davids firefighters, the Canadian Cancer Society and the local NOTL community.

More photos on page 11.

LCBO construction underway



Construction has started at 1561 Niagara Stone Rd. in Virgil. (Richard Harley)



A new full-sized LCBO location is set to open in Virgil in fall 2018. (Supplied)

Richard Harley
Staff

Construction is underway for a retail space that will contain a new LCBO and Tim Hortons at 1561 Niagara Stone Rd. in Virgil.

The development, being completed by Colliers International, was officially announced in February and when completed will be the first full-size LCBO location in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

In addition to the LCBO and Tim Hortons, the development also includes a 3,600-square-foot building for lease, with the option to be sectioned into three 1,200-square-foot units; one 2,400-square-foot unit and one 1,200-square-foot unit; or one large 3,600-square-foot unit.

The next closest full-sized LCBO location is currently more than 20 minutes away in either Niagara Falls or St. Catharines.



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The Lake Report

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Editorial: Stay classy, NOTL



Renee Delaney, owner of Small Scale Farms in Grimsby, gives a "Bee City" presentation to Niagara-on-the-Lake council Monday, April 17. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

Niagara-on-the-Lake might be the prettiest town in Canada, but if it were to be judged based on resident conduct at an April council meeting, it might also win the title of rudest.

During a special meeting at the Community Centre which saw around 300 people show up — some to take a stand against the controversial Randwood development — a local farm owner named Renee Delaney made a presentation to councillors, encouraging the town to become the next

"Bee City" in the region.

For her efforts, she was heckled by a crowd of grown adults after her presentation went past the 10-minute time limit.

To give a quick rundown, "Bee Cities" promote pollinator bee populations through various initiatives including species protection, planting gardens and education.

In short, her presentation had nothing to do with Randwood.

It was also not the first time Delaney has given the presentation to a municipal council. NOTL would be the third Niagara municipality

to become a Bee City.

Regardless, during her presentation, many in the NOTL crowd shouted at her, attempted to clap her off the podium, and showed a general lack of respect for her and the procedures of council.

Phrases like "oh come on," and "hurry up" could be heard being shouted.

I can't speak to why any adult would act in such a manner, though what I can say is: of the three times I've now seen her presentation, not once did she receive the same lack of courtesy she did in NOTL.

Whoever was heckling

Delaney should be ashamed of themselves.

The fact that residents in attendance were clearly unhappy with council regarding Randwood is no excuse to tear down a citizen who is speaking to council.

Those who take a stand for what they believe in deserve a chance to speak, regardless if we agree with them or not.

Not to mention, for the average citizen it isn't easy to address council on any given day — let alone with an audience of that size behind them.

I feel the need to remind people of the golden rule.

Sure, the presentation may have dragged on a bit long. Sure, the 10-minute timer buzzed. And sure, some people might not even have agreed with what she was saying.

But is there no respect for decorum?

Further than that, is there no compassion?

This is Canada and — whether you agreed with Delaney's message or not; whether you thought she went on too long; or whether you were just concerned about getting home to watch the Leafs — our government council meetings deserve more respect than that.

And so does a citizen who is striving towards something they believe in.

editor@niagaranow.com

A letter of support from Penny Coles



Penny Coles.

Penny Coles
Contributor

Knowing how important it is to Niagara-on-the-Lake to have a community newspaper dedicated to 100 per cent local news, I congratulate Richard Harley for stepping up to provide that service.

As the former editor of the Niagara Advance, I'm delighted to have an opportunity to support his efforts, and to write for future editions.

NOTL deserves a community newspaper to call its own, and to ensure the success of The Lake Report (what a great name!), I'm confident residents and businesses alike will want to get behind it.

This newspaper is offering you all a voice - please use it to reach out with your letters and events.

I've been sharing your stories for the last 25 years, and many of you have become part of what feels like an extended family for me.

I've missed you!

I look forward to hearing from you and continuing to play a part in your lives as a regular contributor to The Lake Report.

penny_coles@yahoo.com

NOTL U-turns on plan to reduce voting stations

Jer Houghton
Staff

Residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake are keeping their polling stations.

After municipal boundaries changed in 2014, the town of NOTL reduced the number of polling stations from eight to five.

This April, the town suggested it was going to further reduce the number of stations to three, though based on feedback from residents town staff are now planning to stick with five.

The decision will not go before council said NOTL chief administrative officer Holly Dowd.

"The clerk doesn't have to go to council and ask for how many polling stations they want ... we heard the public and council very clear that they want us to go back to five," she said.

NOTL Town Clerk Peter Todd said he is working on finding the five locations, and will submit an information report to council before the end of May.

"The deadline (for selecting the locations) would be when

we're putting it on (resident) voter cards, but I plan on giving council an update much sooner than that," said Todd.

He said May is not a set deadline, but more a practical date to ensure voter cards get out in a timely manner.

Before deciding to stick with five stations, Dowd said the town planned to combine Queenston, St. Davids and Glendale into a "mega poll" that would be stationed at Niagara College's Niagara-on-the-Lake campus, while keeping its Old Town and Virgil locations.

She said the initial idea was that having stations in one place would make things easier for voters, and that rural residents wouldn't be too strained by the distance because they're used to driving to get places.

"It's a beautiful venue at Niagara College ... You could have had a mega poll and the students would have been on reading week," she said.

Queenston resident Rob Copeland, assistant district fire chief at Niagara-on-the-Lake District 4 Fire Station (Queenston Firehall) and former town councillor, said



The Laura Secord Homestead has been considered a location for a new polling station in Queenston. The town says the Queenston Firehall doesn't meet accessibility needs. for aging residents. (Richard Harley)

Niagara College would have been a "ways-away" for residents in Queenston and St. Davids.

Copeland, who disagreed with the idea of poll reductions in the first place, feels both Queenston and St. Davids were being "discounted" from voting as a result and that the town shouldn't have changed something that was working.

"If something has worked

for so long, why change it?"

"And why change it in a way that would adversely affect your voter turnout? Voter turnout is the most important thing," he said.

"(Niagara College) is less accessible as far as I'm concerned."

Dowd said the town has used the Queenston Firehall as a polling station in past years, though town staff is looking into alternatives due

to accessibility concerns.

"We have to have facilities that do not have any barriers for the voters," she said.

Copeland said the parking lot, entrance and ground floor to the Queenston Firehall are accessible but admitted there were no devoted accessible washrooms.

Dowd said the parking lot was not up to accessibility standards.

"We have a senior popula-

tion, and the fire hall is just not conducive for what we're trying to use," Dowd said.

She said town staff is currently looking at another facility for the Queenston station and that the Laura Secord Homestead has been considered, though Todd has not made his final decision.

Copeland said he thinks an alternative suggestions should have been brought forward in the first place, pointing out the Laura Secord Homestead has been used as a voting station for provincial and federal elections in the past.

Both Dowd and Todd said the goal is to make the voting experience both convenient and accessible for all communities in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"We're just as interested in finding locations that are convenient to the electors, but we also need to keep in mind those who have mobility issues," said Todd.

Dowd said the effort to increase the accessibility of polling stations is a part of the town's Vote Anywhere strategy, which has included upgrading voting technology to make voting easier.

"We don't want to have any barriers for our voters," added Dowd.

The municipal elections will be held Monday Oct. 22.



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Pleasant Manor expansion gets green light



Radiant Care CEO Tim Siemens stands beside a peach orchard that will be the future location of a new 160-bed long-term care facility at Pleasant Manor. The building will connect to the current long-term care facility to the right of the photo. (Richard Harley)

New 160-bed long-term care facility to be built in NOTL

Richard Harley
Staff

After nearly 20 years of planning, Radiant Care Pleasant Manor will officially be able to move forward on a new 160-bed long-term care facility in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The green light came in April when Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term

Care Dr. Helena Jaczek visited Pleasant Manor to announce an additional 81 bed licences which the non-profit organization needed to secure the development.

Tim Siemens, chief executive officer of Radiant Care, said the expansion will see the 41 residents of Pleasant Manor's current long-term care facility moved to the new building, opening up a

total of 119 new beds.

He said the multi-storey facility will be "state-of-the-art" with an emphasis on dementia and palliative care, and will include a community hub; space for fitness and wellness; fall prevention services.

The building will be constructed on 4.6 acres of green space and will connect to the current long-term care facil-

ity — which will be retrofitted to increase capacity for other assisted living services.

Altogether the redevelopment will cost \$35 million, with more than \$20 million being funded by the provincial government. The rest will be covered by Radiant Care.

Siemens said there are currently around 950 people on the waiting list for Pleasant Manor, with around 150

waiting for long-term care specifically.

The new facility will be able to accommodate most of those people needing long-term care.

Siemens said shovels are expected to hit the ground in about a year, though there are lots of pieces that still need to fall into place.

Further to expanding long-term care, the new facility will also act as a catalyst for applied training to students from local academic institutions and be a hub for palliative research through a partnership with Brock, MacMaster and MacGill Universities.

"People are coming to our homes, and they're dying in our homes," said Siemens.

"Our relationship with Brock University, Mac and McGill with this long-term care palliative care study is to begin that process of learning more about how we can specialize in providing the best end-of-life care that we can to people who are actively dying."

He said researching ways to enhance senior care is particularly important for a region that boasts the highest percentages of seniors in the country.

Seniors are the fastest growing population in Niagara-on-the-Lake, with 26.9 per cent of the population being 65 or older.

The Ontario average 16.4 per cent, to put that into perspective.

Further to that, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, 50 per cent of residents are older than 50.

"It's kind of a bit of a harbinger of the future," Siemens

said.

"If 50 per cent of your population is 50 years or older, with every passing year that really impacts the percentage of people 65 and older."

He said in Ontario, between 25,000 and 30,000 people waiting for long-term care, and noted that figure is expected to climb to around 48,000 in the next five years.

The opportunity for research and development at Radiant Care is somewhat unique because the organization offers multiple forms of assisted living, Siemens said

"We're different from other long-term care homes in the sense that we don't have just a standalone long-term care home. It's a continuum of care campus, so we have independent living, semi-independent living and long-term care."

Radiant Care currently serves more than 600 seniors and employs 361 people between its two locations in Niagara-on-the-Lake (Pleasant Manor) and St. Catharines (Tabor Manor). The new development will create another 120 jobs, said Siemens.

The home will be bright and warm with spacious accommodation, comfortable amenities, all built to meet the latest LEED Silver standards that respect the environment and reduce the home's carbon footprint.

Gertrude Klassen, a resident at Pleasant Manor, said she's looking forward to the extra space in her room to welcome her family.

Radiant Care Pleasant Manor is located at 15 Elden St. in Virgil.

Interest donations to keep on giving



Joe Pillitteri. (Supplied)

Penny Coles
Contributor

Comedy Night in Niagara was a great night with lots of laughs coming from the sold-out crowd at the Niagara-on-the-Lake community centre, but more important was the \$19,480 raised for the Niagara Community Foundation.

Around 320 people packed into the auditorium to hear comic Joe Pillitteri and two other comedians perform for the event, which supports the Terry Fox Foundation, Red Roof Retreat, and Kidsport Niagara.

With Pillitteri were fellow Niagara comics Clifford Myers and Marc Sinodinos.

Sinodinos left his own St. Catharines Showtime Comedy

Club with about a half hour's notice to step in and help out when the third comedian on the bill had to cancel at the last minute, said Pillitteri.

It was a true community event, with the Sandtrap Bar and Grill providing pizza and the NOTL Kinsmen looking after the bar.

This was the fundraiser's 14th year, though two years ago Pillitteri — with the help of his sisters Eileen and Caroline — set up the Vince and Margaret Pillitteri and Family Fund, named for Joe's parents, who he says inspired them to give back to the community.

Together they set a goal of raising \$100,000 over five years to support the Terry Fox Foundation, KidSport Niagara, which helps finance children who otherwise would not be able to take part in organized sports and Red Roof Retreat, which provides day programs and respite care for special needs children.

Each year the interest on the donations to the fund will be donated to those three organizations, he explained.

"That's the way the founda-

tion is set up, so the principal remains there and the interest is donated. It's a great way to give forever. It will be there for our kids to look after and when their time comes they can carry it on for us."

Pillitteri said his son Johnny — the target of many of his jokes — is shaping up to be a bit of a comedian himself, and may just carry on fundraising in his footsteps.

"Johnny is already imitating me, and he's always going for the laugh. There are worse things in the world than wanting to make people laugh. I'm proud of all my kids, but it looks like he's leaning in that direction."

Pillitteri's comedy act also always includes jokes about his Scottish mother and Italian father, including the accents he's so good at, but he never forgets to mention the lessons they taught him and his sisters when they were growing up.

"My parents set a great example of hard work and selflessness," he said.

Recognizing them through the community fund, he said, "is a great opportunity to

honour the people who brought us here."

Pillitteri's act for the show was a little edgier than usual, he said.

He chose to take the opportunity to reflect what he sees going on in NOTL these days, with some controversial issues being debated.

It always feels good to get "legitimate laughs" from people, he said, but this time he targeted the complaints about what he feels is a great community.

"We have so much to be thankful for, with all we have in this town."

Pillitteri thanked his family members and supporters who helped put on the show, and singled out Ward Simpson in the audience for all he has done for others over the years

He also thanked those in attendance.

He said he loves performing and getting laughs in a room full of locals, "but on the nights where the room is filled with love and a desire to do better as a community — it feels like magic on stage."

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
29	30	1	
		NOTL Library: Accessing Medical Cannabis Tweed Farms - 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.	NOTL Library: Live, Mark Micklethwait
6	7	8	
NOTL Library: Writers' Lab - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Public Meeting: 493-507 Line 2 Rd. (proposed new medical site) - 6:30 p.m. - Town Hall Public Meeting: South Side Plantation Drive - 6:30 p.m. - Town Hall Wordplay Creative Writing Classes for Kids - 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Yellow Door Theatre	NOTL Library: Cyber Security Part 1 - Computer Health & Good Habits - 11 a.m. to noon NOTL Library: Science Series - Evolution on the Fast Track: Epigenetics and Culture 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Town Meeting: Municipal Heritage 7 p.m. - Town Hall	Town Meeting: Sign (*Tentative) - 9 a.m. NOTL Library: Simp 11 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. NOTL Library: Info Crisis in Niagara 1 NOTL Library: "Spr to 5 p.m.
13	14	15	
NOTL Library: Writers' Lab - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Town Council Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - Town Hall	NOTL Library: Tech Class - iPhone Basics - 11 a.m. to noon NOTL Library: Science Series - The Story of Human Origins - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. NOTL Library: The Makeshift - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. St. Mark's Cemetery Tour - 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. - St. Mark's Cemetery	NOTL Library: Simp - 11 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
20	Victoria Day 21	22	
VIRGIL STAMPEDE Art Show and Sale - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queenston Library Famous & Infamous: Eliza Fenwick (Biography of a House in NOTL) - 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum Party in the Vineyard: Food Truck Edition - 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Peller Estates Winery & Restaurant	VIRGIL STAMPEDE Art Show and Sale - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queenston Library Party in the Vineyard: Food Truck Edition - noon to 4 p.m. - Peller Estates Winery & Restaurant	NOTL Library: Cyber Security Part 2 - Email & Phishing Scams - 11 a.m. to noon NOTL Library: Science Series - The Origins of Behavioural Traits - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. NOTL Library: Moccasin Talks - 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Town Meeting: Urban Design Committee - 5 p.m. - Town Hall	NOTL Library: Simp - 11 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
27	28	29	
Family Friendly Drop-In Art Studio - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Nikki Chooi and Tony Yike Yang - 7:30 to 11 p.m. - Stratus Vineyards	NOTL Library: Cyber Security Part 3 - Setting Security and Privacy - 11 a.m. to noon NOTL Library: The Makeshift - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tours of St. Mark's Cemetery - 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Cemetery	NOTL Library: Simp - 11 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 Learn, Jazz with 7:30 to 9 p.m.	3 Foodie Tour - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL NOTL Library: Minecraft Club -4 p.m. to 5 p.m.	4 Sip & Sizzle - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m - 20+ NOTL wineries Spaghetti Dinner: All You Can Eat - 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Queenston Firehall	5 St. Davids & District Lioness Spring Bazaar - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. - St. Davids Lions Club NOTL Tennis Club registration 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Memorial Park Pavilion
9 Committee - Town Hall Steam Story Time n. Health - The Opiate p.m. to 2 p.m. ing" Craft - 4 p.m.	10 NOTL Library: Family Story Time 11 to 11:30 a.m. NOTL Library: Minecraft Club -4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Artists' Cafe: Local Artists' Drop-in - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Mother's Day Workshop - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Konzelmann Estate Winery	11 NOTL Library: Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	12 Horticulture Society Plant Sale - 9 a.m. to noon - Meridian Virgil Arena Magdalena Titian Art Exhibition - 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Grace United Church
16 Steam Story Time a.m.	17 NOTL Library: Practical Genealogy, Beginner Class - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. NOTL Library: Practical Genealogy, DNA Workshop 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Town Meeting: Committee of Adjustment - 7 p.m. - Town Hall Walking Tours of Old Town: Camp Kosciuszko Lecture Series - 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum	18 Art Show and Sale - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queenston Library NOTL Library: P.D. Day? Make & Play! - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. NOTL Library: Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	19 VIRGIL STAMPEDE Art Show and Sale - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queenston Library Party in the Vineyard: Food Truck Edition - 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Peller Estates Winery & Restaurant The War of 1812 Officers' Day at Fort George - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Fort George
23 Steam Story Time a.m.	24 NOTL Library: Family Story Time - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. NOTL Library: Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.	25 NOTL Library: Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	26 NOTL Library: St. John's Ambulance Babysitting Course - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Veronica Swift and the Emmet Cohen Trio - 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. - Stratus Vineyards
30 Steam Story Time a.m.	31 NOTL Library: Family Story Time - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. NOTL Library: Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Strategy Execution Roundtable for Executives and Managers - 7 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. - White Oaks Conference Resort	1 Neighbourhood Walks: Chautauqua - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum Town of NOTL nomination period starts Trius Red Presents: Movie Night in the Vineyard - 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant	2 Music Niagara: The Big Night 2018 - 5:30 p.m. - Music Niagara Walking Tours of Old Town: Camp Kosciuszko Lecture Series - 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum

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NNFHT doctors threaten to leave NOTL

Richard Harley
Staff

Niagara North Family Health Team has said if Niagara-on-the-Lake town council doesn't approve the land use amendments for a proposed new medical centre, doctors may be "forced to seek other options outside the community."

The notice came in an April letter to NNFHT patients, which urges them to contact council members showing support for the new centre.

The desired location is at 493-507 Line 2 Rd. in Virgil, next to Crossroads Public School and if given the green light, would see the two current NNFHT locations at the NOTL Hospital and Niagara Stone Rd. consolidated into the new centre.

It would be called the Crossroads Health Centre.

The letter said "if you want to ensure that your medical practitioners remain in NOTL, our councillors need to hear from you."

Many residents are viewing the letter as a threat to residents, council and NNFHT patients.

Town Coun. Martin Mazza said he thinks it is a clear attempt at scaring residents into

supporting the development.

Coun. Betty Disero said although she doesn't think the location is the best place for a new medical centre, she doesn't view the letter as a threat.

"I see it as an explanation for what might happen," she said.

"Emails and letters are so impersonal. When I spoke to Dr. (Karen) Berti, I could see the frustration in what she was telling me ... the doctors are frustrated and concerned about stability."

She said to her the decision isn't about taking sides, but rather what is the best decision for the town.

Some have said — though the Lake Report could not confirm by press time — that some of the developers are also doctors involved in current NNFHT practices.

Disero said she doesn't know for sure if that is true, but that regardless, she doesn't think it should play a big part in the town's decision.

When asked if she thought there was a conflict of interest, she said no, and that town planners would decide whether the location is suitable for a medical centre or not.

"Is it the best location? Our planners will tell us that,"

said Disero.

Mazza said it's about more than just picking and choosing locations when there are zoning bylaws in place.

He said he's received phone calls from doctors involved who asked him to support the zoning bylaw amendment.

"It put me in an awkward situation," said Mazza.

"Very uncomfortable."

"And now they're asking their patients to call us and to email us."

The letter states that because of the closure of the Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital there is a "crucial need and mounting time constraints" for a new site.

Anthony Annunziata, owner of the NOTL Medical Centre at 1882 Niagara Stone Rd., said the doctors that currently practice in his building are welcome to stay for "as long as they want."

"This is a land use application. Not a vote to keep the doctors in NOTL," Annunziata said.

Residents of NOTL aren't happy about the proposal either.

Dozens of people gathered at a public open house in March to voice their concerns about the proposed centre's proximity to a public school, potential traffic problems

and the accessibility of the location.

Mazza also said he thinks the town needs to keep residential areas zoned residential to attract more young families to Niagara.

Here is the letter:
"A message from Niagara-on-the-Lake Doctors and the Niagara North Family Health Team."

To our valued patients:

We are reaching out to inform you that our medical practices are expected to be relocated by late 2019, and to assure you that we are currently pursuing a relocation option. This option is one that allows us to remain in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and to maintain and improve health-care services for our patients.

There is a crucial need and mounting time constraints for a new site due to the closure of the Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital. As the health care providers in this community, we are planning to consolidate our practices and services in a single, new location -- the Crossroads Health Centre.

After a four-year process and our own review of available locations (new, existing or refurbished), we have come together to ensure that the most desirable option for the provision of high quality healthcare -- a newly built, consolidated centre -- becomes a reality in Niagara-on-the-Lake.



Niagara North Family Health wants to open a new medical facility on Niagara Stone Road beside Crossroads Public School. (Artist rendering)

The site developer is in the process of seeking a zoning change from the Town, which is required in order to proceed. Council will vote on the zoning amendment request following a public meeting on May 7th. We want to be clear with patients that if the project cannot proceed, we may be forced to seek other options outside of the community. If you want to ensure that your medical practitioners remain in Niagara-on-the-Lake, our councillors need to hear from you. Please consider sharing your perspective as a patient by emailing or phoning councillors via the contact information found on the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake website at <http://www.notl.org/content/lord-mayor-and-council>.

We have attached an information package to share the most up-to-date information on the planned Centre. T allows for the construction of a purpose-built, modern facility

that can house the 11 medical practices, the Family Health Team Employees, and other services currently located at two sites. It has capacity for additional and expanded services (lab, imaging, pharmacy, specialist care) and additional practitioners. It is centrally located, accessible by public transit, closer to emergency medical services and the largest retirement/long-term care centre in the Town, and will offer free on-site parking.

The new centre is certain to have a very positive impact on healthcare in our Town, and we will continue to work diligently to make it available to our community.

*Sincerely,
Drs. Adams, Ahmed, Bastedo, Berti, Durocher, Frenedo, O'Leary, Ricciardi, Smith and Viviers and Mary Keith, Executive Director, Family Health Team."*

Niagara College, Canopy Growth partnership offers gateway to higher learning

Jer Houghton
Staff

Niagara College and Canopy Growth recently announced an educational partnership at Tweed Farms in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The partnership will create placement opportunities and applied research projects for Niagara College's new commercial cannabis production program, which launches September 1.

The program is the first post-secondary cannabis production program in Canada.

Niagara College president Dan Patterson said the partnership will help the college "fine-tune" the program, so the college can support the growing workforce demand in the cannabis industry.

He said the college assessed 20 cannabis producers to identify which was the best fit for the college.

"It's a new program, our commercial cannabis production program, and we want to get it right," he told The Lake Report, during a tour of Tweed Farms in Niagara-on-the-Lake in April.

He said as a result of the partnership, students will be able to do internships and co-op courses at Canopy Growth facilities, not just at Tweed, but across Canada.

"It's an exciting day not just for the college, but for the workforce of the future in



Tweed's Scott Baum inspects a cannabis plant at Tweed Farms. Photos by Richard Harley

this area and for our community," said Patterson.

Tweed is also currently working on a 1-million-square-foot expansion and expects to increase its staff from 80 to more than 180 by completion in July.

The company is currently one of the largest licensed cannabis producers in North America, selling a gram of cannabis every 0.33 seconds.

NOTL Lord Mayor Pat Dart said the partnership will provide an "economic boost" for the town, bringing the pay scale up for new employees coming in from

the college and staying in the area.

"It's great for Niagara-on-the-Lake because we are trying to attract young families and young people," said Dart.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake needs some rejuvenation and this is part of it."

Patterson said the college built the new program on the strengths of its "signature" greenhouse technician program.

Part of the reason Tweed was chosen is because of its "pharmaceutical-like environment."

"At the heart of the agreement is a recognition that, in order for this sector to be successful, it has to make sure that it is a highly skilled workforce that understands the complexities of the health regulatory environment," Patterson said.

Mark Zekulin, president of Canopy Growth, said there are a lot of "extra rules" imposed on cannabis because it can be smoked, ingested and vaporized as a medicine.

"They're essentially pharmaceutical procedures applied to a plant," he said. "So it's a very unique



Dan Patterson, president of Niagara College, and Mark Zekulin, president of Canopy Growth.



Cannabis growing at Tweed Farms in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

system, and particularly when we get to the processing part, it starts to look like real agricultural processing — but again, with a lot more pharmaceutical standards applied upon it."

Patterson said the companies take the time to partner with education start to

develop a talent pool they can call on to support their work.

"We have an opportunity here in Niagara to capitalize on a growing industry and to get it right."

Twenty-four students are expected to start in the college's cannabis production program in September.



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Activity still bustling at Court House



The Old Court House in Niagara-on-the-Lake. (Jer Houghton)

Jer Houghton
Staff

Although the Shaw Festival will no longer be hosting official plays at the Old Court House, the building is still bustling with art and activity.

Shaw will continue using the building as a rehearsal space, as well as a spot to host educational programming.

Tim Jennings, executive director and chief executive officer for Shaw, said the decision to stop performances at the Court House was

made partially because the building will not meet accessibility laws set to come into effect in 2020.

"The building itself has some issues and we would not have been able to live up to those accessibility requirements," said Jennings.

It is also a difficult location to set up and tear down sets, he said, adding that production crews need to crane the set pieces into the building.

He said the shows that would normally run at the Court House will move to the Studio Theatre.

"We started re-thinking about what the most accessible space was in our portfolio of the four theatres, which was our studio theatre, the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre."

He said the move allows the Festival to use the Court House as a rehearsal hall and will open opportunities for educational programs, such as a matinee workshop called Creating the Magician's Nephew, a one-hour interactive show open to grandparents, parents, kids, teachers and students.

"(The children) help us tell the story of the Magician's Nephew," said Suzanne Merriam, senior manager of education at Shaw Festival.

"They play roles, they sing songs, they create soundscapes, so they are actively involved in the show but from their seats."

The Court House Theatre will also play host to Shaw's annual symposium "Shaw at the Shaw" from July 27 to 29.

The three-day event will see academics from around the world share papers and information about playwright George Bernard Shaw.

The attendees, made up of primarily post-secondary students, will attend Shaw Festival shows and participate in talks, presentations and lectures from the company's actors and directors.

Jennings said using the Court House for education just makes more sense.

He said the Festival has increased the amount of education and outreach work it is doing by about 50 per cent in the last two years.

Some more exclusive plays will still take place in the Court House for Festival members, such as shows by Shaw's intern directors Diana Donnelly and Tawiah Ben M'Carthy, who will each direct their own one-act play to be performed before Shaw Festival members and invited guests.

Jennings said future plans for the Court House Theatre are still in discussion and that there may be ways to make productions more accessible in coming years.

"I mean, we haven't decided on everything yet," Jennings said.

Shaw saw its final show at the Court House in 2017.

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TERRY FLYNN

Chinese restaurant to replace rooster



The former Little Red Rooster. (Jer Houghton)

Jer Houghton
Staff

Little Red Rooster in Niagara-on-the-Lake is being converted into a Chinese restaurant, expected to open in June.

It will be the third Asian-style restaurant rolled out by Vintage Hotels in the last three years, including Niagara's Finest Thai and Masaki Sushi.

Though it is still unnamed, the restaurant will specialize in dim sum and Szechuan dishes, said Bob Jackson, chief executive officer of Vintage Hotels.

"We started a few years ago, looking at Niagara-on-the-Lake and looking at the dining options, and realizing to ourselves there's not a lot of diversity in town," he said.

"So we took it upon ourselves to say, 'let's start doing things a little bit different.'"

Vintage Hotels took over the Little Red Rooster business around two years ago.

The Rooster officially closed in March and moved its breakfast menu to Butler's Sports Bar and Grill.

"We know it was a popular breakfast spot for locals in town and wanted to continue to provide something."

The restaurant is currently being renovated, with most of the renovation work being done in the kitchen.

Jackson said the restaurant's first hire is a chef from Toronto and that Vintage Hotels is looking for chefs from across Canada.

"The real important thing is to get the chefs right, because that's what these restaurants are all about," he said.

"It's just so when people come to visit Niagara-on-the-Lake, they will have a variety of diverse options, with this of course, being one of them."

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Silversmith expansion to double brewing capacity



Construction at Silversmith Brewing Company will double seating. (Richard Harley)

Jer Houghton
Staff

Construction is underway for a new expansion at Silversmith Brewing Company in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The development, which broke ground in January, will increase the establishment's seating capacity from 50 people to around 100 and double beer production, said Silversmith president and

CEO Chris Pontsioen.

He said the kitchen and retail area will be relocated to the new addition, along with a new bar and a private event area.

The addition is going to be "a real juxtaposition to the church," Pontsioen said.

Seating inside the original building will also be expanded, while the basement section of the new building will be used as a beer pro-

duction facility.

"People want to participate in the church environment, so we're going to provide more room for that," said Pontsioen.

"We really want to be able to reduce (wait times) and get people in so they can have their experience here without having to go through the trouble."

He said the private event area will also allow the



brewery to host events such as birthday parties, wedding receptions and corporate dinners.

"We going to be able to offer a dedicated or separated event space which is a challenge for us now ... because the pub is always full."

Discussions around the expansion have been in the works for a couple years, Pontsioen said, based on what customers have said they'd like to see.

"We're a pretty customer-centric organization," he continued. "And so we are building in response to all those requests."

The expansion is expected to be completed by fall 2018.



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St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



Denise Ascenzo
Featured

One of the most striking buildings in Niagara-on-the-Lake is St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Simcoe Street between Gage and Centre Streets.

It was the first church built NOTL, constructed in 1794 under the watchful eye of Rev. John Dun, a missionary from Albany, New York.

Typical of Presbyterian congregations settling into a new community, the church was built first, then the school and then the hospital.

The original church building was burned to the ground by the occupying American forces in August of 1813, three months before the entire town was razed. The Americans had been very suspicious of the church steeple being used to send signals to the British Army, which had been forced to leave the town during the American invasion in May of 1813.

For the next 18 years, the Presbyterian congregation, which put great emphasis on equal education for all people, held services in a school house on the north corner of the property.

The school house, built in 1802, was a simple two-storey wooden building. The upstairs room was used as a school for freed or runaway slave children for several decades, while the lower rooms were used as the main school rooms for the children of the congregation.

In later years the building became a meeting place known as the Kirk House and was for a time occupied by the church's sexton (caretaker).

The school house was taken down in 1950 and only the stone foundation can be seen today.

An excerpt that can be found in the Special Collections room of the St. Catharine's Centennial Library documents one woman's account of her school days in the upstairs classroom.

"I went to a black man upstairs in the school house of the Scotch church. The room was full, full of children. The benches were slabs of the flat side up and the back of the trees down, with round sticks put in slanting for legs. The children all studied aloud and the one that made the most noise was the head scholar in



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake. (Richard Harley)

"One can only imagine the embarrassment of being late; everyone would see you trying to sneak in."

those days."

The new church we see today was constructed in 1831, on the same site as the first church. It is a wonderful example of Greek revival architecture with the design based on the Temple of Theus in Athens, Greece.

Facing onto Simcoe Street there are six Doric columns and a pediment (triangular gable over a portico) at the front of the church. Above the central door is the tympanum (semi-circular decorative wall surface) that has a gilt sun-burst design.

The steeple is octagonal and points to the skies over the front of the church.

In the 1800s, there was a seven-foot weathervane of archangel Gabriel attached to the very top of the steeple — technically seven-foot-five tall and two feet wide.

On April 18, 1855 at 6:45 a.m., a ferocious hurricane struck the town and Gabriel flew away.

It was later found in a farmer's field and lay hidden away in a barn for more than



Interior of St. Andrew's showing the pulpit at entrance. (Supplied)

40 years before it was donated to the NOTL Museum. You can see the weathervane today in the museum as it is part of the permanent display in the gallery.

Saint Andrew's interior has been meticulously preserved to its original state with a high pulpit (one of the few in Canada) and three types of pews, box, slip and table.

On Communion Sundays the pews have long pine tables placed before them and are covered with a fine linen cloth. The silver communion service in use today is the original one used from 1831.

The church itself can seat up to 600 people using the

main floor and the colonial style gallery on three sides of the church.

In the early years of the church history pews were purchased by the families. The records show the cost of a pew in 1831 was from eight to 25 pounds plus an additional cost of two to three pounds for annual "ground rent."

Ground rent was paid yearly to the church for ongoing costs of maintaining the property.

An unusual feature of St. Andrew's is the location of the pulpit — most pulpits are at the front of the church opposite the entry doors which are at the back of the

church, while the pulpit at St. Andrews is located at the back of the church with the entry doors on each side.

One can only imagine the embarrassment of being late — everyone would see you trying to sneak in.

The graveyard at St. Andrews came into use in the 1830s.

"Miss" Janet Carnochan, a renowned NOTL historian, noted that although the church had been established even before St. Mark's Anglican Church, there were no burials in St. Andrews until March of 1833.

A man named John Crooks, who died at the age of 36, was the first person to

be buried in the graveyard of St. Andrews.

As you walk through the graveyard you will notice there are no ornate stones with crosses and religious symbols that you see in St. Vincent de Paul, nor are there lengthy verses or warnings to do better in life such as on the stones in St. Mark's graveyard.

The Scots who established St. Andrew's kept their faith simple and plain. A verse from the Bible, a line from a hymn or hope for the resurrection is the most you will find.

There are several headstones that indicate a military grave. These stones are among the few that do provide more information about the life of the person with rank and regiment listed on the stone.

Amongst the military graves are references to the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Peninsular War (fought in Spain and Portugal from 1808 to 1812) and even the American Civil War.

One of the more notable people to be buried in St. Andrew's graveyard is Janet Carnochan (mentioned above), who founded the Niagara Historical Museum.

Carnochan was a recognized author, having written articles for several newspapers and published many books. Carnochan's involvement in the community not only showed her desire to preserve the history of the town but to also played a big factor in encouraging the study of Canadian literature and history.

This year, on September 21, 22 and 28, 29, the Niagara Historical Society and Museum will host its annual Stroll Through History.

The "Graveyard Shift" under the direction of Barbara Worthy will be telling the stories of the folks who once lived in NOTL and are now residing in St. Andrew's graveyard.

More information can be obtained at the Museum.

To learn more about the topic of this story you can visit the Niagara Historical Society & Museum website at, niagara-historical.museum.com, or visit the museum for yourself.

The Niagara Historical Museum is located at 43 Castlereagh Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake in Memorial Hall.

Give them a call at 905-468-3912.

Find more of Denise's work at niagaranow.com.

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COMMUNITY

All local residents are welcome to submit photos, job postings, classified ads and letters for consideration in this section.



Welcome back, spring! We've missed you.

PHOTOS: Daffodil Garden of Hope

Photos by Richard Harley



Lord Mayor Pat Darte and Sheila Hirsch-Kalm speak during the opening of NOTL's eighth Daffodil Garden of Hope.



Cole and Claire Turcotte making bubbles next to the blooming daffodils at St. Davids Fire Station.



Laurice Albert of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticulture Society brings out daffodils for all.

NOTL garden tours to inspire landscaping ideas

Michael Fox
GARDEN MAKING
Special

Niagara-on-the-Lake enjoys the distinction of hosting two annual home garden tours in the summer — the Shaw Guild Garden Tour in June and the NOTL Horticulture Society Garden Tour in July.

Garden tours are a great way to appreciate quality perennials, specimen trees and shrubs, garden structures, water features and garden ornaments.

The tours can also provide ideas for creating privacy, colour, texture, scents and incorporating edible plants and vegetables into residential landscapes.

In 2018, both tours focus on gardens in the Old Town.

First up is the Shaw Guild Garden Tour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on June 9. This is Shaw's 13th annual garden tour, including eight private gardens on properties dating from the 1930s to 2006.



Lee garden during 2017 Horticulture Society Garden Tour. (Walwyn Hopman, Hopman Portraits)

Master Gardeners volunteer at each of the garden to provide horticultural info to curious visitors.

Tickets are \$25 per person and are available at the Shaw Festival box office, Mori Gardens, the Chamber of Commerce or at any of the garden locations on tour day.

Proceeds support the Shaw

Guild Endowment Fund.

For a brochure and map, visit shawfest.com/gardentour.

A month later, the NOTL Horticultural Society (which itself is 100 years old) will host its 27th annual garden tour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, July 7, showcasing 10 impressive residential gardens all located in

historic NOTL with styles ranging from casual to formal.

Local musicians and visual artists will be in some gardens. Early-bird tickets are \$12 each if purchased online before June 1.

Regular tickets are \$15 and will be available at Mori Gardens, Seaway Gardens and the NOTL Chamber of Commerce.

Proceeds support enhancing local public garden spaces, presenting monthly lectures of horticultural and environmental interest.

Each of the tours can attract 1,000 or more visitors on a pleasant summer day; usually a combination of locals as well as groups who come from cities across Ontario and New York state.

The tours are self-guided, which allows participants to start at any of the gardens and visit others of interest in the sequence and at a pace that suits them.

For a brochure and to purchase tickets, visit notlhortsociety.com.

PHOTO: April showers bring May floods



Localized flooding affected areas of Niagara-on-the-Lake during April and into May. (Richard Harley)



SCENE OF THE MONTH

It's no secret Niagara-on-the-Lake is a beautiful place to live year round, with stunning sunsets, blossoming parks and gardens in summers, and frozen lakeside scenery in winters. Each edition of The Lake Report would like to showcase some of those spots. Get out your cameras and start shooting.

Submit your photos to editor@niagaranow.com

JOKE OF THE MONTH

"My granny says I eat so many chips I'm going to turn into one. Yeah right — like I'm going to take advice from a Werther's Original."



By David Green. Check out Monday Pundays with David Green, only at niagaranow.com.



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Featured Local Story

Voicing a dream of Broadway



Sydney Cornett with her ukelele. The 15-year-old singer has scooped up more than 35 first-place medals in competitions already.

Yellow Door's Sydney Cornett has her sights set on the world of musical theatre

Richard Harley
Staff

Although there's no denying she's got the pipes for it, 15-year-old Sydney Cornett has no interest in becoming the next Taylor Swift.

The classically-trained singer, who has already scooped up more than 35 first-place awards in competitions, has her sights set somewhere else — Broadway.

"I'm hard-wired for classical," said Sydney, during a chat with her and her mother Elisabeth in April.

Looking around their house, you might think a lineage of musicians lived here. There's a piano in the front room, next to a guitar stand with an acoustic and a ukulele.

But as you would learn, it's all Sydney's.

As Sydney puts it — and her mother agrees — her musical talent is "an isolated incident" in the family.

Neither of them are quite sure where her talent came from, though it didn't take long for her parents to notice.

The first time Elisabeth "really knew something was going on musically" was when Sydney was just a baby and somebody got her a wind-up toy that played Brahms' Lullaby.

"So I gave her this pink thing, wound it up and she just started doing this (baby voice) ... I'm like what is she doing?"

That's when she realized a mobile in Sydney's crib also played Brahms' Lullaby, and

Sydney was trying to communicate that the crib and toy played the same song.

"I thought, is this normal?"

Sydney, who said she doesn't remember all of that, has never really known a time where she wasn't involved in music.

She started piano lessons at three-years-old and classical vocal training at nine, though she admits she truly found her passion in musical theatre two years ago, when she "fell in love" with the musical Hamilton and got involved with Yellow Door Theatre Project in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

It was then she truly came out of her shell, she said.

"It was just a really amazing experience ... you get to work with professional and

people who have been in the industry and that obviously is a really good opportunity for young people."

For Sydney, meeting all sorts of new people in a safe and encouraging environment was a big part of what made her fall in love with musical theatre.

Before catching the musical theatre bug, she admits even she didn't have a lot of desire to add acting and dancing into the mix with her singing.

She recalls a time where she would much prefer to just stand still, sing and get it over with.

"We picked up that is really not a good thing to pursue a career in music," Sydney said.

She said though her mother basically forced her into attending Yellow Door, she's

glad for it and hasn't looked back since.

Now her sights are set on a getting a bachelor of arts in vocal performance when she finishes high school.

Ideally she'd like to go to Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where she has already been accepted to a fairly exclusive summer program this year.

Getting into the school will require her to be in the top three per cent of applicants.

With her long list of accomplishments, including a first place at the 2018 Elite International Music Competition held at Carnegie Hall in New York City, she seems well on her way.

Sydney said she doesn't know where singing might take her, though she said

Broadway, or singing at the Metropolitan Opera, would be a "dream come true."

Specifically, she'd love to be in the Phantom of the Opera.

Sydney performed at Yellow Door's annual Spring Talent Show last month at Redekopp Creative and Performing Arts Centre in Virgil.

If you get the chance to see her play, whether it's a song from a musical she loves like Anastasia or by an indie artist like Dodie Clark, Sydney's talent is sure to raise your arm hairs.

You can see a video of Sydney performing at niagaranow.com

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For full program details, visit musicniagara.org